

This is a collection of conversations that we (amanda, avian, jon) have had and are continuing to have. We hope you will join us as a reader!

Sent from my iPhone

## conversation (n.)

mid-14c., "place where one lives or dwells," also "general course of actions or habits, manner of conducting oneself in the world," both senses now obsolete; from Old French *conversacion* "behavior, life, way of life, monastic life," and directly from Latin *conversationem* (nominative *conversatio*) "frequent use, frequent abode in a place, intercourse, conversation," noun of action from past-participle stem of *conversari* "to live, dwell, live with, keep company with," passive voice of *conversare* "to turn about, turn about with," from assimilated form of *com* "with, together" (see *con-*) + *versare*, frequentative of *vertere* "to turn" (from PIE root *\*wer-* (2) "to turn, bend").

## Community Development During and Post COVID-19

with Westoby, Harris

### Community development 'yet-to-come' during and post the COVID-19 pandemic: from Derrida to Zuboff

Peter Westoby\* and Yvonne Harris

**Abstract** The pandemic has made it clear that we need to rethink our relationship with technology, work, and community. This article explores the potential for community development to address these challenges. It discusses the importance of building resilient communities that can withstand future crises. The article also examines the role of technology in community development and the need for a new paradigm of community development that is rooted in collectivism and mutual aid.

In the early 20th century, community development was primarily focused on providing social services and addressing the needs of the poor. However, in the 21st century, community development has evolved to encompass a wider range of issues, including economic development, social justice, and environmental sustainability.

One of the key challenges facing community development today is the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has highlighted the importance of community and the need for a new paradigm of community development that is rooted in collectivism and mutual aid. This article explores the potential for community development to address these challenges and build resilient communities that can withstand future crises.

### BROWSING HISTORY



### Antivenom



Milking a snake for the production of antivenom

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RyHVI2PC3NbkiVLikWIIMv4D74Mwi61Q/view>

I found this article while doing research on pandemic community care. I strongly believe in collectivism as a response to the cycles of abuse that capitalism puts us through, and through the pandemic I was worried that an absence of physical space to congregate would disrupt collectivism. I like how this article addresses security and data mining issues with the state of our hyperconnectivity, and also outlines hopeful examples of connectedness. Westoby's tracking of the soul through understanding modern capitalism and the restructuring of the workplace from industrial labor movements, and it's connection to our bodies, identities, desire and creativity resonated with me -- I've been caught in the trap of giving my best cognitive juice to my job and am left with nothing at the end of the day. I enjoyed the way Westoby and Harris had an academic dialogue that was rooted in friendship and support.

# MEASURES OF EXCESS

## Libby

Libby is an app that links to your existing library card and lets you borrow books and ebooks from your local library. It is cute and free and easy to use. The ebooks you borrow are audio-files that appear as touchable images on the screen of your smartphone. Libby has helped me during pandemic. It has offered a portable, phone-based entry into narrative worlds that have more duration/slow-drug effect than the (often) pummeling feel of 24-hour news/cycles/media/feeds. As someone interested in the excessive dimensions of reading, i.e. content relayed not through 'pure' narrative but the surrounding dimensions of form, Libby has also offered new space of consideration re. the (im)material excesses of digital technologies.

## Measure Of Passage

One of Libby's most satisfying 'In-App' features is a duration timeline that shows how far 'into' a book you are. It is like a (literal) bookmark, or the flap of the book jacket, two banal technologies that indicate 'measure of passage'. *How far along am I? How much more to go? Where are we? Are we there yet?* Libby shows your passage via the digital/visual indicator of a triangle advancing on a horizontal line of tick-marks and chapter demarkations. It is a journey through the vague space of 'progress' bracketed by an assumed 'beginning' and 'end'.

