

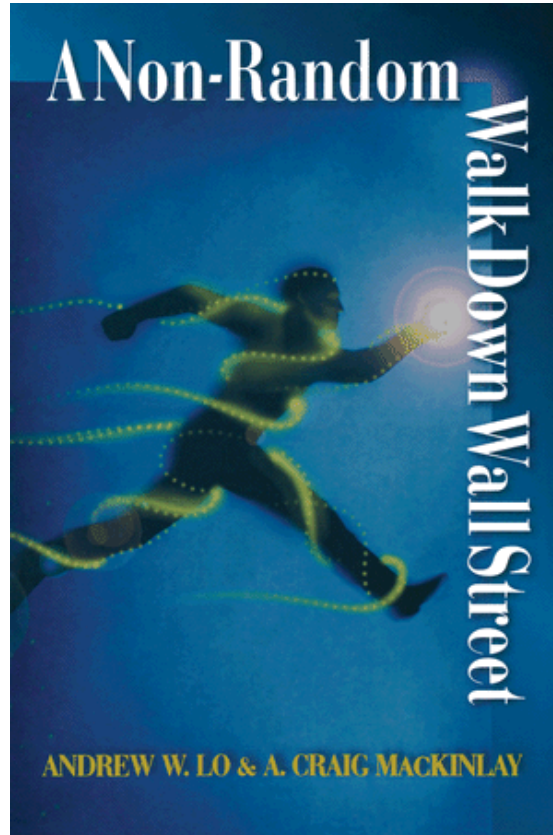
# Adaptive Markets: Financial Evolution at the Speed of Thought

Andrew W. Lo, MIT  
*National Bank of Belgium and 11 Universities*  
*Finance Seminar*  
*November 29, 2017*



## 1. DELIVERY OF MANUSCRIPT

You agree to deliver the complete manuscript ready for copyediting, including a preface, other front matter, and back matter, together with camera-ready copy for all illustrations, maps, charts, drawings, or other material (except index) to be included in the Work, not later than **April 15, 2008**, or a later date designated in writing by the Press (the “Delivery Date”), time of delivery being of the essence. The final manuscript submitted to the Press will consist of no more than **80,000 words** in length (including text, notes, and bibliography), 20 illustrations, and 10 color plates, and **we reserve the right to reject the manuscript if the manuscript exceeds this limit.**



In a fashion analogous to Theorem 6.3.1, the behavior of  $Q_n$  under long-range dependent alternatives may now be derived in several steps using Lemmas A.2, A.3, and Theorem 6.3.2:

**Theorem 6.3.3.** Let  $\{\epsilon_t\}$  be a zero-mean stationary Gaussian stochastic process with autocovariance function  $\gamma_k$  such that

$$\gamma_k \sim \begin{cases} k^{2H-2} L(k) & \text{for } H \in (\frac{1}{2}, 1) \text{ or,} \\ -k^{2H-2} L(k) & \text{for } H \in (0, \frac{1}{2}) \end{cases} \quad \text{as } k \rightarrow \infty \quad (6.3.14)$$

where  $L(k)$  is a slowly varying function at infinity. Then as  $n$  and  $q$  increase without bound such that  $(q/n) \rightarrow 0$ , we have:

$$\begin{aligned} (a) \quad & \max_{1 \leq k \leq n} \frac{1}{\sigma_n} \sum_{j=1}^k (X_j - \bar{X}_n) \Rightarrow \max_{0 \leq \tau \leq 1} W_H^c(\tau) \equiv M_H^c, \\ (b) \quad & \min_{1 \leq k \leq n} \frac{1}{\sigma_n} \sum_{j=1}^k (X_j - \bar{X}_n) \Rightarrow \min_{0 \leq \tau \leq 1} W_H^c(\tau) \equiv m_H^c, \\ (c) \quad & R_n = \frac{\hat{\sigma}_n(q)\sqrt{n}}{\sigma_n} \cdot \frac{1}{\sqrt{n}} Q_n \Rightarrow M_H^c - m_H^c \equiv V_H, \\ (d) \quad & a_n \equiv \frac{\sigma_n}{\hat{\sigma}_n(q)\sqrt{n}} \xrightarrow{p} \begin{cases} \infty & \text{for } H \in (\frac{1}{2}, 1), \\ 0 & \text{for } H \in (0, \frac{1}{2}), \end{cases} \\ (e) \quad & \frac{1}{\sqrt{n}} Q_n = a_n R_n \xrightarrow{p} \begin{cases} \infty & \text{for } H \in (\frac{1}{2}, 1), \\ 0 & \text{for } H \in (0, \frac{1}{2}), \end{cases} \end{aligned}$$

where  $\hat{\sigma}_n(q)$  is defined in (6.3.6),  $\sigma_n$  is defined in Theorem 6.3.2, and  $W_H^c(\tau) \equiv W_H(\tau) - \tau W_H(1)$ .<sup>20</sup>

Theorem 6.3.3 shows that the modified rescaled range test is consistent against a class of long-range dependent stationary Gaussian alternatives. In the presence of positive strong dependence, the  $R/S$  statistic diverges in probability to infinity; in the presence of negative strong dependence, it converges in probability to zero. In either case, the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis approaches unity for all stationary Gaussian stochastic processes satisfying (6.3.14), a broad set of alternatives that includes all fractionally-differenced Gaussian ARIMA( $p, d, q$ ) models with  $d \in (-\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{2})$ .

From (a) and (b) of Theorem 6.3.3 it is apparent that the normalized population rescaled,  $R_n/\sqrt{n}$ , converges to zero in probability. Therefore,

<sup>20</sup>Although it is tempting to call  $W_H^c(\tau)$  a "fractional Brownian bridge," this is not the most natural definition despite the fact that it is "tied down." See Jonas (1983, Chapter 3.3) for a discussion.

