

## Re: Probability Theory--A Science?

**Source:** <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.stat.math/2005-02/0081.html>

---

**From:** Einar Andreas R dland (*e.a.rodland\_at\_medisin.uio.no*)

**Date:** 02/03/05

Date: Thu, 03 Feb 2005 12:42:05 +0100

To: "W. Wat son" <wolf\_tracks@invalid.inv>

W. Wat son wrote:

> *Mathematics is not considered a science, but is probability theory?*

> *Statistics? I would lean to yes on both.*

Probability theory and statistics (the theory at least) are both branches of mathematics.

In other languages, there are several distinct words for 'science' corresponding to different meanings of 'science'. I'll give the germanic terms (modulo misspellings).

1. natural science (Naturwissenschaft);
2. natural and mathematical sciences (Realwissenschaft);
3. all kinds of research including social sciences (Wissenschaft).

As far as I understand, in English the term 'science' can mean either the study of the the physical world (i.e. 1. natural science) or research in general (i.e. 3.). I'm not certain if it is also used in sense 2. as well, though I can't find that in any of the dictionaries I checked.

Mathematics and statistics are not part of natural science, though they are both extensively used in them, so in that use (1.) of the word the answer is no, however they are both sciences is the more general sense (3.).

Einar