

Generalized Contagion

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Outline

- Introduction
- Independent Interaction models
- Interdependent interaction models
- Generalized Model
 - Homogeneous version
 - Heterogeneous version
- Nutshell
- Appendix
- References



1 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

- Introduction
- Independent Interaction models
- Interdependent interaction models
- Generalized Model
 - Homogeneous version
 - Heterogeneous version
- Nutshell
- Appendix
- References



2 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

- Introduction
- Independent Interaction models
- Interdependent interaction models
- Generalized Model
 - Homogeneous version
 - Heterogeneous version
- Nutshell
- Appendix
- References



3 of 63

Generalized contagion model

Basic questions about contagion

- How many types of contagion are there?
- How can we categorize real-world contagions?
- Can we connect models of disease-like and social contagion?
- Focus:** mean field models.

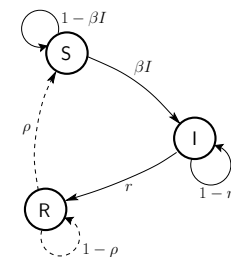
Mathematical Epidemiology (recap)

The standard SIR model^[11]

- = basic model of disease contagion
- Three states:
 - S = Susceptible
 - I = Infective/Infectious
 - R = Recovered or Removed or Refractory
- $S(t) + I(t) + R(t) = 1$
- Presumes random interactions (mass-action principle)
- Interactions are independent (no memory)
- Discrete and continuous time versions

Independent Interaction Models

Discrete time automata example:



Transition Probabilities:

- β for being infected given contact with infected
- r for recovery
- ρ for loss of immunity

Independent Interaction Models

Original models attributed to

- 1920's: Reed and Frost
- 1920's/1930's: Kermack and McKendrick [8, 10, 9]
- Coupled differential equations with a mass-action principle

Independent Interaction models

Differential equations for continuous model

$$\frac{d}{dt}S = -\beta IS + \rho R$$

$$\frac{d}{dt}I = \beta IS - rI$$

$$\frac{d}{dt}R = rI - \rho R$$

β , r , and ρ are now **rates**.

Reproduction Number R_0 :

- R_0 = expected number of infected individuals resulting from a single initial infective
- Epidemic threshold: If $R_0 > 1$, 'epidemic' occurs.

Reproduction Number R_0

Discrete version:

- Set up: One Infective in a randomly mixing population of Susceptibles
- At time $t = 0$, single infective randomly bumps into a Susceptible
- Probability of transmission = β
- At time $t = 1$, single Infective remains infected with probability $1 - r$
- At time $t = k$, single Infective remains infected with probability $(1 - r)^k$



"Universal Behavior in a Generalized Model of Contagion" [↗](#)
Dodds and Watts,
Phys. Rev. Lett., **92**, 218701, 2004. [5]



"A generalized model of social and biological contagion" [↗](#)
Dodds and Watts,
J. Theor. Biol., **232**, 587–604, 2005. [6]



4 of 63

PoCS
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Generalized
Contagion

- Introduction
- Independent Interaction models
- Interdependent interaction models
- Generalized Model
 - Homogeneous version
 - Heterogeneous version
- Nutshell
- Appendix
- References



5 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

- Introduction
- Independent Interaction models
- Interdependent interaction models
- Generalized Model
 - Homogeneous version
 - Heterogeneous version
- Nutshell
- Appendix
- References



6 of 63



7 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

- Introduction
- Independent Interaction models
- Interdependent interaction models
- Generalized Model
 - Homogeneous version
 - Heterogeneous version
- Nutshell
- Appendix
- References



8 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

- Introduction
- Independent Interaction models
- Interdependent interaction models
- Generalized Model
 - Homogeneous version
 - Heterogeneous version
- Nutshell
- Appendix
- References



9 of 63

Reproduction Number R_0

Discrete version:

Expected number infected by original infective:

$$R_0 = \beta + (1-r)\beta + (1-r)^2\beta + (1-r)^3\beta + \dots$$

$$= \beta(1 + (1-r) + (1-r)^2 + (1-r)^3 + \dots)$$

$$= \beta \frac{1}{1 - (1-r)} = \beta/r$$

Similar story for continuous model.

