Russell.S.Barry

Designer | Whimsical Creator | Oddball

My Background

What brought me here?

My parents set me on the path to here. My parents have always supported and encouraged me. Pushed me to do better. Pushed me to pursue what I want to do, not what would make me money. Their outlook on life, their sense of humor, and what is right and wrong, gave me the foundation for what I am today. While my parents are adults, with adult responsibilities, they have never lost their sense of fun and wonder at the world around us.

I was floundering in community college, unsure how to continue. I liked learning new things. I liked learning about how things work. I liked designing and making things. I've always liked doing that. So I planned to be an engineer, it's what I thought they did. The problem was my math skills. I've always struggled with math and I knew engineering was going to involve a lot of it.

Then one day I saw a tv show where David Kelley, one of the founders of IDEO, showed some of their process in designing a children's toothbrush and an emergency defibrillator that almost anyone can use.

That was the moment where everything snapped into place for me. This is what I want to do for a living. This is the field I never knew existed but always wanted to work in.
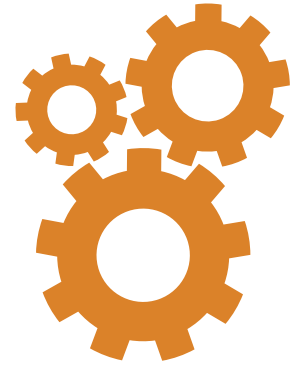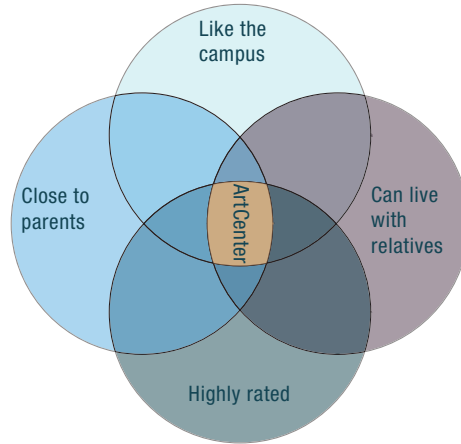

Above: My parents playing on a see-saw we passed on the side of the road during vacation.
Below: My sister and I playing on one of the few remaining see-saws in the US.

Russell S Barry | 11/21/2017 | 0250637

Like the campus

Close to parents

ArtCenter

Can live with relatives

Highly rated

Why did I chose ArtCenter?

I chose ArtCenter for a few reasons. ArtCenter is regularly rated as one of the top design schools, which to me means their program is good and worth the time and money. The campus is close enough that I can easily still visit my parents. I have relatives nearby that I can live, so I don't have to worry about a number of expenses I would have to deal with if I was on my own. I liked the feel of the campus when I toured it before applying.

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Why do I want to be a product designer?

I want to be a product designer because it's fun and interesting.

What type of project you're working on can keep changing.

It gives me an opportunity and use to keep learning and exploring

I can help improve peoples lives in the smallest of ways.

It is a field I can see myself working in and not tiring of it.

What am I passionate about?

Educating people that gears do not work like above.

Mechs, especially ones with wings.

That all acronyms should be pronounced. Beards and beard related topics.

Learning, understanding, feeding my own curiosity.

Understanding life, hopes, and struggles from a different view then my own.
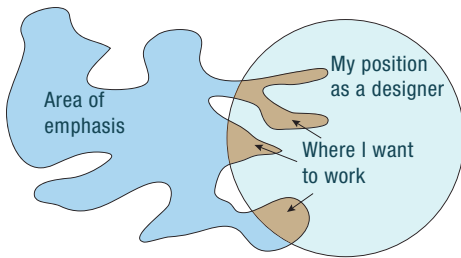
New experiences, trying new things.

Applying what I learn into new areas. How things work.

Understanding why people act the way they do and how design can change that.

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My Educational Experience

Me defying my high school principle and having a friend put my hair in pigtails.

What is my area of emphasis and how do I position myself as a designer?

I have not yet figured how to specialize. I keep thinking I wouldn't be interested in a field only to find it interesting when I actually do a project on that topic. I would like to be hired because, although I may be less knowledgeable about a specific topic or field, my wide range of general knowledge can help me look at problems in a different way.

I've designed a knitting bag for product 3, a women's snowboarding jacket for product 4, and dog shoes for advanced sewing lab and before I took product 4 I was sure I did not find softgoods interesting and did not think it was a field I'd be interested in.

Me dressed as a time traveler for halloween. Shown here to fill space.

What are my strengths?

Wide range of interests.

I always want to understand more.

Willing to listen and learn form others.

Willingness to be silly.

