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VORONOI RESIDUAL ANALYSIS OF SPATIAL POINT PROCESS MODELS WITH APPLICATIONS TO CALIFORNIA EARTHQUAKE FORECASTS

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Many point process models have been proposed for describing and forecasting earthquake occurrences in seismically active zones such as California, but the problem of how best to compare and evaluate the goodness of fit of such models remains open. Existing techniques typically suffer from low power, especially when used for models with very volatile conditional intensities such as those used to describe earthquake clusters. This paper proposes a new residual analysis method for spatial or spatial–temporal point processes involving inspecting the differences between the modeled conditional intensity and the observed number of points over the Voronoi cells generated by the observations. The resulting residuals can be used to construct diagnostic methods of greater statistical power than residuals based on rectangular grids.

Following an evaluation of performance using simulated data, the suggested method is used to compare the Epidemic-Type Aftershock Sequence (ETAS) model to the Hector Mine earthquake catalog. The proposed residuals indicate that the ETAS model with uniform background rate appears to slightly but systematically underpredict seismicity along the fault and to overpredict seismicity in along the periphery of the fault.

1. Introduction. Considerable effort has been expended recently to assess and compare different space–time models for forecasting earthquakes in seismically active areas such as Southern California. Notable among these efforts were the development of the Regional Earthquake Likelihood Models (RELM) project [Field (2007)] and its successor, the Collaboratory for the Study of Earthquake Predictability (CSEP) [Jordan (2006)]. The RELM project was initiated to create a variety of earthquake forecast models for seismic hazard assessment in California. Unlike previous projects that addressed the assessment of models for seismic hazard, the RELM participants decided to adopt many competing forecasting models and to rigorously and prospectively test their performance in a dedicated testing center [Schorlemmer and Gerstenberger (2007)]. With the end of the RELM project, the forecast models became available and the development of the testing center was done within the scope of CSEP. Many point process models, including

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1 multiple variants of the Epidemic-Type Aftershock Sequence (ETAS) models of 1
2 [Ogata \(1998\)](#) have now been proposed and are part of RELM and CSEP, though 2
3 the problem of how to compare and evaluate the goodness of fit of such models 3
4 remains quite open. 4

5 In RELM, a community consensus was reached that all entered models be tested 5
6 with certain tests, including the Number or N-test that compares the total fore- 6
7 casted rate with the observation, the Likelihood or L-test that assesses the quality 7
8 of a forecast in terms of overall likelihood, and the Likelihood-Ratio or R-test that 8
9 assesses the relative performance of two forecast models compared with what is 9
10 expected under one proposed model [[Jackson and Kagan \(1999\)](#), [Rhoades et al. \(2011\)](#), 10
11 [Schorlemmer et al. \(2007\)](#), [Zechar, Gerstenberger and Rhoades \(2010\)](#), 11
12 [Zechar et al. \(2013\)](#)]. However, over time several drawbacks of these tests were 12
13 discovered [[Schorlemmer et al. \(2010\)](#)] and the need for more powerful tests be- 13
14 came clear. The N-test and L-test simply compare the quantiles of the total num- 14
15 bers of events in each bin or likelihood within each bin to those expected under 15
16 the given model, and the resulting low-power tests are typically unable to discern 16
17 significant lack of fit unless the overall rate of the model fits extremely poorly. Fur- 17
18 ther, even when the tests do reject a model, they do not typically indicate where or 18
19 when the model fits poorly, or how it could be improved. Meanwhile, the number 19
20 of proposed spatial-temporal models for earthquake occurrences has grown, and 20
21 the need for discriminating which models fit better than others has become increas- 21
22 ingly important. Techniques for assessing goodness of fit are needed to pinpoint 22
23 where existing models may be improved, and residual plots, rather than numerical 23
24 significance tests, seem preferable for these purposes. 24

25 This paper proposes a new form of residual analysis for assessing the goodness 25
26 of fit of spatial point process models. The proposed method compares the normal- 26
27 ized observed and expected numbers of points over Voronoi cells generated by the 27
28 observed point pattern. The method is applied here in particular to the examina- 28
29 tion of a version of the ETAS model originally proposed by [Ogata \(1998\)](#), and its 29
30 goodness of fit to a sequence of 520 $M \geq 3$ Hector Mine earthquakes occurring 30
31 between October 1999 and December 2000. In particular, the Voronoi residuals 31
32 indicate that assumption of a constant background rate ρ in the ETAS model 32
33 results in excessive smoothing of the seismicity and significant underprediction of 33
34 seismicity close to the fault line. 34

35 Residual analysis for a spatial point process is typically performed by partition- 35
36 ing the space on which the process is observed into a regular grid and comput- 36
37 ing a residual for each pixel. That is, one typically examines aggregated values 37
38 of a residual process over regular, rectangular grid cells. Alternatively, residuals 38
39 may be defined for every observed point in the pattern, using a metric such as de- 39
40 viance, as suggested in [Lawson \(1993\)](#). Various types of residual processes were 40
41 proposed in [Baddeley et al. \(2005\)](#) and discussed in [Baddeley, Møller and Pakes \(2008\)](#) 41
42 and [Clements, Schoenberg and Schorlemmer \(2011\)](#). The general form of 42
43 43

1 these aggregated residual measures is a standardized difference between the number of points occurring and the number expected according to the fitted model, where the standardization may be performed in various ways. For instance, for Pearson residuals, one weights the residual by the reciprocal of the square root of the intensity, in analogy with Pearson residuals in the context of linear models. [Baddeley et al. \(2005\)](#) propose smoothing the residual field using a kernel function instead of simply aggregating over pixels; in practice, this residual field is typically displayed over a rectangular grid and is essentially equivalent to a kernel smoothing of aggregated pixel residuals. [Baddeley et al. \(2005\)](#) also propose scaling the residuals based on the contribution of each pixel to the total pseudologlikelihood of the model, in analogy with score statistics in generalized linear modeling. Standardization is important for both residual plots and goodness-of-fit tests, since otherwise plots of the residuals will tend to overemphasize deviations in pixels where the rate is high. Behind the term *Pearson residuals* lies the implication [see, e.g., the error bounds in Figure 7 of [Baddeley et al. \(2005\)](#)] that these standardized residuals should be approximately standard normally distributed, so that the squared residuals, or their sum, are distributed approximately according to Pearson's χ^2 -distribution.

The excellent treatment of Pearson residuals and other scaled residuals by [Baddeley et al. \(2005\)](#), the thorough discussion of their properties in [Baddeley, Møller and Pakes \(2008\)](#), their use for formal inference using score and pseudoscore statistics as described in [Baddeley, Rubak and Møller \(2011\)](#), and the fact that such residuals extend so readily to the case of spatial-temporal point processes may suggest that the problem of residual analysis for such point processes is generally solved. In practice, however, such residuals, when examined over a fixed rectangular grid, tend to have two characteristics that can limit their effectiveness:

- I. When the integrated conditional intensity (i.e., the number of expected points) in a pixel is very small, the distribution of the residual for the pixel becomes heavily skewed.
- II. Positive and negative values of the residual process within a particular cell can cancel each other out.

