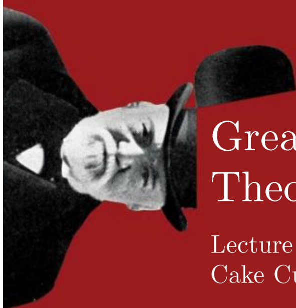


Great Ideas in Theoretical CS

Lecture 10:
Cake Cutting

Anil Ada
Ariel Procaccia (this time)

Cake cutting

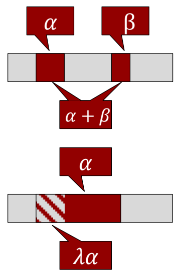
How to fairly divide a heterogeneous divisible good between players with different preferences?

The problem

- Cake is interval $[0,1]$
- Set of players $\mathrm{N} = \{1, \ldots, n\}$
- Piece of cake $X \subseteq [0,1]$: finite union of disjoint intervals

The problem

- Each player $i \in N$ has a non-negative valuation V_i over pieces of cake
- Additive: for $X \cap Y = \emptyset$, $V_i(X) + V_i(Y) = V_i(X \cup Y)$
- Normalized: For all $i \in N$, $V_i([0,1]) = 1$
- Divisible: $\forall \lambda \in [0,1]$ can cut $I' \subseteq I$ s.t. $V_i(I') = \lambda V_i(I)$

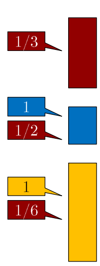


Fairness properties

- Our goal is to find an allocation $A_1, \ldots, A_n$
- Proportionality:
$$\forall i \in N, V_i(A_i) \geq \frac{1}{n}$$
- Envy-Freeness (EF):
$$\forall i, j \in N, V_i(A_i) \geq V_i(A_j)$$
- Poll 1: For $n = 2$ which is stronger?
  1. Proportionality
  2. EF
  3. They are equivalent
  4. They are incomparable

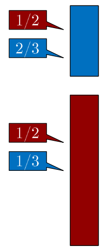
Fairness properties

- Our goal is to find an allocation $A_1, \ldots, A_n$
- Proportionality:
$$\forall i \in N, V_i(A_i) \geq \frac{1}{n}$$
- Envy-Freeness (EF):
$$\forall i, j \in N, V_i(A_i) \geq V_i(A_j)$$
- Poll 2: For $n \geq 3$ which is stronger?
  1. Proportionality
  2. EF
  3. They are equivalent
  4. They are incomparable



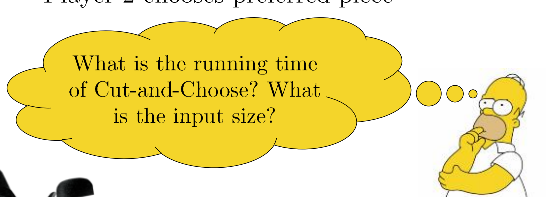
Cut-and-Choose

- Algorithm for $n = 2$ [Procaccia and Procaccia, circa 1985]
- Player 1 divides into two pieces X, Y s.t.
  $V_1(X) = 1/2\,, V_1(Y) = 1/2$
- Player 2 chooses preferred piece
- This is EF (hence proportional)



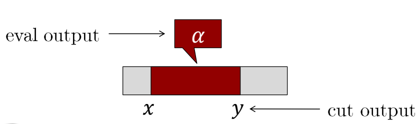
Time complexity

- Player 1 divides into two pieces X, Y s.t.
  $V_1(X) = 1/2\,, V_1(Y) = 1/2$
- Player 2 chooses preferred piece



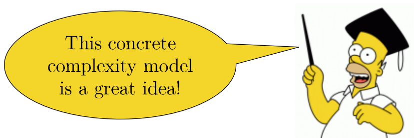
The Robertson-Webb model

- Input size is n
- Two types of operations
  - $\mathrm{Eval}_i(x, y)$ returns $V_i([x, y])$
  - $\mathrm{Cut}_i(x, \alpha)$ returns y such that $V_i([x, y]) = \alpha$



The Robertson-Webb model

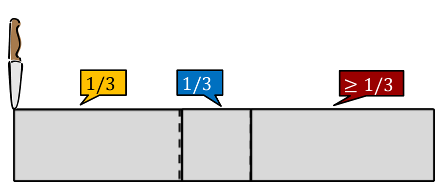
- Two types of operations
  - $\text{Eval}_i(x, y) = V_i([x, y])$
  - $\text{Cut}_i(x, \alpha) = y$ s.t. $V_i([x, y]) = \alpha$
- Poll 3: #operations needed to find an EF allocation when $n = 2$?
  1. 1
  2. 2
  3. 3
  4. 4



