Design 7002
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Reflective Statement - Personal Public Transportation
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Our goal of this Personal Public Transportation (PPT) system is to merge the public transportation into everyday life with consideration of different needs, decreasing the transit gap of current, location A to B, mode. Grounded on several research into the future public transportation concepts, such as the Hyperloop and the Ultra personal rapid transit (PRT), our solution is aiming at changing the public transit system to a more efficient, consistent, and personal style, meaning that it should fit to the more complicated social / family structure in the future.

Taking the advantage of the personal usage of the PRT, we have a personal POD which plays the role of daily commuting. Inspired by the high speed and capability of the Hyperloop, we came up with the idea that we can transform several PODs into a shared transportation system which acts as either train or airplane. Besides, fantasy artwork on public transportation with love towards classics and life, have also played an important role during our ideation stage.

Among all the research we did for this project, the one about the effect of streetcar's decline to population of Cincinnati was the most interesting one and also the one worthy of thinking. With a historical research on the city's streetcar, we accidently found that the population of the city has a relative reflection when the streetcar was stopped in using. So, the issue is not simply about public transportation, but has something to do with social and cultural factors. That's why after we conducted our PPT system, we started to figure out the possible social issues or potential problematic using of the system in the future.

Going back to see the process of this project, the first and most important thing we learned is discursive design. It changes our previous view on design which was simply about solving problems. We found that sometimes design is not the end of a problem but can be a start of increasing questions and thoughts. Seeing things in different perspectives is an essential method for all designers. In addition, the dark matter mapping exercise is also very interesting and worthy of trying for both future design projects and thesis development. It gave us more opportunities than we have thought. It could be very amazing to think that how far we have gone from our first observation attempts to the final concept.

With the experience digging into the fact of car ownership and sharing economy of the United States, we as foreigners, learned a lot of differences between cultures. In a country where people has taken private car as an necessity of their life, how to make public transportation more efficient and attractive is really a big challenge. And with the new generation who is caring about privacy, personal rights, space, security much more than ever, applying the diverse needs of people to a fixed system is even harder. However, changing our mind from solving the complex problem to making people think more when looking at our design, we found it more interesting and flexible.

In all, from this project, we have practiced on broadening our horizon to more perspectives even though they might be unrelated at the beginning, we have accomplished the self-exploration with those wonderful advices from teacher and colleagues. That was a very meaningful and interesting experience.