

**Ethics in Graphic Design:
A Call to Arms for an Undergraduate Course**

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graphic Design Department
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Fine Arts
Savannah College of Art and Design

By

Eileen MacAvery Kane

Savannah, Georgia

August 2010

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	5
Thesis.....	7
Introduction.....	7
Legalities.....	13
Integrity.....	15
Morality.....	21
Conclusion.....	31
Recommended Curriculum.....	33
Notes.....	35
Images.....	42
Bibliography.....	50
Appendix A.....	57
Appendix B.....	89
Appendix C.....	104
Appendix D.....	109

ABSTRACT

Thesis statement

A required course about ethics in graphic design in undergraduate graphic design curriculum will help to create informed and responsible graphic designers as well as establish strategic and critical thinkers.

Overview

The context of research looks at contemporary issues of ethics in graphic design. Two areas direct the research: 1) What are the rules of conduct that guide graphic designers in their practice? 2) What does “right conduct” mean, practically, morally, and philosophically?

Research includes an assessment of undergraduate graphic design curriculum across the nation, a survey of undergraduate students taking graphic design courses, and interviews with graphic design educators and practitioners. Based on this research, relevant content for a course about ethics in graphic design is explored through three different lenses: legalities, integrity, and morality.

Results of the research suggest that there is a void in undergraduate graphic design education in the area of ethics in graphic design; students are unclear about many important ethical issues in graphic design and graphic design educators and practitioners see a wide variety of important issues related to ethics in graphic design that students can expect to face during their careers.

This thesis suggests that we can use three different lenses to explore and discuss ethics in graphic design curriculum: 1) legalities—the rules that govern the profession including copyright law, piracy, plagiarism, fair use, and photo manipulation; 2) integrity—principles of right conduct including spec work, crowd sourcing, and responsibility to clients and contracts; 3) morality—the general nature of moral choices to be made by a person including sustainability, social awareness, and cultural influence.

Conclusion

Current graphic design courses touch upon some of the ethical issues that students will face during their careers. However, including a required course devoted entirely to ethics in graphic design will provide students with a solid framework to practice their profession responsibly and ultimately create strategic and critical thinkers.

THESIS

Introduction

In *Thank You For Smoking* the main character, Nick Naylor, a spokesman for a tobacco company, states, “My job requires a certain... moral flexibility.”¹ While every profession must deal with ethics in its particular field, graphic designers are trained to “make things look good.” The very nature of their core mission inherently lends itself to a certain “moral flexibility.” Anthony Grayling, Professor of Philosophy at Birkbeck College, University of London, and a Supernumerary Fellow at St. Anne’s College, Oxford, England, thinks that asking graphic designers not to persuade is like asking fishermen not to fish—it’s what they are trained to do.²

Since graphic design education came into the mainstream in the 1980s, the core curriculum has included courses like 2D design, drawing, typography, and production. Graduates were prepared to create layouts and produce mechanicals and spec type. In more recent years those skills have evolved to involve digital technology. Current course offerings include courses in business practices, entrepreneurship, and social responsibility. While these courses may touch upon some of the ethical issues in graphic design, they don’t offer an in-depth look at the full scope of issues, and there are still no required courses that deal directly with this topic.

Graphic design educators are raising a call to arms to create critical and strategic thinkers and to create real world experiences for students. In Scott Boylston’s paper “Teaching Toward an Ethical Legacy in Graphic Design,” he

discusses creating projects that force students to consider the integral role that the visual world plays in influencing people's opinions. Current conversations in graphic design and graphic design education center around transitioning from the traditional role of servicing consumerism to creating graphic design within the themes of social responsibility and sustainability while creating strategic and critical thinkers. Design professionals and design educators alike acknowledge that graphic design has been undergoing a prolonged identity crisis in regards to whom it should serve and to what end.³ At AIGA's (American Institute of Graphic Arts, the professional association for design) 2009 Make/Think, design professionals, educators, and students gathered to explore the ways that designers focus both on making beautiful things and on thinking about problems strategically. Integral to this debate is the discussion about the role that graphic designers play as cultural influencers versus the responsibility they bear. With this in mind, a course about ethics should be a logical component of their education.

Historically, graphic design has been an agent of moral and ethical thought. From the code of Hammurabi to illuminated manuscripts to the broadsheets used to spread the word of Martin Luther, graphic design has been used to visually communicate beliefs and ideas—to inform, inspire, and delight. During the Middle Ages campaigns like *ars moriendi* were designed specifically to influence the behavior of individuals, in this case urging those on their deathbed from the bubonic plague to leave their money to the church (Fig 1). Soviet propaganda produced by artists like El Lissitzky who fully supported the government after the Russian

revolution practically rewrote Soviet history (Fig 2). More recently the Obama branding campaign has been deemed one of the most successful branding campaigns for a political candidate and cause (Fig 3).

Despite its historical roots, graphic design is in its infancy in terms of being a recognized profession and, as such, is less than 100 years old. It was not identified until 1922 when William Addison Dwiggins coined the term graphic design to describe his activities as an individual who brought structural order and visual form to printed communications.⁴ During the mid-twentieth century graphic design was referred to as commercial art, and designers like Paul Rand, Saul Bass, and Milton Glaser proved that good design added value to products and services. Consequently graphic design grew in notoriety. The IBM logo designed by Paul Rand is one example of the powerful brand identities that were created during this era (Fig. 4). Throughout this time period, schools specializing in graphic design were born, and the graphic design curriculum was developed.

Over the years the required courses have changed to respond to technology and contemporary culture, but there is still a noticeable lack of courses about ethics in graphic design. Results from interviews with graphic design educators and practitioners about what they perceive to be the most important ethical issues in graphic design today reveal the myriad of opinions. When asked what the most important issue is that he thinks graphic design students will face in their careers, author, art director, and educator Steven Heller responded, “Interesting question. The answer is not specific. Every individual will face different concerns. Some will

be asked to serve a client they might not like or a product they might not care for, while others might be faced with whether or not to undercut a competitor. There are no universal answers.”⁵ Heller’s answer speaks to the heart of the issue.

Research conducted through email, phone, and social networking sites with over 60 graphic design professionals and educators asking them what they think is the most important issue facing graphic design students yielded a vast sea of answers.

Included among the issues named were copyright, non-payment for services, font licensing, spec work, crowdsourcing, corporate sponsorship, working for someone you don’t like or whose product or service you don’t believe in, and sustainability.

(See Appendix A)

Ironically, despite such a long list of issues that come up when discussing ethics in graphic design, undergraduate courses directly addressing ethics in graphic design are sorely lacking within graphic design curriculum. Perhaps the reason that ethics is not a requirement in undergraduate graphic design curriculum is that it opens up a Pandora’s box of issues. A survey of twenty different nationally recognized design schools shows that a course about ethics in graphic design is not part of standard graphic design curriculum. Courses in sustainability, social change, and business practices in graphic design are offered at some schools as electives and focus on different aspects of ethics in graphic design, but there are no required courses that directly address the full spectrum of ethics in graphic design. (See Appendix B) When asked what the biggest issue graphic design students will face in their careers is, AIGA medalist and Professor Meredith Davis of North Carolina State

University responded, “the topic is enormous, entire articles have been written on just one area of ethics in graphic design alone.”⁶ Davis’ statement echoes the findings of the research; there is a huge spectrum of ethical issues that graphic design students will encounter during their careers. The number of different issues raised by graphic design educators and practitioners validates that ethics is an important topic in the field of graphic design and warrants a course devoted entirely to it.

In her article for *Communication Arts*, “Where Our Wild Things Are—Part 1, Graphic design ethics in an age of exacerbation,” brand strategist, designer, and author DK Holland discusses the ugly truth about design “taboos”—work on speculation, plagiarism, piracy, work for hire, stock logos, cronyism, unsustainable design—and how they are being broken daily. Holland says, “what is exacerbating is that not only are these taboos being broken, but that there is no ‘Code of Ethics’ promoted by AIGA.”⁷ Holland goes on to say that AIGA has an online document, the “Statement of Professional Standards,” that outlines business practices and addresses some issues of ethical nature but excludes and skirts others.⁸ Holland asserts that “students with no professional experience are daunted by professionalism and don’t understand the importance of professional standards. It needs to be brought alive for them.”⁹ The plethora of issues raised in Holland’s article sounds a call to arms for a course in ethics in graphic design and consideration that the discussion and exploration of the wide range of ethical issues that graphic designers face should be a required component in the education of a graphic designer. This will not only raise awareness and understanding of these

important issues, but it will also create a dialogue among our future design professionals that will enhance their ability to be strategic and critical thinkers.

The topic of ethics causes discomfort among people because there's a feeling that it's something we should somehow already know that has to do with the values of right and wrong that we've been brought up with. In his book *Moral Imagination*, Mark Johnson states that we would be morally irresponsible to think and act as if we possess a universal reason that generates absolute rules, decision-making procedures, and universal or categorical laws by which we can tell right from wrong in any situation we encounter.¹⁰ According to Johnson, absolute moral laws ignore what's truly important about the concept of morality, to achieve imaginative dimensions of moral understanding that make it possible for us to determine what's really important in any given situation or relationship and to make wise decisions accordingly.¹¹ The ability to reach these decisions requires exploration, discussion, and imagination.

If we begin by defining ethics according to the dictionary, we can start by looking at ethics as “the rules or standards governing the conduct or members of a profession.” Another listing defines ethics as “a set of principles of right conduct.” Lastly, the dictionary defines ethics as “the study of the general nature of moral choices to be made by a person.”¹² Using these definitions as a starting point, we can use three different lenses to explore and discuss ethics in graphic design:

- 1) legalities—the rules that govern the profession—copyright law, piracy, plagiarism, fair use, photo manipulation

2) integrity—principles of right conduct—spec work, crowd sourcing, responsibility to clients and contracts

3) morality—the general nature of moral choices to be made by a person—sustainability, social awareness, cultural influence.

Obviously, these areas overlap. Photo manipulation involves moral choices as well as issues of integrity. Violating copyright law has clear legal consequences; however, it's also a matter of integrity if graphic designers are aware of copyright laws and simply choose to ignore them. As the nature of ethics is not strictly black and white, it would be nearly impossible to look at ethics through a single lens without respect or careful consideration of its relationship to all areas of ethics.

Legalities

One would think that legalities in graphic design would be fairly black and white. “Right conduct” is governed by law in most cases. However, even here there are issues of debate. Traditional copyright laws grant exclusive rights of ownership for 50 years and offer protection to copyright owners. Larry Lessig, copyright lawyer and Chair of Creative Commons, has challenged these laws. He contends that current copyright laws are antiquated and out of sync with contemporary culture.¹³ He suggests that current copyright law actually creates a culture of lawbreakers and that alternative options for licensing images and other creative content will create a culture that is more likely to comply with the law and protect artists instead of creating a complete disregard for copyright law and the consequences that ensue.¹⁴

In addition to copyright law and fair use issues, font licensing, software end user licensing, piracy, plagiarism, and correct image usage are some of the other legal issues that graphic designers need to be aware of. When undergraduate graphic design students answered a survey designed to gauge their knowledge about ethical issues in graphic design, the results showed that there are many issues they know little or nothing about. Questions concerning licensing fonts, reading terms and conditions for EULAs (End User License Agreements), and correct image use all showed that a high number of students are unsure and unclear about these issues. Of all the respondents, 59% of the students answered “sometimes” when asked if they only use properly licensed fonts and 16% said that they didn’t know what this meant. When asked if they read the legal copy on EULAs, 54% answered “sometimes.” When asked if it’s ok to use images that they find on Google, 23% answered with “I don’t know.” (See Appendix C) Lise Prown, Professor of Introduction to Digital Art at Mount St. Vincent, Bronxville, NY, states that in her experience students have no idea what correct image use is.¹⁵ She teaches them how to use Flickr and Creative Commons and how to tell if images they grab can be used. She also discusses the importance of teaching clients about image use.¹⁶ Graphic design students need to think and act responsibly. If they are taught about the full scope of ethics in graphic design and incorporate these practices into their coursework, then later the transition to their professional work will be an easy one.

When graphic designer, educator, author, and AIGA Gold Medalist Ellen Lupton was asked for a personal story about ethics in graphic design, she shared her

experience of being asked by a lawyer for the Associated Press to be an expert witness in the Shepard Fairey case and his use of the AP photo in the Obama Hope Poster.¹⁷ The case has been one of the most famous examples of “fair use” and it’s been hotly debated as to whether or not Fairey’s poster was indeed fair use of the photo or copyright infringement. Lupton decided not to testify because she felt the case had too much moral ambiguity.¹⁸ She said that when it was later discovered that Fairey had lied about which image he had used, the issue became far less ambiguous.¹⁹ Lupton’s dilemma pertains to an area of ethics in graphic design that is not clearly black and white. The lines between appropriation, fair use, and copyright infringement are grey and can easily shift. A lack of understanding or awareness of what the laws and standards are can make the issue even more confusing. The legalities and standard practices for these topics as well as other rules of conduct in graphic design are readily available through numerous sources: books, websites, and EULAs. AIGA offers guidelines for all these issues on its website. Graphic design students, as well as professionals, need to be made aware of both the presence and content of these resources.

Integrity

An area in ethics in graphic design that is also filled with shades of grey is integrity. Issues of integrity include working on speculation, corporate sponsorship, certification, and one of the hottest topics being debated among graphic designers today—crowdsourcing. The general concept of crowdsourcing, though, doesn’t

apply only to graphic design. In essence, crowdsourcing is any sort of outsourcing that involves a large group of people actively participating in the project.²⁰ In the graphic design industry, what it means in practical terms is that sites like Crowdspring.com and Elance.com have a pool of graphic designers who compete against each other by bidding for projects. With Crowdspring, graphic designers produce the work and present it for consideration to the client, and then the client picks the design he/she likes best and subsequently pays only that designer. The results of this are obvious—it's doing work on speculation—and graphic designers whose work does not get picked get no compensation at all. With Elance, graphic designers post their rates for services, in essence underbidding each other to obtain work. Because this is a global arena, designers are not only competing against each other within their same economic environment, but they are also competing against the value of the dollar. Proponents of crowdsourcing argue that it's a free trade system and actually gives young designers who don't have a big client list or portfolio filled with work a chance to be judged on merit alone. In an article for *Communication Arts*, creative arts management consultant David Baker says, "I have a client with 64 employees, all but 4 of whom are in Colombia doing web development for Fortune 500 companies. All the while making roughly one-third of what their U.S. counterparts make, and twice what their fellow citizens make."²¹ Baker asserts that crowdsourcing will be a self-selective process and that clients with small budgets will use crowdsourcing and allow designers to concentrate on clients that value their services.²² Baker and other advocates for crowdsourcing

believe it will change the playing field, and designers will be valued for strategic and creative thinking, not the production of logos and other output that will become commoditized and produced through methods like crowdsourcing.

On the opposite side of the argument, many graphic designers along with AIGA are taking a hard stand against crowdsourcing and spec work. AIGA has published their stance online where they detail the risks involved for both designers and clients when they engage in spec work.²³ Designers risk being taken advantage of as well as not being paid fairly or at all for their services. Clients risk compromised quality when research, the development of multiple options, and lack of testing and prototype development fall by the wayside. Both parties face legal risks as well should aspects of intellectual property, trademark and trade-dress infringements become a factor.²⁴

Despite being a topic of such hot debate among graphic design professionals, when undergraduate graphic design students were surveyed, nearly half of them didn't even know what working on speculation means.²⁵ The other half were almost evenly split between thinking it's acceptable to work on speculation, it's not acceptable, and that it depends on the circumstances.²⁶

Corporate sponsorship is another issue of integrity that graphic design students may not be aware of. Used by educational institutions as an alternate stream of revenue, corporate sponsorships allow private industry to buy the naming rights for classes. Proponents claim that it allows them to keep classes running and that the corporations rarely get involved in defining curriculum.²⁷ Critics contend

that it compromises the integrity of the curriculum and ends up serving as an endorsement for products and services.²⁸ The University of Wisconsin at Madison offers doctors and other health-care professionals an online continuing-education course on menstrual disorders that is funded by the pharmaceutical giant Bayer. While the class's title doesn't carry Bayer's name, the company's drugs are mentioned in the course, and the school fully acknowledges the arrangement in course materials.²⁹ Graphic designer and educator Robyn Waxman was appalled when the graduate graphic design program at California College of the Arts asked that she give Intel Corporation non-exclusive, perpetual, irrevocable, royalty-free, fully paid up license under all of her copyright and trade secret rights in and to any of her ideas, creations or copyrighted works created by her as a student during a required course in the program.³⁰ When she refused to sign the agreement she was forced to leave the class. The most surprising thing to her was how anxiously and enthusiastically her classmates signed the waiver and gave away their licensing rights.³¹ If students were knowledgeable about the full implications of their actions and that they were actually signing away the rights to their own artwork at the financial gain of the corporation with none for themselves, they might not sign so readily.

Another issue of integrity is certification. Canada, Switzerland, and Norway are some of the countries that offer certification for graphic designers. It is currently a topic of debate among graphic designers in the United States and has been for over a decade. Art director and graphic design professor Gregg Bernstein states, "I think

certification is best reserved to fields and disciplines where there is a substantial safety or legal risk to being improperly trained. Medicine, law, psychology, psychiatry, building trades: done poorly, the risk here is significant. An uncertified graphic designer might make a poor design, but poor alignment never harmed anyone.”³² DK Holland feels that certification would be a waste of time. She feels there may have been a time when it would have been useful, but we are past that. She says, “certification won’t add any value to the role of a graphic designer or help with the current problems of lack of respect for what we do.”³³ Ellen Lupton and Steven Heller are both opposed to certification. Lupton feels that design is a way of thinking and working that is accessible to everyone.³⁴ Heller believes that there is no way to certify a designer.³⁵ The varied responses from these designers and the sense of futility conveyed by them points to the important need for an informed discussion about it in the classroom.

Proponents of certification feel that at the very least it establishes a minimum standard of professionalism and minimum level of performance regarding business procedures, education, skill, and ethical behavior.³⁶ Certification does not stop anyone from designing but rather recognizes a certain level of professionalism within the industry. In Ontario, graphic designers receive the designation “Registered Graphic Designer” (RGD) upon passing an examination. A quarter of the exam evaluates knowledge of professional conduct standards. The curriculum in Ontario design schools prepares graduates to pass the exam. (See Appendix D)

David Berman, graphic designer and author of *Do Good Design: How Designers Can*

Change the World, feels certification also helps to protect society from the damages of predatory persuasion and exploitative design much the same way that certification of architects protects against buildings that could fall down.³⁷

Among the others who support Berman's call for certification is Richard Farson, author of the book *The Power of Design: A Force for Transforming Everything*. Farson asserts that when one thinks of a profession, one imagines that those who practice it would put humanitarian issues first.³⁸ He states that people seek professionals' advice because they trust that their judgment is based on that special kind of wisdom that cannot be exercised in business.³⁹ Farson and his proponents believe that designers are driven by the needs of business and solve problems that are client-based with short term goals rather than taking a holistic approach that looks at the systems with long term goals in mind.⁴⁰ Some feel that the pursuit of a terminal degree in the field of graphic design, an MFA, supports this goal, but others feel certification will yield greater ethical responsibility across a wider field of practitioners.⁴¹ Graphic design students' thoughts about certification reflect the opposing opinions among educators and professionals; they are almost evenly split on the topic. When 48 undergraduate students were surveyed, 25 said they think graphic designers should be certified while 23 said they think they should not be certified.⁴² If students had the opportunity to fully understand the implications of certification, these numbers would reflect the opinions of a more informed audience.

