

Motivation: Version Control with Git as a Learning Objective in Statistics Courses

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Who cares about reproducibility & VC?

- American Statistical Association ¹²³
- National Science Foundation ⁴⁵
- CS education (e.g., ACM SIGCSE) ⁶⁷
- Employers, Practitioners, & Students ⁸

¹ASA Undergraduate Guidelines Workgroup (2014)

²DeVeaux et al. (2016); a.k.a., The Park City Report

³Broman et al. (2017); ASA reproducibility recommendations

⁴Broman et al. (2017); ASA reproducibility recommendations

⁵Bollen et al. (2015); Cmte recommendations to NSF

⁶Haaranen & Lehtinen (2015); SIGCSE teaching with VC

⁷Zagalsky et al. (2015); SIGSCE teaching VC

⁸Kaggle (2017); user survey

The Kubler-Ross model ⁹

... better known as the 5 stages of grief:

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- **Bargaining:** Can't students just pick it up on their own?
- **Depression:** I don't know *anything* about Git...
- **Acceptance:** Wait, there are buttons in RStudio? Maybe it won't be so bad after all...

⁹Kubler-Ross E (2005). *On Grief and Grieving: Finding the Meaning of Grief Through the Five Stages of Loss*. Simon & Schuster.

Reproducibility:

- roughly speaking, the code “just works” with no changes needed
- completely self-contained including. . .
 - source data
 - code book
 - all data wrangling/prep steps
 - recreate all analysis, models, visuals
 - final reporting
- easy to verify results or refresh if source data updates
- ethical practice

Version control (1/2)

- collaboration among users
- self-collaboration—e.g., RStudio Desktop and RStudio Server

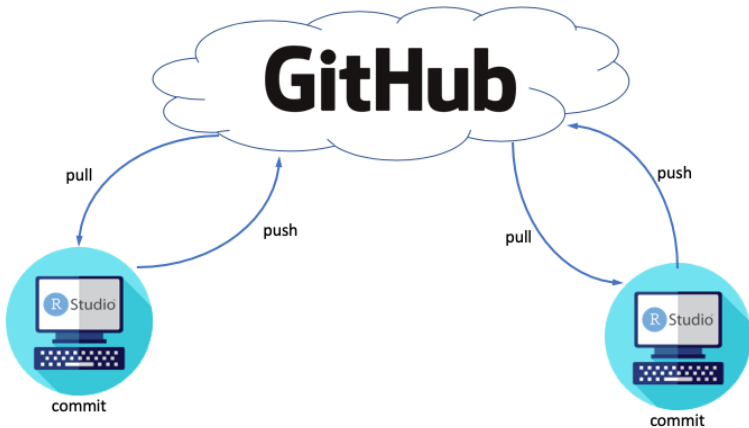


Figure 1: Collaboration schematic

Version control (2/2)

- maintains the evolution of the project
- safely explore alternative solutions/ideas in parallel

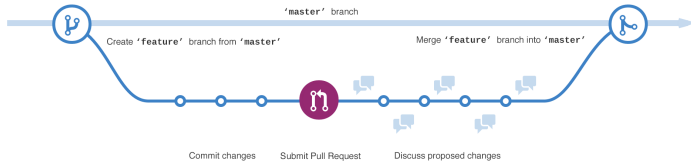


Figure 2: exploring parallel solutions
(<https://guides.github.com/activities/hello-world/>)

Reproducibility \neq Version Control

Sometimes lumped together as if they're one in the same, and it's even tempting to speak of Git(Hub) as a panacea. . .

They aren't and it isn't. . .

Our motivation: invest in good habits with a professional workflow designed to streamline **both** virtues.

Ethical practice

- Any analysis may require hundreds of tiny decisions
- Many of these decisions may be handled in private by a single person
- Our work is often intended for audience without the expertise required to scrutinize those decisions

With reproducibility & version control

- all decisions are documented
- all results can be checked
- proper scrutiny is possible (now or in future)

References

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Thank You

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<https://mdbeckman.github.io/JSM2020-Virtual/>