

## EDITORIAL

Welcome to the second issue of the *Statistics Education Research Journal (SERJ)*! We hope that you agree that it was worth waiting for.

If you have looked at the first issue you know that it was not so very different from the *Statistics Education Research Newsletter (SERN)*, partly because it included material which had already been prepared for *SERN*. In this issue, in line with the statement on the *SERJ* web page (<http://fehps.une.edu.au/serj>) that papers submitted to *SERJ* are peer-reviewed by referees selected by the editors, we are pleased to publish four papers which have been refereed both by an associate editor and two external referees. The paper by Beth Chance and Joan Garfield makes an important contribution to the methodology of obtaining data on how students develop an understanding of statistics. This is complemented by a paper by Maxine Pfannkuch and Amanda Rubick that is concerned with a study of students' statistical thinking, and a paper by Maria Meletiou and Carl Lee about a study of students' reasoning. The fourth paper, by Nigel Smeeton, is a little different and describes research into statistics courses given to dental students.

We are, however, retaining some of the features of *SERN* in *SERJ*, so this issue includes a useful bibliography of references for teaching undergraduate statistics that was prepared by Peter Holmes, and, with an emphasis on statistical education research, summaries of publications, and information about recent dissertations, and about past and forthcoming conferences. We feel that these sections are valuable to the statistics education research community.

We are pleased to report that we are receiving a steady flow of papers and that currently there are several papers either being refereed or revised. This has encouraged us to increase the size of the editorial board and we were delighted that, in spite of their many other commitments, Joan Garfield, Dick Scheaffer, David Green, and Iddo Gal all accepted our invitation to become associate editors. They are all well known in the statistical education world. In particular, Joan started the newsletter which has evolved over time to become *SERJ* and she must be one of the most cited statistical education researchers, Dick has served as a vice-president of IASE and has been very active in the American Statistical Association, David was one of the first to undertake a large-scale study into the probabilistic understanding of school children and the questions he devised have since been used by many others, and Iddo is heavily involved with the international Adult Literacy and Lifeskills survey. You can find more details about these new associate editors later in this issue. Details of all members of the editorial board are on the web page, including an update for Flavia Jolliffe who has retired from the University of Greenwich but continues to be active in many professional activities.

The sixth International Conference on the Teaching of Statistics, ICOTS6, was held in Cape Town, South Africa, in July, twenty years after the first ICOTS in Sheffield in the UK. The second to fifth conferences were held in Victoria (Canada), Dunedin (New Zealand), Marrakesh (Morocco), and Singapore respectively. The seventh ICOTS will be held in Brazil in 2006. It was good to meet so many people active in statistical education at ICOTS6, and we were especially pleased that the attendance at the open meeting of *SERJ* was well supported in spite of the early hour. Many useful suggestions were made at this meeting and we would like to thank those who offered their help. You will be hearing from us if we have not already approached you! There is a full report on ICOTS6 in this issue, including the opening address given by South Africa's Minister of Finance, the Honorable Trevor Manuel. We are extremely pleased that he has agreed that we may reproduce this.

*SERJ* is still under development and the editorial board has been very busy behind the scenes, for example discussing the refereeing process and the guidelines for authors. Here we should like to take the opportunity to mention that Carol Joyce Blumberg, the IASE vice-president with responsibility for IASE publications, keeps a watchful eye on the email exchanges between members of the editorial board and makes helpful interventions. We value her input. Just as we were about to go to press we received the news that the Executive Committee and Council of the ISI have approved our request that *SERJ* is to be a joint publication of the ISI and the IASE.

The IASE executive has decided that access to *SERJ* should continue to be free to all until the journal is well known. The IASE is paying the cost of hiring a student to help Associate editor Chris Reading, who looks after the Website, prepare the final version of each issue. We are very grateful to Chris for these contributions to the success of *SERJ*. We urge you to join IASE if you are not already a member. This will be an indication of your support for its activities and enable you to play a full part in these. Please also tell others about IASE. The web address is <http://www.cbs.nl/isi/iase.htm>

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