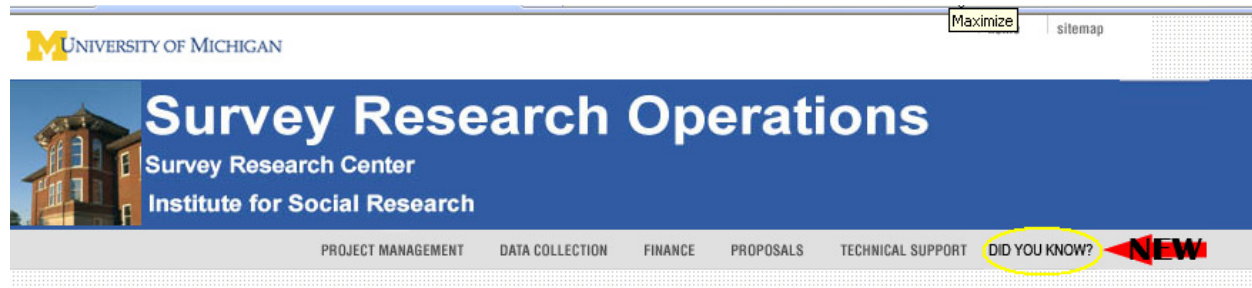


## Happening in SRO

You can find this “Happening in SRO” and all similar updates on the SRO Intranet. Look for the Section titled: Did You Know?



### From the Archive: The ACS Kelly Chatain

It is hard to imagine a time when we didn't know about the signs and symptoms of cancer. This is due in large part to the educational efforts of organizations like The American Cancer Society (ACS). After WWII the ACS was reorganized and revitalized. They had a successful volunteer 'army' of women active around the country, a newly formed research funding arm, and were greatly expanding their educational and fundraising efforts. In 1948 they enlisted the help of the SRC to find out how they were doing and how they could improve their efficiency and reach. The goals were as follows:

1. To determine public information about and attitudes towards cancer.
2. To find out to what extent the aims of the Society are known and accepted and identified with the Society.
3. To assess the effectiveness of the 1948 campaign of the Society, and to investigate factors contributing to its success.<sup>1</sup>

While the ACS was headed in new directions, it was also a new direction for SRC. This was their first study dealing with public health and illness. Initially, the investigators were not sure how people would respond to questions on this difficult topic. It turned out that respondents were quite willing to discuss the disease and their experience with it, so much so that the study staff felt obligated to write a memo to the interviewers on the need to protect themselves psychologically and emotionally. "You should not allow yourself to become depressed by the interviewing and the information you get. One other thing; don't take it personally." <sup>2</sup>

The results of the survey were gratifying to the ACS in a number of ways. They confirmed that people did, indeed, know that cancer was a "grave problem" and that research was important. They also revealed personal solicitation to be a highly effective means of receiving contributions. Depending on where people were solicited, 81%-95% contributed versus only 59% of those who heard about the campaign on the

<sup>1</sup> American Cancer Society Website (<http://www.cancer.org/aboutus/whoweare/our-history>)

<sup>2</sup> "Special Note on Interviewing on Project #34", P. 34 American Cancer Society Study, SRO Archive

radio. After receiving these initial reports from SRC the ACS used this information to immediately reshape their 1949 efforts.

On a side note, can you guess what was the second most cited dangerous disease or illness after cancer? Tuberculosis, cited by 45% of respondents (Cancer was 80%).

The Details:

Directed by Dr. Charles A. Metzner

Funded by The American Cancer Society

30 minute (approx.) face-to-face interviews

1,244 respondents from 44 counties and 10 metropolitan areas, aged 21 and older in private households