Large knowledge of fantasy and science fiction to pull examples from to help explain new ideas.

Always interested in the opportunity to learn.

What are my weaknesses and how have I addressed them?

Weakness - Misunderstanding assignment instructions.
Coping Method - Paying closer attention to what is said. Asking for clarification more often. Writing more detailed notes.

Weakness - Procrastinating so I have to rush to finish and not doing it well or just not finishing assignments. Stress also makes this cycle worse.
Coping Method - Part of this is depression and is being treated with drugs, counseling, new calming techniques, and paying more attention to how much I'm sleeping. The other part is blocking out each day what I'm doing, how long I'm doing it for, and when and how long I'm going to take breaks.

What are my weaknesses and how have I addressed them? (Cont...)

Weakness - My hand writing looks like it is done by a child.
Coping Method - Doing more work digitally. Using an Ames lettering guide to create guides to write in. Not traveling backwards through time in non-safety tested time machines hidden at a local Public Storage.

Weakness - Speaking to fast, biting off the ends of my sentences, and jumping all around when giving presentations
Coping Method - Writing down what I need to say beforehand. Going over what I am going to say. Practicing talking.

Weakness - Drawing ellipses.
Coping Method - Carrying around and using the ellipse guides I had to buy first term. Drawing more digitally. Only drawing flat or square things.

Weakness - Time management/scheduling **Sudden realization that this is a bigger problem then I thought and am just now starting to think of how to deal with things like this in the future** - I thought I wasn't doing that bad until I realized I am still working on this 6th term assessment the night before it's or the day after it's due and that is after already being given nine more weeks to work on it then I was originally given because I had not even started it until the night before it was due. I feel like I'm doing pretty good on the weekly assigned homework. This assignment was not due yet and I planned on doing some of it every week. I just kept putting it off.

Professional Enrichment

What kind of internships have you done and which ones are you seeking?

I have not done any internships yet and I am seeking all of them. I like many parts of design process, but I have not found a topic that calls to me more. I have never had to have a job. My family has always supported me. I have basically been going to school continuously since I was four years old. I feel any internship will be really helpful to me. I think an internship would be helpful to me in learning how the actual world works. What it is like outside academia. Any internship I have will be helpful in both exposing me to more what it will actually be like to have a job, and giving me more experience in different facets on design. The more I am exposed to, the better idea I will have on what I want to do.

Which study abroad opportunities are you considering?

All of them?

Similarly to what kind of internship I want, I don't have a firm idea about study abroad opportunities. Ignoring how I would pay for it, I want to study abroad. I don't want a permanent job abroad, but I definitely want to experience more of the world. As an American child that grew up going through the California public school system, I do not know any language other than english. Until I talk to someone about how hard it is studying abroad in a country that doesn't speak english, that's my only criteria, and even that can change.

Which design competitions have you entered?

None of them.

What kind of extra curricular activities are you involved in?

Unfortunately none of them. One of my weaknesses is procrastinating and putting stuff off. This makes it feel like I never have time for clubs or anything. I often feel like whatever it is I'm doing I should always being doing homework instead. I went to a couple of the DIY club meetings a couple of terms ago and then again when it reformed recently, but I didn't do it regularly. I want to start a beard club at school, but besides making all members have a real or fake beard I haven't figured out what we would do, so it hasn't gone anywhere.

Your Educational Goals

What future classes are you interested in to shape your POV?

I don't know if ArtCenter has any anthropology classes besides Visual Anthropology, but if so I would like to take them.

I would also like more Human Factors classes. At the begging of each Product 4 class with Frido he would talk about general knowledge things we should know like; how to come up with how much we should charge for our work, how to get a rough estimate on how much a product cost to make based on how much it's being sold for, how and why to tailor our resume for the job we are looking for, and other things like that. A lot of product 5 with Jeff was similar and all of the teachers do it to some extent. I would like for it to be a series of lectures instead of just part of the classes they teach, because many classes have more then one section, taught different teachers, and this way students who take Product 4 with Frido won't miss what Kevin has to say and vice versa.

What can we expect to see for your 8th term capstone project?

1) I want to design a system to change how something is done. I recently saw a video about how Gallaudet University, the top college for deaf people in the US, designed a new building specifically for deaf people that use ASL. Hallways were wider because to see the person signing next to you, you need to be farther away then people who are communicating verbally. Similarly I also saw a video about how UCSB reworked their cafeterias to significantly cut down on food waste. I want to create a system that changes the behavior of those using it in positive ways. Similarly at a hospital to make patients feel more comfortable while they had to stay there, they changed the look of the ceiling tiles and floor of the patients room, which visually indicated that that space is separate from the rest of the hospital and they could relax there.

