

MEDICAL HYPOCRICY AND EFFECTISM IN COGNITIVE SCIENCE



When
Wednesday
October 30, 2019

Where
Tillett Hall
Room 226



Time
11:00am-12:30pm

Keynote Speaker
J.P. de Ruiter
Of Tufts University

Benefiting
Psychology Students
Undergraduate/ Graduate

In the cognitive sciences, our most common way to empirically support theories is to collect empirical data and then demonstrate the presence of a statistically significant "effect" that would be predicted by our theory.

Most psychologists believe that by using this general methodology, we are following (a variant of) Popper's falsificationism, because in our statistical standard paradigm, we try to falsify the null hypothesis that there is no effect. But in fact, we are doing the *opposite* of what Popper proposed.

Arguably even more dangerous is our assumption that a significant effect suggest its own explanation, which leads to weak, hand-wavy, and badly motivated theories. I will discuss these two methodological problems, provide illustrative examples from cognitive psychology, and suggest some ways to avoid them.