Confronting the Uncomfortable

Kathryn Clapsaddle
clapsak@bgsu.edu

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CONFRONTING THE UNCOMFORTABLE

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JEWELRY DESIGN IN THE MEDICAL FIELD

Honors Project
Kathryn Clapsaddle
Background Information

With this Honors Project, I wanted to accomplish two different goals. Firstly, I wanted to explore some issues that might be uncomfortable through the design and creation of jewelry. The **Confronting the Uncomfortable** section of the project accomplished this goal. These pieces explored themes such as issues with society and the world today. Secondly, I wanted to complete a project that combines jewelry with technology to improve some aspects of the health field. The **Jewelry Design in the Medical Field** section of the honors project accomplished this goal. This part of the project focused on updating the medical alert bracelet design and technological integration to make these tools more useful.

Now for a little background about my background: I am a Studio Art and Biochemistry major, so I am very interested in combining the science and art/design fields. In the art world, I am most interested in the three-dimensional arts. I love the variety of media, techniques, and results that these disciplines provide. In terms of content, I typically lean towards confronting uncomfortable subjects. I think art is a great way to start a conversation about things that are not working well and possibilities for change. I am also concerned about the environmental state of the earth and the intricacies of society and use these subjects quite a bit in my pieces.

As a scientist, I am constantly surrounded by and learning about issues dealing with the science field. As a member of society, I am surrounded by issues dealing with society and inequality. Upon noticing these issues I research to gain abundant information on the issues I want to discuss and why they are issues that need to be discussed. Then, I focus on creating engaging works surrounding these issues.
It’s the End of the World as We Know it, But I Feel Fine

This piece employs an integral hinge, which appears almost invisible when the hinge is closed. Once opened, the hinge creates jagged, gaping cracks. Most people only see the problems with our world as inconsequential, seeing them as little cracks when really they are deeply serious issues.
CONFRONTING THE UNCOMFORTABLE

It’s the End of the World as We Know it, But I Feel Fine

2019
Brass
4” x 2” x 1”
2019
3-D Modeled, Cast Silver
1” x1” x 0.25”
Statement Rings

These rings have the words “weak” and “emotional” written on the inside of them, which are words that have been used to negatively define females. The rings are about half a size too small and press against the wearer’s finger, imprinting the word into the skin. In this way, these statement rings address how society “marks” females and how these stereotypes can deeply affect the lives of these people.

The design of the rings is simple; a plain silver band on the outside. The design is an ironic play on the term “statement rings,” which are typically made to stand out. The simple, perhaps unnoticeable design, also illustrates how these stereotypes and ways we define females have become a part of our norms and do not stand out as detrimental, even though they deeply impact the members of this group. Although smooth on the surface, on the underside of these rings, a crackled texture appears. Though these descriptions may seem harmless upon first glance, they can cause a lot of damage internally.
Improved Medical Alert Devices

My interest in both the arts and sciences got me thinking about ways that these two fields could combine. One thing that came to mind were medical alert bracelets, which inform others of a medical condition that someone may have in case of a medical emergency.

The problem with the existing medical bracelets is that they are quite conspicuous and are not something people want to wear every day. Additionally, they can only convey the information inscribed into the bracelet or have a phone number to call to access other additional information. These improved medical alert devices revolutionize the use of medical alert bracelets using QR codes. By using QR codes, medical professionals could instantly access a list of important medical information (such as existing conditions, medications, blood type, etc.) to provide fast, effective assistance.
These QR codes contain a recognizable logo which indicates that these codes reveal medical information.
Medical Record

Personal Information

Name: Bradly Matson  
Birthdate: 02/20/1994  
Gender: Male  
Social Security Number: 820-49-3492  
Phone Number: 419-896-8325  
Status: Single

Medical Information

Allergies: Peanuts, penicillin
Blood Type: AB+
Current Medications: ACTOS, Glycet
Pre-existing Conditions: Diabetes
Insurance: Anthem Blue Cross  
(Member 123456789, Group 123456)

Emergency Contacts

Name: Debbie Matson  
Relation: Mother  
Phone Number: 419-896-4589

Name: Dave Matson  
Relation: Father  
Phone Number: 419-896-5821
These QR codes link to personalized medical records. They can be incorporated into jewelry pieces (like the key-chain below) or printed onto stickers. These stickers can be attached to the back of their smart watches, phones, licenses, etc.

Incorporating this medical alert technology into more accessible jewelry pieces such as keychains will allow people to keep their medical alert information on them without having to visibly wear it. The sticker option also allows for the accessibility of medical alert technology. These stickers can be attached to objects that people carry with them every day.


