Towards automatic parsing of arbitrary form images The Label-Value pairing problem

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Family History TECHNOLOGY WORKSHOP 2019



Outline

- Problem definition
- Previous work
- Dataset
- Elements of a solution
- Subproblem: Label-Value pairing
- Method
 - Detection
 - Pairing
 - Optimization
- Results
- Conclusion

The problem

- Genealogical data is often recorded on forms
 - Birth, death, marriage records, etc.
- We'd like to automatically extract this information

The problem

Template based solutions

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The problem

- Some collections are not of uniform form types
 - Most have variations of the same form
 - Some are fairly random assortments for forms
- We want to be able to automatically extract information from a form image that we have never seen before
 - Template-free
 - Noisy, historical forms

Elements of a solution

- 1. Detect (locate) pre-printed text and input writing on the page
- 2. Transcribe (read) the pre-printed text and input writing
- 3. Identify the meaning of the input writing (using the pre-printed text and layout)
- 4. Format the transcription of the handwriting to match a data schema

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Bottom-left. J. Hirayama, H. Shinjo, T. Takahashi, and T. Nagasaki, "Development of template-free form recognition system," in Document Analysis and Recognition (ICDAR), 2011 International Conference on . IEEE, 2011, pp.37-241.

Right: M. Hammami, P. Heroux, S. Adam, and V. P. d'Andecy, "One-shot field spotting on colored forms using subgraph isomorphism " in International Conference on Document Analysis and Recognition 2015

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Dataset

- From the National Archive, imaged by FamilySearch
- We restrict our problem to forms without tables or fill-in-the-blank paragraphs
 - Though we use the whole set to pre-train our detector
- Size

0	Train:	143 images	(full 682)
0	Validation:	13 images	(full 59)
0	Test:	13 images	(full 62)



Talk to me if you're interested in using it.

Subproblem: Label-Value pairing

Often determining the meaning of input writing is as simple as knowing it's label

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Subproblem: Label-Value pairing

Often determining the meaning of input writing is as simple as knowing it's label



Subproblem: Label-Value pairing

- First pre-printed text and input writing must be detected/located
- Then we need to decide which pre-printed text is related to which input writing
 - Not always one-to-one relationships!



We do this without transcribing/reading the text and handwriting.

• Language agnostic

Method



Method



- We detect lines of text/writing using an object detection method.
- Specifically we model our detector after YOLOv2/v3.
 - Single fully convolutional network



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However, a normal convolutional net architecture does not handle very long text/writing lines.

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and Hurry Co Huskeep	residing
at No. 68. Helen D	Street, in the
City of Walerney	
both in said County, and both citizens of said United States, severally de	pose and say.
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last past, during whie	time he has
resided in Waterville, Winslow I Garde	ier
that he has resided within the United States five years next preceding the	Pressed Proven
16 Th day of Muurch	D. 1904, the
date of his application for naturalization, and within the State of Maine	one year next
preceding said date; and that, to the best of our knowledge, information	and belief, he
has meanwhile conducted himself and behaved as a man of good moral char	racter, attached
to the principles of the Constitution of the United States, and well dispose	d towards the

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However, a normal convolutional net architecture does not handle very long text/writing lines.

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has meanwhile conducted himself and behaved as a man of good moral cl to the principles of the Constitution of the United States, and well dispo	baracter, attached osed towards the

Split detections

Missed detections

- We detect lines of text/writing using an object detection method.
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 - Single fully convolutional network

However, a normal convolutional net architecture does not handle very long text/writing lines.

YOLO handles this with multi-resolution detection.

\wedge	
KENNEBEC ss;-Superior Court On this thornty first day of June	A. D. 19
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both in said County, and both citizens of said United States, see that we have known the foregoing applicant for less and last past, due	find which time he has
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to the principles of the Constitution of the United States, and we	Il disposed towards the

Split detections

Missed detections

We increase the horizontal receptive field of our network by introducing dilated 1x3 convolutions.

