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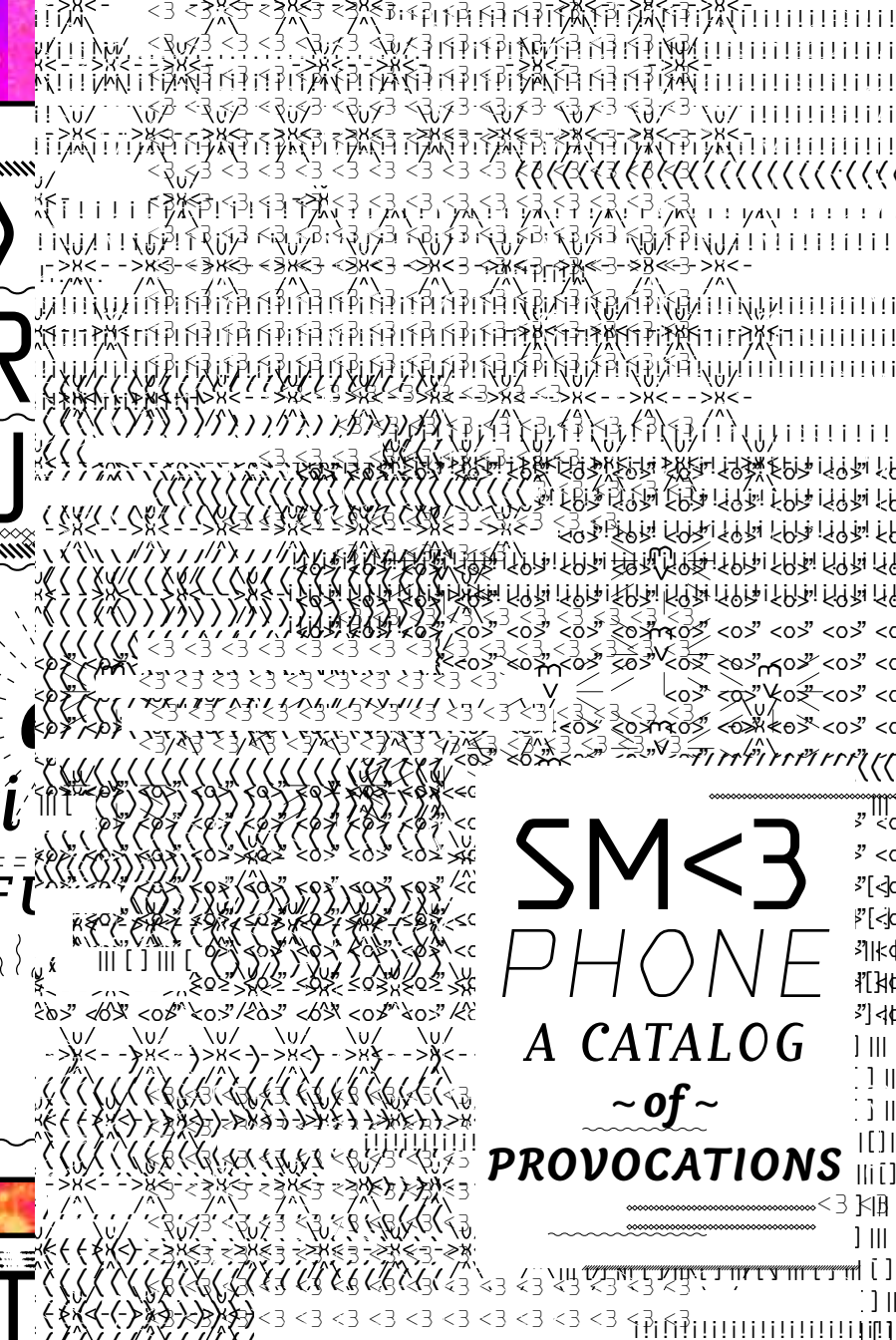
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A COMPANION PUBLICATION to
Extending and Enhancing Meaningful Conversation

by Erin Hauber

FIRST EDITION
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 North Carolina State University

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I LIVE
 AN ALWAYS-CONNECTED LIFE.
 I FLUIDLY MOVE BETWEEN
 DIGITAL AND PHYSICAL WORLDS,
 NAVIGATING MY RELATIONSHIPS
 WITH INTERFACES AND
 FUNCTIONS. I'VE COME TO EXPECT
 EASE AND EFFICIENCY FROM
 ALL INTERACTIONS. APPS ARE
 CROWDING OUT THE EMOTIONAL
 ASPECTS OF HOW I ENGAGE
 WITH MY FRIENDS. I DO NOT LIKE
 COMPROMISE. I CAN IMAGINE A
 CURIOUS, MORE DELIGHTFUL PATH.

