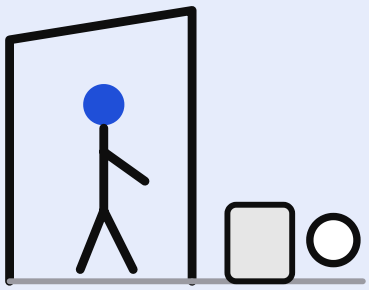
Specialty

Experiential futures

Designs fragments of an imagined future, such as objects, spaces or performances, so people can experience it with their senses and talk about it.



In Spanish
Futuros experienciales

Origin
Candy (2010)

What problem it addresses

Futures are usually told through reports and figures: they feel abstract and hard to relate to.

Principles

Lived, not read
The future is presented as something you can touch, walk through or hear.

A fragment is enough
A single object or scene evokes a whole world.

To start a conversation
The experience opens a dialogue about what future we want.

An example

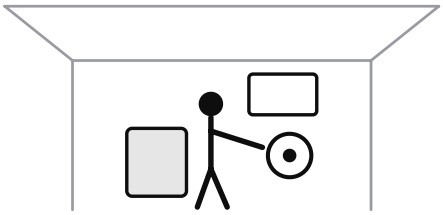
Two ways to share the same future scenario.

A report



Text, charts and figures about what life could be like twenty years from now. **You read it.**

A scene



A space with objects from that future that the audience walks through and touches. **You live it.**

This is how Candy and Dunagan turned a scenario into an experience with The People Who Vanished, at Emerge (Arizona State University, 2012).

How it works

1 

A described future is abstract and easy to ignore.

2 

A fragment you can touch makes it concrete.

3 

Living it makes the conversation about it deeper.

Applications in design

✓ Use it like this

Turn a scenario into an object or a small scene and let the team use it before deciding.

✗ Avoid

Staging something spectacular without a question about the future behind it.

Don't fall for it

Record what people say and feel during the experience: it is the most valuable result.

Connections

Builds on

- Image of the future

Uses these methods

- The Thing From The Future

Authors and works

2010	**Stuart Candy**	Defined experiential scenarios in his doctoral thesis.
2017	**Stuart Candy and Jake Dunagan**	Explained how they designed The People Who Vanished.

Sources

Original sources

- Candy, S. (2010). The futures of everyday life: Politics and the design of experiential scenarios [Doctoral dissertation, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa].
- Candy, S., & Dunagan, J. (2017). Designing an experiential scenario: The People Who Vanished. Futures, 86, 136–153. View source (https://doi.org/10.1016/j.futures.2016.05.006)

Last reviewed: October 25, 2026

Atlas público de diseño, de Adriana Ojeda. Texto e ilustraciones bajo licencia CC BY 4.0.