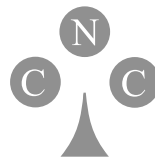


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Benjamin Doerr • Frank Neumann
Editors

Theory of Evolutionary Computation

Recent Developments in Discrete Optimization

 Springer

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Preface

The theory of evolutionary computation, or, more generally, randomized search heuristics, is aimed at understanding how these methods work and why they are so successful in many applications. While there has always been theoretical work in this field, and even more since Ingo Wegener (1950–2008) pushed for a mathematical approach inspired by the classical field of randomized algorithms, this research area remains young and many astonishing advances have only been made in the last five to ten years. These include new and more powerful methods, the solution of long-standing open problems, and the analysis of heuristics that could not be analyzed before. Not only have the topics changed and become closer to what is the state of the art in applications, but also the field has progressed from only analyzing existing methods to finding unexpected and more powerful parameter choices, designing new building blocks such as mutation operators, selection operators, and mechanisms that adjust parameters on the fly, and even proposing completely new heuristics.

In this edited book, we report on some of these recent developments. Our aim is to give a concise summary of the state of the art to experts in the field and to make this exciting area more accessible to students and researchers in related fields.

The book starts with two chapters on mathematical methods that are often used in the analysis of randomized search heuristic. These are followed by three chapters on how to measure the complexity of a search heuristic: we discuss black-box complexity, a counterpart of classical complexity theory in black-box optimization, parameterized complexity, aimed at a more fine-grained view of the difficulty of problems, and the fixed-budget perspective, which answers the question of how good a solution will be after investing a certain computational budget. We then describe theoretical results on three important questions in evolutionary computation, namely how to profit from changing the parameters during the run of an algorithm, how evolutionary algorithms are able to cope with dynamically changing or stochastic environments, and how population diversity influences performance. Finally, we look

at three algorithm classes that have only recently become the focus of theoretical work, namely estimation-of-distribution algorithms, artificial immune systems, and genetic programming.

We hope that this book will help students and researchers in the field and around it to access these topics, to deepen their understanding, and possibly to join this young and exciting area, in which many very fundamental questions are still wide open.

We thank all authors for accepting the time-consuming task of writing a book chapter and for completing this task to perfection. We are very grateful to the reviewers of each chapter, whose careful reading is a guarantee of the high quality we aim at. Our final thanks go to the publisher, and, in particular, Ronan Nugent, for all their help and responsiveness, and to the copyeditor, Douglas Meekison, for his work on the book manuscript.

Palaiseau, Adelaide,
May 2019

Benjamin Doerr
Frank Neumann

Contents

1	Probabilistic Tools for the Analysis of Randomized Optimization Heuristics	1
	Benjamin Doerr	
1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	Notation	3
1.3	Elementary Probability Theory	3
1.4	Useful Inequalities	5
1.5	Union Bound	11
1.6	Expectation and Variance	15
1.7	Conditioning	22
1.8	Stochastic Domination and Coupling	25
1.9	The Coupon Collector Process	35
1.10	Large-Deviation Bounds	38
	References	80
2	Drift Analysis	89
	Johannes Lengler	
2.1	Introduction	89
2.2	Basics of Drift Analysis	90
2.3	Elementary Introduction to Drift Analysis	94
2.4	Advanced Drift Theorems	112
2.5	Finding the Potential Function	123
2.6	Conclusion	125
	References	126
3	Complexity Theory for Discrete Black-Box Optimization Heuristics	133
	Carola Doerr	
3.1	Introduction and Historical Remarks	134
3.2	The Unrestricted Black-Box Model	138
3.3	Known Black-Box Complexities in the Unrestricted Model ..	148

- 3.4 Memory-Restricted Black-Box Complexity 162
- 3.5 Comparison- and Ranking-Based Black-Box Complexity 166
- 3.6 Unbiased Black-Box Complexity 170
- 3.7 Combined Black-Box Complexity Models 188
- 3.8 Summary of Known Black-Box Complexities for ONEMAX
and LEADINGONES 196
- 3.9 From Black-Box Complexity to Algorithm Design 197
- 3.10 From Black-Box Complexity to Mastermind 201
- 3.11 Conclusion and Selected Open Problems 203
- References 206

