



ATTENTION, MUSIC, IMMERSION (with Natalie Miller) 1 March 2024

Beginning with a Gaming/Music/Immersion Exercise --

14:14:42 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/13SFs_sRx9hTtmQrE3S_nT44V4gYpAX2l/view?usp=drive_link

14:14:50 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

Don't click it yet!

14:14:58 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

We will all do it together....

14:17:30 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:

Thumbs up!

Responses --

14:24:54 From Larry Berger to Everyone:

hard to focus on whole, immersed in aspects of the scenes, not much connection with music

14:24:58 From Ana Marques to Everyone:

1st - pure enchantment, excited to be entering a new world

2nd - closing my eyes opened space for emotions (like fear) to come up; my imagination kept on building a world inside my mind's eye

3rd - felt more present, less like fantasy, but analytic of what image & sound meant our could mean (also like where is everybody?)

14:25:17 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

A few thoughts from me — I ended up feeling like I wanted to try to REMEMBER the different visual elements and where they fell with respect to the sound cues and modulations — For me, PART II felt like a mnemonic exercise!

14:25:19 From Ben Berger (Swarthmore) to Everyone:

I was amazed by how poor my recall was from the first to the second viewing—things like the order in which scenes/ scenery appeared. I wonder whether it's a different, more immersive, experience for those who already have seen the video (perhaps many times)?

Using the music to help recall what was happening visually didn't work so well for me, and I wonder whether it's likely something that improves with the practice of close attention.

14:25:51 From Carlos Montemayor to Everyone:

The music makes the “silo” experience of getting into the concrete structures more relaxing than they would be otherwise.

14:25:51 From manningc@sacredheart.edu to Everyone:

It was fun seeing the video a second time. I noticed some items, like the big orange ball, more that time. For me the music did not help me recall much of the images, it was very, very soft (maybe my volume is not working right) and all sounded kind of similar.

14:26:05 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:

I experienced it first by watching and taking screenshots of some of the images because I had never seen them before and it's just part of a habitus I suppose, the second time was a little difficult to get “settled into” because of all the light in the sunroom that I'm sitting made it “at odds” with the lighting of the scenes I saw the first time around. The first time I just tried to kick back and enjoy it without taking the screenshots with the exception of two shots: one that said Halo EVOLVED and the other was the green light I wasn't able to capture on my first run. 😊👁️😊

14:26:24 From Jessica Gallucci to Everyone:

Thinking about how sound can be engineered to convey feelings of movement and vastness; even when I couldn't see or remember specific components of the set I felt oriented by it. The most memorable bit was the creeping/scuttling insect noises as we move past what looks like a big leaf

14:26:42 From Eve Jacobs to Everyone:

In round 2 I saw in my minds eye only the blurred edges/only impressions from round 1. In round 3, I was amazed by how many details came into my attentional path that I didn't notice the first time.

14:26:44 From Sebastian Watzl to Everyone:

I found the video distracting at first (I think I have an initial negative reaction to video games). It was easier to ‘get into’ the music, when the video was off and I felt it was quite relaxing as I fused the music with my own visual imagery. In the last take I could get the relaxing feel also with the video on.

14:27:00 From Jacob Weger to Everyone:

With my eyes closed I noticed textures of the music that I didn't notice the first time. On the third time I noticed much more visually as well. Without visual (the 2nd time) I certainly didn't recall the sequence of images very well, but more so than I expected to - images that came to mind associated with specific sounds. Very much a mood, atmospheric.

14:27:01 From Jessica Gallucci to Everyone:

(I wonder if its memorable-ness is an evolutionary feature? We are especially attuned to the presence of other creatures?)

14:27:22 From Ben Berger (Swarthmore) to Everyone:

Reacted to "(I wonder if its mem..." with 👍

14:27:35 From Lucy Elvis to Everyone:

I found the music alone easier to feel focused on, but perhaps less immersed? The second looking and listening felt more like noticing more small visual elements and synergies between sound and images

14:31:52 From elenaradice to Everyone:

Spent last night while reviewing my students project listening to an NTS radio playlist, very loud, with a certain amount of minutes of this precise soundtrack. Also, spent part of the day talking about the historical importance of gaming industry for the development of audiovisual media... so basically I sadly was never able, paradoxically because of the immersive experience, to abstract myself from the self, becoming the avatar I was craving to be :')

14:32:15 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:

Reacted to "It was fun seeing th..." with ❤️

14:32:25 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:
Reacted to "Thinking about how s..." with ❤️

14:32:37 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:
Reacted to "In round 2 I saw in ..." with ❤️

