

Complexity

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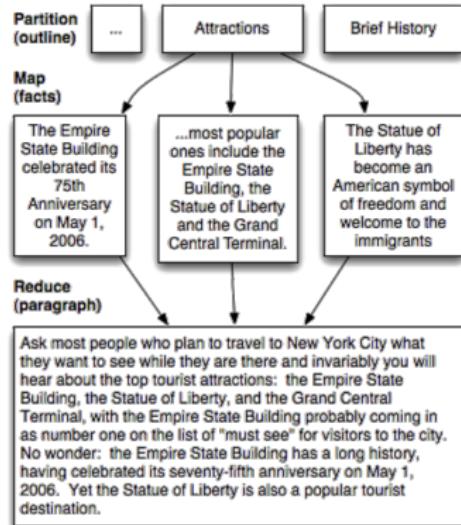
- Can crowds create things from whole cloth?

Kim and Monroy-Hernández [7], Kim et al. [8], Hahn et al. [5], and Lasecki, Kushalnagar, and Bigham [11]

What does the crowdsourcing literature say?

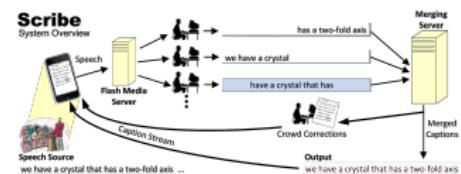
- Build complexity into the process
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Kittur et al. [10]



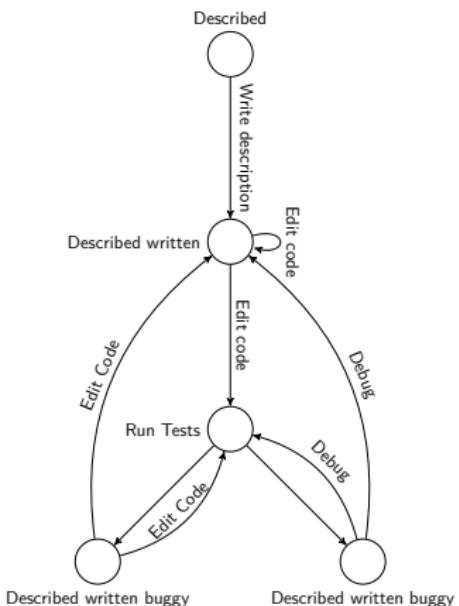
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 - Crowdsourcing workflows as function state machines
LaToza et al. [12]



What does the piecework literature say?

George Airy (astronomer) used a very similar approach [4]



- Employed computers
- 13–20 years old
- Overworked
- Underpaid
- Could be fired at will

George Airy — whiz kid

Airy built complexity into the process, assigning *human computers* to compute, verify, and correct the right ascension and declination of stars.

No. of Swings.	Approximate Time (Astronomical Reckoning).	Number of Signals.	Mean of Times by SHELTON.	Mean of Times by EARNSHAW.	Interval by SHELTON.	Interval by EARNSHAW.	Rate $\frac{\text{EARNSHAW}}{\text{SHELTON}}$	Logarithm of $\frac{\text{EARNSHAW}}{\text{SHELTON}}$	Corrected Logarithm of $\frac{\text{EARNSHAW}}{\text{SHELTON}}$
	Oct. h		h m s	h m s	h m s	h m s			
1	1. 23	22	3 19 36.505	21 23 28.764	..4 0 23.100	4 0 38.722	1.0010831	0.00047012	
2	2. 3	21	7 19 59.605	1 24 7.486	..3 58 21.652	3 58 37.400	1.0011011	0.00047793	
3	2. 7	21	11 18 21.257	5 22 44.886	..4 45 27.829	4 45 46.421	1.0010855	0.00047117	0.00047387
4	2. 11	29	16 3 49.086	10 8 31.307	..4 17 6.532	4 17 23.234	1.0010827	0.00046995	
5	2. 16	17	20 20 55.618	14 25 54.541	..3 13 21.898	3 13 34.795	1.0011116	0.00048249	
6	2. 19	25	23 34 17.516	17 39 29.336	..3 49 42.503	3 49 57.654	1.0010994	0.00047720	0.00047990
7	2. 23	31	3 24 0.019	21 29 26.990	..3 55 2.071	3 55 17.433	1.0010893	0.00047282	
8	3. 3	21	7 19 2.090	1 24 44.423	..4 2 41.510	4 2 57.445	1.0010944	0.00047503	
9	3. 7	25	11 21 43.600	5 27 41.868	..4 31 5.786	4 31 23.591	1.0010947	0.00047516	0.00046316
10	3. 11	22	15 52 49.386	9 59 5.459	..3 27 49.747	3 28 3.324	1.0010888	0.00047260	
11	3. 15	24	19 20 39.133	13 27 8.783	..3 59 47.292	4 0 3.188	1.0011049	0.00047959	
12	3. 19	24	23 20 26.425	17 27 11.971	..4 3 30.416	4 3 46.620	1.0010686	0.00046384	0.00047194

Cottage Industry

Farms



Cottage Industry

Farms



Textiles



Cottage Industry

Farms



Textiles



Matchsticks



Planes, trains, and automobiles
... not in that order

Trains



- “Efficiency experts” measured how long it would take to do various jobs [2]
- These measurements would be used to assign values for each specific task [6]
- Train engineers instituted “The Fix” to correct perceived unfairness [14]

Planes, trains, and automobiles
... not in that order

Automobiles

- Fordism,
Taylorism, and
Scientific
Management in
full force



- *Manufacturing*
proved amenable
to assembly line
processes.

Planes, trains, and automobiles
... not in that order

Planes

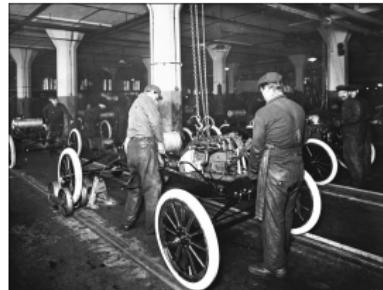


Planes, trains, and automobiles
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Trains



Automobiles



Planes



Comparisons

- Limited array of tasks versus arbitrarily complex work
 - *Building* planes versus *fixing* trains
- Has technology changed this?
 - Technology makes complex tasks relatively trivial
 - Measuring workers is easier than ever

Complexity

Cab Drivers



Complexity Cab Drivers



Complexity

Algorithmic Measurement

notes

- I'm thinking of pointing to UpWork's screen recording tool as a way to measure workers
- also maybe google analytics and other ways of tracking web-based workers

Implications

- We make stronger assumptions about workers' abilities thanks to technology
- Evaluation remains difficult, but we're trying to find stopgap solutions through decomposition
- We're still not solving the problems of inherently subjectively judged work

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