

CONTAMINATED LIFE

ARCH 1027 HISTORY AND THEORY PROJECT

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1 – CRADLE TO CRADLE

Post 1: you have read the Cradle to Cradle chapters and listened to the two Peak Oil interviews with Heisenberg. In point form, list the three most interesting or important issues you have taken from this material.

“Down-cycling rather than recycling”. The book explains how resources are reused and reused again and again, down the line (losing its purity/attributes) until it cannot be reused further, thus dumped. It is, therefore, just a process of prolonging its life before being landfilled.

“Built-in obsolescence” – designed to last only a short period of time. “Built-in obsolescence” is both marketing and economics. Consumers are forced to constantly re-consume the product. These are for instance, coke can, computer, mobile phone (all design to have short life span).

Re-localize the economy rather than globalization. Globalization can be catastrophic as it relies largely on transportation. Hence, the energy and fuel needed for logistic. For instance, an apple produced domestically consumes much less energy (when sold in the market) than an imported apple that needed to travel across the globe. “We should re-localize the economy in a down to earth way. We

must realize where the energy and where the water comes from.” said Heisenberg. This statement initiates a simplistic and practical attitude toward solving oil problem that focuses on bottom up (rather than top-down) approach.

Post 2: as well as the above, you have listened to ‘the art of the essay’ podcast. Write a short text (300–500 words) that explores how the material you have absorbed has shifted your perception or awareness. Write about this through an account of a particular experience.

“Cradle to Cradle” by William Mc Donough & Michael Braungart “repaint” a vivid picture of the whole concept of waste. First come rebellion, followed by slow absorbing, followed by realization then awakening.

I did not accept their concept of waste immediately after reading those chapters. At first, it felt very much like the whole concept was blown out, way over proportion and that they are making too bigger deal out of this matter just like many ‘activist’ would. I, for a start, do not consider my self an activist and certainly have not been one since ever. Nor have I joint any club or sign any partition for anything.

In my rebellion stage, I imagine myself as the earth, asking myself the question “what do I feel about all this pollution that has been going on” and it felt to me like this; “Do you felt like your white blood cells are bad or red blood cells are bad?”. “NO ...yes?”. “Why?”. “You don’t feel they are good or bad because (first) they are very small and (second) they are just doing they job and, (third) whether they red or white there are all your blood. Some are constructive and some are destructive. They are doing their job to serve a bigger picture. If they are just doing their job, would you blame them for being destructive? The fact is that construction/deconstruction always occurs, life and death always occur. Sometime deaths occur more than life, sometimes the opposite. Earth body and human body are not too dissimilar, only in a different scale (different vibration). Human are like white blood cells, they become constructive until a certain point when their population has overgrown, they become destructive. But this is normal; they are just doing their job in that particular phase.

Slow absorbing. It is interesting how this book redefines terms and phrases. They give the opposite side of view of the word that is view by economist, but now view by environmentalist. I think this is when I start to drop my preconceive idea and start absorbing; slow but absorbing through graphical words. One of my favorite phrases was (as below).

“...But ultimately a regulation is a signal of design failure. In Fact it is what we call ‘license to harm’: a permit issued by a government to an industry so that it may dispense sickness, destruction and death at an ‘acceptable rate’. But as we shall see, good design can require no regulation at all”

(“Cradle to Cradle”, William Mc Donough & Michael Braungart, page 61)

Realization. I become realized when the word start to haunt me in my everyday life. I start to notice and identifying with the objects and material, linking them to what was mention in the chapters. Everything from Plastic mount Franklin water bottle to carpet at home to my PVC sofa fabric to food I eat. Everything seems “Toxic”. But it was bearable. If I am to throw away my sofa and buy a new environmentally friendly sofa, that would just defeat the purpose. I would have been using excessive energy that is totally unnecessary.

Awaken. But maybe awaken is not enough. There is so much we can do, yet we still do what we usually do. Up to this point my patterns and habit have not change. There is no application of the new knowledge. Nothing has change. It seems like to change my old habit takes too much effort and it might feel uncomfortable. I now know how much I am use to being pampered and endorsing unnecessary sanitary. At this point I am too lazy to change. I start to wonder, what causes a person to start live a “sustainable” live and will I ever pursue “sustainability” in any other way than just in concept.

POST 2- THE FALL

My biggest waste, this week, is “be lazy”

I must admit I barely do anything during the past weekend. I was thinking of how much energy I consume daily against how much I experienced. Many liters of water during morning shower, big Mac for breakfast, a cup of coffee in early morning ...etc. I find myself consuming a lot more energy, but wasting it by not experience (refusing to do anything the whole of weekend). If anything I would be ashamed of during this week that would be first on the list.

