Rendering Participating Media

Data Visualization Seminar

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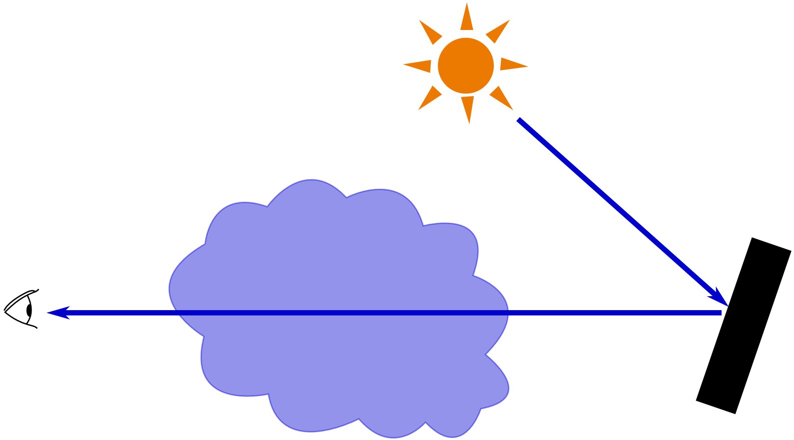
Motivation

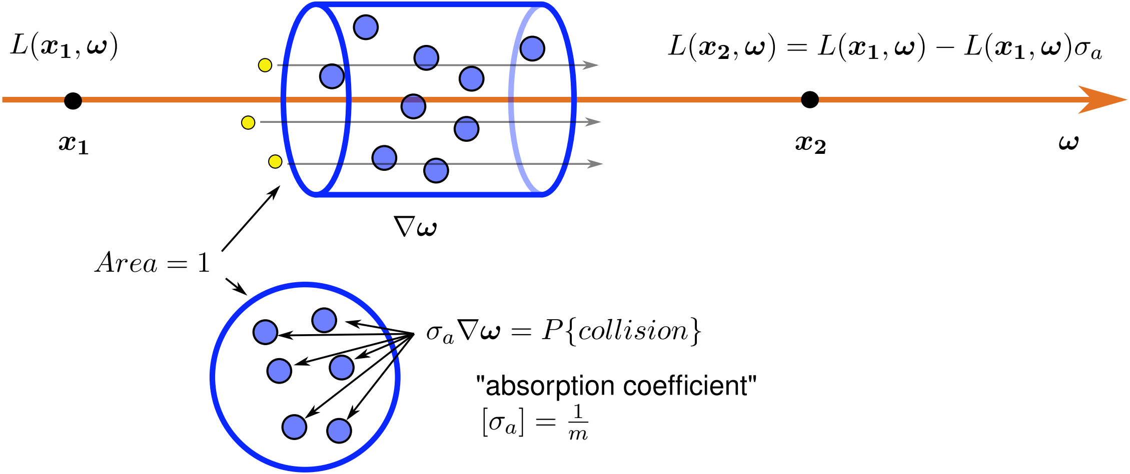



Motivation

Propagation of light in a medium



Change of radiance in a differential volume

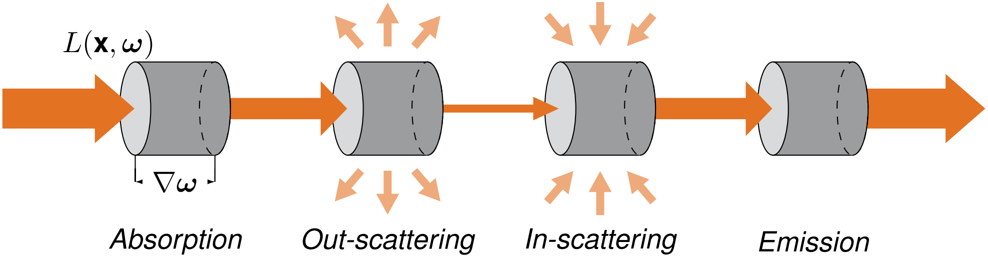


"absorption coefficient"

