I made a comment in one of my previous journal entries that I have a preference for plain language. To be completely honest with you, when I started this reading assignment, I thought to myself “Oh, I should have saved that comment for this reading” lol. My vocabulary is not the greatest of all time and the amount of words I had to look up in this essay was not insignificant (VCU seems to like stuff like this, though). \*I say these things lightheartedly- no hate to the person who chose this essay as part of the curriculum!

I do like the line “In the morning her arms were sore, like she had been trying to fly” and I like the illustrations, as well.

The design of the page that the essay is on feels reminiscent of what I picture when I think of older web design, which I think is appropriate given the content of the essay. I am 33 so I was around in the 90s, but I was still pretty young, so I wasn’t on the internet too much in its early days (my first memories of being online involve me being on AOL Instant Messenger- or “AIM”, as we called it). But I think even if you weren’t around in the 90s, you can still recognize design elements that feel reminiscent of that time.

I can see the association between his project “Fishes & Flying Things” of a zine. I actually really enjoyed that website- I appreciate its simplicity and I can see how that website is kind of like the author’s own “Passion” project in a way. He’s interested in fish and flying things, so he made a website about it. And I actually really enjoyed JR’s writing in his “Fishes & Flying Things”- there were some really lovely lines.

I just think there was a decent amount of “artspeak” (or IAE/International Art English <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2013/jan/27/users-guide-international-art-english> ) in the “Handmade Web” essay, which can sometimes act as a barrier towards certain people understanding the information that you’re trying to share. I’m sure the author wasn’t consciously thinking about the concept of artspeak (I don’t know if that was even a topic of conversation when he wrote this) and possibly being exclusionary towards some people (which is a big word for a girl who has big feelings about artspeak vs. plain language, lmao).

I think the problem is that some people just get used to speaking a certain way and don’t think about the fact that some people may have a hard time understanding them (for a number of reasons such as English not being their first language or not having that great of a vocabulary, like me). These are just some of my thoughts that came up as a response to this essay when it comes to artspeak.

Lastly, I will say that I can appreciate the line where the author says “I evoke the term 'handmade web' to suggest slowness and smallness as a forms of resistance.” **I do think this is a** lovely sentiment that isreally relevant to the web as we know it now and it will likely become more and more relevant. Because of the culture that late-stage capitalism cultivates, we’re so competitive and there’s always a sense of urgency and I think all of us have been socialized with the idea that expansion = success.

Overall, the author’s style of writing was not my cup of tea at times but I can appreciate what I believe the author was trying to say.