



# Newsletter

Issue 9 • June 1998

## HIGHLIGHTS

Put on your cowboy hat and boots and prepare for the Dallas heat and humidity. If you have not already done so, please plan on attending the Joint Statistical Meetings in Dallas — August 9-13. The theme for this year's program is "Statistics: A Guide to Policy."

Internet registration is available on [www.amstat.org/meetings/JSM/1998/](http://www.amstat.org/meetings/JSM/1998/).

For a summary of this year's exciting SRMS Sessions and Roundtable Luncheons, please note pages 2-4 of this issue. The complete JSM program and abstracts are available on the internet at the WEB site noted above.

Update: "What is a Survey?" series - page 7.

## *Greetings from the Chair - Donald B. Rubin*

*Welcome to the newsletter of the Survey Research Methods Section. This section of ASA has been blessed with the energies of a tremendous number of its members. The production of this newsletter is one example.*

*For another example, take a look at the sessions sponsored by our section: presentations concerning specific surveys (e.g., BRFSS), others on surveys for types of populations (e.g., Web data), some on types of sampling methods (e.g., adaptive), discussions of methods of analysis (e.g., for small area estimation), methods of instrument construction (e.g., questionnaire design), issues that arise with data release (e.g., disclosure limitation), techniques for dealing with practical complications (e.g., imputation for missing data), and much more, such as the Memorial Session for James Massey. Also check out the rich collection of roundtable lunches and our duo of one-day short courses!*

*In addition, please notice that we have our Business Meeting and Mixer on Wednesday, August 12 starting at 5:30 PM. Although the standard for running this show set by the two previous chairs, Kirk Wolter in 1997 and David Binder in 1996, is a bit too lofty for me to meet, I expect that, as in previous years, this will be an enjoyable and informative opportunity to exchange information and to sample early evening refreshments. Please attend and bring along friends you think would be interested in our issues or in joining what must be one of ASA's most active sections.*

**Joint Statistical Meeting Schedule Highlights**  
**Sessions Sponsored by the Survey Research Methods Section**

**Sunday, August 9, 1998****2:00 PM - 3:50 PM**

| Session | Title   |
|---------|---|
| 5       | Network and Adaptive Sampling -- Theory and Application - Invited Session |
| 19      | Data Quality Evaluations and Improvement - Regular Contributed Session    |

**4:00 PM - 5:50 PM**

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 32 | Survey Methodology for the American Community Survey - Special Contributed Session |
| 37 | Improving Survey Data Using Administrative Records - Regular Contributed Session   |

**Monday, August 10, 1998****8:30 AM - 10:20 AM**

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 54 | The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System: Design and Methods Issues - Special Contributed Session |
| 60 | Surveying Institutional and Group Quarters Populations - Regular Contributed Session                    |

**10:30 AM - 12:20 PM**

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 80 | Research on Coverage in Household Surveys - Regular Contributed Session             |
| 81 | Imputation and Variance Estimation in Complex Surveys - Regular Contributed Session |

**2:00 PM - 3:50 PM**

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 92  | Achieving Quality in Surveys - Invited Session                |
| 105 | Topics in Small Area Estimation - Regular Contributed Session |

**Tuesday, August 11, 1998****8:30 AM - 10:20 AM**

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 121 | Issues in Web Data Collection - Special Contributed Session |
| 128 | Topics in Estimation - Regular Contributed Session          |

**10:30 AM - 12:20 PM**

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 139 | The Application of Logistic Models with Mixed Effects to Sample Survey Datasets - Invited Session |
| 151 | Advances in Questionnaire Design Methods and Evaluation - Regular Contributed Session             |

**2:00 PM - 3:50 PM**

| Session | Title  |
|---------|--|
| 152     | Sampling Topics I - Regular Contributed Session  |
| 169     | Statistical Issues in the National Survey of American Families - Special Contributed Session |
| 177     | Sampling Topics II: Sample Design for Establishment Surveys - Regular Contributed Session    |

**Tuesday, August 11, 1998****2:00 PM - 3:50 PM**

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| 178 | Nonresponse in Surveys - Regular Contributed Session |
|-----|--|

**Wednesday, August 12, 1998****8:30 AM - 10:20 AM**

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| 187 | Analysis of Longitudinal Data from Complex Surveys - Invited Session |
| 201 | Evaluation of Bias - Regular Contributed Session                     |

