A catalog of formats for digital discomfort

… and other ways to resist *totalitarian zoomification.*

Os as alites etur? Pudae soluptae num nulloris ra dus consequ Os as alites etur? Pudae soluptae num nulloris ra dus consequid quasime nimus, qui blaute dit >>> quid molest Os as alites etur? Pudae soluptae num nulloris ra dus consequid quasime nimus, qui blaute dit quid molest

Due to physical distancing measures under COVID-19, we are finding ourselves in what can be identified as an increased condition of gathering online. This condition includes learning situations, as well as moments to share and exchange our views, analyses, approaches, results, prototypes and proposals in a wide spectrum of academic and para-academic situations.

Through the imposition of closed, proprietary, exclusive and over-optimised commercial formats for so-called "webinars", this situation is rapidly resulting in the settlement of a monoculture in mediated gatherings. GAFAM & co are taking over research and educational ecosystems, while turning all interactions into business transactions. It is therefore urgent to find ways to capture the damage of this cloudy landscapes, wider bandwidths, endless remote-working video calls and pervasive user-ization (the dominant tendency towards subjectivity-as-user-only). These are all elements partaking in an evident cultural and aesthetic flattening on platforms. These elements come to erase diversity, smoothly deepen structural dependencies and provoke relational precarity. They reproduce a techno-colonial regime that passes through deadly environmental damage and exploitative labour.

Yet, by building on and accentuating the techno-colonial regime, platform-settlers also unwillingly energize an array of counter-forces. These counter-

Platframe reflections

Anja Groten and Karl Moubarak

The platframe is a website that converges and frames pre-existing tools, to facil itate online encounters, exchanges and forms of content production. It is a frame rather than a form – as it attempts to sustain a certain legibility of the boundaries and relationships of the many different tools, softwares, services, frameworks and legacies embedded in the technical object. We have expanded this readme from the conventional format of a step by step installation manual towards a reflective document that considers the process of the website coming into being, its different 'lifecycles', the expecta tions it created and the conversations it facilitated.

How to preserve a platframe?

While the platframe is a continuation of pre-existing tools, placing them in a dif ferent setting, creating new relations and dependencies, it never solidified nor reached one final state or destiny. The platframe grew, matured, broke, and con tinued to evolve. Documenting such a living creature, is in and of itself a chal lenging project. From what perspective, or at what moment to make the cut?When and how to create the necessary distance to draw together its many traces, and how to make them available for others in a meaningful way? This readme thus grapples with the issue that comes with documenting something that is constantly changing, emerging and evaporating. We took the approach of structuring the documentation of the platframe through its different lifecycles, which include the different tools that have been informing the process of making this digital object, whether or not they became explicitly visible. Some screenshots will help to give an indication of how the website was coming to life, how it accommodated different encounters and how it challenged those encountering it. The most intensive moment of this was the workshop day on May 7, 2021, with around two hundred participants interacting on the platframe.

Lifecycles

The platframe went through different stages and states (and continues to do so). It changed its configuration and appearance at different moments in time. We refer to the different states as lifecycles. Each lifecycle

facilitated different forms and intensities of interaction of participants with the website and with each other. We also referred to the process of designing the platform as a choreography, due to its spatial and dynamic characteristics, and its relation to temporality.

Lifecycle 0: Development

In December 2020, Hackers & Designers was invited to work with the organizing team of the 3rd Workshop on Obfuscation (Jara Rocha, Seda Gürses, Ero Balsa) to conceptualize, design and develop a digital platform that takes an important part in facilitating an online workshop. The challenge was to develop this digital object while the conference was also still in the process of development. Principles that were important to address from the beginning of the process were:

○   F/OSS: The extensibility and adaptabilty of
everything we were developing
○   Privacy and data security: The need for care
around privacy and security issues, which
seemed to be even more amplified due to the
global pandemic and our inceasing reliances
on online meetings platforms.
○   Welcoming and safe online encounters:
Writing a code of conduct and a careful and
moderation of the chat in order to create
and sustain a safe (online) environment that
is welcoming to all participants.
○   Collaboration across disciplines: The
possibility to engage in a collaborative,
reflective making process that transgresses
solutionist approaches to technological
development, disciplinary boundaries and
different knowledge domains. The platframe
thus, became a convergence of different
tools as well as a convergence of different
practices.
○   Digital Discomfort: Embarking on this project
as 'nonexperts' in platform development, we had
to manage the expectations of everyone,
including ourselves. This platform would
probably challenge us more than the, by now
habitual experience, of meeting on Zoom, Teams
or Google Hangout. As the Workshop on
Obfuscation raised questions about inner
workings, ethics, and socio-technological
entanglements, the platframe would therefore
ask for more patience and endurance from
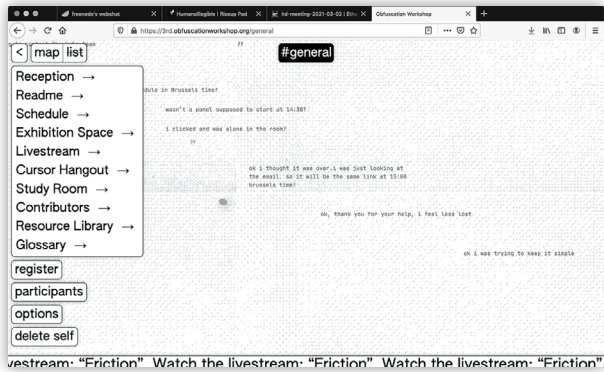
Os as alites etur? Pudae soluptae num nulloris ra dus consequ Os as alites etur? Pudae soluptae num nulloris ra dus consequid quasime nimus, qui blaute dit >>>

participants than they were used to. In that
context Jara Rocha curated an anti-solutionist
collection of formats for digital discomfort.

