Applying the Histogram of Oriented Gradients Algorithm for Detecting Grass Lay Direction

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Table of contents

1 Abstract

In Alaska, indigenous hunters and gatherers have long observed the alignment of grass and plants after the growing season as indicative of prevailing wind directions and shifts. Due to the remote and harsh conditions, traditional weather stations are absent to measure shifts in historically predominant wind directions. In a previous study Dr. Jon Rosales (Environmental Studies) and his team collected images of grass lay from St. Lawrence Island, Alaska, and manually attempted to measure grass lay angles. This project investigated the Histogram of Oriented Gradients (HOG) algorithm to automate this process. We applied the algorithm to various images of grass fields sampled from the internet to test its viability.

2 Introduction

Subsistence-oriented indigenous communities across Alaska rely heavily on Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), a holistic understanding of their environment acquired through generations of observation and cultural transmission. Among the Anishinaabek tradition, sweetgrass symbolizes wisdom and knowledge, passed down from elders to younger generations. Indigenous hunters and gatherers have long observed the alignment of grass and plants after the growing season as indicative of prevailing wind directions. Predominant wind direction serve a crucial role to subsistence practitioners when hunting, fishing, settling, and keeping track of changing weather. On islands like St. Lawrence Island in Savoonga, AK, natives have observed a shift from historically predominant northerly wind patterns to southerly and easterly and dominated winds. This hypothesis has not yet been confirmed, due to the absence of weather stations.

This research project seeks to reinforce Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) with Scientific Ecological Knowledge (SEK) to develop our understanding of Alaskan indigenous wisdom and its correlation with modern scientific findings. By employing advanced image processing and machine learning techniques on imaging data obtained from the Living Laboratory at St. Lawrence University, we aim to utilize a Histogram of Oriented Gradients (HOG) algorithm to enhance the methodology of data collection and measure the predominant direction in which grass lays after its growing season. This interdisciplinary approach not only deepens our comprehension of indigenous knowledge systems but also sheds light on environmental dynamics and climate change impacts in remote regions.

3 Methods

The HOG algorithm, introduced by Navneet Dalal and Bill Triggs in 2005, is a popular technique for object detection in images. The algorithm can identify gradient magnitudes and angles at each pixel in an image. The preliminary steps involved using the 'skimage' library from Python to preprocess the images of interest. This included loading, resizing, and converting the images to grayscale. Images were rescaled to standardize their resolutions and preserve their aspect ratios to prevent distortion that could affect the accuracy of angle identification. Converting the images to grayscale was necessary because it allowed for focusing on a single channel to represent pixel intensity, rather than three channels (red, green, and blue).

The HOG features were then computed for the resized images, which involved calculating the gradient magnitudes and angles at each pixel. The gradient magnitude at each pixel is comprised of the gradients in the 'x' and 'y' directions. The gradient in the x-direction is computed by subtracting the pixel value to the left of pixel of interest is subtracted from the pixel value to its right. Similarly, the gradient in the y-direction is calculated by pixel value below the pixel of interest is subtracted from the pixel value above the pixel of interest. Now to calculate the gradient magnitude at the pixel of interest, the Pythagorean Theorem can be utilized where the gradient magnitude is equal to the square root of the x-gradient squared plus the y-gradient squared. The angle at a given pixel can be calculated by taking the inverse tangent of its y-gradient divided by its x-gradient. It is important to note all angles produced by this algorithm are between zero and one hundred eighty degrees. This occurs, because the inverse tangent function used for calculating a given pixel's angle cannot distinguish between all four quadrants. OR:

$$Magnitude(\mu) = \sqrt{G_x^2 + G_y^2}$$

 $Angle(\Theta) = \arctan(\frac{G_y^2}{G_y^2})$

Next, histograms are constructed to visualize the distribution of gradient magnitudes and angles. Two different techniques for creating gradient angle histograms were implemented. The simpler method involved counting the frequencies of angles and The second scheme uses the same number of bins, but factors in a pixel's gradient magnitude and its allocation to its bordering bins. Here, the weight assigned to each bin is calculated by the angle's deviation from the center of its central bin. This approach allows for a more representative histogram which splits angles between bins and takes their magnitudes into account.

Lastly, these histograms are converted to polar histograms so the primary angles can be visualized and compared to their original images.