**10:30 AM - 12:20 PM**

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 216 | Census 2000 Sampling and Estimation I - Special Contributed Session                         |
| 224 | Topics in Survey Design and Analysis: NHANES and Other Topics - Regular Contributed Session |

**2:00 PM - 3:50 PM**

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 242 | Census 2000 Sampling and Estimation II - Special Contributed Session  |
| 247 | Drawing Inference from Nationwide Health Surveys - Regular Contributed Session  |
| 248 | Imputed Data and Replication Methods for Variance Estimation: Census and Housing Topics - Regular Contributed Session |

**Thursday, August 13, 1998****8:30 AM - 10:20 AM**

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| 257 | The Controversy about Sampling in the Census - Invited Session                                     |
| 271 | Longitudinal Data Bases - Regular Contributed Session  |
| 284 | Methodological Issues in the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse - Special Contributed Session |
| 291 | Variance Estimation in Complex Surveys - Regular Contributed Session                               |

**Joint Statistical Meeting Schedule Highlights**  
**Sessions Co-sponsored by the Survey Research Methods Section**

**Sunday, August 9, 1998****2:00 PM - 3:50 PM**

| Session | Title   |
|---------|---|
| 10      | Technical Issues in Statistical Disclosure Limitation and Computer Security - Special Contributed Session |

**4:00 PM - 5:50 PM**

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 31 | Users of the Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey for Health Policy - Special Contributed Session |
|----|--|

**Monday, August 10, 1998****10:30 AM - 12:20 PM**

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 71 | Restricting Data and Restricting Access Procedures Used by Federal Statistical Agencies - Special Contributed Session |
|----|---|

**2:00 PM - 3:50 PM**

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 101 | Improving User Access to Data - Regular Contributed Session |
|-----|---|

**Tuesday, August 11, 1998****10:30 AM - 12:20 PM**

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 141 | Statistical Methods for Nonignorable Missing Data - Invited Session |
|-----|---|

**Tuesday, August 11, 1998****2:00 PM - 3:50 PM**

| Session | Title  |
|---------|--|
| 167     | Measuring the Impact of Welfare Reform: The New Survey - Special Contributed Session |

**Wednesday, August 12, 1998****8:30 AM - 10:20 AM**

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 197 | Statistical Application in Health Policy Research - Regular Contributed Session |
|-----|---|

**10:30 AM - 12:30 PM**

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 221 | Seasonality and Seasonal Adjustment - Regular Contributed Session |
|-----|---|

**2:00 PM - 3:50 PM**

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 232 | Welfare Reform: How Will We Know What Happened? - Invited Session |
|-----|---|

**Thursday, August 13, 1998****10:30 AM - 12:20 PM**

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 273 | Memorial Session: James T. Massey - Invited Session |
|-----|---|

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 276 | Statistical Methodologies for Census 2000 - Invited Session |
|-----|---|

**Memorial Session: James T. Massey**

*Thursday, August 13, 1998, 10:30 AM - 12:20 PM*

Chair: Elizabeth R. Zell, *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

(10:35) Using the National Health Interview Survey as a Sampling Frame for Other Health-Related Surveys

Trena M. Ezzati-Rice, *National Center for Health Statistics*

Steven Cohen, *Agency for Health Care Policy Research*

Meena Khare, *National Center for Health Statistics*

Christopher Moriarity, *National Center for Health Statistics*

(11:05) Telephone Surveys: Past, Present, and Future

Brenda G. Cox, *Mathematica Policy Research*

Susan Mitchell, *Mathematica Policy Research*

(11:35) An Evaluation of the Bias in Telephone and Face-to-Face Interviewing for the National Health Interview Survey

Paul P. Biemer, *Research Triangle Institute*

(12:05) Discussant

Andrew A. White, *National Research Council*

(12:15) Floor Discussion

⑤④③②①!! Come to the Section's Business Meeting and Mixer  
 Wednesday, August 12, 1998 at 5:30 PM

## **A d d i t i o n a l opportunities this year in Dallas to share and exchange information with NINE...**

### **ROUNDTABLE LUNCHEONS**

**Developing Analytic Programming Capability to Empower the Survey Organization** — This discussion will focus on how to develop individual skills and create teams of methodologists who program and programmers who do analysis, so that survey organizations have the power to create generalized systems, use modern statistical techniques such as the bootstrap, the EM algorithm, and Monte Carlo Markov Chain methods, and bring powerful methods from computer science, applied mathematics, and operations research to statistical problems. Discussant - William E. Winkler, Statistical Research Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, DC 22033-9100, Phone: (301) 457-4729, Fax: (301) 457-2299, E-mail: [william.e.winkler@ccmail.census.gov](mailto:william.e.winkler@ccmail.census.gov), [bwinkler@census.gov](mailto:bwinkler@census.gov).

