

It'll be all right on the night!

Hugh Morton reports on the stresses of providing statistical commentary for a cliffhanger election.

Many of you will have watched some or all of TV One's coverage of the election. This was my fourth election involvement and my first actively on camera. I thought I was reasonably prepared, but what a night it was! Six continuous hours of live television was somewhat more than I had expected. Even though we had a full scale rehearsal the previous night and a debrief lasting until 1 am, I hadn't felt tired throughout Saturday's proceedings. But suddenly at 1.01 am when it was all over, I knew I was knackered!

The final result was a really hard one to predict with any certainty. Early results were very slow to come in. When they did what we saw was several very large swings Labour's way, and one or two small swings National's way. Statisticians know the dual problems of small sample size and high variability all too well. The public don't! A little later things became somewhat clearer and at first the barest majority for National seemed likely. Only when the localised support for the two minor parties became apparent, did the hung parliament emerge.

TVNZ of course have a dual purpose to their election coverage; to give the results quickly and accurately, and to present the drama of the event. The former proved the more difficult, but on all accounts the latter was a great success. I am proud to have been a part of it, and I hope NZSA members enjoyed the show.

There were a few glitches; always unavoidable in such a long and complex live production. The swing worm wouldn't animate the first time we tried it. In my earpiece I was getting the instruction "Keep talking, it will come up in a second", so I did. Next moment in a loud voice I get "The ***** thing won't work. Kill it. Throw to Ian for the next item." When I viewed the videotape of this incident you could see the strain on my face! Now I laugh at this and a couple of other similar occurrences.

As to what lies ahead for statistical coverage of future

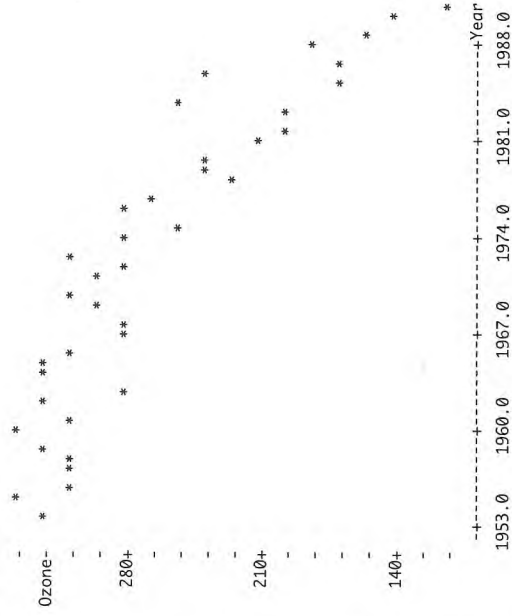
elections, only the need for a new analysis and prediction system to cater for MMP seems assured. But when it is, remains to be determined. Whenever that occurs and after my experiences on Saturday, I'll be a definite starter.

And more about the election can be found on page 8, where Alan Simpson discusses the polling of the two marginal Hamilton electorates.

The Ozone Hole

Until recently I treated stories about the 'Greenhouse Effect' and the 'Ozone Hole' rather skeptically. I'm still not convinced about the Greenhouse Effect, but I recently found an alarming set of data on the Internet.

```
MTB > name c5 'Year' c6 'Ozone'
MTB > plot c6 c5
```



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President's Column



It has sometimes been a tradition for the president to express his or her personal philosophy in this column. But I have decided to attempt the role of Person of Action and leave the philosophizing to the Newsletter editor. Murray fits the part admirably as can be

seen in his editorial.

Jean Thompson, our past president, and Megan Clark received Women's Suffrage Centennial Year Medals. Congratulations to you both!

Jean presented her president's report at the AGM in August. It will be published in the next issue of the *New Zealand Statistician* and is available by anonymous ftp from `rua2.ruakura.cri.nz`. (Change to the `nzsa` directory by typing `cd nzsa` and then type `get pres93.txt`.)

The Association grew by 100 from March 1992 to March 1993 to 375 members:

	NZ	Overseas
Ordinary members	238	36
Student members	19	36
Libraries/agencies	13	20
exchange members		13
Totals	270	105

As Jean says in her report: "This year has seen many more changes for statisticians than we would ordinarily hope to see. As an Association we have endeavoured to keep abreast of them. My personal opinion is that we could now do with a period of consolidation, both inside the Association and within our major employing organizations. The structures we have in place and all the excellent people we have who make them work should allow this at least as far as the Association is concerned."

As editors of the *Newsletter* for four years, Peter and I thank contributors and readers. As I move across the page to president I look forward to continue working with you. We have an excellent team of committee members and convenors distributed widely both geographically and by affiliation.

Copies of the minutes of the August AGM are available from the Secretary, or by anonymous ftp from `rua2.ruakura.cri.nz` (`cd nzsa, get agm93.txt`).

When I'm not singing Barbershop or canoeing the Waikato there is a good chance you can contact me at:

phone: (07) 838-5151 direct dial
or call your closest AgResearch (avoid toll)
(09) 307-0784 Auckland
(06) 356-8019 Palmerston North
(04) 528-6089 Wellington
(03) 489-3739 Dunedin
and ask for extension 5151
phone: (07) 856-3899
fax: (07) 838-5012
email: hendersonh@ruakura.cri.nz

Harold Henderson
Statistics
AgResearch Ruakura
Private Bag 3123
Hamilton



The Sunday Times photographer captures Helen Stott (left) and Jean Thompson with Wellington Girls College seventh-former Megan Hubbard at the April launch of a Suffrage Year display showing the work of New Zealand women mathematicians and statisticians aged from 20 to 70. A pamphlet with the same theme has also been produced. Helen Stott, who convenes the NZSA Women's Suffrage Project, is at present on maternity leave, demonstrating in another way how women statisticians continue to successfully combine their careers with family life.

Ozone Hole (from page 1)

These data form a time series of mean October ozone column thicknesses, in Dobson Units (whatever they are) recorded at Halley Bay in the Antarctic between 1956 and 1991, they come from the Usenet newsgroup `sci.answers`, specifically the file called `Ozone Depletion FAQ Part III: The Antarctic Ozone Hole`. Now, how many Dunedin statisticians want to go on my distribution list for statistics job vacancies? (see page 6).