## Printed Passage

With printed books the 'measure of passage' has the material accompaniment of pages (pulp) between the front and back covers in which the passage occurs. Flip through the pages of the open book. Consider the stacked pages of the closed book. Slip a bookmark in the stack for a showing of *where you are in the book*. With bookmarks, dustjackets, pens, receipts, etc. etc. I locate myself in the book. Another way to think of the (physical) bookmark is as resting (touching) the words of the closed book in the interim space of encounter between the book and the reader. I stop reading and (temporarily) redirect my attention away from the book. The bookmark fixes a thread of my attention in the space of our encounter-space heater, seat warmer, hold my place, ok? I have not yet found a way to enter a physical bookmark into my smartphone.

## Furthermore

In addition to the horizontal digital-visual indicator, Libby mathematizes your passage through the audiobook into the numerical measure of elapsed-time and remaining-time. While printed books are measured in pages, audiobooks are measured in time. Page is an abstract measure, time is (supposedly) standard. In both instances of measure I (badly, tritely?) want to find the split down the "middle" of the book. The middle is the space of suspension, where I, Humpty Dumpty, can be ovum perfectly poised on the brink. The brink of what? Entry and exit, beginning and end, old and new. Only once in the journey of reading a book (printed or audio) is this measure of middle an even split. I crave that suspension.

## In(conclusion)

Did Humpty Dumpty throw himself off the wall?

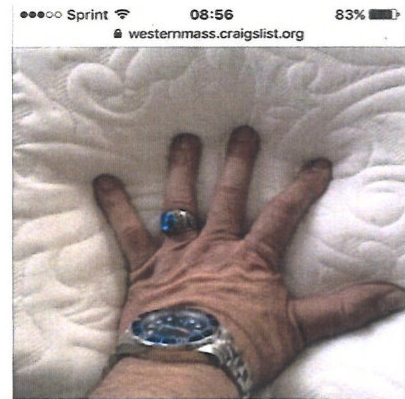
AJC  
8:10 AM Yesterday  
#touch



## BROWSING HISTORY



9:31 PM Today  
OMG. All i want to for someone to press down on me with their entire body weight. On my lower back. I want to be engulfed.



Avian Weiswiler  
7:30 PM Dec 16  
Pressure, impact, traces, containment, weight



Dec 5 Emerald ring 1500.00 Cash \$1,500  
(Fitzwilliam, Nh)



## Charles Mudede White Knee, Black Neck

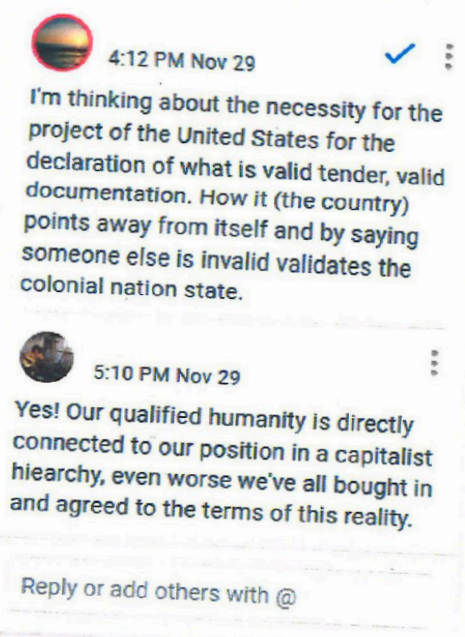
<https://www.e-flux.com/journal/110/337358/white-knee-black-neck/>

At the top of the article there is a play button that lets you hear Charles Mudede read the article. I keep coming back to this piece a few times a month because of its power and clarity. This article is important to me because it outlines the history of police and oppression, land ownership, and the murder of George Floyd: and when participating in demonstrations, or reading radical texts, or even developing my own anti-oppression way of existing, it is important to remember these histories to continue to inform my actions. I hope you listen and carry Charles Mudede's words

In the recorded version of the article, Mudede says that he is inspired by Alian Baidou's dictum that "when you philosophize you must begin at the beginning." For Mudede in his piece this is the police, deconstructing them as a force, as an entity. I assume this dictum is supposed to have a sisyphian element to it, for when can we ever say we have ever truly traced our way back to the