PoCS
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Generalized
Contagion

Introduction

Independent
Interaction
models

Interdependent
interaction
models

Generalized
Model

Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version

Nutshell

Appendix

References



10 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction

Independent
Interaction
models

Interdependent
interaction
models

Generalized
Model

Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version

Nutshell

Appendix

References



11 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction

Independent
Interaction
models

Interdependent
interaction
models

Generalized
Model

Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version

Nutshell

Appendix

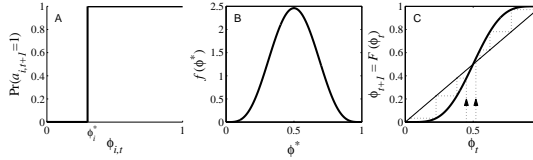
References



12 of 63

Granovetter's model (recap of recap)

Action based on perceived behavior of others.



- Two states: S and I.
- Recovery now possible (SIS).
- ϕ = fraction of contacts 'on' (e.g., rioting).
- Discrete time, synchronous update.
- This is a **Critical mass model**.
- Interdependent interaction model.

PoCS
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Generalized
Contagion

Introduction

Independent
Interaction
models

Interdependent
interaction
models

Generalized
Model

Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version

Nutshell

Appendix

References



13 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction

Independent
Interaction
models

Interdependent
interaction
models

Generalized
Model

Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version

Nutshell

Appendix

References



14 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction

Independent
Interaction
models

Interdependent
interaction
models

Generalized
Model

Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version

Nutshell

Appendix

References



15 of 63

Generalized model—ingredients

$S \Rightarrow I$

Individuals 'remember' last T contacts:

$$D_{t,i} = \sum_{t'=t-T+1}^t d_i(t')$$

Infection occurs if individual i 's 'threshold' is exceeded:

$$D_{t,i} \geq d_i^*$$

Threshold d_i^* drawn from arbitrary distribution g at $t = 0$.

PoCS
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Generalized
Contagion

Introduction

Independent
Interaction
models

Interdependent
interaction
models

Generalized
Model

Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version

Nutshell

Appendix

References



16 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction

Independent
Interaction
models

Interdependent
interaction
models

Generalized
Model

Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version

Nutshell

Appendix

References



17 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction

Independent
Interaction
models

Interdependent
interaction
models

Generalized
Model

Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version

Nutshell

Appendix

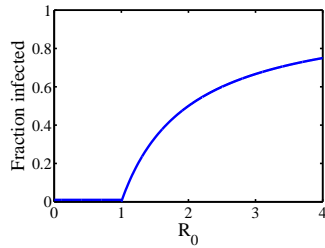
References



18 of 63

Independent Interaction models

Example of epidemic threshold:



- Continuous phase transition.
- Fine idea from a simple model.



11 of 63

PoCS
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Generalized
Contagion

Introduction

Independent
Interaction
models

Interdependent
interaction
models

Generalized
Model

Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version

Nutshell

Appendix

References



12 of 63

Some (of many) issues

- Disease models assume independence of infectious events.
- Threshold models only involve proportions: $3/10 \equiv 30/100$.
- Threshold models ignore exact sequence of influences
- Threshold models assume immediate polling.
- Mean-field models neglect network structure
- Network effects only part of story: media, advertising, direct marketing.

Generalized model—ingredients

$I \Rightarrow R$

When $D_{t,i} < d_i^*$, individual i recovers to state R with probability r .

$R \Rightarrow S$

Once in state R, individuals become susceptible again with probability ρ .



14 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction

Independent
Interaction
models

Interdependent
interaction
models

Generalized
Model

Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version

Nutshell

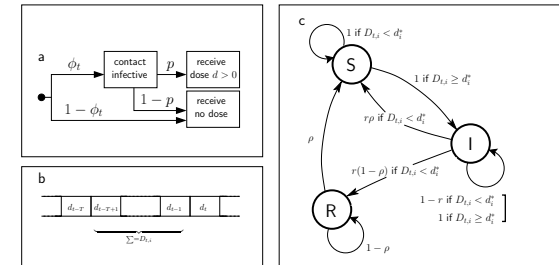
Appendix

References



15 of 63

A visual explanation



17 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction

Independent
Interaction
models

Interdependent
interaction
models

Generalized
Model

Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version

Nutshell

Appendix

References



18 of 63

Simple disease spreading models

Valiant attempts to use SIR and co. elsewhere:

- Adoption of ideas/beliefs (Goffman & Newell, 1964)^[7]
- Spread of rumors (Daley & Kendall, 1964, 1965)^[3, 4]
- Diffusion of innovations (Bass, 1969)^[1]
- Spread of fanatical behavior (Castillo-Chávez & Song, 2003)^[2]



12 of 63

Generalized mean-field model

Study SIS-type contagion first:

- Recovered individuals are immediately susceptible again:

$$\rho = 1.$$

- Look for steady-state behavior as a function of exposure probability p .
- Denote fixed points by ϕ^* .