Since Pearson residuals are standardized to have mean zero and unit (or approximately unit) variance under the null hypothesis that the modeled conditional intensity is correct [see [Baddeley, Møller and Pakes \(2008\)](#)], one may inquire whether the skew of these residuals is indeed problematic. Consider, for instance, the case of a planar Poisson process where the estimate of the intensity λ is exactly correct, that is, $\hat{\lambda}(x, y) = \lambda(x, y)$ at all locations, and where one elects to use Pearson residuals on pixels. Suppose that there are several pixels where the integral of λ over the pixel is roughly 0.01. Given many of these pixels, it is not unlikely that at least one of them will contain a point of the process. In such pixels, the raw residual will be 0.99, and the standard deviation of the number of points in the

1 pixel is $\sqrt{0.01} = 0.1$, so the Pearson residual is 9.90. This may yield the following 1
2 effects: (1) such Pearson residuals may overwhelm the others in a visual inspection, 2
3 rendering a plot of the Pearson residuals largely useless in terms of evaluating 3
4 the quality of the fit of the model, and (2) conventional tests based on the normal 4
5 approximation may have grossly incorrect p -values, and will commonly reject the 5
6 null model even when it is correct. Even if one adjusts for the nonnormality of the 6
7 residual and instead uses exact p -values based on the Poisson distribution, such a 7
8 test applied to any such pixel containing a point will still reject the model at the 8
9 significance level of 0.01. 9

10 These situations arise in many applications, unfortunately. For example, in mod- 10
11 eling earthquake occurrences, typically the modeled conditional intensity is close 11
12 to zero far away from known faults or previous seismicity, and in the case of mod- 12
13 eling wildfires, one may have a modeled conditional intensity close to zero in ar- 13
14 eas far from human use or frequent lightning, or with vegetation types that do not 14
15 readily support much wildfire activity [e.g., Johnson and Miyanishi (2001), Keeley 15
16 et al. (2009), Malamud, Millington and Perry (2005), Xu and Schoenberg (2011)]. 16

17 These challenges are a result of characteristic I above, and one straightforward 17
18 solution would be to enlarge the pixel size such that the expected count in each 18
19 cell is higher. While this would be effective in a homogeneous setting, in the case 19
20 of an inhomogeneous process it is likely that this would induce a different prob- 20
21 lem: cells that are so large that even gross misspecification within a cell may be 21
22 overlooked, and thus the residuals will have low power. This is the problem of 22
23 characteristic II. When a regular rectangular grid is used to compute residuals for 23
24 a highly inhomogeneous process, it is generally impossible to avoid either highly 24
25 skewed residual distributions or residuals with very low power. These problems 25
26 have been noted by previous authors, though the important question of how to 26
27 determine appropriate pixel sizes remains open [Lawson (2005)]. 27

28 Note that, in addition to Pearson residuals and their variants, there are many 28
29 other goodness-of-fit assessment techniques for spatial and spatial-temporal point 29
30 processes [Bray and Schoenberg (2013)]. Examples include rescaled residu- 30
31 als [Meyer (1971), Schoenberg (1999)] and superthinned residuals [Clements, 31
32 Schoenberg and Veen (2012)], which involve transforming the observed points 32
33 to form a new point process that is homogeneous Poisson under the null hypoth- 33
34 esis that the proposed model used in the transformation is correct. There are also 34
35 functional summaries, such as the weighted version [Baddeley and Turner (2000), 35
36 Veen and Schoenberg (2006)] of Ripley's K -function [Ripley (1976)], where each 36
37 point is weighted according to the inverse of its modeled conditional intensity so 37
38 that the resulting summary has conveniently simple properties under the null hy- 38
39 pothesis that the modeled conditional intensity is correct, as well as other similarly 39
40 weighted numerical and functional summaries such as the weighted R/S statist- 40
41 ic and weighted correlation integral [Adelfio and Schoenberg (2009)]. As noted 41
42 in Bray and Schoenberg (2013), all of these methods can have serious deficiencies 42
43 43

1 compared to the easily interpretable residual diagrams, especially when it comes to 1
 2 indicating spatial or spatial–temporal locations where a model may be improved. 2

3 This paper proposes a new form of residual diagram based on the Voronoi cells 3
 4 generated by tessellating the observed point pattern. The resulting partition ob- 4
 5 viates I and II above by being adaptive to the inhomogeneity of the process and 5
 6 generating residuals that have an average expected count of 1 under the null hy- 6
 7 pothesis. 7

8 For an [Introduction](#) to point processes and their intensity functions, the reader is 8
 9 directed to [Daley and Vere-Jones \(1988\)](#). Throughout this paper we are assuming 9
 10 that the point processes are simple and that the observation region is a complete 10
 11 separable metric space equipped with the Lebesgue measure, μ . Note that we are 11
 12 not emphasizing the distinction between conditional and Papangelou intensities, 12
 13 as the methods and results here are essentially equivalent for spatial and spatial– 13
 14 temporal point processes. 14

15 This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 describes Voronoi residuals and 15
 16 discusses their properties. Section 3 demonstrates the utility of Voronoi residual 16
 17 plots. The simulations shown in Section 4 demonstrate the advantages of Voronoi 17
 18 residuals over conventional pixel-based residuals in terms of statistical power. In 18
 19 Section 5 we apply the proposed Voronoi residuals to examine the fit of the ETAS 19
 20 model with uniform background rate to a sequence of Hector Mine earthquakes 20
 21 from October 1999 to December 2000, and show that despite generally good agree- 21
 22 ment between the model and data, the ETAS model with uniform background rate 22
 23 appears to slightly but systematically underpredict seismicity along the fault line 23
 24 and to overpredict seismicity in certain locations along the periphery of the fault 24
 25 line, especially at the location 35 miles east of Barstow, CA. 25
 26

27 **2. Voronoi residuals.** A Voronoi tessellation is a partition of the metric space 27
 28 on which a point process is defined into convex polygons, or *Voronoi cells*. Specif- 28
 29 ically, given a spatial or spatial–temporal point pattern N , one may define its cor- 29
 30 responding *Voronoi tessellation* as follows: for each point τ_i of the point process, 30
 31 its corresponding cell C_i is the region consisting of all locations which are closer 31
 32 to τ_i than to any other point of N . The Voronoi tessellation is the collection of such 32
 33 cells. See, for example, [Okabe et al. \(2000\)](#) for a thorough treatment of Voronoi 33
 34 tessellations and their properties. 34

35 Given a model for the conditional intensity of a spatial or space–time point 35
 36 process, one may construct residuals simply by evaluating the residual process 36
 37 over cells rather than over rectangular pixels, where the cells comprise the Voronoi 37
 38 tessellation of the observed spatial or spatial–temporal point pattern. We will refer 38
 39 to such residuals as *Voronoi residuals*. 39
 40

41 An immediate advantage of Voronoi residuals compared to conventional pixel- 41
 42 based methods is that the partition is entirely automatic and spatially adaptive. 42
 43 This leads to residuals with a distribution that tends to be far less skewed than 43

1 pixel-based methods. Indeed, since each Voronoi cell has exactly one point inside 1
 2 it by construction, the raw Voronoi residual for cell i is given by 2

$$3 \hat{r}_i := 1 - \int_{C_i} \hat{\lambda} d\mu 3$$

$$4 (2.1) \quad = 1 - |C_i| \bar{\lambda}, 4$$

5 where $\bar{\lambda}$ denotes the mean of the proposed model, $\hat{\lambda}$, over C_i . This raw residual 5
 6 can be scaled in various ways, as is well addressed by [Baddeley et al. \(2005\)](#). Note 6
 7 that when N is a homogeneous Poisson process, the sizes $|C_i|$ of the cells are ap- 7
 8 proximately gamma distributed. Indeed, for a homogeneous Poisson process, the 8
 9 expected area of a Voronoi cell is equal to the reciprocal of the intensity of the 9
 10 process [[Meijering \(1953\)](#)], and simulation studies have shown that the area of a 10
 11 typical Voronoi cell is approximately gamma distributed [[Hinde and Miles \(1980\)](#), 11
 12 [Tanemura \(2003\)](#)]; these properties continue to hold approximately in the inho- 12
 13 mogeneous case provided that the conditional intensity is approximately constant 13
 14 near the location in question [[Barr and Diez \(2012\)](#), [Barr and Schoenberg \(2010\)](#)]. 14