**Sampling Plans to Assess Consumer Satisfaction in a Managed Care Organization** — The discussant will present one or two sampling plans for assessing satisfaction in a managed care organization and will encourage other participants to describe sampling plans that they use as well, with the discussion emphasizing how the designs may not yield equal probability samples of members and how response rates should be calculated. Discussant - Donna J. Brogan, Department of Biostatistics, Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University, 1518 Clifton Road, NE, Atlanta, GA 30322, Phone: (404) 727-7701, Fax: (404)

727-1370, E-mail: [dbrogan@sph.emory.edu](mailto:dbrogan@sph.emory.edu)

**New Technologies for Mobile Survey Data Collection: Hand-Held Computers, Global Positioning Systems (GPS), Geographical Information Systems (GIS), and the Web** — This discussion will focus on new and developing technologies that support survey data collection in distributed and/or mobile environments, including: computer-assisted survey information collection (CASIC) with hand-held computers or palmtops; use of GPS during data collection; recording data as GIS objects; and centralized services such as data base servers and Web-based tools to support survey activities. Discussant - Sarah Nusser, Department of Statistics, 220 Snedecor Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011-1210, Phone: (515) 294-9773, Fax: (515) 294-2456, E-mail: [nusser@iastate.edu](mailto:nusser@iastate.edu)

**Application of the Finite Population Correction Factor in Analytic Sample Surveys** — This discussion will focus on the application (or omission) of finite population corrections in analytic sample surveys under various types of designs, with examples given by the discussant (state educational assessment studies) and other participants. Discussant - James R. Chromy, Research Triangle Institute, 5320 Barclay Drive, Raleigh, NC 27606, Phone: (919) 859-9773, Fax: (919) 851-9481, E-mail: [jrc@rti.org](mailto:jrc@rti.org)

**Use of Design Effects and Related Quantities in Sample Design Work** — This discussion will consider several issues relevant to enhancing the use of design effect information, including: availability of relevant design effect information in the public domain; homogeneity of design effects across variables and subpopulations in

a survey; transportability of design effects and related quantities across surveys; and evidence regarding cost-benefit tradeoffs in the use of design effects and related quantities. Discussant - John L. Eltinge, Department of Statistics, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-3143, Phone: (409) 845-3141, Fax: (409) 845-3144, E-mail: [jeltinge@stat.tamu.edu](mailto:jeltinge@stat.tamu.edu)

**The Degrees of Freedom in Analysis of Complex Sample Survey Data** — This discussion will focus on issues concerning the degrees of freedom in analysis of sample survey data, especially when the data structure is altered in the analysis stage, such as when strata are collapsed or when a nonresponse weighting adjustment is carried out. Discussant - Anthony An, SAS Institute, Inc., SAS Campus Drive, R5243, Cary, NC 27513, Phone: (919) 677-8000 extension 5879, Fax: (919) 677-4444, Email: [sasaba@wnt.sas.com](mailto:sasaba@wnt.sas.com)

**The 2000 Census and Statistical Science: Shall Ever the Twain Meet?** — This discussion will focus on issues surrounding the 2000 census, including controversies such as: the role of statisticians in the policy debate; whether sampling should be used for following up nonrespondents; and whether estimates from a post-enumeration survey should be incorporated into the census counts. Discussant - Andrew A. White, Committee on National Statistics, National Academy of Sciences, 2101 Constitution Ave., NW, Rm. HA192, Washington, DC 20418, Phone: (202) 334-2511, Fax: (202) 333-3751, E-mail: [awhite@nas.edu](mailto:awhite@nas.edu)

**The "Organizational Climate Survey" of Statistical Agencies** — This discussion will focus on the Organizational Climate Survey conducted by an interagency analysis

team, with an emphasis on issues such as: what the results of the survey tell us; why some agencies declined to participate; why individual agencies were reluctant to share agency-level results; problems and lessons learned from designing and fielding the survey; plans for the future; and how to implement a similar survey in your own agency or group. Discussant - Lynda Carlson, Statistics and Methods Group, Energy Information Administration EI-70, U.S. Department of Energy, Washington, DC 20585, Phone: (202) 426-1068, Fax: (202) 426-1081, E-mail: Lcarlson@eia.doe.gov

