# Data Visualization:

# What Can you See In Your Data?



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Astronomy and Center for Data-Driven Discovery, Caltech

Lecture 2

XXX Canary Islands Winter School

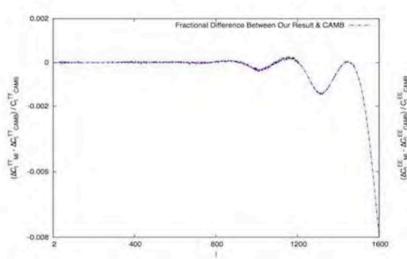
November 2018

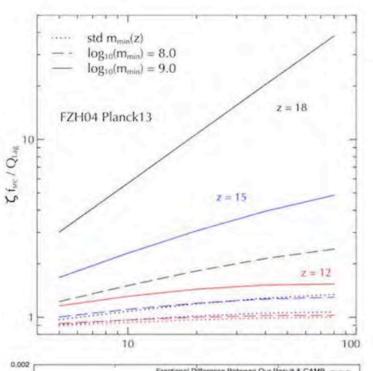


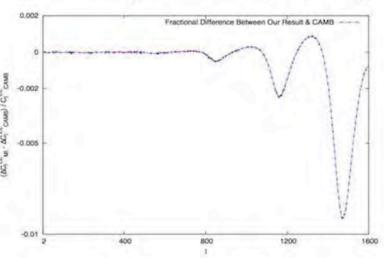
### **Never Do This!**

A figure made for a print may not look good on the screen: Paper ~ 5000 by ~ 6500 pixels Powerpoint usually 768 by 1024

Figure axes and labels must be legible: use a large font







#### We consume information, and information consumes us

What information consumes is rather obvious: it consumes the attention of its recipients. Hence a wealth of information creates a poverty of attention, and a need to allocate that attention efficiently among the overabundance of information sources that might consume it.

Herb Simon

Scientific American, 1995

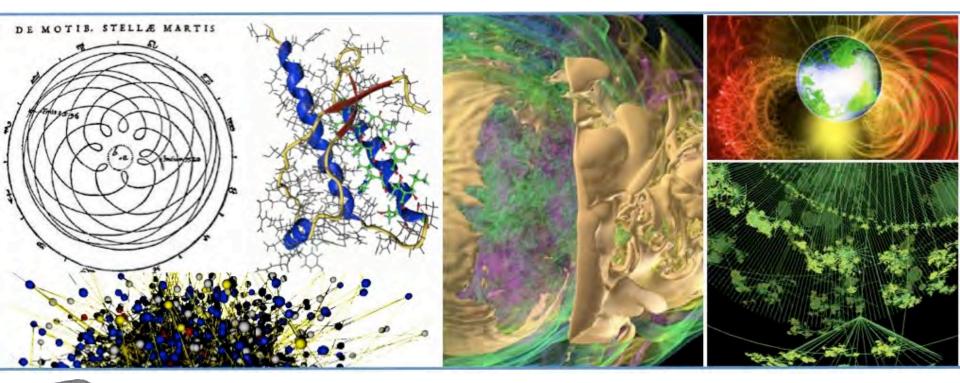
#### What are the computers for?

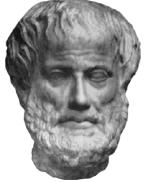
Increasing the capability of a man to approach a complex problem situation, to gain comprehension to suit his particular needs, and to derive solutions to problems.

Douglas Engelbart

Augmenting Human Intellect: A Conceptual Framework

# Effective visualization is the bridge between quantitative information and human intuition





Man cannot understand without images

Aristotle, De Memoria et Reminiscentia

You can observe a lot just by watching

Yogi Berra, an American philosopher



### A Key Challenge: Visualizing Complexity

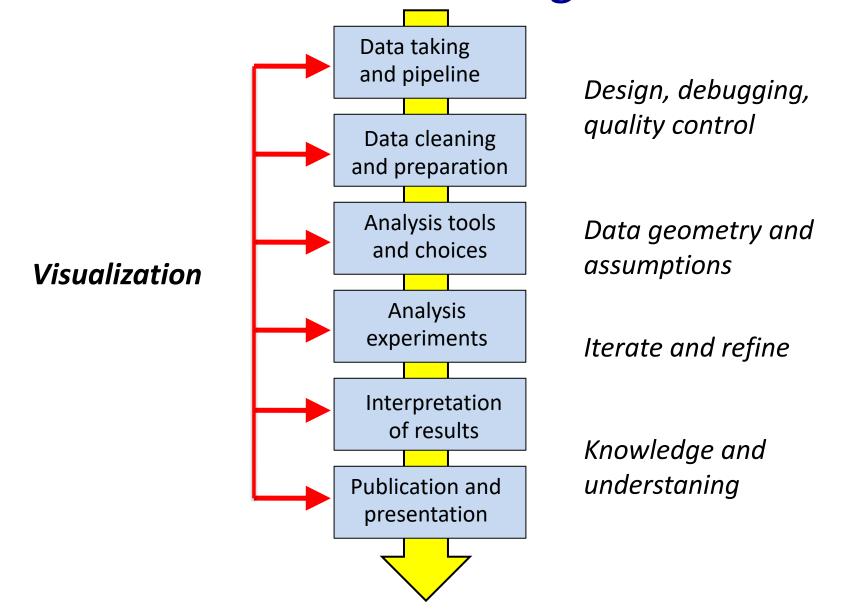
- Hyperdimensional structures (clusters, correlations, etc.)
  are likely present in many complex data sets, whose
  dimensionality is commonly in the range of D ~ 10<sup>2</sup> 10<sup>4</sup>,
  and will surely grow
- It is not only the matter of data understanding, but also of choosing the appropriate data mining algorithms, and interpreting the results
- We are biologically limited to perceiving
   3 12(?) dimensions

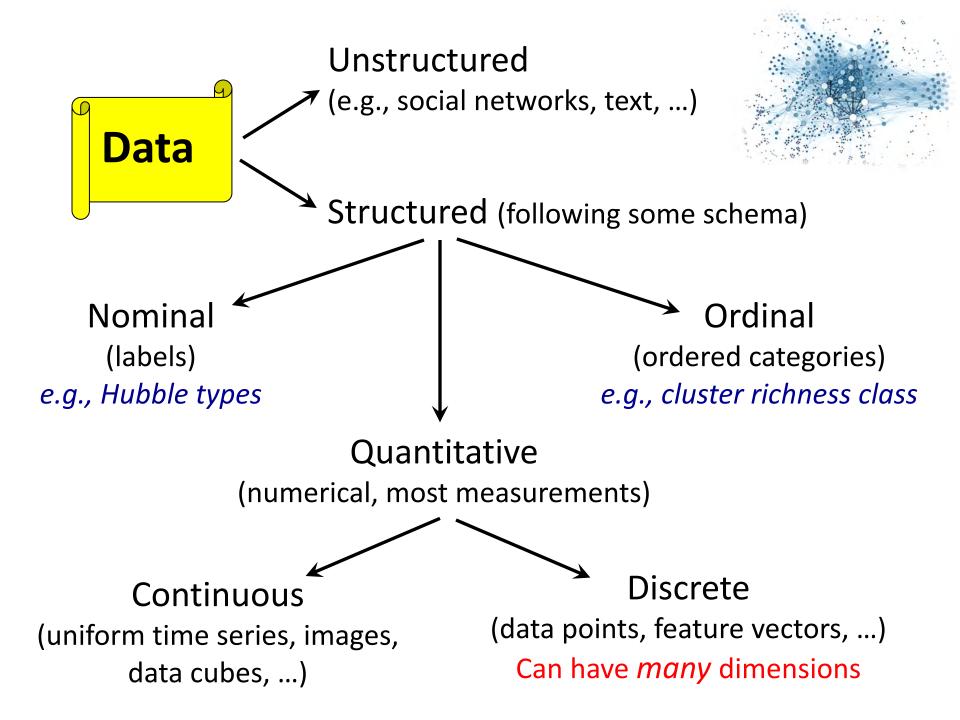
What good are the data if we cannot effectively extract knowledge from them?

