

# V5.06

## Writing for Wikis: Collaborative Writing and Editing Puts Design Studies on the Wikipedia Map

Diana Duque

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by Diana Duque

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Parsons graduate students in Susan Yelavich's Fall 2017 course "Writing for the Public Realm" were tasked with the ultimate "public" writing challenge: To create a Wikipedia entry for the discipline of Design Studies. Their first job was to understand the wiki rules.

The Encyclopedia Britannica describes a wiki as, "a website on which users collaboratively modify content and structure directly from the web browser. In a typical wiki, text is written using a simplified markup language and often edited with the help of a rich text editor."<sup>1</sup> The free, internet-based encyclopedia known world-wide as Wikipedia, has used the English-language version of this open-source management style since 2001. This public archive of knowledge, is overseen by the Wikimedia Foundation, a non-profit made up of billions of readers, donors, volunteers, affiliates, and partners.<sup>2,3</sup> With a current catalog of approximately 5,649,702 articles, the Encyclopedia Britannica estimates the growth of the English Wikipedia website at a rate of a million words per month.<sup>4,5</sup>

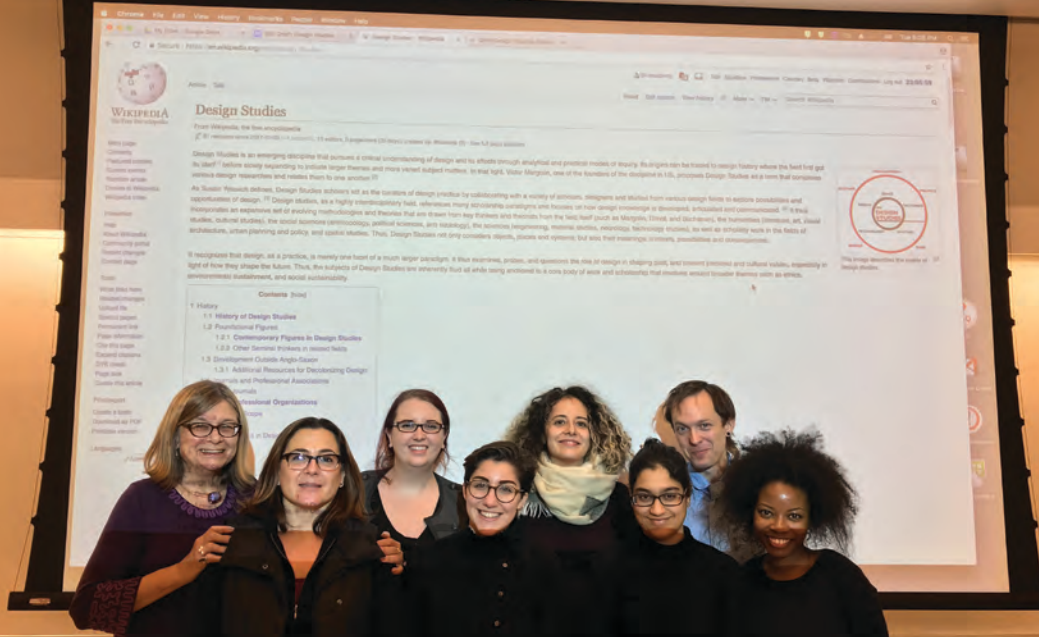


Figure 1. The Design Studies Wikipedia team from left to right: Professor Susan Yelavich; MA Design Studies students, Diana Duque, Kayla O'Daniel, Mariann Asayan, Irem Yildiz, Kashish Mittal, Rami Saab (not included in the photo); Lane Rasberry, NY representative of Wikimedia Foundation (and most excellent wiki guru); MA History of Design and Curatorial Studies.

