What You Can See in Limited Data Tomography

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DTU Training School: Scientific Computing for X-Ray Computed Tomography (CT), January 6, 2021

(Partial support from U.S. NSF, Otto Mønsteds Fond, Simons Foundation)

X-ray Tomography

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4. Understand, geometrically, how this depends on the data.

Some History: The first CAT Scanner

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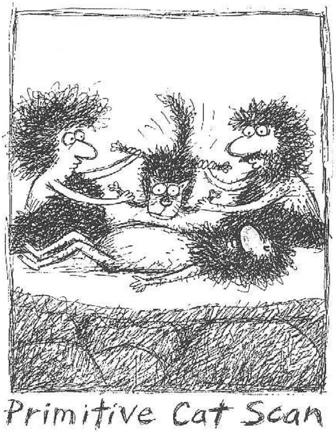

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Allan won the 1979 Nobel Prize in Medicine! (early AM)...taught!

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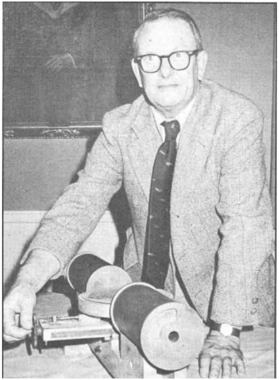
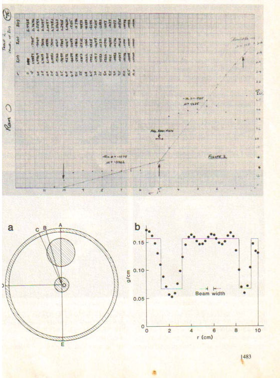
Cormack’s CT Scanner

Allan + Scanner



His original calculations



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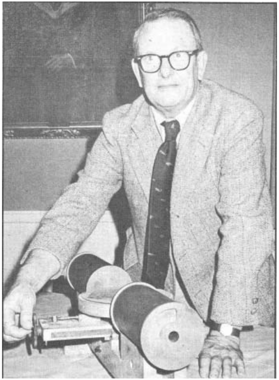

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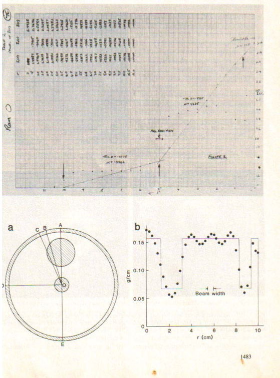

Cost: DKK 2400

Nobel Prize!!

Modern GE scanner

GE Reconstruction

Modern GE scanner

Cost: DKK 12,000,000

GE Reconstruction

The Mathematical Model of X-ray CT

f a function in the plane representing the density of an object

L a line in the plane over which the photons travel.

The X-ray (Radon) Transform:

$$\text{Tomographic Data} \sim \mathcal{R}f(L) = \int_{x \in L} f(x)\,ds$$

–The 'amount' of material on the line the X-rays traverse.

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With *complete data* (lines throughout the object in fairly evenly spaced directions), good reconstruction methods exist (e.g., Filtered Backprojection [Natterer, Natterer-Wübbling]).

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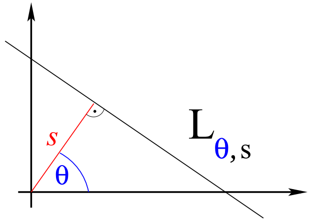
Parallel Beam Scanning Geometry

The angle: $\theta \in [0^\circ, 360^\circ]$ $\quad \bar{\theta} = (\cos(\theta), \sin(\theta))$

The lines over which X-rays travel: $L_{\theta,s}$ is the line perpendicular to θ and s units from the origin (in the opposite direction of θ if $s < 0$) (∼fan beam but simpler)



Note $L_{\theta+180^\circ,-s} = L_{\theta,s}$ $\longrightarrow$

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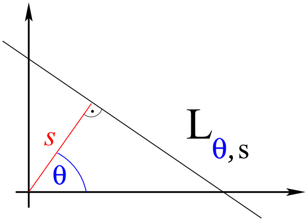

Note $L_{\theta+180^\circ,-s} = L_{\theta,s}$ $\longrightarrow$

Moral

Each line can be parameterized by a unique $(\theta, s) \in [0^\circ, 180^\circ[\times [-1, 1]$.
or redundantly by two $(\theta, s) \in [0^\circ, 360^\circ[\times [-1, 1]$.

X-ray Tomographic Data

The object: f is the density function of an object in the plane–inside the unit disk (radius 1 centered at $(0,0)$).

Tomographic data: $\mathcal{R}f(\theta,s) = \int_{x\in L_{\theta,s}} f(x)ds$ is calculated using X-rays traveling along the line $L_{\theta,s}$.

In practice: a finite number of evenly distributed lines.

*The **Data Domain** is the set of lines $L_{\theta,s}$ over which data are taken–equivalently, the set of (θ,s) parameterizing those lines.*

Complete X-ray Tomographic Data

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Complete Tomographic Data: *X-ray data are given over all lines going through the body (e.g., $L_{\theta,s}$ for $(\theta,s) \in [0^\circ, 180^\circ] \times [-1,1]$).*

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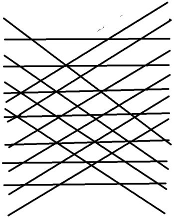
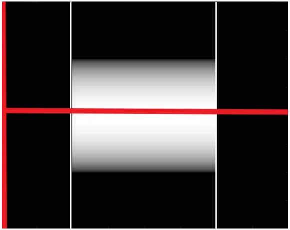
Example: The set of (θ, s) over which data are taken, the *data domain*, includes only horizontal-ish lines–$L_{\theta,s}$ with $(\theta, s) \in S = [45^\circ, 135^\circ] \times [-1, 1]$





Horizontal-*ish* lines are in the data domain, (shown in (θ, s) space on right).

