DATA SCIENCE: HOW DO YOU DO IT?

Outline

- The data science software stack
- Choosing the "best" software tool or language for the job
- What is the (statistical) question?
- A vignette: Asking and answering a predictive question
- Where can I learn more data science?
- Where can I access compute resources?

The data science software stack

Type of tools needed: Examples:

- Programming language
- Code editor

 Version control software













Choosing the "best" tool for the job

As long as the tools allow you to meet the following criteria for your analysis, they will be suitable for data science:

- 1. Reproducible and auditable
- 2. Accurate
- 3. Collaborative

Parker, H. (2017), Opinionated Analysis Development. *PeerJ*, doi: 10.7287/peerj.preprints.3210v1

Reproducible and auditable

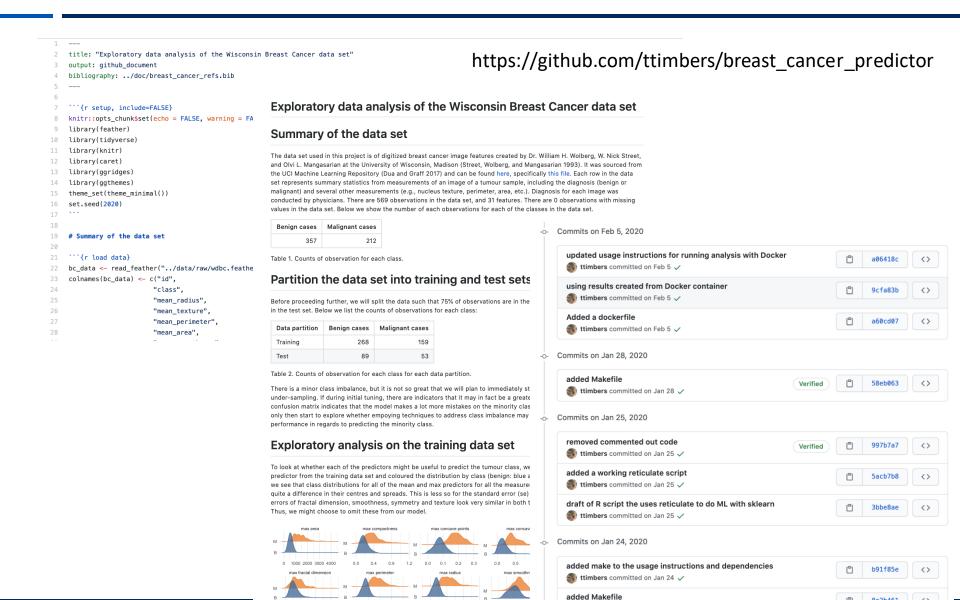
Data science requires reproducible and auditable analyses.

This means that you should be able to hand over your analysis and the raw data and they should be able to generate the exact same results as you. And see how this was done!

Performing analysis with code and version tracking can make your analysis reproducible and auditable!

Parker, H. (2017), Opinionated Analysis Development. PeerJ, doi: 10.7287/peerj.preprints.3210v1

Reproducible and auditable



Accurate

For analysis to be trustworthy, it also has to be accurate.

Writing your analysis with modular and testable code helps make your analysis accurate.

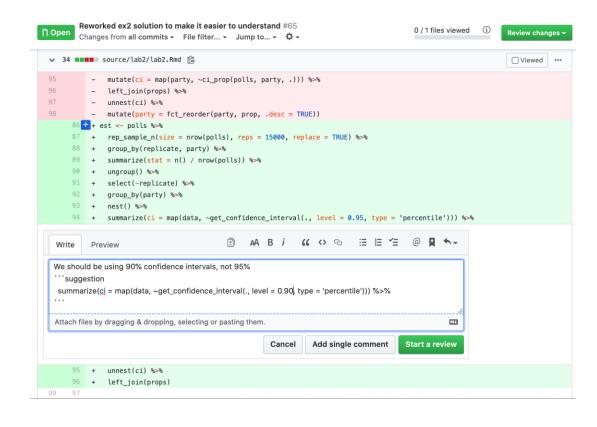
As does having your analysis code reviewed by others.

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Accurate

```
import numpy as np
    import pandas as pd
     import pytest
     from sklearn.datasets import load iris
    from feature_selection import variance_thresholding
    iris = pd.DataFrame(load_iris().data)
 9
10
    def test_1d_array_support():
        Test with 1d array
14
         result = variance_thresholding([1, 2, 3, 4, 5])
16
        assert np.array_equal(result, [0])
18
    def test_2d_array_support():
19
20
        Test with 2d array
        result = variance_thresholding(
24
             [[1, 6, 0, 5], [1, 2, 4, 5], [1, 7, 8, 5]]
26
        assert np.array_equal(result, [1, 2])
27
28
29
    def test_df_support():
30
        Test DataFrame support
        iris_copy = pd.DataFrame.copy(iris)
34
        iris_copy['fake_num'] = np.zeros(iris_copy.shape[0])
         iris copv['fake categorical'] = 'abcde'
```



Collaborative

An analysis is not useful unless it is used/viewed by others.

