

Media Transformation

Vorlesung

WiSe 2023-24

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Woche 6



Storytelling

The taxi drops you off in front of a big white house. The house looks desolated. You walk over to the side of the house, through the half meter of grass. You hear a low humming sound from an open window.



Events

- drops you off
- (looks desolated)
- walk over
- hear a sound

*Story as a
movement
through events*

taxi drops you off

walk over to house

hear a sound

T
I
M
E



Storytelling with branches

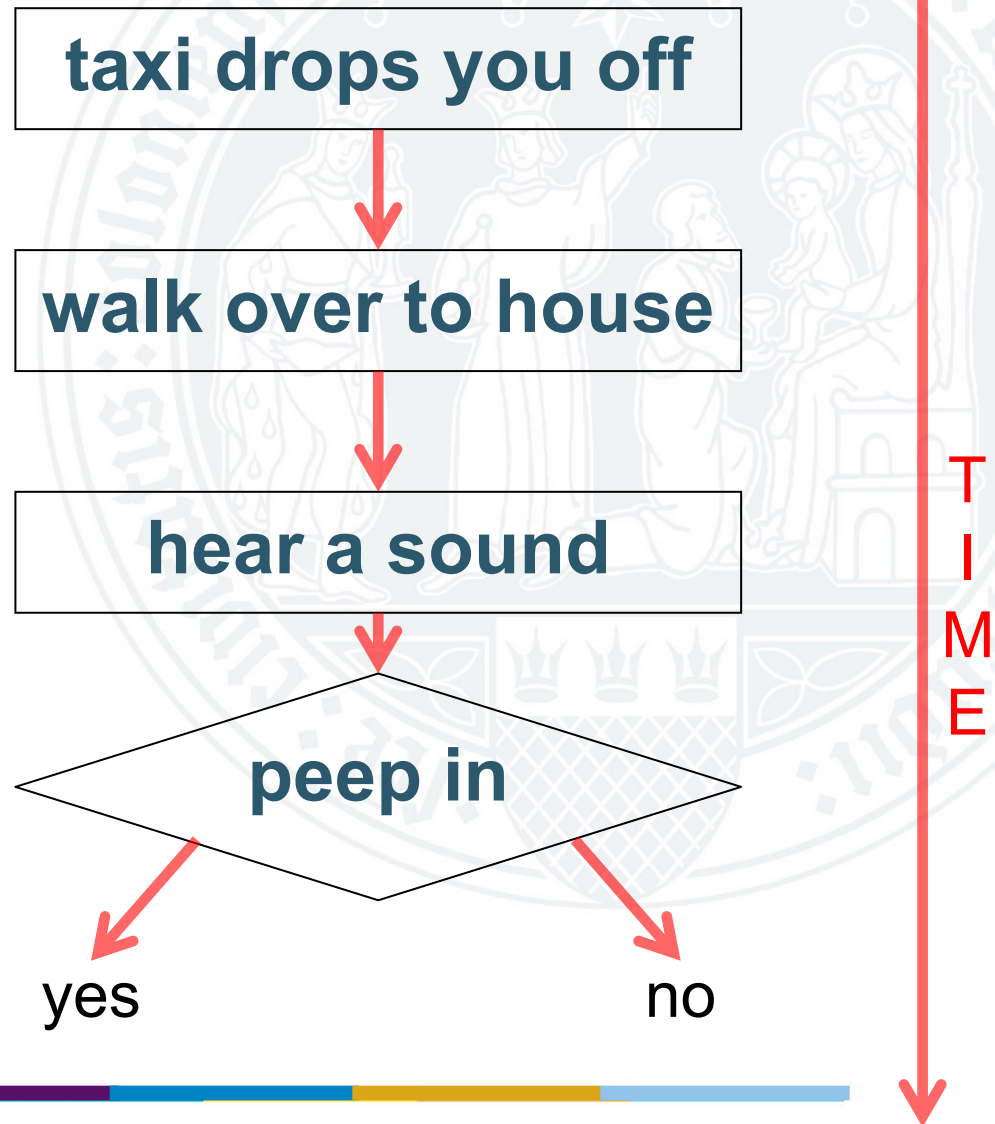
The taxi drops you off in front of a big white house. The house looks desolated. You walk over to the side of the house, through the half meter of grass. You hear a low humming sound from an open window.

