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Ferris J. Ritchey

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The Statistical Imagination, a basic social science statistics text with illustrations and exercises for sociology, social work, political science, and criminal justice courses, teaches readers that statistics is not just a mathematical exercise; it is a way of analyzing and understanding the social world. Praised for a writing style that takes the anxiety out of statistics courses, the author explains basic statistical principles through a variety of engaging exercises, each designed to illuminate the unique theme of examining society both creatively and logically. In an effort to make the study of statistics relevant to students of the social sciences, the author encourages readers to interpret the results of calculations in the context of more substantive social issues, while continuing to value precise and accurate research. Ritchey begins by introducing students to the essentials of learning statistics; fractions, proportions, percentages, standard deviation, sampling error and sampling distribution, along with other math hurdles, are clearly explained to fill in any math gaps students may bring to the classroom. Treating statistics as a skill learned best by doing, the author supplies a range of student-friendly questions and exercises to both demystify the calculation process, and to encourage the kind of proportional thinking needed to master the subject. In addition to pencil-and-paper exercises, *The Statistical Imagination includes computer-based assignments for use with the free Student Version SPSS 9.0 CD-ROM that accompanies each new copy of the book.*

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