Infornography(book)

From DataLust

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Infornography: The Tao of Memetic (Meta)Engineering

Introduction

Information is omnipresent. Knowledge is power, not only over personal fortune and the fate of others, but also over the destiny of the universe. Those who know how to wield the sword of data are the Neitzcsheian OverMen, Stephenson's Morlocks, the Illuminati: they control the world. In the words of Orwell (in his book 1984), "He who controls the Present, controls the Future. He who controls the Future, controls the Past". This book is an introduction to the art of memetic engineering, data mining, information overload, and metaprogramming. Welcome to The World of The Real.

The Purpose

The purpose of this text is to teach the reader the following:

- The power of data
- Respect for data
- How to wield data
- How to grok and become one with data
- The consequences of a society in which data is wielded and grokked effectively

Items

Before you begin, you will need the following:

- A few computers running a free UNIX such as Linux, FreeBSD, or Darwin. A safe choice is Lunar Linux (http://lunar-linux.org), which is reasonably stable and has everything necessary easily accesible.
- A broadband connection. Although this is not entirely necessary, it will definitely help.
- Monitors. As many as you can fit on your desk or computer stand. Should equal approximately the number of video outputs of your computers. These will be used for inputting large amounts of data into the brain subliminally.
- Data. Good types of data to use are:
    -
    - EBooks. Get a ton of them from Project Gutenberg (http://gutenberg.org) on a variety of subjects.
    -
    - Essays and papers. Google Scholar (http://scholar.google.com) will help with this.
    -
    - Other textual data. Try WikiPedia or search Google for subjects you are interested in. Source code works too, if you're a coder.
    -
    - Music and music videos. The trippier, more complex, flashier, more jarring, and more syncronized, the better. Also helps if there is a big data content to the video or song, even if it is simply visual or melodic. Stereophonic stuff works great. Try CreativeCommons (http://creativecommons.org) for free-licensed music, videos, text, et cetera, or AMV.org (http://animemusicvideos.org) for anime stuff. Also, Google Video and other net video sites (the ones that let you download the videos or read from a socket stream) are good places to find these things. Bittorrent sites are nice as well, if you don't mind legality/suit-related crappiness.
- A copy of X.org (or some other stable X client) and XScreensaver (from which we will be getting our subliminal message program, xsublim, though other screensavers are useful as data sources)
- Energy drinks. Taurine, caffine, ginko, d-ribose, sugar, and carbs are what you should be looking for primarily, with gurana, cartenine, and other nonstandard ingredients as a secondary goal. Taurine is a neurotransmitter, which will help build up connections and speed in the brain, and also helps regulate the pacemaking cells in the heart, making the effects of the caffine less dangerous. Caffine will increase the pulse rate and build up speed in neuroelectric processes. The brain runs only on pure sugar, but carbs break down into sugar when needed. D-Ribose, a complex sugar of some type, packs a huge punch as far as energy and brain function are concerned.
- A diet rich in fish, carbohydrates, fruits and vegetables, and sugar. Fatty fish contain the infamous (and aptly named ^.~) Omega-3 oils, which help build neurons and the

connections between them. Carbs and sugars provide energy for your brain, which soon will be requiring quite a bit more energy than it's used to. (NB: My brain now uses approximately 5 times the sugar it used to before I began the treatments, about 3 years ago. -John Ohno). Fruits and vegetables contain vitamins and minerals that help keep your systems strong and your body and mind generally healthy.

- A good selection of brain exercises. These can be found at the DataLust community, in magazines like MentalFloss, and on the web. Brainteasers and riddles of varied types, strategy board games and trivia games, and things like crosswords, visual puzzles, word games, mazes, and Sudoku/Kakuro-type logic games will prove to be worthwhile in helping grow your mental facilties. The more your brain hurts, the more it's working. The "Scramble Squares" family of puzzles from b. dazzle, inc. present an enjoyable challenge that will fry your brain, and multiplayer games like Shougou will help build up certain sections of the NeoCortex as well. If you are a programmer, try some esoteric languages like BrainFuck or Befunge.

- A lot of time. It will take a long while to progress, even spending a lot of time in front of monitors and doing puzzles. Make sure it doesn't interfere with any prior plans beforehand. Once you start, you're in it for the long haul. Although you can stop at any time, you won't want to, because like the name implies, Infornography has an element of illicit, almost sexual thrill. Be forewarned.

