Why do we need a visualization system?

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Definition

- Computer-based visualization systems provide visual representations of datasets designed to help people carry out tasks more effectively.

  Tamara Munzner

- Why?

- Trade-off

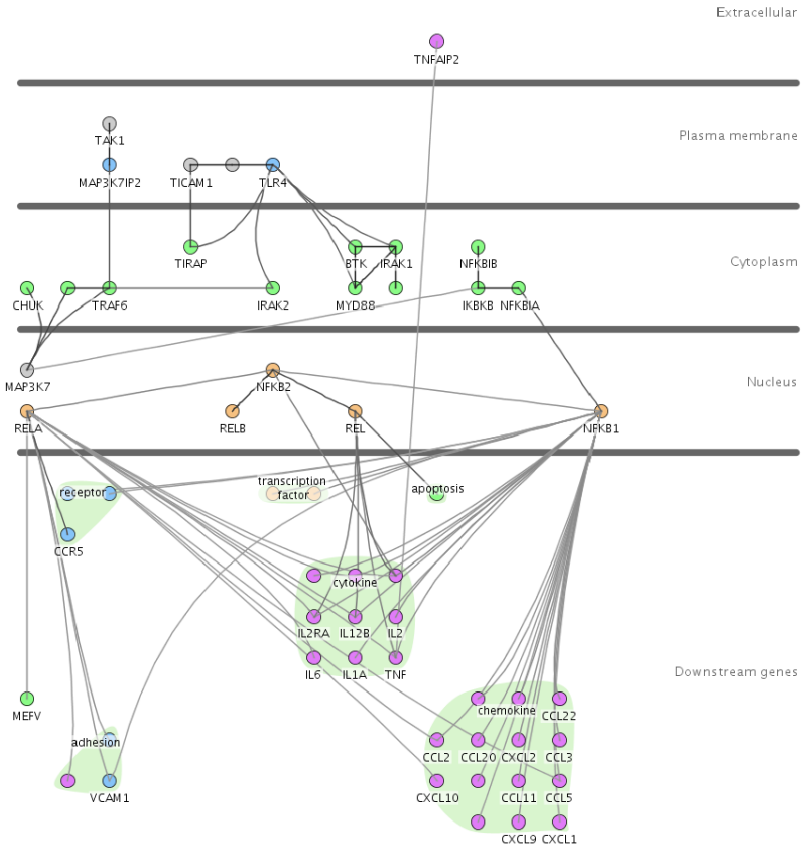
Why have a human in the loop?

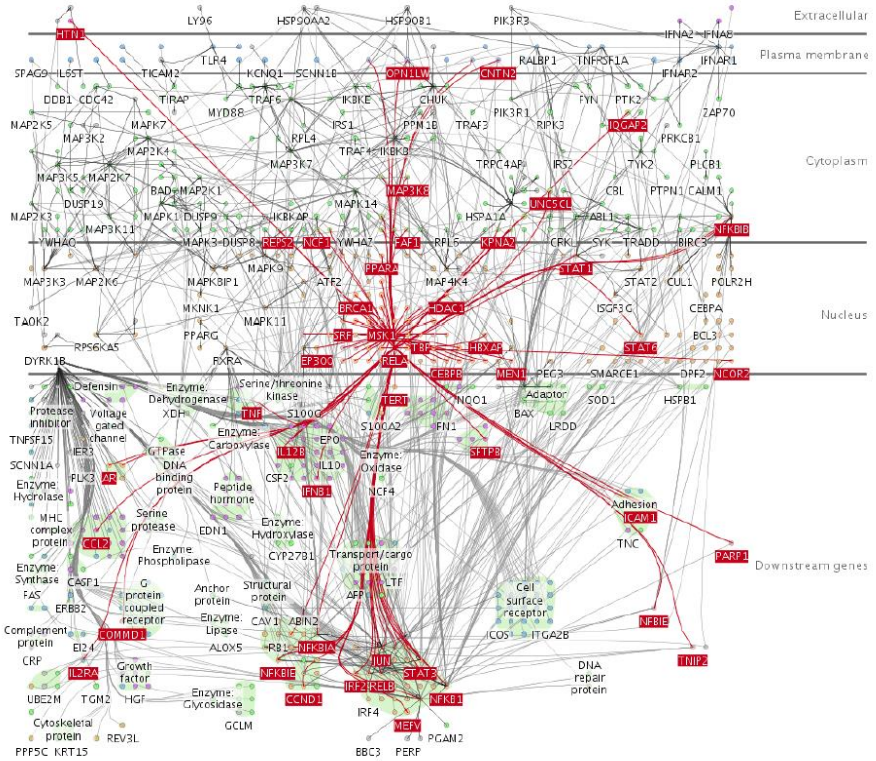
Computer-based visualization systems provide visual representations of datasets designed to help people carry out tasks more effectively.

Visualization is suitable when there is a need to augment human capabilities rather than replace people with computational decision-making methods.

