

Integrated Design Studio 1

Anthony D'Angelo

Position Paper - Making

In the Sennett interview, he advocates for a culture that puts more value on craftsmanship, and thus patience, hard-work, and raw skill, things which our current culture doesn't best exemplify. Instead we collectively value efficiency and [most] things going as fast as possible.

While I do think the world would be in a slightly better place if majority of our society had this mindset, I don't think its feasible or realistic. A small-business, craftsman based economy doesn't work on all scales and it wouldn't make sense to go backwards. The world is getting "smaller" and more interconnected, which means goods and services have to further and further reach parts of the globe.

Through advocating for a craft-praising society, Sennett also indirectly advocates for a slower paced world who operates more deliberately and methodically, especially when putting out product. I again agree with this statement. To reference Jony Ive, there is a lot of careless product being put out into the world today, where the main goal is profit and not the product, and Sennett makes the solution to be gravitating towards a more craft based system.

I believe he's lumping too many things together. I think what answers this specific problem of careless design and product is more care, not necessarily more traditional craft. Businesses can still put out a product with care and attention and not be a small-scale workshop where everything is made by a single person.

One of my issues I have with Sennett is that he doesn't offer and solutions for the issues he brings up. Although they are complex and there is not answer, I believe a start would be a society more concerned with quality, not exactly craftsmanship.

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Position Paper - Manifesto

This set of readings were quite interesting because I was able to gain information in two distinct avenues as opposed to just one. The more direct aspect was the actual content and ideas presented by each manifesto. The second aspect is how I inadvertently discovered my own preferences for how a manifesto should be presented and structured, which ultimately helps me in actually formulating my own.

Through reading a lot of these, I found that any given manifesto was successful (in my eyes) when it was approachable. I was near-instantly turned off by any manifesto that didn't present itself in the point-by-point style that roughly half did. Maybe this was my mood at the time, but when presented with a block of text that is trying to get me to think a certain way (Manifesto of the Communist Party, Society of the Spectacle, S.C.U.M. Manifesto, etc.), a way different than my own, I have a difficult time reading it. I feel like the shorter style has a lot power in that it is easier to digest and therefore accept. If the point of a manifesto is to get people to conform to your beliefs, step one should be making sure they understand them. At a surface level, one's manifesto should be able to be broken down into at least major headings. That way it is easy to navigate for anyone and if they do want more information or clarification on a given heading, then they can read the paragraph or two below.

I also feel like a short and concise, bullet-format manifesto allows people to stretch your ideas to mesh into their beliefs. Even if the manifesto was geared towards a

particular facet, such as art and design (Steal like an artist) or teaching (10 Rules for Students, Teachers, and Life) I found it easy to carry ideas into other realms and apply them on a broader scale. The issue with this is that a short manifesto can be too broad and accommodating, which is the opposite of what you want when you're trying to get someone to think just like you. There is a balance to be struck in between a wishy-washy, "ten rules" system and an encyclopedic codex of do's and do-not's.

The manifesto I found to be the most successful was the last; *Beyondthenew*. I found it struck this balance I have described near perfectly. You got a sense of a concise, bullet-point system from the fact that the type was very large, making it easily approachable as there was little to bite off at a time. In reality, the manifesto was more extensive than a bullet-point style one would be, which allowed it to elaborate on each point enough so that it backed up its ideas and narrowed the scope of its rules. Lastly, it was aesthetically pleasing, which I feel like can be seen as shallow, but it does play a role in how someone approaches your ideas. This can add an inviting quality to the manifesto, once again making it easier for someone to approach your opinions willingly.

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Position Paper - Observation

The reading that got me most interested and (for lack of a better term) excited was the Stilgoe reading. I do agree with his views; that removing oneself from the everyday indoor environment(s) and going for a aimless stroll or bikeride can introduce you to all sorts of new experiences and nuggets of interesting information that you wouldn't have seen otherwise. That being said, I find that he completely berates all other forms of observation, such as driving in a car, using a computer, using a mobile phone, etc. This is the part of his argument that I don't necessarily agree with. The form of observation one experiences from a car window or computer screen is not better or worse than that of a curiosity-inspired walk, it's just that they are different, and in similar ways.

A relaxed walk through an unfamiliar part of town (for example) lets you notice small details otherwise unseen from a car, but a car lets you see more in less detail, which is not necessarily better or worse, just different. In a similar sense, looking up images of the same street online gives you an even broader observatory experience than a walk or trip in car, but you're able to see an even broader view of the subject, and even over time (as opposed to just space).

The Flâneur reading is also one that I found interesting. It describes the Flâneur character as being a sort of background figure, well-versed in observation, who soaks and basks in his (his, not her due to the historical context) surroundings for intellectual

pleasure. The text states that these individuals were usually wealthy, intellectual men, the only people who could afford the opportunity to just stroll around at their leisure.

I thought that today, anyone has the chance to be a Flâneur, it just takes time. In modern society, most standards of living are high enough that one can afford a leisurely stroll from time to time, and in doing so they could engage in the same behaviours as a Parisian Flâneur would in the 19th century.

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Position Paper - Work

Out of the four readings on the topic of work, the one that spoke to me the most was *A World Without Work* from Derek Thompson. Semi-independently, I have theorized that soon, we as a human race will reach a point where computers and, for lack of a better term, robots will have the capacity and potential to replace the majority of human jobs, and (to compound this) it won't make sense for them to not [replace us]. The Thompson article brings up this topic and explores it quite thoroughly. This being a topic of interest to me, I found the article very engaging; a page-turner. The other articles, in comparison, seemed so tame and almost juvenile. They talked about much more current and specific issues that they seemed insignificant after reading the Thompson article. Perhaps this effect was increased since I read the Thompson article first, but I still find it much more substantial and on another level than the other readings.

To finally get to the topic of work, I agree with a great majority of the ideas brought up in *A World Without Work*. Machines, computers, robots, however you want to define them, are simply better workers than humans. Humans complain, get tired, old, sick, demand higher wages, go on vacation - the list goes on. I feel as though already, some business owners (perhaps more in the primary and secondary industry sectors) are faced with this issue of machines being better workers than humans, but are too conscious of "looking bad" to replace a swath of their employees with a fleet of

automated robot-arms (or whatever). I feel like this is simply pushing the problem away; a band-aid fix for something that needs surgery.

I believe that this machine-work paradigm that is inevitably on the way will ultimately be a good thing. Humans might be able to get back to being human again, rather than being their pay check or their credentials. There are a lot of variables that could make this go wrong. As brought up in the *Share the Scraps* article, there could be a divide in those who are able to “employ” the machines and those who cannot, and are forced to buy the machine-employers goods and services. I think this stems from a greater issue of greed in modern society and money being a bigger goal than it is. If we can simultaneously replace human jobs with machines and keep the greater interests of humanity, present and future, in mind, then we may be on the way to a - get ready for it - utopia.