Editorial

As I write this editorial this week's *Time* has a cover story 'The Death of Freud' and inside the magazine the editorial refers back to a cover story on 'The Death of God', published in April 1966. We need no reminding of the recent collapse of the Soviet Union which may entrain the metaphorical death of Marx and the actual physical burial of Lenin. All we seem to be left with in the way of things to believe in is the steady hand of market forces, and we may well doubt how long this ideology will last before it is seen to let us down.

Statisticians as individuals may be Freudians, Theists, Marxists, or devotees of the free market, but as a group we have something that sets us apart from those who see the world completely from a theoretical perspective. This is the ability to let our theories be tuned, or modified, or even completely rejected by the data that we observe. We may need this ability now as we struggle to adapt to a changing role in a changing society, a society that neither understands what it is we do, nor sees why our concerns should be taken particularly seriously.

How do we apply our empirical, non-ideological outlook to our own predicament? Well for a start we must listen to each and share our experiences with each other. This is what makes a newsletter like this

New Zealand Statistical Association

President: Harold Henderson

Secretary: Ray Littler

Treasurer: Gary Dunnet

Editors *NZ Statistician*: Hugh Morton

Newsletter: Murray Jorgensen

Committee: Garry Dickinson, Vince Galvin,

Stephen Haslett, Jeff Hunter, Donal Krouse,

Katrina Sharples, Debra Taylor, Marianne

Vignaux.

Subcommittee convenors: Stephen Haslett

(SAPQC), Mike Camden (Education), John Waller

(Publications), Vince Galvin (Science Fairs), Garry

Dickinson (Standards), Greg Arnold (History),

Helen Stott (Women's Suffrage Project), Katrina

Sharples (Public Relations).

Further information from:

Secretary

New Zealand Statistical Association

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Wellington, New Zealand

Email littler@waikato.ac.nz

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so important. By using it to speak to each other we can understand a little better the challenges that we each face in plying the statistical trade in today's world. It can help to know that the hurtful remark that someone made to you the other day is the same kind of comment that other statisticians have experienced. It can help to know that some of the doubts you have about particular hallowed verities of our profession are shared by a sizable fraction of your colleagues.

I'd like to see the *Newsletter* as a place where members can let off steam about anything that concerns them, and I encourage you to send me articles about any topic on which you feel strongly about.

Harold and Peter have made the position of *Newsletter* Editor a hard act to follow. I couldn't even begin to try if Harold were not giving me a lot of help. I'll need help from readers as well! Please let me know what you would like to see the *Newsletter* undertake. And please help your local *Newsletter* correspondent by suggesting items of interest that could be mentioned. If you are a 'lone statistician' in your organisation, congratulations! You have just been elected *Newsletter* correspondent!

The next *Newsletter* will be produced in March for distribution in April. If you are not on my list of contributors at the moment and would like me to send you a reminder of the final deadline, please drop me a line.

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(07) 856 2889

Extn 8328

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(07) 838 4155



PS Harold has asked me to take on the philosophical burden for the society. This is no easy task as the following cautions underline:

Don't LOOK at anything in a physics lab.
Don't TASTE anything in a chemistry lab.
Don't SMELL anything in a biology lab.
Don't TOUCH anything in a medical lab
and, most importantly,
Don't LISTEN to anything in a philosophy department.
(source: read somewhere on the Internet.)

Education Committee

Convenor Mike Camden reports on the latest activities.

We have been strengthened by the arrival of two new participants: Sandra McDonald, who provides a link with Statistics New Zealand; and Maxine Pfankuch, who provides a link with Maths and Statistics education at the University of Auckland.

Our main concern is now the activities in Maths of the NZ Qualifications Authority. NZQA has this year set up its Maths Advisory Group. We (NZSA) are represented on it by Peter Fleming and Mike Camden. The Group has appointed a writer who is creating Unit Standards for Maths at Form 5, 6 and 7 (NZQA Framework levels 1, 2 and 3). The writer has a reference group, and we are represented on that by Sharleen Forbes.

The old problems remain: Statistics is "new" to many people. The peculiar philosophy of Statistics which we (the Education Committee) are pushing is "new" to even more people. Our philosophy includes doing investigations with care and common sense, exploring data with graphs, and communicating. It is very difficult to get the right words into the Unit Standards: words which will make our intentions clear, and which will empower school teachers.

We hope to debate this "philosophy" of ours with you at the 1994 NZSA Conference.

The recent meeting of NZQA's Maths Advisory Group included two strong debates.

The first was about how the "process" skills of Maths (Problem-solving, Reasoning, Communication; and for statistics more specifically Investigation and Communication) could be secured in the Unit Standards as they are written and hung on the Framework.

The second was about the User-Pays philosophy. NZQA suggested that we (NZSA and the other groups represented) were the users (of the Framework) and so should pay for time at meetings and for the costs (copying, posting and talking) of consulting with our networks. Your reps (and the reps of the other groups) suggested that NZQA were the users of our expertise and consulting networks, and should pay us. (NZQA currently pays Reference Groups but not Advisory Groups.)

We contributed some workshops to the NZ Association of Maths Teachers' Conference "Maths with Class" (Christchurch, August), and were again impressed with the enthusiasm and energy of NZ teachers; especially for Time Series! We have made recommendations for further statistical input to NZAMT 1995.

How others see us

Roger Littlejohn sends in an extract from 'Three Men (not) in a Boat' by T. Finn, (Duckworth, London, 1983). The interesting twist in this extract is that it is not the statistician that is the butt (he's a properly cynical gliding-on type) but the bore who is so misguided as to think that Statistics could be interesting.

'Tell me, ' he said to Henry about six-and-a-half seconds after he had caught up with us. 'Tell me, what do you do for a living?'

Henry said, 'I'm a statistician.'

'Really?' exclaimed our companion, 'How very interesting.'