1a) The opposite of the above project would also be really interesting. The idea would be to use all those methods to design a space or a system that is just a little wrong, but with people not being able to tell exactly why.

2) I keep reading about groups at various colleges that claim they are designing programs or electronics to translate ASL into english and english into ASL, but they are not. what they are doing is more along the lines of translating spoken english to letters appearing on a screen spelling the words out one letter at a time to someone who doesn't really know english or how to spell. I don't want to design a program to do that. I more want to create a guide showing more of actual problems they need to be solving.

Your Educational Goals

What can we expect to see for your 8th term capstone project? (Cont...)

3) This is an idea I had for product 6 that I didn't pursue. I loved going to playgrounds when I was a kid, even when I was a young adult. Playgrounds suck now mostly due to safety concerns and about not being sued. Ignoring all of that I came up with the basic Idea for a modular playground. The city would buy all of the hardware and professionals would come to build the sand pit (because you can't run barefoot on wood chips) and then sink an evenly spaced grid of vertical supports. There would then be modular pieces like slides, ladders, platforms, and monkey bars that attached to the vertical supports. Children would come and play on it bringing their parents. Once the children are bored of the playgrounds current setup they would convince the adults to change the layout of the modular pieces to have a new park.

3a) I actually want to design and build a playground for adults. Adult sized teeter totters, mazes made from rented chainlink fence or modular cubicle walls. Tall metal spaceships I vaguely remember form my youth.

4) I am aware of the boy code. but my parents didn't raise me like that. I'm not racist, or sexist or homophobic. I am a calm rational adult. Except that I'm not. I did not think I did any of those things, but I do and don't often realize it, and that is scary. I would like something to help people deal with this. It needs more thought put into because it sounds bad when I say it, but I thought I didn't have any problems until I was talking an openly gay classmate and I said something stupid and stereotypically negative until he stopped me and explained how what I had said was wrong. This project would be some nebulous idea on dealing with/educating people like that.

What are your career goals after graduation?

I do not like being in charge and leading. I want to work somewhere where I as close to relaxed me as I can be. I don't know. I've never thought about it. In a lot of our classes people talk about going into business themselves or they have some idea they want to turn into a startup for a company. Our teachers talk about being head of departments or going into business for themselves. That doesn't really interest me. I don't like the stress of being in charge of other people. My aunt runs her own accounting business and I know some other people who also run their own business I feel like all of them are working all the time and not paying themselves as much they would make doing the same job for another company. I don't know what kind of career goals there are besides those.

My sister is a CPA working for our aunt and she's working there because the pay is good and she can work from home, making it easier to raise her kids. It's not a job she likes though. She doesn't hate it but it's not interesting it's a way to have money to live. I don't want to be like that. I want a job thats interesting. I want a job where I can keep learning. I want a job that forces me to think in new ways and look at things in a new light.

Finally I am the youngest of 3 siblings and we are all worried about our parents. They're getting older and less healthy. They don't really have savings that they can retire and live off of. I like living with my family and we have a vague plan to own a house with a granny flat behind that house or in the basement that my parents can live in so we can support them.

Russell.S.Barry

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Education

Bachelors of Science in Product Design. Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, CA
Expected date of graduation: Fall 2018

Pasadena City College, Product Design Studies 2012-2013

ArtCenter At Night, Product Design Studies 2012-2013

Community College, General Education Studies, 2005-2012

Work Experience

Teacher - Creative Arts Workshop, Camarillo CA, Summer 2002
- Summer school computer class for children starting fourth grade
- Class taught:
  - Internal working of computer
  - Touch typing
  - General computer use
- Experience takeaways: Keeping children interested in what you are teaching

Live in Nanny - Layah Wise - 2014 to 2015
- 24 hour general care for twins from newborn to 22 weeks then part time for a year
- Experience takeaways: Developed empathy

Nephrology Presentation Poster - Roberts Enterprises - 2016
- Showcased the results of a nephrologist's research project
- Experience takeaways:
  - How to make your point for design with non-designer
  - Making data more visually appealing while maintaining understandability

Honors

Provost's List, Summer 2015, ArtCenter College of Design (for a 3.813 GPA)

Skills

Illustrator
Photoshop
InDesign
Keynote
Pages
Solidworks
Rhino
Keyshot
Digital Sketching

Marker Drawing
Hand Sketching
Mechanical Drafting
Mockup Creation
Ethnographic Research

Hobbies

Designing and constructing scale medieval siege weapons
Chainmail making
Swimming
Knitting
Minecraft