Series Editor's Note

People who know me, know how much I love missing data. When Craig Enders agreed to do the first edition of this book, I was elated. Now that the second edition is here with so much new trailblazing material, I'm simply tickled pink. This second edition is like a biblical tome for researchers in any discipline where missing data arise. Craig Enders is a rock star on the scientific stage, and I'm right there in the proverbial mosh pit, grooving to every word and idea he presents in this edition. He's encapsulated new ideas (e.g., factored regression specifications, multilevel missing data methods, sensitivity analyses) and expanded on the "analytic pillars" (as he calls them) such as factored regression specifications for maximum likelihood approaches and three whole chapters dedicated to Bayesian estimation. This new edition is hands down the most comprehensive, practical, and accessible book devoted to missing data.

As I wrote in the Series Editor's Note in the first edition, missing data can be a real bane to researchers across all social science disciplines. For most of our scientific history, we have approached missing data much like a doctor from the ancient world might have used bloodletting to cure disease or amputation to stem infection (e.g., removing the infected parts of one's data by using listwise or pairwise deletion). My metaphor should make you feel a bit squeamish, just as you should feel if you see published papers that dealt with missing data using the antediluvian and ill-advised approaches of old. When Craig ushered us into the age of modern missing data treatments in the first edition, I'd hoped we'd see most researchers embrace the modern treatments for missing data. At the time, Craig captured what we knew then and presented it to us in a refreshing pedagogical manner.

The field of missing data has advanced probably more than any other quantitative topic area. In the second edition, Craig again captures what we know now and brings it to us in the most accessible way. As before, he demystifies the arcane discussions of missing data mechanisms and their labels (e.g., MNAR) and the esoteric acronyms of the various techniques used to address them (e.g., FIML, MCMC, and the like).

Craig's approachable treatise provides a comprehensive treatment of the causes of missing data and how best to address them. He clarifies the principles by which various mechanisms of missing data can be recovered, and provides expert guidance on which method to implement, how to execute it, and what to report about the modern approach you've chosen. Craig's treatment deftly balances practical guidance with expert insights. It's rare to find a book on quantitative methods that you can read for its stated purpose (to educate us on modern missing data procedures) and find that it treats you to a level of insight on topics that are unmatched in the literature. Craig's presentation of maximum likelihood, multiple imputation, and Bayesian estimation procedures, for example, are the clearest, most understandable, and instructive discussions I've read—your inner geek will be delighted, really.

Craig successfully translates the state-of-the-art technical missing data literature into an accessible reference that you can readily rely on and use. Among the treasures of this work are the myriad ways he shows you exactly what the technical literature obtusely presents. Because he provides such careful guidance on the foundations and the step-by-step processes involved, you will quickly master the concepts and issues of this essential component of nearly all research endeavors. Another treasure is the broad collection of real-world data examples, including a whole chapter of illustrative examples that deal with a broad array of issues that he pragmatically and clearly guides us through. Moreover, the accompanying website (*www.appliedmissingdata.com*) is one of the richest treasures he's produced. Here, you will find, for example, up-to-date syntax files for the examples presented as well as practical details of the different software programs for handing missing data.

As I said in the first edition, what you will learn from Craig is that missing data imputation is not cheating. In fact, you'll learn why the egregious scientific error would be the business-as-usual approaches that *still* permeate our journals. You'll learn that because modern missing data procedures are so effective, they afford the use of intentionally missing data designs, which often can provide more valid and generalizable results than traditional data collection protocols. You'll learn to rethink how you collect data to maximize your ability to recover any missing data mechanisms. You'll learn that many quandaries of design and analysis become resolvable when recast as a missing data problem. You'll learn that Craig Enders is a gifted quantitative specialist who can share his fountain of knowledge with diverse readers from beginners to seasoned veterans. Bottom line, you'll learn, after you read this book, to go forth and impute with impunity!

Todd D. Little
Still virtually circumnavigating the world from home
Lubbock, Texas

Guilford Publications
370 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10001
212-431-9800
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