

Computer Vision II - Lecture 2

Background Modeling

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Bastian Leibe

RWTH Aachen

<http://www.vision.rwth-aachen.de>

leibe@vision.rwth-aachen.de

Announcements

- **Course webpage**
 - <http://www.vision.rwth-aachen.de/teaching/>
 - Slides will be made available on the webpage
- **L2P electronic repository**
 - Exercises and supplementary materials will be posted on the L2P
- **Please subscribe to the lecture on the Campus system!**
 - Important to get email announcements and L2P access!
 - Bachelor students please also subscribe

Course Outline

- **Single-Object Tracking**
 - **Background modeling**
 - **Template based tracking**
 - **Color based tracking**
 - **Contour based tracking**
 - **Tracking by online classification**
 - **Tracking-by-detection**
- **Bayesian Filtering**
- **Multi-Object Tracking**
- **Articulated Tracking**



Topics of This Lecture

- **Motivation: Background Modeling**
- **Simple Background Models**
 - Background Subtraction
 - Frame Differencing
- **Statistical Background Models**
 - Single Gaussian
 - Mixture of Gaussians
 - Kernel Density Estimation
- **Practical Issues and Extensions**
 - Background model update
 - False detection suppression
 - Shadow suppression
 - Applications

Motivation: Tracking from Static Cameras



Motivation

- **Goals**

- Want to detect and track all kinds of objects in a wide variety of surveillance scenarios.
⇒ *Need a general algorithm that works for many scenarios.*
- Video frames come in at 30Hz. There is not much time to process each image.
⇒ *Real-time algorithms need to be very simple.*

- **Assumptions**

- The camera is static.
- Objects that move are important (people, vehicles, etc.).

- **Basic Approach**

- Maintain a model of the static background.
- Compare the current frame to this model to detect objects.

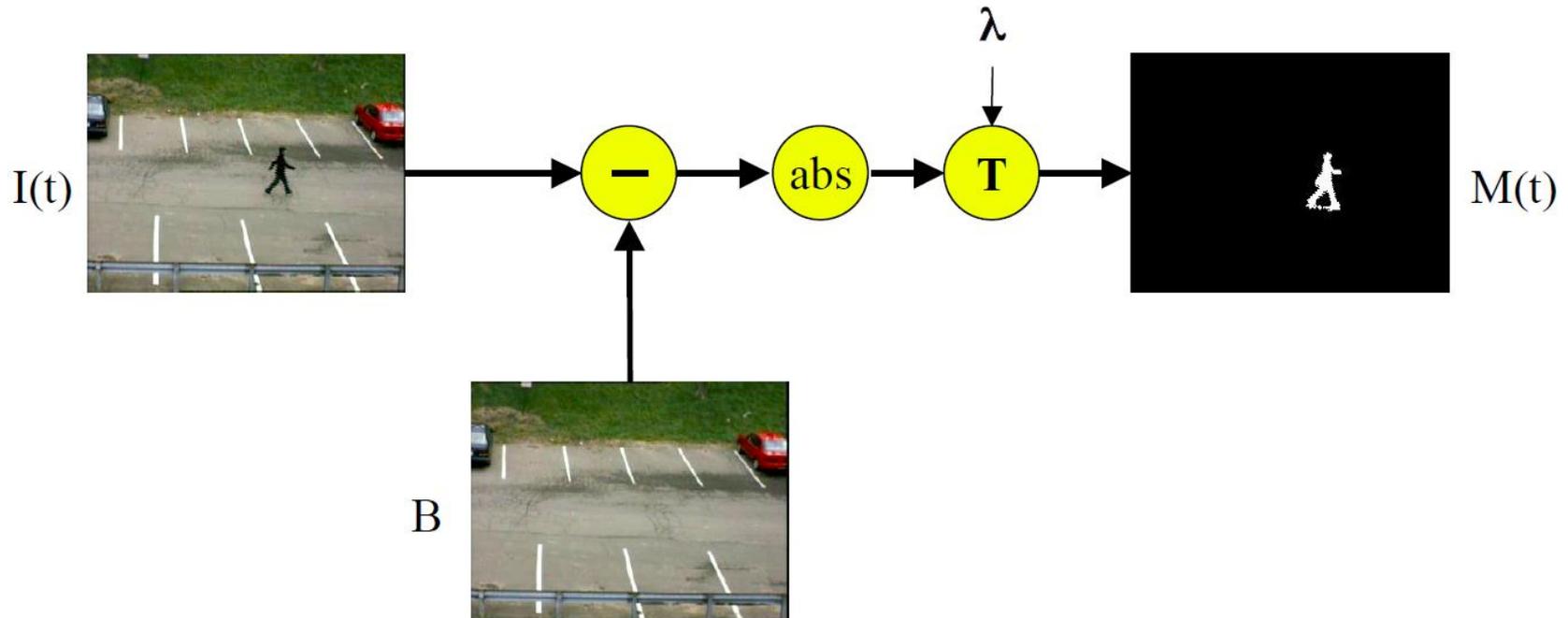
Background Modelling Results



Topics of This Lecture

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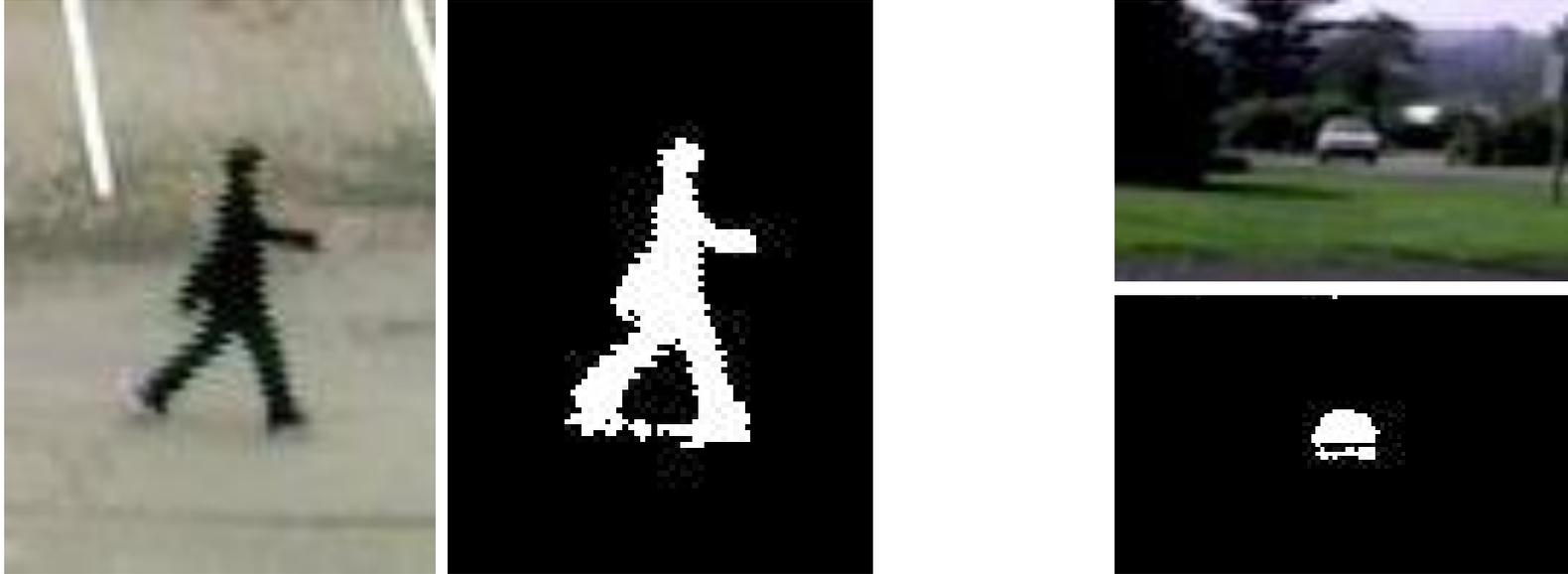
Simple Background Subtraction



- **Procedure**

- Background model is a static image (without any objects).
- Pixels are labeled based on thresholding the absolute intensity difference between current frame and background.

