Coding.Care

Field notes for making friends with code

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My questions for committee

- Where sections might travel, how to make intro stand alone, how to grow conclusion?
- Setting myself up for interdisciplinary work with more technical connections but still artistic bent going forward, create lab spaces

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interdisciplinarity Interdisciplinarity is equally important to, and intertwined with, intersectionality. It is a way of inviting open, moving among, drawing connection — a multipronged effort of understanding and imagination that is necessary to confront urgent sociotechnical concerns. Creatively it is the generative energy, the challenge as well as the

how the different forms come together Each speaks of a different part of the 'pipeline' or the broader sociotechncial system. Coding. Care at the point of engaging outsider audiences to imagine different systems, at the point of software writing. Datasets Field Guide at the point of the dataset in use. Intersectional AI Toolkit at the point of understanding models and agents and systems as a whole.

Each also intervenes in a different form. CC captures the spirit of a community through broad recommendations meant to inspire. The Field Guide is an instruction manual. The Toolkit zines document synchronous workshops and the digital wiki collects contextual topical resources.

Together they are all pedagogical objects, teaching tools, but also conversation starters and invitations to engage across community barriers.

Ideally written with, not only for, these communities, based in the belief that common modes of expression are possible and that no information or tech should be off limits, it places these different modes together to continue that process, give different folks something to grab ono.

The same info needs to be expressed in different ways to reach others; also can't always be got at through just any form. What can lyric essay say about sociotechnical systems that so-called scholarly writing cannot.

defining feminism(s)

defining critical AI

defining creative-critical coding Catherine's reflective/reflexive software

TT to artists

TT to technologists

TT to social scientists

TT to activists, humanist scholars, policy makers

18 feb 24

A note on design: Reformatting the website, it's slightly less cute, perhaps, but it allows for several things to happen with the interface and with the behind the scenes simplicity and flexibility.

First, footnotes appear as sidenotes, in Edward Tufte style, next to what they reference. In the future I imagine a much more citational practice of writing and coding that opens up whole layers of these interweaving practices that can be navigated between and among, toggling through popups and sidenotes as wormholes between the layers of code, primary text, and paratexts.

Second, the coding framework and processors (Jekyll) are gone, and plain markdown writing is rendered directly and simultaneously to HTML pages and to PDF documents using the easy command line tool Pandoc. This both streamlines the dependency on various code packages and also opens up proliferating formatting possibilities — zines, sites, dissertations, books, etc.

22 sep 23

some of James Bridle's main points so far in Ways of Being

- corporations are the current general AI, not the big baddies they teach us to fear
- what is an intelligence that is not extractive, not modeled on corporate intelligences, but coming out of our entanglement with/as nature/world?
- language emerged from direct experience of environment

me: ...then what would be a phenomenological (rather than stocastic) computational representation of language?

- we don't recognize the intelligence of nature until we build unnatural intelligent systems that reflect it
- new forms of AI need to be: decentralized, nonbinary, and embedded in morethanhuman systems

these are old ideas and is he having the same belated recognition? am i?

15 sep 23

Susanne Briet "What is document?": wiki: "indice (index) as not only pointing to an object but also reflective of the networks in which that object appears as a named thing, leading to a semiotics-inspired definition of "document". Furthermore, Briet argued that techniques and technologies are expressions of a networked culture."

Convo w T about critical intro: * uniting the areas of practice/theory through diff modalities, methodologies, diff spaces and venues for each * how the three come together, why they're important, what methodologies join them * each have diff methods, ways of accessing community and collaborative space, diff ways of knowing * I'm the node holding these together, how to honor all the parts * meta work to interlace and foreground * shorter framing intro for each section * stealthy introductions of humanities and criticality * no more lit reviews

25 aug 23

Suchman, L. A., & Trigg, R. H. (1993). Artificial intelligence as craftwork. Dhaliwal, R. S. (2022). On Addressability, or What Even Is Computation? Liu, Ani.

20 aug 23

Reporting back from Chaos Communication Camp. It takes me a day to get acclimated, at first I think everyone is standoffish, in their own little clique world. I have to remind myself that I can go home as soon as my job is done if I want to. This helps. By the time I am giving my talk and the "leaving window" is available" I have acclimated to camping and to people and their ways. Maybe I am always this way in new spaces and noticing this makes it easier.

