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Fitting the additive model using the backfitting algorithm with symmetric smoothers having eigenvalues in $[0,1]$ amounts to a Bayesian procedure. This statistical interpretation is interesting in its own right, but also suggests other algorithms and provides a framework for solving some of the inferential problems left open by Buja, Hastie and Tibshirani.

The paper by Buja, Hastie and Tibshirani (referred to hereafter as BHT) makes several important contributions. On a trivial note, the discussion of "degrees of freedom" hopefully clarifies the ambiguity of the term when applied to smoothers which are not orthogonal projections. The tantalizing remarks on concurvity may well be the first salvo in a whole barrage of results on such notions. However, the main contribution is the development of the backfitting algorithm. There is an aesthetic elegance in computing estimates for the complex additive model by concatenation of estimates for simpler unidimensional models. From the practical perspective, it provides a method whereby users can "wire together" existing pieces of software to solve a seemingly difficult problem. There are clearly opportunities for many spinoffs, such as implementations on distributed processing systems. Most of the theorems for general $p$ (the dimension

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