

# learning with few data

Marcus Liwicki, Machine Learning  
Luleå University of Technology



[bit.ly/2023-nldl-tutorial](https://bit.ly/2023-nldl-tutorial)

**are you working on your  
PhD  
or finished recently ?**

**did you ever**

**did you ever**

**feel** insignificant

**did you ever**

**feel** insignificant

**doubt your skills**

**did you ever**

**feel** insignificant

**doubt your skills**

or

**feel unchallenged ?**

**You are not alone !**

Marcus Liwicki, Machine Learning  
Luleå University of Technology

ELLIS member, WASP member

IEEE senior member, IAPR award winner, ...



[bit.ly/2023-nldl-tutorial](https://bit.ly/2023-nldl-tutorial)



# agenda

motivation

prior

approaches

end to end learning

transfer learning

clustering

representation learning

auto-encoding

contrastive learning

comparative summary

remarks on contrastive learning

and some spices in-between:

what I have learned during my life as presenter

# agenda

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and some spices in-between:

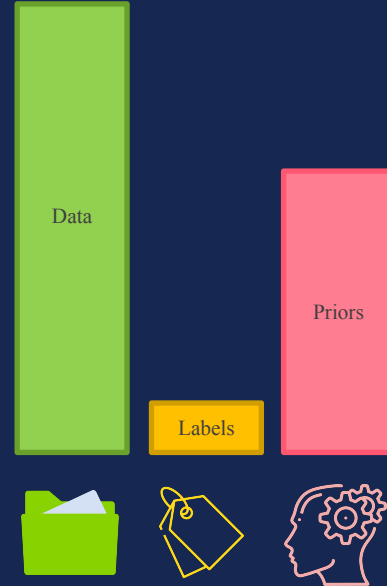
what I have learned during my life as presenter

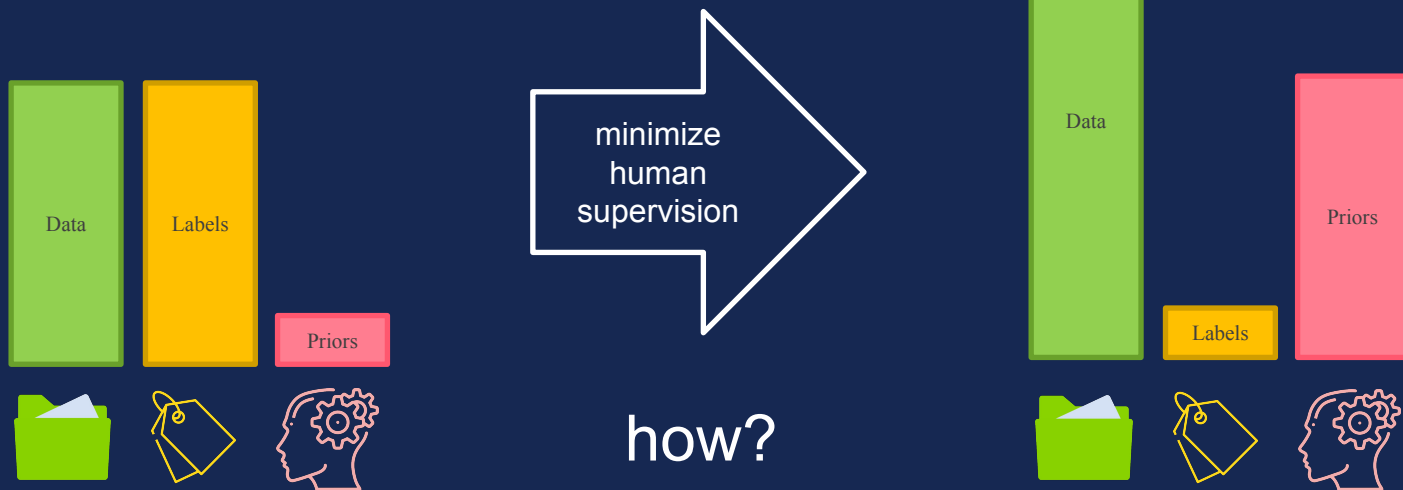
**machine learning needs data**

# machine learning (ideal)



# reality

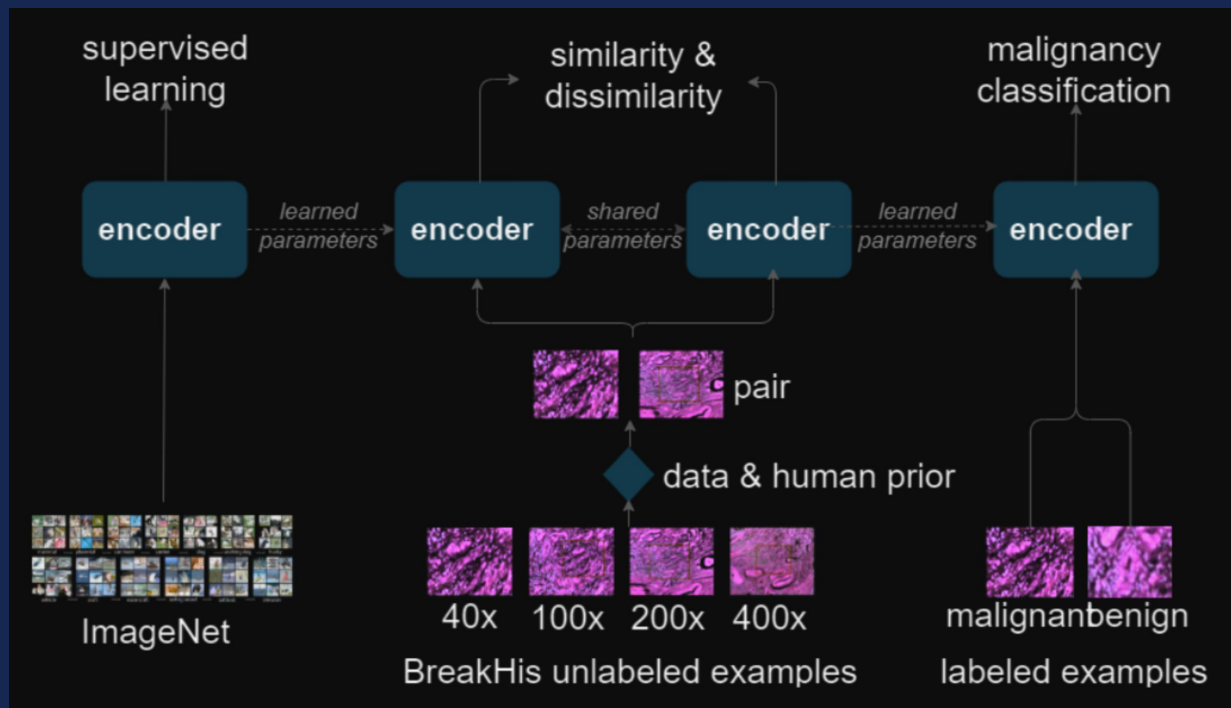




1. adding more unlabeled data or synthetic data
2. incorporating more prior (knowledge)

**there are so many priors hidden in structure**

# there are so many priors hidden in structure



including priors  
**92.15%** (SotA 88.2%)

Better than  
Google



# prior

experience (from earlier experiments)

proven architectures, meta parameters, ...

