



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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MORTALITY BY CAUSE OF DEATH

We commend a sister publication for making age-adjusted death rates by cause in the United States population conveniently available. These figures, compiled by H.E.W.'s National Center for Health Statistics, appear on pages 77-84 of the *T.S.A.* 1978 Reports Number distributed last November, and are there primarily through the efforts of John W. Tomlinson.

Our enthusiasm comes partly from remembering that this valuable time-series was originally presented to actuaries by the first Associate Editor of *The Actuary*, Mortimer Spiegelman (*T.S.A.* XIX, D 449).

As the Report makes clear, the purity of this series over the past 28 years is unavoidably somewhat marred by changes in official classifications, especially between 1967 and 1968.

To whet our readers' appetites we show below a few death rates for the years 1950, 1967, 1968 and 1977. Strict comparability exists only between the first pair and the last pair for each cause of death.

Age-Adjusted Death Rates Per 100,000, United States White Males

<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>1968</u>	<u>1977</u>
Major Cardiovascular Diseases*	499.9	465.7	465.4	365.0
Malignant Neoplasms	130.9	150.3	152.5	160.0
Accidents	81.0	77.8	77.9	63.2
Pneumonia & Influenza	27.1	24.2	30.9	18.1
Diabetes Mellitus	11.3	12.4	13.3	9.8
Cirrhosis of Liver	11.6	17.2	17.7	16.7
Tuberculosis	23.3	3.6	3.1	1.2

E.J.M.

* 1968 definition

AERF TO SPONSOR SOCIAL SECURITY MONOGRAPH

The Actuarial Education and Research Fund is sponsoring preparation of a monograph, *Actuarial Guide to Social Security in the United States*, under specifications developed by the Committees on Social Insurance of the Academy and Society.

These purposes are (1) to provide a source through which actuaries, accountants, economists and others may become acquainted with the actuarial aspects and issues of Social Security, and (2) to be an authoritative introduction to actuarial principles and processes used to guide Social Security.

This project offers some actuary (or actuaries) an opportunity to make a contribution of professional and national significance. If you are interested in undertaking it, watch for announcements, to be published soon, of the request for proposals. You might also reveal your interest to any member of the AERF Pension Subcommittee. Its members are James C. Hickman, Fenton R. Isaacson and Cecil J. Nesbitt (Chairman).

Boleslaw Monic Foundation Award

Papers on "Net Retentions"

1st prize — 8,000 Dutch florins
(approximately \$4,500.)

2nd prize — 5,000 florins

3rd prize — 1,000 florins

Competitors are invited to submit papers setting out and justifying methods which will assist offices in determining optimal retention limits. Theoretical analysis of the problem will be welcome but such a treatment, possibly based on a general strategy, should produce methods or algorithms which can be understood and applied by practitioners.

An example of the application of the favoured method to a hypothetical or existing portfolio will be welcome.

Papers must be received in The Netherlands by April 30, 1980.

For full details, please write to the Executive Director in the Chicago office.

Note: In 1976 John Haynes Miller was one of the award winners. Maybe he'll try again.

Railroad Retirement Act Valuation Report

The December 1977 valuation of the railroad retirement system has been published. It includes a statement by the Board's Actuarial Advisory Committee whose members were Cedric W. Kroll (chairman), Thomas H. Jolls, Jr., and Robert J. Myers. You may obtain a copy gratis from Robert E. Larson, Chief Actuary, Railroad Retirement Board, 844 Rush St., Chicago, IL 60611.

A THOUSAND REPLIED TO FUTURISM ENQUIRY

by David N. Ball

The Committee on Futurism is grateful to the Fellows and Associates who answered our questionnaire last summer. The 1,011 responses came from a representative cross-section of older and younger members, but with rather more than a proportionate number from those who attained membership since 1970. The degree of your interest in futurism was expressed thus:

Strong Interest	98
Substantial Interest	316
Casual Interest	572
No Interest	25

On futurism's relevance to the actuary's professional life, 476 thought it "very much relevant," 492 "moderately," 29 "not relevant."

Repliers' Activities

Eighty-seven of you are members of futurism-oriented bodies such as the World Future Society. Forty-seven have given talks or written papers or books in this field. Sixty-two others reported a variety of activities, including work in ACLI's Trend Analysis Program. Ninety-six are willing to serve on our Committee—some conditionally. (One said, "if a local committee were formed in Johannesburg!") We were pleased to hear from several overseas members.

About one-quarter of you gave us your views on what you'd like to see being done. In general, our Committee activities—sessions at Society meetings, offering speakers to actuarial clubs, giving ideas to examination and other committees, compilation of bibliographies, and encouragement of papers for the *Transactions*—appear to fill the expressed needs. We have ample encouragement to proceed!