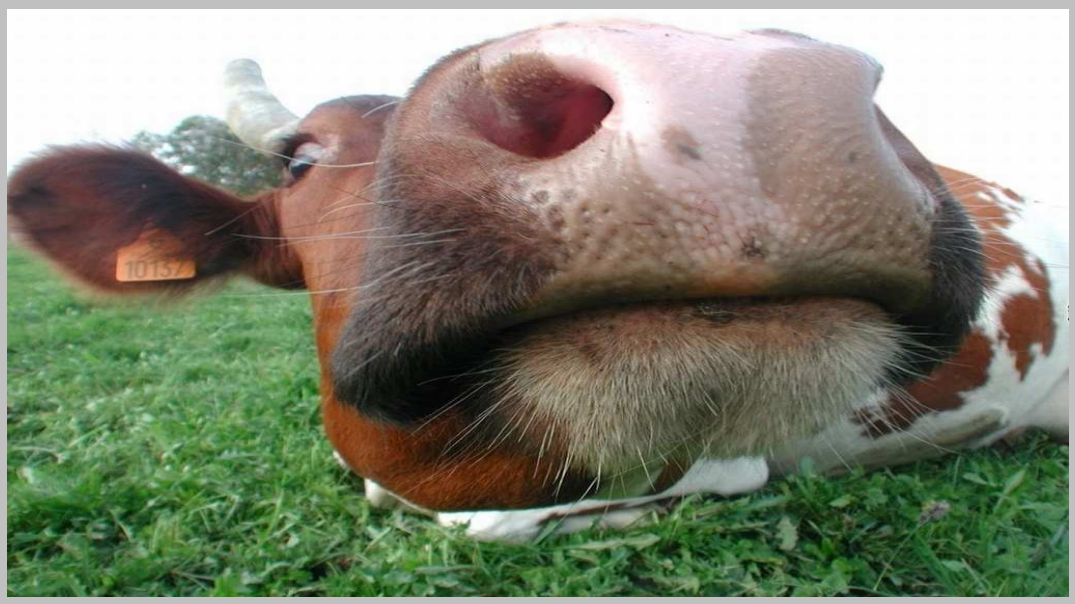
Sigbjørn S. Åmdal, *studiosus perpetuus vitae*

Defining Statistics and Social Research



A pretty objective introduction to science

Report nr. 500,000!

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Scope of interest

When we encounter tasks that need to be done, we often apply tools to achieve the wanted goals, like using a frying pan to make eggs & bacon. And statisticians (terribly hard title which reportedly doesn't impress any girls) and social researchers are very fond of eggs & bacon. This treatise is a thorough attempt of a descriptive analysis of the frying pan.

It is my humble opinion that this is all you really need to know, as per a need-to-know basis specification, but opponents are welcome to discuss this over a free meal.

Acknowledgments

People always begin the credits by saying that *"this report would not have been possible if [insert conditions]"* but philosophically such a statement makes no sense and – at most – qualifies as nonsense. But I must acknowledge, however, that this report would not have been possible without my scientific sixth sense and my outmost, impenetrable effort to stay purely objective.

I also want to send a fairly extended thanks to the OFaf Foundation for allowing me to study quite a few characters under their ideal conditions. And for the coffee.

Let me inform that most of the objects I surveyed were not aware of my undercover investigation, which should underline my ethical acuteness. I didn't even feed them once.

Please allow moments of reflection and awe while reading, due to the complexity of the problems here solved and the fact that I solved them.

Part 1: Statistics and Social Research

I. Statistics, *n*. vs. statics, *n*.

Having first established both of these words as nouns, it's vital for understanding that statistics are not under any circumstances associated with statics. Statics can be all sorts of things statistics are not, like *static electricity* that makes the hair on your back stand up, and although some statistical research can have the same effect it is unlikely to have been caused by electricity. So statistics <> static electricity.

There is another Fregean sense of statics that we also have to deal with, since it deals with numbers much the same way statistics might be said to do.
Take the number one, for instance: 1.
As we can see here, the number one is one, e.g. 1=1.
We can perform as many mathematical operations we like, yes, we can even negate one and make its value be the same as if we collected all the numbers in the Universe and deleted them, and then deleted 1 once more; -1, while still not being able to change 1 *an Sich*.
What we've done has not been done to the 1, but to the Universe, and although some political people believe deleting the Universe is not such a bad idea, we can't touch the 1. Let's just look at the evidence. What we did was negating 1: 1 to -1.
Logically, this is believed to be kind of equivalent to adding a - to 1.
So the 1 remains 1, it is *static*.

And history supports this view. Since the Ancient Egyptians of the early period began using the number 1 (although they used some funny-looking hieroglyph looking mostly like an unknown bird with a long beak and stomach ache) no mathematicians have been reported to be able to prove any change in 1. The 1 remains.

Statistics, on the other hand, have a totally different approach to 1.
Many doctorates qualified for receiving their *dr.* title (a grammatically simple one which *has* been reported to impress girls) have accomplished precisely that by writing

several hundred pages why their 1 is better than someone else's 1. So, statistically, the funny-looking bird of the Ancient Egyptians of the early period *has* in fact changed.

We may therefore conclude that statistics are not statics or the other way around. Having cleared up that mess, what then is this statistics business?

II. Statistics, *n*

From the previous revelation that 1 is not equal to 1 we must understand just how the statistician goes to work. This is where the frying pan re-enters the treatise.

The statistician is born with a life-long love affair with equations. Even in the early stages of his or her life one can find a deep interest in everything numerical. But we'll deal with the statistician as agent later. Let's look more on his work.

In the monstrous body of science, the statistician has come to play a more and more significant role, although no one can remember any longer just how that happened. For the statistician, 1 is not 1 but 1/1. It's read one *out of one*.
1, in its entirety, is 1 only inasmuch as it could've been something else, like a half or a third. We clearly see scientific supervenience trespassing on the indignant common man's truth.
But if we are to understand this, we have to cut them some slack.

It's the statistician's job to do what most of us prefers not to. Remember those long boring hours during maths in school? How we used to sit there and watch the mouth of the teacher act as though it was saying something meaningful, casting a glance out the window, pining for the fjords? You can probably also remember the geek with glasses who drooled when he got his first TI-83+ calculator. This is the statistician. All in all, his job is to calculate. Of course, he calculates in a scientific setting. That's what makes him different than your typical geek. That, and the salary.

The statistician doesn't typically settle with numbers. No. He wants his calculative genius to be universal, that's why he insists on x's, y's and z's instead of 1, 2 and 3s.

This makes it easier to keep the entire population of Poland in his head, since he can simply refer to it as p. Or q. Or whatever neat, little symbol he can postulate.

I read a recent survey about alcohol consumption, written and published by a well-known yet nearly anonymous statistician. He confidently remarked he was not a member of the AA, but without additional information it was kind of hard deciding whether that was a good thing or not. It went something like this:

> "In any typical bar, b, the consumer (hereafter referred to as class C respondents) has a variety of *n* alcoholic beverages which subjects belonging to C are to choose from, based on personal preferences, pp, herewith excluded.
> I was astonished *(yes, that's his word)* to find that out of b(C)>b(not-C) in b, since pp of not-C was <> with pp's of C in or out of b.
> This means that there are conclusive grounds to expect the prices to rise or drop accordingly.
> I gather any serious analysis to reveal that if 3/4 non-classified entities x (belonging randomly to C or not-C or both over a sufficient span of time) enters b *on the basis of assuming* that the currency (cu.) of x's country X (which again is inter-defined on international stock markets) still holds, will choose to or not to consume *y* from *n*.
> This all instantiates the common law of:
> ((C&not-C(3/4x)&x(Xcu.)->b)->*y*^not-y(n.))->%pp"

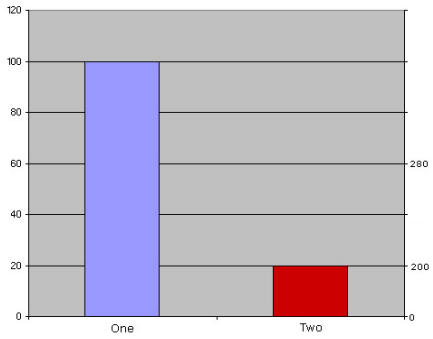
This may look like a mystery. But really it's not.
It merely states that if you combine the different letters above, you'll find out how many are likely to get pissed on a Saturday night upon entering the bar. The percentage you end up reveals the statistical truth about your drinking habits, *pp*.
We clearly see how 1 cannot statistically be 1 since the 1 depends on being a factor or a result of the presented equation.
Besides, 1 is static and statisticians hate statics.

Every statistician is his own personal matrix. His mind holds strings in clusters, strings that inter-define that famous fluctuation of ones and zeros on the sea of probability.

I will not elaborate any further on this matter, since a good 80% of mankind has no interest in statistics or maths if there is no way to benefit from it, but we will come

back to him in other respects in which his genius is fully, or at least hopefully, revealed.
You see we have more to gain from investigating his functions as scientist and social being, and I always refrain from boring my obedient readers with numbers and plain facts.

A good advice, though: When dealing with statistics you must pay attention to the charts.



Here you can see 1 and 2 is proportionally reversed. Two is even painted red to underline its critical importance, while the erect 1 seems much larger. It must be an important 1 according to this particular statistician, but the message is ambiguous.

III. Social research, *n* vs. Solitaire research, *n*

It is vital that we keep these two nouns and three dimensions apart.
Yes, there are three of them.

The most important aspect of solitaire research is the one that concerns the study of a card game called Solitaire. Solitaire is a one-man card game reportedly invented a long time ago. It requires a full stack of cards, that is 52, and not 52 of the same card but 52 different cards divided in; four colours (hearts, spades, clubs, diamonds) and two classes (picture card, number cards). The object of the game is prevention of suicide due to boredom. All in all it's a very complex field of study, since there are more than 70 well-known

versions of the game. It is also the most time-consuming study if you count the working hours put into it.
If we stick to the traditional version that is often a part of a computer's operating system, it mainly consists of clearing the table in the right fashion.
But even in this version, there are many alternative variants of playing. I personally favour the timed Las Vegas style variant, drawing three-cards and having a cumulative score. That's how real men play Solitaire.

