



# ata

(ah-tuh)

an LLM-powered CS1470 assistant,  
augmented with:

Course Information

Stencil Code

Assignment  
Specifications

The screenshot shows a web-based chat interface titled "Artificial Teaching Assistant". The sidebar on the left lists recent conversations: "HW 4 Conceptual", "Debugging", "Recent conversations", "Translational Equivalence Explanation", "Mystery Homework Help", and "Difference between LSTMs and RNNs". The main conversation area has a message from "You" asking "What is the difference between LSTMs and RNNs?". ATA responds with a detailed explanation. The response includes points 1-3 about LSTM architecture and memory, followed by an example of how an LSTM handles long-term dependencies better than an RNN. A "Logout" button is at the bottom left, and a "Ask ATA a debugging question about HW 4 Conceptual" input field is at the bottom right.

Available for use starting today (HW5) at  
**talktoata.com**

Terms and conditions apply  
Questions or feedback? Reach out to us at [team@talktoata.com](mailto:team@talktoata.com)

CSCI 1470/2470  
Spring 2024

Ritambhara Singh

April 01, 2024  
Monday

Autoencoders and Variational Autoencoders

# Deep Learning



Make sure to submit mid-semester feedback!

# Review: Supervised v/s Unsupervised Learning

## Supervised Learning

**Data:**  $(x, y)$

$x$  is data,  $y$  is label

**Goal:** Learn a *function* to map  $x \rightarrow y$

**Examples:** Classification,  
regression, object detection,  
semantic segmentation, image  
captioning, etc.

## Unsupervised Learning

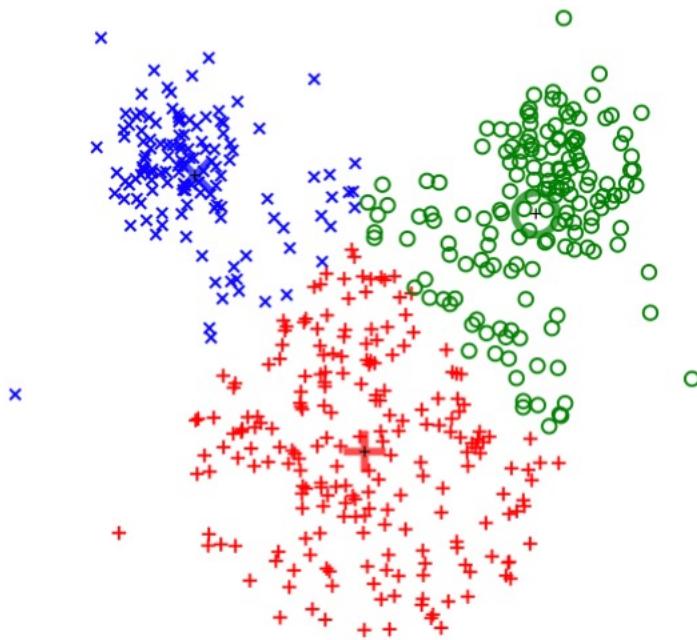
**Data:**  $x$

Just data, no labels!

**Goal:** Learn some underlying hidden  
*structure* of the data

**Examples:** Clustering,  
dimensionality reduction, feature  
learning, density estimation, etc.

# Review: Unsupervised Learning



k-means clustering

[This image](#) is CC0 public domain

## Unsupervised Learning

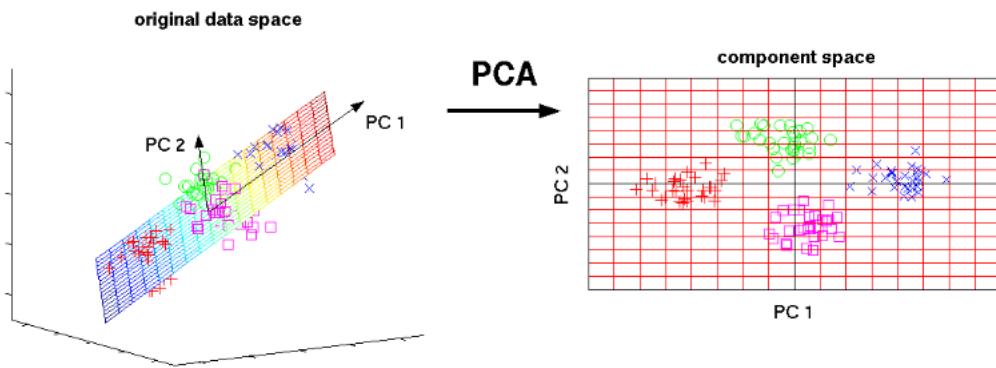
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# Review: Unsupervised Learning



dimensionality reduction

[This image](#) is CC0 public domain

## Unsupervised Learning

**Data:**  $x$

Just data, no labels!

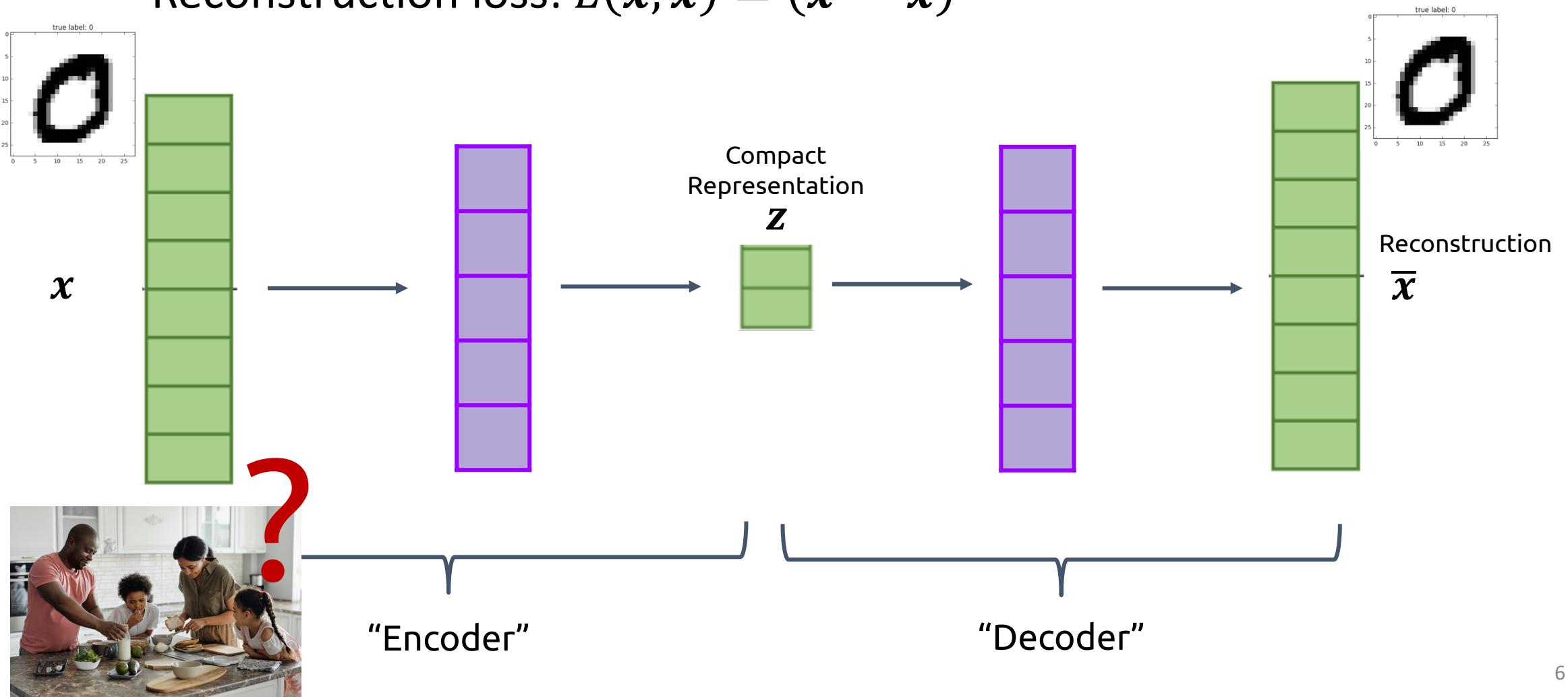
**Goal:** Learn some underlying hidden *structure* of the data

**Examples:** Clustering,

dimensionality reduction, feature learning, density estimation, etc.

# Review: Autoencoder

- Reconstruction loss:  $L(x, \bar{x}) = (x - \bar{x})^2$



Today's goal – learn about variational  
autoencoders (VAEs)

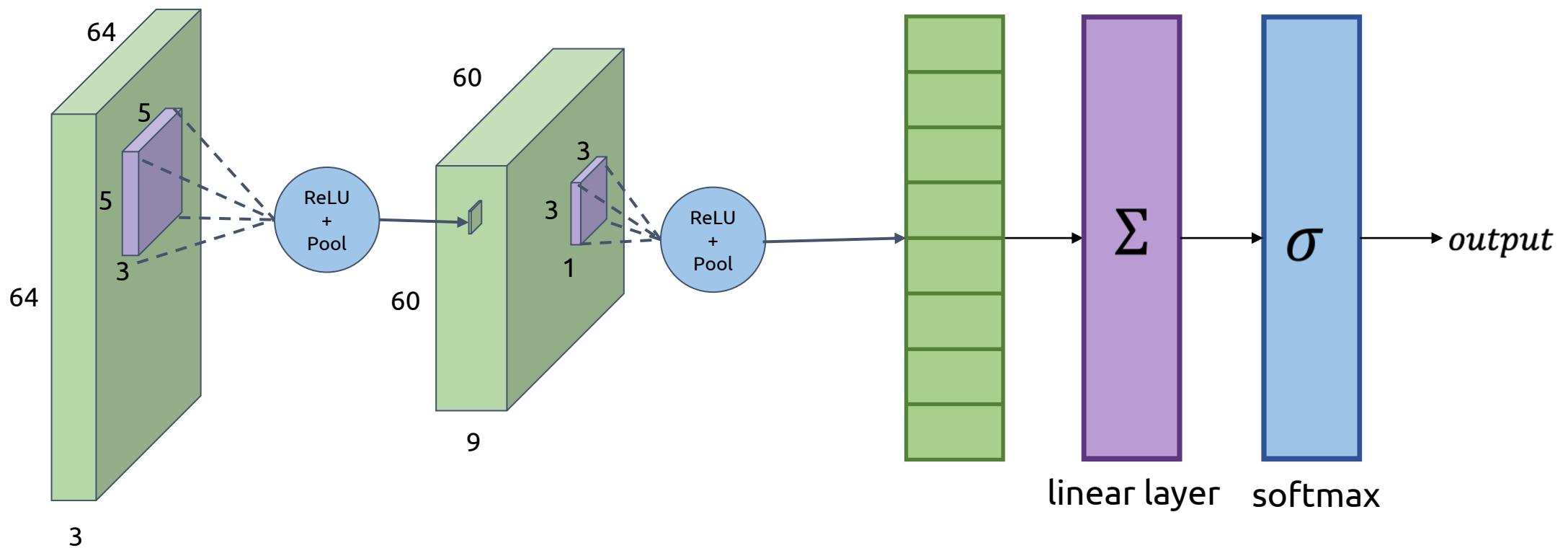
**(1) Convolutional AEs**

(2) Generative models

(3) Variational Autoencoders (VAEs)

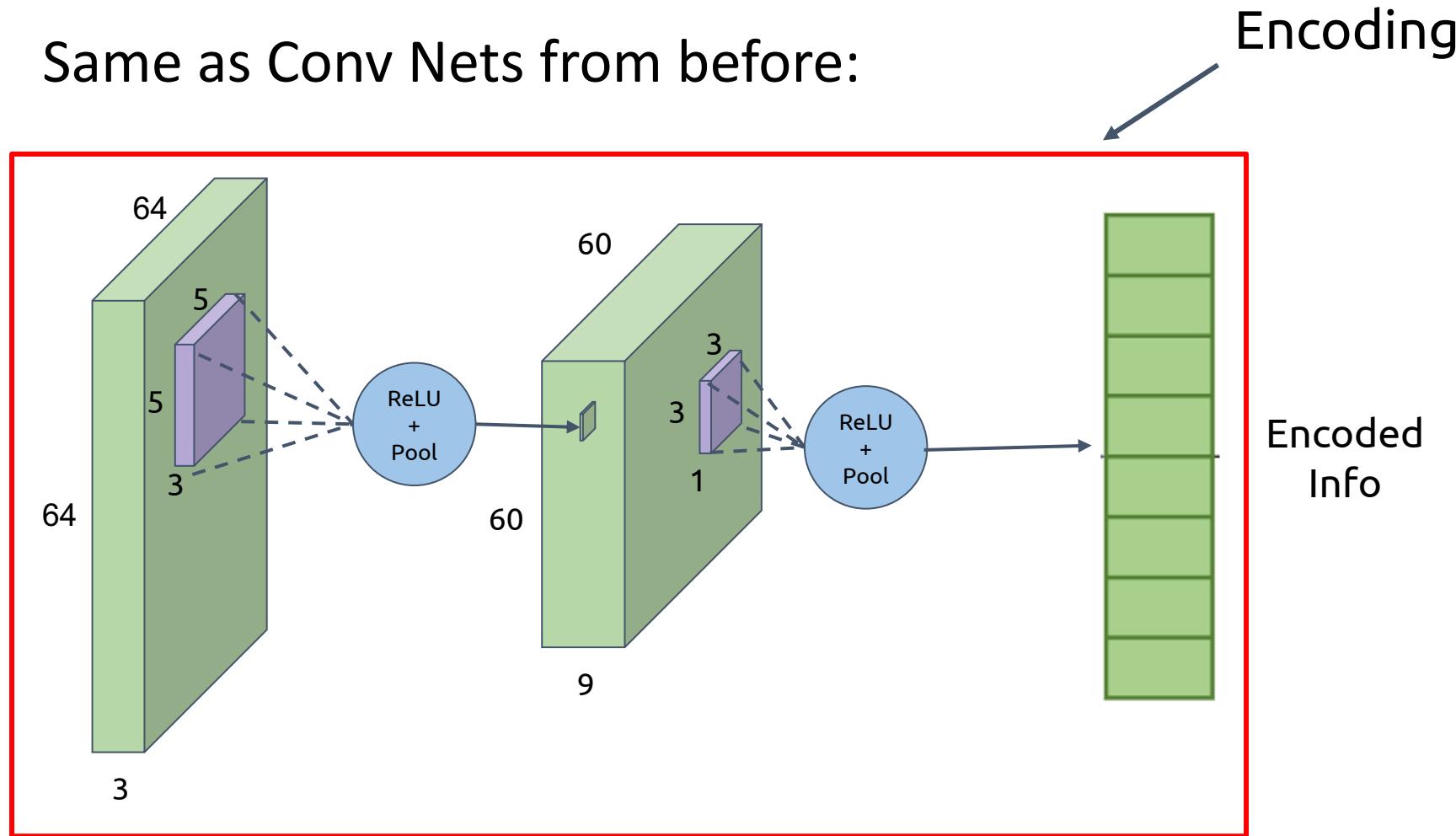
# Convolutional Autoencoders

- CNNs are great for image processing in Neural Networks
- How can we build a *convolutional* autoencoder?