The writing challenge required a thorough investigation into the origins of the academic discipline. Foundational figures were carefully identified, while scholarly methods, subjects, issues, and concepts were discussed. Student pairings were successful in consolidating the extensively verifiable facts, sources, and published materials in keeping with the standard principles established by the Wikipedia community thanks to the assistance of local Wikipedian in residence, Lane Rasberry.<sup>6</sup>

One important principle [of Wikipedia] is neutrality; another is the faith that contributors are participating in a sincere and deliberate fashion. Readers can correct what they perceive to be errors, and disputes over facts and possible bias are conducted through contributor discussions, with [Jimmy] Wales remaining as the final arbiter. Three other “pillars of wisdom” are not to use copyrighted material, not to contribute original research, and not to have any other rules. The last pillar reinforces the project’s belief that the open-source process will make Wikipedia into the best product available, given its community of users.<sup>7</sup>

In the usual wiki way, feedback was provided from Mr. Rasberry and other members of the Wikimedia chapter and published on wiki's talk page. (For a glimpse into the editing process, access the talk page of the Design Studies draft at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Draft\\_talk:Design\\_Studies](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Draft_talk:Design_Studies)).

After several rounds of edits and a crash course on the particularities of proper wiki citation, the Design Studies Wikipedia page went live on December 12, 2017. The page remains a living document and it continues to evolve thanks to the contributions of wiki users beyond Yelavich's classroom. We invite you to access the page in its most current iteration at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Design\\_studies](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Design_studies).

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> "wiki," Encyclopædia Britannica Online, last modified April 24, 2008, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki>.

<sup>2</sup> "Wikipedia." Encyclopædia Britannica Online, last modified April 24, 2008, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1192818/Wikipedia>.

<sup>3</sup> "Knowledge Belongs to All of Us," Wikimedia Foundation 2016-2017 Annual Report, <https://annual.wikimedia.org/2017/>.

<sup>4</sup> "Wikipedia English Article Count," Wiki Count, accessed May 31, 2018, <http://wikicount.net/>.

<sup>5</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Wikipedia."

<sup>6</sup> "Lane Rasberry, Wikipedian in Residence at Consumer Reports," LinkedIn, May 31, 2018.

<sup>7</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Wikipedia."

## Wikipedia Article: Design Studies

by Mariann Asayan, Diana Duque, Kashish Mittal, Kayla O'Daniel, Rami Saab, Narender Strong, Irem Yildiz, ed. Susan Yelavich

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Design Studies (Fig. 1) is an academic discipline that pursues a critical understanding of design and its effects through analytical and practical modes of inquiry. Its origins can be traced to design history where the field first got its start<sup>1</sup> before slowly expanding to include larger themes and more varied subject matters. In that light, Victor Margolin, one of the founders of the discipline in the US, proposes Design Studies as a term that comprises various design researches and relates them to one another.<sup>2</sup>

As a highly interdisciplinary field, Design Studies references many scholarship paradigms and focuses on how design knowledge is developed, articulated and communicated.<sup>3</sup> It therefore incorporates an expansive set of evolving methodologies and theories that are drawn from key thinkers and theorists from the field itself (such as Victor Margolin, Clive Dilnot, and Richard Buchanan), but also from several related fields such as, the humanities (literature, art, visual studies, cultural studies), the social sciences (anthropology, political sciences, and sociology), the sciences (engineering, material studies, neurology, technol-



Figure 1. Screenshot of the Design Studies Wikipedia page captured February 21, 2018.

ogy studies). Design Studies not only considers objects, places and systems, it investigates their meanings, contexts, possibilities and consequences.

Design Studies recognizes that design, as a practice, is merely one facet of a much larger paradigm. It examines, probes, and questions the role of design in shaping past and present personal and cultural values, especially in light of how they shape the future. The subjects of Design Studies are inherently fluid while being anchored to a core body of work and scholarship that revolves around broader themes such as ethics, environmental sustainment, and social sustainability.

