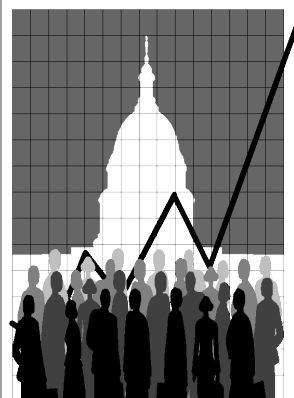


# GSS Newsletter

## SSS

Social Statistics and Government Statistics Sections  
American Statistical Association  
Vol. 5 No. 4  
July 2002



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Note: the SSS web site has been moved to <http://www.amstat.org/sections/ssoc/>.

### INVITATION

#### **...to submit invited paper session proposals for 2003 in San Francisco. Help us plan!**

Members of the Social Statistics Section and Government Statistics Section should be thinking NOW about proposals for Invited Sessions at the 2003 Joint Statistical Meetings in San Francisco. Invited Sessions offer more time per speaker and are designed for extensive discussion on a single theme or topic. The slots for Invited Sessions are limited and each section typically is allowed the same number each year. We can also enter the 'best' ideas in a competition for additional slots not yet allocated to a specific section or committee.

Typically, Invited Sessions include three 30 minute invited talks, a 10 minute talk by a discussant, and 10 minutes of floor discussion. Invited panels are another option and usually include 5 panelists on a specified topic.

Since the program for Invited Sessions is finalized in August, we need to hear from you NOW about your ideas. Even if you aren't quite sure about the speakers you would include, if you have a good idea for an Invited Session don't hesitate to contact your Program Chair and we will be happy to help. Please forward Invited Session proposals to:

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**Government Statistics Section's corporate sponsors:**

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Bureau of Justice Statistics  
Energy Information Administration  
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### **Roger Herriot Award to be given at JSM in New York**

The Social Statistics Section, along with the Government Statistics Section and the Washington Statistical Society, will present their 2002 recipient of the Roger Herriot Award for Innovation in Federal Statistics at the Joint Statistical Meetings in New York. The annual award is presented to a statistician who exemplifies the qualities of Roger Herriot who was the Associate Commissioner for Statistical Standards and Methodology at the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) before he died in 1994. The award recognizes the recipient's unique contributions to solving difficult statistical problems in federal data collection efforts—a key trait of Roger's. Last year's recipient was Jeanne Griffith.

The award committee consists of Ed Spar (SSS), Phil Kott (GSS), and Jerry Gates (WSS). Ed is serving as the 2002 chair for the committee. The announcement for award candidates was placed in Amstat News and the WSS Newsletter, and information was further disseminated through COPAFS, AAPOR, SSS, GSS, and APDU. The deadline for nominations was May 10, 2002. Unsuccessful nominations submitted in prior years are eligible for consideration this year. The award committee will make its selection in late May. The award will be presented at a session sponsored by the Government Statistics Section titled "Data Confidentiality and Access Issues Among Federal Agencies" (Session 104) on Monday, August 12 at 10:30 AM. A reception honoring the recipient will immediately follow the session. Please join us in celebrating with our 2002 honoree.

### **Mini Staffests Held at Spelman College and Hampton University**

The ASA Committee on Minority in Statistics (CMS) held two conferences for undergraduates, cosponsored partly by the Social Statistics Section -- one on November 10, 2001 at Spelman College, Atlanta, Georgia, and one on April 13, 2002, at Hampton University, Hampton, Virginia. The purpose of these conferences was to stimulate and interest African American undergraduate students in the statistical sciences and to provide information about graduate school and employment opportunities available to statisticians in the many different areas of industry, government and academia.

Both conferences were highly successful with over a hundred participants in each location. At Spelman College Drs. Nagambal Shah (Professor, Spelman College) and Gladys Reynolds (Senior Statistician, CDC) were conference coordinators.

For the opening session Dr. Walter W. Williams, Associate Director for Minority Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention gave the keynote address, "Statisticians Shape the Nation's Health". He emphasized the contributions of statisticians in planning and implementing large studies and surveys that provide information on the health and well being of the nation and that shape our health policy.

