CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE GLOBAL ACTION
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Recipients of 2017 Leamer-Rosenthal Prizes for Open Social Science
The Berkeley Initiative for Transparency in the Social Sciences (BITSS) awards eight prizes to researchers and educators demonstrating values and practices of openness and transparency in research.

EMBARGOED UNTIL: 8:00 am PDT on Thursday, October 12, 2017

BERKELEY, CA (Thursday, October 12, 2017) – The open science community has grown rapidly in recent years, partly in response to a series of newsworthy scandals involving fake results and irreproducible findings. In an effort to draw attention to the need for greater transparency and reproducibility in research, in 2015 a group of scientists established the Leamer-Rosenthal Prizes for Open Social Science as one of many responses to the "credibility crisis".

Though the Prizes have been around for just two years, the issues of transparency (and attempts to address them) are decades old. One of the Prizes' namesakes, psychologist Robert Rosenthal, wrote about the "file drawer problem" in 1979 to refer to the countless studies that go unpublished due to their statistically insignificant results. Just four years later, in 1983, economist Edward Leamer published a paper asking us to "…take the con out of econometrics." It wasn't until fairly recently, however, that social scientists mobilized as a community to take action.

Managed by the Berkeley Initiative for Transparency in the Social Sciences (BITSS), the first two rounds of the Leamer-Rosenthal Prizes (in 2015 and 2016) recognized 17 researchers from universities and research institutes around the globe. These researchers have significantly advanced research transparency through their own practice, teaching of better research methods, and development of new tools for the broader scientific community.

This year, an interdisciplinary committee[1] reviewed 58 nominations from disciplines across the social sciences to select recipients in two categories: senior researchers who have led improvements in science education (Leaders in Education), and junior researchers who have advanced transparency through their work (Emerging Researchers). BITSS is pleased to announce the eight awards for 2017.

This year's recipients in the *Leaders in Education* category are **Dr. Daniel Lakens**, Assistant Professor of Psychology at the Eindhoven University of Technology and widely recognized creator of the "Improving Your Statistical Inferences" online course; and **Dr. Simine Vazire**, Associate Professor of Psychology at University of California, Davis, co-founder and President of the Society for the Improvement of Psychological Science (SIPS) and Senior Editor of the journal *Collabra: Psychology*.

The six recipients in the *Emerging Researchers* category are:

Ms. Erica Baranski, a doctoral candidate in the University of California, Riverside Department of Psychology who has led demonstrations of the Open Science Framework, was involved in the Reproducibility Project: Psychology and two Many

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Labs projects, and co-authored a [paper about the Open Science Badges](#);

- **Mr. Charles E. Ebersole**, a doctoral candidate in the University of Virginia Department of Social Psychology, known in psychology for his leadership in two [Many Labs projects](#) and his involvemewnt in the development of [StudySwap](#), an online platform that facilitates replication and collaboration between researchers;

- **Mr. Ranjit Lall**, a doctoral candidate in the Department of Government at Harvard University, whose work attempting to [replicate 35 published studies](#) both uncovered statistical inconsistencies in some and strengthened the claims of others;

- **Dr. Joshua Polanin**, a Principal Researcher at American Institutes for Research, whose research has focused on [meta-analytic transparency and reproducibility](#), as well as training other researchers on [meta-analytic *R* packages](#);

- **Dr. Karthik Ram**, a Senior Research Scientist at the Berkeley Institute for Data Science (BIDS) and co-founder of the [rOpenSci](#) project, whose more recent work has focused on developing open data tools and services; and

- **Ms. Soazic Elise Wang Sonne**, a doctoral candidate at United Nations University – MERIT (UNU-MERIT) in the Department of Economics and Governance, who has led research transparency courses and [trainings in Sub-Saharan Africa, Europe, and the U.S.](#) reaching over 150 researchers since 2015.

