

American Sociological Association  
California Institute for Federal Policy Research  
Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics  
Population Resource Center

*Present  
A briefing for Congress*

**Racial and Ethnic Data:  
Why We Collect It; How We Use It**

Wednesday, May 28, 2003  
Room 2168 Rayburn House Office Building (The Gold Room)  
10:00 – 11:30 a.m.  
*(Light refreshments served)*

The question of whether to collect statistics that allow comparisons among racial and ethnic groups, in the census, public surveys, and administrative databases, is not an abstract one. The role of racial classification in American society is directly relevant to informed, evidence-based public policy and meaningful scientific research.

Former Rep. Thomas C. Sawyer will moderate a discussion by three distinguished speakers – Dr. Troy Duster, New York University and University of California-Berkeley; Dr. Brian Smedley, The National Academies/Institute of Medicine; and Gerald Sanders, former San Diego Police Chief and C.O.O., Virtual Capital of California – on why racial and ethnic categories, although not necessarily reflecting biological or genetic differences, are socially significant constructs that aid in understanding and addressing inequalities in primary social institutions such as health care, law enforcement and criminal justice, the workplace, and education. Attendees will receive ASA's official statement, *The Importance of Collecting Data and Doing Social Scientific Research on Race*.

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