Homogeneous version:

- All individuals have threshold d^*
- All dose sizes are equal: $d = 1$

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Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



19 of 63

Homogeneous, one hit models:

Fixed points for $r < 1$, $d^* = 1$, and $T = 1$:

- $r < 1$ means recovery is probabilistic.
- $T = 1$ means individuals forget past interactions.
- $d^* = 1$ means one positive interaction will infect an individual.
- Evolution of infection level:

$$\phi_{t+1} = \frac{p\phi_t}{a} + \underbrace{\phi_t(1-p\phi_t)}_b \underbrace{(1-r)}_c.$$

- a: Fraction infected between t and $t + 1$, independent of past state or recovery.
- b: Probability of being infected and not being reinfected.
- c: Probability of not recovering.

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Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



21 of 63

Homogeneous, one hit models:

Fixed points for $r < 1$, $d^* = 1$, and $T = 1$:

- Set $\phi_t = \phi^*$:

$$\phi^* = p\phi^* + (1-p\phi^*)\phi^*(1-r)$$

$$\Rightarrow 1 = p + (1-p\phi^*)(1-r), \quad \phi^* \neq 0,$$

$$\Rightarrow \phi^* = \frac{1-r/p}{1-r} \quad \text{and} \quad \phi^* = 0.$$

- Critical point at $p = p_c = r$.
- Spreading takes off if $p/r > 1$
- Find continuous phase transition as for SIR model.
- Goodness: Matches $R_o = \beta/\gamma > 1$ condition.

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Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



22 of 63

Simple homogeneous examples

Fixed points for $r = 1$, $d^* = 1$, and $T > 1$

- $r = 1$ means recovery is immediate.
- $T > 1$ means individuals remember at least 2 interactions.
- $d^* = 1$ means only one positive interaction in past T interactions will infect individual.
- Effect of individual interactions is independent from effect of others.
- Call ϕ^* the steady state level of infection.
- Pr(Infected) = 1 - Pr(uninfected):

$$\phi^* = 1 - (1 - p\phi^*)^T.$$

Homogeneous, one hit models:

Fixed points for $r = 1$, $d^* = 1$, and $T > 1$

- Closed form expression for ϕ^* :
- Look for critical infection probability p_c .
- As $\phi^* \rightarrow 0$, we see

$$\phi^* = 1 - (1 - p\phi^*)^T.$$

$$\phi^* \simeq pT\phi^* \Rightarrow p_c = 1/T.$$

- Again find continuous phase transition ...
- Note: we can solve for p but not ϕ^* :

$$p = (\phi^*)^{-1}[1 - (1 - \phi^*)^{1/T}].$$

Homogeneous, one hit models:

Fixed points for $r \leq 1$, $d^* = 1$, and $T \geq 1$

- Start with $r = 1$, $d^* = 1$, and $T \geq 1$ case we have just examined:

$$\phi^* = 1 - (1 - p\phi^*)^T.$$

- For $r < 1$, add to right hand side fraction who:
 - Did not receive any infections in last T time steps,
 - And **did not recover** from a previous infection.
- Define corresponding dose histories. Example:

$$H_1 = \{\dots, d_{t-T-2}, d_{t-T-1}, \underbrace{1, 0, 0, \dots, 0, 0}_{T \text{ 0's}}\}$$

- With history H_1 , probability of being infected (not recovering in one time step) is $1 - r$.

