

Week 1: Why do we need **game theory**,
...and what does it tell us?

- Focus on basic concepts

- Focus on basic concepts
- Ideas, philosophy,

- Focus on basic concepts
- Ideas, philosophy, history

- Focus on basic concepts
 - Ideas, philosophy, history
- ...hidden behind mathematical models

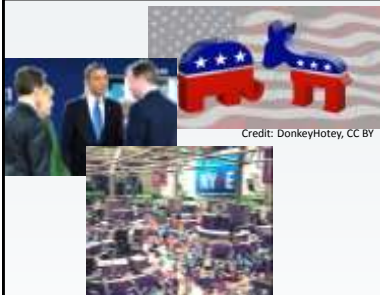
- 1.1 What is game theory?



Credit: DonkeyHotey, CC BY



Credit: DonkeyHotey, CC BY



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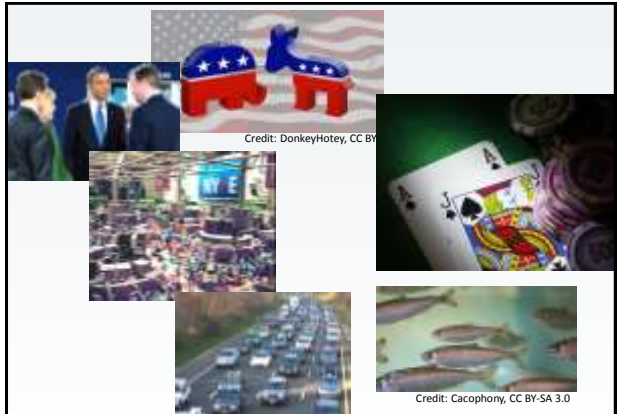


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"Social" problem

"Social" problem

You interact with others

"Social" problem

You interact with others

What is **best for you** depends on **what others do**

"Social" problem

You interact with others

What is **best for you** depends on **what others do**

Strategic Situation



"Social" problem

You interact with others

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Strategic Situation

"Social" problem

You interact with others

What is **best for you** depends on **what others do**

Strategic Situation

Game theory constructs mathematical models to examine how people behave in **strategic situations**

Sorry, Game Theory is **not** about your favorite video games....



Sorry, Game Theory is **not** about your favorite video games....



Question 1: What determines the **policies** of the two parties?

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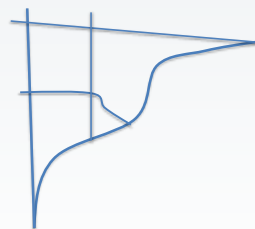
Credit: DonkeyHotey, CC BY

Question 2: What happens to the **traffic flows** if we construct a new bypass?

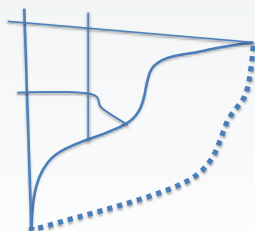
Question 2: What happens to the traffic flows if we construct a new bypass?



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Question 2: What happens to the traffic flows if we construct a new bypass?



Game theory

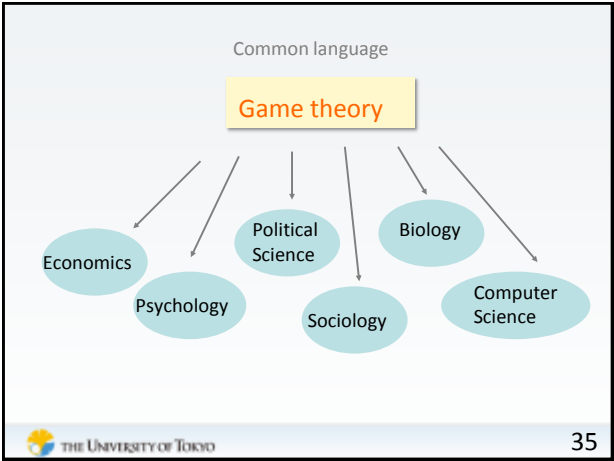
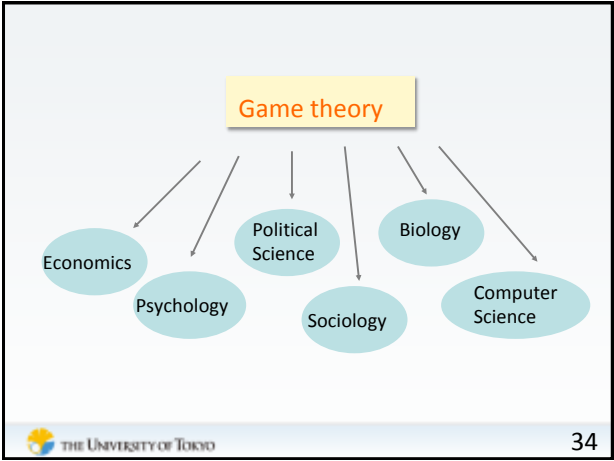
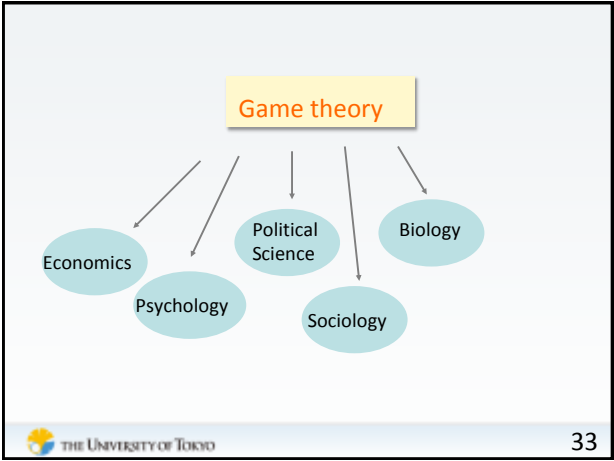
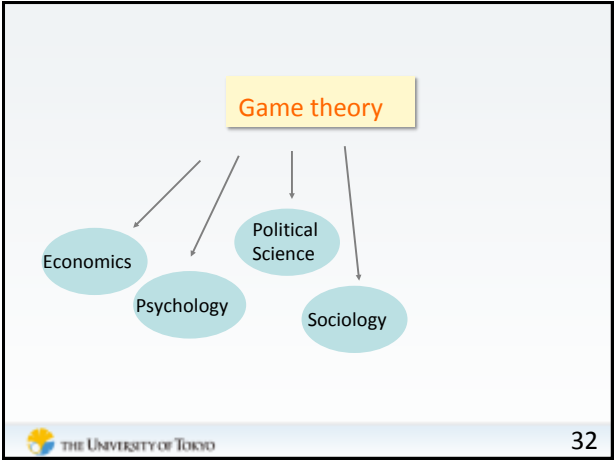
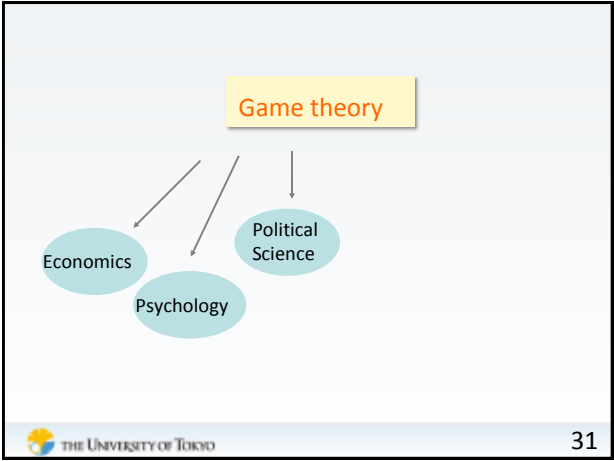
Game theory

Economics

Game theory

Economics

Psychology



1.2 Modelling social problems as a “game”

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Credit: DonkeyHotey, CC BY

Credit: Cacophony, CC BY-SA 3.0

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Question 1: What determines the policies of the two parties?

Credit: DonkeyHotey, CC BY

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Question 2: What happens to the traffic flows if we construct a new bypass?

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“Ad-hoc” approach

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(a) Individuals try to do their best against others

Credit: Cacophony, CC BY-SA 3.0

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(a) Individuals try to do their best against others

(b) under a certain set of rules

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(a) Individuals try to do their best against others

(b) under a certain set of rules

44

(a) Individuals try to do their best against others

(b) under a certain set of rules

Social problems can be formulated as a mathematical model.

45

(a) Individuals try to do their best against others

(b) under a certain set of rules

Social problems can be formulated as a mathematical model.

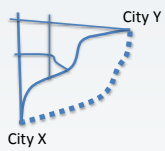
“game”

46

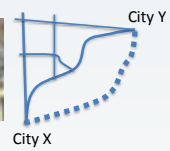
Question 1: What determines the policies of the two parties?

47

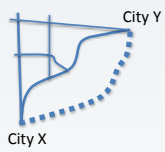
48



(1) Players

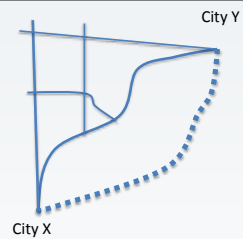


(1) Players = **drivers** commuting from City X to City Y

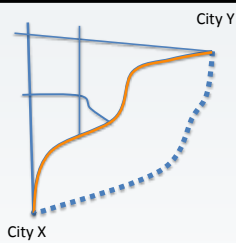


(1) Players = **drivers** commuting from City X to City Y

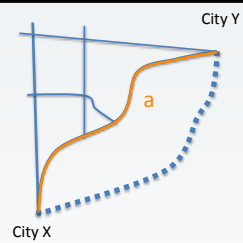
(2) Strategies of each player



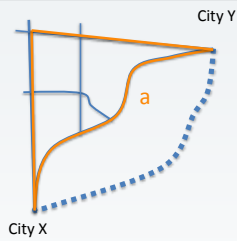
(2) Strategies of each player



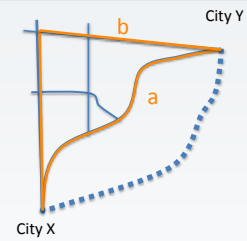
(2) Strategies of each player



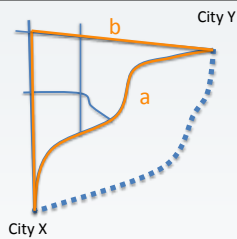
(2) Strategies of each player



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(2) Strategies of each player

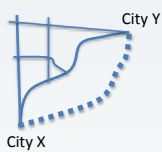
{Route a, Route b,....}



(1) Players = **drivers** commuting from City X to City Y

(2) Strategies of each player

{Route a, Route b,....}

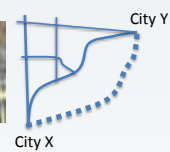


(1) Players = **drivers** commuting from City X to City Y

(2) Strategies of each player

{Route a, Route b,....}

(3) Payoff of each player



(1) Players = **drivers** commuting from City X to City Y

(2) Strategies of each player

{Route a, Route b,....}

(3) Payoff of each player

= - (traveling time)

(a) Individuals try to do their best against others

(b) under a certain set of rules

Credit: Cacophony, CC BY-SA 3.0

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Is there a general theory?

