



CLUSTER  
**2:**  
GRAPHIC DESIGN:  
INTERDISCIPLINARITY

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## ETHICS OF A DESIGNER IN A GLOBAL ECONOMY (EDGE): A COURSE ON ETHICS, DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

What is 'good' design? What constitutes an ethical design decision? Aristotle argued that an object is 'good' if it fulfills its purpose. This philosophy dictates then, for example, that a well-designed knife is 'good' if it cuts effectively. However if the same knife was used in the taking of an innocent life, the concept of a 'good' design gets murky. Ethics are based on moral choices and the reasons people give to support their belief systems. Ethics also help us appreciate and evaluate our choices and allow us to be more cognizant of how we can better shape our future. When one looks at how design connects to ethics, it is fairly evident that a direct relationship exists. Every object and system in our daily lives has been intentionally created through a design process. With that in mind the designers' power to enact a positive or negative ethical or equitable change is profound. This paper (details the results of the fall 2007 EDGE course) argues that the more the design student explores the ethical questions posed previously, the more they will be able to make informed moral design decisions in the professional world. This paper further explains how and why EDGE was structured into two distinct but connected modules. These divisions of study allowed the students to address the course's principal argument by exploring design's relationship to cultural and racial stereotypes and also to environmental degradation. Finally, the paper compares the traditional paradigm of design curriculum constructed on the philosophical models of egoism and hedonism (increasing student's skills to fuel economic/personal success) with a more utilitarian and relativist version of design ethics where good design is conditional and provides 'the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people.'

**Jennings** is an Associate Professor of Graphic Design at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Jennings frequently lectures on visual literacy, popular culture, and the visual communication found in Hip Hop culture. Jennings is also the co-author of the graphic novel *The Hole: Consumer Culture* and a co-founder of Eye Trauma, a web based collective of sequential artists, activists, and curators who seek to expand the public's perception of the comics medium.

**Benson** is currently an Assistant Professor of Graphic Design at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His work/research has appeared in *HOW Magazine*, *Creative Review*, *Communication Arts* and will be featured in *Blogs: Mad About Design* (Maomao Publications), *SustainAble: A Handbook of Materials and Applications for Graphic Designers and Their Clients* (Rockport Publishing) and *Reproduce and Revolt* (Soft Skull Press). He has lectured internationally on the topic of sustainable design and his work has appeared in various galleries from Portland, OR to Beirut, Lebanon. Benson received his BFA in graphic and industrial design from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor in 1998. His work professionally has been focused on creating enriching digital experiences on the web and environmentally friendly print and packaging material. In 2006 Benson received his MFA from the University of Texas at Austin with a concentration in design and social responsibility. His research is available at [www.re-nourish.com](http://www.re-nourish.com), which provides a depository for practical information about sustainable materials and design theory.

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## DEFINING PLACE BRANDING: A CRITICAL EXAMINATION AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR GRAPHIC DESIGNERS

Urban environments are in a state of constant change. Issues such as social integration, economic stratification, ethnic and racial composition, and immigration, test the traditional image of the city. This perceptual shift has given rise to a new method of identifying cities, the place brand. Over the past 25 years, the number of city-based place brands has increased nearly ten-fold. Place branding takes cue from the practice of modern consumer product branding, which began in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. The practice of place branding, much like consumer product branding, draws heavily upon advertising and marketing professionals to communicate and connect with the public. Traditionally, graphic, information, and communication designers have worked closely with advertising and marketing professionals to develop brand campaigns. Place branding, however, is different than branding automobiles, jeans, or lipstick. Flavors of other brand, place-making practices and customs influence the development and evolution of contemporary place branding, and the role of the designer must adapt to these shifting demands. This information shift and focal re-alignment has created a gap in knowledge for most designers. Compounding the issue, the moniker 'place branding' remains vague and a touchpoint for charged debate. As such the definition of 'place brand' remains elusive for most design professionals. This paper outlines the five main types of place brands as a mode of moving toward a clearer definition of place branding, and provides a brief historical context for designers and evaluators of contemporary place brands.

**Bitterman**, MArch, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor in the School of Design at the Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, New York. Dr. Bitterman is an expert on branding, identity, and identity systems, and particularly place branding. Much of his research focuses on the accessibility of branding and identity systems for people with physical, cognitive, cultural, or situational impairments. Dr. Bitterman recently completed a three-year research program funded by the National Endowment for the Arts to design an identity program for universally designed spaces, places, products, and systems. He is the founding editor and current editor-in-chief of *Multi: the Journal of Diversity and Pluralism in Design*. *Multi* is an international peer-reviewed, journal that examines issues of social responsibility in design practice and design education. The journal can be accessed at <http://multi.cias.rit.edu>.