Solitaire research in this respect naturally operates with an entirely different terminology than social research. The solitaire researcher can confidently analyse the *tableau*, and see whether or not he's successful in filling the *foundation*.
Take the word 'grace' for instance. In solitaire terminology *a grace* is a special move that may be illegal to the rules of the game otherwise. A solitaire researcher being graceful would mean he's a cheating bastard, while the social researcher's grace is depending on his or her grace or the grace of the gods et al.

The second, seemingly trivial sense of solitaire research is in itself two-sided.
The first one of these two is quite trivial. It's about researching with patience. And it can also be researching on patience with patience. All in all it's very patient.

The other side concerns researching alone, on your own, in solitary confinement. Just imagine the smart guy or girl sitting there in the tower, or kept prisoner in a dubious looking monastery, or tied up in an evil-minded mental hospital. Writing down the truths of the world. Doing the research that has to be done.
There are also those scientists kept in solitary confinement, since they've been using themselves as test subjects. Although sad cases, this mostly falls under the 'mad scientist' category. Any half-decent, sane scientist would rather turn to rats or persuade some friends.

But this does not fit the description of the researcher that's social, the social researcher, so we shouldn't confuse the two. While the researcher in solitary confinement can be apt to express symptoms of a-social and erratic behaviour, yes, even your average paranoia, the social researcher steps aside from these matters and merely snorts at them from a safe distance.

Let's all agree that social research is none of these, perhaps apart from the bit about patience on some very rare occasions. So what, then, is social research?

IV. Social research, *n*

The social researcher is far from a solitaire researcher, despite the possible occurrences of her playing Solitaire, which would mostly make for an inefficient social researcher.

The social researcher starts her day by establishing some good definitions. She may find herself in bed after a long night's sleep thinking: *"I am."*
That's a very dubious and, philosophically speaking, disastrous definition.
So she saves it with an ad hoc: *"I am. – I am hungry."*
Still a bit tired and not yet comfortable with the thought of abandoning the warm and soft bed where she'd rather reside the remainder of the morning, she finds herself in an oppressive situation – forced upon her by a cold, egocentric society.
Instead of hiding underneath her pillow, she tries to figure out what changes have to be made in order to accomplish social harmony on a general, balanced basis in order to provoke a structural change in the foundations of the social platform, e.g. the bringing abouts of breakfast in bed.

As we can see, the social researcher is analytic to the same extent as the statistician, and the extent extends quite noticeably, while they differ dramatically in form. Politically put, the statistician sees what is while the social researcher sees what's missing – when they're looking at the same thing.

In any situation the social researcher will rather be dealing with *cases* than the present. Hypothetical as they may be, she still captures the audience in the promotion of realizing said possibilities.
Just take a look at this typical example from a social researcher's letter of proposal:

Would you like to marry me? Circle all that apply	YES! Yes, maybe Yes, perhaps Can't say that I won't no

The social researcher then, is awfully obliged to modal logics. Even from bed she can visualize the counterfactuals making breakfast in bed possible without leaving it. One such possible hypothesis could be the apprehension of a gentle mate. Of course, if it were a mad scientist, she'd venture about the production of brainless, obedient slaves. Furthermore, feminists have argued that this goes for the same thing.
But the point remains.

She's therefore not only capable but suitable for science, as it is defined in social research. And that is the understanding and manipulation of environments.
Where the statistician sees a forest for its numbers, the social researcher sees it for its potentials. One could very simply say that she adds a little colour to the scenery.
But just the same way statistics can be misleading, the social researchers can be said to add too much colour. Or too dark or bright colours. Or colours that simply don't fit together. She's ruining the Feng-shui.

Social research's main focus is the focus on tendencies. Sometimes these can be underlying, like hidden agendas, and other times quite obvious, like the plague.
In the eyes of the social researcher, then, people are not going to die, but they definitely have a tendency to.

Tendencies are really hard to grasp sometimes, and consequently the social researcher is performing some really heavy-duty work on behalf of her institute. It's not a rare occasion that the researcher is suddenly caught by surprise by a tendency that had been lurking in the dark before suddenly coming out in the open, creating havoc in society.
In such situations the social researcher rushes to the institute to save the day. She writes a rapid assessment or a short paper on the situation, gets it trumped through the publication office and sends it away to whoever survived the ordeal.

As you can see from this example, this 1 has a tendency of leaning a little to the right. In terms of meaning this can mean all sorts of things, but just what is entirely up to the researcher. We can speculate that if this were a political analysis, the 1 in question would have a tendency of voting in favour of the Conservatives.

Similarly we have the physical disposition of this 1 falling. In fact, he is falling. And if it is one of them lonely and bitter 1s, he'll be determined to take every 1 else with him! The spooky thing is that *he is* falling but that's compared to the ghostly 1 standing behind him.

Who's that? A government agent? An angel? A demon? Death? An ideal?

I'm not really sure. And sometimes the situation seems reversed.

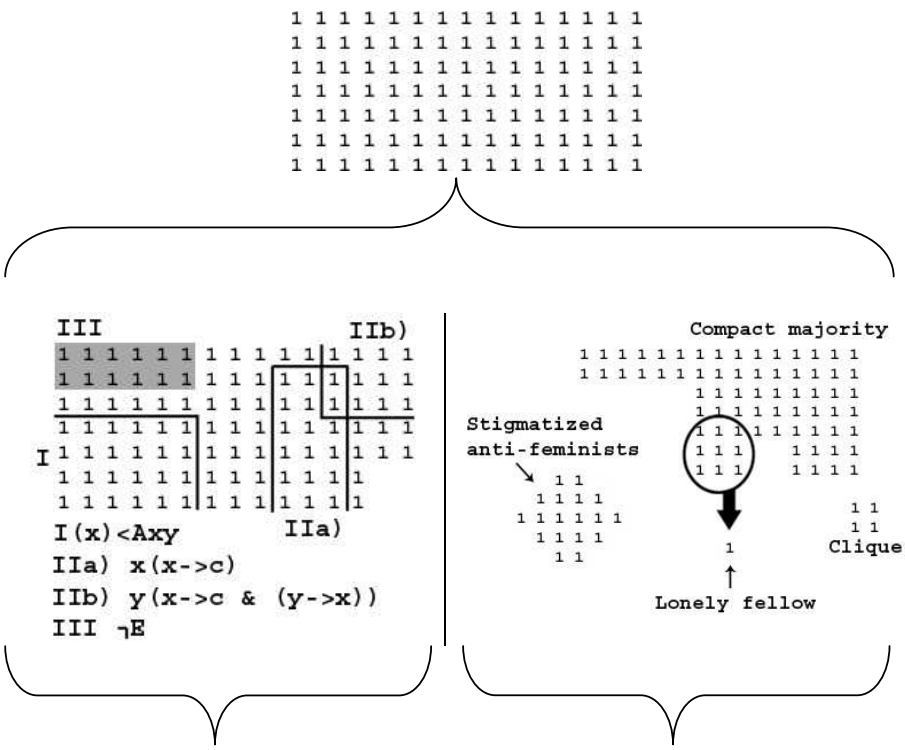
There is a lot of stuff you can draw from a tendency with or without its consent.

If people have a tendency to wage war, they are usually quite upset about something.

This too, the foundation of a tendency, is research matter for the social researcher.

V. Social Research vs. Statistics

So far we know quite alot of whatever is relevant to the scope of this analysis. Like, both of the words are nouns. To see how the stuff behind those nouns work together, I want to illuminate a creative team work process I've dubbed the *process of scientific obfuscation* (fig).



a) Statistical data b) Social research data

At the top there, you've got all the 1s in the world. Well, not all of them, but the 1s falling in under the categories from which the scientists choose their data. It's the raw data, so to speak.

You don't want to jump to conclusions and call it 'the field' because, as you will later find, there are some challenging problems to the theoretical establishment of 'the field'. For now we'll just call it raw data. The 1s to the core.

As you can see, the raw data is simply there. All the 1s are patiently waiting to be picked up by an eager scientist and hurled away to a magical place, or more correctly, his desktop.

Underneath, the river parts into the work of the a) statistician and b) social researcher.

a) As you can see from the work of the statistician, he has applied his favourite equations on the populus of 1s. Most of them fit into the rectangle-shaped schemes I, IIa, IIb and III.

There can be no doubt that the little cross-section between IIa and IIb is the 1s who are likely to fall into both categories. If this had been a natural study of animals consider: the duck, the beaver and the duckbilled platypus.
But we're dealing with statistics, and if it had been a general gender study, they're both homosexual and heterosexual, e.g. they're bisexual. The hard, black borders signify a solid diversion between the different groups here. Not everyone belongs to any group either, and only time can tell if they'll ever be let inside.
But it's more likely that we're dealing with monks in this case.

b) The social researcher has revealed quite a few tendencies here. There's the typical stigmatised group of anti-feminists, which is clearly making a stand against the compact majority, indicated by the white, empty space forming some sort of semantic, social abyss. As opposed to the statistician, we are looking at more circular concepts here, and that's because tendencies don't form perfect rectangles. This also means that the regular diameter of social outcasting depends on the number of 1s looked at in the first place, and that it also can have elliptical, spherical shapes.
If the diameter increases, the tendency will influence more 1s.
You see the strong arrow from a little part of the compact majority there, revealing the tendency to go for the lonely feller. There's also a right-wing clique trying to avoid suspicion on the right. From this information the social researcher can say that the anti-feminists are mostly self-sustained and really stupid, that the clique is likely to attract hostile attention and that it's too late to do anything for the lonely fellow. It's a tragedy, yes, but it's still a fact.
His vulnerability, statistically speaking, is close to a hundred percent. In terms of social research, he has a tendency of getting whacked.

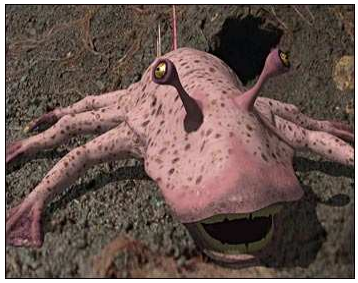
Also note the grey areas on the upper right of chart b) marked III. That's the data, all those 1s, which simply didn't fit the calculations. Looking at the formula, the statistician confidently confirms that they don't exist. Although these ones are grey and mystified, they've completely disappeared from the social researcher and not even granted a grey existence. Of course the social researcher is quite aware of them, but he or she will simply state that these 1s are not interesting since they're not many enough to form a tendency worth noticing. They're worthless and apt to suffer the same wrath as the lonely fellow.

