

Design History Lab: Visualizing Technology, Power, Influence, and Form.

"We are connected by intellectual threads not only to what is happening around us, but also with what happened in the past, and the way that it colors the present. History undergoes constant and continual revision by all cultures." Christopher Crouch, Modernism in art, design and architecture (Macmillan, 1999) |

- Description:** In this course we will explore different ways of visualizing design history online, by building an opinionated database of commentary on images of design based on our reading and discussion of key texts. The class is divided into two halves: in the first part of the morning we will discuss readings, research findings and develop ideas for content. The second half will be technical: a lab devoted to the presentation and organization of that knowledge by acquiring and refining web design skills. Our goal is to explore how history is made and re-made through the framing, mining, analysis and arraying of information in compelling forms.
- Method:** At the heart of our analytical method is the drawing of threads between works, so that we begin to see how the visual environment around us is a product of historical processes. Our key terms for discussing works of design are as follows:
- Technology – what technical processes emerged that made this work possible?
 - Power (follow the money) – who funded this work? What are the dominant agendas and hidden assumptions in the message?
 - Influence – what was the impact of this work on subsequent works? What were its precursors? Who made it and what else did they do?
 - Form – What compositional, material and tactical techniques are at work in the work? How does it achieve its impact?
- Structure:** Students will work individually and in groups on research. They will be expected to take some initiative in finding commonalities—ideas, motives and visual rhymes—between given design works and works they have unearthed in their library research. Our primary material will be graphic design and product design, with some diversions into architecture, film and interior design.
- Participation in class discussions is a crucial part of the process: weekly readings will be assigned to the class, and smaller groups of students will be asked to present specific works from the readings, and lead a class discussion. Participation will be graded at the end of the course.
- Through the course of the semester, each student will write three short texts for the database based on their research presentations. These are to be posted on the class blog. (URL to come)
- Blackboard:** Blackboard <<http://courses.utexas.edu/>> will be used to post course material and announcements.
- TA:** Courtney Inge <courtneyinge@gmail.com>
- Objectives** This course will enable and require students to:
- Learn and refine basic web design skills, including xhtml, CSS, integrating blog software (Wordpress) and html editors (Dreamweaver).
 - Develop critical and presentation skills and incorporate them into their design process.
 - Develop a note-taking/indexing system for readings and prepare verbal synopses of the readings.
 - Develop journalistic and academic methods of research: self-initiated reading, note-taking, online database queries, library based research of texts.
 - Develop writing practices for written papers and websites, develop editing techniques, and learn to summarize ideas with brief statements, captions and headings.
 - Post regularly on the class blog, including three assignments (750+ words each).

Films

Design Classics: London Underground Map (BBC 4, 1988)

Helvetica, 2007 (80 mins) d. Gary Hustwit 2007

The Bauhaus: Its Impact on the World of Design (19 mins) d. Detten Schleiermacher 1976

Texts

Required: Drucker, Johanna and McVarish, Emily, Graphic Design History: A Critical Guide (Pearson Prentice Hall 2009)

Recommended: Crouch, Christopher, Modernism in Art, Design and Architecture (Macmillan 1999)

Eskilson, Steven, Graphic Design: A New History (Yale University Press, 2007)

Gorman, Carma, The Industrial Design Reader (Allworth Press, 2003)

Lupton, Ellen, Thinking With Type: A Critical Guide for Designers, Writers, Editors and Students (Princeton Architectural Press, 2004)

Meikle, Jeffrey Twentieth Century Limited: Industrial Design in America, 1925-1939 (Temple University Press, 2001)

Meikle, Jeffrey Design in the USA (Oxford University Press, 2005)

Weschler, Lawrence Everything that Rises: A Book of Convergences (McSweeney's 2006)

Writing: Barnet, Sylvan, A Short Guide to Writing About Art, 9th Edition (Pearson Longman 2007)
Strunk & White, The Elements of Style 4th edition (Allyn & Bacon, 1999)

Philosophy: De Landa, Manuel, A Thousand Years of Nonlinear History (Zone Books, 1997)

Deleuze, Gilles, "Mediators," and "Letter to a Harsh Critic", Negotiations 1972-1990 (Columbia University Press, 1990)

Design History: Forty, Adrian. Objects of Desire: Design and Society Since 1750. (Thames & Hudson 1992)

Heller, Steven and Georgette Ballance, eds, Graphic Design History (Allworth, 2001)

Henthorn, Cynthia Lee From Submarines to Suburbs: Selling a Better America, 1939-1959 (Ohio University Press, 2006)

Kirkham, Pat. Charles and Ray Eames. MIT Press.

