



ATTENTION AND THE GROUP CHAT (with Sophie Haigney) 2 February 2024

14:02:43 From Leonard Nalencz to Everyone:

Order of the Third Berger

14:02:50 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

BEAT ME TO IT

14:02:57 From Leonard Nalencz to Everyone:

Reacted to "BEAT ME TO IT" with 😊

14:02:58 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

Reacted to "Order of the Third B..." with 🔥

14:03:14 From Ben Berger (he/him) to Everyone:

Reacted to "Order of the Third B..." with 🤔

14:21:35 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

Email me w/ questions about the School: peter@sustainedattention.net

14:29:57 From margaret wertheim to Everyone:

what if we don't do group chat? Its not part of my life. I use texting as a minimal comm method. It feels to me that it takes my attentive time away from being present to the people in my physical presence. I like Plato's take on this,

14:31:21 From Amalia Rosa to Everyone:

if you dont do a group chat no worries! We invite you to draw a map of a group of social relations you are in perhaps of people who do not live close to you, but who you communicate with somewhat often using digital technology

14:31:37 From Amalia Rosa to Everyone:

Reacted to "what if we don't do ..." with ❤️

14:32:01 From Amalia Rosa to Everyone:

Would love to hear more about what plato says on this Margaret !

14:33:49 From Jesse Prinz to Everyone:

Reacted to "what if we don't do ..." with ❤️

14:35:03 From Amalia Rosa to Everyone:

peter@sustainedattention.net

14:35:28 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

^^ u actually CAN send this to me! We like to collect this stuff...

14:36:52 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

Thanks to folks who have already sent their pictures in...

14:40:34 From Julian Wright to Everyone:

in England in lockdown :\

14:48:25 From David Landes to Everyone:

hmmm imagine a Friends of Attention SMS group chat beyond Discord in right into our phones...😏

14:49:55 From Amalia Rosa to Everyone:

Reacted to "hmmm imagine a Frien..." with ❤️

15:06:13 From manningc@sacredheart.edu to Everyone:

Here is my report:Content of conversations not that different from in person –but on some topics, like group chat on Israel war, it can become intense even among people who don't live in same place, it can come into your home at any time ... what do people want from each other?

It affects our attention because it pings, it calls to us ... in brazil they use whatsapp, many groups, how do I keep w. them all ... some are less active but more important How do you choose? Teaching our kids how to deal with this ... so it can capture a lot of attention, it can feel too much, fragmenting, it's work!

GCs take email to another level, constantly satisfying various people's demands

Whatsup lets people leave voice mssags, and you can't skim those like you do w. written message, takes even more time

Is GC only written.... Is this breakout group also a GC? But this has boundaries, online chats don't

15:06:45 From Julian Chehirian to Everyone:

Julian Wright:

Two different kinds of group chats. One kind is my family - dominated by one person.

My wife and I are friends with someone who is connected with a community that doesn't usually give out phone numbers without it being through their agents; like being at an enormous party with luminous beings. Hierarchies were implicit.

Deep listening in chat forums: is it possible?

If you're in a group chat with three people, you can hear back and forth quite quickly. Gives example of early 20th century European postal services: e.g. up to six postal deliveries per day... you could correspond in that way somewhat rapidly.

Carlos Montemayor: group chats might be intended to be intimate; but they are often substitutes for real interactions. Erosion of intimacy. The reaction you expect in a group chat is much more unengaged. Not a lot of expressive power. Opposite side of this is that we'd have even less contact. They shape our attention but they are also trap-like, with social media.

15:06:45 From Julian Chehirian to Everyone:

Larry Berger: Zoom is a more powerful way to connect. Interest in mindfulness in video call spaces. Way to resist fracking is to be autonomous in one's attention. And that is through disciplines of attention. Arendt's idea of citizen councils - e.g. of 30 people. If you want to start a fresh new approach to governing, you form citizen councils. The condition is deep listening - mindfulness and "relational presencing" (a term that Larry uses with a group he is involved with)

15:06:51 From Ben Berger (he/him) to Everyone:

Apologies, I was more or less transcribing the conversation as best I could so mine is FAR too long. I will spend a few minutes summarizing it.