In addition to spec work, crowdsourcing, corporate sponsorships, and certification, there are many other issues involving integrity in the field of graphic design. Kickbacks, design plagiarism, clients paying for services (or refusal to pay for services), cronyism, and ethical treatment of employees are all issues the students can expect to face. Industry professionals gave accounts about graphic designers stealing fellow designers' work and presenting it as their own, being asked to create marketing materials for "the boss' wife," having their work used without permission or compensation by respected organizations like the Museum of Modern Art, having to testify in court about kick-backs, and even having a client refuse to pay over \$40,000 in design fees.⁴³ With so many issues and topics dealing with integrity that graphic designers experience during their careers, it makes sense to prepare students.

Morality

One of the biggest questions when discussing ethics in graphic design is what "good" design means. In the 20th century graphic design became a valued tool for corporate America. This was exemplified when IBM legend Thomas Watson Jr. gave a lecture at the Wharton School of Business and coined the phrase "Good Design Means Good Business."⁴⁴ Designers were generally seen as tools of capitalism. Creating brands, packaging, and marketing for consumer goods, graphic designers became an integral part of the free market system by contributing to the creation of wealth in society. Free market supporters believe that this will create peaceful

relations and moral behavior. In fact, Alan Greenspan, American economist and chairman of the U.S. Federal Reserve Board from 1987 to 2006, thought that fraud shouldn't be the worry of regulators.⁴⁵ He advised that if someone committed fraud, the business community would police itself by a natural process of selection by refusing to do business with that person.⁴⁶ He believes that the free-market self-corrects.⁴⁷ In today's economic and political environment, this policy is thought by many to be a complete failure. Opponents feel that unbridled spending and greedy consumerism has led our society to the state of recession where we find ourselves today.⁴⁸ The free-market system is seen to be contradictory to issues of sustainability and encouraging social and community awareness.

Another definition of what "good design" means speaks to the responsibility that designers have for making things beautiful in order to impact our quality of life. Throughout the course of history, the creation of art has been essential to human survival. In her book *What is Art For?* author Ellen Dissanayake writes that art is used for functional social motivations and effects.⁴⁹ Showing one's social or professional position, as in a business card, or illustrating important myths or precepts by attracting attention and conveying information takes form with aesthetic elements. Evolutionary biologists agree that the arts have survival value.⁵⁰ There is overwhelming evidence that people everywhere express and respond to art and design. Designer Milton Glaser says that the ultimate challenge for designers is to create beautiful, not just sustainable, design. Glaser, along with art historians and scholars, believes that we are secretly challenged to respond to beauty as a species;

beauty is the means by which we move towards attentiveness that protects our species as a survival mechanism. Creating art and design is as intrinsic to human beings as speech and tool making. Glaser thinks that ultimately it's the responsibility of the graphic designer to inform and delight by creating beautiful designs.⁵¹

According to the Oxford English dictionary "good" means "of high quality or acceptable standard."⁵² How is this measured in graphic design and how does one determine what the value of a piece of design is? Graphic designers are responsible to many people. Like everyone else, graphic designers have contractual duties, duties to clients, to stakeholders, to colleagues, to themselves, to their work, and lastly, to society at large. Are graphic designers ultimately accountable for how the work they produce affects people's lives? Are they adding unnecessary interruption to people's lives or helping someone in some way? Where and how do graphic designers draw the line? What if they are faced with working for a client they don't agree with or firing staff if turning down a job means not enough work to keep everyone employed?

Issues of morality are rarely black and white, and that is often what makes many people anxious about the ethics of morality and what defines "good design." Anthony Grayling feels that a code that says "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not" is inflexible and fits awkwardly with real life.⁵³ Grayling states that to devise an ethical code for designers one would do better to give examples of what a responsible and well-intentioned designer would do.⁵⁴ The traditional picture of morality is rule-following, which results in deep tensions for people between their inherited view of

a moral task and the moral dilemmas they actually experience.⁵⁵ A list of strict rules has proven very difficult to observe in practice, which is always the problem with top-down ethics. The alternative idea of a “way of being” is bottom-up, which rests on individuals being conscious of their involvement in society and the impact they have on it.⁵⁶

Richard Holloway, former Chair of the British Medical Association Steering Group on Ethics and Genetics and Bishop of Edinburgh, is currently Chair of the Scottish Arts Council. Holloway feels that what may serve graphic design best in terms of ethics is an ethic of servant-hood, based on the idea that helping other people is a good thing to do.⁵⁷ This is basic to Christianity. God comes among us not to lord over us but as a servant—to amplify our lives and make our lives more abundant. Holloway feels this is a wonderful ethic for any public servant, including graphic designers.⁵⁸ He can see where it may be a conflict for designers who strive to be unique and break new ground.⁵⁹ If graphic designers approach their work more like journalism—to get to the truth, to describe events, and to delight others with their prose—it can become an art, something superior by virtue of the mystery of grace.⁶⁰

Designing for social responsibility correlates with ideas of servant-hood, and some design schools are teaching courses that follow this thinking. In January 2009, Hartford Art School Professor Natacha Poggio and a team of six art and design students traveled to Abheypur, India to implement the “Water for India” sanitation campaign as partners to the works of the Engineers Without Borders Student

Chapter at the University of Hartford. “Water for India” aims to convey the importance of cleanliness, sharing, and respect for water resources. During the January trip, the team painted a mural at the girls’ primary school (Fig. 5) and distributed coloring books with sanitation tips as well as t-shirts with the campaign logo. What began as an assignment in the spring of 2008 for a class called “Issues in Design” grew into an ongoing effort after receiving feedback from Abheypur’s villagers. Since the start of the project, the students worked on this wide-reaching effort collaboratively with other disciplines, team members and cultures. The students and Professor Poggio have continued using design as a way to educate and empower people. The social consciousness and awareness of those involved grew through the process of research and learning to design for a more universal audience. The effort continued in the next session of “Issues in Design” in Spring 2009, where the students worked on a new wellness campaign designing “kangas” (traditional cotton garments that Sub-Saharan women wear) for local communities in the Lake Victoria region of Kenya. Professor Poggio continues to teach “Issues in Design” along with a special topics class called “Design Global Change” (DGC), which focuses on global design projects.⁶¹

When Anthony Grayling was asked whether or not he thinks graphic design is about manipulation, he said that graphic design stems from the art of rhetoric and was developed in classical antiquity when oratory, or verbal eloquence, was the only means of conveying information and persuading people to see a certain point of view.⁶² Nazi design was an example of this at its worst (Fig. 6). It’s generally agreed

that the Nazi regime used design to tremendous effect. On a technical level it was extremely “good” design. However, once people consider what their design represented, it’s much more difficult to refer to the design as “good.” In his book *Iron Fists: Branding the 20th-Century Totalitarian State*, author Steven Heller asks, “how did a practice as vile as branding become so valued, indeed, the very mark of value?”⁶³ Heller writes how in the past branding was used for slaves and criminals. Today, cities and colleges have joined toothpastes and soft drinks in the battle for “brand loyalty.”⁶⁴ Heller compares corporate branding strategies—slogans, mascots, jingles and the rest—to those adopted by four of the most destructive 20th-century totalitarian regimes: Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union under Lenin and Stalin, and Mao’s China. Heller asserts that design and marketing methods used to inculcate doctrine and guarantee consumption are fundamentally similar.⁶⁵

Artist, designer, and educator Louis Tomaino has served as a project director at the Institute for Learning Technologies at Columbia University's Teachers College. When asked what he feels the biggest ethical issue is that graphic design students will face, Tomaino responded with “their role in defining society, culture, civilization.”⁶⁶ In his interview he points to many ways that the intersection of culture and technology have put us at risk in losing touch with authenticity and valuable experiences that keep us connected to our humanity.⁶⁷ Tomaino feels that the constant and now nearly ubiquitous broadcasting of the Internet and television inhibits people’s ability to think very well or relax in a meaningful way.⁶⁸ He goes on to say that this broadcast defines society and stills its positive and creative evolution

by substituting—metaphorically—sawdust for the experience of a forest, and—actually—the light of the colors of a commercial on a screen for the experience of sun on the wall and floor, a place where new ideas may be written by the mind.⁶⁹

The issue of the designer’s role in defining society and place within it was also raised by Robyn Waxman who said, “my biggest ethical issue concerns whether I am brave enough or care enough to follow that trail of manufacturing to learn that the product or service I am about to promote is the very thing that undermines me and what I care about.”⁷⁰ The issues that Tomaino and Waxman raise speak to the heart of what many think of when the term “ethics” is used—how graphic design affects humanity.

Sustainability is another topic that many graphic designers feel is an issue of ethics best viewed through the lens of morality. When the concept of creating eco-friendly design first came to the forefront more than a decade ago, issues about the toxicity of ink and paper and the sheer quantity of paper produced were raised. We’ve since learned that there’s much more to the life cycle of the products that graphic designers help produce. To really determine the sustainability or carbon footprint of a product, one needs to follow it through its entire life cycle (Fig. 7). How much fuel is being used for shipping? What’s the final end product? How long is the life cycle, and how long before the product ends up as waste? In *Green Graphic Design* author Brian Dougherty asks graphic designers to start at the end of the process instead of the beginning. Designers should imagine the best possible destiny for the design and visualize the process of every phase from the final destination of

the product at the end of its life cycle back to the design studio. Furthermore, they should consider everything from the time of its ultimate disposal to its conception including transportation, warehousing, production, and manufacturing that may prevent green solutions from being implemented.⁷¹

When companies claim to be eco-friendly based on a myopic view of sustainability and without looking at all the implications of their actions, they may end up being guilty of greenwashing—the practice of “spinning” their products and policies as environmentally friendly, such as by presenting cost cuts as reductions in use of resources.⁷² Unlike other topics viewed through the lens of morality, sustainability involves both a point of view and set of values along with measurable actions that graphic designers can take.

The concept of the book and movement *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things* is that it’s not enough for us to “reduce, reuse, and recycle” as environmentalists urge. Authors William McDonough and Michael Braungart explain how products need to be designed from the outset so that after their lives they will provide nourishment for something new.⁷³ They’ve spent the past decade working with clients to create systems that embody this concept. They feel that when designers employ the intelligence of natural systems—the effectiveness of nutrient cycling, the abundance of the sun’s energy—they can create products and systems that allow nature and commerce to fruitfully co-exist.⁷⁴ This important concept could be used by graphic designers in their practice. The discussion and

exploration of how to implement these concepts into their work would be extremely beneficial to graphic design students.

Online there are numerous sites that focus on sustainability and social responsibility. Websites like *Renourish* and *Lovely as a Tree* are designed to help graphic designers practice sustainability by providing resources and information about how to work sustainably and even how they can green their own studio. *The Living Principles for Design* website is sponsored by AIGA and was introduced at their conference in Memphis in 2009. It's a resource for sustainability theories and practices. The goal of this site is to look at sustainability holistically—environmental protection, social responsibility, equity, and economic health—and make it accessible, relevant, and actionable.⁷⁵ IDEO (an innovation and design firm that uses a human-centered design-based approach) is another resource that graphic designers can look to for advisement about issues concerning social responsibility. “The Human Centered Design Toolkit” is a free guide that was created by IDEO for NGOs (non-government organizations) and social enterprises that work with impoverished communities around the world. The Toolkit was designed to help organizations find solutions that are innovative and meet these communities’ needs with financial sustainability in mind.⁷⁶

These days the problem is not necessarily a lack of information: it's making sure the information is received. Despite the fact that this information is readily available online—and for free—when graphic design students were asked how important they think sustainable design is, almost half answered not important at

all, somewhat important, or that they don't know what sustainable design is.⁷⁷ Even more alarming is that more than half of the students surveyed did not know what greenwashing means and less than a quarter of them did not feel designers have a responsibility to educate their clients about greenwashing if they feel it's an issue with a project they are involved in.⁷⁸

Another question that needs to be asked when looking at the ethics of graphic design through the lens of morality is "the right" behavior for a graphic designer when dealing with clients. Some feel strongly that it's a graphic designer's job to communicate the client's message to the target audience rather than present a personal agenda. For graphic designers working on projects that involve politics and religion often necessitate representing a client with an opposing point of view from their own. Some would argue that professionalism calls for graphic designers to represent their clients regardless of the product or services. The topic becomes even more complicated when looking at the consequences involved when turning work down if the designer doesn't necessarily support the client and the client's product or services. Where does one draw the line about whether or not its graphic designers' moral responsibility to keep their employees and work on something they don't necessarily agree with or to let them go, adversely affecting their lives as well their families? Should they refuse to work for the client or take the job for the sake of their employees? Coca-Cola Company is local in 206 countries, more than the United Nations (Fig. 8). They have 700,000 employees, 50 million retailers, and 50 million customers all over the world.⁷⁹ Critics of Coca-Cola condemn the company

for encouraging a consumer culture that is unhealthy and economically draining on individuals. In *Do Good: How Designers Can Change the World*, author David Berman talks about how Coke has branded the nation of Tanzania. In the 1990s they took care of all of their road signage and included the Coke brand on every sign. In some parts of Africa, Coke is considered medicinal and the price of a bottle of Coke is the same as an anti-malarial pill. While Coke is the best selling drink on the continent, a million Africans die each year of malaria.⁸⁰ But imagine the economic impact and subsequent repercussions on the lives of those employed by the company if Coke suddenly disappeared. When looking at issues of moral responsibility, it's rarely black and white. The consequences of all actions need to be considered.

Conclusion

Students do know that graphic designers play an important role in delivering visual communication. When surveyed, over 75 percent of students said that they think graphic designers have a large of impact on consumers' buying decisions.⁸¹ They know that their role is an important one in influencing behavior, but they don't appear to know nearly as much about the rules of conduct for graphic designers.

In her article for *Communication Arts*, "Where Our Wild Things Are—Part 1," DK Holland discusses the 1990s PBS roundtable series "Ethics in America" and how television journalist Fred Friendly would open each episode by saying "Our purpose is not to make up your mind for you, but to make the agony of decision-making so intense, you can only escape by thinking."⁸² We don't necessarily want to cause our

design students agony, but we do want to make them think. A required course in ethics in graphic design would provide students with a dedicated forum to explore and discuss the full spectrum of issues, learn the rules of conduct in their profession, and help them determine what their own behavior should be.

RECOMMENDED CURRICULUM

Course Title: Ethics in Graphic Design

Course Level: Junior/Senior Level

Pre-requisites: History of Graphic Design, Graphic Design I & II

Course Description: This course explores topics concerning the ethics of graphic design. Two areas will guide our inquiry: What are the rules of conduct that guide graphic designers in their practice? What does “right conduct” mean—practically, morally, and philosophically?

Course Objectives: Students taking this course will:

1. Learn about the ethical issues facing graphic designers
2. Learn to identify and recognize ethical issues
3. Articulate, communicate, and present well-informed ideas about these issues
4. Arrive at a well-informed and intellectually complex understanding of these issues
5. Research topics and offer well-informed responses verbally and in written form

Course Outcomes: To demonstrate mastery of course goals, students will:

1. Complete quizzes
2. Respond to course topics through thoughtful written analysis
3. Articulate responses verbally in class discussions
4. Work collaboratively in groups to research and present on an assigned topic

5. Craft a research paper on a topic of choice

Key Topics:

- Defining ethics in graphic design
- Copyright
- Fair Use
- Fonts
- Software Piracy
- Plagiarism
- Image Manipulation
- Work on Speculation
- Crowdsourcing
- Cronyism / Kickbacks
- Responsibility to Client
- Professionalism / Certification
- Sustainability
- Cradle to Cradle
- Greenwashing
- Social Responsibility
- Mass Consumerism
- Branding / Brand Stretching
- Cultural Influence

NOTES

1. "Thank You for Smoking," IMBD, <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0427944/quotes> (accessed June 2010).
2. Lucienne Roberts, *Good: Ethics of Graphic Design* (Lausanne, Switzerland: AVA Publishing SA, 2006), 92.
3. Scott Thomas Boylston, *Teaching Toward an Ethical Legacy in Graphic Design* (Melbourne, Australia: Common Ground Publishing, 2007) 166.
4. Philip Meggs, *History of Graphic Design* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2006), ix.
5. Steven Heller, Appendix A, 72.
6. Meredith Davis, Appendix A, 75.
7. DK Holland, "Where Our Wild Things Are—Part 1: Graphic design ethics in an age of exacerbation," *Communication Arts* (March/April 2010) 18.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Mark Johnson, *Moral Imagination: Implications of Cognitive Science for Ethics* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), 5.
11. Ibid.

12. Dictionary.com, s.v. "ethics," Dictionary.com,
<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/ethics> (accessed March 13, 2010).
13. Ted Talks, "Larry Lessig on laws that kill creativity," Ted Talks,
http://www.ted.com/speakers/larry_lessig.html (accessed March 24, 2010).
14. Ibid.
15. Lise Prown, Appendix A, 65.
16. Ibid.
17. Ellen Lupton, Appendix A, 71.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. About.com, "What is Crowdsourcing?" About.com,
http://webtrends.about.com/od/glossary/a/what_is_crowdsourcing.htm (accessed
March 10, 2010).
21. David C. Baker, "Communication Arts: Embracing Marginalization,"
Communication Arts, [http://www.commarts.com/columns/embracing-
marginalization.html](http://www.commarts.com/columns/embracing-marginalization.html) (accessed April 17, 2010).
22. Ibid.

23. AIGA, "AIGA Position on Spec Work," AIGA, <http://www.aiga.org/content.cfm/position-spec-work?searchtext=spec%20working#spec-risks> (accessed April 18, 2010).
24. Ibid.
25. Chart 6, Appendix C, 106.
26. Ibid.
27. Steven Grey, "Can Corporate Funding Save Endangered College Classes?" Time, <http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1909937,00.html> (accessed June 23, 2010).
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.
30. Robyn Waxman, Appendix A, 68.
31. Ibid.
32. Gregg Bernstein, Appendix A, 75.
33. DK Holland, Appendix A, 73.
34. Ellen Lupton, Appendix A, 71.
35. Steven Heller, Appendix A, 72.

36. Graphic Design Certification, <http://designcertification.org/> (accessed June 23, 2010).

37. David B. Berman, *Do Good Design: How Designers Can Change the World* (Berkeley, CA: New Riders, 2009), 138.

38. Richard Farson, *The Power of Design: A Force for Transforming* (Norcross, GA: Greenway Communications, LLC, 2008), 21.

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.

42. Chart 9, Appendix C, 108.

43. Eric Baker, Appendix A, 59.

44. DMI Publications, "Viewpoints." DMI Publications, <http://www.dmi.org/dmi/html/publications/news/ebulletin/ebvsepmm.htm> (accessed August 3, 2010).

45. Frontline, "The Alan Greenspan Era," PBS, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/warning/themes/greenspan.html> (accessed May 2010).

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
49. Ellen Dissanayake, *What is Art For?* (Seattle: WA: University of Washington Press, 1988), 61.
50. Ibid., 62.
51. Milton Glaser, "Big Think: Interview with Milton Glaser," Big Think, <http://bigthink.com/miltonglaser/big-think-interview-with-milton-glaser> (accessed March 23, 2010).
52. Dictionary.com, s.v. "good," Dictionary.com, http://www.askoxford.com/concise_oed/good?view=uk (accessed March 13, 2010).
53. Roberts, 36.
54. Ibid.
55. Johnson, 1.
56. Roberts, 36.
57. Ibid., 55.
58. Ibid.
59. Ibid.
60. Ibid.

