



## Damned Lies and Statistics: Untangling Numbers from the Media, Politicians, and Activists

By Joel Best

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Here, by popular demand, is the updated edition to Joel Best's classic guide to understanding how numbers can confuse us. In his new afterword, Best uses examples from recent policy debates to reflect on the challenges to improving statistical literacy. Since its publication ten years ago, *Damned Lies and Statistics* has emerged as the go-to handbook for spotting bad statistics and learning to think critically about these influential numbers.

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From the Inside Flap

"[An] absolutely fascinating and sobering quest into the fantastic differences between the world as it is and the world as it is portrayed in the statistics the media use. . . . This book is simply a must."—Nachman Ben-Yehuda, author of *The Masada Myth*

"Best is our leading authority on social problems today. His detective work in exposing the spurious use of statistics is essential to constructive social science. No one who speaks for the public welfare can ignore his powerful work."—Jonathan B. Imber, Editor-in-Chief, *Society*

"Joel Best is at it again. In *Damned Lies and Statistics*, he shows how statistics are manipulated, mismanaged, misrepresented, and massaged by officials and other powerful groups to promote their agendas. He is a master at examining taken-for-granted "facts" and debunking them through careful sociological scrutiny."—Patricia Adler, author of *Peer Power*

"A real page turner. Best is the John Grisham of sociology!"—James Holstein, author of *The New Language of Qualitative Method*

"In our era, numbers are as much a staple of political debates as stories. And just as stories so often turn into fables, so Best shows that we often believe the most implausible of numbers--to the detriment of us all."—Peter Reuter, co-author of *Drug War Heresies: Learning from Other Vices, Times and Places*

About the Author

**Joel Best** is Professor of Sociology and Criminal Justice at the University of Delaware. His many books include *Everyone's A Winner: Life in Our Congratulatory Culture* and *Stat-Spotting: A Field Guide to Dubious Data*, both from UC Press.

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