15 The raw Voronoi residual in (2.1) will therefore tend to be distributed approx- 15
 16 imately like a modified gamma random variable. More specifically, the second 16
 17 term, $|C_i| \bar{\lambda}$, referred to in the stochastic geometry literature as the reduced area, 17
 18 is well approximated by a two-parameter gamma distribution with a rate of 3.569 18
 19 and a shape of 3.569 [[Tanemura \(2003\)](#)]. The distribution of the raw residuals is 19
 20 therefore approximated by 20
 21

$$22 (2.2) \quad r \sim 1 - X; \quad X \sim \Gamma(3.569, 3.569). 22$$

23 By contrast, for pixels over which the integrated conditional intensity is close to 23
 24 zero, the conventional raw residuals are approximately Bernoulli distributed. 24

25 The exact distributions of the Voronoi residuals are generally quite intractable 25
 26 due to the fact that the cells themselves are random, but approximations can be 26
 27 made using simulation. Consider the point process defined by the intensity func- 27
 28 tion $\lambda(x, y) = 200x^2|y|$ on the subset $S = [-1, 1] \times [-1, 1]$. Figure 1 presents a 28
 29 realization of the process along with the corresponding Voronoi tessellation (top 29
 30 panels) and a regular rectangular pixel grid (bottom panels). Two locations in S 30
 31 were selected for investigation: one with relatively high intensity, the other with 31
 32 relatively low intensity. Residual distributions were simulated by generating 5000 32
 33 point patterns from the model, identifying the pixel/cell occupied by the location 33
 34 of interest, then calculating the difference between the number of observed points 34
 35 and the number expected under the same model. 35
 36

37 It can be seen from Figure 1 that the distribution of Voronoi residuals under the 37
 38 null hypothesis is well approximated by distribution (2.2) at both the high inten- 38
 39 sity and low intensity locations. By comparison, the distribution of pixel residu- 39
 40 als is that of a Poisson distributed variable with intensity $\int_{G_i} \hat{\lambda} d\mu$, for pixel G_i , 40
 41 41
 42 42
 43 43

VORONOI RESIDUALS FOR POINT PROCESSES

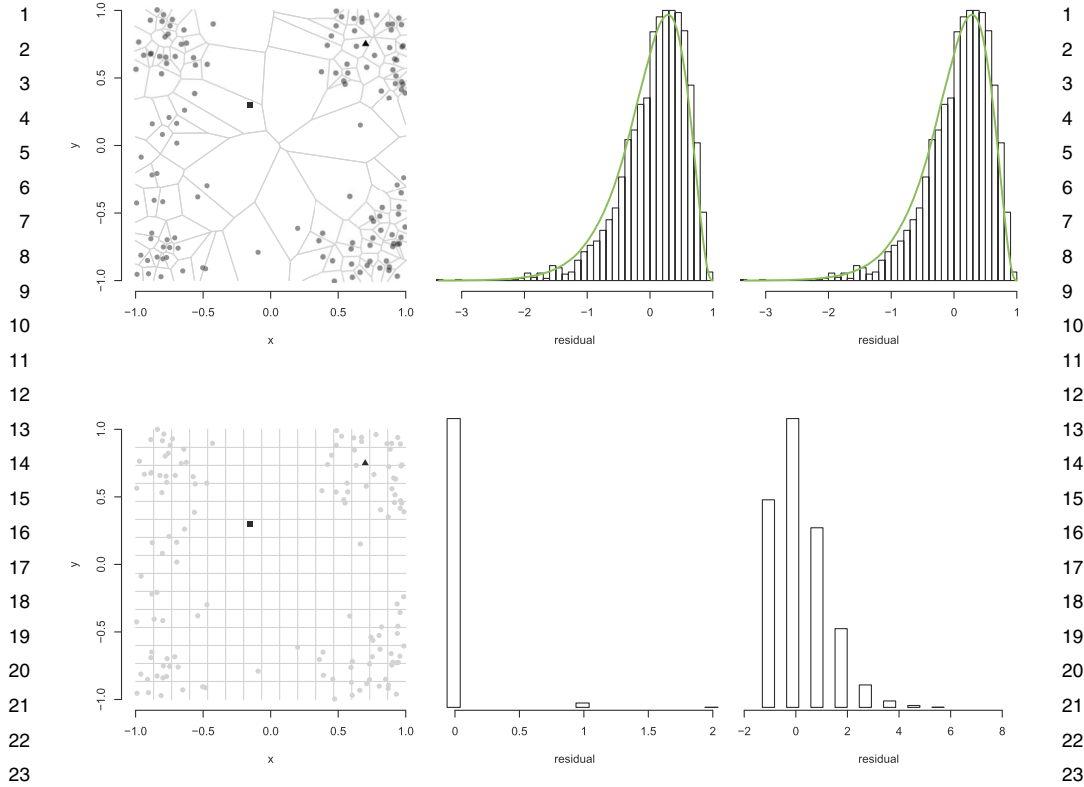


FIG. 1. Residual distributions under the null hypothesis based on a Voronoi tessellation (top panels) and a pixelated grid (bottom panels). The underlying point process is Poisson with intensity $\lambda(x, y) = 200x^2|y|$. The middle panels show results at location \blacksquare where $\lambda = 1.35$; the right panels show results at location \blacktriangle where $\lambda = 73.5$. The distribution (2.2) is overlaid for the top middle and top right plots.

centered to have mean zero. At the location where the intensity is high, this distribution is moderately skewed, but for the low intensity location the distribution becomes extremely skewed to the point of being effectively a two-valued random variable.

In addition to distribution (2.2) being a good approximation for the distribution of the Voronoi residuals at a given location across many realizations, it is also a close approximation for the distribution of all residuals for a single realization (see, e.g., the lower left plot in Figure 2). It is important to note that such residuals are not strictly independent of one another due to the nature of the tessellation, however, our assessment is that this dependence is fairly minor. See the discussion for additional comments on independence.

3. Voronoi residual plots. In this section the utility of Voronoi residuals will be demonstrated using a series of simulations of spatial Poisson processes. The

