

# False Discovery Rates, A New Deal

Matthew Stephens

2014/7/8

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- Over ~10 years of working with graduate students + postdocs, I've noticed something.
- Organized researchers get more done (and better!).
- Many of them are more organized than I am!
- Thought: I should get organized; I should help others get organized.

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- Use *knitr* to help make your research reproducible.
- Talk about the tools you find useful!

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- An amateur example: <http://github.com/stephens999/ash>

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- This talk was written with knitr (with RStudio)!

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# What is Reproducible Research?

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- “publishing figures or results without the complete software environment could be compared to a mathematician publishing an announcement of a mathematical theorem without giving the proof” (Buckheit and Donohoe)
- “an article about a computational result is advertising, not scholarship. The actual scholarship is the full software environment, code and data, that produced the result.” [Claerbout]

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- If you do not publish code implementing your methods, your methods will likely go unused.

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- ...?

# FDR, local fdr, and q values

Although precise definitions vary depending on whether one takes a Bayesian or Frequentist approach to the problem, roughly

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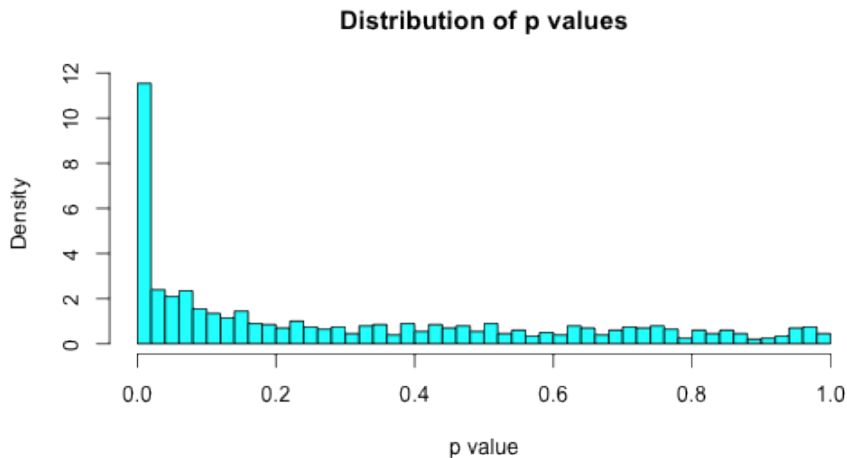
- The q value for observation  $j$  is  $q_j = \text{FDR}(p_j)$ .
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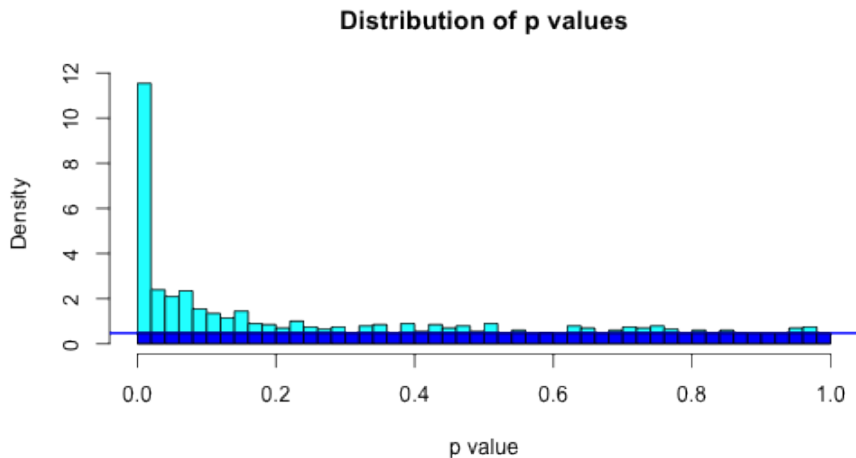
- The fdr is more relevant, but slightly harder to estimate than FDR because it involves density estimation rather than tail-area estimation.



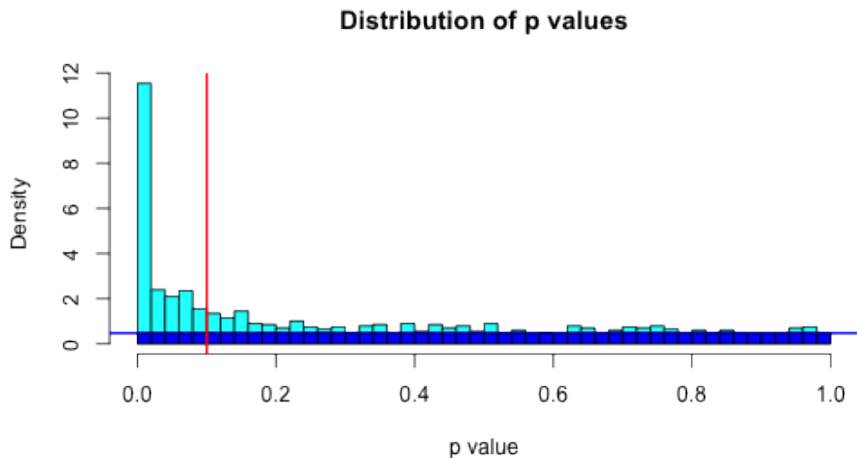
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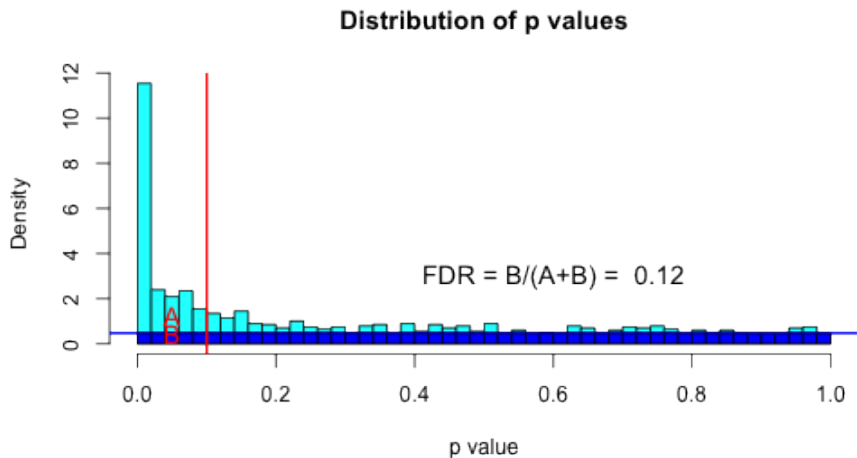
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# Is this an important problem?

