THE ISBA BULLETIN

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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- Alexandra M. Schmidt -

ISBA President, 2015

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"Good day sunshine, Good day sunshine, Good day sunshine..."

As it is already summer in some parts of the world, people are getting ready to enjoy the warm days, work on that project that has been waiting for the summer break, join the family on some holidays, and attend some conferences. Wow, it is time to balance lots of activities!

In other parts of the world, winter is starting. In Brazil, for example, the north-east does not know what a real winter is, while the south of Brazil can experience freezing temperatures at this time of the year.

Independent of the season, there are many ISBA activities going on which I would like to share with you.

Francisco Torres Avilés It is with great sorrow that I inform that Francisco Torres Avilés, from *Universidad de Santiago de Chile*, passed away on June, 9th. He was on a sabbatical in São Carlos, in the state of São Paulo, Brazil. Francisco made important contributions to the Bayesian Latin American community. He was the chair of the local organizing committee of the 3rd Latin American Meeting on Bayesian Statistics (III COBAL) held in Pucon, Chile, in 2011. He also helped a lot with the organization of the 4th Latin American Meeting on Bayesian Statistics, that will be held in Medellin, Colombia, during July, 1st-5th, 2015. The organizing committee of IV COBAL plans to pay a tribute to Francisco during the meeting and this will be reported in the next issue of the bulletin.

Bayesian methods in other areas of science Bayesian methods have been experiencing an enormous growth in the last 25 years. Alan Gelfand's contributions to this growth were remembered during a workshop held last April in Durham, NC, to celebrate Alan's 70th birthday. See Brad Carlin's report on the workshop in this issue of the Bulletin.

In this issue

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT, *Continued from page 1. . . .*

One of the advantages I experienced from being Alan's post-doc between 2001-2002 (his last year at UConn) was the opportunity to interact with researchers from other areas of science. I also shared with him a course on spatial statistics to graduate students from Statistics but also from other areas. John Silander commented during his talk how he, as an ecologist, benefited from his interactions with Alan.

While interactions between statisticians and scientists from other areas are becoming more and more frequent, I feel that there is still a long way for Bayesian inference to become the standard tool to be used when tackling a statistical problem. My impression is that this is very related to the statistical courses we teach both for undergraduate and graduate courses in other fields. In Brazil, very few undergraduate courses in statistics deal with Bayesian inference. Worse still, Bayesian methods often are not even mentioned in statistical courses in other fields. Students from fields other than statistics usually learn traditional statistical techniques and are not exposed to more modern methods.

I plan to contact some colleagues from different parts of the world, asking for their thoughts on how Bayesian inference is taught to students in statistics and in other disciplines in their institutions, and on what ISBA can do to better promote Bayesian methods in other areas of science. During Alan's workshop one of the ideas that came up was to offer short courses on Bayesian methods in meetings of societies in other fields. This might be a good activity for the Continuing Education committee and is quite related with the idea of joint initiatives that we have been discussing. Your comments are welcome. I plan to return to this topic in the September issue of the bulletin.

ISBA 2016 The Program Council, lead by Michele Guindani, continues working hard to prepare the world meeting, ISBA 2016 .

The Early Bird Registration for ISBA 2016 is now open . All ISBA members and students enjoy discounts on the registration fees! If you are not a current member, join ISBA now and then register for ISBA 2106!

The Scientific Committee is taking proposals for special topic sessions. They should be submitted online by **August 15th, 2015**.

More detailed information about ISBA 2016 is provided by Michele Guindani here.

Honorary lifetime member The Board of Directors has conferred to **Sir Adrian F. M. Smith** the ISBA Honorary Lifetime Membership,

"in recognition of his many fundamental contributions to Bayesian statistics, especially for the development of the hierarchical model and Markov chain Monte Carlo methods, and for his public service at the highest level".

Dear Adrian, congratulations!

ISBA Prizes A reminder that the ISBA 2014 prizes will be awarded during the SBSS mixer at the JSM in Seattle (August 8-13, 2015). I hope to see you there if you are attending the JSM.

This year ISBA had calls for the Savage Award, Mitchell and DeGroot Prizes. Submissions closed on May 31st. The Prize Committee is choosing the committees for the different prizes, which will be awarded during ISBA 2016. This year, ISBA received 7 nominations for the DeGroot Prize, 12 for the Mitchell Prize, and 25 submissions for the Savage Award, 14 in the category of Theory and Methods, and 11 for Applied Methodology.

ISBA Fellows Submissions are now open for nominations of ISBA Fellows. *Nominees must be current ISBA members and should have been members for the last three consecutive years, at least.* The candidate's contributions should have had a significant impact in promoting Bayesian ideas and methods in society, through scientific works and other activities, such as teaching, consulting or service. Submissions and supporting letters should not be made by current members of the Fellows Selection Committee to avoid conflicts of interest. Nominations may be made by any current ISBA member. The nominator should upload three supporting letters (pdf format) from ISBA members (other than the nominee) that address the criteria for Fellows, plus a Citation to be used if the individual is elected. The submission form is available from here . The **deadline** for submission is **September 15th, 2015**.

ISBA Co-sponsorships and Travel Awards General Policy The board has approved the new general policy for ISBA Co-sponsorships and Travel Awards. Note that now ISBA will have a *single deadline* within a year to receive requests for co-sponsorship of events. The document containing the new rules can be found here.

ISBA's Website ISBA's website is now hosted by DesignHammer (DH). We migrated the website from the Duke server about a month ago. The contract with DH costs ISBA US$6,000 a year and gets us hosting, security and module updates to the more recent branches of `Drupal` and `CiviCRM`. We expect this will give more security to our website. If you experience any problems with the site, please let us know.

Membership categories

- The Executive Board is discussing the creation of a `Senior Membership` category, which would be available to individuals who are 65 or older or who are fully retired (not currently employed) regardless of age. It would also include all benefits of the regular ISBA Membership. The Executive Board hopes to submit this proposal to the Board soon.

- It is worth reminding our members that since the beginning of this year ISBA gives **free membership to ISBA members in countries with reduced subscription fees**. Note that our web system is not yet ready to accommodate this type of membership. We hope this will be sorted out in the next few months, once we have finished moving the website. If you are based in a country with reduced subscription fees, and want to indicate a student of yours to get this free membership, contact Gabriella Bonfanti, ISBA's Administrative Manager, at bonfanti.ga@gmail.com .

The World of Statistics As you probably remember, ISBA is part of The World of Statistics, the successor to the highly successful International Year of Statistics campaign celebrated in 2013. Kerrie Mengersen is the ISBA representative in the Steering Committee of The World of Statistics. This time, I invite you to read the latest News from the World of Statistics.

Consider becoming an ISBA Lifetime Member You know that ISBA has different types of memberships. A lifetime membership costs US$990 for members over 50, and members under 50 pay an additional $50 for every year under 50. One of the advantages of being a lifetime member is that you do not have to remember to renew your membership every year. More important is that **you contribute** to the fund devoted to supporting Junior Researchers (ISBA members who are graduate students or who received their PhD or equivalent degree within four years) so that they can participate in an ISBA World Meeting. The award recognises Life Members as significant contributors to, and supporters of, ISBA, and their interest in assisting ISBA's junior members. Awards are made by the Program Chair of the ISBA meeting. Past recipients of the ISBA Lifetime Members Junior Researcher Award can be seen here.