- Your brain. If you don't think and try your best to work within this paradigm (or at least aligned to it), you will have some issues. We would like you to go, explore, and try out new variants and new methods. That's what we did to begin with, just starting out. And when you do, we'd like you to tell us about them, perhaps post your findings on this very page. But remember, only the unwise reject the techniques of their predecessors without first understanding their merits. We put a lot of work into exploring and creating this guide, and if you start over from the beginning without at least being aware of the work we did, it is unnecessary duplication of effort. Futhermore, if you go through the steps halfassedly and make no effort to really understand or expand upon what's going on, it will not work at all. If we have some factual error, fix it. If there's something you disagree with, find a way to get around it. The way is flexible, more of a nylon rope than a steel rod, but if you are not careful you ca

Warnings

The methods in this book can have the following side effects:

- Headaches
- A burning sensation in the eyes or head
- An increase in normal pulse rate
- Synthasia (mixing of senses, for example "seeing sounds" or having visual or audio patterns that represent certain ideas trigger certain other sensory feedback that signify the representation of that idea)
- Seeing subliminal messages in one's normal vision, even when one is not looking at actual subliminal messages
- Increased metabolism
- Increased need for sugar and carbohydrates
- Faster speaking, or speaking coherently without subvocalisation
- A feeling of "static" or noise signals in the mind

- An integration of concious thought into the upper subconcious
- Having non-subliminal data trigger subliminal effects
- Intense, near-hallucinatory memory of information
- Cryptoknowledge (knowing things, but not knowing where the information comes from)
- Increased need for new information and experiences
- The tendency to become bored easily
- The tendency to attain a very intense focus level (hyperfocus)
- The tendency to zone out and become lost in thought
- Slight telepathy
- Better than average intuition
- Dream premonitions
- Insomnia
- The inability to "stop thinking"

These are all signs of the treatment working, and should be seen as a good thing.

Do not attempt the treatment if you:

- Are prone to epileptic fits
- Have high blood pressure
- Have increased chance of a heart attack or stroke

Doing so is projected to possibly result in health problems.

Miscelania

This book is created and maintained by the members of DataLust.net and other interested parties. It is continuously under revision, and its newest version can be found at http://hakware.twilightparadox.com/datalust/wiki/Infornography(book). News on its progress, written by its maintainers, may be found on The DataLust/Infornography Blog (http://datalust-infornography.blogspot.com).

It will be published in dead-tree form once it is reasonably complete. This version will be found at The DataLust Store (http://cafepress.com/~datalust).

Chapter 1: The Meme, and other background info

What's a meme?

A meme is a unit of information. It can be as small as a bit, or as big as the whole universe. The difference between saying "memes" and "data" is that memes are seen as being evolutionary organisms. Memes fight for cognative space and resources, and evolve themselves in order to survive, using humans as hosts. A good example is a religion. Christianity, and many other monotheistic religions, survive well by making sure there is no competition for space within hosts. They do this by making sure no other religions can inhabit the host. Buddhism and Taoism, on the other hand, act in a symbiotic relationship with other religions and belief systems, and thereby secure themselves a place even if there are other religions in occupation.

Memes can be viral, and spread from person to person. A good example is a religion that's interested in "converting heathens", or a fad. This can be a good thing, as in the case of GMail's viral marketing, or it can be a bad one, like MicroSoft's FUD (fear, uncertainty, and doubt) campaigns. Memes can be concious, or they can be subliminal. A book is a meme, and so is a

person. In fact, the entire history of the universe (according to Quantum Computer Scientist Seth Lloyd, at least) can be attributed to the processing and transfer of memes.

What's in a name?

Meme comes from the same root as "memory", and the french "meme" (translated as "the same"). The meme is information from a human perspective, a memory that is kept alive inside people, and transferred between people of similar interests. It is constantly changing, but its essence, the will to survive, is always the same.

The meme: a history

Memetic Engineering

Memetic Engineering, a term that is being coined specifically for this book, is defined as the following:

Memetic Engineering: (n) The art and science of creating, manipulating, and understanding memes from a utilitarian perspective; the wielding of specially crafted memes as tools of change, created specifically so that they would generate the feelings, ambiguity, connotations, and other specific qualities (such as viral nature) to do their job. It is like programming a computer with poetry, except that the computer is human, and its processor a machine of meat.