The American author, editor and educator Susan Yelavich, encapsulates the terrain of Design Studies as embracing “two broad perspectives—one that focuses inward

on the nature of design and one that looks outward to the circumstances that shape it.”<sup>4</sup> Masters programs in Design Studies are offered at Carnegie Mellon School of Design,<sup>5</sup> Harvard Graduate School of Design,<sup>6</sup> and Parsons School of Design.<sup>7</sup>

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## History of Design Studies

The history of the field of Design Studies can be traced to the early 1960's in England. In 1962, a "Conference on Design Methods" held in London led to the emergence of the Design Research Society, bringing together academics and practitioners who shared interests in new approaches to the process of designing.<sup>8,9</sup> Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, a series of conferences were held that helped continue the development of the Design Methods Movement (DMM)—a product of the post-war optimism of the 1950s, cancelled in 1962.<sup>10</sup> This movement focused on the comparison between science and design and tried to determine methods that distinguished design as an important academic field apart from the realm of art and art history. However, in 1980 at the Design Research Society's Design:Science:Method conference concluded that there was not much for design to learn from science, instead, science had something to learn from design.<sup>11</sup> From this point, design became a discipline of study "based on the view that design has its own things to know and its own ways of knowing them." This stance was promulgated in the first issue of Design Studies with the launch of a series of articles in its pages called "Design as a Discipline."<sup>12</sup> (*Design Studies*, *The Interdisciplinary Journal of Design Research* as it is now known, was first published as *Design Studies* 1, no.1 in July 1979. Produced by the publisher Reed Elsevier known since 2015 as Elsevier). The series began with Bruce Archer, and his 1979 essay, "Whatever became of Design Methodology?"<sup>13</sup> In his accompanying article from the same issue titled "The Three Rs," Archer places Design with a capital D as a third extreme in an education triangle with the Sciences and Humanities situating design, though not exclusively, within acts of configuration, composition, meaning, value, and purpose in man-made phenomena.<sup>14</sup>

Debates about the discipline of design and design research continued through the 1980s and were significantly reignited in 1995 when Victor Margolin, an American scholar who contributed to the development of design history, argued for a new approach to "Design Studies."<sup>15</sup> Margolin referred to the "dynamic



crossings of intellectual boundaries” when describing the interdisciplinary nature of intellectual practice at the time. He felt that early design historians should question “whether design history as it [had] been constituted...[was] a viable enterprise.”<sup>16,17</sup>

Margolin defines design studies as a field of inquiry that addresses how we make and use products and how we have done so in the past. These products compromise the domain in the artificial. Design studies addresses ideas of product conception and planning, production, form, distribution, and use. It considers these topics in the present as well as in the past.<sup>18</sup>

Margolin’s position triggered counter arguments about how to characterize the study of design. A battle in print began with his article titled, “Design history or design studies: subject matter and methods” published in the international journal *Design Studies* (*Design Studies* was the journal of the Design Research Society, founded in the UK in 1966; the journal itself has been in publication since 1979). This controversial topic had resonance in Britain where Adrian Forty’s response appeared in the pages of the *Journal of Design History*, in which he argued in favor of research that led to the understanding of quality judgements defining good design “as an entirely legitimate field for design historical research.”<sup>19</sup> The importance of this debate was made clear by the fact that it was reprinted in a special issue of *Design Issues* in 1995 where it refocused attention on “some of the controversies and problems that surround the seemingly simple task of telling the history of design.”<sup>20</sup> The shift from Design History to Design Studies started to occur as the research and approaches to the field began to focus on broader questions of meaning, authority and power, in other words, with the dynamics surrounding and enabling the practice of design.<sup>21</sup> The realization came that Design History is only “but one component of what goes on in studying design, and to claim that all that is going on now could use the umbrella term ‘design history’ is not tenable.”<sup>22</sup> This new field of Design Studies would now include not only design history, but also allow for a dialogue about “issues of product conception and planning, production, form, distribution, and use” in a historical and contemporary context.<sup>23</sup>

## Foundational Figures

L. Bruce Archer. (1922-2005) was a British mechanical engineer and later Professor of Design Research at the Royal College of Art who championed research in design, and helped to establish design as an academic discipline. Archer trained a generation of design researchers, showing them how the procedures of scholarly research based on well-founded evidence and systematic analysis were as applicable in design as in the more traditional academic subjects.<sup>24</sup> In 1967 he helped to found the cross-disciplinary Design Research Society.<sup>25</sup>

Reyner Banham. (1922-1988) Banham's *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* and his journalistic articles written for *New Society* have been described by the British writer and design historian Penny Sparke as representing a major "shift in how material culture was seen."<sup>26</sup> His writing focused on popular commodities as well as formal architecture.

