

30 Years Informatics Professor: Insights and Perspectives

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Farewell Lecture

October 3, 2024

Farewell Lecture ???



- 30 years Informatics professor ... in 30 minutes ?
- Systematic discussion of own work and achievements ?
- Technical presentation, akin to an Inaugural Lecture ?
- Copy of another Farewell Lecture ?

→ **“Insights and Perspectives“**, ...

... to have to reflect on 30 years of academic work,
... to convey some (useful) “messages“ to (young) colleagues,
... based on (only) „sporadic evidence“.

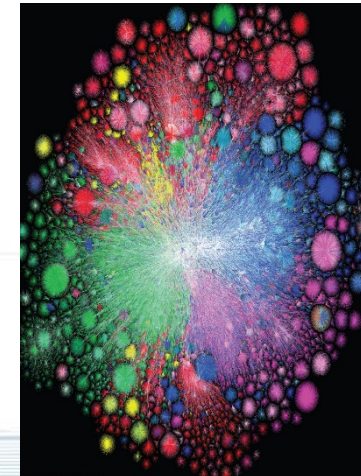
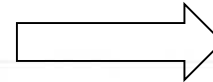
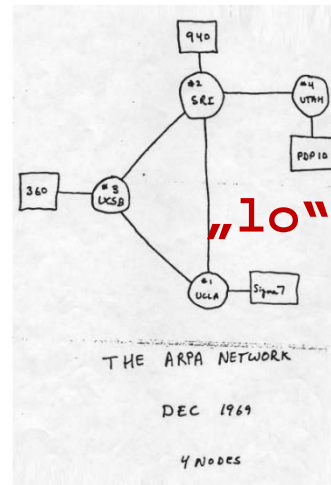
Insights

1. *Humble beginnings can lead to great, durable, new, and unexpected outcomes.*

Example “in the large“:

Development of the Internet

Wikimedia
Commons



CACM, 02/2023

Example in the institute: Research on multimedia systems @ ITEC

2 FWF projects → ... EU/FFG projects ... → ... BITMOVIN ... → ... CD lab ...

Sincere thanks to: László Böszörményi, Christian Timmerer, Klaus Schöffmann, Mathias Lux, PhD students, post-docs, and colleagues

Insights

2. Believe in people's potential and be surprised by how it unfolds!

Example „in the large“: FWF – funding of career development



Examples in the institute: Christian Timmerer, Martina Steinbacher

Sincere thanks to: Martina Steinbacher

Insights

3. Other perspectives, an open mind, understanding, and cooperation are productive.

Examples “in the large“: Wikipedia, Linux, many open source projects



Examples Hellwagner:

- FWF: project proposals from the perspectives of applicants, reviewers and funding agency (jury/panel)
- Research on drones, in cooperation with colleagues of ICE



Sincere thanks to: Christian Bettstetter, Bernhard Rinner, Stephan Weiss, PhD students, post-docs, other collaborators

Insights

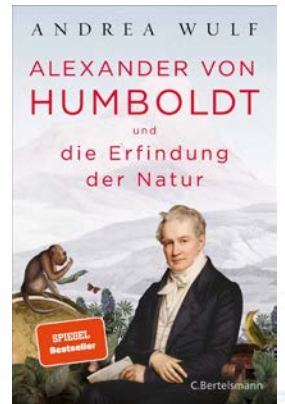
4. Appreciation of, interest in, and support of other people pay off.

Example “in the large“: Alexander von Humboldt

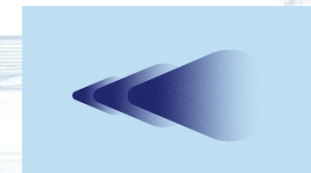
„Humboldt unterstützte junge Wissenschaftler, so gut er konnte ...“

„Humboldt ‚macht es Freude zu helfen‘, sagte Babbage ...“

Andrea Wulf, AvH und die Erfindung der Natur, Bertelsmann 2016



Examples Hellwagner: workshops and presentations, reviews of and consultation on proposals of young scientists



FWF ASTRA

Sincere thanks to: Marion Taschwer, Rudolf Messner, Margit Letter; members of university rectorate, university administration, and FWF

Insights

5. Hard, persistent work and overcoming setbacks are indispensable.

Examples “in the large“:

- A.v. Humboldt: „Alle Widerstände lassen sich durch Energie besiegen.“ (Wulf)
- T.A. Edison: „Genius is 1 percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration.“
- L. Pasteur: „Chance favors only the prepared mind.“

Examples Hellwagner: appointments, projects



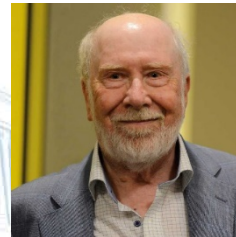
Sincere thanks to: Gertraud, Martin and Hannes; family and friends

Insights

6. High quality standards, clarity, and precision of language (communication) are essential.

Examples “in the large“:

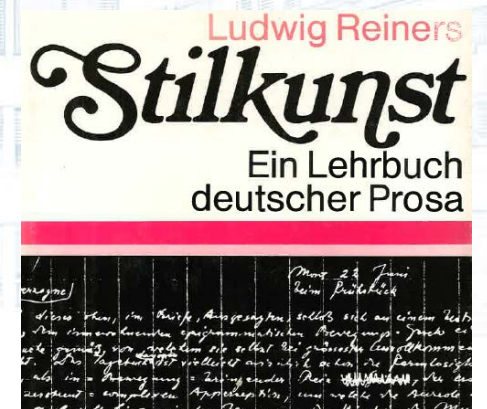
- AvH: „Für H[.] war die Sprache ebenso wichtig wie der Inhalt.“ (Wulf)
- US colleagues and textbooks
- Niklaus Wirth



ETH Zürich

Examples Hellwagner:

- Ludwig Reiners, *Stilkunst*: „Klarheit – Kürze – Klang“
- Work on text with PhD students:
„clear – concise – consistent – convincing“



Insights

7. Watch out for the developments and results of our work and (technical) disciplines!

Examples “in the large“:

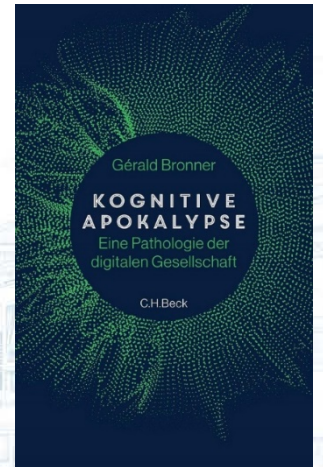
- numerous *dual-use* technologies
- Joseph Weizenbaum: „ELIZA“ (1966)
- so-called „social media“

Example Hellwagner:

Research on (swarms of) drones



Shutterstock



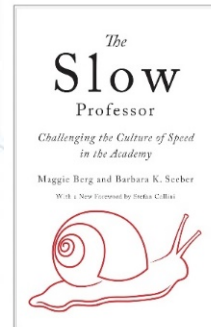
Perspectives



Digital Humanism? Risks and threats of AI?
„Slow Professor“?



DIGHUM



„Wir sollen heiter Raum um Raum durchschreiten,
An keinem wie an einer Heimat hängen,
Der Weltgeist will nicht fesseln uns und engen,
Er will uns Stuf‘ um Stufe heben, weiten.“

aus: Hermann Hesse, „Stufen“, in *Das Glasperlenspiel*

„Try not to become a man of success,
but rather try to ~~become~~ a man of value.“

remain

~~Albert Einstein~~
FWF NawiTec

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THANK
YOU!