

## ATTENTION AND CURIOSITY (with Yves Citton) May 5 2023

20:56:44 From Sal Randolph to Everyone:

I love that, a curiosity economy

20:59:33 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WECQjUoF5SR3dYYEQ8AmMrihexAIBXMa/view?usp=s>

haring

21:02:38 From Ana Cristina dos Santos to Everyone:

Hello everyone!

21:03:14 From Justin Smith to Everyone:

Hi All, I'm on a train with bad connectivity — forgive me if I disappear again...

21:15:42 From Adam Jasper to Everyone:

oh, wow, I want to know how the attention and discourse exercise works...

21:16:00 From Raiane Cantisano (she.her) to Everyone:

Replying to "oh, wow, I want to k..."

It's FUN

21:16:41 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

My email:

21:16:53 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

[peter@sustainedattention.net](mailto:peter@sustainedattention.net)

21:17:12 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

Feel free to reach out w questions, leads, etc!

21:17:42 From David Landes to Everyone:

Replying to "oh, wow, I want to k..."

interested x2

21:29:56 From Eric Nadler Zoomleroni to Everyone:

hi... I dropped zoom... can you put me in a breakout room pls?

21:34:42 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

I am in a kind of sunporch at the top of a student dorm at the University of Helsinki, and the space is lovely but unheated – as I moved around the room “feeling around” for gravitational centers of curiosity, I lingered for a bit on some cracks in the plaster, on the metal hardware for the casement windows – but I really came up short upon noticing a sign that read “no fires of any kind!”

21:37:45 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

Yves! You are getting big love from Kristin Lawler on the shout out to student labor-resistance!

21:38:28 From Kristin Lawler to Everyone:

Facts!!!

21:38:42 From Raphaële Jeune:

My conductor experience : getting through some objects and furniture that I circle with both hands without touching them and then feel like kneeling and grab the dust with my hand, establishing a sensual relationship with it, playing with it, from one side to the other, caressing it, taking time, taking it to the garbage can very consciously and feeling related with the can, which gets beautiful and smooth through my gesture.

21:41:17 From Adam Jasper to Everyone:

Lutte Greve Blocage Tout bruler = Struggle Strike Blockade Burn it all down

21:44:02 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

Just making sure everyone is getting the term that Yves is using — he is complaining about a “Manichean” view of attention (meaning a black-and-white, good vs evil, “battle royale” style of thinking....).

21:44:22 From Masami (she/her) to Everyone:

Reacted to "Just making sure eve..." with 👍

21:44:32 From Adam Jasper to Everyone:

Reacted to "Just making sure eve..." with 👍

21:44:41 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

In this thinking Attention=good; Distraction=bad.

21:45:04 From Eric Nadler Zoomleroni to Everyone:

shout out to the writers on strike in the US!

21:45:19 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

Citton thinks this framing has made things too simplistic — and has been “moralized” in cheapening ways...

21:45:47 From Raiane Cantisano (she.her) to Everyone:

Reacted to "shout out to the wri..." with 🔥

21:45:50 From Sal Randolph to Everyone:

Reacted to "shout out to the wri..." with ✨

21:45:59 From Eric V. (he/him) to Everyone:

I was at a WGA East strike yesterday and this morning, it was powerful to watch them interrupt capital

21:46:02 From Sal Randolph to Everyone:

Reacted to "Just making sure eve..." with ✨

21:46:17 From Sal Randolph to Everyone:

Reacted to "I was at a WGA East ..." with ✨

21:46:47 From Raiane Cantisano (she.her) to Everyone:

Reacted to "shout out to the wri..." with ✨

21:46:50 From Raiane Cantisano (she.her) to Everyone:

Removed a ✨ reaction from "shout out to the wri..."

21:48:15 From Sal Randolph to Everyone:

Lovers of curiosity come out from your cabinets!

21:48:27 From Julian Chehirian to Everyone:

Reacted to "Lovers of curiosity..." with ❤️

21:48:31 From Will to Everyone:

Reacted to "Lovers of curiosity..." with ❤️

21:48:56 From Raiane Cantisano (she.her) to Everyone:

Reacted to "Lovers of curiosity..." with 🥰

21:50:08 From Carolyn Biltoft to Everyone:  
My notes, from exercise just putting, them now, belated. Inspired by Yves on repurposing distraction and pull since was relevant. My books seem like strangers on the shelf, I can't remember why I had arranged them as such, and so much time between two continents, tugging ocean, I can't remember who they are or how they got here or last time I held them in my hands, eyes wandering, wondering, Willa Cather, William James. My violin, I also have not touched. There it sits, grey, lack of sun. But I see the white floor boards, friendlier, a border, closer strangely than these neglected loves. Just a simple line between the wall and the floor. Bare feet, vis-a-vis, my neighbour's baby crib

