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02-08-2012 01:55 AM

#1

**Karabiner**

TS Contributor

[m.v.c.](#)


Location: Schalke 04, Germany

Posts: 1,005

Thanks: 12

Thanked 245 Times in 235 Posts

### Statistics Poetry



#### ***Love the Motherland, Love Statistics***

In Life

Some mock me for doing statistics

Some loathe me and statistics

Some don't understand what statistics are

Why is it that statistics

Put a calm smile on my face?

Because of statistics I can solve the deepest mysteries

Because of statistics I will not be lonely again, playing in the data

Because of statistics I can rearrange the stars in the skies above

(by Chinese statistician Wang Jiaowei [translated],  
The Wall Street Journal, September 26-27, 2009,  
<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125390923281341865.html>)

*Last edited by Karabiner; 02-08-2012 at 02:08 AM.*

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**The Following 2 Users Say Thank You to Karabiner For This Useful Post:**

gianmarco (02-16-2012), TheEcologist (05-25-2012)

02-08-2012 02:05 AM

#2

**Karabiner** 

TS Contributor

**m.v.c.**



Location: Schalke 04, Germany  
Posts: 1,005  
Thanks: 12  
Thanked 245 Times in 235 Posts

**Re: Statistics Poetry**

***Dissertation Blues  
or Why I should have paid attention in stats class***  
by Peter Flom

I've designed a great experiment  
And collected all my data.  
I've no idea what it all means  
I'll get to that stuff later.

I've forgotten all the stats I learned,  
And I never learned that much.  
I needed it to pass my comps  
But since then I've lost touch.

I'll do another lit review  
And find another theory,  
But when it's time to analyze,  
Everything goes bleary.

So I hired a consultant  
To tell me what I'd got  
He looked at three years of my life  
And answered "Not a lot".

"There is no dissertation here,  
There aren't any theses  
Basically what you have got  
Is a great big pile of feces!"

"You should have called me years ago

Now get this through your head:  
 You've hired a physician  
 But the patient is quite dead".

Date: Fri, 25 Nov 1994 14:40:18 -0500 (EST)  
 From: [FLOM@MURRAY.FORDHAM.EDU](mailto:FLOM@MURRAY.FORDHAM.EDU)  
 To: [edstat-l@jse.stat.ncsu.edu](mailto:edstat-l@jse.stat.ncsu.edu)  
 Subject: A humorous poem

**Reply With Quote**

02-16-2012 03:52 PM

#3

## Karabiner

TS Contributor

m.v.c.



Location: Schalke 04, Germany  
 Posts: 1,005  
 Thanks: 12  
 Thanked 245 Times in 235 Posts

## Re: Statistics Poetry

### *Me and my buddies did a few studies*

#### AUTHOR NOTE

We wish we could acknowledge  
 A fancy research grant  
 But since ours was rejected  
 Unfortunately we can't.  
 Still Larry, Jill, and Jerry  
 All need to be thanked  
 But as for the reviewers  
 Those bastards should be spanked.

#### INTRODUCTION

According to Germain & Johnson  
 (and also Smith, but cf Swanson)  
 People process information  
 From their current situation  
 Mainly from infatuation  
 - Only if they get the urge  
 From powerful affective surge  
 They get smart when touched by Cupid  
 Otherwise they're pretty stupid.  
 Other work on social thinking  
 Has provided findings linking  
 Self-conceptions and aggression  
 Especially amid repression  
 Before the topic was exhausted  
 The truth was found but then they lost it  
 Contradict'ry findings came out  
 Grand conclusions did a flameout  
 Meta-analyzed collections  
 Pointed opposite directions  
 Issues were still mixed and muddy  
 So we thought we'd do a study.  
 The goal of our investigation

Was to get a publication  
Research purposes were clear:  
We wanted to get our tenure here.  
Sitting over cheapo beers  
We bemoaned our stalled careers  
Waxing cynical and leery  
Groping for a brilliant theory  
Wondered how to make a splash  
And get some research funding cash  
Toot our horn, like Diz Gillespie,  
And get into JPSP,  
Things like this, not any logic  
Caused us to pursue this project.  
As usual, our theory's cursed:  
Freud or Heider said it first.  
He thought it up but didn't test it  
Back then, was 'nuff to just have guessed it.

