# *The New Old Home*

# 22 Ideas, 6 Themes

*Cover Illustrations by Jodi Lynn Burton: jodilynndoodles.com*

# What is the New Old Home?

*The New Old Home* takes a look at some of the converging trends shaping homes in the post-COVID world as we partially return to an older way of doing things, but in new ways that integrate the lessons we've learned.

Although the ideal of the modern post-war home has been in terminal decline for decades, it wasn't clear what would come next.

Now, COVID-19 is forcing the issue.



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# What is the New Old Home?

Work used to take place in the home. Then it traveled out into the world with the male breadwinner. Now work has come back home again... but obviously things are now much different than they were on the farm.

The New Old Home contains more breadwinners, and fewer children, than the Baby Boomer home. It hosts high levels of production, not just consumption.

*How will knowledge workers adapt themselves and their spaces to this new milieu?*

Post-COVID Homes:

ABOVE THE API

## The New Old Home

### The Radical New Home

*Intentional Groups, Cyberpunk Houses, High-end microapartments*

CONSERVATIVE

RADICAL

### The Precarious Home

*Housepoor Buyers, Mobile Homes, Public Housing*

### The Crash Pad Home

*AirBnB Nomads, Chronic Subletters*

BELOW THE API

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# a small caveat...

This goal of this deck is to imagine a "model home" that takes into account changing technologies, remote knowledge work, social/isolation needs, and care tasks.

*Model homes* are slightly-aspirational visions for the middle class: a backyard with a white picket fence in the suburbs, a fancy condo in the city. In reality, homes come in a variety of shapes and sizes that can fall quite short of our aspirations.

**In particular, the future homes of the marginalized working class are not fully explored in this document.**

Nevertheless, we hope that some of the ideas in this deck are relevant to everyone as we look forward towards the future of our living spaces.



*"Lodgers in a Crowded Bayard Street Tenement—'Five Cents a Spot'", from Jacob Riis photo collection of New York City (ca 1890)*

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*Designed this deck while caring for Grandma at home.*

# Lenses on the New Old Home

# The Home as Farcaster Mansion

In Dan Simmons's 1989 science fiction classic, Hyperion, wealthy individuals such as the poet Martin Silenius own mansions constructed with "farcaster" technology, with different rooms or wings on different planets. Doorways between rooms are portals connecting worlds light years apart.

Farcaster mansions suggest an allegorical understanding of **a home as a portal among a set of otherwise disconnected worlds**, with a presence in each, and comprising liminal passages between worlds for inhabitants to pass through. Individuals change roles and personas to suit different worlds, as they pass from room to room.
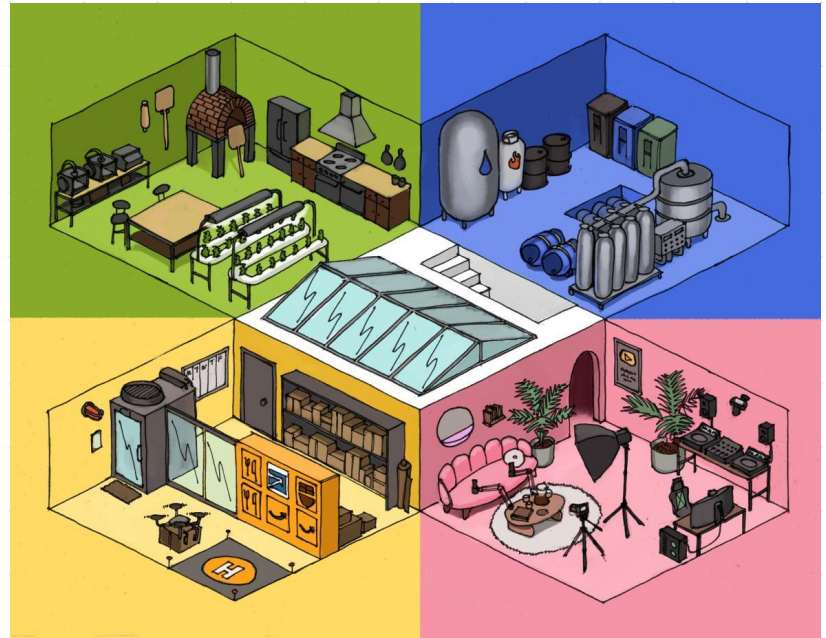


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**(Illustration by Ryan Hume)**

# The Home as Farcaster Mansion

Farcaster mansions serve as an illuminating allegory for the postmodern, post-Covid home as a set of portals among four different human worlds:

1. *The supply chain world*
2. *The waste stream world*
3. *The domestic production world*
4. *The public appearances world*

These four universes can be arranged in an interesting 2x2, with inputs vs. outputs on the x-axis and high to low visibility on the y-axis. The farcaster mansion serves as an update and expansion of Thorstein Veblen's conceptualization of the leisure class in terms of conspicuous consumption.
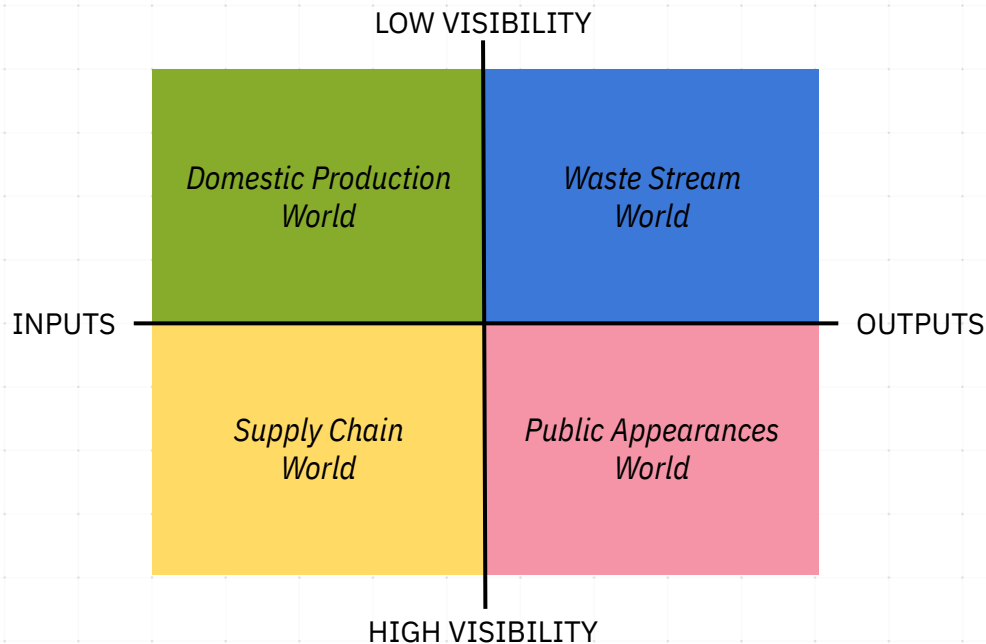
LOW VISIBILITY

| | |
|---|---|
| *Domestic Production World* | *Waste Stream World* |

INPUTS — OUTPUTS

| | |
|---|---|
| *Supply Chain World* | *Public Appearances World* |

HIGH VISIBILITY

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# The Home as Farcaster Mansion



What can be made at home in the most from-scratch way in a world where supplies can be uncertain and self-sufficiency is a higher imperative?
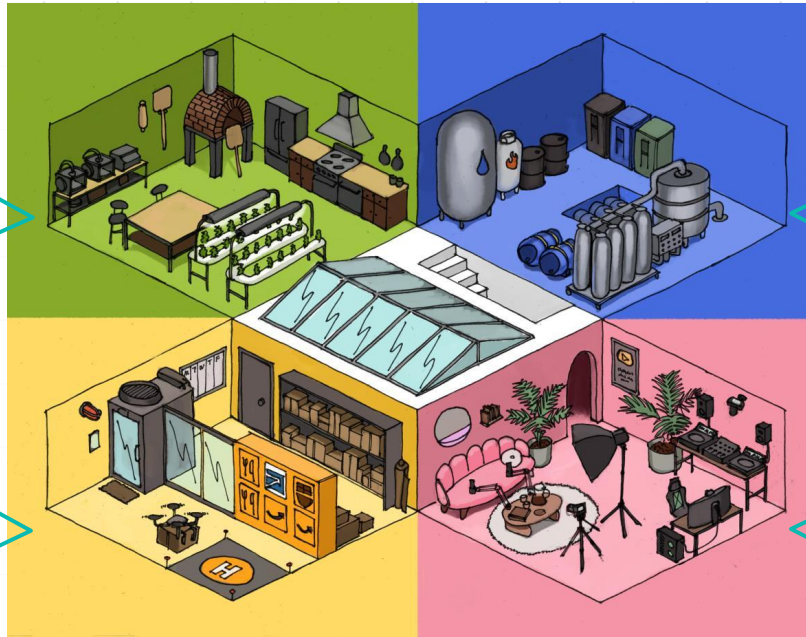
What does the waste stream look like in a world of climate action and disruption of long-distance remote waste handling?

What is the last-mile interface to the supply chain, and what are its physical and biological security characteristics in a world of delivery-based consumption and viral threats?

What does "keeping up with the Joneses" look like when the Joneses mostly keep up with you on social media rather than visiting your home?

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# How Homes Work

Most obviously, "home" serves as storage space and simply somewhere to be by default.

But homes also provide the means to establish and reflect personal identity. People choose, arrange, and decorate their homes in a way that reflects their current identities (or nudges them towards aspirational identities).

Homes also give their occupants a stable, structured way to regulate their emotions. By moving through curated spaces, home users increase predictability and control over notoriously-fickle moods.

*(For my pre-COVID statement on this topic, see this post)*

## Personal Identity

- Display achievements - awards
- Showcase loyalties - sports teams, countries/cities
- Keep hobbies front and center - cooking stuff

## Emotional Regulation

- Sparse & calm areas
- Decorated for homey-ness
- Separate spaces for different functions (e.g. home office)

Inspired by *Snoop: What Your Stuff Says About You* (Sam Gosling)

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# How Homes Work

| Function | Pre-Pandemic | Mid- and Post-Pandemic |
|---|---|---|
| **Personal Identity: Others** | People have bifurcated into those who host guests and those who do not:<br>● *Entertainers* take more care to display what they wish for others to see<br>● *Non-entertainers* maintain "crash pad"-type homes, not geared towards the consumption of others. | With home entertaining off the table for now, the other-facing function of home recedes.<br><br>If entertaining at home resurges (as a safe alternative to gathering in groups in public), then projecting identity via one's home will become *more* important than it was before. |
| **Personal Identity: Self** | For those who used to work many hours away from home, it became less necessary to identify via home space. | If you're spending nearly all your time at home, it almost necessarily becomes a primary source of identity. |
| **Mood Regulation** | Can outsource some mood functions to gyms, cafes, coworking spaces, etc. | Heightened need to repatriate functions to the home via home gym, comfortable seating, dedicated home office area, etc. |

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# *How Homes Work*: *the Post-COVID world*

Like most changes, the post-COVID home offers benefits and challenges distributed unevenly.

Widespread uncertainty, fear, and financial pressure due to COVID-19 are already threatening the mental health of millions of people around the world. Indicators suggest that the number of Americans struggling with anxiety and/or depression in May 2020 has doubled compared to a 2014 baseline.

Stressed-out people, many whose jobs and plans have been upset by COVID-19, will want and need to marshall their homes for identity & mood regulation purposes.

| Challenges | Opportunities |
|---|---|
| ● Increased pain in inhabiting a home that's inappropriate, because you have to stay there more of the time. *(too small, noisy area, misconfigured)* | ● A big nudge to finally make one's home nice *(for those who had neglected this before)* |
| ● It costs money to make homes fulfill the identity & mood functions well. *(decorations, furniture, electronics)* | ● More disposable income may become available due to other reductions in discretionary spending *(fewer restaurant meals, trips, and other outings)* |
| ● Moving homes is harder/riskier during lockdown and periods of pandemic uncertainty. | ● Extraordinary times provide a good excuse for those who were already curious to experiment with alternate ways of life. |

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# *How Homes Work*: *a Note on Space*

There's nothing new about making trade-offs between a home's location and the amount of personal space it offers.