"A man has got to know his limitations"

Dirty Harry, another American philosopher

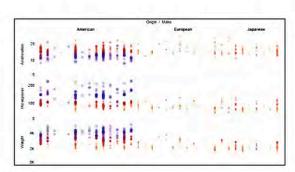
### Visualization is an Essential Component of the Entire Data-to-Knowledge Process





### Geometric Structure of Data



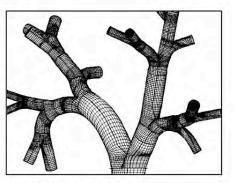


UNSTRUCTURED

#### ABSTRACT DATA

multi-dimensional data RECORDS

MPG Cylinders Horsepower Weight Acceleration Year Origin 8.  $60.4\ 2.8\ 8.2\ 4\ 40.\ 250.\ 4\ 1500.\ 5500.\ 4\ 5.\ 30.\ 4\ 69.5\ 82.5\ 4.\ 8\ 3.2\ 3$  18.000000 8.000000 150.000000 3504.000000 12.000000 70.000000 1.000000 15.000000 8.000000 150.000000 3436.000000 11.500000 70.000000 1.000000 18.000000 8.000000 150.000000 3436.000000 11.000000 70.000000 1.000000 17.000000 8.000000 160.000000 3435.000000 12.000000 70.000000 1.000000 150.00000 3449.000000 10.500000 70.000000 1.000000 15.000000 8.000000 150.000000 3693.000000 11.500000 70.000000 1.000000 18.000000 8.000000 150.000000 3436.000000 11.000000 70.000000 1.000000 16.000000 8.000000 150.000000 3436.000000 11.000000 70.000000 1.000000 17.000000 8.000000 150.000000 3436.000000 12.000000 70.000000 1.000000 17.000000 8.000000 140.000000 3436.000000 12.000000 70.000000 1.000000 16.000000 8.000000 150.000000 3435.000000 150.000000 70.000000 70.000000 1.000000 16.000000 8.000000 150.000000 3435.000000 150.000000 70.000000 70.000000 1.000000 16.000000 8.000000 150.000000 3435.000000 12.000000 70.000000 1.000000 16.000000 8.000000 150.000000 3435.000000 12.000000 70.000000 1.000000 16.000000 8.000000 150.000000 3435.000000 12.000000 70.000000 1.000000 16.000000 8.000000 150.000000 3435.000000 12.000000 70.000000 1.000000 16.000000 8.000000 150.000000 3435.000000 12.000000 70.000000 1.000000 16.000000 70.000000 10.000000 70.000000 10.000000 70.000000 10.000000 70.000

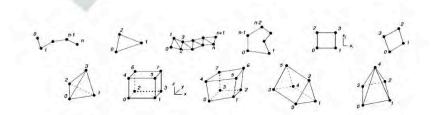




STRUCTURED

2D/3D DATA

scalar/vector/tensor + time



The two kinds can be interchangeable



# From Data Space to Visualization Space

If data consists of feature vectors with N independent measurements, the form an N-dimensional data space

Each of the data dimensions is mapped to one "axis" of the visualization space:

Data = 
$$\{x_1, x_2, x_3, ... x_N\}$$

Visualization space:

XYZ positions, point sizes, shapes, RGBα or HSV colors, textures, glyphs, point orientations, animations, ...

The choice of this mapping is *critical* 

### Quantitative perception (visual or other)

Many senses are organized around the "just noticeable difference"

Ratio is more important than magnitude

Most continuous variation in stimuli is perceived in discrete steps

### Two important visualization principles:

Principle of consistency

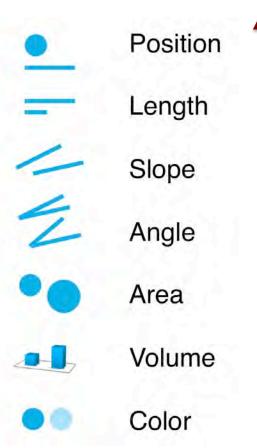
Properties of the image (visual encoding) should match the properties of the data

### Principle of importance ordering

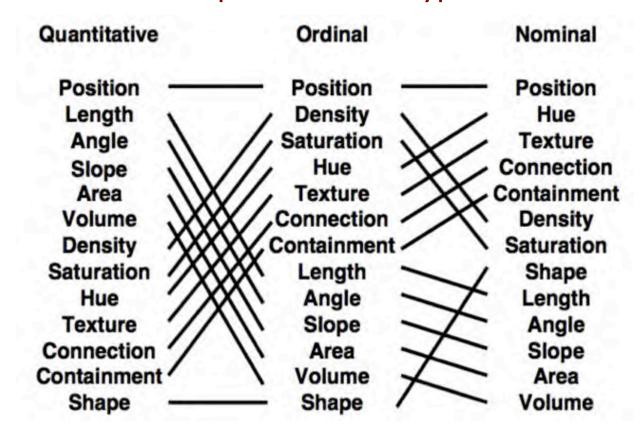
Encode the most important variables in the most effective way

# Map the most important variables to the visual "axis" that corresponds to the most accurate perception:

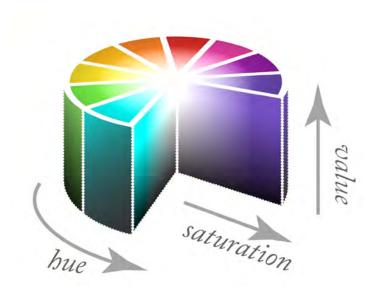
Increasing accuracy



It also depends on the type of data:



# **How Many Dimensions for Color?**

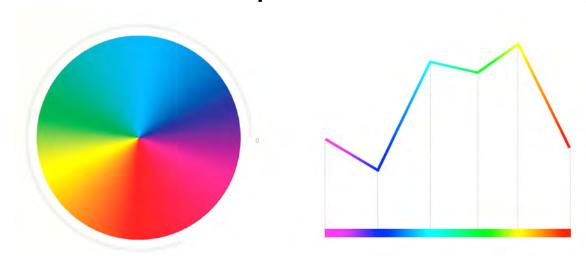


3? RGB or HSV

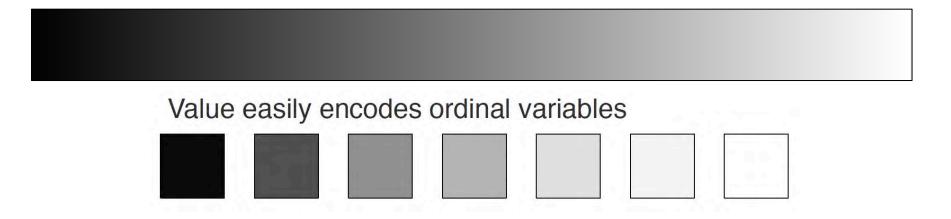
2? R/G, G/B

Actually, effectively only  $oldsymbol{1}$ 

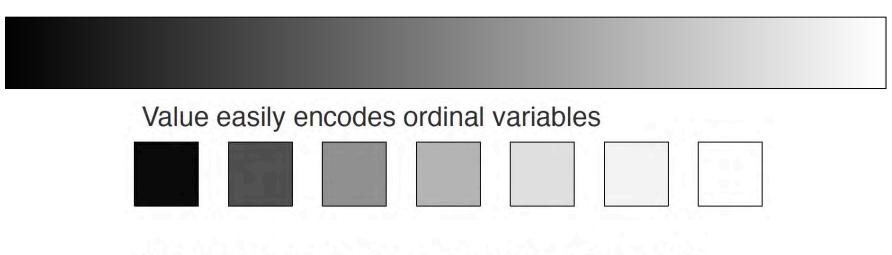
### Perceptions of luminosity are different:



e.g., at a given value, yellow looks brighter than blue

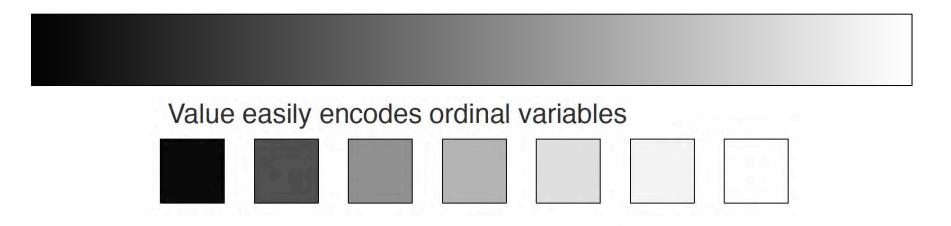


Value encodes continuous variables (less well)



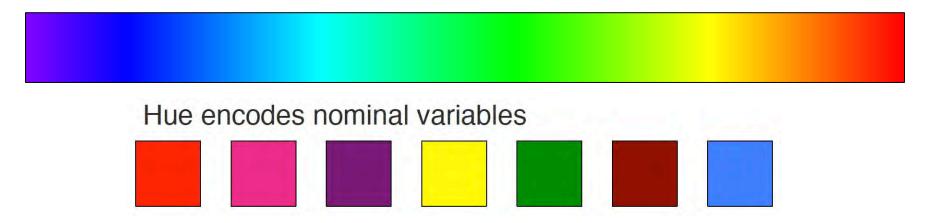
Value encodes continuous variables (less well)

### **How Many Colors?**



Value encodes continuous variables (less well)

