

UNDERSTANDING THE MOTIVATIONS TO COMMUNICATE IS CRUCIAL FOR A DESIGNER. RESPONSIBLE DESIGNERS MAKES DECISIONS ON THIS BASIS, OR DECIDE NOT TO COMMUNICATE.

If analyzed the motivations of designers can enlighten consumers. By understanding that a cell phone is designed to be replaced, consumers can see that the design is motivated by the desire for perpetual profit. This desire for consumption and profit motivates business, and it motivates workers.

The major design motivation of this century attempts to perpetuate consumer habits and promote them as beneficial on a global scale. Design history and philosophy is a warehouse of tools well equipped to solve this problem. Design is also the best tool for solving the problems associated with planned obsolescence.

I am not a business and I am not a worker. I am the counter-structure that exists to the motivations of a prosperous and profitable consumption driven economy. By opposing these motivations one is part of a counter-structure even though a mass consumption economy is a phenomenon less than 3 centuries old. Human society is emergent. The way the world works today is not the way things have always been, humans constantly make new discoveries and form new philosophies. The ideologies of today's economy attempt to do more than facilitate the human experience, they attempt to control it. The current state of being in the UNITED STATES is one that is trying to be preserved, when in fact it should be a state of being that is allowed to be free and have the liberty to change.

Design can be motivated by myriad forms of counter-structures. Designing this counter-structure is a task modern designers should be focusing on. I find my focus as a design student has become defining my place in this non-existent counter-structure. This is a very difficult task. Much more difficult than the task the art student faces in defining their place in an emergent structure, counter to the one of the previous generation. By studying the past discourse in the art community and its motivational structure one can define their justification for existing in that structure. By studying the discourse in the young institution of design I have defined my existence in that structure as being illegitimate, not only based on my uninformed justification, but based on the motivations of the contemporary institution as a whole. Design not only creates stress and confusion for me, a student of media and design history, philosophy and practice, but for every human on the planet, other than maybe, the few that define the influential structure of the our economic institution.

The counter-structure designers should strive for is a socially progressive world that honors human rights, freedom, and liberty. Designers are empowered with the tools to communicate and whomever utilizes the tools to communicate will be heard. Designers must make the choice to communicate only within a structure which is truly beneficial to life, whether it be the life of the consumer, or the life of anyone else on the planet. Otherwise design will have contributed to society no more than propaganda.

Designers **are** truly empowered to create a design counter-structure because the current structure survives by correctly directed design and selectively censored design. A change in design attitude can influence mass culture.

CONSUMPTION DRIVEN PROFIT IS THE STRUCTURE THAT MOTIVATES DESIGN. DESIGN CONTROLS LEVELS OF CONSUMPTION.

There is an important semantic difference between the statement 'consumption driven profit' and 'profit driven consumption'. The first, 'consumption driven profit' refers to profit that is made from consumption. The second, 'profit driven consumption' would refer to consumption driven by profit; people consuming in hopes of profiting from the consumption, just the case in U.S. culture.

Consumption happens on some levels just because consumers believe it is good for them, the economy they live in and the rest of the world. This is consumption driven by profit, the second point of focus. The first point is this; very often those who accumulate consumption driven profit must design ways to profit even more regardless of their existing levels of profit.

Design solves the problems a business faces when planning obsolescence.

Obsolescence creates problems for everyone, effective design however, can hide the shortcomings of such a problem, highlight the positive aspects, and create profit. Design is empowered by the philosophy of progressive obsolescence. Deciding to deem what consumers have already consumed as obsolete causes the problem of motivating future consumption. Obsolescence also creates trash, which is ignored by most consumers, and is not a real design problem. Design is a powerful problem solving tool, understanding and communicating with consumers is the perfect situation for a design solution. "Success of product obsolescence for the mass market could not have taken place without advertising" (Raizman 295). Advertising and other facets of the institution of design are responsible for creating mass culture. Although design created mass culture, it only can only affect it through the structure imposed by consumption driven profit.

