Beta: The Random Variable for Probabilities

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Which video are you more likely to like?

Davie504

10,000 👍 50 👎

Not Davie504

10 👍 0 👎

Philosophical Ponderings:
You ask about the probability of rain tomorrow.

Person A: My leg itches when it rains and its kind of itchy…. Uh, p = .80

Person B: I have done complex calculations and have seen 10,451 days like tomorrow… p = 0.80

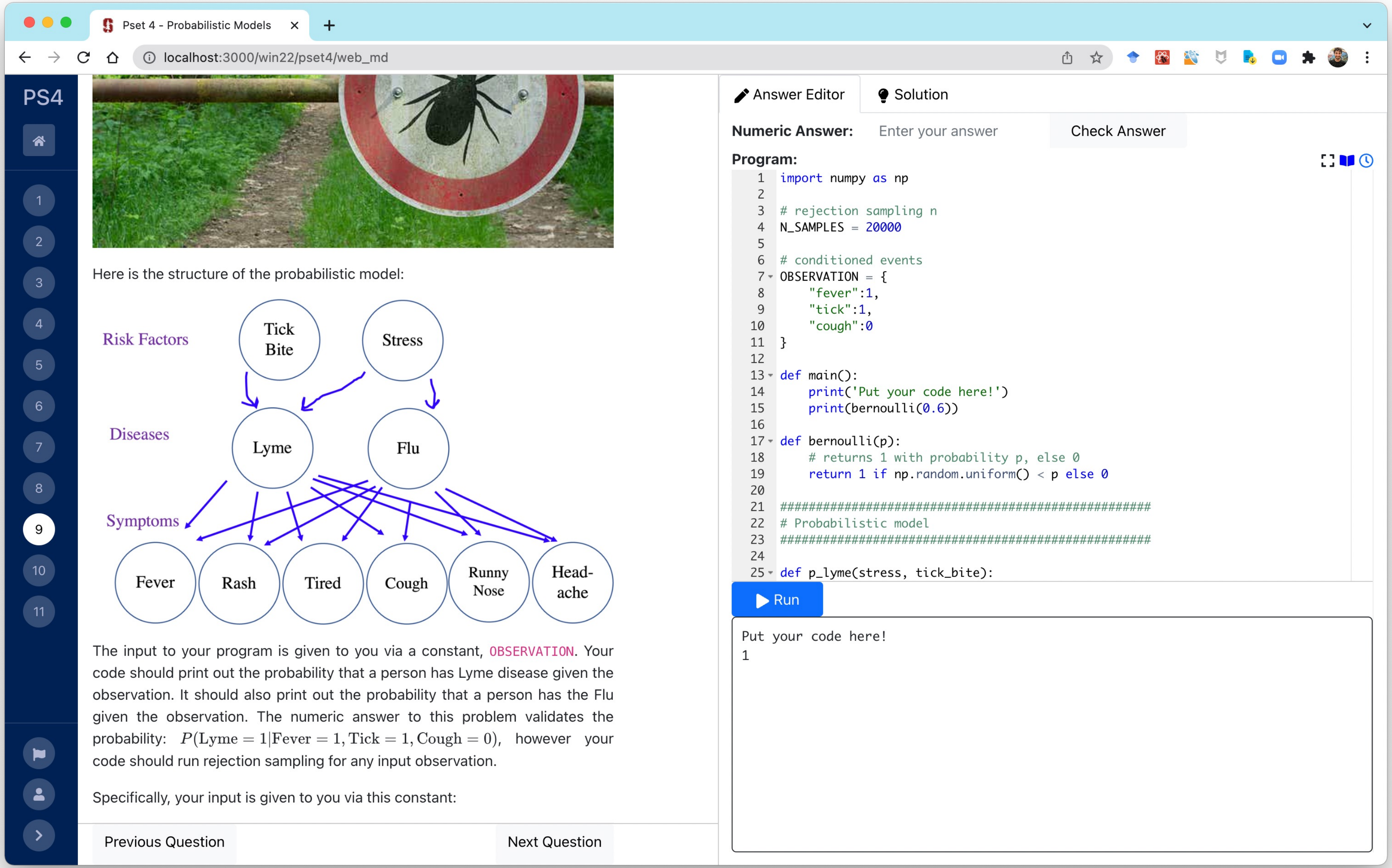
What is the difference between the two estimates?

"Those who are able to represent what they do not know make better decisions"

- CS109

Today we are going to learn something unintuitive, beautiful and useful

Pset 4 is out!


Pset 4 - Probabilistic Models
localhost:3000/win22/pset4/web_md
PS4
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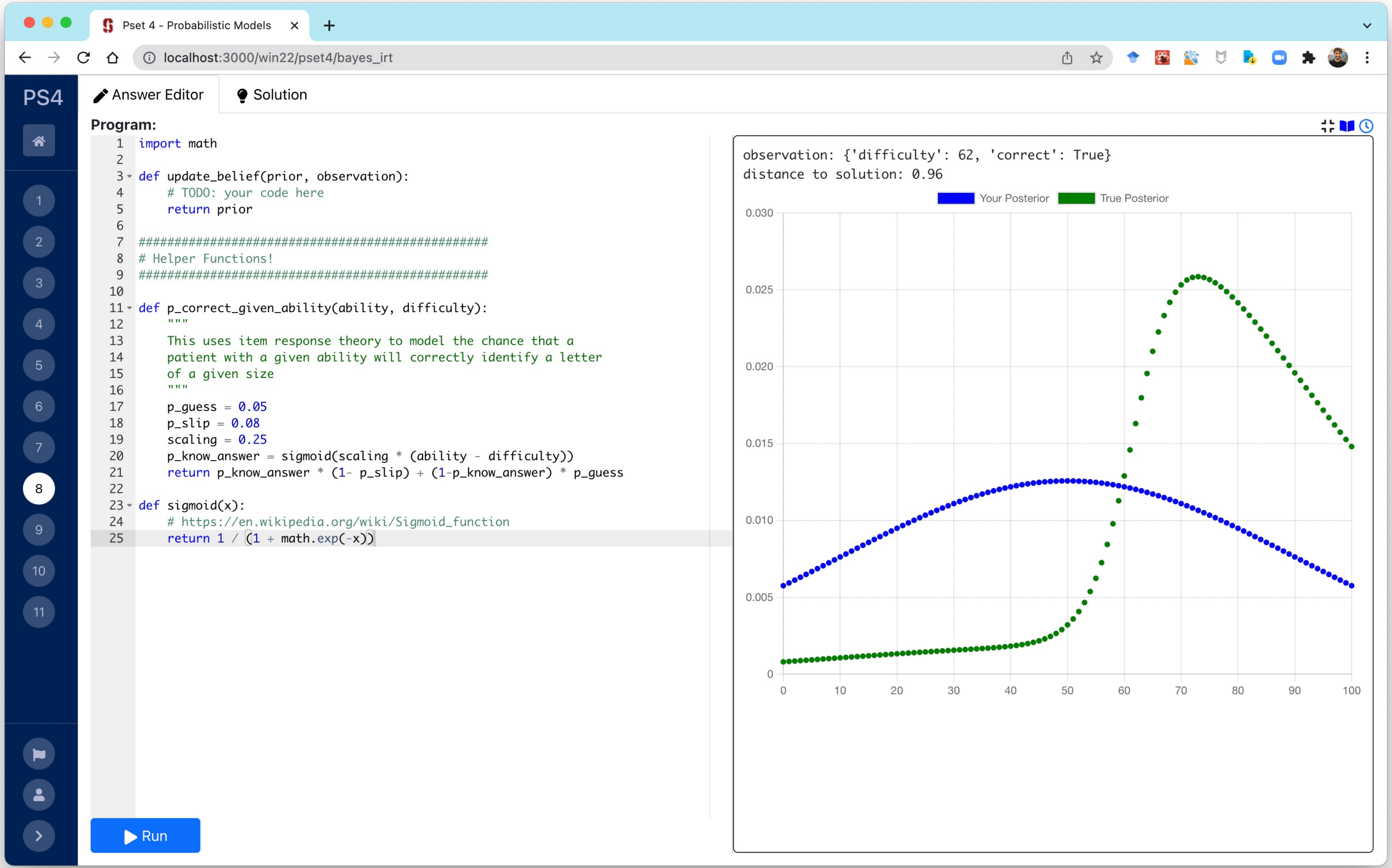
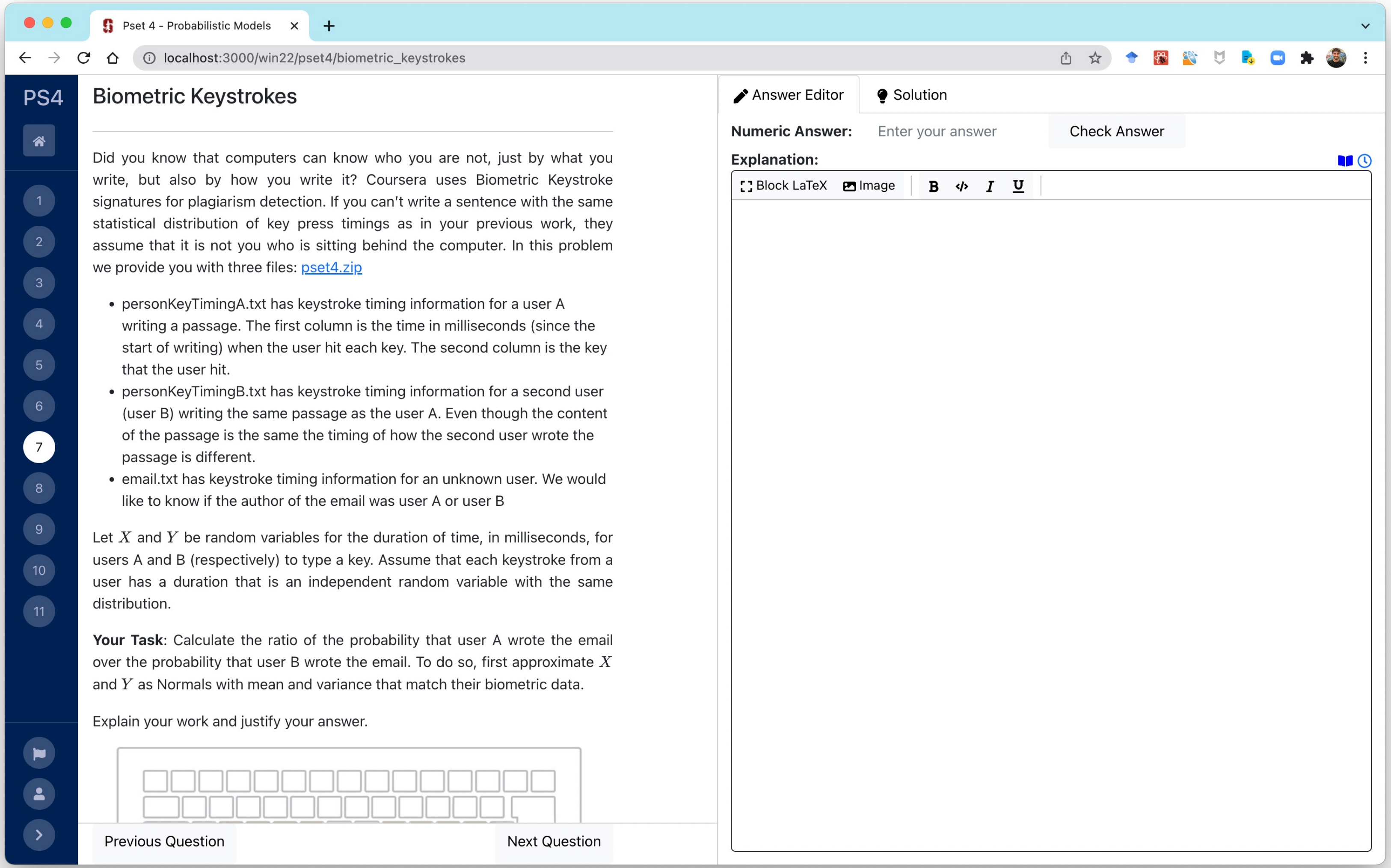
11
Here is the structure of the probabilistic model:
Risk Factors
Tick Bite
Stress
Diseases
Lyme
Flu
Symptoms
Fever
Rash
Tired
Cough
Runny Nose
Head-ache
The input to your program is given to you via a constant, OBSERVATION. Your code should print out the probability that a person has Lyme disease given the observation. It should also print out the probability that a person has the Flu given the observation. The numeric answer to this problem validates the probability: P(Lyme = 1|Fever = 1, Tick = 1, Cough = 0), however your code should run rejection sampling for any input observation.
Specifically, your input is given to you via this constant:
Previous Question
Next Question
Answer Editor
Solution
Numeric Answer:
Enter your answer
Check Answer
Program:
import numpy as np
# rejection sampling n
N_SAMPLES = 20000
# conditioned events
OBSERVATION = {
"fever":1,
"tick":1,
"cough":0
}
def main():
print('Put your code here!')
print(bernoulli(0.6))
def bernoulli(p):
# returns 1 with probability p, else 0
return 1 if np.random.uniform() < p else 0
##
Probabilistic model
##
def p_lyme(stress, tick_bite):
Run
Put your code here!
1