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- That is three times a day for the last 19 years!

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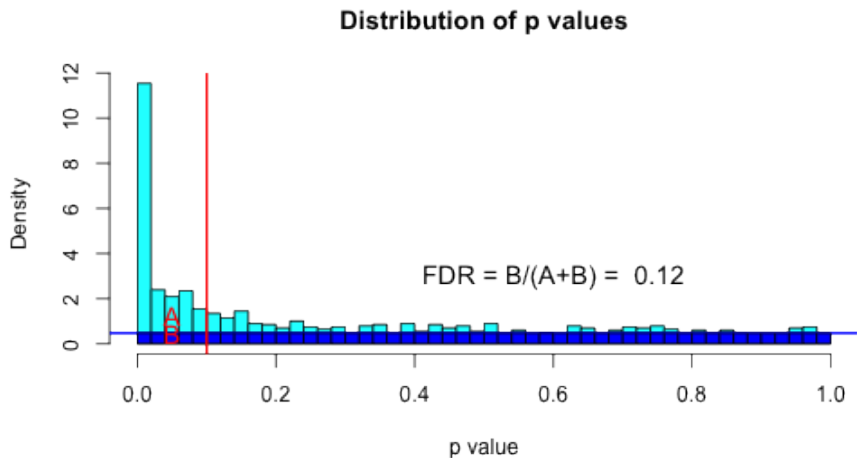
- The standard  $q$ value approach assumes that all the  $p$  values near 1 are null.
- Analogously, one can assume that all  $Z$  scores near 0 are null. Efron refers to this as the “Zero Assumption”.



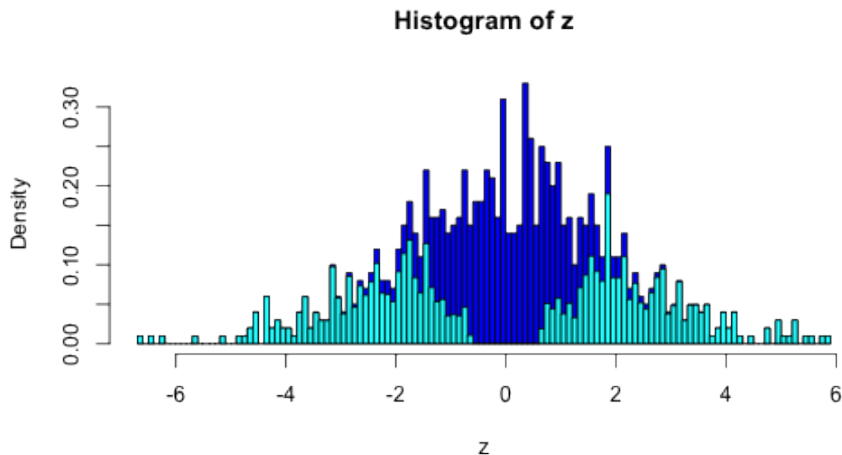
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- The standard  $q$ value approach assumes that all the  $p$  values near 1 are null.
- Analogously, one can assume that all  $Z$  scores near 0 are null. Efron refers to this as the “Zero Assumption”.
- Seems initially natural.

# Implied distribution of $p$ values under $H_1$



# Implied distribution of Z scores under alternative



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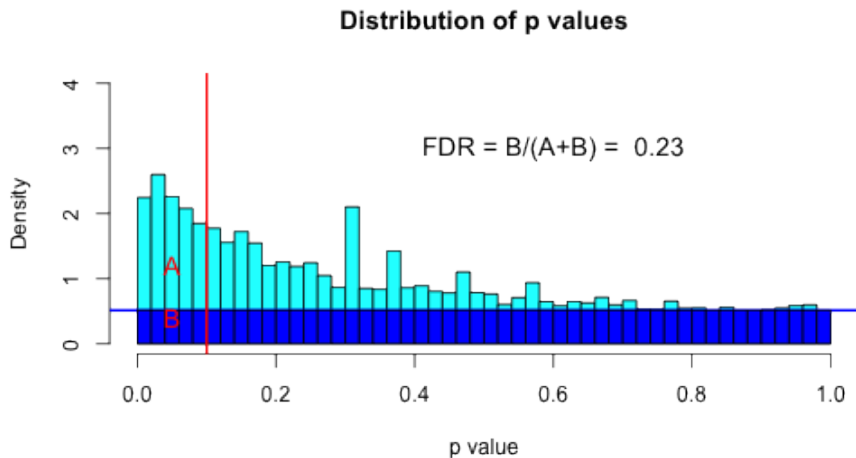
- In some cases the measurement precisions differ among units
- Eg Expression levels of low-expressed genes have less precision than high-expressed genes
- If some effects are measured less precisely than others, those tests “lack power” and dilute signal, increasing FDR

## Example: Mouse Heart Data

##	gene	lv1	lv2	rv1	rv2	genelength
## 1	Itm2a	2236	2174	9484	10883	1626
## 2	Sergef	97	90	341	408	1449
## 3	Fam109a	383	314	1864	2384	2331
## 4	Dhx9	2688	2631	18501	20879	4585
## 5	Ssu72	762	674	2806	3435	1446
## 8	Eif2b2	736	762	3081	3601	1565