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Game

(1) Players
(2) Strategies
(3) Payoffs

Is there a general theory?

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Game

(1) Players
(2) Strategies
(3) Payoffs

General "Solution" ?

Is there a general theory?

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"unified" approach

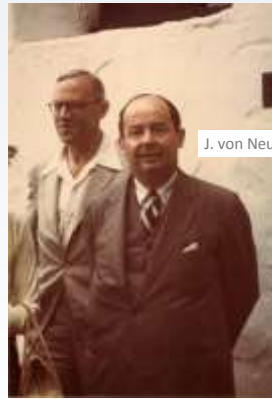
65

(a) Individuals try to do their best against others

(b) under a certain set of rules

Is there a "governing principle"?

66

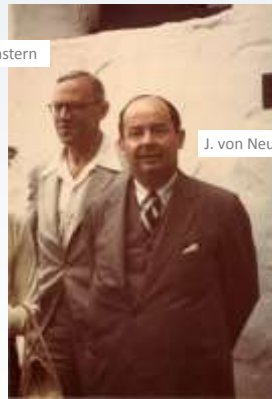


J. von Neumann



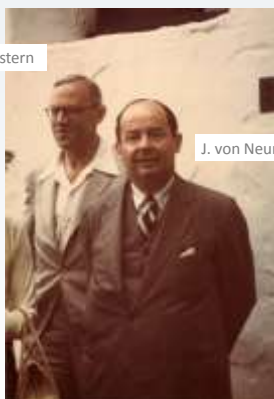
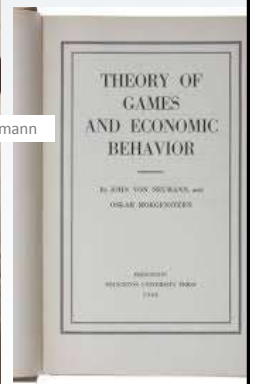
O. Morgenstern

J. von Neumann



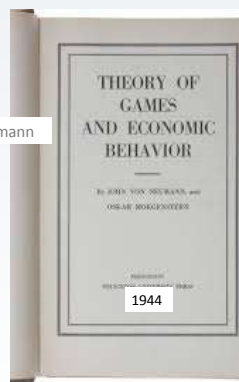
O. Morgenstern

J. von Neumann



O. Morgenstern

J. von Neumann



1944

1.3 In search for the governing principle

(a) Individuals try to do their best against others

(b) under a certain set of rules

Credit: Danke photo

Credit: Cacophony, CC BY-SA 3.0

Is there a "governing principle"?

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(a) Individuals try to do their best against others

(b) under a certain set of rules

Credit: Danke photo

Credit: Cacophony, CC BY-SA 3.0

Anything like Newton's law?

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Individuals try to do their best against others

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Individuals try to do their best against others

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Basic Idea

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Basic Idea

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Basic Idea





Better

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Basic Idea





Better **Worse**

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Basic Idea

Your choice





Better **Worse**

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Basic Idea

Your choice



Better **Worse**



Not as perfect or accurate as Newton's law....

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Basic Idea

Your choice





Better **Worse**

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Basic Idea

Your choice



Better **Worse**


... but it captures an **important driving force** of human behavior.

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Basic Idea

Your choice




Better **Worse**

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Basic Idea

Your choice



Better **Worse**


"Rationality"

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Basic Idea

Your choice



Better **Worse**

Payoff = 2


"Rationality"

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Basic Idea

Your choice



Better **Worse**

Payoff = 2

Payoff = 1


"Rationality"

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Basic Idea

Your choice



Better **Worse**

Payoff = 2

Payoff = 1

"Rationality"

Maximizing your payoff


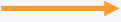

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How far can we go with that basic idea?

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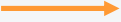

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Roulette





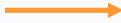

A


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Roulette





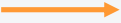

A

Poker




B A





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Roulette




A


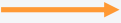

Game Theory

Poker







B A


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Roulette





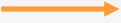

A

Poker





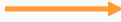

B A


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Roulette




A




Poker




B A


Substantially
more complex


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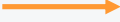

95

A



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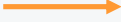

A

Behavior is **given**



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A


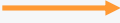

Behavior is **given**

A's behavior can be described by a simple math problem



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A

Behavior is **given**


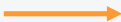

A's behavior can be described by a simple math problem

Maximization of his payoff




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Poker


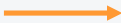

B

A



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Poker

B


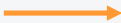

A

Behavior is **not given**



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Poker

B

A

Behavior is **not given**

A's behavior ?



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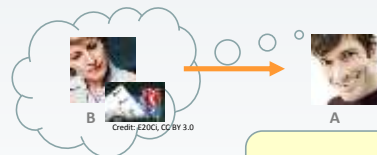
A's prediction or belief



A's prediction or belief

A's behavior can be described by a simple math problem

Maximization of his payoff

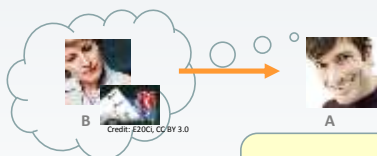


A's prediction or belief

A's behavior can be described by a simple math problem

Maximization of his payoff

Is this the end of the story ?



A's prediction or belief

A's behavior can be described by a simple math problem

Maximization of his payoff

No!



Unlike roulette, B is not choosing her behavior mechanically.

Unlike roulette, B is **not** choosing her behavior **mechanically**.

To better predict B's behavior, we need to examine **what she is thinking about**.

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A deeper strategic thought

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A deeper strategic thought

111

A deeper strategic thought

A's belief about B's belief

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We can go further and further

113

We can go further and further

114

We can go further and further

A's belief about B's belief about A's belief about B's belief

Credit: E2001, CC BY 3.0

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We can go further and further

A's belief about B's belief about A's belief about B's belief

The problem of "infinite regress"

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Rationality alone fails to pin down individuals' behavior in social problems.

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Simple math model of maximization

Rationality alone fails to pin down individuals' behavior in social problems.

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Simple math model of maximization

Rationality alone fails to pin down individuals' behavior in social problems.

This is the reason why we need game theory.

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Simple math model of maximization

Rationality alone fails to pin down individuals' behavior in social problems.

This is the reason why we need game theory.

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Credit: DonkeyHotey, CC BY

Credit: Cacophony, CC BY-SA 3.0

Is there a “governing principle”?

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Credit: DonkeyHotey, CC BY

Credit: Cacophony, CC BY-SA 3.0

A challenging scientific problem

Is there a “governing principle”?

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1.4 Concerns about a mathematical theory of human behavior

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Prediction by mathematical formula

Credit: MichaelMaggs, CC BY-SA 3.0

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Prediction by mathematical formula

Credit: MichaelMaggs, CC BY-SA 3.0

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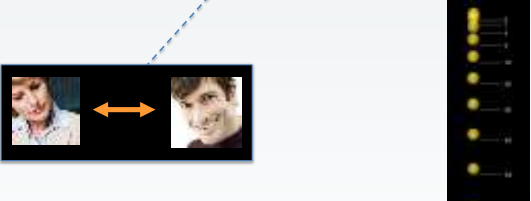
Prediction by mathematical formula

Credit: MichaelMaggs, CC BY-SA 3.0

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Prediction by mathematical formula



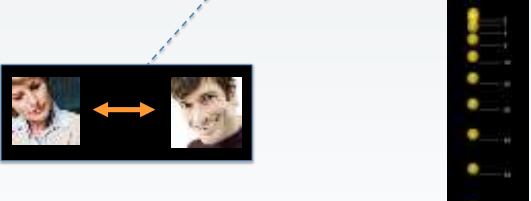
#1 It shouldn't work

Credit: MichaelMaggs, CC BY-SA 3.0

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Prediction by mathematical formula



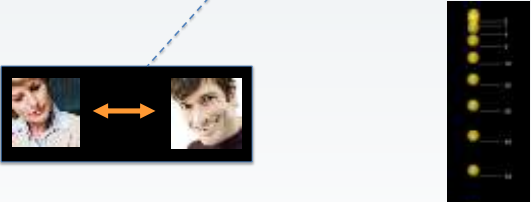
#1 Free will defeats any attempt to predict human behavior by a math formula

CC BY-SA 3.0

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Prediction by mathematical formula



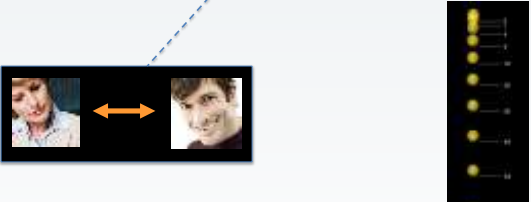
#2 We don't need it

Credit: MichaelMaggs, CC BY-SA 3.0

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Prediction by mathematical formula



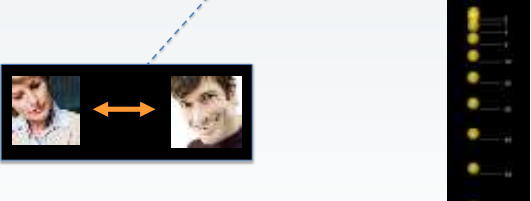
#2 You can just ask them why they did it.

Credit: MichaelMaggs, CC BY-SA 3.0

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Prediction by mathematical formula



#2 You can just ask them why they did it.

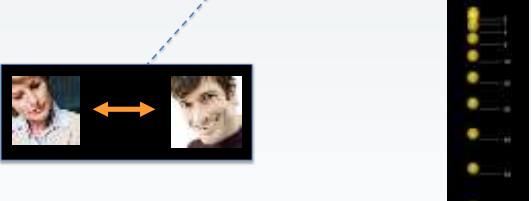
Collecting detailed facts and conducting interviews are all we need in social sciences

Maggs, SA 3.0

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Prediction by mathematical formula



#3 I have never seen that it works.

Credit: MichaelMaggs, CC BY-SA 3.0

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Sometime around 1939, a mathematician teased
an economist....



Stan Ulam



Stan Ulam



Paul Samuelson
Credit: Bender235, CC BY



Stan Ulam



Paul Samuelson
Credit: Bender235, CC BY

Name me one proposition in all of
the social sciences which is
both true and non-trivial.



Stan Ulam



Paul Samuelson
Credit: Bender235, CC BY

Name me one proposition in all of
the social sciences which is
both true and non-trivial.



Stan Ulam



This was a test that I
always failed.



Paul Samuelson
Credit: Bender235, CC BY

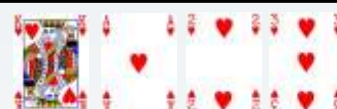
(Valid) concerns about game theory

#1 **Free will** defeats any attempt to predict human behavior by a math formula

#2 You can **just ask**, “why did you do that?”

#3 I’ve never heard **it works**.

1.5 Let’s play a game



↑
Each player carefully chooses one card and
show it to the opponent (simultaneously)
↓



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Red wins, if both choose K

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Red wins, if they choose cards with different numbers

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152

Red wins, if they choose cards with different numbers

Black wins in the remaining cases.