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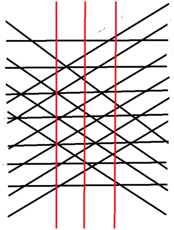
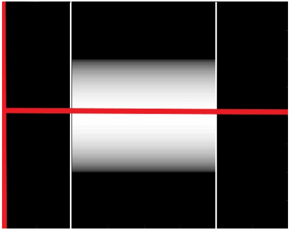


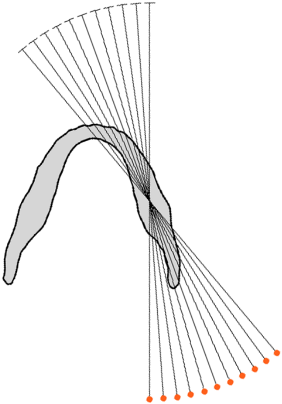


Vertical-*ish* lines are missing (data domain shown in (θ, s) space on right).

Limited Angle CT in Dental Imaging

Dental Scanner–head goes in “Π”

Jaw showing X-ray projection angles

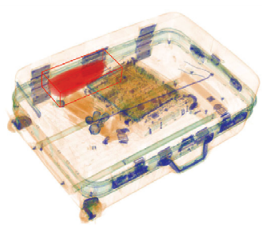


http://www.siltanen-research.net

Limited Angle CT in Luggage Testing

Luggage Scanner

Sample Luggage scan



Scanner moves above and below suitcase ⟶

Analogic COBRA carry-on luggage scanner

FBP

FBP for complete data: $f = \frac{1}{4\pi}\mathcal{R}^*\Lambda\left(\mathcal{R}f\right)$

- $\mathcal{R}^*$ is the backprojection operator, Λ the filter, $\mathcal{R}f$ the data.

- *We know the data only for $(\theta, s) \in S$.*
- *So, we mask the data off of S the data domain–set the data we don't have to zero, and then do FBP on this completed data!*
- ***The mask for limited data:*** $\chi_S(\theta, s) = \begin{cases} 1 & (\theta, s) \in S \\ 0 & (\theta, s) \notin S \end{cases}.$
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Note: by multiplying $\mathcal{R}f$ by χ_S, we set the data off of S—the data we don't have–to zero.

Example: Limited Angle FBP

FBP with general data domain S.

$$f(x) \sim \frac{1}{4\pi}\mathcal{R}^* \Lambda \left(\chi_S \mathcal{R} f\right), \qquad \chi_S(\theta, s) = \begin{cases} 1 & (\theta, s) \in S \\ 0 & (\theta, s) \notin S \end{cases}.$$

$$= \frac{1}{4\pi}\int_{0^\circ}^{360^\circ} \Lambda \left(\chi_S \mathcal{R} f\right)\left(\theta, x \cdot \overline{\theta}\right) d\theta.$$

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- By integrating from a to b, we reconstruct using only data in the data domain, $S = [a^\circ, b^\circ] \times [-1, 1]$.

Example: Limited Angle FBP

FBP with general data domain S.

$$f(x) \sim \frac{1}{4\pi}\mathcal{R}^*\Lambda\left(\chi_S\mathcal{R}f\right), \qquad \chi_S(\theta,s) = \begin{cases} 1 & (\theta,s)\in S \\ 0 & (\theta,s)\notin S \end{cases}.$$

$$= \frac{1}{4\pi}\int_{0^\circ}^{360^\circ} \Lambda\left(\chi_S\mathcal{R}f\right)(\theta, x\cdot\overline{\theta})\,d\theta.$$

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- By integrating from a to b, we reconstruct using only data in the data domain, $S = [a^\circ, b^\circ]\times[-1,1]$. We do standard FBP on data that is masked (is set to zero) off of S.

Tufts UNIVERSITY

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- So, knowing the boundaries of structures in the test object is important.
- We don't always need to know the exact density values of the object.
- Algorithms such as limited data FBP can be useful!

Which features of the body are sharpest in this X-ray image?

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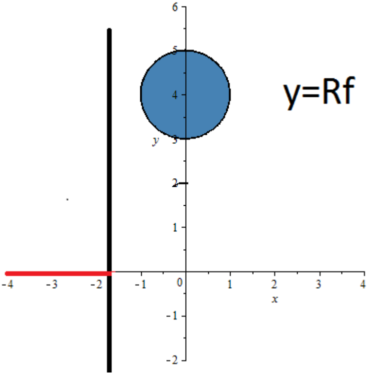
Which X-ray beams show edges (boundaries) (pic⟶)?

Answer: The beams tangent to the edges (boundaries) of the bones!

Now see why mathematically.

