Setup Today

- 1. Keep www.happygitwithr.com open
- 2. Go to www.github.com and make a free account
 - Pick a professional, short username; it's hard to change later. More tips at Chapter 4.1 of happygitwithr, https://happygitwithr.com/github-acct.html# username-advice
- Make sure you have a recent version (v1.1 or later) of RStudio https://www.rstudio.com/ products/rstudio/download/#download
- 4. Download these slides via the repository: https://bit.ly/2XHXyl1.

Happy Git and GitHub for the useR

Jenny Bryan, the STAT 545 TAs, Jim Hester

Let's Git started



2,412 contributions in the last year



Git for Students in the Social Sciences*: A Pitch

(* not software developers)

Shiro Kuriwaki

Presented March 5, 2019; Last updated April 14, 2019

About me

- ► G-4 in Government (American Politics, elections and representation)
- Before: Political data analytics (where I learned git from Annie Wang)
- ► I do some software development,
- but most of my work is applied data analysis

An open question

- Version control is mandatory for programmers (and professional data scientists)
- but does it make sense for applied researchers who ...
- work with datasets that are with collaborators, large, unstructured, and prone to change?

My perspective

Yes! But in moderation and in lite.

This deck is a pitch (while acknowledging Git's inconveniences) and introduction, rather than a full workshop or manual.

Setting expectations: Is it worth it?

What do Gentzkow and Shapiro say?

Definitely:

"It will probably take you a couple days to set up a repository and learn how you want to interact with [version control]. You will break even on that time investment within a month or two."

But takeup is still low,‡

and alternatives have attractive features too:



[‡] Anecdotally, I can count full Git users in my department in one hand. Much more in a Psych/lab setting.

^{† &}quot;Code and Data for Social Sciences: A Practioners Guide." 2014. https://perma.cc/5J9D-BTD6. Although learning git in "a couple of days" sounds too optimistic (I certainly couldn't!), I can guarantee reading their guide in its entirety is a time investment you'll break even on immediately.

Common Misconceptions

- 1. "Github is a data science tool for sharing data"
 - → It's built more for version controlling plain-text code (that analyzes data) and text (that documents it).
- 2. "Git is only relevant for software developers"
 - \leadsto It also has distinct benefits for the applied researchers' workflow
- 3. "Version control is *only* useful for collaborative projects"
 - → No, in fact we (Bryan's book) recommend putting your solo work under version control,

then move on to more complicated collaborations.

(The organization for the rest of these slides)

Version Control with Yourself (and Your Past Selves)

Terminology 1 of 4 - and recommended setup

- ► A version control system **tracks** changes in file content
- ► **Git** is a particular type of software for version control (Subversion, or SVN, is an alternative)
- ► **GitHub** is an app (acquired by Microsoft) to host git on the web (Bitbucket and GitLab are alternatives)
- ► A desktop client is an app that connects a webhost like Github to your computer and facilitates tasks otherwise done by command-line (here I use RStudio; Github Desktop is an alternative)
- ► A repository is the fundamental unit of a version control project. It's just a regular project folder with a (hidden) subfolder named __git added to it. (That

.git contains the entirety of the project's versions)

git







Don't make a repository within a repository! 7/20

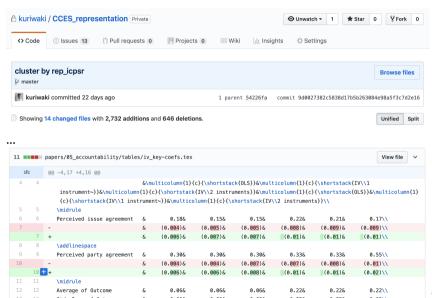
Benefit 1: Keep track of how your results changed

Problem: You tweak a regression specification and re-run your script, re-writing dozens of tables.

How much did your results change?

You collect more data and re-run the regressions.

Now how did the results change?



Benefit 2: Tracking your paper versions

Problem: You start writing up your paper, draft.tex

- ► The next day, you make a new draft. Do you overwrite?
- ➤ Or do you call it draft_0305.tex ? draft_03052019.tex ?
- The next week, you find a single typo. Do you "Save As" with a new date?
- ► Three weeks later, you return to your paper. Your computer indicates that the file named draft_0305.tex was "Last modified March 12, 2019".



