Calling Bullshit: THE ART OF SKEPTICISM IN A DATA-DRIVEN WORLD

Description

Tweet

By **CARL T. BERGSTROM** and **JEVIN D. WEST, August 2020**
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Reviews

Wired review article

Guardian review article

Forbes review article

Kirkus Review article

Podcast Interview with the authors here

ABOUT CALLING BULLSHIT (=publisher blurb)
â??Bullshit isnâ??t what it used to be. Now, two science professors give us the tools to dismantle misinformation and think clearly in a world of fake news and bad data.

Misinformation, disinformation, and fake news abound and itâ??s increasingly difficult to know whatâ??s true. Our media environment has become hyperpartisan. Science is conducted by press release. Startup culture elevates bullshit to high art. We are fairly well equipped to spot the sort of old-school bullshit that is based in fancy rhetoric and weasel words, but most of us donâ??t feel qualified to challenge the avalanche of new-school bullshit presented in the language of math, science, or statistics. In Calling Bullshit, Professors Carl Bergstrom and Jevin West give us a set of powerful tools to cut through the most intimidating data.

You donâ??t need a lot of technical expertise to call out problems with data. Are the numbers or results too good or too dramatic to be true? Is the claim comparing like with like? Is it confirming your personal bias? Drawing on a deep well of expertise in statistics and computational biology, Bergstrom and West exuberantly unpack examples of selection bias and muddled data visualization, distinguish between correlation and causation, and examine the susceptibility of science to modern bullshit.

We have always needed people who call bullshit when necessary, whether within a circle of friends, a community of scholars, or the citizenry of a nation. Now that bullshit has evolved, we need to relearn the art of skepticism.â?•

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Category

1. Books

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