CT data of a disk of radius 1 over vertical lines



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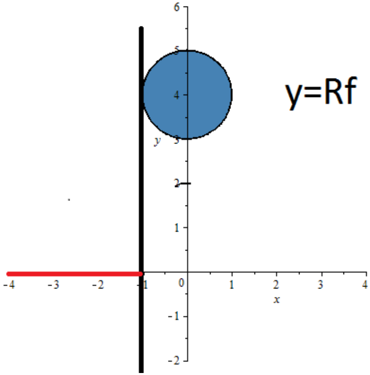

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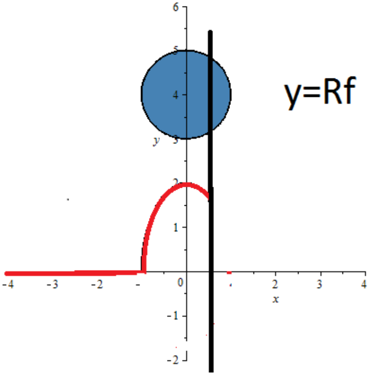

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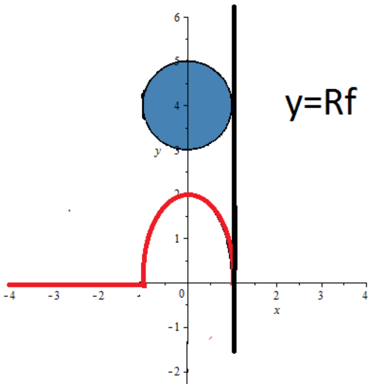

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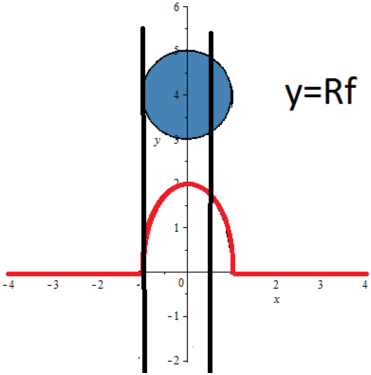

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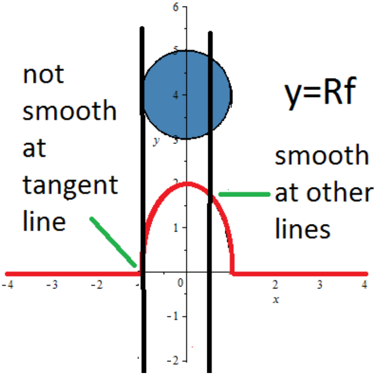

- The CT data has a “corner” (graph not smooth) at any line tangent to the boundary of the disk.

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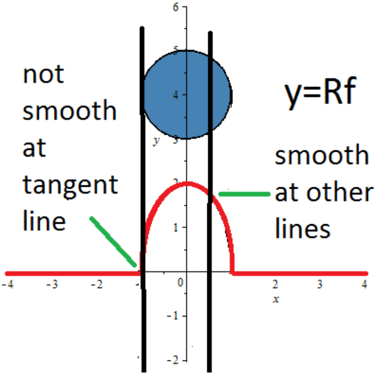
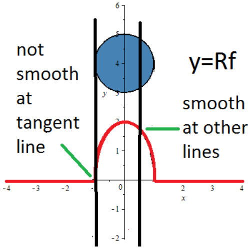


- The CT data has a “corner” (graph not smooth) at any line tangent to the boundary of the disk.
- So the boundary will be easy to see in the data.

In limited data CT, data over some lines are missing.



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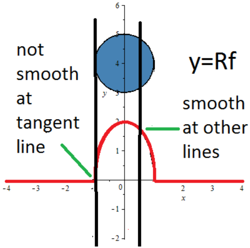

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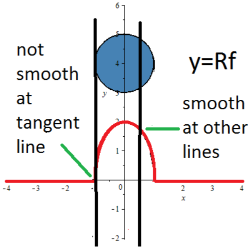

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If a boundary in the object is tangent to a line in the data domain, then it will be easy to see in the data (like the chest X-ray!).

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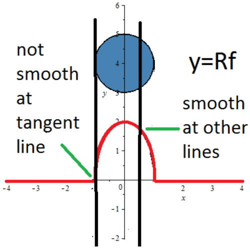

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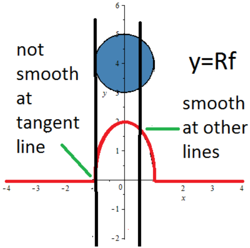

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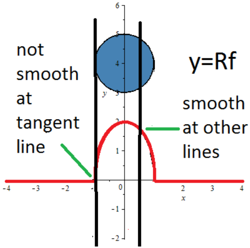

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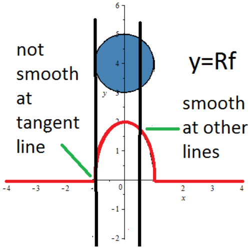

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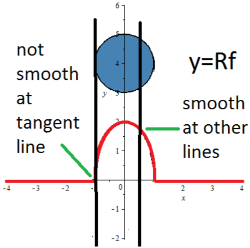

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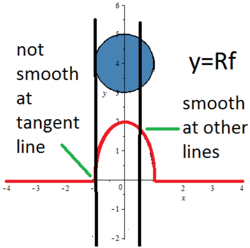

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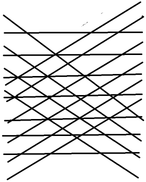
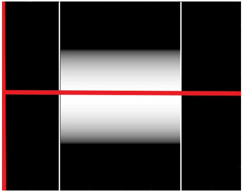
Example

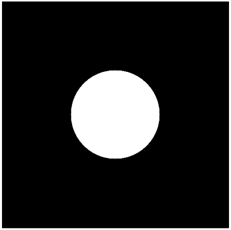
Limited angle CT data of a disk over lines $L_{\theta,s}$ with $(\theta, s) \in [45^\circ, 135^\circ] \times [-1, 1]$

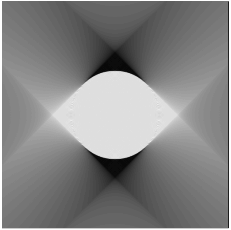
The data





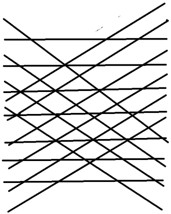
Data Domain

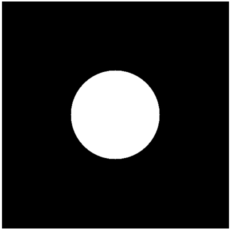


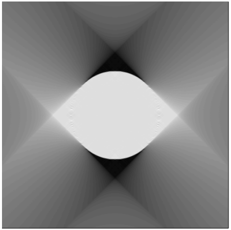


[Frikel, Q 2013] *Left:* disk, *Right:* Limited data FBP reconstruction

The data domain: all lines with $L_{\theta,s}$ with $(\theta, s) \in [45^\circ, 135^\circ] \times [-1, 1]$.







