The Harms of Historical Hyperbole

Dylan Spicker, PhD Candidate (Presented on June 30th 2021)





Who was George Dantzig?

An American Mathematician/Statistician who created the simplex algorithm for linear programming.

Operations Researchers: "Oh no. We can't check 70! combinations. That will take longer than the heat death of the universe. Aweh shucks."

The Simplex Algorithm ENTER STAGE RIGHT

The Simplex Algorithm: "I can do that, fast and effectively! Even on computers from the 1940s!"

Operations Researchers: "Yay! Now we can solve all of these allocation problems effectively."

Good George Dantzig Will Hunting

Some liberties were taken...



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A slacker was 20 minutes late and received two math problems... His solutions shocked his professor.

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Today I will tell you a relatively short story about a young man, which occurred many years ago. Even though the story contains nothing supernatural, I'm not exaggerating when I say that it was able to change the lives of millions across the world. In one way or another, every self-

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1. George Dantzig was a genius.



- 1. George Dantzig was a genius.
- 2. Positive thinking makes you into a genius.



- 1. George Dantzig was a genius.
- 2. Positive thinking makes you into a genius.
- 3. Geniuses finish their disserations in a week.

Therein lies my beef. Those lessons are lies*.

* or at least not justified by the storied event.

The corre is a lie.





Vanguard Mathematician George Dantzig Dies

By Joe Holley May 19, 2005

George B. Dantzig, 90, a mathematician who devised a formula that revolutionized planning, scheduling, network design and other complex functions integral to modern-day business, industry and government, died May 13 at his home in Palo Alto, Calif. The cause of death, according to his daughter, was complications from diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Dr. Dantzig was known as the father of linear programming and as the inventor of the "simplex method," an algorithm for solving linear programming problems.

"He really created the field," said Irvin Lustig, an operations research software consultant who was Dr. Dantzig's student at Stanford University. Dr. Dantzig's seminal work allows the airline industry, for example, to schedule crews and make fleet assignments. It's the tool that shipping companies use to determine how many planes they need and where their delivery trucks should be deployed. The oil industry long has used linear programming in refinery planning, as it determines how much of its raw product should become different grades of gasoline and how much should be used for petroleum-based byproducts. It's used in manufacturing, revenue management, telecommunications, advertising, architecture, circuit design and countless other areas. "The virtually simultaneous development of linear programming and computers led to an explosion of applications, especially in the industrial sector," Stanford University Professor Arthur aid in a statement. "For the first time in history, managers were given a powerful ration Smulating and comparing extremely large numbers of interdependent alternative courses of action to find one that was optimal."



Look at all the famous people.

Plot Twist I used to kind of love Dantzig.



We need to make sure we always take care of ourselves. It is important to do what is right for us, always, regardless of any extrinsic forces. You matter.

Please, if you ever need to chat, email me or reach out. dylan.spicker@uwaterloo.ca

We need to do a better job at recognizing the impact of the environments that we create have on others. My talk is tongue-in-cheek and meant to be entertaining, but that is simply a tool at cutting through our inability to discuss these issues frankly. I promise I will get back to less serious slides next, but please take this to heart. If it is helpful, remember that other people feel like you do and want to be there to support you.

So What is My Take? George Dantzig did what most graduate students do... ... and that is something we should celebrate.

Nyth

These were very famous problems...











¹ The main results of this paper were obtained by the authors independently of each other using entirely different methods.

² Research under contract with the Office of Naval Research.

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How about we co-author this one?





ON THE FUNDAMENTAL LEMMA OF NEYMAN AND PEARSON¹

BY GEORGE B. DANTZIG AND ABRAHAM WALD²

Department of the Air Force and Columbia University

1. Summary and introduction. The following lemma proved by Neyman and Pearson [1] is basic in the theory of testing statistical hypotheses: LEMMA. Let $f_1(x), \dots, f_{m+1}(x)$ be m + 1 Borel measurable functions defined

over a finite dimensional Euclidean space R such that $\int_{-1}^{\infty} |f_i(x)| dx < \infty$ $(i = 1, \dots, m + 1)$. Let, furthermore, c_1, \dots, c_m be m given constants and s

the class of all Borel measurable subsets S of R for which

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ON THE NON-EXISTENCE OF TESTS OF "STUDENT'S" HYPOTHESIS HAVING POWER FUNCTIONS INDEPENDENT OF σ

By George B. Dantzig

1. Introduction. Consider a system of n random variables x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n where each is known to be normally distributed about the same but unknown mean, ξ , and with the same, but also unknown standard deviation σ . The assumption, H_0 , that ξ has some specified value, ξ_0 , e.g. $\xi_0 = 0$, while nothing is assumed about σ , is known as the "Student" Hypothesis. Two aspects of the hypothesis H_0 have been already studied extensively. If the alternatives with respect to which it is desired to test H_0 assume specifically that $\xi > \xi_0$, (or $\xi < 0$), then we have the so-called asymmetric case of "Student's Hypothesis" and it is known, [1], that there exists a uniformly most powerful test of H_0 . This consists in the rule, originally suggested by "Student," of rejecting H_0 whenever

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MR1970576 Reviewed Preda, Vasile; Bătătorescu, Anton On duality for minmax generalized B-vex

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By George B. Dantzig



Princeton

MR2193867 Indexed Cottle, Richard W. Geor (2005), no. 6, 892-898. 01A70 (90-03)

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Nyth H

These problems were unsolved...