### **Decreasing Survey Nonresponse and Correcting for Nonresponse Error**

— This discussion will focus on methods for decreasing nonresponse in surveys, errors that are introduced into surveys by nonresponse, and methods for correcting for nonresponse error. Discussant - Susan Ohm, USAA, 9800 Fredericksburg Road, San Antonio, TX 78288-0524, Phone: (210) 498-0503, Fax: (210) 498-4026, E-mail: ohms@usaa.com

## **Also TWO...**

### **ONE-DAY SHORT COURSES**

**August 10 - Issues in the Analysis of Complex Survey Data** — This course will cover (1) the need to account for the sample design when analyzing data from surveys, (2) the theory, methods and software for computing variances from complex surveys, and (3) applications to the estimation of means, totals, ratios, parameters from linear and logistic regression, and adjustments to chi-square tests. The course is directed to individuals who have a good understanding of basic statistics, are familiar with survey sampling, and who are or expect to be analyzing data from complex surveys. Instructors: Mike Brick and Keith

Rust, both from Westat, Inc. Mike and Keith have international reputations in the design and analysis of large scale sample surveys. They have taught a number of short courses on a variety of aspects of design and analysis of sample surveys to a wide range of audiences. Complex surveys are surveys with sample designs that are more complicated than simple random sampling. Complex surveys often use stratified sampling, cluster sampling, and sample weighting.

### **August 12 - Multiple Imputation for Missing-Data Problems**

— This course is co-sponsored by the Biometric Section and the course material will be directed to survey and biostatistical applications. It will focus on the application rather than the theory of multiple imputation (MI). The course will (1) motivate the MI paradigm and compare a variety of popular ad hoc missing data methods, (2) give an overview of the current practice of MI, covering computational methods such as the Markov chain Monte Carlo Method and demonstrating public domain software to use MI, (3) provide guidance to the participants for their own missing data problems by conducting a question and answer session where Schafer and Rubin will open the discussion to problems posed by the participants. The intended course audience are applied statisticians and methodologically-oriented researchers who are familiar with basic statistical inference and modeling. Instructors: Joe Schafer, Pennsylvania State University and Don Rubin, Harvard University. Joe and Don have international reputations in the development and application of missing data methods to survey and nonsurvey data and have taught many short and semester length courses on topics of missing data.

**Remember to register by July 10. Details can be found on the JSM web site.**

## **A CALL FOR PAPERS**

FCSM Research Conference  
November 15-17, 1999

The Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology, which is composed of the senior statisticians from several federal statistical agencies and is sponsored by the Office of Management and Budget, is planning a research conference to be held November 15-17, 1999 in the Washington, DC area. The conference will consist primarily of contributed papers, most of which will receive formal discussion at the conference. The conference will feature papers and demonstrations on topics related to a broad range of government statistical research interests. Papers and demonstrations may address methodology, empirical studies, or relevant issues. Final papers will be due prior to the conference. Papers and demonstrations must be original and not previously published or disseminated.

To have a paper or demonstration considered for presentation, an abstract of at least one page will be required by December 1, 1998. Submit both a hard copy and an ASCII text file by Internet or on a 3 1/2" IBM-PC compatible disk. Limit columns to 7" or less. Include the presenter's name, affiliation, mailing address, telephone and fax numbers, and E-mail address, if available. To submit abstracts or obtain additional information, contact: Ruth Detlefsen, Bureau of the Census Bureau, Room 1182-3, Washington, D.C. 20233; Phone: 301-457-3390, Fax: 301-457-3396, and E-mail: [fcsm@ccmail.census.gov](mailto:fcsm@ccmail.census.gov).

## Data Release Updates...

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) collects health-related data from a variety of sources, including sample surveys and administrative records. Many different types of public use data files are released. More information is available from the NCHS Data Dissemination Branch, 301-436-8500, or from the NCHS World Wide Web home page on the Internet,

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchswww/>

Electronic mail inquiries may be sent to

[nchsquery@cdc.gov](mailto:nchsquery@cdc.gov)

Information is provided below on recent public use data file releases from three major NCHS surveys: the National Health Interview Survey, the National Survey of Family Growth, and the Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey.