- don't need vis when fully automatic solution exists and is trusted
- many analysis problems ill-specified
  - don't know exactly what questions to ask in advance
- possibilities
  - long-term use for end users (e.g. exploratory analysis of scientific data)
  - presentation of known results
  - stepping stone to better understanding of requirements before developing models
  - help developers of automatic solution refine/debug, determine parameters
  - help end users of automatic solutions verify, build trust

Why have a Computer in the loop?

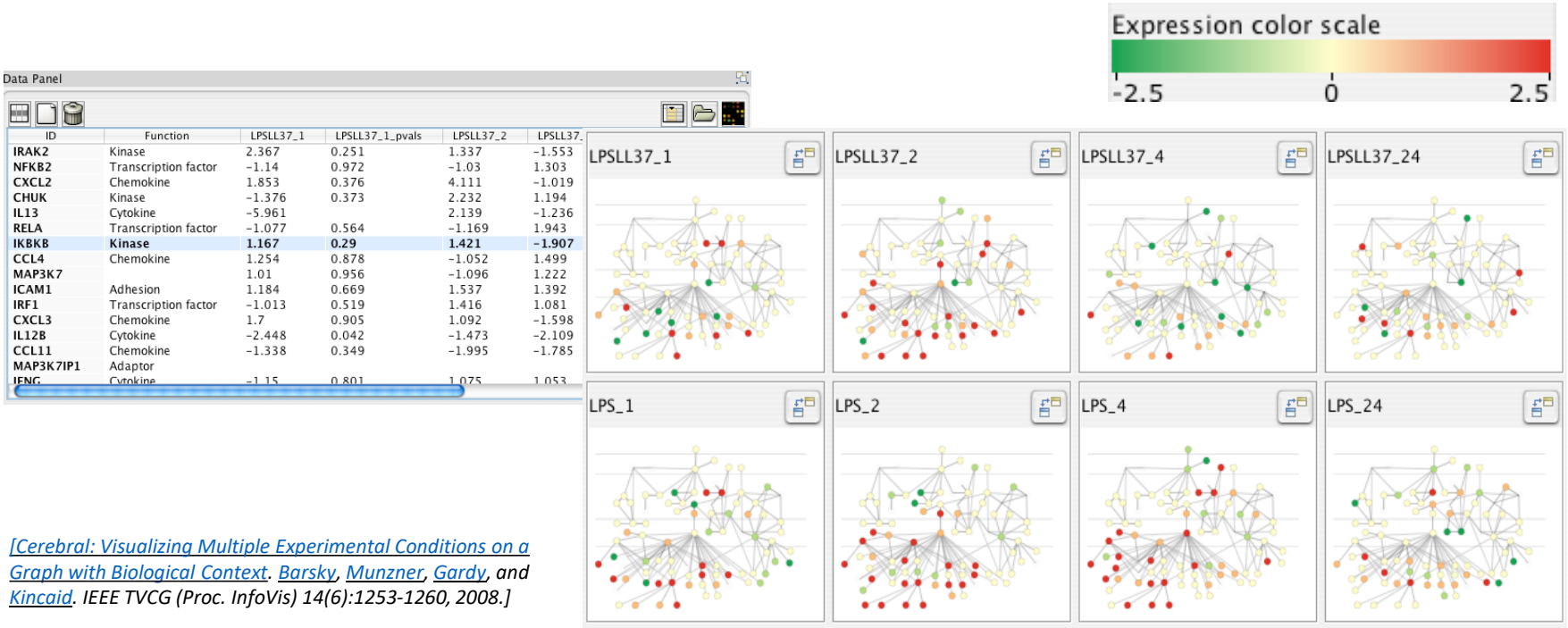




Why use an external representation?

Computer-based visualization systems provide **visual representations** of datasets designed to help people carry out tasks more effectively.

- external representation: replace cognition with perception



[Cerebral: Visualizing Multiple Experimental Conditions on a Graph with Biological Context. Barsky, Munzner, Gardy, and Kincaid. IEEE TVCG (Proc. InfoVis) 14(6):1253-1260, 2008.]

Why depend on vision?

Computer-based visualization systems provide visual representations of datasets designed to help people carry out tasks more effectively.

- human visual system is high-bandwidth channel to brain
  - overview possible due to background processing
    - subjective experience of seeing everything simultaneously
    - significant processing occurs in parallel and pre-attentively
- sound: lower bandwidth and different semantics
  - overview not supported
    - subjective experience of sequential stream
- touch/haptics: impoverished record/replay capacity
  - only very low-bandwidth communication thus far
- taste, smell: no viable record/replay devices

Why represent all the data?