'SHAPING' CONSUMER NEEDS AND VALUES, AS DAVID RAIZMAN WOULD SAY, IS A ROLE THAT MASS MEDIA IN CONJUNCTION WITH FOCUSED DESIGN PERFORMED TO CREATE CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION. AFTER WORLD WAR II "CONSUMPTION ITSELF BECOMES A WAY OF LIFE". (RAIZMAN 294) THE U.S. BECOMES AS REYNER BANHAM WOULD SAY: A THROWAWAY CULTURE.

This wasteful mass culture, throwaway culture, consumption way of life which design facilitated is responsible for perpetuating consumption driven profit.

How I fit in I do not fit into mass culture, 'profit driven culture'. I vehemently oppose current trends in consumption. Much of this opposition comes from my recently gained understanding of the intentional corporate practice of 'shaping' values and needs. Mass media journalism shares common beliefs. The attitude placed upon mass culture is that its exploitation creates fulfillment for investors and consumers. I do not like being told what to do, or being told how to attain fulfillment.

OUR JOB IS TO GIVE PEOPLE NOT WHAT THEY WANT, BUT WHAT WE DECIDE THEY OUGHT TO HAVE. (RICHARD SALANT, FORMER PRESIDENT OF CBS NEWS. 2)

CONSUMPTION IS THE PERVERSIVE ELEMENT MOTIVATING AND AFFECTING DESIGN AS WE ENTER THE THIRD MILLENNIUM. (364 RAIZMAN)

CONSUMPTION STIMULATES THE ECONOMY.

U.S. FOREIGN POLICY IS GOVERNED BY A CONVENIENT DOVETAILING BETWEEN THE CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE EXPLORATION OF NEW MARKETS FOR GOODS AND SERVICES. (RAIZMAN 354).

The U.S. understands the importance of an economy stimulated by consumption. The U.S. has shown interest in economic improvement opportunities related to consumption by exploring International Expositions. 1925 Paris - after delegates from the American Association of Museums investigated the expo traveling exhibitions were arranged in the U.S. to create new interest in design, and create new audiences (Raizman 205). New sophisticated, and modern, consumers were 'shaped' to believe, "that consumption and materialism were the means to individual fulfillment." (Raizman 295).

"BROAD INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGHOUT MUCH OF THE 1990S CONTRIBUTED TO THE BELIEF THAT CONSUMPTION IS IN DEED SELF-JUSTIFYING, FUELING STILL FURTHER GROWTH BY CREATING JOBS AND STIMULATING THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PRODUCTS, SERVICES, AND MARKETING TOOLS ON AN INCREASINGLY GLOBAL LEVEL. (RAIZMAN, 364).

This perspectives from the past promotes the personal and professional choices that Americans make today. Until faith in the U.S. economy was lost people believed our lives, led by the dollar and consumption, could get better and better while making the whole world better if we continue to consume.

U.S. citizens, which in the past could help mankind just by consuming, now focus on consumption while never considering the negative impact of their consumption. Oil burning/ processing has an astronomically negative impact on our planet, yet is only now being reconsidered in some industries. Consumers are only recently, due to widespread financial restrictions, forced to examine their consumption habits.

How I fit in Human rights is a policy concern of the U.S. when economic gain is involved, otherwise human rights are ignored on an increasingly conspicuous frequency. The U.S. treatment of prisoners at GUANTANAMO BAY is know to be inhumane, the same can be said of the decision to detain these 'prisoners' in many cases. Human conditions at home are not perfect either; the ACLU says, "The amended PATRIOT ACT continues to fail to adequately protect the privacy rights of innocent, ordinary people in this country"(1). Human rights influence contemporary society disproportionately less than economic gains, new markets, goods, services -- mass consumption. I see this as a result of culture which celebrates consumption and lacks direction and concern.