Conference Coordinators at Hampton were Dr. Douglas DePriest, Associate Professor, Mathematics Department, Dr. Carolyn Morgan, Chair, Mathematics Department, and Dr. Gladys Reynolds.

Dr. Morris H. Morgan III, Dean of the School of Engineering and Technology, and Dr. DePriest gave welcoming remarks. For the opening session Dr. Fritz Scheuren, Vice President for Statistics, National Opinion Research Center, University of Chicago, and Chair, Social Statistics Section, ASA, gave the keynote address, "Statistical Disaster and Success Stories?"

More details on the Conferences, including pictures, are posted on the Social Statistics Section website.

### **First Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship Awarded!**

The Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship (WJSS) Committee is extremely pleased to announce the selection of Amelia Haviland as the first winner of the WJSS. Haviland, a doctoral student at Carnegie Mellon University's Department of Statistics and H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management, received the \$1,000 award to support her efforts to inform her work using government statistics.

The Government Statistics Section of the American Statistical Association (ASA) announced the new scholarship last year, in memory of Wray Jackson Smith, a founding member of the Section and long-time contributor to Federal statistics. The WJSS, co-sponsored with the Social Statistics Section of ASA, the Washington Statistical Society, the Caucus for Women in Statistics, Mathematica Policy Research, and Synectics for Managements Decisions, Inc., is intended to reward promising young statisticians for their diligence, thereby encouraging them to consider a future in government statistics.

The WJSS will be offered again next Spring. Look for announcements in the *Amstat News* and through this newsletter - and help us spread the word. Individuals and organizations interested in contributing to this very worthy effort should contact the WJSS Committee via Jana Asher, at [asher@stat.cmu.edu](mailto:asher@stat.cmu.edu). Contributions to the Wray Jackson Smith Scholarship Fund are tax deductible.

Congratulations, Amelia, on your award!

### **2002 JSM Sessions sponsored by the Government Statistics and/or Social Statistics sections:**

#### **Government Statistics Section:**

Government Statistics Section to Have Impressive Presence on the 2002 JSM Program.

Submitted by Nancy Bates and Kirsten West

There are 21 GSS sessions on the program featuring more than 100 presentations!

The session breakdown is as follows: Two invited panels, two invited papers, 11 topic contributed papers, and two topic contributed panels. Enough individual papers were submitted to form four contributed paper sessions. We also have three posters and seven roundtable luncheons scheduled. Finally, GSS is co-sponsoring numerous sessions which we believe are of interest to government statisticians and users of government statistics.

The roundtable luncheon sessions start on Monday. Staff from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau, and Energy Information Administration will host three Monday luncheons. Pat Getz and

Kenneth Shipp (BLS) will co-host a luncheon discussing changes in employment measurement in the current employment statistics program. At the same time, Chip Alexander (Census) will facilitate a discussion of the American Community Survey's rolling sample design and estimates. Also on Monday, Nancy Kirkendall will lead a discussion of recent statistical agency collaboration to develop the Office of Management and Budget's information quality guidelines. On Tuesday, Brian Harris-Kojetin of OMB will lead a roundtable on the use of incentives in government-sponsored surveys. Rounding out Tuesday will be Stephanie Shipp of the National Institute of Standards and Technology who will share information about the technical and economic criteria of the Advanced Technology Program (ATP). The luncheons will conclude on Wednesday when Laura Zayatz (Census) will discuss the ins and outs of disclosure proofing a public-use data file and Elizabeth Vacca (Census) will share her experiences with contracting for research and development services in government agencies. Don't miss your opportunity to engage in discussion and ask questions

You will want to attend the GSS luncheons for sure (remember to register), but also keep in mind the invited sessions. The sessions start on Monday at 2 p.m. with "Taking the Census: What Have We Learned? Where Are We Going?" The National Academy of Sciences, through its Committee on National Statistics, has convened a number of expert panels to study decennial census issues and methodology over the past three censuses. The chairs of two current panels will present summaries of their panel's work and three eminent discussants will add their interpretations. On Tuesday morning (10:30 a.m.) national and regional needs for health data are reviewed by panelists representing the experience of government surveys in the United States and Canada. Then, on Wednesday afternoon (2 p.m.) methodological issues in local area applications of the American Community Survey are explored. Finally, we end the week with a session on immigration statistics entitled "The Streets and Byways in All of New York: Stories, Statistics and Styles in a High Immigration Era" (Thursday at 8:30 a.m.).