The purpose of this book is to introduce the reader to memetic engineering, however, a set of exact, step-by-step instructions for creating a meme will not be adressed. However, by following the instructions herein, you (the reader) will begin to create memes, first subconciously, then semiconciously, then finally you shall wield the power that moves entire bodies of thought. Being an effective memetic engineer requires skill, patience, and intuition. However, if you've read past the introduction to this book, you probably have all of this already.

In the words of [Son of Rust](), "Information is Surpreme".

Chapter 2: Sublims

What's a sublim? Just the facts, ma'am.

"Sublim" is slang for subliminal message, the thing that Marshall McLuhan and Mad Magazine warned us all about in the 1960s. It is some sort of information that is input into the brain of the user without his concious mind processing it. It is said to have a subconcious effect like that of hypnosis or sleep-learning.

Contrary to popular belief, sublims, like hypnosis, have very little ability to "program" people into doing things they don't want to do. For example, I could send you a sublim telling you to kill someone, and if you were morally against killing, your brain would ignore the instruction. On the other hand, people who don't really think, and just go through their lives on autopilot, tend to have less depth to their moral qualms and would probably take this instruction to heart.

Sublims are used here not for their controlling value, but instead for their ability to pipe large amounts of information into the brain at a high speed and subconcious level. This provides us with the ability to initiate a sort of artificial "information overload", which gives us headaches and staticy brains, but also grows the neural connections that make us smart and give our brains the kind of mental shock-training that make us think faster and process better. Certain methods used with sublims will also make our thoughts more parallelized, our lateral thinking more

flexible, and increase our ability in math, vocabulary, languages, reading, quick association, and other uses.

Setting up a sublim rig

A sublim rig is simply a group of computers and monitors displaying subliminal messages and other data. For the purposes of this text, we will be giving examples with UNIX in mind, since that is what the authors use, however you are welcomed to add your own experiences in terms of creating sublim rigs on other systems.

The first step is to hook up all the computers. A few should be laptops or dual-monitor systems, so that the same data can be displayed on more than one monitor. It is also useful to have some monitors that are badly tuned to the video card settings, though if the tuning is too extreme it may be dangerous, so it is recommended to either use known safe tunings or to avoid this altogether (a tuning generated automatically by a video card/monitor probe and then set to a lower frequency is likely to be ok). Each computer should be running a variant of X (the GUI for UNIX), as well as the XScreensaver daemon (which can be initialized by running "xscreensaver &"). They all should also contain multiple copies of scripts of the following format:

nice -20 /usr/X11R6/lib/xscreensaver/xsublim -delayShow $(($RANDOM % 3 + 1)) -delayWord $(($RANDOM % 4)) -delayPhraseMin $(($RANDOM % 4)) -delayPhraseMax $(($RANDOM % 7 + 4)) -no-center -no-screensaver -no-random -program "cat ~/PATH_TO_TEXTDATA/"*

where */usr/X11R6/lib/xscreensaver* is the path to your XScreensaver program directory, and *~/PATH_TO_TEXTDATA* is replaced with the path to the folder containing the data collected and put in place in the next section.

You should have multiple copies per set of data, with a total of as many that will run without too much lag. This should be on every computer. Create a script that will run all of them in the background, sleeping random intervals inbetween running some of them. Make all the scripts executable, and when you are ready to sublim, run the master script.

Choosing data

Now is the time to choose a bunch of those ebooks and text you've downloaded to pipe into the streams. Pick ones you have heard of and agree with, but have never read, as well as your old favorites, especially ones you haven't reread in a while. Additionally, try lyrics for your favorite songs, essays and theses about subjects you're interested in, and your own writings (both poetry and prose).

When collecting these, place them in different directories based on the type of information held within. This will allow you to put the messages in parallel while maintaining a bit of consistency. Also, choose some music videos and movies to use. These will be playing while the subliminal messages will be going, to distract you from the messages themselves. Choose ones that have personal significance, thought provoking and confusing plots, lots of flashing and fast cutting, good syncronity with the music, lots of overlayed data or advanced ing, and your personal interest. Also, stereophonic experimentation in the audio helps.

Sublimming

To sublim, plug each of the groups of texts into the sublim scripts, more than once each if possible. Choose a bunch of brainy screensavers to run on the other computers, and run the

sublim scripts on all screens, with the screensavers going on every screen but the ones hooked to the computer that will be playing the videos.

To play the videos, I suggest a program written by Jon Kopetz called [PWIM](#). It allows one to play any file in a set of specified directories using a set of filename search terms. As of this writing, it works only on UNIX. It has both a command line and a GUI mode, and it supports playlists.

