



CLUSTER
3:
GRAPHIC DESIGN:
PRACTICE AND METHODS

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PICTURE LANGUAGE CAPABILITY: VISUAL COMMUNICATION OF APHASIC PATIENTS

Imagine you want to say: 'Please give me a glass of water' and what comes out of your mouth is this: 'Please give me the glass of butter', but you really think that you have asked for a glass of water. This example of communication performed by aphasia patients led us to the research question: 'How can the communication between aphasia patients, clinic staff or the patients' relatives and friends be enhanced?' Therefore the research project was set up as an interdisciplinary team of design researchers, design professionals, speech therapists and speech therapists educators. The research team focused on the design analysis of existing auxiliary devices to support their communication, for example exploring how the patients could look and point at picture books and booklets to support their communication. These things were offered for aphasia patients who couldn't find their words or who couldn't perform other speech modalities.

Our main hypothesis is: The communication of aphasia patients can be improved if the design focuses on the valorisation of the patients' abilities. We firstly hypothesised that the existing visual assisting devices were inadequately designed. However, it occurred to us that other forms of communication, for example, a quickly hand-drawn picture, appeared to stimulate the patient's ability to undertake a word finding process. This meant that the best recognisable visual representation was not automatically the most adequate picture for the aphasia therapy. Therefore we had to reformulate the design criteria for the analysis.

Furthermore the visual communication capability of people suffering from aphasia hasn't been sufficiently investigated until recently, especially not within a design research perspective (Huber 1997). This research project addresses the basic communication question: What is the equivalent visual representation for a 'notion' that can trigger a patient to select the 'right' word for what he or she wants to express? In doing this we have referred to existing research work undertaken in the field of visual representation, for example Arnheims 'visual concept' (Arnheim 1954; Mitchell 1994; Lupton 1996; Sachs-Hombach 2003) or Foucault's claim that visual representation and words differs from one another. Foucault suggests that words follow each other successively which contrasts with simultaneous perception of a picture (cf. Foucault 1971, pp. 118-120).

The research project 'Picture Language Capability' starts from this point and raises questions about the possibilities and constraints of visual auxiliary devices in the field of communication for aphasic people. The project team undertook an analysis of existing visual auxiliary devices according to design criteria such as readability, recognisability, findability, as well as situated criteria such as improvisation and quick handling facilities. These were undertaken through the analysis of the specific communication situation, through the research team's expertise and through a literature analysis of design criteria for visual communication (Kress 2006; van Leeuwen 2004; Lidwell 2003). This design analysis is fundamentally based on intensive participatory observations by the research team and the project partner's knowledge about the particularities of the communication situation of aphasic patients. The research objective is to develop a tangible prototype, which includes picture cards, a layout system or different visual auxiliaries and interfaces.

[Arnheim, R 1954, *Art and Visual Perception: A psychology of the creative eye*, Berkeley. / Bonsiepe, G 1994, *Visuell verbale Rhetorik: Über einige Techniken der persuasiven Kommunikation*, [in] Fachhochschule Köln, Fachbereich Design (Hg.), Kölner Design-Jahrbuch. / Foucault, M 1971, *Die Ordnung der Dinge*, Frankfurt a. M. / Götte, M et al. (Hg.), 2007, *Die Welt der Zeichen, Globale Kommunikation mit Piktogrammen*, Av Edition. / Huber, Poeck, Weniger, D 1997, *Aphasie*, [in] Klinische Neuropsychologie, Stuttgart. / Kress, G. et al. 2006, *Reading Images: The grammar of visual design*, London. / Leeuwen, van T 2004, *Handbook of Visual Analysis*, London. / Lidwell, Holden, Butler 2003, *Universal Principles of Design, A cross-disciplinary reference*, Gloucester. / Lupton, E & Miller A 1996, *Design Writing Research: Writing on graphic design*, London. / Mitchell, WJT 1994, *Picture Theory*, Chicago/London. / Sachs-Hombach, K (Hg.) 2003, *Was ist Bildkompetenz? Studien zur Bildwissenschaft*, Wiesbaden.]

Bandyopadhyay was born 1969 in Neuss/Rhine. He studied Cultural Science and Design at the University of Lüneburg (Germany) and at the University of Applied Science in Cologne (Germany), where he graduated in 2001 with a diploma in design. His diploma was about a product biography of mobile phones with his 'Handliche Welt' (Handy World). After four years of working as a designer he started doing his doctorate at the Humboldt-University of Berlin (Germany) in the Course for Aesthetics at the Professorship of Prof. Dr. Friedrich Kittler with his Doctorate Project 'Biography of Media—Mobile Phone' (working title). Since 2007 he has worked as a design researcher at the Berne University of Arts in the field of social communication and design for development.

Gene Bawden

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THE SURFACE OF THINGS

For most designers, graphic or otherwise, our personal histories are littered with dalliances with all forms of design. Our lives since childhood have been a progression of sultry affairs with buildings, furniture, films, clothes, objects, surfaces, textures, landscapes, pictures, posters, books... An in-depth investigation of the things that inspire us may eventuate, but our immediate attraction is based purely on the visual: lusty, unabashed visual seduction. Why then has this base emotive element of design become such a pariah? Why can we not exploit the beauty of surface and ornament, and the seductive qualities of colour and texture without feelings of guilt and deception?