See what I mean? Now if he had said how totally dull and boring being a statistician must be, one could have had some respect for the man. If he had coughed nervously and changed the subject on to growing your own courgettes one would have sympathised with his predicament. But to go around shouting 'How interesting' when a man tells you he's a statistician is a sure sign that you are - to use a medical expression - soft in the head.

'How very interesting,' he went on. 'I should think you've seen a lot of changes in statistics in the last few years, haven't you?'

'Yes,' Henry said. Well - there again - he was hardly going to say that he just pulls open a drawer and gets the statistics out for 1979 and blows the dust off them and changes the data and bangs them straight in the post.

'Tell me now, do you really think - I mean, do you yourself really think that statistics are useful? What I mean is, do you really think that they help us out here in the modern world?'

'I suppose so,' said Henry dully.

It shouldn't really help, but somehow it does, to know that growing numbers of partially literate people have a similar image of those who deal with the printed word. To them spending time poring over books of words is behaviour just as incomprehensible as finding numbers in any way to be interesting!

New Executive

At the AGM in Christchurch on August 26 a new executivewas elected. The new officers of the association are

Harold Henderson, AgResearch Ruakura
President
Harold is a Biometrician at Ruakura.

Ray Littler, University of Waikato
Secretary
Ray is in charge of the Waikato Centre for Applied Statistics.

Gary Dunnet, Statistics New Zealand
Treasurer
Gary's just moved from Wellington to Christchurch.

and the committee members and convenors for 1993/4 are

Mike Camden, Wellington Polytechnic
Convenor Education

Mike also convenes a group of polytech tutors of Statistics.

Garry Dickinson, Statistics New Zealand
Convenor Standards

Garry is a Chief Advisor. Len Cook always asks for his advice if it's anything important.

Vince Galvin, Statistics New Zealand
Corporate Representative, Science fairs
Vince is Chief Analyst, Analytical Support at Stats NZ.

Steve Haslett, Victoria University of Wellington
Committee/Convenor SAPQC
Steve is ISOR's counterpart to Ray. Littler.

Jeff Hunter, Massey University
Committee
Jeff is Professor of Statistics at Massey.

Murray Jorgensen, University of Waikato
Newsletter Editor
Murray is a Senior Lecturer in the Mathematics and Statistics Department.

Donal Krouse, Industrial Research Ltd
Committee

Donal is in the group that succeeds the former Applied Maths, DSIR.

Hugh Morton, Massey University
Editor, *NZ Statistician*
Hugh is an Associate Professor and a keen sports statistician.

Katrina Sharples, University of Otago Medical School
Committee, Convenor Public Relations
Katrina works on AIDS modelling, among other things.

Helen Stott, Statistics New Zealand
Convenor Women's Suffrage Project
Helen is Chief Methodologist, Survey Methods, currently on leave.

Debra Taylor, Statistics New Zealand
Committee
Debra is Senior Mathematical Statistician, Survey Methods.

Marianne Vignaux, MAF Fisheries Research
Committee
Marianne recently joined the fisheries modelling group at Greta Point.

John Waller, AgResearch Ruakura
Convenor Publications
Like Harold, John is a Biometrician at Ruakura.

The following Officers, Committee members and Convenors have stepped down, but are still far too important to the running of the Association to be let off the hook easily. Some are continuing to assist with subcommittees.

Greg Arnold, Massey University
Committee (outgoing), Convenor History Project
Greg is a Senior Lecturer in Massey's Statistics Department

Peter Danaher, University of Auckland
Coeditor Newsletter (outgoing)
Peter recently moved from Maths and Stats to Marketing

Antony Gomez, NIWA Atmosphere
Treasurer (outgoing)
Antony works at Gracefield.

Alistair Gray, Victoria University of Wellington
Secretary (outgoing)
Alistair recently moved from Statistics NZ to ISOR.

Jean Thompson, Consultant
President (outgoing), Liaison education committee
Formerly Applied Maths, DSIR, Jean now has a consulting business.

Graham Wood, University of Canterbury
Committee (outgoing), Maths & Stats brochure

Graham has been appointed to the Math. Sciences Chair at Rockhampton, Queensland. We will all miss Graham's outgoing, friendly nature and our loss will be Central Queenland's gain as he starts the work of strengthening Statistics and other mathematical areas in his new job. Graham had a unique gift of being able to move from interesting statistics to interesting mathematics or vice-versa without a sickening bump at the point of transition!

Statistics Job Information

For some time now I have maintained a list of email addresses of statisticians, people who use a lot of statistics in their work, and some members of some allied professions such as operations research and applied mathematics. This list is published from time to time in this *Newsletter*.

I have recently formed a subset of my mailing list as a list for distributing job vacancy notices and other important notices to the statistical community.

At the moment I am providing the service without charge but this may need to change if it causes a big blip in the Department's accounts. At the moment the job advertisements go out to 132 computer accounts in NZ and overseas, mainly to universities and potential job applicants, but now I may need to trim the list a little.

I had tried for a wide spread of locations but allowed myself a little duplication at some sites to cope with people going on leave. I would value information about who would be the best person or persons at your site to be on the list; 'best' in the sense of most likely to pass on the information to those in most need of it. Without this information I will just have to make my own guess.

You may be aware of persons in New Zealand or overseas who have email addresses and would like to hear of statistical vacancies: please tell me about them.

Murray Jorgensen
[maj@waikato.ac.nz]

TWELFTH AUSTRALIAN STATISTICAL SOCIETY CONFERENCE

4th July - 8th July 1994
Monash University, Clayton, Victoria.

Speakers have been invited for sessions on environmental statistics, image analysis, industrial statistics, mathematical and statistical genetics, statistical inference (including a talk on Pitman's contribution to statistical inference), statistics in meteorology and medical statistics.

International invited speakers will include:

David Clayton (Medical Statistics) Cambridge,
Andrew Gelman (Markov Chain Monte Carlo, Bayesian Statistics) Berkeley,
Michael Kenward (Repeated Measures) Rothamsted
Simon Tavaré (Mathematical Population Genetics, Random permutations), U. Southern Calif.
Terry Speed (Statistical Genetics) Berkeley.

