

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
1. The story behind the statistics	13
2. Take CARE	60
3. Understanding measurements	112
4. Describing ratios	186
5. Comparing ratios	237
6. Interpreting ratios	284
7. Randomness and chance	331
Table of Figures	371
Table of Tables.....	375
Table of Stories	378
Table of Equations.....	380
Glossary	381
Index	390

Typography: **Bold** indicates a term that is being defined. Any term in bold should be found in the Glossary. *Italics* indicate an important concept, point or claim. In part-whole ratios, underscoring indicates a part while SMALL CAPS indicates a whole.

1. The story behind the statistics

TABLE OF CONTENTS FOR CHAPTER 1

Introduction	14
Organizing the questions	16
Critical Thinking Issues.....	16
What is the point?.....	17
Statistical Generalizations.....	18
Causation	19
Causation Verified.....	20
Association	21
Association Defined	21
Association as a useful tool.....	22
Kinds of Association	22
Keywords for Association and Causation.....	24
Cases: Distinguishing Causation from Association	26
Strength of evidence.....	28
Statistical Literacy Issues	30
C = CONTEXT.....	33
Confounding	34
Triangle diagrams.....	35
Common Cause	36
Mechanism.....	38
Confounding and arguments.....	39
Review	40
A = ASSEMBLY	42
Data definition.....	42
Data presentation.....	44
R = RANDOMNESS	47
Coincidences: Too Unlikely To Be Due to Chance	48
E = ERRORS	52
Analyzing Stories.....	55
More Stories	55

2. Take CARE

TABLE OF CONTENTS FOR CHAPTER 2

C for Context: Comparisons	61
Presenting statistical comparisons	62
Order comparisons	62
Arithmetic comparisons	63
Ambiguous Comparisons	67
Mistaken Comparisons in the News	67
Comparing Percentages	69
Deducing test or base from a comparison	70
Problems with 100% wholes	70
Change: Absolute versus Relative	70
A for Assembly	72
Assembly Influences Perception	72
Assembly: Choosing which Complement to Compare	74
Data Definition	75
Wording	77
C for Context: Study Design	79
Minimizing Confounder Influence by Study Design	82
Observational studies	85
Random Assignment	90
Experiments	91
Identifying the kind of study	95
Types of control	96
Benefits of study designs	97
Assembly: Large Numbers	97
R for Randomness (Random Sampling)	99
Accidents	99
Too Unlikely to be due to Chance	99
Sampling Variability Due to Chance	101
Statistical Significance and Margin of Error	102
E for Error (Bias)	104
Three Kinds of bias	104
Minimizing bias	106
Summary	107
Analyzing Stories	108

3. Understanding measurements

TABLE OF CONTENTS FOR CHAPTER 3

Distributions	113
Column charts	113
Ranks	116
Percentiles	117
Calculating Percentiles from Ranks	120
Comparing Percentiles	120
Percentile Examples	122
Stanines	126
Measures of Center	127
Standard measures of center	127
Comparing measures of center	129
Relation between center and shape	132
Evidence presented through measures of center	133
Comparing group centers	135
Choosing a cut point	137
Association between two sets of measurements	138
Assembly of Averages	140
Mean versus median	141
Confounder influence	142
Confounder Influence on Averages	143
Weighted averages using arithmetic	145
Weighted averages using graphs	147
Standardizing real averages	151
Percentage explained by a confounder	157
Common Problems With Weighted Averages	158
When will an association reverse?	158
Controlling for a continuous confounder	160
To control for	161
Examples of standardizing measurements	162
Spread	165
Normalizing measurements	166
Standardizing measurements	168
Effect sizes	170
Coefficient of Variation and Skewness	173
Normal distribution and prediction intervals	174
Internal comparisons of top and bottom extremes	175
Inter-group comparisons of top extremes	177
Mean vs. median: technical details	180
Correlation and slope: technical details	181
Sample Correlations	184
Summary	184