Pset 4 is out!


Pset 4 - Probabilistic Models
localhost:3000/win22/pset4/bayes_irt
PS4
Answer Editor
Solution
Program:
import math
def update_belief(prior, observation):
# TODO: your code here
return prior
##
Helper Functions!
##
def p_correct_given_ability(ability, difficulty):
"""
This uses item response theory to model the chance that a
patient with a given ability will correctly identify a letter
of a given size
"""
p_guess = 0.05
p_slip = 0.08
scaling = 0.25
p_know_answer = sigmoid(scaling * (ability - difficulty))
return p_know_answer * (1- p_slip) + (1-p_know_answer) * p_guess
def sigmoid(x):
# https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sigmoid_function
return 1 / (1 + math.exp(-x))
Run
observation: {'difficulty': 62, 'correct': True}
distance to solution: 0.96
Your Posterior
True Posterior
0.030
0.025
0.020
0.015
0.010
0.005
0
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
100

Pset 4 is out!



Pset 4 - Probabilistic Models
localhost:3000/win22/pset4/biometric_keystrokes
PS4
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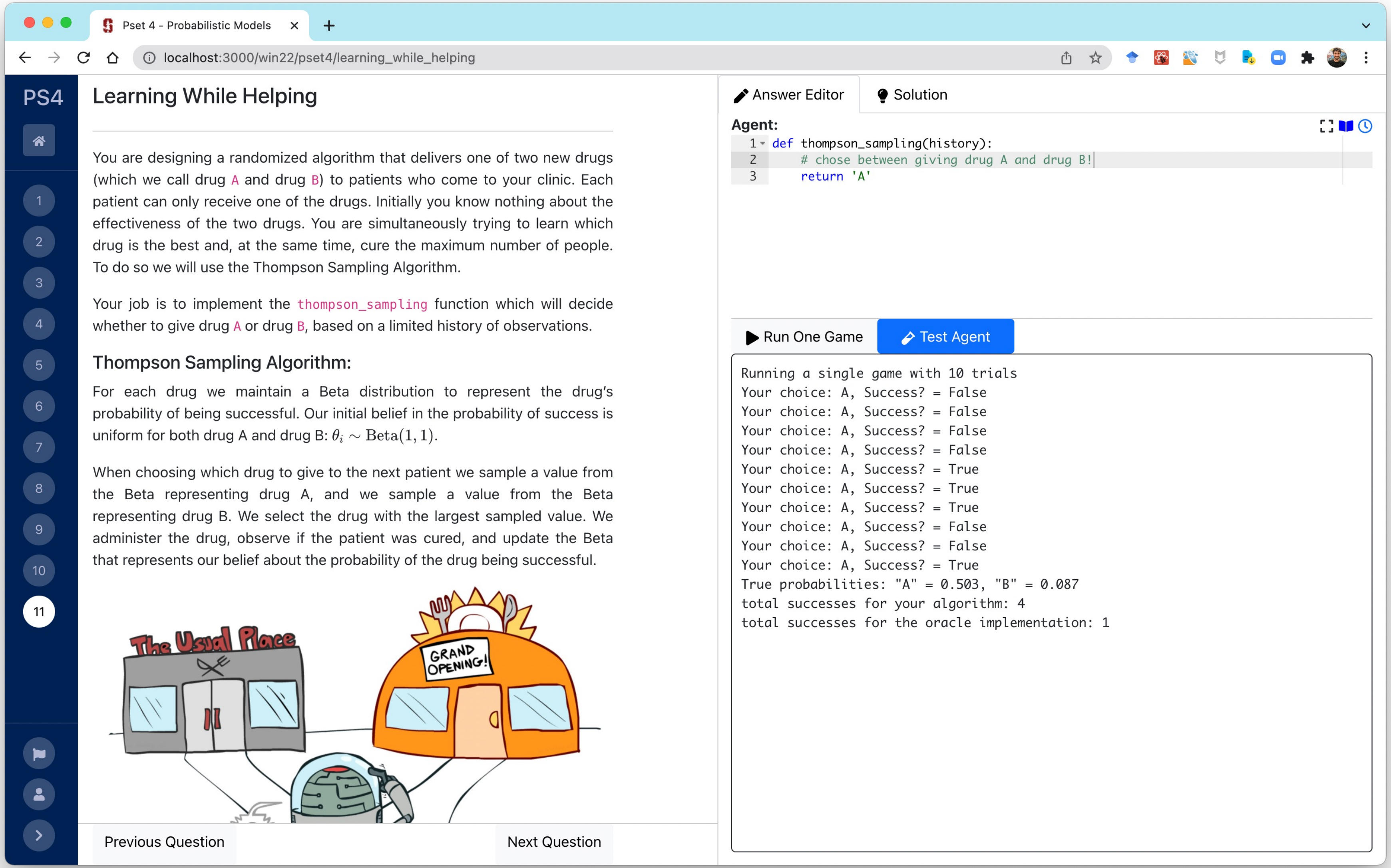
Biometric Keystrokes
Did you know that computers can know who you are not, just by what you write, but also by how you write it? Coursera uses Biometric Keystroke signatures for plagiarism detection. If you can't write a sentence with the same statistical distribution of key press timings as in your previous work, they assume that it is not you who is sitting behind the computer. In this problem we provide you with three files: pset4.zip
personKeyTimingA.txt has keystroke timing information for a user A writing a passage. The first column is the time in milliseconds (since the start of writing) when the user hit each key. The second column is the key that the user hit.
personKeyTimingB.txt has keystroke timing information for a second user (user B) writing the same passage as the user A. Even though the content of the passage is the same the timing of how the second user wrote the passage is different.
email.txt has keystroke timing information for an unknown user. We would like to know if the author of the email was user A or user B
Let X and Y be random variables for the duration of time, in milliseconds, for users A and B (respectively) to type a key. Assume that each keystroke from a user has a duration that is an independent random variable with the same distribution.
Your Task: Calculate the ratio of the probability that user A wrote the email over the probability that user B wrote the email. To do so, first approximate X and Y as Normals with mean and variance that match their biometric data.
Explain your work and justify your answer.
Previous Question
Next Question
Answer Editor
Solution
Numeric Answer:
Enter your answer
Check Answer
Explanation:
Block LaTeX
Image
B
I
U

Pset 4 is out!


Pset 4 - Probabilistic Models
localhost:3000/win22/pset4/learning_while_helping
PS4
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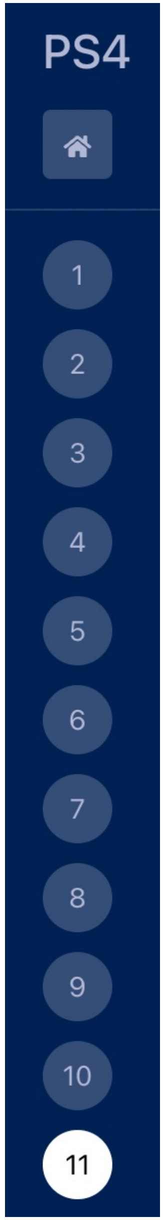
Learning While Helping
You are designing a randomized algorithm that delivers one of two new drugs (which we call drug A and drug B) to patients who come to your clinic. Each patient can only receive one of the drugs. Initially you know nothing about the effectiveness of the two drugs. You are simultaneously trying to learn which drug is the best and, at the same time, cure the maximum number of people. To do so we will use the Thompson Sampling Algorithm.
Your job is to implement the thompson_sampling function which will decide whether to give drug A or drug B, based on a limited history of observations.
Thompson Sampling Algorithm:
For each drug we maintain a Beta distribution to represent the drug's probability of being successful. Our initial belief in the probability of success is uniform for both drug A and drug B: $\theta_i \sim \text{Beta}(1, 1)$.
When choosing which drug to give to the next patient we sample a value from the Beta representing drug A, and we sample a value from the Beta representing drug B. We select the drug with the largest sampled value. We administer the drug, observe if the patient was cured, and update the Beta that represents our belief about the probability of the drug being successful.
The Usual Place
GRAND OPENING!
Previous Question
Next Question
Answer Editor
Solution
Agent:
def thompson_sampling(history):
    # chose between giving drug A and drug B!
    return 'A'
Run One Game
Test Agent
Running a single game with 10 trials
Your choice: A, Success? = False
Your choice: A, Success? = False
Your choice: A, Success? = False
Your choice: A, Success? = False
Your choice: A, Success? = True
Your choice: A, Success? = True
Your choice: A, Success? = True
Your choice: A, Success? = False
Your choice: A, Success? = False
Your choice: A, Success? = True
True probabilities: "A" = 0.503, "B" = 0.087
total successes for your algorithm: 4
total successes for the oracle implementation: 1

Coverage. You are ready!



Probabilistic Models

Today!

