

## Election Night Statistics and Warren Mitofsky

by **Stuart Scott, Publications Officer**

For decades, Americans have become accustomed to hearing breathless reports of projected winners on election night. Warren Mitofsky has been the dominant figure in establishing the statistical techniques for collecting and analyzing data in order to make those calls, often as soon as the polls close. This article begins with a picture of these techniques in action and then profiles Mitofsky and his long career covering elections.

In a close election with stronger than usual partisan passions, Warren Mitofsky and a handful of veteran analysts were responsible for providing the country and the world with projected winners for the 2004 Presidential, Senate, and gubernatorial races. Fairly soon after midnight, the Presidential race focused on Ohio. If Bush kept his lead there, he would win the election. This prognosis held up. CBS, NBC, ABC, Fox, and CNN all mounted major election coverage and all received data and election projections from a consortium, dubbed the National Election Pool (NEP) and headed by Warren Mitofsky. Perhaps as a result of exercising caution after erroneous calls in Florida in 2000, there were no errors this time by any of the networks across more than 100 major election calls. (In a few cases, such as the Iowa Presidential race, no call was made). In spite of this record of accuracy, great controversy ensued, due to the release of exit poll data more favorable to Kerry than the official vote in several states. On one side, some trumpeted this as collusion

between the networks and the Democrats; on the other side, some considered it evidence of error or fraud in the vote count. Perhaps, these charges say more about the passions of the election than anything else.

Three data sources are employed on election night: exit polls, vote counts, and telephone polls. A stratified random sample of 50 to 100 precincts is selected pps in each state. Field staff collect voting results in all these precincts when the polls close and conduct exit polls in a subsample. For the exit polls, interviewers collect systematic samples of 50 to 100 voters across the day. The questionnaire asks who the respondent voted for in the major races, demographic information, and issues determining the voter's preferences.

In 2000, exit polls overstated Gore's vote percentage in about 20 states, Bush's percentage in another 10, and agreed closely with the official vote count in the remaining states. An overall bias in exit polls toward the Democratic candidate has occurred in several Presidential elections. In 2004, the magnitude of the bias, in states where it occurred, tended to be greater than in earlier years. Mitofsky attributes the major source of bias to nonresponse, which falls roughly in the 40% range. The fairly lengthy questionnaire appears to discourage many from participating. One can speculate on when and why nonresponse varies by party affiliation, but hard evidence is lacking.

Actual vote counts form a second source of information. NEP field staff can provide timely counts for most (but not all) of the sample precincts, giving an early picture for the state as a whole. The Associated Press has a long history of reporting county-level counts throughout election night. The county votes become more complete as the evening advances and more precincts report.

The newest information source is telephone polls, employed to account for mail voting (100% in Oregon, about 70% in Washington) and increased absentee voting. In 2004 polls were conducted in 12 states, including Florida, where absentee balloting exceeds 20%. The questions asked are virtually identical to those for the exit polls.  
*(Continued on next page)*



### Inside This Issue

- 3 **Executive Committee Reports**
- 6 **Section News**
- 8 **Announcements**
- Insert **Executive Committee Members**

All these data, plus data from previous elections, are used in estimation. Simple weighted estimates, ratio estimates (with the related variable being votes in one or more previous elections), and composites of estimates are computed, along with two types of poststratification, geographic and political. In combination, this represents a sizable number of estimates to study and compare. Finally, numerous quality control checks are used in "real time." Following the errors in calling the 2000 Florida outcome, there have been improvements in (1) checking for anomalies in the accumulating vote counts and (2) estimating the number of votes still to be counted.

