The Inclusion of Social Responsibility in the Visual Communications Curriculum

2008

Case Study

Submitted by:
Brit Rowe
Chair, Assistant Professor
Ohio Northern University
Ada, Ohio

"My goal for these types of assignments is to get students thinking of themselves as citizens, and taking on values and responsibilities as citizens. I want them to think about the choices they make, and how their work has an impact beyond visual communications."

Brit Rowe
Chair, Assistant Professor
Ohio Northern University

Ohio Northern University

Synopsis from official website <www-new.onu.edu>

About ONU

Established in 1871, Ohio Northern University is a selective, comprehensive private institution that uniquely blends a student centered, liberal arts education with professional programs. Abundant opportunities, guidance and a close-knit community foster individual growth to produce individuals prepared to live full and purposeful lives.

Personal Interview

November 27, 2007

Brit Rowe
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How do you incorporate social responsibility in your curriculum?

For one of my projects I borrowed a concept from Carnegie Mellon University. Their industrial design students did a "reduce and reuse" program that encouraged students to think about the amount of waste created on a daily basis. Their goal was to get people thinking about how and what they consume, and the types of trash that their consumption produces. Their task was to utilize trash to create something useful and beautiful; something that someone else would want to buy.

I wanted to try something similar in my class to emphasize the importance of design and art for doing something valuable for the community, and to also stimulate thought, dialogue and action on the topic of sustainability. The students came up with some pretty creative ideas for this project.

Another project we did was grounded more in political activism. Our Ohio governor wanted to do away with Choice Grants, a $900 stipend for students who attend college in Ohio. Our class discussed how designers can use their skills to create social and political change, and how they can contribute their time and talents to public service organizations to promote awareness for a cause. The students had to really think about the political process, how state budgets are created, and the role of the media in shaping values and public opinion. Their assignment was to take a stand against what the governor proposed, and create a solution that would best communicate their position. They came up with some very thoughtful and strategic solutions for this project as well.

What is the feedback from your students regarding these types of projects?

Feedback from the students is generally pretty positive. On the trash project, for instance, they admitted to really thinking about what not only they throw away everyday, but they also found themselves being aware of the vast accumulation other people's trash as well. One student made a connection to homelessness as she was rummaging through trash cans for this assignment, which was something I hadn't thought of.

What are your goals for these types of assignments?

My goal is to get students thinking of themselves as citizens, and taking on values and responsibilities as citizens. I want them to think about the choices they make, and how their work has an impact beyond visual communications. There are ethical issues and environmental issues to consider, and as designers they have the ability to educate their clients about these issues as well.

Do you feel your students are getting this message?

I see a good deal of philanthropy happening at the student level. Student organizations are doing a lot of good things in our community. It almost seems as though a sense of community is inherent—that they feel community service and philanthropy is expected of them, and so it comes as second nature. It's very encouraging.

Course Syllabi

The following pages include examples of course syllabi for the Graphic Design program.

WBR

REDUCE
REUSE

Art 0000
First Year Experience
Department of Art
Ohio Northern Univ.
4 Credits

Fall 2007
Tues., Fri.
1–1:50p.m.
Wilson 115

Brit Rowe
Instructor
Office: Wilson 108
772-2496
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There are many formal definitions of sustainability. Perhaps the most widely recognized definition of sustainability was provided by Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland in her 1987 report, Our Common Future:

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Other noteworthy perspectives include:

Sustainability is an economic state where the demands placed upon the environment by people and commerce can be met without reducing the capacity of the environment to provide for future generations. It can also be expressed in the simple terms of an economic golden rule for the restorative economy: leave the world better than you found it, take no more than you need, try not to harm life of the environment, make amends if you do.
Paul Hawken, The Ecology of Commerce. 1994

Sustainability means living on nature's income rather than its capital.
Murray Gell-Mann, Nobel Prize Winner

And, nearly 200 years ago, Thomas Jefferson described a similar ethic, providing evidence that although the term "sustainable development" is new, the concept has been around for a long time:

Then I say the earth belongs to each... generation during its course, fully and in its own right. The second generation receives it clear of the debts and encumbrances, the third of the second, and so on. For if the first could charge it with a debt, then the earth would belong to the dead and not to the living generation. Then, no generation can contract debts greater than may be paid during the course of its own existence.
Thomas Jefferson, 1789

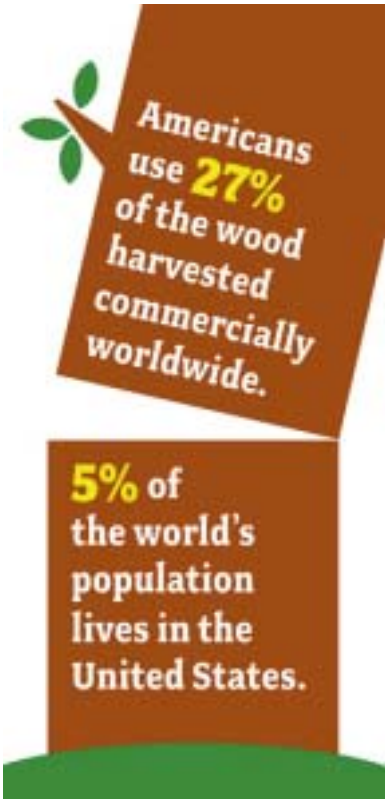
Design Brief

This project engages you in a thoughtful, community-based response to *sustainability and community.* You are to invent a creative way to reuse something, or invent a device or object that uses waste in a meaningful way.

Parameters and Considerations

- You are charged the task of using trash to recreate beautiful and useful artifacts.
- How might you encourage people to use waste, and/or consume less?
- How might you stimulate thought, dialog and action? Your artifact can be seen as a way to emphasize the value of design/art by doing something valuable for/to the community; and that will stimulate thought, dialog and action.
- What do local businesses throw away? What do your neighbors throw away? What do you throw away? Research the answers to these questions. The waste you find will become the material for your project.

- What things do you collect when you go out? Shopping bags? Create a list of things you collect. What on your list could be considered trash to some people?
- When you make something, do you create waste? Does the waste have any potential value?
- How might you encourage people to use waste, and/or consume less?
- Use your journal/sketchbook to record your thoughts and research, along with sketches of ideas.
- Your design should demonstrate a careful consideration of format, use of color, choice of material, design principles and elements, etc.
- Technologies are open.
- Remember the design process: your process, organization and document skills will be exteremly important.



Exhibit

Your final project will be on display for the university community to enjoy and to learn.

Evaluation

Specific evaluation criteria will include:

- How will this artifact reduce waste?
- Will someone actually want to buy/ use this thing you've created?
- Is if fun, attractive, useful?
- Will the artifact be convenient to use?
- Is this something that you would use yourself?
- Is it eco-effective?

The Point

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines the noun advocacy as "the act or process of advocating or supporting a cause or proposal."

You are citizens participating in a democratic society, and as such, you should be cognizant that your skills can be put to use as a powerful tool for social change for any number of issues you personally consider important to the well-being of the society in which you live.

This project assignment, that addresses sustainability and community, raises general awareness and requires you to reflect on your core values and ethical responsibility as a designer/artist.

As student designers, this project becomes a means of making you aware of your choices and your works' impact beyond art and design. This project will show you that you can make a difference as aware, thinking designers and/or artists.

Schedule

- *Week 8: Fri., Oct. 26*
  mid-project critique; workday.
- *Week 10: Tues., Nov. 6*
  project due and presented.
- *Week 10: Fri., Nov. 9*
  project due and presented; AlcoholEdu part 2 due; portfolio due (papers, etc.)