Background Subtraction Results



- **Observation**
 - Background subtraction does a reasonable job of extracting the object shape if the object intensity/color is sufficiently different from the background.
- *What are the limitations of this simple procedure?*

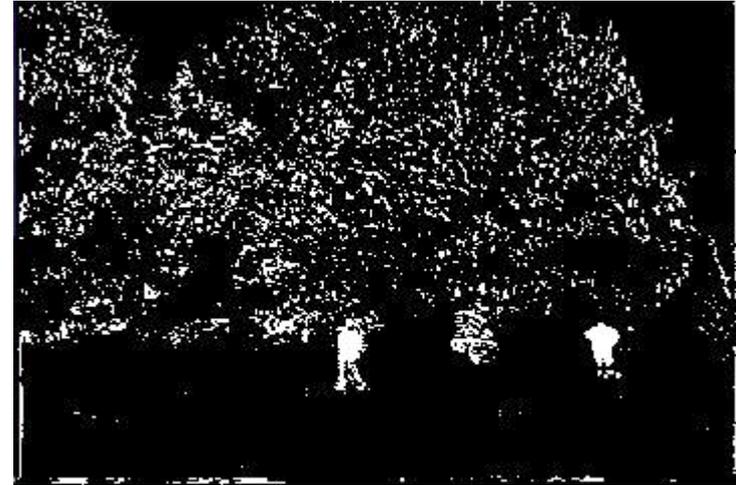
Background Subtraction: Limitations

- **Outdated reference frame**
 - **Objects that enter the scene and stop continue to be detected...**
...making it difficult to detect new objects that pass in front of them.
 - **If part of the assumed static background starts moving...**
...both the object and its negative ghost (the revealed background) are detected.



Background Subtraction: Limitations

- **Illumination changes**
 - Background subtraction is sensitive to illumination changes and unimportant scene motion (e.g., tree branches swaying in the wind).

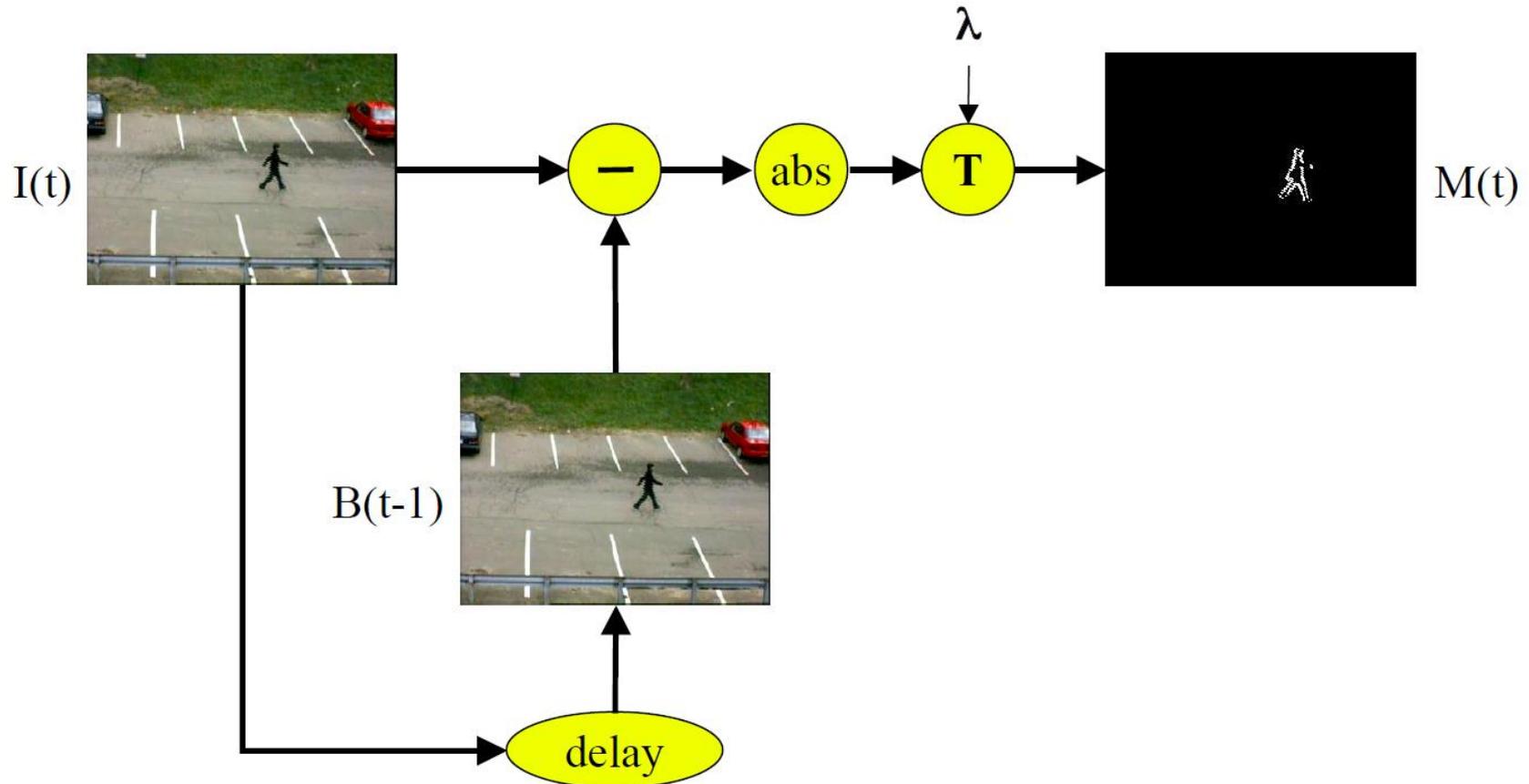


- **Global threshold**
 - A single, global threshold for the entire scene is often suboptimal.



⇒ *Need adaptive model with local decisions*

Simple Frame Differencing



- Other idea

- Background model is replaced with the previous image.

Frame Differencing Observations

- **Advantages**

- Frame differencing is very quick to adapt to changes in lighting or camera motion.
- Objects that stop are no longer detected.
- Objects that start up no longer leave behind ghosts.



- **Limitations**

- Frame differencing only detects the leading and trailing edge of a uniformly colored object.
- Very few pixels on the object are labeled.
- Very hard to detect an object moving towards or away from the camera.



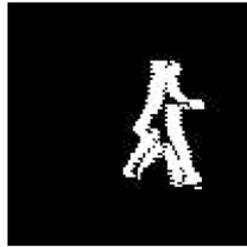
Differencing and Temporal Scale



I(t)



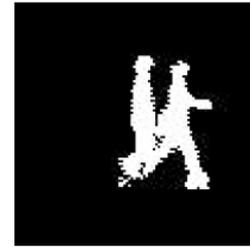
D(-1)



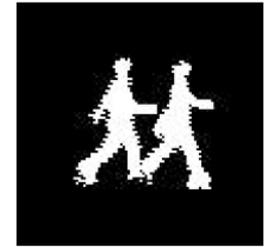
D(-3)



D(-5)



D(-9)



D(-15)

