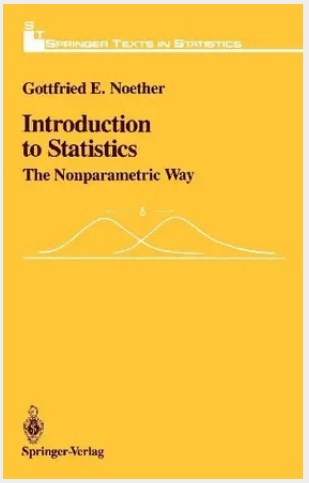
Noether

Introduction to Statistics

The Nonparametric Way



The introductory statistics course presents serious pedagogical problems to the instructor. For the great majority of students, the course represents the only formal contact with statistical thinking that he or she will have in college. Students come from many different fields of study, and a large number suffer from math anxiety. Thus, an instructor who is willing to settle for some limited objectives will have a much better chance of success than an instructor who aims for a broad exposure to statistics. Many statisticians agree that the primary objective of the introductory statistics course is to introduce students to variability and uncertainty and how to cope with them when drawing inferences from observed data. Addi tionally, the introductory COurse should enable students to handle a limited number of useful statistical techniques. The present text, which is the successor to the author's Introduction to Statistics: A Nonparametric Approach (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1976), tries to meet these objectives by introducing the student to the ba sic ideas of estimation and hypothesis testing early in the course after a rather brief introduction to data organization and some simple ideas about probability. Estimation and hypothesis testing are discussed in terms of the two-sample problem, which is both conceptually simpler and more realistic than the one-sample problem that customarily serves as the basis for the discussion of statistical inference.

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