#### METHOD

Though the recompense was meagre  
Subjects signed up seaming eager  
Possibly they liked our title  
(A catchy one is often vital)  
Sign-up sheets said bold and clear,  
"Chocolate, money, sex, and beer".  
Seated at computer screen,  
Craving stimuli obscene  
Instead we held them up for fools  
and trotted out our usual tools  
Slides of subliminal prime  
(Software costs a pretty dime)  
Timed IQ tests, pass or fail,  
Here and there a Likert scale,  
Questionnaires with spaces fillable,  
Long dull lists of nonsense syllable  
Variables are elusive?  
We have measures more intrusive  
Sensors on their private parts  
Record their hiccups, burps, and farts  
To reveal their state of mind  
Through data patterns we shall find.  
Polygraphs with lines a-wagging  
Inform us their attention's lagging  
So we push their affect button  
Get their hormones all a-struttin'.  
Manipulated and provoked  
Their angry impulses were stoked  
We got them hot under their collars  
But then we paid them each two dollars  
(A fair and proper settlement-  
Besides, they signed informed consent.)  
They listened to our full debriefing

And gave "the finger" before leaving.

#### RESULTS

To buttress our investigation  
We checked the manipulation  
Ratings on the questionnaire  
Across conditions, did compare  
And showed that in our lab'ratory  
They believed our cover story  
They fell for it, and what is more,  
Rated us a total bore.  
Next we turned with doubtful pleasure  
To analyze dependent measure  
Oh how we tried to beat the odds  
Courting the statistics gods  
Sacrifices, prayers, libations,  
Logarithmic transformations,  
Square, covary, standardize,  
T-tests tell the sweetest lies.  
LISREL made us feel a fool,  
Reviewers, though, will think it's cool.  
Finally in our musty basement  
Printouts showed to our amazement  
Sort of a pink elephant  
Our finding was significant!

#### DISCUSSION

Now it's time to tell our story  
Of how our t-tests, in their glory,  
may advance the stock of knowledge  
(and our paychecks from the college).  
Our results, and you can quote us,  
Show that students mainly notice  
Things romantic and lascivious  
To all else they seem oblivious.  
Alternative interpretations  
Regarding our investigations  
Puzzle and befog our brains  
And in our asses give us pains  
Not to mention blind reviewers  
(Minds like knives and mouths like sewers)  
But their suggestions were all heeded  
But still, more research is needed.

#### CONCLUSION

The broadest point, as we reflect,  
Is that the human intellect  
Is \*\*\*\*er than you would expect.

Baumeister, R. F. & Tice, D. M. (1998). Me and my buddies did a few studies. Dialogue, the Newsletter of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, 13(2), 16.

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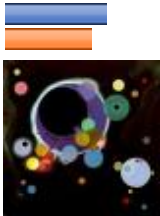
02-16-2012 04:38 PM

#4

**ledzep** ◉

Point Mass at Zero

m.v.c.



Location: Berks, UK

Posts: 639

Thanks: 169

Thanked 130 Times in 128 Posts

**Re: Statistics Poetry**Originally Posted by **Karabiner** ➡

*"....You've hired a physician  
But the patient is quite dead".*

Priceless! As is often the case, statisticians are called upon only when there is a deep trouble.

Thanks K for sharing some wonderful and light-hearted poems.

Oh Thou Perelman! Poincare's was for you and Riemann's is for me.

Reply With Quote

05-25-2012 07:02 AM

#5

**Karabiner** ◉

TS Contributor

m.v.c.



Location: Schalke 04, Germany

Posts: 1,005

Thanks: 12

Thanked 245 Times in 235 Posts

**Re: Statistics Poetry****Statistics**

by Neil Harding McAlister

No politician wishes to get caught  
With policies opposed to public thought.  
A popular position holds more sway,  
So mathematics comes to save the day.  
Some pollsters are retained to man the phones.  
They only reach the folks who are at home;  
But now he's got a survey full of notes --  
A skewed opinion poll that he can quote.  
And thus statistics help our leaders lead  
When leading from the rear is all they need.

The world of medicine is fertile soil  
For workers who in TV newsrooms toil.  
A staffer scans some journals 'til she finds  
An article to baffle laymen's minds,  
Then takes her viewers down the garden path  
Less through ill-will than ignorance of math.  
This person, who is no statistics whiz,

Thinks probability translates to "is."  
 Her foolish talk of breakthroughs spawns false hope,  
 But all that hype helps sponsors sell more soap.

