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 Central Moments of Our Lives
 

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**DEAR STUDENT**

Readers may write to *DEAR STUDENT* for answers to questions that have been bothering them forever. *DEAR STUDENT* does not guarantee that the answers will be what readers want to hear/read.

**Dear Student-** I am a regular user of the excellent RPAC. When I use the exercise bicycle, I select the setting "Random Hill". I would like to know if the hills are truly random.  
**-Goodness of being fit, Dublin, OH**

**Dear Goodness of being fit-** The hills are what we called "pseudo random". They are generated using the Random Table at the back of an intro-level Statistics book called "Statistics: What about 'em?".

**Dear Student-** How much will I earn after I complete my statistics degree? I am worried I will not make as much as my significant other.  
**-Stewing about skewing, Truth or Consequences, NM**

**Dear Stewing about skewing-** The distribution of incomes is right skewed. If your significant other manages to be more on the right than you are, quit your job and stay at home. There will be such a thing as a free lunch, a free dinner, etc.

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**NON-STATISTICAL WORD OF THE WEEK USED IN A STATISTICAL SETTING:**

bowlerize \BODE-luh-rise; BOWD-\, transitive verb:

1. To remove or modify the parts (of a book, for example) considered offensive.
2. To modify, as by shortening, simplifying, or distorting in style or content.

Usage: "The sections explaining convergence in distribution were bowlerized from Beau's copy of Casella & Berger."

**NEWS QUIZ**

See if you have been keeping up with current events by answering these simple questions:

1. According to astronomer Dirk Schulze-Makuch, there is life on Mars but...
  - a. the U.S. Air Force has confiscated all evidence of it
  - b. NASA inadvertently killed it with its Viking probes
  - c. it is too deep beneath the surface for instruments to reach
2. Which of the following objects have been seen falling from the sky over the United States since January 1:
  - a. bales of straw for snow-stranded cattle
  - b. a metallic object of unknown origin
  - c. a spent Russian booster rocket
3. Ken Barnes, during an attempt to sail around the world solo, became stranded off the coast of Chile two weeks ago. According to his girlfriend, he survived by eating
  - a. Pop-Tarts
  - b. seaweed
  - c. pieces of canvas from the sails
4. The Baker-Hamilton report presented President Bush with several options for dealing with Iraq. According to Bush, the importance of the report is evidenced by the fact that...
  - a. it was long
  - b. James Baker worked for the President's father
  - c. the President read it

Answers: 1b,2c,3a,4c.

## GRADUATE FACULTY PROFILE

Dr. Jackie Miller writes,



As Sophie takes a nap...



When you think of me, the first thing that might come to mind is my love of dogs. If you need proof, stop by my office. Currently we have 5 dogs: Rocket (10, English springer spaniel); Maggie (8, Dalmatian); Spencer (6, whoops puppy-lab/shepherd cross); Rusty (about a year, golden retriever mix, and, no, we didn't need a fifth dog again.); and Sophie (10 months; German shorthaired pointer/English Springer spaniel cross). If any of you believe in reincarnation, you would probably want to come back as one of our dogs-it's a rough life for them (see picture of Sophie.).

Recently, Stacey and I were featured in one sentence of the New York Times: "The display includes one Jewish couple's house with an inflatable menorah and blue-and-white lights." We were part of a crazy adventure called Picktown Lights (see [www.picktownlights.com](http://www.picktownlights.com) <<http://www.picktownlights.com/>>). In addition to the NYT, our famous little street appeared in The Columbus Dispatch and on all major news channels in Columbus. Oh, you can actually see a clip of Stacey and me on CBS Sunday Morning-our 3 seconds of fame (see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N9hoFozNsl0>). The families on our street were also honored by both the City of Pickerington and Violet Township-this is interesting, since we don't live in either, but we do have Pickerington schools with Columbus taxes.

When I am not signing autographs, I serve as a statistics education specialist for the department. I love teaching, but you probably know that as well. One of my teaching-related activities is being the point person for the Graduate Interdisciplinary Specialization in College and University Teaching. If you're interested in getting the "GIST," come by to talk to me. You can often find me in my office, more often very early than very late. If it looks like I am not there, you can always knock-the lights are always off and the window happens to be blacked out. My office offers more than ambience and advice-there's always chocolate of some sort and a collection of Magic 8 Balls (the original, the Sarcastic ball, the My Analyst ball, the Excuse ball, Lemony Snicket's Unfortunate Events ball, and the newest addition-the Affirmation ball-that tells you things like "You're 100% Fun!" and "Your breath is so minty!"). Be careful which ball you choose or which question you ask!