WBR

Art 340 Graphic Design 3: *Narrative* Ohio Northern Univ. 4 Credits	Winter 2006–07 Mon., Wed., Thurs. 1–2:50p.m. Wilson 117	Brit Rowe Instructor Office: Wilson 108 772-2496 w-rowe@onu.edu

CFPA POSTER PROJECT

Everyone has an opinion about everything. Even if the opinion is a bored yawn, that opinion is based upon prior experiences. Each of us brings the baggage of a lifetime to each encounter with new information. Those experiences form the basis for judgement and stance.

This project encourages you to think about how the designer can use both skills and opinions to influence the ways that a new audience perceives a new body of information.

The origin of the English word *graphic* can be found in the Greek word *graphe*, which means both "to write" and "to draw." According to the Oxford dictionary, the primary definition of the word *design* is "to organize or to plan."

In this project, we also will explore the relationships between verbal and visual language that are intended for a specific audience. Using the semantic research technique introduced during the first project, answers will be found to the following questions:

How can words and images be used to build planned, focused, targeted messages that inform and educate their intended audience?

How do verbal and visual languages derive meaning from context?

How can language be made specific to time and place?

Design Brief

Develop and design a poster which promotes awareness of toxicity levels in manufactured paper.

Design Process

- Research: your design should demonstrate that you have engaged the subject matter in depth.
- Conduct a semantic analysis.
- Do 10 visual metaphor exercises.
- Record at least 20 ideas on butcher paper (brown).
- Hand-drawn roughs must be executed, critiqued and worked out before using the computer. Emphasis should be on concept development and how the elements and principles, and content communicate an excellent solution.
- Final submission should also include 15 reproduction quality proofs on an 8 1/2" x 11" sheet of paper, and all art and fonts must be provided electronically on your desktop.
- You're in competition. Win.

Design Parameters

- Your design should accurately evoke the themes and goals as described by the Chlorine Free Futures program.
- The design language you build for the poster should clearly speak to an audience of children in middle/high school. More generally, your design should educate children ages 10–17.
- Your design should demonstrate a careful consideration of format, use of color, choice of paper, design principles, imagery, typesetting, etc.
- Technologies are open, but the poster must be output digitally.
- Any art and written material must be original and copyright free.

POSTER PROJECT | CFPA Poster Project: Designer as Advocate

The Point

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines the noun advocacy as "the act or process of advocating or supporting a cause or proposal."

You are citizens participating in a democratic society, and as such, you should be cognizant that your communication skills can be put to use as a powerful tool for social change for any number of issues you personally consider important to the well-being of the society in which you live.

This project assignment, that addresses a pertinent environmental issue, raises general awareness and requires you to reflect on your core values and ethical responsibility as a graphic designer.

As student designers, this project becomes a means of making you aware of your choices and your works' impact beyond visual communication. For American designers, the environmental impact of our professional activity is easily ignored. We don't come into direct contact with manufacturing and disposal processes related to paper and ink. This project will show you that you can make a difference as aware, thinking designers.

About the CFPA

The Chlorine Free Products Association is an internationally recognized non-profit trade association. They promote sustainable development and advances in technology with the aid of certification projects, publications and educational programs to schools and businesses.

Design Goals

As with the first project, this endeavor encourages you to use primary research as a means of proving whether or not your designs are appropriate for their intended audience. By thinking about what you want an audience to know about a given subject, your work can directly influence how the subject is perceived and how the information is used. This power forms the basis of the persuasive medium known as editorial design.

The intended audience for this project consists primarily of fifth and sixth grade children. As a group, you will explore the semantics inherent to combinations of words and images that would be accessible to this particular audience. You will examine the validity of the theory that perception is filtered by culture, and that the ways in which we encounter verbal and visual language inform one another.

You also will continue to explore the semantic issues that are inherent to combinations of words and images. Typography, design, illustration, photography and writing each contain the potential to communicate to an audience. Overall, this project challenges you to use one or more of these media to examine and *control* the relationships between media, expression, meaning and context.

As a result, you are encouraged to apply basic typographic principles to the development of a *visual system*. You will also be encouraged to use those principles in the forming of meaningful, appropriate word/image relationships.