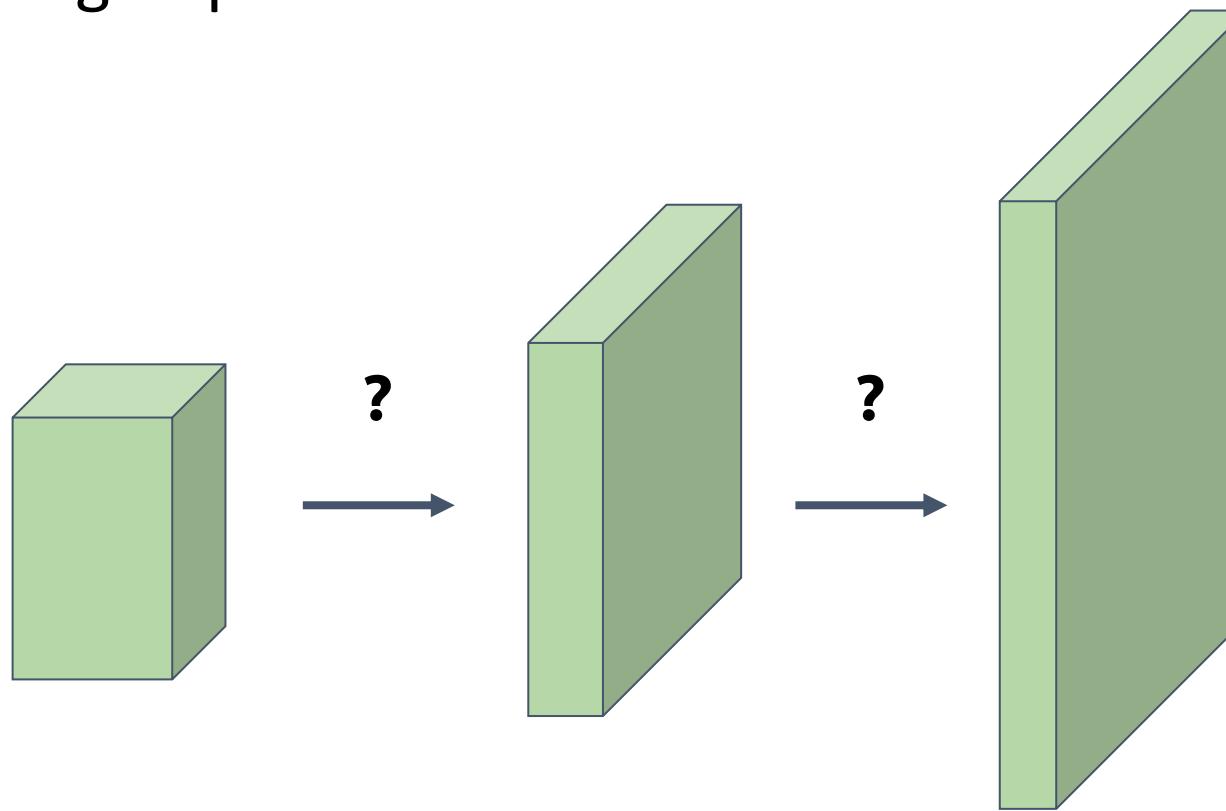
# Convolutional Autoencoders: Encoding

Same as Conv Nets from before:



# Autoencoders: Decoding

- Convolution as we know it only keeps resolution same or decreases it
- How do we go up in resolution?



# Autoencoders: Transpose Convolution

- Convolution can be viewed as a matrix multiplication
- How do we represent it this way?

2	1	0	3
0	0	1	2
3	1	2	0
0	2	2	1

Input

?

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9

Kernel

=

57	60
66	61

Output

# Autoencoders: Transpose Convolution

Step 1: Flatten the image into a column vector

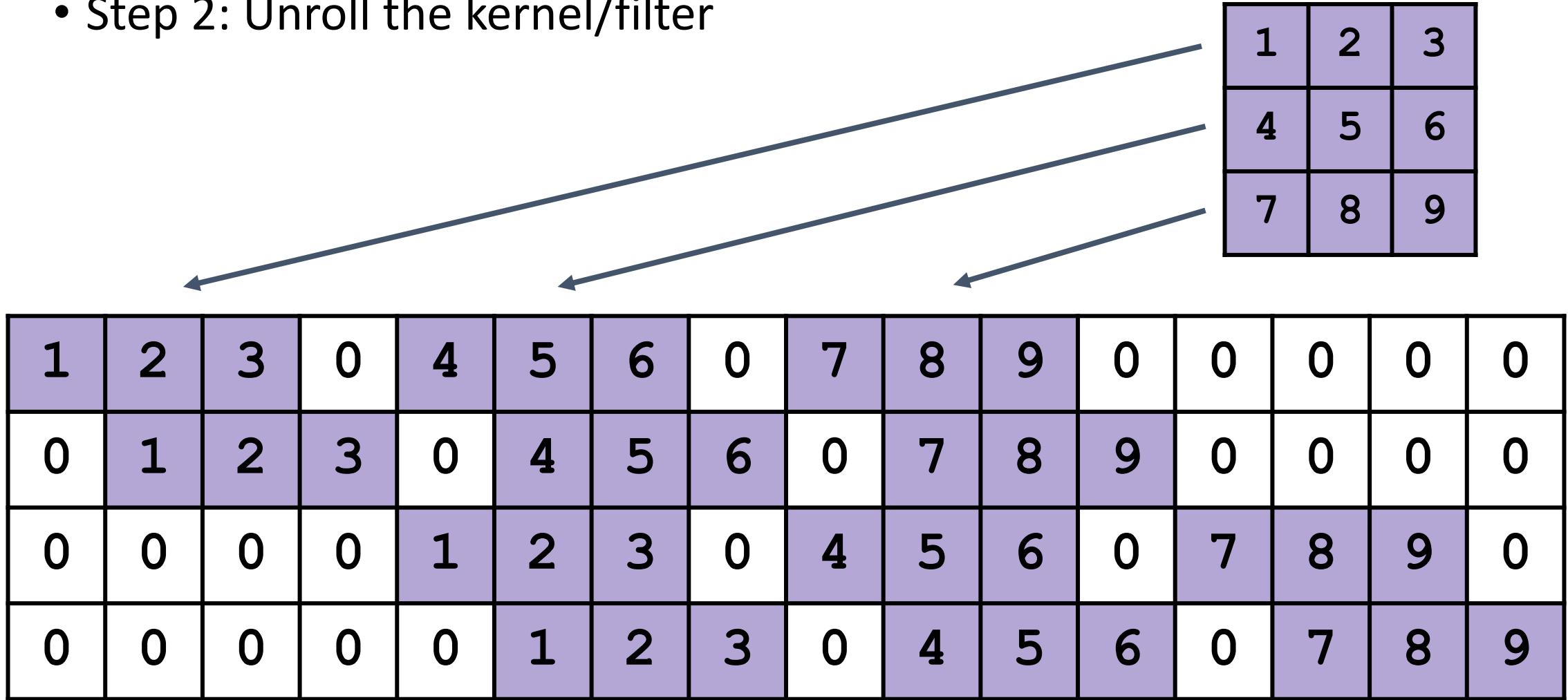
2	1	0	3
0	0	1	2
3	1	2	0
0	2	2	1



2
1
0
3
0
0
1
2
3
1
2
0
0
2
2
1

# Autoencoders: Transpose Convolution

- Step 2: Unroll the kernel/filter



# Autoencoders: Transpose Convolution

Step 3: Matrix multiply  
unrolled kernel with flattened  
image

1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0	0	0	0	0
0	1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0
0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9



2
1
0
3
0
0
1
2
3
1
2
0
0
2
2
1



57
50
66
61

# Autoencoders: Transpose Convolution

Each row of the convolution matrix corresponds to a dot product between filter and image patch:

1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0



2	1	0	3
1	0	1	2
3	1	2	0
0	2	2	1
0	0	0	0
2	2	1	0
2	1	0	3
0	0	0	0
1	2	3	0
2	3	0	1
0	1	2	3
0	0	0	0



2	1	0	3
0	0	1	2
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0	2	2	1

# Autoencoders: Transpose Convolution

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1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0



2	1	0	3
0	0	1	2
3	1	2	0
0	2	2	1



2	1	0	3
0	0	1	2
3	1	2	0
0	2	2	1

# Autoencoders: Transpose Convolution

Each row of the convolution matrix corresponds to a dot product between filter and image patch:

1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0



2	1	0	3	0	0	1	2	3	1	2	0	0	2	2	1
0	0	1	2	3	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	1	2	3	0
3	1	2	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	1
0	2	2	1	2	3	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	1	2	3



2	1	0	3	0	0	1	2	3	1	2	0	0	2	2	1
0	0	1	2	3	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	1	2	3	0
3	1	2	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	1
0	2	2	1	2	3	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	1	2	3

# Autoencoders: Transpose Convolution

Each row of the convolution matrix corresponds to a dot product between filter and image patch:

1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0	0	0	0	0
0	1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0
0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9



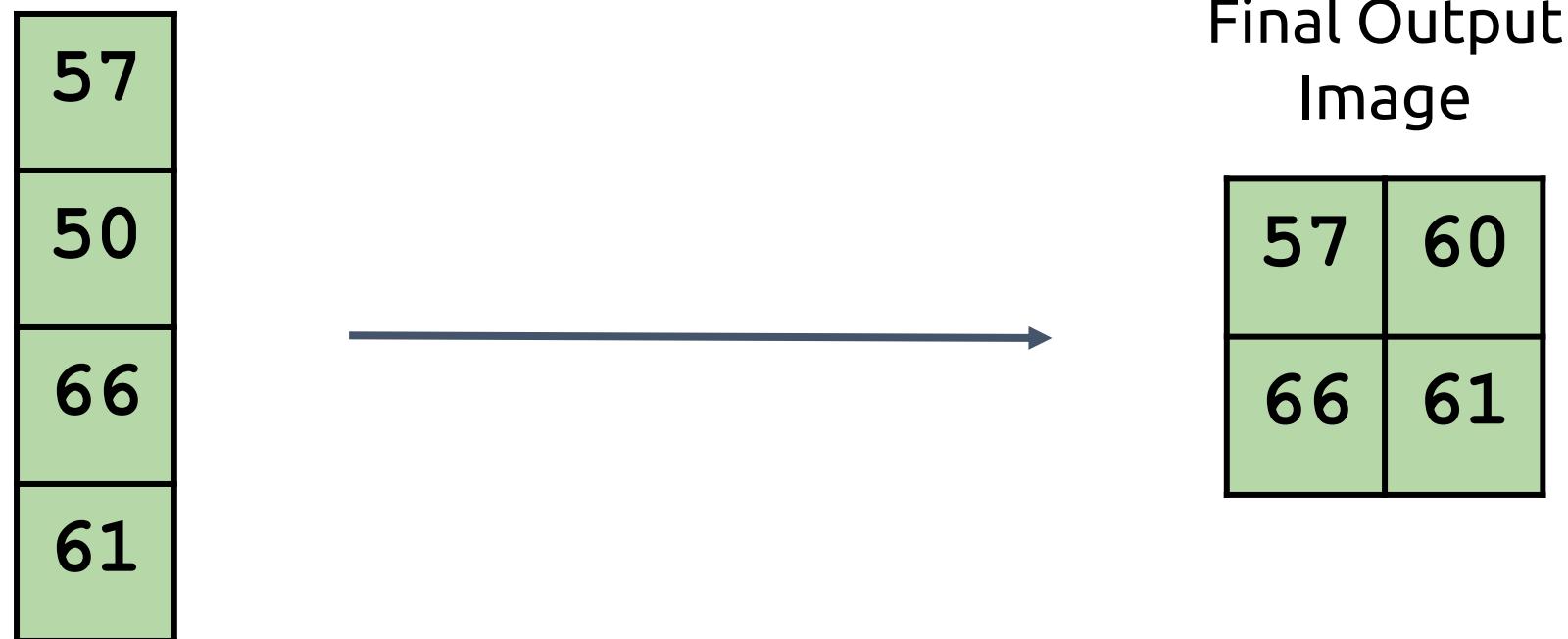
2	1	0	3
0	0	1	2
3	1	2	0
0	2	2	1



2	1	0	3
0	0	1	2
3	1	2	0
0	2	2	1

# Autoencoders: Transpose Convolution

Step 4: Finally reshape the output back into a grid



Final Output  
Image

# Autoencoders: Transpose Convolution

1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	4	5	6	0	7	8	9	0



2
1
0
3
0
0
1
2
3
1
2
0
0
2
2
1

=

57
50
66
61

# Autoencoders: Transpose Convolution

To upsample an image, we just do the inverse of this operation.

What matrix do we use?

