

ARTHI 5572: THE DESIGN OF POLITICS / THE POLITICS OF DESIGN

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Fall 2015: Wednesdays 9-12

116 S Michigan - 202

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This class explores the intersections of design and politics. From the circulation of messages and materials related to revolutions, to personal habits of consumption and use, we will consider how design creates and responds to ideological programs and agendas. Students will develop their own paths of inquiry, selecting core issues (such as environmental, labor, social, or ideological interventions) to track in design history and culture. Our readings and writings will focus on the question, “do artifacts have politics?” as we consider design practices both official and subversive.

Learning Goals

Goal 1. Students will arrive at new insights through analysis of primary sources (objects, images, texts) relating to design history.

- Craft complex visual and textual interpretations of design from the standpoint of politics and power
- Contextualize works in relation to global, national, and local histories

Goal 2. Students will master tools developed by historians of design.

- Master skills and conventions of scholarly writing and oral presentation
- Make full use of all relevant research resources (museums, libraries, archives)
- Situate inquiries in relation to design historiography and critical theory

Goal 3. Students will contribute to the field of art and/or design history.

- Build sustained original arguments and demonstrate their originality by relating them to existing scholarly literature
- Make interesting or important claims persuasive by grounding them in interpretation of sources

COURSE REQUIREMENTS (See Canvas for more detailed assignments)

- >Attendance – 10 pts. please be present and prepared. This is a seminar style class in which I expect you to bring your own ideas and participate openly. Any more than 3 unexcused absences may be grounds for "No Credit" standing.
- >Weekly Responses – 24 pts: Each week you will post an informal response to the readings on our class discussion board by the evening beforehand (please post by 9 pm). This post should raise initial questions for discussion (“I found it interesting that..” “I wondered what the author would think of...” “What about ___”, etc). You may find that current events correspond to issues in the readings: post links or comments as they come up. In addition to your own post, please respond to at least one classmate’s discussion post each week. Responses are 3 points each and you can skip 3 per semester without penalty.

- >Discussion leader – 10 pts. Each week, 2 students will start the discussion with a prepared comment on the readings and prompts for discussion. Plan to engage your classmates with questions about the readings, highlights of specific passages, or related works/examples to discuss. If the reading uses images or examples, prepare to show and discuss at least a few of them; related images/media (objects, videos, etc) are also useful for discussion. This is also an invitation to bring your own research or art/design practice to the class as a part of the discussion.
- >Book review and report – 15 pts. For one week, you will read one of the “related readings” books in entirety and write a review of 500-800 words. You will want to plan ahead for this assignment to give yourself time to acquire books (not all books will be in Flaxman but most should be in the i-share network) and read them. The written assignment should follow a standard academic book review format by summarizing the work and then offering an assessment of its contributions to scholarship and strengths/weaknesses as a work in its field. I suggest looking at the reviews section of academic journals (e.g. *Art Bulletin*, *Journal of Design History*, *Design and Culture*) for a sense of typical formats. Prepare to discuss the book in class as a way of sharing our class’ bibliography: reports should be 5-10 minutes and give a sense of key topics and your assessment of the effectiveness and relevance of the work to our class topics. Please highlight at least one example of the material covered (e.g. an artwork, object/site, or historical event covered in the book).
- >Research projects - Students will propose topics for further study and discussion based on their own interests and paths of study. This assignment has three parts: a proposal with bibliography (to be developed over 2 assignments); a class presentation with peer comment; and a final paper of 15-20 pages.

INCLUSION & ACCOMMODATIONS

Your success in this class is important to me. If there are circumstances that may affect your performance in this class, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can work together to develop strategies for adapting assignments to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course.

I follow SAIC’s policy that all students with exceptional needs or concerns (including 'invisible' difficulties such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, or psychiatric complications) are encouraged to make an appointment with the professor to discuss these issues by the end of the second week of the term so that appropriate accommodations can be arranged. Students with known or suspected disabilities, such as a Reading/Writing Disorder, ADD/ADHD, and/or a mental health or chronic physical condition who think they would benefit from assistance or accommodations should first contact the Disability and Learning Resource Center (DLRC) by phone at 312.499.4278 or contact [on their website](#). DLRC staff will review your disability documentation and work with you to determine reasonable accommodations. They will then provide you with a letter outlining the approved accommodations for you to deliver to all of your instructors.

PLAGIARISM

I take plagiarism VERY SERIOUSLY and will not tolerate students who misrepresent their work. The School of the Art Institute of Chicago prohibits "dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the School" (Students' Rights and Responsibilities, *Student Handbook*). Plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft. One plagiarizes when one presents another's work as one's own, even if one does not intend to. The penalty for plagiarizing may also result in some loss of some types of financial aid, and repeat offenses can lead to expulsion from the School. To find out more about plagiarism, (1) go to the [Current Students Dashboard](#) on the saic.edu site, under Campus Resources select the Academic Advising link, and click Guides and Forms. The Faculty Senate Student Life Subcommittee produced a handbook that can be found there. Or (2) read about it in the *Student Handbook* under the section Academic Misconduct.

