



Truth or Truthiness: Distinguishing Fact from Fiction by Learning to Think Like a Data Scientist

By Howard Wainer



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Teacher tenure is a problem. Teacher tenure is a solution. Fracking is safe. Fracking causes earthquakes. Our kids are over-tested. Our kids are not tested enough. We read claims like these in the newspaper every day, often with no justification other than 'it feels right'. How can we figure out what is right? Escaping from the clutches of truthiness begins with one simple question: 'what is the evidence?' With his usual verve and flair, Howard Wainer shows how the sceptical mindset of a data scientist can expose truthiness, nonsense, and outright deception. Using the tools of causal inference he evaluates the evidence, or lack thereof, supporting claims in many fields, with special emphasis in education. This wise book is a must-read for anyone who has ever wanted to challenge the pronouncements of authority figures and a lucid and captivating narrative that entertains and educates at the same time.



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Editorial Review

Review

"This book is like the proverbial bag of potato chips. It's impossible to stop reading after just one of its fun and thought-provoking examples of statistical reasoning."

Andrew Gelman, Columbia University

"Howard Wainer persuasively argues that you cannot be an informed citizen unless you understand the new data science. Using examples and anecdotes from education, medicine, and elsewhere, he arms readers with tools they can use to make better decisions and a better world. And he does it with the ease, charm, and brilliance of the originator of truthiness."

Arthur E. Wise, President Emeritus, National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education

"[This is] compelling reading on contemporary topics that exemplifies how to think clearly about the busy world around us ... Wainer gets more clever over the years, finding deeper anecdotes, discovering better quotes, and writing with more grace than ever."

Ben Shneiderman, University of Maryland

"Wainer has taken a leap forward with his new book, Truth or Truthiness. He has shown that he can take on complex issues using the basic premise that our new societal norm addresses policy solely through inference while lacking supportive evidence. With his usual interesting and direct style, Wainer looks at this lack of data support in examining societal issues, especially education. This is truly a compelling read and I think should be required reading for those who set educational policy."

Kurt Landgraf, President and CEO, Educational Testing Service, 2000-2013

"Howard Wainer was an expert witness in cases where I defended public school teachers who were accused of changing students' answers on standardized tests. I implored him to explain his theories in terms that would be understandable to lay people. Truth and Truthiness makes clear that he took this to heart."

Keith J. Zimmerman, Kahn, Smith and Collins, P. A., Baltimore

"... at a time when PolitiFact's 'Truth-O-Meter' provides an essential guide to politicians' stump speeches, Wainer's book is welcome indeed. It is perhaps especially relevant in a divisive election year, when evidence, truth, and expertise seem under assault and yet desperately needed ... [Wainer's] examples form a convincing argument that no matter how intractable a problem seems, careful use of data can help sort things out."

Christopher J. Phillips, Science

About the Author

Howard Wainer is a Distinguished Research Scientist at the National Board of Medical Examiners. He has published more than four hundred articles and chapters in scholarly journals and books.

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Julius Montanez:

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Mary Benoit:

Truth or Truthiness: Distinguishing Fact from Fiction by Learning to Think Like a Data Scientist can be one of your basic books that are good idea. All of us recommend that straight away because this publication has good vocabulary which could increase your knowledge in language, easy to understand, bit entertaining but nevertheless delivering the information. The writer giving his/her effort to place every word into pleasure arrangement in writing Truth or Truthiness: Distinguishing Fact from Fiction by Learning to Think Like a Data Scientist however doesn't forget the main position, giving the reader the hottest as well as based confirm resource info that maybe you can be certainly one of it. This great information can easily drawn you into completely new stage of crucial contemplating.

Matthew Gregg:

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