Review

Bayes with Random Variables

Let M be a **discrete** random variable

Let N be a **discrete** random variable

$$P(M=2|N=3) = \frac{P(N=3|M=2)P(M=2)}{P(N=3)}$$

More generally

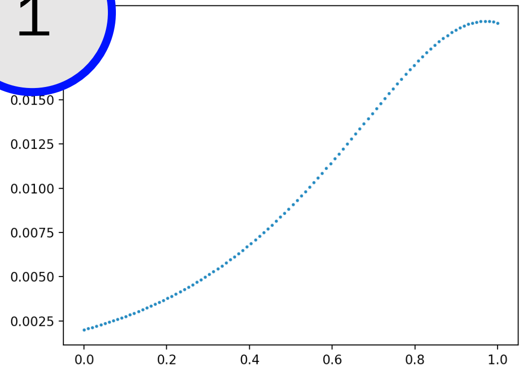
$$P(M=m|N=n) = \frac{P(N=n|M=m)P(M=m)}{P(N=n)}$$

Shorthand notation

$$P(m|n) = \frac{P(n|m)P(m)}{P(n)}$$

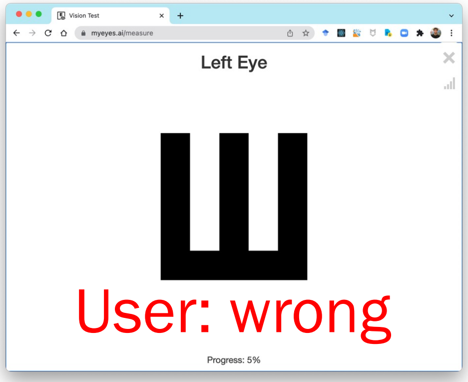
Inference on a non-bernoulli random variable

1



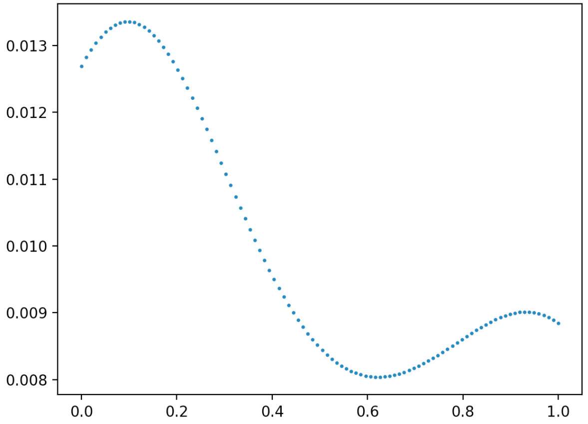
$$P(A = a)$$

2



Observation $Y = 0$

3



$$P(A = a | Y = 0)$$

We can perform **inference** when there are two random variables using Bayes!

Number or Dictionary?

belief $\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad$ belief

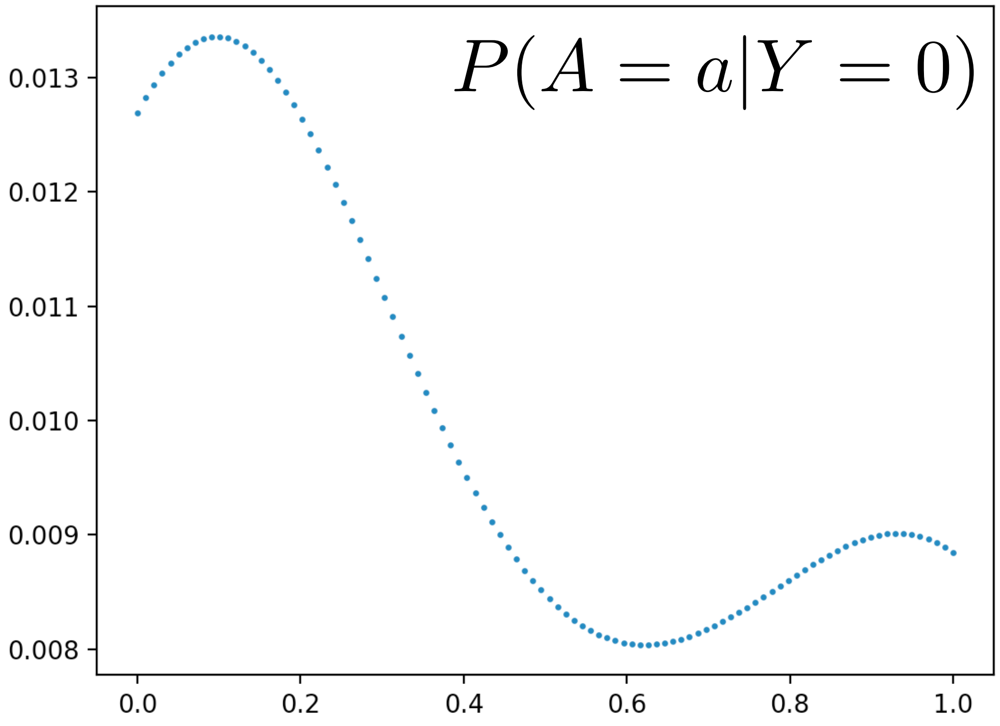
$$P(A = a|Y = 0) = \frac{P(Y = 0|A = a)P(A = a)}{P(Y = 0)}$$

```
belief[0.02] = 0.001
```

Value of a $\qquad$ P(A=a)

Inference on a non-bernoulli random variable

In plain English: run bayes for each value of a




```
# RV bayes as code
def update(belief, obs):
    for a in support:
      prior_a = belief[a]
      likelihood = calc_likelihood(a, obs)
      belief[a] = prior_a * likelihood
    normalize(belief)
```

likelihood

$$P(A=a|Y=0) = \frac{P(Y=0|A=a)P(A=a)}{P(Y=0)}$$

Normalize???

```
# RV bayes as code
def update(belief, obs):
    for a in support:
      prior_a = belief[a]
      likelihood = calc_likelihood(a, obs)
      belief[a] = prior_a * likelihood
    normalize(belief)
```

In plain English: this is the sum of all the things in belief

$$P(A = a|Y = 0) = \frac{P(Y = 0|A = a)P(A = a)}{P(Y = 0)}$$

$$= \frac{P(Y = 0|A = a)P(A = a)}{\sum_a P(Y = 0, A = a)}$$

$$= \frac{P(Y = 0|A = a)P(A = a)}{\sum_a P(Y = 0|A = a)P(A = a)}$$

End Review

Where are we in CS109?

Overview of Topics

- Counting Theory
- Core Probability
- Random Variables
- Probabilistic Models
- Uncertainty Theory
- Machine Learning

Let's play a game!

Flip a plate 5 times. If you get heads 3 times you win

Credit: Rembrandt via Dall E

$$P(X = 3) = \binom{5}{3} \cdot \frac{1}{2}^3 \cdot \frac{1}{2}^2$$
$$= 0.3125$$

What if you don't know a probability?

What if you don't know a probability?

What is your belief that you flip a heads on my coin?

The parameter *p* to a binomial can be a random variable

9 Heads out of 10 Flips. What is your Belief in p?

$$p = \frac{9}{10}$$

9 Heads out of 10 Flips. What is your Belief in p?

Let X be our belief about the probability of heads:

$$P(X = x | H = 9, T = 1)$$

$$= \frac{P(H = 9, T = 1 | X = x) f(X = x)}{P(H = 9, T = 1)}$$

Binomial

Uniform?

9 Heads out of 10 Flips. What is your Belief in p?

Let X be our belief about the probability of heads:

$$P(X = x | H = 9, T = 1)$$

$$= \frac{P(H = 9, T = 1 | X = x) f(X = x)}{P(H = 9, T = 1)}$$

Binomial → $P(H = 9, T = 1 | X = x)$

Uniform? → $f(X = x)$

$$= \frac{\binom{10}{9} x^9 (1 - x)^1}{P(H = 9, T = 1)}$$

9 Heads out of 10 Flips. What is your Belief in p?

Let X be our belief about the probability of heads:

$$P(X = x | H = 9, T = 1)$$

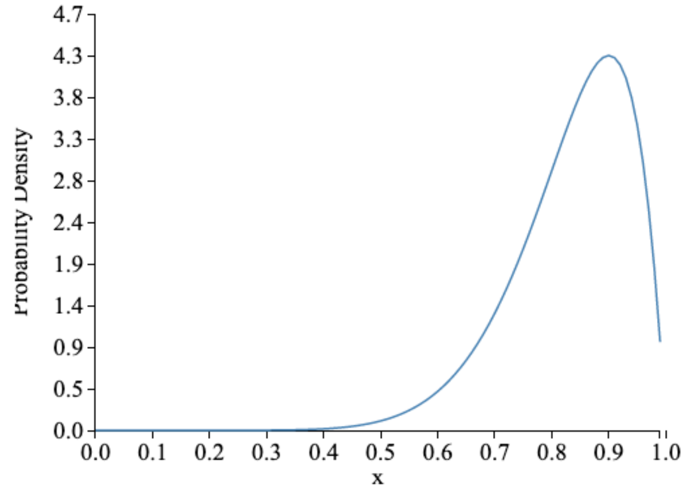
$$= \frac{P(H = 9, T = 1 | X = x) f(X = x)}{P(H = 9, T = 1)}$$

Binomial

Uniform?

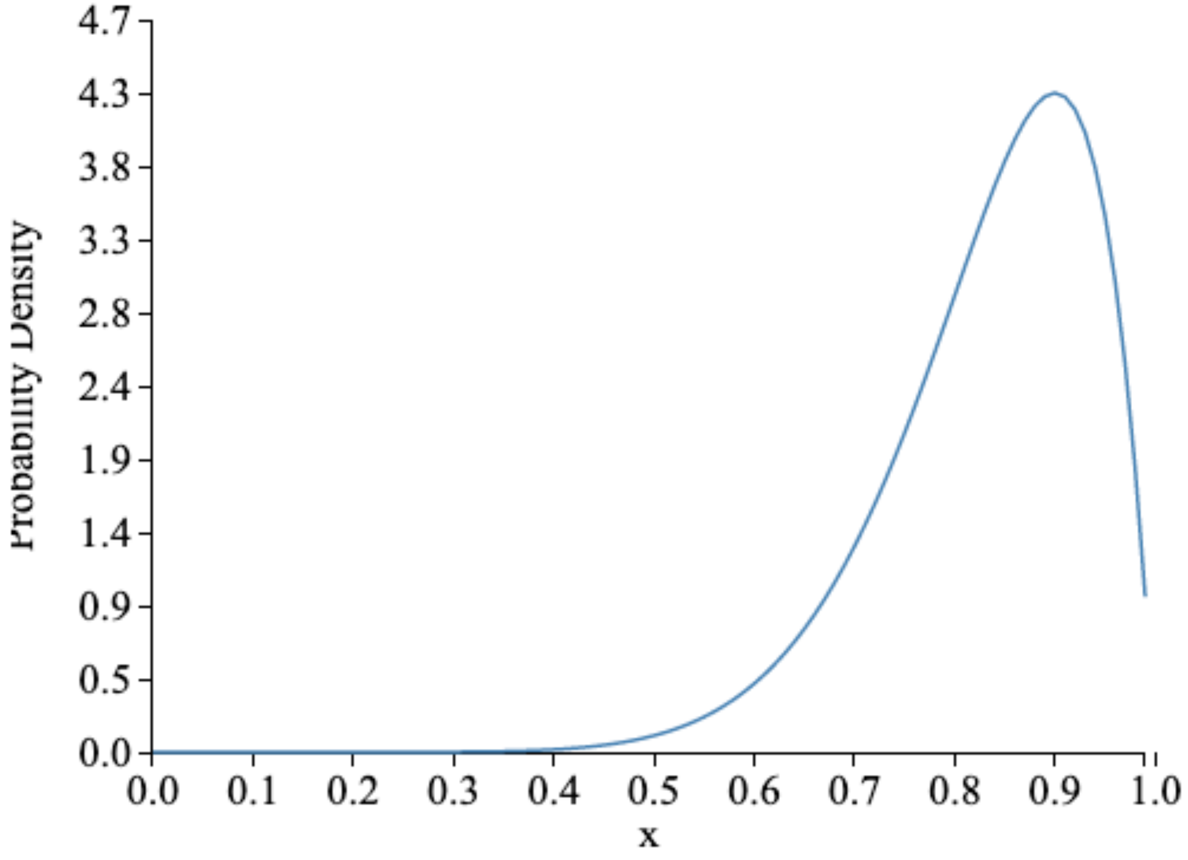
$$= \frac{\binom{10}{9} x^9 (1-x)^1}{P(H = 9, T = 1)}$$