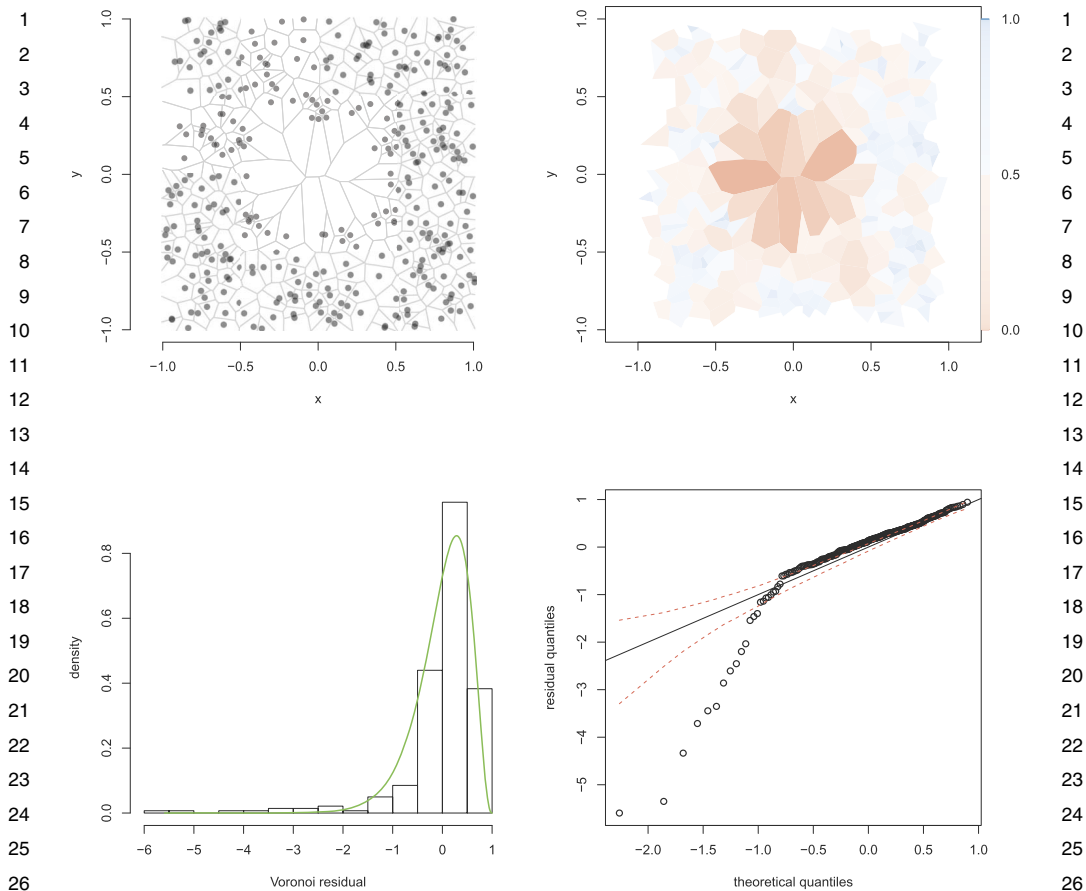


FIG. 2. Simulated Poisson process with intensity $\lambda(x, y) = 100\mathbf{1}_{\{|x|, |y| > 0.35\}}$ with Voronoi tessellation overlaid (top left), Voronoi residual plot for this simulation using a proposed intensity of $\lambda(x, y) = 100$ (top right), histogram of the Voronoi residuals, with the density of the reference distribution (2.2) overlaid (bottom left), quantile plot of the Voronoi residuals with respect to distribution (2.2), with pointwise 95% confidence limits obtained via simulation of the proposed model (bottom right). The color scale of the Voronoi residual plot is $\Phi^{-1}\{F(r)\}$, where F is the distribution function of (2.2). Tiles intersecting the boundary of the space are ignored.

simulations are random samples from a specified *generating model*. These simulations are then modeled, correctly or incorrectly, by a *proposed model*. Voronoi residuals are then computed and used to assess the degree to which the proposed model agrees with simulations.

3.1. *Correctly specified model.* We first consider the simplest case, where the proposed model is the same as the generating model. As a result, one expects residuals that are spatially unstructured and relatively small in magnitude, that is, the only variation should be due to sampling variability.

VORONOI RESIDUALS FOR POINT PROCESSES

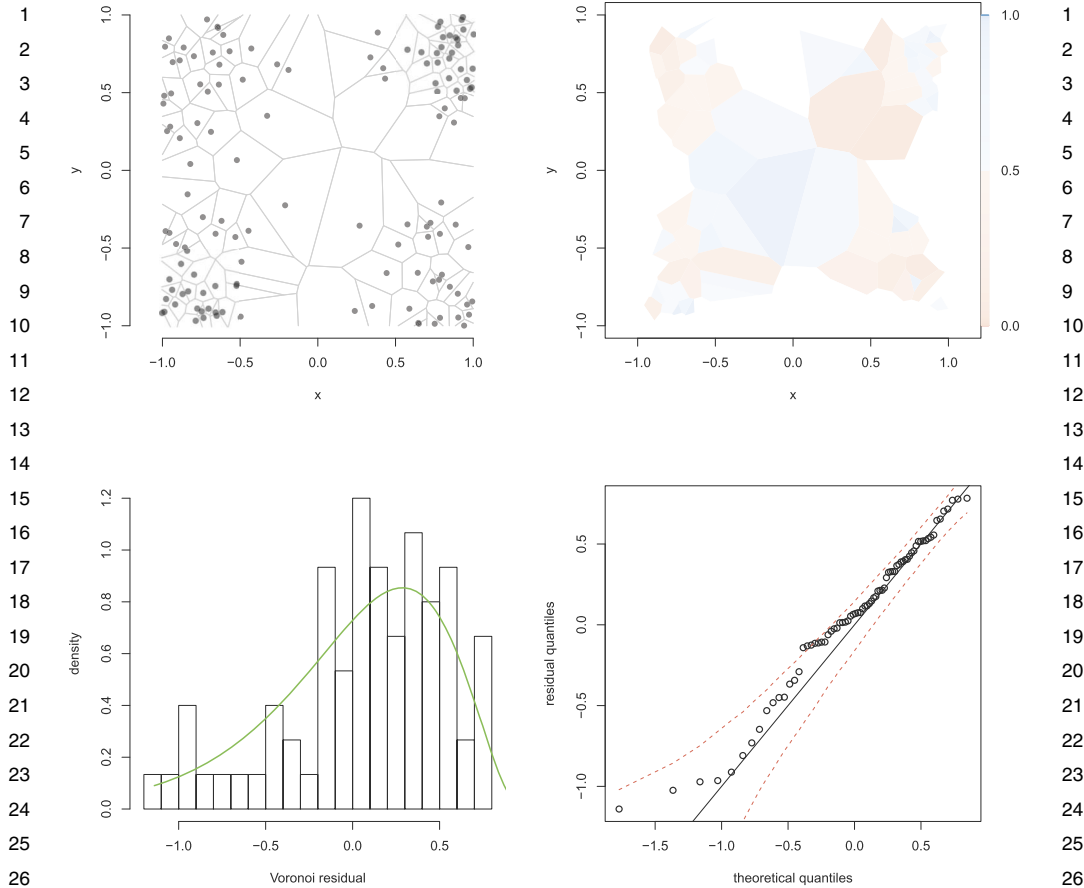


FIG. 3. Simulated Poisson process with intensity $\lambda(x, y) = 200x^2|y|$ with Voronoi tessellation overlaid (top left), Voronoi residual plot of this simulation (top right), histogram of the Voronoi residuals, with the density of the reference distribution (2.2) overlaid (bottom left), quantile plot of the Voronoi residuals with respect to the distribution (2.2), with pointwise 95% confidence limits obtained via simulation (bottom right). The color scale of the Voronoi residual plot in the top right is $\Phi^{-1}\{F(r)\}$, where F is the distribution function of (2.2). Tiles intersecting the boundary of the space are ignored, as the distribution of these tile areas may differ substantially from the gamma distribution.

Figure 3 shows a simulation of a spatial Poisson process with intensity $\lambda(x, y) = 200x^2|y|$ on the subset $S = [-1, 1] \times [-1, 1]$, along with its corresponding Voronoi tessellation.

