

Soc 596: Computational Social Science

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01-01-Introduction to computational social science



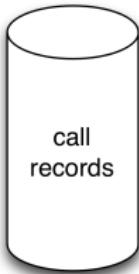
What is computational social science?

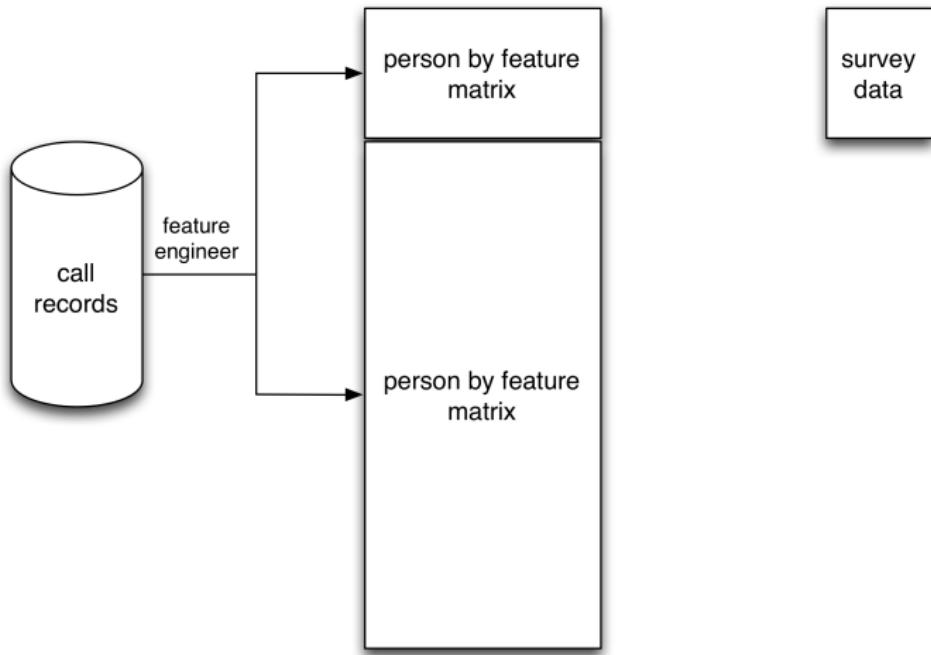
Predicting poverty and wealth from mobile phone metadata

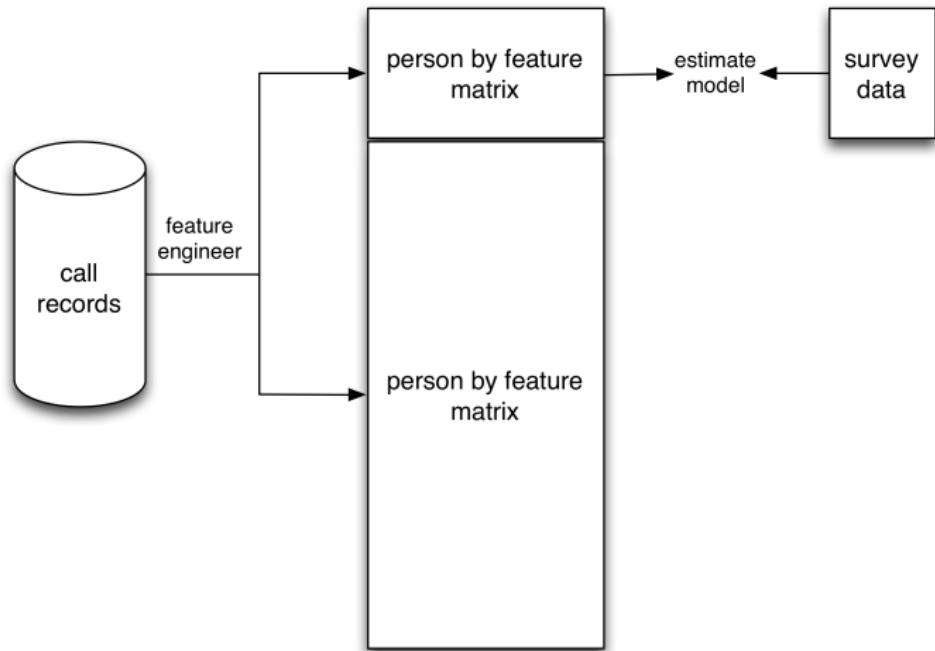
Joshua Blumenstock,^{1*} Gabriel Cadamuro,² Robert On³

