

Washington Statistical Society

CHAPTER • AMERICAN STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION

WSS NEWSLETTER – JULY 1982

WSS SPECIAL DINNER MEETING

SPEAKER: THE HONORABLE ROBERT GARCIA, Chairman, Subcommittee on Census and Population, House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service

TOPIC: The Impact of the Budget Cuts on the Utility and Quality of Federal Statistics

ABSTRACT: On March 16, Congressman Robert Garcia held a day long hearing on the impact of recent budget reductions on the utility and quality of Federal Statistics. Over 100 representatives from the private sector, state and local governments, the research community and public interest groups provided testimony on their concerns with respect to a wide array of Federal economics, social and demographic statistics programs.

After an introduction by Katherine Wallman, COPAS, Congressman Garcia will discuss the immediate effects of the budget reductions and their long term implications for the quality of Federal Statistics. After his presentation, members of the audience will be invited to participate in a question and answer session with Congressman Garcia.

DATE AND TIME: WEDNESDAY, July 28, 1982, Cocktails (Cash Bar): 6:00-8:00 P.M.; BUFFET DINNER: 7:30 P.M.; PROGRAM (Congressman Garcia and Question and Answer Session): 8:30 P.M.

LOCATION: Commissioned Officer's Club, Washington Navy Yard Gates and 9th and M Streets, S.E., BUILDING 101, Washington, D.C.

COST: \$12.50 per person (includes tax and tip)

BUFFET MENU: Roast Beef, Chicken, Baked Lasagne, Salad, Vegetables, Dessert, Coffee or Tea.

RESERVATIONS: Reservation must be made by JULY 21. Please make checks payable to WSS and mail to Charles Roberts 4501 Cheltenham Drive, Bethesda, Maryland 20814 [Work telephone: 357-1678]

Print Name(s) for Tags _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Number in party _____

NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS SEMINAR

July 22, 1982 – 1:30 P.M. - 2:30 P.M.

Center Building, Room 7-32
3700 East-West Highway, Hyattsville, Maryland

TOPIC: INTERPRETING VITAL STATISTICS: THE IMPLICATIONS OF DIAGNOSTIC AND CERTIFICATION ERRORS

SPEAKER: Marvin A. Kastenbaum, Ph.D., Director of Statistics, The Tobacco Institute, Wash., D.C.

For further information, call (301) 436-7111

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT, 1981-1982

Although our Newsletter usually contains only meeting notes, I thought it would be appropriate to discuss the events of the Washington Statistical Society during this past year. It was a busy year with many great events ranging from the unprecedented visit of the delegation of the 5 statisticians from the People's Republic of China. WSS hosted the Washington, D.C. portion of their visit which lasted 6 days. Julie Oliver deserves much credit and appreciation for all her work in connection with their visit. We are very grateful to the Office of International Cooperation and Development at the U.S. Department of Agriculture which helped with finances under its scientific and technical exchange with the PRC.

The other special international event was the session commemorating the 200th anniversary of the birth of Simeon Denise Poisson, cosponsored with George Washington University, the Office of Naval Research, and the Embassy of France. A highlight of the session was an address by Dr. Bernard Bru, Professor at the Universite de Paris. Seymour Selig, Nozer Singpurwalla, and Marvin Schneiderman conceived the idea and were the guiding forces in the arrangements.

In addition to these special events, WSS sponsored or cosponsored some 36 other program sessions during the year. Attendance at the sessions varied from quite small to very large and all had lively discussions and interactions of the presentors and the audience.

A development which pleased me in this year's program sessions was involvement of younger statisticians, particularly of ASA Fellows. Will Gersch and Genshiro Kitagawa, ASA Research Fellows at the Census Bureau, jointly presented a session on "Smoothing Problems." Nancy Carter and Gail Walker, ASA Fellows at the Department of Agriculture, were major presentors in sessions on "Alternative Sampling Frame Construction for a Price Survey" and "Evaluation of the Battese-Fuller Estimator for Crop Area Estimates," respectively.

Our annual dinner this year focused on the nationwide concern about the economy. Dr. Jerry L. Jordan of the Council of Economic Advisors gave the keynote address on "Macroeconomic Issues for the 1980's." Edward Denison was awarded the third annual Julius Shiskin Award for outstanding achievement in economic statistics.

WSS again continued its program of honoring outstanding graduate students at local universities through a one-year membership in ASA and WSS. This year's students were:

Mr. Ha Nguyen	—	American University
Mr. Daniel Najjar	—	George Washington University
Mr. Olusegun Olutu	—	Howard University
Mr. Myron Chang	—	University of Maryland

Looking back, it seems as if this has been a short year. I want to thank all the members of the Board of Directors who assisted this year in making the Washington Statistical Society a organization responsive to its members' needs and desires. Joe Gastwirth, Vice President this year and the President for next year, brought a new enthusiasm and new ideas to the Board this year. Rich Allen and Bennie Clemmer, as the returning Secretary and Treasurer, provided the type of continuity which is important to an organization such as WSS. The program chairs—Nancy Kirkendall, Julia Oliver, Seymour Selig, Jim Carpenter, Mary White, and Jim Wetzel—put together a well balanced, far ranging assortment of program sessions for our members and the whole community.