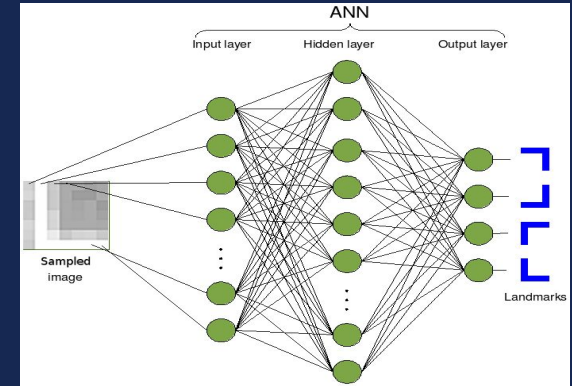
knowledge (human reasoning)

correlating the given input details and identifying discriminative features

data (intrinsic or human induced)

sequential correlation, local correlation

filenames folder structures, taxonomies



x001-t14.xml

x001-t15.xml

**time to learn something about presentations ;)**

**should we use dark background ?**

**or white ?**

**ok, enough of the torture**

**but why did so many of you torture each other?**

# Contrast is important



0:00 / 20:31 • Introduction >

How to avoid death By PowerPoint | David JP Phillips | TEDxStockholmSalon

 TEDx Talks  
37.3M subscribers

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# equity in the machine learning group



Marcus



Pedro



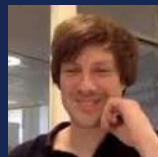
Konstantina



Gustav



Fotini



Christian



Kanjar



Vibha



Fredrik



Priyamvada



György



Saleha



Rajkumar



Oluwatosin



Homam



Mattias



Nosheen



Sana



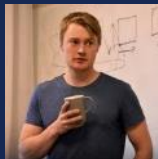
Ali



András



Richa



Karl



Carl



Prakash



Lama



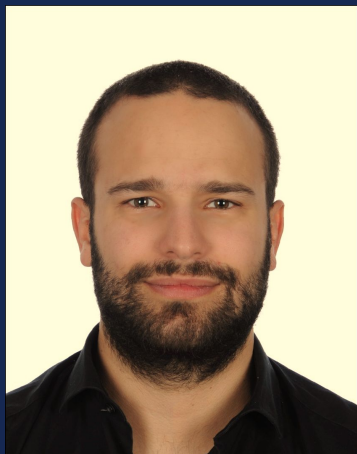
Elisa



Notice something?  
Almost 40%  
**woman**

# machine learning for the welfare of society

# thanks to previous and current PhDs



Michele Alberti



Vinay Pondenkanath



Gustav G. Pihlgren



Prakash Ch. Chhipa



# overview of approaches

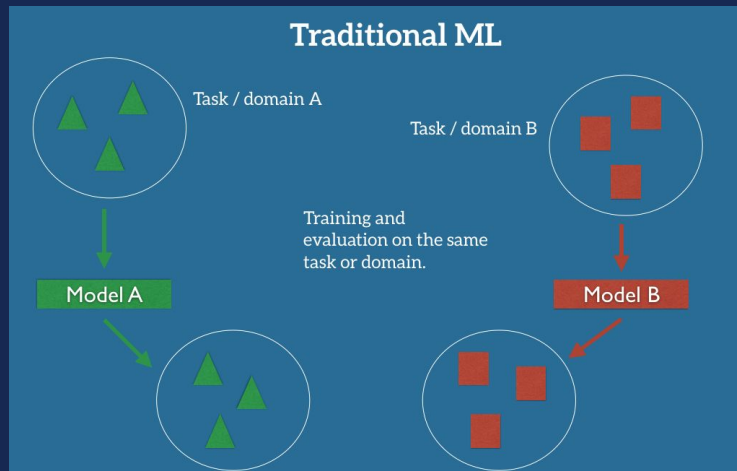
## end to end learning

- transfer learning (*A Survey on Deep Transfer Learning - 2018*)
  - Utilizing pretrained models and finetuning on application specific data
  - Required less data to fine tune than training it from scratch
- clustering – (*Deep Clustering for Unsupervised Learning of Visual Features - 2018*)
  - Labelled data not required

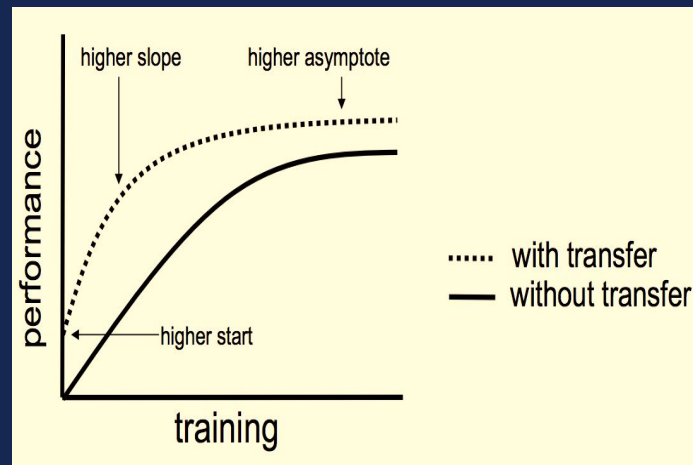
## representation learning

- auto-encoding – (*Variational Autoencoder for Deep Learning of Images, Labels and Captions, 2016*)
  - Questionable if this is a good way to go – (*A Pitfall of Unsupervised Pre-Training, 2017*)
- contrastive learning (*SimCLR - July 2020, SwAV – October 2020*)
  - Pretraining mechanism which utilizes application specific unlabeled data
  - Also compute intensive but possibility to scale down

# transfer learning



Source: <https://ruder.io/transfer-learning/>

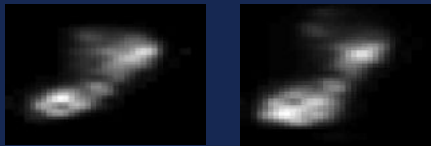


Source: <https://machinelearningmastery.com/transfer-learning-for-deep-learning/>

## remarks

- successful but **only initial layers with low-level features are common** & useful across applications
- no possibility for unlabeled data

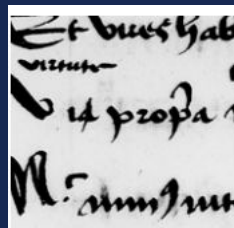
# ImageNet pretraining works outside of natural images



footsteps for person identification  
(88 % for 13 persons, previous SotA 77 %)

MS Singh, V Pondenkandath, B Zhou, P Lukowicz, M Liwicki  
*Transforming sensor data to the image domain for deep learning—An application to footstep detection, IJCNN 2017*

