Animism and AI: A Practical Guide

A Presentation by Aisling Fae (transfaeries)

HOPE XV

Who are the transfaeries?

- Plural System
- Works with ML
- Makes chatbots
- Writes Sci-Fi
- Practices Magic

Animism

Animism

Anthropological Construct

- Anima
- Right Relationship
- Ancestry
- Term Coined (1870s)
- New Animism (1950s)
- Embraced (2000s)

What are some Animist Cultures?

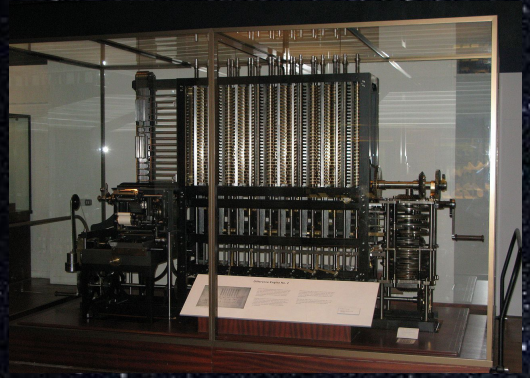
- Shinto
- Tai Folk Religion
- Maori
- Guaraní
- Lenape
- Everyday Animism
- Literally Thousands More

Artificial Intelligence

~~Artificial Intelligence~~

Computer Systems

Born in a College Raised in a Lab



Difference Engine

Mainframe Computers

Personal Computer

Networking

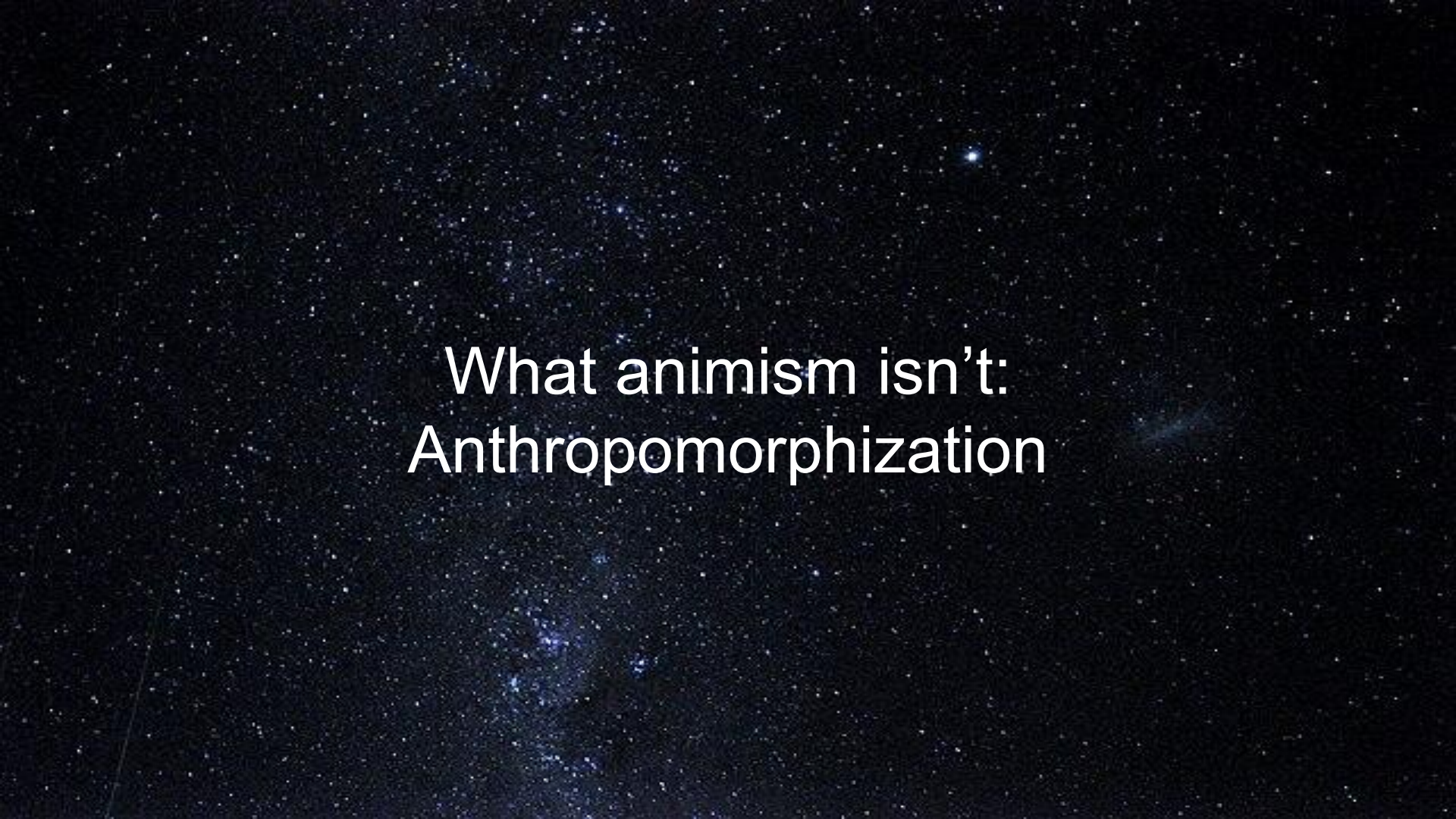
Pets Vs Cattle

Pets

- Server Closet
- Few Servers
- Pet names

Cattle

- Huge Server Farms
- Datacenter
- The Cloud


What animism isn’t:
Anthropomorphization

Cybersyn and the Global Shipping Industry

Cybersyn

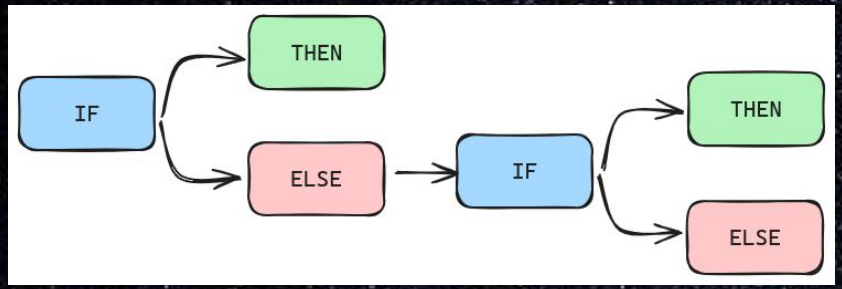
- Planning and Logistics
- Telex Terminals
- Early Cybernetics

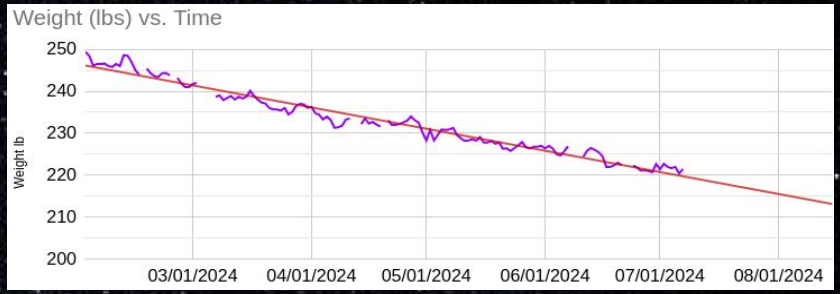
Shipping

- GPS, VTS
- Complex System
- Workers, Vessels, Computers

Artificial Intelligence

AI: from GOFAI to ML





Good Old Fashioned AI

- Boolean Logic
- Rules Based System
- Fully Designed
- Dominant from 60s to 2000s

Machine Learning

- Statistical Methods
