

Slide 1 ...designing from authentic experience

Play scene from Matrix 'birth'



Slide 2

Play scene from The Matrix 'real'

.... what is real?

Last week I played a scene from the Matrix movie in which Neo was aborted from the system once the system became aware that he was aware of the system.

The system rejected him before he could reject it.

I asked you to imagine what it would have been like in that artificial womb before he was aborted. No senses ...no thoughts no feelings etc. ...but that was not the case was it?

If you know the story of the matrix you know that all of his sensations, feeling and thoughts were supplied by the system ...all that he thought was real was supplied by the system. This is why he has trouble coming to terms with his new reality when he realiseseverything he thought was real up until now was not real ...naturally he is angry and tries to deny what is happening to him....but he is faced by the undeniable truth that what he thought was happeningwas really fake and that now there was no going back ...he was in the real world

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Narcissus narcosis, a syndrome whereby man remains as unaware of the psychic and social effects of his new technology as a fish of the water it swims in ... it also becomes invisible. McLuhan (1969)

The world that we confront every day is more and more blurring the boundaries between what is real and what is unreal. Like Neo in the Matrix how do we know if what we experience is real or not. I think sooner than later we will begin to crave more reality. Not reality as depicted in things like reality television butreal reality.

But how do we tell or define the difference.People will look you in the eye and tell you thatreality television, is real.news is presented on television as if its realand they expect you to believe its real, .

you see and hear music on MTV type shows ...but how real is it? You don't know But that's television I hear you say.

Marshall McLuhan had a few things to say about television and the way we have become drugged by it.

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Getting back to transport for a minute. I met a fellow in the Netherlands who was telling me about driving a BMW 7 series on the autobahn.

He said he looked down at one point and was horrified to realise he was traveling at 250kph and he was not aware of it at all.

There was not vibration that had all been engineered out, there was no wind or sound that too was engineered out,

the screen was perfectly clear and could well have been a TV screen for all the input it required of him .

There was no way for him to really tell that he was there at all.

Maybe he was just watching it on a widescreen TV.

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You knowwhat's Real is becoming a really interesting question and I'm certainly not the first to think its important.....if you go to Pine and Gilmores Strategic Horizons website ... there it has an interesting insight into how they think of it ...it says....

Authenticity as the New Consumer Sensibility

In a world increasingly filled with staged experiences – an increasingly *unreal* world – consumers decide to buy or not to buy based on how *real* they perceive the offering to be. **Businesses today must learn to understand, manage, and excel at rendering Authenticity with a capital “A”**. Finding ways to tap into this emerging standard of selection and criteria for purchase will become essential. To be blunt: business offerings must get real. This new challenge perhaps can be **defined best as the *management of the customer perception of authenticity.***

In an age when consumers want what's real, this becomes the new business imperative, and **success awaits those who gain an understanding of what's real and what's fake – (and this is the part that worries me) or at least what elements contribute to forming such consumer perceptions**

....this kind of statement worries me a bit because it hints at, or suggests that a fake answer to providing what's real could be ok if it is 'managed' properly

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Another hint of this kind of subtle manipulation of the real or authentic in order to increase sales and profit can be seen in a paper put out only last week in the Design and Emotion Society newsletter...

The article's author was talking about another designer who had said, that "design should be ...an act of love". Now the author of this article is very well known (so I won't mention his name) but his research and his work is also very well sponsored by auto manufacturers and other commercial interests. He concluded that this was a good thing ...yes ...Design should be an act of love.....but that this is not incongruous with selling more products.

He says quite cynically I think, "[I] may sound like someone who is dreaming of a compassionate world while in reality is oiling the mechanisms of consumerism. How praiseworthy is the intention to develop approaches, techniques, and theories in order to facilitate the design of products that make people feel good, when the outcome is techniques that are used to manipulate unsuspecting consumers? Luckily, that question makes no sense. (he decides) Because, and this is the loveliness of it all, when it comes to experience, commercial and empathic concerns do not collide" ...this from a guy who obtains most of his funding from pleasing commercial organisations.

