

# New techniques for climate data homogenization

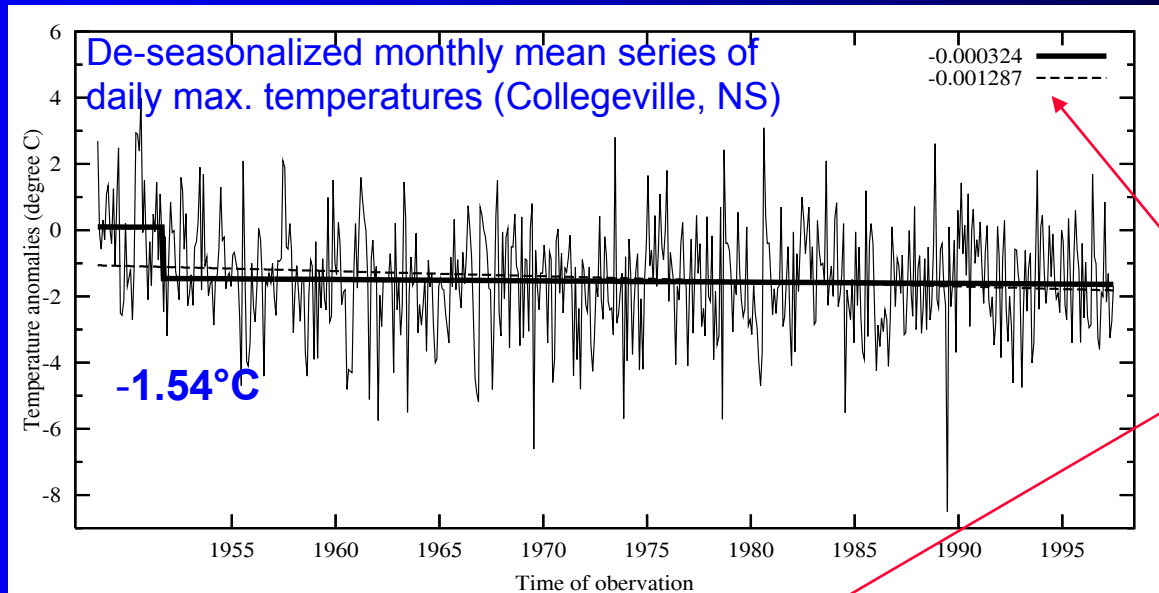
Xiaolan L. Wang

Climate Research Division, ASTD, STB, Environment Canada

CMC Seminar, 19 September 2008

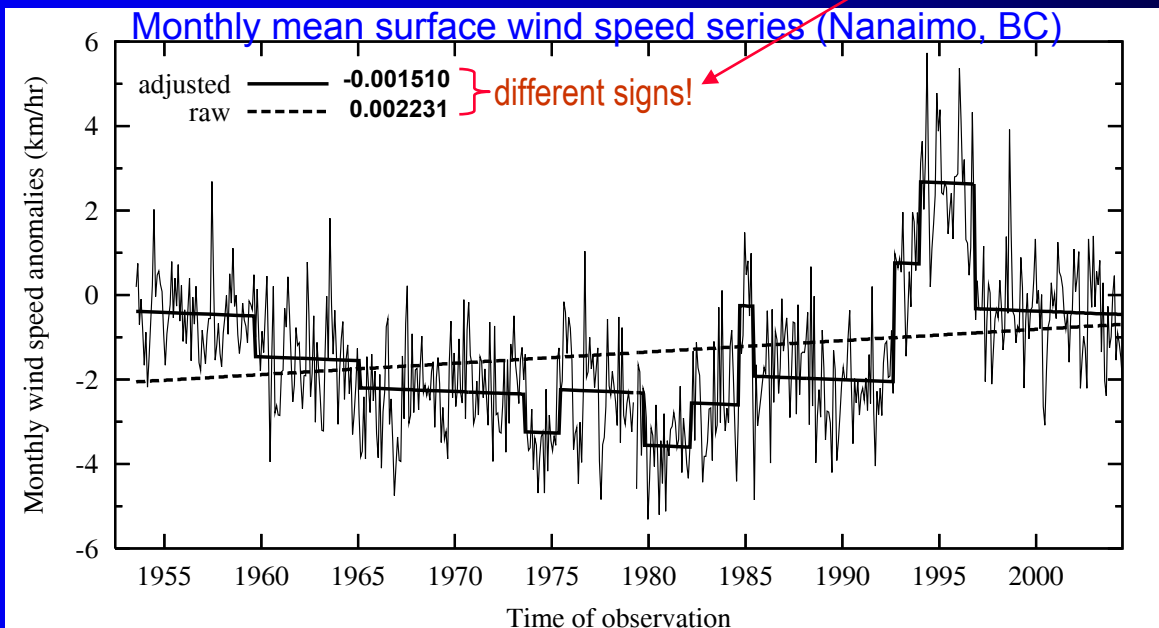
# Some examples of discontinuity in climate data series

## 1. Temperature:



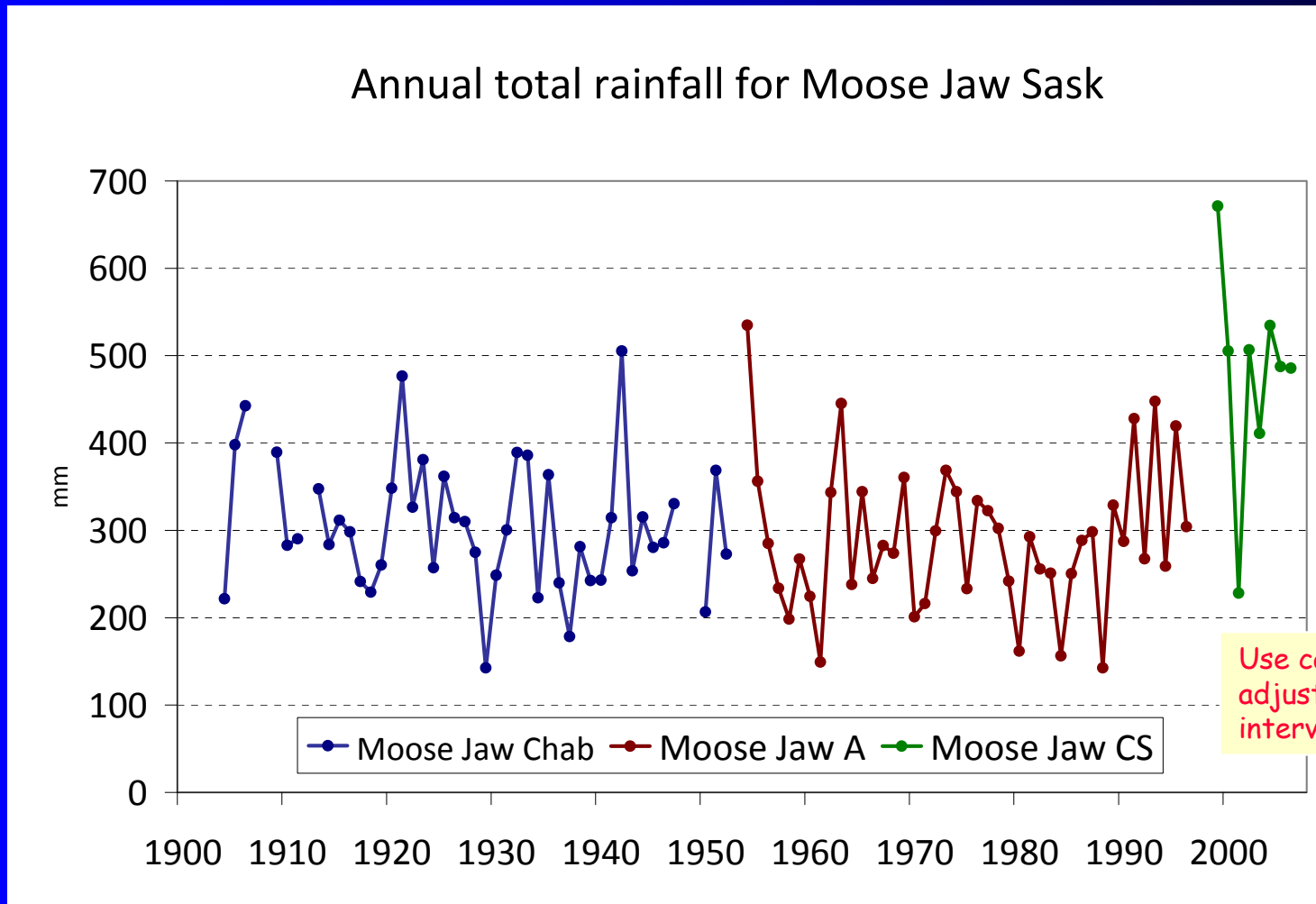
Effects of mean-shift on trend estimation

## 2. Wind speed:



Mean, var., & extreme indices biased!

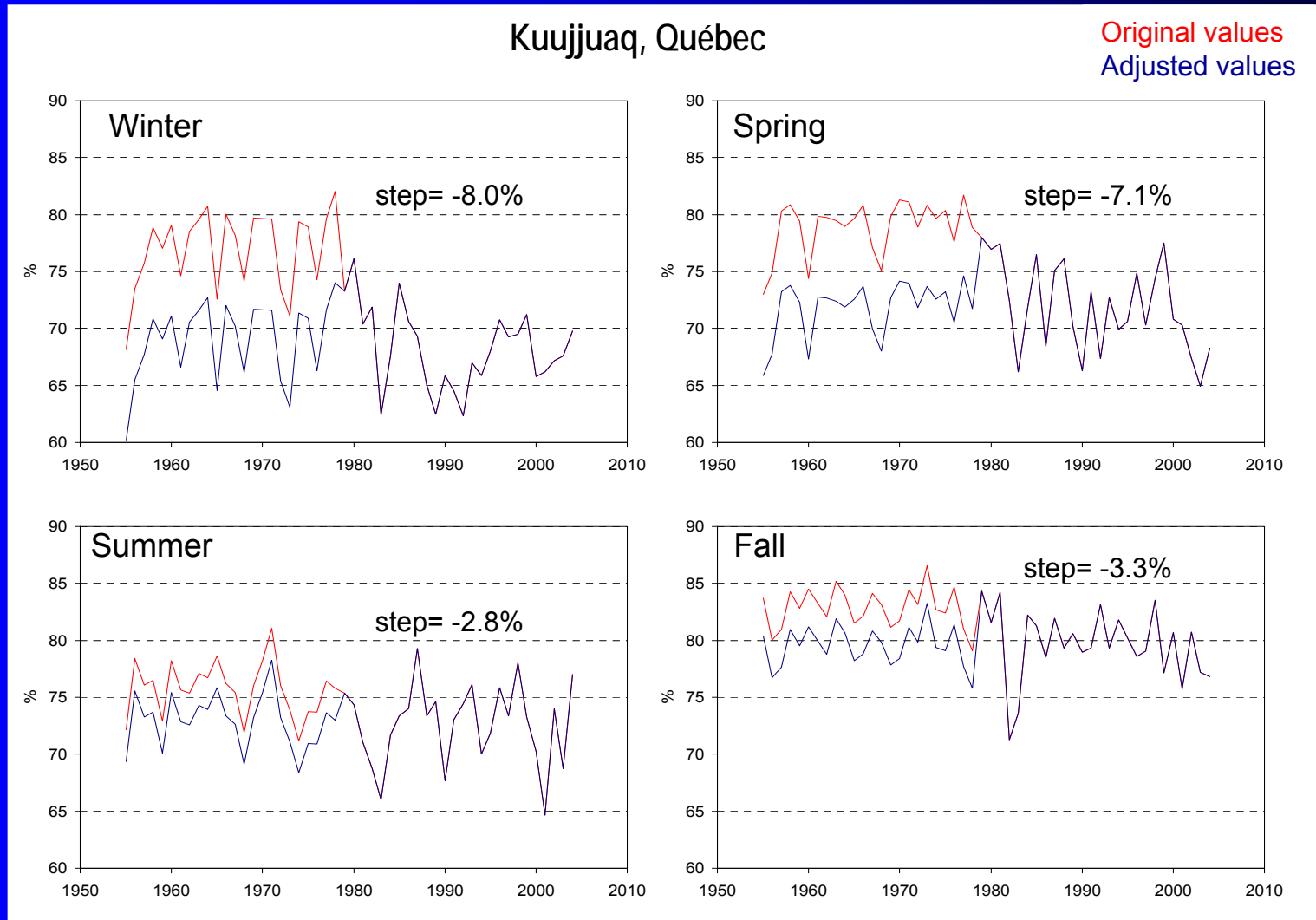
### 3. Precipitation - discontinuity due to joining of observations from nearby stations



Courtesy of Lucie Vincent and Eva Mekis

See Vincent and Mekis (2008), Discontinuities due to joining precipitation station observations in Canada, J. App. Meteor. Climatol., in press.

