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id project II

kick-off



“closed loop” experiment

Rule 1: Waste = food

Everything brought into my apartment stays in my apartment except things that biodegrade and can directly return to the earth
(ex- food, compost)

(This will force me to separate my waste so that the organic waste can supplement the earth.)

Rule 2: Take in the trash

Never take out the trash.

(Keeping garbage out of landfills... and in my room.)

Rule 3: Recycle

Things that can be recycled locally like paper, plastics, and aluminum can be taken out of the apartment once a month.

(Encourage me to buy recyclables, but still see the materials accumulating.)

Rule 4: Repurpose

Only recycle things that cannot be used again!
Always try to re-use anything before throwing it in the trash or recycling bin.

(Add sentiment/value to a normally disposable item)

“closed loop” experiment



Not so much has changed with the recycled-wall mosaic. After the first two weeks I learned not to accumulate unnecessary things so, there was not anything more to add. Making a conscience effort to collect things in order to build the mosaic was totally contradictory of the experiment, so I abandoned this side project.



“closed loop” experiment



Same thing applies here. I stopped buying a lot of products with unnecessary packaging so I did not have a lot more to add to the fridge. Once every few weeks there is something to add, but not a lot. It would be silly to purposely collect it, so I also abandoned this side-project. I am not going to take down what I have started, but I do not actively put more things up.



“closed loop” experiment



Not much to see here either. I have been breaking one of the rules, and I actually have not taken anything out to recycle yet. So this is two months worth of recyclables. I find myself reusing the same bottle so I do not accumulate a lot. It is weird how my expectations have changed.



“closed loop” experiment



“closed loop” experiment

Bottom: teeny tiny garbage bag where I put things that cannot go anywhere else...

Left: all of the plastic packaging I have collected. Covers my entire bed.



The "Closed Loop" Experiment

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The Green Grass Grows...

March 16, 2009 · No Comments



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website videos



article topics

composting

Article >> *My sister recently told me about how composting meat can be tricky because bacteria that grows faster than the meat composts. Maybe that's why my composting bin smells so rancid right now? I have put small pieces of chicken and fish in there that were left-overs on my plate. A possibility... I also had half of a container of ground beef that was sitting in my fridge for a week that I wasn't able to eat.. and it started to smell A LOT. I just stuck it in the freezer because I don't know what to do with it! I think I froze the stank out of it. But that is just a temporary fix... research on what to do with meats is to come...*

trash burning

Response by Johan >> *Recycling heat from a process that was going to happen anyway is good and renewable sources are naturally good (no pun intended). But out of the other three I prefer waste. I cannot vouch for the cleanliness of burning trash, but I think it's a lot better to burn it than to bury it environmentally speaking as well. Today the prices on trash are so low that some companies are actually importing it for burning, about that you can say some negative things. But I still don't know if the conserved energy is worth more than the transportation or not.*

garbage vs. health

Article >> *Can living with any of these things be harmful? I should do my best to wipe out all of the sugar inside the paperbag and rise it out so there is no more food residue inside because maybe it will attract flies/ants. But other than that products that we live with everyday are made out of plastic and paper, how are these things any different? The lamp above my bed is plastic, am I in danger of sleeping under it?*

website

product paranoia

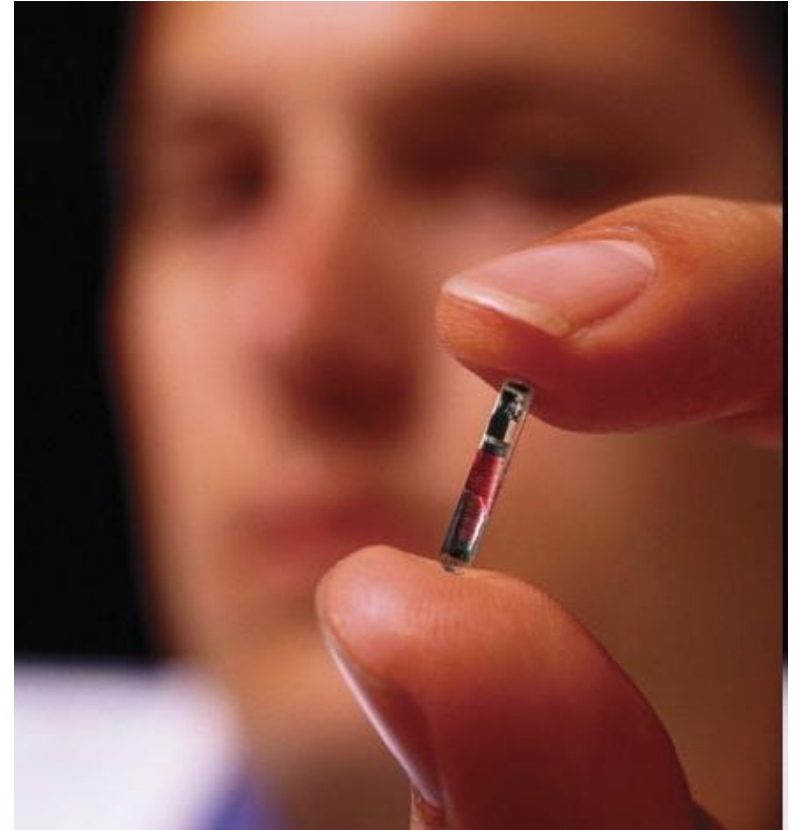
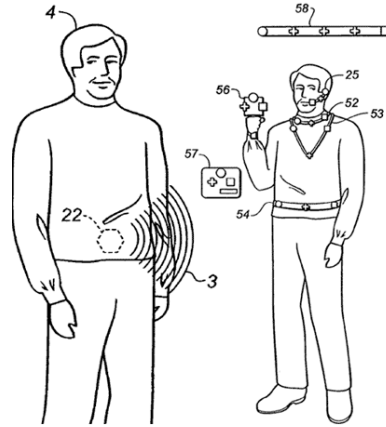
every time I pick up a product will I have to mentally go through a checklist of safety precautions to make sure it is REALLY okay for me to use? Last time I checked that is the job of designers/engineers... has there been a shift of responsibilities?