A workshop on Statistical Methods in Epidemiology and Clinical Research, with David Clayton as an invited speaker, will be held 7-8th July. The workshop is co-sponsored by the Clinical Oncological Society of Australia (Epidemiology Group) and the Melbourne Epidemiology Group.

A Statistical Education workshop will be held on the weekend prior to the conference.

ASC12 Conference Secretary,
Mathematics Department,
Monash University,
Clayton, VIC. 3168, AUSTRALIA
email: asc12@monash.edu.au

1994 NZSA Conference

Charles Lawoko reports that the local organising committee is proposing a two-day fully joint conference with the Operations Research Society of New Zealand (ORSNZ) at Massey on Thursday 25th August and Friday 26th August 1994.

There will be a mixer on the Wednesday evening.

Some details are still to be confirmed with the NZSA and the ORSNZ. Precise details will be available in the next *Newsletter*. If impatient get in touch with Charles. [c.lawako@massey.ac.nz]

1994 Mathematics Colloquium

The New Zealand Mathematics Colloquium for 1994 will be held at the University of Waikato from 9 May to 12 May. More details will be in the next issue. The organiser is Stephen Joe [stephenj@waikato.ac.nz].

NZMS Membership

Marston Conder, President of the New Zealand Mathematical Society, writes to say that the NZ Math Society's Council meeting in August decided that NZMS members who are concurrently members of the NZSA or ORSNZ could apply for exemption from subscription to that part of the NZMS membership fee pertaining to subscription to the NZ Journal of Mathematics (NZJM).

This year the NZMS subscription for ordinary members was \$52.90, which included a component of \$16.90 for the NZJM subscription; under the new ruling the subscription is reducible to \$36.00 (incl. GST) for members who are concurrently members of the NZSA or ORSNZ and do not wish to receive the journal.

The NZMS Membership Secretary is John Shanks, Department of Mathematics and Statistics, University of Otago. [jshanks@maths.otago.ac.nz.]

SAPQC Notes

The Survey Appraisals and Public Questions Committee has dealt with a number of requests over the last few months, some more extensive than others.

The Association of Social Science Researchers approached the committee for comment on a survey carried out by Professor Kendall from the Marketing Department at Massey University. The ASSR's concern was primarily about the extent and length of the questionnaire, and the questionnaire was the only information supplied to the SAPQC by ASSR.

In reply, a letter was sent to Professor Kendall suggesting that the length of his questionnaire may have an effect on the response rate, especially since the survey was a postal one, and that advice on certain aspects of the design apparent from the questionnaire might in future be sought from a professional statistician with experience in sample surveys.

The Lotteries Commission approached the committee for an appraisal of a relatively extensive survey carried out by Dr Max Abbott and Dr Rachael Volberg together with National Research Bureau on problem gambling.

The SAPQC declined the request since the Lotteries Commission's interest was commercial - reducing their contribution to problem gambling programmes - and that the 'public interest' benefit of reduced Lotteries Commission contributions was small. The committee noted that the report had already indicated that Lotto and Scratch Kiwi were not the major areas of problem gambling activity, and an appraisal even in the Lotteries Commission's favour was unlikely to clarify the substantive area of debate for the Lotteries Commission. The services of a consulting statistician were recommended.

The appraisal of the adequacy of data and procedures in monitoring and analysis for setting of Social Welfare Department benefit levels for families with children, undertaken at the request of the the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services, is currently incomplete. Consultations and correspondence with the Commission for Children, Department of Social Welfare, Statistics New Zealand, and the Treasury are continuing.

Steve Haslett
Convenor, SAPQC.

Visitors

Several statisticians are currently visiting the University of Otago in conjunction with the conference called 'Statistics in Ecology and Environmental Monitoring' being held 13-17 December 1993 and organised by Otago's Centre for Applications of Statistics and Mathematics, these are Mark Boyce from the Department of Zoology, University of Wyoming.

Richard Cormack from the Department of Statistics at the University of St Andrews.

Larry Cox from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Roger Green from the Department of Zoology at the University of Western Ontario.

Lyman McDonald of WEST Inc., a consultant on environmental statistics from Denver.

Tony Underwood from the Institute of Marine Biology at the University of Sydney.

[Details were given in the July Newsletter, Bryan Manly is the organiser.]

Other statistical visitors currently in the country or shortly to be so include:

Dr J Gao of the University of Science and Technology of China, who will be visiting the University of Auckland from 1 February 1994 to 31 January 1995 hosted by George Seber;

Professor Roland Thomas of Carleton University, Ottawa is visiting the University from August 1993 to June 1994 hosted by Alistair Scott. Roland is interested in Survey Sampling and Multivariate analysis; and Dr Debbie Street is visiting the University of Waikato, see Members' News.

News of Visitors

Please let the Newsletter Editor know about visitors to your institution. Send a copy as well to:

David Robinson

N.Z. Mathematical Society Visitors' Co-ordinator
Department of Mathematics and Statistics
Private Bag 4800