---

### National Health Interview Survey

NCHS has released public use data files from the 1995 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS), and from several NHIS supplements administered in 1995 and earlier years. Some of the public use data files are available only as mainframe tapes, while others are available both on mainframe tape and on CD-ROM. Contact the NCHS Data Dissemination Branch or refer to the NCHS World Wide Web home page for more information.

The NHIS is an ongoing survey that has been in continuous operation since 1957. It has some major features that are similar to the Current Population Survey (CPS). For example, both surveys make estimates for the civilian non-institutionalized population of the U.S. Both surveys administer periodic supplements. The Census Bureau is the data collection agent for both the CPS and the NHIS. The sample designs of the two surveys have some similarities, although one important difference is that the NHIS currently does not support the production of state-level estimates.

The annual sample size of the NHIS is approximately 110,000 persons in

45,000 households.

The NHIS provides information on acute conditions such as short-term illnesses and injuries, prevalence of chronic conditions such as diabetes, and use of medical services. NHIS supplements provide information on topics such as disability and immunization.

The 1995 NHIS "core" public use files include five record types: household, person, condition, doctor visit, and hospital.

The following 1995 NHIS supplements recently have been released as public use data files: Immunization, Year 2000, Health insurance, Access to care, and AIDS knowledge.

Other NHIS supplements recently made available as public use data files are 1994 Disability Phase 2 (Child), and 1994 Disability Phase 2, Study of Aging.

Public use data files from the 1996 NHIS, and NHIS supplements for 1996 and preceding years, are expected to be released later in 1998.

---

### National Survey of Family Growth Data and Report Released

NCHS has released both the public use data file and the first report from the 1995 National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG). For the 1995 NSFG, in-person interviews were conducted between January and October of 1995 with a national sample of 10,847 women 15-44 years of age.

The 1995 NSFG public use data file is available on mainframe tape and on CD-ROM. Ordering information is available from the NCHS Data Dissemination Branch or from the NCHS World Wide Web home page.

The first report from the 1995 NSFG contains 91 tables on a wide range of topics, such as fertility, marriage, divorce, cohabitation, contraceptive use, infertility, and use of infertility services. The report is titled: "Fertility, Family Planning and Women's Health: New data from the 1995 National Survey of Family Growth." Single copies of the report are available free from the National Center for Health Statistics at Room 820, 6525 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, MD. 20782, or by calling 301-436-8731, ext. 125.

NCHS also recently released a CD-ROM containing the data and documentation from Cycle 4 of the NSFG, conducted in 1988 with a 1990 reinterview.

NCHS has formed an informal e-mail network and mailing list to provide information to researchers using the NSFG data. If you would like to be put on that list, send an e-mail message with your name, mailing address, and e-mail address to: [LJP2@cdc.gov](mailto:LJP2@cdc.gov).

---

### Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES III)

The Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES III), 1988-94, was conducted on a nationwide probability sample of approximately 34,000 persons aged 2 months and over. The survey was designed to obtain information on the health and nutritional status of the civilian noninstitutionalized population of the United States through interviews and direct physical examinations.

Some of the 30 topics investigated in the NHANES III were: high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, obesity, passive smoking, lung disease, osteoporosis, HIV, hepatitis, helicobacter pylori, immunization status, diabetes, allergies, growth and development, blood lead, anemia, food sufficiency, dietary intake-including fats, antioxidants, and nutritional blood measures.

The NHANES III consists of five separate files: Adult Household Data, Youth Household Data, Examination Data, Laboratory Data, and Dietary Recall Data. These data files are from the full 6 years of the NHANES III, 1988-94, and contains nearly all the data collected in the survey.

The NHANES III data files contain all data collected over the entire course of the survey. Data are available on mainframe tape and CD-ROM. Ordering information is available from the NCHS Data Dissemination Branch or from the NCHS World Wide Web home page.

*Please send further release updates to the newsletter editors for inclusion in the next issue.*

---

## Update: "What is a Survey" Series

by Fritz Scheuren, Overall Series Editor

In 1995, the Section on Survey Research Methods (SRMS) began the series "What is a Survey?" -- based on an earlier American Statistical Association (ASA) publication of the same name, which had been out of print for some time. The new Series is intended to improve the survey literacy of the interested general public -- e.g., survey respondents and those who use surveys.

Three pamphlets were produced the first year and two more promised. The response from the Series was very encouraging -- so much so that the project was expanded in scope and we now expect to publish at least 11 brochures.