Mitofsky states that the goals for his exit polls are to assist (1) in election calls and (2) in analysis of the vote in terms of demographic patterns and pertinent issues. Some have suggested their further use for monitoring elections for error or fraud. Integrity of our elections has become a concern, based on the ballot problems in Florida in 2000, the implementation of electronic voting with limited checking mechanisms, and the wide variation in voting methods across the country, sometimes determined by local budget limitations. Mitofsky himself, believing exit polls to be a valid tool, has conducted them for election monitoring in Russia and Mexico. He distinguishes between his U.S. and foreign polls in terms of response. With very short questionnaires, the latter had over 90% response, much higher than the U.S. polls with their lengthy questionnaire. Just this summer, however, an exit poll in Venezuela designed by a U.S. firm was discredited when it showed roughly a 60-40 vote for recalling the country's president, while the official vote, endorsed by the Carter Center, opposed recall by about a 60-40 margin. This huge discrepancy was widely attributed to using interviewers affiliated with a group favoring recall.

A remarkable fact of U.S. election coverage is that Warren Mitofsky has been involved in every national election since 1968 and many off-year elections as well. Four of six key individuals responsible for 2004 election night projections can trace their lineage in elections to him: Murray Edelman (CBS), Clyde Tucker (CNN), Dan Merkle (ABC), and Joe Lenski (NEP).

Mitofsky and Edelman were hired from the Census Bureau by CBS in 1967 to work on elections. Their Census boss Joe Waksburg, now at Westat, encouraged them to take on this challenge, provided advice, and has stayed involved all the way down to the 2004 election. In earlier work at CBS, Lou Harris initiated the process of sampling precincts to make election projections, but the new team, with their Census background, raised the calibre of survey methods. As described above, the sample of precincts was a true probability sample. In these early days, some of the other networks, as part of their precinct selection, factored in speed of reporting on

election night. Two countering pieces of advice were (1) to visit all the sample precincts to understand better their characteristics and (2) to implement as many "real-time" quality control measures as possible for election night. Mitofsky took the second path, suggested by Joe Daly, then chief mathematical statistician at Census. This was implemented through a reweighting scheme, which downweighted questionable values, introducing possible bias, but intended to reduce mean square error.

Mitofsky is credited with inventing the exit poll. The idea came from a market researcher, who interviewed moviegoers at "sneak previews." The results allowed moviemakers to revise a film before general release. The basic thinking was simple: polling actual voters would be more accurate than pre-election polls. The method was used in 6 primaries and 21 states for the 1968 election. NBC and ABC first conducted exit polls in 1973 and 1980, respectively. Individual states over the years have attempted to limit exit polls by requiring the interviewers to remain at "electioneering distance." Mitofsky and legal partners have successfully overturned these restrictions, as far back as the 80's and most recently in 2004 in Ohio.

From their first days at CBS, Warren Mitofsky and Murray Edelman have raised the bar for reporting election results, working to apply sound, up-to-date survey methods. Another remarkable quality is Mitofsky's positive response to criticism. In the 2001 Hansen lecture for the Washington Statistical Society, he and Edelman speak of the "blunders" in the Florida calls. In response to a *Washington Post* article describing this year's exit poll bias as a "third black eye in as many elections," Mitofsky says, "It IS a black eye. We need to do better." (The same *Post* article reports that Mitofsky warned the networks about possible Democratic bias in the exit polls mid-afternoon on Election Day). The fascination and enthusiasm for elections continues after 37 years. He and his partner Joe Lenski plan to continue their collaboration; they await word from the networks on plans for November 7, 2006.

*Note: This article is based on interviews with Mitofsky and Clyde Tucker, the 2001 Hansen lecture by Mitofsky and Murray Edelman, and the 11/21/04 Washington Post article "Exit Polls Can't Always Predict Winners, So Don't Expect Them To" by Richard Morin. Opinions and errors are mine. S.S.*

## SRMS Newsletters On-Line

Newsletters, dating back to 1995, can be viewed at:  
<http://www.amstat.org/sections/SRMS/newsletter.html>

## Executive Committee Reports

### Report from the Past Section Chair by Sharon Lohr

Over 100 people attended the SRMS business meeting and mixer, held in Toronto on August 11, 2004. For the second year in a row, the SRMS mixer was generously underwritten by Marketing Systems Group, and we were pleased to have Ashley Hyon of Marketing Systems Group at the meeting.

