

# Module 1: Introduction to Bayesian Statistics

Rebecca C. Steorts

# Agenda

- ▶ Motivations
- ▶ Traditional inference
- ▶ Bayesian inference
- ▶ Bernoulli, Beta
- ▶ Posterior of Bernoulli-Beta
- ▶ Conjugacy
- ▶ Example with 2012 election data
- ▶ Marginal likelihood
- ▶ Posterior Prediction
- ▶ Additional problems at the end of lecture (derivation + applied)

# What should you learn?

- ▶ You should learn the main principles of Bayesian inference/prediction and how to apply these to real data analysis.
- ▶ You will continue with this in lab/homework to make sure that you understand these key principles.

# Traditional inference

You are given **data**  $X$  and there is an **unknown parameter** you wish to estimate  $\theta$

How would you estimate  $\theta$ ?

- ▶ Find an unbiased estimator of  $\theta$ .
- ▶ Find the maximum likelihood estimate (MLE) of  $\theta$  by looking at the likelihood of the data.
- ▶ Please review unbiased estimation and finding an MLE.
- ▶ Please also review other background material such as likelihoods, sufficient statistics, basic probability concepts, etc. Most of this material can be reviewed in Chapters 1-3 in Hoff.

# Bayesian inference

Bayesian methods trace its origin to the 18th century and English Reverend Thomas Bayes, who along with Pierre-Simon Laplace discovered what we now call **Bayes' Theorem**

- ▶  $p(x | \theta)$  likelihood
- ▶  $p(\theta)$  prior
- ▶  $p(\theta | x)$  posterior
- ▶  $p(x)$  marginal distribution

How can we derive  $p(\theta | x)$ ?

## Derivation of $p(\theta \mid x)$

# Bernoulli distribution

The Bernoulli distribution is very common due to binary outcomes.

- ▶ Consider flipping a coin (heads or tails).
- ▶ We can represent this a binary random variable where the probability of heads is  $\theta$  and the probability of tails is  $1 - \theta$ .

Consider  $X \sim \text{Bernoulli}(\theta) \mathbb{1}(0 < \theta < 1)$

The likelihood is

$$p(x | \theta) = \theta^x (1 - \theta)^{(1-x)} \mathbb{1}(0 < \theta < 1).$$

- ▶ Exercise: what is the mean and the variance of  $X$ ?

# Bernoulli distribution

- Suppose that  $X_1, \dots, X_n \stackrel{iid}{\sim} \text{Bernoulli}(\theta)$ . Then for  $x_1, \dots, x_n \in \{0, 1\}$  what is the likelihood?



# Notation

- ▶  $\propto$ : means “proportional to”
- ▶  $x_{1:n}$  denotes  $x_1, \dots, x_n$

# Likelihood

$$\begin{aligned} p(x_{1:n}|\theta) &= \mathbb{P}(X_1 = x_1, \dots, X_n = x_n \mid \theta) \\ &= \prod_{i=1}^n \mathbb{P}(X_i = x_i \mid \theta) \\ &= \prod_{i=1}^n p(x_i|\theta) \\ &= \prod_{i=1}^n \theta^{x_i} (1 - \theta)^{1-x_i} \\ &= \theta^{\sum x_i} (1 - \theta)^{n - \sum x_i}. \end{aligned}$$

## Beta distribution

Given  $a, b > 0$ , we write  $\theta \sim \text{Beta}(a, b)$  to mean that  $\theta$  has pdf

$$p(\theta) = \text{Beta}(\theta|a, b) = \frac{1}{B(a, b)} \theta^{a-1} (1 - \theta)^{b-1} \mathbb{1}(0 < \theta < 1),$$

i.e.,  $p(\theta) \propto \theta^{a-1} (1 - \theta)^{b-1}$  on the interval from 0 to 1.

► Here,

$$B(a, b) = \frac{\Gamma(a)\Gamma(b)}{\Gamma(a+b)}$$

.

- Parameters  $a, b$  control the shape of the distribution.
- This distribution models random behavior of percentages/proportions.

# Posterior of Bernoulli-Beta

Lets derive the posterior of  $\theta \mid x_{1:n}$

# Conjugacy

What do you notice about the prior and the posterior from the Bernoulli-Beta example that we just considered?