Single copies of each brochure are free to all by calling the ASA at 703-684-1221. The pamphlets in the Series are also available on the Section's ASA web page, <http://www.stat.ncsu.edu/info/srms/srms.html>.

Longtime SRMS members should have received seven pamphlets in the mail. Recent members may wish to request from ASA any pamphlets they did not receive. The pamphlets out so far are:

- ▶ What is a Survey?
- ▶ How to Plan a Survey.
- ▶ How to Collect Survey Data.
- ▶ Judging the Quality of a Survey.
- ▶ How to Conduct a Pretest.
- ▶ What are Focus groups?
- ▶ More about Mail Surveys.

At least one more - What is a Margin of Error? -- is scheduled to be available at the Dallas Meetings and will be mailed to everyone early this fall.

Three other pamphlets are now in draft and expectations are that all 11 will be out by next spring. These three are:

- ▶ Designing a Questionnaire.
- ▶ More on Telephone Surveys.
- ▶ What is a Survey: Workbook and Summary.

To help address this expanded scope, outside funding was obtained to cover initial printing costs. The Section has continued to cover ASA's modest copy preparation costs. Organizations who have supported the printing of the Series include the Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the National Agricultural Research Service, the U.S. Postal Service, and Ernst and Young LLP. The ASA Office of Scientific and Public Affairs will pick up the costs of the brochure on "What is a Margin of Error?".

Reprinting of the pamphlets is the responsibility of the ASA itself and is partially paid for by the sale of brochures. The first three pamphlets have already been reprinted several times -- with well over 10,000 copies distributed.

The series is very much a work in progress. Improvements have been made at each reprinting. Suggestions for topics have led to the continuing expansion of the Series' scope.

Please keep your improvements and additions coming. Send these via E-mail to [Fritz.Scheuren@ey.com](mailto:Fritz.Scheuren@ey.com) or to Fritz Scheuren at 1402 Ruffner Rd., Alex., VA 22302.

## 2000 Census Update

by TerriAnn Lowenthal

Project Consultant, Census 2000 Initiative

As the Census Bureau continues its 'ramp up' toward the 2000 census, President Clinton's budget request for Fiscal Year 1999 (FY99) includes a substantial increase in funding for the decennial count. The request of \$848 million is more than twice the \$390 million Congress allocated for the 2000 census in the current fiscal year (FY98).

The request includes \$36 million for the Census Bureau to prepare for a census that does not include sampling and statistical techniques to count the population. In the FY98 funding bill, Congress required the Bureau to proceed along a dual track in preparing for 2000: one track is the Bureau's proposed plan to supplement direct counting methods with some sampling; the other is a plan that does not rely on sampling either to complete the door-to-door visits to homes that do not return a census form by mail or to measure the quality of the initial count and correct for any undercounts and overcounts. In the explanation accompanying the President's budget request for next year, the Administration said that it "... remains fully committed to the use of sampling in the decennial census. Without sampling the cost of the decennial census will increase and its accuracy, especially with regard to groups that are traditionally undercounted, will decrease."

In FY99 (which begins on October 1, 1998), the Census Bureau will make final preparations to conduct the census in 2000. The Bureau will conduct and evaluate a dress rehearsal in the first half of FY99, in order to identify any operational problems and address those issues before the actual census. It also must finish compiling the address lists that will be used to send out the questionnaires.

The Bureau also plans to open hundreds of local census offices in 1999 and begin hiring staff to run them. In fact, the Bureau expects to add 5,000 new temporary employees to its rolls in 1999, raising the agency's staffing level from about 11,000 to over 16,000. Other crucial activities that must be completed in 1999 include printing census forms (the questionnaires must go to the printer in April, 1999) and building the new state-of-the-art data capture and processing technology in partnership with private sector companies. Also, partnership specialists, working from the Bureau's regional offices, will work to build grassroots support for the census among state, local, and tribal officials, civic organizations, and community leaders.

# CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

## FOR MONOGRAPH PAPERS

# INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SURVEY NONRESPONSE

**Time:** Fall, 1999

**Place:** United States, probably in the Western U.S.

**Deadline for abstracts for monograph papers:** July 1, 1998

### Background and Goals

The International Conference on Survey Nonresponse will be the first international gathering totally devoted to nonresponse phenomena in sample surveys since the meetings of the National Academy of Sciences panel in 1983. Since that time there have been important new developments both in statistical estimation in the presence of missing data and data collection procedures to reduce nonresponse. An edited volume containing a description of state of the art research findings in the area will be written and a related conference will be mounted in 1999.