On behalf of the section I would like to offer a special thank you to the outgoing members of the Executive Committee: Lynne Stokes (past chair), Partha Lahiri (program chair), Tom Belin (treasurer), Michael Cohen (publications officer) and Dave Chapman (education officer). All of them have made tremendous contributions to the section. Many thanks also to Wendy Alvey, who has done a tremendous job writing and updating the SRMS brochure, and to Mike Elliot and Trivellore Raghunathan for representing SRMS on the Spring 2004 and 2005 Biometrics meetings.

The section continued its efforts in encouraging students to work in survey sampling. Ten students received travel awards to attend the 2004 Joint Statistical Meetings and attend a short course co-sponsored by the section. Thanks to Tom Belin for initiating these awards, and to Nielsen Media Research for financial support that allowed us to make more awards than had originally been planned.

Fritz Scheuren has revised the popular "What is a Survey?" pamphlets. These are now available as a pdf file on the Section website. "What is a Survey?" provides a wonderful introduction to many of the concepts of survey sampling, and is widely used by teachers and practitioners alike. Thanks, Fritz!

The section provided financial support to the ASA Committee on Privacy and Confidentiality for its web site. SRMS is also participating in the development of international standards for market, opinion, and social research (see the article "SRMS Work on International Standards" in this newsletter). Mike Cohen and Paul Biemer generously offered to represent the SRMS in this important venture, and we very much appreciate their work on this.

Thank you for the privilege of serving as Section Chair, and for all your help and contributions. It's been fun. Best wishes to Sarah Nusser as she takes over.

### Report from the Past Publications Chair by Michael P. Cohen

Let me begin by welcoming Stuart Scott as the new Publications Officer. Stuart is a long-time friend of mine whose dedication and thoughtfulness are evident in whatever he undertakes. I am certain that his efforts as Publications Officer will be no exception. Welcome, Stuart!

I thank Leslie Wallace and Tom Krenzke for continuing to serve as newsletter editors during my first year, Brian Meekins for ably taking over the duties during my second year, and all three for the smooth transition.

Tony An continues his excellent service to the Section as Webmaster, also known as Assistant Editor for *Amstat Online*. This year Tony began what we hope will be an annual practice by putting the three year old (2001) *Proceedings of the Survey Research Methods Section* up on the Web for the convenience of the survey research community. We do not put more recent years on the Web to avoid competing with ASA CD sales. The years 2000 and before were all put up on the Web en masse during the Publications Officer term of my predecessor, Al Tupek.

To all Section members, I encourage you to be active in the Section, and I urge you to publish your SRMS presentations in the *Proceedings*!

### Report from the Section Chair by Sarah Nusser

Greetings in the new year! First, a hearty thanks to the 2004 SRMS officers, who spent last year developing several opportunities for our members in the upcoming year. The 2005 Executive Committee expects to continue this rich tradition of serving our members and the broader survey community.

One of SRMS's major initiatives is to support students who may be interested in survey research methods. Each year, we offer travel awards to attend the Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM) and co-sponsor a student paper competition for JSM with the Government Statistics and Social Statistics Sections. Winners of these awards are given a travel grant and the opportunity to attend a JSM short course sponsored by SRMS for free. We encourage those of you in academia to make your students aware of these opportunities as part of our mission to grow the next generation of survey research professionals. Although the paper competition deadline has passed for the 2005 JSM, ask students to consider applying for the 2005 travel awards and preparing for next fall's student paper competition.

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SRMS also devotes considerable effort to continuing education for the survey research community. The Section is helping to sponsor the Second International Telephone Survey Methods Conference, to be held in 2006. We have also pledged to support the Third International Conference on Establishment Surveys (ICES III) for summer 2007. And, each year we offer continuing education programs through JSM in the form of short courses, round table luncheons, and a myriad of invited, special topic contributed, and regular contributed sessions.

