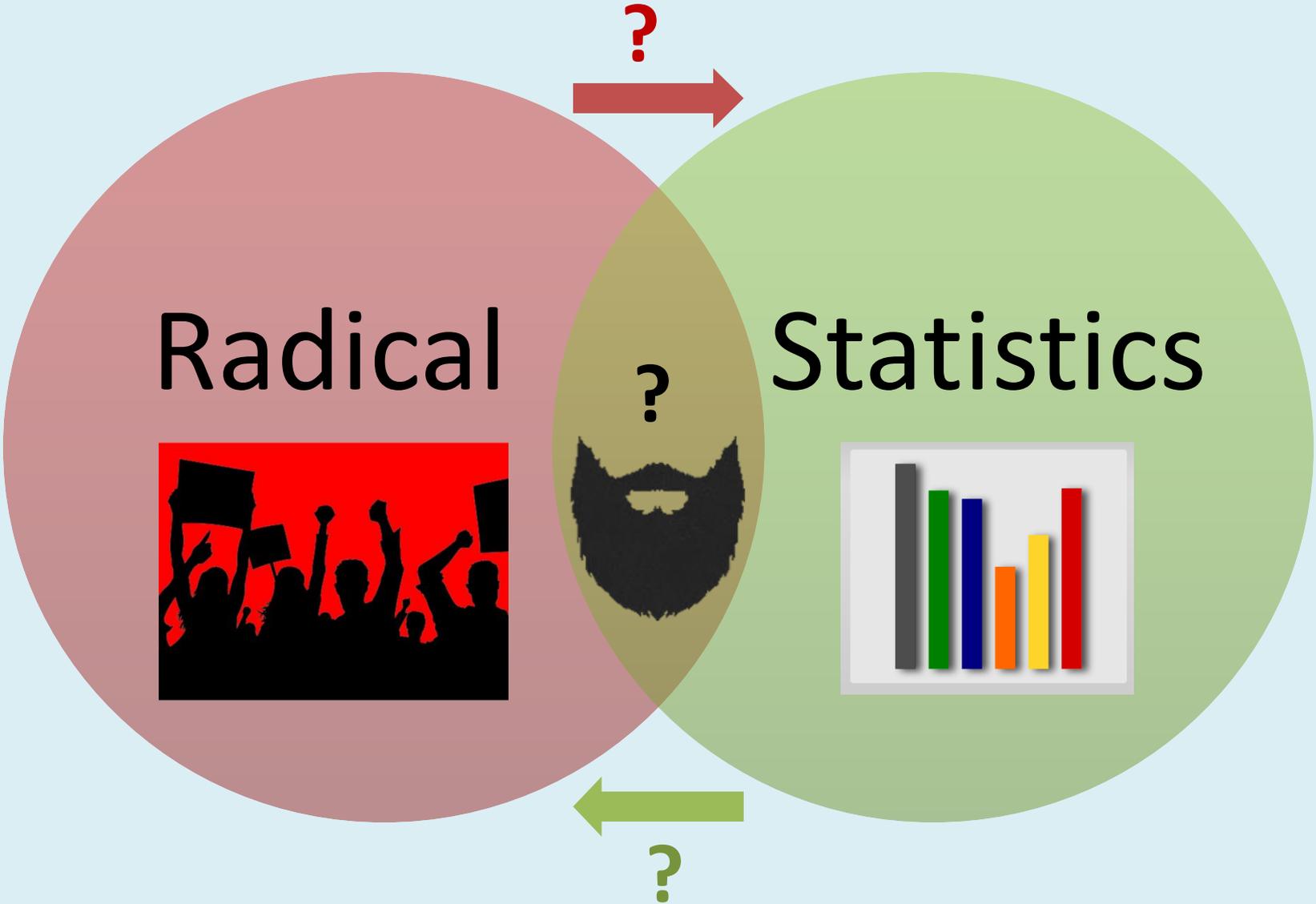


What is radical about radical statistics?

