We All Wear Dark Glasses Now

by
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視界が完全に塞がれない
ウェアラブルモニター式メガネ

Augmented and virtual reality

How today's cool became
tomorrow's nightmare

Reality

The idea is that reality isn't enough, that it needs augmenting, and/or can be improved by making it virtual. However, writing it on your retina doesn't make it real.

Where does this idea come from?

Who does it benefit?

What does it do to us?

Where does it come from?

Despite the complex and sophisticated evolutionary tuning to the natural world of our senses as perceptual systems, this is not regarded as enough. We doubt our perception of the world.

Direct reality, as it is, for whatever reasons, is not exciting enough, not fulfilling enough, not reliable enough; is lacking.

'Reality' is nothing more than the *apparent,* and it is the underlying '*reality*', the real real, that we seek.

Who does it benefit?

It will clearly shift more product in the future and also be intrinsic to the product it shifts.

In an overall ideological sense it benefits all those who want to maintain the distinction between the real and the apparent. This is an ancient argument that runs throughout history.

In a practical sense it allows more information than is available directly from the natural world to be made available, or, it allows for remote presence in a real or imagined world.
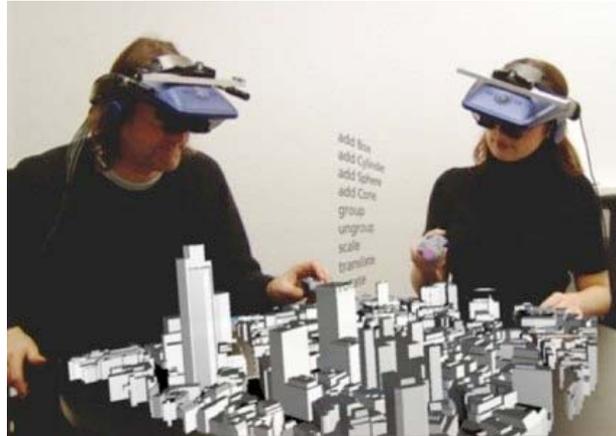
What does it do to us?

The proliferation of augmented and virtual reality in the form of mobile phones and associated technologies, including skype, has already led to a situation where people's communities are becoming etherealised.

If you are in regular contact with people who have made laptops and mobile phones intrinsic to their daily lives, your face to face presence takes second place to a virtual and impoverished connection to a remote other in a way that feels alienating. This has become a way of life for many people today.

What are the dangers?

There is a psychoanalytic theory based in our relationships with each other that argues that our earliest experiences lead to long term choices of orientation to other people and the world.
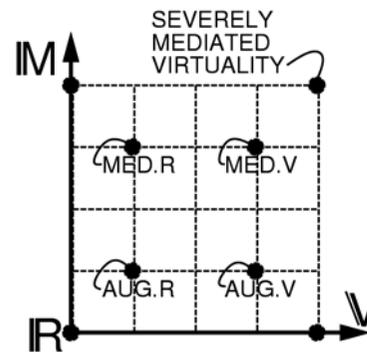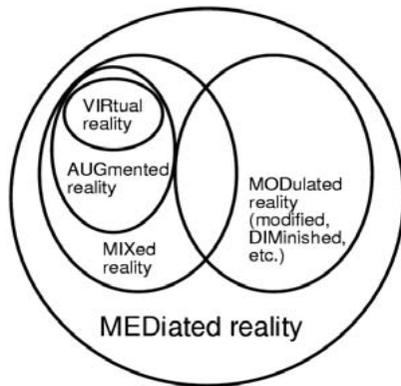
This theory argues that we are essentially social and realistic and that this is exemplified in our orientation towards each other.

This theory states that a proper recognition of reality and our dependence upon others is crucial to the success of our communities.

Flight from reality can be occasioned by early experience of relations with primary caregivers and in a simplified form has three possible outcomes.

Attitudes towards reality.

The first and healthiest response is that you remain realistic about the world and others and are committed to a communal life together.

The other responses are both based upon a degree of failure of that early relationship and a subsequent mistrust of reality and community.

One involves adopting an aggressive stance towards the world and taking what you want in a selfish way. The other results in a partial withdrawal from the world and an over valuation of inner reality.

In our opinion the idea that an augmented or virtual reality can ever actually rival the real world is based upon the over valuation of inner reality and ignores the very real problems of simulating the haptic rather than the visual.

Relation to technological research and development.

All of this may seem to be very remote from the development of technology that we are engaged in.

But it is in fact very close to the area we are working in for one simple reason.

We are using our imagination to think beyond what is currently available.

In short these stories and these technologies are a product of phantasy

and as such a suitable area for psychoanalytic discussion.

Internet

There are already psychoanalytic studies of the internet that suggest that our normal ways of relating to each other are undermined by the relatively thin connection between us, or indeed, the lack of any real connection between us.

Since some of our deepest feelings and responses are erotic and aggressive, it isn't any surprise to find that these are involved in some of the unwanted and unexpected side effects of the internet.

We might therefore expect that some of the most enthusiastic take up of augmented and virtual realities will be from the military industrial

complex and the porn industry.

Message

Be careful what you wish for, it may come true.

Today's fashion item can be tomorrow's oppressor.

It is not just nuclear or biological scientists that need to take social responsibility seriously.