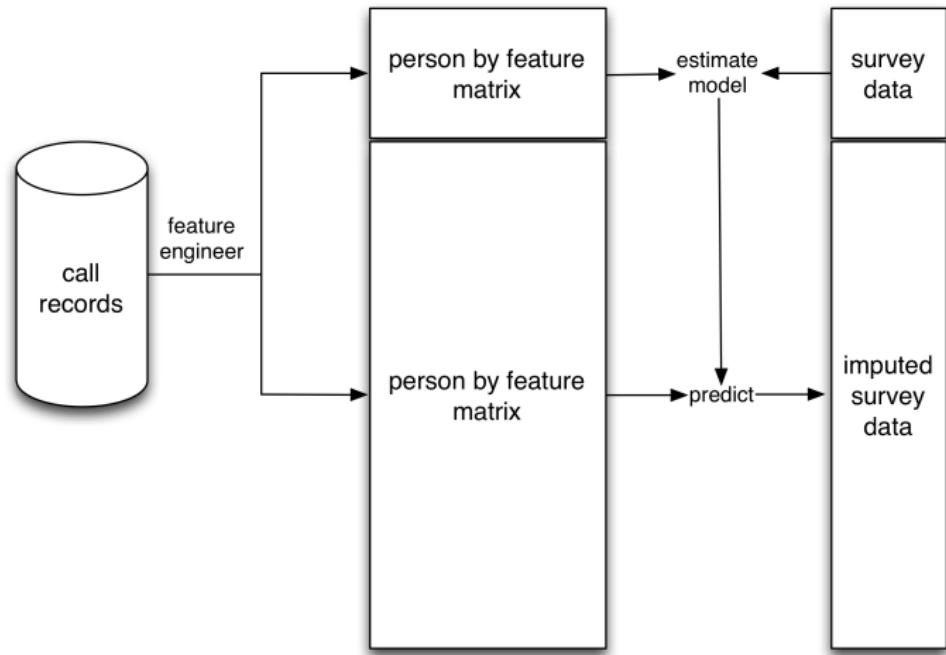
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1126/science.aac4420>

