

## **Cultural Consensus Theory: Observations about Past, Present, and Future**

**Bill Batchelder**

Around 1985 Kim Romney and I began a long and lasting collaboration centered on what has come to be called Cultural Consensus Theory (CCT). CCT is a statistical methodology for determining if a group of respondents (informants) share consensus knowledge or beliefs, and if so to estimate the components of their consensus. Our approach was based on developing and estimating parametric, cognitive response models for various questionnaire formats. Kim and I were Co-PIs on a number of NSF grants, and the approach, thanks to many others some of whom will be giving talks in this conference, quickly became a major methodology in social and cultural anthropology. In this talk I will discuss some of the early models and estimation theory for CCT. Then I will discuss my more recent work involving the development of new models along with associated Bayesian hierarchical estimation theory. Finally I will discuss some ongoing work to extend CCT to more complicated questionnaire formats such as items reflecting preferences, items reflecting ties in a social network, items involving matching response terms to stem questions, and items involving triads tests. It is hoped that the present and future work will serve to establish Kim's and my original vision as a major and standard methodology across the social and behavioral sciences.