One suspects that the modern economy of design (both aesthetic and financial) has given cause to denounce the ornamentation of surface, an abundance of elements, and the satisfying gluttony of excess. The desire for contemporary communication to be clutter free, simple, global, clear and instant has given immense credibility to the sharp, generic aesthetics of digital production. Specialist typographers have made way for a couple of cds of a thousand fonts. Illustrators once chosen for their quirky individual styles are over looked in favour of easily purchased online art, or worse, poorly conceived Photoshop filter-fests. Garish, eye-popping colour has been over-painted in muted shades of tasteful warm grey. Graphic designers once praised for their genuine skills as artists, capable of wielding a pen, a brush, and a pencil with equal dexterity and wit, are now as irrelevant as rubilith and bromides. Viva la vector.

It is little wonder that we see so much graphic design on a daily basis, and so little of it that stops us in our tracks in awe and wonderment. The personality, that quality that speaks to us in such a way that we react—completely seduced, or violently apposed—has been superseded by ho hum, inoffensive, generic good taste. It is disappointing that as a culture we have become so visually literate and design savvy that we see graphic design independent of the work's creator: a publicly consumed commodity, not a piece of art that caused its creator an intoxicating journey of despair, joy and satisfaction.

The intent of this paper is to restate the need for humanity and personality in mainstream graphic design; a need for good taste to be balanced by bad; for the restrained to be balanced by the eccentric; for the spartan to be balanced by the over-abundant; for the full gamut of human emotion to be spurred into action by our daily interaction with graphic design. It will question the validity and continued proliferation of work that does not warrant a second glance, does not offend, nor does it excite.

God knows the world has enough of those.

Bawden completed a Bachelor of Arts (Graphic Communication) at Chisholm Institute of Technology in Melbourne. In 1988 he began working at the Melbourne newspaper *The Age* then later moved to *The Herald Sun* as an editorial designer and illustrator. Since 1997 he has lectured full-time in graphic design, typography and illustration at Monash University, Faculty of Art & Design. He is currently undertaking a PhD that intends to investigate the political, historical, cultural and personal impacts of interiors constructed for display rather than use: the good room.

Leslie Becker

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CONSTRUCTING WORLDS: IMAGE AS CULPRIT

When graphic designers began to discuss ethics in the latter part of the twentieth century, the physical nature of designed artifacts dominated a conversation that raised questions about the designer's responsibility to the environment. As a response to global issues of sustainability, designers might focus their attention upon the integrity of the image and locate a method to query the responsibility of the representation.

Although understood to be a site of production of desire, the commercial image now, tacitly or explicitly, increasingly also depicts socially responsible corporate behaviors. What lies behind the image when Target Corporation imbricates community-oriented philanthropy with consumer advertising? Or Dove, a Unilever brand, constructs a 'pro-aging' theme that appears altruistic but works to appeal to a large, aging demographic? And BP's cheerful, yellow and green mark belies rather well documented egregious corporate behaviors. Meanwhile design pedagogy and practice, the sites at which representations are brought to life, remain mostly outside critical inquiry into the effect of the image and what lies behind it.

This work interrogates the often deceptive, seemingly responsible roles that imagery plays in creating what is now understood to be an unsustainable lifestyle. Though leveling a claim of culpability at the design community in the production of the current crisis may appear to be an audacious one, understanding what constitutes an ethical image becomes more critical as electronic images circulate globally and designers begin to understand the effects of their work within a large, unstable network of images that ultimately lives far beyond the screens upon which they were so enthusiastically created. Although 'reading' images is complex and contexts are unstable (Bal & Bryson 1991), corporate images continue to be products of tangible intent. Having vetted potentially useful methods of ethics, this project hopes to inject pedagogy and practice with a reflective, yet pragmatic, space that allows for querying what lies behind problematic representations. Casuistry, a centuries-old, case-based, paradigmatic method is being used to resolve contemporary biomedical conflicts (Jonsen & Toulmin 1988). Communicative Ethics, particularly in its recent feminist iteration, rejects universalization and focuses on a discourse ethics rooted in pluralistic, linguistic exchanges (Benhabib & Dallmayr 1990). Design Casuistry, over time, could develop paradigms for querying images and, in concert with recent iterations of Communicative Ethics, could provide ways to reframe what constitutes visual responsibility. The central task of the work is to embed and begin to answer, within the design process, the question: what constitutes honest representation?

[Mieke, B & Bryson, N 1991, 'Semiotics and Art History', *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 73, no. 2, June pp. 174-298. / Seyla, B & Dallmayr, F (eds.) 1990, *The Communicative Ethics Controversy*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass. / Albert, JR & Toulmin, S 1988, *The Abuse of Casuistry: A History of Moral Reasoning*, University of California Press Berkeley, Los Angeles.]