The project is set up to use and test your knowledge of the following 2-D design and typographic principles:

- semantic research methodology
- visual narrative
- contrast and visual hierarchy
- gestalt theory principles
- typography and grid structures
- illustration vs. photography

You will also develop your knowledge of the following 2-D design and typographic principles:

- typographic expression
- word/image semantics
- digital file organization

You will also develop your knowledge of poster design:

- the history of posters
- the purpose of a poster
- the dual nature of a poster (visual communication vs. art object)
- the awareness of how a poster must be considered in context
- the consideration of designing a poster as an instant, memorable communication
- the understanding of the integration of concept with type and visuals

Required Readings

Type & Image, Philip Meggs
chapter 2 & 3, and pps. 162–171.

Other Readings

Citizen Designer, ed. Steven Heller
Obey the Giant, Rich Poyner
Design Literacy (continued), Heller
Graphic Agitation, Liz McQuiston
Looking Closer 4, ed. Heller

Schedule

- *Mon., Jan. 22*
  project introduced, begin research.
- *Wed., Jan. 24*
  lecture, workday.
- *Thurs., Jan. 25*
  lecture, workday.
- *Mon., Jan. 29*
  research due; discussion.
- *Mon., Feb. 19*
  project due.

WBR

SERIES AND SYSTEMS

BUILDING BRAND IDENTITY

Art 341	Fall 2007	Brit Rowe
Graphic Design 4:	Mon., Wed., Thurs.	Instructor
Identity	1–2:50 p.m.	Office: Wilson 108
Ohio Northern Univ.	Wilson 117	772-2496
4 Credits		w-rowe@onu.edu

NON-PROFIT COMMUNICATIONS AND IDENTITY A graphic identity, usually based on a logo, is the visual representation of a brand's personality. It should appear on all materials associated with the brand. A design firm may also develop a graphic standards manual, which establishes guidelines to maintain the consistency of the brand's graphic identity. A corporate designer develops communications pieces for the customers, investors, donors, partners, and employees of corporations, non-profit organizations and government departments. These pieces are developed following a graphic standards manual created as part of the company or brand's graphic identity.

Design Brief

Write, design and produce a graphic standards manual that communicates the brand essence of the non-profit organization Hardin County Hospice.

Design Requirements

- Your design should demonstrate that you have engaged the subject *in depth.* Document *all* your research.
- The three-dimensional prototype book should explain the reasoning behind your designs and give instructions on how the symbols are to be used by others. Include a cover design, a table of contents, brand and sub-brand messages (e.g. positioning statements), information about the organization (e.g. history, mission, vision, etc.), logos, color systems, typography, and 8-to -10 applications (e.g. stationery system, brochure system, signage, banners, uniforms, etc.).
- Dimensions are open for the most part. Your prototype must demonstrate a careful consideration of format, use of color, choice of paper, folding options, binding, typesetting, imagery, design principles, etc.
- Technologies are open, but the report must be output digitally using InDesign.
- Evaluations will be based on the *appropriateness* of the idea to the company, design thinking, the effectiveness of the communication of the brand message, brand engagement, brand emotions, execution and craftsmanship.

Design Process

- Begin with the reading assignments.
- Develop/Finish your brand strategy.
- Create a brand identity; produce at least 12 concepts.
- Build your brand (the applications).
- Develop ideas/concepts for your manual based; produce at least 7 thumbnails/concepts before choosing a solution.
- Choose a single idea and begin to refine it, applying great care concerning form, typography, identity, etc. Present your storyboard and rough in class. Pay attention to the visual orgaization of information, along with the visual identity of the manual.
- Choose and refine a rough for your final solution to the communication problem.
- Present your final prototype.

Readings

Designing Brand Identity, Wheeler, chapter 2: the process. The case studies also may be helpful (ch. 3).