Chaos Camp takes delight in an idea taken to its extreme. In any kind of depth of knowledge they find joy. Anything blinky and buildy and weird and cooperative. This kind of pleasure is a fantasy we build together.

Spycraft. crafting, synthesizing the necessary handmade labor still required to engage impossibly scaled systems.

17 mar 23

"situated docs" software documentation as care practice, web to print https://hub.xpub.nl/soupboat/wlist/situated doc

"we engage scandalous metaphors to break through established grounds of CS (Computer Science)—as an undoing so that diverse practices might flourish as part of a complex field of CS (Chance and Scandal). We propose that we need more metaphors for practices of: scandal and enjoyment, friendships, refusals, inaction, mucus membranes, hums, modes of survival, modes of non/commitment, queering damage (Pritchard et al. 2020), namings, cruising (Muñoz 2009), feelings, pockets, tooling up and down (MELT 2020), oozing, stimming (Scientist Stims, n.d.), reading (Smilges 2021), dreaming, writing (Brown 2021), making, smelling, rhythms and flows (Gumbs 2018), tunings (Gabrys 2016), cusps, insensibilities (Yusoff 2013), and

wayward practice (Hartman 2019)." "we propose to replace CS (Computer Science) with CS (Careful Slugs), forthcoming could be CS (Cushions and Stargazing), CS (Crying Sabotage)," »Britton, Ren Loren, and Helen V. Pritchard. 2022. "For Careful Slugs: Caring for Unknowing in CS (Computer Science)." Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience 8 (2): 1–20.

02 mar 23

How we do things, what has worked for us, not prescriptive but descriptive.

Techniques from efficient, anarchist meetings... - timekeeper, needs to be assigned - dissent speak up - meetings bad, short as possible

From Circle: - speak from the heart, listen from the heart, be spontaneous, be lean

18 jan 23

- touch sensitive speed runs through the process. the more people standing on the labyrinth, moving through, or reaching the center, the faster the workflows
- contrast with mechanized processes, the sewing machine video, still run by a human. its sound.
- scale, toggle up toggle down. bring the mechanical down to the human labor, the labor up to the mechanical, technological.

17 jan 23

"manuals not manifestos" (Furious 2020)

manuals, plans, sketches, practices, tactics, prototypes

14 jan 23

- People enacting metaphors for computing through their bodies and movements.
- Fibre optic flows of data/light.
- NFC B00b

10 nov 22

"to make the body simply a thing that needs"

"what being insolvent to each other does"

"The body is never going to be solvent; it's always going to need too much, be too expensive, not do everything we want it to, hurt more than we can bear, and then deteriorate until it can no longer move. Disability access is about orienting time to a scale that prioritizes this truth, prioritizes what we need and whom we support, which is in direct opposition to the capitalist order of time that ignores and devalues such things." >(johanna hedva, "why is it taking so long")

28 sep 22

recommended to create a design document to scope out the idea for a database, multiple phases of model creation, implementation of what intersectional ai anarchy tool methodology could be... researching what the heck such a thing would look like and where it would live (part of this site, its own thing, indesign, google doc, etc etc). The purpose is to scope down and leave instructions but again it's iterating on forms while wondering about contents... never content.

31 aug 22

"In the same way that the lenses of microscopes and telescopes are never perfectly curvilinear and smooth, the logical lenses of AI systems have their own faults and aberrations. To study the impact of AI is to study the degree by which information flows are diffracted, distorted and lost by AI." (Pasquellini, How a Machine Learns and Fails, a Grammar of Error")

21 aug 22

"broaden this idea of showing work to sharing work" on vera molnar weaving variations in holo mag https://www.holo.mg/dossiers/vera-molnar-weavingvariations/#33817

19 aug 22

"Machine learning is a practice of working with data to accommodate all differences within an expanding dimensional space" (MacKenzie 2017, 211)

digging into the material (teaching content, physical material) of large language models, the datasets that make them, the 'transformers'

and terminology and what's in all the abstractions, including the maths happening so that I can grasp what parts are even worth grasping from the perspective of what's encoded with worldviews, where are decisions made and described.

also my new strategy for reading, the only way i seem to be able to ingest anything quickly and with understanding, is to read from the bottom up. i also say what i mean toward the end, once i figure it out, and am still learning to move the conclusions to the start. but it helps to start with the recap then peruse upward...