Hints for better results

- Try to play a varied set of videos each time, as this will help with the flow of new data, and keep you from becoming bored.
- Perception is everything. The effects of this treatment are governed largely by your perception of how it's working. A good attitude is therefore useful. Additionally, you can use this placebo effect to your advantage, using the power of suggestion to add functionality. Try making up rules governed by the videos watched. For example, I specify that a certain video, when upside down, marks the beginning of my session, and that the same video, right side up, marks the end. I also sometimes specify that all or some of the semantics shown by the videos played before a certain video are negative, or to another video, positive. The possibilities are endless.
- Try varying your perception of the videos and sublims, for example by flipping them upside down (MPlayer's "-flip" option), or wearing coloured sunglasses (perhaps partially on and partially off), or with an LCD screen, viewing from a slight angle. This will modify the data slightly, and make your brain process harder to deal with it.
- When you sublim, try to be aware of the messages but not to read them. This will allow them to be subconciously recieved without the risk of not seeing them at all.
- Think about things slightly related to the video while watching it. This will increase parallelization.
- Create another file to be sublimmed, with each line a phrase that will remind you of something. Try reversing some of the phrases, or adding spaces between the letters, or both. Make this file be displayed by random lines, using xsublim'ss "-random" option
- Please, don't center your sublims. It's too predictable, and with parallel sublims, it can make it not even subconciously readable. Instead, use xsublim's "-no-center" option
- If your brain hurts, then it's working. If your brain really hurts and won't stop hurting even after you finished sublimming, that means you have too little sugar in your brain, and should eat some sugar and carbs. Marshmallows and bread do nicely.

Personal Experiences With The Sublim Treatment

- Test Subject #1

Name: John Ohno

Age: 18

Number of Sublim Treatments: ???

I have been doing sublim treatments for approximately 3 years, ever since I found the xsublim program on my machine. My idea was to overload the brain with information so that it would grow to adapt to these new conditions, working faster and better because it needed to in order to handle all this information. I started off with a single stream of randomized phrases, with no tricks. I didn't really get anywhere with that, so I screwed around with the settings a bit and got a

bit of a buzz. I kept it up, and added more info and another stream (the dissasemby of the Linux kernel), and soon I was getting mild levels of acceleration and what I assumed to be caffine headaches. I read up a bit on the subject and concluded that these headaches were because my brain was running out of sugar. Empirical evidence supported this (have headache, each bread and marshmallows, no longer have headache -kind of logic). By a year after I had started, I could, by visualizing certain words I knew were in the stream, become accelerated. By 2 years later, I was able to do this on command, and it was beginning to be triggered by other input (such as music the same or similar to those used in the videos). By december of this year, I had moved over to my new laptop and had begun to do 5 streams. I became accelerated more easily, and could visualize the sublims in my view. I also started having very good intuition, and lots of coincidences started happening around me. I introduced Nicole to sublimming in June of this year (2006), in a syncrosublim experiment with 15+ streams, lasting 3 hours. The followup was ~5 hours long. I then started experiencing more of the effects of the syncrosublimming than before. I also tried extending acceleration time over more than a week. It worked, but after a week I became forgetful, though later trials showed that the more I do it, the less forgetful I become and the longer I can last.

- Test Subject #2

Name: Nicole Sestito

Age: 19

Number of Sublim Treatments: 2

Well I went over John Ohno's house to try his sublim treatment he created. The preparations were easy, all I had to do was drink an energy drink and then we got started. At first I noticed the sublim words that were flashing all over the 3 screens (which had different background programs running on each of them). My first reaction was 'how is this going to work when I can read what the sublims say?', but later I paid more attention to the AMV's (on the main screen) and the screen savers (on the other 2 computers) that the sublims were playing over. Within a half hour I didn't notice the sublims any more; I guess you can say that the sublims were invisible to me at this point. The treatment lasted about 3-4 hours and John and I had to stop for marshmallow breaks (the sugar energizes the brain so the sublims don't cause headaches). After hours of keeping my eyes attached to the computer screens, along with no body movements (which was pretty hard for me) I felt very accelerated...