My path backwards crossed through this article on Techumsah in the New Yorker <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/11/02/what-tecumseh-fought-for> The article is in most part a history of Techumseh and his brother Tenskwatawa but it starts off with the framing 'The ghosts of forgotten histories haunt America's heartland, begging to be remembered and exorcised.' The ghosting of the history of the land that Derrick Chauvin braced his body against as he killed George Floyd. The project of Western Expansion was one of creating property, of "rationalizing the land" into a grid, commodifying, abstracting it into property, making it something that could be held and owned. Something that had to be defended. The land that the Cup Foods stands on was once Native land. Mudede writes that long before George Floyd cashed a bad check, America had given black people in this country many bad checks. He quotes Martin Luther King jr, "America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked 'insufficient funds.'" But before that check had bounced, there had been many other false documents passed off by America-treaties. There were many beginnings on the way to the end.

A fifteen minute drive from the Cup Foods is Fort Snelling, originally a frontier outpost where many questionable treaties were signed. In 1840 Dr. John Emerson brought a man he had enslaved to Fort Snelling. This man, Dred Scott, three years later would sue for his freedom. He had been brought into Fort Snelling, ironically called 'free territory' as an enslaved person. I won't walk through every turn of his legal battle, but will stop at one of its' ends, the 1857 Scott v Sanford Supreme Court case in which it was decided that black people "are not included, and were not intended to be included, under the word 'citizens' in the Constitution, and can therefore claim none of the rights and privileges which that instrument provides for and secures to citizens of the United States." This was what was decided about a black body on that land, a chalk line drawn on it over a century before. This decision was ultimately partially voided by the 13th and 14th amendments (obligatorially mentioning the caveat of the 13th amendment which allowed slavery as punishment for a crime). I'm thinking about the importance of this case and the incomplete end of slavery as I think about Mudede's piece, the discussion of invisibilized bodies in prison and the importance of their criminalization and incarceration for the economy and for a narrative of that economy. I'm thinking about all that as I think about property, about land, about what undergirded the pavement that day in May.





9:33 PM Dec 2

the caption in this image is everything for me. Beginning with the line, "the way a state functions" makes me curious to trace the ways in which the state functions – much like Mudede did at the beginning of his article – whose outcomes are violent, racist, oppressive; commodifying our essential needs, creativity, and every thought. The state functions to serve capitalism. I'm currently reading *In the Wake* on Blackness and Being by Christina Sharpe, and one of the subjects that this book captures is the inherent nature of capitalism which is crushing, and the ways that the state protects it's functioning. It outlines the history of chattel slavery and the way that it is so PRESENT right now and ignored. We can see it with police violence on Black communities. The state is functioning so well, that the violence against black is even ignored in art scenes or capitalist critique's that Sharpe brings to light. I can't recommend this book enough. See the first chapter here:

<http://drive.google.com/file/d/1wJ8CUjw461qA3V89O0C-RxYJXuYCiBAe/view>

[Show less](#)

Reply or add others with @

I've been holding onto this image, snapped awkwardly from my iPad at night. It's from the Romanian documentary Collective about an investigation into government ineptitude, corruption, and cruelty following a 2015 nightclub fire and the treatment of its victims.

jonjon: this newsletter came about from conversations around the resources that have held us up through 2020. I appreciate how the folks in my community so freely share thoughts, podcasts, book recommendations, and general synthesis of their experience -- it's this experiential dialog processing where I learn, and cultivate knowledge, community. This newsletter for me encourages the processing, the information sharing, the learning, the teaching. I want my friends, and friends of friends to contribute to these newsletters! Thanks for reading and looking forward to seeing what comes of this.

ajc:

conditions of covid

remove from 'business as usual'

show me my mechanisms are multiple:

i read a book start to finish for the first time in months. something about 'uninterrupted'... new-blooming ability to *sit-still*, new space to *take-in*, *retent*.

