



Week 8: Random variables & Sampling

Elena & Willa
10/19/2020

Today's agenda



Warm-up



Random variables and distributions



Sampling distributions

Random variables

So far, we have focused on directly assigning values to variables.

```
num <- 1
```

```
df <- penguins.csv
```

```
names <- c("Willa", "Elena", "Roya")
```

Random variables

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What is a random variable?

Random variables

“A variable that takes on different numerical values as a result of a random experiment (eg. flipping a coin) or random measurements (eg. randomly sampling height in the population).”

Random variables

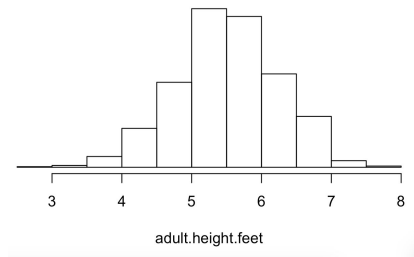
“A variable that takes on different numerical values as a result of a random experiment (eg. flipping a coin) or random measurements (eg. randomly sampling height in the population).”

Randomly tossing a coin

Flip a coin and tally how many times it lands on heads and tails.

Heads	Tails
total 9	total 7

Randomly sampling height in a population



A random variable has a set of possible values, but the outcome each time is unknown.

Random variables

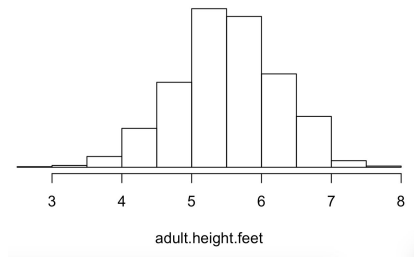
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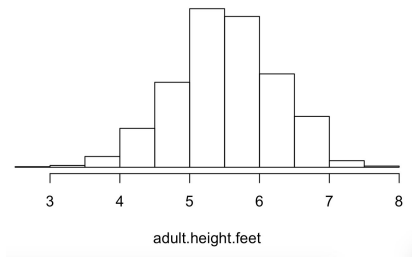
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- Characterizing the distribution of the variable
- Statistical inference
- Predicting other outcomes from their values
- Comparing distributions amongst populations

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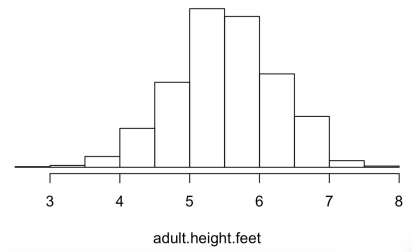
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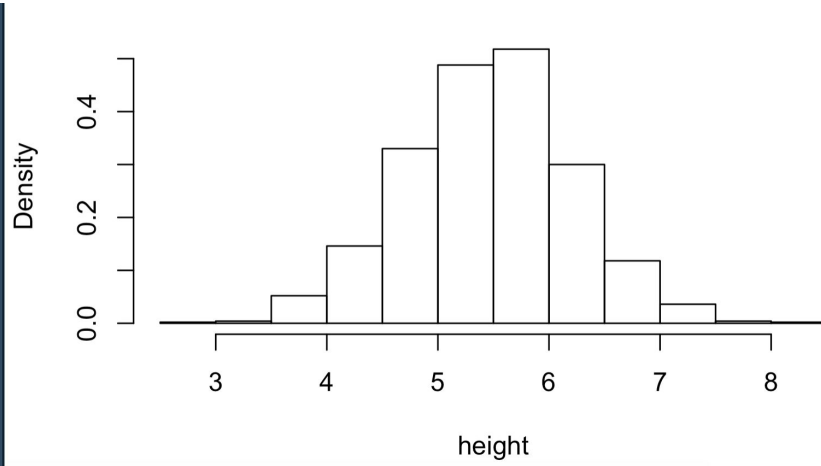
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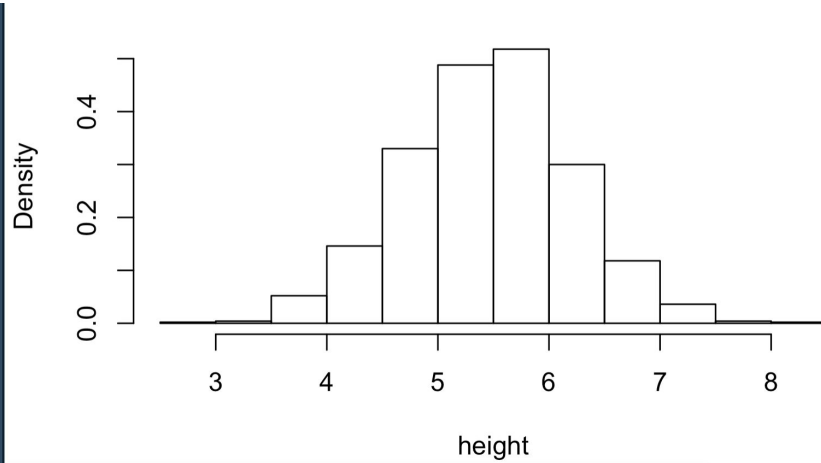
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Understanding the definition & properties of random variables becomes important when you are doing data analysis.