- **More general formulation**

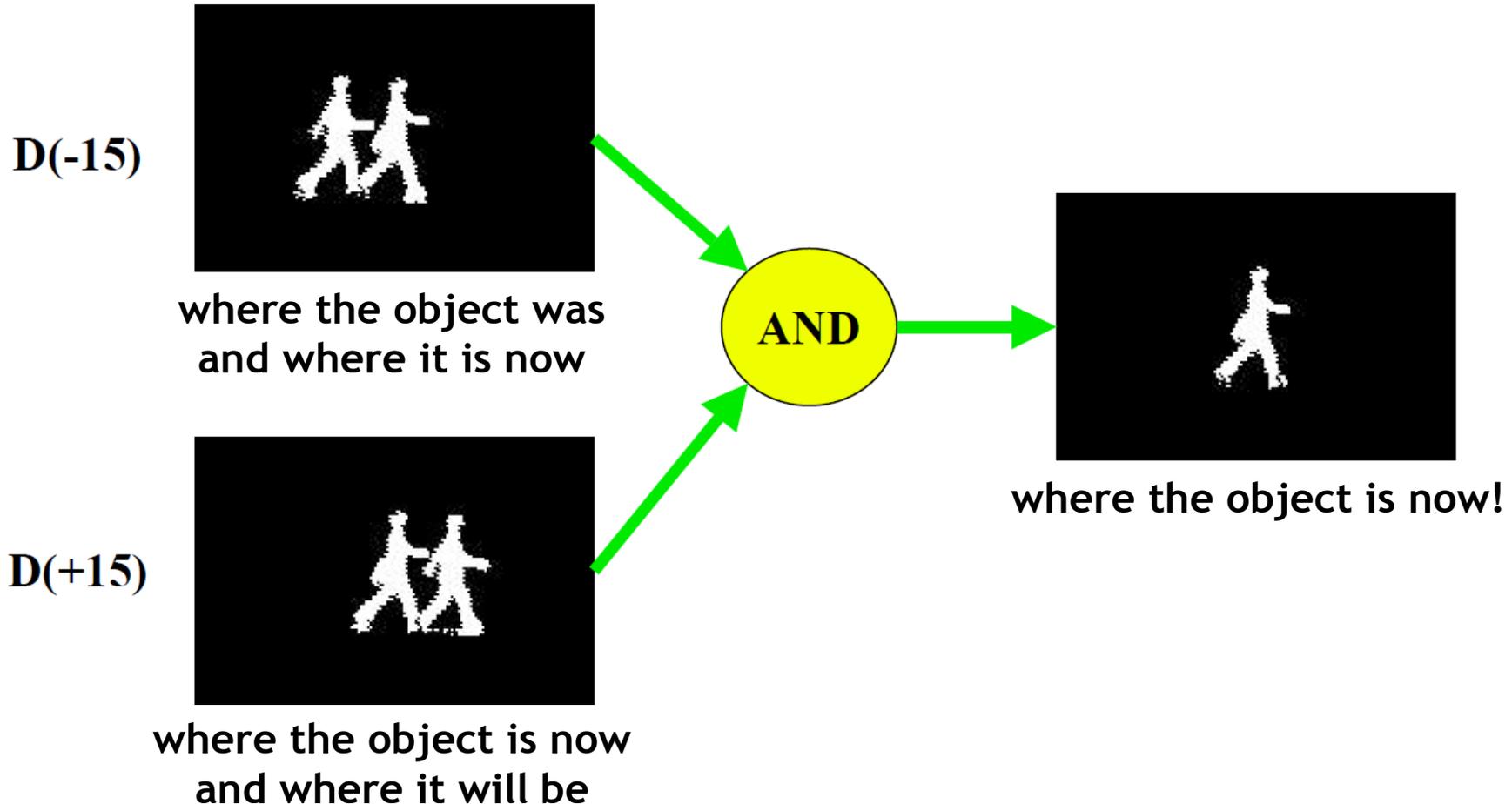
- Define
$$D(N) = \|I(t) - I(t + N)\|$$

- **Effect of increasing the temporal scale**

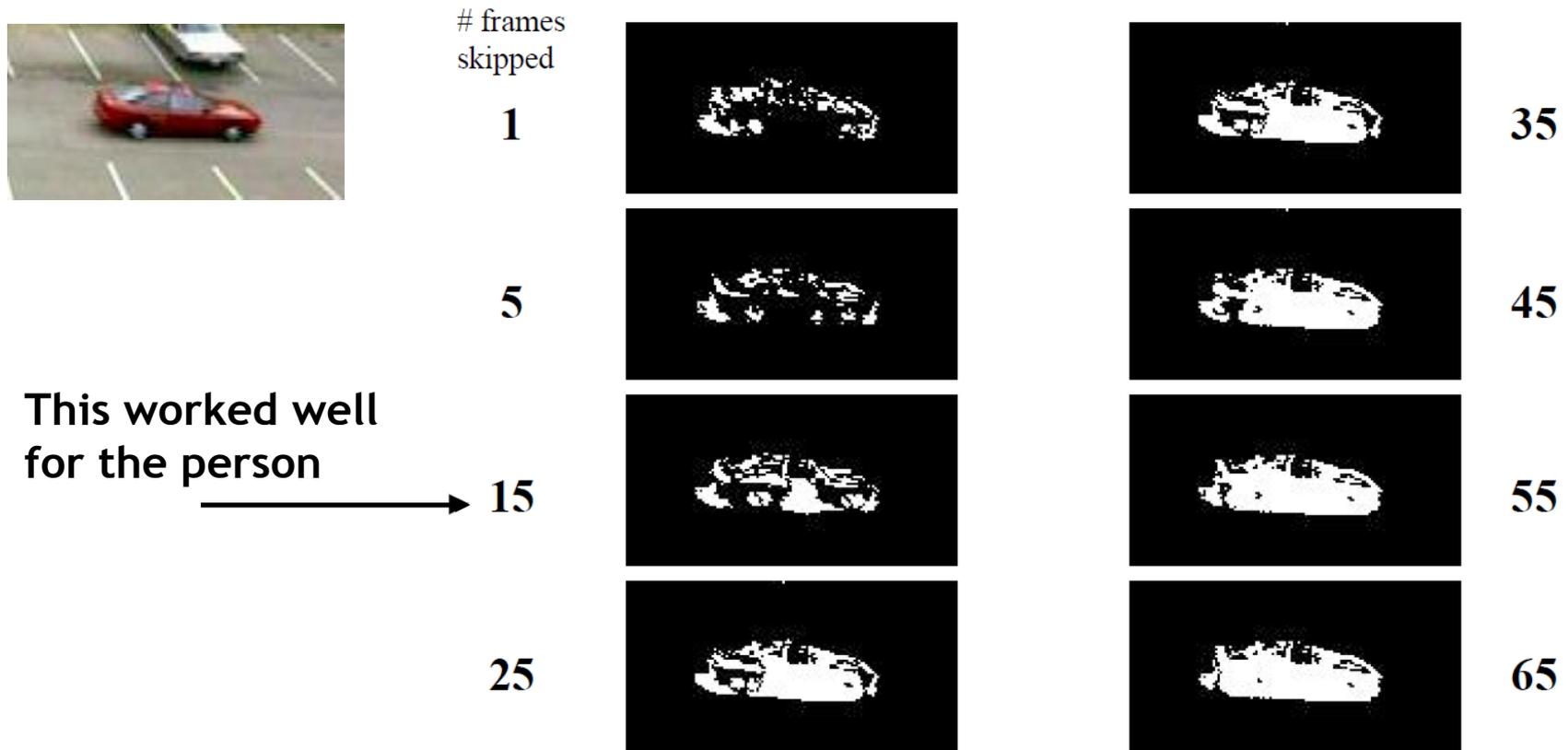
- More complete object silhouette, but two copies of the object (one where it used to be, one where it is now).

Three-Frame Differencing

- Improved approach to handle this problem



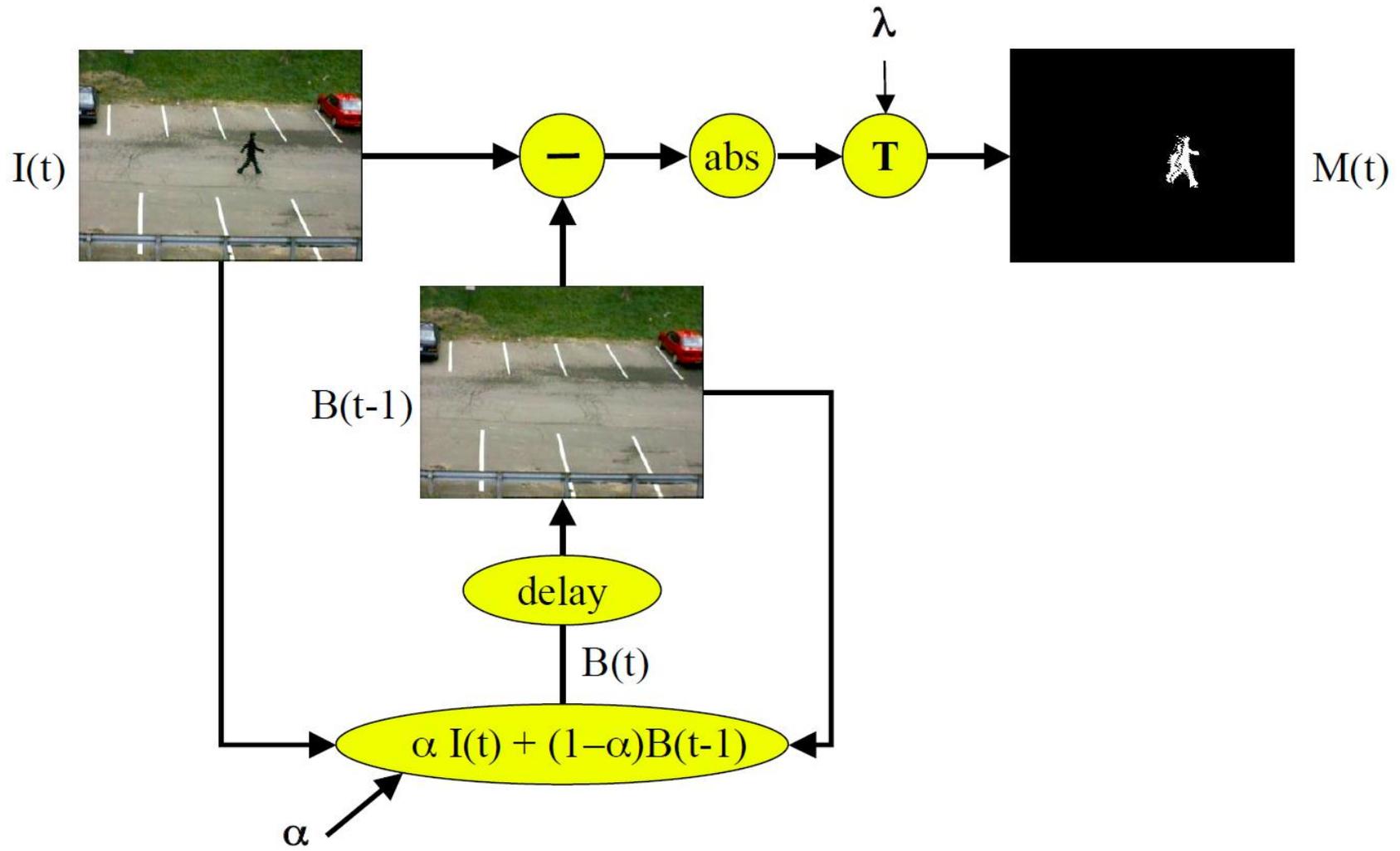
Three-Frame Differencing



- **Problem**

- Choice of good frame-rate for three-frame differencing depends on size and speed of object.