Anscombe's Quartet: Raw Data

	1		2		3		4	
	X	Y	X	Y	X	Y	X	Y
	10.0	8.04	10.0	9.14	10.0	7.46	8.0	6.58
	8.0	6.95	8.0	8.14	8.0	6.77	8.0	5.76
	13.0	7.58	13.0	8.74	13.0	12.74	8.0	7.71
	9.0	8.81	9.0	8.77	9.0	7.11	8.0	8.84
	11.0	8.33	11.0	9.26	11.0	7.81	8.0	8.47
	14.0	9.96	14.0	8.10	14.0	8.84	8.0	7.04
	6.0	7.24	6.0	6.13	6.0	6.08	8.0	5.25
	4.0	4.26	4.0	3.10	4.0	5.39	19.0	12.50
	12.0	10.84	12.0	9.13	12.0	8.15	8.0	5.56
	7.0	4.82	7.0	7.26	7.0	6.42	8.0	7.91
	5.0	5.68	5.0	4.74	5.0	5.73	8.0	6.89
Mean	9.0	7.5	9.0	7.5	9.0	7.5	9.0	7.5
Variance	10.0	3.75	10.0	3.75	10.0	3.75	10.0	3.75
Correlation	0.816		0.816		0.816		0.816	

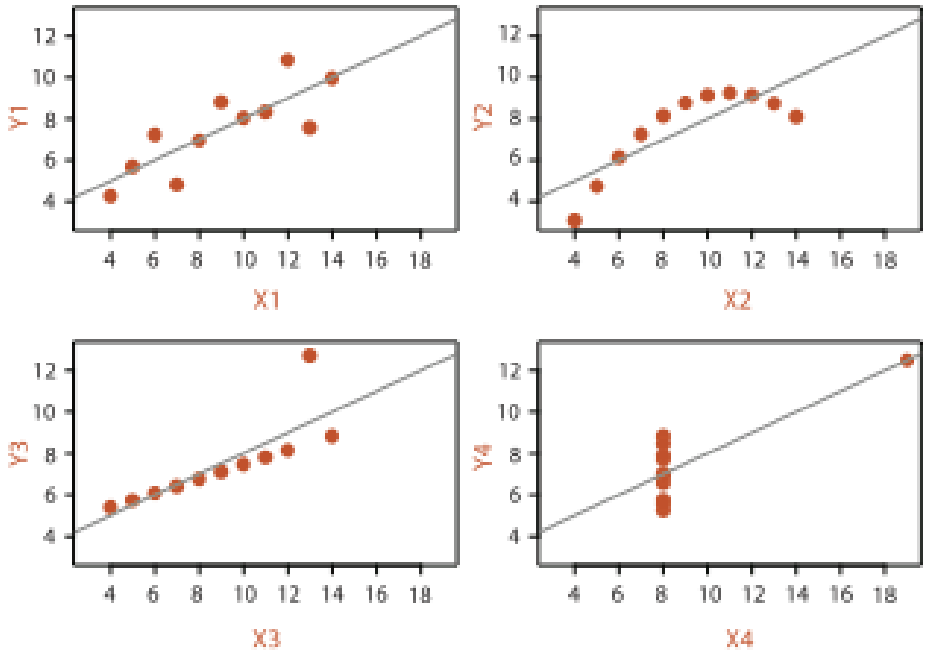
Why represent all the data?

Computer-based visualization systems provide visual representations of datasets designed to help people carry out tasks more effectively.

- summaries lose information, details matter
  - confirm expected and find unexpected patterns
  - assess validity of statistical model

Anscombe's Quartet

Identical statistics	
x mean	9
x variance	10
y mean	7.5
y variance	3.75
x/y correlation	0.816



