

# Covariances, Robustness, and Variational Bayes

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Assistant Professor,  
MIT

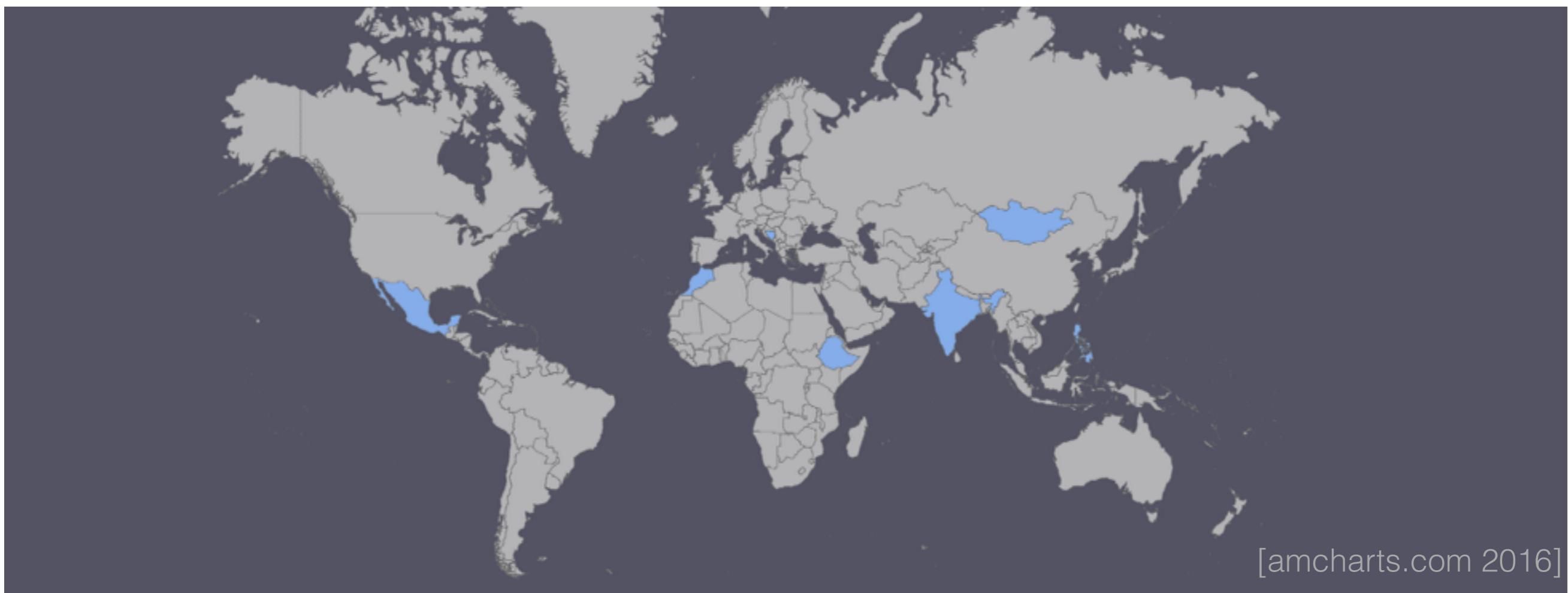


With: Ryan Giordano, Rachael Meager,  
Jonathan H. Huggins, Michael I. Jordan

# Microcredit Experiment

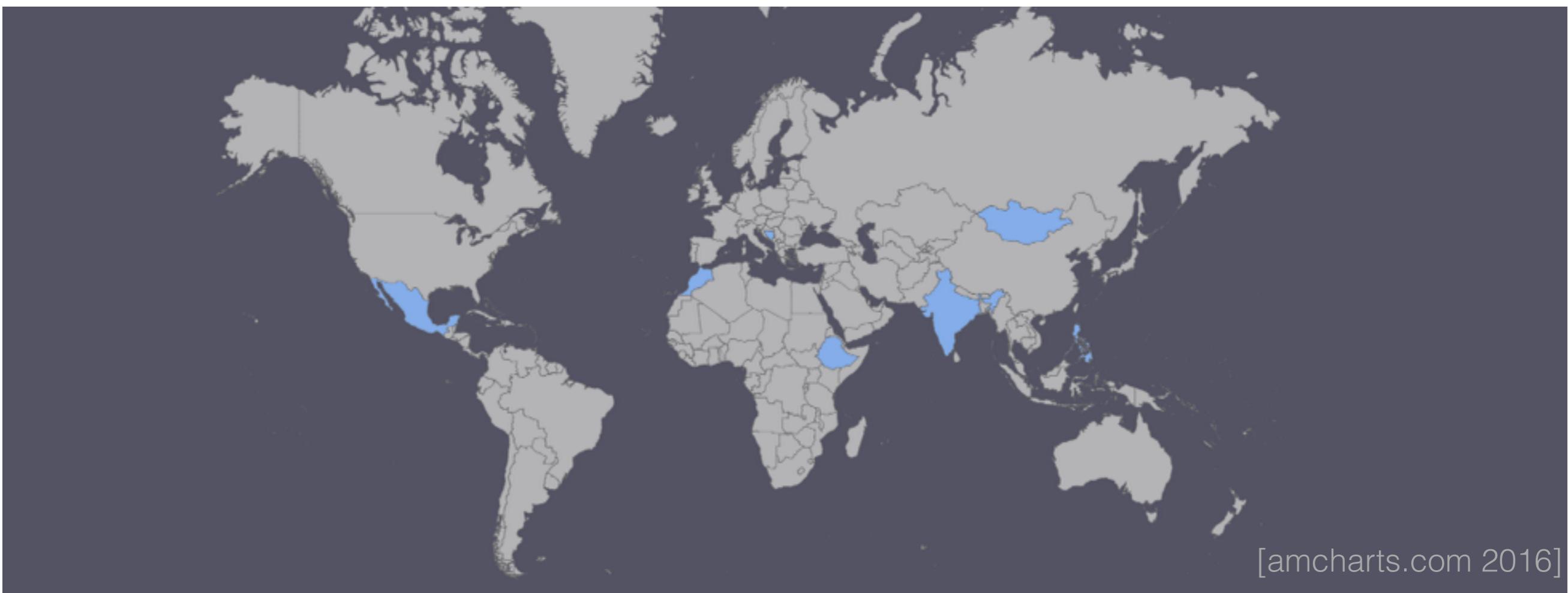
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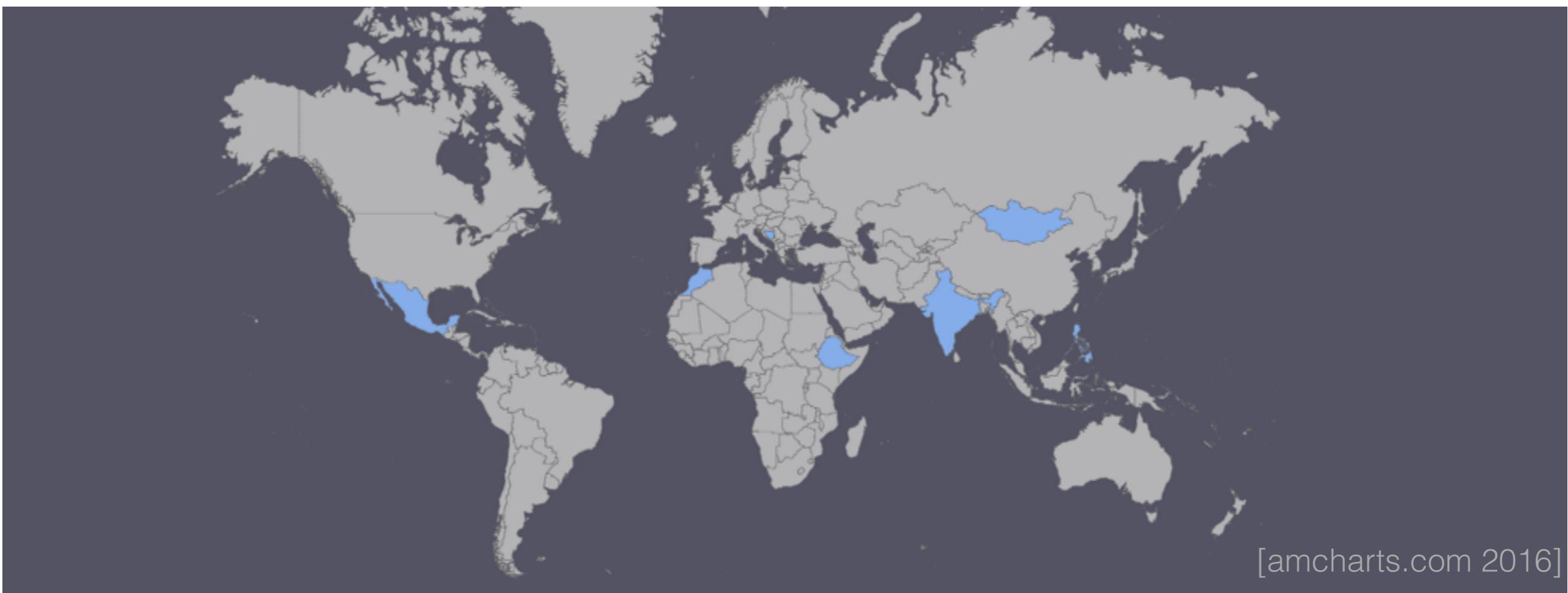
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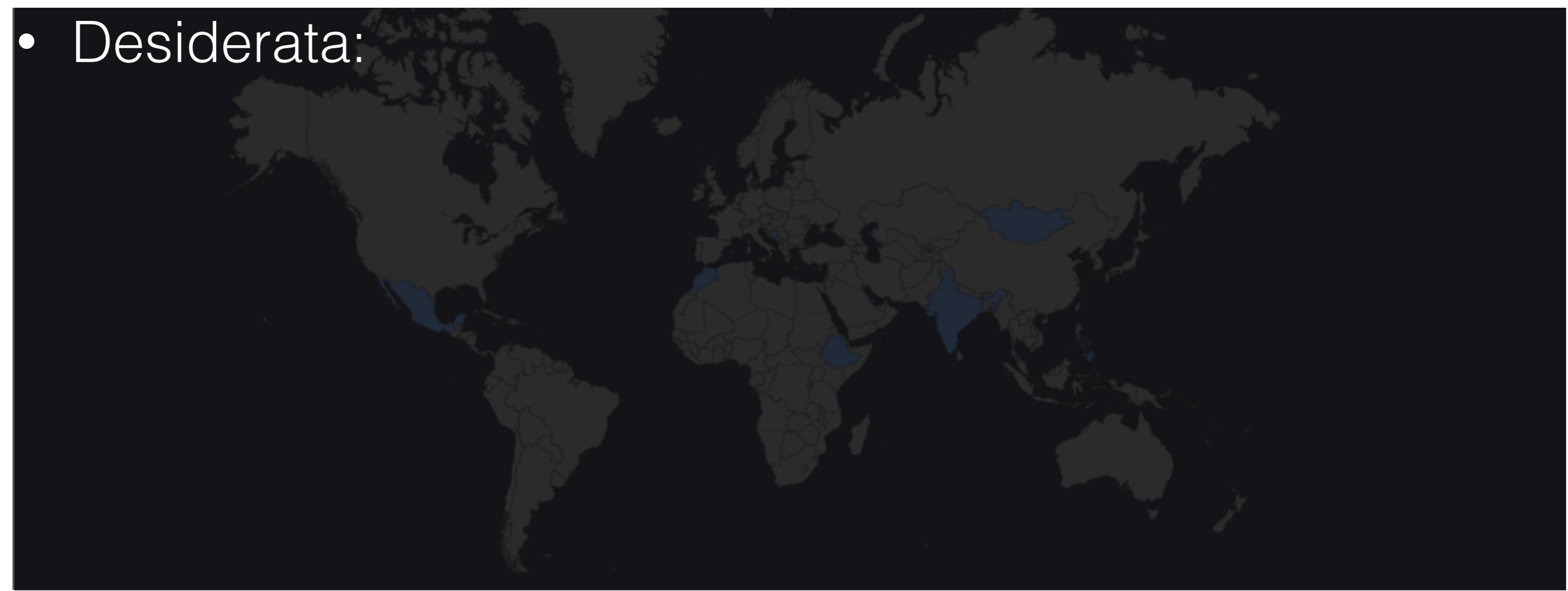
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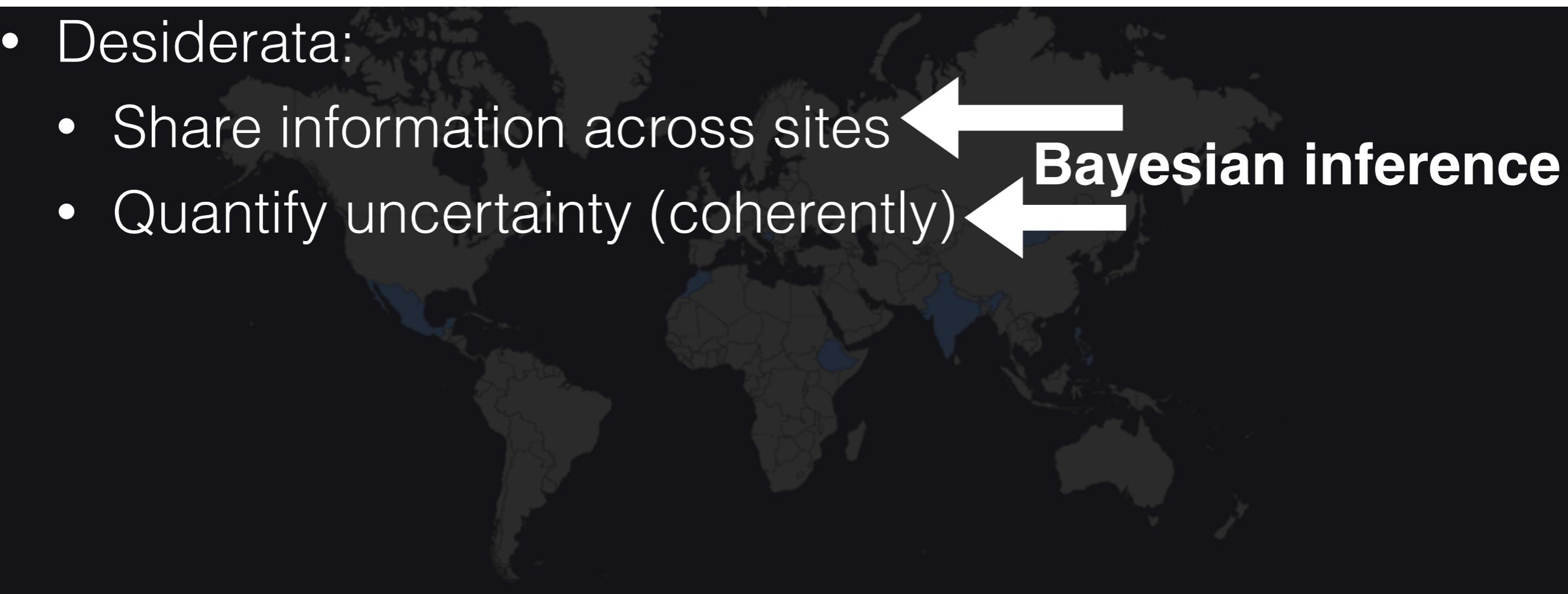
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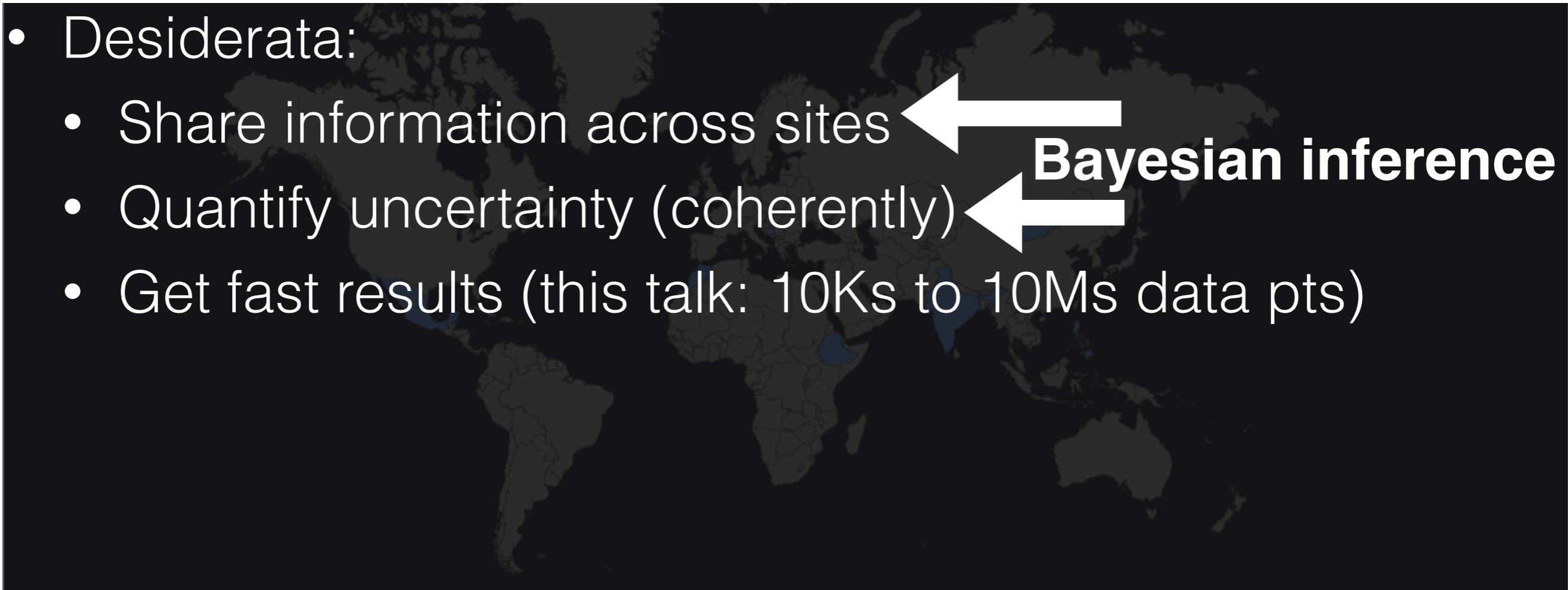
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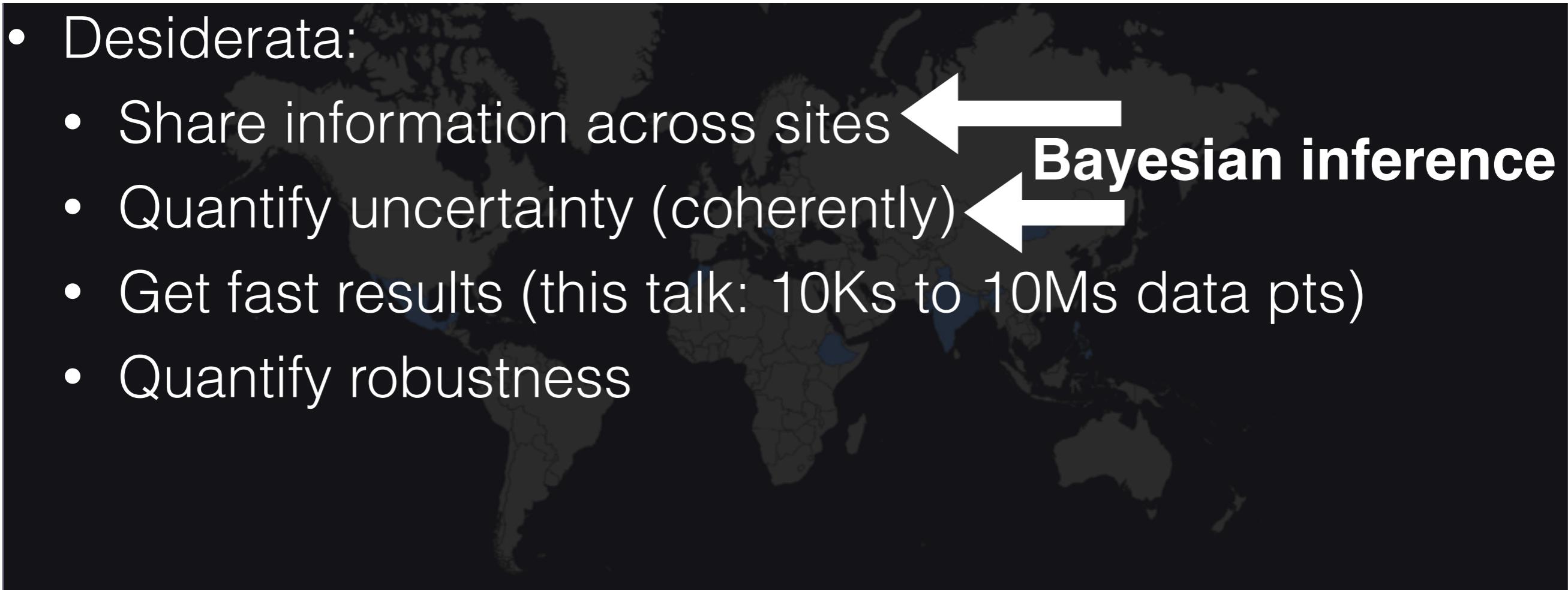
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**Bayesian inference**

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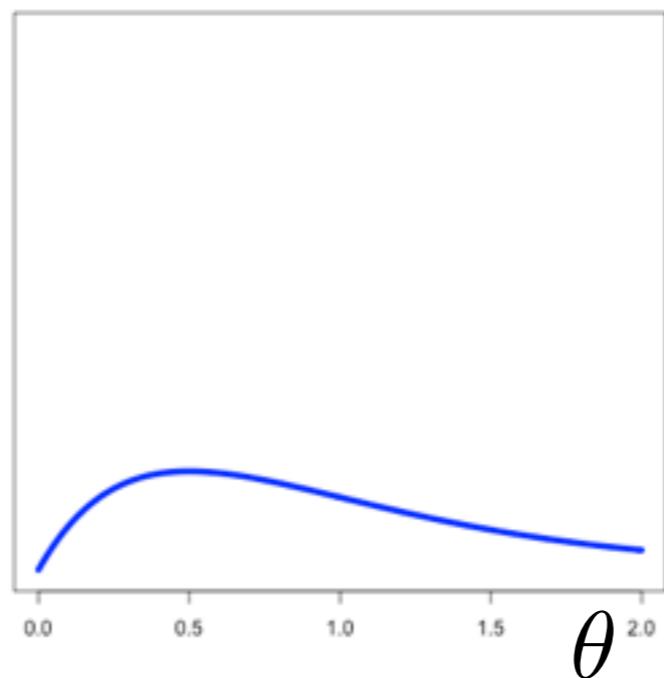
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- Bayesian inference  $p(\theta)$

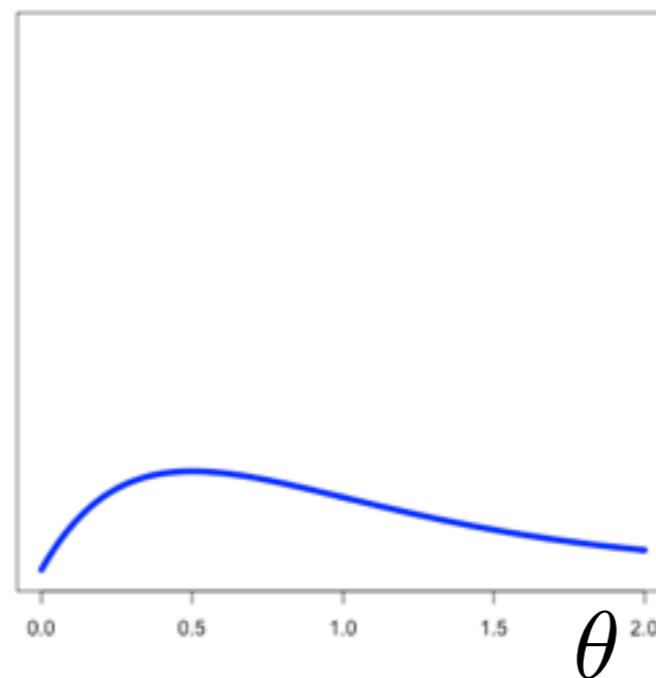
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$$p(\theta)$$

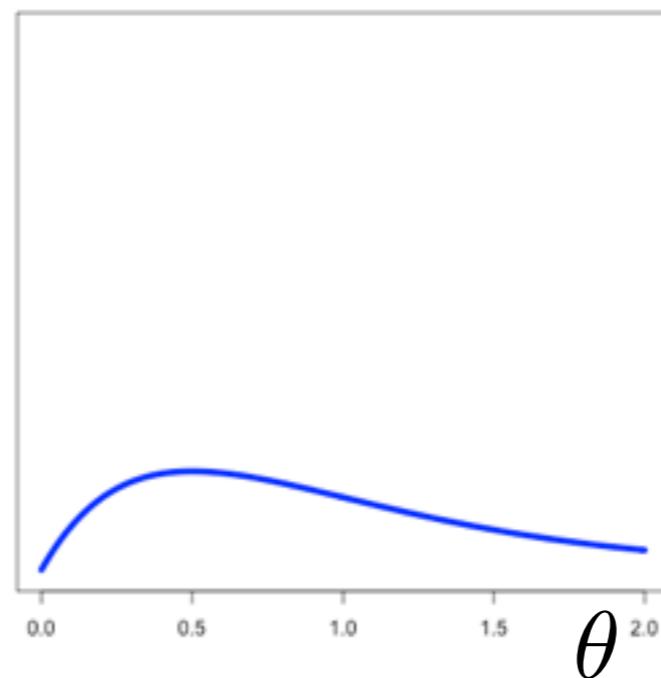


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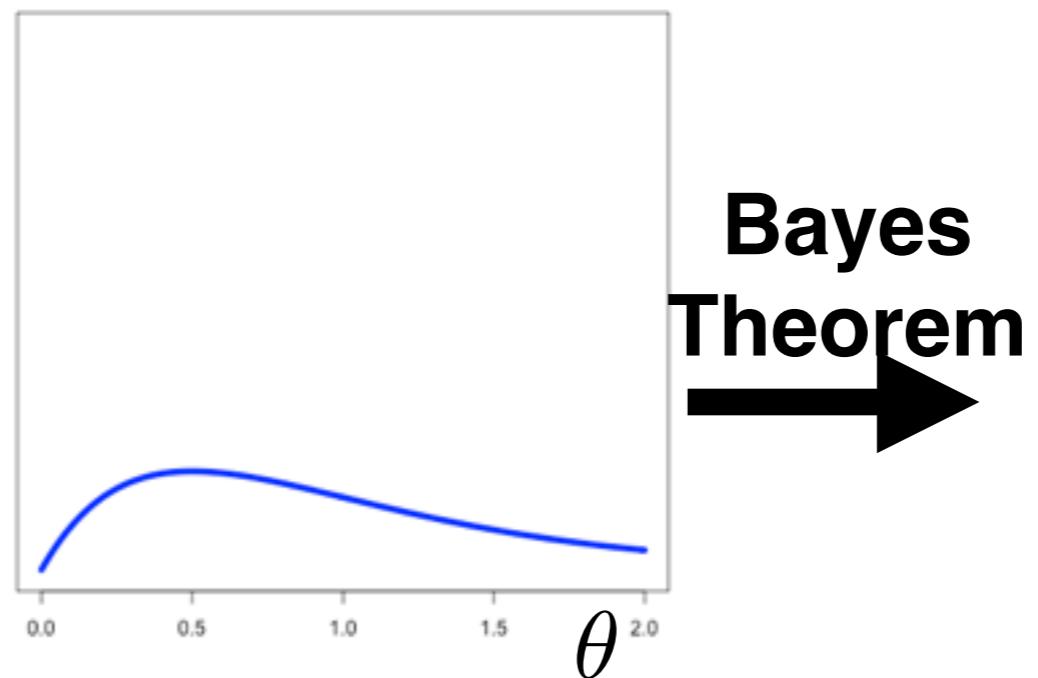
$$p(y|\theta)p(\theta)$$



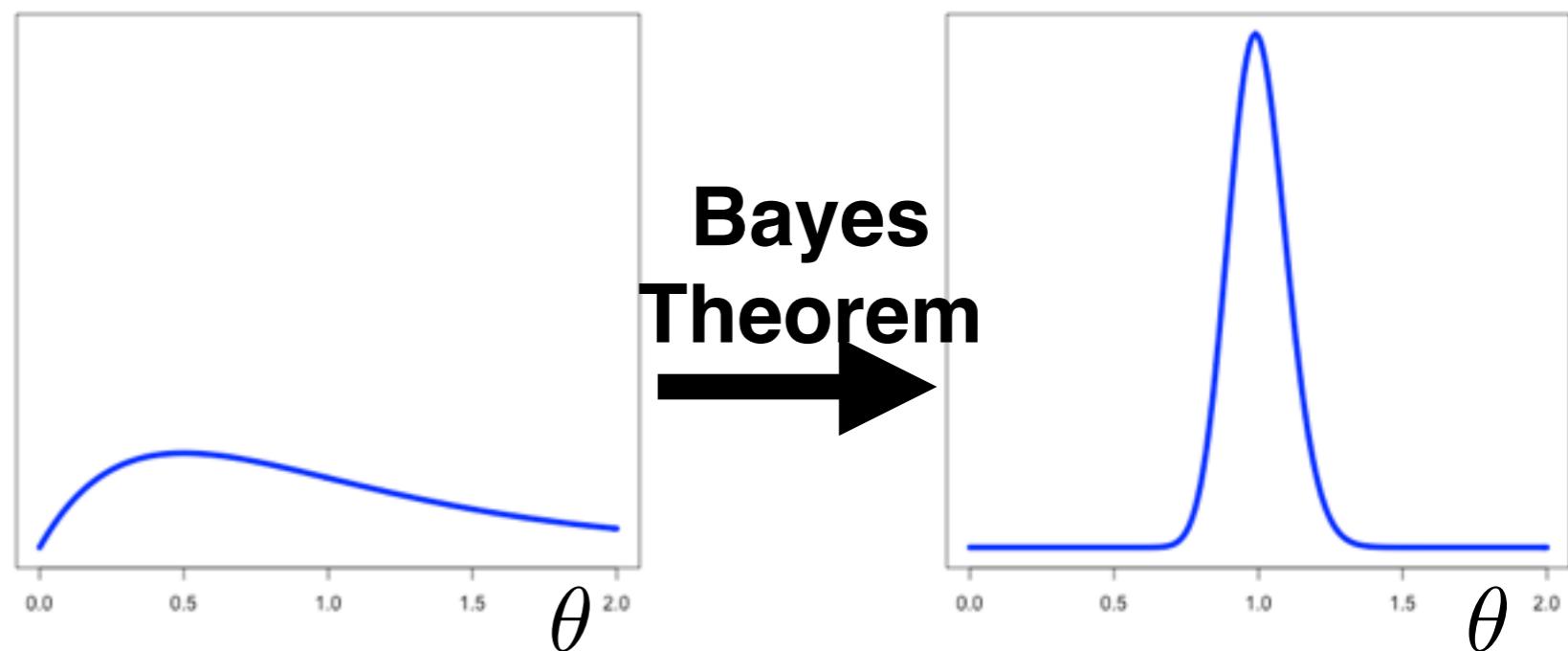
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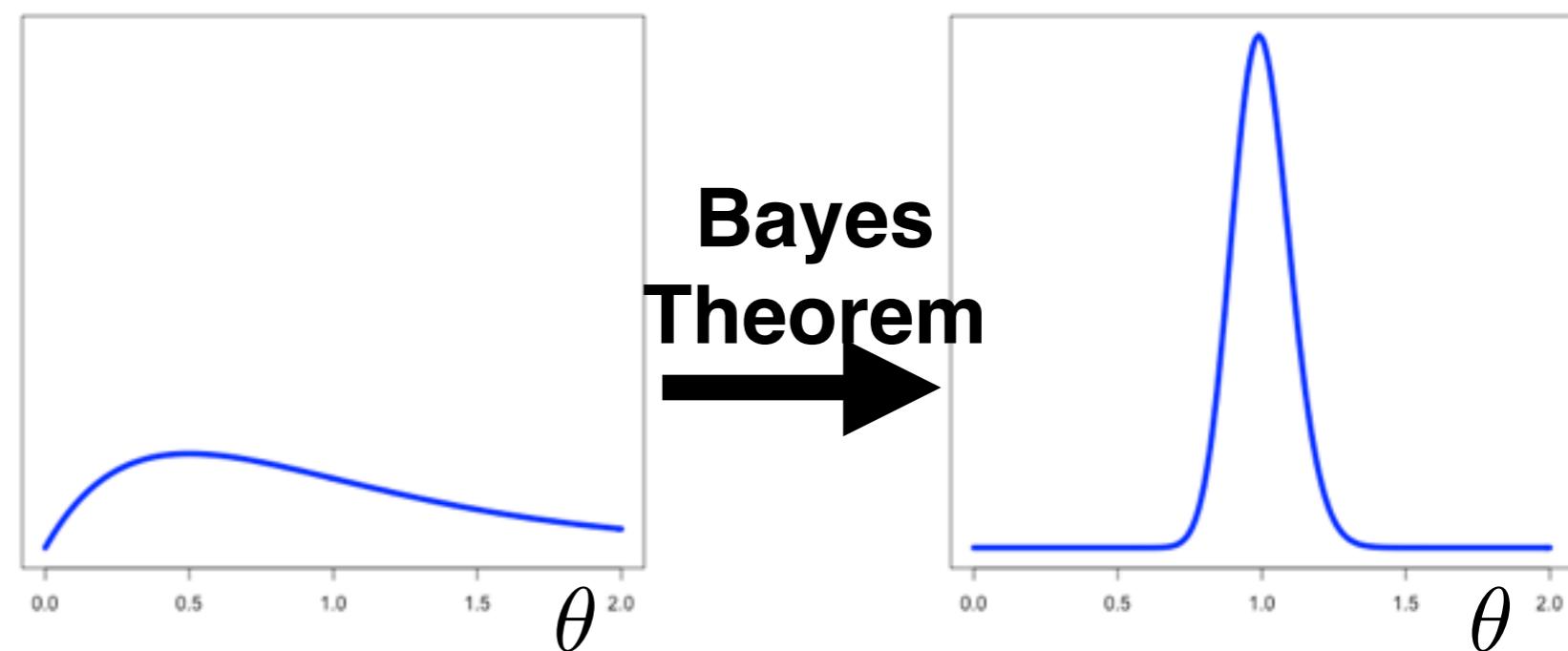


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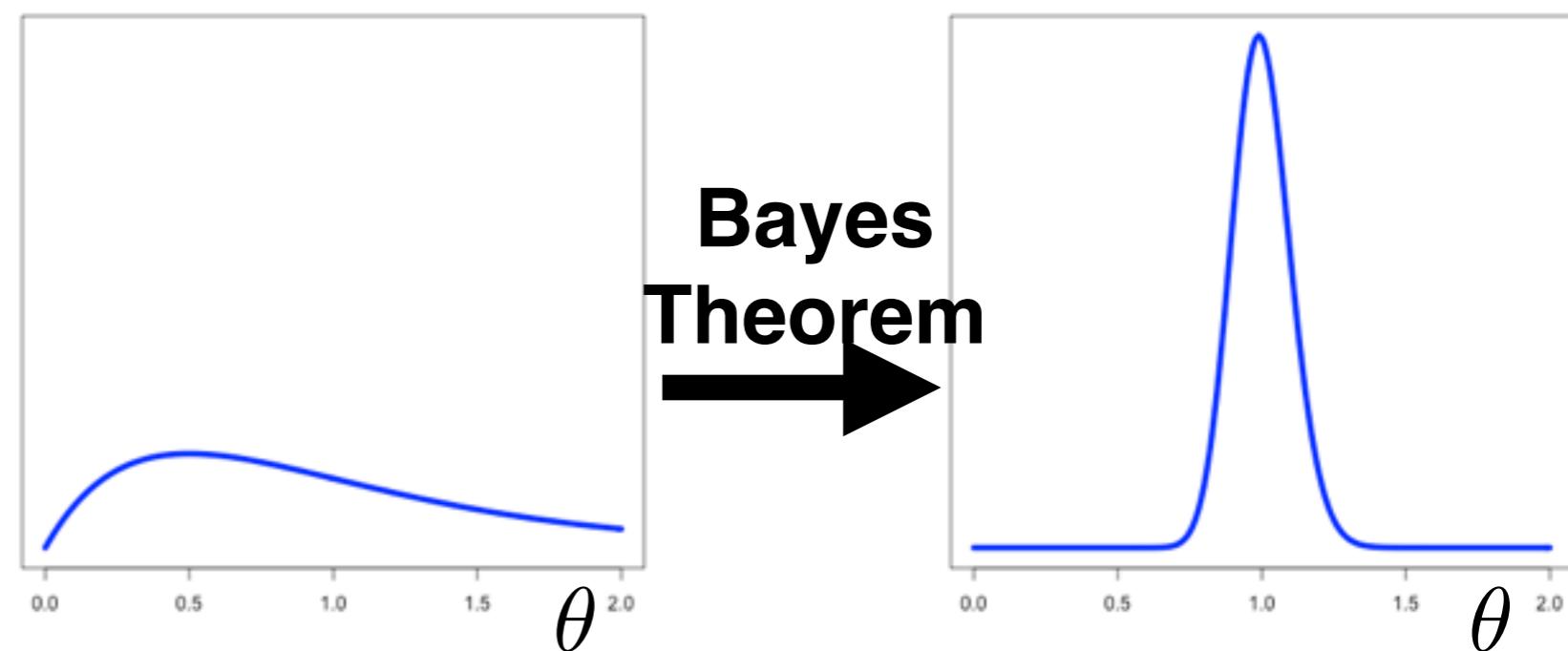
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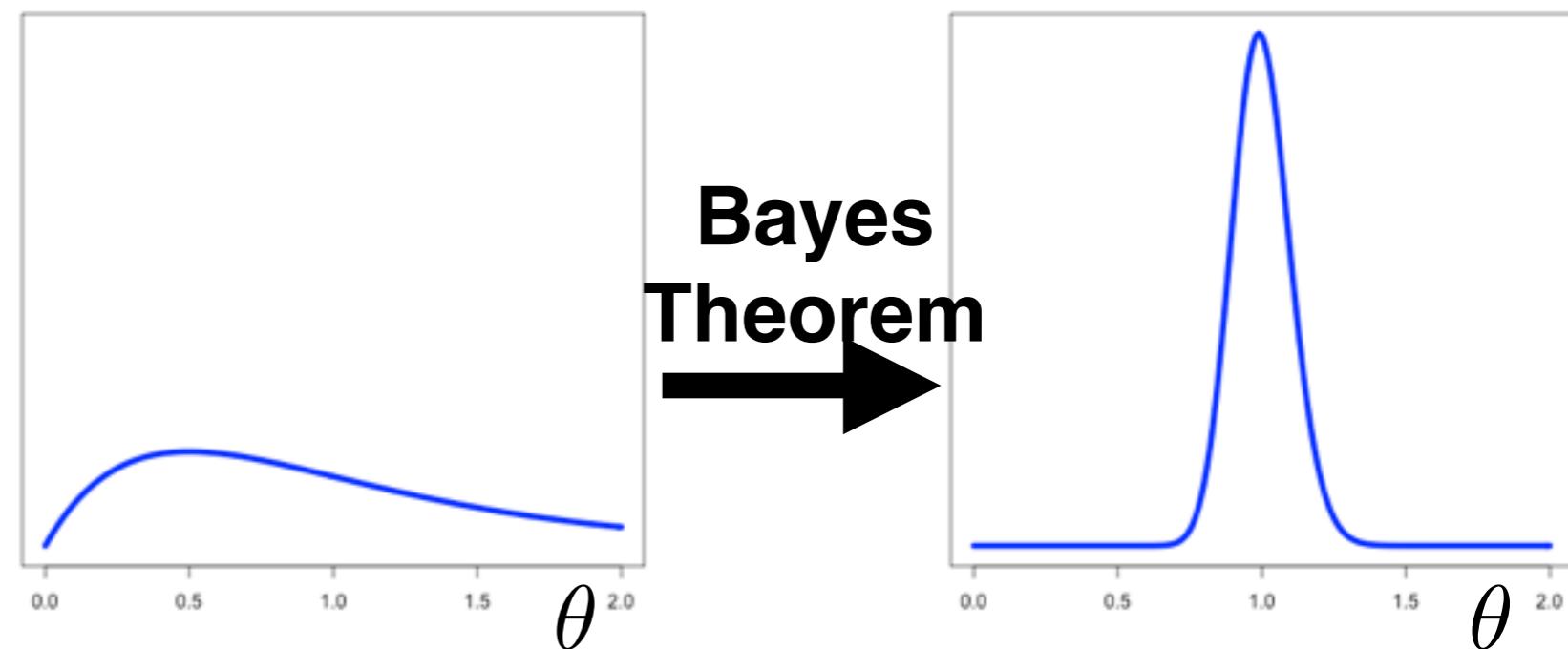
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- Time-consuming

