Statisitcal Thinking in Biology Research Chapter 1

Terry Neeman and Timothée Bonnet

November 25, 2018

Acknowledgemnts and warning

• Statistics in biology is the study of biological variation

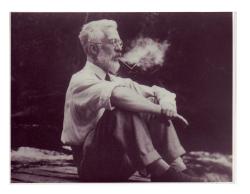
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- Statistical ideas about biological variation inform the design of experiments

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- Statistical ideas about biological variation inform the design of experiments
- Statistical ideas about biological variation inform the analysis of experiments
- Statistical thinking is an essential component of scientific thinking

A bit of history of statistical methods

R.A. Fisher: 1890-1962



Statistical Principles for Research Workers (1925)

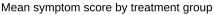
A bit of history of statistical methods

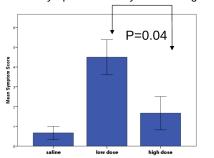
R.A. Fisher: 1890-1962



Statistical Principles for Research Workers (1925)

- Cautionary tales from the front
- 2 Introduction to Statistical Modelling
- 3 Another look at essential steps

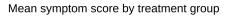


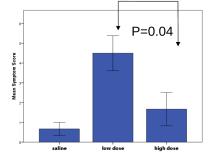


Vaccine challenge experiment:

- 6 mice/group (saline/low dose/high dose)
- All mice challenged with Shigella
- Followed for 14 days
- Outcome: Symptom score average Days 2 - 8

One-way ANOVA (post-hoc Bonferroni) p=0.04





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Do you think the vaccine works? What is strange?



Experimental design

The observed difference in outcome could be the result of:

- · Cage effects
- · Mouse strain effects

These effects are CONFOUNDED with treatment effect



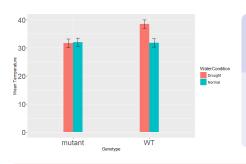
Cage 1: saline





Message 2: p-values from simple comparisons cannot tell us when differences are "different"

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Are temperature mechanisms modified in a genetically modified tomato plant?

- Genotypes: WT/mutant
- Water condition: Normal/Drought
- Leaf temperature measured

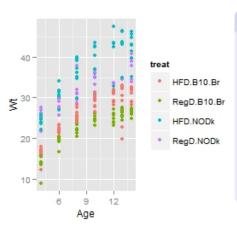
Comparisons made using t-tests

Evidence of difference + No evidence of difference \neq Evidence that differences are different.

Message 3: Interpreting experimental results needs more than t-tests

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Research question: Are mice susceptible to obesity when exposed to a high fat diet?



Experimental set-up:

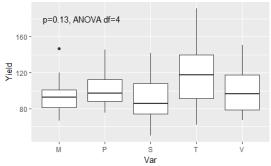
- 37 mice: 16 NODk /21 WT
- Randomised to either regular or high fat diet
- Monitored for 14 weeks
- Outcome measure: Body weight (g)
- Experimental factors: Diet (2), Strain (2), Time (8)

Acknowledgements: Ainy Hussain, PhD student 2013

Comparing yield in five barley varieties (1930s)

Experimental factors: 5 varieties of barley, 6 locations, 2 time points.

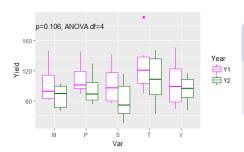
Outcome measure: yield



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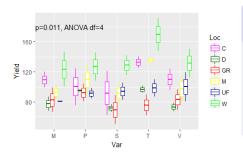
Controlling for other sources of variation:

 Controlling for year = comparing yield WITHIN years and combining these

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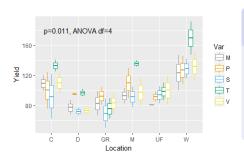
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Message 5: Knowing what factors contribute to the variation in outcome helps design experiments and analyses

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Research question: How does cold duration impact upon germination in alpine plant A. glacialis?



Experimental set-up:

- Seed collections from alpine region in Australia
- 3 Regions- low/high altitude
- 4 sets of Petri dishes
- 4 cabinet shelves
- Response % germinated

What other factors are important to consider when comparing cold duration?

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- Interpreting experimental results needs more than t-tests. Need a statistical model of the experiment, matching scientific question.
- Combining information across subgroups can improve inference. A statistical model enables accumulation of evidence across experiments.
- Knowing what factors contribute to the variation in outcome matters. A statistical model allows one to incorporate effect of other factors in the analysis.