61. Design for Global Change, <http://designglobalchange.org/> (accessed June 24, 2010).
62. Roberts, 42.
63. Christopher Benfey, "Iron Fists: the insidious side of brand loyalty," New York Times, http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/31/arts/31iht-IDLEDE2.1.14885119.html?_r=1 (accessed July 2010).
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid.
66. Louis Tomaino, Appendix A, 78.
67. Ibid.
68. Ibid., 79.
69. Ibid.
70. Robyn Waxman, Appendix A, 67.
71. Brian Dougherty, "Green Graphic Design," Green Graphic Design, <http://www.greengraphicdesign.net/> (accessed June 24, 2010).
72. Business Ethics, "Greenwashing," Business Ethics, <http://www.businessethics.ca/greenwashing/> (accessed June 24, 2010).

73. William McDonough and Michael Braungart, "Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things," McDonough,

http://www.mcdonough.com/cradle_to_cradle.htm (accessed April 19, 2010).

74. Ibid.

75. AIGA: The Living Principles for Design, <http://www.livingprinciples.net/> (accessed April 19, 2010).

76. IDEO, "The Human Centered Design Toolkit," IDEO, <http://www.ideo.com/work/item/human-centered-design-toolkit/> (accessed April 29, 2010).

77. Chart 4, Appendix C, 105.

78. Chart 5, Appendix C, 106.

79. David Butler, "Redesigning Design," Presentation for Make/Think: AIGA Design Conference, October 8-11, 2009, <http://www.aiga.org/content.cfm/video-makethink-2009-butler> (accessed March 5, 2010).

80. Berman, 38.

81. Chart 5, Appendix C, 106.

82. Holland, "Part 1," 19.

Images



Fig. 1. Page from an *ars moriendi*, 1466. (Meggs, *History of Graphic Design*, 67).

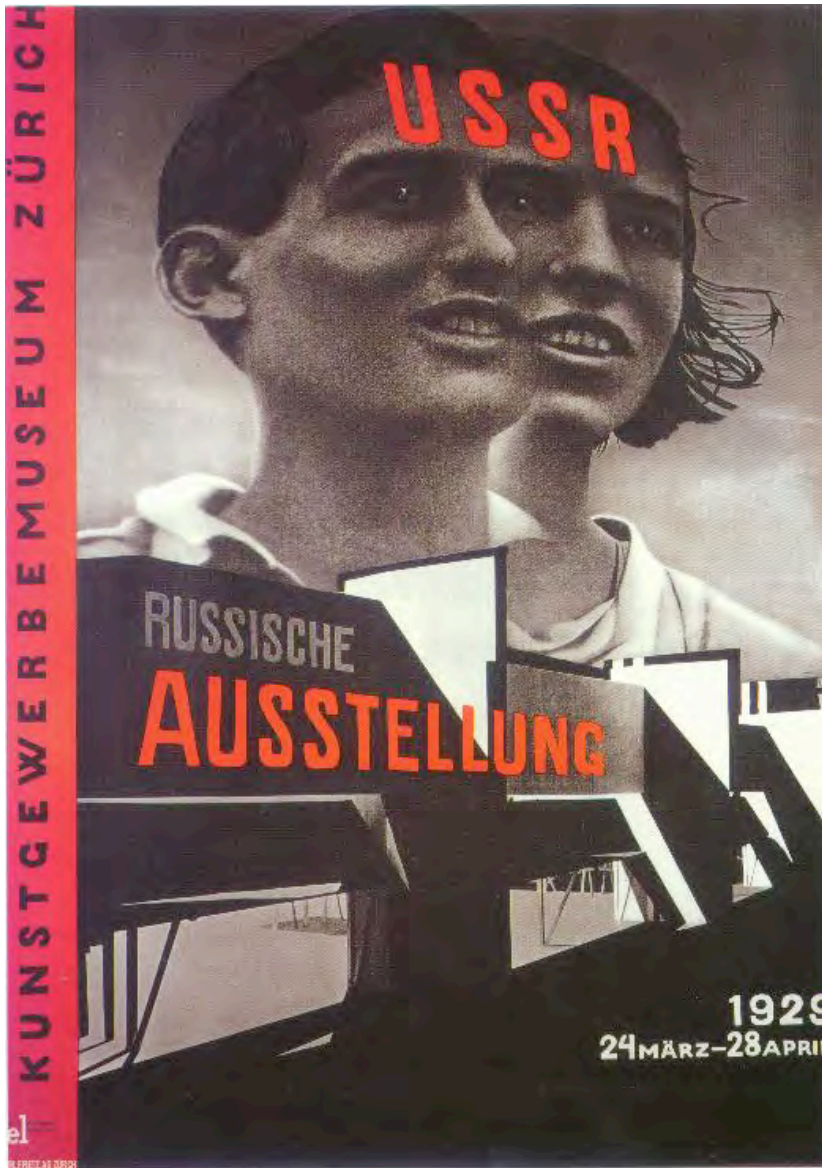


Fig. 2. Artwork by El Lissitzky, c. 1930

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Artwork_by_El_Lissitzky_c1930.jpg).



Fig. 3. Shepard Fairey, "Hope," 24x36 screenprint, 2008

(<http://obeygiant.com/headlines/obama>).



Fig. 4. International Business Machines (IBM), 8-bar variation, 1972

(<http://www.paul-rand.com/index.php/site/identity/>).



Fig. 5. Design team, children, and villagers in front of mural for “Water for India” campaign. Photo courtesy of Professor Natacha Poggio.



Fig. 6. Nazi propaganda poster,

(<http://thesituationist.wordpress.com/2007/03/03/situational-sources-of-evil-part-iii/>).

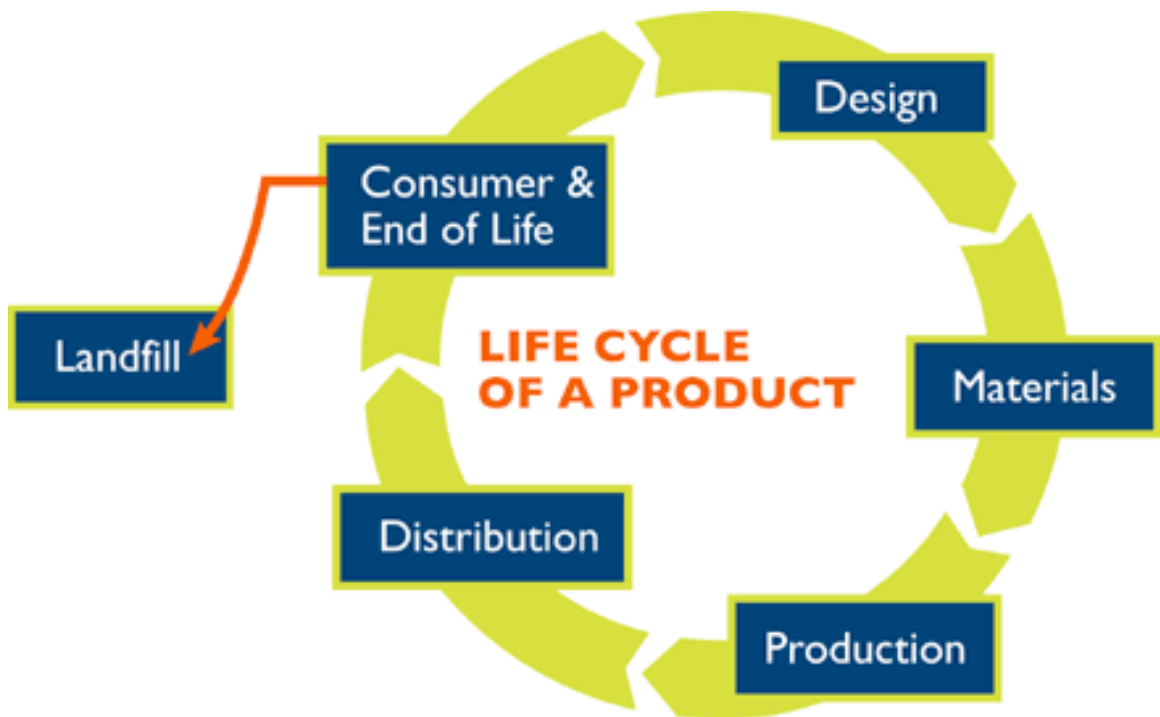


Fig. 7. The Life Cycle Concept, (<http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/lifecycle/whatis.asp>).



Fig. 8. Coca-cola advertising in Africa, (<http://www.psfk.com/2008/08/medical-aid-via-coke-facebook.html>).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

About.com. "What is Crowdsourcing?" About.com,

http://webtrends.about.com/od/glossary/a/what_is_crowdsourcing.htm

(accessed March 10, 2010).

AGDA. "Code of Ethics." AGDA,

<http://archive.agda.com.au/aboutagda/more/codeofethics.html> (accessed

March 2010).

AIGA. "Design Business and Ethics." AIGA,

<http://www.aiga.org/content.cfm/design-business-and-ethics> (accessed

March 2010).

_____, "The Living Principles for Design." Living

Principles, <http://www.livingprinciples.net/> (accessed April 19, 2010).

Airey, David. "How Ethical Are Your Design Practices?" David

Airey, <http://www.davidairey.com/how-ethical-are-your-design-practices/>

(accessed March 2010).

Armstrong, Helen. *Graphic Design Theory: Readings from the Field*. NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 2009.

Airasian, Peter W., Lorin W. Anderson, Kathleen A. Cruikshank, David R. Krathwohl, Richard E. Mayer, Paul R. Pintrich, and Merlin C. Wittrock. *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, abridged ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2000.

Art: 21. "Flash Points: The Ethics of Art." Art: 21 Blog, <http://blog.art21.org/2010/02/05/flash-points-the-ethics-of-art/> (accessed March 2010).

Baker, David C. "Communication Arts: Embracing Marginalization," Communication Arts, <http://www.commarts.com/columns/embracing-marginalization.html> (accessed April 17, 2010).

Benfey, Christopher. "Iron Fists: the insidious side of brand loyalty," New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/31/arts/31iht-IDLEDE2.1.14885119.html? r=1> (accessed July 2010).

Berman, David B. *Do Good Design: How Designers Can Change The World*. Berkeley, CA: New Riders, 2009.

Bestley, Russell, and Ian Noble. *Visual Research*. NY: Watson-Guptill Publications, 2005.

Bierut, Michael, William Drenttel, Steven Heller, and DK Holland. *Looking Closer: Critical Writings on Graphic Design*. NY: Allworth Press, 1994.

Boylston, Scott Thomas. *Teaching Toward an Ethical Legacy in Graphic Design*.

Melbourne, Australia: Common Ground Publishing, 2007.

Braungart, Michael, and William McDonough. *Cradle to Cradle*. NY: North Point

Press, 2002.

Business Ethics. "Greenwashing." Business Ethics,

<http://www.businessethics.ca/greenwashing/> (accessed March 2010).

Butler, David. "Redesigning Design," Presentation for Make/Think: AIGA Design

Conference, October 8-11, 2009. AIGA,

<http://www.aiga.org/content.cfm/video-makethink-2009-butler> (accessed

March 5, 2010).

Clancco. "Art and Law." Clancco, <http://clancco.com/wp/> (accessed March 2010).

Coleman, Elizabeth. "Design and the Liberal Arts Education." AIGA,

<http://www.aiga.org/content.cfm/video-makethink-2009-coleman> (accessed

March 2010).

Cory, Jacques. *Activist Business Ethics*. New York: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002.

<http://books.google.com> (accessed June 2010).

Creative Latitude, <http://www.creativelatitude.com/index.html> (accessed June

2010).

Designers Accord, <http://www.designersaccord.org/> (accessed March 2010).

Dissanayake, Ellen. *What is Art For?* Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1988.

DMI Publications. "Viewpoints." DMI Publications, <http://www.dmi.org/dmi/html/publications/news/ebulletin/ebvsepmm.htm> (accessed August 3, 2010).

Ethics Resource Center, <http://www.ethics.org/> (accessed April 2010).

Farson, Richard. Notes from presentation "Embracing the Paradoxes of Sustainability." Leadership Summit on Sustainable Design, San Francisco, CA. November 2005.

The Power of Design: A Force for Transforming Everything. Norcross, GA: Greenway Communications, 2008.

"Frontline: The Alan Greenspan Era." PBS, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/warning/themes/greenspan.html> (accessed May 2010).

Glaser, Milton. *4 Short Talks (More or Less on the Subject of Design)*. NY: Visual Arts Press, 2008.

"Big Think: Interview with Milton Glaser." Big Think, <http://bigthink.com/miltonglaser/big-think-interview-with-milton-glaser> (accessed March 23, 2010).

Graphic Design Certification, <http://designcertification.org/> (accessed June 23, 2010).

Grey, Steven. "Can Corporate Funding Save Endangered College Classes?" *Time*, <http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1909937,00.html> (accessed June 23, 2010).

Gross, Larry, John Stuart Katz, and Jay Ruby, eds. *Image Ethics in the Digital Age*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.

Heller, Steven, and Lita Talarico. *Design School Confidential*. Beverly, MA: Rockport Publishers, 2009.

Heller, Steven, and Veronique Vienne. *Citizen Designer*. NY: Allworth Press, 2007.

Holland, DK. "Where Our Wild Things Are—Part 1: Graphic design ethics in an age of exacerbation." *Communication Arts* (March/April 2010).

_____. "Where Our Wild Things Are—Part 2: Graphic design ethics in an age of exacerbation." *Communication Arts* (May/June 2010).

Johnson, Mark. *Moral Imagination: Implications of Cognitive Science for Ethics*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993.

IDEO. "The Human Centered Design Toolkit." IDEO. <http://www.ideo.com/work/item/human-centered-design-toolkit/> (accessed February 2010).

King, Elaine A., and Gail Levin, eds. *Ethics and the Visual Arts*. NY: Allworth Press, 2006.

Lavin, Maud. *Clean New World*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001.

Living Principles, <http://www.livingprinciples.net/index.htm> (accessed February 2010).

Lovely As A Tree, <http://lovelyasatree.com/> (accessed February 2010).

McDonough, William, and Michael Braungart. "Cradle to Cradle/Remaking the Way We Make Things." McDonough, http://www.mcdonough.com/cradle_to_cradle.htm (accessed April 19, 2010).

Meggs, Philip. *Meggs' History of Graphic Design*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2006.

Nini, Paul, "In Search of Ethics in Graphic Design." AIGA. <http://www.aiga.org/content.cfm/in-search-of-ethics-in-graphic-design> (accessed March 2010).

Purdue Online Writing Lab. "Creating Good Interview and Survey Questions." Purdue University, <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/559/06/> (accessed March 2010).

Rasmussen, Lisa. *Ethics Expertise: History, Contemporary Perspectives, and Applications*. Netherlands: Springer, 2005. <http://books.google.com> (accessed March 2010).

Roberts, Lucienne. *Good: Ethics of Graphic Design*. Lausanne, Switzerland: AVA Publishing SA, 2006.

School of Visual Arts. "MFA Designer as Author, Projects: Ethics." School of Visual Arts, <http://design.sva.edu/site/projects/show/71> (accessed March 2010).

Shapiro, Ellen. "Greenwashing!" *Communication Arts* (December 2004).
http://www.visuallanguage.net/vl/goodwriting1.php?show=greenwash_article_Shapiro.html (accessed April 29, 2010).

Sketchblog. "Responsible Design." Sketchblog,
<http://sketchblog.guava.nl/2007/05/01/responsible-design/> (accessed March 23, 2010).

Speak Up. "Design vs. Designers." UnderConsideration,
<http://www.underconsideration.com/speakup/archives/002723.html>.
(accessed March 23, 2010).

Sullivan, William. *Work and Integrity: The Crisis and Promise of Professionalism in America*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2005.

Survey Monkey. "Smart Survey Design." Survey Monkey,
<http://help.surveymonkey.com/> (accessed March 2010).

Szenasy, Susan S. "Ethics and Sustainability: Graphic Designers' Role." Paper presented at Power of Design: AIGA National Design Conference, Vancouver, Canada, October 23-26, 2003.

<http://powerofdesign.aiga.org/content.cfm/szenasy> (accessed March 23, 2010).

Szostak, Rick. *Unifying Ethics*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2005.

Ted Talks. "Larry Lessig on laws that kill creativity." Ted Talks,

http://www.ted.com/speakers/larry_lessig.html (accessed March 24, 2010).

Vavetsi, Rozina. "The Wide, Wide World of Graphic Design." AIGA,

<http://aiga.org/content.cfm/the-wide-wide-world-of-graphic-design>

(accessed March 23, 2010)

APPENDIX A

The following results are from email and phone interviews and questions posed to social media groups to find out what areas of ethics in graphic design are of interest to graphic design educators and professionals.

1) *Feedback from Florian Bach Leda – Creative Director, FB Design, a graphic design studio in New York City and he is also Creative Director of Latina magazine*
<http://fbdesign.com/>. Feedback via email.

ISSUE: Ethical treatment of employees

Florian responded to the question “What do you think the biggest ethical issues are that graphic design students can expect to face in their careers?” with the following:

“I think the biggest ethical issue will be from a managerial perspective. Some bigger corporations will try to use the recession as an excuse to place more work on the shoulders of fewer people. Creatives in managerial positions that work for these corporations must balance the reasonable requests that some of them make in response to the recession with the ones that are borderline exploitative. The junior designers in the field need to decide if they are being asked to be part of an understandably lean and mean operation, or if they are being taken advantage of. Everyone has to decide these things for themselves.”

2) *Feedback from Eric Baker – Design Director, The O Group, “strategy and design agency for all things luxury:”* http://ogroup.net/people/eric_baker. Feedback via email.

ISSUE: Promoting and advocating for change in how graphic designers work

Eric responded to the question "What do you think the biggest ethical issues are that graphic design students can expect to face in their careers?" with the following:

"To me the ethical issues facing young designers will have to do with promoting and advocating change in how we do things.

To be able to argue, respectfully, that we must face BIG issues in terms of WHAT we produce and HOW we produce it.

And not to get sucked into working for unethical companies just to make money."

PERSONAL STORY: *Lack of respect / Usage Rights*

Eric responded to the question "Have there been any issues that you have run into during your career that have caught you off guard?" with the following:

"Many! Clients that have no respect for what we do. Mean people. Petty people. Boring people. But mostly stupid, greedy people. Just wait, you'll meet them soon enough.

I have always gravitated to work that might enlighten or serve a bigger purpose rather than just making 'pretty design'. To seek out people you admire and to learn from them is extremely important.

I once had a client, The Museum of Modern Art, which commissioned me to do a design for their yearly date book, without asking they went on to use it for a number of other products. I called them and politely explained that they had only had the right to use it on the project they commissioned and that they had to pay me a (small) fee for the other uses. They got all huffy and said that they would pay me, but that I wouldn't work for them again. Frankly, even though I love MoMA, I didn't really want to work with them again."

3) *Feedback from Jessica Heffland – Partner, Winterhouse, a studio focusing on publishing, new media and cultural institutions.* <http://winterhouse.com/helfand.html>.
Feedback via email.

ISSUE: *Boundaries, honesty, kindness*

Jessica responded to the question “What do you think the biggest ethical issues are that graphic design students can expect to face in their careers?” with the following:

“Being clear about boundaries — between friends and clients, money, and its perception being the complication that thwarts all successful achievement in collaboration.”

“Honesty — because it is the single most important prerequisite for success in life AND work.”

“Kindness — because you can, and must endeavor to be famous and successful and STILL BE NICE (an overstatement, but I’m serious) which is not only possible, but mandatory for true happiness.”

PERSONAL STORY: *Women in the field*

Jessica responded to the question “Have there been any issues that you have run into during your career that have caught you off guard?” with the following:

“It never ceases to amaze me that women, who continue to struggle, in millions of ways, to achieve equal status and pay with their male counterparts, do not help and support other women more than they do: worse, they prevent other women from achieving, when they should be mentoring them, period.”