Examining consumption habits is a way in which the human condition and human rights can come into focus. Consumption promotes a misdirected way of life.

CONSUMPTION IS CONTROLLED BY THE PREVAILING ECONOMIC STRUCTURE.

WHOEVER CONTROLS THE VOLUME OF MONEY IN ANY COUNTRY IS ABSOLUTE MASTER OF ALL INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE." (JAMES A. GARFIELD, 4).

Design is necessary for modern consumption because consumers must be told what to consume and when to consume more. Consumption benefits those in control not by chance, but by design. Consumption and the economy could work on a symbiotic relationship, but because the economy is controlled by a private fractional reserve banking system all money is debt to this institution. The FEDERAL RESERVE is gaining more and more control over money and its creation, and by doing so more and more control over the entire economy and thus consumption habits.

WE ARE COMPLETELY DEPENDENT ON THE COMMERCIAL BANKS. SOMEONE HAS TO BORROW EVERY DOLLAR WE HAVE IN CIRCULATION, CASH, OR CREDIT. IF THE BANKS CREATE AMPLE SYNTHETIC MONEY WE ARE PROSPEROUS; IF NOT, WE STARVE. WE ARE ABSOLUTELY WITHOUT A PERMANENT MONEY SYSTEM. WHEN ONE GETS A COMPLETE GRASP OF THE PICTURE, THE TRAGIC ABSURDITY OF OUR HOPELESS SITUATION IS ALMOST INCREDIBLE -- BUT THERE IT IS. (ROBERT HEMPHILL. CREDIT MANAGER, FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF ATLANTA. 3)

Design is slave to the economy, and slave driver to the consumers that feed the economy.

How I fit in My life has a defined structure. I defined the parameters in which I exist through a small series of decisions. With little investigation I first decided to accept money as a necessity. Then I decided the cost of college education would enable me to make the amount of money I deserved as a designer (In the broadest sense of the term).

The cost of college education has endowed me with a debt that I don't fully understand. Its hard for me to look at this structure, one in which I am in debt, and be satisfied knowing now what I do about my loans and what I expect from them as a return. My loan money was created by a private company based on the promissory note that I wrote, with my parents co-signature. The education I am receiving is being paid for with money created simply on the basis of educating me and my pupils, well, and for a bank to profit from interest paid on the principle.

The loans that paid for me to further my education are intended to give me the opportunity to make more money in the future. But I see them more as the creation of debt, which can be seen as temporary, but by participating in the loan driven debt based economy I see a perpetuation of a controlling cycle. I have refocused my education with the aim of working as a contributor to a counter-structure that dictates design in a way that promotes socially responsible consumption, and encourages shared wealth and responsibility.

I refuse to be a slave or a slave driver. Just as Andrew Jackson expressed by vetoing the re-charter of the Second Bank of the United States in 1832.

**CONSUMPTIONS' RELATIONSHIP TO THE ECONOMY HAS A HISTORY OF CONFUSION
AND DISTRESS.**

Competition within the world of consumers is based on the fact that there is not enough wealth to go around. This is due to our fractional reserve banking system, in which money is created in response to fractions of reserves not actual currency. Money is created with the basis of repayment justifying its existence. Money is not created to facilitate free trade, money is created to signify debt. "If all the bank loans were paid, no one could have a bank deposit, and there would not be a dollar of coin or currency in circulation." (Robert Hemphill Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. 3). By understanding that money is debt one might make the conclusion that there is really **no** wealth to go around. Why do we all seem to be in debt? Who is responsible for the national debt? Has consumption created this debt?

The economic system can be seen as a fundamental cause of class stratification and tension. Our culture is essentially one in which people of varying consumption levels compete in economic activity. Consumption power is controlled by economic measures, consumption power is synonymous with class. Class stratification unnecessarily creates factions within our culture. Consumption levels are seen as defining cultural differences within the UNITED STATES. Mass culture asserts that competition amongst companies delivers the best, most efficient, cheapest products and services. This leads consumers to believe our culture, like our economy, is based on competition.