Design Goals

- Think strategically about identity design and concepts while refining your design process and creative brainstorming skills.
- Learn how to create a methodology for communicating the concepts behind your identity systems and how your design work will be implemented. This will be demonstrated in a comprehensive identity manual for this project.
- Create a visual personality for your non-profit organization. An identity program is a visual set of elements including some or all of the following: a mark, colors, typeface, printed and electronic communications, uniforms, signs, packaging.
- To become familiar with the formal and coneptual aspects of book design.

Deadlines

- *Thurs., Oct. 18*
  project introduced, begin process.
- *Mon., Nov. 12, 4p.m.*
  project due.

WBR

TAKE A STAND
PARTICIPATE BY NOT PARTICIPATING

Art 440
Graphic Design 5:
Persuasive Design
Ohio Northern Univ.
4 Credits

Spring 2007
Mon., Wed., Thurs.
1–2:50p.m.
Wilson 117

Brit Rowe
Instructor
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w-rowe@onu.edu

Everyone has an opinion about everything. Even if the opinion is a bored yawn, that opinion is based upon prior experiences. Each of us brings the baggage of a lifetime to each encounter with new information. Those experiences form the basis for judgement and stance.

This project encourages you to think about how the designer can use both skills and opinions to influence the ways that a new audience perceives a new body of information.

This project will also encourage you to examine what you like and don't like as a designer, and the reasons you have arrived at those opinions.

Design Brief

Develop and present a proposal, including a poster and an activist event, for Buy Nothing Day, that persuades your family and friends to "switch off shopping and tune back into life for one day."

Take a Stand

November 23th will be considered the busiest day in the American retail calendar and the unofficial start of the international Christmas-shopping season. Buy Nothing Day is a global event which could be celebrated as a relaxed family holiday, as a non-commercial street party, or even as a politically charged public protest.

Anyone can take part provided they spend a day without spending.

Reasons for participating in Buy Nothing Day are as varied as the people who choose to participate. Some see it as an escape from the marketing mind games and frantic consumer binge that has come to characterize the holiday season, and our culture in general. Others use it to expose the environmental and ethical consequences of overconsumption.

Buy Nothing Day isn't just about changing habits for one day. It's about starting a lasting lifestyle commitment to consuming less and producing less waste.

Design Process

- Research: your design should demonstrate that you have engaged the subject matter in depth.
- Research: Conduct a questionnaire and elicit answers from our target audience. Analyze all research.
- Do 10 brainstorming exercises.
- Record at least 13 campaign ideas on butcher paper (brown).
- Hand-drawn roughs must be executed, critiqued and worked out before using the computer. Emphasis should be on concept development and how the elements & principles, and content communicate a persuasive message.

Design Criteria

- Document all research, writing, thumbnails, roughs, etc. for each component in your sketchbook. Clearly define the demographics, keeping in mind consumer behavior (motivation, cognition and learning—psychological concepts).
- A PowerPoint presentation should introduce the subject (social propaganda issue), relay your design process (including all prototypes), and depict your social activist campaign proposal.

Brit Rowe
Instructor
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Design Goals

As with the first project, this endeavor encourages you to use primary research as a means of proving whether or not your designs are appropriate for their intended audience. By thinking about what you want an audience to know about a given subject, your work can directly influence how the subject is perceived, the information used. This power forms the basis of the persuasive medium known as editorial design.

As a result, you are again encouraged to apply basic typographic principles to the development of a visual system. You will also be encouraged to use those principles in the forming of meaningful, appropriate word/image relationships (synergy).

This project examines persuasion in its commercial and social applications. You are encouraged to study persuasive strategies, critical techniques, ethical issues, propaganda, and the roles of media in shaping contemporary values. This project also examines the challenges facing persuasive communicators, that must use a variety of strategies to inform and persuade consumers in the marketing of ideas, products and services.

This project also is set up to use and test your knowledge of the following 2-D design and typographic principles:

- contrast / hierarchy
- gestalt principles
- grid structures
- typographic expression
- sequencing
- story-boarding
- word/image semantics
- persuasive communication

Readings

Please read/examine the following resources as a basis for the project:

- *Graphic Design Solutions,* Robin Landa, Posters, chapter 8
- other resources from the library.

