

Radon-Nikodým derivatives and disintegration for σ -finite measures: some semantic bases for probabilistic metaprogramming

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- 1 Introduction: s -finite-measure semantics of an idealised 1st-order probabilistic programming language
- 2 Properties of s -finite measures and kernels
- 3 Radon-Nikodým derivatives
- 4 Conditional distribution and disintegration
- 5 Conclusions and further directions

A typed 1st-order probabilistic programming language, PPL

Idealised, 1st-order version of Church, Anglican, Venture, Hakura, etc.
(Staton et al. LICS 2016)

PPL Types. $A, B ::= \mathbb{R} \mid \mathbb{P}(A) \mid 1 \mid A \times B \mid \sum_{i \in I} A_i$, where I is countable, nonempty.

- Types A are interpreted as measurable spaces $\llbracket A \rrbracket$.
- $\llbracket \mathbb{R} \rrbracket$ is the measurable space of reals with its Borel sets.
- $\llbracket \mathbb{P}(A) \rrbracket$ is the measurable space of probabilistic measures on $\llbracket A \rrbracket$ (i.e. “Giry monad”).
- The type of booleans and natural numbers are definable.

PPL Terms-in-context. Two typing judgements:

- $\Gamma \vdash_d t : A$ for **deterministic terms**
- $\Gamma \vdash_p t : A$ for **probabilistic terms**

Terms-in-contexts of PPL

Sums and products. The language includes variables, and standard constructors and destructors for sum and product types.

Sequencing: monadic unit, and bind

$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash_d t : A}{\Gamma \vdash_p \text{return}(t) : A} \qquad \frac{\Gamma \vdash_p t : A \quad \Gamma, x : A \vdash_p u : B}{\Gamma \vdash_p \text{let } x = t \text{ in } u : B}$$

Language-specific constructs. Constants for all measurable functions.

Bayesian constructs: Posterior \propto Likelihood \times Prior

- 1 Sampling from **prior** distributions:
$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash_d t : P(A)}{\Gamma \vdash_p \text{sample}(t) : A}$$
- 2 Recoding **likelihood** scores:
$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash_d t : \mathbb{R}}{\Gamma \vdash_p \text{score}(t) : 1}$$
- 3 Normalisation (for **posterior**):
$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash_p t : A}{\Gamma \vdash_d \text{normalise}(t) : \mathbb{R} \times P(A) + 1 + 1}$$

Semantics of PPL (Staton, ESOP 2017)

- Interpret $\Gamma \vdash_d t : A$ as a **measurable function** $\llbracket t \rrbracket : \llbracket \Gamma \rrbracket \rightarrow \llbracket A \rrbracket$
- Interpret $\Gamma \vdash_p t : A$ as an **s-finite kernel** $\llbracket t \rrbracket : \llbracket \Gamma \rrbracket \rightsquigarrow \llbracket A \rrbracket$.

DEF. A **kernel** k from (X, Σ_X) to (Y, Σ_Y) is function $k : X \times \Sigma_Y \rightarrow [0, \infty]$ s.t.

- $\forall x \in X, k(x, -) : \Sigma_Y \rightarrow [0, \infty]$ is a measure
- $\forall U \in \Sigma_Y, k(-, U) : X \rightarrow [0, \infty]$ is a measurable function.

(Henceforth identify **measures** with kernels $\mu : 1 \times \Sigma_Y \rightarrow [0, \infty]$)

Kernel $k(-, -)$	Definition
subprobability	$\sup_{x \in X} k(x, Y) \leq 1$
finite	$\sup_{x \in X} k(x, Y) < \infty$
σ -finite	$\exists (Y_i \in \Sigma_Y)_{i \in \omega}. (Y = \biguplus_i Y_i \ \& \ \forall i. \sup_{x \in X} k(x, Y_i) < \infty)$
s-finite	$k = \sum_{i \in \omega} k_i$, each k_i is a finite kernel $X \rightsquigarrow Y$.

The classes above form an increasing chain (ordered by \subseteq).

Examples of σ -finite / s-finite measures

DEF. Let (X, Σ_X) be a measurable space; $\mu : \Sigma_X \rightarrow [0, \infty]$ be a measure.