Gui Bonsiepe. (born 1934) German designer and professor for various universities including FH Köln; Carnegie Mellon; EUA, Chile; LBDI/FIESC, Brazil; Jan van Eyck Academy, Netherlands.<sup>27</sup> His most influential work is *Design and Democracy*.

Richard Buchanan. American professor of design, management, and information systems and editor of the journal *Design Issues*. He is well known for "extending the application of design into new areas of theory and practice, writing, and teaching as well as practicing the concepts and methods of interaction design."<sup>28</sup> As a co-editor of *Discovering Design: Explorations in Design Studies* with Victor Margolin, he brought together the fields of psychology, sociology, political theory, technology studies, rhetoric, and philosophy.<sup>29</sup>

Richard Buckminster Fuller. (1895-1983) American architect, engineer, inventor, philosopher, author, cartographer, geometrician, futurist, teacher, and poet—established a reputation as one of the most original thinkers of the second half of the 20th century. His research was aimed at finding "a radical solution of world problems by finding the means to do more with less."<sup>30</sup>

Richard Coyne. (1926-1990) American. Professor at the University of Edin-

burgh and author of several books on the implications of information technology and design particularly as developed by Coyne's colleague Adrian Sloggrass in the 1990s, and with whom he co-authored the book *Interpretation in Architecture: Design as a Way of Thinking*.<sup>31</sup>

Nigel Cross. (born 1942) Cross is a British academic, design researcher and educator who focuses on design's intellectual space in the academic sphere. He is a Professor of Design Studies in the Department of Design and Innovation, Faculty of Technology, at the UK's Open University, and Editor-in-Chief of *Design Studies*, the international journal of Design Research. With his 1982 journal article "Designerly Ways of Knowing" in *Design Studies*, Cross argues that Design has its own intellectual and practical culture as a basis for education, contrasting it with cultures of Science and Arts and Humanities.<sup>32</sup>

Clive Dilnot. British. Originally educated as a fine artist, Dilnot later began studying social philosophy and the sociology of culture with Polish sociologist Zygmunt Bauman. Dilnot has worked on the history, theory, and criticism of the visual arts in their broadest terms. His teaching and writing have focused on design history, photography, criticism, and theory. Dilnot's most significant contribution to design scholarship is a study of ethics in relation to design, and the role of design's capabilities in creating a humane world in his book, *Ethics? Design?*<sup>33</sup> published in 2005. He has also written and taught in fields ranging from aesthetics and art theory to photography, the decorative arts, museums and their framing of objects, architecture and architectural theory, and the economics of the current crisis and the question of how we can contend culturally with the world we have made.<sup>34</sup>

Adrian Forty: (born 1948) was Professor of Architectural History at The Bartlett, The Faculty of the Built Environment at University College London. Forty believed that the drive to define a new field, the field of Design Studies, was unnecessary, due to the fact that the field of Design History had not exhausted all of its possibilities.<sup>35</sup> His book *Objects of Desire*<sup>36</sup> explores how consumer goods relate to larger issues of social processes.<sup>37</sup>

Tony Fry is a British design theorist and philosopher who writes on the relationship between design, unsustainability, and politics. Fry has taught design and cultural theory in Britain, the United States, Hong Kong and Australia. He is perhaps best known for his writing as a defuturing<sup>38</sup> phenomenon, by virtue of the resources it depletes.