I AM INSPIRED TO SPIN TALES
 OF “WHAT ELSE?” AND “WHAT IF?”
 TO ENTERTAIN WHAT COULD BE
 AND WHAT SHOULD BE. HERE
 I EXPLORE THE RANGE OF
 POSSIBILITIES TO AMPLIFY OUR
 HUMANITY; FOR BRIDGING THE
 FEELING GAP; AND ENABLING
 HEART-CENTRIC CONVERSATION.

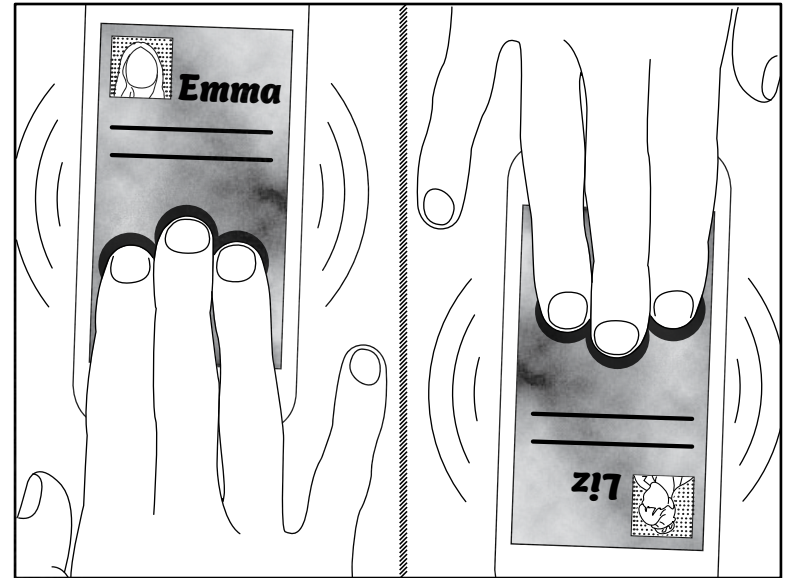
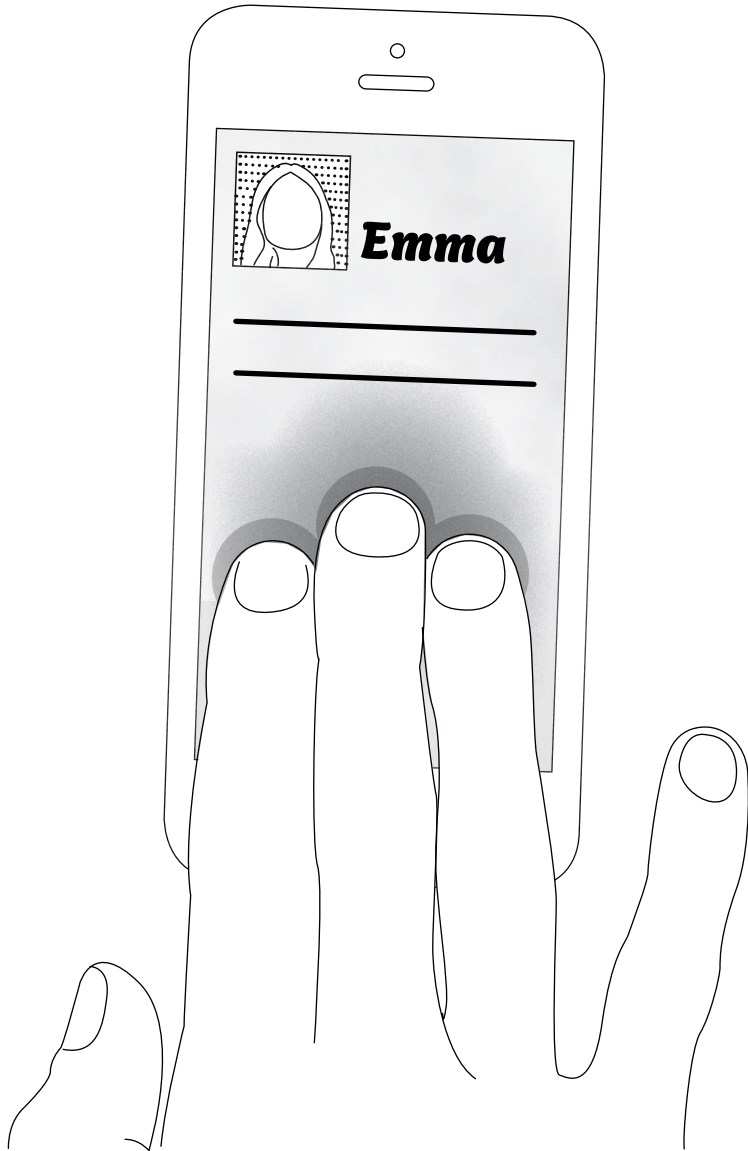




