



# COSSA Washington Update

Consortium of Social  
Science Associations

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## THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND EDUCATION AT NSF

For many years the National Science Foundation's (NSF) Education and Human Resources Directorate (EHR) has tried to improve science education in the United States. Also, for many years, EHR has limited their inclusion of the social sciences in the definition of science education. Since the arrival of Judith Ramaley, former President of the University of Vermont, as the Assistant Director for EHR in 2001, things have changed.

Ramaley has developed a strong working relationship with the Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences Directorate (SBE) and its head, Norman Bradburn. This was evident from Ramaley's recent appearance at the SBE Advisory Committee on May 29. Before focusing on how the changing use of mathematics in the conduct of research and practice in science and engineering is affecting the expectation of the undergraduate experience, Ramaley made some brief comments about the social and behavioral sciences and education. That topic will also be addressed in an SBE sponsored workshop, taking place on June 12-13.

Overall, Ramaley suggested that the key to improving the input of the social and behavioral sciences, particularly in K-12 education, was to replace the current curricula of "social studies" with a greater focus on the scientific aspects of studying social and behavioral phenomena. This will not be easy. At the moment, there is a concerted effort, with the strong support of Senator Robert Byrd (D-WV) to improve the teaching and learning of history. (Senator Byrd has helped provide over \$100 million in Federal

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## NEW EDUCATION STATISTICS COMMISSIONER CHOSEN

President Bush has announced his intention to nominate Robert Lerner to be the next Commissioner of Education Statistics for a term expiring June 21, 2009. The National Center for Education Statistics has not had a Senate-confirmed leader since the resignation of Pascal Forgione in 1999.

Lerner is currently a partner with Lerner and Nagai Quantitative Consulting, a social science research firm. The firm has conducted a number of studies whose conclusions may signal a contentious confirmation process. It has examined affirmative action policies at University of California campuses and in the case of the San Diego campus has noted:

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appropriations for this purpose). Earlier, with the help of the National Geographic Society, there was a major effort to infuse geography into the K-12 curricula (Geography was one of the core subjects of the National Educational Goals). A new piece of legislation seeks to enhance American students' knowledge of civics as well as history. However, the social sciences and psychology are often in the K-12 curriculum, usually in the last years of high school, by virtue of advanced placement exams.

Also impinging on education is the changing nature of science, according to Ramaley. She strongly believes in the complexity of the new science. How do we bring the new emerging areas of science into students' educational experiences, she asked? Clearly, the impact of technology on learning is an area that needs exploring by social scientists. These scientists must also examine the societal implications of the new cyberworld. Congress has responded by including research funds for this in the proposed nanotechnology legislation. How will all of this impact the transitions to the workforce, Ramaley wondered. NSF has made the Workforce of the 21st Century one of its priorities.

It would be hard, Ramaley noted, given the Bush Administration's focus on education, to ignore the accountability factor. How can we develop a research base for action? What are the changing conditions between research and practice? These are questions that must be raised, she asserted. In addition, developing the capacity to "go to scale," remains a problem. Dissemination of what works is good, but how to interpret and adopt in context, still needs discerning in most situations. She noted that the Interagency Educational Research Initiative is supporting research on this problem.

Another of the Administration's projects, the Math and Science Partnership Program (MSP), also concerns Ramaley. The MSP tries to improve mathematics and science learning through developing partnerships between local schools and higher education, industry, and other entities. Ramaley questioned how engaged scientists will become in education issues, again particularly at the elementary and secondary level, when the scientist's usual focus is on research and experimentation.

Finally in any discussion of education policy, the volatility of environments from students, teachers, local school boards, state education agencies, and state budgets, all play a role in determining educational outcomes. Ramaley would like to foster through EHR a robust education research community that would build a "culture

of evidence." To help accomplish this, she hopes to enhance the infusion of research into the EHR portfolio in the future.

## **EDUCATION STATISTICS COMMISSIONER,** (Continued from Page 1)

"Apart from the unfairness of using non-merit-based criteria in the selection process, these preferences actually hurt the very people they are intended to help." In addition, Lerner and his partner Althea Nagai, have examined 49 studies regarding the impact of gay and lesbian parenting and found them non-scientific and "no basis for good science or good public policy."

Lerner also served as a consultant to the U.S. Census Monitoring Board and Congressional Members, and as an invited participant in a workshop conducted by the National Academies' Panel to Review the 2000 Census.

