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Task 1: Manifesto = 464 words

Task 2: Semiotics = 585 words

Task 3: Practice-based writing = 605

Total word count = 1654

Task 1: Manifesto

1. We have a duty to protect and preserve our environment and planet. We must, at all costs strive for a more sustainable way of living.
2. We must not condone the irresponsible actions of 'fast fashion' but instead should embrace new ways and ideas of how to extend the life cycle of our clothing.
3. We must not tolerate or play ignorant to the damage that we cause from the over consumption of purchasing low-cost, poor-quality clothing. We must listen to the facts about what our greed has caused, not only to our natural resources but to the living conditions of other humans.
4. We must continue to fight for the protection of animals. To boycott fashion brands that farm and kill animals for their fur. We no longer need, nor can we sustain the demand for fur farms. We must take a moral standing to defend and protect mistreated animals.
5. We must not let our own vanity and desire for status and adoration destroy our only home.
6. We must hold ourselves accountable for the damage that we have caused and contributed to without considering the future generations and the fate of the planet.
7. We must not believe that this will fix itself. We must be part of the change and make conscious choices when purchasing clothes.
8. We must understand that some of the smallest changes can have the biggest impact.

Key Statement:

3. We must not tolerate or play ignorant to the damage that we cause from the over consumption of purchasing low-cost, poor-quality clothing. We must listen to the facts about what our greed has caused, not only to our natural resources but to the living conditions of other humans.



Fig 1. Dye entering a river. Photo: RiverBlue, 2016

The phrase “Ignorance Is Bliss” was coined by the English poet Thomas Gray in 1742. This phrase has become the rule to follow for those who actively choose to deny the insurmountable and unfathomable destruction that has been forcefully implanted into developing nations by the fashion and textile industries. The over-production of “wear it once” items, fuelled by major online and high street clothing brands such as Zara, Shein and H&M, in highly developed countries have led to devastating effects on the environment. The natural resources in countries such as China are now facing severe environmental stress. “There is a joke in China that you can tell the ‘it’ color of the season by looking at the color of the rivers” says fashion designer and activist Orsola de Castro (*Riverblue, doc, 2016*). While acknowledging the spilling of red dye into a river (*fig.1*) not only seems unnatural but also serves as a reminder that the connotations of the colour red incite thoughts of bloodshed, and at its very core, these industries are killing our planet, one garment at a time.

Key statement:

2. We must not condone the irresponsible actions of 'fast fashion' but instead should embrace a more traditional approach of how to extend the life cycle of our clothing.

A survey carried out by British Wool in 2022 stated that the average British person will throw away 6 pieces of clothing a month, totalling 72 pieces a year (*fig.2*), (*British Wool, 2022*).

With rapidly changing trends and easily accessible, low-cost clothing there no longer appears to be the need to maintain the longevity of our staple wardrobe items. Shamelessly buying a new dress or shirt every weekend as to not be photographed wearing the same outfit twice. The wardrobe becomes a graveyard for unloved, unwanted, and impulsively bought clothes.

To preserve resources during WWII the British Government introduced the 'Make-do and Mend' campaign (*fig.3*). This was to reduce the consumption of clothing and encouraged people to repair or rework the items that they already owned, bringing new life to old clothes.



Fig 2. British Wool survey poster, 2022.



Fig 3. Make-do and mend, WWII propaganda poster, 1942.

Key statement:

8. We must understand that some of the smallest changes can have the biggest impact.

With the current economic uncertainty that a lot of countries are facing, it is easy to understand that people are more concerned about how they will feed their family, rather than ruminating over the life cycle of every item of clothing that they own.

It is wildly ambitious (at the present time) to suggest that individuals should only purchase organic cotton clothing or replace every synthetic material they own with natural fibres. For most, it is financially impossible. However, small steps can be taken in all households to lead a more conscientious way of living and each playing our small part in fixing a bigger problem. Climate activist Livia Firth of Eco-Age started the “30 wears” challenge in 2016. “It all starts with a simple question: will I wear this clothing item at least 30 times before I throw it out?” (Firth, 2016). A simple question to consider before thoughtlessly purchasing something that we may not need.

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List of Figures

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Figure 2: British wool survey poster, 2022. Available at:

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Task 2: Semiotics

Signs and symbols in Tarot cards

From its origins in 15th century Northern Italy, Tarot, which was originally named *Trionfi* and later *Tarocchi*, was traditionally a card playing game that became immensely popular across Europe, with further expansion resurging in the late 18th century, driven by French occultist Jean-Baptiste Alliette. Thus, leading the humble card game to gain traction within the spiritual community.

Tarot cards are now used for psychic or intuitive readings and spiritual guidance, by interpreting the images, signs and symbols displayed on the cards.

Tarot, as we know it today, has an extensive list of complex rules. Interpretations depend on its layout, also known as 'spread.' A card facing upside down, or "reversed" as it is referred to, has a distinctly different meaning to it facing the right way up.

With the layout aside, or having no prior knowledge of interpreting tarot cards, it is possible to decipher its mystical attraction through its pictorial meaning. Suggesting we look beyond the words inscribed on the card, such as 'The High Priestess' (*fig.1*) and take a more in-depth look at the signs and symbols around it and what they represent within our culture.



Fig.1 Rider-Waite Tarot 'The High Priestess', 1909.

Within tarot, 'The High Priestess' card represents knowledge, wisdom, and enlightenment. As well as trusting one's own intuition. Draped in blue robes, the High Priestess is akin to images of the Virgin Mary, an influential figure of virtue and purity. The colour blue also symbolising wisdom, intuition, and loyalty. Her robes form into a pool of water at her feet, and partially cover the moon. Within astrology, the moon is the ruling "planet" of the zodiac sign Cancer, the cardinal water sign. The moon, a powerful symbol that also represents femininity, in addition to what we perceive from Earth; a side that is light and the other dark, alongside its notable gravitational force to cause rising and ebbing tides.

