

## **Special Article in *Sequential Analysis* Inspires Discussion Among Peers**

In the special invited paper titled *Second Guessing Clinical Trial Designs*, authors Jonathan J. Shuster and Myron N. Chang of the University of Florida “propose a methodology that can help biostatistical reviewers of nonsequential randomized clinical trials, armed only with the single summary statistic from the trial, ask the ‘what if’ question ‘Could a group sequential design have reached a definitive conclusion earlier?’” Published in Volume 27, Issue 1 of *Sequential Analysis*, the article has inspired a discussion among a number of the authors’ critically respected peers, and their responses have been included in the same issue.

“Sequential designs generally can shorten the expected duration or reduce the expected number of patients entering the trial,” says Shuster and Chang in the lead article. “If early termination occurs, not only will potential entrants be spared from receiving inferior therapy (or useless but more toxic therapy), but the results of the trial can get to the public earlier, when a much larger general population can benefit from the results.”

The main paper is followed by eight response articles written by such respected colleagues such as Dr. William F. Rosenberger, Dr. Susan S. Ellenberg, and Dr. Atanu Biswas, among others. Shuster and Chang describe these responses as providing a “diversity of opinion about this issue, ranging from very practical matters to very theoretical ones” as each piece tackles the issue of clinical trials from a different angle and viewpoint.

The authors have also addressed these discussions through a response piece, which is also included in the issue. In this article, Shuster and Chang “offer our commentary on a variety of issues raised” as a way of bringing the discussion full-circle and providing additional detail and clarity to their original article.

Four additional articles contributing to the overall conversation on sequential analyses in clinical trials conclude the issue.

To access the entire issue for free, please visit the *Sequential Analysis* web page at [www.informaworld.com/07474946](http://www.informaworld.com/07474946)

Published quarterly by Taylor & Francis, *Sequential Analysis* features interdisciplinary articles that emphasize the methodology of practical value to applied researchers and statistical consultants as well as the development of new and important sequential approaches. The journal also contributes to theoretical and applied aspects of sequential methodologies in all areas of statistical science.

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*Editor's Notes*  
Nitis Mukhopadhyay

*Editor's Special Invited Paper: Second Guessing Clinical Trial Designs*  
Jonathan J. Shuster and Myron N. Chang

*Discussion on "Second-Guessing Clinical Trial Designs" by Jonathan J. Shuster and Myron N. Chang*  
D.S. Coad

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Jonathan J. Shuster and Myron N. Chang

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