Map / Navigation
The platframe was not designed to mimic a physical conference but aimed at facilitating the temporalities and collectivities of an online workshop. We worked with the concept of a large canvas, which extends in all directions and can be navigated similarly to how a map is navigated. It contains regions, such as the reception, study room and exhibition space, each with their own respective content. Different regions became more and less relevant in different lifecycles.

Chat
One of the most distinctive functions of this website is the 'spatially' distributed chat. Participants could leave messages anywhere on the canvas and navigate either through the map or the list. As a result, the platframe is a 'living' space: all participants emit their presence through the visibility of their cursors and messages.

The discussion around obfuscation demanded a close inspection and consideration of networked privacy practices. Messages dropped on the platframe are assigned a lifetime by their authors, an enumeration of seconds they are allowed to exist before self-destructing. As they near their expiration dates, their visibility decreases until they are deleted.

An important feature of the chat was the moderator's role. To create an environment that is safe and free of hostility we created a moderators' login which would allow a selected group of trusted participants to erase or censor messages, or block access to the platframe if needed.

Cookies
Technically the platframe did not use cookies. However, data submitted by participants, such as their display name, posi tion, cursor's color and messages were sent to our Hackers & Designers server and to the

other participants. To remember participants, the server assigns a unique identifier (UID) to their browsers and stores it in the browser's localStorage, that looks like this: "uid": "266f429f2d4". When a participant accesses the platframe, the server authenticates their UID against its store of users.

On a technical level, this was not absolutely necessary and we did explore alternative methods that rely purely on peer-to-peer authentication with no servers involved (see CRDTs). Although this method was worth exploring, it could not ensure full certainty that participants blocked by moderators would not be able to access the website, so we resorted to the current method. There is always the option for a given participant to delete their user from our server.

Front and back: VueJS and Strapi
This platframe was built with two open-source web development frameworks: Strapi for the "backend" and VueJS for the "frontend".

Strapi is a content management system that is installed and configured on our server to manage all static content on this platform. It produces a framework agnostic public API that enabled us to define the so-called regions, write texts using a draft/publish system, manage the schedule, receive glossary submissions and host the videos presented in the exhibition area.

Vue is a front-end Javascript framework with a templating oriented approach. It enabled us to design reusable (yet customizable) HTML templates to wrap the data that is produced in Strapi.

The API created by the backend in the server is 'consumed' by the web pages created by the frontend in the browser. To see the raw output of the API for the Schedule, for example, go to: https://api.obfuscation.karls.computer/sessions And to see the template for the Schedule go to: https://github.com/hackersanddesigners/obfuscation/blob/master/dev/front/src/components/Userland/Territory/Timetable/index.vue

Lifecycle 1: Preparation

In this lifecycle, the platframe facilitated mainly the preparation for the conference –specifically the work of the study group who collected, discussed, and prepared for the workshops, and populated the glossary and library. The group provided us with a moment to test and gave feedback on the platframe and its convergence of tools.

A crucial moment in this process was receiving the generous feedback of the artist and researcher Loren Britton. Loren screened the platframe for accessibility. While we scheduled this feedback moment rather late in the process we could still implement some changes to the styling of the website that allowed visitors to 'deobfuscate' the platframe in a way that would make it easier to access, read and navigate.

Loren provided us with many helpful references and frames to think within, in terms of accessibiliy. We are going to list a few here, also to remind ourselves for the next time that accessiblity should not come as an afterthought, but should go hand in hand with the development of such projects:

○ The importance of multiple points of access: https://www.mapping-access.com/- that one of the things they are working with explicitly is description and redundancy.

○ The work of scholar Aimi Hamraie, who addresses how accessibility is some thing that shifts and is different for every person. What are ways to present, describe and make accessible different parts of the website – for instance by providing an alt-text and descriptions of what the website looks like? https://aimihamraie.wordpress.com/

○ Something we weren't able to address in the short amount of time was the possibility to tab through and hit enter on the chat component of our website. The rest of the website is navigable with only the tab and enter buttons.

○ For the Livestream, we could have considered live captioning or offering a transcript after the talks.

○ While we enjoyed exploring 'obfuscation' in some aesthetic choices of the website design (textures and the noise font - a font chosen because its illegible to machines – specifically Optical Character Recognition software) we realized that this conceptual and aesthetic choice made it difficult for people with low vision to access the content. To make the site more legible we implemented an option for users to increase contrast and 'strip' the css of the website, depending on their needs. A great reference Loren shared for implementing different css options, such as font choices to allow different points of access, is queer art collective Coven Berlin: https://www.covenberlin.com/contact/

○ For similar reΩsons we decided to add the option for website visitors to reduce the colors to black and white, which makes the chat more legible

○ We were not able to sufficiently test the site with screen readers. For instance it would have been important to see how the spatially distributed chat could have been displayed and read linearly, making it more screen reader friendly.