4 Results

4.1 Load R Packages

4.2 Load Python Libraries

```
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
import pandas as pd

# jupyter only inline output command
#%matplotlib inline

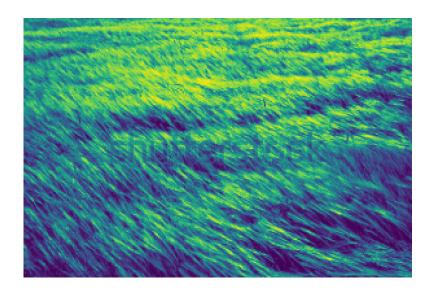
from skimage.io import imread, imshow
from skimage.transform import resize
from skimage.feature import hog
from skimage import data, exposure
```

```
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
from skimage import io
from skimage import color
from skimage.transform import resize
import math
from skimage.feature import hog
import numpy as np
```

4.3 Read, Grayscale, Resize Image

```
# TODO: DONT CHANGE HEIGHT AND WIDTH
img = color.rgb2gray(io.imread("images/grass_image2.jpg"))
# img = color.rgb2gray(io.imread("images/b_test_image_copy.jpg"))
#img = color.rgb2gray(io.imread("images/long_grass_sample.jpeg"))
#img = color.rgb2gray(io.imread("images/diagnol_lines.jpg"))
#img = color.rgb2gray(io.imread("images/san_francisco_scale_zoom_12.png"))
#img = color.rgb2gray(io.imread("images/diagnol_lines_flipped.jpg"))
#img = color.rgb2gray(io.imread("images/long_grass_sample_cropped.jpg"))
# aerial rotated image
#img = color.rgb2gray(io.imread("images/living_lab_aerial/aerial_grass_living_lab_rotated.
# zoomed internet photo
#img = color.rgb2gray(io.imread("images/dead_grass_zoom.jpeg"))
# zoomed in 11
#img = color.rgb2gray(io.imread("images/living_lab_aerial/LL_zoomed_in_11.jpg"))
# zoomed in 12
#img = color.rgb2gray(io.imread("images/living_lab_aerial/LL_zoomed_in_12.jpg"))
# zoomed in 16
#img = color.rgb2gray(io.imread("images/living_lab_aerial/LL_zoomed_in_16_side.jpg"))
```

```
# real one
  #img = color.rgb2gray(io.imread("images/living_labs_real_grass_image.jpg"))
  img.shape
(395, 596)
  # height = img.shape[0]//5
  # width = img.shape[1]//5
  # original image aspect ratio
  aspect_ratio = img.shape[0]/img.shape[1]
  height = 200
  width = int(height/aspect_ratio)
  width = 300
  # height = 128
  # width = 192
  # make sure the resized is in sample ball park as the original aspect ratio,
  # that way the angles don't get squished
  resized_ratio = height/width
  img = resize(img, (height, width))
  #img = resize(color.rgb2gray(io.imread("b_test_image_copy.jpg")), (height, width))
  #resized_img = resize(img, (height, width))
  plt.axis("off")
(0.0, 1.0, 0.0, 1.0)
  plt.imshow(img)
  print(img.shape)
(200, 300)
```



4.4 Plot Resized Gray Scale Image

```
plt.figure(figsize=(15, 8))
plt.imshow(img, cmap="gray")
plt.axis("off")

(-0.5, 299.5, 199.5, -0.5)

plt.show()
```



```
img = np.array(img)
```

