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How Statistics Revolutionized Science: A Lady Tasting Tea

Friday, Jan 20, 11A.M. – 12 P.M. SPHIS Room 103

The development of statistical modeling in research was a dominant paradigm shift in the foundation of science. Starting with a lady claiming she could detect a difference between milk-into-tea vs. tea-into-milk infusions; statistics has changed the culture of science. Statistics makes possible the construction of meaningful scientific experiments. Statistical modeling is the child of applied mathematics and the 19th-century scientific revolution. The products of statistical modeling is the advancement of more reliable pharmaceuticals, better beer, econometrics, quality control manufacturing, diagnostic tests and social policy. This talk will be a conversion of science from observational natural history into rigorously defined statistical models of data collection and analysis. This is especially important now that we seem to be reaching the point of diminishing returns and are looking for new paradigms of scientific investigation.