Hiram's Lighthouse

PROVIDING MASONIC *LIGHT* FROM TORONTO EAST DISTRICT

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Hiram's Lighthouse - January 1, 2024
Grand Lodge Merit Award Winner for District Newsletter 2008

New Year’s serves as reminder that time waits for no one.

Sounds ominous doesn’t it? Brethren I read a quote a while back that described life as a flowing river.

We ride down this river from start to finish never seeing the same shoreline twice.

This quote struck a chord with me as it applies perfectly to my Masonic journey. I believe that we must learn from our past experiences, but at the same time, realize that we cannot change things that have already passed.

We as masons, must learn, adapt and grow as we ride the tide that moves us forward. As our journey continues, we must learn to be open to change and embrace new challenges. The symmetry and order that is a constant in our work, serves as the vessel or means to keep us from drowning in the challenges and difficulties that inevitably come our way. New Year, new shoreline.

Communication, patience and support for each other, coupled with the Masonic principles that we all share will always make our lives flow smoothly.

Happy New Year to everyone.

R.W. Bro. Nick Zarafonitis
District Deputy Grand Master
Toronto East District

...Now here's a Lodge in

Kootenay Lodge No. 15
209 Mackenzie Ave,
Revelstoke, BC.
V0E2S0

Around and About
(News & Notices)

Making good men better: a look at the Masonic Brotherhood in Revelstoke

At the Revelstoke Masonic lodge, members focus on philanthropy, men's mental health and more.

BY MELISSA JAMESON • LATEST NEWS • DEC 13, 2023
Full Article HERE

Trestle Board

Coming Soon...

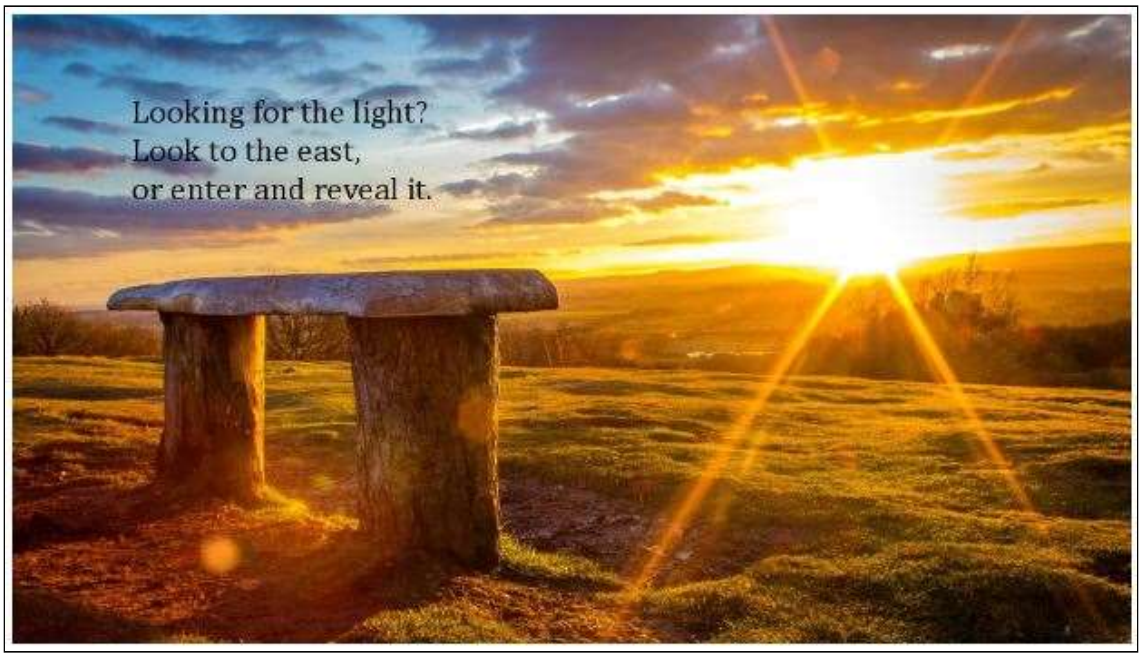
Books and Manuscripts

This Month in History

January 1, 1776 - During the American Revolution, George Washington unveiled the Grand Union Flag, the first national flag in America.

January 1, 1942 - Twenty six countries signed the *Declaration of the United Nations*, in Washington, D.C., reaffirming their opposition to the Axis powers and confirming that no single nation would make a separate peace.

January 1, 1958 - The EEC (European Economic Community) known as the Common Market was formed by Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and The Netherlands in order to remove trade barriers and coordinate trade policies.



Please take the time to log in and review the new Grand Lodge website.
www.grandlodge.on.ca

Nature & Science

What The Prisoner's Dilemma Reveals About Life, The Universe, and Everything

What game theory can teach us about standing up to bullies

In a time of income inequality and ruthless politics, people with outsized power or an unrelenting willingness to browbeat others often seem to come out ahead.

