

From: James Scanlan <jps@jpscanlan.com>

To: David Norris <david@dnc-llc.com>

Cc:

Date: Tuesday, July 26, 2016 01:38 pm

Subject: Re: Your argument regarding rate ratios -- better done graphically

Dear David,

Thanks for the note and the suggestion. Item 1 after the signature shows the types of graphics I ordinarily use.

I have been urged to use (and have been provided) illustrations based on the density function (something akin to that used by the authors in item 2). But that is a bit over my head.

The Shiny application seems quite promising for something I have had in mind. For I have wanted to be able to move a cursor across the x-axis of an illustration like Figure 1 (slide 23) of item 1 and have the two ratios change as I move the cursor. I'll let you know if I manage to do something like that.

I don't think improvements in presentation will eliminate the need for some authoritative body to give attention to this issue. I have been publishing the ideas in some pretty prominent places since 1987 and have yet to see material change in the way people analyze outcome rates. In any case, however, thanks to ASA Connect, my institutional letters probably get more reads by thoughtful people than any of my publications.

Best wishes,
Jim Scanlan

1. "The Mismeasure of Health Disparities in Massachusetts and Less Affluent Places,"
Quantitative Methods Seminar, Department of Quantitative Health Sciences, University of
Massachusetts Medical School (Nov. 18, 2015)

Abstract: http://jpscanlan.com/images/UMMS_Abstract.pdf

PowerPoint:

http://jpscanlan.com/images/Univ_Mass_Medical_School_Seminar_Nov._18,_2015_.pdf

2. Lambert P.J., Subramanian S. Group inequalities and "Scanlan's Rule": Two apparent
conundrums and how we might address them. Working Paper 84/2014, Madras School of
Economics (2014): <http://www.mse.ac.in/pub/Working%20Paper%2084..pdf>

-----Original Message-----

From: David Norris [mailto:david@dnc-llc.com]

Sent: Tuesday, July 26, 2016 10:05 AM

To: jps@jpscanlan.com

Subject: Your argument regarding rate ratios -- better done graphically

Dear Mr. Scanlan:

I noted your posting on the ASA website, and briefly skimmed your letter and your 2014 Society article, "Race and Mortality Revisited". I believe I have a pretty good sense of the basic statistical point you're

making, which is sound. I believe you err in not using a more graphical exposition of your point. I rather suspect you could make your point with a graphical exploration made widely available via HTTP using e.g. [Shiny](#).

This would have the advantage of making your argument widely accessible to the public at large, and even to journalists, obviating the need to for the ASA to 'mansplain' the issue to Mr. Obama.

You would probably be able to get a computer-savvy undergraduate Statistics major (or MPH student, or even a quantitatively-oriented Political Science student) in the Washington D.C. area to build a Shiny app for this. It could be a great learning experience for everybody.

Kind regards,

David Norris

--

David C. Norris, MD

David Norris Consulting, LLC

523 Broadway E, Suite 348

Seattle, WA 98102-5384

david@dnc-llc.com

(206)327-9280

[NCBI Bibliography](#)

Attachments:  (4KB)