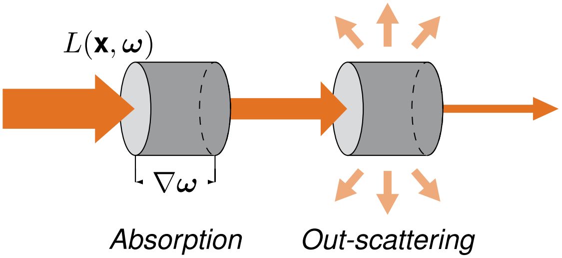
$[\sigma_a] = \frac{1}{m}$

Possible interactions

between the volume and the light traveling through the medium



Summing up the losses



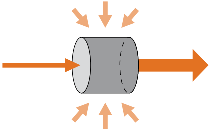
σ_a : Absorption coefficient
σ_s : Scattering coefficient
$\sigma_a + \sigma_s = \sigma_t$: Extinction coefficient

We lose $\sigma_t(\boldsymbol{x})L(\boldsymbol{x}, \boldsymbol{\omega})$ radiance due to *absorption* and *out-scattering*.

$\sigma_t \implies$ Homogeneous

$\sigma_t(\boldsymbol{x}) \implies$ Heterogeneous

In-scattered radiance



$$L_s(\boldsymbol{x}, \boldsymbol{\omega}) = \int_{S^2} f_p(\boldsymbol{x}, \boldsymbol{\omega}, \boldsymbol{\omega}') L_i(\boldsymbol{x}, \boldsymbol{\omega}') d\boldsymbol{\omega}'$$

Phase function

$f_p(\boldsymbol{x}, \boldsymbol{\omega}, \boldsymbol{\omega}')$

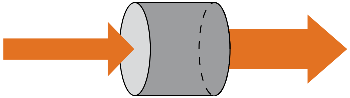
$\approx BSDF$

(in surface rendering)

- scattering at point $\boldsymbol{x}$, given incident ($\boldsymbol{\omega}$) and outgoing ($\boldsymbol{\omega}'$) directions
- $\int_{S^2} f_p = 1$
- $f_p(\theta)\big|_{\theta = \measuredangle(\boldsymbol{\omega}, \boldsymbol{\omega}')}$
- $f_p(\boldsymbol{x}, \boldsymbol{\omega}, \boldsymbol{\omega}') = 1/(4\pi)$, if the medium is *isotropic*

(otherwise, *anisotropic*)

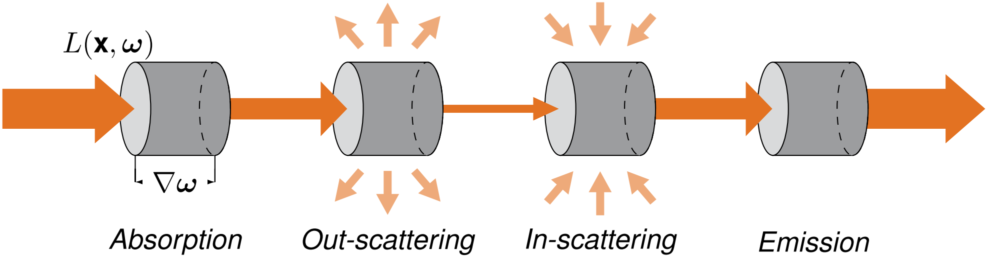
Emission



$$L_e(\boldsymbol{x}, \boldsymbol{\omega})$$

$$\sigma_a(\boldsymbol{x}) L_e(\boldsymbol{x}, \boldsymbol{\omega})$$

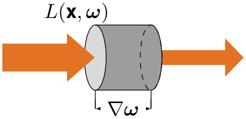
Assembling all the parts



- Loses $\sigma_a L(x, \omega)$ due to absorption
- Loses $\sigma_s L(x, \omega)$ due to out-scattering
- Gains $\sigma_s L_i(x, \omega)$ due to in-scattering
- Gains $\sigma_a L_e(x, \omega)$ due to emission

RTE – Radiative Transfer Equation

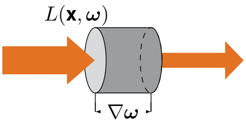
The change in radiance L traveling along direction ω through a differential volume element at point x.



$$(\boldsymbol{\omega}\nabla)L(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{\omega}) = \underbrace{-\sigma_t(\boldsymbol{x})L(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{\omega})}_{Extinction} + \underbrace{\sigma_s(\boldsymbol{x})L_s(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{\omega})}_{In-scattering} + \underbrace{\sigma_a(\boldsymbol{x})L_e(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{\omega})}_{Emission} \quad (1)$$

RTE – Radiative Transfer Equation

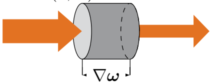
The change in radiance L traveling along direction $\boldsymbol{\omega}$ through a differential volume element at point $\boldsymbol{x}$.



$$(\boldsymbol{\omega}\nabla)L(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{\omega}) = \underbrace{-\sigma_t(\boldsymbol{x})L(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{\omega})}_{Extinction} + \underbrace{\sigma_s(\boldsymbol{x})L_s(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{\omega})}_{In-scattering} + \underbrace{\sigma_a(\boldsymbol{x})L_e(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{\omega})}_{Emission} \quad (2)$$

Let’s integrate it!