COVID-19 makes this situation suddenly more stark: during a pandemic the public/shared spaces that usually make small urban apartments work within the context of urban dwellers' lives have become unavailable: gyms, coworking spaces, and even some parks.

The tradeoff towards more private space, then, has coincidentally paid off much higher than usual. As the pandemic drags on, people with options may "temporarily" trade to larger less-urban spaces and like them, fixing new preferences for a generation or more.

### City Apartment

- **Identity function**: If you can work from anywhere and don't leave home, city-based identity loses its essence.
- **Mood function**: Cumbersome to regulate mood without discrete zone; multi-use spaces are not ideal for any purpose.

### Suburban/Rural House

- **Identity function:** Nondescript physical surroundings don't imply milquetoast identity when socializing happens online
- **Mood function**: Space offers many possibilities for reliable mood regulation, (especially via physical activity & other recreation/hobbies, and for kids)

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# *Colonialising the Home*

Colonialism is fundamentally about creating a division, declaring one side 'better'—the holy vs. the mundane[1]—and using that division as the basis for oppression, manipulation, and extraction.

Colonialism has manifested itself in many ways during the 20th and 21st centuries, including right within our homes.

The New Old Home cancels this bullshit—opening up the possibility of healing the rift.

[1]another such division

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# *Colonialising the Home*: *the Bullshit*

- The sanctified roving male, the 'breadwinner' *versus* the domesticated docile wife

- The high prestige, highly paid 'intellectual' work, *versus* The low prestige, low-paid work of child rearing and care, food production, and cleaning

- The separation of 'holiday'—temporary potential for role reversal and wholism—from life

- The alienation of self—from shared aesthetics, from wholeness, and therefore from self-creation—into ownership and consumption

- ...and the passing on of this through the procurement and consumption of these services from outside the home



*Mad Men: Don Draper's proposal to offer men "Executive Private Accounts" that are hidden from their wives and families*

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# *Colonialising the Home*: *the Cancellation*

Lockdown has imposed a number of new or returned realities:

- Families forced together—with no nannies, no cleaners, and no business trips nor holidays

- Households forced into self-sufficiency and self-reliance

- The revealing of what's really work—what's 'essential' and what is mere onanistic status massage

- The backlash—through gendered division of labour and bids for status via the medium of sourdough—only serves to either expose or heal the divide, not obfuscate



Anchor: I think one of your children has just walked in.

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# *Colonialising the Home*: *the Healing*

Mid-Pandemic, we now observe:

- A bringing down of the alienated Gods of work

- A reconsideration of the measures of value

- That the whole cannot be healed until the self is healed, and vice versa

- The bread, the gardening, the new social games

But is this the New Old Home, or simply a carnevale of temporary reversal?

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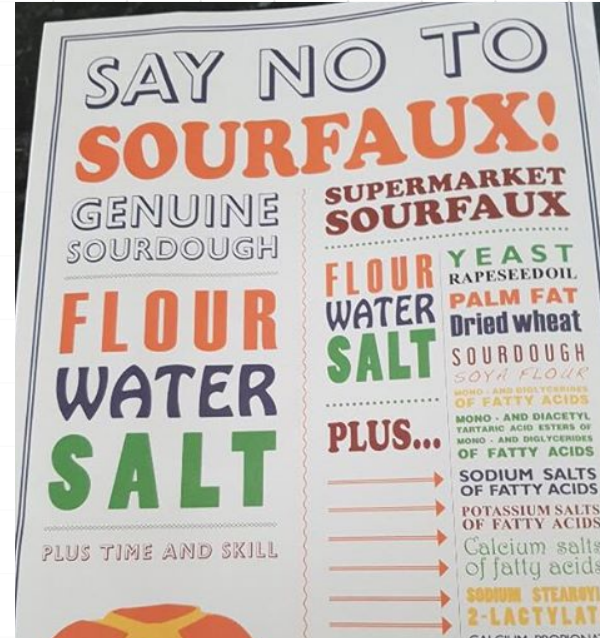
# *Imperceptible Units*

Being social creatures, humans show up in the world not strictly as individuals but as members of actual or aspirational "Units" (sometimes, not always, biological/genetic families). These "Units" also shape our approach to constructing our homes and our environment. The Units become sticky, because experimenting with them is costly—financially, emotionally, and culturally.

In the wake of the looming threat of nuclear war, **Nuclear Units** arose and led to ambitious experiments in suburban housing. Now, in the COVID-19 world, a new storm of **COVID-19 Units** is brewing, waiting to foment in a series of new experiments for living.

These environmental Units can either ossify into **Prediction Units**, projecting a moment's particular anxieties into the future and optimizing for the lowest common denominators; or ascend into **Imperceptible Units**, teeming with untimely signals that show a new path forward.



*The Chicago Projects: These projects were originally imagined as low-rise housing for the middle class in the wake of the depression ("Depression Units"). Budgetary constraints and explicit racism caused the plans to be weaponized against the poor, mostly-black community.*

**Scott Garlinger**
*Groupmuse:* Director of Business Dev.
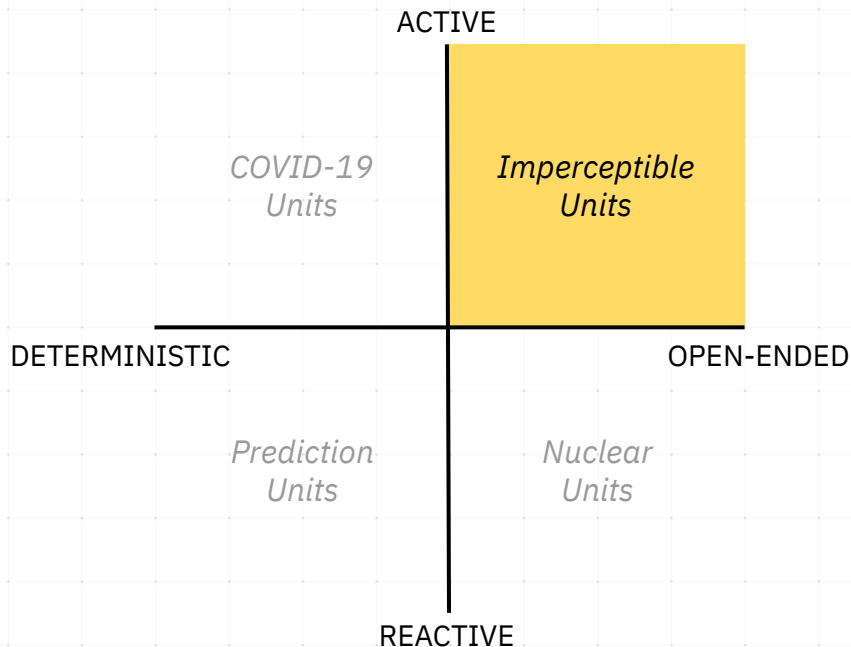*Dynasty:* A.I. Operator

# Imperceptible Units

**Nuclear Units:** Mom, Dad, and 2.5 kids in the suburbs. Watching Cronkite for Russian updates. Take harsh spatial divisions and a constant spectre of nuclear apocalypse for granted. They tell time via their spatial program.

**COVID-19 Units:** Everyone forced back into one home. Ordering in. Looking at Twitter to see Trump cancel WHO. Take the collapse of spatial divisions for granted, cannot differentiate temporality, and collapse all data into the logics of 'the curve.'

**Prediction Units:** project a moment's anxieties into the future and optimize for the lowest common denominators. This is the Nuclear Family in 2015: it lives on in name/on paper, but not in spirit.

**Imperceptible Units:** arise after unprecedented experiments: untimely, unconditioned, and teeming with signals. *Imperceptible units push social frontiers, even without social legibility.*

ACTIVE

*COVID-19 Units*

*Imperceptible Units*

DETERMINISTIC — OPEN-ENDED

*Prediction Units*

*Nuclear Units*

REACTIVE

**Scott Garlinger**
*Groupmuse:* Director of Business Dev.
*Dynasty:* A.I. Operator

# Places & Spaces

# *Domestic Cozy to Hard Cozy*

## *Before Covid19: Domestic Cozy*

The current retreat to domesticity represents an acceleration of a trend that had already been underway for over a year when Covid19 hit : **domestic cozy**. I flagged and named the trend in early 2019. The concept was just beginning to gain memetic momentum in early 2020 when the pandemic knocked it to a whole new level of intensity.

Domestic cozy represents a reversal of a previous decade-long trend that emphasized public appearances: **premium mediocrity**. Domestic cozy homes are low-profile: they underpromise and overdeliver. In contrast, premium mediocre homes overpromise and underdeliver.

**Inc.** NEWSLE

SOCIAL MEDIA

## How to Appeal to Gen
## Instagram: Be Weirder (and

SO COSY

The rise of "domestic cozy"

That's the contention of offbeat and <u>always thought-provoking</u> blogger Venkatash Rao. In a series of recent posts he's speculated on a generational shift happening as Gen Z starts to take the reins of more public culture. Th
mediocre" (think seaside avocado toasts
"<u>domestic cozy</u>."

**Vox**

## Why are so many brands pivoting to coziness?

Marketers have always used beautiful domestic spaces in advertisements. Now even shoes and liquor are supposed to make us feel safe and warm.

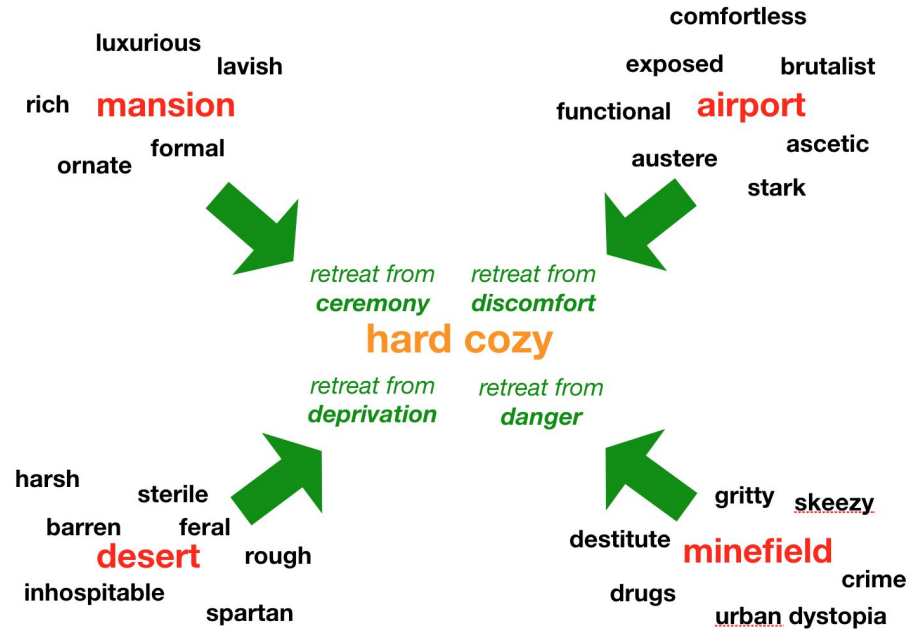By Rebecca Jennings | @rebexxxxa | Jan 15, 2020, 7:00am EST

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# Domestic Cozy to Hard Cozy

*After Covid19: Hard Cozy*

We can expect a **rapid hardening and long-term persistence of core tendencies already present in domestic cozy**. What might otherwise have been a short-lived fad might well turn into a generational posture for Gen Z as they grow older and establish households.