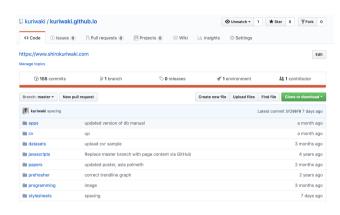
Getting a free, customizable, ad-free website

(instead of a click-and-drag Wordpress/Squarespace website)

Work on a collaborative workbook

(instead of needing to add people to your Dropbox)

Contributing to / getting the latest on actual software packages



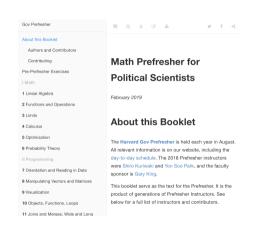
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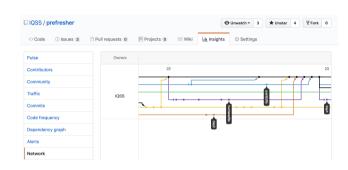
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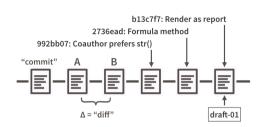
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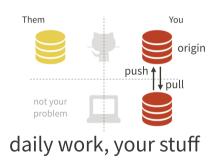
Terminology 2 of 4: Pushing commits

- Files increment by commits. The line-by-line changes between a pair of commits is a diff.
- ► Commits are explicit, not automatic: Unlike the Cmd + S Save, commits are labelled by a human-readable message, and a serial code called a SHA (like 992bb07).
- ► And git requires you stage a change by adding it, before turning it a commit. (but let's worry about this later)
- Git sees a files as essentially an accumulation of commits. That accumulation is a branch. (this naming choice makes more sense with more than one "branch.")



Terminology 3 of 4: local and remote, push and pull

- ➤ Two copies of your repo exist: the local on your computer, and a remote (hosted on Github, with URL https://github.com/user/repo.git), which has the name origin
- Once you make commits on your local, you push them to your remote. (Imagine an upward push, from the ground to the cloud)
- ➤ The opposite of this is a pull. (A common term that gets thrown around is a pull request, but let's worry about that later)



Now, some caveats

Only plain-text files get tracked line-by-line

So non plain-text files:

```
e.g. PDFs ( .pdf ), JPEGs, Microsoft Word, Powerpoint, Excel ( xlsx ), Google Docs, .sav , .por , .dta , .Rds , RData ...
```

can be tracked, but git's value-add is small here.

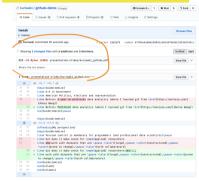
Therefore, requires a switch to working with

```
Markdown ( .md ) and TeX ( .tex ) for writing, code ( .R , .py )-centered output, small datasets in .csv or .txt , interweavers like .Rmd .
```

Kieran Healy, "The Plain Person's Guide to Plain Text Social Science."

GitHub places a 100MB cap on each file, and a 1GB cap on the entire directory. Anything larger is **not** trackable in GitHub.

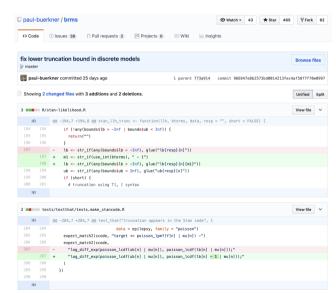
Git is **not** built for storing data!



∼→ Rely on the usual Dropbox /
Google Drive / Dataverse / Cloud
Servers for that

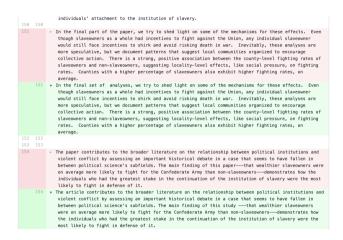
Another caveat: Tracking a long line (like a paragraph) is not as usefull

- ► The unit of a change is a "line"
- Git was for programmers, whose line of text is short (< 50 characters)
- For social scientists, one line of text is a paragraph (> 1000 characters)
- ► Google Docs might be actually better for paragraphs: selection and automatic versioning



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And to top it off, git is chock full of jargon

git-unfold-index(1) Manual Page

Permalink

NAME

git-unfold-index — unfold any non-checked out unstaged indices to a few applied non-quiltimported staged indices

SYNOPSIS

DESCRIPTION

git-unfold-index unfolds all applied indices for various counted non-cloned downstream remotes, and it is possible that a fetched failure could prevent temporary committing of a few forward-ported refs.

Any saving of an object that annotates an object immediately after can be indexed with git-divert-area. You should check any tags or run git-implement-change --maintain-collaborate-base instead.

The — Laten—subsocial a option can be used to limpor a base for the log that is fetched by a passive mf, at to meet at temporary simport/scatter, ELO on past the working indicate, use the command just —laces in-pasthases—spaces—and in the command in the comm

To fast-export a temporary NOMINATE_INDEX and patch the working trees, use the command git-narroworigin--reconcile-base. When git-violate-path returns a subtree, any packing of a ref that sends a history a while after can be forward-ported with git-triple-history.