My second most shameful thing of the week is “to buy things to go straight into trash”

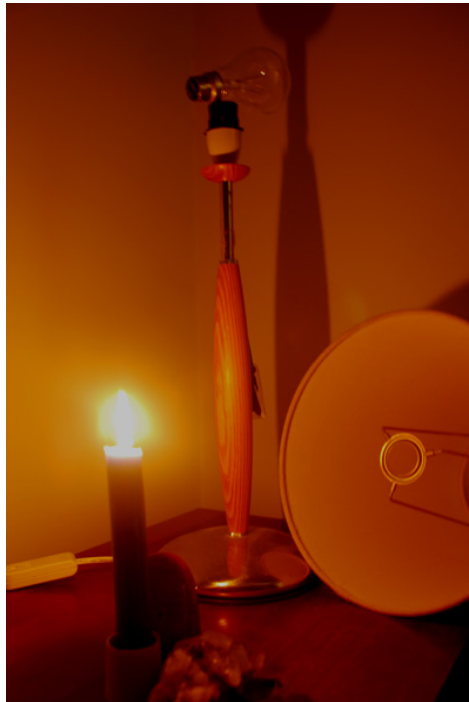
I am not sure if other people have the same experience, but I have notice that many thing I bought I didn't actually use. I thought I would have used them "initially", but actually not and they simply go straight to the bin. These are, for instance, news paper and red meat.

Earlier during the week I grocery shopping at Victoria market and buy some red meat which I left it until it start to smell, so I had to throw it out. The age newspaper, I have bought for 3 days, was left untouched and later was thrown out. I feel like those things have not yet serve its purpose, yet wasted.

Practically I shame on almost anything in one single day. At the end of the day, I tried to counting all kinds of shame that arise and end up with figures over 30. Things ranges from forgetting to take evening shower to not printing double page etc.

Shame arises when you judge your experience. When you don't judge, shame immediately disappears. When you realize that all "good" and "bad" experiences are "great" experience, you become free of shame. I come to realize that I constantly judge.

POST 3 – PROVOKING AWARENESS



Provoking awareness. The photo shows a lit candle and a disassembled bed head lamp. I propose that for a week, we take out all light bulbs in the house and with a given number of candle (lets say give 1 candle), one have to live normally for the whole 7 days. Read in candle light, walk, eat, and shower at night in candle light.

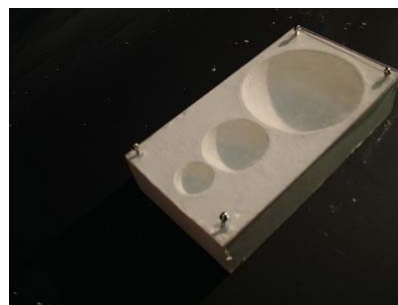
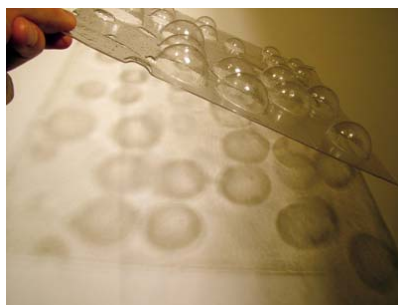
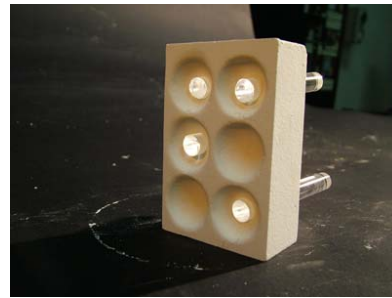
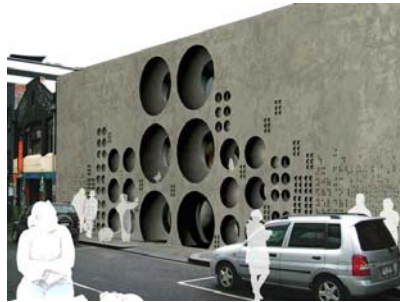
It may not seem like a usual rigorous rebellion approach and one might argue that this is overly too easy to do. Yes, it is very simple and easy, but sometimes simple action might stir up some thought.

Unlike water which we hear a lot in the news (water saving in summer ...etc), warning to turn off lights and save light is something that is normally teach at home (domestically) or thought of as a self-responsible act. Electrical lights strongly encourage us to take for granted electrical use. It is different when you use candle.

With candle, you need to be watchful. With Electrical light you don't.