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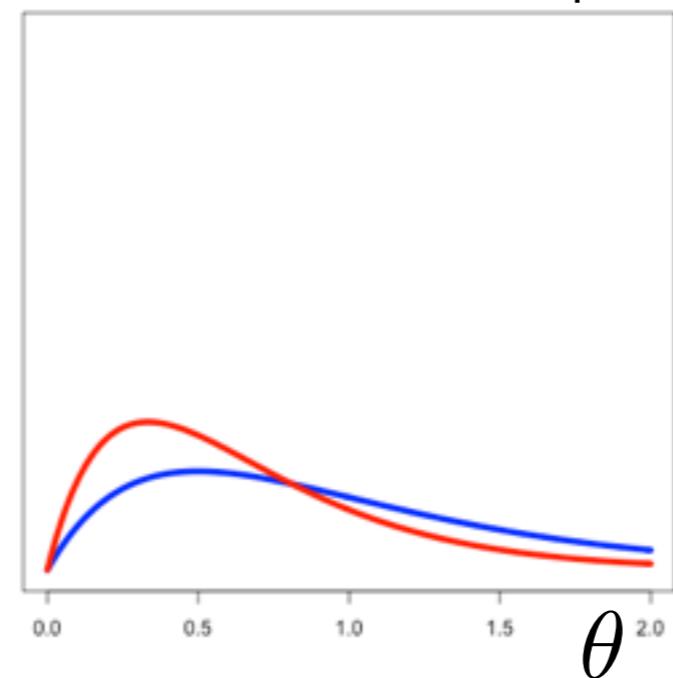
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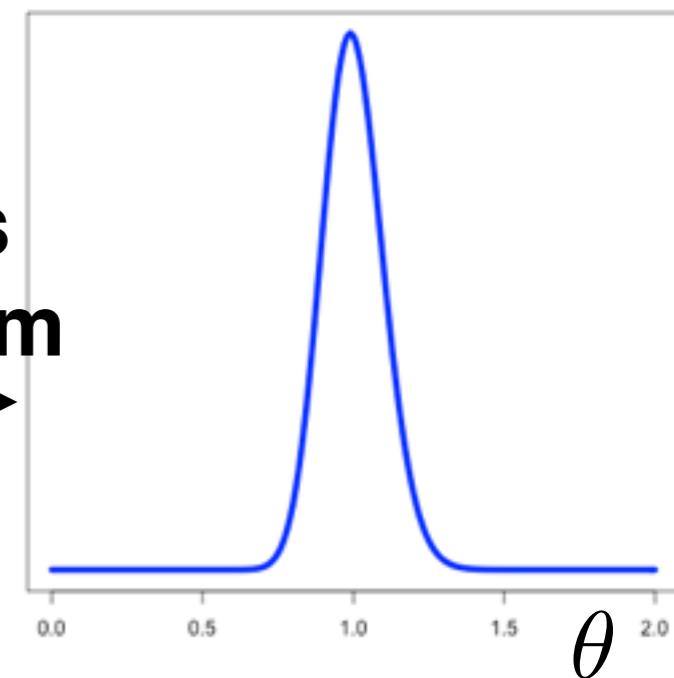
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Some reasonable priors



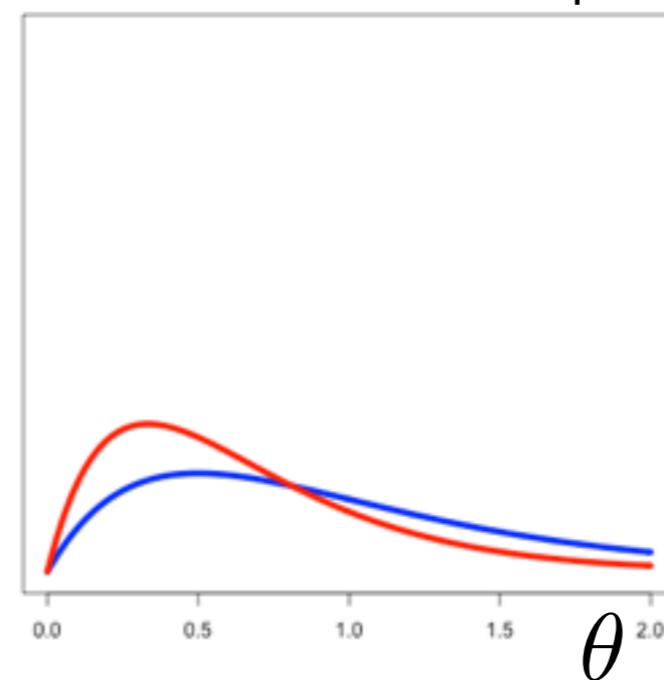
**Bayes  
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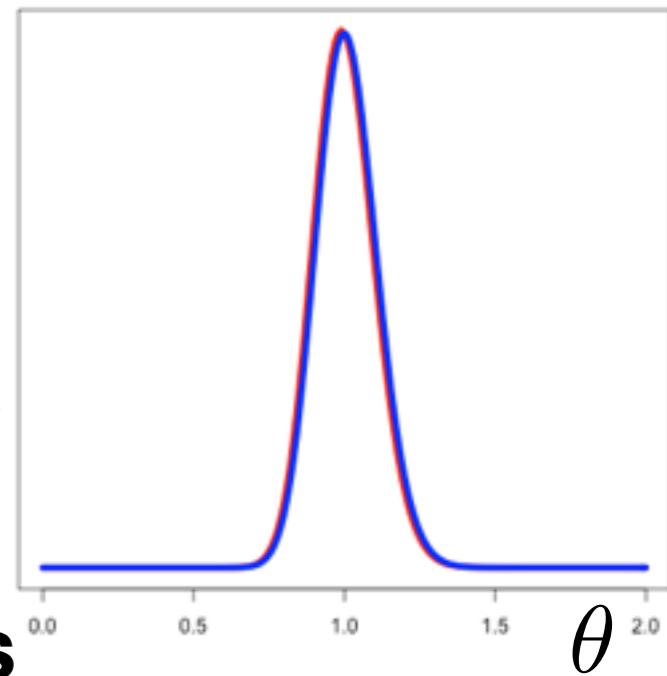
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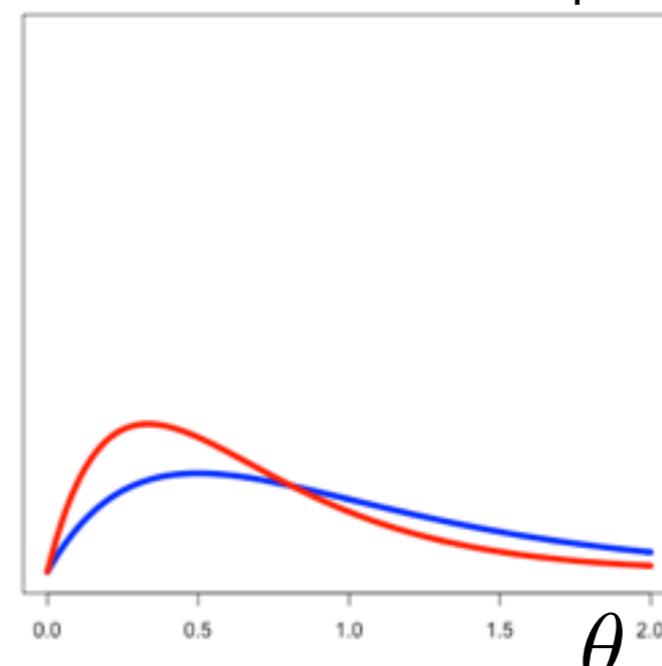
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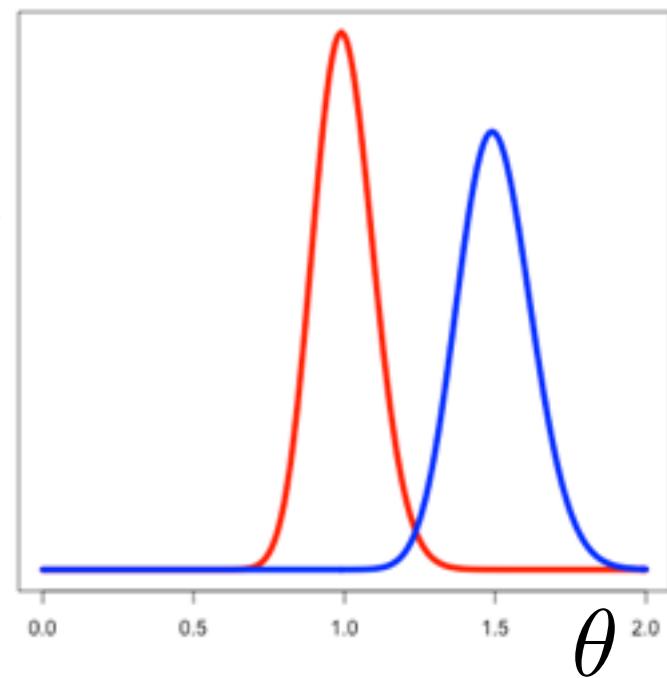
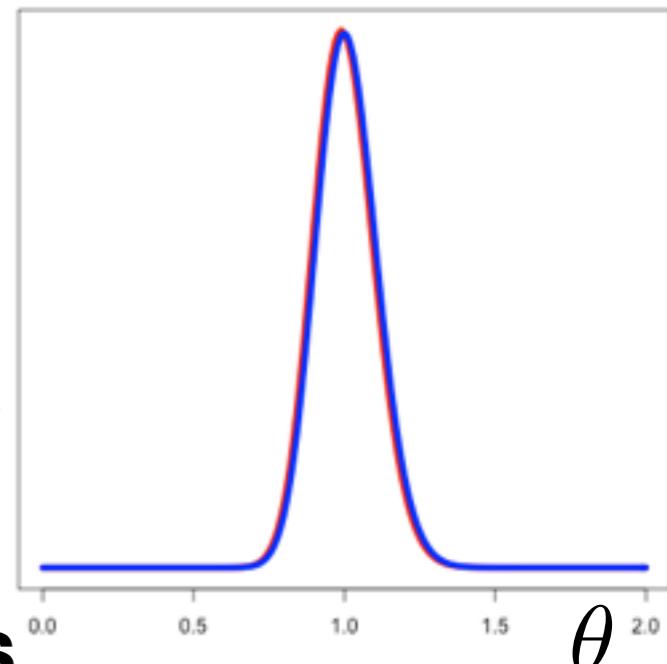
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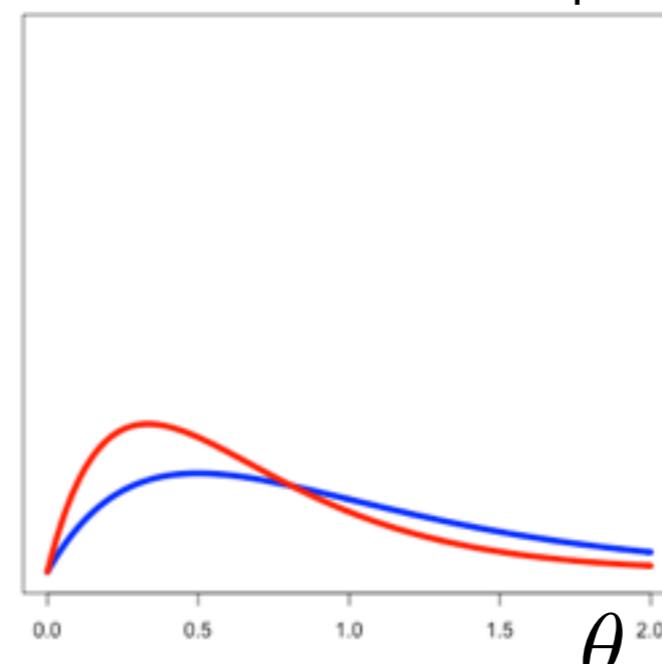
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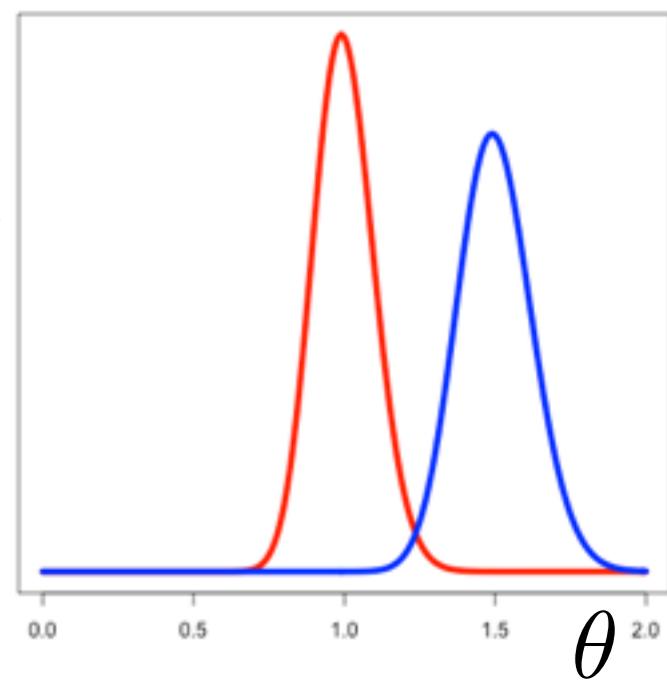
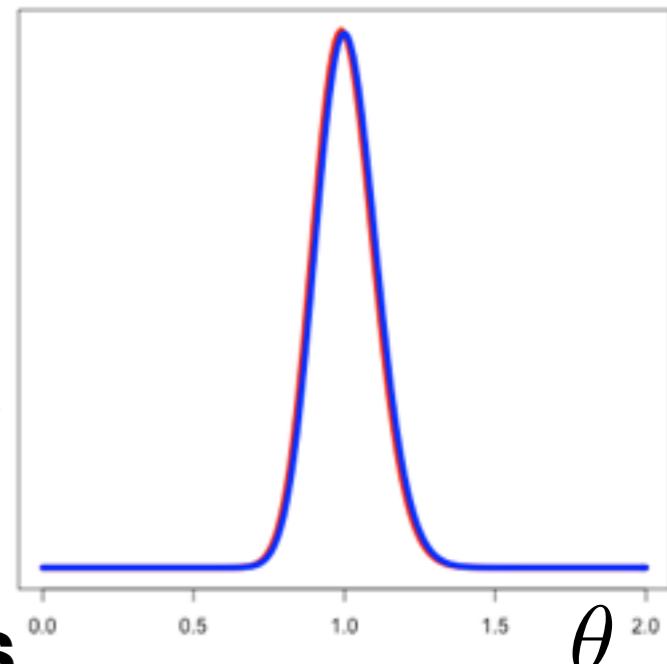
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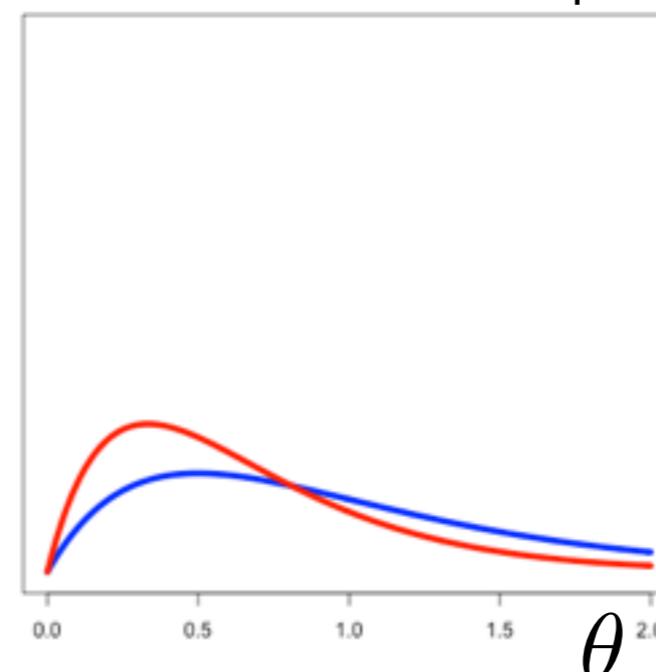


# robustness quantification

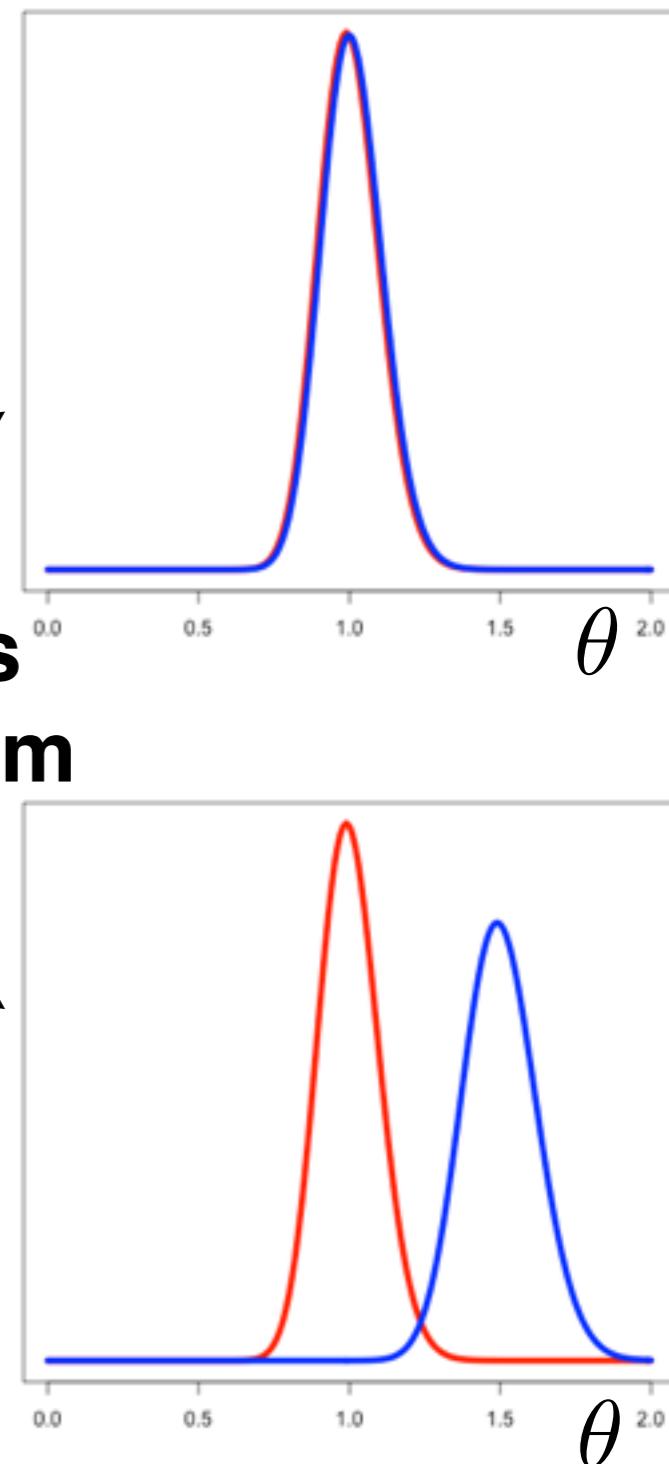
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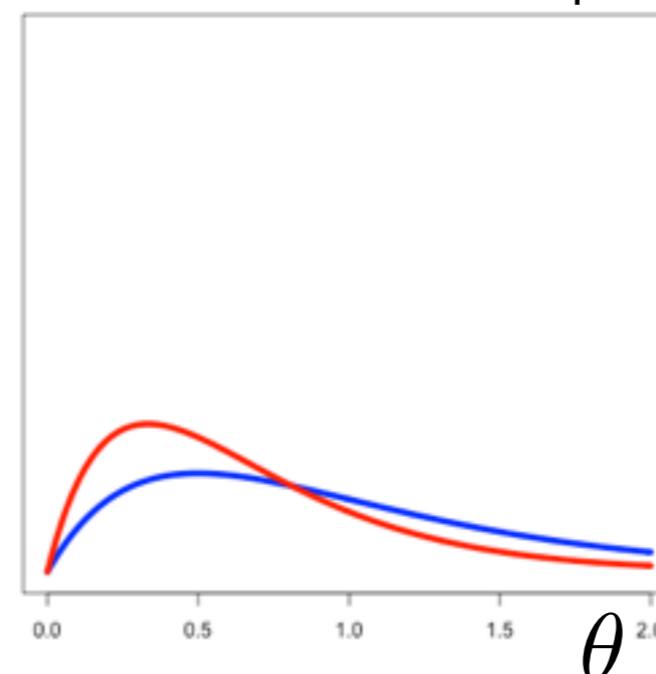


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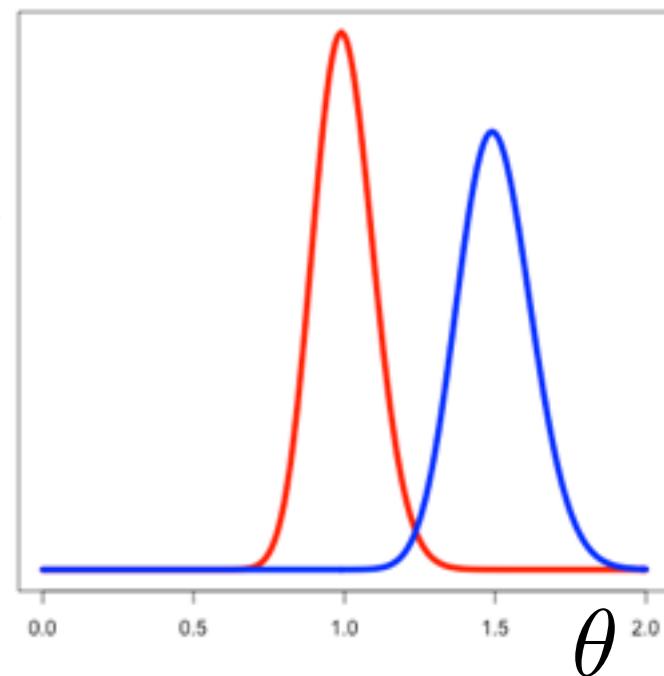
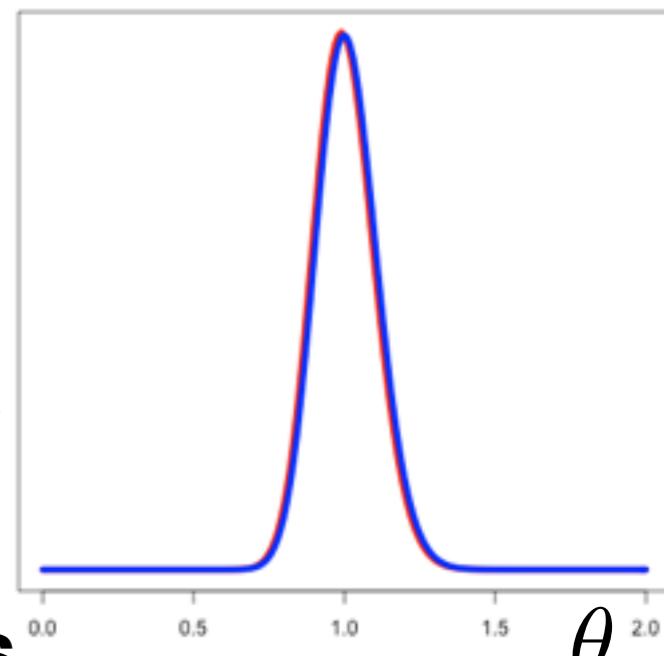
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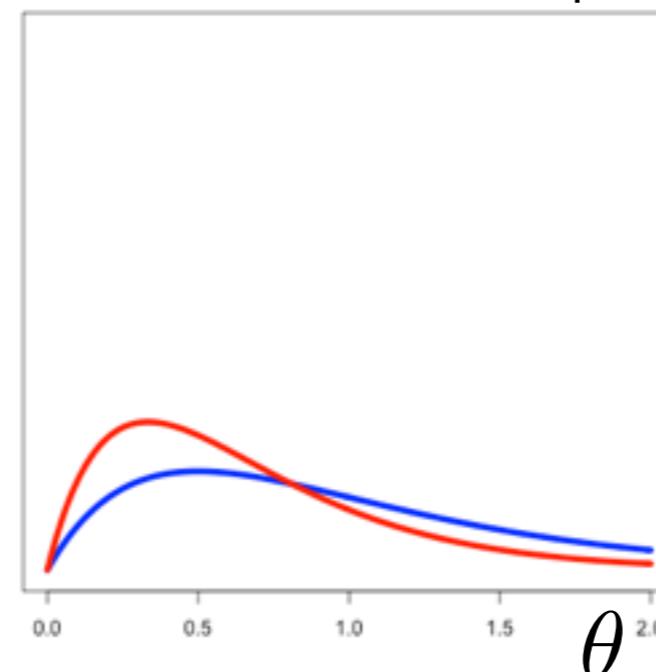


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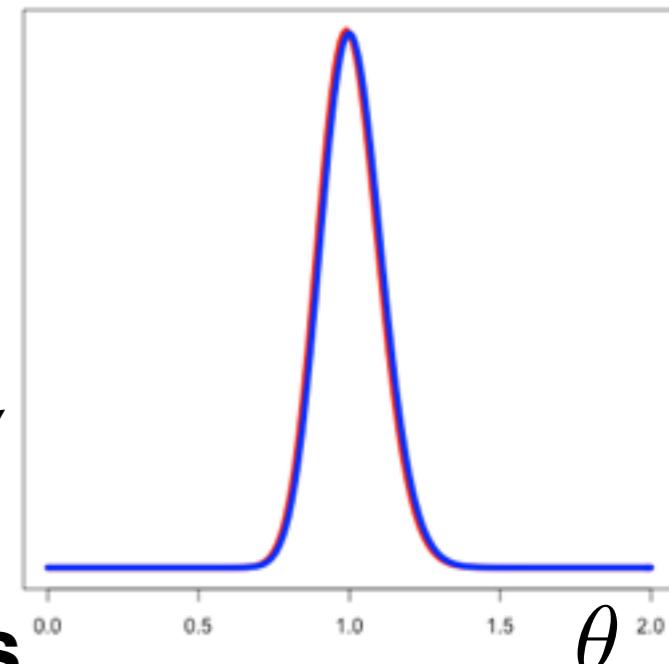
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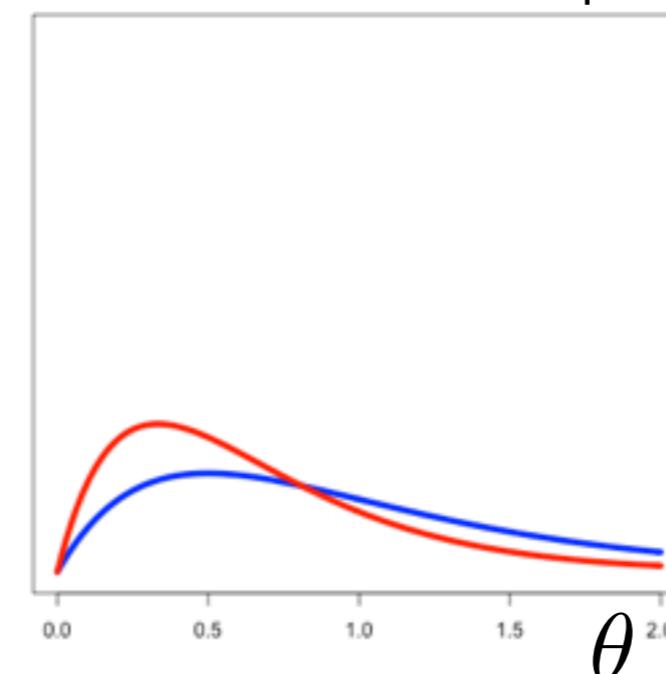
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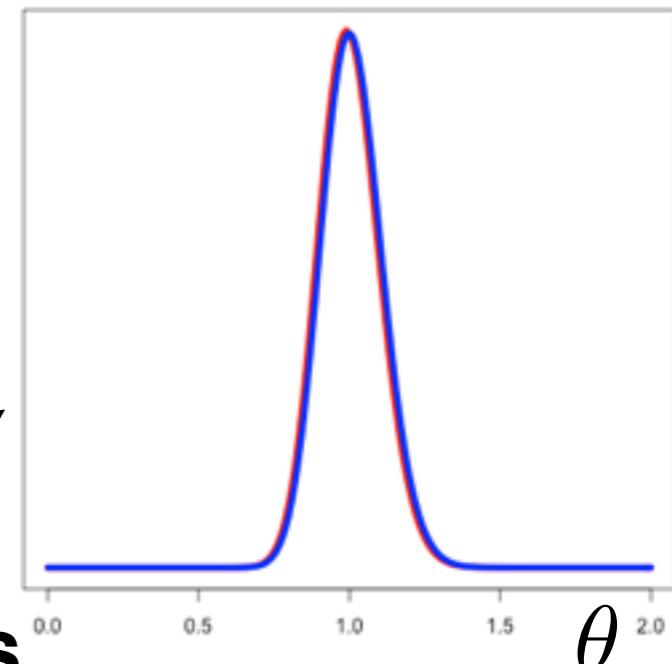
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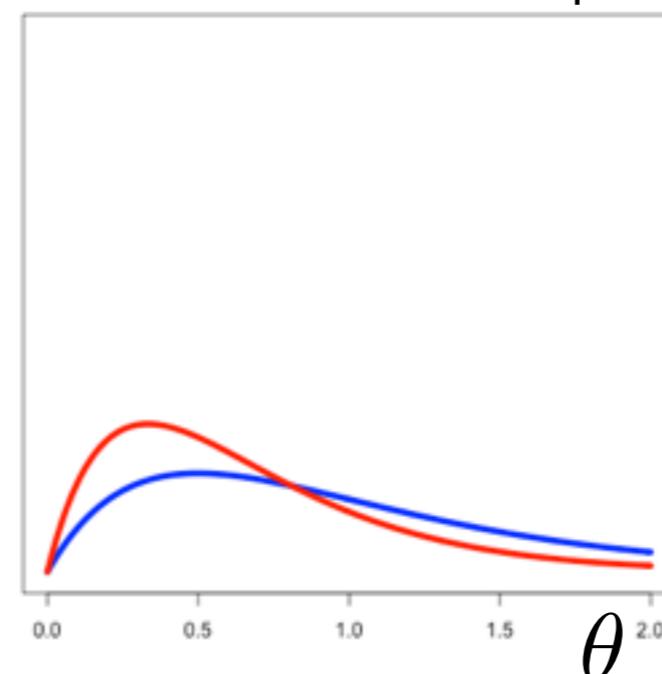
*variational Bayes*

# Uncertainty & robustness quantification

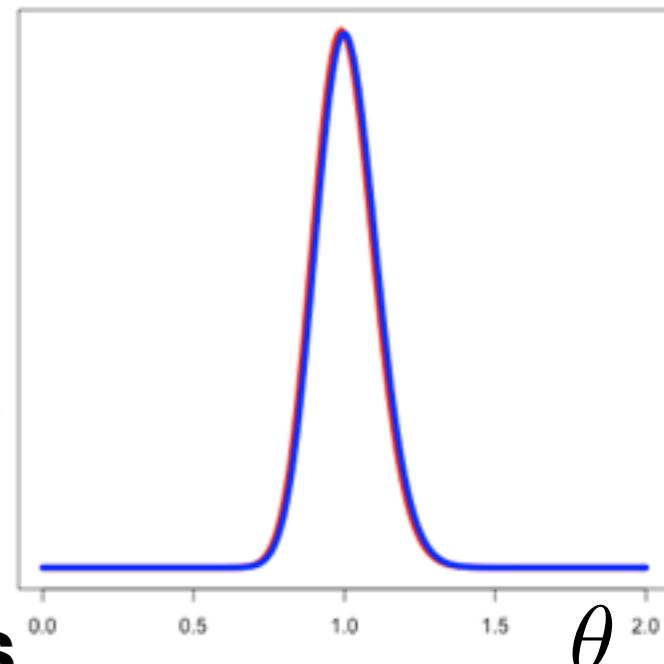
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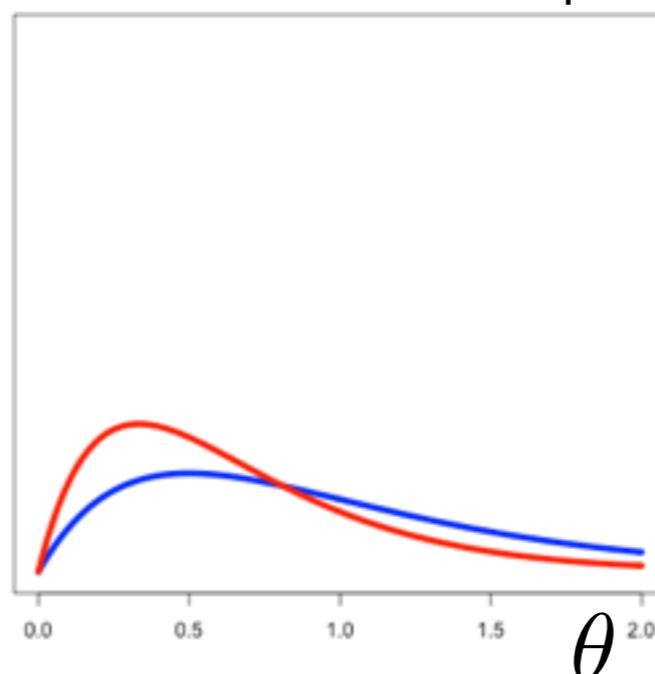
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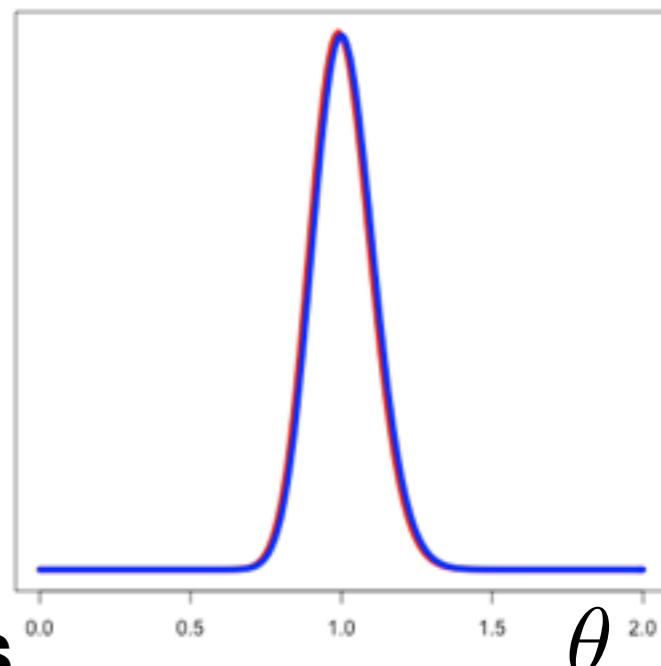
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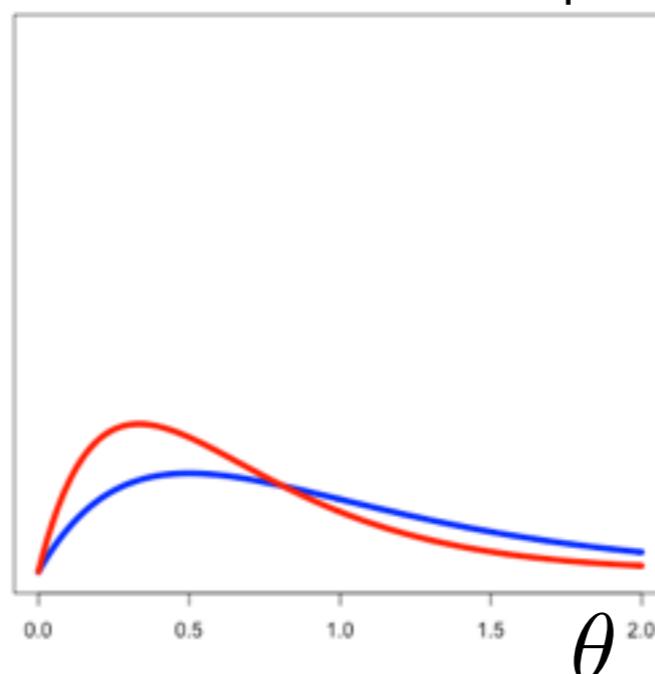
- We propose: *linear response variational Bayes*

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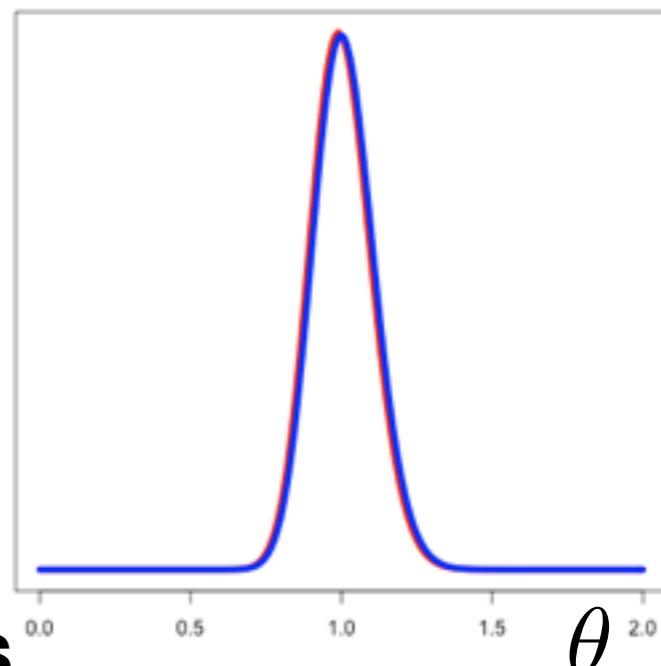
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[see also Opper, Winther 2003]

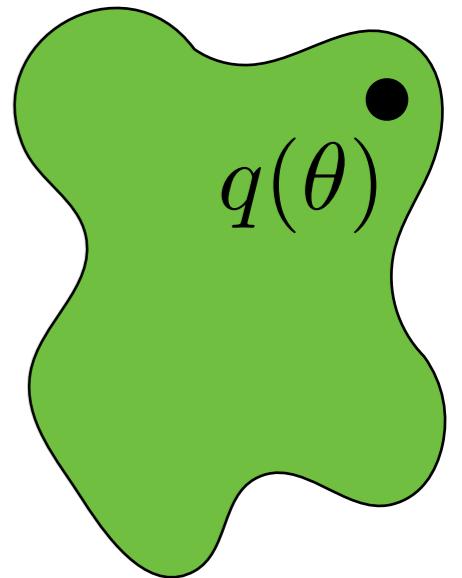
# Roadmap

- Challenges of VB
- Accurate uncertainties from VB
- Accurate robustness quantification from VB
  - Big idea: derivatives/perturbations are relatively easy in VB

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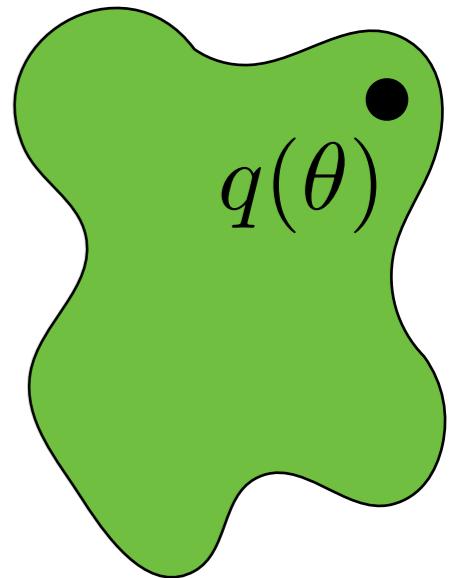
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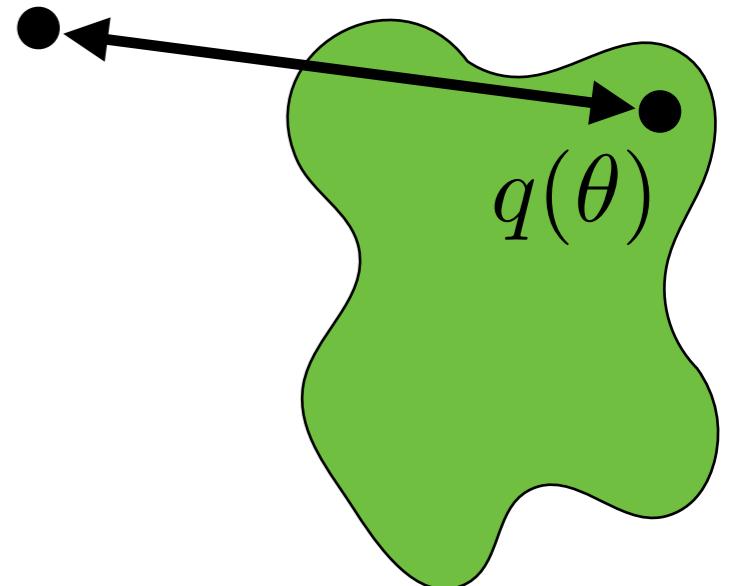
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$$p(\theta|y)$$



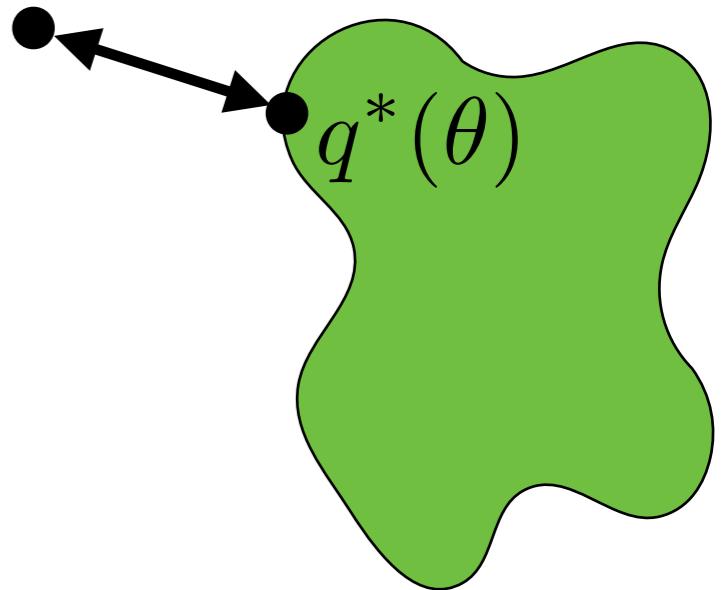
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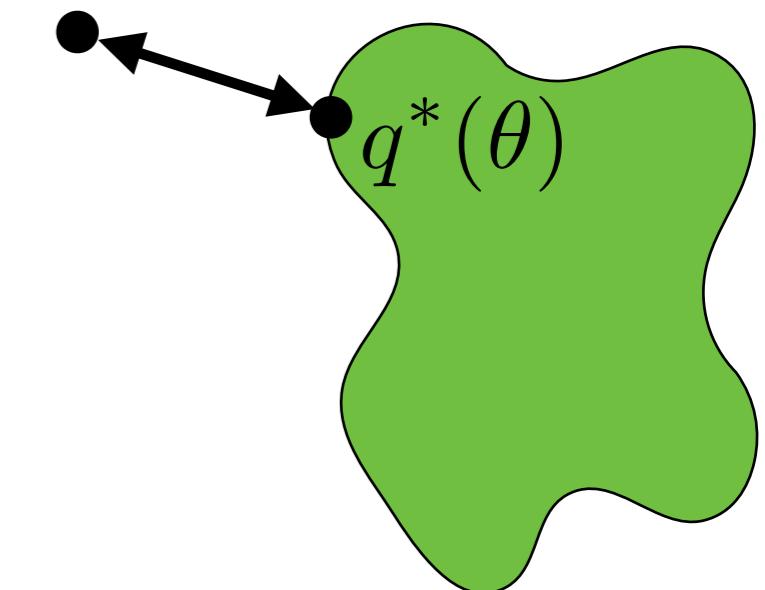


