



THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
Department of Information Engineering

Seminar

Observational Learning with Noise
by
Professor Randall Berry
Northwestern University
U.S.A.

Date : 17 June, 2015 (Wed.)
Time : 11:00am – 12:00noon
Venue : Room 833, Ho Sin Hang Engineering Building
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Abstract

When making decisions, people often engage in “observational learning” and draw inferences from observing the choices of their peers. Online platforms aid in this by providing people with a larger set of “observations.” Models for such setting have been well-studied for Bayesian agents, where it is known that in some cases informational cascades or herding behavior can result. In this talk, we investigate the impact of noise in these observations and in particular we characterize how this noise effects the onset of information cascades and the resulting social welfare. Interestingly, we show that in some cases more noise actually improves the overall welfare.

This is joint work with Tho Le and Vijay Subramanian.

Biography

Randall Berry joined Northwestern University in 2000, where he is currently a Professor in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science. His research interests span topics in wireless communications, computer networking, network economics, and information theory. Dr. Berry received the M.S. and PhD degrees in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1996 and 2000, respectively, where he was part of the Laboratory for Information and Decision Systems.

Dr. Berry is the recipient of a 2003 CAREER award from the National Science Foundation. He has also received the Best Teacher award for the 2001/2002 academic year from the ECE Department at Northwestern University and was nominated to 2012 Northwestern University Associated Student Government Faculty Honor Roll.

He is an IEEE Communications Society Distinguished Lecturer for 2013-15. He has served as an Editor for the IEEE Transactions on Wireless Communications from 2006 to 2009, and an Associate Editor for the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory from 2009 to 2011, in the area of communication networks. He has also been a guest editor for the IEEE Journal on Selected Topics in Signal Processing special issue on Dynamic Spectrum Access and the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory special issue on Relaying and Cooperation. He has served on the program and organizing committees of numerous conferences including serving as the co-chair of the 2012 IEEE Communication Theory Workshop and a technical co-chair of 2010 IEEE ICC Wireless Networking Symposium. He is a Fellow of IEEE.

**** ALL ARE WELCOME ****

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