

Editor's Letter

Mike Larsen,
Executive Editor



Dear Readers,

This issue of *CHANCE* contains articles from four areas in which statistics and probability make a difference. The first is statistical consulting. H. Dean Johnson, Sarah Boslaugh, Murray Clayton, Christopher Holloman, and Linda Young discuss compensation for statistical consulting in their university settings. Tom Louis provides recommendations for improving the status, experience, and compensation for statistical consultants, and Janice Derr illustrates the benefits to students of being involved in effective consulting experiences.

The second area is politics. Arlene Ash and John Lamperti present statistical arguments concerning the disputed 2006 Florida Congressional District 13 election. Could statistical arguments be used to overturn an election? Joseph Hall and Walter Mebane comment and provide their perspectives on statistical and other issues pertaining to U.S. elections.

In the area of health, Jane Gentleman celebrates the 50th anniversary of the National Health Interview Survey by relating details about its design, statistical qualities, and innovations over time. Way to go NHIS! Mark Glickman brings us the Here's to Your Health column. In this issue, Gerardo Chowell, N. W. Hengartner, Catherine Ammon, and Mac Hyman employ statistical models to speculate on the effect of hypothetical interventions on the 1918 influenza pandemic.

David Banks describes five statistical challenges researchers in the area of metabolomics face. As David explains, metabolomics is an expanding dimension of the genomics revolution and a rich domain for statistical contributions. Phil Dixon and Geng Ding give a detailed examination of a study in plant metabolomics.

The fourth area of content is graphics and, in particular, communication issues related to graphics. In his Visual Revelations column, Howard Wainer uses a

variety of examples to warn of the dangers of too much creativity with insufficient education of the reader in large reports. Linda Pickle, the author of a report praised by Howard, comments on her experiences researching and negotiating the improvement of graphics in government publications. A letter from John Tukey to Linda is included in supplemental online material.

This issue is completed with a reflection by Roger Pinkham on the paradox of de Mere (and a favorite recipe) and the Puzzle Corner column by Tom Jabine. Tom has been writing the puzzle column for *CHANCE* for more than a decade. It is with deep appreciation for his service that I announce this puzzle to be his last regular contribution. Tom is turning Puzzle Corner over to Jonathan Berkowitz, and we look forward to his first puzzle in the next issue. In addition to the puzzle, an interview with Tom is included. In his answers, he expresses his enthusiasm for statistics and his enjoyment in helping and interacting with others throughout a fruitful career. Tom, thanks for all you have done for *CHANCE* and the field of statistics. Best wishes.

I also want to thank Albyn Jones for his service as an editor of *CHANCE*. Albyn has joined his college's institutional review board, and we wish him the best with this new position. Further, I want to welcome two new editors to *CHANCE*: Herbie Lee of the University of California at Santa Cruz and Sam Kou of Harvard University. Welcome aboard. As I mentioned in my first editorial, the articles in *CHANCE* cover a diverse set of topics in which statistics and probability play important roles, so get ready for some interesting reading!

I look forward to your comments, suggestions, and article submissions.

Enjoy the issue!

Mike Larsen