

under such drastically different conditions, a personality could remain the same as before. . . . To take a crude but telling analogy, it is past belief that, if the body of any one of us were suddenly changed into that of a shark or an octopus and placed in the ocean, his personality could, for more than a very short time, if at all, recognizably survive so radical a change of environment."

*C. J. Ducasse, A Critical Examination of the Belief in a Life After Death*

### Exercise 11-13

Every student I've met from Ohio State believes in God. My conclusion is that most of the students from Ohio State believe in God.

- ▲ 1. Suppose (as is the case) that Ohio State has no admission requirements pertaining to religious beliefs. Suppose further the students in the sample were all interviewed as they left a local church after Sunday services. Does this supposition warrant a more or a less guarded conclusion than the original?
2. Suppose all those interviewed were first-year students. Does this supposition warrant a more or a less guarded conclusion than the original?
3. Suppose all students interviewed were on the Ohio State football team. Does this supposition warrant a more or a less guarded conclusion than the original?
- ▲ 4. Suppose the speaker selected all the students interviewed by picking every tenth name on an alphabetical list of students' names. Does this supposition warrant a more or a less guarded conclusion than the original?
5. Suppose the students interviewed all responded to a questionnaire published in the campus newspaper entitled "Survey of Student Religious Beliefs." Does this supposition warrant a more or a less guarded conclusion than the original?
6. Suppose the students interviewed were selected at random from the record office's list of registered automobile owners. Does this supposition warrant a more or a less guarded conclusion than the original?

### Exercise 11-14

You want to find out what percentage of residents of your local community believe the sheriff's department is adequately staffed, so you conduct a survey. Name four characteristics of the sample that would bias the survey—characteristics that would reduce our confidence that your findings applied to the community at large. For example, if the people in the sample were all interviewed in a local bar, that characteristic should diminish our confidence that your findings can be extended to the community in general.

▲ Now name four characteristics of a sample that would increase our confidence that your findings applied to the community at large. For example, if the

people surveyed belonged to a wide range of economic backgrounds, that fact would increase our confidence that your findings applied to the entire community. Now name four characteristics of your sample that would not affect our confidence one way or the other. In other words, name four characteristics that are irrelevant to the issue.

### Exercise 11-15

Suppose that you are interested in finding out what percentage of people in your community lift weights. Name four characteristics of your sample that would decrease our confidence that your results were generalizable to the whole population, four that would increase our confidence, and four that would be irrelevant.

### Exercise 11-16

Suppose you want to determine what percentage of people in your state believe that gasoline taxes for road repairs should be increased. Name four characteristics of your sample that would decrease our confidence that your results were generalizable to the whole population, four that would increase our confidence, and four that would be irrelevant.

### Exercise 11-17

Read the following Associated Press newspaper story; then decide how the last sentence should be completed.

WASHINGTON—More Americans than ever support a ban on handgun sales, saying it is needed for the safety of children in an increasingly violent society, according to a poll released Thursday.

The poll of 1,250 adults conducted April 3–12 by Louis Harris of LH Research Inc. found 52 percent in favor of a ban and 43 percent opposed.

That would be the first time a majority of Americans expressed support for a ban, Harris said. But the margin of error was plus or minus 3 percentage points.

The anecdote given the

### Exercise 11-18

George's class is doing a survey of student opinion on social life and drinking. One of the questions is "Do you believe that students who are members of fraternities and sororities drink more alcohol than students who are not members of such organizations?" Let's say that George would only wager a large sum on a bet if he had a 95 percent chance of winning. Answer the following questions for him. (Use Table 11-1 on page 389 to help you with this exercise.)