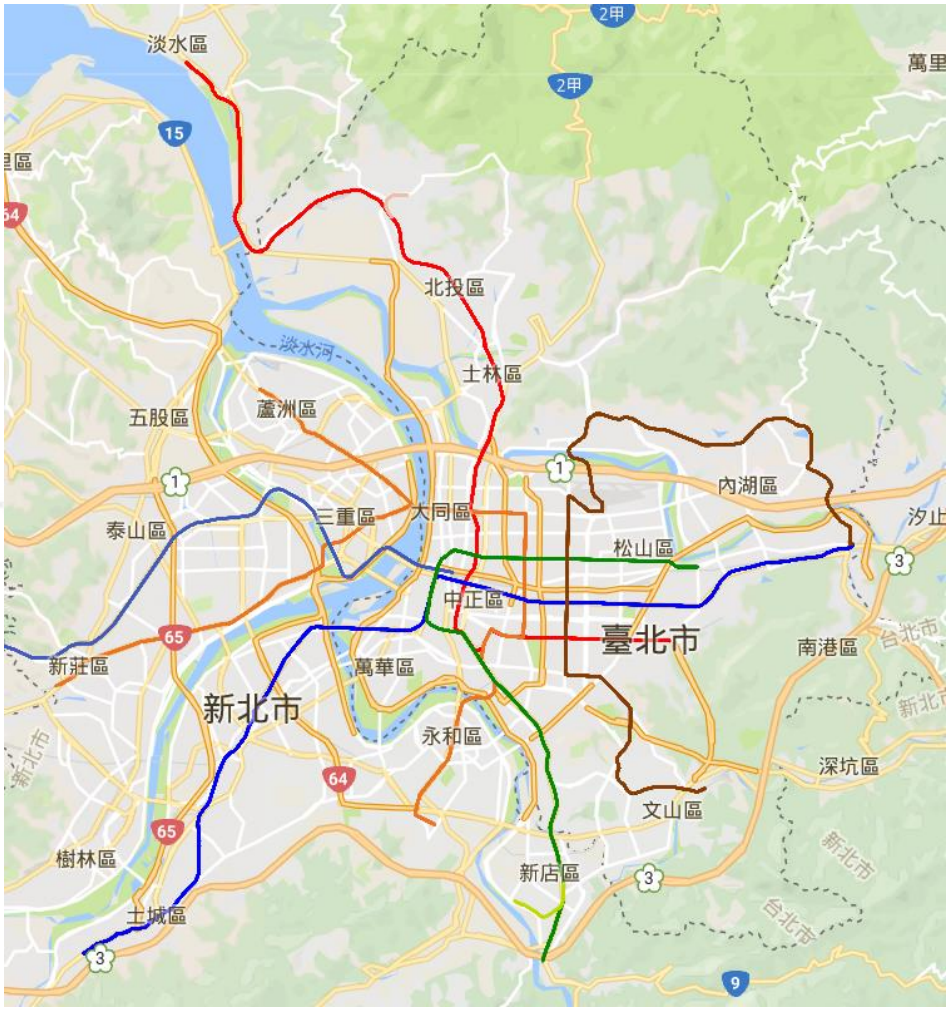
Same Stats, Different Graphs - CHI 2017

X Mean: 54.2632025
Y Mean: 47.8315781
X SD : 16.7650109
Y SD : 26.9353144
Corr. : -0.0645195

Why focus on tasks and effectiveness?

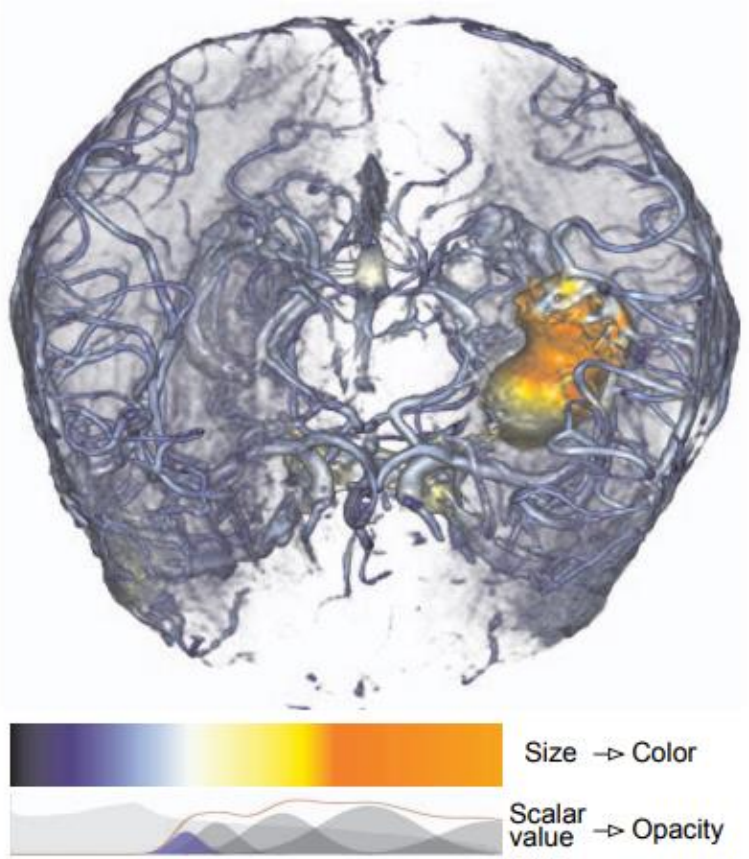
Computer-based visualization systems provide visual representations of datasets designed to help people carry out tasks more effectively.

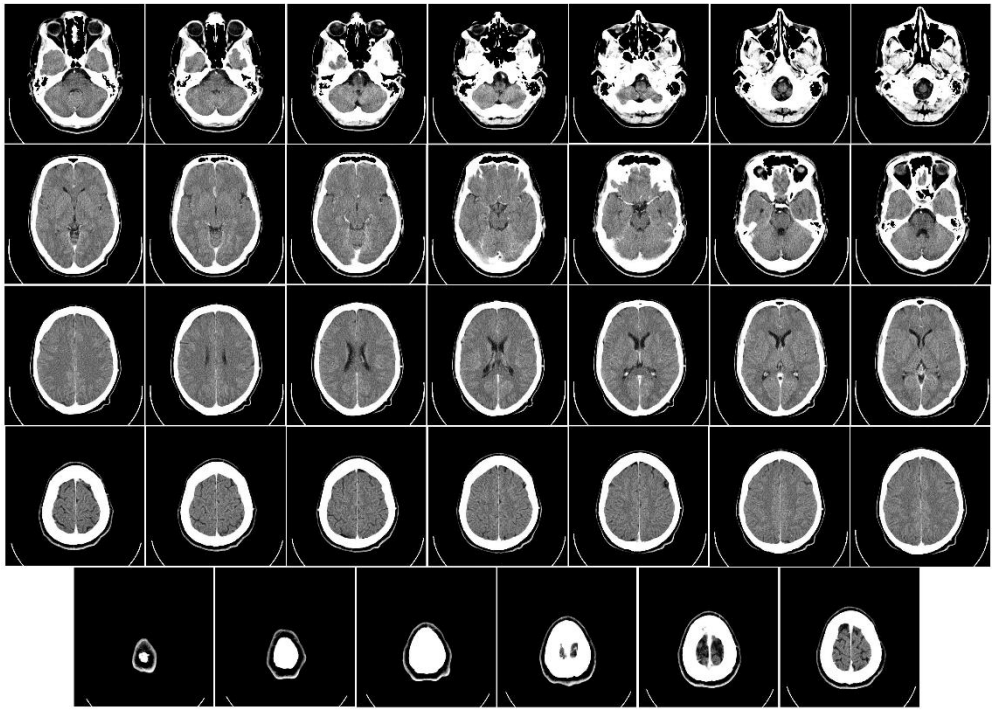
- tasks serve as constraint on design (as does data)
  - idioms do not serve all tasks equally!
  - challenge: recast tasks from domain-specific vocabulary to abstract forms
- most possibilities ineffective
  - validation is necessary, but tricky
  - increases chance of finding good solutions if you understand full space of possibilities
- what counts as effective?
  - novel: enable entirely new kinds of analysis
  - faster: speed up existing workflows