Detection network





Detection Results

Mean average precision (measures both precision and recall)

Normal convolutional network: 0.397 mAP

With dilatations (our architecture): 0.453 mAP



11A Waberefore, your applicant prays, that he may be admitted to become a citizen of the 23" NOTE PARTICULARLY-FOR USE OF ALIENS WHO ARRIVED BEFORE JUNE 29, 1966. said United States of America, according to the forms of the statutes in such case made FACTS FOR PETITION FOR NATURALIZATION Circk of court and applicant should read these instructions carefully. [Circk of courts should rests to execute petitions for align who survei in its United Station after Jame 29, 1000, until certificate of arrival is familished the clock by the Bureau of Manmanian, start request that has not of real 250. [See Test Stations.] disation, shift request of the align or form 22.0. 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My wife's name is married in the same this with the three other with the three both and the other both at the other deal; that married, in short enser one's to an autore other the same the other three both at the other three both the same three both the same the other three both the same the other three both the same She was born in ______ [] toward _____ on the _____ day of ______ [18] and now resides at [(Surferantitut)] [Carrows] [Carrows] [Carrows] 1994. Sworn to by the said Pobut Stobic Jun 21 I have _____ children, and the name , date , and place of birth, and place of residence of each of said before the Court. born day of 1 at ; resides at State of Maine. day of ; resides at , born day of , 1 at KENNEBEC ses - Superior Court. On this turnity first day of June WATERVILL , I at . D. 1904 day of , 1 , at ; resides at at No. 88. Diebar , born day of , 1 at ; resides at Street, in the [City of] Waterween and Stury o Sturkere 8. I am _____ able to speak the English language. at No. 68. Delvar 9. I have resided continuously in the United States since the day of day of day 1905, and in the City of Walerinee of JORADO since the S day of Lep 1905 both in said County, and both citizens of said United States, severally depose and say, 10. I have heretofore made petition for United States citizenship. that we have known the foregoing applicant for at leverst five yraces (If petitioner has heretofore made application for citizenship, the facts required should be fully stated in the following blanks:) KENNE last past, during which time, he has resided in Waterville, Wieslow Hardener in the day of , which was denied for the following reason; that he has resided within the United States five years next preceding the 16 Th day of Murch date of his application for naturalization, and within the State of Maine one year next The cause of such denial has since been cured or removed. presentions and readings address addresses at two streams, editions of the Trainet stream investigation for at least. Not your, last reads at a readers of the State is which partition is made, who will make a minimum of the Trainet streams and who will read a stream with you before the clock when partition is made. Who will make a minimum of the Trainet streams and who will read a stream with you before the clock when partition is made. preceding said date; and that, to the best of our knowledge, information and belief, he has meanwhile conducted himself and behaved as a man of good moral character, attached mut prosusting Shipping sleph voigan ERIOR to the principles of the Constitution of the United States, and well disposed towards the James E. Surke 1719 Erschaus good order and happiness of the same, and obeyed the laws thereof. SUP Hand Hacker June 2/ 1904 Sworn to by the above-named Witnesses, before the Court Clerk. ATTEST :

Method



Heuristic over pairing

- Rather than considering every possible pairing, we only consider a pair between detections that are within line-of-sight.
- +0.99 recall on relationships



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Heuristic over pairing

- Rather than considering every possible pairing, we only consider a pair between detections that are within line-of-sight.
- +0.99 recall on relationships



Method



- Nearest neighbor of opposite class
 - Simple, but definitely not optimal

- Nearest neighbor of opposite class
- Heuristic scoring functions (borrowed from Hirayama et al. "Development of template-free form recognition system")
 - Average of three functions
 - It's too the left
 - Same height
 - Not too far apart
 - Better, but still not optimat