○ Finally, we authored a guided tour of the platframe, – a step by step tutorial with instructions on navigation and interaction. https://3rd.obfuscationworkshop.org/readme/tour
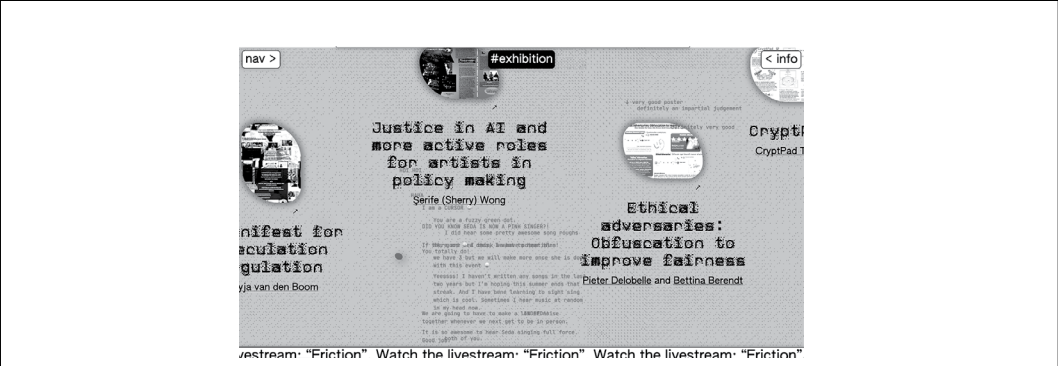
Os as alites etur? Pudae soluptae num nulloris ra dus consequ Os as alites etur? Pudae soluptae num nulloris ra dus consequid quasime nimus, qui blaute dit >>>

Tools for collective organization: Ethercalc, Etherpad, Jitsi, Freenode.

Much of the preparatory and organizational work for the 3rd Workshop on Obfuscation took place online, but was not convened solely by the platframe. Some other tools that were used for internal communication, budgeting, and responsibility management are worthy mentions. For instance, Jitsi calls were our main sites to regularly meet, discuss, and keep tabs on the different processes. Etherpad instances hosted on the Hackers & Designers and Constant servers, were used for taking notes and drafting documents, while spreadsheets created in Ethercalc were used to mediate task division schedules for moderators as well as convene a bug reporting workflow for the platframe itself. Finally, Freenode (IRC) was used as a temporary communication back-channel for the conference days.

Lifecycle 2: 1st platframe public enounter – The vernissage

The vernissage on May 4, 2021 was the first populated moment of public encounter and live interaction with the platframe and the distributed chat. In the vernissage exhi bition, visitors of the platframe could watch videos from the invited contributors that were related and interlinked with elements in the timetable and the contributors list. The video making process was guided by Jara Rocha and Lucie de Bréchard, the concept, design and editing of the videos was done by Lucie. For the exhibition, it was important that visitors could easily reach other regions and additional information related to the respec tive videos. The distributed chat and cursor visibility created a feeling of liveness and a shared moment of spending time together. Visitors left messages close to the videos and engaged in conversations with each other about the content. There were also BigBlueButton (BBB) links distributed during the vernissage, to allow for participants to speak face to face. In retrospect, it might have

been more lively on the platframe if we had chosen for only one form of interaction – that of the platframe chat rather than adding possibilities and scattering of the pro gramme onto many different spaces.

We initially planned for thirteen videos to be exhibited in this region. However, throughout the process of developing the conference the amount of videos that were to be uploaded and exhibited increased. Additionally, the wish to upload and exhibit 'conference posters' was introduced last minute. The exhibition as a region thus expanded quite drastically and took over a large portion of the overall canvas.

The choice of including introductory videos and explanatory posters by workshop contributors allowed participants to decide when to familiarize them selves with the conference materials. The materials didn't have to be a viewed simultaneously, but could accommodate the different time zones and availabilties of the participants. The main incentives for this decision were to reduce time spent in video calls and to protect both the participants and servers from 'liveness fatigue'. Additionally, the entire platframe, including tools such as Etherpad and Ethercalc, and excluding BBB, were hosted on a VPS in Amsterdam that is provided by Greenhost, running on wind-power. Other measures taken to reduce the ecological footprint of the platframe are the shrinking of media such as videos, pdfs, and images into smaller, web-compatible files, as well as the implementation of load-balancing strategies on the server and in the browser to intentionally slow down live-communication processes, and even go offline, when traffic increases. Nonetheless, the platframe is quite CPU-intensive and was not as accessible in lower bandwidth devices such as mobile phones.

The vernissage was also a moment when the platframe's capacity to sustain a large number of participants simultaneously, was put into question. With some days remaining until the workshop day, we proceeded to develop testBot, a script intended to choreograph a varying number of visitors arriving to the platframe, interacting with it and then leaving.

Although testBot looked like a single participant in the platframe, it often represented 100, 200, or even 500 active visitors. It enabled us to stress test the performance of the platframe and gage the extent of hardware upgrades we needed to install on the server in preparation for the workshop. TestBot remained in the plat frame for the entire duration of the conference for hardware performance-logging reasons.

Lifecycle 3: The workshop

Although the platframe acts as a central source of information on the 3rd Workshop on Obfuscation, containing the resource library, directory of contributors and artworks, as well as a place for participants to converse, the main space where the workshop took place was TU Delft's instance of BBB. Our goal was not to try and recreate features of BBB, but to embed it in the convergence of tools. The platframe was designed as a jumping off board from which participants arrive into BBB, be it to join the workshop sessions or take part in informal hangouts.

Additionally, during the course of the development of the platframe, Tobias Fiebig, the maintainer of the BBB instance of TU Delft, worked on extending their installation of BBB with an option to livestream conference calls via publicly accessible RTMP streams. This extension enabled us to give access to the workshops outside of BBB, and display them in real time to a larger group of viewers on the platframe.

This was the platframe's most active lifecycle. Participants spent time in between sessions gathering around posters and videos in the exhibition, discussing, and mingling. The platframe's management, moderation and maintenance was similar to that of a physical conference, with dedicated moderators guiding participants around the canvas, attending to moments of urgent need (in accordance to the Workshop's code of conduct) , continuously documenting the sessions and taking care of the space.

