CSSE 230

Sorting Lower Bound
Radix Sort

What is the min height of a tree with X external nodes?

Radix sort to the rescue … sort of…
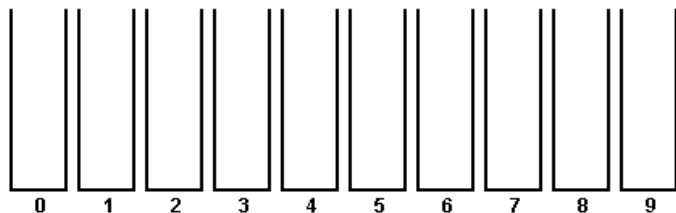
After today, you should be able to…
…explain why comparison-based sorts need at least O(n log n) time
… explain bucket sort
… explain radix sort
… explain the situations in which radix sort is faster than O(n log n)

http://www.cs.auckland.ac.nz/software/AlgAnim/radixsort.html

Announcements

▸ EditorTree evals due last night – late is better than never on these, though!

▸ Doublets demo

▸ Questions on HW8?

▸ The sounds of sorting. Radix sort later.
  ◦ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kPRA0W1kECg

A Lower-Bound on Sorting Time

We can't do much better than what we already know how to do.

What's the best best case?

▸ Lower bound for best case?

▸ A particular algorithm that achieves this?

What's the best worst case?

▸ Want a function $f(N)$
such that the **worst case running time**
for **all sorting algorithms** is $\Omega(f(N))$

▸ How do we get a handle on
"all sorting algorithms"?

Tricky!

What are "all sorting algorithms"?

▸ We can't list all sorting algorithms and analyze all of them
  ◦ Why not?

▸ But we can find a **uniform representation** of any sorting algorithm that is based on **comparing** elements of the array to each other

First of all...

- The problem of sorting N elements is at least as hard as determining their ordering
  - e.g., determining that $a_3 < a_4 < a_1 < a_5 < a_2$
  - sorting = determining order, then movement

- So any lower bound on all "order-determination" algorithms is also a lower bound on "all sorting algorithms"

Sort Decision Trees

▸ Let A be any **comparison-based algorithm** for sorting an array of distinct elements

▸ We can draw an EBT that corresponds to the comparisons that will be used by A to sort an array of N elements
  ◦ This is called a **sort decision tree**
  ◦ Internal nodes are comparisons
  ◦ Externals nodes are orderings

  ◦ Different algorithms will have different trees

So what?

▸ Minimum number of external nodes in a sort decision tree? (As a function of N)

▸ Is this number dependent on the algorithm?

▸ What's the height of the shortest EBT with that many external nodes?

$$\lceil \log N! \rceil \approx N \log N - 1.44N = \Omega(N \log N)$$

No comparison-based sorting algorithm, known or not yet discovered, can **ever** do better than this!

Can we do better than N log N?

- $\Omega(N \log N)$ is the best we can do if we compare items

- Can we sort without comparing items?

Yes, we can! We can avoid comparing items and Q5 still sort. This is fast if the range of data is small.

- Observation:
  - For N items, if the range of data is less than N, then we have duplicates

- O(N) sort: Bucket sort
  - Works if possible values come from limited range
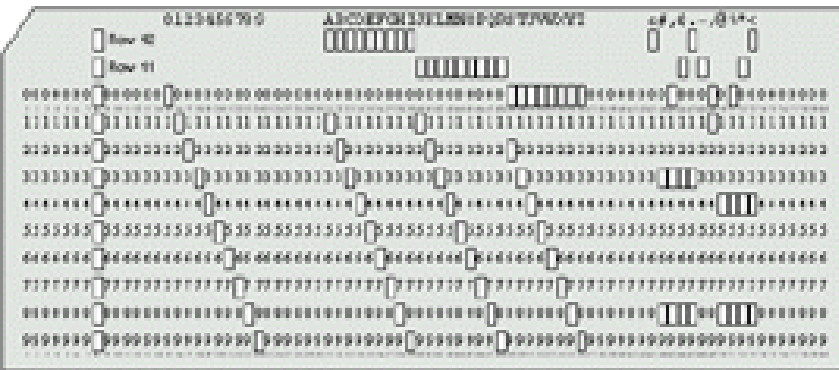 - Example: Exam grades histogram

- A variation: Radix sort

Radix sort

- A picture is worth 10^3 words, but an animation is worth 2^{10} pictures, so we will look at one.
- http://www.cs.auckland.ac.nz/software/AlgAnim/radixsort.html (good but blocked)

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xuU-DS_5Z4g&src_vid=4S1L-pyQm7Y&feature=iv&annotation_id=annotation_133993417 (video, good basic idea, distracting zooms)

- http://www.cs.usfca.edu/~galles/visualization/RadixSort.html (good, uses single array)

RadixSort is almost O(n)

▸ It is O(kn)
  ◦ Looking back at the radix sort algorithm, what is k?

▸ Look at some extreme cases:
  ◦ If all integers in range 0-100 (so, many duplicates if N is large), then k = _____

  ◦ If all N integers are distinct, k = ____

Radix sort example: card sorter

Used an appropriate combo of mechanical, digital, and human effort to get the job done.

Type 82 Electric Punched Card Sorting Machine

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IBM_card_sorter

More sorting fun

▸ From the University of Rochester, my PhD alma mater, come *Sorting Dances*!

▸ Bubble Sort: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WuGvUFvG7yo
  Merge Sort: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nK_o13c-0lk
  Shell Sort: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_XggdqSLyw

▸ Should we dance on the Quad next class?