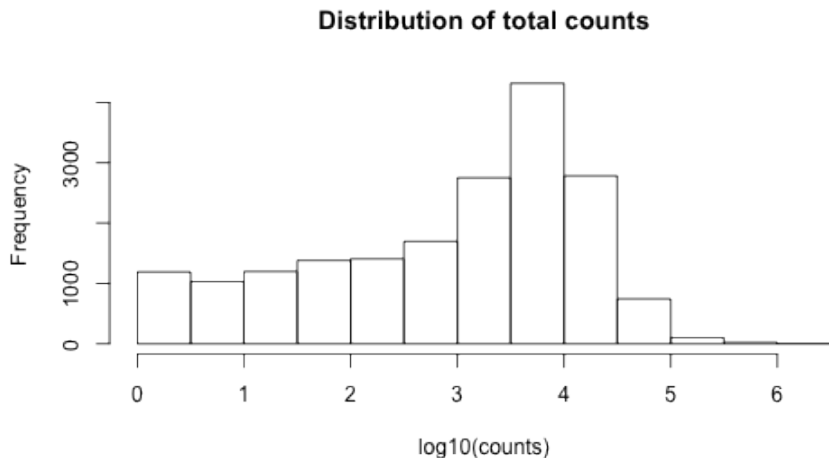
- Data on 150 mouse hearts, dissected into left and right ventricle (courtesy Scott Schmemo, Marcelo Nobrega)

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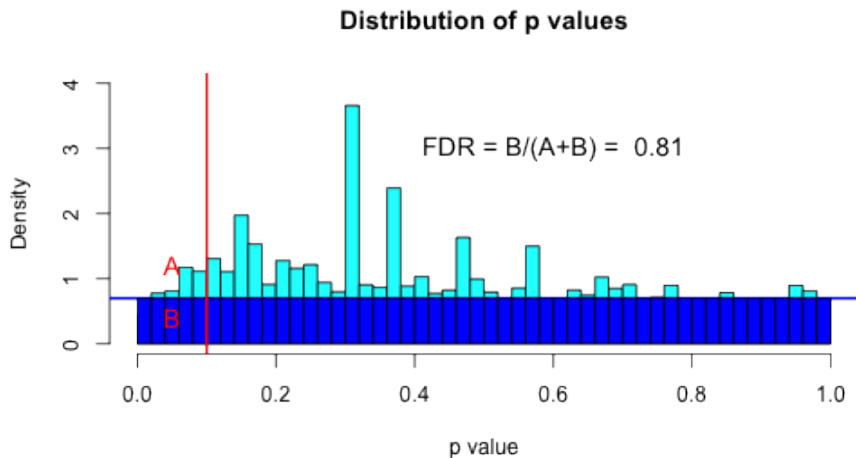




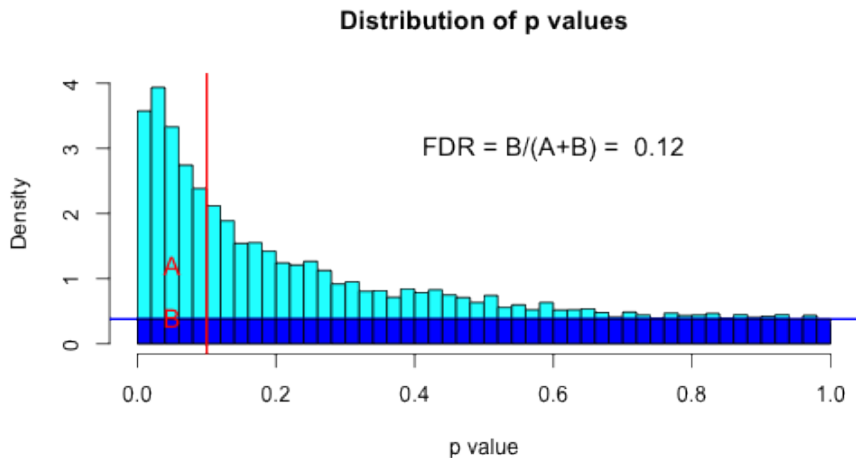
# Mouse Data: Counts vary considerably across genes



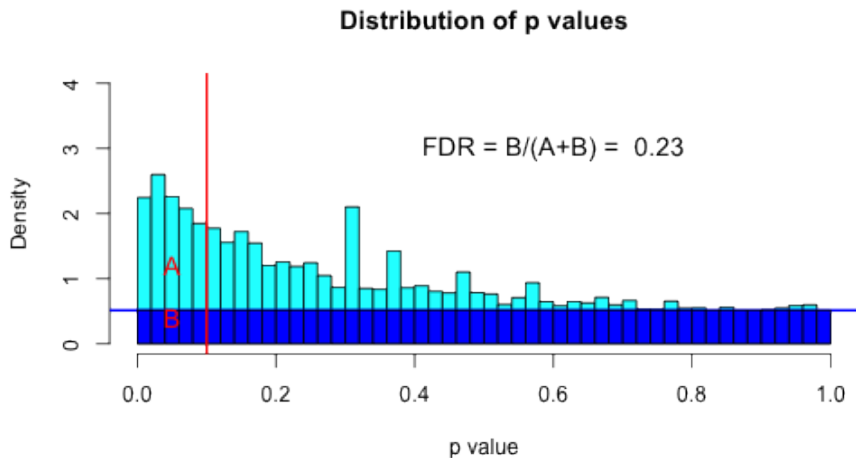
## Lower count genes, less power



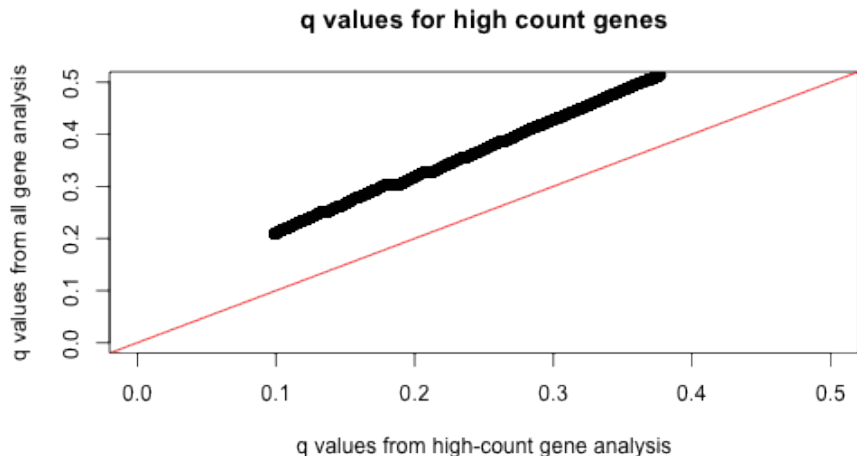
# Higher count genes, more power



# Low-count genes dilute signal at high-count genes



## FDR problem 2: low count genes add noise, increase q values



# Problems: Summary

Standard tools are unduly conservative.