Help ISBA supporting young Bayesian researchers by becoming an ISBA Lifetime Member, it is a win-win game!

I welcome your comments on these topics or others - please feel free to email me at alex@im.ufrj.br . ▲

A Message from the Editor

- Feng Liang -
liangf@illinois.edu

Dear readers, I hope you have been enjoying the summer so far! It is time take a break and catch up with some latest news/updates/reports in our society presented in this issue of the Bulletin: ISBA *named lectures* including the two *inaugural named lectures* at ISBA 2016, general policies on *co-sponsorships* and *travel awards*, updates on *ISBA 2016*, and reports on various conferences including one on a special conference G70.

With the help from our president, we now resume our *Interviews* Section. In this issue, the Bayesian statistician being interviewed is Prof. Helio S. Migon from Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), Brazil.

Also in this issue, in the Students' Corner Section, Diego, a Mexican PhD student in Manchester, is sharing with us his excitement for his line of work. I hope more people, especially the recent graduates, can send us their "Voices".

As always, you are welcome to participate in the Bulletin by emailing suggestions/contributions to me or to any member of the Editorial Board. ▲

FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

ISBA NAMED LECTURES

-Sonia Petrone -
sonia.petrone@unibocconi.it

Prologue. The exciting growth of ISBA as a Scientific Society is reflected in its more and more participated World Meetings. On many occasions, people have expressed the wish that the growing size of the World Meetings does not prevent us from keeping alive the sense of unity and the passion for discussion of the first Valencia Meetings, on which the world meetings are grounded. In this spirit, the ISBA Board of Directors has been considering ways of encouraging plenary moments of discussion at the World Meeting. At the same time, people have expressed interest in establishing Named Lectures to honor prominent scholars who have had a fundamental role in the advancement of Bayesian Statistics. This would also align ISBA with the tradition followed by other international statistical societies, which have well-established named lecture series.

ISBA Named Lectures. With these motivations, on December 2014, the ISBA Board has approved the establishment of *ISBA Named Lectures*. The Lectures will honor historical figures who have made breakthrough contributions to the theory or application of Bayesian methods. They will be highlighted events at the World Meeting, delivered in plenary sessions, **followed by one or more discussants**.

All Named Lectures will include documentation about the Scholar to whom the Lecture is dedicated. The background material attached to each Named Lecture will be prepared in collaboration with the ISBA Continuing Education Committee, and will be **widely accessible on a dedicated page on the ISBA website**.

A Named Lecture must be approved by the ISBA Board, through a formal vote, and has to come with an appropriate **endowment fund**. A special Committee on Named Lectures will select the lecturers and discussants.

Bylaws on Named Lectures

The bylaw on Named Lecture is available at http://bayesian.org/business/bylaws and is reported below.

Bylaw N:

1. ISBA Named Lectures are established to honor individuals who have had a fundamental role in the advancement of Bayesian Statistics. These ISBA Lectures will be named after historical figures who made breakthrough contributions to the theory or application of Bayesian methods, and who have been deceased for at least 20 years. The Board can make an exception to the 20-year rule in specific and rare occasions.

a) ISBA Named Lectures will be delivered in plenary sessions with discussant(s) at the ISBA World Meetings. Each Lecture is delivered no more often than every two years.

b) Named Lectures are highlighted events at the World Meeting. To ensure that their impact will not be reduced, the Board will consider the existing number of lectures before approving new proposals, and can decide to limit the maximum number of named lectures. A general guideline is to limit the number of Lectures delivered at any one World Meeting to 4; named Lectures in excess to such limit can rotate between Meetings.

c) All Named Lectures will include documentation – annotated bibliography, photos, videos of lectures if available, appropriate links to sources of references, etc.– about the Scholar to whom the Lecture is dedicated. The proponents of the Lecture will be responsible for preparing and organizing this material, in coordination with the ISBA Continuing Education Committee. The background material attached to each Named Lecture will be accessible widely on a dedicated page on the ISBA website.

d) Upon approval by the ISBA Board of Directors, Named Lectures can be established in collaboration with other Scientific Societies. Joint Named Lectures must also meet the ISBA bylaws for Named Lectures.

2. The ISBA Named Lectures are:
TBA1
TBA2.

3. **Establishing Named Lectures**. Any ISBA member can propose a Named Lecture, according to a submission procedure that will be provided in the ISBA Book of Procedures. If the Lecture is approved by the ISBA Board, proponents will be responsible to raise the required endowment of at least 30,000 USD. This minimum amount requirement can be increased over time by the Board. The establishment of a new Named Lecture is decided through a formal vote by the ISBA Board. The Board may require the proper documentation (see bylaw N1c) before approval. The Board's approval is definitive, conditionally on the fulfillment, by the proponents, of the endowment fund requirement.

4. **Nominations**: Any ISBA member can nominate potential lecturers to the Committee on Named Lectures, according to nomination rules that will be provided in the ISBA Book of Procedures.

5. **Committee on Named Lectures**. The Committee on Named Lectures is composed of 3 members each of whom serves two years. Members are proposed by the Board of Directors and approved by the ISBA Executive Committee. The Committee members are renewed on July 15th of even-numbered years. The Committee on Named Lectures also includes the members of the ISBA Program Council and the Editor in Chief of Bayesian Analysis. A component of the Committee shall be designated as Chair. The Committee on Named Lectures:

- Selects the lecturers and discussants for the Named Lectures;
- Receives and prepares a report on proposals of new Named Lectures for the Executive Committee, who can also ask the Committee for a recommendation, before the formal vote by the ISBA Board;
- Decides, in collaboration with the ISBA Treasurer and after approval by the ISBA Executive Council, the expenses that can be covered for each Lecture in the corresponding year. The ISBA Treasurer provides a report on the financial status of the endowments to the Committee on Named Lectures and to the Executive Council to help with these decisions. The general principle is that the endowment should cover the costs associated with the Lecture;
- Suggests to the ISBA Board, whether a rotation of Named Lectures is appropriate, and if so, how the rotation should occur.

6. ISBA is mandated to strive towards gender equality in terms of naming lectures and delivering them.

Inaugural ISBA Named Lectures

Two inaugural proposals have been approved by the ISBA Board of Directors, as occasional special Lectures at the ISBA World Meeting in 2016 http://www.isba2016.org. For each of them, an endowment fund is being collected, to consolidate them as permanent ISBA Named Lectures.

- On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of Bruno De Finetti's death, in 1985, ISBA is honoring his memory by a **Bruno de Finetti Lecture at the ISBA World Meeting 2016**.

  The Bruno de Finetti Lecture at ISBA 2016 will be delivered by **Persi Diaconis** (Stanford University, USA).

- In the first ISBA World Meeting without Susie, ISBA is honoring her work for Bayesian Statistics and for ISBA, with a **Susie Bayarri Lecture at ISBA 2016**, by an outstanding young researcher under 35 years old.

  The Susie Bayarri Lecture at ISBA 2016 will be delivered by **James Scott** (University of Texas at Austin, USA).

A memorial fund has been established in November 2014, on initiative of Susie's colleagues and friends, the Jim Berger's family and the Duke Department of Statistical Science, who contributed with generous donations. Contributions can be given at https://bayesian.org/civicrm/contribute/transact?reset=1&id=33

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BIOGRAPHY OF BRUNO DE FINETTI

- Antonio Lijoi, Sonia Petrone -

Bruno de Finetti (Innsbruck, 1906; Roma 1985) has been one of the most influential Italian mathematicians of the XX century and though his most well–known papers have mainly contributed to the advancement of Probability Theory and Mathematical Statistics, his work is a milestone and has had a profound impact even far beyond these two research areas.