Adaptive Background Subtraction



- Current image is “blended” into the background model with α .

Adaptive Background Subtraction

- **Properties**

- More responsive to changes in illumination and camera motion.
- Small, fast-moving objects are well-segmented, but they leave behind short “trails” of pixels.
- Objects that stop and ghosts left behind by objects that start both gradually fade into the background.
- The centers of large, slow-moving objects start to fade into the background, too!
- This can be fixed by decreasing the blend parameter α , but then it takes longer for ghost objects to disappear...



Comparisons



BG Subtraction

Frame Differencing

Adaptive BG Subtract.

Discussion

- **Background subtraction / Frame differencing**
 - Very simple techniques, historically among the first.
 - Straight-forward to implement, fast to test out.
 - We've seen some fixes for the most pressing problems.
- **Remaining limitations**
 - Rather heuristic approach.
 - Leads to relatively poor foreground/background decisions.
 - Optimal temporal scale still depends on object size and speed.
 - Global threshold is often suboptimal for parts of the image.
⇒ *Very fiddly in practice, requires extensive parameter tuning.*
- **Let's try to come up with a better founded approach**
 - Using a statistical model of background probability...

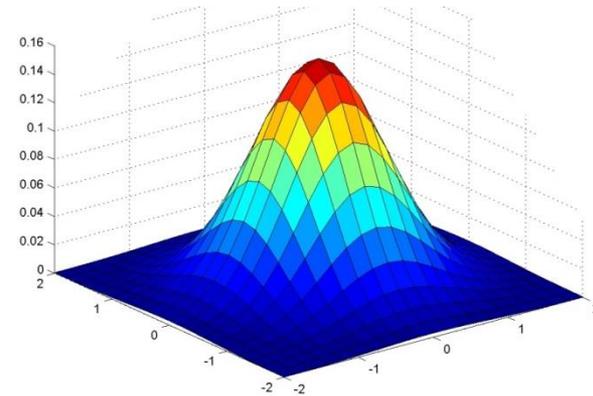
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- Simple Background Models
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Gaussian Background Model

- **Statistical model**

- Value of a pixel represents a measurement of the radiance of the first object intersected by the pixel's optical ray.
- With a static background and static lighting, this value will be a constant affected by i.i.d. Gaussian noise.



- **Idea**

- Model the background distribution of each pixel by a single Gaussian centered at the mean pixel value:

$$\mathcal{N}(\mathbf{x}|\boldsymbol{\mu}, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}) = \frac{1}{(2\pi)^{D/2} |\boldsymbol{\Sigma}|^{1/2}} \exp \left\{ -\frac{1}{2} (\mathbf{x} - \boldsymbol{\mu})^T \boldsymbol{\Sigma}^{-1} (\mathbf{x} - \boldsymbol{\mu}) \right\}$$

- Test if a newly observed pixel value has a high likelihood under this Gaussian model.

⇒ Automatic estimation of a sensitivity threshold for each pixel.

Recap: Maximum Likelihood Approach

- **Computation of the likelihood**

- Single data point: $p(x_n|\theta)$
- Assumption: all data points $X = \{x_1, \dots, x_n\}$ are independent

$$L(\theta) = p(X|\theta) = \prod_{n=1}^N p(x_n|\theta)$$

- **Log-likelihood**

$$E(\theta) = -\ln L(\theta) = -\sum_{n=1}^N \ln p(x_n|\theta)$$

- **Estimation of the parameters θ (Learning)**

- Maximize the likelihood (=minimize the negative log-likelihood)
⇒ Take the derivative and set it to zero.

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} E(\theta) = -\sum_{n=1}^N \frac{\frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} p(x_n|\theta)}{p(x_n|\theta)} \stackrel{!}{=} 0$$

Recap: Maximum Likelihood Approach

- For a 1D Gaussian, we thus obtain

$$\hat{\mu} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{n=1}^N x_n \quad \text{“sample mean”}$$

- In a similar fashion, we get

$$\hat{\sigma}^2 = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{n=1}^N (x_n - \hat{\mu})^2 \quad \text{“sample variance”}$$

- $\hat{\theta} = (\hat{\mu}, \hat{\sigma})$ is the **Maximum Likelihood estimate** for the parameters of a Gaussian distribution.
- **Note:** the estimate of the sample variance is *biased*.

Better use

$$\tilde{\sigma}^2 = \frac{1}{N-1} \sum_{n=1}^N (x_n - \hat{\mu})^2$$

Online Adaptation (1D Case)

- Once estimated, adapt the Gaussians over time
 - We can compute a **running estimate** over a time window

$$\hat{\mu}^{(t+1)} = \hat{\mu}^{(t)} + \frac{1}{N} x^{(t+1)} - \frac{1}{N} x^{(t+1-T)}$$

$$\begin{aligned} (\tilde{\sigma}^2)^{(t+1)} &= (\tilde{\sigma}^2)^{(t)} + \frac{1}{N-1} (x^{(t+1)} - \hat{\mu}^{(t+1)})^2 \\ &\quad - \frac{1}{N-1} (x^{(t+1-T)} - \hat{\mu}^{(t+1)})^2 \end{aligned}$$

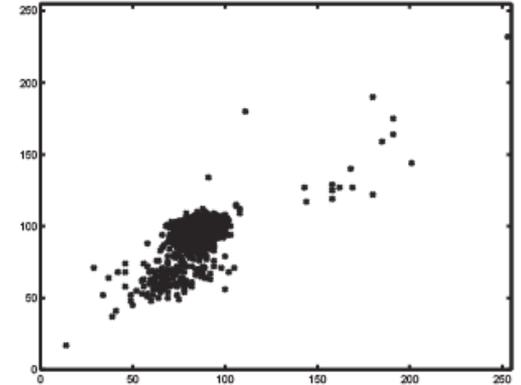
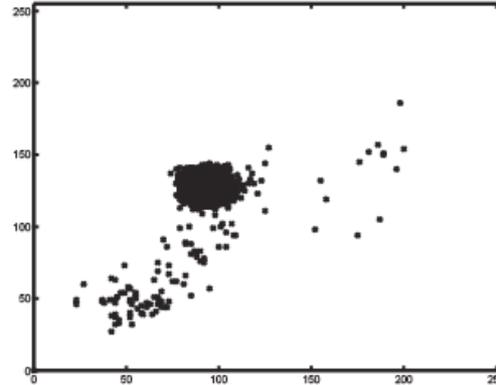
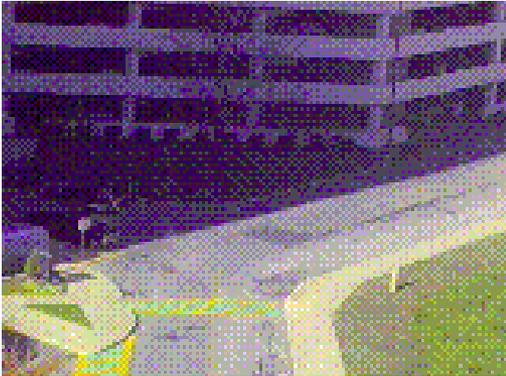
- However, distribution is non-stationary (and newer values are more important) \Rightarrow better use **Exponential Moving Average filter**

$$\hat{\mu}^{(t+1)} = (1 - \alpha) \hat{\mu}^{(t)} + \alpha x^{(t+1)}$$

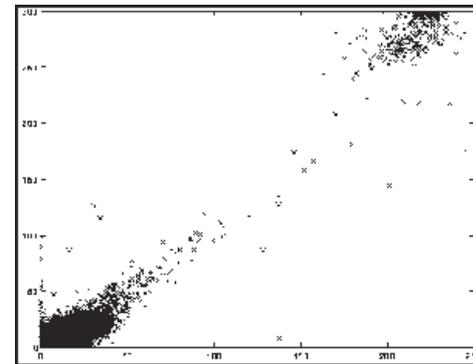
$$(\tilde{\sigma}^2)^{(t+1)} = (1 - \alpha) (\tilde{\sigma}^2)^{(t)} + \alpha (x^{(t+1)} - \hat{\mu}^{(t+1)})^2$$

with a fixed learning rate α .

