



THE FELLOW

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The official peer-reviewed
newsletter of doctoral
students at the School of
Social Policy & Practice
at the
University of Pennsylvania

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Action-Packed Semester, Plans for More

As the end of the semester approaches, we would like to thank the students, faculty, and staff for their support and encouragement over the past few months. The inaugural issue of *The Fellow* received an enthusiastic reception, and this second issue has a larger number of unsolicited articles and information from the SP2 community which we believe will foster our learning and development as scholars. The mission of *The Fellow* is to provide educational, research and practice-based articles that advance the knowledge and skills of its readers. We believe that you will find this mission accomplished in this December issue.

Furthermore, the doctoral students have been pursuing new and innovative activities to foster the SP2 community. During the Fall 2006 semester, the Doctoral Student Steering Committee (DSSC) organized the Committee for Community Outreach (CCO), which organized a night of bowling in October. The CCO is currently in the process of sponsoring a clothing drive for New Visions, a day shelter in Camden, N.J. Boxes for contributions will be at the Caster Building, 3815 Walnut Street, and the Graduate Student Center until December 16. Items that are most needed include: sheets, blankets, coats, jackets, and men's and women's underwear and socks.

The Colloquium series, organized by SP2 Doctoral Students, will have benefited from lectures by Professors Rhodes and Bloom in October and December, respectively. The PhD students also enjoyed a well-attended talk by Dr. Jerri Bourjolly who discussed teaching and TA opportunities available to

PhD students at SP2. The CCO also hopes to plan a Habitat for Humanity event with PhD students and faculty during the Spring 2007 semester. It would be a great opportunity to get to know each other and grow a stronger SP2 community, so that we can contribute in full force to the West Philadelphia community.

Again, thank you for your support. We wish you and your loved ones a joyous holiday season.

Sincerely,
The Fellow Editorial Board



Pictures (left/above): The CCO organized a bowling party at Strikes for new and returning doctoral students in October. More than 15 people attended and bonded outside of the academic setting.

PEER REVIEW

We all work hard writing papers for class, and many papers are worthy of more than just a letter grade. *The Fellow* provides an outlet to share unpublished manuscripts, essays, book reviews and editorials with colleagues in an effort to distribute ideas, spark debates, obtain feedback, encourage journal submissions, and support interdisciplinary collaborations. Full references are available upon request to the authors.

A brief summary of "A Time of Transformation: A Report Documenting Recent Changes in Eastern North Philadelphia."

by Kristie Thomas, MSW | kristiet@sp2.upenn.edu

During the summer of 2006, I was chosen to be a Samuel S. Fels Intern at Women's Community Revitalization Project (WCRP), a Community Development Corporation (CDC) founded in Philadelphia in 1988. WCRP builds and maintains quality, affordable rental housing for women and children living in poverty. Although WCRP is an active advocate for all Philadelphians in need of affordable housing, they work and build homes primarily in Eastern North Philadelphia.

WCRP commissioned me to collect data and write a report on housing trends and housing characteristics for the neighborhood in which they work. The report was needed for a number of reasons. First, WCRP had begun to organize a neighborhood coalition of local social service agencies, neighborhood associations, and congregations in their area to address issues of gentrification. The coalition needed housing information to inform their current and future work. Second, WCRP wanted data to support a citywide campaign to increase public awareness regarding the impact of gentrification on renters because less attention is paid to the concerns of renters (i.e. displacement concerns) than to those of homeowners. Finally, WCRP staff, tenants, and community members had been conducting in-depth interviews with people in the neighborhood regarding their housing concerns, and they wanted quantitative data to complement their growing qualitative information.

The boundaries for the neighborhood of interest were very specific: Spring Garden St. to Montgomery Ave from North to South, and Front St. to 10th St. from East to West. This area is racially and economically diverse and consists of a number of neighborhoods, all of which have experienced dramatic changes over the past six to eight years. In order to get the most detailed information, I broke down the area into nine Census tracts, and then into 36 block groups.