Finally, SRMS members are active in providing service to other organizations and agencies as part of our efforts to build bridges and encourage good survey practice. On behalf of our Section, members serve on the advisory committees for survey programs, and professional conferences sponsored by agencies and other organizations. We thank those who have served and continue to serve in this capacity.

We look forward to developing new activities for the upcoming year. We are especially interested in any ideas you might have for improving our service to the profession. Please feel free contact me or any of the other members of the 2005 SRMS Executive Committee, listed near the end of the newsletter.

### Treasurer's Report by Tom Belin

On January 1, 2004, the SRMS section started with a balance of \$71,489.07. As of November 10, 2004, the section balance was \$54,897.24.

A reduction of the balance was anticipated in my previous report. The difference this year stems primarily from \$7,500 in contributions to other organizations (\$5,000 to the 2006 Telephone Survey Conference and \$2,500 to the Committee on Privacy and Confidentiality), and an aggregate of roughly \$6,500 in additional award expenses (\$3,200 in student travel fellowships supported by the section, not counting two additional awards sponsored by Nielsen Media Research, along with roughly \$3,300 in Continuing Education course awards for student paper competition winners and student travel fellows, all of which is in addition to the section's previous \$1,600 commitment to the joint student paper competition with Government and Social Statistics). By contrast, the section balance decreased by \$2,529.38 during the same period in 2003. An anticipated contribution not yet received, the section's share of a surplus from the 2003 QDET conference, and the

correction of an accounting mistake should help the balance improve in the near term.

Plans for 2005 still call for continuing the student travel fellowship program. Some of the Continuing-Education course expense comes back to the section in the form of CE revenue, and that has not yet hit the ledger this year. But as the outgoing Treasurer who was active in pushing for the creation of this award, I would recommend reviewing its impact on section finances next year to see whether the program is sustainable as an SRMS-funded enterprise in the long run or whether we need to seek outside support.

In closing, I want to thank all of my Executive Committee colleagues for their leadership and to thank section members for the opportunity to serve in this very satisfying role as a section officer.

### Report from the Program Chair by Rachel Harter

The theme that Fritz Scheuren has chosen for the 2005 Joint Statistical Meetings is "Using Our Discipline to Enhance Human Welfare." The theme encourages us to think about our individual and collective contributions to the public interest, broadly defined. Certainly there are plenty of situations that benefit from the expertise we offer. The meetings in Minneapolis next August should stimulate our awareness of beneficial applications and opportunities, as well as the latest developments in the statistical world. We can and do make a difference!

The Survey Research Methods Section is sponsoring eight invited sessions that should be of broad interest. The organizers and topics are:

- Paul Biemer*—Total Survey Error: Past, Present, and Future
- David Banks*—Sample Surveys in Unsettled Situations
- Mack Shelley*—Education Research Meets the Gold Standard: Statistics, Education, and Research Methods
- Jane Meza*—Assessment of the Uncertainties of Small Area Estimators
- Stuart Scott*—Measures of Uncertainty in Seasonal Adjustment
- John Eltinge*—Accounting for Constraints in Optimization of Survey Procedures
- Charlotte Steeh*—New Strategies for Telephone Samples
- Edward English*—Geographic Information Systems and Survey Research

If you have not already done so, consider organizing a topic contributed session or topic contributed panel. The advantage of a topical session is that it is more cohesive, which generally makes for more interesting and better attended sessions than

regular contributed sessions. The more we use topic contributed sessions, the better the meetings.

Topic contributed sessions can have 5 papers, 4 papers and 1 discussant, or 3 papers and 2 discussants. Speakers in topic contributed sessions get 20 minutes each instead of the 15 minutes allotted for regular contributed papers. A topic contributed panel can have 3-5 panelists (one abstract among them). Abstracts must be submitted by February 1 (with pre-registration required). For SRMS sponsorship, you must contact me beforehand with information on the organizer, the speakers/panelists, and discussants. I can be reached at Harter-Rachel@norc.org. Abstracts for regular contributed papers can also be submitted with pre-registration by Feb. 1.

