Ronald Aylmer Fisher Encyclopedia Article

Ronald Aylmer Fisher

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Ronald Aylmer Fisher

1890-1962

English statistician and geneticist considered one of the founders of modern statistics. Fisher introduced the analysis of variance and the concepts of randomization and confounding into the design of comparative experiments. Other contributions included significance testing and estimation with methods suitable for small samples using exact distributions, which he derived for many efficient sample statistics, and the important concept of likelihood, as distinct from probability. As a geneticist he contributed to understanding of the probabilistic evolution of dominance by natural selection. Politically, he was concerned about the differential fertility of the various social classes.