

## Editorial

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This is my second editorial. As you read this, we are well over halfway into the celebration of the *International Year of Statistics*. The IAOS Journal is also celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary next year. So a moment of reflection may be in order. These interviews afford a way for all of us to begin engaging in that reflection directly. More on consequences after the Hong Kong meetings?

One of the consequences of this “*Year of Statistics*” is that we chose to look in a special way at the leaders of our profession. To celebrate them! One goal of this issue, then, was to do just that. We chose eight top level leaders to showcase. They are from five different countries: Britain, Canada, China, Haiti, and the United States.

Including Interviews in the IAOS Journal, while it may be new to IAOS, is not new in other statistical Journal, e.g., *Statistical Science* and *Significance*. What is entirely new is that the interviews tried to key in on what was at least an inflection point, maybe even a turning point in the careers of those interviewed and in some cases of the profession itself.

We are following the model found in the book, *Profiles in Courage*, by John F. Kennedy (Harper, Perennial, Modern Classics, 1963 edition). Each of the interviewees was provided a copy of the book, as were the interviewers.

The interviewers, mostly young statistical practitioners, researched the lives of the interviewees to seek out moments of crisis/opportunity (sometimes represented by the same character in Chinese). The emphasis was aimed at this change point. So, the interviewees were ready to probe, if given the chance.

Most of the Interviewees were graduate students at The George Washington University (GWU). Thanks to Ali Mushtaq at GWU for his various roles with the GWU students as their instructor and mentor.

In addition to GWU, additional interviewees were provided by Ernst and Young (E&Y) and the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago. Special thanks is owed (and acknowledged

here) to Dr. Thomas Neubig at E&Y and Chet Bowie at NORC for allowing their junior staffs to participate.

Pictures of those interviewed lead off each article here. At the end of each article is more on the interviewees, including a picture they provided for use.

Of course, an interview is, at its best, only a guided conversation, jointly directed. And, to be successful, there must be a level of rapport, well achieved here. The interviews provided are mostly short (under an hour), done over the phone (often by Skype), recorded with permission, transcribed and edited by the interviewers, and approved for publication by the interviewees.

### *About the articles*

The eight articles here are balanced by gender, four men and four women.

We begin with Ivan Fellegi, followed by Jill Montaquila.

Dr. Ivan Fellegi is the Chief Statistician Emeritus of Statistics Canada (STATSCAN) He was interviewed by Lia Katz and Brent Willig. The inflection point emphasized in the Fellegi interview arose because of the budget problems at STATSCAN. The outcome, thanks to Dr. Fellegi and the leadership team he built made STATSCAN a premier organization.

Dr. Montaquila is currently the Associate Director of Westat’s Statistical Staff and a senior statistician. She was interviewed by Megan McNally and Teresa Dodson. The Montaquila interview discusses her success as a leader of innovative teams and a co-founder of the American Statistical Association movement to mentor new professionals.

The next pair of articles are interviews with Denise Lievesley and David Hemson.

Dr. Lievesley is currently a professor and the Head of the School of Social Science and Public Policy at King’s College London. She was interviewed by Emily Bass and Jennifer Carr. Her leadership skills arose though her international practice around the world.

Dr. Hemson, currently a senior researcher at DTP, was interviewed by Basema Maki and Daniel Lee. Dr.

Hemson grew up in a generation of change in South Africa and helped end Apartheid there.

The third set of articles are interviews with Christy Chuang-Stein and Arthur Kennickell.

Dr. Chuang-Stein, currently Vice President, Head of Statistical Research and Consulting Center at Pfizer, was interviewed by Julia Rotondo and Molly Jones. While never an Official Statistician Dr. Chuang-Stein's interview links nicely with Dr. Batcher's interview (below). Dr. Batcher had started out as an official statistician and then left for the private sector.

Dr. Arthur Kennickell, for almost three decades, has been a survey leader at the Federal Reserve Bank. He was interviewed by Matthew Rae and Robert DeHaan. He is an innovative thought and practice leader of wealth surveys around the world, including China, the Philippines and Spain.

The last set of articles are of Jean Orelie and Mary Batcher.

Dr. Orelie is a co-founder and currently the CEO of SciMetrika. He was interviewed by Nils Nelson, assisted later by Daniel Lee. Dr. Orelie, among the most entrepreneurial of those interviewed, is included because he stepped in after the Haitian earthquake of January 2011 and brought a first response statistical team to aid in the data gathering and clean-up.

Dr. Batcher is the Executive Director of the Quantitative Economics and Statistics unit (QUEST) at Ernest and Young. She was interviewed by Brent Willig, Lia Katz, Matthew Rae, Basema Maki, Daniel Lee, Will Hayes, Christina Lee, and Robert Dehaan. The final form of the interview was prepared by Daniel Lee. Dr. Batcher talks about her work at IRS at a moment of positive change brought on in part by her infectious statistical courage.

#### *About the future*

The interviews in our small sample size of  $n = 8$  are not representative; nor, indeed, arguably could they be. Of course, *the Year of Statistics* is not yet over, either. We intend, partly through our wide IAOS associate editorships, to get at least three or four more interviews done by early 2014.

We were not looking in this special issue for a full life, as in the portraits of statisticians found in *Statistical Science* or in the marvelous 1982 book on Jerzy Neyman, *From Life* (Constance Reid Springer). Such articles and books are yet to be written about the interviewees in this IAOS issue. But, perhaps, the articles

here might eventually form a "starter set" for such an ambitious undertaking. In the meantime, perhaps the interviews have provided immediately actionable examples.

#### *Selected background references and further details*

Below, for this issue, we depart from past IAOS editorial practice and provide a few citations for those who wished for more background. These are organized by interview.

*Ivan Fellegi:* Fellegi, Ivan P. Characteristics of an Effective Statistical System. *Canadian Public Administration/Administration Publique Du Canada* 39.1 (1996): 5-34. Print.

*Jill Montaquila:* Bailer, John, Roger Hoerl, David Madigan, Jill Montaquila, and Tommy Wright. Preparing Master's Statistics Students for Success: A Perspective from Recent Graduates and Employers | Amstat News. *Amstat News*. ASA, 1 Feb. 2013. Web.

*Denise Lievesley:* Lievesley, D. Making a Difference: A Role for the Responsible International Statistician? *The Statistician, Journal of the Royal Statistical Society Series D* vol. 50, issue 4 (2001): pg. 383.

*David Hemson:* Hemson, David. The Crime Which Went Away. *Mail & Guardian Online*. 5 Apr. 2012. Web. <<http://mg.co.za/article/2012-04-05-the-crime-which-went-away>>.

*Christy Chuang-Stein:* Chuang-Stein, C., Xia, A. (2013). The practice of pre-marketing safety assessment in drug development. *Journal of Biopharmaceutical Statistics*, 23(1):3-25.

*Arthur Kennickell:* Bricker, Jesse; Bucks, Brian; Kennickell, Arthur; Mach, Traci and Moore, Kevin. 2011. *Surveying the aftermath of the storm: Changes in Family Finances from 2007 to 2009*. Federal Reserve. <http://www.federalreserve.gov/pubs/feds/2011/201117/201117abs.html>.

*Mary Batcher:* Batcher, Mary and Fritz Scheuren. "CATI Site Management in a Survey of Service Quality." *Survey Measurement and Process Quality*. New York: Wiley, 1997. N. pag. Print.

*Jean Orelie:* Orelie, Jean, Robert Philippe, Antwone Wesner, James Ashley, Justin Fisher, and Fritz Scheuren. *Significance* 25 Apr. 2013: n. pag. Web.

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Statistical Journal of the IAOS