WASHINGTON STATISTICAL SOCIETY

WSS NEWS

March 1995

Roger Herriot Award for Innovation in Federal Statistics

The Roger Herriot Award has been established jointly by the Washington Statistical Society, the Social Statistics Section and the Government Statistics Section of the American Statistical Association in memory of Roger Herriot, an Associate Commissioner for Statistical Standards and Methodology at the National Center for Education Statistics. Roger's untimely death last spring at the age of 52 robbed the federal statistics community of a creative intellect that always tried to "reinvent" the ways and methods of the statistical system.

Roger Herriot made major contributions during his career in a number of areas of federal statistics. Chief among these was his work in the area of income statistics, where he played a leading role in improving the measurement and analysis of economic well-being of the U.S. population through his leadership role in the measurement of cash and noncash income, after tax income, and poverty statistics. He expanded the collection of income data in the March Current Population Survey and was instrumental in the development and success of the Survey of Income and Program Participation. More recently, at the National Center for Education Statistics, Roger made significant contributions in improving public access to education data by developing a user-friendly demographic data base on the Nation's school districts.

Roger Herriot's federal career was marked by his unique and innovative approaches to the solution of problems encountered in federal statistics data collection, data analysis, and statistical program management. The award, therefore, is to recognize innovation and unique approaches in the federal statistical system.

A wide array of activities within the federal statistical data system are qualifying, including proposing the introduction of new methods into a federal statistical data program; an insightful and innovative analysis of federal statistical data; an improved understanding of issues in measurement, (cont'd on next page)

WSS Seminars

(All events are open to any interested persons)

March		
2	Thurs.	Revisiting Inverse Sampling Designs
3	Fri.	Response-Driven Designs
8	Wed.	A Generalized Moments Estimator for the Autoregressive Parameter in a Spatial Model
10	Fri.	Graphical User Interface Tools in Data Editing/Analysis
21	Tues.	The L_{1} Method for Robust Nonparametric Regression
29	Wed.	A Paradox of Multiple Imputation (Latest Presentation in Methodology Seminar Series on Handling Missing or Bad Data)
30	Thurs.	Further Evaluation of Alternative Rent Estimators for the CPI
April		
5	Wed.	Statistical Image Analysis for Agriculture

Call (703) 803-8109 for up-to-date information.

Announcements

Roger Herriot Award Cont'd

particularly with respect to income measurement; and creative management of federal statistical programs aimed at reducing bureaucratic impediments. In his career at the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Education Statistics, Roger Herriot contributed significantly in all these areas.

The award is not restricted to "senior" members of an organization, nor is it to be considered as a culmination of a long period of service containing incremental contributions. Rather, individuals at all levels, from entry to senior, federal employees, private sector employees, or employees of the academic community, will be considered and nominated on the basis of the unique significance and unusual or different approach represented by the specific contribution.

The recipient of the Roger Herriot Award will be chosen by a committee composed of representatives of the Social Statistics Section and Government Statistics Section of the American Statistical Society and a representative of the Washington Statistical Society. Mr. Herriot was associated with and strongly supportive of these organizations during his career. The award will consist of an honorarium of $500, to be given at the Memorial Session in honor of Mr. Herriot at the 1995 meeting of the American Statistical Association.

A nomination from can be obtained by contacting Daniel Kasprzyk (202) 219-1588, (202) 219-1728 fax, or email to Daniel_Kasprzyk@ed.gov. All nomination forms should be returned to the Roger Herriot Award Committee, c/o Daniel Kasprzyk, 4906 Colonel Contee Place, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772-2875.

Completed nomination forms must be received by June 1, 1995.

Receive the Newsletter via Email!!

WSS is distributing the monthly newsletter and schedule via electronic distribution. Approximately 80 members currently receive the letter via electronic mail through the Internet. Electronic distribution offers several advantages to the present surface mail procedures, primarily much improved timeliness of delivery (usually by the 20th of the month previous) at significantly lower postal and administrative cost. Participation in the electronic delivery is voluntary, and should lead to reduced cost and lower member dues.