# Conjugacy

If the posterior distribution comes from the same family of distributions as the prior, we say that the prior is conjugate for the likelihood.

More formally, a class  $P$  of prior distributions for  $\theta$  is called **conjugate** for the likelihood  $p(x | \theta)$  if

$$p(\theta) \in P \implies p(\theta | x) \in P.$$

Tip: In practice, we check to see if the posterior has an updated form of the prior.

## Example

- ▶ The Gaussian family is conjugate to itself with respect to a Gaussian likelihood.
- ▶ That is, if the likelihood function is Gaussian, choosing a Gaussian prior over the mean will ensure that the posterior distribution is also Gaussian.
- ▶ We will return to conjugacy later.
- ▶ First, we will look at a simple example to illustrate the idea of the Bernoulli-Beta.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conjugate\\_prior](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conjugate_prior) provides many conjugate families.

# Approval ratings of Obama

What is the proportion of people that approve of President Obama in PA?

- ▶ We take a random sample of 10 people in PA and find that 6 approve of President Obama.
- ▶ The national approval rating (Zogby poll) of President Obama in mid-September 2015 was 50%. We'll assume that in PA his approval rating is also 50%.
- ▶ Based on this prior information, we'll use a Beta prior for  $\theta$  and we'll choose  $a$  and  $b$ .
- ▶ Let's first look at a simple choice of just setting the prior.



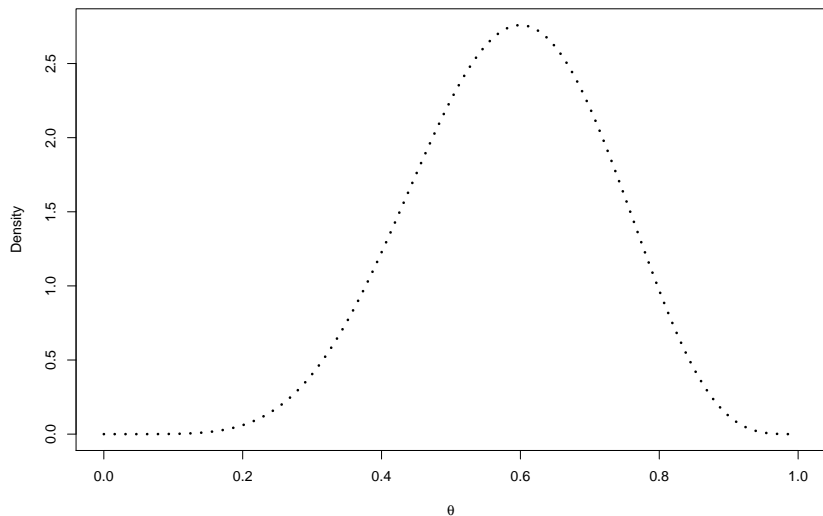
## Obama Example

```
n = 10
# Fixing values of a,b.
# I've chosen the prior on Beta to be skewed
a = 21/8
b = 0.04
th = seq(0,1, length=500)
x = 6

# we set the likelihood, prior, and posteriors with
# THETA as the sequence that we plot on the x-axis.
# Beta(c,d) refers to shape parameter
like = dbeta(th, x+1, n-x+1)
prior = dbeta(th, a, b)
post = dbeta(th, x+a, n-x+b)
```

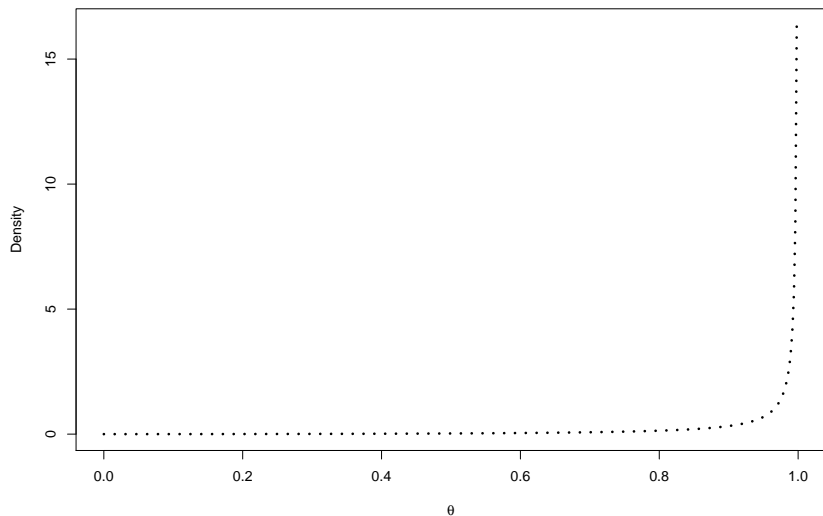
# Likelihood

```
plot(th, like, type='l', ylab = "Density",  
      lty = 3, lwd = 3, xlab = expression(theta))
```



