



WASHINGTON  
STATISTICAL  
SOCIETY

October 1986  
1986: The 60th Birthday of WSS

# NEWSLETTER

October 16	Thursday	Applying the Theories and Methods of Cognitive Psychology to Reduce Non-Sampling Errors in Surveys
October 22	Wednesday	Estimation of the Mean from Censored Income Data
October 28	Tuesday	Stochastic Curtailing for Comparison of Slopes in Longitudinal Studies
October 29&30	Wed./Thurs.	Short Course: Analysis of Survival Data (FEE EVENT)

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## Highlights of the ASA Board of Directors Meeting by Eva E. Jacobs, District 1 Representative

The following is a brief summary of the key agenda items covered at the August 16-17, 1986 ASA Board of Directors meeting in Chicago, Illinois. A full report of the meeting will appear in a future issue of Amstat News.

### 1. Strategic Planning

Preliminary reports of the three task forces were presented. A group of five persons, three presidents plus chairs of the task forces, will review all the reports and prepare an integrated document for consideration by the Board at its December meeting. The report of the Task Force on Strategy for ASA Program Direction (I) made recommendations concerning journal options (see item 2), establishment of a class of "affiliate member" of ASA and introduction of dues for section members and lower dues for members from developing countries.

The Task Force on ASA Organizational Flexibility (II) recommended several changes to the existing structure of ASA, which led to a lively discussion. One change was to make sections easier to form and more autonomous, including running their own publications. Another proposed change was to make the Board smaller and have 6 representatives at large, in addition to 3 representatives from the sections and 3 from the chapters. There was objection to the "at large" feature as being unfair to small sections or small districts.

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## WASHINGTON STATISTICAL SOCIETY PROGRAM CHAIRS

**Agriculture & Natural Resources**  
Fred A. Vogel 447-3638  
Gary Liberson 363-7140

**Economics**  
Bette S. Mahoney 697-5655  
Wray Smith 528-2772

**Physical Sciences and Engineering**  
Seymour Selig 334-3522  
Nozer Singpurwalla 676-7515

**Public Health & Biostatistics**  
Jai Choi 436-7047  
GooLoo Wunderlich 245-2100

**Social & Demographic Statistics**  
Lee-Ann C. Hayek 357-1587  
Donald J. Hernandez 763-7950

**Statistical Computing**  
Harry Foxwell 872-8058  
Ron Steele 475-3483

**Short Courses**  
Virginia deWolf 275-5801  
Josefina Lago 251-1500  
Andrew A. White 436-7022

**Methodology**  
Cathryn Dippo 523-1874  
Mary Mulry-Liggan 763-7140

**Newsletter Editor**  
Julia Oliver 252-5744

**Employment**  
Evelyn Kay 331-1153

## Highlights of the ASA Board of Directors Meeting (Continued)

The Task Force on ASA Interactions with Other Organizations (III) presented a set of proposed guidelines governing such interactions and discussed the current framework and mechanisms of interactions. The report also presented a proposal for exploring new relationships.

Task Forces II and III proposed the establishment of an Office of Scientific and Public Affairs for ASA which was also considered by Task Force I. Questions of financing and role definition were raised. Obtaining the proper kind of professional person to run such an office would be costly. Should the function of such an office be geared to public relations, public information or statistical policy? It was agreed that an advisory committee be formed to begin planning for such an office beginning with defining the focus of the activity.

### 2. Journal Options

Task Force I recommended a form of "unbundling" the journals of ASA; i.e., not all members would receive JASA. There was much heated discussion, as has prevailed on this subject for many years. Those opposed fear the loss of a unifying professional force. Those in favor feel that the current arrangement does not serve the best interests of all the members. The Board voted to table the question of Journal options until the Publications Committee completes its report on restructuring JASA and added a charge to include review of the American Statistician. The Publication Committee will be expanded for the restructuring activity to be more broadly representative of the membership.

### 3. Building and Development Fund

The fund now has about \$1 million. It is not feasible to own an appropriate building completely but the ultimate goal will be controlling ownership. Consultations with a real estate company and law firm have taken place. There was a presentation on a building not yet constructed that appeared to be a likely prospect. The Executive Committee was authorized to proceed with final negotiations, and upon the unanimous approval of the Executive Committee, the President and the Executive Director could sign the final contract.