$$= K \cdot x^9 (1-x)^1$$



9 Heads out of 10 Flips. What is your Belief in p?

$$P(X = x | H = 9, T = 1)$$



Flip a coin with unknown probability

Flip a coin (n + m) times, comes up with n heads

- We don't know probability X that coin comes up heads

Frequentist (never prior)

$$X = \lim_{n+m\to\infty} \frac{n}{n+m} \approx \frac{n}{n+m}$$

X is (often) a single value

Bayesian (prior is great)

$$f_{X|N}(x|n) = \frac{P(N=n|X=x)f_X(x)}{P(N=n)}$$

X is a random variable. Leads to a belief distribution which captures confidence

Flip a coin with unknown probability!

Flip a coin (n + m) times, comes up with n heads

- We don't know probability X that coin comes up heads
- Our belief before flipping coins is that: X ~ Uni(0, 1)
- Let N = number of heads
- Given X = x, coin flips independent: (N | X) ~ Bin(n + m, x)

$$f_{X|N}(x|n) = \frac{P(N = n|X = x) f_X(x)}{P(N = n)}$$

Bayesian "posterior" probability distribution

Bayesian "prior" probability distribution

Flip a coin with unknown probability!

Flip a coin (n + m) times, comes up with n heads

- We don't know probability X that coin comes up heads
- Our belief before flipping coins is that: X ~ Uni(0, 1)
- Let N = number of heads
- Given X = x, coin flips independent: (N | X) ~ Bin(n + m, x)

$$f_{X|N}(x|n) = \frac{P(N=n|X=x)f_X(x)}{P(N=n)}$$

Binomial

1

$$= \frac{\binom{n+m}{n}x^n(1-x)^m}{P(N=n)}$$

Move terms around

$$= \frac{\binom{n+m}{n}}{P(N=n)}x^n(1-x)^m$$

$$= \frac{1}{c}\cdot x^n(1-x)^m \qquad \text{where } c = \int_0^1 x^n(1-x)^m dx$$

Flip a coin with unknown probability!

If you start with a $X \sim \text{Uni}(0, 1)$ prior over probability, and observe:

n "successes" and

m "failures"…

Your new belief about the probability is:

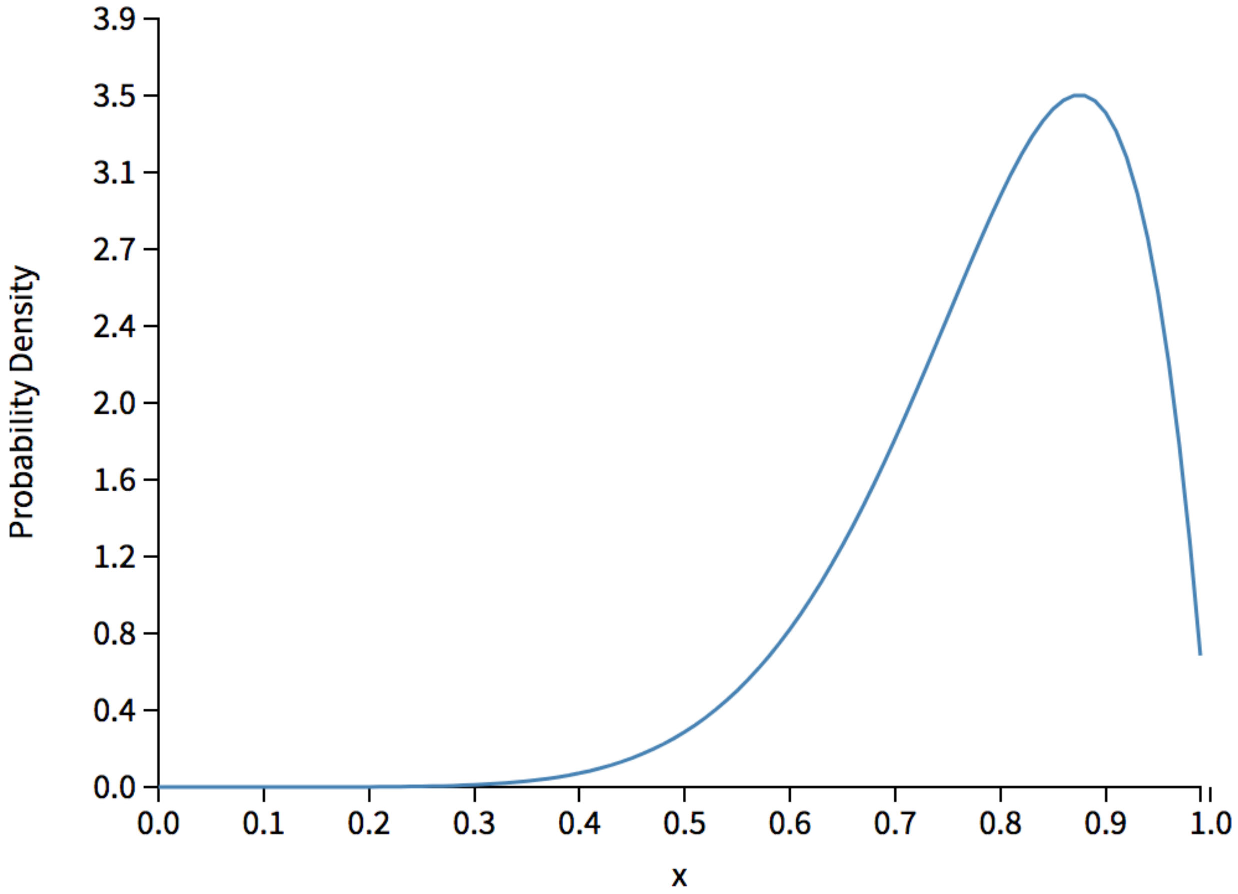
$$f_X(x) = \frac{1}{c} \cdot x^n (1-x)^m$$

where $c = \int_0^1 x^n (1-x)^m$

Belief after 7 success and 1 fail

$$f_X(x) = \frac{1}{c} \cdot x^n (1 - x)^m$$

$n = 7$ $m = 1$



Equivalently!

If you start with a $X \sim \text{Uni}(0, 1)$ prior over probability, and observe:

- let a = num "successes" + 1
- let b = num "failures" + 1

Your new belief about the probability is:

$$f_X(x) = \frac{1}{c} \cdot x^{a-1}(1-x)^{b-1}$$

where $c = \int_0^1 x^{a-1}(1-x)^{b-1}$

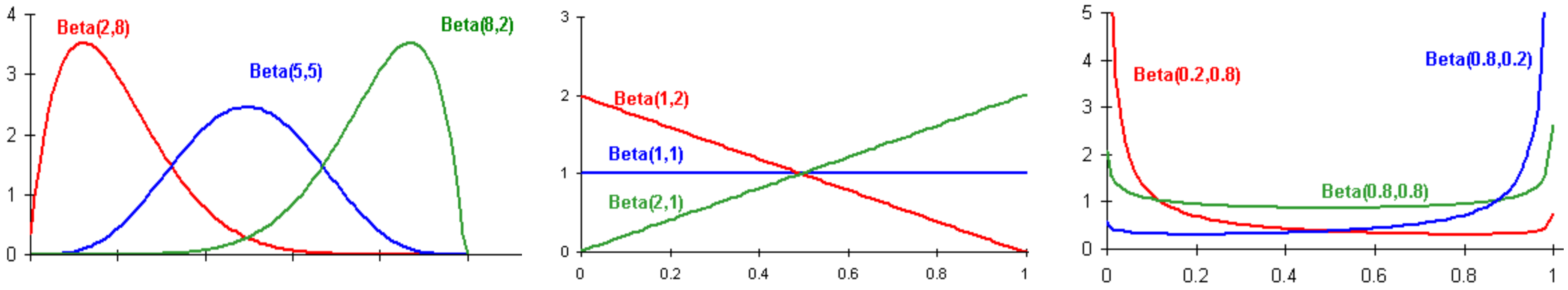
Beta Random Variable

X is a **Beta Random Variable**: X ~ Beta(*a*, *b*)

- Probability Density Function (PDF): (where *a*, *b* > 0)

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{B(a,b)} x^{a-1}(1-x)^{b-1} & 0 < x < 1 \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

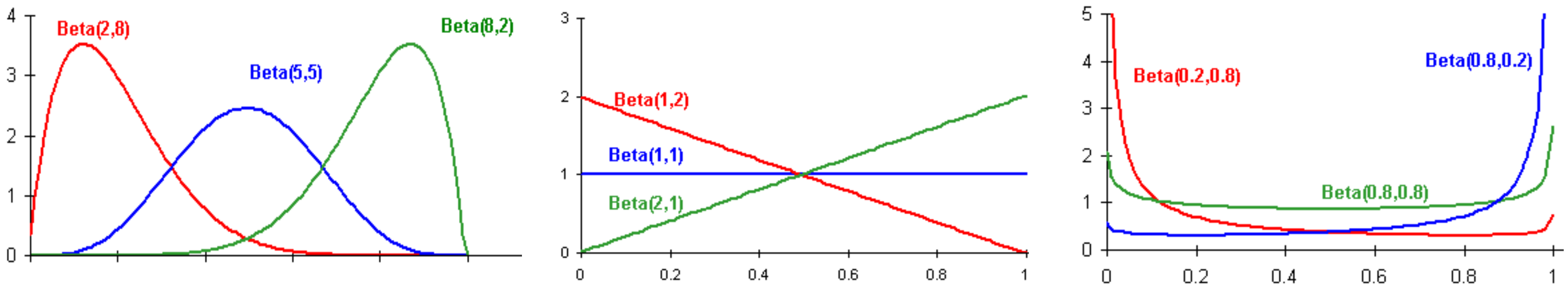
$$B(a,b) = \int_0^1 x^{a-1}(1-x)^{b-1}\,dx$$



