

Bioinformatics: A perspective

Dr. Matthew L. Settles

Genome Center
University of California, Davis
settles@ucdavis.edu

The data deluge



- Plucking the biology from the Noise

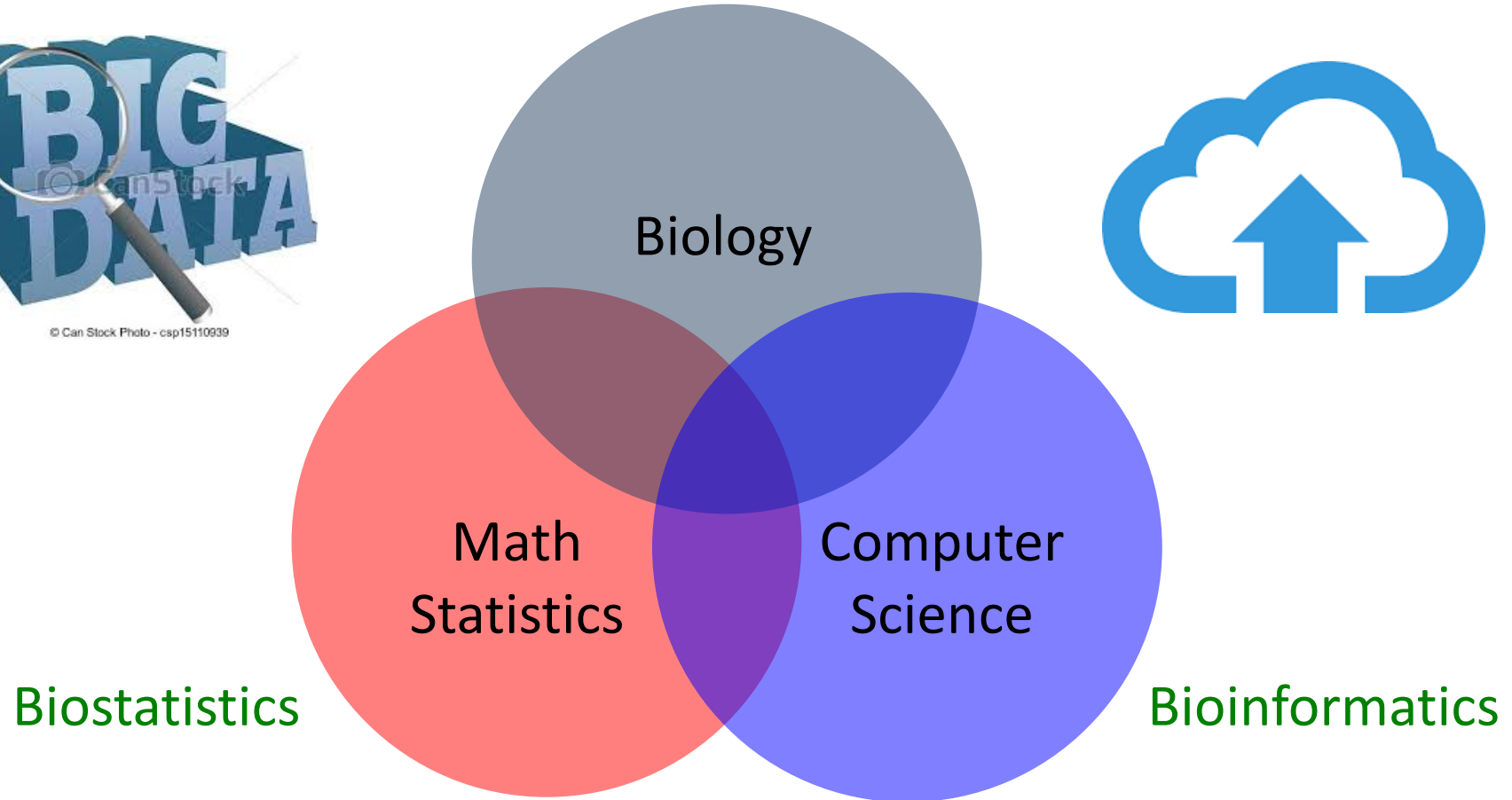
Reality



- Its much more difficult than we may first think

Bioinformatics is Data Science

Computational Biology



‘The data scientist role has been described as “part analyst, part artist.”’
Anjul Bhambhri, vice president of big data products at IBM

Data Science

Data science is the process of formulating a quantitative question that can be answered with data, collecting and cleaning the data, analyzing the data, and communicating the answer to the question to a relevant audience.

