



CLUSTER
6:
GRAPHIC DESIGN:
CHANGING THE 'REAL WORLD'

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WHOSE ROLE IS IT ANYWAY? COMMUNICATION DESIGN AND DESIGNER'S ROLE IN SOCIETY

Design is often perceived as both an intensely commercial practice and a significant mode of cultural production. Furthermore, design also plays a central role in shaping and informing the ideas and behaviours of people and their environment (Frascara 1995). This presentation focuses on the role of designers and their practices to understand how design expresses social priorities and carry cultural values. The social priorities and cultural values are often invisible and yet are pervasively inscribed into the design process by the way designers, clients and other project stakeholders engage with and create the designed outcome. This presentation will discuss the need for designers to understand how and whose values become embedded in the outcomes of design. The presentation will propose that through this understanding, it may lead to a better understanding of the social worth of the outcomes and experiences of communication design. The presentation begins by drawing on the discourse by many scholars who have argued for many years that designers need to think more critically about what they are doing and the cultural, social and environmental conditions they contribute to. However, contrary to their good intentions, these arguments are yet to achieve a significant impact where practitioners of communication design are addressing them daily within their own practices. Within the debate on design's social role, arguments for social responsibility are still largely framed by charity and good intentions. In this argument, a designer's responsibility is framed by ideas of doing pro bono work for socially oriented organisations, or using environmentally friendly methods of printing and production (Bush 2003). The literal and simplistic provision of solutions to this complex debate is one of the impetuses for this presentation. The presentation will critique the approach that many scholars have made, that a large part of the argument surrounding a designer's responsibility places importance on adopting values that designers may find difficult in applying or translating to their daily, commercial practices. The critique points to the lack of understanding of how values are discussed, communicated and knowing of ways that can be manifested in a designer's practice. In contrast, the presentation puts forward the importance of self-reflection—being aware of one's values and how that manifests in one's practice as a key understanding for a communication designer in creating a social practice.

[Bush, A 2003, 'Beyond Pro Bono', [in] Heller, S & Vienne, V (eds.) *Citizen Designer—Perspectives on Design Responsibility*, Allworth Press, New York, pp. 25-31. / Frascara, J 1995, *User-Centred Graphic Design: Mass communications and social change*, Taylor & Francis, London.]

Akama has recently completed a practice-led Ph.D. in communication design at RMIT University. She continues to pursue a socially oriented practice in communication design, which spans over 10 years in various locations including London and Melbourne. Her research is situated within the practice of communication design where she investigated how design 'scaffolds' can capture, articulate and manifest stakeholder values that can become embedded in design projects. Yoko has been teaching communication design for six years into various undergraduate and postgraduate levels in Australian universities. She is also involved as a researcher in an Australian CRC for Interaction Design (ACID) projects. She was born in Japan, grew up in Australia, England and Japan; studied (and hated) living in Los Angeles; did her BA (Hons) at Ravensbourne College of Art and Design, England and now she 'calls Australia home'. And, no, she wasn't named after the infamous woman who split up the Beatles...

Carolyn Barnes

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Simone Taffe

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KNOWLEDGE IN PRACTICE: USING PARTICIPATORY GRAPHIC DESIGN TO ENCOURAGE SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE INDOOR CLEANING

The theory of 'mode 2' knowledge production, while in some respects contentious, suggests a socially engaged way of being a design researcher, codifying a pattern of interdisciplinary research that engages with specific problems in real world contexts. This paper describes such a project, being based on research carried out as part of the Safe and Sustainable Indoor Cleaning project (SASI Clean), a government-funded pilot study into the promotion of sustainable cleaning in childcare centres in the Australian state of Victoria. Low-chemical cleaning practices are recommended for cleaning surfaces like baby change mats and play tables in childcare. Currently, however, a medley of surface sprays, disinfectants, harsh detergents and air-fresheners are used in many childcare centres, demonstrating that information alone can be inadequate to the task of influencing attitudes and behaviour.