David Judkins is program chair-elect for SRMS. See his report for information on roundtable luncheons for 2005 and invited sessions for 2006. We want to hear your ideas so that we can make these meetings more valuable to you!

### **Report from the Program Chair-Elect by Dave Judkins**

The 14<sup>th</sup> annual Hansen Memorial Lecture was a fascinating talk by Dr. Jennifer Madans about the work done at the National Center for Health Statistics on how to extend historical health trends by race in light of the new multiple-race reporting procedures required by OMB in 1997 and implemented by the Census Bureau for the 2000 Decennial Census. She has graciously agreed to lead one of roundtable luncheons at JSM in Minneapolis this coming summer on the same topic. I'll be lining up more roundtable discussion leaders in the next couple of months. Be sure to contact me if you have ideas or would like to lead a round table. We have to make final submissions to ASA by February 1. Also, it is not too early to start thinking about invited sessions for the 2006 meeting in Seattle. I need to have a pretty good list of potential sessions for 2006 by June of 2005

### **Report from the Publications Chair by Stuart Scott**

In 2005 the section will continue to benefit from the service of Tony An, our Webmaster, and Brian Meekins, Newsletter Editor, both veterans at their positions. I also thank Mike Cohen, my predecessor, for advice on publicizing our events and encouraging submissions for our proceedings. Good luck, Mike, with your new duties as program chair-elect for the Government section.

Since Brian and I are in the same office at BLS in Washington, it will be easy to coordinate our efforts. I

look for help from section members to keep a broad perspective, across the continent and across government, academia, and business. We can claim space in each month's Amstat News for information on current and upcoming activities, so please let me know if you have suggestions for that space. I'm hoping that many will be making their plans for JSM in Minneapolis, Aug 7-11, and/or AAPOR in Miami Beach, May 12-15.

### **Report from your Council of Sections Representatives By Stephen H Cohen**

While everybody was busy attending many of the interesting paper sessions, short courses, round table lunches, exhibit hall booths; Elizabeth Stasny and I spent some of our time finding out what the Council of Sections has been up to over the last year. The Council of Sections actions can affect how your section operates. At the business meeting we got section member input to give the Council of Sections at the Thursday morning response and action meeting. We thank all the members who attended the business meeting for your input.

At the business meeting last August, Elizabeth announced that the ASA plans to develop a new brochure to describe ASA sections that it will send to all new ASA members. The ASA will also email a letter to each new section member composed by the SRMS section chair. The ASA also plans to do more surveying of its members to gauge opinions, satisfaction with ASA, etc.

Changes for next year's JSM include adding password protection for JSM abstract submissions. Registration fees will probably also increase (approximately \$25 more for early registration). The Council of Sections Governing Board will take over allocation of JSM invited sessions to sections in 2006 or 2007. Suggestions for guidelines for allocation rules were solicited from members at the business meeting.

There is a proposal to change rules governing Special Interest Groups. The proposal includes allowing special interest groups to exist longer than the current 3 years and to possibly allow them to compete in the invited session competitions.

There is a proposal to provide a CD of the complete JSM proceedings to all JSM registrants. This would involve a \$10 increase in registration fees. The ASA proposes that this would involve no risk and no profit for the sections. Section members expressed concern that the section would no longer profit from the JSM proceedings under this plan, but Tom Belin (Treasurer) reported that while we do make some profit from page charges, it isn't really a large amount.

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Elizabeth also reported that the Council of Sections invites feedback on proposed restructuring of the JSM meetings. Changes being considered including starting sessions earlier on Sunday and eliminating Thursday sessions, moving the Tuesday social event to Wednesday, and scheduling opening and closing plenary sessions. Many section members suggested that keeping the exhibit hall open longer (e.g., at least all day Wednesday) would improve the mood of the conference in the last two days, but there were conflicting opinions about eliminating Thursday sessions and starting earlier on Sunday.