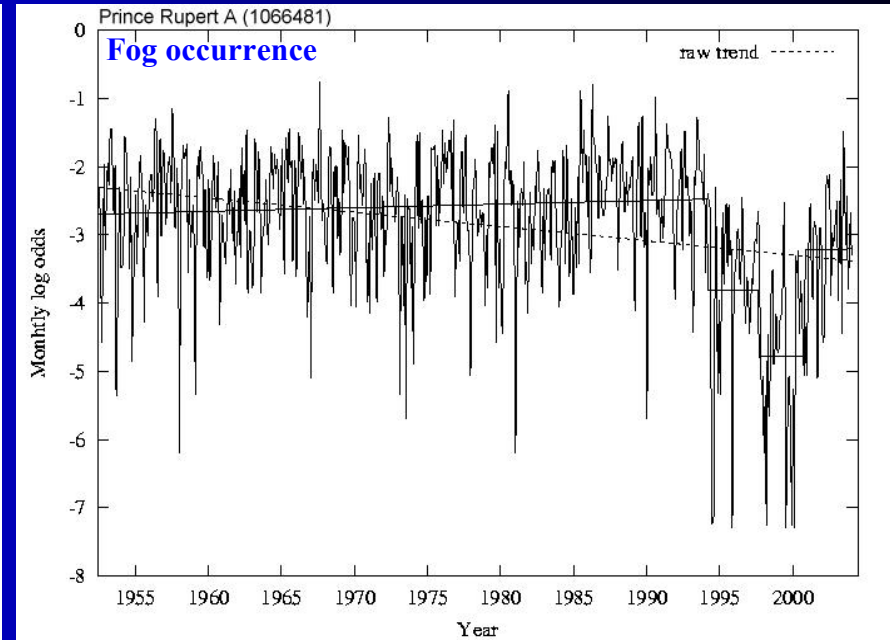
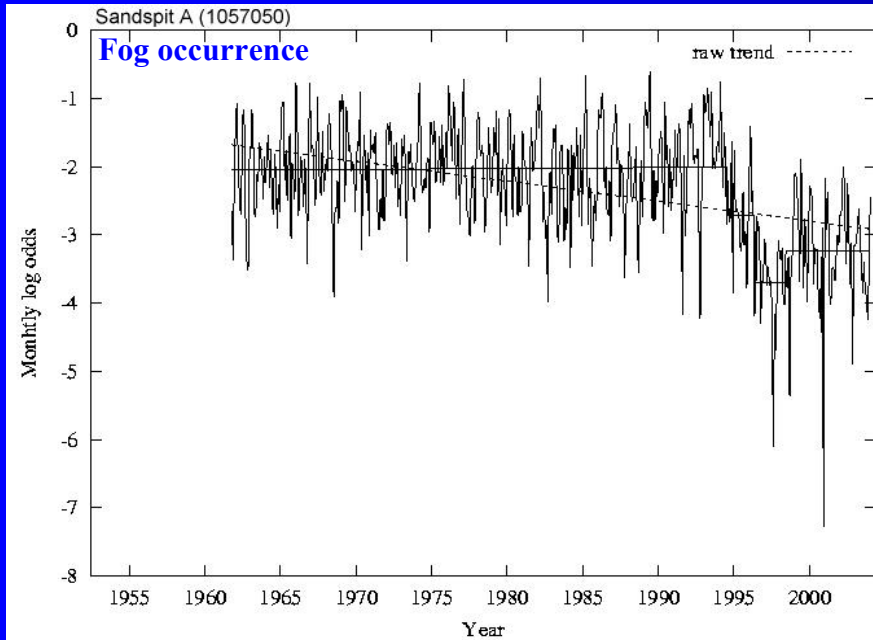
## 4. Relative humidity – discontinuity due to introduction of dewcel in June 1978



Courtesy of Lucie Vincent

See Vincent et al. (2007), Surface temperature and humidity trends in Canada for 1953-2005. *J. Clim.*, **20**, 5100-5113.

## 5. Fog & low ceiling occurrence frequency - Effects of mean-shift on trend estimation

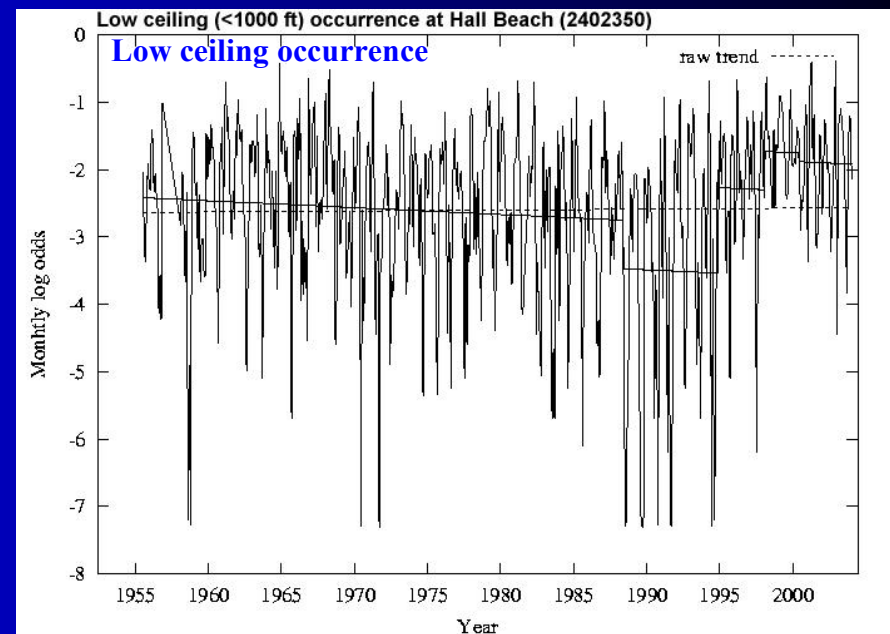


$$\text{Log odds } \eta_t = \log\left(\frac{S_t + 0.5}{M_t - S_t + 0.5}\right)$$

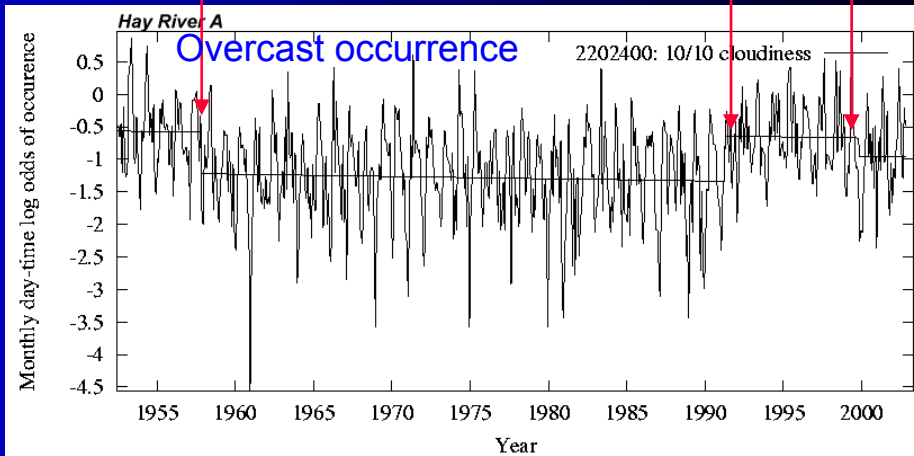
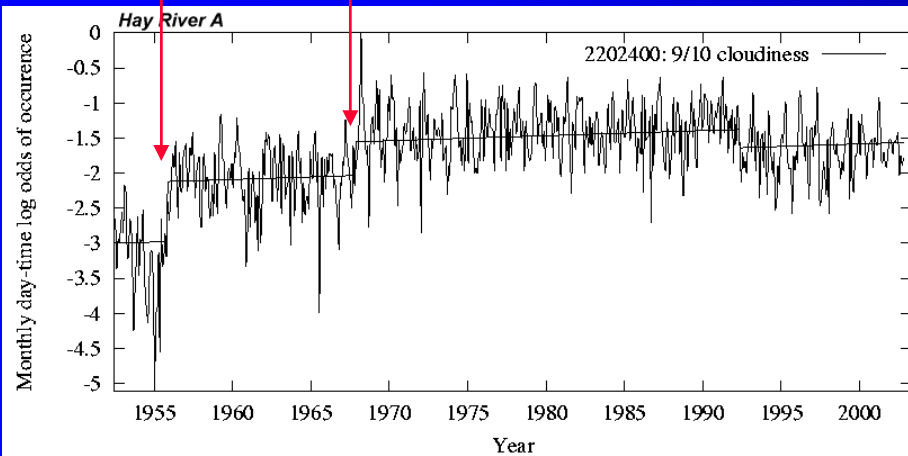
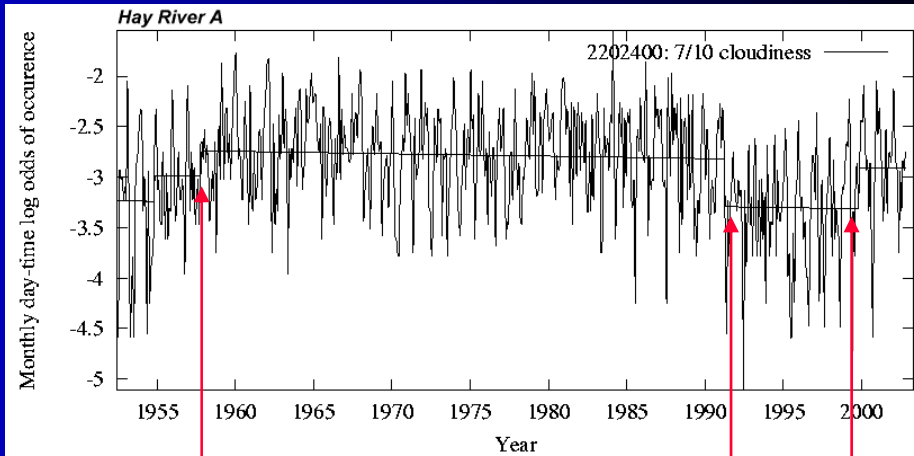
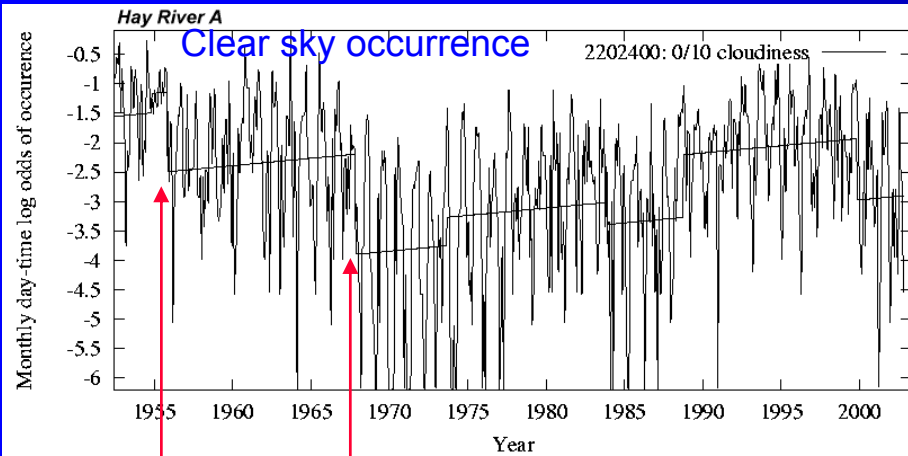
$M_t$  is the number of observations in month  $t$