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I found these comments very strange and somewhat alarming. This is the man who in the same paper seemingly “struggles with” the ethics of using a mechanical formula he has developed for measuring the ‘wow-index’ in products ... with the intention being to excite more people to buy more products.

Surely an important question to be asked here is...if you are to be authentic and design with love,...you should be asking ... do people want these products in the first place and why?again anything can be sold in the name of love if all you have to do to justify it is to say it is with love, where is the meaning? anyone can SAY that If it was a real act of love it would require sacrifice and involve respect?

How do we know any aspiration on behalf of the designer to positively enhance the experience of a product comes from anything real, genuinely felt or authentic?

How do we know if it isn't just ...well intentioned.... or even worsefabricated emotional hooksfor commercial gain.

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If designers were to operate from a real level of authenticitywith love in their designswe would not design cars that make people feel safe but that still kill them in their millions,we would not design software that incites people to do harm to others,we would.... if we really cared, in many cases, not design at all.

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"Twenty-three hundred years ago Aristotle concluded that more than anything else, men and women seek happiness. While happiness itself is sought for its own sake, every other goal - health, beauty, money or power - is valued only because we expect that it will make us happy. Csikszentmihalyi (1991)

I put this quote up there simply because I like it

If design proceeds from a basis of love or caring then it could be called authentic design depending on how the love or caring was developed otherwise how can it be called authentic? If it is simply design aimed at selling more products using a grab bag of emotional tricks to differentiate the product in the marketplace, then it is fakeness and ingenueness of the worst kind Fake in the guise of real

Okthat's the end of my sermon.....now

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Today I want to talk to you about this similar idea of real and unreal.

I will be discussing personal reality...using terms such as authentic and inauthentic, ordinary and superordinary as if they are somewhat interchangeable.

There's been a great deal of discussion around some of these terms of late.....what they mean and how they might be interpreted.Most of the discussion I will talk about todayrelates to the origins of these words in the philosophy of phenomenology.

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Last week after my lecture, someone said to me ...I think the students might benefit from a little more depth in the background of the philosophy that underlies the ToE. Particularly phenomenology and hermeneutics
So today I thought I'd talk about some of the origins of Phenomenology and in particular ...hermeneutical phenomenology and how this relates to the ToE

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This slide shows a rudimentary genealogy of phenomenology.
One of the first difficulties that arise in studies of this subject lie in the fact that most of the people involved started out by studying the writings of the ancient Greek philosophers particularly Aristotle and Plato.

Last week I told you that Hermeneutics is the interpretation of texts. In this case it was the interpretation of Greek texts in the ancient Greek languages. So these and many other scholars argued a great deal about how to interpret them.
Many of the leading people doing this kind of thing were Germanand they naturally wrote their ideas in German. ...consequently.....for English speaking people to understand their interpretations ...they had to be re-interpreted into English. So we have interpretations of the interpretations of the interpretations...and so on until we get to my interpretation. And that is all I offer you ...my interpretation of these interpretations and how I have used these in developing the ToE.

I would however like to make a small apology to Philosophy scholars such as Cameron who understand these things this in far greater depth than I do but I hope I remain true to the spirit of the philosophy if not the detail.

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These multiple layers of interpretation can create some problems if you let them. So in my interpretation of this philosophyit is very important for you to remember, that the words Real, Authentic and Superordinary are just words ...it is their meanings that are really important.

" phenomenology means...to let that which shows itself, be seen from itself, in the very way in which it shows itself from itself.

This is the formal meaning of that branch of research which calls itself phenomenology" Heidegger, 1962

Today what I will try to convey to you is the essence of the meanings of these kinds of words. Whatever words you use... it is the meaning that is important, so I will present the meanings of these words in a number of waysfrom a variety of people ..and from different disciplines

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" phenomenology means...to let that which shows itself, be seen from itself, in the very way in which it shows itself from itself.

This is the formal meaning of that branch of research which calls itself phenomenology" Heidegger, 1962

Edmund Husserl is commonly accepted to be the grandfather of phenomenology and the person who first called it phenomenology. But it was Heidegger who developed it much further.