- μ is σ -finite if $X = \biguplus_{i \in \omega} X_i$ with each $X_i \in \Sigma_X$ and $\mu(X_i) < \infty$.
- μ is s-finite if $\mu = \sum_{i \in \omega} \mu_i$, and each $\mu_i(X) < \infty$.

Intuition: “bad ∞ ” is ∞ concentrated at a point.

- σ -finiteness only admits “good ∞ ”
- s-finiteness can admit “bad ∞ ”, but only countably many.

Examples

- 1 The Lebesgue measure, Leb , is σ -finite.
- 2 The ∞ -measure on the point 1 is s-finite, but not σ -finite;
- 3 Counting measure $\#_S$ on any uncountable standard Borel space S is not s-finite
- 4 $\infty \cdot Leb$ is not s-finite. (Convention: $0 \cdot \infty = 0$.)

s-finite-measure semantics of PPL (Staton, ESOP 2017)

Context $\Gamma = (x_1 : A_1, \dots, x_n : A_n)$, with $\llbracket \Gamma \rrbracket := \prod_{i=1}^n \llbracket A_i \rrbracket$.

Semantics of PPL

- Interpret $\Gamma \vdash_d t : A$ as a **measurable function** $\llbracket t \rrbracket : \llbracket \Gamma \rrbracket \rightarrow \llbracket A \rrbracket$
- Interpret $\Gamma \vdash_p t : A$ as an **s-finite kernel** $\llbracket t \rrbracket : \llbracket \Gamma \rrbracket \rightsquigarrow \llbracket A \rrbracket$.

Theorem (Definability)

If kernel $k : \llbracket \Gamma \rrbracket \rightsquigarrow \llbracket A \rrbracket$ is s-finite, then there is a term $\Gamma \vdash_p t : A$ s.t. $k = \llbracket t \rrbracket$.

This is a very useful result (for us)!

Why s-finite (and not σ -finite) measures?

Infinite measures seem unavoidable.

- No known useful syntactic restriction that enforces finite measures.
- A program with finite measure may have subexpression with infinite measure.

σ -finite measures are a much-studied class of infinite measures, but they are not suitable for interpreting probabilistic programming languages.

- The pushforward of a s-finite measure is s-finite; but the pushforward of a σ -finite measure is generally only s-finite.
- Failure of kernel composition of σ -finite measures: let $U \in \Sigma_1$

$$\llbracket \vdash_p \text{let } x = \text{Leb in return } () : 1 \rrbracket(U) = \int_{\mathbb{R}} \text{Leb}(dz) \chi_{()}(U) = \infty \cdot \chi_{()}(U).$$

Leb (Lebesgue measure) is σ -finite, however the composite is s-finite, and not σ -finite

Talk outline

- 1 Introduction: s -finite-measure semantics of an idealised 1st-order probabilistic programming language
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Product measures

Given measure μ on X and kernel ν from X to Y , call measure Ψ on $X \times Y$ a **product measure of μ and ν** if $\Psi(U \times V) = \int_U \mu(dx) \nu(x, V)$, for all $U \times V \in \Sigma_{X \times Y}$.

- By Carathéodory Extension Theorem, a **maximal product measure $\mu \otimes \nu$** always exists:

$$(\mu \otimes \nu)(W) := \inf \left\{ \sum_{i \in \omega} \int_{U_i} \mu(dx) \nu(x, V_i) \mid W \subseteq \bigcup_{i \in \omega} (U_i \times V_i) \in \Sigma_{X \times Y} \right\}.$$

- Product measures may be defined via **iterated integration**:

$$(\mu \otimes^l \nu)(W) := \int_X \mu(dx) \int_Y \nu(x, dy) \chi_W(x, y)$$

and, in case $\nu(x)$ is independent of x , i.e., ν is a measure on Y

$$(\mu \otimes^r \nu)(W) := \int_Y \nu(dy) \int_X \mu(dx) \chi_W(x, y).$$

Fubini theorem—for swapping order of integration

Even when \otimes^l and \otimes^r are well-defined, they may not be equal:

- For non-*Leb*-null $V \in \Sigma_{\mathbb{R}}$:

$$\otimes^l : \int \#_{\mathbb{R}}(dx) \left(\int \text{Leb}(dy) \{(r, r) \mid r \in V\} \right) = 0$$

$$\otimes^r : \int \text{Leb}(dy) \left(\int \#_{\mathbb{R}}(dx) \{(r, r) \mid r \in V\} \right) = \text{Leb}(V).$$

Theorem (Fubini)

For an *s*-finite measure μ on X , and an *s*-finite kernel ν from X to Y

- i. $\mu \otimes^l \nu$ is well-defined, and $\mu \otimes \nu = \mu \otimes^l \nu$.
- ii. Further, if ν is simply a measure on Y , $\mu \otimes^r \nu$ is also well-defined, and $\mu \otimes \nu = \mu \otimes^l \nu = \mu \otimes^r \nu$.

Characterisations of s-finite kernels ν from X to Y ($\neq \emptyset$)

s-finite kernels: T.F.A.E.

- 1 ν is a s-finite kernel from X to Y
- 2 $\nu = \sum_{n \in \omega} \nu_n$ for subprobability kernels ν_n .
- 3 ν is the pushforward of a σ -finite kernel.

Given kernel $k : X \rightsquigarrow Y$ and measurable function $f : Y \rightarrow Z$, define the **pushforward kernel** $f_*k : X \rightsquigarrow Z$ by: for $x \in X$, $U \in \Sigma_Z$,
 $f_*k(x, U) := k(x, f^{-1}(U))$.

s-finite measures

- 1 ν is a s-finite measure iff there is a σ -finite measure μ on X and a measurable function $f : X \rightarrow \{1, \infty\}$ such that $\nu = \mu(f)$.
- 2 **A weak converse:** if ν is an s-finite measure on X , then either ν is zero or $\nu = \mathbb{P}(f)$ for a probability measure \mathbb{P} and a measurable function $f : X \rightarrow [0, \infty]$ with $\mathbb{P}([f = 0]) = 0$.

s-finite measures and ∞ -sets

Fix a measure μ on a measurable space (X, Σ_X) .

DEF. $U \in \Sigma_X$ is an ∞ -set w.r.t. μ if (i) $\mu(U) = \infty$, and (ii) for all $V \in \Sigma_U$, $\mu(V) = 0$ or ∞ .

- If μ is σ -finite then it does not have any ∞ -sets (\because any set U of infinite μ -measure must have a countable partition of finite μ -measure, i.e., 0).
- IDEA: presence of ∞ -sets distinguishes s-finite from σ -finite measures.

Call $U \in \Sigma_X$ a σ -finite complement of X if (i) U is an ∞ -set or a null-set, and (ii) μ is σ -finite on $X \setminus U$.

Theorem. Let μ be an s-finite measure on X . Then

- There exists a σ -finite complement in Σ_X .
- μ is σ -finite iff there are no μ - ∞ -sets in Σ_X .

The converse of (i) fails: not every measure μ which has a σ -finite complement need be s-finite. Take $\mu = \#_{\mathbb{R}} \cdot \infty$.

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Let μ and ν be measures on X . A **Radon-Nikodým derivative** of μ w.r.t. ν is a measurable function $X \rightarrow [0, \infty]$, typically written $d\mu/d\nu$, s.t.

$$\mu = \nu \left(\frac{d\mu}{d\nu} \right) := \int_X \nu(dx) \frac{d\mu}{d\nu}(x). \quad \text{Notation. } \nu(f) = \int_X \nu(dx) f(x).$$

Recall: μ is **absolutely continuous** w.r.t. ν (written $\mu \ll \nu$) if $\forall U \in \Sigma_X . \nu(U) = 0 \implies \mu(U) = 0$.

Theorem (Radon-Nikodým – standard version)

Let $\mu \ll \nu$ be σ -finite measures on a space (X, Σ_X) . Then μ has a R-N derivative w.r.t. ν , which is unique up to ν -equivalence.

The pdf of a r.v. is the R-N derivative of the induced measure with respect to some stock measure (usually the Lebesgue measure for continuous r.v.).

- Provides **existence proof of conditional expectation** for probability measures – key concept in probability theory.
- Basis of compilation of prob. programs to densities (Bhat et al. POPL12; LMCS17; etc.)