Prior to his work heading the consulting firm, Lerner served, from 1996-97, as Faculty Associate for the Department of Health Policy and Management at The Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health. Prior to this position he was a Senior Research Associate and Assistant Director for the Center for the Study of Social and Political Change at Smith College. Earlier in his career he taught in the Department of Public Administration at Syracuse University.

He has published: *American Elites* (with Althea K. Nagai and Stanley Rothman); *Molding the Good Citizen*, a study of high school textbooks (with Althea K. Nagai and Stanley Rothman); *Giving for Social Change: Foundations, Public Policy, and the American Political Agenda* (with Althea K. Nagai and Stanley Rothman); and *No Basis: What the Studies Don't Tell Us About Same Sex Parenting* (with Althea Nagai).

Lerner earned his B.A. from Oberlin College, and his M.A. and Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Chicago.

## AEI/BROOKINGS COMMISSION RELEASES REPORT ON CONTINUITY OF CONGRESS

On June 4, the Continuity of Government Commission, a joint project of the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) and the Brookings Institution, released its first report, *The Congress: Preserving Our Institutions*. The report details recommendations for how the U. S. government should prepare for the possibility of a terrorist attack that either kills or incapacitates a large number of members of Congress.

The Commission was formed in early 2002 as a response to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and the realization that we could be instantly left without an easily-replaceable House of Representatives. Under the 17th Amendment of the Constitution, Governors may make appointments to fill vacant Senate seats, but House seats must be filled through special elections, which, depending on the state, can take months. Another potential problem would exist if House and Senate members were alive but hospitalized or incapacitated. No provisions currently exist for such a situation.

The Commission's Honorary Chairs are former Presidents Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter. Former Senate Minority Whip Alan Simpson (R-WY) and former Carter and Clinton White House Counsel Lloyd Cutler serve as the active Co-Chairs. The AEI's Norm Ornstein and the Brookings' Thomas Mann are Senior Counselors to the Commission and John Fortier of AEI is the Executive Director. The full membership list is on the organization's website at <http://www.continuityofgovernment.org>.

The report recommends that a concise constitutional amendment be passed giving Congress the authority to provide by legislation for temporary appointments to fill vacancies due to death or incapacitation after a catastrophic attack. These appointments could either be made by the governors or be based on a list drawn up in advance by the member whose seat becomes vacant. The appointment would last either until the member's incapacity ends or a special election can be held. The Commission further recommends that the constitutional amendment should be ratified within two years. (This would require a two-thirds vote in both houses of Congress and ratification by three-quarters, or 38, of the states.)

At a press conference held to release the report, Mann noted that there is a good chance for timely

action by Congress on an Amendment. Former Reagan White House Chief of Staff Ken Duberstein, a member of the Commission, was more reserved, stating, "We are asking 535 people to contemplate their death." He placed the onus for action on the Congressional leadership. Rep. Brian Baird (D-WA), who has been a proponent of action by his colleagues on this issue and was invited to speak at the press conference, posed a grim scenario involving a nuclear detonation in Washington. He asserted that this is a matter of preserving our democracy and that Congress must act with the "utmost urgency."

Copies of the report were delivered to the House and Senate leadership and the Commissioners had lunch at the White House with Vice President Cheney to discuss their conclusions. On June 5th, the House passed a resolution, H. Con. Res. 190, to create a joint House-Senate Committee to consider the issue of Congressional continuity. It has now been referred to the Senate Rules Committee, where swift action is expected. In addition, Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX), Chair of the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, has promised to hold hearings on the Commission's findings.

Some members of Congress, however, have already come out against a constitutional amendment. House Rules Committee Chairman David Dreier (R-CA) asserted that an "amendment would be premature until Congress determines that there are no other ways to resolve these issues." Rep. Vic Snyder (D-AR) objects on the grounds that the framers intended the House to always be elected by the people. Cutler took on this argument, noting "there is no way the framers could have imagined a scenario where weapons could exist capable of destroying the entire Congress and the people who work there."

The Commission plans to issue future reports on continuity of the Executive and Judicial branches. The Congress report is accessible on the website.

## ASA HOLDS BRIEFING ON THE USE OF RACIAL AND ETHNIC DATA

On May 28, the American Sociological Association (ASA), joined by the California Institute for Federal Policy Research, the Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics, and the Population Resource Center, sponsored a Capitol Hill briefing on the importance of collecting racial and ethnic data. Studies of this type have come under fire recently, most notably in California, where a ballot question could outlaw the state from undertaking such efforts.