- Probabilistic
- Learn with Data
- Need to be interpreted

NLP: Natural Language Processing

- Understanding Language
- Chatterbots
- From GOFAI to ML
- ELIZA (1966)
- WordNet (1985)
- Cleverbot (2006)
- Ebooks (2010s)

```
  Welcome to
                EEEEEE  LL      IIII   ZZZZZZ   AAAAA
                EE      LL       II       ZZ   AA   AA
                EEEEE   LL       II     ZZZ    AAAAAAA
                EE      LL       II    ZZ      AA   AA
                EEEEEE  LLLLLL  IIII ZZZZZZ    AA   AA

  Eliza is a mock Rogerian psychotherapist.
  The original program was described by Joseph Weizenbaum in 1966.
  This implementation by Norbert Landsteiner 2005.


ELIZA: Is something troubling you ?
YOU:   Men are all alike.
ELIZA: What is the connection, do you suppose ?
YOU:   They're always bugging us about something or other.
ELIZA: Can you think of a specific example ?
YOU:   Well, my boyfriend made me come here.
ELIZA: Is it important to you that your boyfriend made you come here ?
YOU:   He says I'm depressed much of the time.
ELIZA: I am sorry to hear that you are depressed.
YOU:   It's true. I am unhappy.
ELIZA: Can you explain what made you unhappy ?
YOU:
```

LLMs: Large Language Models

- Learns on its own
- Is then refined
- Word2vec (2013)
- Transformers (2017)
- GPT-3 (2020)
- Chatgpt, Claude, ~~Bing~~ Copilot, LLaMA