# What about uncertainty?

- Variational Bayes

$$KL(q||p(\cdot|x)) = \int_{\theta} q(\theta) \log \frac{q(\theta)}{p(\theta|x)} d\theta$$

$$p(\theta|y)$$

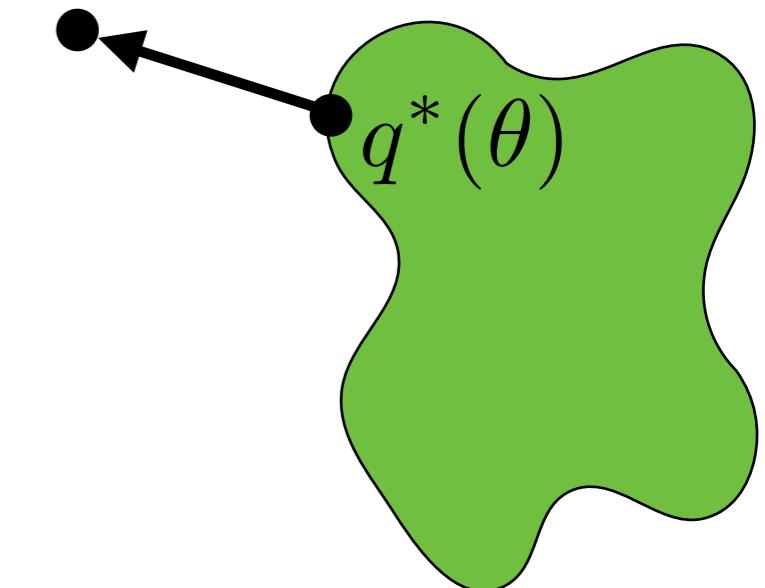


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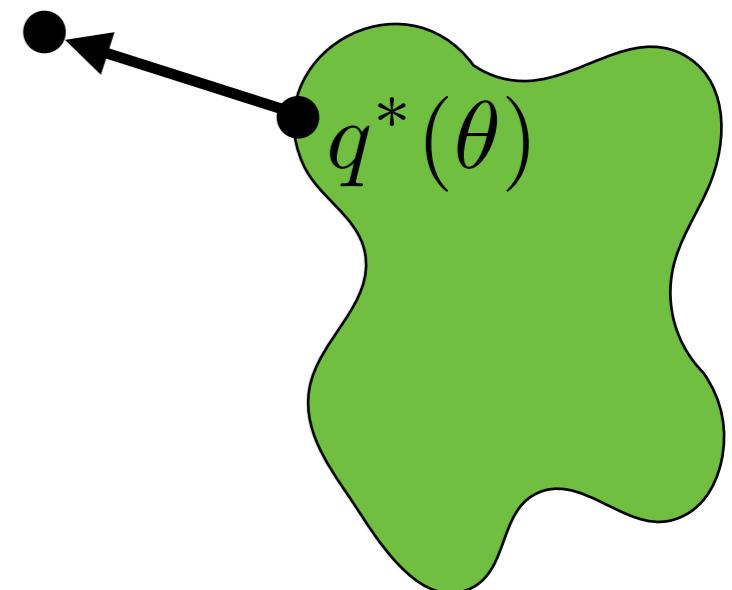
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- Mean-field variational Bayes (MFVB)

$$q(\theta) = \prod_{j=1}^J q(\theta_j)$$

$$p(\theta|y)$$



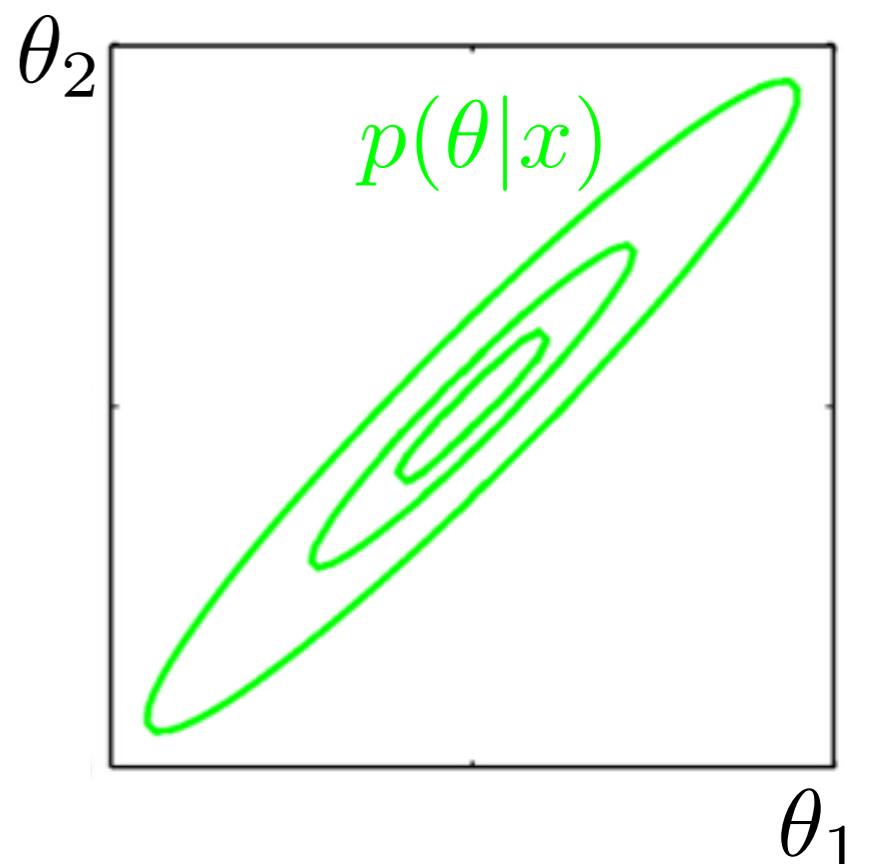
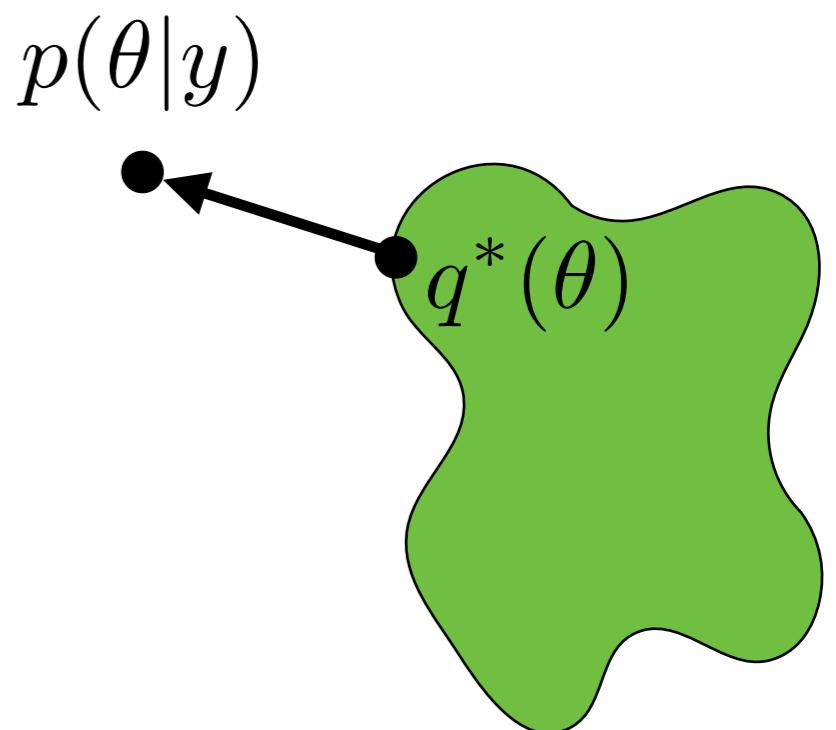
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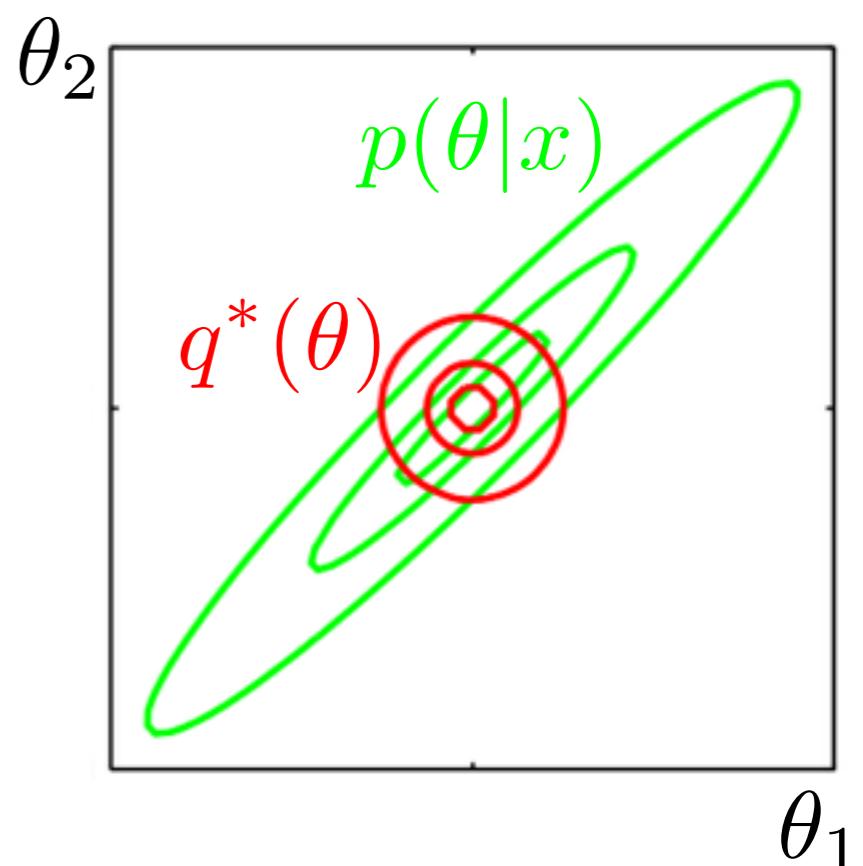
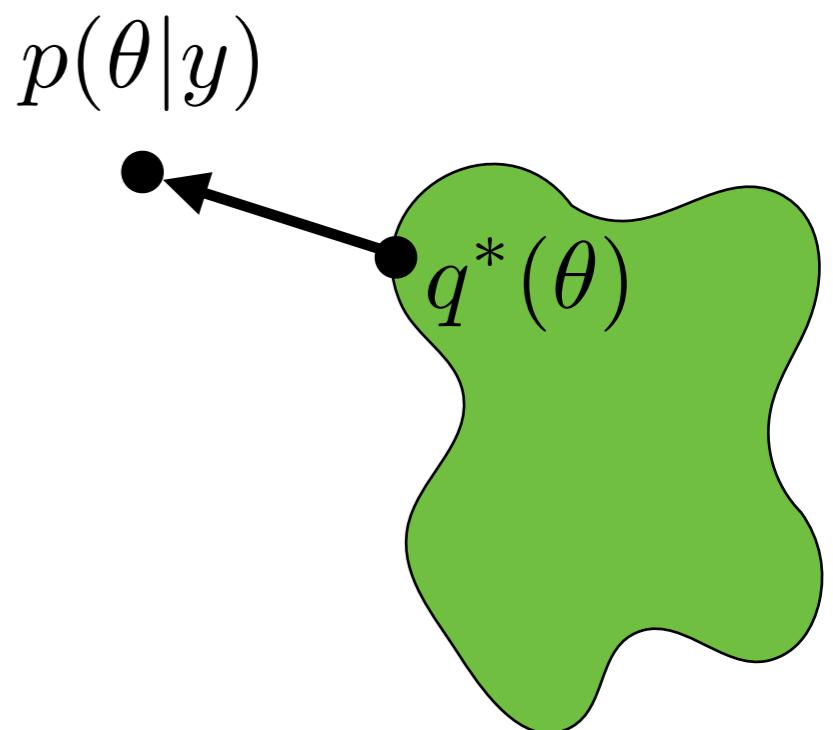
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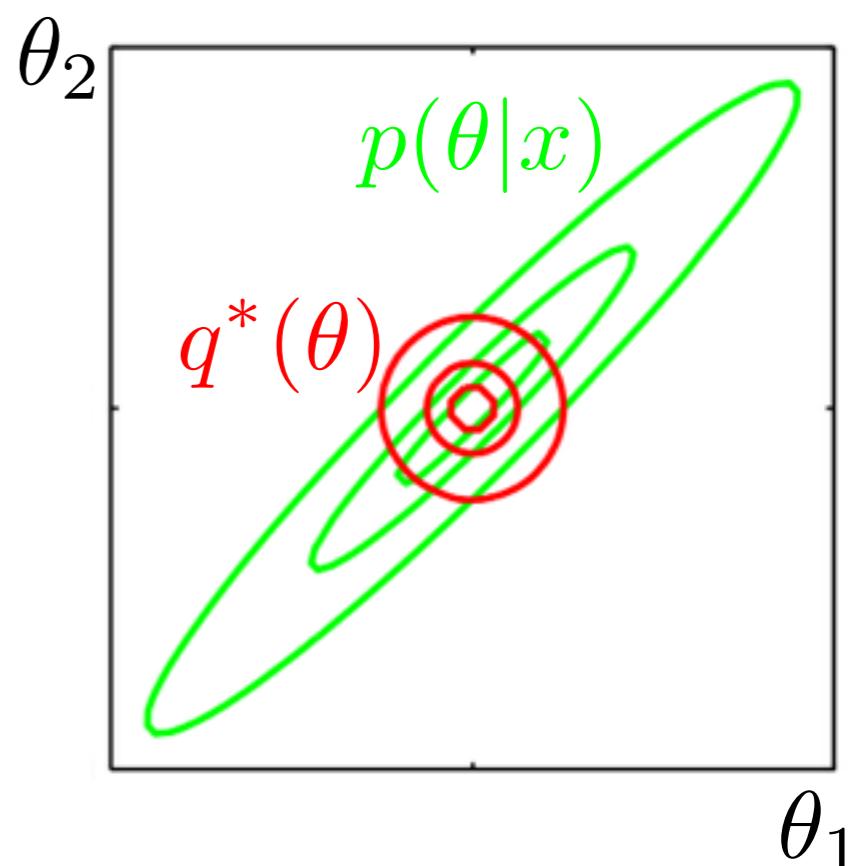
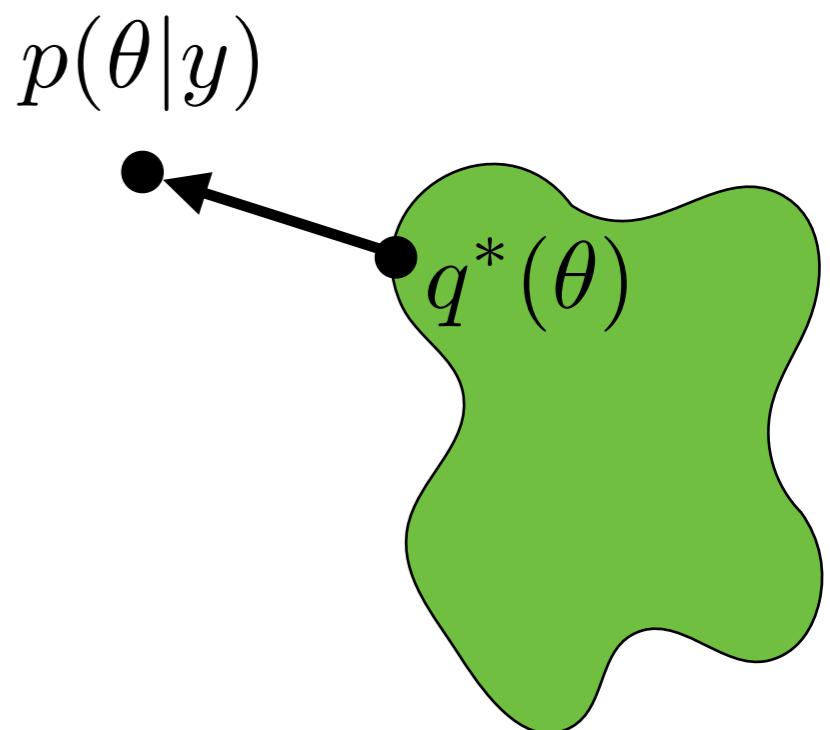
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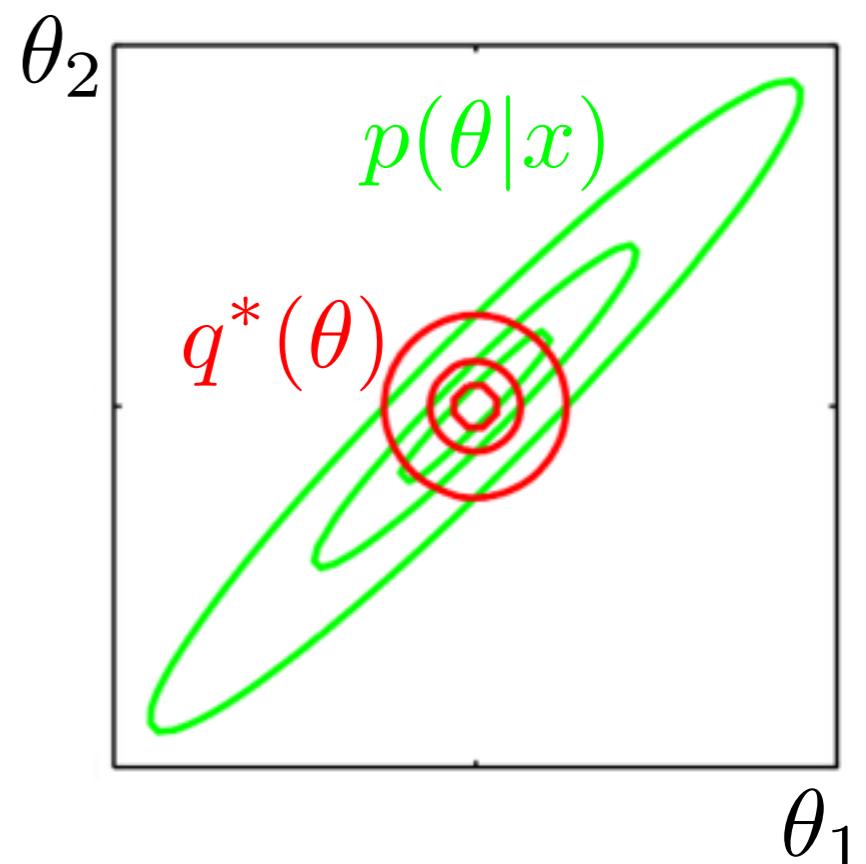
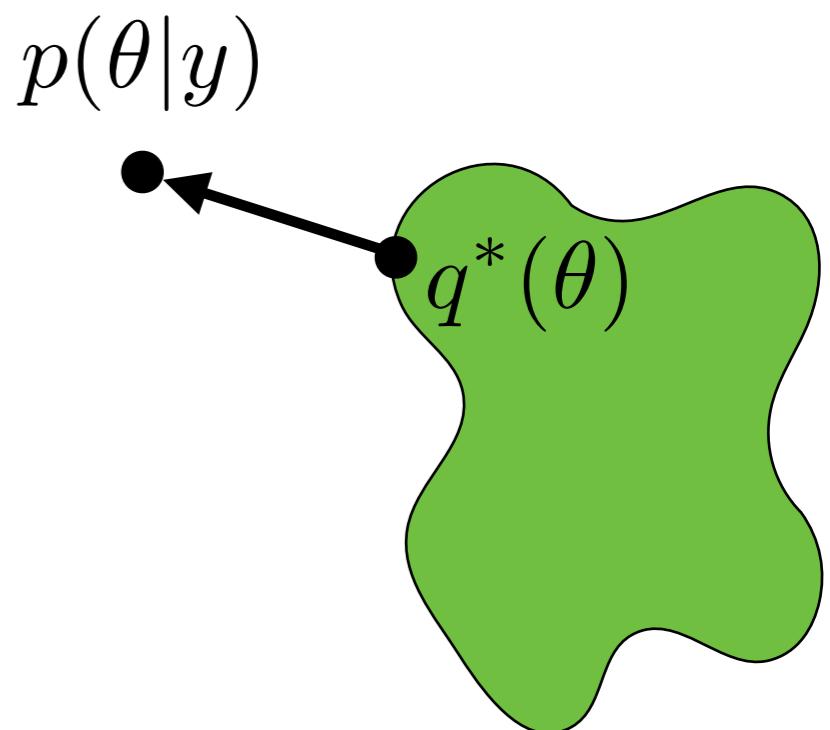
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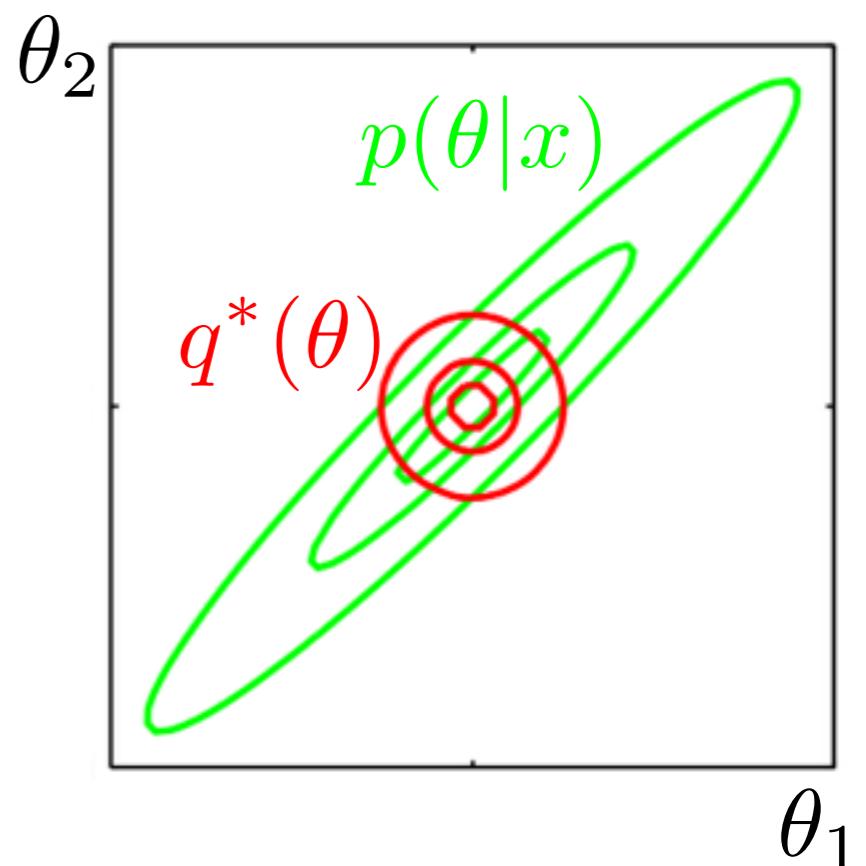
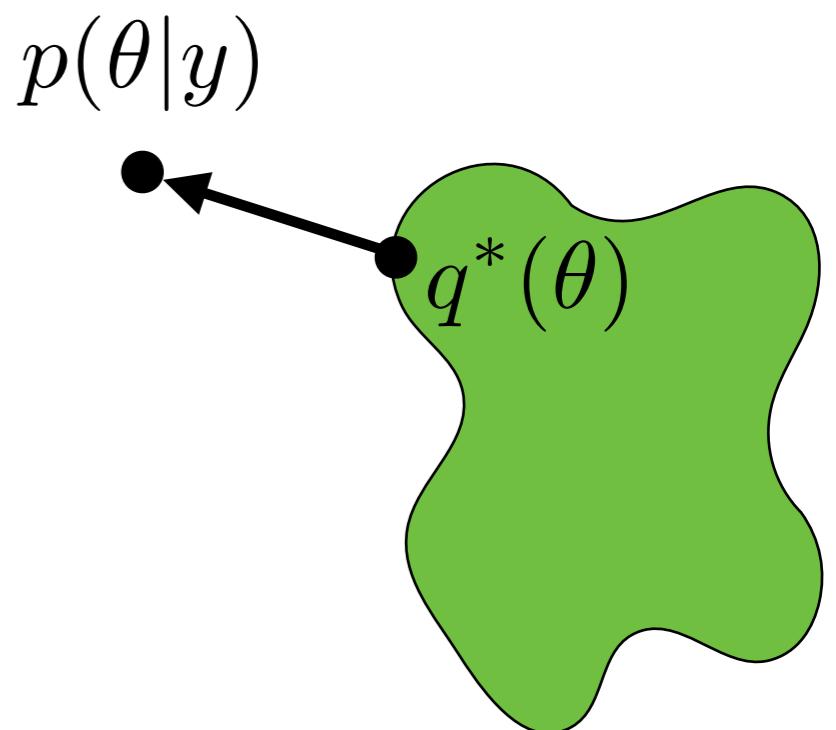
- Variational Bayes

$$KL(q||p(\cdot|x)) = \int_{\theta} q(\theta) \log \frac{q(\theta)}{p(\theta|x)} d\theta$$

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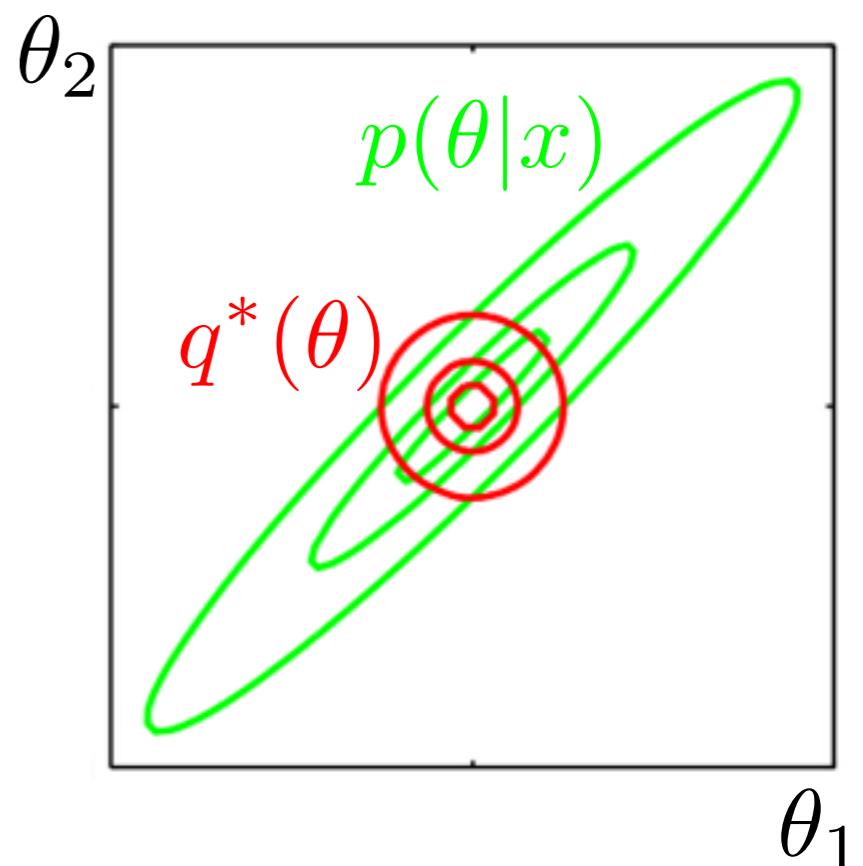
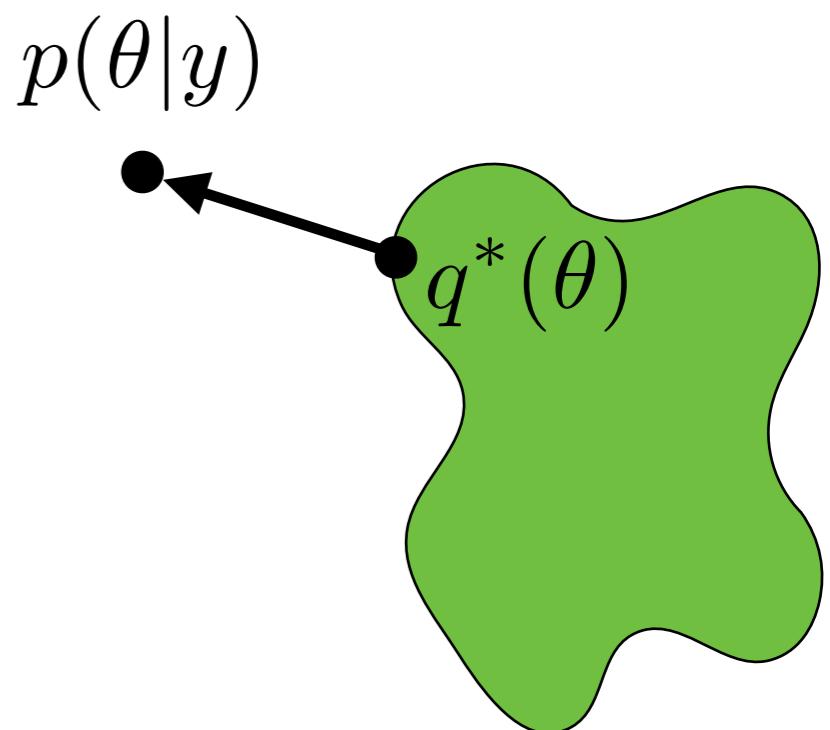
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[MacKay 2003; Bishop 2006; Wang, Titterington 2004; Turner, Sahani 2011]

[Fosdick 2013; Dunson 2014; Bardenet, Doucet, Holmes 2015]

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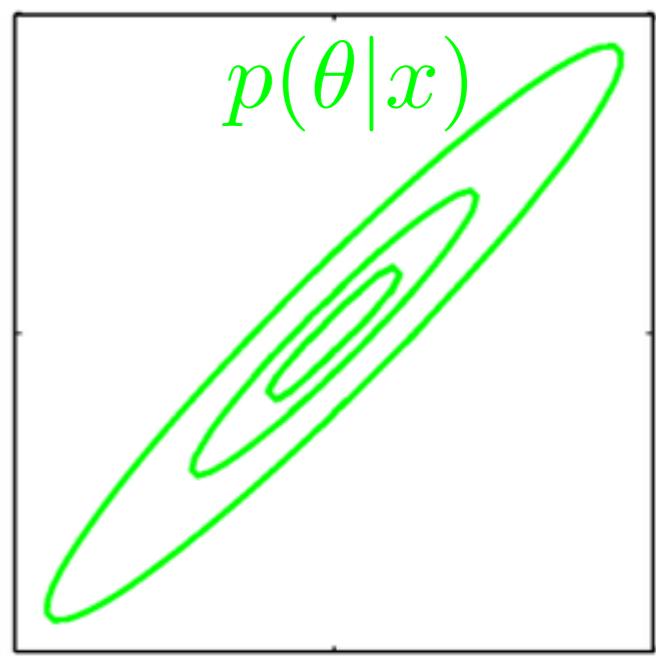
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[adapted from Bishop 2006]