$S_t$  is the number of occurrences in month  $t$

$f_t = \frac{S_t}{M_t}$  is the frequency of occurrence

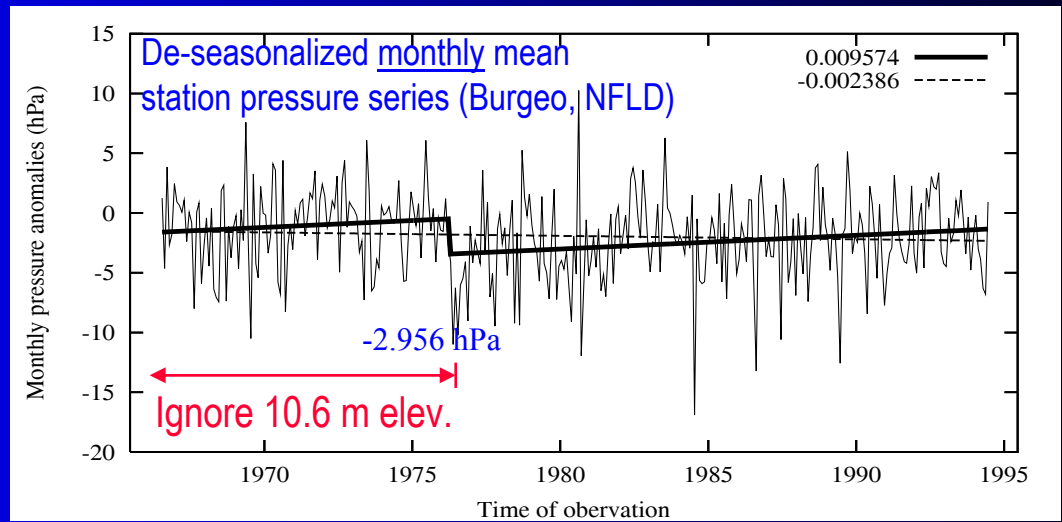


## 6. Cloudiness frequency data

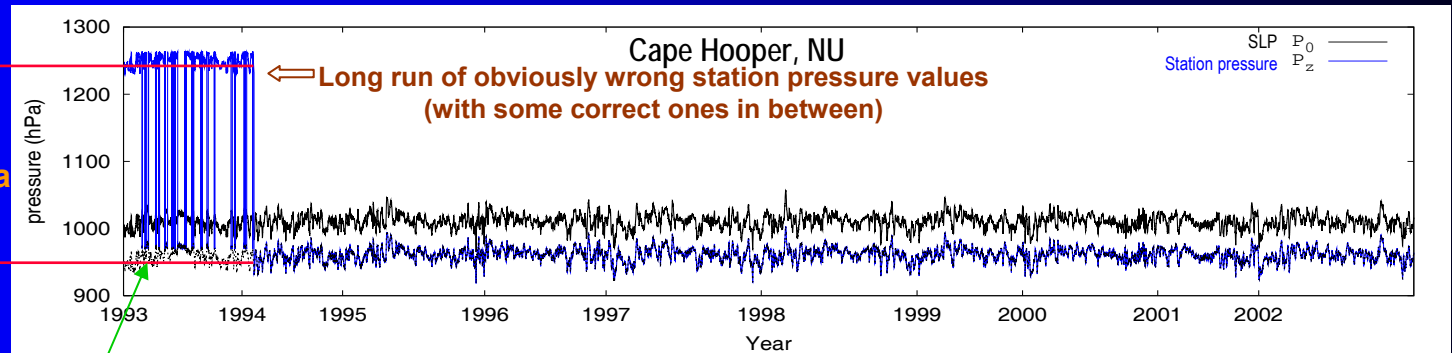


# 7. Pressure data:

Relatively small shift  
but it changes the sign  
of trend estimate

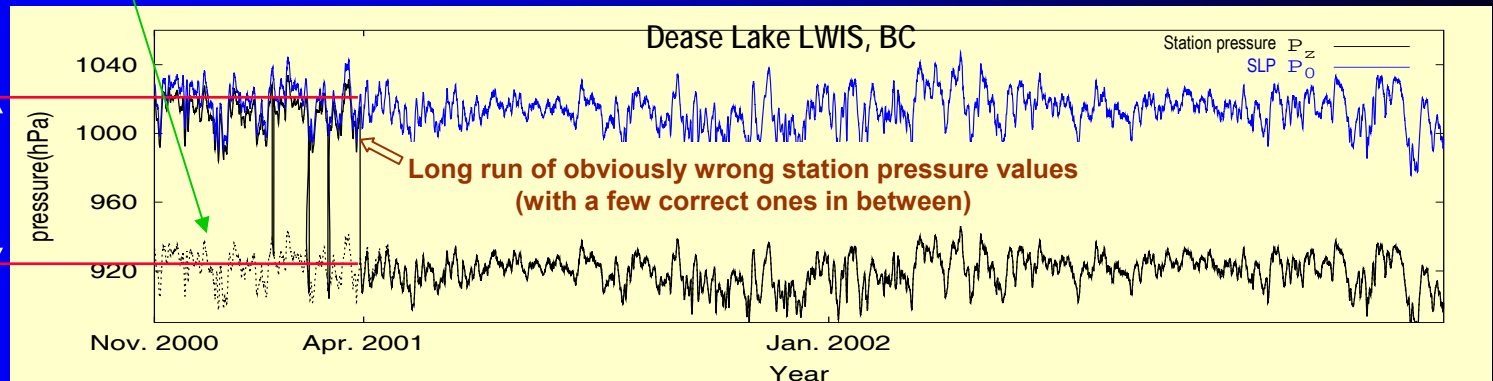


- examples of hourly station pressure values



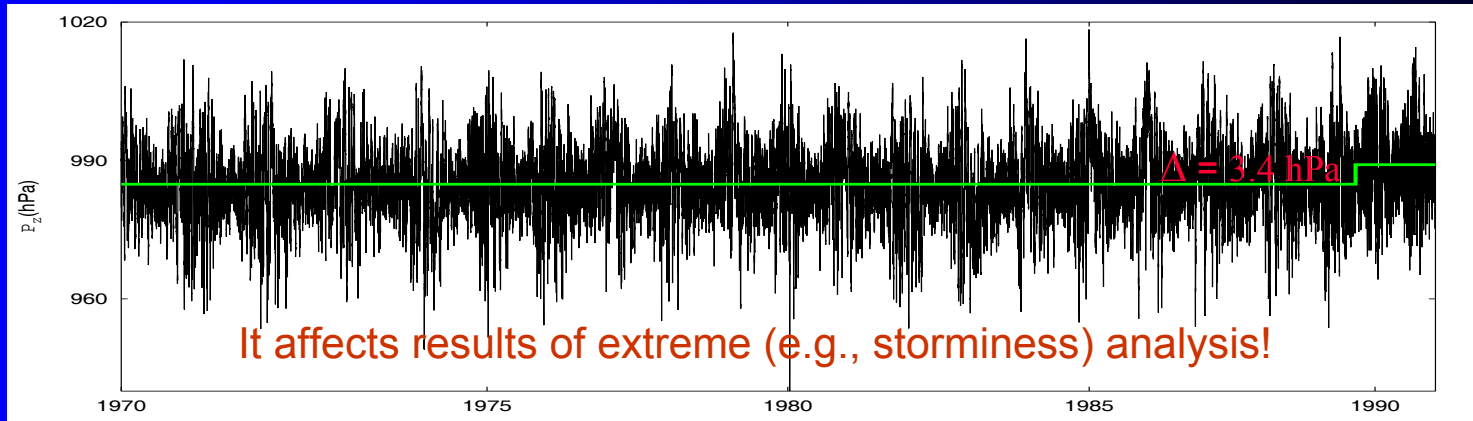
Huge errors!

Dashed lines - corrected values

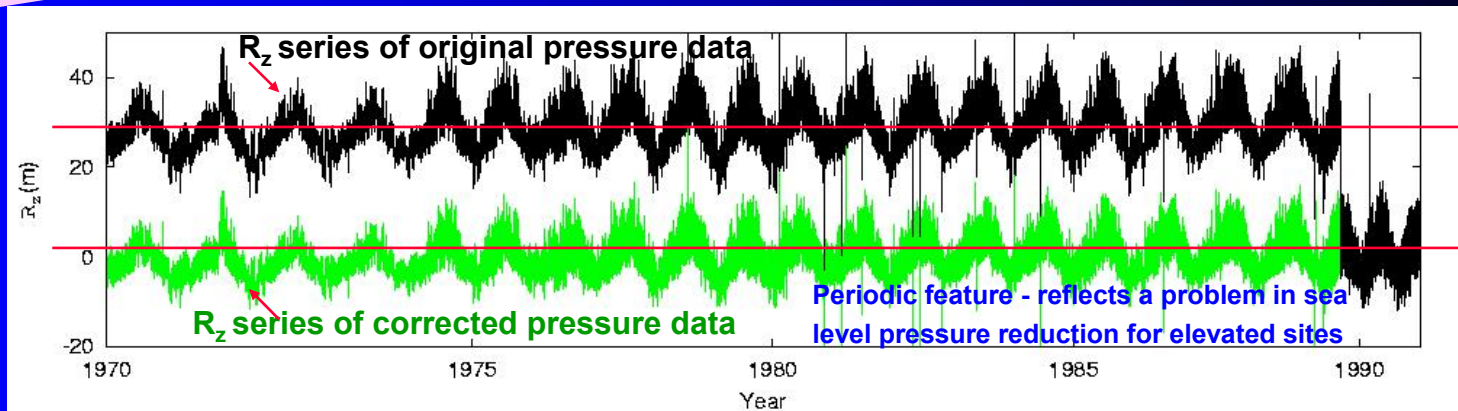
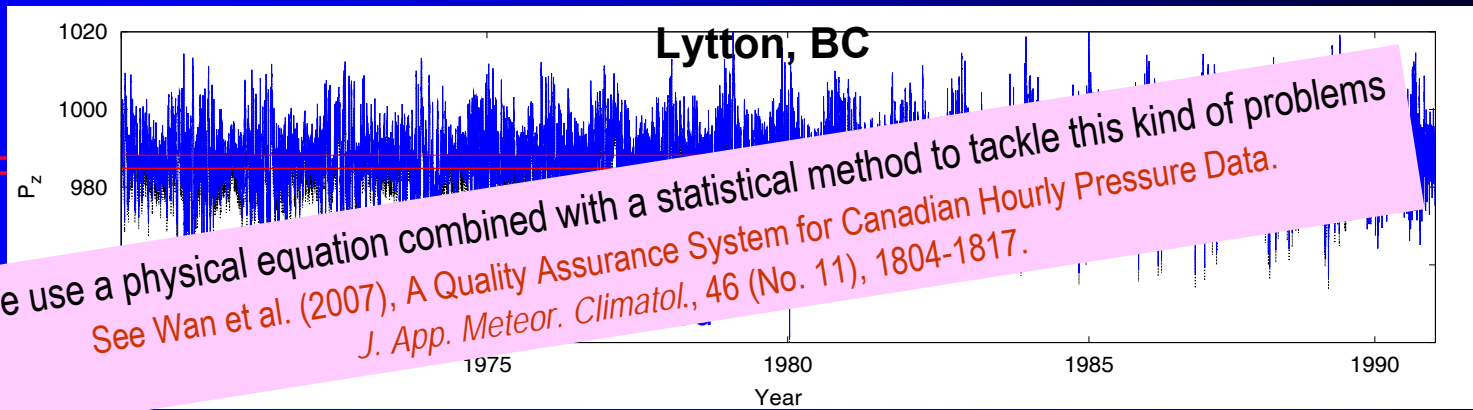


Δ = 91.4 hPa

- Another problematic hourly pressure series (relocation with elev. drop of 27.4 m)



$\Delta = 3.4 \text{ hPa}$





Data discontinuities are inevitable due to inevitable changes in observing **instrument/location/environment...** and **evolving technology**

*Such discontinuities not only affect trend assessment, but also affect*

- calibration of statistical relationships for use in **statistical weather forecast**,
- estimates of other statistics that are used to study climate variability and climate extremes, and to validate model simulations
- *many other aspects of our study and understanding of the climate system*

Huge amount of \$ spent on collecting climate data

- **big waste of \$ if there were no effort to clean up the data**
- **more and more effort devoted to climate data homogenization**

# Data Homogenization Tools:

e.g., hydrostatic equation to adjust pressure data for elevation changes, log wind profile for anemometer height adjustments for wind speeds

- Metadata
1. Use physical relationships to correct some known shifts
  2. Use statistical methods to detect shifts and estimate their magnitude

Most commonly used statistical methods include

- 1) SNH test for detecting mean-shifts in zero-trend series (Alexandersson 1986):



- 2) TPR3 test for detecting mean-shifts in constant trend series (Wang 2003):



Special cases:

e.g., urbanization effects on T

Use a variant of TPR3!

- 3) TPR4 test for detecting mean-shifts and/or trend-changes (Lund & Reeves 2002):

(a trend-change without an accompanying mean-shift)



## Problems/drawbacks of these changepoint detection methods:

1. Uneven distribution of false alarm rate and detection power (details next)
  2. Model errors are assumed IID Gaussian
  3. For a series that contains at most one changepoint
- Detection of a changepoint in a homogeneous series

## Our recent studies

1. Propose two penalized tests to even out distribution of false alarm rate & detection power
  2. Extend these penalized tests to account for the first order autocorrelation
  3. Propose a stepwise testing algorithm for detecting multiple changepoints
- Now, developing methods to deal with non-Gaussian data (e.g. daily precip.), and multi-categorical data (e.g., frequencies of cloudiness conditions)

## The remainder of this presentation - outline

- The uneven distribution problem of the old methods
- The new methods and their detection power aspects (vs. those of the old methods)
- The RHtestV2 software package
- Examples of application

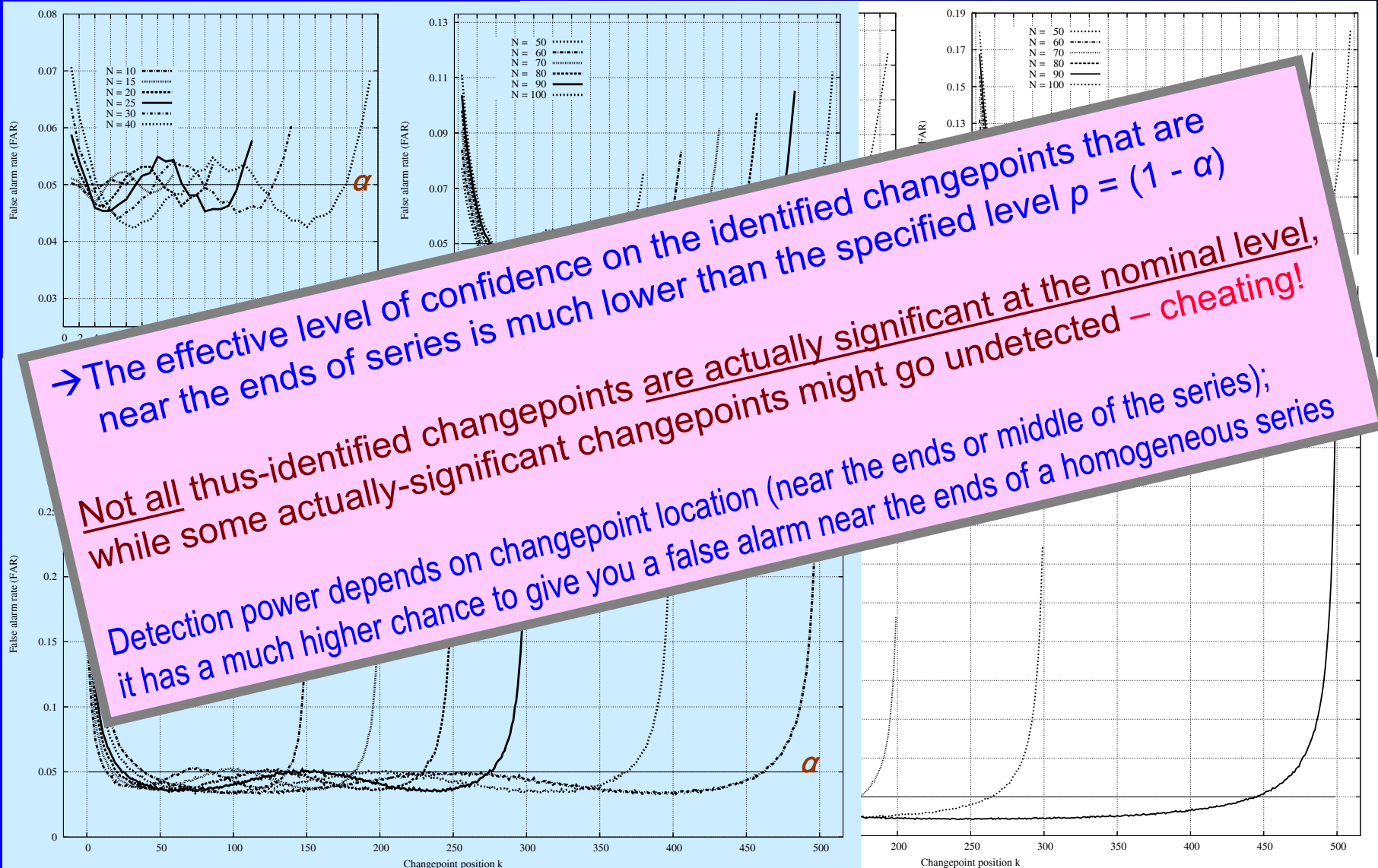
# Problems!