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## DESIGN & ECOLOGICAL LITERACY: PART OF THE SOLUTION

Climate change is a problem that will require a response from all sectors of society. Design is already primed to change and help inspire systemic transformation once we decide to engage in a meaningful manner with the environmental crisis. Thanks to the work of researchers studying the interface between ecological systems and human culture we now have the tools to catalyze a transition. Graphic design must embrace its unique ability to facilitate change by engaging with the emergent concept of ecological literacy, communicate key concepts and help initiate a wide-reaching social learning process (Manzini 2007).

Ecological literacy is an understanding of ecological systems and an awareness of how society operates within natural imperatives (Orr 2002, pp. 92-93). Ecological literacy creates a conceptual basis for integrated thinking about sustainability. Informed by ecological systems, industry is transformed by ideas such as cradle-to-cradle, waste=food, and the necessity of staying within the current solar income (Hawken 2003, p. 182).

Researchers have developed foot-printing and life cycle analysis tools that can make assessments of the environmental impacts of a system, design, process or product. These tools help communicators develop tangible characterizations of the often mis-used term 'sustainability'. One Planet Living™ offers a clear vision of living within the planet's carrying capacity (WWF 2006, p. 4). Meanwhile ecological economics offers accounting tools that could be the basis for carbon reduction programmes (Poritt 2005, pp. 259-262). Communication designers have an important role to play in making these tools & principles meaningful to diverse audiences and integrating these concepts into the public arena.

We are at the precipice of an unprecedented ecological crisis. The design industry needs to recognize that a societal level challenge to avoid climatic tipping points is different from other issues that compete for industry attention. The speed, scope, and scale of the communication challenge are critical (Gore 2008). So far we are losing—evidenced by the significant gap between the proscriptive action recommended by scientists and our collective response. Embedding ecological awareness into the cultural mindset is a formidable task. On a positive note, within this upheaval is the potential for profound renewal (Homer Dixon 2006, p. 23). Designers will no longer be capable of feigning innocence in an era with a challenge as great as climate change. Design motivates action and our actions have implications; designers are implicit. Design is still part of the problem, but it is capable of becoming part of the solution. It is up to us—now, to make it happen.

[ Manzini, E 2007, *The Scenerio of a Multi-local Society: Creative Communities, Active Networks, and Enabling Solutions*, [in] Chapman, J, & Gant, N, (eds.) *Designers, Visionaries, and Other Stories*, Earthscan, vol. 78, London. / Orr, D 1992, *Ecological Literacy*, State of New York Press, Albany. / Hawken, P 2007, *Blessed Unrest*, Penguin, London. / WWF 2006, *LIVING Planet Report 2006*, WWF, Switzerland. / Poritt, J 2005, *Capitalism as if the World Matters*, Earthscan, London. / Gore, A 2008, *New Thinking on the Climate Crisis*, TED2008 [online], Monterey, Available: [www.ted.com/talks/view/id/243](http://www.ted.com/talks/view/id/243) / Homer Dixon, T 2006, *The Upside of Down*, Souvenir Press, London. ]

**Boehnert** is founding director of EcoLabs (an ecological literacy initiative: [www.eco-labs.org](http://www.eco-labs.org)). EcoLabs is a network and platform for designers that is developing a range of projects to visually communicate complex environmental concepts and help instigate systemic change towards a low carbon future.

She is a graphic designer at IAMBE design, a south London based studio with a focus on sustainability communications. She has written in the design press for *Eye Magazine*, *Varoom*, *IdN*, and *Design Week*. She has an MA in Graphic Design from London College of Communication (2005), and a first degree in Fine Arts.

Her work is informed her involvement with the Transition Movement that engages local communities with planning for energy descent and re-localization. She is a member of the UK Systems Society. She will be starting a Ph.D. programme in Autumn 2008: Design & Dissemination of Ecological Literacy (dependent on AHRC scholarship approval).

Riitta Brusila  
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## LOOKING FOR SIGNIFICATION

The focus of my presentation is on how signification and narrative are constructed in layout (graphic design). I question how graphic designers or visual communication designers construct a story by arranging and manipulating their materials, especially in the printed context of newspapers and magazines.

There are four logical stages in the process of producing a media message: discourse, design, production and distribution (Kress & van Leeuwen 2001, pp. 4-5). Design is understood as a multimodal function. Discourses are socially constructed knowledge of (some aspect of) reality. Any discourse may be realized in different ways. Kress and van Leeuwen see discourse as being relatively independent of genre, mode and design. Design stands midway between content and expression. It is the conceptual side of expression and the expressive side of conception. Design allows the socially constructed knowledge to be realized in social action (2001, p. 5).

Within this context, design can have different ideas about how the material expresses itself in different practical contexts and for different audiences. From a semiotic point of view we can speak about codes and coding in graphic design/visual communication. Coding brings out genres and styles, which classify the final product in certain categories. It can also answer to the receivers' expectations and make them respond to and read the material. In this case visual narratives are constructed by modes of visual expression (size, place, color, intertextual relationships). They are interpreted as a part of a story together with the thematic content.

