

What Is the Point of Confirmation?

Huber, Franz (2004) What Is the Point of Confirmation?. In *[2004] Philosophy of Science Assoc. 19th Biennial Meeting - PSA2004: Contributed Papers (Austin, TX; 2004): PSA 2004 Contributed Papers*, Austin, Texas.

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Abstract

Philosophically, one of the most important questions in the enterprise termed confirmation theory is this: Why should one stick to well confirmed theories rather than to any other theories? This paper discusses the answers to this question one gets from absolute and incremental Bayesian confirmation theory. According to absolute confirmation, one should accept "absolutely well confirmed" theories, because absolute confirmation takes one to true theories. An examination of two popular measures of incremental confirmation suggests the view that one should stick to incrementally well confirmed theories, because incremental confirmation takes one to (the most) informative (among all) true theories. However, incremental confirmation does not further this goal in general. I close by presenting a necessary and sufficient condition for revealing the confirmational structure in almost every world when presented separating data.

Keywords: confirmation, semantic information, theory evaluation

Subjects: [General Issues: Confirmation/Induction](#)

Conferences and Volumes: [\[2004\] Philosophy of Science Assoc. 19th Biennial Meeting - PSA2004: Contributed Papers \(Austin, TX; 2004\): PSA 2004 Contributed Papers](#)

ID Code: 1924

Deposited By: [Huber, Franz](#)

Deposited On: 01 September 2004