CHAPTER

10 The Search for the "Killer Application": Drawing the Boundaries around the Sonification of Scientific Data Get access ›

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Abstract

While the ears interpret information all the time, the usage of sound to represent scientific data remains contested. This article deals with the sonification of scientific data. It focuses on strategies that the practitioners of sonification utilize to establish the legitimacy of sonification as a scientific method of data display. Furthermore, it presents a study of a community that attempts to liberate the sounds from their hidden by using them as a tool in the analysis and representation of scientific data. It focuses on the establishment of a core sonification community and studies debates about how to best define the field. Subsequently, the article discusses the community's search for a "killer application" and how expectations shape the community, zooming in on the borderline between science and art where boundary conflicts appear large. Finally, it discusses the disputes about notions of "quality" and how to best assess it.

Keywords: killer application, sonification, scientific data, quality, sound, data display

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