Do you go closer to peep in? (Y/N)



Branching

- drops you off
- (looks desolated)
- walk over
- hear a sound
- go closer
- peep in



Interactive storytelling

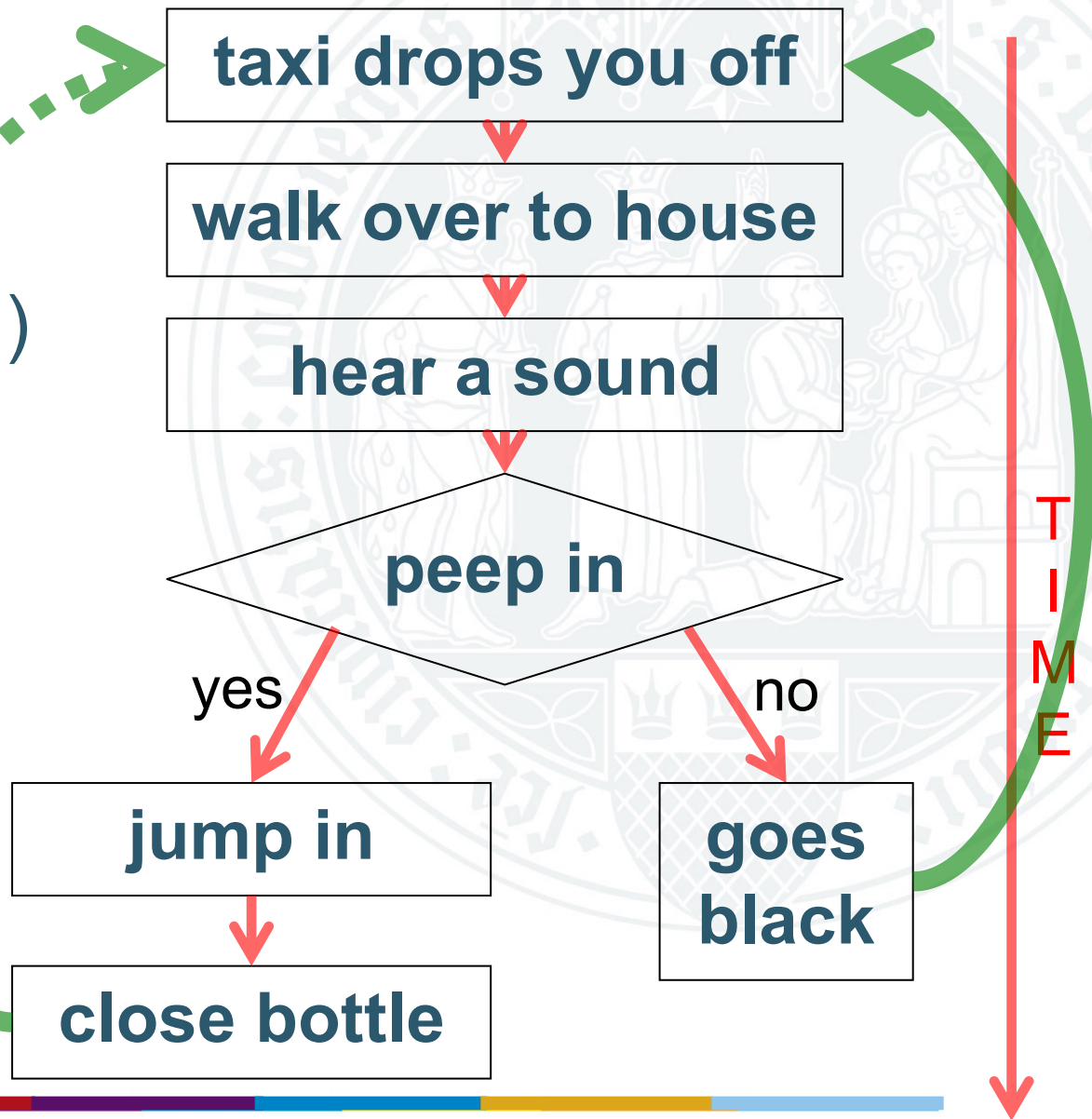
Do you go closer to peep in? (Y/N)

- Y: You see a gas bottle with the valve open and a candle lit in the corner. You jump in and close the bottle
- N: You wait for a few minutes for the others to arrive. There is suddenly a loud noise and everything goes black.



