

Records

[Key Passage\(s\)](#) [Context](#)

[Download key passages/title pages as a PDF](#)

Sterling TD (1959). Publication decisions and their possible effects on inferences drawn from tests of significance – or vice versa. *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 54:30-34.

Key passages

PUBLICATION DECISIONS AND THEIR POSSIBLE EFFECTS ON
INFERENCES DRAWN FROM TESTS OF SIGNIFICANCE
—OR VICE VERSA*

THEODORE D. STERLING
University of Cincinnati

There is some evidence that in fields where statistical tests of significance are commonly used, research which yields nonsignificant results is not published. Such research being unknown to other investigators may be repeated independently until eventually by chance a significant result occurs—an “error of the first kind”—and is published. Significant results published in these fields are seldom verified by independent replication. The possibility thus arises that the literature of such a field consists in substantial part of false conclusions resulting from errors of the first kind in statistical tests of significance.