The **transpose** of the big convolution matrix



1	0	0	0
2	1	0	0
3	2	0	0
0	3	0	0
4	0	1	0
5	4	2	1
6	5	3	2
0	6	0	3
7	0	4	0
8	7	5	4
9	8	6	5
0	9	0	6
0	0	7	0
0	0	8	7
0	0	9	8
0	0	0	9

Input image  
flattened to  
column vector



1
0
2
1



1
2
3
0
6
10
14
3
15
22
26
6
14
23
26
9

# Autoencoders: Transpose Convolution

Finally, reshape the output vector into a grid to get the final output image:

1
2
3
0
6
10
14
3
15
22
26
6
14
23
26
9



Final output image

1	2	3	4
6	10	14	3
15	1	22	26
14	23	26	9

# Transpose Convolution in Tensorflow

```
tf.nn.conv2d_transpose(input, filters, output_shape, strides, padding='SAME')
```

4D tensor of shape [batch, height,  
width, in\_channels]

4-D Tensor with shape  
[height, width, output\_channels, in\_channels]

length 4 1D tensor representing  
the output shape.

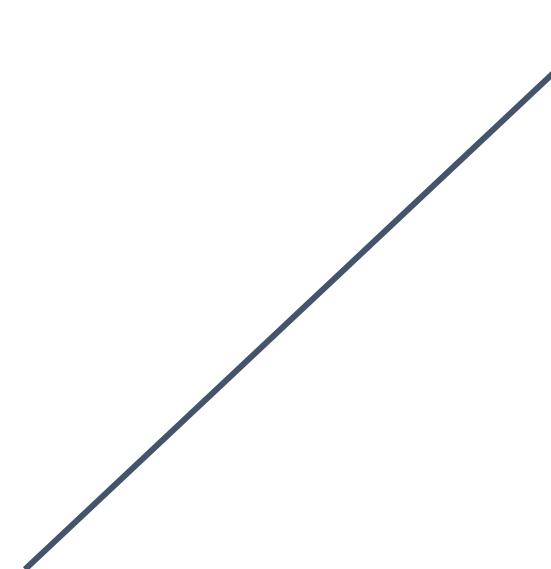
Strides along  
each dimension  
(list of integers)

String  
representing  
type of padding

Documentation here: [https://www.tensorflow.org/versions/r2.0/api\\_docs/python/tf/nn/conv2d](https://www.tensorflow.org/versions/r2.0/api_docs/python/tf/nn/conv2d)

# Transpose Convolution in Tensorflow

```
tf.nn.conv2d_transpose(input, filters, output_shape, strides, padding='SAME')
```



***Why do we need to specify output size?***

# Specifying Output Size

- An image can be the result of the same convolution on images of different resolution
- We need to specify which one we want.

57	60
66	61

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9

Kernel

2	1	0	3
0	0	1	2
3	1	2	0
0	2	2	1

2	1	0	3	0
0	0	1	2	0
3	1	2	0	0
0	2	2	1	0
0	0	0	0	0



# Transpose Convolution in Keras

```
tf.keras.layers.Conv2DTranspose(filters, kernel_size, strides, padding='SAME')
```

Number of filters  
(Integer)

Size of Convolution  
Window (tuple)

Strides along  
each dimension  
(list of integers)

String  
representing  
type of padding

Note: Output Shape is inferred

Documentation here: [https://www.tensorflow.org/api\\_docs/python/tf/keras/layers/Conv2DTranspose](https://www.tensorflow.org/api_docs/python/tf/keras/layers/Conv2DTranspose)

Today's goal – learn about variational  
autoencoders (VAEs)

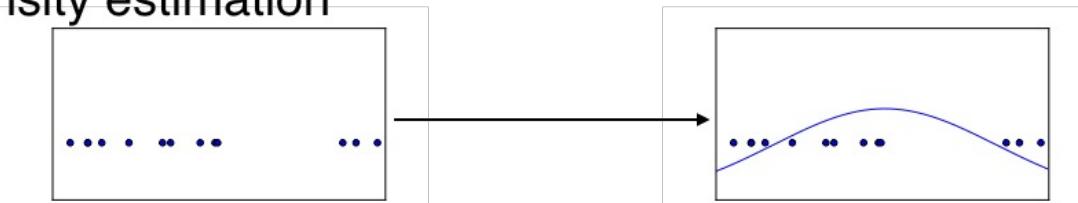
(1) Convolutional AEs

**(2) Generative models**

**(3) Variational Autoencoders (VAEs)**

# Unsupervised Learning

- Density estimation



## Unsupervised Learning

**Data:**  $x$

Just data, no labels!

**Goal:** Learn some underlying hidden  
*structure* of the data

**Examples:** Clustering,  
dimensionality reduction, feature  
learning, **density estimation**, etc.

# Unsupervised Learning

## Generative models

- Density estimation



- Sample generation



Training examples

Model samples

## Unsupervised Learning

**Data:**  $x$

Just data, no labels!

**Goal:** Learn some underlying hidden *structure* of the data

**Examples:** Clustering,  
dimensionality reduction, feature  
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# Discriminative v/s Generative models

**Discriminative Model:**

Learn a probability distribution  $p(y|x)$

**Generative Model:**

Learn a probability distribution  $p(x)$

**Data:  $x$**



**Label:  $y$**

Cat

# Discriminative v/s Generative models

**Discriminative Model:**

Learn a probability distribution  $p(y|x)$



$$P(\text{cat} | \text{monkey})$$

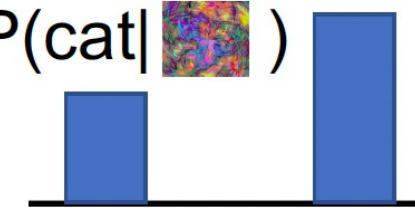


**Generative Model:**

Learn a probability distribution  $p(x)$



$$P(\text{dog} | \text{colorful pattern})$$



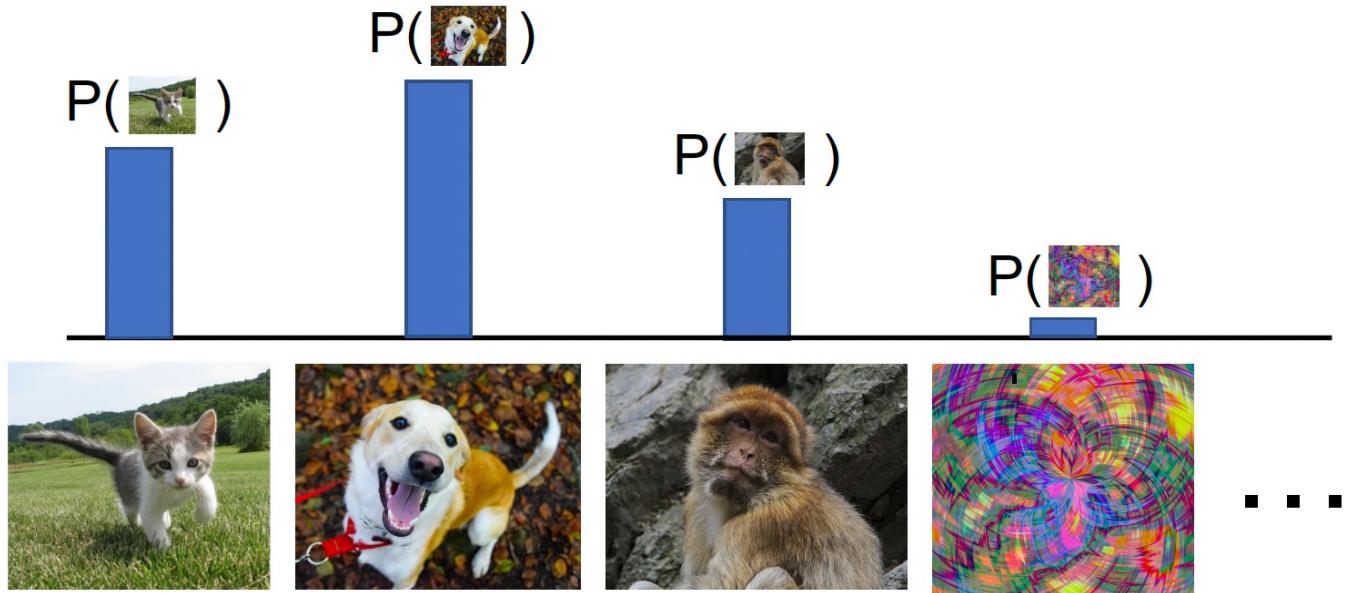
Discriminative model: No way for the model to handle unreasonable inputs; it must give label distributions for all images

# Discriminative v/s Generative models

**Discriminative Model:**

Learn a probability distribution  $p(y|x)$

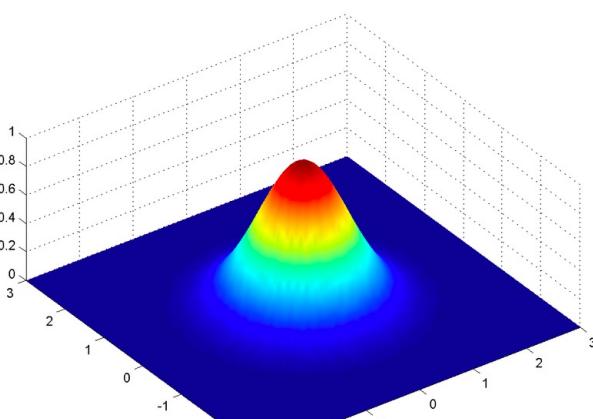
**Generative Model:**  
Learn a probability distribution  $p(x)$



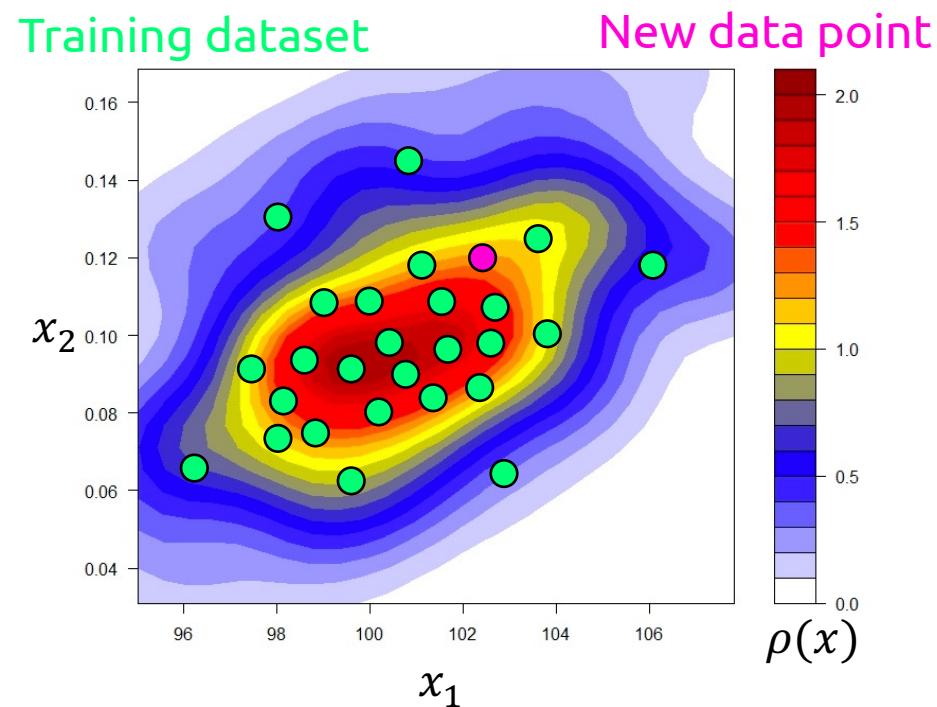
- Generative model: All possible images compete with each other for probability mass
- Intuition: Generation should require deep understanding! Is a dog more likely to sit or stand? How about 3-legged dog vs 3-armed monkey?
- Model can “reject” unreasonable inputs by assigning them small values

# Generative Modeling Is:

1. A procedure for (approximately) **sampling** from the distribution from which a dataset was drawn



$$x' \sim p(\cdot)$$

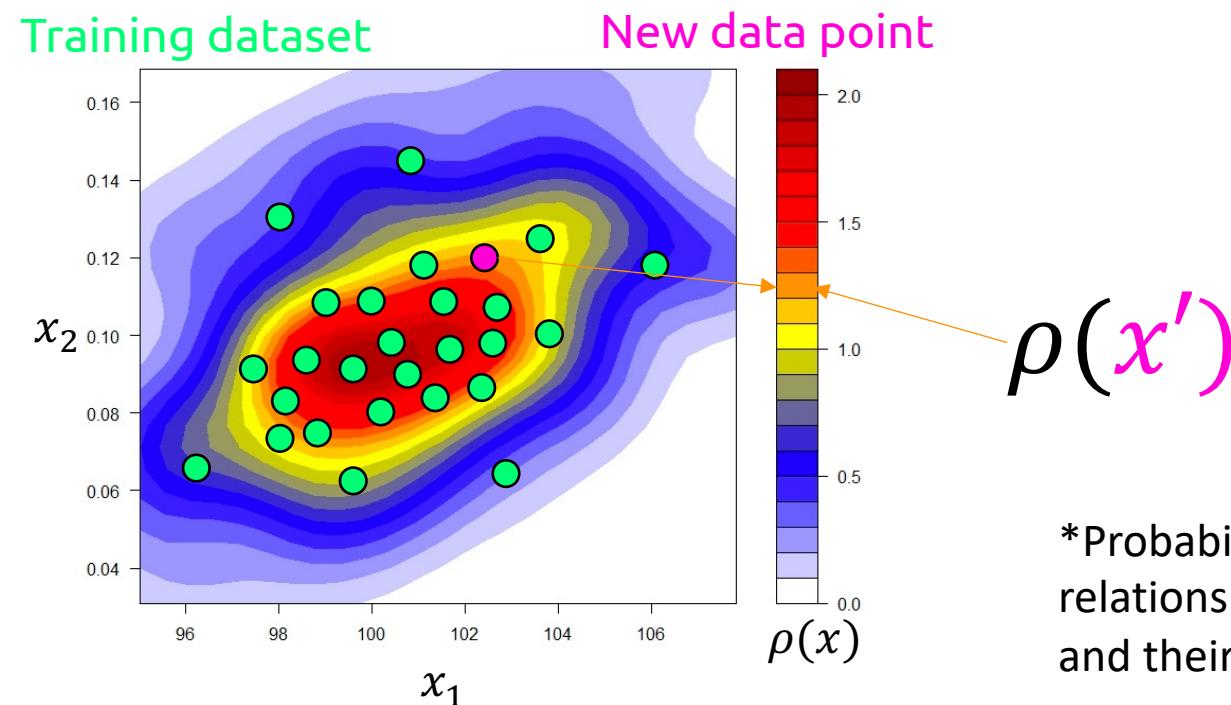


\*Probability density is the relationship between observations and their probability.

