

# Statistical Machine Learning

Point Processes  
Temporal Point Processes

Spring 2020

(PARTLY FROM ICML TUTORIAL, JULY 2018)

# Outline

## INTRODUCTION TO POINT PROCESSES (PPs)

### TEMPORAL POINT PROCESSES (TPPs)

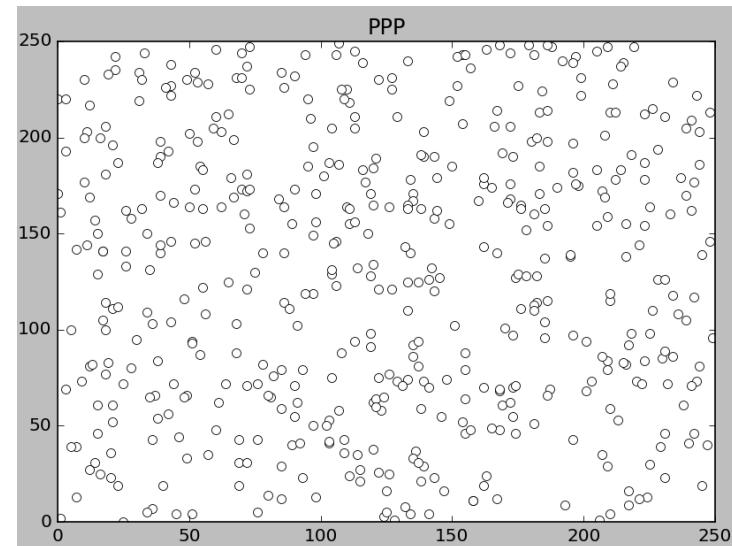
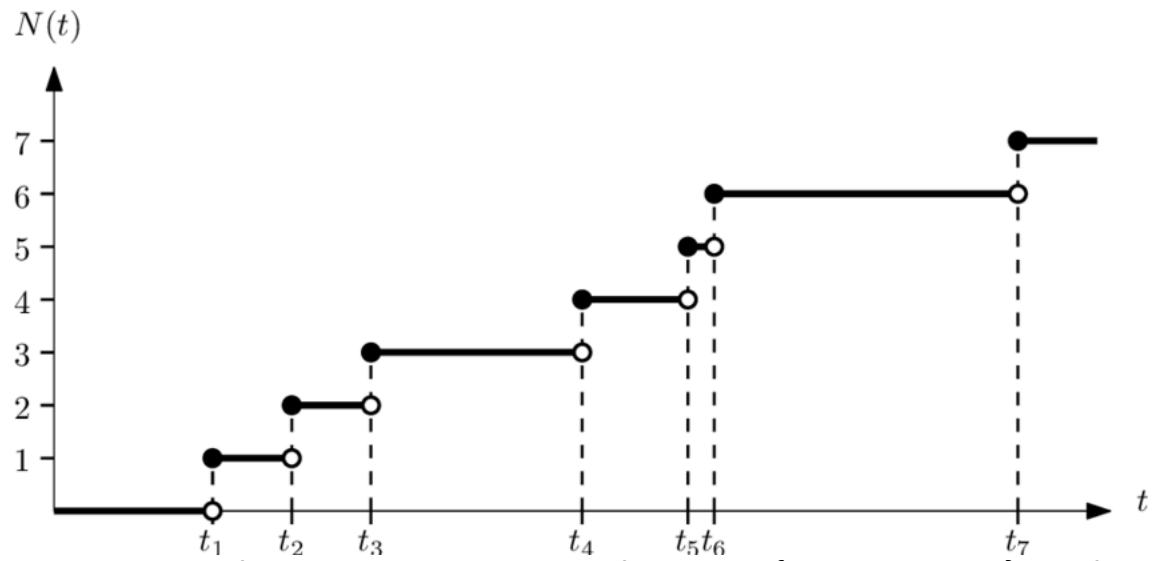
1. Intensity function
2. Basic building blocks
3. Superposition
4. Marks and SDEs with jumps

## MODELS & INFERENCE

1. Modeling event sequences
2. Clustering event sequences
3. Capturing complex dynamics
4. Causal reasoning on event sequences

# Introduction to Point Processes

- Point processes are used to describe data that are localized in space or time.
- A temporal point process is a stochastic, or random, process composed of a time-series of binary events that occur in continuous time.

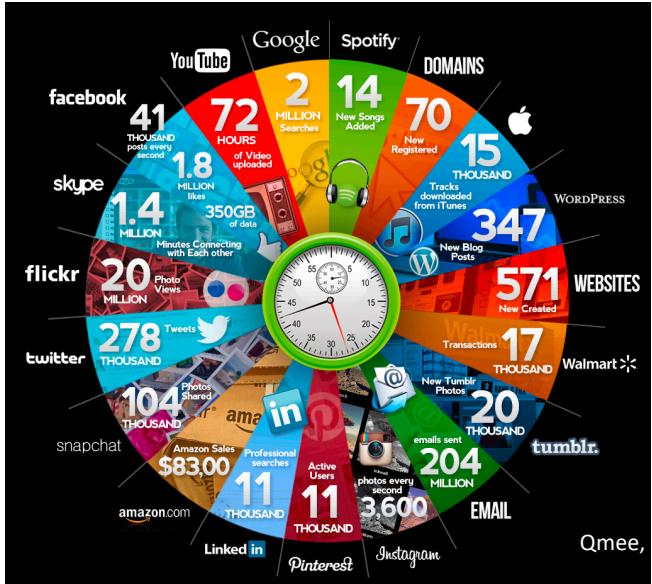


# Introduction to Point Processes

- Point processes are used to describe data that are localized at a finite set of time points. As opposed to continuous-valued processes.
- A point process can take on only one of two possible values, indicating whether or not an event occurs at that time.
- Point processes have many applications in real world data.
- For example: the study of point processes is especially crucial for neural data analysis.
- Brain areas receive, process, and transmit information about the outside world via stereotyped electrical events, called action potentials or spikes.
- Spikes are the starting point for virtually all of the processing performed by the brain. This can be modeled by point processes.

# Introduction to Point Processes

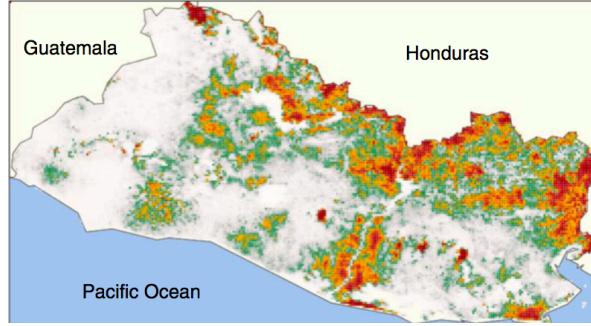
More examples: many discrete events in continuous time



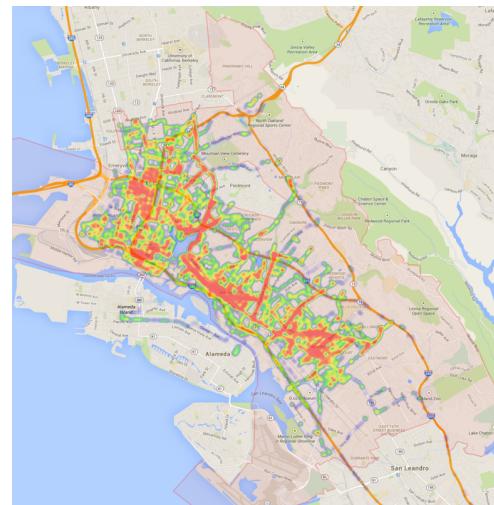
Online actions



Financial trading



Disease dynamics



Mobility dynamics

# Introduction to Point Processes

Variety of processes behind these events  
**Events are (noisy) observations of a variety of complex dynamic processes...**



Stock  
trading



Flu  
spreading



Article creation  
in Wikipedia



News spread in  
Twitter



Reviews and  
sales in Amazon



Ride-sharing  
requests



A user's reputation  
in Quora

FAS

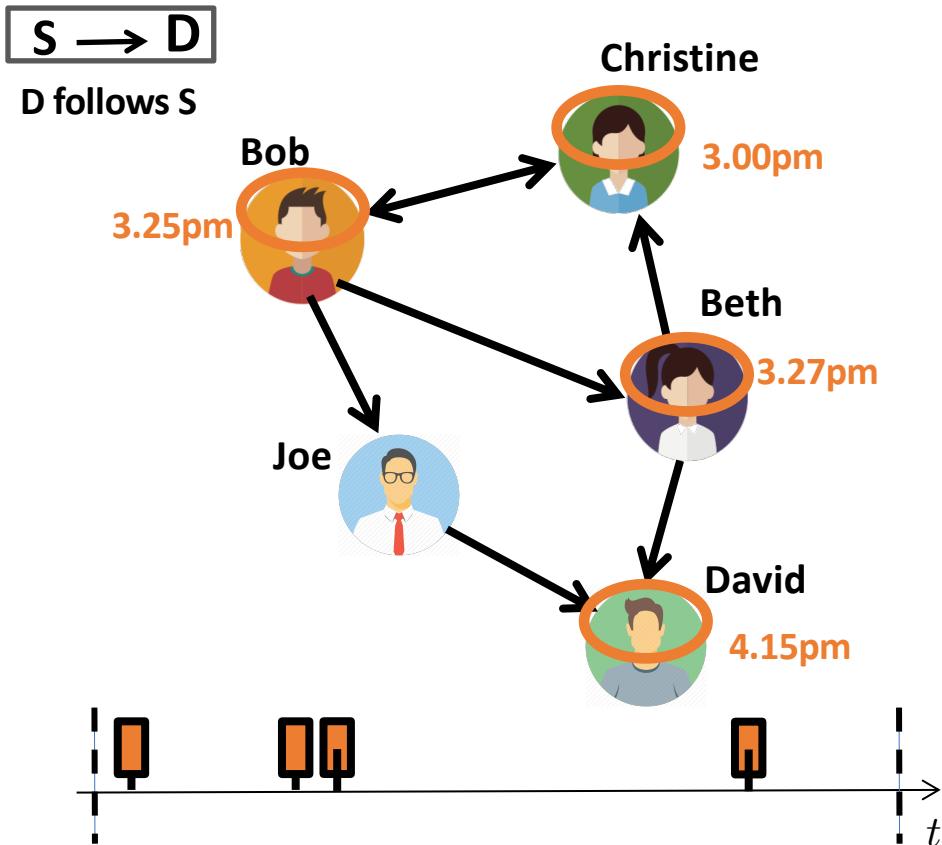
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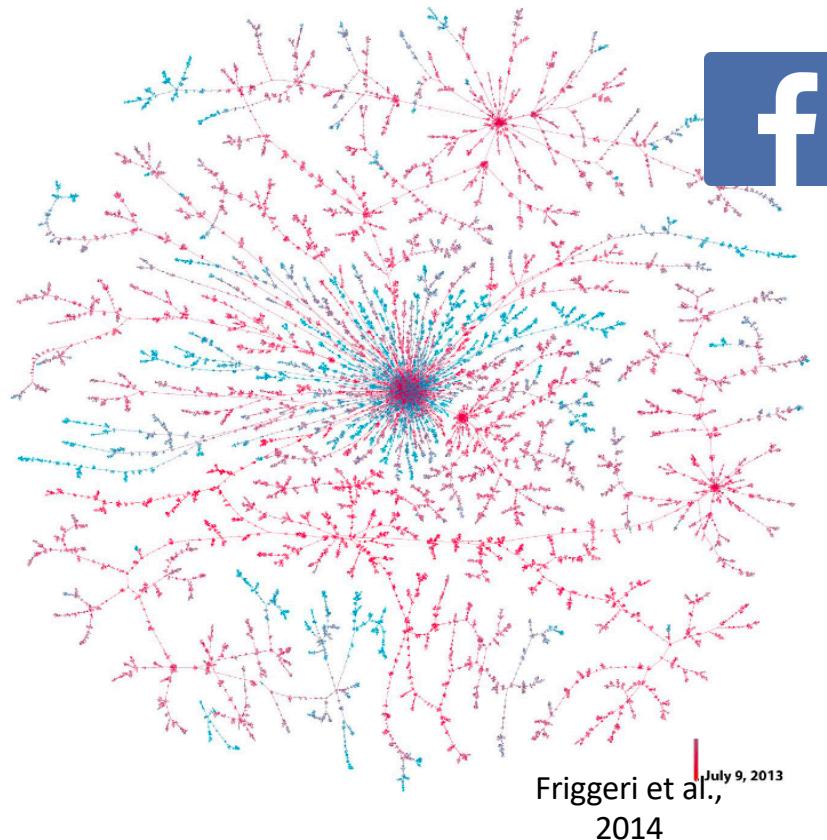
W

...in a wide range of temporal scales.

# Point Processes and Information propagation



**They can have an impact  
in the off-line world**



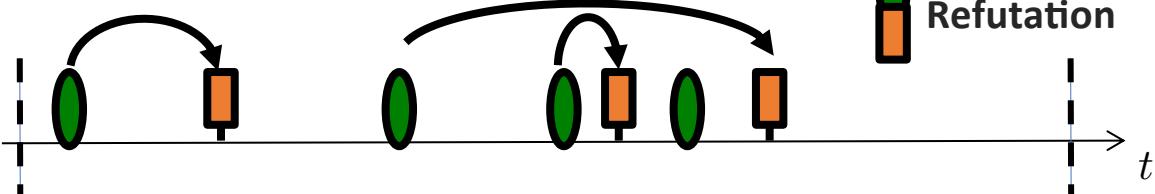
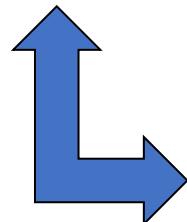
**the guardian**

Click and elect: how fake news helped Donald Trump win a real election

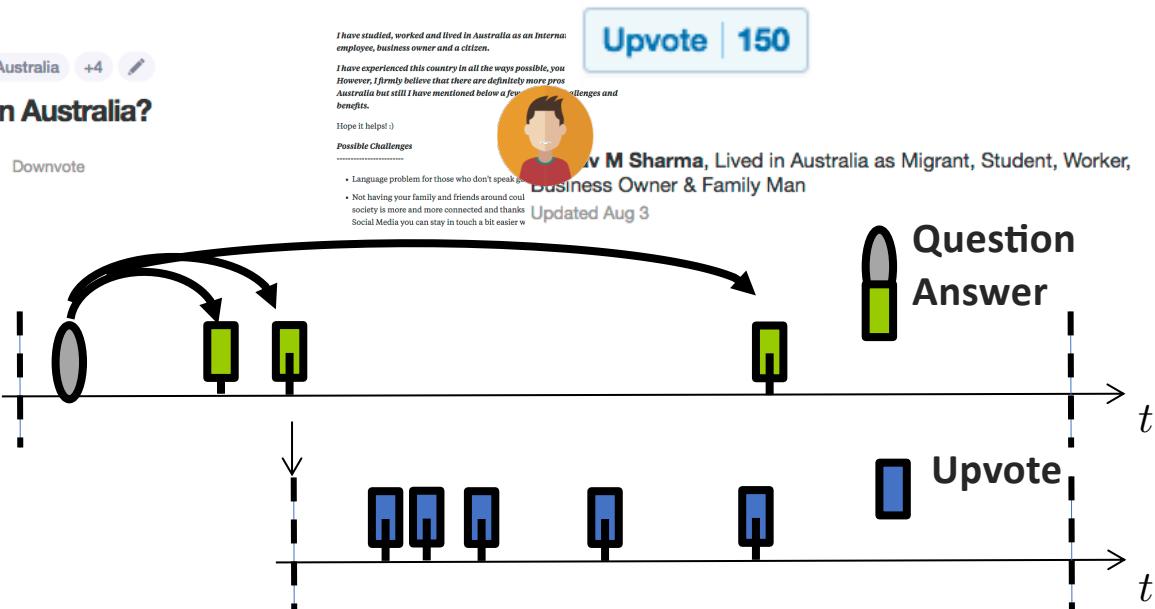
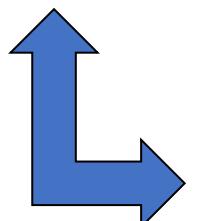
# Point Processes and Information propagation



Barack Obama  
From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia  
*"Barack" and "Obama" redirect here. For his father, see Barack Obama Sr. For other uses of "Barack", see Barack (disambiguation).*  
Barack Hussein Obama II (the current President of the United States) was president of the Harvard civil rights attorney and taught representing the 13th District States House of Representative  
Barack Obama: Revision history  
03:41, 28 November 2016 Ranze (talk | contribs) . . (301,105 bytes) (+18) . .  
03:32, 28 November 2016 Xin Deui (talk | contribs) . . (301,087 bytes) (-68) . .  
00:57, 28 November 2016 SporkBot (talk | contribs) m . . (301,155 bytes) (-37)  
07:03, 27 November 2016 Saiph121 (talk | contribs) . . (301,192 bytes) (+25) . .



Moving to Australia Working in Australia Study abroad in Australia +4  
What are the pros and cons of living in Australia?  
Answer Request Follow 109 Comment Share 9 Downvote

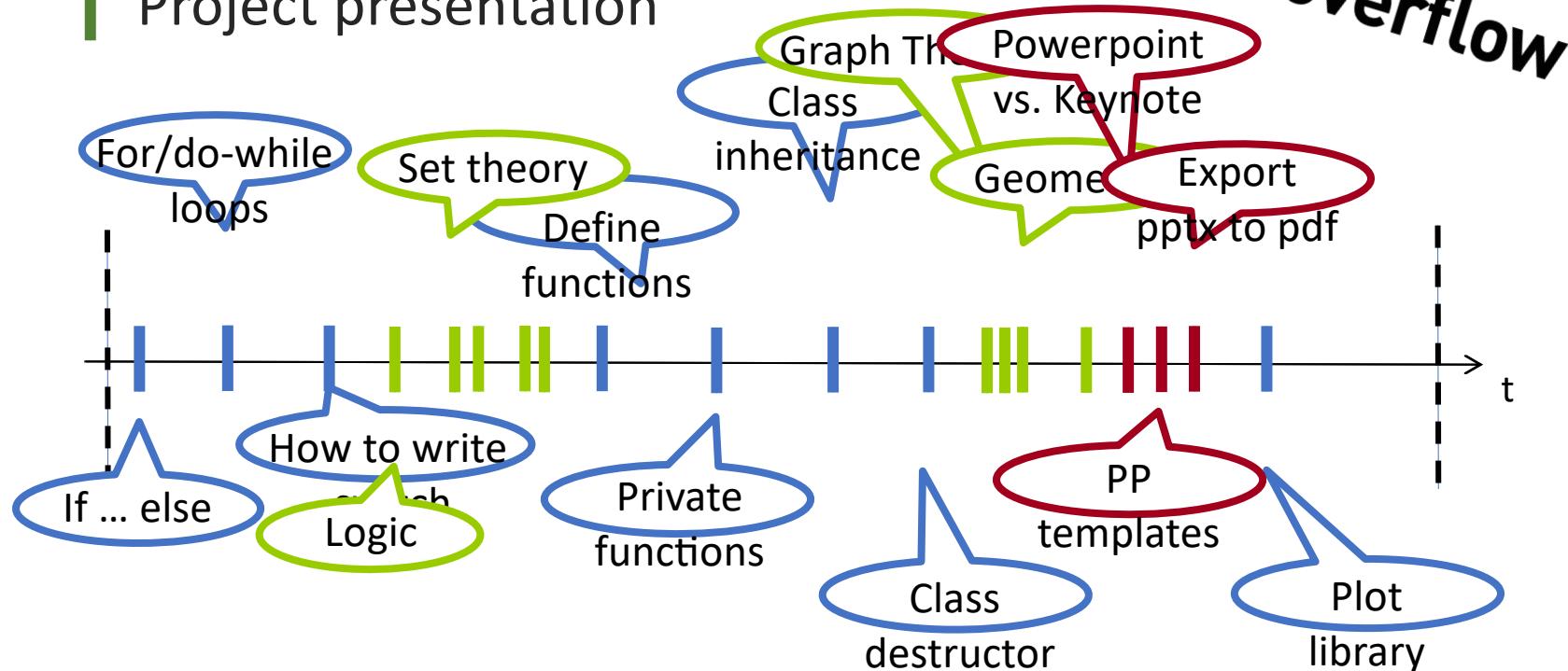


# Point Processes and Information propagation

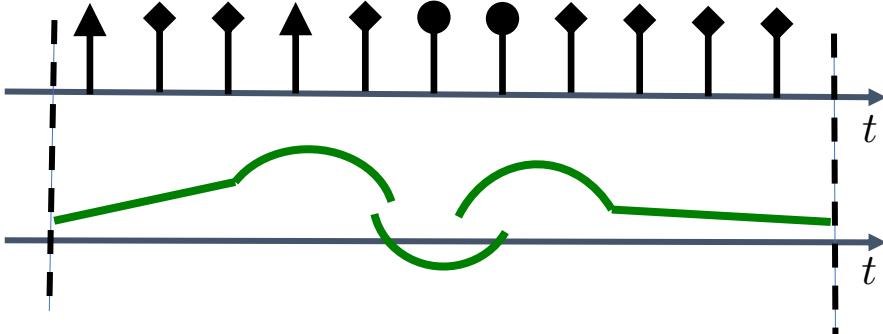


## 1st year computer science student

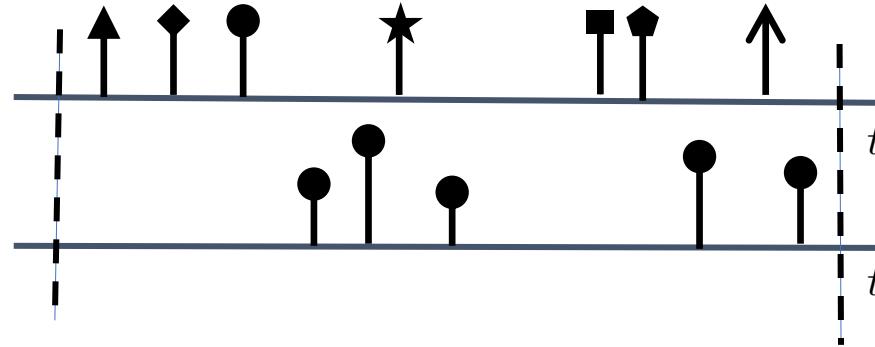
- Introduction to programming
- Discrete math
- Project presentation