To address this problem the project brought together a team consisting of sustainable cleaning consultant, bureaucrats from three tiers of government, childcare workers, environmental scientists, graphic designers and microbiologists. The project's first objective was to demonstrate worthwhile reductions in environmental impacts while maintaining hygiene. The second was to identify the real and perceived barriers to the adoption of safe and sustainable cleaning and to propose solutions as a result of this study. The project undertook a participatory design process to integrate childcare workers' knowledge of the human and material context for information delivery with designers' knowledge of visual communication and design production.

In fields including architecture, urban design, human-computer interaction and product design, participatory design encompasses a diversity of methods and motives for involving end-users and other stakeholders in design. Graphic design, however, lacks significant applied studies in participatory design as the paradigms and methodologies for its application are not yet established. In the SASI Clean project, its participatory design process incorporated various graphic design techniques for idea generation and design refinement. These were oriented to the philosophical perspectives of the global investigation, which was not simply to deliver quantifiable environmental benefits but to afford childcare workers—so often the subjects of externally imposed expectations—a measure of self-determination in their working life. Scope for mutual learning, the exchange of critical knowledge and collaborative creation was thus privileged over more basic issues of the efficacy of information. The paper uses a case study approach for its capacity to address the whole context of the applied project, allowing for the drawing of specific insights and the beginnings of theory development; the vignettes we present revealing the challenges in applying participatory design within multidisciplinary projects.

Barnes is a Senior Research Fellow in the Faculty of Design, Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, Australia, where she is involved in a range of research projects investigating the role of art and design in public communication. These include the role of design and national self-representation in Australia's pavilions at world expositions; the use of participatory design as a resource for public information campaigns and design's role in brokering knowledge, meaning and visitor experience in the contemporary museum. Carolyn holds a Ph.D. from the University of Melbourne. Her monograph on the Hong Kong Australian artist John Young was published by Craftsman House in 2005. She is an assistant editor of the *International Journal of Design*.

Taffe is Coordinator of the Communication Design programs in the Faculty of Design, Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, Australia. Simone has 15 years industry experience working in leading Australian design consultancies, including FHA Futurebrand where she worked on many large-scale branding projects. For seven years she managed the City of Melbourne's design and communication service, leading a comprehensive re-branding project that saw the municipality be the first to shift from a heraldic crest to a modern corporate identity system. She later managed this process for four other Victorian municipalities. Simone holds a Master of Arts (Design) from Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and is currently a Ph.D. candidate in the Faculty of Design, Swinburne University of Technology, researching the role of participatory design in design management.

Noel Douglas

Senior Lecturer, Programme Leader in Graphic Design and Illustration, University of Bedfordshire, Luton, UK

MYSPACE?

'To call on people to give up their illusions about their condition is to call on them to give up a condition that requires illusions'. — Karl Marx

'Imagine a city where graffiti wasn't illegal, a city where everybody could draw wherever they liked. Where every street was awash with a million colours and little phrases. Where waiting standing at a bus stop was never boring. A city that felt like a living breathing thing which belonged to everybody, not just the estate agents and barons of big business'. — Banksy

Neo-Liberal Capitalism has drastically altered the shape and fabric of key cities around the world. More than any other country in Europe the UK has slavishly followed these policies for the last quarter of a century. London in particular represents a city that embodies these values in explicit ways in its organization of space and public life.

This presentation will address how Neo-Liberal values and ideology are expressed and visualized through the forms of graphic imagery and systems that adorn the urban spaces of London. It uses the theories of alienation, commodity fetishism, semiotics and the everyday, drawn primarily from Marx, Trotsky, Lefebvre, Berger, Fromm, Voloshinov, Harvey and the Situationists. It will focus on how imagery is used to help the commodification and privatization of space and make an argument for how this impoverishes, not only the space we live in, but also our relations with each other and our very being.

The presentation will contrast this enclosure with examples of artists', designers' and activists' projects drawn from the social and political movements of the past decade that attempt to either open up the urban space to dialogue and debate or re-imagine what the city could be through graphical forms. By looking at a range of contemporary and historical examples, the presentation will attempt to look forward to ask, what is the potential for the city to become a space beyond alienation and commodification? What role does imagery play in this?

