If someone asked you what your super-power was, what would you say? X-Ray Vision, Super Speed? Well, according to JD Hooge, his super-power is “Design”. JD Hooge considered him and his friends a “ pack of cigarette smoking, skateboarding misfits hiding from the cops looking for streets and curbs to bomb”. While he thought as himself as a misfit growing up, things turned around once design encompassed his identity. He found his passion and found success. In his TEDx Portland talk, he explains the need for responsibility to be taken for what is created. He also dives into ideas about how our digital wellbeing is at risk. Most importantly, he explains how design shapes the future, and why we need design. He does this in an “easy to understand” kind of way which I enjoyed. The speaker also opened the discussion with a comical icebreaker and made multiple comical references throughout the talk which was enjoyable to hear and follow along with. The talk was well structured, and had sufficient information where I was able to walk away with more knowledge than prior to watching the video.

People are waking up and re-evaluating their connection with technology. Revealing bias and discovering new solutions, more and more people are connecting with technology every single day. From engineers, consumers, journalists, policy makers and designers, everyone has a role to play. Designers are uniquely positioned in the front-line. With more power than ever before to influence the future of technology, and leverage it in a purposeful way, this needs to be used via the tools that are available by filling in the knowledge gaps we have within ourselves. Designers need to get out of their comfort zones and learn more about rather than Design History. Typography, Aesthetics, Hex Colors, Navigation Patterns, and Responsive Grids are all things of the past, a more futuristic approach is needed and JD Hooge explains this thoroughly. World History, Ethics, Neuro-science, Inclusion, Cognitive Bias, and Systemic Inequality are things that need to be mastered and the lack of knowledge needs to be bridged. Seeing things differently is needed. Seek understanding in historical, cultural, and economic contexts, elevate the current design curriculums, build diverse teams to improve decision making, and empower individuals to lead these missions.

I really enjoyed the structure of this TEDx Portland talk by JD Hooge. While tech talks might not be the easiest to follow along with and to keep focus on, by JD Hooge introducing comedy into the talk, I was able to follow along and retain the information said much better than I would have with a different approach. The speaker being dressed so casually with tattoos all over his arms made me feel more comfortable listening to him, and even made me feel like I could relate to him in some way. He opens the talk up with some background information about his family, and builds a connection with the readers. This helps him connect with his audience right off the bat, and kind of grab their attention. The speaker spoke very slow, and legibly which made the talk easier to follow along with as well. The point of the TEDx Portland talk was fairly clear and concise, it was essentially a call to action for designers and individuals interested in similar fields. I think this speaker did an excellent job communicating his thoughts, displaying the need for design, and explaining his call for action.

In conclusion, the speaker did an excellent job at staying on topic and communicating his need for a call to action for design. He explains the current state of design, and what could potentially improve the quality of designers by bridging their gaps of knowledge in certain regions of information. By becoming masters in all areas of information, we will be able to leverage it in many useful ways. I feel as if JD Hooge did an excellent job of introducing comedy into the talk to grab and maintain the listeners attention. An unanswered question I was left with was how should we go about becoming masters in all areas of information such as ethics, cognitive bias, inclusion and others? While his points are very true, his call to action seems a bit tougher than it may sound.

Work Cited

TEDxTalks. (2019, September 12). *The Power of Design | JD Hooge | TEDxPortland*. YouTube. Retrieved February 12, 2023, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHyx5qjZEN4&t=630s