Becker is professor and former chair of the graphic design program at California College of the Arts. She teaches Typography, Information Design, Graphic Design Thesis, and courses in Visual Studies and Critical Studies. As practitioner, she has designed and written Intel's co-marketing standards for Intel/Smithsonian, designed custom furniture, consulted with 3Com worldwide and Nokia (Finland) on their print standards. She has designed brochures for the National Metalsmith Museum, Posti-Tele (Finland) borders performance project, and the AIA/SF and East Bay chapters. She developed fund-raising graphics for the Wooden Synagogue Project to reconstruct a Nazi-destroyed Polish synagogue in Northern California. She served on the AIGA/SF Board, founding and editing their publication; did *pro bono* work for Kelsey St. Press, a nationally recognized women's press; and has presented papers at AIGA and AICAD conferences, Tsinghua University Beijing, Harvard University, St. Louis University Business School, and University College Dublin. She has written for *Print*, SFDC Magazine, *Graphis New Talent*, *Design Book Review*, and several Steven Heller (ed.) texts. She was awarded a BFA in 1969 from The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art; MA (Design) in 1997 from University of California, Berkeley and she is completing her dissertation on ethics and image in the Architecture School at UC Berkeley.

Suzanne Boccalatte
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MORE THAN SMOKE AND MIRRORS, BELLS AND WHISTLES

'Lately, technology's been the world's driving force and our sensory perceptions have grown comparatively dull. But it's not technology's fault. We haven't developed technology to entertain or please our cutaneous sense ... We will be approaching design from the perspective of how we perceive, and will design 'ways of perception'. Here lies dormant a massive vein of design' (Hara 2005).

Boccalatte is a studio with traditional designers who produce print-based objects that involve the senses; touch, sight and sometimes smell and sound, intimate and personal. Interestingly, more clients are requesting a digital presence whilst cherishing the printed outcome, which is valued for its tactility, clarity and immediacy within its communication space. Are we in a transitory place? Is this our future in graphic design? What are the interstices and complexities that are characterised by the prevalence of digital media? Is there a need to retain and foster a diversity of human experiences and emotions around graphic design as multi-sensory forms of communication?

Descriptions of the paucity of experiences provided by the internet as a visual medium highlight the inconsistencies and poor quality of many of its products and processes. According to Chapman (2007), the internet is perceived as a fountain of all knowledge, a 'techno nirvana'—but he suggests it is basically prosaic, a strange 'labour saving device', starting and ending with google.com. Chapman believes we trade our real existence for an 'impoverished virtual version, a second life, having failed miserably in the first one'. In a time where audiences look to the real and authentic, can technology truly deliver?

Similarly, in Turkle's (2007) 'Evocative Objects', Susan Yee describes her first encounter with Le Corbusier's original architectural drawings. Filled with his scribbles and markings, she felt at one with Le Corbusier. Later she experienced the same drawings as digital files, which had lost all sense of the original. She felt anonymous and 'a loss of her former rituals in the physical archive'. What does that say about our experience and connection to real objects? Is something lost when it becomes digital? Yee's response may be characterised as nostalgic—a hankering for authenticity of the object. It highlights the paradox of digital information, often devoid of human error and expression. Lupton's (2006) descriptions of the re-emergence of DIY graphic design in recent times supports this revival of the 'hand' made, drawing and gesture.

Consider how we consume music today, the sensual experience of vinyl replaced with the downloadable MP3. No artwork, no lyrics, nothing to touch—the compressed aural file becomes the singular emphasis of the experience. How will visual design respond to this situation of the general abbreviation of language?

We acknowledge the debates about the tension between the digital and the handmade. Rather than re-describe these debates, one way forward may be to envisage a transitional direction—integrated mediums that connect with all the senses—that create unique and evocative experiences for individuals and mass audiences.

As Turkle suggests, 'evocative objects bring philosophy down to earth ... focusing on objects means we can find common ground in everyday experience'. We wish to move beyond the idea that the physical object is ordinary and technology is extraordinary. And as Hara suggests this notion might be overtaken by a senses-driven world. This paper discusses examples of graphic design that demonstrate such an in-between transitional approach, by using digital mediums which work in conjunction with objects. This approach opens up possibilities for re-interpreting the conventions of digital designing, by placing a greater emphasis on the design of the experience which is embedded within the medium of designing, and its usage and intention.

[Chapman, D 2007, 'Foreword' BibliOdyessy, Fuel Publishing. / KinserHohle, M 2005, 'Kenya Hara: Creative Director Muji', *thememagazine*, vol. 3, www.thememagazine.com / Lupton, E 2006, *D.I.Y.: Design It Yourself*, Princetown Architectural Press, New York. / Turkle, S 2007, *Evocative Objects*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.]

Boccalatte has been working in the field of visual communications for over 20 years. She holds First Class Honours from Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney; a Grad Dip. in Communications Management, University of Technology; and has completed a copywriting course at UTS/Ad School. She is a practising visual artist and her work is represented in the National Gallery of Australia and the Powerhouse Museum. Suzanne Boccalatte founded Boccalatte (boccalatte.com) in 1990 in Sydney and now employs five designers.

Boccalatte designs various things—books, posters, brochures, visual identities and websites. They love clients with social, artistic and cultural leanings, and designs are provided with thought and unexpectedness. Boccalatte was in an exhibition called *In Your Face: Contemporary Graphic Design*, 2006 at the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney. They have recently won a gold award from Graphis for Sydney Design Campaign 2007 for the Powerhouse Museum (www.dhub.org/articles/640 and www.dhub.org/articles/147).