### 4. The Board approved New Orleans as the site for the 1988 meetings. New Orleans has excellent facilities and reasonable room rates. The 1989 meeting, the Sesquicentennial year for ASA, will be in Washington, D.C. A petition for a commemorative stamp is being circulated.

### 5. An Ad Hoc Committee on the process for selecting ASA fellows has been appointed by the President. The committee will examine the process used to select fellows and develop a revised process to "improve fairness and the perception of fairness."

## PROGRAM ABSTRACTS

TOPIC: Applying the Theories and Methods of Cognitive Psychology to Reduce Non-Sampling Errors in Surveys  
SPEAKER: David Mingay, National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)  
CHAIR: Monroe Sirken, NCHS  
DISCUSSANT: Betsy Martin, Bureau of the Census  
DATE AND TIME: Thursday, October 16, 1986; 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.  
LOCATION: Room 1-39, NCHS, 3700 East-West Hwy., Hyattsville, MD.  
ABSTRACT: Cognitive psychologists are concerned with the mental processes that underlie our ability to perceive, to remember, to think and to communicate. An understanding of the cognitive processes underlying respondents' answers to survey questions offers a valuable tool for the development of effective survey instruments. This claim will be supported by a description of the recent applications of cognitive psychological theories and methods to the survey response process conducted for NCHS both by NCHS staff and by outside agencies.

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TOPIC: Estimation of the Mean from Censored Income Data  
SPEAKER: Sandra West, Bureau of Labor Statistics  
CHAIR: Peter Sailer, Internal Revenue Service  
DISCUSSANT: John Coder, Bureau of the Census  
DATE AND TIME: Wednesday, October 22, 1986; 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.  
LOCATION: Room 2736, GAO Building, 441 G Street, N.W. Please call 523-1760 if you plan to attend in order to assure building entrance.  
ABSTRACT: In this paper the problem of estimating the mean from censored data is considered. One way to approach this problem is to fit a theoretical distribution to the upper portion of the observed income distribution. In this paper a truncated Pareto distribution is used and a modified maximum likelihood estimator is developed for the Pareto parameter. Other estimators of the Pareto parameter are also considered. In particular it is shown that the quantile estimator most used in applications can lead to very misleading results. In order to see the effect of the tail estimator six actual populations, consisting of income data that were not top-coded, were considered. Different estimates of the tail and overall mean are compared to the true values for twenty-subpopulations.

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TOPIC: Stochastic Curtailing for Comparison of Slopes in Longitudinal Studies  
SPEAKER: Elizabeth Wright, George Washington University  
DISCUSSANT: Richard Simon, National Cancer Institute  
DATE AND TIME: Tuesday, October 28, 1986; 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.  
LOCATION: Conference E, Landow Bldg., 7910 Woodmont Ave., Bethesda, MD.  
ABSTRACT: In some clinical trials, rate of change of a physiological function is used as a surrogate for a more serious outcome. We assume an expected change linear in time for each study participant with variation in slopes and intercepts from individual to individual and repeated measures over time for each individual. We also assume that deviations of response for an individual from expected response have zero mean, constant variance and are uncorrelated. Under these assumptions we describe ways in which stochastic curtailing as defined by Lan, Simon and Halperin (1982) can be implemented in a two armed trial for one sided comparison of slopes in two groups. Staggered entry is taken into account as is random missingness. The analysis assumes the number of participants in each group is large and that most individuals have at least two measurements (including baseline value). An example of this application to a completed clinical trial is presented.

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## OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Summary of the August WSS Board Meeting

Announcements of several upcoming events were made at the August 26 meeting of the WSS Board of Directors. The Society will once again sponsor an evening holiday party at the George Washington University in early December. WSS will play a major role in the American Statistical Association Sesquicentennial activities which begin in August 1988. Between August 1988 and August 1989, WSS will plan special sessions (individually and in combination with other organizations) to commemorate the 150th anniversary. WSS will be the host chapter for the August 1989 ASA meeting and will plan at least one invited papers session. There is a goal of completing the papers for that session nearly a year in advance so copies will be available for all participants at the 1989 meetings. Another topic discussed at the August meeting was how to best utilize a new 20 minute modular slide show on careers in statistics which is aimed at high school audiences.