Which object boundaries are visible in the reconstruction?

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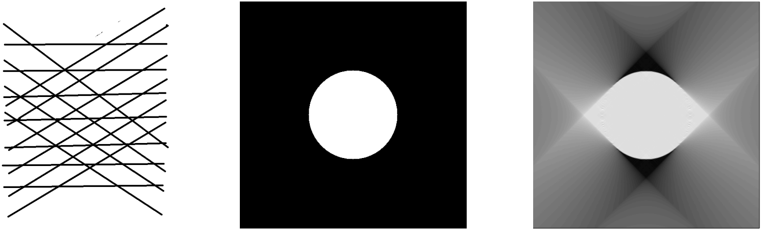

Which object boundaries are visible in the reconstruction?

Answer: the horizontal-ish boundaries.

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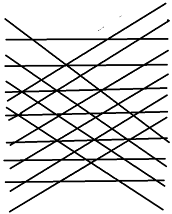
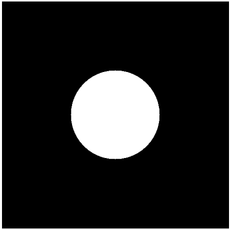
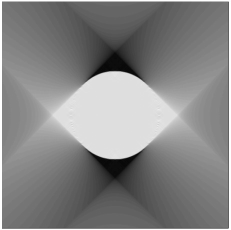

Which object boundaries are visible in the reconstruction?
Answer: the horizontal-ish boundaries.

We claimed that, if a line in the data domain is tangent to a boundary, that boundary will be easy to see in the reconstruction from that data.

Is that true in this picture?

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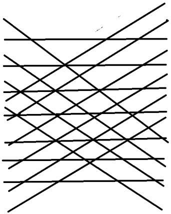
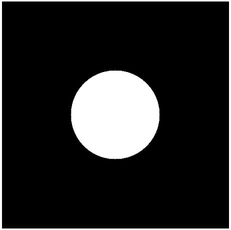
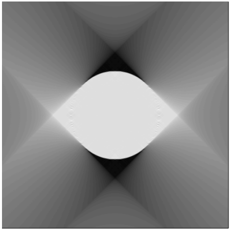

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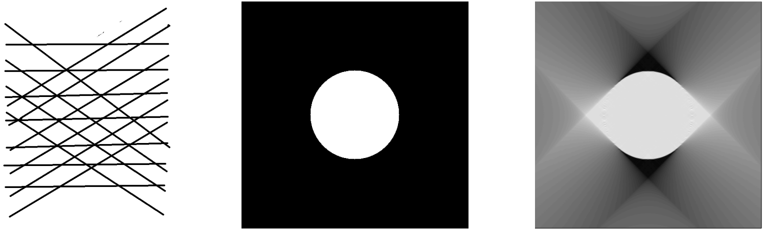

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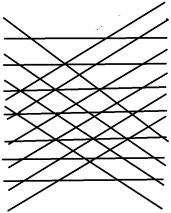

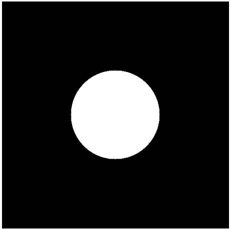

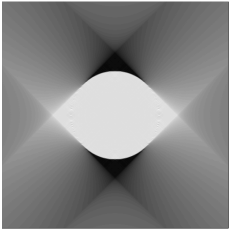

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Answer: the horizontal-ish boundaries.

We claimed that, if a line in the data domain is tangent to a boundary, that boundary will be easy to see in the reconstruction from that data.

Is that true in this picture? YES!

Moral

A boundary of an object will be visible in the reconstruction from limited data if it is tangent to a line in the data domain.

The data domain: all lines with $L_{\theta,s}$ with
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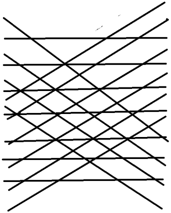
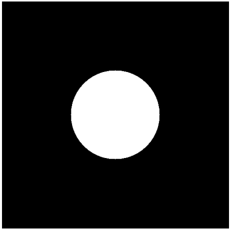
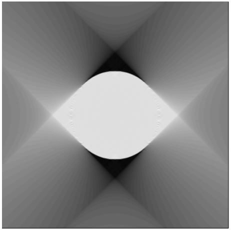

Which boundaries of the disk are <u>not</u> visible in the reconstruction?

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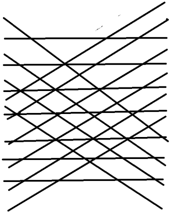

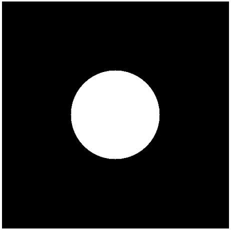

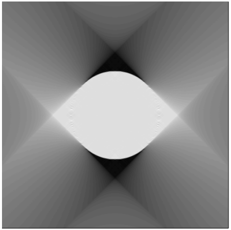

Which boundaries of the disk are <u>not</u> visible in the reconstruction?

