



Bayesian Analysis for the Social Sciences

By Simon Jackman

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Bayesian methods are increasingly being used in the social sciences, as the problems encountered lend themselves so naturally to the subjective qualities of Bayesian methodology. This book provides an accessible introduction to Bayesian methods, tailored specifically for social science students. It contains lots of real examples from political science, psychology, sociology, and economics, exercises in all chapters, and detailed descriptions of all the key concepts, without assuming any background in statistics beyond a first course. It features examples of how to implement the methods using WinBUGS – the most-widely used Bayesian analysis software in the world – and R – an open-source statistical software. The book is supported by a Website featuring WinBUGS and R code, and data sets.

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Editorial Review

Review

“This is a comprehensive text on applied Bayesian statistics. Though it is primarily aimed at social scientists with strong computational and statistical backgrounds, its scope should appeal to a wider readership. I recommend it to anybody interested in actually applying Bayesian methods.” (*Significance*, 1 June 2010)

“As in many texts, each chapter ends with a collection of exercises which would make this text suitable for teaching a one-semester course in Bayesian methods with applications in the social sciences . . . with this small caveat, I was impressed with the text and believe it would be a worthy candidate for a first Bayesian courses that gives the student a balanced view of the theory and practice of Bayesian thinking.” (*The American Statistician*, 1 February 2011)

From the Back Cover

Bayesian Analysis for the Social Sciences provides a thorough yet accessible treatment of Bayesian statistical inference in social science settings.

The first part of this book presents the foundations of Bayesian inference, via simple inferential problems in the social sciences: proportions, cross-tabulations, counts, means and regression analysis. A review of modern, simulation-based inference is presented with a detailed examination of the suite of computational tools (Markov chain Monte Carlo algorithms) that underlie the “Bayesian revolution” in contemporary statistics. Furthermore, the book introduces the general purpose Bayesian computer programs BUGS and JAGS along with numerous examples, and a detailed consideration of the art of using these programs in real-world settings.

The second half of the book focuses on intermediate to advanced applications in the social sciences, including hierarchical or “multi-level” models, models for discrete responses (binary, ordinal, and multinomial data), measurement models (factor analysis, item-response models, dynamic linear models), and mixture models, along with models that are interesting hybrids of these models. Each model is accompanied by worked examples using BUGS/JAGS, using data from political science, sociology, psychology, education, communications, economics and anthropology.

Each chapter is accompanied with exercises to further the students' understanding of Bayesian methods and applications. Extensive appendices provide important technical background and proofs of key theoretical propositions.

This book presents a forceful argument for the philosophical and practical utility of the Bayesian approach in many social science settings. Graduate and postgraduate students in such fields as political science, sociology, psychology, communications, education, and economics and statisticians will find much value in this book.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Becky Pope:

As people who live in typically the modest era should be revise about what going on or facts even knowledge to make all of them keep up with the era which can be always change and advance. Some of you maybe may update themselves by studying books. It is a good choice for you but the problems coming to you is you don't know what one you should start with. This Bayesian Analysis for the Social Sciences is our recommendation so you keep up with the world. Why, because this book serves what you want and need in this era.

Randy Garrison:

Spent a free time to be fun activity to try and do! A lot of people spent their down time with their family, or their particular friends. Usually they doing activity like watching television, going to beach, or picnic from the park. They actually doing same task every week. Do you feel it? Will you something different to fill your personal free time/ holiday? Could be reading a book could be option to fill your free time/ holiday. The first thing you will ask may be what kinds of reserve that you should read. If you want to try out look for book, may be the e-book untitled Bayesian Analysis for the Social Sciences can be very good book to read. May be it can be best activity to you.

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