# Aren't these event traces just time series?

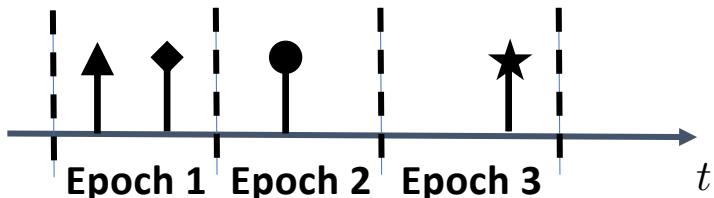


**Discrete and continuous times series**



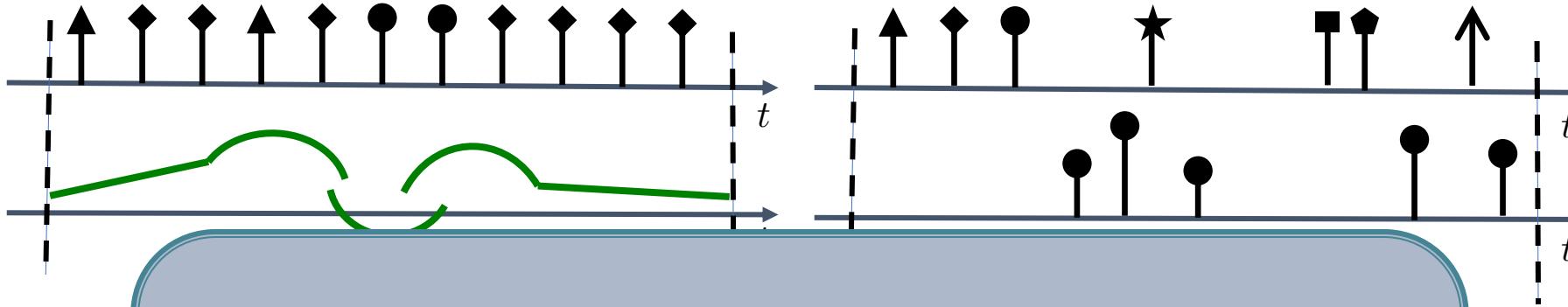
**Discrete events in continuous time**

**What about aggregating events in *epochs*?**



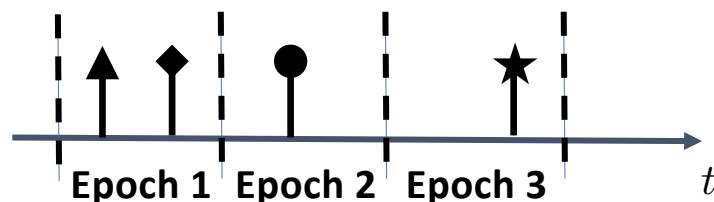
- ⌚ How long is each epoch?
- ⌚ How to aggregate events per epoch?
- ⌚ What if no event in one epoch?
- ⌚ What about time-related queries?

# Aren't these event traces just time series?



Discussing  
with  
what  
events in epoch?  
epoch?  
what if no event in one epoch?  
What about time-related queries?

The framework of  
**temporal point processes**  
provides a *native representation*



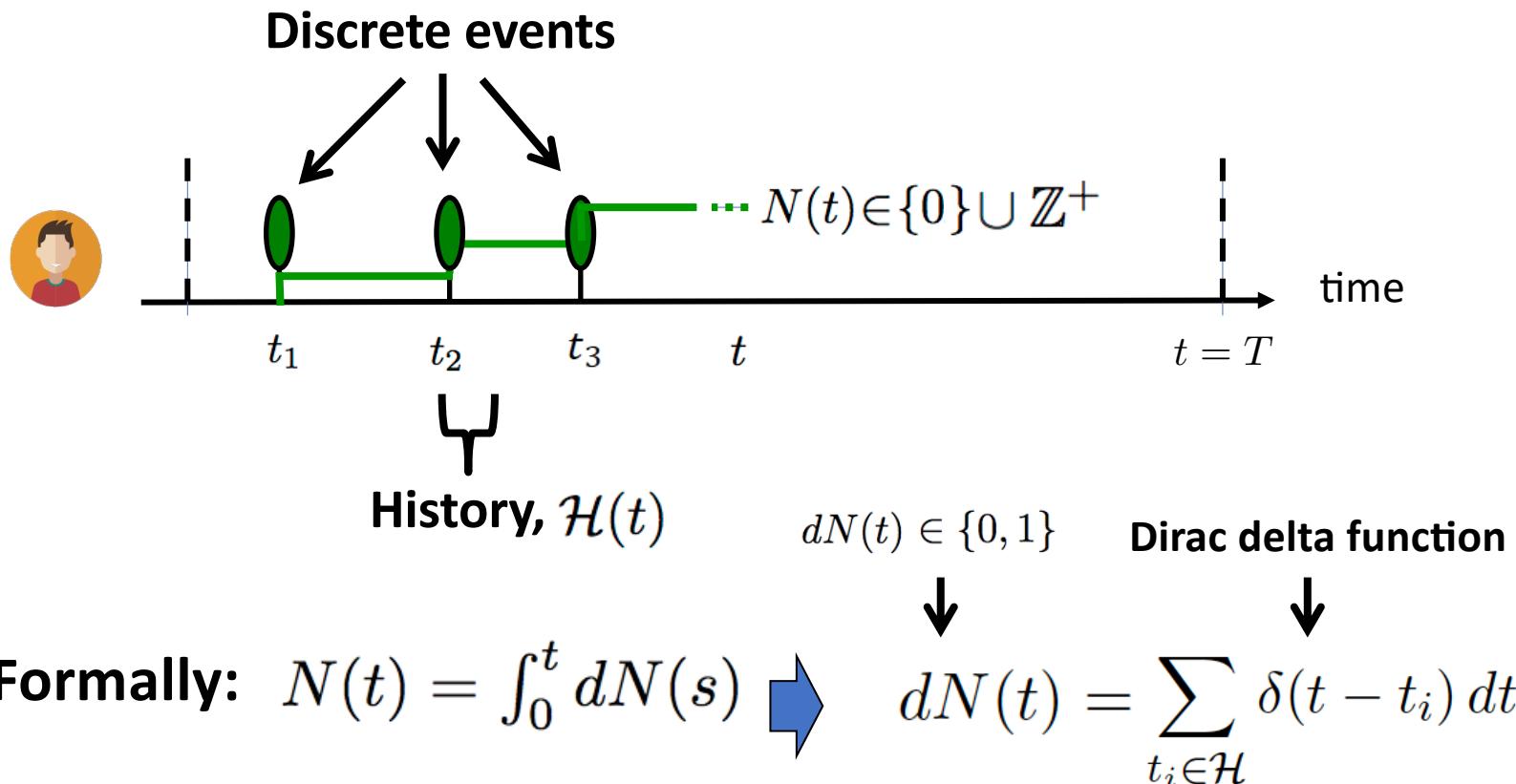
# Temporal Point Processes (TPPs):

- 1. Intensity function**
2. Basic building blocks
3. Superposition
4. Marks and SDEs with jumps

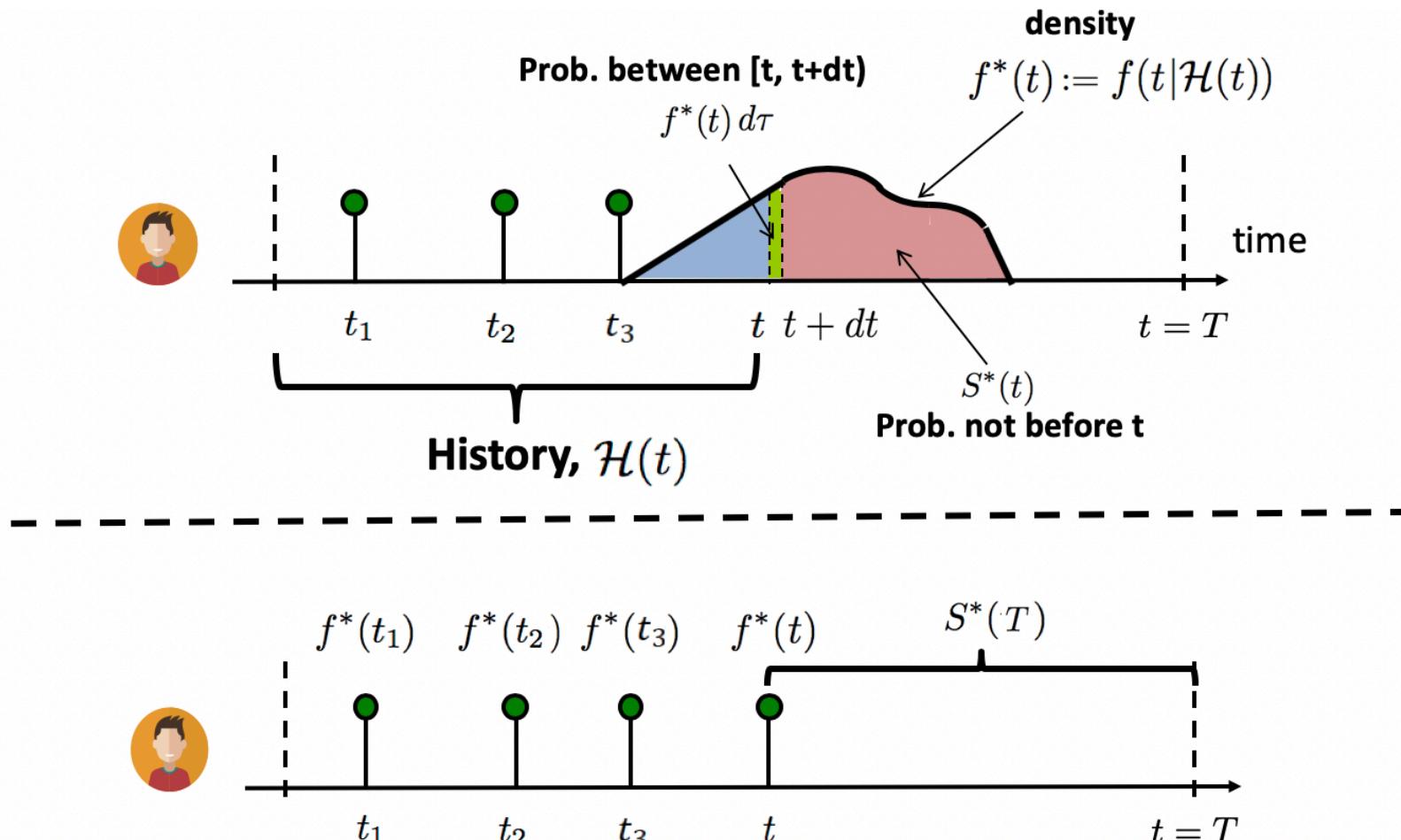
# Temporal point processes

**Temporal point process:**

A random process whose realization consists of discrete events localized in time  $\mathcal{H} = \{t_i\}$

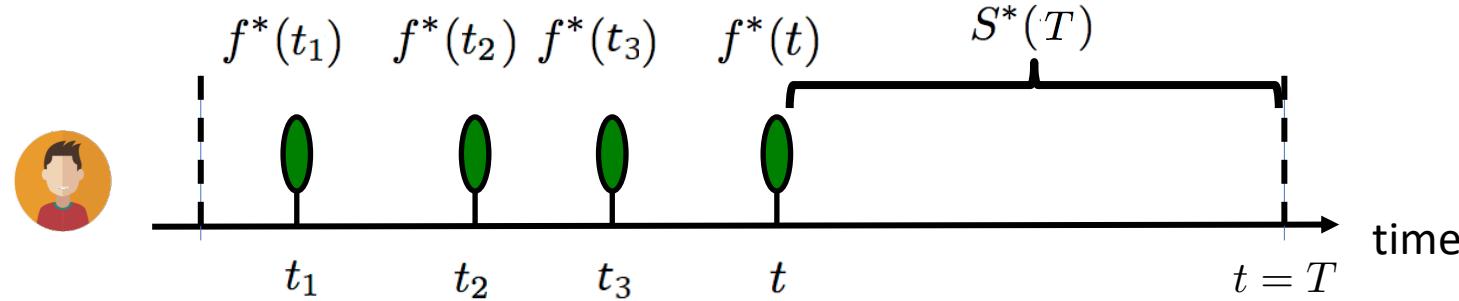


# Model time as a random variable



**Likelihood of a timeline:**  $f^*(t_1) f^*(t_2) f^*(t_3) f^*(t) S^*(T)$

# Problems of density parametrization (I)

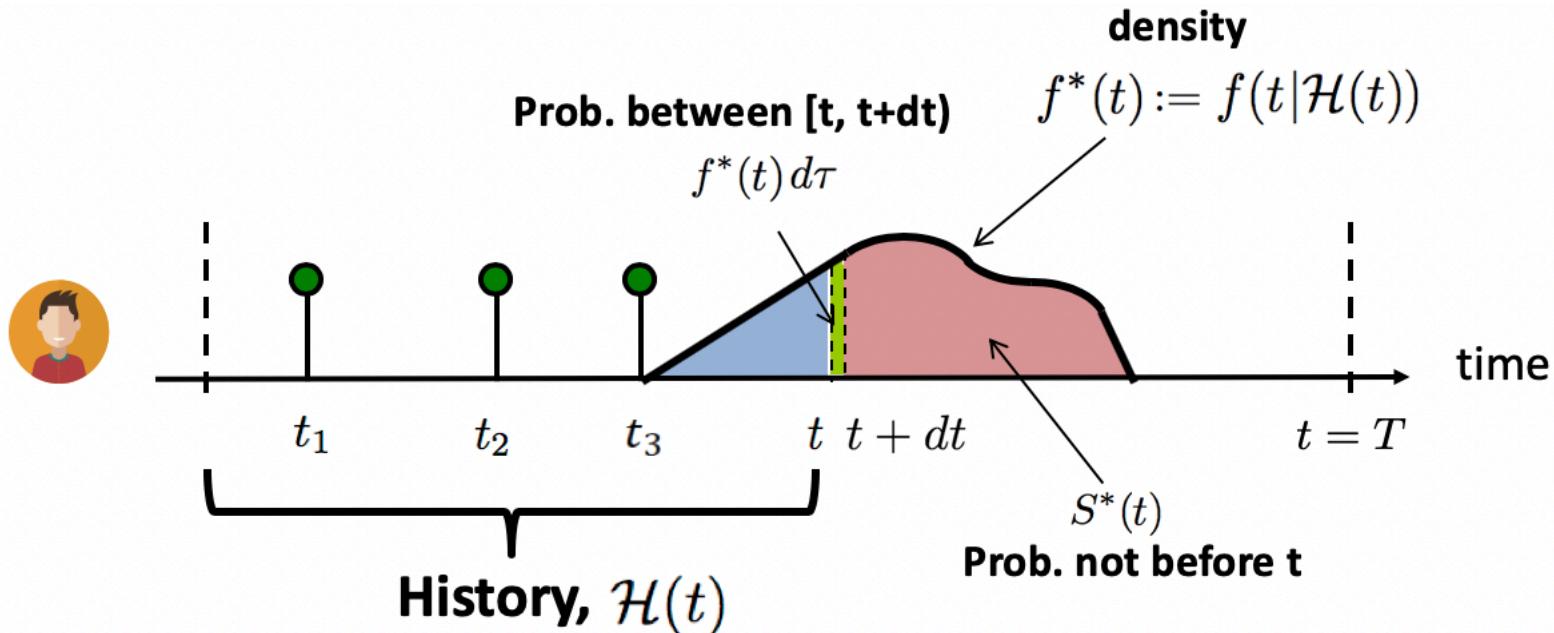


$$\frac{\exp\langle w, \psi^*(t_1) \rangle}{Z} \quad \frac{\exp\langle w, \psi^*(t_2) \rangle}{Z} \quad \frac{\exp\langle w, \psi^*(t_3) \rangle}{Z} \quad \frac{\exp\langle w, \psi^*(t) \rangle}{Z} \quad 1 - \int_t^T \frac{\exp\langle w, \psi^*(\tau) \rangle}{Z} d\tau$$

It is **difficult for model design and interpretability**:

1. Densities need to integrate to 1 (i.e., partition function)
2. Difficult to combine timelines

# Intensity function



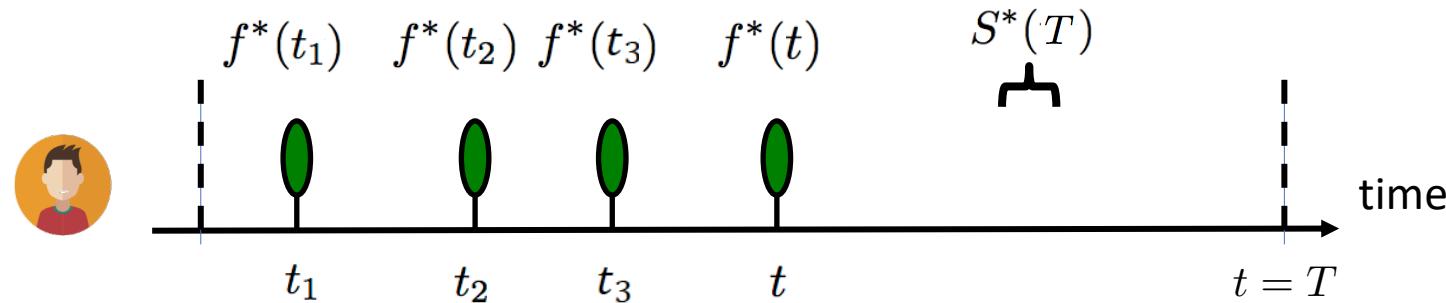
**Intensity:**

**Probability between  $[t, t+dt]$  but not before  $t$**

$$\lambda^*(t)dt = \frac{f^*(t)dt}{S^*(t)} \geq 0 \quad \rightarrow \quad \lambda^*(t)dt = \mathbb{E}[dN(t)|\mathcal{H}(t)]$$

**Observation:**  $\lambda^*(t)$  It is a rate = # of events / unit of time

# Advantages of intensity parametrization (I)

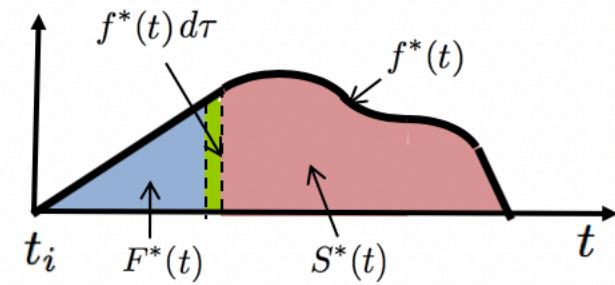
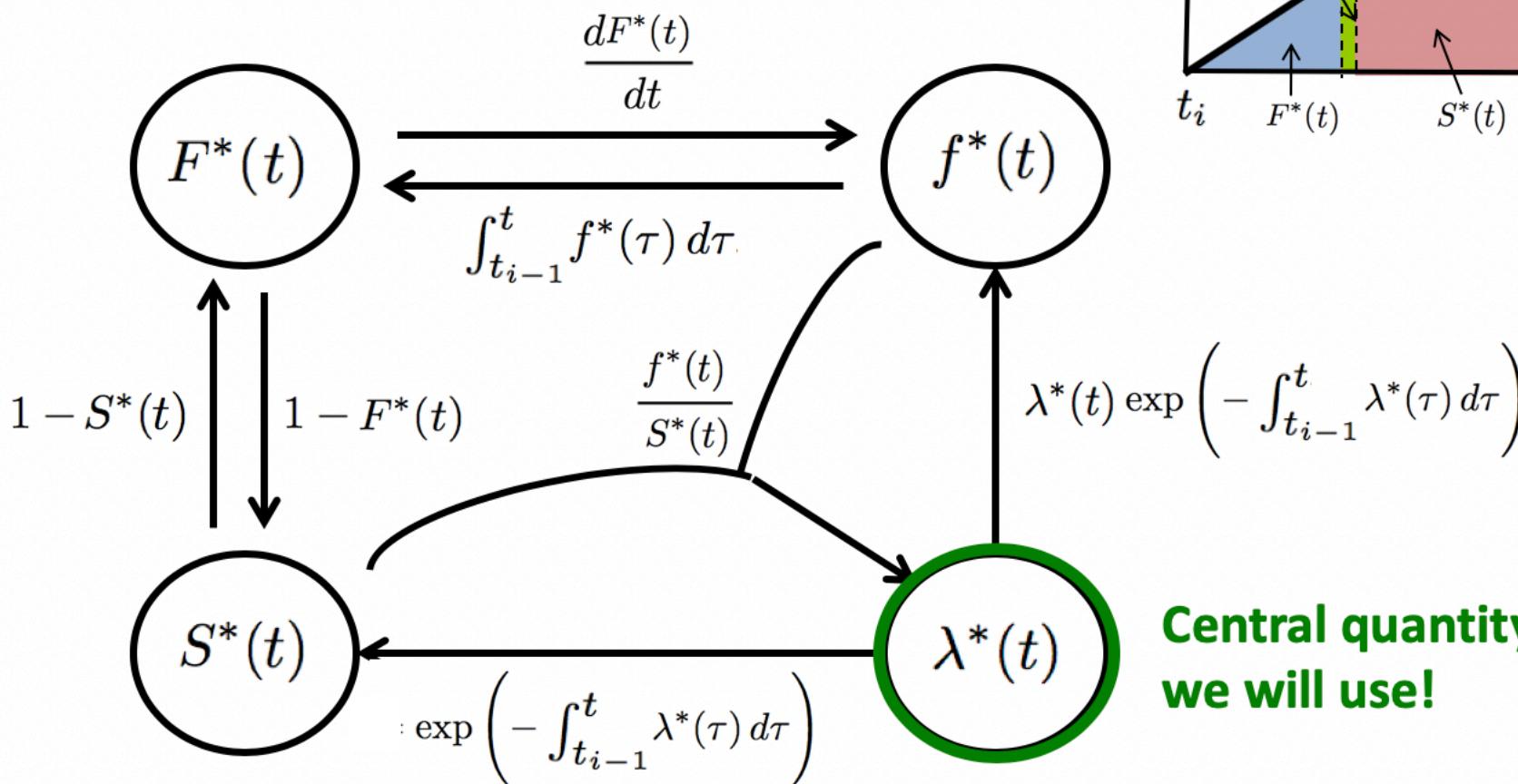


$$\lambda^*(t_1) \quad \lambda^*(t_2) \quad \lambda^*(t_3) \quad \lambda^*(t) \quad \exp\left(-\int_0^T \lambda^*(\tau) d\tau\right)$$
$$\begin{matrix} \nearrow & \nearrow & \nearrow & \nearrow \\ \langle w, \phi^*(t_1) \rangle & & \langle w, \phi^*(t_3) \rangle & \\ \searrow & \searrow & \searrow & \searrow \\ \langle w, \phi^*(t_2) \rangle & & \langle w, \phi^*(t) \rangle & \exp\left(-\int_0^T \langle w, \phi^*(\tau) \rangle d\tau\right) \end{matrix}$$