# ImageNet pre-training works often well



	CHARACTER RECOGNITION			STYLE CLASSIFICATION			MANUSCRIPT DATING		
	SCRATCH	PRE-TRAINED	$\Delta$	SCRATCH	PRE-TRAINED	$\Delta$	SCRATCH	PRE-TRAINED	$\Delta$
3-LAYER CNN	92.98 $\pm$ 0.22	N/A	-	12.4	N/A	-	11.7	N/A	-
VGG19 BN	98.17 $\pm$ 0.18	98.35 $\pm$ 0.15	+0.18	42.5	52.1	+9.6	24.0	36.1	+12.1
INCEPTION V3	97.82 $\pm$ 0.11	98.51 $\pm$ 0.11	+0.69	46.5	<b>55.5</b>	+9.0	24.8	35.4	+10.6
RESNET152	97.27 $\pm$ 0.26	<b>98.69</b> $\pm$ 0.10	+1.42	39.1	49.3	+10.2	20.6	<b>37.9</b>	+17.3
DENSENET121	98.64 $\pm$ 0.06	98.56 $\pm$ 0.06	-0.08	47.3	50.9	+3.6	30.7	36.4	+5.7

Linda Studer, Michele Alberti, Vinaychandran Pondekandath, Pinar Goktepe, Thomas Kolonko, Andreas Fischer, Marcus Liwicki, Rolf Ingold:  
A Comprehensive Study of ImageNet Pre-Training for Historical Document Image Analysis, ICDAR, 2019

# shortcomings – ImageNet transfer learning

## ImageNet-trained CNNs are biased towards texture

- Strongly biased towards recognizing textures rather than shapes

Geirhos, R., Rubisch, P., Michaelis, C., Bethge, M., Wichmann, F. A., & Brendel, W. (2018, September). ImageNet-trained CNNs are biased towards texture; increasing shape bias improves accuracy and robustness. In *International Conference on Learning Representations*.



(a) Texture image

81.4%	<b>Indian elephant</b>
10.3%	indri
8.2%	black swan



(b) Content image

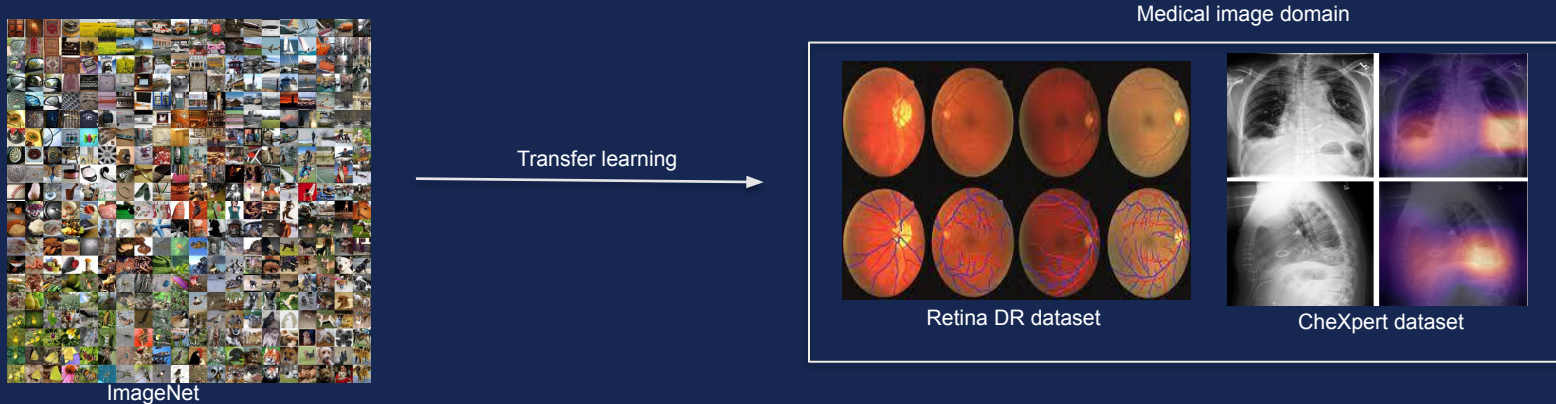
71.1%	<b>tabby cat</b>
17.3%	grey fox
3.3%	Siamese cat



(c) Texture-shape cue conflict

63.9%	<b>Indian elephant</b>
26.4%	indri
9.6%	black swan

# ImageNet transfer learning in medical images



ImageNet transfer learning does not significantly affect performance on medical imaging tasks

- Ref: *Transfusion: Understanding Transfer Learning for Medical Imaging*

Raghu, M., Zhang, C., Kleinberg, J., & Bengio, S. (2019). *Transfusion: Understanding transfer learning for medical imaging*. *Advances in neural information processing systems*, 32.

- Task specific learning - **only initial layers with low-level features are useful**

	Large Models, Lower Layers	Large Models, Higher Layers	Small Models, Lower Layers	Small Models, Higher Layers
Random Initialization	Little change	Significant change	Significant change	Significant change
Transfer Learning	Little change	Significant change	Significant change	Significant change
	High feature reuse	Low feature reuse	Moderate feature reuse	Low feature reuse

Adapted from <https://ai.googleblog.com/2019/12/understanding-transfer-learning-for.html>

# ImageNet transfer learning in histopathology

Sharmay, Y., Ehsany, L., Syed, S., & Brown, D. E. (2021, July). *HistoTransfer: Understanding Transfer Learning for Histopathology*. In *2021 IEEE EMBS International Conference on Biomedical and Health Informatics (BHI)* (pp. 1-4). IEEE.

## Gastrointestinal, breast cancer

Model	Gastro AUC	Camelyon AUC	ImageNet Acc@1
ResNet18	90.3	76.5	69.8
ResNet34	90.8	71.9	73.3
ResNet50	88.4	71.9	76.1
DenseNet121	91.1	79.9	74.4
DenseNet169	90.8	75.0	75.6
EfficientNetB0	86.6	72.5	76.3
EfficientNetB1	90.0	76.9	78.8
EfficientNetB2	87.8	69.3	79.8
EfficientNetB3	90.5	69.9	81.1

## ImageNet vs. SSL

Model	Training Strategy	Gastro AUC
ResNet18	ImageNet Training	90.3
ResNet18	Histopathology Self-Supervised Learning	93.7
DenseNet121	ImageNet Training	91.1
DenseNet121	Histopathology Multi-task Learning	93.1
ResNet50	ImageNet Training	88.4
ResNet50	Histopathology Multi-task Learning	90.6

## Why ImageNet supervised transfer learning is sub-optimal?

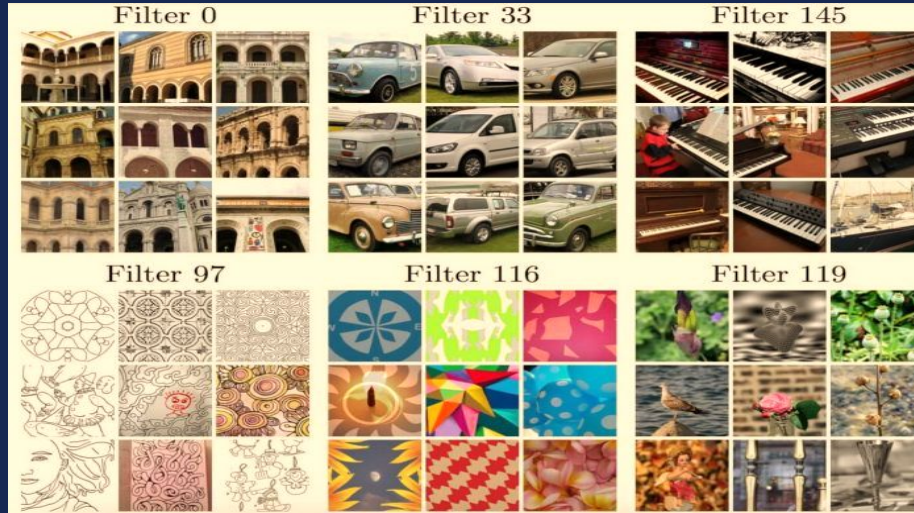
Possibly, ImageNet trained model is overfitted for natural scenes