Answer: the vertical-ish boundaries.

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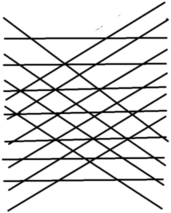

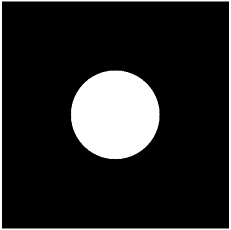

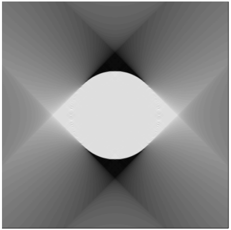

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We claimed that, if no line in the data domain is tangent to a boundary, that boundary will be hard to see in the reconstruction.

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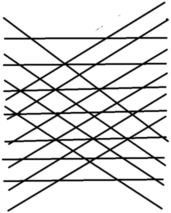
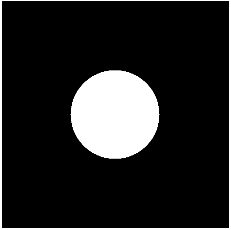
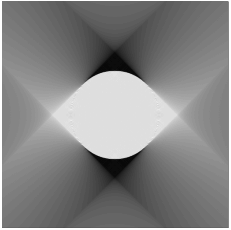




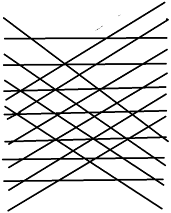
Which boundaries of the disk are not visible in the reconstruction?

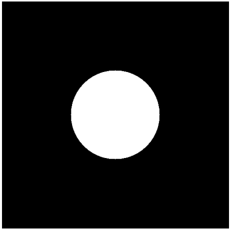
Answer: the vertical-ish boundaries.

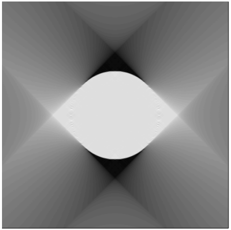
We claimed that, if no line in the data domain is tangent to a boundary, that boundary will be hard to see in the reconstruction.

Is that true in this picture? YES!

The data domain: all lines with $L_{\theta,s}$ with $(\theta, s) \in [45^\circ, 135^\circ] \times [-1, 1]$.







Which boundaries of the disk are not visible in the reconstruction?

Answer: the vertical-ish boundaries.

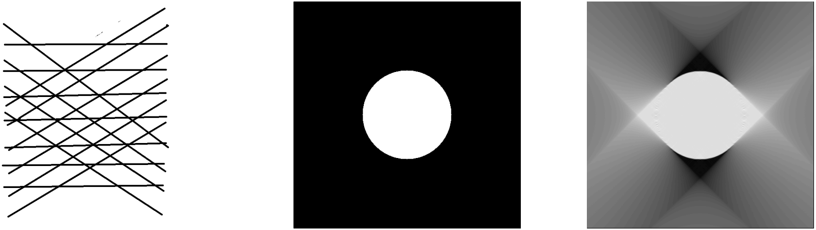
We claimed that, if no line in the data domain is tangent to a boundary, that boundary will be hard to see in the reconstruction.

Is that true in this picture? YES!

Moral

A boundary will be difficult to see in the reconstruction from limited data if **no** *line in the data domain is tangent to it.*

The data domain: all lines with $L_{\theta,s}$ with $(\theta, s) \in [45^\circ, 135^\circ] \times [-1, 1]$.



How do the streak lines relate to the object?

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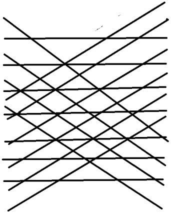

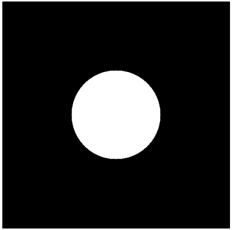

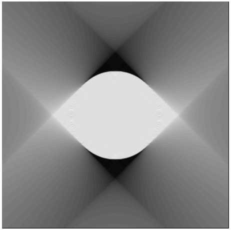

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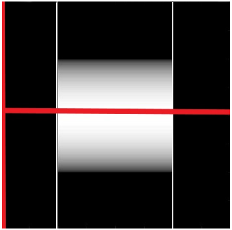

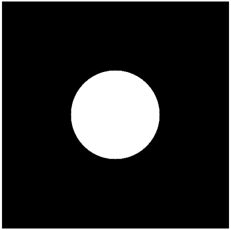

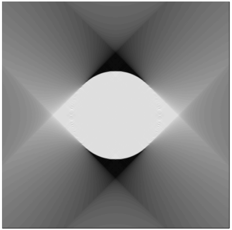

How do the streak lines relate to the object?

They are tangent to the object.

How do the streaks relate to the data domain?

They are along lines $L_{\theta,s}$! What are the value of θ for the streak lines?

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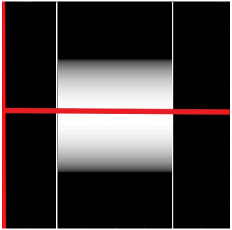
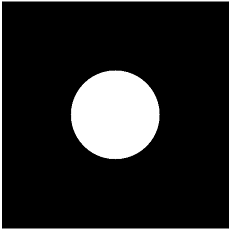
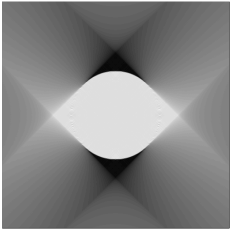

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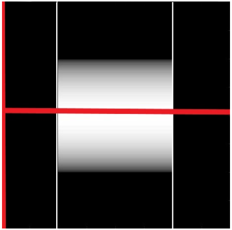
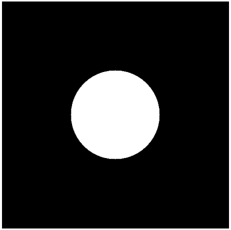
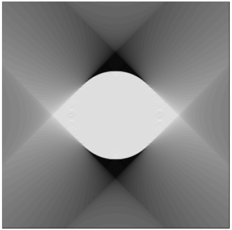
They are along lines $L_{\theta,s}$! What are the value of θ for the streak lines?
Either 45° or 135°

The data domain: all lines with $L_{\theta,s}$ with $(\theta, s) \in [45^\circ, 135^\circ] \times [-1, 1]$.

