

# Bayesian Statistics with Stan

# Packages for this section

```
library(tidyverse)
# library(rstan)
library(cmdstanr)
library(posterior)
library(bayesplot)
```

# Installation 1/2

- cmdstanr:

```
install.packages("cmdstanr",  
                 repos = c("https://mc-stan.org/r-packages/",  
                           getOption("repos")))
```

- posterior and bayesplot, from the same place:

```
install.packages("posterior",  
                 repos = c("https://mc-stan.org/r-packages/",  
                           getOption("repos")))  
install.packages("bayesplot",  
                 repos = c("https://mc-stan.org/r-packages/",  
                           getOption("repos")))
```

## Installation 2/2

Then, to check that you have the C++ stuff needed to compile Stan code:

```
check_cmdstan_toolchain()
```

## The C++ toolchain required for CmdStan is setup properly!  
and then:

```
install_cmdstan(cores = 2)
```

If you happen to know how many cores (processors) your computer has, insert the appropriate number. (My laptop has 4 and my desktop 6.)

All of this is done once. If you have problems, go [here](#) (link).

# Bayesian and frequentist inference

- The inference philosophy that we have learned so far says that:
  - parameters to be estimated are *fixed* but *unknown*
  - Data random; if we took another sample we'd get different data.
- This is called “frequentist” or “repeated-sampling” inference.
- Bayesian inference says:
  - *parameters* are random, *data* is *given*
- Ingredients:
  - **prior distribution**: distribution of parameters before seeing data.
  - **likelihood**: model for data if the parameters are known
  - **posterior distribution**: distribution of parameters *after* seeing data.

# Distribution of parameters

- Instead of having a point or interval estimate of a parameter, we have an entire distribution
- so in Bayesian statistics we can talk about eg.
  - probability that a parameter is bigger than some value
  - probability that a parameter is close to some value
  - probability that one parameter is bigger than another
- Name comes from Bayes' Theorem, which here says *posterior is proportional to likelihood times prior*
- more discussion about this is in **a blog post**.

# An example

- Suppose we have these (integer) observations:

```
(x <- c(0, 4, 3, 6, 3, 3, 2, 4))
```

```
## [1] 0 4 3 6 3 3 2 4
```

- Suppose we believe that these come from a Poisson distribution with a mean  $\lambda$  that we want to estimate.
- We need a prior distribution for  $\lambda$ . I will (for some reason) take a *Weibull* distribution with parameters 1.1 and 6, that has quartiles 2 and 6. Normally this would come from your knowledge of the data-generating *process*.
- The Poisson likelihood can be written down (see over).

## Some algebra

- We have  $n = 8$  observations  $x_i$ , so the Poisson likelihood is proportional to

$$\prod_{i=1}^n e^{-\lambda} \lambda^{x_i} = e^{-n\lambda} \lambda^S,$$

where  $S = \sum_{i=1}^n x_i$ .

- then you write the Weibull prior density (as a function of  $\lambda$ ):

$$C(\lambda/6)^{0.1} e^{-(\lambda/6)^{1.1}}$$

where  $C$  is a constant.

- and then you multiply these together and try to recognize the distributional form. Only, here you can't. The powers 0.1 and 1.1 get in the way.



# Sampling from the posterior distribution

- Wouldn't it be nice if we could just *sample* from the posterior distribution? Then we would be able to compute it as accurately as we want.
- Metropolis and Hastings: devise a Markov chain (C62) whose limiting distribution is the posterior you want, and then sample from that Markov chain (easy), allowing enough time to get close enough to the limiting distribution.
- Stan: uses a modern variant that is more efficient (called Hamiltonian Monte Carlo), implemented in R packages `cmdstanr`.
- Write Stan code in a file, compile it and sample from it.