Optimized for dataset specific characteristics



# clustering

group features with k-means and update the weights to optimize for these assignments



remarks

Source: <https://neurohive.io/en/state-of-the-art/deep-clustering-approach/>

- **Compute intensive** when applied on images
- Non robust feature representation when feature extracted with pretrained models



# agenda

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representation learning

auto-encoding – and alternatives

contrastive learning

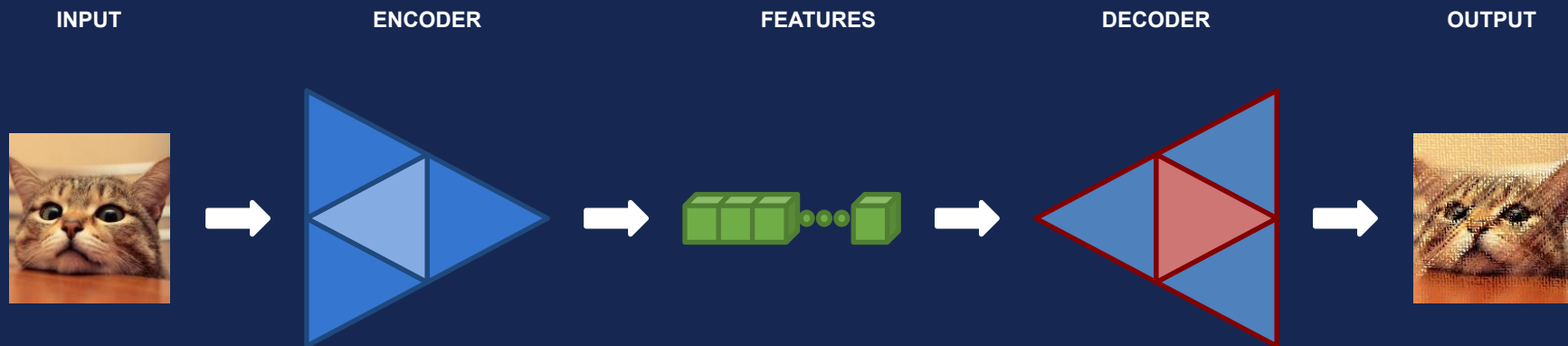
comparative summary

remarks on contrastive learning

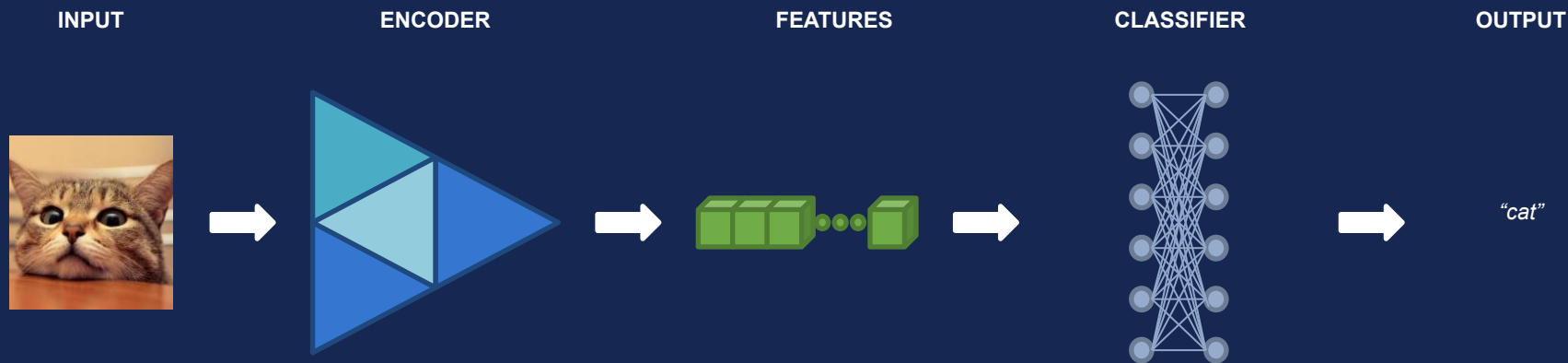
and some spices in-between:

what I have learned during my life as presenter

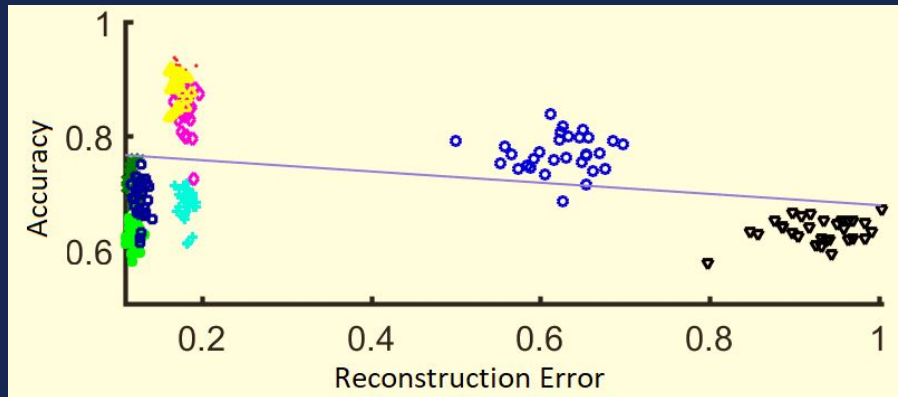
# Auto-Encoding – pre-training



# Auto-Encoding – classification

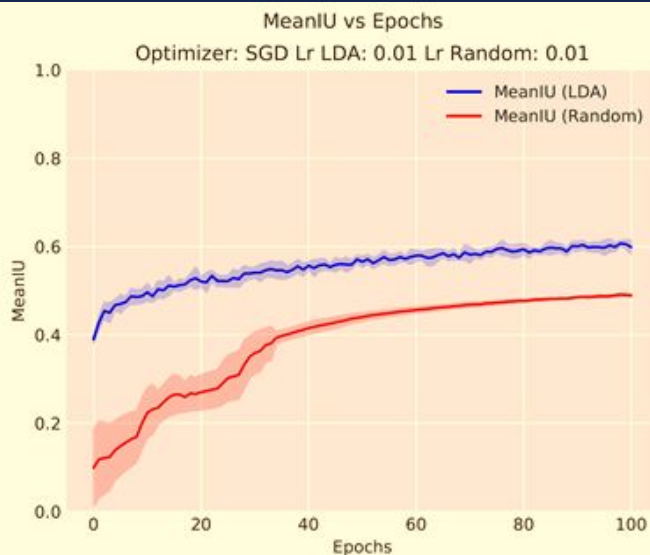


## a pitfall of unsupervised pre-training, 2017



a good auto-encoder (low reconstruction error) does not necessarily lead to better accuracy