John Heskett (1937-2014) In the late 1970s, Heskett became a prominent member of a group of academics based in several of Britain's art schools (then part of the polytechnics) who helped develop the discipline of design history and theory, later to become subsumed under the broader banner of Design Studies. In subsequent years, as design became a global practice increasingly valued by corporations and governments alike, design history became, along with design pedagogy, one of the nation's most successful academic exports. Heskett brought his deep knowledge of economics, politics and history to the project and worked alongside scholars from other disciplines to communicate the meaning and function of that increasingly important concept, "design", both past and present.<sup>39</sup>

Victor Margolin (DS-History) Considered one of the founders of Design Studies, Victor Margolin is Professor Emeritus of Design History at the University of Illinois, Chicago. He is a co-editor of the academic design journal, *Design Issues*, and is the author, editor, or co-editor of a number of books including *Design Discourse*, *Discovering Design*, *The Idea of Design*, *The Designed World*, and *The Politics of the Artificial*.<sup>40</sup>

Victor Papanek. The architect-designer Victor Papanek suggested that industrial design had lethal effects by virtue of creating new species of permanent garbage and by choosing materials and processes that pollute the air.<sup>41</sup> His *Design for the Real World* (1972)<sup>42</sup>, has been identified by the British design historian and librarian Anthony Coulson as an example of a "growth in the literature stressing the visual/perceptual aspects of design" and a "plea for design to adopt a much broader role."<sup>43</sup>

Penny Sparke: A professor of Design History and Director of the Modern Interiors Research Centre (MIRC) at Kingston University, London. Along with

Fiona Fisher, Sparke co-edited the recently published *The Routledge Companion to Design Studies*, a comprehensive collection of essays embracing the wide range of scholarship relating to design - theoretical, practice-related, and historical which makes an original and significant contribution to the field of Design Studies.<sup>44</sup>

## Development Outside Anglo-Saxon

According to Ahmed Ansari, Danah Abdulla, Ece Canli, Mahmoud Keshavarz, Matthew Kiem, Pedro Oliveira, Luiza Prado, and Tristan Schultz who make up the Decolonising Design Group, “Coloniality is not an abstract concept nor is it a subject to be examined from a comfortable distance. It is something that affects our communities, our countries and our peoples every single day. It is a continuous process of domination and violence to which we are submitted. It demeans our knowledge, subjugates our bodies, and renders our lives arduous.”<sup>45</sup>

Established via their online blog “Decolonising Design,” this collective of design researchers, academics, and practitioners working in and with the fields of Design Studies and Design Research firmly believe that “decolonisation is imperative for survival.”<sup>46</sup> The Decolonising Design Group’s effort was born from their frustrations with academia during the events that led up to their withdrawal from the 2016 Design Research Society Conference and driven by their desire to engage in a profound debate of the colonial ethos of design and research. The collective believes it is, “not sufficient for design studies and design research to simply include a greater ‘diversity of perspectives’ as a means to delay and offset demands for radical systemic change.”<sup>47</sup> With the purpose of transforming the agenda of design studies and design research, the group organized a symposium on decolonization titled “Intersectional Perspectives on Design, Politics & Power” which was held at the School of Arts and Communication, Malmö University, Sweden on 14–15 November 2016. For these [relatively] young academics, the field of design studies is not “geared towards delivering the kinds of knowledge and understanding that are adequate to addressing the systemic problems that arise from the coloniality of power.”<sup>48</sup>

They argue that design history and design research tends to have the most influence from the triad of Western Europe, North America, and Japan.<sup>49</sup> The effect tends to be in line with the notion that history is written by the victors and thus design history is written by the economically powerful.<sup>50</sup> They point to concurrent histories outside of the western context. For instance, Hong Kong has a unique system of design that was established prior to the economic growth of the Pearl River delta which can be found in the continuities of design in product types and styles, manufacturing and printing companies, and families of artist-designers.<sup>51</sup> Or in Cuba for instance, where the origins of design was influenced by the crisis of “modern movement ideology and the ideologies oh how to escape underdevelopment.”<sup>52</sup> These countries lie on the periphery of the westernized view of design history and design studies and in some instances may have suffered in their adaptation of European modernity. As such, Gui Bonsiepe, a German designer, teacher, and writer, suggested that “Decolonization in all its manifestations, economic, technological and cultural, should be the goal of project activity in the periphery.”<sup>53</sup>