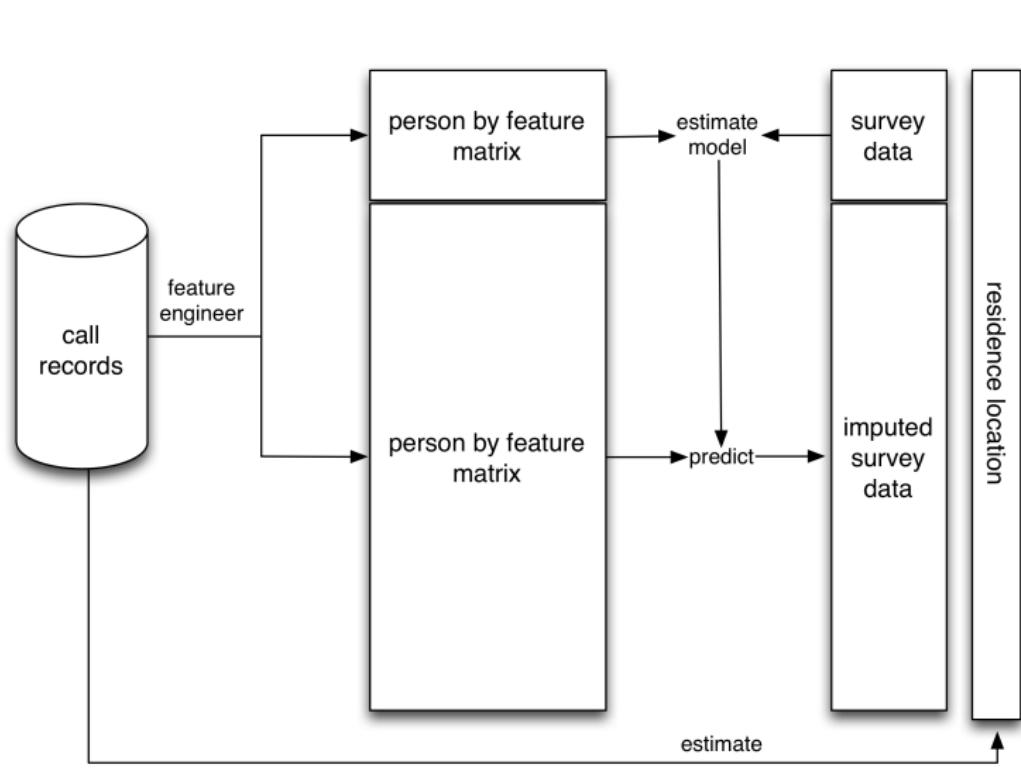


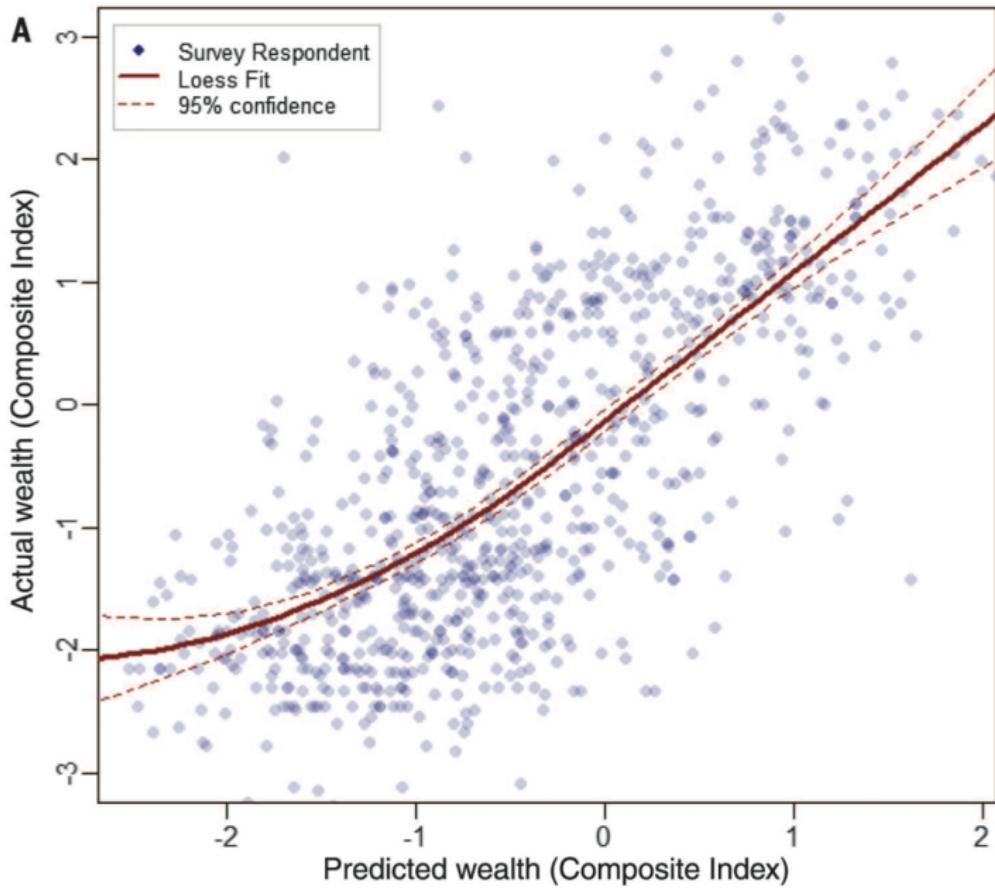


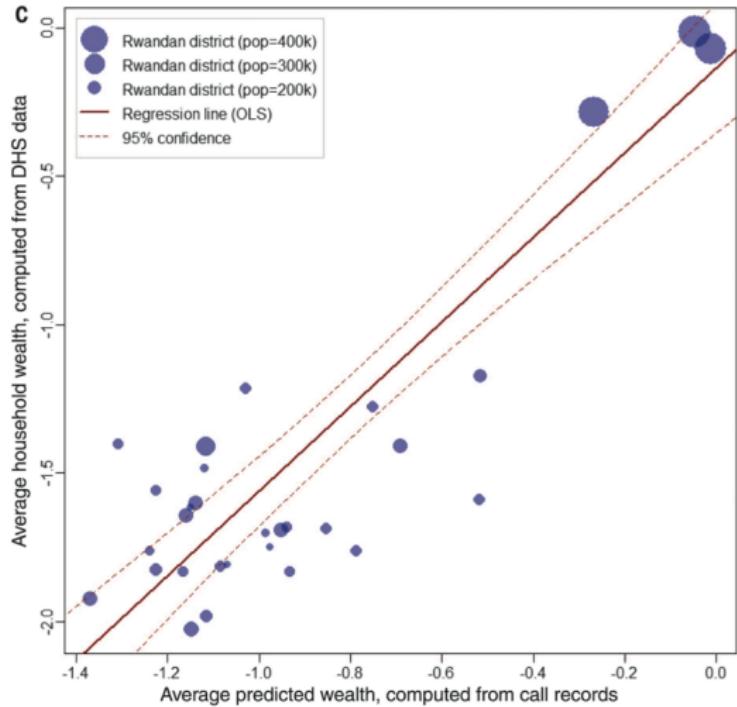


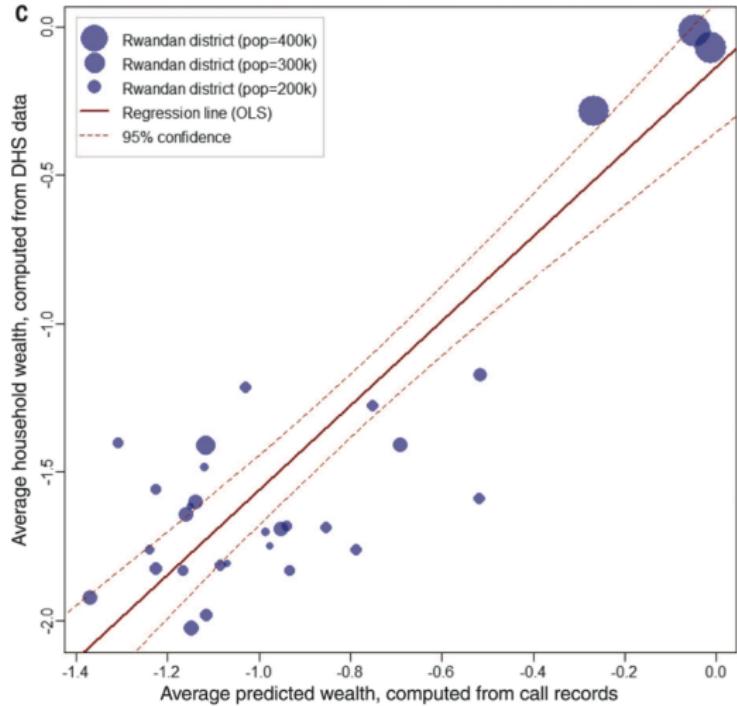






A





- ▶ 10 times faster
- ▶ 50 times cheaper

- ▶ *computational and social science*

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- ▶ often involves ethical/privacy questions that are now considered complex

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Readymades



Custommades

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Duchamp_Fountainne.jpg

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%27David%27_by_Michelangelo_JBU0001.JPG

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- ▶ involves five key communities: social science, data science, business people, privacy advocates, policy makers