Even though both the statistician and the social researcher kick ass respectively in their respective fields, they kick even better ass when put together. The question we must ask ourselves is: whose ass, exactly, are they kicking?

Part 2: The agents

I. History and Habitat

There are a lot of things you can say about agents, even when you're dealing with undercover agents, you can for instance say that they have long coats and dark glasses. But before we get thus far, let's have a look at the natural habitat of the scientist. I've encountered scientific agents in more than one context, and although it would have been interesting as well as satisfying to elaborate into these particular instances, the scope we're dealing with permits no such investigation. I'll stick to the natural habitats.



Artistic re-creation of
the early *Homo sciencius*

The scientists naturally emerged from certain amphibia who sustained life by blowing bubbles on the surface of small puddles of mud. While other natural organisms, like humans, expressed tendencies of a capitalistic approach to life, like the serial reproduction of one and the same unit while consuming more and more prey from lower steps of the food chain; the scientists refrained from such ignorance.

The natural scientist was no part of any food chain whatsoever, and it consequently didn't need to stress around so much.

The primitive scientist simply lied quite relaxed in the warm mud, staring at the hassle of life as inquiring, with the famous speculating eyebrow, as can be expected from slimy amphibians. They observed and took notice.

This gradually evolved their over-sized brains. Recent neurophysics shows that size doesn't matter, however, so it was a natural choice for the scientist to commence research on whatever he or she found interesting to put their useless brain compartments to use.

The general belief is that they started off with philosophy, e.g. *what's the meaning of life, what's good and what's not* and *how do we open cans of tuna without a can opener*; before moving on to science as we know it.

It would be logical thinking that the natural habitat of the scientist would be musky swamps filled to the brim with moist, but facts tell us otherwise. This is naturally because the scientist as we know it has developed a thin membrane around its fragile body that sustains a continuous supply of moist and vapour from the air. This also explains why most scientists are so pale.
Apart from that and the substantial loss of hair, they mostly resemble the usual hominoid, such as the *Homo sapiens* also known as *Homo commonsensus*.

The natural habitat of the scientist could therefore be expected to be quite diverse, but I find the contrary manifested in what I've seen. This is because the scientist's activities are so predominantly important of their very existence.

From this follows a range of bizarre consequences. The scientist will dwell in office-like surroundings, suited with regionally individualistic furniture, personal effects of tremendous ritual importance and the occasional plastic plant.

As you can see from this illustrating photograph of one such area, the scientist in question has decided to go for the "home sweet home" atmosphere, attained by hidden references to his ancestral habitat; the walls are comfortably green, there's a plastic plant in the corner, and the carpet on the floor provides the amount of dust particles to impersonate the "muskiness" of the swamp.
Not surprisingly he has chosen black, comfortable, leather chairs which invites for a chill karma, and it probably reminds him of the days in the swamp when he blew bubbles on the surface. Also note the pictures, pictures of old serious men in black and white, all of whom are icons of worship.

When the scientist is not confined to his dwelling, he will seek out others of his kind in areas I've divided into: the "meeting rooms" and the "conference rooms".
They differ in terms of technological advancement, and in the conference rooms the scientist is able to connect with other scientists across the world using spiritual

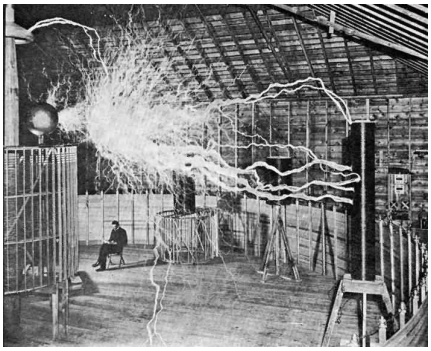
telepathy and information technology. The shaman a.k.a the sysadmin or his minions, sees to it that all sacred relics are in place prior to such an event. But apart from their vital and immediate role in such circumstances, the IT people are mostly looked upon as simple, lesser beings.

Along the path of the scientist's daily doings, you will find different devices that ease the burden of practical issues so that he can focus on his primary existence. Instability in or the removal of said devices will lead to a collapse of the scientist environment, and will probably cause them to die. I venture the species has grown well accustomed to its darwian role, and a sudden impact of disaster could wipe them out.
But there's an ongoing change in the habitat, however, and I've observed the abandoning of offices such as the one illustrated in favour of simplistic and ergonometric depression. It will be interesting to observe how the scientists cope.

After this short dip into the habitat, it's time to have a closer look at the agents.

II. The Mad Scientist

The concept of mad scientists, which has been widely praised as the first and perhaps only successful anthropological categorization, can be traced back to Nikola Tesla (1856-1943).
He was a pioneer in the field of electronic discharges, e.g. lightning, and among the first to attempt controlling it. He was also one of the few that survived such



experiments. This was, of course, also the reason of his self-chosen solitary confinement. You can't have just anyone barging in disrupting your scientific tests by burning to death in an uncontrollable manner. His neighbours reported that the ground around his "Tower" was buzzing and electrifying, and in the evenings a blueish hue surrounded the area. This was naturally subject to a great concern regarding the motives of this man. Was he going to wipe out the world? And if he were, would he do it with a slow burn or an instantaneous electrical explosion? A Sizzling Big Bang?

There are a lot of other things one could say about this great man. He kept his mind cold despite his enormous power bills and the fact that no one would sell him an insurance policy.
And I, for one, would have been proud to call myself one of his friends, if it had been the case that I had met him and we became friends.

This eccentric career path spawned a dozen stories, and eventually the mentioned concept of the mad scientist. Even though today's scientists resemble normal people in many ways, we can safely assume that there's a Tesla in every, single one of them. Or at least a mr Hyde.
You can tell it by their eyes. A flicker of madness during a debate, indications of global domination fantasies in their choice of terms, and the universal anomality of the brain in everyday situations.

As folk psychology goes, the mad scientist is one hundred percent absorbed into bizarre and inhumane experiments, seemingly emotionless he's undisturbed by the screams of agony produced by his unwanting specimens. And he always hums some kind of simple melody. Although this at first glance might resemble the statistician for instance, we'll see that the normal scientists are as normal as any neoliberal society can ask for.
Yes, they create a nuisance sometimes, but that hardly qualifies in terms of wiping out the world or turning us all into unsuspecting newts.
But I'm not saying that they aren't carrying a secret dream of doing it. It's just that most of them leave it at that. Rest assured they are constantly kept in an existential limbo by the eternal paper flow and immanent lack of funding.

They may look normal, but they aren't.

III. The Statistician

The statistician can simply be described as a 'being whose main concerns are numbers and the crunching thereof'.

I've tested randomly chosen statisticians by surprising them in the hallway and throwing a good equation or some unknown factors at them instead of the usual 'hello'.
All of them stopped, looked at me, then for a split-second their eyes flickered and they hurled their consciousness into the world of equations. Their eyes rolled back into the skull, hands clutched, some of them panting, chasing themselves like a naked, wild animal in the forests of ones and zeros. They dipped their toe into the matrix before returning with the answer and an excuse for having a cigarette.

A good statistician sleeps with a calculator on his nightstand, ready to estimate whatever probabilistic event that may or not occur during the night. He knows, for instance, that his infant son or daughter (it's a 52% chance it's a son) may on a good night wake up screaming three point twenty-five times, and that his wife with a near 1 to 1 probability will send him off to shut up the kid. He reckons the instantaneous bother of upbringing a reasonable price to pay for dramatically increasing the probability of ever copulating again. We clearly see a well-founded understanding of Hobbe's freedom in his non-daily reasoning.

The statistician likes to have peaceful, controllable surroundings that do not interfere with numbers. Rather than sketchy sketches half-wittedly, yet whole-heartedly, produced by his 52% son in kindergarten – the kind of incoherent and abstract surrealism such as the lying rectangle block with two circles on it in desperate red insisting to be a fire truck – he keeps list of things, maps and altogether indexical symbolic objects.
The general family picture is more likely replaced by the family tree, on which he has plotted in what he could find on the development and current status of the family DNA.

He knows per definition that:

- he has a 48% daughter, and a 52% son both of whom suffers terribly from his 25% divorce
- he is only 75% married
- he votes for the labour party with a 23% accuracy
- he has a 15% solid University education, and a solid 85% ignorance
- the answer to the meaning of life, the universe and everything is 42
- he is subjected to 4% fatal illnesses per year, and has a solid 20% mental illness in total
- he was born with a mere 50% life

and that he kills innocent people in traffic because he is 65% sleeping behind the wheel, on his way to and fro his 76% job. Of course he rightly denies this on the basis of being 14% unemployed.

On a personal level, then, he is the kind of being whose decisions are always weighted against the probability of failure. He would not ask his would-to-be wife to marry him, if he did not have a fair estimate of the odds. He's pretty safe in his neat, little matrix - he likes it there - and would never take the blue pill even if he had to. He knows that pills are dubious, and that the general disease mostly supervenes on future side effects of medication in terms of comfort. So you'll probably see him at the hospital on any of three occasions: birth, near death and dead.

Behavioristically, the statistician is most successful if numbers are involved. Be advised against certain words like 'absolute', 'truth' and also 'maybe'. If your thoughts can't be expressed in a trustworthy equation, don't expect too much rational output. Bottom line the statistician is a hard realist. It's just that no one is really sure about what kind of reality that is. But weigh your words accordingly and there's a good percentage you'll get along.

In addition to this quality assessment, one should note the general fascination for every little device one can encounter in and around the field of research. The gadgets are everywhere. Wireless calculators that can grab numbers out of thin air, operative systems that have a mind of their own and refuses to open the mail (Artificial Unintelligence), small pens that annoyingly hum the national anthem of up to 36

nations at the same time if you write the word 'work', phones that always call the wrong persons, civil workers that never show up for work etcetera ad infinitum.
But all in all the calculus is the object of desire. Even when it comes to the notorious SPSS. Which really just adds less understanding and more time consumption to your standard calculator. The statisticians are attracted to technology as mice to cheese. With the same amount of squeaking when the shipment arrives and order is restored to the universe.