Linda Fu

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GRAPHIC DESIGN ≠ VISUAL COMMUNICATION

A few years before the world entered the new Millennium, most graphic design schools and faculties across the globe had completed a re-branding process by replacing the existing identity with the term 'visual communication'. Many graphic design practices followed suit amid such movements. This phenomenon can be perceived as a worldwide institutional and professional acceptance of the equation of *graphic design* with *visual communication*.

The unspoken yet prevalent belief in such equation within the profession is evident: As the dust of the re-branding program has now seemingly settled, it is apparent that the transformation has been, by and large, about the substitution of one name with another in terms of identity, and about the substitution of one expression with another in terms of discourse. In other words, the *sameness* between the two terms has been taken for granted, and the *gap* between the two terms has been neglected.

By problematising the graphic design-visual communication equation, I aim to elicit much needed soul-searching into the meaningfulness of the disciplinary re-branding. As an advocate of greater awareness of the communicative nature of graphic design within academic and professional arenas, it is certainly not my intention to part graphic design from visual communication. Instead, my objective is to advance awareness of the substance towards this most recent re-branding. To achieve this, the differences between graphic design and visual communication—as fine or great as the gap may be—need to be debated, realised and bridged.

This paper argues that the simplistic graphic design-visual communication equation is problematic to the appreciation and progression of our profession, because it can cloud our vision, mission and judgement. By its very nature, visual communication involves wider territory (both theoretically and disciplinary) and therefore represents greater challenges to the traditional boundary of graphic design. Following this vine, the unfinished business of this disciplinary re-branding program is identified, and key aspects of adaptation needed to overcome the current shortcomings are suggested in this paper.

In short, by suggesting that the graphic design-visual communication equation is problematic and at best conditional, this paper attempts to stimulate discussion into the real meanings of the re-branding, and propose potential steps towards the establishment of a well-defined design profession that not only has acquired a new identity, but also is committed to integrating the essence of design and communication—in education and in practice.

Fu is an Australian designer migrating from Hong Kong. She has founded the Canberra based Global iCom Consulting and Linda Fu Design, serving clients from Federal departments/agencies to major commercial/cultural institutions. With works widely awarded, exhibited, and published, Linda has received the honour to serve as a juror for several international design contests conducted in Asia, Middle East and Europe.

As a consultant/strategist, she advocates for a culturally sensitive and socially responsible design approach. She was invited to address various design conferences such as the ICOGRADA 'Redefining Design on a Changing Planet International Conference' (USA), and the 'Identity/Communication International Conference' (China). During her previous capacity as an academic, Linda had several papers selected for scholarly conferences, including the DRS Re-inventing Design Education in the University International Conference. Fu holds a Bachelor of Graphic Design, a Research M.A. in Communication, and is now completing her Ph.D. thesis.

Lisa Grocott

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VISUALISING THINKING: THE DISCURSIVE AGENCY OF GRAPHIC DESIGN

This paper reports on a practice-led research project that followed up the hunch that designers' oftentimes implicit understanding of what they bring to a project has compromised their potential contribution (Rust 2007), and subsequently limited the perceived agency of design. Driven by an ambition to better understand the thought processes a designer employs, the research project sought to consider the role graphic design might play in mapping what designers know.

The key question was what might visual mapping as a methodology for interrogating the design process disclose for designers? This question framed a dialectic approach where the act of designing visual essays afforded a critical space to observe the communication design expertise being played out, at the same time as the essays' subject concurrently explored designers' knowing-in-action (Schön 1983). The transactional interplay between the design and subject of the essay aligned with Dewey's notion of inquiry where conscious reflection on the situation, is enhanced by the practitioner's reflection on the way they are thinking through and acting in the situation.

In this context the agency of visual communication often ran contrary to claims made for conventional information design. Not subscribing to claims of honest data and truthful representations the research was less concerned with what these maps detailed and more driven by what mapping as a visual art practice offered (Hobbs 2003; Sladen 2001). The research never set out to trace a definitive reading of subject; the communication design of the essays alternatively embraced open-ended readings and pluralistic interpretations. The objective was to negotiate for the designer a discursive, iterative way into reflecting upon the complexity of the subject (Herbert 2003) while rendering an ambiguous likeness that engaged the audience in the transactional activity of interpreting the maps.

This paper introduces the key research outcomes, specifically by presenting examples of how the graphic design exercise of figuring out and charting the terrain led to a nuanced understanding of the process. The paper asserts the relevance of this research by arguing that this heightened knowing can enhance our capacity to draw on the speculative, iterative, propositional expertise of the designer. In highlighting the discursive agency of the visual essays as works-in-progress and the social act of designing, the research claims that the purchase of design rests not just with the utility of the artefact in the world but with the process of imagining, proposing, and negotiating to explore what might be.

