

Preface to the First Edition

Survival methods are used in many circumstances in medical and allied areas of research. Our objective here is to explain these methods in an accessible and nontechnical way. We have assumed some familiarity with basic statistical ideas, but we have tried not to overwhelm the reader with details of statistical theory. Instead, we have tried to give a practical guide to the use of survival analysis techniques in a variety of situations by using numerous examples. A number of these arise from our own particular field of interest—cancer clinical trials—but the issues that arise in the analysis of such data are common to trials in general and to epidemiological studies.

There are many people whom we would like to thank: these include past and present members of the Medical Research Council Cancer Therapy Committee and its associated working parties, colleagues of the Human Reproduction Programme of the World Health Organization, the European School of Oncology and the Nordic School of Public Health.

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Preface to the Second Edition

Since the first edition of this book there have been many developments in the statistical methods associated with survival techniques and, very importantly, parallel developments in computer software programs to implement the methodologies. The latter enable quite technical methods to be implemented by a wide range of users and not confined to statisticians alone. The object of this second edition is to refocus the presentation of the basic survival analysis techniques and to introduce some of the new developments while maintaining a 'practical' emphasis so that the book remains targeted at the practitioner rather than the research statistician.

Principal amongst the changes introduced, is a greatly expanded chapter on parametric modelling using the Weibull and other distributions of survival time and several extensions of the Cox model. Other new material introduced concerns more model diagnostic techniques, cure models, clustered and multiple failure time, and competing risks analysis. These have resulted in a major restructuring of the book and a substantial revision of the majority of the material of the first edition.

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