Let μ, ν be **s-finite measures** on (X, Σ_X) .

DEF. μ is **∞ -absolutely continuous** w.r.t. ν (written $\mu \lll \nu$) if (i) $\mu \ll \nu$, and (ii) for all ν - ∞ -sets U , U is a μ - ∞ -set or a μ -null-set.

- For σ -finite measure ν , we have $\mu \lll \nu$ iff $\mu \ll \nu$, vacuously.
- If μ has density f w.r.t. ν (i.e. $\mu = \nu(f)$) then $\mu \lll \nu$.

DEF. Let $f, g : X \rightarrow [0, \infty]$ be measurable, and let $X_\infty \in \Sigma_X$ be a σ -finite complement w.r.t. ν . Say f and g are **ν - ∞ -equivalent** if

$$\nu([f \neq g] \cap (X \setminus X_\infty)) + \nu([g = 0 \neq f] \cap X_\infty) + \nu([f = 0 \neq g] \cap X_\infty) = 0$$

- On the σ -finite part of X : f and g are ν -equivalent
- On σ -finite complement of X : the points where one has value 0 and the other strictly positive are ν -negligible.

Theorem (Radon-Nikodým for s-finite measures)

Let $\mu \lll \nu$ be s-finite measures on a space (X, Σ_X) . Then μ has a R-N derivative w.r.t. ν , which is unique up to ν - ∞ -equivalence. [False if only assume $\mu \ll \nu$.]

Application

Let $\mu \ll \nu$ be σ -finite measures on X . Then there exists an RN-derivative $d\mu/d\nu : X \rightarrow [0, \infty]$, satisfying $\nu(d\mu/d\nu) = \mu$, unique up to ν - ∞ -equivalence.

- 1 Importance sampling of μ w.r.t. ν .

sample $\mu = \text{let } (\text{sample } \nu) \text{ be } x \text{ in } \left(\text{score} \left(\frac{d\mu}{d\nu}(x) \right); \text{return } x \right).$

- 2 Rejection sampling of μ w.r.t. ν .

Assume $d\mu/d\nu \leq M \in [0, \infty)$. Let

$f(z) := \text{let } (\text{sample } \nu) \text{ be } x \text{ in}$
 $(\text{sample } \mathbb{U}_{[0,1]}) \text{ be } y \text{ in}$
 if $\left(y \leq \frac{1}{M} \frac{d\mu}{d\nu}(x) \right)$ then (return x) else z .

Then, we get a rejection sampling procedure for μ : sample $\mu = \mathbf{Y}(f)$.

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Disintegration

- Disintegration formalises the idea of a **non-trivial “restriction” of a measure to a measure-zero subset** of the measure space in question.
- It is closely related to the **existence of conditional probability measures**.
- Disintegration may be viewed as a process **opposite** to the construction of a product measure.
And hence it is related to **Fubini theorem**.

Borel's Paradox: conditioning on a measure-0 subset

Let x be a point on Earth's surface drawn from a uniform distribution. If x lies on the equator, its longitude should be uniformly distributed over $[-\pi, \pi]$.

But there is nothing special about the equator: it's just a great circle. In particular, for a great circle through the poles (i.e. conditioning on the longitude) there should be conditional probability $1/4$ that x lies north of latitude $45^\circ N$.

Now "average out" over the longitude to deduce that x has probability $1/4$ of lying in the spherical cap extending from the north pole down to the 45° parallel of latitude.

Alas, that cap does not cover $1/4$ of the Earth's surface area, as would be required for a point uniformly distributed over Earth's surface.

(Pollard 2002)

Kolmogorov (1930): "The concept of a conditional probability with regard to an isolated hypothesis whose probability equals 0 is inadmissible."

Review: Conditioning for discrete random variables

Straightforward – provided we eschew conditioning on probability-0 events.