Problem: Complex Distributions



RG scatter plots of the same pixel taken 2 min apart



Bi-modal distribution caused by specularities on the water surface

⇒ *A single Gaussian is clearly insufficient here...*

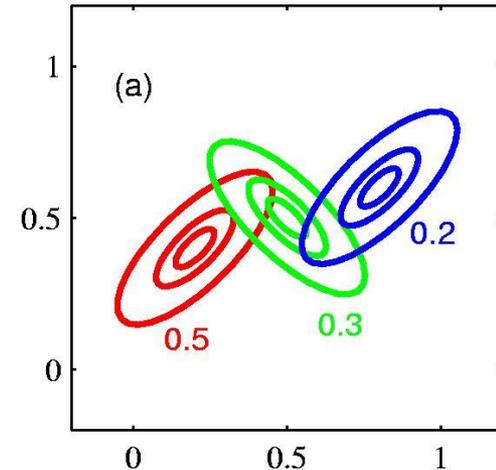
Problem: Adaptation Speed, Sensitivity

- If the background model adapts too slowly...
 - Will construct a very wide and inaccurate model with low detection sensitivity
- If the model adapts too quickly...
 - Leads to inaccurate estimation of the model parameters
 - The model may adapt to the targets themselves (especially slow-moving ones)
- Design trade-off
 - Model should adapt quickly to changes in the background process *and* detect objects with high sensitivity.
 - *How can we achieve that?*

MoG Background Model

- Improved statistical model

- Large jumps between different pixel values because different objects are projected onto the same pixel at different times.
- While the same object is projected onto the pixel, small local intensity variations due to Gaussian noise.



- Idea

- Model the color distribution of each pixel by a mixture of K Gaussians

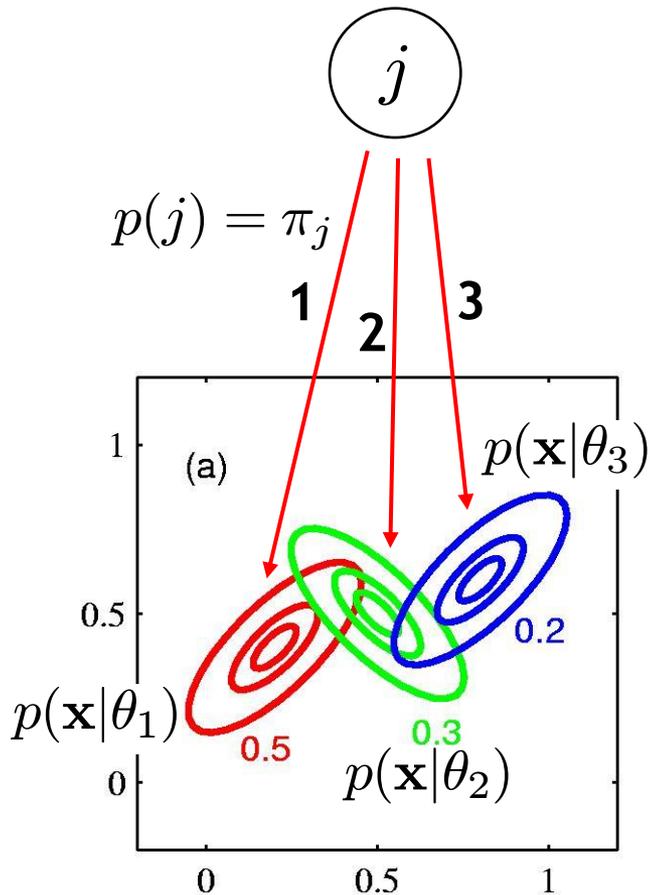
$$p(\mathbf{x}) = \sum_{k=1}^K \pi_k \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{x}_n | \boldsymbol{\mu}_k, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_k)$$

- Evaluate likelihoods of observed pixel values under this model.
- Or let entire Gaussian components adapt to foreground objects and classify components as belonging to object or background.

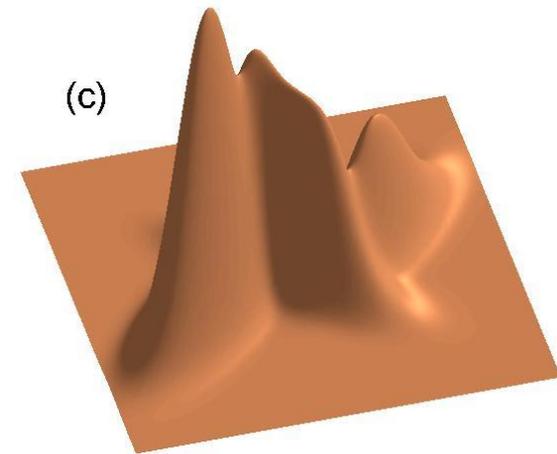
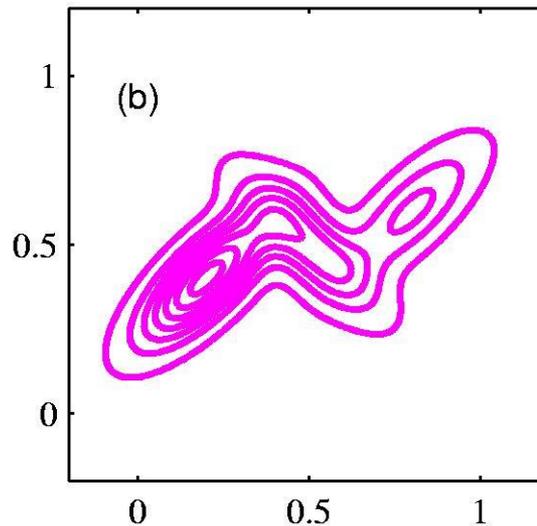
Recap: Mixture of Gaussians

- “Generative model”

$$p(\mathbf{x}) = \sum_{k=1}^K \pi_k \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{x}_n | \boldsymbol{\mu}_k, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_k)$$



$$p(\mathbf{x}|\theta) = \sum_{j=1}^3 \pi_j p(\mathbf{x}|\theta_j)$$



Recap: EM Algorithm

- **Expectation-Maximization (EM) Algorithm**

- **E-Step:** softly assign samples to mixture components

$$\gamma_j(\mathbf{x}_n) \leftarrow \frac{\pi_j \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{x}_n | \boldsymbol{\mu}_j, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_j)}{\sum_{k=1}^K \pi_k \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{x}_n | \boldsymbol{\mu}_k, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_k)} \quad \forall j = 1, \dots, K, \quad n = 1, \dots, N$$

- **M-Step:** re-estimate the parameters (separately for each mixture component) based on the soft assignments

$$\hat{N}_j \leftarrow \sum_{n=1}^N \gamma_j(\mathbf{x}_n) = \text{soft number of samples labeled } j$$

$$\hat{\pi}_j^{\text{new}} \leftarrow \frac{\hat{N}_j}{N}$$

$$\hat{\boldsymbol{\mu}}_j^{\text{new}} \leftarrow \frac{1}{\hat{N}_j} \sum_{n=1}^N \gamma_j(\mathbf{x}_n) \mathbf{x}_n$$

$$\hat{\boldsymbol{\Sigma}}_j^{\text{new}} \leftarrow \frac{1}{\hat{N}_j} \sum_{n=1}^N \gamma_j(\mathbf{x}_n) (\mathbf{x}_n - \hat{\boldsymbol{\mu}}_j^{\text{new}})(\mathbf{x}_n - \hat{\boldsymbol{\mu}}_j^{\text{new}})^{\text{T}}$$

Stauffer-Grimson Background Model



- Very popular model
 - Used in many tracking approaches
 - Suitable for long-term observations (finding patterns of activity)

C. Stauffer, W.E.L. Grimson, [Adaptive Background Mixture Models for Real-Time Tracking](#), CVPR 1998.

Stauffer-Grimson Background Model

- Idea

- Model the distribution of each pixel by a mixture of K Gaussians

$$p(\mathbf{x}) = \sum_{k=1}^K \pi_k \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{x}_n | \boldsymbol{\mu}_k, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_k) \quad \text{where} \quad \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_k = \sigma_k^2 \mathbf{I}$$

