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Subject: FAZ's Frank Schirrmacher on The Age of the Informavore
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The new EDGE edition will be published later today with an important interview with Faz's Frank Schirrmacher on "The Age of the Informavore". It's an opportunity to generate an interesting and significant EDGE discussion. Two pieces are already in from Danny Kahneman and George Dyson. Hope to hear from you.

JB

THE AGE OF THE INFORMAVORE (*)
A Talk With Frank Schirrmacher
EDGE Video

(*The term informavore characterizes an organism that consumes information. It is meant to be a description of human behavior in modern information society, in comparison to omnivore, as a description of humans consuming food.)

We are apparently now in a situation where modern technology is changing the way people behave, people talk, people react, people think, and people remember. And you encounter this not only in a theoretical way, but when you meet people, when suddenly people start forgetting things, when suddenly people depend on their gadgets, and other stuff, to remember certain things. This is the beginning, its just an experience. But if you think about it and you think about your own behavior, you suddenly realize that something fundamental is going on. There is one comment on Edge which I love, which is in Daniel Dennett's response to the 2007 the Edge question, in which he said that we have a population explosion of ideas, but not enough brains to cover them. ...

INTRODUCTION

The most significant intellectual development of the first decade of the 21st Century is that concepts of information and computation have infiltrated a wide range of sciences, from physics and cosmology, to cognitive psychology, to evolutionary biology, to genetic engineering. Such innovations as the binary code, the bit, and the algorithm have been applied in ways that reach far beyond the programming of computers, and are being used to understand such mysteries as the origins of the universe, the operation of the human body, and the working of the mind.

Enter Frank Schirrmacher, Editorial Director the editorial staff of the FAZ Feuilleton, a supplement of the FAZ on the arts and sciences. He is also one of the five publishers of the newspaper, responsible for the Feuilleton, and he has actively expanded science coverage in this section. He has been referred to as Germany's "Culture Czar", which may seem over the top, but his cultural influence is undeniable. He can, and does, begin national discussions on topics and ideas that interest him, such as genomic research, neuroscience, aging, and, in this regard, he has the ability to reshape the national consciousness.

I can provide a first-hand account of "the Schirrmacher treatment". ...

[MORE...]

Permalink: http://www.edge.org/3rd_culture/schirrmacher09/schirrmacher09_index.html

THE REALITY CLUB

On "The Age of the Informavore": A Talk with Frank Schirrmacher

Daniel Kahneman, George Dyson

DANIEL KAHNEMAN

Eugene Higgins Professor of Psychology, Princeton; Recipient, 2002 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences

Very interesting interview, which is itself a nice example of what Schirrmacher is talking about: it should be read very quickly, to get a vague sense of unease, of possibilities, of permeable boundaries between self and others, between one's thoughts and those you get from others. You do get something out of it, and may find yourself thinking slightly differently because of it. ...

GEORGE DYSON

Science Historian; Author, Darwin Among the Machines

Nine years after his Wake Up Call for European Tech, issued just as the Informavores sat down to eat, Frank Schirrmacher is back, reminding us of the tendency to fall asleep after a heavy meal. All digital all the time may be too much of a good thing. Can we survive the deluge? ...

http://www.edge.org/3rd_culture/schirrmacher09/schirrmacher09_index.html#rc

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