# Persistent Homology: Intro

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# Outline for studying persistent homology

- 1. Intro to persistent homology
  - Build intuitions of persistent homology: what it does, what it produces
- 2. Formalizing persistent homology
  - Introduce its input (filtration) and study an algorithm for computation
- 3. Different ways for building filtrations
  - Vietoris-Rips filtration, sub-levelset filtration
  - Cubical complexes (for images)
- 4. Interpretation and stability of persistence diagram

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- We know now that, given a topological space (e.g., a simplicial complex), we can use homology (e.g., *Betti number* or *homology basis*) to infer the shape of the data in different dimensions
- **Ex**: The homology basis for the 1-cycles in the below simplicial complex contains the single red 1-cycle.
  - So that we can use the red cycle to represent the 1-dimensional "homological features" of the space



Image source: Yan et al. Persistence Landscape based Topological Data Analysis for Personalized Arrhythmia Classification

- We know now that, given a topological space (e.g., a simplicial complex), we can use homology (e.g., *Betti number* or *homology basis*) to infer the shape of the data in different dimensions
- **Ex**: The 1-dimensional homological features of a torus can be characterized by two cycles:
  - *a* (longitude) and *b* (meridian)



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- But is there any problem?



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- We shall look at at least two problems with it



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- Homology inference relies on given a simplicial complex as input
- Simplicial complex is "highly structured" data, while in practice we don't have the luxury of always having data rich structure
- Typically, data come in as "unstructured" (e.g., point clouds)
- For the right point cloud (which is unstructured), everyone could see that it consists of two rings (1-cycles)
- But we have to construct a simplicial complex from the point cloud first to infer this information



- There are mature methods on reconstruction from point clouds.
- In 2D:



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Image source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JExKRTSI0Po

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Image source: https://elmoatazbill.users.greyc.fr/point\_cloud/index.html

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- There are mature methods on reconstruction from point clouds.
- But there still are problems:
  - 1. The reconstructions process can be costly
  - 2. There are probably more information in the original unstructured data than is reconstructed
  - 3. Reconstruction from point clouds which are not nicely shaped is very hard if at all possible



Image source: https://prototechsolutions.com/cad-notes/lasso-selection-tool/

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- i.e., with some "perturbation" on the data, the four small holes could simply disappear
- But using homology basis we could not differentiate the "more significant holes" from the "less significant ones"



- Similarly, in the following space, there are three 1-dimensional holes, but there is clearly a "more significant" one and two "less significant" ones which also be some artifacts
- Again, using just homology basis we could not differentiate them



• Solving problem 1:



- For the point cloud, persistent homology produces a "topological signature" called **persistence diagram**
- In the diagram, the blue dots represents the two rings, thus correctly inferring the topological structure of the point cloud

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• Solving problem 2:



• For the above shape, its **persistence diagram** provides a measure of the "size" (i.e., "significance") of the 1-dimensional holes so that we can differentiate the three more significant ones from the remaining



• The input to persistent homology is a growing topological space



- The input to persistent homology is a growing topological space
- Given this, it produces a persistence diagram, which is a robust (i.e., stable) "topological signature" that captures the multi-scale topological features (aka. holes) of the data in arbitrary dimensions

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  - We let a value  $\alpha$  ranges, say, from 0 to  $\infty$
  - Let each value  $\alpha$  corresponds to a topological space so that
  - The topological space grows as  $\alpha$  increases from 0 to  $\infty$
- Then, as  $\alpha$  increase, we track the changes of the homology features of the corresponding spaces


#### Examples:

- <u>https://gjkoplik.github.io/pers-hom-examples/0d\_pers\_2d\_data\_widget.html</u>
- <u>https://gjkoplik.github.io/pers-hom-examples/1d\_pers\_2d\_data\_widget.html</u>



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- Notice that homology features / holes are in different dimensions
- The PD where points corresponding to d-dimensional holes is also called the d-dimensional / d-th PD which is typically denoted as  $PD_d$
- And of course, we could also have the PD in all dimensions (this id the PD by default)

# Persistent homology: History

- Persistent homology is proposed roughly around 2000 (or earlier) by several works
- The following is by no means a comprehensive list of works:
  - Edelsbrunner, Letscher and Zomorodian, 2002. Topological persistence and simplification.
  - Zomorodian, A. and Carlsson, G., 2004, June. Computing persistent homology.
  - Carlsson, G., 2009. Topology and data.
  - Ghrist, R., 2008. Barcodes: the persistent topology of data.
  - Singh, G., Mémoli, F. and Carlsson, G.E., 2007. Topological methods for the analysis of high dimensional data sets and 3d object recognition.