We have sessions on data confidentiality and privacy throughout the week. Improving income measurements in surveys; industry and occupation data and how to ensure data quality are some of the topics covered in the contributed sessions. "Alternative Fuel Vehicles and Alternative Transportation Fuel," and "The Challenge of Measuring Welfare Reform" are titles that illustrate the variety of other topics and sessions.

It was difficult to schedule so many sessions and not create conflicts for members participating in more than one activity on the program. A few GSS sponsored sessions unfortunately overlap with sessions on similar topics sponsored by other Sections such as Survey Research Methodology or Social Statistics. So you may have to plan your day carefully to catch all the sessions.

The willingness of the GSS membership to organize so many excellent topic contributed sessions is greatly appreciated. Also, many members have stepped forward volunteering to chair contributed sessions or to serve as discussants. The efforts have resulted in an exciting program that reflects a variety of statistical issues in government surveys and in the analyses of data from Federal agencies.

**Business meeting on Tuesday, August 13 from 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM.**

Make sure to check out these and other GSS sponsored sessions on <http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2002/onlineprogram>

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## **Social Statistics Section**

**Program Overview.** Social Statistics Section is pleased to provide its members a stimulating and provocative program for the 2002 JSM in New York City. This year our program features two Invited Sessions, two Topic Contributed sessions, four Contributed Sessions, two Poster Sessions, and four

Roundtable Luncheons. Moreover, one of our sessions is devoted exclusively to honoring the winners of our 2002 SSS/GSS/SMRS Student Paper Competition. The schedules and titles of each event appear below. In addition, Social Statistics Section is co-sponsoring a fairly large number of session that we know will be of interest to you.

For more detail, please check the 2002 JSM Program at

<http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2002/onlineprogram/>

Then, under **Search by Sponsor**, you use *Social Statistics Section* to list all SSS sponsored and co-sponsored sessions.

Of the two invited sessions, one focuses on non-English speakers in national surveys -- a hot topic given the increase in non-English speakers in the U.S. over the past decade. The other features a panel discussion of data needed for the evaluation of Welfare Reform. The former session includes papers that analyze the nature and prevalence of linguistically isolated households in the U.S., as well as papers that discuss best practices and experiences stemming from national surveys that include significant representation from non-English speakers. The latter session re-assembles several members of the Committee on National Statistics' Panel on Data and Methods for Measuring the Effects of Changes in Social Welfare Programs, plus policy stake holders.

Topic Contributed sessions are devoted to a panel that will discuss the conduct of membership surveys with participants from different professional organizations, and a session to honor and to hear this year's winners of the SSS/GSS/SMRS Student Paper Competition.

Four Contributed Paper sessions (including 27 papers) and two poster sessions cover a variety of interesting methodological and analytic issues in policy research and social policy analysis. And four Roundtable Luncheons include experts in survey methods in the areas of Web based survey design, cross-cultural surveys, the Census long form, and disability measurement.

**Business Meeting.** Please join us at 5:30 p.m. Monday, August 12 for our open JSM Business Meeting in New York! There will be food and drink, of course, plus the presentation of two special achievement awards. Dr.. Patrick Ball is one of the recipients for his work with the Kosovars, as summarized in his testimony this March at the Hague. The second award will be announced at the meeting itself and has to be kept a surprise for now.

Learn about what the Section is doing to provide services to members like you. Come meet our wonderful student paper competition awardees. And, of course, come meet and chat with statisticians like yourself who have dedicated themselves to the area of social statistics. Our JSM Section meetings are always productive, interesting and fun!

