

## SSA Biostatistics & Bioinformatics Newsletter

Q2 2019

Welcome to the July edition of the Biostatistics and Bioinformatics section newsletter!

This is our second quarterly update of 2019. We aim to keep you updated about our activities of this quarter and highlight the topics that may be of interest to you. Our mailing list keeps growing and comprises 255 people from every state and territory across Australia. 89% report an interest in biostatistics and 39% in bioinformatics. In this newsletter, we are presenting you with information about the Young Statisticians Conference, our upcoming workshop on gaining skills in biostatistical consultancy, our Webinars on biostatistics and bioinformatics, meeting one of our members in our mailing list, and much more...

Happy reading!

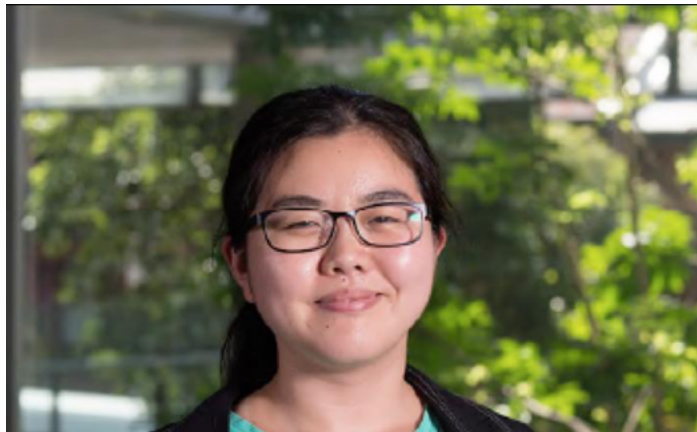
The SSA Biostatistics and Bioinformatics section committee

### Upcoming SSA Biostatistics & Bioinformatics events

Our section has been busy planning several events in 2019. We are also supporting other events. Please spread the word to colleagues who may be interested in attending. We hope to see many of you and your colleagues at these events!

#### • Gaining skills in biostatistical consultancy (July 4, Melbourne)

Our section is co-hosting a workshop in conjunction with the Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics Unit from the Murdoch Children's Research Institute on consultancy skills for biostatisticians. We have four fantastic speakers: Dr Emily Karahalios and Professor Julie Simpson from Melbourne University, Associate Professor Susan Donath from the Murdoch Children's Research Institute and Dr Emi Tanaka from Sydney University. The workshop will cover a range of subjects including communication skills, how to reach and interact with different clients, how to manage consultancy projects from start to end and how to secure funding as a consultant. Interest in this workshop has been high and we reached our capacity of 40 registrations well before the registration closing date. You are invited to join the [waitlist](#) for those still interested in the event or a similar future event.



Presenters for the biostatistical consultancy workshop: Dr Emily Karahalios (top left), Professor Julie Simpson (top right), Associate Professor Susan Donath (bottom left) and Dr Emi Tanaka (bottom right).

#### • Young Statisticians Conference (October 1-2, Canberra)

The [Young Statisticians Conference](#) is a fantastic conference for early career statisticians. Speakers come from all parts of the country to present their work on a broad range of statistical topics. This is a key opportunity for statisticians to network with their peers. The conference includes two highly relevant workshops on communicating with R markdown and and maximising the use of ABS data. Our section is delighted to have nominated the fantastic biostatistician [Dr Teresa Neeman](#) from the Australian National University to participate in the careers panel at this conference.



#### • Webinars (October & November)

The SSA is in the process of reviving their webinar series to ensure we reach our members across the country. In the second half of this year we will be holding two webinars. These will include one seminar on biostatistics and one on bioinformatics. Speakers will include:

- Professor Kate Tilling from the University of Bristol (UK)
- Associate Professor Agus Salim from La Trobe University (Melbourne)

Keep an eye out in future newsletters for additional information on these webinars. If you have any suggestions of biostatistics or bioinformatics topics you would like our section to cover in a seminar or workshop, please contact us. Additionally, do let us know if you are aware of any visiting international biostatisticians or bioinformaticians who are coming to Australia who may be interested in presenting at an SSA event. All events organised by the SSA can be found on the [SSA events calendar](#).

### Other Biostatistics & Bioinformatics events

There are a range of biostatistics and bioinformatics events taking place this year. These include:

[International Conference on Computational Science and its Applications](#)  
Saint Petersburg, Russia 1st-4th July 2019

[International Workshop on Statistical Modelling 2019](#)  
Guimarães, Portugal 7th-12th July 2019

[International Society for Clinical Biostatistics 2019](#)  
Leuven, Belgium 14th-18th July 2019

[Oceania Stata Conference](#)  
Sydney, Australia 19-20th August 2019

[GeoMed 2019](#)  
Glasgow, Scotland 27th-29th August 2019

[Applied statistics and policy analysis conference](#)  
Wagga Wagga, Australia, 5th-6th September 2019

[ACTA International Clinical Trials Conference](#)  
Sydney, Australia, 2nd-5th October 2019

[Australasian Epidemiological Association Annual Scientific Meeting](#)  
Brisbane, Australia, 23rd-25th October 2019

[New Zealand Statistical Association Conference](#)  
Dunedin, New Zealand, 28th-28th November 2019

[International Biometric Society- Australasian Region](#)  
Adelaide, Australia, 11th-6th December 2019

[7th International Statistical Ecology Conference](#)  
Sydney, Australia, 22th-26th June 2020

If you would like to advertise any upcoming biostatistics or bioinformatics events to our mailing list, please contact one of our co-Chairs, [Sabine Braat](#) or [Karen Lamb](#).