I DON'T LIKE
THE TERM SMARTPHONE.
THERE'S NOTHING SMART ABOUT
AN APPLIANCE THAT CANNOT
TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN
MY CAR MECHANIC AND MY MOM
BECAUSE I HAVE THEM BOTH
ON SPEED DIAL. I TALK WITH MY
MECHANIC DAILY, WHILE MOM IS
LUCKY TO HEAR FROM ME
ONCE A WEEK. BLAME MY FAILING
EXHAUST SYSTEM.

I THINK "SMART"
SHOULD INCLUDE MORE HEART.

A "SM<3ER" PHONE COULD BE MY
ALLY WHEN IT COMES TO DEVOTING
MY TIME AND ATTENTION TO
THE PEOPLE I LIKE BEST. AND I
KNOW ITS SMARTS WON'T COME
FROM RANKING MY LOVED ONES
LIKE NETFLIX MOVIES.



PULSE

Pulse is not a push-button rating system. It is a place for the openhearted to show devotion to a few so companion apps will be more responsive to conversational intentions. Add feeling data to ensure *Pulse* knows a relationship is cherished by visiting a person's page when thinking of her. It takes time, but contact with your hand virtually warms the page and opens a feeling channel between you and your friend. If that friend is practicing the same devotion towards you at the same time, then you will feel each other's heartbeat.

Technical requirements

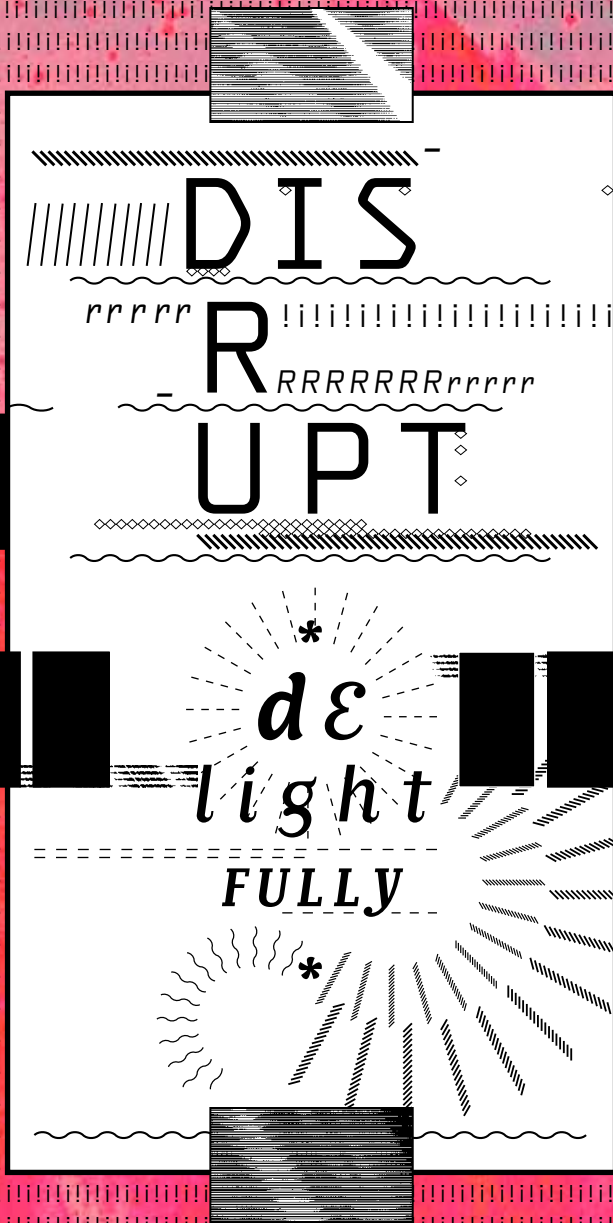
context-aware smartphone; free time; heartbeat or voice recording

