

Creating Connections in Complexity: discussions at the intersection of big data & learning

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Data is explosive, evolving and infinite.

Penetrating the fog

in many discussions about future of education, ubiquitous technologies often grab the spotlight

but the invisible hand of big data & analytics is the most dramatic factor shaping that future.

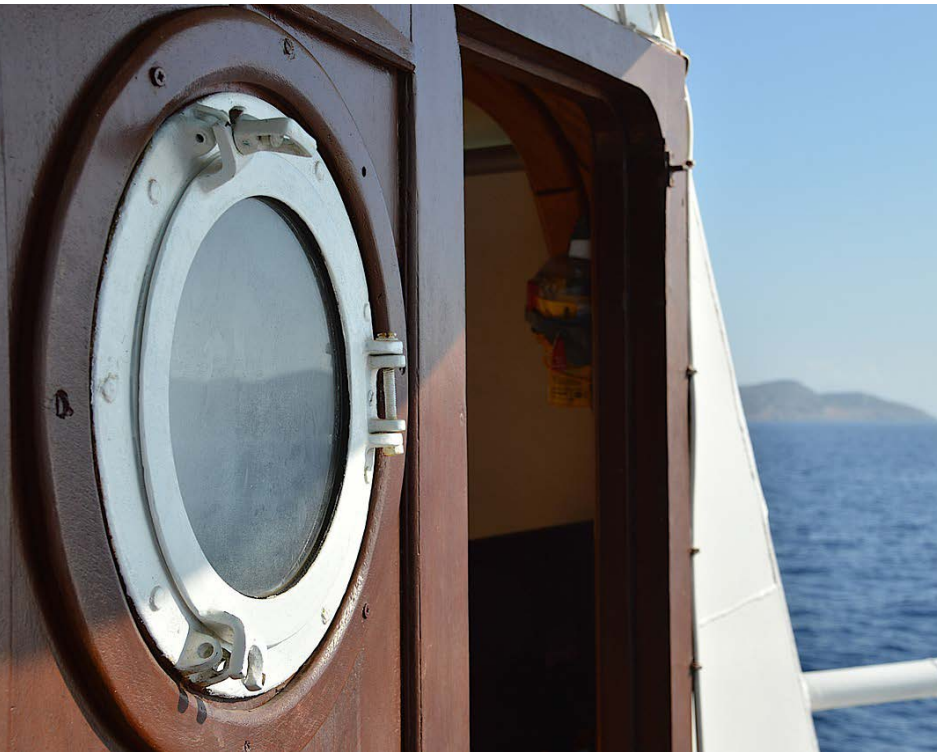


“We must ask difficult questions of Big Data’s models of intelligibility before they crystallize into new orthodoxies.”

boyd & Crawford, 2012



categorisation as provocation



“data points in a graph are tiny portholes onto a rich human world, and encapsulates some of the concerns that educators have about the misuse of blunt, blind analytics—proxy indicators that do not do justice to the complexity of real people, and the rich forms that learning take.”

Buckingham Shum, 2015

assumptions & values get baked into data

Du Gay, P. and Pryke, M.
(2002) *Cultural Economy:
Cultural Analysis and
Commercial Life*. Sage,
London. pp. 12-13

“accounting tools...do not simply aid the measurement of economic activity, they **shape the reality they measure**”

“In the very process of trying to value certain learning qualities by tracking them, will we in fact distort or even destroy a living, organic system, through clumsy efforts to categorise and quantify?”

The Rabbit Talks Back
(source unknown)



What we thought was just a shadow is now exercising agency... *When the Rabbit Talks Back*, we're reminded that the digital shadow is no longer a passive, causally determined rendering. It is not only getting higher and higher in resolution, updated in real time, but is exercising agency. Data

visualizations—especially if they are endorsed by those in power—will shape how we see the world and how we act. Recommendation engines will exploit limited human attention to place certain resources at the top of the page.

Buckingham Shum, 2015

"Raw data is both an oxymoron and a bad idea; to the contrary, data should be cooked with care."