Nowadays, the statistician comes with a disclaimer that is worth noticing:
It so happened that a newly hired manager one day asked his favourite statistician to solve a problem for him; *"I was wondering if you could draw some outputs from the hypothetical case of a conjunction x plus z and not x, and keep away from prime numbers, y and n?"* The statistician, eager to please, disappeared into the matrix.
He was found three days later, shaking in the corner of his office, froth running down the cheeks. The finest physicians did their best, but he was never restored to his former glory.
He ended up as a lunchbox officer at the local post office. Whatever that is.
The manager became an alcoholic.
His kids started onto heroin. His wife became a prostitute. In fact, the entire nation from whence he'd come was blown off the face of the earth in an improbable mishap between the local doomsday prophets and an alleged truck of bananas. Nobody knows how it happened.
So, if you know there are statisticians in your vicinity, you're wise to put away your futile attempts at Fermat's last theorem.

IV. The social researcher

A recent survey made by fashion specialist Melanie Moss concludes that IT-workers are the worst dressed employees. Now, a British study shows that in most cases asocial persons tend to drool more e.g. produce more saliva.
If we assume that a good 75% of all IT-workers in the world are asocial, we can postulate that they're poorly dressed and produce a respectable amount of saliva.

Assume that this is the case presented to the social researcher. She will then sit down with the numbers, chew her pencil (or more likely these days - her foldable laser pointer which can predict the weather with a ten percent accuracy), and think really hard what all these numbers mean. If you ever have the luxury of studying social researchers at first hand, you can silently stand by their offices and hear how they think, mumbling late at nights: *"There's 1.... and over here is 1... AND THERE'S ANOTHER 1! Oh, that was not the 1."*
And then they sigh very often. I'm inclined to think it a respiratory issue, but that would have to be the subject for a future in-depth investigation.

The social researcher looks at the tendencies between that 1 and that other 1, and tries to put the whole thing into a reasonable perspective for the common folk. Social researchers, like everybody else, like to be the good guys - or in this case, the good girls. So, she will find a way these numbers can be presented in such a manner and context that they serve the good.
Presume this particular researcher is put to work for the UN. So it has to look good for the UN. UN's main man, mr. Kofi, set up quite a few millennium goals to be achieved if not in this millennium then at least in another millennium. One of these goals was the IT development in developing countries. So this is an example of how the social researcher will reason:
a) IT-workers are asocial
b) IT-workers are poorly dressed
c) IT-workers produce respectable amounts saliva
d) Main man mr. Kofi wants more IT development, i.e. IT-workers, in developing countries

From a) to d) we can logically abduct that:
e) The UN agenda promotes saliva and poor taste of clothing in developing countries

Of course she adds more explanations to show what she means; *by 'respectable' in "respectable amounts saliva" we understand 'amounts such the common man would not produce despite his hardest efforts'.* That's called a definition. Some researchers never get any further, because they are thrown back and forth discussing these definitions, some claiming IT-workers are a priori subjects to over-stimulated palate

activity while others don't, without actually getting anywhere off the spot. I think this too can be related to the sighing.

Then she gets on to the tendencies.
The population of developing countries, x through z, finds it hard to cope with the UN millennium goals for legitimate reasons. One of the main concerns revolve around the issue of just how good it is for any developing country, in terms of being a social community, to produce more asocial individuals.
*Politicians of nations x through z have stated that it was this kind of behaviour that brought them back from the developed stage to the develop*ing *stage in the first place, and that "we're better off just learning this IT business by ourselves."*
While other, less portrayed, interest groups endorse Mr. Kofi's goals due to the positive impact they're believed to have on the dry climate of country y, and the ecosystem as a whole.

If we look at the methodology of the Saliva Principle, however, it does not state that the respondents sampled had an overally anti-social attitude. They were not aggressive, just shy.
It is also my strong belief that much of the late hassle, especially from the Farmers' Union in country z who believe more saliva will mean the end of farming as we know it, originates fully from a misunderstanding of the concepts involved. One should ask oneself: Just how much saliva is it possible to produce? The misunderstanding would say "a lot", while the facts, when available for comment and speaking for themselves, simply say "not a whole lot more than you already are."

So, we easily recognize how economy, politics and general beliefs are interacting through the thesis of the social researcher.
It is also a good thing for a researcher to be a little naughty. To do this she often criticizes her employers in a humble and objective manner. Like this:

One could ask what profit the United Nations hope to gain from all of this, and I find it both worrying and revealing that they're buying up stocks in companies such as Geeks-Are-Us and Star Trek Clothing, the latter's motto being: "Comfortable suits to wear in any occasion - weddings, funerals and welcoming parties for formerly

unknown, intelligent forms of life." *At the same time, most of the debate as discussed here is not actually relevant to the UN goals. Main man mr. Kofi has simply seen the advantages of IT, like sending an e-mail instead of paying some delivery service to report packet loss a week too late, and he wants other people to have this advantage too. The UN is therefore a posteriori ambiguous in that they want to press IT-workers for what they're worth, while spreading the wonders of the trade. And, of course, strike back on delivery boys.*
All in all there is much that remains in this field of study, yes, much work to be done, so hopefully the UN will increase funds for research in the next millennium.
Or at least by the end of next year.

What we can draw from all of this is simply that the key to understanding social researchers is to see how social they are. Where the statistician is trapped in the matrix, the social researcher is more dispositioned to put the kettle on and ask you how you're feeling.
Most social researchers, then, do not fall under the category 'mad scientist'. Unless you mean “mad” in the silly sense of having chocolate chip cookies with the tea.

V. Management

Management is a lesser evil when compared to dictatorships.
But there are additional positive sides to it, although hard to find on a day-to-day basis. If you look at a research institute as an ant colony (or an aunt colony as in Florida) every little worker is doing what he or she does, with no *particular* interest in the colony as a whole. The interest is fundamentally there, however. Whatever action is taken concerns the colony. So the management can be seen as a concernful body part of the research entity. And that's quite a paradox at first glance.

As all spiritual leaders, management is deeply interested in ceremonial rituals such as the Monday Morning Meeting, and the religious obedience that naturally follows. This is where the managers can prance with their feathers in full glory, bask in the monotone humming produced around the table by scientists in Monday Morning Trance.
I've observed many of these ceremonies and have come to some startling results.

Not once have I seen goats sacrificed. The cultural development has forced them from such primitive animal cruelty, and nowadays they'll sacrifice sandwiches - which are enthusiastically devoured - or cubes of sugar dipped in coffee sucked upon.
But there's no reason to not believing that they pull out a goat on special occasions. Still I can't say I recommend any counter-action, since we're far from the ancient days when management reportedly sacrificed young civil workers to man-eating crocodiles.

During the sacrifices, the managers will cite from holy manuals, such as the Prophecies of Progress, the Fundamentals of Funding and the Tragedies of Timesheets. These are all classics, but every once in a while other topics are raised, to the complete bafflement of the crowd. I've noticed some eloquent remarks that get full attention despite their apparent meaninglessity to the uninitiated;

- *"There's a board meeting coming up"* - this is clearly a bad omen, and here we see the managers' true skills as to keeping his subjects' full trust. There is no reason to doubt his sincerity when he at the end of the prophecy concludes with a prayer promising that he'll do his best.
- *"We have a deficit this quarter"* - this phrase is often used to reveal suspected heretics among the believers, and always ignite a series of suspicious looking glances around the table. I strongly believe the manager often uses this phrase, however, only to emphasize her supreme power and global domination *allthewhile* promoting the general guidelines she's been given by the gods.
- *"Maybe you could do a lunch on it"* - a member's faith is put to the test.

Every person in the ceremony plays a distinct role. There's the Manager of course, the Economist, the Critical Voice, the Counter-Critical Voice, the Sympathetic Voice, the Voice of General Indifference, the Voice from Afar (phone or video conference device has substituted the traditional drum), the Voice Nobody Listens to (the uninitiated, the civil workers) etc.
All of these roles are characteristically played to please the gods. In the Monday Morning Meeting, the Deity of Methodology is not as important as the Angel of

Personal Opinions, for instance, and only occasionally will the Manager raise his voice as the Ruler of Relevance.

When a new member of faith is accepted into the cult, he is given his first timesheet. The ceremony is analogous with rituals of adulthood in various other cultures, and it is only after this the other members will look at him as an equal.
Each month, at a moment proclaimed by different star constellations and phases of the moon, the subject humbly pays his respect to the Administrative Supremacy by signing a generic copy of the first timesheet with his own name.
But the newly initiated is kept under strict religious supervision for a while. And if a deficit is announced, the freshman is smart to bid his beloved goat farewell.

Apart from the vital role of Management in rituals such as the one just analysed, quite thoroughly too, they are not completely useless in other matters. They hover in the background, so to speak, protecting their subjects from the Evils of the Press (the ones cast down from heaven) and decorating the offices with efficient, depressing colours and uncomfortable furniture to enhance the coming joys of paradise.
They also provide the statisticians with high-tech gadgets that amaze them for hours on end.
What can I say? They like to keep in touch with the little people. Sometimes with a cattle prod. But mostly they're gracious to the servants of Statistics and the riders of Research.
They're like children in the sense that if something doesn't work, they shake it.
Bottom line, though, management are the ones responsible for getting upset when someone has mismanaged what has to be managed.

VI. Coping with Scientists

When you’re facing scientists first hand it is of outmost importance that you don’t rub them the wrong way. In fact, you should leave the rubbing altogether.
There are a few simple steps you can take in order to not provoke their over-sized brains, and keep the environment hazards down to a minimum. Some of them are very similar to the Do’s and Don’ts of parrot breeding:

Do's

- Do supply your [scientist] with toys that will keep it mentally and physically stimulated.
- Do establish a daily routine that allows your [scientist] adequate social time as well as rest.
- Do bathe your [scientist] at least once a week.
- Do expose your [scientist] to fresh air and sunlight during good weather.

Don'ts

- Don't feed your [scientist] foods high in fat or sugar. Never feed chocolate, avocado or apple seeds.
- Don't delay in taking your [scientist] to the vet if it is showing signs of illness.
- Don't ever discipline your [scientist] by hitting or yelling.
- Don't spend more time early on in your relationship with your [scientist] than you are prepared to spend later.

These should be considered the general guidelines for successful and harmonic relationships with scientists. From a safe distance, I should add.
You see, not everyone is thus blessed that they can just turn off the TV or put away their newspaper to escape the scientists. Some people don't have a choice, and they face scientists every day, so these will have to refer to the *security manual* about coping with scientists.