SNH & TPR3 suffer from the effect of unequal sample sizes ( $N_1 = k \neq N_2 = N - k$ , generally)

$$\rightarrow FAR(k) = \alpha_e(k) \neq \alpha, \quad p_e(k) \neq p!$$

TPR3: W-shape FAR(k) curves!

SNH test: U-shape FAR(k) curves!



# Wang et al. (2007) propose a Penalized Maximal $t$ (PMT) test to even out the U-shaped FAR( $k$ ) curves of the SNH type tests:

$\cap$ -shape penalty  $P(k)$ :  
(thick curves)

$$PT_{\max} = \max_{1 \leq k \leq N-1} [P(k) T(k)]$$

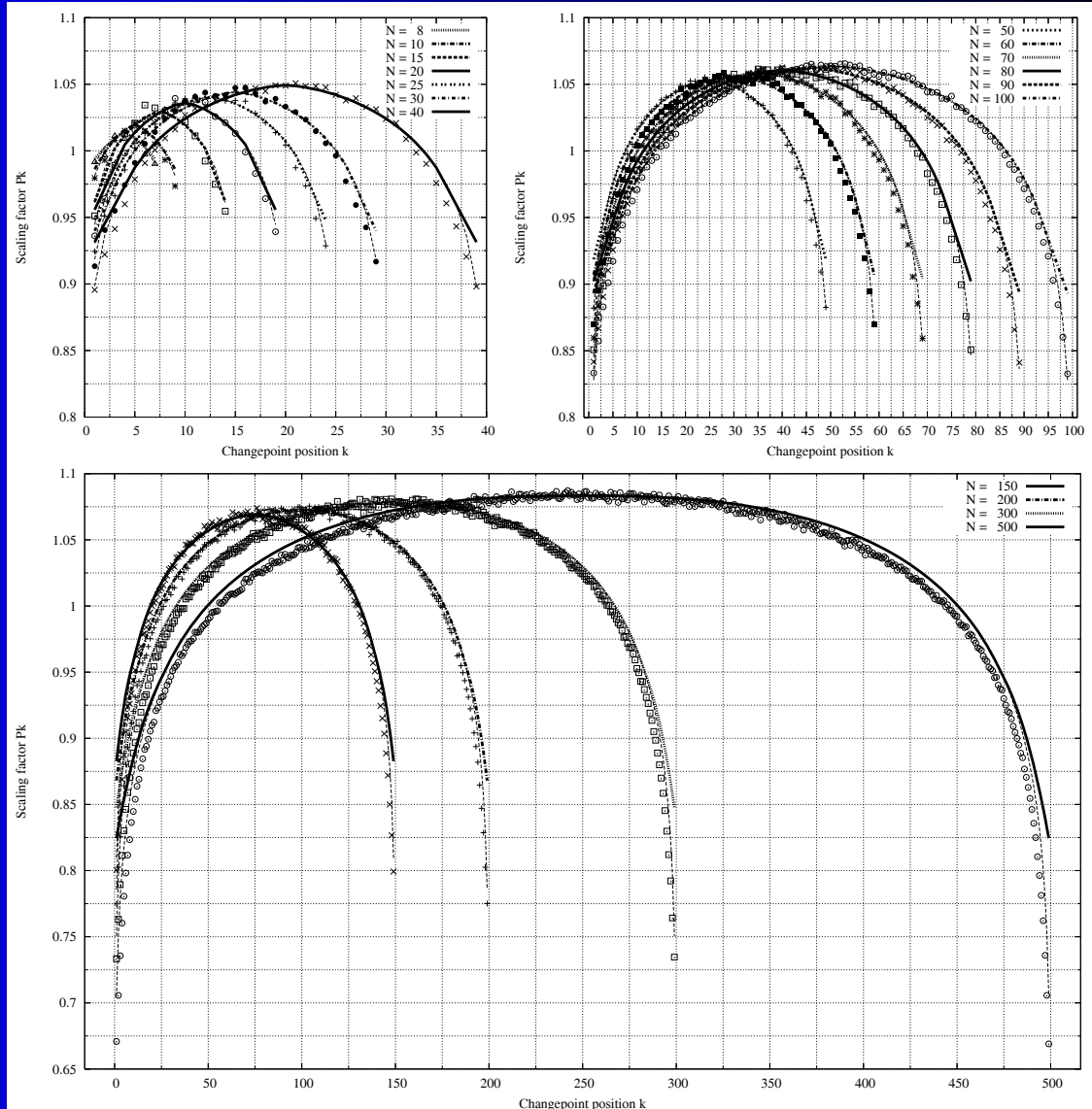
where  $T(k) = \frac{1}{\hat{\sigma}_k} \left( \frac{k(N-k)}{N} \right)^{\frac{1}{2}} |\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2|;$

$$\bar{X}_1 = \frac{1}{k} \sum_{t=1}^k X_t; \quad \bar{X}_2 = \frac{1}{N-k} \sum_{t=k+1}^N X_t$$

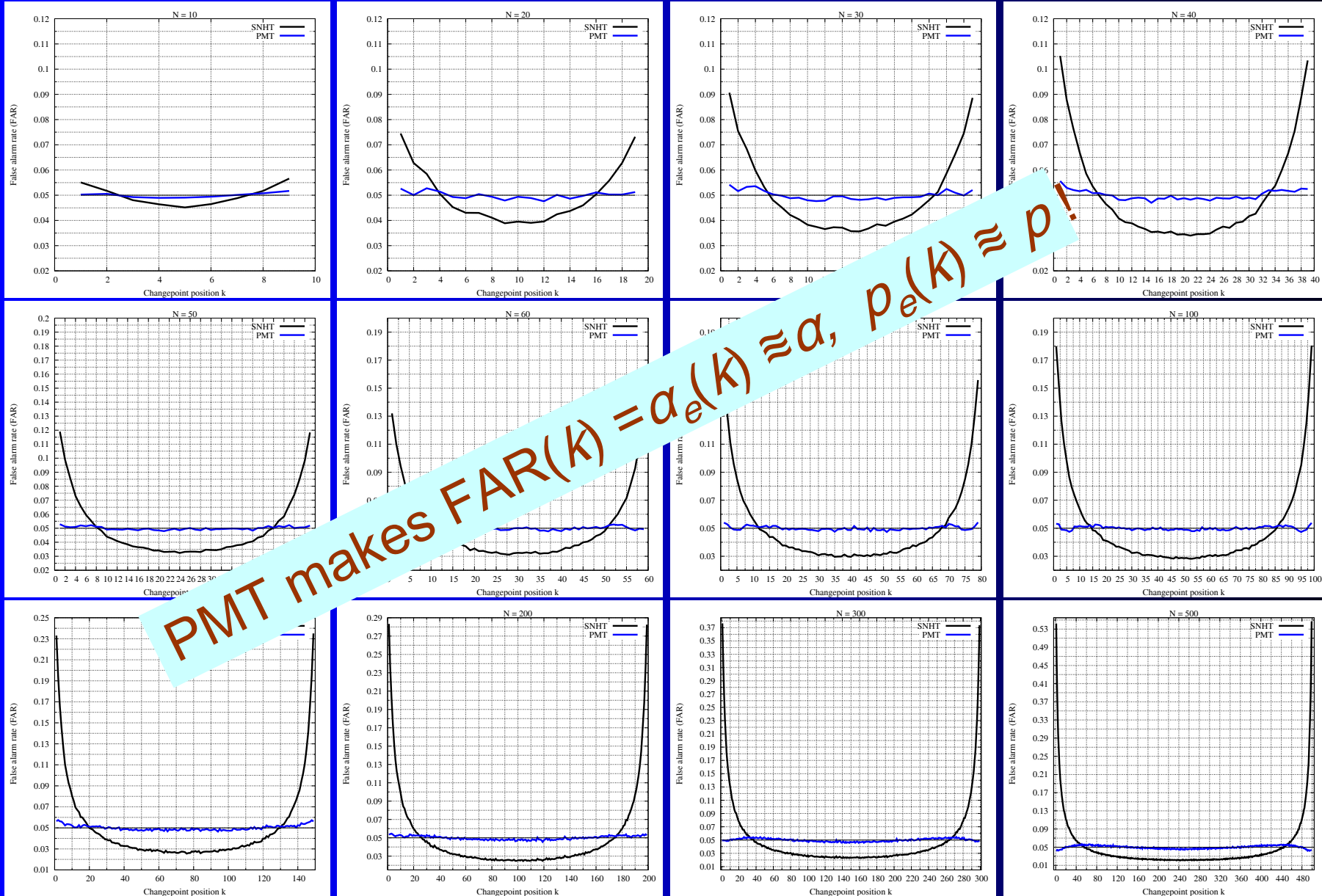
$$\hat{\sigma}_k^2 = \frac{1}{N-2} \left( \sum_{t=1}^k (X_t - \bar{X}_1)^2 + \sum_{t=k+1}^N (X_t - \bar{X}_2)^2 \right)$$

$\times, \dagger, \square, \circ, \dots$

$$R_k = \frac{T_{\max}(\alpha_e(k))}{T_{\max}(0.05)}$$



# FAR(k): SNH test vs PMT test



# Power of detection: PMT vs SNH (real mean-shift $\Delta$ at $t = k$ )

$$RSS = \Delta / \sigma$$

averaged over  
 $2 \leq k \leq N-2$

Mean Hit Rate:  
(PMT/SNH)

Detect it in  $[k-2, k+2]$   
& with  $p \geq 0.95$

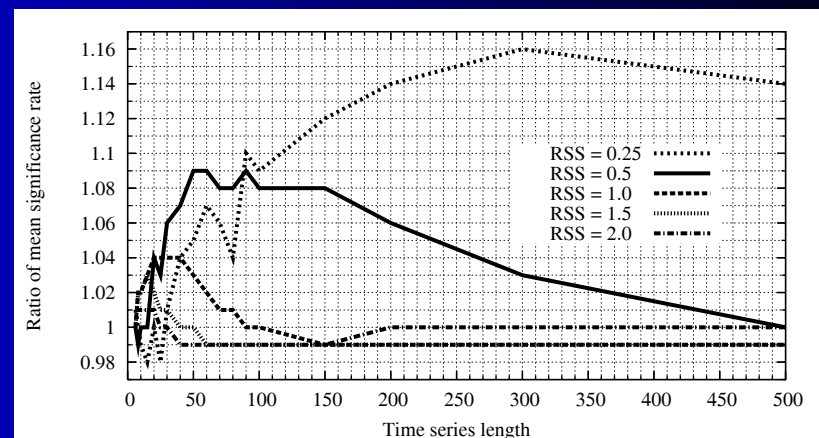
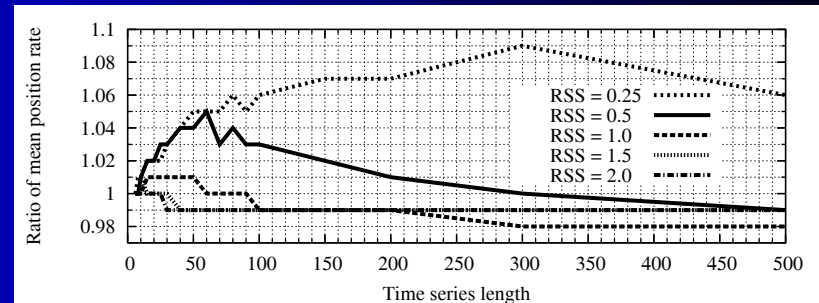
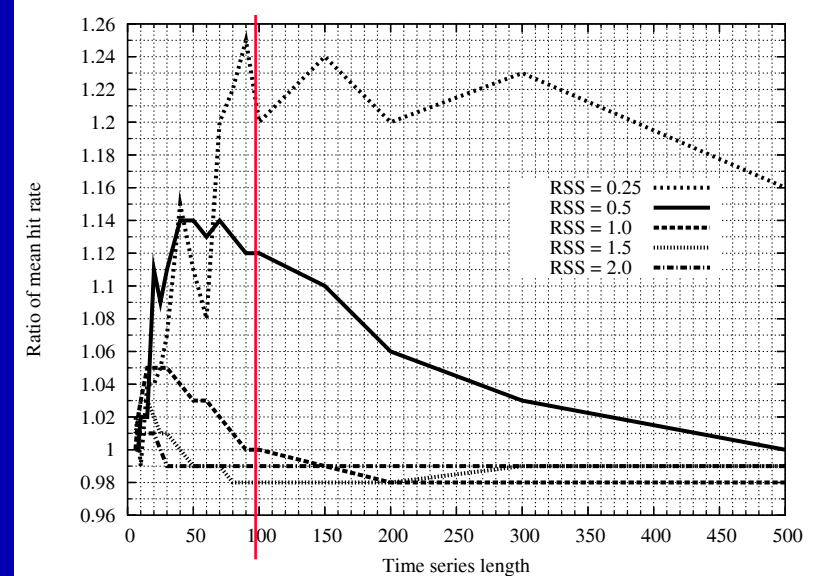
Mean Position Rate:  
(PMT/SNH)

Detect it in  $[k-2, k+2]$   
regardless of  $p$

Mean Significance Rate:  
(PMT/SNH)

