

## VR and tall buildings

Monday, 21 June 2004

Two sort of related links this morning...

June 16 2004

VR Tool Re-Creates Hallucinations

[http://www.technologyreview.com/articles/rnb\\_061604.asp?trk=nl](http://www.technologyreview.com/articles/rnb_061604.asp?trk=nl)

and...

July/August 2004

The World's Tallest Building (for Now)

by Patric Hadenius

<http://www.technologyreview.com/articles/hadenius0704.asp>

The first article briefly describes how a virtual reality installation has been programmed to simulate a particular psychiatric patient's hallucinations. The idea is that this -- currently used as a teaching tool -- will help health care workers to gain an understanding of the reality of patients.

Yes.

I find ideas and manifestations such as this incredibly encouraging. It remains one of my convictions that with all of this technology available to us, applying it towards understanding ourselves and each other better (in order to better help each other out) ought to be one of the main pushes.

And, a bunch of years ago now, I had the good fortune of being in a VR installation in another "Emerging Technologies" context. This VR experience was ultimately to be used to help people deal with some of their phobias. The demonstration I participated in was to work on the apparently common "fear of heights".

Now I personally am not afraid of heights per se but I do suffer from vertigo. For me this means that I get a little concerned when I find myself leaning over any barrier that is ultimately the only thing keeping me "high in the sky". I am concerned given that I have this incredible urge to let myself fall. I don't think that this comes from any sort of death wish. It is not the crash at the bottom that I think of. It is simply an incredibly strong invitation to "float". And I am not sure that I can trust myself to not let myself be "so invited".

So... in the VR installation that I was in, the experience of allowing myself to climb high and to let myself lean as I would -- safely -- was a really good experience. A trust builder of sorts. And this short exercise in how VR could be used was completely convincing to me.

It is then and now, good to know that not only do/will doctors/patients have tools to in order to manifest help but that doctors do/will have tools that afford understanding. At the very least this will afford compassion. At the very best this will afford new ways to help.

Good for us!

So now, the second article. I came to the article through a poll on the MIT Emerging Technologies newsletter. The question was "What's the highest floor you would be comfortable working on?". The answers started at 10 and jumped from there. (Guess what my illogical answer was? :o) And/but, in here was the link highlighted above to the The World's Tallest Building (For Now). I particularly found the image with the construction details interesting. (And I found the link between the two links valid too :o)