

The ethical lecture: looking at university teaching through a Data Hazards lens

Melanie I Stefan

Medical School Berlin

melanie.stefan@medicalschool-berlin.de

10 March 2023

Who am I?

Working at Medical School Berlin as a

Researcher and

Teacher

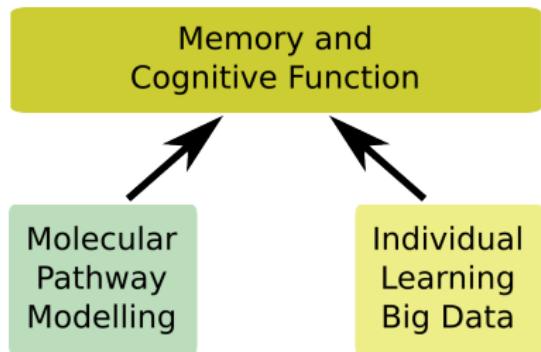


Photo by Robina Weermeijer on Unsplash

Data Hazards



Labels by Data Hazards team, CC-BY 4.0

Lacks informed consent



A typical slide in medical lectures . . .



Blabla Syndrome

- First described by Dr. Arthur Blabla in 1834
- Characteristic symptoms are bla, blabla, and blablabla
- ...

A typical slide in medical lectures . . .



Blabla Syndrome

- First described by Dr. Arthur Blabla in 1834
- Characteristic symptoms are bla, blabla, and blablabla
- ...

What we might want to think about:

- Did the depicted person (or their parent) give consent to their picture being used in this way?
- Did they even consent to the medical research done on them (picture or not)?
- Is the picture actually necessary and useful to illustrate the condition?

Risk to privacy

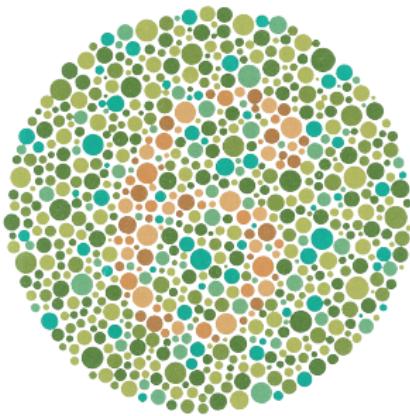
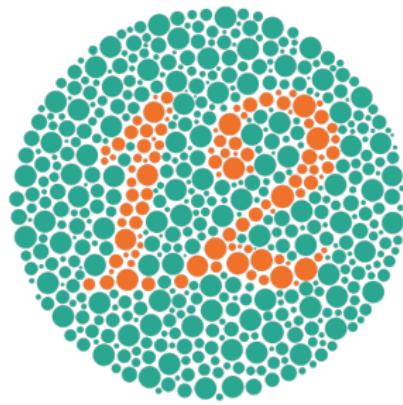


Risk to privacy

- Similar concerns for patient privacy as for patient informed consent.
- And also ...

Risk to privacy

- Similar concerns for patient privacy as for patient informed consent.
- And also . . . risk of casual threats to students' privacy



By Shinobu Ishihara - Unknown source, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1696001>

May cause direct harm



May cause direct harm

Support the Guardian
Fearless, independent, reader-funded
[Support us →](#)

The Guardian Newspaper of the year

News **Opinion** **Sport** **Culture** **Lifestyle** **More** ▾

Education ▶ Schools Teachers Universities Students

University of Cambridge

• This article is more than **5 years old**

Cambridge University issues trigger warnings for Shakespeare lecture

Students were warned that a lecture discussing *Titus Andronicus* and *The Comedy of Errors* would include 'discussions of sexual violence'

Alia Shoaib
Thu 19 Oct 2017 15.16 BST



The Guardian, 19.10.2017

Difficult to understand



Well, it's a uni lecture, so . . . duh?