How do we define a random variable ?



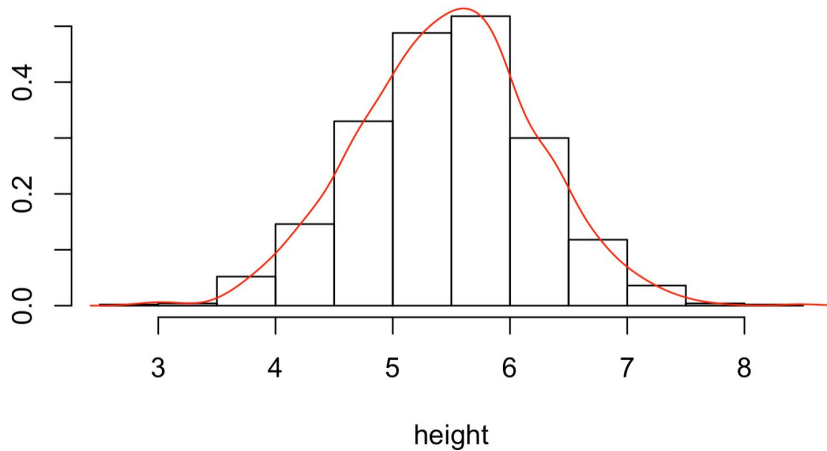
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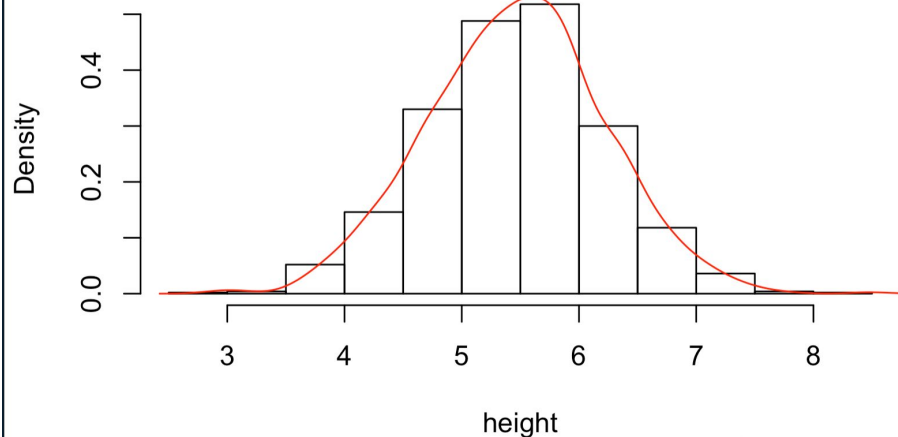
Density



Define our variable with a function (eg. normally distributed).