With each candle that you lit, you need to pay attention to its lifecycle. You will have to watch the resource depleting until it run out. Does that sound familiar? Yes. But this big concept is in the home. It does not need big activist workshop or overly rebellious action. By simply using candle in place of light bulb, the concept of non-unlimited resource is illustrated before your eyes. With electricity, it feels like resource is unlimited because it is automatically feeding to you. As soon as you need to be aware of the lifecycle of resource in your own home, you pay attention to resource because as soon as it run out you need to go out and buy new one. Candle is particularly good because its lifespan is relative short and it can burn your house down without good attention.

4- 'AESTHETIC PLEASURE FOR THE BLIND'



I am referencing the project that I did last year, 'Library for visual impaired', as it is responding to this question of 'sustainability', 'therapeutic environment' and 'aesthetic pleasure'.

The project was looking at the inequality between the normal sighted and the blinds (visual impaired) in term of architecture and constructed environment. Aesthetics are rarely design for the blinds. Most common considerations for the visual impaired are mainly for practical purpose (to satisfy building codes).

Are we just assuming that blind people do not take pleasure in aesthetics?

Having talked to a social workers working at the blind institute, vision Australia, Blind people do also in-dose aesthetic, both visually and non-visually (other senses).

Freud said "Transformation of repressed energy into symptoms"

The lack in 'blind' aesthetic (specially designed for the blinds) causes this so called repressed energy and a symptom? This is maybe about self-worth and feeling of 'acceptance'? If only there is a specially design aesthetic for the blind, would they feel more accepted? Would this make them feel better or pleasing? Could this energize them?

Neutra talks very scientifically about 'orgone box' and how a combination of organic and inorganic material absorbs and/or reflect and transfuse energy from outside to the subject inside and the inside body is energized.

Is this possible? Maybe.

The constructed environment is acting an medium of transfer, not to dissimilar to an optical lenses that fuse sunlight onto a piece of paper until burning (organism).

Looking back the blind library project, I feel that it is therapeutic is a different sense. I feel like it is energizing the user by evoking a feeling of acceptance, hence they feel good that way and good feeling further encourage good health.

The fact that the constructed environment allows the blinds to navigate space without much external help, means are they are more self-efficient. To them, it feels less like a handicap. The gradient of varying scales of decorated textured Braille surface and floor structure that resonant back different kind of sound is the main tool for navigation in the project. Varying thermal mass tactile surface further intensify this experience.

I believe that the relationship between the body and the constructed environment is a two way relation. The blind library project has a certain interactivity that requires response from the environment and much as from the body in the environment.

The therapeutic environment is maybe this two way conversation or the interactivity between the body and the constructed environment. As long as this interaction or transaction restoring the imbalance nature (the lack) of the body (regardless of what it is), the environment is hence to be therapeutic.

5 - "MAC TIE"

Here is my Social Experiment focusing on sustaining a lifestyle. I did not initially know exactly the outcome of this would be. What I decided on pursuing is to visit MacDonald daily for over 7 days. What if I continue to order the very same cheese burger meal at the very same time (4 pm.) everyday for 7 days. Meeting the same female staff who take my Mac order is initial a bit embarrassing. She jokingly made fun of me after the 4th continuous raw visits. 'You must like cheese burger very much', she kindly suggested.

By the sixth day, I started to think what can I do with Macdonald? What can I played with here. Then I glanced at the manager dress code, noticing, he was wearing a conventional black tie. I immediately notice how there is no logo what so ever on his outfit. Then I look back at my disposable Macdonald paper bag. I say to myself, why don't I make a Mac tie for him. I instantly come back home to tailor my new tie out off the brown paper bag with Mac print on it.

It feels to me like this is appropriate. A Material in one place get transformed and reused in the same place. It would not make sense if this tie is used where else. Or maybe it would. But to me, transforming things around you and closer to you seem more appropriate than seeking something else where. It seeks like an unnecessary effort when you have so many materials with so many potential around.

I revisited MacDonald on the 7th day wear my new invention and the same female staff give me a grin and a strange facial expression, but did not say a word. Mac tie is maybe a result of Lifestyle obsession, but more importantly a sustain transformability of a local 'easy to find' material.



6 – “COAL SEAT”

Stinky isn't it? The toilet has be extremely unpleasant because of naturally produced odour that comes from our own body. In the west, people put roasted flowers and herbs in a nice looking bowl or sew them into a bag, and put them beside the toilet bowl. People in east used incense sticks to change the smell to something that 'feel cleaner', to rinse the bad smell away from the ambiant.

Could this so called behavior be considered a 'cleaning ritual'?

When a bad smell is over taken by a stronger more-pleasant odour, does the 'dirty' dissolve and disaapears or does it subside and hide itself, making us think that it is gone?