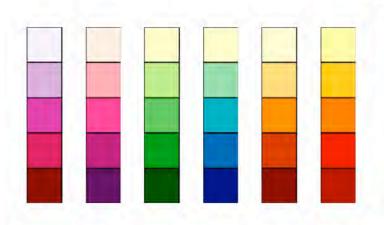
#### **How Many Colors?**



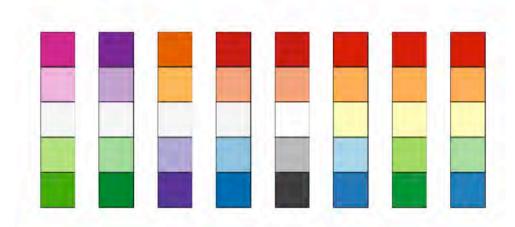
# Choosing the color palette

Discrete rather than continuous

#### Sequential color

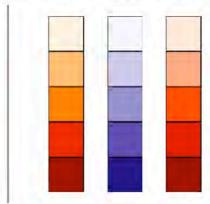


#### Diverging color



Data maps to meaningful mid-point

Color midpoint neutral, saturation at endpoints

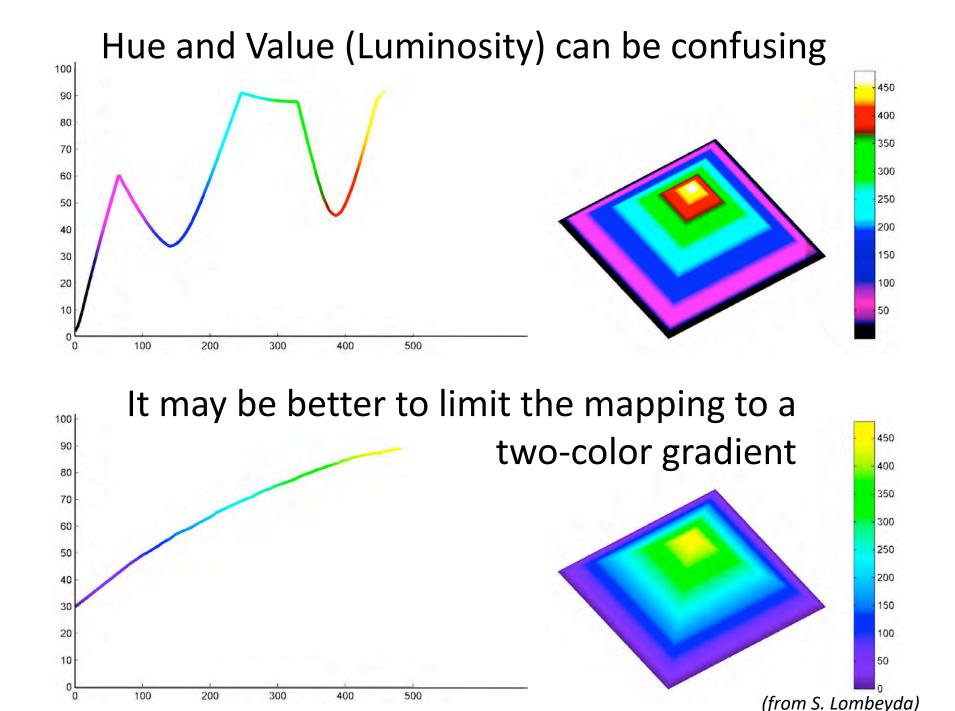


It depends on your purpose

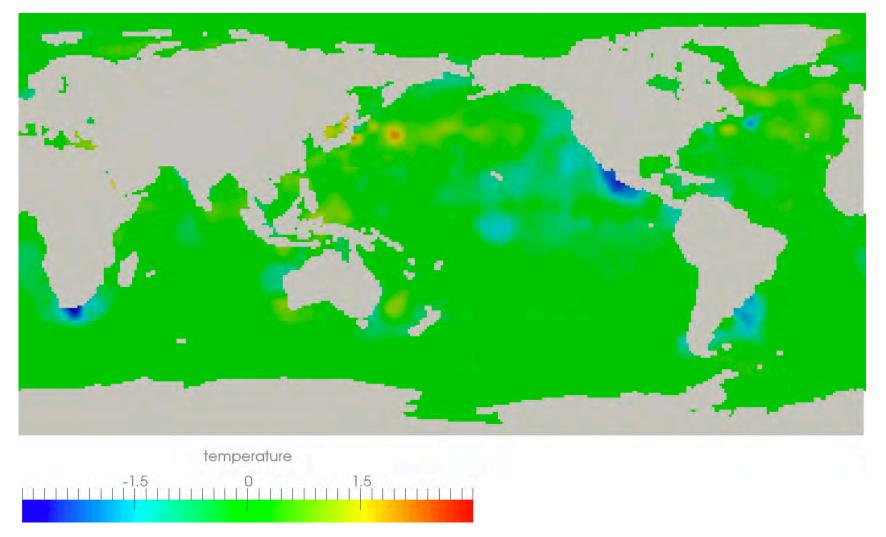
Vary luminance and saturation

Map higher values to darker colors

(from S. Davidoff)

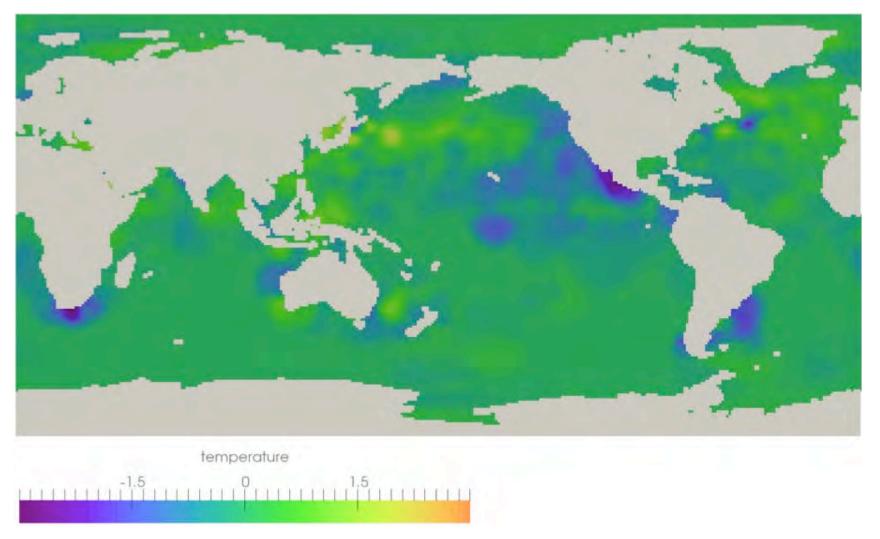


NOAA satellite data on the annual average ocean temperature at a 100m depth



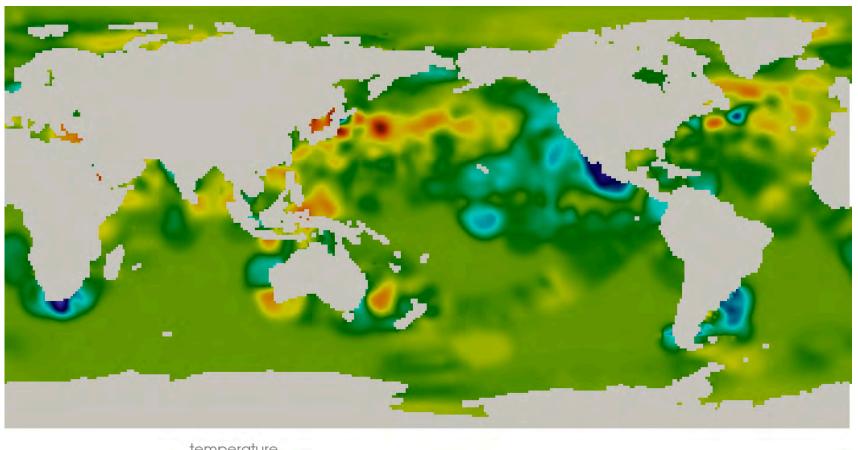
Standard rainbow: dominated by the most common pixel values

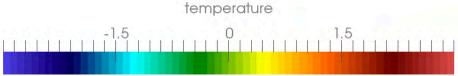
NOAA satellite data on the annual average ocean temperature at a 100m depth



Squeeze the middle to emphasize the tails of the distribution

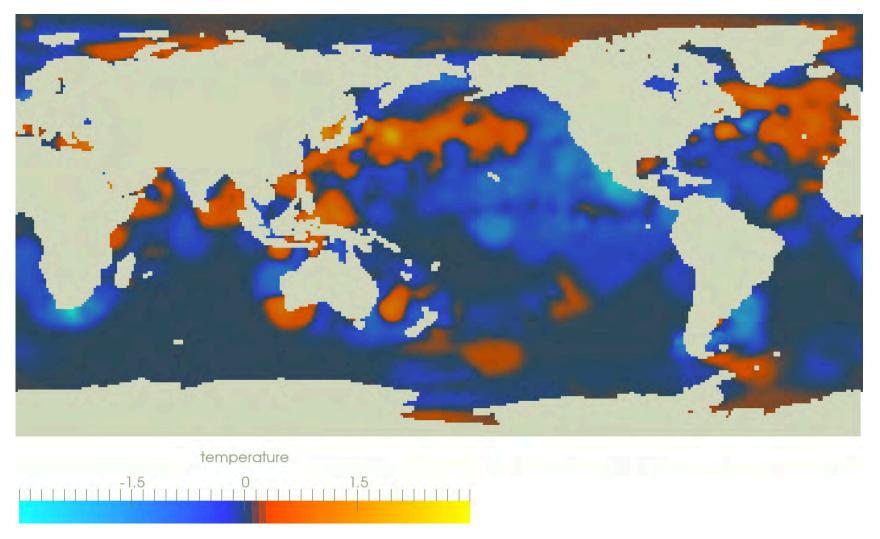
NOAA satellite data on the annual average ocean temperature at a 100m depth





