



David Backus &lt;david.backus@gmail.com&gt;

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## books and other media

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**Thomas J Sargent** <thomas.sargent@nyu.edu>

Sun, Jun 15, 2014 at 9:43 PM

Reply-To: thomas.sargent@nyu.edu

To: David Backus &lt;dbackus@stern.nyu.edu&gt;

Cc: John Stachurski &lt;john.stachurski@gmail.com&gt;

Dear Dave, Hi. I will put my (not necessarily John's) answers in capital letters behind your questions.

Tom

On Sun, Jun 15, 2014 at 11:50 AM, David Backus <dbackus@stern.nyu.edu> wrote:

I wanted to run some questions/ideas by you, they were triggered by your Python site and John's mention that you planned to have a book, too. I'm thinking about similar projects of my own, which is why I'm asking. As usual, skip if you're busy.

\* Media. In our MBA classes, we tend to use two things in parallel: a book that covers the material in detail (a reference) and slides that organize class time. Do you use your online Sphinx materials in class, or more as a reference? IN MY CLASS WITH DAVID EVANS, WE USED THE SPHINX MATERIAL AS A REFERENCE. IN CLASS, WE OFTEN USED IPYTHON NOTEBOOKS. DAVID MADE SOME BEAUTIFUL ONES, ESPECIALLY HIS NOTEBOOK ON PANDAS.

\* IPython. I'm new to this, but Spencer wondered whether IPython would be a good substitute for Sphinx. He says you can embed code and generate both slides and html. I THINK OF IPYTHON NOTEBOOKS AS A COMPLEMENT TO SPHINX

\* Book. How would the book compare to the online version? More text? GOOD QUESTION. I EXPECT THERE WOULD BE MORE TEXT AND MAYBE SOME MORE TECHNICALITIES. LINKING THE TEXT TO THE WEB SITE IN A CONSTRUCTIVE WAY IS SOMETHING THAT WILL REQUIRE SOME THOUGHT AND CREATIVITY.

\* Publishing. I've noticed a number of examples where publishers allow simultaneous publication and posting of (an identical) pdf – see link below. One advantage for users is that they can print out individual chapters and not lug the whole thing around. It also allows authors to make minor corrections at will. Is that something you'd consider?

<http://statweb.stanford.edu/~tibs/ElemStatLearn/>

THIS IS A VERY INTERESTING IDEA DAVE.

THANKS A LOT FOR THESE THOUGHTFUL QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS. TOM

Cheers.

PS: John: It will be great having you here in a year, but if you