box76

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Which parts of the paper might be worthwhile for me to read in more detail, and why? If you see an immediate benefit to obtaining a better understanding of part of the paper, then you may spend extra time on it to the extent that fits into your schedule.

This question is more relevant for a technical paper.

What is the strongest part of the paper? i.e., something that the paper demonstrates which deserves to be widely known.

The need to integrate theory and practice. Is this well known, or is it something that can use a well-argued reminder. How is this actionable?

What is the weakest part of the paper? Is there a limitation that may make the paper less useful in practice, or even misleading. (This may be rare, or hard to find, in high-impact papers.)

It supposes that one paper can and should aspire to “complete the feedback loop” despite (perhaps inconsistently) saying this is rare [sec 3.13: “it is refreshing, but alas unfamiliar, to see publication of new designs simultaneous with data obtained from their successful use”]. If you are only working on part of the loop, how do you know if it is closed or open?

Has the paper had an impact on statistical theory and/or methodology and/or applications? Why or why not?

Cited over 3300 times, suggesting that many have found it insightful.

Technical questions include: (a) why was the notation set up this way? (b) what steps need additional explanation to be clear to this reader?

Not relevant here.

Study the numerical results, figures and tables. To what extent do they support the conclusions of the paper?

The numerical results in the table look like concrete support for the advice of worrying more about dependence than about normality

Other questions:

1. Is this rather old paper still relevant? Why or why not?

2. Another dichotomy is the “two cultures” of machine learning vs model-based statistical inference, identified by Breiman (2001). Is this related to the cookbookery/mathematistry categorization of Box (1976)?

Breiman, L. (2001). Statistical modeling: The two cultures (with comments and a rejoinder by the author). Statistical science, 16(3), 199-231.