Those interested in electronic delivery will be able choose between receiving the newsletter via electronic mail (in a text format), or could retrieve the news letter via an Internet Gopher or WWW utility. No surface mailing will be sent to those who choose to receive the newsletter electronically. Also, WSS will restrict the use of the electronic mailing list to the newsletter or related announcements. The mailing list will not be distributed. At present, only the email option is available, however, but we are working to incorporate the WWW format.

If you are interested in receiving the WSS Newsletter and schedule via electronic means, please send a note to Vince Massimini, svm@mitre.org. Include your Internet mail address. (Recall that this may be different than your address internal to your organization. The Internet address is what is required.) If you submitted your name/address earlier and didn't receive the February newsletter electronically, please send another note to Vince. A dual mailing (surface and electronic) will be required for a few months until certain administrative changes can be completed with the surface mailing.

Thanks for your support. We believe that this initiative will result in much better service to WSS members at a lower cost to the Society.

Program Abstracts

Topic: Revisiting Inverse Sampling Designs

Speakers: Susan Hinkins, Internal Revenue Service
Fritz Scheuren, The George Washington University

Chair: Susan Ahmed, National Center for Education Statistics

Date/Time: Thursday, March 2, 1995, 12:30 - 2:00 P.M.

Location: BLS Cognitive Lab, Postal Square Building, Room 2990, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, Washington DC (Red Line -- Union Station). Enter at Massachusetts Avenue and North Capitol Street.

Sponsor: Methodology Section

Abstract: Last year at a spring Washington Statistical Society meeting the notion of inverse sampling designs was introduced. This talk will continue the discussion of their utility and construction.

The idea of an inverse sample design grows out of analysis problems that arise in complex surveys. For a host of practical reasons it is unwise, undesirable, or just plain infeasible to draw a simple random sample from many, even most, populations. However, once the complex sample has been selected, it may be possible to design and draw a subsample of the original sample which has a data structure that is easier to analyze. This is where the idea of an inverse sample comes in.

Inverse sample designs are not always possible and, unless computing costs are modest or nil, they may not make sense. The reason for this last observation is that a single subsample is seldom enough and repeated subsampling is needed to recapture the full information in the original complex design.

Since last year we have extended our results to designs beyond stratified random samples and believe the method has potential as a way to calculate stable variance estimates from a wide class of complex samples (including, in some cases, two PSU per stratum designs where the degrees of freedom to estimate the complex sampling variance may be small with existing approaches).

We are very interested in the work others may now be doing with this idea, particularly any changes being made to existing original (conventional?) designs to make them more "invertible." So, if you are or want to be working on this "Fun" problem, please come.

Program Abstracts (Cont'd)

Topic: Response-Driven Designs

Speaker: Nancy Flournoy, American University

Chair: Janet Wittes, Statistics Collaborative

Discussant: Richard Simon, National Cancer Institute

Date/Time: Friday, March 3, 1995, 1:30 - 3:00 P.M. **(Note special time)**

Location: Conference Room H, Executive Plaza North, 6130 Executive Blvd., Rockville, MD

Sponsor: Public Health and Biostatistics

Abstract: Often in studies of dose-response surfaces, it is desirable to arrange treatments in some region defined by the unknown surface. We describe how to construct designs in which treatments are sequentially determined as functions of the previous outcomes. Such *response-driven designs* include a randomized class of up-and-down designs described by Durham and Flournoy [In *Statistical Decision Theory and Related Topics V*, S.S. Gupta and J.O. Berger eds., Springer-Verlag (1993), 467-477] and a family of designs based on the generalized Polya urn model. For monotone response curves, these nonparametric procedures center the treatment distribution around an unknown quantile. In the case of two types of failure, such as treatment failure (i.e., lack of efficacy) and toxicity, we give procedures for centering the treatment distribution around the dose corresponding to the maximum success probability.

Program Abstracts (Cont'd)

Topic: A Generalized Moments Estimator for the Autoregressive Parameter in a Spatial Model

Speaker: Ingmar Prucha, University of Maryland

Chair: Arthur Kennickell, Federal Reserve

Date/Time: Wednesday, March 8, 1995, 12:30 - 2:00 P.M.