http://www.metro.taipei/ct.asp?xItem=78479152&CtNode=70089&mp=122035

Which vis design is effective?

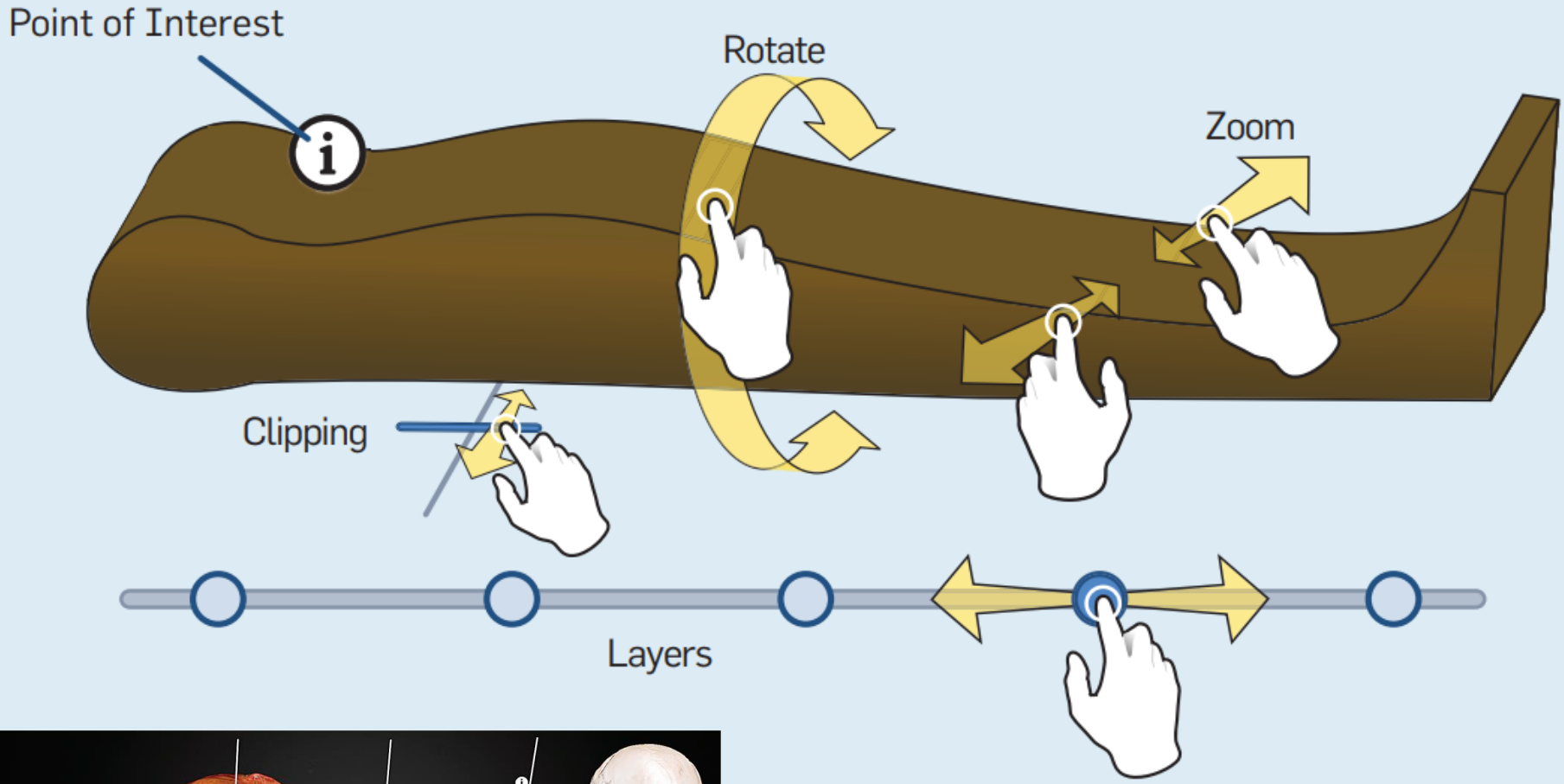


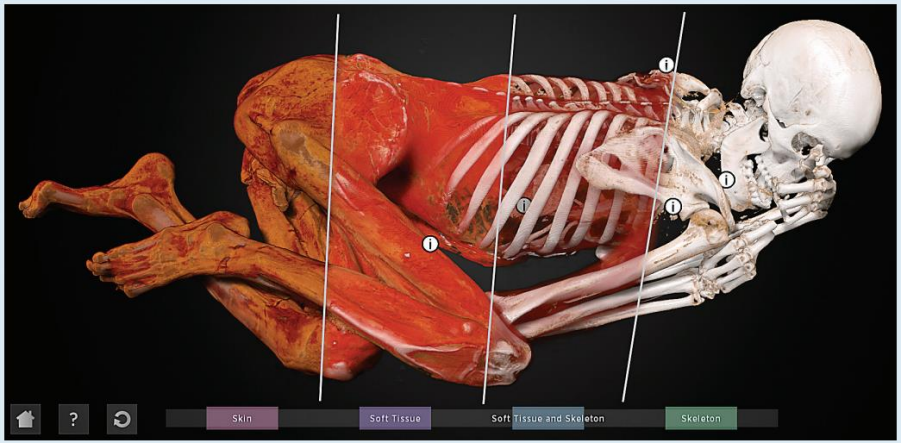


https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CT_scan

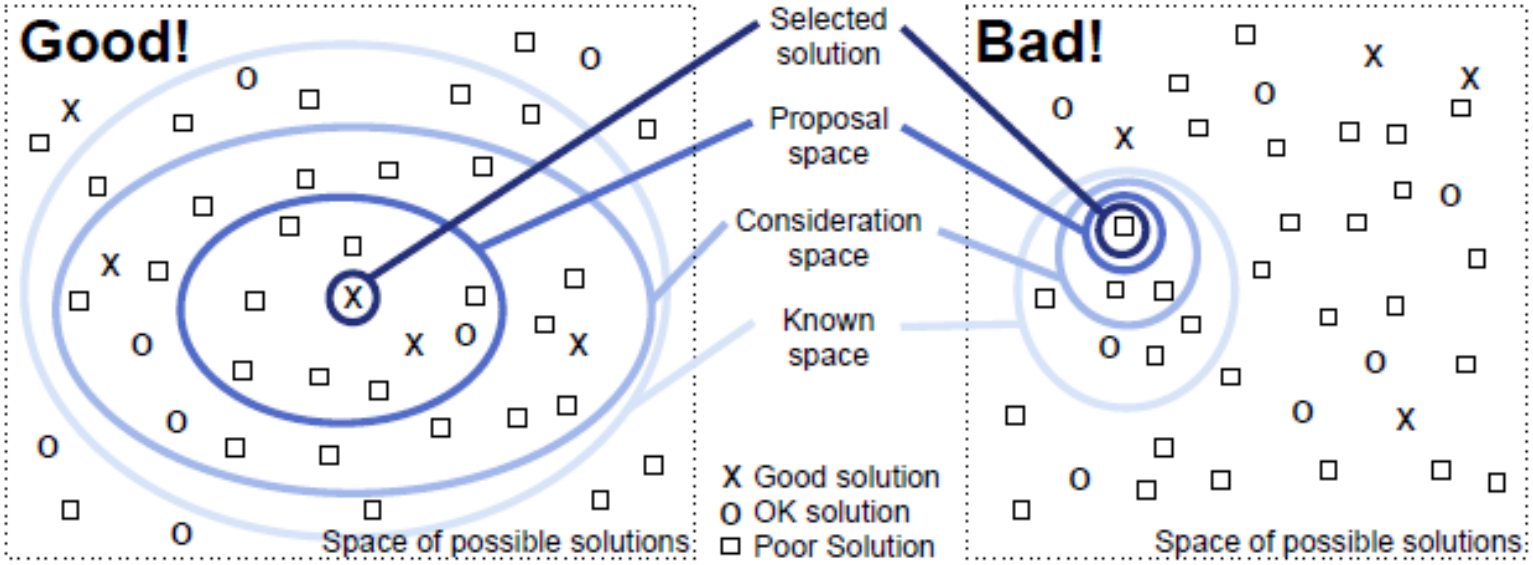
C. Correa and K. L. Ma, "Size-based Transfer Functions: A New Volume Exploration Technique," in *IEEE Transactions on Visualization and Computer Graphics*, vol. 14, no. 6, pp. 1380-1387, 2008.

Anders Ynnerman, Thomas Rydell, Daniel Antoine, David Hughes, Anders Persson, and Patric Ljung. Interactive visualization of 3d scanned mummies at public venues. *Commun. ACM*59, 12, 2016



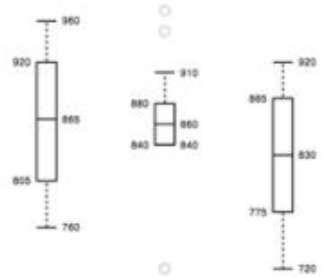


Why are most designs ineffective?