Life cycle 4: The archive

The platframe developed along with the conceptualization and planning of the 3rd Workshop on Obfuscation, the platframe was imagined at the same time as its context. Content, timetable, contributors, formats and media were yet to be defined when we started developing this website.

The new and changing requirements confronted us with the question of 'scalability' and 'adaptability' of this platframe. While we started off with the idea that this website would become something that could travel into other contexts, be used by different communities for their own respective events, the platframe became increasingly tailored to the specific context of the 3rd Workshop on Obfuscation.

In terms of documenting and archiving this project, the desire remains that it could become useful for another context than the 3rd Workshop on Obfuscation, both in terms of content and as the new tool relationships it creates and challenges. The full repository for this platframe, as well as instructions on setting it up, hosting it and converging the different tools and layers, is made available here: h ttps://github.com/hackersanddesigners/obfuscation Please make note of the license: https://github.com/hackersanddesigners/obfuscation/blob/master/LICENSE There will be a moment when the chat will be turned off and the videos in the exhibition will be taken offline. This will be approximately one year after the workshop has concluded. This will probably be the platframe's last lifecyle – at least in this context. The platframe becomes more static, contributions are collected and organized in a manner that makes them accessible for future reference. A workshop report – the postscript of which this document is part of, is published and distributed. The platframe regions that will stay available are the resources collected in the library, the glossary, the references of the different sessions, notes that can be read back, the readme and of course the code repository. ●

Angela Jerardi

Consensus Decision Making — short guide

Consensus decision making is a creative and dynamic way of reaching agreement between all members of a group. Instead of simply voting for an item and having the majority of the group getting their way, a consensus group is committed to finding solutions that everyone actively supports – or at least can live with. This makes sure that all opinions, ideas and concerns are taken into account. By listening closely to each other, the group aims to come up with proposals that work for everyone.

Consensus is neither compromise nor unanimity – it aims to go further by weaving together everyone's best ideas and most important concerns – a process that often results in surprising and creative solutions, inspiring both the individual and the group as whole.

Working together

At the heart of consensus is a respectful dialogue between equals. It's about everyone working together to meet both the individual's and the group's needs – working *with* each other rather than *for* or *against* each other, something that requires openness and trust.

Consensus is looking for 'win-win' solutions that are acceptable to all - no decision will be made against the will of an individual or a minority. Instead the group adapts to all its members' needs. If everyone agrees to a decision they will all be much more committed to making it happen.

Consensus decision making is based on the idea that people should have full control over their lives and that power should be shared by all, not just concentrated in the hands of a few. It's about having the freedom to decide one's own course in life and the right to play an equal role in creating a common future. This is why it is used widely in groups working towards a more just and equitable society such as small voluntary groups, co-operatives and campaign networks.

www.seedsforchange.org.uk   2010

The aim of this talk is to speak about consensus as a method for decision making, but also more broadly as a means to structural non-hierarchical collaboration for a group to build community, identify conflict, and develop shared values and intentions. As a caveat to all of this, before I get into deep, many of these ideas have been close to my heart for a couple of decades, and much of the material I will speak of today I experienced in situ and intuitively learning along the way without too much, too much in the way of formal training. It was only much later that I became aware of how things I was involved in were actually a part of a larger story of anarchist and Quaker histories of the recent past. So this is something of a work in progress to synthesize my embodied experiences and understandings gained over the years with knowledge of the historical context and precedents that were shaping these very experiences. I did my bachelor study at one of the few remaining true Quaker universities in the United States, a place which is at once mostly secular and at the same time very much still attached to Quaker teachings. For example, virtually all the decisions that get made at the school are in fact made by a consensus decision making. Some years later, I moved to Philadelphia and became connected to intersecting circles there of radical Quakers, community activists and artists and designers. There are surely many genealogies of consensus, as one of the Quakers I will refer to today has said, quote, Consensus is a structural attempt to get equality to happen in decision making, unquote. Surely many people in

many communities and many times have been concerned about how to make decisions in a group in a way that feels equal and fair. So in that sense, the notion of consensus must have many, many histories. Unsurprisingly, my reference points were consensus come from my geographical home in the Americas, from the traditions of the Religious Society of Friends, which is known as Quakers. Governance structure of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, sometimes known as the Iroquois Nation, which has existed and what is now known as Canada and the United States before such places existed, as well as the organizing and governing principles of the Zapatistas in Mexico. Today I'll be focusing on a specific strand of history that comes out of activist Quaker circles, primarily on the East Coast of the United States in the seventies and eighties. This is a little interlude into this. I was wanting to show some images, Quaker meeting houses. I think architecturally it's also interesting to think about how we can create spaces for equality or the sensation of potentially nurturing equality. I think Quaker Meetinghouse is a really beautiful example of that, and this one is one of my particular favorites. It's in Philadelphia, the Chestnut Hill neighborhood. And James Turrell, the artist, New Zealand artist that you've heard of, is also a practicing Quaker. And he installed this space in this building so that you can also experience this art at the same time as Think about God. So, bakers. Who are they? What's their story? Quakerism began in the mid 17th century in England. It was part of the larger situation

of dissenting Protestants, people that were not happy with the way Protestantism was being interpreted at the time, and is definitely related also to the English Civil War, which was happening in the mid 17th century. The Centrepoint of Quaker belief is on the notion of testimonies finding and answering that which is of God in everyone. So the belief that everyone has God in them and testimonies are an expression to the commitment to put these beliefs, this belief of having God in everyone into practice. Quaker testimonies have changed very little over the centuries and centre on some key concepts piece. So in that case, peacemaking, but also nonviolence, quality and therefore seeking justice, integrity, consistency and word and indeed community. So living in fellowship and being concerned about how you build community with others simplicity, spirit, lead, restraint. There's many interpretations of that which maybe more traditionally would have been to do with dress or habits.

