

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE CLUB

President: EARL (BERTRAND) RUSSELL, O.M., M.A., F.R.S.

History of Science Museum
17 Corn Exchange
Cambridge
Thursday.

Dear Sir Ronald,

Your letter burned my fingertips! May I assure you with all possible emphasis that we are not interested in organizing 'acrimonious dispute'. The Club would never have been formed had this been the goal, - nor would there have been any real value (to our understanding of the use of hypotheses in natural science) in inviting Braithwaite and you to discuss the subject. So please let us be absolutely clear on this point.

In the other hand there would have been no

philosophical or logical value whatever in
bringing together two thinkers who agreed
on every single point. So I would not dream
of denying that my reason for trying to get
you and Braithwaite to discuss the matter
is my strong belief that you two will
differ on many points of principle and of
detail. This is precisely what is likely to
be of such great philosophical interest. If
you endorsed every facet of the Keynes-
Pearson - Wald researches what could you
do after Braithwaite's paper other than
add footnotes and corrigenda? This
would be of statistical importance perhaps,
but it would not engender a very prof-
itable logical/conceptual discussion.

And if this quite explicit organizing
assumption leads to 'acrimonious dispute'

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then the Club had better disband, or turn into a scientific debating society and I had better give up my University post.

Of course I do not believe for a moment that anything but a most illuminating and profitable discussion will be the result; or else I would have changed the program weeks ago. It is with this in mind that I have asked Anscombe to report the proceedings in the Review, - the interest of the discussion is likely to be greater than just for our Club members (particularly inasmuch as Hartree will be lecturing at the same time; some of our own members may be inclined to hear

him and still wish to learn what went on
with me). If, however, you object to
Encombe doing this reportage I will
cancel the whole business [Incidentally,
that acrimonious dispute is not our
intention - must be clear from our asking
a distinguished statistician to do the
reporting: anyone can describe a wrestling
match].

As to clarifying the program; I
have already announced four times at
previous meetings this term what the
actual situation was to be. Braitwaite
now, - with you opening discussion from
the floor, - and you on January 17th,
with Braitwaite opening discussion. V

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will announce this again on Monday evening and stress that yours will be a paper not in answer (i.e. reply) to Braithwaite's. The program was printed before these details were sorted out, i.e. before you so kindly offered a complete paper of your own. My secretary and I had previously only expected you would give a formal reply to Braithwaite's paper, - but when the opportunity arose of giving you a whole evening we grasped it hoping we could make clear what the ~~the~~ program as printed would fail to convey.

Please rest assured Sir Ronald, that

all your misgivings have been, and will be,
sorted out to your complete satisfaction.
I will take entire responsibility for
anything which goes amiss, or displeases
you in any way; - and I will just
make damned sure that everything runs
off smoothly.

So please, look forward to Monday's
discussion as I do, as Braithwaite does
and as all members of the Club do, - as
a forum for discussing the merits and
demerits (logical!) of a particular method
of choosing between statistical hypotheses.

Yrs. W. R. Hanson

P.S. Will you be my guest for dinner on Jan. 17th!

P.P.S. I don't know what 'statistical hypotheses' are either.