

## Acknowledgments

We thank above all Morris Altman, who organized a session at the American Economic Association meetings in San Diego on these matters (January 2004) and then edited the articles into a special issue of the *Journal of Socio-Economics* (no. 5, 2004). We have benefited over the years from the comments of a great many scientists, by no means all of them favorable to our views: Theodore W. Anderson, Kenneth Arrow, Orley Ashenfelter, Howard Becker, Yakov Ben-Haim, Mary Ellen Benedict, Nathan Berg, Kevin Brancato, James Buchanan, Robert Chirinko, Ronald Coase, Kelly DeRango, Peter Dorman, Paul Downward, Roderick Duncan, Graham Elliott, Deborah Figart, William Fisher, Edward Fullbrook, Andrea Gabor, Marc Gaudry, Robert Gelfond, Gerd Gigerenzer, Arthur Goldberger, Clive Granger, Daniel Hamermesh, Wade Hands, John Harvey, Reid Hastie, David Hendry, Kevin Hoover, Joel Horowitz, Sanders Korenman, William Lastrapes, Tony Lawson, Frederic Lee, Geoffrey Loftus, Peter Lunt, John Lyons, Andrew Mearman, Peter Monaghan, John Murray, Anthony O'Brien, David F. Parkhurst, John Pencavel, Gregory Robbins, William Rozeboom, David Ruccio, Thomas Schelling, Allan Schmid, George Selgin, Jeffrey Siminoff, John Smutniak, Gary Solon, Dwight Steward, Stephen Stigler, Diana Strassman, Lester Telser, Bruce Thompson, Erik Thorbecke, Geoffrey Tilly, Andrew Trigg, Gordon Tullock, Jeffrey Wooldridge, Allan Würtz, and James P. Ziliak.

Arnold Zellner, the late William Kruskal (1919–2005), Daniel Klein, Stephen Cullenberg, Kenneth Rothman, Edward Leamer, and the late Jack Hirshleifer (1925–2005) have our special thanks. Zellner, Kruskal, Rothman, Leamer, and Hirshleifer have long advocated sanity in significance. It has been inspiring to have such excellent scientists saying to us, “Yes, after all, you are quite right.” We would like especially to thank Arnold

Zellner for plying us with papers and books on Jeffreys's and Bayes's methods that we clearly needed to read. And we thank him, Kenneth Rothman, Regina Buccola, Roger Chase, Charles Collings, Joel Horowitz, Geoffrey Loftus, Shirley Martin, Stephen Meardon, Bruce Thompson, Erik Thorbecke, and the two reviewers, Peter Boettke at George Mason and Julian Reiss, who teaches in Spain, for reading and commenting on substantial parts of the manuscript. Late in the project Pete Boettke saw a need for a wider sociological explanation of an eighty-year-old mistake in science. Thus the penultimate chapter.

Collectively speaking we have been telling versions of our story for some decades now. McCloskey has been dining out on the idea of economic versus statistical significance for over twenty years. J. Richard Zecher first explained the point to her in the early 1980s when they were colleagues at the University of Iowa working on an article on the gold standard. Eric Gustafson had explained it to her when she was an undergraduate at Harvard, but after her "advanced" econometric training in Fisherian methods, vintage 1965, the point slipped away. In 1983 Harry Collins introduced her to the "significance test controversy" in psychology and sociology. She remembers a presentation to a large audience at the American Economic Association meetings in Dallas in 1984, with Edward Leamer and the late Zvi Griliches commenting; and smaller but still crucial seminars at Groningen, Oxford, and the LSE in 1996. The results of all this patient tuition, 1962–96, show up in her *The Rhetoric of Economics* (1985b [1998]).

Ziliak, too, has been the recipient of many courtesies. He first learned of the point in 1988, from the elementary book by Ronald and Thomas Wonnacott (1982), while working in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor as a labor market analyst for the Indiana Department of Employment and Training Services. When Ziliak pointed out to the chief of his division that black teenage unemployment rates were being concealed from public view he encountered puzzling resistance. Given the small sample sizes, the chief said, the unemployment rates did not reach an arbitrary level of statistical significance. But the Department of Labor, which authorizes the distribution of official labor market statistics, appeared to be saying that an average 30 or 40 percent rate of unemployment was not discussable because the  $p$ -values exceeded .10, the department's shut-up point. Ziliak was embarrassed to return to the telephone to deliver the news to the citizen whose call had started the inquiry. "Sorry, sir. We do not have any quantitative information about black teenage un-