# Components of Stan code: the model

```
model {  
  // likelihood  
  x ~ poisson(lambda);  
}
```

This is how you say “ $X$  has a Poisson distribution with mean  $\lambda$ ”. **Note that lines of Stan code have semicolons on the end.**

# Components of Stan code: the prior distribution

```
model {  
  // prior  
  lambda ~ weibull(1.1, 6);  
  // likelihood  
  x ~ poisson(lambda);  
}
```

# Components of Stan code: data and parameters

- first in the Stan code:

```
data {  
  int x[8];  
}
```

```
parameters {  
  real<lower=0> lambda;  
}
```

# Compile and sample from the model

- compile

```
poisson1 <- cmdstan_model("poisson1.stan")
```

- set up data

```
poisson1_data <- list(x = x)
```

- sample

```
poisson1_fit <- poisson1$sample(data = poisson1_data)
```

```
## Running MCMC with 4 sequential chains...
```

```
##
```

```
## Chain 1 Iteration:      1 / 2000 [  0%] (Warmup)
```

```
## Chain 1 Iteration:    100 / 2000 [  5%] (Warmup)
```

```
## Chain 1 Iteration:    200 / 2000 [ 10%] (Warmup)
```

```
## Chain 1 Iteration:    300 / 2000 [ 15%] (Warmup)
```

```
## Chain 1 Iteration:    400 / 2000 [ 20%] (Warmup)
```

# The output

```
poisson1_fit
```

```
## variable mean median sd mad q5 q95 rhat
## lp__ 3.75 4.03 0.71 0.31 2.36 4.26 1.00
## lambda 3.19 3.15 0.63 0.61 2.24 4.31 1.00
## ess_bulk ess_tail
## 1827 2086
## 1443 1807
```

# Comments

- This summarizes the posterior distribution of  $\lambda$
- the posterior mean is 3.19
- with a 90% posterior interval of 2.24 to 4.31.
- The probability that  $\lambda$  is between these two values really is 90%.

# Making the code more general

- The coder in you is probably offended by hard-coding the sample size and the parameters of the prior distribution. More generally:

```
data {  
  int<lower=1> n;  
  real<lower=0> a;  
  real<lower=0> b;  
  int x[n];  
}  
...  
model {  
  // prior  
  lambda ~ weibull(a, b);  
  // likelihood  
  x ~ poisson(lambda);  
}
```



## Set up again and sample:

- Compile again:

```
poisson2 <- cmdstan_model("poisson2.stan")  
poisson2
```

```
## // Estimating Poisson mean  
##  
## data {  
##   int<lower=1> n;  
##   real<lower=0> a;  
##   real<lower=0> b;  
##   int x[n];  
## }  
##  
## parameters {  
##   real<lower=0> lambda;  
## }
```

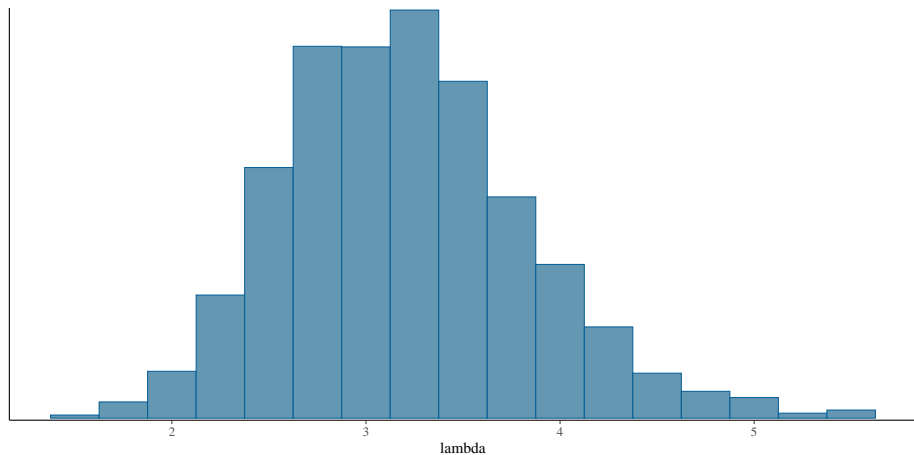
output should be the same (to within randomness)

```
poisson2_fit
```

```
## variable mean median sd mad q5 q95 rhat
## lp__ 3.76 4.03 0.72 0.31 2.31 4.26 1.00
## lambda 3.21 3.16 0.63 0.60 2.29 4.30 1.00
## ess_bulk ess_tail
## 1707 1844
## 1429 1830
```

# Picture of posterior

```
mcmc_hist(poisson2_fit$draws("lambda"), binwidth = 0.25)
```



# Extracting actual sampled values

A little awkward at first:

```
poisson2_fit$draws()
```

```
## # A draws_array: 1000 iterations, 4 chains, and 2 variables
## , , variable = lp__
##
##           chain
## iteration  1    2    3    4
##           1 4.2 3.6 3.9 4.0
##           2 4.2 3.5 4.1 4.0
##           3 3.9 3.8 4.1 3.6
##           4 4.0 3.1 3.8 4.2
##           5 4.0 4.0 4.0 4.2
##
## , , variable = lambda
##
```

