

Preface

For more than thirty years, Jon A. Wellner has made outstanding contributions to several very active and important areas of statistics and probability. His results have been especially influential in semiparametric statistics, estimation and testing problems under shape constraints, empirical processes theory (both classical and abstract), survival analysis, biostatistics, bootstrap, probability in Banach spaces and high-dimensional probability. Among the main features of Jon's work are his exceptional taste and ability to identify research problems in statistics that are both challenging and important, his deep understanding of the purely mathematical side of statistics, his extraordinary curiosity and interest in the work of others and the quality of his insights.

Jon's contribution to the statistical arena is further underscored by his four highly influential (co-authored) books on empirical processes, semi-parametric models and nonparametric maximum likelihood estimation. The impact of his books on the discipline and the vital role that they played in communicating the power of empirical processes and semiparametric theory to the statistical community as effective tools for studying statistical models can hardly be exaggerated. Indeed, in this regard, he should be seen as one of the visionaries who helped unleash the potency of empirical process theory for solving hard theoretical problems in the statistical arena and which brought about a paradigm shift in the approach to a broad sphere of asymptotics.

Jon has also been a prolific mentor with 27 graduated Ph.D. students (and one more being advised) at the time of going to press, many of whom have gone on to successful research careers at distinguished universities. In addition, he has been a mentor and source of inspiration to junior colleagues who were not his students and who, in many cases, are formidable names in the profession today. Further evidence of Jon's influence on colleagues and students is furnished by the fact that he was recently appointed as Knight in the Order of the Netherlands Lion (in July 2010) in recognition of his impact on the development of stochastic sciences in the Netherlands.

It is, therefore, both a pleasure and privilege for us to present this Festschrift in honor of Jon's 65th birthday. Many of the papers included in this volume were presented at the conference *From Probability to Statistics and Back: High-Dimensional Models and Processes* that took place in Seattle, Washington on July 28 - 31, 2010. They cover a broad range of topics related, at various levels, to Jon's work. We would like to take this opportunity to extend our most sincere thanks to the contributors of this volume. On behalf of the participants of the aforementioned conference in which the seeds of this volume were sown, we would like to acknowledge the support of National Science Foundation, University of Washington and the local organizers in Seattle, especially Petra Buzkova and Arseni Seregin. We also thank Shawn Mankad for helping us extensively with the tex work that was needed to put the volume together. Last but not least, we thank Aurore Delaigle and Elyse Gustafson at IMS for working closely with us to produce this volume.