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- The ZA, which implies actual effects have a (probably unrealistic) bimodal distribution; causes overestimate of  $\pi_0$ , losing power.
- By focussing on  $p$  values, low-precision measurements can dilute high-precision measurements.

# FDR via Empirical Bayes

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$$Z_j \sim f_Z(.) = \pi_0 N(., 0, 1) + (1 - \pi_0) f_1(.)$$

where  $f_1, \pi_0$  are to be estimated from the data.

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- Various semi-parametric approaches taken to estimating  $f_1$ . For example, Efron uses Poisson regression; Muralidharan uses mixture of normal distributions.
- Once  $f_1$  and  $\pi_0$  estimated, FDR calculations are straightforward.

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- Constrain  $g$  to be unimodal about 0; estimate  $g$  from data.
- Incorporate precision of each observation  $\hat{\beta}$  into the likelihood.  
Specifically, approximate likelihood for  $\beta_j$  by a normal:

$$L(\beta_j) \propto \exp(-0.5(\beta_j - \hat{\beta}_j)^2/s_j^2).$$

[From  $\hat{\beta}_j \sim N(\beta_j, s_j)$ ] Or, better, use a  $t$  likelihood if  $s_j$  estimated using few observations.

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- By allowing  $K$  large, and  $\sigma_k$  to span a dense grid of values, we get a flexible unimodal symmetric distribution.
- Can approximate, arbitrarily closely, any scale mixture of normals. Includes almost all priors used for sparse regression problems (spike-and-slab, double exponential/Laplace/Bayesian Lasso, horseshoe).

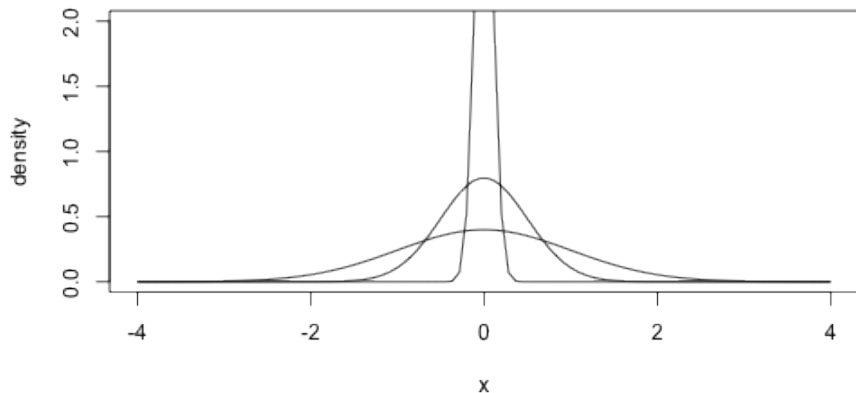
# FDR - A New Deal

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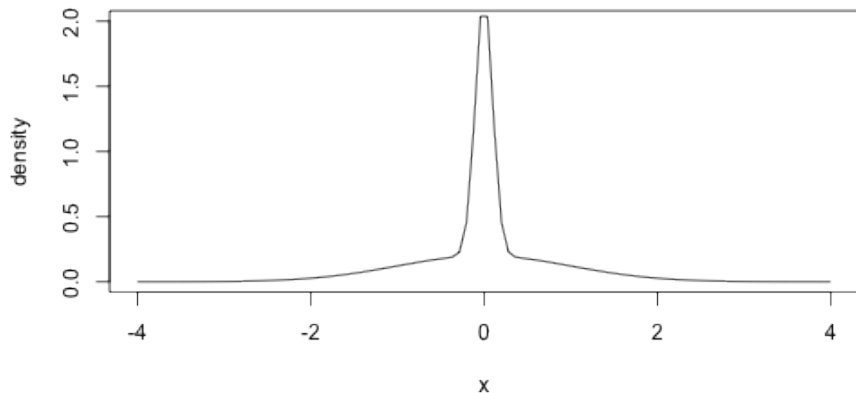
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- Alternatively, a mixture of uniforms, with 0 as one end-point of the range, provides still more flexibility, and in particular allows for asymmetry.
- If allow a very large number of uniforms this provides the non-parametric mle for  $g$ ; cf Grenander 1953; Cordy + Thomas 1997.

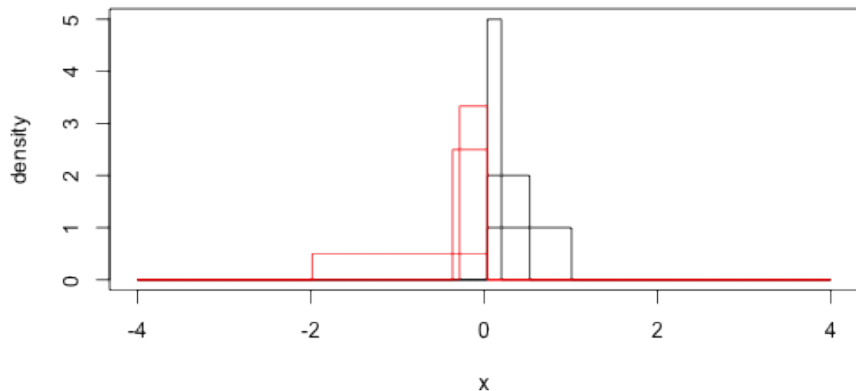
## Illustration: $g$ a mixture of 0-centered normals