Soon after graduating in Mathematics at the University of Milano, de Finetti was offered a position at the *Italian Central Statistical Institute* (ISTAT), which at that time was led by Corrado Gini. He had been working at ISTAT from 1927 to 1931. In 1931 he moved to Trieste where he accepted a position as an actuary at the *Assicurazioni Generali*, which he left in 1946. Both experiences played a fundamental role in his research and it was during those years that he gave the most influential contributions to Probability theory, Statistics, Economics, Actuarial and Financial Mathematics. Indeed, a considerable part of his research was deeply motivated by his farsighted work in applied problems he had to tackle in his professional activity. At the *Assicurazioni Generali* he was also involved in the mechanization of some actuarial services and this certainly contributed to making him one of the first mathematicians extremely aware of the possibilities offered by computing machinery for scientific calculus. Despite he had won a position as Professor of Financial Mathematics in 1939 at the University of Trieste, he could officially enter academia only in 1946 due to a law forbidding the appointment of unmarried professors that was cancelled after the fall of the fascist regime. In 1954 he moved to the University of Rome "La Sapienza" where he remained until his retirement in 1976.

It would be a formidable task to quickly list the innovative results de Finetti has achieved. Here it is worth mentioning his deep contribution to the foundations of probability theory through a rigorous formalization of the subjective approach, his seminal work on stochastic processes where he anticipated the theory of processes with independent increments, the results on exchangeable sequences of random elements and their connections with prediction and induction. He is also duly considered as the founder of modern Bayesian statistics. For example, Richard E. Barlow has identified de Finetti's paper *La Prévision* (1937) as the first major contribution that has led to the re-birth of Bayesian statistics. See Barlow (1992) [1]. Indeed, in de Finetti's own words "Bayesian standpoint is noways one among many possible theories, but is an almost self-evident truth, simply and uniquivocally relying on the indisputable coherence rules of probabilities.". For a stimulating account of de Finetti's contributions to probability and statistics, we refer to Cifarelli and Regazzini (1996).[2]

More importantly, his masterful mathematical talent made him a forerunner of a number of seminal contributions that are currently considered at the foundations of other research areas. For example, the first paper (in 1926) of his almost

[1] BARLOW, R.E. (1992). Introduction to de Finetti (1937) foresight: its logical laws, its subjective sources. In *Breakthroughs in Statistics 1. Foundations and Basic Theory* (S. Kotz and N. L. Johnson, eds.) 127–133. Springer, New York.

[2] CIFARELLI, D.M. and REGAZZINI, E. (1996). De Finetti's contributions to probability and statistics. *Statistical Science* **11**, 253–282.

three hundred writings was the first example in population genetics of a model with overlapping generations, at least forty years ahead of its time. The results therein attracted the attention of Lotka and Hadamard and originated the so–called *de Finetti diagrams* that are extensively used in population genetics.

His work in actuarial sciences has been influential to the development of life insurance mathematics, credibility theory and the theory of risk. In de Finetti (1940) he introduced the mean–variance approach for portoflio selection, thus largely anticipating the work that awarded Harry Markowitz the Nobel Prize in 1990. Similarly, in Rubinstein's words: "in 1952 anticipating Kenneth Arrow and John Pratt by over a decade, he (*de Finetti*) formulated the notion of absolute risk aversion, used it in connection with risk premia for small bets and discussed the special case of constant risk aversion". See de Finetti (1952) and Rubinstein (2006)[3].

References.

Despite most of de Finetti's work is in Italian (in particular, we confine ourselves to mentioning de Finetti (2006), a two–volume collection containing an impressive selection of his papers), anyone who is interested in studying and understanding de Finetti's stance in probability and statistics can rely on translations of some of his significant contributions. In this respect, besides the renowned book de Finetti (1970), useful references are de Finetti (1931), (1937), (1938), (1972), (1992).

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[3] RUBINSTEIN, M. (2006). Bruno de Finetti and mean–variance portfolio selection. *Journal of Investement Management* **4**, 1–2.

FROM THE PROGRAM COUNCIL

Update on ISBA 2016

There are lots of exciting news about our 13th World Meeting, which will take place in Santa Margherita di Pula, Sardina, Italy, from June 13th to June 17th, 2016:

Official Web Site: The official website of the conference is now available at http://www.isba2016.org. The website contains all the information you need to attend the conference. In particular, information on the registration fees, accommodation at the conference hotel, travel information, extras at the conference venue, etc. The Cagliari Airport is well connected to many airports in Europe and is served also by many low cost airlines. On the website, you will also find important information regarding the new procedures required to obtain a VISA to Italy and the European Union, if you are required to get one. For the more social among us, we have also started Facebook and Google+ sites for keeping up with updates.

Registration is now open! The Early Bird Registration for the ISBA World Meeting 2016 is now open at http://www.isba2016.org/registra-info.asp

All ISBA members and students enjoy discounts on the registration fees! Not a current member? No worries! Join ISBA now by completing the membership form at https://goo.gl/GROst8 and then register for ISBA 2016! Please, note that if you decide to register to the conference first, the difference between the member and non-member rate does not provide the renewal of the ISBA membership. If you want to check and renew your ISBA membership status, use the link above first!

Bookings at the conference hotel! We recommend to register and book the room at your earliest convenience, since ISBA has a limited number of rooms initially negotiated at special conference prices. **Half-board accommodation rates include breakfast and dinner buffets.** For all bookings (both for the young investigators and the grown-ups), deposit of the first night is required to guarantee the reservation and must be paid not later than February 10, 2016. The balance must be paid no later than March 25, 2016. Full payment (not only first night deposit) is mandatory for all bookings after February 10, 2016.

Plenary Speakers and Invited Sessions. We have an impressive slot of plenary speakers, who have already confirmed their participation to the conference. There will be *two special lectures* at ISBA 2016:

On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of Bruno De Finetti's death, in 1985, ISBA is honoring his memory by establishing a **Bruno de Finetti Lecture**, that will be delivered at the world Meeting 2016 by **Persi Diaconis** (Stanford University, USA). *Read more in the special announcement in this issue of the Bullettin.*

In the first ISBA World Meeting without her, ISBA is honoring the work for Bayesian Statistics and for ISBA of Susie, with a **Susie Bayarri Lecture for an outstanding young researcher under 35 years old.** The lecture will be delivered by **James Scott** (University of Texas at Austin, USA).

Peter J. Green (University of Bristol, UK), **Sonia Petrone** (Bocconi University, Italy) and **David Spiegelhalter** (University of Cambridge, UK) will deliver the Foundational Lectures, which will start our meeting with the traditional bang on Monday morning! **Sudipto Banerjee** (University of California Los Angeles, USA), **Merlise A. Clyde** (Duke University, USA), **David B. Dunson** (Duke University, USA) and **Raquel Prado** (University of California Santa Cruz, USA) will be the meeting's Keynote Speakers, highlighted plenary moments in the meeting.