# alternative: use PCA or LDA for initialization



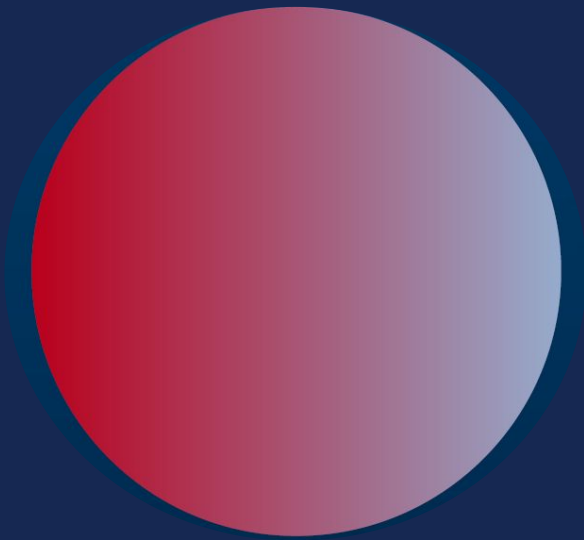
Will they  
converge ?

No !

Better local minima ?

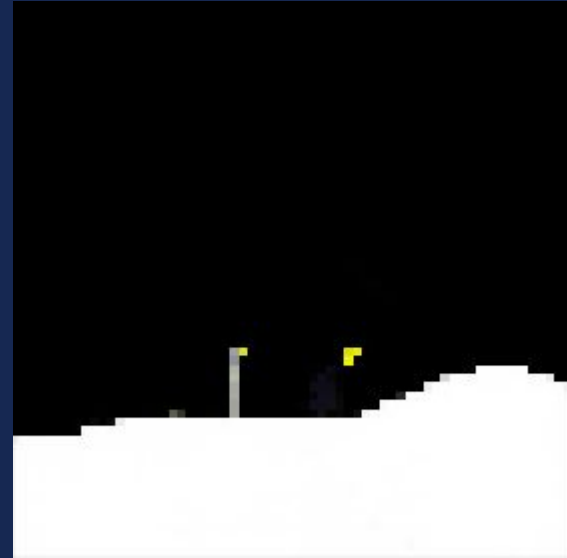
# auto-encoding limitation

what we want

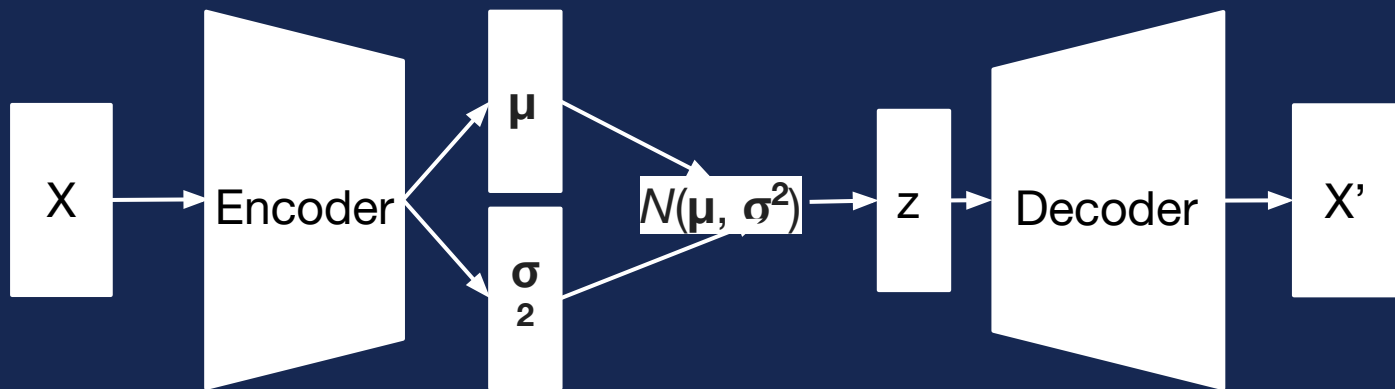


what we might get





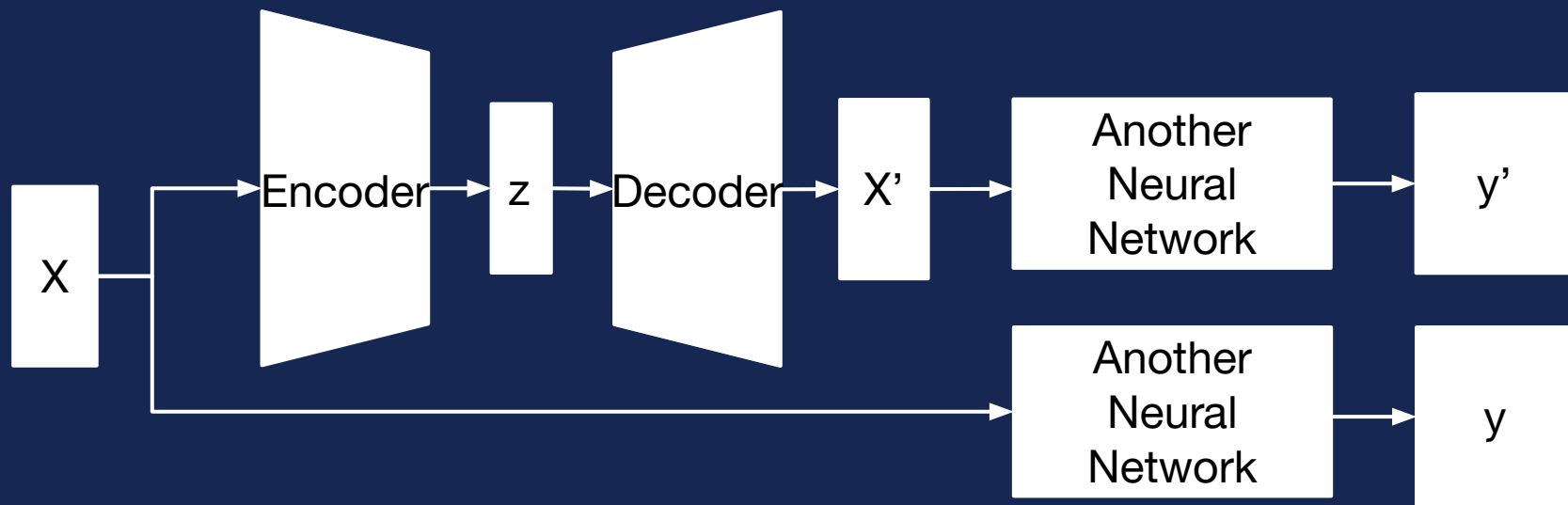
# variational auto-encoders



Kingma, Diederik P., and Max Welling. "Auto-encoding variational bayes." 2013



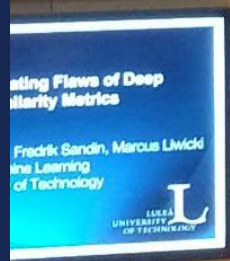
# perceptual loss



Thorough investigation :  
Improving image autoencoder embeddings with perceptual loss, 2020  
And Oskar Sjögren (yesterday)

# Identifying and Mitigating Flaws of Deep Perceptual Similarity Metrics

Oskar Sjögren, Gustav Pihlgren, Fredrik Sandin, Marcus Liwicki  
EISLAB Machine Learning  
Luleå University of Technology



try it out ...



