

# 6.S978

# Deep Generative Models

Fall 2024

Instructor: Kaiming He



# Lecture 1

# Introduction

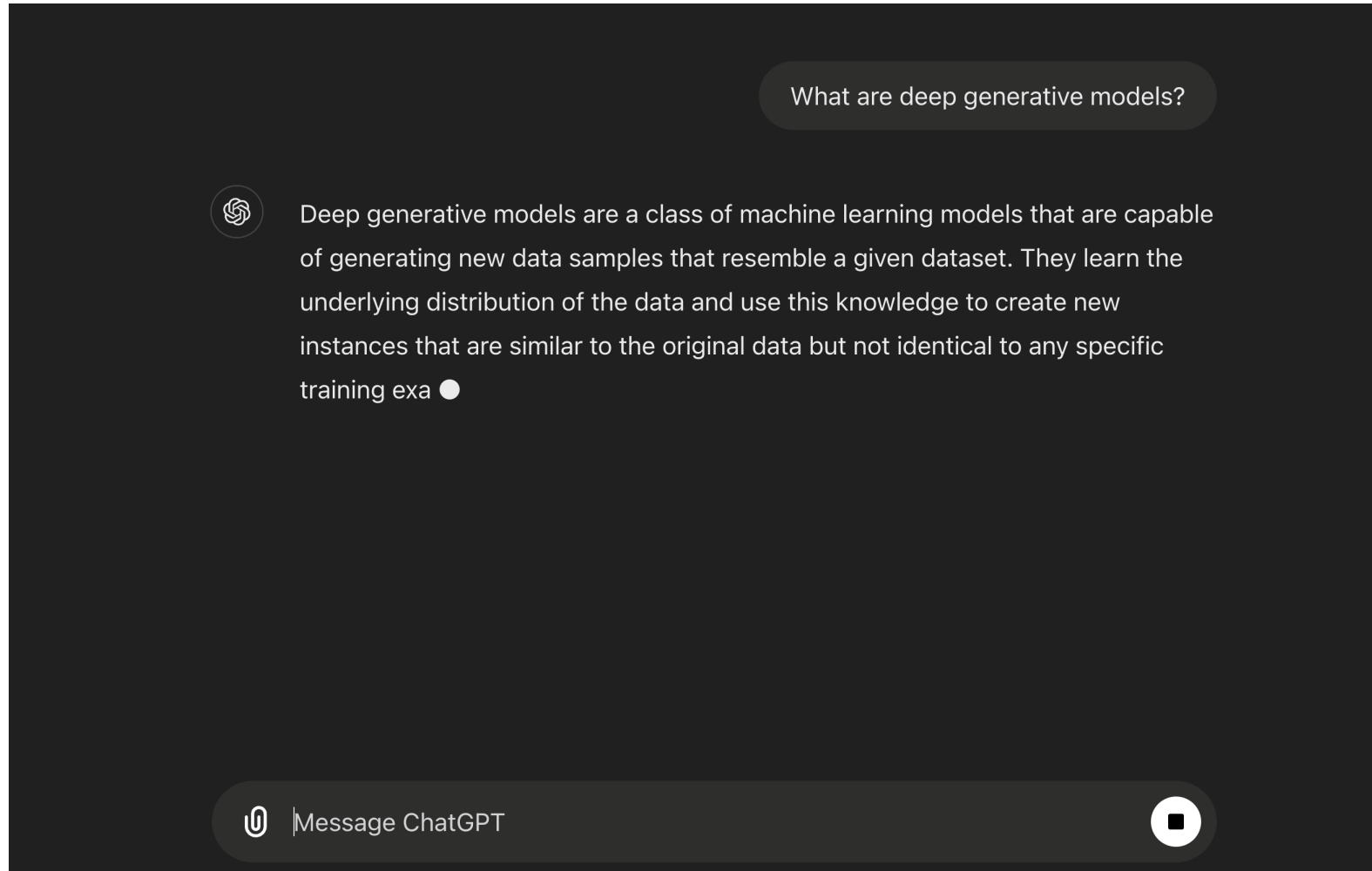
6.S978 Deep Generative Models

Kaiming He  
EECS, MIT



# The “GenAI” Era

## Chatbot and natural language conversation



# The “GenAI” Era

Text-to-image generation



*Generated by Stable Diffusion 3 Medium.*

*Prompt: teddy bear teaching a course, with "generative models" written on blackboard*