- Check every new pixel value against the existing K components until a match is found (pixel value within $2.5 \sigma_k$ of $\boldsymbol{\mu}_k$).
- If a match is found, adapt the corresponding component.
- Else, replace the least probable component by a distribution with the new value as its mean and an initially high variance and low prior weight.
- Order the components by the value of w_k / σ_k and select the best B components as the background model, where

$$B = \arg \min_b \left(\sum_{k=1}^b \frac{w_k}{\sigma_k} > T \right)$$

Stauffer-Grimson Background Model

- Online adaptation

- Instead of estimating the MoG using EM, use a simpler online adaptation, assigning each new value only to the matching component.
- Let $M_{k,t} = 1$ iff component k is the model that matched, else 0.

$$\pi_k^{(t+1)} = (1 - \alpha)\pi_k^{(t)} + \alpha M_{k,t}$$

- Adapt only the parameters for the matching component

$$\boldsymbol{\mu}_k^{(t+1)} = (1 - \rho)\boldsymbol{\mu}_k^{(t)} + \rho x^{(t+1)}$$

$$\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_k^{(t+1)} = (1 - \rho)\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_k^{(t)} + \rho(x^{(t+1)} - \boldsymbol{\mu}_k^{(t+1)})(x^{(t+1)} - \boldsymbol{\mu}_k^{(t+1)})^T$$

where

$$\rho = \alpha \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{x}_n | \boldsymbol{\mu}_k, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_k)$$

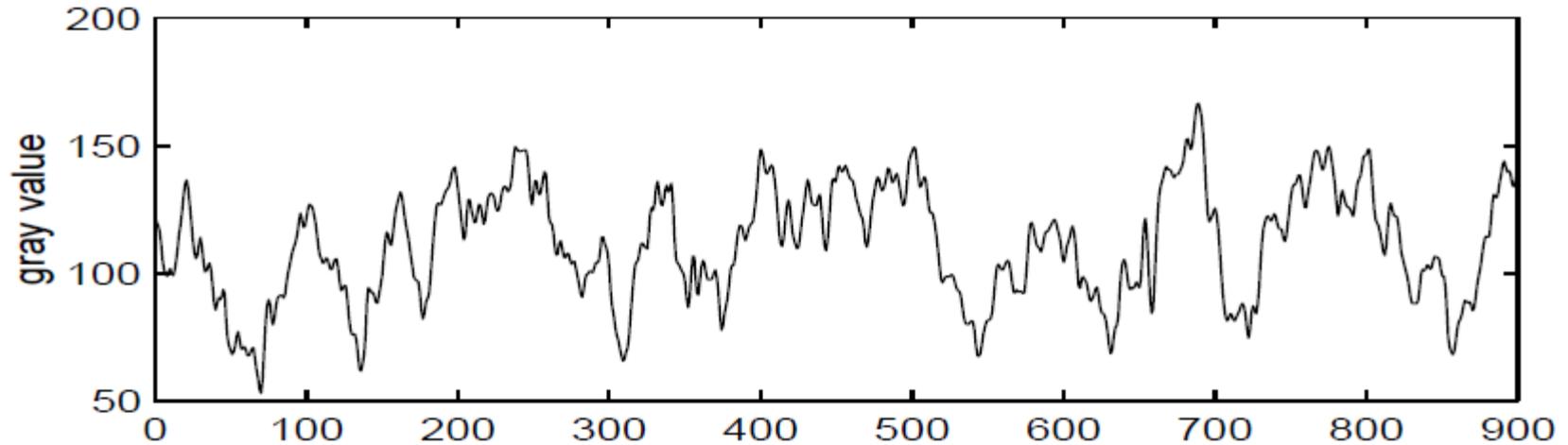
(i.e., the update is weighted by the component likelihood)

Discussion: Stauffer-Grimson Model

- **Properties**

- **Static foreground objects can be integrated into the mixture**
 - Advantage: This doesn't destroy the existing background model.
 - If an object is stationary for some time and then moves again, the distribution for the background still exists⇒ Quick recovery from such situations.
- **Ordering of components by w_k/σ_k**
 - Favors components that have more evidence (higher w_k) and a smaller variance (lower σ_k).⇒ Those are typically the best candidates for background.
- **Model can adapt to the complexity of the observed distribution.**
 - If the distribution is unimodal, only a single component will be selected for the background.⇒ This can be used to save memory and computation.

Problem: Outdoor Scenes

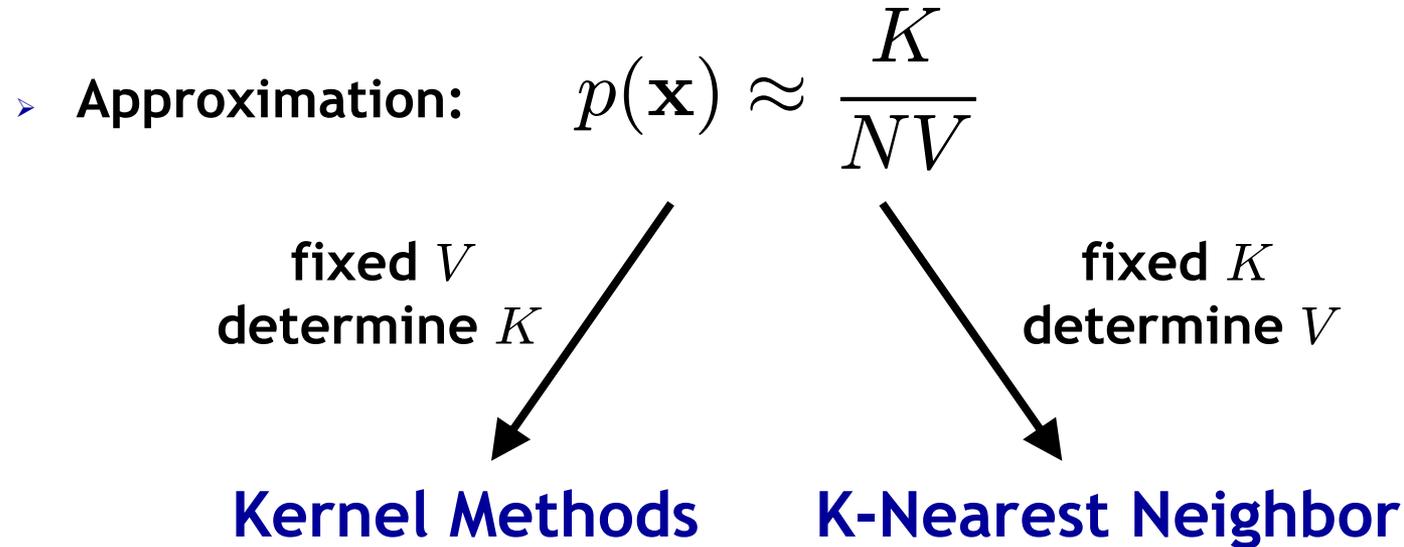


- **Dynamic areas**
 - Waving trees, rippling water, ...
 - Fast variations
- ⇒ *More flexible representation needed here.*



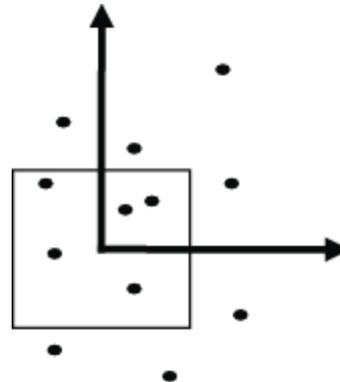
Recap: Kernel Density Estimation

- Estimating the probability density from discrete samples



- Kernel methods

- Example: Determine the number K of data points inside a fixed hypercube...



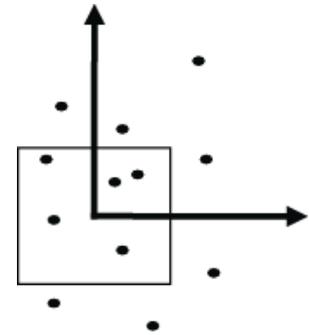
Recap: Kernel Density Estimation

- Parzen Window

- Hypercube of dimension D with edge length h :

$$k(\mathbf{u}) = \begin{cases} 1, & |u_i| \leq \frac{1}{2}, \quad i = 1, \dots, D \\ 0, & \text{else} \end{cases}$$

“Kernel function”



$$K = \sum_{n=1}^N k\left(\frac{\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_n}{h}\right) \quad V = \int k(\mathbf{u}) d\mathbf{u} = h^D$$

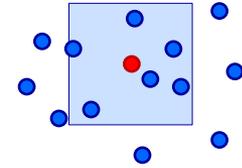
- Probability density estimate:

$$p(\mathbf{x}) \approx \frac{K}{NV} = \frac{1}{Nh^D} \sum_{n=1}^N k\left(\frac{\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_n}{h}\right)$$

Recap: Parzen Window

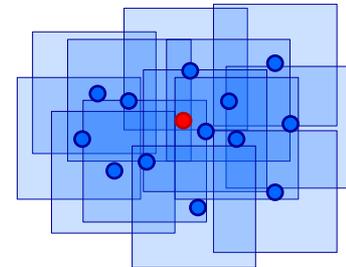
- Interpretations

1. We place a *kernel window* k at *location* \mathbf{x} and count how many data points fall inside it.



2. We place a *kernel window* k around *each data point* \mathbf{x}_n and sum up their influences at location \mathbf{x} .