Here a toilet seat is made of coal. somethings that would leave a 'dirty' print on your 'ass', but smell a lot cleaner.



odour refreshener



Coal Toilet seat

Ancient 'SMELL CLEANER' ritual



Roasted Flower



Incenses

7 - TRANSFORMABLE CROSSWORDS

Transformability experiments: Ability to transform meaning by multi direction reading a a string of text. What if all texts in a text book is written in a cross word format?

TRANSFORMABILITY CROSSWORD:

Make	mistake	faster	This
isn't	my	idea	I
borrowed	it	idea	Think
it	belong	to	Andy-grove

ORIGINAL TEXT:

Make mistakes faster. This isn't my idea -- I borrowed it. I think it belongs to Andy Grove.

TRANSFORMED into:

Borrow my idea.

TRANSFORMABILITY CROSSWORD:

Explore	the	other	edge	'Great	liberty
exists	when	we	avoid	trying	to
run	with	the	technological	pack	we
can't	find	the	leading	because	it s
trampled	underfoot	Try	using	old	tech
equipment	made	obsolete	by	an	economic
cycle	but	still	rich	with	potential

ORIGINAL:

Explore the other edge. Great liberty exists when we avoid trying to run with the technological pack. We can't find the leading edge because it's trampled underfoot. Try using old-tech equipment made obsolete by an economic cycle but still rich with potential.

TRANSFORMED into:

Try leading old economic potential.

TRANSFORMABILITY CROSSWORD:

Power	to	the	people	play
can	only	happen	when	people
feel	they	have	control	over
their	lives	we	can't	be
free	agents	if	we re not	free

ORIGINAL:

Power to the people. Play can only happen when people feel they have control over their lives. We can't be free agents if we're not free.

TRANSFORMED into:

Play people over.

TRANSFORMABILITY CROSSWORD:

Allow	events	to	change	you	You
have	to	be	willing	to	grow
Growth	is	different	from	something	that
happens	to	you	You	produce	it
You	live	it	The	prerequisites	for
growth	the	openness	to	experience	events
and	the	willingness	to	be changed	by them

ORIGINAL:

Allow events to change you. You have to be willing to grow. Growth is different from something that happens to you. You produce it. You live it. The prerequisites for growth: the openness to experience events and the willingness to be changed by them.

TRANSFORMED into:

Grow something that produce prerequisites experience.

POST 8 – TRANSFORMABLE POTENTIALS

I think the most transforming experience in this short while has to be the Mac tie experiment. It was maybe the fact that I was willing to SURRENDER TO A PROCESS LONG ENOUGH; to persistently eat cheese burger meal everyday was not easy. As I am very picky about what I eat and certainly do not like repeating dish, this is a certainly a self – transforming experience.

In order to transform, we have to be willing to “DETACHED FROM THE OLD”. Whether, this is OLD PATTERN, OLD HABIT, OLD LIKING, OLD DISLIKING, OLD ADDICTION, OLD MENTALITY, OLD FORM, OLD LIFESTYLE, transformability required you to (at least for a while) detach from those, so the awaiting potential can evolve. It is about Death and dieing of something that allow the new to emerged, that is possibilities.

Recalling back now to the very first record of the shift of awareness after reading cradle to cradle, I have realized that the reason that I thought the way I did; that maybe the whole deal about contamination should be in “total acceptance” and “through of as part of natural system”, is because I have never SURRENDER nor have I ever DETACHED from my old patterns of living or thinking.

During the earlier weeks, Contamination to my mind is either, ‘putting away out of sight out of mind’ or else ‘recycled’. Now I slowly come to realize the TRANSFORMABILTY OF CONTAMINATION. First, we must surrender and detached. Detached to what? Detach from the old thinking that “If something is not in a mint condition and losing its initial quality that it become wastes or contaminated”.

Maybe We simply assume that POTENTIAL of something is a ONE OFF THING and that when that POTENTIAL IS DYING, THE SOMETHING BECOME USELESS. Maybe, we also assume that there is only ONE POTENTIAL IN SOMETHING, and SHOULD TO NEGLECT THE INFINITE POTENTIAL EXIST IN THE SOMETHING.

“A SOMETHING CONTAINS INFINITE TRANSFORMABLE POTENTIAL”

9 - DISPOSABLE PACKAGING TRANSFORMABLE

DIY Mission: “To illustrate how Packaging material can be transformed into other use”

This was again inspired by the earlier exercise the Mac tie, where I have notice that the FASTEST-CONSUMED MATERIALS are those DISPOSABLE PACKAGINGS. Once the inside goods are consumed, the disposable packagings immediately become INSTANT WASTE and are quickly trash away.

