

Neural Code: Understanding Complexity

Track 5: Cultural Code

Chris Landau (artist/designer) Presentation Notes

The topic of my presentation is information design or information evolution as it pertains to a human understanding of complexity and networks. The primary problem we will address is how to understand the process of generating creativity. A variety of images throughout my presentation should help to illuminate the ideas.

Introduction

- We must understand how to generate creativity
- Producing creative capital for solving difficult problems
- Our main problem is in trying to understand complex systems and networks
- Understanding the human mind as an information navigator

The Problem: Complexity is Complex

Tiziana Terranova and "Network Culture"

-Biological computing is a perfect model for understanding the brain

Stuart Kauffman -Networks create novelty, autocatalytic sets

Dawkins- Memes are ideas as analogous to genes

Gilles Deleuze -The "Body without Organs" as a scale-free model of complexity a rhizomatic philosophy, multiplicity

DeLanda- Information flows are like gene flows

Latour- Diversity requires communication and tolerance fact/value vs matters of concern

A Solution: Cognitive Evolution

Psychologist **Stephen Kaplan**

-Neural Models: Mechanisms of Learning

-synthesis of behaviorism, gestalt, neuroscience, and environmental aesthetics

-explanation of learning in information rich environments

-complexity, mystery, legibility, and understanding

-We build cognitive maps through intersecting sequences

-the generative properties of cognitive maps

Creative Implementation: The Flocking Party

Chris Landau (here I will discuss my current project)

-"The Flocking Party" is an online narrative environment

-A safe venue for engaging environmental ideas

-Creating analogies for understanding unseen scales

-reevaluating subjectivity/objectivity (perception is coded)

(Please visit theflockingparty.com)

Conclusion

-We must understand the networks in and outside of the brain and from in and outside of the system.

-Creative Research: ideas are tools, society is a network, share these ideas

Bio

Chris Landau is currently finishing his MFA thesis at the University of Michigan, School of Art and Design. He received his BFA in Printmaking from the Cleveland Institute of Art. Chris's creative work ranges from traditional to digital media in projects that bridge scientific visualization and fine art. His current written work is a synthesis of both media theory and cognitive evolution.

Chris's most recent project, theflockingparty.com, brings many of his favorite themes together, living systems, multi-linear narrative, and speculative technologies. He has also begun illustrating a cognitive psychology book by the esteemed psychologist, Steven Kaplan. For another project, he will be creating an animation of yeast cell development for Organelle View, a team that visualizes the genomic protein database at Kumar Lab. Upon graduation, Chris plans on moving to Philadelphia to be with his wife and start a company that feeds his interest in the life sciences and digital media through inventive forms of visualization.

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