4.5 Collect Feature Vectors

```
import math

mag = []
theta = []

for i in range(height):
    magnitudeArray = []
    angleArray = []

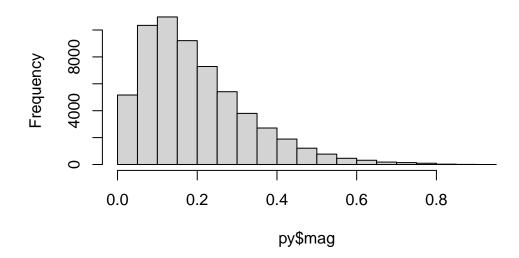
for j in range(width):
    # Condition for axis 0
    if j - 1 < 0 or j + 1 >= width:
        if j - 1 < 0:
            # Condition if first element
            Gx = img[i][j + 1] - 0
        elif j + 1 >= width:
            Gx = 0 - img[i][j - 1]
    else:
```

```
Gx = img[i][j + 1] - img[i][j - 1]
        # Condition for edge case height
        if i - 1 < 0 or i + 1 >= height:
            if i - 1 < 0:
                Gy = 0 - img[i + 1][j]
            elif i + 1 >= height:
                Gy = img[i - 1][j] - 0
        else:
            Gy = img[i + 1][j] - img[i - 1][j]
        # Calculating magnitude
        magnitude = math.sqrt(pow(Gx, 2) + pow(Gy, 2))
        magnitudeArray.append(round(magnitude, 9))
        # Calculating angle
        if Gx == 0:
            angle = math.degrees(0.0)
        else:
            angle = math.degrees(math.atan(Gy / Gx))
            # if the angle is negative, need to be between 0 and 360 degrees
            if angle < 0:
                angle += 180
        angleArray.append(round(angle, 9))
    mag.append(magnitudeArray)
    theta.append(angleArray)
mag = np.array(mag)
theta = np.array(theta)
```

4.6 Make HOG DF

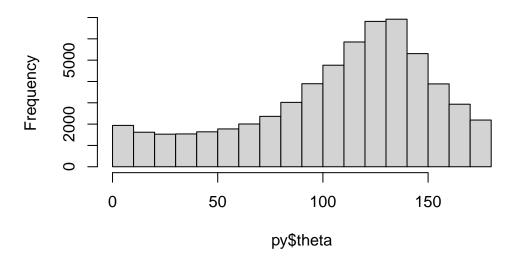
```
hist(py$mag)
```

Histogram of py\$mag



hist(py\$theta)

Histogram of py\$theta



4.7 Defining Function for Calculating HOG Neighbors

```
# Define the number of bins
  num_bins <- 9
  # Function to calculate the contributions to neighboring bins
  calculate_bin_contributions <- function(angle, magnitude, num_bins) {</pre>
    bin_width <- 180 / num_bins</pre>
    contributions <- numeric(num_bins)</pre>
    # get the central bin
    central_bin <- floor(angle / bin_width) %% num_bins</pre>
    next_bin <- (central_bin + 1) %% num_bins</pre>
    # get contributions to neighboring bins
    weight <- (1 - abs((angle %% bin_width) / bin_width)) * magnitude</pre>
    contributions[central_bin + 1] <- weight</pre>
    contributions[next_bin + 1] <- magnitude - weight</pre>
    return(list(contributions[1],
            contributions[2],
            contributions [3],
            contributions [4],
            contributions [5],
            contributions [6],
            contributions[7],
            contributions[8],
            contributions[9])
  }
  # test
  angle <- 170
  magnitude <- 1
  bin_contributions <- calculate_bin_contributions(angle, magnitude, num_bins)</pre>
  bin_contributions
[[1]]
[1] 0.5
```