Schedule

- *Thurs., March 22*
  project specifications are introduced and discussed.
- *Mon., March* 26
  group discussion and workshop in class; research/readings are due by beginning of class.
- *Wed., March* 28
  lecture, workday.
- *Thurs., March* 29
  lecture, poster concepts/sketches due, group critique, workday.
- *Mon., April 2*
  group discussion, campaign (for presentation) critiqued.
- *Wed., April 4*
  final workday, group critique.
- *Thurs., April 5*
  final critique, presentations.

WBR

TAKE A STAND
DESIGN AGAINST FUR

Art 440
Graphic Design 5:
Persuasive Design
Ohio Northern Univ.
4 Credits

Spring 2006
Mon., Wed., Thurs.
1–2:50p.m.
Wilson 117

Brit Rowe
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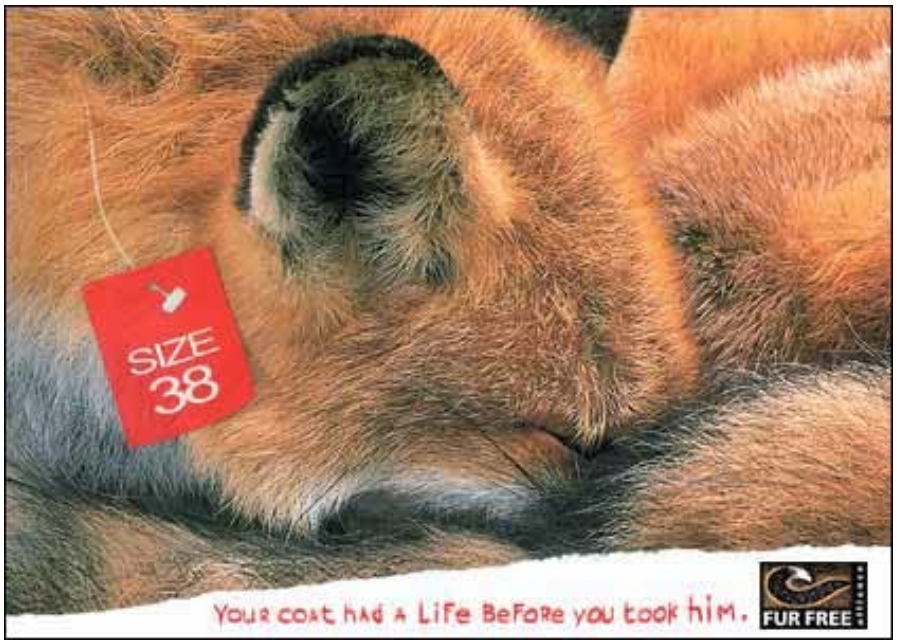
This project encourages you to think about how the designer can use both skills and opinions to influence the ways that a new audience perceives a new body of information.

This project will also encourage you to examine what you like and don't like as a designer, and the reasons you have arrived at those opinions.



Design Brief

You are to develop and design a poster and an advertising campaign for the Fur-Free Alliance's program called Design Against Fur.

Design Criteria

- The Fur Free Alliance is an international coalition of some 35 leading humane and conservation organizations representing tens of millions of supporters worldwide. Your message must support and convey the message that *Fur does not belong in the 21st century and the use of fur and fur trim should be obsolete. The killing of animals for their fur is cruel, unnecessary and wrong in the modern age.*
- Your proposal must include a poster design, along with the use of $100,000 for an advertising campaign. The campaign could consist of marketing materials, t-shirts, media purchase, or any other creative uses of the budget.
- A broadside should introduce the subject, include all prototypes, and relay your advertising campaign proposal. The dimension should be 18" x 33".
- The dimension for the poster is open.
- Technologies are open, but must be reproduced in no more than four colors.
- All content should have a direct relationship to your chosen subject.
- All materials should have a direct relationship to you chosen subject.
- The semantic research analysis must be used as a form of research and organization of material. Use it to build connections/narrative. Hand in this study with your project.
- Document all research, writing, thumbnails, roughs, etc. for each component in your sketchbook. Clearly define the demographic audience, keeping in mind consumer behavior (motivation, cognition and learning—psychological concepts).