**Suitable for model design and interpretable:**

1. Intensities only need to be nonnegative
2. Easy to combine timelines

# Relation between $f^*$ , $F^*$ , $S^*$ , $\lambda^*$

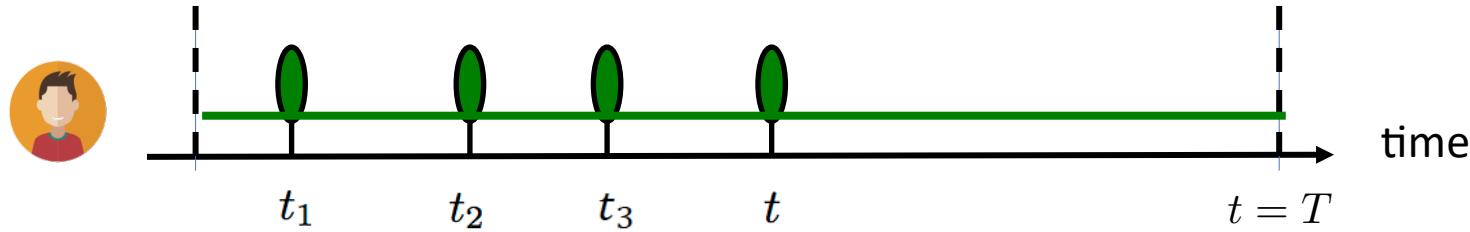


**Central quantity  
we will use!**

# **Representation:** Temporal Point Processes

- 1. Intensity function**
- 2. Basic building blocks**
- 3. Superposition**
- 4. Marks and SDEs with jumps**

# Poisson process



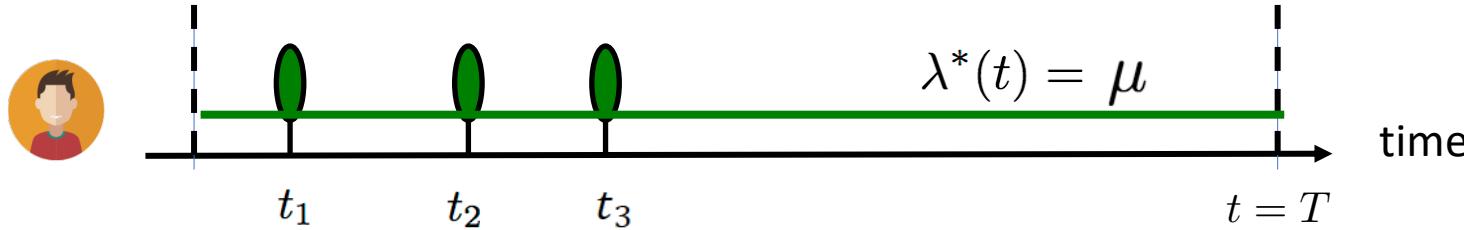
**Intensity of a Poisson process**

$$\lambda^*(t) = \mu$$

**Observations:**

1. Intensity independent of history
2. Uniformly random occurrence
3. Time interval follows exponential distribution

# Fitting & sampling from a Poisson



**Fitting by maximum likelihood:**

$$\mu^* = \underset{\mu}{\operatorname{argmax}} \ 3 \log \mu - \mu T = \frac{3}{T}$$

**Sampling using inversion sampling:**

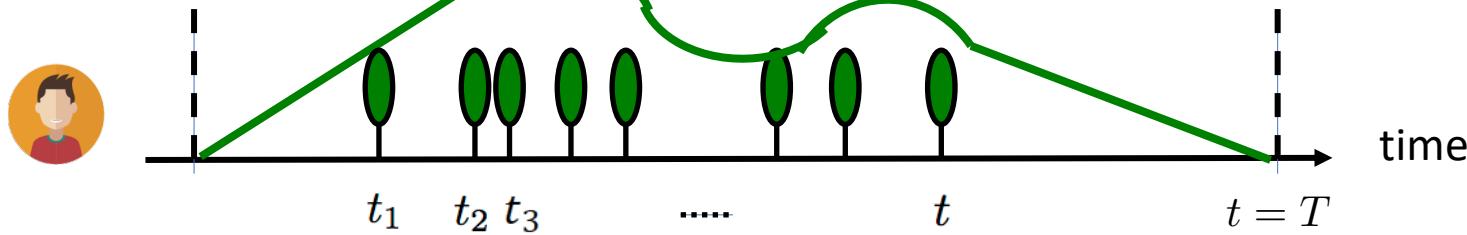
$$t \sim \mu \exp(-\mu(t - t_3)) \quad \xrightarrow{\text{f}^*_t(t)} \quad t = -\frac{1}{\mu} \log(1 - u) + t_3$$

$\downarrow$   
 $f^*_t(t)$

$\downarrow$   
 $Uniform(0, 1)$

$\downarrow$   
 $F_t^{-1}(u)$

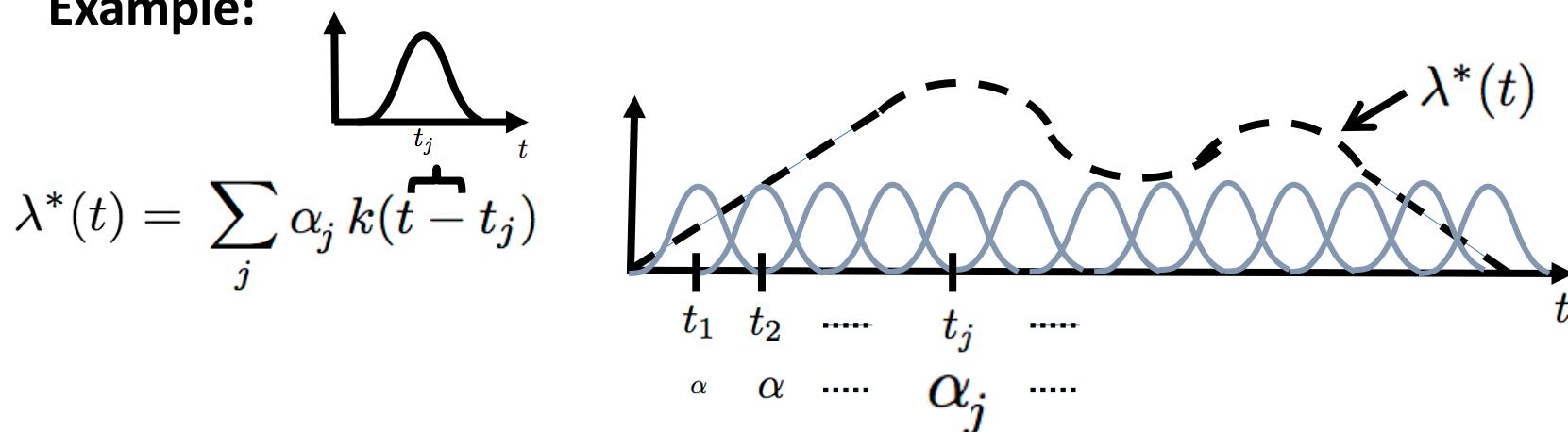
# Inhomogeneous Poisson process



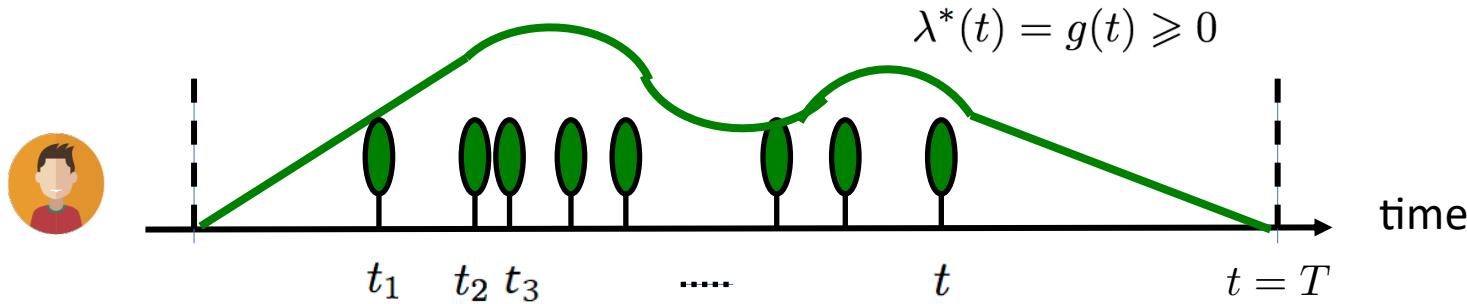
**Intensity of an inhomogeneous Poisson process**

$$\lambda^*(t) = g(t) \geqslant 0 \quad (\text{Independent of history})$$

**Example:**



# Fitting & sampling from inhomogeneous Poisson

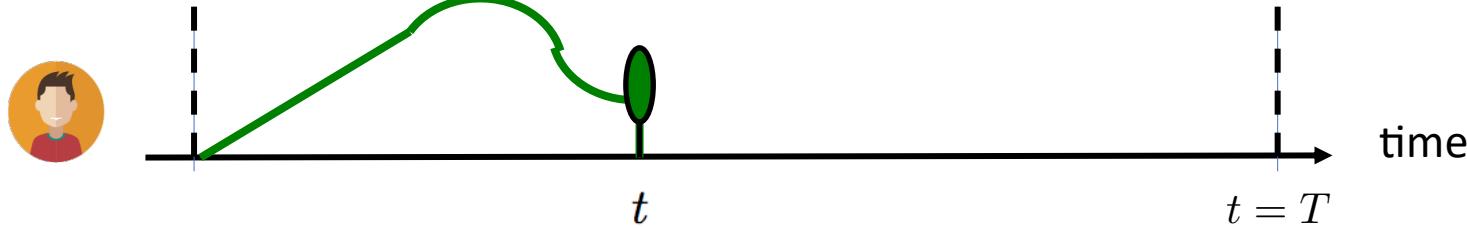


**Fitting by maximum likelihood:**  $\underset{g(t)}{\text{maximize}} \sum_{i=1}^n \log g(t_i) - \int_0^T g(\tau) d\tau$

**Sampling using thinning (reject. sampling) + inverse sampling:**

1. Sample  $t$  from Poisson process with intensity  $\mu$  using inverse sampling
  2. Generate  $u_2 \sim \text{Uniform}(0, 1)$
  3. Keep the sample if  $u_2 \leq g(t)/\mu$
- } Keep sample with prob.  $g(t)/\mu$

# Terminating (or survival) process



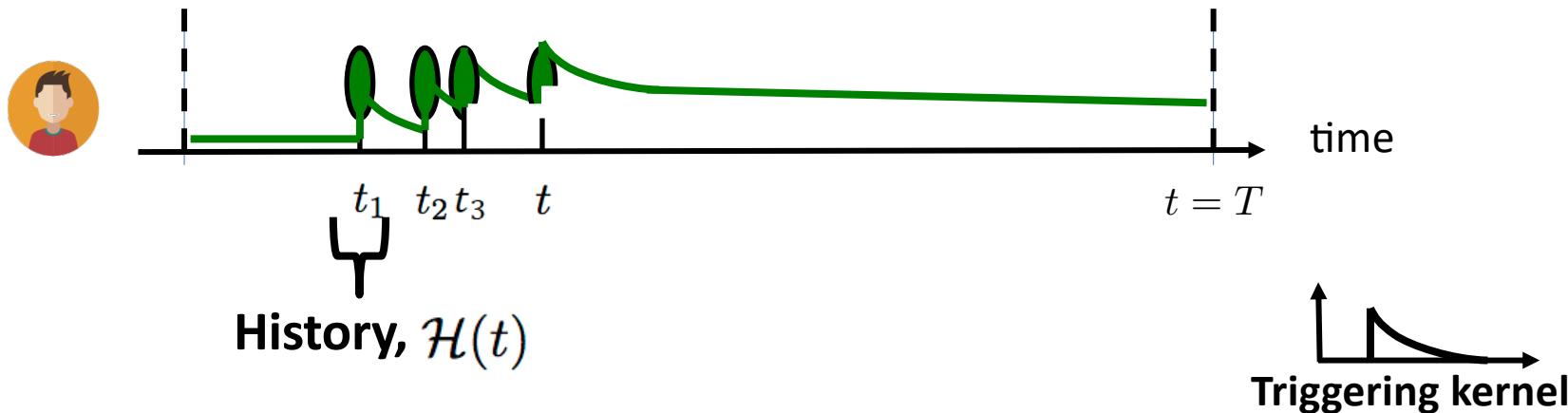
**Intensity of a terminating (or survival) process**

$$\lambda^*(t) = g^*(t)(1 - N(t)) \geq 0$$

**Observations:**

1. Limited number of occurrences

# Self-exciting (or Hawkes) process



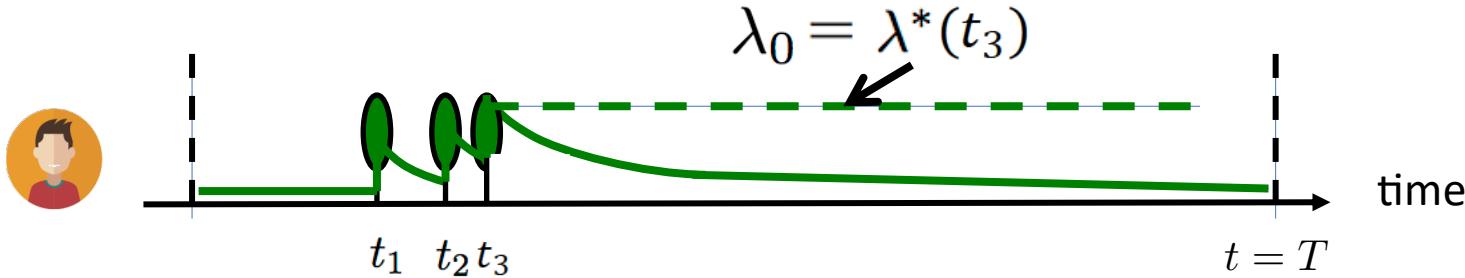
Intensity of self-exciting  
(or Hawkes) process:

$$\begin{aligned}\lambda^*(t) &= \mu + \alpha \sum_{t_i \in \mathcal{H}(t)} \kappa_\omega(t - t_i) \\ &= \mu + \alpha \kappa_\omega(t) \star dN(t)\end{aligned}$$

Observations:

1. Clustered (or bursty) occurrence of events
2. Intensity is stochastic and history dependent

# Fitting a Hawkes process from a recorded timeline



**Fitting by maximum likelihood:**

$$\underset{\mu, \alpha}{\text{maximize}} \quad \sum_{i=1}^n \log \lambda^*(t_i) - \int_0^T \lambda^*(\tau) d\tau \quad \} \quad \begin{array}{l} \text{The max. likelihood} \\ \text{is jointly convex} \\ \text{in } \mu \text{ and } \alpha \end{array}$$

**Sampling using thinning (reject. sampling) + inverse sampling:**

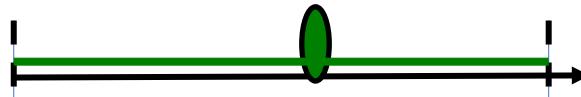
**Key idea: the maximum of the intensity  $\lambda_0$  changes over time**

# Summary

**Building blocks to represent different dynamic processes:**

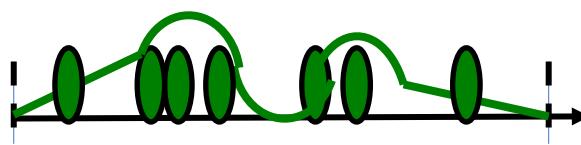
Poisson processes:

$$\lambda^*(t) = \lambda$$



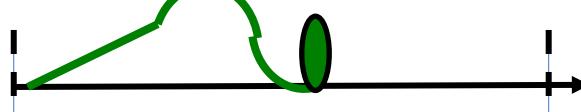
Inhomogeneous Poisson processes:

$$\lambda^*(t) = g(t)$$



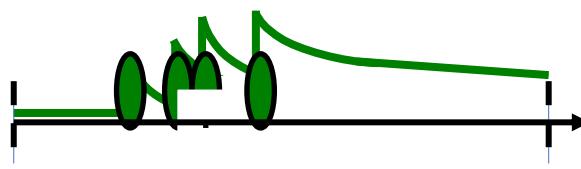
Terminating point processes:

$$\lambda^*(t) = g^*(t)(1 - N(t))$$



Self-exciting point processes:

$$\lambda^*(t) = \mu + \alpha \sum_{t_i \in \mathcal{H}(t)} \kappa_\omega(t - t_i)$$

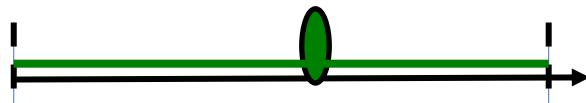


# Summary

**Building blocks to represent different dynamic processes:**

Poisson processes:

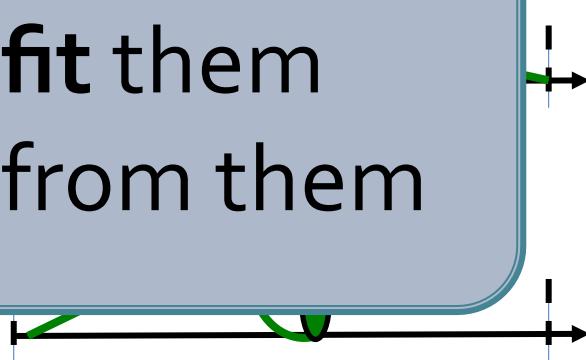
$$\lambda^*(t) = \lambda$$



Inhomogeneous

We know **how to fit them**  
and **how to sample from them**

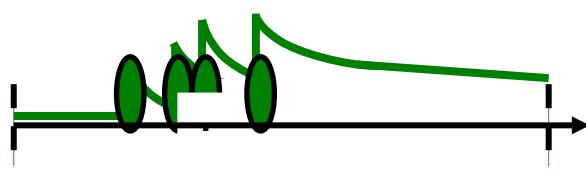
$$\lambda^*(\tau) = g^-(\tau)(1 - I^+(\tau))$$



Term

Self-exciting point processes:

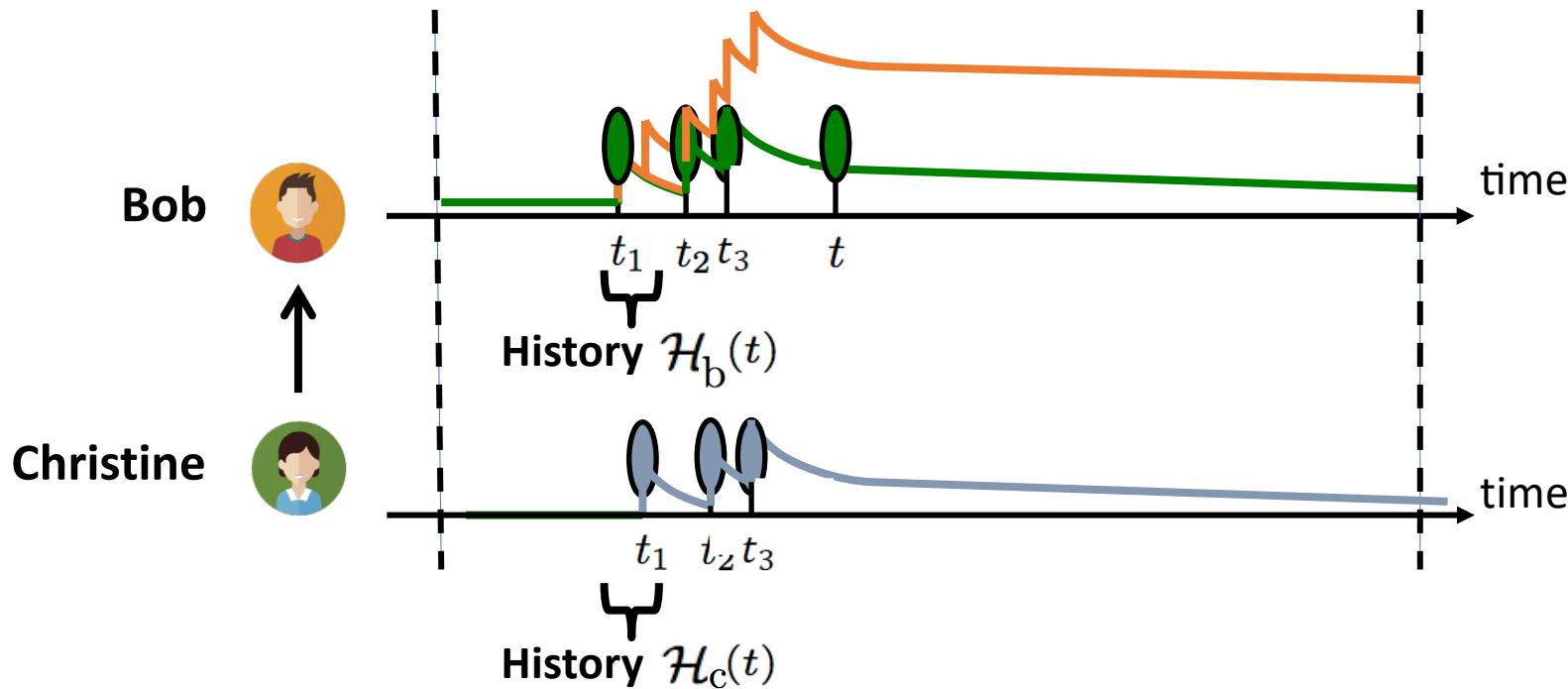
$$\lambda^*(t) = \mu + \alpha \sum_{t_i \in \mathcal{H}(t)} \kappa_\omega(t - t_i)$$



# **Representation:** Temporal Point Processes

1. Intensity function
2. Basic building blocks
- 3. Superposition**
4. Marks and SDEs with jumps

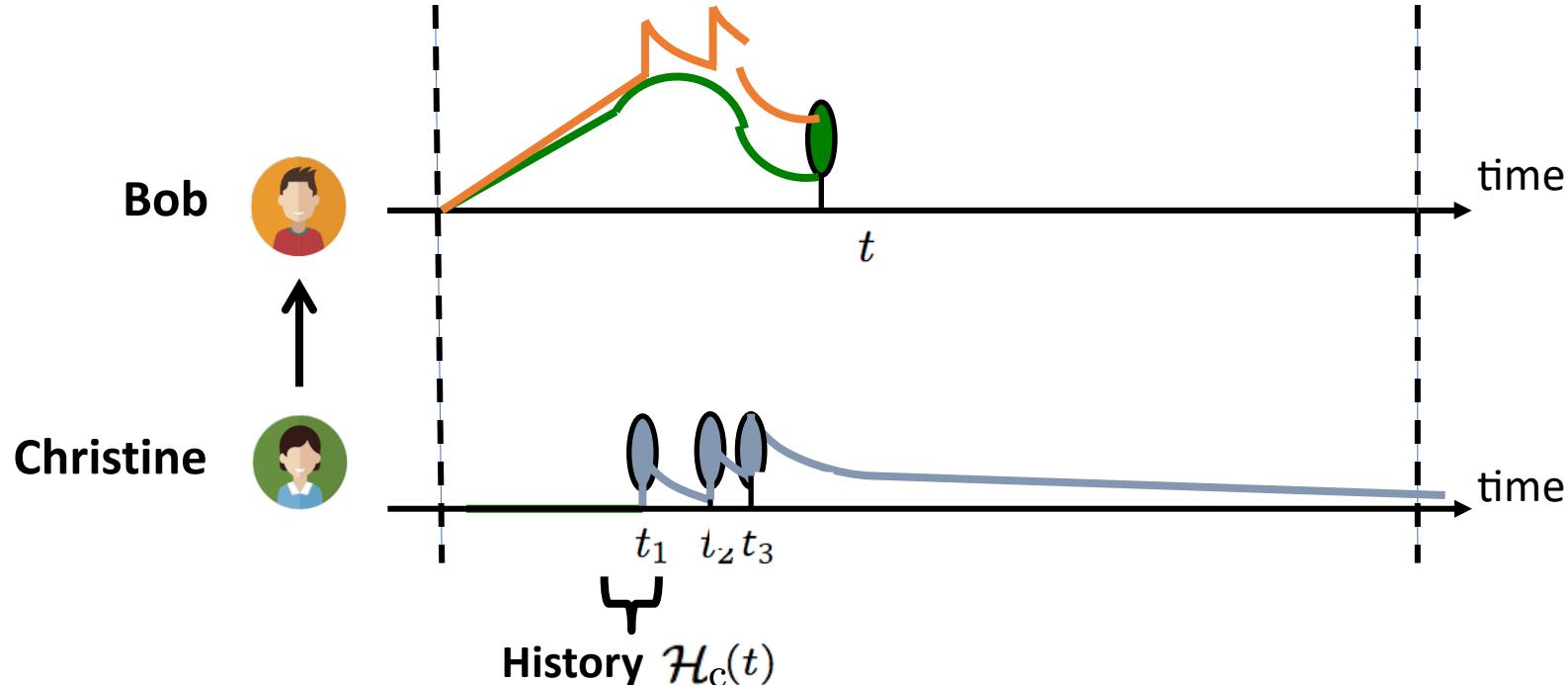
# Mutually exciting process



**Clustered occurrence affected by neighbors**

$$\begin{aligned}\lambda^*(t) = & \mu + \alpha \sum_{t_i \in \mathcal{H}_b'(t)} \kappa_\omega(t - t_i) \\ & + \beta \sum_{t_i \in \mathcal{H}_c(t)} \kappa_\omega(t - t_i)\end{aligned}$$

# Mutually exciting terminating process



**Clustered occurrence affected by neighbors**

$$\lambda^*(t) = (1 - N(t)) \left( g(t) + \beta \sum_{t_i \in \mathcal{H}_c(t)} \kappa_\omega(t - t_i) \right)$$

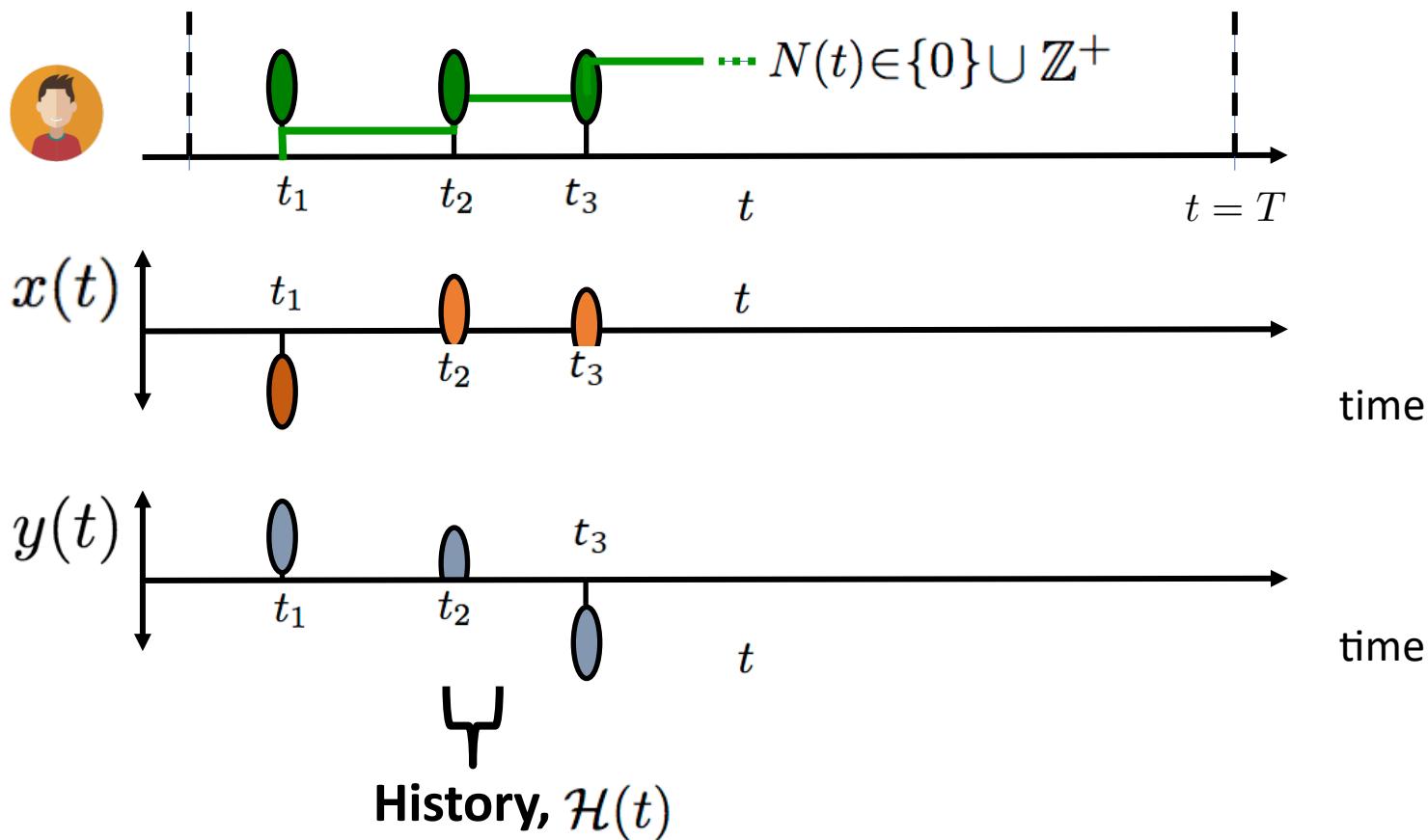
# **Representation:** Temporal Point Processes

- 1. Intensity function**
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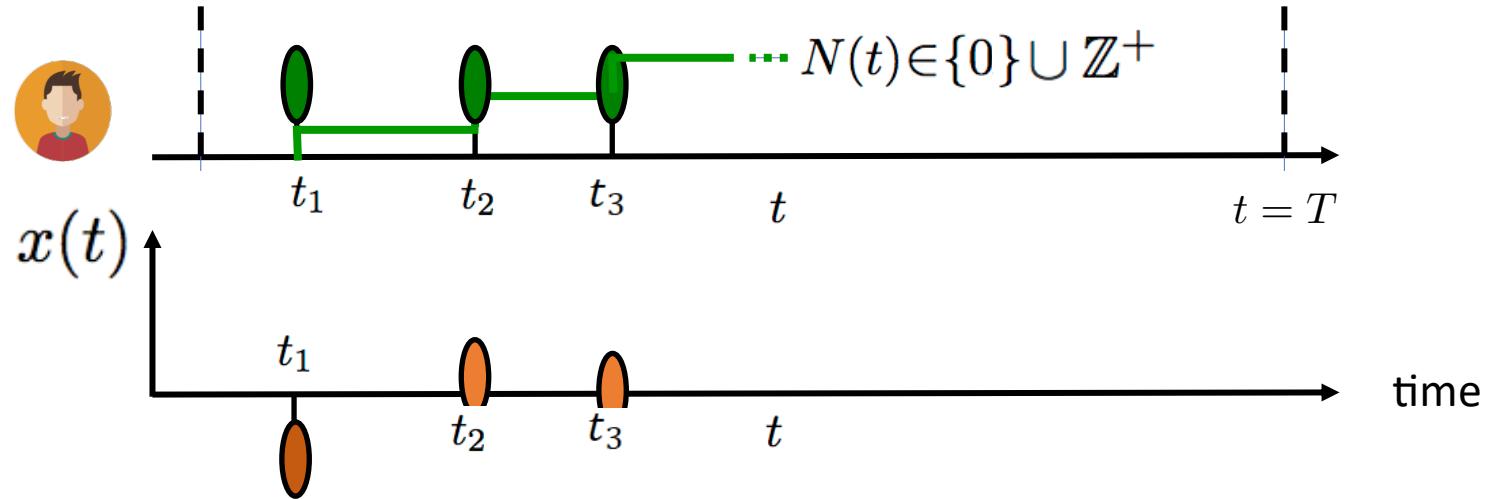
# Marked temporal point processes

**Marked temporal point process:**

A random process whose realization consists of discrete *marked* events localized in time



# Independent identically distributed marks



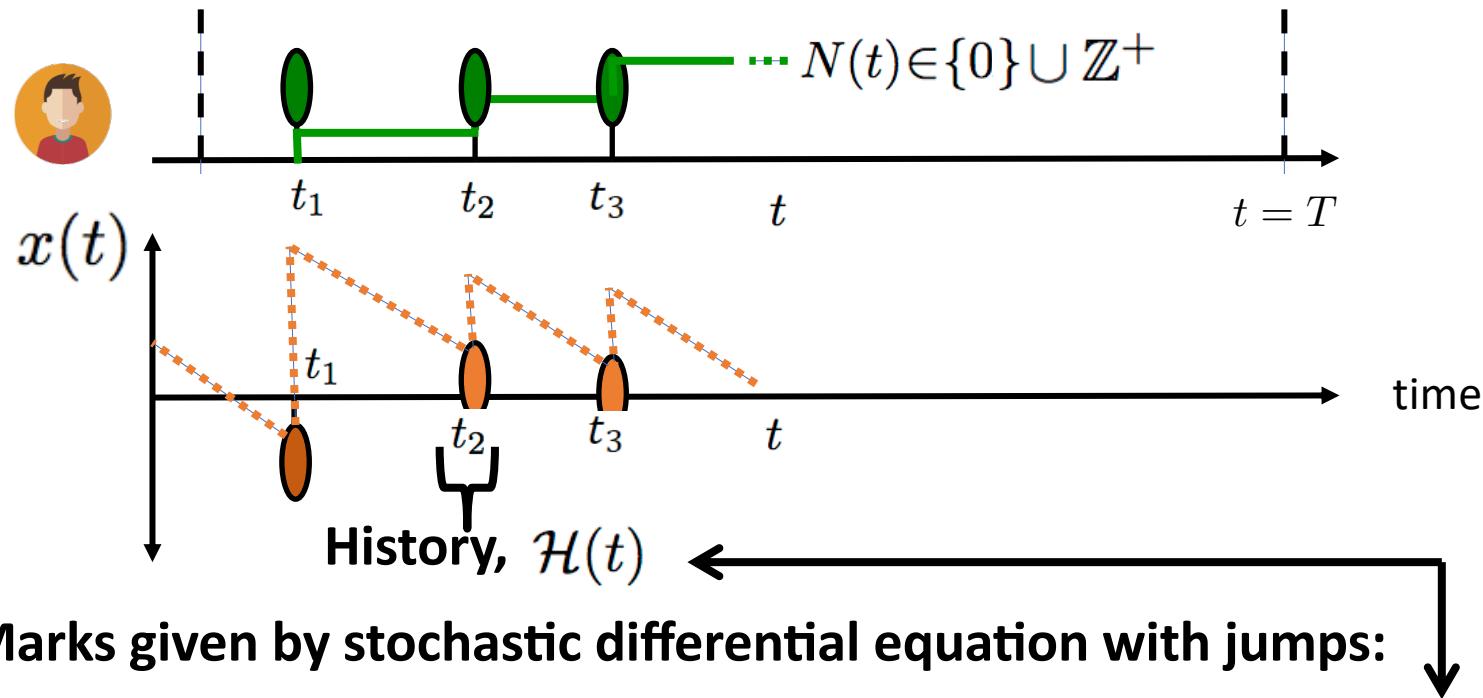
**Distribution for the marks:**

$$x^*(t_i) \sim p(x)$$

**Observations:**

1. Marks independent of the temporal dynamics
2. Independent identically distributed (I.I.D.)

# Dependent marks: SDEs with jumps

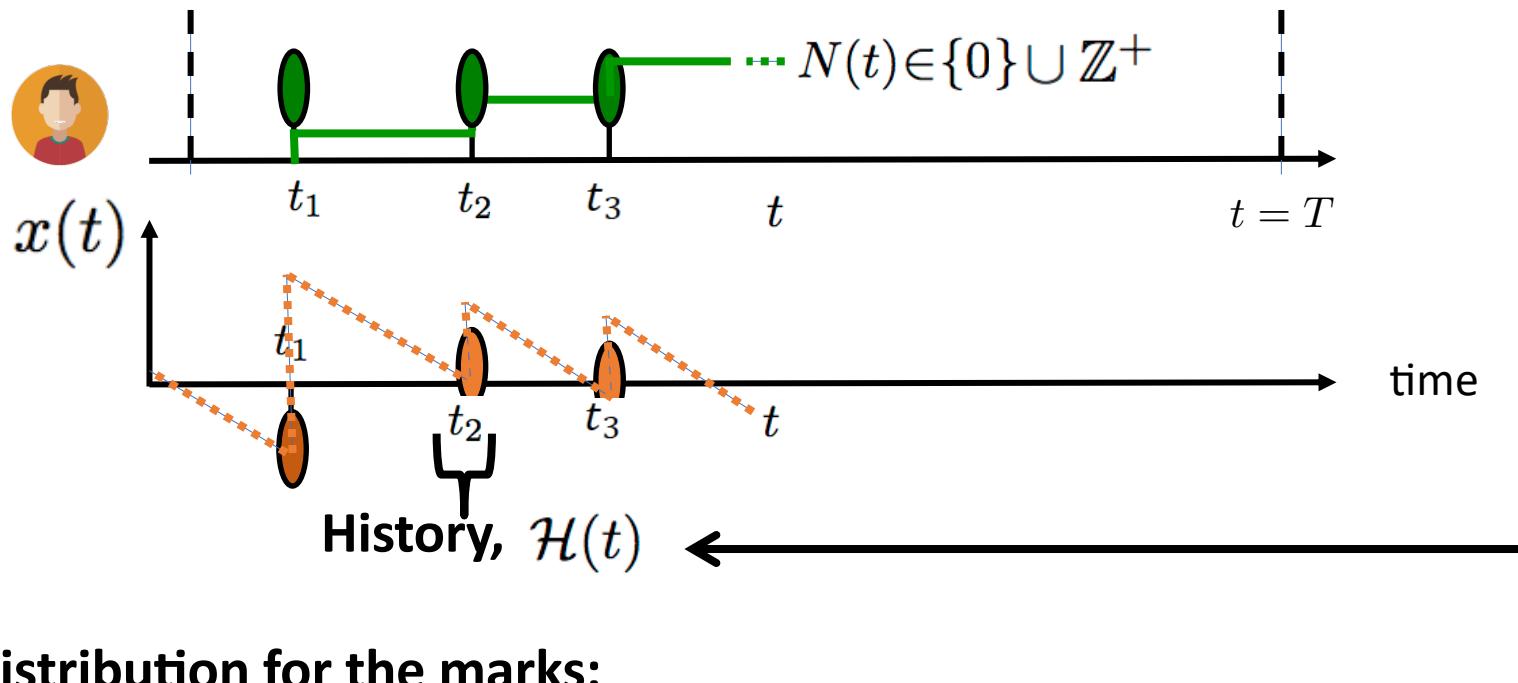


$$x(t + dt) - x(t) = dx(t) = f(x(t), t)dt + h(x(t), t)dN(t)$$

Observations:                      Drift                      Event influence

1. Marks dependent of the temporal dynamics
2. Defined for all values of  $t$

# Dependent marks: distribution + SDE with jumps



$$x^*(t_i) \sim p(x^* | x(t)) \rightarrow dx(t) = f(x(t), t)dt + h(x(t), t)dN(t)$$