The core traits of domestic cozy, all expressed through patterns of risk-averse domesticity, can be understood as a set of **four retreats from archetypal spaces that are not cozy**:

- Retreat from **discomfort**—airport-like spaces
- Retreat from **ceremony**—mansion-like spaces
- Retreat from **deprivation**—desert-like spaces
- Retreat from **danger**—minefield-like spaces

luxurious
lavish
rich **mansion**
ornate formal

comfortless
exposed brutalist
functional **airport**
austere ascetic
stark

*retreat from ceremony*   *retreat from discomfort*

**hard cozy**

*retreat from deprivation*   *retreat from danger*

harsh
sterile
barren feral
**desert** rough
inhospitable spartan

gritty skeezy
destitute **minefield**
crime
drugs urban dystopia

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# *Housing Affordability*: *Prosperous, Shrinking Cities*

The wealthiest regions continue to lose population, and particularly young people, due to high cost of housing.
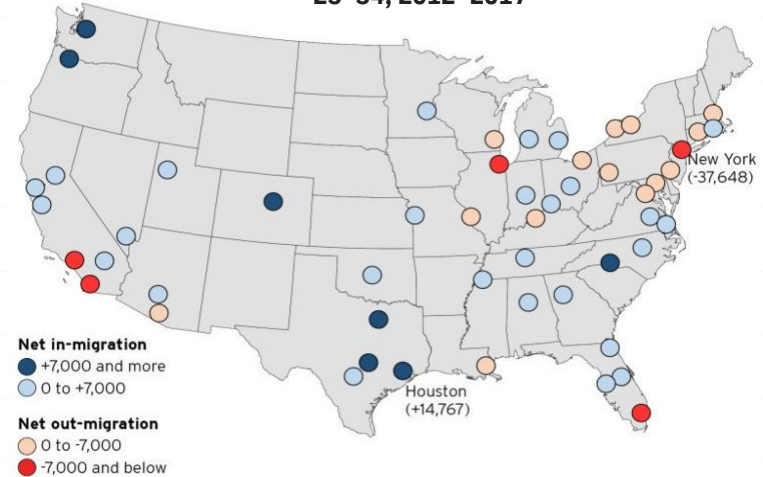
- About 6 million residents left CA since 2007, a net loss of 1 million.
- NYC loses ~38,000 young people each year (see chart).

COVID-19 will accelerate this trend as labor markets soften but rental and homebuying markets do not:

- Lack of new construction keep supply low; and
- Mortgage forbearance options lessen sell pressure.

**Result:** Housing as a labor sorting mechanism. High- productivity employees will live near HQs. Remote work in lower-cost cities will be viable, but with lower career ceiling.

**Annual Net Migration of Residents ages 25–34, 2012–2017**

New York (-37,648)

Houston (+14,767)

**Net in-migration**
- +7,000 and more
- 0 to +7,000

**Net out-migration**
- 0 to -7,000
- -7,000 and below

*"Old people are holding in place, but we are losing the younger generation. It is a **slow-moving train wreck** here."*

– USC Professor Dowell Myers

**Benton Heimsath**
LA YIMBY

# *Housing Affordability*: *A Tale of Two Cities*

- In high cost of living cities, people trade off commute time, safety, neighborhood amenities, and having children with housing costs.
- In lower cost of living cities, the trade-offs might instead include job opportunities and walkability.

Compare Houston and Los Angeles: with similar median incomes, LA's high cost of housing leaves many households floundering.

Although COVID-19 won't end cities (no pandemic has before), it does change the tradeoffs for now. Remote work, family-based childcare, and a privately-owned car seem more attractive than ever, at the same time as a "good school district" matters less.

| Los Angeles, CA | Houston, TX |
| --- | --- |
| **Median Home Price (2019)** *$817,000* | **Median Home Price (2019)** *$251,000* |
| **Median Rent** *$3,500* per month | **Median Rent** *$1,400* per month |
| **Median Income** *$51,000* | **Median Income** *$47,000* |



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# ⅓ *Space*

The ideal of a "third space" has served as a north star for the design of modern office and urban living spaces, which are defined by their proximity to and inclusion of these spaces: nearby coffee shops, open rooftop lounges, etc.

Recent events have forced the idea of "digital third spaces" to mature at a rapid rate. As Zoom fatigue sets in, other existing tools and game engines are being hacked: with [graduation ceremonies](#) and [concerts](#) in *Minecraft*, a ["wfh town"](#) built in the collaborative design tool *Figma*, and [office meetings around a campfire](#) in *Red Dead Redemption 2*. It remains to be seen how viable these spaces truly are: there's only so much *Animal Crossing* a person can stand.

In the meantime, as our home and work lives collapse into one space, how can we incorporate the positive qualities of a third space into our homes?

## Third Space

*A third space is a place to go that is separate from the two usual environments of home ("the first space") and the workplace ("the second space"): Churches, cafes, clubs, public libraries, bookstores or parks.*

*Places where you want to be, rather than places that you have to be.*

**Drew Schorno**
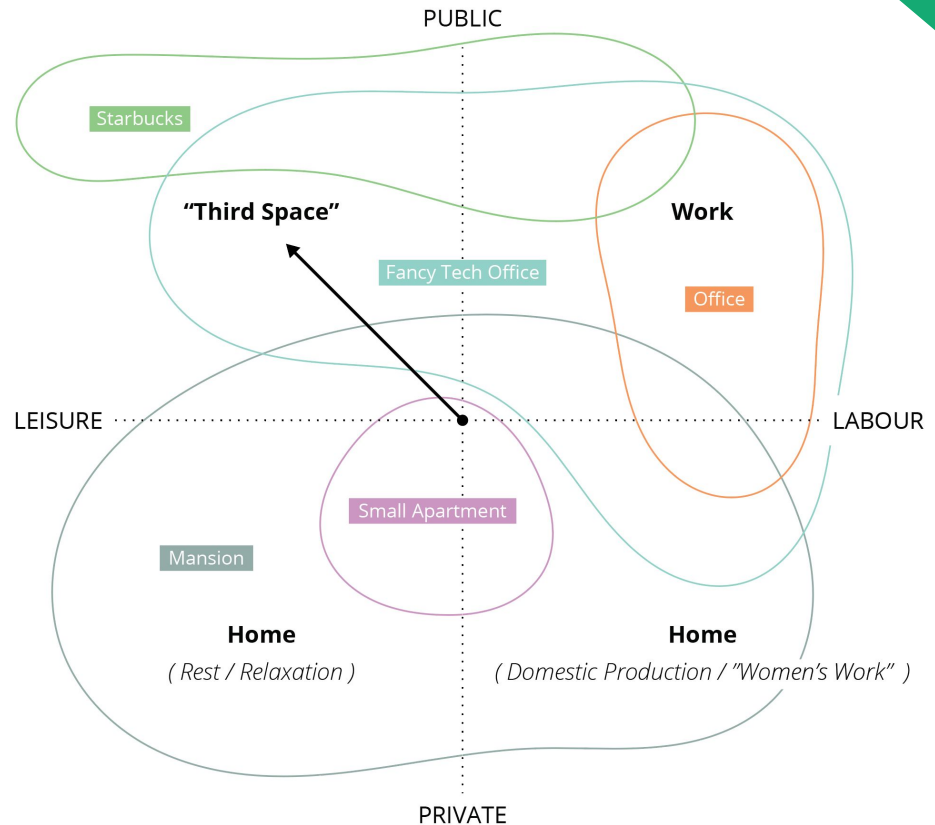[drewschorno.com](http://drewschorno.com)
*Clown school graduate. Failed startup alumni.
Designed this deck while caring for Grandma at home.*

# ⅓ Space

**What do physical third spaces offer at their best?**

1. Lucky encounters with loose acquaintances, old friends, and the public: a sense of *community*.

2. Light-hearted and humorous conversation

3. An opportunity to temporarily forget about obligations

4. Freedom to come and go as you please

5. A sense of commonality and level hierarchy

6. Accommodating, accessible, and non-judgemental

7. A playful mood



PUBLIC

Starbucks

"Third Space"

Work

Fancy Tech Office

Office

LEISURE ............................................................ LABOUR

Small Apartment

Mansion

**Home**
*( Rest / Relaxation )*

**Home**
*( Domestic Production / "Women's Work" )*

PRIVATE

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# Travel as Ritual

The homes of people who can afford it are increasingly *atomized*: the number of functions for each room is lowered until you get ultra-specific rooms like "the meditation nook" in real estate listings—presumably for the sole purpose of meditating. The reason why this is desirable is that different physical spaces give your body a signal to prepare for different contexts of activities.

The act of traveling between areas within a single home, or from your house to a separate office space, can serve as a ritual that puts you into "working mode", "sleeping mode", "exercise mode", etc.

Perhaps it is possible to design new habits and rituals that make the idea of a unified space more bearable: the manual handling of a previously invisible and automatic experience.



*I wish I had a meditation nook...*

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# A New Old Pattern Language

Christopher Wolfgang Alexander is a design theorist whose cult-classic, *A Pattern Language*, revolutionized design thinking not only in architecture, but in software engineering as well as UI/UX design.

A Pattern Language, as it stands, is a holistic design system adapted to life before Covid-19. As such, there is an emphasis on the socially-intimate village of, at times, 7000 people. This was appropriate then but serious foundational changes have to be considered now; for example, to a newfound cultural memory and impulses for/against social-distancing.

By adapting Alexander's existing scheme to the new challenges of a Post-Covid World, we can build *A New Old Pattern Language*.

Developing and deploying a first-principles-driven, uniform language will allow multiple agents to rapidly scale their rebuilds in self-consistent and harmonizing manners.
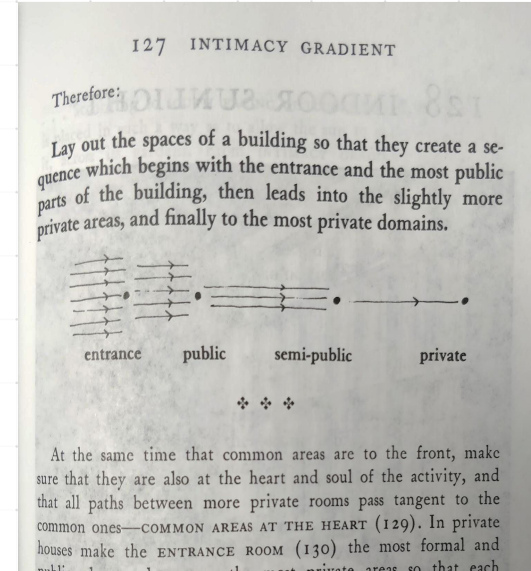


*Pattern 127: Intimacy Gradient*

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*Design Thinker & Writer*

# A New Old Pattern Language

| Consideration | Effect |
|---|---|
| **Radical uncertainty in real estate market & geographic distribution of people** | • Inevitable reactionary movement among urbanites: <br> ○ *"No subway, no bars, no coworking spaces - no city. Dead to us."* — *Pamela Hobart* <br> • First-, second-, and third-order economic effects |
| **Remote-first work** | • Merging of office & domestic spaces |
| **Greater domestic social exposure among inhabitants vs. Deprivation of social nutrients delivered by public interaction** | • Increased demand for privacy |
| **Decreased trust in existing structures → Increased impulse for self-sufficiency** | • *A New Old Home* has new responsibilities (gardening, dedicated workshop for mechanical upgrades & maintenance) |

*The New Old Home is some combination of:*

🏠 home
🏢 office
🏋️ gym
☕ cafe
🏫 school
🚜 farm
📦 warehouse
🛠️ workshop

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# *A New Old Pattern Language: a Case Study*

The Zen Work Pod and HAVEN are two presently-evolving attempts at meeting the new domestic demands incurred by Covid-19.

**Zen Work Pod** *by* [Autonomous](#)

"Atomized" solution
- Only works as an add-on to current "single-family" home/property
- Modular design

Affords a boundary between work and home
- Reifies a stark distinction
- By granting the home office its own structure, work is upheld as analogous to dwelling itself



**HAVEN** *by* [The Jetters](#)
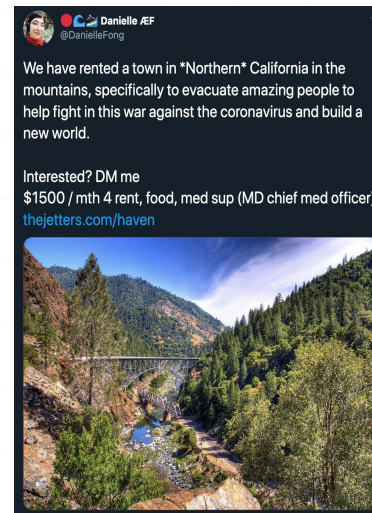
"Condensed" solution
- Integration between multiple families and their resources

Decentralized governance
- Rules governed by leaders of HAVEN
- Private economy

Opportunity for profit
- New direction for rentals



Danielle ÆF
@DanielleFong

We have rented a town in *Northern* California in the mountains, specifically to evacuate amazing people to help fight in this war against the coronavirus and build a new world.