Ultimately the kind of cities we want to live in the future cannot be divorced from what kind of people we want to be. We face an uncertain future and we need to examine our options. This presentation will make an argument for an engaged graphic practice that attempts to raise questions and open up new possibilities for the field of art and design.

Douglas is an artist, designer and activist who work across a range of media. He completed an MA in Computer-Related Design at the Royal College of Art in London and also holds a BA in Fine Art. Recent projects have included a residency using Europe's largest slide projection system at Ars Electronica in Linz, Austria and the bestselling satirical pack of playing cards *Regime Change begins at Home* and with the Greater London Authority as an organiser of a three-day cultural programme for the European Social Forum. He writes regularly for cultural publications including *Eye the International Journal of Graphic Design* and his publications include, as Editor *Website Graphics Now* (Thames and Hudson 1999). His work is part of the permanent collection of the British Museum and has been featured in *Adbusters* magazine (Canada), *Atlas* magazine (USA), *Art Monthly*, *Blueprint*, *Dazed and Confused*, *The Economist*, *The Guardian*, *Malababa* (Spain), *Mute*, *NME* and *Time Out*.

Anna Gerber
Independent
Zoé Whitley
V&A Museum, London, UK

FROM THERE TO HERE: NEW DIRECTIONS IN CONTEMPORARY GRAPHIC DESIGN

'Contrary to what was thought in the past, the joint phenomena of globalisation and increased connectivity have given rise once again to the local dimension'. — Ezio Manzini.

The international graphic design discourse is shifting. The canon is moving away from a Western-biased discourse to one that includes a rapidly changing political, social and economic landscape of emerging regions (and, in turn, emerging designers) from around the world. With this changing landscape, we are seeing an emerging graphic language. A language that is new, one that aims to reflect not only regional changes, but one that retains a sense of place, culture, history and locality.

In the wake of exhibitions such as *Global Cities* and books such as *World Graphic Design*, this paper will raise aspects of emerging creative industries in Zimbabwe and India and their visual idioms in a bid to reassess our view that graphic design is necessarily rooted in a Modernist aesthetic and Westernised discourse. The authors will examine emerging graphic design practice in India and Zimbabwe and through that prism, consider what Zimbabwe-based designer Saki Mafundikwa has called, 'the pluralism of influence wrought by the globalization of the canon'.

Both countries are in political, social and economic flux, one busy moving ahead, the other seemingly blighted by its government. This status quo will make for an arresting portal into the graphic design emerging from these regions. Globalisation in India can be thought of as another form of colonialism. American advertising agencies such as Weiden + Kennedy are opening new offices in New Delhi. The annual Indian design conference, Kyoorius Design Yatra are purporting to deal with contemporary Indian graphic design yet boasts a roster of Western graphic designers. At the same time, the paper will reveal a return to Gandhian swadeshi philosophies, whereby designers are utilising local crafts, materials and traditions, in their work. In the case of Zimbabwe, it will be shown how until recently, 'African design' most often signaled either a Western designer's source of inspiration or Western design technology mobilized for African aid and how that led to graphic design which was either 'about' or altruistically/condescendingly 'for' Africa. In this context, design practice has too often upheld the false dichotomy of timeless 'primitive' Africa versus a technologically advanced and design-savvy West.

Gerber is an independent writer, designer and lecturer, based in London. She writes regularly for design publications such as *Creative Review*, *Eye*, *Print*, *Idea* and *Varoom*. Her visual commissions have appeared in *Idea*, *shift!* and *+rosebud*. She is the author and designer of *All Messed Up: Unpredictable Graphics* (2004) and co-author/co-designer of *Influences: A Lexicon of Contemporary Graphic Design* (2006) with Anja Lutz. She is a lead tutor on the BA Graphic Media Design course at London College of Communication and has lectured extensively worldwide, including Malaysia, India, the U.S. and Australia as well as in museums, including Tate Modern and the V&A. Bringing together her academic backgrounds in politics, philosophy and communication design (MA Communication Design, Central Saint Martins and MSc Political Philosophy, LSE), she is currently working on her third book, *Beyond Green: Graphic Design and Sustainability*. Written by Gerber and co-designed with Rathna Ramanathan, the book will be published by Laurence King in 2009.