## Sampled values as dataframe

```
as_draws_df(poisson2_fit$draws()) %>%  
  as_tibble() -> poisson2_draws  
poisson2_draws
```

```
## # A tibble: 4,000 x 5  
##      lp__  lambda .chain .iteration .draw  
##      <dbl>  <dbl>   <int>      <int> <int>  
##  1  4.20    2.99     1         1      1  
##  2  4.20    2.99     1         2      2  
##  3  3.93    3.72     1         3      3  
##  4  4.04    3.62     1         4      4  
##  5  4.02    3.64     1         5      5  
##  6  3.74    3.87     1         6      6  
##  7  1.70    4.82     1         7      7  
##  8  4.07    2.83     1         8      8  
##  9  4.16    3.47     1         9      9  
## 10  4.00    3.00     1        10     10
```

# Posterior predictive distribution

- Another use for the actual sampled values is to see what kind of *response* values we might get in the future. This should look something like our data. For a Poisson distribution, the response values are integers:

```
poisson2_draws %>%  
  rowwise() %>%  
  mutate(xsim = rpois(1, lambda)) -> d  
d
```

```
## # A tibble: 4,000 x 6  
##   lp__ lambda .chain .iteration .draw xsim  
##   <dbl>   <dbl>   <int>      <int> <int> <int>  
## 1  4.20    2.99     1         1      1     2  
## 2  4.20    2.99     1         2      2     3  
## 3  3.93    3.72     1         3      3     2  
## 4  4.04    3.62     1         4      4     5
```

# Comparison

Our actual data values were these:

```
x
```

```
## [1] 0 4 3 6 3 3 2 4
```

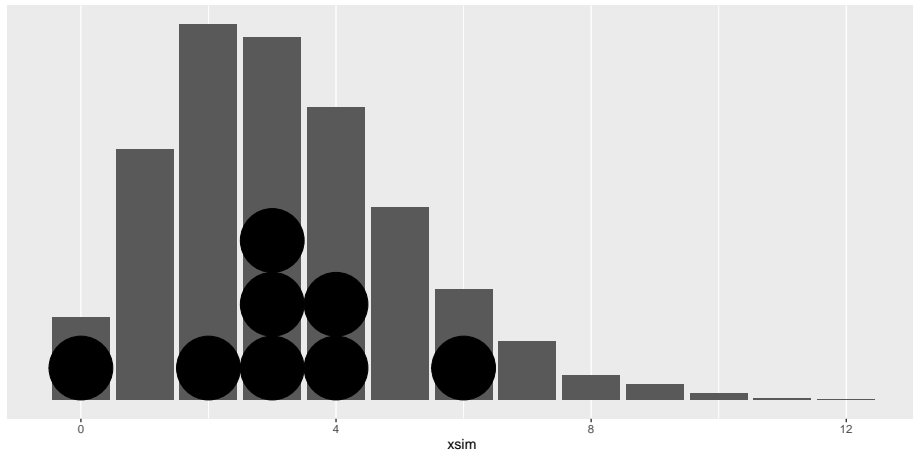
- None of these are very unlikely according to our posterior predictive distribution, so our model is believable.
- Or make a plot: a bar chart with the data on it as well (over):

```
ggplot(d, aes(x = xsim)) + geom_bar() +  
  geom_dotplot(data = tibble(x), aes(x = x), binwidth = 1) +  
  scale_y_continuous(NULL, breaks = NULL) -> g
```

- This also shows that the distribution of the data conforms well enough to the posterior predictive distribution (over).

# The plot

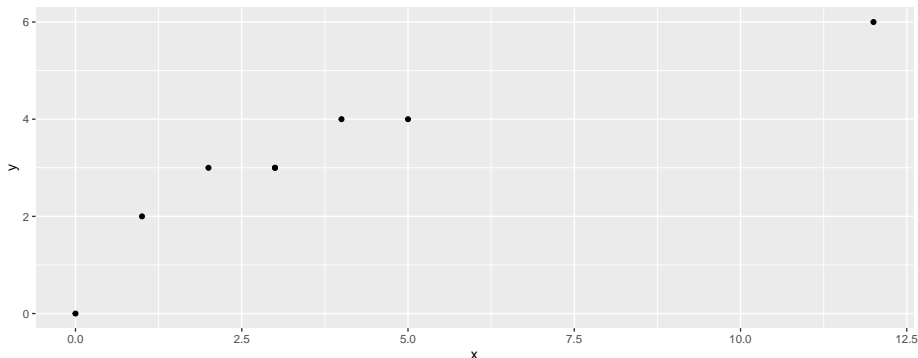
g





# Do they have the same distribution?

```
qqplot(d$xsim, x, plot.it = F) %>% as_tibble() -> dd  
ggplot(dd, aes(x=x, y=y)) + geom_point()
```