4) *Feedback from Steff Geissbuhler – Partner, C&G Partners, an integrated design firm specializing in media, the arts, public spaces and financial services.*

<http://www.cgpartnersllc.com>. *Feedback via email.*

ISSUE: *Working for a client involved in something you find unacceptable*

Steff responded to the question “What do you think the biggest ethical issues are that graphic design students can expect to face in their careers?” with the following:

“A major ethical dilemma is to be hired to work for a client whose products, services or actions are harmful, criminal, politically unacceptable, or are promoting violence and war, or foster morally unacceptable opinions or actions.”

PERSONAL STORY: *Being asked to represent the opposition in politics*

Steff responded to the question “Have there been any issues that you have run into during your career that have caught you off guard? Any stories you'd like to share?” with the following:

“We were approached by the Republican Party to design banners, posters, and the Madison Square Garden stage for the Republican Convention in New York City. We were financially struggling at the time and would have welcomed a big project like this. Also, with Michael Bloomberg as mayor, a Republican at the time, this would have opened a lot of doors for us. We even tried to fool ourselves by camouflaging the project as doing something nice for New York and adding to the many projects we've done for our city. However, after some of us playing devil's advocates for a while, we unanimously agreed to reject this project, based on being Democrats and not wanting to be a handmaiden in reelecting GW Bush and supporting the war. (Besides, I believe the design community would have crucified us had we accepted this project). Obviously someone did do the job, but interestingly enough, as far as I know, nobody claimed credit for having created and designed all the graphics and promotions for this event.

As far as being caught off guard, please read my story of my first interview on the AIGA website:"

<http://www.aiga.org/content.cfm/portfolio-presenting?searchtext=Steff%20Geissbuhler>

5) Feedback from Ann Byne – principal of The Byne Group, a design and marketing firm with a diverse client base that includes education, non-profit, and financial organizations: <http://thebynegroup.com/> (Permission to use everything for research paper issue, need to get permission for personal stories if distributed more widely). Feedback via phone interview.

ISSUE/PERSONAL STORY: *Kick-backs*

Ann Byne, principal of The Byne Group in Suffern, NY told me during a phone interview that she feels the biggest issue in regarding ethics in graphic design is the practice of kick-backs from printers and vendors.

During the 80s Ann was a freelance graphic designer who counted Orange and Rockland Utilities among her clients. One of their chief executives was Linda Winikow, who had previously been a state senator and activist who ironically often attacked the local power company accusing them of charging consumers exorbitant rates. During this time period she was accused, tried, and convicted of receiving kickbacks from ad agencies, printers, and other vendors while working for Orange and Rockland. Ann Byne had to testify during the trial. She says this was one of the most unethical situations she's seen but stresses that this type of behavior is commonplace in the industry and should be addressed.

Other sources for story:

<http://www.recordonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070115/NEWS/70115722/-1/NEWS271993>

<http://www.lohud.com/article/20080828/COLUMNIST/808280448/A-plummet-from-grace>

6) *Feedback from Page Simon – Professor of Graphic Design, Rockland Community College. Feedback via in-person interview.*

ISSUE: *Unethical clients who don't pay for services*

When asked the open-ended broad question “What do you think is the biggest ethical issue graphic design students will face?”, Page responded that she thinks it’s working with clients that don’t pay. Trying to get paid has been a big problem throughout her career as a graphic designer. She did work for a record company a few years ago and was owed \$40,000 and has yet to be paid. When I asked if she followed up with legal action, she said it would be futile, from what she understands there’s a long line of people in front of her, and she decided not to pursue it.

PERSONAL STORY: *Where to draw the line*

When asked if she had any stories she’d like to share, Page told me about being asked to design a logo for an air carrier during the 1960s. She was in grad school at the time and was supporting herself through freelance jobs. The logo was for a new airplane, and the issue was the plane was going to be used only for transporting equipment to the frontlines during the Viet Nam war. Page was opposed to the war, but she did end up doing the job; she needed the money.

PERSONAL STORY: *Graphic design education*

Page also talked how as an educator at a community college she feels students graduating with an associates degree in Graphic Design are often ill-prepared to get a job in the field. Is she being ethical as an educator in contributing to false hopes? She said she encourages students to continue their education at a four-year school, but not all of them do. She talked about the visual arts field in general and how

competitive it is; even MFA graduates often have a hard time finding work or work that pays enough.

7) *Feedback from Mark Stutzman – Owner of Digital Variant – social media experts, <http://www.digitalvariant.com/>. Feedback via email.*

ISSUE/PERSONAL STORY: *Design plagiarism*

When asked what he thinks the biggest ethical issues in graphic design are Mark told me the following personal story that sums it up.

Mark told me that his company was recently working with a freelance designer who sent them the most amazing mock ever for a project—it was really cool. Later in the evening he was poking around online looking at similar campaigns when he came across a campaign that was literally a COPY of the mock he had just received from the designer. He was torn about what to do.

He spoke with the designer and demanded an explanation, which would (a) help him understand why they did this, (b) determine if he could ever trust this person again—as the work they generally create is amazing, and he had always assumed "original".

Luckily this was a project for them internally—but if it were a project for a client and this happened and the client had already approved the designs he was not sure what he would have done.

In this case he decided to give the designer a second chance and had them redo the work, making it clear that if this ever happened again they would not work for him anymore. He's still not sure he made the right decision. But he believes in the person and feels like it was a single mistake that happened because they were under a ton of pressure—he hopes he made the right decision.

8) Feedback from Dr. Sherry Mayo – Director of Peekskill Digital Art Workshop, Peekskill, NY. Sherry also teaches Digital Imaging. Feedback via email.

ISSUE: *Copyright issues*

When asked the open-ended question “What do you think is the biggest ethical issue graphic design students will face?”, Sherry responded with copyright issues and responded with links to information about digital art, Larry Lessig, and Creative Commons.

Creative Commons <http://creativecommons.org/>

Larry Lessig

http://www.ted.com/talks/larry_lessig_says_the_law_is_strangling_creativity.html

9) Feedback from Lise Prown – Gallery Director and Lab Manager at Peekskill Digital Art Workshop, Peekskill, NY. Visual artist specializing in contemporary public art installations, Professor of Intro to Digital Art at Mount St. Vincent, Bronxville, NY. Feedback via phone interview.

ISSUE: *Image use*

When asked the open-ended question “What do you think is the biggest ethical issue graphic design students will face?”, Lise responded with image use. She says students have no idea what correct image use is. She shows them Flickr and Creative Commons and how to tell if images they grab can be used. She tells them if they appropriate an image, there must be at least 3 alterations to the original image. She also discussed the importance of teaching clients about image use.

She also added that in her experience students will be most interested in business ethics rather than issues of morality because they want to know “what’s in it for them.”

Lise directed me to this resource: <http://clancco.com/wp/>

<http://blog.art21.org/2010/02/05/flash-points-the-ethics-of-art/>

10) Feedback from Matt Ferranto – Professor of Graphic Design, Westchester Community College, Valhalla, NY. Feedback via email

ISSUE: *Cultural influence*

When asked the open-ended question “What do you think is the biggest ethical issue graphic design students will face?”, Matt responded:

“In my own career, most of my ethical questions have centered on the economic implications of my work. In other words, does the world really need another car ad? Michael Beirut has a great reply to the First Things First manifesto in which he asks why the world shouldn't get a well-designed dog biscuit package. That said, I don't know if it's possible to work in advertising design for any length of time and seriously question the amount of time, money, & resources that goes into a grocery store cereal aisle. It's not the ‘quality’ of the design work but rather the larger purpose. I'm not going to assert that designers should only, or even mostly, work for education, social services, and other ‘good’ (read liberal, left-leaning...) causes, but constantly shilling shit that you wouldn't buy or can't afford has often left me wondering ‘why?’

ISSUE: *Copyright issues*

“Today's students have grown up in an electronic cut/paste culture that is fundamentally different than my own. On top of that, today's students seem to regard everything on the internet/web as ‘free’ - that is, it's there for them to take. Many of them don't realize that, say, typefaces are designed by people who need to be paid for their work in order to pay their rent, and when they do learn this, many don't seem to care. I know that musicians are increasingly developing new business

models to account for this - the money is in live tours rather than record sales. Copyright, fair use, etc. promises to be one of the key legal & ethical issues of the next few decades, and no doubt technology is going to change people's interpretation of it. I suppose it's no good in applying a single ultimatum on this moving target, but I do think young designers need to think through the economic implications of cut & paste & develop a firm sense of what is 'fair' to use."

11) Feedback from Robyn Waxman – Professor of Graphic Communications, Sacramento City College, Sacramento, CA and Coordinator of Design Education, Designers Accord, San Francisco, CA. Feedback via email

ISSUE: *Social responsibility*

When asked "What do you think the biggest ethical issues are that graphic design students can expect to face in their careers?", Robyn responded:

"As designers, we often take the role of promoting and selling someone's 'stuff' or service. This stuff has a long manufacturing trail that includes how it was made, whose hands it passed through, what natural resources/cultures/human rights were sacrificed in the making of it, and what type of unjust economic systems we support in the purchase of it. My biggest ethical issue concerns whether I am brave enough or care enough to follow that trail of manufacturing to learn that the product or service I am about to promote is the very thing that undermines me and what I care about."

ISSUES: *Corporate sponsorship / Greenwashing*

When asked if there have been any issues she has run into in her career that caught her off guard Robyn Waxman replied:

“Yes, and I write about a specific situation extensively in my thesis paper when the Graduate Design program at California College of the Arts asked that I give Intel Corporation non-exclusive, perpetual, irrevocable, royalty-free, fully paid up license under all of my copyright and trade secret rights in and to any of my ideas, creations or copyrighted works created by me during a required course in the program. I needed to leave the required class because I refused to sign the agreement. The most surprising thing was how anxiously and enthusiastically my classmates signed this waiver of licensing rights. Current culture seems amazingly ready to give away the public sphere/commons to corporations who then privatize it, make a giant profit, treat employees poorly, and pollute the earth.

More recently, with the F.A.R.M. project, Kraft/Triscuit contacted me through a non-profit urban farm organization. They wanted to corporately sponsor the San Francisco F.A.R.M. so they could use it for advertising... to show their engagement in ‘humanitarian’ projects. In exchange for this, they would give us soil, seeds and a part timer gardener. This would be the cheapest adverting opportunity money could buy—especially since we get dirt, seeds and a workforce via donations and volunteering. I’m not sure this caught me off guard, but it sure did get me fired up! I let them know exactly how I felt about a company that peddles diabetic-causing food to (mostly) children, wanting to associate themselves with an organic urban farm ... as if they actually built it.”

*12) Feedback from Alex W. White – Chairman of the Type Directors Club, Jury Chair of TDC49, author of *The Elements of Graphic Design*, Professor of Graphic Design, 2D Design, Typography. Feedback via email.*

ISSUE: *Design plagiarism*

When asked the open-ended broad question “What do you think is the biggest ethical issue graphic design students will face?”, Alex White responded:

“Using other’s work and design ideas is a problem. This is particularly relied on when time is tight and something has to be generated. Duplicating a design from a design annual is a cheap and easy way to get some preliminary studies. Learning how to look critically, for example, at design annuals produces a list of design relationships that can be interpreted in unlimited ways, and that produces unique, fresh solutions that address the needs of this particular client and this particular message.”

ISSUE: *Piracy*

“Stealing software and fonts are common problems. I address these issues in my classes and explain the EULA in clear terms, so they at least know when they are stealing other creative persons’ work.”

ISSUE: *Clients who don’t pay for services*

“My experience is that, as service providers, graphic designers are generally very principled businesspeople. It is our clients who ignore agreements and expect more work than they pay for. It is unethical to agree to pay XX dollars for a defined body of work and then expect revisions until the client is either satisfied or exasperated or unable to get more because something is eventually actually needed for reproduction and uploading for live use.”

13) Feedback from Ellen Lupton – Curator of contemporary design at Cooper-Hewitt Design Museum in New York City, director of the Graphic Design program at Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), author of numerous books and articles on design, public-minded critic, frequent lecturer, and AIGA Gold Medalist. Feedback via email.

ISSUES: *Font and software licensing, sustainability, and fair pricing (crowdsourcing and spec work)*

When asked the open-ended broad question “What do you think is the biggest ethical issue graphic design students will face?”, Ellen Lupton responded with:

“Designers must constantly make decisions about the legal use of fonts and software. We also have to think about waste. So much of what graphic designers create is, essentially, pollution. Other ethical questions include fair pricing. Sometimes, a big firm will low-ball a job in order to get a prestigious commission at a museum or whatever; this forces the organization to choose based on price, driving hungrier firms out of the market. Likewise, young people sometimes work for free and end up devaluing their/our services in the process.”

ISSUE: *Intellectual property*

When asked if there have there been any issues that she has come across in her career that have caught her off guard, Ellen responded:

“Intellectual property (which includes font property) is a big issue in design practice. So much of what designers do involves working with other people’s work. It’s rarely obvious where to draw the line. Many people have a political point of view that more visual content should be in the public domain. I have been asked twice to serve as an ‘expert witness’ in intellectual property suits involving designers or artists. Both times I said no, because I have such mixed opinions on this question. Part of me does want culture to be free. But another part believes that artists do have to fight to protect their property.”

PERSONAL STORY: *Fair use*

When asked if she had any personal stories she could share, Ellen responded:

“I was asked to be an expert witness in the Shepard Fairey case. The call came from the lawyer representing the Associated Press. So this was a case of artist-vs-artist. I could really see both sides of the case. On the one hand, shouldn’t any picture of Obama be considered part of the culture, fair game? On the other hand, didn’t the photographer work hard to get that particular shot? I said no. Too much moral ambiguity. Later, it came out that Fairey had lied about which picture he used. The morals become far less ambiguous, and Fairey ended up embarrassing the free culture side of the argument. Not cool.”

CERTIFICATION

When asked whether she thinks graphic designers should be certified Ellen responded:

“I think certification is a monumentally dumb idea. Talk about trying to defend your intellectual property! Design is a way of thinking and working that is accessible to everyone. We should focus on getting better at what we do and raising awareness of design as a valuable contribution society rather than trying to protect our trade secrets.”

14) From Steven Heller—formerly art director at the New York Times, originally on the OpEd Page and for almost 30 of those years with the New York Times Book Review. Currently, co-chair of the MFA Designer as Author Department, Special Consultant to the President of SVA for New Programs, and writer of the Visuals column for the “New York Times Book Review.” Feedback via email

ISSUE: No universal answer

When asked the open-ended broad question “What do you think is the biggest ethical issue graphic design students will face?”, Steve answered with the following:

“Interesting question. The answer is not specific. Every individual will face different concerns. Some will be asked to serve a client they might not like or a product they might not care for while others might be faced with whether or not to undercut a competitor. There are no universal answers.”

CERTIFICATION

When asked if graphic designers should be certified Steve Heller responded:

“Not at all. However, I do believe that just because you might say you’re a designer doesn't mean you are. I've seen too many portfolios that look like design but are just carbon copies of what's in the books. Still, there is no way to certify a designer. There are no universals here either.”

15) From DK Holland—Designer, creative director, teacher, strategist, and writer; formerly a partner at Pushpin Studios, currently a brand strategist for socially progressive organizations. Feedback via phone interview.

ISSUE: *Many, see referenced article, look for Part 2 and also look closely at Crowdsourcing*

When asked the open-ended broad question “What do you think is the biggest ethical issue graphic design students will face?”, DK referred me to her thoughtful and extensive article written for the Communication Arts March/April 2010 issue entitled “Where Our Wild Things Are—Part 1.” (source: <http://www.commarts.com/columns/where-our-wild-things-are-mdash.html>)

During our conversation DK discussed the lack of ethics in graphic design curriculum. She recently had the opportunity to guest lecture at CCA (California College of the Arts) on a recent trip to San Francisco. The class was a business practices class for undergraduate graphic design majors, and just one class is devoted to ethics. DK expressed her concern that only one class addressed this

critical topic and also mentioned that almost half the class was absent that day—they won't be introduced to the topic of ethics at all.

We also spoke about crowdsourcing and how she recently attended a conference that featured a panel of educators at Pratt where one of the founders of Crowd Spring had been invited. DK was a bit horrified to see Pratt supporting Crowd Spring. She also mentioned that when she was guest lecturing at CCA the students had not heard of crowdsourcing and had no idea what it was.

ISSUE: *Ownership*

When asked if there been any issues that she had come across in her career that have caught her off guard, DK responded with the following:

“When clients start changing things themselves, ownership changes.” DK talked about how she did not expect that and how she's seen this paradigm shift during the course of her career. She feels that during the infancy of graphic design in the latter part of the 20th century there was a mysticism and respect for the work of the design icons of that era: Paul Rand, Milton Glaser, Seymour Chwast. These designers used systems to create their work, but it was not widely talked about because they were seen as professionals. We talked about how in today's current environment and our prosumer culture, individuals feel it's their right to take work created by designers and change it to suit their own needs, which can result in a completely different concept than what was originally intended.

ISSUE: *Certification*

When asked if she thinks graphic designers should be certified, DK responded:

“Absolutely not, it would be a waste of time.” She feels there was a time when it may have been useful, but we've long passed that. It won't add any value to the role of the graphic designer or help with the current problems of lack of respect for what we do.

We talked at length about the bias against graphic designers in the design field and how they seem to be seen as the lowest members of the caste system. Often brought in mid-way through a project or at the end for the window dressing, engineers and system designers don't see the value that designers could have in offering their expertise in terms of visual communication early in the process.

16) Gregg Bernstein—Graphic Designer, art director, and educator. Sole proprietor of “Made by Gregg,” specializes in design for music industry, SCAD MFA student. Feedback via email.

ISSUE: *Plagiarism, intellectual property, font licensing*

When asked the open-ended broad question “What do you think is the biggest ethical issue graphic design students will face?”, Gregg answered with the following:

“The biggest ethical issue facing graphic design students relates to plagiarism and intellectual property rights. Having taught undergraduate design students at the sophomore and junior levels, I was surprised to see so much confusion and misinformation about acceptable and unacceptable use of third party resources. With so much digital content available for use, students must be explicitly warned against using art inappropriately or without attribution.

Another contemporary design ethics issue involves typeface licensing. Students, perhaps informed by the ease of sharing mp3 files see no reason to purchase typefaces. While they may face no repercussions within the academic bubble, such practices are sure to cause problems for the studios and agencies they end up working with and for.”

ISSUE: *Legal contracts*

When asked if there have been any issues that he has come across in his career that have caught him off guard, Gregg responded:

“As a young freelancer, I found out the hard way about the importance of written contracts, especially in describing deadlines and milestones. I also think that working with hired talent—photographers and illustrators, for instance—is a tricky area for freelance designers. Be sure to spell out who retains the rights and whether the work created is exclusive or non-exclusive.”

CERTIFICATION

When asked if he thinks graphic designers should be certified, Gregg responded:

“I think certification is best reserved to fields and disciplines where there is a substantial safety or legal risk to being improperly trained. Medicine, law, psychology/psychiatry, building trades: done poorly, the risk here is significant. An uncertified graphic designer might make a poor design, but poor alignment never harmed anyone.”

17) Meredith Davis—Professor of Graphic Design at North Carolina State University, AIGA medalist, leading advocate for the use of design thinking in K-12 classrooms, for improving standards in design education and for research as a defining characteristic of the design profession. Feedback via email.