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153

Red player wins if ...

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154

Red player wins if ...

- both choose K

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155

Red player wins if ...



- both choose K
- players choose cards with **different numbers**

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156

Red player wins if ...

both choose K



such as  and 

players choose cards with different numbers

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Red player wins if ...

both choose K

such as  and 



players choose cards with different numbers

Black player wins if ...

 THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO158

Red player wins if ...


both choose K

such as  and 

players choose cards with different numbers



Black player wins if ...

only one player chooses K

 THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO159

Red player wins if ...

both choose K


such as  and 

players choose cards with different numbers

Black player wins if ...



only one player chooses K

players choose cards with the same number

 THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO160

Red player wins if ...

both choose K



such as  and 


players choose cards with different numbers

Black player wins if ...


only one player chooses K


players choose cards with the same number

such as  and 

 THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO161

Who has an advantage,
Red or Black?



 THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO162

What is the winning rate of each player?



Any prediction about the cards they choose?



1.6 John Nash discovered the governing principle

Game theory was created by Neumann and Morgenstern in 1944, but even in 1950 the central problem was still open.



Game

- (1) Players
- (2) Strategies
- (3) Payoffs

General "Solution" ?

Is there a general theory?



John Nash



Credit: Peter Badge, CC BY-SA 3.0

John Nash



Credit: Peter Badge, CC BY-SA 3.0

John Nash

This man is a genius.



Credit: Peter Badge, CC BY-SA 3.0

1994: Nobel prize in economics

Motion Picture: A Beautiful Mind

1994: Nobel prize in economics



Motion Picture: A Beautiful Mind

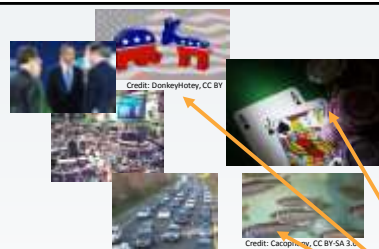
1994: Nobel prize in economics



Motion Picture: A Beautiful Mind



Credit: ©2001 Universal Studios and DreamWorks LLC.
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Credit: DonkeyHotey, CC BY



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Credit: Donkeyhotey, CC BY

Credit: Cacophony, CC BY-SA 3.0

Credit: Peter Badge, CC BY-SA 3.0

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Credit: Donkeyhotey, CC BY

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A point that does not move

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A vortex and human behavior.....why are they similar?

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This point ...

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moves here.

This point ...

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181

moves here.

This point ...

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moves here.

This point ...

The vortex point does not move.

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183

Suppose the surface of coffee represents the set of possible human behavior.

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Suppose the surface of coffee represents the set of possible human behavior.

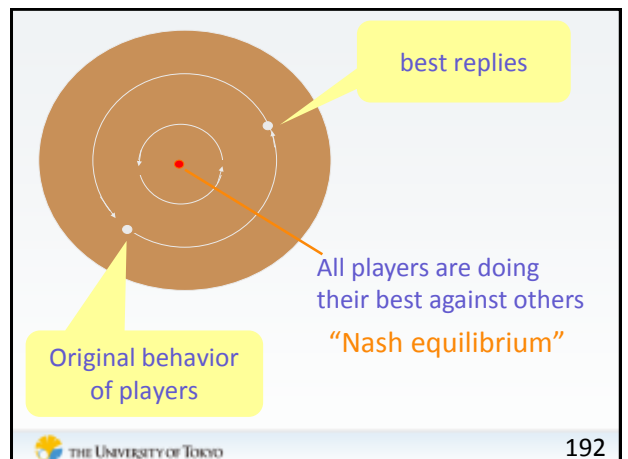
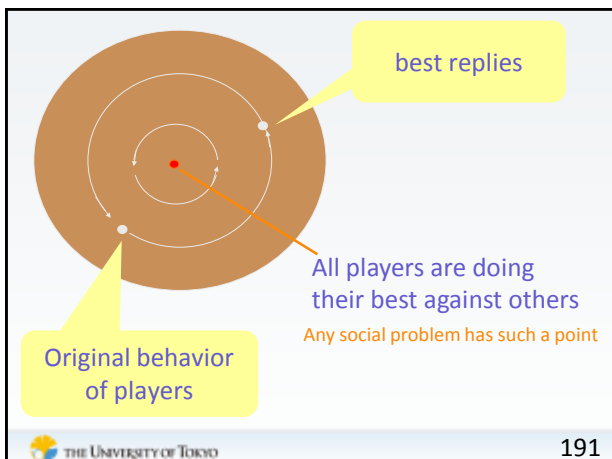
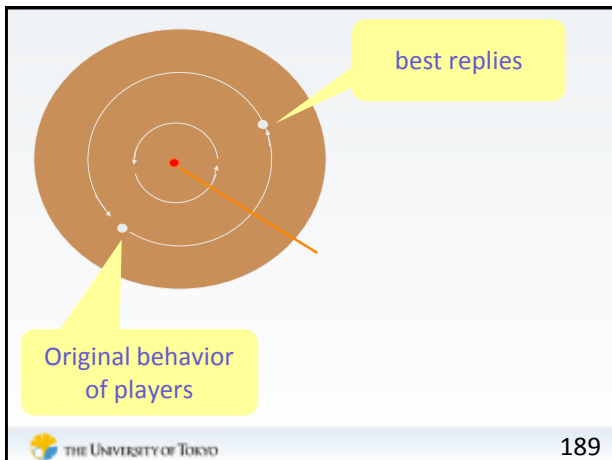
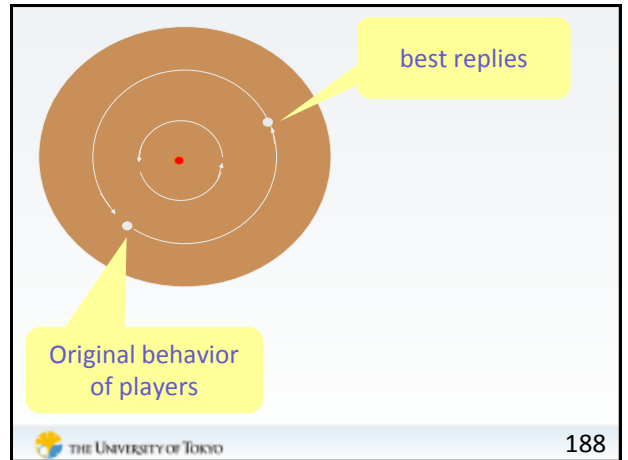
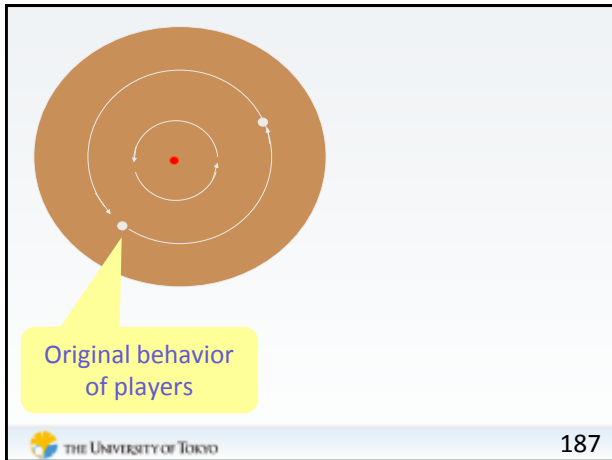
This is really an ingenious idea of Nash!

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and the others continue to use their respective mixed strategies
 now define a set of continuous functions of \mathbf{s} by

Nash discovered that every social problem has
 a “stable point” where

$$s_i = \frac{s_i + \sum_j \varphi_{ij}(\mathbf{s}) \tau_{ij}}{1 + \sum_j \varphi_{ij}(\mathbf{s})}$$

for each component s_i of \mathbf{s} we define a modification s'_i by

ling \mathbf{s}' the n -tuple $(s'_1, s'_2, s'_3 \dots s'_n)$.
 We must now show that the fixed points of the mapping $T: \mathbf{s} \rightarrow \mathbf{s}'$
 equilibrium points.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO 193

and the others continue to use their respective mixed strategies
 now define a set of continuous functions of \mathbf{s} by

Nash discovered that every social problem has
 a “stable point” where

all individuals are doing their best against others

$$s_i = \frac{s_i + \sum_j \varphi_{ij}(\mathbf{s}) \tau_{ij}}{1 + \sum_j \varphi_{ij}(\mathbf{s})}$$

ling \mathbf{s}' the n -tuple $(s'_1, s'_2, s'_3 \dots s'_n)$.
 We must now show that the fixed points of the mapping $T: \mathbf{s} \rightarrow \mathbf{s}'$
 equilibrium points.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO 194

and the others continue to use their respective mixed strategies
 now define a set of continuous functions of \mathbf{s} by

Nash discovered that every social problem has
 a “stable point” where

all individuals are doing their best against others

Nash equilibrium

$$s_i = \frac{s_i + \sum_j \varphi_{ij}(\mathbf{s}) \tau_{ij}}{1 + \sum_j \varphi_{ij}(\mathbf{s})}$$

ling \mathbf{s}' the n -tuple $(s'_1, s'_2, s'_3 \dots s'_n)$.
 We must now show that the fixed points of the mapping $T: \mathbf{s} \rightarrow \mathbf{s}'$
 equilibrium points.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO 195

and the others continue to use their respective mixed strategies
 now define a set of continuous functions of \mathbf{s} by

Nash discovered that every social problem has
 a “stable point” where

all individuals are doing their best against others

Nash equilibrium

Game

- (1) Players
- (2) Strategies
- (3) Payoffs

General “Solution”

THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO 196

and the others continue to use their respective mixed strategies
 now define a set of continuous functions of \mathbf{s} by

Nash discovered that every social problem has
 a “stable point” where

all individuals are doing their best against others

Nash equilibrium

Game

- (1) Players
- (2) Strategies
- (3) Payoffs

General “Solution”

Vortex

THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO 197

and the others continue to use their respective mixed strategies
 now define a set of continuous functions of \mathbf{s} by

Nash discovered that every social problem has
 a “stable point” where

all individuals are doing their best against others

Nash equilibrium

Game

- (1) Players
- (2) Strategies
- (3) Payoffs

General “Solution”

Vortex

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Credit: DonkeyHotey, CC BY

Credit: Cacophony, CC BY-SA 3.0

Game
 (1) Players
 (2) Strategies
 (3) Payoffs

General "Solution"

All individuals are doing their best against others

Nash equilibrium

Vortex

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1.7 Nash equilibrium

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Question 2: What happens to the traffic flows if we construct a new bypass?

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201

Question 2: What happens to the traffic flows if we construct a new bypass?

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Question 2: What happens to the traffic flows if we construct a new bypass?