The need for understanding design as a global and multicultural phenomenon is also argued by Jonathan M. Woodham, Victor Margolin, and Anna Calvera in Denise Whitehouse’s collection of essays.<sup>54</sup> Together their aim is to “create a theoretical narrative that brings intellectual logic to the multiple stories of how different countries... have negotiated the process of Westernization and the idea of design according to their specific economic, geographical, political, and cultural circumstances.”<sup>55</sup>

As Whitehouse points out, “While many countries produce local histories of design, the output is uneven and often driven by nationalist and trade agendas.”<sup>56</sup> Academic groups like the Japanese Design History Forum and The International Committee for Design History and Studies (ICDHS) draw together both western and non-western, post-communist, postcolonial, Asian, and Southern Hemisphere, “to remap the scope and narrative concerns of design history.”<sup>57</sup>

## Additional Resources for Decolonizing Design

The United Nations and Decolonization- <http://www.un.org/en/decolonization/index.shtml> (Accessed November 12, 2017)

Manipulations Platform – <http://www.manipulations.info/> (Accessed November 12, 2017)

Decolonize ALL The Things – <https://www.decolonizeallthethings.com/> (Accessed November 12, 2017)

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## Approaches and Scope

Design Studies thinks ambitiously about design, beyond its professional enclaves, and studies the significance and consequences of design activity in the modern world. It looks at design as a complex and multifarious activity and examines the forces that design exerts in, and on, the world—forces design sets in motion but does not control.<sup>58</sup> The field of Design Studies views design as both the embodiment of the imminent future (by virtue of behaviors it triggers and resources it depletes) and as a means of envisioning alternative futures.<sup>59</sup> Because Design Studies is interdisciplinary (moving between disciplines), multi-disciplinary (utilizing multiple disciplines in its process and methods) and transdisciplinary (combining disciplines in creating new disciplinary structures),<sup>60</sup> its approaches and scopes are not constrained by any boundaries of academic disciplines. It is promiscuous and draws on the knowledge of philosophy, sociology, anthropology, literature, cultural theory, politics and the sciences to ask questions of what is design, and how can we comprehend its acting in the world by analyzing its possibilities and limits.

As an organized field of study, Design Studies is substantiated by its own academic and professional discourse and theoretical perspectives concerning the ways we think about design—its nature, purpose, agency, configuration, engagement, deployment, place, responsibilities, ethics, politics, problems, environment, sustainment, potentialities and alternative futures. It focuses on de-

scribing the why, the how and the what of design. It does not limit its inquiry to prescriptive definitions of what design is supposed to be, but instead it aims to understand (and study) the possibilities of what design can achieve and uses varied methodologies to explore the delineations and synergies between academic inquiry, critical theory and design practice. Its scholars explore the coherent structures and intellectual parameters of how design is encountered in the world, as well as analyze which different modes of contemporary practice are rethinking design to propose and realize alternative futures.

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### Subject(s) of Design Studies

As an organized field of study, Design Studies is a discipline concerned with design as a practice and as an intervention in the world. It is substantiated by its own academic and professional discourses and theoretical perspectives concerning ways to think about design—its nature, purpose, agency, configuration, engagement, deployment, place, responsibilities, ethics, politics, problems, environment, sustainment, potentialities and alternative futures. It does not limit its inquiry to prescriptive definitions of what design is supposed to be, but instead it aims to understand (and study) the possibilities of what design can achieve by using various methodologies to analyze the delineations and synergies between academic inquiry, design practice and critical theory.

Design Studies analyzes how different modes of contemporary practice are rethinking design to propose and realize alternative futures using approaches such as those conventions listed under design as well as:

- Aesthetics: Aesthetics in design refers to the visual attractiveness, in the context of beauty and taste, of a product. Studies have proven that creating good aesthetics in a product lead to better usability and user experience.
- Applied arts
- Architecture
- Biological design