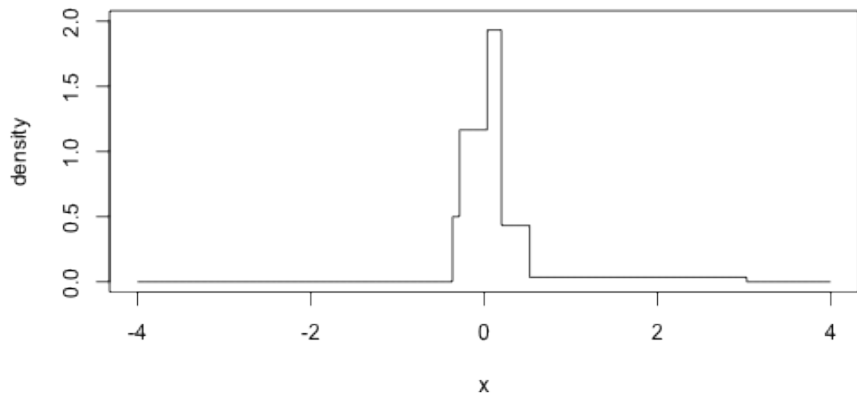
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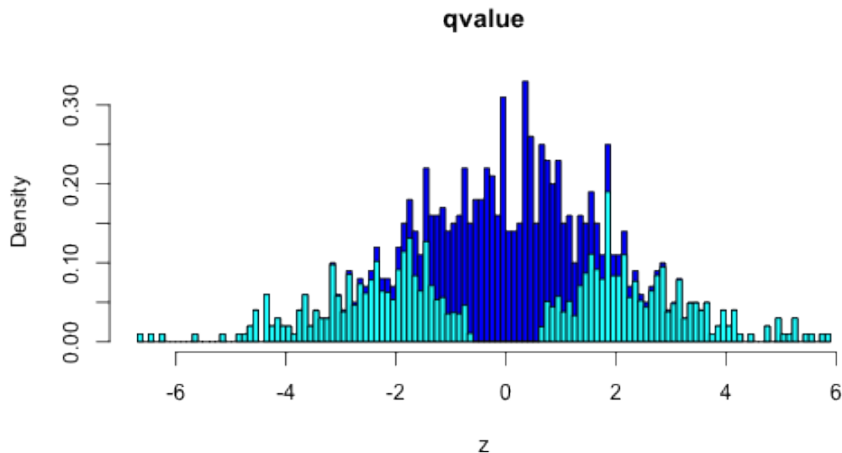
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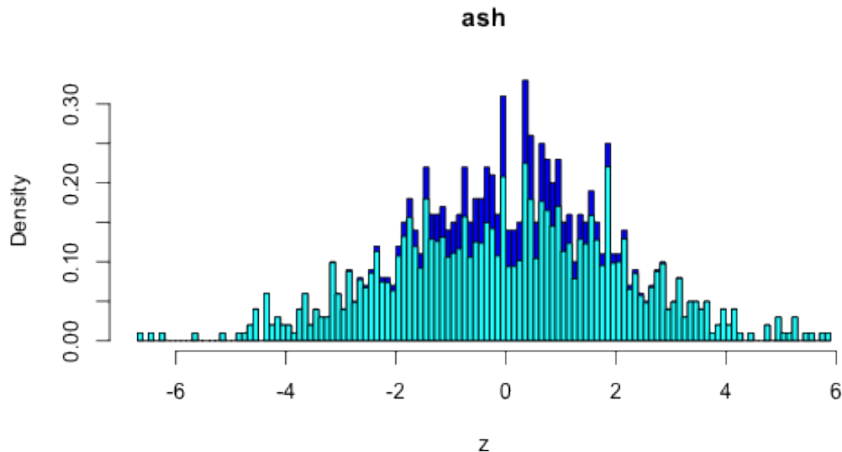
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- So we call the approach “Adaptive Shrinkage” (ASH).

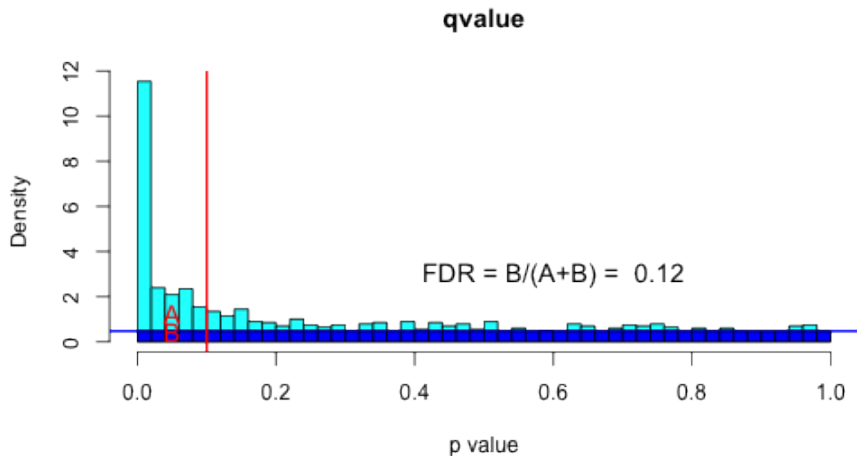
## Recall Problem 1: distribution of alternative Z values multimodal