Production refers to the way the expression is organized and articulated in the actual material. Often we cannot distinguish between design/mode and production/medium. Graphic designers design/encode modes for media. The most important skill for a designer is to understand how modes are used to create a layout in a medium. Through research we can find out how design—in this case, layout—functions, seeing it as a hypothetical way that may be received by the receiver/user/reader does.

[ Kress & van Leeuwen 2001, 'Multimodal Discourse' [in] *The Modes and Media of Contemporary Communication*, Oxford University Press, London. ]

**Brusila** is teaching and researching visual communication and graphic design at University of Lapland. She is tutoring master and doctoral students. Dr. Brusila has studied at the University of Art and Design, Helsinki (1987 M.A., visual communication) and at the University of Tampere (1997, Doctor of social sciences, communication research and visual journalism). She has published articles and books about typography (in Finnish). She has also translated some of Jan Tschichold's texts into Finnish. Brusila has been chairman of the board of Grafia (Finnish Graphic Designer's Association) 2003-2007.

**Raquel Camacho Garcia**  
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## MODEL OF ANALYSIS OF THE IMAGE: PROPOSAL FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN INTEGRATED AND STRUCTURED MODEL FOR IMAGE ANALYSIS

There exists a lot of literature across different disciplines that highlights the importance of the semantic construction of the identity and the use of the same concepts. However, according to this bibliography, there is evidence of a lack of cohesion at the moment of defining concepts, and the lack of measure and evaluation instruments. The following investigation tries to make a proposal of parametric, hierarchic and interdisciplinary integration of bibliography to make operative and coherent all theoretical approaches.

We propose a model called First Integration Phase, FIP, to contribute with certain clarity to the current state of disorder, and tries to make a systematic theoretical model for order all design variables. Moreover, we expect that it could be useful both for design practice and to other disciplines that has common elements to design practice.

Firstly, this research tries to demonstrate the existence of a high disparity between different disciplinary areas. Secondly, it proposes how we might be able to analyze these areas from different points of view.

### DEVELOPMENT

As the first step of this research, we compared between terms used in design bibliographies and disciplines related to design bibliographies, for example, Semiotic, Image Theory, Communication Theory, Advertising Communication, Advertising Theory and Evaluation, and advertising efficiency.

Our initial exploration of the bibliographies revealed an absence of constructed tools and a lack of clear parameters, the utilization of different semantic fields to name the same concepts, the mixture of concepts with more general areas, and the existence of a hierarchic chaos in the majority of the discipline areas.

As a first possible solution to this semantic chaos, we realized the ISIAAC, an Integration System of Image Analysis and Comprehension. This forms part of a theoretical methodology. The ISIAAC is a diagram of categories that arranges the hierarchies and discipline ranges of the analytical parameters used from an integrated discipline vision that allows the analysis of concepts from the same point of view.

Concepts proposed by different authors of the same discipline area are tested with the ISIAAC, with the aim to organize the different disciplines under the same criteria and strata, by the arrangement of general's criteria to particularly ones, based on strata and ranges.

The result of testing all disciplines by the ISIAAC is named First Integration Phase (FIP). This First Integration Phase reveals different disciplines, authors, diagrams and relations between disciplines expectations, and gives answers to demonstrate our initial hypothesis.

**Garcia** was born in Igualada, Barcelona and lives in Collbató, Barcelona. Licensed in 'Bellas Artes' of the University of Barcelona. She studies Advanced in Research in design, crediting the research sufficiency at the Department of design and image, University of Barcelona. She is a teacher of Theory of Design, Theory of the Image and Projects in the different schools of art and design in Barcelona.

**Arjona** was born in Antequera, Málaga and lives in Mataró, Barcelona. Awarded a doctorate in 'Bellas Artes' / Design in 2002. He is an adviser and consultant in strategies and project definition of communication and design. He is a project holder of Graphical Design of the University of Barcelona, Department of design and image. He teaches and researches Corporate Identity, schematic-informative Graph and typography and runs design, communication, marketing, 'Analysis and critique of the design' courses within the doctoral program (Research in Design) at the University of Barcelona. Involved in scientific communication, in the Master Official, Bologna, Biodiversidad Animal.

**Laura Chessin**  
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## GRAPHIC DESIGN AS MATERIAL CULTURE

This paper will assume a view of graphic design pedagogy that draws from the language and observations of documentary studies and anthropology. This view will look beyond the isolated study of form and personal expression to a more interdisciplinary approach that looks at design in the context of the culture in which it functions. This paper will argue that the understanding and study of material culture adds validity and substance to graphic design activity, the visual means through which culture is communicated and expressed. I will address the varieties of experience and aesthetics each student brings into their design process and raise the question of how well the formal educational setting is able to embrace and nurture this range. This paper will address how there are both conflicts and rich rewards in attempting to build a curriculum that reinforces well-defined formal principals, and embraces individual aesthetics.