The edited volume and conference have the following goals:

- the volume will be designed to be a description of the state of the art in social science and statistical theory and practice in nonresponse rate reduction, nonresponse error measurement, and postsurvey compensation for nonresponse.
- the volume will be designed to be suitable for university use; that is, it will not be a proceedings volume, but an integrated treatment of the field.
- the conference will gather together large numbers of active researchers in survey nonresponse and missing data issues.
- the conference will have presentations of current research and practice regarding survey nonresponse.

### Type of Papers Eligible for the Monograph

The ideal paper contributes both to theory and methods in the handling of nonresponse in surveys. Papers with empirical tests of ideas are preferred to papers that demonstrate an approach, without evaluating it. Thus, assessing the merit of ideas, hypotheses, and protocols is the target of the conference and the monograph.

Papers should focus on nonresponse; that is, the failure to measure a sampled unit on some variable desired in a survey. Issues involving coverage error; that is, missingness on a sampling frame, are not in scope. However, papers that address the intersection of the coverage error and nonresponse error are eligible. Papers on editing and imputation, as a tool to address missing data, are in scope, but should have evaluations of the methods being described. Review papers, synthesizing an area of research findings, are eligible for the monograph.

We hope to assemble papers across the breadth of research issues in survey nonresponse, including:

- Unit nonresponse vs. item nonresponse
- Design vs. estimation (including variance estimation)
- Methods to reduce nonresponse and methods to measure the effects of nonresponse
- Theory (both social science and statistical) vs. practice
- Onetime vs. longitudinal surveys
- Surveys of persons, households, establishments
- Item missing data on objective and subjective measurements
- Relationships between nonresponse error and other survey errors

This is a call for abstracts of papers to be considered for the edited volume. Senior authors of the monograph papers will have travel and lodging expenses paid at the conference. A later "contributed paper" call will be made for abstracts of papers to be presented at the conference.

**How to Submit Abstracts:** An abstract of 500 words should be submitted as an attachment to ICSN@SURVEY.UMD.EDU. Questions about submissions can also be sent to that ID, or queries can be posed to Robert M. Groves, chair of the editorial committee, at 301-314-7911.

**Sponsoring Organizations:** The American Statistical Association, Survey Research Methods Section; and the American Association for Public Opinion Research.

---



### **In Memoriam — Steven L. Botman**

Steven L. Botman, a mathematical statistician with the survey design staff of the National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention died on June 1, 1997. He had dedicated his entire professional career to the mission of NCHS and to the advancement of statistical methodology. He joined the staff of NCHS in 1973 and during his years at NCHS helped design and develop the data systems which now monitor the health of the nation.

He played a key role in developing the complex sample designs for several surveys including the National Health Interview Survey, the National Survey of Family Growth, and Vital Statistics Followback Surveys. He contributed significantly to the development and application of nonresponse adjustment techniques to national surveys as well as the development of a plan to integrate national health surveys. Steve was an active statistical consultant within NCHS as well as throughout the entire Public Health Service. Chairing the NCHS Confidentiality Committee during a time when advances in technology were making data more readily accessible to vast numbers of users, he charted a careful course to protect the confidentiality of survey respondents while making data more useful and accessible.

He was a graduate of the University of Massachusetts and received a master's degree in mathematics from the University of Maryland. He was a member of the American Statistical Association. He received numerous awards throughout his career, most recently the NCHS Director's Award for Methodological Statistics in 1996 and for Program and Policy Development in that year as well. He is survived by his wife, Nancy Coleman, and their two children, Mara and Joshua Botman, all of Bethesda, Maryland.

### **In Memoriam — Ida Sherman**

Ida Sherman died Monday, December 15, 1997 in Atlanta, Georgia. Ms. Sherman was the Chief, Statistics Section, Bureau of Epidemiology, Center for Disease Control (CDC) at the time of her retirement in 1970. During the two and one half decades that she worked at CDC, she directed CDC's National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System and collaborated with Bob Serfling and Alex Langmuir to develop the seminal Serfling-Sherman curves still in use today to model the incidence of infectious diseases. She was instrumental in the development of surveillance and survey sampling methods important in the development of vaccines for polio during the 1950s and still in use today in state and local health departments for immunization surveys. Following her retirement, Ms. Sherman returned to graduate school to earn a degree in art history; she became an expert on Edmund Mundt, even learning his language. Ms. Sherman was a leader in statistical methods in public health, teacher of hundreds of Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) officers, and close friend and colleague of many epidemiologists.

