

Hemispheric Headspace Mind-Map Guide

Four broad topics emerged in the *Hemispheric Headspace* discussions:

- Partition
- Artificial Intelligence
- Global vs. Local
- Archives

This document outlines and describes the four broad themes and the concepts connected with these themes.

Partition: In our exploration of partition, we considered this term in relation to advancing technology in the digital and analogue realms and in connection to domestic and/or geopolitical relationships across state lines. We discussed the ready and obvious divides between the digital world and our lived experience. We also explored the concept and construct of partition in regard to national borders that divide populations across languages, traditions, political ideologies and relationships to land, as well as separation across populations in a single state, in relation to legacies of formal and petty **apartheid**, division and access, across race, class, religion and other features of division. We are invested in interrogating categories that group populations into legal and practical standing associated with **citizenship**, residence, refugee status and characteristics of acknowledgement in terms like personhood or **subject** and the rhetorical extension of such categories to rapidly developing AI systems. We considered the documentation and enforcement of such categories through governmental documentation, categories of **data** and modes of recording keeping in human populations. Issues pertaining to enforcement of such categories are considered in relation to **surveillance**, government access to **personal data versus public data**, constructs and concepts of **privacy**, access to such data and a myriad of other concerns also in relation to the tools used to uphold or conduct such practices in any given context. I.e. Who owns the archives or data holdings? And how are issues like security, governance and access understood or positioned to be in flux in benign or sinister ways, based on who has access to data holdings and what information is held

in databases? What tools are used to hold information, gather and analyze data or mobilize action in support of or to control facets of any given population?

We discussed ethical concerns pertaining to **privacy**, anonymity and agency in relation to various forms of political ideology and legacies of such ideology in the wake of apartheid, controlled movement across regions and borders and legal actions against those who do not comply with such systems. And we interrogated the tools used to uphold these categories and enforcement of legislation or political will as we considered access and rationales for storing data, protecting data and limitations on access, oftentimes associated with archival materials, public records, governmental databanks, etc. We also briefly discussed actions taken in relation to such data when a breach is identified by the power structures in the state or across nation states.

Keywords on Partition:

Apartheid

Surveillance

Government access to data

Corporate access to data

Access to resources

Social reality of race

Racialization

Citizen vs. subject

Privacy and anonymity

Decision makers

Labor and Leisure

Feedback loops

Digital sovereignty

Power dynamics

Time and space

Translation and othering

Artificial Intelligence: Rather than attempt to define Artificial Intelligence [AI] in our discussions in the workshops, we acknowledged the complexity of this term and the myriad of interpretations and even contradictory descriptions offered by researchers in this domain. Sometimes these definitions and descriptions overlap or coincide, but just as frequently they can run in contradiction to one another, depending on research focus or depth of expertise, in addition to other factors. Instead, we elected to describe these variations in the context of our own concerns and interests. In such description we acknowledged the manner in which the terms are commandeered in popular press, in industry and across various educational and governmental domains, which are oftentimes connected to a particular concern or set of priorities intrinsically linked to the terms' use or the power of a particular version of the tool, lines of capital or other systems of power. In discussion we considered the **opacity** of current systems, and/or their training corpuses, the explicit discussions on transparency that reveal that invisibility of full access to the operational features of various AI systems and the secrecy that can be associated with these features, in particular in competitive corporate contexts. Considerable attention to the role of speed and large scale dissemination or processing afforded in these increasingly powerful systems was discussed. We also considered the measures of sophistication of such tools that are frequently linked to human capacities, whether to demonstrate optimization beyond human capabilities or deficits in such performance in the tool in relation to human abilities. Concerns pertaining to **simulation**, **simulacra** and **mimicry** were considered in relation to these considerations, in particular in the ways that designers and engineers communicate the capacity or imagined application of these tools. Ethical and social issues pertaining to scaled dissemination of disinformation, flawed data and transfer of consequential decision making in relation to these tools was also discussed.