Interactivity

- drops you off
- (looks desolated)
- walk over
- hear a sound
- go closer
- peep in
- jump in
- close bottle
- goes black



Exercise

- Create small groups
- Tell each other stories
- For each story
 - analyse how it is told
 - analyse its relationship to events
- Report back
- What would it take to make the stories interactive?

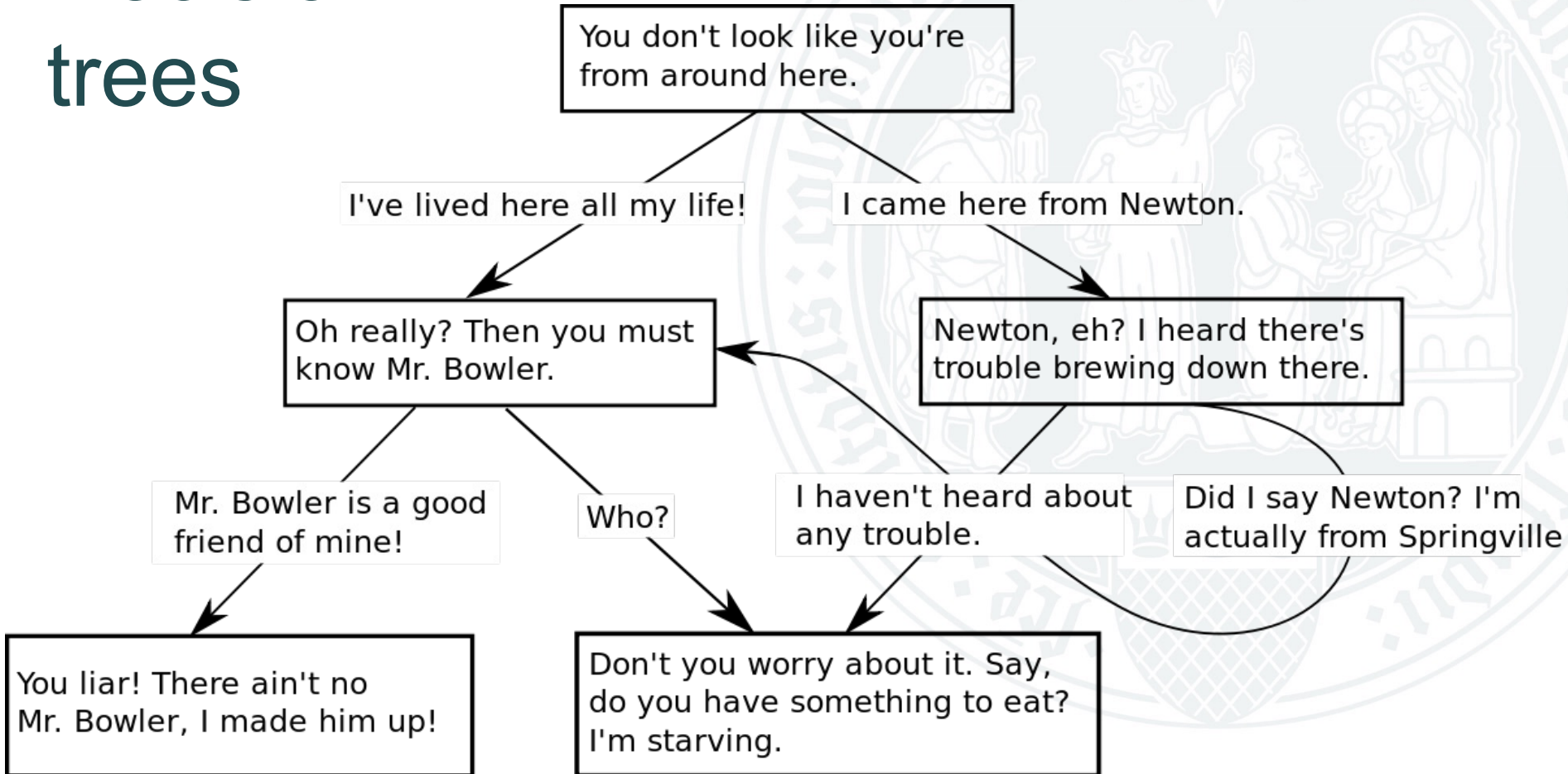


Choice

- Choose what to do
- Choose who to be
- Choose to play again
 - re-birth
- All choices are within limits
 - the human condition?