Location: Room M-3319, Martin Building, Federal Reserve, 20th and C Streets, NW; nearest Metro stop: Foggy Bottom or Farragut West (Blue/Orange Lines). People outside the Federal Reserve who are interested in attending should call Linda Pitts at 202-736-5617 to be put on the guard's list for entry.

Sponsor: Economics Section

Abstract: This paper is concerned with the estimation of the autoregressive parameter in a widely considered spatial autocorrelation model. The typical estimator for this parameter considered in the existing literature is the maximum likelihood estimator corresponding to a normal density. However, as discussed in the paper, this estimator may not be computationally feasible in many cases involving moderate or large sized samples. In this paper we suggest a generalized moments estimator for this parameter that is computationally simple irrespective of the sample size. We provide results concerning the large and small sample properties of this estimator.

Help Wanted

WSS is searching for several people who would like to be newsletter editors. This is a position for anyone who would like to be up-to-date about the statistics community in Washington. This will be an exciting time for WSS *News* since many new efforts are underway including electronic distribution of the newsletter. Please contact Theresa Hallquist at (202) 586-2051 for more information.

Program Abstracts (Cont'd)

Topic: Graphical User Interface Tools in Data Editing/Analysis

Speakers: Sharon Mowry, Federal Reserve Board
Alan Estes, Federal Reserve Board

Chair: Po Kim, Federal Reserve Board

Date/Time: Friday, March 10, 1995, 12:30 - 2:00 PM

Location: Dining Room E, Terrace Level, Martin Building (Federal Reserve Board Annex, next to the State Department), C Street between 20th and 21st Streets, NW, Washington, DC 20551. Allow 15 minutes to walk from Farragut West or Foggy Bottom Metro stations. (Note: The security guard at the "C" Street Entrance will direct you to Dining Room E.)

Sponsor: Statistical Computing Section

Abstract: In November 1994, David A. Pierce and Laura Bauer Gillis from the Federal Reserve Board presented a paper on "Utilizing Time Series and Cross Section Methods In EDDS (Edited Deposits Data System) Editing." The EDDS data are a key resource supporting the monetary policy-making and open market operations of the Federal Reserve and it represents the daily balances of deposits, borrowings, and reserves for the largest 7,700 depository institutions in the United States. The data require a high level of confidence, and identifying and resolving errors in quality must be done under increasingly stringent deadlines. The Distributed EDDS Editing Project (DEEP) was initiated with the objective to improve the data analysis effort through the utilization of graphical user interface tools in conjunction with the presentation of statistically significant data edits. The DEEP system is a Windows-based client/server application designed to provide analysts with a sophisticated tool to access both raw data and data that have fallen outside of the data model forecasts based upon five different types of data edits or forecasts. This presentation will detail major features of the DEEP application and their uses for the editing and analysis of these critical data.

Program Abstracts (Cont'd)

Topic: The L_{1} Method for Robust Nonparametric Regression

Speaker: Ferdinand T. Wang, American University

Chair: Arthur Kennickell, Federal Reserve

Discussant: Douglas McManus, Freddie Mac

Date/Time: Tuesday, March 21, 1995; 12:30 PM - 2:00 P.M.

Location: Room M-3319, Martin Building, Federal Reserve, 20th and C Streets, NW;
nearest Metro stop: Foggy Bottom or Farragut West (Blue/Orange Line).
People outside the Federal Reserve who are interested in attending should call Linda Pitts at 202-736-5617 to be put on the guard's list for entry.

Sponsor: Economics Section

Abstract: Even robust parametric least squares regression and some classes of nonparametric regression methods are sensitive to important types of outliers. Existing algorithms for robustifying nonparametric regression procedures employ either nonlinear optimization of an influence function, or iterative solution of local polynomial fitting using reweighted least squares. Neither of these two approaches combines computational ease with asymptotic theoretical results. Furthermore, application of the robust procedure has been limited almost exclusively to the case of a single explanatory variable with the response variable. In this paper, a new hybrid method is proposed that combines nonparametric regression with the L_{1} norm, which leads naturally to a robust estimator in any dimension. In spite of L_{1}'s reputation for being computationally intractable, a relatively simple computational technique is developed. A proof of consistency for the L_{1} algorithm is presented, and results from both real and simulated data are shown.