Sally Hillsman, the ASA's Executive Officer, asserted that collecting racial and ethnic data, through the Census and other undertakings, is vital to good decision-making, both by governments and the private sector. She then turned the event, entitled "Racial and Ethnic Data: Why We Collect it; How We Use it in Public Policy," over to the moderator, former Congressman Tom Sawyer (D-OH), and the speakers: Troy Duster, New York University Sociologist and former COSSA seminar speaker, Brian Smedley, a psychologist at the Institute of Medicine, and Gerald Sanders, Chief Operating Officer of Virtual Capital and former Police Chief of San Diego.

Duster framed his remarks around the context of access to public services. He noted that racial classifications still play into decisions regarding employment, health care, loans, residential opportunities, and education. Duster, an expert on genetics research, explained that while race may not be important to molecular biology, "it still affects society and social constructs, so we must continue to collect data classified by race and ethnicity."

Smedley oversaw a National Academies report that concluded that disparities exist in minorities' access to health care. He pointed to studies that have shown that doctors are often less likely to recommend optimal therapies or procedures for African Americans. Physicians with no history of bias in their background often make these decisions subconsciously. He concluded by stressing the importance of racial/ethnic data collection to ensuring Americans of all backgrounds receive the best health care and that disparities are eliminated.

Sanders, calling upon his criminal justice experience as a longtime police officer, admitted that racial profiling continues to be a major problem. He explaining that data on arrests and stops categorized by race can be valuable when used in training, both for new and veteran officers. He pointed to the importance of the police maintaining a status as impartial and fair arbiters of justice and that public trust can be eroded if this is brought into doubt. Sanders also made a separate argument for the collection of racial and ethnic data that has become apparent to him in his work in the private sector: "These data can aide those who solicit philanthropic giving by educating on how to appeal to different racial/ethnic groups."

The ASA this year released a policy statement, "The Importance of Collecting Data and Doing Social Scientific Research on Race." It goes into greater

detail on the issues that were discussed at the briefing. The statement can be accessed on the ASA's website at [http://www.asanet.org/media/asa\\_race\\_statement.pdf](http://www.asanet.org/media/asa_race_statement.pdf).

## FOGARTY CELEBRATES 35 YEARS AT NIH

On May 20, the Fogarty International Center (FIC) celebrated its 35th year at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) with an Anniversary Symposium entitled, "Global Health: A Challenge to Scientists." The Center conducts and supports research in biology and medicine that is dedicated to bridging the gap in public health between the developed and developing worlds. Named after the late Congressman John Edward Fogarty (D-RI), FIC is a leader in the formulation and implementation of international biomedical and behavioral research and remains committed to providing adequate health care to all mankind because "diseases know no national boundaries."

The first panel, "Global Health: Why it Matters," during the two day symposium focused on research from several prominent scholars about why global health is an international concern and the correlation between development and public health. In order to guide Fogarty's vision into the 21st century, Gerald Keusch, Director of FIC, stressed the critical role of research in advancing global health. According to Keusch, "without continued research we are limited to the tools of yesterday." If research is inert within public health, the global health community will not be able to apply science to combat old and emerging diseases.

Elias Zerhouni, Director of NIH, praised FIC for being a vital mechanism in the fight to reduce global health disparities because the Center promotes and supports scientific research and training internationally. Zerhouni added, "global crises in health must be addressed by the research community and that is why Fogarty serves as the Ambassador of NIH." Former Congressman Paul Rogers (D-FL), who chaired the panel, concurred with Zerhouni about research being a significant instrument in eliminating disparities in health among nations.

Echoing the same ideology about research and its role in advancing global health, Gro Brundtland, Director-General of the World Health Organization, emphasized that health is the most important tool for development. Highlighting poverty as a detriment of health, Brundtland stressed that diseases are a drain on

economic development. Although poverty does not disproportionately affect Americans as it does developing nations, Louis Sullivan, former Secretary of Health and Human Services and current President of the Morehouse School of Medicine, underlined that there are still gaps in the health status of people in America and around the world. "Impoverished nations still face the burden of disease and that is why research should lead the efforts to curb health cost and statistics," he asserted.

Rounding out the panel, Mary Wolley, President of Research!America, discussed the importance of research in the fight to reduce health disparities. "Preventable diseases are a major health problem for the public, a problem that needs more research and then using those findings to translate into practice," she noted. During her discussion of global health, Wolley conveyed to the panel that the American public wants research to succeed in the area of eliminating health disparities in an attempt to curtail any future global health epidemics. Wolley added, "sustained hope for better global health is the right vision and research is one of the most important ways to make that vision become a reality because without research, there is no hope."