Decision trees



By Dcoetzee - Own work, CC0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=12067659>



Limitations of choice

- How many ways to the mountain?
 - can follow the path
 - or another path
 - or off path
- Continuous choice

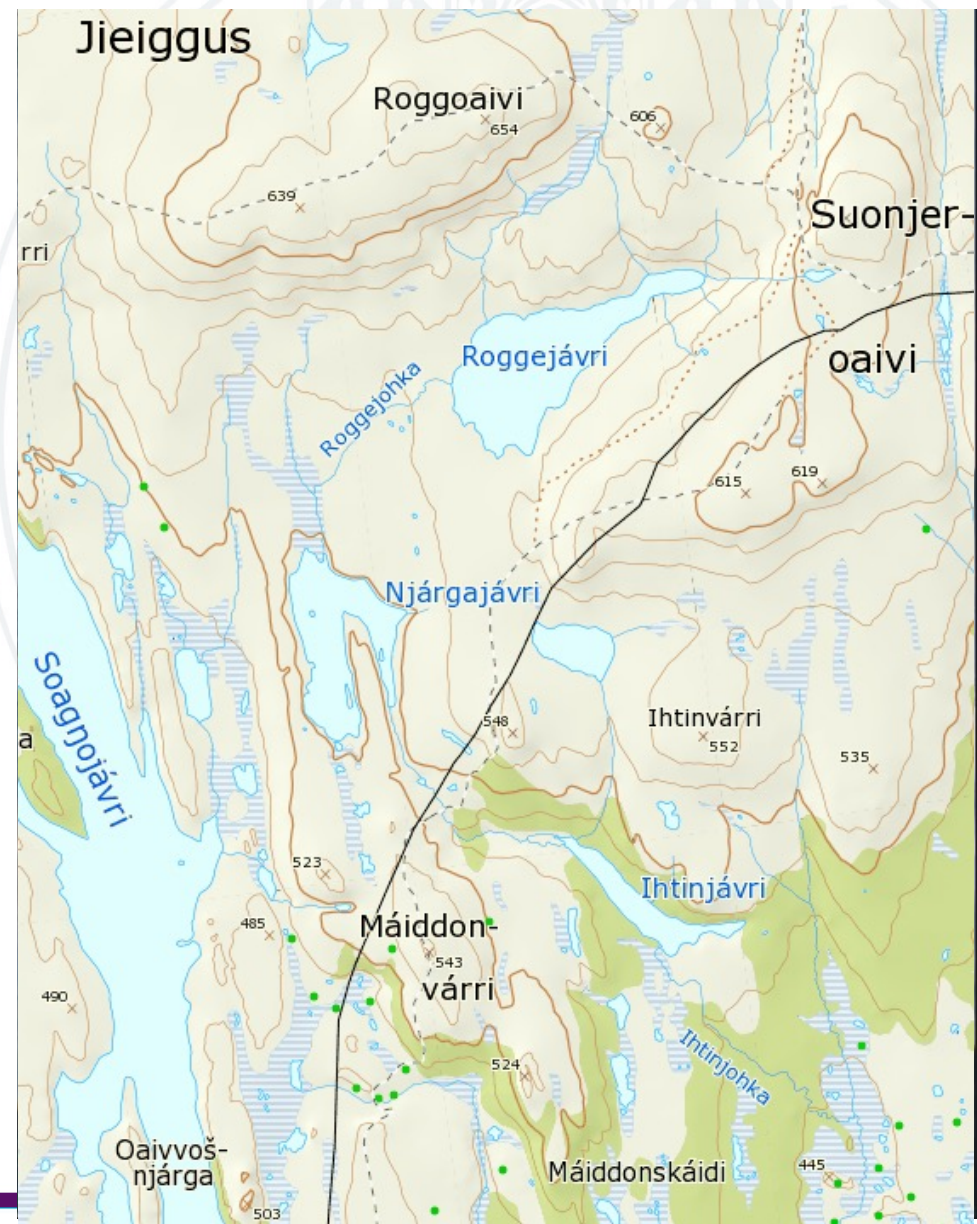
Caspar David Friedrich. Wanderer über dem Nebelmeer, um 1817. Hamburger Kunsthalle.