# The “GenAI” Era

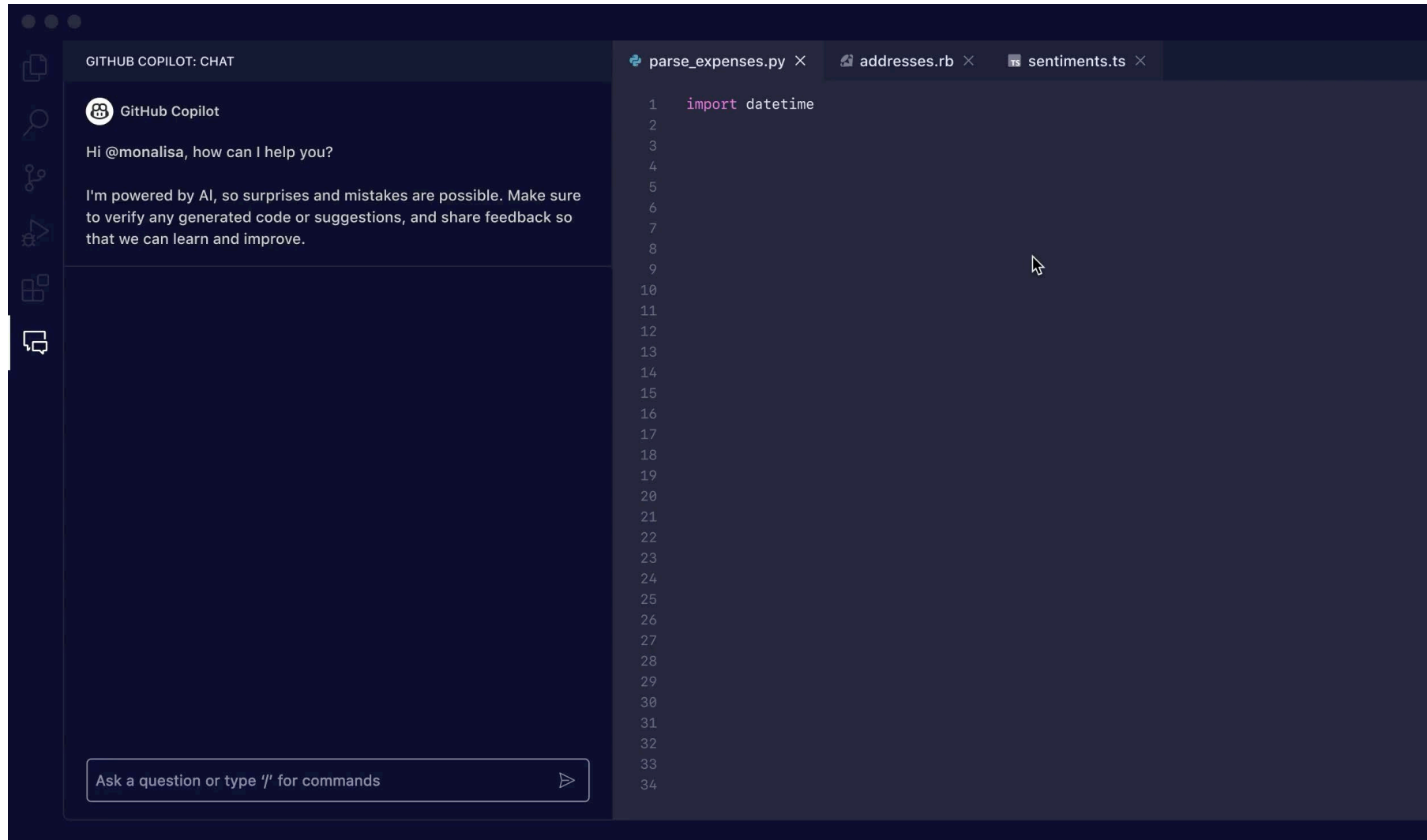
Text-to-video generation



*Generated by Sora*

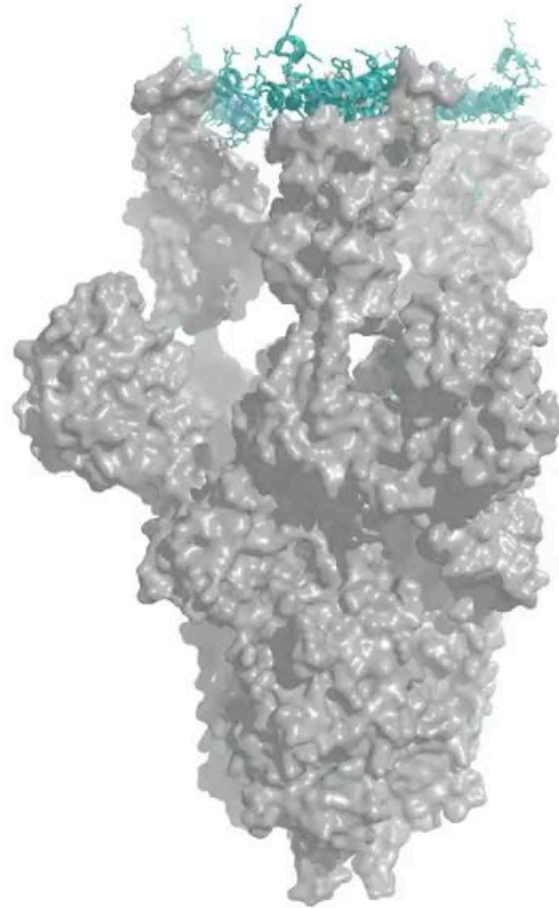
# The “GenAI” Era

## AI assistant for code generation



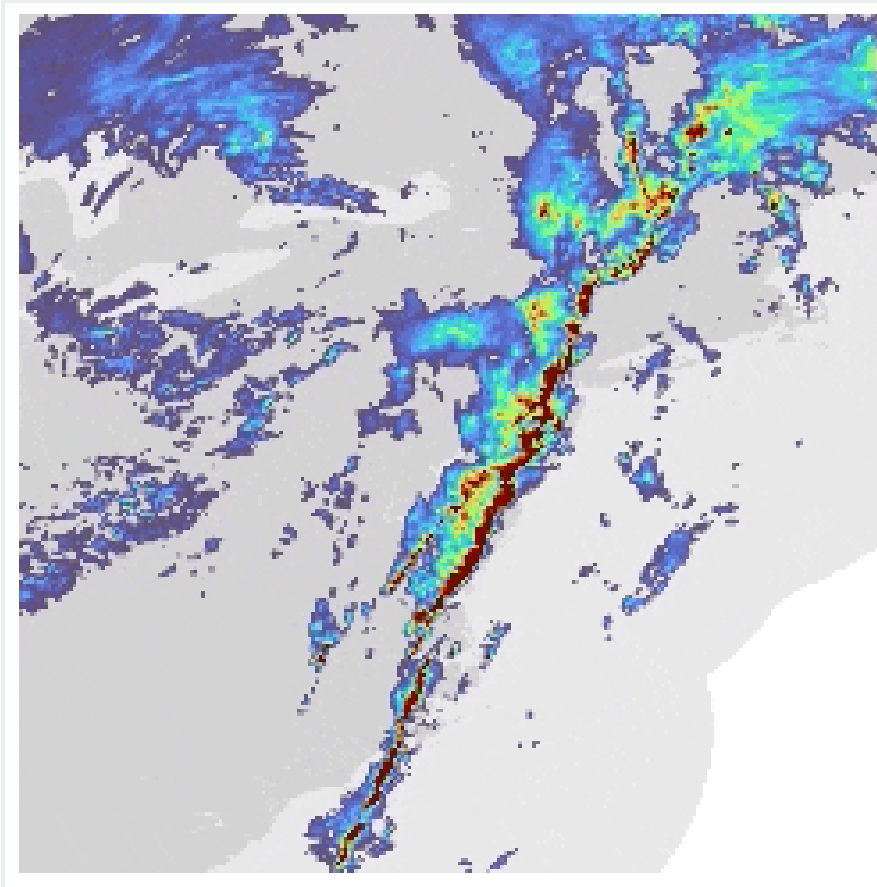
# The “GenAI” Era

## Protein design and generation

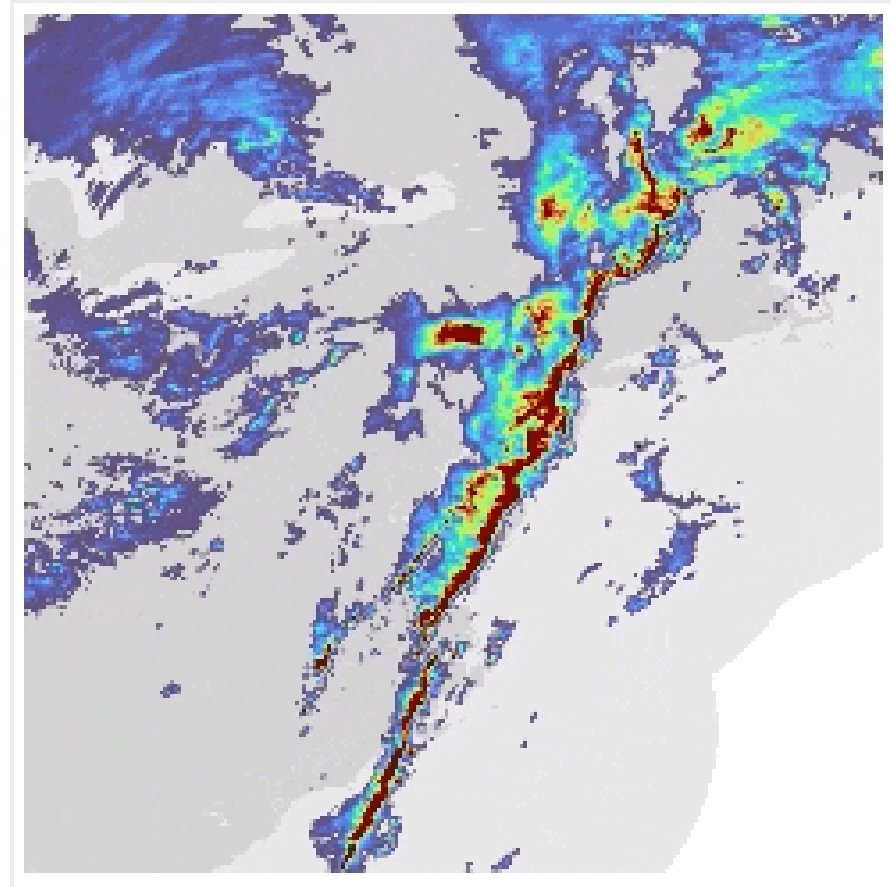


# The “GenAI” Era

## Weather forecasting



Target



DGMR



# Generative Models before the “GenAI” Era

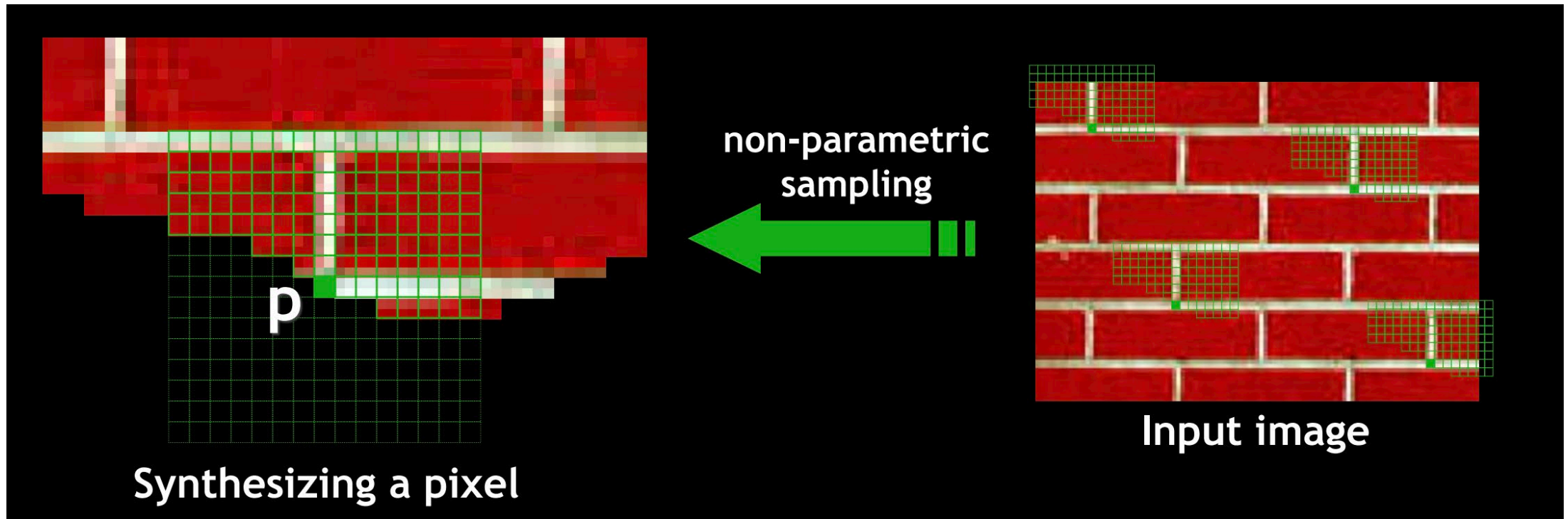
2009, PatchMatch: Photoshop’s Content-aware Fill



# Generative Models before the “GenAI” Era

1999, the Efros-Leung algorithm for texture synthesis

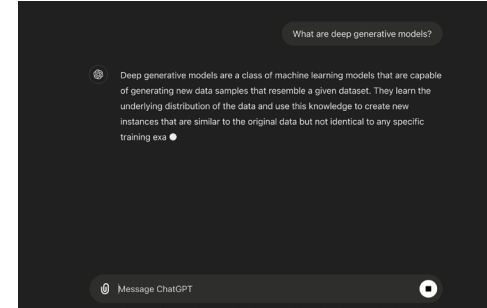
In today's word: this is an **Autoregressive** model



# **What are Generative Models?**

# What do these scenarios have in common?

- There are **multiple** or infinite predictions to one input.
- Some predictions are more “**plausible**” than some others.
- Training data may contain **no exact solution**.
- Predictions may be **more complex**, more informative, and higher-dimensional than input.



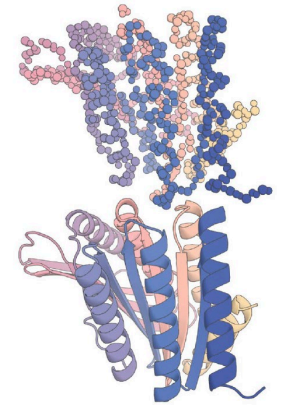
Chatbot



Image generation



Video generation



Protein generation

# Discriminative vs. Generative models

## discriminative

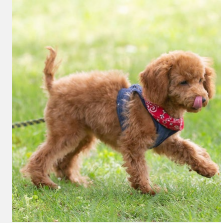
- “sample”  $x \Rightarrow$  “label”  $y$
- one desired output

## generative

- “label”  $y \Rightarrow$  “sample”  $x$
- many possible outputs

### discriminative

$x$



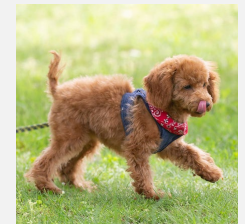
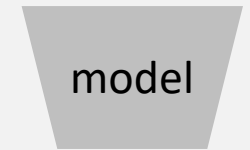
“dog”