Integrating the loss of radiance



$$L(\boldsymbol{x} + dx) = L(\boldsymbol{x}) - L(\boldsymbol{x})\sigma_t(\boldsymbol{x})dx\Big|_{dx=\nabla\boldsymbol{\omega}, L(\boldsymbol{x})=L(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{\omega})}$$

$$\boxed{\frac{dL(\boldsymbol{x})}{dx} = -L(\boldsymbol{x})\sigma_t(\boldsymbol{x})} \text{ ("exponential extinction")}$$

$$\int_{L(x)}^{L(x+S)} \frac{1}{L} dL = -\int_0^S \sigma_t(\boldsymbol{x})dx \tag{3}$$

$$ln(L(\boldsymbol{x} + S)) - ln(L(\boldsymbol{x})) = -\int_0^S \sigma_t(\boldsymbol{x})dx$$

Transmittance
The Beer-Lambert Law

$$\Longrightarrow \quad L(\boldsymbol{x}+S) = L(\boldsymbol{x})e^{-\int_0^S \sigma_t(\boldsymbol{x}+s)ds}$$

Usually written as:

$e^{-\int_0^y \sigma_t(\boldsymbol{x}-s\boldsymbol{\omega})ds} = T(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{y})$

"transmittance coefficient" $T(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{y})$

net reduction factor between $\boldsymbol{x}$ and $\boldsymbol{y}$

due to absorption and out-scattering

$\int_0^y \sigma_t(\boldsymbol{x}-s\boldsymbol{\omega})ds = \tau(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{y})$

"optical thickness" τ

$$T(t) = e^{-\tau(t)} = e^{-\int_0^t \sigma_t(\boldsymbol{x}-s\boldsymbol{\omega})ds}$$

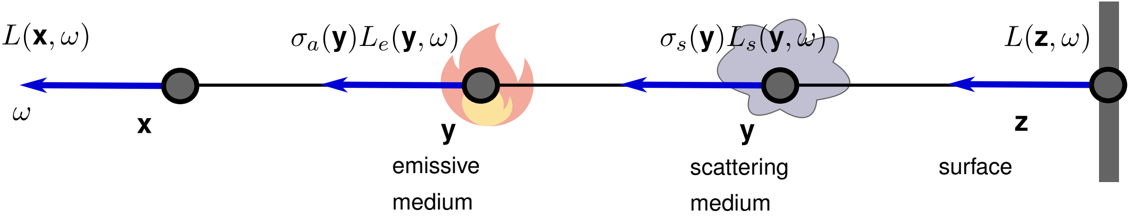
over distance t

RTE – Radiative Transfer Equation

The integral version

$$L(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{\omega}) = \int_0^\infty \underbrace{e^{-\int_0^y \sigma_t(\boldsymbol{x}-s\boldsymbol{\omega})ds}}_{\text{Transmittance } T(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{y})} \left[\underbrace{\sigma_s(\boldsymbol{y})L_s(\boldsymbol{y},\boldsymbol{\omega})}_{\text{in-scatter}} + \underbrace{\sigma_a(\boldsymbol{y})L_e(\boldsymbol{y},\boldsymbol{\omega})}_{\text{emission}}\right] d\boldsymbol{y} \tag{4}$$

VRE – Volume Rendering Equation



$$L(\boldsymbol{x}, \boldsymbol{\omega}) = \int_0^z T(\boldsymbol{x}, \boldsymbol{y}) \left[\sigma_a(\boldsymbol{y}) L_e(\boldsymbol{y}, \boldsymbol{\omega}) + \sigma_s(\boldsymbol{y}) L_s(\boldsymbol{y}, \boldsymbol{\omega})\right] dy + T(\boldsymbol{x}, \mathbf{z}) L(\mathbf{z}, \boldsymbol{\omega}) \tag{5}$$