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Submit print-ready papers to: DSSC@sp2.upenn.edu
Papers under 600 words will be published on a first-come-first-serve basis and will be edited only to conform to newsletter styles and formats.

Sources included: 2000 U.S. Census; 2004 U.S. Census American Community Survey; University of Pennsylvania's Cartographic Modeling Lab's neighborhoodBase and parcelBase; Philadelphia Planning Commission Reports; and newspaper classifieds and articles.

Findings for the aforementioned neighborhood:

- In 2000, of the 5,232 housing units, 35% were owned and 65% were rented— *a rate of rentership that was almost double that of homeownership.*
- In contrast, the City of Philadelphia's *ownership rate* was 18% higher than that of its rentership rate (59% owned vs. 41% rented).
- In 2000, 49% of households earned below \$20,000 a year.
- In 2000, 60% of the 2,001 renters, and 30% of the 553 homeowners earned less than \$20,000 a year. In Philadelphia, 47% of all renters and 26% of all owners earned less than \$20,000 a year.
- In 2000, 37% of all renters and 19% of all owners were paying more than 30% of their income on housing.
- As of July 2006, 35% of the land parcels were vacant. Of the vacant properties, 73% were privately owned and 27% were owned by a city, state, or federal agency. In one particular Census Tract, 68% of properties were vacant.
- Between 2004 and July of 2006, the number of condominium units increased from 54 units to 210 units—an increase of 400% in two years.
- Between 2003 and 2005, all but one of the nine Census Tracts saw increases in residential sale prices, some as high as 380%.
- Classified ads revealed that rental prices in many of the nine Census Tracts have increased dramatically since 2000.

These are just a few of the findings from the report. Hopefully, neighborhood agencies, including WCRP, will be able to use these findings to raise awareness, increase resource allocation, and possibly influence Philadelphia's housing policy.

Significantly Statistical

by Tae Kuen Kim* | kimtk@sp2.upenn.edu

One of the most frequently used sentences in academic journals may be "this result is statistically significant with $p < .05$." What does that mean? Before talking about it, let me give you a brief overview of this column. I hope to share several statistical issues with all of my SP2 colleagues through this section. This section is neither meant to be a part of some boring statistical textbook nor an intricate statistical article. I'll avoid ugly equations and difficult-to-understand technical terms. I hope this section will help you appreciate several statistical concepts which we always use, in our everyday language. We are not producers of statistics, but consumers. Thus, what is required for us is not mathematical understanding but intuitive understanding. Now, are you ready? O.K. let's begin!

To understand the meaning of 'statistical significance' and ' p -value', we first have to be familiar with the logic of 'statistical estimation'. Suppose that someone asks you: what is the average SAT score in U.S. high schools? Unfortunately, you only know the average score of 100 schools and it is 850. Now, there are a number of ways to answer this question based on your sample average. For example, you can say "the average score for all the schools may be 850." Well, it's possible. But your 'sample average' does not mean the 'average score of all the schools'. Of course, if you know the average score of 10,000 schools rather than 100 schools, this average may be very close to the true value, or average score for all the schools. This implies that whenever you increase the sample size, you can more accurately estimate the entire population. Hence, the best case scenario is to study all the schools. But, as you know, it is difficult to increase the sample size in real situations. This is one reason why we depend heavily on statistics.

What is the alternative? Instead of estimating an exact score like in the above-mentioned example, you may say "it's probably between 700 and 1000." This looks better. Why? Because the probability to hit the answer is higher in this kind of estimation than in the prior method. The previous method is called 'point estimation' and this method is called 'interval estimation'. The weakness of 'point estimation' is that researchers cannot calculate the probability of getting the answer. In fact, there are only two options: 'true or false'--'all or nothing'. A bold gambler may prefer this estimation, but what researchers do is not the lottery, it's research. Therefore, researchers usually depend on 'interval estimation'. Most statistics that we use, including t-Test, ANOVA, chi-square and regression analysis, are based on interval estimation. So if we want to understand the meanings of 'statistical significance', ' p -value', 'confidence interval', and 'power', we have to know the logic of interval estimation.