- 4 Parameterized Complexity Analysis of Randomized
Search Heuristics 213**
Frank Neumann and Andrew M. Sutton
- 4.1 Introduction 213
- 4.2 Parameterized Complexity Analysis 216
- 4.3 Maximum-Leaf Spanning Trees 217
- 4.4 Minimum Vertex Cover 221
- 4.5 Submodular Functions with Constraints 226
- 4.6 Euclidean TSP 230
- 4.7 Conclusion 243
- References 244

- 5 Analysing Stochastic Search Heuristics Operating on a
Fixed Budget 249**
Thomas Jansen
- 5.1 Introduction 249
- 5.2 Analytical Perspective and Basic Results 251
- 5.3 Reusing Known Runtime Results 255
- 5.4 Advanced Methods 257
- 5.5 Results Obtained by Using the Fixed-Budget Perspective 261
- 5.6 Summary 266
- References 268

- 6 Theory of Parameter Control for Discrete Black-Box
Optimization: Provable Performance Gains Through
Dynamic Parameter Choices 271**
Benjamin Doerr and Carola Doerr
- 6.1 Introduction 271
- 6.2 A Motivating Example: (1+1) EA and RLS on LEADINGONES 273
- 6.3 Classification of Parameter Control Mechanisms 275
- 6.4 State-Dependent Parameter Control 278
- 6.5 Success-Based Parameter Control 287
- 6.6 Learning-Inspired Parameter Control 295
- 6.7 Self-Adaptation: Endogenous Parameter Control 299
- 6.8 Hyper-Heuristics 303

6.9 Conclusion and Outlook..... 312
References 315

7 Analysis of Evolutionary Algorithms in Dynamic and Stochastic Environments..... 323
Frank Neumann, Mojgan Pourhassan and Vahid Roostapour

7.1 Introduction 323
7.2 Preliminaries 325
7.3 Analysis of Evolutionary Algorithms on Dynamic Problems . 330
7.4 Analysis of Evolutionary Algorithms on Stochastic Problems 342
7.5 Ant Colony Optimization 351
7.6 Conclusions 353
References 354

8 The Benefits of Population Diversity in Evolutionary Algorithms: A Survey of Rigorous Runtime Analyses 359
Dirk Sudholt

8.1 Introduction 359
8.2 Preliminaries 362
8.3 How Diversity Benefits Global Exploration 363
8.4 How Diversity Benefits Crossover 381
8.5 How Diversity Benefits Dynamic Optimization 392
8.6 Diversity-Based Parent Selection 396
8.7 Conclusions 399
References 400

9 Theory of Estimation-of-Distribution Algorithms 405
Martin S. Krejca and Carsten Witt

9.1 Introduction 405
9.2 Estimation-of-Distribution Algorithms 407
9.3 Common Fitness Functions 418
9.4 Convergence Analyses..... 419
9.5 Runtime Analyses 422
9.6 Conclusions and Open Problems 437
References 438

10 Theoretical Foundations of Immune-Inspired Randomized Search Heuristics for Optimization 443
Christine Zarges

10.1 Introduction 443
10.2 Theoretical Analyses of Hypermutations 445
10.3 Theoretical Analyses of Aging Operators 457
10.4 Theoretical Analyses of Complete AIS 462
10.5 Summary 469
References 470

11 Computational Complexity Analysis of Genetic Programming	475
Andrei Lissovoi and Pietro S. Oliveto	
11.1 Introduction	476
11.2 Preliminaries	478
11.3 Evolving Tree Structures	482
11.4 Evolving Programs of Fixed Size	494
11.5 Evolving Proper Programs: Boolean Functions	498
11.6 Other GP Algorithms	509
11.7 Conclusion	513
References	514

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