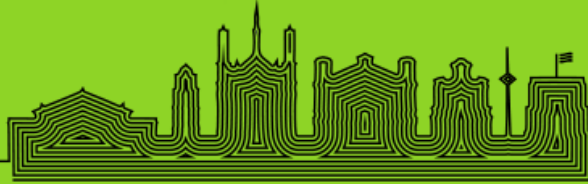




Constructionism 2018

Constructionism, computational thinking
and educational innovation

Vilnius, Lithuania, August 21 to 25



Arthur Hjorth

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United States

Social Gears - a Constructionist Approach to Social Studies

Historically, Constructionism has focused primarily on STEAM. One of its foundational analogies– the gears of Seymour Papert’s child hood – arguably implies a deterministic causal chain, brought about by cogs with no agency or say in the matter. While this analogy has proven productive for designing and thinking about thinking about STEAM, the analogy falls short when thinking about social systems where people are the “cogs”.

In this talk, I present and discuss my work on bringing Constructionism to social studies. I discuss the challenges of designing expressive objects-to-think-with when the thinking that we are designing for is fundamentally tied to ideology and essentially contestable, and I present my hopes for the future of Construction in Social Studies.

About speaker

Arthur Hjorth is a postdoctoral fellow at the Center for Connected Learning and Computer-Based Modeling (CCL), and at the Center for Prevention and Implementation Methodology (CePIM) at Northwestern University. In his recently completed dissertation, he developed a multi-level agent-based modeling tool for NetLogo, and designed, implemented, and tested two high school curricular units for Social Studies using agent-based models. In his work at the CCL, Arthur works on the use of ABMs as teaching tools, specifically for helping learners think about *social issues as complex systems*. In his work at CePIM, Arthur builds research models for HIV prevention at the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University. He received his PhD in Learning Sciences at Northwestern University.