

EDITOR'S PREFACE

One of the principal aims of this conference was to bring together people with a common interest but differing perspectives and diverse areas of expertise. In spite of this diversity, virtually all the papers in this volume can trace their origins to two prominent sources. These are the pioneering papers by Fréchet and Hoeffding in which they originated the study of distributions with given marginals and studied various optimization problems, e.g., upper and lower bounds for variances, correlations, joint distributions, etc., in this context.* Subsequently, in the early 1950's, there were important advances by Dall'Aglio et al. and by Sklar et al. These are discussed in detail in the papers by Dall'Aglio and Schweizer which appear in the proceedings of the 1990 Rome conference on "Advances in Probability Distributions with Given Marginals." Since then the subject has grown by leaps and bounds. Much of this growth is documented in the proceedings of the above mentioned conference. Subsequent developments are the subject of these proceedings.

In his Foreword, Howard Sherwood expresses everyone's thanks to the Organizing Committee, the various sponsoring agencies, the University of Washington, and a host of others. It remains for us to thank Howard. The original idea for the conference was his, and his was the driving force behind it. He sought and obtained the necessary financial support and shouldered most of the organizational burdens, both before and during the conference. The lion's share of the credit for the success of the conference is undoubtedly his.

All the papers submitted for publication in this volume were refereed, in most cases by two referees. We thank all the authors and conference participants for their contributions. We also thank the referees for their conscientious efforts and helpful advice.

* Fréchet's work is very well known. However it seems to us that Hoeffding's contributions have not been sufficiently recognized and that he has not been given the credit he so justly deserves. This is perhaps due to the fact that his basic paper on scale-invariant correlation theory was published just at the beginning of the Second World War in a German journal of limited circulation. (The paper has recently been reissued, in an English translation, and appears in *The Collected Works of Wassily Hoeffding*, edited by N. I. Fisher and P. K. Sen and published by Springer-Verlag in 1994.) We would therefore like to suggest that henceforth we speak of Fréchet-Hoeffding classes, Fréchet-Hoeffding bounds (briefly, FH-classes, FH-bounds), etc., rather than Fréchet-classes, Fréchet bounds, etc.