



# Democratizing Methods

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(New York University)

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Department of Statistics, Ludwigstr. 33, Seminar Room 144,  
and online via Zoom [\[Link\]](#)  
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## Abstract

The past few decades have seen an explosion in the development of freely available software to implement statistical methods and algorithms to help explore and analyze data. However, researchers tend to assume that releasing software packages implementing specific methods is sufficient for ensuring that the tools are adopted and used correctly. Typically, very little attention is paid to the user experience. This in turn means that the tools do not get used, are used incorrectly, or the results are misinterpreted. This talk will present a case study for how software development could be different by describing a causal analysis tool that scaffolds the user experience. I will discuss lessons learned through user studies and experimental evidence. I conclude with calls to action for those that develop methods and software.

## About the Speaker:

Jennifer Hill is a Professor of Applied Statistics at New York University. She develops and evaluates methods to help answer the types of causal questions that are vital to policy research and scientific development. In particular she focuses on situations in which it is difficult or impossible to perform traditional randomized experiments, or when even seemingly pristine study designs are complicated by missing data or hierarchically structured data. Hill is currently the Co-Chair of the Department of Applied Statistics, Social Science, and Humanities Department as well as the Co-Director of the Center for Practice and Research at the Intersection of Information, Society, and Methodology.