Detect it with  $p \geq 0.95$   
regardless of position

Each value from 1000 simulations



# Wang (2008a) proposes a Penalized Maximal $F$ test (PMF test) to even out the W-shaped FAR( $k$ ) curves of TPR3 test

M-shape penalty  $P_{\lambda}(k)$ :  
(thick curves)

$$PF_{\max} = \max_{1 \leq k \leq N-1} [P_{\lambda}(k) F(k)]$$

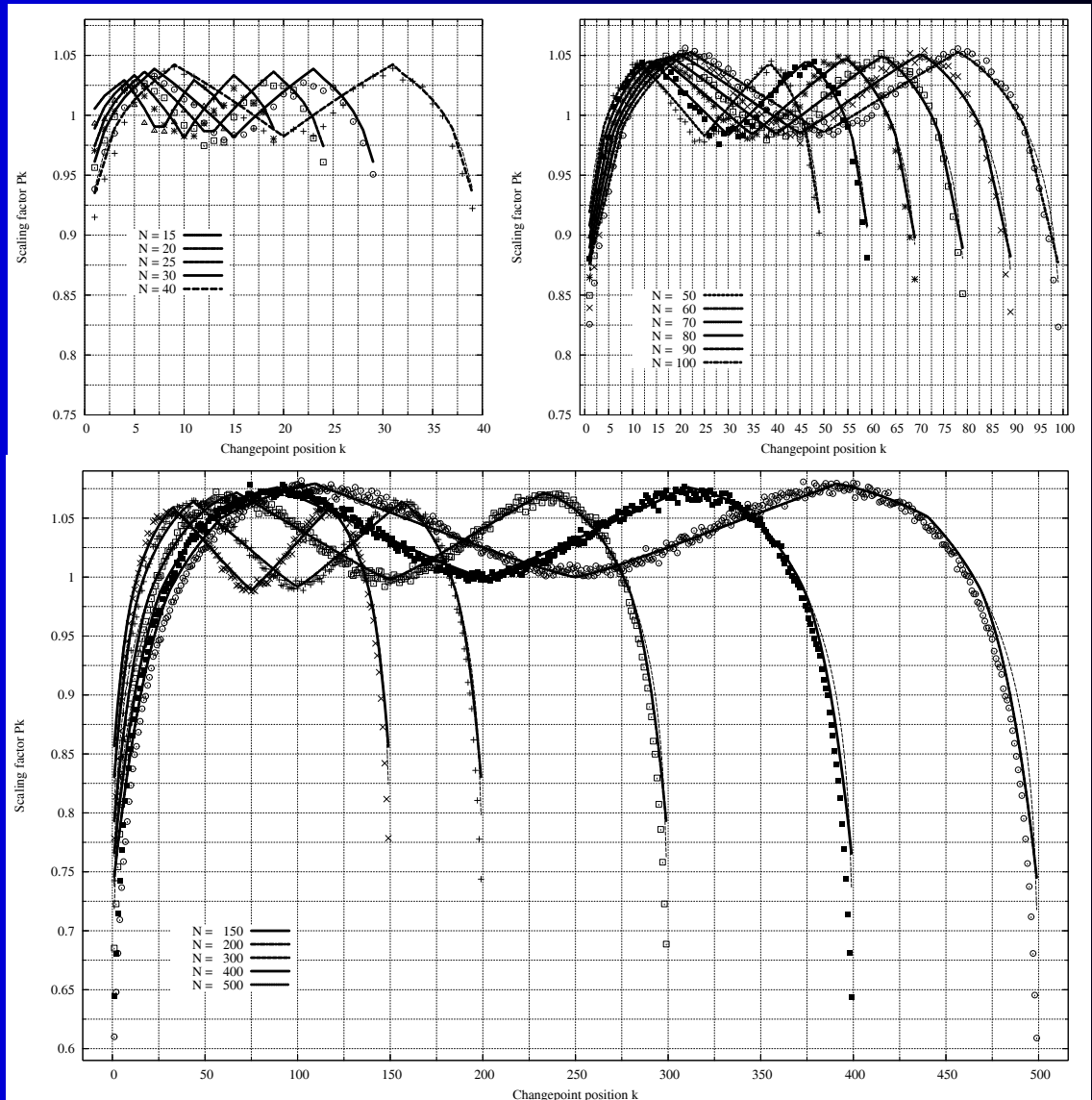
where  $F(k) = \frac{(SSE_0 - SSE_A)/1}{SSE_A/(N-3)}$ ;

$$SSE_0 = \sum_{t=1}^N (X_t - \hat{\mu}_0 - \hat{\beta}_0 t)^2;$$

$$SSE_A = \sum_{t=1}^k (X_t - \hat{\mu}_1 - \hat{\beta} t)^2 + \sum_{t=k+1}^N (X_t - \hat{\mu}_2 - \hat{\beta} t)^2$$

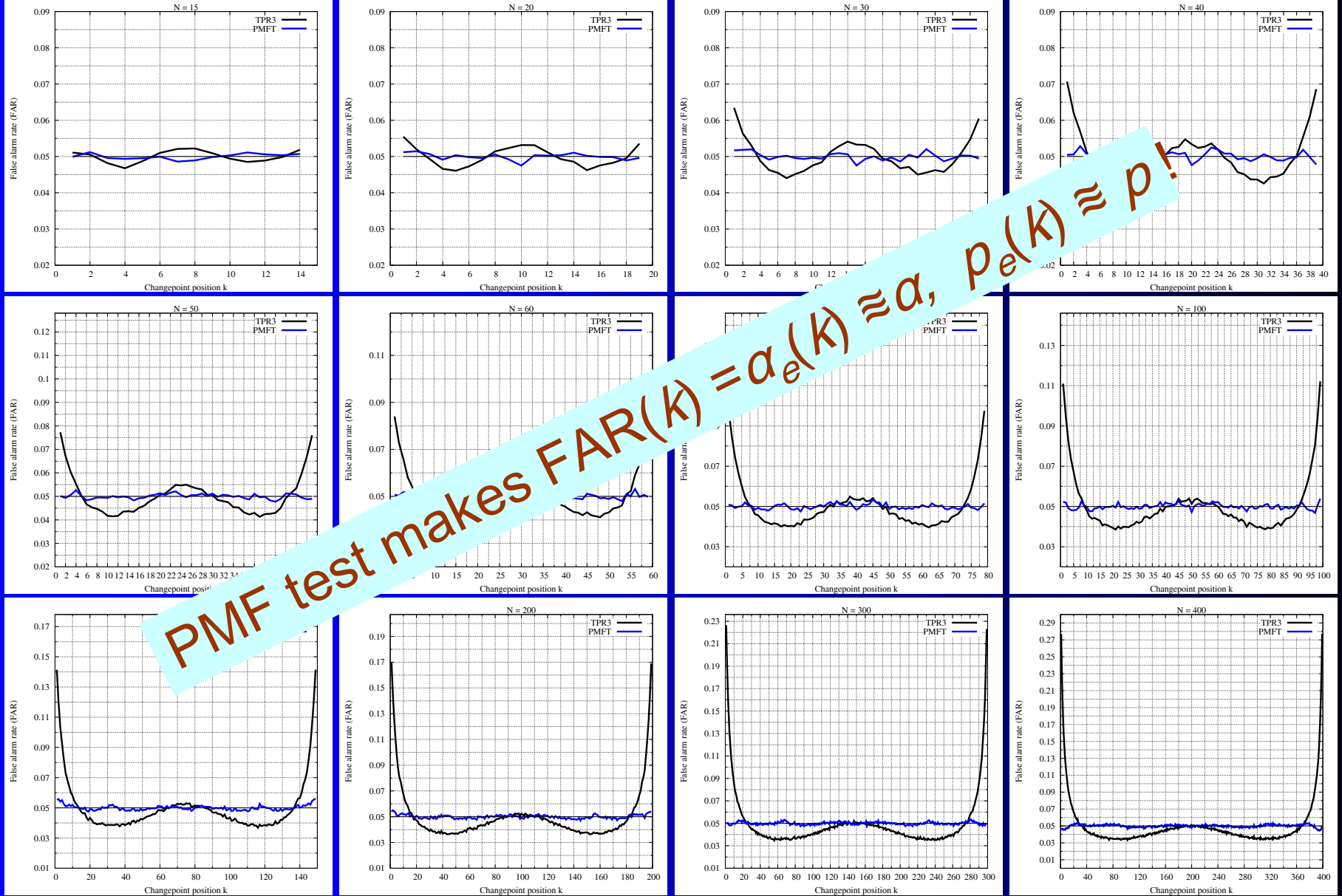
$\times, +, \square, \circ, \dots$

$$R_k = \frac{F_{\max}(\alpha_e(k))}{F_{\max}(0.05)}$$





# FAR(k): TPR3 vs PMF test



# Power of detection: PMF vs TPR3 (real mean-shift $\Delta$ at $t = k$ )

$$RSS = \Delta / \sigma$$

averaged over  
 $2 \leq k \leq N-2$

Mean Hit Rate:  
(PMF/TPR3)

Detect it in  $[k-3, k+3]$   
& with  $p \geq 0.95$

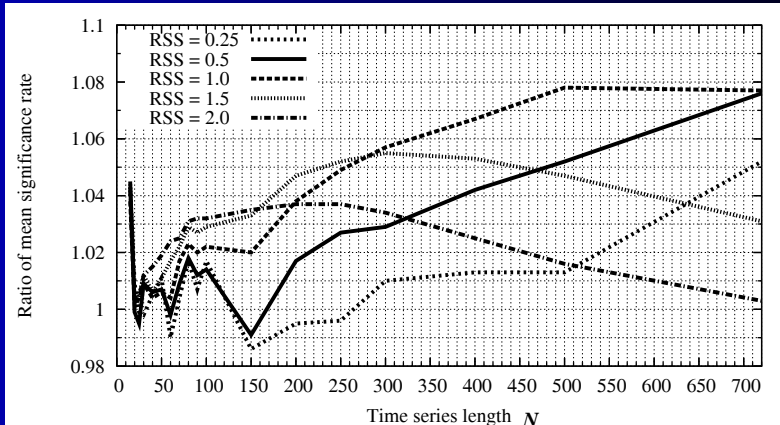
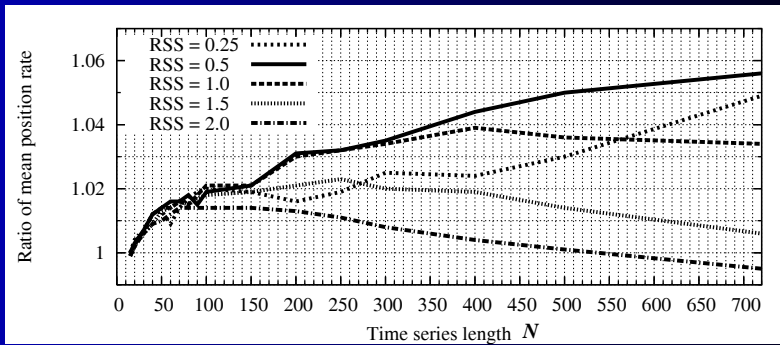
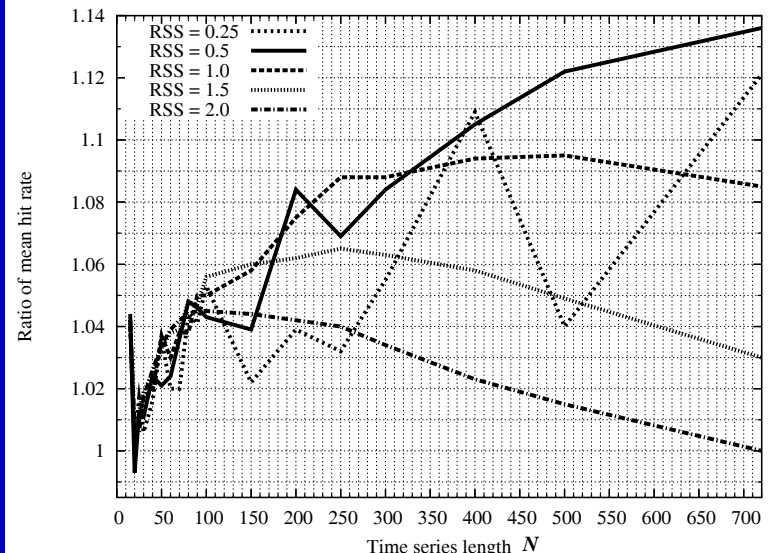
Mean Position Rate:  
(PMF/TPR3)

Detect it in  $[k-3, k+3]$   
regardless of  $p$

Mean Significance Rate:  
(PMF/TPR3)

Detect it with  $p \geq 0.95$   
regardless of position

Each value from 10,000 simulations



# PMT and PMF tests: still assume IID Gaussian errors!

## Autocorrelation and Periodicity

- inherent features of most climate data series

## Common practice:

- use ref series to diminish periodicity (and trend)
  - > problem: ref series are not always available or homogeneous!
- apply tests to annual series to reduce autocorr.
  - (usually autocorr. can not be diminished by using ref series! **example**)
  - sample size: only  $N/12$
  - diff. shift-years identified in diff. month series for the same shift!