Keywords on AI:

Opacity

Invisibility

Reactivity

Compression

Transience

High speed
Content without context
Large scale
Flawed data
Simulation
Simulacra
Disinformation
Prediction
Privacy and anonymity
Decision makers
Labor and Leisure
Feedback loops

Global vs. Local: In acknowledgement of our configuration between Cape Town, South Africa and Pittsburgh, U.S.A. we considered the distinct relationships we each bring to advancing technological tools by virtue of physical proximity and distance, and across historical access and/or in-access to such tools. We discussed contested relationships, the legacies of colonialism and economic imperialism across the Global South and Global North in regards to a long view of **power negotiations** over **time and space**. We considered the alignment and **misalignment of values** across these regions that manifest in our adoption of technological tools and that limit the use-function or designed intention for particular systems. We discussed this in the context of colonial and imperial relationships and histories of violence, extraction and exploitation. We considered what **standardization** across language systems and in relation to **digital sovereignty** can look like in tools or uneven adoption of tools, in these storied and complex relationships and histories across regions. We considered the primacy of English in digital spaces and the influence of this intentional or unintentional **standardization** across regions and in regard to variations of tools and systems, likened to other forms of violent standardization in the context of colonial and imperial histories. Discussion also focused on the need for representative translation across language systems, across values and in regards to the intentional design of current and future tools. The power and potency of **memory, legacy** and the rich possibilities of reinscribing power negotiations and potential collaboration with meaningfully integrated or mutually respected values that inform new and improved tools in use throughout these regions were briefly considered.

Keywords on Global vs. Local:

Misalignment of values

Resistance

Standardization

Digital sovereignty

Power dynamics

Time and space

Translation and othering

Memory

Legacy

Archives: Practices pertaining to preservation, valuation and the continued unfolding of concerns pertaining to digitization that take new shape in the age of LLMs and other AI tools were considered in relation to archives. Archives were described as vernacular, community-based archives, as well as governmentally sanctioned and protected archives. We discussed the roles that archives play in building features of grounded public and private **memory, legacy, imagined** and **anticipated futures** as we consider the ethical frameworks and political will embedded in how we value and preserve features of culture, politics, history and other facets of lived experiences. We considered, at length, the role and power inscribed in the archivist as stewards of content and context. We discussed the powerful role of the archivist in interpreting the holdings, **reinterpretation** of historical moments by virtue of what is held or what is added to expanded collections or holdings, what is saved and what is not preserved when we move from tactile, physical holdings to digital representations of the archives. I.e. 'we cannot keep everything.' We considered interpretation of materials and shaping and reshaping of narratives in the context of transitional justice and in the role that the **artist in the archive** might play. What insights or meaning can be extrapolated from archival holdings or a repository of data through the **(re)interpretation** of such materials across forms and media, in various iterations of expression by an **artist** versus a historian, a cultural critic or an archivist?

We discussed the activist archive, the manner in which historical powerbrokers who develop and preserve public memory through governmental institutions can be challenged through counter-collections - resistance archives, the **activist archivist** or the renegade collector. How do we consider the integration of narratives when the political will or the imagined political future of a territory or state is reconstituted through more inclusive and deliberate collections of materials from the past? How does this necessitate a reimagined political or sociopolitical future?

What are the ethical concerns pertaining to access, inaccess, open sourced repositories in the age of LLMs? What can AI tools achieve in mining or analyzing data to determine trends or concerns at scale? I.e. The Bitter Aloe Project at the University of Kentucky that analyzes data from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa to uncover narratives at scale, to visualize patterns unavailable or invisible without scaled analysis afforded through mining tools. How do we attend to anonymous data versus re-personalization of data; issues pertaining to intention in

preservation of materials versus their uses i.e. Boston College Tapes on Northern Ireland. We considered how advocacy and education might manifest as our relationships to collecting, preservation and analysis of archival holdings continue to evolve alongside emergent power negotiations and shifts in political will that may or may not align with the principles once used to originally build such collections.

Keywords on Archive:

Activist archive

Stewards of context

Content vs. context

Reinterpretation

The artist in the archive

Digital access

Re-personalization

Advocacy and education

Best practices

Legacy

Memory

Consent

Technological solutions

Invasiveness

Anticipating futures

Imagined futures