Whitley is a Curator of Contemporary Programmes at the V&A. She manages temporary exhibitions, new commissions, and contemporary design-led initiatives. Previously, she served as Assistant Curator and Bursary Curator of the Schreyer Poster Collection at the V&A, overseeing the acquisition and cataloguing of a significant collection of 19th and 20th century propaganda graphics. Exhibitions to her credit include *Uncomfortable Truths: the shadow of slave trading on contemporary art and design* (touring 2007-2008) and she has organised others including *Che Guevara: Revolutionary & Icon* (2006), *Blood on Paper* (2008) and *Telling Tales* (2009). She has lectured and provided artist's translation at Kingston University, the Royal College of Art, Camberwell College of Art & Design, University of Trier, Tate and Harvard University. Her writing has appeared in catalogues for Mode Museum Antwerp, the Studio Museum in Harlem and the V&A. Forthcoming writing includes contributions to *Phaidon Graphic Classics*. Whitley received her MA from the RCA in the History of Design.

Neal Haslem
Ph.D. candidate, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia

I HAVE LEARNT A LOT FROM THIS POSTER... AND IT IS MY POSTER

Jan van Toorn initiated the conference *design beyond Design: critical reflection and the practice of visual communication* in November 1997. During this conference he described a new form of politicised practice for graphic design; a dialogic design that required the user or reader to take a part in creating the meaning of the artefact. Van Toorn's concept remains radical today in its contradiction to the predominant understanding of what graphic design is (and is for). This seminal conference, and the publications it produced, took place over a decade ago, what has happened to the 'design beyond Design' vision?

This proposition develops van Toorn's proposal and suggests a graphic design practice that goes beyond dialogic design into a holistic communicative interplay between content, form, self and other. This interplay connects all involved parties in the design process through an exchange of teaching, learning, and expression. Design for the 'other', and the designer.

Through visualization and materialization, the implicit becomes explicit and the ineffable is given form. Language is a technology that allows us to verbalize, communicate and think. Visual language, likewise, allows designers to externalise nebulous responses (ideas and emotions) and render them out(side), cohesive and concrete. The artefact produced is then 'read', it can then start to work, and reply back to inform both the designer and the 'other'. In this way graphic design constructs the metonym with which we understand (and create) the world. This is (visual) speaking, not as a way of demonstrating knowledge, but as a way of creating, and allowing the 'phase transition' of knowledge.

This 'New View' reflects on a recent project to discuss a 'socially-situated' design activity, one that is intrinsically linked to context and, rather than acting from the finalised or the known, situates itself in a state of uncertainty, generating the possibility to move both designer and user.

Haslem is a design educator and practicing communication designer. He has recently completed a research Masters degree in communication design, concerned with a proposition for community facilitation through communication design. He is a current Ph.D. candidate at RMIT University, School of Applied Communication, in Melbourne Australia, and lectures into the communication design stream at Swinburne University of Technology. His current practice-led research investigates the potential for a socially-situated communication design ontology through a focus on the role of the 'other' in the design activity.

Russell Kerr
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FOR WE ARE YOUNG AND FREE. DESIGN + MANIFESTO = A NEW WORLD ORDER

The 'real world' can be a nasty place; rampant consumerism and wealth generation now underpin all aspects of human function. This way of life is not sustainable and generally does not value equality or human life in any meaningful way. The graphic design industry thrives on income earned from peddling misconceptions, and the virtues of lust and excess. These actions lead to gentrification of culture and the degradation of living standards for the vast majority of inhabitants of this planet.

This paper outlines the role socially aware graphic designers can play in shaping a just real world. It discusses the need for a real world manifesto that positions graphic design in a wider social context, not one that compromises its principles by failing to acknowledge the inherent problems of consumerism.