ISSUE: *Enormous questions on many topics*

When asked the open-ended broad question “What do you think is the biggest ethical issue graphic design students will face?”, Meredith answered with the following:

“Unfortunately, these are ENORMOUS questions (entire articles have been written on these topics - I have edited complete journals on one of these topics alone) and at this point in the semester, it would be extremely difficult for me to answer them with any degree of completeness. I'm afraid I can't help under my current workload.”

18) Jennifer Salzburg, Academic Department Director of Graphic Design and Web Design for The Art Institute of Raleigh-Durham. Feedback via email.

ISSUES: Working for a client you find unethical / Appropriation

When asked what she thinks the biggest ethical issues are that graphic design students can expect to face in their careers, Jennifer responded:

“I think there are two:

One is the fact that they could be approached to do design work for a company and/or client that they find questionable. They need to decide if they are willing to set aside their personal feelings to earn the money or if their personal code of ethics should preclude them from doing the work.

Two, is the idea of designers appropriating the work of others without properly giving them credit for the original. The recent issue with Shepard Fairey and the Obama ‘HOPE’ image/poster comes to mind.”

ISSUE: Inappropriate (unethical) use of designers

When asked if there have ever been any issues that she has come across in her career that have caught her off guard, Jennifer responded:

“The only time I've really been caught off-guard about anything in my career was when I was a very young designer. I was working in an internal creative department for a company and the wife of the president of the company had her own charitable organization. She used to make use of us, the creative department of the company, to do her design work (which to my knowledge was never charged back to the organization). I always found this rather suspicious, but being a brand new junior designer, it wasn't really my place to say anything.

There isn't much that manages to catch me off-guard anymore, especially with all of the stories one hears from those that mentor you throughout your career.”

PERSONAL STORY: *Live to work rather than work to live*

When asked if she had any personal stories she could share, Jennifer responded with the following:

“There's more to quality of life than a fat paycheck. As a designer, you should find your creative passion and try to do as much as you can with it. It makes for a much happier life and a much more enjoyable career.”

CERTIFICATION

When asked if she thinks graphic designers should be certified, Jennifer responded:

“I don't necessarily think that a designer needs to be certified, as long as society and those that are hiring designers recognize a degree (undergraduate or graduate) in graphic design as an equivalent to a certification. If certification was to be included as a part of design education, perhaps upon completion of their degree, I think that could be a viable solution.”

19) From Louis Tomaino—artist, designer, and educator. Formerly a project director at the Institute for Learning Technologies at Columbia University's Teachers College, education consultant on projects such as the creation of an arts and technology program in high school and the design of a new media program at the college level. Feedback via email.

ISSUE: *The designer's role in defining society, culture, civilization*

When asked the open-ended broad question “What do you think is the biggest ethical issue graphic design students will face?”, Louis responded:

“Moreover, I think that the effects of what we create will become an increasingly pervasive and defining influence on society, and that it is now effecting it at a unique crisis of social evolution. At least we can hope that crisis is possible—that we are able to rise to the need to consider a kind of crossroads at which we stand - and to create the most good to meet it and pass through it.

There are three forces that need to be consciously faced, that might, imperfectly, be named the commercialization of society, the mechanization of society, and the virtualization of society. All create a layer of detachment of human experience from both a fuller engagement with the physical - which in this context might be called natural - and from a large part the human emotional world.

This part of the emotional world centers on 1) immediacy, honesty, trust, and the kinds of engagement that follow from them; 2) the originality, invention, and deepening, positively progressing aesthetic and intellect that can follow in that engagement; and 3) action taken on personal vision that rises both from a baseline of culture awareness of, and living with, cumulative social, aesthetic, and accomplishments of the past - and from experiencing these things within a setting not far removed either from the natural or human worlds uncluttered by, and not supplanted by, most of the noise made in commerce, through technology, that has nothing to do with those things.

Perhaps people can neither think very well nor relax in any meaningful or useful way in a room into which the television and the Internet are constantly broadcasting, no matter what these things are broadcasting. Whether there be a sense of being in constant dialog about nothing of substance: waiting for the next commercial interruption to which no response is actually, in the end, required, over

and over again, or it be a sense of waiting for that broadcast to stop as a sign that there is a place in society for whatever meaning, hope, value, people hold most dear—a pause that would represent the will, choice, of many people—this broadcast defines society and stills its positive and creative evolution by substituting – metaphorically—sawdust for the experience of a forest, and—actually—the light of the colors of a commercial on a screen, for the experience of sun on the wall and floor, a place where new ideas may be written by the mind.

In a way this world of sunlit space, in which feeling, aesthetic, and invention are not interrupted, is a description of an ideal, but it is also a description of the basis of civilization that exists, always, to one degree or another. We are now, and have for a long time been, at a place where it is constantly, mechanically, and pointlessly interrupted. The loss is inestimable.

It isn't all of the aspects of commerce or all of the aspects of mechanization, centrally now, technology and the way we receive it, that drive this wedge of stupefaction and silence between people and their world.

Perhaps the most important task we have is to become clear about which aspects of commerce and technology do have this effect—and which have the opposite effect.

A lasting movement of decision, discernment, of the good from the bad, is postponed again and again because the effects and the forces that cause them almost always take a position of secondary, lower concern than the overt evils in the world, especially of politics and political systems and movements and of activity of individuals and groups recognized as criminal or that constantly cause damage without recognition. Among them are the offenses to human rights lead by dictatorial individuals and governments, religious and secular, and of individual people and criminal organizations generally outside of politics, trading in harm to others.

Furthermore, this secondary tier of problem is, by contrast, and without ever fully understanding it, often offered as a solution to the problems of people and societies: more technology, more commercial culture, sometimes with commerce sponsoring technology's spread, sometimes with technology sponsoring commerce's spread.

For example, not long after the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, one of the main political commentators in this country proposed that the way to most quickly and democratically cause an end to hostilities would be to put a large-screen television in the tribal gathering place of conference between elders and the rest of the people of each village there. The argument was that the people in these villages would quickly 'choose our way of life.' There is reason to believe, I think, that that would be the result. The question is, 'At what cost?' And there is no coherent answer to that—at least not one that has become part of our culture except, in fragmentary form, at its fringes.

Still, somehow that fringe of discernment seems to have prevailed—it is uncertain by how large a margin.

That is an example of sponsoring commercial culture with technology, which would have resulted in the institution of both with a particular role in a society, and in world culture, a role already part of our own society.

There is a parallel in what happened to many of the historical artifacts of world culture in Iraq after it was invaded and its museums were looted. One telling remark of that same period, emblematic of the aspect of the stewardship that was being offered, was if I remember correctly, our vice president referring to the Tigris as 'some river'. It has always been common knowledge, considered basic to understanding the heritage and progression of all world civilization, that the Tigris and Euphrates river valley is one of the places world civilization began, one of the

world's few 'Cradles of Civilization.'

Magnification of the value in culture of societies and individuals, in even the smallest way, rather than diminishing, trivializing, and supplanting it - that is a worthy and delicate task for a designer.

A second example of this bundled technology and commerce has been the sponsoring of technology by corporations—in public school settings. While I was at Columbia a proposal had been floating—a serious one, apparently likely of being enacted—of allowing corporations to pay for the installation of computers and Internet access thoroughly throughout the New York City public school system and for the families of its children in exchange for the placement of advertisements for their products through the conduits the technologies would provide.

This was of course not the first time this issue had come up—broadcasting commercials into the classroom had been done as part of that same exchange in the past, but it was stunning to find how many people seemed perfectly comfortable with this process. 'It is everywhere else in a child's life—so why shouldn't it be in their schools as well?' This was one rationale, and it probably underlies the most acceptance for the idea.

Of course, what seems to be continuously proposed: extending the range of broadcast of commercials and the products that go with them, from newscasts, to varieties of fiction, to physical products, into places that aren't yet filled with their noise, cultures yet without them to the extent ours is or places in our own culture where they are still banned—this spreading of influence sits securely on a base of the places in the world where it is a constant: practically every home in our country and public space in our country.

What are some of the milestones in this process? Where are we in it and where are

we likely to be going?

One important one was the transformation of public physical space in cities into a single huge visual advertising medium. In the timescale of human development, this transformation was instantaneous and sudden. And after that moment, it became impossible to have one's eyes open and not be forced to see advertisement. One cannot think of most things of importance and consider advertisement at the same time—certainly one does not wish to do so. This causes a detachment of people from their environment and from hope that their society as a place where meaningful dialog is valued or respected.

Another was the decision— no longer remembered as controversial or of even having been made - to make radio a commercial rather than educational medium. With radio, interruption of thought, whether through advertising or other programming, became even more difficult to avoid, but the baseline for the culture of that interruption was set as well.

Radio required listening, but accommodated other activities. Television required watching as well, and limited the activities still possible. It followed as a commercial medium.

Then the Internet, with its attractions—communication and access to information as it had never been experienced before—also became a place people go. Radio and television came to people. But people go into the Internet. And almost immediately, most activities within it became fringed with advertisement. The transformation from broadcast to place is the transformation point to a new epoch.

However, perhaps the largest step by far, bringing that epoch into existence, is occurring now and is more of an incursion than even the covering of public spaces with advertisement and the substitution, by television, of family interaction with

commercial broadcasts.

It is the propagation of portable technologies that has already transformed every public space we are likely to encounter—whether it be a library, a bookstore, a walk at night, a train ride, a film, or a rest in the park. There is now the expectation of constant, unannounced, interruption with totally irrelevant noise, and the detachment of people there as their consciousness enters a kind of non-land between places.

To get to the huge Rose Reading room of the New York Humanities Library, visitors pass through several layers of signs telling them that the use of phones is not allowed there. Yet phones sounding and the sound of people talking into them continues from the time it opens until the time it closes. Other interruptions like the sounds of people's portable music players are now considered so secondary a problem that it is harder to address it.

One looks nostalgically to the time when someone speaking to no one there could be a sign of idiosyncrasy rather than bland and common unconsciousness.

Sometimes it seems that most nannies in the park are talking into a telephone and listening into it while they wheel around the babies in their care. A mother sits on the train, her child at her breast, her attention to a long telephone dialog—she is speaking, but it has nothing to do with the baby or anyone there. Another woman brings her girl with her for a day in the city. The girl is sitting with a stunned look of suppressed rage as her mother uses the time on the train, perhaps the entire time—it seems that way to her daughter, in any case—to talk to someone somewhere else, on the phone. She knows now that at any time in their dialog her mother may exchange it for an indefinite period of time speaking with someone invisible to them both. A man stands in the middle of the road typing the abbreviations of his language that are used in constant written dialog—cars stop and have to go around

him. No one there finds it comical. He walks off with no acknowledgment of the interaction he was part of. Another man comes within a foot of killing woman with his car. She stands outraged, but he pulls over without even noticing her and continues to type into his machine. A woman stops on her trail bike in the middle of the forest next to another visitor there, oblivious of his presence and begins to shout into a telephone. This had been a place of deep beauty. In another wood, the sound of one half of a telephone dialog is spoken relentlessly and tediously across and into the quiet of tens of other people there. In another place a man tries to write, perhaps a poem, the attempt is cut short and it seems pointless to have even tried there. A person opens the window to hear a neighbor, sitting in the next yard, talking on the phone. He closes the window again and a bird flies away.

This list now goes on forever in every public space, just as television brought it to the family room of every private home. The list goes on forever, and to more accurately express the change, one could to make the list the length of a book, perhaps a deathlike Ulysses, about vacancy and evacuation, and without a plot lit by the inner life of the mind. A story of everything and everyone left behind at the end of an epoch, because the immediate, the present, is something the use of portable technologies has proved to be easily, completely, and thoughtlessly—mechanically—dispensable to most people, to the human psyche—at least as it stands by social convention in all of the cultures we are likely to experience today.

Where does the technology take the person using it—how is that place between places described? Where is the world evacuating to?

All of these channels are parts of the same Internet, closed rooms in it when it is where two people are talking n the phone, but a shared physic space outside of, or hidden without location inside the non-virtual world.

We know without having to think about it much that technology will continue to

become more engrossing - as radio and television have demonstrated - engaging more of the senses, dominating more attention. And for every one user, the space of tens of people around them is transformed.

What will that new place become, and what will the world outside of it become?

Will it be defined by the cumulative cultural accomplishments of the world—its classical and folk arts, its meaningful modern movements, its great ideas put into words?

How can the weight of the considerations be met positively?

I think of the play of the Eameses—the few toys they made for children and the furniture they made for their family's homes. And I think of John Kennedy, the inspiration and uplifting sense he instilled through his public praise of the value of the arts. The poets, Dylan Thomas, Lorca, their incantations and exaltations; the Bach cantatas. These people made the world again, made it in a way that is full and bright, deep and beautiful; the founders of this country, who created its constitution and protected our fields and homes with it; the people who worked for the conventions of war, the Geneva Conventions, one of the highest achievements of humankind. The great movement to protect the natural world.”

Feedback from Social Networking sites:

LinkedIn AIGA:

http://www.linkedin.com/groupAnswers?viewQuestionAndAnswers=&gid=53028&sik=1265759333046&discussionID=13424575&readyToAnswer=readyToAnswer&trk=ug_qa_usrcomm&goback=.ana_53028_1265759333046_3_1

Excerpt of topics:

- Plagiarism - copying other artists' work, and using other artists' works
- Misrepresentation of work
- Spec work via competitions
- Moral issues, promoting a material culture which may be harmful

LinkedIn Communication Arts

http://www.linkedin.com/groupAnswers?viewQuestionAndAnswers=&gid=66136&sik=1265761251385&discussionID=13444924&readyToAnswer=readyToAnswer&trk=ug_qa_usrcomm&goback=.ana_66136_1265761251385_3_1

Excerpt of topics:

- Copyright issues – images, intellectual property, fonts
- Exercising integrity and professionalism
- Copyright issues – image rights
- Intellectual property theft
- Spec work, including contests
- Drawing the line—when to refuse work when it goes against your values

Personal story from Rand McIvor:

“Regarding ethical motive: (motivation based on ideas of right and wrong)... Many years ago I was approached by a woman who owned a start-up who wanted me to design funny t-shirts on a gambling theme to sell in casinos. Now I'm no purist but celebrating in any way an activity that causes people to lose their homes, marriages and well-being (even a few), whose only motive is to take people's money, was not a job I thought I'd like to take. But I don't like saying no. So I told her I'd take the job if I could donate a portion of my fees to Gamblers Anonymous and if it could say that on the display and/or tags. She refused.”

Personal story from Jan Noren:

“Here’s a little story of what can happen if you slide the rules, for example in not paying the rights to an image bank for using pictures in a time frame. A while ago I was creating a series of CSR posters for a big international company. There were some pictures that I bought from a well-known International Image bank for use in the specific campaign, really extreme pictures taken in extreme weather conditions around the world (not any of the usual ‘all-over-the-place-images...’). I paid the fees for the campaign and made it clear to the customer that the pictures were paid for a limited time. We also paid for web use on their International web page. One year later an employee at the customer company in another country found the pictures on their web site and thought they were amazing and just ‘saved’ them into another field of use in the same company, but out of the time frame we bought them for a year earlier. They were up on the web in another campaign that I did not know of until I got a letter from a lawyer in another country with a \$4000 fine for using their client’s pictures without compensation...eeeeh. I solved the problem by making the customer pay directly to the Image bank again for the usage and added some extra time just in case and as a kind of buttering, so the case was closed and everyone happy, almost everyone. This was a time-consuming process and negotiation with the lawyer and the customer and not one single buck in it for my company, and it

was a long time after the original campaign was over.

So my advice to students and freshly baked Art Directors and other people handling pictures/copyrights and the like, just check the rules and pay with a smile. Make the customer aware of the limitations in the usage rights! If you need to, just draw up a simple contract where they agree of the rights and limitations for using copy protected material.”

Personal story Lisa Winand:

“Like Rand, I also won't do work that goes against my personal ethics. I had to get out of automotive marketing because there's so much dishonesty in it, in addition to the effect that many vehicles have on the environment. This was at a time when the manufacturers were still producing mostly large vehicles that abused fuel. At one company I worked for, one of the account managers wanted to bring in work from a local strip club, but thought that certain designers would have an issue with it—she was right. However, I did freelance work for a friend whose client was loosely related to the adult industry, but that product was more humorous than offensive and wasn't degrading, so I didn't really have a problem with it. You just have to go by your instincts and what feels right to you.”

LinkedIn Design Education

http://www.linkedin.com/groupAnswers?viewQuestionAndAnswers=&gid=122171&sik=1265761251389&discussionID=13623702&readyToAnswer=readyToAnswer&trk=ug_qa_usrcomm&goback=.ana_122171_1265761251389_3_1

Excerpt of topics:

- Piracy/Intellectual property rights
- Spec work
- Plagiarism and copyright violation vs. appropriation and fair use

- Trademark issues
- Integrity issues regarding client contracts
- Professionalism vs. tradesman
- Social responsibility
- Cultural influence
- Promoting civilization, understanding, and thoughtfulness

LinkedIn Design Educators:

http://www.linkedin.com/groupAnswers?viewQuestionAndAnswers=&gid=76206&discussionID=13425421&goback=.anh_76206

Excerpt of topics:

- Copyright issues
- Digital retouching
- Sustainable design practices

From Yahoo educators group:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aiga-education/message/2046>

Excerpt of topics:

- Humanity
- Ethics in brand development

APPENDIX B

The following provides a sampling of the research done for “Ethics in Graphic Design” in undergraduate level graphic design curriculum.