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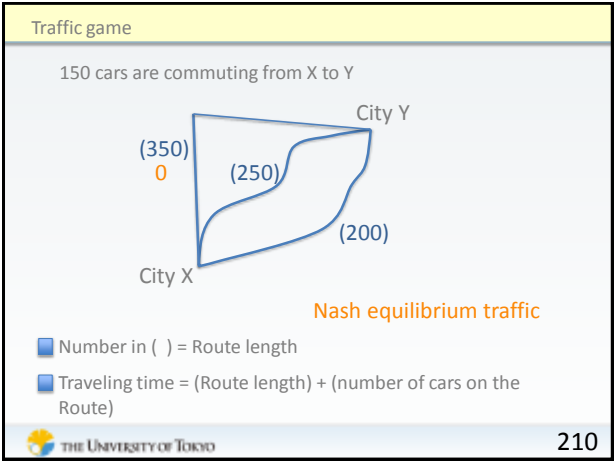
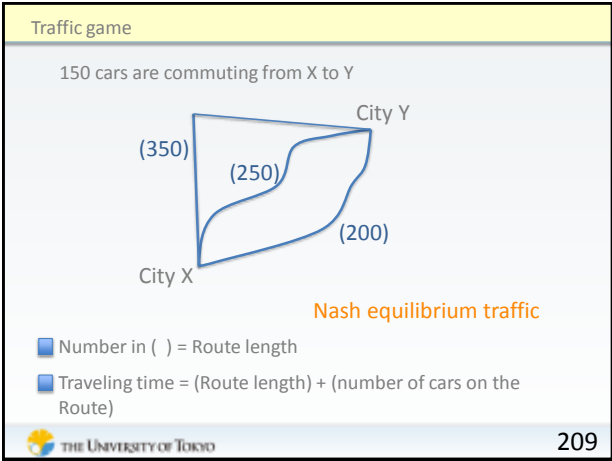
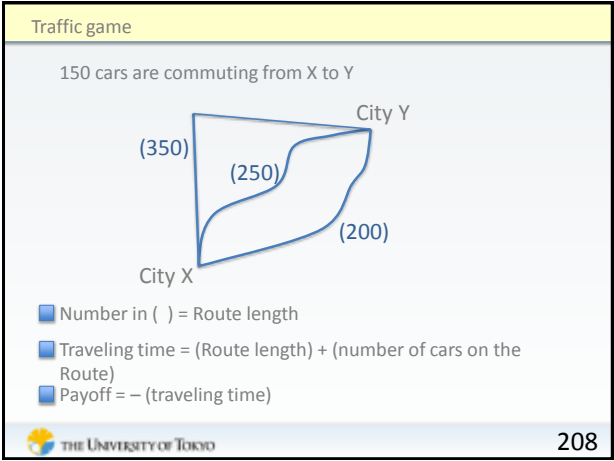
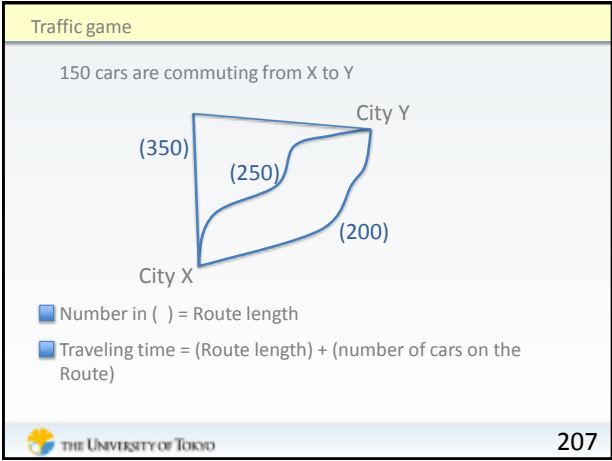
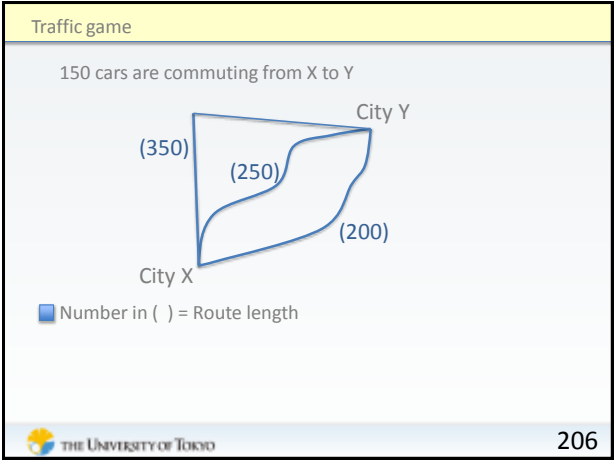
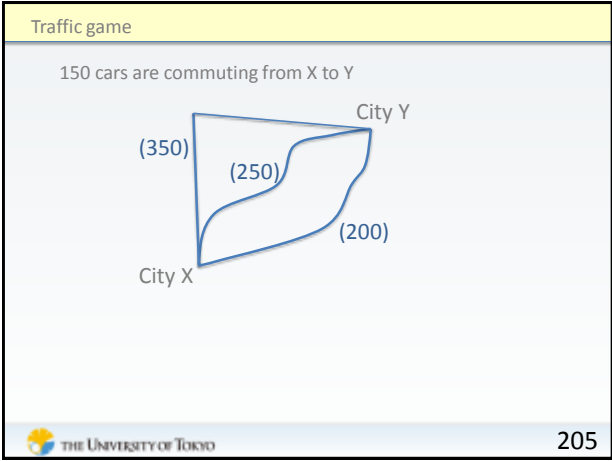
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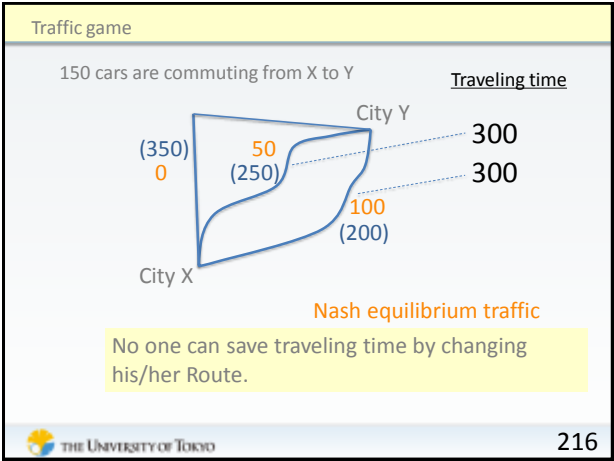
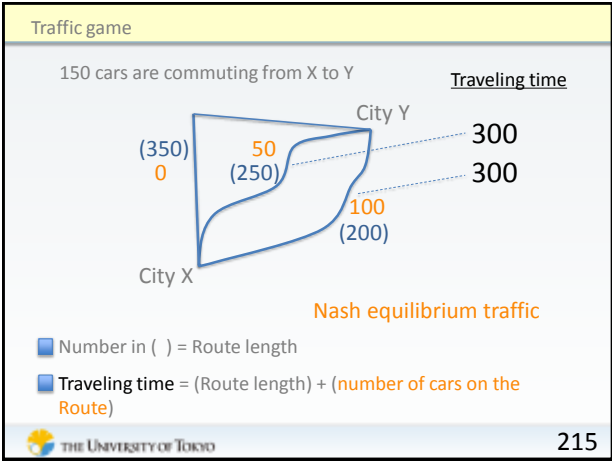
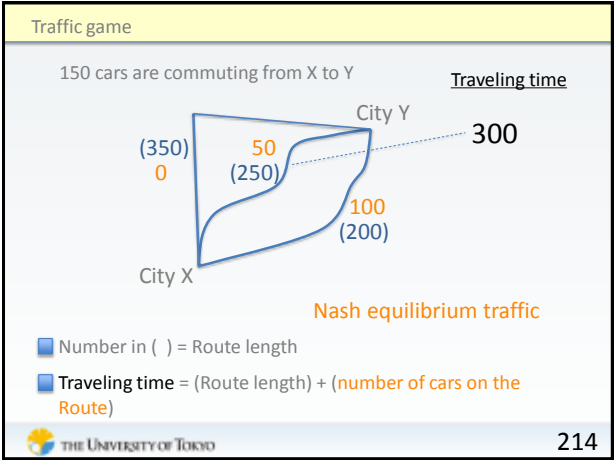
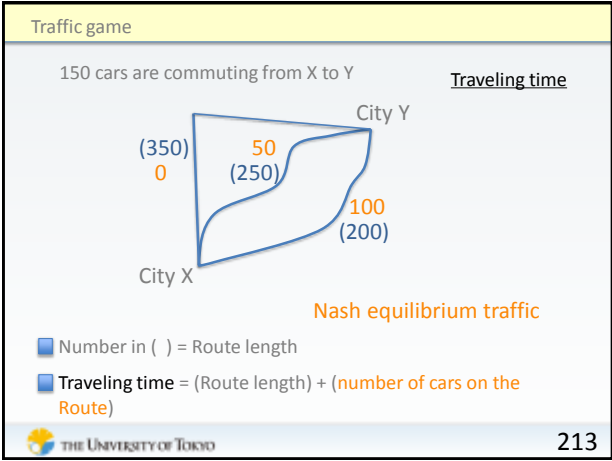
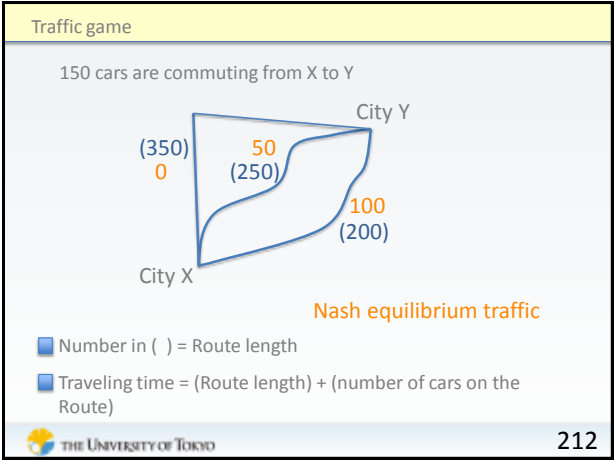
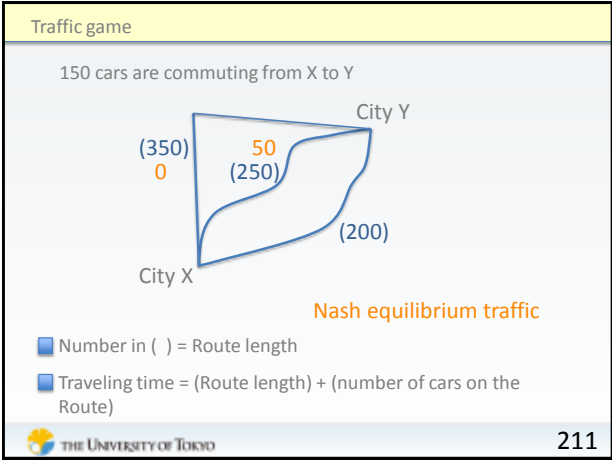
Traffic game

