

REFLECTION ONE

“Our Symbiotic Life: An Exploration of Interspecies Relations”

This article provides a method “design fiction” that makes designers be able to approach a very complex and abstract concept of society and development of human beings and economic and so on. It is a big picture to catch. It activates a “story world” that makes designers be able to picture a not-exist future. it offers a narration to help designers identify a certain scenario. Like Budinger and Heidman states in their article: “[d]esign fiction is one way to create ‘experiential futures’. It can be allocated to speculative and critical designs that look forward, by dealing with ‘what if...’ scenarios, with an emphasis on the unreal.”

One of these “shaping scenario” components is called SSP(shared socioeconomic pathways). The SSPs works as a framework, designers can build scenarios on it. With this framework helps, a complex and highly abstract concept can be pictured easier.

By creating 4 scenarios, the author tells us what their perspective is and how they practice the concept that they are exploring the relationship between humans, plants, and technology. They are Harmony, Invasion, On-Demand, and Bottle Garden. The second one “Invasion” reminds me of a TV series that I have seen called “black mirror”. There are full of imagination or scenarios in that series shows how technology impacts people’s life profoundly in a negative way. For me, it is black humor. But it shows the possibilities how this technology that we think could help us build this world better place, but it ends up the opposite way, just like Budinger and Heidman said in their article: “The future is not yet determined: it will be influenced by the decisions we make today...we all are part of ecosystems: we are actors in a network who depend on each other [23]. We might benefit from “working with nature” [23], instead of trying to control it, which means taking its point of view into account.”

Stand on this point, there are a few similar ideas from other articles, Youatt states that “‘Interspecies relations’ is not just a human understanding of the world (though it is that) but is also an effort to map every material and biological human-nonhuman relations under a new term that is not anthropocentric.”[2]. Galvin states that “rethinking anthropocentrism thus must mean rethinking our relation to animal life, human and nonhuman...functioning ecosystems require sustainable levels of biodiversity”[1]. Kirksey says that “the relationships that humans have with plants, animals, and other life forms, forged through practices of pastoralism, ..., and settled permanent agriculture, rank among our most abiding and intimate forms of interspecies connection. “[3]

It is a delicate way to find the right path to go. The balance between humans, plants, and technology is delicate and complex. For now what we can do, is to invoke people to be aware of this and reflect on this, finally do better than what we do now.

Work Sited

- [1] Galvin, Shaila Seshia. "Interspecies Relations and Agrarian Worlds" , Annual Review of Anthropology, Vol. 47:233-249 (Volume publication date October 2018), <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-anthro-102317-050232>.
- [2] Youatt, Rafi. "Interspecies Relations, International Relations: Rethinking Anthropocentric Politics." Millennium, vol. 43, no. 1, Sept. 2014, pp. 207–223, doi:10.1177/0305829814536946.
- [3] Kirksey, S. Eben, Helmreich, Stefan, "The Emergence of Multispecies Ethnography.", First published: 13 October 2010 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-1360.2010.01069.x>.