Design of Politics

Week 1 – September 11. Politics of Artifacts: Theories and Things

Langdon Winner, "Do Artifacts have Politics?" from *The Whale and the Reactor: A Search for Limits in the Age of High Technology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986)

"Introduction," Dauntun, M. J., and Matthew Hilton, eds. *The Politics of Consumption: Material Culture and Citizenship in Europe and America*. New York: Berg, 2001.

assignment: bring in an object that you see as related to the argument of one of these readings.

Prepare to discuss the object in relation to the readings.

Week 2 – September 18. Politics of Space: Power and Tactics

Michel Foucault, "Panopticism," *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

Henri LeFebvre, excerpt from *The Production of Space (La Production de l'Espace, 1974)*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith, 1991. With introduction by K. Michael Hays, in *Architecture / Theory since 1968* (MIT Press, 2000).

Schultze, Paul. "Mies van Der Rohe in America." In *Chicago Architecture and Design, 1923-1993: Reconfiguration of an American Metropolis*, edited by John Zukowsky and Mark Jansen Bouman. Munich, Germany : Chicago, Ill: Prestel and The Art Institute of Chicago, 1993.

Week 3- September 25. Politics of modern design

William Morris, "The Arts and Crafts of To-Day (1889)" from *The Theory of Decorative Art*, Isabelle Frank ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000)

Gustav Stickley, "The Place of Furniture in Our Country," *Craftsman Homes* (New York City: The Craftsman Publishing Company, 1909).

Adolf Loos, "Ornament and Crime" (1909) from *The Theory of Decorative Art*

Boris, Eileen. "'Dreams of Brotherhood and Beauty': The Social Ideals of the Arts and Crafts Movement." In *"The Art That Is Life": The Arts & Crafts Movement in America, 1875-1920*, edited by Wendy Kaplan. Boston: Little, Brown, 1987.

*Required site visit: Jane Addams Hull-House Museum. Vernacular Architecture tour Weds, Sept 27 at 1 pm OR attend any public tour held daily Tues-Sat 1-2 pm.

REVIEWS

Colonialism and the Object

Thomas Andrew Denenberg, *Wallace Nutting and the Invention of Old America* (New Haven: Yale University Press in association with the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, 2003).

Week 4- October 2. Design and the Politics of Consumption

Karl Marx, "The Fetishism of the Commodity and Its Secret" (1863) reprinted in *The Design Studies Reader*.

Funk, Clayton. "The Gaze Across the Aisle: Architecture, Merchandising, and Social Roles at Marshall Field and Company, 1892 to 1914." *The Journal of Social Theory in Art Education (Online)*; *Reston* 32 (2012): 145–59.

Christina Kiaer, "The Russian Constructivist Flapper Dress," *Critical Inquiry* 28, no. 1 (Autumn 2001): 185–243.

REVIEWS

Susan Strasser, *Satisfaction Guaranteed: The Making of the American Mass Market* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1989).

Lifebuoy Men, Luxe women

The Culture of Property

Ellen Gruber Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor: Magazines and the Gendering of Consumer Culture, 1880s to 1910s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

Rosalind H Williams, *Dream Worlds, Mass Consumption in Late Nineteenth-Century France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

Week 5 – October 9. Bodies and Form

Christina Cogdell, *Eugenic Design: Streamlining America in the 1930s* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

Jill Lepore, "The Last Amazon," *The New Yorker*, Sept 22, 2014.

"Introducing Wonder Woman," (1941) *All-Star Comics Archive Vol 2*

REVIEWS

Robin Bernstein, *Racial Innocence: Performing American Childhood and Race from Slavery to Civil Rights* (NYU Press, 2011).

Carolyn Thomas de la Peña, *Empty Pleasures: The Story of Artificial Sweeteners from Saccharin to Splenda* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

In Meat We Trust

Jo Paoletti, *Pink and Blue*

Marshall, Jennifer Jane. *Machine Art, 1934*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012.

Week 6 – October 16. Houses as a Site for Design & Politics

Le Corbusier and Jean-Louis Cohen, "Eyes That Do Not See: Airplanes," *Toward an Architecture*, trans. John Goodman (Los Angeles, Calif: Getty Research Institute, 2007).

Christine McGaffey Frederick, *The New Housekeeping; Efficiency Studies in Home Management*. Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, Page & Co, 1913.

Gwendolyn Wright, *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1983).