Now eager to advance his own career  
 And garner kudos from his trusting peers,  
 With ardent lust for academic fame  
 And big, fat research grants that bear his name,  
 A scientist pads up his resume  
 With guff that should not see the light of day.  
 His papers bulge with histograms and plots,  
 ANOVA, chi squared's, Student's t's -- the lot.  
 So what if he has analyzed with care?  
 His data were all fudged out of thin air!

Innumerates don't know statistics lore;  
 But aiding us, as in the days of yore,  
 A sceptic's common sense can serve us well.  
 It doesn't take a Ph.D. to tell  
 That making little thoughts seem so much bigger,  
 The figures may not lie -- but liars figure!

<http://www.durham.net/~neilmac/Statistics.htm>

**Reply With Quote**

07-13-2012 10:50 AM

#6

## Karabiner

TS Contributor

m.v.c.



Location: Schalke 04, Germany  
 Posts: 1,005  
 Thanks: 12  
 Thanked 245 Times in 235 Posts

## Re: Statistics Poetry

### Three Haikus

Found correlation  
 Careful, it's not causation  
 Variables may lurk

---

So many numbers  
 So little time left,  
 Whats that equation?

---

Simpson's paradox  
 Is only the beginning  
 Getting dangerous

From the Smith College MTH190 (Statistical Methods for Undergraduate Research) spring 2005 and spring 2010 classes  
<http://www.math.smith.edu/~nhorton/haikustat.html>

A haiku consists of three lines.  
The first and third lines must have 5 syllables each;  
the second line must have seven.  
Here, the requirement was dropped that a season  
of the year be mentioned.

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11-12-2012 04:01 AM

#7

**Karabiner**

TS Contributor

m.v.c.



Location: Schalke 04, Germany  
Posts: 1,005  
Thanks: 12  
Thanked 245 Times in 235 Posts

**Re: Statistics Poetry**

***Hiawatha Designs an Experiment***  
by Maurice Kendall

Hiawatha, mighty hunter,  
He could shoot ten arrows upward,  
Shoot them with such strength and swiftness  
That the last had left the bow-string  
Ere the first to earth descended.

This was commonly regarded  
As a feat of skill and cunning.  
Several sarcastic spirits  
Pointed out to him, however,  
That it might be much more useful  
If he sometimes hit the target.  
"Why not shoot a little straighter  
And employ a smaller sample?"  
Hiawatha, who at college  
Majored in applied statistics,  
Consequently felt entitled  
To instruct his fellow man  
In any subject whatsoever,  
Waxed exceedingly indignant,  
Talked about the law of errors,  
Talked about truncated normals,  
Talked of loss of information,  
Talked about his lack of bias,  
Pointed out that (in the long run)  
Independent observations,  
Even though they missed the target,  
Had an average point of impact  
Very near the spot he aimed at,  
With the possible exception  
Of a set of measure zero.

"This," they said, "was rather doubtful;  
Anyway it didn't matter.  
What resulted in the long run:  
Either he must hit the target  
Much more often than at present,

Or himself would have to pay for  
All the arrows he had wasted."

Hiawatha, in a temper,  
Quoted parts of R. A. Fisher,  
Quoted Yates and quoted Finney,  
Quoted reams of Oscar Kempthorne,  
Quoted Anderson and Bancroft  
(practically in extenso)  
Trying to impress upon them  
That what actually mattered  
Was to estimate the error.

Several of them admitted:  
"Such a thing might have its uses;  
Still," they said, "he would do better  
If he shot a little straighter."

Hiawatha, to convince them,  
Organized a shooting contest.  
Laid out in the proper manner  
Of designs experimental  
Recommended in the textbooks,  
Mainly used for tasting tea  
(but sometimes used in other cases)  
Used factorial arrangements  
And the theory of Galois,  
Got a nicely balanced layout  
And successfully confounded  
Second order interactions.

All the other tribal marksmen,  
Ignorant benighted creatures  
Of experimental setups,  
Used their time of preparation  
Putting in a lot of practice  
Merely shooting at the target.

Thus it happened in the contest  
That their scores were most impressive  
With one solitary exception.  
This, I hate to have to say it,  
Was the score of Hiawatha,  
Who as usual shot his arrows,  
Shot them with great strength and swiftness,  
Managing to be unbiased,  
Not however with a salvo  
Managing to hit the target.

"There!" they said to Hiawatha,  
"That is what we all expected."  
Hiawatha, nothing daunted,


Called for pen and called for paper.  
But analysis of variance  
Finally produced the figures  
Showing beyond all peradventure,  
Everybody else was biased.  
And the variance components  
Did not differ from each other's,  
Or from Hiawatha's.  
(This last point it might be mentioned,  
Would have been much more convincing  
If he hadn't been compelled to  
Estimate his own components  
From experimental plots on  
Which the values all were missing.)