⇒ Direct visualization of the density.



- Still, we have artificial discontinuities at the cube boundaries...

- We can obtain a smoother density model if we choose a smoother kernel function, e.g. a Gaussian

Kernel Background Modeling



- **Nonparametric model of background appearance**
 - Very flexible approach, can deal with large amounts of background motion and scene clutter

A. Elgammal, D. Harwood, L.S. Davis, [Non-parametric Model for Background Subtraction](#), ECCV 2000.

Kernel Background Modeling

- **Nonparametric density estimation**

- Estimate a pixel's background distribution using the kernel density estimator $K(\cdot)$ as

$$p(\mathbf{x}^{(t)}) = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N K(\mathbf{x}^{(t)} - \mathbf{x}^{(i)})$$

- Choose K to be a Gaussian $\mathcal{N}(0, \Sigma)$ with $\Sigma = \text{diag}\{\sigma_j\}$. Then

$$p(\mathbf{x}^{(t)}) = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N \prod_{j=1}^d \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi\sigma_j^2}} e^{-\frac{1}{2} \frac{(x_j^{(t)} - x_j^{(i)})^2}{\sigma_j^2}}$$

- A pixel is considered foreground if $p(\mathbf{x}^{(t)}) < \theta$ for a threshold θ .
 - This can be computed very fast using lookup tables for the kernel function values, since all inputs are discrete values.
 - Additional speedup: partial evaluation of the sum usually sufficient

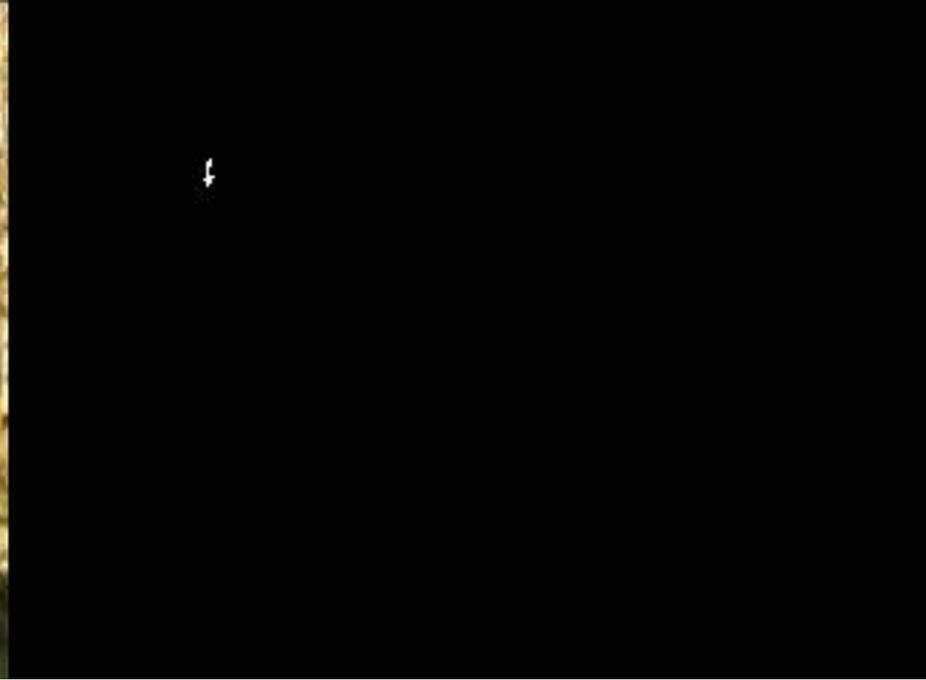
Results Kernel Background Modeling

- Performance in heavy rain



Results Kernel Background Modeling

- Results for color images



- Practical issues with color images
 - *Which color space to use?*

Topics of This Lecture

- Motivation: Background Modeling
- Simple Background Models
 - Background Subtraction
 - Frame Differencing
- Statistical Background Models
 - Single Gaussian
 - Mixture of Gaussians
 - Kernel Density Estimation
- **Practical Issues and Extensions**
 - **Background model update**
 - **False detection suppression**
 - **Shadow suppression**
 - **Applications**

Practical Issues: Background Model Update

- Kernel background model
 - Sample N intensity values taken over a window of W frames.
- FIFO update mechanism
 - Discard oldest sample.
 - Choose new sample randomly from each interval of length W/N frames.
- When should we update the distribution?
 - **Selective update**: add new sample only if it is classified as a background sample
 - **Blind update**: always add the new sample to the model.

Updating Strategies

- **Selective update**

- Add new sample only if it is classified as a background sample.
 - Enhances detection of new objects, since the background model remains uncontaminated.
 - But: Any incorrect detection decision will result in persistent incorrect detections later.
- ⇒ Deadlock situation.

- **Blind update**

- Always add the new sample to the model.
 - Does not suffer from deadlock situations, since it does not involve any update decisions.
 - But: Allows intensity values that do not belong to the background to be added to the model.
- ⇒ Leads to bad detection of the targets (more false negatives).

Solution: Combining the Two Models

- **Short-term model**
 - Recent model, adapts to changes quickly to allow very sensitive detection
 - Consists of the most recent N background sample values.
 - Updated using a selective update mechanism based on the detection mask from the final combination result.
- **Long-term model**
 - Captures a more stable representation of the scene background and adapts to changes slowly.
 - Consists of N samples taken from a much larger time window.
 - Updated using a blind update mechanism.
- **Combination**
 - Intersection of the two model outputs.

Extension: False Detection Suppression

- Problem

- Small camera motion (e.g., due to wind swaying) may still result in false detections.

- Workaround

- Consider a small circular neighborhood (e.g., 5×5) $\text{Ne}(\mathbf{x})$ and evaluate the pixel under each neighbor's background model $B_{\mathbf{y}}$:

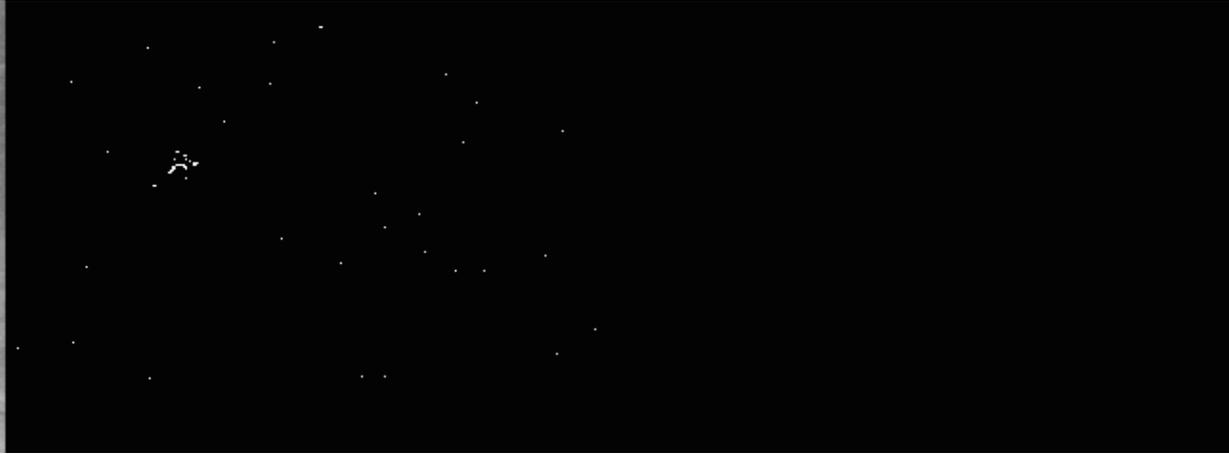
$$p_{\text{Ne}}(\mathbf{x}^{(t)}) = \max_{\mathbf{y} \in \text{Ne}(\mathbf{x})} p(\mathbf{x}^{(t)} | B_{\mathbf{y}})$$

- Threshold p_{Ne} to determine the foreground pixels.
⇒ *Eliminates many false detections, but also some true ones.*
- To avoid losing true detections, add the constraint that an entire connected component must have moved from a nearby location, not only some of its pixels.

