COMP 204
Introduction to image analysis with scikit-image
(part three)

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Edge detection

Goal: Identify regions of the image that contain sharp changes in colors/intensities.
Why? Useful for

- delineating objects (image segmentation)
- recognizing them (object recognition)
- etc.
Edge detection
Edge detection
Edge detection

What’s an edge in an image?

Horizontal edge at row $i$:
- $image[i - 1, j]$ is very different from $image[i + 1, j]$  

Vertical edge at column $j$:
- $image[i, j - 1]$ is very different from $image[i, j + 1]$  

Idea: To determine if an RGB pixel $(i, j)$ belongs to an edge:
For each color $\in \{R, G, B\}$:
- $L_x[color] = image[i, j - 1, color] - image[i, j + 1, color]$  
- $L_y[color] = image[i - 1, j, color] - image[i + 1, j, color]$  
- $\text{gradient}[color] = \sqrt{L_x[color]^2 + L_y[color]^2}$  
- $\text{edginess} = \sqrt{\text{gradient}[R]^2 + \text{gradient}[G]^2 + \text{gradient}[B]^2}$  
- if edginess $> \text{some\_threshold}$, then pixel $(i, j)$ belongs to an edge
def detect_edges(im, min_gradient=50):
    
    Args:
    im: The image on which to detect edges
    min_gradient: The minimum gradient value for a pixel to be called an edge
    Returns: An new image with edge pixels set to white, and everything else set to black
    
    n_row, n_col, colors = image.shape

    # create a empty empty of the same size as the original
    edge_image = np.zeros((n_row, n_col, 3), dtype=np.uint8)

    for i in range(1, n_row - 1):  # avoid the first/last row
        for j in range(1, n_col - 1):  # and first/last col
            grad = [0, 0, 0]  # for each color
            for c in range(3):
                Lx = float(im[i-1,j,c]) - float(im[i+1,j,c])
                Ly = float(im[i,j-1,c]) - float(im[i,j+1,c])
                grad[c] = math.sqrt(Lx**2+Ly**2)
            norm = math.sqrt(grad[0]**2 + grad[1]**2 + grad[2]**2)
            if (norm > min_gradient):
                edge_image[i,j] = (255,255,255)
    return edge_image
Analysis of microscopy images

Cells (purple "circles") are infected by Plasmodium falciparum (small red dots).
Edge detection (threshold = 60)
Edge detection (threshold = 120)
Edge detection

Skimage has many edge detection algorithms:
http://scikit-image.org/docs/0.5/auto_examples/plot_canny.html
Counting/annotating cells

What if we want to automatically identify/count cells in the image?

Idea:

1. Find edges in the image
2. Identify closed (encircled) shapes within the edge image

Each closed shape is assigned a different color. Number of closed shapes (≈ approximation to cell count) is calculated.
Seed filling algorithm

How to take an edge image and fill-in each closed shape?
Seed filling (aka flood filling) algorithm:

- Start from a black pixel.
- Color it and expand to its neighboring pixel, unless neighbor is an edge (white).
- Keep expanding until no more expansion is possible.
- Repeat from a new starting point, until no black pixels are left.
Seed filling algorithm

Oops: I’ve swapped black and white!... Black = edge, white = background

Seed = pixel at position (4,4)
Seed filling algorithm

Oops: I’ve swapped black and white!... Black = edge, white = background
Seed = pixel at position (4,4)
def seedfill(im, seed_row, seed_col, fill_color, bckg):
    
    # The image on which to perform the seedfill algorithm
    seed_row and seed_col: position of the seed pixel
    fill_color: Color for the fill
    bckg: Color of the background, to be filled
    Returns: Nothing
    Behavior: Modifies image by performing seedfill
    
    size=0 # keep track of patch size
    n_row, n_col, foo = im.shape
    front=[(seed_row,seed_col)] # initial front

while len(front)>0:
    r, c = front.pop(0) # remove 1st element of front
    if np.array_equal(im[r, c,:], bckg):
        im[r, c]=fill_color # color pixel
        size+=1
        # look at all neighbors
        for i in range(max(0, r−1), min(n_row, r+2)):
            for j in range(max(0, c−1), min(n_col, c+2)):
                # if background, add to front
                if np.array_equal(im[i,j,:], bckg) and
                                (i,j) not in front:
                    front.append((i,j))

return size
Seeding from all possible starting pixel...

```python
min_cell_size = 100  # based on prior knowledge
max_cell_size = 300  # based on prior knowledge
n_cells = 0

# look for a black pixel to seed the filling
for i in range(image.shape[0]):
    for j in range(image.shape[1]):
        if np.array_equal(edge[i, j, :], (0, 0, 0)):
            rand_color = (random.randint(0, 255),
                          random.randint(0, 255),
                          random.randint(0, 255))

            size = seedfill(edge, i, j, rand_color, (0, 0, 0))

            if size >= min_cell_size and size < max_cell_size:
                n_cells += 1

print("Number of cells:", n_cells)
```
Seed filling execution

See live execution of program