Problem set 1

Each question is worth ten marks.

1. In the Monty Hall problem, a host (H) and a contestant (C) play the following game. (1) H places a prize behind one of three doors. (2) C makes a random guess as to which door hides the prize. (3) H opens one of the unchosen doors that does not hide the prize. (4) C chooses whether to stay with the chosen door, or switch to the other closed door. (5) All remaining doors are opened to show whether C wins the prize.

   What is the probability of winning if C stays with the chosen door in step (4)? What is the probability of winning if C switches to the other closed door? Prove your answers using the basic rules of probability theory.

2. Write an R function `rcnorm( nsamp, mean, sd, nclip )` that returns a vector of `nsamp` independent random numbers that are normally distributed, except that they all fall within `nclip` standard deviations of the mean. The mean is `mean` and the standard deviation of the unclipped distribution is `sd`. Give the mean a default value of 0, the standard deviation a default value of 1, and `nclip` a default value of 2. (Suggestion: start with a sample from `rnorm()`, and keep resampling any values that are outside of the desired range.)

3. The file `keeling.txt` contains monthly measurements of the atmospheric concentration of CO_2 from March 1958 to present. Download this file from the course github repository. Write an R script that does the following with this data.

   (a) Use `read.table` to read the file as a data frame. Use the optional argument `header=TRUE` to indicate that the file contains a line of headings (`year`, `month`, etc.) that will be used to name the data frame columns. Also use the optional argument `sep=","` to indicate that the columns in the text file are separated by commas. Consult `?read.table` if you need further information about this function.

   (b) Plot the CO_2 concentration for each month from March 1958 to present. Inspect the data in `keeling.txt`, and use one or more of the first four columns to come up with a measure of time for the x-axis. For the CO_2 concentration, use the column `co2_fit`, which is a slightly smoothed version of the measurements.

   (c) Plot the average CO_2 concentration during each year from 1959 to present.

   (d) Plot the average CO_2 concentration by month, averaging over the years from 1959 to present.

   In parts (b), (c), and (d), give the plots titles and axis labels.

Due date: March 5, 2019