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Many statisticians tried and failed to solve these...









Assume that X_1, \ldots, X_n are all i.i.d. $N(\mu, \sigma^2)$. We wish to test $H_0: \mu = \mu_0$, versus the alternative, $H_1: \mu \neq \mu_0$.

Recall that the statistical power of a test is:

$$ext{Power} = eta(\mu,\sigma) = P(ext{Reject}\ H_0;\mu,\sigma)$$

Can you devise a test with power that is independent of σ ?



GENERALIZED POLAR COORDINATE TRANSFORMATION:

We can transform \mathbb{R}^n to a space with $(r, \theta_2, \theta_3, ..., \theta_n)$. The Jacobian of the transformation is given by $|\Delta_r| = r^{n-1}T(\theta)$.



W is the sample space.

 $\mathbf{x} = (x_1, \dots, x_n)$ is a sample point.

w is the rejection region.

 W_r is an *n*-dimensional hypersphere

(i.e. $\sum_{i=1}^{n} (x_i - \mu_0)^2 = r^2$).

 W_r is the intersection $W_r \cap w$.



SURFACE AREA OF A HYPERSPHERE:

The surface area of W_r is given by $\int \dots \int_{W_r} |\Delta| d\theta_1 \dots d\theta_n = r^{n-1} K$, where K is

functionally independent of r.





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SIMILAR REGION:

Given a parametric family of distributions, parameterized by $\theta \in \Theta$, w is called similar to W with size α if $P(\mathbf{x} \in w; \theta) = \alpha$ for all $\theta \in \Theta$.





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THEOREM 1 (NEYMAN-PEARSON, 1933):

If **x** is normally distributed, then *w* is similar to *W* with size α if and only if, for all $r \ge 0$ we have $P(\mathbf{x} \in w_r | \mathbf{x} \in W_r) = \alpha$.





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STEP 1 (ASSUME THAT THE REGION EXISTS):

Suppose *w* exists with $P(\mathbf{x} \in w; \mu_0) = \alpha$ and $P(\mathbf{x} \in w; \mu_1) = \beta$ for all σ .

That is, w is similar with size α similar with size β , to normal distributions parameterized by σ .



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STEP 2 (INVOKE THE NEYMAN-PEARSON THEOREM):

Define W_r, W_p, w_r, w_p . Then by **Theorem 1** $P(\mathbf{x} \in w_r | \mathbf{x} \in W_r) = \alpha$ and $P(\mathbf{x} \in w_p | \mathbf{x} \in W_p) = \beta$.



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STEP 3 (USE SOME CLEVER GEOMETRY):

Note that normal distributions are constant on hyperspheres around their means.

By (S2) we know that w_r (and w_p) must be a constant proportion of the area of W_r (and W_p). Therefore $\int \cdots \int_{W_r} |\Delta| d\theta_1 \cdots d\theta_n = \alpha r^{n-1} K$ and $\int \cdots \int_{W_p} |\Delta_p| d\theta_1 \cdots d\theta_n = \beta p^{n-1} K.$



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STEP 4 (INVOKE TRIANGLE INEQUALITY)

The distance from μ_0 to x is r, from μ_1 to x is p, and from μ_0 to μ_1 is $L = \sqrt{n} |\mu_0 - \mu_1|$. By the triangle inequality we get $r \le L + p$ and $p \le r + L$.

If g(t) is taken to be an arbitrary monotone function, then the inequality is preserved^{*}.

* or flipped, if g(t) is monotonically decreasing.



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STEP 5 (INTEGRATE OVER OUR REGION):

Define $I_r(g) = \int_w g(r) dx_1 \cdots dx_n$ which is transformed to $I_r(g) = \int_w g(r) |\Delta| dr d\theta_2 \cdots d\theta_n$. We can compute

$$I_r(g) = \alpha K \int_0^\infty r^{n-1} g(r) dr.$$

Also: $I_p(g) = \beta K \int_0^\infty p^{n-1} g(p) dp$ and $I_{p+L}(g) = \beta K \int_0^\infty g(p+L) p^{n-1} dp$.



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$$\frac{\text{STEP 6 (Fix THE MONOTONE FUNCTION)}}{\text{Take } g(t) = \exp(-ct) \text{ for } c \ge 0.}$$

$$\text{Then } g(r) \ge g(p+L) = g(p)g(L).$$

$$\text{Integrating gives } I_r = \alpha K \frac{\Gamma(n)}{c^n}, I_p = \beta K \frac{\Gamma(n)}{c^n} \text{ and } I_{p+L} = \beta K e^{-cL} \frac{\Gamma(n)}{c^n}.$$



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STEP 7 (SIMPLIFY AND ARRIVE AT CONTRADICTION):

Simplifying (since K > 0) we get: $\alpha \ge \beta e^{-cL}$ and by symmetry $\beta \ge \alpha e^{-cL}$. Therefore, $\alpha = \beta$.



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Ρ th p

Time Spent Doing PhD "Research"



The True Story of Dantzig's Homework



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