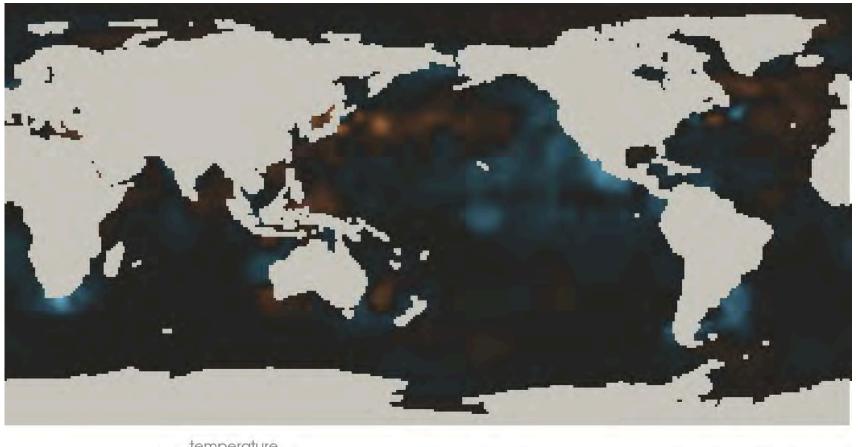
Expand the ends to see most of the variations

NOAA satellite data on the annual average ocean temperature at a 100m depth



Squeeze the middle dramatically, to really emphasize the tails

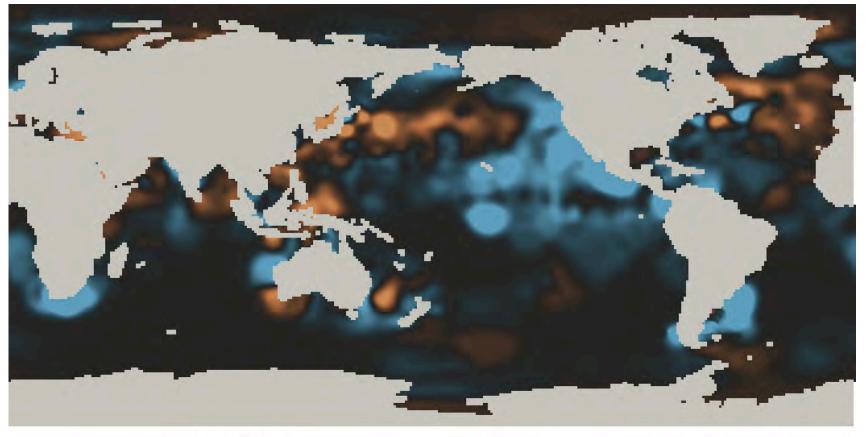
NOAA satellite data on the annual average ocean temperature at a 100m depth



temperature -1.5 0 1.5

Black out the middle, color the ends of the distribution

NOAA satellite data on the annual average ocean temperature at a 100m depth



temperature



Really emphasize the extreme values

### Guidelines for Color in Data Visualization

Use only a few (6 is ideal, 9 is max)

Colors should be distinctive and named

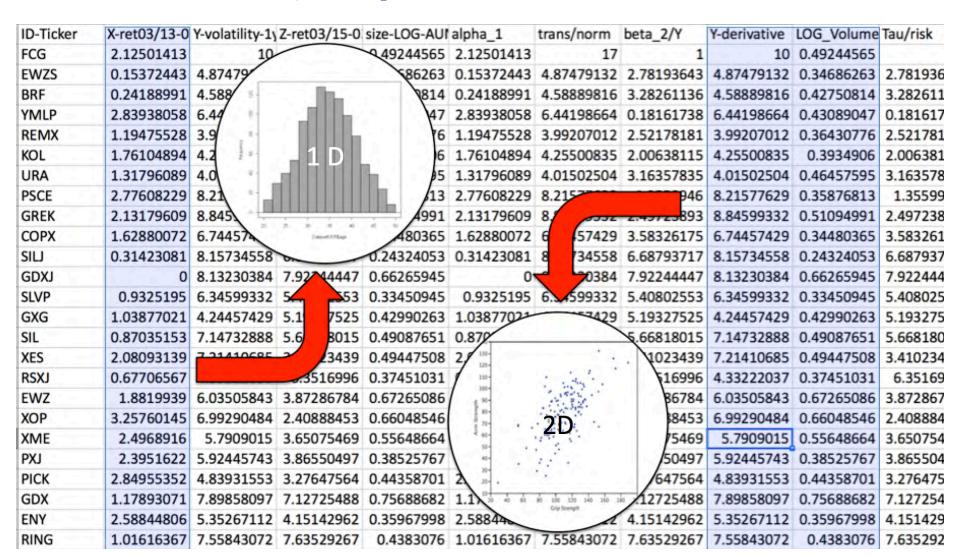
Strive for color harmony

Be aware of cultural conventions

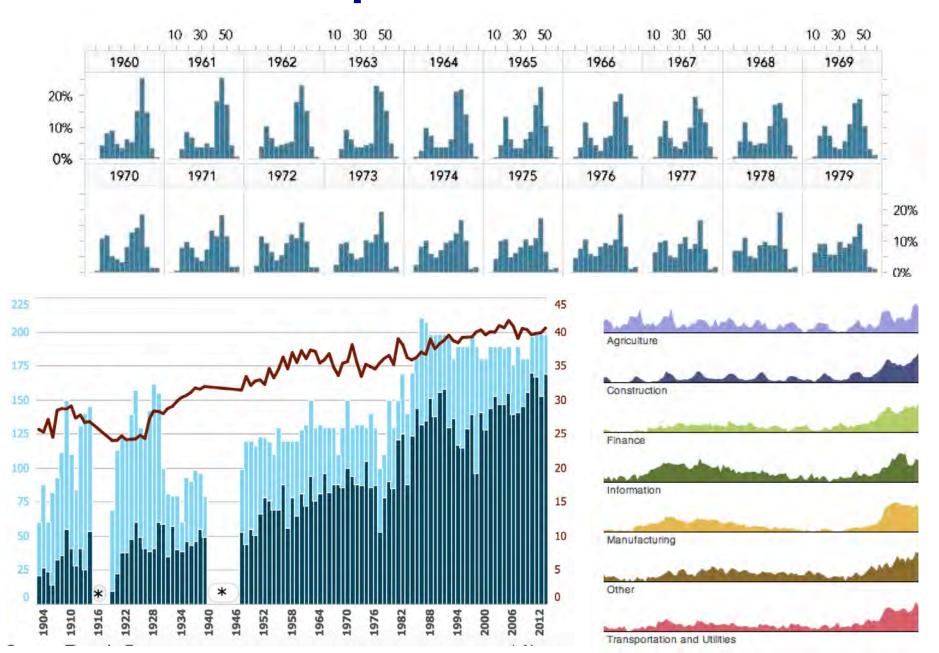
Beware bad interactions

Get it right in black and white

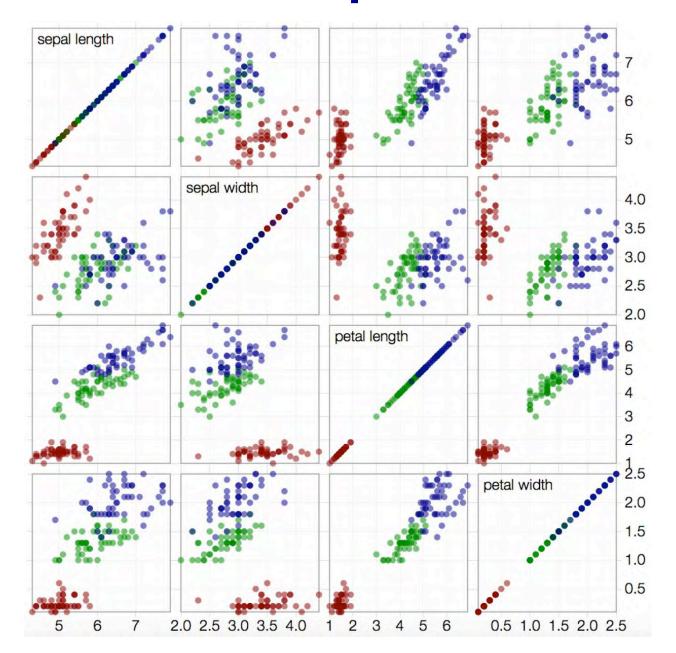
# Traditional data visualization fails to reveal the complex patterns - the hidden knowledge - that may be present in the data