the observed zero is a bit too small compared to expected (from the posterior), but the other points seem pretty well on a line.

# Analysis of variance, the Bayesian way

Recall the jumping rats data:

```
my_url <-  
  "http://ritsokiguess.site/datafiles/jumping.txt"  
rats0 <- read_delim(my_url, " ")  
rats0
```

```
## # A tibble: 30 x 2  
##   group density  
##   <chr>    <dbl>  
## 1 Control    611  
## 2 Control    621  
## 3 Control    614  
## 4 Control    593  
## 5 Control    593  
## 6 Control    653  
## 7 Control    600
```

# Our aims here

- Estimate the mean bone density of all rats under each of the experimental conditions
- Model: given the group means, each observation normally distributed with common variance  $\sigma^2$
- Three parameters to estimate, plus the common variance.
- Obtain posterior distributions for the group means.
- Ask whether the posterior distributions of these means are sufficiently different.

# Numbering the groups

- Stan doesn't handle categorical variables (everything is real or int).
- Turn the groups into group *numbers* first.
- Take opportunity to put groups in logical order:

```
rats0 %>% mutate(  
  group_fct = fct_inorder(group),  
  group_no = as.integer(group_fct)  
) -> rats  
rats
```

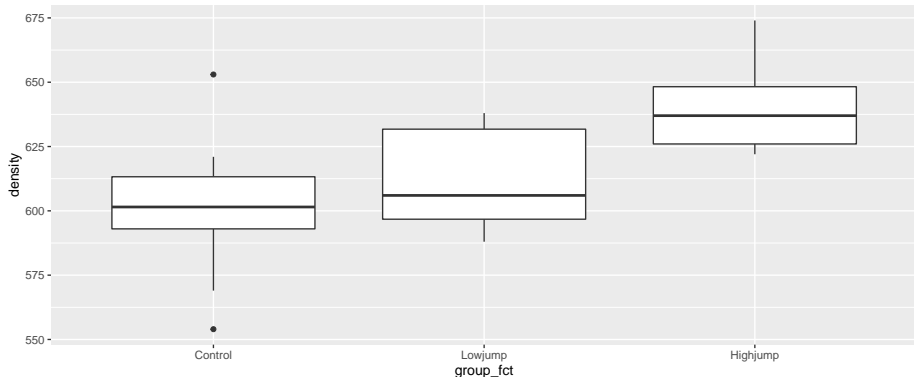
```
## # A tibble: 30 x 4
```

```
##   group    density group_fct group_no  
##   <chr>    <dbl> <fct>      <int>  
## 1 Control    611 Control        1  
## 2 Control    621 Control        1  
## 3 Control    614 Control        1  
## 4 Control    593 Control        1
```

# Plotting the data 1/2

Most obviously, boxplots:

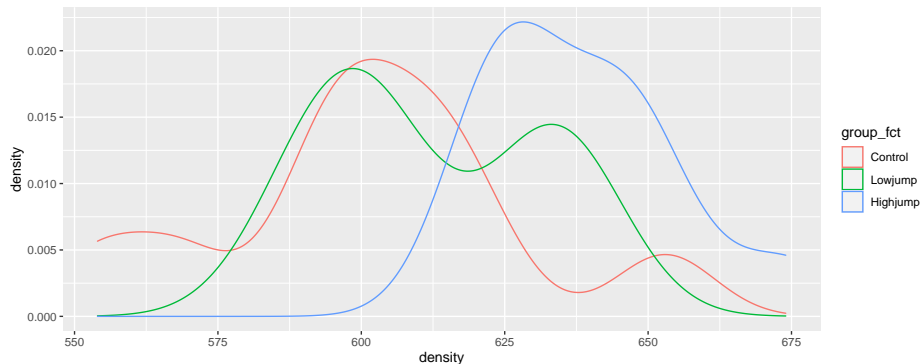
```
ggplot(rats, aes(x = group_fct, y = density)) +  
  geom_boxplot()
```



## Plotting the data 2/2

Another way: density plot (smoothed out histogram); can distinguish groups by colours:

```
ggplot(rats, aes(x = density, colour = group_fct)) +  
  geom_density()
```



# The procedure

- For each observation, find out which (numeric) group it belongs to,
- then model it as having a normal distribution with that group's mean and the common variance.
- Stan does for loops.

