

Foreword

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Reading the articles comprising this reflection on Harvey's work highlights the unique breadth and depth of his contributions, spanning well over 50 years. In each area, Harvey's fresh imaginative thinking challenged established approaches and provided the impetus for substantive development – in both the statistical methodology and its application. Perhaps this is crystallized by his work on the development of the iterative generalised least squares algorithm for fitting multi-level models: there are many ways this can be done, but Harvey's approach allowed him — in an inspirational partnership with Jon Rasbash — to build on Michael Healy's *Nanostat* package and create ML2, then MLn and MLwiN. These in turn allowed social and medical researchers to apply multilevel modelling for the first time —and so unleashed a wave of progress, for which Harvey was rightly honoured with the RSS Guy Medal in Silver (1988), Fellowship of the British Academy (1996) and an honorary doctorate from the Open University (2001).

In the Multilevel Fellows, who met regularly at the Institute of Education up until Harvey's retirement in 2005, Harvey created a uniquely stimulating research environment. Comprising researchers from PhD to professorial, the group were united in their enthusiasm for the methodology and application of multilevel models – covering all the areas mentioned in this reflection (growth, education, record linkage, surveys) and extending to ecology and beyond. Each meeting began with members of the group briefly updating on their projects and plans, and typically concluded with a slightly longer presentation from one or more members about their on-going work. The collaborative, supportive group discussions unfailingly facilitated fresh thinking; Harvey's perspicacious insights kept everyone's focus on addressing methodological problems that were relevant to improving applied research.

At Harvey's retirement party from the Institute of Education, I recall Jon Rasbash speculating that there must be more than one 'Harvey' – such was the speed and efficiency of his work: in an evening when he was playing his flute in a concert, you'd also receive detailed comments on a manuscript you'd sent to him at the end of the day! Working with him was immensely stimulating, productive and fun: when he visited the LSHTM, we would often sit down and write the heart of an article (with Harvey often supplying the simulation study that evening or later in the week) as well as having an incisive discussion about the state of progressive politics (Harvey was offered an honour but, as he said, both his critique of the system and the fact the government 'systematically ignored all the evidence and advice I have ever given it' compelled him politely to decline) and enjoying reflections on

our shared interest in music (Harvey took up the flute when his son decided to stop lessons, played to a high standard, and was active in orchestras and chamber groups).

As the symposium to celebrate his 80th birthday showed, his gracious engagement with all his collaborators (from policy makers to PhD students) enabled his work to be hugely influential, and he was immensely valued as a friend and colleague. His passing leaves a huge gap in the lives of all of us who were privileged to know him. As we recall his legacy, our tribute is to allow his inspired approach to permeate our work, and to transmit to our colleagues and students the many insights he gave us.

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