Homogeneous, one hit models:

Fixed points for $r \leq 1$, $d^* = 1$, and $T \geq 1$

- In general, relevant dose histories are:

$$H_{m+1} = \{\dots, d_{t-T-m-1}, \underbrace{1, 0, 0, \dots, 0, 0}_{m \text{ 0's}}, \underbrace{0, 0, \dots, 0, 0}_{T \text{ 0's}}\}.$$

- Overall probabilities for dose histories occurring:

$$P(H_1) = p\phi^*(1-p\phi^*)^T(1-r),$$

$$P(H_{m+1}) = \underbrace{p\phi^*}_a \underbrace{(1-p\phi^*)^{T+m}}_b \underbrace{(1-r)^{m+1}}_c.$$

- a: Pr(infection $T + m + 1$ time steps ago)
- b: Pr(no doses received in $T + m$ time steps since)
- c: Pr(no recovery in m chances)

Homogeneous, one hit models:

Fixed points for $r \leq 1$, $d^* = 1$, and $T \geq 1$

- Pr(recovery) = Pr(seeing no doses for at least T time steps and recovering)

$$= r \sum_{m=0}^{\infty} P(H_{T+m}) = r \sum_{m=0}^{\infty} p\phi^*(1-p\phi^*)^{T+m}(1-r)^m$$

$$= r \frac{p\phi^*(1-p\phi^*)^T}{1 - (1-p\phi^*)(1-r)}.$$

- Using the probability of not recovering, we end up with a fixed point equation:

$$\phi^* = 1 - \frac{r(1-p\phi^*)^T}{1 - (1-p\phi^*)(1-r)}.$$

Homogeneous, one hit models:

Fixed points for $r \leq 1$, $d^* = 1$, and $T \geq 1$

- Fixed point equation (again):

$$\phi^* = 1 - \frac{r(1-p\phi^*)^T}{1 - (1-p\phi^*)(1-r)}.$$

- Find critical exposure probability by examining above as $\phi^* \rightarrow 0$.

$$\Rightarrow p_c = \frac{1}{T+1/r-1} = \frac{1}{T+\tau}.$$

where τ = mean recovery time for simple relaxation process.

- Decreasing r keeps individuals infected for longer and decreases p_c .

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Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



23 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



24 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



25 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



26 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



27 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



28 of 63

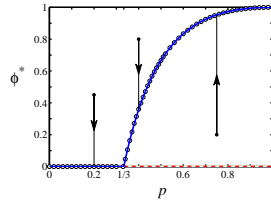
Epidemic threshold:

Fixed points for $d^* = 1, r \leq 1$, and $T \geq 1$

$$\phi^* = 1 - \frac{r(1-p\phi^*)^T}{1-(1-p\phi^*)(1-r)}$$

$$\phi^* = 0$$

$$p_c = 1/(T + \tau)$$



- Example details: $T = 2$ & $r = 1/2 \Rightarrow p_c = 1/3$.
- Blue = stable, red = unstable, fixed points.
- $\tau = 1/r - 1$ = characteristic recovery time = 1.
- $T + \tau \approx$ average memory in system = 3.
- Phase transition can be seen as a **transcritical bifurcation**.^[12]



29 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



30 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References

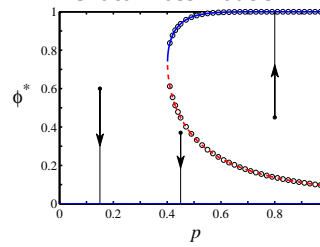


31 of 63

Homogeneous, multi-hit models:

Another example:

Critical Mass Models



$r = 1, d^* = 3, T = 12$ Saddle-node bifurcation.



32 of 63

PoCS
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Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



33 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



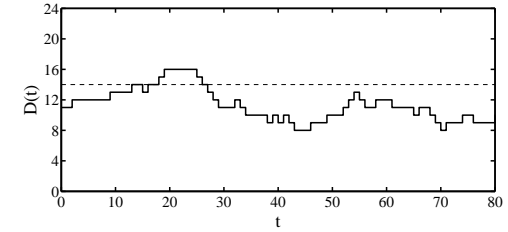
34 of 63

Fixed points for $r < 1, d^* > 1$, and $T \geq 1$

- For $r < 1$, need to determine probability of recovering as a function of time since dose load last dropped below threshold.
- Partially summed random walks:

$$D_i(t) = \sum_{t'=t-T+1}^t d_i(t')$$

Example for $T = 24, d^* = 14$:



35 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



36 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



37 of 63

Homogeneous, multi-hit models:

- All right: $d^* = 1$ models correspond to simple disease spreading models.
- What if we allow $d^* \geq 2$?
- Again first consider SIS with immediate recovery ($r = 1$)
- Also continue to assume unit dose sizes ($f(d) = \delta(d-1)$).
- To be infected, must have at least d^* exposures in last T time steps.
- Fixed point equation:

$$\phi^* = \sum_{i=d^*}^T \binom{T}{i} (p\phi^*)^i (1-p\phi^*)^{T-i}$$

- As always, $\phi^* = 0$ works too.



