The Statistics Wars and Their Casualties for Journal Editors: Intellectual Conflicts of Interest: Questions for Burgman

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1. In an applied field such as conservation science, where statistical inferences often are the basis for controversial policy decisions, should editors and editorial policies avoid endorsing one side of the long-standing debate revolving around statistical significance tests? Or should they adopt and promote a favored methodology?

2. If editors should avoid taking a side in setting author's guidelines and reviewing papers, what policies should be adopted to avoid deferring to the calls of those wanting them to change their author's guidelines? Have you ever been encouraged to do so?

3. If one has a strong philosophical statistical standpoint and a strong interest in persuading others to accept it, does it create a conflict of interest, if that person has power to enforce that philosophy (especially in a group already driven by perverse incentives)? If so, what is your journal doing to take account of and prevent conflicts of interest?

4. What do you think of the March 2019 Editorial of *The American Statistician* (Wasserstein et al., 2019) Don't say "statistical significance" and don't use predesignated p-value thresholds in interpreting data (e.g., .05, .01, .005).

   (While not an ASA policy document, Wasserstein's status as ASA executive director gave it a lot of clout. Should he have issued a disclaimer that the article only represents the authors' views?)

Those who don’t know the story: Because no disclaimer was issued, the ASA Board appointed a new task force on Statistical Significance and Reproducibility in 2019 to provide recommendations,

These have thus far not been made public.