Program Abstracts (Cont'd)

Topic: A Paradox of Multiple Imputation (Latest Presentation in Methodology Seminar Series on Handling Missing or Bad Data)

Speaker: Phillip S. Kott, National Agricultural Statistics Service

Chair: Michael P. Cohen, National Center for Education Statistics

Date/Time: Wednesday, March 29, 1995, 12:30 - 2:00 P.M.

Location: BLS Cognitive Lab, Postal Square Building, Room 2990, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, Washington DC (Red Line -- Union Station). Enter at Massachusetts Avenue and North Capitol Street.

Sponsor: Methodology Section

Abstract: Multiple imputation provides a method of adjusting for survey nonresponse. When used correctly, inferences drawn from multiply imputed data sets are statistically valid under the right conditions. A little understood paradox of multiple imputation with weighted sample data is that, although the imputations themselves are often based on models of variable behavior, variance estimates derived from multiply imputed data sets are not conditioned on realized survey respondents as is typical in model-based sampling theory. Rather, variance estimation relies on the assumption of a quasi-random response mechanism. A simple example illustrates this point. A discussion of the practical repercussions of this paradox follows.

Program Abstracts (Cont'd)

Topic: Further Evaluation of Alternative Rent Estimators for the CPI

Speaker: Shawn Jacobson, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Chair: Sandra A. West, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Date/Time: Thursday, March 30, 1995, 12:30 - 2:00 P.M.

Location: BLS Cognitive Lab, Postal Square Building, Room 2990, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, Washington, DC (Red Line -- Union Station). Enter at Massachusetts Avenue and North Capitol Street.

Sponsor: Methodology Section

Abstract: Recently, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) has drawn a great deal of attention from economists and politicians. As a result of the attempt of BLS to improve the quality of the CPI, several changes have been made. One of these changes is to switch from a composite index to a chained six month index. This presentation will describe research used to evaluate alternative rent indexes. A brief history of research on alternative index formulas is given. The problem that the composite index has with instability is described. Also, the biases due to a lack of timeliness and the failure to report one month rent changes will be presented. Results of simulations run for the 1994 ASA paper "Evaluation of Alternative Rent Indexes for the Consumer Price Index" are discussed. Further work on simulations which includes: unusable responses, vacant housing units, and imputed rents is discussed.

* * * Note from the WSS NEWS Editors * * *

Items for publication in the May 1995 WSS NEWS should be submitted no later than March 28, 1995. FAX items to:

Hattie Ramseur or Theresa Hallquist
FAX: (202) 586-0018

Program Abstracts (Cont'd)

Topic: Statistical Image Analysis for Agriculture

Speaker(s): Mike Craig, U.S. Department of Agriculture
Martin Ozga, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Chair: Mark Pierzchala, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Date/Time: Wednesday, April 5, 1995, 12:30 - 2:00 P.M.

Location: USDA, South Building, Room 5152 (NASS Board Room), 12th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC (Orange/Blue Line--Smithsonian, Independence Ave., Exit). Government ID needed or sign in at the desk.

Sponsor: Statistical Computing Section

Abstract: PEDITOR is a modular system of PC programs written specifically to estimate crop acreage with measurable precision using satellite imagery combined with ground gathered survey data. PEDITOR has been under development within NASS for several years and portions and/or offshoots of it are available for other (non-PC) platforms. Currently, all PEDITOR functions can be accomplished with a PC under MS-DOS as the primary platform. One Landsat Thematic Mapper (TM) image as used by the PEDITOR system consumes 290 MB of disk space; as an example, the analysis of major Mississippi River Delta crop areas in Arkansas requires twelve TM images or 3.5 GB of storage. The ground data from sampled land areas is collected during an annual NASS operational survey; for Arkansas there are about 200 samples (known as segments) in the major crop regions. Each segment, with its field boundaries and corresponding tabular data, generates at least five computer files during the estimation process. Field boundaries from sample segments are located in the satellite data and used with clustering and pattern recognition techniques to train the computer to recognize crop types. Maximum likelihood classification is applied to entire scenes to cover large areas such as entire states or major portions of states. Regression estimation is used to generate estimates of crop acreage for major crops both for large areas and by county. Area displays are provided on the PC screen and on color printers to show crop distribution. Current processing is in the Mississippi Delta region of Arkansas, but in the past other larger areas have been processed.