14:32:43 From Colleen Kennedy to Everyone:
I thought, on the first playthrough, that the music sounded more clearly referential to changes in the visuals - however, listening to the music alone for the second time, I didn't perceive "changes in scene" auditorily to the same degree of clarity as I expected. I reflected on that interplay on the third playthrough

14:32:58 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:
Reacted to "I found the video di..." with ❤️

14:33:02 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:
peter@sustainedattention.net

14:33:05 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:
Reacted to "With my eyes closed ..." with ❤️

14:34:01 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:
davidgrahamburnett@gmail.com

14:34:16 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:
Reacted to "I found the music al..." with ❤️

14:34:21 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:
Alyssa.K.Loh@gmail.com

14:34:34 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:
Reacted to "Spent last night whi..." with ❤️

14:34:35 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:
^^ email us if you're interested in the summer school!

14:34:44 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:
Reacted to "I thought, on the fi..." with ❤️

14:35:01 From Ana Cristina (Tininha) to Everyone:
I didn't know the game and loved the soundtrack. 1: I loved the music, but the images were disturbing to me: changed too fast and presented me with ideas and environments that I didn't particularly appreciate. But I was trying to take in as much as possible. 2: with the eyes closed, the music transported me to childhood and teenage years memories of walking at the beach under the night sky and the forest where my friends and I would play pretend for many hours each day. The music and the images I was exposed to in part 1, I imagine, triggered those memories that I keep so close to my heart. 3: I started listening and looking, but quickly stopped looking because I wanted to stay with my memories. So, I closed my eyes again and the music transported me to my childhood memories of starry skies and tropical forests.

14:35:40 From Lucy Elvis to Everyone:
<https://aireinquiryandenvironment.wordpress.com/>

14:38:04 From Lucy Elvis to Everyone:
lucy.elvis@universityofgalway.ie

14:38:09 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:
Lucy, is "Aire" a wordplay on Eire? 🤔

14:38:43 From Michela Dianetti to Everyone:

it means attention in Irish, it stays for attentive inquire reclaiming attention :)

14:38:49 From Lucy Elvis to Everyone:

Its actually both an Irish word and a handy acronym 😊

14:38:57 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:

Reacted to "it means attention i..." with ❤️

14:39:00 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:

Reacted to "Its actually both an..." with ❤️

14:43:03 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

That was so beautiful!

14:43:12 From Ben Berger (Swarthmore) to Everyone:

Reacted to "That was so beautifu..." with 👍

14:47:07 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

"Sense of Presence Inventory"

14:47:13 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

^^^

14:47:18 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

Love the idea of that...

14:47:39 From Colleen Kennedy to Everyone:

Reacted to ""Sense of Presence I..." with ❤️

14:48:29 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

DURATION as a proxy for "immersion" — interesting...

14:48:32 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

I wonder...

14:49:08 From Ben Berger (Swarthmore) to Everyone:

I'm not surprised by the finding of immersion being related to but not the same as enjoyment

14:49:25 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

^^^ interesting

14:51:05 From Ben Berger (Swarthmore) to Everyone:

I think of the Csikszentmihalyi and other studies re: TV watching... people can spend a huge amount of time in front of television but report fairly low enjoyment. Want to learn more!!!

14:51:37 From Carlos Montemayor to Everyone:

Skillful training, according to N. A. Bernstein is "repetition without repetition."

14:51:43 From David Landes to Everyone:

Curious what your concept of "immersion" is. Solely "stimulus engagement" or something more? (e.g., hearing vs listening vs enrapt capture...)

14:51:51 From Ben Berger (Swarthmore) to Everyone:

Reacted to "Curious what your co..." with 👍

14:52:10 From Carlos Montemayor to Everyone:

Reacted to "I think of the Csiks..." with 👍

FIRST BREAKOUT QUESTION: examples of "immersive states" (linked to soundscapes) --

15:00:16 From David Landes to Everyone:

David: Singing "Happy birthday"

Ana/Michaela: Music for "zoning out", go-to music we are trained to work to repeatedly

Haven: ringtones during calls, matching task/art with the right song

David: Parade music, we are "in" the parade watching

David: silence when things breakdown (e.g., power outages)

15:00:26 From Jac Mullen to Everyone:

Jac: What is difference between this soundscape and something that induces a hypnotic state? Maybe—does anyone have an experience with listening to a specific song or playlist while working on a specific writing project?

Lucy: Yes with dissertation. A playlist that unfortunately stopped working its flow-state-inducing magic once the dissertation wrapped.

Alyssa: Lana del Ray album while working on a screenplay. Helping preserve the space of screenplay while leaving room, etc.