A special Invited Session has been organized in honor of **Kathryin Chaloner**, which will underscore her fundamental work on Bayesian optimal design. A special invited session will be organized by our own journal, **Bayesian Analysis**, which will promote a discussion on some up-to-date topic of interest to our community. The **Savage Award** session will also be held, as tradition, du-

ring the World Meeting. Last but not least, the Scientific Committee has been working, and interacting with the ISBA Sections, on organizing a number of **invited sessions**. Naming all of them is impossible in the limits allowed by the bulletin, but we will soon give details on the conference website.

Call for Special Topic Sessions. The Scientific Committee of ISBA 2016 is looking forward to receive proposals for special topic sessions. These have represented the core of past meetings, and we hope we are keen to continue such tradition for ISBA 2016. Each special topic session typically consists of 3 talks with a common theme. A discussant may be considered in addition to the 3 talks. Other session formats (e.g., round tables, panel sessions, multiple speakers...) may be considered but will need to be properly justified. In any case, each session will have a duration of 1h 30' including questions and organized/floor discussions.

Proposals should be submitted online at http://bayesian.org/node/add/isba-session-proposal/ by **August 15th, 2015**. Please note that proposal submission does not require ISBA membership. However, non-members will need to create an account on the ISBA website to be able to submit proposals. Session proposers will be required to submit the following information: Meeting: ISBA 2016; Meeting Program Chair: ISBA 2016 Program Chair; Session Type: Special Topic Session; Session Title; Session Organizer: Name, email and affiliation; Session Proposal: The proposal should include an abstract with the description of the session, the list of speakers with their affiliations and contact information, and the tentative titles of the talks. The abstracts of the talks may be included in your proposal but are not required by the August 15th deadline. Please indicate if the proposed session is sponsored by one or more ISBA Sections and in such case provide a brief statement to that effect at the end of the proposal. The Scientific Committee will confirm the sponsorship from the Program Chairs of the Section(s); Session Chair Please, make sure to correctly fill the form with the information outlined above, in order to avoid routing the application to the wrong ISBA officers. The proposals will be reviewed by the ISBA 2016 Program and Scientific Committees. Notification of acceptance of the proposals will be sent by September 15th 2015. The abstracts for the talks of the approved sessions are due on November 1st, and should be uploaded at http://bayesian.org/node/add/isba-abstract/ All inquiries should be directed to the Program Council of ISBA: programcouncil@bayesian.or or to Michele Guindani at micheleguindani@gmail.com. We look forward to receiving your proposals.

Travel Awards. We will soon communicate deadlines and procedures to apply for the ISBA Travel Awards: the ISBA Lifetime Members Junior Researcher Award, which is intended to recognize junior researchers, attending a World Meeting, who gave significant contributions in the early stage of their career, the Pilar Iglesias Travel Award, which is reserved to students from developing countries, and up to two ISBA New Researchers Travel Awards to support participation in ISBA Meetings by outstanding junior researchers.

Young Travel Support/Sponsor Support. In addition to the travel awards mentioned above, we will make our best to facilitate the participance of young researchers to the ISBA 2016 meeting. First of all, students who are also ISBA members obtain a **hefty discount on the registration fees**. In addition, we have been able to obtain a hefty discount on the rates for **70 hotel rooms** at the conference hotel (and same half-board accommodations). These rates are applicable to: Ph.D. students, postdoctoral fellows (or equivalent no full time tenure-track position), who received their Ph.D. title after 2010. In addition, ISBA has been applying as usual for funds from the government and private companies to support the travel of students and young investigators to the conference. I am glad to let you know that **Google** and **Stata** have agreed to help us with such endeavor. Google has been known to highly consider the work of Bayesians (just go and search http://research.google.com), and Stata has just introduced a new Bayesian module in their latest Stata 14 release. A notable number of ISBA young members will be then supported by ISBA-Google and ISBA-Stata travel support funds, in addition to the funds usually provided by ISBA and government agencies. Of course, if you know of any other private entity which would be willing to add to the list of sponsors, please let us know! We have also received some help from Collegio Carlo Alberto, Turin (http://www.carloalberto.org), a joint

of venture of Compagnia di San Paolo and the University of Torino. Italy, whose mission is to foster research and education in the social sciences.

Short Courses. Short courses will be held at the nearby University of Cagliari, on June 12th, 2016. For the first time ever, the Continuing Education Committee of ISBA together with the the Program Council have created an open poll, which can be accessed at http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/2096918/ISBA-2016-Poll-on-Short-Courses to understand the most compelling interests of the community. To date, the poll has received 164 responses. We will soon start organizing the courses based on the results of the poll. Thanks to the help of the University of Cagliari, we expect to be able to provide the short courses at exceptionally low rates to participants who are also registered to the World Meeting! ▲

Recipients of ISBA Travel Awards for COBAL 2015

Mauricio Sadinle

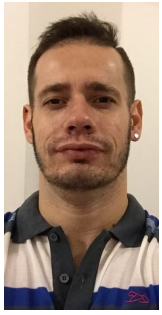
Mauricio holds a bachelors degree in statistics from the National University of Colombia in Bogota. He worked for three years in the Conflict Analysis Resource Center – CERAC, a Bogota-based think tank devoted to the study of armed conflicts. Mauricio has a PhD and a masters degree in statistics from Carnegie Mellon University where he worked under the supervision of Stephen Fienberg. Mauricio is currently a Postdoctoral Associate within the Department of Statistical Science at Duke University and the National Institute of Statistical Science (NISS) where his work is supported by the National Science Foundation - Census Research Network under the mentoring of Jerry Reiter.

Kelly Cristina Mota Gonçalves

I am a Professor of Statistics at the Department of Statistics of the Institute of Mathematics and Statistics of the Federal Fluminense University, Brazil, since January 2011. I completed my undergraduate studies in Mathematics in December 2007 at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro.

After that, in March 2010, I obtained my MSc. degree in Statistics, also from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, with a dissertation entitled “Bayes linear estimators for finite population sampling”, supervised by Prof Helio Migon and Prof Fernando Moura. I finished my Ph.D. in Statistics in 2014 at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro with a thesis entitled “Forecasting models for rare and clustered populations under adaptive cluster sampling”. During my Ph.D. course I was supervised by Prof Fernando Moura. My research interests include: Bayesian inference, survey sampling and mixture models.

Gustavo Henrique M. A. Rocha



I am a researcher in geographical sciences and statistics at National School of Statistical Sciences (ENCE – IBGE, Brazil). I got my undergraduate , master and PhD degree in Statistics from Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil. I finished my doctoral in 2014 . In my PhD dissertation I worked with robust models for censored responses.

▲

ISBA Co-sponsorships and Travel Awards General Policy Document

The purpose of the following general policy document is

1. to establish an organized application process for requesting co-sponsorships to ISBA, in accordance to ISBA's bylaws.

2. to distinguish regular junior travel support from the "ISBA New Researcher Travel Awards", in accordance to ISBA's bylaws.

1. Applications for Events' co-sponsorships.

The following **deadlines** are set for handling the application process for events requesting ISBA co-sponsorships:

1. By **January 31st** of each year, the ISBA treasurer will provide a provisionary budget to the attention of the *Executive Board* and *Program council*, based on budget, revenues and expenses from the previous years.

2. By **May 30th** of each year, the Program Council of ISBA will receive requests for co-sponsorships **for events and workshops scheduled the following year**. For example, organizers of a meeting scheduled at any date between January 1st and December 31st of 2017 will have to request co-sponsorhip to ISBA by the deadline of May 30th, 2016.