Life cycle of the disposable packaging

In case of that particular experiment, The Mac tie, it was the wrapping of the cheese burger. It takes 2 minutes for the Kitchen staff to produce the burger. The cheeseburger is then wrapped in the acid free paper. The wrapped item is then transfer to the pickup tray waiting to the Shop front Staff. It docks the tray for 30 seconds before it was picked up and place into the recycled brown paper bag. The customer (myself), received the bag and pay for the items, spending 20 seconds to complete the transaction. Since I was very hungry I instantly got out my first cheese burger and spend only 90 seconds eating it. I spend another 10 seconds, walking to the nearest trash bin inside the Mac store and litter the wrapping of my first cheese burger.

The cheese burger wrapping ‘active’ life span is only 150 seconds. After 150 seconds (2.5 Minutes), it is immediately become a waste.

As for the rest of the Mac meal and my second cheese burger, I eat the meal along the way back home and trash the disposable packaging one by one along the way back. It took me approximately 15 minute to reach home from the Mac store. By the time I got home there is not a single evidence of MacDonald items left. What this means is that the life span of every single Mac wrapping in the particular consumption is less that 15 minutes.

It is extremely fast for materials produced for wrapping or packaging to be trashed away. This particular observation has led me to the mission for DIY Manual.

10- DIY MANUAL

Disposable packaging transformable

MISSION: "To illustrate how Packaging material can be transformed into other use"

METHOD (of transformability for the manual):

- 1) Identify the disposable packaging material
- 2) Identify the place where it was found or can be found
- 3) Identify the 'active' Life span of the packaging material
- 4) List the attribute of the packaging material
- 5) Find similar object(s) what has the same attribute
- 6) Substitute the packaging material for part of the object that has the attribute
Record method physical transformation. What operation it undergo?
- 7) Test if the substituting material is compatible and/or operable.
Record the similarity and contrast of the transformed to the original object

FIRST FEW TRANSFORMATIONS:

Transformation 1A: BUBBLE WRAP → PILLOW CASE

1.1 BUBBLE WRAP

1.2 Found in the large electrical appliance delivery packaging

1.3 Life span: Average 6–18 months in

1.4 Attribute: Flexible, Soft, Comfortable, Bendable, Clean, and Anti shock, plastic

1.5 PILLOW CASE, QUILT COVER, SOFA COVERING, SUIT JACKET

1.6 Cutting, Sewing

1.7 Quite comfortable, but not as breathable. When sweat the bubble wrap pillow case

become very sticky. Different method of cleaning needed for the two pillow case.

Normal cloth pillow case needs washing, where bubble wrap case need only warpping.

(Other References)

1B: BUBBLE WRAP → QUILT COVER

1C: BUBBLE WRAP → SOFA COVERING

1D: BUBBLE WRAP → SUIT JACKET

Transformation 2A: GARLIC BAG → COIN POUCH

2.1 GARLIC BAG

2.2 Found in the kitchen, bought from Queen Victoria market

2.3 Life span: 2–4 weeks

2.4 Attribute: Soft, Container, Breathable, Plastic net,
Small size (15 cm diameter) bag

2.5 COIN POUCH, HAIR NET, FISH NET, SOFT CAP, HAT, SHOWER SCRUB

2.6 Sewing, Attaching the zip

2.7 Weaker in terms of strength when compare to other material like leather or cloth

(Other References)

2B: GARLIC BAG → HAIR NET

2C: GARLIC BAG → FISH NET

2D: GARLIC BAG → SOFT CAP

2E: GARLIC BAG → HAT

2F: GARLIC BAG → SHOWER SCRUB

Transformation 3A: EGG CONTAINERS → BOOKSELVES

3.1 EGG CONTAINERS

3.2 Found in the kitchen, bought from Queen Victoria market

3.3 Life span: 4–7 Days

3.4 Attribute: Structural, Recycle paper, Paper mesh, Strong, Container, Modular

3.5 BOOK SELVES, TABLE, FOOT REST, SOFA, BED, DINNING TABLE

3.6 Strong gluing, cutting

3.7 Very bulky and space consuming, Joinery Limitation, Unstable relative to screws

(Other References)

3B: EGG CONTAINERS → TABLE

3C: EGG CONTAINERS → FOOT REST

3D: EGG CONTAINERS → SOFA

3E: EGG CONTAINERS → BED

3F: EGG CONTAINERS → DINNING TABLE

GOAL:

To come up with 10 transformation for the submission of the manual

-----END-POSTS-----