



ATTENTION, RELEVANCE, IRRELEVANCE (with Elisa Tamarkin) 3 May 2024

14:06:50 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

LANE!!

14:07:03 From David Landes to Everyone:

LANE!!

14:07:10 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

Reacted to "LANE!!" with 🤔

14:07:26 From Lane Stroud to Everyone:



14:13:20 From Jessica to Everyone:

Apologies to everyone in my last breakout room: I didn't intend to leave! Spilled water on my laptop and in wiping it off I think I hit a key that booted me. Sorry to miss y'all.

14:14:22 From Jesse Prinz to Everyone:

Reacted to "Apologies to everyon..." with 🙏

14:18:43 From Jac Mullen to Everyone:

Peter also needs a return ticket

SHOUT OUT ON THE NEW SPACE IN DUMBO

14:18:51 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

Reacted to "Peter also needs a r..." with 🤔

SHOUT OUT ON JAC'S PIECE IN *THE NATION*

14:20:04 From Jac Mullen to Everyone:

thanks graham!

14:20:24 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

<https://www.thenation.com/article/society/attention-capture-technologies-classrooms-crisis/>

SHOUT OUT ON THE PIECE IN *THE NEW YORKER*

14:20:50 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

Jahony Germosen! And Troy Mitchell!

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE ESTAR(SER) SHOW IN TRIBECA

14:23:32 From Jac Mullen to Everyone:
17th of May for opening

SHOUT OUT ON JULIAN'S VENICE BIENNIAL INSTALLATION

14:23:37 From Jesse Prinz to Everyone:

There was a nice video essay on the attention economy posted yesterday by a French YouTuber: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D31le4HAPSc> (no huge revelations for this group, but she comments on the capitalist logic that underlies some critiques of the attention economy, as well)

14:24:11 From Jessica to Everyone:

Reacted to "There was a nice vid..." with 🙌

14:27:41 From D. Graham Burnett to Everyone:

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2024/05/06/the-battle-for-attention>

14:30:40 From Ellyn Daly to Everyone:

Reacted to "<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2024/05/06/the-battle-for-attention>" with ❤️

QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION

14:58:36 From Elisa Tamarkin to Everyone:

Or, more pointedly, can you think of a time when you experienced a sudden shift between the background and the foreground of your perceptual field, and the difference it made?

15:10:35 From David Landes to Everyone:

Magic eye prints: childhood realization of seeing via de-focusing

True crime stories: clues

Humor: plays upon figure/ground rels

Ritual: figure/ground

Life/death

The spoken vs the unspeakable

A mirror: we see our seeing

15:10:39 From Vitória Oliveira to Everyone:

- Interracial relationships or being witnesses to violent crimes can add layers to your life. This violence that was covered suddenly becomes a burden, something that is everywhere

- When you learn a new word, you start to perceive it everywhere, it gains a new light that makes you more sensitive to it. You stop filtering this information.

15:11:45 From Christopher Mole to Everyone:

We were talking about music, and wine, and language: slow attention shifts and fast ones; one's that occur with expertise, and in the course of recovery.

15:12:05 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

Sara: I noticed an embodied shift in how I experienced my environment. I was visiting Santiago, Chile and went to an indigenous people's fair in the mountains. Music, chanting, beautiful place. I had the urge to climb a tree. I climbed the tree and looked out, and didn't even notice that the entire military was mobilizing on the road to dismantle the entire festival. So a friend of mine yelled at me to get down before we got teargassed. THE SHIFT: the presence of danger froze my body, and I was suddenly unable to get down from the tree. The movement from enjoyment to danger.

Helen: I was so struck by the story of the man in the boat. It reminded me of contact improv, in which body parts can enter our perceptual field from just about anywhere - their very "irrelevance" is the source of their power, just like the poem in the story.

15:12:12 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

Peter: Listening to lots of Kendrick Lamar this week. Famously dense and rich lyricist. I experience this shift in relevance as I listen to a track over and over again, and start to hear the second, third, fourth layer of meaning (beat, content, echo, reference).

We thought about the inherent surrender that this notion of relevance entails - we sorta have to give ourselves over to an "irrelevant" thing in order for it to become relevant. Which somewhat

complicates the way the Friends often think about attention. Perhaps our mission is not so much autonomy or agency as a careful configuring of the terms of our surrender to the world...?

15:12:54 From Julian Chehirian to Everyone:

Akua also mentioned their uneasiness with the visual, and our conversation with Kyle went in the direction of thinking about narrative across different mediums, visual and sonic, and how sinews of significance are drawn together

15:12:56 From Akua Banful to Everyone:

Elisa Tamarkin: "What gets recognized is always social and ethical work"

[preface: an improvisational conversation]

Kyle: China Pearl in Cambridge Lacquer catching the light functioning as a mirror. Black flipping to a mirror. Reminding Kyle or Robert Irwin's piece who's afraid of Red white & Blue.

Akua: When does the switch go off in your mind when you see a place differently

Julien: margins of the project: site of an illegal dumping ground
Finding in a trash heap the constituent parts of an entire apartment
When does the trash shift from being noise to being

Akua: A slippage between the visual and the auditory

Kyle: Cameron Rowland land purchase piece - declaring the value of the land. Declaring of the value of the land. Making it clear.

What do you only hear when when it stops?

15:13:06 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

And per Elisa's comment, thinking about education / STUDY as the process by which we set the terms of our surrender to the world!

15:13:30 From Jac Mullen to Everyone:

We were talking about: shifts that occur through expert training (learning to notice, expert perception) vs. spontaneous shifts that are occasioned just by - chance? an opportune knock? expert shift: musical, physical therapeutic, literary critical. I spoke about locating critter in ceiling by its sound in my classroom, weird acoustics.

15:13:44 From David Landes to Everyone:

BREAKOUT ROOMS

15:13:51 From Peter Schmidt to Everyone:

Reacted to "BREAKOUT ROOMS" with 🔥

15:14:23 From Jac Mullen to Everyone:

Reacted to "BREAKOUT ROOMS" with 🔥

15:15:27 From Jeff Dolven to Everyone:

ELLYN started us off with the opening scene of Blade Runner—how her curiosity moved from the various action of the foreground, to the sky, black and starless, which became the heart of the story of what had happened to the world. JEFF talked about meeting a friend for coffee, in the scrum of a cafe; his friend realized that a man beside them wasn't able easily to get out of his chair, and reached to help him, taking him by the elbows and raising him; that background man, to me, and even more that gesture, became foreground. EVE caught the eye of a woman sitting in the airport, waiting for a plane; when she looking back, the woman was lying down, and Eve realized that she was losing consciousness—she tried to capture the attention of the woman, to rouse her, then the attention of the other busy travelers, to help. AVIK got us thinking about the flip between attention to yourself, attention to others, subjects and objects, etc.