How do the streak lines relate to the object?

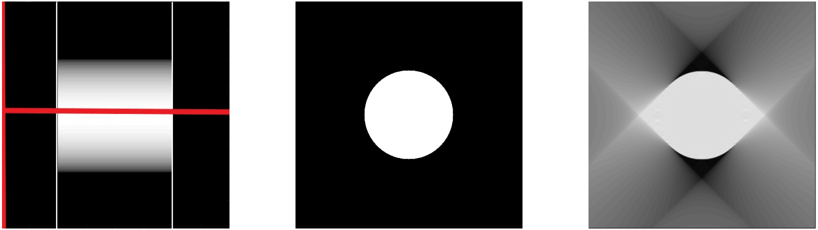
They are tangent to the object.

How do the streaks relate to the data domain?

They are along lines $L_{\theta,s}$! What are the value of θ for the streak lines?

Either 45° or 135°–they represent lines at the ends **(i.e., boundary)** of the data set.

The data domain: all lines with $L_{\theta,s}$ with $(\theta, s) \in [45^\circ, 135^\circ] \times [-1, 1]$.



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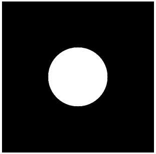
How do the streaks relate to the data domain?

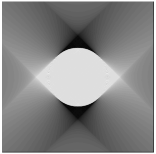
They are along lines $L_{\theta,s}$! What are the value of θ for the streak lines?
Either 45° or 135°–they represent lines at the ends **(i.e., boundary)** of the data set.

Moral

Streaks in the reconstruction come from lines at the boundary of the data domain (min. or max. of θ) that are tangent to the object.

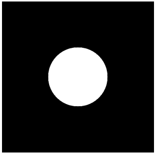
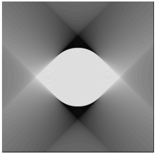
Moral (up to now) for Limited Data Tomography





- A boundary of the object is (should be) *visible* in the reconstruction if:

Moral (up to now) for Limited Data Tomography

- A boundary of the object is (should be) *visible* in the the reconstruction if:
  it is *tangent* to a line in the data domain.

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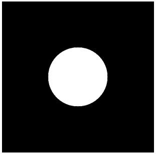

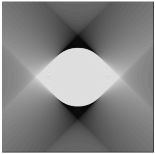

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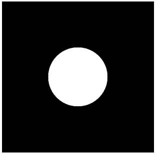

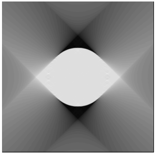

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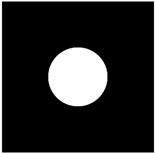

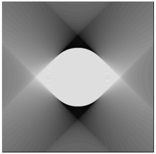

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- A streak artifact can occur in the reconstruction on a line if:

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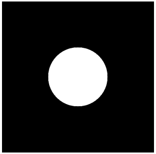 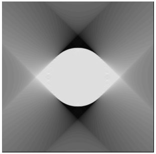

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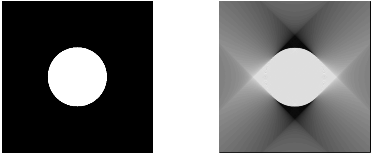
Moral (up to now) for Limited Data Tomography



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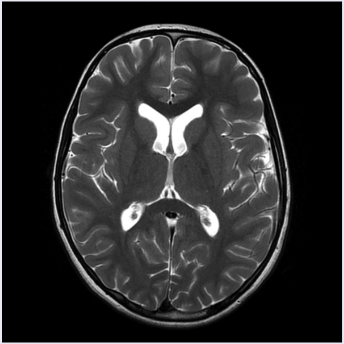
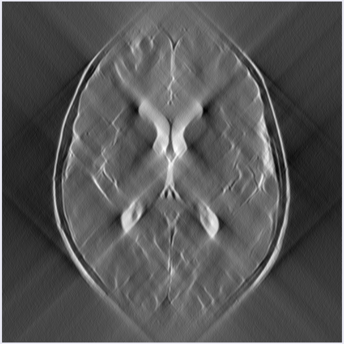
This is valid for general limited data problems by deep mathematics + a precise concept of singularity–microlocal analysis [3].

Exercise (In Class/Breakout Rooms)





Brain phantom [radiopedia.org], FBP reconstruction [Frikel, Q 2013]

(a) *Which features of the brain are visible in the reconstruction?*

(b) *Which are invisible?*

(c) *Are there added streak artifacts?*

(d) *Use this information to determine the data domain for this reconstruction.*

Artifact Reduction

$$f(x) \sim \frac{1}{4\pi}\mathcal{R}^*\Lambda\left(\chi_S \mathcal{R} f\right), \qquad \chi_S(\theta, s) = \begin{cases} 1 & (\theta, s) \in S \\ 0 & (\theta, s) \notin S \end{cases}.$$

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- *The streaks occur along lines at the ends of the data domain.*

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- By multiplying by χ_S, we restrict to data in the given data domain, S.
- *The streaks occur along lines at the ends of the data domain.*
- *The cause of streaks:* the sharp cutoff in the mask at the ends of the data domain.