"The very capacity to make a political claim on the future — even to board a bus to make that claim — is effaced by algorithms that condense multiple potential futures to a single output." (Louise Amoore, Cloud Computing)

08 aug 22

Ursula Franklin on technology as practices and processes, and teaching as working together not imparting upon: >"whatever somebody may teach you in working together with you, it isn't the kind of learning for which you ever get a credit. I think it's important to realize that technology defined as practice shows us the deep cultural link of technology, and it saves us from thinking that technology is the icing on the cake. Technology is part of the cake itself." (lecture 1, Real World of Technology, 2nd ed, 1999)

growth model vs production model

thinking about how code collective could exist in classroom settings where there are constraints and customer-service models for education. we did well in the summer lab model but students were still not being graded and were still self-selecting. but it also did relatively well as a module lesson in a larger course so i think it's

possible as a teaching method to focus on student-led learning. after decades of avoiding it, god i sound like my father.

07 aug 22

thinking again about manifesto energy, and Jeff [Watson]'s iMAP manifesto, but also Johanna [Hedva]'s push back against them. Jeff and imap had/have that pataphysical energy i am looking for, which combines the two, making the impossible in the real world now as a proposition toward how it can be possible and actual. and laying those thoughts against a conversation about Mark []'s post-capitalist desire in which we wondered if these were precapitalist desires that had been present all along and surpressed and swept up in western ideologies of progress.

15 jul 22

is the machine learning model a maze or actually more a labyrinth with a single path outcome, a string theory synthesizing multiple dimensions, multiple streams of knowledge from its training datasets, into narrower and narrower possibilities. as more and more work is being made using transfer learning on a few base large language models and computer vision models like gpt-3 trained on the pile, and so many examples trained on imagenet, what is seeded in its seeminly infinite possibilities is actually reduced to its biased inputs and limited by the structures of its initial designs. Even as its designers go back and claim to remove the most problematic bits, the fundamental assumptions and underlying scaffolding that lead to its outputs remain.

23 jun 22

Indonesian concept of "lumbung" or "experimental resource sharing" and "collectives of collectives" >Experimental Resource Sharing: An Interview with ruangrupa. (2022, April 22). Berlin Art Link. https://www.berlinartlink.com/2022/04/22/experimental-resource-sharing-an-interview-with-ruangrupa/

14 jun 22

the lab book "everything is a lab" (manifold press)

30 may 22

"it cost me nothing to keep that part of me—the poor part—intact for the sake of another part that felt infinitely more valuable." >(johanna hedva, "why is it taking so long")

25 may 22

Thinking about spaces, what's needed physically and digitally for survival, for connection, for thriving.

Chaos Computer Club Berlin (https://berlin.ccc.de/)

17 may 22

Staying with the Algorithm Trouble >"In complement to approaches to algorithmic auditing and accountability which start with, for example, reverse-engineering and the use of computational techniques to

detect biases, algorithm troubles are the temporary accounts of a situation that has not yet bifurcated into a technological component on one side, and a social component on the other; into code and context; into an individual use case to be better taken into account, and a general social critique of algorithms. This is precisely why the algorithm trouble, as fragile and fleeting as it may seem, is worth attending to: it presents itself as a situated, mundane and ordinary experience of living with algorithms, stripped of the extraordinary promises and future perils through which algorithms and artificial intelligences are usually envisaged; yet it destabilizes and engages, intensifies and deflects the inertia of beliefs into an active inquiry." Institute, A. N. (2021, December 16). A New AI Lexicon: Algorithm Trouble. Medium. https://medium.com/a-new-ai-lexicon/a-new-ai-lexicon-algorithm-trouble-50312d985216

16 may 22

it's funny to read the prior notes entries and see how much can change in a day or an hour or a week, and also how much can echo and thread through. at the moment of the last entry i thought i might go somewhere else to build something from scratch, and then a lightning bolt stops me in my tracks and suggests a pivot, says stay here, there is more to learn about how to do this thing, how to make it, and perhaps you don't have to do so alone, but can make it bigger and wilder than originally envisioned.

this thing keeps getting bigger and blobbier and will my capacities get tested or will they get honed, the way the qualifying exam reshapes the brain or the scrappy code held together with chewing gum makes something inexplicably magic?

eclipsing my own expectations of what any of this could be.