In their natural habitat, the scientist expects you to follow the legendary *office policies*. Apart from not picking your nose, they include clauses on how you are dressed, how you behave, what you eat and how much you drink. Contrary to popular beliefs, scientists have shown an indisputable fascination for alcoholic beverages, and I believe they find it amusing to break down the molecules with their mental powers when normal people are drunk. That said, not every scientist is thusly successful, which are apt to create some memorable experiences.

An anthropological view at the hierarchy

As you understood from the initial introduction of the agents, both the social researcher and the statistician works hand in hand (metaphorically) during the process of scientific obfuscation, but this is not equivalent with a flat power structure when you look at the institute as a whole. It's a little more inflatable than that.

At the bottom you have the civil workers. The survival rate is revealingly low.
If you head up a notch, you'll find the research assistants. Their survival rate is even lower, even though they supersede on civil workers in terms of social acceptance. This is mainly due to their *concernful* manner of work, while the civil worker's living conditions is dramatically raised due to his *indifference*.

Of course, this doesn't account for all cases, and I've heard reports of civil workers gnawing off their left foot in complete emotional agony after a scientific scorning. But let's focus on the big picture here.
Both of these agents take a lot of crap. One indifferently and the other concernfully.

Rising over both of them are normal people, additional personnel and third-party persons. They are granted dignified existence and the occasional contract.

Administration is a chapter of its own, since their aura seem to linger across the entire social hierarchy. A benefit from this is the extreme life expectancy and the resourcefulness from a living an entire life alongside scientists. Many times have I blessed their well doings among the poor civil workers.
And from the findings I presented on management, I shouldn't have to elaborate.
Three words: absolute supreme power.

The scientists themselves are the babies of the cradle.
If you take away the babies the cradle isn't of much use, they are undoubtedly its *raison d'être.* But sometimes the babies forget that they're still lying in the cradle, and that it's actually quite nice there, all warm and soft and stuff. The single threat to the scientific community is the lesser beings becoming aware of this. So the babies make sure to whine occasionally, just to distract them.
And it works.

The scientists harvest tremendous respect from the external environment, and among common folks they are the most common. Some believe this to be the cause of their gigantic egos, but I'm quite positive that this feature is actually related to their genetic heritage. And if you've had the opportunity to study them closely, you even detect small hints of irony. In small portions and distributed over long periods of time.
You should keep note of current events and recent research, if you are to follow any discussion they have. They might not take it kindly if you don't congratulate their new professorship or pose ignorant questions during a head to head debate.

In addition to these, you've got:

- Advisors, who mainly read the newspaper and give advices
- Senior advisors, the advisors' parents
- Consultants, feeble creatures hired on a leash and treated like civil workers
- Support, gives you a hug
- IT support, gives your computer a hug
- Burglars, cleans up the messy offices
- Guest researchers, a researcher treated like a guest
- Doctorate candidates, doctors without patients
- Writers, no one is really sure what they do

and a few more. Their place in the hierarchy seems indeterminate.
Sometimes sons and daughters get involved, but they usually don't have a title, and are only occasionally referred to by name.

To keep a scientific community viable it's important not to go against these customs, at least not in the open. If you must, you can treat assistants like human beings as long as there aren't any scientists around, so as not to disturb the natural balance. If you do, it's equivalent with throwing out the baby and setting the cradle on fire, which doesn't look good in any court of law.
And you should consider the benefits too.
I'm not completely aware of their nature, but I'm quite sure they exist.

Part 3: Das Prozeß

It must be noted that Das Prozeß must not be confused with the process of scientific obfuscation that we've previously dealt with.
Nor is it Dad's Projects, whatever they are.

It can sometimes be hard picturing hamsters in the wild, devouring a dead cow and harassing the local farmers simply by staring at them. But nevertheless it's a fact that hamsters originally came from the wild.
When most people think about scientists, they think about mad scientists or your average genius, and due to their exquisite nature we end up at the same predicament as that of the hamster. We can't really picture them if not in a lab or a James Bond movie or both.
The scientists we're dealing with here, however, don’t have a lab and most of them can only distantly dream about featuring in a Hollywood blockbuster. And they're not in hamster cages either, even though it is a well-debated fact that some think they should've been.

We've already mentioned the natural habitat of the statistician and the social researcher, so we're not going to repeat it. But we're more interested in the devouring of cows, in hamster terms; In what manner is the science performed by the scientists? That is Das Prozeß.

I. Ekstatic Pro-jects

The main manner of working for statisticians and social researchers has been coined by Martin Heidegger with his 'ekstatic pro-jects' since the scientist-dasein is always "beyond itself" [über sich hinaus] with a clear directedness, the "in-order-to" of grandest scale.
If anyone wants to learn difficult, German motional verbs, I really recommend him. But here we'll settle with the way the scientist-being-in-the-world is always concernful, and not the least worried about the worldhood of the world, despite its

undeniable habit of announcing itself. If the scientist had been, its pro-jects would've been nearly non-existent.

The scientist starts with some kind of idea of what would've been cool to know. Then it is up to that scientist to phone friends and contacts and hear what they think about it, arrange a few lunch meetings, and get ahead with the planning. We already smell the in-order-to in its most global scale, as the theories and hypotheses are contemplated in the dark, dusty corner-office of the researcher.

He is equipped with different questions to ask his respondents, and more importantly, those he must answer himself.

Sampling

The sciences of social research and statistics have little or no opportunity to collect specimens to drag home to the lab to conduct experiments on. And that would arguably ruin the specimen too, since they are mostly contextually configured in their dealings with the world, being human and all.
Consider the project that relates to the indigenous inventors of the Gouda cheese. If you kidnap them from the heart of their existence, they will no longer be indigenous inventors.

One of the important questions the scientist must answer to himself and his sponsors, is what kind of samples he's looking for (what's the hot thing in the market of research today?), and next what kind of sampling will capture the target respondents (how to get gouda?).
Most of these questions have to be answered prior to the hunt for raw material, and in a scientifically justifiable manner. If the paperwork isn't done properly other scientists will nag him for really going after the Camembert – or in worst-case scenarios – the cottage cheese.

After he's established a general idea of what he wants to know, who he wants to learn it from, how and why, it's about time to find out if anyone is interested in paying him for it. And this is the tricky part.

Funding

Financing an Ekstatic Pro-ject is like asking for a loan from the mafia. They will ask what they can get in return. The sponsors of most research are ipso facto its immediate benefactors. A good researcher will therefore learn through painstaking effort how to present his plans so far, in a manner appealing to those who've expressed interest, without ending up sleeping with the fishes. It's indeed a concernful dealing-with-the-world,

And I gather as much as seventy percent of an entire Pro-ject is dedicated to the problems arising from fundraising. Socialist nations have solved the problem by granting total neutrality to their institutes, but so far this has only resulted in pretty boring reports that either arrives at two opposite conclusions from the same data or the general approach which gives the whole thing up and discuss the weather instead. Before arriving at the conclusion that this too is biased and that they must settle with the weather being there.
As we can understand it's pretty boring. So let's not go on.

The questionnaires

Having established some general idea of what to do and how to pay for it, the scientist must look into just how he is to have any success with what he wants to do. In other words: what questions should he be asking?
An important scientific part of a Pro-ject goes into the construction of questionnaires. For instance, you don't want to be offending any parties, so you can't ask whether a person is an alcoholic. Instead you ask how many alcoholic units the respondent's body usually consumes during a given time span, with or without the respondent's consent.
This is far from trivial, since the wrong kind of questions can put the entire work in a bad light. Not bad in terms of illumination, but bad in terms of reputation.

Here are a few samples I've collected which are using the culturally aware linguistic approach:

Australia (Rural)

Have you had eny of'em kangaroos 'round 'ere, mate?	1. Sure, mate 2. Can't say that I have, mate 3. Blimey, mate! 4. Mate… (NA)

Canada (Rural… but that goes without saying)

How do you feel aboot the Canadian Mounties, eh?	1. I feel just fine aboot it 2. I don't feel aboot it 3. Oui 4. Eh? (NA)

England (middle-lower class)

How would you rate the London Underground security?	1. The dog's bollicks 2. The bollicks 3. It gives 4. Give it to the French!

Germany (urban)

Ordnung muss sein?	1. Ja! 2. Nein! 3. Ich have es eilig (NA)

America (very urban)

What do you think about the way sh*t went down in the 2003 election?	1. He popped the f***ers. 2. When are we gonna have a black president? 3. That was some whack sh*t right there 4. That sh*t ain't for real in the streets, man (NA)

This method was later dropped since the reports were generally unfathomable and produced qualitative confusion more than solid research material.

Take the natural question: *Who's your daddy*, for instance. It's widely regarded an unsolved case as to what the foundation of being a daddy consists of. It ranges from biological origins to your next-door street pimp.

The approach was consequently dropped, and today we have the neutral format:

How does the respondent feel about this? Check all that apply	1. Uncomfortable 2. Highly indifferent 3. Mostly okay 4. Bad, very bad 5. Even worse 6. The respondent refused to answer 7. The respondent performed offensive hand gestures

When all of this is done, the scientists run to 'the field'. But before we run after them, let's have a closer look at some important issues regarding their thinking in Das Prozeß.

II. Methodology

Methodology is really just a fancy word for 'a body of methods used in a particular branch of activity'. And you don't even have to be a Methodist to flash your methodological body.

The methodology of Rambo is killing with small knives, killing with huge knives, killing with bow and arrow assembled on the spot, killing using Kung Fu, killing using guns, killing using the occasional killer Soviet combat chopper in the particular area of making a killing.
His methodology in terms of smart remarks consists of shouting and producing a respectable amount of saliva while making a funny face.
But we don't have to be brutes. For instance, the other day I overheard a father say to another: *"I was hoping you could offer some valuable insights into the methodology of toilet training."*
So methodology is really something we encounter on a day-to-day basis.