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- *The streaks occur along lines at the ends of the data domain.*
- *The cause of streaks:* the sharp cutoff in the mask at the ends of the data domain.
- *The solution:* Make a smooth, gradual cutoff in the mask.

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- Replace χ_S by a smooth function $\psi(\theta, s)$ that is 1 on most of S (e.g., for *limited angle* equal to 1 on most of $[a, b]$ and smoothly goes to 0 at a, b).

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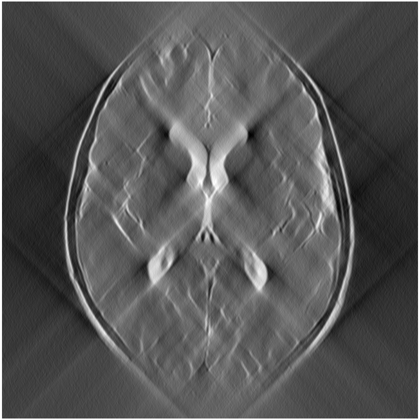
- Replace χ_S by a smooth function $\psi(\theta, s)$ that is 1 on most of S (e.g., for *limited angle* equal to 1 on most of $[a, b]$ and smoothly goes to 0 at a, b).

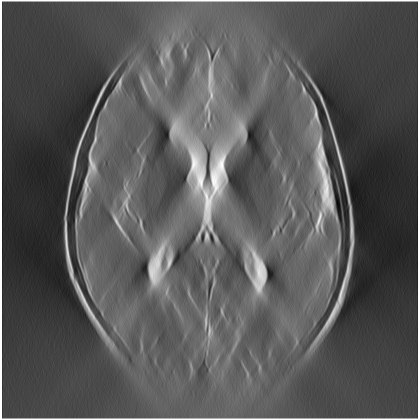
Artifact reduced limited angle FBP: $f \sim \frac{1}{4\pi}\mathcal{R}^*\Lambda\left(\psi \mathcal{R} f\right)$

Tufts UNIVERSITY

Sample Reconstruction [Frikel Q 2013]



Reconstruction



Artifact reduced reconstruction

Region of Interest (ROI) or Interior Tomography

ROI Tomography: tomography using only lines that pass through a small part of the object to reconstruct that part of the object. This is often because the object is too large or we are interested in only imaging that small part of the object. ⟶

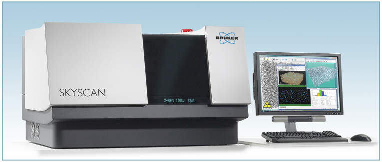


Figure: Skyscan Micro-CT Scanner

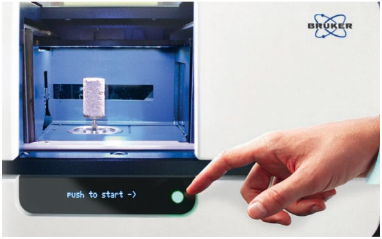


Figure: Object in scanner

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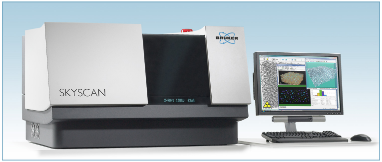

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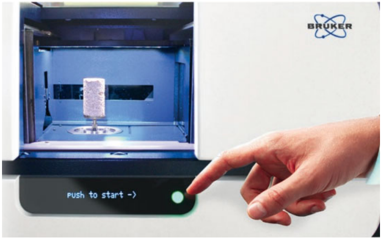


Figure: Object in scanner

ROI CT is used for nondestructive evaluation of parts of small objects.

The data domain for ROI CT: $S = [0^\circ, 180^\circ] \times [-r, r]$ where $r < 1$ is the radius of the ROI.

The mask: χ_S.

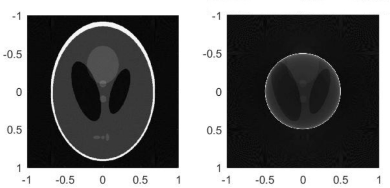


Figure: The Shepp Logan Phantom + ROI

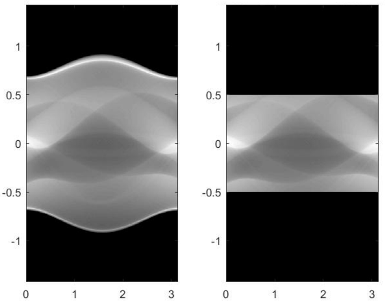


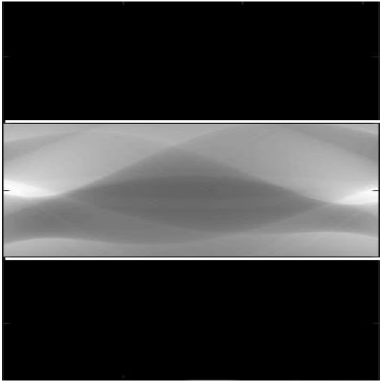
Figure: Complete Data Sinogram and ROI Sinogram

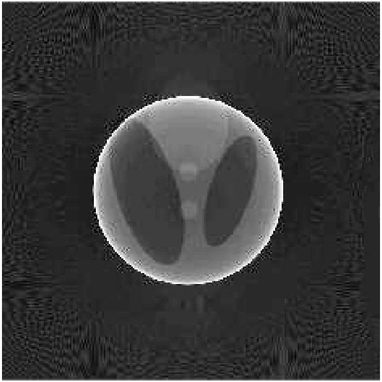
Exercise (Breakout rooms!)

