

Preface

Textbooks like this evolve over many years after several cycles of lectures, seminars, and workshops. This book would be of no use without feedback from students, colleagues, and all the other people who were foolish enough to agree to read drafts again and again until the final product was understandable and fun to work through. We therefore do not want to miss the opportunity to publicly thank all of those involved. In particular, we wish to thank our patient students (who would rather have been taught with a slick and clean textbook but instead had to live with draft versions) at the University of California at Los Angeles, as well as the Universities of Mannheim, Berlin, and Konstanz.

This book is based on a German edition published in 2001. Although we cannot list everyone individually, we acknowledge our indebtedness to those who helped us with the initial version of that text. The entire revised and updated English version would not have been written without the initiative of Vivian Lew, who, while team-teaching a class using the book's material, planted the idea of publishing an English version in our minds. Vivian Lew, Jan de Leeuw, William Mason, and Michael Mitchell supported us in finding a publisher for the English-language book.

Having found a publisher, we quickly realized that merely translating the German version would not do the trick, especially with the major revisions with which we were faced once Stata 8 was on the market. We therefore thank the members of the Department of Statistics at UCLA, especially Gretchen Davis, Robert Gould, Heidi Graziano, and Roger Peng, as well as the UCLA Academic Technology Service Statistical Consulting Group for various helpful discussions on teaching concepts, tests of early versions in their classes, statistical checks, and software adaptations. In addition, we thank Xiao Chen, Elisabeth Coutts, Stefanie Gundert, Florian Fliegner, John Kimmel, Lars Eric Kroll, Lisa Lara, Magdalena Luniak, Peter Lynn, Merja Mankila, Katherine Masyn, Michael Mitchell, Karen Nylund, Claudia Queisser, David Reimer, Rainer Schnell, Helene Venningen, and three anonymous reviewers of earlier chapters for their rigorous reading and critical comments. Vince Wiggins's help allowed us the pleasure of creating Graph 6.2 in Stata. Although we rewrote many parts or translated them ourselves, it was incredibly helpful to have copy editing and translation assistance from Rie von Eyben, Joe Fineman, Pete Gordon-Smith, Annette Jäckle and Christine Schwarz. Finally, we would like to thank our editors at Stata Press, who read through the entire text in detail for a final language check, made sure we presented Stata in the way we intended, and checked for the changes necessitated by Stata 9.

Many other factors contribute to creating a usable textbook. Half of the point of the book would have been lost without good data, so we greatly appreciate the help and data we received from the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW). And, of course, ensuring usability takes more time than anything else. Maintaining an environment that allowed us to work on this project was not always easy; we thank Jens Alber, Jan de Leeuw, and Roger Tourangeau for supporting us at work and thank our families and friends for supporting us at home.

We both take full and equal responsibility for the entire book. We can be reached at *fkreuter@survey.umd.edu* and *kohler@wz-berlin.de*, and we would appreciate being informed of any remaining errors and suggestions for improvements.