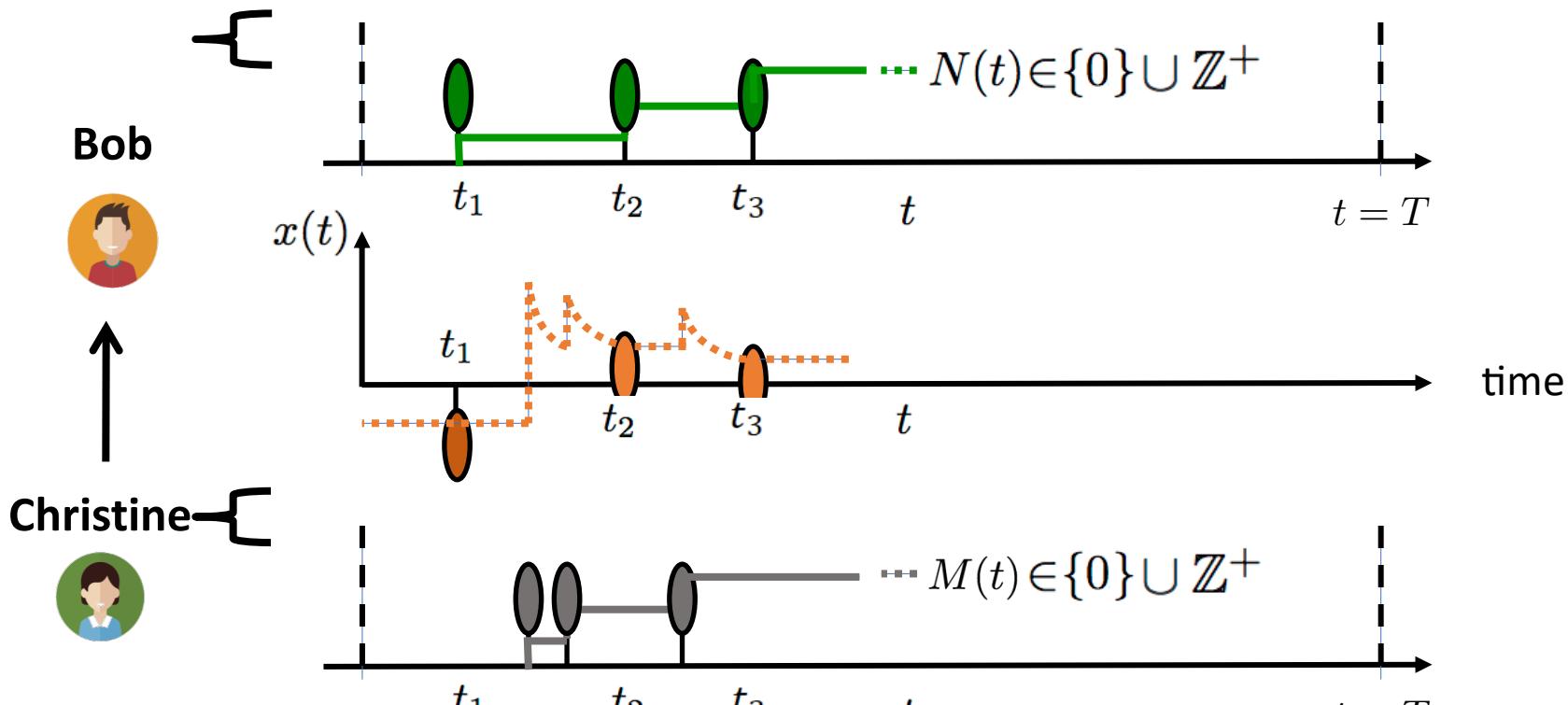
Observations:

Drift

Event influence

1. Marks dependent on the temporal dynamics
2. Distribution represents additional source of uncertainty

# Mutually exciting + marks



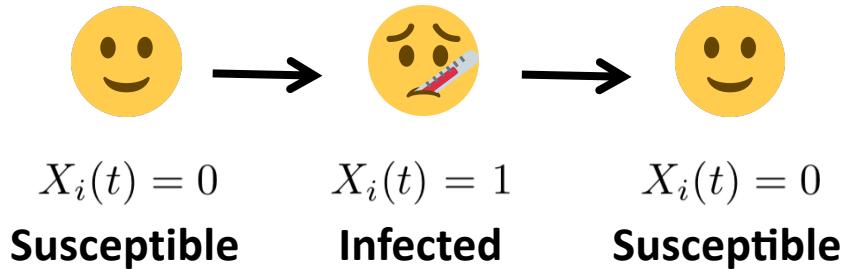
**Marks affected by neighbors**

$$dx(t) = f(x(t), t)dt + g(x(t), t)dM(t)$$

Drift                  Neighbor influence

# Marked TPPs as stochastic dynamical systems

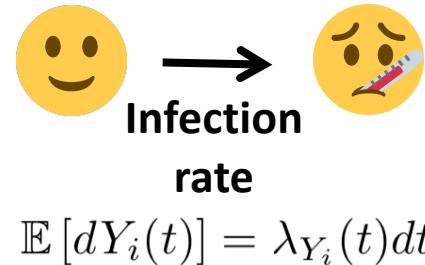
## Example: Susceptible-Infected-Susceptible (SIS)



SDE with jumps

$$dX_i(t) = dY_i(t) - dW_i(t)$$

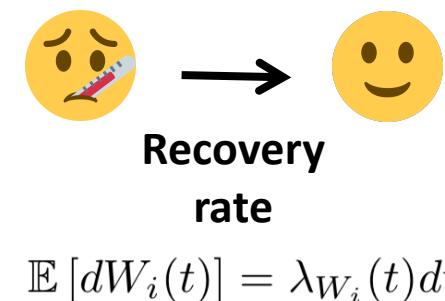
It gets infected      It recovers



Node is susceptible

$$\lambda_{Y_i}(t)dt = (1 - X_i(t))\beta \sum_{j \in \mathcal{N}(i)} X_j(t)dt$$

If friends are infected, higher infection rate



SDE with jumps

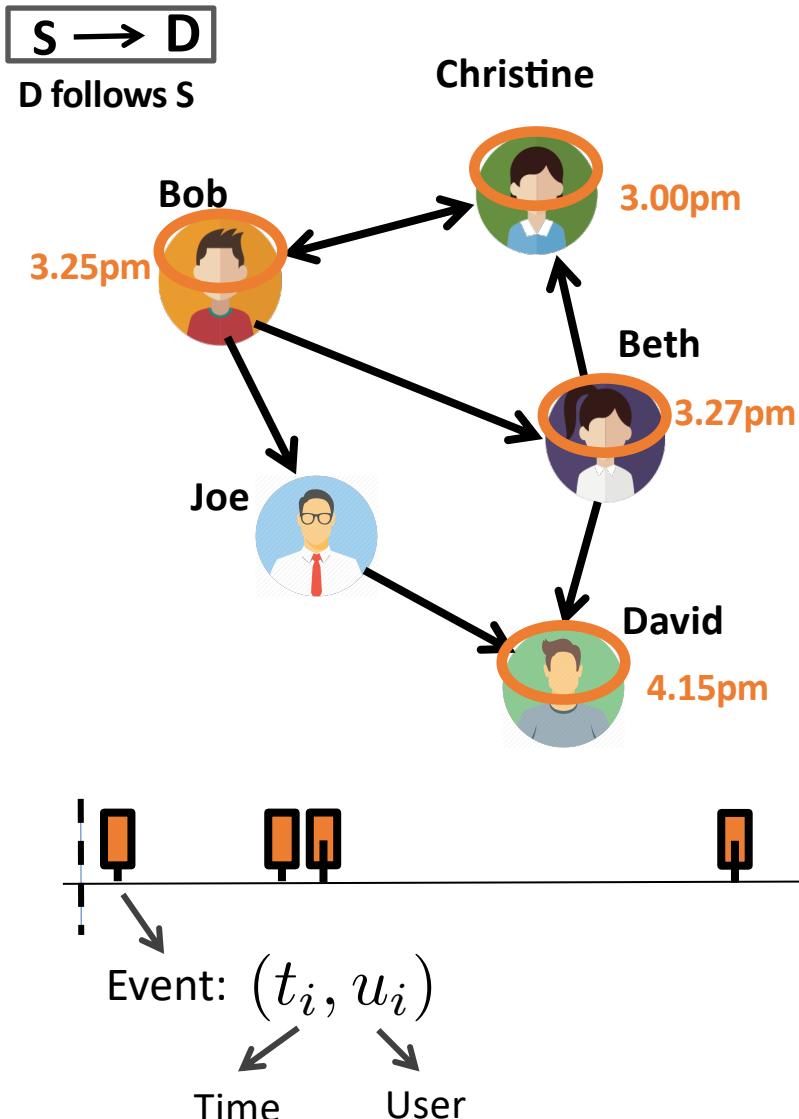
$$d\lambda_{W_i}(t) = \delta dY_i(t) - \lambda_{W_i}(t)dW_i(t) + \rho dN_i(t)$$

Self-recovery rate when node gets infected      If node recovers, rate to zero      Rate increases if node gets treated

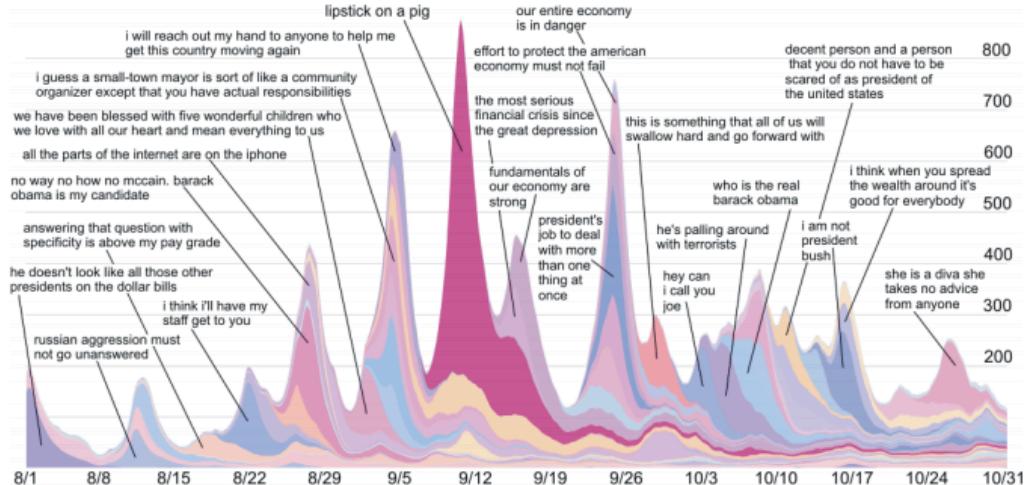
# Models & Inference

- 1. Modeling event sequences**
- 2. Clustering event sequences**
- 3. Capturing complex dynamics**
- 4. Causal reasoning on event sequences**

# Event sequences as cascades

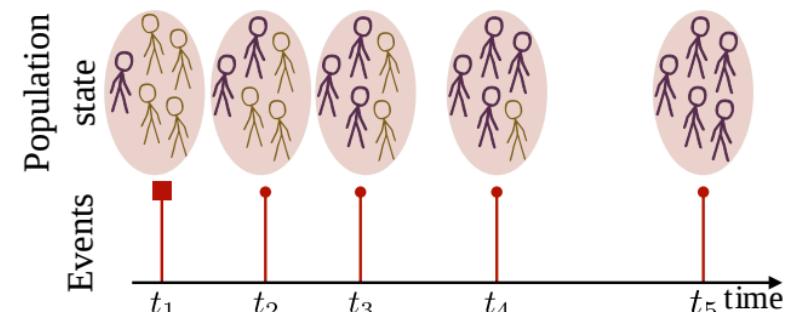


## Information Diffusion



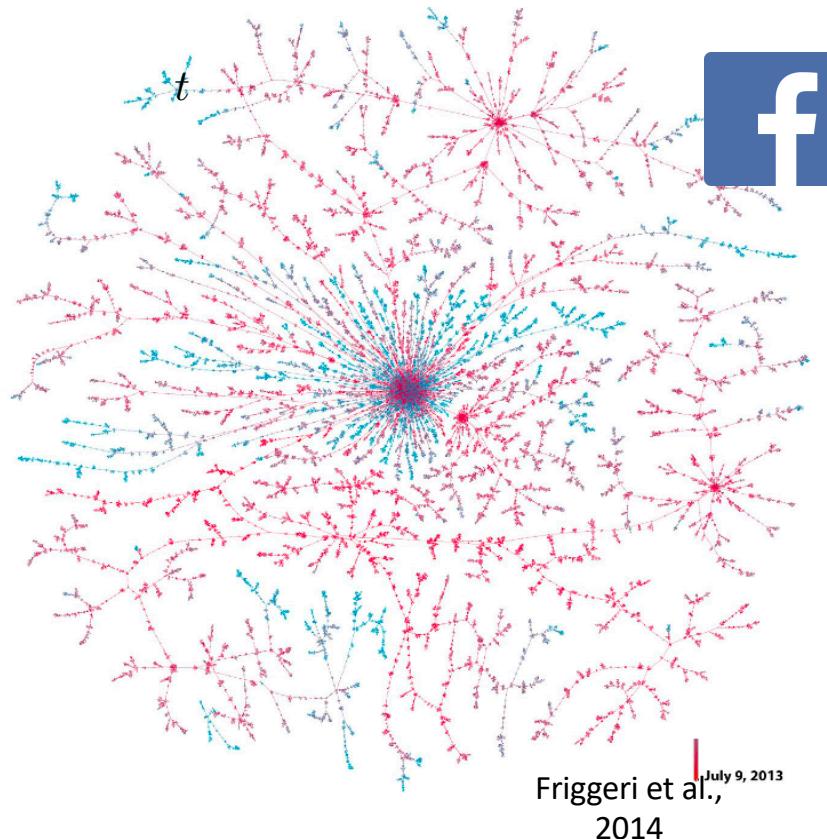
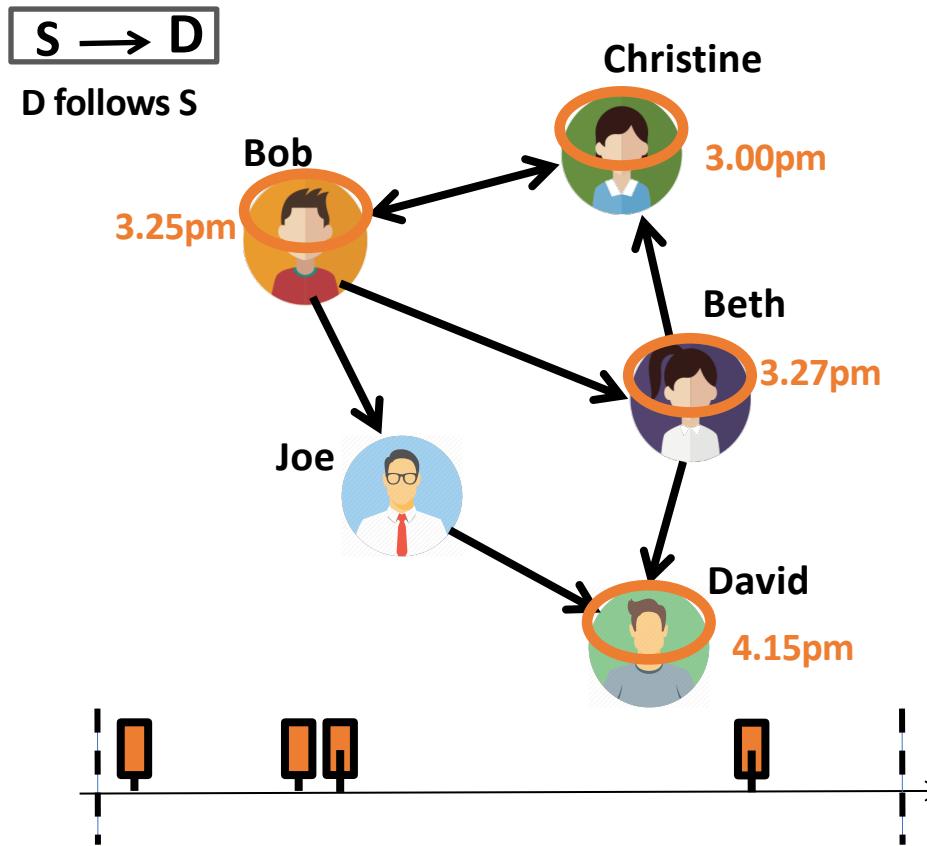
[Leskovec et al., 2009]

## Disease Diffusion



[Rizoiu et al., 2018]

# An example: idea adoption



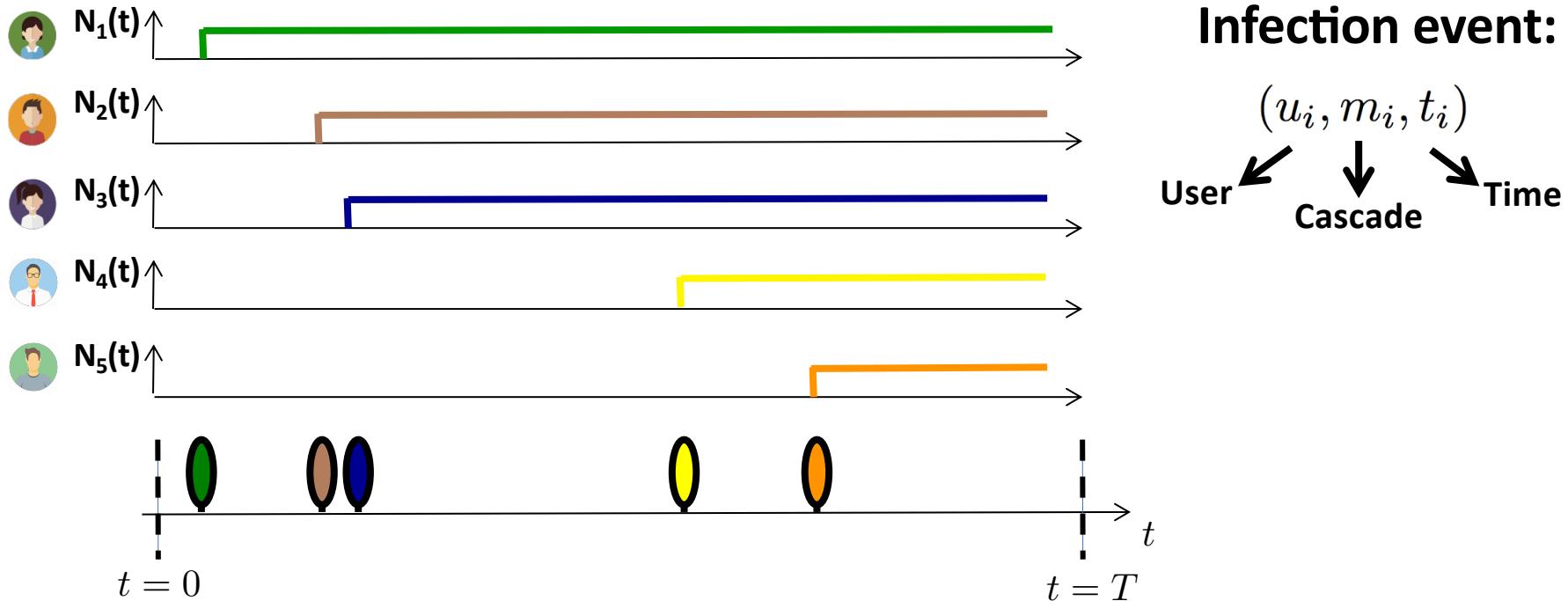
**They can have an impact  
in the off-line world**

theguardian

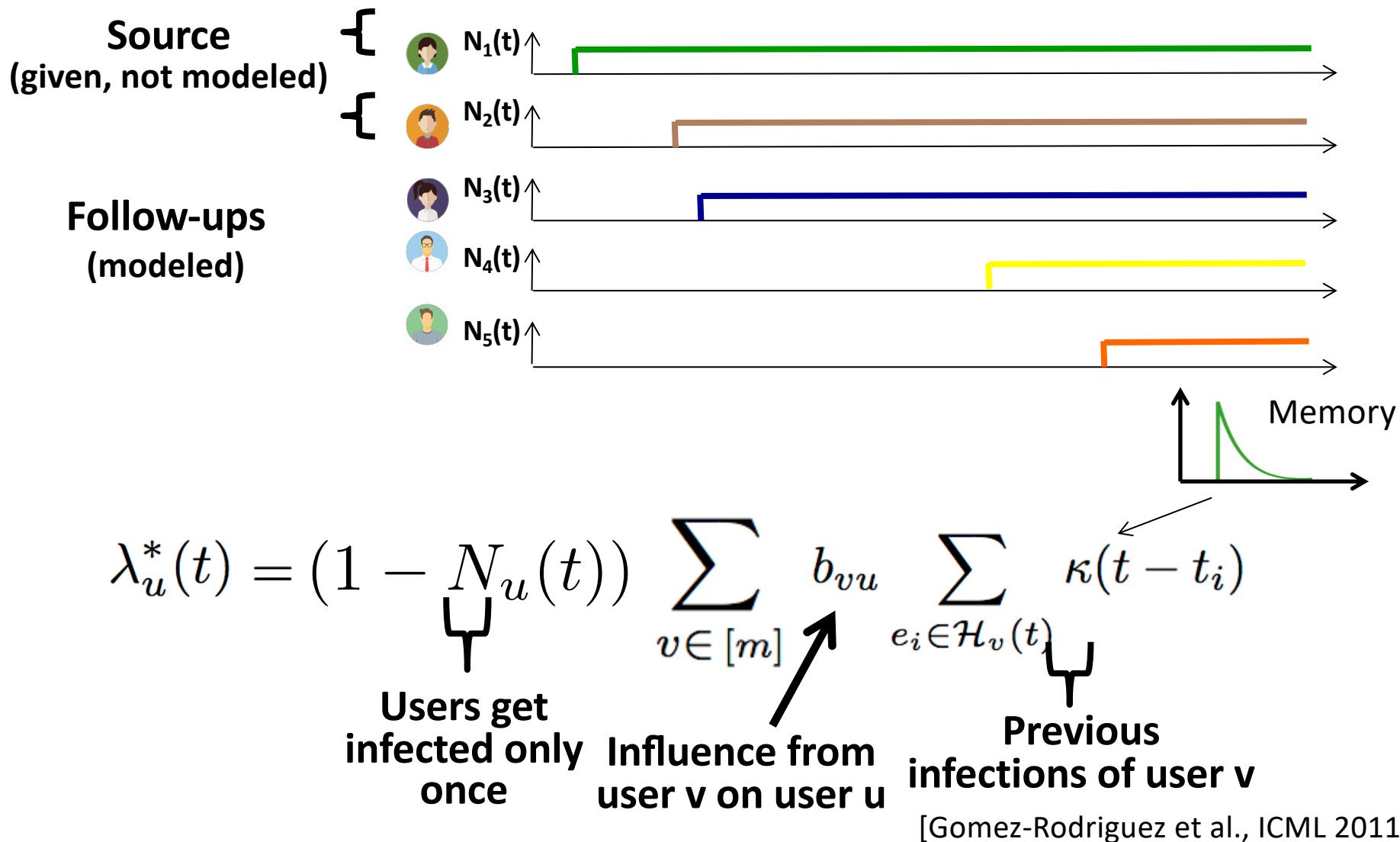
Click and elect: how fake news helped  
Donald Trump win a real election

# Infection cascade representation

We represent an infection cascade using **terminating temporal point processes**:



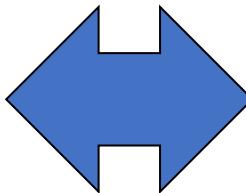
# Infection intensity



# Model inference from multiple cascades

Conditional  
intensities

$$\lambda_u^*(t)$$



Diffusion log-likelihood

$$\mathcal{L} = \sum_{u=1}^n \log \lambda_u^*(t_u) - \int_0^T \lambda_u^*(\tau) d\tau$$

Maximum likelihood  
approach to find  
model parameters!