150 cars are commuting from X to Y

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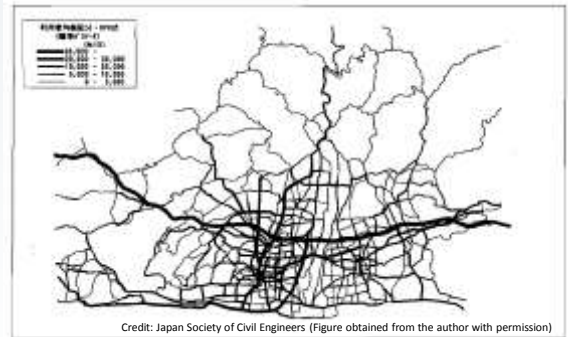
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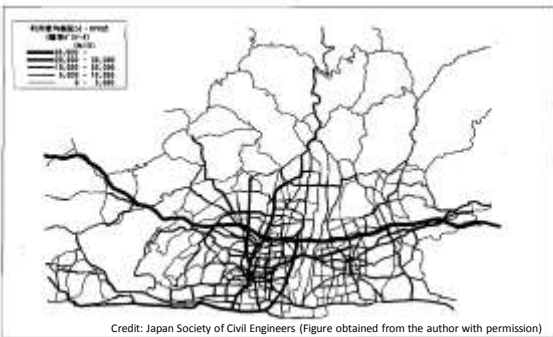


1.8 Traffic game in reality

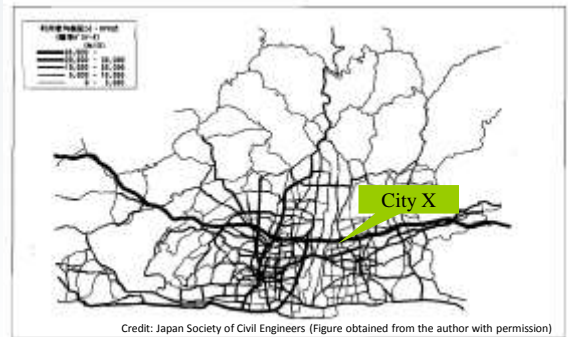
Traffic around Hamamatsu city, Japan



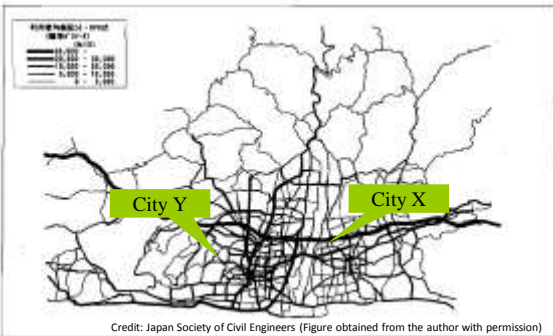
First, collect some data



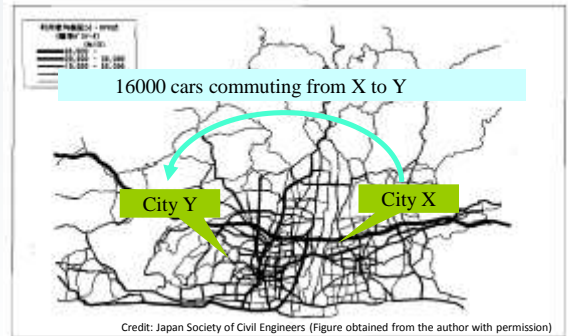
First, collect some data



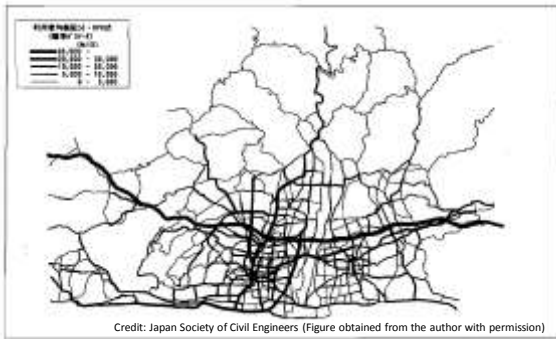
First, collect some data



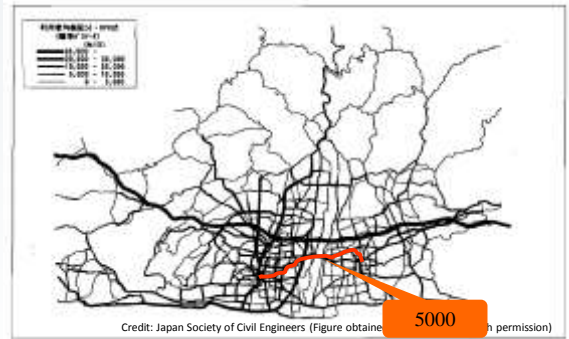
First, collect some data



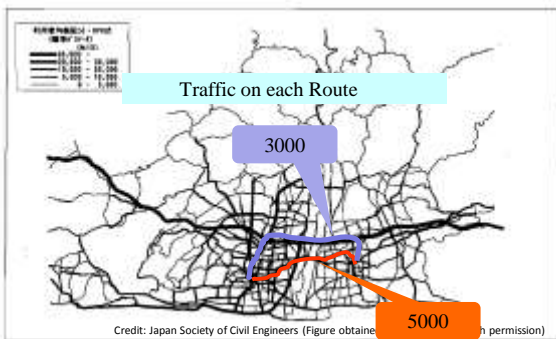
First, collect some data



First, collect some data



First, collect some data



Second, compute Nash equilibrium traffic, based on the following information

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- How many cars are commuting from each origin to each destination

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- How many cars are commuting from each origin to each destination

➡ Use the data

Second, compute Nash equilibrium traffic,
based on the following information

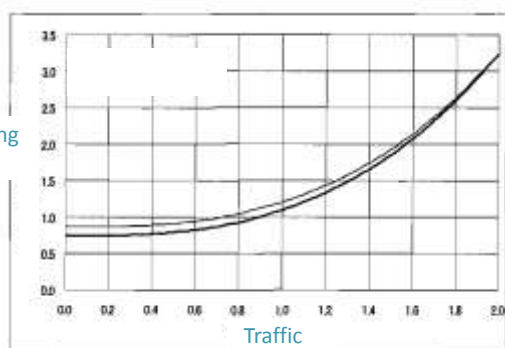
- How many cars are commuting from each origin to each destination
→ Use the data
- The relationship between traveling time and traffic

Second, compute Nash equilibrium traffic,
based on the following information

- How many cars are commuting from each origin to each destination
→ Use the data
- The relationship between traveling time and traffic
→ Estimate from the data

Estimated relationship

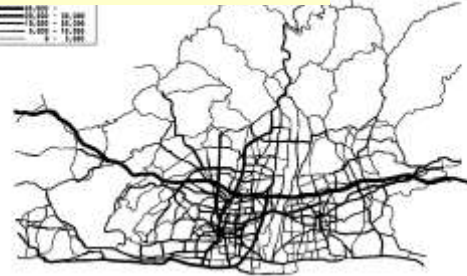
Traveling
time



Credit: Japan Society of Civil Engineers (Figure obtained from the author with permission)

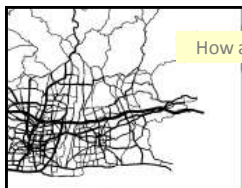
Nash equilibrium traffic

Thickness of Route indicates the amount of traffic

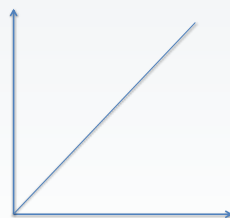


Credit: Japan Society of Civil Engineers (Figure obtained from the author with permission)

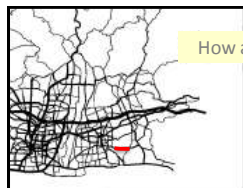
How accurate is Nash equilibrium prediction?



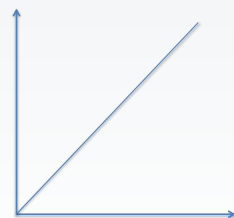
Credit: Japan Society of Civil Engineers (Figure obtained from the author with permission)

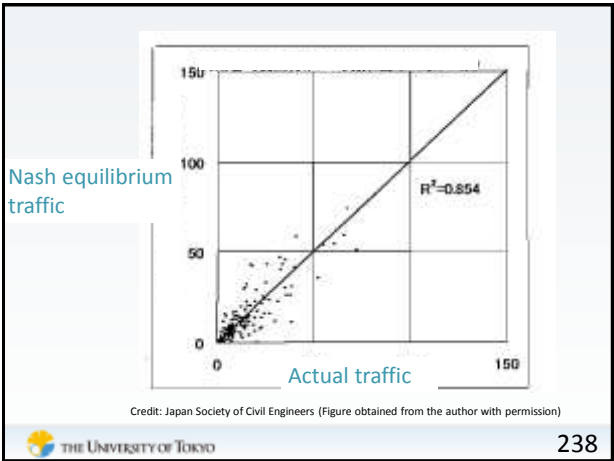
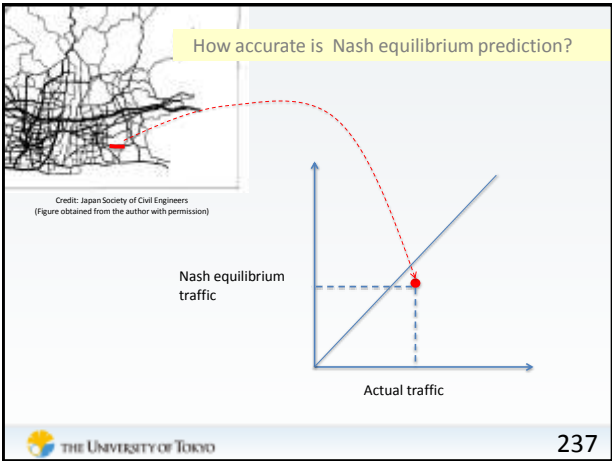
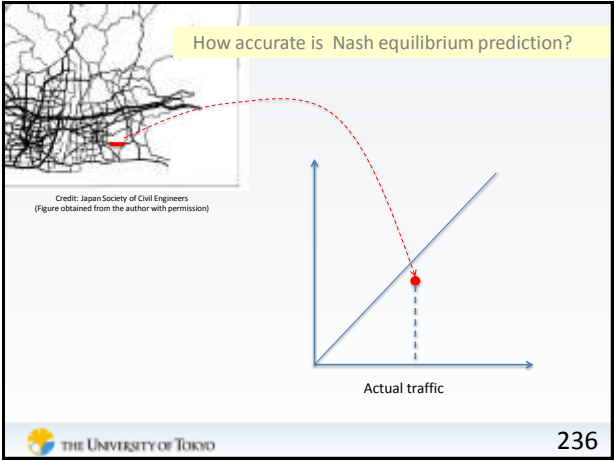
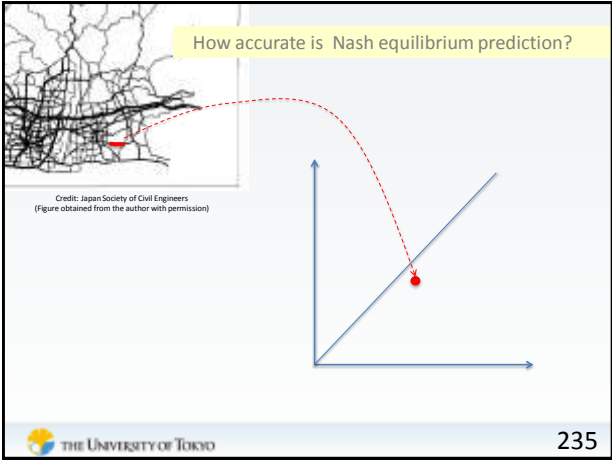


How accurate is Nash equilibrium prediction?