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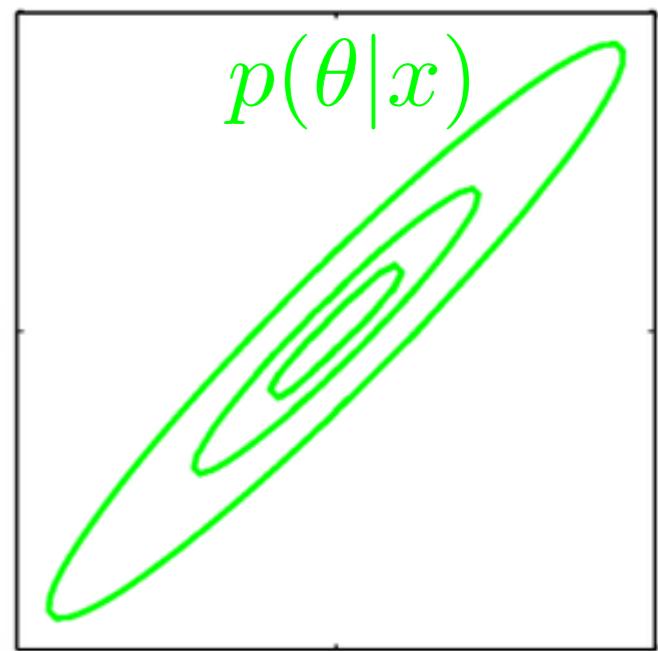
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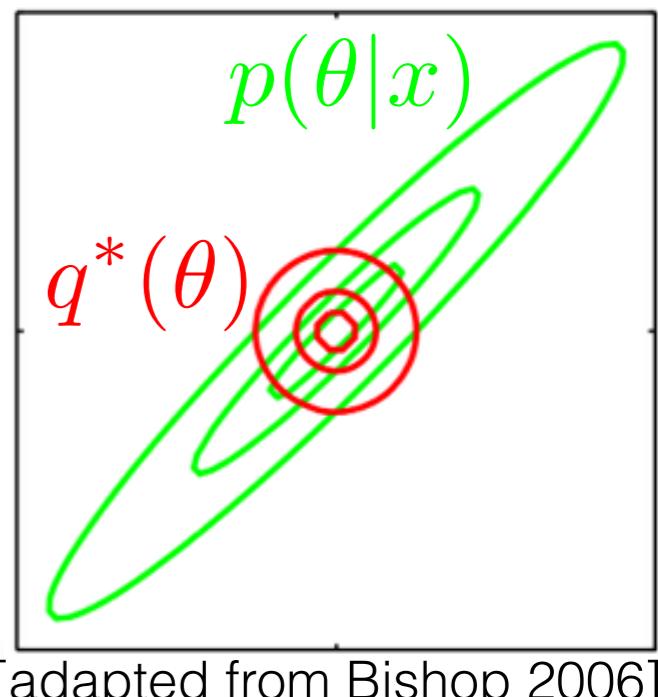
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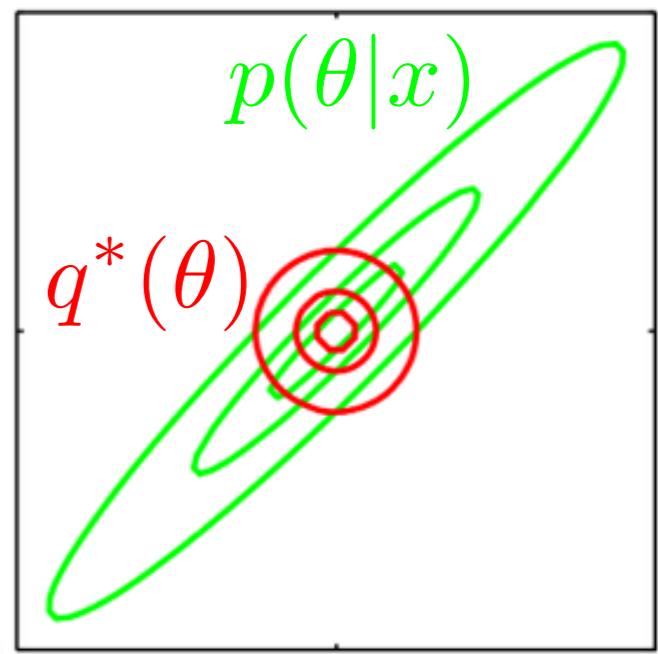
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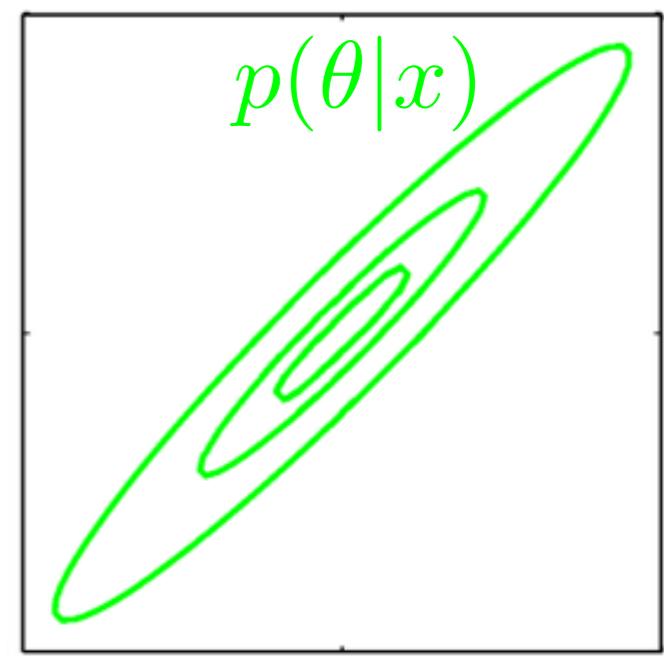
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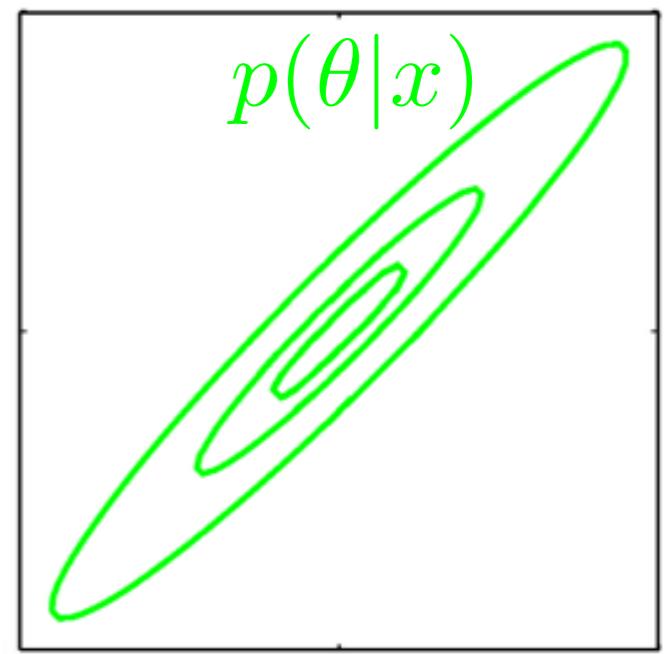
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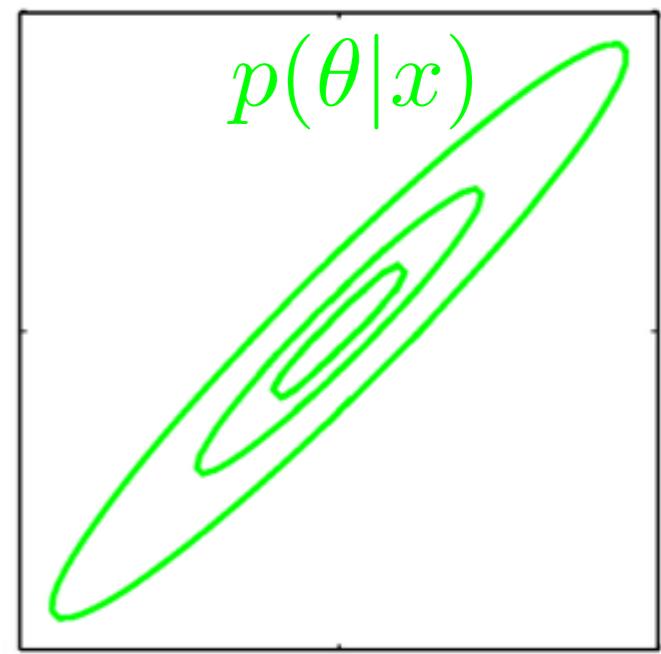
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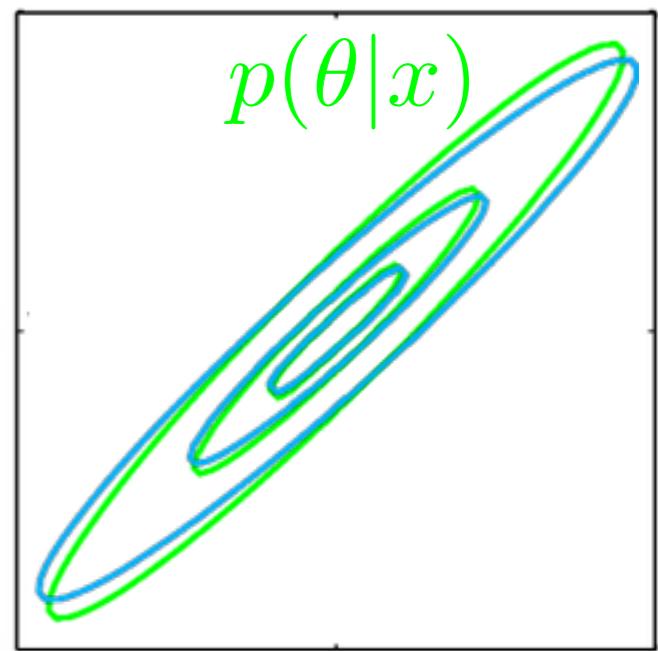
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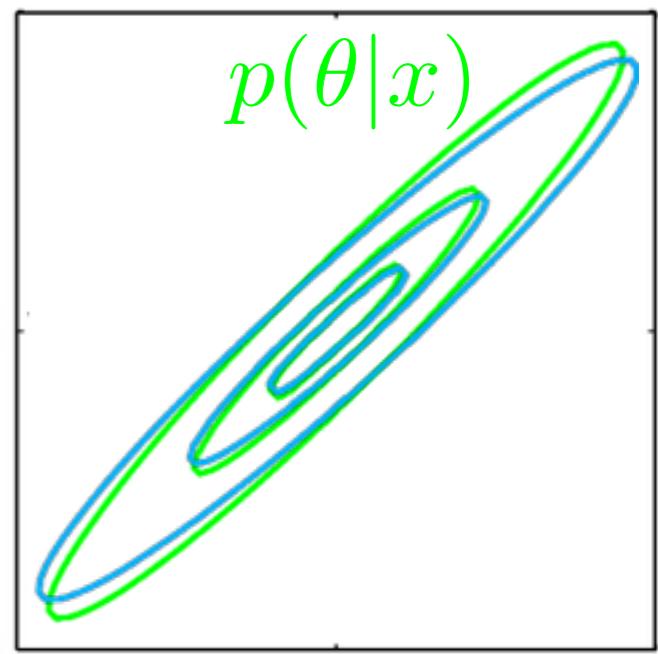
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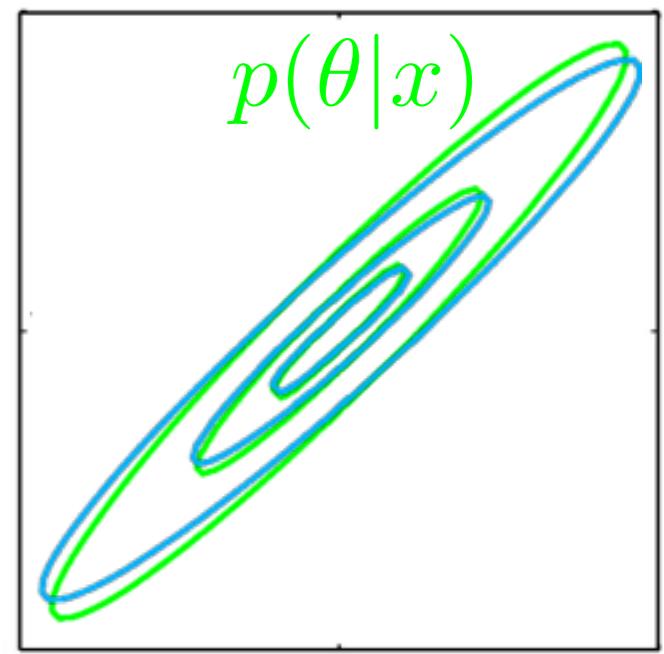
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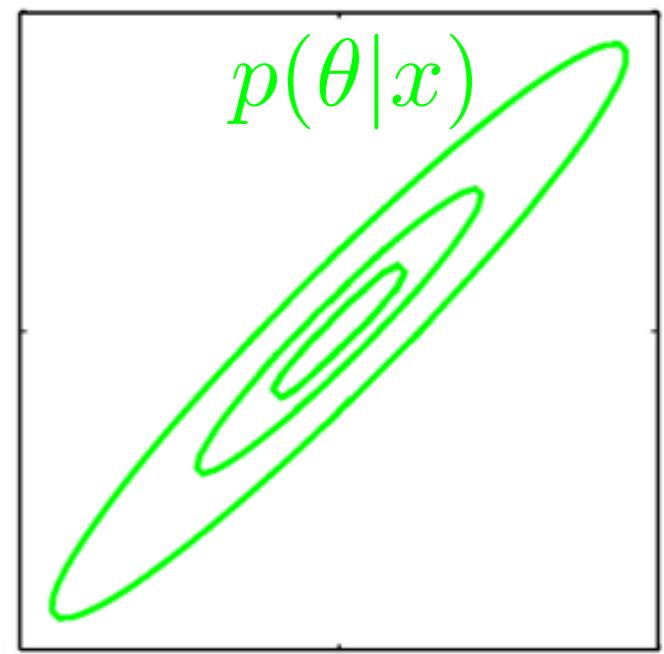
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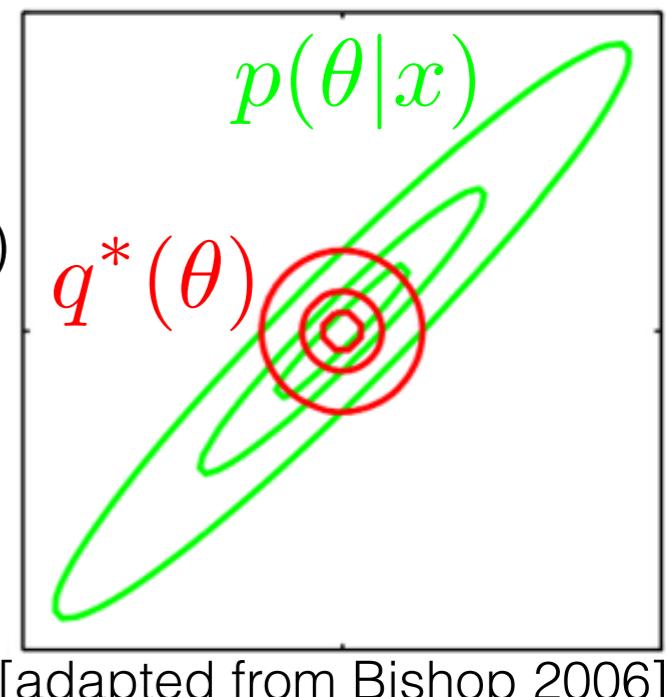
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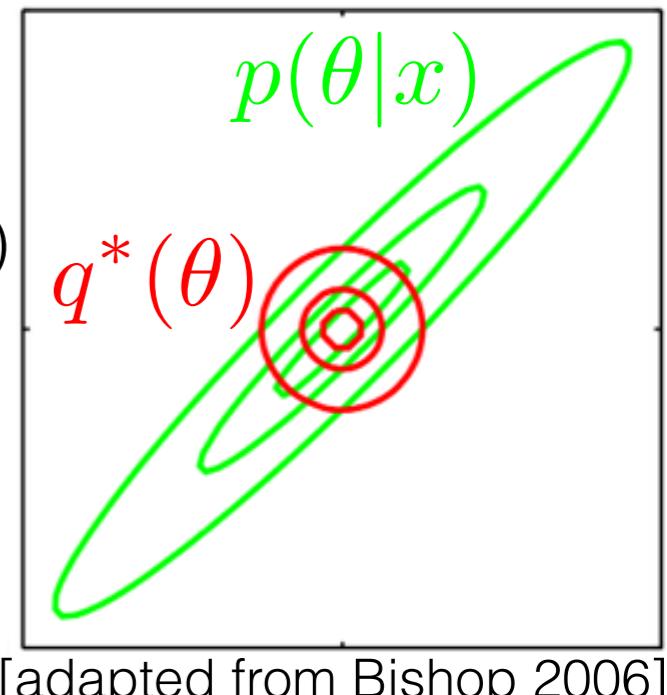
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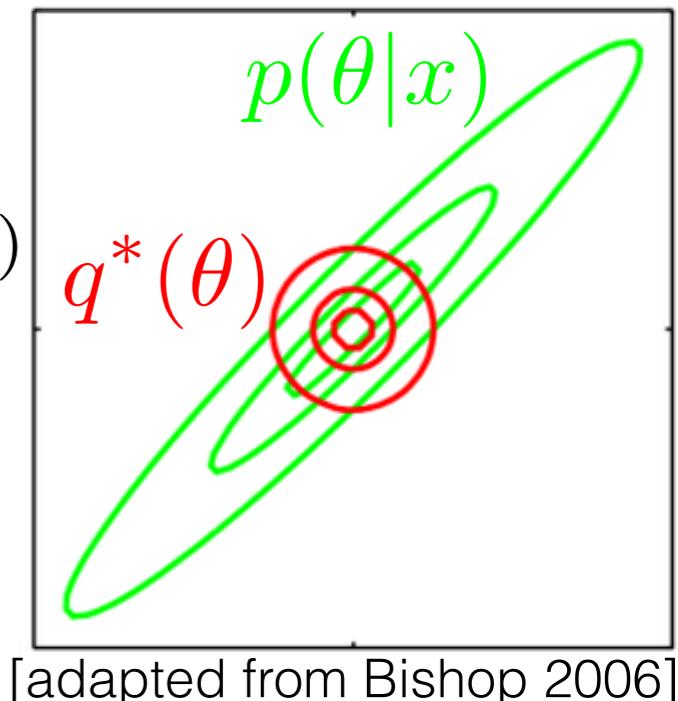
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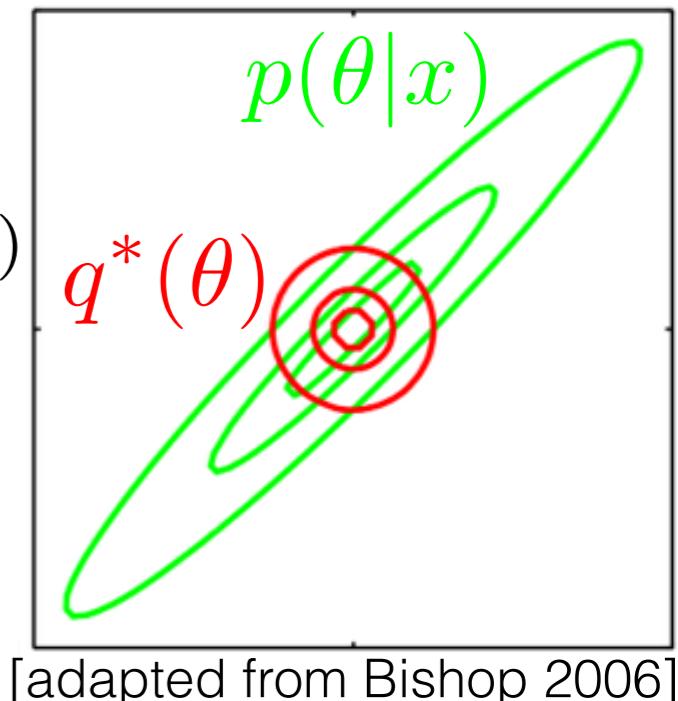
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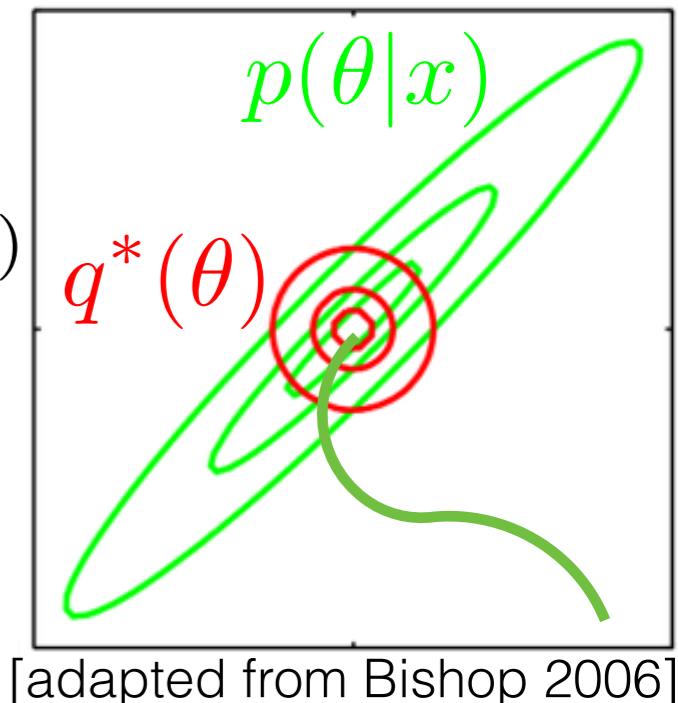
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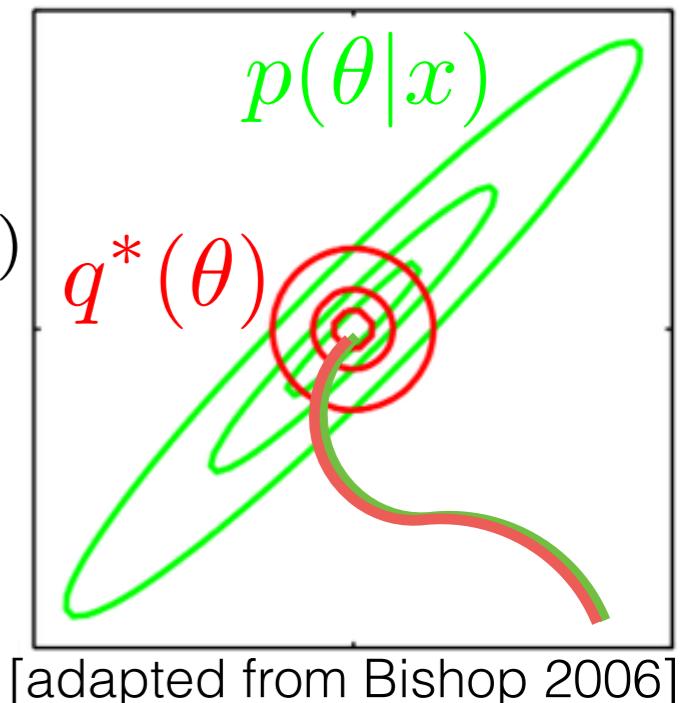
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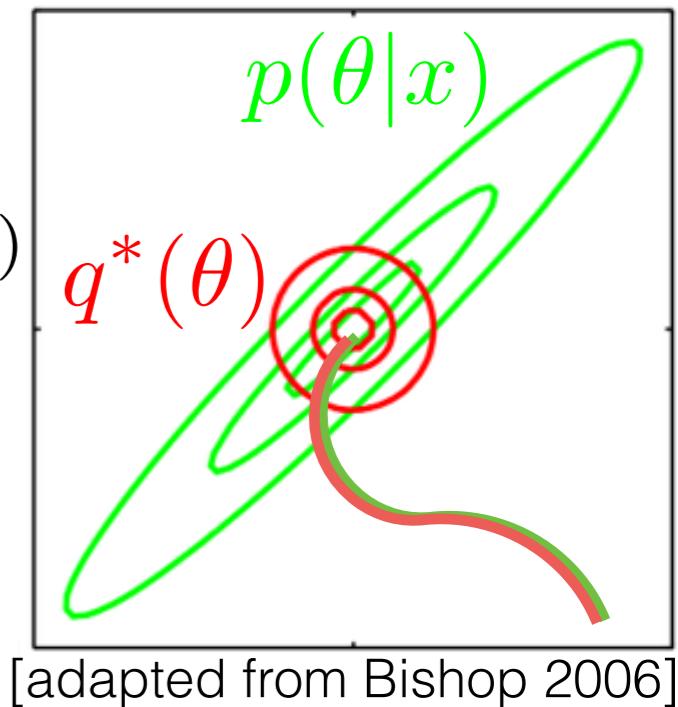
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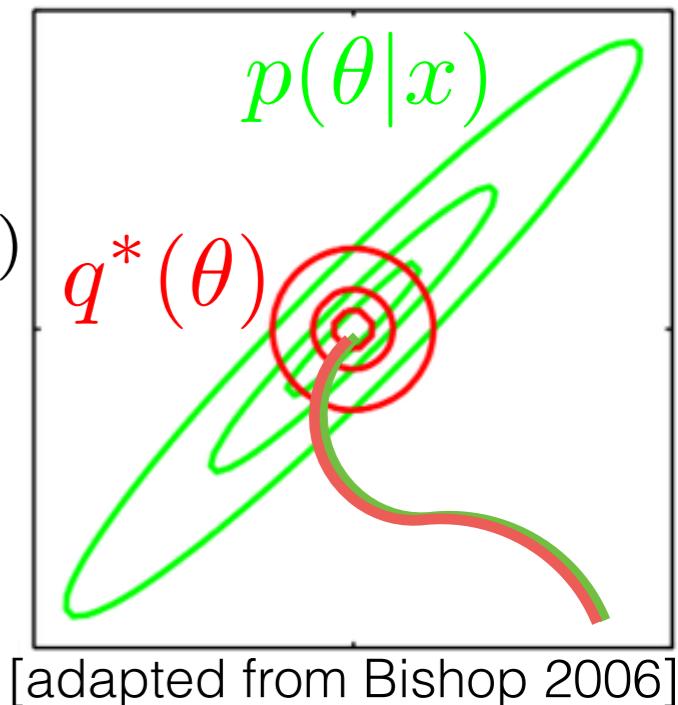
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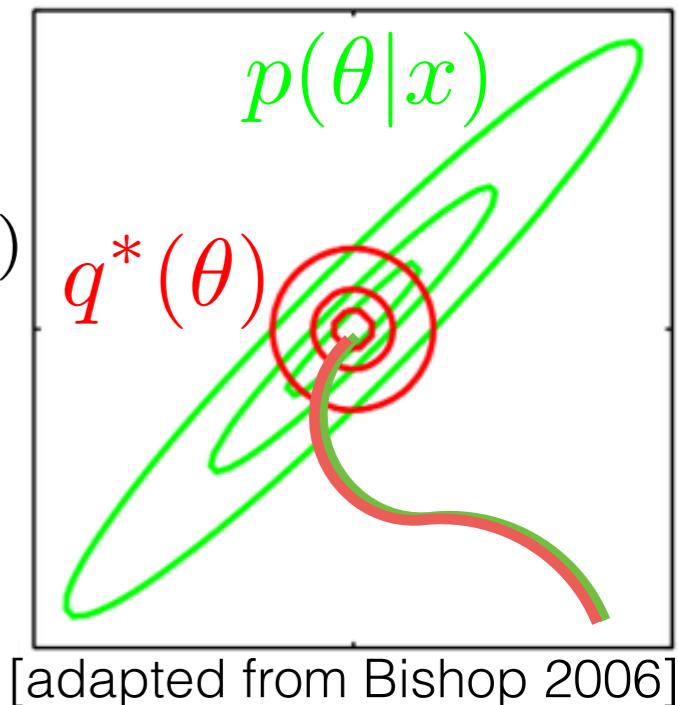
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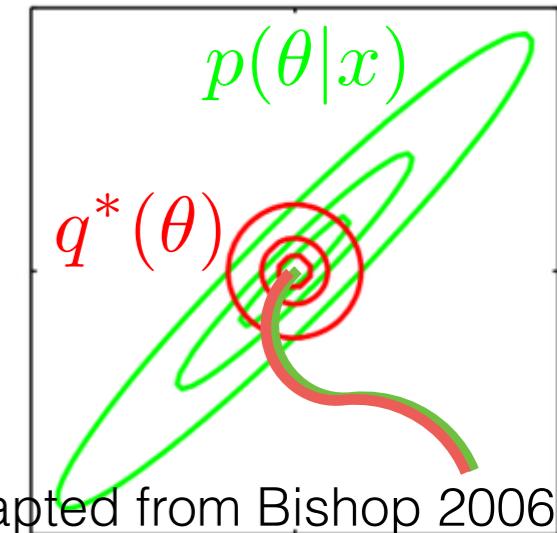
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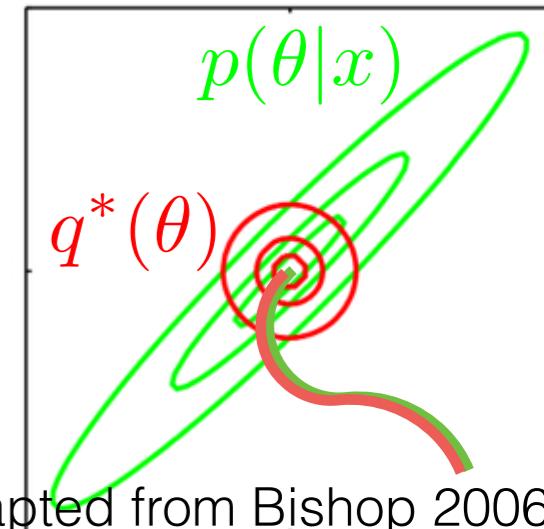
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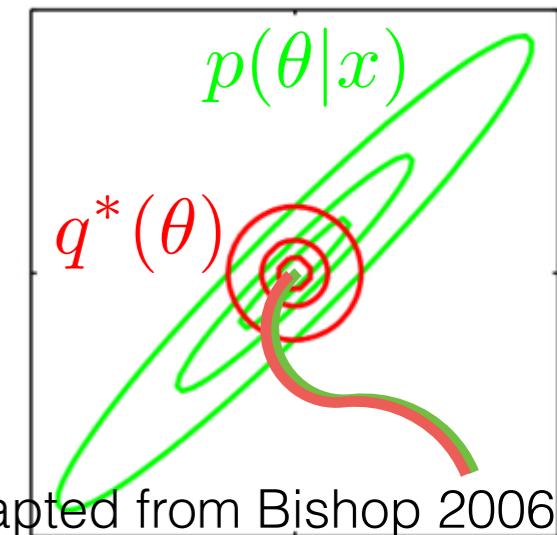
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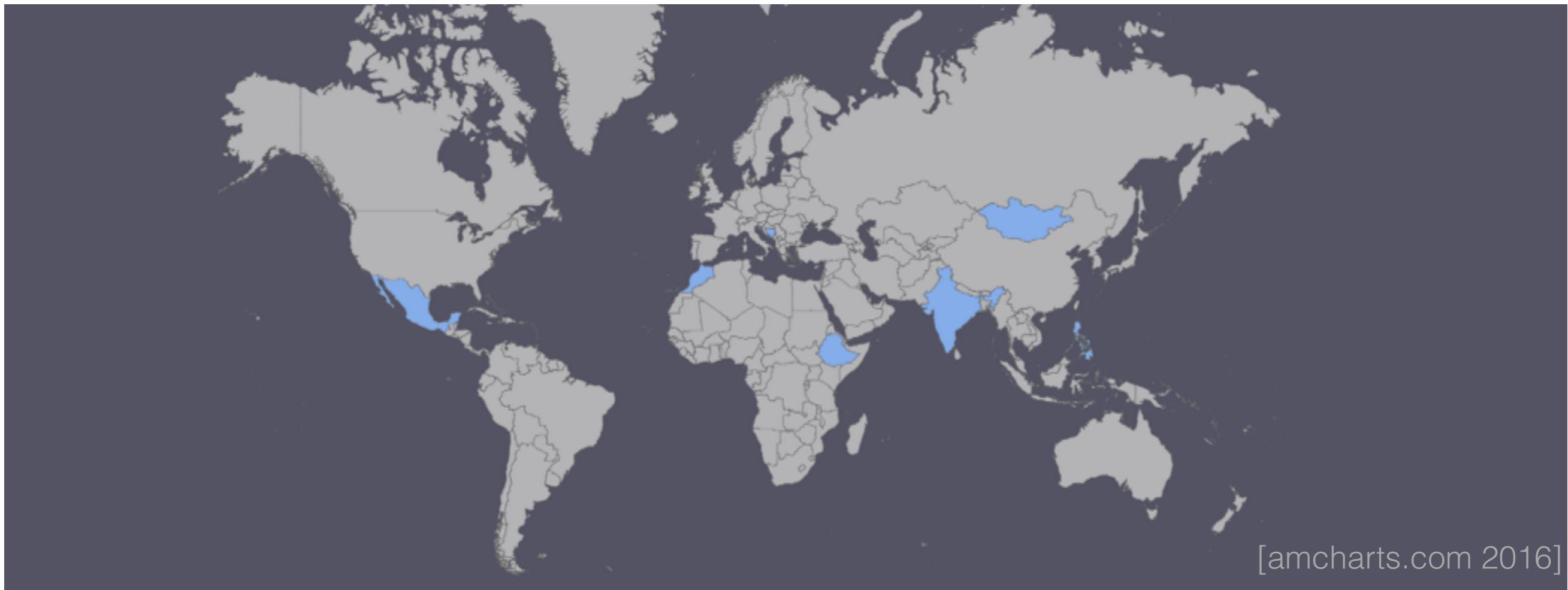
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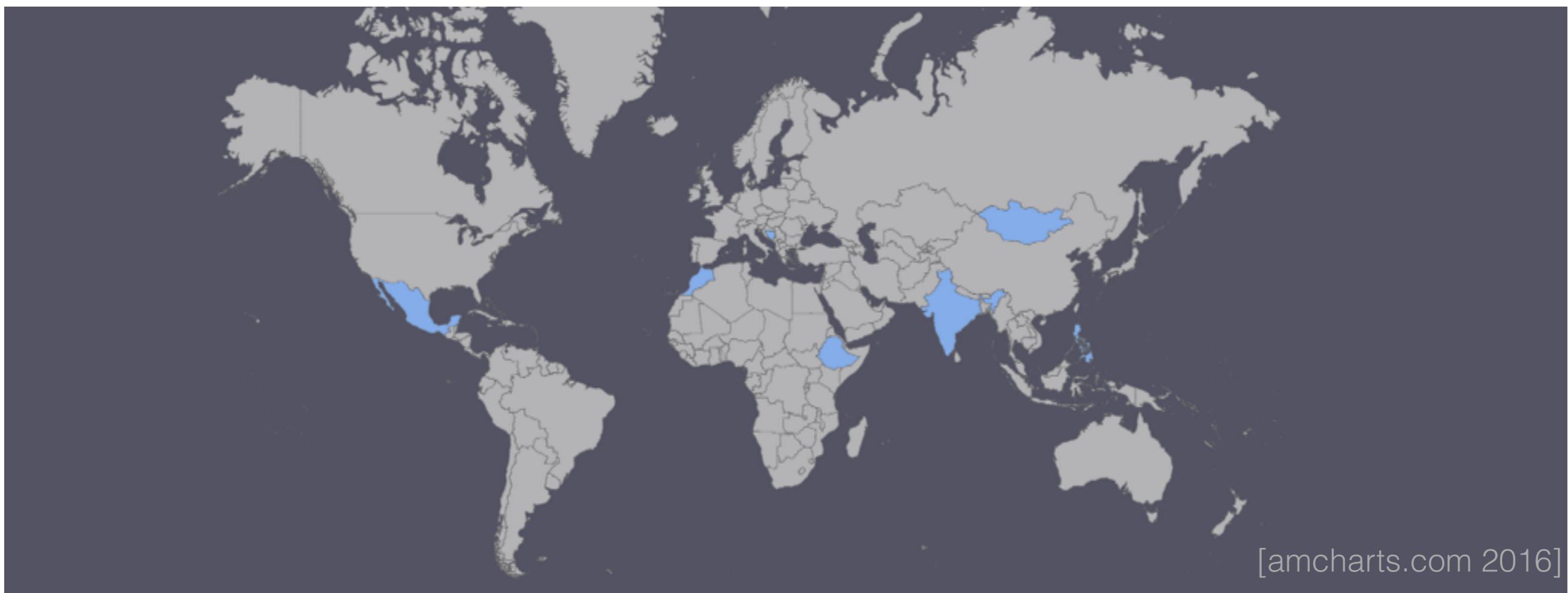
# Microcredit Experiment



[amcharts.com 2016]

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- $N_k$  businesses in  $k$ th site ( $\sim 900$  to  $\sim 17K$ )



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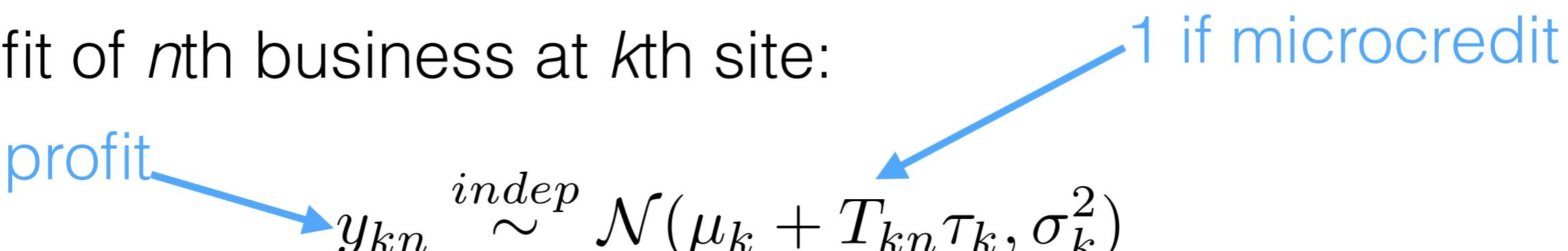
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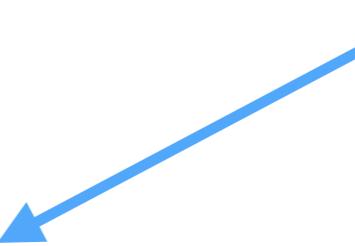
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- $K$  microcredit trials (Mexico, Mongolia, Bosnia, India, Morocco, Philippines, Ethiopia)
- $N_k$  businesses in  $k$ th site ( $\sim 900$  to  $\sim 17K$ )
- Profit of  $n$ th business at  $k$ th site:  
$$y_{kn} \stackrel{\text{indep}}{\sim} \mathcal{N}(\mu_k + T_{kn}\tau_k, \sigma_k^2)$$

profit

1 if microcredit

- Priors and hyperpriors:

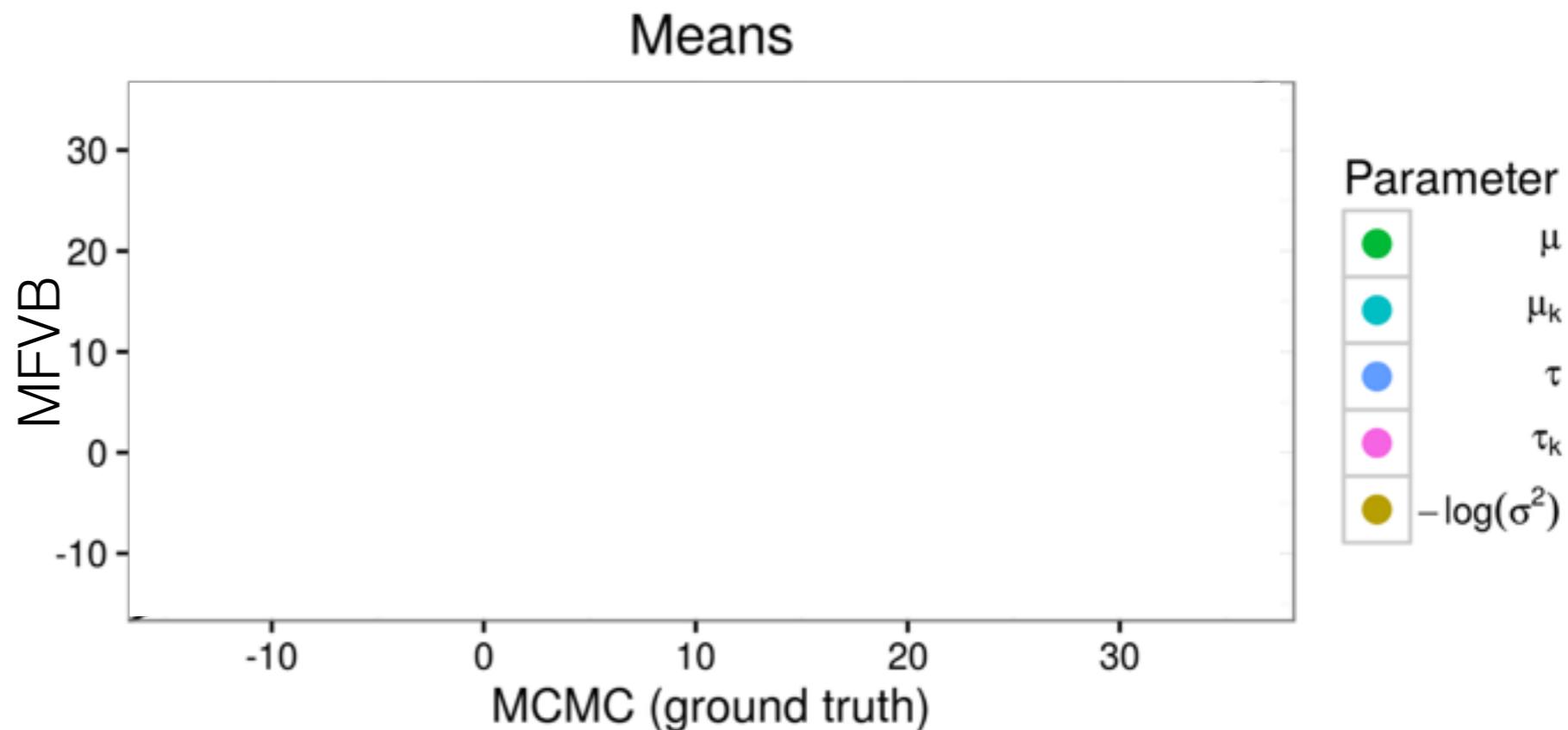
$$\begin{pmatrix} \mu_k \\ \tau_k \end{pmatrix} \stackrel{iid}{\sim} \mathcal{N}\left(\begin{pmatrix} \mu \\ \tau \end{pmatrix}, C\right)$$

$$\begin{pmatrix} \mu \\ \tau \end{pmatrix} \stackrel{iid}{\sim} \mathcal{N}\left(\begin{pmatrix} \mu_0 \\ \tau_0 \end{pmatrix}, \Lambda^{-1}\right)$$

$$\sigma_k^{-2} \stackrel{iid}{\sim} \Gamma(a, b)$$

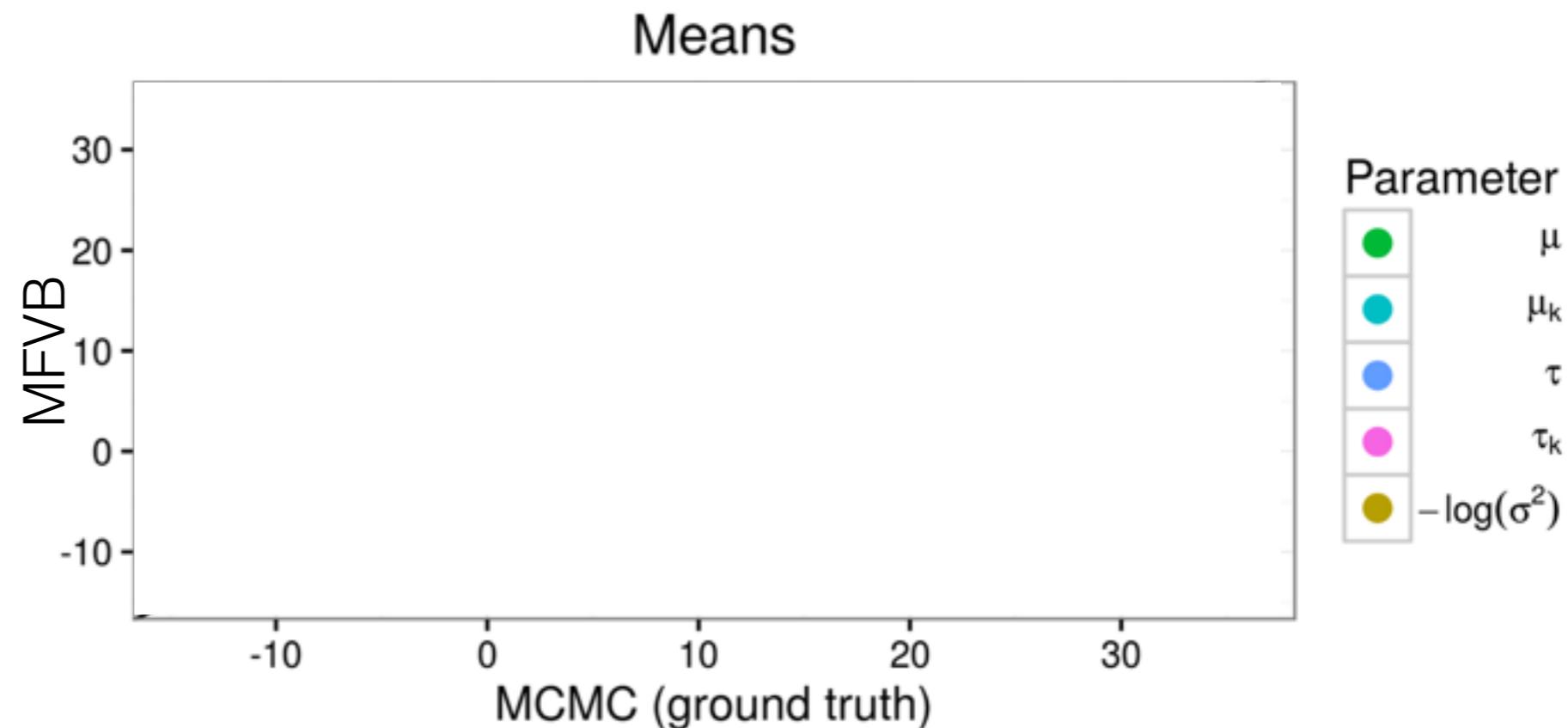
$$C \sim \text{Sep\&LKJ}(\eta, c, d)$$

# Microcredit Experiment



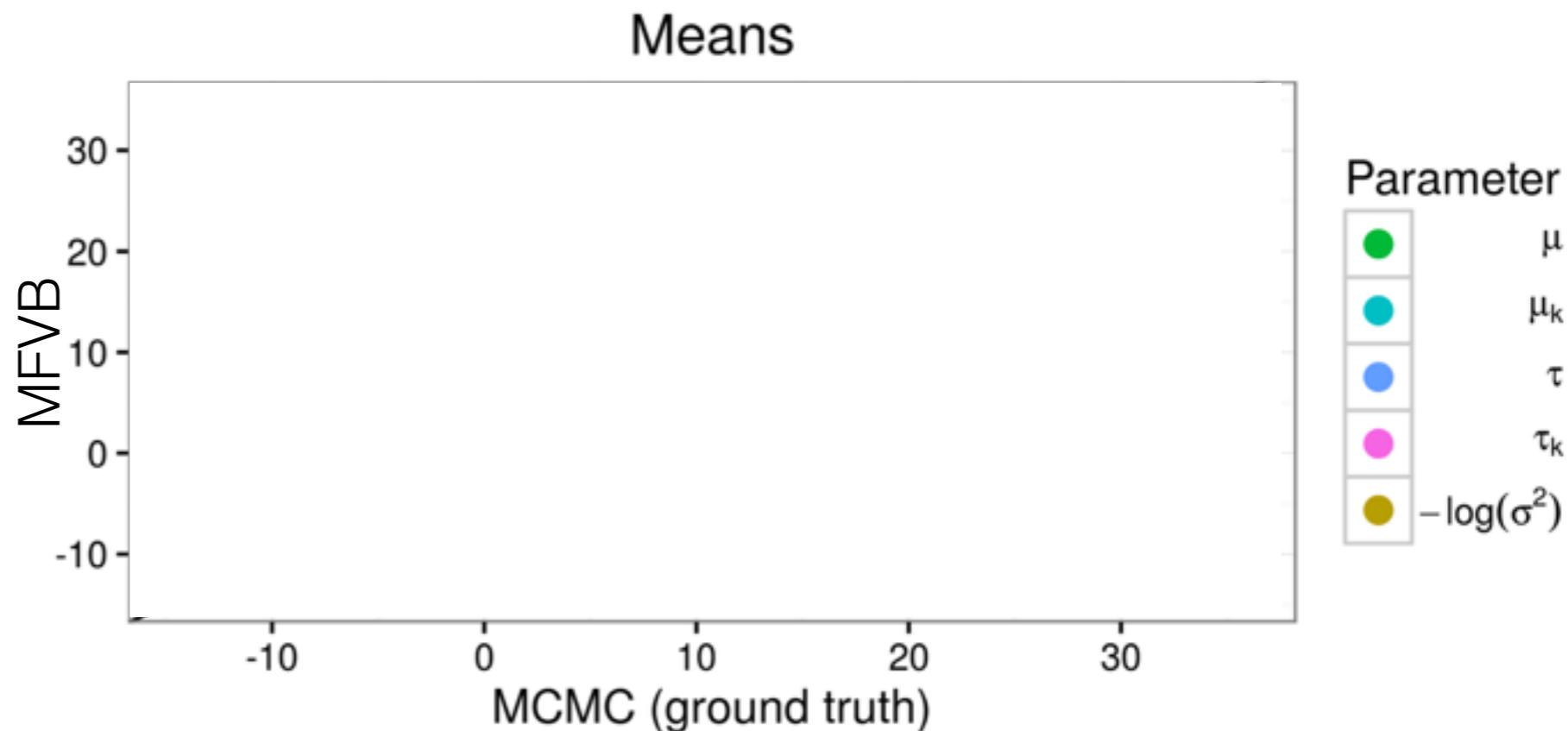
# Microcredit Experiment

- One set of 2500 MCMC draws:  
**45 minutes**



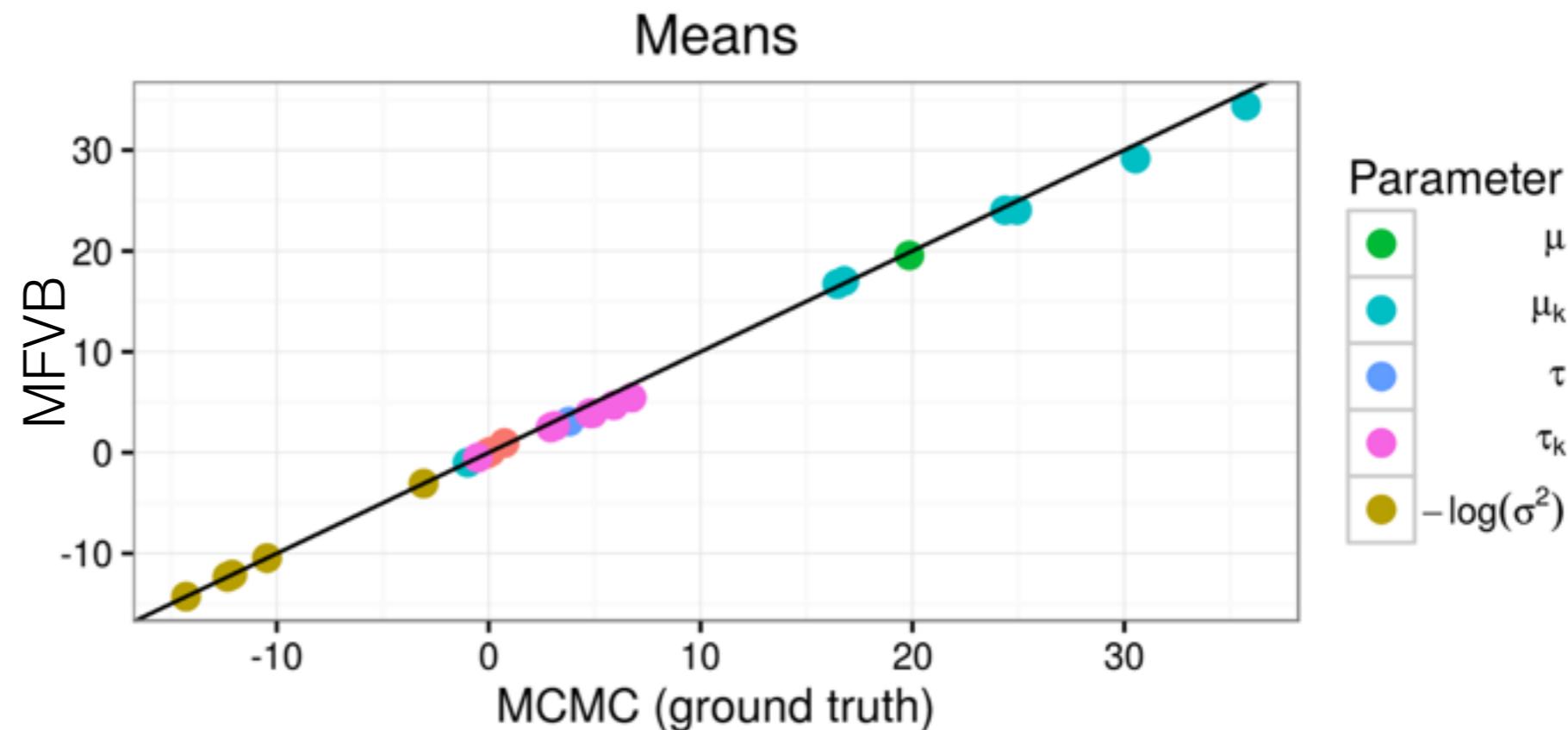
# Microcredit Experiment

- One set of 2500 MCMC draws:  
**45 minutes**
- All of MFVB optimization, LRVB uncertainties, all sensitivity measures:  
**58 seconds**



