

TEACHING OF STATISTICS IN THE HEALTH SCIENCES

SECTION OF THE AMERICAN STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION

July 1995

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Electronic *JSE* Datasets and Stories Retrieval and Animation How-To by Tim Arnold

Hello everyone. Those of you who have a graphic browser for the World Wide Web may already know that the last issue (v3n1) of the *Journal of Statistics Education* contained a computer animation as "Figure 1" in the Datasets and Stories article, "Teaching Statistics With Data of Historic Significance: Galileo's Gravity and Motion Experiments." The animation demonstrates an experiment in which Galileo rolled a ball down a ramp with a horizontal shelf at the end to study the horizontal distance travel by the ball.

In case you have Mosaic or Netscape and haven't discovered the Web version of the *JSE*, open this URL:

<http://www2.ncsu.edu/ncsu/pams/stat/info/jse/homepage.html>

In case you do have the browser, but not the software to view animations, check out the ftp servers listed at the end of this message.

I thought some readers and prospective authors might be interested in the steps involved in creating an animation as an inclusion to a figure. I claim no particular expertise in this area, but here is a list of what I did to create the animation:

1. Create the initial graphic (to become the first frame of the animation) and covert it to a "tga" Targa graphics format file. It doesn't matter much what software you use to create the frames, which are just plain old graphic files. You just have to output them as tga files or covert them to tga files.
2. Create the rest of the frames by re-doing the initial frame, but with some parameters changed. I changed the viewing angle, the ball's position and the lighting as I created the frames. You may want to write a batch or script file to create these frames.
3. Execute the program and get a bunch of tga files which will become frames of the animation.
4. Run an mpeg encoder on the tga files, creating an mpg file (an mpeg animation).

TSHS Section
BUSINESS
MEETING

August 15

Tuesday
6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Orlando, Florida

What you need is

Software to create a graphics file, either in tga format or if not, then 1.1 software to convert your graphics into tga format.

- Patience to create the several graphics frames needed for the animation. The animation in the datasets article was about 98 frames.
- An mpeg encoder to take the tga files and create a single animation.

An mpeg player to view your animation

Two software notes

- (i) If this subject is completely new for you, take a look at the following file -- it gives a good overview of software tools available for animations:

ftp to
ftp.crs4.it

the path and filename is:

/mpeg/programs/00-INDEX.TXT

- (ii) If you already know what software you want and need, ftp to

ftp.ncsa.uiuc.edu

and explore these directories and files:
/Web/Mosaic/Unix/README.Mosaic
/Web/Mosaic/Unix/viewers/mpeg-play-

2.0.tar.Z

/Web/Mosaic/Windows/viewers/mpeg32h.zip
/Web/Mosaic/Mac/Helpers/sparkle-231.hqx

Hope to hear from those of you who want to try this out! Please send comments on articles/data etc. appearing in the JSE to **jse-talk@jse.stat.ncsu.edu**

--Tim Arnold (**arnold@stat.ncsu.edu**, FAX: 919-515-7591, North Carolina State University, Department of Statistics, Box 8203, Raleigh, NC 27695)

Sharpening TSHS Section's Services by Michael J. Symons

As Past Chair of Teaching of Statistics in the Health Sciences, a question of what services are offered to our Section's membership was raised. Reproduced below are those official Section Services as published in the August 1992 issue of *Amstat News*:

1. Organize invited and contributed sessions at the Annual Meetings
2. Organize proceedings from the Annual Meetings (jointly with Statistical Education and Statistical Consulting)
3. Organize roundtable discussion luncheons at the Annual Meetings
4. Organize continuing education sessions at the Annual Meetings
5. Produce *Teaching Statistics in the Health Sciences Newsletter* (3 annually)
6. Publish articles in *Amstat News*
7. Sponsor computerized repository/exchange of educational resources
8. Represent Health Sciences in educational initiatives of other Sections and ASA entities (e.g., Biopharmaceutical, Statistical Education)

These services are captured in three broad categories: fostering the professional benefits of the Annual Meetings by (1)-(4), aiding communication by (5) - (7), and contributing to the greater good of the ASA by (8). Which of these services are most valued by you? Are there other services which should be developed?

Your Section officers (listed below) will be meeting in Orlando on Tuesday morning, August 15. Take time to send your thoughts to one or more of them on how the TSHS Section can better serve you! And, if you go to Orlando, remember the TSHS Section Business Meeting, 6:30-7:30PM, August 15.

