

The authors have succeeded in asking pertinent questions and providing the best answers based on current information. This book is an excellent and handy reference for medical students, residents, practicing physicians in primary care, and clinical medical educators.

Raye Maestas, M.D.
Providence Family Practice Residency Program
Seattle, WA

A Review of Biostatistics: A Program for Self-Instruction. Fourth Edition.

By Paul E. Leaverton. 111 pp. Boston, Little Brown, 1991. \$18.95 (paper).

ISBN 0-316-51854-9.

This clearly written, self-guided, instruction manual is aimed at an audience who desires a basic review or refresher course on biostatistics. Family physicians in practice, residents, and medical students are a potential target audience who can benefit from this tailored approach to teaching statistical methods. The author's stated goal is to provide a working knowledge of biostatistics to enhance the comprehension and appreciation of a scientific work in the medical literature.

There are probably two ways that a reader will use this book. I recommend a chapter-by-chapter analysis to take full advantage of the programmed learning format that builds from one subchapter to the next. Not necessarily recommended is the use of this book to "look up" and reference specific statistical methods. The conciseness of the text, a strength of the book from one perspective, does not allow a richer analysis of specific methods desired by another perspective.

The clear statement of educational objectives at the outset, the well-organized and thoughtful self-programmed text, and the "leanness" of the material presented led to my perception of the key strength of this book: the demystification of basic statistical methods for the neophyte. This text does not take the place of a major reference book for biostatistics, as may be needed in a graduate division course, nor is it meant for the researcher who already possesses a firm grasp of basic statistical methods. With these limitations in mind, *A Review of Biostatistics* is a well-written, time-efficient text that successfully achieves its aim at clearly and concisely presenting the basics of biostatistics for the motivated learner.

Jeffrey L. Tanji, M.D.
University of California, Davis
Sacramento, CA

of Columbia, Inc., 2828 Croasdale Drive,
Durham, NC 27705.

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