General Graphic Design Courses / Curriculum

Graphic Design I

Graphic Design II

Typography I

Typography II

History of Graphic Design

Desktop Publishing

Digital Imaging

Typography III

Typography IV

Graphic Design III

Graphic Design IV

Idea and Image

Package Design

Internship Preparation

Computer Graphics

Selected Topics in Graphic Design: Issues in Information Design

Intermediate Computer Publishing/Production

Flash Animation

Portfolio Preparation

Graphic Design V

Graphic Design VI

Web Site Design

Advanced Projects in Typography

Studio Art

Graphic Arts and Printing Techniques

Marketing Design

Advertising Design

Source: <http://designeducation.allgraphicdesign.com/graphicdesign-curriculum.html>

Art Institute Online—*Bachelor of Science, Graphic Design*

Strategies for Online Learning

Drawing

Life Drawing

Color Theory

Fundamentals of Design

Perspective

Composition and Language

Mixed Media

Concept Development

History and Analysis of Design

Computer Literacy

College Math I

Advanced Typography

Electronic Design

Graphic Illustration

History of Art in Early Civilization

Composition and Language II

Digital Image Manipulation II

Design Principles

Design Marketing

General Education Elective

Economics
Digital Illustration
Corporate Identity
Photography
Survey of Contemporary Art
Foundations of Electronic Production
Contemporary Typography
Packaging Graphics
Intermediate Illustration
General Education Elective
Art Direction
Design Team Production
Program Elective
General Education Elective
Dimensional Design
Editorial Illustration
Design and Technology
General Education Elective
Interactive Portfolio Design
Communication Design
Advertising Design
Advanced Communications
Internship or Program Elective
Portfolio Preparation for Graphic Design
Basic Web Animation
General Education Elective
General Education Elective
Internship or Program Elective
Portfolio

Digital Illustration II

General Education Elective

Source: http://www.aionline.edu/programs/online_degree_coursecatalog/online_graphic_design_degree_bs.asp

California College of the Arts—*Graphic Design Curriculum*

Core Studio

Drawing 1

Visual Dynamics (2D, 3D & 4D)

Graphic Design Major Requirements

Graphic Design 1–5

Typography 1–4

Tools 1–2

Media History: History of Visual Communication

Transition to Professional Practice

Internship or Sputnik

Investigative Studio

Graphic Design Electives

Additional Studio Requirements

Interdisciplinary Studio

Diversity Studies Studio

Studio Electives

Source: <http://www.cca.edu/academics/graphic-design/curriculum>

East Stroudsberg University—*Bachelor of Arts with an Art and Design major*

Basic Drawing

Two-Dimensional Design

Three-Dimensional Design

History of Art I

History of Art II

Advertising Graphics

Painting I

Communication Graphics

Drawing II

Painting II

Composition and Painting

Illustration

Portfolio in Art

Field Experience and Internships

Source: http://www4.esu.edu/academics/majors2/programs/art/art_ad.cfm

Hartford Art School—*Media Arts Credit Requirements*

Sophomore

Drawing, Painting, Illustration or Visual Communication Design

Sculpture or Ceramics

Printmaking, Photography or Video

Intro to Media Arts

Intro to Photography

Intro to Video

Art History or Academic Requirement

AUC Other Cultures or Academic Requirement

AUC Science/Tech. or Academic Requirement

Mathematics or Academic Requirement

Junior

Type I

Video Post-Production

Interactive Media

Special Topics in Media Arts: Sound/Image/Text, Physical Computing, Sudden Media, Intermedia Studio

Studio Elective

Digital Photography

Art History or Academic Requirement

AUC Western Heritage or Academic Requirement

AUC Social Context or Academic Requirement

Academic Elective

Senior

Visual Culture and Electronic Resources

Special Topics in Media Arts: Sudden Media, Documentary/Propaganda/
Simulation, Performance Seminar

Senior Project: Media Arts

Studio Electives

Academic Electives

Unrestricted Electives

Source: <http://www.hartfordartschool.org/>

Maryland (MICA)—*Graphic Design Major Requirements*

Electronic Media & Culture

Elements of Visual Thinking I

Sculptural Forms

Elements of Visual Thinking II

Painting I

Drawing I

Drawing II

Source:

http://www.mica.edu/Programs_of_Study/Undergraduate_Departments_%28BFA%29/Graphic_Design/Curriculum.html

New Paltz State University of New York—*Majors in Visual Arts*

Bachelor of Science:

Required foundation courses:

Drawing: Visual Thinking I

Drawing: Visual Thinking II

Integrated Design I: Space and Form

Integrated Design II: Forces

Art Seminar

Required liberal arts cognate courses—18 credits

Art of the Western World I

Art of the Western World II

Creative Art Projects - capstone course

PLUS

Liberal arts requirement for BS degree—57 credits, including 18 credits in art history or art theory

Bachelor of Arts (BA)

Required foundation courses:

Drawing: Visual Thinking I

Drawing: Visual Thinking II

Integrated Design I: Space and Form

Integrated Design II: Forces

Art Seminar

Required liberal arts cognate courses—18 credits

Art of the Western World I

Art of the Western World II

Creative Art Projects - capstone course

Source: <http://www.newpaltz.edu/ugc/fpa/art/bs.html>

Parsons New School—*Communication Design Curriculum BA/BS*

First Year:

2D Integrated Studio 1 & 2

3D Studio 1 & 2

Drawing Studio 1 & 2

Laboratory 1 & 2

Critical Reading & Writing 1 & 2

Perspectives in World Art & Design

Sophomore Year:

Type: Core Studio & Lab

Web: Core Studio & Lab

Creative Computing

Studio Electives

Introduction to Design Studies

History of Graphic Design

Liberal Arts Elective

University Lecture Elective

Junior Year:

Topic Studio: Adv Type/Info Design/

Art Direction or Studio Design

Collaborative Studio/Current Elective

Studio Electives/Internship

Global Issues in Design & Visuality: 21st C.

Art History/Design Studies Elective

University Lecture Elective

Senior Year:

Thesis 1 & 2

Studio Electives

Senior Seminar

Advanced Art History/Design Studies Elective

Liberal Arts Elective

Source: <http://www.parsons.newschool.edu/departments/department.aspx?dID=72&sdID=95&pType=1>

Savannah College of Art and Design—*Visual Communication Concentration in Graphic Design Core Curriculum*

Drawing I

Drawing II

2-D Design

Color Theory

Studio Elective

Survey of Western Art I

Survey of Western Art II

20th-century Art

ARLH/ARTH Elective

Survey of Computer Art Applications

Speech and Public Speaking

Composition

ENGL Elective

Aesthetics

Natural Sciences/Mathematics

Social/Behavioral Sciences

General Education Elective

Introduction to Graphic Design

Typography I

History of Graphic Design

Vector and Raster Graphics

Digital Page and Web Graphics

Graphic Design Studio I

Production Design

The Business of Graphic Design

GRDS Elective

Electives

Source: <http://www.scad.edu/graphic-design/ba.cfm#programButtons>

School of Visual Arts—Course Listings

Foundation-year requirements

Two semesters of:

Painting

Drawing

One semester of:

Survey of World Art I

Survey of World Art II

Printmaking

Sculpture

Foundations of Visual Computing

Second-year requirements

Two semesters of:

Basic Graphic Design

Basic Typographic Design

Drawing

Computers in the Studio

Basic Advertising

Students may substitute one of the following for ADD-2030:

Painting for Graphic Designers

Basic Three-Dimensional

Graphic Designer as Image Maker

Digital Photography for Designers

Originality

One semester of:

Visual Literacy

Recommended courses:

History of Advertising

Design Procedures

Basic Typography Workshop

Basic Graphic Design Workshop

Third-year requirements

Two semesters of:

Communication Graphic Design

Two courses per semester from any of the following specialized areas:

ADVERTISING

Advanced Advertising I

Advanced Advertising II

Hybrid Culture: Designing for Advertising

Design in Advertising I

Advertising in 360° I

Advertising in 360° II

Introduction to Maya and Match Moving

After Effects and Final Cut Pro

Motion Graphics Workshop I
Motion Graphics Workshop II
The Music Video I: A “Real-World” Workshop
The Music Video II: A “Real-World” Workshop
Editorial Design I
Editorial Design II
Editorial Design: Style and Culture
Intermediate Graphic Design
Web Site Design
Toys and Games
Design and Photography
Advertising and Graphic Design for Social Change
Information Graphics
Graphic Design Workshop
Corporate Identity
CD Package Design
Package Design
Poster Design
Book Jacket Design and Beyond
Experimental Book Art
Publication Design
The Project Class I
The Project Class II
Design for the Good I
Design for the Good II
Say It Differently I
Say It Differently II
3D Design and Illustration
Designing with Typography I

Designing with Typography II

Alphabets and Typeface Design

Advanced Type I: The Perfect Paragraph

Advanced Type II: The Perfect Paragraph

Communication Graphic Design

3D Design and Illustration

Designing with Typography

Fourth-year requirements

Two semesters of:

Design Portfolio

One course each semester from the following specialized areas:

After Effects and Final Cut Pro

Motion Graphics Workshop I

Motion Graphics Workshop II

The Music Video I: A “Real-World” Workshop

The Music Video II: A “Real-World” Workshop

Editorial Design I

Editorial Design II

Editorial Design: Style and Culture

Hybrid Culture: Designing for Advertising

Web Site Design

Toys and Games

Design and Photography

Advertising and Graphic Design for Social Change

Information Graphics

Sustainable Design for the 21st Century

Graphic Design Workshop

Corporate Identity

CD Package Design

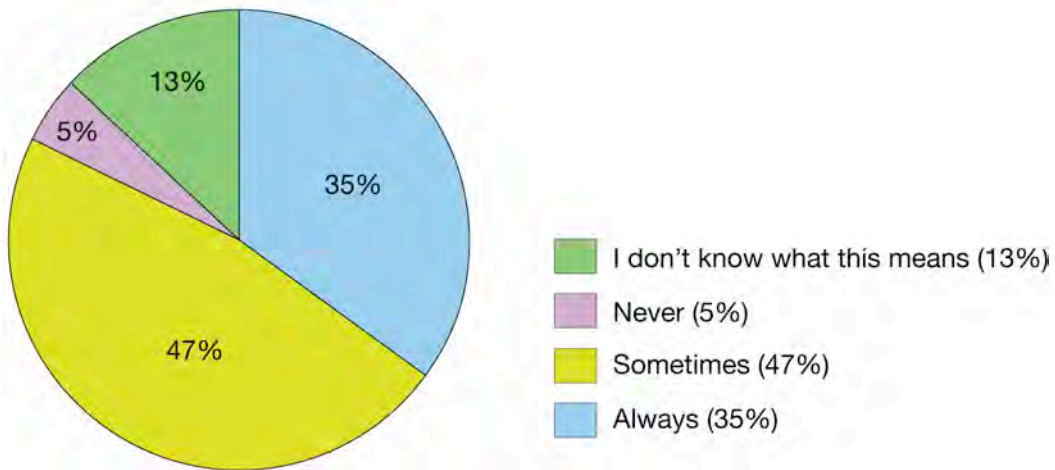
Package Design
Poster Design
Book Jacket Design and Beyond
Experimental Book Art
Publication Design
Design for the Good I
Design for the Good II
3D Design and Illustration I
3D Design and Illustration II
Designing with Typography I
Designing with Typography II
Alphabets and Typeface Design
Advanced Type I: The Perfect Paragraph
Advanced Type II: The Perfect Paragraph
Broadcast Design I
Broadcast Design II
Urban Design I
Urban Design II
Production Studio for the Graphic Designer
Designing a Business
Senior Type Design
Creative Leadership in the Business World
Yearbook

Source: <http://www.schoolofvisualarts.edu/ug/index.jsp?sid0=1&sid1=400>

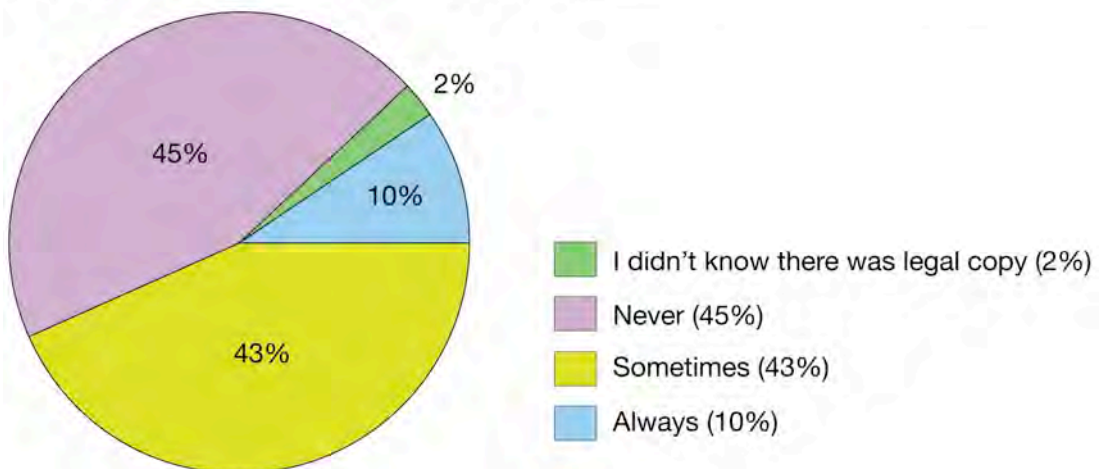
APPENDIX C

The following shows survey results from 125 undergraduate students* enrolled in graphic design courses from five different schools—Savannah College of Art and Design, Westchester Community College, Marist College, Rockland Community College, College of Mount St. Vincent.

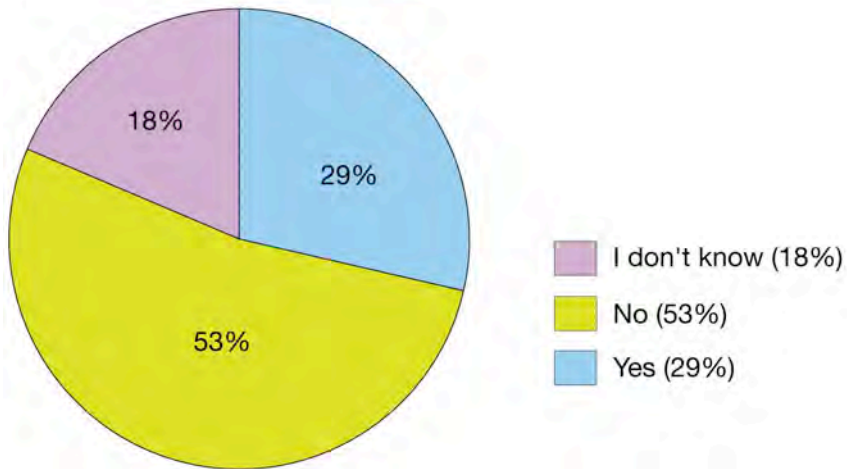
1) Do you only use properly licensed fonts?



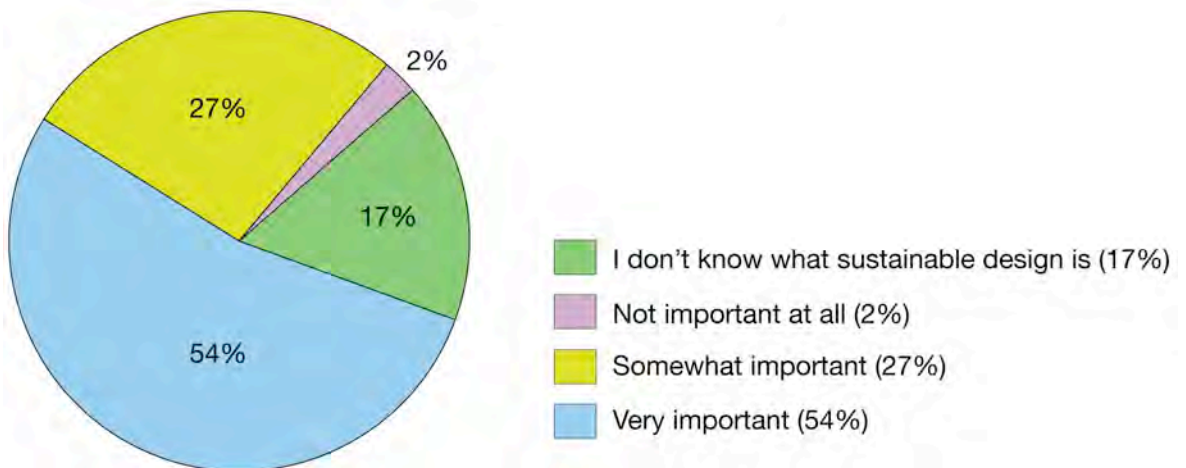
2) Do you read the legal copy for downloading software, images, and fonts before checking the box: "I have read and agree to the...?"



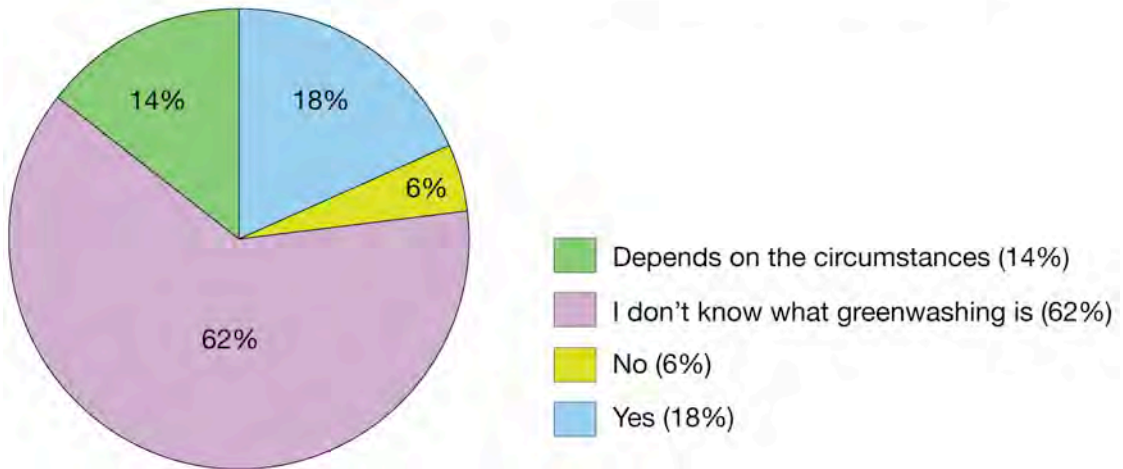
3) Is it ok to use images you find on Google?



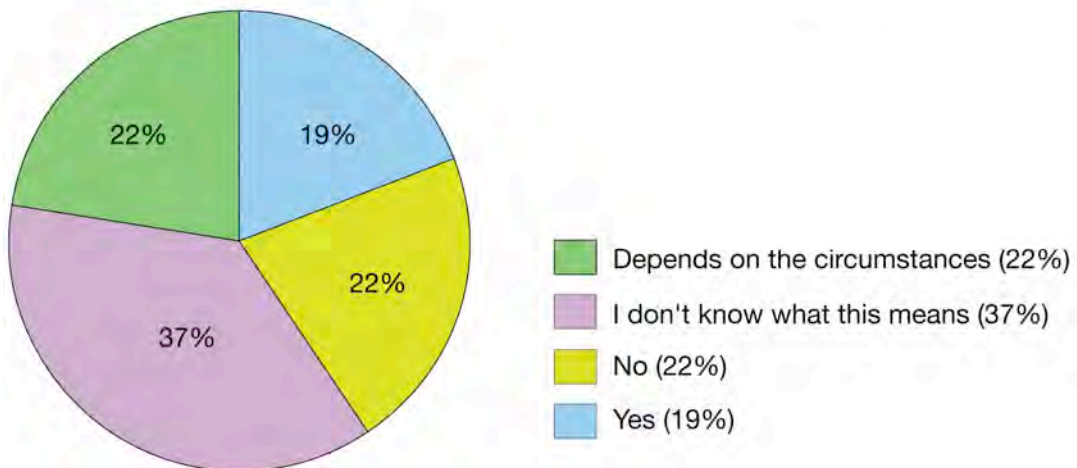
4) How important do you think it is to practice sustainable design?



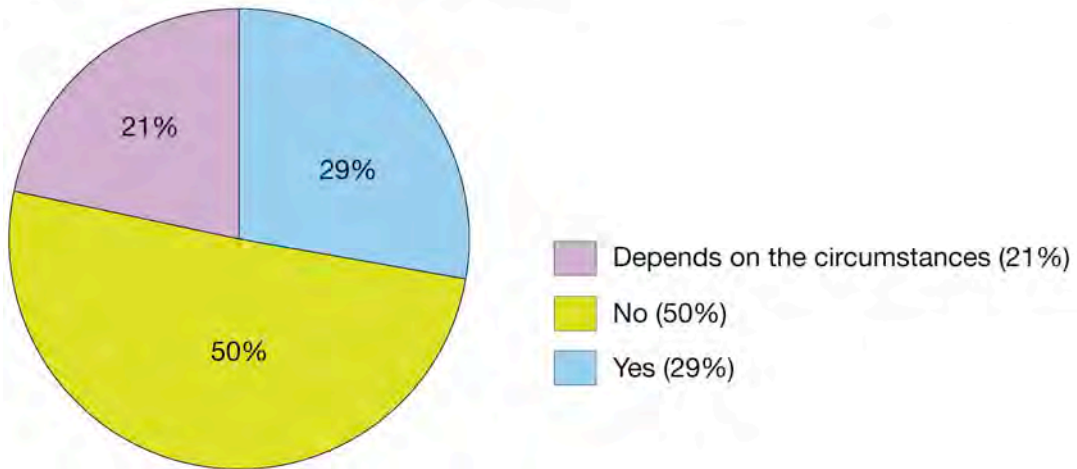
5) Should graphic designers tell their clients if they feel a project is "greenwashing?"