30 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

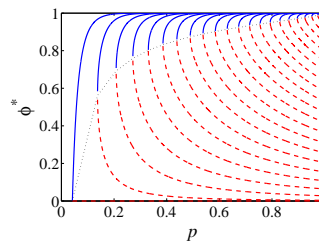
Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



31 of 63

Fixed points for $r = 1, d^* > 1$, and $T \geq 1$

$T = 24, d^* = 1, 2, \dots, 23$.



- $d^* = 1 \rightarrow d^* > 1$: jump between continuous phase transition and pure critical mass model.
- Unstable curve for $d^* = 2$ does not hit $\phi^* = 0$.

- See **either** simple phase transition or saddle-node bifurcation, nothing in between.



32 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



33 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References

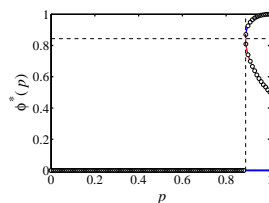


34 of 63

Homogeneous, multi-hit models:

Fixed points for $r = 1, d^* > 1$, and $T \geq 1$

- Exactly solvable for small T .
- e.g., for $d^* = 2, T = 3$:



- Fixed point equation: $\phi^* = 3p^2\phi^{*2}(1-p\phi^*) + p^3\phi^{*3}$
- See new structure: a **saddle node bifurcation**^[12] appears as p increases.
- $(p_b, \phi^*) = (8/9, 27/32)$.

- Behavior akin to output of Granovetter's threshold model.



30 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

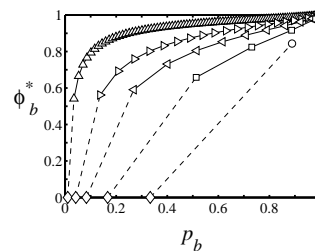
Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



31 of 63

Fixed points for $r = 1, d^* > 1$, and $T \geq 1$

Bifurcation points for example fixed T , varying d^* :



- $T = 96$ (▲).
- $T = 24$ (▷),
- $T = 12$ (<),
- $T = 6$ (□),
- $T = 3$ (○).

Fixed points for $r < 1, d^* > 1$, and $T \geq 1$

Example: $T = 3, d^* = 2$

- Want to examine how dose load can drop below threshold of $d^* = 2$:

$$D_n = 2 \Rightarrow D_{n+1} = 1$$

- Two subsequences do this: $\{d_{n-2}, d_{n-1}, d_n, d_{n+1}\} = \{1, 1, 0, 0\}$ and $\{d_{n-2}, d_{n-1}, d_n, d_{n+1}, d_{n+2}\} = \{1, 0, 1, 0, 0\}$.
- Note: second sequence includes an extra 0 since this is necessary to stay below $d^* = 2$.
- To stay below threshold, observe acceptable following sequences may be composed of any combination of two subsequences:

$$a = \{0\} \quad \text{and} \quad b = \{1, 0, 0\}.$$



32 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



33 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



34 of 63



35 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



36 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



37 of 63

Fixed points for $r < 1$, $d^* > 1$, and $T \geq 1$

- Determine number of sequences of length m that keep dose load below $d^* = 2$.
- N_a = number of $a = \{0\}$ subsequences.
- N_b = number of $b = \{1, 0, 0\}$ subsequences.

$$m = N_a \cdot 1 + N_b \cdot 3$$

Possible values for N_b :

$$0, 1, 2, \dots, \left\lfloor \frac{m}{3} \right\rfloor.$$

where $\lfloor \cdot \rfloor$ means floor.

