
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Robert G. Morrison, Ph.D.
Executive Director

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Robert G. Morrison seeks to live and work at the crossroads of the arts and sciences. As an undergraduate Morrison studied chemistry and molecular biology at Wheaton College and later studied art at the Cleveland Institute of Art. He received an M.A. in experimental psychology from Cleveland State University and a Ph.D. in cognitive neuroscience from UCLA while he was a National Research Service Award fellow.

During the last two decades Morrison's work in the sciences and education has spread across several disciplines. He has worked in molecular biology and chemistry research labs and managed a chemistry research program where his team of researchers was responsible for developing a new polymer technology resulting in several US patents.

Morrison was first attracted to the study of psychology through his work as a conceptual artist where he developed visual analogies involving identity development and sharing and explored the ways that observers influence the creative process. In psychology, his work has concentrated on human higher cognition and its implications for education. One area of research involves using experimental and computational methods to investigate how the brain constrains human reasoning. This has involved work with several different populations including college students, children, older adults and patients suffering from dementia.

Morrison has been involved in several educational collaborations including a project with Medantics Technology to optimize a web education tool, which uses case-based reasoning to improve medical professional's medical diagnostic skills. He is also collaborating with Dr. Lindsey Richland of UC Irvine on a variety of projects using personal data assistants in conjunction with web-based science inquiry software to improve children's learning in classrooms and science museums.

As Executive Director and Producer for Xunesis, Morrison has developed several projects including, *Retrieval: A Journey into Memory*, an innovative blend of narrative film with a video learning module. *Retrieval* represents a brand new approach to introducing the topic of memory in a psychology class, encouraging long-term retention and knowledge integration of key memory concepts based on principles of analogical reminding. A second Xunesis project, *Virtual Lab Tours*, uses interactive media to take high school and college students inside the laboratories of major scientists to learn about the questions that drive research, see the methods first hand and get the big picture on where a field is heading.

The National Institute of Mental Health, the National Science Foundation and the Office of Naval Research have supported Morrison's work as a scientist and educator. He has authored scientific papers and presentations and is the co-editor of the recently published *Cambridge Handbook of Thinking and Reasoning* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), the first comprehensive handbook on higher human thought.

Simultaneous with his science career, he has actively pursued the arts. His paintings, photographs and sculpture have been exhibited in galleries and museums throughout the United States and he has designed sets and media for the stage while producing for both the stage and cinema. To learn more about Morrison's art please visit www.studiotheia.com.