"if there's uncertainty, then we are no longer sure quite what's the right way to behave. And there's potential in

that, an openness to new forms. We are susceptible to what I call sacred transgression. Not straight-up theft but a recalibrating of taboo to further the making of culture." (Shaw, "Navigating the Mysteries")

"WHAT IF WE reframed "living with uncertainty" to "navigating mystery"?"

books: crafting textiles in the digital age making is connecting

12 may 22

another prong of the dissertation-as-life-as-lab takes shape, the lounge, the gathering hub that spokes the rest of this. Why wait to make the center place? Why wait until the degrees are officially signed off, until the boxes are checked until the decisions are made and settled until the lives are in their final fixed states when we know that this is not how things work, we go to where the action is, we calcify in stillness, or we stay energized around what keeps us fed and creative.

could i create the creative community lab i've been dreaming of now? it has come up in some form or another (tender tech, tenant in common, bookshop, etc) since i was small. these magical spaces where people find each other, where things are made more than the sum of their parts, stories are discovered, words and threads are woven together, people are offered what they need.

of course there are long histories of this, in and outside of ML/AI/tech. the hackerspaces and makerspaces and knitting circles and covens. the garages and gatherings of femme underground power.

03 may 22

James Baldwin on not labeling, from the Center on Privacy & Technology on why they are not saying AI any longer:

"[The poet's] responsibility, which is also his joy and his strength and his life, is to defeat all labels and complicate all battles by insisting on the human riddle, to bear witness, as long as breath is in him, to that mighty, unnameable, transfiguring force which lives in the soul of man..." [https://medium.com/center-on-privacy-technology/artifice-and-intelligence%C2%B9-f00da128d3cd]

Whew, exactly, Mr. Baldwin.

25 apr 22

"how would the everyday practice of sociological imagining shift if it incorporated machinic intelligences as social entities into its purview?" (Ceyda Yolgörmez, 144, Machinic Encounters: A Relational Approach to the Sociology of AI)

18 apr 22

Pirate Care on sus- not sur- >"We need to see digital resources as occasions for building mutualism, collective learning and radical pedagogies on the terms of those who are invisible, vulnerable and discriminated against." (Pirate Care. "Care in a Techno-Capitalist World." Ding Magazine.)

"What's needed is not something out of science fiction — it's regulation, empowerment of ordinary people and

empowerment of workers." (Bender, E. M. (2022, April 18). On NYT Magazine on AI: Resist the Urge to be Impressed. Medium. URL)

"Find the wounded places in your community, where thinking and action are stagnant—bring the medicine of imagination." (brown, a.m. "Dream Beyond the Wounds" Ding Magazine.)

13 apr 22

Randy Bass: >"we have reached the end of the era of assuming that the formal curriculum—composed of bounded, self-contained courses—is the primary place where the most significant learning takes place."

Randy Bass would call this a "high-impact practice" in "co-curriculum" (via Holly). >"These practices also have high impact because they induce, according to George Kuh, student behaviors that lead to meaningful learning gains. The important student behaviors include the following: Investing time and effort Interacting with faculty and peers about substantive matters Experiencing diversity Responding to more frequent feedback Reflecting and integrating learning Discovering relevance of learning through real-world application

And Bass points to Henry Jenkins' participatory cultures, which have... >"* Low barriers to entry Strong support for sharing one's contributions Informal mentorship, from experienced to novice A sense of connection to each other A sense of ownership in what is being created A strong collective sense that something is at stake"

Bass suggests to bring this impact into the classroom and "design for greater fluidity and connection between the formal curriculum and the experiential co-curriculum."

"we start in practice ["learning to be"], and practice drives us to content ["learning about"]. Or, more likely, the optimal way to learn is reciprocally or spirally between practice and content."

I like that, learn "spirally between practice and content," learning about and learning to be.

Also, while the need to quote from the original source for accuracy seems plain enough to me, I don't much care for the way it erases the path by which you found that source, the work that author in the middle put in tracking it down, synthesizing it, and helping it contribute to my thinking. I wish there were a better way to cite that was celebration not excavation and accolades.