Credit: Japan Society of Civil Engineers (Figure obtained from the author with permission)

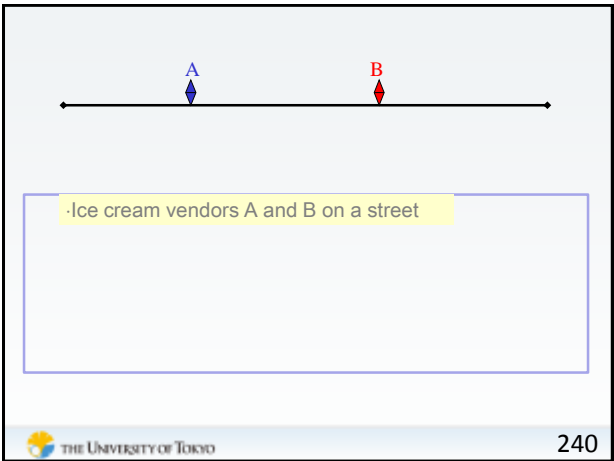




1.9 Location game

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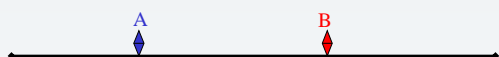




- Ice cream vendors A and B on a street
- Customers are uniformly distributed



- Ice cream vendors A and B on a street
- Customers are uniformly distributed
- Each customer goes to the nearest vendor



- Ice cream vendors A and B on a street
- Customers are uniformly distributed
- Each customer goes to the nearest vendor
 - * A and B at the same location → they split customers equally



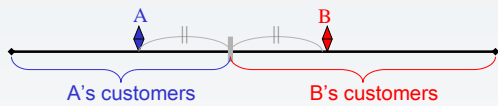
- Ice cream vendors A and B on a street
- Customers are uniformly distributed
- Each customer goes to the nearest vendor
 - * A and B at the same location → they split customers equally
- A vendors payoff = the number of customers



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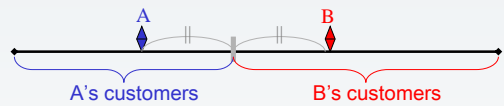


- Ice cream vendors A and B on a street
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· Ice cream vendors A and B on a street

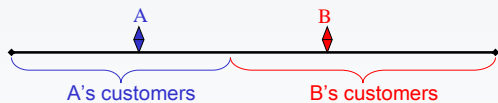
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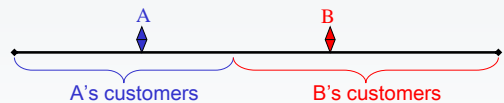
· Ice cream vendors A and B on a street

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 - * A and B at the same location → they split customers equally
- A vendors payoff = the number of customers

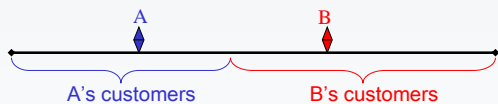
Hotelling's location game



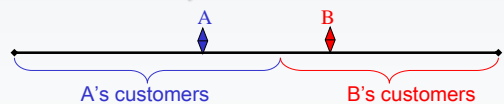
Not a Nash equilibrium

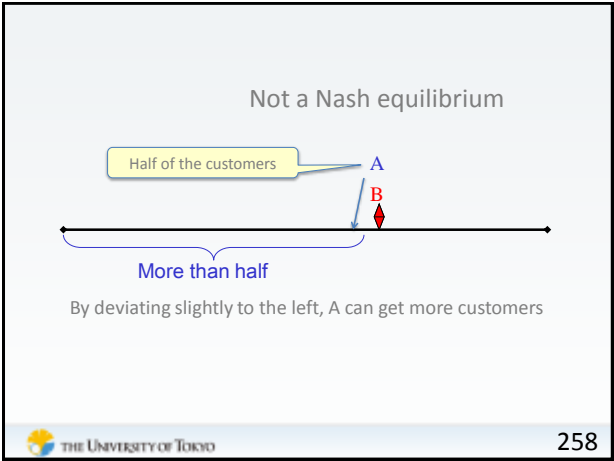
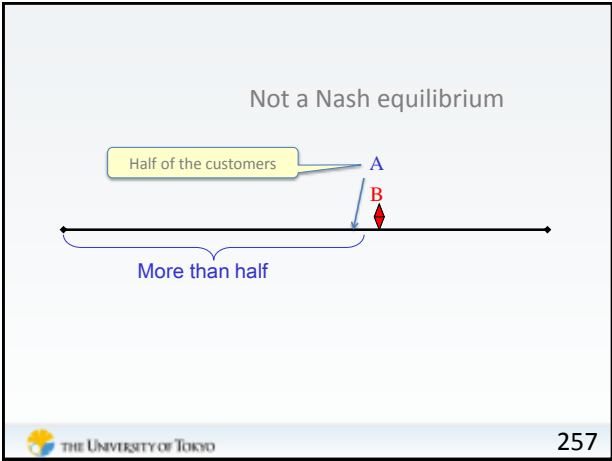
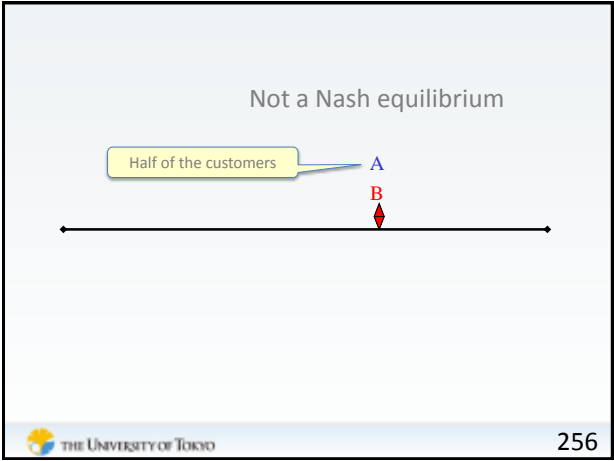
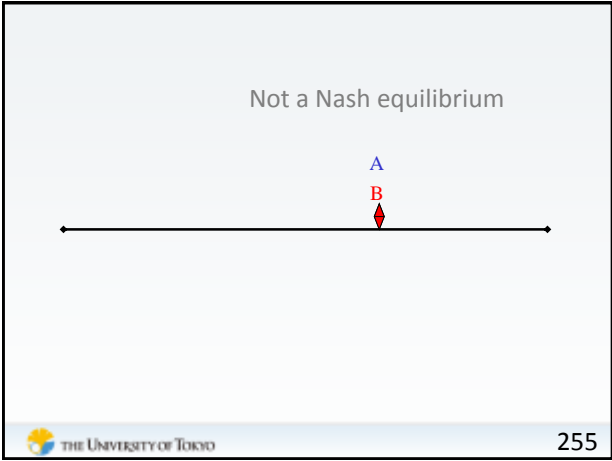
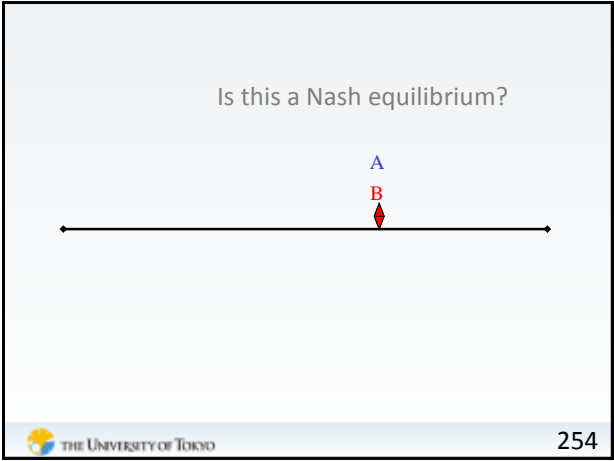
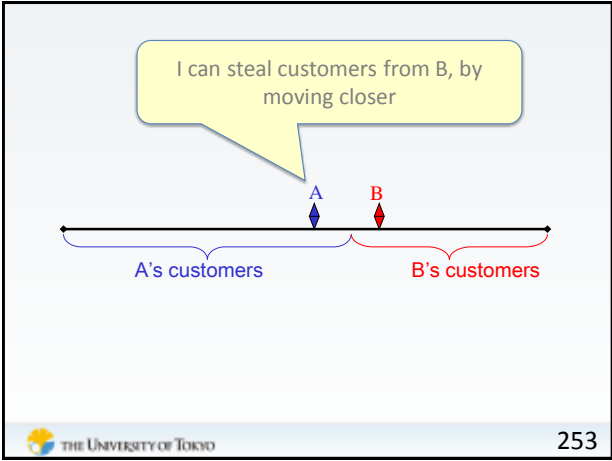


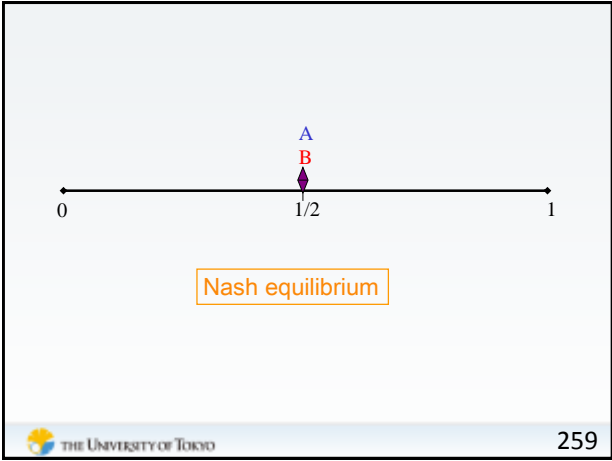
I can steal customers from B, by moving closer