15:07:12 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

Replying to "Apologies, I was mor..."

Please send! We love a detailed transcript!

15:07:13 From Jessica Gallucci to Everyone:

Larry Berger: some of the younger people on this call might not have the generational quality of "where the group chats happen" bc we don't have them in AOL/IM anymore. It makes your older friendships have less functionality: the group chat doesn't do as much bc it's been long abandoned by its creator for newer technologies. Your old group of friends is in a chat that is literally just text and you have to use punctuation marks if you want to make emojis, etc.

Caitlin: there's a resistance to transferring those conversations to iMessage?

Larry: yes. Someone would actually have to shut it down and then people would get lost

Caitlin: it's interesting to think about how, when these formats go away, they exist in your memory. Having to draw out a digital room in space had me thinking about digital vs physical spaces

15:07:16 From Jessica Gallucci to Everyone:

Larry: a discussion in an ancient format, like a sepia-toned photograph. In some cases the space is actually a listserv which is not quite a group chat, but it's a sequential conversation. I also wanted to raise the strange quality of them being conversational, in the sense that they happen in real time, but you can suspend your attention to them indefinitely. In older formats you can't go in and insert a comment historically, but now you can reply to old comments and edit them.

Caitlin: the ability to reply to individual comments within the same thread also does something your attention.

Larry: I recently had the experience of accidentally pocket-dialing, FaceTiming a group chat. It was awkward: it was too real, even though it was all still virtual. I guess maybe part of what it was doing was demanding an amount of attention that was incommensurate with what we'd all signed up for.

15:08:08 From Ana Marques to Everyone:

how does the chat thread looks like? temporally speaking it can't really be a thread

be drawn to the specific energy that that group of people create in that group

messages sent in the group x sending individually

15:08:47 From David Landes to Everyone:

our group talked about love, relocation, and nostalgia. coming in a min...

15:09:05 From elenaradice to Everyone:

Reacted to "our group talked abo..." with ❤️

15:09:09 From Alyssa Loh to Everyone:

Reacted to "our group talked abo..." with ❤️

15:09:11 From Christopher Mole to Everyone:

Family Dynamics in Group Chat (Mom runs hot), Dad drops out.

Room for calamitous error: posting in wrong chat!

Anti-calmness of notifications, becomes clear only when one switches off,

Guilt of non-participation

Awareness of surveillance (litigation) — private sphere.

Group writing in person: a tiring mess — what's lost and what's gained in group chat version?:

ability to scroll back in time

Notes to self become one's own group chat with self.

15:09:20 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

Occurred to me that my generation of friends grew up with inside jokes from our group chat that were PRIMARILY textual... did other people grow up with key collective memories being text-based?

15:09:35 From Julian Wright to Everyone:

Reacted to "Family Dynamics in G..." with 🤔

15:10:11 From Jo to Everyone:

What kind of group chats did we select? What kinds of relationships do we have with the people in there, and how did they shape our behaviors?

Mihir: high school group chat - feels canonical, a bunch of people who had a lot in common once and in my case, decades later, we still have connections but they're attenuated.

Avik: brother and sister-in-law, one of the more recent group chats. I shy away from many group chats, having had difficulties in organizing events, etc.

Zach: I'm dating someone new and they've created a chat with me and their best friends, etc.

Mihir: I don't have a bunch of these broader groups, but at work there's Slack, which functions as a group chat, no one talks to anyone in person, it's all in there. I also had to have someone walk me through different emojis.

15:10:18 From Jo to Everyone:

Zack: one of the things that presents itself in the group chat but is true of any social context is how vulnerable I wanna be, how risk-taking. There's comedy I try to engage in, jokes/memes, if I know they will be well-received.