# Generative Modeling:

1. A procedure for (approximately) **sampling** from the distribution from which a dataset was drawn
2. A procedure for (approximately) **evaluating the probability density** of a datapoint under the distribution from which a dataset was drawn

$$x' \sim p(\cdot)$$



\*Probability density is the relationship between observations and their probability.

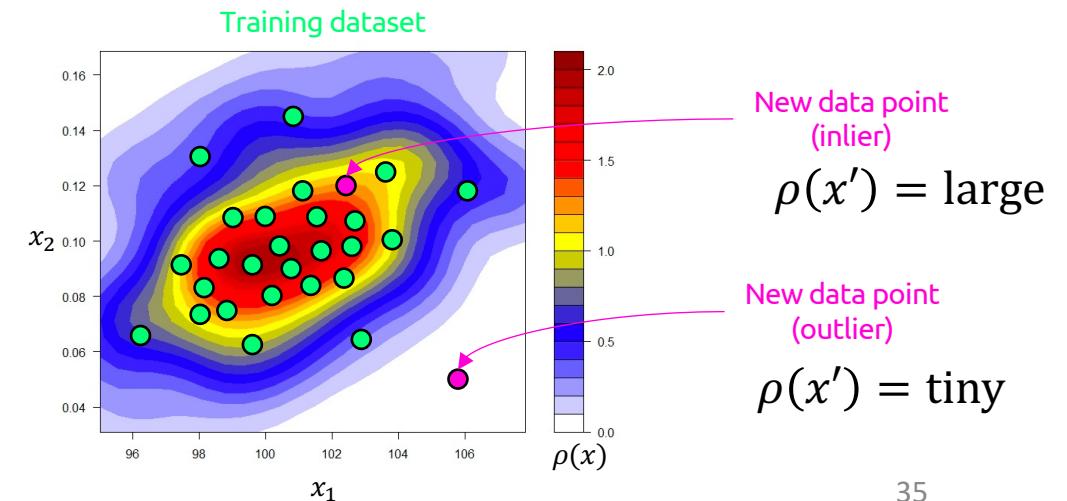
# These two views are both useful

1. A procedure for (approximately) **sampling** from the distribution from which a dataset was drawn
2. A procedure for (approximately) **evaluating the probability density** of a datapoint under the distribution from which a dataset was drawn

**Application: visual creativity**



**Application: outlier detection**



# These two views are both useful

1. A procedure for (approximately) **sampling** from the distribution from which a dataset was drawn
2. A procedure for (approximately) **evaluating the probability density** of a datapoint under the distribution from which a dataset was drawn

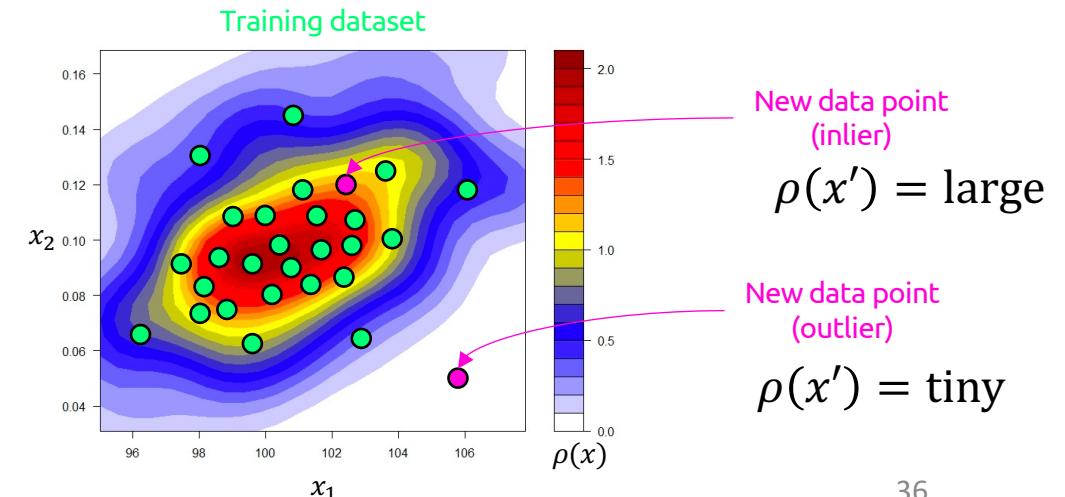
## Application: things are getting more complicated! Computer-generated inclusivity: fashion turns to 'diverse' AI models

Fashion brands including Levi's and Calvin Klein are having custom AI models created to 'supplement' representation in size, skin tone and age



[The Guardian](#)

## Application: outlier detection



# What are some example generative models?

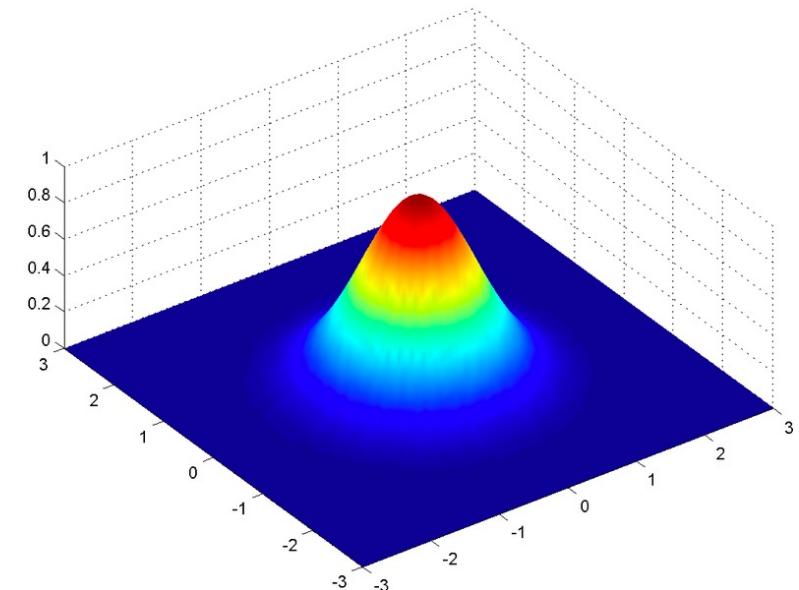
- Any probability distribution can be a generative model
- You already know some of these!

- E.g. The Gaussian Distribution

- $p(x | \mu, \sigma) = \mathcal{N}(\mu, \sigma)(x) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi\sigma^2}} e^{-\frac{(x-\mu)^2}{2\sigma^2}}$

- Sampling:

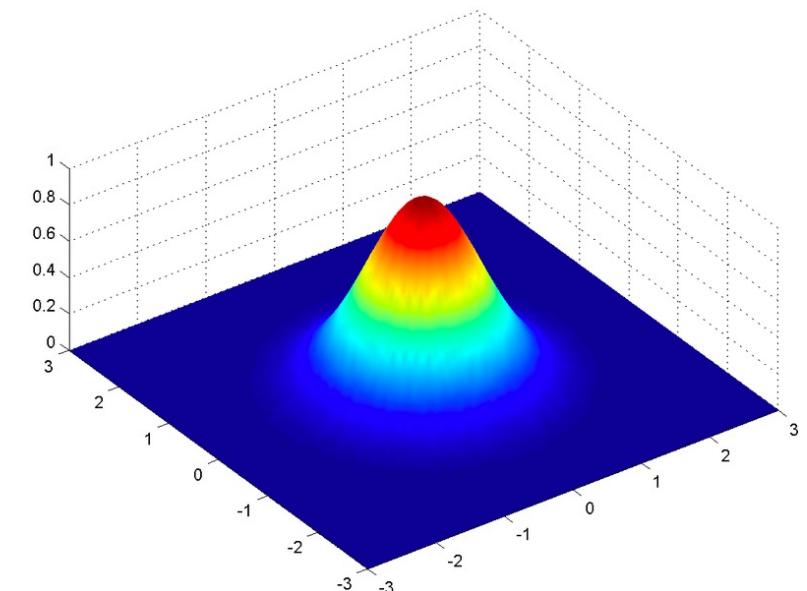
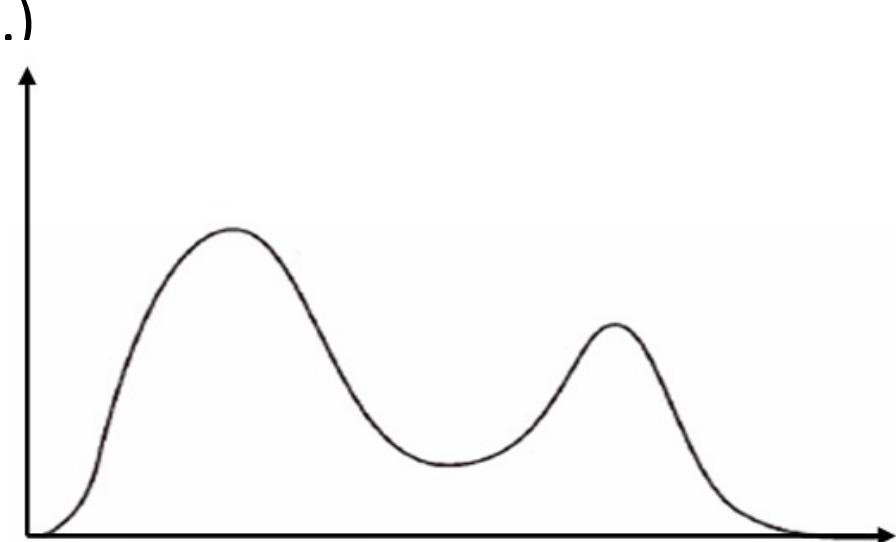
- [Sample from the unit normal distribution](#)  $\rightarrow r \sim \mathcal{N}(0, 1)$
  - Return  $\mu + r\sigma$



# Disadvantages of Gaussian distribution

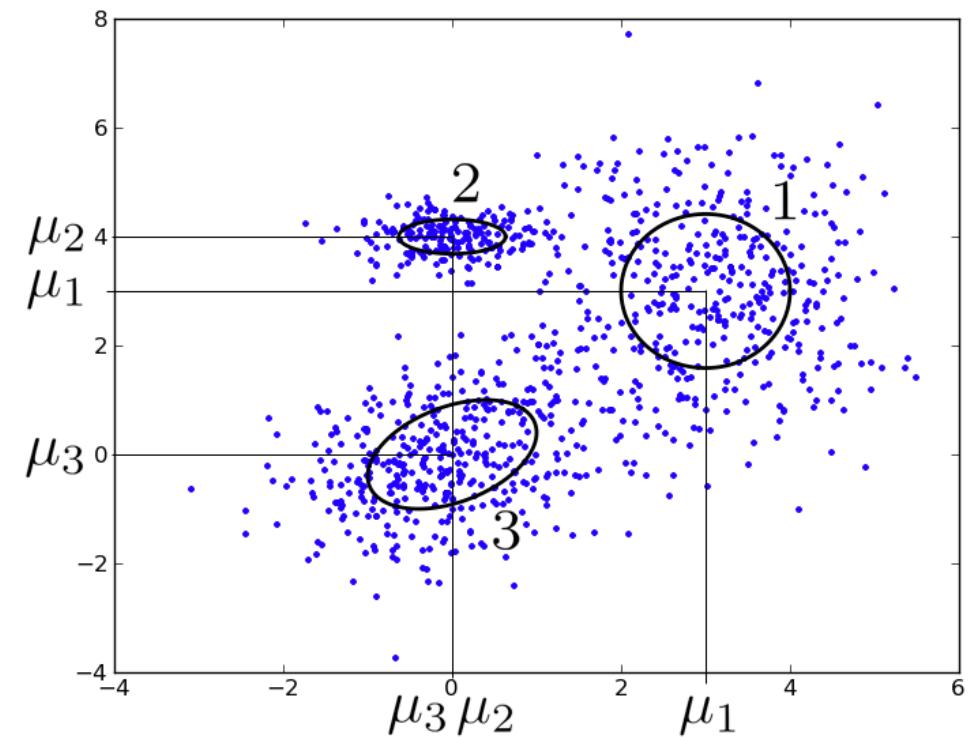
- Can only represent distributions with a single ***mode***

- What if the distribution has multiple “peaks?”
- E.g. book prices (concentrates around different price points if it’s hardcover, paperback, e-book, ...)