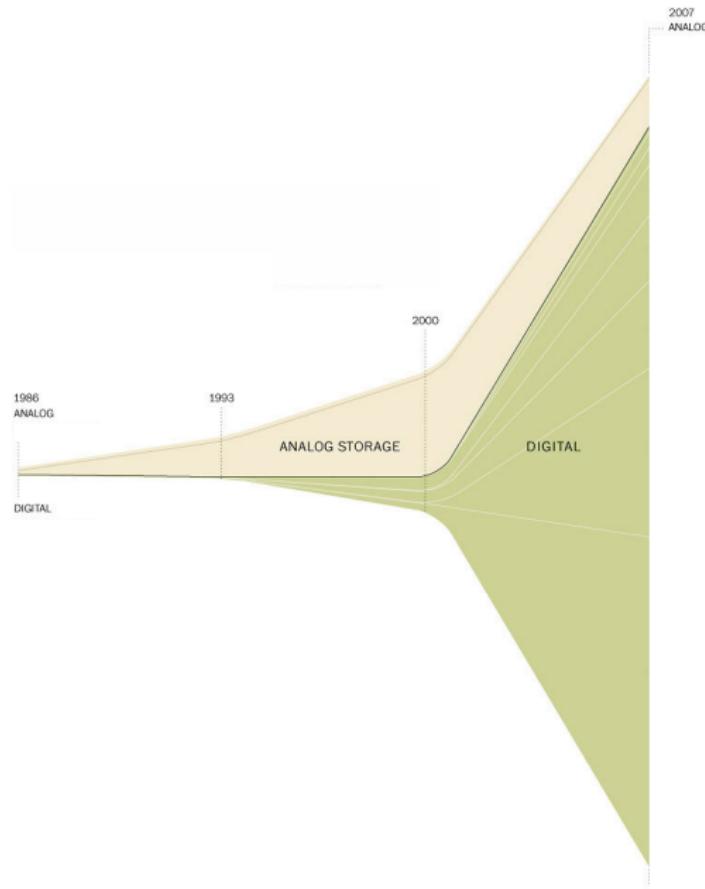
Balance between social science, data science, business people,
privacy advocates, and policy makers

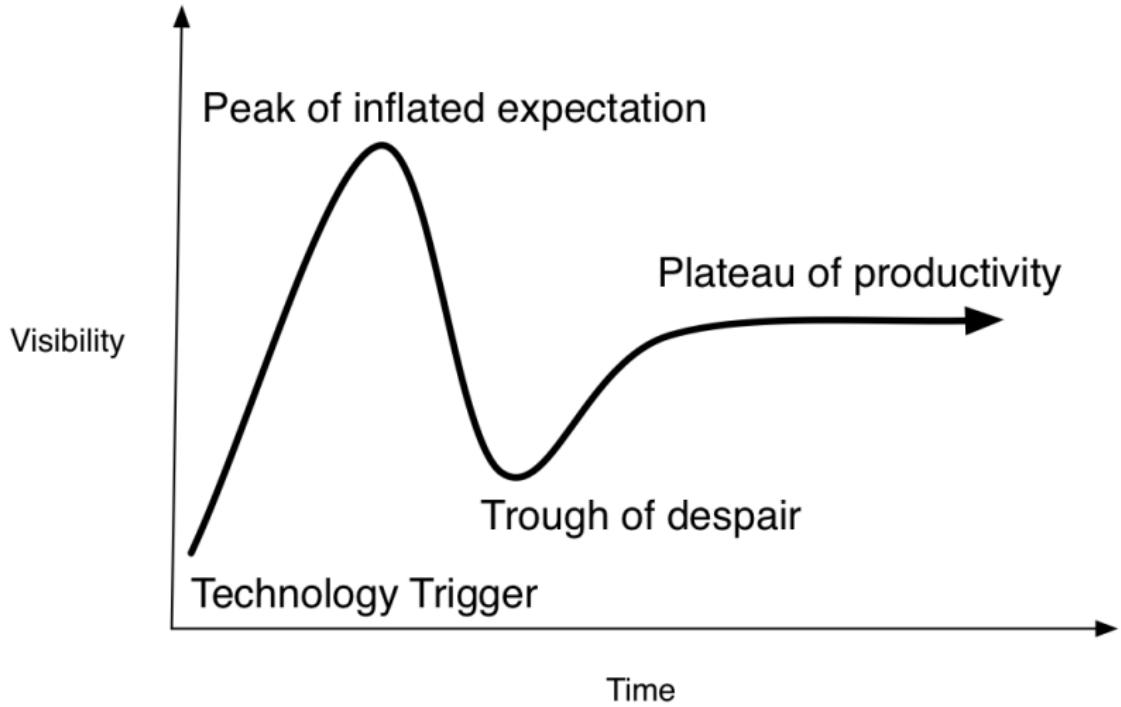
Health Ecosystem vs Horrific Monoculture

What is computational social science?

