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Reading 4
Data Toolkit

Design Critique 'Confluence'

The interactive visualisation 'Confluence' depicts the opinion of both the critics and the audience and how much their opinions differ, of over 600 Hollywood movies that where released between 2007 and 2011. This visualisation could be useful for film scholars and professionals within the film industry for a variety of tasks. 'Confluence' can be used to examine if their is direct correlation between the genre of a movie and wether or not the critics and the audience are in agreement. Or if the profitability of a movie is in direct reference to either how the critics or the audience received it. The visualisation can also be used to examine if award winning films where received better by the audience or by the critics and how much their opinions differed. Or if there is a correlation between the degree of agreement of the critics and/or the audience and the movie's budget, profitability, domestic gross, foreign gross, worldwide gross, opening weekend theatre count, opening weekend gains or opening weekend success.

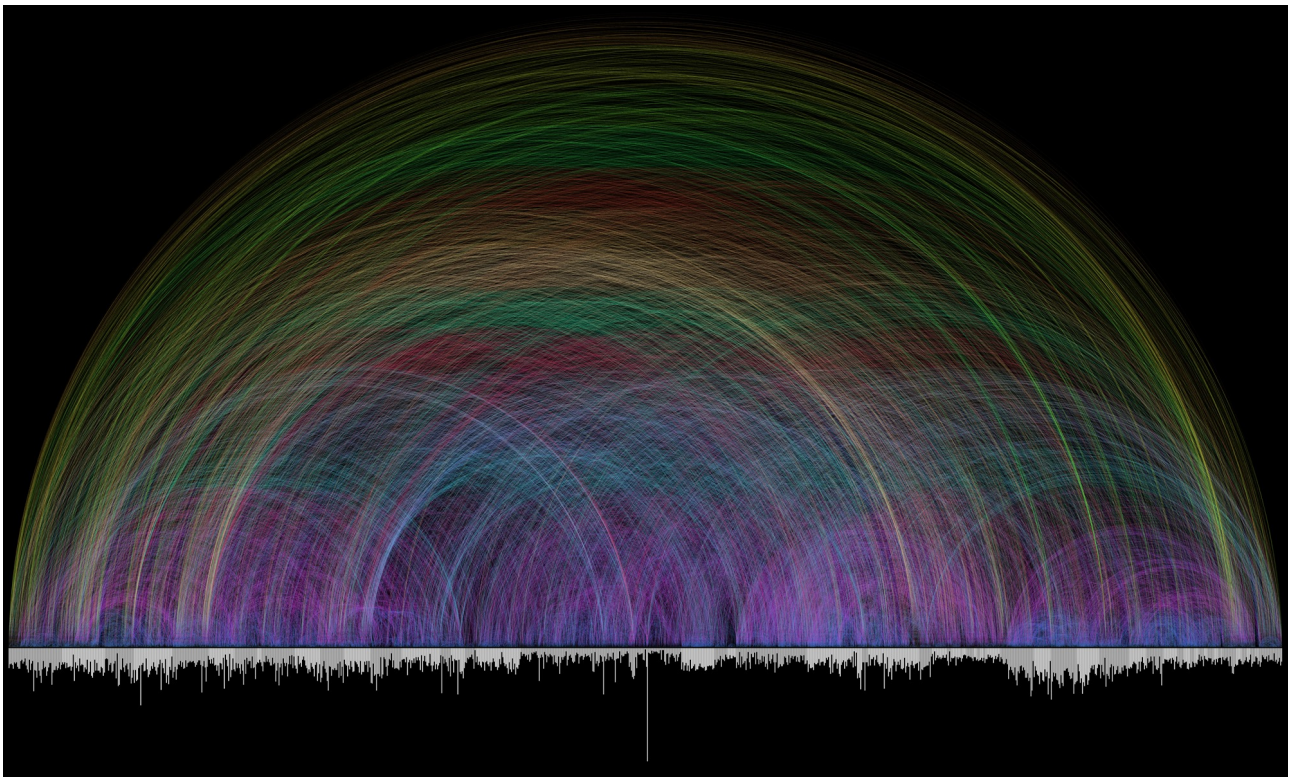
Each circles in the visualisation represent a movie, its position on the graph displays how well it was received by the audience and by the critics and how much their opinions differed. The colour of the circle indicates if it is the critics' or the audience's opinion that is being represented. The initial size of the circles has no meaning only after choosing a different viewing option do the sizes change and represent either the budget, profitability, domestic gross, foreign gross, worldwide gross, opening weekend theatre count, opening weekend gains or opening weekend success. When discussing the 'Confluence' visualisation in relation to Edward Tufte's principles of graphical integrity and design principles the visualisation is reasonable. The vertical axis represents how well the movie was received by the critics and the audience. How a movie was received is displayed on a scale of 0 to a 100. The physical measurements of the vertical axis is directly proportional to the number it represents and thus the lie factor of this visualisation is 1. However the horizontal axis is not labeled and only after closer examination and reading the description, it becomes apparent that the location, of the circles on the horizontal axis, represent if a movie was received better by the audience or the critics and how much the opinions of the critics and the audience differed. The visualisation offers a lot of data variation due to the different tabs displayed above the graph. The tabs offer viewing options that highlight different aspects of the data in the same design with the exception of 'the producers calendar'. Here the movies are grouped together by the month that they where released in and organised by their profitability.

The initial size of the circles does not represent any information. The circles could be replaced by dots that grow in size when chosen to present a different aspect of the data to maximise the data-ink ratio. Also the area chart running across the horizontal axis could have been depicted in a much more efficient way regarding the data-ink ratio. The area chart conveys an impression the difference of opinion not the exact difference. The circle in the top right, that depicts a pie-chart, could be replaced by more exact data to increase the data-ink ratio. There seems to be no real chart junk. The outlined circles represent award winning films and the colour effect creating gradient bars in the background aid to see how well the movie was received. The information is layered and the different aspects of the information can be uncovered by changing the viewing options. 'Confluence' uses contrast to indicate that certain information belongs together. More detailed information of a movie is displayed when the cursors hovers over the circle representing the movie. The information is grouped together at the bottom lefthand corner of the visualisation and displayed in a transparent black box. The contrast between the box and background is

subtle but enough to make information pop out. The titles of the different viewing options are aligned at the top of visualisation indicating that belong together and dictate what is visible underneath them.

The aesthetics of the visualisation are overall pleasing. The colour palette works well and despite the fact that the circles might not maximise the data-ink ratio they do create a playful and aesthetically pleasing visualisation. However on the initial view the graph is accompanied by a lot of text. That fact that the designers felt they had to explain their visualisation in so much detail, indicates that the visualisation is unclear and overly complicated. However after having read all the information and played around with the visualisation, it does offer a lot of different information aiding in variety of task as mentioned earlier.

Rainbow colour map



Bible Cross-References by Chris Harrsion
[http://www.chrisharrison.net/index.php/Visualizations/BibleViz]

This visualisation depicts the cross-references within the different chapters of the Bible. The visualisation does not intend to inform in detail about the content of the Bible but displays how the bible speaks to itself. The visualisation is interesting for theology scholars, Christians or anyone interested in the Bible. The bars at the bottom represent the chapters and their length indicates the number of verses in the chapter. By alternating the colour of the bars the chapters can be distinguished. The colours refer to the distance between the chapters of each reference and conveys an impression of the scale of the cross-references. The rainbow colour map seems to work for this visualisation because the height of the arches also displays how far apart two references are. The different colours make the arches clearly visible and distinguishable and thus aids in conveying the information.