

# Today I am a blog

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Hi.

This is the blog for my book, *Modeling with Data*. That means that I'll be discussing statistics, scientific inquiry, computing, academia, publishing, and what I had for lunch before sitting down to write.

Let me tell you why I'm setting up another blog: because *statistics is amazing*. Seriously enthralling. Pure mathematics is internally consistent, but comfortably ignores what we like to call reality; statistics is a field that does the dirty work of linking mathematical models with observed phenomena. This is a *hard problem*, not in the sense that with enough elbow grease we can solve it, but in the sense that we mortals are fundamentally incapable of a definitive solution.

Of course, we do our best anyway. What are the odds that it will rain tomorrow? Your weatherman will be happy to give you a number, even though just explaining what that question means is about impossible.

*Modeling with Data* grazed the surface of these questions, but it's a textbook, so I focused on specific techniques and details rather than the social, technological, and even philosophical issues underlying the techniques. I will not be talking about the politics of information, because I already have a blog about that. Also, despite being the author of a statistics textbook, I'm human, and can perhaps share with you some interesting ideas about writing, publishing, and doing research in the present day.

Finally, an important piece of logistics: I don't write 140-character posts every fifteen minutes, but instead tend toward infrequent, more substantive posts. So don't click back here every day to see if something is new: get notifications of new posts via the RSS feed. If you don't know what RSS is<sup>1</sup>, it's the civilized way to read everything from The New York Times<sup>2</sup> to The Onion<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web\\_feed](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_feed)

<sup>2</sup><http://www.nytimes.com/services/xml/rss/index.html>

<sup>3</sup>[http://www.theonion.com/content/news\\_feeds](http://www.theonion.com/content/news_feeds)