### Multiple 1-D $\neq$ Multi-D



### Multiple 2-D $\neq$ Multi-D

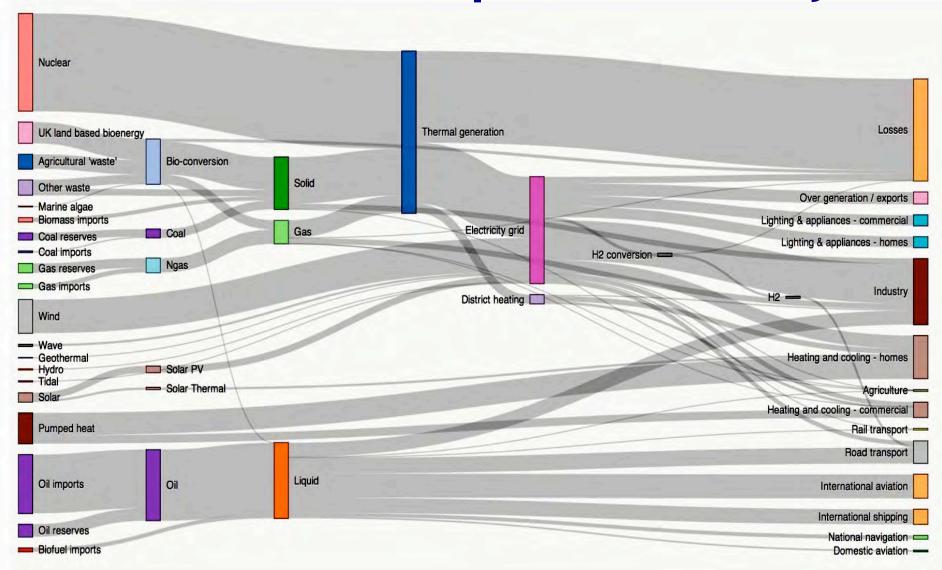


A grid plot of pairwise XY projections

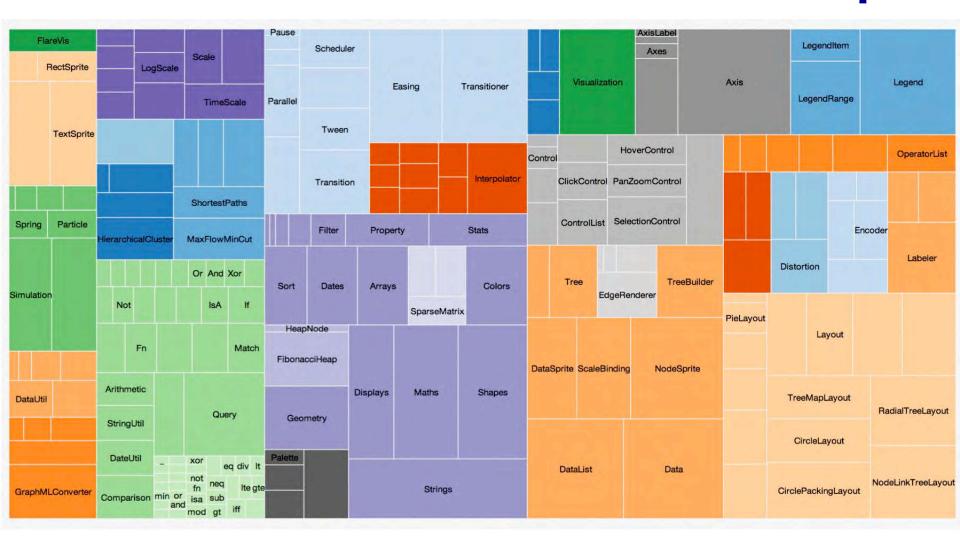
Structures (e.g., clusters) that are present in 3-D (or higher) may not project well on any 2-D plane

**Chord Diagram** A compact way to show multiple connectivities South Of Market

# Sankey Diagram: another way to visualize a multiple connectivity

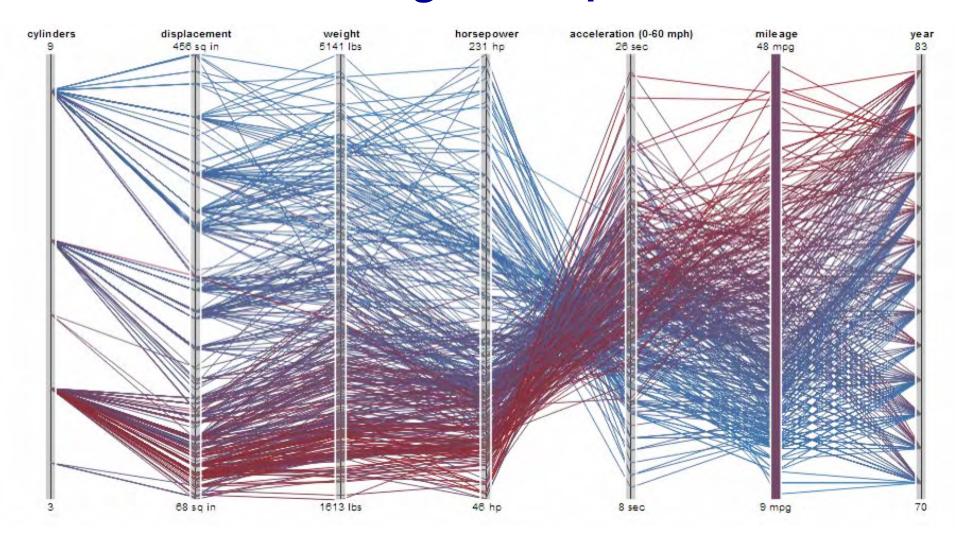


### **Hierarchical Visualization: Treemap**



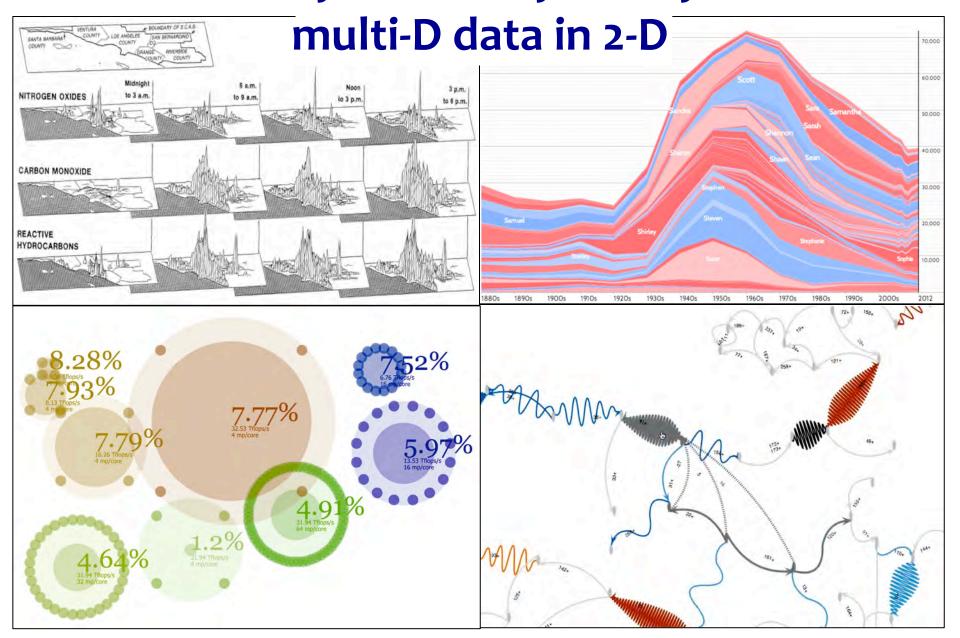
Area = 1 quantitative dimension Color = 1 nominal (or ordinal?) dimension

# Parallel Coordinates: visualize clustering in multiple dimensions



Note: the order of the axes is arbitrary!

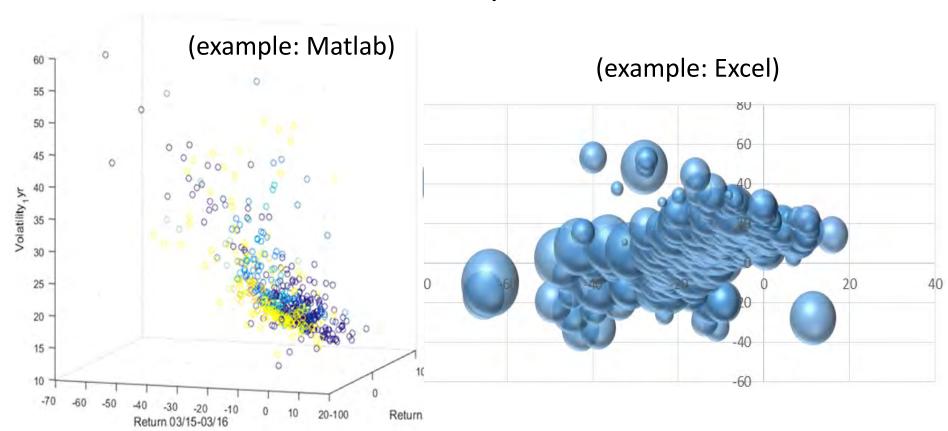
### There are many other ways to try to visualize



(examples from S. Davidoff and S. Lombeyda)