Markets  
are  
efficient

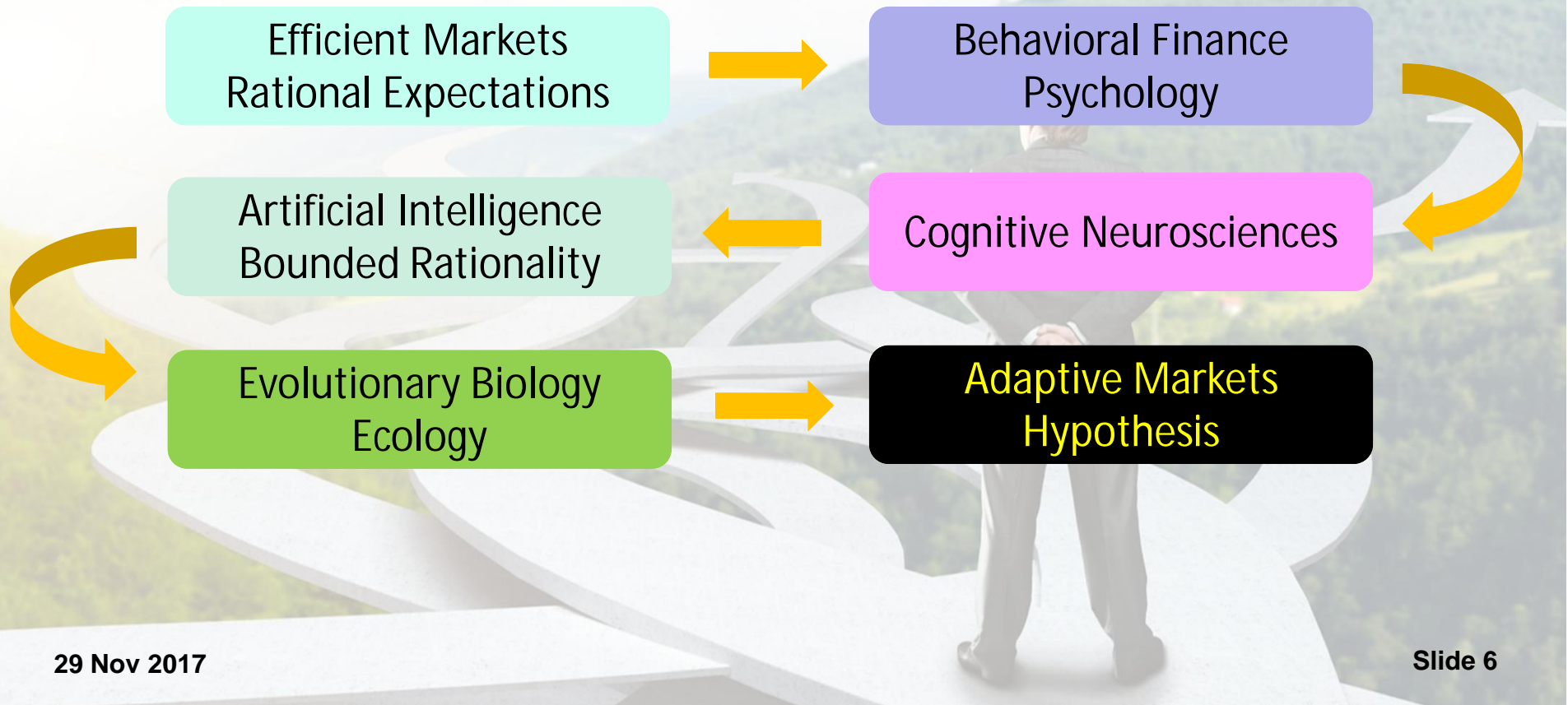


People  
behave  
irrationally





# Personal Journey





29 Nov 2017

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# Summary

- Traditional investment framework is flawed
- Not wrong, but incomplete (physics envy)
- Stable environment  $\Rightarrow$  stable investment policies (EMH)
- Dynamic environment  $\Rightarrow$  dynamic investment policies (AMH)
- The current environment is highly **dynamic**
- We must adapt to changing market conditions
- “it’s the ~~economy~~ **environment**, stupid”
- **The Adaptive Markets Hypothesis provides a framework for investing, risk management, financial regulation, and more**



# The Traditional Investment Paradigm



In the beginning...

$$R_{it} = \alpha_i + \beta_i F_t + \epsilon_{it}$$

Implications:

- Correlation matters; diversification
- Benchmarks, performance attribution
- Passive investing
- Indexation, hedging, portable alpha
- Risk budgeting
- Framework for fiduciary duties



# The Traditional Investment Paradigm



But This Framework Requires Several Key Assumptions:

- Relationship is **linear**
- Relationship is **static** across time and circumstances
- Parameters can be **accurately estimated**
- Investors behave **rationally**
- Markets are **stationary** (static probability laws)
- Markets are **efficient**

What If Some of These Assumptions Don't Hold?

# The Traditional Investment Paradigm

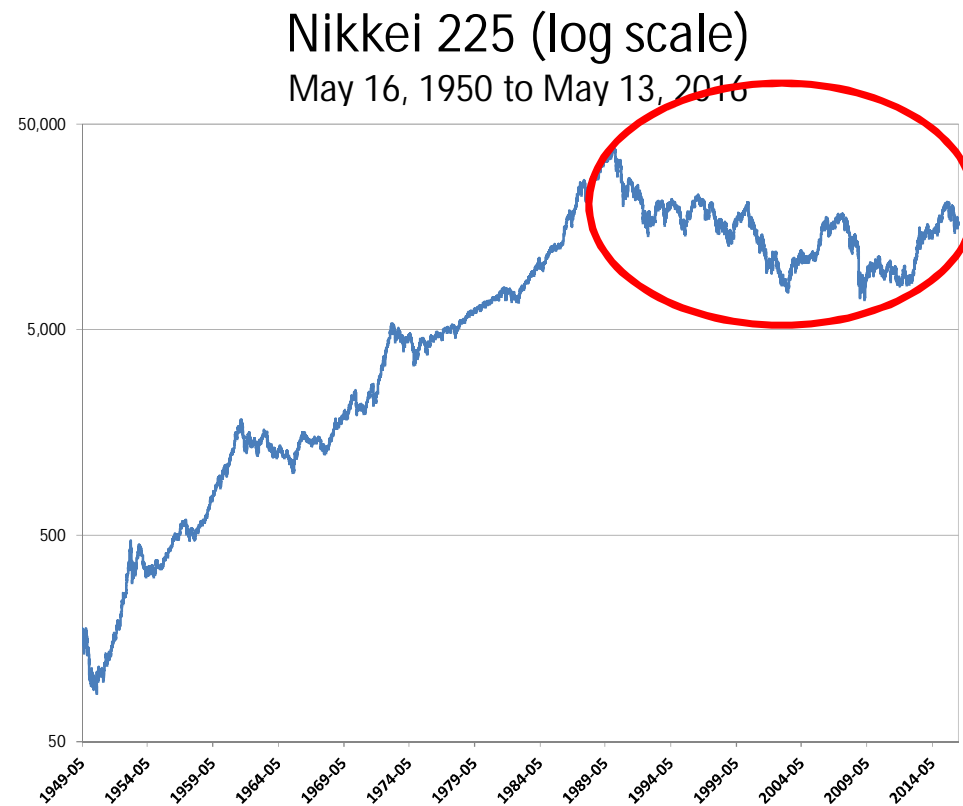
Cumulative Return of S&P 500 (log scale)

January 1926 to December 2015



But Do They  
Still Hold  
Today??

# The Traditional Investment Paradigm







# Have Alternatives Become Irrelevant?

MIT  
LFE

**The Economist** Dec 22, 2012

Hedge funds  
**Going nowhere fast**

Hedge funds have had another lousy year, to cap a disappointing decade

Dec 22nd 2012 | From the print edition

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**HEDGE FUNDS**

FINANCE | BANKS | INVESTING | WALL STREET | **HEDGE FUNDS** | M&A | INSURANCE

**'An industry in crisis': Hedge funds bleed \$100 billion in 2016**

Jeff Cox | @JeffCoxCNBCcom  
Friday, 13 Jan 2017 | 2:02 PM ET

**CNBC**

**FINANCIAL TIMES** ft.com > companies > Mar 21, 2013 7:07 pm

**NEW YORK POST** Jun 13, 2017

**Hedge fund returns are still falling short of the S&P 500**

By Carleton English June 13, 2017 | 4:52pm

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Why are gas prices up and oil prices down?

