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The 3 projects explained in Disobedient Electronics that I found most interesting were the Abortion Drone, PeriodShare, and the I.E.D.

The wearable I.E.D. or Improvised Empathetic Device highlights the sad truth that media will always favor the glitz and glamour over honoring the American soldiers who have been killed. With the read-out that displays the soldier’s name, while simultaneously triggering a solenoid to inflict pain on the wearer’s arm, it’s such a small price to pay to at the very least acknowledge someone’s life and their unnecessary death.

If I were to make a project based off this idea, I would like to address the numbers killed by mass shootings throughout the US, a direct product of the NRA’s corruption and greed. Since the school shooting in Parkland, teens are turning towards social media to create a united front against gun violence, even organizing marches to make sure the message is heard. We need to enforce gun control laws similar to those that are enforced in other countries such as Japan or Australia, dramatically reducing the numbers killed due to unnecessary gun violence. For the I.E.D., the LED read-out would show that person’s name, where they were killed, and how young or old they were.

As a first generation Filipino, I was raised in a very Catholic household, went to Catholic schools and maybe once believed that an unborn child deserved the right to live, no matter the situation. I don’t feel particularly close to my motherland (which is 85% Christian) since I was born and raised in New York, a salad bowl of cultures and religions. I now more closely identify as an American lesbian, and I am firmly pro-choice - every woman has a different story and no other human, organization, or law should be making a decision for what a woman does with her own body.

With the Abortion Drone, a woman who wants to safely ingest the appropriate medicine rather than opt for potentially unsafe or ineffective means would be granted access and liberty to make her own choices, otherwise stolen by the government. I’ll admit I tend to think drones are being used negatively, like to drop bombs on civilian villages, loaded with cameras for peeping Toms, or soon will flood our skies delivering Amazon packages. On the other hand, it has changed the way so many films are made, like Planet Earth II’s footage of the ever-elusive Snow Leopard would never have been caught otherwise. Drones can be used for good, and the Abortion Drone is not just delivering medicine, but also awareness that there are women in Poland that are simply seeking help.

Lastly, I thought that PeriodShare was totally humorous, highlighting our sick obsession with smart tracking and social media. I personally don’t have the urge to share my menstrual cycle on Facebook, Instagram, or any other app, and that’s not because I think “menstruation is taboo.” Should I be rewarded with likes from my friends for how much of my uterus lining is shedding? Would I get more likes if I’m sharing how irregular my cycle is being and proclaiming that “Yes, ladies. I, too, bleed weird and you’re not alone”? I’m all for positive reinforcement, but maybe I don’t know any fellow women that feel ashamed of their varying cycles, and feel that they need validation from others. My period is a natural occurring process, and I’d like to keep it that way, with all data capturing devices out of my lady parts.

Regarding the construction, I’m amazed that the sensor can safely be attached to a Diva Cup. I love the idea of a Diva Cup, and how in practice, it reduces the amount of wasted plastic tampon applicators. However, the Diva Cup is simply not for everyone, i.e. for people with heavier flows, it’s uncomfortable to more frequently dump and rinse out your cup several times throughout the day. Vice versa, there’s no need for a Diva Cup if you’re just spotting and may at the very most need a panty liner. This then skews the data, right? With this neoliberal trend to be transparent and quantify and track data, is it really fair to exclude the women who can’t comfortably use the device? I do appreciate the conversation, but I wish there was more discussion on why the patriarchy still decides to tax feminine hygiene products - now that pisses me off.