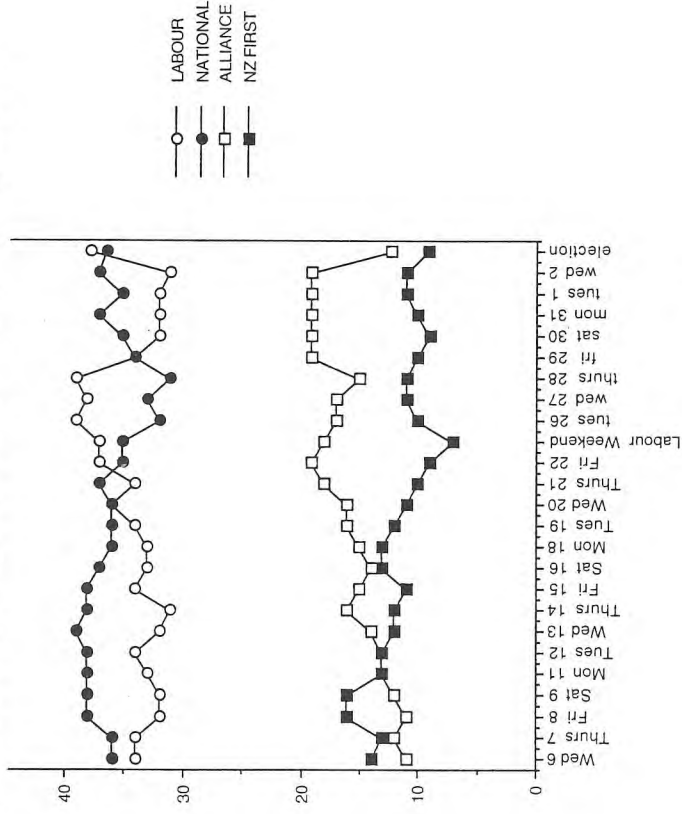
University of Canterbury

email: dfr@math.canterbury.ac.nz

fax: (03) 364 2587

who maintains a list of information about mathematical visitors to New Zealand.

Hamilton Electorates: proportions in a five-day moving window



'Bugger the polls'

Alan Simpson is a Waikato political scientist who has polled Hamilton's marginal seats through many elections. He reacts to Jim Bolger's parting shot on election night.

For someone who had previously denied taking much notice of polls the Prime Minister's 'Bugger the polls' remark on election night was an odd one. After several years as a pollster such sentiments have often been my own, but for rather different reasons.

Polling is a fascinating and privileged exercise. People do take issues seriously, think about them, and about how they intend to use their vote.

Instead of accusing the electorate of being fickle, as politicians are inclined to do when disappointed with an outcome, the Prime Minister blamed the pollsters after the election. Those polls featured in the headlines just before the election declaring National would win the election by several seats got it wrong. But many polls pointed to a close result.

The pre-election polls are, for the most part, snapshots of national or local opinion. Mostly they are telephone surveys. Such polls need to be read and presented with caution. They should not be seen as predictors of future behaviour.

As a technique, telephone polling is affordable and gives control over many aspects of the interview process. However those without telephones are left out, as are those with unlisted numbers (unless random telephone numbers are used rather than random names). In this pollster's experience, telephone polling also has a low response rate for the under 30-year-olds. Results can be weighted to some extent in this

form of sampling.

Resistance to polling was a more serious difficulty encountered this year. Among those in the so-called marginal and weather-vane electorates, like Hamilton East, there was a poll weariness. Like the piles of junk mail in the letter box there was neither the time nor the interest in responding to the flood of pollsters' questions.

As for getting results, 'snap shot' polling is simply that, a snap shot of opinion. Yet indicative behaviour is sought from polling, particularly by those conducting political campaigns. Panel surveys offer one means of gauging the extent and direction of change in voter intentions. Another method is to track opinion on a daily basis over several weeks and to plot aggregated results over a 5 day period. This approach was adopted in the polling undertaken of the Hamilton East and Hamilton West electorates by the University of Waikato's Survey Unit this year. The results are shown in the accompanying table. They indicate trends in party support and a level of volatility among respondents.

Upon reading these results Mr Bolger would not have had cause to react to polls in the way he did. He could only have urged his followers to even greater efforts in the weeks and days before November 6 since both the Hamilton electorates could have gone either way. What more could and should a leader expect from the polls?

Dr Alan Simpson, Senior Lecturer
Department of Political Science and Public Policy
University of Waikato

Contacts for IBC94 and related meetings.

If you made it to IBC92 at the University of Waikato you may have thought that it was a rather large meeting. Well the next meeting in the series will be quite a bit larger, but still manageable. If you are interested in agricultural, biological or medical applications of statistics this could be for you! Here are the details of who to contact if you are interested in going.

XVIIth International Biometric Conference
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada: 8-12 August 1994

Contact:

IBC'94 Local Organizing Committee
Department of Mathematics and Statistics
McMaster University
1280 Main Street West
Hamilton, Ontario
Canada L8S 4K1

Tel. +1-905-529-7070, ext.23423
Fax +1-905-522-0935
Internet: ibc94@mcmail.cis.mcmaster.ca

Or you may like to retrieve the files describing the conference from the ftp server which has been set up. Begin by ftp-ing to [fhs.mcmaster.ca](ftp://fhs.mcmaster.ca) and cd to the directory `/pub/ibc`. Then get the file `index.txt`, which will help you decide what other files to pull over.

Like IBC92, IBC94 will have satellite meetings held in nearby (say within 50km) places.

5th World Congress on Genetics Applied
to Livestock Production
Guelph, Ontario: 7-12 August, 1994

Contact:

Dr E. B. Burnside,
Co-ordinator, 5WCGALP,
Centre for Genetic Research of Livestock,
Department of Animal and Poultry Science,
University of Guelph,
Guelph, Ontario, Canada N1G 2W1.

Tel. +1-519-824-4120, ext.3643
Fax +1-519-767-0573
Internet: gil5wcg@aps.uoguelph.ca

Arrangements are being made for the IBC and

5WCGALP to share joint sessions; transportation may be provided to take interested IBC participants to a session in Guelph.

Another satellite conference is the

5th International Conference on Statistical Methods for
the Environmental Sciences,
Burlington, Ontario: 12-15 August, 1994

Contact:

Dr A. H. El-Shaarawi,
National Water Research Institute,
P.O. Box 5050,
Burlington, Ontario, Canada L7R 4A6.
Tel. +1-905-336-4584
Fax +1-905-336-4989 Internet: u101@cs.cciw.ca

And finally the next affair is not a satellite of IBC94, quite the reverse, in fact. For all I know it may turn out to be the worlds largest Statistical Conference ever!

Joint Annual Meetings of the American Statistical
Association, Biometric Society, Statistical Society of
Canada, and the Institute of Mathematical Statistics.
Toronto, Ontario: 14-18 August, 1994

Contact:

American Statistical Association,
1429 Duke Street,
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-3402, U.S.A.