# The model part

Suppose we have `n_obs` observations:

```
model {  
  // likelihood  
  for (i in 1:n_obs) {  
    g=group_no[i];  
    density[i] ~ normal(mu[g], sigma);  
  }  
}
```



# The variables here

- `n_obs` is data.
- `g` is a temporary integer variable only used here
- `i` is only used in the loop (integer) and does not need to be declared
- `density` is data, a real vector of length `n_obs`
- `mu` is a parameter, a real vector of length 3 (3 groups)
- `sigma` is a real parameter

`mu` and `sigma` need prior distributions:

- for `mu`, each component independently normal with mean 600 and SD 50 (my guess at how big and variable they will be)
- for `sigma`, chi-squared with 50 df (my guess at typical amount of variability from obs to obs)

# Complete the model section:

```
model {  
  int g;  
  // priors  
  mu ~ normal(600, 50);  
  sigma ~ chi_square(50);  
  // likelihood  
  for (i in 1:n_obs) {  
    g=group_no[i];  
    density[i] ~ normal(mu[g], sigma);  
  }  
}
```

# Parameters

The elements of `mu`, one per group, and also `sigma`, scalar, lower limit zero:

```
parameters {  
  real mu[n_group];  
  real<lower=0> sigma;  
}
```

- Declare `sigma` to have lower limit zero here, so that the sampling runs smoothly.
- declare `n_group` in data section

# Data

Everything else:

```
data {  
  int n_obs;  
  int n_group;  
  real density[n_obs];  
  int<lower=1, upper=n_group> group_no[n_obs];  
}
```

# Compile

Arrange these in order data, parameters, model in file `anova.stan`, then:

```
anova <- cmdstan_model("anova.stan")
```

# Set up data and sample

Supply values for *everything* declared in data:

```
anova_data <- list(  
  n_obs = 30,  
  n_group = 3,  
  density = rats$density,  
  group_no = rats$group_no  
)  
anova_fit <- anova$sample(data = anova_data)
```

```
## Running MCMC with 4 sequential chains...
```

```
##
```

```
## Chain 1 Iteration:      1 / 2000 [  0%]   (Warmup)
```

```
## Chain 1 Iteration:    100 / 2000 [  5%]   (Warmup)
```

```
## Chain 1 Iteration:    200 / 2000 [ 10%]   (Warmup)
```

```
## Chain 1 Iteration:    300 / 2000 [ 15%]   (Warmup)
```

```
## Chain 1 Iteration:    400 / 2000 [ 20%]   (Warmup)
```

# Check that the sampling worked properly

```
anova_fit$cmdstan_diagnose()
```

```
## Processing csv files: /tmp/RtmpYaNcmB/anova-202107072009-1-128ec5.csv, /tmp/RtmpYaNcmB/anova-202107072009-2-128ec5.csv, /tmp/RtmpYaNcmB/anova-202107072009-3-128ec5.csv, /tmp/RtmpYaNcmB/anova-202107072009-4-128ec5.csv
##
## Checking sampler transitions treedepth.
## Treedepth satisfactory for all transitions.
##
## Checking sampler transitions for divergences.
## No divergent transitions found.
##
## Checking E-BFMI - sampler transitions HMC potential energy.
## E-BFMI satisfactory.
##
## Effective sample size satisfactory.
##
## Split R-hat values satisfactory all parameters.
##
## Processing complete, no problems detected.
```

# Look at the results

```
anova_fit
```

```
## variable    mean median    sd  mad      q5      q95
## lp__      -40.99 -40.62  1.52  1.24 -43.89 -39.29
## mu[1]     600.93 600.81  9.19  8.53 586.06 616.02
## mu[2]     612.36 612.29  8.80  8.55 598.09 626.98
## mu[3]     637.38 637.49  8.81  8.77 622.74 651.45
## sigma     28.48  28.13  4.19  4.04  22.51  35.84
## rhat ess_bulk ess_tail
## 1.00      1999      2522
## 1.00      4064      2624
## 1.00      4171      2984
## 1.00      3688      2652
## 1.00      3339      2868
```