I can steal customers from B, by moving closer

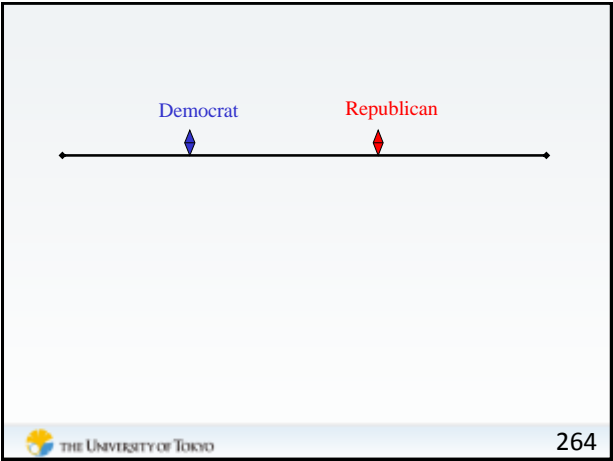
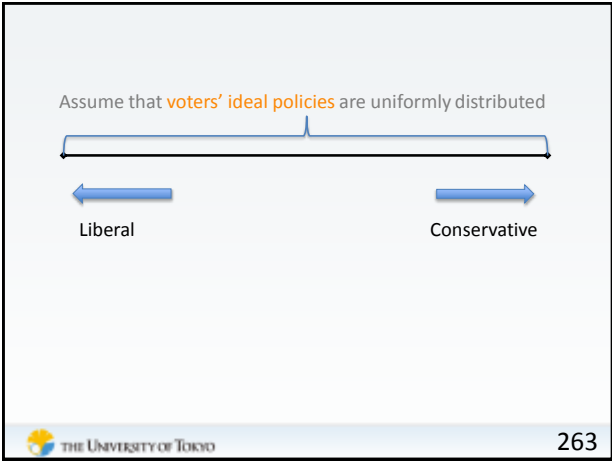
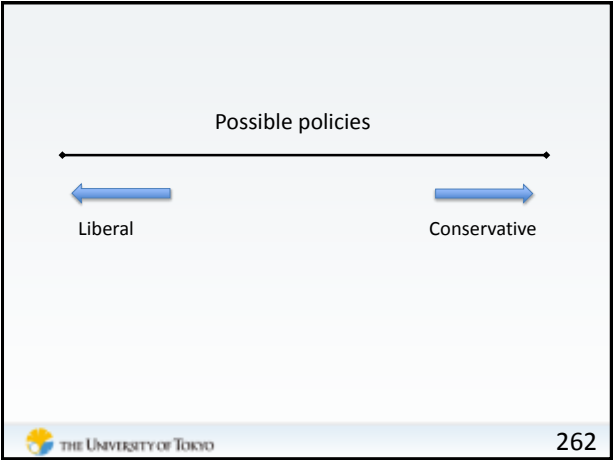
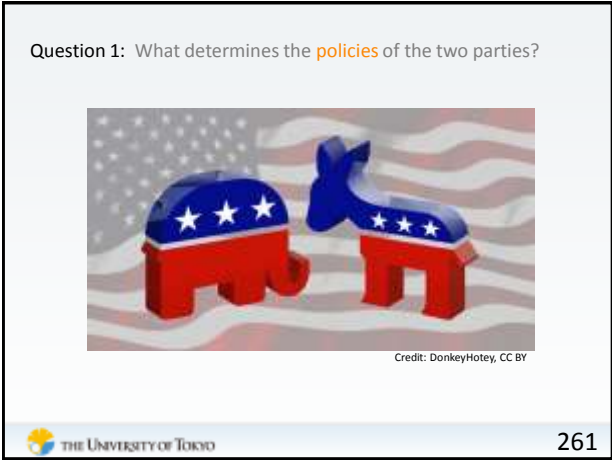


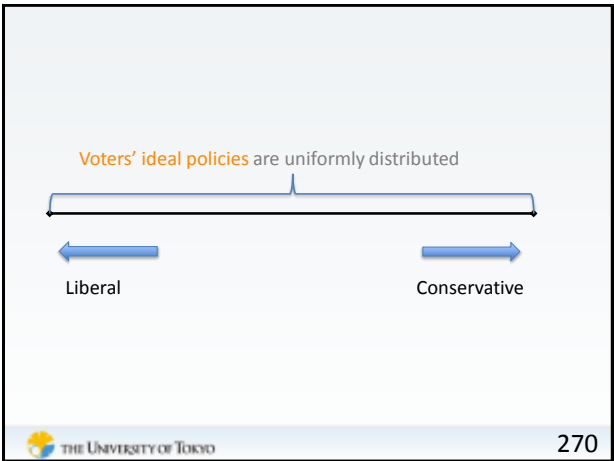
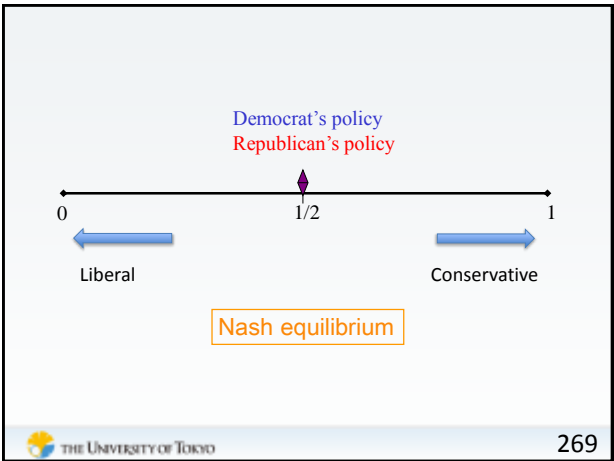
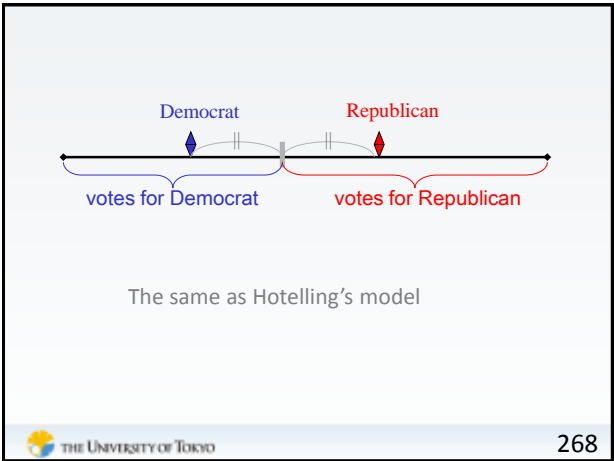
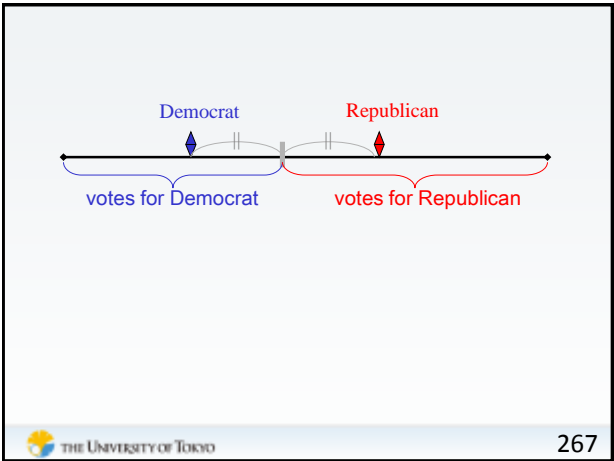
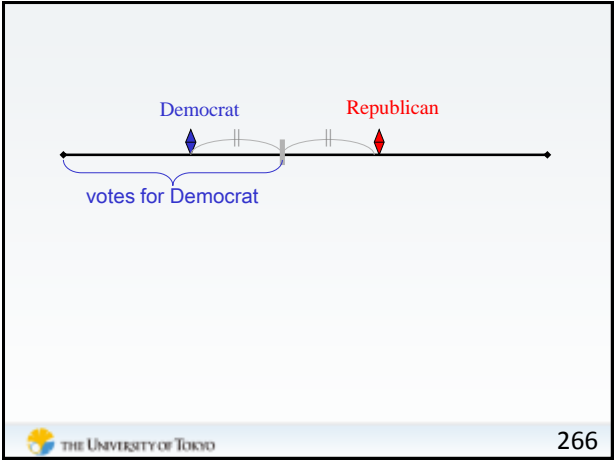
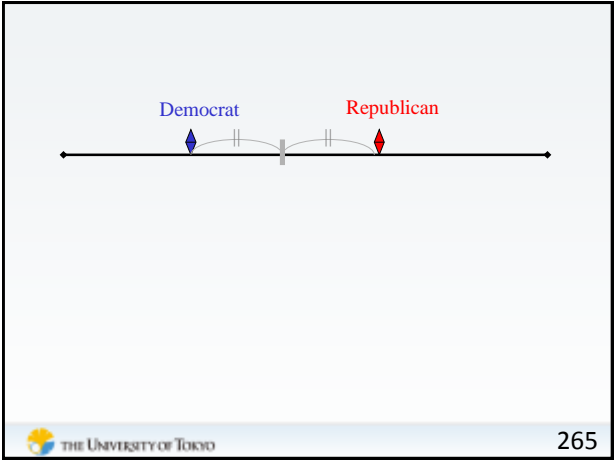