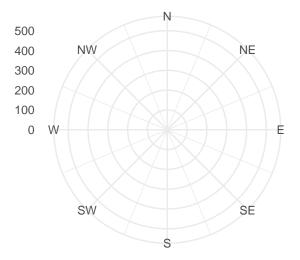
```
[[2]]
[1] 0
[[3]]
[1] 0
[[4]]
[1] 0
[[5]]
[1] 0
[[6]]
[1] 0
[[7]]
[1] 0
[[8]]
[1] 0
[[9]]
[1] 0.5
  bin_contributions[9]
[[1]]
[1] 0.5
  bin_contributions[1]
[[1]]
[1] 0.5
  contribution_hog_df <- data.frame(mag = as.vector(py$mag),</pre>
                        theta = as.vector((py$theta))) %>%
    mutate(radian = theta*(pi/180)) %>%
    filter(mag > 0.1) %>%
    rowwise() %>%
    mutate(`0` = calculate_bin_contributions(theta, mag, 9)[[1]],
           `20` = calculate_bin_contributions(theta, mag, 9)[[2]],
           `40` = calculate_bin_contributions(theta, mag, 9)[[3]],
```

```
`60` = calculate_bin_contributions(theta, mag, 9)[[4]],
           `80` = calculate_bin_contributions(theta, mag, 9)[[5]],
           `100` = calculate_bin_contributions(theta, mag, 9)[[6]],
           `120` = calculate_bin_contributions(theta, mag, 9)[[7]],
           `140` = calculate_bin_contributions(theta, mag, 9)[[8]],
           `160` = calculate_bin_contributions(theta, mag, 9)[[9]],
           )
  # split_histo_df <- hog_df[4:ncol(hog_df)] %>%
  split_histo_df <- contribution_hog_df %>%
    pivot_longer(names_to = "bin", values_to = "contribution", cols = 4:ncol(hog_df)) %>%
    mutate(bin = as.numeric(bin))
Warning: There was 1 warning in `mutate()`.
i In argument: `bin = as.numeric(bin)`.
Caused by warning:
! NAs introduced by coercion
  split_histo_df <-</pre>
    split_histo_df %>%
    group_by(bin) %>%
    summarise(contribution_sum = sum(contribution))
  polar_split_plot <-</pre>
    ggplot(split_histo_df, #>% filter(mag >= 0.3),
           aes(x = bin, y = contribution_sum)) +
    # geom_histogram(stat = "identity",
                     colour = "black",
    #
                      fill = "lightblue",
    #
                      breaks = seq(0, 360, length.out = 30),
                     bins = 9) +
    geom_histogram(stat = "identity",
                   colour = "black",
                   fill = "lightblue",
                   breaks = seq(0, 360, length.out = 17.5),
                   bins = 9) +
    coord_polar(
      theta = "x", start = 0, direction = 1) +
    scale x continuous(limits = c(0,360),
      breaks = c(0, 45, 90, 135, 180, 225, 270, 315),
```

polar_split_plot

Warning: Removed 2 rows containing missing values or values outside the scale range (`geom_bar()`).

Polar Plot of Internet Grass Image Using Distributed HOG Technique

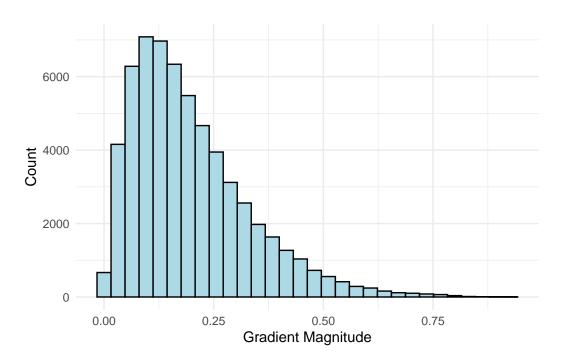


4.8 Create Histogram Plots of Gradient Magnitudes and Angles

```
histogram_mag_plot <-
ggplot(hog_df, aes(x = mag)) +
geom_histogram(colour = "black", fill = "lightblue") +
scale_x_continuous() +</pre>
```

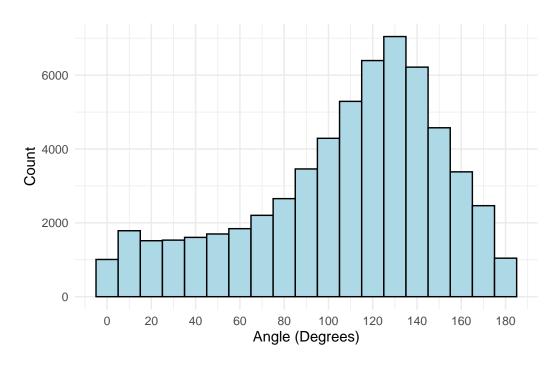
```
labs(x = "Gradient Magnitude", y = "Count"#, title = "Histogram of Magnitudes of Gradien
         ) +
    theme_minimal() +
    theme(plot.title = element_text(hjust = 0.5))
histogram_mag_plot
```

`stat_bin()` using `bins = 30`. Pick better value with `binwidth`.



ggsave("images/plots/grass2_magnitude_histogram.jpg", histogram_mag_plot, width = 6, heigh

`stat_bin()` using `bins = 30`. Pick better value with `binwidth`.



ggsave("images/plots/grass2_angles_histogram.jpg", histogram_theta_plot, width = 6, height