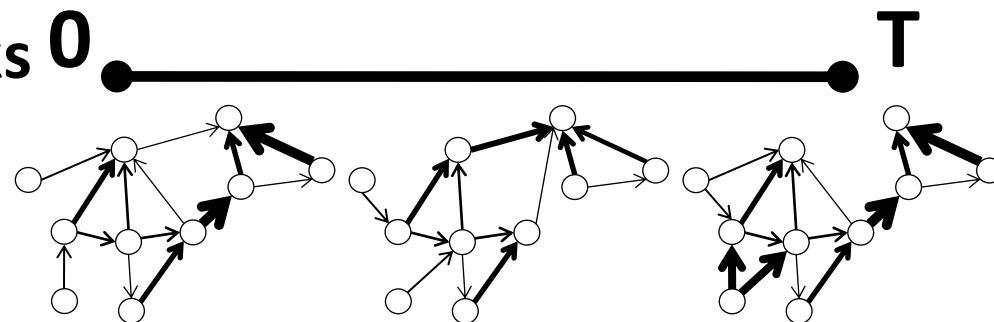
Sum up log-likelihoods  
of multiple cascades!

**Theorem.** For any choice of parametric memory,  
the **maximum likelihood** problem is **convex in  $B$** .

In some cases, influence change over time:



Propagation over networks  
with variable influence



# Recurrent events: beyond cascades

**Up to this point**, each user is only infected once, and event sequences can be seen as cascades.

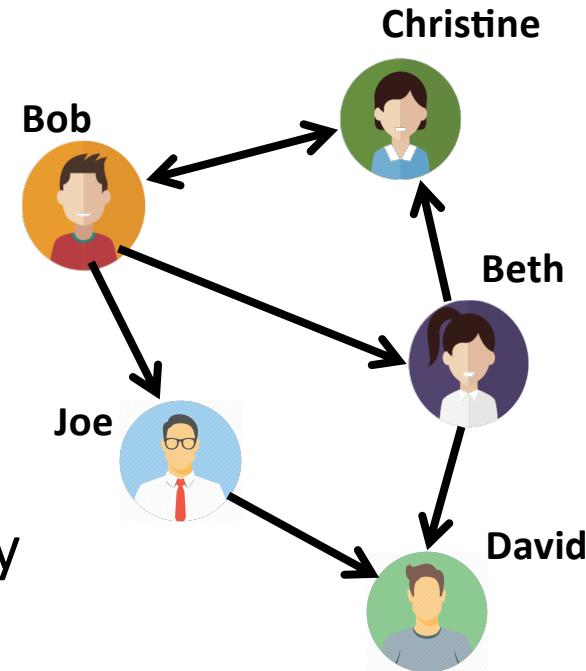
**In general**, users perform recurrent events over time. E.g., people repeatedly express their opinion online:



How social media is revolutionizing debates

The New York Times

Campaigns Use Social Media to Lure Younger Voters



The New York Times

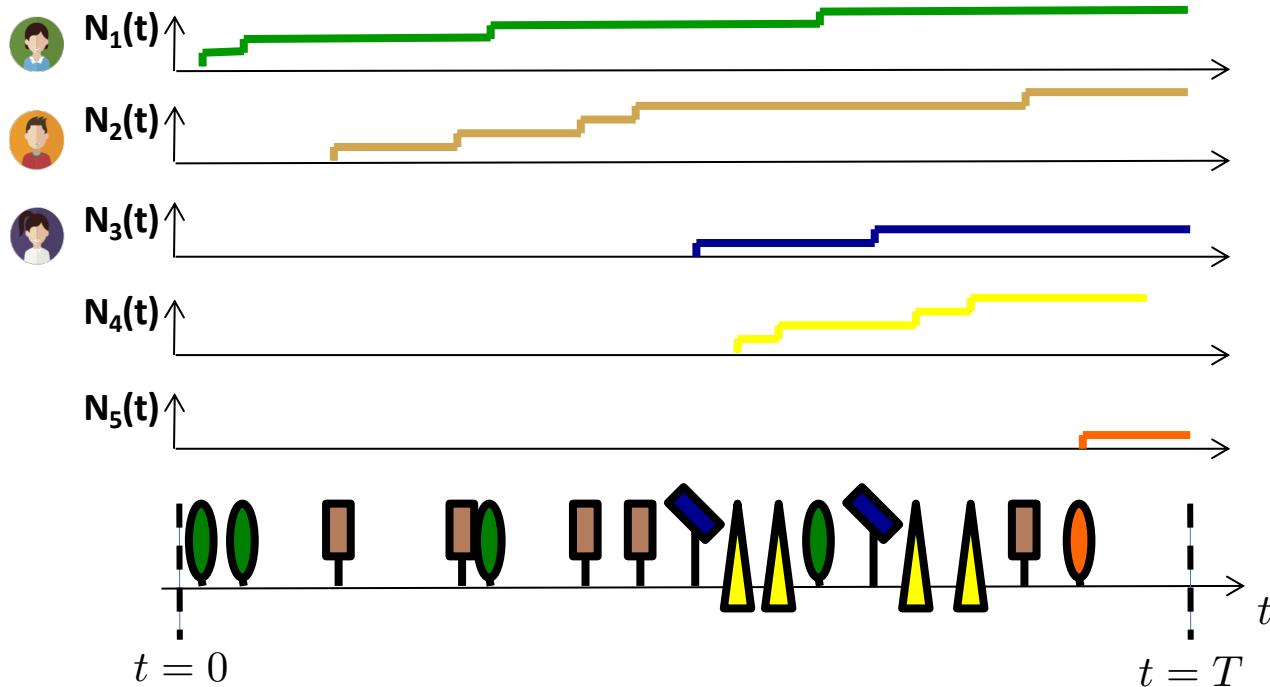
*Social Media Are Giving a Voice to Taste Buds*



Twitter Unveils A New Set Of Brand-Centric Analytics

# Recurrent events representation

We represent messages using **nonterminating temporal point processes**:



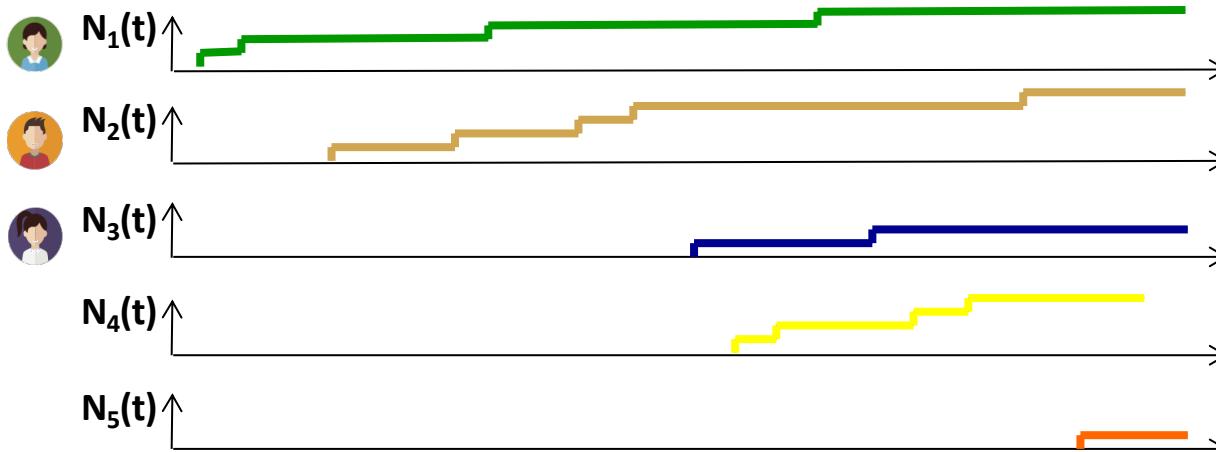
**Recurrent event:**

$(u_i, t_i)$

User

Time

# Recurrent events intensity



Cascade sources!

$$\lambda_u^*(t) = \mu_u + \sum_{v \in [m]} b_{vu} \sum_{e_i \in \mathcal{H}_v(t)} \kappa(t - t_i)$$

User's intensity      Events on her own initiative      Influence from user v on user u      Previous messages by user v

Memory

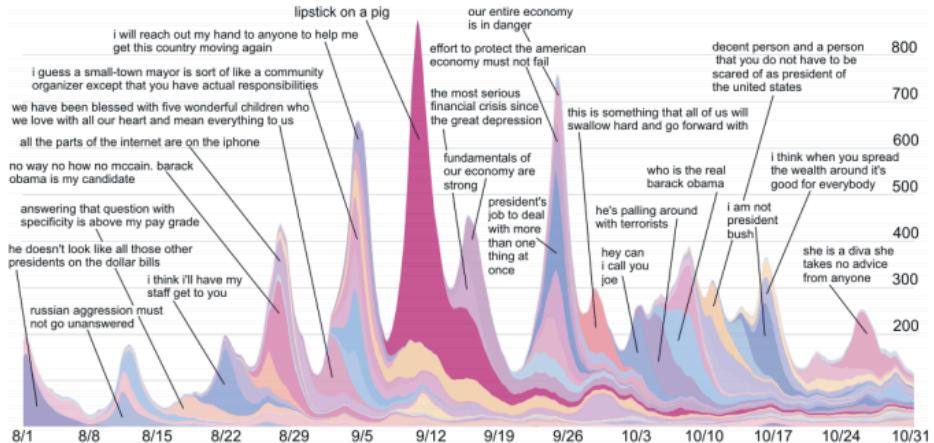
Hawkes process

# Models & Inference

1. Modeling event sequences
2. Clustering event sequences
3. Capturing complex dynamics
4. Causal reasoning on event sequences

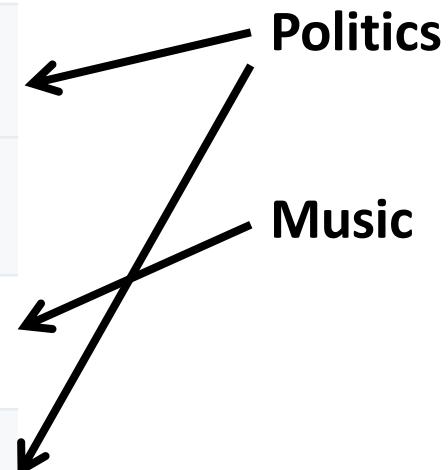
# Event sequences

we have assumed the cascade (topic, etc.) that each event belongs to was known.

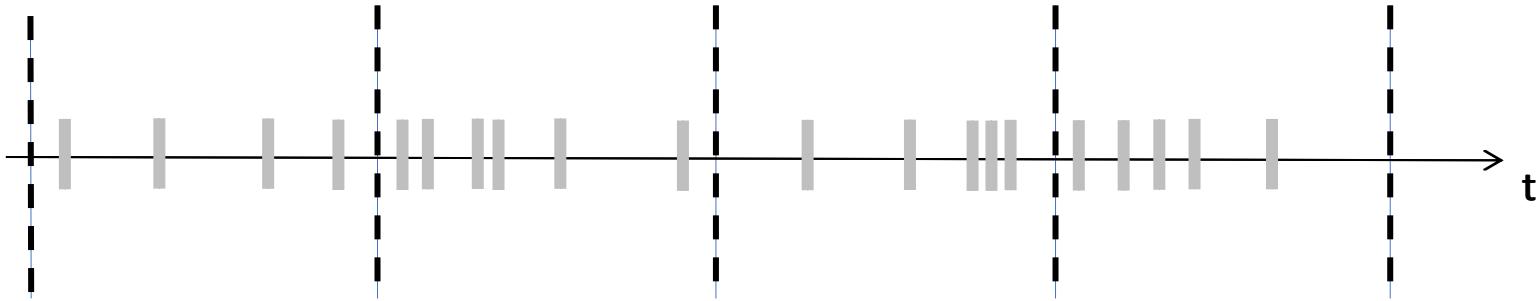


Often, the cluster (topic, etc.) that each event in a sequence belongs to is not known:

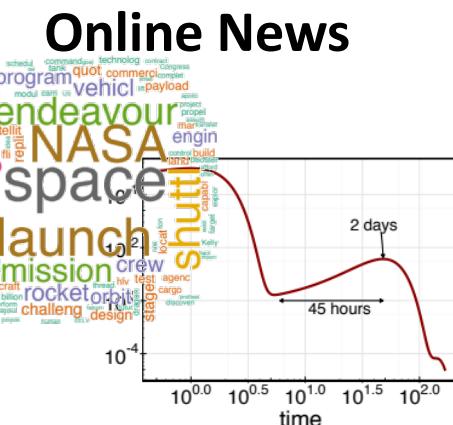
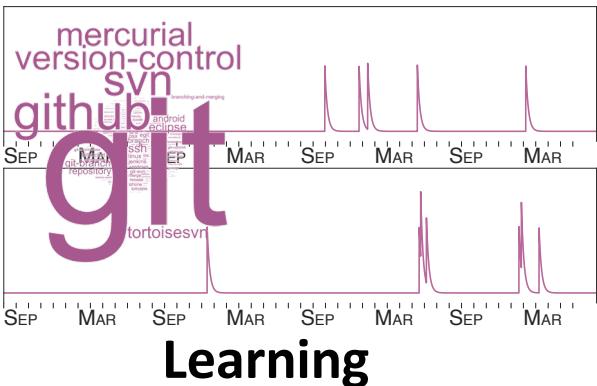
-  BBC News (World)  @BBCWorld · 4m  
Turkey election: Erdogan win ushers in new presidential era
-  BBC News (World)  @BBCWorld · 46m  
Dublin church: Seven injured as car hits pedestrians
-  BBC News (World)  @BBCWorld · 2h  
Nigerian music star D'banj's son 'drowns at home'
-  BBC News (World)  @BBCWorld · 2h  
Turkey election: Country's heart split over Erdogan victory



Assume the event **cluster** to be hidden and aim to automatically learn the cluster assignments from the data:



Bayesian methods to cluster event sequences in the context of:



**Health care**

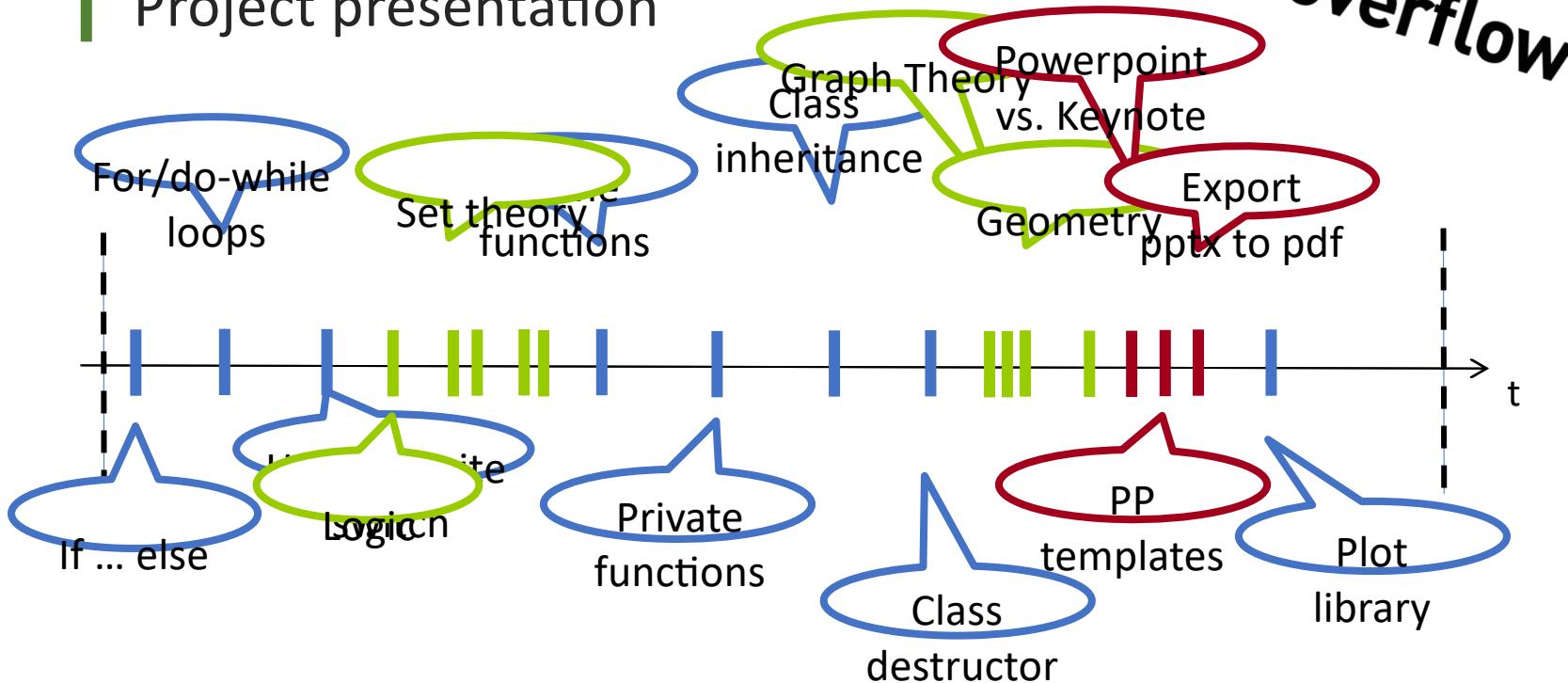
Method	DMHP
ICU Patient	<b>0.3778</b>
IPTV User	<b>0.2004</b>

