

# Saw Swee Hock Public Lecture in Statistics

## Contemporary Statistics: Glamour Risk and Aftermath



**by Professor D.A.S. Fraser**

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*Toronto, CANADA*

**August 22, 2013 (Thursday)**

6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Rayson Huang Theatre (黃麗松講堂), HKU

Tea Reception at 5:30 p.m.

### **About the Talk**

On May 21 the magazine Science included a review entitled "Mr Bayes goes to Washington" of Nate Silver's book on statistical prediction in the 2012 US presidential election. Recent newspaper reports have discussed the manslaughter convictions of scientists who used statistics in their prediction of the risks of an earthquake in l'Aquila, Italy, in the days preceding the event. Both these events have glamour, risks, and major aftermath. The discipline of statistics has two theories at its core, and this brings a potential for even greater risks and aftermath. We discuss these and related challenges facing contemporary statistics. Statistics should put its house in order, or a civil court might do it instead: this would not be good for Statistics, for Science, or for Society.

### **About the Speaker**

Since receiving his PhD in Mathematics from Princeton University, Professor D.A.S. Fraser has been on the faculty of the University of Toronto, and has held many visiting appointments worldwide. He has published 4 books and more than 250 research papers, and supervised more than 55 PhD students. He is a Fellow of all the major statistical societies, the first winner of the Gold Medal of the Statistical Society of Canada, and the winner of the R.A. Fisher Lecture Award of the Committee of Presidents of Statistical Societies in 1990. He is an elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and, in 2012, was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada -- the counterpart of a knighthood in the United Kingdom.

Professor Fraser's research includes a concern centered on responsibility in the discipline of statistics for its professional activities, in particular in science and society.

For online registration, please go to <http://www.saasweb.hku.hk/seminar/20130822.html>



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All interested are welcome

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