

Editorial Note

The article that follows, "Computer Power and Legal Reasoning: A Case Study of Judicial Decision Prediction in Zoning Amendment Cases," by Charles M. Haar, John P. Sawyer, Jr., and Stephen J. Cummings, reports the results of an innovative effort to examine statistically with the aid of a computer the meaning of the body of cases on a specific topic. Each reader of the article can judge the extent to which the effort is successful in the chosen field and might also be useful in his or her own field of interest in the law.

The method employed raises some interesting questions about the applicability of statistical techniques to the study of bodies of case materials. I believe the method both requires and merits additional exploration at the methodological level. In consequence, this *Journal* plans to present in a forthcoming issue a commentary upon the approach taken in the following article, which will not only suggest ways to sharpen up the statistical analysis but will also point out any inherent limitations on such analysis. In particular, the later article will focus on the important distinction between the predictive and the explanatory uses of the models developed in this article. Although that distinction is made clearly in the article herein, I believe that it is important to explore the implications of that distinction in greater detail than was possible within the framework of this article itself. The author of the critique will be Yakov Avichai, Mathematical Statistician of the American Bar Foundation.

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Editor