- Corresponding possible values for N_a :

$$m, m-3, m-6, \dots, m-3 \left\lfloor \frac{m}{3} \right\rfloor.$$

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References

38 of 63

Fixed points for $r < 1$, $d^* > 1$, and $T \geq 1$

- How many ways to arrange N_a a 's and N_b b 's?
- Think of overall sequence in terms of subsequences:

$$\{Z_1, Z_2, \dots, Z_{N_a+N_b}\}$$

- $N_a + N_b$ slots for subsequences.
- Choose positions of either a 's or b 's:

$$\binom{N_a + N_b}{N_a} = \binom{N_a + N_b}{N_b}.$$

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References

39 of 63

Fixed points for $r < 1$, $d^* > 1$, and $T \geq 1$

- Total number of allowable sequences of length m :

$$\sum_{N_b=0}^{\lfloor m/3 \rfloor} \binom{N_b + N_a}{N_b} = \sum_{k=0}^{\lfloor m/3 \rfloor} \binom{m-2k}{k}$$

where $k = N_b$ and we have used $m = N_a + 3N_b$.

- $P(a) = (1 - p\phi^*)$ and $P(b) = p\phi^*(1 - p\phi^*)^2$
- Total probability of allowable sequences of length m :

$$\chi_m(p, \phi^*) = \sum_{k=0}^{\lfloor m/3 \rfloor} \binom{m-2k}{k} (1 - p\phi^*)^{m-k} (p\phi^*)^k.$$

- Notation: Write a randomly chosen sequence of a 's and b 's of length m as $D_m^{a,b}$.

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References

40 of 63

Fixed points for $r < 1$, $d^* > 1$, and $T \geq 1$

- Nearly there ...must account for details of sequence endings.
- Three endings \Rightarrow Six possible sequences:

$$D_1 = \{1, 1, 0, 0, D_{m-1}^{a,b}\}$$

$$D_2 = \{1, 1, 0, 0, D_{m-2}^{a,b}, 1\}$$

$$D_3 = \{1, 1, 0, 0, D_{m-3}^{a,b}, 1, 0\}$$

$$D_4 = \{1, 0, 1, 0, 0, D_{m-2}^{a,b}\}$$

$$D_5 = \{1, 0, 1, 0, 0, D_{m-3}^{a,b}, 1\}$$

$$D_6 = \{1, 0, 1, 0, 0, D_{m-4}^{a,b}, 1, 0\}$$

$$P_1 = (p\phi)^2 (1 - p\phi)^2 \chi_{m-1}(p, \phi)$$

$$P_2 = (p\phi)^3 (1 - p\phi)^2 \chi_{m-2}(p, \phi)$$

$$P_3 = (p\phi)^3 (1 - p\phi)^3 \chi_{m-3}(p, \phi)$$

$$P_4 = (p\phi)^2 (1 - p\phi)^3 \chi_{m-2}(p, \phi)$$

$$P_5 = (p\phi)^3 (1 - p\phi)^3 \chi_{m-3}(p, \phi)$$

$$P_6 = (p\phi)^3 (1 - p\phi)^4 \chi_{m-4}(p, \phi)$$

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References

41 of 63

Fixed points for $r < 1$, $d^* = 2$, and $T = 3$

$$\text{F.P. Eq: } \phi^* = \Gamma(p, \phi^*; r) + \sum_{i=d^*}^T \binom{T}{i} (p\phi^*)^i (1 - p\phi^*)^{T-i}.$$

where $\Gamma(p, \phi^*; r) =$

$$(1-r)(p\phi)^2(1-p\phi)^2 + \sum_{m=1}^{\infty} (1-r)^m (p\phi)^2 (1-p\phi)^2 \times$$

$$[\chi_{m-1} + \chi_{m-2} + 2p\phi(1-p\phi)\chi_{m-3} + p\phi(1-p\phi)^2\chi_{m-4}]$$

and

$$\chi_m(p, \phi^*) = \sum_{k=0}^{\lfloor m/3 \rfloor} \binom{m-2k}{k} (1 - p\phi^*)^{m-k} (p\phi^*)^k.$$

Note: $(1-r)(p\phi)^2(1-p\phi)^2$ accounts for $\{1, 0, 1, 0\}$ sequence.