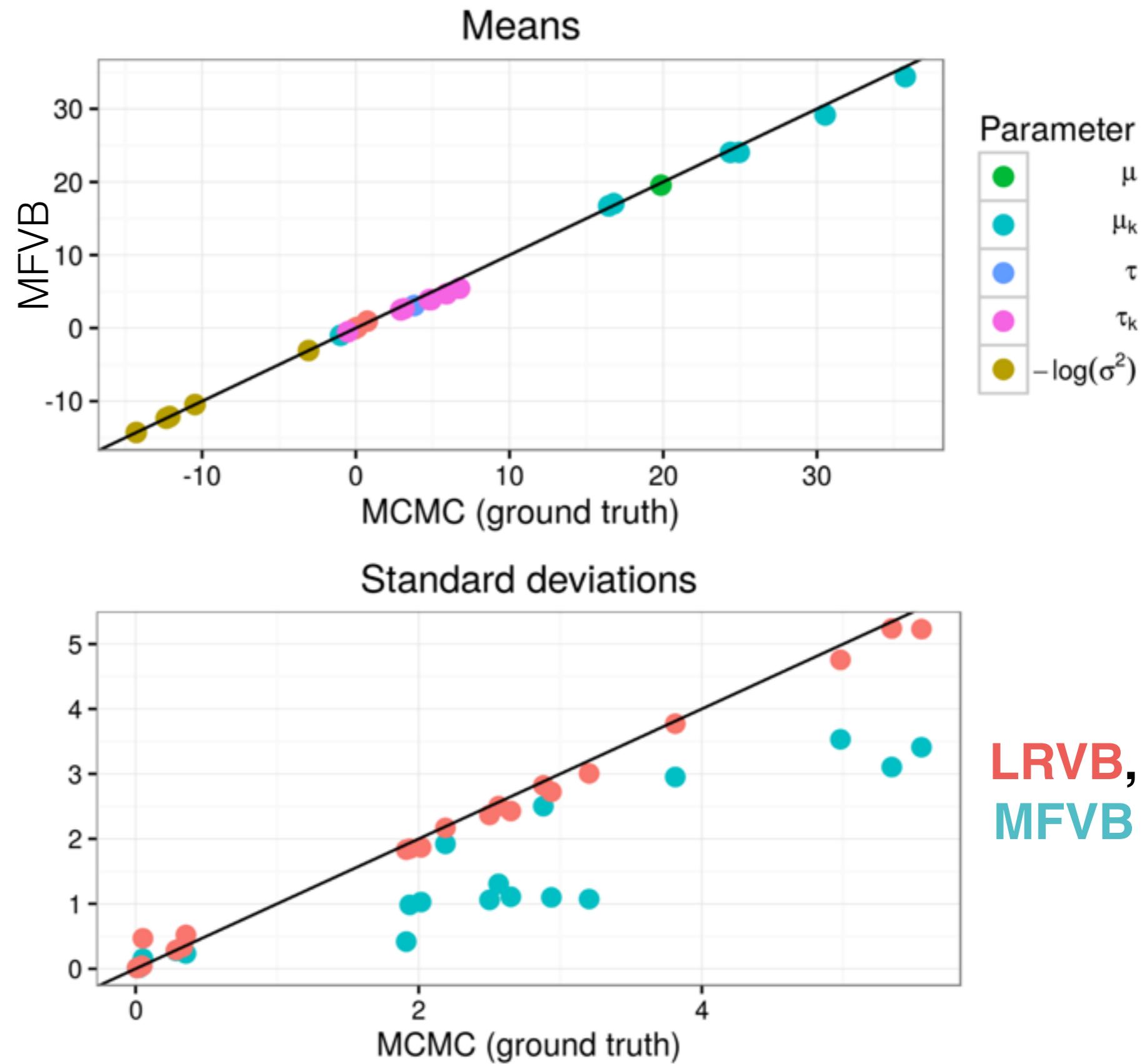
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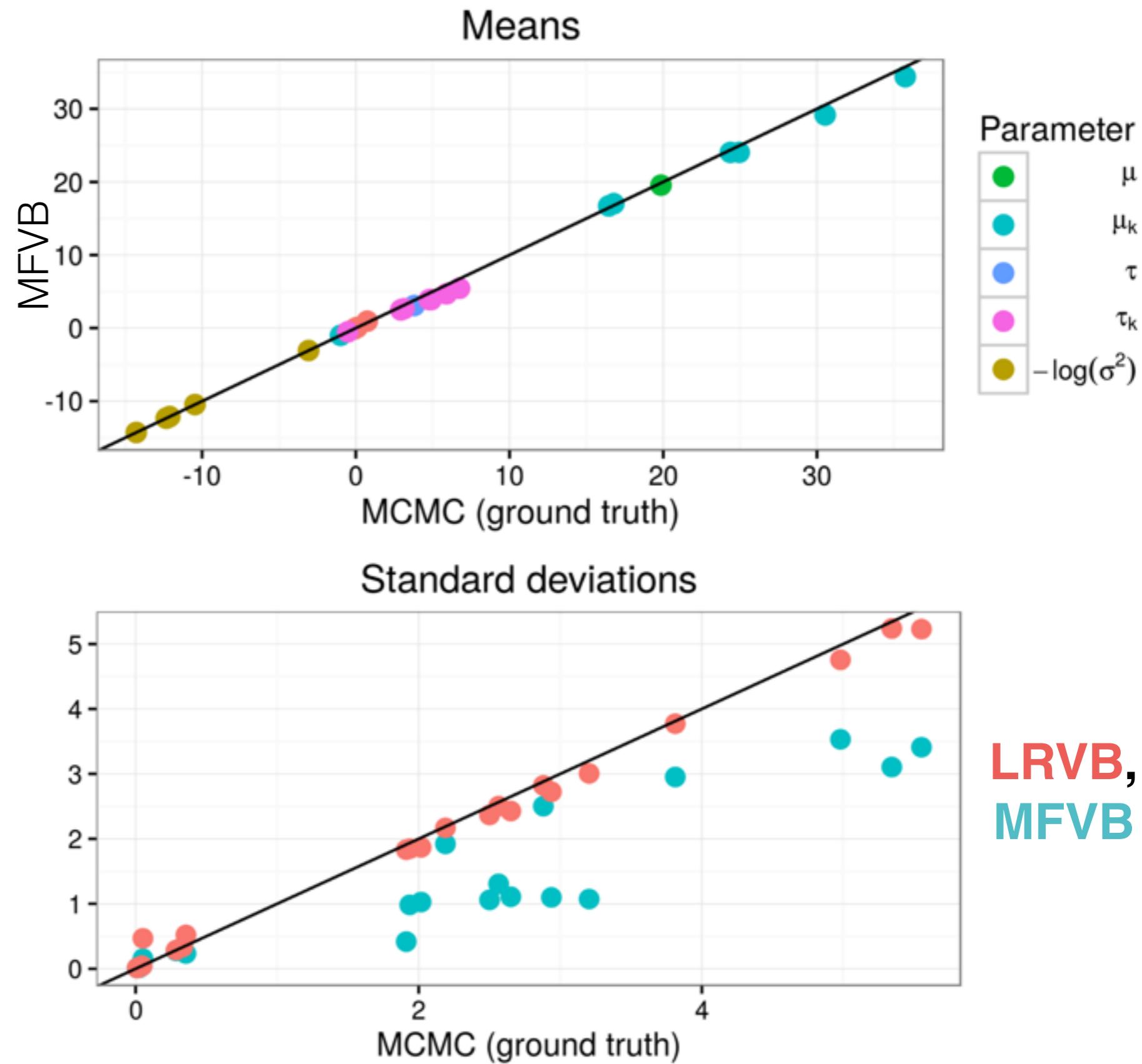
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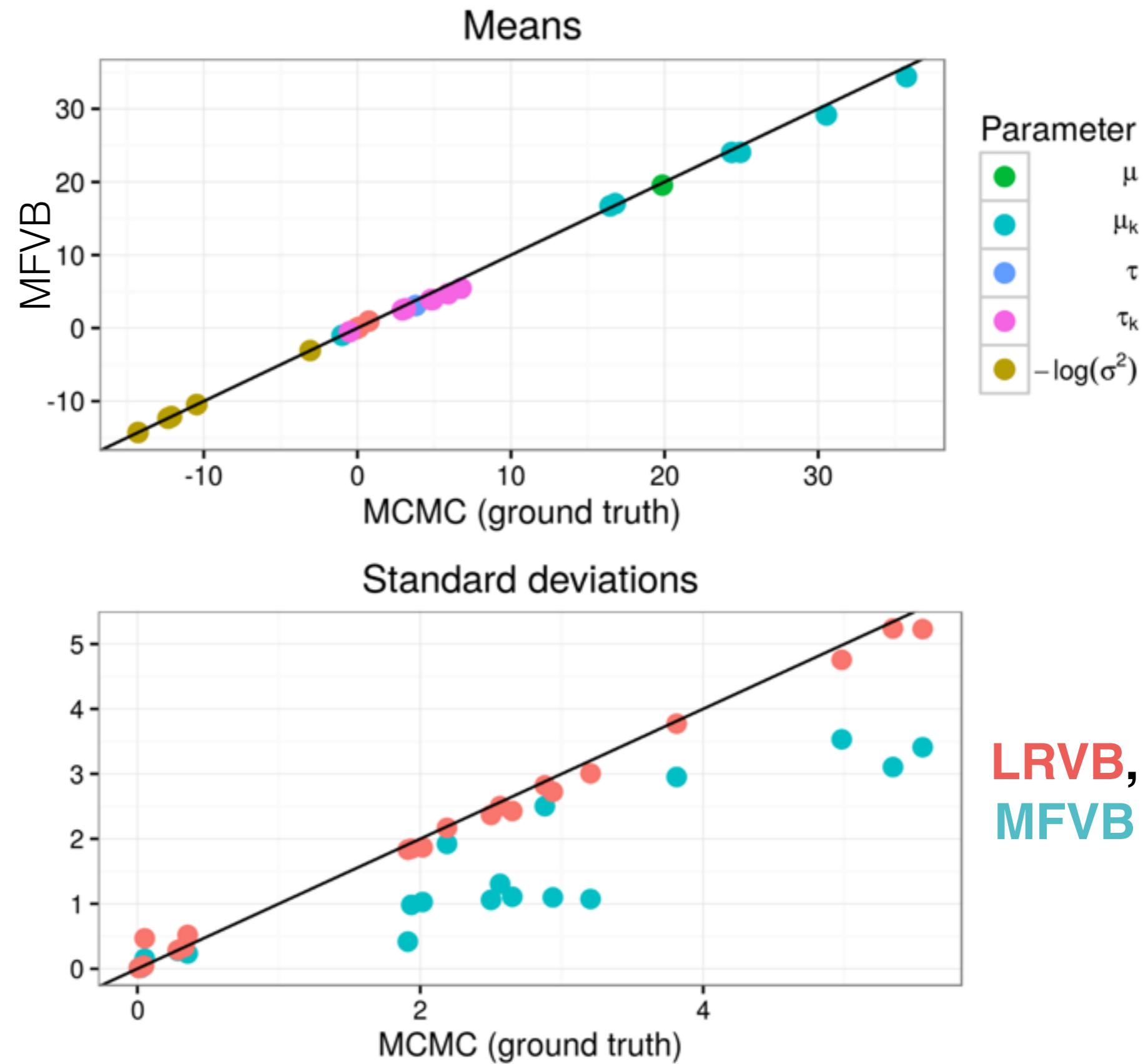
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- $\tau$  mean (MFVB):  
3.08 USD PPP



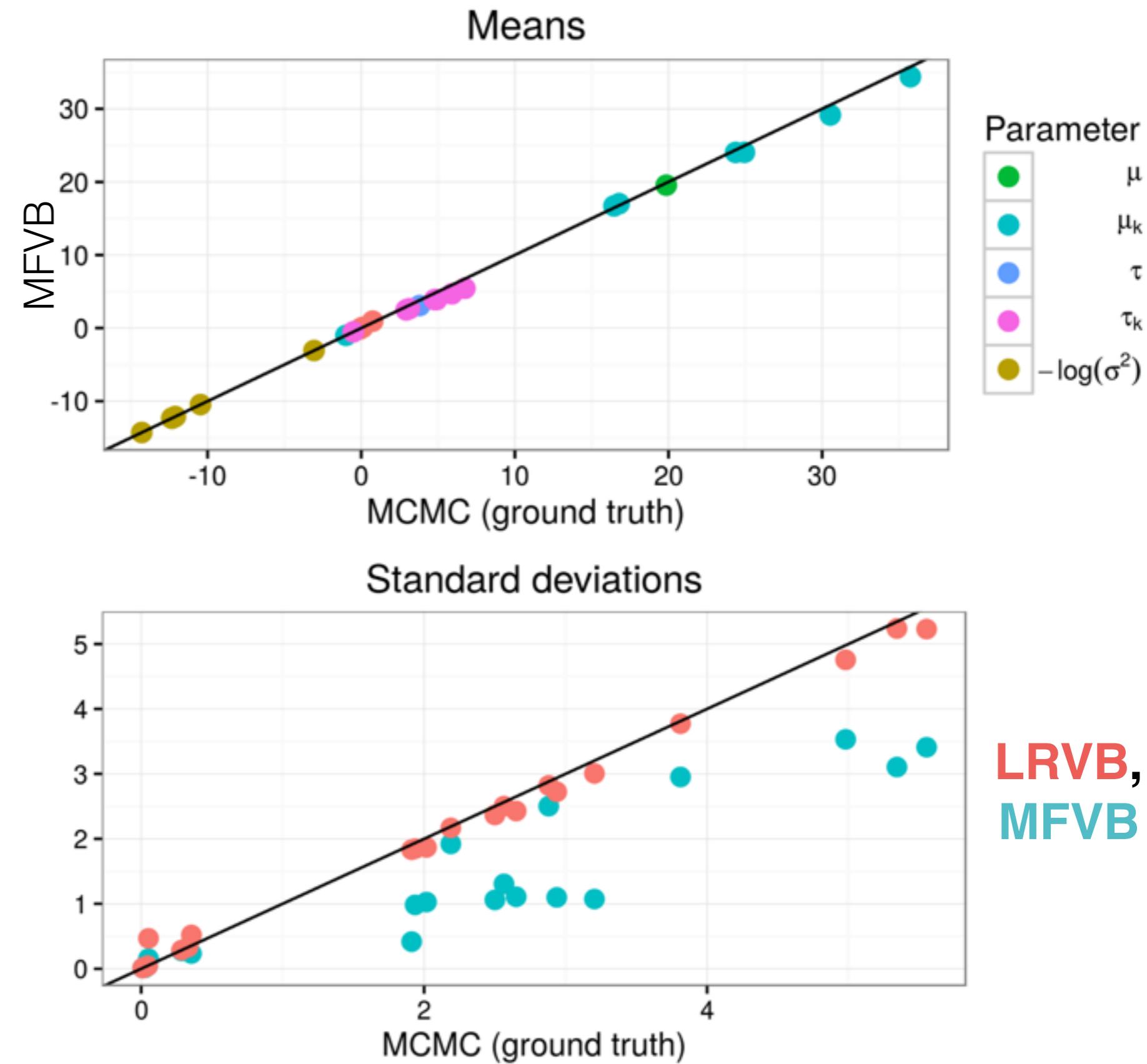
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- $\tau$  mean (MFVB): 3.08 USD PPP
- $\tau$  std dev (LRVB): 1.83 USD PPP
- Mean is 1.68 std dev from 0



# Scaling the matrix inverse

$$\hat{\Sigma} = - \frac{\partial \mathbb{E}_{q_\eta} \theta}{\partial \eta} \Big|_{\eta=\eta^*} \left[ \frac{\partial^2 \text{ELBO}(q_\eta, p_0)}{\partial \eta \partial \eta^T} \Big|_{\eta=\eta^*} \right]^{-1} \left[ \frac{\partial \mathbb{E}_{q_\eta} \theta}{\partial \eta} \Big|_{\eta=\eta^*} \right]^T$$

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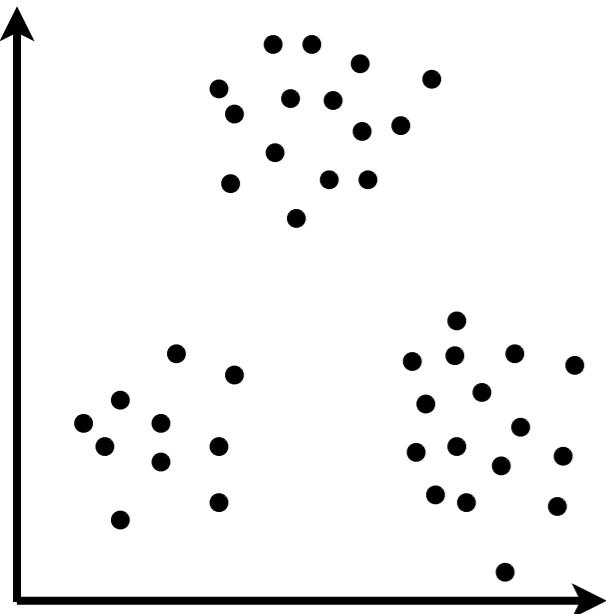
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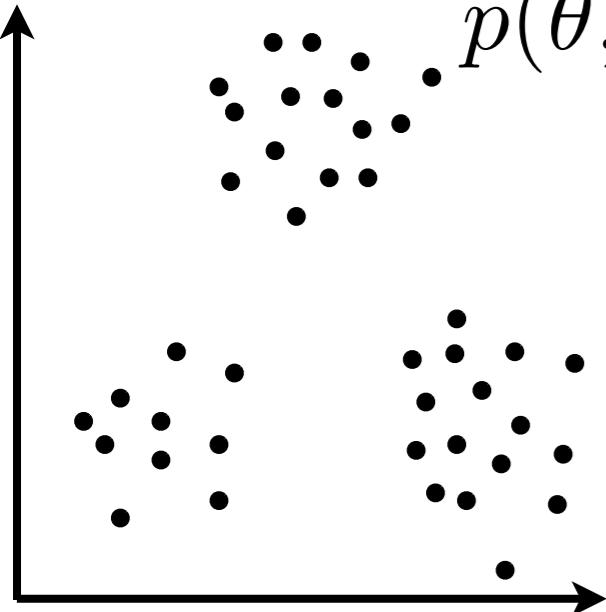
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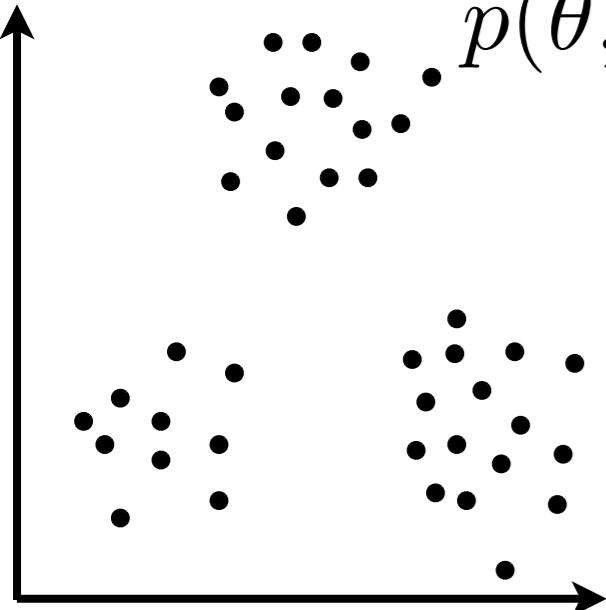
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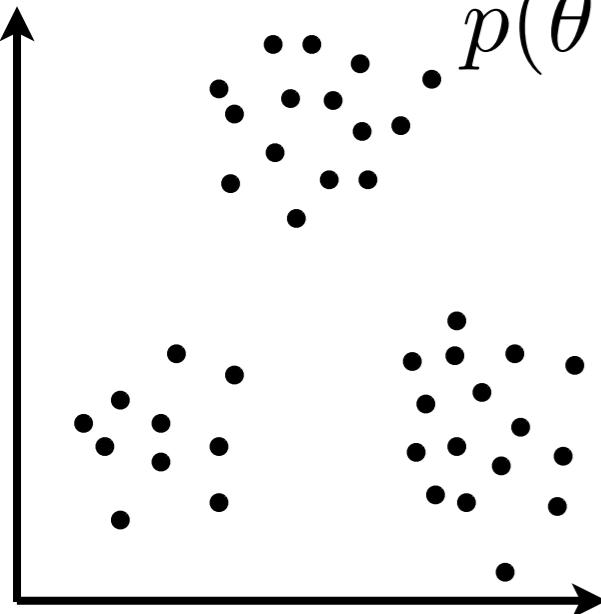


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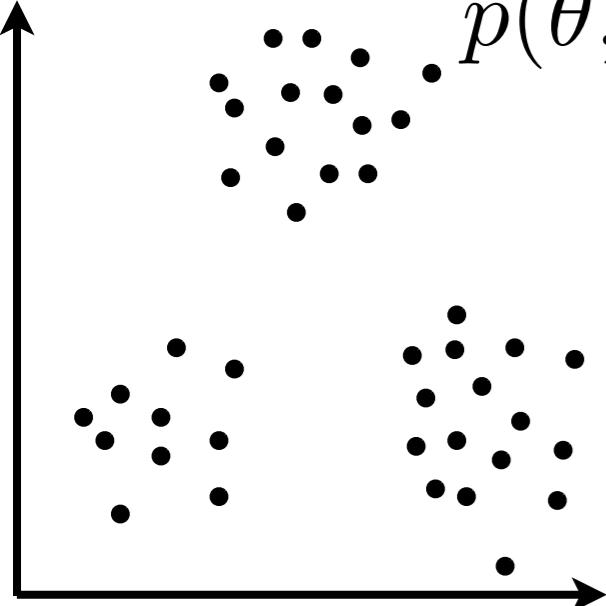


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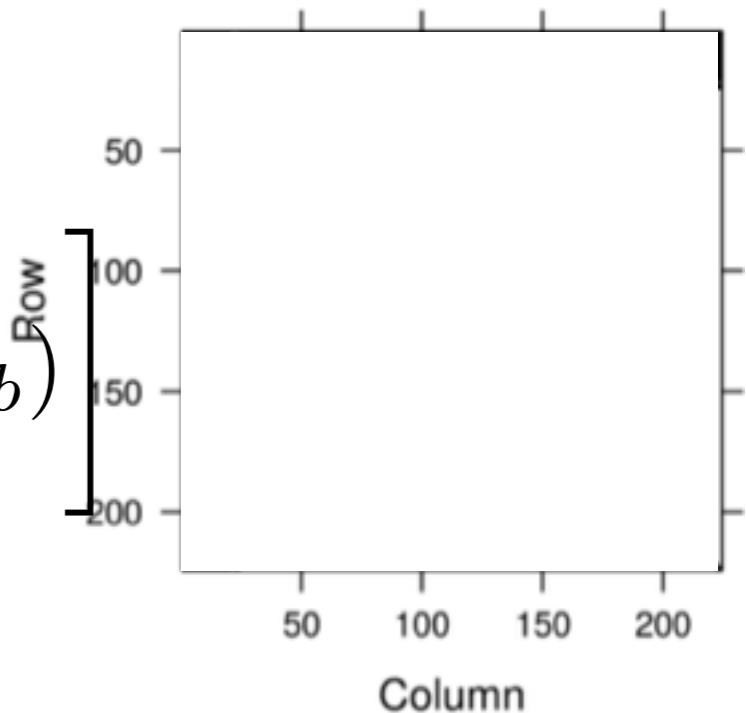
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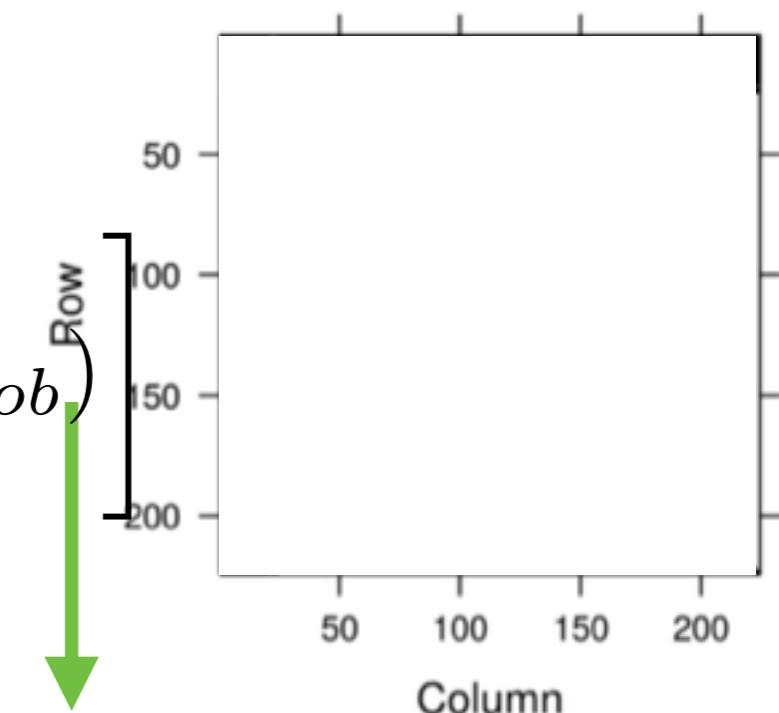
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10,014 params



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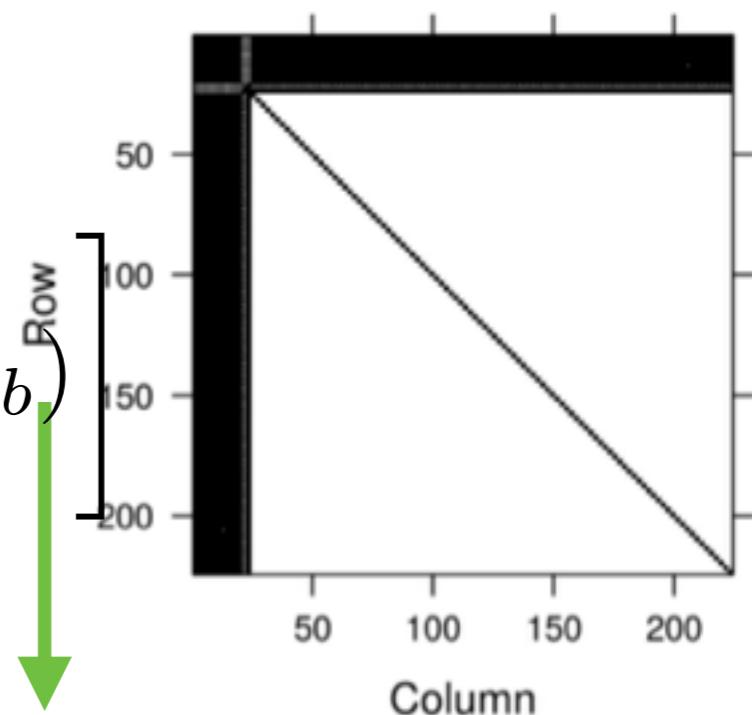
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10,014 params →

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# Roadmap

- Challenges of VB
- Accurate uncertainties from VB
- Accurate robustness quantification from VB

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# Robustness quantification

- Bayes Theorem

$$p(\theta|y)$$

$$\propto_{\theta} p(y|\theta)p(\theta)$$

# Robustness quantification

- Bayes Theorem

$$p(\theta|y, \alpha)$$

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# Robustness quantification

- Bayes Theorem

$$p_\alpha(\theta) := p(\theta|y, \alpha)$$
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# Robustness quantification

- Bayes Theorem

$$p_\alpha(\theta) := p(\theta|y, \alpha)$$
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- Sensitivity

# Robustness quantification

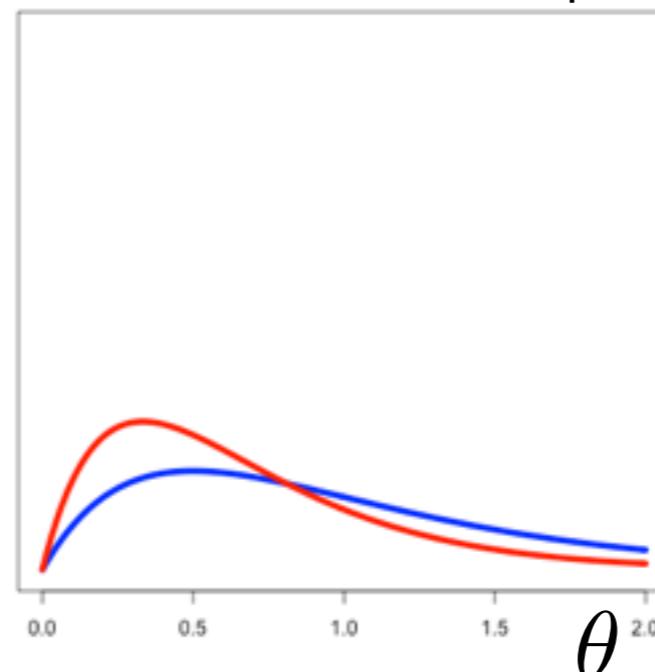
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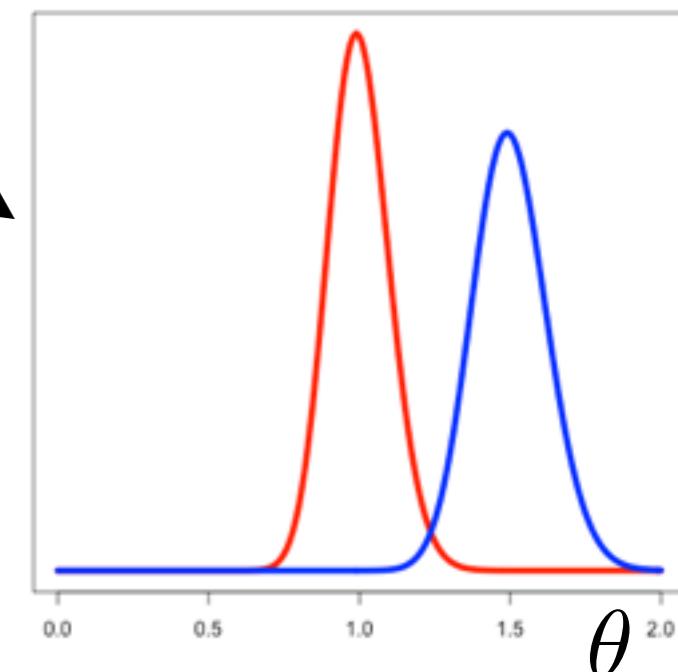
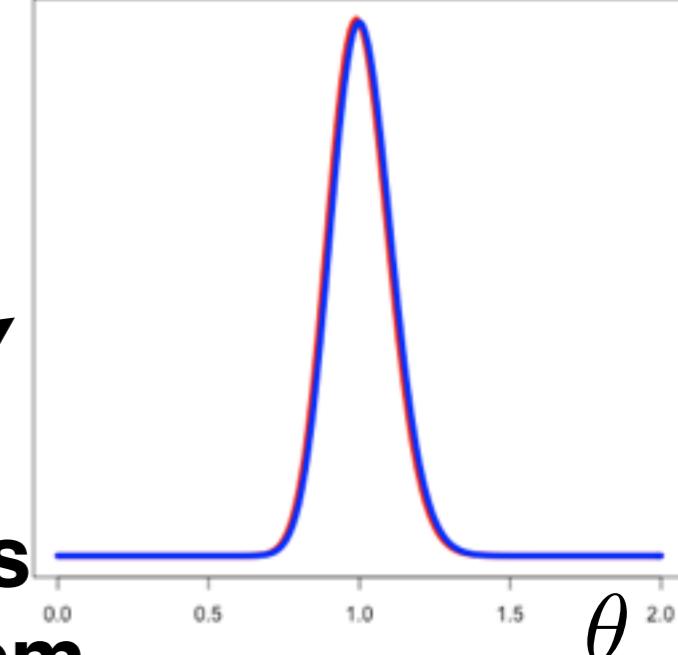
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- Sensitivity

Some reasonable priors



**Bayes  
Theorem**



# Robustness quantification

- Bayes Theorem

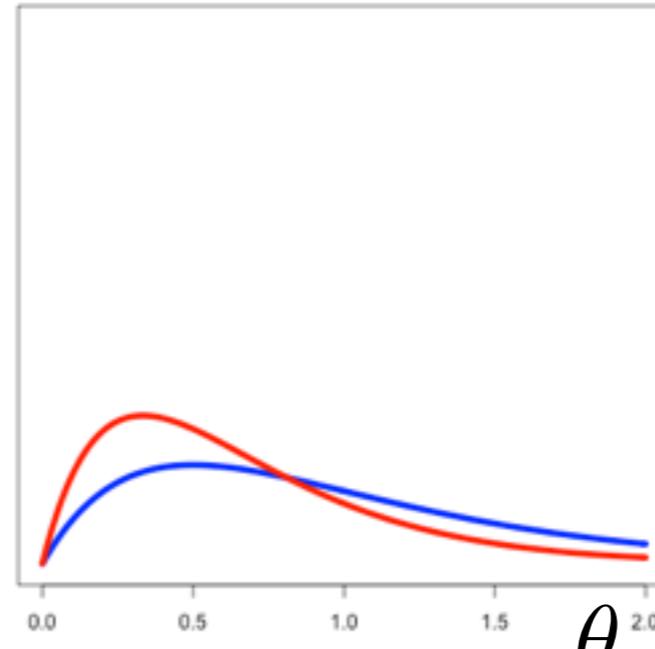
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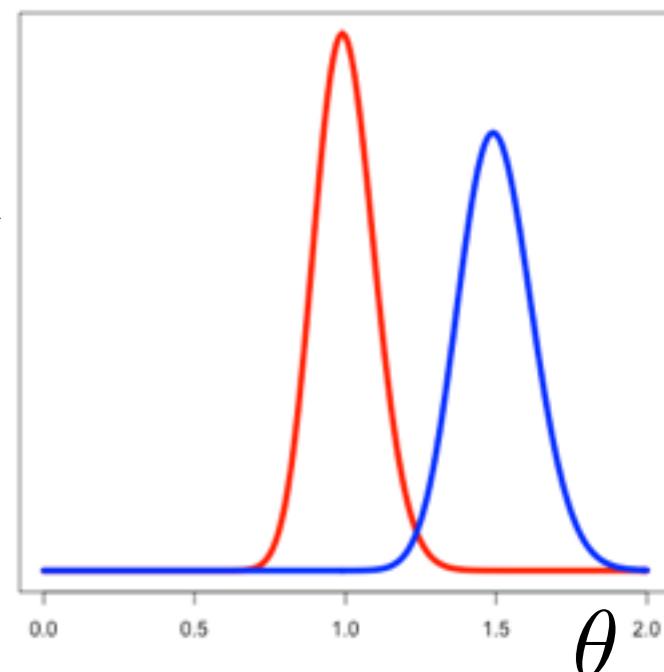
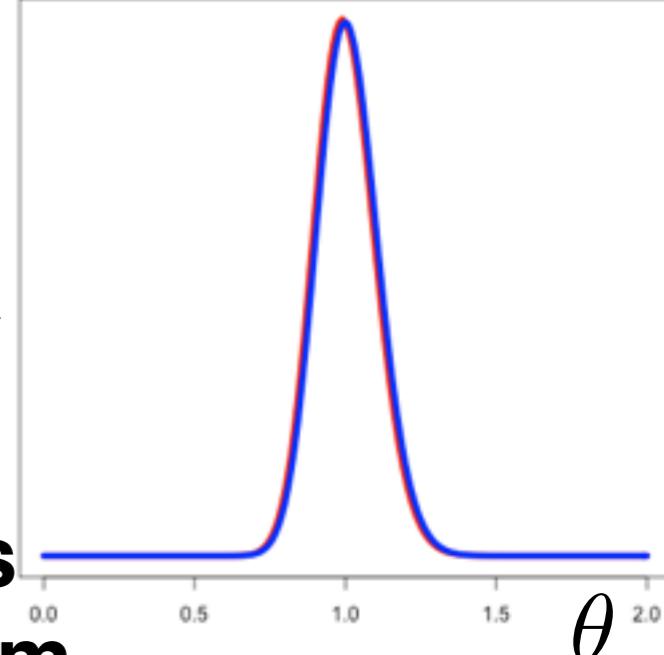
- Sensitivity

$$\mathbb{E}_{p_\alpha}[g(\theta)]$$

Some reasonable priors



**Bayes  
Theorem**



# Robustness quantification

- Bayes Theorem

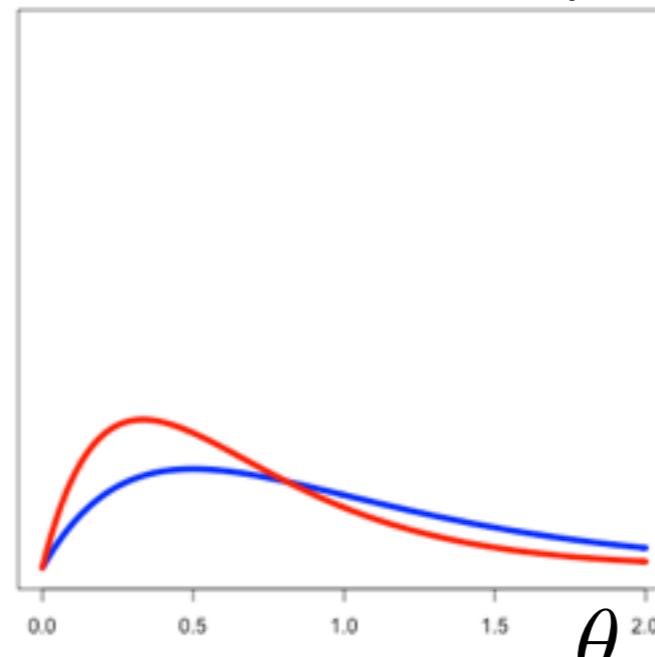
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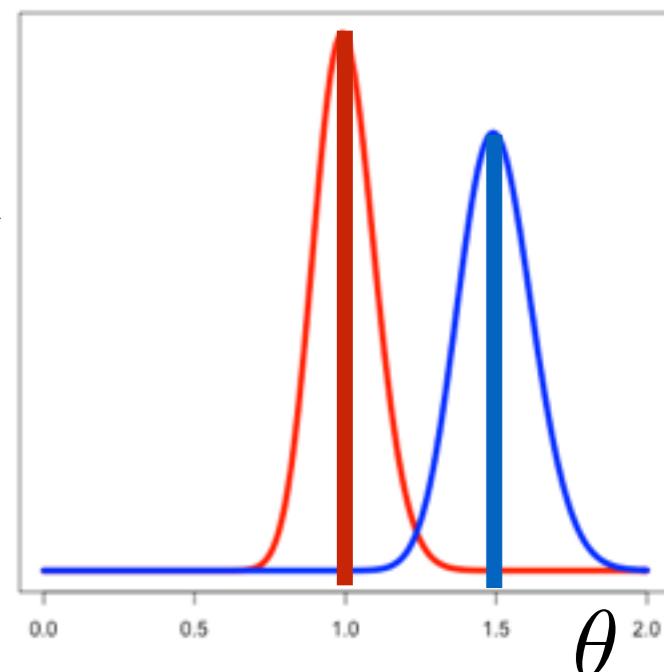
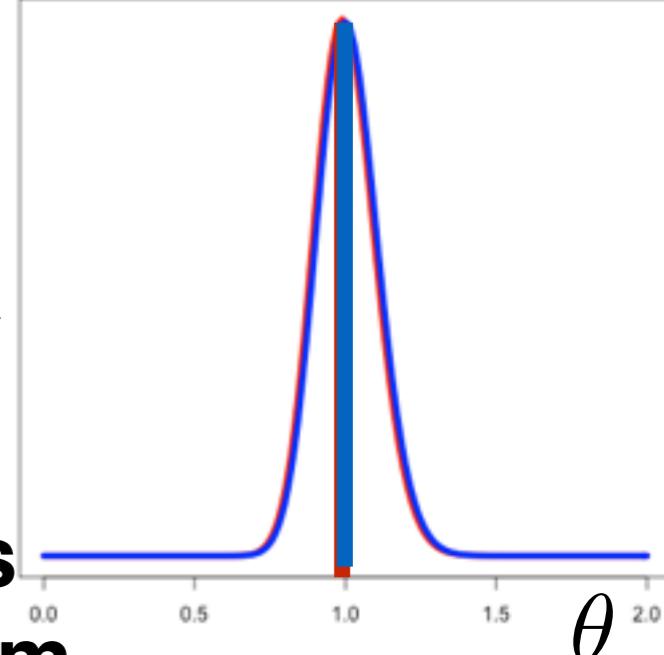
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Some reasonable priors