**Jonathon Trugman**  
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**Jennifer Gould Keil**  
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**SEE ALL COLUMNISTS**

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# Have Alternatives Become Irrelevant?



**The Economist**

**Jul 25, 2002**

**Hedge funds**  
**Absolute disappointment**

Despite being in a bear market, hedge funds struggle to do well

Jul 25th 2002 | From the print edition

A YEAR ago hedge-fund managers were hailed as the new heroes of Wall Street. They made a cameo appearance in "Sex and the City" as the confident suitor. (He got the girl, of course.) He had the "skill-set" that distinguished them from mere fund managers: they were "aggressive" and "irrespective of market directions". They put big bets on the market as well as annual management fees, took a reward of 50%—of any gains made for clients.

**The New York Times**  
nytimes.com

**Mar 27, 2005**

March 27, 2005

**If I Only Had a Hedge Fund**

By [JENNY ANDERSON](#) and RIVA D. ATLAS

**The New York Times**  
nytimes.com

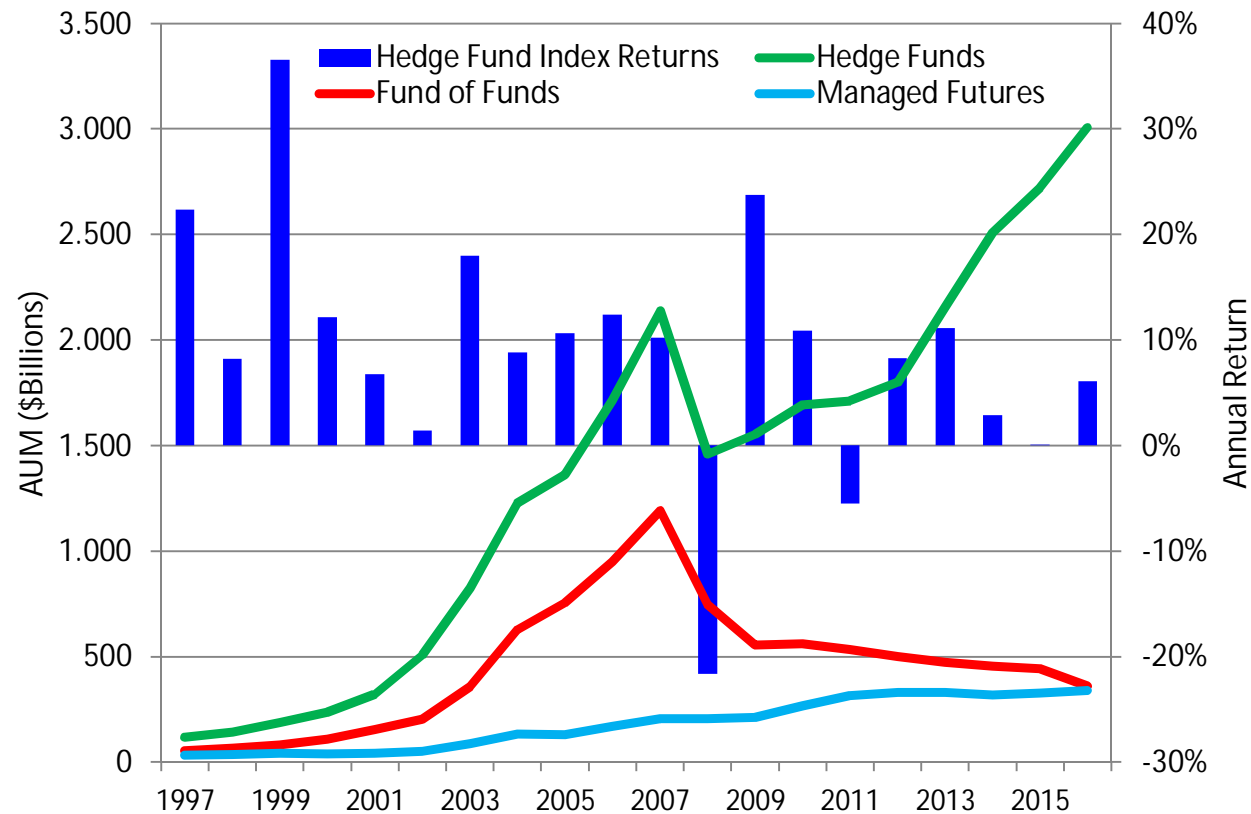
**Nov 22, 2005**

November 22, 2005  
Market Place

**A Hedge Fund for Anyone With \$10,000**

By RIVA D. ATLAS

# “News of my death is greatly exaggerated...”



29 Nov 2017

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Source: [www.barclayhedge.com](http://www.barclayhedge.com)

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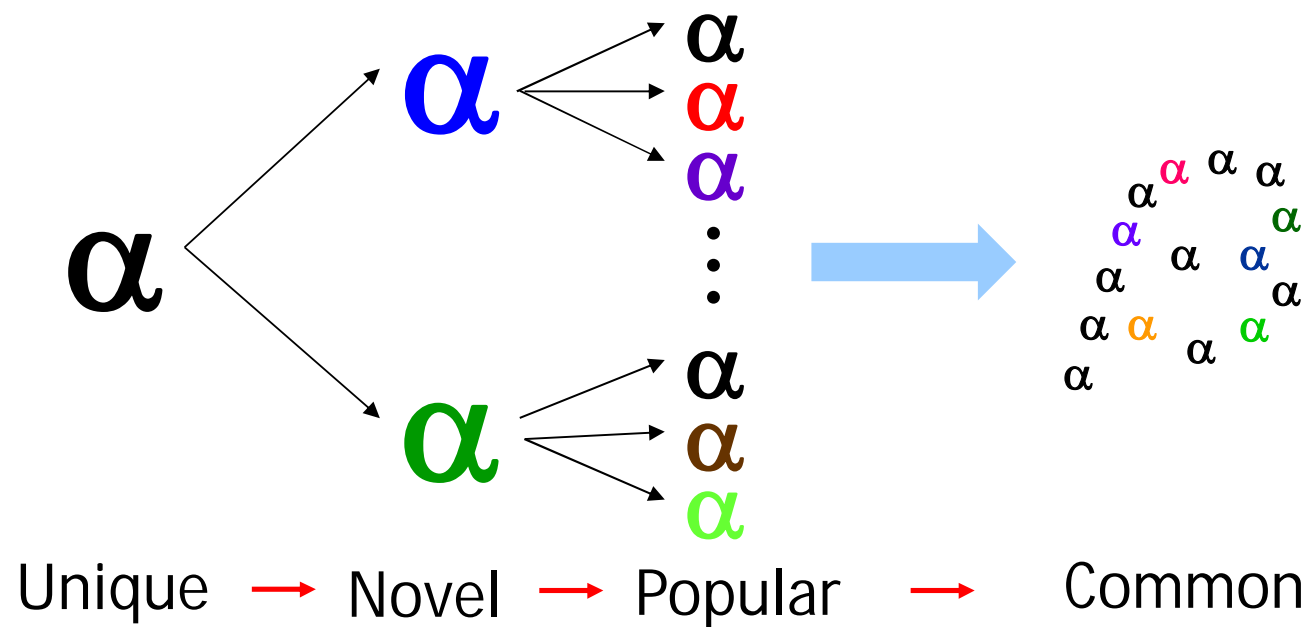
# Pre- and Post-Crisis Hedge Fund Performance