3. By the following **June30th**, the Program Council of ISBA will communicate decisions on the co-sponsorhip requests to the event organizers.

   General conditions of the co-sponsorship are as follows:

   (i) In accordance with ISBA s bylaws, the funds should be used for junior travel support. Preference should be given to senior/advanced students active in research over young researchers post-PhD, and to students from economically disadvantaged countries. ISBA expects that the awards are spread to ensure the maximum participation. When awards are made, they should carry a note mentioning "partial support from ISBA".

   (ii) Current ISBA members attending the event will receive discounted registration fees. The organizers should consider having a non-member rate that is at least the amount of ISBA membership higher than the regular meeting rate as part of the member benefits. In addition, the organizers are also welcome to have a section member discount. That way the event can help recruit new membership to ISBA and the section. ISBA membership can be verified by having one of the ISBA members on the organizing committee contact the ISBA Program Council for instructions on how to access the membership list.

   (iii) Event organizers will include the ISBA logo in an appropriate place in the conference packet and website. Also a link to the ISBA website should be added where appropriated.

   (iv) In order to provide an efficient management of ISBA's resources and avoid funds to concentrate to a particular group or person, we ask the organizers to **communicate the names** of the awardees to the ISBA Program Council and **wait for confirmation before informing** the award recipients.

   (v) A short CV of all awardees should be passed to the ISBA Program Council so a proper dissemination is done through the ISBA channels.

   (vi) In all their public communications, the organizers will refer to the funds provided by ISBA as "**junior travel support**", unless the funds are explicitly used to establish the *ISBA New Researcher Travel Award* as described below. **Under no circumstances** the organizers will refer to the junior travel support contributions as "Travel Awardsïn their communications.

ISBA will be under no financial obligation for the co-sponsored events. Any financial loss associated with the meeting is solely the responsibility of the primary event sponsor or the event organizers. Nevertheless, we

encourage donations to ISBA, so that future events can also be supported by our society. Organizers are entitled to make use of the ISBA IT (web-based) infrastructure to manage conference registration and facilitate the corresponding fee payments electronically. The charge for this service will be 250 US$ for the onetime set-up costs, 5% of the total collected amount, plus corresponding bank fees (if any).

2. ISBA New Researcher Travel Award

If the co-sponsorship is approved by the Program Council, the funds can be used to establish **one or a maximum of two** "*ISBA New Researcher Travel Awards*", e.g. granted via a junior paper competition, best oral presentation, and any other verifiable open competition. The amount of the Travel Award should be considerably higher than the amount granted for the regular travel support.

In order to establish the "ISBA New Researcher Travel Awardsthe following *additional* conditions will need to be met:

1 The Awards will have to be properly advertised in the event website and through the ISBA mailing lists. A specific call for the Travel Award should be established.

2 The selection process for this latter should be established by the corresponding Scientific Committee with the endorsement the ISBA Program Council and the relevant Section of ISBA (if applicable). In particular, the names of the awardees will have to be promptly communicated to the ISBA Program Council for verification and confirmation. The organizers will wait for confirmation before informing the award recipients.

3 A brief note of the awardee(s) and motivations for the selection will be added to the ISBA Bulletin after the event.

3. Exceptions

Additional funds can be exceptionally be granted for applications not received by the requested deadline and/or for amounts in addition of those established by the provisionary budget. Those decisions will need to be properly motivated on a case-by-case basis. Those funds will generally be used for junior travel support and not for establishing the New Researcher Travel Award. ▲

INTERVIEWS

HELIO S. MIGON

by Dani Gamerman
dani@im.ufrj.br

I had the pleasure of performing an interview with Prof. Helio S. Migon (HSM) for the ISBA bulletin. The interview was conducted live via skype on a late afternoon in May 2015.

Prof. Migon is one of the central figures in the development of Bayesian Statistics in Brazil. His research focuses primarily on dynamic models, where his seminal JASA discussion paper Dynamic Generalized Linear Models and Bayesian Forecasting outstands. His other areas of expertise include Econometrics, Actuarial and Hierarchical Models. Prof. Migon is a prolific researcher, having published more than 60 papers in peer-reviewed Statistics journals, the book Statistical

With the UFRJ group at a meeting around 2004.

Inference with Chapman & Hall now in his 2nd edition (co-authored by myself and F. Louzada) and 6 other statistical books in Portuguese. He has supervised 24 doctoral and 39 master students, including Carlos Carvalho, Marco Ferreira, Thais Fonseca and Hedibert Lopes, thus creating

a strong tradition of Bayes at UFRJ and in Brazil. Besides his research activity, Helio was Director of Graduate Studies in Statistics and Head of Department of Statistical Methods in UFRJ, where he spent most of his professional career, and was also President of the Brazilian Statistical Association, among many other services for academia, mostly in Brazil.

- How have you become Bayesian, after studying undergraduate and masters in frequentist Statistics?

HSM: I came across the book of Box and Tiao in one of my frequent visits to the library during my Masters (long course 71-74 !!!). I tried to read some things but did not have enough background. On the other hand, a great friend from undergraduate times was back from his doctorate in CORE in Louvain, under the supervision of Drèze, an econometrician with Bayesian inclination, and suggested me the book by Zellner.

- And hence the Bayesian turn was..?

HSM: These were the first contacts with the Bayesian argument. The final factor to opt for Bayesian way was, however, the suggestion of our friend Basilio Pereira to apply for PhD in Warwick. He had attended the presentation of Jeff Harrison paper for the RSS[4] and recommended me so much the issue that I decided to contact Jeff. Since reading Zellner, I thought of working with transfer functions, because of its obvious applications in Econometrics. This is an application area in which I always had an interest since graduation, and especially after an extension course in Economics in CENDEC/IPEA[5] in Brasilia.

At Warwick (circa 1982).

At Dani's house near Warwick (circa 1984).

- What are your major references (past and present) in Bayesian thinking?

HSM: As revealed above, always enchanted me the force of Bayesian reasoning of Arnold Zellner. Of course, for the same reasons, I could not help but remember Dennis Lindley. At present there are many influential references. I admire the developments in decision theory which I would cite J. Berger, S. French and M DeGroot as influential authors. On the other hand, the contributions of Bernard and Smith are also significant to me.

- It seems to me that your main references are based on books (instead of persons, papers or conferences). Do you think books are the most important means of dissemination of ideas in Statistics?

HSM: Of course books are essential references for dissemination, above all, of the knowledge already consolidated. Scientific papers or conferences are fundamental to monitor and participate in the current development of science.

- Which one(s) do you consider your main contribution(s) to the advancement of Bayesian Statistics?

HSM: I work in different directions, focusing predominantly on application. Initially, contributions were significant in dynamic models including generalized linear dynamic models and dynamic hierarchical models (along with you).

Some econometric applications include transfer function models, vector autoregression models (VAR) and more recently dynamic general equilibrium models with heteroscedastic errors (DS-

[4]the paper Bayesian Forecasting by P. J. Harrison and C. F. Stevens was read before a Royal Statistical Society meeting and published with discussion on JRSSB in 1976

[5]Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada, a Brazilian government consulting agency

GE). In Actuaries also I have a couple of contributions using dynamic hierarchical models.

In recent years, I made some insertions on objective priors. In particular, Jeffreys priors in Student-t and exponential power regression models were proposed with various collaborators. Currently, I have been proposing the use of objective priors in penalised regression models.