Many recipients became involved in the research transparency movement as a result of frustration. They may have attempted to replicate a past study, or build on prior work, but felt stymied by a system that incentivizes both intentional and unintentional lack of transparency. Simine Vazire gives an eloquent summary of the biggest barriers to open science: "It's human nature to want to be right and look good and make a living. Right now there's a lot more reward for finding what you predicted (or predicting what you found) and getting surprising, extraordinary results than for getting results that are robust."

Fortunately, for a growing number of researchers, frustration seems to have given way to a more optimistic, yet grounded, perspective. When asked what excites him most about being involved in the move toward reproducibility, Charles Ebersole stated, "…now we have the technology, community, and energy to create lasting improvements in research practice and culture."

Mr. Ebersole also points out a valuable insight: open science isn't just about transparency and reproducibility. The movement has spawned a small but growing scientific culture that values crowdsourcing, sharing, and collaboration. Developers of open science software, who may have started with tools to detect misconduct or statistical inconsistencies, are now creating platforms to make working together easier – all in the name of doing better science.

The 2017 Leamer-Rosenthal Prizes will be formally awarded at the [2017 BITSS Annual Meeting](#). After the awards ceremony, a panel of the 2017 recipients will discuss their perspectives on the state and future of transparency in social science, as well as their roles in the movement. Past prize recipients will also be in attendance. The Annual Meeting takes place December 5-6 at the Bancroft Hotel in Berkeley, California and is open to the public. An agenda is forthcoming. RSVP to attend [here](#).

About BITSS: The Berkeley Initiative for Transparency in the Social Sciences (BITSS) works to strengthen the integrity of social science research and evidence used for policy-making. Established by the Center for Effective Global Action (CEGA) in 2012, BITSS leads trainings in research transparency and reproducibility, conducts and funds meta-research, provides funding for curriculum development, and promotes tools that advance open science. The Leamer-Rosenthal Prizes were conceived as a platform to elevate innovative work and realign incentives toward more open, reproducible science.

2017 Leamer-Rosenthal Recipient Highlights

LEADERS IN EDUCATION

Dr. Daniel Lakens | Assistant Professor, Psychology, Eindhoven University of Technology

Daniel Lakens is an experimental psychologist at the Human-Technology Interaction group at Eindhoven University of Technology (TU/e) whose work focuses on reward structures in science and applied statistics. His MOOC "Improving Your Statistical Inferences" has over 10,000 students enrolled and he has given over 40 workshops on open science and improving research practices. Dr. Lakens won a Teacher of the Year award at TU/e in 2014 and co-edited with Brian Nosek a 2014 special issue of *Social Psychology* with pre-registered replication studies. He has published extensively on meta-analysis, statistical methods, and research reproducibility.
Personal website: https://sites.google.com/site/lakens2/Home

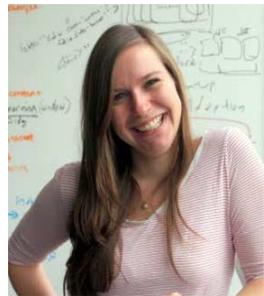**Dr. Simine Vazire** | Associate Professor, Psychology, University of California, Davis

Simine Vazire is the Director of the Personality and Self-Knowledge Laboratory at UC Davis. She teaches courses on research methods, replicability, personality, and self-knowledge. She also conducts meta-science examining how people interpret scientific findings and tracks trends in the methods and results of published studies in psychology over time. She is a Senior Editor at *Collabra: Psychology*, Editor in Chief of *Social Psychological and Personality Science* (SPSS), and Co-Founder and President of the Society for the Improvement of Psychological Science (SIPS).
Personal Website: http://simine.com/
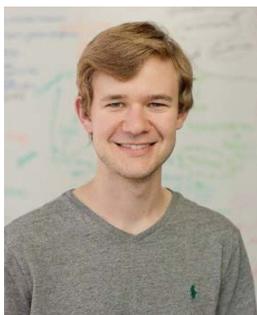
EMERGING RESEARCHERS

Ms. Erica Baranski | PhD Candidate, Personality Psychology, University of California, Riverside