$y$

### generative

$y$

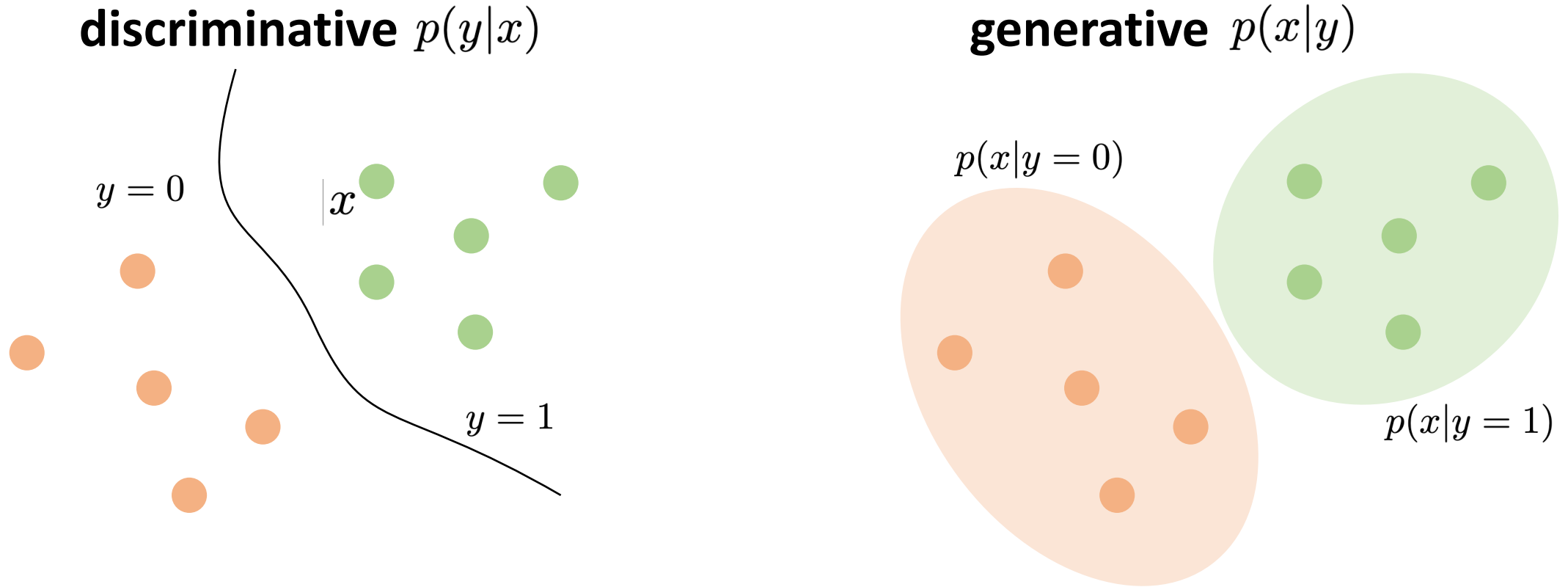
“dog”



$x$



# Discriminative vs. Generative models



- Generative models can be discriminative: Bayes' rule
- Can discriminative models be generative?

- Generative models can be discriminative: Bayes' rule

$$\underbrace{p(y|x)}_{\text{discriminative}} = \underbrace{p(x|y)}_{\text{generative}} \frac{p(y)}{p(x)}$$

← assuming known prior

← constant for given x

- Generative models can be discriminative: Bayes' rule

$$\underbrace{p(y|x)}_{\text{discriminative}} = \underbrace{p(x|y)}_{\text{generative}} \frac{p(y)}{p(x)}$$

← assuming known prior

← constant for given x

- Can discriminative models be generative?

$$\underbrace{p(x|y)}_{\text{generative}} = \underbrace{p(y|x)}_{\text{discriminative}} \frac{p(x)}{p(y)}$$

← still need to model prior distribution of x

← constant for given y

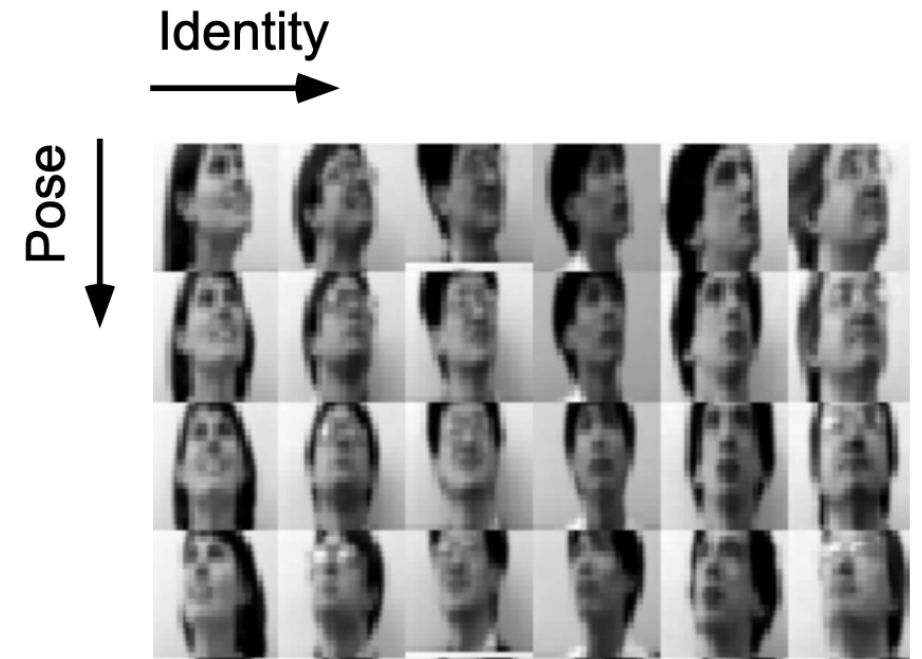
- The challenge is about representing and predicting distributions

# Probabilistic modeling

- Where does probability come from?
- Assuming underlying **distributions of data generation process**

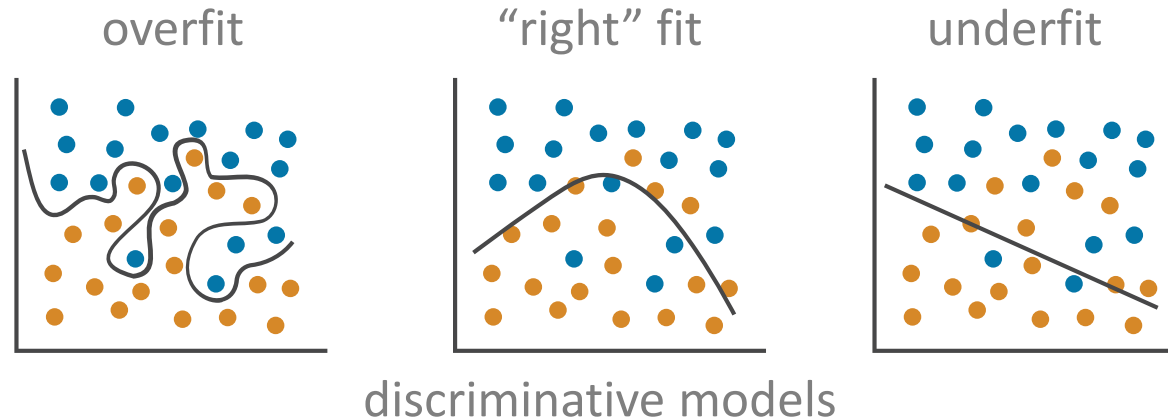
example:

- latent factors  $z$  (pose, lighting, scale, ...)
  - $z$  has simple distributions
  - observations  $x$  are rendered by a “world model” that’s a function on  $z$
  - observations  $x$  have complex distributions
- 
- Probability is part of the modeling.



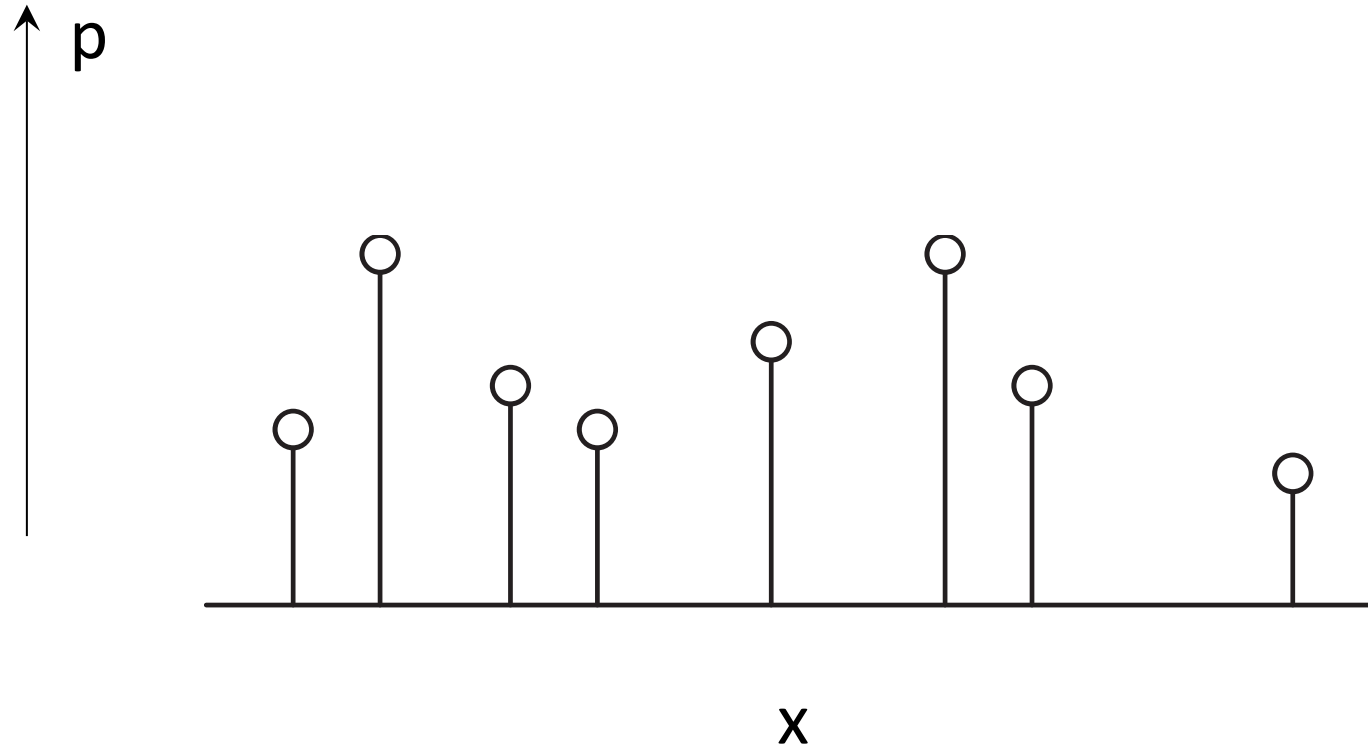
# Probability is part of the modeling

- There may not be “underlying” distributions.
- Even there are, what we can observe are a **finite** set of data points
- The models **extrapolate** the observations for modeling distributions
- Overfitting vs. underfitting: like discriminative models