Emotional requirements

patience; ritualistic tendencies; empathy; open-heartedness

Cognitive requirements

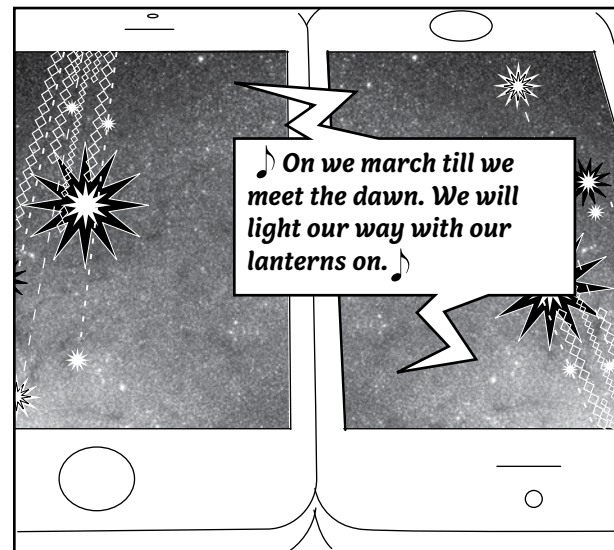
understanding of cause and effect; impulse control; knowing who is special; belief that computers can aid in decisions of the heart



I SUSPECT

THAT A LITTLE PIECE OF MY HEART DIES EACH TIME I SEND A FRIEND ONE OF THOSE TEXTS THAT SAYS, "CU IN 3" OR "ALMOST THERE, PARKING..." THOSE MEANINGLESS FRAGMENTS CLOG THE ARTERIES THROUGH WHICH VOICE AND FEELING TRAVEL. YET, I OFFER CONTINUOUS UPDATES INSTEAD OF SHOWING UP WHERE AND WHEN I SAY. SO MY FRIEND WAITS. AND I CAN'T BLAME HER WHEN SHE REACHES OUT TO OTHERS WHO ARE MORE IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE.

I DESPISE THAT MOMENT WHEN I WALK UP TO FIND HER ENGAGED ELSEWHERE, FINISHING HER DIGITAL THOUGHT. SHE IS NEARLY WITHIN REACH, BUT THE DISTANCE BETWEEN US COULD NOT BE GREATER.



FETTIFÊTE

Fettifête is like having fairy dust in your pocket. Swing your phone wildly to send a glittery, fluttery animation of your choice to any nearby cherished friends. *Fettifête* casts a spell on their phones, turns their attention away from their other communication activities and tells your friends how excited you are to see them.

Technical requirements

Pulse; context-aware smartphone;
friends with context aware
smartphones

Cognitive requirements

Understanding of cause and
effect; decisiveness, clear
conversational intentions

Emotional requirements

Impulsivity; enthusiasm;
likes to exercise her inner
Glenda; likes being noticed;
passive-aggressiveness;
sneakiness; sensitivity

EMBRACE
seamfulness

interactIOnAL
F/R/I/C/T/I/O/N

(((enables)))

CONSCIOUS

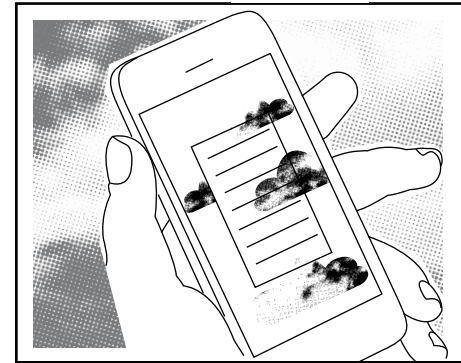
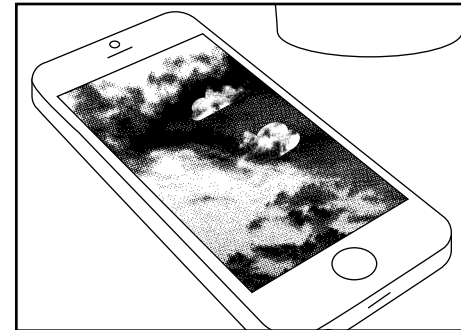
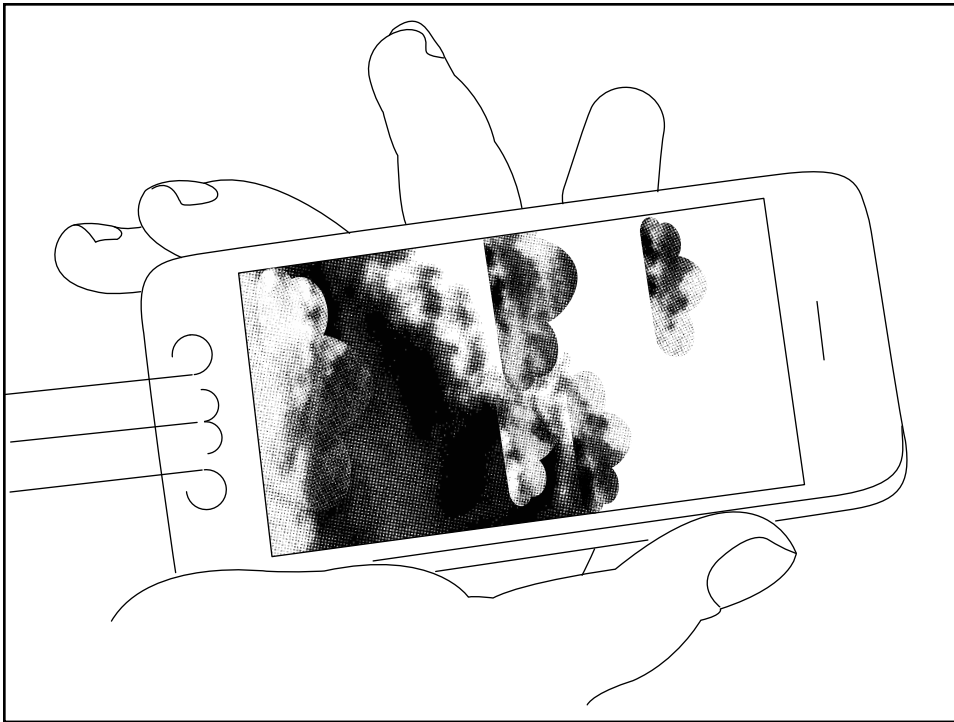
ACTION