Interested? DM me
$1500 / mth 4 rent, food, med sup (MD chief med officer)
thejetters.com/haven

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*Design Thinker & Writer*

# The Home as a Curative Environment

**Throughout history, pandemics have spurred architectural change.** Most notably, early-20th-century modernism stemmed partly from the idea that sunlight and fresh air were the best cures for tuberculosis. That led to sanatorium-inspired houses with big windows, open spaces, outdoor areas, easily cleaned surfaces like tiles, and a white, sterile aesthetic.

**Until the coronavirus pandemic, the most pressing, world-altering issues for today's top architects were climate change and income disparity.** They focused on how to design sustainable homes that offer protection in the case of natural disasters like wildfires, floods and hurricanes, as well as methods to house people more affordably.

With the external threat of the virus now creating the need for separation, **architects report a new focus on the theory of prospect and refuge**, in which a house design includes areas that allow occupants to both feel secure and to have the ability to observe the outside.

> *A house is not just a machine for living in but also a "convenient place for meditation and healing"*
>
> – Le Corbusier

**Michael Colin**
Founder, CEO - MVMNT
*Supply Chain; Logistics; Freight Tech*
*Twitter*

# The Home as a Curative Environment
## Then: Tuberculosis and Architectural Modernism

As germ theory became better understood, medical professionals knew that isolation was key to prevent the spread of tuberculosis. A person's best hope for recovery was to live somewhere with plenty of fresh air, sunlight, rest, and nourishing food. The resulting design of sanatoria influenced Modernist architecture.

Architectural elements like flat roofs, terraces and balconies, and white-painted rooms spread across Europe. Not unlike the sanatorium, the new architecture was intended to cure the perceived physical, nervous, and moral ailments brought on by crowded cities.

Interior spaces, furniture, and fixtures were also intended to assist the healing process. Custom sinks minimized noise (so as not to disturb the patient's roommate) and splash, (to keep germs from spreading). Sanatorium-style chairs, angled to ease the patient's breathing, became fashionable for domestic use in the middle class.
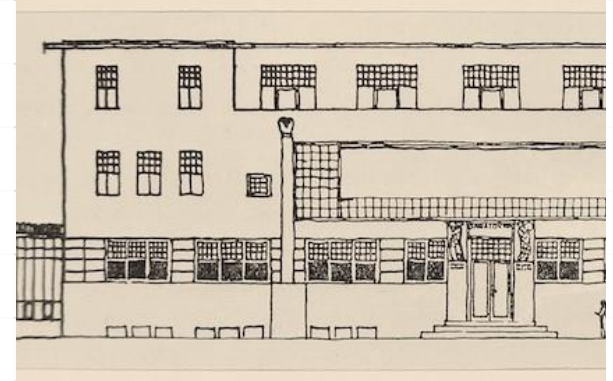


*The Secessionist-style Purkersdorf Sanatorium near Vienna: sketch by architect Josef Hoffmann, 1903. Purkersdorf treated nervous complaints, but like sanatoria for TB, its design emphasized light, air, and hygiene. Its walls were painted bright white. (PHOTO: Imagno/Getty Images)*

**Michael Colin**
Founder, CEO - MVMNT
*Supply Chain; Logistics; Freight Tech*
Twitter

# The Home as a Curative Environment

## *Now: Coronavirus and the Home*

Designers are rethinking the configurations of their own houses for a post-pandemic world. With the external threat of the virus now creating the need for separation, architects are focusing on the theory of prospect and refuge, in which a house design includes areas that allow occupants to both feel secure and to observe the outside. Specific forthcoming trends include:

- **Entry vestibule as a hygiene station**: Including separate bins for gloves, masks, shoes and other gear worn outside, a place for hand washing and sanitation wipes, and places to put shopping bags, recycling, and mail. More upscale homes may be equipped with a UV lamp that can can kill some pathogens.

- **Facilitating no-contact delivery**: Installation of no-contact appliances at homes, near the front door, for deliveries of all food or packages.

- **Heightened purification**: Where water and air quality were previously more taken for granted, people harbor new worries about where viruses may lurk. "Smart homes" can go a step further, controlling both temperature and cleanliness of cirulating air.



*The utility sink for washing will also enjoy a second life as a hand-wash station, perhaps with motion sensor plumbing fixtures for touchless use. (PHOTO: Sterling Plumbing)*

**Michael Colin**
Founder, CEO - MVMNT
*Supply Chain; Logistics; Freight Tech*
Twitter

# Running the New Old Home

# Home Economics

The home is a site of production, where **wealth**, **goods and services**, and **adult humans** are created.

How have these dynamics changed, and what's in store for the coming decades?

**Prior to Industrial Revolution:**
- Family businesses the main source of wealth.
- Goods and services often produced inside the home.
- Except for wealthy, education was informal and insourced

**19th + 20th Centuries:**
- Industry moves from home to factories and offices
- Mass migration to single-family homes, engineered by cooperation of financial industry and the state
- Decoupling of education and home: movement towards formal and eventually compulsory out-of-home education

**21st Century:**
- What comes next?

# Home Economics: *Old vs New*

**Previously Immovable Object**

Three forces conspire to sustain the 20th century home:

1. *Public education system* – a relic of state military needs

2. *Single-family homeownership* – a relic of Fordist-Taylorist factory models and state-sponsored mortgage stimulation

3. *Dual-career culture* - a product of increasing competition for quality public education via well-districted homes, plus increasing education and professional aspirations for women

– *vs* –

**Now-Unstoppable Force**

Incoming disruption and migration patterns conspire to change it:

1. Specialized knowledge + education markets

2. Work-from-home normalization

3. Smaller cities luring tech worker migration

4. Coronavirus and climate threats

# Home Economics: *Education Markets*

**Education markets change everything.**

Proliferation of new homeschooling + online education companies mean many millennial parents will choose an **education subculture** to participate and raise their kids in (*Primer, Motherly, AltSchool, Outschool, Knewton...*)

Not needing to live in a "good school district" liberates families from the increasingly-oppressive financial and geographic limitations that help make modern parenting miserable.

**Opportunities in the coming value chain:**

- Education methodologies

- Education technology services

- Support services for families (nannying, tutoring)

- Local teaching spaces

- Educator training

- Testing and certification

**Toby Shorin**
tobyshorin.com
*Other Internet*

# Home Economics: *A Return to Home Production*

| Theme | Short-Term Changes | Long-Term Effects |
|---|---|---|
| *Public vs Private Education* | Proliferation of private education services, homeschooling + tutoring networks | Negative feedback cycle of diminished funding + worsening outcomes for public education |
| *Education and Space* | Families make group decisions / group buys of specific education methodologies-services | Reconfiguration of physical space to support niche internet-grown education ideologies (e.g. suburban charter K-8 schools) |
| *Family Values* | Culture war surrounding domestic labor, womens' labor, and masculinity | Value shifts toward acceptability of both "traditional" labor split and male homemakers |
| *Family Businesses* | Work-from-home becomes a weak default | Normalization of children's participation in parents' labor |

*These changes conspire to bring production of goods, services, and education back inside the home space.*

**Toby Shorin**
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# Do Home Technologies Save Labor?
## *What Happened to the Time Savings?*

It seems like labor-saving technologies should, well, save labor. But the story is much more complicated than it seems at first.

On the old home, the farm, everyone pitched in—men, women, and even young children. A few tasks were gendered by necessity (i.e. strength) or convention (e.g. cooking) but everyone busted their butt from sunrise to sunset.

At the new home, devices and gadgetry alleviated some of these burdens—but only unevenly. Children no longer have to beat rugs, men no longer have to dry the dishes.

But someone's still left holding the vacuum cleaner bag—usually either the mom/wife. In single-occupant households, plenty is left to do.
c.f. *More Work for Mother* (Rose Schwartz Cowan)


*Vacuum cleaners*


*Clothes washers & dryers*

*Dishwashers*




*Cleaning products*

**Pamela Hobart**
Philosopher, Mother of 3
*The Life Coach for Smart People*

# Do Home Technologies Save Labor?
## *Case Study: A Closer Look at the Kitchen*

Food work continues to be a timesink, despite the introduction of many appliances and conveniences. *Why?*

**Food Got Complicated**

1. Parkinson's Law: Tasks expand to fill time. Appliances and gadgets may not save time so much as transform the nature of time spent.

2. Increases in food standards have swamped time savings. Managing taste, variety, and nutrition is a complex endeavor. Individual- and family-specific preferences mean that even ordering pre-made food takes a significant amount of planning and care.

3. Food practices have moved up Maslow's hierarchy towards identity for many people, so comparing them to those of the past is apples & oranges anyways.



*Why does food work resist efficiency?*

**Pamela Hobart**
Philosopher, Mother of 3
*The Life Coach for Smart People*

# Do Home Technologies Save Labor?
## *Home Delivery: It's Not Lazy, It's Traditional*

When landscapes were remade to accommodate the personal automobile, women began having to travel to supermarkets and department stores to retrieve purchases (whereas previously many things were delivered).

Although the variety of things for purchase skyrocketed and their relative prices plummeted, this cost household managers (i.e. women) the one nonrenewable resource: time.

Having food and other consumer goods delivered to one's home is, then, not a new invention of lazy startup yuppies. Instead, it is yet another return to former practices in the New Old Home.



**Pamela Hobart**
Philosopher, Mother of 3
*The Life Coach for Smart People*

| Chores at the Old Farm Home | Chores at the New Post-War Home | Chores at the New Old Home |
|---|---|---|
| **Who does chores?:** Everyone pitches in | Housework is the "job" of non-breadwinner.<br><br>Children make token contributions, as to earn allowance. | |
| **Gender:** Minimal relevance. | Household labor assigned mostly to women. | Abandonment of the failed standard that men and women should split 50/50.<br><br>Idiosyncratic divisions based on amount & nature of other responsibilities. |
| **Outsourcing:** Minimal & sporadic help from outside the household. | Some outsourcing by upper-class women to lower-class women | |
| **Technologies:** Simple tools that make farm work possible to do at all (plows, stoves) | Appliances save some manual labor, but running and maintaining homes filled with them still takes many hours per week. | Although chores are less physically exhausting, the juggling of so many moving parts remains cognitively demanding.<br><br>Personal knowledge management & productivity practices become applicable to the home. |
| **Time:** *inherent rhythm of day/season/year* | Time is strongly bifurcated between work/home, and across gender lines. | Time poverty for everyone, unless carefully guarded against via household-level trial and error. |

**Pamela Hobart**
Philosopher, Mother of 3
*The Life Coach for Smart People*

# Making Our Own Fun
## In Corona-Time, we rule our routines

The uncertainty of the new world leaves consumers yearning for order.

Order used to come from the external demands imposed by institutions. In corona-time, the power to control our calendars has been given back to the people. For those without the anchors of children or "essential jobs," the old structure of the day has melted away. Now we get order from our own internal motivation.

Instead of a daily commute we take a morning walk. Instead of going to the gym, we work out at home. Instead of lunch with our parents, it's a weekend Zoom call.

We impose routine on our days. Consumers, previously creatures of habit travelling well-worn paths, now plan their days more fully, forging their habits anew.

Successful brands will help consumers remake these habits. Unsuccessful ones will ignore them, clinging to a status quo which no longer exists.

*When the world is uncertain, we seek order for our days.*

**Thomas Hollands**
Writing and Strategy
*Previously:* Barclays & UCL*; Currently:* L.E.K. Consulting
blog / twitter / LinkedIn

# *Making Our Own Fun*

## *Individuals, not institutions, are creating rituals to order their days*

| Then: institutions imposing external demands | Now: Self-imposed internal demands |
|---|---|
| ● **Old habit:** Daily commute<br>**Old losers:** coffee shops, billboard ads, books & radio | ● **New habit:** Morning walk or run<br>**New winners:** delivery & coffee machines, podcasts, and audiobooks |
| ● **Old habit:** The school run and extracurriculars<br>**Old losers:** kids clubs, churches, sports leagues | ● **New habit:** Afternoon games with the kids<br>**New winners:** structured online activities, video games |
| ● **Old habit:** Exercising before or after work<br>**Old losers:** gyms, fitness centres, sports leagues | ● **New habit:** Youtube yoga and at-home workouts<br>**New winners:** fitness apps, influencers, and exercise retailers |
| ● **Old habit:** Hanging out downtown with friends<br>**Old losers:** cinemas, pub quizzes, and restaurants | ● **New habit:** Watch-parties, virtual quizzes, Zoom bake-offs<br>**New winners:** quizzing apps, streaming services, and virtual "game" companies |

**Thomas Hollands**
Writing and Strategy
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# Making Our Own Fun

## People want both order and "minimum viable novelty"

While consumers crave reliable, predictable routine, they don't want every day to be the same.

