

**Email exchanges between Uri Simonsohn and Norbert Schwarz
February 2012**

These communications are provided as background for [this posting](#) to the SPSP mailing list.

2012 03 10 - UPDATE:

Norbert wrote he was upset about me having posted our email exchanges, here is my reaction:

- 1) I posted our communications to demonstrate the extent to which I attempted to avoid having a public confrontation with Norbert.
- 2) Information that I considered private (such as my phone numbers, and some info Norbert provided about his private life) were edited out.
- 3) Because I have posted my emails to Norbert, readers can judge whether I ever made the supposed promise that I would keep all exchanges private, or if I shared information that is inappropriate to share about someone. I have highlighted in yellow the only relevant mention of privacy I was able to locate, it referred to a message I sent which I considered too blunt to be made public at the time. I posted it anyway for transparency.

The original set of emails begins on page 2.

ADDED ON 03/10/2012 Per Norbert's Request

Friday March 9th, 2012

From: Norbert

To: Uri

Uri -- a while back YOU asked me to respond to you personally, not to the SPSP list. I now learned from Facebook (!) that you have posted that supposedly "private" exchange publicly. I would have preferred this as a public discussion to begin with. You are not at liberty to request private communications that you can later post without informing me. I will not engage in further "private" discussions with you -- if you post anyway as you see fit, and possibly selectively, I'd rather post the whole exchange from the get go. I'll have a look at your post after I return to the US and caught up with my backlog but wanted to let you know that your style is unacceptable. I request that you add this email to your post. Thanks, Norbert (writing from Hong Kong)

Norbert Schwarz | University of Michigan Charles Horton Cooley Collegiate Professor | Psychology.Business.ISR
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Saturday March 10th, 2012

From: Uri

To: Norbert

Hi Norbert,

I updated the posting as you requested.
You can take a look [here](#). Let me know if there is something else you would like to add to it.

I could not find any evidence for your claim that I asked our exchange remain private (which in total Norbert style you state matter-of-factly while attacking my integrity, you are such a mensch).

If you find evidence for such claim in the written record, I will be happy to highlight it for others to see, and I apologize.

If you do not, I would appreciate you clarify your most recent unsubstantiated claim about me.

Best,

Uri

Wednesday February 1st, 3.37PM

From:Uri

To: Norbert

Hi Norbert,

Having read your note it seems there may be some misunderstanding regarding the assumptions, statistical power, and use of p-curve. In a nutshell, it requires virtually no assumptions, it can lead to reliable inference with very few p-values (those from a single paper sometimes), and we are not using it to 'go after' any individual researchers, findings or papers.

Moreover, as Joe points out in his note, our paper provides a methodology for assessing the reliability/significance/precision of p-curve, just like for any statistic used for making inference. So one can assign a p-value to a p-curve being flat or upward sloping. One can reject the null that the effect size behind a set of studies is above a given magnitude, etc.

If a researcher employs p-curve on too small a dataset, as you fear one might, p-curve will tell her that, by giving out too wide a confidence interval for inference to be useful (e.g., "this set of findings could be very strong or very weak or non-existent").

If curious, these calculations are based on derivations of the distributions of p-values when the null hypothesis is false (see e.g., Hung et al, Biometrics 1997), plus further derivations from us (to convert from Normally distributed to Student) and importantly have been validated with bootstrapping and simulation techniques. I edited much of this out from a talk, because I suspected most audience members are not interested in these kinds of details and I did not think there would be enough time to talk about statistical significance of p-curve.

Since you are interested in the topic, I would love to talk to you on the phone about all this.

My office number is [xxx xxx xxxx] and my cell [xxx xxx xxxx]. I can also give you a call if you give me a time and number.

It would be great to make the time to discuss this topic with the attention and deliberation it deserves, let's give it a shot.

Best,

Uri

Wednesday February 1st, 11.28PM

From:Norbert

To:Uri

Hi Uri,

I'm curious how you manage all of these statistical wonders (no assumptions, etc.), but I'm also not a statistician. Can you send me the paper when you have it? I'd appreciate it. As I said in my note, I think this could be a great addition to the repertoire of meta-analysis but got worried by your emphasis on small numbers, comparing job candidates, etc. Well, I look forward to reading the piece.