Category	# Fund-Months	Ann. Mean (%)	Ann. SD (%)	Sharpe Ratio	Sortino Ratio	Skew.	Kurt.	MaxDD (%)	Corr. to S&P 500 (%)	$\rho_1$ (%)	Box-Q(3) p-value (%)
January 1996 to December 2006											
Convertible Arbitrage	7,827	8.1	4.3	0.95	1.53	-1.25	8.63	-8.70	42.9	45.9	0.0
Dedicated Short Bias	1,384	-2.3	18.8	-0.31	-0.58	0.59	4.17	-42.29	-76.8	8.9	19.1
Emerging Markets	12,673	11.6	15.7	0.47	0.69	-1.61	10.51	-49.26	58.5	28.0	0.8
Equity Market Neutral	11,537	6.5	3.0	0.82	1.82	2.05	16.06	-2.21	3.0	-11.7	22.4
Event Driven	18,565	9.4	5.2	1.02	1.55	-2.02	13.89	-12.56	54.7	32.3	0.2
Fixed Income Arbitrage	7,749	6.8	3.7	0.75	0.95	-3.56	24.53	-13.69	-1.0	42.7	0.0
Global Macro	8,948	4.7	6.1	0.14	0.26	0.46	4.17	-14.24	21.7	2.5	41.6
Long/Short Equity Hedge	69,160	11.1	9.8	0.71	1.33	0.15	5.31	-18.52	68.8	18.7	16.7
Managed Futures	13,761	5.0	9.8	0.11	0.20	0.14	2.97	-16.34	-8.7	0.0	72.9
Multi-Strategy	8,100	8.5	5.2	0.85	1.43	-0.73	5.16	-6.67	49.1	0.1	65.1
Fund of Funds	55,507	6.6	6.4	0.41	0.68	0.33	6.51	-12.07	53.3	22.2	5.0
All Single Manager Funds	163,702	8.7	6.5	0.72	1.28	-0.26	5.46	-10.95	65.2	19.2	13.1
January 2010 to December 2014											
Convertible Arbitrage	3,940	3.0	5.7	0.52	0.96	-0.07	2.67	-10.20	50.4	10.6	63.6
Dedicated Short Bias	571	-1.5	7.3	-0.21	-0.33	-0.40	2.94	-22.56	-59.1	10.2	66.5
Emerging Markets	22,401	0.4	8.5	0.04	0.06	-0.67	3.84	-16.10	79.6	7.9	41.9
Equity Market Neutral	8,930	3.9	2.4	1.59	2.97	-0.69	4.00	-3.35	81.6	22.4	25.1
Event Driven	11,465	5.0	4.9	1.01	1.78	-0.70	3.04	-7.66	77.1	20.1	20.2
Fixed Income Arbitrage	7,202	5.0	1.7	2.90	6.29	-0.94	4.23	-1.03	54.1	-10.0	68.3
Global Macro	16,824	3.7	2.5	1.46	3.29	0.12	3.54	-2.03	63.2	9.7	68.7
Long/Short Equity Hedge	66,758	4.7	6.2	0.73	1.27	-0.54	3.42	-10.67	89.0	11.1	64.2
Managed Futures	23,471	2.8	7.5	0.36	0.71	0.11	2.28	-14.48	25.4	-12.4	78.4
Multi-Strategy	57,505	5.2	2.5	2.06	4.06	-0.87	5.52	-3.20	80.9	16.3	23.2
Fund of Funds	139,161	1.7	3.5	0.46	0.78	-0.55	2.73	-7.42	79.3	11.6	59.1
All Single Manager Funds	233,194	4.2	4.2	1.00	1.84	-0.39	3.63	-6.36	85.3	11.7	46.8

Source: Getmansky, Lee, Lo (2015, Table 14)

# Hedge-Fund Strategy Life Cycle





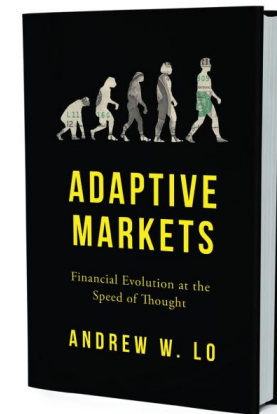
# The Adaptive Markets Hypothesis



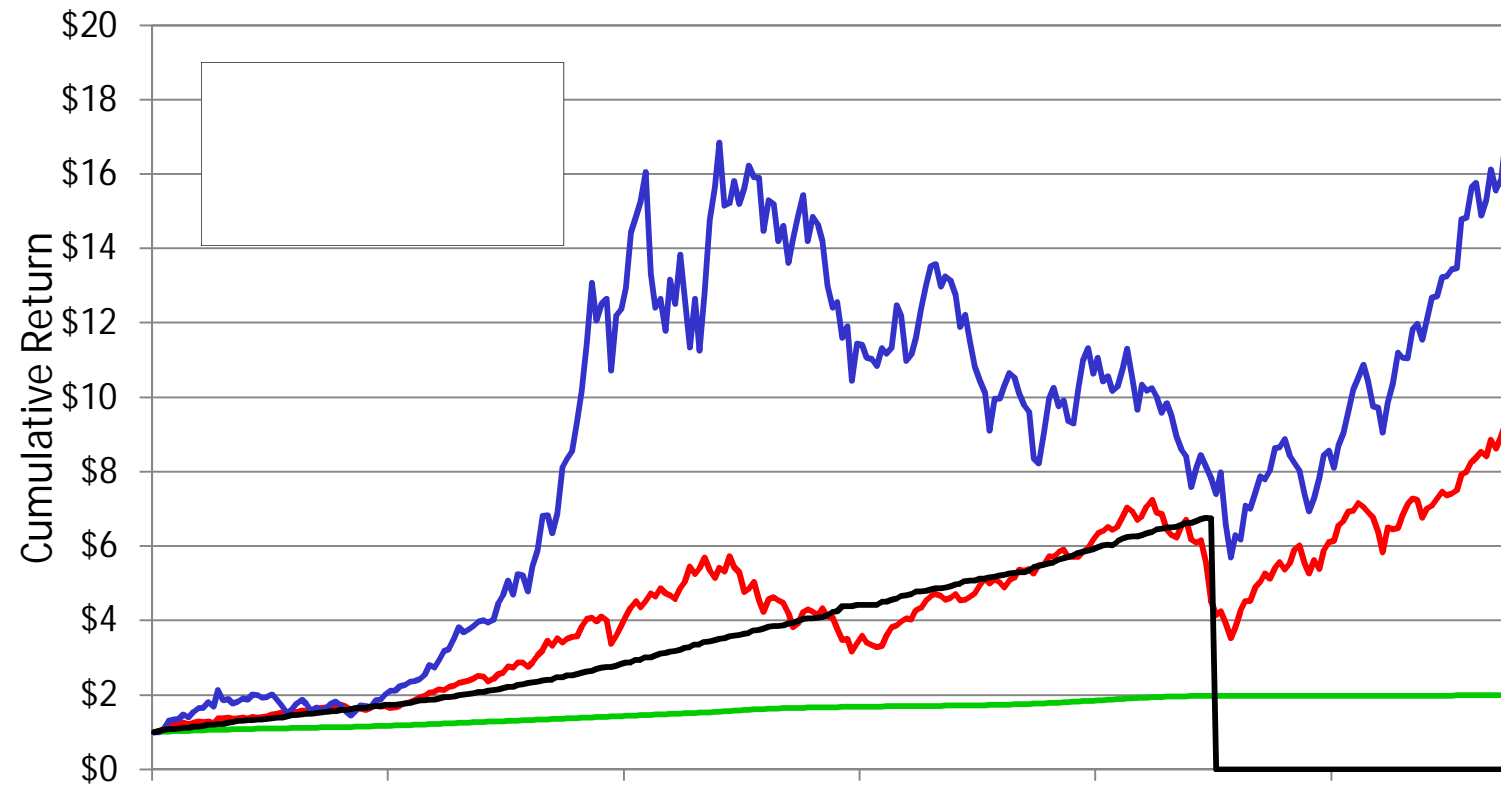
“Nothing makes sense in biology except in the light of evolution,”  
Dobzhansky (1973)