Some people ignore the effects, unaware of them



# Effects of autocor. $\phi$ on $PT_{max}$

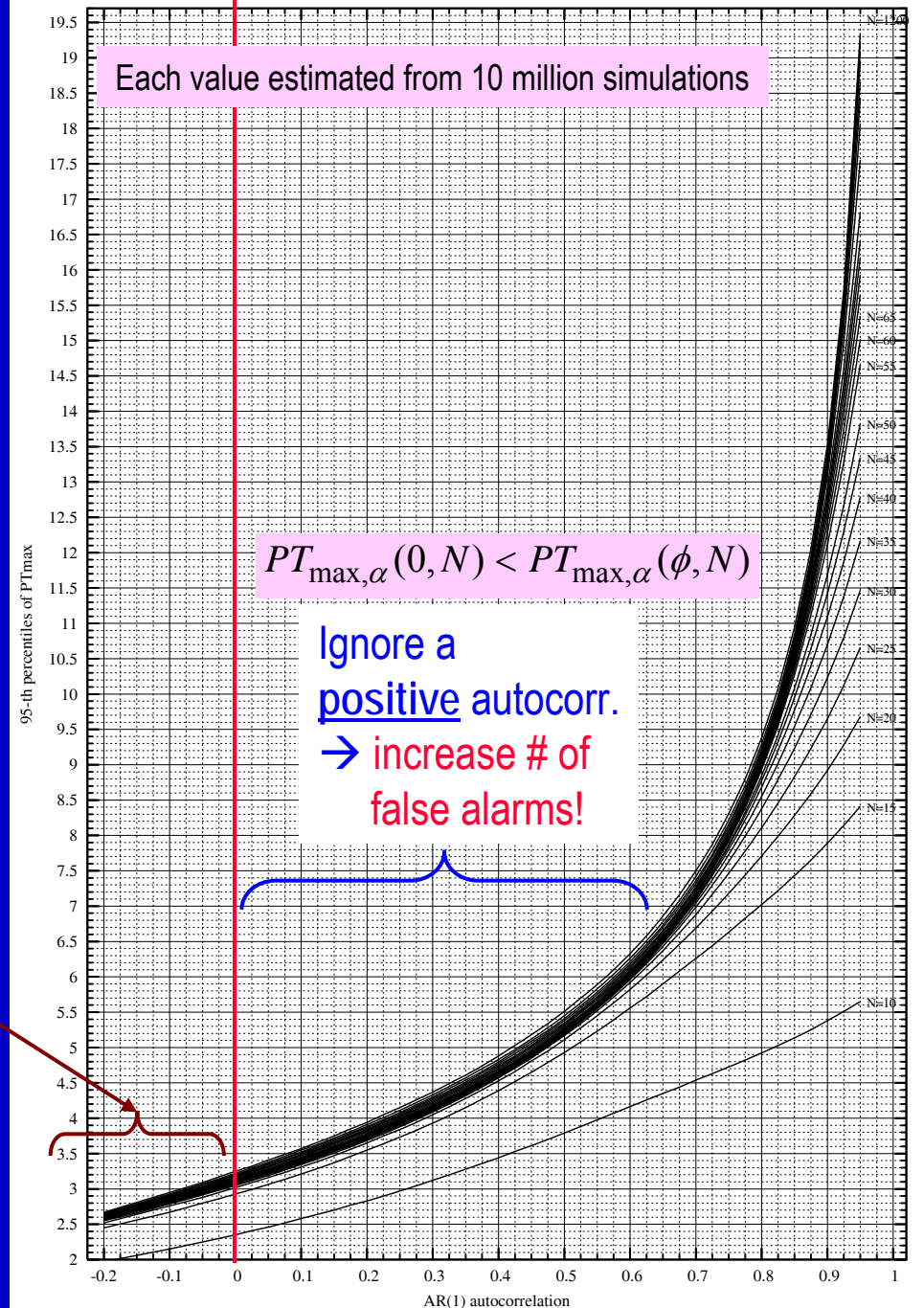
Consider AR(1) errors:

$$\varepsilon_t = \phi\varepsilon_{t-1} + z_t$$

IID Gaussian noise  
(constant var.)

$$PT_{max,\alpha}(0, N) > PT_{max,\alpha}(\phi, N)$$

Ignore a negative autocorr.  
→ let changepoints  
go undetected!

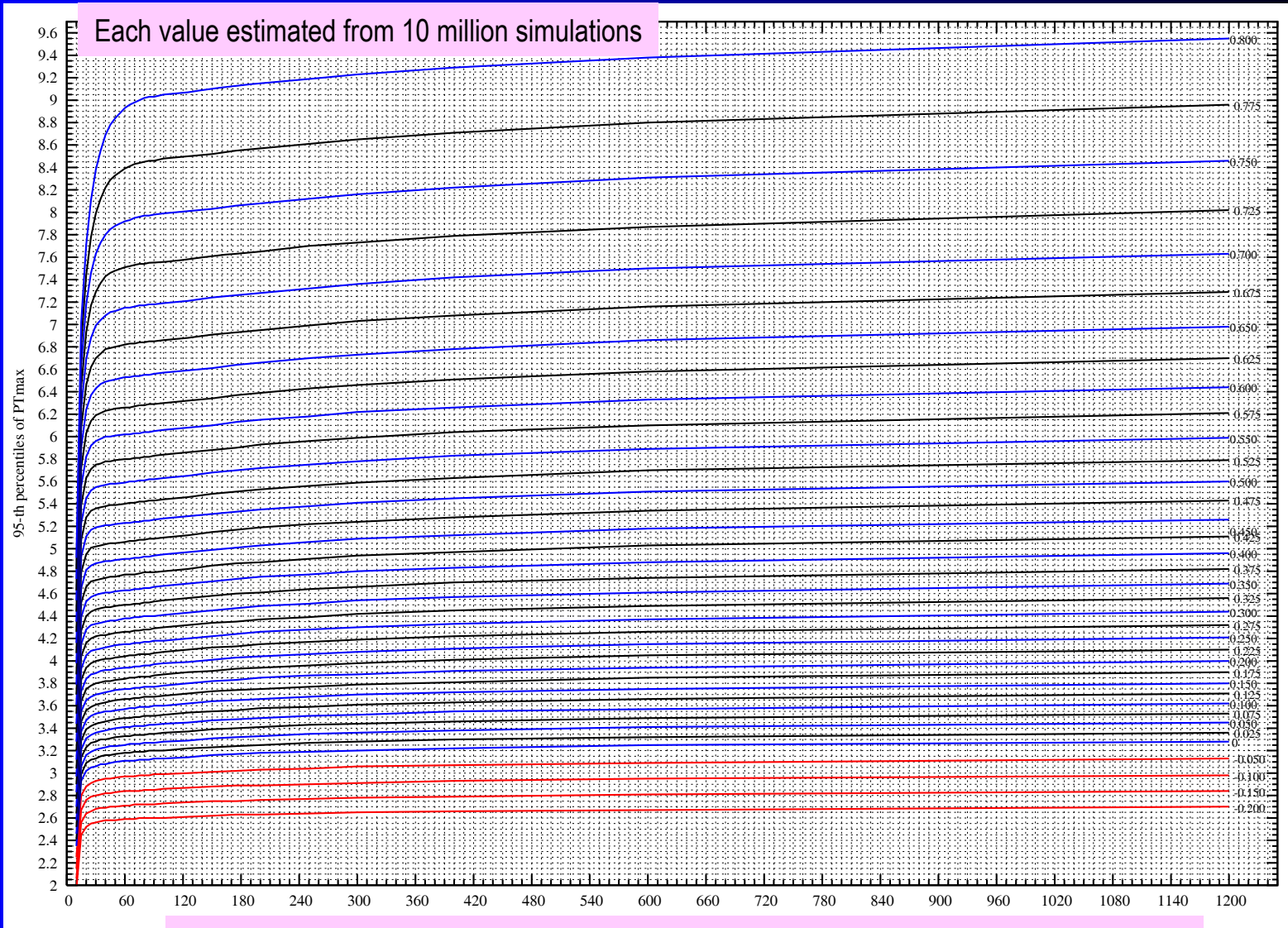


$PT_{max}$  percentiles as a function of autocor.  $\phi$  for each  $N$

Table of  
critical  
values

$$PT_{\max, \alpha}(\phi, N)$$

The PMTred  
algorithm  
(RHtestV2)



$\hat{\phi} [\hat{\phi}_L, \hat{\phi}_U]$  from the full model residual series

$$\Rightarrow PT_{\max}(\hat{\phi}, N) [PT_{\max}(\hat{\phi}_L, N), PT_{\max}(\hat{\phi}_U, N)]$$

$\gamma \phi$

# Effects of autocor. $\phi$ on $PF_{max}$

Consider AR(1) errors:

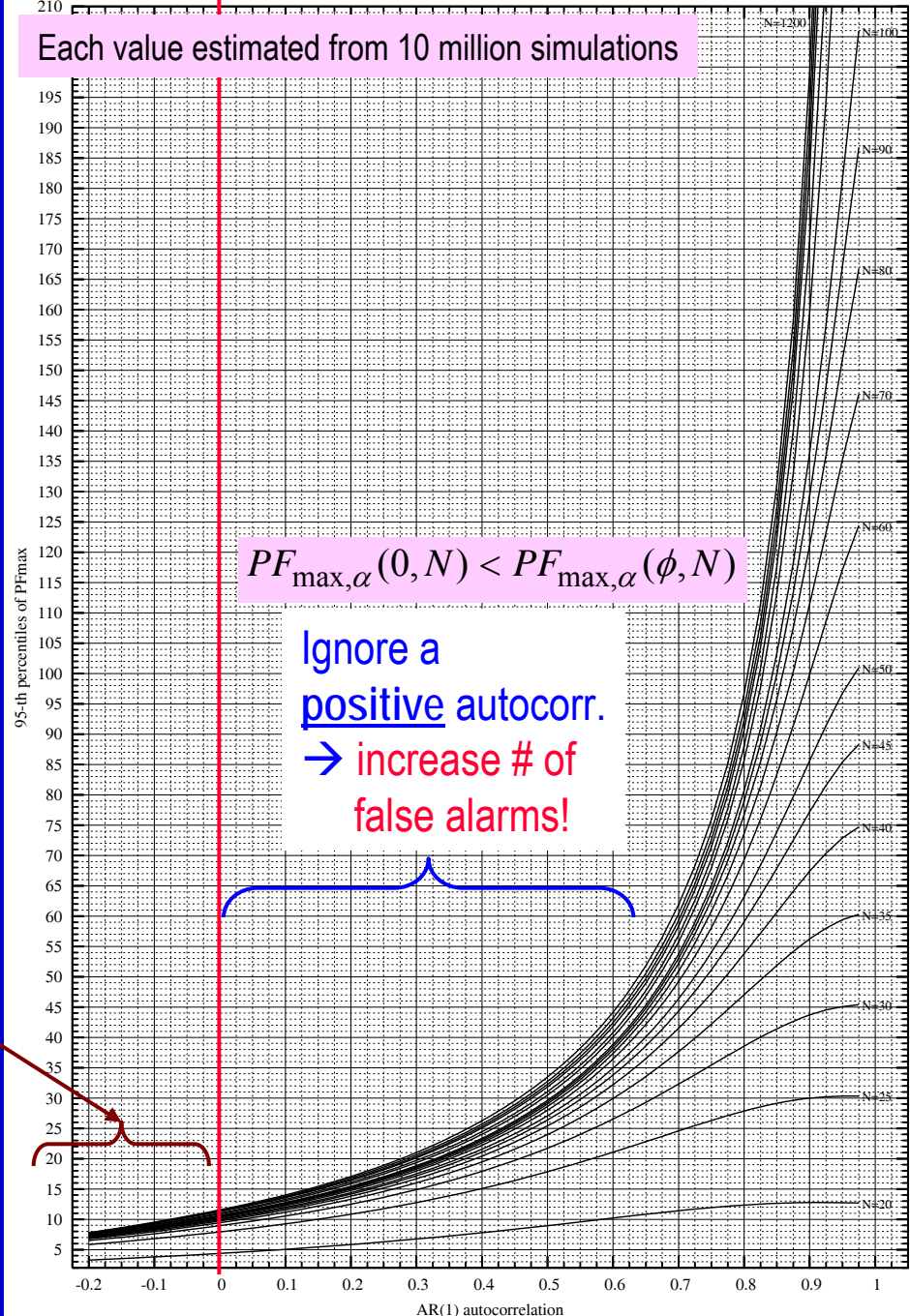
$$\varepsilon_t = \phi\varepsilon_{t-1} + z_t$$

IID Gaussian noise  
(constant var.)

$$PF_{max,\alpha}(0, N) > PF_{max,\alpha}(\phi, N)$$

Ignore negative autocorr.  
→ let changepoints  
go undetected!

Each value estimated from 10 million simulations



$$PF_{max,\alpha}(0, N) < PF_{max,\alpha}(\phi, N)$$

Ignore a  
positive autocorr.  
→ increase # of  
false alarms!

$PF_{max}$  percentiles as a function of autocor.  $\phi$

Each value estimated from 10 million simulations

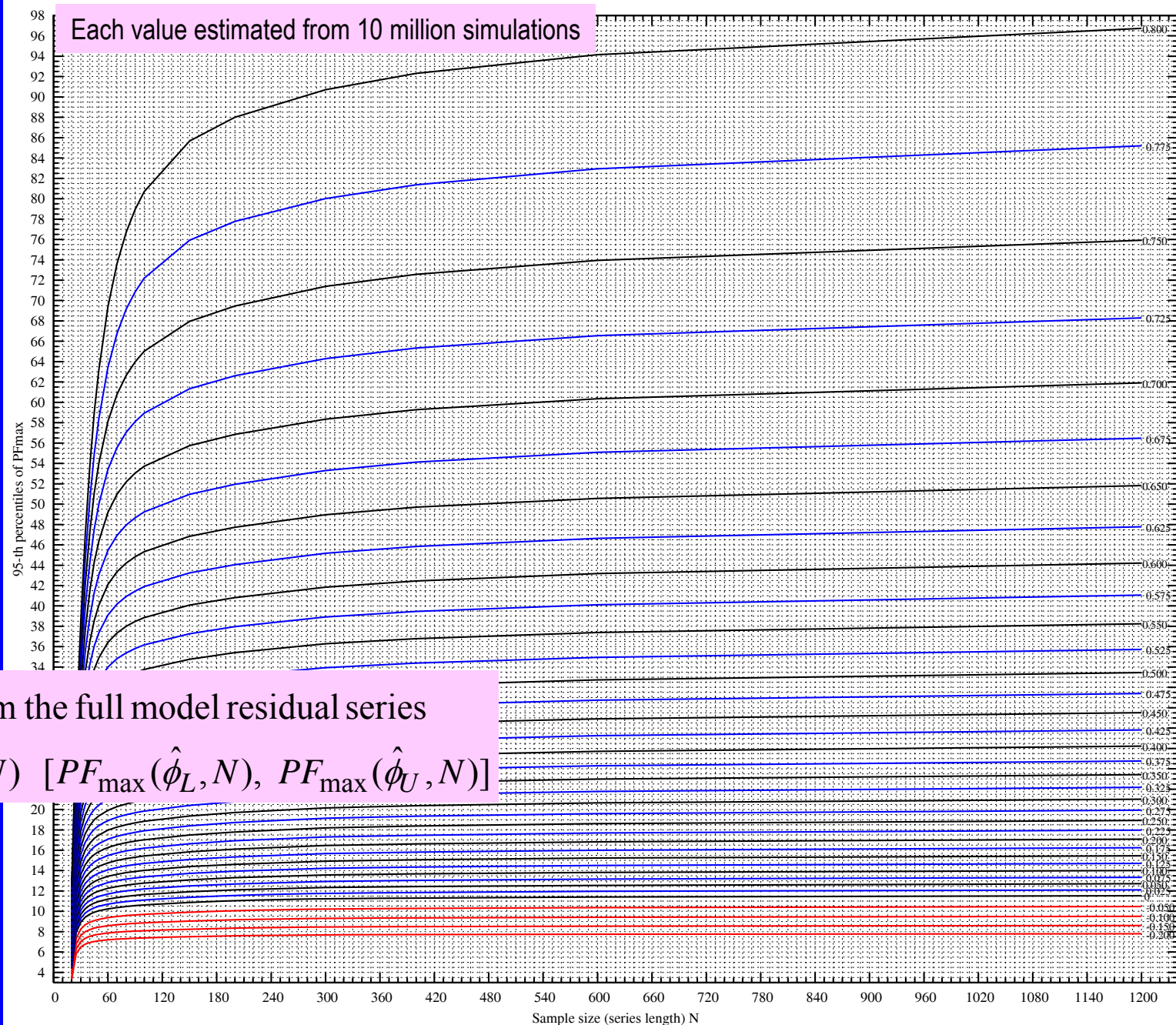


Table of  
critical  
values

$$PF_{\max, \alpha}(\phi, N)$$

The PMFred  
algorithm  
(RHtestV2)

$\hat{\phi}[\hat{\phi}_L, \hat{\phi}_U]$  from the full model residual series

$\Rightarrow PF_{\max}(\hat{\phi}, N) [PF_{\max}(\hat{\phi}_L, N), PF_{\max}(\hat{\phi}_U, N)]$

$PF_{\max}$  percentiles as a function of sample size  $N$  for each  $\phi$

# Power aspects: False Alarm Rate (FAR) and Hit Rate (HR; $k \pm 18$ )

(Each value estimated from 10,000 simulations)

PMTred algorithm (for zero-trend series):

Power of accurate detection

is satisfactory,  $N_c = 1$  or  $N_c > 1$ !