website

innovation vs. excess

What defines an innovative product and what defines a totally unnecessary waste of energy? Are we solving problems or what? Certain advancement of technologies might not have the most positive impact, so why do they exist on the market? What is the industrial designer's purpose?



primary research

bins clearly marked “RECYLING”



City of Atlanta
Department of Public Works

Mary Harrington, Atlanta Recycling Coordinator

Thanks for calling our attention to the typo – we'll get that corrected right away.

There is no intention in the near future to include soft plastics (Styrofoam) in the City's curbside recycling program due the propensity of food contamination and the light-weight nature of the material (takes up a lot of room for very little actual product/weight and it breaks easily and clogs machinery)... I'd rather work on finding alternative products to use in place of Styrofoam.

The City does not manage commercial recycling, but we are investigating ways to encourage recycling in the commercial sector. Both initiatives have been slowed (but not stopped) due to budget cuts and the current low value of recyclables. We are also supporting efforts divert food residuals from the waste stream to composting and conversion of fats, oils, and greases to bio-fuel.

focus group

5 participants non-design majors

- + sustainability could be in the hands of politician/lawmakers
- + designers are at fault for enabling consumers with harmful materials
- + composting is easy! (composting systems set up at home)
- + plastic grocery bags are too cheap and too tempting at times
- + what is with packaging? why is it so extensive?
- + consumers ARE at fault too, but until the infrastructure changes, it is hard to predict definite change.



IDEO interview



Briefly interviewed an employee of IDEO, **Leif Huff**

Have you ever refused to work on a design project?

- + has refused to design products because of personal disinterest (ex-video games)
- + moral disagreement as well (ex- tobacco industry, military, etc)
- + only design products that will have a **positive impact** on the world
- + tries to guide clients in a sustainable direction, but that is not always the outcome
- + educates clients, but does not force them
- + IDEO has a sustainability department that deals with these issues

Who is responsible for trash pollution? How can it be solved?

+ it is a whole ecosystem in our government/society that contributes to pollution. We all feed off of each other. In order for the system to change, every one has to change as well.

“closed loop” book/manual

Website community

- + Educate readers
- + Raise awareness of environmental issues
- + Document my experiences with the experiment
- + Create a web-community/following about this “closed-loop” concept



Final project

- + A proposal for a more efficient recycling/distribution system (I should pick a particular area or a specific company)
- + A manual guide for a young designer... how to be a designer AND sustainable... AND get a job. As a designer, do you really want to design a product you know will be thrown away eventually? But you want to get paid, right? Maybe I can further explore how to interact with people (which maybe coworkers, bosses, or friends) and really educate and present your ideas in the best way.
- + A proposal of how to set up your own organic composting system in your home (even if you do not have a yard).
- + A proposal for restaurant owners to compost their organic waste. There is a lot of food wasted.
- + Proposed floor plans explaining how systems could be integrated into a home (for recycling, compost, etc)
- + A movie?
- + A book?
- + Designing products out of recycled/used materials (been done before)
- + **How do you affect the psychological behavior of people?**

upcoming

1. Focus group with designers (volunteers??)
2. Follow up with sustainability department at IDEO
3. Better ways to market website!
- 4. How do you present/bring this philosophy down to a concrete measure?**
5. More ideas?

Visit the “The Closed Loop Experiment” at www.krystalpersaud.wordpress.com

