Random Variables

A random variable is a map from the sample space to reals

Ex. dice
$\Omega = \{1,2,3,4,5,6\}$

$X(\omega) = \omega \quad \forall \omega \in \Omega$

Ex. flip coin 5x $\quad \Omega = \{(c_1 c_2 c_3 c_4 c_5) : c_i \in \{H,T\}\}$

$X(\omega) = \#$ heads

$X(HTTHH) = 3$

9/01

Announcements

- Intro Survey today
- HW1 next Tuesday
- Quiz 1 next Tuesday

Ω = sample space (set of all outcomes of experiment)

- $\{1,2,3,4,5,6\}$
- $\{(H,H),(H,T),(T,H),(T,T)\}$

event = subset of Ω (set of outcomes of experiment)

- $\{1,3,5\}$
- $\emptyset, \Omega$

probability distribution / measure

- $\mathbb{P}[A] \geq 0 \quad \forall$ event A
- $\mathbb{P}[\Omega] = 1$
- $\mathbb{P}[\bigcup_{i=1}^{\infty} A_i] = \sum_{i=1}^{\infty} \mathbb{P}[A_i]$ if $A_1, A_2, \ldots$ disjoint

independent events

$\mathbb{P}[A \cap B] = \mathbb{P}[A]\,\mathbb{P}[B]$

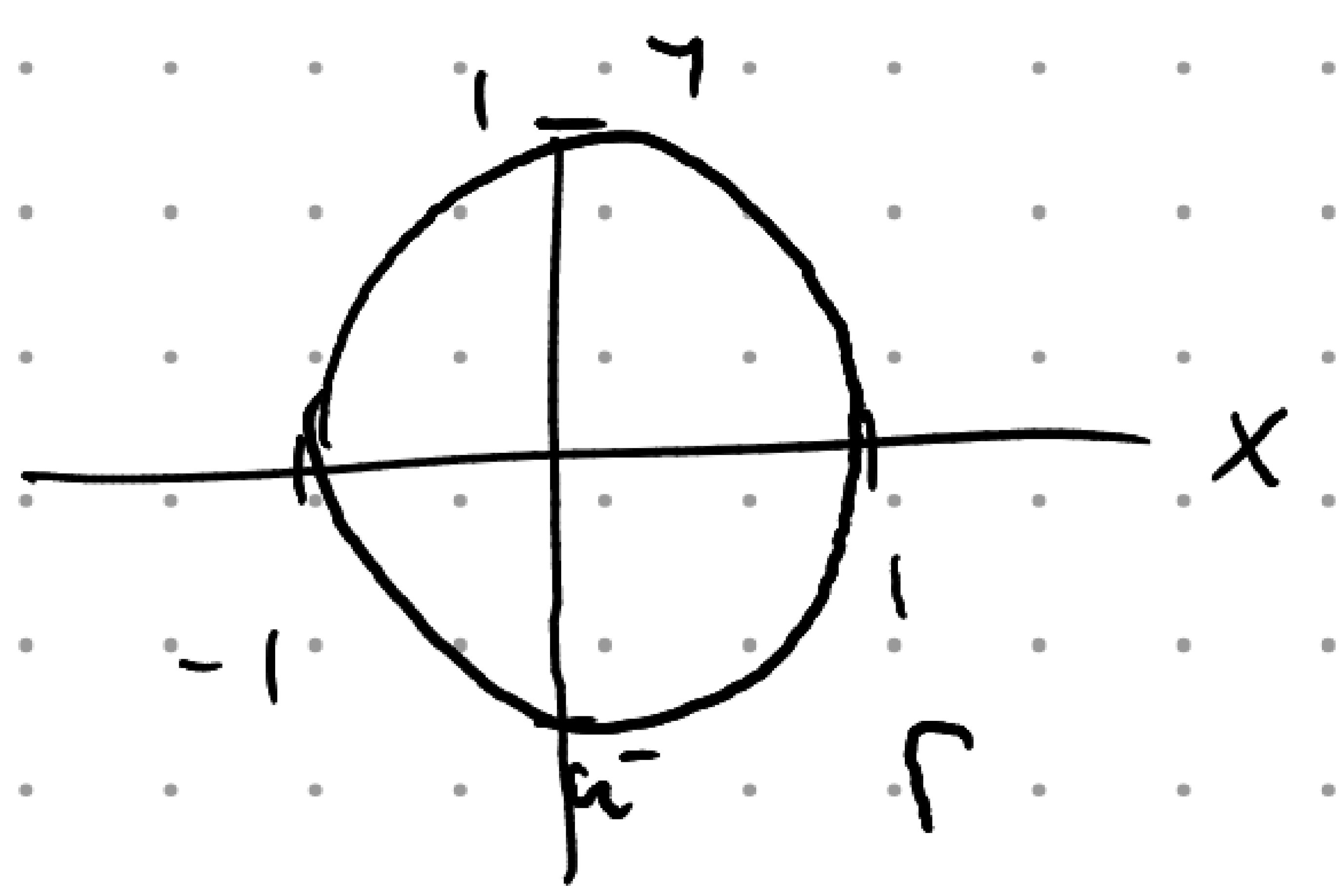
conditional probability

$\mathbb{P}[A \mid B] = \mathbb{P}[A \cap B] / \mathbb{P}[B]$

RV : map from $\Omega \to \mathbb{R}$

- $X(\omega) = \#$ heads in ω
- $X(\omega) =$ payoff for roulette roll

Ex. Let $\Omega = \{(x, y) : x^2 + y^2 \leq 1\}$



Suppose we draw a point at random from Ω

Examples of RVs:

- $D(\omega) = \sqrt{x^2 + y^2}$ (distance from $(0,0)$)
- $B(\omega) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } D(\omega) \leq \frac{1}{10} \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$ (did I get bullseye?)