- Cautionary tales from the front
- 2 Introduction to Statistical Modelling
- 3 Another look at essential steps

Introduction to Statistical Modelling

- What is a statistical model?
- Modelling outcomes:
 - a summary of data
 - a prediction model
 - an explanatory model
- Model may take many different functional forms
- Model a conceptualization of the experiment

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ALWAYS BEGIN WITH A RESEARCH QUESTION

Key components of a statistical model of an experiment

- Outcome measure
 - Response variable
 - Measure of interest
- Experimental factors
 - Conditions that can be manipulated
 - Conditions of interest (e.g. genotype, gender)
 - ▶ Main questions: do the conditions impact upon the outcome measure?
- Blocking factors
 - Conditions (not of interest) that may impact upon the outcome measure
 - Sources of variation in the experiment that need to be controlled for
 - Clustering of experimental units

ALWAYS BEGIN WITH A RESEARCH QUESTION



Key Objectives of a statistical model of an experiment

- To compare the mean response of an organism/system to a set of different experimental conditions.
 - Obtain estimate of "Treatment effect"
 - Is this "effect" different in subgroups of interest?
- What are the most important factors influencing the mean response?
- Subsidiary question: how can we design our experiment in future to more efficiently test our hypotheses?

Example 1: Does dark respiration differ between C3 and C4 plants?

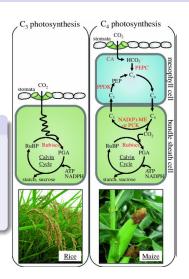
Outcome measure: dark respiration

Experimental factor: Plant type (C4/C3)

Data: 6 plants each of C4, C3

Can calculate

- Observed overall mean
- Observed mean C3 plants
- Observed mean C4 plants
- Variation around each mean



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Statistical model

Respiration = Mean for C3 + Difference C4-C3 * (is C4?) + Noise

Can calculate

- Observed overall mean
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- Observed mean C4 plants
- Variation around each mean

Statistical model

```
Respiration = Mean for C3 + Difference C4-C3 * (is C4?) + Noise response = A + D \times predictor + \epsilon
```

A and D are the model PARAMETERS.

We want to infer whether D is different from 0

response =
$$A + D \times predictor + \epsilon$$

Can we separate the signal D from the noise ϵ ?

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T-test

- Outcome is a continuous variable
- Experimental factor is one factor with 2 conditions
- No blocking factor / corrections

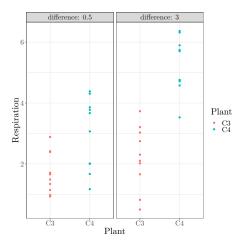
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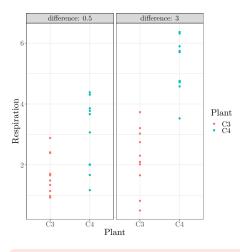
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Is it easier when the true difference is 0.5 or when it is 3 ?

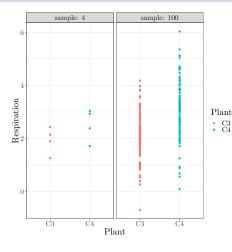


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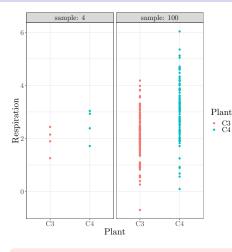
Large true difference between the means





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Is it easier when sample size is 4 or when it is 100?

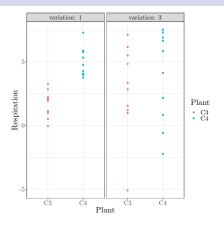


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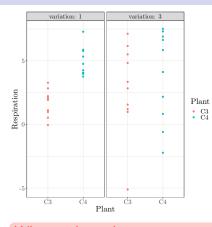
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$$t = \frac{D}{ ext{Variation of } \epsilon} imes \frac{ ext{Sample Size}}{\sqrt{2}}$$

Is it easier when unexplained variation is 1 or when it is 3?

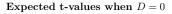


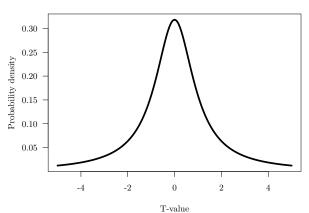
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What makes *t* large:

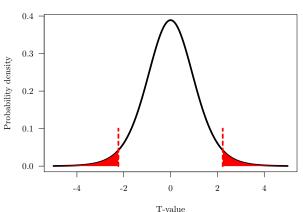
- Large true difference between the means
- 2 Large sample size
- Small unexplained variation





p-value: probability (area under curve) of getting a value as extreme as what you observed, when D=0

Expected t-values when D=0



Candy practical

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- Are there more Halloween than Fruit candies in that pack?