I will present results from an interdisciplinary course cross-listed as both a Women's Studies and Graphic Design course, titled Documentary Studies: Gender and Identity; and provide as concrete examples the work from a Senior Seminar for Graphic Design majors at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia, in the US.

In the Senior Seminar course we explored issues of personal identity and culture. Readings included both fiction and non-fiction texts, and each student was asked to define an area of study relative to their own personal identification of cultural identity. The areas of study reflected the general population of this urban campus, which draws students from a wide sampling of cultures, both native and foreign. Each student was engaged in a semester-long design of a 'zine for which they generated all content, both text and images. Students self identified such cultures as Mennonite, ex-Mormon, Punk, Chinese-American, Pennsylvania farmsteader, Iranian-American.

As a link to design activity, the Senior Seminar allowed students to evaluate their own formative set of values and to explore ways in which personal and cultural biases guide their aesthetic, and their approach to both formal and conceptual problem solving. We explored how culture, aesthetics and the material expressions of culture are finely interwoven. The work of this class supports the argument that design activity is enriched by an understanding of the nuances of differences in material culture, and how this recognition of difference both challenges and compliments a structured graphic design curriculum. As a form of *Material Culture*, graphic design activity goes beyond a form of visual communication and acts not only as a purveyor of culture but also a mediator of personal and cultural identity.

**Chessin** teaches courses in Graphic Design that include Typography and Publication Design as well as Sophomore-level design fundamentals and Senior Seminar. She teaches an interdisciplinary documentary studies course cross-listed as both a Women's Studies and Graphic Design course, exploring issues of gender and identity. She has produced a variety of photo-documentary completed the design of a book documenting the variety of traditional folkways in the state of Virginia and designed the *Material Culture* exhibitions for the National Folk Festival. She studies both classical violin, and tradition Appalachian old-time fiddle.

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## A NEW CREATIVE PROCESS: FUSING SOUND AND VISION IN GRAPHIC DESIGN

Experience is more than just visual. All senses affect our overall perception of the things we see every day. The McGurk effect substantiates that our perception of an event is dominated by the unity of multiple senses—seeing and hearing (McGurk & MacDonald 1976). Since the boundary of graphic design continues to expand due to the accessibility of modern technology, the new generation often needs to work beyond the visual realm on web design, interactive design, or movie title sequences. Is the conventional design process adequate to fulfill today's interactive, multi-sensory and interdisciplinary needs?

Fusing sound and vision in filmmaking is widely practiced (Chion 1994). In graphic design, some readings descriptively acknowledge the kinetic aspect of typography in motion graphics (Bellantoni & Woolman 2001); some provide technical instructions on the use of sound in software; some address the essence of creating rhythm in composition with line, dots and shapes (Hiebert 1992). However, we rarely utilize sound as a creative component in design thinking or explore sound as critical component in the totality of communication. The ABA musical structure has once been theoretically used to examine the consistency within the grid system in *Typographic Design* (Carter, Day and Meggs 1993). With digital technology, how may designers extract new principles from visual-aural synchronization to offer a new creative guideline with more design control?

Implementing the dimension of sound reinforces the structuring of time as a design element. It not only offers significant opportunities to strengthen the dynamism of visual communication in a trans-disciplinary level but also to unify different sensory channels along a time-based structure. Applying this time-based structure to vision and sound categorizes the two periphery channels in a co-related taxonomy based on their narrative meaning, functionality, and sequential orders in a presentation. The 'visibility' in this time-based form reveals the visual limitations and highlights the possibilities of visual language in unity with sound. A new theoretical guideline is proposed in this paper for optimizing senses in storytelling and for integrating vision and sound in the creative process. This fusing of visible image and invisible sound advances our understanding in visually representing invisible/abstract information.

If the role of the terms 'experience design', 'embodiment' and 'emotion design' played in design become as significant as 'less is more' or 'form follows function', then the notion of fusing aural sensory input to visual design is definitely worth exploring. It is time to think beyond visual.

[ Bellantoni, J & Woolman, M 2001, *Type in Motion: Innovations in Digital Graphics*, Rizzoli, New York. / Burrow, J 2000, 'Time, Motion, Symbol. Line', *Eye Magazine*, vol. 27, no. 37, pp. 30-37. / Carter, R, Day, B & Meggs, P 1993, 'Syntax and Communication', [in] *Typographic Design*, John Wiley & Sons Inc, Canada, pp. 43-84. / Chion, M 1994, *Audio-Vision: Sound on screen*, Columbia University Press, New York. / Heller, S, (ed.) 2001, *The Education of an E-designer*, Allworth Press, New York. / Hiebert, KJ 1992, *Graphic Design Processes*, Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York. / McGurk, H & MacDonald, J 1976, 'Hearing Lips and Seeing Voices', in *Nature*, vol. 264, December, pp. 746-748. ]