“Nothing makes sense in the hedge fund industry except in the light  
of the Adaptive Markets Hypothesis,” Lo (2017)

1. Individuals act in their own self-interest
2. Individuals make mistakes (“satisfice”)
3. Individuals learn and adapt (heuristics)
4. Competition drives adaptation and innovation
5. Evolution determines market dynamics



# What Do Investors Want?



# Risk Perception and Adaptive Behavior



## **The Effects of Automobile Safety Regulation**

---

Sam Peltzman

*University of Chicago*

Technological studies imply that annual highway deaths would be 20 percent greater without legally mandated installation of various safety devices on automobiles. However, this literature ignores offsetting effects of nonregulatory demand for safety and driver response to the devices. This article indicates that these offsets are virtually complete, so that regulation has not decreased highway deaths. Time-series (but not cross-section) data imply some saving of auto occupants' lives at the expense of more pedestrian deaths and more nonfatal accidents, a pattern consistent with optimal driver response to regulation.

*Journal of Political Economy* 83(1975), 677–726.

# Risk Perception and Adaptive Behavior



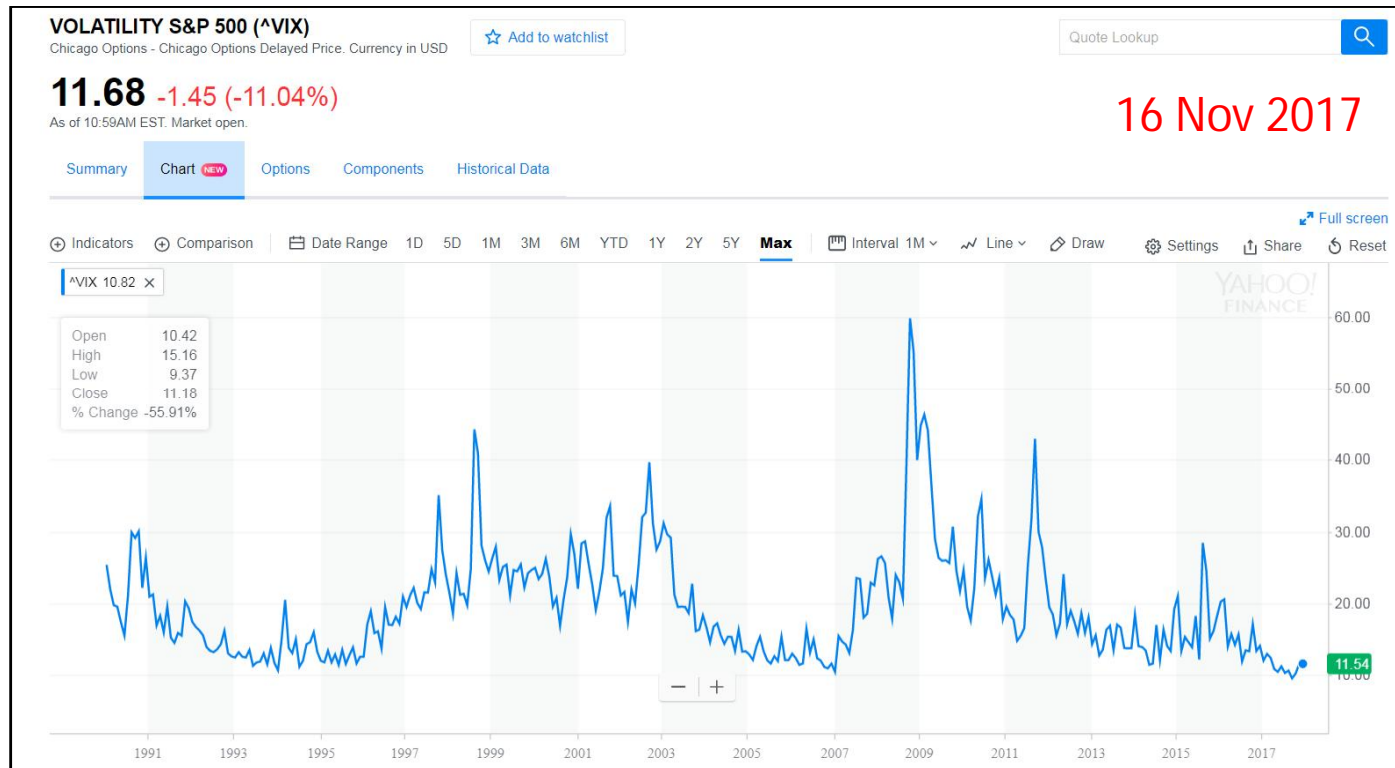
## **Automobile Safety Regulation and the Incentive to Drive Recklessly: Evidence from NASCAR**

Russell S. Sobel\* and Todd M. Nesbit†

When safety regulation makes automobiles safer, drivers may drive more recklessly, partially or completely offsetting effects on the overall level of safety. Evidence of these offsetting effects has been hard to find, however, primarily because of the aggregate nature of accident data. In this paper we explore how changes in the safety of automobiles used in the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) has altered the incentive of drivers to drive recklessly. This unique data set allows more accurate and objective measurement of the necessary variables to test for these effects at a microlevel. Our results strongly support the presence of these offsetting behavioral effects.

