

MAN202T: Sociology of Design

Session 9



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SESSION OUTLINE

01

Recap / Feedback on Exercise
8a & 8b

02

How to get started & explore
the world (see & listen
better)?



Exercise 9a: Answer in brief

- What are the two approaches to ethnography?
- What should we capture while conducting an ethnographic study?



Re-look at what you have written in 8b

Observe the objects
around you... not
your feelings /
reflections

Observe details -
cues & signals... *Do
not abstract or
generalize*

Remember, the act of
observing will change
the observed

Do not judge
what you observe

Do not
imagine
things

Ethnographic way of exploring a situation

- Always be looking ... Everything is interesting. Look closer
- Use all of the senses in your investigation
- Observe for long durations
- Alter your course often ... Incorporate indeterminacy
- Document your findings in a variety of ways
- Trace things back to their origins
- Consider everything alive & animate
- Create a personal dialogue with your environment. Talk to it
- Notice the stories going around ... Observe movement
- Notice patterns, make connections

Artists and Scientists analyze the world around them in similar ways – Keri Smith

Observe, Collect, Analyze, Compare, Notice Patterns

Art is to Arrange or Fit Together ... Design/Engineer/Manage is to... ?



Creativity arises from our ability to see things from many different angles (1/2)

- Sight, Sound, Smell, Touch, Taste, Color, Movement, Shape, Texture, Function, Symbol, Language
- Subjectively, Objectively, In comparison, Contrast, Negative Space, Symmetrically, in Parts

Creativity arises from our ability to see things from many different angles (2/2)

- Anecdotally, Artistically, Scientifically, Morally, Historically, Diachronically, Synchronically, Linearly, Contextually, Culturally, Politically, Ritualistically, Micro, Macro, 2D, 3D, Mythically, Light heartedly



Ways of seeing: some inspiration

- https://www.ted.com/talks/rob_forbes_on_ways_of_seeing?language=en



Exercise 9b: One thing (15 min)

- Choose an everyday object. This can be something you find on the street or something you have. Look at the top half of the object for 5 minutes. Record everything you see there in detail. Then do the same thing for the bottom half.
- “If something is boring after two minutes, try it for four. If still boring, then eight. Then sixteen. Eventually one discovers that it is not boring at all” — John Cage
- Debrief: The longer you look the more you see

Ways of seeing: some inspiration

- https://www.ted.com/talks/michael_rubinstein_see_invisible_motion_hear_silent_sounds_cool_creepy_we_can_t_decide?language=en



Exercise 9c: What has changed? (10 min)

- Two players form a pair
- One player observes another closely. Then she closes her eyes, and her partner changes three things in his/her appearance. She open her eyes again and tries to discover what has changed
- Now exchange roles and repeat

Exercise 9d: Observing Cues & Signals (15 min)

- Borrow the most boring object of your neighbor (bag, phone, watch..)
- Observe and document 20 cues or signals in your neighbors object that tell about its usage
- After you have finished, **try to see if there is a pattern** in it and what does it suggest? Is there an element of surprise for your friend?

Try more on your product context

Get inspired by Keri Smith's book "How to be an explorer of the world"