Monte Carlo Integration

- $\int f(x)dx = \int \frac{f(x)}{p(x)}p(x)dx = E_N\left[\frac{f(x)}{p(x)}\right] \approx \frac{1}{N}\sum_{i=1}^{N}\frac{f(x_i)}{p(x_i)}$
- Applied to the Volume Rendering Equation:

$$\langle L(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{\omega})\rangle = \frac{T(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{y})}{p(y)}\left[\sigma_a(\boldsymbol{y})L_e(\boldsymbol{y},\boldsymbol{\omega}) + \sigma_s(\boldsymbol{y})L_s(\boldsymbol{y},\boldsymbol{\omega})\right] + T(\boldsymbol{x},\mathbf{z})L(\mathbf{z},\boldsymbol{\omega})$$

- $p(y)$ is the PDF of sampling point y

$$\Longrightarrow \sum_{i=1}^{N}\left(\frac{T(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{y}_i)}{p(y_i)}\left[\sigma_a(\boldsymbol{y}_i)L_e(\boldsymbol{y}_i,\boldsymbol{\omega}) + \sigma_s(\boldsymbol{y}_i)L_s(\boldsymbol{y}_i,\boldsymbol{\omega})\right]\right) + T(\boldsymbol{x},\mathbf{z})L(\mathbf{z},\boldsymbol{\omega})$$

- We need:
  - Sampling distances
  - Estimating the transmittance T along a ray

Tracking
In homogeneous volumes

- Simulate how a photon bounces around inside a volume
- Explicitly modeling absorption and scattering effects

$$T(t) = e^{-\int_0^t \sigma_t(\boldsymbol{x}-s\boldsymbol{\omega})ds} = e^{-\int_0^t \sigma_t ds} \boxed{= e^{-\sigma_t t} = T(t)} \quad (6)$$

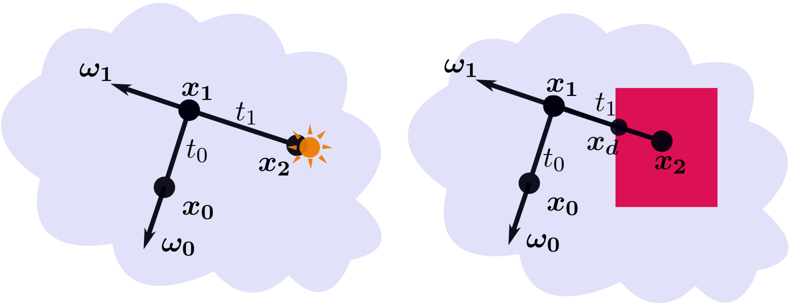
PDF $p(t) = \sigma_t e^{-\sigma_t t}$ (by normalizing)
Perfectly importance sample with $t' = -ln(1-\zeta)/\sigma_t$ $\qquad \zeta \in [0,1)$

$$L(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{\omega}) = \int_{t=0}^{d} p(t)\Big[\frac{\sigma_a}{\sigma_t} L_e(\boldsymbol{x_t},\omega) + \frac{\sigma_s}{\sigma_t} L_s(\boldsymbol{x_t},\boldsymbol{\omega})\Big] dt + L_d(\boldsymbol{x_d},\boldsymbol{\omega}) \quad (7)$$

$$\frac{\sigma_a+\sigma_s}{\sigma_t} = 1; P_a = \frac{\sigma_a}{\sigma_t}; P_s = \frac{\sigma_a}{\sigma_t} \quad (8)$$

Closed-Form tracking

In homogeneous volumes



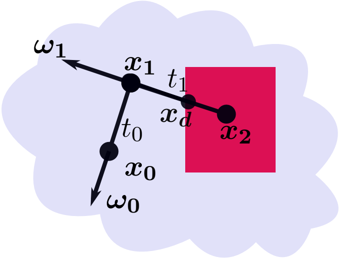
$$L(\boldsymbol{x}, \boldsymbol{\omega}) = \int_{t=0}^{d} p(t) \Big[P_a L_e(\boldsymbol{x_t}, \omega) + P_s L_s(\boldsymbol{x_t}, \boldsymbol{\omega}) \Big] dt + L_d(\boldsymbol{x_d}, \boldsymbol{\omega}) \quad (9)$$

Regular tracking

In heterogeneous volumes

What happens if the volume is **not homogeneous**? $\implies \sigma_t(\boldsymbol{x})$