REVIEWS

Hayden, Dolores. *The Grand Domestic Revolution: A History of Feminist Designs for American Homes, Neighborhoods, and Cities*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1981.

Harris, Dianne Suzette. *Little White Houses: How the Postwar Home Constructed Race in America*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013.

Week 7 – October 23. Things and Politics under Fascism

Stratigakos, Despina. *Hitler at Home*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015.

Leora Auslander, "'Jewish Taste'? Jews and the Aesthetics of Everyday life, in

Paris and Berlin, 1933-1942," in Rudy Koshar, ed. *Histories of Leisure* (Oxford: Berg Press, 2001).

Goldberger, Paul. "ARCHITECTURE VIEW; Trump: Symbol of a Gaudy, Impatient Time." *The New York Times*, January 31, 1988. <http://www.nytimes.com/1988/01/31/arts/architecture-view-trump-symbol-of-a-gaudy-impatient-time.html>.

REVIEWS

De Grazia, Victoria. *The Culture of Consent: Mass Organization of Leisure in Fascist Italy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Betts, Paul. *The Authority of Everyday Objects: A Cultural History of West German Industrial Design*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.

Rudy Koshar, *From Monuments to Traces*

Week 8 – October 30. The Design of US Ascendancy

Adas, Michael. *Dominance by Design: Technological Imperatives and America's Civilizing Mission*. Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006.

Colomina, Beatriz, Annmarie Brennan, and Jeannie Kim, eds. *Cold War Hothouses: Inventing Postwar Culture, from Cockpit to Playboy*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004.

REVIEWS

The Power of the Zoot

Martin, Reinhold. *The Organizational Complex: Architecture, Media, and Corporate Space*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003.

De Grazia, Victoria. *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance Through Twentieth-Century Europe*. Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005.

Week 9 – November 6. Black Power as Art/Design Power

Amiri Baraka, "Technology and Ethos," in *Raise, Race, Rays, Raze: Essays Since 1965* (New York: Vintage Books, 1972).

Tanisha C. Ford, *Liberated Threads: Black Women, Style, and the Global Politics of Soul* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017).

REVIEWS

Shabazz, Rashad. *Spatializing Blackness: Architectures of Confinement and Black Masculinity in Chicago*. University of Illinois Press, 2015.

Thomas J Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*, Princeton Studies in American Politics (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1996).

Kobena Mercer, *Welcome to the Jungle: New Positions in Black Cultural Studies* (Routledge, 2013).

Fouché, Rayvon. *Black Inventors in the Age of Segregation: Granville T. Woods, Lewis H. Latimer, and Shelby J. Davidson*. JHU Press, 2003.

Week 10 – November 13. Reforming Design in the West

Victor J Papanek, *Design for the Real World: Human Ecology and Social Change* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972).

First Things First Manifesto and First Things First 2000

Alison J. Clarke, “‘Actions Speak Louder’ Victor Papanek and the Legacy of Design Activism,”
Design and Culture 5, no. 2 (2013): 151–168.

Matthew Soar, “The First Things First Manifesto and the Politics of Culture Jamming: Towards a Cultural Economy of Graphic Design and Advertising,” *Cultural Studies* 16, no. 4 (July 1, 2002): 570–92.

REVIEWS

Daniel Barber

Adam Rome

Architecture for Humanity (Organization), *Design Like You Give a Damn: Architectural Responses to Humanitarian Crises* (New York, NY: Metropolis Books, 2006).

Final Project Proposal Due – make appointment to meet with Bess this week

Week 11– November 20. Consuming as Politics

bell hooks, “Eating the Other,” *Black Looks: Race and Representation*. Boston, Mass: South End Press, 1992.

Paul Gilroy, “Driving While Black,” in *Car Cultures*, ed. Daniel Miller, Materializing Culture (Oxford: Berg, 2001).

Frank, Thomas. *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997.

REVIEWS

Chin, Purchasing Power

Thuy Linh Nguyen Tu, *The Beautiful Generation: Asian Americans and the Cultural Economy of Fashion* (Duke University Press Books, 2010).

Latinos, Inc

Cashing in on Queers

Week 12 – November 27 Diversifying Design History

Aimi Hamraie, *Building Access: Universal Design and the Politics of Disability* (Minneapolis: Univ Of Minnesota Press, 2017).

David Brody, *Housekeeping by Design: Hotels and Labor*, Reprint edition (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2016).

REVIEWS

Whiteness and Leisure

Clean New World

Bananas, Beaches, and Bases - Enloe

Anne Phizacklea, Unpacking the Fashion Industry

Updated Proposal w/ Bibliography due

December 4 – CRITIQUE WEEK. No Class.

Week 13 – December 11.

Presentations w/ comments

Week 14 – December 18.

Presentations w/comments