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Prob and Stat 1372

After reading David Brook’s article, The Philosophy of Data , have begun to notice how data calculation and predictions can be applied to our everyday life., or rather our misconceptions of its use. People who have do not understand the basic properties of probability often mistake how it works. For example, many often state that the “Law of Averages” makes a desired outcome more likely after consecutive fails. However the law of averages does not in fact apply to these situations, because it doesn’t exist. But this is just an example of how people interpret the meaning of probability. Brook goes on in his article asking whether or not we can always use data and statistics to accurately predict and outcome. He gives us examples using politics, education, and even human behavior. I find this part the most interesting.

His mention of human conduct is probably the most fascinating aspect of the article, since I am quite a fan of studying humans. I would like to learn more about human psychology, but more importantly how statistics can be applied to this field. I want to see how others interpret certain human patterns and use these numbers to predict possible actions. I wouldn’t mind if our class had more problems relating to people and behavior.

After reading Brook’s other article, I began to question whether or not we can actually use data to accurately pinpoint a trend. Granted that humans are creatures of habit, is it really plausible to break down to a science, the very nature of a human? The answer to that is no. There are so many other factors that affect human conduct, such as emotions, and attitude. So in a way it would be virtually impossible for someone to predict the actions of any human. However data has been beneficial to us at the same time

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We can use it for various purposes, such as predicting the spread of a disease, or `popularity of a television show. So I am not discounting statistics use completely, only stating that it is an imperfect representation. While it can be used to predict short term outcomes of certain events, it cannot accurately “predict the future”. There are so many things that are ironically up to chance,, and probability cannot account for all of it. With this being said I agree with his second article.

The reason why I chose this topic is because I am very interested in seeing how human interact with each other. I also wonder if it’s possible to use math to help predict people’s actions. As cold and calculating as it sounds, I basically want to be able to use this data to better my relationship with people.

Many people are actually creating programs that allow users to input collected data in order to determine likely conclusions. Although I have come to a conclusion that some of these models are wrong, some of them are more wrong than others. But even without these it is fair to say many people can make accurate guesses about the outcome of an event based off of previous experiences or observed outcomes. Statistics once again is a very powerful tool and can allow us to control the way people think. He who controls the data is able to manipulate it their own way (perhaps I should have put the cold and calculating disclaimer here). People’s understanding of data is an essential part of their daily lives. So if someone were able to skew or withhold the information, they would be able to control the masses.

In my research I have also read up about game theory and how it influences our consciences decisions about how we do something. Mathematical models are used to determine the most beneficial action to take. This is another use statistics and modeling in order to make choices. It shows that we are able to use math and apply it to the real world.

<http://www.stat.indiana.edu/files/TR/TR-12-01.pdf>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Game_theory>