- What is your position on the subjectivist-objectivist dichotomy in the Bayesian paradigm both philosophically and operationally?

HSM: It is undeniable that the most important is always the scientific problem that you are solving or intending to solve. In this respect, we should seek to use the most appropriate methods, irrespective of the philosophical standpoint. Where it is feasible to subjectively specify prior distributions, I think we should do it. However, for some models we reach a level where eliciting prior distribution for model parameters is difficult because these parameters have little physical interpretation and hence are difficult to assess subjective.

- So you advocate that the objective point of view should only be used when you do not have prior information?

HSM: Yes. I think an example might help clarify my opinion. Think of a simple robust regression. It is not difficult to explore subjective information to elicit the regression coefficients, but it is unlikely that the scientist can collaborate in the subjective evaluation, say, of the degrees of freedom of the Student-t regression.

- I would like your analysis on the progress of Bayesian Statistics in recent decades: 1) Was it higher, equal or lower than you expected?

HSM: No doubt it was much larger than expected for me. The numerical methods of the 80s, freeing from the "analysis with conjugate priors", accelerated the growth of Bayesian statistics, allowing the development of models that were highly complex and therefore more adherent to reality.

- 2) What weight you assign to these methods and to MCMC?

HSM: The MCMC has undoubtedly greater weight than the others. Even more so after "overruninngßeveral developments of the early 80. The risk is to use the potential of MCMC methods in situations where less computationally intensive approaches could also provide equally accurate responses with sometimes significantly smaller computing times.

- 3) Do you consider this a positive development (some contend that many people began to use these methods without knowing what they were doing)?

HSM: In fact, the more automate the use of certain techniques is, the more risk we run of bad usage. Pushing buttons is undoubtedly more comfortable than having to think about the problem, in its modeling and in the implementation of algorithms for its inference. I think, however, that these risks should be assumed, for the most widespread use helps to advertise the potential of Bayesian approach. The remedy is to provide more and more training in Bayesian foundations for a broad public. Only then applications will become of higher quality, wherever possible involving and committing the decision maker and the decision analyst.

- How do you see the new techniques that have emerged or were revisited along with MCMC?

HSM: Scientific development sometimes involves moves back to the past. That is, certain advances occur at the expense of losing some facilities available in the methods of the past. So ultimately, they end up suggest revisits to the past. This is typical in dynamic models. MCMC sacrifices sequential analysis, while extends the modeling capability. Particle filters recover this sequential aspect without losing the ability to rather general modeling.

- What do you think is still lacking for Bayesian Statistics?

HSM: Science is constantly evolving. So there will always be something lacking (though I can not predict what). Surely we have many challenges coming from different fields of science. Large masses of data certainly will still require many developments of statistical methods.

- How do you see the future of Bayesian Statistics in Brazil and the world?

HSM: I see the future of Bayesian Statistics with

optimism. Overall, in its foundation the Bayesian statistics provides the answers expected by scientists. As mentioned, the interaction with other scientific areas, more specifically, Computing in general, and Machine Learning in particular, will leverage new developments.

At the Brazilian Bayesian meeting held in 2006 to celebrate Prof. Migon's 60th birthday.

In Brazil, we still have to climb several basic steps. Although we have a good performance in terms of methodological developments, with a few researchers with internationally recognized contributions, we must expand considerably the training of our students, not only the undergraduate Statistics students, but especially those of the applied areas. Still predominates the teaching of fractionedSStatistics. The Bayesian argument, when transmitted, comes down to a chapter at the end of the course or, sometimes, a basic course without motivation.

Finally, my recommendation is to continue striving to attract good students, expand the domestic and international exchanges and to continue overworking to overcome the difficulties we experience here in Brazil. So there is only left for us to "work, work, work ..."

I would like to finish off by thanking Dani for his kind and stimulating questions. ▲

BAYESIAN ANALYSIS - A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

UPDATE FROM BA

- Marina Vannucci -
Editor-in-Chief
marina@rice.edu

Thanks to the new Production and Editing systems we have adopted at Bayesian Analysis, accepted articles are now available at the journal website under the "advance publicationtab, and journal issues are assembled 'live'. The June issue of the journal (Volume 10, Number 2) was completed back in May and it is now available, in final form, under the "all issuestab on the Journal website. The September issue (Volume 10, Number 3) is already fully assembled as "first onlineänd it is available under the "current issuetab. The December issue (Volume 10, Number 4) will feature accepted papers that will compete for the Lindley prize.

We hope that the new production system will allow readers to read articles in a timely manner and to cite them appropriately. I encourage BA authors to consider paying the voluntary article charges, to help defray the costs of hosting the journal on Project Euclid and the added costs of the new production system (see http://bayesian.org/BA/article-charges).

The June issue of BA features a discussion paper by Philip Dawid and Monica Musio titled "Bayesian Model Selection Based on Proper Scoring Rules". Bayesian model selection with improper priors is not well-defined because of the dependence of the marginal likelihood on the arbitrary scaling constants of the within-model prior densities. In this paper the authors show how this problem can be evaded by replacing marginal log-likelihood by a homogeneous proper scoring rule, which is insensitive to the scaling constants. Suitably applied, this will typically enable consistent selection of the true model. The manuscript is published together with three invited discussions, followed by a rejoinder. The issue also contains other fine articles on various topics of Bayesian statistics.

The September issue of BA features a discussi-

on paper by Gustavo da Silva Ferreira and Dani Gamerman titled "Optimal Design in Geostatistics under Preferential Sampling". The paper analyses the effect of preferential sampling in Geostatistics when the choice of new sampling locations is the main interest of the researcher. A Bayesian criterion based on maximizing utility functions is used. Simulated studies are presented and highlight the strong influence of preferential sampling in the decisions. The computational complexity is faced by treating the new local sampling locations as a model parameter and the optimal choice is then made by analysing its posterior distribution. Finally, an application is presented using rainfall data collected during spring in Rio de Janeiro. The manuscript is published together with three invited discussions, followed by a rejoinder. The issue also contains other fine articles on various topics of Bayesian statistics.

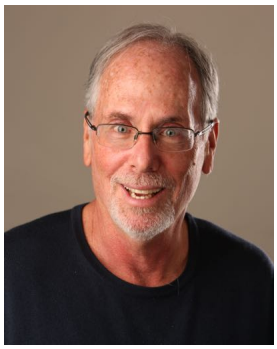
I remind readers that at BA it is now possible for individual authors to submit manuscripts for consideration as discussion papers. Such submissions will first go through our regular review process and, if accepted, the Editor in charge and the EiC will make a decision as to whether the manuscript can make a good discussion paper. If you wish to submit your work for consideration, please select "Article with Discussion"when submitting at EJMS.

Please consider submitting your best work to Bayesian Analysis! ▲

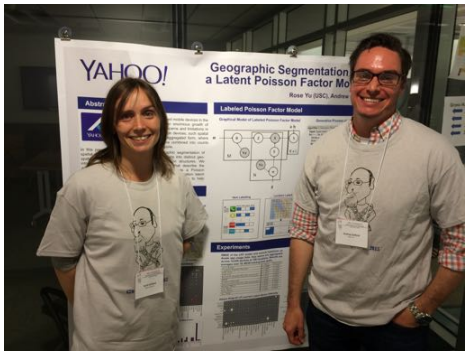
REPORT ON G70

A Conference and Celebration of Alan Gelfand's 70th Birthday

-Brad Carlin -
carli002@umn.edu



G70, a ISBA-endorsed conference celebrating the career and 70th birthday of Alan Gelfand, was held April 19-22 at the Hilton Garden Inn (HGI) in Durham, NC. The conference featured invited plenary talks by six internationally known researchers with whom Alan has collaborated, and shorter invited talks by 21 former PhD students, "grandstudents", and postdocs that constituted the bulk of the program. The meeting also featured a poster session with 31 participants, one from as far away as Italy! Another of the poster participants was Alan's own son Andrew, who has a PhD in computer science and now work for Yahoo, Inc. (see picture of Andrew in front of his poster with his sister Sarah, who herself has an MS in Statistics from the University of Washington).