In the ancient Greek language ...the expression 'phenomenon; signifies that which shows itself, in itself ...and 'logos'is the mode in which it is made manifest or is made visible.

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Husserl drew a lot of his earlier understandings from Dilthey and Schleiermacher as did the master's apprentice Martin Heidegger. It is Heidegger who took phenomenology and really ran with it, leaving Husserl behind, to become somewhat irrelevant.

Heidegger was a very dynamic, young German philosophy teacher ... whose thinking on phenomenology dramatically changed the face of 20th century thinking.

On the left you can see how Existential phenomenology branched off and dominated the French arm with people like Simone de Beauvoir, Jean Paul Sartre and Jacques Derrida ...meanwhile on the right the leading lights in hermeneutical phenomenology were Hans Gorge Gadamer, Paul Ricoeur and Hannah Arendt. ..nearly all these people studied at some timeunder Heidegger.

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Now all of these people have developed their own spin on phenomenology and how it might be used to understand various aspects of life and they are all relevant and helpful in different ways.... I'm going to stay with Heidegger and Gadamer because as I said last week we are looking to understand lived experience through interpretation and that is the essence of hermeneutical phenomenology.

I also said last week phenomenology is essentially the understanding of lived experience and hermeneutics is the interpretation of texts. So when we combine them as Heidegger did, what we are doing is hermeneutical phenomenology...orthe interpretation of lived experiences

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Now I know this is all sounding a bit 'out there' and losing some of you...but it is directly relevant and essential to you really understanding where you are going with your ToE projects. ..and I am hoping all this philosophy background,will give you a more solid basis to understand and guide you as has guided me in my interpretations..

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A fundamental concept of Heidegger's phenomenology is the concept of 'being' ...now this is a little hard to grasp at any time so I ask you to bear with me.

'Being' is the way you are in the world ...it is the sum of your past experiences and your possibilities for future experiences it is the way you are in the world.

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Heidegger's seminal work was called Being and Time. (Sein und Zeit)

It shows his preoccupation with understanding what it means to BEand as being is only two dimensional in terms of you and the world around you it can only be understood in the context of time. So phenomenology is the study of being over time...in other wordsliving. Heidegger came up with a word to describe living or being ... he called it DA SEIN or 'there being'

So Dasein means all the things we understand as our being- in-the-world.

How we understand ... how we arehere... now

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But wait there's more...

Heidegger's concept of Da Sein also has two main layers of living which he calls inauthentic and authentic. Well actually.... he didn't call them this ... the English translator did. Heidegger actually referred to them as *Un-eigentlich* and *Eigentlich*

But we'll stick with inauthentic and authentic ...ok?

So our way of being in the world we will call Daseinand within this way of living we have inauthentic and authentic Daseinor ways of living

What are they?

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Now the English dictionary is not that helpful ...in respect to the meaning of authentic ...it defines authentic as ..."a quality of being authentic, or having genuineness".

In phenomenology nothing is as it seems or is that simpleand the meaning of authentic is no exception.

Imagine again the scene from the Matrix when Neo wakes up in the womb bubble thing. In phenomenological terms he awakens from Inauthenticity and is thrust into Authenticity. When he is in the dream state he is living inauthentically, when he becomes aware of himself he becomes authentic.

This is the essence of authentic experience.

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Dasein (there being)

Heidegger thinks we live in an inauthentic way most of the time" Moran, 1999

Now let me take a step backwards and relink up with Heidegger for a moment. The concept of authenticity and inauthenticity is not simple, ...so lets try to relate this to your everyday life.

Heidegger uses the term 'Dasein' meaning 'being there'. This concept of 'Dasein' includes all your previous life experiences, your past baggage, all the things that go to make up your way of 'being there' ...at any point in time. So Dasein is the way you are in the world ...in an every-day kind of way. Heidegger says that this ...'everydayness' ...is the way we are most of the time.

But 'Dasein' includes both authentic and inauthentic modes of being.