### Norwood Wins Shiskin Award

Janet L. Norwood, Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, received the 1986 Julius Shiskin award for Economic Statistics for her direction of the statistical program of the Bureau. The presentation was made at the Washington Statistical Society Annual Dinner along with an honorarium of \$250. The Award Program is designed to honor an unusually original and important contribution in the development of economic statistics or in the use of economic statistics in interpreting the economy. Participating organizations in the selection program are the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bureau of the Census, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Office of Federal Statistical Policy and Standards, National Bureau of Economic Research, National Association of Business Economists, and WSS all of which Mr. Shiskin was associated with in his long and fruitful career.

### WSS Joins the Washington Academy of Sciences

The Washington Academy of Sciences was incorporated as an affiliation of scientific societies in 1898, under the leadership of the Philosophical Society of Washington, to encourage the advancement of science and "to conduct, endow, or assist investigation in any department of science." The original eight affiliates have now increased to nearly 50 affiliates. The Academy is also a membership organization in which many hundreds of scientists, engineers and educators are individual members or elected as Fellows. The Academy publishes a quarterly journal, holds regular meetings, and sponsors Awards for Scientific Achievement.

The WSS recently affiliated with the Washington Academy of Sciences. WSS members are encouraged to attend the meetings of the WAS and make statistics a part of their scientific activities, nominate outstanding candidates for the Awards, and submit papers to the Journal of the Washington Academy of Sciences. To request membership information or to obtain the program schedule for the year, contact the Washington Academy of Sciences, 1101 N. Highland Street, Arlington, VA 22201, phone 703-527-4800. If you have suggestions for activities of mutual benefit to WSS and WAS members, please write R. Clifton Bailey, WSS representative to the WAS, 6507 Divine Street, McLean, VA 22101.

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## OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### Fellowship Announcement

The American Statistical Association/NSF/Census Bureau Research Fellowships and Associateships at the Census Bureau for 1987-88 are a unique opportunity to make major advances in methodological or subject matter research related to Census Bureau operations or data. General areas for research are social and demographic studies, economic measurement and analysis, and statistical methodology and computing. Requirements: for Fellows, recognized research record in relevant field (e.g. Statistics, Demography, Sociology, Economics); for Associates, at least two years graduate study in relevant field plus computer experience. Salaries are commensurate with qualifications and experience; also, fringe benefits and a travel allowance are provided. Apply by January 1, 1987 for Fellows and February 15, 1987 for Associates. For information, write Dr. William Bell, ASA/NSF/Census Research Program, Room 3514-3, SRD, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233 or telephone him at (301-763-3848).

### M.S. In Statistical Computing at American University

The Department of Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science at American University has instituted a Master of Science degree program in Statistical Computing. The goal of the new program is to train students in the techniques and procedures of computer-oriented data analysis. Emphasis is placed on the design of algorithms, data structures, and numerical and graphical procedures for the representation and solution of statistical problems. Courses offered in the program include algorithms and data structures, programming languages, numerical analyses, mathematical statistics, data analysis, statistical computing, time series analysis, artificial intelligence, data management systems, computer graphics, and statistical methods courses. For information contact Dr. Austin Barron, Chair, Department of Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science, American University, Washington, D.C. 20016 or telephone 202-885-3120.

## OTHER PROGRAMS OF INTEREST

### Bureau of Labor Statistics Statistical Seminar

On Monday, October 6, Wayne Fuller from Iowa State University will speak on "Response Error in Second-Order Statistics" as part of the BLS statistical seminar series. The seminar will be held in Room 2736 in the GAO Building, 441 G Street, N.W., from 10 to 11:30 a.m. If you plan to attend, you must call 523-1760 in advance to arrange building entry. For additional information about this presentation, contact Clyde Tucker on 272-2280.