At the Council of Sections Response and Action Meeting there was no clear consensus of a format change for the annual meeting. The proposal on increasing the registration fee by \$10 in 2006 for producing CDs for all registrants received positive input from most sections. The minutes of both Council of Sections meetings at JSM can be found on the home page for the sections on the ASA website.

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## Section News

### SRMS Work on International Standards by Michael P. Cohen

Late summer of 2003 a technical committee (TC 225) of the International Standards Organization (ISO) began drafting standards for “market, opinion and social research.” The scope of these standards includes, but is broader than, sample surveys. The United States did not become involved in the development of these standards until the spring of 2004. SRMS represents the ASA on the U.S Technical Advisory Group.

Why are ISO Standards important? ISO Standards are not legally binding, yet they are very influential. Adherence to ISO Standards is frequently written into contracts and agreements. They generally become accepted as “good professional practice.”

How did SRMS become involved? Sweden was one of the original Participating Members of TC 225, the technical committee developing the standards. Lars Lyberg (Statistics Sweden and a former Chair of SRMS) and Kerstin Söderberg, (Swedish Standards Institute) alerted the three major professional organizations in the United States that focus on statistical surveys: SRMS/ASA, American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR), and the Council of American Survey Research Organizations (CASRO). The three organizations now form the U.S. Technical Advisory

Group (TAG), and the United States is a Participating Member of TC 225. The TAG has had two in-person meetings, one in Phoenix at the Annual AAPOR Conference and one at the national headquarters of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) in New York City. ANSI is the official U.S. representative to ISO, and CASRO has become an ANSI member with financial support from SRMS and AAPOR. The other TAG meetings have been by conference phone calls.

Who is working on this? Paul Biemer and Mike Cohen are the representatives of SRMS with involvement by Sharon Lohr and Steve Cohen as well. Other members are Diane Bowers of CASRO (chair), Bob Groves, Nicole Cupp, Harry Heller, Tom W. Smith, Mark Schulman, Harry W. O’Neill, and Nancy Belden. Don Ambrose of Canada participates in the meetings (Canada just recently became a Participating Member of TC 225). Henrietta Scully, our ANSI contact, has been invaluable.

How are we doing? A vote is underway to advance the working draft to the status of a Draft International Standard (DIS). The consensus of the U.S. TAG is that the working draft is unbalanced, providing too much detail (and sometimes detail of debatable merit) in some places and too little in others. Much of the working draft was formulated before the U.S. TAG became involved. Nevertheless, the TAG will conditionally support the advancement of the working draft to DIS status and work on revising the DIS. The official vote on DIS status will take place at a Plenary Meeting in Berlin in June 2005 with consideration being given to all comments by Participating Members.

Questions? Contact Paul P. Biemer ([ppb@rti.org](mailto:ppb@rti.org)) or Michael P. Cohen ([michael.cohen@bts.dot.gov](mailto:michael.cohen@bts.dot.gov)).

### Outgoing Section Officers

A hearty thanks to:

**S. Lynne Stokes**, for her leadership and wisdom on the SRMS executive committee for the past three years as Chair-Elect, Chair, and Past Chair.

**Partha Lahiri**, for his outstanding organization and planning of the JSM conference program for the past two years as Program Chair-Elect, and Program Chair.

**Thomas Belin**, for his two years of service, meticulous bookkeeping, and detailed reports as Treasurer.

**Michael P. Cohen**, for his two years as Publications Officer and his guidance with this newsletter. Special thanks for his work on the JSM Proceedings online.

**Dave Chapman**, for stepping in as Education Officer and setting the bar very high for those to follow. Students have greatly benefited from his efforts.

## Incoming Section Officers

We welcome the following new SRMS officers:

**Roger Tourangeau**, Chair-Elect

**Dave Judkins**, Program Chair-Elect

**Virginia Lesser**, Treasurer

**Stuart Scott**, Publications Officer

**Rachel Caspar**, Education Officer

We look forward to your service to the section. Contact information for all section officers can be found in the enclosed insert.