Resonating one of Fogarty's favorite tenets – "research is the only means we have for reducing the growing Federal burden of medical care cost" – Wolley reiterated that public support for more research in global health is essential. And the consensus among scholars and researchers – both domestically and internationally – is that FIC has had and will continue to have a monumental impact on global health because of its commitment to advance public health in the international community through science and research.

## NATIONAL SECURITY EDUCATION PROGRAM BECOMES POLITICAL FOOTBALL

The National Security Education Program (NSEP), named after former Senator and now University of Oklahoma President David Boren (D-OK), has had a rocky life. The program, which awards scholarships to undergraduates and fellowships to graduate students to acquire language skills and experience in foreign countries, has been a poor stepchild in the Department of Defense (DOD). Financed through an ever-shrinking trust fund, the NSEP has, on a number of occasions, been on the

verge of extinction. Its requirement that grantees must work in the Federal government in a national security capacity has also engendered resentment in some quarters.

Nonetheless, since 1994, NSEP has awarded over 1,600 scholarships and 850 fellowships for study in over 100 countries. NSEP recipients study less-commonly-taught languages such as Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Swahili, and Turkish. They also travel to South and Central Asia and the Near East, rare places for American students studying abroad. Former Congressman Lee Hamilton (D-IN), now Director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars has praised the program, noting: "You [NSEP Recipients], the experts in the fields ranging from political science to anthropology, to environmental science to economics, are the people we will need most in the new century. ... More than anything else we need skilled and committed people with international experience."

In its FY 2004 budget submission, the Bush Administration proposed moving the program from DOD to the Department of Education (ED), as part of the latter's international education and foreign language studies area that includes the Title VI Centers. Since NSEP funding does not include an appropriation and the trust fund will run out soon, there is some concern that in the current constrained budgetary climate NSEP may steal resources from existing ED international programs.

Recently Congress pondered the future of the program. In its consideration of the DOD's authorization bill, the Senate rejected the Administration's switch to ED, but instead sent NSEP to the CIA. The House bill leaves NSEP in the Defense Department. Former Senator Boren has now been enlisted to reverse the Senate decision. Stay tuned!

## HUMAN RESEARCH PROTECTION GROUP ACCREDITS THREE ORGANIZATIONS

The Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs (AAHRPP) has recently announced that it has accredited the University of Iowa, the New England Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the Regional Western IRB.

These organizations underwent a rigorous accreditation process: an extensive self-assessment submitted to AAHRPP in the form of a program description; an on-site visit from a team of peer experts that spent several days completing a detailed assessment,

which was compiled into a site visit report; and review by AAHRPP's Council on Accreditation, which deliberated on the site visit reports and determined the organizations' accreditation status. AAHRPP's accreditation standards examine five domains of responsibility: organization, research review unit, investigator, sponsor, and participant. AAHRPP accreditation is valid for three years and accredited organizations must submit annual reports to AAHRPP on the status of their human research protection programs.

"We congratulate these organizations in reaching this important milestone," said AAHRPP Executive Director Marjorie Speers. "They sought AAHRPP accreditation, which is voluntary, because it is the right thing to do." David Wynes, University of Iowa Assistant Vice President for Research added, "Receiving full accreditation from AAHRPP underscores the University's commitment to the highest ethical standards for research involving human participants."

AAHRPP is a non-profit, voluntary accrediting organization founded by the Association of American Medical Colleges, the Association of American Universities, COSSA, the Federation of American Societies on Experimental Biology, the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges, the National Health Council, and Public Responsibility in Medicine and Research. These groups came together to help the research community improve protections for research participants and believe that voluntary accreditation was one of the best strategies to bring about significant improvements. AAHRPP is governed by a 21-member Board, among whose current members are: Barbara Bailar, Senior Vice-President, National Opinion Research Center (retired); Robert Hauck, Deputy Director, American Political Science Association; and Steven R. Smith, Dean, California Western School of Law.

## SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE COMMUNITY CELEBRATES NIH INSTITUTE DIRECTORS

On May 22, COSSA, the American Psychological Association, the Society for Research in Child Development, and the Federation of Behavioral, Psychological and Cognitive Sciences, joined 13 other organizations to welcome the three recently appointed National Institutes of Health (NIH) Institute Directors: Thomas Insel (Mental Health), Ting-Kai Li (Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism), and Nora Volkow (Drug Abuse).

Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA), Ranking Democrat on the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education Appropriations Subcommittee, and Rep. Patrick Kennedy (D-RI), a member of the House Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee, noted in their remarks the admirable and commendable job the NIH is doing with the resources that have been provided by Congress the last five years. Sen. Jim Jeffords (I-VT) also attended the event.

Former Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Directors, APA CEO Norman Anderson and NIH Deputy Director Raynard Kington were also present and welcomed the Directors of the three Institutes that support the bulk of the social and behavioral science research by the NIH. Anderson served as Master of Ceremonies and Kington introduced the newly appointed Directors, all of who expressed what an awesome opportunity it was for them to be a part of the NIH. For more information on Insel, Li, and Volkow, see *Update*, September 23, 2002 and January 27, 2003.

## SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT

COSSA provides this information as a service and encourages readers to contact the sponsoring agency for further information. Additional application guidelines and restrictions may apply.

### **Excellence in Human Research Protection Award**

The Health Improvement Institute is now accepting entries for the 2003 **Award for Excellence in Human Research Protection** awards competition. The award honors demonstrated excellence in promoting the well-being of people who participate in research. Award categories are:

- Best practice that has demonstrated benefit — given to a research institution, unit (such as an Institutional Review Board) or individual.
- Innovation established through research or other report published in the last five years — given to an individual (or team) that produced a significant contribution to advancing human research protection.
- Life-time achievement — given to an individual in academe, industry, or government.

A panel of judges, representing the various sectors involved in human research, evaluates entries. Winners will be announced in November 2003.

The **Award for Excellence in Human Research Protection** was established by the Health Improvement Institute, a non-profit, tax-exempt organization based in Bethesda, Maryland, to encourage and to recognize excellence and innovation in human research protection. The Office for Human Research Protections of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is the founding sponsor of the awards program. The 2003 awards competition is also supported by MCMC and Pfizer.

The deadline for receipt of entries is **September 29, 2003**. More information and/or application packets are available from the Awards Coordinator at (301) 651-1818 or by email at [hii@mcman.com](mailto:hii@mcman.com). Information can also be accessed at the Institute's web site: <http://www.hii.org>.

### Human Subjects Research Enhancements Program

Recognizing that the added procedures and safeguards for research on human subjects create a burden for institutions, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is providing short-term interim support for institutional activities that strengthen oversight. The request for applications (RFA), Human Subjects Research Enhancements Program (OD-03-007) will allow considerable flexibility in the types of activities that can be supported. The solicitation is limited only to those institutions funded under the first RFA (OD-02-003). However, "for this solicitation, the NIH requires applicants to collaborate with other institutions conducting human subjects research and not currently funded under this program, to share educational resources, computer technologies, best practices, etc."

All of the NIH Institutes and Centers supporting clinical research are providing support for the Program. **Applications are due July 11, 2003**. For more information, contact L. Tony Beck, National Center for Research Resources, at (301) 435-0805 or via e-mail: [beckl@mail.nih.gov](mailto:beckl@mail.nih.gov).

### Genetics, Behavior, and Aging Research

The National Institute on Aging is seeking novel research integrating genetics, behavior, and aging. The program announcement (PAS-03-128) is framed around two broad categories of questions: (1) gene-to-behavior questions concerning the nature and role of genetic influences on behaviors at older ages, and how these genetic effects vary with age; and (2) questions about dynamic processes including gene-environment interactions, gene-environment covariation, age-related genetic effects, and how behaviors interact with and affect genetic expressions. The announcement is designed to "stimulate methodologically rigorous research integrating genetics, other biological sciences, and the behavioral and social sciences."

Relevant behavioral domains include, but are not limited to, social behaviors, resilience, vitality, adaptivity, personality, vulnerability to stress, health behaviors, social cognition, human and social capital accumulation, economic savings for retirement, risk-taking, happiness, coping, caregiving, cognitive abilities, cognitive flexibility, cognitive reserve, learning, and functional abilities.

For more information contact Angie Chon-Lee, Behavioral and Social Research Program, (301) 594-5943 or [Chon-LeA@nia.nih.gov](mailto:Chon-LeA@nia.nih.gov); or see <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAS-03-128.html>.

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The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA), an advocacy organization for federal support for the social and behavioral sciences, was founded in 1981 and stands alone in Washington in representing the full range of social and behavioral sciences.

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