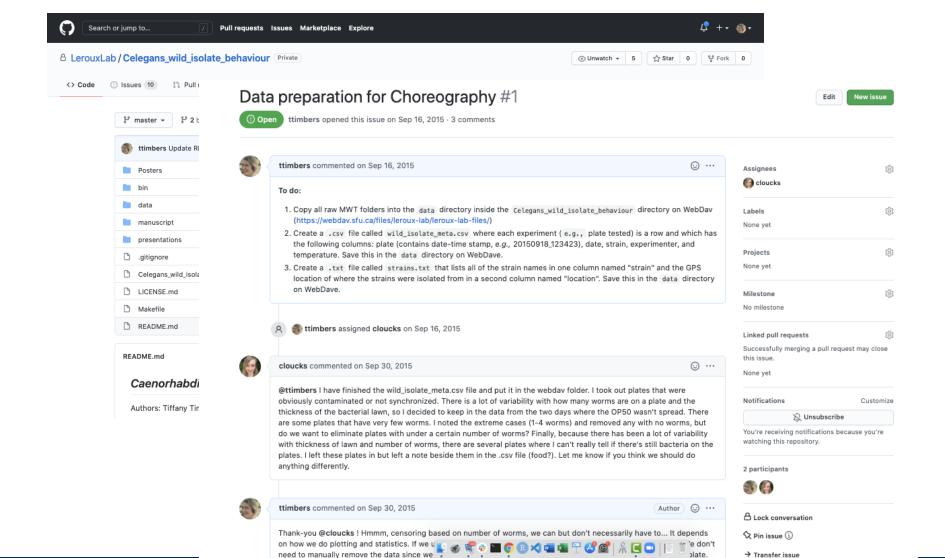
Most analysis for solving real-world problems are quite complex and sophisticated. Thus multiple experts are often required to complete such an analysis.

Collaborating on writing and code can be challenging if care is not taken, and versions are not managed.

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PeerJ, doi: 10.7287/peerj.preprints.3210v1

Collaborative



Choosing the "best" tool for the job



Source: http://thecontextofthings.com/2015/11/11/work-and-certain-skills-belonging-to-a-few-people/

Avoid the language wars... silos are worse than not choosing the "perfect" tool.

Choosing the "best" tool for the job



Source: https://chatsworthconsulting.com/2015/01/29/why-it-is-imperative-to-break-down-silos-now-and-five-ways-to-do-it/

Sharing of tools and workflows connect silos and leads to collaboration and success

What is the (statistical) question?

Data analysis flowchart Not a Did you summarize the data? data analysis Yes Did you report the summaries without interpretation? No Exploratory Did you quantify whether your discoveries are likely to hold in a new sample? No Are you trying to predict Are you trying to figure out how changing the measurement(s) for individuals? average of one measurement affects another? Is the effect you are looking for an average effect or a deterministic effect? Average Deterministic

Peng, R. & Leek, J. (2015), What is the question? Science, doi: 10.1126/science.aaa6146

Descriptive question

One that seeks to summarize a characteristic of a set of data. No interpretation of the result itself as the result is a fact, an attribute of the data set you are working with.

- 1. What is the frequency of viral illnesses in a set of data collected from a group of individuals?
- 2. How many people live in BC?

Exploratory question

One in which you analyze the data to see if there are patterns, trends, or relationships between variables looking for patterns that would support proposing a hypothesis to test in a future study.

- 1. What is the frequency of viral illnesses in a set of data collected from a group of individuals?
- 2. Does air pollution correlate with life expectancy in a set of data collected from groups of individuals from several regions in the United States?

Inferential question

One in which you analyze the data to see if there are patterns, trends, or relationships between variables in a representative sample. We want to quantify how much the patterns, trends, or relationships between variables is applicable to all individuals units in the population.

- 1. Is eating at least 5 servings a day of fresh fruit and vegetables is associated with fewer viral illnesses per year?
- 2. Is the gestational length of first born babies different from that of non-first borns?

Predictive question

One where you are trying to predict measurements or labels for individuals (people or things). Less interested in what causes the predicted outcome, just what predicts it.

- 1. How many viral illnesses will someone have next year?
- 2. What political party will someone vote for in the next US election?

Causal question

Asks about whether changing one factor will change another factor, on average, in a population. Sometimes the underlying design of the data collection, by default, allows for the question that you ask to be causal (e.g., randomized experiment or trial).

- 1. Does eating at least 5 servings a day of fresh fruit and vegetables cause fewer viral illnesses per year?
- 2. Does smoking lead to cancer?

Mechanistic question

One that tries to explain the underlying mechanism of the observed patterns, trends, or relationship (how does it happen?)

- 1. How do changes in diet lead to a reduction in the number of viral illnesses?
- 2. How does how airplane wing design change air flow over a wing, leading to decreased drag?

What is the (statistical) question?

Common mistakes		
REAL QUESTION TYPE	PERCEIVED QUESTION TYPE	PHRASE DESCRIBING ERROR
Inferential	Causal	"Correlation does not imply causation"
Exploratory	Inferential	"Data dredging"
Exploratory	Predictive	"Overfitting"
Descriptive	Inferential	"n of 1 analysis"

Peng, R. & Leek, J. (2015), What is the question? Science, doi: 10.1126/science.aaa6146

A vignette: asking a predictive question

Will a patient develop heart disease?

Install the data science software stack on your local desktop or laptop:

- 1. Mac OSX
- 2. Linux (Ubuntu)
- 3. Window 10

Or take advantage of a University-run JupyterHub:

1. For UBC: https://ubc.syzygy.ca

Login with your UBC cwl credentials.

(see here for additional information, and for other institutions)

If you need more compute power:

1. UBC has an Advanced Research Computing (ARC) unit: https://arc.ubc.ca/

ARC provices support to access Compute Canada's high-performance computing resources, as well as training on using their resources.

If you need people and compute resources to help you get started on a project:

- 1. Submit a proposal to UBC's Amazon Cloud Innovation Centre: https://cic.ubc.ca/
- Submit a proposal to be a partner for UBC's Master of Data Science capstone project: https://ubc-

mds.github.io/capstone/about/

THANK-YOU.