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- For this, we need to build a meaningful topological space
- Our strategy is to connect the dots by increasing their size, as before
- Notice that there are different choices of the size



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- Technically, a point does not have "size", so what we are actually doing here is that we put a 2-dimensional ball around each point, where all such balls have the same radius.
- For each different radius, the homology can be **vastly different**, with different cycles in the homology basis corresponding to the different radii
  - We focus on the 1-cycles (1-dimensional holes) in the example
  - For each radius, the colored cycles form the homology basis



• **Question**: What is a correct radius to infer the shape of the point cloud?



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- Answer: It's really hard to know, and there probably is no such "correct" radius



Image source: Bobrowski O, Skraba P. A universal null-distribution for topological data analysis.

• Solution: Consider all radius, and track the changes of the 1-cycles in the homology basis as we increase the radius



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- Solution: Consider all radius, and track the changes of the 1-cycles in the homology basis as we increase the radius
- As the radius increases, different cycles in the basis could appear (getting born) or becomes trivial (dies).
- We pair the **births** and **deaths**, which are the points in the PD



•  $\alpha_0$ : nothing happens.



- $\alpha_0$ : nothing happens.
- $\alpha_1$ : purple cycle born



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 $\Rightarrow (\alpha_1, \alpha_2)$ 



- $\alpha_0$ : nothing happens.  $\alpha_3$ : red cycle born
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- $\alpha_1$ : purple cycle born  $\alpha_4$ : blue cycle born
- $\alpha_2$ : purple cycle dies

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- $\alpha_0$ : nothing happens.
- $\alpha_1$ : purple cycle born
- $\alpha_2$ : purple cycle dies  $\Rightarrow (\alpha_1, \alpha_2)$
- $\alpha_3$ : red cycle born
- $\alpha_4$ : blue cycle born
- $\alpha_5$ : green cycle born





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- $\alpha_2$ : purple cycle dies  $\Rightarrow (\alpha_1, \alpha_2)$
- $\alpha_3$ : red cycle born
- $\alpha_6$ : red cycle dies
- $\alpha_4$ : blue cycle born
- $\alpha_5$ : green cycle born





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- $\alpha_6$ : red cycle dies  $\Rightarrow (\alpha_3, \alpha_6)$
- $\alpha_7$ : blue cycle dies





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$$\alpha_7$$
: blue cycle dies  $\Rightarrow (\alpha_4, \alpha_7)$ 





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- $\alpha_5$ : green cycle born
- $\alpha_6$ : red cycle dies  $\Rightarrow (\alpha_3, \alpha_6)$
- $\alpha_7$ : blue cycle dies  $\Rightarrow (\alpha_4, \alpha_7)$
- $\alpha_8$ : green cycle dies



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 So we have a 1-dimensional PD on the left with the four points corresponding to the different cycles born and died in the growing spaces with different α value, matching the colors



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Image: Bobrowski, Skraba. A universal null-distribution for topological data analysis

• Furthermore, we have that distances of the points to diagonal indicate the difference of birth and death (how long a cycle persist), which in turn indicate the significance of the feature



# Persistent homology: Brief Summary



- Given a growing topological space, produce a set of points on the 2D plane (above the diagonal) called persistence diagram (PD) such that:
  - each point in the PD represents a homological feature (aka. cycle / hole) of the data in a certain dimension.
## **Online resources**

• A webpage for visualizing 1–dim PD: <u>https://gjkoplik.github.io/pers-hom-</u> <u>examples/1d\_pers\_2d\_data\_widget.html</u>



- For another example of persistent homology, we look at the left curve y = f(x)
- Again, we consider a growing space
- Each space in the growing sequence is part of the curve below a certain horizontal line



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- As the space grows, we track the changes of *0-dimensional homology*
- i.e., we track the changes of the connected components and the gaps in between
- On the left, there are three connected components with two gaps in between



