SIGBOVIK 2016 Paper Review

Paper 9: Type-Safe Friends Will Never Hurt You

Stefan Muller, 563 Facebook friends
Rating: ☹
Confidence: π

This paper aims to solve the long-standing problem of type theory nerds not having friends, by means of a modal logic for friendship verification. This intuitively seems like the right way to go about making friends, so the committee was initially very excited by this submission.

Unfortunately, the submission failed to live up to its promise. There are many errors in the two provided proofs, and clear typos in the provided axioms. One wonders whether the author should have spent more time checking the submission and less time out with friends. As an example, the variable X in axiom A3 of the second proof is unbound and can be instantiated with anything, leading to the very suspicious axiom that being friends with Brandon requires taking all of his stuff. This seems like a strange condition for friendship. The Program Committee's expertise on the subject of friendship is admittedly limited, so we consulted an anonymous external reviewer who had the following to add:

> Ugh, I can't work when Brandon's in the office. He spends all of his time writing meaningless inference rules about friendship on the board, and if I try to use any of the board space, he yells something about me being a bad friend. He keeps ordering pizza and hinting that we should chip in even though no one else is hungry. Oh, also he keeps insisting that my desk is his and putting his stuff there, and when I take some of his papers off of my desk and move them to his desk, he accuses me of stealing his stuff.

Given our initial evaluation of the paper and the external feedback, the committee is forced to take the unusual step of deciding that the author is a Bad Friend. If the errors are fixed, this might be a decent submission for some other venue, but a prestigious conference like SIGBOVIK can't accept submissions from Bad Friends.