Stuck at home, people are tired of doing the same things with the same people 24/7.

Mere routine is not enough. To delight customers, brands must offer "minimum viable novelty"—inject a little randomness into people's days.

The most memorable times are when you break from routine. On the commute you sometimes have to give a tourist directions, or bump into an old friend.

What are the at-home equivalents for IRL serendipity?



### Case Study: Peloton

**Peloton provides order:** regular spin classes with the same instructor at the same time and place each day

**Peloton provide novelty:** consistently release new playlists, tracking metrics, and different classes

**So it's growing fast:** Yearly sales CAGR of 91%, and a Net Promoter Score of 91, higher than both Apple and Netflix.

**Trend alert:** New Yorkers' "Peloton nooks"

**Thomas Hollands**
Writing and Strategy
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# Working from the New Old Home

# *From Oikos to Polis and Back*

Ancient Greek city-states adopted the form of the self-governing *polis* to solve the problems of collective decision-making. This also changed the role of of *oikos*—the "household"—and moved the most important decisions from domestic spaces to the collective ones.

The modern company is also organized to solve for collective decision-making. Like the polis, companies designate decision-makers (then, heads-of-household; now, senior executives) vs. decision-takers (formerly women and slaves; now, middle managers and rank-and-file employees). Like the polis, company collectivities increase interdependency, security, and expected outcomes.

**Now that "polis" workers are working from "oikos" spaces, how will their needs and capabilities change?**

### The Oikos Principle:

*"When economic production moves back to the home, household management (oikonomia, "economics") takes precedence over group decision-making (politeia, "politics")"*

**David McDougall**
Director of Product, Arabesque S-Ray
Founder, Lusiad Innovation
Newsletter, LinkedIn

# From Oikos to Polis and Back
## The Corporate Polis

Over the last ~300 years, companies evolved to take on many of the organizational and structural forms of the polis.

Larger decisions are made by people who wield responsibility for larger units, while smaller decisions are left to the levels below.

"Open plan" offices mimic agora (public square/marketplace) designs to encourage the free-flow of ideas, objectives, and people.

The workplace plays the role of public sphere—whereas a household is something to which one returns.

Home life must be outsourced (to domestic laborers, or stay-at-home partners), or remains an after-hours burden.



*via @davidhuber_ on Twitter*

**David McDougall**
Director of Product, Arabesque S-Ray
Founder, Lusiad Innovation
*Newsletter*, *LinkedIn*

# From Oikos to Polis and Back
## The "New Oikos"

Thanks to a global pandemic and widespread internet connection, the "workplace" lives entirely inside the private sphere (at least for now). A household isn't something you return to, it once again serves as the primary place of everyone's economic production.

This new oikos is "unevenly distributed" of course—who gets to work from home? Freelancers and stay-at-home-parents find themselves way ahead of the curve.

Focus falls, once again, on the links between work and life, rather than on their separation.

In 2020, the question is: **How many of these changes are permanent?**



*via @EvagorouM on Twitter*

**David McDougall**
Director of Product, Arabesque S-Ray
Founder, Lusiad Innovation
*Newsletter*, *LinkedIn*

# From Oikos to Polis and Back

*The shift is happening, the struggle is real*

> "I think that it's possible that over the next five to 10 years — maybe closer to 10 than five, but somewhere in that range — I think we could get to about half of the company working remotely permanently."
>
> – [Mark Zuckerberg](#) (May 2020)

> "'Working from home with two toddlers' reality: Participating in a project meeting while feeding and entertaining kids. So please be patient with me if I am not accepting invitations to review papers or I am not good on meeting deadlines. I am multitasking to my limits!"
>
> – [Maria Evagorou](#) (May 2020)

**David McDougall**
Director of Product, [Arabesque S-Ray](#)
Founder, Lusiad Innovation
[Newsletter](#), [LinkedIn](#)

# From Oikos to Polis and Back

*Oikos, Polis, and "New Oikos" Cultures of Work*

| | Oikos culture | Corporate "Polis" culture | New Oikos culture |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Work and life** | De facto work-life integration | Work-life balance: Work and life separated in time and place | Work-life harmonization: Constant juggling of "work" and "life" |
| **Childcare** | Childcare happens alongside domestic labor | Childcare is outsourced, or stay-at-home parenting becomes one's "job" | Childcare happens alongside exogenous work |
| **Autonomy and scope of work** | Autonomous household management | Dependent work for larger goals: set timelines, set working locations | Autonomous work for larger goals: Fluid timelines, fluid working locations |
| **Collaboration** | Immediate, hyperlocal, analog | Scheduled, local, analog | Immediate, global, fluid |
| **Time** | Cadence-driven schedules: seasons, daily meals | Regular schedules, work fits into time-shaped boxes | Fluid schedules, work fits around other work |

**David McDougall**
Director of Product, Arabesque S-Ray
Founder, Lusiad Innovation
*Newsletter*, *LinkedIn*

# The Nuclear Family is Anomalous

Throughout history, people have lived in small clusters, often family-based—but also including servants, retainers, apprentices, tutors, nursemaids, and other non-family members.

Groups of people have almost always lived together; the late 20th and early 21st century idea of only two adults and their children in one house is new. (Census data from pre-WWII almost always has multiple surnames per household)

The nuclear household suits capitalism—more households buy more goods and services.

This doesn't mean "one house"—a cluster of houses nearby works too, and the North European 'hamlet' style and African village settlements are the norm through 95% of human history.



*Look for historical family portraits, pre-WWII.
How many have only two adults?*

**Drew Shiel**
Independent Domestic Historian
*Moderator at AskHistorians*

# The Nuclear Family is Anomalous
## The Nuclear Family is weak in a Crisis - like a Pandemic

**Small numbers in a household:**

1. Lack of carers when one or two adults are ill

2. More exposures for grocery trips and other essentials

3. Essential tasks all fall on one or two people

4. No support if both nuclear-family parents work from home

5. Cabin fever

# The Nuclear Family is Anomalous
## Larger Households are a Historic Fallback

**Larger Households**

1. (Multi-generational, co-housing, cooperatives, kibbutzim, medieval Great Household, etc)

2. Share out tasks

3. Minimise infection vectors or risky trips

4. Support (cooking, child-minding) for people WFH or in gig economy

5. More people to talk to



**Drew Shiel**
Independent Domestic Historian
*Moderator at AskHistorians*

# Visible Knowledge Work

Knowledge work in the context of the home and family life has largely been invisible—the worker "goes to work" (an office/co-working space/coffee shop) holding a phone and a coffee and returns at the end of the day without the coffee.

The days of briefcases, printed documents, signage, and tools are all evaporating from family life.

This invisible knowledge work provides zero visibility into what the knowledge work looks or feels like for partners and kids.

The unit of work across all knowledge work—the meeting—lives on a digital calendar, often not shared or only shared opaquely with the family unit.
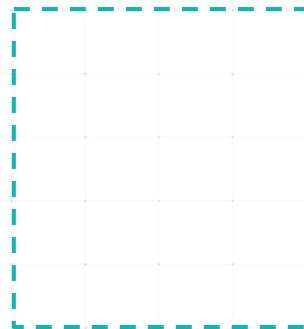
*Home*

*Office*

**Tom Critchlow**
Digital Strategy & Media Design
*Indie Status:* 5+ years

55  |  *The Yak Collective*
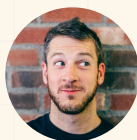
# Visible Knowledge Work

## Case Study: Roxanne (4), Knowledge Worker in Training

Kids learn & process the world through imitation—and most of this happens in the home (or at school).

However, the pandemic has made knowledge work more visible and my own daughter has taken to imitating zoom calls, typing emails, taking conference calls and more.
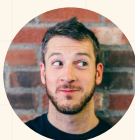
What effect will this have on the long term embedded mental model of "work" and "work cultures" for kids who suddenly get a peek into what knowledge work looks, feels and sounds like.



"taking a conference call"



"at work", typing on her "laptop" next to me in my office
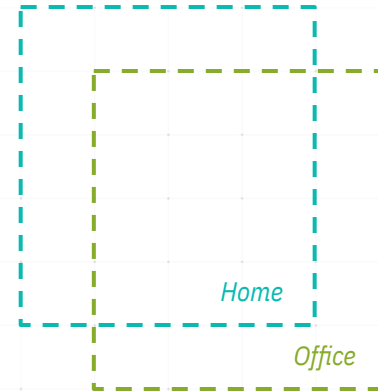
**Tom Critchlow**
Digital Strategy & Media Design
*Indie Status:* 5+ years

# Visible Knowledge Work

In the new era of digital by default (i.e. remote work & home offices) the home space becomes a place for knowledge work.

This brings a visibility and tangibility to previously invisible knowledge work. Some examples:

- The home calendar and work calendars now require syncing

- Zoom calls for work with children on your knee

- Shared meal times and shared diets (homes don't have micro-kitchens)

- Ambient awareness of meetings, projects, calls, across the home via over-hearing

- Printed reports sitting next to printed kids art projects

*Home*

*Office*
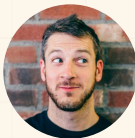
**Tom Critchlow**
Digital Strategy & Media Design
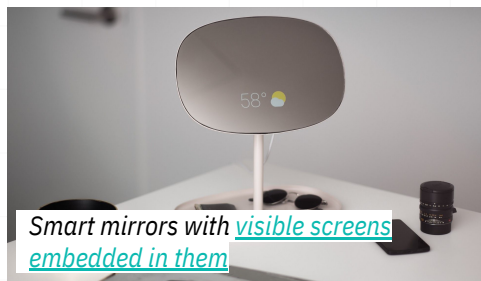*Indie Status:* 5+ years

# *Visible Knowledge Work*

As we enter an age of projection, machine vision and e-ink—every surface is going to become a display. What by-products will come from an increasingly visible culture of knowledge work?
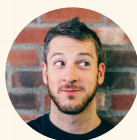


Visible shared computing experiments at *Dynamicland*



*"ePaper at an architectural scale"* explored by building a *Very Slow Movie Player*



*Smart mirrors with visible screens embedded in them*



*A large format NYTimes e-ink display prototype*

**Tom Critchlow**
Digital Strategy & Media Design
*Indie Status:* 5+ years

# The Knowledge Work Apprenticeship
## *Revisiting Child Labor post COVID-19*

Thanks to school shutdowns, parents find themselves flooded with more responsibilities than before. Although the school buildings aren't open, "distance learning" means parents must assume much more of an educational burden than they had intended.

At the same time, parents' knowledge economy jobs still present significant burden (perhaps even more so as they compete head-to-head with childless colleagues with fewer social options).

How long before parents try to kill two birds with one stone: foregoing burdensome, ineffective online lesson plans and bringing their children on as apprentices?

If school largely exists to perpetuate these families' upper middle class status, why not cut to the chase and accrue work experience now?
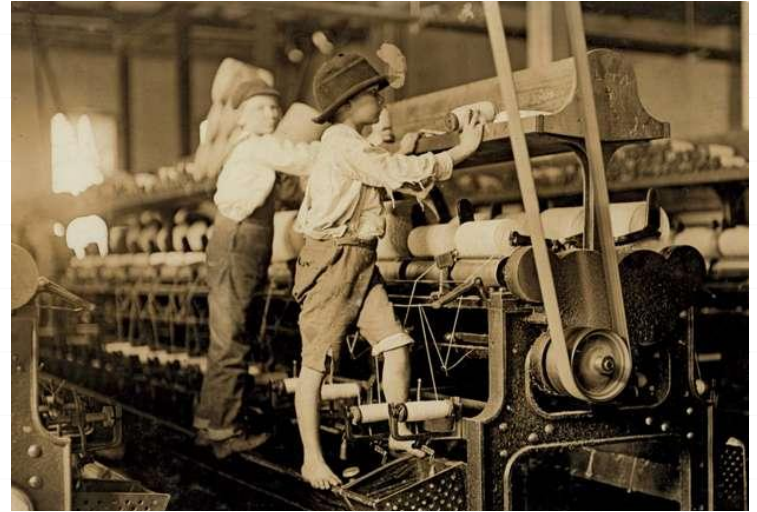


Young boys working in a thread-spinning mill: slightly more dangerous than my 3-year old looking over my shoulder as I type.

