There are lies, damned lies and statistics.
There are lies, damned lies and statistics.

- Benjamin Disraeli, PM of Great Britain (1868, 1874-1880)
There are lies, damned lies and statistics.

- Benjamin Disraeli, PM of Great Britain (1868, 1874-1880)

Statistical thinking will one day be as necessary for efficient citizenship as the ability to read and write.
There are lies, damned lies and statistics.

- *Benjamin Disraeli, PM of Great Britain (1868, 1874-1880)*

Statistical thinking will one day be as necessary for efficient citizenship as the ability to read and write.

- *H. G. Wells (1866-1946)*
Does a low-fat diet foil breast cancer?

New study says it cuts risk by 24%
Some experts urge caution on findings

MARILYNN MARCHIONE
ASSOCIATED PRESS

ORLANDO, FLA. — A new study seems to suggest that low-fat diets can help prevent a return of breast cancer in certain women, but many specialists disagreed with the conclusions, saying other factors might have played a role, like weight loss.

Previous studies have failed to find that cutting fat in the diet can prevent breast cancer, so some doctors urged caution in interpreting the new data.

“There are more questions than answers,” said Dr. Eric Winer, director of breast care at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston. “What we don’t want to happen is for every woman who’s had breast cancer to panic if she’s had a Big Mac.”

The study was funded by the National Cancer Institute and involved 2,437 women at sites around the United States. All had surgery followed by standard chemotherapy drugs for early-stage breast cancer and five years of tamoxifen, their tumours were estrogen receptor positive — that helped to grow by estrogen.
Is Fat where it’s at?

Kirstie Alley might start weight watchin’ trend
Statins may cut risk of cancers

Anti-cholesterol drug widely used

Users less prone to 3 types of disease
La difference?

“Gender is the single greatest difference in the human species, much bigger than race,” writes Sally Jenkins in The Washington Post.

“MIT biologists have found that men and women differ genetically by 1 to 2 per cent — the same amount of genetic difference that separates humans from chimpanzees.”

Household health

“The medicine cabinet is the worst place to store medications,” reports Knight Ridder News. “The heat and humidity...

Floss to live longer

Flossing can add up to six years to your life, according to Michael Roizen, a professor of anesthesiology and internal medicine at the State University of New York, Syracuse. In his book *The Real/Age Makeover*, he writes: “Flossing your teeth daily can make your arteries younger. The probable reason: Flossing helps keep your immune system young.”

Source: Albany Times Union

Thought du jour

“I do not stare at myself in the mirror. For one
THE MATH MYTH
The real truth about WOMEN'S BRAINS and the gender gap in SCIENCE
Boys and girls don't differ much on math tests, but that small gap gets bigger as either sex gets smarter in that subject or other sciences.

**THE SAT SPLIT**
Girls score about 7% lower on the math part of the SAT. One factor may be that more girls than boys from lower-income families take the test.

Source: The College Board

**GETTING AHEAD**
Boys outperform girls on Advanced Placement exams before college, but that gap is closing as more girls take the elite tests each year.

Source: The College Board
**CHALLENGE TO CHIEFS**

**Kingston proves race bias**

Police chief there apologizes to blacks, aboriginals
Toronto expected to follow with own study of practices

CATHERINE PORTER  
CITY HALL BUREAU

KINGSTON, ONT.—A tearful Police Chief Bill Closs apologized yesterday to black people in Kingston after being confronted with proof they are stopped by officers three times more often than whites.

Then Closs challenged police chiefs across Canada to monitor their forces for racial profiling.

"It's time the police chiefs look at themselves in the mirror and said to themselves, 'What is going on in my organization?'" he said. "My officers took the risk. They knew there'd be consequences and they demonstrated integrity."

Toronto Police Services Board chair Pam McConnell pledged that a similar "made-in-Toronto" version of the monitoring would be put in the hands of the city's police force within the next eight months.

She called the results "very disturbing" but not unexpected. "This is a road map for the future," said McConnell, in Kingston with fellow board member Alok Mukherjee to witness the data analysis first-hand.

"For me, this affirmed what we all know. It beg the question of us, what will we do about this?"

The Kingston force was the first in the country to ban racial profiling and keep tabs on the race of people stopped by officers over the course of a year, from Oct. 1, 2003 to Sept. 30, 2004.

Yesterday the analysis of that data was released, revealing great disparities.

* Blacks were stopped by police about three times as often as whites.

★ Please see Race, A4

**Blacks stopped the most**

Kingston Police kept a record of civilians who were stopped during a 12-month period and found that black men and women were stopped the most.