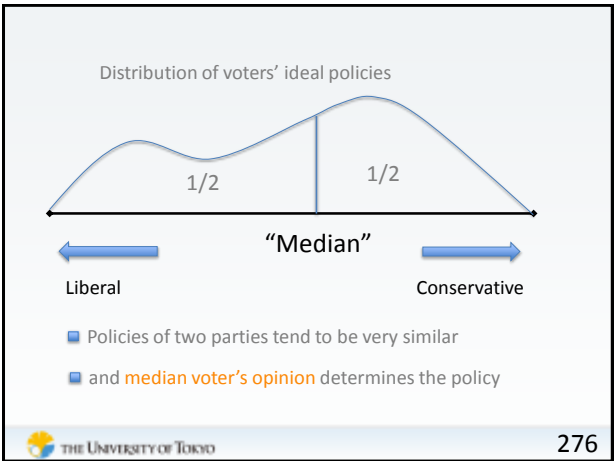
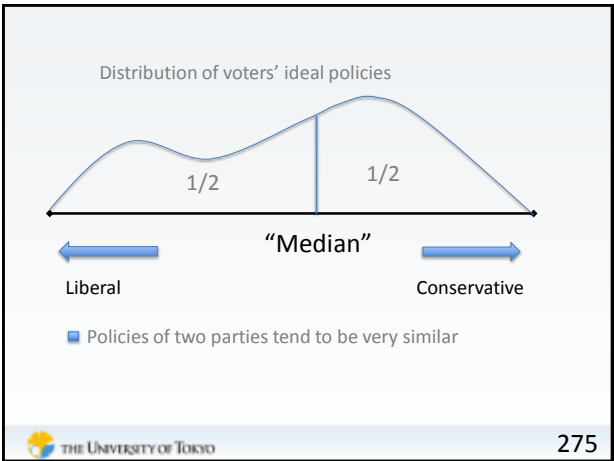
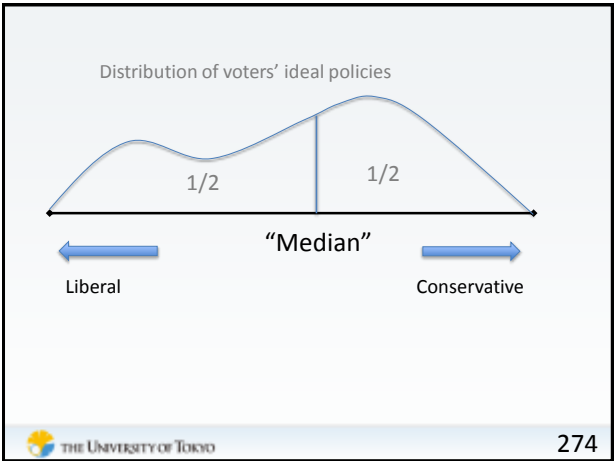
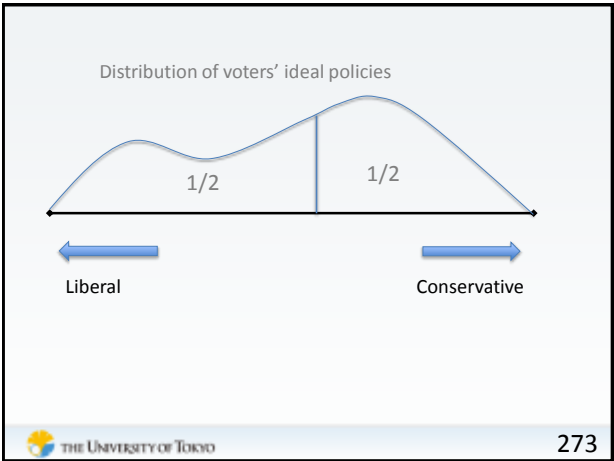
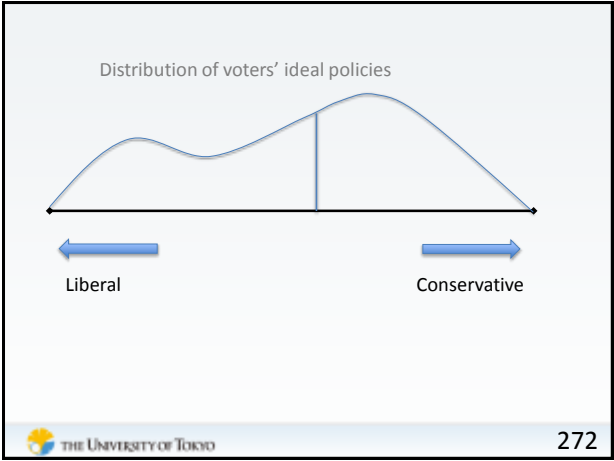
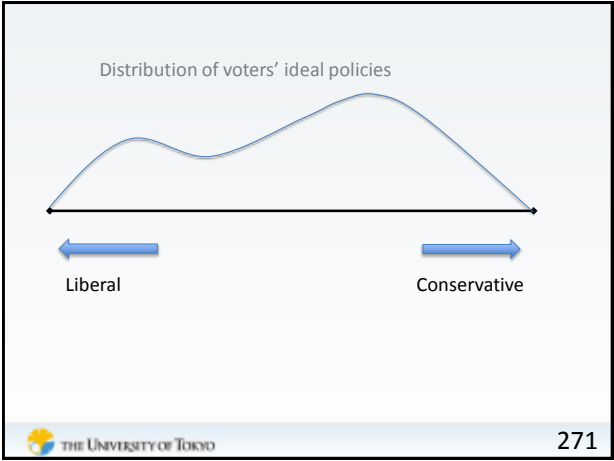


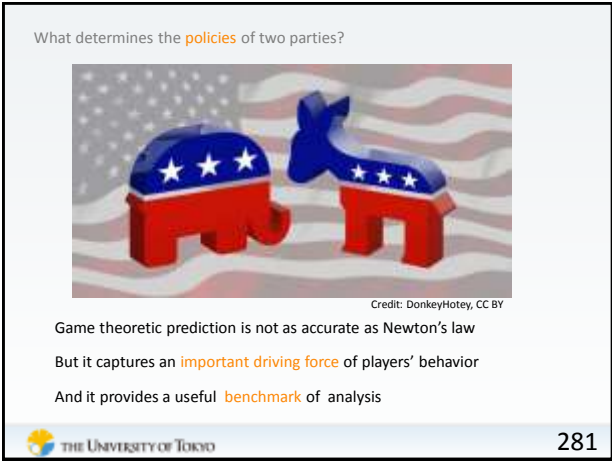
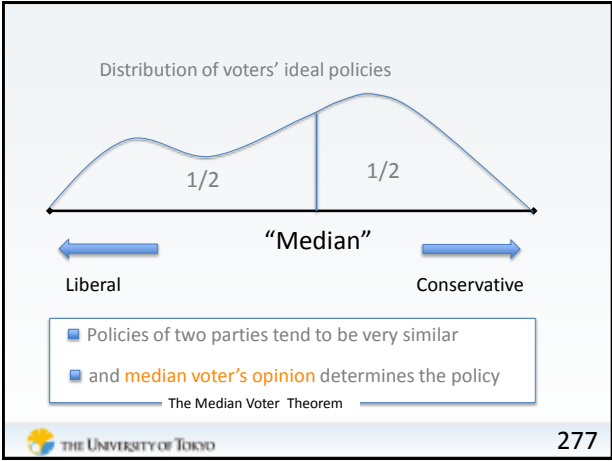
1.10 Policies of two parties

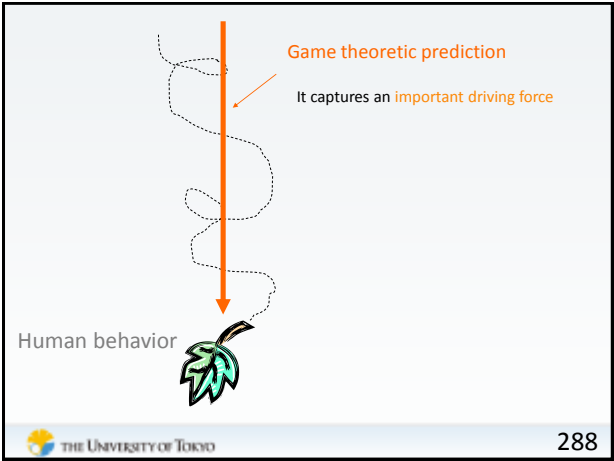
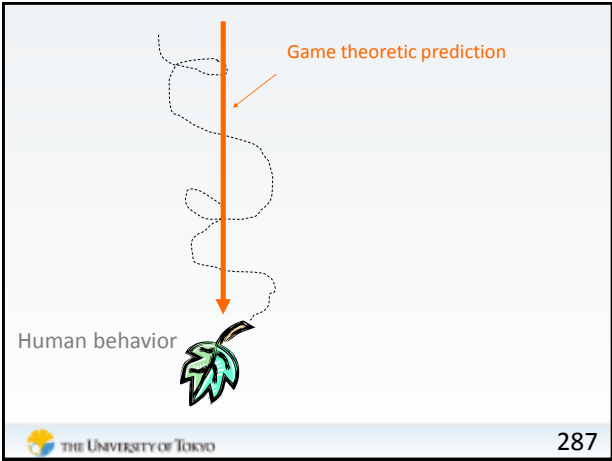
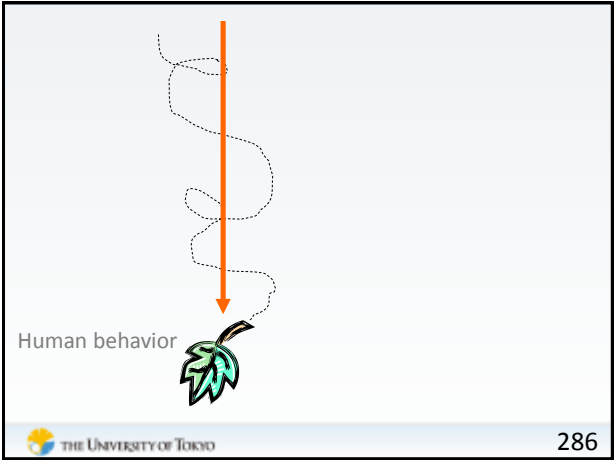
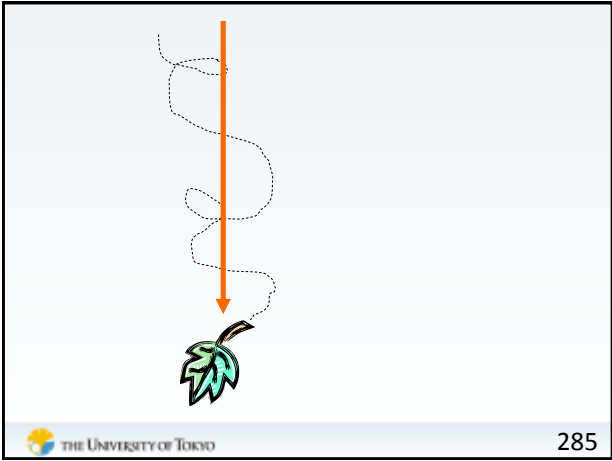
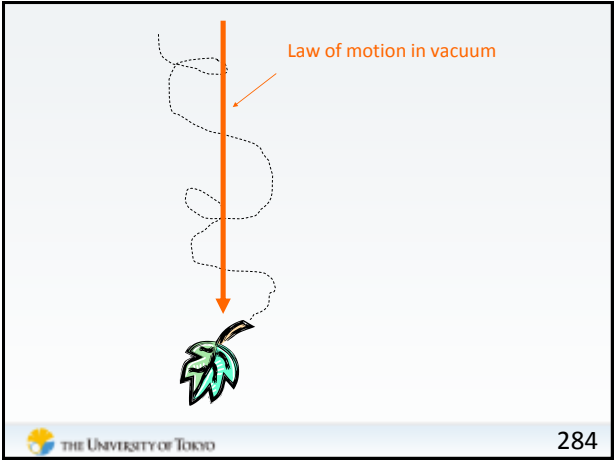
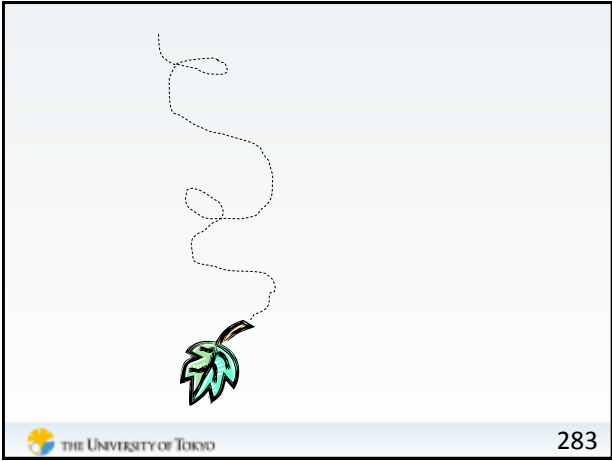
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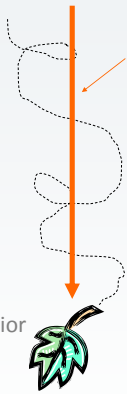












Game theoretic prediction

It captures an **important driving force**

It provides a useful **benchmark** of analysis

Human behavior