

## **Joke 1**

**Did you hear about the statistician who had his head in an oven and his feet in a bucket of ice? When asked how he felt, he replied, "On the average I feel just fine."**

*\*Thanks to George Litman for reminding me of the first statistics joke I had ever heard. This just might be the granddaddy of them all.*

## **Joke 2**

**"When she told me I was average, she was just being mean".**

*\*A big thanks for this quickee to Mike Beckman who is working on his Ph.D at Virginia Tech. Just wondered Mike if one of your professors told you this?*

## **Joke 3**

**You know how dumb the average person is? Well, by definition, half the population is dumber than that!**

*\*Thanks to Barbara Kerr from Australia for sending me this. She told me that this not-terribly-nice aphorism is attributed to the fictitious Bob Dobbs of the Church of the Subgenius.*

## **Joke 4**

**One day the variance and the standard deviation were engaged in a heated argument over which was the better measure of variability.**

**The standard deviation shouted at the variance, "You are useless because you don't even relate to the original score scale."**

**The variance glared back and yelled, " Oh yeah! You are totally worthless because you are far too radical."**

**Just then the mean deviation stepped between the two indices and pushed them both back. In a proud voice the mean deviation proclaimed, "You are both wrong! I am ABSOLUTELY the best measure of variability since both of you would be worth ZERO if you didn't square your deviations!!!!"**

*\*OK this may not bring down the house with laughter. I still have a place in my heart for the antiquated mean deviation because of its intuitive nature. I believe students can see a rationale for both  $S$  and  $S_2$  if MD is introduced first.*

### **Joke 5**

**What did the Box Plot say to the outlier?**

**"Don't you dare get close to my whisker!!"**

*\*I had to dig very deep in the BOX to come up with this one.*

### **Joke 6**

**I'm not an outlier; I just haven't found my distribution yet!**

*\*Thanks to Ronan Conroy in Dublin, Ireland for this real cute one. I have also been searching for my distribution throughout my entire career.*

### **Joke 7**

**Two unbiased estimators were sitting in a bar. The first says, "So how do you like married life?" The other replies, "It's pretty good if you don't mind giving up that one degree of freedom!"**

*\*A big thank you to Bert Bishop for submitting this.*

### **Joke 8**

**A statistician's wife had twins. He was delighted. He rang the minister who was also delighted. "Bring them to church on Sunday and we'll baptize them," said the minister. "No," replied the statistician. "Baptize one. We'll keep the other as a control."**

*\*Sorry I lost the attribution on this one. Does anyone want to claim credit?*

### **Joke 9**

**A Physicist, a Biologist, and a Statistician see two people enter a house, and then after some time, they see three people leave the house.**

**The Physicist concludes, "My initial observation must have been incorrect." The Biologist concludes, "Clearly, the two reproduced..." The Statistician concludes, "Well, if one more person enters the house, then there will be no-one in the house!"**

*\*A big thanks to Paul Dickman for this subtle piece of humor that many of my friends just don't understand.*

### **Joke 10**

**What does a statistician call it when the heads of 10 rats are cut off and 1 survives?**

**Nonsignificant.**

*\*Thanks to Chad Hartry a graduate student in my Stat II class.*

### **Joke 11**

**One day there was a fire in a wastebasket in the Dean's office and in rushed a physicist, a chemist, and a statistician. The physicist immediately starts to work on how much energy would have to be removed from the fire to stop the combustion. The chemist works on which reagent would have to be added to the fire to prevent oxidation. While they are doing this, the statistician is setting fires to all the other wastebaskets in the office. "What are you doing?" they demanded. "Well to solve the problem, obviously you need a large sample size" the statistician replies.**

*\*This is one of my favorites. Thanks again to Hugh Foley.*

### **Joke 12**

**A Bayesian and a Frequentist were to be executed. The judge asked them what were their last wishes. The Bayesian replied that he would like to give the Frequentist one more lecture. The judge granted the Bayesian's wish and then turned to the Frequentist for his last wish. The Frequentist quickly responded that he wished to hear the lecture again and again and again and again.....**

*\*Thanks to Xiao-Li Meng for this subtle humor.*

## Joke 13

There is a group of five statisticians on a 'train. At the next stop, five epidemiologists get on. They all seem to know each other and start chatting. It transpires that each of the epidemiologists has bought a ticket, but the statisticians have only bought one between the five of them. "Why did you do that?" asks one of the epidemiologists. "Surely you're going to get caught and. thrown off the train". "Just wait and see!", smiles one of the statisticians.

As the ticket inspector is approaching to check everyone's tickets, the statisticians all go off to the nearest toilet -the inspector passes the epidemiologists and inspects all their tickets then moves on and notices that the toilet is locked. "Tickets please!" shouts the inspector. One of the statisticians pushes their ticket under the toilet door, which the inspector checks and returns under the door. Once the inspector has gone, all the statisticians return to their seats to the awe and amazement of the epidemiologists. "That's incredibly clever!" says one of the epidemiologists.

A few weeks later they all find themselves on the same train again. They sit together and start chatting once more. "We've done what you suggested", says one of the epidemiologists, "and just bought one ticket between the five of us!". "Oh really", says one of the statisticians, "we haven't bought ANY tickets this time!". The epidemiologists look at each other in amazement. "OK, one ticket between you is fine but not buying any at all is ludicrous! "

As the ticket inspector approaches the epidemiologists hurry off to the toilet. Once they're inside the statisticians follow them. "Tickets please! " shouts one of the statisticians. The ticket appears under the door and they take it away and all bundle into a different toilet. The inspector gets to the toilet with the epidemiologists in it. "Tickets please!" he shouts. No reply. "Tickets please!". The epidemiologists admit defeat and come out of the toilet only to be thrown off at the next station.

*The moral of this story: Epidemiologists should not attempt to use statistical methods without fully understanding the theory behind them.*

More on <http://www.ilstu.edu/~gcramsey/Gallery.html>

<http://evall.crc.uiuc.edu/edpsy390/statjokes.html>