**THE FIRST STEP**  |  Province to help disabled children

**TOUGH-TALKING CRACK-UPS**

Subversive penguins steal the show in Madagascar.
Movies, E1
Implants not always uplifting

Women who have cosmetic breast enhancement surgery may have triple the risk of suicide compared to other women, according to a study reported in the October issue of the *Annals Of Plastic Surgery*. The suicide risk was particularly high in the first few years after implant surgery.

Researchers say their findings indicate the need for plastic surgeons to assess patients' mental health status before performing breast enlargement surgery. The study included 2,166 Finnish women who had cosmetic breast surgery between 1970 and 2000. The study is the third in recent years to show a link between increased suicide risk and breast implant surgery.

Mind-body connection given boost

If you believe that thinking can make it so, you'll be pleased with results from a University of California study showing that Tai Chi can boost immunity factors that suppress shingles by 50 percent.

The findings of the randomized, controlled clinical trial, reported in this month's edition of *Psychosomatic Medicine*, were the first to demonstrate a positive, virus-specific immune response to a behavioral intervention. Study participants were elderly adults in a 15-week Tai Chi class. They also showed significant improvement in their physical health and ability to move through their day.

"Our findings offer a unique and exciting example of mind over matter," says Dr. Michael Irvin, a professor at the UCLA Neuropsychiatric Institute and director of the Center for Psychoneuroimmunology. "The improvements in both immunity and physical functioning were significant by widely accepted measures of each, and all with no surgery, no drugs and no side effects."

Spousal support a royal pain?

Overly supportive spouses are not necessarily doing their partners a favor. They could be prolonging the recovery of their injured spouses.

That's the conclusion of a study reported in this month's edition of *The Clinical Journal Of Pain*. Researchers also found that there are differences between the way each sex responds to a "solicitous" spouse — which should come as no surprise.

"Spousal solicitude is related to how male patients say they're doing and to how female patients are actually doing," says study author Roger Fillingim of the University of Florida.

He and his colleagues surveyed 114 female and 213 male chronic pain patients, most of whom were being treated for low back pain.

Men with highly attentive spouses reported higher levels of pain and more disability but despite their complaints, they did well on physical functions tests.

For women, it was just the opposite. Women with highly solicitous spouses didn't report feeling more pain or being more disabled.

However, they performed more poorly on physical function tests than did women with less attentive spouses.

For our good

This advertisement in the American magazine *Health*, sold in Canada, promotes a drug for breast cancer — "Arimidex." Significantly reduced the risk of breast cancer returning compared with tamoxifen... The ad appears a couple of pages after an ad for Rold Gold pretzels.

Drug companies spend about $8 billion (U.S.) a year on direct-to-consumer advertising of prescription medicines. This week, U.S. health officials announced they'll publish new guidelines for this kind of advertising. Requirements would include better presentations of drug risks and benefits instead of the tiny print summaries that appear on a page behind the big flashy illustrations.

Critics charge the ads encourage patients to ask their doctors for heavily advertised drugs, leading to unnecessary prescriptions and driving up healthcare costs. But the president of Pfizer U.S. Pharmaceuticals, which blankets the airwaves with ads for Viagra and Lipitor, said consumers benefit from the ads. "The unspoken truth about advertising of medicines is that it constitutes one of the largest and most successful public health campaigns in U.S. history."

Oh, sure. And the fox is hanging around the hen house just to protect the chickens.

Purrfect explanation for everything

Wife reckless? Hubby morose? Blame the cat.

Kicking the cat may be a metaphor about venting frustrations on the innocent family feline, but it could be that Snowball or Fluffy really is to blame after all.

A Czech scientist told Reuters news service this week that his research showed a parasite called Toxoplasma gondii in cats, rabbits or raw meat, may make women reckless and friendly.

Jaroslav Flegr of Charles University in Prague said the same parasite, however, makes men quiet, withdrawn, suspicious, jealous, morose and dogmatic.

He could not find a reason for the different reactions by men and women.

Flegr also believes that the parasite is responsible for up to a million deaths on the roads worldwide, making it the one of the deadliest parasitic diseases, second only to malaria.

"It is not much fun. Our research has shown that toxoplasmosis raises the risk of traffic accident by prolonging the reaction time of infected people," he said.

"It is not only about driving accidents but also about the probability of being run over by a car."

"Health"
Implants not always uplifting

Women who have cosmetic breast enhancement surgery may have triple the risk of suicide compared to other women, according to a study reported in the October issue of the *Annals Of Plastic Surgery*. The suicide risk was particularly high in the first few years after implant surgery.

