Bayesian statistics with R

7. Contrast scientific hypotheses with model selection

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Model selection

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- Idea: **penalize models with too many parameters**.

Akaike information criterion (AIC)

$$AIC = -2\log(L(\hat{\theta}_1, \ldots, \hat{\theta}_K)) + 2K$$

with L the likelihood and K the number of parameters θ_i.

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A measure of goodness-of-fit of the model to the data: the more parameters you have, the smaller the deviance is (or the bigger the likelihood is).

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$$\text{AIC} = -2\log(L(\hat{\theta}_1, \ldots, \hat{\theta}_K)) + 2K$$

A penalty: twice the number of parameters K

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- Two models are difficult to distinguish if ΔAIC < 2.

Bayesian version

- Watanabe-Akaike (Widely-Applicable) Information Criteria or WAIC:

$$\text{WAIC} = -2\sum_{i=1}^{n} \log E[\Pr(y_i \mid \theta)] + 2p_{\text{WAIC}}$$

- where $E[p(y_i \mid \theta)]$ is the posterior mean of the likelihood evaluated pointwise at each ith observation.
- p_{WAIC} is a penalty computed using the posterior variance of the likelihood.
- More in this video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vSjL2Zc-gEQ by McElreath.
- Relatively new and not yet available in Jags in routine.

```
# calculate wAIC with JAGS
# https://sourceforge.net/p/mcmc-jags/discussion/610036/thread/8211df61/#ec
samples <- jags.samples(storks$model,c("WAIC","deviance"), type = "mean",
                        n.iter = 2000,
                        n.burnin = 1000,
                        n.thin = 1)
```

```r
samples$p_waic <- samples$WAIC
samples$waic <- samples$deviance + samples$p_waic
tmp <- sapply(samples, sum)
waic <- round(c(waic = tmp[["waic"]], p_waic = tmp[["p_waic"]]),1)
waic
#>    waic p_waic
#>   217.2   12.7
```

Further reading

- Hooten, M.B. and Hobbs, N.T. (2015), A guide to Bayesian model selection for ecologists. Ecological Monographs, 85: 3-28. https://doi.org/10.1890/14-0661.1
- Conn, P.B., Johnson, D.S., Williams, P.J., Melin, S.R. and Hooten, M.B. (2018), A guide to Bayesian model checking for ecologists. Ecol Monogr, 88: 526-542. https://doi.org/10.1002/ecm.1314

Your turn: Practical 7