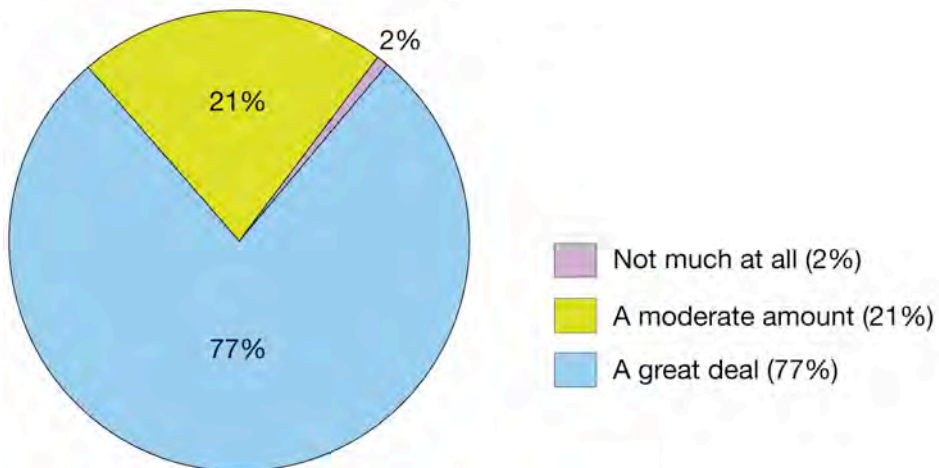
6) Do you think doing work on speculation is ok as long as you have time for it?



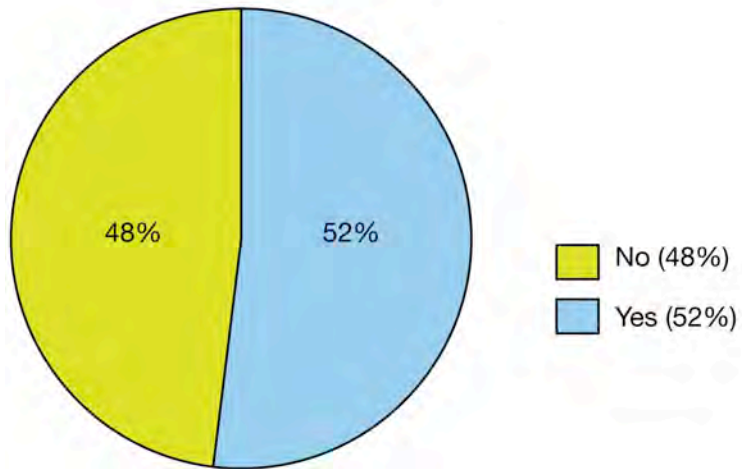
7) Do you think a graphic designer has a responsibility to take on a project for a client regardless of whether or not they believe in it?



8) How much impact do you think graphic designers have on consumers' buying decisions?



9) Do you think graphic designers should be certified?



Please Note: Survey group for Question 9 was 48 students.



Examination Board for Registered Graphic Designers

R.G.D.

Handbook for the
Registered Graphic Designers
Qualification Examination

Revised January 2010

Table of Contents

Introduction	1		8
Part 1 Application Process		D. Sample Questions	
A. Eligibility Requirements	2	E. Typical Timetable	10
B. Examination Fees	2	Part 3 Portfolio Interview	
C. Application Requirements	2	A. General Information	11
D. Written Rationales	3	B. Interview Procedures	11
E. Criteria for Portfolio Piece Selection	3	3.1 Design Practitioner Submissions	12
F. Notification of Eligibility	3	3.2 Design Educator Submissions	12
		3.3 Design Manager Submissions	12
Part 2 Written Test		C. Evaluation Process	12
A. General Information	4	4.1 Design Practitioner Evaluation Criteria	13
B. Content	4	4.2 Design Educator Evaluation Criteria	13
2.1 Design History, Research and Principles	4	4.3 Design Manager Evaluation Criteria	13
2.1.1 Design History	4	D. Appeal Policy and Procedure	14
2.1.2 Design Research	5	Part 4 Additional Information	
2.1.3 Design Principles	5	A. Applying for R.G.D. Membership	15
2.2 Business	5	B. Frequently Asked Questions	15
2.2.1 Business Communications	5	C. Examination Feedback	17
2.2.2 Studio Management	5	D. A Note on Professional Accreditation	18
2.2.3 Legal Issues	5	E. Contact Information	19
2.3 Technology	6		
2.3.1 Basic Section	6		
2.3.2 Print	6		
2.3.3 Electronic Media	6		
2.3.4 Three-Dimensional Graphics	6		
a Signage, Exhibit and Environmental Graphics	6		
b Packaging Graphics	7		
2.4 Rules of Professional Conduct	7		
C. Suggested Texts	7		

Introduction

This handbook is intended to help candidates prepare for the Registered Graphic Designers Qualification Examination.

The examination consists of three steps:

- the application to determine eligibility
- the written test
- the portfolio interview

The Examination Board does not aim to standardize designers or design programs in our broad and changing field. The purpose of the examination is to ensure that successful candidates fulfill the definition of a Registered Graphic Designer (R.G.D.):

- A An R.G.D. is professionally competent in areas of business, design principles, research and theory and ethics. He or she has also demonstrated the successful application of this knowledge to design problems, management and/or education.
- B An R.G.D. is prepared and capable to function as an effective ethical, professional, responsible practitioner, manager and/or educator.

A. Eligibility Requirements**1.1 Regular**

- 3-year or 4-year diploma or degree in graphic design
- 3 or 4 years of graphic design work experience
- graphic design education and work totals 7 years
- transcript verification

1.2 Atypical A

- 2-year diploma in graphic design acquired prior to 2005
- 6 years of graphic design work experience
- graphic design education and work totals 8 years
- transcript verification

1.3 Atypical B

- 3-year or 4-year non-graphic design diploma or degree
- 5 or 6 years of graphic design work experience
- education and graphic design work totals 9 years
- transcript verification

1.4 Seniority A

- 7 years of graphic design work experience prior to 2000
- continuous work in graphic design since 2000
- 2 industry sponsors

1.5 Seniority B

- 3-year or 4-year diploma or degree in graphic design prior to 2000
- graphic design work experience prior to 2000

- graphic design diploma or degree and work combined totals 7 years prior to 2000
- continuous work in graphic design since 2000
- transcript verification
- 2 industry sponsors

Seniority applicants A and B are exempt from all parts of the written test except the Rules of Professional Conduct section. All applicants must pass this section of the written test and the portfolio interview.

B. Examination Fees

The examination fees include an application registration fee (non-refundable) and a fee for the written test and portfolio interview sections.

C. Application Requirements

The application for the examination, which is submitted to the Examination Board for a review of the candidate's eligibility, must include:

- completed application form
- record of employment/professional experience. The Examination Board reserves the right to verify employment and professional experience information.
- sealed official transcript(s), if applicable
- payment of applicable fees
- completed R.G.D. / Industry sponsor forms if applicable.
- submission of written rationales

D. Written Rationales

Candidates must submit a written rationale for each of the six portfolio pieces that will be presented at the interview as part of their application.

Each of the six written rationales must include a visual reference to the portfolio piece in a high enough resolution that examiners can reasonably review it on a monitor. The following information must also be included (totaling 300-450 words):

- project objectives
- target audience
- concept
- design issues (brief overview)
- design process (brief overview)
- outcome/results
- date when produced

The six rationales must be consolidated into one PDF.

Candidates must use the following file naming convention: surname.first initial_portfolio.pdf. For example, if your name is Jane Smith, you would use the following: Smith.J_portfolio.pdf.

Candidates must upload their PDF file to www.rgdexamboard.com/applicant as part of the application process.

E. Criteria for Portfolio Piece Selection

Candidates should select pieces that demonstrate their range and quality of achievement in one or more of the following professional areas: (1) Design Practice (2) Design Education and (3) Design Management.

Candidates may include not more than one of the following:

- a pro bono project for which the design process was the same as if it had been paid professional work
- a project of personal work (personal expression).

All six portfolio pieces must have been created in a professional capacity or as a professional (not while a student) and may not be work created as part of an academic or curriculum requirement.

Candidates must state under which of these categories they are applying. At least half of their projects must be from the chosen category.

Half of the projects must have been completed within the last five years.

Please refer to page 11 for further guidelines on how these pieces will be evaluated as part of the interview process.

F. Notification of Eligibility

The Examination Board determines whether applicants are eligible. Confirmation of eligibility will be sent to applicants providing examination procedures, regulations and other details. The Board will inform ineligible applicants and will return any refundable portion of fees that may have been paid.

A. General Information

The written portion of the examination is held throughout the year in Toronto. Dates and locations are announced on the web at www.rgdexamboard.com. Special administrations of the written test may be arranged outside of Toronto. For more info, e-mail info@rgdexamboard.com or call 1 888 274 3668 x 22.

Candidates are asked to bring:

- one piece of photo identification
- pens or pencils
- books or written notes (no laptops or other electronic hardware) for the open book portion on design history, principles and research only

The full examination, including the portfolio interview, must be completed within three years.

There are four sections of the written test:

- A design history, research and principles (open book)
- B business (closed book)
- C technology (closed book)
- D Rules of Professional Conduct (closed book)

With respect to evaluation, candidates receive an analysis of their strengths and weaknesses for each of section A, B, and C components. The analysis is given in the form of quintile rankings showing how candidates scored relative to others who have taken the test. For section D, Rules of Professional Conduct, the passing mark is 75%.

The written test consists of multiple choice questions. There are four choices per multiple choice question, one of which is the correct answer.

B. Content**2.1 Design History, Research and Principles**

As information processors, what do designers need to know? Design history, principles and research inform design practice, and are important in professionalizing the field. The aim of this section is not to train historians, researchers or critics, but to raise awareness of, and to expand, the body of knowledge available to designers. Investigating design history and principles enables us to:

- develop an understanding of the changing roles and responsibilities of designers in society
- evaluate our own design work and that of others
- advance the practice of design

2.1.1 Design History

Since design plays a key role in mass production and mass consumption in our society, this is the context within which the activity of design should be understood. Stylistic evolution should not be seen in isolation, but in relation to technological, economic and social requirements.

Printing and Design before the Industrial Revolution

- The development of printing and design before 1800

The Industrial Revolution

- Typography and type designers for an industrial age
- The impact of photography and new printing technologies
- Victorian graphics
- The Arts and Crafts Movement
- Art Nouveau and proto-modern design at the turn of the century
- Parallel Canadian developments

The Twentieth Century

- Bauhaus, Constructivism, De Stijl, the New Typography
- Pictorial Modernism
- The Modern movement in North America
- The International Typographic Style
- The New York School and its influence
- Corporate identity and visual systems
- Post-modernist and de-constructivist influences
- The impact of new technologies and media
- Parallel Canadian developments

2.1.2 Design Research*Research Terminology*

- Methods of Research
- Research Strategies and Tactics
- Types of research and their usefulness in the design process

2.1.3 Design Principles

This section looks at how allied disciplines such as systems analysis, communication models, research and theories of perception and learning contribute to the practice of design.

Design Process

- Elements and models of design processes
- Systems approach and relevant models

Perception and Cognition

- Elements of visual structure
- Relevant psychological theories and their relationship to design

Communication Theory

- Comparison of models of communication
- Semiotics in relation to design practice

Colour: Applied Theory

- Terminology
- Colour theories for pigments and light

2.2 Business

The purpose of the business section is to assess the ability of the candidate to function as an independent business person in the design field. This section tests the applicant's skill in making sound, legal and ethical judgments in areas of studio management and business practices. It also tests comprehension and communication skills.

2.2.1 Business Communication

- Business letters, memos and reports
- Design proposals

2.2.2 Studio Management

- Establishing ethical and sound business relationships with clients, peers, other professionals and suppliers
- Accounting – accounts payable and accounts receivable
- Collecting and paying taxes

2.2.3 Legal Issues

- Contracts with clients, employers/employees and suppliers
- Knowledge of basic labour regulations (e.g. minimum wage, insurance and workplace safety requirements, etc.)
- Canadian copyright law
- Canadian vs. American copyright law

2.3 Technology

Designers use technologies which change very rapidly. Therefore, the topical outlines here do not cover the minutiae of current use. The examination aims to test the applicant's knowledge and ability both to communicate with specialists and suppliers, and to use technology for design and production.

Because the field is so broad, the Technology section is divided into:

- a Basic Technology section to be answered by all candidates,
- three specialty subsections of which candidates must complete one.

The three specialty sub-section options (choose one only) are:

- 1 Print Technology
- 2 Electronic Media
- 3 Three-Dimensional Graphics consisting of:
 - Signage, Exhibit and Environmental Graphics
 - Packaging Graphics

2.3.1 Basic Section

(This section must be completed by all candidates.)

This section tests general knowledge across a range of graphic design technologies.

2.3.2 Print

(Candidates may choose this as the one required sub-section option to be completed.)

- Paper and printing terminology
- Printing processes
- Colour systems
- Pre-press file preparation
- B&W and colour-proofing systems

2.3.3 Electronic Media

(Candidates may choose this as the one required sub-section option to be completed.)

- History and development of the www and Internet
- Different kinds of networks, servers, browsers, search engines and CGI scripting
- Intranet security, firewalls and language
- Appropriate selection, installation, setup and use of technology
- Issues in navigation interfaces
- Workstations
- Platform issues (Mac, DOS, UNIX, etc.)
- Issues of server-supplied files and applications and uniform and seamless distribution

2.3.4 Three-Dimensional Graphics

(Candidates may choose this as the one required sub-section option to be completed.) Candidates who choose this as their sub-section option must answer all questions in both parts (i.e., Signage, Exhibit and Environmental Graphics and Packaging Graphics), but may circle the sub-head title on their answer sheet to indicate which is their predominate area of specialty within Three-Dimensional Graphics.

2.3.4 a Signage, Exhibit and Environmental Graphics

- Terminology
- Architectural drawings (floor plans, elevations and perspectives)
- Technical, three-dimensional and fabrication drawings
- Visual effects created by commonly used fabrication technologies
- Specifications
- Characteristics of commonly used indoor and outdoor signage materials
- Characteristics of commonly used prefabricated

signage systems

- Characteristics of commonly used modular systems (structural and display)
- Accessibility issues and requirements

2.3.4 b Packaging Graphics

- Terminology
- Technical, three-dimensional and production drawings
- Packaging materials and their print characteristics
- Print technologies for packaging
- Packaging production methods
- Common shipping restrictions

2.4 Rules of Professional Conduct

This section tests comprehension of the Rules of Professional Conduct (By-Law #3) of the Association of Registered Graphic Designers of Ontario (included in the application package). The following categories are included:

- responsibility to the association and the profession
- responsibility to other members
- responsibility to clients and employers
- responsibility to society and the environment
- competitions and fees

C. Suggested Texts

The literature covering the theory and practice of graphic design is extensive. The following is a limited list of suggested basic texts which may assist candidates in preparing for the Registered Graphic Designers Qualification Examination. These books are available through Swipe Books on Advertising & Design, 477 Richmond St. West, Toronto. RGD Ontario members receive a 10% discount at the store. Swipe takes phone orders and ships across Canada. For more information or to order one of these items call 1 800 567 9473, in Toronto: 416 363 1332. Books may also be borrowed by applicants from RGD Ontario.

Ashworth, Hilary, ed. *The Business of Graphic Design: A Professional's Handbook*. Toronto: The Association of Registered Graphic Designers of Ontario, 2004. (Also available through RGD Ontario)

Bowers, John. *Introduction to Two-Dimensional Design: Understanding Form & Function*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1999.

Visocky O'Grady, Jen and Ken. *A Designer's Research Manual: Succeed in Design by Knowing Your Clients and What They Really Need*. Rockport Publishers, 2006.

Dondis, Donis. *A Primer of Visual Literacy*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1973.

Meggs, Philip. *A History of Graphic Design*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1998.

Saldanha, Errol. *Canadian Icons*. Applied Arts Magazine, January-February, 2008. (With permission of the author and publisher, download a PDF of the article at www.rgdexamboard.com/downloads.html)

D. Sample Questions**Design History**

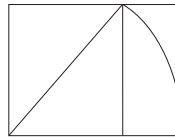
- 1) Which designer edited and designed the book, *The Isms of Art 1914–1924*?
 - a. Theo van Doesburg
 - b. Kasimir Malevich
 - c. El Lissitzky
 - d. Laszlo Moholy-Nagy
 Correct answer is: c.
- 2) Which magazine designer was responsible for the influential look of *Harper's Bazaar* from 1934-1958
 - a. Lester Beall
 - b. Alexy Brodovitch
 - c. J. Müller-Brockmann
 - d. Herbert Matter
 Correct answer is: b.

Design Research

- 3) This form of research is built around numbers, logic and objective data:
 - a. formative research
 - b. exploratory research
 - c. quantitative research
 - d. qualitative research
 Correct answer is: c.
- 4) Ethnographic investigations that strive to analyze cultural phenomena through the perspective of one actively participating in the community under study are called:
 - a. emic
 - b. personal world-view
 - c. etic
 - d. internal vision
 Correct answer is: a.

Design Principles

- 5) In Gestalt theory, sharpening is defined as:
 - a. a heightening of grouping tendencies
 - b. an increase or exaggeration
 - c. greater alignment of elements
 - d. improvement of the edge definition of shapes
 Correct answer is: b.
- 6) This rectangle is an example of:



- a. a root rectangle
 - b. a Golden Rectangle
 - c. a Pentagon Page Rectangle
 - d. Le Corbusier's Rectangle
- Correct answer is: a

Printing

- 7) Colour management systems rely on the device-independent nature of which colour model?
 - a. RGB
 - b. CMYK
 - c. CIE LAB
 - d. Pantone®
 Correct answer is: c.
- 8) Stochastic printing consists of:
 - a. a random pattern of dots varied by frequency
 - b. a regular pattern of dots varied by frequency
 - c. a random pattern of dots varied by amplitude
 - d. a regular pattern of dots varied by amplitude
 Correct answer is: a.

Technology

9) 3 Dimensional software creates objects that are:

- a. in raster format
- b. in RAW format
- c. in vector format
- d. in CMYK format

Correct answer is: c.

10) Open Type refers to:

- a. typefaces that are open faced
- b. script faces based on handwriting ligatures
- c. type designed for multiple platforms
- d. type that is converted to outlines in Illustrator

Correct answer is: c.

Electronic Media

11) What type of compression does a tiff format typically use?

- a. LZW
- b. JPG
- c. Baseline
- d. Optimized

Correct answer is: a.

12) What CSS property is used to set leading in HTML text?

- a) line-space
- b) line-height
- c) leading
- d) baseline

Correct answer is: b

Studio Management

13) You are thinking of starting your own design practice. Experts say:

- a. you need 2 good design projects in the works before starting your own business.
- b. you will need a minimum of six months salary to get your business off the ground.
- c. that a diversified design portfolio is a guarantee of success.
- d. you will need a partner with a separate income.

Correct answer is: b.

14) Some Ontario graphic designers conduct business in other Canadian provinces including Québec. If this is the case:

- a. PST or its equivalent will apply in all other provinces.
- b. PST or its equivalent will not apply in any other province.
- c. A person conducting business in Québec cannot recover the QST paid on expenses.
- d. A person conducting business in Québec can generally recover the QST paid on expenses.

Correct answer is: d.

Legal Issues

15) To register a trade mark, you must file an application with the Canadian Trade Marks Office

- a. in Ottawa
- b. in the capital city of the province of original registration
- c. in all provinces other than Québec
- d. in Gatineau, Québec

Correct answer is: d.