"Sociocultural approaches to learning have recognized that kids gain most of their knowledge and competencies in contexts that do not involve formal instruction. A growing body of ethnographic work documents how learning happens in informal settings, as a side effect of everyday life and social activity, rather than in an explicit instructional agenda." (21) "messing around" especially "looking around" or "fortuitous searching", and "experimentation and play" "messing around requires a good deal of time for self-directed learning" (61) "messing around is a genre of participation that is driven by young people's own interests and motivations. It is not always fully provided by the adults who have authority over kids. While schools may provide structured media production programs for youth, these programs are task focused and there is little time for unstructured experimentation and play." (62-63) "Rewriting the rules in the service of geeking out, however, also involves a willingness to challenge technological restrictions—to open the black box of technology, so to speak." (71) Ito, M., Baumer, S., Bittanti, M., boyd, danah, Cody, R., Stephenson, B. H., Horst, H. A.,

Lange, P. G., Mahendran, D., Martínez, K. Z., Pascoe, C. J., Perkel, D., Robinson, L., Sims, C., & Tripp, L. (2009). Hanging Out, Messing Around, and Geeking Out: Kids Living and Learning with New Media. MIT Press.

07 apr 22

showing the roughest zero drafts of this to a few trusted people has been affirming. normally I wouldn't show anything quite so unrealized, in order to protect its spark, but in this case its spark has been getting lots of tending from lots of places.

also it brought up some thoughts about tone, the guide feels more vibrant and lively than the manifesto section, even though I originally thought I was trying to write one, and this quote I subsequently came across explains why perhaps:

"a manifesto is only ever a document that reaches too far, that speculates too impossibly, and that the only use a manifesto can have is to lay bare why it cannot be manifested, to open itself to all the ways its un-manifestation shapes the world and is its very foundation." (Hedva, J. 2022. "Why It's Taking So Long" Topical Cream.)

18 mar 22

had an easy time adding Bindery.js tool to this minimalist Jekyll + Github pages setup, which affirms my (not) gut instinct for minimalism somewhat. even though I want everything to have all the moving parts and bells and whistles, anne lamont says "bird by bird" and it's easier to see the interconnectedness of things, each tree in

the forest, when each part is tall and strong and simple and can move on its own.

I sunk this week in an application it turns out I'm not eligible to apply for. But in it I wrote about simple tools: The *Anarchist's Tool Chest* says there is power in a small set of tools, known intimately and carried easily. Its author Christopher Schwarz calls this "a radical and rare idea that can help change the world." This idea is missing from AI tools, which require massive technical knowhow and financial resources to operate.

The work done with Intersectional AI Toolkit and Creative Code Collective both argues that anyone should be able to understand the key tools of technology and should have the power to reimagine the systems that impact them most.

24 feb 22

affirming that everything is better when we're in it together, I shared my worthless feelings with code collective and we commiserated that no one ever fully moves past the coding aches and pains, ebbs and flows. that heroku dynos are haaaaard. sometimes everything is hard. some weeks are bursts of productivity and sometimes everything is a struggle. miraculously, strangely, the antidote to shame may be live coding on the big screen as your friends help you talk through your problem. and also we celebrated a win tonight as one of our anchor members heard great news and will be moving on, potentially starting a new CCC chapter at another university. this will be such an adventure to discuss remotely how the wild experiment of our collective might be replicated and remixed and i'm so excited to see how we might rhizome out into the world, while also sad to lose our unique little magic pod which cheered me up so much tonight.

21 feb 22

ever have one of those days where nothing works and you just keep trying and still nothing works? until you start to doubt your own ability to do even simple tasks because when you try to switch gears to do something simpler to make yourself feel better even that doesn't work? I can't seem to stop and it doesn't help. It sucks to feel like there's no solution to the seemingly easy problems I am trying to solve with code, which is why I started code collective in the first place, and I'm feeling exactly like I don't want people to feel about coding in general and machine learning specifically.