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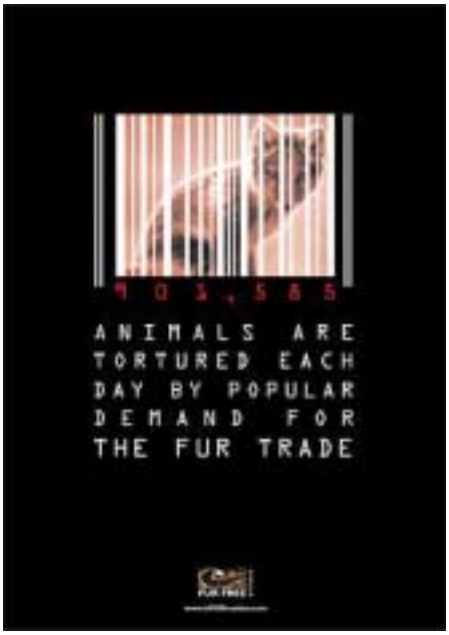

Design Goals

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As a result, you are again encouraged to apply basic typographic principles to the development of a visual system. You will also be encouraged to use those principles in the forming of meaningful, appropriate word/image relationships.

This project examines persuasion in its commercial and social applications. You are encouraged to study persuasive strategies, critical techniques, ethical issues and the roles of media in shaping contemporary values. This project also examines the challenges facing persuasive communicators, that must use a variety of strategies to inform and persuade consumers in the marketing of ideas, products and services.

This project also is set up to use and test your knowledge of the following 2-D design and typographic principles:

- contrast
- proximity of units
- isomorphic conversion
- similarity of units
- grid structures
- visual hierarchy
- typographic specification
- sequencing
- story-boarding

You will also develop your knowledge of the following 2-D design and typographic principles:

- typographic expression
- ABA form
- word/image semantics
- persuasive communication

Readings

Please read/examine the following resources as a basis for the project:

- *Kleppner's Advertising Procedure*, Media, The Complete Campaign.
- *Graphic Design Solutions,* Robin Landa, Advertisements, chapter 11
- other resources from the library.

Schedule

- *Thurs., April 28*
  project specifications are introduced and discussed.
- *Mon., May 2*
  group discussion and workshop in class; research/readings are due by beginning of class.
- *Wed., May 4*
  workday.
- *Thurs., May 5*
  workday.
- *Mon., May 9*
  poster concepts/sketches due.
- *Wed., May 11*
  group discussion, ad campaign (for broadside) critiqued.
- *Thurs., May 12*
  final workday, group critique
- *Mon., May 16 (10:30a.m.)*
  final critique, project due.

WBR

Art 440
Graphic Design 5:
Persuasive Design
Ohio Northern Univ.
4 Credits

Spring 2007
Mon., Wed., Thurs.
1–2:50p.m.
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DESIGN IGNITES CHANGE

There are many formal definitions of sustainability. Perhaps the most widely recognized definition of sustainability was provided by Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland in her 1987 report, Our Common Future:

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Other noteworthy perspectives include:

Sustainability is an economic state where the demands placed upon the environment by people and commerce can be met without reducing the capacity of the environment to provide for future generations. It can also be expressed in the simple terms of an economic golden rule for the restorative economy: leave the world better than you found it, take no more than you need, try not to harm life of the environment, make amends if you do.
Paul Hawken, The Ecology of Commerce. 1994

Sustainability means living on nature's income rather than its capital.
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And, nearly 200 years ago, Thomas Jefferson described a similar ethic, providing evidence that although the term "sustainable development" is new, the concept has been around for a long time:

Then I say the earth belongs to each... generation during its course, fully and in its own right. The second generation receives it clear of the debts and encumbrances, the third of the second, and so on. For if the first could charge it with a debt, then the earth would belong to the dead and not to the living generation. Then, no generation can contract debts greater than may be paid during the course of its own existence.
Thomas Jefferson, 1789

Design Brief

Design Ignites Change is an initiative developed by AIGA and Worldstudio Foundation. This yearly program engages professional practicing designers and design students across the nation in thoughtful, community-based responses to *sustainability and community.*

Individually or in teams, work to create some kind of visual artifact that will have broad visibility in our communities; that will be seen as a way to emphasize the value of design by doing something valuable to the community; and that will stimulate thought, dialog and action.

Design Parameters

- Again, the focus of your program is sustainability and community.
- You must finish developing certain project parameters and criteria, whatever final form your program may take (e.g. nationwide, annual, audience, etc.).
- You must explore your role as community-centered designers, drawing from a variety of media: poster campaigns, online communities, events/performances, etc.
- Your design should accurately evoke the theme.
- Your design should demonstrate a careful consideration of format, use of color, choice of paper, design principles, imagery, typesetting, etc.
- Technologies are open.
- Any art and written material must be original and copyright free.

Design Process

- Evaluate the problem.
- Read the assigned essays. After you read each essaay, reflect on the author's point of view and note the general thesis of each topic or argument for discussion/ presentation in class.
- Research: your design should demonstrate that you have engaged the subject matter in depth.
- Write a design brief.
- Refer to historical and contemporary solutions.
- Conduct two different visual brianstorming exercises.
- Record at least 14 ideas on brown butcher paper.
- Present the revised roughs which solve compositional, communiation, technical problems.
- Present your final proposal and design(s).

The Point

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines the noun advocacy as "the act or process of advocating or supporting a cause or proposal."

You are citizens participating in a democratic society, and as such, you should be cognizant that your communication skills can be put to use as a powerful tool for social change for any number of issues you personally consider important to the well-being of the society in which you live.

This project assignment, that addresses sustainability and community, raises general awareness and requires you to reflect on your core values and ethical responsibility as a graphic designer.

As student designers, this project becomes a means of making you aware of your choices and your works' impact beyond visual communication. For American designers, the environmental impact of our professional activity is easily ignored. We don't come into direct contact with manufacturing and disposal processes related to paper and ink. This project will show you that you can make a difference as aware, thinking designers.

You also will continue to explore the semantic issues that are inherent to combinations of words and images. Typography, design, illustration, photography and writing each contain the potential to communicate. Overall, this project challenges you to use one or more of these media to examine and *control* the relationships between media, expression, meaning and context.

This project examines persuasion in its commercial, political and social applications. You are encouraged to study persuasive strategies, critical techniques, ethical issues and the roles of media in shaping contemporary values. This project also examines the challenges facing persuasive communicators, that must use a variety of strategies to inform and persuade consumers in the marketing of ideas, products & services.

You are also to learn how to articulate a message in the form of persuasion or information in a simple, straightforward manner to a general audience.

Required Readings

- *Ethics and Sustainability: Graphic Designer's Role* Susan Szenasy
- *There Is Such a Thing as Society* Andrew Howard
- *Toward a New Ecology* Tucker Viemeister
- *Case Study: Whole Foods 2005 Holiday Print Collateral* Eric Benson
- *Case Study: The Green Building Institute's Branding Program* Ida Cheinman

Other Readings

Graphic Agitation, Liz McQuiston
Obey the Giant, Rich Poyner

Schedule

- *Thurs., April 26* project introduced, lecture.
- *Mon., April 30* readings due, case study presentations due, lecture, workday.
- *Wed., May 2* lecture, workday.
- *Thurs., May 3* design brief due, lecture, workday.
- *Mon., May 7* sketches due, lecture, workday.
- *Wed., May 9* lecture, workday.
- *Thurs., May 10* roughs due, workday.
- *Tues., May 15, 10:30a.m.* project due.