[Herbert, LM 2003 *Matthew Ritchie: Proposition Player*, Contemporary Arts Museum, Hatje Cantz Publishers, Houston. / Hobbs, R 2003 *Mark Lombardi: Global Networks*, Independent Curators Publishers. / Rust, C 2007 'Unstated Contributions—How artistic inquiry can inform interdisciplinary research', *International Journal of Design*, vol. 1, no. 3, pp. 69-76. / Schön, DA 1992 'The Theory of Inquiry: Dewey's Legacy to Education', *Curriculum Inquiry*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 119-139. / Sladen, M (Curator) 2001 *The Americans*, New Art, Barbican Gallery, London.]

Grocott is the Dean of Academic Initiatives at Parsons The New School for Design in New York and in this role her primary responsibility is the conceptualisation of an integrated suite of graduate programs. Lisa came to the United States from Australia where she was director of the Communication Design Masters program at RMIT University and creative director at Studio Anybody. The design consultancy fostered a culture of practitioner-research that directly informed the critically acclaimed studio work that has been published in Europe, Asia and the Americas. Lisa's academic research is concerned with the potential role visualising can play in generating and translating design knowing. The practice-led nature of the research shapes the visual form of her conference presentations, book chapters and journal articles and is integral to her design-led approach to curriculum design.

Luciana Gunetti

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THE ATLAS AS A COMMUNICATION FORMAT FOR GRAPHIC DESIGN ARCHIVES: THE CASE OF THE ALBE AND LICA STEINER ARCHIVE

How do Communication Design and information technologies contribute to the construction of multilevel narrations aimed at designing digital memory/archives about communication artefacts?

The *Albe* and *Lica Steiner* web—archive (www.archiviosteiner.dpa.polimi.it) is here analysed to investigate how Communication Design can contribute to making archives 'open resources'—'open' in terms of content and interface design—using its own analytical and design instruments.

The protagonist, Albe Steiner, is still viewed as a leading figure on the scene of Italian visual design on both the cultural-political and design-didactic levels. Through an observation of his cross-disciplinary design activity it is possible to reconstruct the socio-cultural context and the area of design studies and practice of his time, just by turning to the materials in the archive.

The archive under study was conceived as a space for pure *research images*, which the designer's choice to collect and arrange in notebooks and albums turns into *communication images*. In Steiner's view, an archive should be a tool to collect visual findings and interesting images, be them his own or someone else's creations. Regardless of the criteria adopted to organise image archives of this kind, they will in any case be evidence of 'doing' design. These are archives of visual knowledge, which designers in general and Steiner in particular often arrange following their own distinctive methods.

The archive Albe Steiner managed included different kinds of visual knowledge, with content areas as filed samples were arranged and properly displayed, i.e. paged, following a strategy based on a specific display tool—the album.

Based on these considerations, we re-read the whole Archive as a 'digital atlas' of the designer's visual processes of association and design thought, investigating the potential of a paradigm that can depart from the taxonomies that normally regulate archives. The 'atlas' metaphor enables us to consider archives as places to open up new research fields, and above all, places for the localisation/representation of complex knowledge systems related to the culture of graphic design.

The 'digital atlas' is thus the design instrument that enables a 'narration' of communication designers' archives. Using the tools of Communication Design to translate into visual language collections of images and ideas as well as theories and processes, this may be enjoyed both 'locally' (i.e. inside individual archives based on a structure defined by single designers) and 'globally', building the possible relations between different archives. The result is an interactive prototype based on historical and critical methodologies to be applied to teaching, or to fields of study and research, but also to the practice of graphic design.

Gunetti is an architect with a background in history of architecture and a research consultant with a Ph.D. in Industrial Design and Multimedia Communication from Politecnico di Milano. Since 2000 she has been involved in research in the area of the theory and history of Communication Design. She completed a post-graduate specialisation course in Industrial Design at the S.S.D.I. School of Naples University Federico II. In A G Fronzoni's practice-workshop in Milan she has inventoried part of the archive and is still carrying out research regarding the mapping and design of new info-display systems for the archives of the main figures of Italian visual design. She has worked at the Albe and Lica Steiner Archive, Department of Architectural Design at Politecnico di Milano, with research and management roles. At Milan Politecnico she is currently collaborating with the Research Unit d.com, Communication Design Research and Teaching Unit, INDACO Department, Faculty of Design.

Robert Harland

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THE PRODUCTS OF GRAPHIC DESIGN AND THE NATURE OF URBAN DESIGN

Graphic design has been described as being 'everywhere, yet nowhere ... commonplace, yet specialised ... global and public' (Jubert 2006, p. 6). One could add 'everything' and 'nothing' to this, in the same sense that other disciplines such as urban design have responded to the need to define integrated practice (Carmona et al. 2003, p. 5). While this duality of words is useful for conveying the potential breadth of the subject, it encourages ambiguity rather than specificity, and provokes wide-ranging interpretation and use of terminology. Consequently there is the potential for confusion and misunderstanding about what graphic design is, has been, or might be perceived to be. To the layperson, fellow design professional and academic such confusion may undermine the subject's potential to be taken seriously.