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How to?

Draw 5 candies out of the pack

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- Write down how many Halloween candies
- How often is it 5?
- Estimate the p-value for the test "candies have same frequency"
- Redo the experiment in R, using random sampling (rbinom)
- What is the correct null-distribution?

Back to C3/C4 plants. Analyse real data in R

- 1. Set working directory (setwd('' / '')) or create a R-project
- 2. Load and check data

```
resp <- read.csv("d_respiration.csv")
str(resp)
View(resp)</pre>
```

3. Visualize data

```
library(ggplot2)
ggplot(resp,aes(Plant_type,rrarea,colour=Plant_type))+
    geom_point()+facet_wrap(~Variation)
```

Subset data by Variation (High and Low)

```
resp_H <- subset(resp, Variation == "High")
resp_L <- subset(resp, Variation == "Low")</pre>
```

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Compare C3 and C4 plants in "High Variation" subset

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t.test(rrarea~Plant_type, data=resp_H, var.equal=TRUE)
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Subset data by Variation (High and Low)

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```
Two Sample t-test
data: rrarea by Plant_type
t = -0.93776, df = 10, p-value = 0.3705
alternative hypothesis: true difference in means is not equal to 0
95 percent confidence interval:
-1.7619349 0.7181446
sample estimates:
mean in group C3 mean in group C4
2.720021 3.241916
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resp_H <- subset(resp, Variation == "High")
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```

Compare C3 and C4 plants in "Low Variation" subset

t.test(rrarea~Plant_type, data=resp_L, var.equal=TRUE)

Fit an anova in R: aov()

```
aov1 <- aov(rrarea~Plant_type, data=resp_H)
summary(aov1)</pre>
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```
Df Sum Sq Mean Sq F value Pr(>F)
Plant_type 1 0.817 0.8171 0.879 0.37
Residuals 10 9.292 0.9292
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Fit an anova in R: aov()

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aov1 <- aov(rrarea~Plant_type, data=resp_H)
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$$response = A + D \times predictor + \epsilon$$

Fit a linear model in R: lm()

```
lm1<-lm(rrarea ~ Plant_type, data = resp_L)
summary(lm1)</pre>
```

Fit a linear model in R: 1m()

lm1<-lm(rrarea ~ Plant_type, data = resp_L)</pre>

Terry Neeman and Timothée Bonnet Statisitcal Thinking in Biology Research

```
summary(lm1)
lm(formula = rrarea ~ Plant_type, data = resp_H)
Residuals:
   Min 1Q Median 3Q Max
-1.7380 -0.4201 -0.1437 0.6706 1.6754
Coefficients:
            Estimate Std. Error t value Pr(>|t|)
(Intercept) 2.7200 0.3935 6.912 4.13e-05 ***
Plant_typeC4 0.5219 0.5565 0.938 0.37
Signif. codes: 0 '*** 0.001 '** 0.01 '* 0.05 '. '0.1 ' 1
Residual standard error: 0.9639 on 10 degrees of freedom
Multiple R-squared: 0.08083, Adjusted R-squared: -0.01109
F-statistic: 0.8794 on 1 and 10 DF, p-value: 0.3705
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November 25, 2018

34 / 57

Fit a linear model in R: lm()

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Fit a linear model in R: lm()

```
library(emmeans)
emmeans(lm1, ~Plant_type)
```

```
Plant_type emmean SE df lower.CL upper.CL
C3 2.720021 0.3935305 10 1.843180 3.596861
C4 3.241916 0.3935305 10 2.365076 4.118757

Confidence level used: 0.95
```