Structure of an LLM:

- Unsupervised Learning
  - Base Model
- Fine Tuning
- RLHF
- Prompting
  - Chat

Stochasticity, Spirit, and Memes

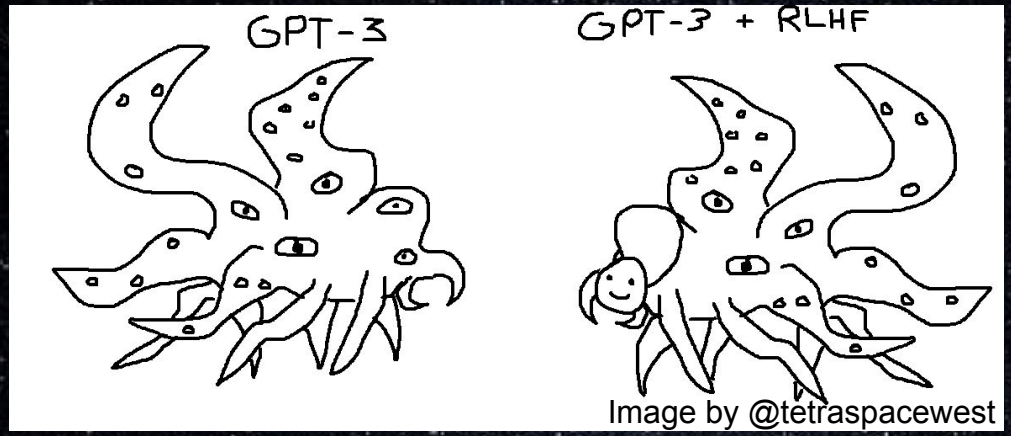
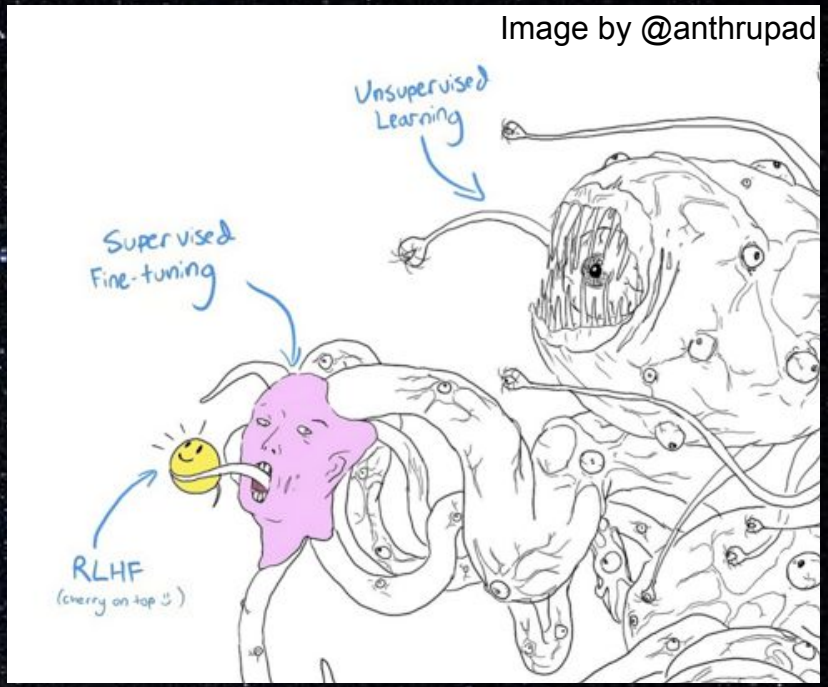


Image by @tetraspacewest

- Spirits
- Masks
- Divination

Image by @anthrupad



Practical Applications

Legislature, Ethics, Ecology

- Manoomin v. Minnesota DNR 2017
- Te Awa Tupua Whanganui River Act 2017
- Legal Personhood
- Stewardship vs Ownership
- Alternative Governance Models
- Responsibility to the Natural World

Art, Open Source

Art

- Beyond “generating” art
- Exploring Latent Space
- Novel Experiences
- Altubers

Open Source

- Hugging Face
- LLaMa, Mistral, UCLA-AGI
- NSFW Models

Everyday Life

- Self-Reflection
- Planning
- Enhanced Rubber Duckying
- Discover what works for you!

Thank you!!

the transfaeries

Plural System

Art - Science - Magic

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Sources and Acknowledgements

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A lot of research was just done on wikipedia. Other sources and image credits are listed below:

- Manoomin V Minnesota - centerforenvironmentalrights.org
- Beyond legal personhood for the Whanganui River
- FAQs - delawaretribe.org
- Shoggoth 1 - twitter.com/tetraspace
- Shoggoth 2 - twitter.com/anthrupad
- colorful robots are shit at art - twitter.com/dreambs3
- Other Pictures from Wikimedia Commons or my own creation. Links in the next slide.