This research is concerned with the 'somewhere' and 'something' of graphic design, and how its potential as a profession, field and discipline is recognised, distinguished and further harnessed, to improve urban environments. It attempts to identify what the products of graphic design are, or might be, in relation to the context of the built environment. It is hypothesised that these 'products' play a critical role in the primary and secondary functions of cities and urban places, identified by Lang as 'communication', 'economic', 'cognitive' and 'display' functions (1994, pp. 168-180). This research relates these products, and their function as graphic design (Barnard 2005, pp. 13-18), in context, in anticipation of better understanding the potential contribution to knowledge that graphic design can make to enhance the quality of urban design, and influence the work of built environment professionals.

In doing so, this research assesses the usefulness of the term graphic design, and what this may represent (for instance, in comparison with phrases such as 'visual communication'), in the context of the built environment. For example, although 'communication' is used as 'shorthand' to describe a 'vast array of two-dimensional material' (Heskett 2005, p. 82) as a key term it does not relate exclusively to graphic design—it has been considered the central idea in the larger field of design, from industrial and product design to architecture and urban planning (Buchanan 1985, p. 4). In conclusion, the paper argues that what might be identified as graphic design knowledge may be useful to the built environment professional as a possible remedy to visual communication clutter, misuse of signs, and other related problems associated with the public realm.

[Barnard, M 2005, *Graphic Design as Communication*, Routledge, London and New York. / Buchanan, R 1985, 'Declaration by design: rhetoric, argument, and demonstration in design products', *Design Issues*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 4-22, The MIT Press. / Carmona, M, Heath, T, Oc, T, & Tiesdell, S. 2003, *Public places—urban spaces: the dimensions of urban design*, Architectural Press, Oxford. / Heskett, J 2005, *Toothpicks and logos: design in everyday lives*, Oxford University Press. / Jubert, R 2006, *Typography and graphic design: from antiquity to the present*, Flammarion, Paris. / Lang, JT 1995, *Urban design: the American experience*, Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York.]

Harland is Programme Leader for BA(Hons) Graphic Design at Nottingham Trent University, and a part-time research student at The University of Nottingham School of Built Environment. His research focus is the relationship between graphic design and urban design. Before pursuing an academic career he spent 15 years in private practice in London, working for a range of national and international clients in United Kingdom, Belgium, France, Germany and Portugal in the private and public sector. He is a Member of the International Society of Typographic Designers and Fellow of the Chartered Society of Designers.

Peter Jones
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DEMOGRAPHICS: THE AUDIENCE IS THE MESSAGE?

With the vast amount of 'quantitative' personal data collected over the last decade or so, allied to the collection of 'qualitative' data through such methods as focus groups, combined with developments in screen and print based communications, it was anticipated by some that this may lead to a Marketeer's and Communications Strategist's Utopia, where these databases and developments in communications technology could be exploited in order to communicate more effectively, inventively and directly to a particular target audience.

However despite this anticipated 'Utopia', the use of established quantitative and qualitative marketing and communications research methodologies still appears to lead to systemised, mediocre and clichéd communications.

One of the core components of the above methodologies is the use of demographic groupings or composites to identify relevant target audiences. These groupings or composites are generally based on, or developments of, advertising market groupings (a, b, c, d and e's) that in turn within the UK, stem from historical social and class structures. Although these groupings and composites are often sophisticated in terms of how they are generated and the nature of the social groupings they identify, these groupings and composites tend to follow well established patterns such as: age, gender, income, wealth, education, employment, ethnicity, nationality, family status, sexual orientation etc.

This preliminary abstract is an outline of a proposed research project/practice-based Ph.D., that intends to investigate alternatives to established marketing and communications research methodologies. Initially, this will be achieved by investigating the context, nature and use of existing demographic groupings and composites, but also more significantly exploring alternative groupings or composites and how the use of the latter may impact on the authorship, content and synthesis of the message.

Jones's professional practice background was primarily in brand and corporate identity strategy, design and management, prior to teaching at the University of Plymouth. He graduated from the London College of Printing during the early '80s and subsequently worked for various design consultants including: Pentagram, Henrion Ludlow & Schmidt, Banks & Miles and Interbrand Newell & Sorrell on such projects as: London Underground sign system and corporate/brand identities for British Airways, Cunard and Faber & Faber. Jones also taught on a part-time basis at the London College of Printing and at Central Saint Martins. At Plymouth he is currently authoring and managing the development of an MA in Communication Design due to start in Sept 08. His current research interests are the research methodologies used by design, branding, marketing and advertising practitioners. He is hoping to develop the latter investigation into a practice-based Ph.D.

Bettina Minder
Lucerne University of Applied Arts and Sciences, Luzern,
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VISUAL STORYTELLING IN CROSSMEDIA

Crossmedia communication is being used widely and has contributed to the information environment in terms of continuity of the communication. Crossmedia communication is not only restricted to billboards, spots on TV, cinema, screens in public spaces and the internet, but it is also used in emerging technologies like handy-TV, In-Game-publicity or SMS- or MMS-marketing (crossmedia instruments also include event marketing and point-of-sale-marketing but these will not be discussed here).

