

Abstract

When I first beheld **these** cut-out shapes of various models of contemporary handheld devices, I was overwhelmed by emotion. It came from a feeling of immense comfort, in looking at these familiar shapes. I was left with the urge to investigate the relationship between humans and recent technology. This text seeks to investigate this relationship in the process of becoming an individual. Central questions are: what are the conditions that form the process of becoming an individual; how does design form our relationship with technology; how can technology be designed so that it facilitates the process of becoming an individual?

This text is divided into three parts, wherein Part One is the theoretical; Part Two describes the current situation; Part Three applies theory to the current situation. Specifically, Part One will outline two theories on the process of becoming an individual: Simondon's concept of "individuation" and Matthew Crawford's argument on the necessary conditions for the becoming of the individual. Part Two describes how design of technology plays a significant role in the process of the becoming of the individual. It is contended that there are designs of technology which can facilitate this process, and there are designs which can obstruct it. An analysis of the current dominant design of technology is given, and the case is made that it places the designer/creator at one end, and the consumer at the other. That is to say, dominant design of technology is applied through a consumer ethic. Building upon the theories of Simondon and Crawford, Part Three outlines designs of technology and methodologies which facilitate the process of becoming and individual, aiming at a deeper and more integrated relationship between humans and technology. Speculative Art and Design will be discussed, giving two examples, each serving different forms of artistic reflection. The first being a series of speculative images and the second a diegetic prototype published in a book. This is followed by definitions of hacking and Open Design, giving examples of each as methods and forms of practice, and how it applies to software. Lastly, a description and analysis of a series of workshops that entail technological engagement and function to transform technologies as political practices.