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- So we can assume the red connected component is born at the value -∞



- Red component continues
- A new purple component is born

Image source: Makarenko et al. Topological data analysis and diagnostics of compressible MHD turbulence



- Red component continues
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## • Red and purple components continue



- Red and purple components continue
- A new blue component is born













- The purple and blue components merge into one (gaps between them disappear)
- The means that a 0-dimensional homology hole disappears (dies)
- The gap between purple and blue components appears because of birth of the blue component
- So we consider the gap to be born when the blue component is born, i.e., at 2.0

Blue: born at 2.0



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- The gap between purple and blue components appears because of birth of the blue component
- So we consider the gap to be born when the blue component is born, i.e., at 2.0
- So we have a 0-dimensional hole born at 2.0 and dies at 3.0

• Red: born at -∞

• Purple: born at 1.0

• Blue: born at 2.0



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• PD: (2.0, 3.0)











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- So we have a 0-dimensional hole born at 1.0 and dies at 4.0

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• PD: (2.0, 3.0)



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- A 0-dimensional homology hole disappears (dies)
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- So the gap is born at 1.0
- So we have a 0-dimensional hole born at 1.0 and dies at 4.0

• PD: (2.0, 3.0)









 As the value for the line keeps on increasing to +∞, the single red component will keep on persisting

 So we have the red component born at -∞ and dies at +∞






#### **Online resources**

• A webpage for visualizing 0-th PD: <u>https://gjkoplik.github.io/pers-hom-</u> <u>examples/0d\_pers\_2d\_data\_widget.html</u>

#### A similar but more involved example



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- Right is an example where the value is indicated by color (red for high and blue for low)
- You can also treat the value on each point of  $\mathbb{R}^2$  as a "height", and plot the function like the bottom one
- Similar to the previous 1D function, as we increase the value  $\alpha$ , we consider the part (subset) of the domain  $\mathbb{R}^2$  whose values are below  $\alpha$







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- Similar to the previous 1D function, as we increase the value  $\alpha$ , we consider the part (subset) of the domain  $\mathbb{R}^2$  whose values are below  $\alpha$
- Now let's track the birth and death of 0D/1D holes



- Four connected components are born at different values
- (Will not display the birth of each component though)



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- Since C1 is born earlier, we keep C1 and kill C4 (the rule adopted by persistent homology)
- We then add a point (b, d) to the 0-d PD where b is the value in which C4 is born and d is current values where C4 dies (merges with other)



• As the value keep increasing, C1, C2 and C3 merged into the same connected component, producing two additional points in 0-d PD



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- Three additional components C5, C6 and C7 are born
- Also, a 1-dimensional hole H1 is born



• H1 dies, producing a point in the 1-d PD



- H1 dies, producing a point in the 1-d PD
- A 1-dimensional hole H2 is born



• A 1-dimensional hole H3 is born



• H2 and H3 die, producing two additional points in the 1-d PD

- We can also extend the prev. idea and define persistence on 3D function:  $f: \mathbb{R}^3 \to \mathbb{R}$
- Similarly, as we increase the value  $\alpha$ , we consider the part (subset) of the domain  $\mathbb{R}^3$  (or a cube) whose values are below  $\alpha$



Adler, Robert J., Omer Bobrowski, Matthew S. Borman, Eliran Subag, and Shmuel Weinberger. "Persistent homology for random fields and complexes."





(c) 2000 points on a 3D torus.

(d) Corresponding diagram.



(e) Stanford bunny with 1889 points.



(f) Corresponding diagram.







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#### Corresponding to meridian and longitude







(c) 2000 points on a 3D torus.

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(e) Stanford bunny with 1889 points.



(f) Corresponding diagram.

Corresponds to the "crust" of the bunny which is a 2D hole







(c) 2000 points on a 3D torus.

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(e) Stanford bunny with 1889 points.



(f) Corresponding diagram.



This is a solid ball which has no interesting holes

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- Notice that we sometimes use the terms "persistence diagram" and "persistence barcode" interchangeable, i.e., we may call a point in a PD also an interval.
## Example



• Corresponding barcode:

## Example



• Corresponding barcode:



## Another example

