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Blake Mellor* (bmellor@fau.edu), Honors College, Florida Atlantic University, 5353 Parkside Drive, Jupiter, FL 33458, and **Dylan Thurston**. *On the existence of finite type link homotopy invariants.*

It has been conjectured (and generally believed) that the only real-valued finite type invariants of link homotopy were the pairwise linking numbers (since the Milnor invariants of higher order are not real-valued). Using combinatorial arguments, we have proved this for links with 5 or fewer components. However, we have recently found a simple (non-constructive) linear algebra argument which shows that non-trivial homotopy invariants of type greater than 1 must exist for links with nine or more components. (Received August 08, 2000)