[bit.ly/2023-nldl-tutorial](https://bit.ly/2023-nldl-tutorial)

<https://github.com/guspih/Perceptual-Autoencoders>

<https://github.com/guspih/Perceptual-Encoding>

[https://github.com/guspih/deep\\_perceptual\\_similarity\\_analysis](https://github.com/guspih/deep_perceptual_similarity_analysis)

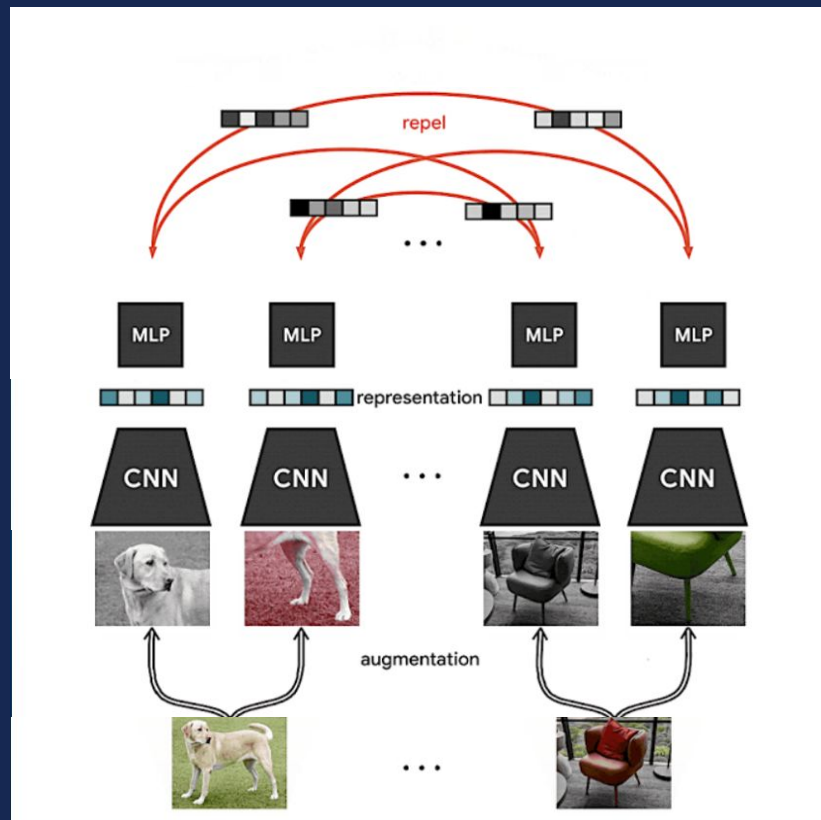
# Contrastive Learning (CL)

## Self-Supervised Method:

Allows model to **learn generic representations on unlabeled data**

## Method:

Learn similarity between augmented representation from same image  
Learn dissimilarity otherwise



# (not so) recent work in Contrastive Learning

## Simple Framework for Contrastive Learning (SimCLR)

A Simple Framework for Contrastive Learning of Visual Representations (SimCLR v1), ICML - 2020

Big Self-Supervised Models are Strong Semi-Supervised Learners (SimCLR v2), NeurIPS - 2020

## Momentum Contrast Learning (MOCO)

Momentum Contrast for Unsupervised Visual Representation Learning (MOCO v1), CVPR - Mar 2020

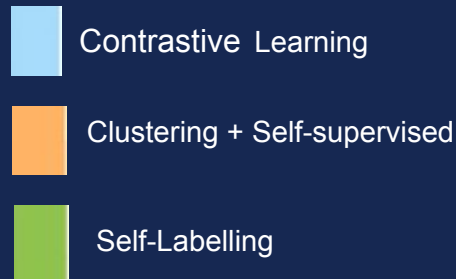
Improved Baselines with Momentum Contrastive Learning (MOCO v2), ?? Arxiv Oct- 2020

Bootstrap Your Own Latent A New Approach to Self-Supervised Learning, NeurIPS - 2020

## Contrastive Learning with Clustering

Unsupervised Learning of Visual Features by Contrasting Cluster Assignments (SwAE), Arxiv 2020

# Comparative Summary on SOTA



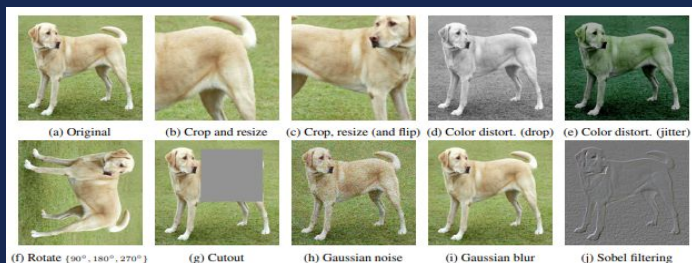
Source (IARAI): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bn66HnBxXFM>

## • Remarks

- Priors (augmentation mechanism) is more important than learning method
- Obtains performance approx. equal to supervised methods with 10% labelled data

# it's easy on natural images

distorted views (augmented views) of input visual



Human prior for visual

Size

Shape

Foreground-Background

Angle

Color spectrum

Relevant Augmentation

Resize

Crop, Flip

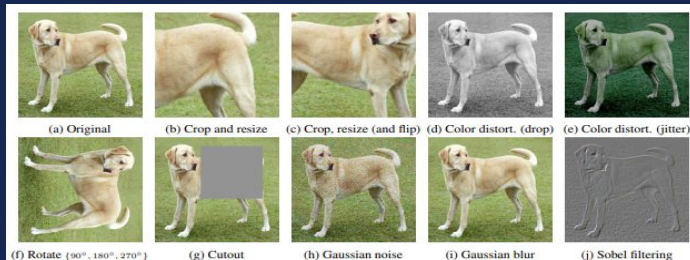
Blur, Noise, Color schemes, filtering

Flip, Rotation

Contrast, saturation

# challenge in adapting SOTA self-supervised methods in another specialized domain **(Not so natural visual concepts)**

- Joint-embedding based self-supervised methods has following core components:
  - Distorted views (augmented views) of input visual** ~ Helps in learning generalized representation about visual concepts to network
  - Objective function** - similarity metrics selection in loss function



Human prior for visual

Relevant Augmentation

Size

Resize

Shape

Crop, Flip

Foreground-Background

Blur, Noise, Color schemes, filtering

Angle

Flip, Rotation

Color spectrum

Contrast, saturation

- Enabling comprehensive distorted views for natural visual concepts is easy with human prior using obvious knowledge of visual world
- Thus, state-of-the-art methods in self-supervised learning are mainly optimized for natural visual
- What about the other vision domain beyond natural visual concepts i.e., medical images, remote sensing imagery, non-obvious visual concepts? – *It makes existing state-of-the-art methods sub-optimal due to insufficiency of human prior for distorted view* – next slide