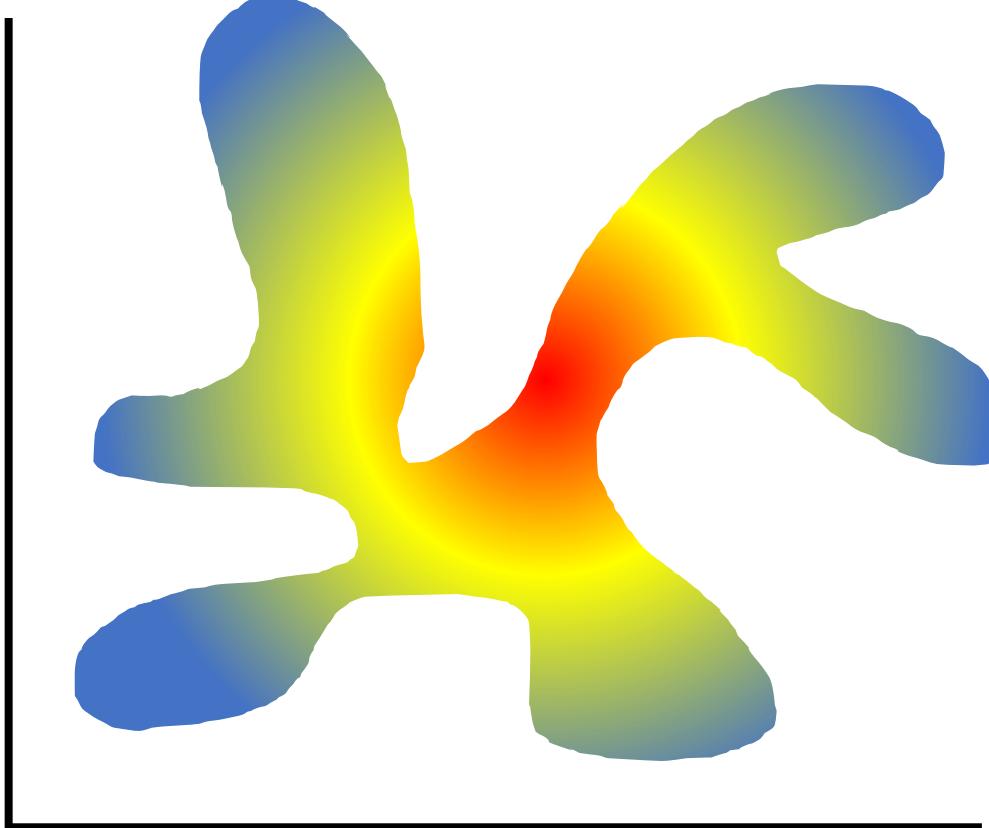


# Better: *Mixture* of Gaussians

- A linear combination of multiple individual Gaussian distributions
  - $p(x | w, \mu, \sigma) = \sum_i w_i \mathcal{N}(\mu_i, \sigma_i)(x)$
  - Sampling:
    - Sample from the discrete weight distribution  $w$  to choose a Gaussian
    - Sample from that Gaussian as before



# What about something like this?



- This doesn't look like a linear combination of Gaussians...
- ...but maybe it can be expressed as a *nonlinear* function of Gaussians?

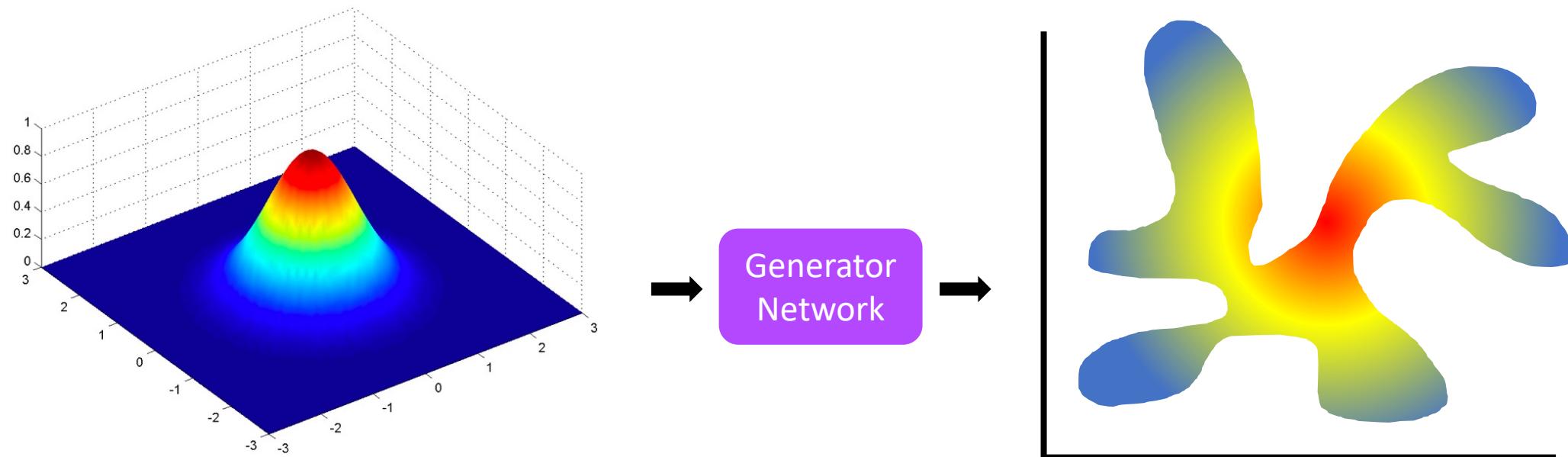
What can we do?

“I hear these neural nets are  
pretty good at learning non-linear  
functions” 😊



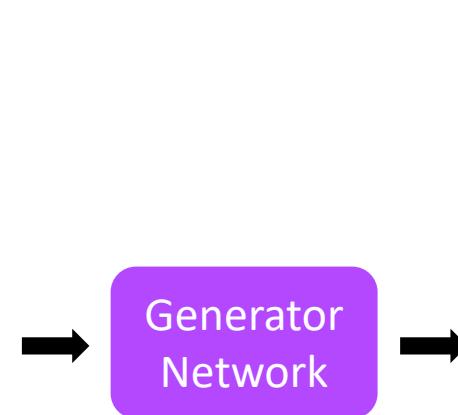
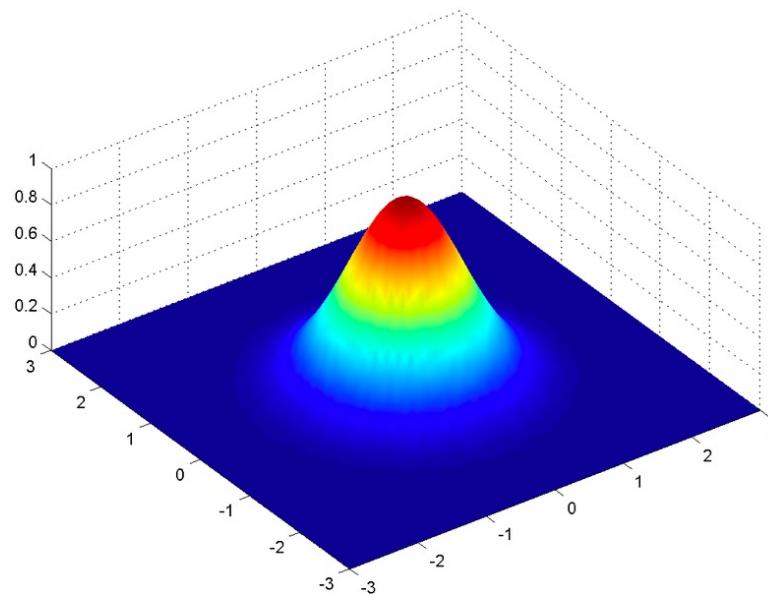
# A Neural Generative Model

- Input: a point  $z \in \mathbb{R}^n$  drawn from a normal distribution  $\mathcal{N}(\mu, \sigma)$
- Output: a point  $x \in \mathbb{R}^m$  distributed according to some more complex distribution



# A Neural Generative Model

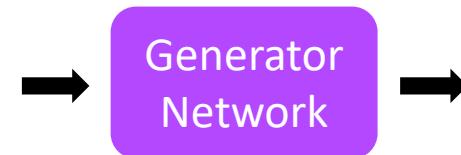
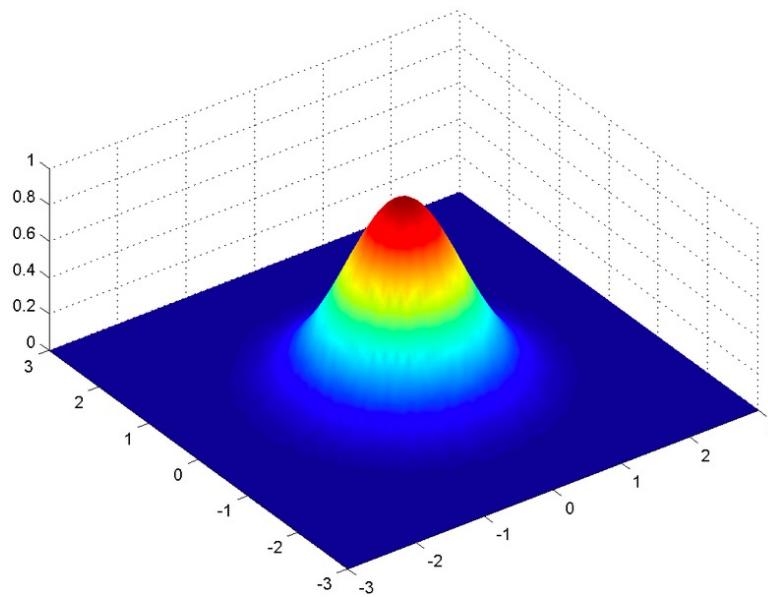
- Input: a point  $z \in \mathbb{R}^n$  drawn from a normal distribution  $\mathcal{N}(\mu, \sigma)$
- Output: a point  $x \in \mathbb{R}^m$  distributed according to some more complex distribution



**What are some  
distributions that  
look like this?**

# A Neural Generative Model

- Input: a point  $z \in \mathbb{R}^n$  drawn from a normal distribution  $\mathcal{N}(\mu, \sigma)$
- Output: a point  $x \in \mathbb{R}^m$  distributed according to some more complex distribution

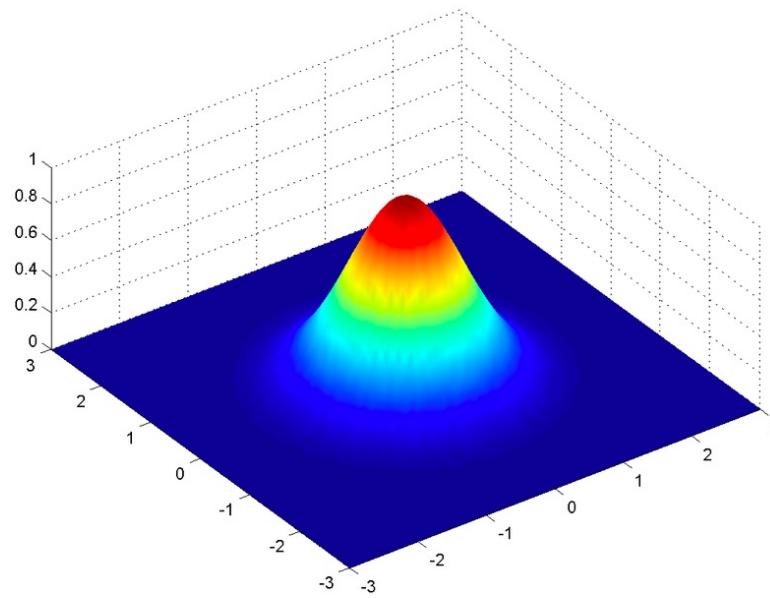


The distribution of human faces



# A Neural Generative Model

- Great! So...how do we train this thing?
  - Let's modify our autoencoder to achieve this

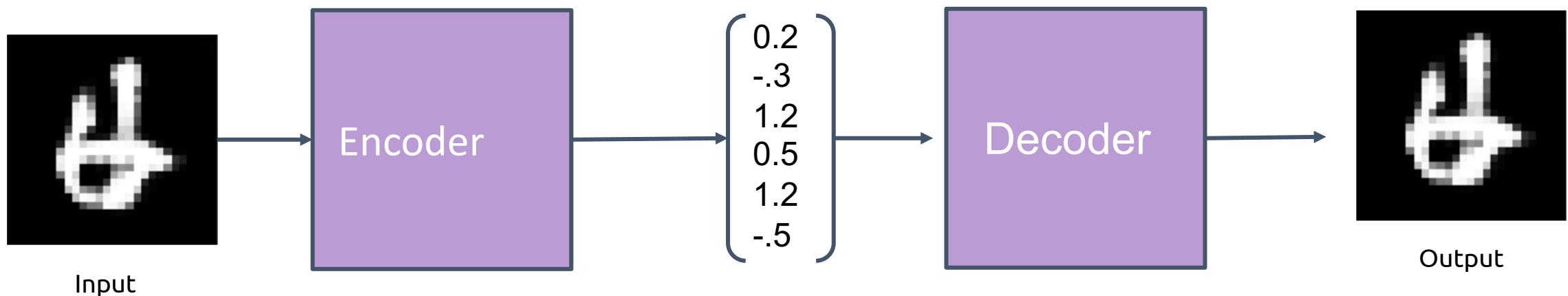


**The distribution of human faces**

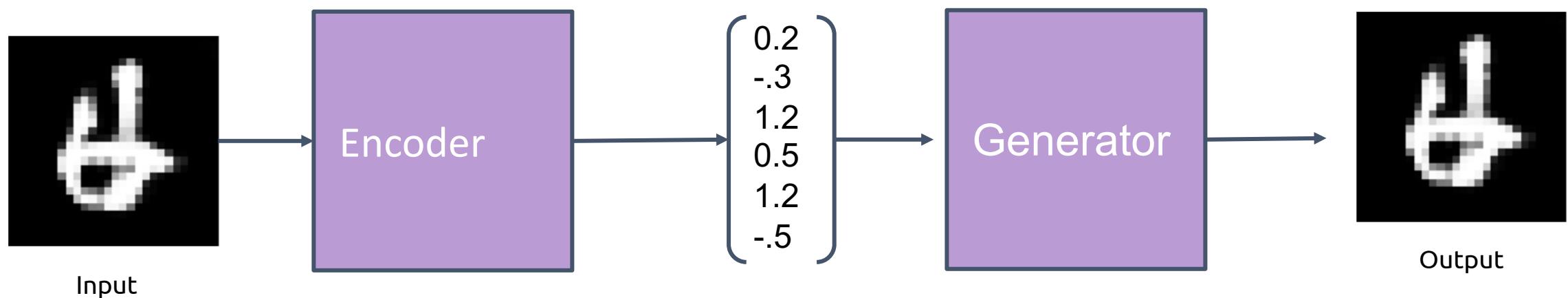


# Autoencoder

Let's think for a bit – how to modify the autoencoder to make it a generative model?

