Welcome Back!

Whew! We’re so glad you decided to pick up another copy of *F THIS!* Otherwise, we’d have a difficult time justifying our existence to our corporate sponsors. However, now that we have a legitimate circulation, we can continue printing the important things that you need to know. For example, this week’s...

Lunch Column

It appears that department members are eating lunch like never before. For this issue we’ll be focusing on the utensil aspect of eating. A quick search of the literature shows that this kind of approach has not been explored to the fullest extent possible. We believe it will prove fruitful. See for yourself.

We asked whomever we could find, “What utensils did you use to eat lunch on Monday?” The answers were surprising:

- Bare hands: Amy, Heidi, Anja, Robert, Jan, Lisa, Rob, Vivian, Steve, Heather, Alex, Nicolas, Arno
- Spoon: Katie, Jason (for soup!), Chiara, Trudy
- Fork: Sarah, Dean
- Knife: Roger
- Chopsticks: Dean

Apparently, we are a fairly primitive bunch, mostly resorting to using our bare hands to devour our food. Perhaps one of the more advanced individuals (Chiara?) should give a seminar on the recent advances in eating technology.

The question remains: Whatever happened to the good ol’ spork? See the next issue....

Mailbag

We had a tremendous amount of feedback regarding our last issue. In fact, if you didn’t email gradnews@stat.ucla.edu then you were in the minority. This time ’round, we’re going to print a few samples from the *F THIS!* mailbag.

Rob Gould was first to respond:

*Dear Llama, I want to thank you for such an informative article. I found the paragraph entitled “Where the $!*%* is Rob’s Office?” particularly valuable, since I still quite regularly get lost. Now I will not leave my office without my copy of the first issue of “F THIS!”.*

The following comment was from an excited Scott Spicer. Apparently he counts for “two” people:

*I think that is a great newsletter! You can put me down for a “yes” in the poll question. In fact, put me down for two!!*

And finally, from Juana Sanchez:

*Nice newsletter!! Congratulations.*

As far as we can see, the newsletter was a spectacular success. We’re going to keep publishing it for ever and ever and ever and....
Celebrity Profile

It’s time to break the suspense — last issue’s mystery department member was Stefanie Vassar! Congratulations Stefanie!

Okay, here are this week’s questions:

What’s your favorite probability distribution?  
I like the Normal (Z) distribution because I can confuse my students by saying “zed” instead of “zee”!

Exactly how many sheep live in your country?  
Far too many for me to count. But I hear there’s about 40 million or so.

And exactly how many people live in your country?  
Only about 4 million.

Describe in three words what you think of Los Angeles.  
“This is winter?”

Is it true that you’re going to an ’N Sync concert this week? Don’t lie!  
Yeah it’s true, but think about it - 15,000 screaming females!!

Do you like long walks on the beach?  
Not with you!!!

If you had to choose between putting ketchup and putting tomato sauce on your spaghetti, which would it be?  
Well considering we don’t use the word “ketchup” back home, then I would put tomato sauce on it. Of course I would need a “serviette” to eat it with, and afterwards I would put the leftovers in the “rubbish bin”.

Random Poll

Would you like to see a second issue of the newsletter?

No Response  
(a lot)

Yes (2)*  
No (0)

* Both from Scott Spicer

Next issue’s poll: Did you know that to respond to Random Polls you should email gradnews@stat.ucla.edu?

Astrology

by Anja Presson

PISCES — You have great wisdom of fisher information. It is probable (84% chance ± 7%) that you will be offered an opportunity of great importance on the 22nd (± 2 days). You’ll have trouble concentrating on practical matters, but in the long run (as $n \to \infty$) it will be good for you. Use Pluto’s retrograde to find your soul estimate.

Send all comments, criticisms, suggestions, questions, events, and poll responses to gradnews@stat.ucla.edu.

Ask the Llama

What’s the deal with the graduate curriculum?  
The word on the street is that (1) there will be nine “core” classes, and the qualifying exam (offered at the end of the year) will cover the first six. These core classes will essentially be 200ABC (Theoretical), 210ABC (Computational), and 217ABC (Data Analysis). The exact material covered in each course has not been decided (yet); (2) Master’s students will not be encouraged to take the qualifying exam since they would have to take the same exam as Ph.D. students without a separate pass level. Instead, Master’s students will be encouraged to do a written thesis.

Calendar/Upcoming Events

March 15  Stat Department party!
March 22  Stefanie’s Kevin has surgery
March 22  Jie’s birthday
March 24  Issis’s birthday
March 26  Yan’s birthday
April 15  Matilda’s birthday