Carlos: Prayer, especially repetitive prayer, as a type of sustaining or attention-preserving soundscape

Christine: Certain soundscapes (Bach, Gregorian chant) allow access (attentional) to certain emotional experiential spaces

15:00:32 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:

Replying to "David: Singing "Happ..."

Lannndesssssss!!!

15:00:38 From David Landes to Everyone:

Reacted to "Lannndesssssss!!!" with 😊

15:00:45 From Larry Berger to Everyone:

Yoga music is good, blocks out other noise from attending to the body

Feel trapped by repetition, by lyrics again and again. Is this judgment?

Chanting can be a good thing, though.

Gregorian chant good though

15:00:57 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

Elena has a sound practice, so she works with repetition and immersion w/ voice and choirs. Thinks of one experience specifically. A concert by Tim Hecker at a small venue (25-30 ppl). I remember the feeling of being *high* on sound. I left the concert with a friend feeling so lifted that I couldn't possibly go home. I try to reproduce that experience in my work - using surround systems, etc...

Jessica thinks of driving cross-country from NYC to LA, which she did solo, on a deadline, to begin a new job. The song she had on repeat was an electronic remix of the wellerman sea shanty, which helped me drive with clarity and focus and SPEED.

Megan thinks of the MASH soundtrack, which brings her back to 1987 - her parents bedroom, with the TV on. Also being in a subway. AND the soundtrack I used to listen to by the Yayaya's remix en route to Occupy, when I was participating / studying that moment...

Peter thinks of charging through midtown Manhattan w Death Grips in his headphones.

15:01:21 From Ana Marques to Everyone:

Replying to "David: Singing "Happ..."

also i'd add jamming and musical improv — specifically when it gets to an angelical choir i get fully immersed

15:01:31 From Larry Berger to Everyone:

also i see that music affects me bodily and changes my comportment in situations.

15:02:10 From Jacob Weger to Everyone:

quality vs. quantity of immersion

15:02:38 From Ben Berger (Swarthmore) to Everyone:

Two of us have had the experience of muscle memory being strongly activated by music that once accompanied the motions.

Helpful distinction b/w immersion in the music itself, or music being in the background and facilitating a flow state. Music you listen to help you work, vs. music that's actually immersed and experiencing.

Particular piece of music helped one of us finish writing a difficult paper.. Played Dvorak New World symphony, was immersed in the paper writing experience. (Another of us [me] played Dusty Springfield's "Son of a Preacher Man" on loop for hours on end while writing a grad school essay.

15:02:51 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:

Replying to "Elena has a sound pr..."

Yes! Just one clarification: Not my parents bedroom, the room my brother and I shared, it was the closest room to the living room where my parents would watch that show together routinely. :)

15:02:55 From Ana Marques to Everyone:

and also there's a component of duration that could be a component of radical true attention, as I'm thinking on the ping pong attention span in modern culture

15:03:02 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:

Reacted to "Elena has a sound pr..." with ❤️

15:03:10 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:

Reacted to "David: Singing "Happ..." with ❤️

15:03:10 From Ana Cristina (Tininha) to Everyone:

We talked about how music can so quickly transport us to places in memories and moods. We both shared the experience of quickly being immersed in music and it of having the experience of music bringing us different kinds of "energies" (moods) and serve us in different moments of our lives.

15:03:18 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:

Reacted to "also i'd add jamming..." with ❤️

15:03:32 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:

Reacted to "Two of us have had t..." with ❤️

15:03:43 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:

Reacted to "We talked about how ..." with ❤️

15:04:16 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

For the folks out there who care about HISTORY... I will recommend one of the GREAT BOOKS on this: LISTENING IN PARIS...

15:04:28 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:

Reacted to "For the folks out th..." with ❤️

15:04:32 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

https://www.google.com/search?gs_ssp=eJzj4tLP1TcwM7eoKjA1YPRSzcksLknNy8xLV8jMUyhILMosVkhUSC7NKSktsSxRyADK5hdVAgCn7RG2&q=listening+in+paris+a+cultural+history&rlz=1C5GCEM_enUS1032US1032&oq=listening+in+paris+&gs_lcrp=EgZjaHJvbWUqBwgBEC4YgAQyBggAEEUYOTIHCAEQLhiABDIICAIQABgWGB4yDQgDEAAYhgMYgAQYigUyDQgEEAAYhgMYgAQYigUyDQgFEAAYhgMYgAQYigUyDQgGEAAYhgMYgAQYigXSAQg0OTY5ajBqNKgCALACAA&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

15:04:33 From Ana Cristina (Tininha) to Everyone:

I love this question!

