

Introduction

The contemporary paradigm of the T-shaped professional, someone who demonstrates a breadth of understanding across a field of activity combined with a depth of knowledge in specific areas, works for journals as well as individuals. So, in place of our typical selection of articles touching on a variety of design topics, most of this issue, guest edited by Teal Triggs, Co-director, Information Environments at London College of Communication, is devoted to Graphic Design History. In her introduction to this special issue Triggs describes the topics under review in this collection and positions the effort within a larger discourse concerning the history of Graphic Design. She also briefly touches upon previous efforts to reflect upon the challenges inherent in efforts to arrive at a consensus regarding the definition and direction of Graphic Design History as an intellectual discipline. She notes: “there remains a sense that graphic design history is less well established as a discipline and perhaps less exploratory in terms of defining new ways of writing about this history.” This observation is really an appeal to the reader to consider the implications of the individual articles collected here for the field as a whole, in Triggs’s words: “to look again ...but also to propose new ways forward.”

What are the constituent elements of a credible, rigorous Graphic Design History? What audiences are to be served by a substantive history of the field? How do historians of the subject communicate with their audiences? The effort to answer such questions is important. A shared consciousness of the intellectual venture involved in compiling the history of Graphic Design is itself generative, that is, suggestive not only of new areas for research but of new questions to ask and innovative ways of answering them. It can help members of the research community negotiate the demands of different constituencies, most notably the Academy (the site of instruction and reflection), the studio (the locus of professional practice), and the world of publishing (the marketplace where the relationship between authors and readers is constantly being negotiated). The ability to position the specific within the general, to relate the circumstantial to the fundamental, to collate diverse perspectives in order to develop a coherent portrait of complexity, these are the attributes of the kind of Graphic Design History Triggs is calling for and *Design Issues* has long championed.

We complete this issue with two pieces on another topic of great interest to our readership: national design policies. One, by Youngok Choi, Rachel Cooper, Sungwoo Lim and Martyn Evans, consists of a comparative study of the patterns and experiences of South Korea and the United Kingdom with regards to national

design policies and industrial development. The second is an exchange of letters between Dori Tunstall and Jonathan Woodham prompted by the publication in the Spring 2010 issue of Design Issues of Woodham's article "Formulating National Design Policies in the United States: Recycling the "Emperor's New Clothes"?" The editors welcome such letters. Finally, we include a selection of book and film reviews addressing a variety of topics. Among other things, reviews and letters are a reminder that the publication of new scholarship and the release of films mark the beginning rather than the conclusion of productive conversations within the design community.

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