I KNOW

MY ACTIONS DON'T ALWAYS MATCH MY INTENTIONS. WHILE I AIM TO GIVE CLOSE FRIENDS ATTENTION WHEN WE HANG OUT, THE EVER-PRESENT SOCIAL NETWORK BECKONS. ITS SIREN SONG LURES ME FROM MY BEST INTENTIONS.

I WISH BEING "HERE" MEANT FRIENDS HAVE MY UNDIVIDED ATTENTION, NOT ONLY UNTIL THE NEXT PUSH NOTIFICATION. MY FEAR OF MISSING OUT IS A HARD HABIT TO BREAK.

I NEED A MOMENT.
I NEED THE SEAMS BETWEEN MY SOCIAL WORLDS TO BE BEAUTIFUL AND APPARENT. I WANT TO PUSH THE STREAM OF TALK ASIDE AND CONTROL ITS FLOW; TO BE FREE TO DEVOTE MYSELF TO THE PERSON I CAME TO SEE.



Technical requirements

Pulse; context-aware smartphone

Emotional requirements

Confidence; patience; desire to do no harm; eagerness to please; straightforwardness

Cognitive requirements

Context-awareness; lack of impulse control; understanding of cause and effect; clear conversational intentions; decisiveness until faced with temptation

MUFFLER

Muffler shows a companion (and proves to you) that you are devoted to a conversation by pushing distant others to the periphery. If you forget your intent to be present, *Muffler* gently nudges you when it senses a cherished friend is near. *Muffler* demands elaborate and deliberate interaction when first engaged, but your phone demands less attention once muffled. To reactivate a muffled phone when that friend is present, you must perform the elaborate interaction in reverse. Otherwise, the smartphone eases you back into a connected state once you leave your cherished friend, carefully delivering any waiting messages according to emotional priority.

~ Make ~
(personal)

ACTIONS

feel

~ More ~
intimate

I WORRY

TOO MUCH ABOUT WHAT I WRITE.
I EDIT MYSELF AS I TEXT,
STOPPING SHORT OF VOICING
MY FEELINGS. I FEAR BEING
MISUNDERSTOOD OR REJECTED
BY THE PERSON I CAN'T SEE.

I DON'T HEAR MY FRIENDS'
VOICES ENOUGH. IT'S THE THINGS
FRIENDS SAY—SPONTANEOUSLY
AND WITHOUT THINKING TOO
HARD—THAT I WANT TO REMEMBER.
WHETHER BREATHLESSLY
DESCRIBING THE BEST NIGHT
OF HER BEACH TRIP OR DELIVERING
A FANATICAL DIATRIBE ON HIS
LATEST MUSIC OBSESSION,
MY FRIENDS' STORIES ARE BETTER
WHEN I HEAR THEM.

SOMETIMES A FRIEND SIMPLY
SAYS THE RIGHT THING
TO LIFT MY SPIRITS AND I WANT
TO HOLD ONTO THAT GOOD FEELING
A LITTLE LONGER.



Technical requirements

Pulse; wifi-enabled, context aware
locket with LED display

Cognitive requirements

Natural mimic; quiet; deliberate;
reasonable

Emotional requirements

Sentimentality; patience; dabbles in
melancholy; private; secretiveness

LOCK-IT

Conversation becomes memento when you wear a friend's voice close to your heart. *Lock-it* works by retaining a copy of talk you collect from your phone and imprint there using your voice. *Lock-it* helps with voice matching by visualizing your friend's voice. Imprinting occurs when you repeat the meaningful portion—in unison—with the recording of your friend. Hear your friend's voice anytime by holding an open *Lock-it* close to your ear. Feel when your friend is near from the jewelry's quiet pulse.



