

Math, Productivity, Happiness & Decision-making

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Wednesdays, 5:10–6:00pm, 740 Evans

Feb 1 **Andrew Critch**, Berkeley (math)

Directed graphical models for our personal lives

Ever find yourself thinking in circles about life? Or maybe in a spiral? Everyone has a limited working memory, and the causal structure of any important issue in our lives is probably big enough to deserve drawing a *directed graphical model* to represent it. This modelling process, which probably happens more naturally for some of us than others, can help us focus locally on relevant causal relationships, and generate queries about them that we might otherwise forget to seriously ask. Using a visual aid can also make it easier to talk to friends; in academia, we consider this obvious, but for some reason we don't automatically do it for "real life" issues. So, to get people started, I'll present an adaptation of de Bono's *Six Thinking Hats* procedure specifically for reasoning about the causal structure of personal problems.

This week (and every second week) we'll go out for dinner after the seminar.