

Social science 'reproducibility crisis': Only 13 of 21 prestigious studies replicable

The "[reproducibility crisis](#)" in [social] science is erupting again. A research project attempted to replicate 21 social science experiments published between 2010 and 2015 in the prestigious journals Science and Nature. Only 13 replication attempts succeeded. The other eight were duds, with no observed effects consistent with the original findings.

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The researchers conclude that there is a systematic bias in published findings, "partly due to false positives and partly due to the overestimated effect sizes of true positives."

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One of the studies that didn't replicate attempted to study whether self-reported religiosity would change among test subjects who had first been asked to look at an image of the famous Auguste Rodin sculpture "The Thinker." The study found that people became less religious after exposure to that image.

"Our study in hindsight was outright silly," said Will Gervais, an associate professor of psychology at the University of Kentucky. Gervais said that [his original study](#) oversold a "random flip in the data," although other parts of his paper did replicate.

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A statement issued by the journal Science pointed out that all the experiments scrutinized in this latest effort were published before a decision several years ago by Science, Nature and other journals to adopt new guidelines designed to increase reproducibility, in part by greater sharing of data. "Our editorial standards have tightened," said the statement from Science.

Read full, original post: [Researchers replicate just 13 of 21 social science experiments published in top journals](#)