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Isn't computational social science a fad?





https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gartner_Hype_Cycle.svg

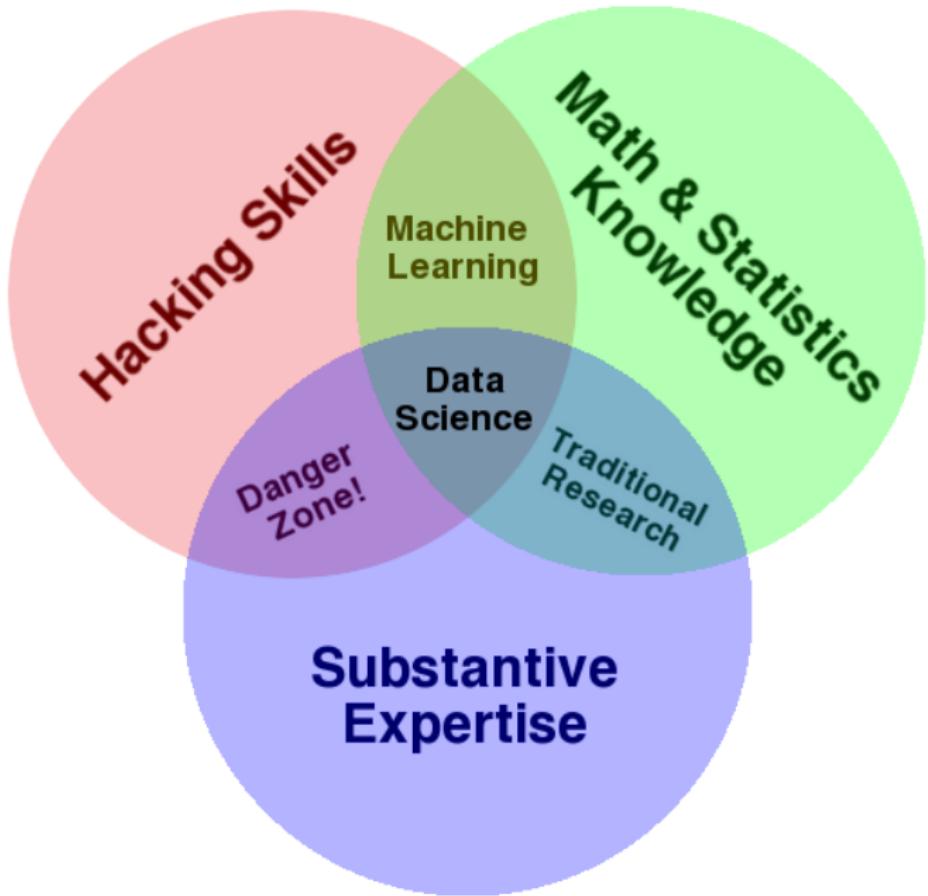
Isn't computational social science a fad?

No

How do we create computational social science, individually and as a community?

Social Scientists ←→ Data Scientists

What is data science?



What is data science?

Academic data science and industrial data science

Academic data science (think of Donoho article)

- ▶ goes back to Tukey (1962)

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Academic data science (think of Donoho article)

- ▶ goes back to Tukey (1962)
- ▶ learning from data
- ▶ it includes statistics and much more

Industrial data science (think of Provost and Fawcett)

- ▶ lots of engineering

Industrial data science (think of Provost and Fawcett)

- ▶ lots of engineering
- ▶ certain kinds of problems—churn and pop-tarts—which are not as far from social science as they appear

Data science alone is not enough if we want to study social behavior (e.g., Anderson)

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Social science alone is not enough if we want to use new data sources

Wallach: I don't get it. Why is that research?

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Computer science	Social science
Study anything	Study social things
Methods driven	Question driven
Large found data	Small designed data
Prediction	Explanation

Another important difference between social science:



Social Scientists ←→ Data Scientists

Computational social science vs Computational *social science*

My goals for this module:

- ▶ SWBAT *describe* computational social science
- ▶ SWBAT assess whether computational social science is a fad
- ▶ SWBAT *describe* the intellectual traditions that underly computational social science