

REJOINDER

The discussant's comments can be said to deal with the papers at this session from two distinct viewpoints: data user and data producer.

As a data user, the discussant is rightly impatient with the extent to which the papers offer only small advances of knowledge on subjects about which there is no apparent immediate need to know more. The Proceedings versions of these papers attempt to take some account of this criticism. Even so, readers may still feel this viewpoint has merit.

On the other hand, as a data producer, the

discussant does find aspects of these papers that are of some interest. After all, the process of converting data into information is always fraught with difficulties, especially where the data came from administrative records -- typically collected for another purpose entirely. Even small gains in such an environment may seem well worth it.

Data gathering activities can, as the discussant points out, be likened to mountain climbing and other risky ventures. However, who is to say that just because one cannot scale the highest mountain, the view is not worthwhile from a lower slope?