DEF. **Conditional probability.** Assume \mathbb{P} is a probability measure on (X, Σ_X) . Suppose r.v. T takes value in $R \subseteq_{\text{fin}} Y$. For $A \in \Sigma_X, y \in R$

$$\mathbb{P}(A \mid T = y) := \frac{\mathbb{P}(A \cap \{T = y\})}{\mathbb{P}(\{T = y\})}$$

Properties: Writing $\mathbb{P}_y(-)$ for the measure $\mathbb{P}(- \mid T = y)$

- i. **Pre-regularity.** \mathbb{P}_y is a probability measure on X , for all $y \in R$.
- ii. **Concentration.** \mathbb{P}_y concentrates on $\{T = y\}$:

$$\mathbb{P}_y(\{T \neq y\}) = \frac{\mathbb{P}(\{T \neq y\} \cap \{T = y\})}{\mathbb{P}(\{T = y\})} = 0.$$

- iii. **Weighted average.** For all $A \in \Sigma_X$, $\mathbb{P}(A) = \sum_{y \in R} \mathbb{P}(\{T = y\}) \mathbb{P}_y(A)$

Question: How to extend conditional probability $\mathbb{P}(A \mid T = y)$ to general spaces (X, Σ_X) and arbitrary measurable T ?

Standard “abstract” approach to conditional expectation

Fundamental Theorem & Definition (Kolmogorov, 1933)

Given triple $(\Omega, \mathcal{F}, \mathbb{P})$, r.v. X with $E(|X|) < \infty$, and \mathcal{G} a sub- σ -algebra of \mathcal{F} . There exists r.v. Y s.t. (i) Y is \mathcal{G} measurable, (ii) $E(|Y|) < \infty$, and (iii) $\forall G \in \mathcal{G}. \int_G \mathbb{P}(d\omega) Y(\omega) = \int_G \mathbb{P}(d\omega) X(\omega)$.

Moreover, if Y' is another r.v. satisfying the above, then $Y = Y'$ a.s., and is called a **version** of **conditional expectation** $E(X | \mathcal{G})$ of X given \mathcal{G} .

- There is a gap between intuition and rigour in conditioning arguments.
- An **accounting problem**: for $F \in \mathcal{F}$ define $\mathbb{P}(F | \mathcal{G})$ to be $E(\chi_F | \mathcal{G})$. For a fixed seq. (F_n) of disjoint elts of \mathcal{F} , $\mathbb{P}(\bigcup F_n | \mathcal{G}) = \sum \mathbb{P}(F_n | \mathcal{G})$ **a.s.** In general, there are **uncountably** many such sequences; we cannot conclude (\because uncountably many null-sets) that there is a kernel $P : \Omega \times \mathcal{F} \rightarrow [0, 1)$ s.t. (a) $\forall F \in \mathcal{F}$, $P(-, F)$ is (version of) $\mathbb{P}(F | \mathcal{G})$, (b) for almost every w , $\mathbb{P}(w, -)$ is a probability measure on \mathcal{F} .

Definition: disintegration of a measure

Let $T : X \rightarrow Y$ be measurable; μ and ν be measures on X and Y resp.

DEF. A (T, ν) -disintegration (or -conditional distribution) of μ are a family $\{\mu_y\}_{y \in Y}$ of measures on X and a ν -null set $N \in \Sigma_Y$ s.t.

- i. **Regularity:** $(y, U) \mapsto \mu_y(U)$ is a **kernel** from Y to X ;
- ii. **Concentration:** $\forall y \in Y \setminus N$, μ_y concentrates on $\{T = y\}$, i.e., μ_y is supported in $T^{-1}(y)$: $\forall V \in \Sigma_X$, $\mu_y(V) = \mu_y(V \cap T^{-1}(y))$;
- iii. **Weighted average:** $\forall V \in \Sigma_X$, $\mu(V) = \int_Y \nu(dy) \mu_y(V)$.

Often write $\mu(- | T = y)$ for μ_y .

iii'. For all measurable $f : X \rightarrow [0, \infty]$,

$$\int_X \mu(dx) f(x) = \int_Y \nu(dy) \int_{T^{-1}(y)} \mu_y(dx) f(x).$$

The standard Disintegration Theorem for σ -finite measures satisfies a weaker definition: if CH holds, $\mu_-(\cdot)$ cannot be a kernel (**Maharam's 1950 Problem:** Back et al. 2015).

A disintegration theorem for s-finite measures

Let $T : X \rightarrow Y$ be measurable from a standard Borel space X to a measurable space Y , let μ and ν resp. be measures on X and Y .