Dubins-Spanier

- Referee continuously moves knife
- Repeat: when piece left of knife is worth $1/n$ to player, player shouts "stop" and gets piece
- That player is removed
- Last player gets remaining piece

Dubins-Spanier Protocol



Dubins-Spanier

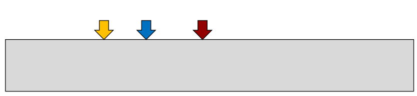
- Claim: The Dubins-Spanier protocol produces a proportional allocation
- Proof:
  - At stage 0, each of the n players values the whole cake at 1
  - At each stage, the allocated piece of cake is worth at most $1/n$ to the remaining players
  - Hence, if at stage k each of the remaining $n-k$ players has value at least $1-k/n$ for the remaining cake, then at stage $k+1$ each of the remaining $n-(k+1)$ players has value at least $1-\frac{k+1}{n}$ for the remaining cake ■

Dubins-Spanier

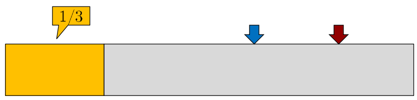
What is the complexity of Dubins-Spanier in the RW model?

- Moving knife is not really needed
- Repeat: each player makes a mark at his $1/n$ point, leftmost player gets piece up to its mark

Dubins-Spanier



Dubins-Spanier



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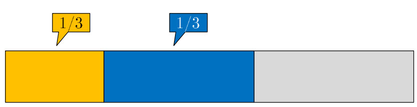
Dubins-Spanier



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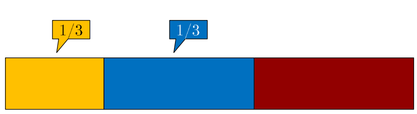
Dubins-Spanier



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Dubins-Spanier

- Poll 4: So what is the complexity of Dubins-Spanier in the RW model?
  1. $\Theta(\sqrt{n})$
  2. $\Theta(n)$
  3. $\Theta(n \log n)$
  4. $\Theta(n^2)$

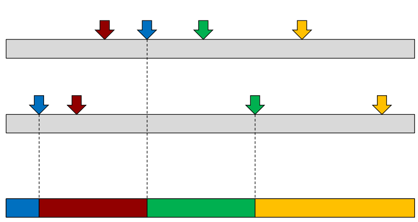
Even-Paz

- Given $[x, y]$, assume $n = 2^k$
- If $n = 1$, give $[x, y]$ to the single player
- Otherwise, each player i makes a mark z s.t.

$$V_i([x, z]) = \frac{1}{2} V_i([x, y])$$

- Let z^* be the $n/2$ mark from the left
- Recurse on $[x, z^*]$ with the left $n/2$ players, and on $[z^*, y]$ with the right $n/2$ players

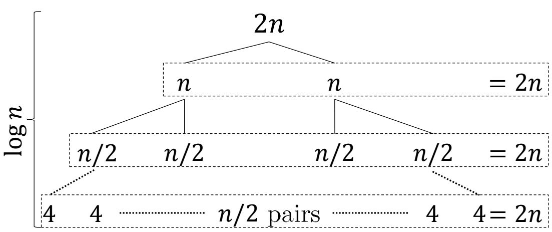
Even-Paz



Even-Paz

- Claim: The Even-Paz protocol produces a proportional allocation
- Proof:
  - At stage 0, each of the n players values the whole cake at 1
  - At each stage the players who share a piece of cake value it at least at $V_i([x,y])/2$
  - Hence, if at stage k each player has value at least $1/2^k$ for the piece he's sharing, then at stage $k+1$ each player has value at least $\frac{1}{2^{k+1}}$
  - The number of stages is $\log n$ ■

$$T(1) = 0, T(n) = 2n + 2T\left(\frac{n}{2}\right)$$



Overall: $2n \log n$

Complexity of proportionality

- Theorem [Edmonds and Pruhs, 2006]: Any proportional protocol needs $\Omega(n \log n)$ operations in the RW model
- The Even-Paz protocol is provably optimal!
- Envy-freeness is a much more complicated story

Summary

- Terminology:
  - Proportionality / envy-freeness
  - The Robertson-Webb model
  - The Dubins-Spanier protocol
  - The Even-Paz protocol
- Principles:
  - Concrete complexity models for reasoning about time complexity

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