4. Describing ratios

TABLE OF CONTENTS FOR CHAPTER 4

Tables.....	189
Percent Grammar	190
Describing parts and wholes.....	190
Parts and wholes in percent grammar.....	191
Evaluating percentage statements supported by tables.....	193
Three kinds of 100% tables	195
Percentage Grammar.....	200
Decoding percentage grammar statements.....	202
Reading percentages in 100% tables	203
Reading percentages in count tables.....	204
Sports and Portion Grammar	206
Percentage Grammar Problems	206
Complex percentage grammar statements.....	208
Convert between percent and percentage statements.....	209
Eliminating relative clauses in percentage grammar sentences.....	210
Convert percent and percentage grammar questions	211
Half tables of percentages.....	212
One-way half-tables of percentages	213
Two-way half tables of percentages	217
Tables with missing margins	220
Rate Grammar.....	222
Phrase rate grammar	225
Describing rates in tables using phrase grammar.....	227
Rates	228
Challenges in phrase-based rate grammar.....	228
Clause rate grammar	229
Chance Grammar	231
Ratio Grammar	235

5. Comparing ratios

TABLE OF CONTENTS FOR CHAPTER 5

Attributable To	239
Percentage Attributable (Rate based)	240
Cases Attributable (Rate based).....	242
“Percentage Attributable To” vs. “Percentage Explained By”	245
Classifying ratio comparisons.....	245
Decoding percentage, rate and chance comparisons	248
Constructing percentage, rate, and chance comparisons	250
Constructing comparisons from descriptions	250
Percentage Comparisons: A Confusion.....	252
Constructing comparisons from table ratios.....	252
Generating short form comparisons.....	255
Spotting errors in comparisons	256
Comparing ratios using <i>likely</i>	257
Decoding	258
Constructing	260
Conversions into Likely comparisons	262
Common pitfalls.....	264
Common Mistakes in Comparing Percentages.....	266
Switching part and whole	268
Over-Involvement	271
Comparing ratios with relative risk	272
Decoding	273
Constructing	274
Attributable (Comparison based).....	276
Cases Attributable (Comparison Based).....	277
Comparing Relative Risks/Prevalences	279
Comparisons Using Graphs	281

6. Interpreting ratios

TABLE OF CONTENTS FOR CHAPTER 6

Misuse of ratios.....	285
Comparing Two Ratios with Related Parts	285
Comparing Two Ratios with Related Wholes.....	286
Inverse ratios.....	286
Three-term ratios.....	288
Distinct and common parts	290
Unclear wholes.....	292
Comparing a Change in Ratios with Different Wholes	293
Base rate fallacy	297
Prediction, Explanation and Confirmation.....	298
Prediction versus explanation	298
Prediction versus confirmation in tests.....	302
Confounding and Simpson's paradox	308
Smoking and Lung Cancer	308
Simpson's paradox for rates	309
Other examples	313
Seeing confounders.....	322
Standardizing Ratios	323
Percentage Explained given Before/After Standardizing Ratios	323
Weighted average graphs: Standardizing given rates	324
Plotting the data on standardization graphs.....	327
Cases Attributable to Exposure Before and After Standardization	327
Confounding in the Humanities and Social Sciences	328
Predicting confounder influence	329
Necessary conditions for Simpson's reversal.....	329

7. Randomness and chance

Table of Contents

The Idea Of Chance	333
Measuring Chance.....	333
Random Samples	335
Randomness and Patterns.....	336
Independent Events	337
Value Expected Due to Chance	338
Astrology: A Double Blind Test	339
Law of Averages: Offset vs. Dilution.....	340
#1: Truthful Answers on Sensitive Issues Using Chance.....	341
#2: Adjusting for Guessing using Chance	343
#3: Estimating Population Size Using Chance	344
Unexpected if Due to Chance	345
Unexpected #1: Regression to the Mean	346
Unexpected #2: Evolution.....	347
Confidence Intervals	347
Margin of Error Formulae.....	350
Conservative Margin of Error	351
Confidence Intervals using Conservative Margin of Error	352
Margin of Error for Subgroups	352
Statistical Significance.....	354
Evaluating Differences for Statistical Significance.....	357
Closing Remarks on Statistical Inference.....	360
Statistical Significance and Importance.....	360
When Is Statistical Significance Applicable?.....	361
Rejecting the Null.....	361
Other Levels of Confidence	362
Statistical Significance and Confounding.....	362
Confounder Influence on a Difference in Percentages.....	362
Confounder Influence on Cases Attributed	366
Chapter Conclusion.....	369
Book Conclusion	370