For those who don't know, Alan is James B. Duke Professor of Statistical Science and Professor of Environmental Sciences and Policy at Duke University. He has made fundamental contributions to Bayesian statistics, spatial statistics, computation, hierarchical modeling, with applications to a wide range of disciplines including ecology, environment, law and other social and biomedical sciences. Alan has spent his entire career at the

University of Connecticut (UConn) and Duke University, where he has advised or co-advised more than thirty PhD students and more than ten postdoctoral fellows. An interesting and freewheeling recent interview with him (coauthored by myself and Prof. Amy Herring of the University of North Carolina) designed to coincide with the G70 meeting will appear in Statistical Science later this year.

The meeting began with a mixer at the HGI, which was a great success despite the rainy weather. The next morning (Monday), the meeting got underway with an excellent talk by Sir Adrian F.M. Smith, currently vice chancellor of the University of London and Alan's coauthor on the famous Gelfand and Smith (1990, JASA) paper that introduced Gibbs sampling to statisticians. Adrian gave a complete and careful review of Bayesian statistics from the mid-1950s to the MCMC revolution, putting Alan's contribution in context and providing a wonderful overview for the many junior investigators in attendance who all "grew up" in the post-MCMC era. The day also included a

plenary talk on spatial statistics (another of Alan's primary research areas) by Prof. Montserrat Fuentes, currently chair of the statistics department at North Carolina State University, and invited sessions on Bayesian nonparametrics, environmental statistics, and public health and health economics. The evening's poster session was well-attended and included lovely food and beverages, a giveaway of Gelfand-coauthored books generously provided by his publisher, CRC Press, and a group photo of all attendees wearing their conference tee shirts!

Day 2 (Tuesday) of the meeting began with a plenary talk on statistical and spatial ecology co-given by Prof. John Silander of the University of Connecticut and Prof. Jim Clark of Duke University. Both talks were very entertaining and it was great to see Alan's contributions in this area put into context by his two primary collaborators in the field, one from UConn and one from Duke. The other plenary that day was given by Dipak Dey, Professor and Associate Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences at UConn, on the subject of Bayesian sparse reduced rank multivariate regression methods, another subfield of Bayesian hierarchical modeling where Alan has made an impact. Invited sessions that day were on ecological statistics, genetics and genomics, and spatial statistics. The actual 70th birthday banquet that evening took place at Duke's beautiful Nasher Museum Hall, and included moving tributes by Profs. Merlise Clyde, Jim Berger, Jim Clark, Dipak Dey, and Mike West. Afterwards, Alan himself made brief remarks and thanks; all in all it was an emotional event for many in attendance.

The conference's final day (Wednesday) began with a plenary address by Prof. Jim Berger, Arts and Sciences Professor of Statistics at Duke. Jim's talk combined Gaussian process modeling (another of Alan's favorite things) and modern methods of computer modeling, in the context of an interesting volcanic lava flow prediction problem. The final invited session followed up on this theme and concerned big data and computer modeling in the context of climate and forestry modeling.

Funding for the event was provided by Duke University, the Information Initiative at Duke (iiD), the Duke Department of Statistical Science, and by Duke University itself; additional funding came from the University of Minnesota Department of Biostatistics, UCLA Department of Biostatistics, and the National Institute of Statistical Sciences. This generous support helped pay for conference materials, food and beverage, and perhaps most significantly, the travel of 23 young investigators (current students or persons within 5 years of receiving the PhD) presenting talks or posters at the meeting.

Overall the conference was a smashing success, both professionally and personally for all involved. Sudipto Banerjee and I served as co-chairs of the organizing committee, a truly easy job since virtually no one we invited to speak turned us down! Merlise Clyde and the indefatigable Fan Li co-chaired the local arrangements committee, with key logistical and administrative support

from Lori Rauch, Nikki Scott, and Karen Whitesell. Larry Hall provided web support, and Candela Rodriguez created the caricature of Alan for the tee shirts (see picture), with help from Antti Huupponen. Gary Larson served as official conference photographer. Finally, thanks go to Alan's spouse Maria Asuncion Beamonte, for her unwavering support and teaching us how to properly prepare pigs' ears for human consumption. We are already looking forward to Alan's 80th birthday in 2025! ▲

ISBA - SECTIONS

OBJECTIVE BAYES SECTION

- Luis Pericchi -
luis.pericchi@upr.edu

The 11th International Workshop on Objective Bayes Methodology, **O-Bayes15**, took place on the Valencia from 1 to 5 June 2015.

The O-Bayesians went back to Valencia Spain to celebrate the life of the outstanding scientist and human being **Susie Bayarri**. The scientific committee consisted of

Ed George (Chair)
Gonzalo Garcia-Donato
Luis Pericchi
Nancy Reid
Christian Robert
Judith Rousseau

Local Organizing committee

Carmen Armero (Chair)
Gonzalo GarcÃa-Donato
Anabel Forte
María Eugenia Castellanos
David Conesa

More information can be found in the website : http://congresos.adeituv.es/OBayes15/

It consisted on 3 tutorials on the first day (1h30 each) and 21 speakers with 20 discussants. Only Jim Berger's talk on the extraordinary career of Susie had no discussant (photo included).

The meeting lasted 4 days and ended by a guided visit of Old Valencia city and Gala Dinner (Submarine Restaurant in Oceanographic of Valencia) the last day was devoted to an excursion to the Bodegas Celler del Roure.

The meeting also offered a visit and cocktail to the beautiful botanic gardens of Valencia (photo

included).

OBayes attracted 109 very active participants from all over the world, and 48 high quality posters.

The 5 winners of the "Jeffreys Poster Excellence Awards" were (photo included):
- Christèle Bioche, Université Blaise Pascal
- Egil Ferkingstad, Norwegian University of Science and Technology and University of Iceland
- Sarah Filipp, University of Oxford
- Takeru Matsuda, University of Tokyo
- Erlis Ruli, University of Padova

With generous grants from ISBA and NSF, travel support was provided for 30 junior participants. This included 8 ISBA travel awards.

The next OBayes meeting will be held in 2017.

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BAYESIAN NONPARAMETRICS SECTION

- Antonio Lijoi -
Chair

The International Journal of Approximate Reasoning has planned a Special Issue on Bayesian Nonparametrics, for publication in late 2016. IJAR is a well established journal, which is intended to serve as a forum for the treatment of uncertainty in Artificial and Computational Intelligence. Alessio Benavoli, Antonio Lijoi and Antonietta Mira will serve as guest editors. Deadline for online submissions is on December 1, 2015. Further details and instructions can be found on the http://www.journals.elsevier.com/international-journal-of-approximate-reasoning/call-for-papers/special-issue-on-bayesian-nonparametrics/.