15:04:57 From Ana Cristina (Tininha) to Everyone:

Reacted to "For the folks out th..." with 🙌🙌

15:05:00 From David Landes to Everyone:

Natalie: where are YOU most susceptible to musical immersion?

15:05:19 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:

Replying to "Natalie: where are Y..."

Great question! 😊

AND A CLOSING BREAKOUT QUESTION –

15:06:04 From Natalie Miller (she/her) to Everyone:

Thinking more generally, what is the relationship between "attention" and "immersion"? Is immersion a "kind" of attention? (Or is it a kind of distraction?)

15:13:40 From David Landes to Everyone:

Attn = immersion

BUT also,

Immersion is a state, reached through various types of attn/conditions

BUT also,

Immersion is a quality of attention

...What about non-aware immersion? Seems like sure we do that a lot too,... (e.g., scrolling on phone, watching a convo, casino)

What about _letting ourselves_ be immersed?

15:14:03 From Ben Berger (Swarthmore) to Everyone:

Connection between immersion and a trance-like state, or hypnotic state? Whereas attention probably requires a lot of focus. There may be an ecstatic aspect to immersion.

Focused attention vs trancelike state.

Perhaps when you're attending you have a sense of self; perhaps some immersion experiences lose the sense of self?

Immersion CAN be loss of time/self, but it can also be an extended period of time immersing yourself in a language or a culture.

Perhaps we should look to William James' distinction b/w passive and active attention. The object takes over; perhaps immersion is more like this? With active attention you choose to attend to something, which requires effort, willpower.

15:14:08 From Eve Jacobs to Everyone:

Ben- was saying that I fall asleep and wake up thinking about the creative project in which I am immersed

15:14:18 From Ben Berger (Swarthmore) to Everyone:

Reacted to "Ben- was saying that..." with 👍

15:14:19 From Eve Jacobs to Everyone:

And it is a choice to be immersed in that way

15:14:23 From Ben Berger (Swarthmore) to Everyone:

Yes

15:14:25 From Colleen Kennedy to Everyone:

Reacted to "Connection between i..." with 👍

15:14:39 From Emmet von Stackelberg to Everyone:

Reacted to "Connection between i..." with 👍

15:15:30 From David Landes to Everyone:

"audio uncanny valley" 😊

15:15:35 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:

As Peter mentioned, things may depend on our definition of immersion. I did a deep dive and didn't expect to see some of its historical definitions, but they may be eye-opening to check out!

15:15:43 From Ben Berger (Swarthmore) to Everyone:

Reacted to "'audio uncanny valle..." with 😊

15:15:48 From Natalie Miller (she/her) to Everyone:

npmiller@princeton.edu — Thank you all!

15:15:52 From Eve Jacobs to Everyone:

<https://evejacobs.ticketspice.com/four-statements-on-attention>

15:16:14 From Ana Cristina (Tininha) to Everyone:

Reacted to "As Peter mentioned, ..." with 👍

15:16:16 From Eve Jacobs to Everyone:

^dance x attention for anyone interested

15:16:18 From Jac Mullen to Everyone:

Alyssa: Immersion isn't necessarily attention or distraction - you can be immersed in the thing, or immersed in the self. And that seems to be where the line breaks down, for me.

Christine: You can be immersed in something that you didn't mindfully choose to put your attention on. This is the commodification of attention.

Carlos: Attention as immersion. Traumatic vs. spontaneous memory intrusion—a good example of harmful vs. innocuous forms of intrusive immersion. Immersed against will.

Jac: Agency/Involuntary, interior/exterior — these are good distinctions. Historically, two poles, or ends of a continuum: dispersion, and absorption/immersion. These are useful!

15:16:24 From Meghan Dunn - St. John's to Everyone:

Reacted to "^dance x attention f..." with ❤️

15:16:25 From Avik Swapnasish Basu to Everyone:

Reacted to "^dance x attention f..." with ❤️

15:16:27 From David Landes to Everyone:

Thank you Natalie!

15:16:27 From Jac Mullen to Everyone:

Lucy: Was also thinking along these different dimensions—is externally directed involuntary immersion worse than internally directed involuntary immersion?

Jac: There's also this question of the affective stance toward the inhibition of self that occurs with immersion stemming from repetition. The difference between the negative affective experience of the detainee hearing Metallica on repeat as a form of 'enhanced interrogation' and the writer using Metallica on repeat as a technique to induce flow while working on a book.

15:16:39 From Colleen Kennedy to Everyone:

Reacted to "Lucy: Was also think..." with 👍

15:16:48 From Eve Jacobs to Everyone:

Replying to "^dance x attention f..."

Performance next Saturday march 9th 6 and 7:30pm hunter college mfa thesis