

This manifesto, this entire book, is such a great reframing of classic Silicon Valley mantras and culture. “Move fast break things” is about the least artful design philosophy and Ge has done a great job offering the alternative. Nothing might be more true than page 405 “WE WANT MORE!!” Silicon Valley is often built on a “more is more” philosophy. Do we need a home that we can talk to? No, but more tech is more better. Principles 8.2 and 8.3 should be taught in every CS class: Technology is never an end in itself and people are never a means to an end. I take Ge as a no-bullshit kinda guy and I wonder what he makes of the software industry in this lens. My personal perspective has always penned the software engineering game as acting in the exact opposite of these ideas. People, users, data, these are the means to our end, ultimate wealth and power. I know not much about OpenAI’s GPT, but my friend who is a little more well read on it speaks to Principle 8.4. Essentially he has explained to me that while machine learning has its drawbacks including overfitting and bias and so on and so forth, the idea with GPT is just “overfit the entire world.” That’s why we have seen the massive increase in parameter counts, into the trillions now. It’s just massive overfitting. I cannot think of anything more of a blunt instrument than that. Brute forcing intelligence, especially an intelligence that sucks in the souls of real humans as it trains itself. Is this not anti-poetry? However what was very poetic was the coming together of so many earlier points and characters throughout the book right at the very end here. I felt like this was a very resounding conclusion to the theses made throughout the book and loved the writing throughout. Ge’s description of the sublime as existing at “the razor edge between life and the ethereal beauty hidden beneath its surface...” that’s right. This made me have a very interesting reaction as a recent Chuck and ChuGL developer who has had to deal with plenty of razor edges, with things hidden behind them.. There is a three dimensionality to this description which fits perfectly in with our class and also Principle 8.22 that Design is born of Life, inseparable from it. The elimination of the barrier between design and human existence is among the most important cases made by this book and the exploration of the many different sorts of sublime in the last few pages really brings the reader back to the real world, which is really the point of it all. What we make, makes us. We must do it correctly. This book was phenomenal. I loved the sentiments as well as the visual accents via comics given throughout. Might artful design guide us to a new era of kind technology, maybe a bit more poetic.