FAR  $\approx \alpha = 0.05$ , regardless of  $\phi$  value

Ignore positive  $\phi \rightarrow \text{FAR} \gg \alpha$

Power depends on shift magnitude & average segment length

A large sample size is needed for a reasonably accurate estimate of  $\hat{\phi}$

No shift

Single shift

Multiple shifts; AR(1) errors

		$FAR_L$	$FAR_U$			$FAR_L$	$FAR_U$	
a. $N_c = 0, N = 600, \phi = 0, (FAR_0 = 0.0526)$		0.0262	0.058			0.0503	0.1016	
b. $N_c = 0, N = 600, \phi = 0.1925 (FAR_0 = 0.2580)$		0.0269	0.058			0.0522	0.1057	
c. $N_c = 0, N = 1200, \phi = 0.1386 (FAR_0 = 0.1698)$		0.0298	0.052			0.0486	0.0827	
# of shifts	$ \Delta/\sigma $	$HR_L$	$HR$			$HR$	$HR_U$	
d. $N_c = 1, N = 600, \phi = 0$ <i>IID</i>	0.5	0.6555	0.6743			0.3682	0.4454	
	1.0	0.9819	0.9856			0.9317	0.9376	
	1.5	0.9999	0.9999			0.9949	0.9985	
	2.0	1.0	1.0			0.9995	0.9998	
	2.5	1.0	1.0			1.0000	1.0000	
e. $N_c = 1, N = 600, \phi = 0.1925$ <i>AR(1)</i>	0.5	0.5068	0.5266	0.5498			0.1826	0.2822
	1.0	0.9071	0.9141	0.9201			0.7965	0.8273
	1.5	0.9902	0.9913	0.9928			0.9506	0.9708
	2.0	0.9998	0.9999	0.9999			0.9895	0.9972
	2.5	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000			0.9995	0.9997
f. $N_c = 2, N = 600, \phi = 0.1925$	(1.0 1.0)	0.7801	0.7879	0.8174			0.6809	0.7326
	RO(0.5 1.0)	0.6614	0.6862	0.7107			0.47	0.5113
	RO(1.0 1.5)	0.8860	0.9050	0.9210			0.8422	0.9057
	RO(1.5 2.5)	0.9711	0.9807	0.9872			0.95	0.985
	RO(1.0 2.5)	0.9223	0.9476	0.9579			0.82	0.9673
g. $N_c = 3, N = 600, \phi = 0.1925$	(1.0 1.0 1.0)	0.6886	0.7245	0.7590			0.5924	0.6467
	RO(0.5 1.0 1.5)	0.6421	0.6720	0.7024			0.441	0.5897
	RO(1.0 1.5 2.0)	0.8511	0.8750	0.8972			0.7878	0.8428
	RO(1.5 2.5 3.5)	0.9628	0.9727	0.9801			0.9514	0.9646
	RO(2.0 2.5 3.5)	0.9620	0.9745	0.9801			0.9624	0.9771
h. $N_c = 3, N = 1200, \phi = 0.1386$	(1.0 1.0 1.0)	0.7977	0.8125	0.8281			0.7805	0.7997
	RO(0.5 1.0 1.5)	0.7507	0.7628	0.7741			0.6695	0.7011
	RO(1.0 1.5 2.0)	0.9214	0.9300	0.9372			0.9092	0.9247
	RO(1.5 2.5 3.5)	0.9868	0.9898	0.9912			0.9811	0.9845
	RO(2.0 2.5 3.5)	0.9882	0.9903	0.9919			0.9842	0.9889
i. $N_c = 5, N = 600, \phi = 0.1925$	(1.0 1.0 1.0 1.0 1.0)	0.6084	0.6547	0.6972			0.4002	0.4520
	RO(0.5 1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5)	0.7431	0.7681	0.7912			0.6622	0.6911
	RO(3.0 1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5)	0.8806	0.9006	0.9166			0.8552	0.8800
	RO(1.5 2.0 2.5 3.5 4.0)	0.9691	0.9796	0.9836			0.9183	0.9235
	RO(3.0 2.0 2.5 3.5 4.0)	0.9691	0.9772	0.9812			0.9277	0.9409
j. $N_c = 5, N = 1200, \phi = 0.1386$	(1.0 1.0 1.0 1.0 1.0)	0.7816	0.8004	0.8186			0.6763	0.7063
	RO(0.5 1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5)	0.7289	0.7397	0.7501			0.7785	0.7920
	RO(3.0 1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5)	0.9451	0.9599	0.9681			0.9528	0.9570
	RO(1.5 2.0 2.5 3.5 4.0)	0.9794	0.9828	0.9854			0.9752	0.9779
	RO(3.0 2.0 2.5 3.5 4.0)	0.9898	0.9915	0.9931			0.9799	0.9819

95% uncertainty range - uncertainty in  $\hat{\phi}$



# The RHtestV2 software package

- recognized by WMO at COP-13 (Bali, Dec. 2007)

(R & FORTRAN)

## 1. PMTred algorithm

- for zero-trend series with IID or AR(1) Gaussian errors
- for use with reference series
- *FindU.wRef, FindUD.wRef, StepSize.wRef*

## 2. PMFred algorithm

- for constant trend series with IID or AR(1) Gaussian errors
- can be used without reference series
- *FindU, FindUD, StepSize*

# Input data format for the RHtestV2

(Annual series)

OR

(Monthly series)

OR

(Daily series)

YYYY MM DD data

1974 00 00 -4.87  
1975 00 00 -3.88  
1976 00 00 -5.65  
1977 00 00 -3.34  
1978 00 00 -5.72  
1979 00 00 -4.08  
1980 00 00 -4.97  
1981 00 00 -2.58  
1982 00 00 -4.48  
1983 00 00 -999. ← Missing Value code  
1984 00 00 -3.40  
1985 00 00 -4.58  
1986 00 00 -4.25  
1987 00 00 -2.25  
1988 00 00 -3.94

YYYY MM DD data

1967 7 00 1015.70  
1967 8 00 1015.95  
1967 9 00 1016.10  
1967 10 00 -999.99 ← Missing Value code  
1967 11 00 1010.71  
1967 12 00 1011.58  
1968 1 00 1009.37  
1968 2 00 1003.07  
1968 3 00 1011.94  
1968 4 00 1014.74  
1968 5 00 1009.59  
1968 6 00 1011.77  
1968 7 00 1014.35  
1968 8 00 1010.87  
1968 9 00 1016.45

YYYY MM DD data

1994 1 27 8.1  
1994 1 28 5.3  
1994 1 29 4.9  
1994 1 30 4.9  
1994 1 31 4.0  
1994 2 1 3.9  
1994 2 2 7.2  
1994 2 3 8.7  
1994 2 4 6.3  
1994 2 5 -999. ← Missing value code  
1994 2 6 -999.  
1994 2 7 -999.  
1994 2 8 -999.  
1994 2 9 9.0  
1994 2 10 6.0

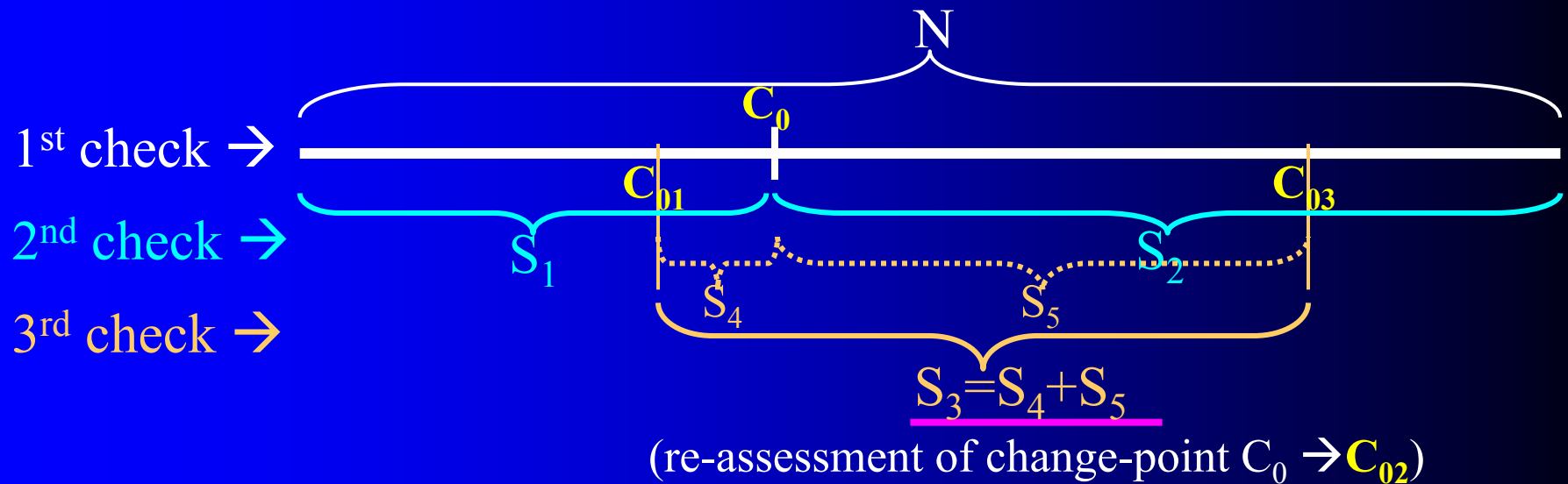
A Ref series should be in a separate file of the same format!

Base and Ref series can have data for different periods or missing values at different times, but they must have the same missing value code!

## Stepwise testing algorithm

- Possible multiple change-points in one single time series
  - Most methods developed assuming at most one change-point
- 1<sup>st</sup> change-point: might be false or inaccurate (“contaminated”)

[1] Find the most probable changepoint in the series being tested:



Is the largest among  $C_{01}$ ,  $C_{02}$ ,  $C_{03}$  significant at the nominal level  $\alpha$ ?  $\begin{cases} \text{No (End!)} \\ \text{Yes, ...} \end{cases}$

# Stepwise testing algorithm for detecting multiple changepoints

[1] Find the most significant shift  $\rightarrow C_1$

[2]  $M_c \neq N_c \geq 1$  characterize the shifts  
Identify the most significant shift

[3] Estimate the parameters of the  $(N_c+1)$ -phase model  $\{C_j\}$  ( $j=1, \dots, N_c+1$ )

[4] Find the most significant shift among the  $N_c$  shifts  
Is it significant at the nominal level  $\alpha$ ?

Yes,  
repeat [2]-[4]

[5] Find the smallest among the  $N_c$  shifts, re-assess its significance in the presence of others. Is it significant at the nominal level  $\alpha$ ?

Yes

No

Delete it from the list  $\{C_j\}$  ( $j=1, 2, \dots, N_c$ ), set  $N_c = N_c - 1$ , re-assess significance of the remaining shifts, and repeat [5]

Main points:

- (1) Significant changepoints are added to the list of changepoints, one by one: the most significant, the next most...
- 2) Significance of a changepoint is always assessed in the presence of others listed, and re-assessed if the list changes.
- (3) In the resulting list, each changepoint is significant in the presence of all others in the list.
- (4) Final estimates  $\leftarrow (N_c+1)$ -phase model fit to de-seasonalized base series, and to the base-minus-reference series ( $\beta \equiv 0$ ) if a reference series is used

ed  $\rightarrow C_1$

$\rightarrow N_c+1$  segments.

$\{K_i\}$  ( $i=1, 2, \dots, N_c+1$ )

n the presence of  
om the whitened series

$\dots, N_c+1$  .