The Inauthentic part of everydayness is the part which we are mostly unaware of. Its the automatic, plodding along without thinking part of our daily routine. Taylor Carmen professor of philosophy at collumbia universtity says

"We understand ourselves daily, ...not authentically in the strict sense, not constantly in terms of the ownmost and most extreme possibilities of our own existence, but inauthentically, we are our selves, but as we are not our own,rather as we have lost ourselves in the everydayness of existing among things and people" Carmen, 2003

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This the way of life that Bourdure calls 'habitus' This is the way most of us live every day ...The way we attach ourselves to things and ways of living that comfort us and reassure us that everything is stable and secure.

" From this viewpoint, the things of the world have the function of stabilizing human life, and their objectivity lies in the fact that [...] men, their ever-changing nature not withstanding, can retrieve their sameness, that is, their identity, by being related to the same chair and the same table" Bourdieu in Bousbaci 2005

I think the cave men had something to do with this. Imagine having to go out each day in a very hostile prehistoric world having to constantly face your fears and your self ...wouldn't you rather be home safe in the cave staring mindlessly into the fire. which is pretty much what we do now with our television sets
...so this is a fairly normal mode of beingwe gravitate towards it naturally



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"Authentic moments are those in which we are most at home with ourselves...I have a deep concrete experience of 'mineness' of 'togetherness'. Moran, 1999

In contrast to these 'mindless moments' there are moments when we are really aware of our existence and our selves, we really see and recognise our 'self'.
These are Authentic moments. Moments of 'own-ness'

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*... developing our understanding of the experience more fully,... brings us closer to generating a simulcrum [a crude representation] of the experience, even up to the point where it becomes the "new real" or new understanding of the experience.
Mergolin (2000)*

These are the kinds of moments we are trying to distil in the ToE process.

We've captured some aspects of our lived experience ...of a party experience.

We've put all these bits into a ToE as a representation of the whole experience.

(remember it isn't THE experience it is only a collection of bits of it)

So the ToE contains the inauthentic (ordinary) bits and the authentic

(superordinary) bits all mixed in together.

So individually and as a team ...we will draw on our Dasein, (our way of being

there)we will look at this party's way of 'being there' using our

understanding of what it was like to be in proximity to this party ...and we're

going to use our Dasein to help us recognise aspects of the parties Dasein that

could be interpreted as 'authentic'.

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We're going to do this by separating out as much of the ordinary or inauthentic

aspects of the experience that we can. This is what we will be doing in the next

few weeks,.... until we are left with a few authentic elements which we might

call in deference to the way I have brutalized Heideggarian language ..I have

called them super-ordinary elements rather than authentic elements...but

remember they're the same thing.

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What then in authenticity?

Heidegger's account of Authenticity

But how will we recognize these authentic moments?...how will we define them?.

Heidegger helps out again here ,...by giving us a clue ...in the way he describes two elements of authenticity ... he talks about Authenticity's resoluteness and forerunning.

Here you can see the problem arising again with interpretation ...and what underlies the whole concept of hermeneutics. How do we understand these two terms ...in terms of what we are doing with this ToE?

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Resoluteness ... consists in a kind of focused engagement with things, and with others

Forerunning' (Vorlaufen). ...means being ready, willing, and able to embrace a particular and essentially fragile set of possibilities, even as they tend to dissolve by their own inertia. Carmen, 2003

Well this is the way I have taken it.

Resoluteness is about confronting and focusing on a situation within an experience... and allowing it to speak to you or effect you in some way.....These are all the fragments of information within your ToE of the party experience and how you will work with them over the next few weeks...to separate out the authentic elements (a bit like separating curds from the whey)

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The second part of Authenticity is called Forerunning ...I know its a weird term probably lost a lot in translation from the German again...but either way lets not get hung up on words but address the meaning.

The Forerunning component of authenticity implies being ready to embrace an ephemeral 'set of possibilities' as we move forward in our analysis or interpretation of the party experience. ...This is precisely what we will be doing in the ToE distillation of the combined experiences in the group ...starting today.

We are moving forward towards an understanding of the experienceand as we move forward we will be letting go of the particulars of the event (letting them dissolve as Carmen says).