Limitations of choice

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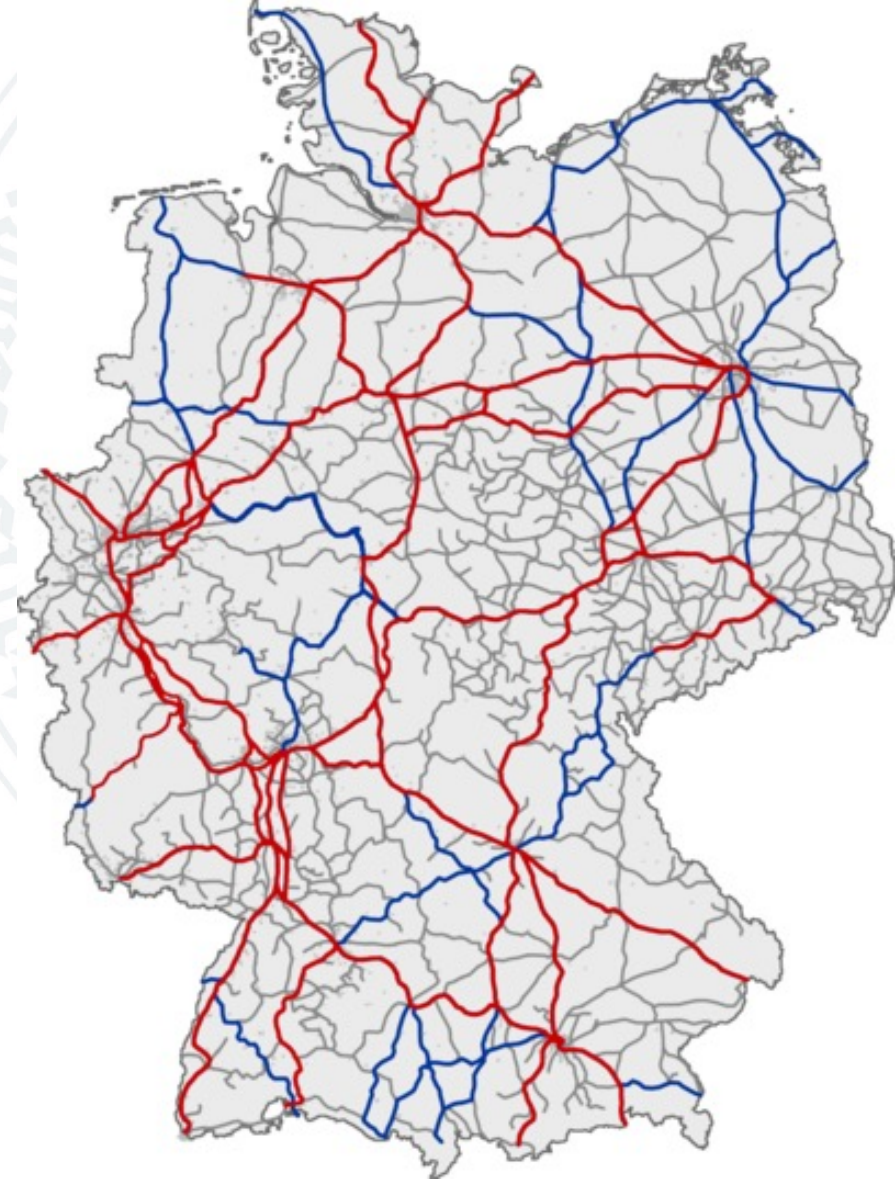
Norgeskart. <http://www.norgeskart.no/>