Attempts have been made to change the landscape in which graphic design occurs, most notably the *First Things First* manifesto. For me *First Things First* doesn't go far enough in specifying the underlying link between graphic design and the problems mentioned above. *First Things First* raised important issues but failed to adequately relate graphic design to the personal accountability of the designer. Another example to be discussed is the *Designers Accord* (www.designersaccord.org). While being an advancement on *First Things First* I believe that it does not go far enough in its vision, merely focusing on sustainability and failing to address graphic design's capacity to effect positive social change through socially responsible and ethical practice.

A meaningful manifesto needs to be hard hitting and address three key areas of concern; sustainability, social responsibility and ethical practice. A meaningful manifesto would denounce designers who work on 'sustainable' projects while simultaneously undertaking commissions for companies who engage in questionable practices. Such a manifesto would set the bar for entry deliberately high. Adopting such a stance would give the manifesto relevance and command respect, and would not merely be a 'feel good' initiative.

I believe the way to formulate such a manifesto is to begin discussions on these issues where the formulation of graphic design thinking is at its most impressionable; within design curriculums. I will present a survey of graphic design students, staff and recent graduates from the Communication Design at RMIT University, (a structure indicative of the majority of design curriculums across the industry). This survey will be used to support a discussion on what needs to be done to formulate a meaningful manifesto. Further I will discuss a project conducted by graphic design students who were asked to develop a position statement discussing 'What is graphic design?' The resulting submissions clearly define a vision for the future of graphic design.

Kerr is an Artworker, Activist and Educator based in Melbourne, Australia. He creates hand-made, screen-printed posters for grassroots political organisations and social causes. Since 2006 he has been the Honours coordinator at The Works, RMIT Universities Design Consultancy. He has a Masters in Public Advocacy and Action from Victoria University and a Bachelor of Arts in Graphic Design with Honours from the University of Ballarat.

He has extensive professional experience in the design industry, he spent three years working at one of Australia's premier design studio, Inkahoots, before moving on to set up his own studio, Transfer Press. Kerr continues to practice design working with grassroots community organizations and creating street based art and screen-printed posters with political content. His work is in the permanent collections of the State Library of Victoria and the Centre for the Study of Political Graphics, Los Angeles. Russell is a founding member of Australian Disruptive, a collective of graphic activists established to cultivate social change through graphic agitation. In 2006 Russell formed the Whale Conservation Front, a not for-profit organization advocating the conservation of whales through visual communication.

Susan King Roth
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USA

MOVING ON, MOVING OUT: FUTURE SCENARIOS FOR DESIGN EDUCATION & PRACTICE

Jared Diamond, author of *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed* (2007) examined factors that caused civilizations of the past to collapse. One factor appears to be the isolation of leadership from problems experienced by the rest of society.

Industrialized nations support the pursuit of profit and accumulation of wealth through incentives and policies that benefit some, but do not necessarily promote democratic ideals or address basic needs. Design has participated in this worldview by association with business and industry but an underlying current of altruism and social responsibility has surfaced at the beginning of the twenty-first century with the potential to become mainstream. This focus on ethical issues, expanded models of practice, challenges to the status quo, and a sustainable role for design and education in the real world are explored through alternate future scenarios.

The global context for design activity is sobering. Reports of oppression, genocide and religious extremism dominate the media; poverty and preventable diseases continue to devastate populations around the world. Climate change is irrefutable and possibly irreversible. Environmental degradation and the socioeconomic impact of addiction to fossil fuels (war, inflation, terrorism) are as threatening today as nuclear attack appeared to an earlier generation. Access to clean water is a challenge in many parts of the world and thousands of children die each day due to unsafe water and poor sanitation.

Not long ago it seemed possible to envision a utopian future based on the development of new technologies, global communities of interest, freedom from disease and hunger and an increasing standard of living. Since 9/11 the possibility of a dystopic future seems equally feasible. Under such daunting circumstances, can design intervention really make a difference? Will designers develop products and communications that produce long-term benefits for society as well as short-term gains for business and industry? Which significant or seemingly intractable problems can be addressed successfully by design, and who will fund design in the public interest?

