

Preface

This volume consists of articles prepared in honor of Lawrence D. Brown by some of his many friends, colleagues and students on the occasion of his 70th birthday. It is associated with a conference “Borrowing Strength: Theory Powering Applications” at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, December 15 - 17, 2010, timed to coincide exactly with Larry’s birthday.

Larry is one of the leading statisticians of our time; his work has spanned the theory and application of statistics, from its mathematical and philosophical foundations in the decision theoretic assessment of widely used methods through to influential policy advice on critical national statistical instruments such as the decennial census. We shan’t attempt to describe here the astounding depth and scope of his work, not least because we look forward to much more from him the years to come! Instead, the volume includes a wide-ranging interview with Larry, conducted in 2001, and published in *Statistical Science* in 2005.

We also include a charming poem adaptation by Larry: “A Most Unusual Bird (Freely adapted from E. A. Poe)” presented at the 6th Purdue Symposium, in 1998, along with a list of Larry’s publications to date.

Larry is widely loved, by students, colleagues and friends alike, for his ready and powerful statistical insight, and his constant wisdom, generosity and geniality. He is truly a statistician’s statistician, always at the center of any statistical community graced with his presence. On behalf of several of those communities, we feel privileged to have had the chance to help assemble this volume and to join in wishing him the happiest of birthdays!

James Berger, Tony Cai, and Iain Johnstone

May, 2010