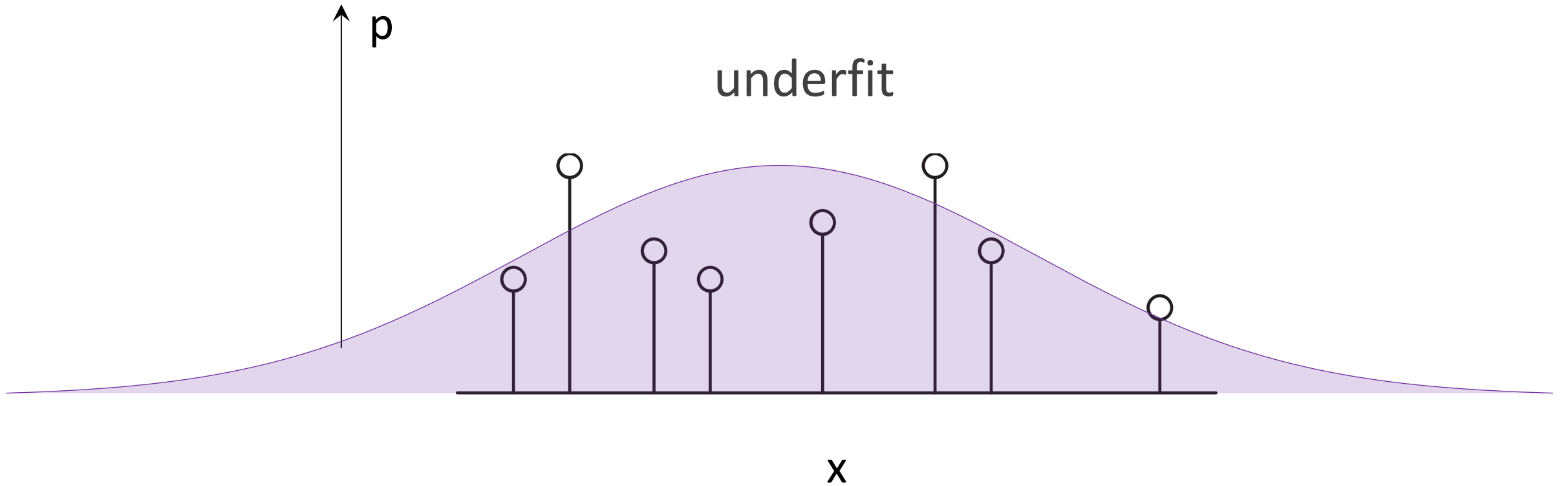




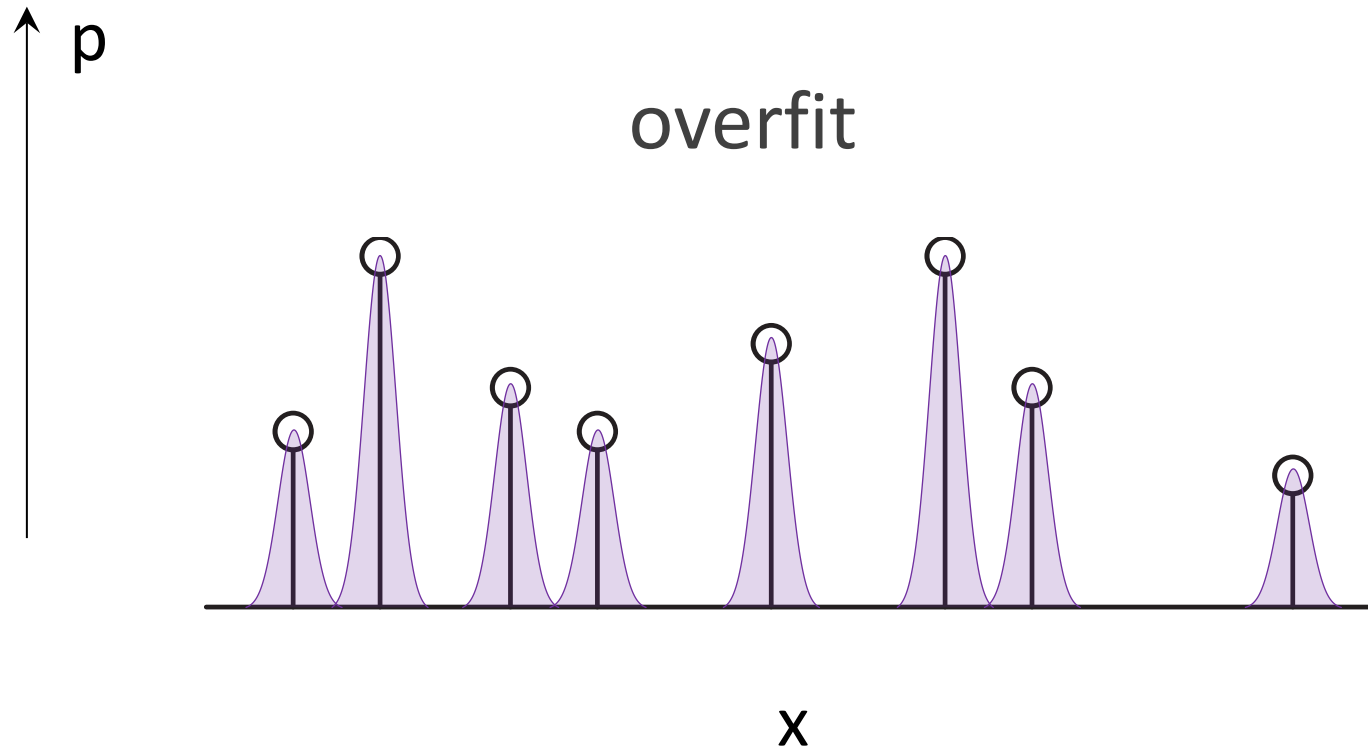
# Probability is part of the modeling



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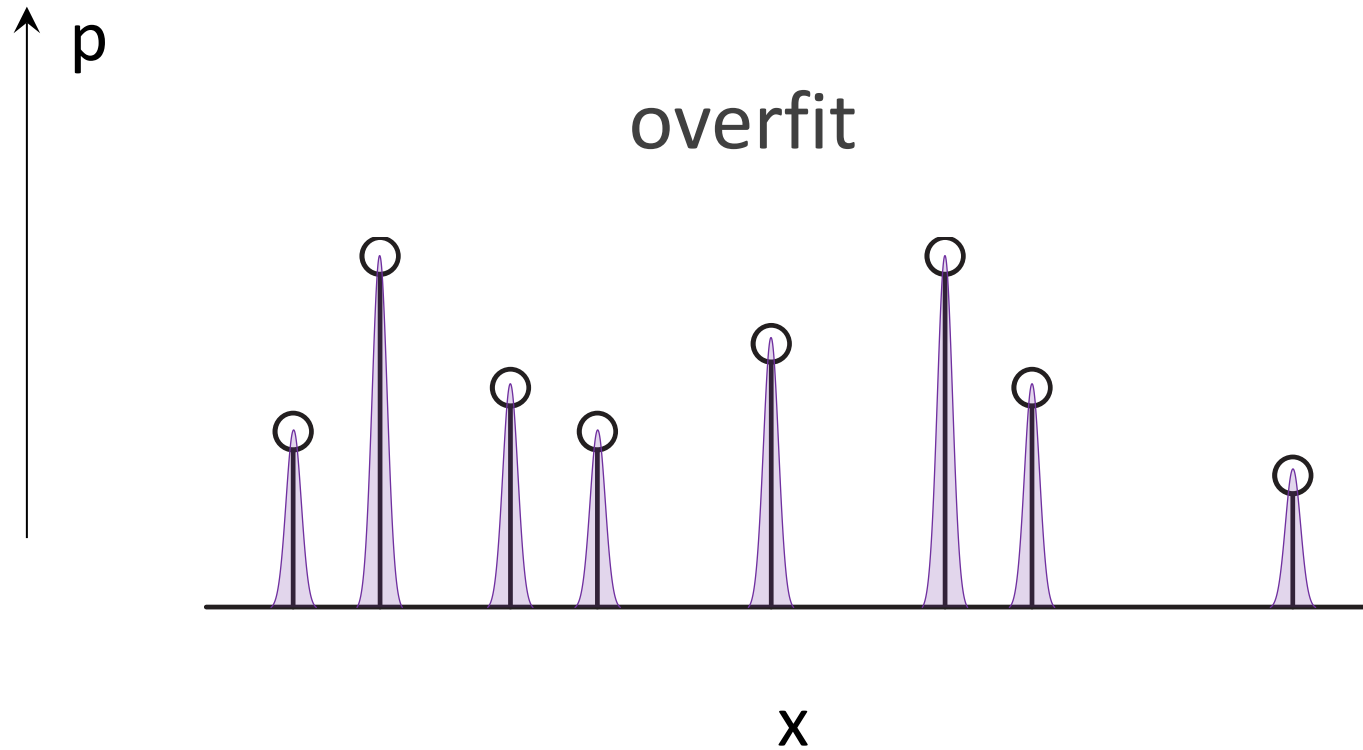