Future scenarios provide a device for envisioning models of design with the potential to address problems experienced by the 'rest of society'. The first scenario extends pro bono design activity through mass collaboration with a visionary twist. The second overwrites traditional practice with concept design, strategic thinking and a global perspective. The third has predictive potential. Scenarios are presented with reference to recent writings on the topic to provoke dialogue on the future of design and education.

[Diamond, J 2007, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed*, Penguin Books, London.]

Roth is Associate Dean for Research and Academic Affairs and Associate Professor of Graphic Design in the School of the Arts, Virginia Commonwealth University. She has an undergraduate degree from Cooper Union and graduate degree from Ohio State University and has practiced design for New York City, the *Whole Earth Epilog* and others. She was Chair of Industrial, Interior & Visual Communication Design and Co-founder/Co-director of the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies in Art and Design at Ohio State University. Publications and presentations focus on design research, human-centered design and interdisciplinary education. Research on the design and usability of voting systems received widespread attention following the presidential election of 2000 including testimony for national panels, citations and interviews in the media and participation in federally-funded research. She is Vice President of NASAD, reviews educational programs of art and design throughout the US, and chairs the Design Futures Working Group.

Paul Linnell

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THE GRAPHIC DILEMMA IN USER INSTRUCTIONS— EXPLORING THE GAP BETWEEN PAST GRAPHIC DIVERSITY IN INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL AND CURRENT PRACTICE

The history of user instructions demonstrates a graphic diversity and freedom from the conventionality that typifies current examples, especially those that attempt to explain the operation of new technology products to ordinary consumers. This paper shows how ideas from graphic design history can be used both critically and creatively to question and improve current practice. The overall aim of the project is to formulate a new model that will benefit both the user and the manufacturer as an integrated part of brand communication. *Firstly*, this paper will define the *problem*: it will attempt to trace and explain the separation of research into the effectiveness of user instructions from the broader flow of graphic design practice and research. Current user instructions demonstrate a limited graphic language that has evolved through a science-based quantitative research methodology. This process measures the reader's cognitive responses in artificial test conditions. The visual outcomes have failed to satisfy the increasing need for user instructions to be both simple and an integrated, consistent tool of brand communication between manufacturer and user.

Secondly, the paper explores the *potential* through a range of examples from the history of user instructions. Examples will focus on those that introduce new technology to a domestic context. These demonstrate both the aesthetic and rhetorical breadth of graphic language, as well as their significance to specific audiences. They illustrate attempts to resolve the conflicting demands of technical instruction whilst promoting brand values and persuading users of the benefits of new technology. Design historians such as Brockmann and Atfield have shown that exploring design ideas from a real-user context can provide an alternative, more meaningful and relevant assessment of designed artifacts.

Finally, this paper will describe research *practice*, showing how visualised qualitative methods can analyse rich and significant graphic communication content, considering visual rhetoric and relevance to the user's context in addition to instructional content. This method can be used to extract ideas and content from instructional documents, which could provide design principles incorporating contextual relevance and value to the user. This parallels recent trends in other areas of design that explore beyond mere functionality to the emotional significance and user's experience of design.

Linnell is Subject Leader for Graphic Design and Course Leader for BA (Hons) Graphic Design at De Montfort University. His specialist areas are typography, information and instructional design. He is also External Examiner for BA (Hons) Graphic Design at University College Suffolk in Ipswich. Before teaching, he worked in Higher Education as a graphic designer and design team leader in educational technology, producing instructional materials and graphic information systems. He designed a series of self-study workbooks on transferable skills for undergraduates, published by Kogan Page. Other includes a teachers' pack on racist bullying for Leicestershire Constabulary.

He is also currently studying part-time towards a Ph.D., which investigates the effectiveness of graphic communication of user instructions for new consumer technology. He is a member of the Typographic Circle, IIID, Design History Society and Design Research Society. He has presented papers at the Design History Society conference, TU Delft, and the Design Research Education East Midlands (DREEM), Nottingham, both in 2006.