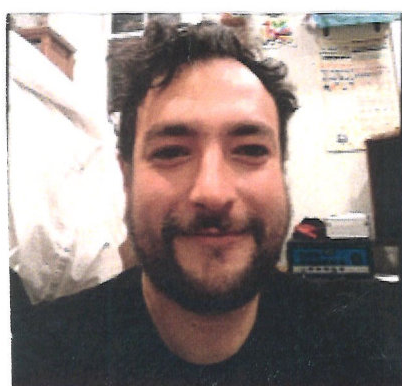
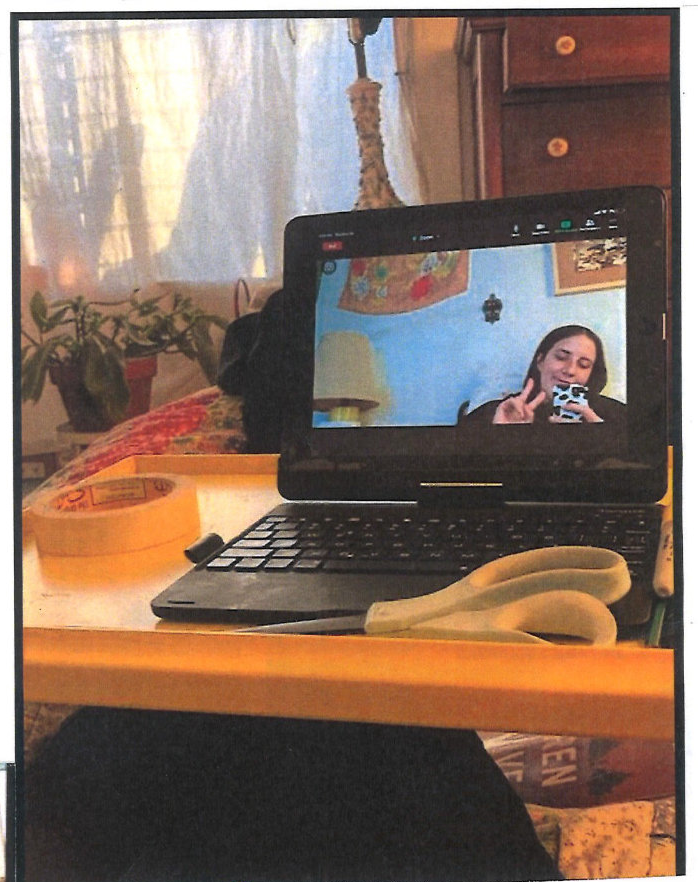
what was this newspace busy with before?  
*driving, running, errands, job, interview, smile.*

empath to the urge/rhythms of capital/flow. i feel so glad to sit alone and read a book 'uninterrupted'...

except, of course, by me. i interrupt myself. why?

bcuz it takes dialogue, the act of moving thought among and btwn bodies to reveal their full(er) dimensions. alone at home 'uninterrupted' i engage my multiplicity by relay/volley/spitball among myself. self-to-self take note. this works okay but often gets distracted or bored. better to relay/volley/spitball with full-fledged others. how refreshing to not be the sole actor, to be multiple and among. how nice to slip in and share...

Avn: for me this newsletter came out of the intersection of consumption and isolation that this pandemic has amplified and intensified. Alone in my room, in my home, I found myself consuming constantly-news, books, instagram, movies, but having very few opportunities for output, for process. I struggle to hold onto, to integrate, and take in what I have consumed if I don't digest, move the ideas about. In this bizarre, often undifferentiated time and space I needed to actively make space to engage with what I had taken in and to engage with others. So, here we are, trying to both connect with you and ourselves, and each other in the hope and the knowledge that doing so will breed new things. Please join in in any way that feels right to you (in your head, in email, in voice, in this newsletter itself).



bye! :D