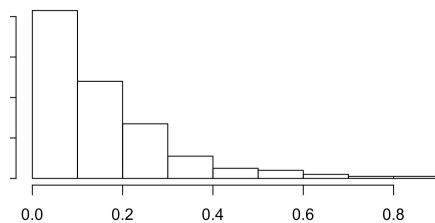
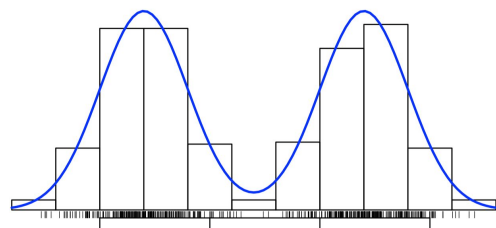
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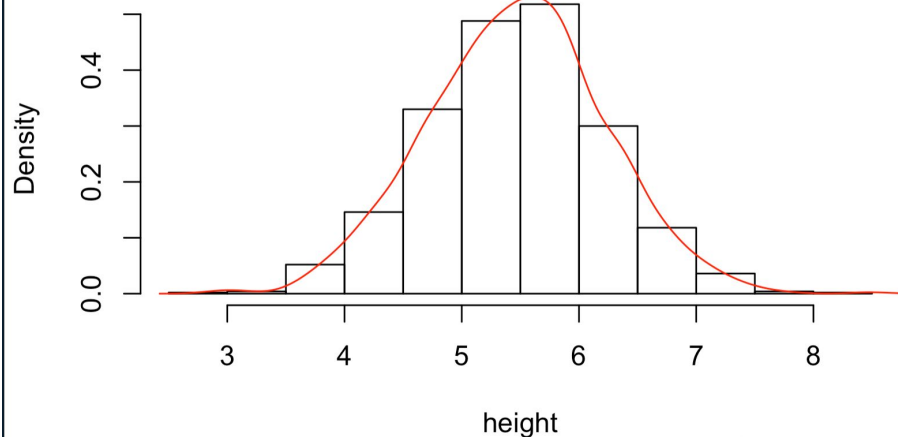


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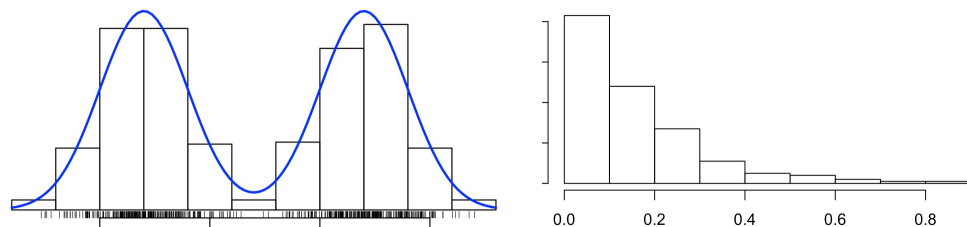
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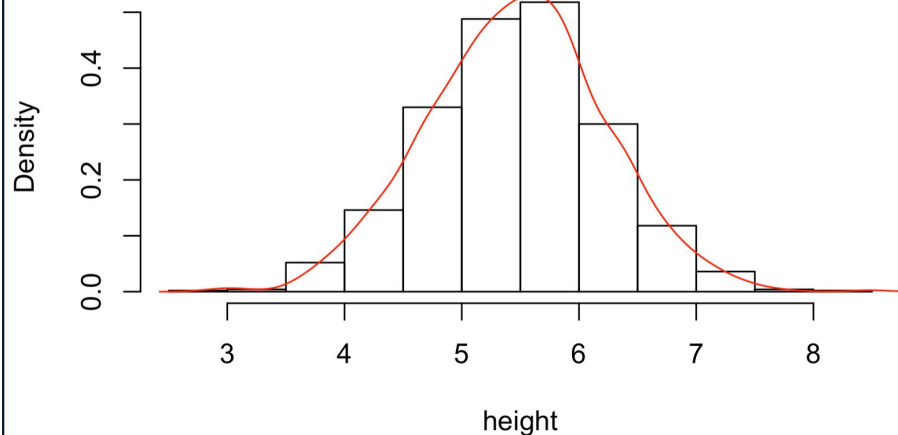
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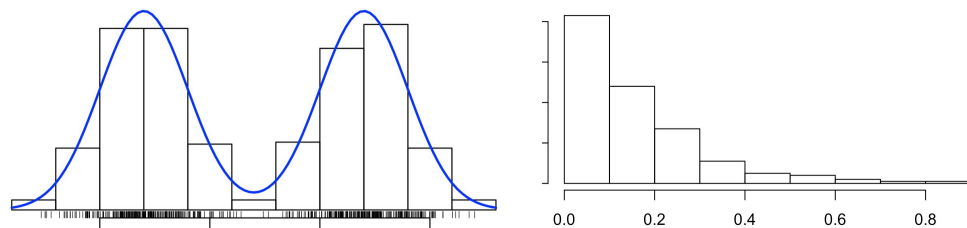