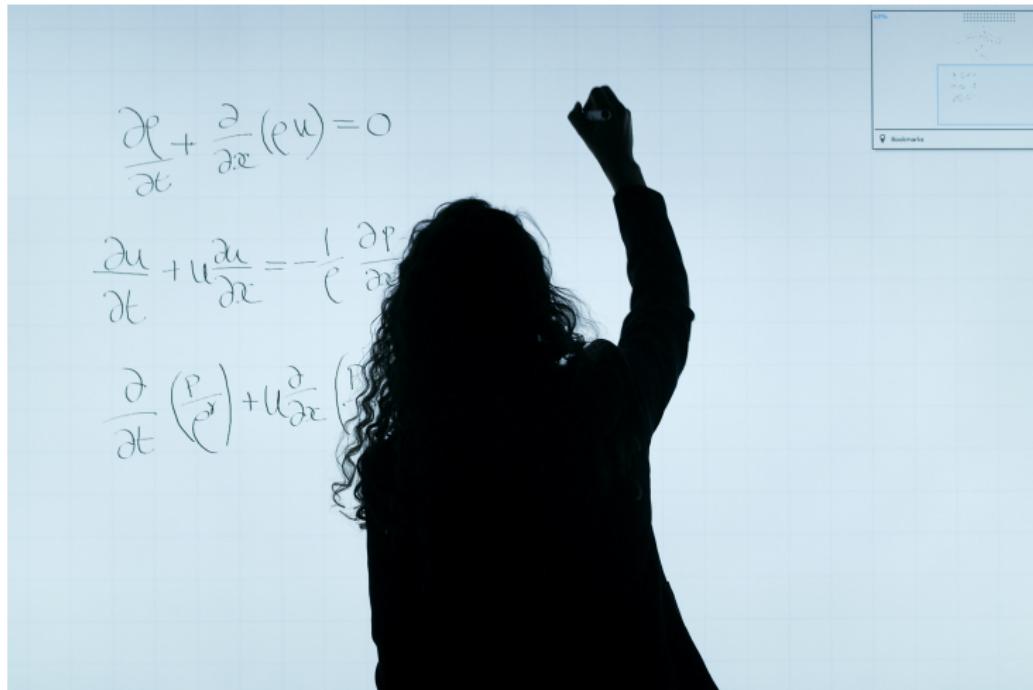


Photo by ThisisEngineering RAEng on Unsplash

Yes but don't make it more difficult than it has to be!

Some useful measures (some of which I do):

- Make lecture slides available beforehand to allow students to take note directly on the slides

Yes but don't make it more difficult than it has to be!

Some useful measures (some of which I do):

- Make lecture slides available beforehand to allow students to take note directly on the slides
- Consider having additional text that explains complex ideas (e.g. on the slide deck for later study)

Yes but don't make it more difficult than it has to be!

Some useful measures (some of which I do):

- Make lecture slides available beforehand to allow students to take note directly on the slides
- Consider having additional text that explains complex ideas (e.g. on the slide deck for later study)
- Provide lecture recordings (they have a "pause" button!)

Yes but don't make it more difficult than it has to be!

Some useful measures (some of which I do):

- Make lecture slides available beforehand to allow students to take note directly on the slides
- Consider having additional text that explains complex ideas (e.g. on the slide deck for later study)
- Provide lecture recordings (they have a "pause" button!)
- Subtitle lecture recordings

Yes but don't make it more difficult than it has to be!

Some useful measures (some of which I do):

- Make lecture slides available beforehand to allow students to take note directly on the slides
- Consider having additional text that explains complex ideas (e.g. on the slide deck for later study)
- Provide lecture recordings (they have a "pause" button!)
- Subtitle lecture recordings
- Make space for reflection, discussion, and questions

Yes but don't make it more difficult than it has to be!

Some useful measures (some of which I do):

- Make lecture slides available beforehand to allow students to take note directly on the slides
- Consider having additional text that explains complex ideas (e.g. on the slide deck for later study)
- Provide lecture recordings (they have a "pause" button!)
- Subtitle lecture recordings
- Make space for reflection, discussion, and questions
- Consider additional media such as lecture-accompanying blogs, like this excellent one by Dr. Julia Goedecke
<https://juliagoedecke.wordpress.com/>

Yes but don't make it more difficult than it has to be!

Some useful measures (some of which I do):

- Make lecture slides available beforehand to allow students to take note directly on the slides
- Consider having additional text that explains complex ideas (e.g. on the slide deck for later study)
- Provide lecture recordings (they have a "pause" button!)
- Subtitle lecture recordings
- Make space for reflection, discussion, and questions
- Consider additional media such as lecture-accompanying blogs, like this excellent one by Dr. Julia Goedecke
<https://juliagoedecke.wordpress.com/>
- Consider accessibility: Use colour-blind-friendly figures, use dyslexia-friendly fonts and, if there is one, *use the microphone!*

Lacks community involvement



Which community are we talking about?