# But does not work in other domains

Distorted views (augmented views) of input visual



Human prior for visual

Size

Shape

Foreground-Background

Angle

Color spectrum

Relevant Augmentation

Resize

Crop, Flip

Blur, Noise, Color schemes, filtering

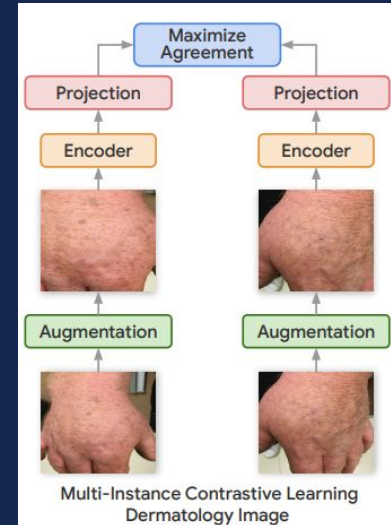
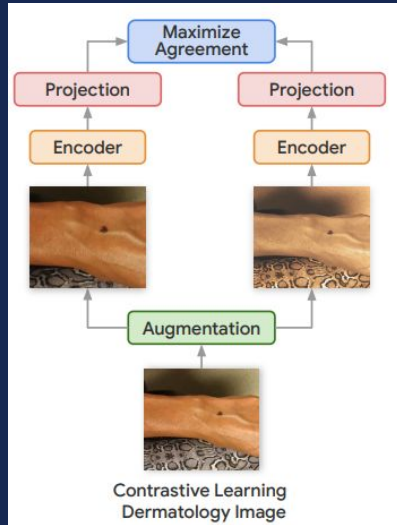
Flip, Rotation

Contrast, saturation

medical images, remote sensing imagery, non-obvious visual concepts

*insufficiency of human prior for distorted view*

# Use two views of same patient



Azizi, S., Mustafa, B., Ryan, F., Beaver, Z., Freyberg, J., Deaton, J., ... & Norouzi, M. (2021). Big self-supervised models advance medical image classification. In *Proceedings of the IEEE/CVF International Conference on Computer Vision* (pp. 3478-3488).

**But wait ... did we use labels ?**

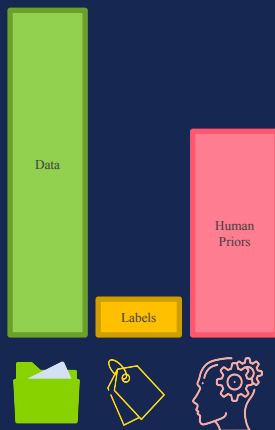
# Our Approach – Shifting focus from **human prior** to **data prior**

Supervised  
approach



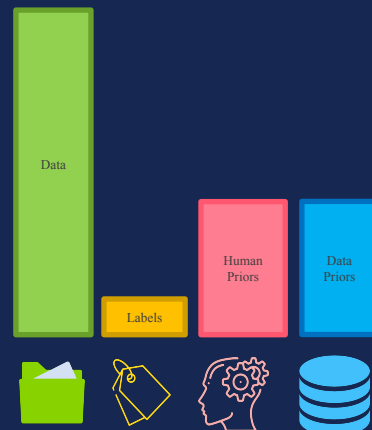
minimize human  
supervision

Self-supervised  
approach (on natural  
visual concepts)

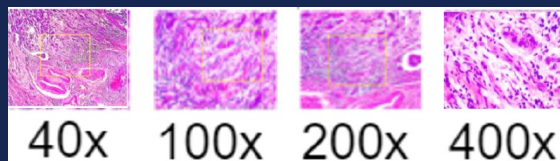


reduce human prior  
(augmentation) &  
incorporate data  
prior

Adapting self-supervised  
approach on specialized  
domain



# let us use the data prior



*data (prior) magnification levels (in BreakHis data) are utilized to generate both views for SSL input*

*the only human prior used in magnification sampling*

Achieves state-of-the-art results with only 20% labels on classification

# ideas for data prior

temporal proximity

spatial proximity

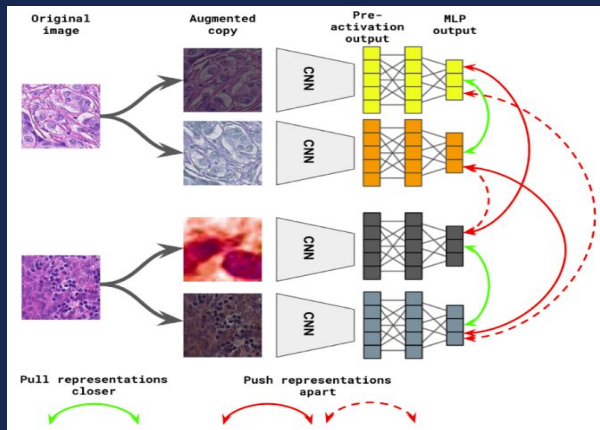
sequential co-occurrence (BERT)

different modalities

more ?