Not everybody knows this. Not even all scientists.
For example, I was reading in this overrated book called Qualitative Methodology. On page sixteen it said:

> *"A more likely meaning of the charge, I think* (oh, he thinks, does he?)*, is this. In the course of our work and for who knows what private reasons, we fall into deep sympathy with the people we are studying."*

Well, excuse me, mr. Becker, while I laugh.
I have no sympathy whatsoever with whatever it is I study. I'm purely objective. Take an apple, for instance. I might study its brute essence, its fruity freshness and its cognitive tastes, without even thinking about asking it how it feels and whether it'd like to join me for a coffee. There is not even the slightest shred of sympathy, not even a little fart of a hint of any such compassion, in my study of anything! Mr.

Becker was refuted ad absurdum with my mere looking at him. I think he’s still hiding in his private reasons.

Body Mass Index

One of the recent popular terms in terms of methodologies is the Body Mass Index. Please note that BMI can also stand for Brain-Machine Interface, but we don’t care much for that. The BMI is what you get when you divide your weight by your height. See? It wasn't that hard. Just don't let the intelligent abbreviation get to you.

There are two objections to this measurement:
a) When you perform any mathematical operation *at all* you will *necessarily* end up with a number. Calling it BMI, Chuck or Yolanda is trivial. (Although Chuck is a little funny.)
b) The BMI can't stand for SHC situations. Spontaneous Human Combustion. If you've just measured a respondent's body mass index and his body mass spontaneously combust, all you've got left is a meaningless index.

While a) is regarded a trivial fact and consequently no direct refutation of BMI, no scientist has yet discovered a way to deal with b). That is why I want to propose the FSUP. The Finite Space Utilization Principle, if you want.

First of all: why finite?
Well, there's a problem with infinity no math can deal with. That is, essentially, its infiniteness. When you think about infinity, 'infinity', the mental content of your thoughts will always be a little smaller than actual infinity. The formula clearly states:
Infinity = 'infinity' + 1
So even how hard or long you think about infinity, you'll only end up with 'infinity'. Thus, we have to settle with some finite space.

The use of the Finite Space Utilization Principle is pretty simple.
You select any suitable finite spatial stretch, like the distance Earth - Sun. Then you divide the respondent's spatial stretch, which equals his mass which by Einstein equals his energy, on the former distance. Voilá! You've just measured your first Finite Space Utilization.

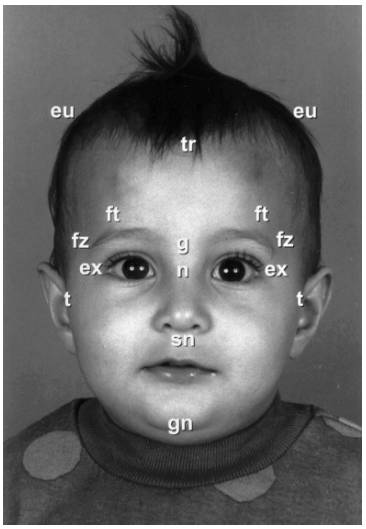
The advantages of FSUP are many. First we can deal with b). Since the atoms, electrons and whatnot - the energy of the respondent - stays the same before and after a spontaneous human combustion, the BMI is no longer worthless. It doesn't even matter if we're talking about SHC, the respondent could just as well have been crushed by a whale who just really wanted a hug. The FSU stays the same! With *no respect to time* at all.
This naturally opens an entirely new dimension to the area of social research.
We don't have to be so chauvinistic to the living impaired any longer. The researcher can now more easily explain the underlying functions of labour movement in the European Union, simply by referring to the long march of Hannibal's army. Or she can show that the social dumping is closely related to the Plague. The possibilities are endless.

There are of course objections to my principle. Some have claimed it unnecessary on the grounds that Spontaneous Human Combustion is so rare.
I've got nothing else to say than; Gentlemen, let's try to stay objective.

Anthropometry

Another interesting field of study in terms of methodologies is anthropometry.
This is another thing they use in the field. They practically stole the term from anthropoets, who mainly write about the anthropological variations in bodily tokens of lost love and insomnia also including the measurement thereof. Shakespeare was a closet fan of anthropoetry, clearly revealed by one of his lesser-known sonnets:

1 Shall I compare thee to abduction in the Coronal Plane?
2 Thou art more lovely and more temperate.
3 Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
4 And summer's lease hath all too short elbow grip length.
5 Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
6 And often's his shoulder complexion dimm'd;
7 And every fair from fair sometime declines,
8 By chance or nature's changing functional reach;
9 But thy eternal summer shall not fade
10 Nor lose possession of that gluteal furrow;
11 Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
12 When in measurable lines thou grow'st:
13 So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
14 So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.



Beautiful.

But that’s not anthropometry. No, *anthropometry* is actually just the measurement and comparison of body parts. And that’s something we encounter every day, like when two guys are at the *pissoire*, and one of ‘em sneaks a peek. The only difference is that scientists keep records of their findings. Just check out that picture of a baby who fell victim of anthropometry. It’s been totally anhtropomorphed! But you can just relax; the toddler’s likely to recover in short time since the anthropomorphosis reportedly isn't permanent.

We've discovered that methodology isn't so scary as we first thought. Now we know that methodology is just a fancy name for whatever it is we hope to do with what we're doing and how we do it. Having saved the Body Mass Index, we can safely move on.

III. Isms

What methodology often handles are concepts derived from theories, or isms.
An ism is when you've treated something very thoroughly and want other people to use an inclusive term to cover all of it. You create an ism.
You could, for instance, write a treatise on the failure of indeterminism when physical probabilism and persisting surrealism are jointly applied. While I must admit that this might influence certain girls at boring parties, included in my assertation of boringism, one can raise a speculative eyebrow at the concept altogether.
Take Professor Jaegwon Kim at Brown University's handling of isms. It reeks of bullcrapism, as this example from *Philosophy of Mind* p. 228;
"The multilayered model of contemporary physicalism is all but explicit in these three doctrines, and the first and third doctrines together make emergentism a form of nonreductive physicalism, combining as they do a physicalist ontological monism with property dualism."
Uhm. Ok, Kim.. Are you sure the authors would agree? And what kind of discipline might it be that you’re applying apart from scepticism?

Of course, we understand what it is he's trying to say, but what he's trying to say is superimposed on hisownism and not portrayed in the original isms respectively.
So, I won't dwell much longer on isms, I just want to say something about;

Feminism

One of the most confusing isms in science is feminism. When I ask questions about it people suddenly turn on the brakes and ask: *why, are you against it?*
It's a bit hard to approve or not when I have no clue as to what it is we're discussing. So at the moment I'm positively indecisive, and sceptically so.

According to a feminist doctrine *all men are created evil*, and some claim the feminists are angry about the 52-48 percent split between the sexes. That that's all of it. That *they* want to be born with a 52% of being their gender too. Many have said the 52-48 split is just an approximate, but that a clear-cut 50-50 would be just a tad unscientific and not serious enough. The feminists, though, are unwilling to settle with that and new research shows that the split is actually 52-52.
This means we must blame over-population on the feminists.

As confusing as it is, my desperate hope is that we can avoid any scientific machoism.

But it is high time we look at the primary practical side of Das Prozeß. Although most of the scientist's work is practical, such as turning the pages or nagging the assistants, fieldwork has always been *the* practical science. Let's see what's up with that.

IV. Fieldwork

No one is really sure what 'the field' is, whether or not it is a field, and if it is - is it used for farming at all? And what kind of farming?
One would believe, then, that only agricultural scientist would be happy to get their hands dirty in fieldwork soil. But I really doubt that any of the scientists I've met thus far have witnessed a live calf birth first hand, and only rarely attend the festivities of manual piglet sterilization. So at first it appears as quite a paradox to us.
This is what I've found so far.

One thing you can count on in the field, regardless of its existence, is that the people who are in it **know what they're talking about**. They just do. Of course, when you've had a look around and say that *"Well, now* I *know too*" they'll just stare at you with this core of significantly controlled hatred and ask; **but you don't *really* know**. And if you insist, they'll probably kill you on the spot.
I, for one, was never able to find out what - exactly - they did know.

Another revealing fact about the field is that there is no management around.
For a long time I suspected this to be the primary reason for the scientists' sigh of relief, the kind that can actually dislocate the lungs, that all they ever wanted to - was to be away from management.
But this does not hold, as any objective thinker will think. And I agree.
'Cause things are *managed* in the field. They manage the heat, the stress, the bothersome respondents (they are always so nosy), the constant diarrhoea and the lack of anything that belongs to civilization. One should especially notice the diarrhoea. An in-depth study of the scientist's intestines would probably reveal a sturdy, self-configuring digestive system, much like that of the ruminant mammal called cow.

Diarrhoea or not, management is not the key. And sometimes, even, management *gets down there*. To 'the field'. But they act merely as supervisors, or worried aunts, and don't necessarily meddle with stuff as they usually do. This might be because they're very far away from their natural habitats, but then so are the scientists! Drawing from what we learned about their history we can only say that they've always existed *alongside* but not *in* the field. There’s a difference qua difference worth noticing.

My working hypothesis, a very good one too, is that the fieldwork plays some important role in the hormonal cycle of the scientist. I don't think any scientist a likely candidate for reproduction if he or she has not been to the field. Other scientists merely snare at them, or make a rattling sound from the back of their throat, when the inexperienced approaches with his innocent, ignorant vibes.
But this is just one part of the picture, because the *work* in *fieldwork* is still left unexplained.

The field is, of course, where the scientists get their data when they've run out of stock back home. It's a repetition of the hunter-gatherer pattern that humans used to follow before natural selection made convenient stores appear. It is vital that we document this thoroughly before they find a way to generate data on their own. Rest assured, though, I find they've got a long way to go before taking such a challenging evolutionary step.

There is at least one weakness to every system. This has led some pessimistic people to believe that if you construct a system so that it is entirely unsystematic, it will be flawless, but that - being a system - would make it systematic nevertheless and therefore flaw full. I will not even venture there, my point is only that even scientists have difficult decisions to make.

You see, on top of the already mentioned challenges, and the extreme diarrhoea, they have to deal with the respondents. If you aren't systematic you might, at the end of the day, discover that the hundred and fifty questionnaires were answered by six people going in circles.
In the good, old days when Human Rights movements had other things to do, scientists merely marked every respondent with a red x in permanent, waterproof paint across the face. Of course, this made it more difficult using a respondent more than one time, and it almost went as far as global war because one country meant the other had been using up all the good respondents without asking anybody else first. Everybody held their breath.
Then Newton came along saying that there was up to 256 colours distinguishable by the human eye, and for a while things were jolly colourful and the scientists reproduced at a normal rate again. Until said movements appeared out of nowhere. No more painting of respondents.