Peter S. Martin

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PAINTING NEW SHADES OF GRAY IN THE DESERT: A CASE OF EXPLORING GRAPHIC DESIGN'S CAPABILITIES IN IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION OF YOUNG MODERN ARABIC WOMEN

Buckminster Fuller declared that change is our only constant. This seems to be an increasingly apt paradox to attribute to our globalizing world as it aggressively equips itself for rapid adaptation, integration, and innovation. Systems of identity perpetuation operating within the intergenerational relationships inherent in traditional societies are being transformed, abandoned, or assimilated into mediated environments comprised of increasing degrees of hybridity. Individuals less automatically assume identities provided to them by their culture as they increasingly negotiate and utilize identity fragments that are encountered within the diverse and mediated contexts of everyday living in a globalizing world. If this modern context is navigated without sensitive support and contextual processes of identity construction, individuals can become vulnerable to arbitrarily 'selected' identities or can become susceptible to a desperate reaction of localization; of which both situations are not sustainable leaving individuals subject to depressive and/or violent conditions.

This paper presents a graphic design potential-seeking project that is pursuing identity construction strategies and methods for the modern Arab woman. This project is the quest of a community of 25 senior-level graphic design students who are all young Arab women living in the modern context of a hybridized society where it is impossible for them to live the same lives as their mothers. With themselves as a point of departure, this project is following a process of research and innovation in graphic design to develop visually communicated identities for the Modern Arab Woman that will be proposed (5 May 2008) for development and implementation to augment an ongoing multi-year Arab women identity research project funded by Qatar National Research Fund.

This paper will present a model of graphic design that asserts that identity construction is at its core. Using this perspective as a foundation the paper will establish a case study of this project to demonstrate and evaluate the capacity of graphic design (research, process, thinking, and generation) to construct functional identities for members of communities and demographic sectors within dynamic and hybridized societies. In conclusion, this paper will argue that the process of graphic design is one of globalizing world's most powerful tools to construct sustainable social identities within the modern condition of change that is constant.

Martin has been teaching graphic design at Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar since September 1999. His experience of working in design education within a multi-cultural context has inspired his particular interest in design problem definition methodology, contextual design, design performance evaluation, design education, and cross-cultural information design. These interests are actively being pursued in his scholarly research.

Martin's background includes a B.S. in Environmental Design and Analysis from Cornell University and an M.F.A. in Communication Arts and Design from Virginia Commonwealth University, as well as five years of professional design experience. Also, his travels and photography in nearly 50 countries has exposed him to the tremendous diversity of form, meaning, and context that is critical to the performance of design.

Ellen McMahon

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Erin Moore

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BEING THERE: CROSSING THE BORDER TO FORM SUSTAINABLE DESIGN PARTNERSHIPS

In 2007 the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum exhibition *Design For the Other 90%* showcased design innovations intended to address the basic needs of resource-impooverished populations. One important factor governing the effectiveness of these projects is the designer's understanding of the situations for which they are designing. Some members of organizations like KickStart, International Development Enterprises, and Designers Without Borders have spent years living with and getting an understanding of the end users before initiating designed responses. This calls to question how designers can create useful products for those whom they are less familiar with. It is a challenge for designers who work from a distance and have little understanding of the local conditions, or those who are too focused on technological innovation.

The University of Arizona is located sixty miles north of one of the most contrasting border regions in the world. One hundred miles south of the border, there are massive unsustainable high-rise tourist developments, which are mostly built by and for Americans. These are rapidly urbanizing the small fishing village of Puerto Peñasco, Mexico. For 27 years, Centro Intercultural de Estudios de Desiertos y Océanos (CEDO), a small nonprofit organization, has been a center of research, environmental education and conservation in this area. One of their strategies for protecting the vulnerable wetlands is to support the land rights of sustainable oyster farming collectives. The center is broadening their economic base through ecotourism, thus keeping the farmers on the land and protecting them from environmentally damaging development.