Bowker, 2005

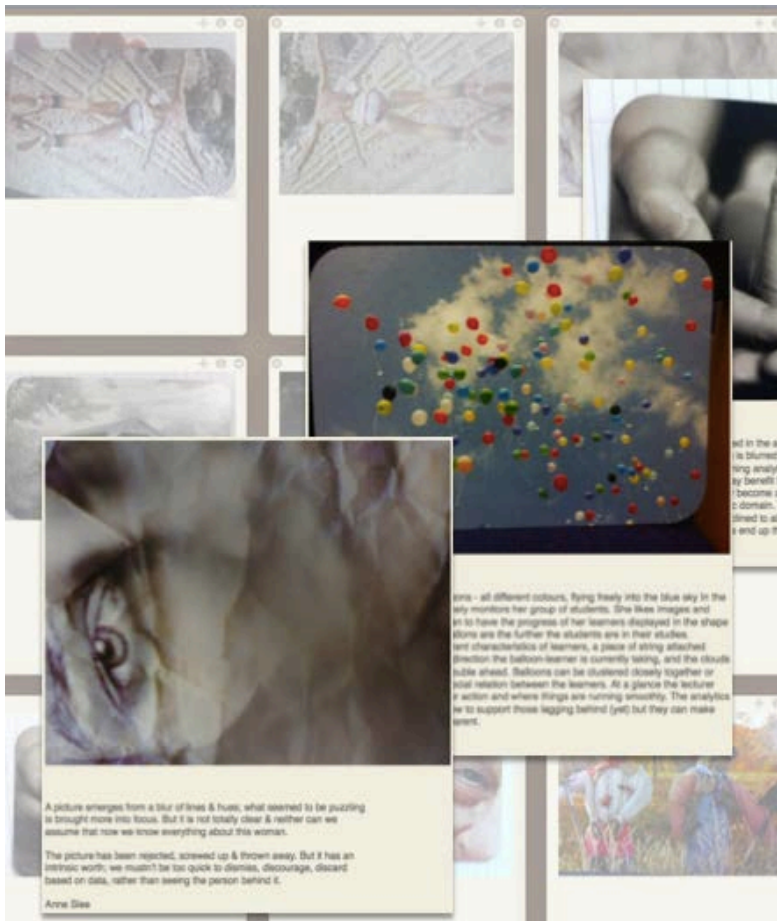


Ponderables...

- Where is the 'human' in analytics – how can we ensure a humanist element remains present?
- What human/machine partnerships can/should we enable in computationally intensive work?
- Can the analytics of curation help us support creativity and learning?



Wording our world

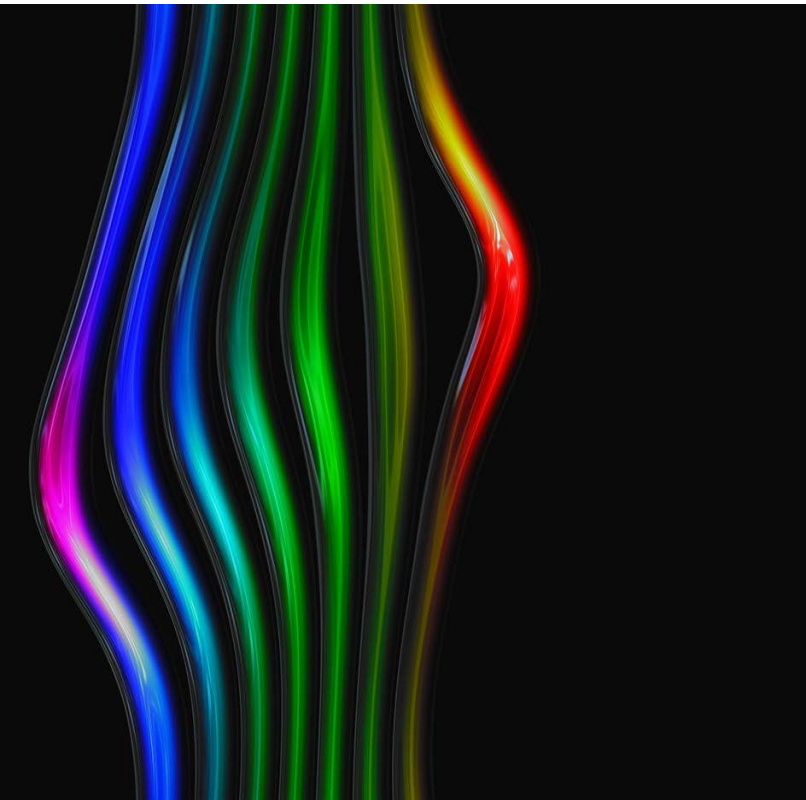


explore the photos
available to you

choose an image
that resonates with
you in response to the
opening conversation

jot down some notes
about your response

engaging with the bright & dark



can we shape a critical discourse about big data analytics and algorithmic intelligence?

how can we carry momentum from this discussion into the future?

what could happen next?

what partnerships might enable this work?

@uts_mdssi
#bright-dark