The process of designing campaigns that are successful in its efficiency to communicate, is well documented and researched. The dynamics of narrative, however, is widely applied by experience. In terms of narrative dramaturgy, crossmedia forms of multi-linear communication are not used consciously. The investigation of crossmedia dramaturgy acts on the assumption of both psychological and physiological knowledge about cognition and compositing (such as Sakkad-movement and Schema-Theory) and on narrative theories from various fields such as literature, film and comix and game design.

The Lucerne University of Arts has undertaken investigation into the communication of out-of-home-displays. The *Crossmedia project* has set out to look into the various components that are piloting crossmedia narratives. This project has been inspired on two levels. Firstly, we determined that there is a lack of systematic investigation or analysis on the visual level. There is a gap in knowledge on the level of dramaturgy, rhythm and dynamics of crossmedia campaigns. From interviews conducted, we have discovered that visual storytelling in crossmedia functions more or less intuitively. Secondly, we observed that narrative has become a focus in communication design, and thus, we have investigated the visual principals that are operating on the narrative and dramaturgic structure.

A prototype model for an analysis tool has been designed and this will be tested on a set of Swiss national Campaigns and other European countries such as the UK and Russia for comparison. Focusing on storytelling-parameters such as cut, montage and vocalisation, the model outlines a set of themes within the visual communication of crossmedia. During the presentation, different levels of dynamics will be visualized to give an idea what is (visually) happening within—between and outside the media and in different combinations.

Minder (*1971) is a design researcher, initially graduated from Zürich professional school for design as a graphic designer in 1995. Several years of professional experience as freelance communication and set designer, amongst others for the fringe theatre company 'You Lucky People' and for 'Fresh Air' in St. Petersburg, Russia. Graduation from Zürich University in 2005 (film and literature studies, Lic. Phil I). She works as a researcher at the Lucerne University of Applied Arts and Sciences in the research field 'visual narration & explanation'. www.hslu.ch/design-kunst/d-forschung-entwicklung.htm

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UBIQUITOUS DESIGN: GRAPHIC DESIGN GUIDES THE USER

At the end of the '80s the desktop revolution had just started. At the end of the '90s it was the web revolution that had just started, and at the beginning of the 2000s we became familiar with ubiquitous computing and ubiquitous design. But where is the graphic designer to be found? What is s/he doing now, what has changed in the last three decades, and how much can we predict on the future of this profession?

The paper will attempt a closer look at the impact of digital communication on the graphic design profession. It will follow the career of a graphic designer raised in the Romanian totalitarian regime of Nicolae Ceausescu, from the first years of graphic design training in Romania through the graphic design education in Stockholm, and from the contact with Scandinavian design to the practice in Stockholm—and Bucharest. Must we redefine the meaning of graphic design? What role will the graphic designer play in the new era of ubiquitous design?

There will be three main themes included in the presentation:

1 Graphic Design Education in Romania at the end of the '80s—focused on engraving and hand painted typography. No experimental thinking was encouraged—the curriculum included classical drawing, and proletkult (short for the Russian for proletarian culture, coined by Alexander Bogdanov) in painting and sculpture, which were the main direction that had to be followed.

2 Graphic Design Education in Sweden at the beginning of the '90s—focused on experimenting with new techniques and was a far cry from the totalitarian way of thinking taught in Romanian schools. It encouraged more on the practitioner than the reflective designer (Schön 1983). Graphic design for the web was not a part of the curricula and print design was synonymous with graphic design.

3 Graphic Design Practice in Sweden and Romania between 1995 and 2008—undertook illustration and graphic design for print for the largest daily newspapers in Scandinavia, *Daily News* and *Expressen*; magazine design for *Ordfront* in Stockholm and *Plural* in Bucharest; graphic design for art projects. New communication means, including Skype and pdf technology, allow a new way of working with graphic design on a global level.

Each of these themes will invite a closer look at the graphic design timeline (Heller & Petit 2000) and the technology of immediate interest for the respective periods. This will show evidence on the implications of the social context on graphic design education, practice, and the new role of graphic design.

[Heller, S & Petit, E (eds.) 2000, *Design Dialogues*, Allworth Press, New York. / Schön, D 1983, *The Reflective Practitioner: How professionals think in action*, Basic Books, New York.]

Stoescu (born 1969, Bucharest, Romania) graduated from the Art and Design Faculty in Stockholm, the Graphic Arts Department, where she received her MFA in 1994. She studied in Germany on an Erasmus grant. She started her graphic design education in the mid '80s in communist Romania, and has lived in Sweden since 1987. She worked with numerous exhibitions as a book designer and curator, and contributed to several Swedish publications as an illustrator. She participated in group and individual exhibitions in Sweden, Romania, Croatia and Lithuania. She taught experimental typography at Beckmans Design School. Presently she teaches visual communication at the Media Technology department of the School of Communication, Technology and Design in Stockholm and is the director of the educational programme IT, Media and Design. In parallel with teaching she is contributing as a designer to various cultural projects of the Romanian Cultural Institute in Stockholm, and researching on typography and politics.

Karel van der Waarde
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SNAPSHOT OF A PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE IN A CITY

Statements about the profession of graphic design are frequently based on assumptions. Examples of these assumptions are that 'a lot of graphic design work is done by tiny agencies who work below the normal rates from lofts and bedrooms', 'graphic design in large cities differs from graphic design in small cities', 'a lot of graphic designers do not have any formal education in graphic design' and 'their clients must be local trade and small and medium-sized enterprises'.