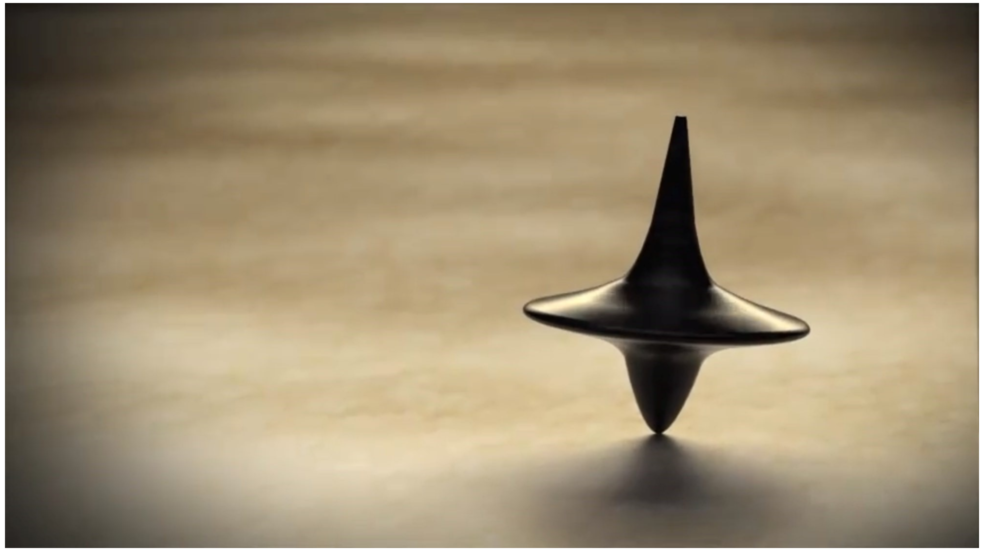
- Symmetric when *a* = *b*

$$E[X] = \frac{a}{a+b} \qquad Var(X) = \frac{ab}{(a+b)^2(a+b+1)}$$

Beta is the Random Variable for Probabilities



Used to represent a distributed belief of a probability



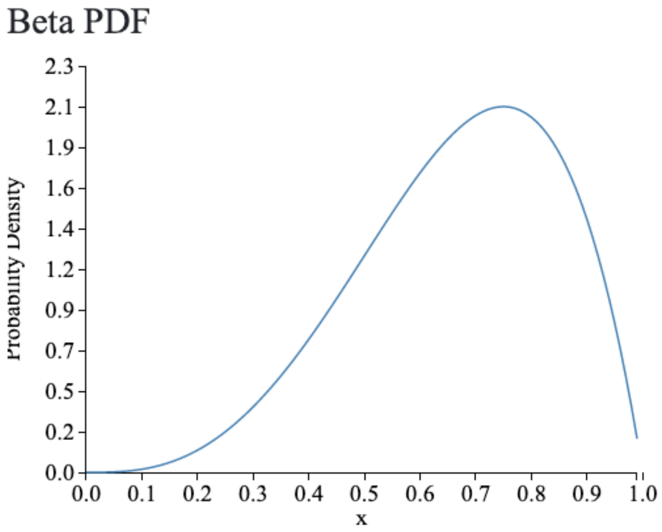
Beta Parameters *can* come from experiments:

a = “successes” + 1

b = “failures” + 1

Think about the difference between a **point estimate** and a **distribution**

$p = 0.75$

$p =$ 

Beta is a distribution for probabilities. Its range is values between 0 and 1

Beta Parameters *can* come from experiments:

a = “successes” + 1

b = “failures” + 1

If the Prior was Beta?

X is our random variable for probability

If our prior belief about X was beta

$$f(X = x) = \frac{1}{B(a,b)} x^{a-1}(1-x)^{b-1}$$

What is our posterior belief about X after observing *n* heads
(and *m* tails)?

$$f(X = x | N = n) = ???$$

If the Prior was Beta?

$$f(X = x|N = n) = \frac{P(N = n|X = x)f(X = x)}{P(N = n)}$$

$$= \frac{\binom{n+m}{n} x^n (1-x)^m f(X = x)}{P(N = n)}$$

$$= \frac{\binom{n+m}{n} x^n (1-x)^m \frac{1}{B(a,b)} x^{a-1} (1-x)^{b-1}}{P(N = n)}$$

$$= K_1 \cdot \binom{n+m}{n} x^n (1-x)^m \frac{1}{B(a,b)} x^{a-1} (1-x)^{b-1}$$

$$= K_3 \cdot x^n (1-x)^m x^{a-1} (1-x)^{b-1}$$

$$= K_3 \cdot x^{n+a-1} (1-x)^{m+b-1}$$

$$X|N \sim \text{Beta}(n + a, m + b)$$

A beta understanding

- If “Prior” distribution of X (before seeing flips) is Beta

- Then “Posterior” distribution of X (after flips) is Beta

Beta is a **conjugate** distribution for Beta

- Prior and posterior parametric forms are the same!
- Practically, conjugate means easy update:
  - Add number of “heads” and “tails” seen to Beta parameters

A beta understanding

Can set X ~ Beta(*a*, *b*) as prior to reflect how biased you think coin is apriori

- This is a subjective probability (aka Bayesian)!
- Prior probability for X based on seeing (*a* + *b* – 2) "imaginary" trials, where

  (*a* – 1) of them were heads.

  (b – 1) of them were tails.

Update to get posterior probability

- X | (n heads and m tails) ~ Beta(a + n, b + m)

Laplace Smoothing

One imagined heads

Prior: $$X \sim \text{Beta}(a = 2, b = 2)$$

One imagined tail

Fancy name. Simple prior

Check this out, Boss

- Beta(a = 1, b = 1) =?

$$f(x) = \frac{1}{B(a,b)} x^{a-1}(1-x)^{b-1} = \frac{1}{B(a,b)} x^0 (1-x)^0$$

$$= \frac{1}{\int_0^1 1\,dx} 1 = 1 \quad \text{where} \quad 0 < x < 1$$

- Beta(a = 1, b = 1) = Uni(0, 1)

- So, prior X ~ Beta(a = 1, b = 1)

Mystery Plate

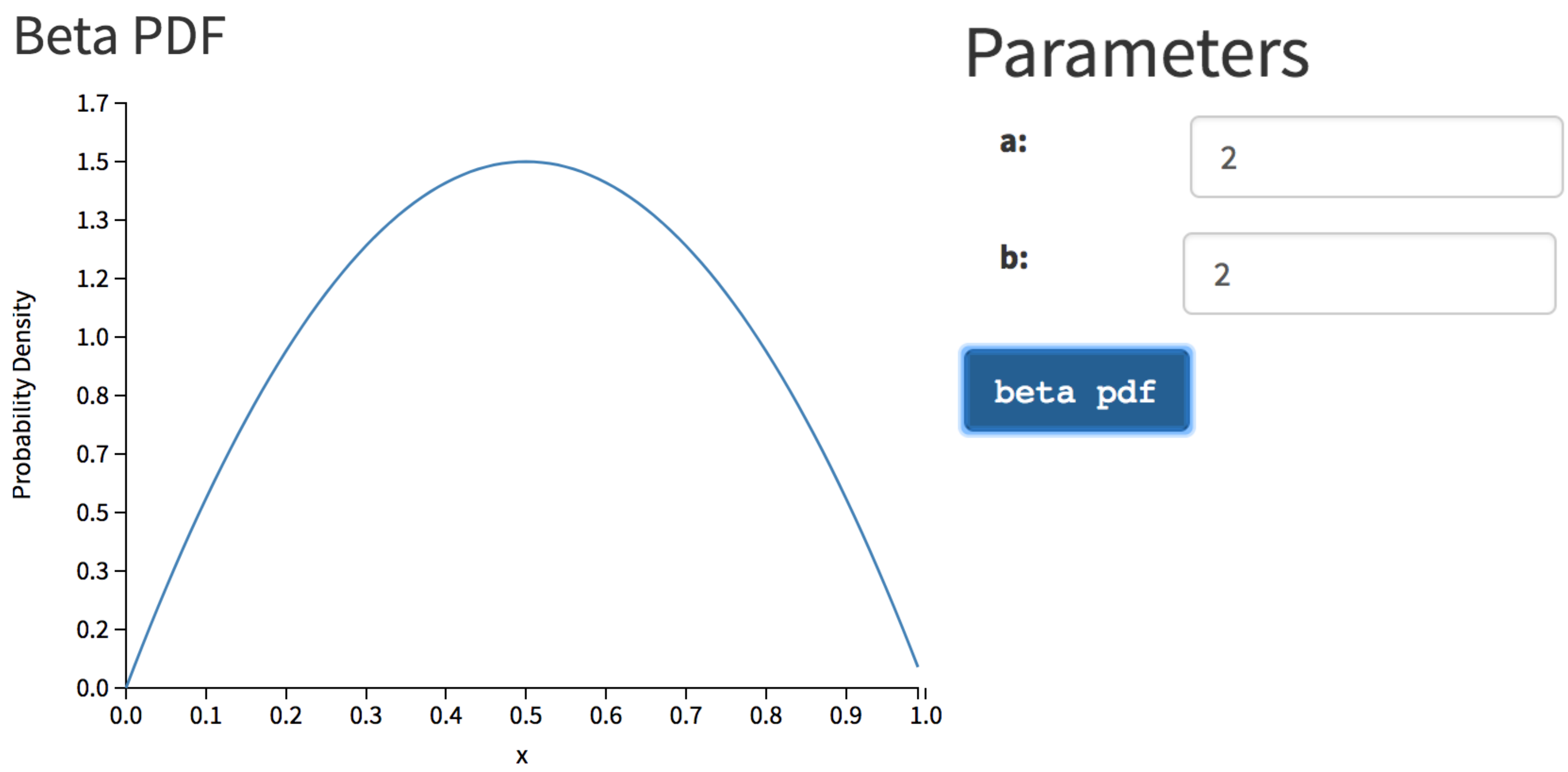
Let X be the probability of getting a heads on a plate.

Prior: Imagine 5 coin flips that were heads

Observation: Flip it a few times…

What is the updated probability density function of X after our observations?

Check out the Demo!



Damn

A beta example

Before being tested, a medicine is believed to “work” about 80% of the time. The medicine is tried on 20 patients. It “works” for 14 and “doesn’t work” for 6. What is your new belief that the drug works?

Frequentist:

$$p \approx \frac{14}{20} = 0.7$$

A beta example

Before being tested, a medicine is believed to "work" about 80% of the time. The medicine is tried on 20 patients. It "works" for 14 and "doesn't work" for 6. What is your new belief that the drug works?