Tel. +1-703-684-1221. OR

T. J. DiCiccio,
Department of Statistics
Stanford University
Stanford, CA 94305, U.S.A.
Fax +1-415-725-8977
Internet: tjdic@playfair.stanford.edu

A thought from Mistress Black

We know that statisticians and epidemiologists keep an anxious eye on sexual behaviour, but less well-known is the sex industry's interest in Statistics. Our spy in Dunedin has sent us a copy of an ad in the 'Adult Entertainment' section of the *Otago Daily Times* in which Mistress Black (Fantasies, Outcalls, Oil Wrestling and Theme Rooms) gives us a thought for the week: 'Stay safe, stay cool and remember... "Statistics: A group of numbers looking for an argument" - Anon.'

Members' News

Invermay

Peter Johnstone recently spent 10 weeks on holiday in Bolivia, Ecuador and Colombia. The purpose of the trip was to climb some mountains and to try to understand the culture. It was not surprising to discover that there was a substantial South American history and there were more to the countries than contemporary news reports would lead you to believe.

One interesting discovery was the way in which the Inca civilisation consciously collected and used statistics. They carefully allocated labour so as to match food production with requirements. This freed labour for civil projects.

An insight into the dynamics of the coca business was obtained through a visit to an area in which USAid was encouraging the locals to grow bananas and pineapples instead of coca. As the locals have used coca without social deprivation for 3,000 years they wonder what all the fuss is about.

A productive day was spent with members of the biometry unit at Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical (CIAT) at Cali in Colombia. CIAT has suffered savage funding cuts and staff numbers have recently been reduced by 600 to 1200.

Roger Littlejohn

Canterbury

The stats department has launched a new course, under the umbrella of the University's Management Foundation, entitled "Measurement in Business". The first ran from November 2-4, with twenty participants. It used case studies to introduce participants to basic statistical tools, then much hands on activity to put across the ideas of statistical process control. This involved production of many 40cm pieces of string with two knots in them - destined for an insatiable overseas market. Champagne was offered to the team able to achieve the highest process capability index, so the atmosphere was intense. A field visit to Firestone rounded out the course.

Graham Wood

Graham is leaving Canterbury to go to Australia, see page 5 for more about this.

VUW ISOR

Lots of news this time, so choose your favourite chair, get a glass of whisky ready and pin back your ears!

Megan Clark, currently at a conference in Sweden, has received a grant from the Suffrage Centennial Year Fund to produce a report on "Women: Performance, Choice and Participation in Mathematics Examinations." This is a joint project with Thora Bliethe and Sharleen Forbes. In addition Megan has been awarded one of the Suffrage Centennial Medals. Well Done!

Life in the ISOR Consulting Group has been busy recently. Firstly Sathi drove into the back of Steve Haslett's car. Given that Steve's the Director of the Group, Sathi can hardly be accused of buttering up the boss! In response to an inundation of cranky letters and calls about Lotto, Ross Renner let slip the following remark which was published in the *Dominion*: "Ross Renner who is the Lottery Commission's chief number cruncher indiscreetly observed that Lotto was a tax on stupidity". Alistair Gray and Helen Stott recently had their first baby, Fionn Padraig. Rumours that Alistair reads Wittgenstein to Fionn at bed-time are completely unfounded. Peter and Anna Smith had their second daughter, Lucy Isobel, around the same time. Rumours that Pete's never heard of Wittgenstein are probably true.

What about TRAVEL, CONFERENCES, STAFF MOVEMENTS etc? Well, Tony Vignaux maximized entropy at Santa Barbara, David Vere-Jones is still away in Europe but returns soon, Peter Thomson is away for 3 months in Japan and Washington (Bureau of the Census). Ray Brownrigg's been to Sydney to the AUUG Annual Conference. A chocolate fish to anyone who knows that this means the Australian Unix Users Group. Abel Ige, Yu Hayakawa, Thomas Mikosch and Zhu Nan attended the NZSA and/or the NZORS Conferences. Yu will be visiting her old haunts (Berkeley and Japan) over the summer. Sathi had a brief visit to Sri Lanka. Zhu Nan has left for Waikato and Wang Qiang is expecting to leave for the Meteorological Institute in Saskatchewan. Paul O'Connor, one of our programmers, has left for a job with the Department of Health. We wish them all well in their new positions.

Visitors included Wolfgang Runggaldier from the University of Padua who gave seminars on aspects of stochastics in Finance. Currently visiting and keeping Thomas in line is Professor Claudia Klueppelberg. She is working on non-standard time series as part of the FORST project.

David Harte is settling in well, despite being bombarded by neutrons in his office in the Physics Building. I understand that his PhD research is on the frightening topic of multifractals. And you thought long division was tricky. Abel Ige, from Ilorin Nigeria, is working on several consulting projects related to survey design and analysis including work for NZ Post, The Justice Department and the Manufacturers Federation.

Lastly, the miscellaneous. Tony organized the ISOR Open Day contributions, including talks, simulation displays and graphics presentations. ISOR has a regular volleyball team and will challenge all comers. The Computing System is now enhanced by a colour printer and a dual processor desk top Sparc Station 10. Finally the decider in the sporting series between ISOR and Statistics New Zealand is scheduled for this summer.

Peter Smith

Massey

It can now be formally announced that Howard Edwards is leading the Statistics Department assault on the North. He leaves for Albany in January. Appointments to two further positions are being negotiated, and it is hoped (particularly by Howard) that they will be filled by March.

The Massey statisticians have stayed home for most of the spring. Doug Stirling and Greg Arnold attended Statistics'93 in Wollongong where *Models'n>Data* received several favourable mentions even by people Doug had never met.

A glimpse of things to come: The Agriculture and Horticulture Faculty, needing a quantitative methods course in their new Applied Science degree, called tenders for teaching it. On this occasion a joint bid from the Statistics and Mathematics Departments was the only tender, but we are preparing to meet stronger competition in future.

Greg Arnold

Waikato

Well we have struggled through the year with Jeff Knowlton unreplaced and Nye John away on leave in Queensland. But lo! There is light at the end of the tunnel. The exams are all marked, Nye is back and Jocelyn Dale will be here in February!

