Jericho McLeod
G00986513

The Rowley paper, ‘The wisdom hierarchy: representations of the DIKW hierarchy’, contextualizes the hierarchy discussed in the previous class. While it is primarily a review and expansion of concepts discussed and debated in class, the specific definitions of tacit and explicit knowledge are something I have a minor issue with. It describes these are binary points; tacit knowledge cannot be shared, explicit knowledge can. It seems relatively trivial of a change to make this a spectrum that is more reflective of my own experience, where knowledge can have varying degrees of ease or difficulty in dissemination.

The paper also points out that wisdom is often not defined alongside the hierarchy in the reviewed materials. While it is pointed out the knowledge is the application of experience to a current problem, and wisdom is the same application but to a different problem, wisdom is more generally defined as the application of knowledge. Further, I do not fully grasp the importance of including wisdom in a system built on data; is the system itself creating wisdom or does the sagaciousness of the user do so?

Lastly, having studied visualization to some extent, I believe that consumers of a visualization decode information based on, perhaps, more aspects than the creators intended. This is mentioned in the paper with respect to the size of the components of the hierarchy alongside questions such as ‘is there more data than information, or is that the current status quo?’ If knowledge can be explicit, and communicated, I may start with some quantity of Data (D), and from it extract some quantity of Information (I), from which I further refine some amount of Knowledge (K) and then Wisdom (W), resulting in this pipeline:

$$D \rightarrow I \rightarrow K \rightarrow W$$

What if I share some amount of knowledge, but not the underlying information or data? This is the primary structure on which our didactic systems are built, for which I present as an alternative to the more traditional hierarchy the following pipeline:

$$D \rightarrow I \begin{cases} \rightarrow K \rightarrow W \\ \rightarrow K \rightarrow W \\ \rightarrow K \rightarrow W \end{cases}$$

I think, perhaps, the most realistic representations would be highly subjective, but signals, the antecedent of data, are far and away the largest category. Data is a subset of signals, then knowledge exists with some unknown scalar to data. Wisdom, in my relatively naive opinion, is more a descriptor of those who acquire knowledge than of the systems through which it is acquired.

These are the most salient points of related and tangential thought that were inspired by reading the assigned article; I of course have no firm answers, merely my own opinions. Regardless of my opinions, the reading did serve to contextualize the hierarchy, and I can speak to common opinion on the topic relatively my own. From that perspective, I am better for having read it.