*Southern Economic Journal* 74(2007), 71–84.

# Implications for the Current Ecosystem



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# A New Investment Paradigm Is Emerging



## Efficient Markets

- Long-only constraint
- Diversify across stocks and bonds
- Market-cap-weighted indexes
- Manage risk via asset allocation
- Alpha vs. market beta
- Markets are efficient
- Equities in the long run

## Adaptive Markets

- Long/short strategies
- Diversify across more asset classes and strategies
- Passive transparent indexes
- Manage risk via active volatility scaling algorithms
- Alphas  $\Rightarrow$  multiple betas
- Markets are **adaptive**
- “In the long run we’re all dead,” but make sure the short run doesn’t kill you first

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# What Is An Index??

- Market-cap-weighted portfolio?

Jack Bogle (1997) on the Origins of the Vanguard Index Trust:

The basic ideas go back a few years earlier. In 1969–1971, Wells Fargo Bank had worked from academic models to develop the principles and techniques leading to index investing. John A. McQuown and William L. Fouse pioneered the effort, which led to the construction of a \$6 million index account for the pension fund of Samsonite Corporation. **With a strategy based on an equal-weighted index of New York Stock Exchange equities, its execution was described as “a nightmare”.** The strategy was abandoned in 1976, replaced with a market-weighted strategy using the Standard & Poor's 500 Composite Stock Price Index. The first such models were accounts run by Wells Fargo for its own pension fund and for Illinois Bell.

# What Is An Index??

- Market-cap weighting requires little trading
- “Buy-and-hold” portfolio
- What if trading were cheaper, faster, and automatable?

**In·dex** \ 'in- ,deks\ *noun*

*An index is any portfolio strategy satisfying three properties: (1) it is completely transparent; (2) it is investable; and (3) it is totally systematic.*

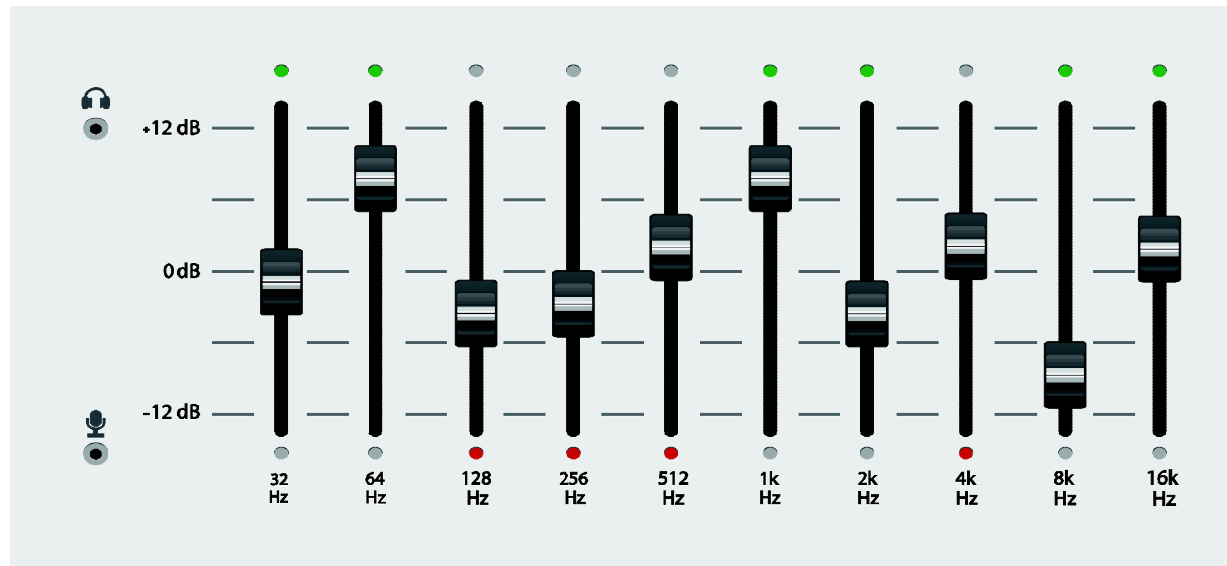
# What Is An Index??



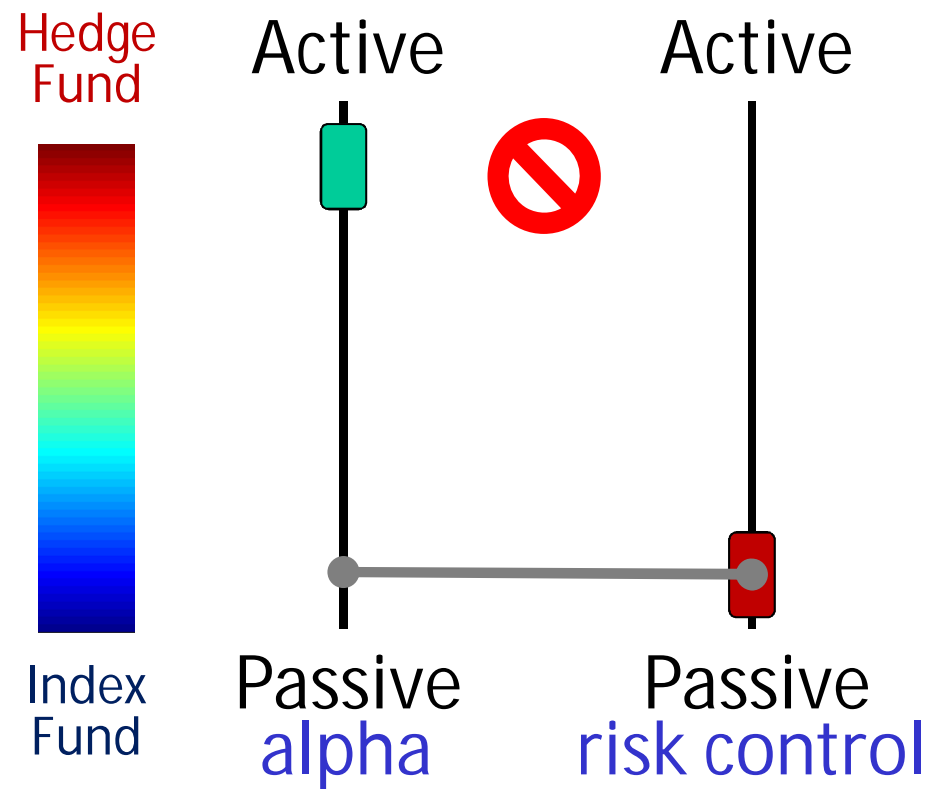
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Maybe</u>
Value-weighted average?	✓		
Equal-weighted average?	✓		
Target-date fund?	✓		
FHFA House Price Index?		✓	
Hedge Fund Index?		✓	
Trend-following futures?			✓
Risk-managed large-cap core?			✓