Reflections on the 1978-80 White House "Federal Statistical Reorganization Project" Part III.

The following is reminiscence written by James Bonnen. James Bonnen is a member of the faculty of the Department of Agricultural Economics at Michigan State University. From February 1978 through March 1979 he was the Executive Director of The President's Reorganization Project for the Federal Statistical System. WSS is interested in printing similar material, either histories, anecdotes, or reminiscences from other members of our federal statistical community. Possibly, this will motivate other federal agencies to initiate similar projects so that the history of statistics in Washington, DC, that is our rich heritage, is preserved. Parts I and II appeared in the last 2 issues.

In Congress and Afterwards. I had briefed relevant Senate and House Committee staffs on the Project during the Summer of 1979. Senator Lawton Chiles of Florida chaired the Government Operations Committee that deals with the Census and Executive Office statistical matters in the Senate. In the House, many of the same statistical matters were the purview of the House Committee on Government Affairs. By Fall, I was trying to sell our ideas to the House Committee and its chair, Jack Brooks of Texas, who had the lead. Brooks was collaborating with three former members of the Commission on Federal Paperwork to push the Commission's recommendations through Congress. The three were Representative Frank Horton who was chair of the Paperwork Commission and ranking minority member of Brooks' Committee, Bert Lance (replacing James Lynn), Director of OMB, and Elmer Staats, Comptroller General and head of the Government Accounting Office. This group, I learned, was determined to enact paperwork legislation as early as possible in 1980 to avoid the growing disorder in Congress that accompanies the presidential election campaign (known then in the Executive Office as "the silly season"). "Paperwork reduction" was the battle flag under which the regulatory reform movement fought its war in Congress.

Jim Lewin, Brooks staff member in charge of paperwork and most other matters, soon advised me that our best chance was not separate legislation, but as a part of the paperwork bill. With the understanding that there might still be changes in it, in early November 1979 we gave the Committee our draft legislation establishing a Statistical Policy Office in the Executive Office (which was not yet approved by OMB!) plus our confidentiality legislation. We spent the month of November passing drafts back and forth only in the last week to have Jack Brooks (or his staff?) decide that our legislation was too complex and thus too heavy a load for the paperwork train to pull through Congress within the time limit they faced. So we "hit the wall" in Congress before we were out of OMB or had cleared the White House. I suspect Brooks believed (probably correctly) that the confidentiality legislation with its statistical enclave would attract political conflict they did not want. In addition, Brooks saw no reason why statistical policy should not also be included in a regulatory rule-making oversight unit enforced by the paperwork controls of the 1942 Federal Reports Act. Perhaps the outcome was inevitable given the political forces in operation. But the latter was evidence again, if one needed it, of the endemic ignorance of what it takes to provide high integrity, objective statistical policy and statistical programs in government.

Subsequent efforts did not change anything. Vince Barabba, who by now was Census Director for a second time, lobbied Representative Horton who was his congressman. I had known Elmer Staats in 1963-65 when he was Deputy Director of OMB, so I renewed this acquaintance soon after I came to Washington, kept him informed, solicited his advice, and tried to enlist him in support of the Project. Despite a final meeting in Elmer's office with Wayne Granquist, Rick Neustadt from the White House and myself, we got nowhere with Elmer who, as an "old pro", knew where the power was in this matter and kept his own counsel. Granquist put OMB into a damage control mode. He testified for OMB on Brooks' paperwork bill on February 21, 1980 requesting that the statistical policy functions be dropped from the bill. A letter to Brooks from OMB Director McIntyre in March 1980 made the same request. On March 18, 1980 OMB distributed for clearance review our legislation establishing a Statistical Policy Office in the EOP. This "Statistical Policy Office Act of 1980" was sent to Congress on May 30, 1980 where, of course,

it languished. Earlier we also had drafted reorganization legislation to establish the Statistical Policy Office. Reorganization authority has advantages over regular legislation since it allows Congress only 90 days to vote a reorganization plan up or down with no change. However, other reorganization plans were in the queue ahead of us and only one plan can go to Congress in any 30 day period. This window of opportunity had vanished by March 1980.