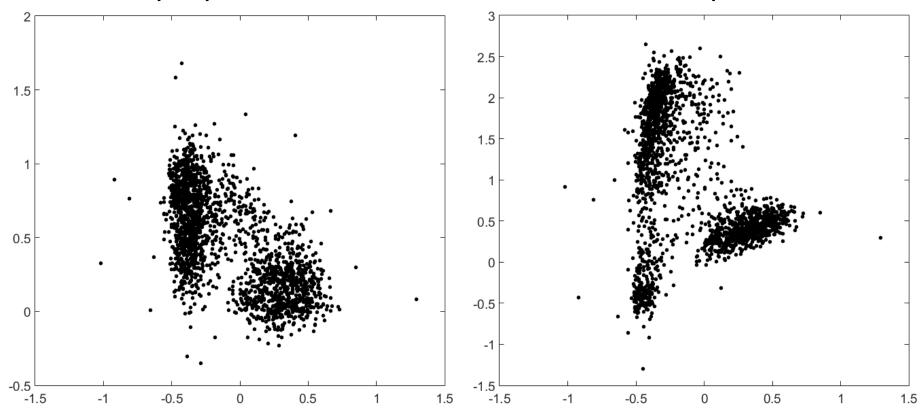
# 3D Data Visualization is Not Simple

Traditional 3D suffers from many problems (navigation, selection, manipulation, anchoring, perspective, occlusion, and inability to transition to 2D and back) that can hide the structure present in the data



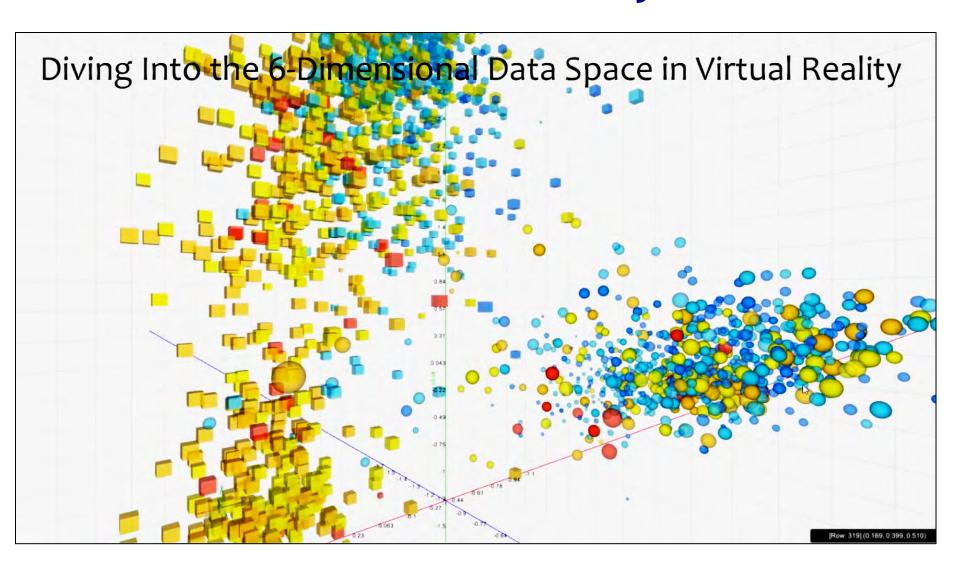
### **Traditional Data Visualization**

An example from astronomy: a subset of data on quasar properties, from a 6-dimensional data space



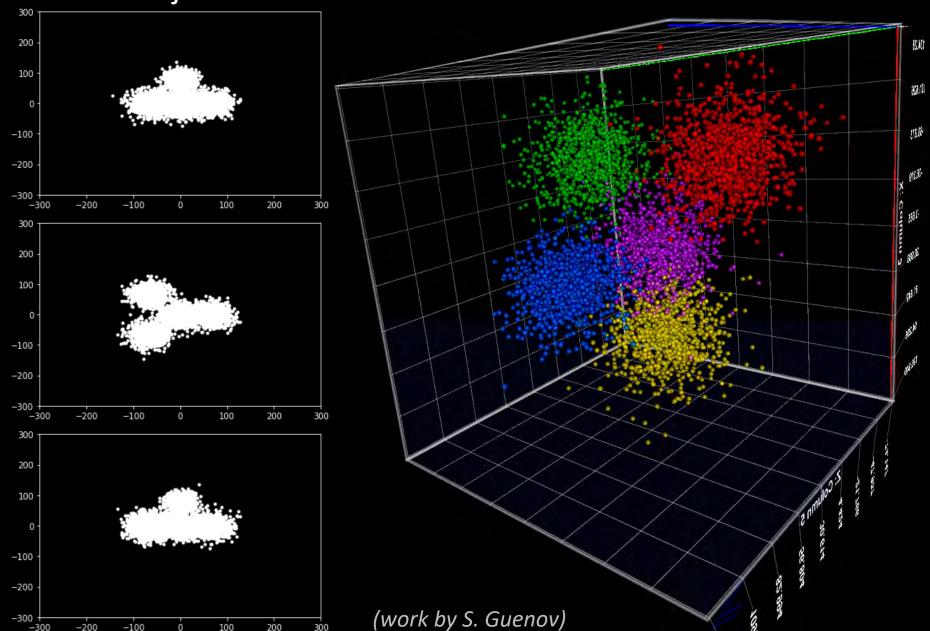
These are 2 out of the 15 possible 2-D plots, but even then relationships involving >2 variables are lost

# Diving Into the 6-Dimensional Data Space in Virtual Reality



### XYZ Projections

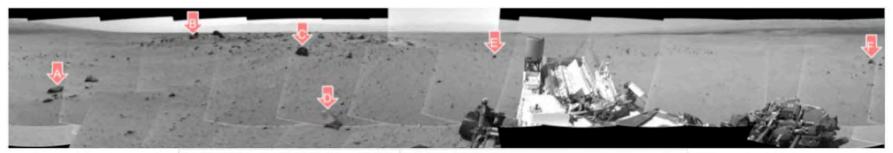
#### 3D Visualization + Clustering Analysis



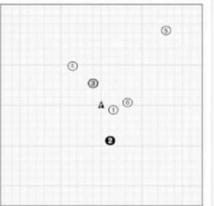
### **Exploring the Virtual Mars at JPL**



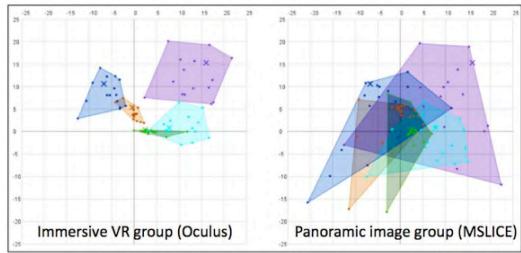
### Navigating on Mars using VR

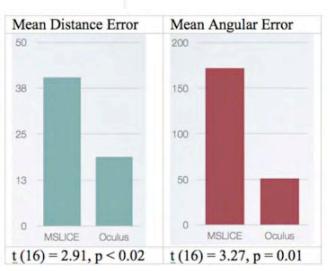


S. Davidoff, J. Norris, et al.



Users in VR are
4 times better in
estimating the
relative positions,
distances, etc.





### Why Virtual Reality?

- VR/AR is the next computing platform, following on the mainframe, desktop, and mobile
- VR solves the problems that traditionally plagued 3-D visualization: occlusion, perspective, navigation, etc.
- Immersion gives a qualitatively different perception of the patterns present in the data
  - The key concepts are proprioception (sense of the relative position) and kinesthesia (movement sense)
- VR is a natural platform for a collaborative visual exploration and collaboration
- Leverages a multi-\$Z investment by the games industry



# Computing/Information/Communication n Platform









From Mainframes...

... to VR/AR Headsets

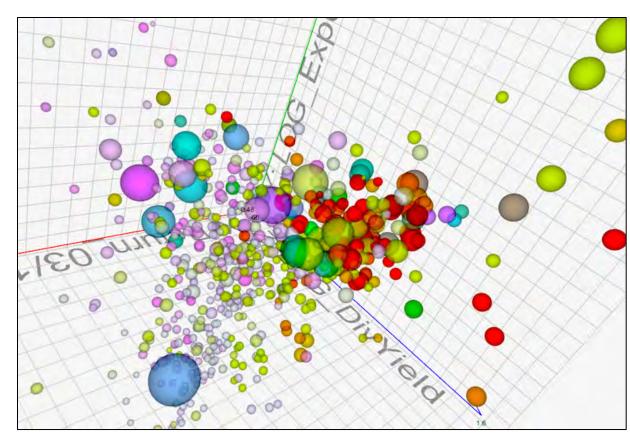
Increasing computing power, usability, fidelity, information content and rate, immediacy

We don't use computers only to compute – we use them to access information and to communicate

### **Quantitative Improvements**

 Preliminary tests using both artificial and real data indicate that dramatic improvements are possible in time-to-insight, as compared to the traditional data analysis/visualization tools (e.g., Excel): from days/months to minutes/hours in some cases