I know that Marian is in charge of the non-statistical word of the week used in a statistical setting, but let me provide you a statistical word featured in the Page-a-Day calendar on January 9: aleatory (adj): characterized by chance or random elements. You can entertain your students and friends with the calendar's suggested sentence "The aleatory nature of lottery drawings makes it impossible to predict the winners." Off to play the lottery. (not!)

## GRADUATE STUDENT PROFILES

Mary Hickey shows off her adorable nephew and niece...



Hi everyone! My name is Mary Hickey, and I'm a first-year student in the Ph.D. program for Biostatistics. (One quarter down! How many more to go...??) I am also a TA for Stat 145. I received my Bachelor's degree in Mathematics from the University of Dayton this past May.

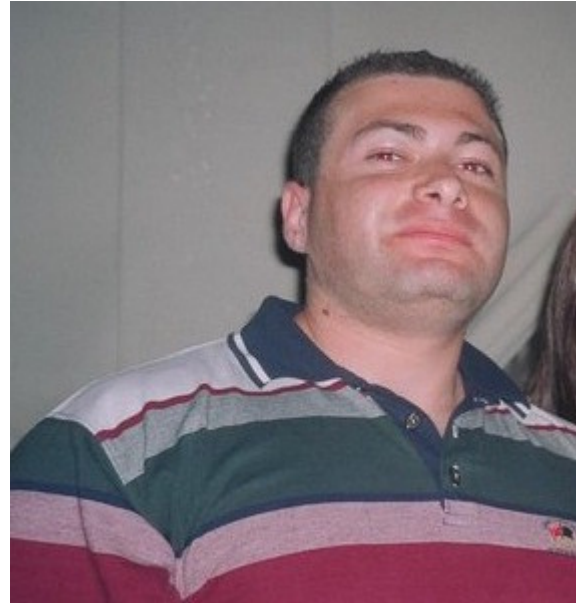
Enough about school stuff though, how was everyone's break?! My break was fantastic. Besides Christmas and New Year's and all of those (family) parties (in Dayton), I was back in Columbus for a friend's wedding and then in Cleveland for another friend's wedding.

My favorite part of break, though, was my trip to North Carolina to visit my sister and her family. I met my sweet niece, Grace, who just turned one-month on January 5, and my adorable nephew John, who is a little over two-years-old and talks like he's much older. They are the cutest children ever and I love to visit them! The picture above is of the three of us from my trip. (My nephew's shirt was part of his birthday present from me☺.)

Other than visiting my relatives in NC, in my free time I enjoy sleeping, baking, watching movies/TV, running/playing most sports, and hanging out with my family, friends, and boyfriend, Jon. I also like to travel. I've studied ("studied") abroad in Dublin, Ireland for a summer and Honolulu, HI for a winter semester. I would be happy to share with you some of my many great stories and experiences from either trip or about anything else really.

I love winter quarter so far!

Nader Gemayel talks about the fun and games that is Statistics...



I was born in the small West African country of Sierra Leone in 1983, and moved back to my native Lebanon at the age of 5. I was an undergrad at the American University of Beirut (AUB) from '01 to '04. It was there that I was converted into a shameless real analysis geek! I came to Ohio State in June '04 and it's been fun and games ever since. During this time, I seem to have acquired a reputation in some circles for being blunt, direct, and undiplomatic. I think that people who feel that way are simply far too easily offended!

When not picking on my buddies Dan Weston and Peter Sprangers ("Dude, Where's my Car?"), I like to watch movies and TV (especially World's Strongest Man competitions on ESPN and The Colbert Report), read good books (I highly recommend Andrew Sullivan's *The Conservative Soul*), listen to music (Bowling for Soup, Yellowcard), waste time on Facebook, and work out (Jesse Owens South owns the RPAC!).

One thing that can be said about students in our department is that they sure know how to throw a party! I have made some great friends here, and have shared some of the best times of my life so far with them. This year, I will miss all my friends who graduated in '06, so here's a shout out to Allison, Katie, Scott, Victor, Dan, and Peter.

## TEN REASONS WHY THE BUCKEYES LOST THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP GAME:

1. Unfamiliarity with the dry Arizona air
2. Bad case of the Mondays
3.  $P(\text{Win all 13 games}) \leq P(\text{Win First 12 Games} \cap \text{Lose 13}^{\text{th}} \text{ Game})$  by Weston – Sprangers Lemma
4. Bad alligator meat at Meijer's plagued the fans from rooting wholeheartedly
5. Titanic-themed halftime show with authentic blue tarps
6. Global warming
7. Maurice Clarett passes on his senior season to spend his time rising up the criminal ranks
8. Not enough parking spots
9. At least one of the members of the department roots against the Buckeyes, and he is sick of them winning every single game
10. The Buckeyes thought it'd be so easy that even a caveman could do it