### Washington Academy of Sciences Seminar

The Washington Academy of Sciences will hold a seminar on Thursday, October 16, at 8:30 p.m. entitled "How Many Kinds of Time" by Gernot M.R. Winkler, United States Naval Observatory. The talk will be held at the Mary Graydon Center, American University, Nebraska and Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. It will be preceded by a social hour at 6:45, and a dinner at 7:30 p.m. Reservations for the dinner, for which there is a fee, must be made by October 9. Call 320-3621 for dinner reservations. There is no charge for attendance of only the seminar which begins at 8:30.

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## OTHER PROGRAMS OF INTEREST (CONTINUED)

### AU Forum on "Statistics, Politics and the News Media"

An American University Forum on "Statistics, Politics, and the News Media" will be held on November 5, at 7:30 p.m. in the lounge of the SIS Building on the AU campus. All statisticians are coordinally invited to hear a distinguished panel, including Dr. Janet L. Norwood, BLS Commissioner, debate and exchange ideas on the topic of media coverage of statistical information. There will be a reception after the Forum to enable members of the audience to talk informally with the panelists. The American Forum is a series of evening programs to evaluate the performance of the media in areas of public interest and controversy. The Forum is free and open to the public. The American University campus, located at Ward Circle, has parking facilities.

### ASQC Program on Banking Quality Assurance

On Thursday, November 20, the Northern Virginia Section of the American Society for Quality Control (ASQC) will hold a program on Banking Quality Assurance at the Evans Farm Inn in McLean, Virginia. From 6-7 p.m., there will be a Happy Hour (cash bar) followed by the presentation from 7 to 8 p.m. and the dinner which begins immediately following the talk. The cost of the dinner is \$13 to \$15. Call Jim Toney, at 272-2385 for reservations by November 19.

### APDU Plans Eleventh Annual Conference

The Association of Public Data Users (APDU) will hold its eleventh Annual Conference at the Ramada Renaissance in Washington, D.C. on October 29-31, 1986.

Wednesday afternoon, October 29, will be devoted to a 1990 Census Workshop, utilizing an APDU-prepared paper that summarizes and crystallizes the data product issues. By that time, the U.S. Bureau of the Census will have held its ten Data Product Planning Workshops and will have preliminary plans in place. The APDU workshop will provide an opportunity to critique this material and convey informed comments to the Bureau.

Thursday morning, October 30, will start with a keynote speaker followed by discussions on federal information policy. Other sessions on that day will include updates on major data series and a look at new forms of information dissemination. Among the sessions planned for Friday, October 31st, are panels on private sector use of public data, population and economic projections, and microcomputers, including demonstrations.

For further information, contact Susan Anderson, APDU, 87 Prospect Avenue, Princeton, New Jersey 08544, (609) 452-6025 between 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

## EMPLOYMENT COLUMN

Deadline for inserting notices  
is 5 weeks before the publication  
date

Send notices and requests to:  
Evelyn R. Kay  
520 - 22nd Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20037 202/331-1153

## JOB APPLICANT

Listed below is a brief description of the qualifications of an applicant seeking employment. Employers interested in interviewing this applicant should contact the applicant directly as indicated.

Telephone: 703/534-1749

CODE NUMBER: 87-02

POSITION WANTED: Research/statistical analyst in social science/public policy area. Government, private or non-profit concern. GS-13/14 or \$45,000+. Washington, D.C. metro area.

EDUCATION: B.A. Smith College 1962. M.A.T. Harvard U. School of Education 1964. Ph.D Brandeis U., School of Social Welfare 1972.

RESEARCH & RELATED SKILLS: Statistical analysis and data interpretation. Questionnaire and survey design. Public policy issue analysis. Knowledge of SPSS, SAS, etc. Written and oral communication.

SUBSTANTIVE SPECIALTIES: Retirement income systems and employee benefits. Economics and sociology of aging. Labor force behavior. Women's economic issues. Note: Job search not limited to these specialties.

EXPERIENCE: 11 years as research/statistical analyst with federal government. 1-1/2 years as policy analyst with federal government and private consulting firm. 1 year as associate professor of social science research. 1 year as lab instructor in elementary stat. 5 years as research assistant in university setting.



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