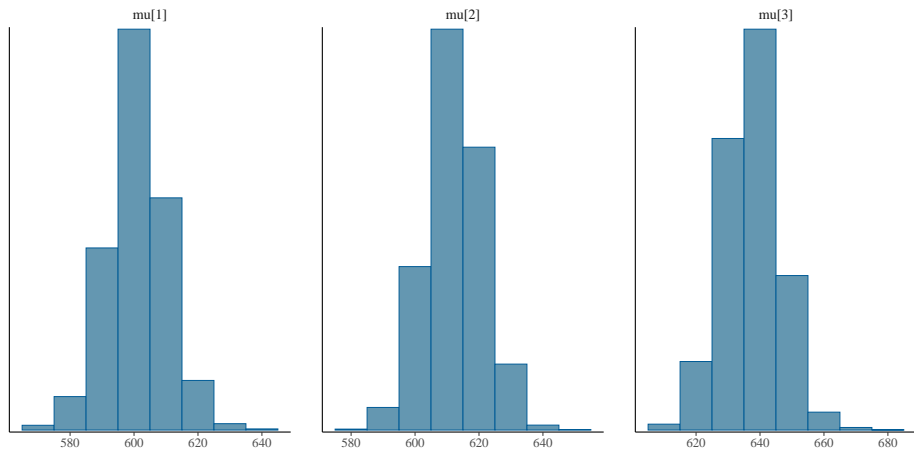


# Comments

- The posterior 95% intervals for control (group 1) and highjump (group 3) do not quite overlap, suggesting that these exercise groups really are different.
- Bayesian approach does not normally do tests: look at posterior distributions and decide whether they are different enough to be worth treating as different.

# Plotting the posterior distributions for the mu

```
mcmc_hist(anova_fit$draws("mu"), binwidth = 10)
```



# Extract the sampled values

```
as_draws_df(anova_fit$draws()) %>% as_tibble() -> anova_draws
anova_draws
```

```
## # A tibble: 4,000 x 8
##   lp__ `mu[1]` `mu[2]` `mu[3]` sigma .chain
##   <dbl>   <dbl>   <dbl>   <dbl> <dbl>   <int>
## 1 -40.5     597.     605.     631.   23.1     1
## 2 -40.6     592.     620.     630.   25.5     1
## 3 -41.9     617.     604.     641.   24.3     1
## 4 -40.2     601.     613.     633.   33.1     1
## 5 -42.4     596.     606.     624.   37.1     1
## 6 -39.3     601.     614.     631.   27.8     1
## 7 -41.4     596.     624.     651.   29.6     1
## 8 -39.5     595.     610.     640.   29.4     1
## 9 -39.4     607.     614.     636.   24.8     1
## 10 -39.4     607.     614.     636.   24.8     1
```

estimated probability that  $\mu_3 > \mu_1$

```
anova_draws %>%  
  count(`mu[3]` > `mu[1]`) %>%  
  mutate(prob = n/sum(n))
```

```
## # A tibble: 2 x 3  
##   `mu[3]` > `mu[1]`      n    prob  
##   <lgl>              <int> <dbl>  
## 1 FALSE              14 0.0035  
## 2 TRUE              3986 0.996
```

High jumping group almost certainly has larger mean than control group.

## More organizing

- for another plot
  - make longer
  - give group values their proper names back

```
anova_draws %>%  
  pivot_longer(starts_with("mu"),  
               names_to = "group",  
               values_to = "bone_density") %>%  
  mutate(group = fct_recode(group,  
    Control = "mu[1]",  
    Lowjump = "mu[2]",  
    Highjump = "mu[3]"  
  )) -> sims
```

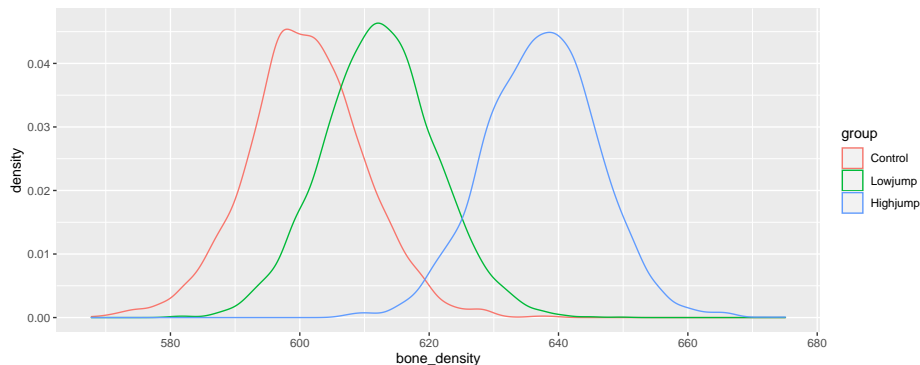
## What we have now:

```
sims %>% sample_n(8)
```

```
## # A tibble: 8 x 7
##   lp__ sigma .chain .iteration .draw group
##   <dbl> <dbl> <int>      <int> <int> <fct>
## 1 -42.8  33.7     4        302   3302 Highjump
## 2 -41.3  24.5     3        422   2422 Highjump
## 3 -40.7  26.2     3        438   2438 Lowjump
## 4 -39.7  27.6     1        780    780 Control
## 5 -39.9  27.3     4        895   3895 Control
## 6 -42.2  37.8     2         58   1058 Lowjump
## 7 -40.4  28.0     2        558   1558 Lowjump
## 8 -42.8  34.7     3        761   2761 Lowjump
## # ... with 1 more variable: bone_density <dbl>
```

# Density plots of posterior mean distributions

```
ggplot(sims, aes(x = bone_density, colour = group)) + geom_density
```



# Posterior predictive distributions

Randomly sample from posterior means and SDs in sims. There are 12000 rows in sims:

```
sims %>% mutate(sim_data = rnorm(12000, bone_density, sigma))  
ppd
```

```
## # A tibble: 12,000 x 8
```

```
##      lp__ sigma .chain .iteration .draw group  
##      <dbl> <dbl>   <int>      <int> <int> <fct>  
##  1 -40.5  23.1     1         1     1 Control  
##  2 -40.5  23.1     1         1     1 Lowjump  
##  3 -40.5  23.1     1         1     1 Highjump  
##  4 -40.6  25.5     1         2     2 Control  
##  5 -40.6  25.5     1         2     2 Lowjump  
##  6 -40.6  25.5     1         2     2 Highjump  
##  7 -41.9  24.3     1         3     3 Control  
##  8 -41.9  24.3     1         3     3 Lowjump
```



# Compare posterior predictive distribution with actual data

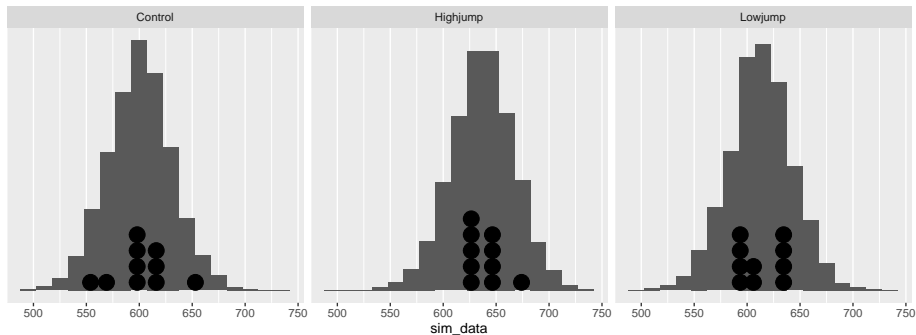
- Check that the model works: distributions of data similar to what we'd predict
- Idea: make plots of posterior predictive distribution, and plot actual data as points on them
- Use facets, one for each treatment group:

```
my_binwidth <- 15
ggplot(ppd, aes(x = sim_data)) +
  geom_histogram(binwidth = my_binwidth) +
  geom_dotplot(
    data = rats, aes(x = density),
    binwidth = my_binwidth
  ) +
  facet_wrap(~group) +
  scale_y_continuous(NULL, breaks = NULL) -> g
```

- See (over) that the data values are mainly in the middle of the predictive distributions.
- Even for the control group that had outliers.

# The plot

g



# Extensions

- if you want a different model other than normal, change distribution in `model` section
- if you want to allow unequal spreads, create `sigma[n_group]` and in `model` `density[i] ~ normal(mu[g], sigma[g]);`
- Stan will work just fine after you recompile
- very flexible.
- Typical modelling strategy: start simple, add complexity as warranted by data.