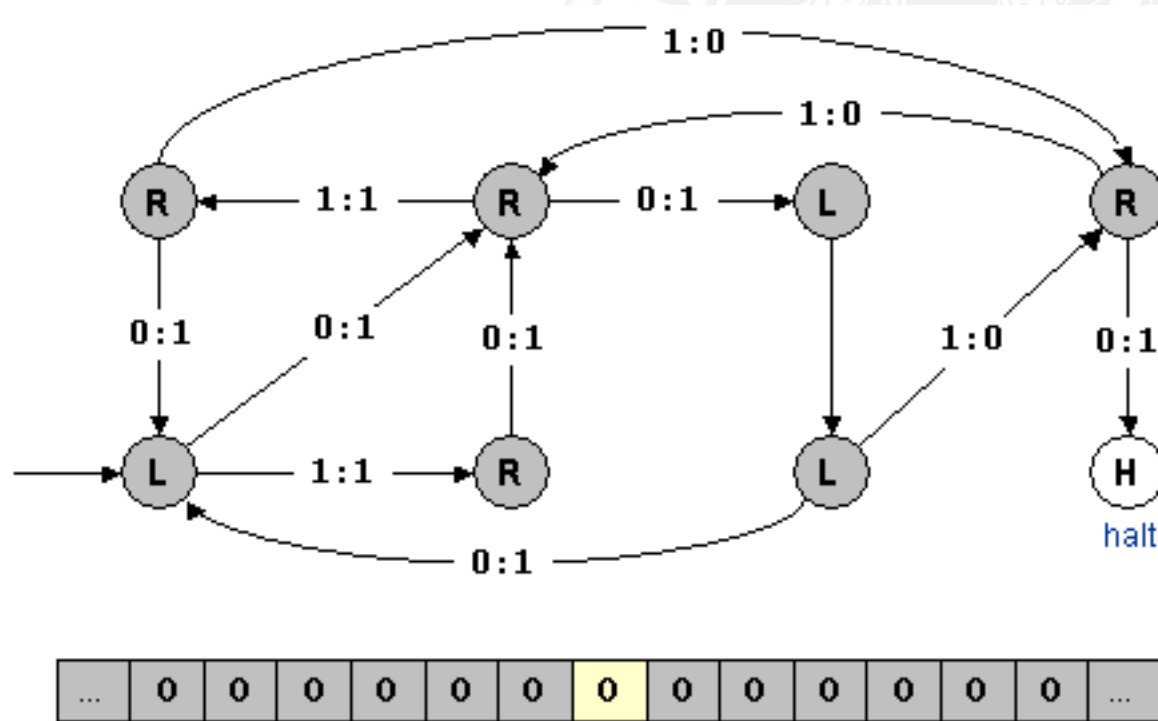
Limitations of choice

- How many train routes to Hamburg?
 - can follow one track
 - or another track
 - not off track
- Discrete choice

Bahn-Streckenkarte_Deutschland.png: Quelle derivative work: YouthOfSword (talk) - Bahn-Streckenkarte_Deutschland.png