Latour, Bruno. "A Cautious Prometheus? A Few Steps Toward a Philosophy of Design". Design History Society Falmouth, Cornwall, 3rd September 2008. <http://bruno-latour.fr>

Latour, Bruno and Albena Yaneva. "Give Me a Gun and I Will Make All Buildings Move: An ANT's View of Architecture". Geiser, Reto (ed.), Explorations in Architecture: Teaching, Design, Research, Basel: Birkhäuser, 2008.

Margolin, Victor. "Design in History". Design Issues: Volume 25, Number 2 Spring 2009

Triggs, Teal, Type Design: Radical Innovations and Experimentation (Collins Design, 2003)

Walker, John A., Design History and the History of Design (Pluto Press, 1989)

Heller, Steven, and Elinor Pettit, Graphic Design Time Line: A Century of Design Milestones (Allworth Press, 2000)

Lamster, Mark, ed. Architecture and Film (Princeton Architectural Press, 2000)

Rothschild, Deborah, Ellen Lupton and Darra Goldstein, Graphic Design in the Mechanical Age (Yale University Press, 1998)

GRADING

Progress in the course will be evaluated in seminar presentations, workshops, and individual sessions with the instructor.

Grade weighting:

Writing & research - %40

Web concept & execution - %40

Participation - %20

Total % 100

POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

Attendance and participation in all classes, group critiques, and individual meetings is very important.

However, three absences will be excused. Each absence, for any reason, beyond three will result in a reduction in the final grade by 1/2 letter grade. Students are allowed to be late 3 times (including class and individual meetings). Each late arrival beyond three, for any reason, will count as an absence.

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class. If you are late to class, it is your responsibility to notify me of your arrival and verify that your late arrival has been recorded. Arrival beyond 20 minutes after the scheduled time will be recorded as an absence. All late work will drop one full letter grade for each class day it is late. All late work must be turned in during class. An incomplete will be given in only rare cases, and for non-academic reasons.

GRADE DEFINITIONS

A = 4.00

A- = 3.67

B+ = 3.33

B = 3.00

B- = 2.67

C+ = 2.33

C = 2.00

C- = 1.67

D+ = 1.33

D = 1.00

D- = 0.67

F = 0.00

A Excellent 100 – 90 points	Surprise yourself and the instructor; prolific work ethic; conceptual precision; investigative agility; honed and refined written work.
B Very Good 89 - 80 points	Strong development and dedication; prolific work ethic; clear intentions; rigorous development; quality written work.
C Average 79 - 70 points	Complete work; solid work ethic; predictable development; fair written work.
D Pass 69 – 60 points	Complete work; poor work ethic; preconceived intentions; unresolved written work.
E Failure 59 - 00 points	Insufficient work and commitment to the requirements of the studio.

Additional grade policy information can be found online at:

<http://www.utexas.edu/student/registrar/grades/>

LOCKERS

If you wish to have a locker (in the hallways), please follow these steps:

- 1 Obtain a lock.
- 2 With the lock, go see the DESL proctor on duty and get a Locker Agreement form.
- 3 Choose a locker and put your lock on it.
- 4 Fill out the form. (You can use any of your design class instructor's names in the form.)
- 5 Return the form to the DESL proctor by January 30th.

ACADEMIC

Academic policies can be found in the University Catalogues available through the Office of the Registrar and online at: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/registrar/>. Be sure to review the University policy on scholastic dishonesty if you have not already. It can be found at the Student Judicial Services web site at <http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs/>.

ACCESSIBILITY

Upon request the University of Texas at Austin provides appropriate academic accommodations for

qualified students with disabilities. More information can be found by contacting the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-4641 TTY or online at: <http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/ssd/>. With the exception of the grade and attendance policies, parts of this syllabus are subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

NOTE

The Design Faculty has many other commitments to the University in addition to their teaching responsibilities. The faculty are available to you several hours a week as well as during office hours. You should try to conduct your class business during these regularly scheduled hours. Arrangement to meet with faculty outside of these hours should occur only in unusual circumstances.

