

Brief history of the Lehmann Symposia: Origins, goals and motivation

The idea of the Lehmann Symposia as platforms to encourage a revival of interest in fundamental questions in theoretical statistics, while keeping in focus issues that arise in contemporary interdisciplinary cutting-edge scientific problems, developed during a conversation that I had with Victor Perez Abreu during one of my visits to Centro de Investigación en Matemáticas (CIMAT) in Guanajuato, Mexico. Our goal was and has been to showcase relevant theoretical work to encourage young researchers and students to engage in such work.

The First Lehmann Symposium on Optimality took place in May of 2002 at Centro de Investigación en Matemáticas in Guanajuato, Mexico. A brief account of the Symposium has appeared in Vol. 44 of the Institute of Mathematical Statistics series of Lecture Notes and Monographs. The volume also contains several works presented during the First Lehmann Symposium. All papers were refereed. The program and a picture of the participants can be found on-line at the website <http://www.stat.rice.edu/lehmann/1st-Lehmann.html>.

The Second Lehmann Symposium on Optimality was held from May 19–May 22, 2004 at Rice University. There were close to 175 participants in the Symposium. A partial list and a photograph of participants, as well as the details of the scientific program, are provided in the next few pages. All scientific activities took place in Duncan Hall in the School of Engineering. Most of the plenary and invited speakers agreed to be videotaped and their talks may be accessed by visiting the following website: <http://webcast.rice.edu/webcast.php?action=details&event=408>. All papers presented in this volume were refereed, and one third of submitted papers were rejected.

At the time of this writing, plans are underway to hold the Third Lehmann Symposium at the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute during May of 2007.

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Editor