**Cheung** completed both his undergraduate and master's degrees in visual communication design at Arizona State University. He is currently a Ph.D. candidate in the school of design with a concentration in Arts, Media, and Engineering at ASU. His research topic focuses on the theory and methodology of integrating the element of time with visual-aural synchronization in design. As a designer and artist, Cheung has had the benefit of working in several environments since 1998, including two different design studios, an in-house advertising department (Fender®) and at ASU teaching graphic design foundation courses for seven semesters. His studio, Unfoldingidea, was established in 2001 as a creative venture specializing in print collateral. He is currently the creative director at the ASU's Office of Vice President for Research and Economic Affairs and his paintings are on display at the Rive Gauche Gallery on Main Street in Scottsdale, Arizona.

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## COLLABORATING THROUGH AESTHETICS: LOOKING AT THE ROLE OF AESTHETICS IN INTERDISCIPLINARY INTERACTION DESIGN PROJECTS INVOLVING COMMUNICATION DESIGNERS

In many interaction design projects collaboration is common between software developers, interaction designers, web designers and communication designers.

In this presentation I will use a case study of a commercial interaction design project to explore the relationships between aesthetics and identity design in digital artifacts. In particular, I will draw on the first-hand experience in the collaborative process where misunderstandings around the role of the communication designer lead to failures in the design of the digital artifact.

The communication designer's role was to redesign the user interface of the digital artifact—a web-based tool to support collaborative document authoring—whilst simultaneously creating an identity and surrounding communications (website, brochures, etc) to brand and market the product. The client wanted their product to be clean, simple, human and friendly; the resulting identity and surrounding communications reflected these qualities. However, the software interface reflected none of these qualities, resulting in a product that promised an experience that is easy and relaxed, but delivered one that is clunky, confusing and incoherent.

**WHAT WENT WRONG?**

The designer, client and developer didn't work together to design these qualities into the digital artifact. The role of the communication designer was limited to providing a style-sheet to apply colour and images to already-existing elements for the system. The interface had a new coat of paint and a shiny new sign, but underneath, the foundations were still the same. The case study highlights a perception by others outside of the field that the practice of communication design is a surface activity. This perception disregards the deeper connection between the surface and structural elements of digital artifacts as well as the design of their surrounding identity.

This case study opens up the discussion on understanding the aesthetics of digital artifacts. Discourse on aesthetic computing sheds light on the aesthetic nature of digital design artifacts. Jonas Löwgren's account from an interaction design perspective suggests that, 'we need to realize that a digital artifact is constituted primarily not by its static visual design but by its dynamic gestalt—the character of the interaction it allows over time' (Fishwick et. al. 2005)

Löwgren illustrates examples of aesthetic qualities used in digital artifacts, one being the notion of seductiveness, which describes the process of enticement, relationship and fulfillment between people and artifacts. This notion is not restricted to digital artifacts, and was first introduced to interaction design from looking at the way brands work.

Such parallels in discourses in aesthetics from interaction design and communication design bring opportunities for deeper understandings between practices in interaction design projects. These shared spaces for understanding could catalyse new ways of looking at interdisciplinary practice, and afford new ways of looking at respective disciplines of communication design and interaction design.

[ Fishwick, P & Diehl, S 2005, 'Perspectives on Aesthetic Computing', *Leonardo*, vol. 38, no. 2, pp. 133-141. ]

**Dunbar** is a Ph.D. student at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia. His research project, entitled *Beyond Skin Deep* explores what it means to be a communication designer collaborating in interaction design projects ... or is it an interaction designer from a background in communication design? Through his practice, he began looking at 'skinning'—reshaping the outer surface of a digital artifact. Through several projects, he moves from concrete of 'skin' to the more abstract notions of identity and strategy to the meta of 'user experience' and 'dynamic gestalt'. He is supported by RMIT University and the Australasian CRC for Interaction Design (ACID).

**Lisa Fontaine**  
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## MISSING IN ACTION? GRAPHIC DESIGN IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

This paper will identify the many missed opportunities for graphic designers to solve problems in the built environment, and will describe how one university has responded to this potential growth area within the discipline by developing a new graduate level degree in Environmental Graphic Design.

Graphic Design is increasingly needed in the built environment, with expanding demands for branded environments and visitor experiences. But we are frequently not consulted or included on projects where we could be of great assistance. Many graphic designers are hesitant to expand into built space; not surprisingly, since few schools address Environmental Graphic Design in their coursework. Exemplary work *does* exist in the area of sign design, and professional design associations such as the Society of Environmental Graphic Design in the U.S. and the Sign Design Society in the U.K. support this specialized area within the graphic design profession. Unfortunately, however, the fact remains that only a small fraction of the 3-dimensional visual communication opportunities incorporate the expertise of graphic designers.