**Chris Clark**
*Daylight:* Product Manager, YouTube
*Moonlight:* Freelance Data Projects

# The Knowledge Work Apprenticeship
## A Concise History of Child Labour

| Feudalism | Mercantilism | Industrial Revolution | Knowledge Economy |
|---|---|---|---|
| Work occurred at home | Work occurred in the market | Work occurred in factories | Work occurs in offices and computers |
| Source of wealth was land | Source of wealth was hard currency | Source of wealth was money | Source of wealth is equity |
| Goods were for consumption | Goods were for trade | Goods were for commerce | Goods are for leverage |
| Children were free manual labor | Children were cheap labor formed via apprenticeships | Children were fodder for mass production | Children are removed from the labor pool and sent to school full-time |
| | | **Child labor laws ended the use of children in developed countries right as the knowledge economy was taking off.** | *"When we started to move off the farms and into the cities, we went from thinking of children as free labor to thinking of children as really expensive pets."* <br> *- Peter Zeihan* |

**Chris Clark**
*Daylight:* Product Manager, YouTube
*Moonlight:* Freelance Data Projects

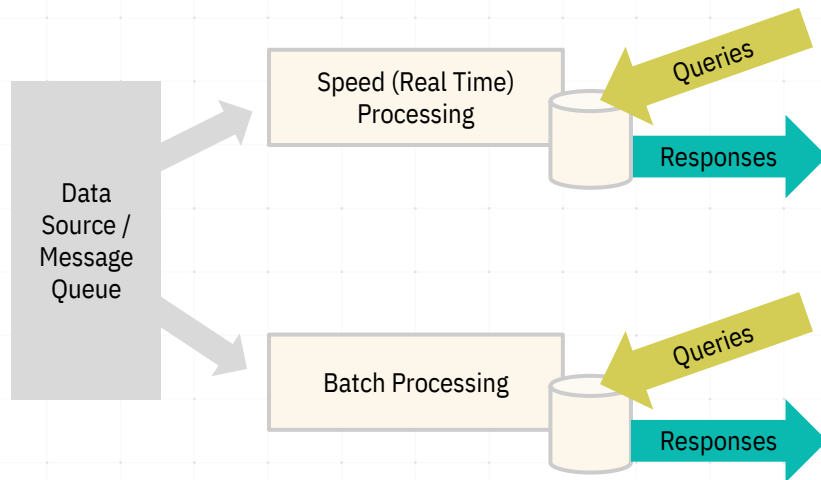# The Knowledge Work Apprenticeship

## What does a knowledge work apprenticeship look like?

What a plumbing or woodworking apprentice should learn is pretty self-evident.

Knowledge work is more abstract, but can be characterized in terms of architecting data systems for processing massive amounts of data.

**Layers of a knowledge processing system:**
- Accumulate and organize key set of data (i.e. facts)
- Batch process facts into aggregates (i.e. "make sense of" the data)
- Accumulate real-time facts quickly
- Move real-time facts into core data set
- Accept arbitrary questions about your data
- Return an answer about your data

Data Source / Message Queue

Speed (Real Time) Processing

Queries

Responses

Batch Processing

Queries

Responses

**Chris Clark**
*Daylight:* Product Manager, YouTube
*Moonlight:* Freelance Data Projects

# The Knowledge Work Apprenticeship
## *A Mundane Example: Buying Groceries*

**Beginning Apprentice**

- Facts are: understanding what we buy, where we buy them, how much we pay
- Batch processing: placing an actual grocery order

**Intermediate Apprentice**

- Accumulating real-time facts: we're out of "x", we want to try "y"; "z" is much cheaper elsewhere
- Move real-time facts into core data set: change order amounts, order frequency etc.

**Journeyman**

- Answer arbitrary questions: how do we optimize for cost / health / shopping locally etc.
- Two ways to expand:
  - by "product area" (i.e you own all food related things)
  - by "functional area" (i.e. you own budgeting, household staples or health)

**Chris Clark**
*Daylight:* Product Manager, YouTube
*Moonlight: Freelance Data Projects*

# The Knowledge Work Apprenticeship
## A Work Example: Product Management

**Beginning Apprentice**
- Facts: understand features of our product and competitor features
- Batch processing: what is our roadmap

**Intermediate Apprentice**
- Real-time facts: product launches, customer inquiries
- Move real-time facts into core data set: update your roadmap

**Journeyman**
- Arbitrary questions: how do we increase 'metric x' / grow market share, etc.
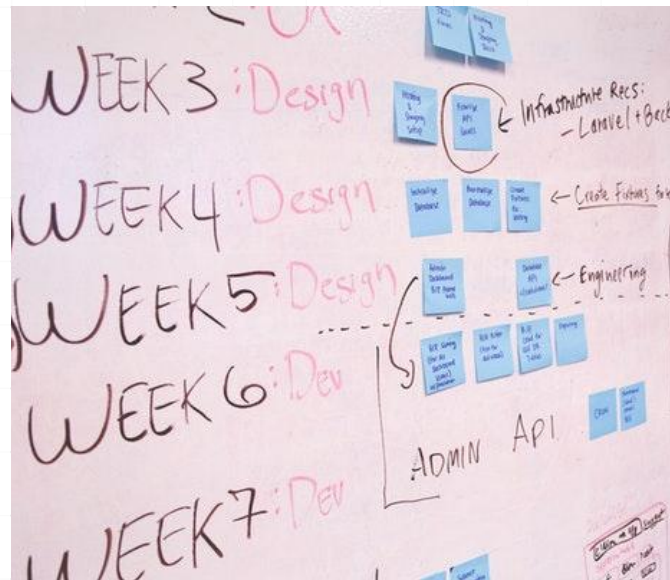
**Chris Clark**
*Daylight:* Product Manager, YouTube
*Moonlight: Freelance Data Projects*

# The Knowledge Work Apprenticeship

*Possible Outcomes*

| Stakeholder | Potential Negative Outcome | Potential Positive Outcome |
|---|---|---|
| *Children* | "Tracking" too early in life can lead to missing out on self-actualization potential | Get real world experience much sooner than age 22+ |
| *Parents* | Parents have to evaluate the quality of their children's work on both the positive and negative sides | Meaningful experience with their children |
| *Businesses* | New legal & security risk exposure | Employees with more skin in the game, at low cost to employer |
| *The Economy* | If we accidentally indoctrinate children with "best practices" too early, novelty may be quashed | Novel ideas can be incorporated into business earlier |
| *Society* | More inequality (think: a 22 year old with "10 years of legal experience" merely because her mother was a lawyer) | Released pressure from school as an elite accreditation factory |

**Chris Clark**
*Daylight:* Product Manager, YouTube
*Moonlight:* Freelance Data Projects

# Families in the New Old Home

# *Intergenerational Living*
## *From bee comb apartments to intergenerational mansions*

Remote work, care needs, purpose, and price inflation drive viability of kin-group home living.

***From:*** *bee comb-like apartments in dense urban & suburban knowledge economy clusters*



***To:*** *intergenerational knowledge worker mansions in any place with cheap land*



**Thomas Verhagen**
clipper.earth
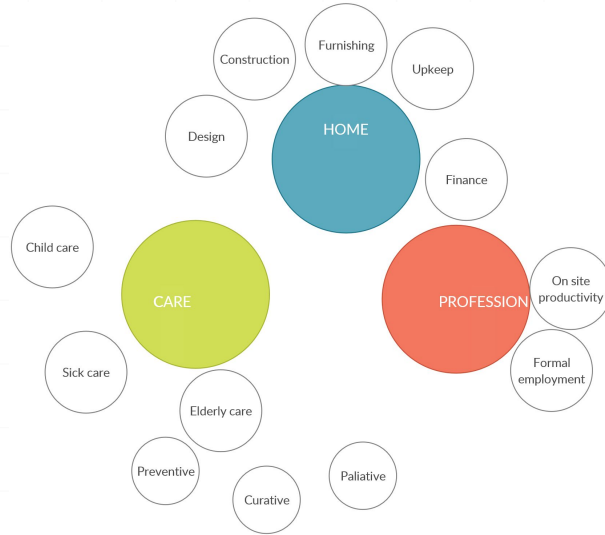*Previously at Cambridge University, ABN Amro*

# *Intergenerational Living*

*An option for knowledge workers to reverse the historic anomaly*

*Emergent Option:* Clustering around kin groups. Older generations can facilitate child care. Younger generations can facilitate (basic) elderly care. All can thrive.

**From:** *knowledge cluster-centricity, spatial specialisation & generational segregation*

**To:** *location agnosticism, spatial integration & intergenerational living*
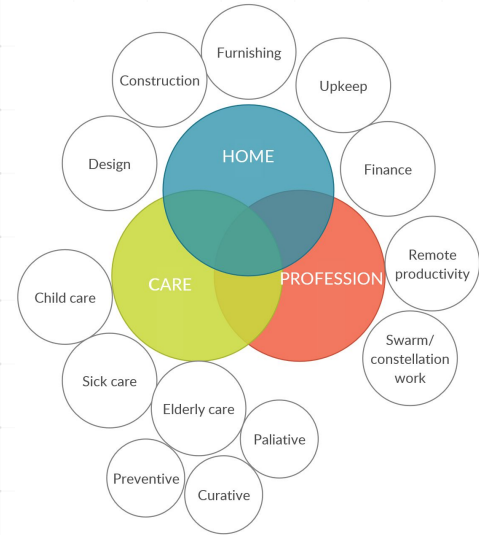


**Thomas Verhagen**
clipper.earth
*Previously at Cambridge University, ABN Amro*

# Intergenerational Living
## Change drivers & facilitators

**Change drivers**
- *Technology:* decreases the need for physical presence in or near (suburban) professional centres
- *Ownership:* low home ownership of millennials due to house price inflation
- *Costs 1:* 'more central' property is more expensive per m2
- *Costs 2:* outsourcing cost of child care

**Delta:**
The home changes from the 'first place' for the nuclear family to a 'base' for an extended family structure.

With this, there is a physical blurring of professional and private spaces, and of care activities bleeding into work life.

**Things that change:**
- Geographical location,
- Amount of physical space/ property goes up
- Architecture/ design
- Cost structure,
- Social mores, social structures

**Facilitated by:**
- *Legal structures*: f.e. rise of '[kangaroo homes](#)' in the Low Countries
- *Design for flexibility around*: space layout, design of furnishings, phases of physical & mental development, levels of physical & sensory ability
- *Accommodation for variation between generations in*: needs, values, abilities, knowledge

**Thomas Verhagen**
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*Previously at Cambridge University, ABN Amro*

# Intergenerational Living

*What does the intergenerational home look like?*

| Professional's home | Kin living |
|---|---|
| Bound to geographic centres | Geographically free |
| One income to cover home costs | Several incomes to cover home costs |
| Optimise for as large a possible home surface to plot size ratio | Cheaper m2, increased surface of plots and dwellings |
| Smaller units | Larger units |
| Separate & non-permeable neighbouring | Permeable, yet separate neighbouring |
| Just-in-time supplies, logistics, storage | Longer term & bigger scale supplies, logistics, storage |
| Basic amenities | Home cinema, laboratory, music studio, folly tea house, polo range :-) |

**Thomas Verhagen**
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# *Intergenerational Living*

**Possible opportunities & structural effects**

- Facilitates bonding across age brackets
- With blurring of these spaces, possible blurring of ideas about generations, less discrete, more blurry, new combinations
- Integration of elderly in (new) economic and social developments
- Intergenerational skills transfer
- Decrease of digital divide, to the extent that it has emerged as a result from generational segregation
- Home related skills, both w.r.t. care as well as built environment
- Less arbitrary developmental cut-off during phases of rapid development/ change of the young (see: Gladwell - Outliers)
- Provides young with opportunity to understand what it might be like for them to be middle aged or elderly
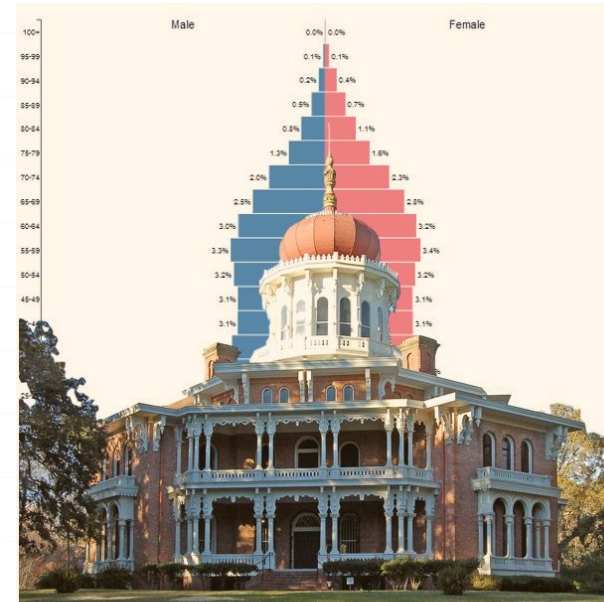
**Where to look**

- What can be learned from other regions & cultures that already have this?
- What practices and services can be used to manage downsides?



