

DART 491

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In the book *Speculative Everything* by Anthony Dunne & Fiona Ray, both authors discuss design as a method to raise discussion and create inspiration about new ideas and alternative ways of living. They propose to go about this process by speculating on potential futures. This opens up avenues to design for the present while working toward the future. It addresses possible ideas for solving current problems as well as issues in the future. As a group we decided to work within the area of health. We are living in a time where human population on earth is growing and transportation is become quicker, safer and more accessible. We are inspired to work with the idea of pandemics and speculate about the systems we use to deal with them and how we interact with each other in those situations.

In their chapter entitled "A Map of Unreality", Dunne & Ray undermine the relationship between reality and unreality. Once designers step away from industrial production and the marketplace, they enter the realm of the unreal, the fictional, or what the authors prefer to think of as conceptual design - design about ideas. By freeing themselves from market pressures, designers are able to explore ideas and issues. There is potential to use the language of design to pose questions, provoke, and inspire. Most importantly, these conceptual ideas need not to be mass produced; they are intended for opening up new possibilities not only for technology, material, and manufacturing, but also for narrative, meaning, and the rethinking of everyday life.

Now, through our desire to explore the social aspect related to health, especially pandemics and how they spread quickly when not controlled, we need to aim exactly at what Dunne & Ray are trying to illustrate. As a team, we need to develop highly speculative scenarios in order to introduce new values and attitudes into how the whole healthcare system thinks about the consumer. We want to change social conventions and expectations by reconsidering utopian ideals that might solve the social and political issues behind the very troublesome health institution worldwide.

We see technology as something that is highly prevalent in our present, and something that will become even more widespread. Technology is something we have learned to live with. It is part of our workplace and our home environment. When looking at health and pandemics, technology could be used for worldwide and local communication. It also provides opportunities to make a pandemic situation less scary. In the future pandemics are a possible problem that we will face. There needs to be a way to inform people without scaring them, but still making them aware that this situation is dangerous, but can be dealt with if the proper resources are available.

We propose to design something that deals with the social and political problems within a pandemic. We will address questions such as: How do people interact with each other socially? How do we stop the transmission of the virus? How can the response system to epidemics and pandemics become more effective?