---

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE****CHAIR (1998)**

Donald Rubin  
 Phone: (617) 495-5498  
 Fax: (617) 496-8057  
 E-mail: rubin@stat.harvard.edu

**CHAIR-ELECT (1999)**

Robert Groves  
 Phone: (301) 314-7911  
 Fax: (301) 314-7912  
 E-mail: bgroves@survey.umd.edu

**PAST-CHAIR (1997)**

Kirk Wolter  
 Phone: (312) 759-4086  
 Fax: (312) 759-4090  
 E-mail: wolter@norcmail.uchicago.edu

**PROGRAM CHAIR (1998)**

Elizabeth Martin  
 Phone: (301) 457-4905  
 Fax: (301) 457-4931  
 E-mail: emartin@census.gov

**PROGRAM CHAIR-ELECT (1999)**

Nathaniel Schenker  
 Phone: (310) 825-5422  
 Fax: (310) 267-3113  
 E-mail: schenker@ucla.edu

**PUBLICATIONS OFFICER (1997-1998)**

Charles Proctor  
 Phone: (919) 737-2531  
 Fax: (919) 787-7520  
 E-mail: proctor@stat.ncsu.edu

**SECRETARY/TREASURER (1997-1998)**

Lars Lyberg  
 Phone: +46 8783 4300  
 Fax: +46 8783 4288  
 E-mail: Llyberg@scb.se

**COUNCIL OF SECTIONS REPRESENTATIVE (1997-1999)**

Colm O'Muircheartaigh  
 Phone: +44 171 405-7686  
 Fax: +44 171 955-7005  
 E-mail: colm@lse.ac.uk

**COUNCIL OF SECTIONS REPRESENTATIVE (1998-2000)**

Carol House  
 Phone: (202) 720-4557  
 Fax: (202) 720-8738  
 E-mail: chouse@nass.uds.gov

**ASA STAFF LIAISON**

Marie Argana  
 Phone: (703) 684-1221, ext. 126  
 Fax: (703) 684-2037  
 E-mail: marie@amstat.org

**STANDING COMMITTEES****COMMITTEE ON ASA FELLOWS****CHAIR (1997)**

Barbara Bailar  
 Phone: (312) 753-7550  
 Fax: (312) 753-7886  
 E-mail: bailar-b@norcmail.uchicago.edu

**ENAR PROGRAM COMMITTEE****REPRESENTATIVE (1997)**

Elizabeth Stasny  
 Phone: (614) 292-0784  
 Fax: (614) 292-2096  
 E-mail: eas@stat.mps.ohio-state.edu

**RESEARCH INDUSTRY COUNCIL****REPRESENTATIVES**

Warren Mitofsky  
 Phone: (212) 582-5675  
 Fax: (212) 582-3824  
 E-mail: mitofsky@aol.com

**BEHAVIORAL RISK FACTOR****SURVEY WORKING GROUP**

Robert Groves  
 Phone: (301) 314-7911  
 Fax: (301) 314-7912  
 E-mail: bgroves@survey.umd.edu

**SIPP WORKING GROUP**

Daniel H. Hill  
 Phone: (313) 763-6866  
 Fax: (313) 747-1186  
 E-mail: dhhill@umich.edu

**NEWSLETTER EDITORS**

Trena Ezzati-Rice/Elizabeth Zell  
 Phone: (301) 436-7022, ext. 133  
 Fax: (301) 436-7955  
 E-mail: tme1@cdc.gov  
 ezr1@cdc.gov



## *Mission Statement*

The mission of the Section on Survey Research Methods is to promote the improvement of survey practice and the understanding of survey methods by encouraging both theoretical and applied research on survey-related topics and by disseminating information on survey methods.

Areas of interest for the Section include all that employ survey methodology as a focus or as a prime tool of investigation. Of special interest are:

- Theoretical foundations of sampling
- Sample design and estimation
- Nonsampling errors and data collection methods
- Analysis and presentation of survey data
- Education of the public and students on the importance of scientific survey research
- Publication and dissemination of survey research findings
- Ethics related to survey conduct and standards for survey practice

American Statistical Association  
1429 Duke Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314-3402  
U.S.A.

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
ALEXANDRIA, VA  
PERMIT NO. 361

**Time Sensitive Information**