New research from Dartmouth, however, shows that being uncooperative can help people on the weaker side of the power dynamic achieve a more equal outcome—and even inflict some loss on their abusive counterpart.

The findings provide a tool based in game theory—the field of mathematics focused on optimizing competitive strategies—that could be applied to help equalize the balance of power in labor negotiations or international relations, and could even be used to integrate cooperation into interconnected artificial intelligence systems such as driverless cars.

Published in *PNAS Nexus*, the study takes a fresh look at what are known in game theory as "zero-determinant strategies" developed by renowned scientists William Press, now at the University of Texas at Austin, and the late Freeman Dyson at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey.

Zero-determinant strategies dictate that "extortionists" control situations to their advantage by becoming less and less cooperative—though just cooperative enough to keep the other party engaged—and by never being the first to concede when there's a stalemate. Theoretically, they will always outperform their opponent by demanding and receiving a larger share of what's at stake.

But the Dartmouth paper uses mathematical models of interactions to uncover an "Achilles heel" to these seemingly uncrackable scenarios, said senior author Feng Fu, an associate professor of mathematics. Fu and first author Xingru Chen, who received her Ph.D. in mathematics from Dartmouth in 2021, discovered an "unbending strategy" in which resistance to being steamrolled not only causes an extortionist to ultimately lose more than their opponent but can result in a more equal outcome as the overbearing party compromises in a scramble to get the best payoff.

"Unbending players who choose not to be extorted can resist by refusing to fully cooperate. They also give up part of their own payoff, but the extortioner loses even more," said Chen, who is now an assistant professor at the Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications.

"Our work shows that when an extortioner is faced with an unbending player, their best response is to offer a fair split, thereby guaranteeing an equal payoff for both parties," she said. "In other words, fairness and cooperation can be cultivated and enforced by unbending players."

These scenarios frequently play out in the real world, Fu said. Labor relations provide a poignant model. A large corporation can strong-arm suppliers and producers such as farmworkers to accept lower prices for their effort by threatening to replace them and cut them off from a lucrative market. But a strike or protest can turn the balance of power back toward the workers' favor and result in more fairness and cooperation, such as when a labor union wins some concessions from an employer.

While the power dynamic in these scenarios is never equal, Fu said, his and Chen's work shows that unbending players can reap benefits by defecting from time to time and sabotaging what extortioners are truly after—the highest payoff for themselves.

"The practical insight from our work is for weaker parties to be unbending and resist being the first to compromise, thereby transforming the interaction into an ultimatum game in which extortioners are incentivized to be fairer and more cooperative to avoid 'lose-lose' situations," Fu said.

"Consider the dynamics of power between dominant entities such as Donald Trump and the lack of unbending from the Republican Party, or, on the other hand, the military and political resistance to Russia's invasion of Ukraine that has helped counteract incredible asymmetry," he said. "These results can be applied to real-world situations, from social equity and fair pay to developing systems that promote cooperation among AI agents, such as autonomous driving."

Chen and Fu's paper expands the theoretical understanding of zero-determinant interactions while also outlining how the outsized power of extortioners can be checked, said mathematician Christian Hilbe, leader of the Dynamics of Social Behavior research group at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Biology in Germany

"Among the technical contributions, they stress that even extortioners can be outperformed in some games. I don't think that has been fully appreciated by the community before," said Hilbe, who was not involved in the study but is familiar with it. "Among the conceptual insights, I like the idea of unbending strategies, behaviors that encourage an extortionate player to eventually settle at a fairer outcome."

Behavioral research involving human participants has shown that extortioners may constitute a significant portion of our everyday interactions, said Hilbe, who published a 2016 paper in the journal *PLOS ONE* reporting just that. He also co-authored a 2014 study in *Nature Communications* that found people playing against a computerized opponent strongly resisted when the computer engaged in threatening conduct, even when it reduced their own payout.

"The empirical evidence to date suggests that people do engage in these extortionate behaviors, especially in asymmetric situations, and that the extorted party often tries to resist it, which is then costly to both parties," Hilbe said.

How Leader Master 21 Game To Be Successful

Paola Cecchi-Dimeglio
Contributor Chair ELRIWMA & Senior fellow, (Harvard University)

The 21 Game, at first glance, appears as a basic numerical challenge but quickly unravels into a complex lesson in strategic thinking and decision-making. In this game, two players take turns adding 1, 2, or 3 to a cumulative total beginning from zero. The objective is straightforward: avoid being the player who pushes the total to or beyond 21. While simplistic in its structure, this game encapsulates the essence of strategic depth and foresight, unlocked through a technique known as backward induction.

Backward induction, a strategic reasoning method derived from game theory, offers a profound approach to decision-making in leadership and everyday life. It involves envisioning a desired outcome and working backward to determine the necessary steps. This technique is instrumental in complex environments where long-term planning and foresight are crucial.