Kevin Broughan has arranged a farewell symposium for John Turner, who is retiring this December. It takes place on the afternoon of Thursday, 9 December and speakers include David Gauld, Ernie Kalnins, Bill Rogers, Mark Schroder, Garry Tee, Graeme Wake, and JCT himself.

John has been here since 1970 and in his earlier years was the guiding light of Statistics at Waikato. He was the co-developer, with Bill Rogers, of STATUS which must have been one of the earliest statistical packages specifically designed for teaching university students. The University of Waikato used STATUS in statistics teaching from 1977 to 1985.

More recently John has moved onto the mathematical side of the Department. We will miss his cheerful enthusiasm for the many areas of mathematics and statistics that he has explored.

As part of a School of Computing and Mathematical Sciences initiative to mark Women's Suffrage Year, Dr Debbie Street, of the University of New South Wales, will be visiting us from December 5 to 17. She is interested in the combinatorics of experimental design.

Murray Jorgensen

Ruakura

Dave Johnson has moved, a few kilometers across the paddocks, to the Livestock Improvement Corporation of the NZ Dairy Board after 19 years at Ruakura. We wish him well in his new position.

Isabelle Gravett in "retirement" is back at Ruakura part-time. Hans Hockey has completed his work in Cameroon. He and Tracy will be back in New Zealand in January. Bill Bolstad and Harold Henderson attended the Joint Statistical Meetings in San Francisco in August. Harold also visited Cornell and Dennis Cook in Minnesota. David Miles is sporting the Personalised Plate STATS on his car.

Harold Henderson

Hort Research, Mt Albert

We were glad to have Melissa White join us earlier this year. S-PLUS has become both an indispensable tool for day to day statistical analysis and a vehicle for a continual process of education in new methodology. Our new professional isolation has given the contacts that we maintain through electronic mail, especially with other S-PLUS users, a new importance. We get regular challenging problems to tackle.

John Maindonald

Food for thought

This has nothing to do with Alan Simpson's article, but Hamilton seems to be accumulating some weird restaurants. Advertising itself as just two doors away from 'Death by Chocolate' is a new hamburger restaurant 'Totally Burgered'. It could add up to a rather hazardous night out for someone not feeling at their best!

1993 NZSA Conference snap-shots

The 1993 NZSA conference was held at the University of Canterbury, 25-27 August. Abstracts of the talks will be published in the next issue of the *New Zealand Statistician*. The conference overlapped with the Mathematics Colloquium. Papers on mathematics and statistics in the biological sciences were featured on Thursday.



Participants in session at the NZSA 93 conference

Invited speakers

Jessica Utts, University of California, Davis, gave an invited address on 'An overview of research in parapsychology'. Jessica was interviewed by Don Carson on his Saturday morning programme on National Radio.

Wes Johnson, University of California, Davis, spoke on 'Screening with cost effective quality control: potential applications to HIV and drug testing'.



Jessica Utts, Dave Saville and Wes Johnson

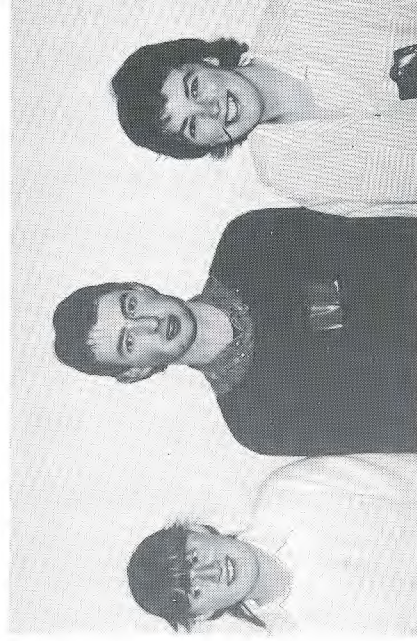
Wolfgang Runggaldier, University of Padua, Italy, spoke 'On stochastic control concepts for sequential burn-in procedures'.

John Deely, University of Canterbury, talked about 'Selecting the best of several treatments using the Gibbs sampler'.

Contributed papers ran in two parallel sessions.

Postgraduate session

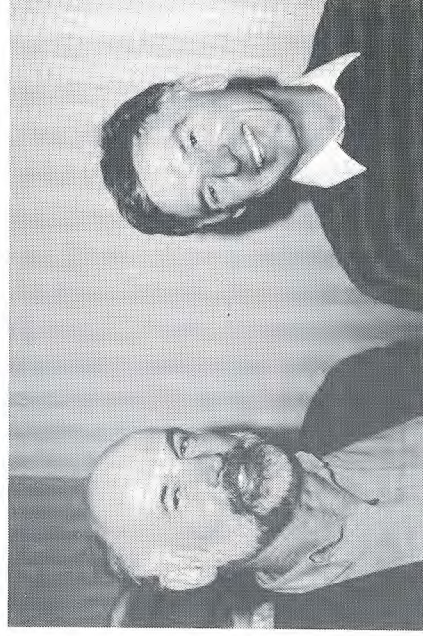
The NZSA encourages new researchers to present papers and offers sponsorship to a student from each NZ university.



Speakers in the postgraduate session: Susan Lindsay, Jon Alsop and Megan Smith

Organising committee

Particular thanks go to the organising committee of Murray Smith, Graham Wood, Easaw Chacko, John Deely and Frank Lad.



Murray Smith and a laughing Graham Wood.



Jean Thompson replying to a vote of thanks, given by Jeff Hunter, for serving as president for three years.

The New Zealand Statistical Association (Inc)

PO Box 1731
Wellington

The NZ Statistical Association, founded in 1948, is New Zealand's only association for professional statisticians. The association has about 350 individual members and is growing strongly. Many of its members are employed by universities, government departments, or research institutes, with growing participation by senior students, who are offered free membership for their first year.

