AUTOMOTIVE FUTURES

This weekend Stanford “Leading Matters” ran one of its alumni events in Santa Clara.

Members of CARS (Center for Automotive Research at Stanford), now including myself, talked about the past, present, and future of auto-mobility. Great presentations came from Sebastian Thrun (robotic cars and Google), Chris Gerdes (driving at the limits – he brought his drive-by-wire Audi TT-S) and Cliff Nass (“the John Nash of the group”).

Clinton Stark has run a very entertaining (and informative) summary on his blog – StarkSilverCreek – All Things West Coast.

"The one hour presentation wasn't so much a soup-to-nuts prognostication of all things cars, as it was an entertaining cross-section of what researchers are working on deep within the Stanford labs …

Some sound bites astonished me. For example, "Even during peak, 92% of a highway remains unoccupied." We learn that this inefficiency results from the infrastructure required to support modern roadways. Also, automotive deaths and injuries impact global GDP anywhere from 1-3% annually.

The stakes are no doubt high. So what would the panelists propose about the future of autos? And, I wondered: how long would it take before the conversation turned to the electric vehicle?

Turns out that latter question would not be explored until the session had almost ended. Thankfully! It was a breath of fresh air. Not because I don't have interest in electric and hybrid cars, or believe they are a potential part of a larger environmental solution, I just wanted to hear something different for a change.

Each of four panelists was given about 5-10 minutes to present. Then the session concluded with an informative Q&A moderated by the Jeremy Clarkson-like archaeologist (of course!) Michael Shanks …"

Our point – human centered design covers engineering, psychology, math, computer science … and, yes, archaeology!


MINI
JUN
California
2007
ARCHLGY
UNIVERSITY
COOPER S