**Bayes  
Theorem**



# Robustness quantification

- Bayes Theorem

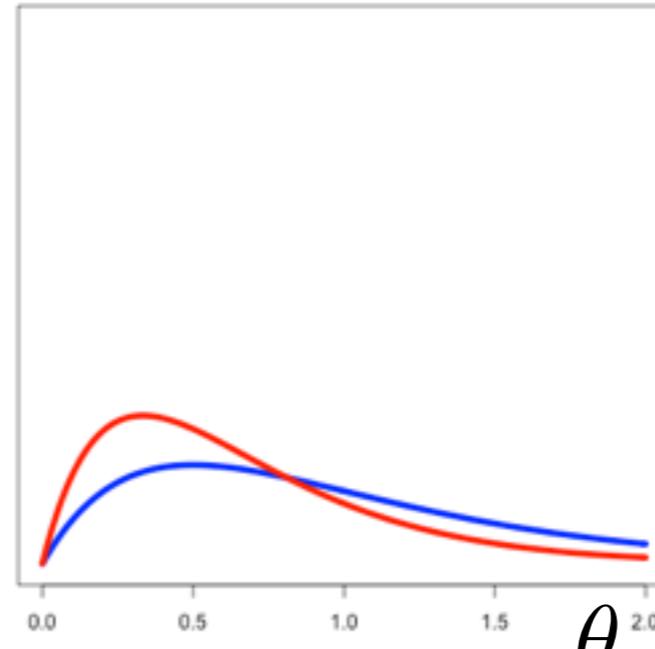
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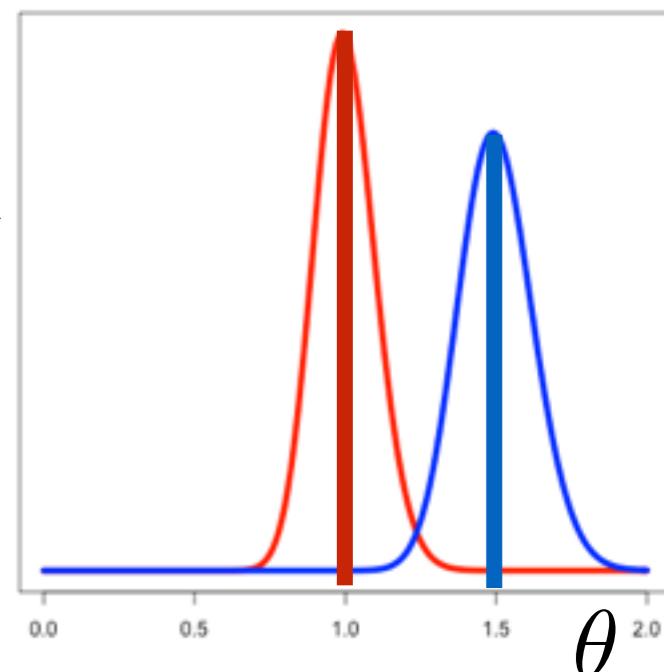
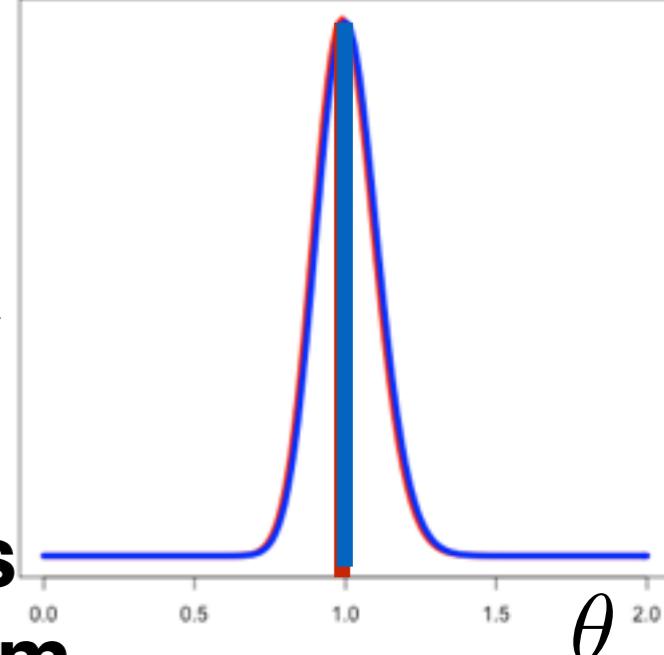
- Sensitivity (local)

$$\mathbb{E}_{p_\alpha}[g(\theta)]$$

Some reasonable priors



**Bayes  
Theorem**



# Robustness quantification

- Bayes Theorem

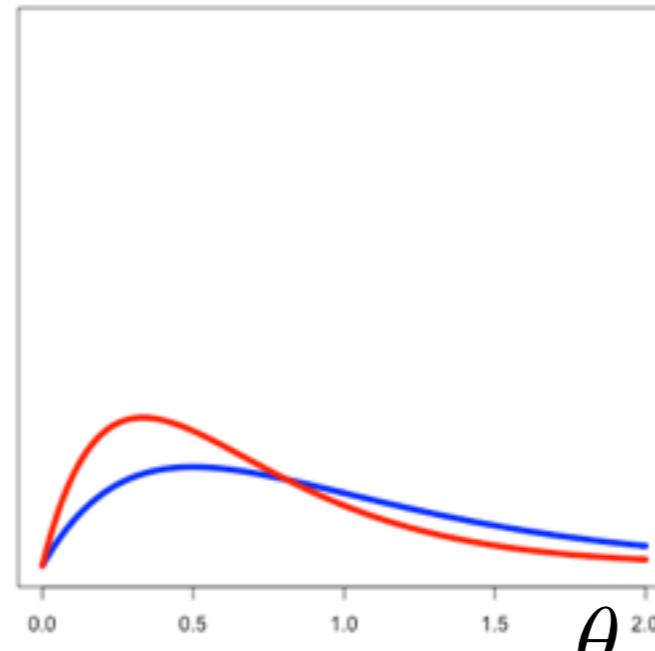
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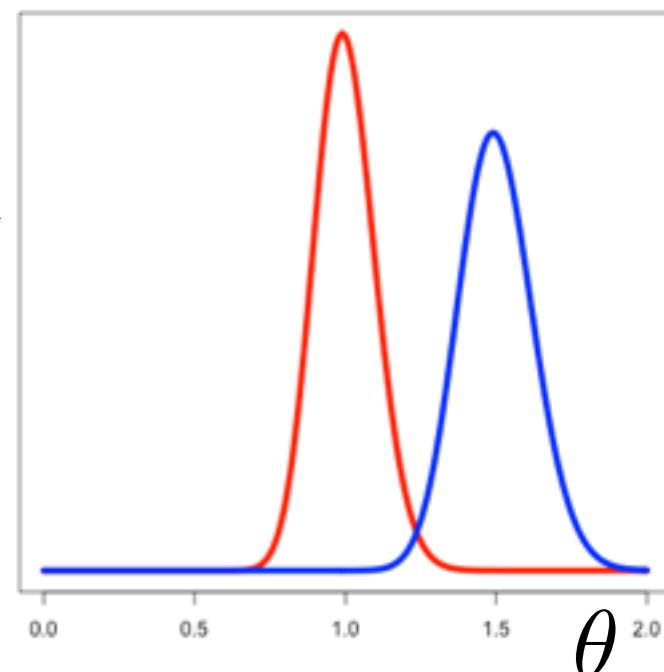
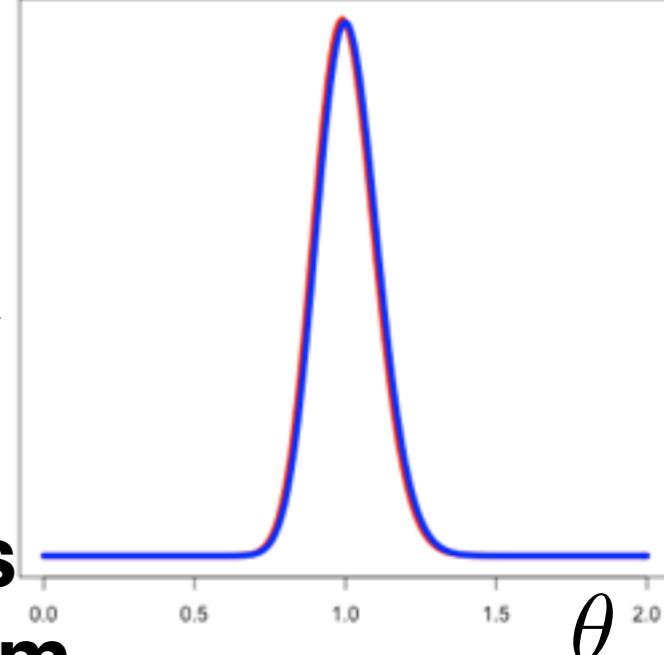
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Some reasonable priors



**Bayes  
Theorem**



# Robustness quantification

- Bayes Theorem

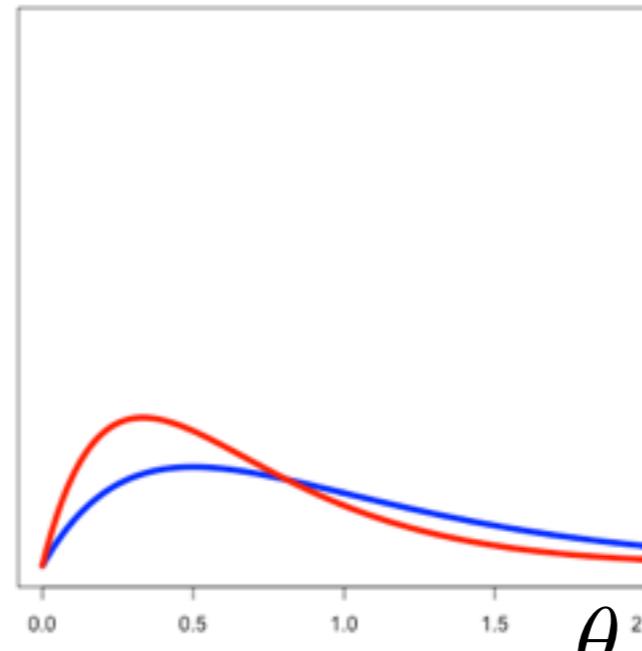
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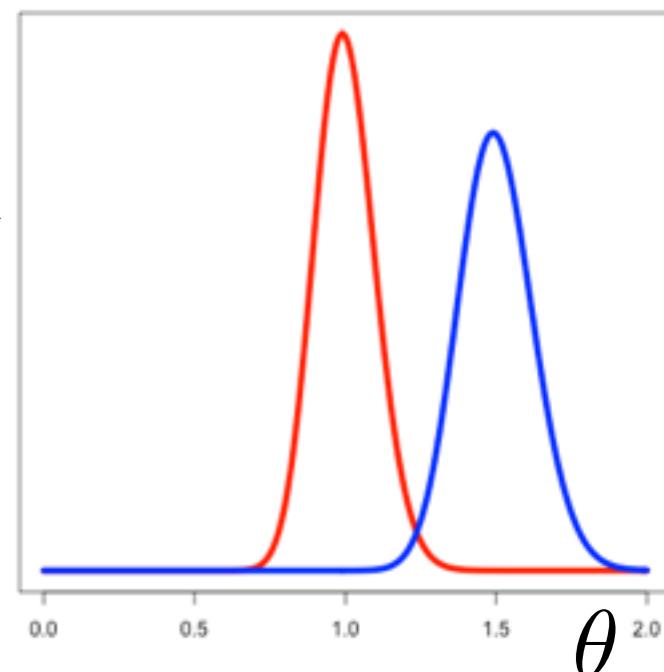
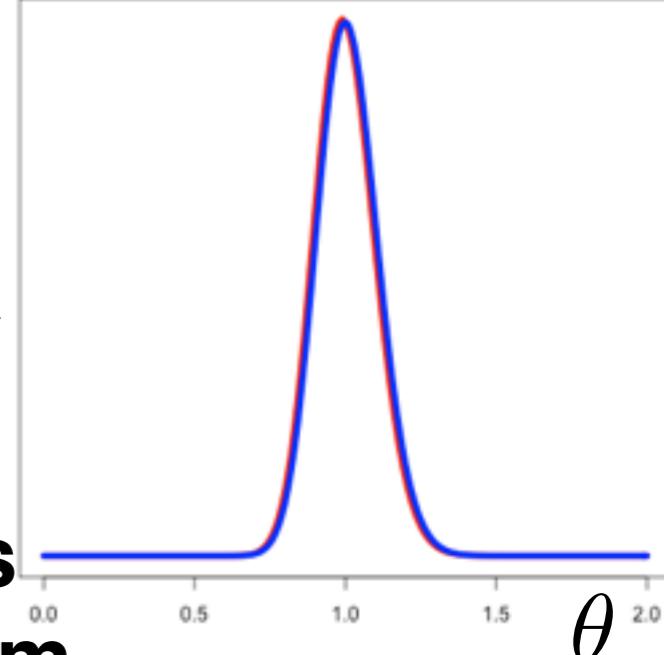
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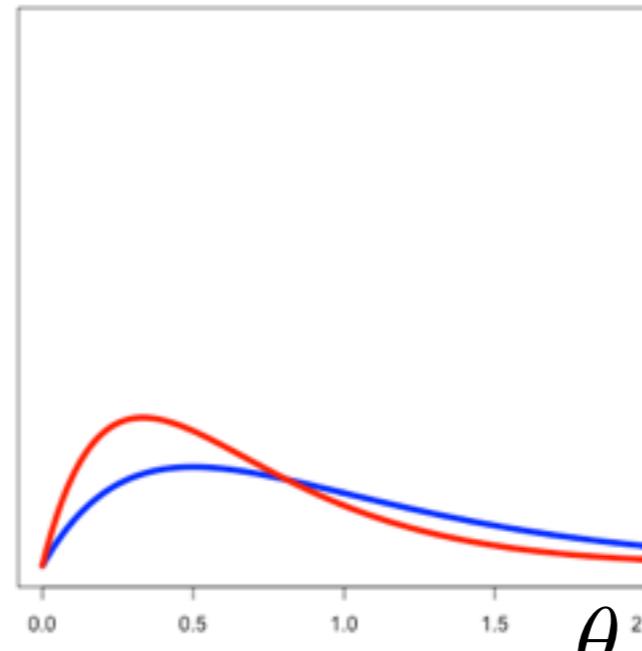
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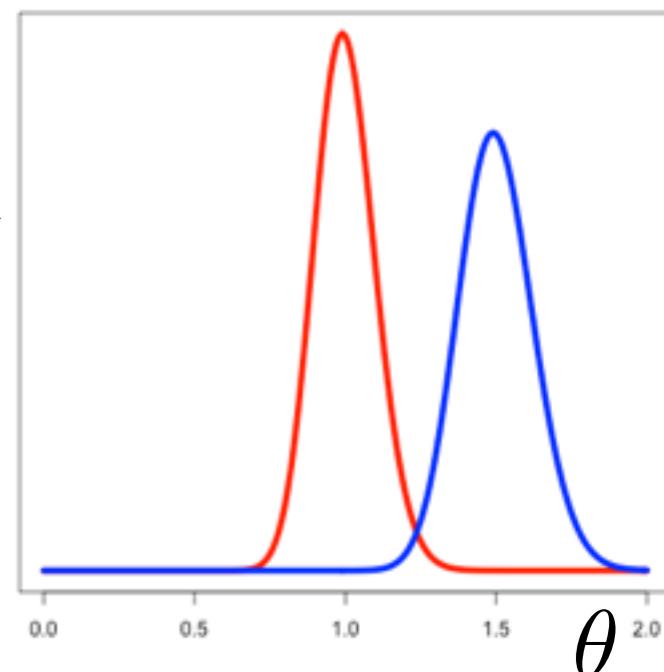
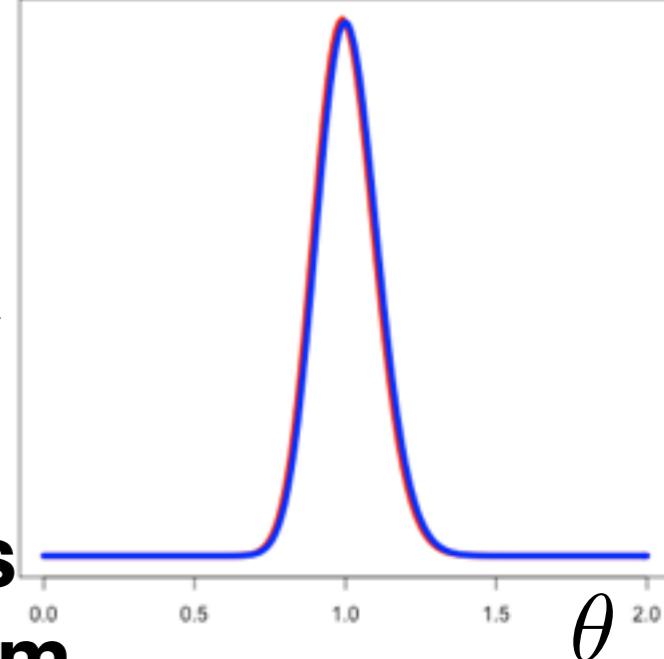
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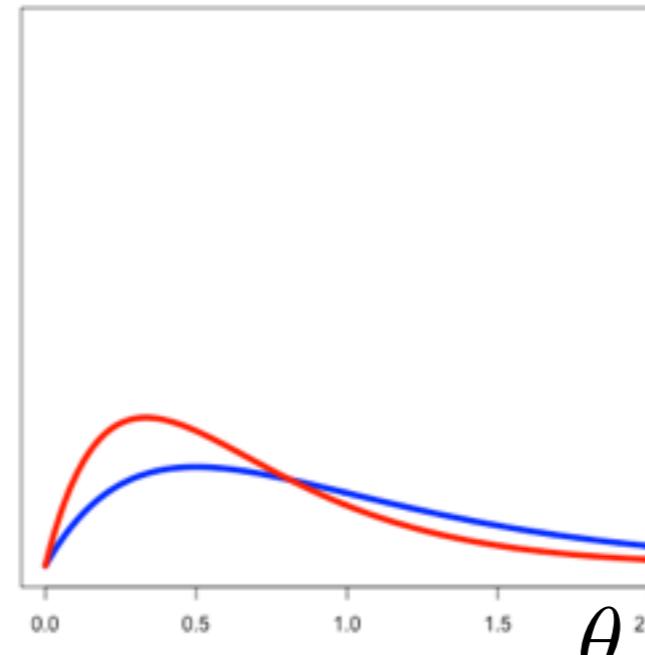
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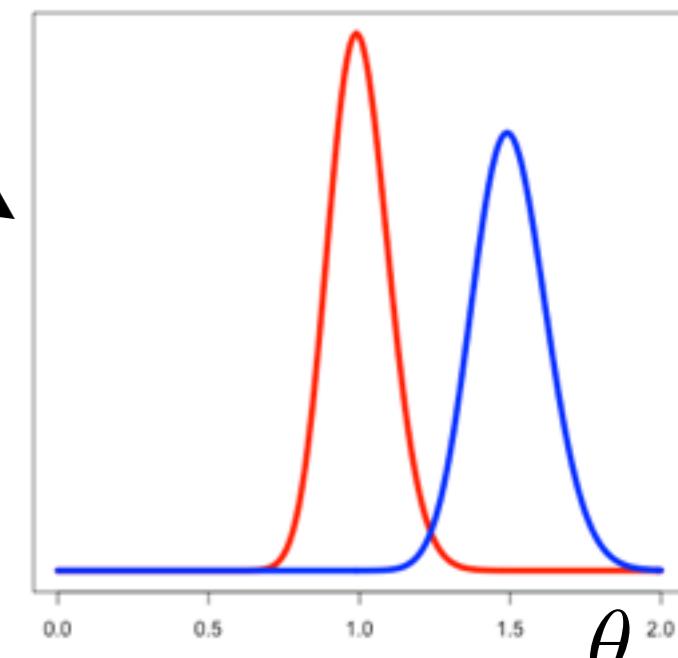
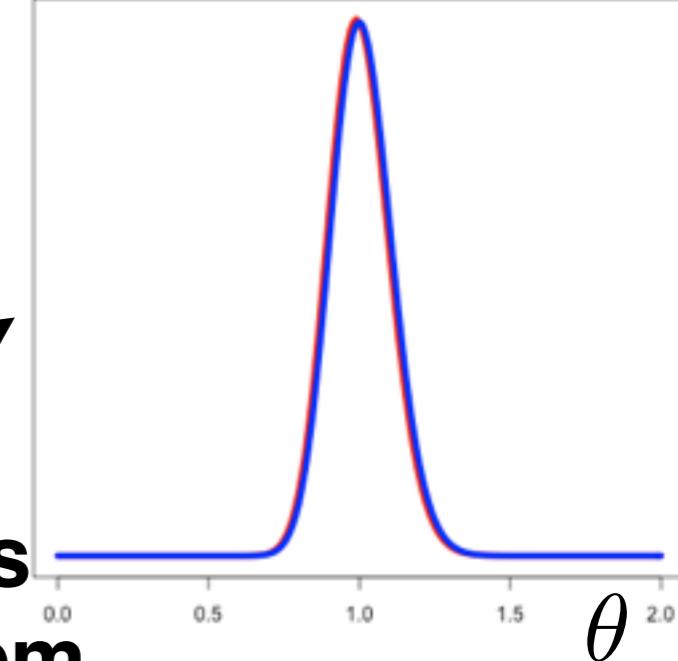
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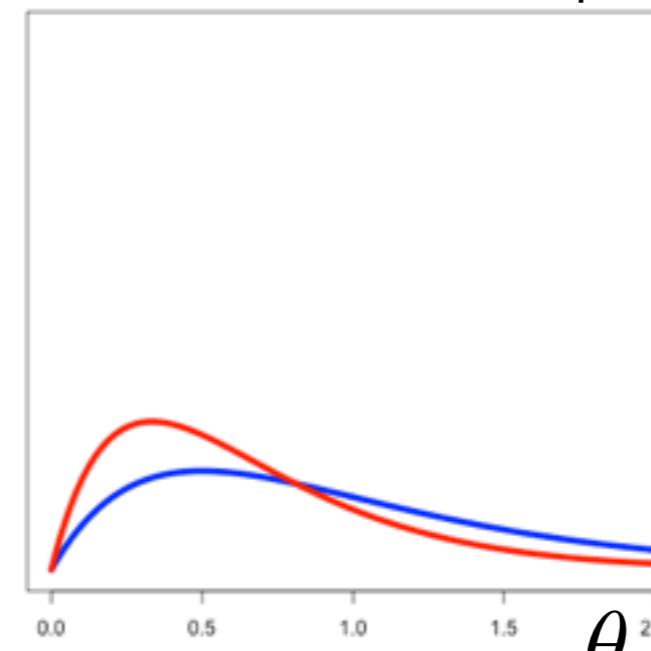
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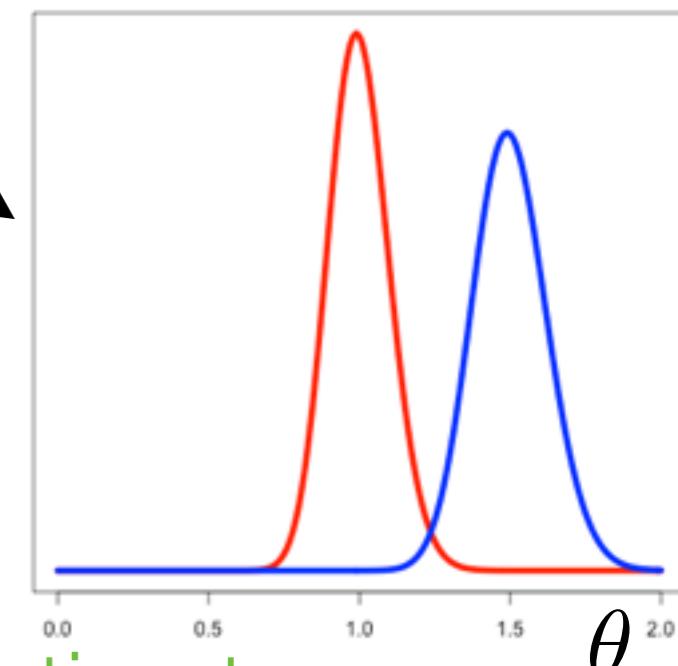
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← LRVB estimator

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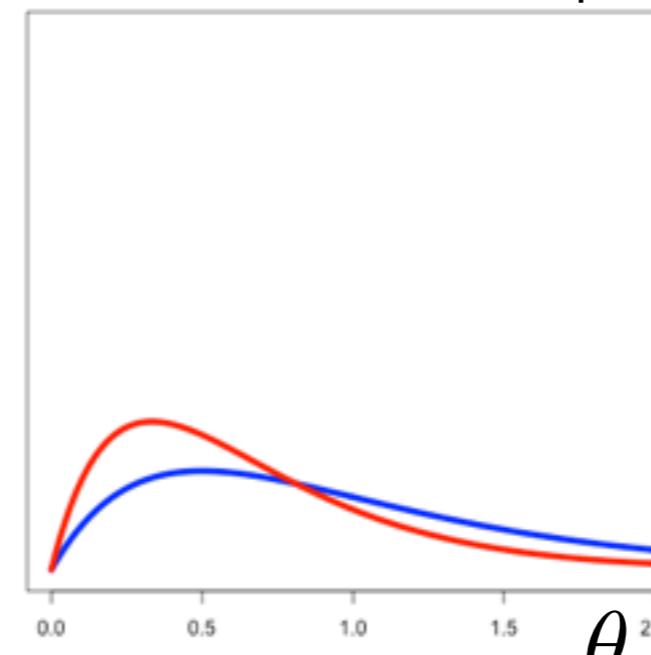
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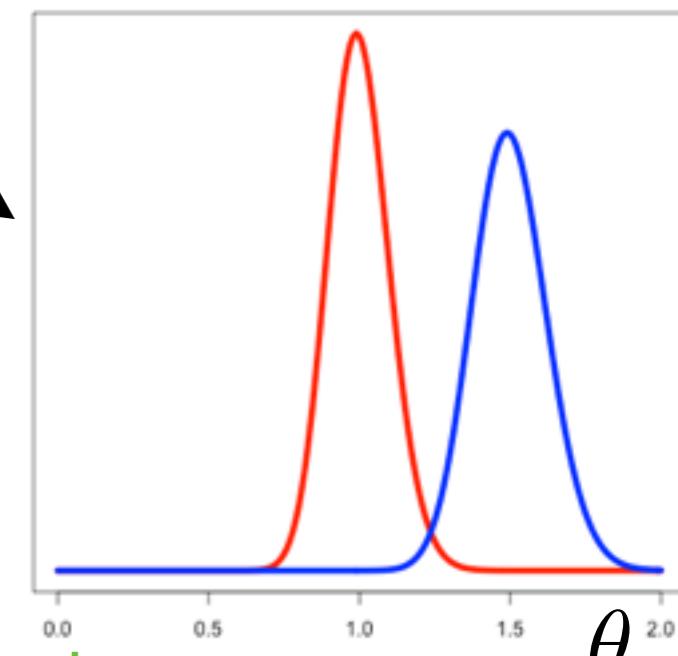
- Recall: our general LRVB formula applies for:

$$\log p_t(\theta) = \log p(\theta|y) + f(\theta, t) - \text{Const}(t)$$

Some reasonable priors



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Theorem**



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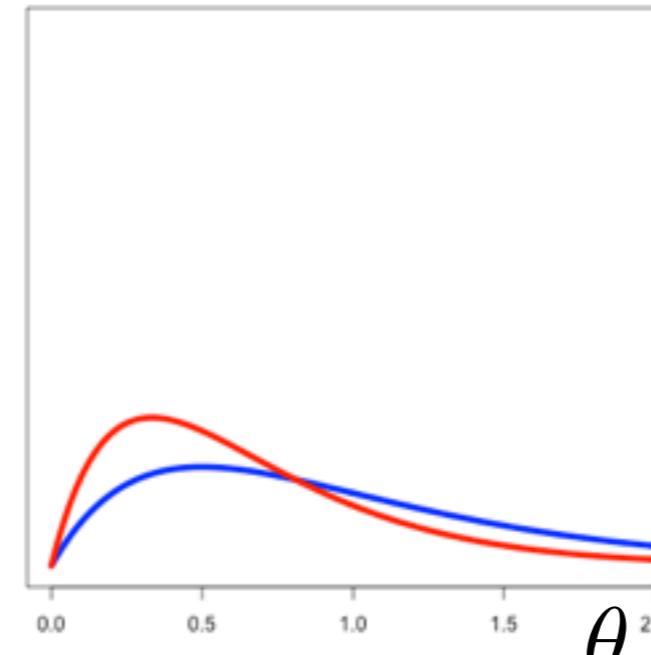
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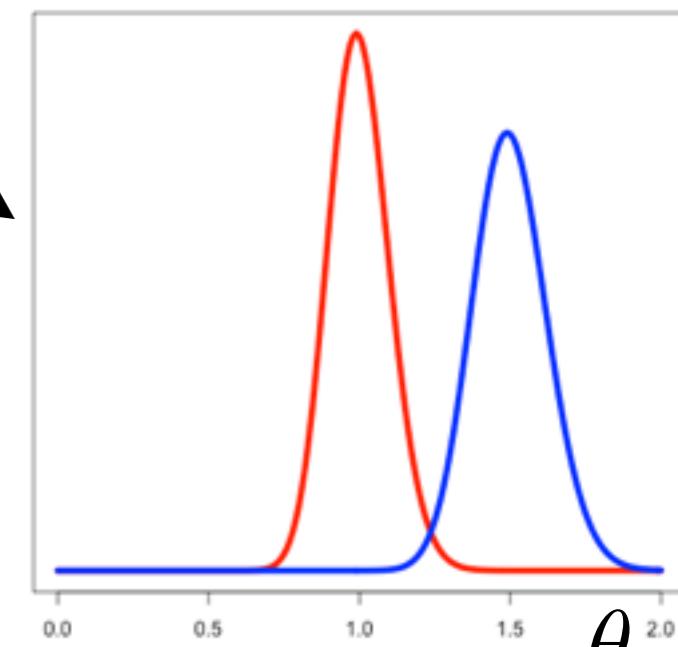
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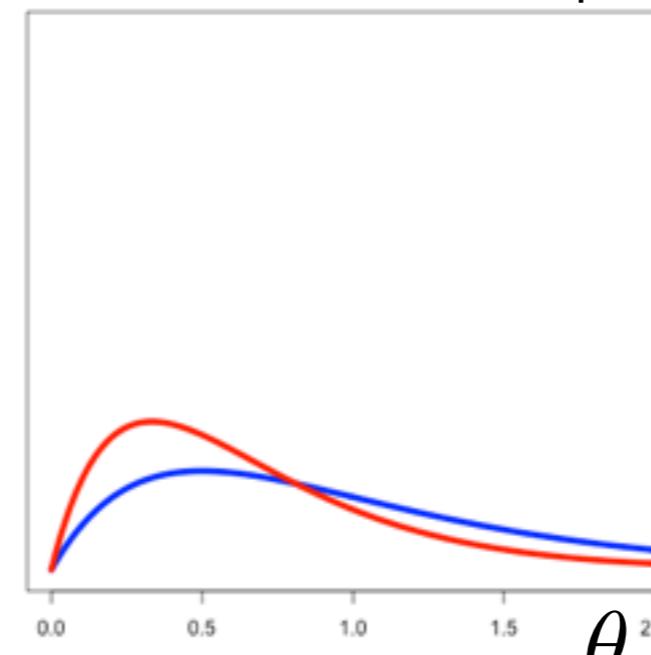
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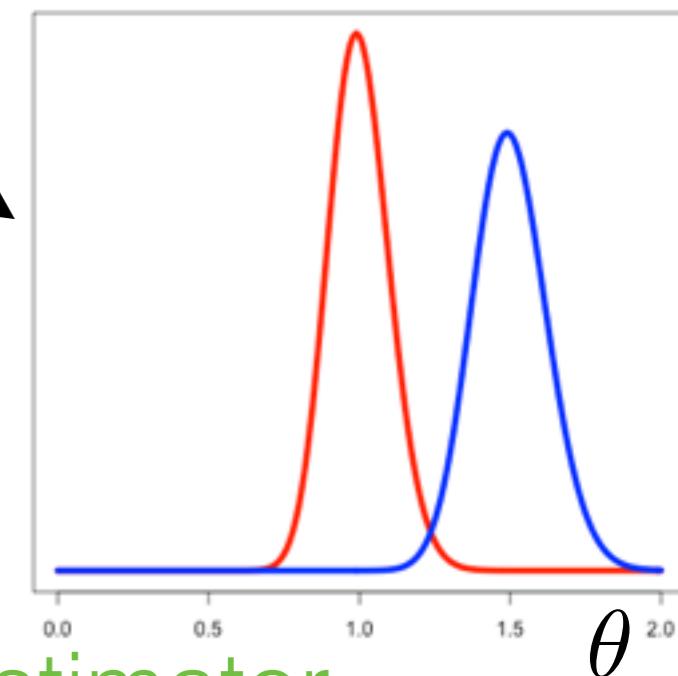
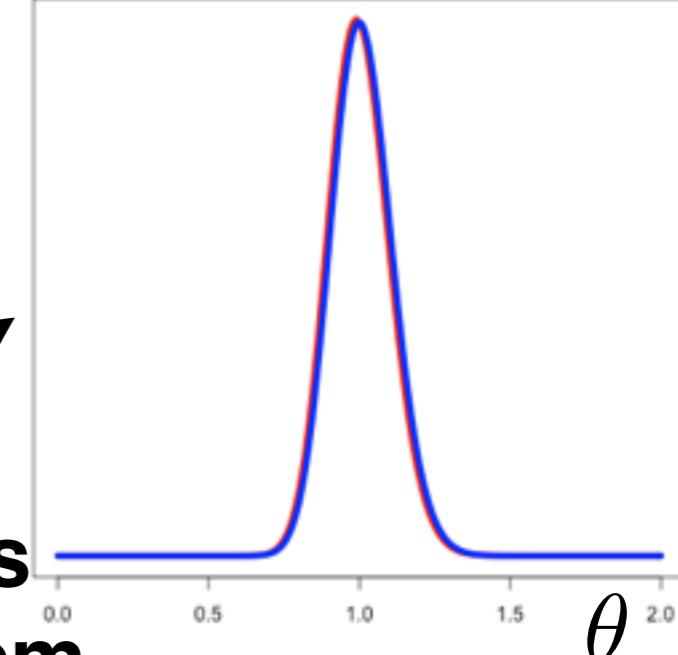
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- Here:  $f(\theta, \alpha) = \log p(\theta|\alpha) - \log p(\theta|\alpha_0)$

Some reasonable priors



**Bayes  
Theorem**



# Microcredit Experiment

- Simplified from Meager (2015)
- $K$  microcredit trials (Mexico, Mongolia, Bosnia, India, Morocco, Philippines, Ethiopia)
- $N_k$  businesses in  $k$ th site ( $\sim 900$  to  $\sim 17K$ )
- Profit of  $n$ th business at  $k$ th site:  
$$y_{kn} \stackrel{\text{indep}}{\sim} \mathcal{N}(\mu_k + T_{kn}\tau_k, \sigma_k^2)$$

profit

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1 if microcredit

- Priors and hyperpriors:

$$\begin{pmatrix} \mu_k \\ \tau_k \end{pmatrix} \stackrel{iid}{\sim} \mathcal{N}\left(\begin{pmatrix} \mu \\ \tau \end{pmatrix}, C\right)$$

$$\begin{pmatrix} \mu \\ \tau \end{pmatrix} \stackrel{iid}{\sim} \mathcal{N}\left(\begin{pmatrix} \mu_0 \\ \tau_0 \end{pmatrix}, \Lambda^{-1}\right)$$

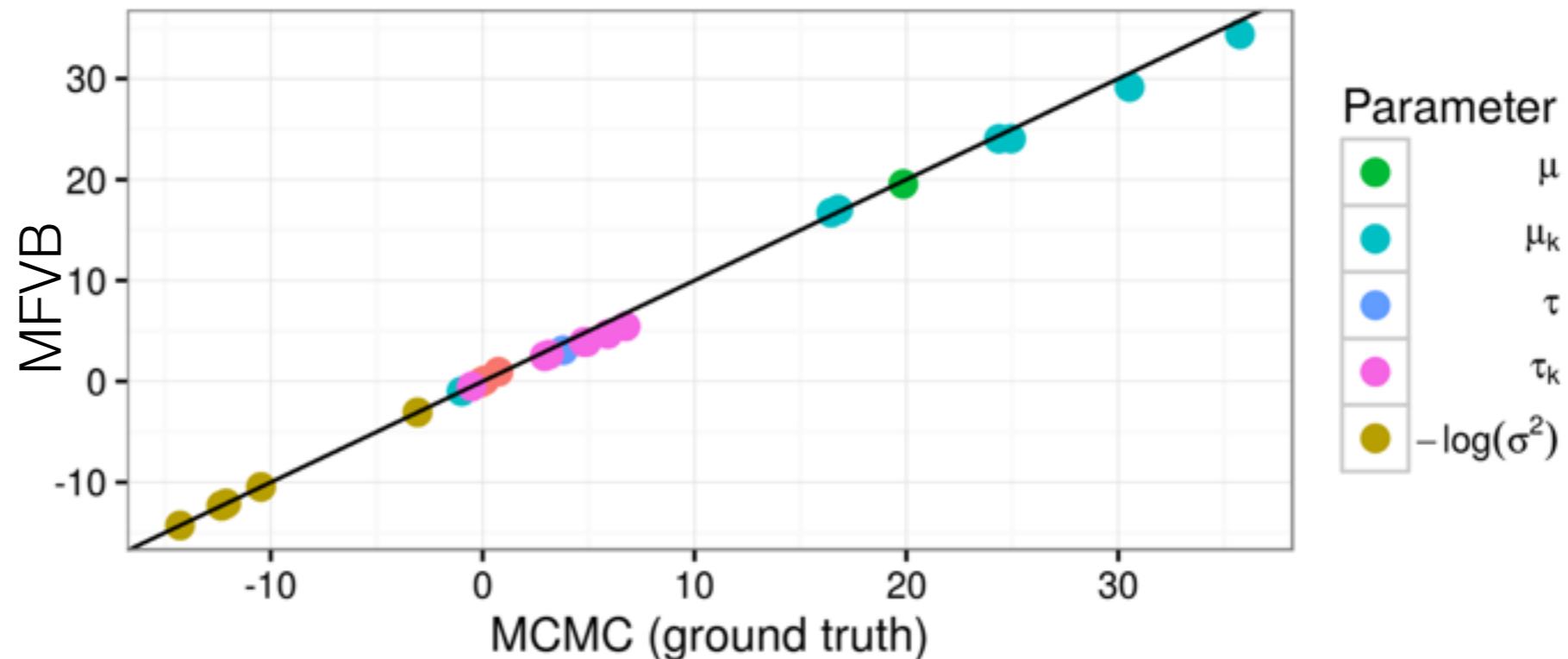
$$\sigma_k^{-2} \stackrel{iid}{\sim} \Gamma(a, b)$$