# Hierarchical Dirichlet Hawkes process



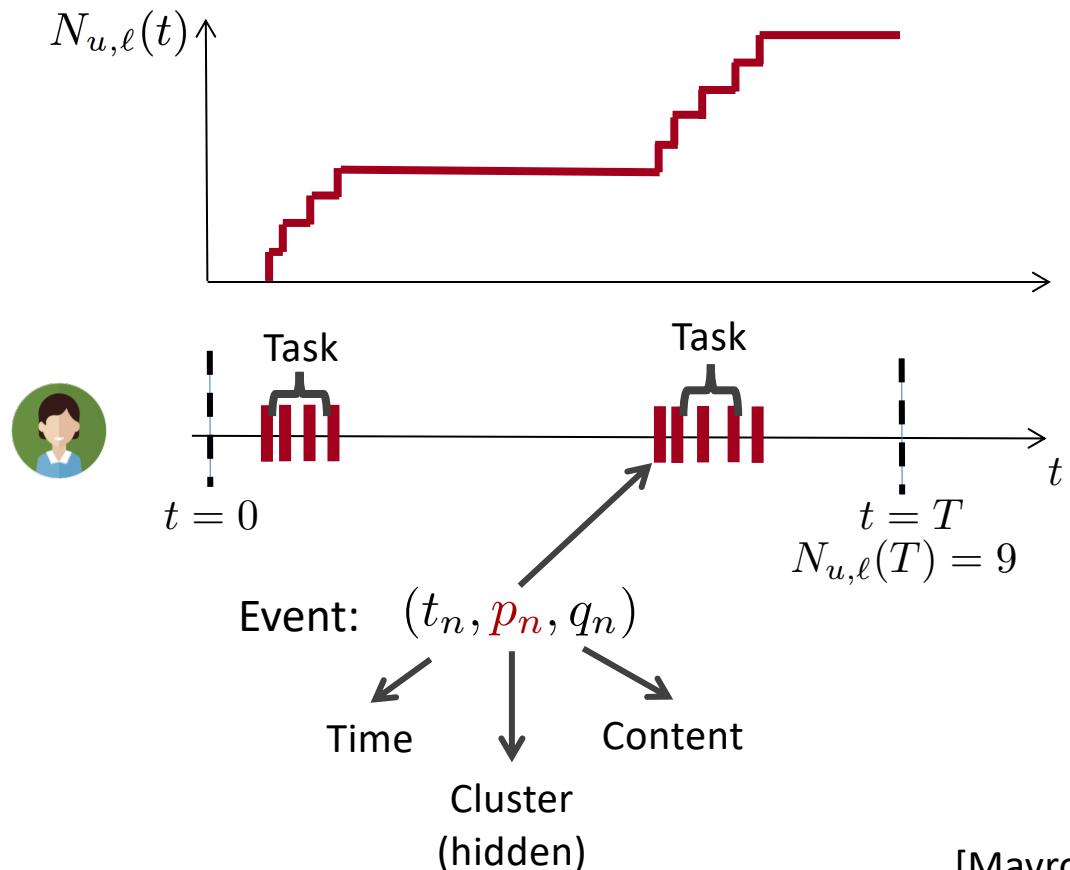
## 1st year computer science student

- Introduction to programming
- Discrete math
- Project presentation

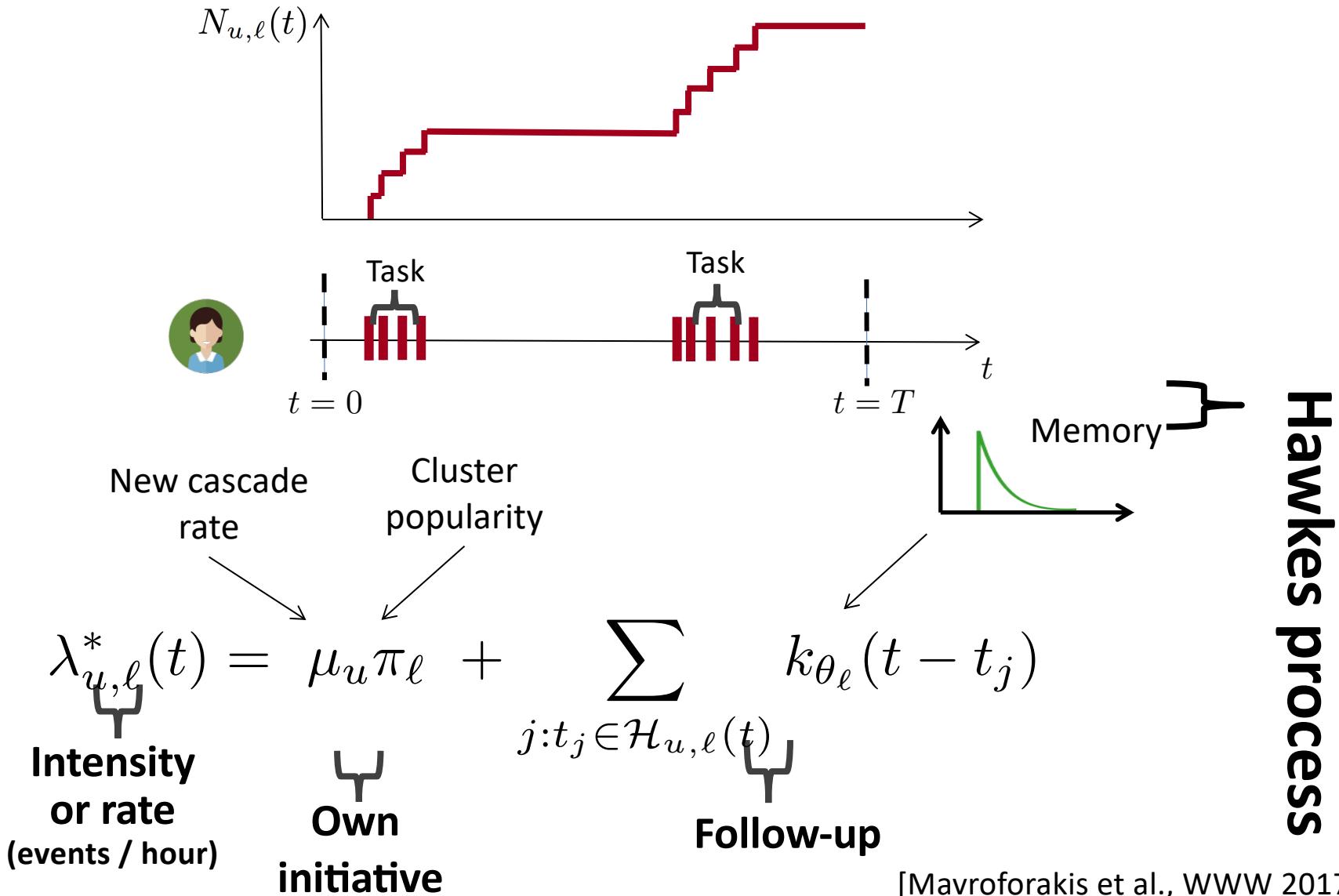


# Events representation

We represent the events using **marked temporal point processes**:

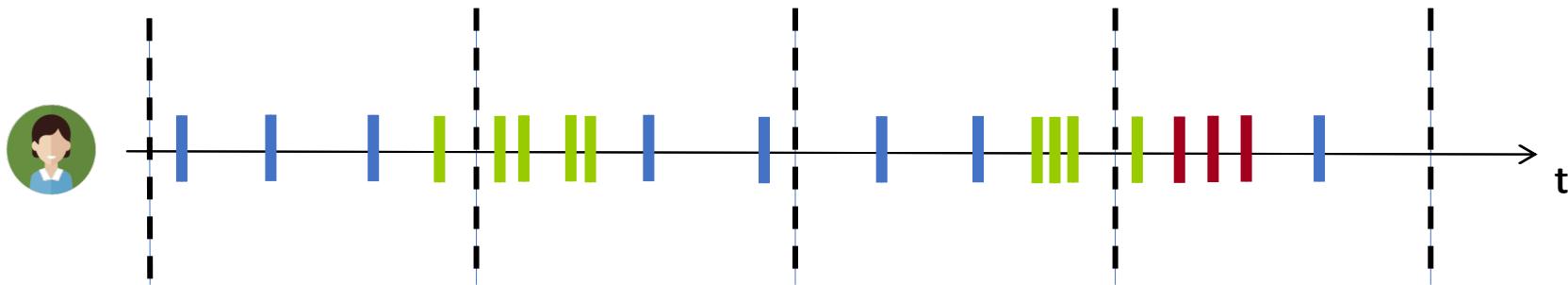


# Cluster intensity



# User events intensity

Users adopt more than one cluster:



A user's learning events as a multidimensional Hawkes:

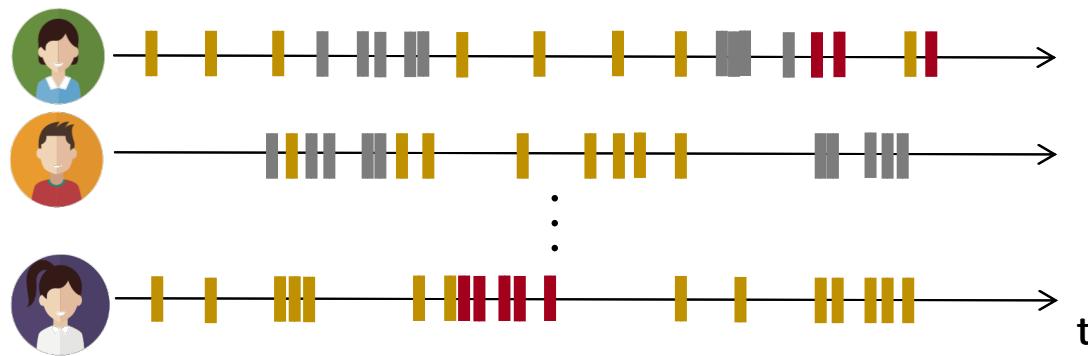
$$\text{Time } (t_n, p_n) \sim \text{Hawkes} \left( \begin{array}{c} \lambda_{u,1}^*(t) \\ \vdots \\ \lambda_{u,\infty}^*(t) \end{array} \right)$$

$$\text{Content } \rightarrow = \boldsymbol{\omega} \quad q_n \sim P(\cdot | \theta_{p_n}) \quad \omega_j \sim \text{Multinomial}(\boldsymbol{\theta}_p)$$

[Mavroforakis et al., WWW 2017]

# People share same clusters

*Different users adopt same clusters*

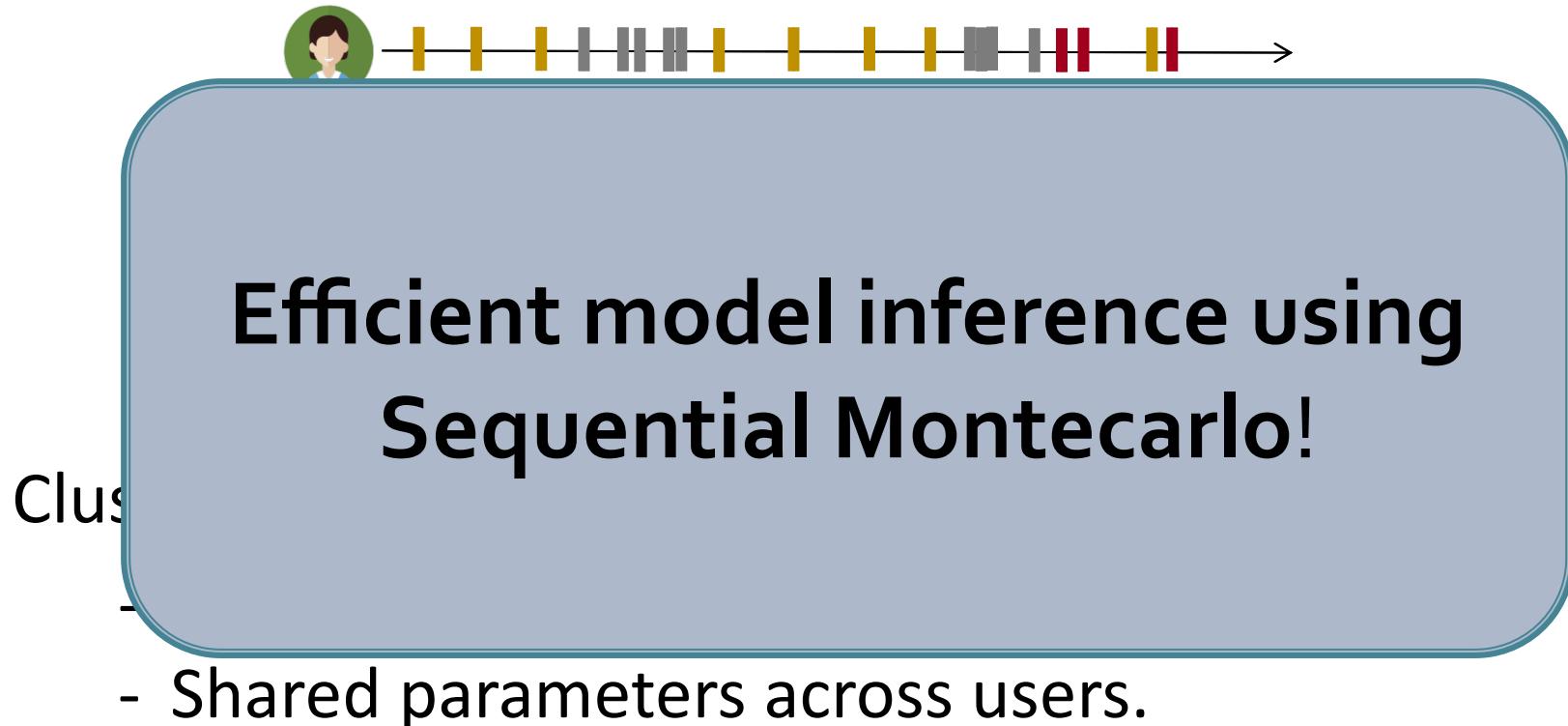


Cluster distribution from a **Dirichlet process**:

- Infinite # of clusters.
- Shared parameters across users.

# People share same clusters

*Different users adopt same clusters*



# Version Control vs Machine Learning

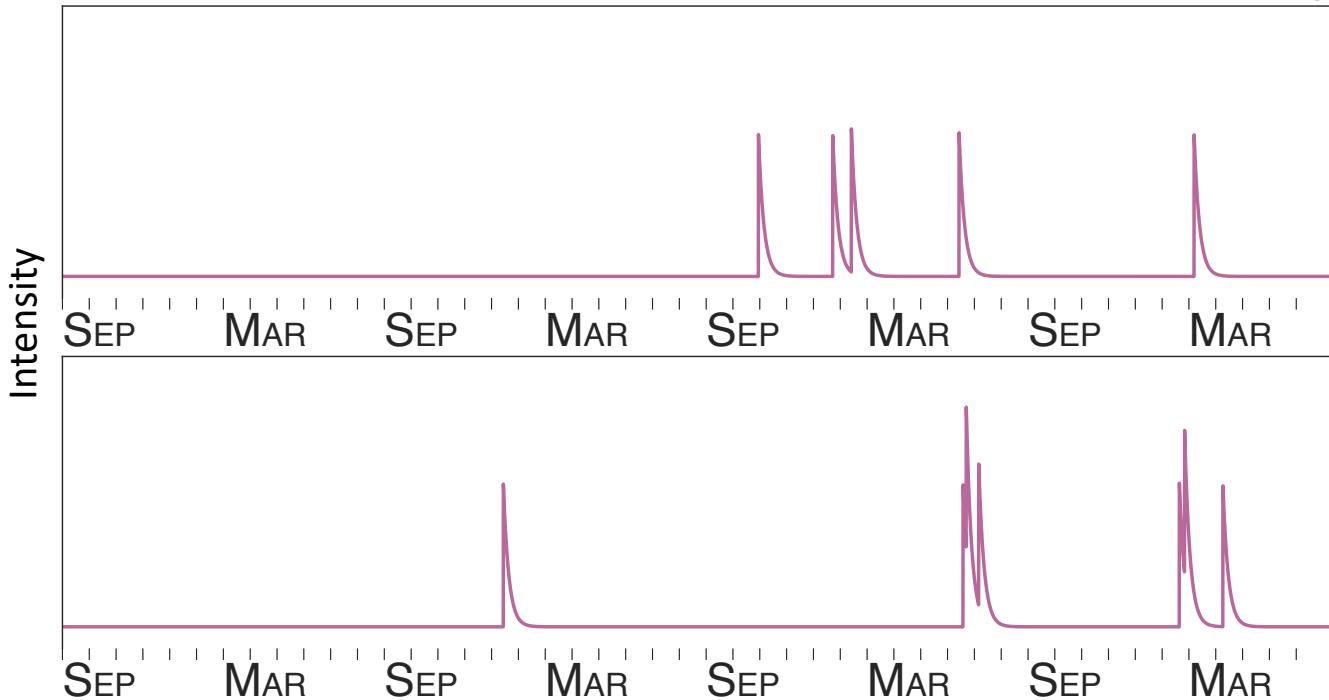
## Content



## Intensities



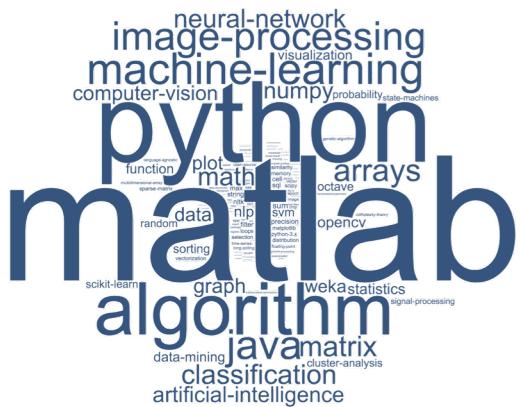
stack**overflow**



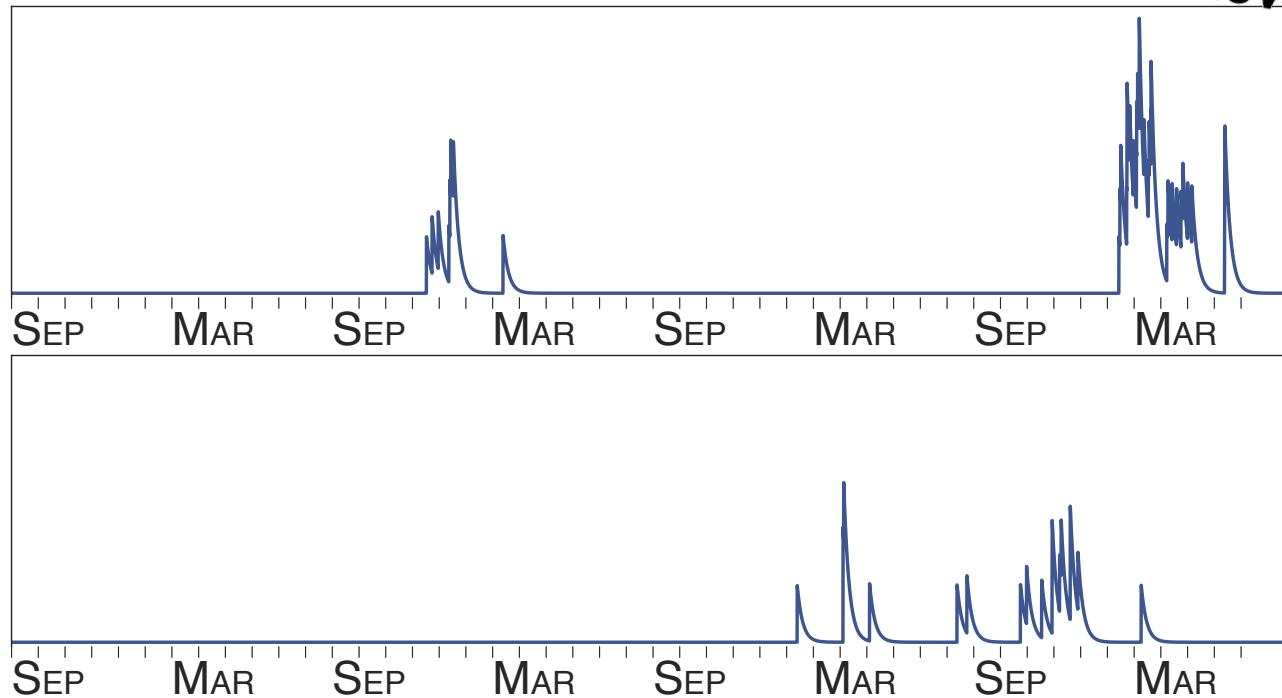
**Version control tasks tend to be specific,  
quickly solved after performing few questions**

# Version Control vs Machine Learning

## Content



## Intensities



**Machine learning tasks tend to be more complex and require asking more questions**

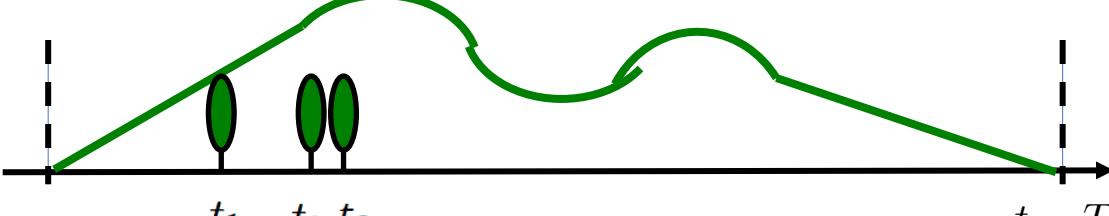
# Models & Inference

1. Modeling event sequences
2. Clustering event sequences
- 3. Capturing complex dynamics**
4. Causal reasoning on event sequences

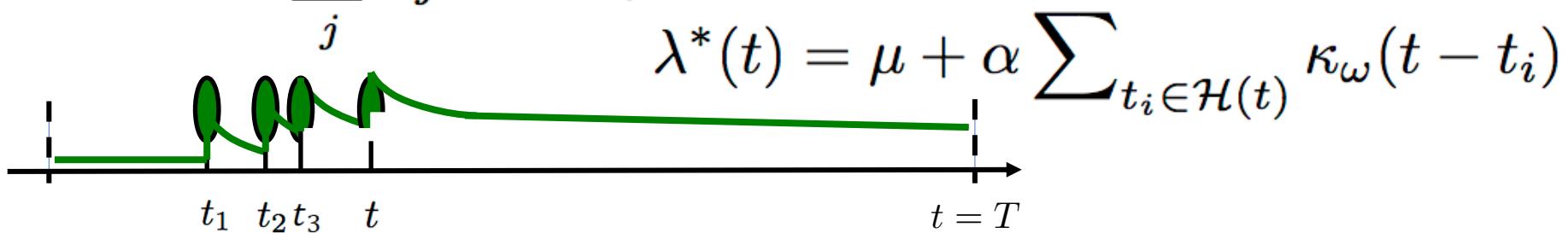
# RNN to Capture Complex Dynamics

Up to now, we have focused on simple temporal dynamics (and intensity functions):

$$\lambda^*(t) = \mu$$



$$\lambda^*(t) = \sum_j \alpha_j k(t - t_j)$$

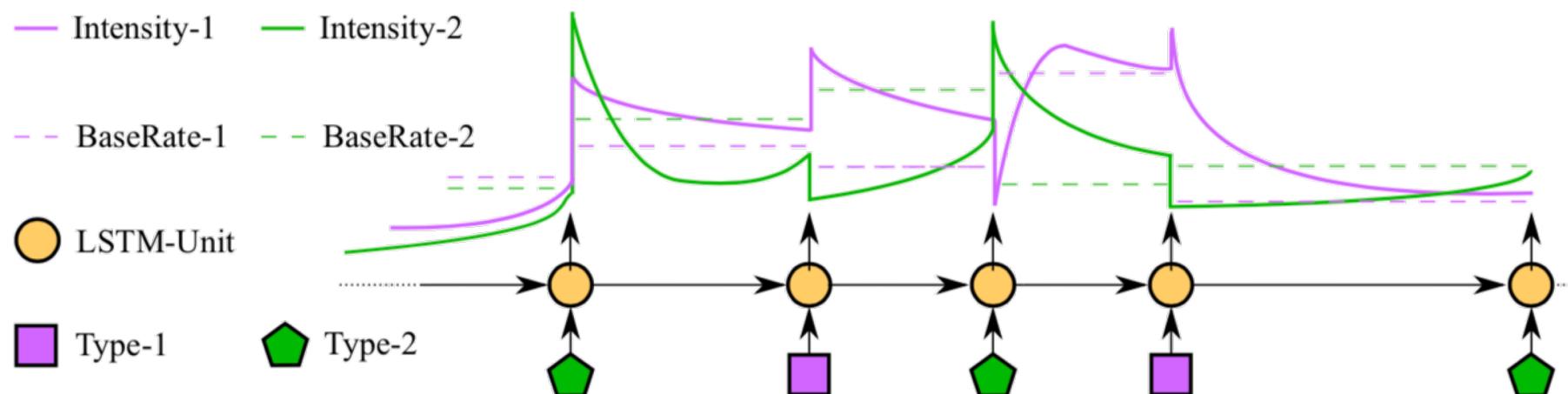


Recent works make use of **RNNs** to capture more complex dynamics

[Du et al., 2016; Dai et al., 2016; Mei & Eisner, 2017; Jing & Smola, 2017;  
Trivedi et al., 2017; Xiao et al., 2017a; 2018]