## Website

The Survey Research Methods Section (SRMS) Website has had some minor revision to be more consistent with the ASA Website. New features to the SRMS Website include the program listing of sessions sponsored by SRMS at the recent Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM). Programs of other recent survey research conferences, for example, the annual conferences of American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR), are also available at the Website. The 2002 SRMS proceedings will be available online in January 2005. Hopefully, these additions will be useful to our members, and also provide a supplement to the JSM proceedings, which currently do not contain program information.

## SRMSNET

Subscribe to SRMSNET. Find out how at: [http://www.amstat.org/sections/SRMS/srms\\_net.html](http://www.amstat.org/sections/SRMS/srms_net.html)

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## Announcements

### Bryant Scholarship for Students Nominations Deadline is April 30, 2005

The E. C. Bryant Scholarship is sponsored by Westat and given annually to an outstanding graduate student in survey statistics. The scholarship winner receives \$1,500 toward further graduate study. All application materials must be received by April 30, 2005. To get an application, visit the Bryant Web page on the ASA Web site at <http://www.amstat.org/awards/bryantap.html> where you can download the forms. For more information about the E. C. Bryant Scholarship, contact Elizabeth Stasny, Chair of the E. C. Bryant Scholarship Committee, at [eas@stat.ohio-state.edu](mailto:eas@stat.ohio-state.edu). The award will be presented at the Joint Statistical Meetings in August 2004 in Minneapolis, MN.

## Student Travel Fellowships to JSM by Tom Belin and Ginny Lesser

The Survey Research Methods Section developed a new Student Travel Fellowship program in 2004, providing graduate students with \$400 travel awards to help them attend the JSM in Toronto. After SRMS developed plans for 8 awards, Nielsen Media Research donated funds to the section to support 2 additional awards. The application form asked for a short essay conveying the student's interest in survey research, and applications were reviewed by a committee of SRMS officers chaired by the SRMS Treasurer. In addition to travel support, the Student Travel Fellows (and winners of the SRMS/Social/Government Student Paper Competition) were sponsored to attend a survey-related continuing education course.

Travel fellowship winners in 2004 were Haijing Chen (Ohio State University), Jim Greiner (Harvard University), Christine Kohnen (Duke University), Jianzhu Li (Joint Program in Survey Methodology), Xiaobai Li (Ohio State University), Jingchen Liu (Harvard University), Andy Peytchev (University of Michigan), Emilia Peytcheva (University of Michigan), Ting Yan (Joint Program in Survey Methodology), and Qingzhao Yu (Ohio State University). The Travel Fellows were asked to provide post-JSM reports on their experience, yielding comments such as "this was an amazing opportunity," "the program was immensely beneficial to me," "I was fascinated by new problems and applications," and "I was really impressed with the broad scope of how and where survey methodology is applied."

The success of the Student Travel Fellowship program has led to its being continued for 2005. Section members should keep an eye on the SRMS web site for details about application procedures (recall that a current SRMS member needs to sign on as a "supporter" of the application). Plans call for applications to be due on Friday, April 29.

## TSM II Conference

The Telephone Survey Methodology Conference Program Committee invites all interested researchers to submit abstracts for consideration for presentation at the conference as contributed papers. The abstract should be no more than 500 words. The deadline for submitting abstracts is March 15, 2005, and final selections will be made by April 30, 2005. Abstracts should be submitted, after January 15, 2005 through the conference website: [www.amstat.org/meetings/tsmii/2006](http://www.amstat.org/meetings/tsmii/2006)

## Short Courses at JSM

SRMS has proposed two excellent short courses at the 2005 JSM this August; make sure to look for them:

- **Adaptive Sampling** by Steve Thompson of Penn State
- **Multiple Imputation** by Don Rubin of Harvard and Trivellore Raghunathan of Michigan.



## 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; and
- ❖ Ethics related to survey conduct and standards for survey practice.

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