$$C \sim \text{Sep\&LKJ}(\eta, c, d)$$

# Microcredit Experiment

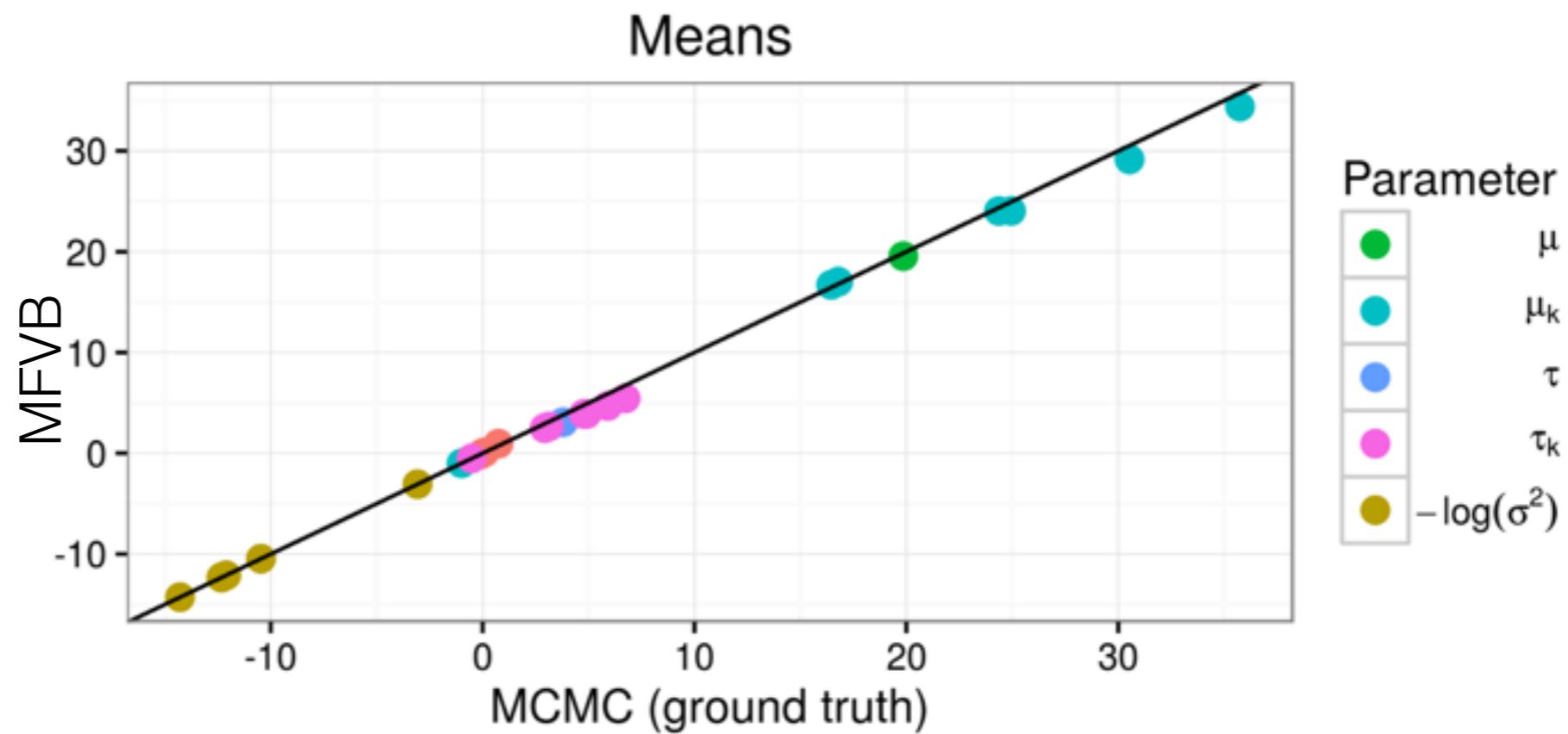
# Microcredit Experiment

Means



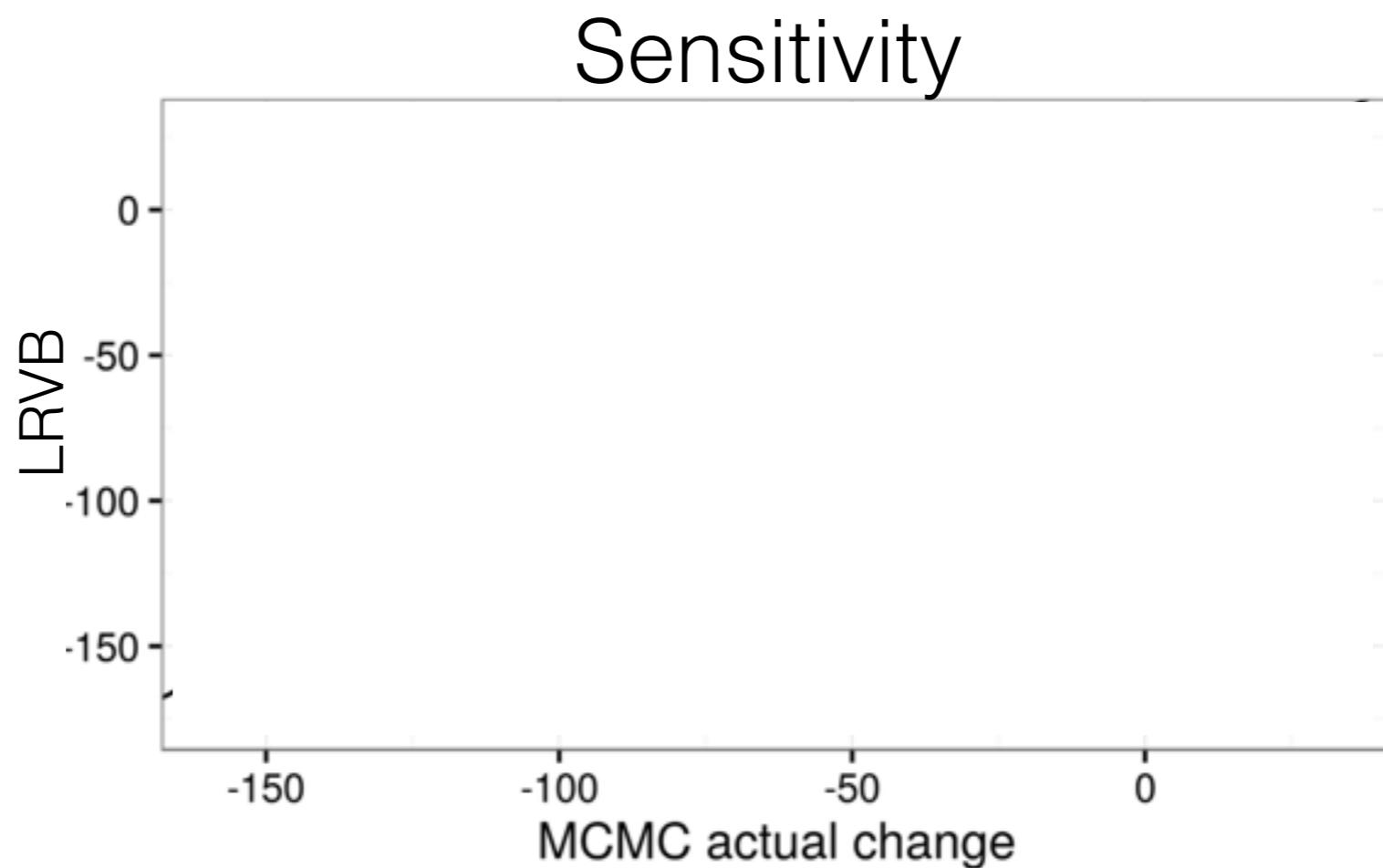
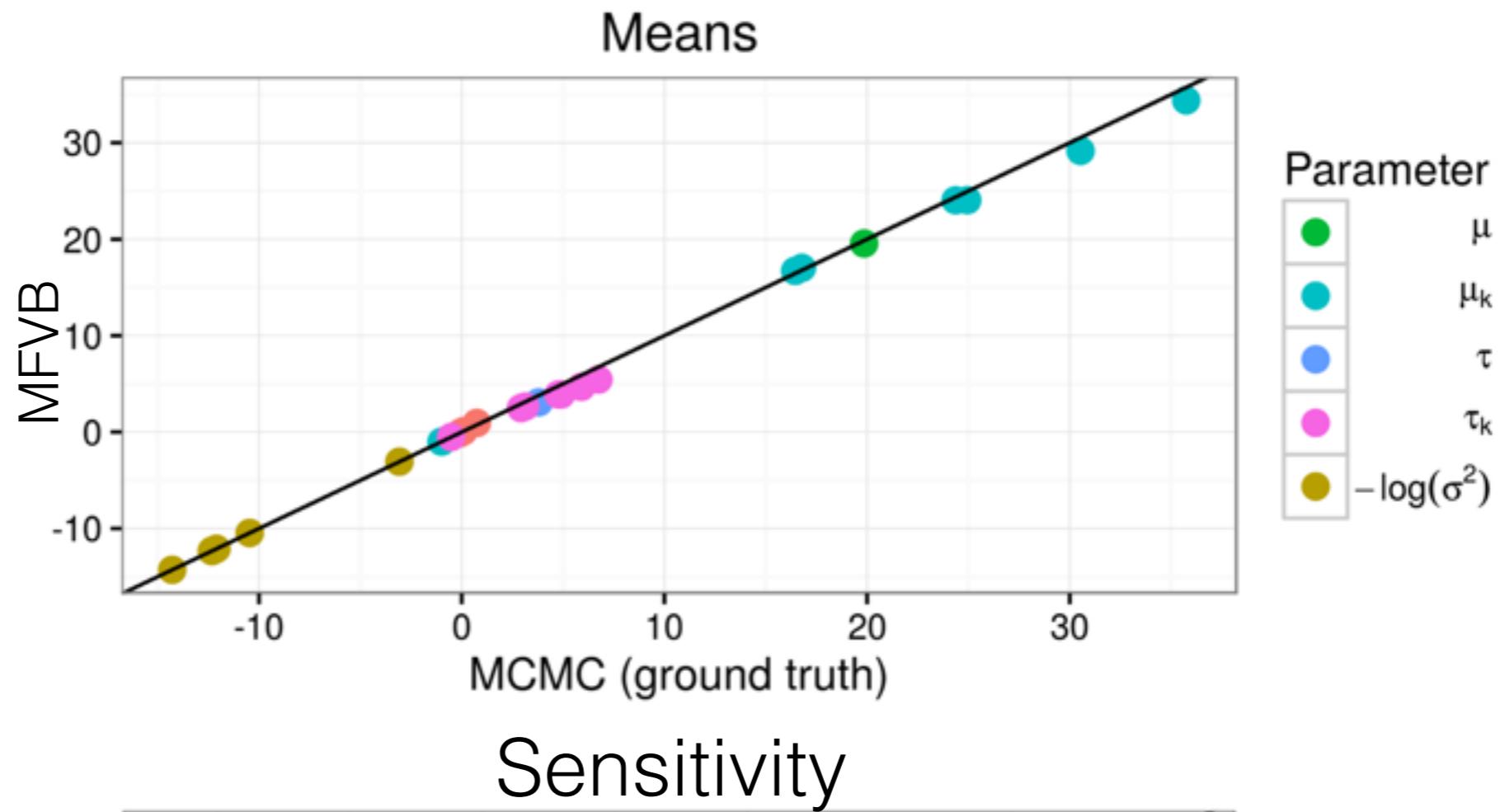
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- Perturb  $\Lambda_{11}$ :  
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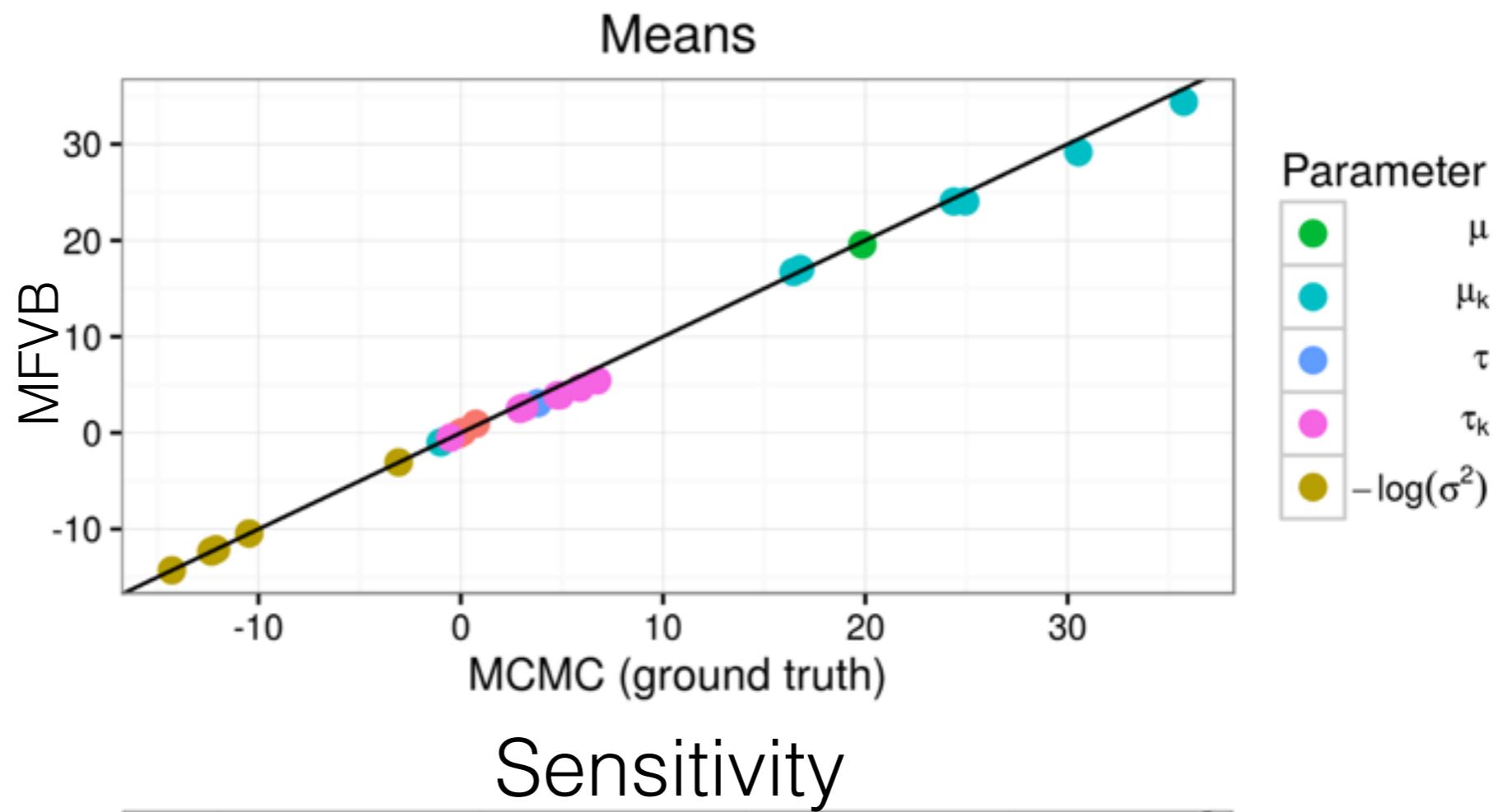
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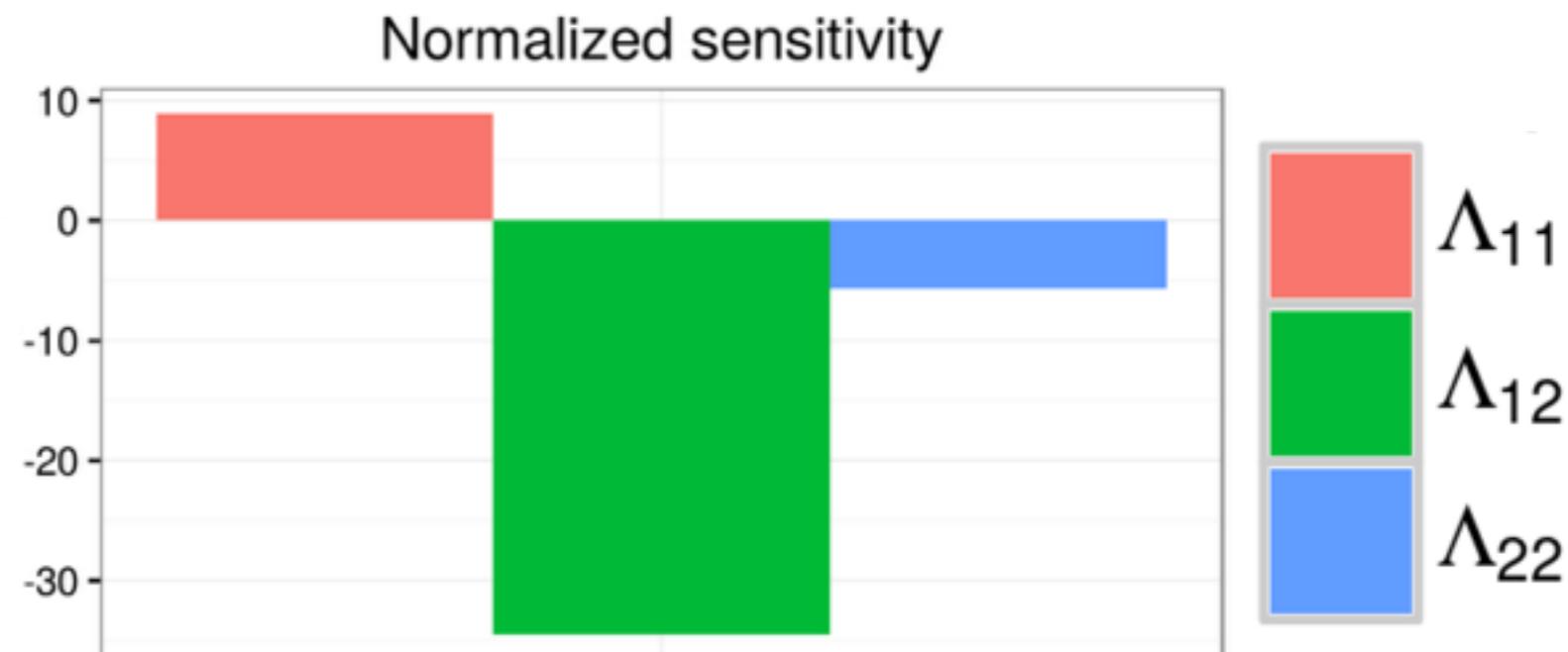
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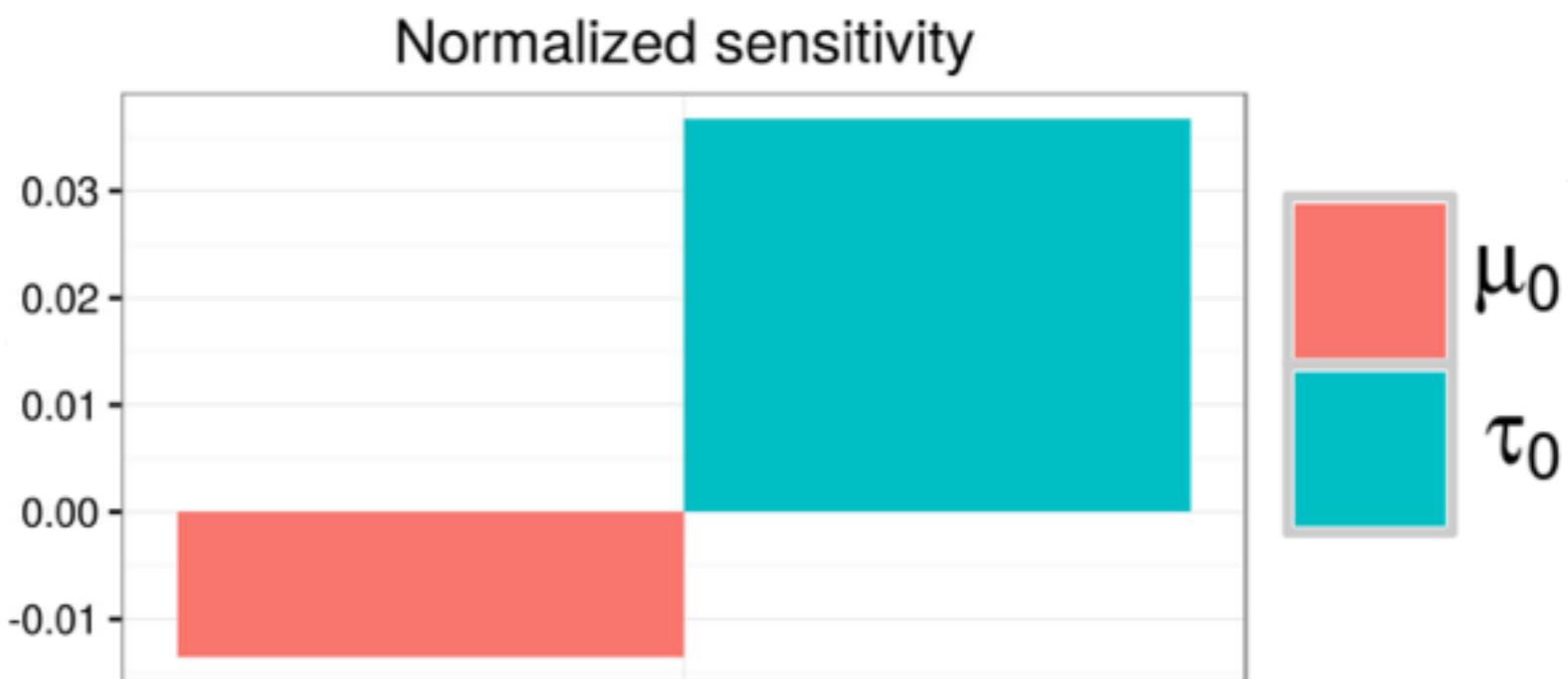
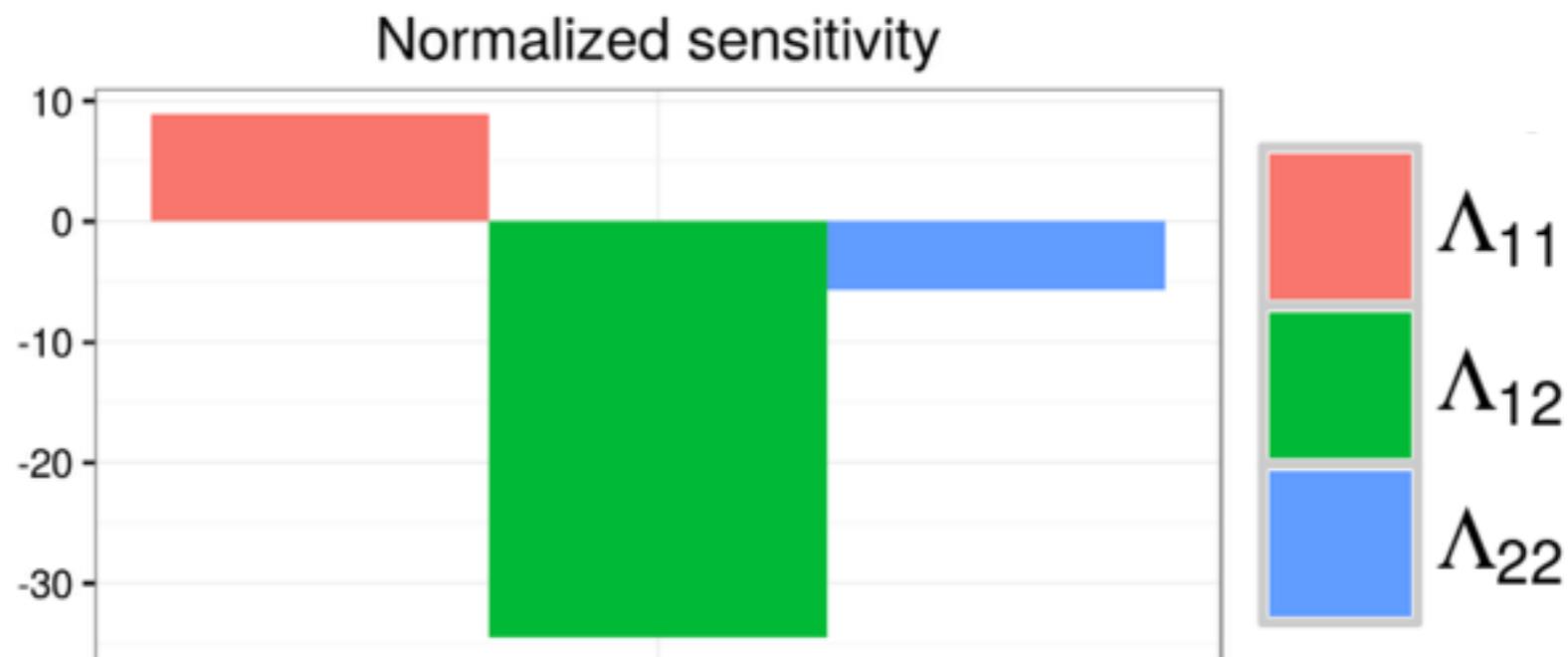
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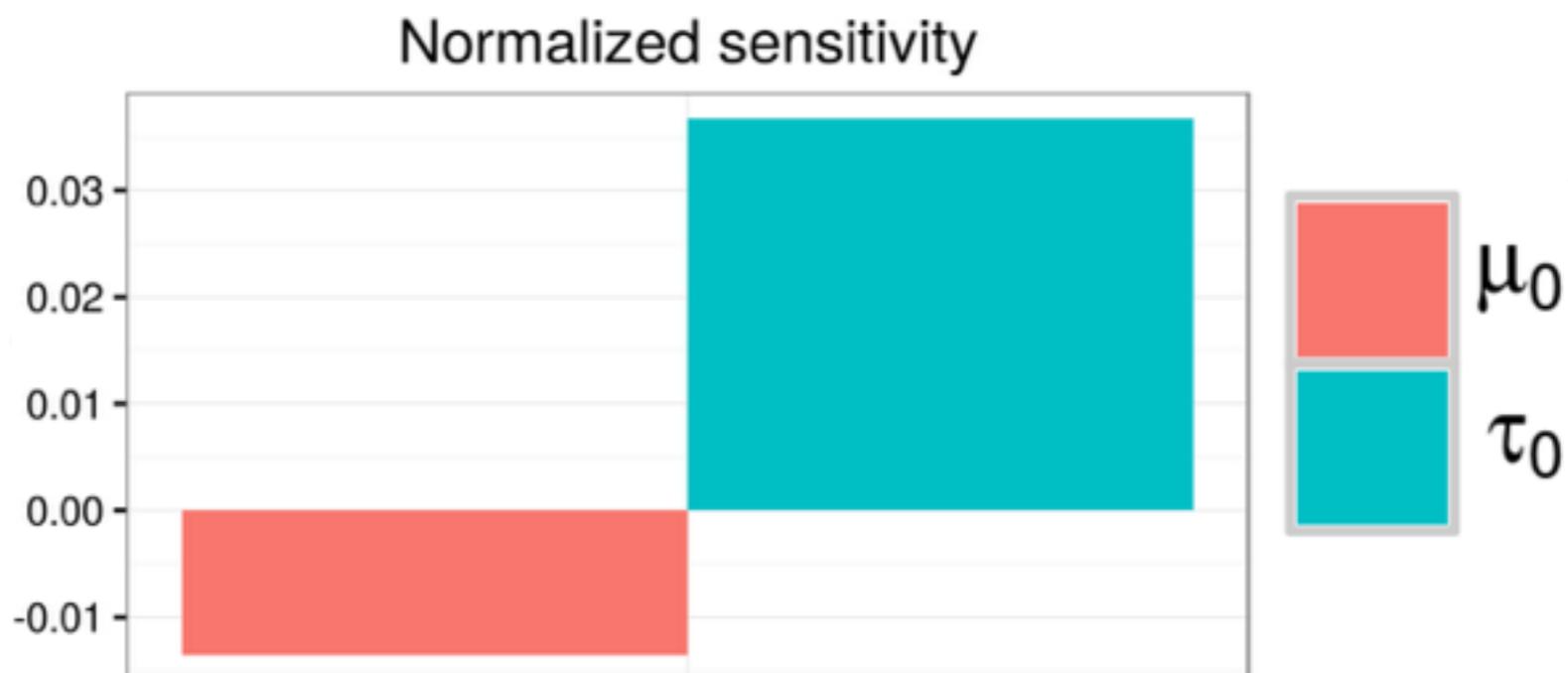
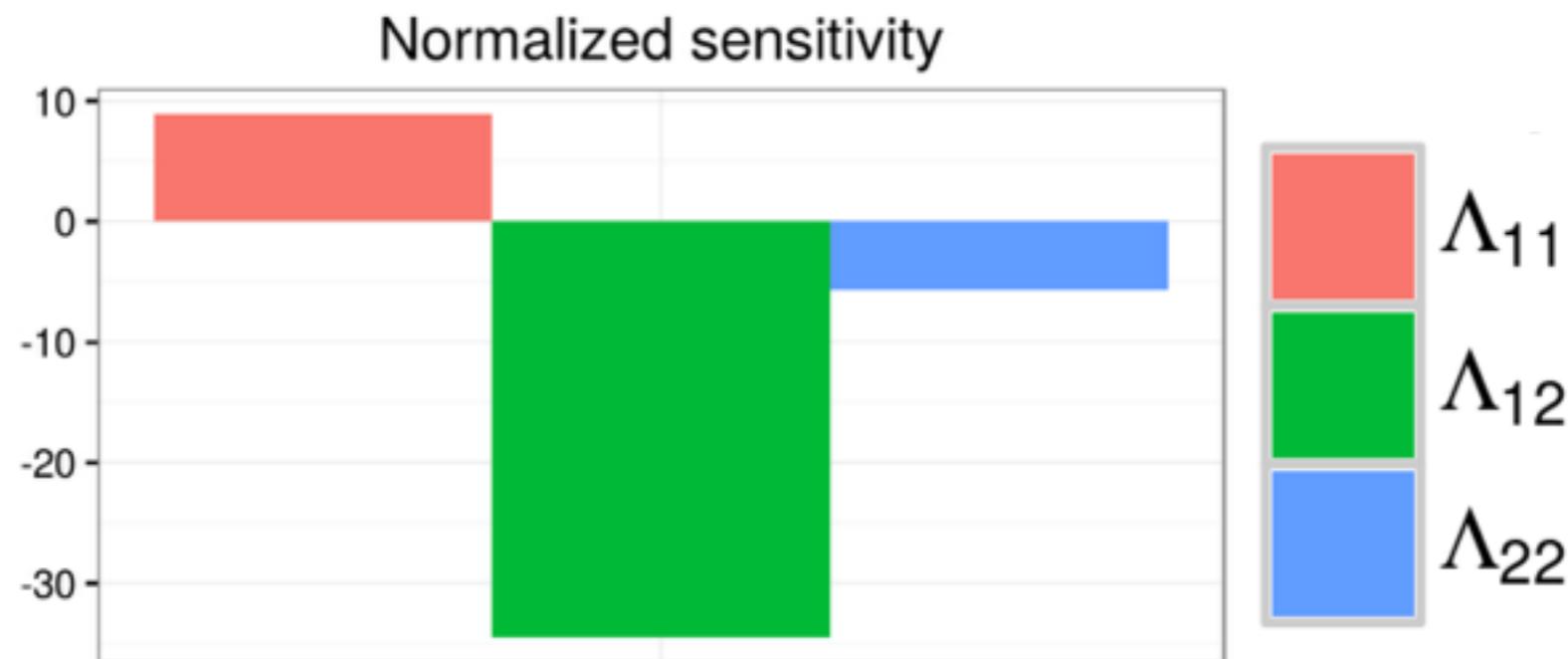
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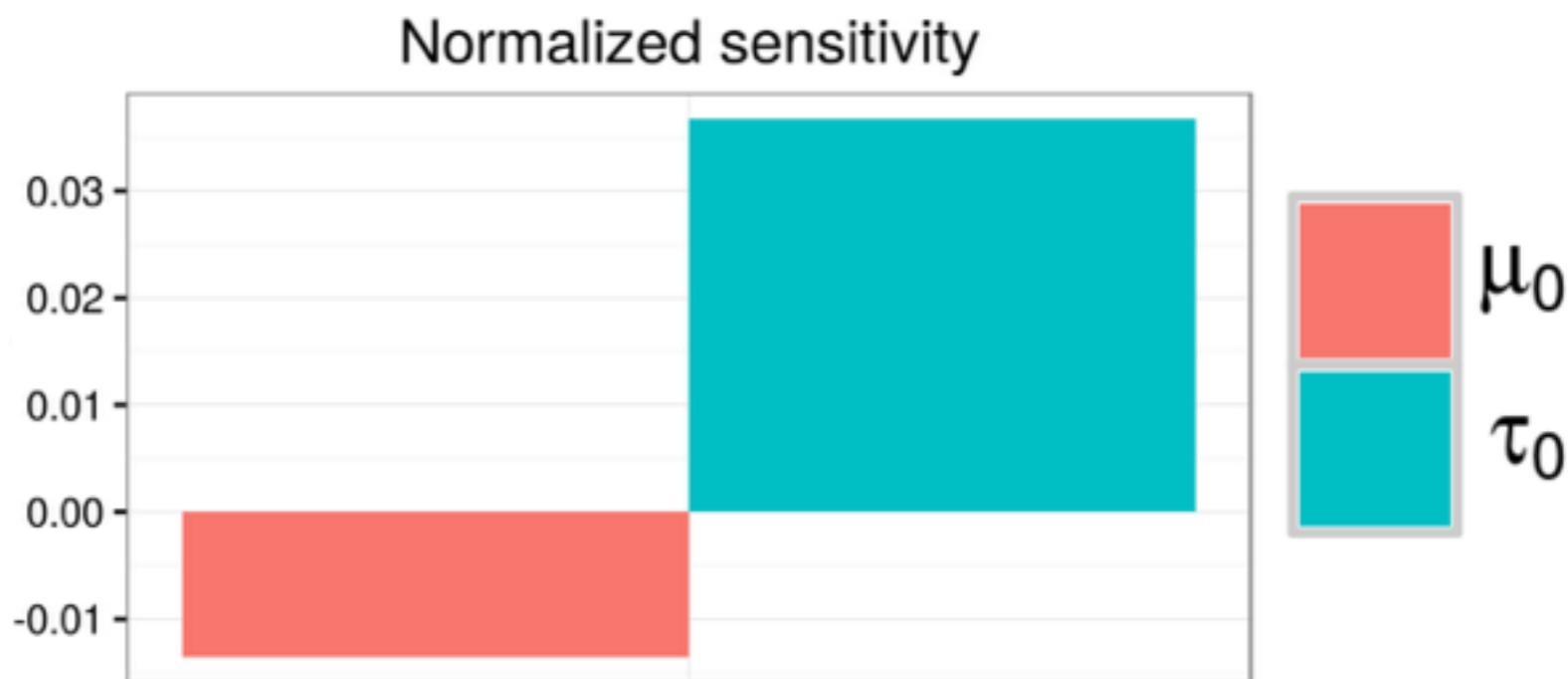
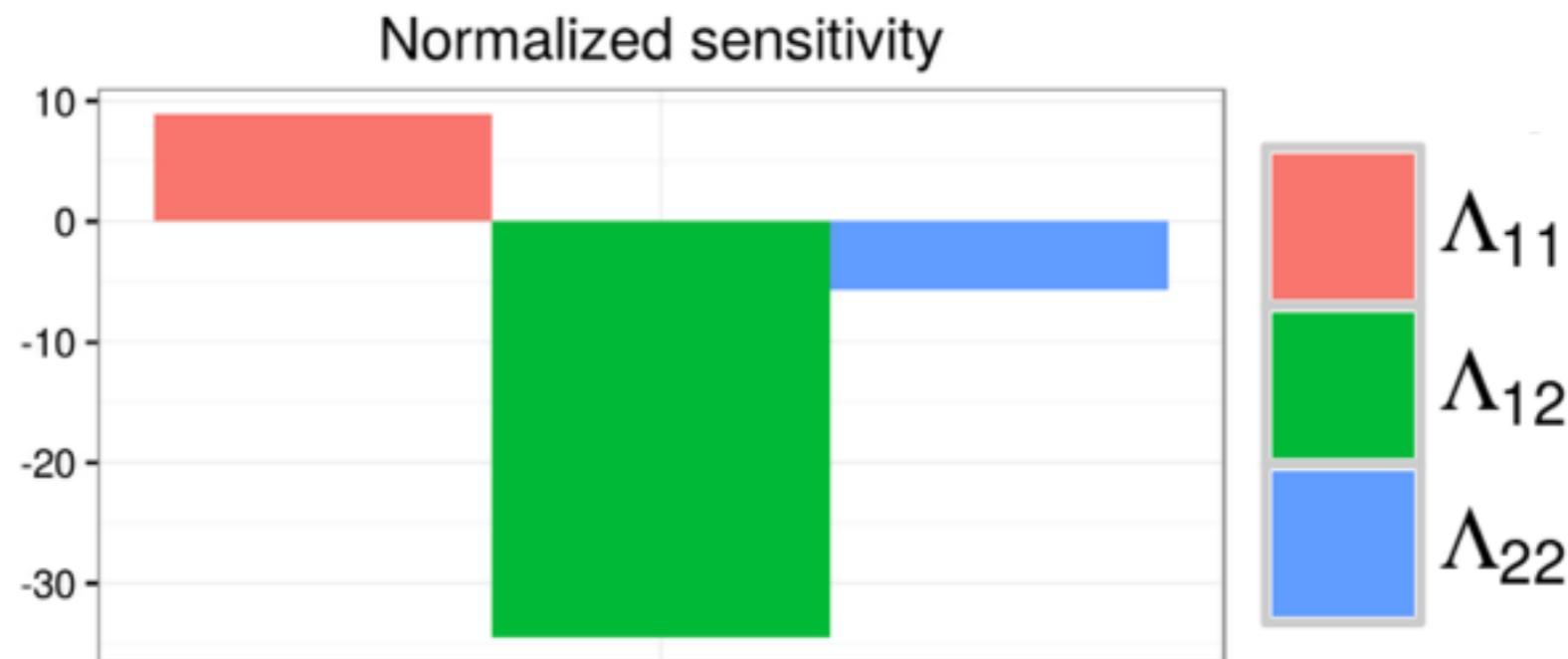
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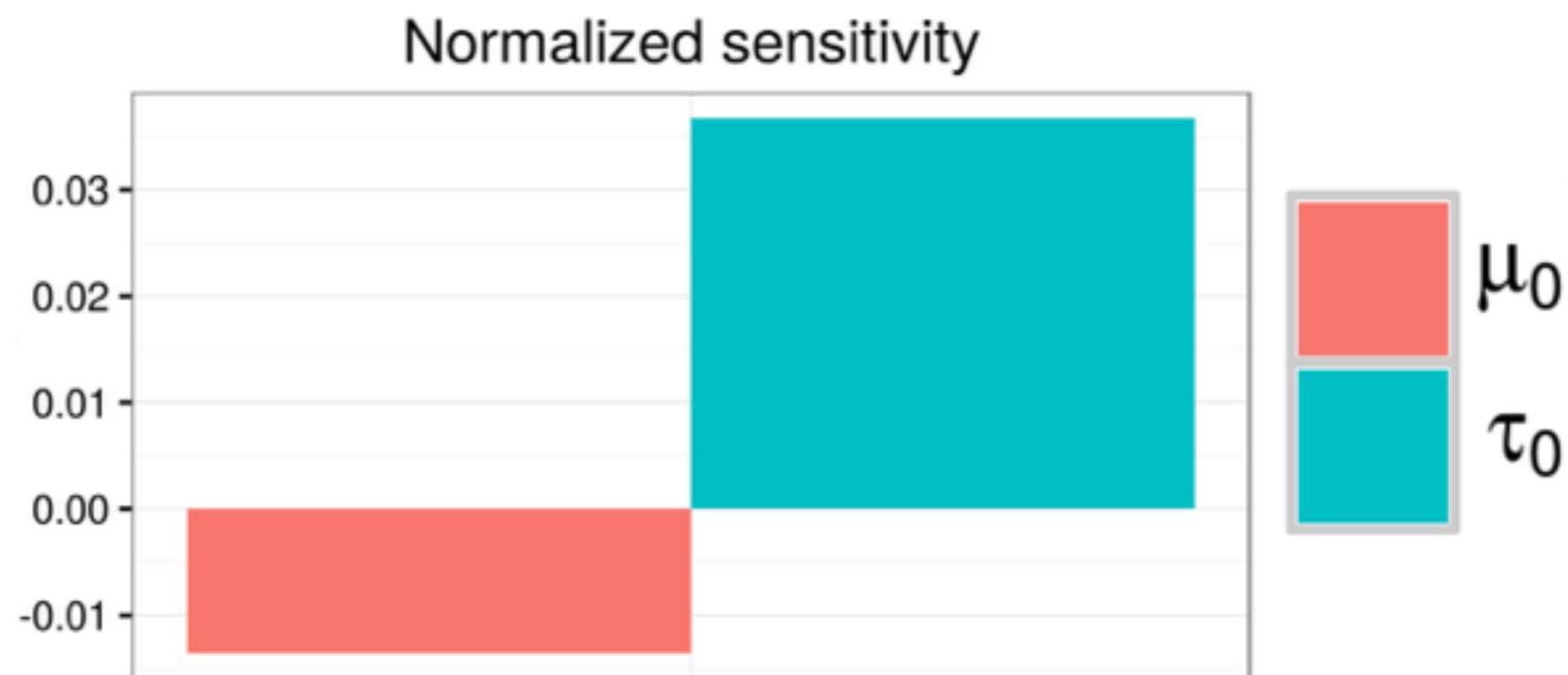
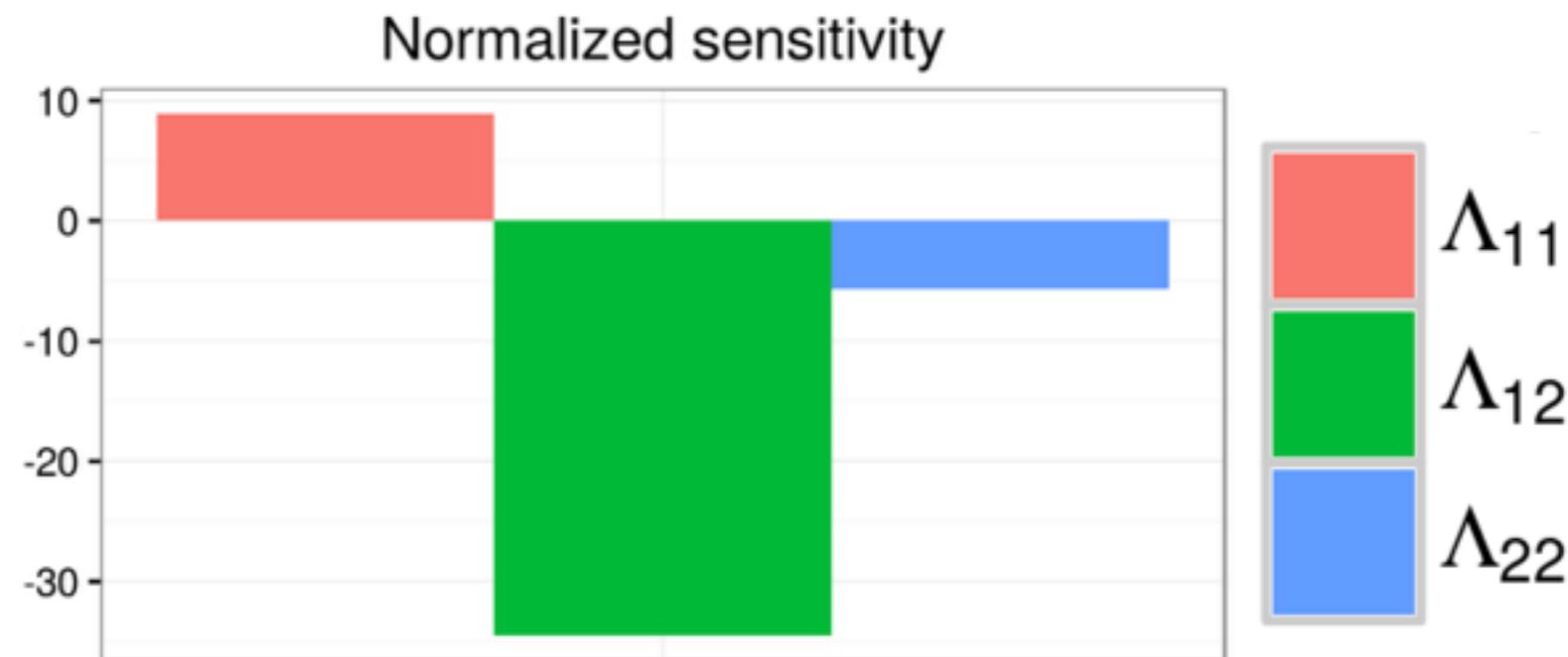
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$$(\sigma^2)^{-1} \sim \text{Gamma}(a, b)$$

