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Millions, Billions, Zillions: Why (In)numeracy Matters

Brian Kernighan, Berkman Fellow & Department of Computer Science, Princeton University

Tuesday, February 8, 12:30 pm

Berkman Center, 23 Everett Street, second floor

RSVP required for those attending in person to Amar Ashar (ashar@cyber.law.harvard.edu (<mailto:ashar@cyber.law.harvard.edu>))

This event will be [webcast \(/interactive/webcast\)](#) live at 12:30 pm ET and archived on our site shortly after.

Technology has buried us in an avalanche of numbers and graphs and charts, many of which claim to present the truth about important issues. At the same time, our personal facility with numbers has diminished, leaving us at the mercy of quantitative reasoning and presentation that is often wrong and sometimes not disinterested. Numeracy is basic numeric self-defense: how to assess the numbers presented by other people, and how to produce sensible numbers of one's

own. In this talk, I'll explore some of the central ideas, with plenty of examples.

About Brian

Brian Kernighan received his PhD from Princeton in 1969, and was in the Computing Science Research center at Bell Labs until 2000. He is now in the Computer Science Department at Princeton. His research areas include programming languages, tools and interfaces that make computers easier to use, often for non-specialist users. He is also interested in technology education for non-technical audiences.

Links

- [David Weinberger liveblogged the talk \(http://www.hyperorg.com/blogger/2011/02/08/berkman-brian-kernighan-on-numeracy/\)](http://www.hyperorg.com/blogger/2011/02/08/berkman-brian-kernighan-on-numeracy/)

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Last updated February 08, 2011

Speakers

- [Brian Kernighan \(/people/bkernighan\)](/people/bkernighan)

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