As in the above example, if you expand the interval to say "it's probably between 0 and 1700", the probability of getting the answer may be close to 100%. But this would be an inappropriate answer. This kind of estimation does not provide any useful information on the average SAT score. This implies that whenever you increase the interval of estimation, you

can more accurately estimate the entire population. However, at the same time, a wider interval decreases the usefulness of information you estimate. Thus, the essence of inferential statistics is to deal with this trade-off between accuracy and utility of the estimation. Next time, we will see how to decide appropriate intervals using standard deviation. Stay tuned! *Kim is a 3rd year Ph.D. student & author of "Applied regression: Data analysis for social science," a book recently published in Korean.

From The Grants Office

by Ted Faigle | tfaigle@sp2.upenn.edu

Private foundations exist in a whole different universe, it seems, than that of government granting agencies, and it is a world definitely worth exploring. Since last spring, I have been taking advantage of the programs and resources of The Foundation Center. Based in New York, and 50 years old, it offers the most authoritative information on private foundation funding sources in the United States.

An associated regional Foundation Center is housed at the Free Library on Logan Circle. There you can find free access to information on grant-seeking, fund development and proposal writing. It is the Philadelphia region's largest public collection of print and electronic materials on all aspects of fundraising, and certainly worth a visit.

The Foundation Center is only in New York, however, it offers a regular series of workshops and classes; some free one-hour sessions and some low-cost day-long seminars. Their seminar on "How To Approach Foundations" for grant money in September was a totally worthwhile experience for me and I have signed up for more classes later this year. Cost of the first seminar included temporary access to their searchable database of foundations numbering in the tens of thousands. I am now subscribed to that database which is searchable by keywords and other parameters.

Keep in mind, as you develop your research and dissertation projects, that I am available to help you find grant money through private foundations as well as federal sources. You need not fear for lack of information or opportunities. If you have not yet started your investigation into funding resources, look into Penn's Career Service information for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows at: www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/funding/funding.html

Watson's Syndrome

Dean Richard Gelles explains that Watson's Syndrome is mostly confined to people in the later stages of studying for a doctoral degree or among people holding untenured positions in colleges or universities. It is often found among high ability/high achievement-oriented individuals. Diagnostic criteria include:

- A.** A continuing and persistent avoidance of engaging in the actual writing and completion of one's...
- B.** Engaging in what appear to be important activities that take the place of completing one's...
...dissertation, publications, or grant proposals

Learn more about it in Dean Gelles's article at www.insidehighered.com/workplace/2006/06/19/gelles

PEER CITES

As the next generation of educators, practitioners and researchers, let's make a conscious effort to read and reference **recent peer publications** so that we can get our ideas out there!

Cederbaum, J. A., Coleman, C. L., Goller, G., & Jemmott, L. S. (in press). Understanding the HIV risk reduction needs of heterosexual African American substance-abusing men. *Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care*.

Cnaan, R. A., & **Dichter, M. E.** (in press). Thoughts on the use of knowledge in social work practice. *Research on Social Work Practice*.

Cohen, B. J., Kinnevy, S. C., & **Dichter, M. E.** (in press). The quality of work life of child protective investigators: Comparison of two work environments. *Children and Youth Services Review*.

Fantuzzo, J. W., & **Fusco, R. A.** (in press). A population-based study of children's direct sensory exposure to substantiated domestic violence crimes. *Violence & Victims*.

Fantuzzo, J. W., **Fusco, R. A.**, Mohr, W. M., & Perry, M. A. (in press). Domestic violence and children's presence: A population-based study of law enforcement surveillance of domestic violence. *Journal of Family Violence*.