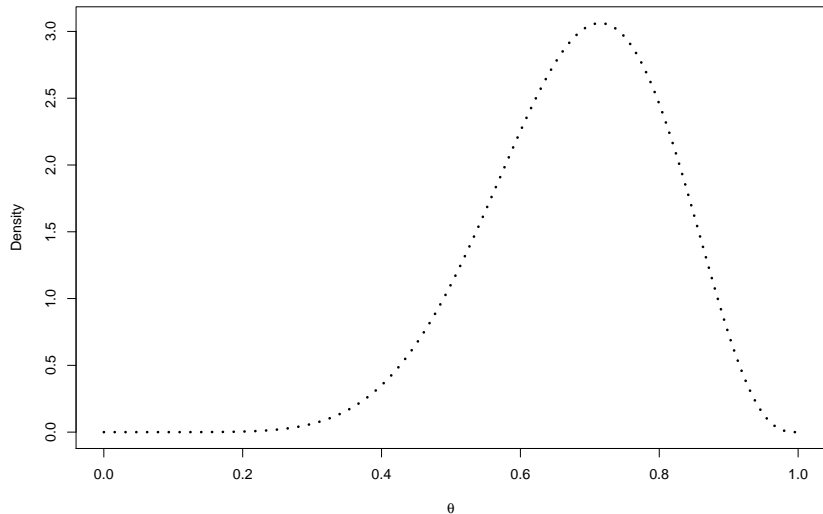
# Prior

```
plot(th, prior, type='l', ylab = "Density",  
      lty = 3, lwd = 3, xlab = expression(theta))
```

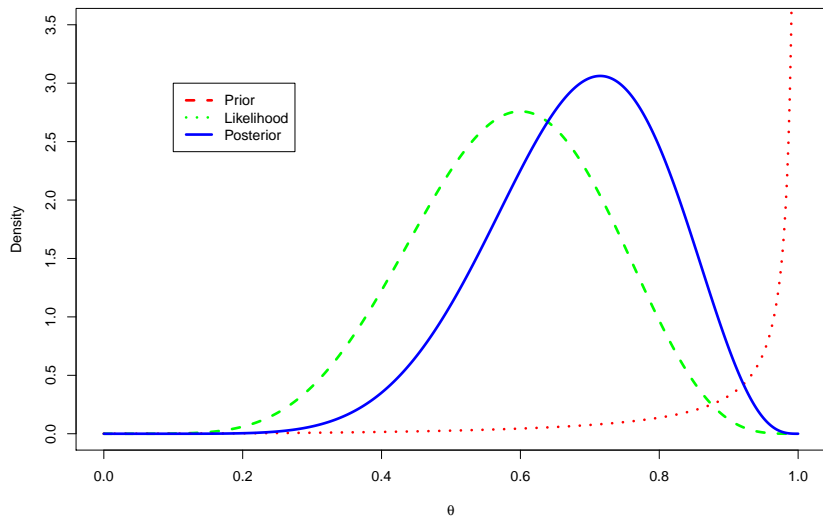


# Posterior

```
plot(th, post, type='l', ylab = "Density",  
      lty = 3, lwd = 3, xlab = expression(theta))
```



# Likelihood, Prior, and Posterior



## Back to the Prior

- ▶ We choose the prior here very arbitrarily due to very little information of “subjective knowledge.”
- ▶ In the supplemental material (end of lecture), find an example where we have more information and can set  $a, b$  from in a more subjective and principled manner.