### *Social Statistics Sponsored Sessions*

#### **2002 JSM, New York City**

##### **Sunday, August 11**

**4:00 p.m. - 5:50 p.m.** Innovative Approaches in Social Statistics (Contributed Session)

##### **Monday, August 12**

**8:30 a.m. - 10:20** Non-English Speakers in National Surveys: Who,

- a.m.** When, and How (Invited)
- 10:30 a.m. - 12:20 p.m.** Presentation of *Roger Herriot Award* at Data Confidentiality and Access Issues Among Federal Agencies  
(Topic Contributed, GSS is the primary sponsor, SS co-sponsor)
- 12:00 p.m. - 1:50 p.m.** Poster Sessions -- (Contributed)  
Puerto Rico Family Income Survey - 1999  
Estimates of Variance Components in Random Effects Meta-Analysis: Sensitivity to Violations of Normality and Variance Homogeneity
- 2:00 p.m. - 3:50 p.m.** Methodological Issues in Public Policy Analysis (Contributed)
- 5:30 pm - 7:00 p.m.** Social Statistics Business Meeting (OPEN)

**Tuesday, August 13**

- 8:30 a.m. - 10:20 a.m.** Estimation Issues in Public Policy (Contributed Session)
- 12:30 p.m. - 1:50 p.m.** Roundtable Luncheon - Cognitive and Social Issues for the Design of Web Surveys: Roger Tourangeau from the Joint Program in Survey Methodology will host a luncheon discussing his work with Mick Couper and others on the design of Web surveys. This work looks at the impact of personalizing the interface, the format of the questions, and the effects of visual images.
- 2:00 p.m. - 3:50 p.m.** Data Needs for Evaluating Welfare Reform (Invited)

**Wednesday, August 14**

- 8:30 a.m. - 10:20 a.m.** Conducting Membership Surveys in an Era of Technological and Demographic Change (Topic Contributed)
- 10:30 a.m. - 12:20 p.m.** GSS/SMRS/SS Student Paper Competition Award Session (Topic Contributed)
- 12:30 p.m. - 1:50 p.m.** Roundtable Luncheons:  
  
Issues in Cross-Cultural Surveys: Best Practices for Translation, Questionnaire Design, and Instrument Testing: Gordon Willis from the National Cancer Institute. The discussion will include views of the current state-of-the-art in cross-cultural questionnaire development, types of language translation practices, culturally-oriented pretesting techniques, and other practices that appear to be worthy of further

development and evaluation.

Census Long Form - Present and Future: Jay Waite from the Census Bureau. This roundtable discussion will touch on the difficulties and challenges of collecting long form decennial data in Census 2000 and the resulting planning efforts for a reengineered 2010 Census.

Jennifer Madans from the National Center for Health Statistics will discuss the Washington City Group on Disability Measurement. It is commissioned by the United Nations Statistical Commission to address issues related to the measurement of disability in an international context so that culturally compatible measures of disability can be developed.

**Thursday, August 15**

**10:30 a.m. - 12:20  
p.m.**

Analysis of Education Systems - Teaching, Learning and Quality (Contributed)

**1958 to 2001 JSM Proceedings Index**

Last fall the Section completed its electronic index of all its past proceedings from 1958 to 1999. These are available in a fully searchable format on the Section's web page for general use. The index is being updated with the 2000 and 2001 proceedings now being added.

For most of this period the volumes contain all the papers for what are now three sections: Government, Survey Research and, of course, Social Statistics. This makes the index invaluable to a wide range of practitioners and we look forward to its general use.

One project that members of Social Statistics are considering is to use the index to collect and republish papers on selected topics that have continuing interest. A volume on Human Rights issues, broadly conceived, has been proposed. We would welcome further ideas and proposals at any time, but especially at the business meeting in New York in August.

**2001 JSM Proceedings on CD-Rom**

You didn't get your publication of the 2001 Proceeding for the Sections on Government Statistics and Social Statistics? Did you know that the Proceedings from last year's Joint Statistical Meetings are available for the first time only on CD-Rom? The CD-Rom contains the proceedings for the Sections on Government Statistics and Social Statistics as well as ALL other sections and is very moderately priced at \$25 (\$35 beginning in 2002). If you haven't ordered your copy it is not too late. Go to the ASA Web site at <http://www.amstat.org/publications/proCDings2002.pdf> and order your copy today.

## Government Statistics Section

### Officers and Contacts

The following list contains the names, addresses, and email addresses (when available) of section officers. The **Section on Government Statistics** has 8 current officers, 2 liaisons, and 2 COPAFS representatives.

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*Last updated: July 11, 2002.*

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