Existence

Assume (i) μ, ν s-finite, (ii) $T_*\mu \ll \nu$, and (iii) for all ν - ∞ -sets U , $T^{-1}(U)$ is a μ - ∞ -set or a μ -null-set^a. Then there exists a (T, ν) -disintegration of μ , $\{\mu_y\}_{y \in Y}$, which is an s-finite kernel.

N.B. Theorem fails for s-finite μ, ν if we only demand $T_*\mu \ll \nu$.

^a(ii) and (iii) are strictly stronger than $T_*\mu \ll \nu$.

Uniqueness

If ν is s-finite, then the (T, ν) -disintegration of μ (*qua* s-finite kernel) is unique up to ν - ∞ -equivalence.

Fubini's theorem for σ -finite measures

Let $\mu = \alpha \otimes \beta$ be a product of σ -finite measures on product space $X \times Y$. Let $T : X \times Y \rightarrow Y$ be $(x, y) \mapsto y$.

Then the (T, β) -disintegration of μ is $\{\mu_y\}_{y \in Y}$, where $\mu_y = (R_y)_*(\alpha)$ with $R_y : x \mapsto (x, y)$. So μ_y is just a copy of α .

Take measurable $f : X \times Y \rightarrow [0, \infty]$. By property (iii) of disintegration:

$$\begin{aligned}\mu(f) &= \int_Y \beta(dy) \int_{T^{-1}(y)} \mu_y(d(x, y)) f(x, y) \\ &= \int_Y \beta(dy) \int_{T^{-1}(y)} (R_y)_*(\alpha)(d(x, y)) f(x, y) \quad (\because \mu_y = (R_y)_*(\alpha)) \\ &= \int_Y \beta(dy) \int_X \alpha(dx) \underbrace{f \circ R_y(x)}_{f(x, y)} \quad (\text{by change of variable})\end{aligned}$$

which is precisely Fubini's theorem for σ -finite measures.

Bayes' Law: Posterior \propto Likelihood \times Prior

$$p(\Theta = \theta \mid X = x) = \frac{p(X = x \mid \Theta = \theta) p(\Theta = \theta)}{p(X = x)}$$

- Bayes' Law says that the posterior times the probability of an observation equals a joint probability.
- But the observation of a continuous quantity usually has probability 0; in which case, Bayes' Law says: "unknown $\times 0 = 0$ "!

(Shan & Ramsey POPL 2017) introduces a new inference algorithm by symbolic manipulation of the prior and an **observable expression**:

- It can draw exact inference from the observation of a probability-0 continuous quantity.
- Idea: the observable expression denotes a conditional distribution *qua* disintegration of a measure.
- These disintegrations (of s-finite measures) are s-finite kernels, which are denotable by PPL terms.

Problem

Conjecture. Let ρ be an **s-finite** measure on $X \times Y$ and μ be **s-finite** measure on X , satisfying condition (C). Then there exists an **s-finite kernel** $k : X \rightsquigarrow Y$ such that $\rho = \mu \otimes k$. Further the kernel is unique up to μ - ∞ -equivalence.

Desiderata:

1. **Higher order & definability.** Take \mathcal{L} an idealised higher-order PPL; e.g. core Hakaru \rightarrow (?). Extend ρ and μ to \mathcal{L} -definable measures; prove that k is \mathcal{L} -definable (Staton ESOP17).
2. **Constructiveness / relativised computability.** Design an algorithm for constructing k as an \mathcal{L} -term, given representations of ρ and μ as \mathcal{L} -terms, via partial evaluation (type-directed / continuation-based); prove correctness via synthetic measure theory.
3. **Compositionality / “parametricity law”.** Replace ρ and μ by s-finite kernels (appropriately typed).

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Conclusions and further directions

- 1 S-finite kernels have good closure properties.
- 2 Radon-Nikodým and Disintegration theorems extend to s-finite measures.

Further directions

- Methods to construct Radon-Nikodým derivatives and disintegrating measures / kernels
- Deriving disintegration by program transformation & synthesis – an approach to Bayesian inference (Shan & Ramsey, POPL 2017)