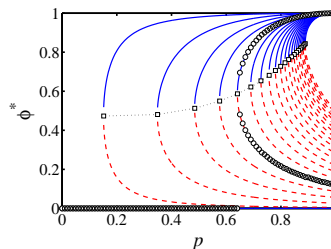
PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References

42 of 63

Fixed points for $r < 1$, $d^* > 1$, and $T \geq 1$

$$T = 3, d^* = 2$$



- $r = 0.01, 0.05, 0.10, 0.15, 0.20, \dots, 1.00.$

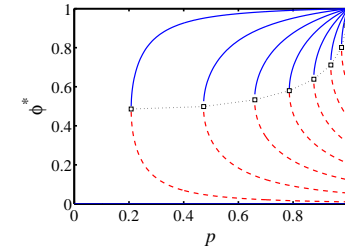
PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References

43 of 63

Fixed points for $r < 1$, $d^* > 1$, and $T \geq 1$

$$T = 2, d^* = 2$$



- $r = 0.01, 0.05, 0.10, \dots, 0.3820 \pm 0.0001.$

- No spreading for $r \gtrsim 0.382.$

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References

44 of 63

What we have now:

- Two kinds of contagion processes:
 - Continuous phase transition: **SIR-like.**
 - Saddle-node bifurcation: **threshold model-like.**
- $d^* = 1$: spreading from small seeds possible.
- $d^* > 1$: critical mass model.
- Are other behaviors possible?

PoCS
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Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References

45 of 63

Generalized model

- Now allow for general dose distributions (f) and threshold distributions (g).

- Key quantities:

$$P_k = \int_0^{\infty} dd^* g(d^*) P\left(\sum_{j=1}^k d_j \geq d^*\right) \text{ where } 1 \leq k \leq T.$$

- P_k = Probability that the threshold of a randomly selected individual will be exceeded by k doses.

- e.g.,

P_1 = Probability that one dose will exceed the threshold of a random individual
= Fraction of most vulnerable individuals.

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Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References

47 of 63

Generalized model—heterogeneity, $r = 1$

Fixed point equation:

$$\phi^* = \sum_{k=1}^T \binom{T}{k} (p\phi^*)^k (1 - p\phi^*)^{T-k} P_k$$

Expand around $\phi^* = 0$ to find when spread from single seed is possible:

$$pP_1T \geq 1 \quad \text{or} \quad \Rightarrow p_c = 1/(TP_1)$$

Very good:

- P_1T is the expected number of vulnerables the initial infected individual meets before recovering.
- pP_1T is the expected number of successful infections (equivalent to R_0).

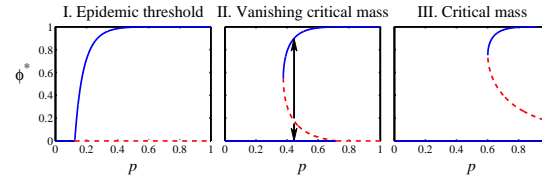
Observe: p_c may exceed 1 meaning no spreading from a small seed.

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References

48 of 63

Three universal classes



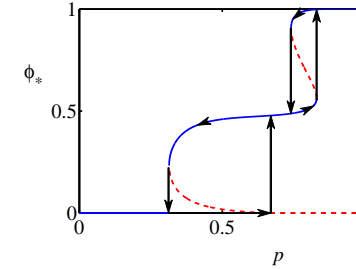
- Epidemic threshold: $P_1 > P_2/2, p_c = 1/(TP_1) < 1$
- Vanishing critical mass: $P_1 < P_2/2, p_c = 1/(TP_1) < 1$
- Pure critical mass: $P_1 < P_2/2, p_c = 1/(TP_1) > 1$

PoCS
@pocsvox
Interaction
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References

51 of 63

Hysteresis in vanishing critical mass models



PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References

54 of 63

Heterogeneous case

Next: Determine slope of fixed point curve at critical point p_c .

Expand fixed point equation around $(p, \phi^*) = (p_c, 0)$.

Find slope depends on $(P_1 - P_2/2)^{[6]}$ (see Appendix).

Behavior near fixed point depends on whether this slope is

- positive: $P_1 > P_2/2$ (continuous phase transition)
- negative: $P_1 < P_2/2$ (discontinuous phase transition)

Now find **three** basic universal classes of contagion models ...

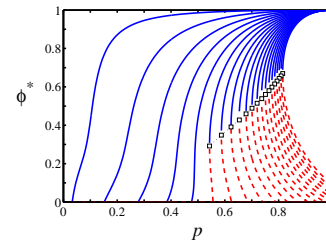
PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References

49 of 63

Heterogeneous case

Now allow $r < 1$:



- II-III transition generalizes: $p_c = 1/[P_1(T + \tau)]$ where $\tau = 1/r - 1 =$ expected recovery time
- I-II transition less pleasant analytically.

