

Class 23: Simulation

Held: Tuesday, 3 October 2006

Summary: Today we consider how to make Scheme simulate potentially unpredictable events, like the rolling of dice or the flipping of coins.

Related Pages:

- EBoard.
- Lab: Simulation.
- Reading: Simulation.

Due

- HW8.

Assignments

- HW9.

Notes:

- There were some difficulties on HW8. We may spend a bit of time discussing it.
- Tuesday extra at 1 p.m.: Installing Linux.

Overview:

- The Problem of Simulation.
- Scheme's `random` procedure.
- Simulating the roll of dice.
- Lab.

Simulation

- At times, we write programs to model real-world situations:
 - The effect of pollutants on a lake
 - The waiting time in line at Wal-Mart
 - The playing of a card or dice game
- Each of these situations has some aspect of unpredictability (even if we ignore the butterfly flappings of chaos theory)
- Can we write such programs in Scheme?

Random

- Scheme provides a simple procedure, `random`, to provide some fodder for simulations and any other times that you want to play with unpredictable behavior.
- `(random n)` produces an "unpredictable" number in the range $[0 .. n-1]$.
- That's all you need to know right now.

Dice

- Here's a simple simulation problem: Simulate the roll of a single six-sided die.
 - Yes, "die" is the singular of "dice"
- Here's one possibility

`(+ 1 (random 6))`
- See the reading for an alternative.

Lab

- Do the lab.
- Reflect?

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