Some reflections

Rachel Cohen.



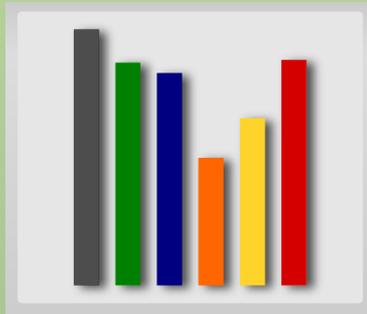
Radical



?



Statistics



‘What we are’

RadStats is independent of any other organisation.

Members are ‘radical’ in being committed to helping build a more free, democratic and egalitarian society.

Members of Radstats are concerned at the extent to which official statistics reflect governmental rather than social purposes.

Our particular concerns are:

- The mystifying use of technical language to disguise social problems as technical ones
- The lack of control by the community over the aims of statistical investigations, the way these are conducted and the use of the information produced
- The power structures within which statistical and research workers are employed and which control the work and how it is used
- The fragmentation of social problems into specialist fields, obscuring connectedness

Radstats website/journal

What is radical?

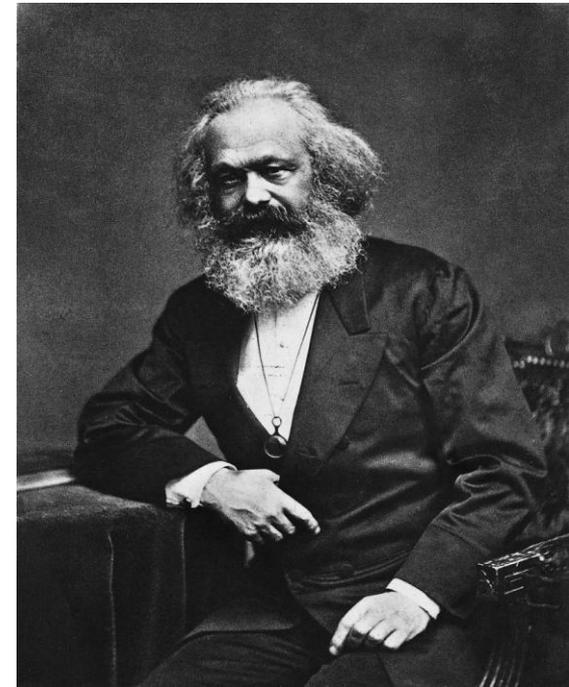
- Dissemination: Radstats as anti-journal.
 - Generalist; academic/non-academic; un-quantified!
 - But, few contributions; No 'test' of radical-ness.
- Critique of Society
 - Status quo/powerful as object of critique
 - But how different to other social science?
- Critique of Statistics/data
 - Statistics production and funding/de-funding
 - Focus only on state production?
- Radical practice and community
 - Internal
 - External community; Prefiguration?

Radical Statistics and Praxis

The weapon of criticism cannot, of course, replace criticism by weapons, material force must be overthrown by material force; but theory also becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses. Theory is capable of gripping the masses as soon as it demonstrates *ad hominem*, and it demonstrates *ad hominem* as soon as it becomes radical. To be radical is to grasp the root of the matter. But for man the root is man himself.

Karl Marx (1844)

A contribution to the critique of Hegel's philosophy of right



Radical Statistics:

Picking our targets, picking our allies

- Workplace analysis:
 - Time and motion studies
 - Quantification of work rates/movement
 - Who
 - collects the data?
 - analyses the data?
 - retains the data?
 - is measured?
 - What change(s) are enacted?
- Radical critique: **against statistics?**

“Accenture Analytics, part of Accenture Digital, delivers insight-driven outcomes at scale to help organizations leverage the digital revolution for their competitive advantage. With deep industry, functional, business process and technical experience, **Accenture Analytics develops innovative consulting and outsourcing services** for clients seeking superior returns on their analytics investment”

Accenture (2014) *Big Success with Big Data*
([online report](#))