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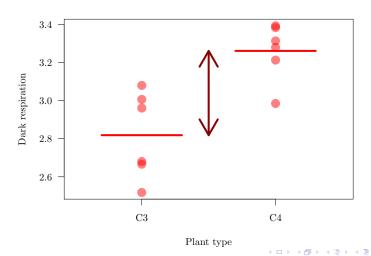
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```

$$response = A + D \times predictor + \epsilon$$

Compare the output from t.test, aov and Im

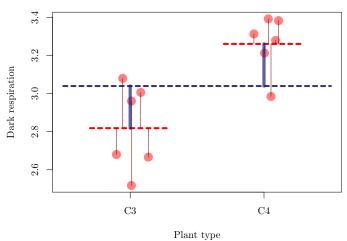
Three equivalent ways to look at data

T-test, focus on difference between two means



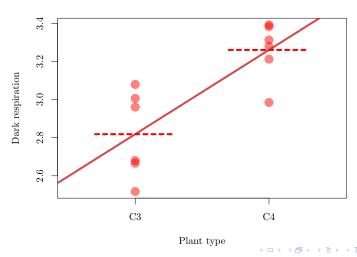
Three equivalent ways to look at data

ANOVA, focus on variation within VS. between



Three equivalent ways to look at data

Linear regression, focus on rate of change



All is one...

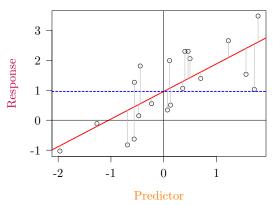
All is one...

...but lm() rules (IMH)

- t-test, ANOVA, regression and others can be mathematically equivalent
- In R, lm() and related functions can do them all...
- ...and much more!

Focus on linear models

$Response = Intercept + Slope \times Predictor + Error$



A simple linear model

Response = Intercept + Slope \times Predictor + Error

```
lm(response ~ 1 + predictor1 + predictor2, data=data)
```

equivalent to

```
lm(response ~ predictor1 + predictor2, data=data)
```

equivalent to

```
lm(response ~ predictor2 + predictor1, data=data)
```

- Intercept can be explicit or implicit
- Can remove intercept with $\ldots \sim 0 + \ldots$
- Error is implicit
- Feed the option data= to keep code short, reliable and flexible
- Order of predictors do not matter



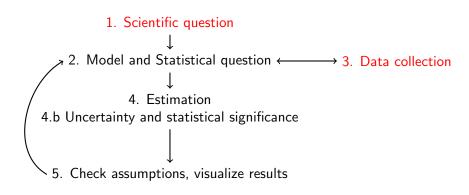
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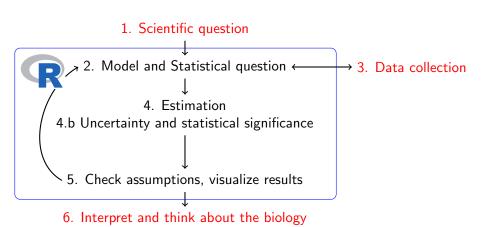
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- 1. Scientific question
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- 1. Scientific question
- 2. Model and Statistical question \longleftrightarrow 3. Data collection
 - 4. Estimation
- 4.b Uncertainty and statistical significance





```
lmL<-lm(rrarea ~ Plant_type, data = resp_L)
summary(lmL)</pre>
```

```
lmL<-lm(rrarea ~ Plant_type, data = resp_L)
summary(lmL)</pre>
```

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Estimate Std. Error t value Pr(>|t|)
(Intercept) 2.81857 0.07856 35.878 6.72e-12 ***
Plant_typeC4 0.44235 0.11110 3.982 0.00259 ** ---
...
```

Estimation:

response =
$$A + D \times predictor + \epsilon$$

 $A = ?, D = ?$

```
lmL<-lm(rrarea ~ Plant_type, data = resp_L)
summary(lmL)</pre>
```

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What do we do next?



Linear model basic assumptions

Predictor not perfectly correlated
 Risk: Model won't run, unstable convergence, or huge SE

Linear model basic assumptions

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- Little error in predictors

 Risk: bias estimates (underestimate with Gaussian error)

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Homoscedasticity (constant error variance)
 Risk: Over-optimistic uncertainty, unreliable predictions

Linear model basic assumptions

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• Gaussian error distribution Risk: Poor predictions

Homoscedasticity (constant error variance)
 Risk: Over-optimistic uncertainty, unreliable predictions

Independence of error
 Risk: Bias and over-optimistic uncertainty

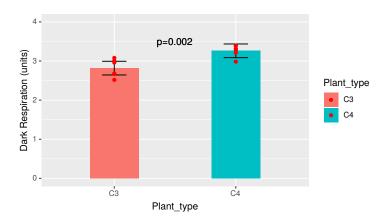
Assessing model assumptions in R:

```
lmL<-lm(rrarea ~ Plant_type, data = resp_L)
plot(lmL)
summary(lmL)</pre>
```

Visualize and report results

```
lm1.results<-summary(emmeans(lm1,~Plant_type))

ggplot(lm1.results,aes(Plant_type,emmean, fill=Plant_type))+
    geom_bar(stat="identity", width=.4)+
    geom_errorbar(aes(ymin =lm1.results$lower.CL,
    ymax = lm1.results$upper.CL), width=.2)+
    ylim(0,4)+
    geom_point(data=resp_L, aes(x=Plant_type, y=rrarea), color="red")+
    labs(y = "Dark Respiration (units)")+
    geom_text(aes(x=1.5, y=3.5, label="p=0.002"))</pre>
```



Another example

Compare wheat yields between 3 varieties

• Outcome measure: Tonnes/hectare

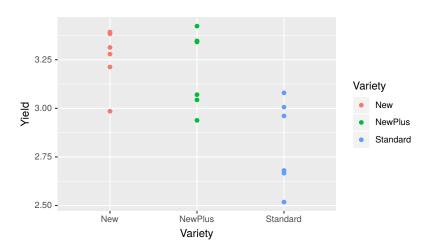
• Experimental factor: Variety (new/newPLUS/standard)

Data: 6 plots/ variety



How many parameters in this model?

Results from Wheat Yield Experiment with 3 Varieties



Analyse these data in R

Sample analysis in R: 1-way ANOVA

```
aov1=aov(Yield~Variety, data = wheat2)
summary(aov1)
```

```
Df Sum Sq Mean Sq F value Pr(>F)

Variety 2 0.6820 0.3410 8.951 0.00276 **

Residuals 15 0.5714 0.0381
```

ANOVA

- Compares means between TWO or MORE GROUPS
- Relies on F-statistic = $\frac{\text{Between-groups variance}}{\text{Within groups variance}} = \frac{\text{Explained}}{\text{Unexplained}}$
- One test for significance of all groups

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```

ANOVA

- Compares means between TWO or MORE GROUPS
- Relies on F-statistic = Between-groups variance = Explained Unexplained Unexplained
- One test for significance of all groups

But which groups are different???



Using emmeans to extract group estimates

```
emmeans(aov1, ~Variety)
```

```
Variety emmean SE df lower.CL upper.CL Standard 2.81 0.079 15 2.64 2.98
New 3.26 0.079 15 3.09 3.43
NewPlus 3.19 0.079 15 3.02 3.36

Confidence level used: 0.95
```

Using emmeans to compare groups

emmeans(aov1, pairwise~Variety)

Equivalent with lm()

```
lm2<-lm(Yield ~ Variety, data = wheat2)
anova(lm2)
summary(lm2)</pre>
```

```
Analysis of Variance Table

Response: Yield

Df Sum Sq Mean Sq F value Pr(>F)

Variety 2 0.68203 0.34101 8.9513 0.002764 **

Residuals 15 0.57145 0.03810
```

```
Coefficients:

Estimate Std. Error t value Pr(>|t|)

(Intercept) 2.81857 0.07968 35.372 7.26e-16 ***

VarietyNew 0.44235 0.11269 3.925 0.00135 **

VarietyNewPlus 0.37529 0.11269 3.330 0.00457 **
```

Equivalent with lm()

emmeans(lm2, pairwise~Variety)

```
        $emmeans

        Variety
        emmean
        SE
        df
        lower.CL upper.CL

        Standard
        2.81
        0.0796
        15
        2.64
        2.98

        New
        3.26
        0.0796
        15
        3.09
        3.43

        NewPlus
        3.19
        0.0796
        15
        3.02
        3.36
```

Confidence level used: 0.95

\$contrasts

 contrast
 estimate
 SE
 df
 t.ratio p.value

 Standard - New
 -0.44
 0.112
 15
 -3.925
 0.0036

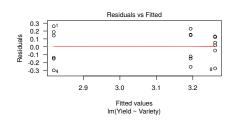
 Standard - NewPlus
 -0.37
 0.112
 15
 -3.330
 0.0120

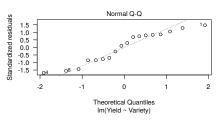
 New - NewPlus
 0.067
 0.112
 15
 0.595
 0.8248

P value adjustment: tukey method for comparing a family of 3 estimates

Assessing model assumptions for lm()

plot(lm2)





Summary of results with post hoc comparisons:

