The Statistics Wars and Their Casualties Workshop

2022-04-05
Location: London School of Economics (CPNSS)

While the field of statistics has a long history of passionate foundational controversy the last decade has, in many ways, been the most dramatic. Misuses of statistics, biasing selection effects, and high powered methods of Big-Data analysis, have helped to make it easy to find impressive-looking but spurious, results that fail to replicate. As the crisis of replication has spread beyond psychology and social sciences to biomedicine, genomics and other fields, people are getting serious about reforms. Many are welcome (preregistration, transparency about data, eschewing mechanical uses of statistics); some are quite radical.

The experts do not agree on how to restore scientific integrity, and these disagreements reflect philosophical battles–old and new–about the nature of inductive-statistical inference and the roles of probability in statistical inference and modeling. These philosophical issues simmer below the surface in competing views about the causes of problems and potential remedies. If statistical consumers are unaware of assumptions behind rival evidence-policy reforms, they cannot scrutinize the consequences that affect them (in personalized medicine, psychology, law, and so on).

Critically reflecting on proposed reforms and changing standards requires insights from statisticians, philosophers of science, psychologists, journal editors, economists and practitioners from across the natural and social sciences. This workshop will bring together these interdisciplinary insights–from speakers as well as attendees.

Speakers:

- Yoav Benjamini,
- Alexander Bird,
- Mark Burgman,
- Daniele Fanelli,
- Roman Frigg,
- Stephen Guttinger,
- David Hand,
- Margherita Harris,
- Christian Hennig,
• Katrin Hohl,
• Daniël Lakens,
• Deborah Mayo,
• Richard Morey,
• Stephen Senn,
• Jon Williamson

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