03 jan 22

challenges of the web3/semantics at large: vastness, vagueness, uncertainty, inconsistency, deceit a semantic web layer cake the desire to be understood by machines, to be held by database

02 jan 22

previously: CODING.CARE: Crafting New Worlds through Queer Transformative Programming CODING.CARE: A Guidebook to Critical-Creative TechnoCraft for Transforming Worlds

[for Changing/Healing Worlds] Crafting New Worlds through Queer Transformative Programming

Coding.Care: A Guidebook for Trans*formative TechnoCraft
Coding.Care: A Guidebook for Queer Trans*formative Programming
and Critical-Creative Techno-Craft

technocraft / technocraft / technopoesis

A workbook, guidebook, field guide A critical making that can hold BOTH politics of materials and embodied politics AND critical theory-practice of working with ideas and interpretive modes

alchemizing, apothecary, regenerating, mutating, reimagining I keep writing caring.codes instead

03 oct 21, "making things, practicing emptiness"

what form should the final object take? "final" "form" "object" after Berlin I am really into (the idea of) making again. seeing the material of the zines be the part of the Intersectional AI Toolkit that comes alive for folks. to want to reorient practice around materials and people. less around the arguments and ideas than the ineffables (immaterial) that can be conjured through the stuff stuff. it probably needs to be a small edition of book/s

02 jul 21, critical-creative approach & the lyric code essay

who is writing this hybrid? there's the lyric essay from the creative writing side but where is this represented from the scholarly side, that vulnerability? Alexis Pauline Gumbs is the example I can think of, adrienne marie brown—and a few innovative folks holding their own in both spaces... outliers, perhaps, not a blending accepted as it now is in lyric essay, not a section of academic journals per se. we have critical ___ studies, and creative ___, but little critical-creative ___. is there a case to be made for this?

another layer to add: code. lyric code essays? lyric gif code essays and lyric data code essays? I am imagining the scholarly object that leans lyric and exposes its code layer as part of its meaning, exposes

its vulnerable human and machinic modes of production and process, its desires for care and its communities of influence and impact.

26 jun 21, orders of operation

questioning this flail main strategy of procrastination-fueled ways of doing. wherein i work on the third item from the top of the list of urgency. wherein i make notes and gestures of ideas and then discover them elsewhere. trying to remember there are no new ideas but also honor other people's separate synchronous efforts. just a pdf hoarder and a collector of half strategies and maybe it's nothing if i do nothing with it? this three-layered beast is definitely tentacled, repeating herself, not sure where to put things, just trying to push through and get some writing out rather than worry about tone or placement to the point of doing nothing. echoing the reminder PERFECTIONISM IS WHITE SUPREMACY. raised steeped in the stuff. therefore maybe it's my job to flail, it's part of the dismantling. or maybe it's me taking up too much space, claiming something that doesn't need to be mine?

thinking a lot about how i would like my role to be harmonizer, facilitator, space holder, platform maker, i don't want the hustle i want the play and collective encouragement and support. not sure how much is fear. the physical therapist says i literally am not making space in my ribcage and thorax when i breathe. like it's all escaping up my crooked chest, that wasted air, this wet noodle core not trying to hold myself up but hoping to hold others. thinking of the codes we might rewrite with our bodies and the bodies we can recode and welcome with our codes.

31 may 21, disappeared

lately mourning depreciation of tools, dependencies, the way time organically breaks down the elements I taped together rickety carefully, to create something. I came to write this down to expand on later and found my organization frenzy missed copying documents over and lost the entirety of this document, starting again blank. sometimes mourning is a carcass of a project's broken link, sometimes it is a blankness. I didn't git commit enough, I toggled between calling this notes and _notes and there is no perfect system for keeping everything and even if there were it would keep us from seeing anything, the map cannot be the territory or else useless. I think all that was lost was yesterday's attempt to write about the 34th attempt to find a perfect platform, and some reorganized notes from prior attempts. how to be okay with all the tiny losses along the way? Elizabeth Bishop never quite answered that one for us.

27 apr 21, process

requires a starting point, a leap into the middle, warp and weft. Maria said start at the very beginning but it's too late for that, and trying to fake a perfect very beginning has got me all muddled in the performance of process instead of showing its actual messiness, its seams. And so it seems important first to discuss the ways I've been unable to start, leaping from platform to platform, behind the scenes, learning again and again how to start—just so, so that it's perfect, so that you (who?) will love what is said (me) and everything will be (different?), language being executable and all, speech acts—

I am in the thick of it. Searching for the perfect way, forgetting that perfectionism is white supremacy and the most important learning is unlearning. Here I am trying to find new forms, wayfinding.