



LOUISE RYAN, PhD Distinguished Professor,
School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences,
University of Technology Sydney

But I'm a Data Scientist Too, Aren't I?

The statistics profession is in a period of disruptive change, heralded by explosive growth in information technology and the “big data” revolution. New specialties such as machine learning, data science and analytics seem to go from strength to strength and sometimes it seems like statistics is being discarded like one of last decade’s fashion embarrassments. In this presentation, I will offer some perspectives on the changing landscape for statistical science. I’ll draw on some of my own recent projects where “statistics as usual” falls short and outline some of the areas where I think there are great opportunities for our profession to strengthen our role in the data science arena. I’ll finish up with some thoughts

about implications for training the next generation as well as up skilling the current generation of statisticians.

Biography: After completing her undergraduate degree in statistics and mathematics at Macquarie University, Dr. Ryan left Australia in 1979 to pursue her PhD in statistics at Harvard. In 1983, she obtained a postdoctoral fellowship in Biostatistics, jointly between Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and the Harvard School of Public Health. In 1985 she was promoted to Assistant Professor and went on to have an illustrious 20+ year career at Harvard, eventually becoming the Henry Pickering Walcott Professor and Chair of the Department of Biostatistics. She returned to Australia in early 2009 to become Chief of the Division of Mathematics, Informatics and Statistics at the Commonwealth and Industrial Research Organization, CSIRO. In 2012, she joined University of Technology Sydney as a distinguished professor of statistics in the School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences. Dr. Ryan is well known for her methodological contributions to statistical methods for cancer and environmental health research. She loves the challenge and satisfaction of multi-disciplinary collaboration. Equal to her scholarly efforts are her efforts to promote the careers of women and other groups traditionally under-represented in the profession. She has championed many causes to this end at many levels, including being a founder of the long-standing Fostering Diversity in Biostatistics Workshop at ENAR. She has received a number of prestigious awards and honors, most recently her 2012 election to the Australian Academy of Science, a 2015 honorary doctorate from Ghent University, Harvard’s 2015 Centennial Medal and her new role as President-Elect of the International Biometrics Society. Not to mention, she is also a former ENAR President.