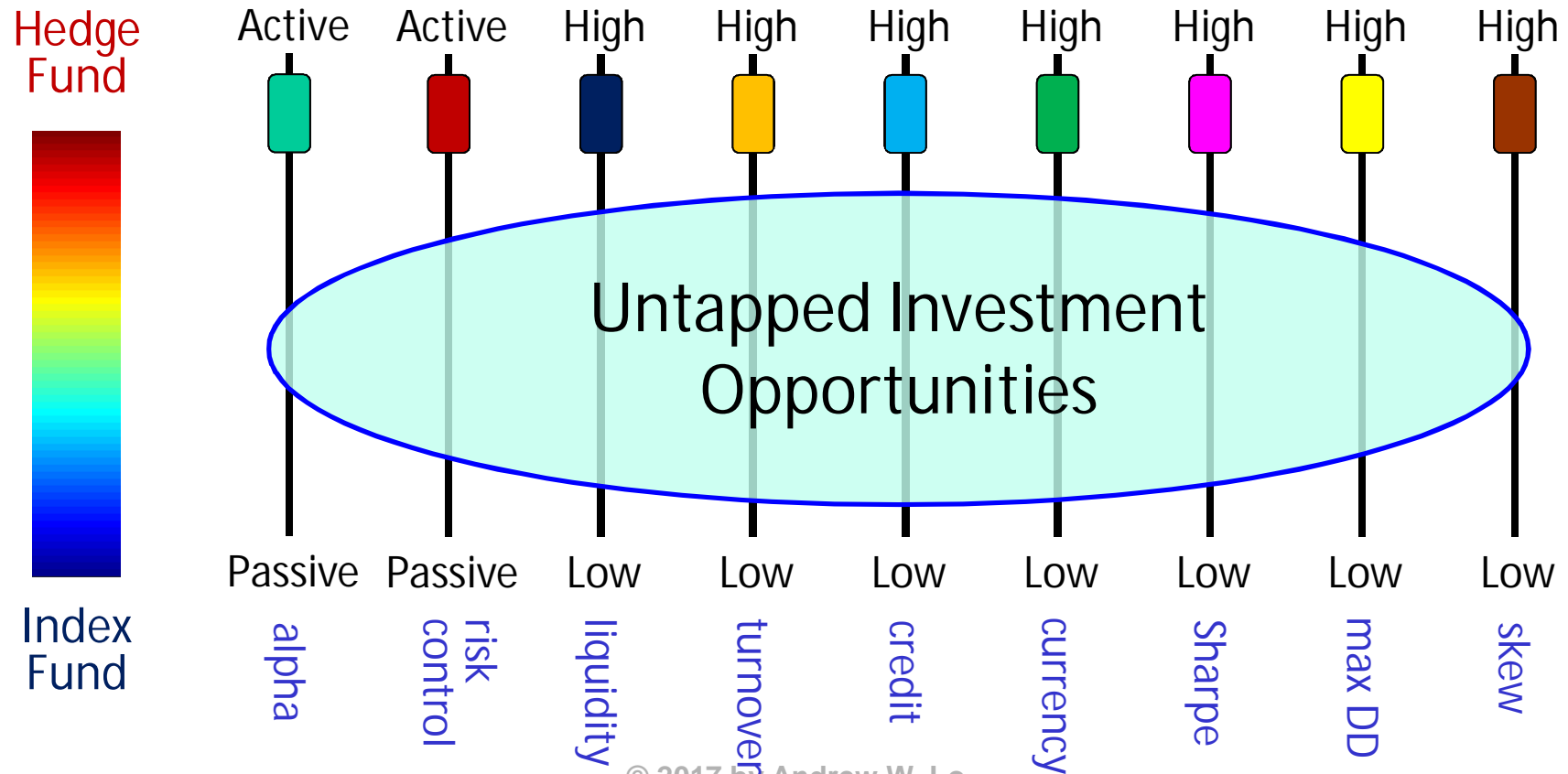
# What Is An Index??



# What Is An Index??



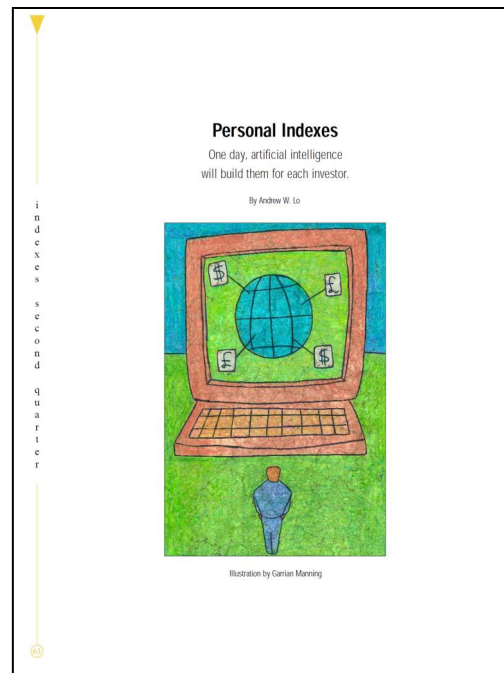
# Full-Spectrum Investing



# The Opportunity: Precision Indexes

- Instead of the DowJones30<sup>®</sup>, FTSE100<sup>®</sup>, or S&P500<sup>®</sup>, imagine investing in the:
  - RichardZeckhauser30<sup>®</sup>, ArnieWood100<sup>®</sup>, or LarrySummers500<sup>®</sup>
- Imagine if such portfolios took into account income, expenses, age, health, taxes, and behavior
- Imagine if such portfolios were automated
- We have the hardware and software; we need the algorithms

# This Idea Is Not New



“Artificial intelligence and active management are not at odds with indexation, but instead imply a more sophisticated set of indexes and portfolio management policies for the typical investor, something each of us can look forward to, perhaps within the next decade.”

– Andrew W. Lo, *Journal of Indexes* Q2, 2001

# So What's Missing?

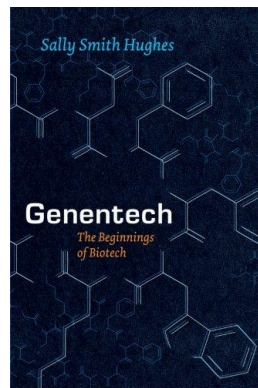


...Not Artificial Intelligence

Artificial **Humanity**

- We need an algorithm for investor behavior so we can counterbalance our least productive actions (e.g., loss aversion, overconfidence, overreaction, etc.)

