

S6 Text: Posterior mean is optimal estimator for squared error cost function

The cost function associated with the L2 norm is given by

$$\gamma(\hat{X}, X) = E[(\hat{X} - X)^2]$$

$$\gamma(\hat{X}, X) = \sum_x (\hat{X} - X)^2 p(X)$$

To find its minimum, first differentiate with respect to \hat{X} ...

$$\frac{\partial \gamma(\hat{X}, X)}{\partial \hat{X}} = 2\hat{X} \sum_x p(X) - 2 \sum_x X p(X)$$

The optimum estimator is the value of \hat{X} that sets the derivative to zero.

$$0 = 2\hat{X}^{opt} \sum_x p(X) - 2 \sum_x X p(X)$$

The first summation is equal to 1, so we have

$$0 = 2\hat{X}^{opt} - 2 \sum_x X p(X)$$

Solving for \hat{X}^{opt}

$$\hat{X}^{opt} = \sum_x X p(X)$$

The right hand side of the equation is the definition of expectation (i.e. the posterior mean)

$$\hat{X}^{opt} = E[X] \tag{S25}$$