"In Western society, light is seen as goodness, growth, and progress. Whereas darkness is seen as evil, stagnation, and lack of knowledge or enlightenment." (Ouwejan, 2021).

The two pillars that stand beside her also reinforce this meaning. One of them being black and the other white can represent night and day, good and evil, right and wrong. As is the equilibrium within human nature.

To further strengthen the intense femininity of this card, pomegranates hang in the background. A symbol of fertility in many cultures and links to Persephone (*fig.2*) the goddess of the underworld, who, after eating pomegranate seeds, was tricked into spending half the year living on earth and the other half in the underworld. Again, reinforcing the balance between good and evil. Always acknowledging both sides.



Fig.2 'Proserpine' D.G. Rossetti 1874.

Therefore, 'The High Priestess' can be interpreted as a card that advocates for balance, moral development, and self-reflection.

"There are things in the psyche which I do not produce, but which produce themselves and have their own life." (*Jung, 1962, as cited in Semetsky 2013*).

Semiotics are deeply rooted within tarot cards, much like the connotations of colours, symbols and images lay deeply rooted within our subconscious. "The edusemiotic structure of Tarot as a system of signs is dynamic and representative of the process of semiosis." (*Semetsky, 2013*).

Some may believe that they are unable to interpret tarot cards at first glance; however, their symbolism has now become so intrinsically intertwined with Christianity, Judaism, and astrology that it is possible to piece the decoded parts together to understand the bigger picture. By doing this, for some, tarot cards can provide clarity and direction by using the power of semiotics.

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List of Figures

Figure 1: Rider-Waite. (1909) *The High Priestess*. Major Arcana Tarot Card. Available at:

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Task 3: Practice-based Writing

Communication & Fungi

Communication /kəˌmjuːnɪˈkeɪʃn/ *n.*

1. A process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior. (*Merriam-Webster, 2024*).
2. the process of intellectual connections between individuals or groups, resulting in the transmission and interchange of information, experiences, affections, goods, and services. (*Encyclopedia, 2023*).

Much like in the way humans communicate, whether it be verbal or non-verbal, listening, written or visual, we share this behaviour with arguably the most overlooked organism on earth. Mycelium. An underground network of fungus that produce fruiting bodies, which are also their reproductive organs, which we know as the ‘mushroom’ or ‘toadstool’.

This underground network (*fig.1*) connects and communicates with other organisms such as trees, plants, animals and insects creating a symbiotic relationship.

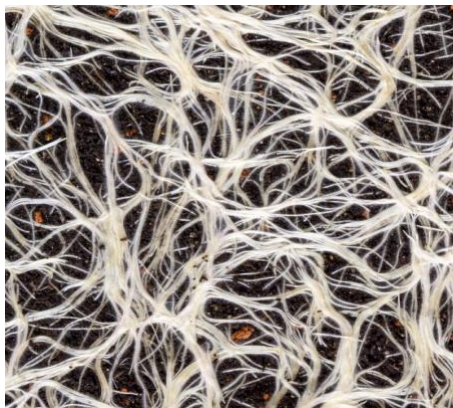


Fig. 1 Mycelium Network, M. Held, 2023.



Fig. 2 A visual representation of the internet, B. Lyon, 2003.

Humans can have the shared misconception that we are the ‘most intelligent’ organism that exists, and often underestimate the complex behaviours and intelligence of other life within our eco system. “Too often they are thought of as the inert backdrop to animal life. Yet many are capable of sophisticated behaviours that prompt us to think in new ways about what it

In 1992, ethnobotanist Terrence McKenna proposed “The Stoned Ape Theory”. A controversial theory suggesting that the consumption of psilocybin mushrooms, also known as “magic mushrooms” were the cause of a dramatic spike in the evolution of *Homo Sapiens*. “Its power is so extraordinary that psilocybin can be considered the catalyst to the human development of language.” *McKenna, 1992*.

If fungi provided us with the gift of communication, does that mean we are an extension of its mycorrhizal network? Like its relationship with plants, with its ability to supply nutrients, we too use fungi to survive. Most notably within medicine and the discovery of penicillin, which scientists now estimate has saved roughly 200 million lives world-wide.



Fig.4 'Shaggy Inkcap' S. Davies, 2021.

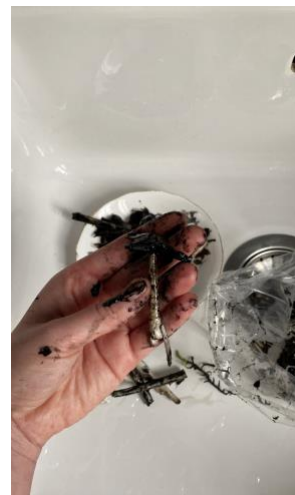


Fig.5 'Deliquescing Inkcap' S. Davies, 2021.

Fungi also provides us with other creative ways to communicate; the ‘Shaggy Inkcap’ (*Coprinus comatus*) (*fig.4*) is a fungus, that once picked, the gills start to deliquesce into a black ink-like liquid in a matter of hours (*fig.5*) which can then be used for drawing, painting and writing.

Beyond the enchanting allure of fungi, I believe that its purpose is to guide us towards further knowledge and understanding. One of the main fundamentals of communication is listening, and it is crucial that we hear what fungi is trying to tell us.

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List of Figures

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