*North American 2019 demographic pyramid & Longwood mansion, Nanchez, MS, U.S.*

**Thomas Verhagen**
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*Previously at Cambridge University, ABN Amro*

# Pandemic Coparenting

Censuses and national surveys have gradually acknowledged variations on the nuclear family. These snapshots are static and fail to take into account the dynamics of children who live in multiple households, often as the result of formal or informal custody arrangements between parents.

Pre-pandemic, this was an issue the State was willing to be blind to. Households are more legible if children aren't being double-counted, and this is made easier by simply mandating for parents to "pick a household" when reporting.

Post-pandemic, however, every movement to or from another household traces a new set of contacts and open up new risk vectors.

Moreover, in situations where:
- court access may be limited or nonexistent, and
- ability to file motions or go to trial for "non-essential" cases may be deferred until further notice

Parents are forced to make choices that leave them open to legal risks, in most areas without case law or precedent.

**Jordan Peacock**
Father, entrepreneur, philosopher
*Becoming Machinic, Sortilege, Yak Collective*

# Pandemic Coparenting

Most people would prefer that the government not need to know or care about the specifics of their household arrangements. Having a child with you 49% or 51% of the year, however, might mean substantially different things for your taxes, or your insurance.
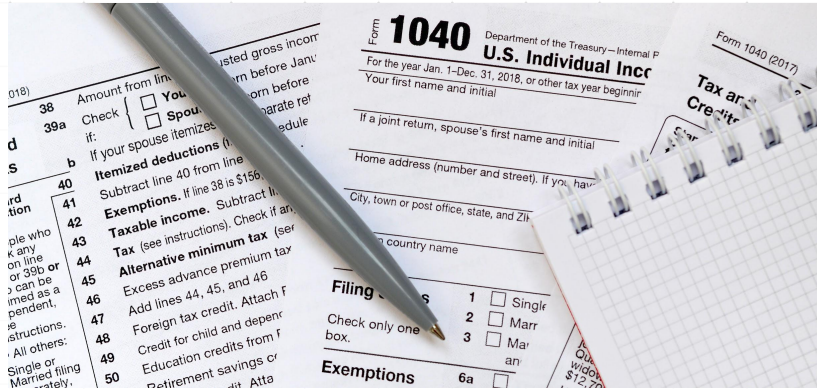


During a pandemic, co-parenting arrangements becomes difficult-to-illegal as governments attempt to mitigate risks by imposing state-at-home orders. This can be a catch-22, if the arrangements are court mandated, sometimes with severe penalties including risks of jail time, fines, or removal of children.

Contact tracing programs or apps are, in some areas, beginning to outline the contours where the map failed to reflect the territory of the lives of children with more than one home.

Nations and organizations are seeing a need for improving their mapping of households, and families are recognizing that better information may be necessary to mitigate deficient policies.

**Jordan Peacock**
Father, entrepreneur, philosopher
*Becoming Machinic, Sortilege, Yak Collective*

# Pandemic Coparenting

There may be a lag, but institutions and law will catch up. The future, however, will be unevenly distributed due to the fragmented nature of domestic and international family law and services.

It may be up to parents and children affected to form advocacy networks that transcend jurisdictional borders: to identify best practices that strike a balance between providing clarity and visibility into dynamic household arrangements, and maintaining the privacy of children and their families, and to campaign for these best practices to be broadly implemented.

**Jordan Peacock**
Father, entrepreneur, philosopher
*Becoming Machinic, Sortilege, Yak Collective*

# Towards the New Old Home

# Activating Multiple Digital Personae

COVID-19 has turned remote-working into remote-living. Interactions with our clients, colleagues, friends and family are all taking place through our screens. We're no longer able to slip out of our computers and into the 'real-world' to fulfill our multiple social roles. Instead we're having to fill these roles at homes by switching between multiple digital personae. There is an opportunity to activate these digital personae by exercising control over their formation.

Building a self-awareness that extends beyond the 'real-world' and into your digital interactions will help you craft projected personae that others will perceive the way that you intend.

The forms of your personae don't need to be fixed or permanent: they should be modified according to the explicit or tacit feedback you receive in your interactions. This modulation will help your personae achieve the most fruitful digital interaction possible.

*The Individual*

Di1  Di2  Di3  Di4

*Multiple Digital-Interactions & the Formation of Multiple Digital Personae*
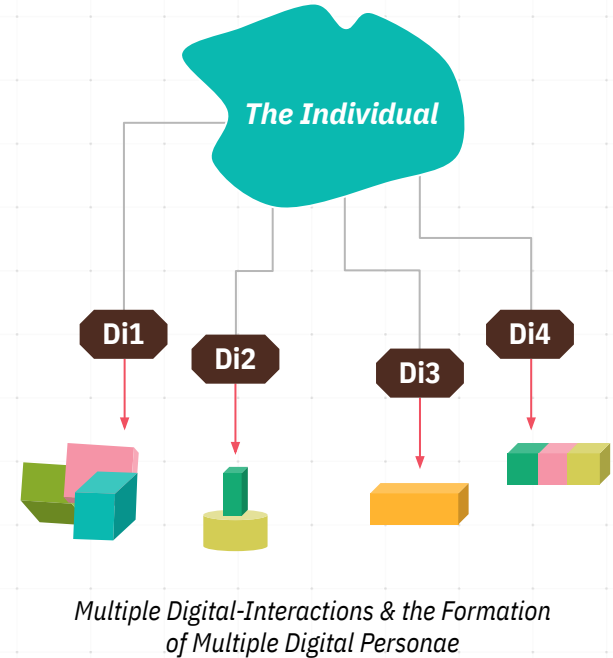
**Kannen Ramsamy**
Policy & Communications

# *Activating Multiple Digital Personae*
## *Digital Personae Control Points*

**General Control Points to Activate Digital Personae**

1. Medium of interaction

2. Times of day of communication

3. Frequency & promptness of communication

4. Topics of discussion

5. Textual/visual/audio aesthetic

6. Consistency in expression

7. Tolerance level
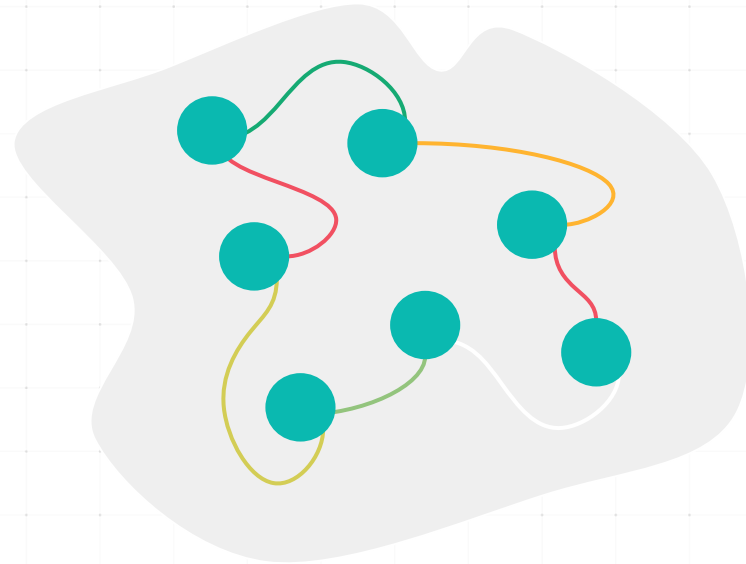


*Digital personae control points can naturally extend far & wide dependent on medium of interaction*

**Kannen Ramsamy**
Policy & Communications

# The Limits of Home Production
## *Doerism Eats the Home*

There is a growing utopian orthodoxy right now about the future of the home with productivity and "ship it" *Doerism* as its core philosophies.

[This TechCrunch story about couples as co-founders](#) offers a perspective on what happens when doerism eats the home.

*""Once we raise the Series D, we'll start thinking about having kids," jokes Calley—in what may not actually be a joke."*

*"They co-founded Anomalie, a wedding dress customization startup that has raised $18.1 million. Instead of vacationing to Bora Bora the day after their wedding, the newlywed founders hopped on a plane to China, where Leslie stayed for a couple of months to set up the supply chain for Anomalie. The couple admits that even now, they don't make time for their personal lives."*

*"We weighed the risk of divorce and decided to take it. We gained a team fully invested in the company and one that could balance personal life and startup life."*

*"If we hadn't been working together, our separation process would have been different. There were truths that needed to be spoken that were emotionally difficult in a marriage, that I didn't want to put on Josh in the middle of a big Target partnership launch."*

**Sachin Benny**
Product Marketing at CDK Global
*Previously: marketing consultant with early stage and series A software products.*

# The Limits of Home Production
## Better Metaphors for the Productive Home

Recognizing the limits of the home as space for labour, production, and meaning-making could help define better metaphors that are more imaginative and expansive than doerism. The emergence of the New Old Home seems to have parallels to the explosion of digital peer production during the web 2.0 era. Peer production was seen as replacement to industrial bureaucracy. The New Old Home replaces corporate work-life balance and changes industrial bureaucratic norms.

Fred Turner explores the limits of peer production in the paper: [The limits of peer production: Some reminders from Max Weber for the network society](). The optimistic claims about peer production that Fred Turner refutes can be mapped to the optimism of the home as a productive unit.



*Lafayette-based volunteer mask sewing group.*
*Great effort, but the masks produced are not as effective.*

**Sachin Benny**
Product Marketing at CDK Global
*Previously: marketing consultant with early stage and series A software products.*

# The Limits of Home Production

| Optimism of Peer Production | Optimism of Productive Home | Limits of Productive Home |
|---|---|---|
| Pursuing psychologically gratifying labor within peer production is an unqualified good. | Pursuing psychologically gratifying labour within home is an unqualified good. | Working at/from home may undermine private autonomy and turn previously pleasurable activities into labour. |
| Peer networks are an egalitarian and efficient means of producing knowledge work. | The productive home treats all labour as equal. with no dehumanizing bureaucracy. | Bureaucratic norms and rulemaking could extend into the home. |
| Peer production necessarily realizes ethical relationships between collaborators. | Homes necessarily foster ethically-better relationships than corporate structures. | Since homes are private, they can easily shelter abuse and oppression away from the public eye. |
| Peer production is equally suited to all domains of social activity | All kinds of work/production/meaning-making can happen at home. | Time-for-money gig work and remote work threatens to degrade the home as a place of rest. |
| Peer production is extra-market and non-proprietary. | Homes can be decentralized units of production, outside the burdensome structures of industrialization. | Professionalization of the home could transform homes into mere extensions of the corporation. |

**Sachin Benny**
Product Marketing at CDK Global
*Previously: marketing consultant with early stage and series A software products.*

# New Narratives for the New Old Home

The collective experience of a sudden mass transition to working from home has made approaches previously considered impractical (if not impossible) now necessary. Pushing work into the home has challenged traditional narratives of the relationship between work and home, creating space for new attitudes and behaviours that may linger for some time. It is yet to be seen if snapping back to our former norms will be a viable option; even less certain is if this will be desirable.

Here I've explored three different narratives of the role of home in terms of work: a dominant narrative from pre-COVID times, a narrative for working from home as an interim measure mid-COVID, and an aspirational narrative for how work and home might become intertwined post-COVID (whatever that may mean).