21:50:25 From Sal Randolph to Everyone:  
Certainly a disciplinarian and self-oriented discourse vs a discourse of systemic change and new infrastructure

21:50:59 From Sal Randolph to Everyone:  
Replying to "My notes, from exerc..."  
I love this

21:51:04 From Caleb Smith to Everyone:  
<https://www.sup.org/books/title/?id=18413>

21:51:15 From Jesse Prinz to Everyone:  
I also recommend Perry Zurn's work on curiosity

21:51:46 From Carolyn Biltoft to Everyone:  
Replying to "My notes, from exerc..."  
🥰

21:52:04 From Isi Litke to Everyone:  
There's also Marina van Zuylén's *The Plenitude of Distraction*

21:53:29 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:  
^^^^. great reference, Isi...

21:53:52 From Alexandru Balgiu to Everyone:  
<https://mitpress.mit.edu/9780262547147/curious-minds/>

21:54:11 From Eric V. (he/him) to Everyone:  
If I may, pasting an excerpt from a "How to Make a Leader" training from Democratic Socialists of America: "Many people believe that good leaders or organizers are people who are charismatic, extroverted and great public speakers. However, while these qualities might be to a person's benefit as an organizer, over the past several years of organizing in DSA, we have consistently found that two simple qualities are core to a person's success as an organizer and a leader:  
Commitment and  
Curiosity (a willingness to learn)"

21:55:07 From Eric Nadler Zoomlroni to Everyone:  
On a less academic front... when in NYC, look out for events (Sunday evenings typically) at Museum of Interesting Things <http://museumofinterestingthings.org/>

21:55:08 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:  
Key curiosity reference: Foucault's "Masked Philosopher"...

21:55:17 From Carolyn Biltoft to Everyone:  
Aussi Georges Didi\_Huberman sur Lucioles

21:55:21 From Masami (she/her) to Everyone:  
Thinking of flaneurs...

21:56:22 From Ana Cristina dos Santos to Everyone:  
Yes, I was just thinking of it... the flaneurs

21:56:47 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WECQjUoF5SR3dYYEQ8AmMrihexAIBXMa/view?usp=s>  
haring

21:57:00 From Carolyn Biltoft to Everyone:  
"Survival of fireflies" and awe

21:57:14 From Alexandru Balgiu to Everyone:  
[https://monoskop.org/Lucius\\_Burckhardt](https://monoskop.org/Lucius_Burckhardt)

22:09:56 From Caleb Smith to Everyone:

What is curiosity? Is it a variety of attention, or an instance of distraction? Or is it a third term that gets us out of the opposition between attention and distraction?

Curiosity as a variety of attention: curiosity is attention when I don't know what I'm seeking. Not instrumental.

Curiosity opposed to attention: might be more playful, even perverse, and in this way less moralistic/disciplinary than attention.

Curiosity is a quality of subjects (a person exercising curiosity) but also of objects (an object is strange, interesting, surprising). The relation of curiosity goes both ways, not just from subject to object.

Attention like a math problem or a flashlight—curiosity amoral but also playful, joyful.

Does curiosity have a connection to surveillance? Voyeurism, rather than strategic data-gathering.

Do we have time or space now for curiosity? What would be an infrastructure of/for curiosity? Archives as an infrastructure of curiosity.

22:09:57 From Julian Chehirian to Everyone:

Julian: Curiosity as digression. Curiosity as taking root in aloofness from object of attention.

Raphael: when Yves talks about relationship between push/pull. There is another way of thinking about push/pull. A reversal. For example, when we do a practice of attention, there is a will to let go, which brings some kind of push which is not coercive (e.g. ad). There is an epiphany.. which is valuable, and powerful - in making us change our minds. Our way of seeing things. When you have an attentional experience, there is some kind of emptiness which permits experience to come to you. I'm not sure that I feel ok with push and pull as being in strict opposition.

Wayne: Can curiosity be purposive?

Julian: Is there an implicit connotation of a kind of agency within curiosity? How does that

Eric: I think of curiosity as two different kinds of things. One is state of being - is someone a curious kind of person? They may see someone and ask questions and be inquisitive. But curiosity is also very itinerant, and temporary (oh, that's curious - I don't know what to do with that. I'd like to ask Yves which one he is thinking of more (is it the case of study)

Wayne: is "doing curiosity" getting us towards thinking about agency? Versus being curious. Thinking about hiking as metaphor - mind wandering. Setting intention to wander/meander a park. Sometimes you get lost.