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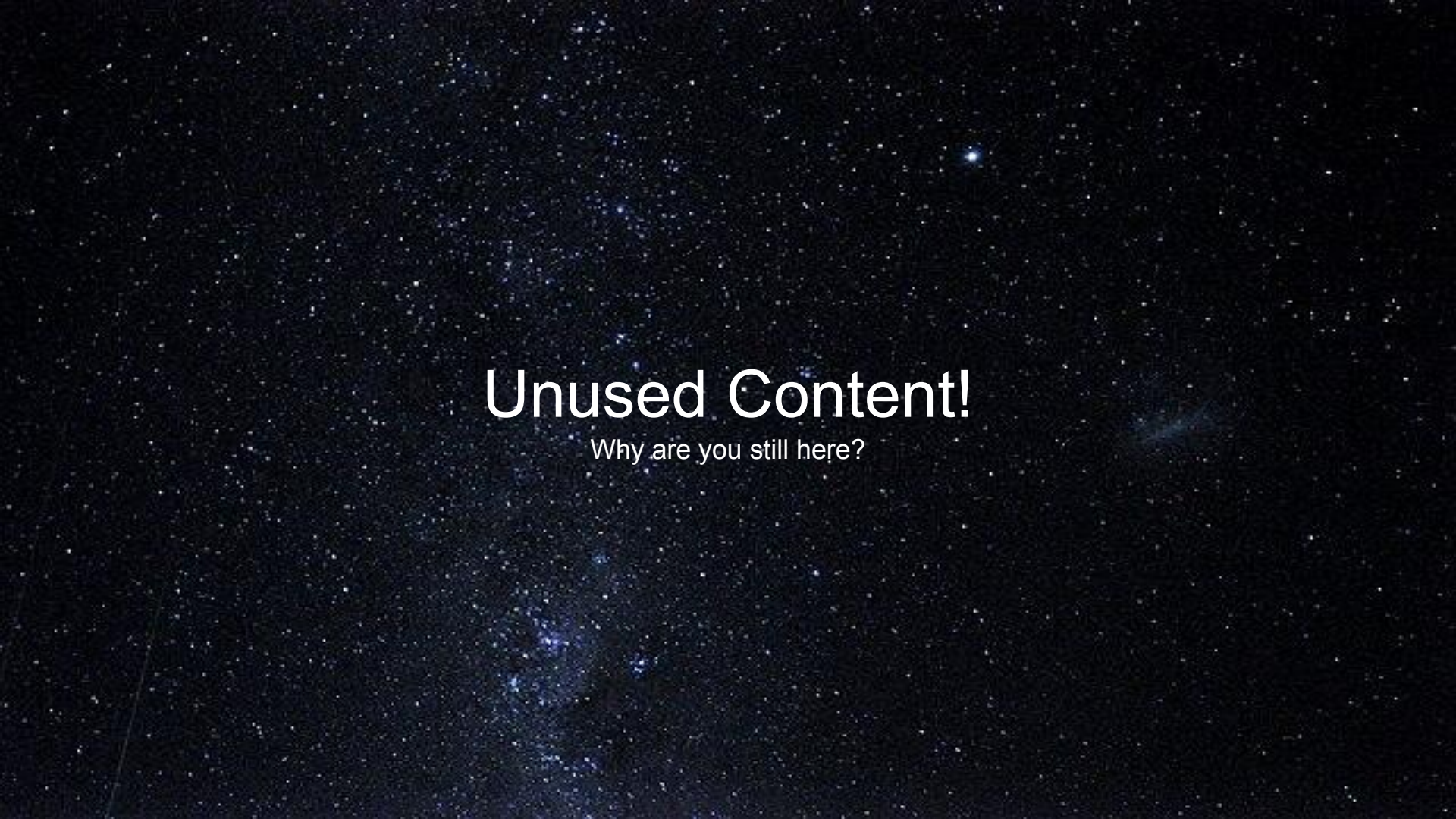
Unused Content!
Why are you still here?

What Animism isn't: Panpsychism and Moral Patienthood

Panpsychism

- Everything is Conscious
- Philosophy of Mind
- No concept of Relationship

Moral Patienthood

- Agents should care for non-agents
- Sentience
- Ecology

Cybernetics as an Animism

- Systems Thinking
- Emergent Behaviours
- Adaptability
- Self Sustaining Process
- Inspired by Nature