# Cast of characters

- ▶ Observed data:  $x$
- ▶ This often involves many data points, e.g.,  
 $x = x_{1:n} = (x_1, \dots, x_n)$ .

likelihood	$p(x_{1:n} \theta)$
prior	$p(\theta)$
posterior	$p(\theta x_{1:n})$
marginal likelihood	$p(x_{1:n})$
posterior predictive	$p(x_{n+1} x_{1:n})$

# Marginal likelihood

The **marginal likelihood** is defined as

$$p(x) = \int p(x|\theta)p(\theta) d\theta$$



## Example: Back to the Bernoulli-Beta

$$X_1, \dots, X_n \mid \theta \stackrel{iid}{\sim} \text{Bernoulli}(\theta)$$

and

$$\theta \sim \text{Beta}(a, b).$$

What is the marginal likelihood for the Bernoulli-Beta?

## Marginal Likelihood: Bernoulli-Beta

Then the marginal likelihood is

$$\begin{aligned} p(x_{1:n}) &= \int p(x_{1:n}|\theta)p(\theta) d\theta \\ &= \int_0^1 \theta^{\sum x_i} (1-\theta)^{n-\sum x_i} \frac{1}{B(a,b)} \theta^{a-1} (1-\theta)^{b-1} d\theta \\ &= \frac{1}{B(a,b)} \int_0^1 \theta^{\sum x_i + a - 1} (1-\theta)^{n - \sum x_i + b - 1} d\theta \\ &= \frac{B(a + \sum x_i, b + n - \sum x_i)}{B(a,b)} \int_0^1 \frac{\theta^{\sum x_i + a - 1} (1-\theta)^{n - \sum x_i + b - 1}}{B(a + \sum x_i, b + n - \sum x_i)} d\theta \\ &= \frac{B(a + \sum x_i, b + n - \sum x_i)}{B(a,b)}, \end{aligned}$$

by the integral definition of the Beta function.

## Posterior predictive distribution

- ▶ We may wish to predict a new data point  $x_{n+1}$
- ▶ **Assumption 1:** Assume that  $x_{1:(n+1)}$  are independent given  $\theta$

$$\begin{aligned} p(x_{n+1}|x_{1:n}) &= \int p(x_{n+1}, \theta | x_{1:n}) d\theta \\ &= \int \frac{p(x_{n+1}, \theta, x_{1:n})}{p(x_{1:n})} d\theta \quad (\text{Conditional probability}) \\ &= \int \frac{p(x_{n+1}|\theta, x_{1:n})p(\theta|x_{1:n})p(x_{1:n})}{p(x_{1:n})} d\theta \quad (\text{Product rule}) \\ &= \int p(x_{n+1}|\theta, x_{1:n})p(\theta|x_{1:n}) d\theta \\ &= \int p(x_{n+1}|\theta)p(\theta|x_{1:n}) d\theta \quad \text{By Assumption 1.} \end{aligned}$$

## Posterior predictive distribution: Bernoulli-Beta

$$X_1, \dots, X_n \mid \theta \stackrel{iid}{\sim} \text{Bernoulli}(\theta)$$

and

$$\theta \sim \text{Beta}(a, b).$$

The posterior distribution can be shown to be

$$p(\theta \mid x_{1:n}) = \text{Beta}(\theta \mid a_n, b_n), \text{ where } a_n = a + \sum x_i \text{ and } b_n = b + n - \sum x_i.$$

## Posterior predictive distribution: Bernoulli-Beta

The posterior predictive can be derived to be

$$\begin{aligned}\mathbb{P}(X_{n+1} = 1 \mid x_{1:n}) &= \int \mathbb{P}(X_{n+1} = 1 \mid \theta) p(\theta \mid x_{1:n}) d\theta \\ &= \int \theta \text{Beta}(\theta \mid a_n, b_n) d\theta \\ &= \frac{a_n}{a_n + b_n} \quad (\text{Mean of Beta distribution}).\end{aligned}$$

Similarly,

$$\mathbb{P}(X_{n+1} = 0 \mid x_{1:n}) = 1 - \mathbb{P}(X_{n+1} = 1 \mid x_{1:n}) = \frac{b_n}{a_n + b_n}.$$

## Posterior predictive distribution (continued)

This implies that

$$p(x_{n+1}|x_{1:n}) = \begin{cases} \frac{a_n}{a_n+b_n} & \text{if } x_{n+1} = 1 \\ \frac{b_n}{a_n+b_n} & \text{if } x_{n+1} = 0 \end{cases}$$

More formally,

$$p(x_{n+1}|x_{1:n}) = \frac{a_n^{x_{n+1}} b_n^{1-x_{n+1}}}{a_n + b_n} \mathbb{1}(x_{n+1} \in \{0, 1\}).$$

Either solution above is correct.

