

# Saw Swee Hock Public Lecture in Statistics

## Statistics and the Law



by **Professor Philip Dawid**

*Professor of Statistics  
Statistical Laboratory  
University of Cambridge*

**January 29, 2010 (Friday)**

5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

T1, LG, Meng Wah Complex, HKU

Tea Reception at 5:10 p.m.

### **About the Talk**

It might appear that the concerns of Statistics and those of Law have little common ground, but in fact both disciplines address the same fundamental task: the drawing out of sound inferences from evidence. I will describe the logic of probabilistic reasoning and its application in the Law, including cases involving multiple infant deaths and DNA profiling, and show how its all too frequent neglect or misapplication has led to serious errors and miscarriages of justice.

### **About the Speaker**

Philip Dawid has been Professor of Statistics at Cambridge University since 2007, having spent most of his academic career at University College London. He has published around 150 research papers in theoretical and applied statistics. His jointly authored book *Probabilistic Networks and Expert Systems* won the 2002 DeGroot Prize for a Published Book in Statistical Science. He has been awarded Guy Medals in Bronze and in Silver by the Royal Statistical Society, and was the first recipient of the Snedecor Award for Best Publication in Biometry. He has served as Editor of *Biometrika*, *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, Series B*, and *Bayesian Analysis*, and as President of the International Society for Bayesian Analysis.

Following a first degree in Mathematics, Philip Dawid enrolled for the Cambridge Diploma in Mathematical Statistics. Naïvely expecting this to open up lucrative employment opportunities, he found himself fascinated by the logical challenges and ferocious controversies pervading the subject, and became an academic instead. He was rapidly converted to the Bayesian approach to probability and statistics, and has since used this as a basis for wide-ranging investigations into the foundations and applications of reasoning under uncertainty. He has long had a particular interest in the structuring and interpretation of legal evidence, including identification by means of DNA profiling, and has served as expert witness or adviser in a number of court cases.

**Visitors please note that the University has limited parking space.**

**If you are driving, please call the Department at 2859 2466 for parking arrangement.**



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All interested are welcome

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