In the Voronoi residual plot in the top right panel of Figure 3, each tile is shaded according to the value of the residual under the distribution function of the modified gamma distribution (2.2). The resulting p -values are then mapped to the color scale using an inverse Normal transformation. Thus, brightly shaded red areas indicate unusually low residuals, corresponding to areas where more points were

1 expected than observed (overprediction), and brightly shaded blue indicates un- 1
 2 usually high residuals, corresponding to areas of underprediction of seismicity. 2

3 The tiles in the Voronoi residual plot in Figure 3 range from light to moderate 3
 4 hues, representing residuals that are within the range expected under the reference 4
 5 distribution. Similarly, the histogram and quantile plot of the Voronoi residuals 5
 6 demonstrate that the distribution of the residuals is well approximated by distribu- 6
 7 tion (2.2). 7
 8

9 *3.2. Misspecification.* In order to evaluate the ability of Voronoi residuals to 9
 10 detect model misspecification, simulations were obtained using a generating model 10
 11 and then residuals were computed based on a different proposed model. The top 11
 12 left panel of Figure 2 displays a realization of a Poisson process with intensity 12
 13 $\lambda(x, y) = 100\mathbf{1}_{\{|X|, |Y| > 0.35\}}$. 13

14 The proposed model assumes a constant intensity across the space, $\hat{\lambda} = 100$. 14
 15 Because of the lack of points near the origin, the tiles near the origin are larger 15
 16 than expected under the proposed model and, hence, for such a cell C near the ori- 16
 17 gin, the integral $\int_C \hat{\lambda}(x, y) dx dy$ exceeds 1, leading to negative residuals of large 17
 18 absolute value. These unusually large negative residuals are evident in the Voronoi 18
 19 residual plot and clearly highlight the region where the proposed model overpre- 19
 20 dicted the intensity of the process. These residuals are also clear outliers in the left 20
 21 tail of the reference distribution of the residuals and, as a result, one sees deviations 21
 22 from the identity line in the quantile–quantile plot in Figure 2. 22
 23

24 **4. Statistical power.** We now consider the manner in which the statistical 24
 25 power of residual analysis using a Voronoi partition differs from that of a pixel 25
 26 partition. In the context of a residual plot, a procedure with low power would 26
 27 generate what appears to be a structureless residual plot even when the model is 27
 28 misspecified. To allow for an unambiguous comparison, here we focus on power in 28
 29 the formal testing setting: the probability that a misspecified model will be rejected 29
 30 at a given confidence level. 30
 31

32 *4.1. Probability Integral Transform.* As was discussed in Section 2, the dis- 32
 33 tribution of Voronoi residuals under the null hypothesis is well approximated by a 33
 34 modified gamma distribution, while the distribution of pixel residuals is that of a 34
 35 Poisson distributed variable with intensity $\int_{G_i} \hat{\lambda} d\mu$, for pixel G_i , centered to have 35
 36 mean zero. To establish a basis to compare the consistency between proposed mod- 36
 37 els and data for these two methods, we utilize the Probability Integral Transform 37
 38 (PIT) [Dawid (1984)]. The PIT was proposed to evaluate how well a probabilistic 38
 39 forecast is calibrated by assessing the distribution of the values that the observa- 39
 40 tions take under the cumulative distribution function of the proposed model. If the 40
 41 observations are a random draw from that model, a histogram of the PIT values 41
 42 should appear to be standard uniform. 42
 43

1 One condition for the uniformity of the PIT values is that the proposed model 1
 2 be continuous. This holds for Voronoi residuals, which are approximately gamma 2
 3 distributed under the null hypothesis, but not for the Poisson counts from pixel 3
 4 residuals. For such discrete random variables, randomized versions of the PIT have 4
 5 been proposed. Using the formulation in [Czado, Gneiting and Held \(2009\)](#), if F 5
 6 is the distribution function of the proposed discrete model, $X \sim F$ is an observed 6
 7 random count and V is standard uniform and independent of X , then U is standard 7
 8 uniform, where 8

$$9 \quad (4.1) \quad U = F(X - 1) + V(F(X) - F(X - 1)), \quad X \geq 1, \quad 9$$

$$10 \quad (4.2) \quad U = VF(0), \quad X = 0. \quad 10$$

11 The method can be thought of as transforming a discrete c.d.f. into a continuous 11
 12 c.d.f. by the addition of uniform random noise. 12
 13 13
 14 14

15 4.2. *Formal testing.* The PIT, both standard and randomized, provides a formal 15
 16 basis for testing two competing residual methods. For a given proposed model 16
 17 and a given realization of points, the histogram of PIT values, u_1, u_2, \dots, u_n , for 17
 18 each residual method should appear standard uniform if the proposed model is the 18
 19 same as the generating model. The sensitivity of the histogram to misspecifications 19
 20 in the proposed model reflects the statistical power of the procedure. 20
 21 21

22 There are many test statistics that could be used to evaluate the goodness of fit 22
 23 of the standard uniform distribution to the PIT values. Here we choose to use the 23
 24 Kolmogorov–Smirnov (K–S) statistic [[Massey \(1951\)](#)], 24

$$25 \quad D_n = \sup_n |F_n(x) - F(x)|, \quad 25$$

26 where $F_n(x)$ is the empirical c.d.f. of the sample and $F(x)$ is the c.d.f. of the stan- 26
 27 dard uniform. Since the Voronoi residuals of a given realization are not indepen- 27
 28 dent of one another, we use critical values from a simulated reference distribution 28
 29 instead of the limiting distribution of the statistic. 29
 30 30
 31 31

32 4.3. *Simulation design.* Two models were considered for the simulation study. 32
 33 The first was a homogeneous Poisson model on the unit square with intensity λ 33
 34 on \mathbb{R}^2 . The second was an inhomogeneous Poisson model with intensity 34
 35 35

$$36 \quad (4.3) \quad \lambda(x, y) = 100 + 200(\tilde{x}^\beta \tilde{y}^\beta c_\beta), \quad 36$$

37 on \mathbb{R}^2 , where $\tilde{x} = \frac{1}{2} - |x - \frac{1}{2}|$, $\tilde{y} = \frac{1}{2} - |y - \frac{1}{2}|$ and $\beta > 0$. The constant c_β is 37
 38 a scaling constant chosen so that the parenthetical term integrates to one. The result 38
 39 is a function that is symmetric about $x = 0.5$ and $y = 0.5$, reaches a maximum 39
 40 at $(0.5, 0.5)$, integrates to 300 regardless of the choice of β , and is reasonably 40
 41 flat along the boundary box. This final characteristic should allow the alternative 41
 42 approach to the boundary problem, described below, to be relatively unbiased. 42
 43 43

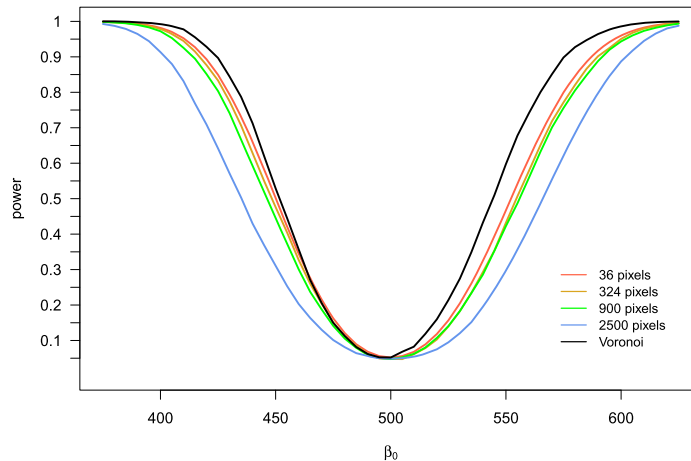
1 Additionally, it presents inhomogeneity similar to what might be expected in an 1
 2 earthquake setting. 2

3 The procedure for the inhomogeneous simulation was as follows. A point pat- 3
 4 tern was sampled from the true generating model, (4.3) with $\beta = 4$. For a given 4
 5 proposed model, (4.3) with $\beta = \beta_0$, and a fixed number of pixels n on the unit 5
 6 square $[0, 1]^2$, PIT values were calculated for the counts in each pixel, G_i . The 6
 7 empirical c.d.f. of the PIT transformed residuals was then compared to the c.d.f. 7
 8 of the standard uniform using the K–S test. After many iterations of this proce- 8
 9 dure, the proportion of iterations with an observed K–S statistic that exceeded the 9
 10 critical value served as the estimate of the power of the method. An analogous proce- 10
 11 dure was followed for the Voronoi partition, but with the PIT values calculated 11
 12 by evaluating the Voronoi residuals (2.1) under the gamma distribution (2.2). 12