Bayesian: $X \sim \text{Beta}$

Prior:	Interpretation:
$X \sim \text{Beta}(a = 81, b = 21)$	80 successes / 100 trials
$X \sim \text{Beta}(a = 9, b = 3)$	8 successes / 10 trials
$X \sim \text{Beta}(a = 5, b = 2)$	4 successes / 5 trials

A beta example

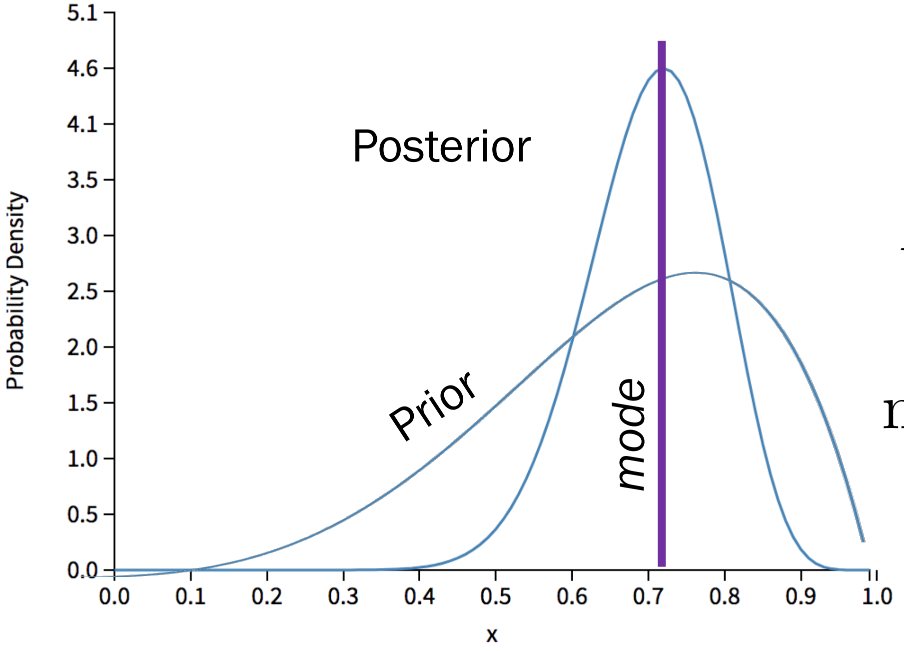
Before being tested, a medicine is believed to "work" about 80% of the time. The medicine is tried on 20 patients. It "works" for 14 and "doesn't work" for 6. What is your new belief that the drug works?

Bayesian: $X \sim \text{Beta}$

Prior: $X \sim \text{Beta}(a = 5, b = 2)$

Posterior: $X \sim \text{Beta}(a = 5 + 14, b = 2 + 6)$

$$\sim \text{Beta}(a = 19, b = 8)$$



$$E[X] = \frac{a}{a+b} = \frac{19}{19+8} \approx 0.70$$

$$\text{mode}(X) = \frac{a-1}{a+b-2}$$

$$= \frac{19}{18+7} \approx 0.72$$

Which video are you more likely to like?

10,000 50

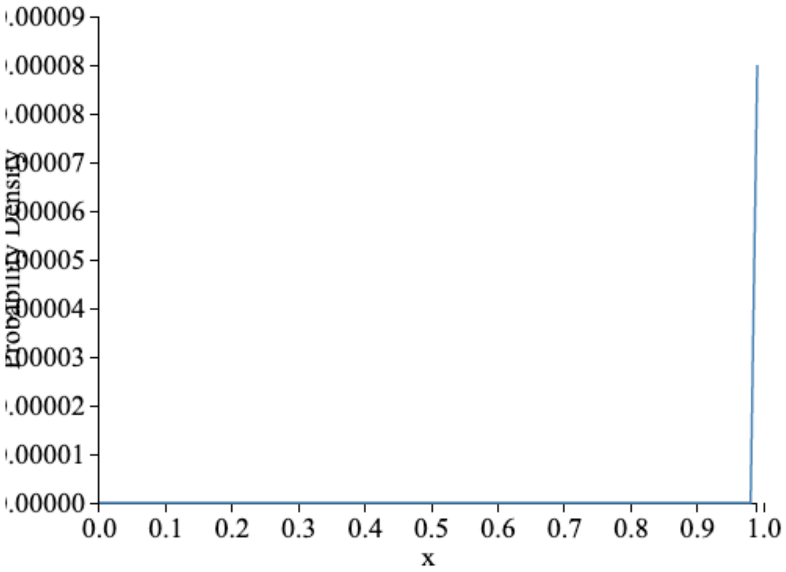
10 0

Which video are you more likely to like?

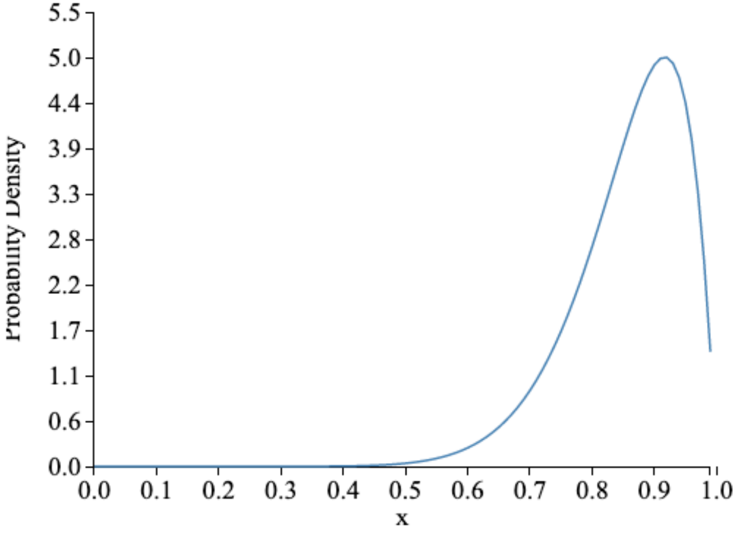
👍 10,000 👎 50

👍 10 👎 0

Beta PDF (Using Laplace prior)



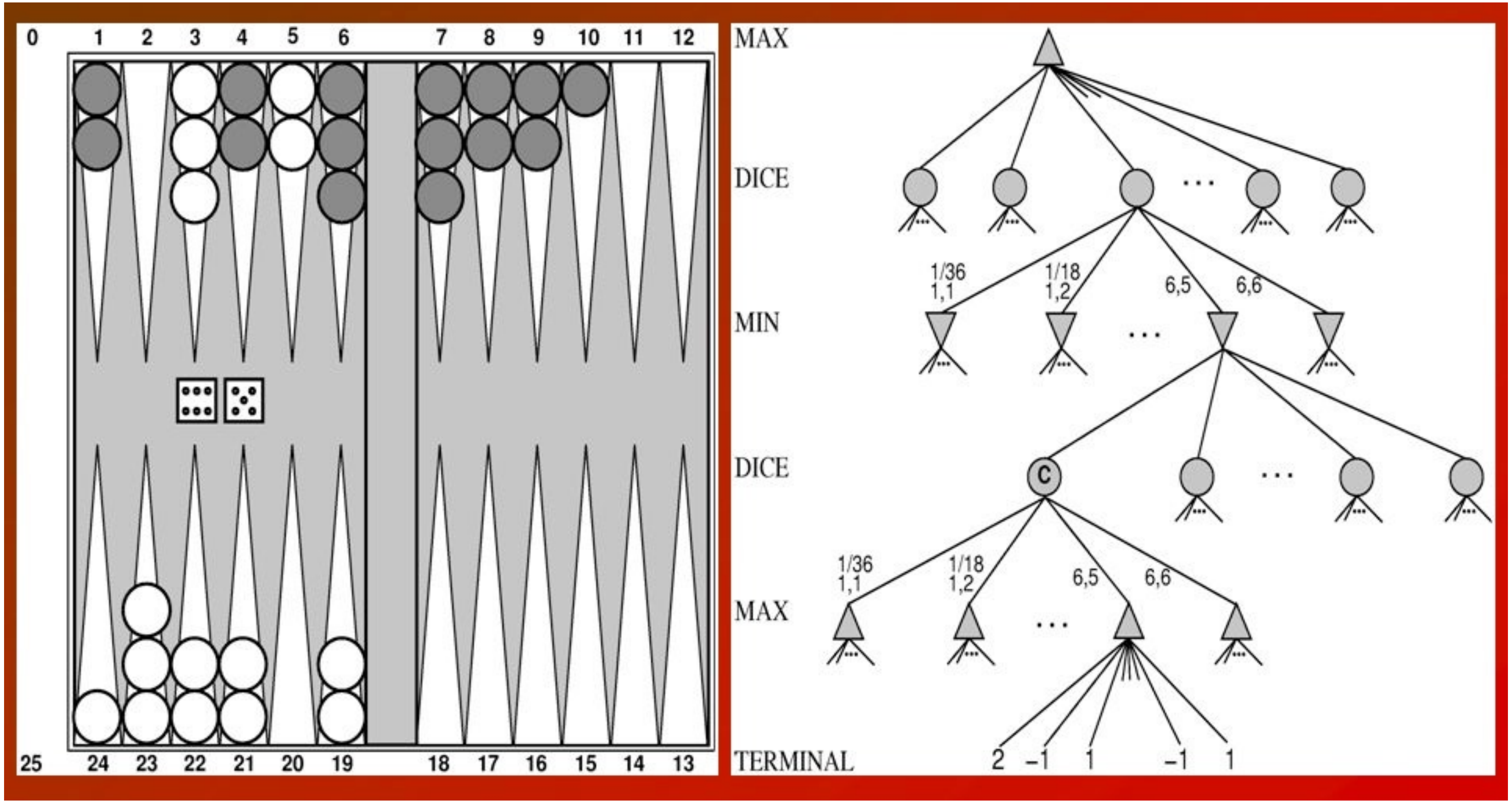
Beta PDF (Using Laplace prior)



Next level?

Alpha GO mixed deep learning and core reasoning under uncertainty

Multi Armed Bandit



Multi Armed Bandit

Drug A

Drug B

Which one do you give to a patient?

Lets Play!

Drug A

Drug B

Which one do you give to a patient?

Lets Play!

sim.py

```python
import pickle
import random

def main():
  X1, X2  = pickle.load(open('probs.pkl', 'rb'))

  print("Welcome to the drug simulator. There are two drugs")

  while True:
    choice = getChoice()
    prob = X1 if choice == "a" else X2
    success = bernoulli(prob)
    if success:
      print('Success. Patient lives!')
    else:
      print('Failure. Patient dies!')
    print('')
```

Optimal Decision Making

You try drug B, 5 times. It is successful 2 times.

If you had a uniform prior, what is your posterior belief about the likelihood of success?

