

Washington Statistical Society

CHAPTER • AMERICAN STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER—OCTOBER 1979

October 17:	The Telephone Health Interview System: Methodological Issues and Preliminary Findings
October 22:	Ridge Regression With Robust Criteria
October 23:	Panel Discussion on Questionnaire Design

Public Health and Biostatistics Section

Topic:	The Telephone Health Interview System: Methodological Issues and Preliminary Findings
Speakers:	Joseph E. Fitti, National Center for Health Statistics Deborah H. Bercini, National Center for Health Statistics Marie L. Monsees, National Center for Health Statistics
Chair:	James T. Massey, National Center for Health Statistics
Discussant:	Joseph Waksberg, Westat, Inc.
When:	Wednesday, October 17, 1979, 2:00-3:30 p.m.
Where:	Prince George's Plaza, Center Building 3700 East-West Highway, Hyattsville, MD Room 7-32 (HRA Conference Room)

This session presents results from the developmental stages of the Telephone Health Interviewing System (THIS) at the National Center for Health Statistics.

The first paper looks at the feasibility of interviewing all adult members of a household in a telephone study. An analysis is made of calls to reach households and to contact respondents, including information about times of household contact and about respondents who refused to participate in the survey.

The second paper presents the results from an experiment designed to study the impact of questionnaire design on the response rate. Two different procedures for obtaining a listing of household members and their placement before and after the interview are compared. Four versions of the questionnaire were developed to test the hypothesis that asking for names negatively affects response rates and that obtaining the household roster at the end of the interview improves response rate.

The third paper examines differences in the reporting of demographic characteristics using THIS and the Health Interview Survey (HIS), when the HIS questions are used in the telephone survey. The paper further examines the effects of modifying the demographic questions from the HIS for the use in THIS.

For any additional information, **Contact:** Julia Oliver (436-7100)

Physical Sciences and Engineering Section

Topic:	Ridge Regression with Robust Criteria
Speakers:	Douglas C. Montgomery, School of Industrial and Systems Engineering, Georgia Institute of Technology
Chair:	Seymour M. Selig, Office of Naval Research
When:	Monday, October 22, 1979, 12:30-2:00 p.m.
Where:	Department of Labor, Auditorium 3rd and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC (Take Metro to Judiciary Square: 4th St. Exit)

Two problems that occur frequently in multiple regression are multicollinearity and nonnormality. Multicollinearity may be handled by using various shrinkage techniques that move the parameter estimates toward the origin, reducing the variance of the estimates, but simultaneously inducing bias. The use of robust estimation criteria as alternatives to ordinary least squares has been suggested as an approach to the problem of nonnormal errors. This talk focuses on the analysis of data that suffers simultaneously from multicollinearity and nonnormality. A method of parameter estimation in linear regression models is presented that combines both biased and robust estimation techniques. The resulting combined estimators have excellent performance characteristics, and may be computed using an ordinary least squares computer program.

Panel Discussion on Questionnaire Design

An afternoon session reviewing fundamental and contemporary issues regarding questionnaire design . . . Some of the topics to be covered include: questionnaire layout and organization; standards for design; respondents' point of view (style and believability); computer-aided design; split-panel surveys; and randomized response.

Chair: Donny Rothwell (763-5326)
Acting Chief of the Center for Human Factors Research, Census Bureau

Participants: Tom Jabine (633-8474)
Statistical Policy Expert, Energy Information Agency

Arthur Kirsch (676-6889)
George Washington University

Brian Keenan (275-5885)
Principal Survey Methodologist, Government Accounting Office

Rosalind O'Connor (763-7161)
Statistical Research Division, Census Bureau

James Bayton (683-6806)
Howard University

When: Tuesday, October 23, 1979, 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Where: Department of Labor Auditorium,
3rd and Constitution Avenue, N.W.
(Take Metro to Judiciary Square, use 4th Street Exit)

**The Washington Operations Research/Management Science Council
Presents the Following Evening Technical Meeting:**

John Parker, President, Public Technology, Inc., and Dr. Costis Toregas, Public Technology, Inc., will speak on "OR/MS Applications Exchanges Among Local Governments," Tuesday, October 16, 8 p.m., at System Planning Corp., 1500 Wilson Blvd., 16th Floor, Arlington, Virginia.

Resolution of Appreciation

At its meeting on August 28, 1979, the Board of Directors of the Washington Statistical Society passed the following resolution:

For their dedicated efforts in assisting the staff of the American Statistical Association with the local arrangements for the 139th annual meetings, held in Washington, D.C., from August 13 to 16, 1979, the Board of Directors of the Washington Statistical Society wishes to thank all members of the Washington Statistical Society who volunteered their services. Their imagination and hard work in providing the necessary support for meetings where registration broke all previous records are a credit to all who participated.

The Board wishes especially to thank James L. O'Brien, Chair, and Barbara A. Boyes, Vice-Chair, for a job well done.

Coming Events

Physical Science and Engineering

(mailed 10/2)

Ingram Olkin on "Inequalities and Majorization," November 7, 1979, at George Washington University.



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