The game's strategic depth is analogous to many real-world leadership scenarios where decisions are often not just about immediate outcomes but also about setting the stage for future moves. The principles of the 21 Game apply directly to leadership, where strategic decisions must consider both immediate needs and long-term objectives.

Understanding Backward Induction

Coined by Von Neumann and Morgenstern, backward induction is a pivotal concept from game theory. It involves starting at the end of a problem and reasoning backward to determine the optimal strategy from the beginning— understanding your final goal and meticulously planning each step backwards to the present. This approach forces decision-makers to consider the long-term consequences of their actions rather than just focusing on immediate gains. It encourages a holistic view, considering the entire pathway to an objective rather than isolated decisions. This technique has broad applications, from simple games to complex business decisions.

Backward Induction in Leadership and Real-Life Decision-Making

Research showed that companies that employ backward induction in their strategic planning are three

times more likely to outperform their competitors in long-term profitability. Leaders often use backward induction for strategic planning and organizational development.

Consider a practical example from the corporate world. A CEO planning a company's growth strategy might envision where they want the company to be in ten years. Using backward induction, they can determine the milestones needed at each stage, right back to the present, ensuring that every step aligns with the ultimate goal.

Apple Inc.

A classic example can be found in the story of Apple Inc. under the leadership of Steve Jobs. When envisioning the first iPhone, Jobs didn't just think about creating a new phone; he envisioned revolutionizing how people interact with technology. He worked backward from this vision, identifying key features like a touch interface, internet connectivity, and an integrated music player that would collectively redefine the smartphone experience.

This backward approach allowed Apple to identify and focus on the critical elements that would make the iPhone a groundbreaking product. It also helped set a roadmap for the development team, guiding them through creating a device that fits the end vision.

OpenAI

When considering the implementation of backward induction in strategic planning, OpenAI's foray into the market serves as another illustrative example. OpenAI, known for its advancements in artificial intelligence, provides a compelling case study in using backward induction to chart a course for long-term success.

The leadership at OpenAI started with a clear vision of their role in the AI industry. The AI industry is poised for explosive growth, with some projections forecasting a market value of $422 billion by 2028, translating to a staggering 39% compound annual growth rate (CAGR). This surge in demand is driven by a multitude of factors, including the rapid advancements in AI technology, the increasing adoption of AI solutions across diverse industries, and the growing recognition of AI's potential to revolutionize various aspects of our lives.

They envisioned OpenAI as a leading innovator in AI technology, contributing to advancements that could benefit humanity while ensuring AI's ethical and safe development. This grand vision set the stage for their strategic planning.

Applying backward induction, the leaders at OpenAI worked backward from this long-term vision. They asked themselves what milestones and achievements would be necessary to realize this vision within a decade. This approach has included identifying key areas of AI research and development that needed focus, such as natural language processing, machine learning algorithms, and ensuring AI safety and ethics.

With the end goal in mind, OpenAI could then delineate the necessary steps to get there. These have included:

- Developing Groundbreaking AI Models: Building models like GPT (Generative Pre-trained Transformer), which can revolutionize natural language understanding and generation.
- Collaborations and Partnerships: Establishing partnerships with academic institutions, industry leaders, and policy-makers to foster an environment of collaboration and ethical AI development.
- Funding and Investment: Securing funding to support expansive research and development efforts. This could involve public funding, private investments, or innovative revenue models.
- Ethical AI Framework: Developing a framework to ensure the ethical use of AI would set OpenAI apart as a responsible player in the industry.

- Public Engagement and Education: Engaging with the public and other stakeholders to educate and inform about the benefits and challenges of AI, building a foundation of trust and transparency.

Adaptability: The Cornerstone of Success

While backward induction provides a powerful framework for decision-making, it's important to recognize that the world is constantly evolving. As leaders navigate the complexities of their industries and personal lives, flexibility and adaptability are essential. Just as players in the 21

The game must adapt to its opponents' strategies; leaders must be prepared to adjust their plans in response to market trends, competitor actions, and internal dynamics. This ability to pivot and innovate is crucial for long-term success.

Conclusion

The 21 Game is more than just a numbers game; it is a microcosm of strategic thinking and planning. Backward induction, as demonstrated in the game, provides a framework for effective decision-making in personal ambitions and organizational leadership. It teaches us the value of foresight, planning, and adaptability – essential qualities for any leader navigating the complexities of today's dynamic world.

Leaders establish the vision for the future and set the strategy for getting there.

— John P. Kotter,

... by the Lighthouse Beam

3 ways to plan for the (very) long term | Ari Wallach

Administration

NOTICE: Hiram's Lighthouse is currently looking to expand its Editorial Board, should you or someone you know be a good candidate, please contacts the editor at hiramslighthouse@gmail.com with a brief bio.

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