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## The Median Researcher Problem by johnswentworth

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URL: <https://www.greaterwrong.com/posts/vZcXAc6txvJDanQ4F/the-median-researcher-problem-1>

Summary: The article discusses the concept of 'medial researcher problem,' proposing that the influence in scientific fields is predominantly driven by median researchers rather than the most competent ones. It exemplifies this by referring to fields where practitioners lack statistical understanding, which leads to the proliferation of flawed memes despite efforts by more competent individuals to address these issues. The author cites evidence, including pre-replication crisis warnings about poor statistical practices, to support this claim. Furthermore, it highlights the IQ gap between disciplines with varying replication rates, suggesting that intelligence levels correlate with the ability to identify and disseminate high-quality research. The implications of the median researcher problem are twofold: first, small, highly intelligent research communities can outperform larger fields because of better internal meme selection processes; second, the broader field may fail to acknowledge the advancements made by these smaller communities. An example of such a community is LessWrong, characterized by its high-intelligence user base and strict norms regarding statistics and economics, illustrating the potential for outperforming entire fields while remaining unrecognized by them.