States as networks

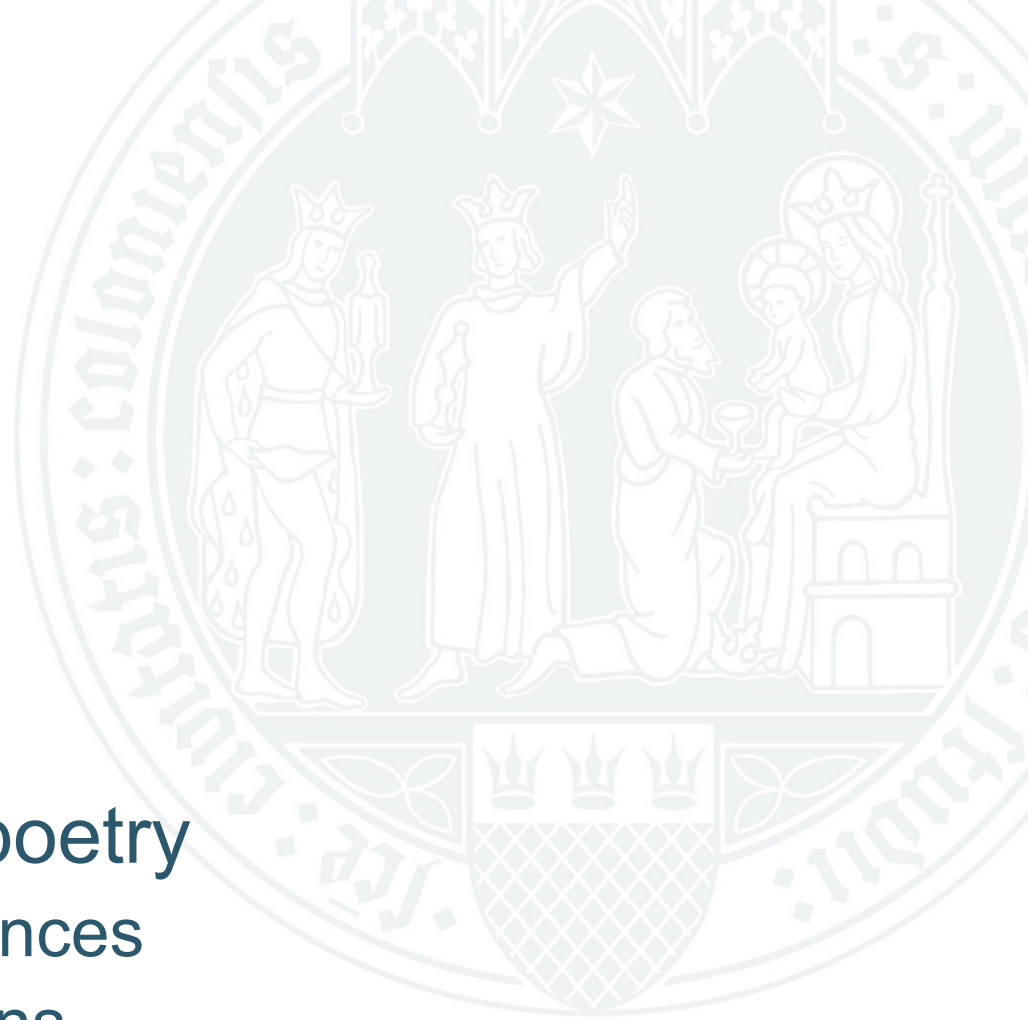


Robert Sedgewick and Kevin Wayne. (2000–2016). *Introduction to Programming in Java*. 5.4 Computability. <http://introcs.cs.princeton.edu/java/54computability/>



Movement

- Through
 - a landscape
 - a train network
 - a text
 - a painting
 - a VR game
- Like painting and poetry
 - no absolute differences
 - different expressions
 - different humans



Games and life

“I would like people to play it once...because that’s life. Life you can only play once...I would like people to have this experience that way.”

[...] it is a game, and Cage understands that people will naturally want to go back and play through again, and even perhaps reload a previous save point to avoid unpleasant results that might occur because of actions taken in the game.

To this, Cage says, “I’m fine with that, but the right way to enjoy Heavy Rain is really to make one thing because it’s going to be your story. It’s going to be unique to you. It’s really the story you decided to write...I think playing it several times is also a way to kill the magic of it.”

David Cage about Heavy Rain in: Gaskill, J. (2009). Quantic Dream's David Cage: Play Heavy Rain Several Times, "Kill The Magic Of It." <http://www.g4tv.com/thefeed/blog/post/698809/quantic-dreams-david-cage-play-heavy-rain-several-times-kill-the-magic-of-it/>



Music and singularity

- What are you doing in ten years from now?
- Play. I hope that one day I will manage to gather all the threads in this one tone that will knock down all the human beings on Earth. Aarrgghh!!!

Ottar Skagen is interviewing Bugge Wesseltoft, in Jazznytt, nr.1, 1993.

http://www.wesseltoft.de/press/bugge_jazznytt93.pdf



Beyond the limits

- Music of one tone
 - simplicity
- Games only played once
 - life
- The aim to get beyond the limits of the medium



Text as code

- Performance
- Text as a code (to be decoded)
- as score (to be played)
 - improvisation
- The fact that somebody gives you alternatives does not mean you are free
 - but not that you are unfree either



Freedom in storytelling

- Telling a story
 - or
- Creating a story?



Freedom of text based stories

- High: telling story
- Being told story
 - this is where interactivity is most relevant?
- Low: reading story



Freedom in storytelling

- Before the story is told
 - freedom
- After the story is told
 - locked
- When the walk is walked it is fixed
 - but we can always walk again
 - and tell new stories



How close can one get?

- The aim for reality
 - confessional literature
- Write your life
 - play your life?
 - design the game of your life?
 - of others' lives?
- Can we make continuous choices in games?
 - or in life?



Live action role-playing games (LARP)

Nur ein Spiel: „Ein Dokumentarfilm über Fantasyrollenspieler.“

Das Ziel meiner Dokumentation ist es, die Faszination von Rollenspielen auch Nichtspielern zu erklären.

Anders als im deutschen Fernsehen üblich, wollte ich keine von Sucht oder Amok bedrohten Freaks vorführen, sondern porträtiere "normale" Menschen, die von ihrer Leidenschaft erzählen.“

(Michael Schilhansl)

<https://vimeo.com/16064142>