Medical practitioners

- ✓ - Curriculum closely follows Medical Association guidelines for teaching and examination

Which community are we talking about?

Medical practitioners

- ✓ - Curriculum closely follows Medical Association guidelines for teaching and examination

Students

- ✓ - We collect feedback on a regular basis (per lecture and also at the end of the semester) and react to it in a timely manner

Which community are we talking about?

Medical practitioners

- ✓ - Curriculum closely follows Medical Association guidelines for teaching and examination

Students

- ✓ - We collect feedback on a regular basis (per lecture and also at the end of the semester) and react to it in a timely manner

Patients

Ranks and classifies people



Reinforces existing biases



Biases (potentially) transported through medical teaching

Ableism, fatphobia, speciesism, transphobia, racism, classism, ageism, . . .
(And it's not just the lecturer, but also the books, images, and other resources they may want to use).

Biases (potentially) transported through medical teaching

Ableism, fatphobia, speciesism, transphobia, racism, classism, ageism, . . .
(And it's not just the lecturer, but also the books, images, and other resources they may want to use).

An example (with a happy ending): Malone Mukwende

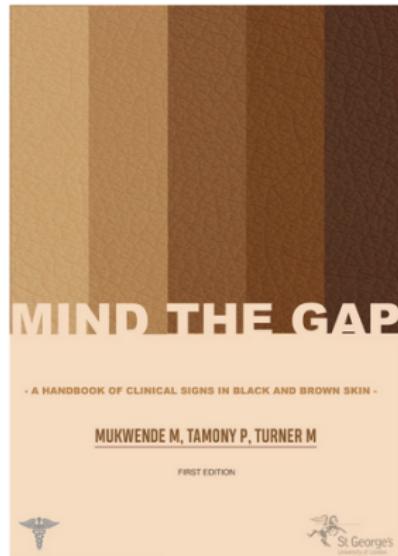


INSPIRED LIFE

A medical student couldn't find how symptoms look on darker skin. He decided to publish a book about it.

By Sydney Page

July 22, 2020 at 7:00 a.m. EDT



Come talk to me!



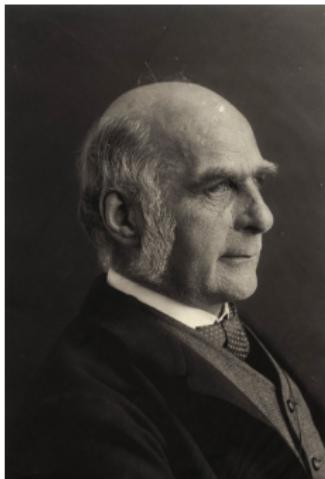
- I am still new to this whole Data Hazards thing (thank you Susana ❤)
- I am not entirely new to lecturing, but have a lot still to learn about doing it thoughtfully and ethically
- Please let me know what you think and what your own experience has been!

Photo by Toa Heftiba on Unsplash

That may be true for medicine, but . . .

"I teach <blabla> which is completely objective and free of bias".

A typical slide in stats lectures . . .

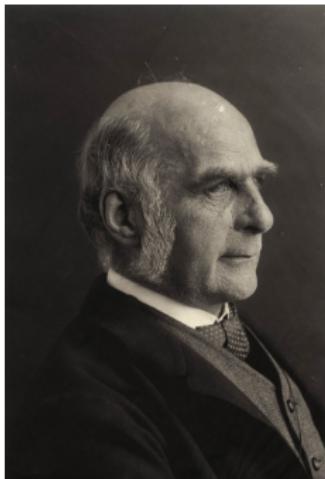


Central Limit Theorem

- History: blablabla Francis Galton
blablabla Galton Board blablabla
Normal Distribution as a limit case for
repeated binary outcomes blablabla

By Eveleen Myers (née Tennant) - <http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw127193>, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=61305409>

A typical slide in stats lectures . . .



By Eveleen Myers (née Tennant) - <http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw127193>, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=61305409>

Central Limit Theorem

- History: blablabla Francis Galton blablabla Galton Board blablabla Normal Distribution as a limit case for repeated binary outcomes blablabla

What we might want to think about:

- "Old white man of science" narrative
- Does the history of the subject actually help us understand the subject?
- Galton was not just into statistics, but also into eugenics, racism and genocide.