# Probability is part of the modeling



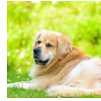
# Probability is part of the modeling

- To the extreme, using delta functions is like sampling from training data



# Generative models w/ probabilistic modeling

data



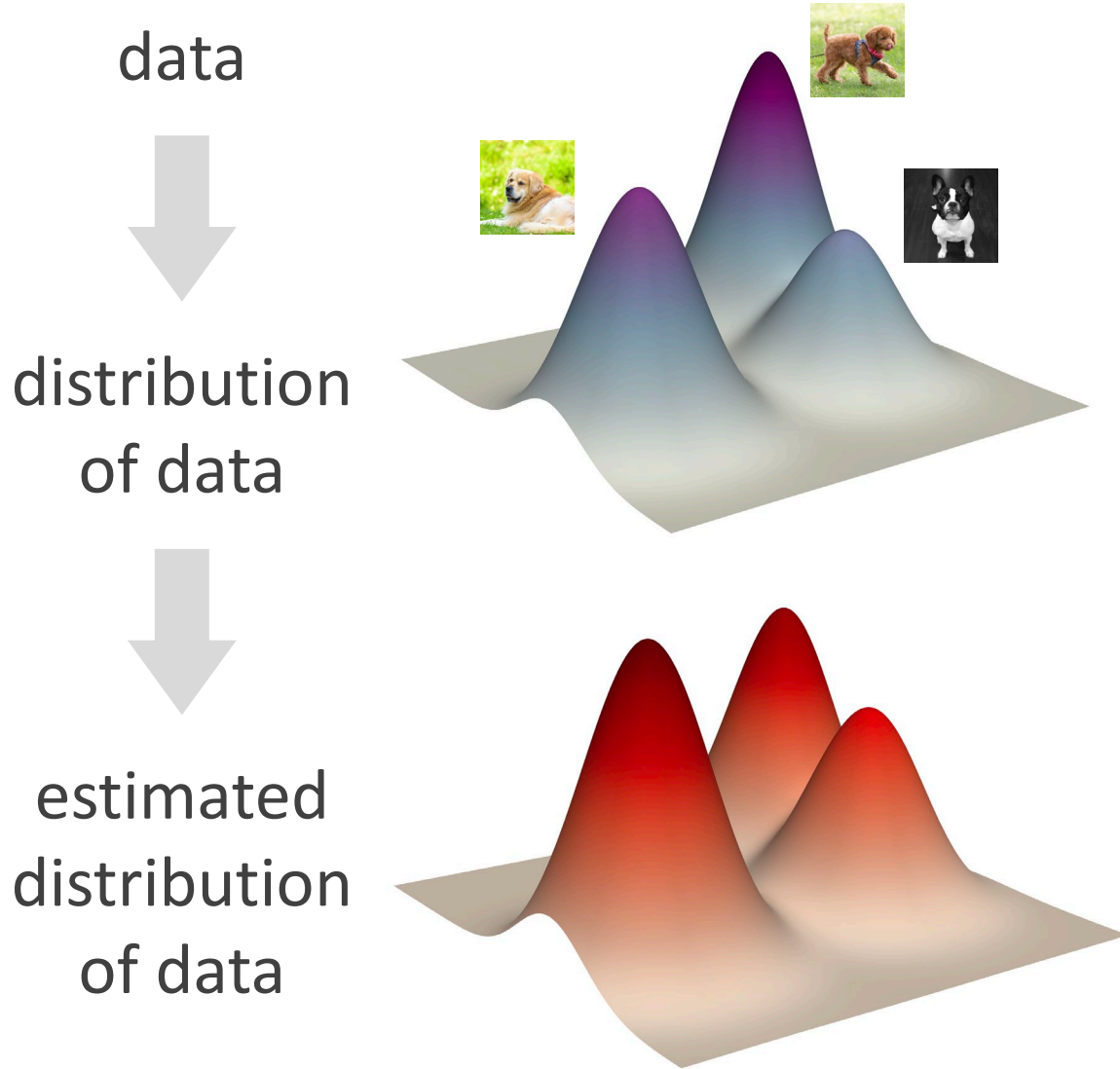


# Generative models w/ probabilistic modeling



- This is already part of the modeling

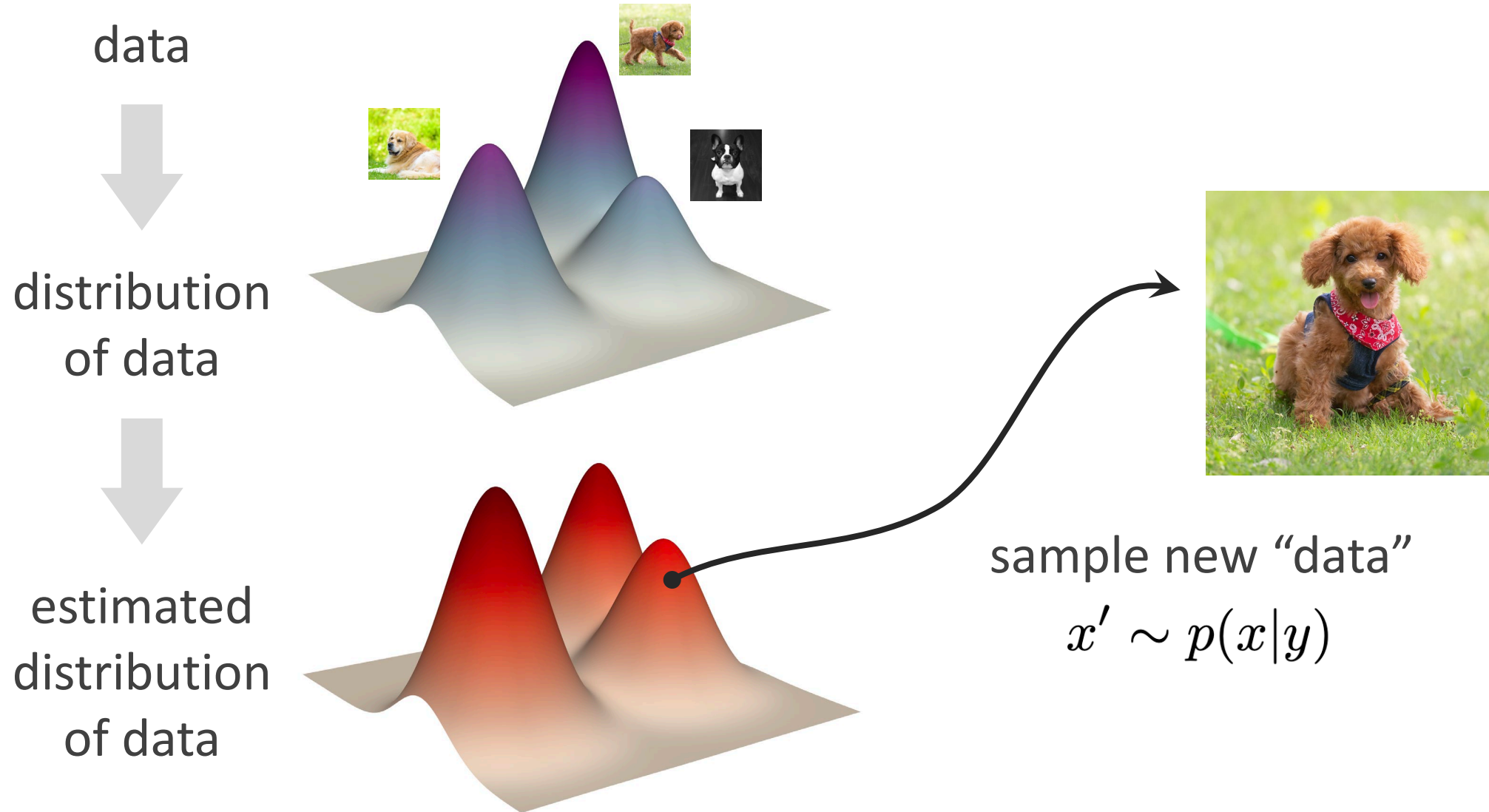
# Generative models w/ probabilistic modeling



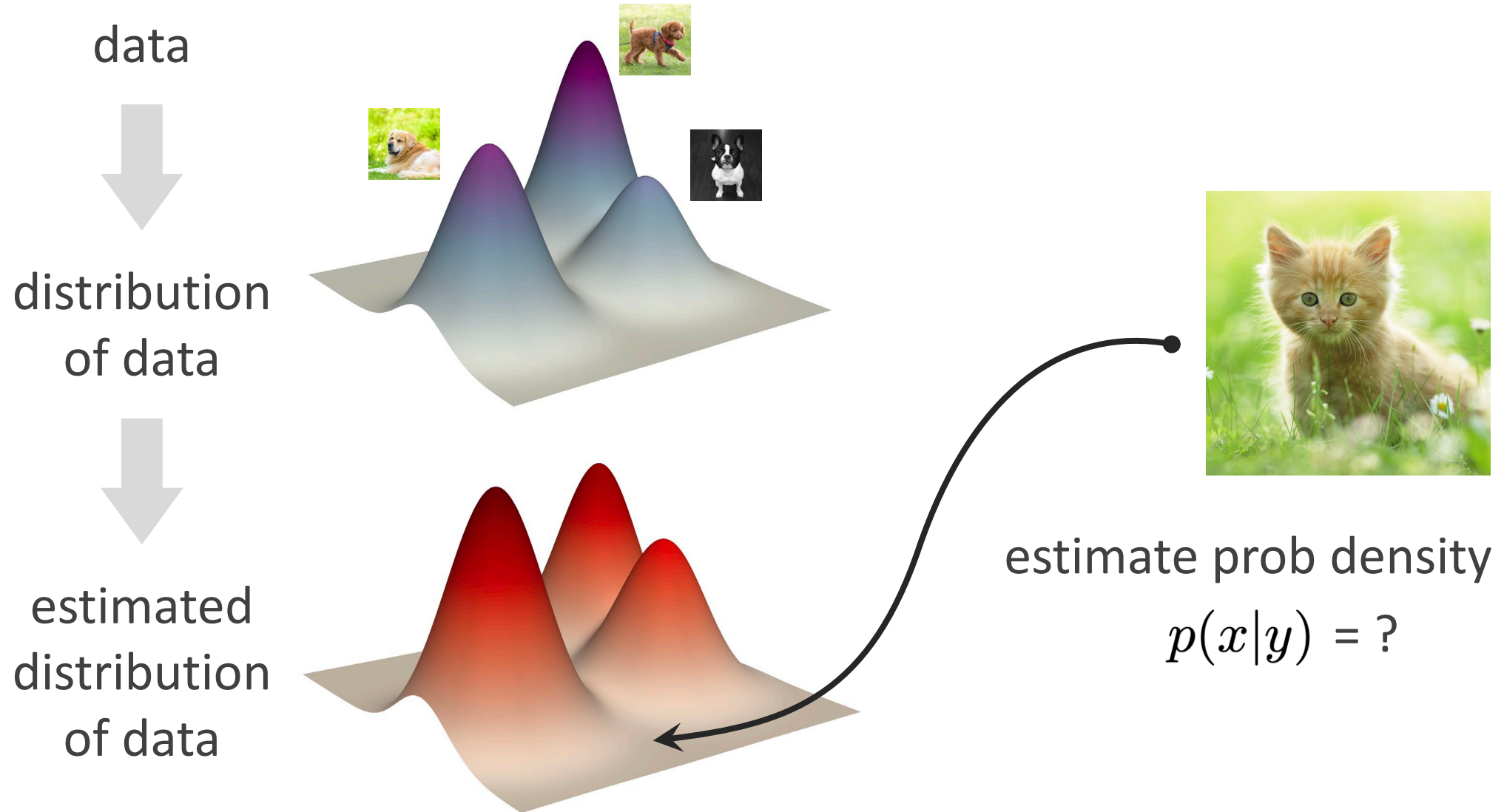
- Optimize a loss function

$$\mathcal{L}(\text{distribution of data}, \text{estimated distribution of data})$$