Volpp, K. G., Stone, R., Jha, A., Lave, J., Pauly, M. V., **Klusaritz, H.**, Chen, H., Cen, L., Brucker, N., & Polsky, D. (in press). Is 30-day hospital mortality really lower for Black veterans compared to White veterans? *Health Services Research*.

Hodge, D. R., & **McGrew, C. C.** (2006). Spirituality, religion, and the interrelationship: A nationally representative study. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 43, 637-654.

Cnaan, R. A. with Boddie, S. C., **McGrew, C. C.**, & Kang, J. (2006). *The other Philadelphia story: How local congregations support quality of life in urban America*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Fantuzzo, J., & **Perlman, S.** (in press). The unique impact of out-of-home placement and the mediating effects of child maltreatment and homeless on early school readiness. *Children and Youth Services Review*.

Stanhope, V., & Solomon, P. (in press). Bridging the gap: Using microsociological theory to understand how Expressed Emotion predicts clinical outcomes. *Psychiatric Quarterly*.

Sungkyu Lee is a recipient of the alumni scholarship at Soongsil University in Seoul, Korea. He was awarded \$12,000 in October.

Fall 2006 Conference Presentations by Doctoral Students

American Association of Public Policy & Management

Bradley, M.C.

- Maternal age at first birth and children's behavioral and cognitive outcomes.
- To charter schools and back: What do parents have to say.

American Society of Criminology

Caplan, J.M.

- Web-based crime mapping for decision support, policy analysis and public relations.
- Using geographic information systems to evaluate post-release prisoner reentry needs in greater Newark, NJ.

Dunn, K.V.

- Like nailing jelly to a tree: Identifying the ingredients of Inside-Out Learning.
- Debating outcomes and mechanisms: Preliminary results from the Inside-Out Participatory Evaluation Project.

Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action

Greenspan, I.

- Client volunteering in organizations serving individuals with psychiatric disabilities.

Law and Society Annual Meeting

Dunn, K.V.

- Institutionalizing death: Capital punishment and legal change in Delaware.

Meetings of the American Anthropological Association

Dunn, K.V.

- The strategic use of difference and commonality in an In-Prison consciousness raising project.

Choosing the right statistical software

Michael Mitchell, a veteran of the Statistical Consulting Group at UCLA Academic Technology Services, released a technical report in August of this year entitled, *Strategically using General Purpose Statistics Packages: A Look at Stata, SAS and SPSS*. The report provides an experienced assessment of commonly used general purpose statistical software and their features through versions: Stata 9.1, SAS 9.13 (service pack 3), and SPSS 14.

In addition to reporting on features (strengths and weaknesses), technical support, and installation ease of the 3 packages, Mitchell provides some suggestions and things to keep in mind when considering which statistical package is right for you:

1. A single package cannot be the most strategic tool for all of your projects.
2. Think about your data management and statistical analysis needs, then choose the packages that most strategically address your needs.
3. Assess the strengths of a package alone, but also how it may complement other packages.
4. Choose a package that makes it easiest to present your findings in a form that is most easily interpreted.
5. Don't skip on purchasing useful statistical software. Using an inappropriate tool to save a modest amount of money is more costly in terms of your time, and more costly in terms of handicapping your ability to put forth the most compelling statistical case possible.
6. Consider the costs of updating your software to plan future budgets.
7. All researchers should periodically evaluate the suite of tools they use in relationship to the state of the art. Over time, some tools that you use may become ill-suited to your needs, and other tools may evolve that suit your current and future needs better.

Taken from:

<http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/technicalreports>

Did you know... you don't need to be a member of the Pottruck Health and Fitness Center to access the healthy food and sports apparel shops located inside. Just flash your Penn ID and let security know you are visiting the Energy Zone or The Sport Shop at Penn for a few minutes, and enjoy.