*Loved our chat today.
It's so nice to talk with
someone who gets me like
you do. I miss you Sis!*

GIVE

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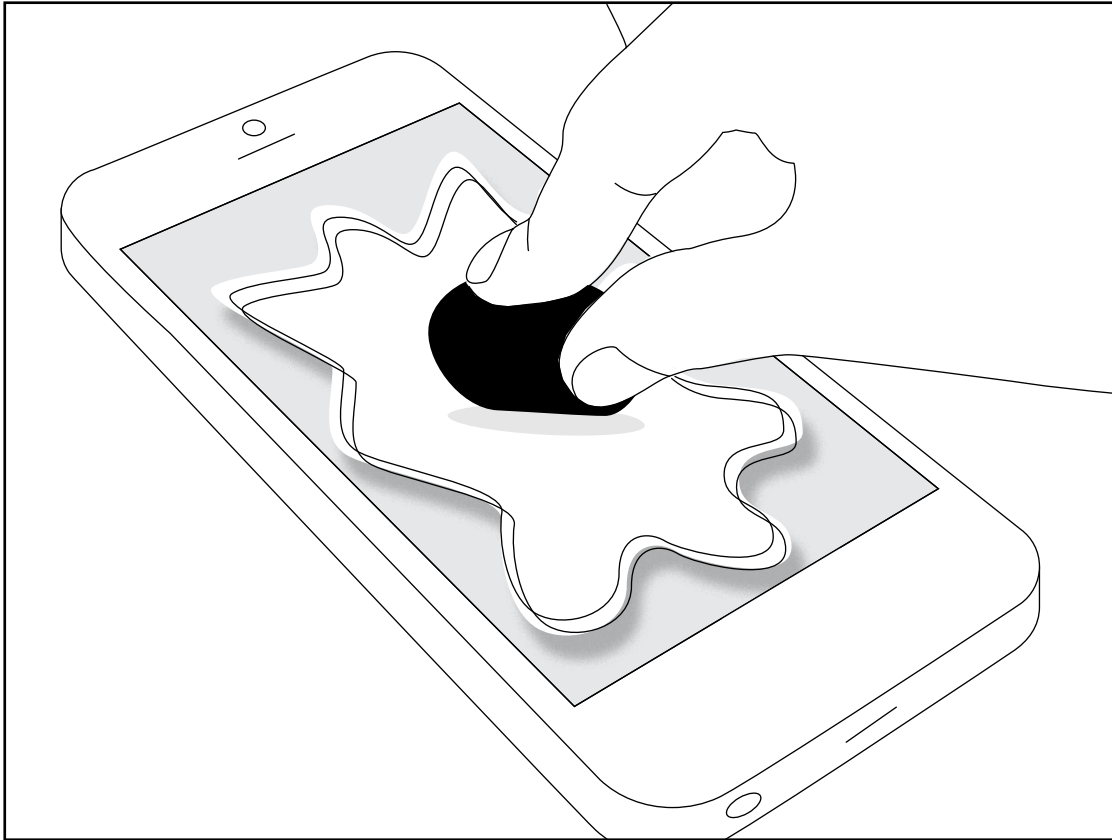
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I REMEMBER

WHEN THERE WAS NO WORD FOR UNFRIENDING. WHEN BREAKING UP MEANT WE STOPPED TALKING, THEN I GATHERED THE REMNANTS OF HIM LITTERING MY APARTMENT TO SET ABLAZE OR SEAL IN A BOX DESTINED FOR THE ATTIC.

ENDING A RELATIONSHIP IS MESSY. IT FEELS DISHONEST AND UNSATISFYING TO DISENTANGLE OUR PROFILES AND ERASE OUR HISTORY INSTANTLY.

MY RELATIONSHIPS CHANGE, YET APPS CANNOT SENSE WHEN I NO LONGER WANT SOMEONE IN MY LIFE. THE DELETE BUTTON DOESN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT IT MEANS TO LOSE A PERSON. I FEEL WOUNDED AND EMPTY.



DISPOSSESSING

The *Relic* makes it possible to dispossess all traces of a relationship from digital life. Resting the *Relic* on the surface of a formerly cherished friend's page pulls every mark of his or her presence out of your digital life and into the object. Place the *Relic* in the *Forgetting Box* for seven days to dispossess the person forever. Though, if you change your mind, just remove the *Relic* from its box and keep the relationship preserved, but at a safe distance.