Jo: When a group chat is novel, like Zack's, and the stakes seem higher, it perhaps invites us to be more attentive than when it involves relationships we're used to. Back to emojis, they sometimes work as a cop-out to more complex, attentive engagement via verbal discourse.

15:10:31 From David Landes to Everyone:

Replying to "our group talked abo..."

and the joys + frustrations of chat for large, ongoing feelings

15:11:30 From Jo to Everyone:

(Sorry, Zach!)

15:11:41 From Amalia Rosa to Everyone:

We spoke about how for many people group chats are the most heart warming form of digital communications we engage with, as they in a way sort of represent social media 1.0 : technology made to actually help you be in touch with people who are far away. We talked about anger + nostalgia and

how in many ways, when in the group chat we are speaking the language of media just as much as English and Italian as David brilliantly said. We talked about the importance of understanding that we are engaging in mixed media platforms, and are constantly negotiating with media logics, alongside love and nostalgia

15:11:52 From Zach Wojtowicz to Everyone:

Reacted to "(Sorry, Zach!)" with ❤️

15:12:11 From margaret wertheim to Everyone:

Jesse - I'd really like to talk with you about resistance to the idea that LLMs "understand" and the idea that there are many other "dimensions" of understanding to what LLM's are doing. This relates to the book I am working on about the concept of "dimension" and what this term means in math physics big-data-science culture art and now AI.

15:13:16 From Jesse Prinz to Everyone:

Let's talk, Margaret. I'm eager to hear about the book. You can reach me at Jesse@subcortex.com

15:13:49 From Ben Berger (he/him) to Everyone:

Jesse and Margaret: never been in group chats

Kristin is blown away by 17 yo daughter's bombardment with 15 different groups at once, thinks it's worse. Margaret agrees, recommends Being Beside Ourselves on fragmentation of self but this sounds like that on steroids.

Sophie focuses on the group chat aspect of constancy: there is no "off" button or end time of a group chat as there is in real life. Sometimes they just die out of their own accord but could be revived. Dead groups can feel like a loss but reviving them can be a collective project.

Ben noted the way in which dominating individuals can kill off the chat community. More than one of felt that the fragmentation has gone too far.

15:15:21 From David Landes to Everyone:

"we attend in the form of our media"

15:15:27 From Amalia Rosa to Everyone:

Reacted to ""we attend in the fo..." with ❤️

15:15:27 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

Reacted to ""we attend in the fo..." with 🔥

15:15:28 From David Landes to Everyone:

and chat = multiple media

15:15:36 From Zach Wojtowicz to Everyone:

Reacted to ""we attend in the fo..." with ❤️

15:15:48 From David Landes to Everyone:

so we have to speak "media languages" alongside our English

15:15:52 From Eve Jacobs to Everyone:

Reacted to ""we attend in the fo..." with ❤️

15:16:06 From elenaradice to Everyone:

Reacted to ""we attend in the fo..." with ⚡

15:16:40 From Ana Cristina (Tininha) to Everyone:

It's role playing... I did that with mister on the phone, but our voices are similar

15:16:41 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

My friends already do this - they share their location with their friends so at any moment one can log on and see their realtime location

15:16:50 From David Landes to Everyone:

communication is the negotiation of selecting content+medium+audience+time, even if we have little language to self-understand ourselves doing it

15:16:58 From Amalia Rosa to Everyone:

Yes mine too haha , and I do not like it! @Peter Schmidt

15:17:02 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

Reacted to "Yes mine too haha , ..." with ❤️

15:17:12 From Leonard Nalencz to Everyone:

Reacted to ""we attend in the fo..." with 👍

15:17:35 From Ana Cristina (Tininha) to Everyone:

Thank you!

15:17:52 From Jesse Prinz to Everyone:

Thanks Sophie!