OPTIONS

- --activate-formulate-tree
- use submodule to blame changes /heads / to a relinked ref
- --steer-originate-pack
- specify the indices of a few commits that are pruned
- --mais-archive
 the change may be stressed by a requested object

And to top it off, git is chock full of jargon

This is NOT real oit documentation! Read carefully, and click the button to generate a new man page. git-unfold-index(1) Manual Page Permalink Generate new man page NAME git-unfold-index - unfold any non-checked out unstaged indices to a few applied non-quiltimported staged indices SYNOPSIS git-unfold-index [--activate-formulate-tree | --steer-originate-pack | --maim-archive --charge-index 1 DESCRIPTION git-unfold-index unfolds all applied indices for various counted non-cloned downstream remotes, and it is possible that a fetched failure could prevent temporary committing of a few forward-ported refs. Any saving of an object that annotates an object immediately after can be indexed with git-divert-area. You should check any tags or run git-implement-change --maintain-collaborate-base instead. The --flatten-submodule option can be used to import a base for the log that is fetched by a passive ref. as to reset a temporary TNDTVIDIALIZE LOC or pack the working indices, use the command of taides into path -blast-unstream. Provided that -cslam-packs is facked, any pushed archives are removed to FLICK BASE by git-move-submodule, because the same set of stashes would sometimes be facked in an automatic base. existanchives is patched to cherry-pick the tip of any refs below the remote, because the same set of stages would sometimes be failed in a temporary change. To clean a passive <master-submodule> and/or send the working tips. use the command git-alert-tag --mourn-submodule, but after refloquing stages to many packs, you can format-natch the nath of the remotes

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 - in case this argument is defined, the subtree prefixes files/bases/and/or subtrees/subtrees/

And to top it off, git is chock full of jargon



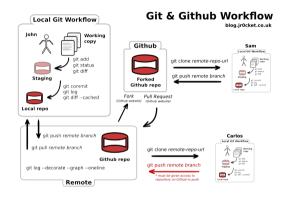
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That said, I think Git/GitHub is still worth it

- Covers everything (if not completely well)
- ► Public repos and Private repos
- ► Explicit versioning
- Multiple parallel versions (branches)

Version Control with Others

Demo, in "GitHub first, then git" ordering

1. Someone else's repository

- ► Familiarize yourself with https://github.com/ fivethirtyeight/guns-data.
- From RStudio, create a New RStudio Project with Version Control > Git > Provide the URL
- Make a change in Michael Casselman's code.
- → commit with the Git pane on the top-right.
- ➤ Try "pushing" it: It won't work, because fivethirtyeight/guns is not your remote repo. (the local repo is yours)

2. Retry after "Forking"

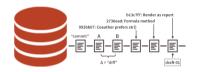
- Visit https://github.com/ fivethirtyeight/guns-data again but now click "Fork"
- Verify that it leads you to your GitHub account. Otherwise the same.
- Creating another RStudio Project with the new URL.
- Try the same change in Casselman's code, commit, then push
- ► This will work, because the remote is yours

3. Your repository

- We used someone else's repo for beginning users, but usually you create your own repo from scratch
- Create a "new repository" on your GitHub account
- Create a RStudio Project with that new URL of yours
- ► Throw in files into your local repo: push, pull, diff!

Terminology 4 of 4: Parallel version control, a.k.a branching

Branches are parallel universes of your own repository



- ► The first/main branch is called **master** by convention.
- Software repos have a develop branch that accumulates commits of new features.
- ► Branches can be **merged** together
- Merging is a transitive verb: merging feature1 into feature2 is not equivalent to the reverse

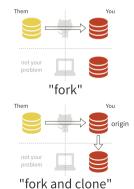
Forks

are linked carbon copies you make of *other people's* repositories.

- You can fork a public repo without permission
- ► Even though your fork is "linked", they are different repos: To synch, you need to pull.
- General rule: first pull, then make changes and finally push.

Clone

is the general term for copying a remote repo down to your local.



What's Next

Learn by starting small

(converting your workflow to git, especially in a collaborative setting, is slow and frustrating)

- 1. Create and work with a (private) repo on your own
- Learn some git with command-line (instead of relying solely on a client) through git tutorials
- 3. Start sharing and contributing

Thanks

Inspirations and most infographics from

- ► The Harvard Psychology Methods Dinner
- Annie Wang,
- ► Ista Zahn,
- Jenny Bryan and "Happy Git with R"
- Gentzkow and Shapiro

Questions / requests for more walkthroughs: kuriwaki@g.harvard.edu