By letting the pieces go and working with the meanings we have developed out of themwill develop a new understanding of the experience from which we can develop new possibilities for designing.

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So in week six we will have arrived at an understanding of our Party's Dasein.

We will have distilled an understanding of the authentic elements out of our party dasein.

Now we are almost ready to design something based on this understanding.

This is what I like to call designing from Da sein.

So what now?

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...well assuming we all agree that we can see howusing the ToE enables us to collect data about an experience in a methodical way.It also allows us to interact with that data until we develop a deep understanding of its inauthentic as well as authentic aspects.

....How can we actually work with this understanding in our designing?.

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Again I need to step back a bit and tell you a little about how this ToE was developed.

In the early stages of working with my data I tried a number of ways to use the data in the ToE. At that stage it was simply a collection of fragments and I didn't really know how to develop its meanings ...or in what way.

I started by developing an Experiential Analysis Report (EAR)you think ToE is bad...can you imagine? ..an EARI thought this was really clever at one pointbecause I had really been listening to what it had to say.

The big question was.....How could I make this huge amount of data useful for designing?

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In the early stages I tried to apply a traditional 'design process' approach...that is ...by defining the problem and fixing it

This spread sheet shows how using the elements of the experienceI tried to correct things...the typical problem solution approach...

so the first column shows taking a positive or a negative aspect of the experience ...and seeing how it could be 'fixed'

The second column looks at the individual elements to see if they can be amplified ie. Made bigger or better

In the last column I really let my hair gogetting all lateral and trying to come up with or invent my way out of the situation This is interesting and some of the ideas were quite radical I think ... but it is a little too much like brainstormingvery uncontrolled and adhoc...somewhat meaningless

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And a the problem still remained....

a) I had hundreds of ideas and no real way of deciding what was relevant or not, and

b) logically applying all of them would eventually lead to designing nothing more exciting than another small car....and this was definitely not the goal.

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I'm telling you this to help point out the difference between the linear approach I just described ...which is fairly typical of most design done today and the ToE approach we will be using.

In my case I returned to Heidegger and Gadamer again for inspiration and through further reading and interpretation of their workI developed another approach entirely. One which suggested I could distill the data ...by searching for its authentic essence. ...and this is what you will be doing with your ToE's over the next few weeks.

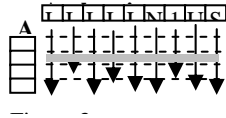
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The design realizations or what you will do with that understanding will largely be up to you in some weeks timeindividually as designers. That is the subject of another lecture which I can't do at this time.... however ...I do want to leave you with some possibilities..... this is where the theory peters out and possibilities really begin...this is where I thinkit gets exciting

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This shows the sort of think that can happen when you tap into authentic design possibilities

.....show car movie file



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My hypothesis ... is that if you develop your ToE's to the point of understandinga number of authentic elements of the experience (authentic Dasein elements)then if you also carefully develop a set of authentic elements of the entity that you wish to design for (authentic Design elements) ...and you put these two authentic things together ...in a creative space.....then you are creating a design domain with a field of possibilities from which to draw inspiration for authentic designing.

I call this an Authentic Design Matrix.

If you do thisyou are applying authentic experience to an authentic entityso your designing can be called ...real or authentic.

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So in summary....designing from a clear understanding of authentic experience,

- Is authentic in the philosophical sense in that it is based of aspects of experience that are outside the ordinary or the inauthentic.
- In Heideggarian terms ...it is authentic ..because it is 'resolute' it addresses the thing itself, the experience and it is forward looking ...by providing a space for possibilities to develop.
- It has a sound scientific basis in that the authentic design elements are drawn from scientifically derived experiential data ...not drawn from scripted, standardized, and formulaic modes of living. The kind of scripted data usually found in marketing driven,user centred research approaches.
- Your designs can genuinely claim to be 'authentic' because they do not follow a 'normal', linear process of problem solution, design ...but come from a more radical design space
- I am hoping that this kind of understanding will help you to always design real thingsfor real peoplebecause I firmly believe that that is where thereal money will be in the future.

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Thank you very much for listening , see you in the workshops the same as last week