Technical requirements

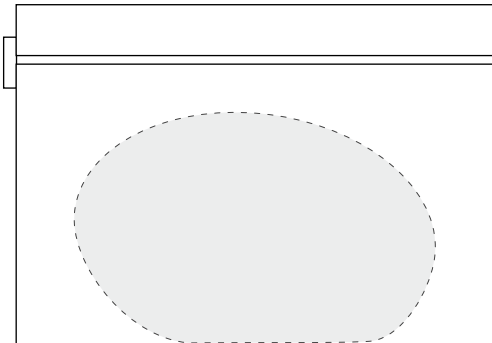
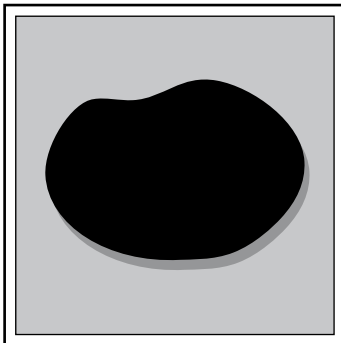
The Internet of Things; *Pulse*; RFID-tagged *Relic*; RFID-tagged *Forgetting Box*; smartphone; nemesis

Cognitive requirements

Lack of impulse control; understanding of cause and effect; awareness of tendency to overreact

Emotional requirements

Confidence; passion; conviction; heartbreak; tendency to overreact; outrage; patience; imagination; desire to deliberate



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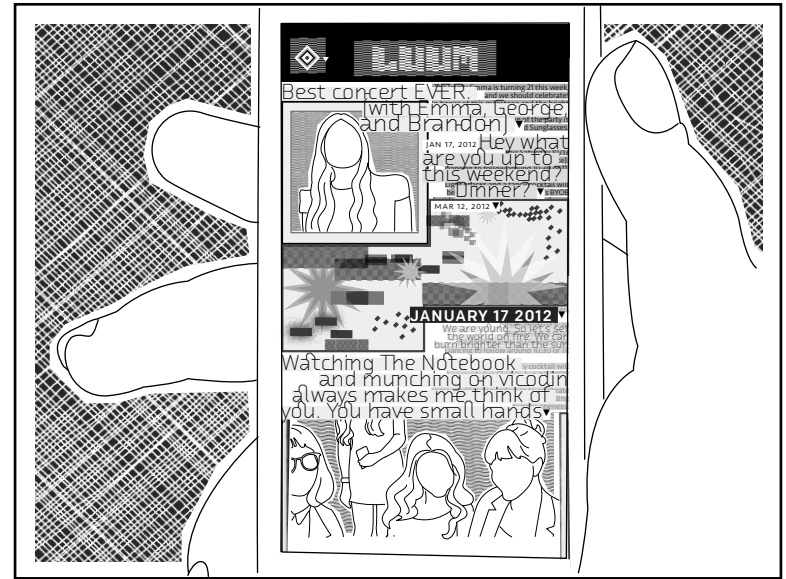
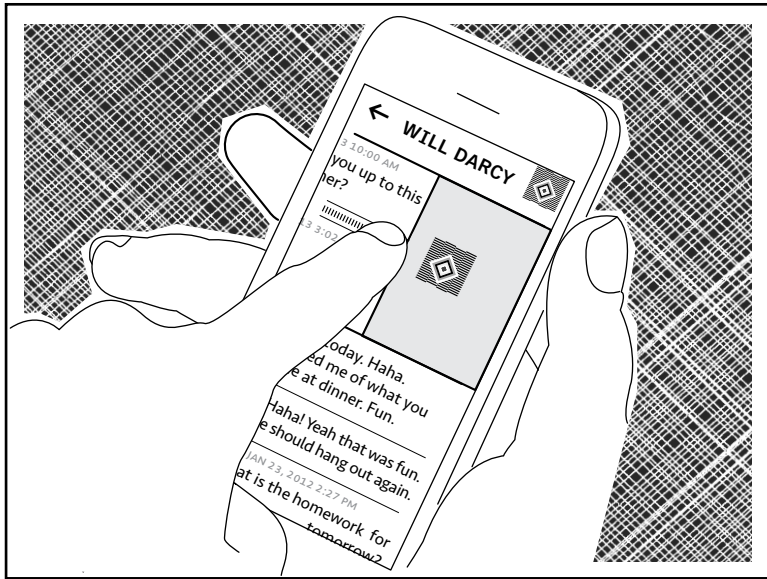
MENT

I HATE

THAT MY FRIENDS VOICES
ARE FRAGMENTED. BITS AND
PIECES OF CONVERSATIONS
ARE SCATTERED ACROSS SO MANY
DIGITAL SPACES, ORGANIZED
BY DEFAULT ACCORDING TO WHICH
PORTAL I USE TO ACCESS THEM.
WHY NOT BY THE PERSON
WHOSE VOICE I HEAR?

