

PARAMETER



AMERICAN STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION

CHICAGO CHAPTER

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TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 12:00 NOON

The Forecaster's Dilemma: What If They Ever Look Back?

Our December luncheon speaker will be Mr. Thomas Swanstrom, Chief Corporate Economist of Sears, Roebuck and Co. In keeping with the spirit of the season, his lighthearted talk is alternatively titled, "How to Make a Bad Forecast Look Good." He assures us that he is well qualified to speak on this subject, having made several bad forecasts himself over the years. What is the key to his continued employment in this cruel world of "What have you done for me lately?" The answer is the set of rules that he follows for all of his forecasts. These rules are simple but essential and he will discuss their meaning and application. Also, if time permits and the audience promises not to take notes, he will give us his latest set of bad economic forecasts for 1988. Or did he say 1998?



Mr. Swanstrom received his B.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of Wisconsin and also did post-graduate work at American University. He spent three years with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and two years with the Population Reference Bureau before joining Sears in 1968. He has held a variety of positions in the past 19 years and has been chief corporate economist for the past seven, where his duties include economic research and forecasting. His publications include various articles on the labor force, employment, population and retail outlook. Tom makes about sixty speeches and presentations each year and is certainly no stranger before a microphone.

Be sure to join your fellow statisticians at this holiday luncheon at the Midland Hotel, west of

LaSalle on Adams. Please make your luncheon reservations now by calling Sue Gross at 875-2908 by 10:00 A.M. Friday, December 4. If you make reservations and are unable to attend, please let Sue know as the Chapter must pay for the luncheons prepared for no-shows.

The cost is \$18.00 for members and \$20.00 for non-members. The Chapter's Lucile Derrick Fund will pay for students who wish to attend.

Is This Your Last Issue Of PARAMETER?

If you have not paid membership dues to the Chicago Chapter since May of 1986, this could be the last issue of *Parameter* that you will receive. A membership file purge is being conducted by the Chicago Chapter with the intent of reducing mailing costs. Those who fall into the above category will be receiving a phone call in the next few weeks asking them to rejoin the chapter. If you have any questions about your current membership status or would like to rejoin the chapter, please contact Richard Smiley at 856-5923 (work number).

Review of Sampling Workshop

The following item was contributed by Kathy Morrissey of CNA Insurance Companies at the editor's request:

On Oct. 22, 1987, at the Drake Hotel, the Chicago Chapter of the American Statistical Association presented a seminar: Finding the Needle in

(Continued on Page 2)

Thump the Tub for Statistics!

The Chapter is looking for members interested in serving on a Community Affairs Committee. The purpose of the committee is to enhance the Chicago community's awareness of statistics, particularly through activities with area high schools. Perhaps you would like to go back to your own high school and talk to students about careers in statistics! Chapter members can play a major role, particularly as probability and statistics are becoming part of the curriculum in many schools.

Possible committee activities include classroom or math club visits, short course presentations for teachers, participation in career days, and consulting on science fair projects. Since the North-east Illinois Chapter is already active in the North and Northwest suburbs, volunteers are particularly needed to work with schools in the city and in the West and South suburbs. Interested Chapter members should contact Sue Groshong, Vice President for Special Events, at (312) 822-4789. Sue would also like to hear from teachers or others interested in this service.

The Marketplace

Position Wanted

An experienced professor of statistics is available for part-time statistical consulting and data analysis. Please call (312) 416-8705 after 6 P.M.

Position Available

Applied Statistician — Nalco Chemical Company, a Fortune 500 world leader in specialty chemicals, has this professional opportunity at our Corporate and Technical Center in Naperville, Illinois.

Candidate will work with Manufacturing, QA, and Marketing personnel in consulting, teaching and implementation of statistical methodologies including SPC. You will work with Research and Marketing on data analysis and experimental design. The ability to perform data analysis on undesigned data sets is assumed. An advanced degree in statistics, or related degree with 1-3 years experience in applied statistics is required. In addition the candidate should have strong written and verbal communication skills. Knowledge of SAS, RS/1 or other statistical analysis software is essential.

Nalco offers an excellent salary commensurate with experience and a comprehensive company paid benefits program. For confidential consideration, please send your resume with salary history to: Karen Nordquist, Employment Manager, Nalco Chemical Company, One Nalco Center, Naperville, IL 60566. An Equal Opportunity Employer.

Review of Sampling Workshop

(Continued from Page 1)

the Haystack — Sampling Techniques for Rare Populations. This well attended seminar was chaired by Paul S. Levy of the University of Illinois.

The focus of the seminar was sampling of heterogeneous populations when the element of interest occurs rarely. Sampling is done for two purposes: estimating the size of the rare population, and locating elements of the rare population for study. Both purposes were addressed by the speakers.

The first speaker was Solomon Dutka, CEO of Audits and Surveys in New York, and author of several books on statistical methods and market research. In his talk titled "Introduction to Sampling Techniques for Rare Populations," Mr. Dutka discussed several techniques, such as direct screening, multiple frame sampling, probability selection of high yield clusters, and multiplicity sampling.

Seymour Sudman of the Marketing Department, University of Illinois, was the second speaker. His presentation, titled "Network Sampling: Theory and Practice," covered network rules, the uses, benefits, and limitations of network sampling, and several examples from Mr. Sudman's experience.

The third speaker, Ron Czaja of the University of Illinois, described several of his studies that utilized network sampling. In his talk titled "Network Sampling Applied: How to Identify Rare Groups Such as Cancer Patients, Crime Victims, and Missing Children," Mr. Czaja discussed the design of several similar studies, and demonstrated the importance of testing the network rule before employing it.

The fourth speaker was Charles Cowan of The Center for Education Statistics, who spoke on "Capture and Recapture Methods." Mr. Cowan reviewed the history of these methods and discussed the model and process assumptions and problems. His somewhat unusual studies provided interesting examples.

Richard Barrett of the University of Illinois was the fifth and final speaker. In his discussion titled "Redefining Chicago's Community Areas," Mr. Barrett presented the results of his demographic clustering study of Chicago communities. He found the demographic clustering techniques good for stratifying and for enhancing sampling efficiency, but not especially useful for rare populations.

Together the speakers provided a balanced survey of sampling techniques useful for rare populations.

Editor: Phil Heckman

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Materials for publication should be submitted to the editor at: CNA Insurance Companies, CNA Plaza, 38-S, Chicago, IL 60685.

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