Today, I think, is seen in many different ways, such as like concern with how you would use resources or how you consume, also how you interact with others. Yeah, there is enough for everyone's need, but not for everyone's greed is a quote from Gandhi that is sometimes referred to. And then lastly, stewardship. Care for the Earth and its inhabitants. Perhaps counterintuitively, the use of consensus in most radical political organizations has religious roots in the beliefs and practices of Quakers. To understand this, you need to know that Quakers believe it is possible for God to speak to all believers directly that a sacred presence exists as an inner light within everyone, thus removing the need for clergy to interpret God's will. Traditionally, Quakers worship by sitting together silently until members of the congregation feel moved, ostensibly by God, to share a message with the community as very finely portrayed in Fleabag. Quaker's model meetings to handle business and social and political initiatives in the same way based on the same approach. Participants take turns expressing ideas. They refrained generally from responding directly, but more in a way of trying to build ideas together. Instead, discussion continues

until there is a sense that all participants share a general agreement about what is to be done. Or can at least accept the position of their compatriots. Or come to a primary decision and can live with that. Through this process, those processes can be time consuming. Quakers are invested in it because they believe the process of reaching consensus is inseparable from the presence of the divine. As historian April Hare has written, quote, For over 300 years, the members of the Society of Friends have been making group decisions without voting. Their method is to find a sense of the meeting, which represents a consensus of those involved. Ideally, this consensus is not simply unanimity or an opinion on which all members happen to agree, but an actual unity, a higher truth which grows from the consideration of divergent opinions and unites them all. So from here, I'll shift gears a little bit and bring us forward into the seventies. And I wanted to talk specifically about this group that I am very fascinated by called Movement for a New Society. They self-identified as a feminist, radical, non-violent organization.

They were active from 1971 until 1988 in the United States. They had chapters in about a dozen or so cities and towns, towns throughout the United States. The hub was in Philadelphia. The ideas that they developed connected with many other activist struggles at the time. So for example, with feminist feminist liberation, also early ecology struggles and anti-nuke activism. A core part of the group's ethos with sharing knowledge, doing trainings and also working directly on themselves. So being concerned about doing anti oppression trainings with themselves, co counseling and something that they termed macro analysis seminars. The purpose of those seminars was to study together, but also to recognize their own internalized racism, sexism, homophobia and classism. So they could figure out how to identify their own problems while also trying to do movement work, macro analysis seminars or long term collaborative student groups modeled on the study group. Sorry, not student groups study or study groups modeled on the popular

education efforts, both from the civil rights movement, but also on the ideas of fair. And I thought it would be nice to sort of give some context for a movement for new society to share. Also about this precursor, this group that existed shortly before them. They were founded in 1966, a radical Quaker action group they were called.

A radical Quaker action group grew out of the radical and leftist Quaker concerns about wars and violence in the world. And one of the interesting things that they did was that they were really interested in doing creative, direct, nonviolent campaigns to talk about how how to do peace or how to to protest violence. And so one of the ways that they decided to do that was through purchasing boats and then shipping materials of importance. So in this case, like antimalarials bacterias, antibacterials and bandages to Hiroshima. And then in another case, they did something similar in Vietnam with their boat. And the boat is called the Phoenix. And the idea behind this was really to try to do direct nonviolent action in campaigns, also, because they felt that nonviolent campaigns and activist work stemmed for them for the belief that war is inherent to capitalism and that social inequality in and of itself is a form of violence maintained by the threat of state violence.

Therefore, to work for peace and equality or to abide by the Quaker testimonies that I just spoke about, in their words, one must be a social revolutionary. There was no other choice. Yeah, I find these examples quite interesting, but maybe it seems quite. Out of time now to think about. But one of the things that they are really interested in that I find intriguing is this notion of image defeat. And so and or maybe actually not out of time, but that it's now just sort of so commonplace. We don't think of it in the same way, but for them, they were really interested in basically creating like kind of creative, speculative moments where they would get a lot of media coverage and it would potentially replace other things that were happening. So for example, when this boat, the Phoenix, went to Vietnam and it ended up on the front page of many newspapers, and they saw this as something

that they called an image defeat of the US government, because instead of the war being on the front page, it was about radical Quakers going.

Vietnam with food and supplies on this boat. The Movement for New Societies. Introductory pamphlets are the first sort of public text that they produced. Declared its opposition to quote, traditional forms of organization from the multinational corporation to the PTA acronym for Parent Teacher Association.

or they exhibit the sexism and authoritarianism we seek to supplant. Thus, the movement we build must be egalitarian and non centralized. Yeah. I'm just generally very fascinated by this group, so I could go on and on, but I will try to keep it short. There's a number of things I find really incredible. They were really concerned about combining external work with internal work. So they in one way, they wanted to make sure that they were thinking about how they lived. Many of them live collectively. They actually built a land trust in West Philadelphia, where they owned co owned houses together and they wanted to live more in accord with the world that they wanted to see. So this is, to me, one of the really crucial precursors of the idea that's now, I think, quite common in anarchist circles, pre figurative politics, the pre figurative modeling. So they were building food co-ops, creating reading spaces. They also create a publisher printer in Philadelphia.