REVISITING WHAT WE SHARE
MAKES ME FEEL GOOD ABOUT
MY FRIENDSHIPS. I SUSPECT THESE
FRAGMENTS WOULD BE MORE
MEANINGFUL IF I COULD LOOK AT
THEM TOGETHER, BUT I'M AFRAID
TO MOVE THEM. I DON'T WANT
TO FORFEIT THE HISTORY ACQUIRED
FROM THEIR HOSTS.

OUR VOICES BELONG TO US. I DON'T
WANT TO LOSE MY MEMORIES
WHEN COLLECTING THEM STOPS
BEING GOOD BUSINESS.



LUUM

Grab elements from conversation to weave into *Luum*. Curate, remix and mash-up words, sound, video and voice into a tapestry for each friend, ready revisit or link back into a conversation. Each thread retains its history and continues to collect digital patina as long as its host survives. Elements within the *Luum* do require maintenance or they'll degrade (but never disappear). Restore degraded content by meeting a friend face-to-face or sharing a thread again. You'll know when that friend is looking at threaded content, because that piece of the fabric comes alive. Gently turn *Luum* to ask it to remind you of a piece you may have forgotten.

Technical requirements

Context-aware smartphone; social networking system memberships; *Pulse*

Cognitive requirements

Decisiveness

Emotional requirements

Sentimentality; patience; dabbles in melancholy; private; open-heartedness; ritualistic tendencies

OPTING
out
SHOULD BE A
CONSTR-
UCTIVE~
/ACT

I DON'T LIKE
MANAGING MY REPUTATION
ONLINE. I SHOULD BE ABLE TO
BE SOMEWHERE IN PERSON
WITHOUT HAVING TO BE
"THERE"—FOREVER—ONLINE.

YET OPTING OUT OF EVER-PRESENT
SOCIAL MEDIA IS HARD TO DO
AND JUSTIFY. I SEE THE FILTERING
THAT'S POSSIBLE ONCE I'M
ONLINE, BUT I DON'T WANT TO
RETROACTIVELY UNTAG MYSELF
FROM EVERY PHOTO OR CHECK-IN.
MY PRESENCE IS MY CHOICE,
NOT SOMEONE ELSE'S.

I'VE SEEN THOSE PEOPLE WHO
WEAR PIXELATED MASKS TO AVOID
CCTV CAMERAS. I ADMIRE THEIR
SPIRIT, THOUGH I WOULD PREFER
SOMETHING LESS ATTENTION
GRABBING AND MORE WEARABLE.



JEWELRY OBSCURA

Jewelry Obscura is for a punk who wants to interrupt the functions of the machine, but not kill the party. You know the difference between being a smartphone user and being used, so you assert your presence when it feels right to you. *Jewelry Obscura* does not prevent a friend from taking your picture, but it does prevent that friend from broadcasting your face to people who weren't there, or who you don't know. Your friend retains the original photo—duck lips and all—though the jewelry constructs an alternate version for public sharing with the charm or message you choose.



Technical requirements

RFID tag with unique signal (attached to jewelry); RFID tag-reading camera or smartphone; subject's head dimensions; context-awareness

Cognitive requirements

Intent to assert degrees of presence; context-awareness; personal style

Emotional requirements

Counter-culture attitude; confidence; hacker mentality; desire to do no harm

I WONDER

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBILITIES
TO EXTEND AND ENHANCE
MEANINGFUL CONVERSATION
IN INTERFACES AND
EXPERIENCES DESIGNED FOR
NETWORKED YOUNG WOMEN?

Extending and Enhancing Meaningful Conversation (available at www.cottageindustri.es) inquires into today's social networking experiences from a critical perspective with a hypothesis that closeness may be represented more substantially in these spaces as people engage in meaningful conversation.

The proposals in this companion to *Extending and Enhancing Meaningful Conversation* are rhetorical. They rely on social psychologists' findings that feeling close escalates intimacy and results in more meaningful conversation. The proposals question the means by which we connect and converse today, and provide principles (called mandates) for designing more affective networked experiences.

The mandates focus on the activities of constant talk, the gradient of "here" and methods for cherishing conversation explored in detail in *Extending and Enhancing Meaningful Conversation*. Opportunities exist to design alternative experiences for young women, interfaces and functions that create conditions where meaningful conversation is more likely to occur.

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