- Co-design
- Communication design
- Critical design
- Design for Social Innovation
- Design management
- Do it yourself (DIY) It is the interface between 'design' taken as a function of the activity of 'professional' designers and being part of an established cycle of the design, production and consumption of goods; and 'Do It Yourself' is more democratic design process of self-driven, self-directed amateur design and production activity carried out more closely to the end user of the goods created
- Experience design
- Fashion design
- Game design
- Graphic design
- Information design
- Industrial design
- Interaction design
- Interior design
- Landscape architecture
- Lighting design
- Materiality
- Modular design
- Motion graphic design
- Participatory design
- Service design
- Spatial design
- Speculative design
- Systems design
- Urban design
- User-centered design
- Transition design
- Vernacular design

Design Studies asks us to think about the meaning of design. It studies the influence of designers and the effects design has on citizens and the environment.<sup>61</sup> Victor Margolin distinguishes a degree in Design from a degree in Design Studies by saying that “the former is about producing design, while the latter is about reflecting on design as it has been practiced, is currently practiced, and how it might be practiced.”<sup>62</sup>

Design Studies urges to rethink design as a process, as a practice, and as a generator of products and systems that gives lives meaning and sustains our economic and political systems. Design thinking invites to explore the complexities inherent to the task of thinking about design.<sup>61</sup> Design Studies is concerned with the relationship between design and gender, design and race, and design and culture. It studies issues such as ethics, sustainment (social and environmental) and works with concepts such as agency and the artificial.

### Issues

#### **Ethics**

Design has the capacity of structuring life in certain ways and thus design should result in the greater good for individuals and society but it doesn't always do so. Ethics deals with how our actions affect others. Design Studies sees ethics as central to design. Tony Fry, a leading figure in Design Studies claims, “Design is quintessentially an ethical process but despite this recognition that ethics is integral to design in many ways, design ethics remains massively underdeveloped and even in its crudest forms remains marginal within design education.” It is important to involve ethics in the design process, especially as the world we inhabit is increasingly becoming artificial.<sup>61</sup>

Clive Dilnot's essay, “Ethics in Design – Ten Questions,” explores why we need ethics in design, what is the relationship between design and ethics. Dilnot writes

that ethics should as a responsibility, as the ability of the designer to address the public as citizens and not as consumers or as the infusing of “humane intelligence” into the made environment, assume the possibility of truly human – humane, sustainable ways or making and remaking the world.<sup>61</sup>

Sustainment: Environmental and Social

## Concepts

### The Artificial

Clive Dilnot goes further and clarifies that the artificial is by no means confined to technology. Today, it is a combination of technical systems, the symbolic realm, including the mind and the realm of our transformations and transmutations of nature. He gives the example of a genetically modified tomato that is neither purely natural nor purely artificial. It belongs rather to the extended realms of living things that are, as human beings ourselves are, a hybrid between these conditions—neither nature nor the artificial nor the human are today pure.<sup>63</sup>

Design Studies scholars also reference sociologist Bruno Latour when investigating the dynamics of the artificial. Latour’s concept of Actor-Network Theory (ANT) portrays the social as an interdependent network of human individual actors and actants, which are non-human, non-individual entities. ANT aims at accounting for the very essence of societies and natures.<sup>64</sup>

### Agency

Design plays a constitutive role in everyday life. We engage design with all of our senses—the things we see and read, the objects we use, and the places we inhabit are all designed. These products (all artificial because they are catalyzed by people) constitute an increasingly large part of the world. The built environment is the physical infrastructure that enables behavior, activity, routines, habits, and rituals, which affect our agency. Jamer Hunt defines the built environment as the combination of all design work.<sup>65</sup>

### Design Ethnography

This form of research requires the scholar to partake in the use of, or observe others use, a designed object or system. Design-based Ethnography has become a common tool where design is observed as a social practice. It describes a process in which a researcher will partake in traditional observant style ethnography and observe potential users' complete activities that can inform design opportunities and solutions.<sup>66</sup> Other ethnographic techniques used by Design Studies scholars would fall more in line with anthropologists' usage of the method. These techniques are observant and participant ethnography. The observant style requires the scholar to observe in an unobtrusive manner. Observations are recorded and further analyzed. The participant style requires the scholar to partake in the activities with their subject. This tactic enables the scholar to record what they see, but also what they themselves experience.

