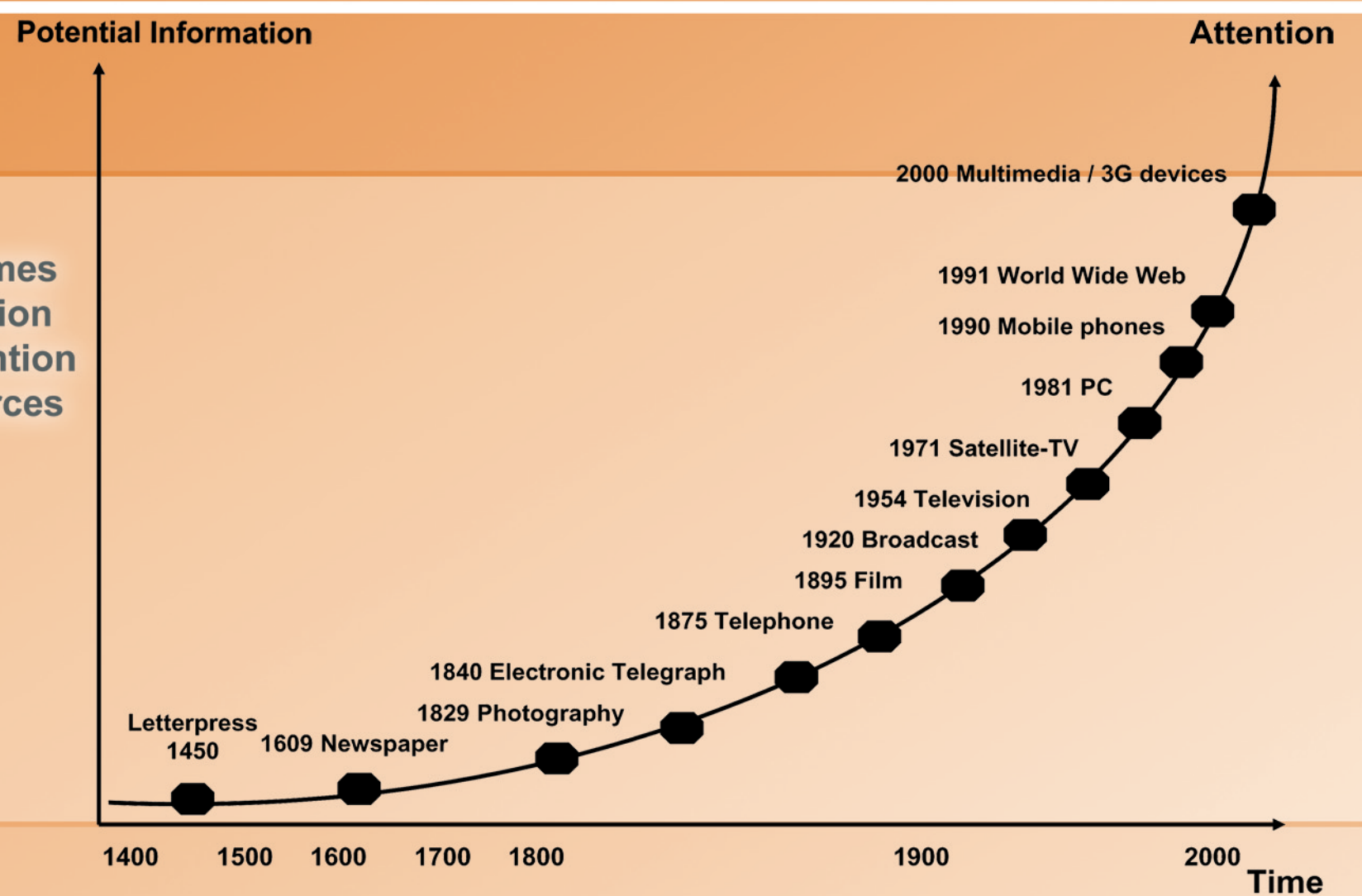




Attention as a scarce resource in an information based society

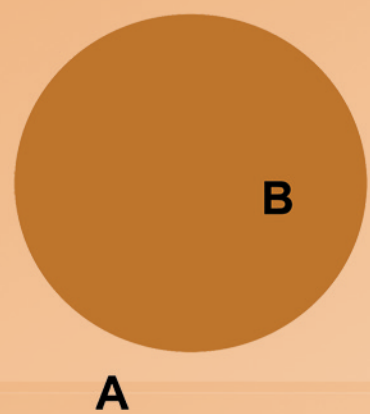
Robert Bichler

“What information consumes is rather obvious: It consumes the attention of its recipients. Hence a wealth of information creates a poverty of attention and a need to allocate attention efficiently among the overabundance of information sources that might consume it.” (Herbert A. Simon, 1971)



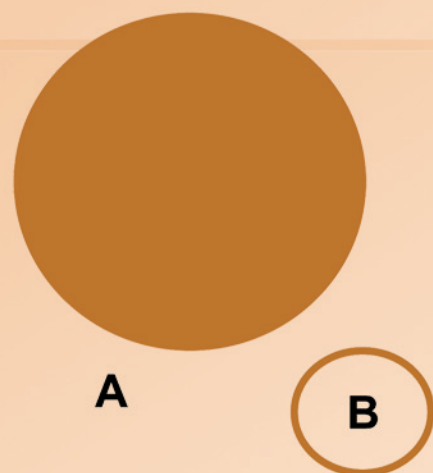
Different ways of thinking on how to deal with an attention - potential information problem situation (based on Wolfgang Hofkirchner):

Reductionism



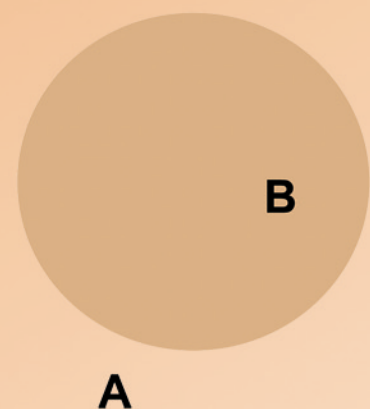
A... attention-information problem
 B... attention problem
 B'... information problem
 → information overload

Dualism



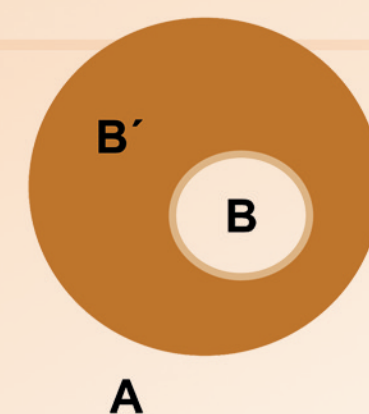
A... attention-information problem
 B... attention problem
 B'... information problem
 → information overload or limited re-organisation capacity

Projectionism



A... attention-information problem
 B... attention problem
 B'... information problem
 → limited re-organisation capacity

Dialectics



A... attention-information problem
 B... attention problem
 B'... information problem
 → Dialectic of information overload and limited re-organisation capacity

Only a dialectical way of thinking has the potential to handle such a complex problem situation.

From a dialectical point of view the information overload and the limited re-organisation capacity have to be considered. Both elements mutually require each other. The social actors have to achieve the capability to self-organise and the information technology should be designed in a complexity reducing way. To solve “the information overload and limited re-organisation capacity dilemma” a collective intelligence approach could be a possible way.