These statements regularly appear in discussions related to 'the creative class', graphic design education, and the visibility of the profession of graphic design. It is likely that the discussions would benefit if data about actual graphic design practice would be available.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

The main aim of this project is to investigate if general assumptions are applicable to graphic design practice in a relatively small city in the Netherlands. The research questions focus specifically on the design-methods and quality-judgments of graphic designers.

APPROACH:

An inventory of all companies who describe themselves as 'graphic designers' in Breda was made through internet and database searches (Breda is a city of 130.000 inhabitants with an art-school and a new graphic design museum). A series of 15 interviews was conducted with a variety of companies. After an analysis of these interviews, more interviews were conducted to focus on more specific topics.

RESULTS:

The initial results are:

- There are about 100 registered graphic design agencies in Breda at the moment. One in 1400 citizens owns a graphic design firm. Employed graphic designers are not included.
- The first set of interviews indicate that a clear division between different activities—such as web design, advertising, writing, photography and editing—is not maintained in practice. The different activities are frequently brought together through a combination of personal interests and commissioner demands.
- The relations between graphic designers and commissioners are long term and are based on pleasant personal contacts.
- The criteria that are used in practice to judge the quality of graphic design can be subdivided into four categories. Criteria are related to the designer (income; pleasure), the commissioner (benefits; costs; appropriateness), the reader/viewer (depending on the artifact: this is to a large extend unknown), society (the profession of graphic design itself; the visual cultures).
- This study only provides a description of a single city. The results can be used as benchmarks to gauge graphic design practice in other cities.

van der Waarde (1963) studied graphic design in the Netherlands (Eindhoven) and in the UK (Leicester, Reading). He received his doctorate in 1994 for a dissertation entitled: 'An investigation into the suitability of the graphic presentation of patient package inserts'. In 1995, he started a design—research consultancy in Belgium specializing in the testing of information design. Most of the projects are related to pharmaceutical information for patients, doctors and pharmacists. His company develops patient information leaflets, instructions, forms, protocols, and the information architecture for websites. van der Waarde is moderator of the InfoDesign and InfoDesign-Café discussion lists and professor in Visual Rhetoric at AKV|St. Joost, Avans University, Breda (The Netherlands). He frequently publishes and lectures about visual information. He is a board member of the International Institute for Information Design (IIID) and a life fellow of the Communication Research Institute (CRI).

Vroombout (1981) studied graphic design at the academy of fine arts and design St. Joost in The Netherlands (Breda). He followed a course at the Media Academy (training centre for public broadcasting) about new media and cross-platform formats. He worked for the VPRO Gids (Dutch television guide) as a designer. Nowadays he works as a designer for *Kroon en Partners*, agency for marketing, communication and design. He also works as a researcher in Visual Rhetoric at AKV|St. Joost, Avans University, Breda (The Netherlands).

DESIGN RESEARCH IN A GRAPHIC DESIGN PRACTICE

The Chartered Society of Designers (CSD)—the world's largest chartered body of professional designers, has recently introduced an Accreditation Program for design consultancies where research activity will be considered one of the key criteria for successful design business development (Peters 2006). While this is an encouraging move by a professional design body to recognise the importance of research in design practice, how much of this view is shared by design practitioners? Do graphic designers actually do much 'research' in their day-to-day projects? If so, what do they consider to be 'research' and how much consideration do they give to it?

This research draws from the researcher's own practice as a design researcher within a commercial design setting. Hence, design projects carried out at the Centre for Design Research at Northumbria University will be used as case studies in order to identify the range, type and value of design research in a commercial setting. Projects will be analysed using Fallman's (2005) continuum model of design research ranging from 'Design-oriented research' projects to 'Research-oriented design' projects. The former describes projects, which emphasises new knowledge as an outcome while the latter describes projects that uses research as a means to a design outcome. The analysis of the projects will help identify: a) the range and purpose of design research methods used in relation to different design projects, b) the value of research activity in graphic design practice and c) suggests ways to incorporate research activity within graphic design projects.

[Fallman, D 2005 'Why Research-oriented Design Isn't Design-oriented Research', *Proceedings of Nordes: Nordic Design Research Conference*, May 29-31, Copenhagen, Denmark. / Peters, F 2006, Key note speech by CEO of CSD, *Finding the Question to the Answer: A Graphic Design Research Symposium*, Nottingham Trent University, 13 September 2006, UK.]

Yee is a practising designer and researcher in visual communication. She is part of the Interactive Design team at the Centre for Design Research, Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne. She has over 10 years experience in graphic and interactive design practice and seven years in design research. She was trained as a graphic designer and received an MA in Visual Communication at London's Central Saint Martins School of Art and Design. Joyce has recently completed a Ph.D. degree at Northumbria University, on developing a practice-led framework to promote the practise and application of typography across different media. She is passionate about advocating the importance of research and teaching in a design practice. Her research interests are in the areas of: theory and practice of research-led practice, specifically developing practice-based research methods for designers and in developing a knowledge-based model for typographic pedagogy.