Effect of False Detection Suppression



Original video



Without false
detection suppr.

With false
detection suppr.

- **Results**

- Effects of camera wind shaking are almost entirely suppressed

Extension: Shadow Suppression



- **Shadows are often detected together with the objects**
 - Leads to poor localization, should be avoided.
 - Idea: Shadowed regions should have the same color as the neighboring background, only the intensity is lower.
- ⇒ Use chromaticity coordinates to remove shadows.

Color Normalization

- One component of the 3D color space is intensity
 - If a color vector is multiplied by a scalar, the intensity changes, but not the color itself.
 - This means colors can be normalized by the intensity.
 - Intensity is given by $I = R + G + B$:
 - „Chromatic representation“

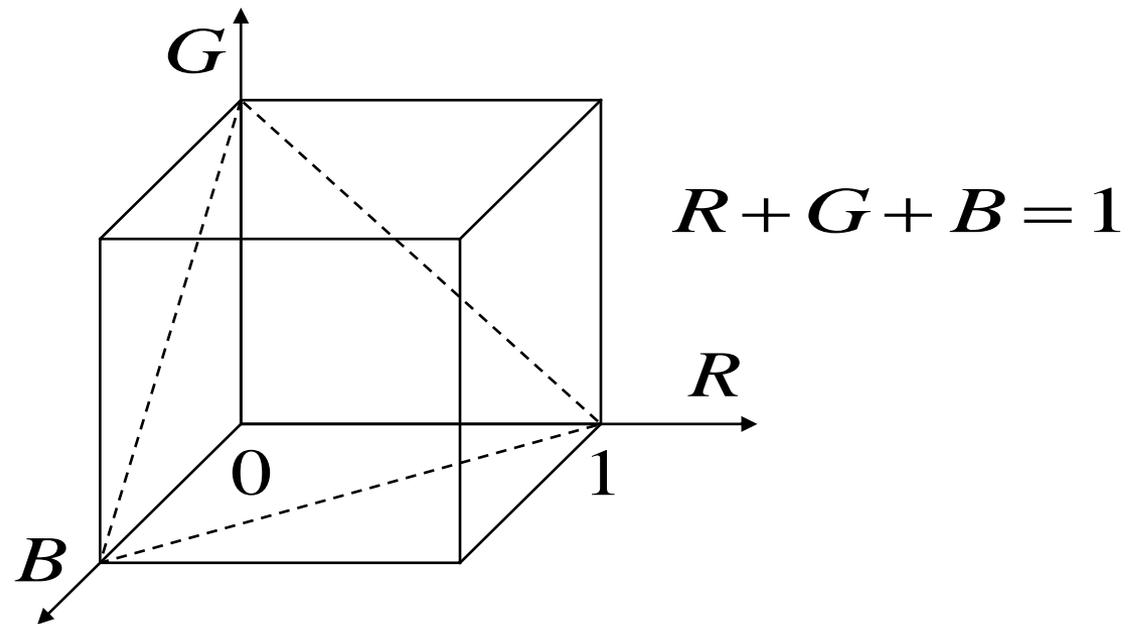
$$r = \frac{R}{R + G + B} \qquad g = \frac{G}{R + G + B}$$

$$b = \frac{B}{R + G + B}$$

Chromaticity Coordinates

- **Observation:**

- Since $R + G + B = 1$, only 2 parameters are necessary
- E.g., one can use R and G and obtains $B = 1 - R - G$



- **Caveat:** cannot distinguish between white and gray anymore!
⇒ Use the normalized (r, g) coordinates, but keep the lightness $s = R + B + G$ as third coordinate ⇒ (r, g, s)

Shadow Removal Procedure

- **Idea**

- Let $\langle r, g, s \rangle$ be the expected background pixel color and $\langle r_t, g_t, s_t \rangle$ be the observed one.
- Shadows or highlights affect the expected pixel lightness within certain bounds $\alpha \leq s_t/s \leq \beta$.

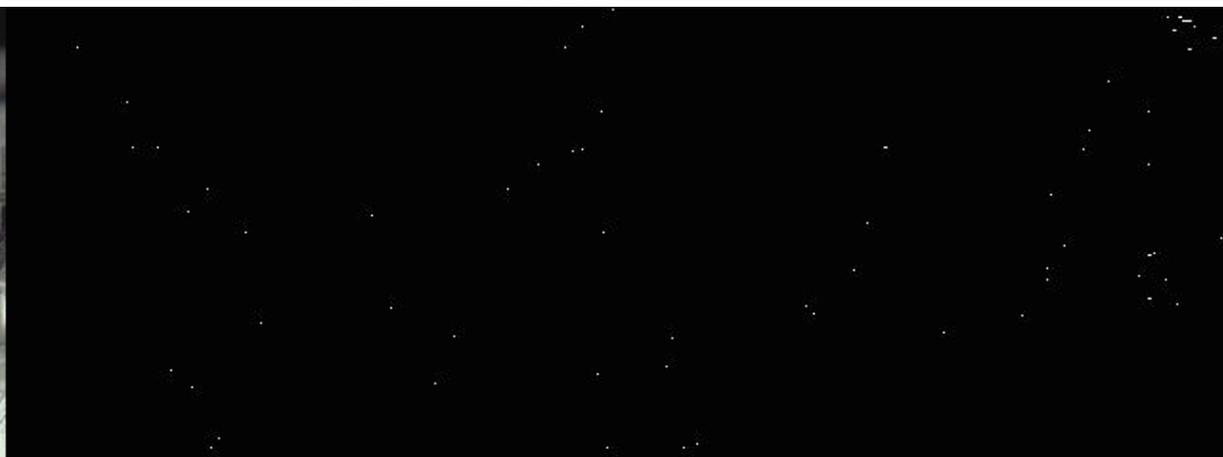
- **Procedure**

- Select the subset B of relevant sample points for each pixel from the stored set A , i.e. those samples that could produce the observed lightness if affected by shadows:

$$B = \left\{ x_i \mid x_i \in A \wedge \alpha \leq \frac{s_t}{s_i} \leq \beta \right\}$$

- Apply the regular kernel background model based on this subset B using only the (r, g) color components.

Effect of Shadow Suppression



Original video

Without shadow suppr.

With shadow suppr.

Topics of This Lecture

- Motivation: Background Modeling
- Simple Background Models
 - Background Subtraction
 - Frame Differencing
- Statistical Background Models
 - Single Gaussian
 - Mixture of Gaussians
 - Kernel Density Estimation
- **Practical Issues and Extensions**
 - Background model update
 - False detection suppression
 - Shadow suppression
 - **Applications**

Applications: Visual Surveillance



- **Background modeling to detect objects for tracking**
 - **Extension: Learning a foreground model for each object.**

Applications: Articulated Tracking



- **Background modeling as preprocessing step**
 - Track a person's location through the scene
 - Extract silhouette information from the foreground mask.
 - Perform body pose estimation based on this mask.

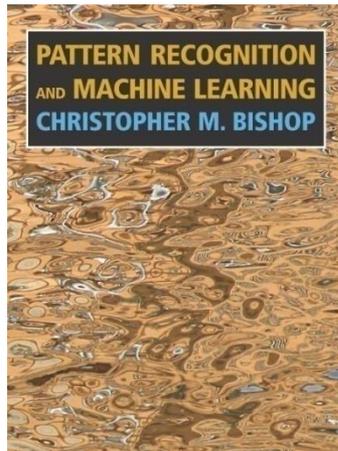
Summary

- **Background Modeling**
 - Fast and simple procedure to detect moving object in static camera footage.
 - Makes subsequent tracking *much* easier!

⇒ *If applicable, always make use of this information source!*
- **We've looked at two models in detail**
 - Adaptive MoG model (Stauffer-Grimson model)
 - Kernel background model (Elgammal et al.)
 - Both perform well in practice, have been used extensively.
- **Many extensions available**
 - Learning object-specific foreground color models
 - Background modeling for moving cameras
 - ...

References and Further Reading

- More information on density estimation in Bishop's book
 - Gaussian distribution and ML: Ch. 1.2.4 and 2.3.1-2.3.4.
 - Mixture of Gaussians: Ch. 2.3.9 and 9
 - Nonparametric methods: Ch. 2.5.
- More information on background modeling:
 - Visual Analysis of Humans: Ch. 3
 - C. Stauffer et al., [Adaptive Background Models for Real-Time Tracking](#), CVPR'98
 - A. Elgammal et al., [Non-parametric Model for Background Subtraction](#), ECCV'00



Christopher M. Bishop
Pattern Recognition and Machine Learning
Springer, 2006

T. Moeslund, A. Hilton, V. Krueger, L. Sigal
Visual Analysis of Humans: Looking at People
Springer, 2011