7 Stages to Data Science

1. Define the question of interest
2. Get the data
3. Clean the data
4. Explore the data
5. Fit statistical models
6. Communicate the results
7. Make your analysis reproducible

1. Define the question of interest

Begin with the end in mind!

what is the question

how are we to know we are successful

what are our expectations

dictates

the data that should be collected

the features being analyzed

which algorithms should be use

2. Get the data
3. Clean the data
4. Explore the data

Know your data!

know what the source was
technical processing in producing
data (bias, artifacts, etc.)
“Data Profiling”

Data are never perfect but love your data anyway!

the collection of massive data sets often leads to unusual ,
surprising, unexpected and even outrageous.

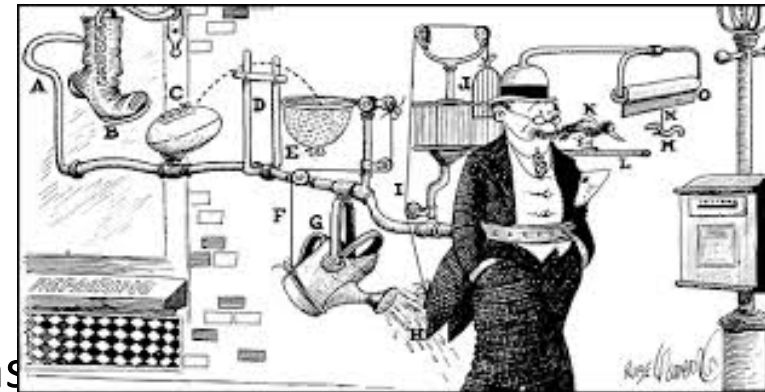


5. Fit statistical models

Over fitting is a sin against data science!

Model's should not be over-complicated

- If the data scientist has done their job correctly the statistical models don't need to be incredibly complicated to identify important relationships
- In fact, if a complicated statistical model seems necessary, it often means that you don't have the right data to answer the question you really want to answer.



6. Communicate the results
7. Make your analysis reproducible

Remember that this is 'science'!

We are experimenting with data selections, processing, algorithms, ensembles of algorithms, measurements, models. At some point these ***must all be tested for validity and applicability*** to the problem you are trying to solve.



**Data science done well looks easy – and
that's a big problem for data scientists**

**simplystatistics.org
March 3, 2015 by Jeff Leek**

Training: Data Science Bias

Data Science (data analysis, bioinformatics) is most often taught through an apprentice model

Different disciplines/regions develop their own subcultures, and decisions are based on cultural conventions rather than empirical evidence.

- Programming languages
- Statistical models (Bayes vs. Frequentist)
- Multiple testing correction
- Application choice, etc.

These (and others) decisions matter **a lot** in data analysis

"I saw it in a widely-cited paper in journal XX from my field"

The Data Science in Bioinformatics

Bioinformatics is not something you are taught, ***it's a way of life***

*“The best bioinformaticians I know are **problem solvers** – they start the day not knowing something, and they enjoy finding out (themselves) how to do it. It's a great skill to have, but for most, it's not even a skill – it's a passion, it's a way of life, it's a thrill. It's what these people would do at the weekend (if their families let them).”*

Mick Watson – Rosland Institute

Training - Models

- Workshops
 - Often enrolled too late
- Collaborations
 - More experience persons
- Apprenticeships
 - Previous lab personnel to young personnel
- Formal Education
 - Most programs are graduate level
 - Few Undergraduate



Bioinformatics

- Know and Understand the experiment
 - “The Question of Interest”
- Build a set of assumptions/expectations
 - Mix of technical and biological
 - Spend your time testing your assumptions/expectations
 - Don’t spend your time finding the “best” software
- Don’t under-estimate the time Bioinformatics may take
- Be prepared to accept ‘failed’ experiments

Bottom Line

The Bottom Line:

Spend the time (and money) planning and producing **good quality, accurate and sufficient data** for your experiment.

Get to know to your data, develop and test expectations

Result, you'll **spend much less time** (and less money) extracting biological significance and results during analysis.

Substrate

Cloud
Computing



Cluster
Computing



BAS™

LINUX

Laptop & Desktop



Environment

“Command Line” and “Programming Languages”



vs

Bioinformatics Software Suite



Prerequisites

- Access to a multi-core (24 cpu or greater), 'high' memory 64Gb or greater Linux server.
- Familiarity with the 'command line' and at least one programming language.
- Basic knowledge of how to install software
- Basic knowledge of R (or equivalent) and statistical programming
- Basic knowledge of Statistics and model building