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BAYESIAN INFERENCE AND MAXIMUM ENTROPY
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28th International Workshop on Bayesian Inference and
Maximum Entropy Methods in Science and Engineering

Boracéia, São Paulo, Brazil 6 – 11 July 2008

EDITORS

Marcelo de Souza Lauretto
Carlos Alberto de Bragança Pereira
Julio Michael Stern

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PREFACE

The Twenty-eighth International Workshop on Bayesian Inference and Maximum Entropy Methods in Science and Engineering, MaxEnt 2008, was held at Boraceia Beach, São Paulo, Brazil, from July 6-11, 2008.

The workshop had 4 tutorials, 9 invited speakers, 26 oral presentations and 35 poster presentations and was attended by participants from institutions of 13 countries, namely, Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Colombia, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States, with citizens of the former and 8 more countries, namely, Bulgaria, China, Iran, Nepal, Russia, Spain, Syria and Turkey.

Like the previous MaxEnt Workshops, this meeting encompassed all aspects of information theory, probability, statistical inference and statistical physics, including research on foundations and theoretical developments, as well as modeling techniques for several specific application areas.

The MaxEnt workshops are unique in several aspects and, we hope, MaxEnt 2008 was no different. The strong attendance of these workshops by both masters and novices alike and the ease with which they mix and intermingle is critical in the transmission of ideals across generations. The organizers would like to extend a special thank to the experienced professionals who throughout the years have spent time with and have inspired the new generation of scientists at this workshop. This is perhaps one of the greatest strengths of this conference, and has led to a coherence and exchange of ideas that is unparalleled in the scientific community. MaxEnt also exhibits a great diversity of techniques and applications all presented in a single-track format. In this sense, these meetings are truly interdisciplinary.

The aim of the MaxEnt workshops is to push at the forefront of our understanding. We contend that this is impossible unless diverse and possibly controversial points of view are deliberately encouraged. Just as the impressionist painters found their work rejected at the annual exhibitions of the Salon de l'Académie, we feel that some of the papers collected at MaxEnt could very well be rejected by established scientific journals. We hope MaxEnt 2008 was able to play the essential role of a Salon des Refusés. Some ideas may be controversial, and may eventually be proven wrong, but at an early stage they need to be nurtured rather than prematurely dismissed. Just as the impressionists did not compromise quality as they explored esthetic frontier, we hold that these papers do not compromise on quality as they explore the scientific frontier.

Unlike previous years, this year no participant was unable to attend due to difficulties obtaining visas. We are extremely grateful for this opportunity to see a scientific meeting bringing together, is a spirit of tolerance and cooperation, people from all ages, races, religions, ideologies and nationalities (and cheering for “almost” all football clubs).

For the first time in the MaxEnt meetings, we have asked the authors of the tutorial sections to prepare real text books. The objective of these text books is to provide an in

depth analysis of important subjects introduced at the tutorial presentations. The tables of contents of these books, at the end of the proceedings, give a good idea of the scope of each tutorial.

This meeting would not have been possible without the sponsorship of several institutions. First and foremost we acknowledge Boise State University and the E.T. Jaynes Foundation. We have also had the sponsorship from IME-USP - Institute of Mathematics and Statistics of the University of São Paulo and its graduate programs in Statistics and Applied Mathematics; IF-USP - Institute of Physics; FIA - Fundação Instituto de Administração; FIPE - Fundação Instituto de Pesquisas Econômicas; CAPES - Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior; FAPESP - Fundação de Apoio à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo; CNPq – Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico; and IM-AGIMB - Instituto de Milênio Avanço Global e Integrado da Matemática Brasileira. We also had the support from IPTI - Instituto de Pesquisas em Tecnologia e Inovação; Supremum Assessoria e Consultoria; Universia; and MaxEnt Workshops Inc.

We hope that all the participants of MaxEnt 2008 had the opportunity to work hard (building science and breaking dogmas), enjoy the beach, make friends, and have fun!

MaxEnt 2008 Editors,

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