Thus, the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 sent the statistical policy and coordination function back to OMB, but not as a Statistical Policy Division. Rather this law embedded it in a regulatory policy unit, the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, or as Ted Clemence liked to call it the "Son of ACUS" (the Administrative Conference of the US). Working through Richard Wirthlin, the new (Reagan) administration White House pollster and Vince Barabba's sympathetic former partner in a polling firm, Vince tried to get the new administration to pick up the torch for statistical policy legislation. But they already had their own agenda and were not inclined to pick up anything from a Carter White House.

The final insult to statistical policy was yet to come. In the Reagan Administration, after about six months of erratic negotiations between Commerce and OMB in early 1981, only fifteen of twenty-five Commerce positions were returned to OMB, of which only five were assigned part-time to statistical policy to coordinate the entire Federal government's then nearly billion dollar statistical budget. The Statistical Reporter, for 40 years a highly useful communication forum for the statistical system, was summarily discontinued by OMB. No Chief Statistician was appointed nor any identifiable statistical policy unit established. In the complete statistical policy vacuum this created, the Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics (COPAFS), led by its Director, Katherine Wallman, became the national forum for information on the statistical system and for coordination of remedial efforts. An Office of Statistical Policy was eventually organized within OIRA and in June 1983 a Chief Statistician appointed, but only after the external statistical community via COPAFS had absorbed endless working hours of the Director of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA). Since the initial appointee as Chief Statistician apparently was selected more for political loyalty than experience, endless problems followed. The real concern in OIRA was only to relieve the Director from having to go to the many meetings and congressional hearings COPAFS generated and to deal with a rising tide of user and media produced political flack on the Hill. Following this learning experience, subsequent OIRA-OMB appointments of Hermann Habermann in July 1988, and now Katherine Wallman since December 1992 as Chief Statistician of the US has put statistical policy in highly competent hands, although still with totally inadequate resources for the responsibilities involved.

Conclusion. Some of my friends have asked if I had any regrets about the Project. I do have a few. I wish the White House had started the Project six months earlier, in the Summer of 1977, which would have gotten us to Congress with a better chance for success. I wish I had been able to visit with Jack Brooks myself. He refers to his East Texas constituents as "yeller dog demicrats" and talks about "that dog won't hunt," when he believes something or someone is failing to perform. As a former East Texan I can talk his lingo well enough that I might have persuaded him to buy part of our package of recommendations. At least I might have dissuaded him of OIRA as a home for statistical policy. In retrospect, I also wish I had had the foresight to adopt the paperwork system's decentralized organization for the statistical policy system. I realized too late that only about 15 to 20 percent of the nearly 200 person capacity needed for the statistical policy functions we envisioned actually had to be in the EOP. The rest could be just as easily, if not more effectively, located in the cabinet agencies. Perhaps too, we should have only given Brooks' staff the Statistical Policy Office legislation and saved the confidentiality legislation for another day. Anyone who mounts this sort of an effort in the future should focus on the essential innovation and leave the rest for later to avoid overloading the circuits with too much complexity for Congress to manage. In statistics that capacity seems limited.

I have no regrets about having taken the assignment. It was, as Vince Barabba might say, "a fine education at great public expense". Not only that, it was enormous fun working with Wayne Granquist and a superb group of very bright, able professionals. Collectively, Chuck Waite, Ivan Fellegi, Ted Clemence, Tom Jabine, Larry Roberson and Ron Kutscher (along with several agency heads), gave me

a graduate education not only on issues of statistical policy, organization and processes, but on the various cultures and behavior of the statistical system and its agencies. For all of us, it was intellectually exciting to think about the statistical system as a system, to analyze its problems and prescribe adjustments. We learned from each other. There was always someone who saw a given problem differently and, if there was not, Ted or Ivan or Chuck would shift into their "devil's advocate" mode and give the rest of us a good workout. The staff made it all fun. I miss them. The 1981 WSS Shiskin Award, of which to my astonishment I was the second recipient for our Statistical System Reorganization effort, really belongs to the Project staff.