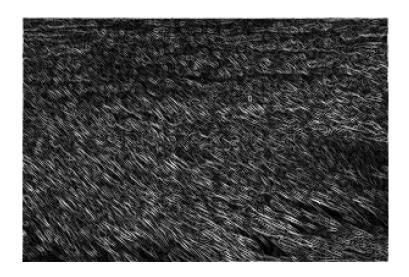
4.9 Plot Magnitudes as Image

```
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt

plt.figure(figsize=(15, 8))
  # plt.title('Gradient Magnitudes by Pixel') # Corrected line
  # plt.suptitle("Image 3", y=0.75, fontsize=18)
  plt.imshow(mag, cmap="gray")
  plt.axis("off")

(-0.5, 299.5, 199.5, -0.5)

plt.show()
```



plt.savefig("mag.png", dpi=300)

```
number_of_bins = 9
step_size = 180 / number_of_bins
#Function to calculate the value of centre of jth bin
def calculate_j(angle):
  temp = (angle / step_size) - 0.5
  j = math.floor(temp)
  return j
# Function to calculate the value of jth bin
def calculate_Cj(j):
  Cj = step\_size * (j + 0.5)
  return round(Cj, 9)
def calculate_value_j(magnitude, angle, j):
  Cj = calculate_Cj(j+1)
  Vj = magnitude * ((Cj - angle) / step_size)
  return round(Vj, 9)
histogram_points_nine = []
high_val = 10
# for i in range(0, height, high_val):
    temp = []
    for j in range(0, width, high_val):
      magnitude_values = [[mag[i][x] for x in range(j, j+high_val)] for i in range(i,i+high_val)
      angle_values = [[theta[i][x] for x in range(j, j+high_val)] for i in range(i, i+high
      for k in range(len(magnitude_values)):
#
#
        for 1 in range(len(magnitude_values[0])):
          bins = [0.0 for _ in range(number_of_bins)]
          value_j = calculate_j(angle_values[k][1])
          Vj = calculate_value_j(magnitude_values[k][1], angle_values[k][1], value_j)
          Vj_1 = magnitude_values[k][1] - Vj
          bins[value_j]+=Vj
          bins[value_j+1]+=Vj_1
          bins = [round(x, 9) for x in bins]
#
      temp.append(bins)
    histogram_points_nine.append(temp)
# print(len(histogram_points_nine))
```

```
# print(len(histogram_points_nine[0]))
# print(len(histogram_points_nine[0][0]))
epsilon = 1e-05
# feature_vectors = []
# for i in range(0, len(histogram_points_nine) - 1, 1):
   for j in range(0, len(histogram_points_nine[0]) - 1, 1):
     values = [[histogram_points_nine[i][x] for x in range(j, j+2)] for i in range(i, i+2)
     final_vector = []
     for k in values:
       for l in k:
          for m in 1:
            final_vector.append(m)
    k = round(math.sqrt(sum([pow(x, 2) for x in final_vector])), 9)
     final\_vector = [round(x/(k + epsilon), 9) for x in final\_vector]
      temp.append(final_vector)
#
    feature_vectors.append(temp)
# print(len(feature_vectors))
# print(len(feature_vectors[0]))
# print(len(feature_vectors[0][0]))
```

4.10 Generate HOG Image

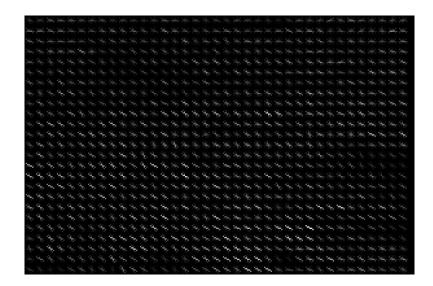
```
img = imread("images/living_lab_aerial/aerial_grass_living_lab_rotated.jpg")
img = color.rgb2gray(io.imread("images/grass_image2.jpg"))

aspect_ratio = img.shape[0]/img.shape[1]

height = 200
width = int(height/aspect_ratio)

# height = 128
# width = 192

# make sure the resized is in sample ball park as the original aspect ratio,
# that way the angles don't get squished
resized_ratio = height/width
```



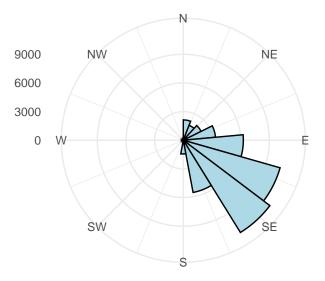
```
plt.savefig('images/plots/grass2_image_hog.jpg')
```

