

# Correlations & Causes

PHL 320  
Critical Thinking  
Distance Delivery

**Critical Thinking**

## Explaining the Numbers

$e_1$  Of the 771 men in the 40-49 year age group, 29% showed some signs of coronary heart disease.

$e_2$  Of the 954 women in the 40-49 year age group, only 14% showed signs of coronary heart disease.

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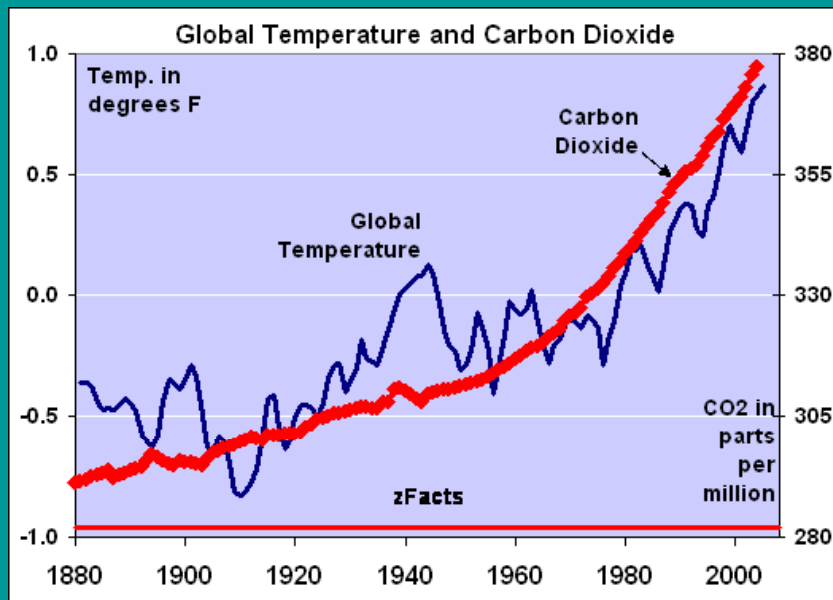
$t_0$  Coronary heart disease appears much more often in men.

**Critical Thinking**

## Explaining the Numbers

- Rival explanations
  - t<sub>1</sub>. It's just a coincidence that there was the gender disparity in the Framingham study
- A casual relationship between gender and coronary heart disease?

## Critical Thinking



## Explaining Correlations

$e_1$ . There is a strong correlation between CO<sub>2</sub> levels and the Earth's average temperature.

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$t_0$ . CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations cause global temperature variations.

**Critical Thinking**

## Explaining Correlations

$t_1$ . Global temperature variations cause varying CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations.

$t_2$ . Increased CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations cause increased temperatures, while, increased temperatures cause increases in CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations.

**Critical Thinking**

## **Jeff's Suggested Reading of the Constitutionality of Capital Punishment**

- t<sub>0</sub>. The death penalty must be imposed fairly, and with reasonable consistency, or not at all.

**Critical Thinking**

## ***McCleskey v. Kemp***

- The crime
- New Georgia homicide statute
- Jury
- Conviction
- Appeal
- Makeup of the Court -- 1987

**Self, World, & God**

## The Baldus Study

Race Killer/Victim	Death Sentence	Percentage
Black/White	50 of 223	22%
White/White	58 of 748	8%
Black/Black	18 of 1443	1%
White/Black	2 of 60	3%
Total by Victim		
White	108 of 981	11%
Black	20 of 1503	1%

### Critical Thinking

## Evidence that Capital Punishment is Unconstitutional

- e<sub>1</sub>- When controlled for over two hundred non-racial variables such as the defendant's record and the severity of the crime, the Baldus study concluded that murderers of white victims were 4.3 times as likely to receive the death penalty.
- e<sub>2</sub>- District attorneys ask for a capital sentence in seventy percent of the cases involving a black defendant and a white victim. When the victim is black and the defendant is white, however, a mere nineteen percent are even prosecuted as capital cases.

### Critical Thinking

## What Explains the Correlation?

- t<sub>0</sub>. The race of the murder victim causally influences the decision whether to seek the death penalty.
- t<sub>1</sub>. The decision to seek the death penalty causes the race of the victim.
- t<sub>2</sub>. It's just a coincidence that victims' race "correlated" with capital sentences in Georgia.
- t<sub>3</sub>. Some unidentified non-racial factor is responsible for the correlation of victim race and death sentences.

**Critical Thinking**

## Ruling in *McCleskey v. Kemp*

- 5-4 decision
- Justice Powell's opinion
- Equal Protection ruling
- Particularized discrimination
- Slippery-slope
- Implications for other sorts of discrimination

**Critical Thinking**