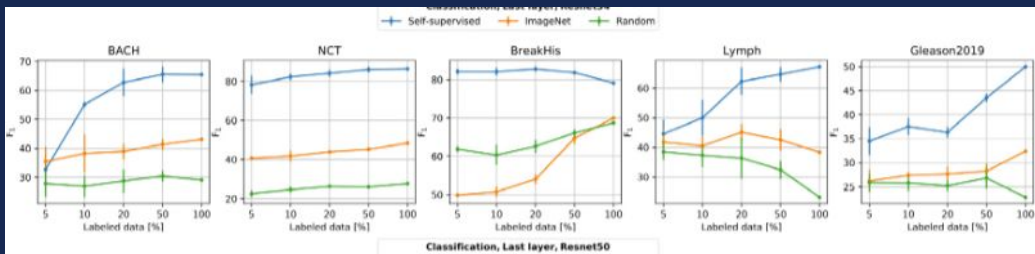
# Adapting SSL on histopathology images

- Contrastive learning on collectively **57 datasets**



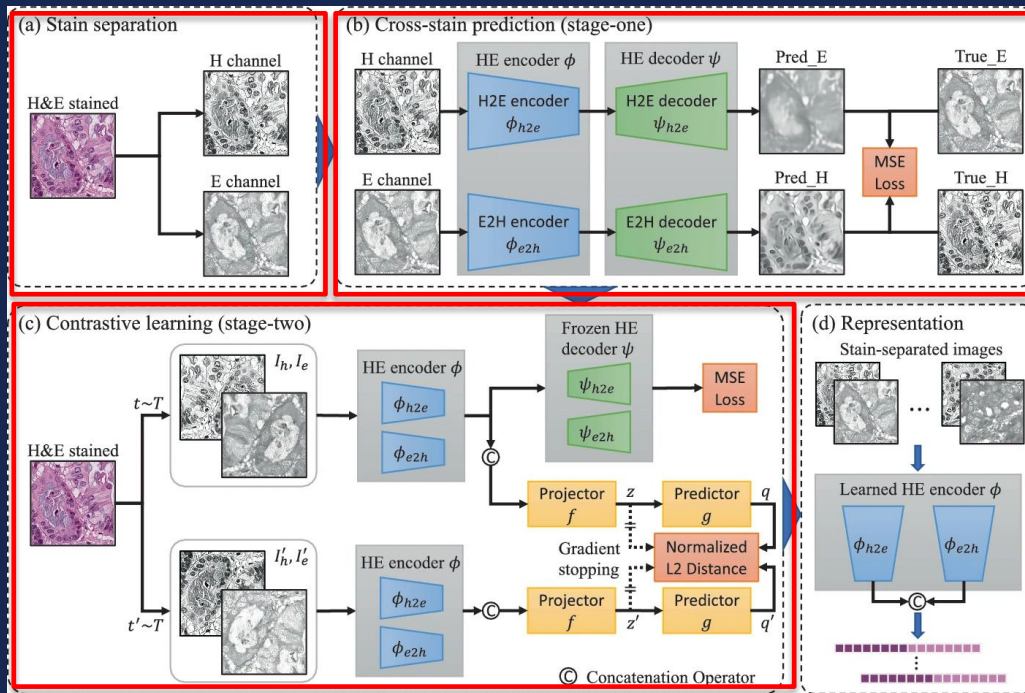
- Adapts SSL to histopathology domain by combining massive and diverse datasets
- Outperform over ImageNet (supervised) transfer learning with significant margins on multiple target datasets
  - Multiple downstream tasks
  - BACH, NCT, BreakHis, Lymph, many more

Ciga, O., Xu, T., & Martel, A. L. (2022). Self supervised contrastive learning for digital histopathology. *Machine Learning with Applications*, 7, 100198.

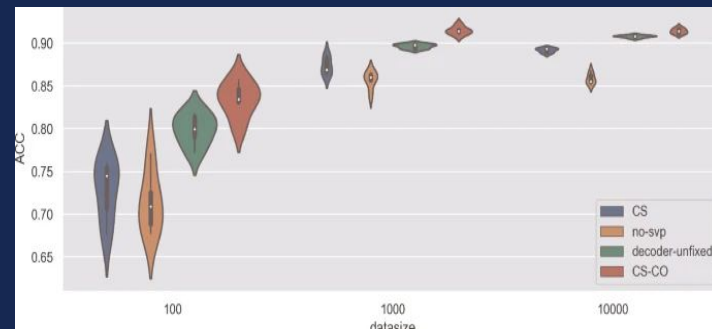


# SSL on histopathology using H&E staining (domain specific details)

Framework of the proposed CS-CO method – multi-stage pretraining



- Dataset – human colorectal cancer dataset (NCT-CRC-HE-100K)



- Combining cross-staining prediction with contrastive learning works well



**Curious, what more we can learn about  
presentation techniques ?**

Btw., should we use slide numbers ?

**typical issues, I observe at scientific  
conferences :**

typical issues, I observe at scientific  
conferences :

**unconfident posture**

typical issues, I observe at scientific  
conferences :

unconfident posture  
**filler sounds**

typical issues, I observe at scientific  
conferences :

unconfident posture

filler sounds

**angle and interaction**

# agenda

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remarks on contrastive learning

And some spices in-between:

What I have learned during my life as presenter

# summary

## end to end learning

- transfer learning
- clustering

## representation learning

- auto-encoding
- PCA, LDA
- perceptual loss
- contrastive learning

meta learning (not covered today)

# remarks on contrastive learning

Method	Contrastive Learning Key Factor	Contribution	Limitation
SimCLR V1.0	<b>K1</b> : Similarity learning for positive pairs <b>K2</b> : Dissimilarity learning for negative pairs	Established <b>benchmark performance on unsupervised contrastive learning</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 'Large batch size' due to positive + negative pair</li> <li>2. 'Mass gradient computation &amp; backprop issue' due to all (+ve &amp; -ve) pairs</li> </ol>
SimCLR V2.0	<b>K1 + K2</b> on Task agnostic Big n/w which used in distillation for task specific small n/w	+ Added enablement of <b>semi-supervised learning</b> through distillation	Same as SimCLR V1.0 + usage of bigger networks
MOCO V1.0	<b>K1 + K2 over momentum encoder</b> where CL as dynamic dictionary lookup	Revealed unsupervised <b>contrastive learning with smaller batch size</b> and lessor backpropagation of gradients	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 'Mass gradient computation &amp; backprop issue' due to all (+ve &amp; -ve) <b>pairs (same as SimCLR because as q-encoder backpropagates)</b></li> <li>2. Overhead of dynamic dictionary queue</li> </ol>
MOCO V2.0	MOCO V1.0 + 2-layer MLP projection head	Stronger baseline, outperformed on SimCLR and MOCO v1.0.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 'Mass gradient computation &amp; backprop issue' due to all (+ve &amp; -ve) pairs <b>same as SimCLR because q-encoder and k-encoder both backpropagates</b></li> <li>2. Overhead of dynamic dictionary queue</li> </ol>
BYOL	<b>K1</b> + momentum encoding + two separate networks (online and target)	Achieves self supervised <b>CL without negative pair</b> . Establishes benchmarks in semi-supervised approach. Robust for smaller batch size.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complex pipeline with large number of pruning. Makes it challenging for concept utilization.</li> </ol>
SwAE	<b>K1</b> + Swapped" prediction mechanism + cluster assignment	Achieves self supervised <b>CL without negative pair</b> . Claims state of art in unsupervised image clustering.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Relatively complex loss computation due to swapped prediction</li> <li>2. Additional online cluster assignment swapping</li> </ol>
DINO	Distillation transformers	Self attention without supervision Moderate computation power	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More research required</li> <li>2. Authors are not self-critical</li> </ol>
Barlow Twins	Redundancy reduction	minimize covariance across embedding dimension  Maximize invariance across sample	



# Remarks on Contrastive Learning

CL is **leading the self-supervision** & potential push for semi-supervised

CL in current state is **compute intensive**

# batch size is huge

SimCLR, performance increase, when batch size of 2048

Reason: large number of negative pairs

- requires array of GPUs and sophisticated parallel processing

knowledge distillation ( BYOL 2020, SimSiam 2020) do not use negative pairs

- batch size 512

However, embedding output size in range of 4096

For non natural images, smaller batch size is already good (128)

Reason: not RGB images, but simpler

# Remarks on Contrastive Learning

CL is **leading the self-supervision** & potential push for semi-supervised

CL in current state is **compute intensive** (batch size, negative pairs, & gradients) which makes it challenging for direct (as-it-is) applications. Needs (**Research Potential**) to be tailored for custom and small-scale application requirement.

Contrastive methods are sensitive to the choice of image/data **augmentation**.

Leveraging utilization of application specific but unlabeled data.

CL can be **benchmarking framework** (Different methods for different applications) for semi-supervised and even supervised task.

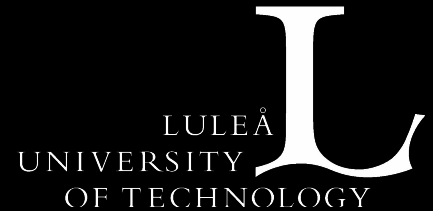
Thanks to my colleagues

There is so much more, I could share

<https://irdta.eu/deeplearn/2023su/>



[bit.ly/2023-nldl-tutorial](https://bit.ly/2023-nldl-tutorial)



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