CALENDAR (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

- 1-20 HISTORY: Intro. (London Underground Diagram)
LAB:
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- 1-25 HISTORY: Drucker/McVarish intro, Ch6 & Ch7
LAB:
- 1-26 HISTORY: Drucker/McVarish Ch6 & 7
LAB:
- 1-29 FIRST WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE 9am
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- 2-1 HISTORY: Writing workshop. Weschler, Baret
LAB:
- 2-3 HISTORY: Writing workshop. Weschler, Baret
- 2-5 FINAL EDITS DUE ON FIRST ASSIGNMENT
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- 2-8 Library research session DFA4.104 (830 am)
HISTORY: Drucker/McVarish Ch8, Crouch Intro, Ch1&2.
- 2-10 HISTORY: Drucker/McVarish Ch8, Crouch Intro, Ch1&2
LAB:
- 2-12 GROUP ASSIGNMENTS DUE
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- 2-15: HISTORY: Drucker/McVarish Ch9 ("Innovation & Persuasion"), Crouch Ch3
LAB:
- 2-17: HISTORY: Drucker/McVarish Ch9, Crouch Ch3
LAB:
- 2-20 GROUP ASSIGNMENTS DUE
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- 2-22: HISTORY: Drucker/McVarish Ch10 ("Culture of Consumption") Meikle, Henthorn on Futurama
LAB:
- 2-24 HISTORY: Visit to HRC to view Futurama artifacts?
LAB:
- 2-26 GROUP ASSIGNMENTS DUE
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- 3-1 HISTORY: Drucker/McVarish Ch11 (Information Design) Meikle
LAB:
- 3-3 HISTORY: Drucker/McVarish Ch11 (Information Design), Meikle.
LAB:
- 3-5 GROUP ASSIGNMENTS DUE
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- 3-8 HISTORY: Crouch, Drucker/McVarish Ch12.
LAB:
- 3-10 HISTORY: : Crouch, Drucker/McVarish Ch12
LAB:

Peter Hall 12/30/09 2:50 PM

Comment: add Meikle & ID history earlier?

3-12 GROUP ASSIGNMENTS DUE

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spring break

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3-22 HISTORY: Spark, Branzi (Italy)

3-24 HISTORY: Spark, Branzi (Italy)

3-26 GROUP ASSIGNMENTS DUE

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3-29 HISTORY: Slade, Papanek, Fuller

3-31 HISTORY: Slade, Papanek, Fuller

4-2 GROUP ASSIGNMENTS DUE

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4-5 HISTORY: Drucker/McVarish Ch13 (Pop and Protest)

4-7 HISTORY: Drucker/McVarish Ch13 (Pop and Protest)

4-9 GROUP ASSIGNMENTS DUE

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4-12 HISTORY: Drucker/McVarish Ch14

4-14 HISTORY: Drucker/McVarish Ch15

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4-19 HISTORY: Eskilson

4-21 HISTORY: Eskilson

4-26 No class (performance review prep)

4-28 No class (performance review prep)

5-3 No class (performance reviews)

5-5 No class (performance reviews)

Assignment I:

Find two works of graphic design that “connect” to your assigned image (below). The connection may be formal (based on visual rhyme or antithesis), technological (eg printing methods), related to subject matter (eg how did this help codify the product as we know it today?), social function, commissioning body or the designer who made the works. Present your argument in a digital slide show on the assigned date. Then, based on your presentation and the resulting discussion, write a 750 word extended caption on the connecting images and post it on the class blog.

Monday January 25

- A – Poster advertising Honore de Balzac’s “Little Miseries of Married Life” anon 1845 (p118)
- B – Charles Darwin’s finch illustrations 1839
- C – Daguerrotype p129
- D – Announcement of sale, 1829 (p130)

- E – William Blake, Jerusalem 1804-20
- F – Department Store poster, 1875 (p142)
- G – Edward Penfield Harper’s ad 1895 OR train tickets 1880
- H – Halftone techniques for printing photos 1880 (p146)

Wednesday January 27

- I – Jessie Wilcox Smith Kodak ad 1904 (p1480)
- J – Eadweard Muybridge motion study
- K – “Shinplaster” 1870 OR Science for Everyone 1908
- L – Winslow Homer, “The Army of the Potomac” 1864

- M – Georges Massias Gladiator ad 1905 OR Campbell’s soups ad (p155)
- N – John Everett Millais, Pears soap ad, 1886
- O – Jules Cheret poster of Loie Fuller 1893
- P – Henri de Toulouse Lautrec poster for Abbe Faure’s memoirs 1893
- Q – Adler Typewriters ad, designed by Lucien Bernhard 1908