Transformation survival models

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- The Cox proportional hazards (PH) regression model (Cox 1972) is the most common method for the analysis of survival data.
- Appeal: estimates of regression coefficients may be obtained without a parametric assumption about the baseline hazard function.
- Restriction: proportional hazards—covariates have multiplicative effects on the hazard function.
- Interpretation: a coefficient is a log-hazard ratio for a one-unit change in a covariate holding other covariates constant.

Bennett model: proportional odds

- The proportional-hazards assumption is often violated in applications. For example, sometimes it is reasonable to assume that the baseline and subject-specific hazard functions
- The proportional odds (PO) regression model (Bennett 1983)
 may be used in this case because it assumes that the odds of
 survival are proportional and as a result that the ratio of
 hazards approaches unity with time.
- Appeal: estimates of regression coefficients may be obtained without a parametric assumption about the baseline hazard function.
- Restriction: proportional odds—covariates have multiplicative effect on the odds of survival beyond time t. The ratio of the hazards converges to unity as time increases.
- Interpretation: a coefficient is a log-odds ratio for a one-unit change in a covariate holding other covariates constant.

become more similar with time.

Introduction
Motivating example

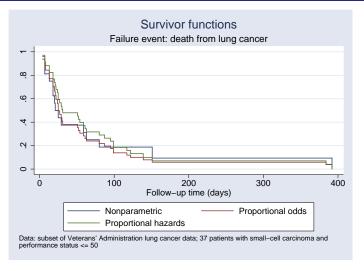


Figure: Survivor curves for lung-cancer patients with small-cell carcinoma who required frequent medical care: nonparametric, proportional-hazards, and proportional-odds estimators.



- Proportional hazards and proportional odds models are special cases of transformation survival models—a class of semiparametric linear transformation models, which relates an unknown transformation of the survival time linearly to covariates (Kalbfleisch and Prentice 2002, 241).
- Appeal: estimates of regression coefficients may still be obtained without a parametric assumption about the baseline hazard function as for the Cox model, but the assumption of proportional hazards is relaxed.
- Restriction: the shape of the subject-specific hazard is determined by the chosen transformation.
- Interpretation: coefficients no longer have intuitive interpretations except for the two special cases of PH and PO.



Semiparametric linear transformation survival model:

$$H(T) = -\beta^{\top} \mathbf{Z} + \epsilon, \tag{1}$$

where T is the failure time, \mathbf{Z} is a vector of fixed (time-invariant) covariates, β is a vector of unknown coefficients, ϵ is an error term with a completely known distribution, and $H(\cdot)$ is an completely unspecified increasing function.

- When ϵ has an extreme-value distribution, (1) reduces to the proportional hazards model.
- When ϵ has a standard logistic distribution, (1) reduces to the proportional odds model.
- Various transformation models may be generated by specifying different distributions for ϵ .



• There is a formulation equivalent to (1) based on the cumulative hazard function:

$$\Lambda(t|\mathbf{Z}) = G(\exp(\beta^{\top}\mathbf{Z})\Lambda_0(t)), \tag{2}$$

where $\Lambda(t|\mathbf{Z})$ and $\Lambda_0(t)$ are the subject-specific and baseline cumulative hazard functions and $G(\cdot)$ is a completely specified continuous increasing function.

• Formula (2) can be extended to allow for time-varying covariates $\mathbf{Z}(t)$ and to multiple and recurrent events by considering a formulation similar to (2) for a cumulative intensity function of a counting process N(t) recording the number of events occurred by time t.



- Zeng and Lin (2007) considered two functions for $G(\cdot)$ in (2).
- Box-Cox transformation, $BoxCox(\rho)$:

$$G(x) = \frac{(1+x)^{\rho} - 1}{\rho}, \rho \ge 0$$
 (3)

• Logarithmic transformations, Log(r):

$$G(x) = \frac{\ln(1+rx)}{r}, r \ge 0 \tag{4}$$

- G(x) = x, with $\rho = 1$ in (3) or r = 0 in (4), leads to the proportional hazards model.
- $G(x) = \ln(1+x)$, with $\rho = 0$ in (3) or r = 1 in (4), leads to the proportional odds model.



