

St John's College
Cambridge
Sept 17 [1938]

Dear Fisher,

Your letter caught me at
Dunblane during a cycling tour.
I have written the enclosed as you
suggest. The other matter is dealt with
in a letter of mine to Nature this week.
That I don't know whether this one would
go better as a letter or a "note".

You seem to have gone through the
same cycle of opinion about Neynon as
I have, but at an earlier stage. I
didn't know that there was any
stimulus from behind in his leaving
Poland. I hope the seismologists at

Berkley don't try to learn statistics
from him - though Byerly is there &
is pretty hard to bluff.

I had a curious paper to referee
recently where a man did a lot of
rigorous mathematics proving that
something or other held "almost
everywhere"; & on inspection it
appeared that the points not included
in "almost everywhere" included all
that could possibly arise.

I am wondering whether more attention
shouldn't be given to the median. Its
uncertainty seems much less sensitive
to the form of the law than that of any
other simple statistic, & significance
tests for it are easy. The kind of case
where it may arise is also there are

only 8 or 10 observations & nothing must
to indicate the character of the law.

The mean of all or the mean of the extremes
may have little value, but there's
always something to be said for the

median. I have some cases where the
law is pretty certainly not normal, but
whether it is $e^{-x/a}$ ($n > 0$) or rectangular
or $(1 - \frac{x}{a})$ ($0 < n < a$) there is no evidence
whatsoever.

Yours sincerely
Harold Jeffreys