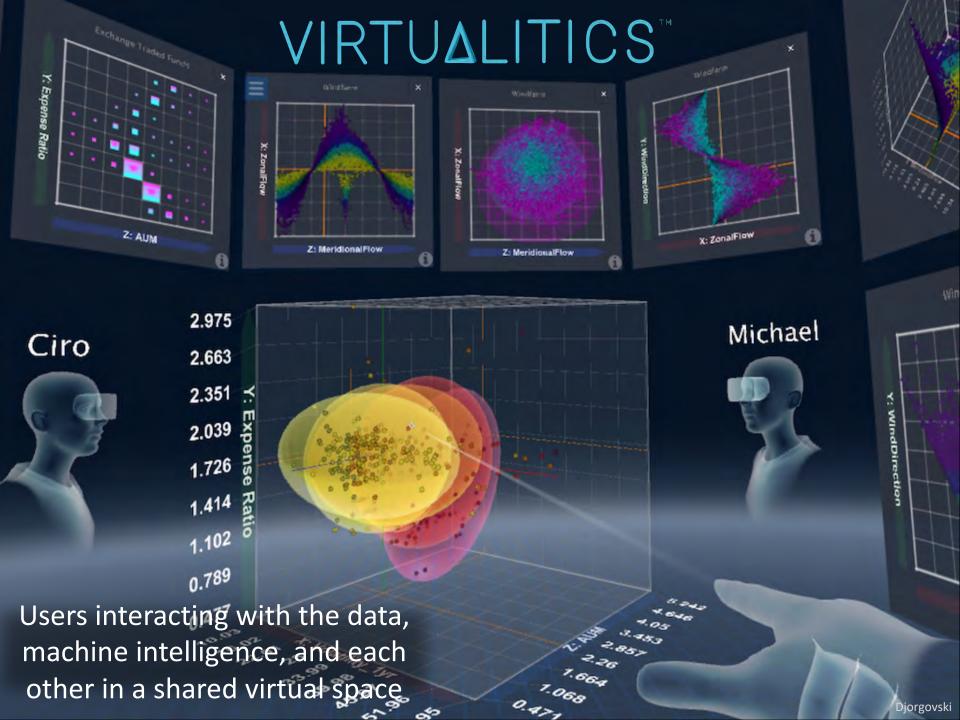
- Some results are simply impossible to achieve using traditional tools, due to the projection effects
- Work still in progress



Keck Institute for Space Studies Symposium on Virtual and Augmented Reality for Space Science and Exploration Caltech, Jan. 30, 2018

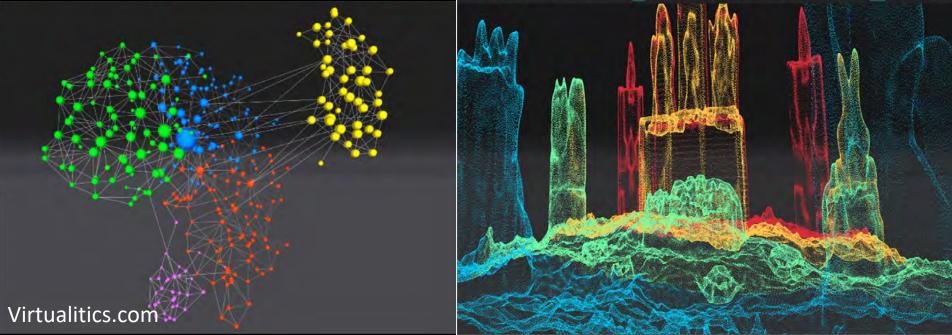
Videos: www.kiss.caltech.edu/symposia/space\_science