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Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References

52 of 63

Nutshell (one half)

Memory is a natural ingredient.

Three universal classes of contagion processes:

- Epidemic Threshold
- Vanishing Critical Mass
- Critical Mass

Dramatic changes in behavior possible.

To change kind of model: 'adjust' memory, recovery, fraction of vulnerable individuals (T, τ, ρ, P_1 , and/or P_2).

To change behavior given model: 'adjust' probability of exposure (p) and/or initial number infected (ϕ_0).

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References

55 of 63

Heterogeneous case

Example configuration:

Dose sizes are lognormally distributed with mean 1 and variance 0.433.

Memory span: $T = 10$.

Thresholds are uniformly set at

- $d_* = 0.5$
- $d_* = 1.6$
- $d_* = 3$

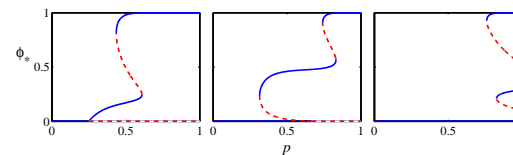
Spread of dose sizes matters, details are not important.

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References

50 of 63

More complicated models



- Due to heterogeneity in individual thresholds.
- Three classes based on behavior for small seeds.
- Same model classification holds: I, II, and III.

PoCS
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Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References

53 of 63

Nutshell (other half)

Single seed infects others if $pP_1(T + \tau) \geq 1$.

Key quantity: $p_c = 1/[P_1(T + \tau)]$

If $p_c < 1 \Rightarrow$ contagion can spread from single seed.

Depends only on:

- System Memory ($T + \tau$).
- Fraction of highly vulnerable individuals (P_1).

Details unimportant: Many threshold and dose distributions give same P_k .

Another example of a model where vulnerable/gullible population may be more important than a small group of super-spreaders or influentials.

PoCS
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Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References

56 of 63

Appendix: Details for Class I-II transition:

$$\begin{aligned}\phi^* &= \sum_{k=1}^T \binom{T}{k} P_k (p\phi^*)^k (1-p\phi^*)^{T-k}, \\ &= \sum_{k=1}^T \binom{T}{k} P_k (p\phi^*)^k \sum_{j=0}^{T-k} \binom{T-k}{j} (-p\phi^*)^j, \\ &= \sum_{k=1}^T \sum_{j=0}^{T-k} \binom{T}{k} \binom{T-k}{j} P_k (-1)^j (p\phi^*)^{k+j}, \\ &= \sum_{m=1}^T \sum_{k=1}^m \binom{T}{k} \binom{T-k}{m-k} P_k (-1)^{m-k} (p\phi^*)^m, \\ &= \sum_{m=1}^T C_m (p\phi^*)^m\end{aligned}$$

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



57 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



58 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



59 of 63

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PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



60 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



61 of 63

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PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



62 of 63

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



63 of 63

Appendix: Details for Class I-II transition:

$$C_m = (-1)^m \binom{T}{m} \sum_{k=1}^m (-1)^k \binom{m}{k} P_k,$$

since

$$\begin{aligned}\binom{T}{k} \binom{T-k}{m-k} &= \frac{T!}{k!(T-k)!} \frac{(T-k)!}{(m-k)!(T-m)!} \\ &= \frac{T!}{m!(T-m)!} \frac{m!}{k!(m-k)!} \\ &= \binom{T}{m} \binom{m}{k}.\end{aligned}$$

PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



59 of 63

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PoCS
@pocsvox
Generalized
Contagion

Introduction
Independent
Interaction
models
Interdependent
interaction
models
Generalized
Model
Homogeneous version
Heterogeneous version
Nutshell
Appendix
References



61 of 63

Appendix: Details for Class I-II transition:

Linearization gives

$$\phi^* \simeq C_1 p \phi^* + C_2 p_c^2 \phi^{*2}.$$

where $C_1 = TP_1 (= 1/p_c)$ and
 $C_2 = \binom{T}{2} (-2P_1 + P_2)$.

Using $p_c = 1/(TP_1)$:

$$\phi^* \simeq \frac{C_1}{C_2 p_c^2} (p - p_c) = \frac{T^2 P_1^3}{(T-1)(P_1 - P_2/2)} (p - p_c).$$

Sign of derivative governed by $P_1 - P_2/2$.



59 of 63