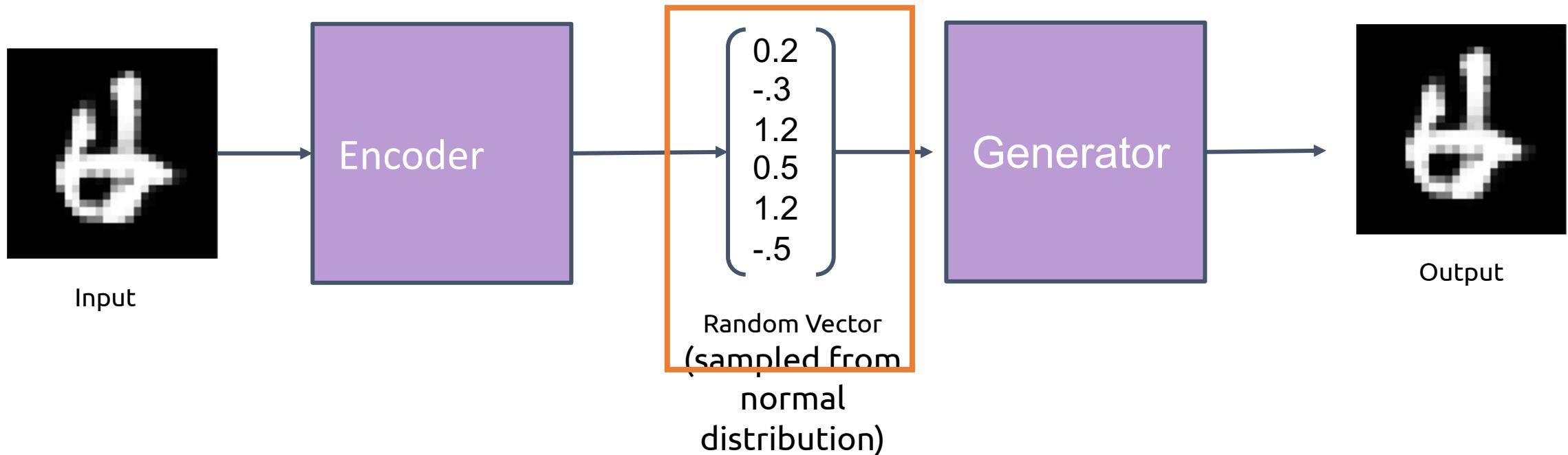


# Variational Autoencoders (VAEs)



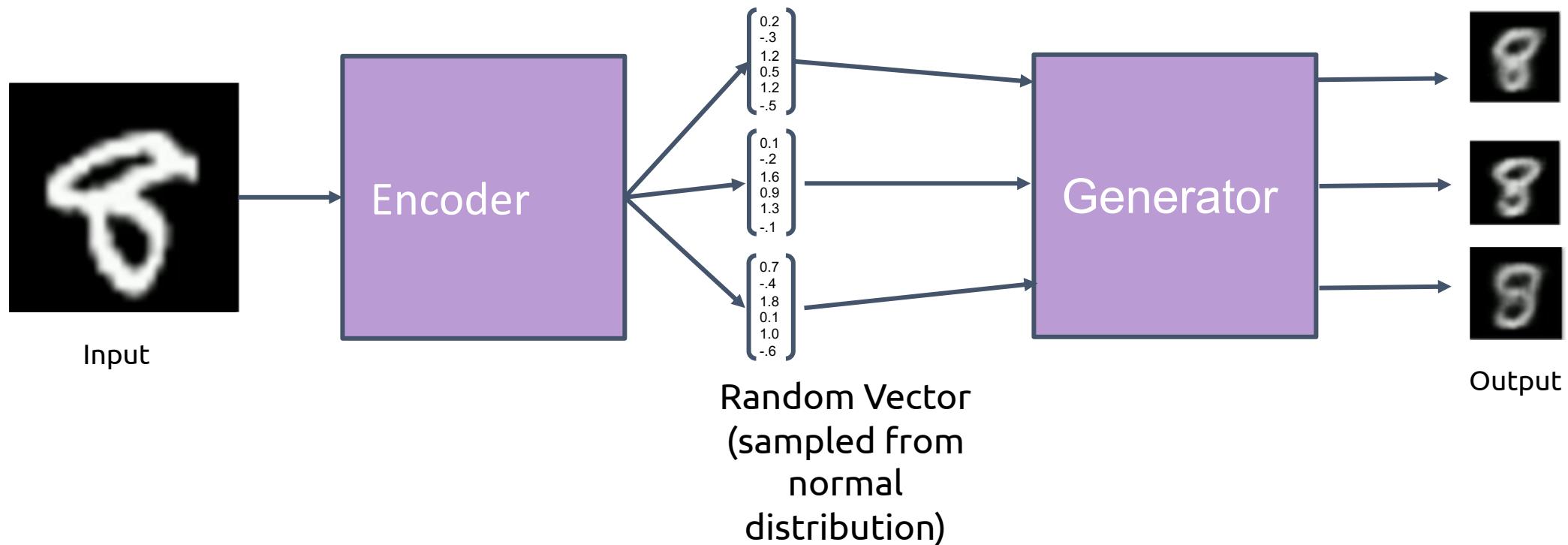
# Variational Autoencoders (VAEs)

- This looks almost exactly like an autoencoder...
- ...except that this bottleneck vector is randomly sampled
  - We'll see how in a few slides



# Variational Autoencoders (VAEs)

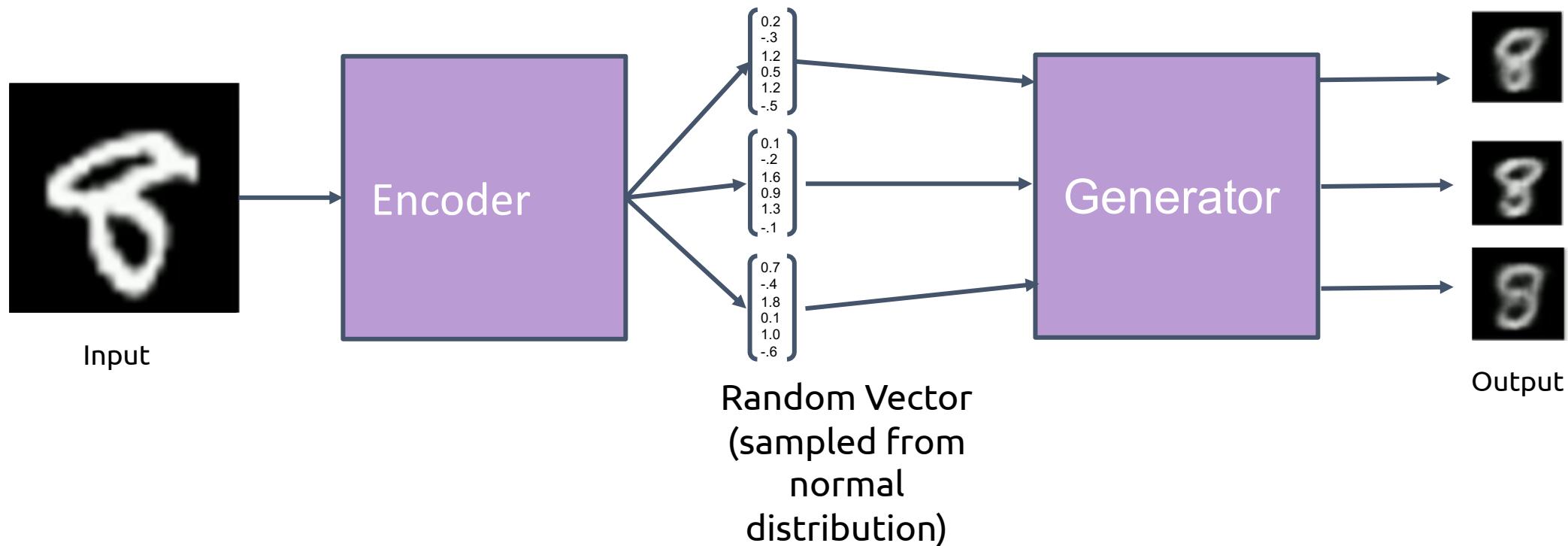
- In fact, the encoder can produce multiple different random vectors...
- ...which then lead to different outputs which are variants of the input



# Variational Autoencoders (VAEs)

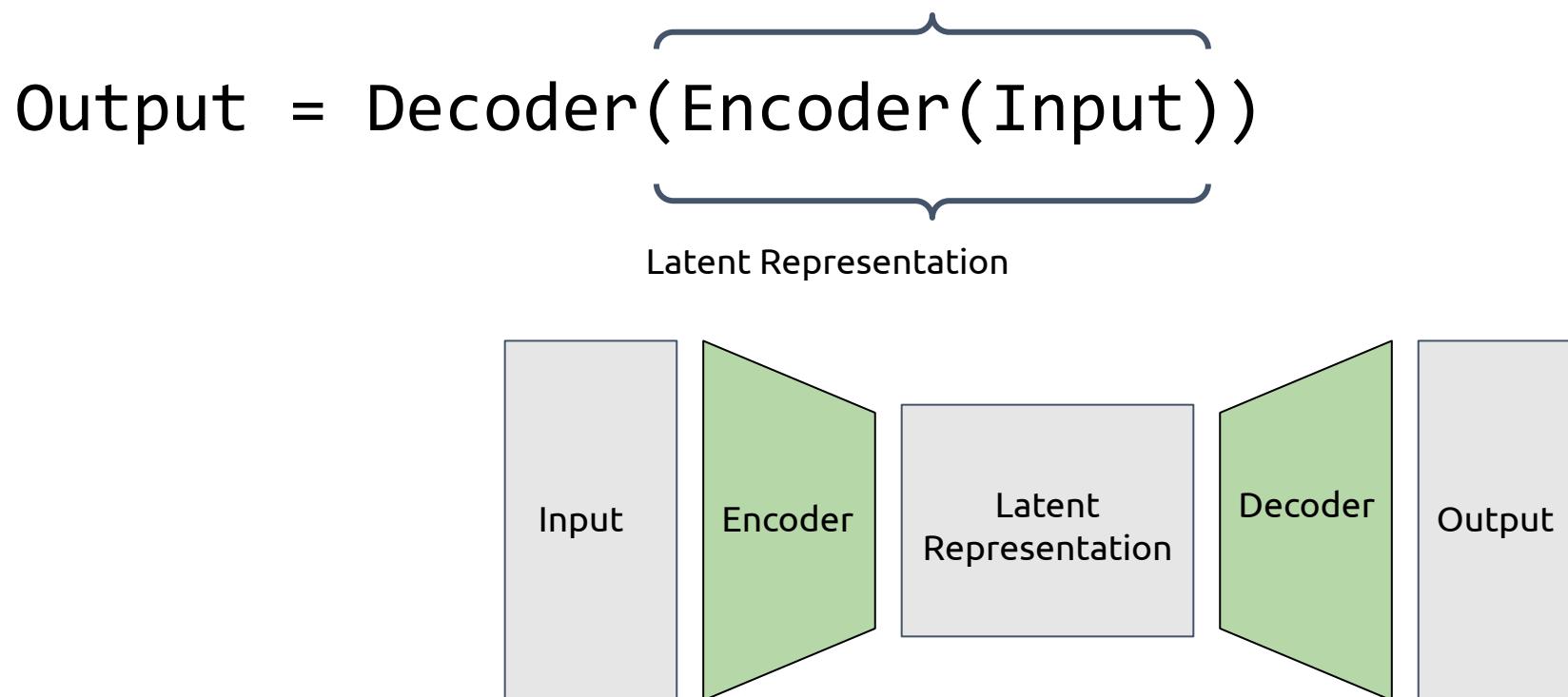
- ***Why do this?***

- We'll see shortly how this setup allows for a nice, stable learning algorithm
- (It's actually just a small modification to how autoencoders are trained)



# Building up the VAE Architecture

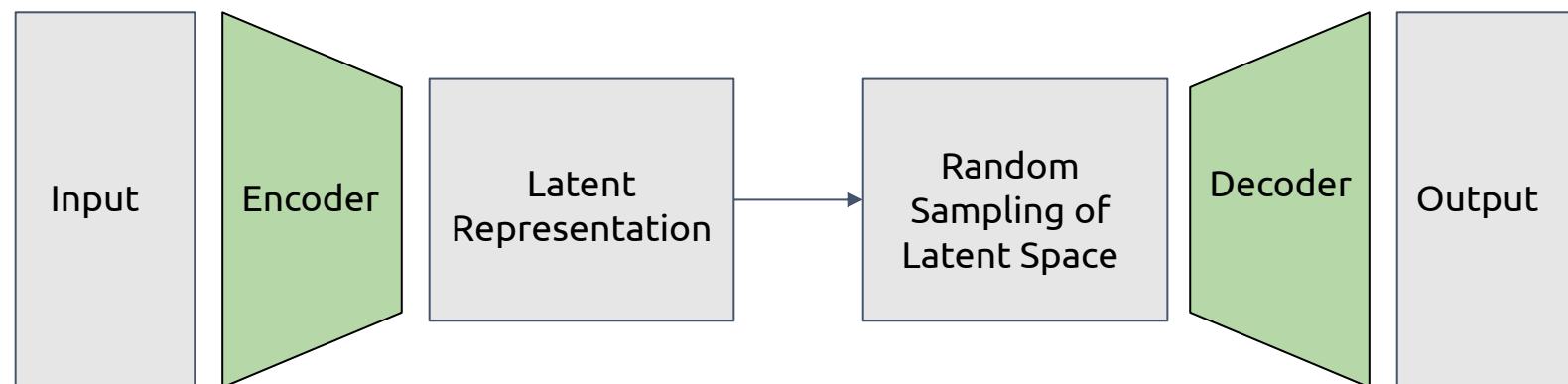
If we were to describe an autoencoder functionally:



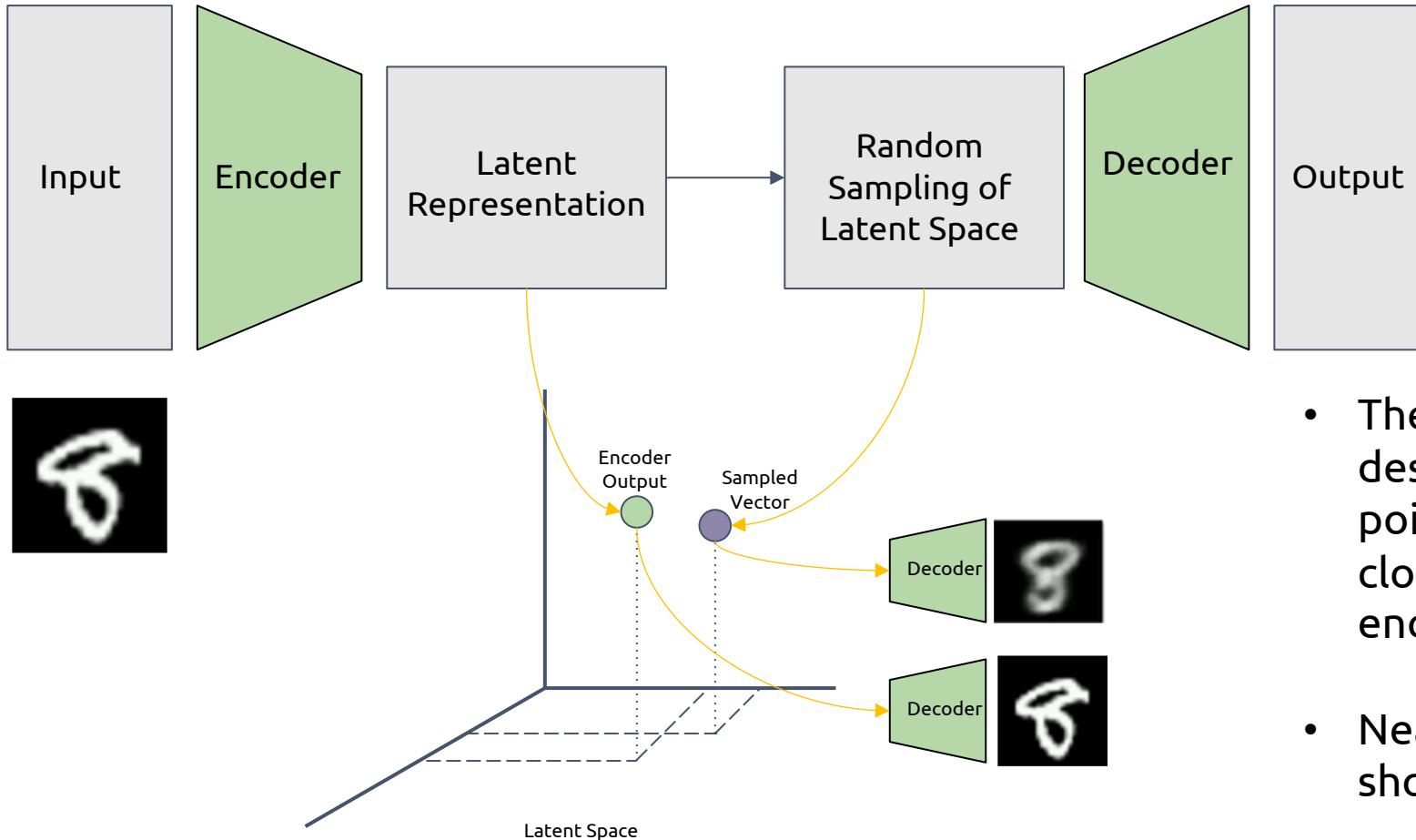
# Building up the VAE Architecture

For variational autoencoders, we also do a random sampling operation at the bottleneck

```
Output = Decoder(random_sample(Encoder(Input)))
```



# How does random sampling in latent space lead to variation?



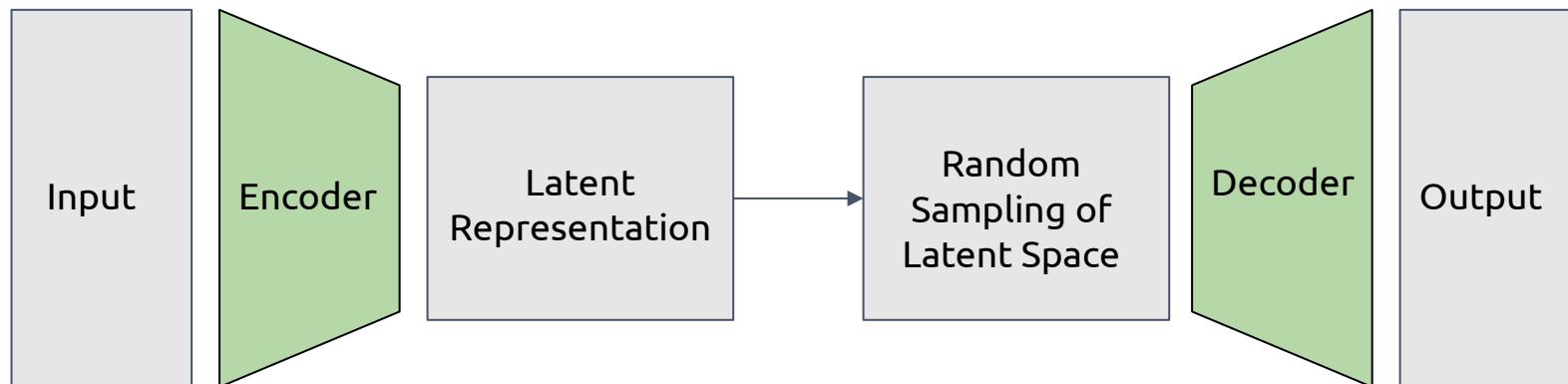
- The random sampling should be designed to produce random points in latent space that are close to the output of the encoder
- Nearby points in the latent space should decode to similar images

# How should `random_sample` be defined?

```
Output = Decoder(random_sample(Encoder(Input)))
```

- We want the sample to be close to the encoder output
- One option: sample from a Gaussian centered at Encoder(Input)

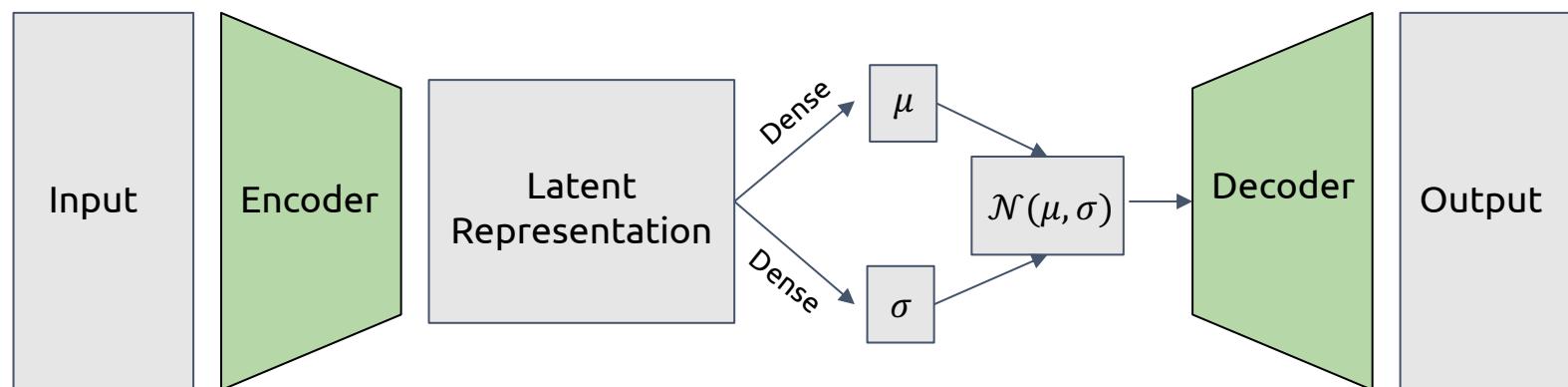
What can we modify?



# How should `random_sample` be defined?

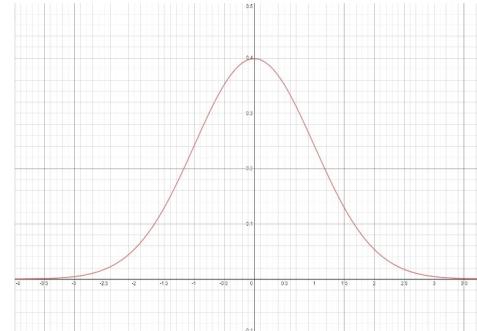
```
Output = Decoder(random_sample(Encoder(Input)))
```

- We want the sample to be close to the encoder output
- One option: sample from a Gaussian centered at Encoder(Input)
- Use two dense layers to convert the encoder output into the mean and standard deviation of the Gaussian

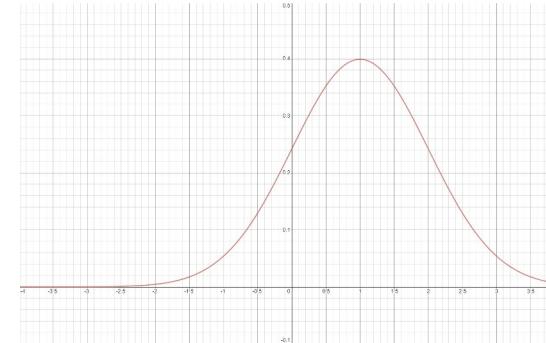




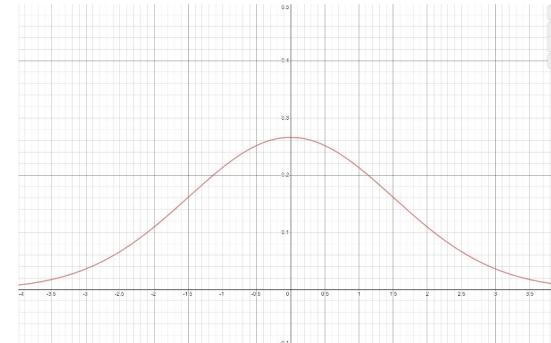
# How should `random_sample` be defined?



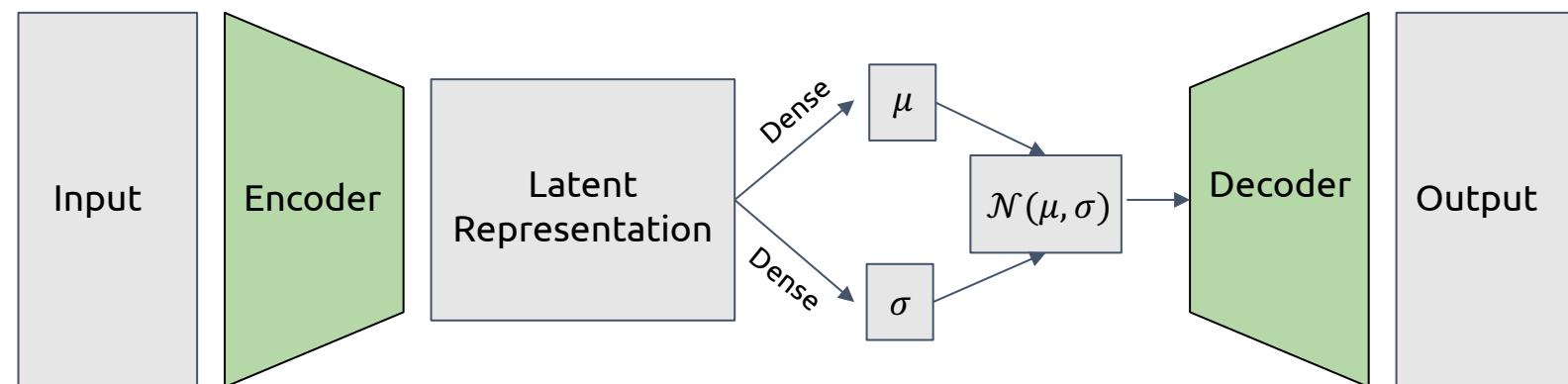
$$\begin{aligned}\mu &= 0 \\ \sigma &= 1\end{aligned}$$



$$\begin{aligned}\mu &= 1 \\ \sigma &= 1\end{aligned}$$



$$\begin{aligned}\mu &= 0 \\ \sigma &= 1.5\end{aligned}$$

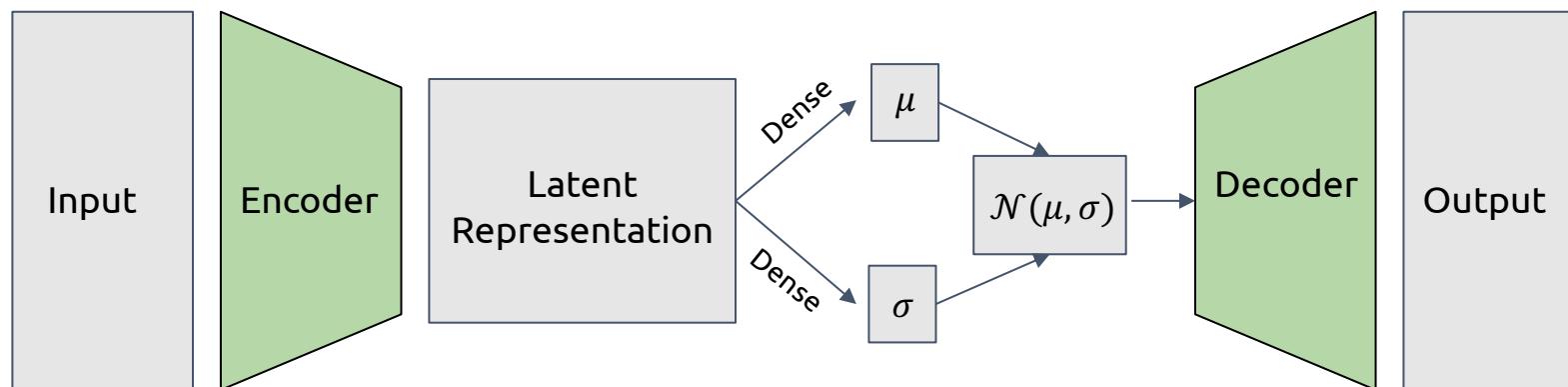


# Training a VAE

Two goals:

1. Reproduce an output similar to the input ( $\text{Input} \approx \text{Output}$ )
2. Have some variation in our output ( $\text{Input} \not\approx \text{Output}$ )

- Seems like two conflicting goals!
- How do we resolve these two goals?