Three-dimensional graphic design opportunities include wayfinding signs, interpretive museum exhibits, branded environments, and place-making initiatives in public spaces. But professionals in *other* disciplines often complete these design projects, since they seldom view graphic design as a unique skill. Common situations include:

- Commercial fabricators creating signs for small businesses that neglect the basic principles of communication and composition, therefore failing to express the client's message clearly and accurately.

- Architects designing wayfinding sign systems with no experience in typographic hierarchy, legibility, or font selection.

- Landscape architects designing streetscape projects for communities with little regard for coordinating graphic identity within the streetscape.

- City planners developing 'design guidelines' for cities and commercial districts with little concern for signage recommendations. This allows poorly designed signs to be approved even though they bring no added value to the district or the business.

- Educators designing interpretive and interactive exhibits for history and science museum without regard for information design methods for ensuring clarity and readability. As a result, these well-intentioned exhibits can be misused, misinterpreted or ignored by users that cannot comprehend their messages.

Iowa State University has responded to these missed opportunities in graphic design by developing a new interdisciplinary masters degree program (the first of its kind in the US) in Environmental Graphic Design. The paper describes this new curricular direction, and how it attempts to cross the boundaries between 2 and 3-dimensional design.

**Fontaine** is an Associate Professor of Graphic Design at Iowa State University, where she has taught two and three-dimensional graphic design for 21 years. Recently she helped to develop the university's new graduate-level curriculum in Environmental Graphic Design, the first program of its kind in the United States. She serves on the Education Committee for the Society of Environmental Graphic Design. Professor Fontaine directs downtown revitalization initiatives as well as placemaking, exhibition design, and wayfinding design projects for communities in Iowa and the Midwest, throughout Iowa. In addition to environmental graphic design, she teaches courses in branding, symbol design, and research methods. She speaks at many professional conferences to show the connection between graphic design and the built environment. Ongoing research includes visual analysis of retail districts in large and small communities across the US and Europe.

**Elizabeth Guffey**  
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## POST POSTERS? COMMUNICATION DESIGN AND THE PRODUCTION OF SOCIAL SPACE

Once a staple of visual communications, today the poster's continuing relevance is contested. On the one hand, art historians and curators often assume that posters continue to plaster streets and thoroughfares as they once did in the nineteenth century. Designers, on the other hand, have begun referring to the form as a 'dead medium' whose function has been usurped by postcards and email blasts. This paper argues for a middle ground, suggesting that while pronouncements of its demise are overrated, the poster's purpose is transforming. Apprehending this change requires interrogating the poster, not in terms of appearance or messaging potential, but rather in regards to its social role in the production of space.

In *The Production of Space* (1991), Henri Lefebvre argues that space is not inert or neutral; rather, he conceives space as a literal construct that is produced through ongoing social activity. Lefebvre largely engages space as a theoretical proposition but posters can concretize these ideas. First developed in the dense urban landscapes of European and American cities in the mid-nineteenth century, the poster was a by-product of the industrial revolution. Moreover, we could argue that posters contributed to a new geography of readership that encompassed dense urban centers, the growth of free market capitalism, and increased literacy.

But the conditions that helped form the poster have forever changed. Indeed, the poster has repeatedly been pronounced 'dead' over the last one hundred years. Inventions like the radio, television and automobile each configured public communications and public space in new ways. Newer forms of media, for example, mass-market publications, and especially the rise of the Internet, continue to challenge posters' communicative power. But posters have hardly disappeared. In many design circles it functions as the historical and cultural equivalent of how framed painting traditionally figured in the fine arts. Moreover, museum and gallery shows, festivals, design magazines and annual competitions encourage avant-garde poster design.

Posters, though, can also describe changing attitudes toward public and private space. They still communicate effectively in densely populated public spaces. But over the last century public space has increasingly privatized; poster hanging is increasingly limited by 'post no bills signs'. Conversely, however, the poster has colonized interior spaces; posters today hang as often on college dorm walls as street corners. Indeed, using the example of the poster, we might also argue that while public space is becoming private, so too is private space is increasingly public.

[ Lefebvre, D 1991, *The Production of Space*, trans. Nicholson-Smith, D, Blackwell, Oxford, UK. ]

**Guffey** is Professor of Art History at the State University of New York, Purchase. Her area of specialization is nineteenth and twentieth century design history; her most recent book, *Retro: The Culture of Revival* (Reaktion 2006), traces new forms of nostalgia in art, design and material culture. Professor Guffey is the author of numerous articles on design and will also be the founding editor of *Design and Culture* (appearing spring, 2009). She is also president of the Design Studies Forum, USA.