### Actor-Network Theory

While it remains a broader theory or concept Actor-Network theory can be used by Design Studies scholars as a research framework. When using this method, scholars will assess a designed object and consider the physical and nonphysical interactions which revolve around the object. The scholar will analyze what the object's impact is on psychological, societal, economical, and political worlds. This widened viewpoint allows the researcher to explore and map out the objects many interactions, identify its role within the network, and in what ways it is connected to stakeholders.<sup>67</sup>

### Semiotics, Rhetorical Analysis, and Discourse Theory

Design Studies scholars may also analyze or research a designed object or system by studying it in terms of images and their various meanings. Based in representation and meaning-making, semiotics as pertinent design as an act of communication between the designer, the thing, and the user or users. This

concept branches out into a rhetorical analysis of the designed thing. Scholars such as Richard Buchanan argue that design can be studied in such a way due to the existence of a design argument.<sup>68</sup> The design argument is made up by the designer, the user, and the applicability to “practical life.”<sup>68</sup> The scholar would pull these segments apart and thoroughly analyze each component and their interactions. Finally, discourse analysis or a Foucauldian discourse analysis can be adopted by the Design Studies scholar to further explore the above components. A Foucauldian approach specifically will analyze the power structures put in place, manipulated by, or used within a designed thing or object. This process can be particularly useful when the scholar intends to understand if the designed thing has agency or enables others to have agency.

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## Journals and Professional Associations

### Journals

#### *Design and Culture, The Journal of the Design Studies Forum*

*Design Issues:* Established in 1984. The first American academic journal to examine design history, theory, and criticism, *Design Issues* is a quarterly publication that provokes inquiry into the cultural and intellectual issues surrounding design.<sup>69</sup>

*The Design Journal:* Established in 1998, the journal of the European Academy of Design, *The Design Journal* is an international refereed journal covering all aspects of design. Published six times a year, the journal provides a forum for design scholars, professionals, educators and managers worldwide. It aims to publish thought-provoking work which will have a direct impact on design knowledge and which challenges assumptions and methods, while being open-minded about the evolving role of design.<sup>70</sup>

#### *Design Philosophy Papers*

*Design Studies:* *Design Studies* publishes work that is concerned with the process of designing, and is relevant to a broad audience of researchers, teachers and

practitioners. *Design Studies* is a leading international academic journal focused on developing understanding of design processes. It studies design activity across all domains of application, including engineering and product design, architectural and urban design, computer artefacts and systems design.<sup>71</sup>

*Early Popular Visual Culture*

*Home Cultures*

*International Journal of Cultural Studies*

*International Journal of Sociology*

*Journal of Consumer Culture*

*Journal of Consumer Research*

*Journal of Design History*: published by Oxford University Press on behalf of the Design History Society. It is the leading journal in its field, and plays an active role in the development of design history, including the history of crafts and applied arts, as well as contributing to the broader fields of visual and material culture studies.<sup>72</sup>

*Journal of Design Strategies*

*Journal of Intercultural Studies*

*Journal of Material Culture*

*Journal of Popular Culture*

*Journal of Visual Culture*

*Material Culture*

*Social Research*

*The Journal of Cloth and Culture*

## Professional Organizations

The Design Research Society (DRS) is a learned society committed to promoting and developing design research. It is the longest established, multi-disciplinary worldwide society for the design research community. The Design Research Society was founded in the UK in 1966. The origins of the Society lie in the Conference on Design Methods, held in London in 1962, which enabled a core of

people to be identified who shared interests in new approaches to the process of designing. The purpose of the DRS, as embodied in its first statement of rules, was to promote ‘the study of and research into the process of designing in all its many fields.’ The DRS Constitution states the Rules by which the society is governed. The Annual General Meeting reports detail the governance, finance, activities, and plans of the society.<sup>73</sup>

Design History Society: Leading organization that promotes the study of global design histories and brings together and supports all those engaged in the subject—students, researchers, educators, designers, designer-makers, critics, and curators. The Society aims to play an important role in shaping an inclusive design history.<sup>74</sup>

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