Distribution functions

Let X be a RV.

If X is discrete, we can consider the <u>probability mass function</u> (pmf)

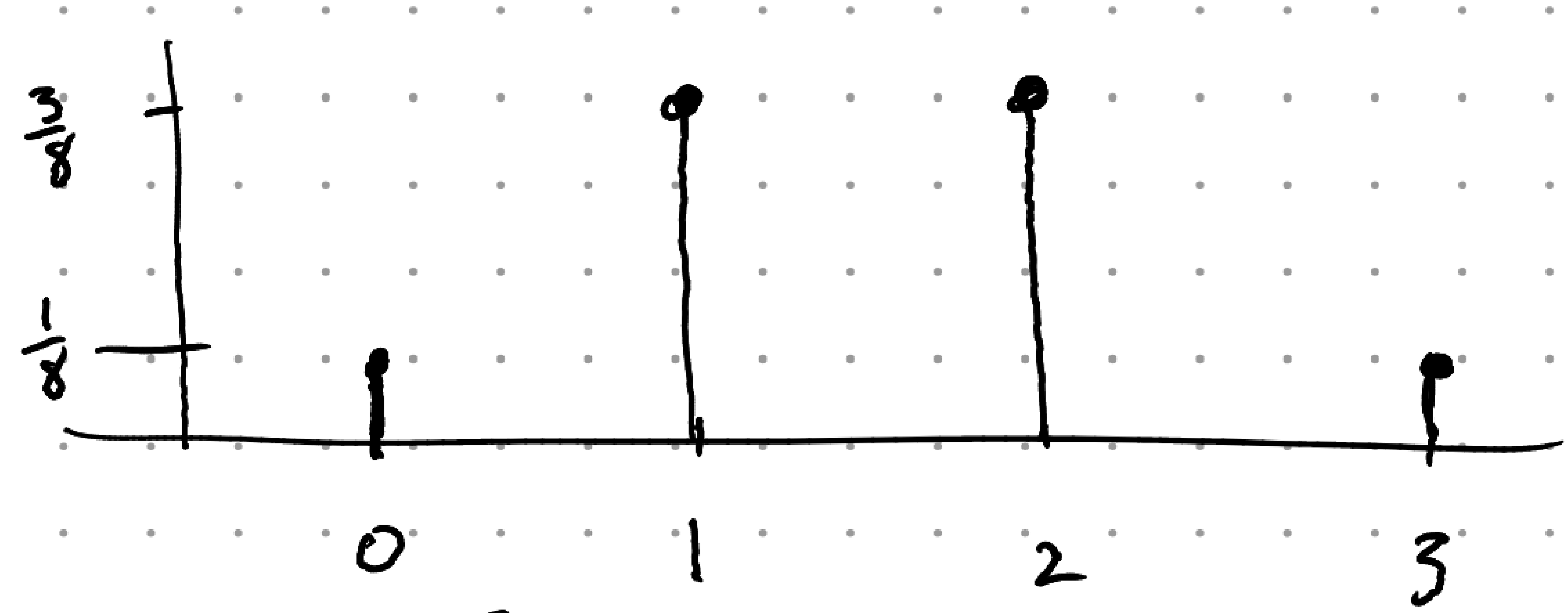
$$f_X(x) = \mathbb{P}[\underbrace{X = x}_{\text{shorthand for this event}}] = \mathbb{P}[\underbrace{\{\omega : X(\omega) = x\}}]$$

Ex. $\Omega = \{(\omega_1, \omega_2, \omega_3) : \omega_i \in \{H, T\}\}$

$X = \#$ heads

$\mathbb{P}[\{\omega \in \Omega : \omega_i = H\}] = \frac{1}{2} \quad i = 1, 2, 3$

i.e. fair coin



$$f_X(x) = \begin{cases} 1/8 & x = 0 \\ 3/8 & x = 1 \\ 3/8 & x = 2 \\ 1/8 & x = 3 \end{cases}$$

Ex. $\Omega = \{\omega : \omega \in [0,1]\} = [0,1]$

$\mathbb{P}$ = "all points equally likely"

$X(\omega) = \omega$

$\mathbb{P}[(a,b)] = b-a$ (ideally)

but then $\mathbb{P}[\{\omega\}] = 0$ ... so $\mathbb{P}[X=x]=0$
$\forall x \in [0,1]$

pmf doesn't make sense here..

<u>Cumulative distribution function</u> (CDF)

$F_X(x) = \mathbb{P}[X \le x]$

Ex. Write down CDF for coin example