- Nonparametric maximum likelihood: an unknown failure distribution is treated as an infinite-dimensional parameter.
- The likelihood is maximized over β and cumulative-hazard jump sizes Λ_k at each observed failure time t_k for $k=1,2,\ldots,K$
- Zeng and Lin (2007) showed that nonparametric maximum likelihood estimators (NPMLEs) of β and Λ_k s are consistent, asymptotically normal, and asymptotically efficient.
- The maximization is computationally intensive, especially for a large number of failures.
- A number of algorithms exist for the computation of NPMLEs of β and Λ_k s.
- One of them is the expectation-maximization (EM) algorithm.



The igencox command fits transformation survival models for failure-time data. Transformation survival models generalize the Cox model to allow for nonproportional hazards. The supported transformations are the class of Box-Cox transformations, $BoxCox(\rho)$, and the class of logarithmic transformations, Log(r). Special cases include the Cox proportional hazards model with BoxCox(1) or Log(0), and the proportional odds model with BoxCox(0) or Log(1).

- Box-Cox and logarithmic transformations
- Proportional hazards models with BoxCox(1) or Log(0)
- Proportional odds models with BoxCox(0) or Log(1)
- Time-varying covariates
- Single-event clustered data with a Gaussian random effect or Gaussian frailties
- Multiple dependent events
- Recurrent data



```
igenset timevar ... [, \underline{f}ailure(failvar) ...]
igencox [varlist] [if] [in]
[, \underline{transf}orm(\underline{box}cox|\underline{log}arithmic [#]) ...]
```

Quick examples:

Load and declare survival data

```
. use mydata
. igenset time, failure(died)
```

Fit proportional hazards model:

```
. igencox age. igencox age, transform(boxcox 1). igencox age, transform(logarithmic 0)
```

Fit proportional odds model:

```
. igencox age, transform(boxcox 0)
. igencox age, transform(log 1)
```

Fit a Box-Cox model with $\rho = 1.5$

. igencox age, transform(boxcox 1.5)

Fit a logarithmic model with r = 0.5

. igencox age, transform(log 0.5)



```
igenset timevar ..., id(id) [failure(failvar) ...]
igencox [varlist] [if] [in], cluster(varname)
        [transform(boxcox|logarithmic [#]) ...]
```

Quick examples:

Load and declare survival data

- . use *mydata*
- . igenset time, failure(died) id(id)

Fit proportional hazards model with a Gaussian frailty for subject:

- . igencox age, cluster(subject)
- . igencox age, cluster(subject) transform(boxcox 1)
- . igencox age, cluster(subject) transform(logarithmic 0)

Fit proportional odds model with a Gaussian frailty for subject:

- . igencox age, cluster(subject) transform(boxcox 0)
- . igencox age, cluster(subject) transform(log 1)

Fit a random-effects Box-Cox model with ho=1.5

. igencox age, cluster(subject) transform(boxcox 1.5)

Fit a random-effects logarithmic model with r = 0.5

. igencox age, cluster(subject) transform(log 0.5)



```
igenset timevar ..., id(id) failtype(failtypevar) [failure(failvar)
...]
igencox [varlist] [if] [in],
        [transform#(boxcox|logarithmic [#])]
        [failcov#(varlist[, add]) ...]
```

Quick examples:

Consider a study investigating the effect of a treatment on a disease relapse (type==1 event) and death (type==2 event) of patients.

Load and declare survival data

```
. use mydata
. igenset time, failure(died) id(id) failtype(type)
```

Fit proportional hazards model for both types of events:

```
. igencox treat
. igencox treat, transform(boxcox 1)
. igencox treat, transform(logarithmic 0)
```

Fit a proportional hazards model for relapses and proportional odds model for deaths:

```
. igencox treat, transform1(boxcox 1) transform2(log 1)
```

Above, include an additional covariate x to model relapses:

. igencox treat, transform1(boxcox 1) transform2(log 1) failcov1(x, add)



Use predict after igencox to compute

baseline and covariate-adjusted survivor functions:

```
. igencox ..., baseq(varname) ...
. predict varname , basesurv
. predict varname , survival [at(varname=# [...])]
```

baseline and covariate-adjusted cumulative hazard functions:

```
. igencox ..., baseq(varname) ...
. predict varname , basechazard
. predict varname , cumhaz [at(varname=# [...])]
```

standard errors of the survivor or cumulative hazard functions:

```
. igencox ..., baseq(varname) savesigma(filename) ...
. predict varname , basesurv|basechazard se(newvarname)
. predict varname , survival|cumhaz se(newvarname) [at(varname=# [...])]
```



 unconditional or conditional (on random-effects) survivor or cumulative hazard functions for single-event clustered data:

```
. igencox ..., cluster(varname) baseq(varname) ...
. predict varname , ...
. predict varname , conditional [ebayes(varname | #)] ...
```

 failure-specific survivor or cumulative hazard functions for multiple-failure data:

```
. igencox ..., baseq(varname) ...
. predict varname , failtype(failtypevar=#) ...
```

 survivor or cumulative hazard functions conditional on another failure occurring at a specific time for multiple-failure data:

```
. igencox ..., baseq(varname) ...
. predict varname , failtype(failtypevar=#) condition(failtypevar=# time=#) ...
```



Example

- Veterans' Administration lung cancer trial (Prentice 1973)
- 97 patients without prior therapy
- Covariates: performance status and tumor type
- . use lungcancer
- . describe

Contains data from lungcancer.dta

vars: 5 size: 582

23 Jul 2014 11:24

variable name	storage type	display format	value label	variable label
id time died performance tumor	byte int byte byte	%9.0g %9.0g %9.0g %9.0g %10.0g	tumorlab	Observation identifier Survival time (days) Death indicator Performance status measured between 0 and 100 (%) Lung-cancer tumors: large-cell,
				adeno, small-cell, and squamous-cell carcinomas

Sorted by:



- Zeng and Lin (2006) fit logarithmic Log(r) and $BoxCox(\rho)$ transformation models for different values of r and ρ with performance and tumor as covariates.
- The likelihood is maximized for the logarithmic model at r = 0.83, and is very close to that for r = 1.
- I reproduce their results for r=0 (proportional hazards model) and r=1 (proportional odds model) using igencox.
- I also fit the Cox PH model using stcox for comparison.

• Declare survival data using stset:

. stset time, failure(died)

last observed exit t =

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• Fit a Cox model using stcox:

```
. stcox performance i.tumor, nolog
        failure d: died
   analysis time _t: time
Cox regression -- Breslow method for ties
No. of subjects =
                                                   Number of obs
                                                                            97
                            97
No. of failures =
                            91
Time at risk
                         10879
                                                   LR chi2(4)
                                                                         33.65
Log likelihood = -312.35474
                                                   Prob > chi2
                                                                        0.0000
          _t
               Haz. Ratio
                            Std. Err.
                                                P>|z|
                                                          [95% Conf. Interval]
                                           z
 performance
                 .9759256
                            .0057701
                                        -4.12
                                                0.000
                                                          .9646817
                                                                      .9873006
       tumor
      Adeno
                 2.342992
                            .8149609
                                         2.45
                                                0.014
                                                          1.184945
                                                                      4.632799
 Small-cell
                 1.729192
                            .5550104
                                         1.71
                                                0.088
                                                          .9218008
                                                                      3.243764
                  .807025
                            .2803153
                                                0.537
      Squam
                                        -0.62
                                                           .408533
                                                                      1.594215
```

. estimates store stcox



Declare survival data using igenset:

. igenset time, failure(died)

last observed exit t =

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Fit proportional odds and proportional hazards models using igencox:

No. of subjects = 97
No. of failures = 91
Time at risk = 10879

Time ut libr 10075

Log likelihood = -399.164425

Wald chi2(4) = 41.35 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000

No. of obs =

_t	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf.	Interval]
performance	0531533	.0101397	-5.24	0.000	0730267	0332799
tumor 1 2 3	1.313782 1.382667 1813802	.5542236 .5237982 .5876395	2.37 2.64 -0.31	0.018 0.008 0.758	.2275237 .3560419 -1.333132	2.40004 2.409293 .970372

- . estimates store igencoxPO
- . qui igencox performance i.tumor, transform(logarithmic 0)
- . estimates store igencoxPH



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• Compare coefficients:

. estimates table stcox igencoxPH igencoxPO, b(%9.3f) se(%9.3f) p(%9.3f)

Variable	stcox	igencoxPH	igencoxP0	
performance	-0.024 0.006	-0.024 0.006	-0.053 0.010	
	0.000	0.000	0.000	
tumor				
1	0.851	0.851	1.314	
	0.348	0.348	0.554	
	0.014	0.014	0.018	
2	0.548	0.548	1.383	
	0.321	0.321	0.524	
	0.088	0.088	0.008	
3	-0.214	-0.214	-0.181	
	0.347	0.347	0.588	
	0.537	0.537	0.758	

legend: b/se/p



• Compare models:

. estimates stats igencoxPH igencoxPO Akaike's information criterion and Bayesian information criterion

Model	Obs	11(null)	ll(model)	df	AIC	BIC
igencoxPH	97		-403.3547	4	814.7095	825.0083
igencoxPO	97		-399.1644	4	806.3288	816.6277

Note: N=Obs used in calculating BIC; see [R] BIC note

- Compute covariate-adjusted survivor functions and their standard errors using predict.
- Option baseq() must be specified with igencox to compute a survivor function (or cumulative hazard).
- Option savesigma() must be specified with igencox to compute standard errors.

```
. qui igencox performance i.tumor, transform(log 1) baseq(q) savesigma(sigma)
```

- . predict double surv80, survival at(performance=80 tumor=0) se(se80)
- . predict double surv40, survival at(performance=40 tumor=2) se(se40)

• Compute 95% pointwise confidence intervals:

```
. qui gen double tmp = 1.96*se80/(surv80*log(surv80))
. qui gen ci180 = surv80^exp(-tmp)
. qui gen ciu80 = surv80^exp(tmp)
. qui replace tmp = 1.96*se40/(surv40*log(surv40))
. qui gen ci140 = surv40^exp(-tmp)
. qui gen ciu40 = surv40^exp(tmp)
```

 Plot covariate-adjusted survivor functions and their confidence intervals:



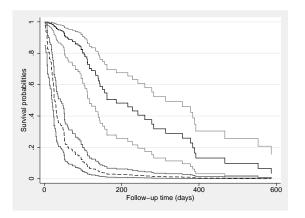


Figure: Estimated survivor curves for the lung-cancer patients: the upper three curves correspond to the point estimates and 95% confidence limits for a subject with a large-cell carcinoma and performance status of 80%, and the lower curves to those of a patient with a small-cell carcinoma and performance status of 40%.



Example

- Diabetic Retinopathy Study (Huster et al. 1989) evaluating the ability of laser photocoagulation to delay visual loss among patients with diabetic retinopathy
- 197 high-risk patients, 394 observations on times to visual loss (visual acuity < 5/200)
- Covariates: laser treatment and onset of diabetes
- Treatment is randomly applied to one of the eyes

Transformation survival models

Examples: Single-event clustered data
Diabetic Retinopathy Study

. use drs
(Visual-Loss Data from Diabetic Retinopathy Study)

. describe

Contains data from drs.dta
obs: 394
Visual-Loss Data from Diabetic
Retinopathy Study
vars: 6 21 Jul 2014 14:16
size: 5,122 (_dta has notes)

variable name	storage type	display format	value label	variable label
id	int	%9.0g		Subject identifier
obsid	float	%9.0g		Observation identifier
time	float	%9.0g		Time to visual loss measured as visual activity less than 5/200
failure	byte	%9.0g		Failure indicator
treat	byte	%9.0g		Laser treatment (0: not received, 1: received)
onset	byte	%9.0g		Onset of diabetics (0: juvenile onset, 1: adult onset)

Sorted by:



- Zeng, Lin, and Lin (2008) fit a logarithmic Log(r) transformation model for different values of r = 0, 0.1, ..., 1 with treat, onset, and their interaction as covariates.
- The likelihood is maximized at r = 0.3.
- Below I reproduce their results for a logarithmic model with r = 0.3.

Declare survival data using igenset

• Fit a logarithmic model with r = 0.3:

```
. igencox treat##onset, cluster(id) transform(log 0.3) baseq(bq) nolog
         failure d: failure
   analysis time _t: time
                 id: obsid
Generalized Cox regression -- Breslow method for ties
Cluster: id
Transformation: Logarithmic(.3)
No. of subjects =
                           394
                                                      No. of obs
                                                                           394
No. of failures =
                          155
Time at risk
               = 14018.24001
                                                   Wald chi2(4)
                                                                         31.25
                                                   Prob > chi2
Log likelihood = -1002.024549
                                                                        0.0000
                                                P>|z|
                                                          [95% Conf. Interval]
          _t
                    Coef.
                            Std. Err.
                                           z
                -.5640272
                            .2379078
                                        -2.37
                                                0.018
                                                         -1.030318
                                                                     -.0977365
     1.treat
     1.onset
                  .446635
                             .256513
                                         1.74
                                                0.082
                                                         -.0561213
                                                                      .9493913
 treat#onset
        1 1
                -1.073225
                            .3850929
                                        -2.79
                                                0.005
                                                         -1.827993
                                                                     -.3184567
     /sigma2
                  1.24072
                            .4326958
                                                          .3926516
                                                                      2.088788
```

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- Compute covariate-adjusted survivor functions:
 - . predict s00, basesurv
 - . predict s10, survival at(treat=1 onset=0)
 - . predict s01, survival at(treat=0 onset=1)
 - . predict s11, survival at(treat=1 onset=1)
- Plot covariate-adjusted survivor functions:
 - . twoway line s00 s10 s01 s11 $_{
 m t}$, sort connect(J J J J) title("Survivor functions")

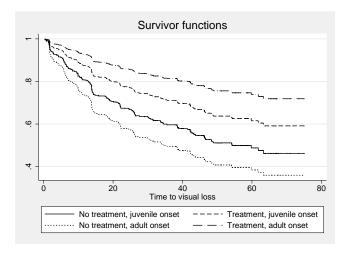


Figure: Survivor functions for treated and untreated eyes for patients with juvenile-onset and adult-onset diabetes.



Example

- Colon-cancer study evaluating adjuvant therapy on cancer relapse and death for patients with resected colon cancer (Zeng and Lin 2007)
- 315 patients in the observation group and 304 patients in Lev+5-FU group
- 268 cancer relapses and 192 deaths
- \bullet Covariates: Lev+5-FU treatment, time of surgery >20, depth of invasion (serosa or not), number of nodes > 4

Examples: Multiple-events data Colon-cancer data

- . use coloncancer
 (Colon-Cancer Data)
- . describe

Contains data from coloncancer.dta

obs: 1,238 vars: 8 size: 14,856 Colon-Cancer Data 23 Jul 2014 12:30 (_dta has notes)

variable name	storage type	display format	value label	variable label
id	float	%9.0g		Subject identifier
type	byte	%9.0g		Failure type (1: cancer recurrence, 2: death)
time	int	%9.0g		Time to event: cancer recurrence or death, in days
failure	byte	%9.0g		Failure indicator
treat	byte	%9.0g		Lev+5-FU treatment (0: no treatment, 1: treatment)
surgery20	byte	%9.0g		<pre>Surgery took place >20 days prior to randomization (0: <=20, 1:</pre>
serosa	byte	%9.0g		Depth of invasion (0: submucosa or muscular layer, 1: serosa)
nodes4	byte	%9.0g		Number of nodes greater than 4 (0: <=4, 1: > 4)

- Zeng and Lin (2007) fit a joint model for the two endpoints by characterizing the dependence between cancer relapse and death through a Gaussian random effect.
- They consider a set of different transformation models.
- Below I use igencox to fit the joint model for two types of events assuming proportional hazards.

• Declare multiple-failure survival data using igenset:

```
. igenset time, failure(failure) id(id) failtype(type)
type = 1
               id: id
    failure event: failure != 0 & failure < .
obs. time interval: (time[_n-1], time]
 exit on or before: failure
      619 total observations
       0 exclusions
     619 observations remaining, representing
     619 subjects
      269 failures in single-failure-per-subject data
   472256 total analysis time at risk and under observation
                                            at risk from t =
                                  earliest observed entry t =
                                      last observed exit t =
type = 2
               id: id
    failure event: failure != 0 & failure < .
obs. time interval: (time[ n-1], time]
 exit on or before: failure
      619 total observations
       0 exclusions
     619 observations remaining, representing
     619 subjects
     192 failures in single-failure-per-subject data
   554878 total analysis time at risk and under observation
                                             at risk from t =
                                  earliest observed entry t =
                                       last observed exit t =
```

 Fit a joint proportional hazards model for cancer relapse and death:

```
. igencox treat surgery20 serosa nodes4, transform(log 0) baseq(bq) nolog
         failure _d: failure
  analysis time _t: time
                 id: id
 failure type: type
Generalized Cox regression -- Breslow method for ties
Failure types:
        fail1: type = 1
        fail2: type = 2
Transformation:
        fail1: Logarithmic(0)
        fail2: Logarithmic(0)
No. of subjects =
                                                       No. of obs =
                                                                           1238
No. of failures =
                           461
                                            No. of failure types
                                                                              2
Time at risk =
                       1027134
                                                                         467.00
                                                    Wald chi2(9)
Log likelihood = -2895.093543
                                                    Prob > chi2
                                                                         0.0000
                            Std. Err.
                                                           [95% Conf. Interval]
          _t
                    Coef.
                                                P>|z|
fail1
       treat.
                -1.481461
                             .234295
                                        -6.32
                                                0.000
                                                          -1.940671
                                                                      -1.022251
   surgerv20
                -.6888368
                            .2179453
                                        -3.16
                                                0.002
                                                          -1.116002
                                                                      -.2616718
      serosa
                 2.244092
                            .2219512
                                        10.11
                                                0.000
                                                          1.809076
                                                                       2.679108
      nodes4
                 2.893161
                            .2053575
                                        14.09
                                                0.000
                                                           2.490667
                                                                       3.295654
fail2
       treat.
                -.7216884
                            .2803086
                                        -2.57
                                                0.010
                                                          -1.271083
                                                                      -.1722937
   surgerv20
                -.6427658
                            .2510799
                                        -2.56
                                                0.010
                                                          -1.134873
                                                                      -.1506583
                 1.937907
                            .2851385
                                         6.80
                                                0.000
                                                           1.379046
                                                                       2.496768
      serosa
      nodes4
                 3.096585
                            .2401568
                                        12.89
                                                0.000
                                                           2.625886
                                                                       3.567284
                 11.63789
                            1.170385
                                                           9.343973
                                                                        13.9318
     /sigma2
```

• Compute event-specific survivor functions:

```
. predict basesurv1, basesurv failtype(type=1)
. predict basesurv2, basesurv failtype(type=2)
```

Plot event-specific survivor functions:

```
. twoway line basesurv1 basesurv2 _t, sort connect(J J) ///
> title(Baseline survivor functions)
```

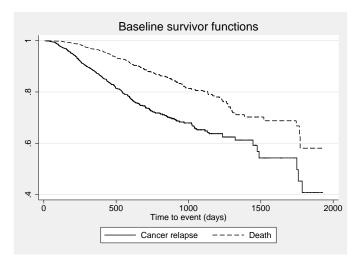


Figure: Baseline survivor functions for cancer relapse and death.



 Compute treatment-group survivor functions for death from colon cancer given relapses of cancer at 200 and 500 days:

```
. predict surv0, survival failtype(type=2) condition(type=1 time=200) ///
> at(treat=1 surgery20=0 serosa=0 nodes4=0)
. predict surv1, survival failtype(type=2) condition(type=1 time=500) ///
> at(treat=1 surgery20=0 serosa=0 nodes4=0)
```

• Plot the survivor functions:

```
. twoway line surv0 surv1 _t, sort connect(J J) ///
```

```
> title("Colon-cancer survivor functions" "for treated patients with cancer relapse
```

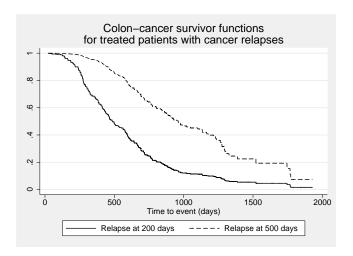


Figure: Colon-cancer survivor functions of treated patients given relapses at 200 and 500 days.

• The first version of igencox is available at:

```
. net describe igencox, from(http://fmwww.bc.edu/RePEc/bocode/i)
. net install igencox, from(http://fmwww.bc.edu/RePEc/bocode/i)
```

- The version of igencox above fits transformation models of type (1)—single-failure models with iid observations and fixed covariates.
- Extensions to time-varying covariates, clustered data, and multiple and recurrent failures are forthcoming.

Bennett, S. (1983). Analysis of survival data by the proportional odds model. *Statist. Med.*, **2**, 273–277.

Cox, D. R. (1972). Regression models and life-tables (with discussion). J. R. Statist. Soc. B, **34**, 187–220.

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