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Is That A Fact? - Second Edition: A Field Guide To Statistical And Scientific Information



Synopsis

How much should we trust the polls on the latest electoral campaign? When a physician tells us that a diagnosis of cancer is 90% certain or a nutritionist tells us what is healthy to eat, what should we believe? Questions such as these are greatly important, yet many of us have only a vague sense of how to answer them. In *Is That a Fact?*, Mark Battersby aims not only to explain how to identify misleading statistics and research, but also to give readers the understanding necessary to evaluate and use statistical information in their own decision making. This second edition is revised and updated throughout and includes a new chapter on weighing risk in personal and public decision making.

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Customer Reviews

Praise for *Is That a Fact?* “*Is That a Fact?* is conceived as an updating for the Internet Age of Darrell Huff’s immensely popular 1954 classic, *How to Lie with Statistics*, with a somewhat broader focus.” Huff’s book has sold more than a million copies. *Is That a Fact?* deserves a similarly large readership. —David Hitchcock, McMaster University, in *Informal Logic* “Using timely and important examples, Professor Battersby provides a careful and well-documented discussion of statistics, and does this without sacrificing liveliness or readability. *Is That a Fact?* is a fascinating book about statistics to give to all your friends.” —Trudy Govier, University of Lethbridge “A delightful discussion that beautifully clarifies what is all too often confusing or just plain confused. The book will help ordinary citizens to better understand and evaluate all sorts of scientific claims as they occur in the

popular press and public policy debates. Hats off to Mark Battersby!

— Harvey Siegel, University of Miami

“Mark Battersby’s *Is That a Fact?* is not a statistics book, but rather a book that will help thoughtful people to better notice the actual grounds (or lack thereof) of claims they are called upon or inclined to believe. This second edition adds new material (such as that on internet polling) and new and better graphics.

— David Weber, Portland State University

“One of the intellectual currents of our time has been a revolution in the study of reasoning and argument. Philosophers and other academics have broadened their horizons and turned their attention to the study and analysis of the reasoning, arguments, and attempts at persuasion that inundate our lives. Mark Battersby has been an integral part of the movement in this direction. In *Is That a Fact?* he provides an engaging and thoroughly readable introduction to critical thinking on statistical and scientific claims. It can usefully inform the thinking of everyone who has to contend with such claims in their professional or personal lives.

— Leo Groarke, President of Trent University

How much should we trust the polls on the latest electoral campaign? When a physician tells us that a diagnosis of cancer is 90% certain or a nutritionist tells us what is healthy to eat, what should we believe? Questions such as these are greatly important, yet many of us have only a vague sense of how to answer them. In *Is That a Fact?*, Mark Battersby aims not only to explain how to identify misleading statistics and research, but also to give readers the understanding necessary to evaluate and use statistical information in their own decision making. This second edition is revised and updated throughout and includes a new chapter on weighing risk in personal and public decision making.

I got much work done after studying the assigned chapters from this book, but I'm not particularly impressed with the contents.

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