origin stories for personas

POSITIONING AND PURPOSE OF THE PERVERSIVE DESIGN TOOL

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do you have persona problems?
“You ask 100 researchers and you will get 200 answers on what a persona is.”

“I guess what I'm trying to say is everything I "hate" about personas really has more to do with their misuse than any specific issue with personas as a design / research tool.”

“So, most times (in the past) there was a lot of data but not enough direct contact with users.”

“Personas are something PMs invoke to sound smart.”

“Our personas are just gathering dust, we spent a lot of effort and money to make them.”
where do personas come from?
they come from researchers.
know the origin story.
an origin story is...
population
what all our personas have in common

distinction
what creates difference between our personas

application
what service our personas provide
population
**population**
what all our personas have in common

**WITHOUT AN ORIGIN**
We build personas based on generalizations or taxonomies, lacking rationale and context.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job titles</th>
<th>Strategic</th>
<th>Visual</th>
<th>Functional</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>• UX researcher</td>
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<td>• Content strategist</td>
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<td>• UX copywriter</td>
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https://medium.com/@stakken/there-are-too-many-designers-cd9adea4c6d0
distinction
what creates difference between our personas

WITHOUT AN ORIGIN
We fabricate or contrive elements for the sake of variety and enlivening the persona.

When your salad keeps making jokes...
THE BUSINESS

EXPERIENCES
Processes and tasks

APTIMUTES
Abilities and knowledge

ATTITUDES
Motivations and beliefs

EMOTIONS
Feelings and aspirations

THE THOUGHT-PROVOKER
(The Tactician, etc.)

THE RELUCTANT PRESENTER
(The Showman, etc.)

THE SERIAL PRESENTER
(The First-Timer, etc.)

THE TEN-MINUTE TALKER
(The 45-minute Presenter, etc.)

THE BUSINESS

THE PEOPLE

FASHIONED

FUNDAMENTAL

@zarlashtah
application
application

what service our personas provide

WITHOUT AN ORIGIN
We default to vague language and categories that can lead to misuse or misinterpretations.

LIKES
Elegant solutions that are flexible and achieve business goals.
**THE BUSINESS**

**EXPERIENCES**
Processes and tasks

**APPTITUDES**
Abilities and knowledge

**ATTITUDES**
Motivations and beliefs

**EMOTIONS**
Feelings and aspirations

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**THE PEOPLE**

**EXPERIENCES**
Processes and tasks

**APPTITUDES**
Abilities and knowledge

**ATTITUDES**
Motivations and beliefs

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Feelings and aspirations

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**RESEARCHER’S WORK**
making the persona’s relatable

**DESIGNER’S WORK**
using persona to inform the offering

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**RESEARCHER’S WORK**
making the persona’s sustainable

**DESIGNER’S WORK**
using persona as inspiration source

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@zarlashtah
distribute the origin story.
population
what all our personas have in common

distinction
what creates difference between our personas

application
what service our personas provide
some reads.

Describing Personas, Indi Young, 2016
https://medium.com/@indiyoung/describing-personas-af992e3fc527

The Effectiveness of Using Personas in Product Design, Frank Long, 2009

Personas Considered Harmful, Nick De Voil, 2010
http://www.devoil.com/papers/PersonasConsideredHarmful.pdf

Why Personas Fail, Kim Flaherty, 2018
https://www.nngroup.com/articles/why-personas-fail/

Iterative Personas, Adrian Howard, 2016
https://medium.com/quietstars/iterative-persona-4e71318887aa


Boo! Hiss! Personas, BayCHI Birds of a Feather, 2018
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nikmQgjAZgU
thank you.

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