---

2 successes

3 failures

$$X \sim \text{Beta}(a = 3, b = 4)$$

Optimal Decision Making

You try drug B, 5 times. It is successful 2 times.
X is the probability of success.

$$X \sim \text{Beta}(a = 3, b = 4)$$

What is expectation of X?

$$E[X] = \frac{a}{a+b} = \frac{3}{3+4} \approx 0.43$$

Optimal Decision Making

You try drug B, 5 times. It is successful 2 times.
X is the probability of success.

$$X \sim \text{Beta}(a = 3, b = 4)$$

What is the probability that $X > 0.6$

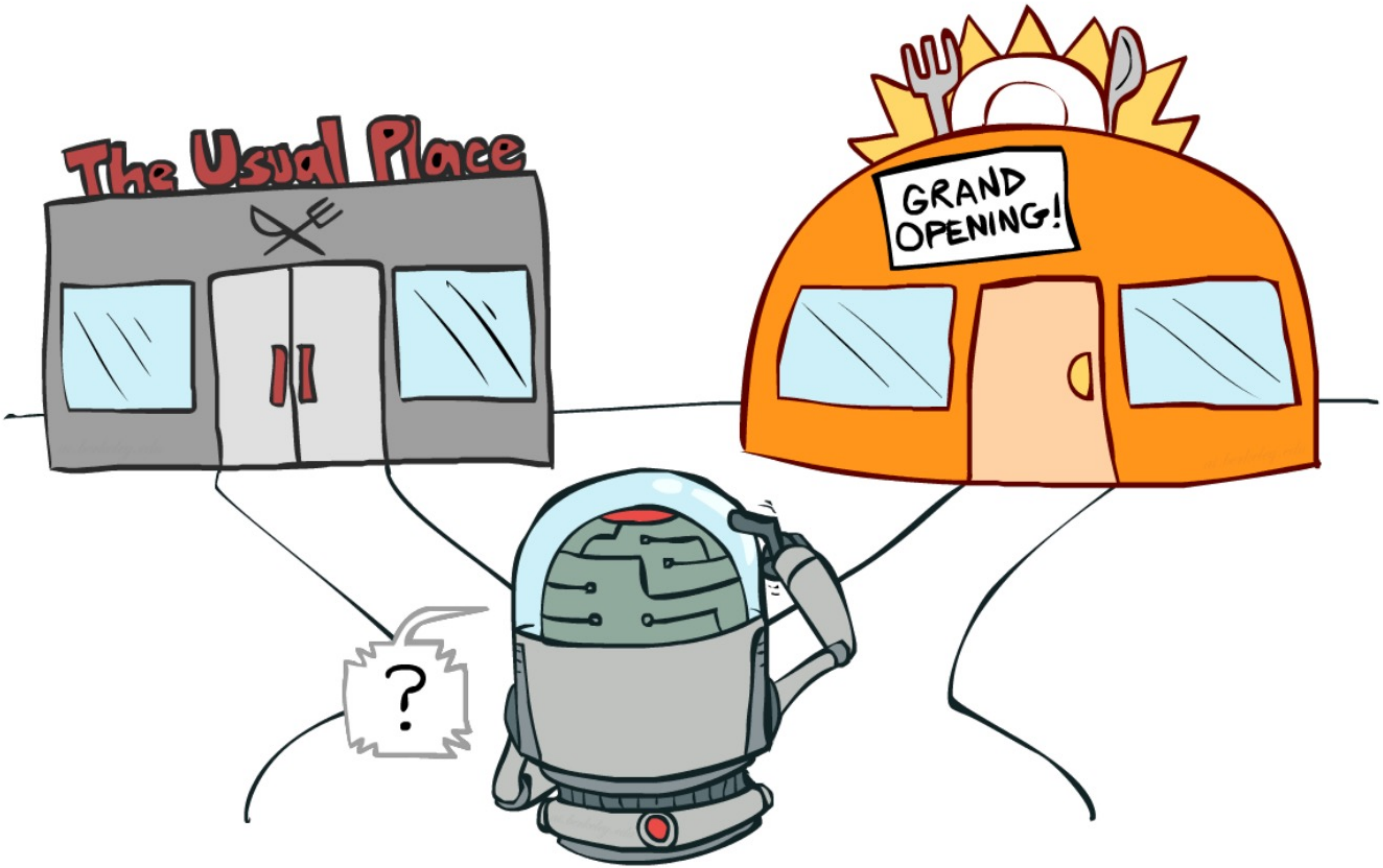
$$P(X > 0.6) = 1 - P(X < 0.6) = 1 - F_X(0.6)$$

Wait what? Chris are you holding out on me?

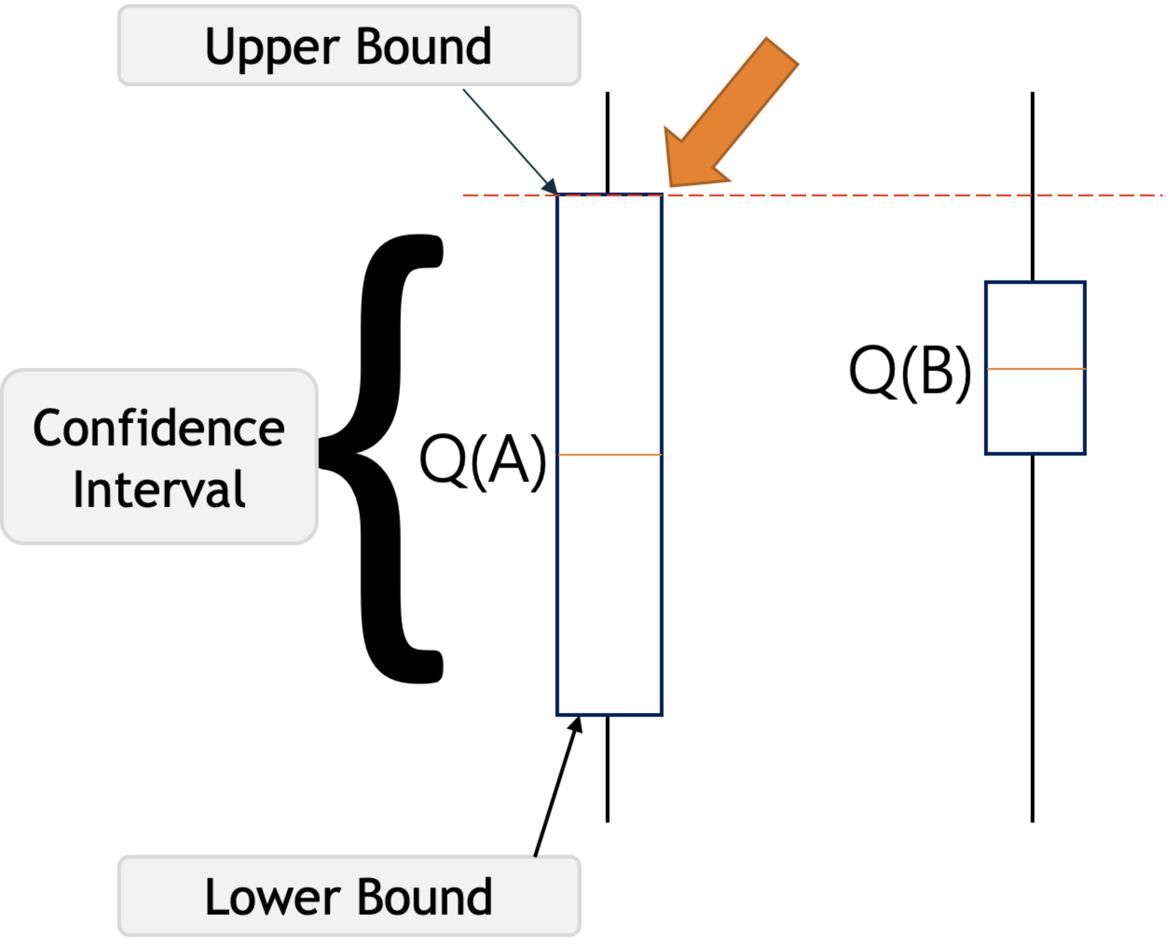
```
stats.beta.cdf(x, a, b)
```

$$P(X > 0.6) = 1 - F_X(0.6) = 0.1792$$

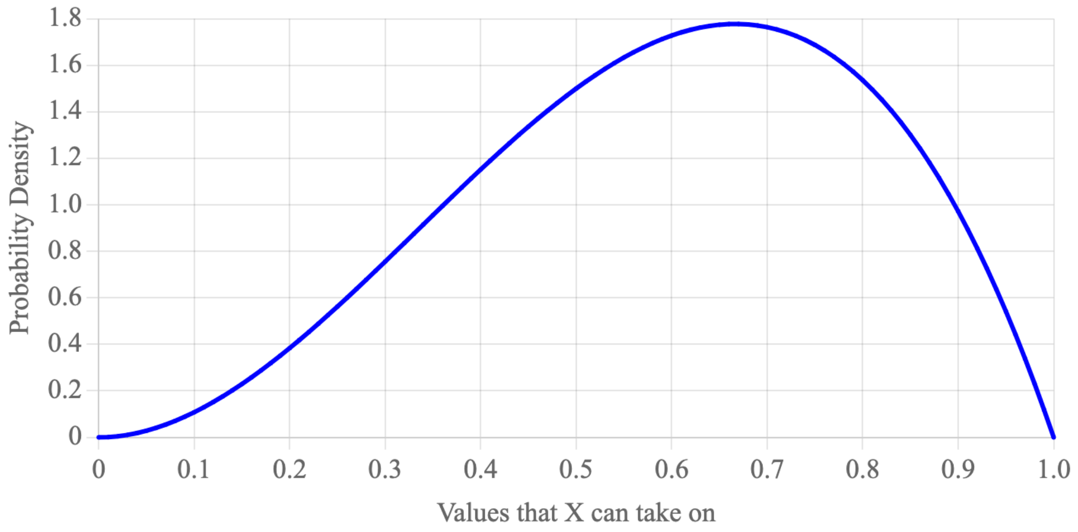
Explore something new? Or go for what looks good now?