## Problem Fixed: distribution of alternative Z values unimodal

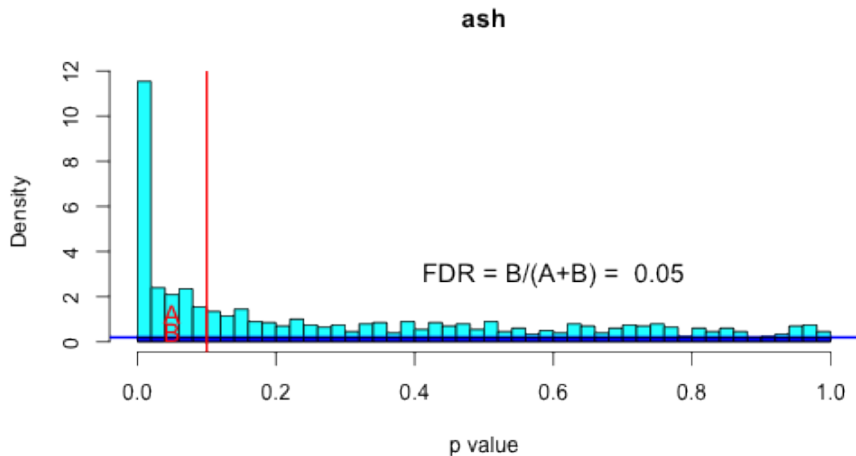


## Example: FDR estimation

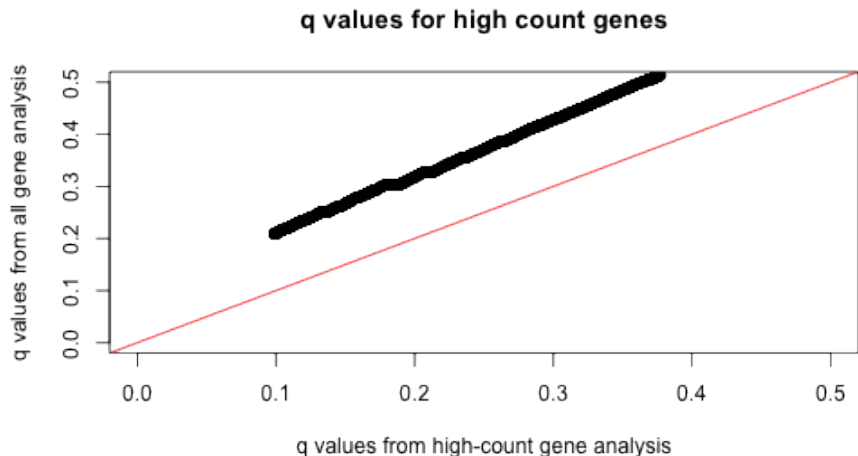




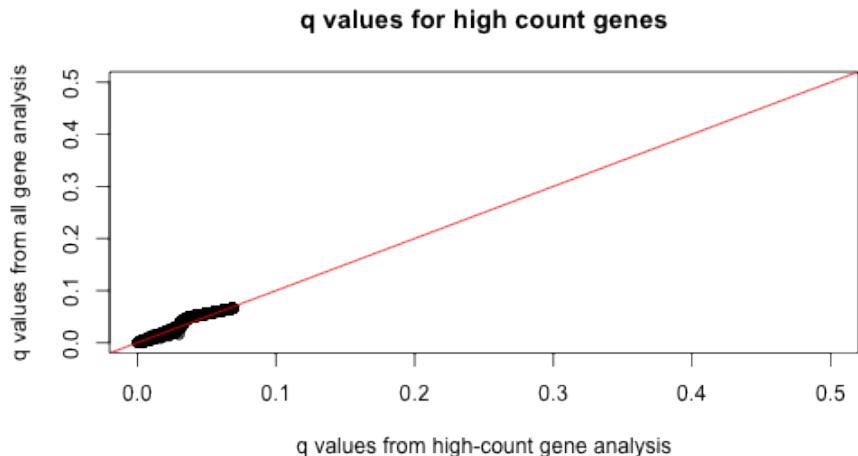
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## Recall Problem 2: low count genes add noise, increase q values



# Problem Fixed: incorporating precision reduces influence of low-count genes



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- In the illustrative example, the maximum  $q$  value is 0.18

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- But for some  $\beta_j$  we still may have little information about actual value
- Suggests a change of focus: ask for which  $\beta_j$  are we confident about the sign (cf Gelman et al, 2012).

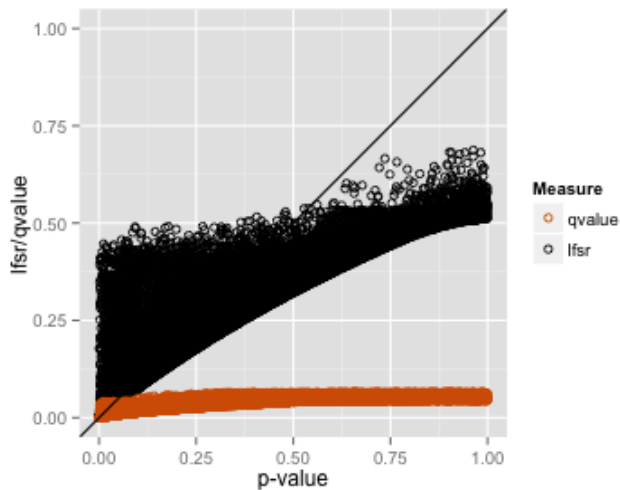
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# The False Sign Rate

- Suggestion: replace FDR with local false sign rate (lfsr), the probability that if we say an effect is positive (negative), it is not.
- Example: suppose we estimate that  $\Pr(\beta_j < 0) = 0.95$ ,  $\Pr(\beta_j = 0) = 0.025$  and  $\Pr(\beta_j > 0) = 0.025$ . Then we report  $\beta_j$  as a “(negative) discovery“, and estimate its lfsr as 0.05.

Even with many signals, large  $p$  values have high Ifsr



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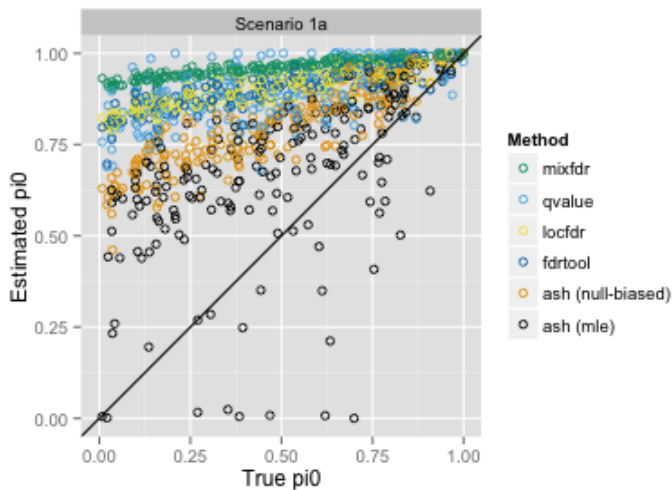
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- So methods for estimating  $\pi_0$  and FDR, including those presented here, are designed to be “conservative” (i.e. overestimate the FDR).