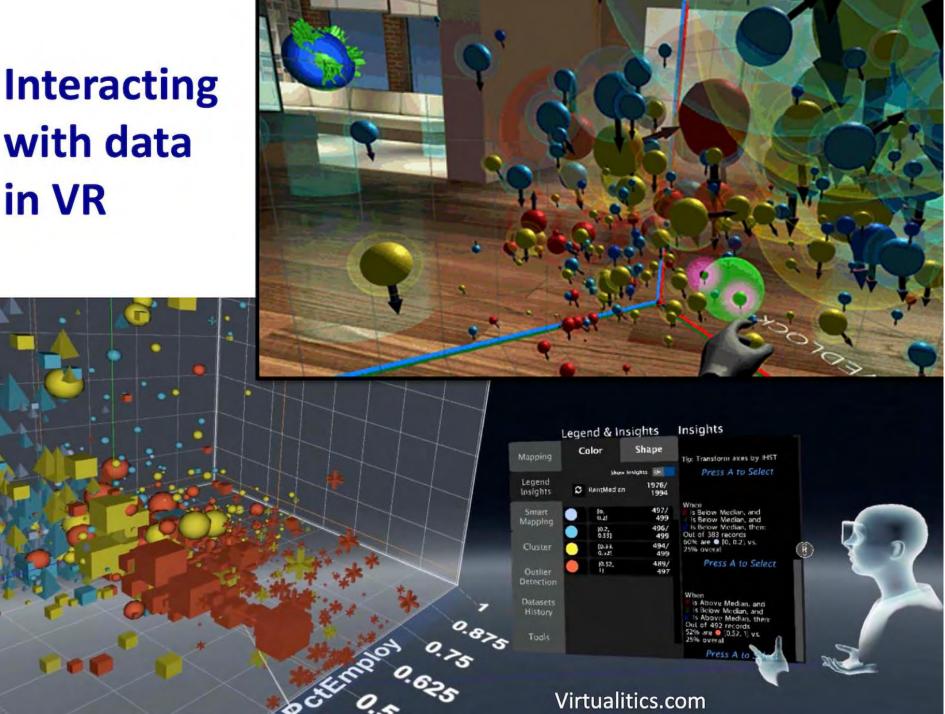


Different types of data visualized in VR



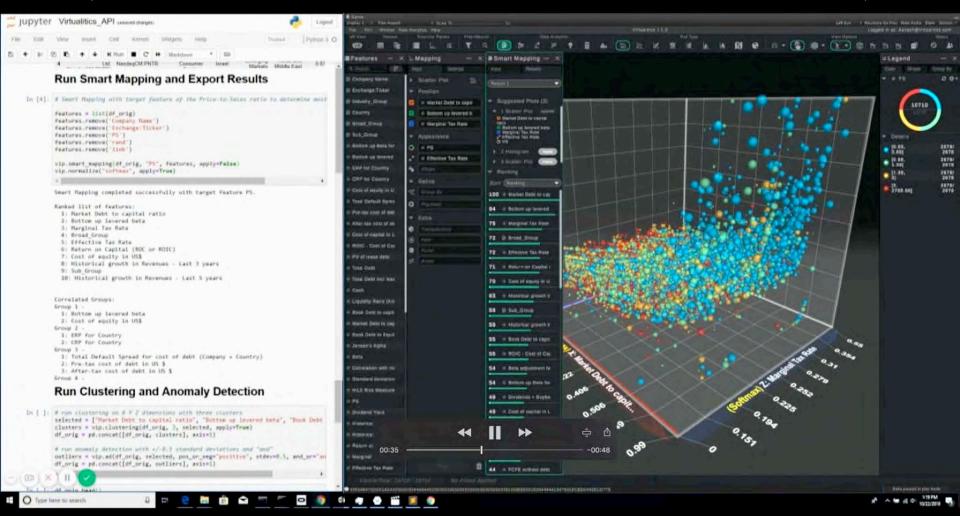


with data in VR

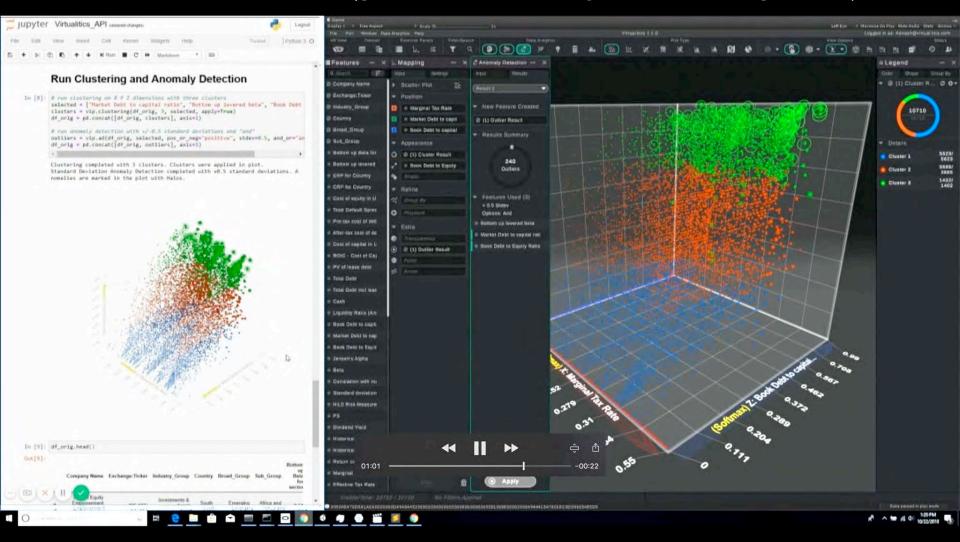




# VR+ML platform API smooth interaction with a Python notebook (and other popular data analytics platforms)

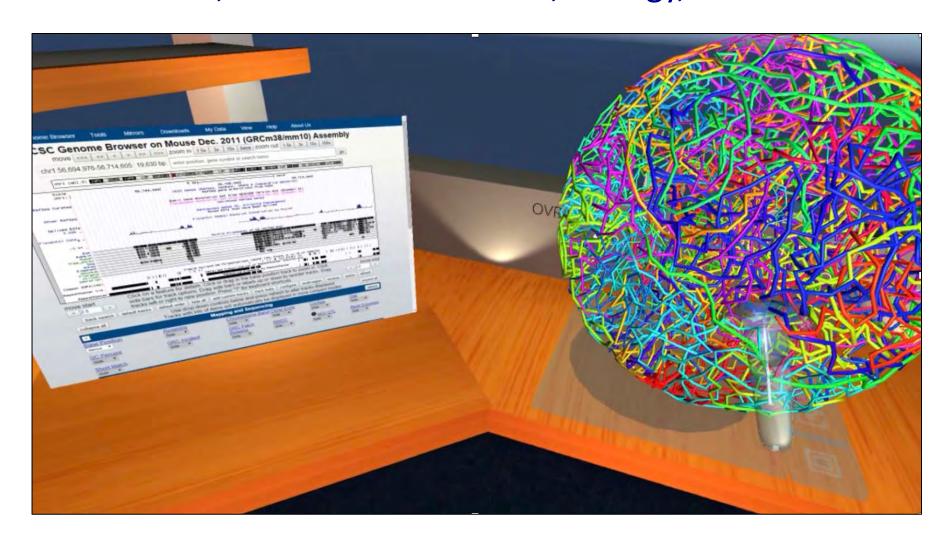


## Export the results back to a Python notebook (publication quality 3D plots)



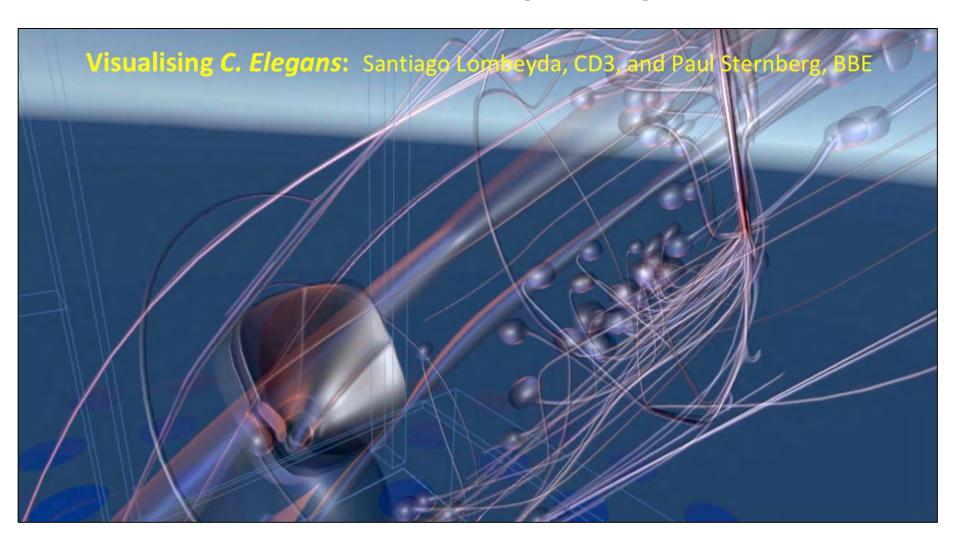
### 3D Mapping of the DNA: Santiago Lombeyda,

CD3, and Mitch Guttmann, Biology, Caltech



### Visualising C. Elegans: Santiago Lombeyda,

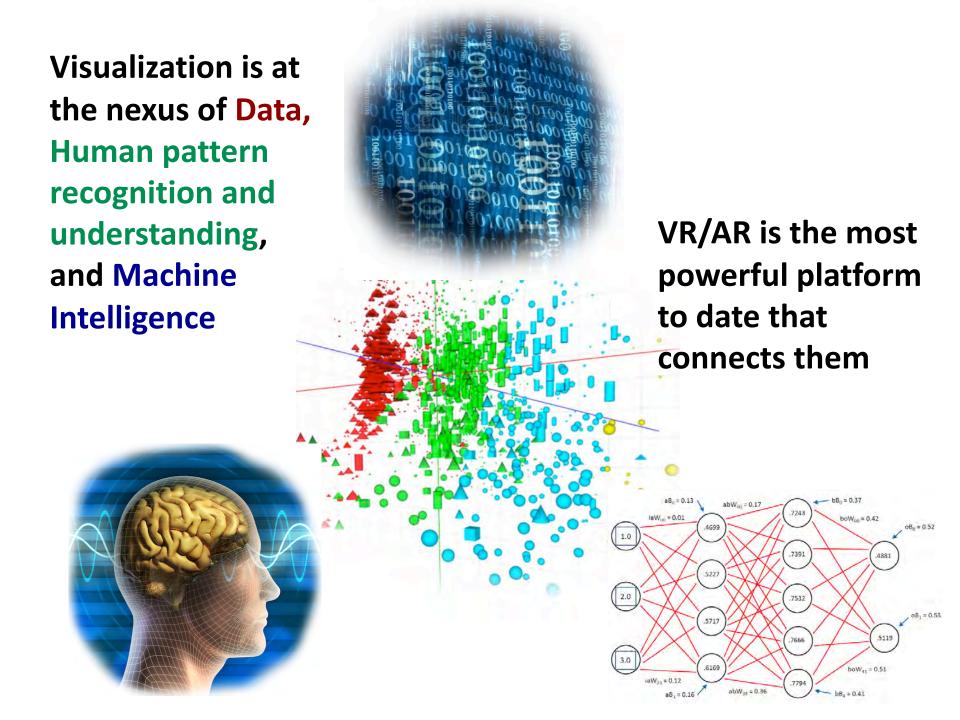
CD3, and Paul Sternberg, Biology, Caltech



### **Virtual Teaching Labs**

- VR enables a better comprehension and recall of the complex patterns and simulated phenomena
- You can do things in VR that are impossible (or too dangerous) in real life: from building or repairing nuclear reactors to entering the cells and the molecules
- This solves one of the major challenges of on-line education



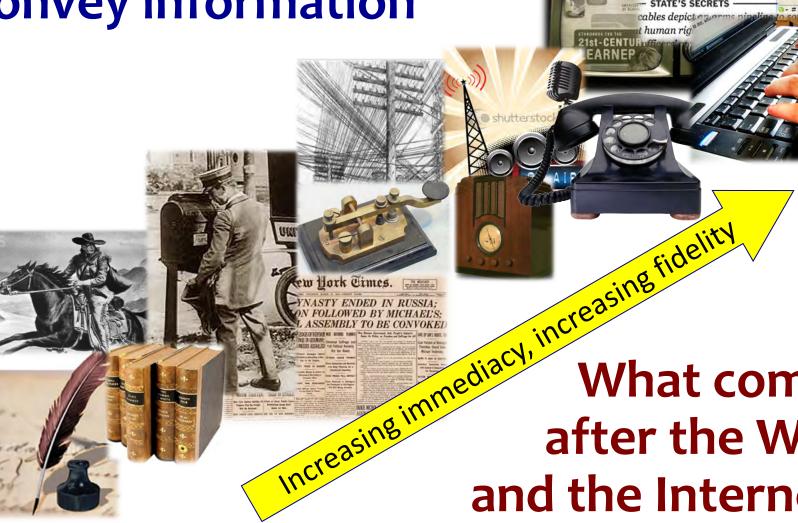


## Ideas, Discoveries, and Learning Occur at the Interfaces

- Between the human minds, theoretical constructs, and data/information
- Between different fields or domains
- Improving technologies for communication and information access facilitate these interactions



**Technology changes how** we communicate and convey information



What comes after the Web and the Internet?



### **Looking Ahead**

VR will become more pervasive and better, driven largely by the entertainment industries, but other domains will follow



- ♦ This will be a natural technology evolution for the digital natives (the future workforce)
- AI will increasingly permeate all aspects of the modern society, science included
  - ♦ It will be essential for a rapid knowledge discovery

VR is the natural interaction environment for the humans and information technology

AI + VR = Cognition Technology

### Summary

- Effective data visualization is an essential component of data exploration and discovery
  - Especially when coupled with machine learning
- Most off-the-shelf data visualization tools are fairly limited, and/or poorly designed
- Learn how to design your data visualizations well
- Visualization of high-dimensionality data spaces may be the key bottleneck of data-driven discovery
  - The challenge is not data size, it is data complexity
- Virtual Reality is a powerful, intuitive new platform for multi-dimensional, collaborative data exploration and visual analytics

  It is not a game any more...

#### Information Dashboard Design

STEPHEN FEW

**Visualizing Data** 

**BEN FRY** 

**Visual Explanations** 

**EDWARD TUFTE** 

**Envisioning Information** 

**EDWARD TUFTE** 

The Visual Display of Quantitative Information

**EDWARD TUFTE** 

Visual Strategies: A Practical Guide to Graphics for Scientists and Engineers

FELICE FRANKEL +ANGELA DEPACE

Information Visualization: Perception for Design

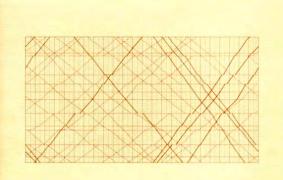
**COLIN WARE** 

Visual Thinking for for Design

**COLIN WARE** 

Interactive Visualization—Insights into Inquiry

**BILL FERSTER** 



The Visual Display of Quantitative Information

EDWARD R. TUFTE