

# **Practical Data Science: Wrangling Data and Answering Questions**

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Nick Eubank

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2. What (**empirically**) is Data Science?

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- The tool you use should be dictated by the question you seek to answer



# What (empirically) is Data Science?

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⇒ Huge proliferation and increase in sophistication of computational methods

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⇒ Development of new tools occurred *within* each silo.

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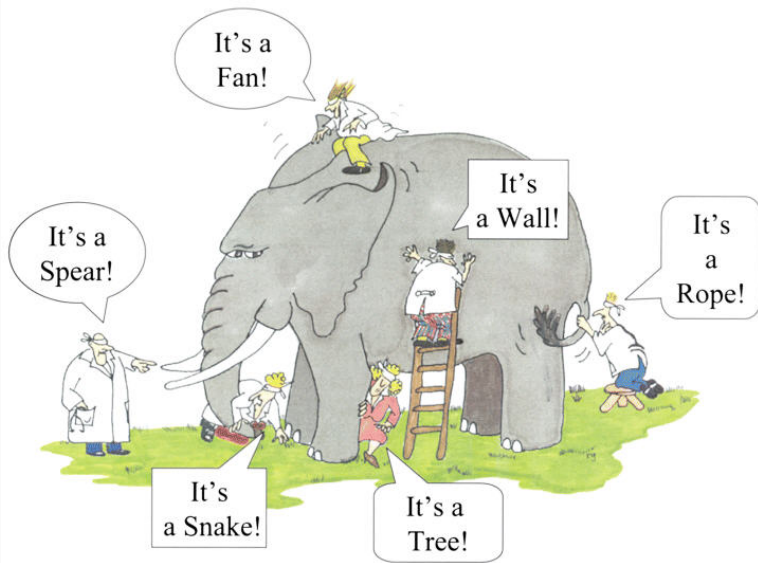
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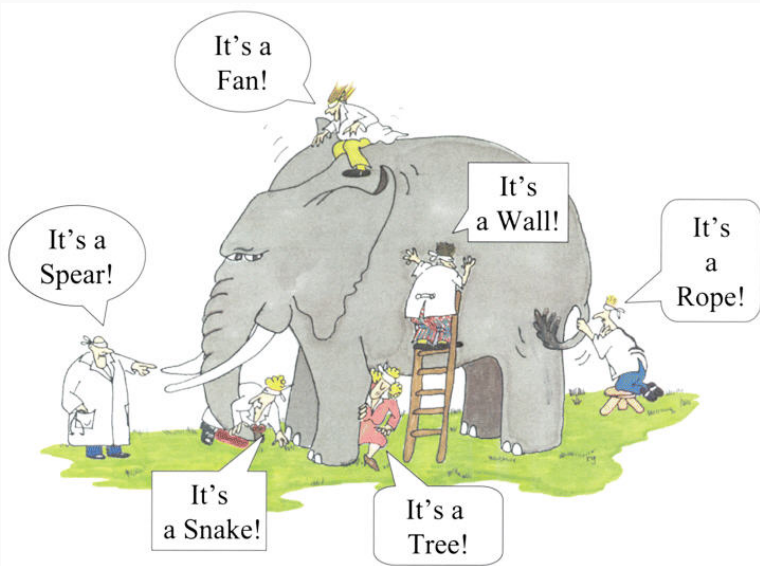
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- Every silo has its own vocabulary.
- Each silo has focused on the aspects most relevant to their applications. e.g.:
  - CS likes to classify things and make predictions, don't care how model works
  - Social scientists like to make causal statements, don't care about predictive power







⇒ This is where we are *now*.

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→ Recognize the elephant

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In many ways, *you will have better perspective than your professors.*
- Important not just technically, but also when it comes to advice.
  - Recognize that your professors' conception of "data science" *may not match yours.*
  - Also just good life advice: scientists are *very unscientific* when it comes to career advice!

# Areas of Data Science

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**Data Analysis DS**

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In this class, we will be focused on the **Data Analysis** flavor of Data Science.

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→ Develop a research question and outline a full project.

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- Know how to approach organizing a full project.



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My job is to meet you where you are.

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- PhD in Political Economy



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## My Research

- Looking for evidence of polling place manipulation in North Carolina
- Developing methods of measuring Gerrymandering in the US.
- Testing theories about how social networks shape political behavior using cell-phone meta-data to map social networks of entire countries (Zambia and Venezuela).
- Studying whether political elites in the US South turned to using incarceration to prevent black voters from exercising political influence after the Voting Rights Act removed their ability to use Jim Crow restrictions.

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*If* this sounds like your “flavor” of data science, I'm happy to talk about career options in this domain.

[www.practicaldatascience.org](http://www.practicaldatascience.org)