Discussion Article — A Meta-analysis of Depression Treatment
for February 24th

For this week, we will discuss a paper involving a meta-analysis of antidepressant benefits, as posted on the course web site. Please also read the three short articles from the New York Times describing the study and analyzing the results.

For class on Wednesday, Feb. 24, be prepared to discuss:

1. Are the findings of this paper clearly described? Are you surprised that the story in the news became that "happy pills don't work," as described in the third NYT article? Was the first NYT article clear? What could have made either the original paper or the NYT article clearer?

2. This was a meta-analysis; how was it conducted? What kind of claim did they try to make? Was it different than the kinds of claims made by the initial studies?

3. The second NYT article discusses problems with the study. Do you think those problems are serious? In contrast, the third article thinks the results of the study are convincing. Why?

4. What does the graph on page 51 about? Does it clearly communicate that? What makes it clear or not clear?