# Generative models w/ probabilistic modeling



# Generative models w/ probabilistic modeling



# Generative models w/ probabilistic modeling

## Notes:

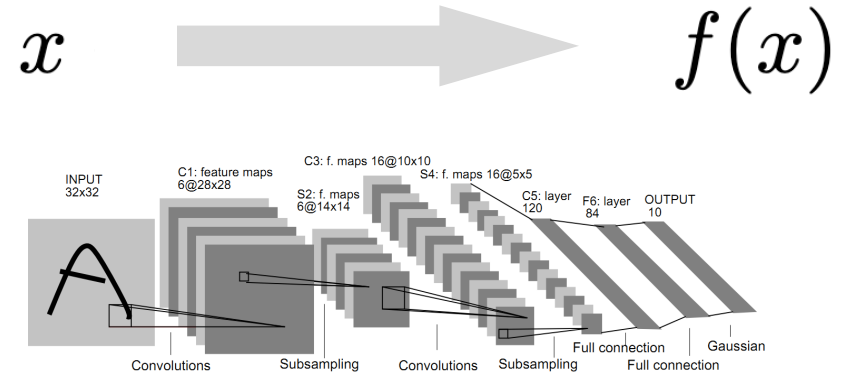
- Generative models involve statistical models which are often designed and derived by humans.
- Probabilistic modeling is not just the work of neural nets.
- Probabilistic modeling is a popular way, but not the only way.
- *"All models are wrong, but some are useful."* - George Box



**What are Deep Generative Models?**

# Deep Generative Models

- Deep learning is **representation learning**
- Learning to represent data instances
  - map data to feature:  $x \rightarrow f(x)$
  - minimize loss w/ target:  $\mathcal{L}(y, f(x))$



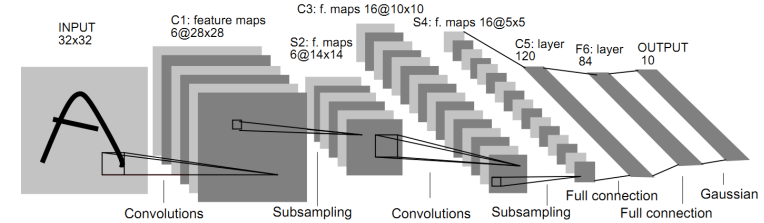
# Deep Generative Models

- Deep learning is **representation learning**



- Learning to represent data instances

- map data to feature:  $x \rightarrow f(x)$
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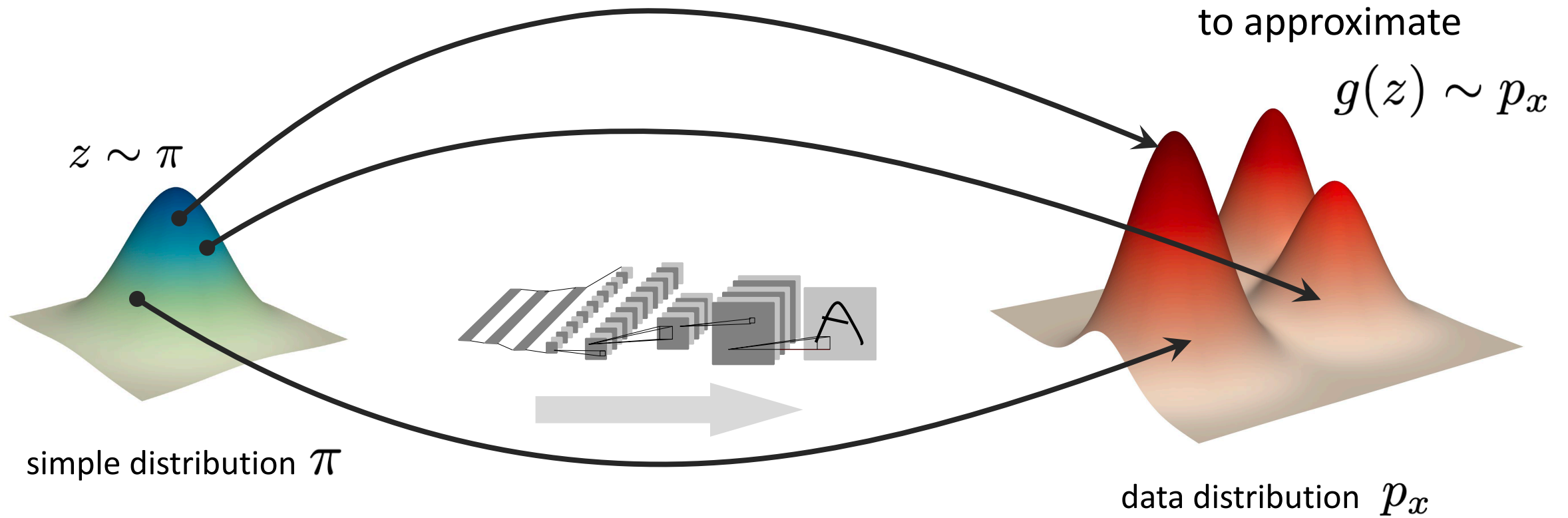
- Learning to **represent probability distributions**

- map a simple distribution (Gaussian/uniform) to a complex one:  $\pi \rightarrow g(\pi)$
- minimize loss w/ data distribution:  $\mathcal{L}(p_x, g(\pi))$

- Often perform both together

# Learning to represent probability distributions

- From simple to complex distributions

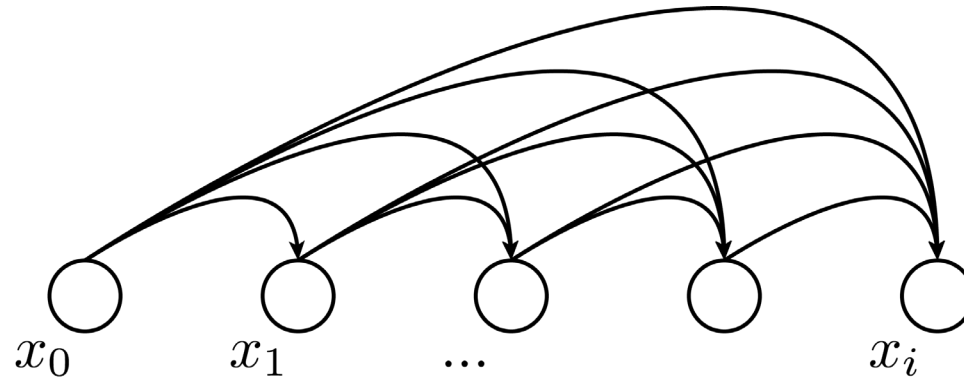


# Learning to represent probability distributions

- Not all parts of distribution modeling is done by learning

## Case study: Autoregressive model

This dependency graph is designed (not learned).

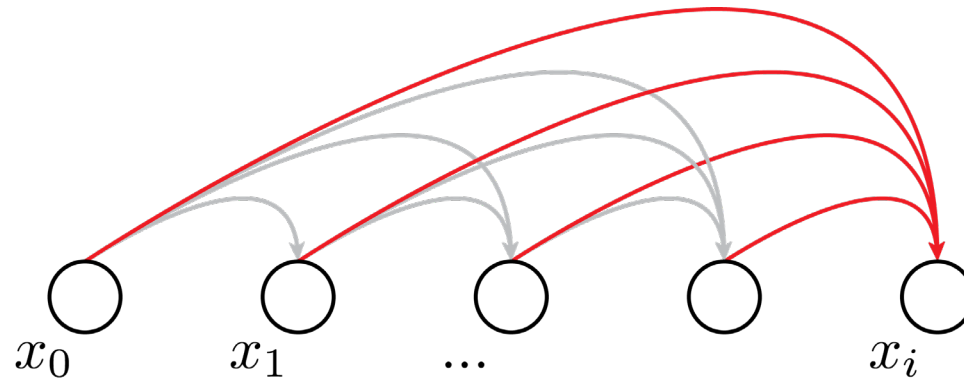


# Learning to represent probability distributions

- Not all parts of distribution modeling is done by learning

## Case study: Autoregressive model

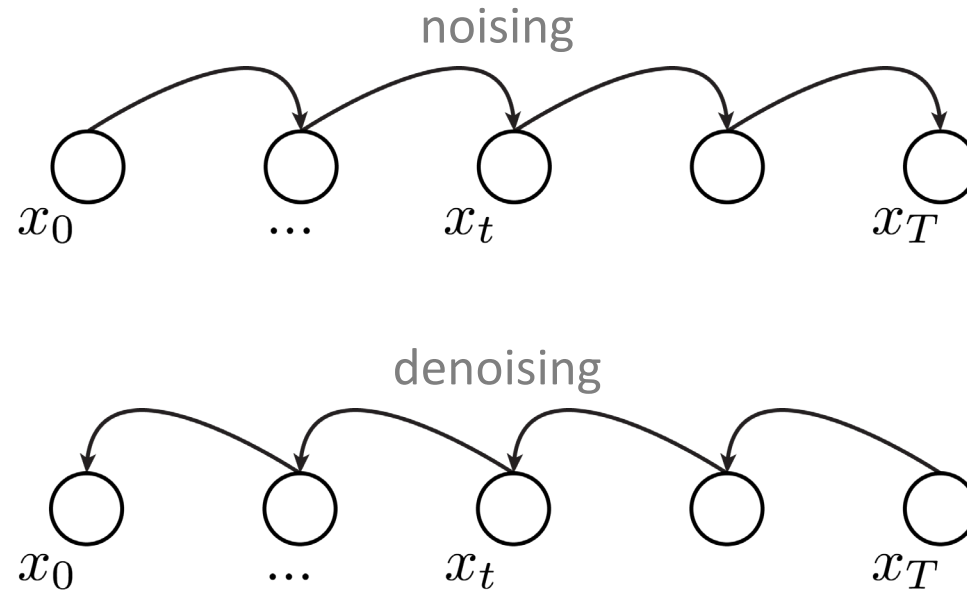
The mapping function is learned  
(e.g., Transformer)