4.11 Polar Plot of Angles from Standard HOG

```
grass2_polar_plot <-</pre>
ggplot(hog_df %>% filter(mag >= 0.1),
       aes(x = radian)) +
 geom_histogram(colour = "black", fill = "lightblue",
                 breaks = seq(0, 2*pi, length.out = 17.5),
                 bins = 9) +
 coord_polar(
   theta = "x", start = 0, direction = 1) +
 scale_x_continuous(
   breaks = c(0, pi/4, pi/2, 3*pi/4, pi, 5*pi/4, 3*pi/2, 7*pi/4),
   labels = c("N", "NE", "E", "SE", "S", "SW", "W", "NW")
 )+
 labs(title = "Polar Plot of Internet Grass Image") +
   theme_minimal() +
 labs(x = "") +
  theme(axis.title.y = element_blank(),
```

```
plot.title = element_text(hjust = 0.5))
grass2_polar_plot
```

Polar Plot of Internet Grass Image



```
#ggsave("_polar_plot.jpg", polar_plot, width = 6, height = 4, dpi = 300)

#all_plots <- ggpubr::ggarrange(diaganol_polar_plot, sf_polar_plot, grass2_polar_plot, aer

#ggsave("images/plots/results_all_plots.jpg", all_plots, width = 7, height = 7)</pre>
```

4.12 HOG Image of Internet Grass

```
from skimage import color, io, exposure
from skimage.transform import resize
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
from skimage.feature import hog

# Load the image and preprocess it
img = color.rgb2gray(io.imread("images/grass_image2.jpg"))
# img = color.rgb2gray(io.imread("diagnol_lines_flipped.jpg"))
aspect_ratio = img.shape[0] / img.shape[1]
```

```
height = 200
width = int(height / aspect_ratio)
resized_img = resize(img, (height, width))

plt.figure(figsize=(8, 20))  # Adjusted the figure size to accommodate the additional objet plt.imshow(resized_img, cmap="gray")
plt.axis("off")

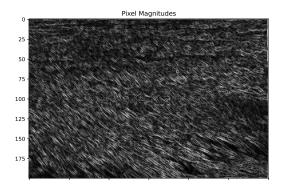
(-0.5, 300.5, 199.5, -0.5)

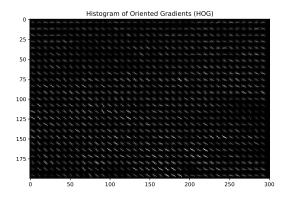
plt.show()
```



```
# Compute HOG features
hog_features, hog_image = hog(resized_img, orientations=9, pixels_per_cell=(8,8),
                              cells_per_block=(10, 10), visualize=True)
# Plot the images
fig, (ax1, ax2, ax3) = plt.subplots(3, 1, figsize=(8, 20), sharex=True, sharey=True) # Ch
# Plot the rescaled black and white image
ax1.imshow(resized_img, cmap=plt.cm.gray)
ax1.set_title('Rescaled Black and White Image')
# Plot the mag object
ax2.imshow(mag, cmap=plt.cm.gray) # Assuming mag is the object you want to insert
#ax2.axis("off")
ax2.set_title('Pixel Magnitudes')
# rescale HOG for better viewing:
hog_color_rescaled = exposure.rescale_intensity(hog_image, in_range=(0, 10))
# Plot the histogram of oriented gradients
ax3.imshow(hog_color_rescaled, cmap=plt.cm.gray)
ax3.set_title('Histogram of Oriented Gradients (HOG)')
plt.savefig("images/plots/rescaled_grass2_image_hog.png", dpi=300)
plt.show()
```