In addition to the system principle, the diarrhoea and the ontological difficulties of establishing 'the field', the average scientist can only work as much as he or she can. Saying something else would be a tautology, and we don't take kindly to those around here.

At times it can be so much to do that the scientist simply doesn't have any time for the respondents at all. Some very poor institutes can't afford any respondent hunting whatsoever, and consequently their reports sound as though written on the verge of a nervous breakdown, much like modern Finnish cinema. Yes, it's very sad. They're always commenting their theories with: *"I wish I had the money to prove this but I guess some other smuck will have all the fun, while I get AIDS or something"* and stuff like that.
More economically viable institutes, however, have come up with the brilliant idea of respondent-driven sampling.

Respondent-driven sampling

Respondent-driven sampling works like sexually transmittable diseases.
Without the sex.
Respondent 1 is interrogated, given a cracker and released into the wild on the condition that he or she comes back with two of his mates. Since we don't know their name, let's call them 2 and 3. Now, 2 and 3 are also interrogated and given a cracker and have to find two of their mates that haven't participated already (4, 5, 6 and 7). On it goes, forming a pyramid-shaped kind of exponential concept.
This way the scientist saves a lot of time, and all that money he'd normally use on paint.

There are three things one should be aware of when it comes to this method.
The first thing is that not everybody likes crackers. I, for one, welcome crackers if followed up by refreshing beverage. But not without it. They're too dry. That's just who I am.

The second thing is more of a theoretical possibility.
Imagine a realistic situation in which a vast research project gets out of hands, or that the scientists are pulled back prior to conclusion because the situation becomes too unbearable. This actually happens from time to time, when management finds it necessary to protect their subjects from danger and diarrhoea, and restore peace and security to the nest. Or, as people in the field are likely to feel, when management **just don't know** (whatever it is they're ignorant of).

In some such situation, imagine that the scientists were unable to stop the respondent-driven sampling. Yes. Even without the crackers the scientists didn't realize that they'd started something beyond their control, and without knowing anything about it, the respondent-driven sampling carried on.
For days. Weeks. Months. Years. Decades. Centuries. Yes, for Millennia!
One could argue that it's not a very realistic possibility.
But it is. It has already happened!

A long, long time ago, during the reign of a so far unknown but presumably highly developed civilization, a group of unknown scientists set forth to map some statistical tendencies. Some claim it was somewhere in central Africa during the time of the first settlements in Egypt around 4000 B.C.
We don't know anything about them, except that they for some reason - possibly the end of civilization as they knew it - did not know about the vast consequences of unobserved respondent-driven sampling left astray. All we know is that they never officially concluded the matter, but went on to other things. And that the sampling didn't stop.
It went on for fifteen hundred years. The respondents remained faithful to their task, amplifying the initial outline exponentially. Who knows what marvellous sights the project saw, how many respondents it sampled, how many tongues it talked and what significance it had. We may never know.

Back then people weren't very interested in writing and correct grammar. That's because computers were really hard to get by. Instead, they kept track of things by preserving information orally; in songs and poems of rhythm and tone.
And people preserved the information. Of course they did have to make some alterations and add a little spiff to it.
Until one day when a group of long-bearded men who *did* take an interest in grammar and writing, decided to sit down and write it all down just like it was. After a couple of generations the report was finally finished and published. It turned out to become the most successful report ever written. They called it the Bible.

Although largely incoherent, people have spent their lives to this very day trying to make out what the original questionnaire was like. Who were the actual respondents? What were the real questions? Who had ordered it? What was the weighted n.?
Some have claimed the main basis was an agricultural survey, semi-political, based on the references to a holy land. Others are more interested in the parts of social conduct and judicial practice. Others again want to focus on the living conditions of the chosen ones. Almost everyone agrees, however, that the Angels are *not* a reference to the Anglo-Saxons.
But the full picture? We will probably never know. But it serves as a good example of what global consequences a respondent-driven sampling gone wild might lead to.

Another objection is somewhat of a logical loop.
If the scientist, troubled by severe and extreme diarrhoea, a killer climate and a horde of people shouting for crackers, loose track of himself - he may end up being sampled himself!
The roles are thrown about like bad jokes at the Friday evening bingo.
All of a sudden the sampling goes wild, the scientists run around screaming with red paint in their face, while the initial respondents are busy noting down the irrational behaviour, handing out field manuals to unsuspecting bystanders.

Respondent-driven sampling should therefore, at all costs, be conducted only by competent personnel who at least have a fair estimate of what they're doing.

The general outline

To establish some truths, let's sum up what we've got.
The field provides the arena for the fieldwork, although no one is really sure what constitutes a field as opposed to the side of the road, a suburban community or the freaking desert. The field plays an important part in the hormonal cycle of the scientist. It also has a vital role in the accumulation of data, which the scientists gather for hard times.
Some smart scientists have discovered ways of letting data collect itself for them.

That aside, the underlying agenda eludes me, and the full understanding of its role in Das Prozeß may never be revealed. It remains a mystery, and we cannot be sure that it has nothing to do with cornfields or crop circles.

V. Results and presentations

One should believe, having understood this much about statistics and social research, that it wouldn't be very lucrative and people would loose interest after a few reports. On the contrary! Scientists are very devious in terms of presentation, and they squeeze a lot of money out of mere numbers to whomever is paying them lousy wages.
Let's have a look at the more common approaches of presenting the so-called findings.

Rapid assessments

Rapid assessments are, as opposed to slightly slower assessments, quite rapid.
They are favoured since they offer many positive thumbs up: they are fast and painless, cheap in terms of labour hours, they retrieve a concentrated amount of data from a small area, look good in diagrams and estimates, and at the end of it it doesn't really matter what it says since - after all - it's *just a rapid assessment*.
Now, one could argue that you're not really saying anything, but no one could argue the fact that you are saying something.

There's a thumbs down, though.
When I was at Junior High I had a teacher who was, mildly put, quite attractive. And as the story goes I'm inclined to believe that I at some point made a vague indication towards the general concept of me and her seeing each other in a reproductively viable manner.
She rapidly assessed me.
"No," she said, rolled her eyes and turned on her heel. *"What manners!"* I heard her conclude at the end of the hallway.

As you can see from this qualitative example, it is easy for the *assessed* to become a victim of such a brutally rapid survey. It's like art experts running past the great paintings of Edvard Munch, trying to see what they can draw from the split-second

they're in front of it. Of course, some art experts state that this is the only true way of experiencing Munch, but such experts are also known to implement cocaine in their rapid analysis. So far I've been unable to find any such tendencies among the scientists.

Rapid assessments have nothing in common with assassinations. Unless the latter is really quick. Then there's the four s's, of course. Or five.

Op-eds

Phenomenologically, they are nothing like yellow post-its that stick to the refrigerator.
Functionally, they play the same role. Except for the refrigerator.
Ontologically, they're mostly written on paper. But I'll deal with papers later.
Please note how elegantly I used the different technical terms here, before moving on.

Notes

Scientific notes are not proper notes. And that's probably a good thing.
Just think about how much the research assistant must remember; all the important names and phone numbers and catastrophically vital arrangements like lunches, conferences and otherwise digestible events. I've seen some such notes and they are horrific! Three times underlining of unreadable hieroglyphs with satanic circles and suspicious looking arrows seemingly pointing nowhere at all.
Imagine spending your last resources on a collection of the latest notes from your favourite researcher, and it's full of doodles and slightly worrying repetitions of incomprehensible mantras, like *management and calculators* or *lucky little lack of funds* or *kill all humans* etc.
Or it can be surprising information of the author's desires, or revealing indications of bizarre sexual preferences. Scientific notes are notes nevertheless, though. It's just that all the doodles have been taken out to spare innocent readers.
And even though notes are just notes, you're better off to take note of them.

Papers

I'm sure you can remember back in school when you had to write stupid papers on uninteresting subjects such as the disadvantages of acne or the social dumping following the natural selection of soccer teams.
This is just the same thing.

You see, scientists don't get away without doing their homework either. But since the scientific hierarchy disallow any teachers, because it wouldn't be logical that the alleged experts also had teachers, that would be crazy, so they have to send in their homework to international journals. Then they wait for the scientific minds around the globe to decide what grade is given. But if you know the right kind of people and the right kind of words, you're likely to get a strong B anyway, since scientists are careful to take care of their own. It's all a part of their natural cycle.

Table or tabulation reports

When the practical work of Das Prozeß is done, the process we called fieldwork, they first release the tables. Table reports are very much like telephone catalogues. Only that they don't have any phone numbers and everything is arranged in neat little tables. 'Cause it looks nice.

This is a descriptive example of one such table:

Q01567x sub 0.1	**Yes**	**No**	**I didn't get the question**	**No physical response**	**Weighted n.**
Section 1	3,4%	1%	0.6¼%	~90%	99
Section Alpha	2%	97%	33	~1	99
Section 2	6%	55%	-24%	ca. 10	99
Section Beta	43%	88%	14	14	99.1
Unsectored sector	4%	1.3%	14	9%	99

And a table-report consist of about 100-1000 of these...

While educated people run to the bookstore after the release, most of them have spent their money on a very large and a very heavy heap of paper. They can at most argue that it seems to be some kind of pattern between people who either didn't get the question or gave no physical response in the Beta section and the unsectored sector, since they all appear to be 14. But nowhere does it say whether respiration is considered response or not and whatnot.

The only thing that makes perfect sense at the time are the few percents that didn't get the question, and if this table-report had reflected the readers of it, it would probably lean more to the full 100%. While this is generally considered a good idea for a research project it has thus far proved to be causally impossible to conduct.

Of course you must count in those who just say that they understand without really understanding anything. They are often very many, a whole mass of people.

It's important to note that if the "weighted n." is far from 100 the entire survey is rubbish. Nobody knows for sure how it got there or what it means, but they know that if it's too thin, the report is found to be too light in scientific circles. This is, for some reason, said to be a key in understanding statistics in general. But we know better.

Reports

If you remember our walk-through, or run-through, of the rapid assessment, reports are nearly the opposite. If you think about rapid assessments as an opera in fast-forward, the fat lady in high-pitched Mickey Mouse on helium style, this is the full performance at regular velocity.

