

Understanding People Through Their Pictures



Tamara Berg
Assistant Professor, Computer Science

CURRENT RESEARCH

Using computers to recognize how our pictures reveal aspects of our socio-identities

Dr. Tamara Berg believes clothing and style have a direct connection to our socio-identities. She feels that computer vision can help us develop visual perception algorithms that can understand aspects of our identities as revealed by the pictures we capture and post online. She and her team at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill are doing just that. This project brings together Dr. Berg's interest in human-centric computer vision with her love of fashion.

Marc Jacobs once said "Clothing is a form of self-expression - there are hints about who you are in what you wear." Aspects of our identities are revealed by the clothing we wear and more generally by the pictures we post online.

Dr. Berg has been interested in fashion her whole life. Memories of shopping with her mother as a child were just the beginning of her love for fashion. As an assistant professor at Stony Brook University, she found herself in the heart of the fashion world New York City. It was there that she thought of a way to mix her love of fashion with her other love, technology. In this work they use methods from computer vision, natural language processing, and machine learning to enable technologies that are useful in end-user applications.

- First they have created a clothing parsing tool (<http://clothingparsing.com>) that takes an image of a person and automatically labels each pixel with the depicted garment type, e.g. sweater, pants, wedges, etc. Large pools of data collected from social networks has helped enable this robust clothing recognition tool. Clothing parsing is the first necessary step toward enabling algorithms to recognize what people are wearing and how that connects to who they are...

AFFILIATION

 University of North Carolina Chapel Hill

EDUCATION

- Ph.D., in Computer Science, 2007, University of California, Berkeley
- B.S., in Mathematics and Computer Science, 2001, University of Wisconsin, Madison

AWARDS

- NSF Faculty Early Career Development Award
- Marr Prize
- Google Faculty Research Award

RESEARCH AREAS

Technology, Computational Sciences / Mathematics, IOT, Devices, Data

FUNDING REQUEST

Your contributions will help fund Dr. Berg's graduate students who are working on this project. It will also enable them to expand their data collections efforts and create applications for market in the near future.

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