Julian: there is a warbling quality to curiosity. There is an impossibility of capture contained within it.

Eric: does anyone feel that they might be criticized for being curious? bc we are supposed to be doing particular things at particular times.

22:10:04 From Sal Randolph to Everyone:  
Room 1

Stephan - attention economy weaponizes the curiosity economy

Jesse - curiosity feels more active, attention can be transfixed. sludge art on tik tok -- overlaid visuals that are different and hard to process, but cause transfixion, put you into a stupor. curiosity, hypertext, the whole potential of digging into

Sal - thinking about the push and pull dimensions as a new kind of spectrum than attention & distraction

Marcos - Had two recent exhibitions, one called push, one called pull. Marcos has been studying push and pull. Push was slowly rotating paintings, paint was added whenever he received a notification. The accumulation of pushes. Pull - how our sense of orientation could be activated by magnetic fields (ferrous chrystals in our tear ducts), the science is still out.

Jesse - Sal's divining rod had a magnetic field

Stephan - curiosity feels like a beautiful thing, Attention doesn't have the same joy. Why do we click on something, it piques our curiosity, but then it wants to exploit us.

Sal - AI as automated attention - how much of our attention will we outsource to AI?

Marcos - I'm on self-driving mode (he's driving a car right now), which is extended attention in practice.

Adam Jasper - attention diasporas

Marcos - the car's cameras are like additional eyes

Jesse - automated curiosity

Naila - resisting these binaries

22:10:17 From Julian Chehirian to Everyone:

Vitoria: Curiosity can be something that is sustained but also the interrupts

22:10:34 From Jesse Prinz to Everyone:

(Sorry to my room. I hit the wrong key and exited prematurely.)

22:13:53 From David Landes to Everyone:

1) "Curiosity economy"? Sure, IF we want to model the aspects of the transactive, value, allocation, scarcity. Why but why not "ecology"?

Curiosity seems different than attn - curiosity has a different underlying phenomenon to shove into "economy"

THUS: We move for a "curiosity ecology" as a richer, inviting, more useful notion, informed by Citton's critique of "attention economy" as too narrow and flattening for our human wellbeing. Economy and ecology have an interface about dematerialized entities and networked, which we struggle to navigate and which generates status and visibility. We have to keep the economy in ecology but not be limited to it.

2) "Automated curiosity" NO! That's such a human thing! We all feel. BUT on the other hand, that which we call curiosity and attn are embedded with and symbionts with automated infrastructures pervading our selfhood in modern society. Perhaps automated curiosity acknowledges how much "curiosity" is always already tied up with automations we live and

22:14:45 From Larry Berger to Everyone:

Yes, to a curiosity economy.

As an early childhood educator - curiosity is how children are drawn through the day, it pulls them, if we do nothing to cut the thread, they go on so far. But then eventually we cut the thread.

Distinction between attention and curiosity: Curiosity is the lead force and attention is something that follows that lead.

If a child is not attentive, is not curious that day, then I know that child is sick.

Chr: but I can get your attention by being jazzy.

AC: But you can't sustain it. They (the children) are so true to their curiosity.

22:14:48 From Larry Berger to Everyone:

I can see the difference between when I worked as a teacher in 1991 and now.

Chr: then maybe there isn't a distinction between attention and curiosity - it's just that sometimes the curiosity is momentary.

Ecologies of attention - the image as the central object to which the idea of curiosity attaches. And connects it to spectacle. Morbid curiosity - how easily that affect shades into the allure of the gruesome.

"The people who are rich in curiosity are the gruesome. Everyone is curious about them."

22:14:58 From Larry Berger to Everyone:

Sound and tactile calls children more than vision

Smell! You don't notice until you pay attention.

Little diary Benjamin kept about his child's language development.

Can there be automated curiosity?

No.

Well, tiktok: next one, next one.

My curiosity can be taken by automation, but can the act itself be automated? and not just automated but commodified?


22:16:26 From Eric Nadler Zoomleroni to Everyone:

just a note to the organizers and participants... the chat can be saved!... click on the "..."  
at the lower right of the chat window and, voila.


22:17:04 From Eric V. (he/him) to Everyone:

If folks have not seen Terrence Malick's The Tree of Life, I highly recommend it — very  
much orbits around curiosity

22:17:29 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

Reacted to "just a note to the o..." with 

22:17:47 From Raiane Cantisano (she.her) to Everyone:

Reacted to "If folks have not se..." with 

22:17:53 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

"Cache economy"

22:18:40 From Jesse Prinz to Everyone:

Thanks all! Happy summer!

22:29:54 From Kristin Lawler to Everyone:

Have a wonderful weekend everybody! Ciao!