$\implies$ apply closed-form tracking to homogeneous sub-parts $\implies \sigma_t$



$$L(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{\omega}) = \int_{t=0}^{d} p(t)\Big[P_a L_e(\boldsymbol{x_t},\omega) + P_s L_s(\boldsymbol{x_t},\boldsymbol{\omega})\Big]dt + L_d(\boldsymbol{x_d},\boldsymbol{\omega}) \quad (10)$$

Delta tracking
Introducing null-collisions

1. Problem: the volume is heterogeneous
2. Idea: **Increase the number of interactions** to make it homogeneous, but **reject** some of the interactions $\implies$ **null-collisions**

$$L(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{\omega}) = \int_0^\infty T_{\bar{\sigma}}(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{y}) \Big[\underbrace{P_s(\boldsymbol{y}) L_s(\boldsymbol{y},\boldsymbol{\omega})}_{\text{in-scatter}} + \underbrace{P_a(\boldsymbol{y}) L_e(\boldsymbol{y},\boldsymbol{\omega})}_{\text{emission}} + \underbrace{P_n(\boldsymbol{y}) L(\boldsymbol{y},\boldsymbol{\omega})}_{\text{null-collision}} \Big] d\boldsymbol{y} \tag{11}$$

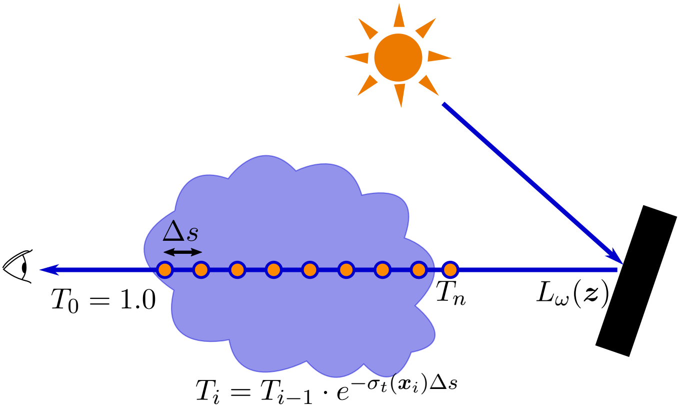
$$T_{\bar{\sigma}}(\boldsymbol{x},\boldsymbol{y}) = e^{-\int_0^y \sigma_s(\boldsymbol{s}) + \sigma_a(\boldsymbol{s}) + \sigma_n(\boldsymbol{s}) d\boldsymbol{s}} \tag{12}$$

$$\sigma_n(\boldsymbol{x}) = \bar{\sigma} - \sigma_t(\boldsymbol{x}) \tag{13}$$

$$\bar{\sigma} = \sigma_s(\boldsymbol{x}) + \sigma_a(\boldsymbol{x}) + \sigma_n(\boldsymbol{x}) \tag{14}$$

Transmittance Estimation

Ray Marching



Acceleration Data Structures

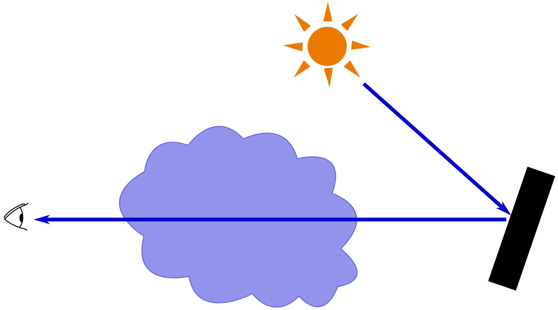
- Spatially-varying properties
- Data access usually dominates the render time
  $\Longrightarrow$ data structures are key for achieving good performance
- Volume data can quickly grow into hundreds of gigabytes for production
  - For example, peak storage needed for a single shot of the movie Soul was 80 TBs.

Remaning challenges and open problems

- Joint handling of surfaces and volumes
  - Unifying the different techniques
- Machine Learning
  - Vast cost of data access and tracking particles high-albedo volumes (resulting in lots of scattering) – e.g. clouds

Summary

- Problem statement and model of volume and light propagating through it
- Interaction between light ray and volume
- Formula for getting the radiance $L(x, \boldsymbol{\omega})$ to make it applicable to usual ray tracing methods
- Subtasks needed
  - Distance sampling
  - Transmittance estimation
- Optimization
- Remaining challenges and open problems



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