

Response to Take a Day for Yourself

This installation showed what happened to a group of everyday people when they were given the chance to take a day off. Each person seemed to have been simply told to not do what they would normally do that day. Their various choices for how they would spend the day were interesting and lead to some unique conclusions.

One of the individuals in the experiment had particularly revealing choices. She started by calling her office and telling them she would not be in that day due to feeling ill. Then she cleaned up her apartment and went to buy food. She then took the food along with her on a hike and had lunch on a scenic overlook. These choices interested me because they revealed a person's innate need to justify taking time for his or her self. This individual started by "calling in sick", she then cleaned her apartment. The choice to clean her apartment is not something a person would associate with taking a day off. Her latter two choices (buying food for a picnic, and enjoying the food on a mountain) seem more likely choices for a day off. This combination shows that she felt the need to do some productive task before enjoying herself.

Other people's responses showed a similar trend. One man decided to get a haircut, buy a new record, eat some pizza and enjoy a malt. The first choice (the haircut) was rather productive followed by three choices (music, pizza, malt) which were more self-indulgent.

There was a surprising variety of choices made. One man went to a peace pagoda, a woman read a book in a park and an elderly woman organized her photo collection. Clearly each person had a different set of interests as one might expect. The only main pattern I saw was the aforementioned need to justify taking a day off.

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As a whole the installation was interesting and well designed. There were three large screens showing videos of each of the individuals and how they chose to spend their day. Behind the screens are large posters with drawings of each person and their activities. The installation was a unique experiment which had some intriguing results.