# Weighted Combination of Losses

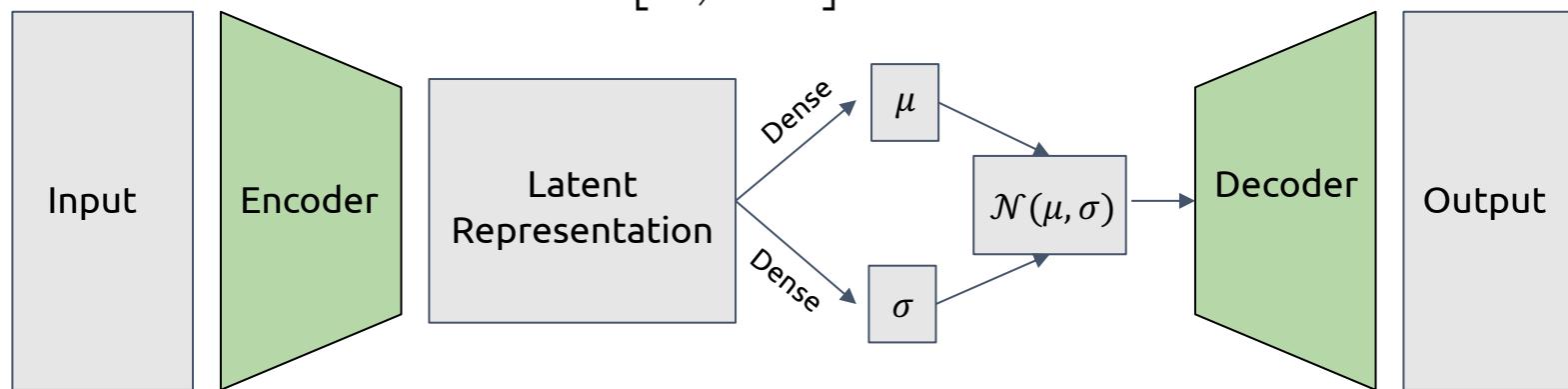
$L_1$  = loss associated with producing output similar to input

$L_2$  = loss associated with producing output with some variation to input

$$L = L_1 + \lambda L_2$$

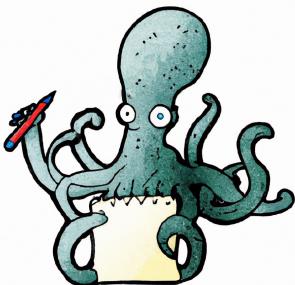
Total Loss:

$$\lambda \in [0, \infty]$$



# Recap

Generative  
Modeling



Convolutional AEs

Generative modeling – formulation  
and applications

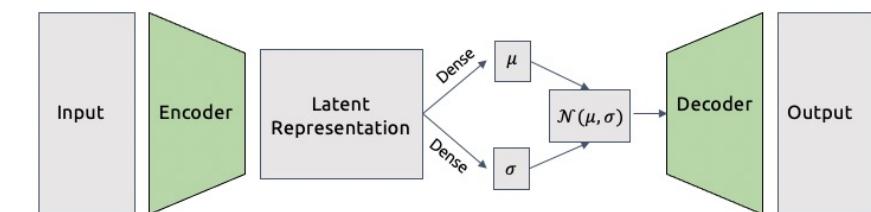
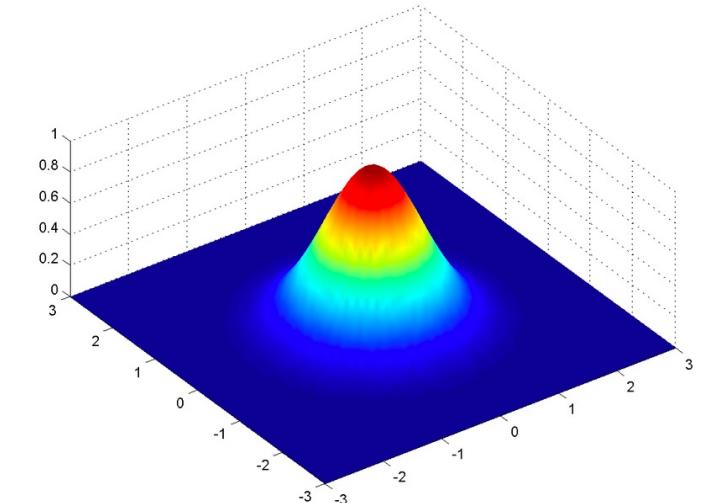
Probability distributions = generative models

Variational  
Autoencoders  
(VAEs)

Generative modeling for complex  
distributions

Modifying AEs

VAE architecture

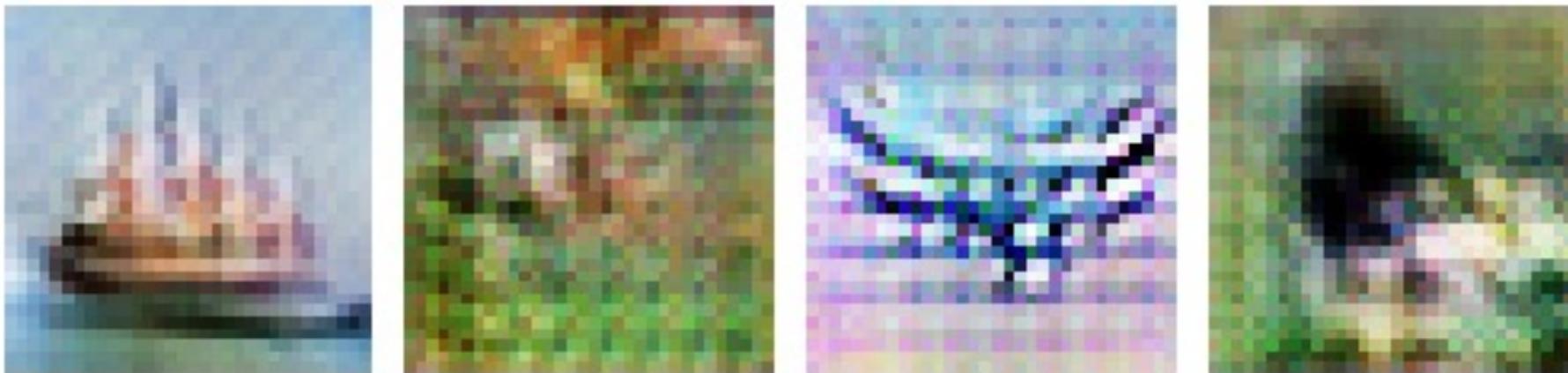


# Extra material

[More reading on Transpose Convolution](#)

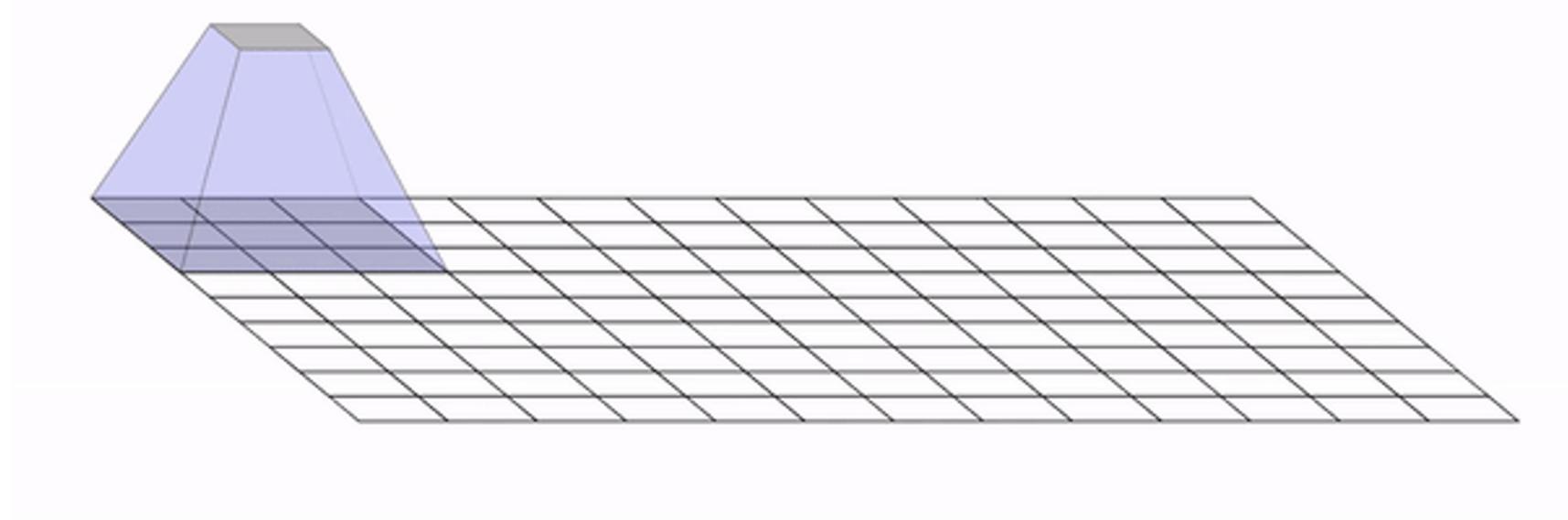
# Caution: Checkerboard Artifacts

- Transpose convolution causes artifacts in output images



# Caution: Checkerboard Artifacts

- Transpose convolution causes artifacts in output image
- Why? Some pixels get written to more often than others
- Is there a better way to upsample?



# Eliminating checkerboard artifacts

Step 1: Upsample using nearest neighbor interpolation:

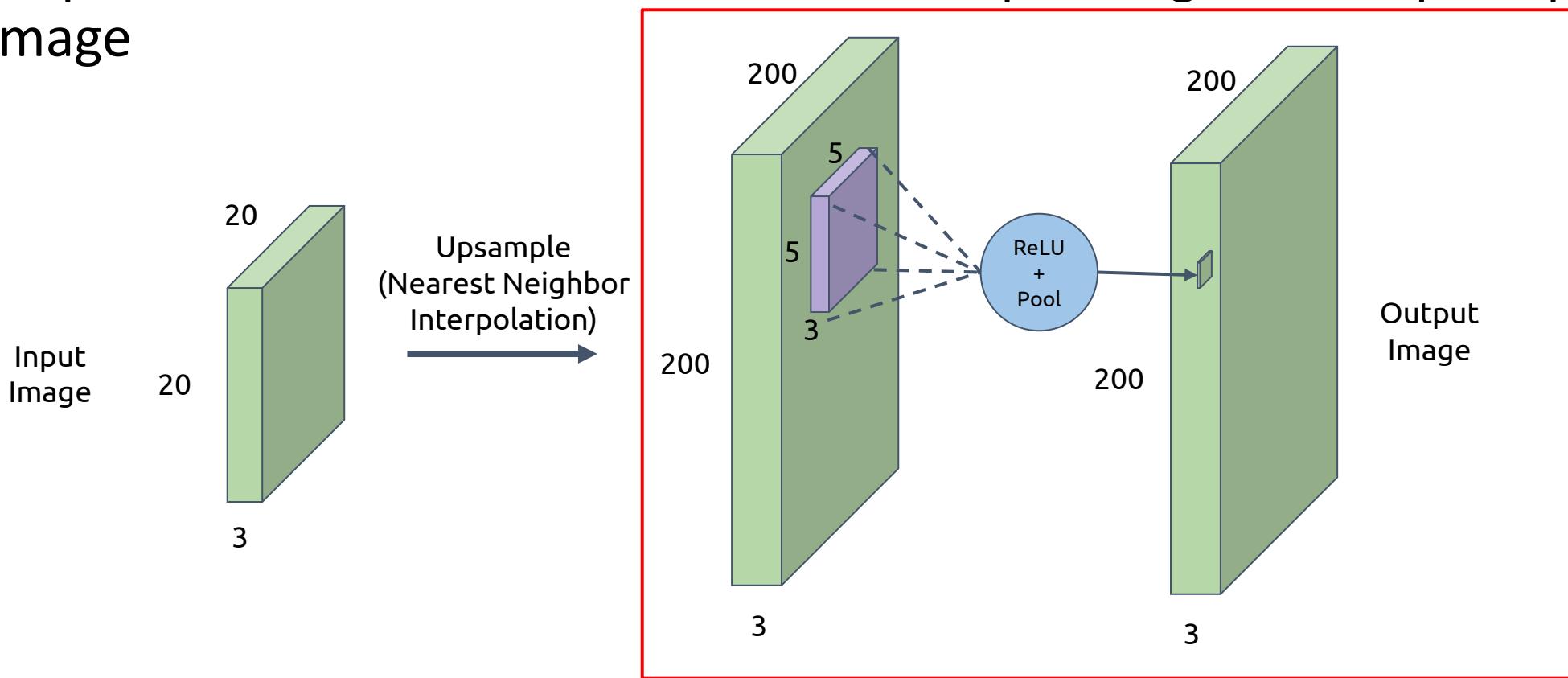
1	2
3	4

Pixels in upsampled  
image are assigned pixel  
value of CLOSEST pixel in  
original image

1	1	2	2
1	1	2	2
3	3	4	4
3	3	4	4

# Eliminating checkerboard artifacts

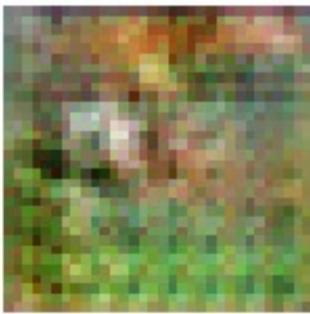
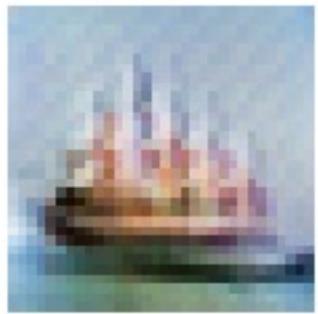
Step 2: Perform a convolution with SAME padding on the upsampled image



# Dealing With it in Tensorflow

```
# Layer to upsample the image by a factor of 5 in x and y using nearest  
# neighbor interpolation  
tf.keras.layers.UpSampling2D(size=(5, 5), interpolation='nearest')  
  
# Do a convolutional layer on the result  
tf.keras.layers.Conv2D(filters = 1, kernel_size = (10,10), padding = "SAME")
```

# Checkerboard Artifacts Resolved



With Transpose Convolution



With Resize + Convolution