13 The homogeneous simulation was conducted in the same manner, but drew sam- 13
 14 ples from a generating model of $\lambda = 500$ and compared them to estimates from a 14
 15 proposed model λ_0 . 15

16 It is known that Voronoi cells generated along the boundary of the space do not 16
 17 follow the same distribution as the interior cells. One recourse is to omit them from 17
 18 the analysis, as in Section 3. Here we consider realizations of the model (4.3) on 18
 19 the entire plane but consider only the distribution of all cells generated by points 19
 20 inside the unit square $[0, 1]^2$. 20
 21

22 4.4. *Results.* For the homogeneous model, Figure 4 shows the resulting esti- 22
 23 mated power curves for several pixel partitions, including $n \in \{36, 324, 900, 2500\}$. 23
 24 The power of each method was computed for a series of proposed models, 24
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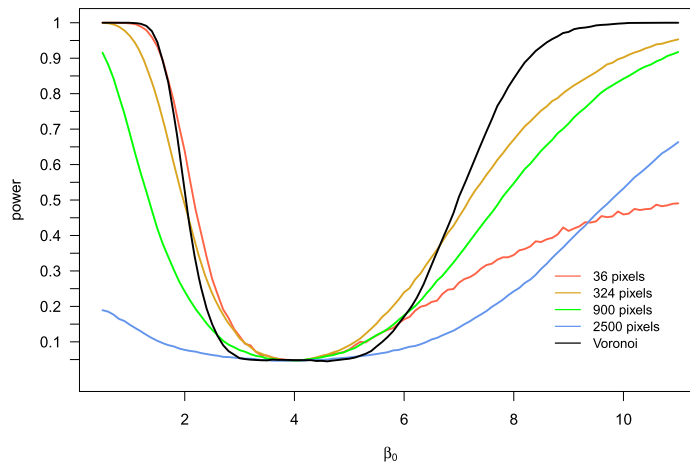


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 41 FIG. 4. *Estimated power curves for the K–S test based on five different pixel partitions as well*
 42 *the Voronoi tessellation. The model under consideration is homogeneous Poisson with a generating*
 43 *intensity of $\lambda = 500$.* 43

1 $\lambda_0 \in (375, 625)$. The best performance was by the method that used the Voronoi 1
 2 partition, which shows high power throughout the range of misspecification. For 2
 3 the pixel partitions, $n = 36$ had the highest power, but as the number of parti- 3
 4 tions increases, the K–S test loses its power to detect misspecification. This trend 4
 5 can be attributed to characteristic I: when the space is divided into many small 5
 6 cells, the integrated conditional intensity is very small and the distribution of the 6
 7 residuals is highly skewed. As a consequence, the majority of counts are zeros, so 7
 8 the majority of the PIT values are being generating by $VF(0)$ [equation (4.2)] and, 8
 9 thus, the resulting residuals have little power to detect model misspecification. The 9
 10 most powerful test in this homogeneous setting is in fact one with no partitioning, 10
 11 which is equivalent to the Number-test from the earthquake forecasting literature 11
 12 [Schorlemmer et al. (2007)]. 12

13 For the inhomogeneous case, power curves were computed for a series of proposed 13
 14 models of the form (5), with $\beta_0 \in (0.5, 11)$. The results are shown in Figure 14
 15 5. The power curve for the Voronoi method presents good overall performance, 15
 16 particularly when the model is substantially misspecified. The Voronoi residuals 16
 17 are not ideally powerful for detecting slight misspecification, however, perhaps 17
 18 because the partition itself is random, thus introducing some variation that is diffi- 18
 19 cult to distinguish from a small change in β . 19

20 Focusing only on the four pixel methods, the best performance is at $n = 324$ 20
 21 pixels. The poor performance of $n = 36$ in detecting the large positive misspec- 21
 22 ification is due to the fact that the model becomes more inhomogeneous as β_0 22
 23 increases, but that inhomogeneity is averaged over cells that are too large (the 23
 24 problem associated with characteristic II in Section 1). Meanwhile, the poor over- 24
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 41 FIG. 5. Estimated power curves for the K–S test based on five different pixel partitions as well 41
 42 as the Voronoi tessellation. The model under consideration is $\lambda(x, y) = 100 + 200(\tilde{x}^\beta \tilde{y}^\beta c)$, where 42
 43 $\tilde{x} = \frac{1}{2} - |x - \frac{1}{2}|$ and $\tilde{y} = \frac{1}{2} - |y - \frac{1}{2}|$. The generating model is $\beta = 4$. 43

1 all performance of $n = 2500$ is due to the same problem that exists in the homoge- 1
 2 neous setting, where the PIT values are dominated by the random uniform noise. 2

3 In applications such as earthquake modeling, the use of pixel methods often 3
 4 results in situations with extremely low intensities in some pixels, similar to the 4
 5 case considered here with $n = 2500$, but perhaps even more extreme. For instance, 5
 6 one of the most successful forecasts of California seismicity [Helmstetter, Kagan 6
 7 and Jackson (2007)] estimated rates in each of $n = 7682$ pixels in a model that 7
 8 estimated a total of only 35.4 earthquakes above M 4.95 over the course of a pre- 8
 9 diction experiment that lasted from 2006 to 2011. Estimated integrated rates were 9
 10 as low as 0.000007 in some pixels, and 58% of the pixels had integrated rates that 10
 11 were lower than 0.001. An immediate improvement could be made by aggregating 11
 12 the pixels, but this in turn will average over the strong inhomogeneity along fault 12
 13 lines in the model, which will lower power. For this reason, the Voronoi residual 13
 14 method may be better suited to the evaluation of seismicity models, as well as other 14
 15 processes that are thought to be highly inhomogeneous. 15

16 5. Application to models for Southern California seismicity. 16

17 5.1. *The ETAS model and the Hector Mine earthquake catalog.* In this section 17
 18 we apply Voronoi residual analysis to the spatial–temporal Epidemic-Type After- 18
 19 shock Sequence (ETAS) model of Ogata (1998), which has been widely used to 19
 20 describe earthquake catalogs. 20
 21

22 According to the ETAS model of Ogata (1998), the conditional intensity λ may 22
 23 be written 23

$$24 \quad (5.1) \quad \lambda(t, x, y) = \mu\rho(x, y) + \sum_{j:t_j < t} g(t - t_j, x - x_j, y - y_j; M_j), \quad 24$$

25 where $\rho(x, y)$ is a spatial density on the spatial observation region S , t and (x, y) 25
 26 are temporal and spatial coordinates, respectively, M_j is the magnitude of earth- 26
 27 quake j , and where the triggering function, g , may be given by one of several 27
 28 different forms. One form for g proposed in Ogata (1998) is 28

$$29 \quad (5.2) \quad g(t, x, y; M) = K(t + c)^{-p} e^{a(M - M_0)} (x^2 + y^2 + d)^{-q}, \quad 29$$

30 where M_0 is the lower magnitude cutoff for the catalog. 30
 31

32 There is considerable debate in the seismological community about the best 32
 33 method to estimate the spatial background rate $\rho(x, y)$ [Helmstetter and Werner 33
 34 (2012), Ogata (2011), Zhuang et al. (???)]. When modeling larger, regional cata- 34
 35 logs, ρ is often estimated by smoothing the largest events in the historical catalog 35
 36 [Ogata (1998)], and in such cases a very important open question is how (and 36
 37 how much) to smooth [Helmstetter, Kagan and Jackson (2007), Helmstetter and 37
 38 Werner (2012), Schoenberg (2003), Zhuang et al. (???)]. For a single earthquake- 38
 39 aftershock sequence, however, can one instead simply estimate ρ as constant 39
 40 within a finite, local area, as in Schoenberg (2013)? A prime catalog to investigate 40
 41 42 43

