

# Aaron's Comments on Trans-disciplinary Graduate Education

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How are you, Wittgenstein asks. Like a dog that's been run over, Pascal answers. Wittgenstein then replies testily, "You don't know what a dog that has been run over feels like."

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Wittgenstein perceives what Pascal says as being-roughly speaking, for now-unconnected to a concern with the truth. Her statement is not germane to the enterprise of describing reality. She does not even think she knows, except in the vaguest way, how a run-over dog feels. Her description of her own feeling is, accordingly, something that she is merely making up.

The terms "Trans-" or "Inter-disciplinary" are byproducts of artificially defining research disciplines to aid the focus of specified researchers. By nature, this classification promotes autonomy, suppressing synergy that may exist between these discipline "boundaries." Is promoting inter-disciplinary collaboration so different than concertedly removing those barriers which have been erected throughout the history of western academics? And, how can we be sure of what we are losing if "there is little theoretical research on which to base design of trans-disciplinary learning environments"? Speaking of which, do these questions give justification or imply ignorance concerning the principle supposition that studying (or discussing) the merits of surpassing historical pretense, is merited in its own right? A drastic change cannot sustain if it becomes a commodity of the challenged system. In this case, the *avant-garde* exists solely as a commodity within the system, and is as such - a reinforcement.

I conjecture that such discussion is just sounding-board fodder for academia, whose long-term transition to *old-garde* may actually spark antithesis publications... A situation which Singaporeans might term "lum pah pah lan." However, I do not believe that research to promote collaboration is exhaustively composed of empty gongs and clanging symbols, humans are naturally inter-disciplinary and sadly, it is often one's ability to suppress this nature that excels one in research. I leave you with the following:

Is incentivized HCI the key to the promoting inter-disciplinary collaboration?