

Biomedical Computation Review

Simbios A NATIONAL CENTER FOR BIOMEDICAL COMPUTING

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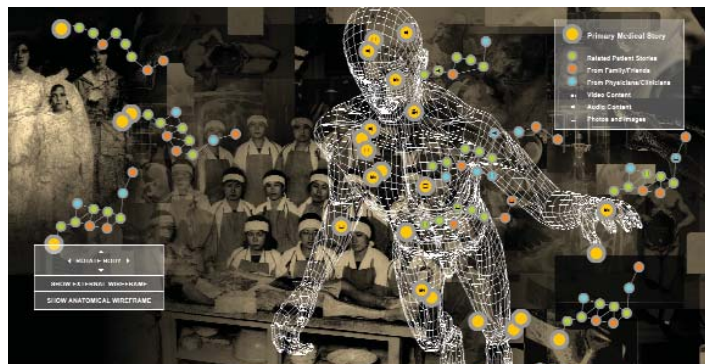
An Avatar of Human Health

The mesh body of a human form floats over the Brooklyn Bridge. Dots of color, embedded with video testimonials, share the collective health problems of 9/11 survivors. In this incarnation, PhineasMap is pure art. “I was attempting to visualize a single, public body that we can all connect to in some manner,” says **Virgil Wong**, “as a common point to empathize with the pain of other people.”

PhineasMap is now evolving into a health encyclopedia, an avatar for individual human health, and a representation of the collective health of people in a particular location.

“We’re currently using this model as a way to archive and access health information,” says Wong, the Web Center director at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital and Weill Cornell Medical College.

Initially, the PhineasMap body will be used as an access point for general health information. He is connecting it to the NewYork-Presbyterian and Weill Cornell online health encyclopedia, which includes a large interactive media library of medical and surgical videos and animations. Users would then click on a part of the body to learn more about it. “The 3-D anatomical body is becoming a natural interface for contextualizing the library of information we already have,” he says. Next, the body would be tailored to reflect the diseases and conditions of individual patients. It could even grow with you, he explains, “so you could go back to see your health at any previous point in time.” Eventually, the map will also represent large populations and perhaps serve as an epidemiological tool. “What would the collective body of San Francisco or New York City look like?” Wong asks. □



PhineasMap floating above the Brooklyn Bridge. Courtesy of Virgil Wong, www.virgilwong.com/installations/phineasmap