The accelerated feeling I had was almost like drinking 3 cups of coffee and 8 bottles of energy drinks, but without the jitters. I felt very awake. I felt like I could have ran and ran and would never stop from tiredness. This accelerated mode I was in was very enjoyable. I was much more attentive and my brain felt as though it was collecting more information then normal, because I was remembering things much better. I was much more aware of my surroundings along with small details about things that I usually wouldn't notice. When the sublims were done I got up and I felt very dizzy. This dizziness lasted for a good 2 hours later. I also could see 'fake' sublims (by which case, 'fake' means the same sublims only I could see them without seeing the 'real' physical sublims I was subjected to for 3-4 hours)for a good 2 hours after too where ever I looked.

A few days later I was subjected to the sublim treatment once again. This time I knew what to expect and after my energy drink, marshmallow breaks, and another 3-4 hours of sublims I felt

quite accelerated. My eyes started to water and once again I got that dizzy after effect. This time was different though. After the second time around I noticed things.

I wasn't sleeping during the night and I have much more excess energy in my body. Also, the sublims didn't go away after 2 hours. The 'fake' sublims lasted much longer along with the accelerated effect. Also, it seems as though the sublim treatment had opened up more telepathic tendencies, in which case I had a history of telepathic tendencies before, but the sublims seems to make me more in tune to these things. For instance, I am able to read people much more quickly, like I knew what they were thinking or about to say before they say it. Also, the sublims made me more prone to premonitions because after the sublims I had dreams about things that have happened the following day. Also, while watching a few AMV's (without sublims) with some friends, I started to see 'fake' sublims. The reasoning, I think, is because the AMV's triggering (unintentionally) the 'fake' sublims and I started to become accelerated. This lead me to an idea: What if I tried to 'trigger' 'fake' sublims on call just for the accelerated feeling?, well I tried.

After trying about 2 times I am now able to see the 'fake' sublims on call. I would look at the computer screen and remember what the sublims look like and then start to see 'fake' sublims from my memory onto the computer screen. Then, I wouldn't need the computer screen, because after I 'recall' the 'fake' sublims I would look up and walk around and would see the 'fake' sublims everywhere I look. Not only would I see the 'fake' sublims, but I would also feel just as accelerated as when I was watching the 'real' sublims. Not to mention the after effect of the dizziness would be felt as well, when I turn off the 'fake' sublims. This isn't the last of it, now that I am able to recall the sublims into 'fake' hallucinated sublims, I am able to trigger my mind to slow the sublims down so I am able to read the information and what time sublims say. Whether the information retrieved when I slow down and recall the sublim is accurate or not still needs to be tested. So another word, because of the sublim treatments, I now basically have an internal drug that I can turn on and off whenever I want to feel accelerated.

I'm not sure if these telepathic tendencies are stronger because of the sublims, but if they are, I'm guessing it's because my brain is more energized and is working overtime. While watching the sublims I am using more brain matter, which can trigger the telepathic tendencies in a part of the brain that is unknown, but affected because of the sublims. Also, my background can also have an effect as to why I can 'recall' the sublims and really see 'fake' sublims in my everyday life, and that is because I use to hallucinate when I was emotionally unstable and because my brain is capable to see the unseen it is possible that is why I have an easier time recalling and hallucinating 'fake' sublims. Not sure why I can slow down the sublims though, this is something I am to look forward in. Also, a further study will proceed to see what would happen if John and I trigger 'fake' sublims at the same time and both our brains are accelerated. I will further update this as I come across more things to share.

Syncrosublimming

What the heck is it?

Syncrosublimming is two or more people watching the same sublims at the same time. This is usually done in the same room, though hypothetically it can also be done over the net. Syncrosublimming has some rather strange effects, as you shall see.

Effects

The effects of syncrosublimming (as opposed to regular sublimming) have been observed as follows:

- A feeling of mutual connection with the partner(s)
- Increased affection for the partner(s)
- Increased intuitive understanding between the partners (telepathy?)
- Increased presence of the partner(s) in the mind of each

Additionally, all normal sublim effects seem to be strengthened by this treatment. These effects have been known to lead to romantic and/or sexual attraction at times, and it usually ends up being mutual, though circumstance plays a big role in that. Additionally, all these effects will be strengthened by traditional communication between the partners.

Explanation

Our best explanation at the moment is that the syncronity of the data being parsed lends both a common ground and similar thoughts, and that possibly the display speeds and values of the data will lead a similar frequency and set of background patterns between the partners, which combined with stronger and more easily carried brainwaves due to the speeding up of the brain, might possibly generate a basis for more powerful telepathy.