Of course, there are many types of work and ways to make meaning; I have focused on knowledge-based work performed in an organisation.
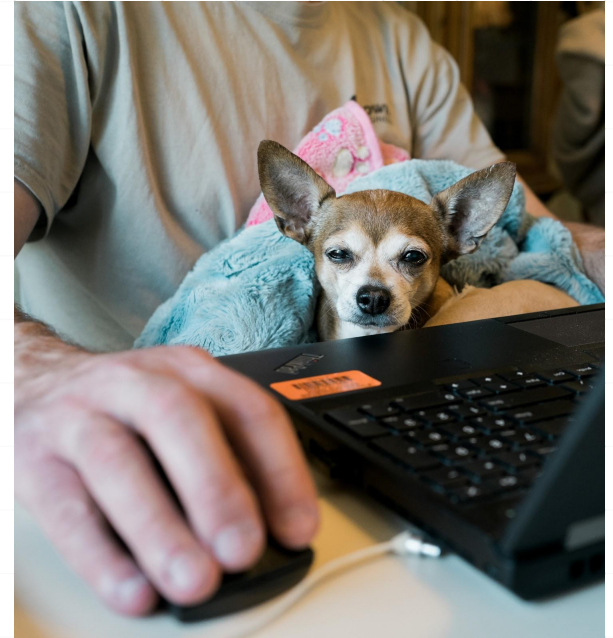
**Amanda Reeves**
Consulting Futurist @ Wabi Sabi Futures
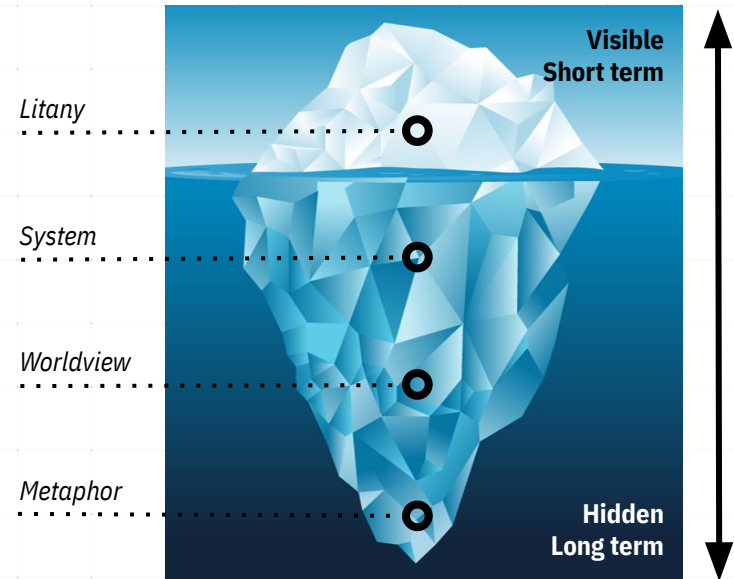*Masters of Strategic Foresight. Previously healthcare improvement and innovation*

# New Narratives for the New Old Home
## Working with layers of understanding

Causal Layered Analysis is a framework used for transformational change that unpacks four layers of the present, starting with what is highly visible and moving towards deeply embedded cultural narratives.

- **Litany:** official public description of the current reality. Includes what is easily observed, what is measured, what is taken as fact
- **System**: moving below the surface; the structural and social considerations that shape the current reality
- **Worldview**: the deeper unconsciously held beliefs, assumptions, and implicitly accepted truths that underpin the system
- **Metaphor**: the subconscious myths, archetypes and cultural narratives that underpin this worldview

From here, we can explore alternative underlying metaphors that give rise to different worldviews, systems, and visible behaviours that might better serve a future we want to move towards.



Litany

System

Worldview

Metaphor

Visible
Short term

Hidden
Long term

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# New Narratives for the New Old Home

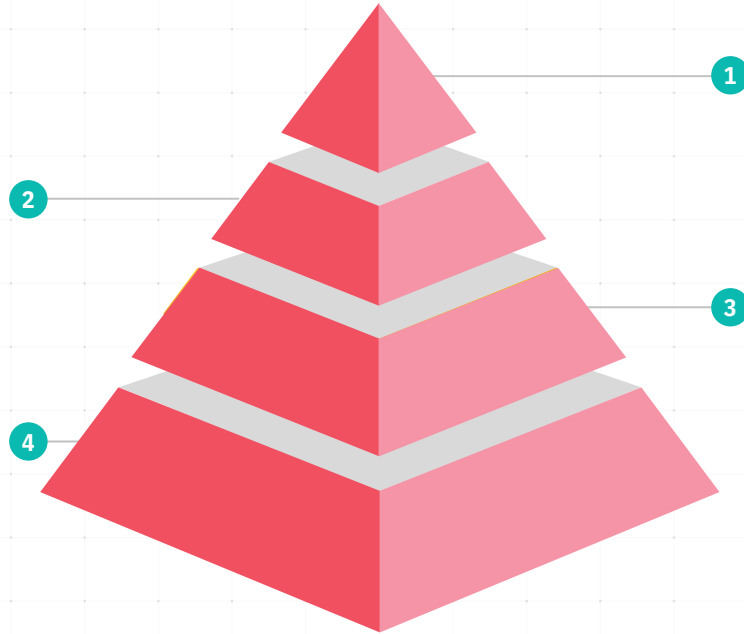*Pre-COVID: separation of work & home*

**System**
- Threshold between between friends at work and friends IRL
- Adopt different personas; who I am at work is not who I am at home
- Theatre & ritual of meetings
- Bureaucratic process to request working from home

**Metaphor**

*Home as a transit station*

*Work is theatre; home is where the mask is lowered*

**Litany**
- Separate locations for work & home (1st & 2nd space)
- Presenteeism: clocking in & out
- Commuting
- 40hr work week

**Worldview**
- Need to conform to social workplace norms
- Work is as much about performance as it is about tasks
- It is dangerous to be seen for who you truly are
- People can't be trusted to work if you can't observe them
- It is irresponsible not to work
- Being busy is a virtue
- Work is who I am

**Amanda Reeves**
Consulting Futurist @ <u>Wabi Sabi Futures</u>
*Masters of Strategic Foresight. Previously healthcare improvement and innovation*

# *New Narratives for the New Old Home*

## *Mid-COVID: work from home by necessity*

### System

- Family and housemates become coworkers; see them in 'work mode'
- Pop-up offices in kitchens & bedrooms
- Blurring of time between home and work, absence of transition rituals
- Increasing self-awareness of dissonance between work and home personas
- Breakdown of power - from vertical to horizontal relationships
- Greater visibility of bullshit tasks & norms

### Metaphor

*Home as a bunker*
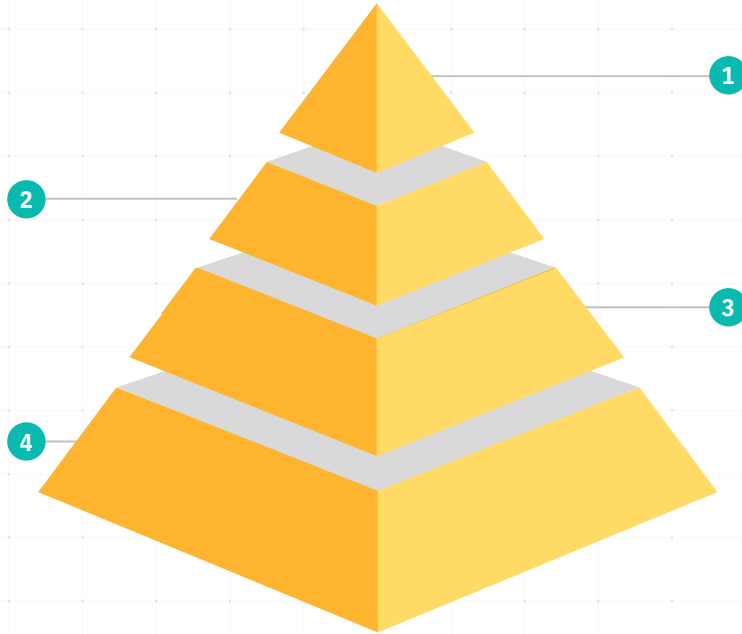
### Litany

- Life collapses into a single space
- Zoom calls (feat. kids, pets, piles of washing)
- Pyjama pants as work wear
- Iso sourdough
- Juggling work & home & childcare

### Worldview

- I can show a different side of myself
- It's ok to be uncertain in uncertain times
- My colleagues are also flawed, messy, chaotic humans
- We're all in this together
- It matters that the work gets done, not how I spend my day
- Despite how well this works, I will be pressured to return to the office

**Amanda Reeves**
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# New Narratives for the New Old Home

## Post-COVID: entanglement of work with home

**System**
- More agency & intention for how time and attention are used
- More single income households
- Lower rates of consumption
- Alternate between wage-based work and domestic duties
- Increase in multiple families or generations cohabiting within a household or neighbourhood hub

**Metaphor**

*Home as a collage*
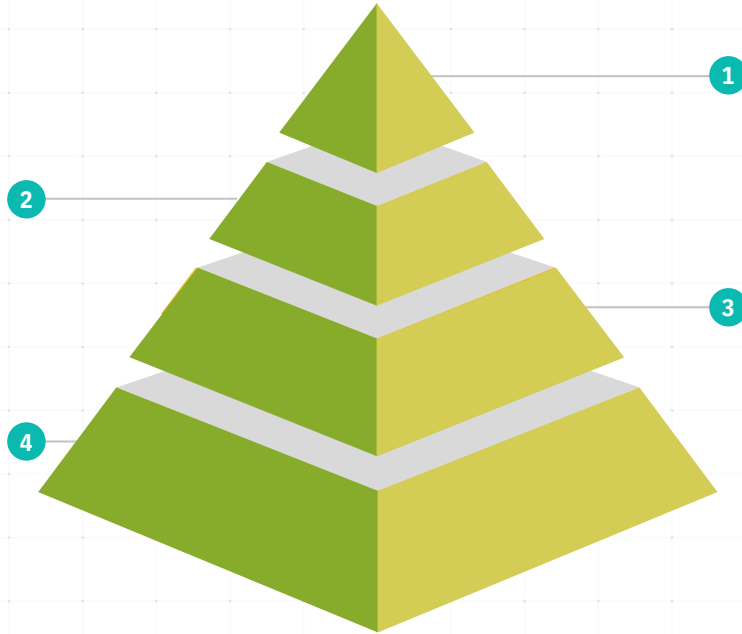
**Litany**
1. Pay by output / outcome rather than time
2. Part time / freelance work
3. Household appoint a caretaker

**Worldview**
- My time is my own, I flow between activities
- Work encompasses many forms of contribution, not all of which are tied to income
- Caring for one another is essential
- Work is one aspect of what I do, not who I am
- Making kin: familial relationships extend beyond the nuclear family to include friends, neighbours, and non-human kin

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*Masters of Strategic Foresight. Previously healthcare improvement and innovation*

# The Yak Wisdom Project

This deck is the **second** in a series of studies the Yak Collective is undertaking in 2020.

Check out the first one here:
*Don't Waste the COVID-19 Reboot*

We aim to generate a body of Covid-19 reboot intelligence that is fundamentally different from anything you might see anywhere else: not just different content, but different content born from a more eclectic process.

# *Let the Yak Collective guide your reboot*

**Want to keep up with our efforts?**

Follow us on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) or [Facebook](#).

**Like bits and pieces of what you saw in this deck?**

Feel free to contact one or more individual contributors directly! The *Yak Collective is not an agency or intermediary*. Our members collaborate because they want to, and each of us maintains their own independent consulting practice. We offer you a catalog of ideas and people to choose from, not a bundle.

**Like a lot of what you see? Got a home futures project to tackle?**

Contact [Pamela Hobart](#) to loop The Yak Collective into your reboot efforts. We will assemble the right team to work with you, whether by producing a study/report, facilitating a workshop, consulting on an ad hoc basis, or something else.

**Want to hang out with us LIVE as we work these problems?**

Join our [Discord server](#). Our working process is literally open. Any independent consultant from anywhere in the world who has ideas is welcome to join our efforts, contribute to and lead collaborative projects. Any prospective client is welcome to hang out as well.

**Still have questions?**

[Read more about us here](#)