Let's say you have a ROI data domain of an object.

1. *According to the theory, what object boundaries would be easy to reconstruct from the ROI data inside the ROI?*
2. *According to the theory, what types of object boundaries would be difficult to reconstruct from the ROI data inside the ROI?*
3. *According to the theory, what object boundaries would be easy to reconstruct from the ROI data outside the ROI?*
4. *According to the theory, what types of object boundaries would be difficult to reconstruct from the ROI data outside the ROI?*
5. *Did you observe this in the ROI reconstruction exercise using `iRadon`?*

Artifact Curves



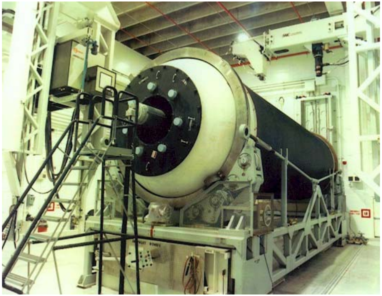


Moral

Artifacts can occur on curves generated from lines in the boundary of the data set. We have a formula for them in [3]!

Exterior Tomography

Exterior Tomography: only rays through an outer annulus of object are measured, not the rays through its center.



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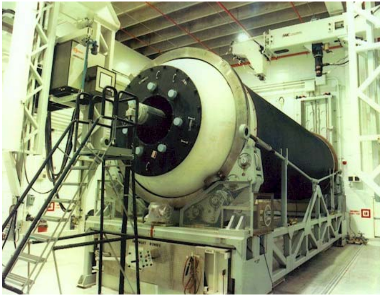
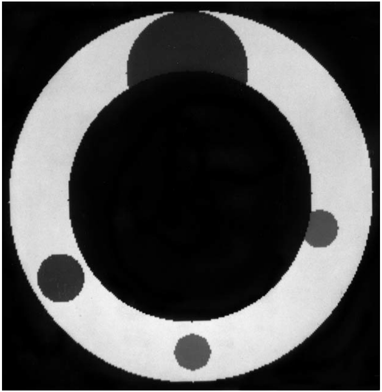
Exterior Tomography: only rays through an outer annulus of object are measured, not the rays through its center.

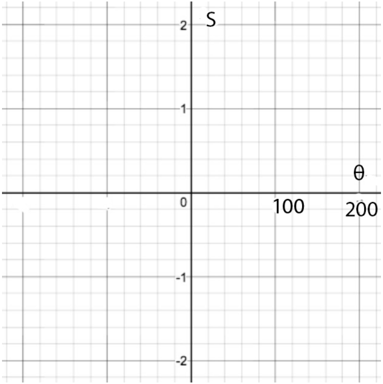


Exterior CT is used for nondestructive evaluation (NDE) of rockets because industrial X-ray CT scanners can't penetrate the thick central part of the rocket, but they can penetrate the outside annulus. Often scientists are interested in cracks, etc., in the rocket shell, anyway.

The data domain for exterior CT: If the central disk has radius $r < 1$, then $S = [0^\circ, 180^\circ] \times ([-1, -r] \cup [r, 1])$.

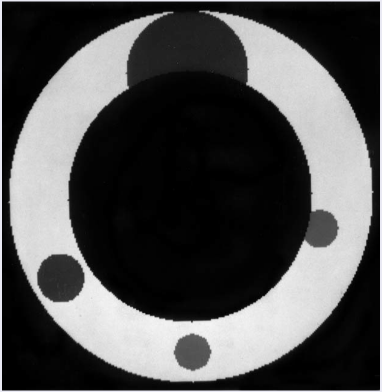
The mask: χ_S.





Exercise (Breakout rooms!)

Use what we've learned to answer the following questions about an exterior reconstruction of this phantom [Q1988]



(a) *What boundaries should be easy to see in an exterior reconstruction of the phantom?*

(b) *What boundaries should be difficult to see in an exterior reconstruction of the phantom?*

(c) ⚠ *Could there be artifact curves? (HINT: think about artifacts in ROI CT.)*

Exercise (If time–Breakout rooms!)

Defects in rocket shells are generally along the circumference direction of the shell.

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Defects in rocket shells are generally along the circumference direction of the shell.

1. ***Would exterior CT be a good modality for such defects?***
2. ***According to the theory, what types of defects would be easy to reconstruct from exterior CT?***
3. ***According to the theory, what types of defects would be difficult to reconstruct from exterior CT?***
4. ***Do you think there could be added artifacts in reconstructions from exterior data? Why or why not?***

Summary I

- **Visible boundary:** boundary tangent to a line in the data domain.
- **Invisible boundary:** boundary tangent to *no* line in the data domain.
- **Added Artifacts:** streaks on lines at the boundary of the data domain that are tangent to the object.
  - More subtle added artifacts can occur on lines or curves generated by lines at the boundary of the data domain.

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- We make this characterization mathematically precise using the Fourier transform and microlocal analysis. See:

[3] Leise Borg, Jürgen Frikel, Jakob Sauer Jørgensen, and ETQ, Analyzing reconstruction artifacts from arbitrary incomplete X-ray CT data, SIAM J. Imaging Sci., 11(4)(2018), 2786–2814.

Summary II

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- Backprojection is useful in general and easy to program. However, it isn't perfect for limited data problems.
- **Other effective algorithms:**
  - Use a priori info about the object (general shape, . .) and iterative methods [PCH]
  - Develop and carefully implement inversion formulas or fill in data cleverly (e.g., [Louis, Katsevich]).
  - Use deep learning (e.g., [Bubba et al.]) and good training sets.

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THANKS FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

For Further Reading I

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