This was to create jobs for people, but also to make sure, for example, that low quality organic food was available to people in the neighborhood. As they said, your means must be in line with the end goal that you seek to create. And another thing that they another quote from them. We need to simplify and organize our life together so that there is time for the confrontations that are needed if the old order is going to fall. So creating the social relations and institutions that we want to know, that we want to exist right here, right now, rather than waiting for after the revolution for them to come into being. So the thing I wanted to bring up also as a sort of important history or genealogy of consensus is to ask and it's a bit weird

to do this without an audience because I'd love to chat with you all about it. But to me, I sort of came into consensus both through studying at a Quaker university, but also from being involved in activist and art related activities. And it felt to me that consensus building was just de rigueur, commonplace in a lot of political and social activist work that I was connected to or many communities that I heard about. It certainly seems that this is probably the case now, but I'm very curious to hear about it from people here today. But I know, for example, Greenpeace uses it or Extinction Rebellion. It was used during Occupy. So many people are familiar with it in one way or another.

This concept of consensus building and many other adjacent methods, such as affinity groups and spoke councils, came from the influence of the movement for a new society, as far as I understand it. And another activist group, Quaker Ties the Clamshell Alliance. The Clamshell Alliance, which movement for a new society was a part of formed to protest the proposed SEABROOK Nuclear Power Plant plant that was planned for the northeast of the US. It's non-violent. Occupation of the power plant in 1977 was hugely successful, garnering lots of media attention and 1400 people were arrested. Interestingly, also, I assume that they plan it this way on purpose. They occupied it on April 30th and the arrest happened on May 1st. So on International Workers Day. So the 1400 people that were arrested en masse together were held in makeshift jails in National Guard armories for two weeks because they collectively chose to refuse bail. What happened next was in many ways or in some ways, at least in my opinion, more significant than the protest itself or the sit in itself.

Movement for New Society was influential along with other people in in the Clamshell Alliance and organizing within the Armory, such that for the two weeks that the protesters were held there, the time was spent holding trainings, using spoke councils to facilitate collective decision making on legal strategy hosting, dance parties, skill sharing, other celebrations such that crazily enough, the detention actually became a time of networking and empowerment for

the 1400 people that were there. And I think that, in my opinion, this really leads to how this notion of consensus building and other related methods like spokes council. My suspicion is that this is how it became so popular or no.

So what is consensus? Consensus is a collective, creative, problem solving process created with or through. And this is my definition receptive, receptive and empathic listening. Digestion and connecting. So finding commonalities and threads between ideas and concerns, and importantly, also noting differences in dissonance. And synthesizing and translating. So what I mean by that is voicing propositions that bring together divergent ideas, concerns and approaches. So to me, this is the core of consensus. It's my version. So you can take it or leave it. But I see it as a collective creative process and that there are certain things that you need as a from the outset to be able to do it. Very important to be able to listen, very important to be able to practice digesting and connecting. So finding connections and then also to synthesizing and verbalizing these connections that you find. This is a sort of diagram of what the consensus process can look like. It starts on the top with discussion. Sometimes also people will make a diagram that shows sort of a point that opens out into a bigger thing and then closes back down to a point. So in this case, the idea is that you start with discussion. It opens into a much broader conversation. Eventually, through the discussion, proposals will end up on the table. Hopefully one, but maybe multiple. Then what you do is you test for consensus. And as you can see, when you test for consensus, you would be asking the room, how are people feeling about this proposal? Yes, well, great consensus achieved. Bring about a boom. Everybody go home. Well, probably not. So then you go to no. And then that's where a really important thing happens, which is that concerns get raised. And sometimes in my experience, if the discussion is really rich and people are very open in the discussion, then concerns will already have been raised when the proposal gets made. Sometimes, though, maybe

something wasn't thought of until later. You just never know or there's really big issues at play that concern needs to get raised. Then you kind of go back to the discussion phase and you're making modifications to the proposal you're brainstorming together. Is there a way that we can still take the initial proposal and rework it, or does it need to be thrown out and a new proposal made? If so, and the modifications are made, then of course you would test for consensus again. If not, then you end up in a difficult situation for sure.

Some people are quite critical of consensus. But I think that that's not necessarily a reason to not do it. And what I find useful is that there are very if you have if you have the benefit of maybe being trained or experiencing consensus, consensus in action with people that have done it, you see the options that are available to you, which are to stand aside or to block when you are not happy with the proposal and to stand aside, as maybe it sounds like ostensibly you say, I understand why people are excited about this proposal or why a lot of it makes sense to the broad group. And therefore I will stand aside and stand down. And what, of course, can be an issue and consensus processes, but I have really appreciated when people use it judiciously, is the block, which is that basically it is possible for any one person in the group to say, I will not stand by this proposal and therefore it will get stuck and would have to go back through process. There's definitely many modifications that have been made of how to think about this and that. You can make it so that maybe multiple people have to block in order for the block to be held or to not allow people to block unless they've been involved with the whole process. So it's like it's not a hard and fast rule. And I think that's what's also to me quite interesting about consensus is it has. It's more of a meta philosophy than it is a strict rule of how to do it. It's more about how do you approach the process of assuming that we are all in a conversation in good faith with one another and are interested in trying to find a solution together? And that creates, I think, a different dynamic in a group. So here I wanted to bring up the conditions for

consensus. These are really important to think through. So, for example, a common goal. Everyone in the group needs to share a clear, common goal or goals and be willing to work together towards it. It's important to work out together what your goals are and how you will get there if differences arrive later. Revisit the common goal to help it to help focus and unite the group. Similarly to me, one of the most important ones is this question of trust and openness, or what I like to call arriving in good faith. We need to be able to trust that everyone arrives with the intention of working together, that everyone respects our opinions and equal rights. It would be a big breach of trust for people to manipulate the process of the meeting in order to get the decision they most want. And this, I think, is really crucial. Part of this is to openly express our desires so what we would like, but also our needs, what we have to have happen in order to be able to live with a decision. And that can be quite vulnerable, actually, in groups. But I think it's very empowering also for a group because it means that, yeah, we're sort of reaching towards understanding one another and maybe, maybe it can be quite difficult and sometimes awkward, but we then understand why something is needed by someone, and that maybe then makes it more possible to understand how modifications might be necessary to meet that need. If everyone is able to talk openly, then the group will have the information it requires to take everyone's positions into account and to come up with a solution that everyone can support. ●