Visual Index

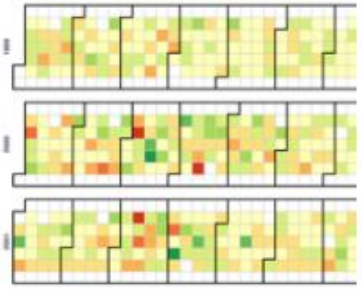
Box Plots



Bubble Chart

Bullet Charts

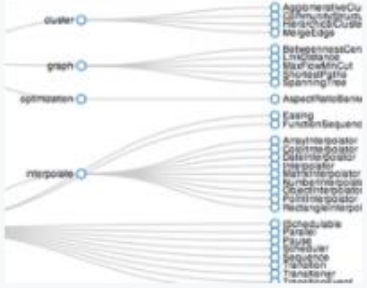
Calendar View



Non-contiguous Cartogram

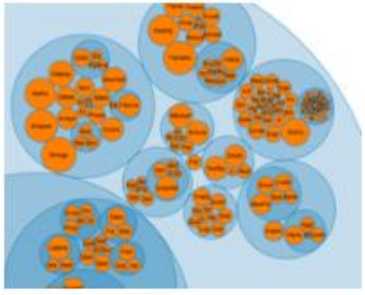
Chord Diagram

Dendrogram

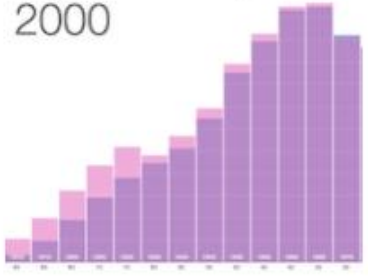


Force-Directed Graph

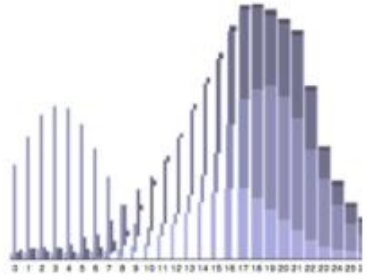
Circle Packing



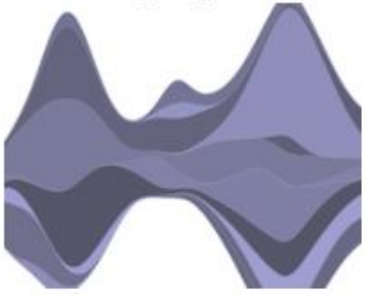
Population Pyramid



Stacked Bars



Streamgraph

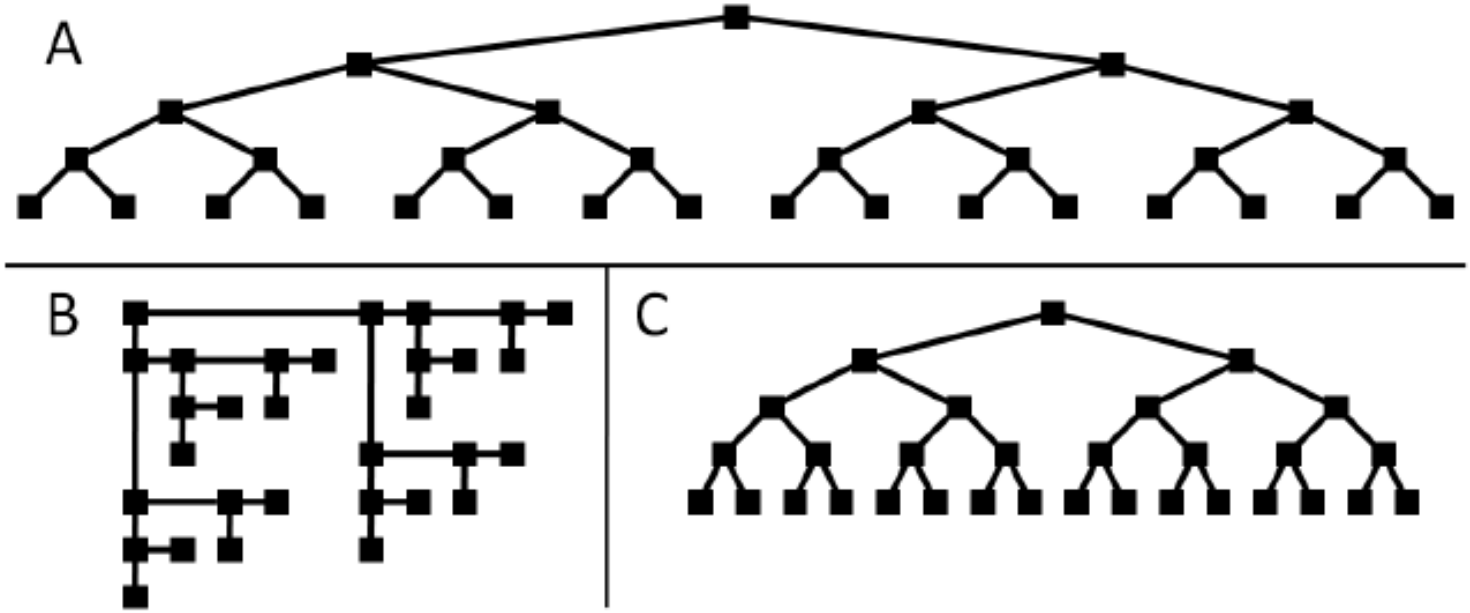


What resource limitations are we faced with?