### Featured articles

#### Here's how to make opinion polls more representative and honest

Opinion polls play a major role in politics, but unfortunately their prediction is not always accurate and their results raise a lot of debate. In [this article](#) in "The Conversation", president and past president of the SSA Adrian Barnett and Scott Sisson break down the art of good polling.

#### Biases in Randomized trials: A conversation between trialists and epidemiologists

First learn the meaning of what you say, and then speak. *Epicetus (55-135 AD)*

Mansournia et al (Epidemiology, 2016) in their paper titled "Biases in Randomized trials: A conversation between trialists and epidemiologists" present a nice translation to the usual epidemiologic terms of confounding, selection bias and measurement bias. Using a structured approach they decode what these biases refer to when discussed by a trialist or an epidemiologist. Through the structured approach, they also show why an explicit description of the inferential goal (intention-to-treat/per protocol) is necessary to assess risk of bias in the estimate. We hope that this paper will provide a nice translation of each other's (trialists, epidemiologists and statisticians) terminologies and will enhance the communication between these groups when considering key concepts and methods for causal inference



Are you aware of a recently published article that may be of interest to our biostatistics and bioinformatics members? Please do not hesitate to let [Murthy](#) know.

### Meet our mailing list



Name: Lee Jones

Where do you currently work? Research Methods Group, Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation, Queensland University of Technology

What field do you associate with, biostatistics or bioinformatics (or both)? Biostatistics

#### What are your background studies in and how did you join this field?

Originally from ecology background, I found a love for statistics and completed a first class honours in environmental statistics. I was accredited as a Graduate Statistician (GStat) in 2008 and spent the early part of my career as a casual lecturer and tutor in statistics. I moved into the health area and established myself as a consulting biostatistician at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital in 2010. In my current role at the Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation at QUT, I enjoy providing statistical help to a broad range of researchers. I am also Vice President of the Queensland branch of the statistical society of Australia.

#### What is the most exciting concept/idea upcoming in your work or field?

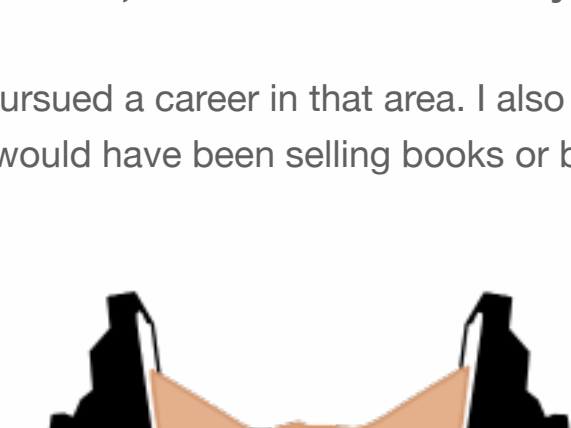
With billions of dollars being invested in science each year, an exciting field of study right now is Research on Research. I am currently undertaking a part time PhD examining statistical quality in health research and how it can be improved.

#### If you didn't pursue biostatistics and/or bioinformatics, what would have been your alternate career?

I have a strong interest in ecology, so I may have pursued a career in that area. I also love to read books and a good alternate career choice would have been selling books or being a librarian.

#### Want to be featured in the next member profile?

Please let [Nicole](#) know.



### Biostatistics & Bioinformatics blogs

Interested in a good statistics blog? Last newsletter we put together a list of some interesting and entertaining statistics blogs. This month we have added a few more.



#### Simply Statistics

This blog site is run by three prominent biostatistics professors (Jeff Leek, Roger Peng, and Rafa Iraznazy). Topics are varied and include anything of interest to the authors, in particular data science and the abundance of data

#### StatsBlogs

A blog with a wide range of contributors. This blog includes posts on statistics, R, machine learning and data visualisation.

#### Statistics How To

This blog has more than 1000 articles and hundreds of videos for elementary statistics and probability. An ideal blog for anyone looking for elementary statistics help.

#### R-Statistics blog

This blog covers statistics with R and open source data

We'd love to have your input to grow this list. Do you have a blog that you love to read? Do you have a blog of your own that you want to promote? Please let [Jaimi](#) and we'll add it to the list.

### Closing comments

We are enthusiastic about our growing mailing list, and commit ourselves to assisting you with your career in biostatistics or/and bioinformatics. We are interested in hearing from our members, especially regarding ideas for future events, presentations, webinars or workshops held by the SSA Biostatistics & Bioinformatics section. We are interested in hearing about our members and how they became involved in biostatistics or bioinformatics. Please contact us via our section co-Chairs, either [Karen](#) or [Sabine](#) regarding these or any other related queries.

If your colleagues would like to receive this newsletter, they can sign up via [Google form](#).

To view previous newsletters please see our [section's webpage](#).

### Social media

We encourage all our members to follow our activities on our social media account links below. We actively promote upcoming events, job opportunities and relevant material. Our online community is growing with over 385 followers on Facebook. If you have any material you would like us to promote on our social media outlets or share with the fellow members, please let [Alysha](#) know.

