ROY DYCKHOFF WAS A RARE NONCONFORMIST

Alessio Guglielmi

Bath

Journeys in Computational Logic: Tributes to Roy Dyckhoff – London, 3 September 2019

Talk available from my home page and at http://cs.bath.ac.uk/ag/t/RDWARNC.pdf

Paper submission to JACM – December 1999

First submission of my paper **A System of Interaction and Structure**, over which **deep inference** is based.

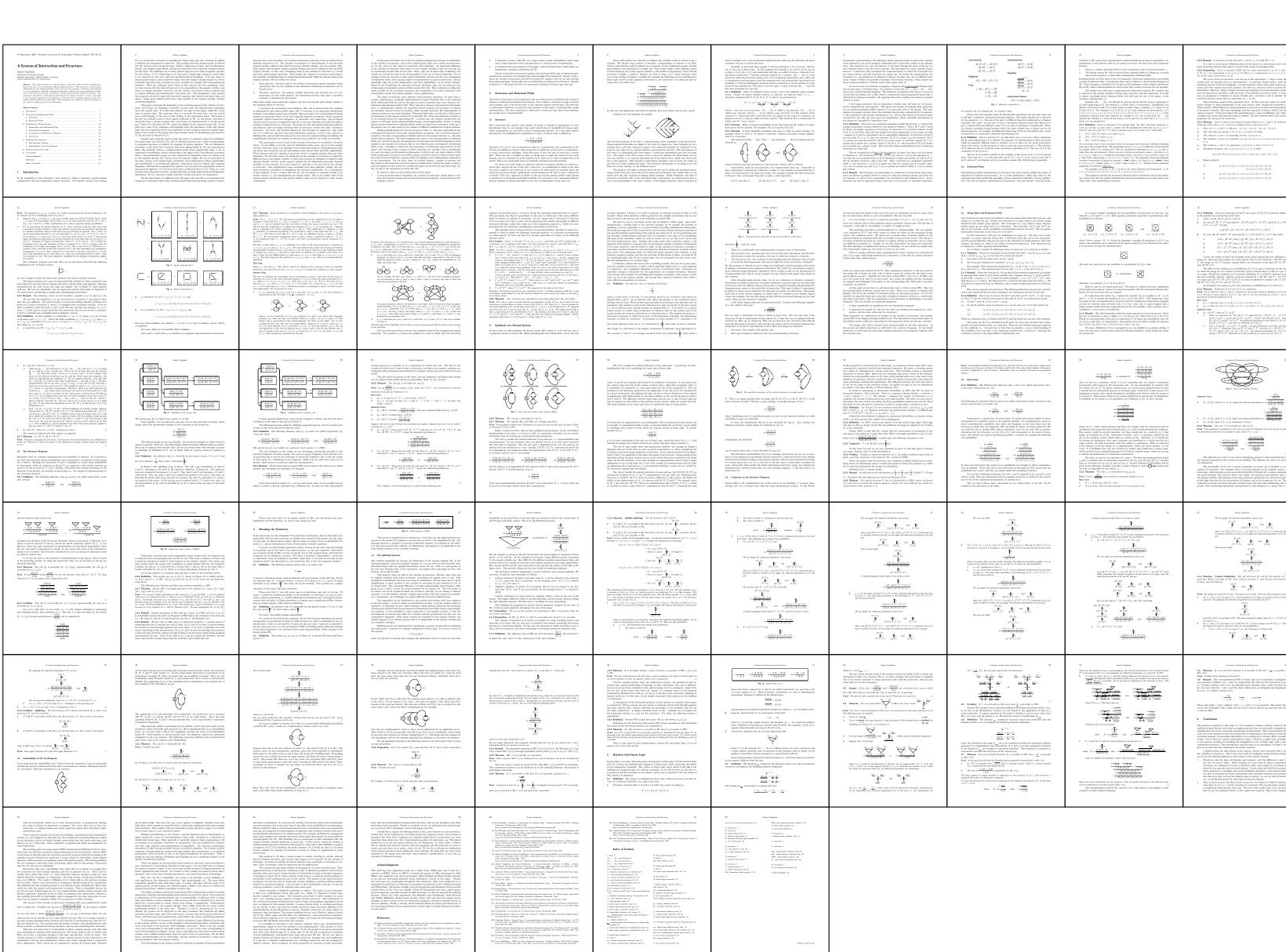**Result** – October 2000: **rejected**. First words in the superficial review:

I have read the introduction and the conclusion of this paper to understand the claims made, and how it is connected with related work. From that I cannot make up my mind. Quite possibly it is brilliant, but [...]

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First submission of my paper **A System of Interaction and Structure**, over which **deep inference** is based.

Result – October 2000: **rejected**. First words in the superficial review:

conformist

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Paper submission to ACM TOCL – September 2002

Resubmission with modest changes.

62 technical pages of eccentric ideas.

Five years of work without publishing anything – for the dominating **neo-liberalism** my measure was zero and **I should have perished** but …

Review by Roy – October 2003

Resubmission.

Result: accepted. First sentence in Roy's in-depth review:

This is an interesting and unusual paper, which I recommend be accepted following attention to my comments below---they are lengthy, but it is a lengthy paper.

Review by Roy – October 2003

Resubmission.

Result: accepted. First sentence in Roy's in-depth review:

nonconformist

This is an interesting and unusual paper, which I recommend be accepted following attention to my comments below---they are lengthy, but it is a lengthy paper.

MY RELATIONSHIP WITH ROY

We met about ten times on professional occasions and we exchanged about three hundred emails.
He helped me when my job was insecure.
He helped my students with technical feedback and recommendation letters.
I am sure he reviewed several of our other papers.
Until the end, he encouraged our research on deep inference.

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But, most importantly,
without Roy's accurate and bold review deep inference (and I) would not exist.

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Any researcher can do this.

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Only a nonconformist does this.

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But, most importantly,
without Roy's accurate and bold review deep inference (and I) would not exist.

Note: Roy encouraged the **method** (**taking risks** by pursuing eccentric ideas) –
not necessarily the ideas themselves (maybe deep inference will turn out to be a bad idea after all).

WHAT I LEARNED FROM ROY

It is possible to resist neo-liberalism and be a happy researcher.

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Nonconformists like Roy are rare and therefore precious – at the very least they keep hope alive.

Those are important pieces of information that helped me survive and that I try to transfer to all my students.