Recall also the August 20, 2015, deadline for submissions for the Special Issue of Statistics and Computing on Bayesian Nonparametrics. Relevant information are available on the special issue website https://sites.google.com/site/bnpspecialissue/

▲

STUDENTS' CORNER

Isadora Antoniano
isadora.antoniano@unibocconi.it

Hello dear readers! It is that time of the year again. For some of us it's summer, for others winter, but regardless of the weather, a wide selection of conferences presents itself to all. And conferences can be exhausting, they can be exciting, for those presenting for the first time they may even be a bit scarry, but above all, they should be exci-

ting. They give us the opportunity to learn about other people's work, to interact with our colegues. We meet old friends and make new ones. We talk to people from whom we can get useful tips or learn new things. They can also open our eyes to new areas of research and collaboration.

And speaking of new people and interesting areas of research, I'm happy to introduce you to Diego, a Mexican PhD student in Manchester who decided to step into this corner and share his excitement for his line of work. I hope you find it interesting, that you enjoy it and, most of all, that it inspries you to share your own stories with us.

Student Voices

by Diego Andrés Pérez Ruiz
diego.perezruiz@manchester.ac.uk

Finding spaces where you can share your research interests and interact with a scientific community sometimes seems difficult, but it's not impossible. When I went searching for such a place, I found the ISBA bulletin, and it seemed like the right place to contribute, to communicate, and to interact with the Bayesian community. After reading the bulletin I found the Student's corner and I thought I should use the opportunity to volunteer for a publication and share my research interest and their relationship to Bayesian statistics.

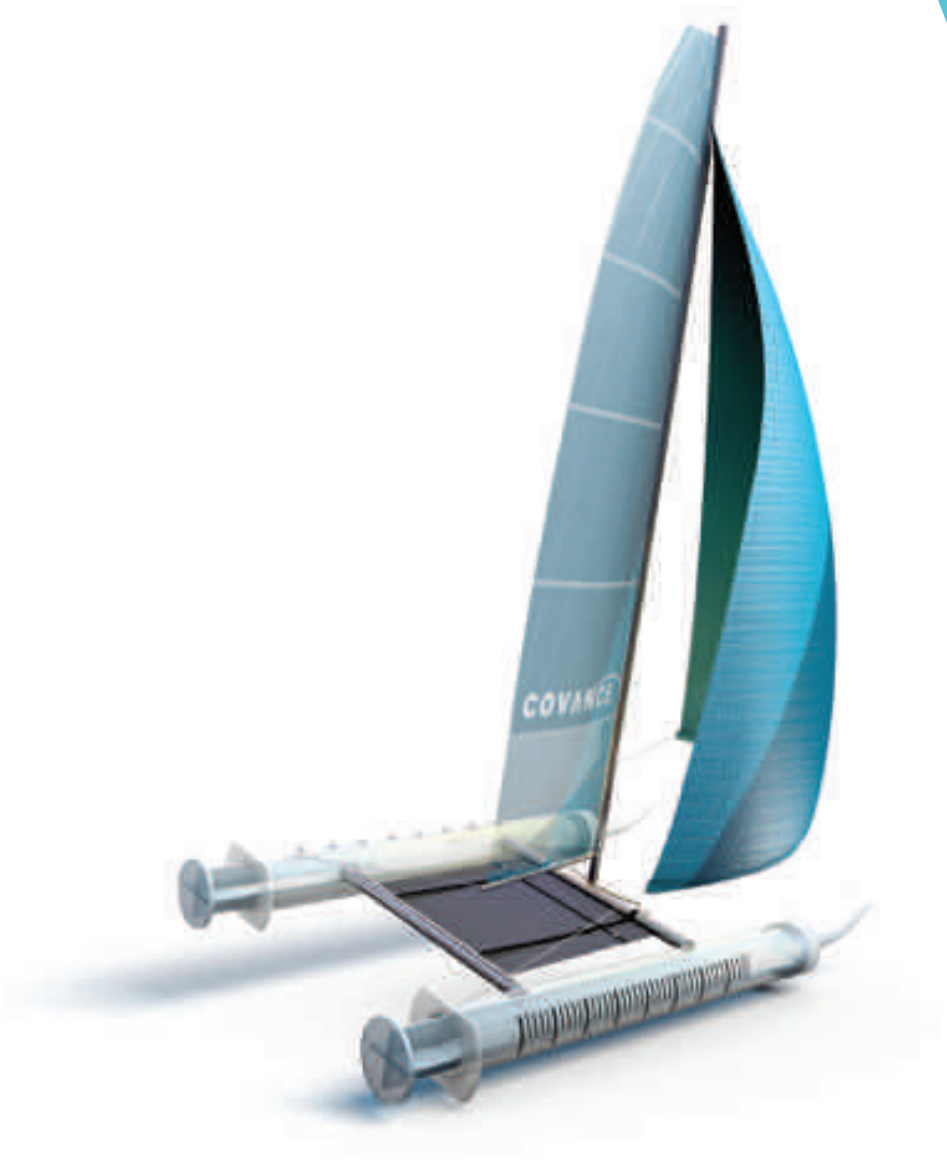
I was born in the State of Chiapas, in Mexico and I obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Applied Mathematics and Computer Science from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). During my university years, I realized that the field of statistics would allow me to combine my interests in mathematics and computer science. Statistics and mathematics fascinated me, so after finishing my bachelor's, I started a Master of Science in Statistics at the Center for Mathematical Research (CIMAT) in Guanajuato, Mexico. There, I took courses in Bayesian and Computational Statistics, which helped me to see the beauty of the Bayesian world. In my thesis, on optimal direction Gibbs sampling, we proposed a simulation algorithm that chooses the direction of maximum independence between successive Gibbs steps, thus minimizing the mutual information criteria between the two variables being updated.

I am currently doing a PhD in Statistics at the University of Manchester. I specialize in Functional Data Analysis, also known as FDA, an area concerned with the statistical analysis of data in the form of functions, and which has been rapidly developing in recent years. It is related to multivariate data analysis, since functions are multivariate objects. The main references in the area are the two monographs by Ramsey and Silverman: *Functional Data Analysis* and *Applied Functional Data Analysis*, together with the book *Nonparametric Functional Data Analysis: Theory and Practice*, by Ferraty and Vieu. Functional data analysis has practical applications in many fields, including physics, economics, biology, chemistry and genetics, and many methods for prediction, classification and clustering of functional data have been developed. Most of these methods, incuding clustering algorithms, nearest neighbour methods and principal components analysis, take a frequentist point of view. I see this as an opportunity to develop new Bayesian methods.

Within the Bayesian literature, it is possible to find methods for variable selection, models for sparse functional data, clustering, regression and graphical models for functional data. There are also people working in Bayesian nonparametric methods for functional data. However, there is still a lack of Bayesian methodology in functional data analysis and I believe that, if developed, It can be useful to give a new perspective on the problem.

I would like to invite you all to the wonderful world of Bayesian functional data, an opportunity to contribute and expand Bayesian statistics. There is a lot of work to do and many interesting applications where Bayesian statistics can be useful. Although there is some research in the area, much remains to be done, there are a many open problems and new methodology to which people can contribute.

Finally, I would like to thank Isidora Antoniano for the opportunity to contribute to the ISBA bulletin. I encourage other students to participate in the Students' Corner of the bulletin; it is a great opportunity to communicate with the Bayesian community and learn from them.



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