- Nearest neighbor of opposite class
- Heuristic scoring functions(borrowed from Hirayama et al. "Development of template-free form recognition system")
- Why not learn heuristic rules? Give shapes and distances as features to machine learning classifier (neural network)
 - Heights, widths, x-offset, y-offset, distances of each corner
 - Two hidden fully connected layers, ReLU, batch norm
 - Trained from detector output

- Nearest neighbor of opposite class
- Heuristic scoring functions(borrowed from Hirayama et al. "Development of template-free form recognition system")
- Why not learn heuristic rules? Give shapes and distances as features to machine learning classifier (neural network)
- Let us see!
 - Why not use a convolutional network look at the potential relationships?
 - RolAlign features from detector network (reusing features)
 - Small convolutional network trained with binary cross entropy
 - Detector is pre-trained, them fine-tuned as classifying network trains.



Optimization

Pairing decisions should depend on each other.

We frame this as an optimization over all relationships, given a prior of how many neighbors/relationships each detection should have

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Optimization

Intuition: We want to pick relationships (x_r) with high probability $(p_r > 0.5)$, but we don't want more relationships (sum x_r) than we think a text instance has (n_r) .

c is a constant indicating how much we trust n_i

maximize
$$\sum_{r=1}^{R} (2p_r - 1)x_r - c \sum_{i}^{B} (n_i - \sum_{x_r \in R_i} x_r)^2$$

subject to $x_r \in \{0, 1\},$

Optimization

We need a prediction of the number of neighbors (generally 0 or 1)

- We can have the detector network predict the number of neighbors (along with class, etc.)
- We can have an additional convolutional network (parallel to relationship classifier) predict the number of neighbors

Method



Results for Label-Value pair finding

	mAP	mAP with optimization
Nearest neighbor	0.197	0.243
Heuristic rules	0.244	0.243
Blind network	0.325	0.349
Full/visual network	0.566	0.566

True positive occurs when both detections have >0.5 IoU with ground truth bounding boxes and there is a true relationship between them.





New Dork Branch Freedmans Union Commission, TEACHER'S SCHOOL REPORT, 1864 For the Month of 1100 Name and Location of school, " Firm swick Co" - hausenceville, Ia, September 25th 1808 - To cleve June 30 Mystog When opened Frot 3 Northern, Suo White, Jur Number of Teachers, By whom the Teachers are considered the Branch Human's Unice Connects in Sessions per any, Fier Longh of Sessions 0/2 hours Jurant Number of Days kept. Boys 42 this 55 White, Number of Pupils enrolled ils envilled at last Report, Free hermecheed & two (1112) Cripht 181 Number left Sch Thuce 131 Number of new Pupils this month, 34 Always Panetual, 2-6 Average Attendance, 106 Number always present, 111 2 Number over 16 years of age. Under six 25 7.36 Number of Pupils paying Lution. Amount paid to you this month, S In 1st of Series int at 16 at 20 min 27 min 11 16 under in America and Frimer. Eighty one 1311 Number in Mental Arithmetic, In 2d of a Series 6 60 In ad, 0 Number in Written Arithmetic, 8 In 2d of Carlos 14 In su. Number in Leoorranke Hort 1 Hour Number in Grammar, 1441 61 20 In Bound Number who write ou States, Number at Newlin-Work. 1 Is your School graded 11.in 1200 How many orages ? Number of rupus 27 2 Of Teachers 101 35 Number of Fupus, Of Teache Number of Fupils, Winne want a Clinar in Wild Number of Pupils 0 Banh Blank should be filled with a number or cipher, and the Report forwarded as soon after the first of the Month as possible. Remarks, in letter form, to be made by the teacher on the third page of this sheet.

Conclusion

- Trainable method for detecting pre-printed text and input writing
- Trainable method for determining relationships
 - Outperforms heuristic baselines
- Method is language agnostic
 - Reading text may help in pairing
- This is one piece of a bigger problem

Thank you!

Questions?