# Learning to represent probability distributions

- Not all parts of distribution modeling is done by learning

## Case study: Diffusion model

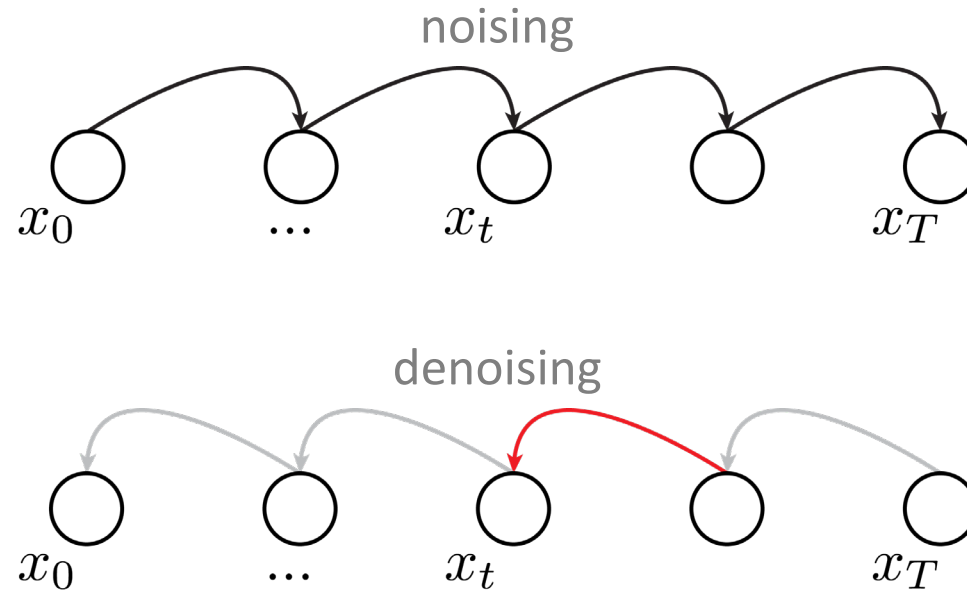


This dependency graph is designed (not learned).

# Learning to represent probability distributions

- Not all parts of distribution modeling is done by learning

## Case study: Diffusion model



The mapping function is learned  
(e.g., Unet)



# Deep Generative Models may involve:

- **Formulation:**
  - formulate a problem as probabilistic modeling
  - decompose complex distributions into simple and tractable ones
- **Representation:** deep neural networks to represent data and their distributions
- **Objective function:** to measure how good the predicted distribution is
- **Optimization:** optimize the networks and/or the decomposition
- **Inference:**
  - sampler: to produce new samples
  - probability density estimator (optional)

# **Formulating Real-world Problems as Generative Models**

# Formulating Real-world Problems as Generative Models

- Generative models are about  $p(x|y)$

## What can be $y$ ?

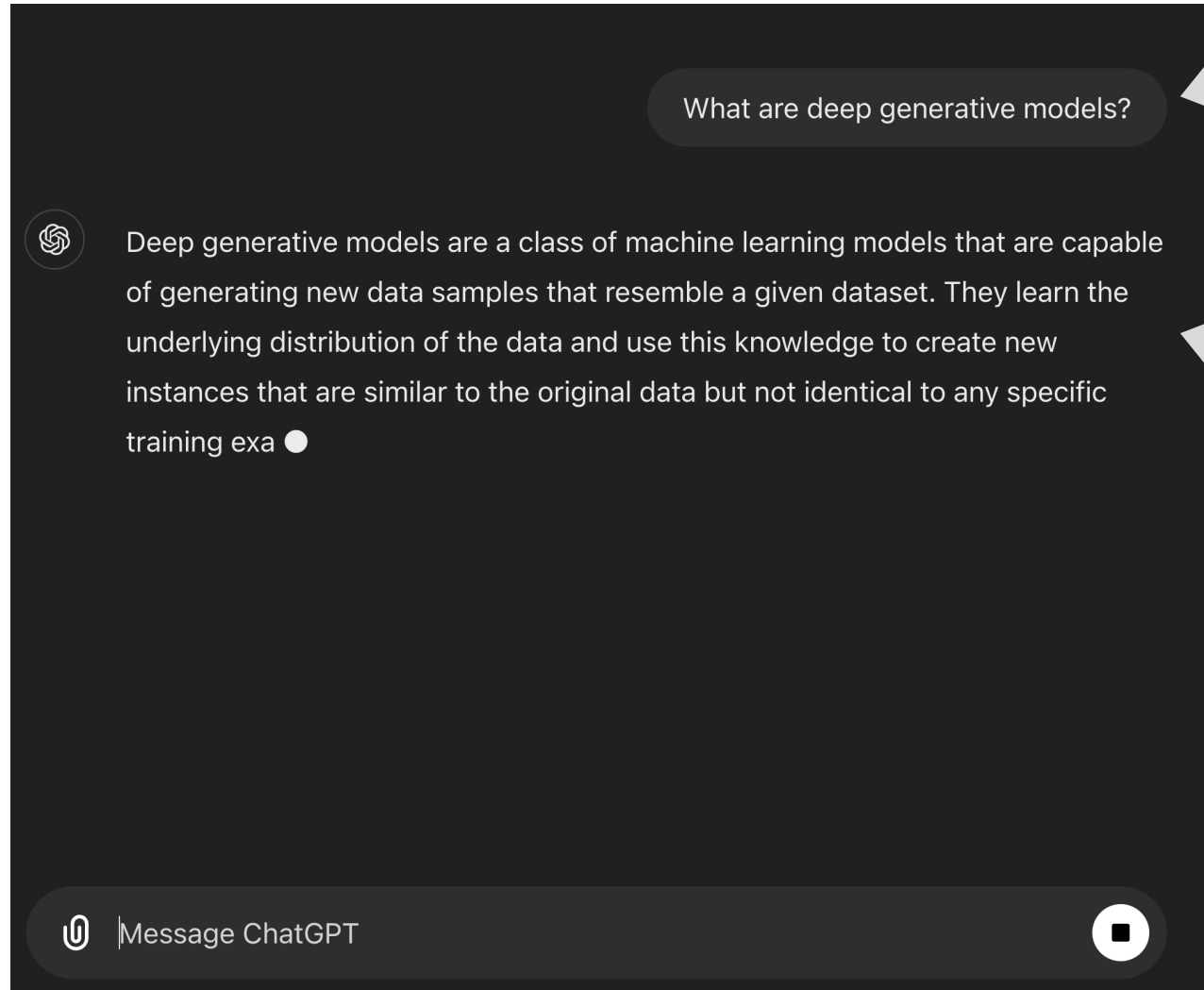
- condition
- constraint
- labels
- attributes
  
- more abstract
- less informative

## What can be $x$ ?

- “data”
- samples
- observations
- measurements
  
- more concrete
- more informative

# Case study: Formulating as $p(x|y)$

- **Natural language conversation**



y: prompt

x: response of the chatbot

# Case study: Formulating as $p(x|y)$

- **Text-to-image/video generation**

*Prompt: teddy bear teaching a course, with  
"generative models" written on blackboard*



y: text prompt



x: generated visual content

# Case study: Formulating as $p(x|y)$

- **Text-to-3D structure generation**



“motorcycle”



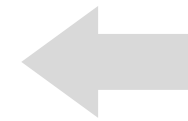
“mech suit”



“ghost lantern”



“furry fox head”



x: generated 3D  
structures



y: text prompt



“dresser”



“swivel chair”



“astronaut”

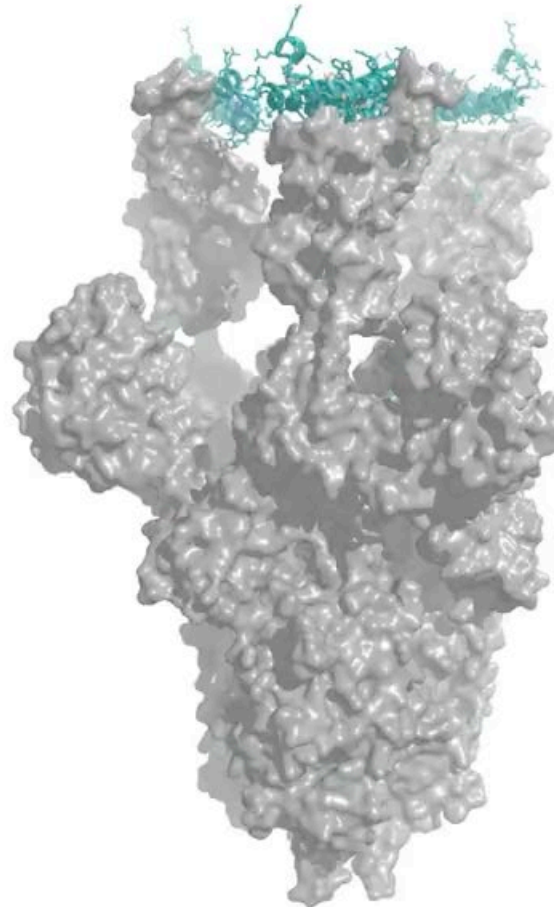


“mushroom house”