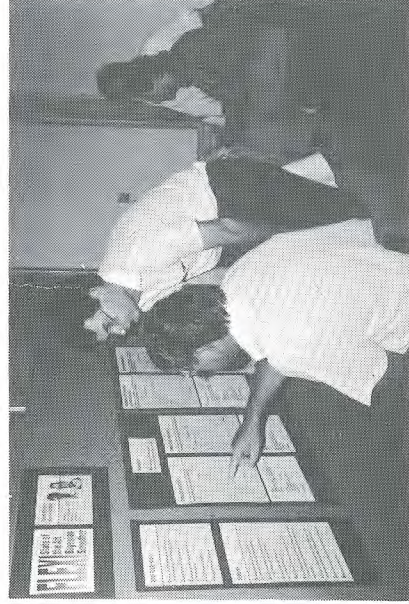
The constitutional aims and objectives of the association are *the encouragement of theoretical and applied statistics in New Zealand*. In 1992 the association agreed on a more comprehensive set of vision and mission statements including the short description:

The mission of the NZSA is to lead New Zealand to value and make intelligent use of statistical thinking and good statistical practice.

(The complete vision and mission statement, which serves to guide the executive and membership in planning and decision-making, is available from the secretary.)

Services to Members

Members receive the official journal *The New Zealand Statistician* twice yearly and are kept up to date on statistical happenings within New Zealand and interesting overseas developments with regular newsletters. A feature of the New Zealand statistical year is the annual three-day conference, normally held in mid-year. In addition to invited and contributed papers on a wide range of topics, there are often special sessions with panel discussion on topics of current concern to the profession.



Ken Jury at the Flexi poster paper with David Wheeler. Martin Upsdell is demonstrating on the PC.



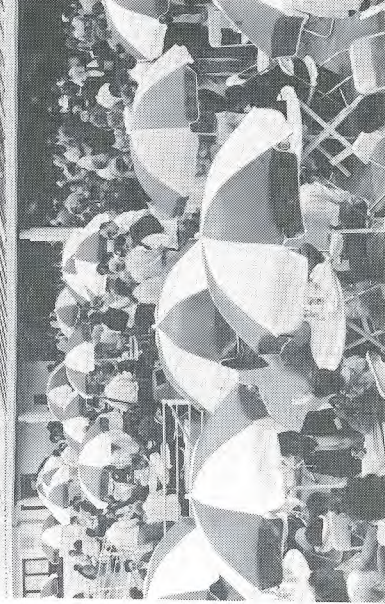
Professional Standards

At the 1993 annual conference the association considered the report of a working party which had studied issues associated with professional standards. Particular attention was paid to the positions adopted by kindred organisations in Australia, UK, and USA on the question of formal accreditation of statisticians. No immediate action will be taken on a formal accreditation scheme but work is continuing on the preparation of guidelines of good practice.

Links with other Bodies

The association is an affiliated organisation of the International Statistical Institute and maintains close relations with a number of statistical societies around the world. It is also a member body of the Royal Society of New Zealand and part of the Mathematical Sciences Council of New Zealand.

Cooperation with related societies sometimes leads to joint conferences such as the International Biometric Conference (IBC) held in Hamilton at the end of 1992.



On the terrace at the IBC

Survey Appraisals and Public Questions

The Survey Appraisals and Public Questions Committee aims to raise the standard of statistical practice and the level of public understanding of statistics in New Zealand by conducting independent appraisals of sample surveys, opinion polls and other statistical statements in relation to the statistical validity of their results. It is regularly called upon to comment on contentious polls and surveys.

Education

The Education Committee aims to improve the quality of statistical education for New Zealand students. It participates in advisory groups related to curriculum matters and helps organise conferences and courses for the benefit of those teaching statistics at all levels. With the support of some of our corporate members, the association sponsors prizes for statistical excellence at each of the regional Science Fairs.

Special Projects

The association has pursued a number of special projects in recent years. The focus for 1993, our Suffrage Centennial Year, was on a series of initiatives culminating in the preparation of a book celebrating the role of women in statistics, and an associated display.

Officers of the New Zealand Statistical Association

President **Harold Henderson**
Statistics, AgResearch Ruakura
Secretary **Ray Littler**
Waikato Centre for Applied Statistics
University of Waikato
Treasurer **Gary Dunnet**
Statistics New Zealand, Christchurch
Newsletter Editor **Murray Jorgensen**
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Katrina Sharples
Dept. of Preventive & Social Medicine
University of Otago Medical School
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Statistics New Zealand, Wellington
Marianne Vignaux
Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
Marine Research, Wellington



NZSA Executive meeting at IBC



Helen Stott, convenor women's suffrage project, Megan Hurnard, seventh former at Wellington Girls College, and Jean Thompson, President NZSA, at the launch of the NZSA display 'Opportunities - Living Numbers' in April 1993.

Application to join NZSA

I wish to join the New Zealand Statistical Association

Name:.....

Address:.....

.....

.....

.....

Phone:.....

Fax:.....

Email:.....

Occupation:.....

Employer:.....

Areas of Interest: eg, Experimental Design, Time Series, Stochastic Processes, Official Statistics, etc

.....

.....

Please circle membership category and enclose cheque made out to NZ Statistical Association.

Ordinary members NZ \$30, Overseas \$35

Student and Retired \$15

(NOTE: First year free for students)

Signature:.....

Date:.....

Post to PO Box 1731 Wellington

For more information contact:

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Electronic mail addresses for NZ Statisticians
Version : December 5, 1993

Abbreviations used :

a = aukuni.ac.nz c = canterbury.ac.nz
chm=chmeds.ac.nz cr = cri.nz
dri=nzdri.org.nz f = mof.govt.nz
frc = frc.maf.govt.nz i=invermay.cri.nz
irl = irl.cri.nz l = lincoln.ac.nz
lev = lan.levin.cr lcn = lan.lincoln.cr
mis = mis.status.gen.nz
mq = wellington.mafqual.govt.nz
m = massey.ac.nz o = otago.ac.nz
r = ruakura.cri.nz s = stats.govt.nz
v = vuw.ac.nz w = waikato.ac.nz
wa=warc.cri.nz wnm = wnmeds.ac.nz

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on leave without mail being forwarded.]

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