Article From:

The Actuary

TURNOUT OF FELLOWS AT SOCIETY MEETINGS 1966-1983

by E.J. Moorhead

A study of attendance at Casualty Actuarial Society meetings by Stephen W. Philbrick F.C.A.S. that appeared in the May issue of *The Actuarial Review* has stimulated us to explore the same subject for our Society using data kindly supplied by Director of Research Mark G. Doherty. Mr. Philbrick gave CAS figures for both Fellows and Associates but we are limiting this present article to figures on Fellows, planning a sequel about Associates.

First, here are the numbers, covering in each calendar year the totals of three Spring Meetings and the Annual Meeting:

Sum of Numbers of Fellows who Attended Meetings in Calendar Years Shown

1966	1,273	1972	1,921	1978	1,964
1967	1,446	1973	1,900	1979	2,409
1968	1,348	1974	1,915	1980	2,345
1969	1,765	1975	2,128	1981	2,357
1970	1,439	1976	1,875	1982	2,581
1971	1,821	1977	2,179	1983	2,420

This doesn't mean that, e.g., in 1966, 1,273 different Fellows were at our meetings; no attempt was made to remove double, triple, or quadruple counting of those present at more than one meeting.

In order to reveal whatever trend there may be, it is desirable first to smooth these figures so as to reduce effects of temporary influences, such as meeting locations, special topics and economic conditions. We have done this by arriving at smoothed values for six selected years: 1968, 1971, 1974, 1977, 1980 and 1983. For each of the first five of these chosen years (t) we have averaged the attendances for the years (t – 2) to (t + 2); for 1983 spring meetings we used the average of 1982, 1983 and 1984; the unadjusted count was used for the 1983 annual meeting. As a measuring rod we use the numbers of Fellows on our roster in the same calendar year but excluding those who became Fellows via the November examinations.

The result is thus:

	1968	1971	1974	1977	1980	1983
1. Calendar Year						
2. Attendance (Smoothed)	1,454	1,769	1,948	2,111	2,331	2,530
3. Fellows on Roster	1,763	2,162	2,575	3,300	4,189	5,028
4. Ratio of 2. to 3.	.825	.818	.757	.640	.556	.503

In the period (1977-1983) that is common to the two studies, our attendance ratios are lower than Mr. Philbrick's but the trends are similar. For us, the speed of decline was highest in the late 1970s. We must remember that there are many more competing meetings, seminars and forums now than there were 15 years ago.

Ed. Note: Further comments on this trend will be welcomed and presented to our readers. □

MAY EXAM STATISTICS

	Passed	G.R.E. Credit	Total	New Associates	New Fellows
May 1980	664	40	704	393	186
May 1981	641	32	673	212	87
May 1982	667	43	710	225	146
May 1983	813	36	849	187	160
May 1984	827	34	861	207	157

The total number receiving credit for Part 1 in May 1984 was the largest since the late 1970's. The number of new Associates is back above the 200-mark. New Fellows were slightly fewer than last year but exceeded the numbers in May 1981 and 1982.

POLITICAL OVERTONES

The following debate recently occurred in *The New York Times:*

POINT: (From a June 24, 1984 editorial by George W. Ball, former Under Secretary of State)

A PRESIDENT AT 74 (77) IS A CONSIDERABLE RISK

Princeton, N.J.—If President Reagan is re-elected, he will be almost 74 when he begins his second term and almost 78 when he completes it. But death may not permit him to complete it, for, under insurance actuarial tables, a 74 year old man has only a two-thirds chance of surviving for four more years.

In fact, a President's chances are even less than that, since, in this century, one-eighth of our dead presidents were assasinated—an occupational hazard that the actuarial tables do not reflect.

COUNTERPOINT: (From a letter to the editor by Henry Denker)

THE ACTUARIAL EDGE OF RONALD REAGAN

In his zeal to ensure the election of a Democratic candidate for president, George Ball resorted to an actuarial attack on Mr. Reagan. However, he did not pursue his figures far enough.

If he had, he would have discovered that, of the Presidents who died in office from various causes, Lincoln died at 52, Taylor at 64, McKinley at 54, Harding at 57, Roosevelt at 63, and Kennedy at 43. Actuarially speaking, Walter Mondale, being 56, would seem the more likely of the two candidates to die in office.

Further, of the presidents who outlived their terms, John Adams lived to be 90; Thomas Jefferson, 83; James Madison, 85; John Quincy Adams, 80; Andrew Jackson, 78; Martin Van Buren, 79; Herbert Hoover, 90; and Harry Truman, 88.

The record seems to favor Ronald Reagan by a wide margin. It also seems to dispute the folk tale that serving as president so taxes a man as to shorten his life. In fact, the presidency may prove to be the new treatment for insuring longevity, Mr. Ball to the contrary notwithstanding.

* * * *

Thanks to Jim Morton and Frank Irish for finding, and Associate Editor Coppel for reporting this interchange. □