

**Prof. Roger Wattenhofer**<http://www.disco.ethz.ch>

## Semester Thesis “Exploring the World of Bookcrossing”

bookcrossing, n.: The practice of leaving a book in a public place to be picked up and read by others, who then do likewise. (added to the Concise Oxford English Dictionary in August 2004) In the last 6 years, BookCrossing<sup>1</sup> has become a huge community, its members being booklovers who *Register - Read - Release* books. Similarly to other social networks such as *mySpace.com* and *facebook.com*, members can mark other members as friends, thus creating a connected structure of members. In addition, travelling books link members as well, since everybody finding a book can write a journal entry associated with this book. Of course books are connected through members as well. Hence BookCrossing generates a graph interconnecting people and books in a very peculiar way.

This leads to many questions, and you have the opportunity to explore them in this semester thesis. For example: How do entries for the same book in different languages vary? How long does it take on average until a book is read? Which books get lost most often? What percentage of books is released into the wild again? Which strategy lets your book be found more often? That is, where are “good” release locations? How has *bookcrossing.com* evolved in the last 6 years? Are there efficient search algorithms for the BookCrossing database?



In your thesis you can analyze the BookCrossing graph, devise exciting algorithms answering one of the above questions, depending on your abilities and interests. If you are interested and have further questions or ideas, please contact us for more details!

**Requirements** Programming skills, interest in exploring social graphs; basic algorithmic background.

Interested? Please contact us for more details!

### Contacts

- Raphael Eidenbenz: [eidenbenz@tik.ee.ethz.ch](mailto:eidenbenz@tik.ee.ethz.ch), ETZ G61.3, phone 044 632 70 44
- Roger Wattenhofer: [wattenhofer@tik.ee.ethz.ch](mailto:wattenhofer@tik.ee.ethz.ch), ETZ G63, phone 044 632 63 12

---

<sup>1</sup>[www.bookcrossing.com](http://www.bookcrossing.com)