# Overall Summary

- ▶ We covered the “cast of characters” needed to work with Bayesian models
- ▶ These include the likelihood, prior, posterior, marginal likelihood, and posterior predictive distribution
- ▶ We derived Bayes' Theorem
- ▶ Bernoulli-Beta
- ▶ Conjugacy

# Background Knowledge

- ▶ Familiar with Discrete and Continuous Distributions
- ▶ Can calculate expectations and variances
- ▶ Change of variables
- ▶ Mean squared error
- ▶ Sufficiency
- ▶ Confident calculating the likelihood and log-likelihood
- ▶ Confident in working with partial derivatives
- ▶ Familiar maximizing or minimizing functions (and proving they are global max/min)



# Detailed Summary for Exam

- ▶ Bayes Theorem
- ▶ Likelihood
- ▶ Prior
- ▶ Posterior derivation
- ▶ Marginal likelihood
- ▶ Posterior predictive distribution
- ▶ Conjugacy
- ▶ Proportionality
- ▶ Understanding when models are appropriate for data given to you (Ex: Approval ratings for Obama)
- ▶ What is an informative prior
- ▶ What is a non-informative prior
- ▶ Proper posterior
- ▶ How do you incorporate a pilot study into your posterior analysis (Ex: See sleep study)

## Supplemental Material

Below you will find supplemental material, such as exercises to help you for the exam with solutions provided.

## Exercise

We write  $X \sim \text{Poisson}(\theta)$  if  $X$  has the Poisson distribution with rate  $\theta > 0$ , that is, its p.m.f. is

$$p(x|\theta) = \text{Poisson}(x|\theta) = e^{-\theta} \theta^x / x!$$

for  $x \in \{0, 1, 2, \dots\}$  (and is 0 otherwise). Suppose  $X_1, \dots, X_n \stackrel{iid}{\sim} \text{Poisson}(\theta)$  given  $\theta$ , and your prior is

$$p(\theta) = \text{Gamma}(\theta|a, b) = \frac{b^a}{\Gamma(a)} \theta^{a-1} e^{-b\theta} \mathbb{1}(\theta > 0).$$

What is the posterior distribution on  $\theta$ ?

## Solution

Since the data is independent given  $\theta$ , the likelihood factors and we get

$$\begin{aligned} p(x_{1:n}|\theta) &= \prod_{i=1}^n p(x_i|\theta) \\ &= \prod_{i=1}^n e^{-\theta} \theta^{x_i} / x_i! \\ &\propto_{\theta} e^{-n\theta} \theta^{\sum x_i}. \end{aligned}$$

## Solution

Thus, using Bayes' theorem,

$$\begin{aligned} p(\theta|x_{1:n}) &\propto p(x_{1:n}|\theta)p(\theta) \\ &\propto e^{-n\theta} \theta^{\sum x_i} \theta^{a-1} e^{-b\theta} \mathbb{1}(\theta > 0) \\ &\propto e^{-(b+n)\theta} \theta^{a+\sum x_i-1} \mathbb{1}(\theta > 0) \\ &\propto \text{Gamma}(\theta \mid a + \sum x_i, b + n). \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, since the posterior density must integrate to 1, we have

$$p(\theta|x_{1:n}) = \text{Gamma}(\theta \mid a + \sum x_i, b + n).$$

# Module 1 Derivations

Class notes from Module 1 can be found below:

<https://github.com/resteorts/modern-bayes/tree/master/lecturesModernBayes20/lecture-1/01-class-notes>

## Additional Applied Example

Below, there is an additional applied example that you may find useful regarding this material.

# How Much Do You Sleep Example

We are interested in a population of American college students and the proportion of the population that sleep at least eight hours a night, which we denote by  $\theta$ .