Our arrangements chair, Charles Roberts, used his sense of humor very effectively in handling arrangements, made more difficult by government agencies' closer concentration on building security. Evelyn Kay handles the monthly employment column and works closely with the Secretary to make arrangements for our Board of Directors meetings. I would group our membership chair, Doug Samuelson, with our representatives-at-large, Don King, David Morganstein, and Yvonne Bishop, as the individuals who often come up with the new ideas for topics and the contacts to round out session by having the "right" discussant and chair for our program sessions. Lillian Madow, in her role as WSS representative to the Julius Shiskin Award, serves the Society in her special way. Since the major features of the WSS are our programs and the publicity of those sessions, Dharendra Ghosh deserves particular praise and thanks. He very quietly assembles the Newsletter material at the last moment, turns around the typing, and coordinates with our printing service to insure that Newsletters are available near the first of each month throughout the program year.

In closing, I want to thank all of you who have attended or participated in program sessions, suggested ideas to me or other Board members, or served WSS in any other way. The Washington Statistical Society is your organization, and I have taken great pleasure in serving you this year.

Shirley Kallek, Board President, 1981-82

**The Washington Statistical Society Will Sponsor A Series of
Workshops on Federally Funded Surveys**

Professional statisticians and survey researchers have been greatly concerned in recent years about the deteriorating quality of surveys conducted under Federal sponsorship. One of the key points of failure has been a lack of understanding and appreciation by Federal contract officers and project monitors concerning the intricacies of conducting high quality surveys. The Washington Statistical Society is sponsoring three half day workshops for Federal project monitors and contract officers, in order to help them conduct their difficult task better. The purpose of the workshops is not to make these persons qualified statisticians and survey researchers, but rather to help them understand the details of survey research better and to point out things they should look for in monitoring survey projects.

The workshops will be held in three consecutive Tuesday afternoons in early Fall, in the Department of Energy Conference Hall, Room 3000A, 12th & Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. The tentative schedule is as follows:

September 28—A workshop on the design of surveys (research design, sample design and questionnaire design) and fieldwork (personal interviews, telephone interviews, and self-administered questionnaires). The chairperson of this session is Charles Turner, National Academy of Science, with two lecturers, (1-5 P.M.).

October 5—A workshop on data processing (receipt, coding and editing, input and computer tabulation and analysis of results (statistical analysis and modelling, interpretation of results, and presentation of results). The chairperson of this session is Dr. Barbara Bailar, U.S. Census Bureau, with two lecturers, (1-5 P.M.).

October 12—A workshop on preparing study requirements and writing a Request for Proposal. The chairperson of this session is Mr. Donald W. King, King Research, Inc. He will be assisted by Mr. Douglas Berninger, RFP, Inc. This notice serves two purposes, (1-5 P.M.).

- (1) Members of the Washington Statistical Society are invited to attend the Workshops.
- (2) Members of the WSS are asked to distribute this notice to nonmembers who are known to be interested in Federally-sponsored survey research or who are monitoring survey research projects.

The workshop is considered to be vital to all those involved with Federally-funded survey research. For further details, contact Mr. Donald W. King or Ms. Helen Kurtz, King Research, Inc. (881-6766) 6000 Executive Boulevard, Rockville, Maryland 20852.

1982 APDU ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Association of Public Data Users (APDU) will hold its 1982 Annual Conference at the Embassy Row Hotel in Washington on October 14th and 15th. APDU is a consortium of business organizations, universities, research institutes, and federal, state and local government agencies; all with a major interest in public machine-readable statistical data. The annual APDU Conference provides producers, distributors and users of public data with a unique opportunity to discuss current and proposed data products.

The conference will open with a panel discussion focusing on several key federal statistical programs. Marie Eldridge, Administrator, National Center for Education Statistics, Shirley Kalleck, Associate Director for Economic Fields, Bureau of the Census, and Janet Norwood, Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, will be the speakers. Other sessions on the first day will address the use of public data for research, planning and marketing; and administrative records as data sources.

The entire program on Friday, October 15th will be devoted to the 1980 census. Bruce Chapman, the Director of the Bureau of the Census, will be the luncheon speaker and other Bureau representatives will provide up to date information on census products and delivery schedules. Users of census data will provide case histories and address key issues relating to census data use.

For more information, please contact Rick Bender, APDU Secretariat, Princeton University Computer Center, 87 Prospect Avenue, Princeton, New Jersey 08544, (609) 452-6023/6052.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS SEMINAR

July 22, 1982

1:30 P.M. – 2:30 P.M.

**Center Building, Room 7-32
3700 East-West Highway
Hyattsville, Maryland**

Topic: Interpreting Vital Statistics: The Implications of Diagnostic and Certification Errors

Abstract: Large error rates in the diagnosis of malignant neoplasms have been reported in the medical literature during the past decades. When compounded with reported errors in death certification, codification, and transcription, the overall problem deserves serious consideration, because the validity of mortality statistics is dependent on the accuracy of death certificates.

Speaker: Marvin A. Kastenbaum, Ph.D., Director of Statistics, The Tobacco Institute, Washington, D.C.

For Further Information – (301) 436-7111

**THE WORLD FUTURE SOCIETY'S FOURTH GENERAL
ASSEMBLY AND EXPOSITION**

WASHINGTON, D.C., U.S.A.

JULY 18-22, 1982

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For more information, contact:

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