employment in the cities.” In 1989 he read the first edition of McCloskey’s *The Rhetoric of Economics* (1985b [1998]), including the then startling chapters on “significance.” Two years later he moved to Iowa and the graduate study of economics, where soon McCloskey invited him to join forces. Talks given jointly with McCloskey at Iowa (1993, 1994) and then solo at Indiana (1995) and the Eastern Economic Association (New York, 1995) transformed early puzzlement into action.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, then, we were talking and talking, individually and as a tag team, persuading a happy few. In recent years (we sense we have not mentioned all the events and apologize) we have found often appreciative and always attentive and sometimes stunned audiences at the annual meetings of the American Economic Association (Chicago, 1998; San Diego, 2004), Ball State University, Baruch College (School of Public Affairs), Bowling Green State University (a student seminar), the bi-ennial meetings of the Association for Heterodox Economics (University of Leeds, 2004), the Association for Heterodox Economics Post-graduate Workshop on Research Methods (University of Manchester, 2005), the University of Chicago (Center for Population Economics, 2005), the University of Colorado-Boulder, Dennison University, the Eastern Economic Association/Association for Social Economics (New York, 2003), the Elgin Community College/Roosevelt University Faculty Speaker Series, Erasmus University of Rotterdam, the summer institutes over many years of the European Doctoral Association in Management and Business, the First International Congress of Heterodox Economics (University of Missouri, Kansas City, 2003), George Mason University (Philosophy, Politics, and Economics Seminar), the University of Georgia, the Georgia Institute of Technology, Göteborg University (twice), Harvard University (a seminar for graduate students in economics; the faculty was skeptical), the University of Illinois at Chicago, Illinois State University, Macquarie University (Australia), the University of Michigan (another student seminar), the University of Nebraska, Northwestern University (Economic History Workshop), the University of Wisconsin (still another student seminar; the faculty was outraged), the Rhetoric and Economics Conference (organized by Paul Turpin at Milliken University, 2005), and annual meetings of the Southern Economic Association (New Orleans, 2004), the Ratio Institute of Stockholm (2006), and the University of Wollongong.

Ziliak gratefully acknowledges the cooperation of libraries and their staffs: University College London, Special Collections, where Gillian Furlong and Steven Wright gave able and kind access to the Galton Papers

and Pearson Papers (containing files on Karl Pearson, Egon Pearson, and Gosset, Fisher, and Neyman); the Guinness Archives, Diageo (Guinness Storehouse, Dublin, where Eibhlin Roche and Clare Hackett are themselves a “storehouse” of ideas); the Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading; the University of Illinois at Chicago, Special Collections, Richard J. Daley Library, Science Library, Mathematics Library, and Health Sciences Library; the University of Chicago’s Eckhart Library (for providing access to *Letters of William Sealy Gosset to R. A. Fisher, 1915–1936, Vols. 1–5* (private circulation, 1962) and its Regenstein, Yerkes, and Crerar libraries; Roosevelt University’s Murray-Green Library; Emory University’s Woodruff Library; and the libraries at the Georgia Institute of Technology, the University of Iowa, and Bowling Green State University. For research assistance at various stages of the project we were fortunate to employ Cory Bilton, Angelina Lott, David McClough, and Noel Winter.

Ziliak also thanks the Institute for Humane Studies for a Hayek Scholar Travel Grant and Roosevelt University for two summer grants used to collect primary materials in London, Dublin, Reading, and Chicago. Roosevelt is a rare site of sanity in academic life, serious about justice and freedom. He thanks there many colleagues who have tolerated his brief lectures on significance over lunch, especially Stefan Hersh, a friend who combines oomph *and* precision and Lynn Weiner and Paul Green, for openhandedly helping. In London Ziliak was well cared for, too. Andrew Trigg and his sons provided an amusing diversion from Gower Street, and Sheila Trigg, an Oxford-trained political adviser and chef extraordinaire, was her usual goddess self. McCloskey thanks the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Illinois at Chicago for continuing research moneys used for the project and her colleagues at UIC, such as Lawrence Officer, who have Gotten It.

We also gratefully acknowledge the University of Wisconsin Press, the *Journal of Economic Literature*, the *Journal of Socio-Economics*, and *Rethinking Marxism* for permission to use some of our earlier writings and statistics; University College London, Special Collections Library, for permission to quote from the Galton Papers and Pearson Papers; Guinness Archives (Diageo) for permission to reproduce images of Gosset; the *Journal of Socio-Economics* and Professor Erik Thorbecke for permission to print a version of Thorbecke’s (2004) very illuminating figure on economic significance; *Biometrika*, for permission to reprint a page from Student 1908a; *Educational and Psychological Measurement* for permission to

reprint a table from Fidler et al. (2004b); the Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health and the *American Journal of Epidemiology* for permission to reproduce a table from Savitz, Tolo, and Poole (1994); the *New England Journal of Medicine* for allowing a version of a figure from Freiman et al. (1978); and Professor Kenneth Rothman for supplying an unpublished graph of a  $p$ -value function. James F. Reische, our editor at the University of Michigan Press, carried our book over the hurdles.

Ziliak would be lost without Flora, Jude, and Suzette, whose love is all about oomph. And he dedicates the book to his parents, Barbara and Lawrence Ziliak, real world examples of unconditional love. McCloskey dedicates the book to her grandchildren, Connor and Lily. May they someday read this and understand a part of love.

Love comes in more academic forms, too: together we dedicate the book to the memory of William H. Kruskal for his many kindnesses extended from the 1970s to the 2000s and for a long life in theoretical and applied statistics of substantive significance.