# How Much Do You Sleep Example

- ▶ *The Gamecock*, at the USC printed an internet article "College Students Don't Get Enough Sleep" (2004).
  - ▶ Most students spend six hours sleeping each night.
- ▶ 2003: University of Notre Dame's paper, *Fresh Writing*.
  - ▶ The article reported took random sample of 100 students:
  - ▶ "approximately 70% reported to receiving only five to six hours of sleep on the weekdays,
  - ▶ 28% receiving seven to eight,
  - ▶ and only 2% receiving the healthy nine hours for teenagers."

# How Much Do You Sleep

- ▶ Have a random sample of 27 students is taken from UF.
- ▶ 11 students record that they sleep at least eight hours each night.
- ▶ Based on this information, we are interested in estimating  $\theta$ .

# How Much Do You Sleep

- ▶ From USC and UND, believe it's probably true that most college students get less than eight hours of sleep.
- ▶ Want our prior to assign most of the probability to values of  $\theta < 0.5$ .
- ▶ From the information given, we decide that our best guess for  $\theta$  is 0.3, although we think it is very possible that  $\theta$  could be any value in  $[0, 0.5]$ .

# Our Model

Our model can be summarized by the Binomial-Beta distribution

$$X|\theta \sim \text{Binomial}(n, \theta) \quad (1)$$

$$\theta \sim \text{Beta}(a, b) \quad (2)$$

You can show that the posterior of

$$\theta \mid X \sim \text{Beta}(x + a, n - x + b)$$

## Choice of $a, b$ for Beta Prior

- ▶ Given this information, we believe that the median of  $\theta$  is 0.3 and the 90th percentile is 0.5.
- ▶ Knowing this allows us to estimate the unknown values of  $a$  and  $b$ .
- ▶ How do we actually calculate  $a$  and  $b$ ?

## Choice of a,b for Beta Prior

We would need to solve the following equations:

$$\int_0^{0.3} \frac{\Gamma(a+b)}{\Gamma(a)\Gamma(b)} \theta^{a-1} (1-\theta)^{b-1} d\theta = 0.5$$

$$\int_0^{0.5} \frac{\Gamma(a+b)}{\Gamma(a)\Gamma(b)} \theta^{a-1} (1-\theta)^{b-1} d\theta = 0.9$$

In non-calculus language, this means the 0.5 quantile (50th percentile) = 0.3. The 0.9 quantile (90th percentile) = 0.5.

The equations are written as percentiles above!

- ▶ We can easily solve this numerically in R using a numerical solver `BBsolve` using the `BB` package. .
- ▶ The documentation for this package is not great, so beware.

# How Much Do You Sleep

```
#load the BB package
```

```
library(BB)
```

```
## using percentiles
```

```
myfn <- function(shape){
```

```
  test <- pbeta(q = c(0.3, 0.5), shape1 = shape[1],  
    shape2 = shape[2]) - c(0.5, 0.9)
```

```
  return(test)
```

```
}
```

```
BBsolve(c(1,1), myfn)
```

```
##    Successful convergence.
```

```
## $par
```

```
## [1] 3.263743 7.185121
```

```
##
```

```
## $residual
```

```
## [1] 5.905161e-08
```

```
##
```

# How Much Do You Sleep

Using our calculations from the Beta-Binomial our model is

$$X \mid \theta \sim \text{Binomial}(27, \theta)$$

$$\theta \sim \text{Beta}(3.3, 7.2)$$

$$\theta \mid x \sim \text{Beta}(x + 3.3, 27 - x + 7.2)$$

$$\theta \mid 11 \sim \text{Beta}(14.3, 23.2)$$



# How Much Do You Sleep

```
th = seq(0,1,length=500)
a = estimated$par[1]
b = estimated$par[2]
n = 27
x = 11
prior = dbeta(th,a,b)
like = dbeta(th,x+1,n-x+1)
post = dbeta(th,x+a,n-x+b)
plot(th,post,type="l",ylab="Density",lty=2,lwd=3,
xlab = expression(theta))
lines(th,like,lty=1,lwd=3)
lines(th,prior,lty=3,lwd=3)
legend(0.7,4,c("Prior","Likelihood","Posterior"),
lty=c(3,1,2),lwd=c(3,3,3))
```



# How Much Do You Sleep