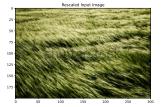


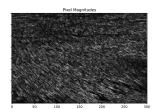


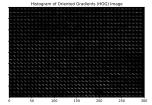
```
from skimage import color, io, exposure
  from skimage.transform import resize
  import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
  from skimage.feature import hog
  # Load the image and preprocess it
  img = io.imread("images/grass_image2.jpg")
  # img = color.rgb2gray(io.imread("diagnol_lines_flipped.jpg"))
  aspect_ratio = img.shape[0] / img.shape[1]
  height = 200
  width = int(height / aspect_ratio)
  resized_img = resize(img, (height, width))
  bw_resized_image = color.rgb2gray(resized_img)
  plt.figure(figsize=(15, 5)) # Adjusted the figure size to accommodate the additional objections
  plt.imshow(resized_img, cmap="gray")
  plt.axis("off")
(-0.5, 300.5, 199.5, -0.5)
  plt.show()
```



```
fig, (ax1, ax2, ax3) = plt.subplots(1, 3, figsize=(25, 5), sharex=True, sharey=True) # Ch
# Plot the rescaled input image
ax1.imshow(resized_img, cmap=plt.cm.gray)
ax1.set_title('Rescaled Input Image')
# Plot the pixel magnitudes
ax2.imshow(mag, cmap=plt.cm.gray) # Assuming mag is the object you want to insert
ax2.set_title('Pixel Magnitudes')
# Plot the histogram of oriented gradients
hog_color_rescaled = exposure.rescale_intensity(hog_image, in_range=(0, 10))
ax3.imshow(hog_color_rescaled, cmap=plt.cm.gray)
ax3.set_title('Histogram of Oriented Gradients (HOG) Image')
# Plot the histogram of oriented gradients
# angle_hist = io.imread("images/grass2_angles_histogram.jpg")
# resized_hist = resize(angle_hist, (height, width))
# ax4.imshow(resized_hist, cmap=plt.cm.gray)
# ax4.set_title('Angle Histogram')
# # Plot the polar plot
# polar_plot = io.imread("images/grass2_polar_plot.jpg")
# resized_polar = resize(polar_plot, (height, width))
# ax5.imshow(resized_polar, cmap=plt.cm.gray)
# ax5.set_title('Polar Plot')
plt.savefig("images/plots/rescaled_grass2_image_hog.png", dpi=300)
plt.show()
```

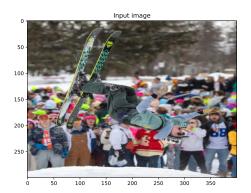


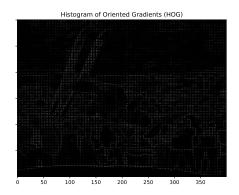




4.13 Titus Flip

```
image = imread('images/TitusFlip.jpg')
  imshow(image)
  print(image.shape)
(1350, 1080, 3)
  resized_image = resize(image, (300, 400))
  #resized_image = image
  imshow(resized_image)
  print(resized_image.shape)
(300, 400, 3)
  fig, hog image = hog(resized_image, orientations=9, pixels_per_cell=(3, 3),
                       cells_per_block=(15, 15), visualize=True, channel_axis=2 #multichanne
  fig, (ax1, ax2) = plt.subplots(1, 2, figsize=(16, 7), sharex=True, sharey=True)
  ax1.imshow(resized_image, cmap=plt.cm.gray)
  ax1.set_title('Input image')
  # Rescale histogram for better display
  hog_color_rescaled = exposure.rescale_intensity(hog_image, in_range=(0, 10))
  ax2.imshow(hog_color_rescaled, cmap=plt.cm.gray)
  ax2.set_title('Histogram of Oriented Gradients (HOG)')
  # store to file
  plt.savefig("images/plots/titus_flip_example_hog.png", dpi=300)
  plt.show()
```







```
# hog_df <- py$hog_df

# ggplot(hog_df %>% filter(mag >= 0.4),

# aes(x = radian)) +

# geom_histogram(#binwidth = 5#, boundary = 0, closed = "right") +
```

```
# )+
# #scale_x_continuous(limits = c(0, 360), breaks = seq(0, 360, by = 45)) +
# #coord_polar(start = 0, direction = 1, ) +
# coord_radial(start = 0, end = pi, expand = F, clip = "on") +
# scale_x_continuous(
# breaks = c(0, pi/4, pi/2, 3*pi/4),
# labels = c("0", "/4", "/2", "3/4")
# ) +
# theme(plot.title = element_text(hjust = 0.5)) +
# labs(title = "Polar Histogram of Theta",
# x = "Theta (Degrees)",
# y = "Frequency") #+ theme_minimal()
```

Conclusion