The Project experience taught me to respect and admire the high standards, integrity and blunt style of government statisticians. With few exceptions, you almost always know where individuals and their agencies stand on important issues. This makes statistical policy more transparent than other areas of policy and helps to make the Federal statistical system, if not really a system, a great statistical community. Statisticians expect higher standards of integrity and performance than any other profession with which I have worked.

Reorganizing government involves the same difficulty as moving graveyards. But changing statistical procedures and institutions leads any reformer on an even longer, more difficult journey and, like the search for the Holy Grail, it never really ends. And rightly so. Statistics track a changing world. In addition, real understanding of statistical processes is very limited and, with few major exceptions, when "the chips are down" only statisticians show up to defend the integrity of statistics and the institutions that produce government statistics. Thus, as I discovered, it is not surprising that statisticians greet those who would modify their system with a tired skepticism, if not a common conservative front of something between "over our dead bodies you will" and "you prove it will work before I support you". Especially when confronted with an unknown newcomer from OMB who proposes to "help" them.

Obituary

Evelyn R. Kay Fischman

Evelyn R. Kay Fischman, 76, former Employment Coordinator, Social Committee Chairperson, and volunteer extraordinare for the Washington Statistical Society died of cancer January 2, 1995. Lyn was the second coordinator of the monthly newsletter Employment Column taking over from Marie Eldridge in 1976 and handling those duties until 1989. She was always one of the most faithful attendees at WSS Board meetings and a constant contributor of new ideas for Society social and technical activities.

Lyn began her government career with the Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1951. She also worked for the Office of Foreign Labor and Trade and the National Center for Education Statistics before retiring in 1982. She received the Labor Department's Meritorious Achievement Award.

Some of her interesting pre-government experiences included being a fashion model and performing as a "wing walker" for barnstorming pilots. She had a pilot's license and flew for the Red Cross during World War II in addition to working as a machine shop foreman and serving in the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps.

Lyn was an Atlantic City native and a graduate of Columbia University. She served as President of the Department of Labor's Recreational Association and did volunteer work for the D.C. Red Cross Blood Bank, Care, Stevens Elementary School, the Kennedy Center, and the White House. One of her great joys after "retirement" was working as a volunteer ceramics teaching assistant at GWU.

Announcements

Cognitive Laboratory Methods in Survey Research and Design

The Joint Program in Survey Methodology (JPSM) is currently accepting registrations for a short course entitled "Cognitive Laboratory Methods in Survey Research and Design" presented by Judith Lessler and Barbara Forsyth on March 28-29, 1995. *The registration deadline for this course is March 15, 1995.*

The instructors will present an introduction to cognitive aspects of survey measurement and cognitive measurement issues in the context of total survey design. Participants will gain experience in using cognitive laboratory methods to review questionnaire materials and to identify potential problems in question and response wordings, question formats, and question-answering tasks.

The course will be presented at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, VA. Registration is $350 for nonstudents and $200 for full-time students (with supervising faculty member signature). Early registration is encouraged because JPSM courses tend to fill up quickly. To request a registration form, call (800) 937-9320 or send E-Mail to JPSM@UMICH.EDU.

Census Bureau's Annual Research Conference

The Census Bureau's Annual Research Conference (ARC 1995) will be held March 19-23, 1995 at the Key Bridge Marriott in Arlington, VA, only 5 miles from National Airport and two blocks from Metro. ARC 1995 will comprise a mix of topics such as address registers, determining census content, census questionnaire response research. For further information, contact Ms. Maxine Anderson-Brown, ARC Conference Coordinator, Office of the Director, Bureau of the Census, Washington, DC 20233, (301) 457-2308. This phone number has been revised. The number given last month was incorrect.