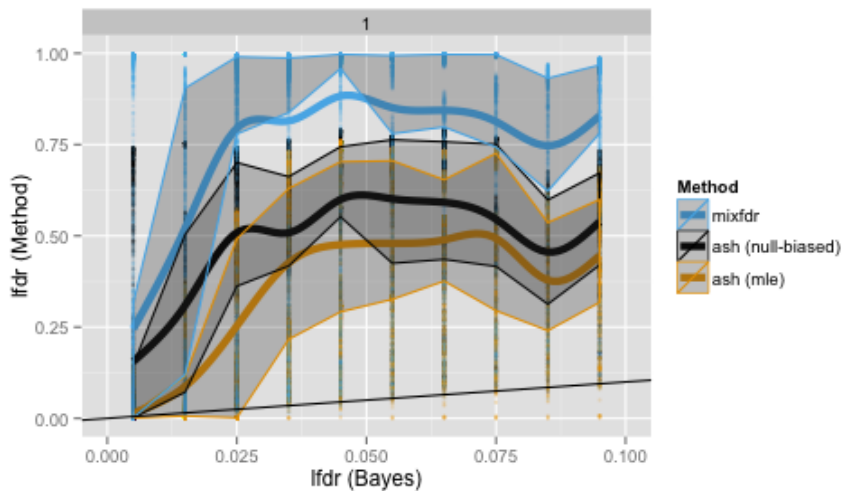
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- So methods for estimating  $\pi_0$  and FDR, including those presented here, are designed to be “conservative” (i.e. overestimate the FDR).
- The False Sign Rate is much less sensitive to  $\pi_0$ , and hence more identifiable from data!

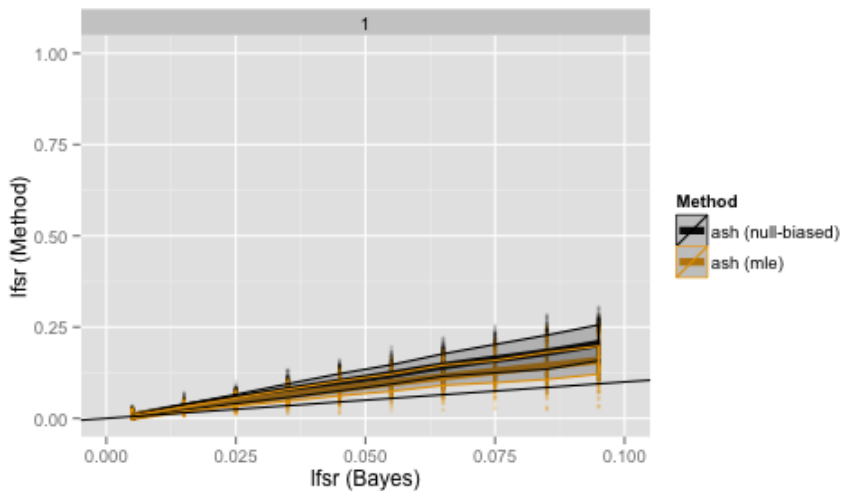
## Simulated example: $\pi_0$ not identifiable.



# Simulated Example: so fdr not identifiable



# Simulated Example: fsr much more identifiable



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- But by using two numbers ( $\hat{\beta}, s$ ) instead of one ( $p$  values or  $z$  scores) varying precision of measurements is better accounted for.
- Unimodal assumption for effects reduces conservatism
- False Sign Rate preferable to False Discovery Rate: more identifiable, and better representation of information in data for “high-signal” situations.



# Other Applications

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- E.g. Currently applying it to wavelet shrinkage applications.

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- Allow  $g(\cdot; \pi)$  to depend on covariates  $X$ .
- Allow for correlations in the measured  $\hat{\beta}_j$ .

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- ashR package: <http://www.github.com/stephens999/ash>

## Pandoc Command used

```
pandoc -s -S -i --template=my.beamer -t beamer -V  
theme:CambridgeUS -V colortheme:beaver slides.md -o  
slides.pdf
```

(alternative to produce html slides; but figures would need reworking)

```
pandoc -s -S -i -t dzslides --mathjax slides.md -o  
slides.html
```

Here is my session info:

```
print(sessionInfo(), locale=FALSE)
```

```
## R version 3.0.2 (2013-09-25)
```

```
## Platform: x86_64-apple-darwin10.8.0 (64-bit)
```

```
##
```

```
## attached base packages:
```

```
## [1] splines      stats          graphics      grDevices     utils          datas
```

```
## [8] base
```

## Some odd things in the data

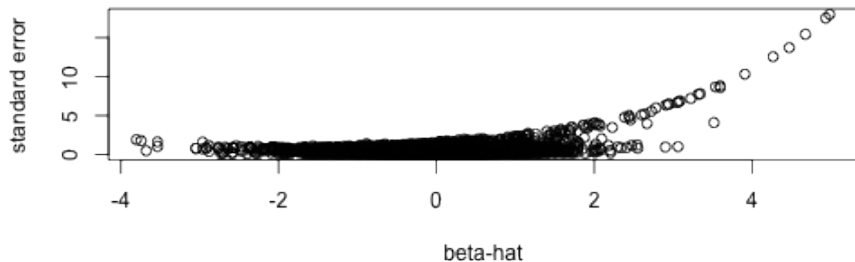


Figure : plot of chunk unnamed-chunk-35

```
## Error: object 'dd' not found
```

## A technicality

- Suppose you estimate  $\Pr(\beta_j < 0) = 0.98$ ,  $\Pr(\beta_j > 0) = 0.01$ ,  
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- Should you declare an fdr of 0.01 or 0.02?