VORONOI RESIDUALS FOR POINT PROCESSES

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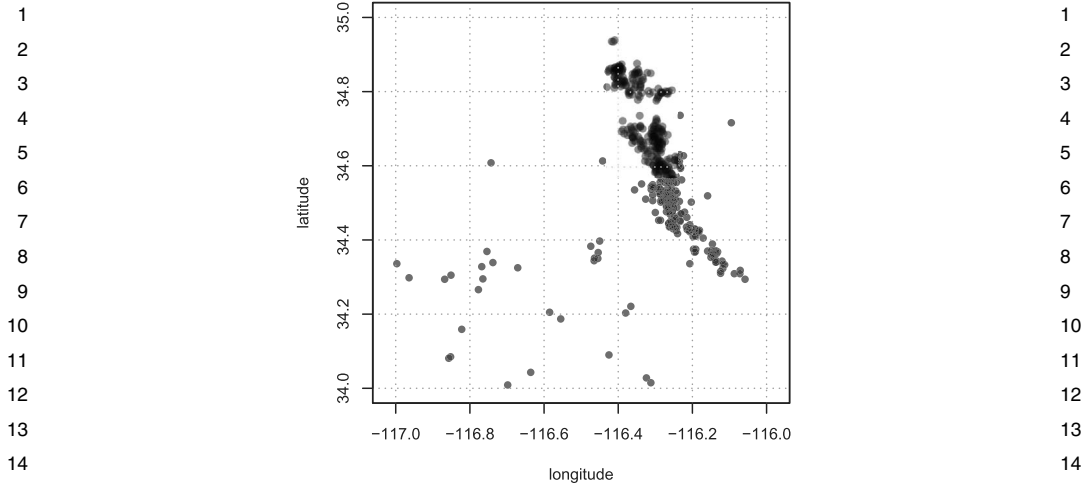


FIG. 6. Locations of the 520 earthquakes that make up the Hector Mine earthquake sequence. All events occurred between 10/16/1999 to 12/23/2000 in the Mojave Desert 35 miles east of Barstow, CA and were above magnitude 3.0.

these questions is the catalog of California earthquakes including and just after the 1999 Hector Mine earthquake (Figure 6). This data set was analyzed previously in Ogata, Jones and Toda (2003), and consists of the origin times, epicentral locations and magnitudes of the 520 earthquakes with magnitude at least 3.0, from latitude 34 to 35, longitude -116 to -117 , from 10/16/1999 to 12/23/2000, obtained from the Southern California Seismic Network (SCSN).

The parameters in the model were estimated by maximum likelihood estimation, using the progressive approximation technique described in Schoenberg (2013). For the purpose of this analysis, we focused on the purely spatial aspects of the residuals, and thus integrated over the temporal domain to enable planar visualization of the residuals. The result is a Voronoi tessellation of the spatial domain where for tile C_i , for the integral in equation (2.1), the estimated conditional intensity function $\hat{\lambda}(t, x, y)$ is numerically integrated over the spatial tile C_i and over the entire time domain from 10/16/1999 to 12/23/2000.

5.2. *Assessing the fit of the model.* We take two approaches to detecting inconsistencies between the ETAS model and the Hector Mine catalog: the inspection of plots for signs of spatial structure in the residuals and the evaluation of PIT histograms as overall indicators of goodness of fit.

Figure 7 shows residual plots based on both the pixel partition and the Voronoi tessellation. As in Figures 3 and 2, the magnitude of each residual cell is represented by the value that the residual takes under the distribution function appropriate to that model (Poisson or gamma), which is the PIT value discussed in Section 4.1. The pixel residual plot shows that the ETAS model estimates a much

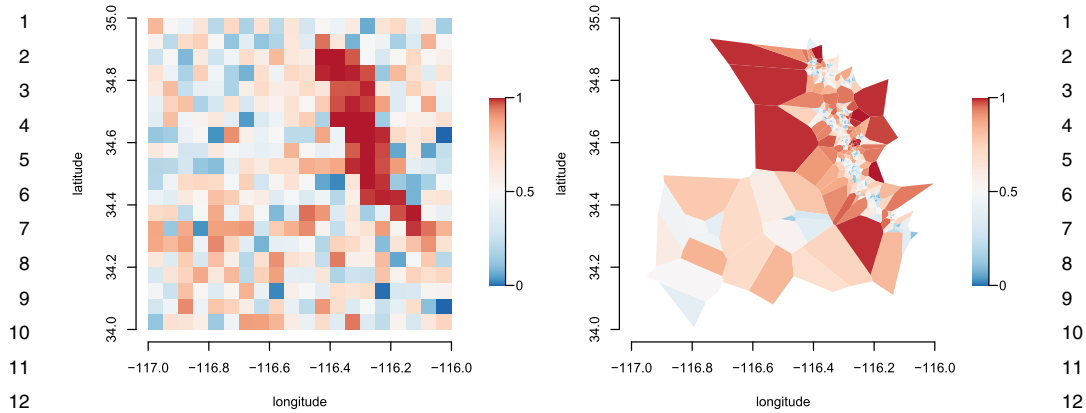


FIG. 7. Residual plots of fitting the ETAS model to the Hector Mine sequence using the pixel (left panel) and Voronoi partition (right panel). In both plots, the PIT value is transformed to a color scale using the inverse normal transformation. In the Voronoi plot, tiles intersecting the boundary of the space are ignored, as the distribution of these tile areas may differ substantially from the gamma distribution.

higher conditional intensity along the fault region running from $(-116.4, 33.9)$ to $(-116.1, 33.3)$ than was observed in the Hector Mine sequence. Away from the fault, the residuals are less structured, with no indication of model misspecification.

The Voronoi residual plot shares the same color scale as the pixel plot, but excludes the boundary cells by shading them white. Some strong overprediction is apparent in several large cells in the general area of the fault line, but the structure is more nuanced than that found in the pixel plot. Figure 8 provides an enlarged version of the fault region, showing systematic underprediction along the fault and overprediction on the periphery of the fault. Such structure in the residuals indicates that the ETAS model with uniform background rate may be oversmoothing. This suggests modeling the background rate $\rho(x, y)$ in equation (5.1) as inhomogeneous for Southern California seismicity, in agreement with Ogata (1998) who came to a similar conclusion for Japanese seismicity.

This structure is lost when the residuals are visualized using the pixel partition because the over- and underprediction are averaged over the larger fixed cells (a case of characteristic II). The true intensity in this region is likely highly spatially variable, which makes the spatially adaptive Voronoi partition a more appropriate choice.