Census Bureau's Seasonal Adjustment Workshop

The Census Bureau is presenting a Seasonal Adjustment Workshop on March 22-23, 1995 featuring twenty-three talks by experts from the U.S., Canada, Europe, Japan, Australia and New Zealand. It includes a software laboratory at which participants can experiment with four new seasonal adjustment programs for the PC including the Census Bureau's X-12-ARIMA. The Workshop will take place at the Key Bridge Marriott in Arlington, VA as the last two days of the Census Bureau's ARC 1995. The Workshop can be registered for separately from ARC 1995. For further information, contact Ms. Maxine Anderson-Brown, ARC Conference Coordinator, Office of the Director, Bureau of the Census, Washington, DC 20233, (301) 457-2308.

SIGSTAT Meetings

SIGSTAT, the Special Interest Group in Statistics for the Capital PC User Group and the Washington Operations Research and Management Science Council (WORMSC), will be sponsoring the following meetings. On March 8, 1995, the topic will be PC Macsyma, symbolic mathematics with graphics under Windows. On April 12, 1995, the topic will be S-Plus 3.2, the latest version of the Windows statistical programming language.

All meetings are scheduled from 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM in Room B-14, 1301 New York Avenue, NW. The building is located midway between the Metro Center and McPherson Square Metro stops. If this is your first SIGSTAT meeting, call Charlie Hallahan at (202) 219-0507 or e-mail to hallahan@ers and leave you name in order to gain entry into the building.

Employment Column

As a service to local statisticians, *WSS News* provides notification of employment opportunities and description of those seeking employment here in the Washington, DC, area. Readers are encouraged to take advantage of this feature of the newsletter. The deadline for inserting notices is five (5) weeks before the publication date. Those interested should write or call: Bill Arends, USDA-NASS, Room 4133 South Building, Washington, DC 20250-2000, (202) 720-6812.

Vacancies

Faculty Appointment

The Joint Program in Survey Methodology (JPSM) seeks applications for an open rank (tenured or tenure-track) faculty appointment from persons with research interests in survey methodology. Responsibilities include graduate teaching and research. Research interest should include areas such as questionnaire design, computer-assisted data collection, cognition and survey measurement, interviewer effects, survey management, and the measurement and reduction of nonsampling errors. Doctorate in a relevant field is required. A strong record in funded research is desirable. Send CV and names of three references to Dr. G. Kalton, Search Committee Chair, 2181 Lefrak Hall, College Park, Maryland 20742. Reviews begin April 1, 1995, and will continue until the position is filled. For more information call Dr. Kalton at 301 251-8253 or e-mail to Gkalton@survey.umd.edu.

Faculty Appointment

The Joint Program in Survey Methodology (JPSM) seeks applications for an open rank (tenured or tenure-track) faculty appointment from persons with research interests in survey statistics. Responsibilities include graduate teaching and research. Research interest should include areas such as sample design, variance estimation with complex sample designs, weighting and imputation, model-based vs. design-based inference, measurement error models, and small area estimation. Doctorate in statistics, biostatistics or a related field is required. A strong record in funded research is also desirable. Send CV and names of three references to Dr. Graham Kalton, Search Committee Chair, 2181 Lefrak Hall, College Park, Maryland 20742. Reviews begin April 1, 1995, and will continue until the position is filled. For more information call Dr. Graham Kalton at 301 251-8253 or e-mail to Gkalton@survey.umd.edu.

Biostatistician

Biostatistical consulting company seeks Master's level biostatistician for design, SAS programming, and analysis for clinical studies. Must be able to juggle several complex projects simultaneously. Send resume to Janet Wittes, Ph.D., Statistics Collaborative, 1710 Rhode Island Avenue NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20036.

Statistician

The Division of Statistics and Research Methodology, Agency for Health Care and Research is recruiting for a statistician at its Rockville, MD office. Interests in survey research, sample design, weights development, data analysis, imputation, measurement error, and variance estimation for complex surveys will be considered. Ph.D. or M.S. in statistics, biostatistics, or a related field required. Send applications (SF-171 or resume) to Steve Cohen, Division of Statistics and Research Methodology, Executive Office Center, 2101 East Jefferson Street, Suite 500, Rockville, MD 20852.

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