Of course, there are those of us who don't feel much for opera, but then you'd have those again standing with their champagne glass with a smug smile on their faces saying that such nonsense is only cultural ignorance. Then we'd be all like: *how would you like that champagne glass shoved down your throat, you stuck up miserable excuse for a silly person?* And he'd be like: *don't be so sensitive.* And we'd counter with: *sensitive smenshitive*. So on and so forth. Then there's the deaf.

But I digress.

Reports differ from novels in the way that you're not really sure who the main character is, how he or she is getting along and what his or her story is all about. Did the wizard conclude his thesis? Did the princess over-throw the masculine power regime? Who fell in love with who? Did the prince defeat the dragon and save the weighted n.? It's hard to tell.

They make for pretty poor novels, and it's a revealing fact that not one single report has ever been nominated for the Nobel Price of Literature.

People still claim they read them though. I suspect it a natural making-conversation phenomenon, but that doesn't explain why scientists buy so much of them.

No. Reports are related to, or trying to relate to, the findings of the fieldwork or the outcome of long discussions on seemingly pointless definitions. They can be found in a vast diversity:

- Why my 1 is better than your 1. (That's a classic.)
- Why the former is wrong, based on q.
- Who is this 1 and why do we care?
- The question is *how* do we care!
- Why the 1 is so full of errors in the X aspect.
- Why the X aspect can't stand on its own two feet.
- I really need some attention here.
- Why we should focus on 2.
- What hides behind x?
- Don't be so biased. 3 is what matters
- Don't be silly, 1 is still 1.

etc.

Mostly they act as manuals to the table reports, though.
As you could see in the example earlier the table reports are very hard to grasp. They're like standing blindfold in a maze when someone asks for the direction to the centre of the universe, or the best way to dismantle a lobster in forty-five seconds with your hands tied.
And that's what most of the debates are all about. *"What are you saying here? What does it mean? What's the significance?"* etc.
For a while after a table report has been released, the publishers sit back, have a glass of wine, go to the museum and attend a few parties - with a smothering grin on their faces - before they finally decide they've got the proper amount of attention and can religiously announce: *"Ok, dudes. Listen up."* In comes the report.

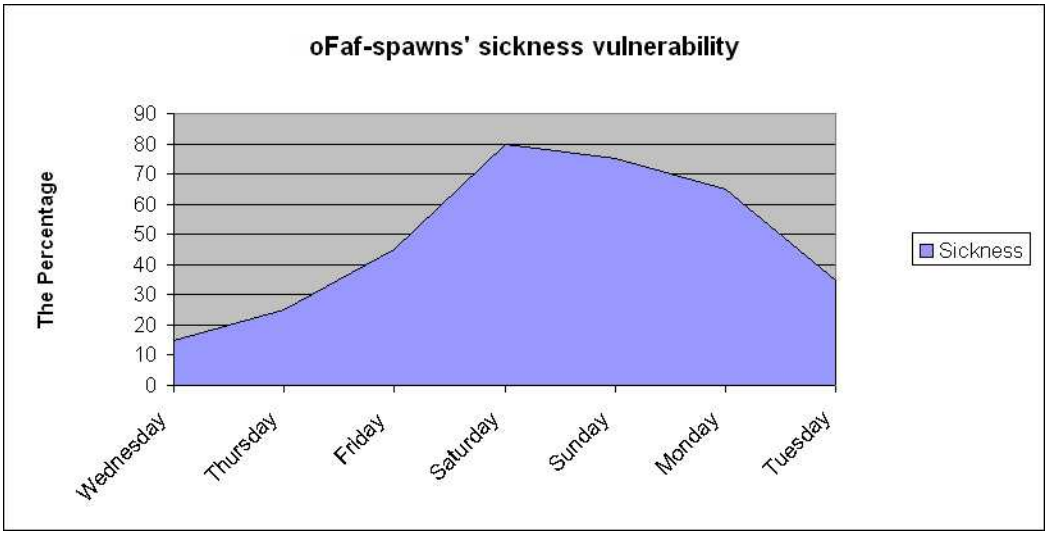
What all reports have in common, however, is all the bragging about the methodology. They can go on in length about how much they like p, how successfully they've implemented p, and why this means that scientist Q is such a tit. This usually means that people will begin implementing p in their planning of Ekstatic Pro-jects, and stop listening to Q.
When reading a report there are a few tips to understanding how the methodology of reports works. I will deal with them briefly:

Footnotes

These are important. Sometimes the most brilliant part of a report is written in the footnotes. You need good glasses, though, since the text is made so tiny. (No one can be arrested for tiny text unfortunately, and presently scientists are looking into the possibility of writing notes on the northern hemisphere of electrons.)
Sometimes the notes give away the entire secret of the report. Like who they originally "lent" the material from, or that *"we're not really sure about it, but it's a good guess anyway"*, or that *"in the diagrams regarding social benefits we used rats instead of people"* etc.

Graphix

Also spelled graphics, but that's so 1998.
Graphix are used to underline a point the scientist in casu is determined to stress. Just remember the statistical comparison of 1 and 2 in the beginning. Or this extraordinary example showing us the statistical chance of an oFafists' spawn getting sick based on what day of the week it is:



It is important to try and see what the scientist is trying to say. You must always assume that it's there for a reason.

Indenting or tabbing

It's really important that you know how indents work in terms of cognitive superiority. They may change out regular bullet points with normal and roman

numbers, alphabetical letters or even Greek ones. But the transitive layers of knowledge are still apparent to the keen eye:

This is what the layman would know

This is what assistants may hope to one day understand

Management usually resides here

Your average scientist Cynthia ends up here

This kid is really stretching it.

Simply a genius.

This is God speaking. What do you want?

And the more you're stretching towards God, the more detailed and intricate the technical details become. In fact, some people argue that geniuses are really just misunderstood morons. After all, they are the only ones having a substantial claim as to what in the oyster soup they're talking about.

There are additional tricks to reading, like how to spot a circular definition without ending in a causal loop, but I find it inappropriate to dig as far as that.

Open Letters

I've also come across something called open letters. I've yet to find out what they're all about, but so far I understand that open letters are better than closed letters since it's really hard to read through the envelope.

The final publication of any such presentation of findings, marks the end of an Ekstatic Pro-ject, while it also sets the starting point for new ones.
During Das Prozeß the scientists have stimulated new ideas, stumbled over new challenges and perhaps found a mate. Das Prozeß is the collective term for it all.

Part 4: Summary and Conclusions

I. Science at the mercy of respondents?

From what we've learned one could think that science is depended on the respondents. And this is believed to have caused the historically long vacation of social researchers in the early seventies, when a survey indicated that 94% of the world's population would not participate in a survey if asked (which we know today to be statistically impossible since 94% of the world's population has already spent their lives in previous generations while only a mere 2% was more or less alive during the seventies).

The factual situation is almost completely reversed, however, since most respondents have indicated that they keep themselves updated on current polls so as to know the right answers.
In addition, if a respondent fails to please, it is no big deal rendering him or her unfit for study and simply incompatible with reality whatsoever.

This indicates that we're stuck with science for at least a little longer.
But try looking at the bright side of it.

II. Statistical truth vs. Traditional truth

Traditional truth has an "all or nothing" appeal, which means that either the sky is blue or it isn't. Statistics, however, disapprove of such a correct measure, and would rather see the sky as something bluish grey or greyish blue with scattered collections vaporized water forming funny faces and unmentionable body parts.
There is therefore a qualitative difference between traditional truthsayers and statistical truthsayers. Qualitative in the sense of changing *aahhhs* with *ooohhs*.
Let me illustrate:

I) *"The ahhh general disagreement about ahhh the restlessness of subjects ahhh subjected to the comfy chair is ahhh something we would have to account for."*

II) *"The ooohh general disagreement about ooohh the restlessness of subjects ooohh subjected to the comfy chair is ooohh something we would have to account for."*

The latter sounds silly. Consequently, the statistician does too.
This also means that there is little or no reason to expect statistical truth taking over.

There are other ways statistical truth differs from traditional truth, however, and one of those we should note concerns the study of tendencies.
According to *National Geographic* it's a statistical truth that on a global scale over a thousand people is killed by donkeys every year. I asked a scientist what this means. *"It means that it's true that we'll have about the same amount of murdering donkeys rampaging next year. And the year after that."*
When asked what the statistical truth would be if all the donkeys suddenly disappeared, he gave me a long, cold stare before informing that *"the bastards have probably planned something anyway."* So you can always count on statistical truth being true regardless of it being true or not.
And in the meanwhile we're all better off if we keep an eye on the donkeys. Don't let them fool you. Underneath that innocent, blank stare of significant ignorance lurks a heartless killing machine from hell. And we wouldn't have known this without statistics.

III. Conclusions

Our main concern then is not to protect traditional truth. Science poses no immediate threat to any de facto knowledge us commoners may or may not have, since they clearly have their own. After Einstein's Theory of Relativity, we understand that gravity is no longer a natural law, it's a mutual agreement; but as long as all parts keep their promises we shouldn't fear the skies suddenly falling down on us.

Consider the analogue of scientists as fishermen.

They put out their theoretical nets in the ocean field, in their excessively inflatable methodological way, and conclude on what they were able to find from the place on the lake or the boat they were at. There's a fine line between fishing and standing on the shore like an idiot. *We* know that this doesn't necessarily say anything about the fish, but that it reveals Das Prozeß.
My point, however, is that we should *consider the fish* as we just considered the donkeys. For inasmuch as the statistician can't raise the funding to dry the lake, all the hassle about the fish might benefit it. And that's what it all boils down to.

If you keep up on recent research and make sure to follow the do's and don't of parrot breeding in your daily doings with scientists, you should be fine.
And apart from the occasional mad scientist, we can now agree that my findings leave only one interpretation of the facts; that the natural scientist is mostly harmless.

IV. References

None. References are for wimps.

Defining Statistics and Social Research

What's the meaning of it all? Well, we all know it's 42.
But what's the use of it? And how are we to relate this to
Statistics and Social Researching?

In this challenging report, Sigbjørn S. Åmdal answers none of these questions and goes on to identifying the general outline of implementing common sense to nonsense.
He supercedes himself in terms of sustaining an objective analysis of science. It's quite brilliant, so to speak.
And nobody knows just how it's done. But everyone is amazed.

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