**Dawn M. Hachenski**Associate Professor of Graphic Design, James Madison University,  
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## 'THE MANGLE OF PRACTICE': ASSEMBLAGES OF DESIGN, SCIENCE, HISTORY & NATURE

### Who works alone?

All designers collaborate. That is a necessary condition of practicing in a world of teams and clients and fabricators. But the mechanical fact of our interdependence with others is the simplest mode of collaboration. It is a necessary condition. When we formed our practice, Hopscotch Studio—two design faculty in a School of Art and Art History, one 2-dimensional and graphic, the other 3-dimensional and architectural—interested in exploring hybrid modes of teaching and multi-disciplinary practice, we had something more radical in mind. Borrowing concepts developed by the philosopher of science Bruno Latour in his essay 'Why has Critique Run out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern' (2004), we are developing an alternative model of collaboration.

We have come to see our design collaboration—Hopscotch Studio—as a choreography of agency, forces, actions, and effects.

With this understanding, the role for the designer in the creative process needs to be reconceived. No longer the Master at his tapestry-covered table. No longer even the leader of the team. Again extending Latour, the designer becomes 'the one who assembles ... the one who offers the participants arenas in which to gather' (p. 246). In our minds, it is a process perhaps best described as a choreography. The designer actively gathers up the assemblages—constructing forums for the emergence of new concepts; distributing agency among the participants (objects, systems, and people); connecting networks, and cultivating things fragile & emergent. A 'multiplication not subtraction' (Latour 2004, p. 248).

Our work on an exhibition for the South River Science Team in Waynesboro, Virginia, USA was a demonstration of this collaborative model of a design practice; one which is affirmative, choreographic, and generative. Affirmative in that we begin in optimism about what might be, and with admiration for the complexity of that which already is. Choreographic in that we imagine our roles as designers not as 'creators' but rather as assemblers and connectors, facilitating an intertwined dance of forces, materials, processes, historical traces, scientists, publics and generative in seeking to cultivate things fragile and emergent.

[Latour, B 2004, 'Why has Critique Run out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern', *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 30, no. 2, pp. 225-248.]

**Hachenski** is an Associate Professor of Graphic Design at James Madison University in Virginia and is co-founder of Hopscotch Studio, a creative collaborative design firm. Her research interests include letterpress typography, history of design, artist books, exhibition design, and multi-disciplinary education. Her work has been recognized by the American Institute of Graphic Arts and *HOW! Magazine*, is placed in permanent collections such as the Newberry Library in Chicago, Yale University, and Rochester Institute of Technology and has been exhibited at the National Building Museum in Washington, DC, among others. After collaborating within the School of Art and Art History, Hachenski is planning to collaborate with a JMU music faculty member. The course will be team-taught and the content will cover composition through the similarities of music and design structures. The course is taught through the Institute for Visual Studies and will be open to music, art, and graphic design students.

**Daniel** is a designer and architect and co-founder of Hopscotch Studio, a creative collaborative design firm. He teaches interior and industrial design at James Madison University in Virginia. His research interests include contemporary design theory, post-war modern architecture, automobile landscapes, and turn of the century interior technologies. Last summer, he spent a beautiful lazy day kayaking down the South River.

**Russell Kennedy**

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## A STATE OF MIND OR A MIND OF STATE? INTERDISCIPLINARITY: A BROADER DESIGN CONTEXT UNITES GOVERNMENT WITH THE PROFESSION

The paper from this abstract will inquire into the promotion and positioning of design around the world with the specific purpose of informing the development of a National design strategy for Australia.

Design is now referred to holistically. Interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary practice is growing. Countries around the world are rapidly investing in design by establishing design centres, which promote human-centred design and broker relationships between designers and business. Governments and corporations increasingly acknowledge design as an important economic and cultural driver while also respecting the role it can play in improving the human condition. Global networking, self-analysis and the redefining of our traditional design areas are emerging as the major issues facing the practitioners and educators of design. A shrinking world combined with the merging of creative disciplines encourages us to, not only redefine our profession but also internationalise our approach to its practice, education and government promotion. Countries like Denmark, Korea, Japan and Great Britain are benefiting greatly from a strategic and holistic approach to design promotion. This paper will propose that the design professions in Australia would benefit greatly from adopting a less territorial approach to promoting its discipline. It will highlight successful examples of multidisciplinary design promotion such as the UK's Design Council, the Korean Institute for Design Promotion (KIDP), the Danish Design Centre and the International Design Centre Nagoya, Japan. These case studies will illustrate how a united voice provides more clarity and focus for stakeholders such as governments, businesses, investors and the consumers of design.

The move to unite the design disciplines under a single term has already occurred in some countries with professional design organizations such as BEDA (Bureau of European Design Associations), the Danish Designers and BNO (Association of Dutch Designers) who all refer to design holistically. INDEX: design to improve life, the worlds largest Design Awards program also refer to design as multidisciplinary. The most significant demonstration of this shift is the recent formation of the IDA (International Design Alliance) between three peak professional bodies, Icsid (International Council of Societies of Industrial Design), Icoграда (the International Council of Graphic Design Associations) and IFI (International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers). All three organizations have acknowledged the importance of speaking as a single and united voice for design.