Vis designers must take into account three very different kinds of resource limitations: those of computers, of humans, and of displays.

- Computational limits
  - processing time
  - system memory
- Human limits
  - human attention and memory
- Display limits
  - pixels are precious resource, the most constrained resource
  - information density: ratio of space used to encode info vs unused whitespace
    - tradeoff between clutter and wasting space, find sweet spot between dense and sparse

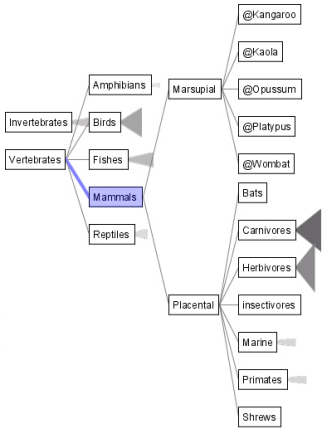
Display limits



Why analyze?

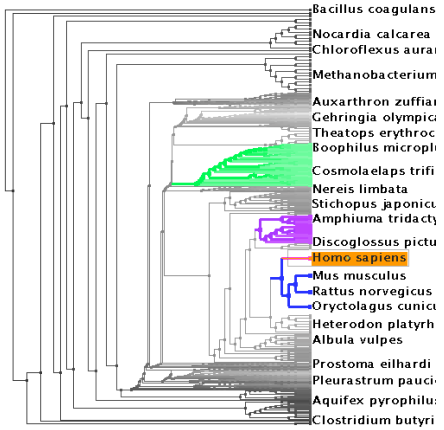
- imposes structure on huge design space
  - scaffold to help you think systematically about choices
  - analyzing existing as stepping stone to designing new
  - most possibilities ineffective for particular task/data combination

SpaceTree

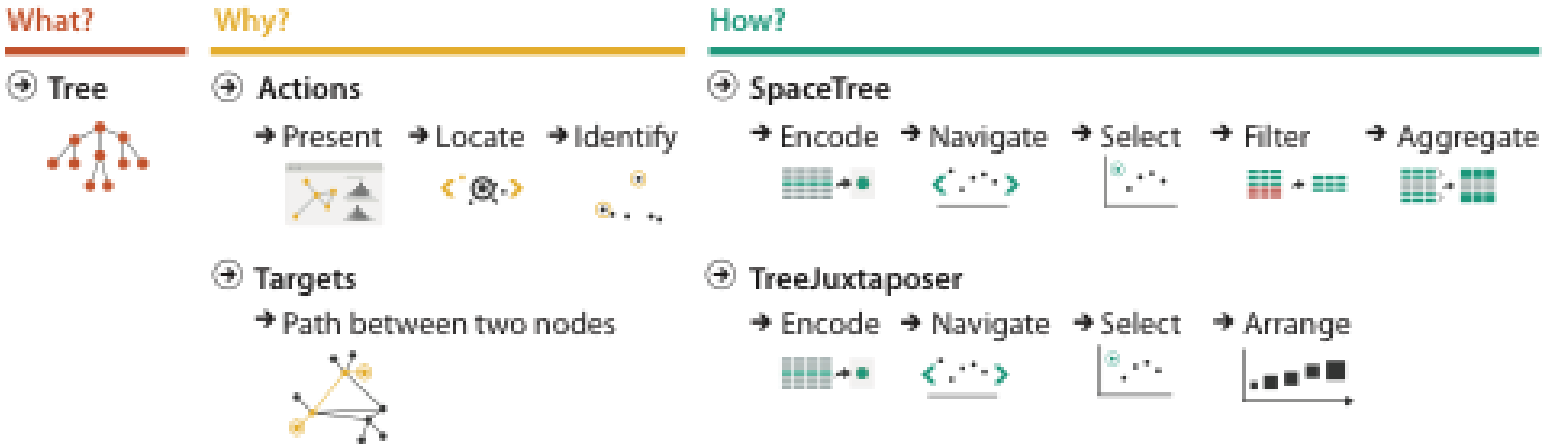


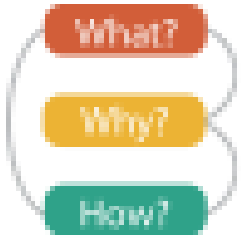
[SpaceTree: Supporting Exploration in Large Node Link Tree, Design Evolution and Empirical Evaluation. Grosjean, Plaisant, and Bederson. Proc. InfoVis 2002, p 57–64.]

TreeJuxtaposer



[TreeJuxtaposer: Scalable Tree Comparison Using Focus+Context With Guaranteed Visibility. ACM Trans. on Graphics (Proc. SIGGRAPH) 22:453– 462, 2003.]





Further reading

- Visualization Analysis and Design. Munzner. AK Peters Visualization Series, CRC Press, 2014.
  - *Chap 1: What's Vis, and Why Do It?*
- A Tour through the Visualization Zoo. Communications of the ACM, 53(6), pp. 59-67, Jun 2010