Erica Baranski's research focuses on the cross-cultural examination of situational experience, as well as the volitional personality change process. She has conducted meta-scientific studies on ethical research practices and the improvement for psychological science. Ms. Baranski has been involved in Reproducibility Project: Psychology, an Open Science Collaboration project, Many Labs 3, Many Labs 5, and the Institutional Re-engineering for Ethical Discourse in STEM. She has been an active Center for Open Science ambassador, presenting on open science at various conferences and trainings across the U.S. and has co-authored a paper about the Open Science Badges.
Personal Website: http://ericanbaranski.wixsite.com/ericanbaranski

Mr. Charles E. Ebersole | PhD Candidate, Social Psychology, University of Virginia

Charles E. Ebersole studies research practices and meta-science at the University of Virginia, where he conducts crowdsourced investigations of factors that influence the replicability of past research. These include the Many Labs 3 and Many Labs 5 projects. He was also involved in the creation of StudySwap, an online platform for researchers and labs to share resources like access to samples. Mr. Ebersole has been involved in the Society for the Improvement of Psychological Science (SIPS) and has given workshops on using transparent research practices.
Lab Website: http://projectimplicit.net/nosek/labgroup/

Mr. Ranjit Lall | PhD Candidate, Government, Harvard University

Ranjit Lall is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Government at Harvard University. His research interests are in the area of international political economy, with a focus on international institutions, global governance, financial regulation, and quantitative methods. His interest in open science was inspired by the difficulties he encountered in acquiring data to replicate past studies. He has since replicated 35 studies and published findings in *Political Analysis* and *Comparative Political Studies*. Mr. Lall's research has been published in International Organization, Political Analysis, Comparative Political Studies, Regulation & Governance, and the Review of International Political Economy. **Graduate Student Profile:** https://scholar.harvard.edu/ranjitlall

Dr. Joshua Polanin | Principal Researcher; Education, Criminal Justice, and Research Methodology; American Institutes of Research

Joshua Polanin's recent work focuses on the use and reporting of meta-analytic statistical significance testing. His substantive experience is in the intersection of education and criminal justice and he serves as the Principal Investigator of a large-scale systematic review and meta-analysis on the longitudinal consequences of school violence, funded by the National Institutes for Justice. His work has been featured in the *Review of Educational Research*, the *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*, and *Research Synthesis Methods*. He has also published and trained researchers on meta-analytic *R* packages. He earned his PhD in Research Methodology with a focus in Quantitative Methodology at Loyola University Chicago. **Personal Website:** https://sites.google.com/site/joshuarpolanin/home

Dr. Karthik Ram | Senior Researcher, Data Science and Ecology, Berkeley Institute for Data Science

Dr. Karthik Ram is a senior data scientist at the Berkeley Institute of Data Science (BIDS) and a co-founder of the rOpenSci project, which develops *R* packages that facilitate access to data repositories. He is also a senior Principle Investigator at the Berkeley Initiative for Global Change Biology (BiGCB). Dr. Ram's interests in reproducible research lie largely in its applicability to global change. Much of his recent work focuses on building tools and services around open data and growing diverse data science communities. Prior to joining UC Berkeley, he earned his PhD in Ecology & Evolution from the UC Davis. **Personal Website:** https://karthik.io

Ms. Soazic Elise Wang Sonne | PhD Candidate, Economics, United Nations University–MERIT

Soazic Elise Wang Sonne is a PhD candidate in Economics and Governance at the United Nations University (UNU-MERIT). Her research focuses on the application of micro-econometric impact evaluation techniques to understand which interventions work better to increase women's empowerment, labor saving technology adoption, and children's health and schooling in Sub-Saharan Africa. As a BITSS Catalyst, Ms. Wang Sonne has lead trainings on openness and transparency in Cameroon, South Africa, the UK, the Netherlands, and the US. Her efforts have lead to the exposure and training of over 150 researchers.

Graduate Student Profile: https://www.merit.unu.edu/about-us/profile/?staff_id=1891