Roleplaying in Etherpad

Juliette Lizotte

Roleplaying in the open source world was a meetup faciliated by Juliette from H&D, with a kick off lecture by Susan Ploetz is an artist-researcher working with somatics, theory, writing, performance, simulation and live action role plays (larping) in different configurations. Her work deals with the overlapping spaces of soma and technos; she uses imagination, magical materiality, and protocol to induce emancipatory emotive dissonances and perceptual expansion. She explores body-centered game design and narrative-building play as co-creative world-making that develops individual agency within spontaneous, ephemeral, decentralized communities.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WiBkPswiPhE&feature=emb_title

Building forth on H&D's commitment of rethinking tools, we collectively explored alternatives scenarios for human-computer interaction.

We took the perspective of the tool itself to rethink our positions as makers. We imagined, embodied and enacted a new open source tool ecology! What tool can you imagine?

What are the features, quirks and glitches?

How would it be used and by whom? How do the tools of our emerging tool ecology relate to each other?

Using methods of character

development and role play in combination with H&D's hacking and DIY approach we explored open source world-making and collaborative storytelling.

The following section is a transcription of the etherpad workshop script and play with no edits.

---

player lisa

A. Ppette

Use: Holding, touching, moving from player to player, charging

Goal: energizing, focussing,

Specificity: I might be broken so i am not sure what is my purpose anymore... crisis moment!

Mutation: I know

---

sevc

s e v c

Synastria

you can see back and forth

noticing the cyclical character of time

you travel along the transit cycle

using this lens you leave your physical form and you embody your imaginative avatar that is pure manifestation of seeing

---

Sinem

Fanta the face filter

Use: change your face like botox, i could be dangerous

Goal: acceptance

Specificity: i only work with internet

Mutation: soon you wont be able to take me off your face

Os as alites etur? Pudae soluptae num nulloris ra dus consequ Os as alites etur? Pudae soluptae num nulloris ra dus consequid quasime nimus, qui blaute dit >>> quid molest Os as alites etur? Pudae soluptae num nulloris ra dus consequid quasime nimus, qui blaute dit quid molest

Os as alites etur? Pudae soluptae num nulloris ra dus consequ Os as alites etur? Pudae soluptae num nulloris ra dus consequid quasime nimus, qui blaute dit >>> quid molest

>>>>Welcome to my world <3

hello

helloooo hiiii hey
hellosup
hi yo

hii alles goed? jaaaaa

heyyi changed my color. :) HIHI
ah.. text became white!

hii

hihi

**>>>> BRAINSTORM! (5min)
what is a tool? what do you
associate with tools, toolness,
tooling?**

○ An extension of your
cognition
things you can use to help you
do stuff, i think of scirssors
when i think of tools. Tooling are
ways or object to help you acheive
sth. acheivements that are basic
or complicated dependind on the
tool. i think tools should always
be useful, if not then they are
extra, not useless but they occupy
space for no good purpose.
way of articulation
translation of ideas into form-
○ A conditioning device
intermediate between me and the
world
Enable actions
○ extension of the body
(body can be human and not human)
○ association of tools with
productivity and work in relating

to iindustralilzation
- a tool relates to intention,
perhaps? but as this tool can be
turbulent.. the intention with
which a tool is being created
does not mean that it is used
as such. many philisophers have
written about tools... the hammer
comes up a lot... a hammer is for
hammering... blablabla.. or the
debate around guns. do guns kill
people? or do people kill people?
clear is that certain tools afford
certain tool relationships no?
in the context of software ...
licenses are interesting tools
to create legal frameworks /
agreements on use and reuse --
anyhow i think that 'tool' is
also overused as a metaphor.. and
can become rather unspecific...
uncritical perhaps? l
playing, changing states, another
bodypart, the fool, putting this
together, apart and to recombine,
things that make us human vs
animals --i think of internet,
gossip and phones
Limits & disaffordances

>>>>What tools do you like?

○ Obsidian\<3
○ i like clumsy tools that
let you do just a few things..
like this one, etherpad, or
ethercalc... i like it because
it doesnt assume too much in
a way.. like for instance
creative cloud tools are not
tools anymore.. its more like
a platform... convergences of
tools and services that assume a
kind of identification and to me
trespassed what I want from a tool
relationship.. adobe is a kind of
exclusive membership only club...
where scribus... or gimp is maybe
a bit more rough but i can feel
its edges.. you know what i mean?
I like the tools that make my

life easier, if i didnt have a
boiler for boiling, it will take
longer time to boil the water.
tools for communicating and
relating

custom made and mutable - modular
ones - collaborative -
Writing
storytelling
the unreliable narrator
language
astrology
cameras, gossip ?1 whats up with
the gossip recurence , gestures
I like tools that help me expand
my vision
Speculative tools
Machine vision
sexy tools

>>>>What tools do you dislike?

rigid use
surveillance
cookies
excluding tools like some laws
worflow tools.. they manage
collaboration to much
i like all tools i love tools

**>>>>What open source tools
do you know?**

linux
wikimediapedia mediawiki is the
tool?
blender <3
OBS
processing
gimp
scribus
inkscape