# Neural Hawkes process

- 1) History effect does not need to be additive
- 2) Allows for complex memory effects  
(such as delays)



# Neural Hawkes process

$$\lambda_u(t) = f_u(\mathbf{w}_u^\top \mathbf{h}(t))$$

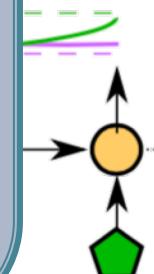
Excitation & inhibition

$$\mathbf{h}(t) = \text{RNN}(\mathcal{H}(t))$$

Memory

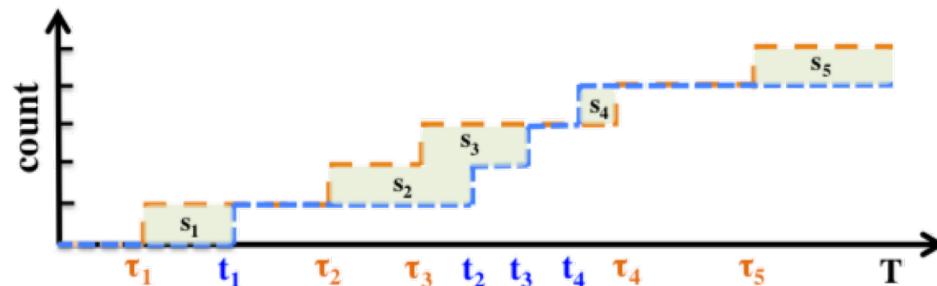
- Inten
- - Base
- LSTM
- Type

Parameter learning using  
stochastic gradient descent



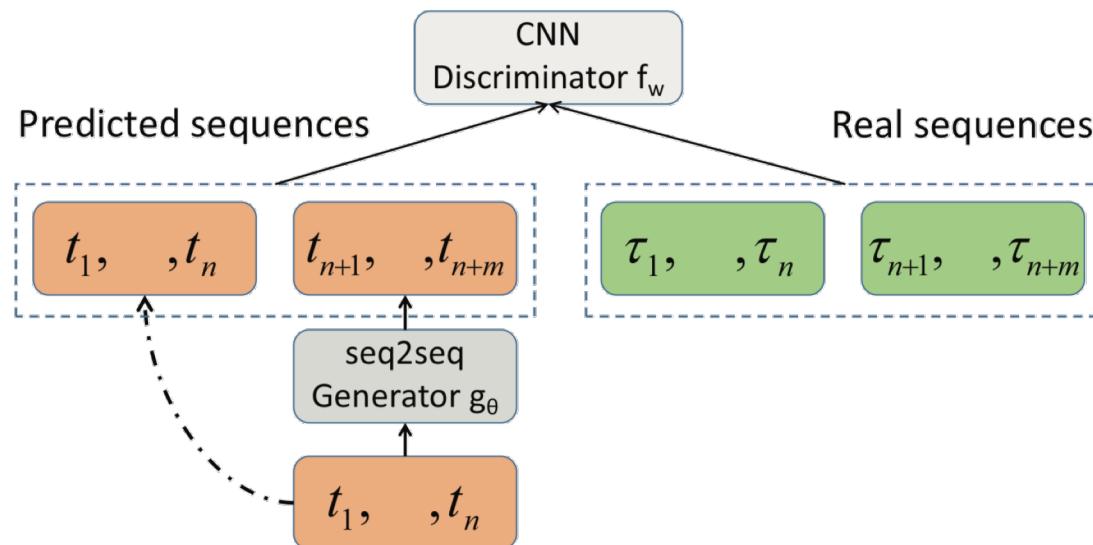
# Applications (I): Predictive Models

**Key idea: Intensity- and likelihood-free models**



**Wasserstein-Distance for  
Temporal Point Processes**

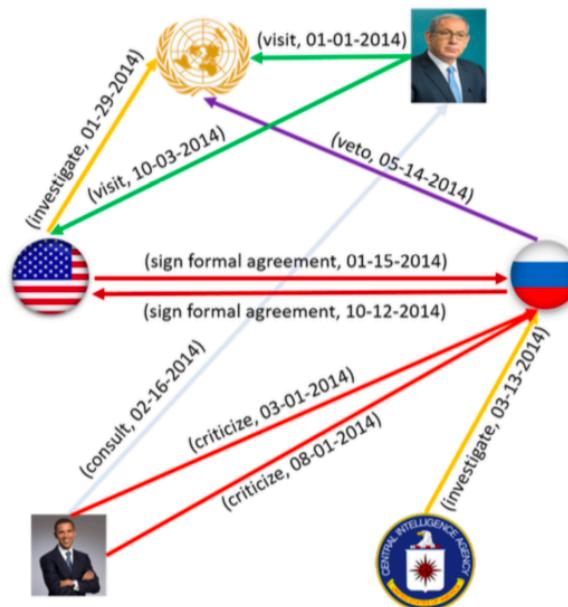
**GAN architecture**



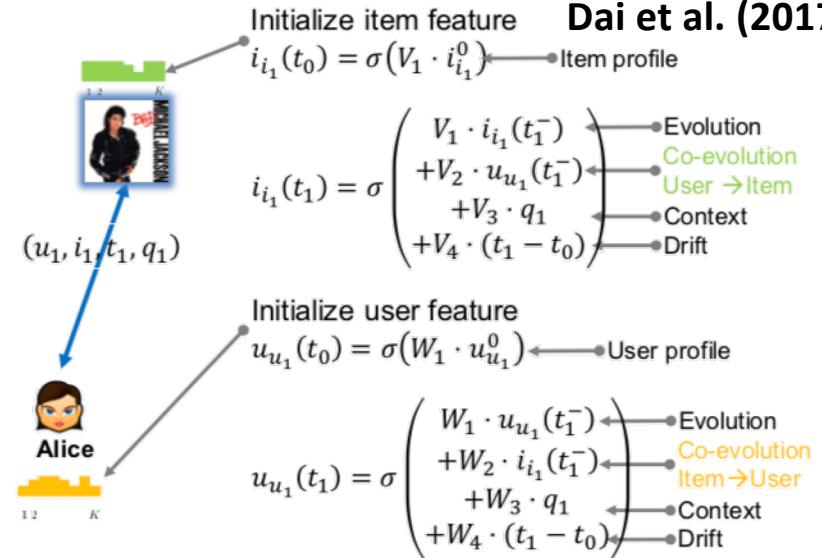
[Xiao et al., 2017 & 2018]

# Applications (I): Predictive Models

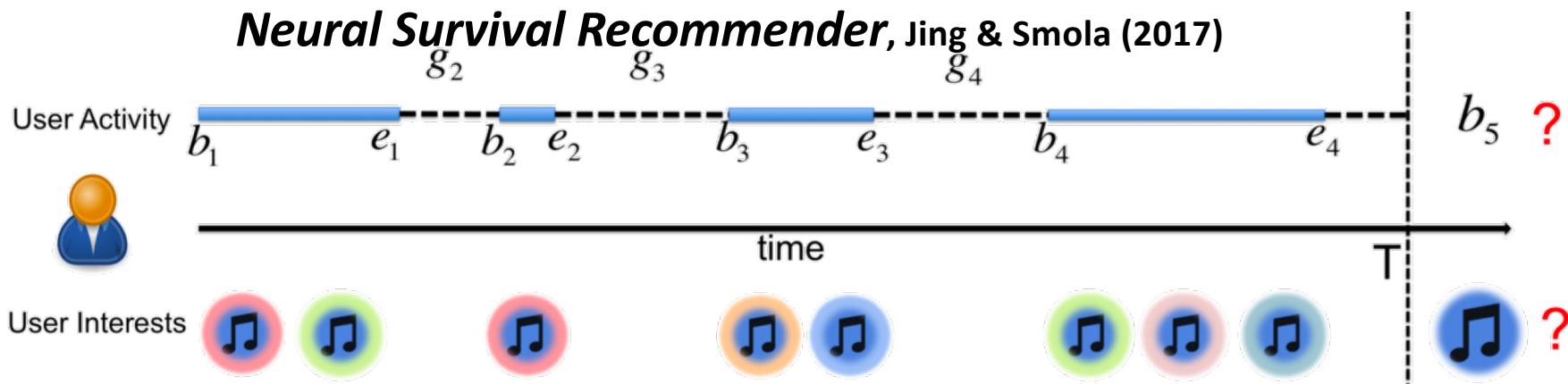
**Know-Evolve**, Trivedi et al. (2017)



**Coevolutionary Embedding**, Dai et al. (2017)



**Neural Survival Recommender**, Jing & Smola (2017)



# **Models & Inference**

- 1. Modeling event sequences**
- 2. Clustering event sequences**
- 3. Capturing complex dynamics**
- 4. Causal reasoning on event sequences**

# Temporal point processes beyond prediction

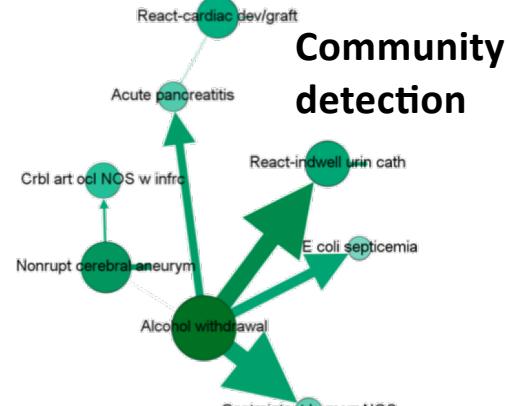
So far, we have focused on models that improve predictions:

Link prediction



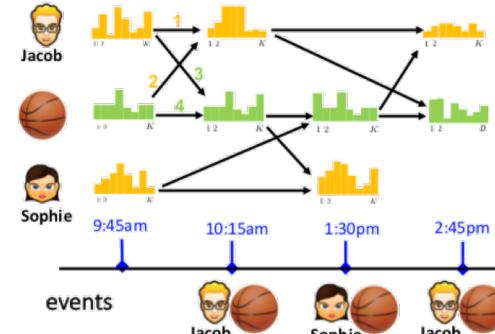
[Trivedi et al., 2017]

Community detection



[Xiao et al., 2017]

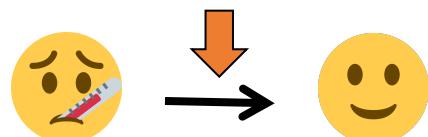
Recommendations



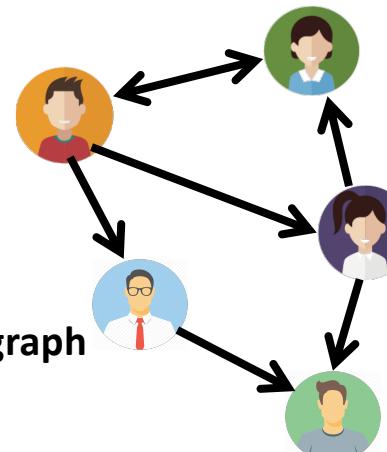
[Dai et al., 2017]

Recent works have focused on performing **causal inference** using event sequences:

Treatment effect



Granger causality graph



[Xu et al., 2016; Achab et al., 2017; Kuśmierczyk & Gomez-Rodriguez, 2018]

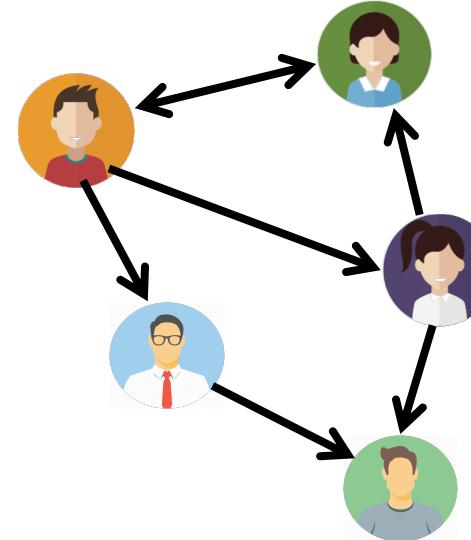
# Uncovering Causality from Hawkes Processes

## Multivariate Hawkes process:

$$N(t) = \sum_{u \in \mathcal{U}} N_u(t)$$

$$\lambda_u(t) = \mu_u + \sum_{v \in \mathcal{U}} \int_0^t k_{u,v}(t - t') dN_v(t')$$

Effect of v's past events on u



## Granger causality:

“X causes Y in the sense of Granger causality if forecasting future values of Y is more successful while taking X past values into account”

[Granger, 1969]

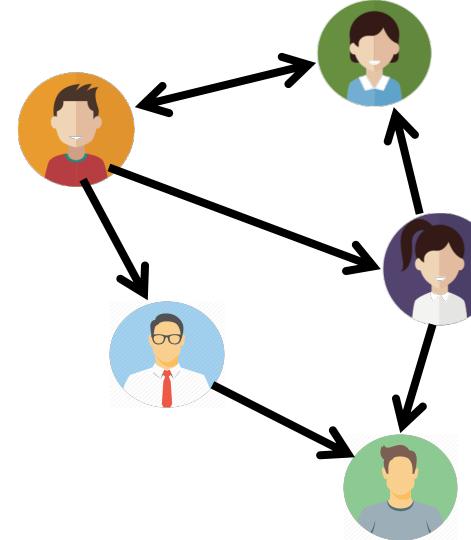
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Effect of v's past events on u



**Granger causality on multivariate Hawkes processes:**

“  $N_v(t)$  does not Granger-cause  $N_u(t)$  w.r.t.  $N(t)$  if and only if  $k_{u,v}(\tau) = 0$  for  $\tau \in \mathbb{R}^+$  ”

[Eichler et al., 2016]

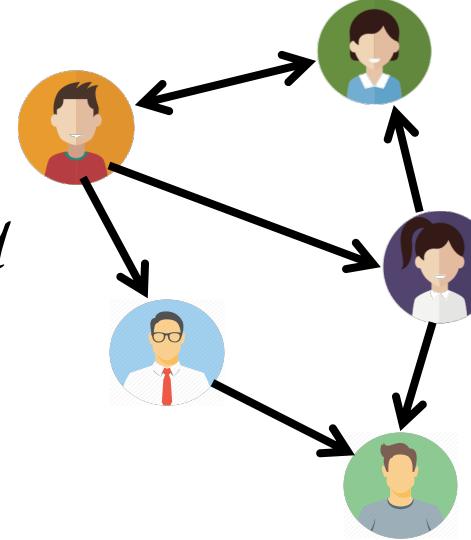
[Achab et al., ICML 2017]

# Uncovering Causality from Hawkes Processes

**Goal is to estimate  $G = [g_{uv}]$ , where:**

$$g_{uv} = \int_0^{+\infty} k_{u,v}(\tau) d\tau \geq 0 \text{ for all } u, v \in \mathcal{U}$$

Average total # of events of node  $u$  whose *direct* ancestor is an event by node  $v$



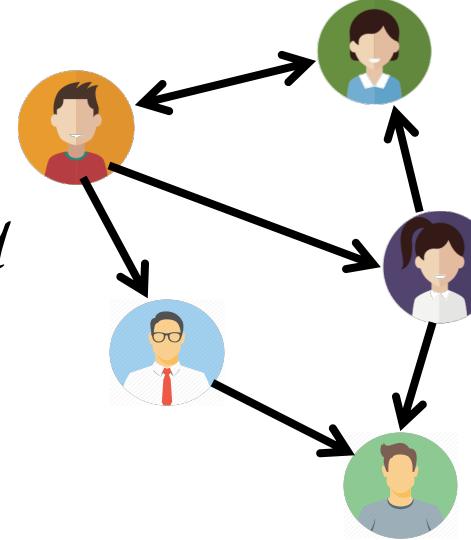
Then,  $G = [g_{uv}]$  quantifies the *direct causal relationship* between nodes.

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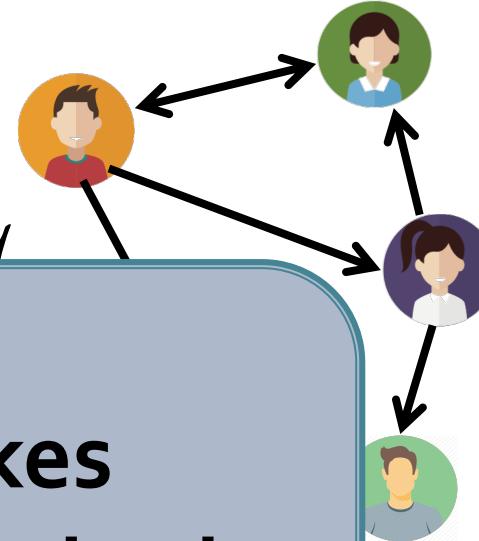
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**Key idea:** Estimate  $G$  using the cumulants the  $dN(t)$  of the Hawkes process.

# Uncovering Causality from Hawkes Processes

Goal is to estimate  $G = [g_{uv}]$ , where:

$$g_{uv} = \int_{-\infty}^{+\infty} k_{uv}(\tau) d\tau > 0 \text{ for all } u, v \in \mathcal{U}$$



**Non parametric Hawkes  
cumulant estimation method**

(with TensorFlow implementation)

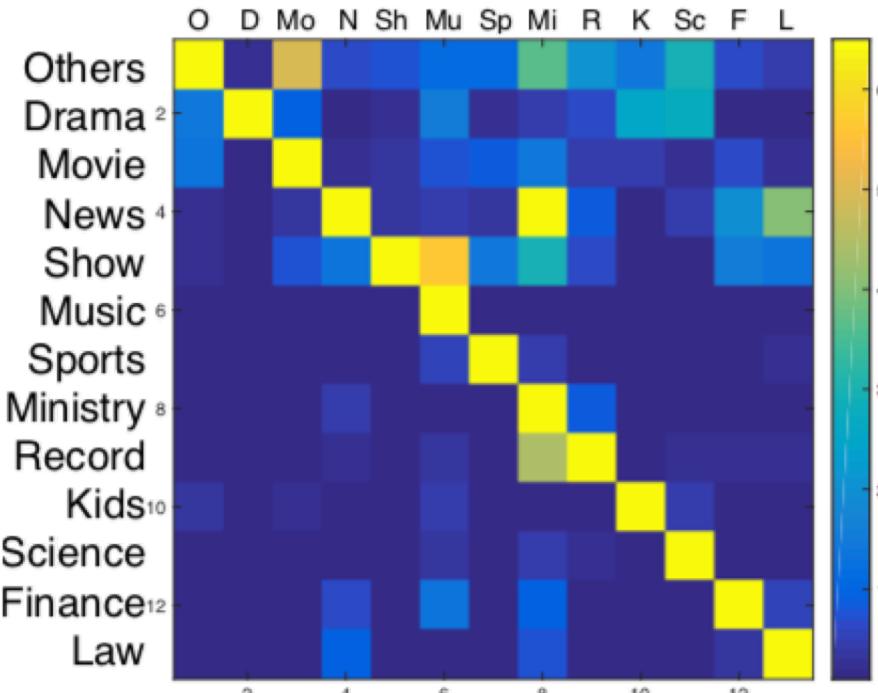
The  
bet

hip

**Key idea:** Estimate  $G$  using the cumulants the  $dN(t)$  of the Hawkes process.

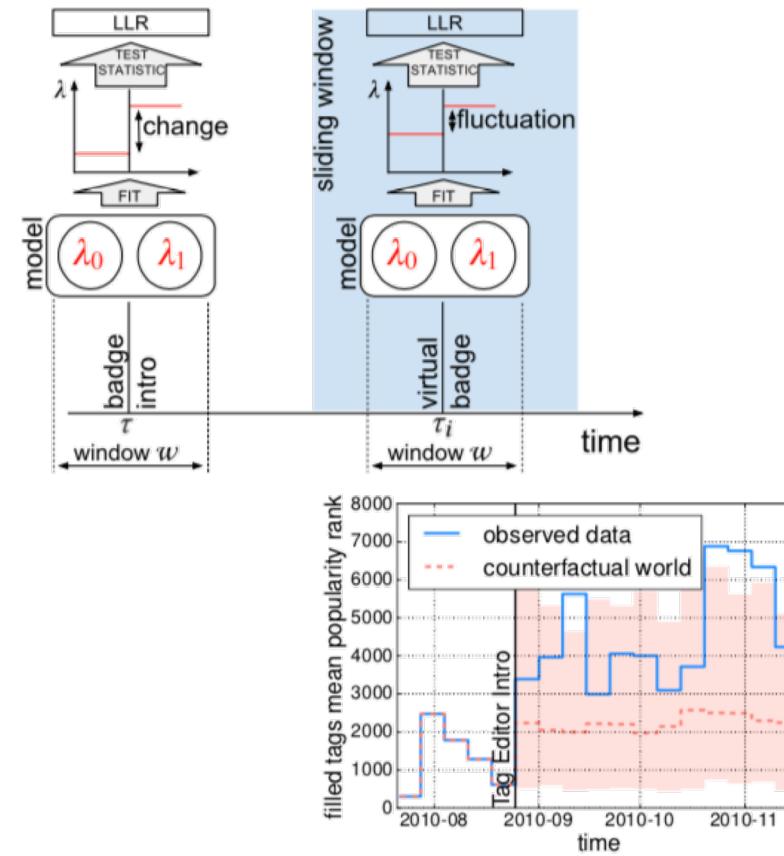
# Causal reasoning: Applications

## Infectivity matrix estimation



[Xu et al., 2016]

## Effect of Badges



[Kuśmierczyk & Gomez-Rodriguez, 2018]