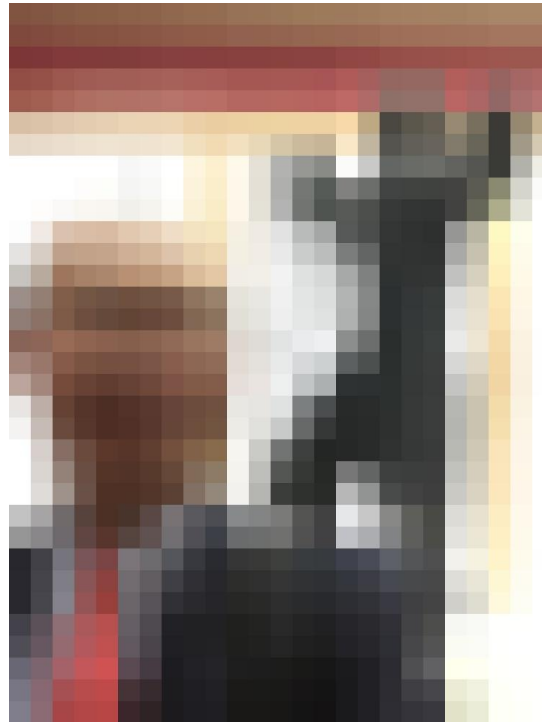
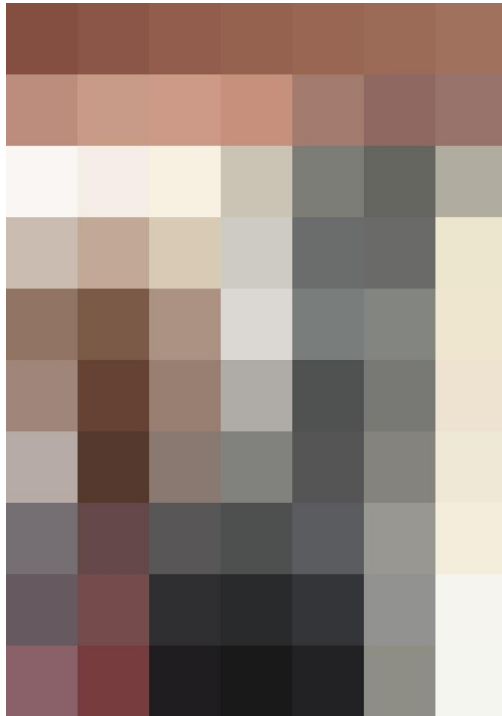
# Artificial vs. Natural Intelligence



- Expert systems vs. machine-learning techniques
- Expensive storage  $\Rightarrow$  small data, complex code
- Cheap storage  $\Rightarrow$  big data, simple code
- This is closer to natural intelligence! Narrative vs. facts



# Friend or Foe?



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# Friend or Foe?

José

Susan

- Gender and sex orientation (4)
- Race/ethnicity (4)
- Age (4)
- Current home state (50)
- Religious affiliation (4)
- Political party (3)
- Economic status (3)
- Education (3)

345,600 Possible Types!

But Beware of Learning With Sparse Data



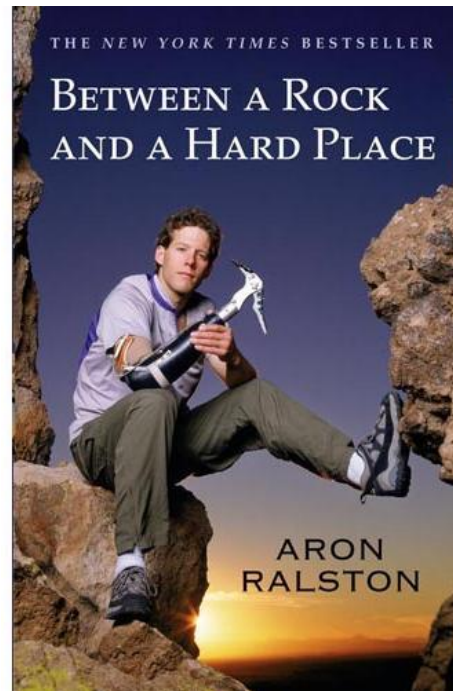




# Evolution at the Speed of Thought



Aron Lee Ralston, 4/26/03



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# Evolution at the Speed of Thought

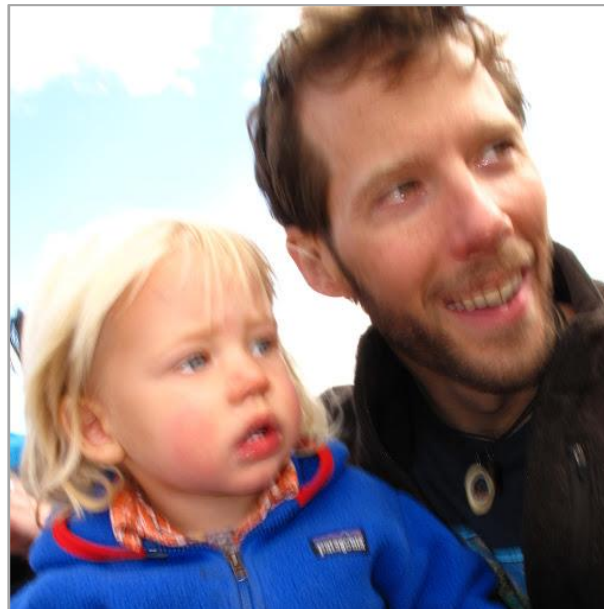
A blond three-year-old boy in a red polo shirt comes running across a sunlit hardwood floor in what I somehow know is my future home. By the same intuitive perception, I know the boy is my own. I bend to scoop him into my left arm, using my handless right arm to balance him, and we laugh together as I swing him up to my shoulder... Then, with a shock, the vision blinks out. I'm back in the canyon, echoes of his joyful sounds resonating in my mind, creating a subconscious reassurance that somehow I will survive this entrapment. Despite having already come to accept that I will die where I stand before help arrives, now I believe I will live.

That belief, that boy, changes everything for me.

– Aron Lee Ralston (2005)



# Evolution at the Speed of Thought

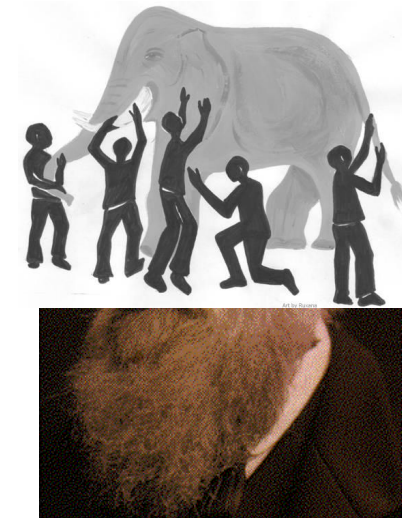


**We Need New Narratives In Finance!**

# Conclusion

## “It Takes A Theory To Beat A Theory”

- Standard paradigm is not wrong, just incomplete
- Human behavior has been stable for 60,000 years
- Our environment has changed rapidly
- The mismatch can create challenges
- Evolution determines dynamics
- Competition, selection, innovation

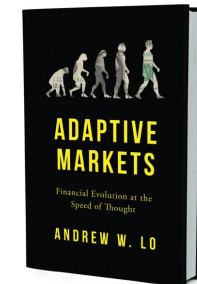


## How Adaptive Are You?

# Thank You!

For more on Adaptive Markets:

- <http://bit.ly/2t3Sre6> (MIT Sloan Lecture)
- <http://bit.ly/2ty6Rqp> (Clarendon Lectures)
- <http://alo.mit.edu> (website)
- @AndrewWLo (Twitter)



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