Best, Norbert

Thursday February 2nd, 8.57AM

From:Uri

To: Norbert

Norbert,

I insist on my offer to chat on the phone, I don't plan on reading or replying to your emails until we have done so.

Again, I can call you if that's more convenient, and my numbers are xxx xxx xxxx, cell:xxx xxx xxxx.

This is a private message, please do not forward it.

Uri

Friday February 3rd, 10.50AM

From:Nobert

To: Uri

I'll call you next week. But I'm really understanding things better when I read them than when I hear them on the phone, so send me the paper when you have it. N

Friday February 3rd, 1.32PM

From:Uri

To: Norbert

Norbert,

I am very happy this will work out.

I want to talk on the phone to avoid unnecessary back and forths, to make sure we both understand each other, etc.

The paper may not be in distributable shape for weeks to come and the potential distribution in the SPSP mailing list of your passionate apprehensions gave this issue an unexpected urgency.

I look forward to talking next week,

Best,

Uri

Wednesday February 8th, 3.03PM

From:Uri

To: Norbert

let me know if you have changed your mind about the phone call

Wednesday February 8th, 4.37PM

From:Norbert

To:Uri

No I haven't -- but I've had 2 dissertation defenses, a site visit, and an advisory board meeting so far this week and I always just manage to prep in time and get it done. Not to speak of the usual daily business. Thu afternoon after 4pm or Fri around 11am look ok.

Does one of those work? N

<phone conversation took place on Friday at 11>

Tuesday February 14th, 9.10AM

From:Uri
To:Norbert

Hi Norbert,

With Joe and Leif (cc'ed) we worked on a possible draft for that joint posting we chatted about on the phone on Friday.

I did my best to remember your position on issues but memory is imperfect.

Tuesday February 14th, 8.47PM
From: Norbert
To: Uri

Thanks, Uri. I'll get to this in a couple days. [edited out: private information about Norbert] and am just catching up. More after teaching -- N.

Saturday February 18th, 4.04PM
From: Uri
To: Norbert

Hi Norbert,

I hope [edited out: private information about Norbert].

I was wondering if you got a chance to take a look at the document. I am very excited about the possibility of posting something together.

Best,

Uri

Monday February 20th, 2.08PM
From: Norbert
To: Uri

Hi Uri -- sorry, was off over the weekend and got sidetracked. Will get there. N

Sunday February 26th, 7.49PM
From: Uri
To: Norbert

Hi Norbert,

Nearly 2 weeks ago I sent you that 1.5 page draft of the joint statement. I was wondering if you have given it a look. If you don't think it is something you are interested in doing I will understand, but I'd like to know.

If it is but you just haven't had the time, when do you think you will be able to?

Best,

Uri

Monday February 27th, 2.37AM
From: Norbert
To: Uri

Uri, as you anticipated when we talked this isn't as easy as saying "yes, we're all in agreement". So I started tinkering with the wordings. But there's always competing stuff, from [edited out] to wrapping up for a trip to preparing talks for a lecture tour in Hong Kong and getting over jet lag. It's still on my list. Best, Norbert (writing from Hong Kong)

Tuesday February 28th, 3.47PM
From:Uri
To:Norbert

Hi Norbert,

Thanks for your message, I really appreciate you getting back to me while away.

I write to see if you think you may be able to send us your edited version by, say, Sunday. I am a bit concern that your message to the listserv left the wrong impression on people, namely that p-curve cannot be very informative when few p-values are available, something that –as I think we discussed on the phone but am not sure- is not correct, p-curve can be used on a handful of p-values in a very informative manner.

I believe a joint statement manages to clarify that point, while also moving the dialogue into a very constructive direction, and that is very important to me, so I strongly prefer doing a joint statement, but it has been a few weeks already so I want to post something no later than next week, be it a joint statement or a solo clarification of this specific and factual point.

What do you think? Do you envision having a revised version by this coming Sunday?

Uri