**YOU ARE A TOOL!
Introduce yourself as your
character-tool trying to encompass
as many details as you can think
of!**

**(10min)

Questions to help you develop
for your character-tool

How would you describe yourself
in three words?**

egg, round, glass
mushy magic tricky
horizental, squarish, spacish
shiny, round, dense
shape shifting, chaotic, opening
gourmet, well-lit,
i change your face, i allow u to
be others, updated
lens, vision, time
open, moving, thinking
small, light, shiny

How would someone else describe
you in three words?
mindbending scary unpredictible
spiritual, hippy, sexy
energetic, creative, focussed
challenging, emotional, wall
difficult socially, can be
misenterpreted, fun
delusional, esoteric, desirable
mechanised,nonhuman, hygienic
triggering, apparent, helpful
focussed, kind, dreamer
annoying, helpfull

**What do you feel conflicted,
confused, excited
or proud about?**

i can interconnect beings & make
them feel & understand like no
other tool can . It can be very
confusing to pp and some will
reject my teachings. I'm not sure
about the nature of the experience
I am bringing
I am a bit broken, a broken tool,
perhaps. The thing is, I should
not be breakable.. like its not
supposed to happen. and now I

am not sure what to do... In a
way, I am not even very certain
on how I am supposed to be used,
so the question is "Am I Really
Broken?" ... its a bit of a crisis
momen tto be honest. I watched
"Keuringsdienst van Warde" and
they talked about my kind of tool
species and how there is a lot of
people reselling fake tools of my
kind.. so now I am wondering..
"Am I even Real???????" Or am I
just some cheap reproduction??
THe fact that something chipped
off my side, does not make me more
confident tbh
I feel conflicted about how
language would look like with
out me, I feel labit of confusion
whether people find my spacishness
triggering/ annoying or just see
it as part of me.
sometimes its hard to confront
people with their walls, ideas...
it's not easy so see them
struggling and that not everyone
is touched through the tool in a
deeper sense but I am happy if I
can reach someone
in everyones smartphones, you use
me when u need me, what would u do
if my tech disappeared, proud that
u need me
I feel like im serving unpaid
labour but I'm getting the needed
power as well. I feed people.
there are some moral questions
about the possibility of seeing
back and forth on the cycle of
time. the topic of responsibility
emerges. curiosity about all
the possibilities that are
unfolding once you claim your
time unreliability. How not to
get seduced by the manipulative
potential of this technology. On
the other hand it becomes a portal
to see that time is not linear but
cyclical
im proud that people let me in,
and im always scared to fall out -
intriguing -
I'm confused by the reality I
helped shape. Is it real or did

i convince even myself into
believing it?

Who would you be as a tool?

a word soup
SpaceBar
face filter
A counterstory
offline cursor
advisor

Or what are you curious to explore
in a tool?
I am a tool in crisis, identity
crisis perhaps..
I would like to explore who
decides whether or not I am useful
actually? Is it only humans that
get to decide? Is it important who
manufactured me? Like is the way I
am made significant for the ways I
exist in the world and interacted
with?
I would be curious to explore my
own limits, concepts... that keep
me stable in some way and how to
find holes in them
im curious to explore the context
of this tool, its position amongst
where it is used, how it is used.
the feelings of this tool.
how it can be shown for what it
is, no more, no less.
to fly around, my belly facing
files

What do you do?

I am usually just laying around
honestly.. Its not a super
entertaining moment of my
life.. but there is potential...
sometimes i am held, touched,
sometimes I am charged... laying
in the window. I see people
looking at me at times.
I FEED
i change peoples faces

I am in some places and there to
be read multiple times, partly...
I am a king of verbal mirror
i give space for legibility, for
opennes that creates freedom,
I change, inspire, deceipt, give
hope, make sense
I am able to open (up) places and
people irl

are you physical, digital, do you
have buttons? an interface?
I'm the interface between
conscious and subconscious between
individual and collective
I am physical but also digital. I
do have buttons and an interface
too.
im very physical
PHYSICAL and SPIRITUAL, so I
think i am able to expand mind and
matter whohooo- are we not only
(almost) the same color but the
same tool as well ? haha i wanna
ask what are you but maybe thats
not allowed?
I can be both, whatever feels more
comfortable
i'm a botton. with a very specific
funtion, i live in context.
digital and an interface
offline fingerextension
I am a tool of the mind

Do you have a specific function,
powers?
I FEEEEED
i create womb-awareness
woooop. yes. i am energizing,
creating focus, and perhaps
upholding a certain connection
to let u try who u want to look
like without physically enduring
it
create chaos in order and give
birth to new patterns
I see here, back and forth
The power to persuade

Can you evolve, mutate?
I'm co-creating me too!!
just in meaning but not in

materiality ... unless perhaps i
could break even more
i evolve with each "trend"
yes I mutate in minds
yes, i am constantly changing
I alternate between arrow shape,
a pointing micky mouse hand and a
simple standing thin shortline

How does your tool's body feel?

Yummy
 Smelly
 glassy
hard
shiny
flexible

Are you comfortable?

 Nope but warm
to watch yes, to lay on no
oh my god yes
kinda indifferent
sometimes
i change so much i dont know
I'm restless

Are you in control?
 I am taking contro and leave
you to enjoy the show - you'll
integrate later l
only through my affordances
not anymore
i hate i have so much control
I try to subvert controll of
others

Where do you come from?
from distributed wisdom
i cannot remember, but there
are two options i guess, in any
case... i can probably say from
deep down inside the earth
an augmented space
the mind

What does your past look like,
describe a fond memory?
it looks like a pokemon maker
about 1500 years ago i was moved
gently... that tickled a bit ...