

## JOINT PROBABILITY MATRICES

## Why

We can characterize the dependence of two events in terms of the rank of a particular matrix.

## **Definition**

Given a probability measure  $P : \mathcal{P}(\Omega) \to R$  on the finite set  $\Omega$  and two events  $A, B \subset \Omega$ , the *joint probability matrix* of A and B is the matrix

$$M = \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{P}(A \cap B) & \mathbf{P}(A \cap C_{\Omega}(B)) \\ \mathbf{P}(C_{\Omega}(A) \cap B) & \mathbf{P}(C_{\Omega}(A) \cap C_{\Omega}(B)) \end{bmatrix}.$$

Since B and  $C_{\Omega}(B)$  partition  $\Omega$ , use the total law of probability to express is  $\mathbf{P}(A) = \mathbf{P}(A \cap B) + \mathbf{P}(A \cap C_{\Omega}(B))$ . Likewise,  $\mathbf{P}(C_{\Omega}(A)) = \mathbf{P}(C_{\Omega}(A) \cap B) + \mathbf{P}(C_{\Omega}(A) \cap C_{\Omega}(B))$ . For these reasons, the sum of the entries of the first row of M is  $\mathbf{P}(A)$  and the sum of the entries of the second row of M is  $\mathbf{P}(C_{\Omega}(A))$ . The events A and B are independent if and only if  $\mathbf{rank}(M) = 1$ 