Teaching of Statistics in the Health Sciences Section Officers

Chair	Robert Wolfe	Ann Arbor, MI	313-936-0997
Chair-Elect	Linda Chan	Los Angeles, CA	213-226-6744
Program Chair	Stephen Looney	Louisville, KY	502-852-6376
Program Chair-Elect	Deborah Dawson	Cleveland, OH	216-778-8476
Publications Officer	Steven Verhulst	Springfield, IL	217-782-4418
Secretary-Treasurer	Ruth Mickey	Burlington, VT	802-656-2526
ASA Council Rep.	Patricia Langenburg	Baltimore, MD	410-328-3251
Past Chair	Michael Symons	Chapel Hill, NC	919-966-7266

New Editor's Comments

by
Michael J. Symons

First, let me express "Many Thanks!" to Steven Verhulst for years of service to the TSHS Section, especially as Editor of the Newsletter. His dedication to our Section's Newsletter since 1987 is way beyond the call of duty. Steven, thanks for a job well done!

As orientation and preparation for my first Newsletter, I surveyed the contents of the past three years ('92, '93, and '94) of TSHS Newsletters. Three categories of items formed:

- (1) Original Contributions. These articles or book reviews were written by TSHS members and required more than one 8 1/2" x 11" page of text.
- (2) TSHS Officer's Reports. Plans for contributions to the Annual Meeting is a frequent item in this category.
- (3) Miscellaneous Short Communications. Listings of TSHS officers, call for papers, and notes from the Editor constitute most of this category.

A mixture of items from these three categories nicely rounded out each issue of the Newsletter. Please send me your items for inclusion into our Newsletter.

Also noted in the content of these Newsletters was a regular call for more Newsletter material. Answers seem to have been sufficient for two, but not always three, issues per year. Ideas for stimulating the Newsletter are hereby requested.

Or, send comments on the following suggestions:

- (a) Article Abstracts. Papers presented at the Annual Meetings or articles appearing in peer-

reviewed journals might usefully be abstracted and efficiently brought to the attention of our members. Since we all struggle to keep up with the literature and not all of us go to every Annual Meeting, such an abstract and reference to the original paper could be a valuable service.

- (b) Condensed Book Reviews. Book reviews are a staple of most peer-reviewed journals. We could sketch the reviews of books that are particularly relevant to our Section and reference the original book review.
- (c) Tough Topics. We all have our best and worst classes on introductory statistics topics. A couple key concepts may not be covered well by some of us, but others may have found ways to make these their best classes. Last year's annual meeting had a session on "first day of class" lectures. Would an exchange on strategies for handling tough topics be a useful undertaking for the TSHS Newsletter?

If you have an idea, see a way to contribute with material, or have a reference to material that could be abstracted for our membership, please contact me by TEL (919-966-7266), FAX (919-966-3804), or E-mail (c/o owens@sophia.sph.unc.edu).

Finally, an electronic offering of this Newsletter and an electronic repository for a data set exchange has support among the TSHS membership and officers. The lead article in this issue was included to provide familiarity with the *Journal of Statistics Education*. As a pioneer among electronic journals, it is a possible vehicle for many, if not all, of these information highway 'dream cars'. Please access and explore *JSE*; then provide a TSHS officer with your thoughts on these rapidly approaching realities.

ORLANDO SESSIONS CO-SPONSORED BY TSHS

Session No. 64 Monday, August 14, 10:30 a.m. - 12:20 p.m.
TRAINING IN STATISTICS FOR ESTABLISHED PHYSICIANS - Invited papers

Session No. 65 Monday, August 14, 12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
POSTER SESSIONS CC through HH - Contributed papers

Session No. 88 Monday, August 14, 2:00 p.m. - 3:50 p.m.
THE INTERFACE BETWEEN HEALTH SCIENCES RESEARCH AND BIOSTATISTICS
EDUCATION - Contributed papers

Session No. 112 Tuesday, August 15, 8:30 a.m. - 10:20 a.m.
HOW TO MOTIVATE STUDENTS IN BASIC BIOSTATISTICS COURSES - Invited Papers

Session No. 136 Tuesday, August 15, 10:30 a.m. - 12:20 p.m.
WHERE THE JOBS ARE, 1995: PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IN BIOSTATISTICS - Special
Contributed Papers

Session No. 256 Wednesday, August 16, 2:00 p.m. - 3:50 p.m.
INNOVATIONS IN TEACHING BIOSTATISTICS - Contributed Papers

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