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## Envisioning information tufte pdf

Imagining Information was recommended to me by a friend as a way to improve how I think about and design visualizations. Although less popular than his other work Quantitative Information Visual Displays (which are still on my reading list), this book has many interesting examples and ideas on how to present complex information. Interestingly for me, this book provides a great discussion of how cartographers design and present geographic maps. It also provides rules of thumb on how to design, color, and create layout data in visualizations. This post is a review section, a write-up section and a discussion section about what I find interesting in this book. Take from it what you will, and if you like or disagree with anything, please leave a comment. VisualizationIn this book, Tufte provides a broad definition of what visualization is. He described visualization of maps, railway lines, periodic tables, planetary movements, sunspots, scientific data, warnings, calligraphy, engine construction, train signals, river length, user interface, dance step instructions and more. The number of things he considers visualization reminds me that many times I fall into the trap of having a very narrow view of what visualization is. I have to remind myself that there are more visualizations than just good-looking big data graphics or graphics on the internet. Reading this book reminds me of objectified documentaries about how they were all designed. Looking around has shown constant memes in the community that visualizing data is seen as a viable effort. For example, rather than simply stating that people in Scandinavia are more likely to be blonde, it provides visualization to make the point better. After expanding my view of visualization, I began to realize how often I use it daily, for example metservice daily forecast.My folder is also a great visualization that gives depth to my very flat and sequential hard drive. These are just examples that are already available to me now, but there are many examples that go beyond computers. For example I recently had to build furniture and the instructions look like this:The purpose of VisualizationOrder to Tufte, the purpose when creating visualizations is to increase the number of dimensions on a flat surface (computer or paper) while increasing the density of the data presented. This is 'cognitive art' (as described by Philip Morrison), it is a presentation that is aesthetically pleasing and rich in information. However, as Augustus Pugin notes:It's okay to decorate constructions, but never build decorationsVisualization is meant to contain information, but often they are tainted with a chart (meaningless decoration) that simply negates the values of the visualization. The closer you look at visualizations, the more information you have to get, not just decorated feathers. In addition, Tufte said that visualizations should not be judged by how much information is displayed, displayed, how effectively it is presented. Displaying as much information can be as bad as the low value of a visualization as a junk chart. Tufte also talked about the importance of visualization design for its consumers. Good graphic design, typography, object representation, layout, color, production techniques and good visual principles are required for visualization. Any chaos or confusion in visualization is a design failure, and not the viewer's fault. This message echoes the theme of The Design of Everyday Things, which is about adapting to user expectations and not blaming them for misunderstood your design. Throughout the book, Tufte explains and defines the characteristics of a good visualization, I have tried to filter what he says into one sentence: Increasing the density and dimensions of the data without cluttering with information overload or adding unnecessary junk into the design. Practical Advice for VisualizationI suck at design! That is, when I get my ideas out of my head and onto paper (or in a browser) they are not how I imagine them looking. So the main reason why I love this book is that it has a lot of practical guidelines to follow when designing visualizations, and designing in general. Tufte, although he gives a lot of advice, draws a lot of this information from other books like Josef Alber's Interaction of Color and Eduard Imhof's Cartographic Relief Presentation. This external knowledge is distilled and added by Tufte, which creates a great combination of general design information and specific info visualizations. Some of them I'll try a gift here. ColourColour is an important aspect of how visualization presents its information. Color can be used to: distinguish — color to distinguish between annotations and annotationsjoin — colors to indicate relatednesslabel — color as noun — color as quantityimitate reality — color as representationdecorate — color as beautyCreate the importance of color, Tufte provides many guidelines around its use. He uses the rules of cartographers when creating maps (especially from Eduard Imhof's Cartographic Help Presentation) and describes their general application to all visualization creation:First Rule - pure, bright or very strong colors have a very harsh and irresistible effect when agreeing with each other, but they have a striking effect on the background of the boringSecond Rule - the bright colors on the white are badBalkah , let the foreground do the workFourth rule - if the image is divided by color, put the color of one intersecting area in another area, and all colors must be represented in the backgroundSome of these rules that you can see are applied to make this marshalling signal visualization more understandable and striking. Use the red arrow and yellow to attract attention, while drawn on dull gray people of less importance. Tufte also explains how to layer visualizations using the same color. For example, if a river is light blue then the label for the river should be dark blue to connect the two together. In addition, to draw attention to certain points use saturated red because it stands out as separate from the blue and green layers. Straight forward reasoning like this about design and color lets me critically look at my own visualizations, and see if I've used color for full efficacy. This type of rule you can see applied in the Marlborough sound map of New Zealand, published in the Atlas of Design by geographix>Note: I got this book for my father, and highly recommend itIn addition to using color, the weight of the line can be changed. In the example below, a thick black line is underlined by a fine red line:The Type of VisualizationTufte also described several types, or different techniques, of visualization. These examples are a practical way to think about data layouts and presentations. Micro/MacroThis is where Tufte introduces micro/macro design, what I think of as a small picture/big picture. The idea is to have the same ink serve more than one information purpose. Using large amounts of high-density data, give an overall picture of using smaller ones. This way you can immediately convey its meaning, while allowing deeper analysis. An interesting example given for this kind of visualization is the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington D.C. This memorial lists the names of 58,000 soldiers who died in Vietnam, in order to date they died. Tufte sees this as a good example of Micro/Macro visualization because each name has three functions: to memorize the deceased, to indicate the order in which they died, and to increase the overall visual representation of the number of dead. It shows the tragedy of the big picture that 58,000 soldiers lost their lives without compromising the tragedy of the small picture that each has a name and a story. It is well thought out, powerful, emotional, yet simple. Small MultipleA Small Multiple visualizations are the same view over and over again, but each time with different data. Visualizing data in the same way side by side highlights the differences that exist throughout the data. Some such small visualizations can be seen in the Meter Trilogy by Dan Meth.This visualization shows the IMDB rating per film for many different trilogies. In this visualization you can see how the audience enjoys movies between and in the trilogy. An alternative way to visualize this data could be to display it on a single bar chart. Such visualizations will be much more striking, more complicated and without conveying more information than this example. Some Inspiration For me this book is a great read if you are stuck or on Mental. It made me want to go and create something beautiful and meaningful. When describing themes, Tufte often gives a list instead of trying to define something. This is a great method he uses to convey something complicated. Here's a list he gave me. things that visualization can do for you to read and take ideas from if you are stuck: choose, edit, single, structure, highlight, group, pair, merge, align, synthesize, focus, organize, condense, reduce, select, categorize, catalog, list, abstract, scan, idealize, isolation, sort, integrate, blend, check, filter, smooth, cluster, summary I spent a long time taking examples and visualizations trying to extract every point Tufte made in his writing. Its ability to separate visualizations and illustrate why they are effective is a skill that I think is worth fostering in a world that wants to visualize everything. Tufte finishes his book with the thought: Perhaps one day high-resolution computer visualization [...] will ease the exhausting complexity of coding — yet still capture some valuable parts of the subtlety of human travel plans. I love that this is becoming a reality. A reference to reality. Reference

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