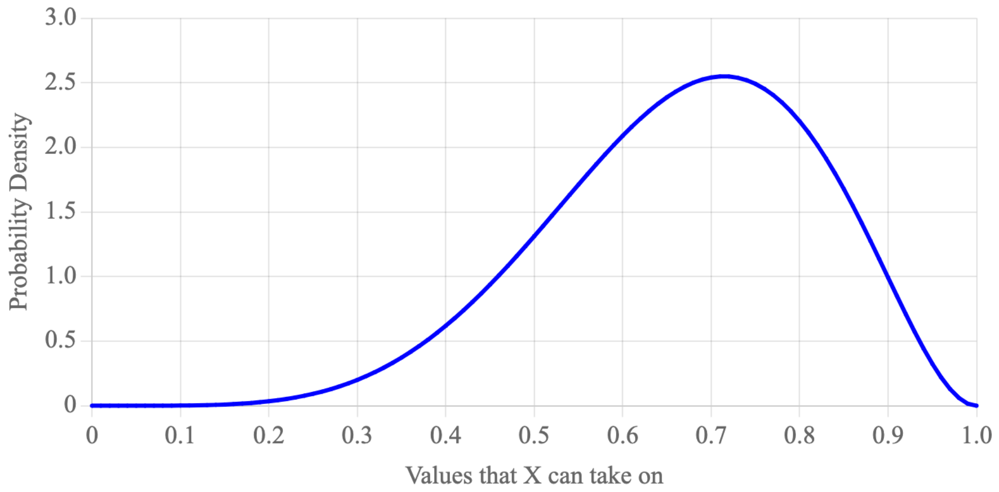


One option: Upper Confidence Bound



Amazing option: Thompson Sampling





1. Chose a sample from each drug's beta

2. Select the drug with the higher sample

Beta:
The probability density for probabilities

Beta is a distribution for probabilities

Beta Distribution

If you start with a $X \sim \text{Uni}(0, 1)$ prior over probability, and observe:

let a = num "successes" + 1
let b = num "failures" + 1

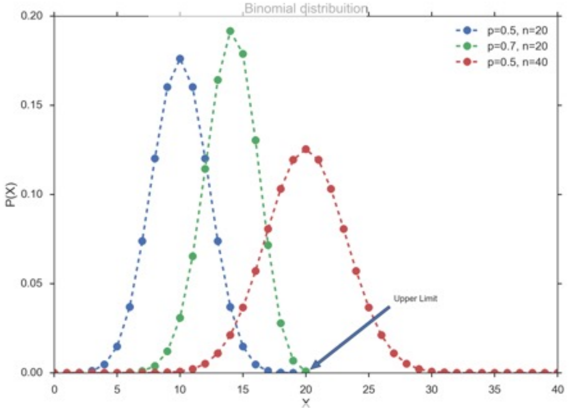
Your new belief about the probability is:

$$f_X(x) = \frac{1}{c} \cdot x^{a-1}(1-x)^{b-1}$$

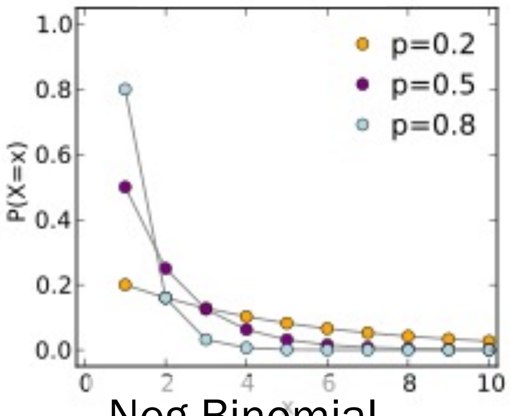
$$\text{where} \quad c = \int_0^1 x^{a-1}(1-x)^{b-1}$$

Distributions

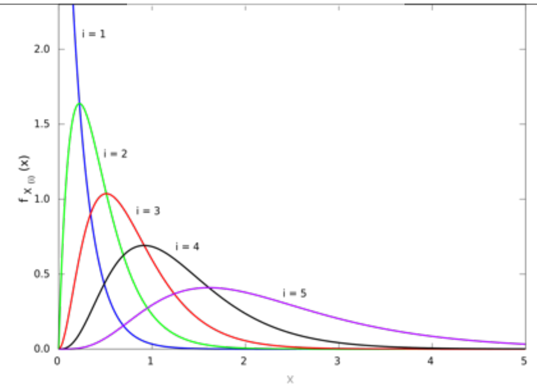
Binomial



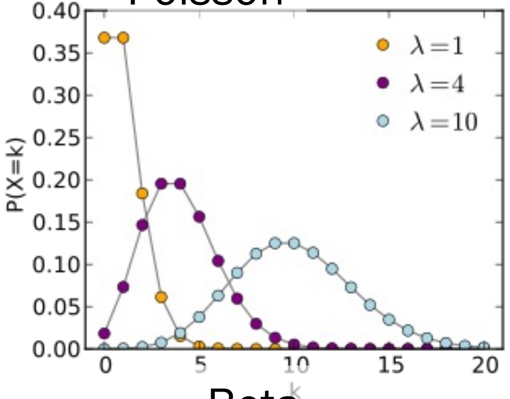
Geometric



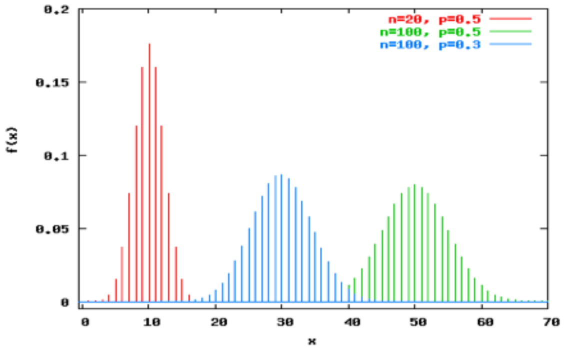
Exponential



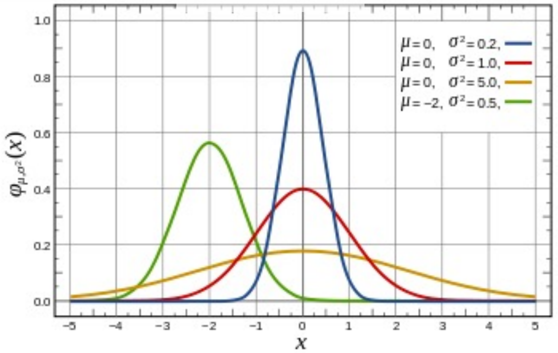
Poisson



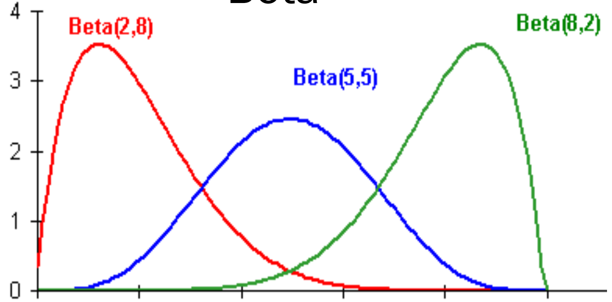
Neg Binomial



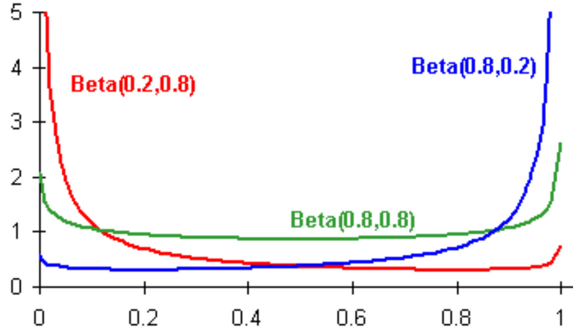
Normal



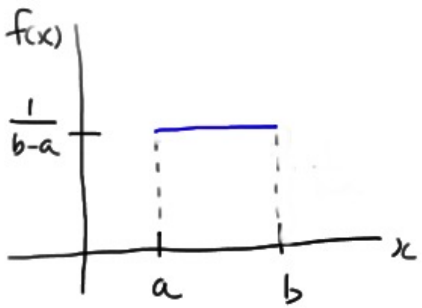
Beta



Beta

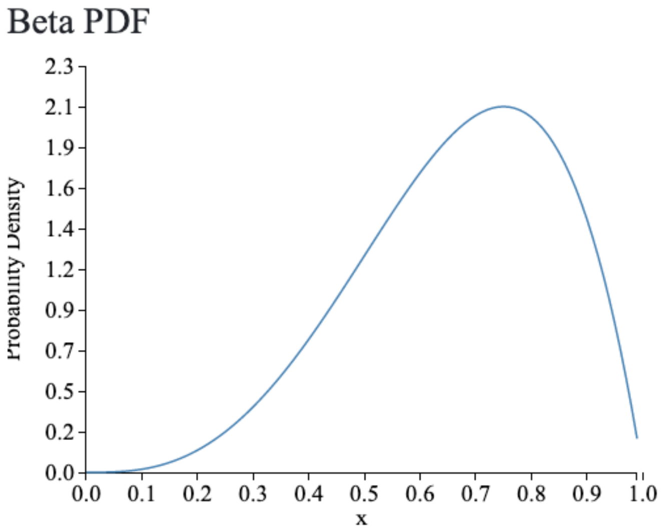


Uniform



Think about the difference between a **point estimate** and a **distribution**

$p = 0.75$

$p =$ 

Problem with a point estimate:

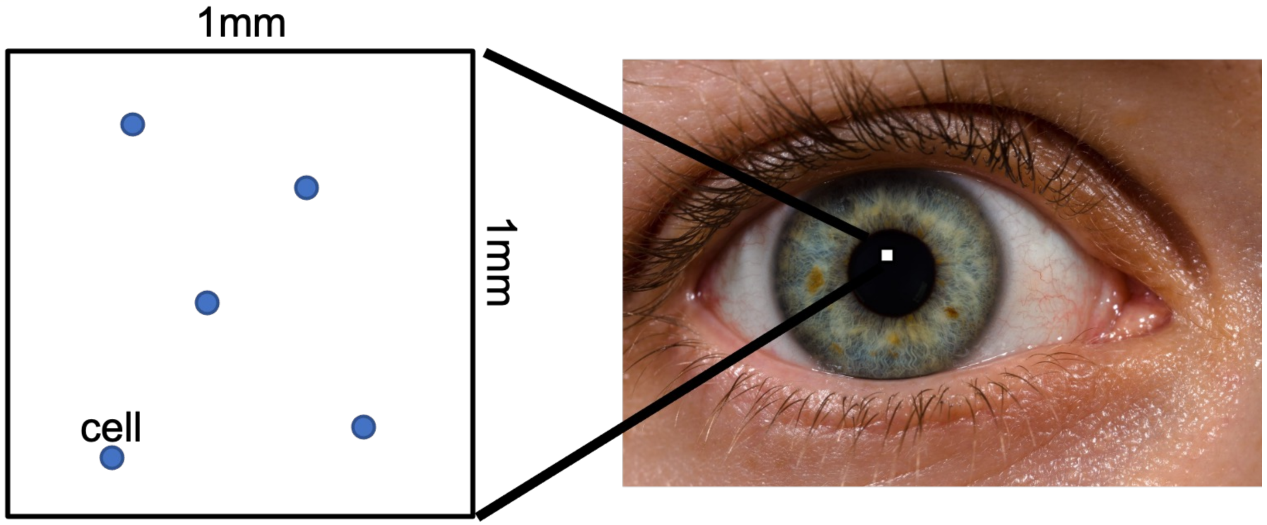
Person A: My leg itches when it rains and its kind of itchy…. Uh, p = .80

Person B: I have done complex calculations and have seen 10,451 days like tomorrow… p = 0.80

Give me the uncertainty!!!

Any parameter for a "parameterized" random variable can be thought of as a random variable.

Eg:



$$P(\Lambda = \lambda | N = 5)$$