Still they couldn't understand it,  
So they couldn't raise objections.  
(Which is what so often happens  
with analysis of variance.)  
All the same his fellow tribesmen,  
Ignorant benighted heathens,  
Took away his bow and arrows,  
Said that though my Hiawatha  
Was a brilliant statistician,  
He was useless as a bowman.  
As for variance components  
Several of the more outspoken  
Make primeval observations  
Hurtful of the finer feelings  
Even of the statistician.

In a corner of the forest  
Sits alone my Hiawatha  
Permanently cogitating  
On the normal law of errors.  
Wondering in idle moments  
If perhaps increased precision  
Might perhaps be sometimes better  
Even at the cost of bias,  
If one could thereby now and then  
Register upon a target.

Kendall, Maurice (1959). Hiawatha Designs an Experiment. The American Statistician 13: 23-24.

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|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| 03-21-2013 10:09 AM  |  | #8  |
| <b>Karabiner</b> <br>TS Contributor |  | <b>Re: Statistics Poetry</b><br><b><i>Some Studies That I Like To Quote</i></b> |

m.v.c.



Location: Schalke 04, Germany  
Posts: 1,005  
Thanks: 12  
Thanked 245 Times in 235 Posts

by James McCormack

Guidelines made me feel so happy I could die  
I told my patients it was good enough  
To lower glucose make them unconscious  
I put my 95 year-olds on a statin

I should have known all along that this was wrong  
100 over 60 made them fall, they really fall  
Stopping salt and fat did not make sense  
I really should have looked at evidence  
I didn't know that half of guidelines were just opinion

You say I need an RCT  
One that actually shows a difference in a real outcome  
I'm supposed to know the NNT, and discuss it with my patients  
Are you kidding me?

Don't know what a p-value is  
You say I need a Cochrane review to help me find some numbers  
I hear some surrogates were wrong  
And now I need some studies I'm supposed to quote

Now I need some studies I'm supposed to quote  
Now I need some studies I'm supposed to quote

Now and then I think of all the things you had me measure  
You had me thinking there was always something that was wrong  
All that fibre was an adventure  
Now I'm passing wicker furniture  
Beta-blockers made me feel real slow  
And now you telling me about some studies that you need to quote

But now I'm reading RCTs  
You get a 1% reduction from a low dose statin

I know now that an A1C of less than 8 is good enough as long as you don't pee  
Forget about your CRP  
Just don't eat like a great fat pig and go get some activity  
I think that I can help you now  
I finally have some studies that I like to quote

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ij8bPX8IING>

A parody of the song "Somebody That I Used To Know" by Gotye.

**Reply With Quote**

07-23-2013 07:05 AM

#9

**Karabiner** ◉

TS Contributor

m.v.c.



Location: Schalke 04, Germany

Posts: 1,005

Thanks: 12

Thanked 245 Times in 235 Posts

**Re: Statistics Poetry**

## Data Analysis Modeling

[www.dotplot.com](http://www.dotplot.com)

Cloud solution for Statistics, Data Visualization, Big Da

**Statistics**

By Carlo Alberti Salustri (1871-1950), alias Trilussa

Translated by Jordi Prats

Do you know what statistics is? A thing  
that's used to record a general tale  
of the newborn people, those with an ail,  
the dead, the imprisoned and those marrying.

But for me the statistic that is funny  
happens when percentage enters the game,  
so that, then, the mean is always the same  
even for the person who has no money.

That is, from the calculations you make  
in accordance to current statistics  
one chicken per year you should take:

And, if your budget doesn't allow you,  
nevertheless allows it statistics  
because someone other will eat two.

Original Version:

*La statistica*

Sai ched'è la statistica? E' `na cosa  
che serve pe' fa' un conto in generale  
de la gente che nasce, che sta male  
che more, che va in carcere e che spósa

Ma pe' me la statistica curiosa  
è dove c'entra la percentuale,  
pe' via che, lì, la media è sempre eguale  
puro co' la persona bisognosa.

Me spiego: da li conti che se fanno  
seconno la statistica d'adesso  
risurta che te tocca un pollo all'anno:

e, se nun entra ne le spese tue,

t'entra ne la statistica lo stesso  
perché c'è un antro che ne magna due.

<http://www.significancemagazine.org/...tatistics.html>

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