Over the last few years the authors have taken university students to CEDO to work with biologists, conservationists and oyster farmers on a variety of projects. They include designs of interpretive kiosk structures; identity, signage and murals for a restaurant and eco-tour businesses; and communication materials. It is an ongoing challenge to understand and be responsive to the needs of our collaborators and the end users. Traveling to Mexico is particularly beneficial for a group of students who live in a politically charged border region. For some, it means returning home. For students who cross the border to work in interdisciplinary teams for the long-term benefit of the people and the environment, this can become critical preparation for their future work as designers.

McMahon is an Associate Professor in the School of Art at the University of Arizona. She has been teaching art and design as well as lecturing and publishing about design education since 1990. As a delegate to the 2007 World Design Congress (ICOGRADA) in Havana Cuba, she presented a paper about the bi-national conservation project she's doing with her American students in Mexico. Other recent presentations include *Experiencing Agency as a Designer Through Service to the Community* at the AIGA Education Conference at the Art Center in Pasadena. Her artist books are in numerous collections including those of UCLA, Scripps, Occidental, Texas Tech, and the New York and Boston Public Libraries. Her multifaceted creative practice is discussed in *Clean New World: Culture, Politics by Maud Lavin*. She is the recent recipient of a Fulbright Grant to contribute design, art and writing to an interdisciplinary conservation project in Puerto Peñasco, Mexico.

Moore is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the School of Architecture at the University of Arizona. In her research and in the design studios she teaches, Moore looks for ways that the processes, media, and craft of architectural design can engage the experience of material and place over time. Her research and writing is often collaborative and draws on cultural geography, gender studies and ecology. Moore is co-founder of Floodspace, a partnership in research on design innovations for communities subject to climate change-related flooding in Bangladesh. Moore was a selected artist for *The Eleventh Shade of Green*, at The Berkeley Art Museum and panelist at the conference of the International Association for Environmental Philosophy, *Thinking Through Nature: Philosophy for an Endangered World*, in Eugene, Oregon. Her publications include *Smart Materials and Self Regulating Envelopes*, in the Proceedings of the International Council for Research and Innovation in Building and Construction in South Africa.

Alistair S. Ross

Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design, University of the
Arts, London, UK

BI/MULTILINGUAL DOCUMENT DESIGN IN THE REAL WORLD

What is the 'real world'? Recent advances in digital technology and computer software enable the design and production of documents in any language that the client or designer could wish for. However, the reality is that design training has not caught up with the technology. The use of the non-Latin writing systems, with or without the accompanying Latin text, seems to require more ability, effort or knowledge than many Western designers are currently able to muster.

An ongoing study is examining the processes and problems of designing and commissioning bi/multilingual public information documents in the United Kingdom. British society is now more ethnically and culturally diverse than at any other time. Yet, given this diversity one is forced to conclude from empirical evidence that the design of information in languages other than English is often perfunctory at best or strewn with basic error at worst.

Currently, there is no resource relating to the design of multilingual, multiscript documents. Few Western designers are acquainted with the mechanics of a non-Latin script, such as Arabic. Often it is a case of the designer sending the Arabic text to a specialist typesetter and then inserting the scanned file into a Latin-biased design. Alternatively, in local authorities many bilingual documents are commissioned and implemented by local government officers—non-design professionals. Thus, the resulting documents are, at best, barely utilitarian.

Frequently, document design now requires the inclusion of unfamiliar writing systems (the non-Latin) that are increasingly becoming familiar with the impact of internationalization in the UK. Yet, today, UK graphic designers and typographers seldom encounter non-Latin scripts in their formal design education.

Little thought is given to other cultures or visual cultures—are we to assume that they have been subsumed into McLuhan's global village and have automatically adopted the English language? Global brands such as *Coca Cola* and *McDonalds* have long understood the need to 'localize' branding for markets outside the US (with varying success) and yet none of this limited knowledge seems to have filtered down to the design schools and their curricula.

Can we assume that the design educators will develop courses that take in the potential need for designing with other languages and cultures? Is the current nomenclature accurate and appropriate, employing culturally pejorative terms such as non-Latin, retrograde script? What is the rationale for creating bi/multilingual documents? How can this be addressed?

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