As discussed in Section 4.1, PIT values will be uniformly distributed if the fitted model is correct, therefore, PIT histograms can be used as a means to assess general goodness of fit [Thorarinsdottir (2013)]. Figure 9 shows the distribution of the randomized PIT values resulting from the pixel partition (left panel) alongside the PIT values from the Voronoi partition (right panel). Both histograms show deviations from uniformity, suggesting model misspecification. The histogram resulting

VORONOI RESIDUALS FOR POINT PROCESSES

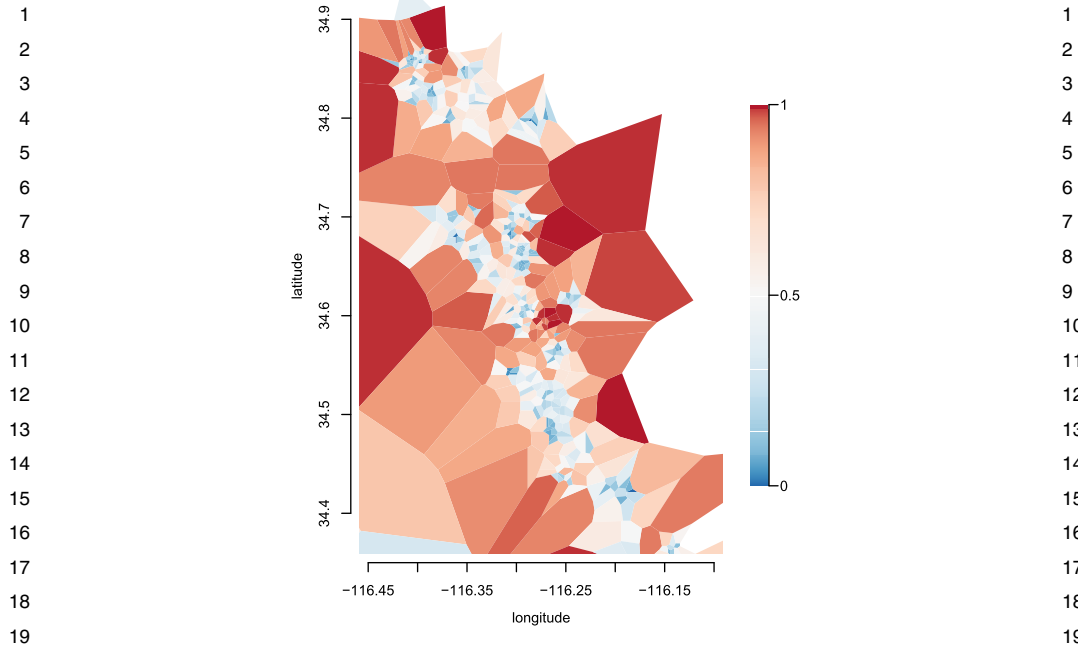


FIG. 8. Enlarged Voronoi residual plot focusing on the region of Figure 7 that covers the fault line, which runs from approximately $(-116.4, 34.85)$ to $(-116.25, 34.4)$. PIT values are transformed to a color scale using the inverse normal transformation and tiles intersecting the boundary of the space are ignored, as the distribution of these tile areas may differ substantially from the gamma distribution.

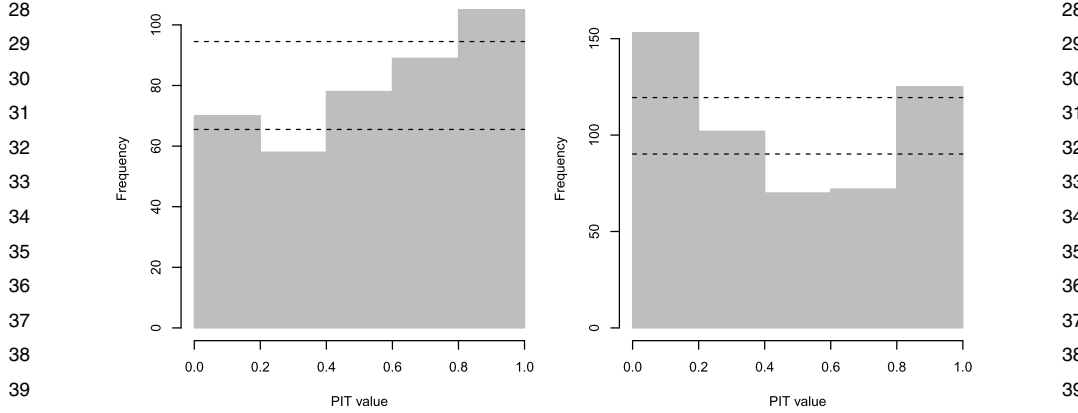


FIG. 9. Histograms of PIT values from the ETAS model and Hector Mine catalog based on the pixel partition (left panel) and the Voronoi tessellation (right panel). Dashed lines represent pointwise 90% coverage intervals calculated by simulation.

1 from the Voronoi partition suggests more deviation, however, which is consistent 1
2 with the finding in Section 4 that this partition is more sensitive to misspecification 2
3 than the pixel partition. It also suggests that there are areas of strong underpredic- 3
4 tion as well as overprediction, while the pixel PIT values primarily identify the 4
5 overprediction. The PIT histogram is a useful tool to visualize overall goodness of 5
6 fit, while the Voronoi residual plot seems to be more powerful for identifying areas 6
7 of poor fit. 7

8
9 **6. Discussion.** Applying Voronoi residual analysis to the ETAS model and 8
10 the Hector Mine earthquake sequence suggests model misspecification—over- 9
11 smoothing along the fault—that is undetected by other methods. These Voronoi 10
12 residuals may of course be used in tandem with standard, pixel-based residuals, 11
13 which may in turn be based on a judicious choice of pixel size, or perhaps using a 12
14 different spatially adaptive grid than the one proposed here. 13

15 The use of PIT values, both in residual plots and histograms, relies upon a read- 14
16 ily computable form for F , the distribution of residuals under the fitted model. 15
17 In the case of the Voronoi partition, this requires Monte Carlo integration of the 16
18 conditional intensity function over the irregular cells. This process can be time 17
19 consuming if the intensity function is sufficiently inhomogenous or if the number 18
20 of earthquakes in the catalog is very high. The PIT values of the pixel partition 19
21 are easier to compute and they benefit from a more straightforward interpretation 20
22 in the residual plot simply because the fixed grid is a more familiar configuration. 21
23 However, because of their improved statistical power, Voronoi residuals are more 22
24 informative and thus worth the additional computation and consideration. 23

25 The importance of selecting the size of the cell on which to compute a residual is 24
26 not unique to this PIT–K–S statistic testing environment. The discrepancy measure 25
27 proposed by Guan (2008) is defined on a Borel set of a given shape S . The author 26
28 emphasizes the importance of choosing an appropriate size for S (page 835) and 27
29 points out that if the cell is too small or too large, the power will suffer. A related 28
30 problem arises in the selection of the bandwidth of the kernel used to smooth a 29
31 residual field [Baddeley et al. (2005), Section 13 and discussion]. 30

31 Although we have focused on formal testing at the level of the entire collection 31
32 of residuals, testing could also be performed at the level of individual cells. For the 32
33 Voronoi partition, this extension is straightforward and is essentially what is being 33
34 done informally in the shaded residual plots. For any pixel partition, such testing 34
35 may be problematic, as any pixel with an integrated conditional intensity close to 35
36 zero would contain zero points with more than 95% probability, so any hypothesis 36
37 test with $\alpha = 0.05$ using a rejection interval would necessarily have a type I error 37
38 near 1. 38

39 Generating the partition using a tessellation of the observed pattern has advan- 39
40 tages and disadvantages. The advantage is that it is adaptive and requires no input 40
41 from the user regarding tuning parameters. The disadvantages are that some sam- 41
42 pling variability is induced by the random cell areas and that the residuals are de- 42
43 pendent, so techniques relying upon an i.i.d. assumption must be used cautiously. 43

1 A promising future direction is to consider residuals based on a model-based cen- 1
2 troidal Voronoi tessellation [Du, Faber and Gunzburger (1999)], which mitigates 2
3 characteristics I and II of the pixel method while providing a partition that creates 3
4 residuals that are independent of one another if the underlying model is Poisson. 4

5 It should also be noted that the standardization methods proposed in Baddeley 5
6 et al. (2005) may be used with Voronoi residuals or instead one may elect to plot 6
7 deviance residuals [Clements, Schoenberg and Schorlemmer (2011)] in each of the 7
8 Voronoi cells. In general, our experience suggests that the standardization chosen 8
9 for the residuals seems far less critical than the choice of grid. The results seem 9
10 roughly analogous to kernel density estimation, where the selection of a kernel 10
11 function is far less critical than the choice of bandwidth governing its range. 11
12

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15

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