This paper will analyse these examples in the context of design promotion in Australia, a country with a dynamic, emerging design culture but who's Federal Government is yet to develop a National design policy. This paper will explore potential strategies for Australian design promotion based on the experience of other countries that have already re-aligned their discipline-specific past into a multidisciplinary or pan-disciplinary future.

**Kennedy** MA FRSA (Melbourne, Australia), President Elect, Icoграда 2007-2009. Kennedy is a Senior Lecturer of Visual Communication with the Department of Design, Faculty of Art & Design at Monash University, Melbourne, Australia. Kennedy is a Fellow of the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufacture and Commerce (RSA) and a member of both the Australian Graphic Design Association (AGDA) and the Design Institute of Australia (DIA). He is an academic and practitioner of both graphic design and film-making. Before joining Monash in 1994 he was the principle of Russell Kennedy Design Pty Ltd, a corporate identity consultancy and Co-Director of Onset Productions Pty Ltd, a motion picture and documentary company.

Kennedy actively promotes a network interface between design education and industry. An international lecturer, he is often invited to assist other educational institutions within the Oceania/Asian region. He has been active in the development of the Icoграда Education Network and the deployment and promotion of worldwide educational exchange initiatives. He is also responsible for initiating and developing INDIGO, Icoграда's Indigenous Design Network.

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## FROM GRAPHICS TO PRODUCTS: CRITICAL DESIGN AS DESIGN AUTHORSHIP

Design criticism is generally thought of as critical writing about design. The critical act is not just commentary on, or criticism about, but the translation of the visual and material into the verbal. The relationship is inherently reactionary—first comes the design, followed by the criticism.

The emerging field of Critical Design, however, uses the medium of design to make statements about social, political, economic and cultural issues, or about the discipline itself. Primarily associated with contemporary product design (see explication in Dunne and Raby's 2001 book *Design Noir*), critical design's posture bears strong resemblance to graphic design authorship, which often takes a critical stance. The other parallel is in critical design's communicative nature—the objects may function in the traditional sense, but their main goal is to contribute to the field's discourse as polemical actors.

Diverse themes of consumption, privacy, waste, sexuality, debt, technology, genetics, media and globalism are raised in critical design's broad agenda. Recent exhibitions of critical design demonstrate worldwide interest: *Don't Panic* (London), *Products of our Time* (Minneapolis-St. Paul), *Connections: Experimental Design* (Sydney), *Designing Critical Design* (Belgium) and *Forms of Inquiry: The Architecture of Critical Graphic Design* (London).

This presentation proposes casting critical design into the wider context of design authorship. By considering historical precedents and examining similarities, the activism and entrepreneurialism of critical design will be shown to have their roots in theories of graphic design authorship.

There are two primary parallels between critical design and design authorship. The first is the act of self-initiation—acting without client commissions—whereby designers frame the topic, aesthetics, process, medium, materials, and users of their designs. The second is the politicized viewpoints of the designers; their designs stake out intentional positions that range from social, cultural, economic and geo-political to personal concerns. Both design authorship and critical design, whether self-referential and 'art'-like or populist and idealistic, pose questions as readily as they offer alternative solutions.

While architecture's influence on critical design can be acknowledged—Archigram and Archizoom from the 1960-70s are appropriate models—I maintain that the theoretical projects, exhibits and publications about graphic design authorship since the 1990s have had a more direct bearing on the discourse surrounding critical design. Specific examples include Tibor Kalman's whimsical paperweights and conceptual watches; Jonathan Barnbrook's rhetorically charged typeface designs and naming provocations; Bureau's confrontational posters for gender and sexual awareness issues; Shepard Fairey's globally viral *Obey Giant* campaign, and *Adbusters* magazine as a forum for anti-consumerist designs.

The field of industrial/product design doesn't own the concepts behind critical design any more than how design authorship is the exclusive intellectual domain of graphic design. Both terms overlap and converge. Both enlarge the activist presence of the discipline of design in general, and both require society to engage in design meaning-making beyond the passive role of consumer.

[ Dunne, A & Raby, F 2001, *Design noir: The secret life of electronic objects*, Birkhäuser, Basel. ]

**McCarthy** is professor of graphic and interactive design at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis-St. Paul, USA. He holds an MFA in design from Stanford University—a joint program of the departments of mechanical engineering and art, and a BFA in sculpture and drawing from Bradley University.

McCarthy creates and exhibits works of design authorship—many of which have received critical recognition and are in institutional collections—and has published on the topic in academic journals and in the trade press. In 1996, he co-curated the seminal exhibit *Designer as Author: Voices and Visions*.

McCarthy's international scholarly presentations have included *Declarations* (Montréal), *Mind the Map* (Istanbul), *Hidden Typography* (London), *Politics of Design* (Belfast), *New Views: Repositioning Graphic Design History* (London), *Wonderground* (Lisbon) and *ConnectED* (Sydney).