Researchers say their findings indicate the need for plastic surgeons to assess patients’ mental health status before performing breast enlargement surgery.

The study included 2,166 Finnish women who’d had cosmetic breast surgery between 1970 and 2000. The study is the third in recent years to show a link between increased suicide risk and breast implant surgery.
Mind-body connection given boost

If you believe that thinking can make it so, you’ll be pleased with results from a University of California study showing that Tai Chi can boost immunity factors that suppress shingles by 50 per cent.

The findings of the randomized, controlled clinical trial, reported in this month’s edition of *Psychosomatic Medicine*, are the first to demonstrate a positive, virus-specific immune response to a behavioural intervention.

Study participants were older adults in a 15-week Tai Chi class. They also showed significant improvement in their physical health and ability to move through their day.

“Our findings offer a unique and exciting example of mind over matter,” says Dr. Michael Irwin, a professor at the UCLA Neuropsychiatric Institute and director of the Center for Psychoneuroimmunology.

“The improvements in both immunity and physical functioning were significant by widely accepted measures of each, and all with no surgery, no drugs and no side effects.”

Purrfect explanation for everything

Spousal support a royal pain?

Overly supportive spouses are not necessarily doing their partners a favour.

They could be prolonging the recovery of their injured spouses.

That’s the conclusion of a study reported in this month’s edition of *The Clinical Journal Of Pain*.

Researchers also found that there are differences between the way each sex responds to a “solicitous” spouse — which should come as no surprise.

“Spousal solicitousness is related to how male patients say...”
Purrfect explanation for everything

Wife reckless? Hubby morose? Blame the cat.
Kicking the cat may be a metaphor about venting frustrations on the innocent family feline, but it could be that Snowball or Fluffy really is to blame after all.
A Czech scientist told Reuters news service this week that his research showed a parasite called toxoplasma gondii in cats, rabbits or raw meat, may make women reckless and friendly.
Jaroslav Flegr of Charles University in Prague said the same parasite, however, makes men quiet, withdrawn, suspicious, jealous, morose and dogmatic.
He could not find a reason for the different reactions by men and women.
Flegr also believes that the parasite is responsible for up to a million deaths on the roads worldwide, making it the one of the deadliest parasitic diseases, second only to malaria.
"It is not much fun. Our research has shown that toxoplasmosis raises 2.6 times the risk of a traffic accident by prolonging the reaction time of infected people," he said.
"It is not only about driving accidents but also about the probability of being run over by a car."

Spousal support a royal pain?

Overly supportive spouses are not necessarily doing their partners a favour.
They could be prolonging the recovery of their injured spouses.
That's the conclusion of a study reported in this month's edition of The Clinical Journal Of Pain.
Researchers also found that there are differences between the way each sex responds to a "solicitous" spouse which should come as no surprise.
"Spousal solicitousness is related to how male patients say they're doing and how female patients are actually doing," says study author Roger Filligim of the University of Florida.
He and his colleagues surveyed 114 female and 213 male chronic pain patients, most of whom were being treated for low back pain.
Men with highly attentive spouses reported higher levels of pain and more disability but despite their complaints, they did well on physical function tests.
For women, it was just the opposite.
Women with highly solicitous spouses didn't report feeling more pain or being more disabled.
However, they performed more poorly on physical function tests than did women with less attentive spouses.
For our good

This advertisement in the American magazine Health, sold in Canada, promotes a drug for breast cancer — "Arimidex significantly reduced the risk of breast cancer returning compared with tamoxifen..." The ad appears a couple of pages after an ad for Rold Gold pretzels.

Drug companies spend about $3 billion (U.S.) a year on direct-to-consumer advertising of prescription medicines.

This week, U.S. health officials announced they'll publish new guidelines for this kind of advertising. Requirements would include better presentations of drug risks and benefits instead of the tiny print summaries that appear on a page behind the big flashy illustrations.

Critics charge the ads encourage patients to ask their doctors for heavily advertised drugs, leading to unnecessary prescriptions and driving up health care costs.

But the president of Pfizer U.S. Pharmaceuticals, which blankets the airwaves with ads for Viagra and Lipitor, said consumers benefit from the ads.

"The unspoken truth about advertising of medicines is that it constitutes one of the largest and most successful public health campaigns in U.S. history."

Oh, sure. And the fox is hanging around the hen house just to protect the chickens.
Georges Monette
Associate Professor
York University
Department of Mathematics and Statistics
and Institute for Social Research

georges@yorku.ca