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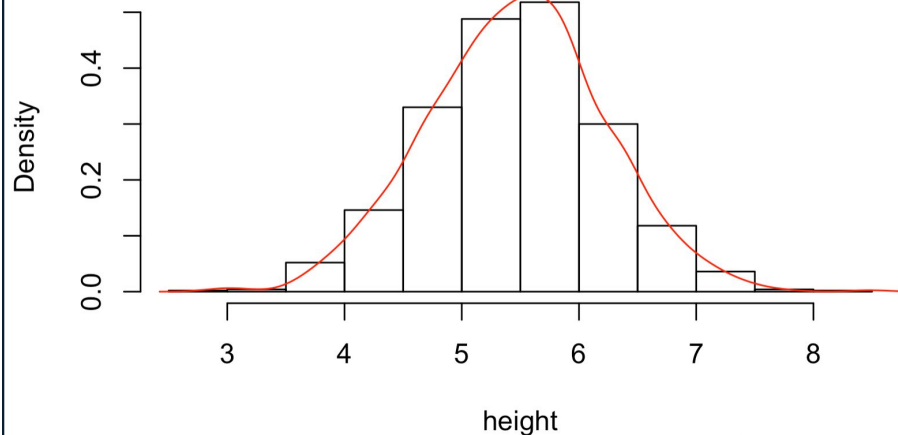
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But we know each observation is one value of a range of possible outcomes.

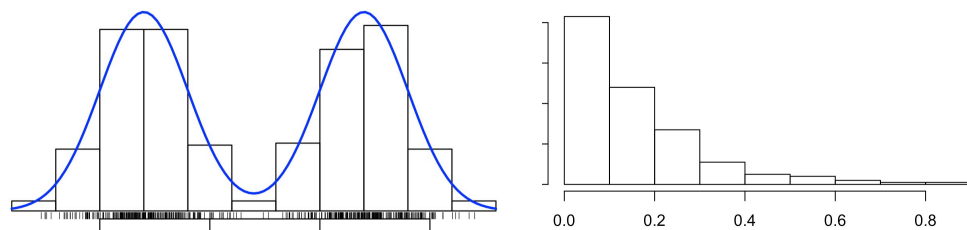


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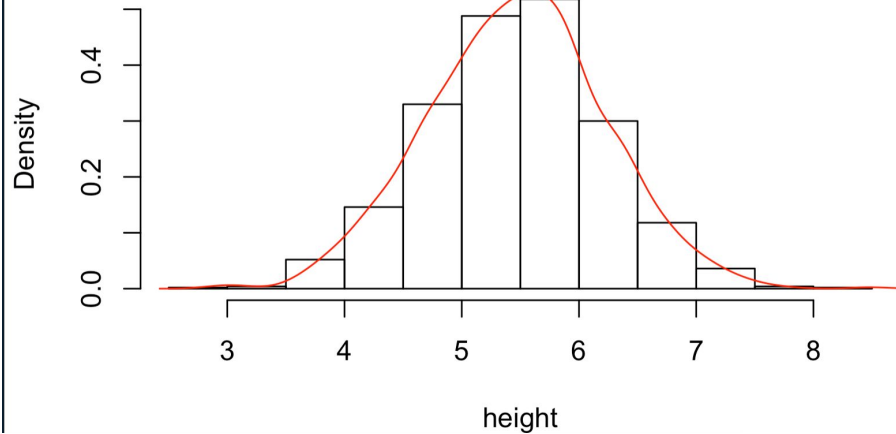


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We can represent the variable as a collection of our measured outcomes and then make inferences about the distribution.

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Thinking about your data this way can help make a lot of statistical techniques more intuitive!

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In the real world we might not know the distribution, but in R we will define our random variable with a range of values and a probability function that we believe makes sense.

Then we will look at the range of values we can get from this variable.