$j=1, 2, \dots, N_c$ ), and  
 $K_i\}$  ( $i=1, 2, \dots, N_c+1$ );  
, & repeat [3]-[4]

[6] output the list  $\{C_j\}$  ( $j=1, 2, \dots, N_c$ ) and obtain the final estimates of

- shift significance
- shift size  $\leftarrow (N_c+1)$ -phase model fit

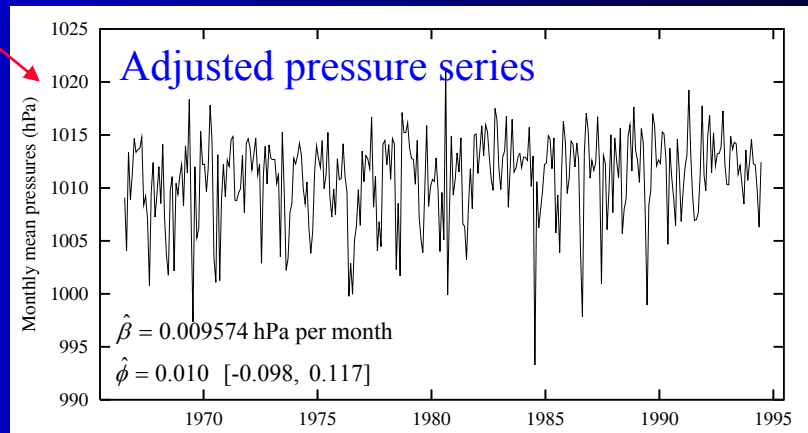
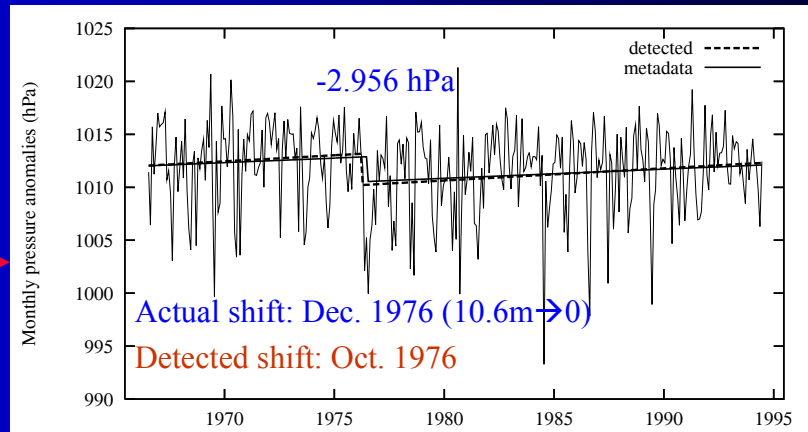
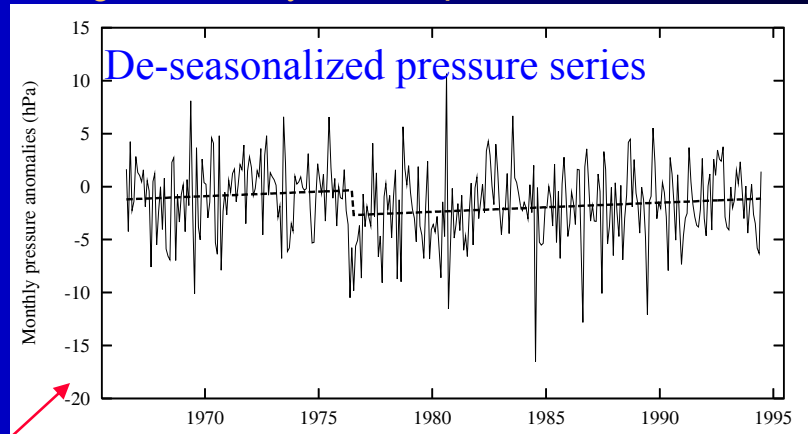
## Burgeo monthly station pressure series

### Examples of application

#### 1. Single changepoint case

- PMTred → Base-Ref series  
(Burgeo-Yarmouth)

Plots like these  
are included  
in the RHtestV2 output



# Examples of application

## 2. Two changepoints

- PMFred → de-seasonalized temp. series  
(shifts & seasonal means estimated via iteration)

Detected

PMFred

Metadata

(1) Oct 1953

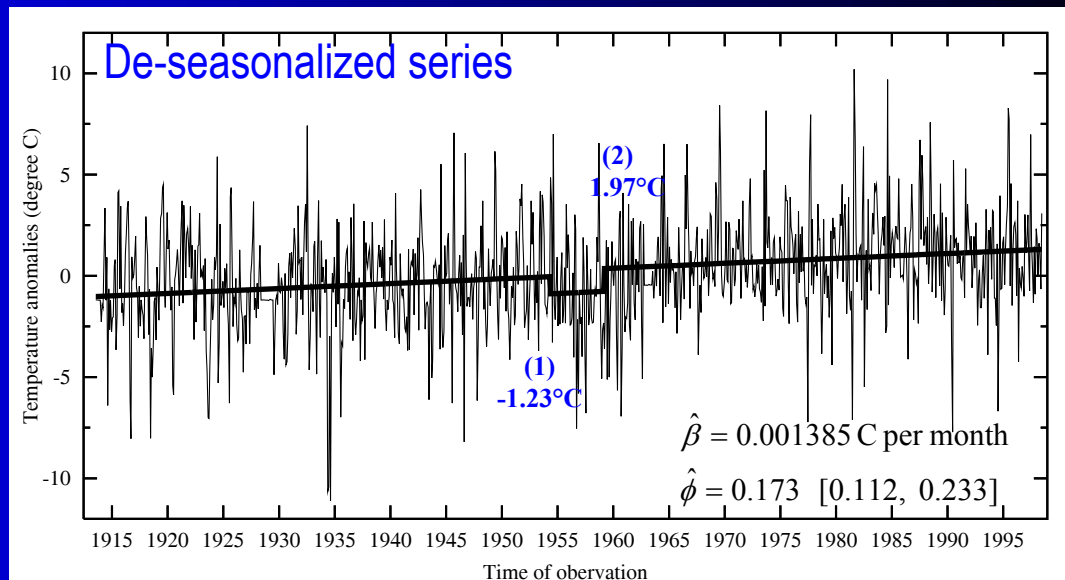
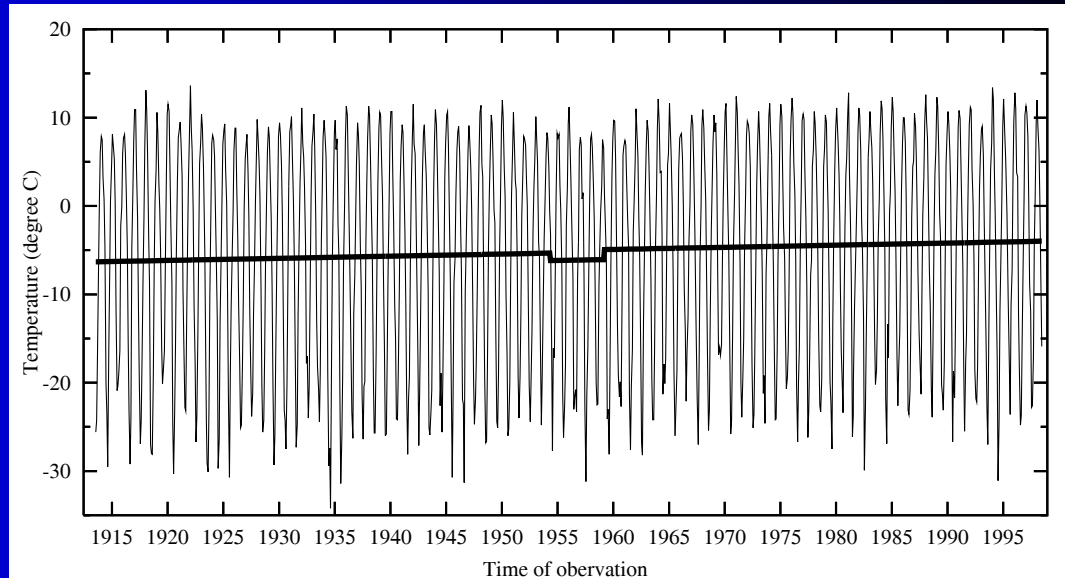
Aug 1948-Oct 1958:

Stn elevation change  
(990 feet → 1002 feet)

(2) Aug 1958

Oct 1958: Thermometer screen & stand replaced

Amos monthly means of daily minimum temperatures

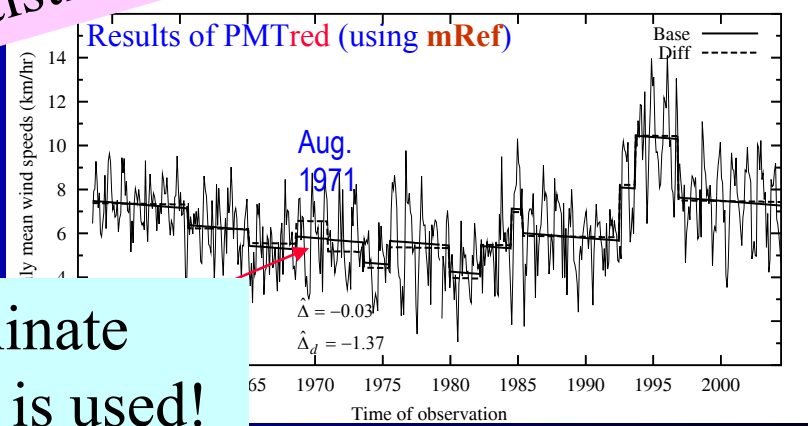
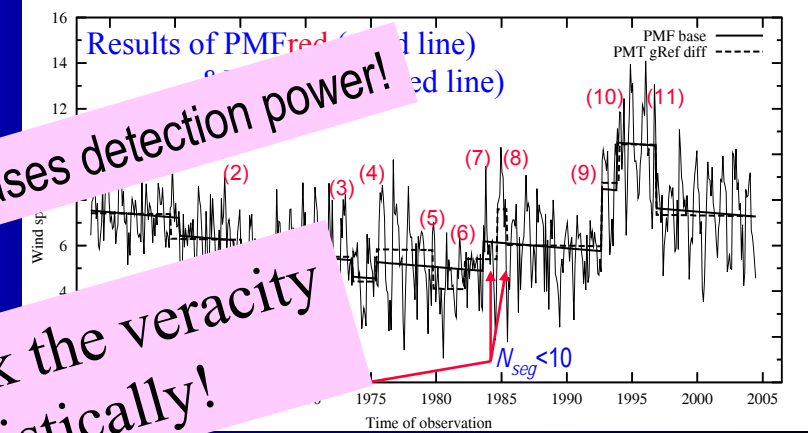
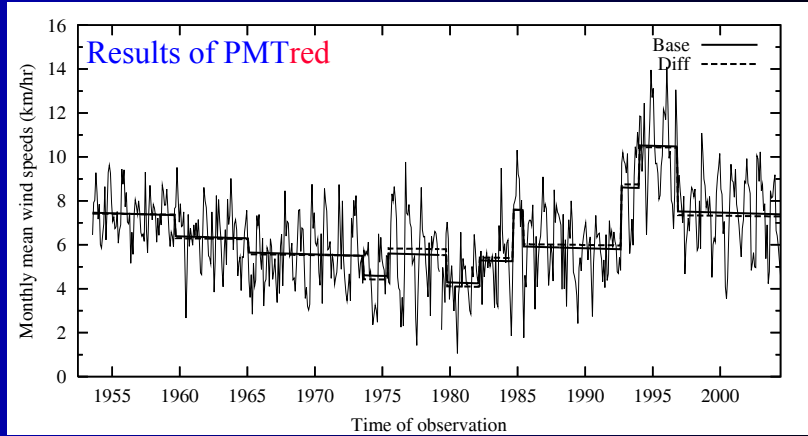


# Examples of application

## 3. Multiple changepoints case

- PMTred → Base-Ref series

Two estimates of shift-size -  
Any notable inconsistency  
between them indicates ...



Detected

PMTred_gRef	PMFref	Metadata
(1) Feb 1960	Oct 1960	May 1957-Feb 1961: anemometer 45P
(2) Jul 1965	Dec 1964	Feb 1961-Mar 1967: Anemometer replaced
(3) Feb 1974	Jan 1974	Early 1974: WSD detector replaced
(4) Jan 1976	Nov 1975	Dec 1975: WSD detector replaced
(5) Mar 1980	X	Mar 1980: WSD detector replaced
(6) Aug 1982	Jan 1984	Jan 1984: WSD detector replaced
(7) Feb 1985	X	Mar 1985: WSD detector replaced
(8) Nov 1985	X	Nov 1985: WSD detector replaced
(9) Feb 1993	Feb 1993	Feb 1993: WSD detector replaced
(10) Jun 1994	Apr 1994	Apr 1994: WSD detector replaced, new tilt pole
(11) Apr 1997	Apr 1997	Apr 1997: WSD detector replaced, new tilt pole

$N_{min} = 5$     $N_{min} = 10$

Use of good reference series increases detection power!  
It is always necessary to check the veracity of changepoints identified statistically!

Apply PMFred to a Ref series to eliminate large artificial shifts (if any) before it is used!

For more details about using the RHtestV2, please refer to

“Wang, X. L. and Y. Feng, 2007: *RHtestV2 User Manual*.”

Available at <http://cccma.seos.uvic.ca/ETCCDMI/software.shtml>,

along with the open source software

#### References:

- Wang, X. L., 2008a: Penalized maximal  $F$  test for detecting undocumented mean-shift without trend change. *J. Atmos. Oceanic Technol.*, 25 (No. 3), 368-384. DOI:10.1175/2007/JTECHA982.1
- Wang, X. L., 2008b: Accounting for autocorrelation in detecting mean-shifts in climate data series using the penalized maximal  $t$  or  $F$  test. *J. App. Meteor. Climatol.*, 47, 2423–2444.
- Wang, X. L., Q. H. Wen, and Y. Wu, 2007: Penalized Maximal  $t$ -test for Detecting Undocumented Mean Change in Climate Data Series. *J. App. Meteor. Climatol.*, 46 (No. 6), 916-931. DOI:10.1175/JAM2504.1
- Wan, H., X. L. Wang, and V. R. Swail, 2007: A Quality Assurance System for Canadian Hourly Pressure Data. *J. App. Meteor. Climatol.*, 46 (No. 11), 1804-1817.

*Thank you very much!*