# Case study: Formulating as $p(x|y)$

- **Protein structure generation**

y: condition/constraint  
(e.g., symmetry)



x: generated  
protein structures

# Case study: Formulating as $p(x|y)$

- **Class-conditional image generation**

*“red fox”*



y: class label

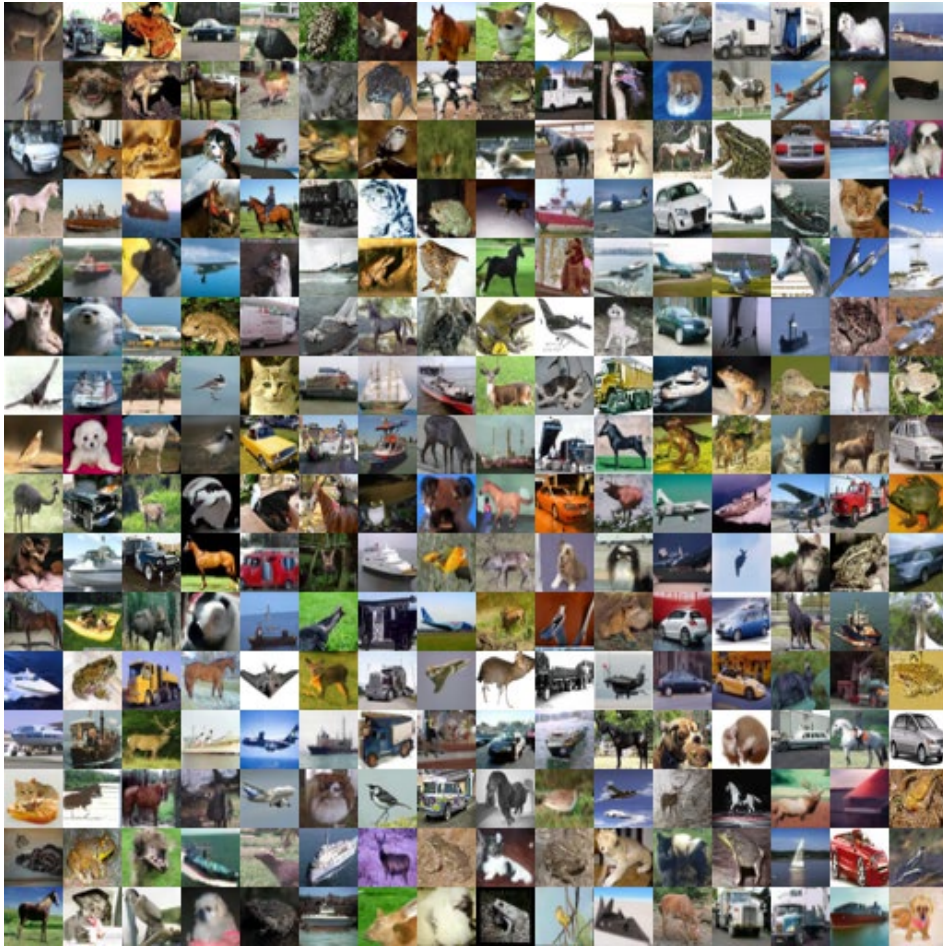


x: generated image



# Case study: Formulating as $p(x|y)$

- “Unconditional” image generation



$y$ : an implicit condition

*“images following CIFAR10 distribution”*

$x$ : generated CIFAR10-like images

- $p(x|y)$ : images  $\sim$  CIFAR10
- $p(x)$ : all images

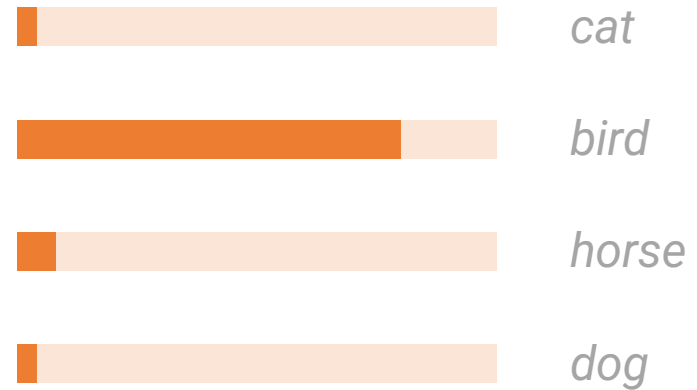
# Case study: Formulating as $p(x|y)$

- **Classification** (a generative perspective)

y: an image as the “condition”



x: probability of classes  
conditioned on the image



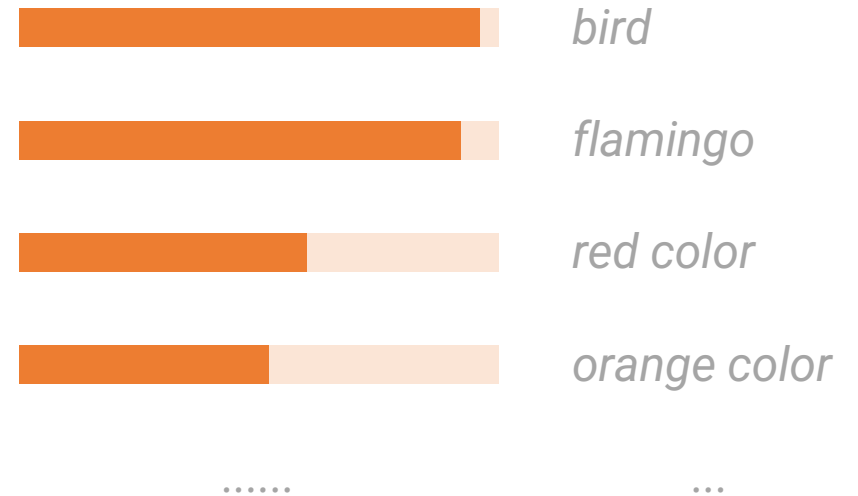
# Case study: Formulating as $p(x|y)$

- **Open-vocabulary recognition**

y: an image as the “condition”



x: plausible descriptions  
conditioned on the image



# Case study: Formulating as $p(x|y)$

- **Image captioning**

$y$ : an image as the “condition”



$x$ : plausible descriptions  
conditioned on the image

a baseball player with a catcher and umpire on top of a baseball field.  
a baseball player is sliding into a base.  
a baseball player swings at a pitch with the pitcher and umpire behind him.  
baseball player with bat in the baseball game.  
a batter in the process on the bat in a baseball game.



# Case study: Formulating as $p(x|y)$

- **Chatbot with visual inputs**

User      What is unusual about this image?



Source: <https://www.barnorama.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/03-Confusing-Pictures.jpg>

y: image and text prompt

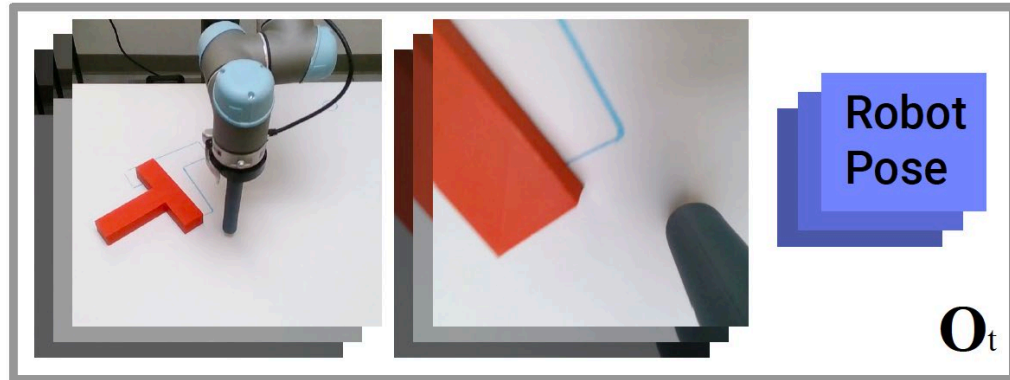
GPT-4      The unusual thing about this image is that a man is ironing clothes on an ironing board attached to the roof of a moving taxi.

x: response of the chatbot

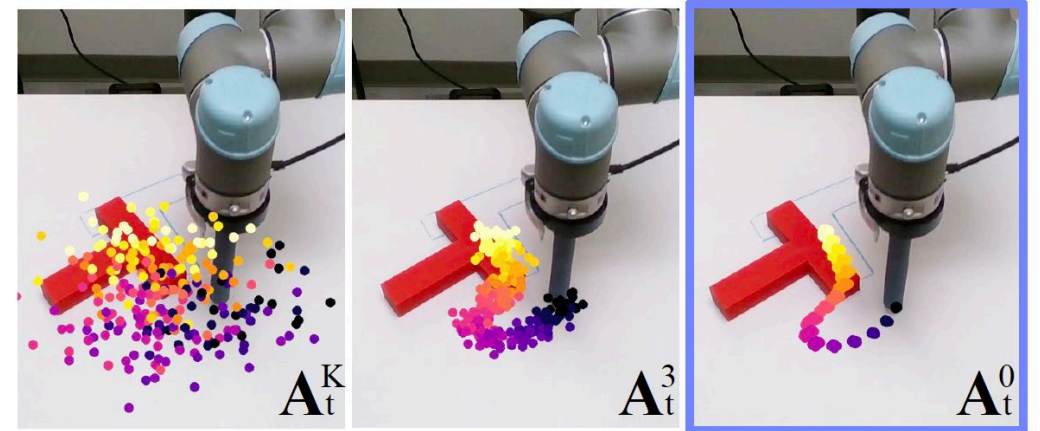
# Case study: Formulating as $p(x|y)$

- **Policy Learning in Robotics**

$y$ : visual and other  
sensory observations



$x$ : policies  
(probability of actions)



# Formulating Real-world Problems as Generative Models

- Generative models are about  $p(x|y)$
- Many problems can be formulated as generative models
- What's  $x$ ? What's  $y$ ?
- How to represent  $x$ ,  $y$ , and their dependence?

# About this course

This course will cover:

- How real-world problems are formulated as generative models?
- Probabilistic foundations and learning algorithms
- Challenges, opportunities, open questions