# Criteo Online Ads Experiment

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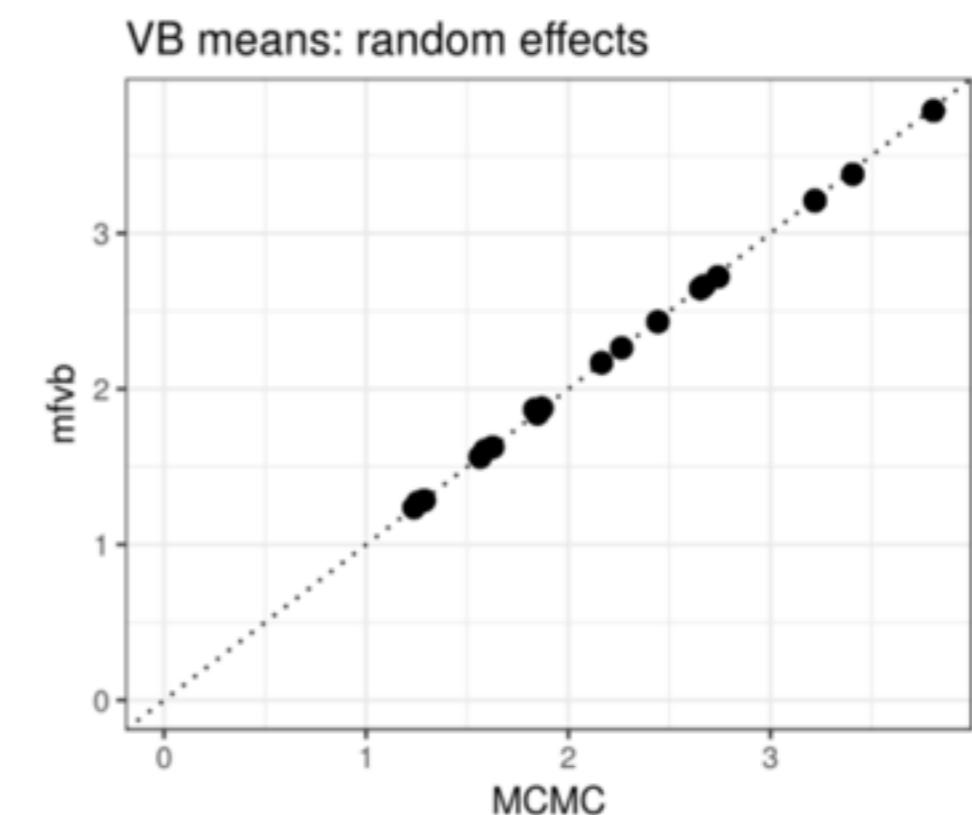
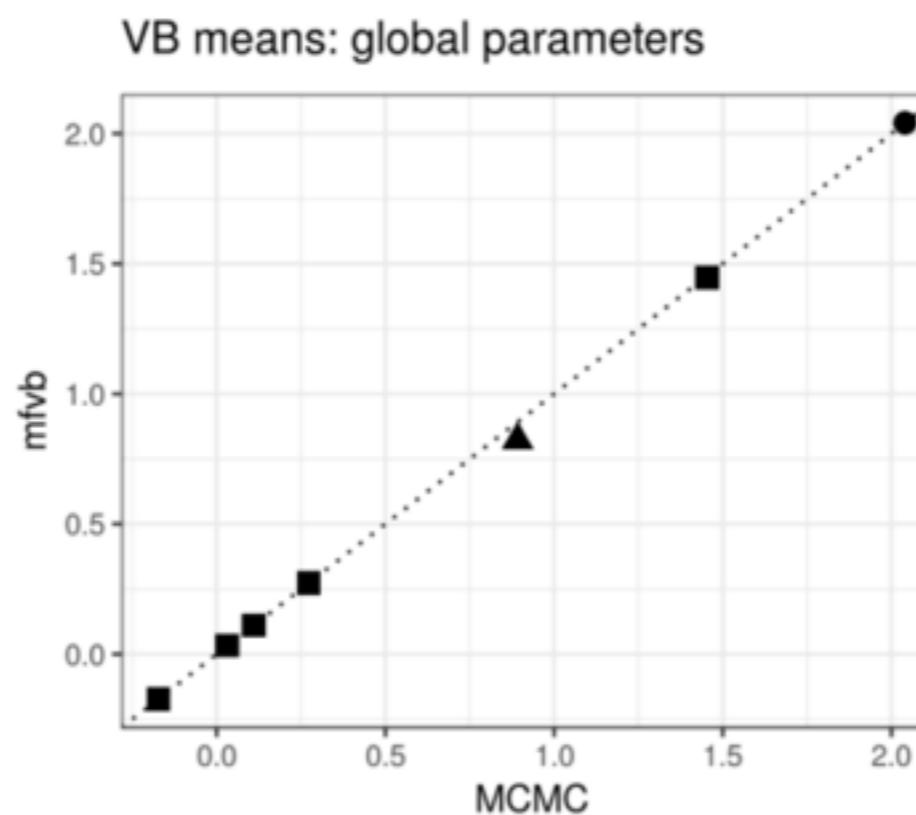
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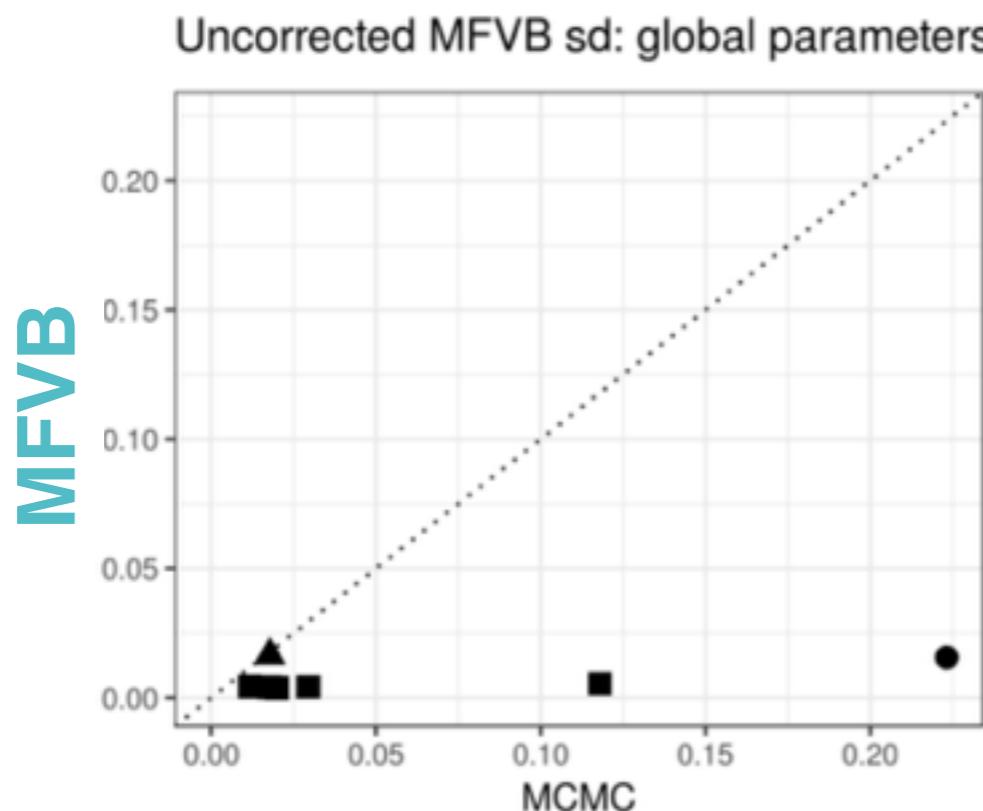
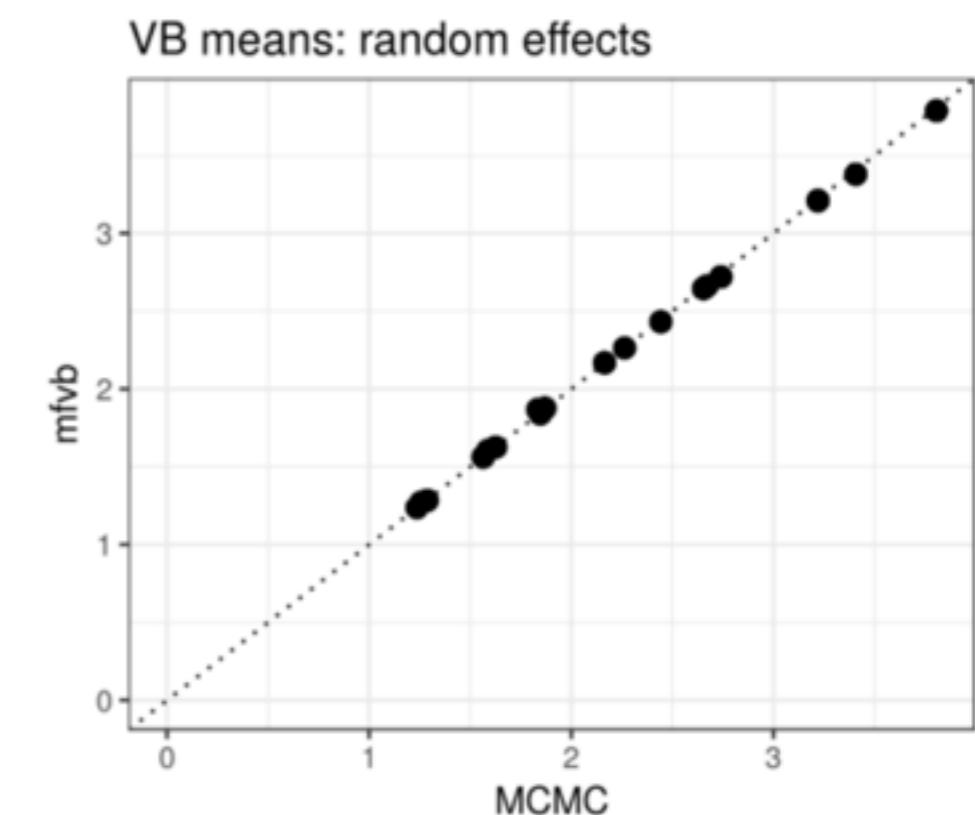
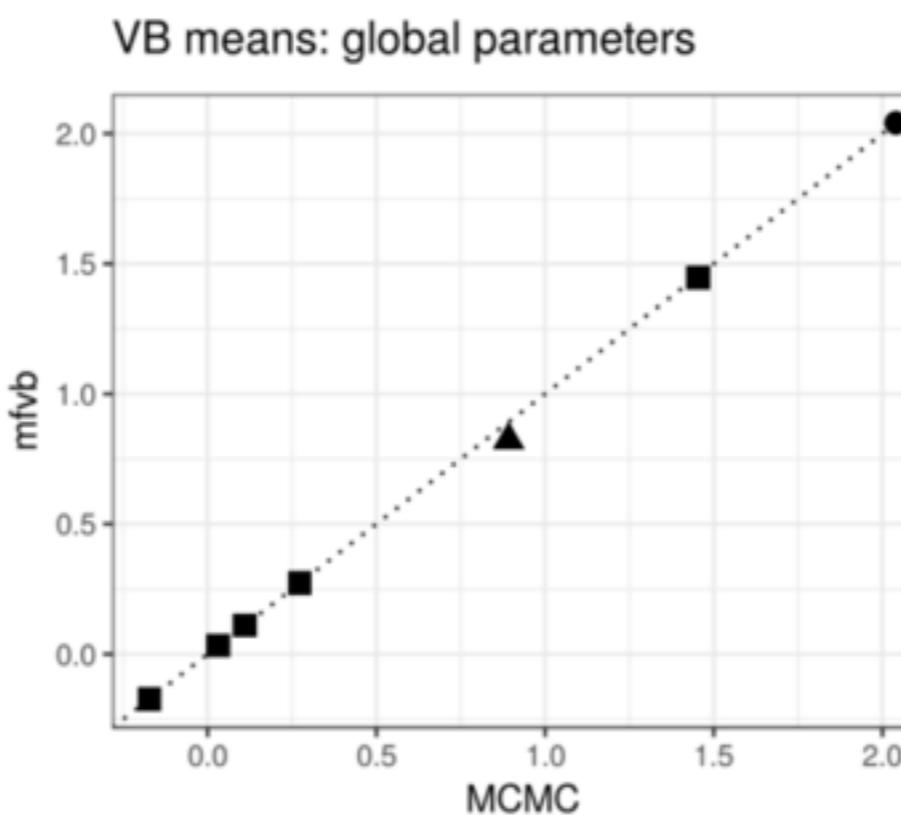
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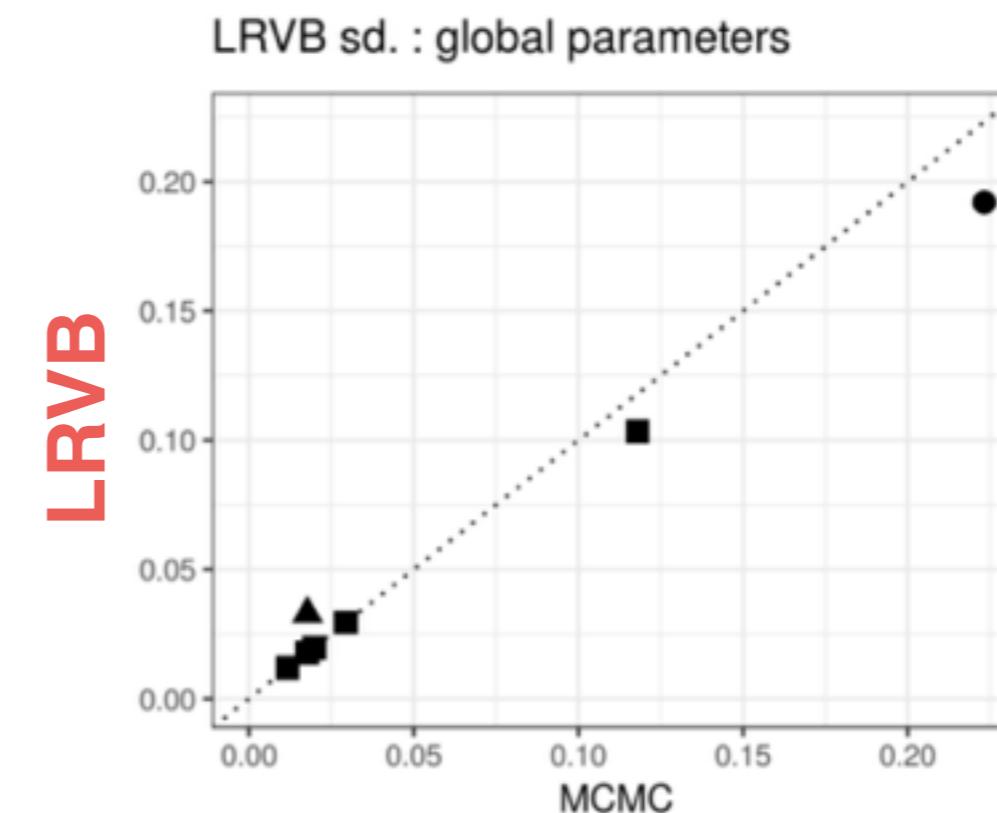
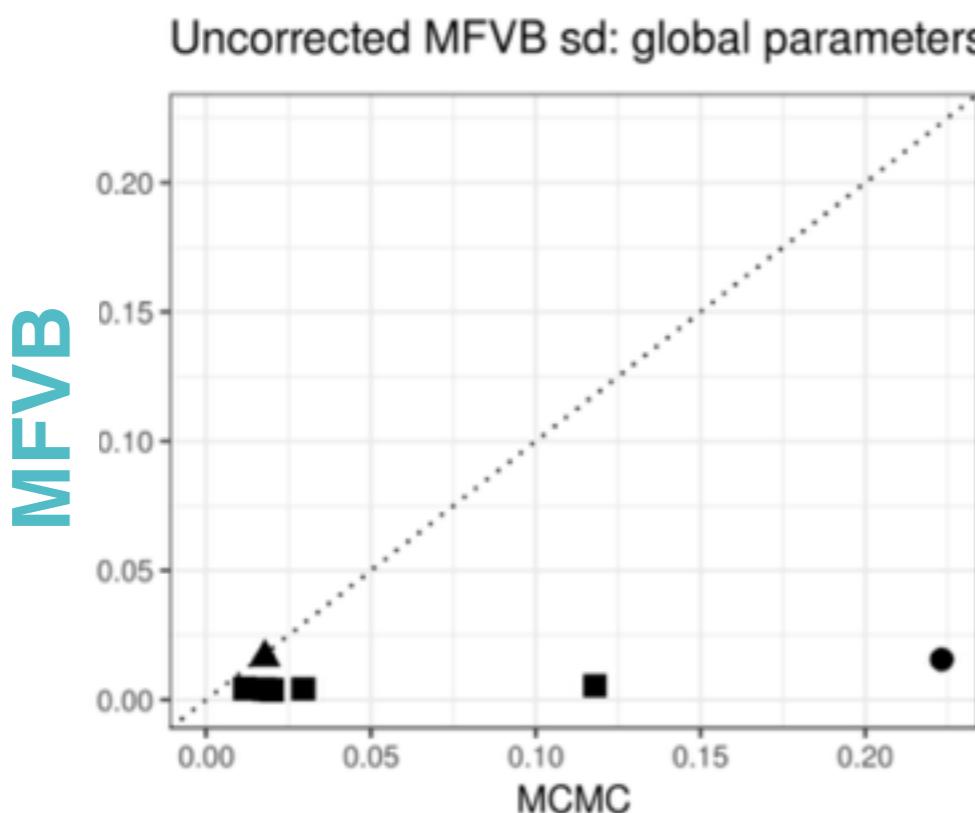
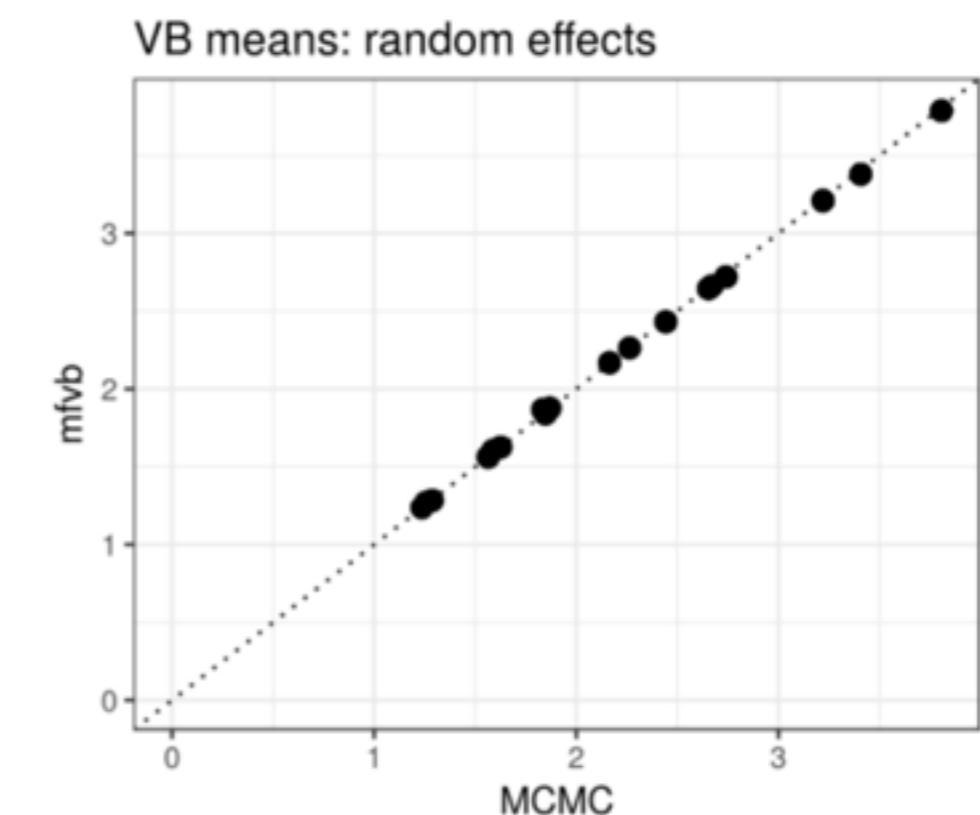
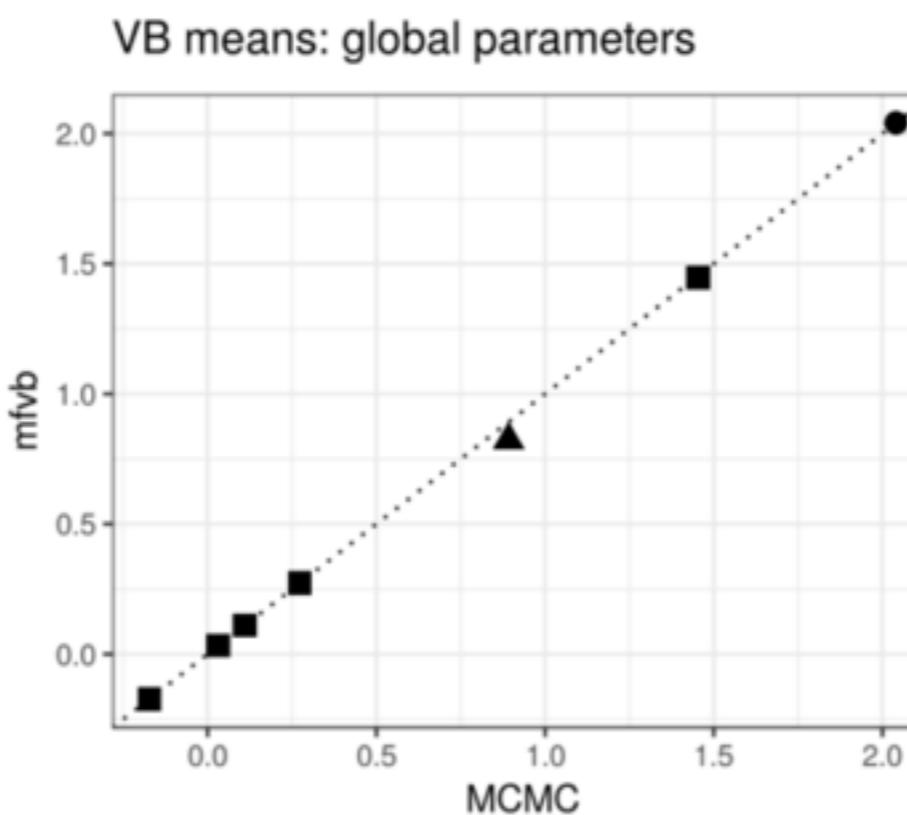
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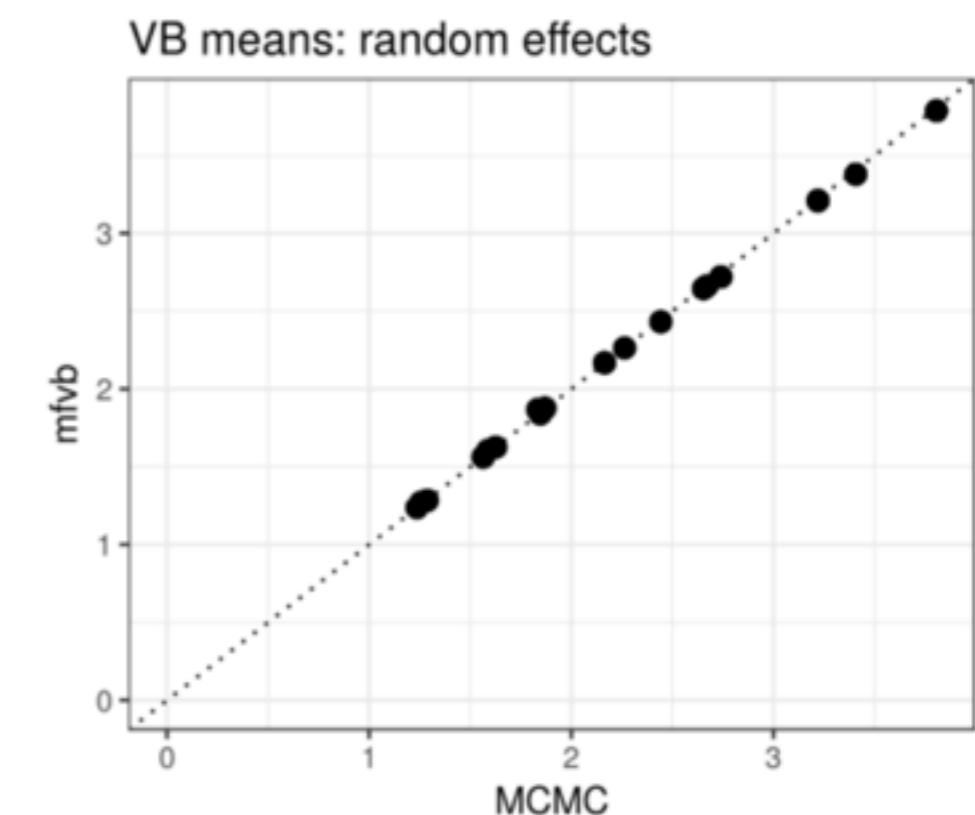
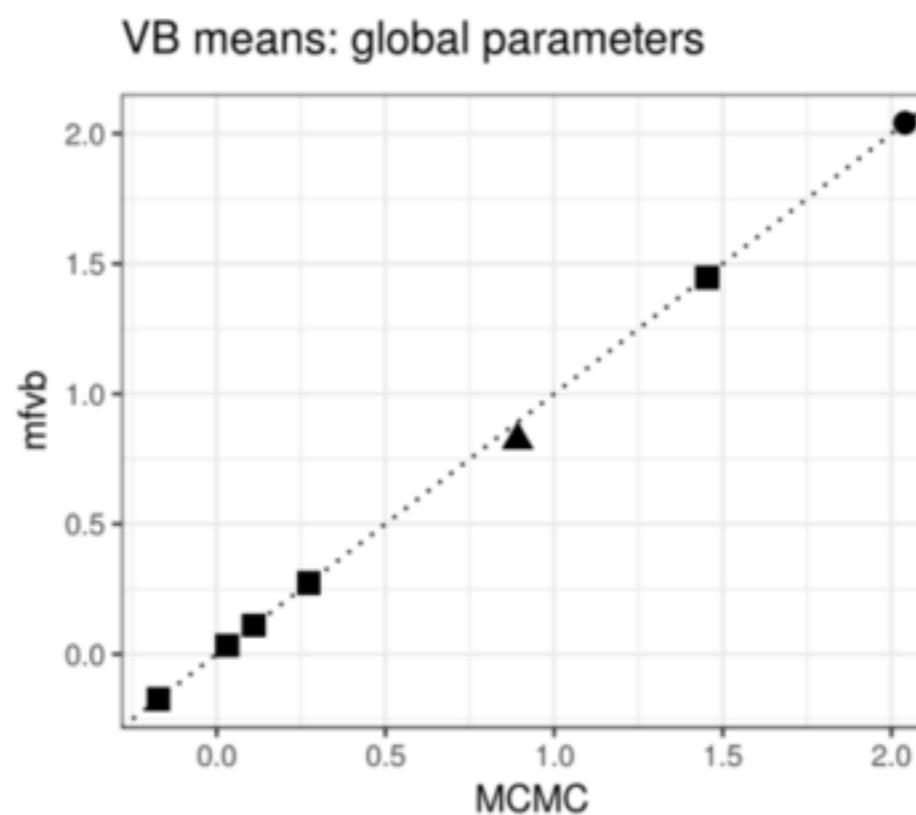
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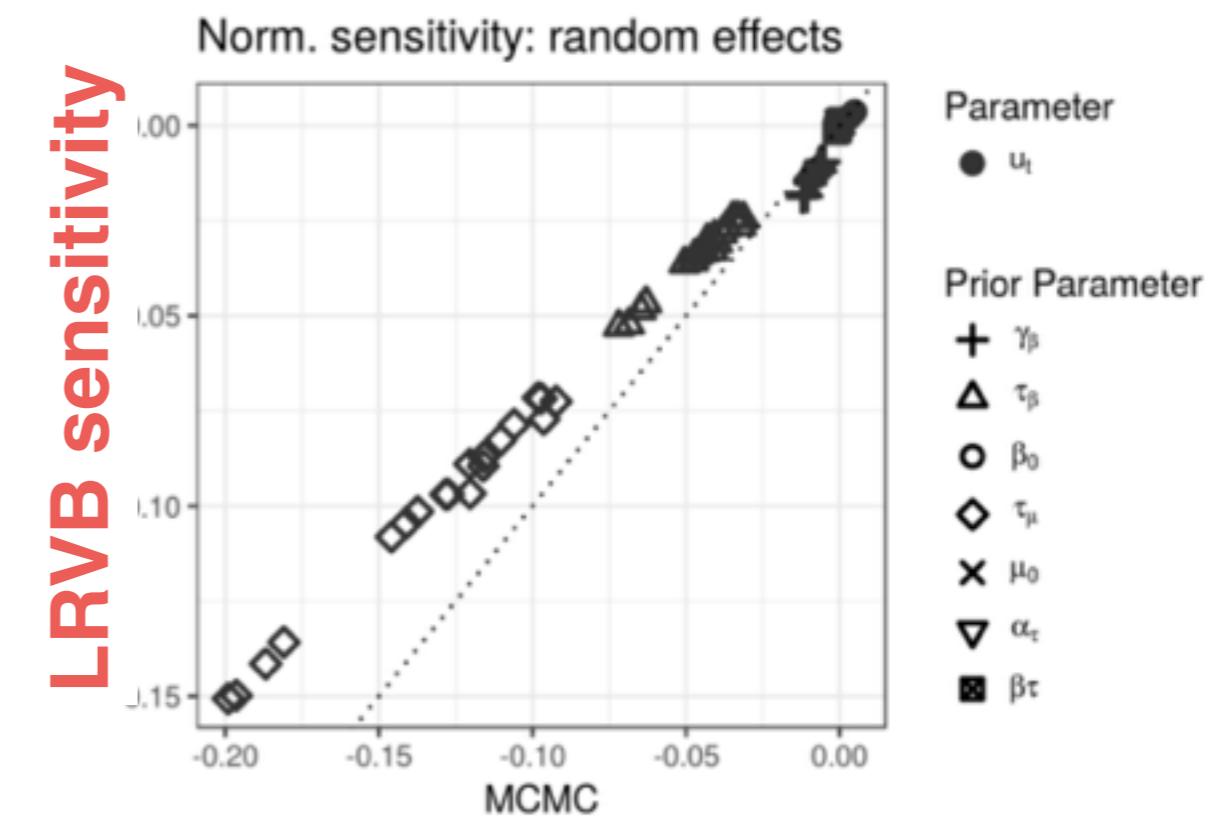
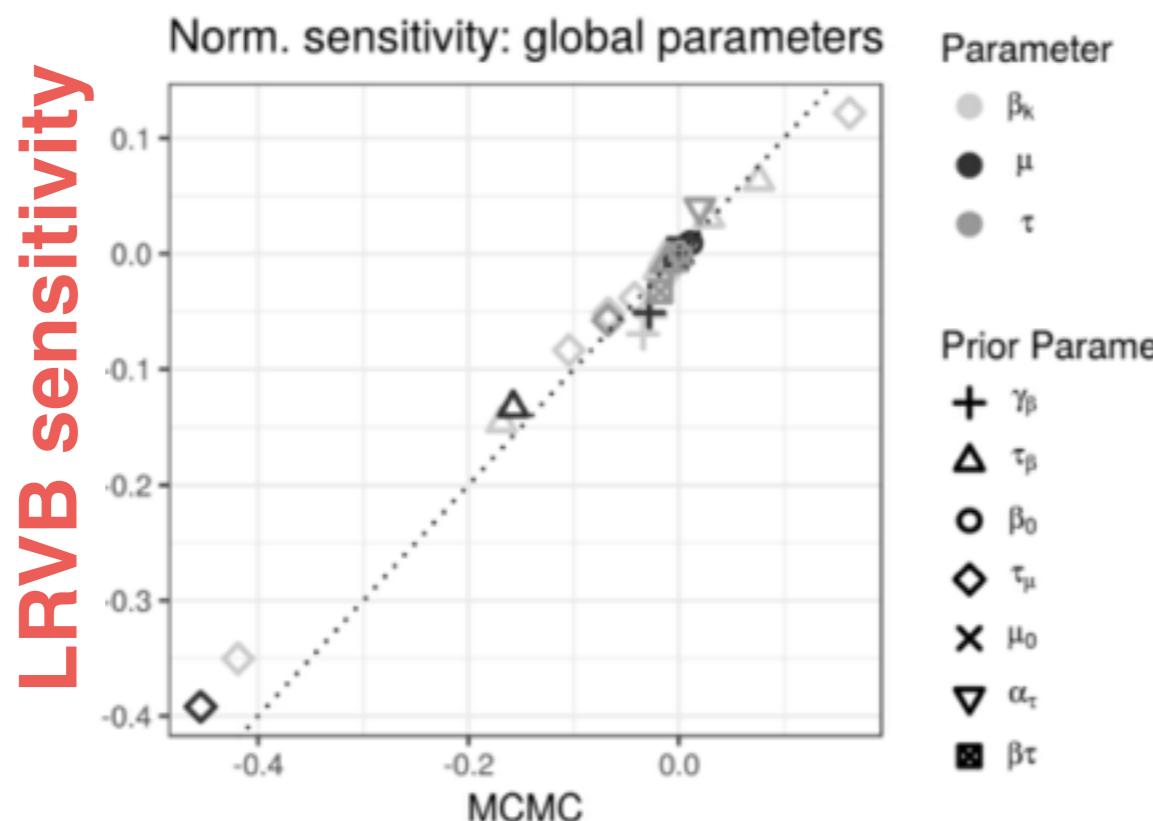
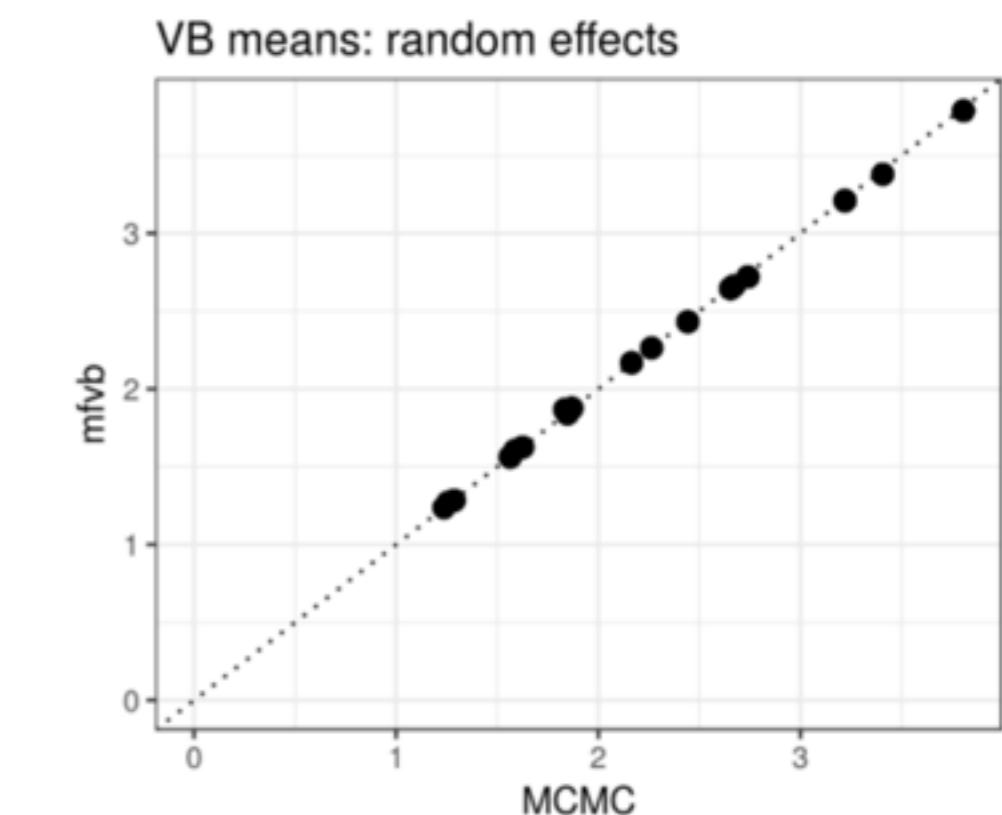
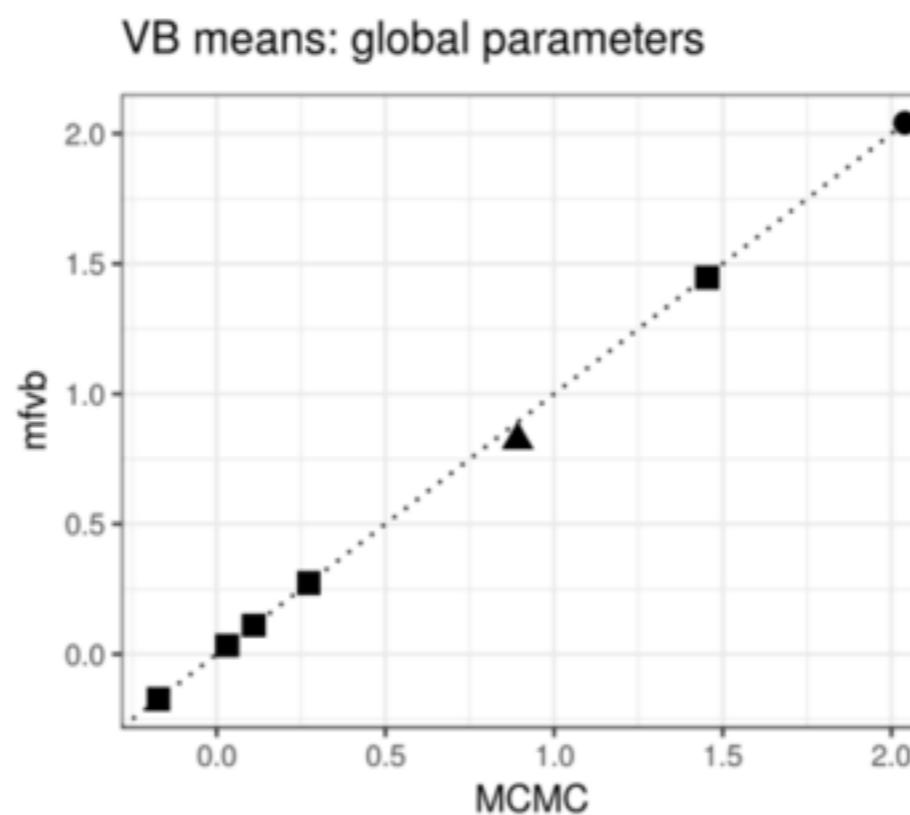
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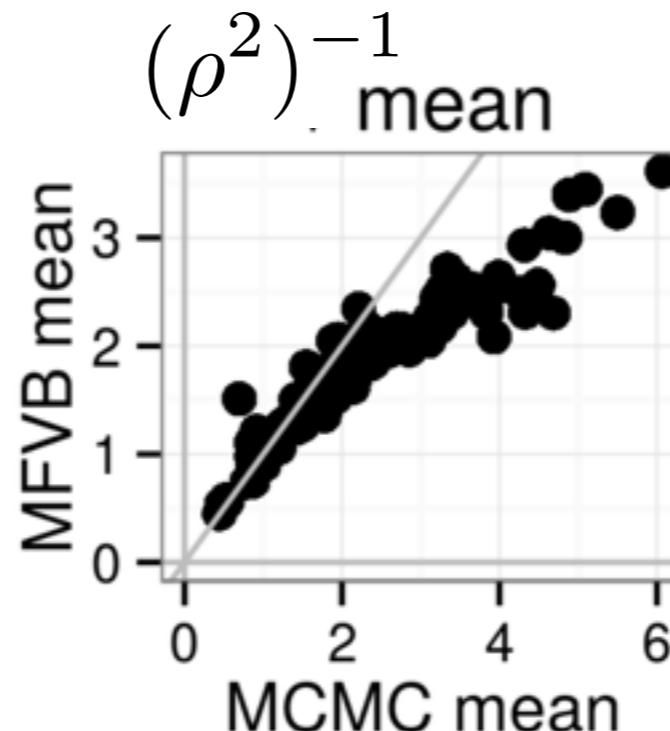
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# Posterior means: revisited

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- Collect: standardized test scores (e.g., SAT, ACT)  $x_n$
- Collect: regional test scores  $r_n$
- Model:  
 $y_n | \beta, z, \sigma^2 \stackrel{\text{indep}}{\sim} \mathcal{N}(\beta^T x_n + z_{k(n)} r_n, \sigma^2)$   
 $z_k | \rho^2 \stackrel{iid}{\sim} \mathcal{N}(0, \rho^2) \quad (\sigma^2)^{-1} \sim \text{Gamma}(a_{\sigma^2}, b_{\sigma^2})$   
 $\beta \sim \mathcal{N}(0, \Sigma) \quad (\rho^2)^{-1} \sim \text{Gamma}(a_{\rho^2}, b_{\rho^2})$

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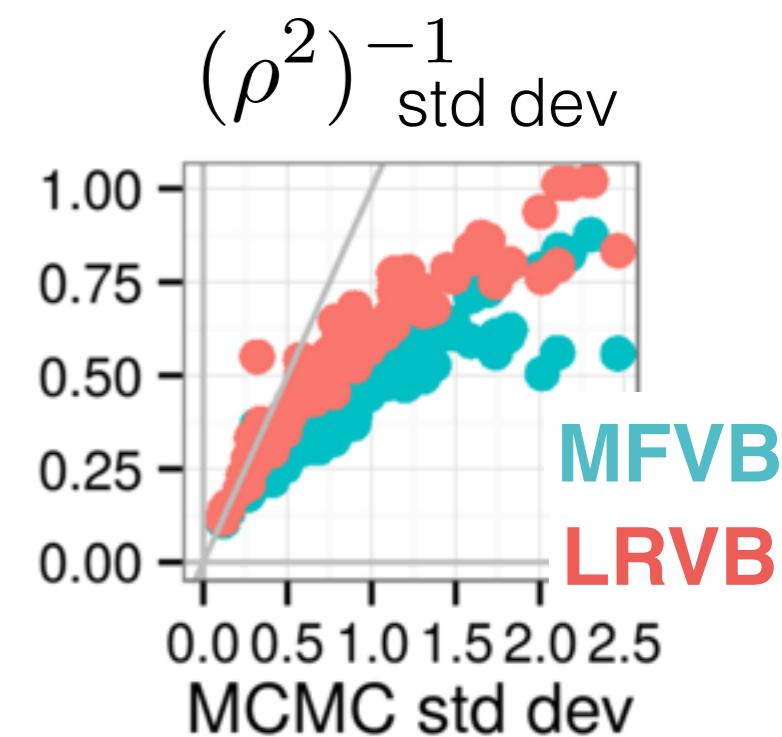
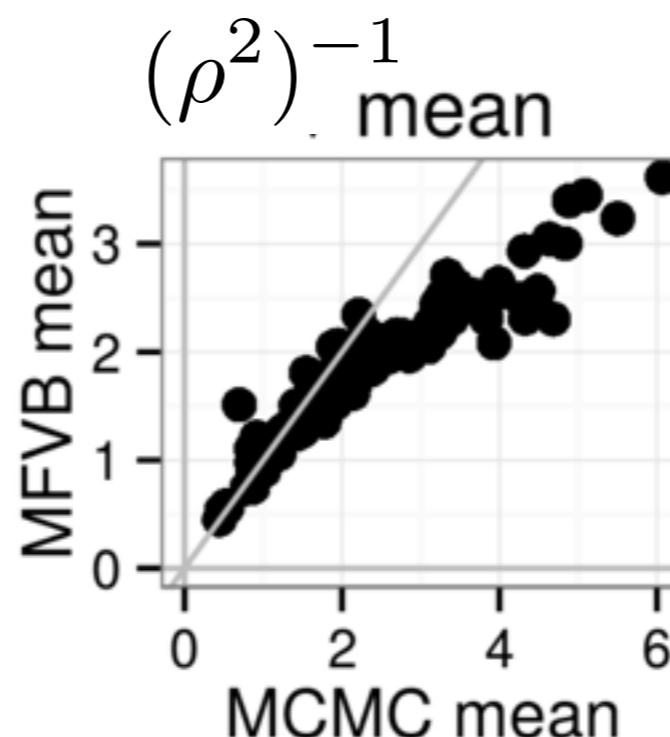
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    - Priors, likelihood, data
- When can we trust LRVB?
- Data summarization for scalability (Part III)

# References (1/2)

R Giordano, T Broderick, and MI Jordan. Linear response methods for accurate covariance estimates from mean field variational Bayes. *NIPS* 2015.

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R Giordano, T Broderick, and MI Jordan. Covariances, robustness, and variational Bayes 2017. Under review. ArXiv:1709.02536.

Code links in the papers

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Code links in the papers

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