Rules of Professional Conduct

16) You are an R.G.D. freelance graphic designer offered a paid assignment by a large architectural firm, where the practice of speculative (spec) presentations is considered to be a convention of the trade. The paid assignment would require you to work as part of a multidisciplinary team on a speculative architectural design. The firm will enter it into a competition for a multimillion-dollar museum project. As an R.G.D. subject to the Rules of Professional Conduct are you allowed to accept the assignment?

- a. No, because you are prohibited from taking part in spec design work no matter what the situation may be.
- b. No, because graphic design work forms a part of the project.

Part 2**Written Test (continued)**

- c. Yes, because the strictures against engaging in spec work do not apply when it is a convention of the trade primarily responsible for the project to compete for contracts on spec.
- d. No, because the architectural firm is not a non-profit organization.

Correct answer is: c.

- 17) A client hired a design firm headed by an R.G.D. to create an identity. The client is unhappy with the design but likes the concept. The client wants you to take over the project and redesign it using the same concept. According to the Rules of Professional Conduct, can you take the job in this situation?
- a. Yes, you can take on this assignment as offered.
- b. No, not under any circumstances.
- c. Yes, but only if you are certain that the client has properly terminated the other design firm and confirmed that all materials, concepts and copyright belong to the client.
- d. No, not unless you can convince the client to use your own concept.

Correct answer is c.

E. Typical Timetable**9:00-9:25 a.m.**

Identification verification, confidentiality agreement, introduction and instructions

9:30-11:15 a.m.

Examination Book 1

Multiple choice questions – open book

- Design History (50 questions)
- Design Research (22 questions)
- Design Principles (24 questions)

11:15-12:00 p.m. – Break**12:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.**

Examination Books 2a & 2b

Multiple choice questions – closed book

- Business: Business Communications, Studio Management, Legal Issues (33 questions)
- Technology: Basic (24 questions)
- Technology: Subsections (*Options - choose 1 of 3*)
 - Option 1 – Technology: Print (36 questions)
 - Option 2 – Electronic Media (39 questions)
 - Option 3 – Three-Dimensional Graphics (complete both (a) and (b), indicate which of the two is your strength):
 - (a) Signage, Exhibit and Environmental Graphics (25 questions)
 - (b) Packaging Graphics (13 questions)
- Rules of Professional Conduct (16 questions)

Please note that there is an average of 45 seconds for each multiple-choice question. Some questions require first reading a scenario or situation and then answering questions about it. The extra time required to read these questions has been factored into the total time allowed.

A. General Information

Portfolio interview sessions occur monthly and may be arranged in person or by phone at a specially-designated location. The portfolio interview takes 25 minutes. Candidates are informed of the outcome (assessed as a pass or fail) by e-mail and will be sent Notification of Eligibility for Registered Graphic Designer (R.G.D.) Status,* if they have passed the interview.

** The Notification of Eligibility for R.G.D. Status is valid for three months from the date of issue, unless there is a request for an extension based on hardship or other reasonable grounds. After its expiration, applicants must requalify for R.G.D. membership by retaking the examination.*

All Candidates will be assessed on their ability to articulate their role in the projects presented, and the processes used to establish goals and to arrive at the creative solution that was approved by the client and produced as a final marketing / communications piece.

Designers agree on the need for effective design education and design management. The Examination Board recognizes the high level of design and professional skills required for curriculum and project design in graphic design programs. The Board also recognizes the important role and experience of design managers in the graphic design profession. In the portfolio interviews, projects from the design education and management fields are recognized as valid and equivalent evidence of professional attainment, demonstrating the application of design knowledge and abilities.

B. Interview Procedures

Candidates must bring to the interview one piece of photo identification.

Candidates must bring to the interview a total of six pieces of work (original medium, if feasible). Projects should be selected to demonstrate your range and quality of achievement in one or more of the following professional areas: (1) Design Practice (2) Design Education and (3) Design Management.

Four hard copies of the written rationales must be provided to the examiners at the portfolio interview.

3.1 Design Practitioner Submissions

Projects should demonstrate the applicant's ability to develop and implement solutions to complex problems encountered in all phases of the design process.

3.2 Design Educator Submissions

Projects submitted in the design educator category should focus on teaching and research, demonstrating the applicant's ability to develop and implement effective strategies for design education. Each project should include pertinent documentation and, where appropriate, relevant visual examples, such as student work. Submissions should demonstrate:

- curriculum/course design teaching practice including project and assessment methods design
- course management and administration
- research, publications and lectures
- liaison with industry

3.3 Design Manager Submissions

Projects should demonstrate applicant's ability to develop and implement effective strategies for design management. Each project should include appropriate documentation and relevant visual support. Submissions should demonstrate:

- design standards and company policy management
- job assignment and management of internal and external designers
- design process, time and budget management

C. Evaluation Process

The Portfolio Interview is a standardized assessment designed to be administered under specific, standard conditions, resulting in a uniformity in testing environment and administration procedures.

Each portfolio interview will be conducted by three R.G.D. examiners, who make their assessment by referencing the criteria outlined further below.

A total of 25 minutes is allocated for the Portfolio Interview. Candidates are asked to give a brief oral overview of their six portfolio pieces, and then to select one piece to demonstrate in detail how it fulfills the criteria for design practitioner, educator or manager as detailed in the next sections.

Candidates should not expect examiners to give feedback or comment on the merits of the work presented. The Portfolio Interview is not the same process as it might be for a portfolio presentation made to obtain a job or a client. Candidates are expected to present their work with reference to the criteria spelled out below for the respective design practitioner, educator and manager categories. In some cases, if it is not obvious in the work as presented or if something is not clear to them, the examiners may ask questions for clarification. Candidates should view the Portfolio Interview as a presentation to the examiners of their work in a way that demonstrates a command of the criteria in their chosen category. As the presenter, candidates should expect to be doing most of the talking.

Examiners will assess the professional competence of the candidates on a Pass/Fail basis for the portfolio interview.

4.1 Design Practitioner Evaluation Criteria

Applicant must be able to clearly and competently articulate and demonstrate:

- his/her role in the projects, verbally and in written submission
- the project brief, including assignment background, design objectives and special or unique circumstances and/or challenges
- his/her approach to design process, including research, analysis or other information gathering and investigation
- the design process, from initial concept exploration and presentation through to acceptance by client
- how the design solution and deliverables satisfied project goals and objectives
- appropriate handling of special or unique circumstances and/or challenges (if presented in the interview)
- an ability to develop ideas that communicate solutions to a client's objectives

Work presented must consistently demonstrate applicant's command of basic principles of:

- usability (e.g. ease of use, choice of media, readability, adequately informative, target audience accuracy)
- composition (e.g. use of grids, visual hierarchy, balance and contrast, visual impact, fluid flow of information)
- typography (e.g. readability and legibility, kerning, choice of typeface, typographic craftsmanship and best practices)
- imagery (e.g. scaling and cropping, reproduction quality, choice, photography/illustration art direction quality, photo/image editing)
- colour (e.g. strategic use of colour, understanding of colour theory)

Applicant demonstrates reasonable technical understanding of production process / media.

Overall assessment

The applicant has demonstrated that he/she has competently practised graphic design through presentation of professional design assignments conducted and completed meeting or exceeding the above benchmark for professional standards that fit a Registered Graphic Designer and will be a fitting representative of the R.G.D. designation.

4.2 Design Educator Evaluation Criteria

Applicant must be able to clearly and competently articulate and demonstrate:

- his/her understanding of teaching issues in design education
- his/her understanding of theoretical, technical and practical knowledge in design practice, design education and design research
- his/her role in curriculum content design and course implementation
- effective and innovative solutions to educational problems, meeting the needs of students and industry
- design skills and knowledge of design principles in development and evaluation of visual communication
- contribution to the advancement of design through papers, publications, exhibitions and teaching materials

Case studies presented consistently demonstrate applicant's command of design education principles and best practices of:

- curriculum design and teaching delivery (e.g. understanding of course objectives and learning outcomes, grading criteria/assignments/project development)
- appropriateness of the recommended readings and assignment (e.g. courseware)

- development of new knowledge and/or skills in the course (e.g. relationship to current industry needs (design and business), promotion of creative thinking and hands-on skills)

- requirements for creative thinking and design process

Overall assessment

The applicant has demonstrated that he/she has competently practised graphic design education through presentation of professional design assignments conducted and completed meeting or exceeding the above benchmark for professional standards that fit a Registered Graphic Designer and will be a fitting representative of the R.G.D. designation.

4.3 Design Manager Evaluation Criteria

Applicant must be able to clearly and competently articulate and demonstrate:

- his/her role in the projects, verbally and in written submission
- the project background and brief, engagement with client, budgeting, scheduling, team building and management of Internal and external resources
- the handling of any special circumstances and/or challenges
- his/her approach to management of the design process, from research and concept design through to final acceptance by client
- how the design solution and implementation satisfied project goals and objectives
- an ability to develop ideas that communicate solutions to a client's objectives

Case studies presented consistently demonstrate applicant's command of basic principles and best practices:

- project management (e.g. writing of brief/ marketing plan/proposal, management of deadline/ budget/ human resources)

- client relationship management (e.g. information flow)
- business communications (e.g. management of client agreements/copyright issues)
- design and relevant production processes (e.g. design and production budgeting, commissioning production suppliers, media buying, use of media)

Applicant must demonstrate reasonable technical understanding of production processes/media.

Overall assessment

The applicant has demonstrated that he/she has competently practised graphic design management through presentation of professional design assignments conducted and completed meeting or exceeding the above benchmark for professional standards that fit a Registered Graphic Designer and will be a fitting representative of the R.G.D. designation.

E. Appeal Policy and Procedure

A candidate who fails the examination on the basis of the portfolio interview will be issued a registered letter informing him or her of the results.

A candidate who fails is permitted one appeal only.

A candidate's notification of intention to appeal must be made in writing within 30 days of receipt of the registered letter informing him or her of the fail result.

The appeal portfolio interview must take place within one year following the appeal request.

Upon receipt of notification of intention to appeal, a form will be sent to the candidate which must be filled out and accompanied by \$75 plus applicable taxes before an appeal is granted and scheduled. Appeal fee is subject to change without notice.

The form must include reasons for the appeal (for information only), and requires the appeal candidate's signature of understanding of the conditions of the appeal.

The appeal candidate agrees:

- to submit the same six portfolio pieces used in the first interview
- to be examined by a new team of three R.G.D. interviewers employing the standard, published assessment criteria
- to be prepared for the appeal portfolio interview to take place at the next scheduled series of interviews
- that there is no guarantee that the results will necessarily be different from the previous portfolio interview

A candidate who has failed a second time or who wishes to re-do the portfolio interview with six different portfolio pieces must wait two years before he/she is permitted to apply for a new (non-appeal) portfolio interview.

A. Applying for R.G.D. Membership

To be eligible to apply for Registered membership in the Association of Registered Graphic Designers of Ontario (RGD Ontario), Regular and Atypical candidates must have successfully completed both the written and portfolio interview sections of the examination and be employed full-time in the practice, education or management of graphic design. Seniority applicants must undergo the Rules of Professional Conduct section of the written test only, and achieve the required 75% passing mark. Seniority candidates must also successfully complete the portfolio interview section of the examination, and be employed full-time in the practice, education or management of graphic design. Upon completion, applicants will be sent an application package for Registered membership from the Association. Successful candidates may not use the R.G.D. designation or hold themselves out to be Registered Graphic Designers until they have applied for and have been accepted as Registered members in the Association of Registered Graphic Designers of Ontario.

B. Frequently Asked Questions

Q *What is involved in writing the Registered Graphic Designers Qualification Examination?*

A The content of the examination is directed to the knowledge and skills currently needed to practise graphic design professionally. There are two parts, a written test consisting of multiple choice questions and a portfolio interview, to take place on a separate day sometime after the written test has been passed. In the written section there are four topics:

- Business
- Technology
- Design Principles, Research and History (this part is an open-book test)
- Rules of Professional Conduct

Q *I have a design degree and over 20 years experience as a Senior Graphic Designer. My partner has many years of experience as a graphic designer but no diploma or degree in graphic design. Do we still have to write the Registered Graphic Designers Qualification Examination if we want to become R.G.D.s?*

A Currently, no-one may become an R.G.D. without successfully completing the portfolio interview portion of the Registered Graphic Designers Qualification Examination. Seniority applicants must also complete the Rules of Professional Conduct section of the written test.

If you have seven years graphic design experience, or seven years of design education and experience combined, prior to the year 2000 and have been working continuously since then, you are exempt from the balance of the written test.

- Q *I have worked as a graphic designer for over 20 years, and have a degree in fine art. Am I eligible to write the exam?*
- A Graphic designers who have a fine art degree or related education, and who can demonstrate years of graphic design work experience, such that education and relevant work experience total at least nine years, may be eligible to write the examination. Such applicants must also supply references who support their application.
- Q *If I am unsure whether I am eligible, may I still apply to write the examination?*
- A Yes. The Examination Eligibility Review Committee reviews each application on a case by case basis. It is up to the Committee to determine eligibility but there is no restriction to who may apply. If you are not deemed eligible, the portfolio and examination fees will be refunded to you. (The application fee is non-refundable.)
- Q *When is the next examination?*
- A The written test is usually held twice a year in Toronto in May and November, and twice a year in Ottawa in February and August. Dates and locations are announced on the web site at www.rgdexamboard.com. Special administrations of the examination may take place in Toronto and locations more than three hours travel time from Toronto where there are five or more approved candidates. Email info@rgdexamboard.com to discuss further options.
- Q *If I apply now, when will I find out if I am eligible to write the next examination?*
- A If you apply before the application deadline, it is likely that your application will be reviewed before the deadline and you will be notified as soon as a decision has been made. Applications received after the application deadline are reviewed within approximately 1 to 3 weeks and you will be notified as soon as a decision has been made.
- Q *I am a professional member of the Manitoba Chapter of the Society of Graphic Designers of Canada (GDC). May I transfer my membership to RGD Ontario?*
- A Your professional membership in the GDC is not transferable to RGD Ontario. RGD Ontario is an independent Ontario corporation. MGDC and R.G.D. are not equivalent. To obtain the R.G.D. designation you must follow the procedures outlined in this Handbook.
- Q *Is there a limit to the number of books that I can bring to the open book section of the written test?*
- A No, there is no limit.
- Q *Can I bring handwritten notes to use for the open book section of the written test?*
- A Yes, you may, but no electronic notebooks.
- Q *What happens if I apply and then I am unable to write the next test?*
- A You may defer both the written test and portfolio interviews to a future date.
- Q *What is the cost of writing the test?*
- A The application fee, which is non-refundable, is \$50. The fee for the written test is \$100. The fee for persons exempt from the written test is \$75 for the mandatory portfolio interview. Fees are subject to change without notice. Fees for the written test and portfolio interview are refundable if they are not attempted. GST is applicable to all fees.
- Q *Do I need to read all of the suggested texts?*
- A You may choose to study all or some of the books on this list.

C. Examination Feedback

The Examination Board asked successful candidates to relate their experiences preparing/studying for the written test. Here are some responses.

- I read and made notes on the recommended materials; searched the Internet for further resources; studied with colleagues and made full use of the RGD handbook.
- Studying for the test was not too difficult, I suppose it depends on how long you have been out of school. The most challenging aspect was finding out about Canadian design work.
- Unfortunately, I did not prepare as well as I should have, as a recent heavy workload cut into my prep time.
- I bought *The Business of Graphic Design. A Professional's Handbook* and found this book informative in all areas of the graphic design business.
- I visited the Reference Library where I found some of the recommended books. I organized my schedule to have more time for studying and reading.
- I not only brushed up on my existing knowledge, but also learned new facts in history and business relations. I now have a "wider angle view" on the design process as a business, not only as a visual and communication art.
- I studied from most of the books on the reading list provided and some other design books I had. I found some information was a refresher but I did learn some new things. A main challenge was finding enough time to study, given that I have a very hectic work schedule.
- I started to prepare for the exam in February, creating notes while reviewing the material. The material was extensive. There were so many sources to choose from – not only did I use books graduated from but also used books listed with RGD Ontario.
- The most rewarding part of preparing for the exam as that I found myself implementing the information I was studying into design situations at work. Refreshing my knowledge of design principles and even design history enhanced the way I approached a project. Another reward was going through the RGD Professional Handbook. It gave me more insight into the business aspect of graphic design which I did not realize was so extensive and I became more appreciative of my employer's responsibilities.
- Studying was interesting – to say the least. It had been a while since the last time I cracked open the books and I worked hard for a test. I would say the biggest challenge was finding the time. I was commuting 3 or so hours a day to work, putting in a solid day, and then coming home to study. The rewards however were great. It has been few years since I opened up the Meggs book (*The History of Graphic Design*). It was great review. Learning the business practices in a more detailed way was great – especially for someone interested in starting a business in the next few years.
- I was very happy to hear that the questions were multiple choice. This way of testing made us all equal. Either you knew the information (or could look it up) or you did not. Short answers or essay questions would be affected by how nervous and intimidated the applicants were and an applicant could misunderstand the question and not find out until he/she sees the results.
- The written test was well-ordered and thoroughly (yet succinctly) explained by supervisors.
- I was nervous before the test. I did not know how difficult the questions would be, but, once I started and was going through the questions, my spirits lifted and I was able to focus on completing the test. I found I was happier with my performance

on the closed book part of the test than the open book part.

- The booklets, answer sheet and instructions were all straightforward and easily understood.
- The individuals presiding over the test were very helpful and thoughtful of the applicants' needs.
- A test is a test, is a test; absorb everything possible prior to writing.
- Locate relevant texts early. Buying on-line is workable, but shipping does not guarantee timely arrival.
- Make sure you have enough time to fully prepare.
- Plan your test and your time. Find extra time for preparation, use every minute. Use different sources such as magazines, web, libraries.
- I encourage everyone to take the test.
- Study everything you can get your hands on especially the books listed on the web site. Even though only part of the information will be on the test, you and your design work will benefit from learning all of it. I believe that history was the most important learning experience from my studying.
- I would suggest that you start a month or so early, just reading the books. Marking all of the important topics/events/concepts/ideas as you go. Once you've marked, it's really easy to go back and study each section. After all the books are marked, or notes are taken, I would recommend concentrating on the topics in the closed book section. If you can't get through all of the open book section material too thoroughly, you'll at least have them well noted.
- It is not as intimidating as it all sounds.

D.A Note on Professional Accreditation

The Association of Registered Graphic Designers of Ontario (RGD Ontario) was created on April 25, 1996 by an Act of the Ontario Legislature. The Act gives the association the right to set standards and criteria for the Registered Graphic Designer and R.G.D. designation, and to grant this exclusive title to graphic design practitioners, managers and educators who qualify. The act sets out the objectives of the organization as follows:

- A to establish, promote and regulate uniform province-wide standards of knowledge, skill and ethics for all persons engaged in the practice of graphic design
- B to provide a unified voice for those engaged in the practice of graphic design
- C to advise its members of developments in the laws and practices related to graphic design
- D to promote and advance liaison with other individuals, associations and groups engaged in similar or related fields of activity
- E to provide formal training and continuing education for its members
- F to furnish means and facilities by which members of the association and graphic design students may increase their knowledge and skill in all things related to the practice of graphic design
- G to promote public education programs on the benefits of graphic design
- H to provide a forum for the exchange of information relevant to the practice of graphic design.

E. Contact Information**Examination Board for Registered Graphic Designers**

96 Spadina Avenue, Suite 503

Toronto, Ontario

M5V 2J6 Canada

Tel: 1 888 274 3668 x 22

in Toronto: 416 367 8819

Fax: 416 367 9150

info@rgdexambboard.com

www.rgdexamboard.com