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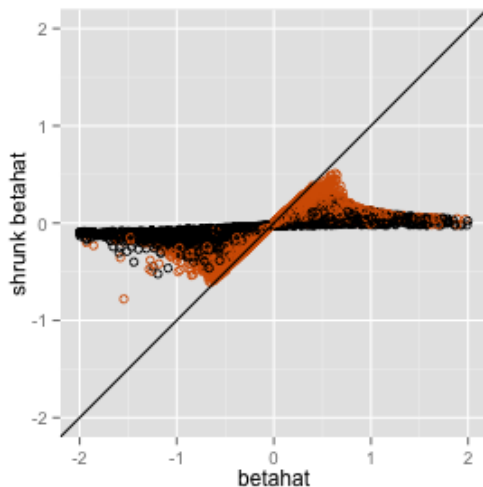
- Suppose you estimate  $\Pr(\beta_j < 0) = 0.98$ ,  $\Pr(\beta_j > 0) = 0.01$ ,  $\Pr(\beta_j = 0) = 0.01$ .
- Should you declare an fdr of 0.01 or 0.02?
- Maybe fsr makes more sense anyway?

# Adaptive Shrinkage of point estimates

- Recall idea: amount of shrinkage depends on measurement precision,  $s_j$ .

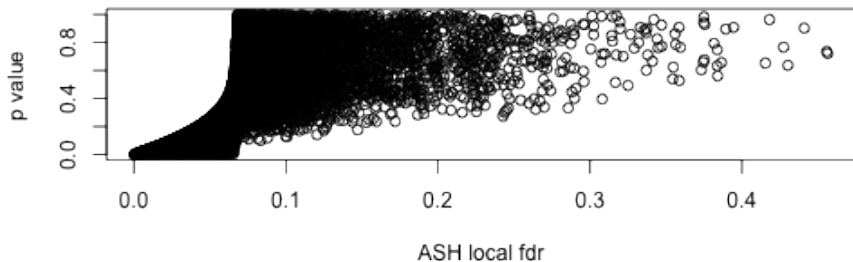


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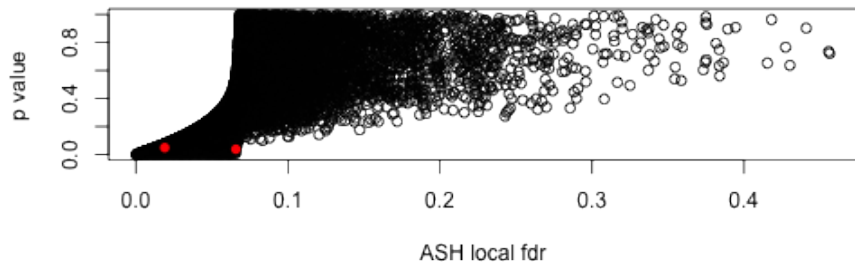


# Shrinkage is adaptive to information

Need to fix counts.associate to use fdr method in ash



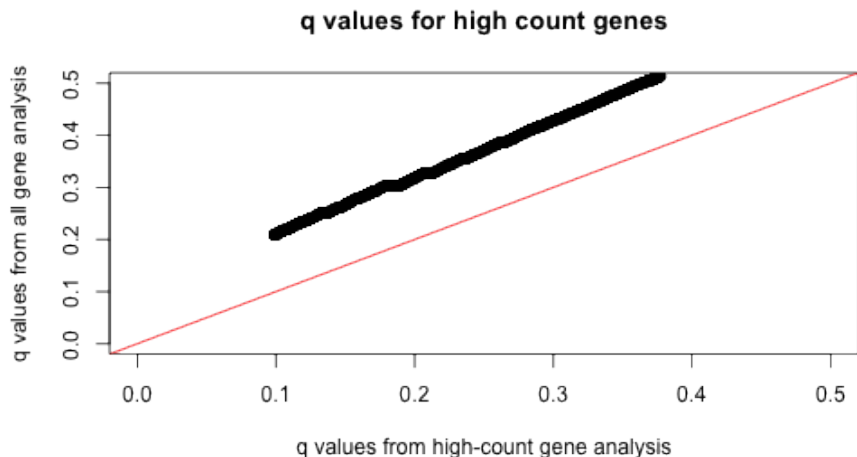
# Shrinkage is adaptive to information



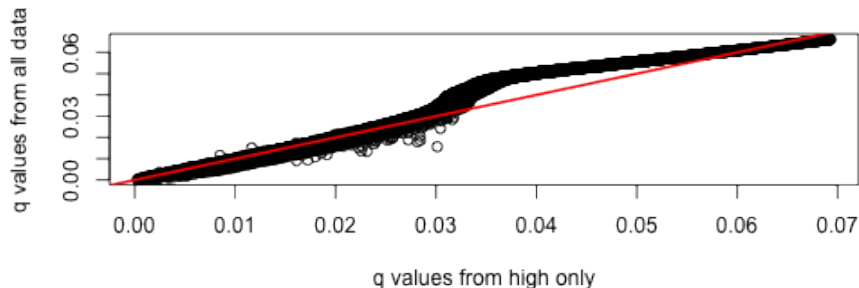
# Shrinkage is adaptive to information

##	gene	lv1	lv2	rv1	rv2	pval	zdat.ash\$lfd
## 19422	Mgat5b	7	10	320	452	0.03795	0.06575
## 20432	Sec63	1042	1034	5496	6649	0.04908	0.01895

# Recall FDR problem 1: q values increased by low count genes



## ASH q values more robust to inclusion of low count genes



Compare fitted  $f(\beta)$ , both estimating  $\pi_0$  and fixing  $\pi_0 = 0$ .

```
## Error: object 'hh.ash.fdr' not found
```

```
## Error: object 'hh.ash.shrink' not found
```