Daisy Collingridge, Head on a bed (Suzan), 2021.

PillowTalk: E-Textile Pillow for Dream Recall

Course instructors: Edwina Portocarrero and Miguel Perez

Course code:

B-KH-201-IK-242502-03

M-KH-201-IK-242502-03

M-KH-E-201-IK-242502-03

Course Description The story goes that Dmitri Mendeleev dreamt the arrangement of the periodic table, Paul McCartney dreamt the melody for "Yesterday," and Elias Howe solved the design of the sewing machine after dreaming of being attacked by spears with holes in their tips. Salvador Dalí famously employed the "paranoic-critical" method, capturing surreal images by waking himself from a light sleep. Dreams provide insights into emotional and cognitive processes, often reflecting personal concerns and waking-life experiences, and they can foster creativity by reducing inhibitions. Yet, a study with a sample size of 1,000 revealed that 32% of participants reported dreaming less than once a month.

You will create a dream diary through lectures and hands-on workshops – a personalized pillow equipped with recording technology and wireless transmission. While pen and paper are helpful to scribble down our dreams, remembering them remains difficult for many. Laying still while waking is crucial to consolidating our dreams, so we will try voicing our dreams directly to our pillow without moving, distraction, or turning the lights on. You will store these dreams without having to share your data with any third parties and have the freedom to run whatever data analysis you want.

To do so, we will examine pillows' historical significance and design diversity as objects of rest across cultures. We will then review dream research, the importance of dreaming to our cognition, memory consolidation, and emotional well-being, and their significance and use in different cultures. Next, we will design a bespoke pillow, make e-textile switches, program our microcontrollers, and integrate the microphones. Lastly, we will explore the possibilities for data analysis and visualization. You will walk out with a pillow, prompting you to remember your dreams and allowing you to record them with detail and ease for later introspection.

Application

Number of participants:

Minimum 5, Maximum 10.

Schedule:

Monday to Friday 10 am - 3 pm (with lunch break)

Outcome:

By creating a technologically enhanced pillow, Participants will have a comprehensive understanding of the historical, cultural, and technical aspects of dream analysis. This course will provide students with skills in everything from e-textile crafting to programming and data visualization.

Students will delve into the evolution of pillows as functional objects and explore diverse cultural beliefs surrounding dreams, enriching their understanding of human cognition and the significance of dreams in various societies. They will acquire basic hands-on experience in e-textiles and physical computing and learn how to transform raw data into understandable patterns, facilitating more profound insights into their dream content.

By the end of the workshop, they will have crafted a functional and aesthetic object, embodying the integration of historical context, technical proficiency, and design.

Prerequisite for completing the course (please underline)**:**

Knowledge of textile technologies, weaving, knitting, and sewing is a big plus - we are no experts on those, and getting your expertise will enrich us all! We are here to learn as well. :)

Course recommendation

(It is for you, if…., it is not for you, if….. (appr.4-500 characters)

This course is for you if:
- You would like to engage in project-based reflective design, merging theory and practice to develop tangible solutions that address the intricate interplay between politics and technology currently defining our social landscapes

- You like using mind, heart, and hands in unison

- You are curious about physical computing and e-textiles and want to get some fundamental insight

- If you have intrinsic motivation to learn and can try to figure things out on your own before relying on others.

This course is not for you if:
- You do not like working with little things and many parts.

- Are impatient and do not like looking for solutions on your own