ALL THE PERPLEXITIES, CONFUSION AND DISTRESS IN AMERICA ARISE NOT FROM DEFECTS IN THE CONSTITUTION, NOT FROM WANT OF HONOR OR VIRTUE, SO MUCH AS DOWN-RIGHT IGNORANCE OF THE NATURE OF COIN, CREDIT AND CIRCULATION. (JOHN ADAMS 1787. 4)

John Adams said this to Thomas Jefferson in a time much different than the current day but it is just as true. Understanding each other is important for our existence, but understanding the way in which we, as individuals exist is more important. An attempt at understanding the structure of consumption driven profit and what that profit actually is, is an attempt to understand one's own existence because we are all subjects of the monetary structure and it dictates opportunities.

How I fit in The following questions embody most of my confusion and distress. Can the resources in the UNITED STATES satisfy the needs of all its citizens? I'm lead to believe with the right direction the U.S. can become independent of foreign aid, and become energy self-sufficient. I'm also lead to believe that there is enough room for everyone in this great country to find a home, and that we can all be kept safe, fed, and healthy by modern technology, ingenuity and design. Next question is what is stopping the U.S. from satisfying the needs of all its citizens? Money - because money must be exchanged for goods and services. The U.S. must use money to solve its problems. If a cure to a disease is found the U.S. cannot design a method of dispersal without considering cost in terms of money. Money distracts humans from getting work done. I'm 22. I could have contributed to society in truly important ways, but so far I've been focused on education as the means of increasing my financial freedom, which might actually have me enslaved. In retrospect I believe questioning the basis for my lack of financial freedom before taking out \$100,000 dollars worth of student loans might have led to actual freedom.

A COUNTER-STRUCTURE FOR DESIGN IS EMERGING THAT OPPOSES ANY IDEOLOGY THAT USES ECONOMIC AND PERSONAL PROFIT AS THE JUSTIFICATION FOR EXPLOITING CONSUMER AND HUMAN RIGHTS.

If the wealth created (reorganized) by U.S. and world consumption is seen as responsible for advancing mankind in anyway that wealth must also be held accountable for new problems mankind faces today. If society envisions change truly responsible citizens must facilitate the exploration in an openly disseminated discourse. Society should be regarded as emergent. Innovation, reorganization, and restructuring should be common design practice. Revolutions and transmogrifications (surprising or magical transformations) as well a catastrophes and aberrations should be approached with a reserved attitude open to various perspectives. Design must be regarded as a problem solving tool when approaching a constantly transforming world.

In a postmodern culture absurdity in design attempts to cause revolution. If change is not realized absurdity becomes a context of consumption. Postmodernism is not a counter-structure because it fosters the possibility of perpetuating a culture of consumption. Postmodernism will motivate the design of an eccentrically constructed sofa made of rigidly exposed steel and torn leather, like Czech designer Bohuslav Horak did in 1988 (360 Raizman), which will be the misinterpreted basis for furthering uncomfortable couch ergonomics. Postmodernism presents ambiguity by appearing to, or participating in activities motivated by the contemporary motivational structure of design. A counter-structure inspired by social responsibility and cooperation should encourage clear communication promoting commonly agreeable interests. Or defined oppositions.

I KNOW THE SECRET OF MAKING THE AVERAGE AMERICAN BELIEVE ANYTHING I WANT HIM TO. JUST LET ME CONTROL TELEVISION...YOU PUT SOMETHING ON THE TELEVISION AND IT BECOMES REALITY. IF THE WORLD OUTSIDE THE TV SET CONTRADICTS THE IMAGES, PEOPLE START TRYING TO CHANGE THE WORLD TO MAKE IT LIKE THE TV SET IMAGES.
(HAL BECKER THE FUTURES GROUP 1981. 5)

How I fit in "KNIGHT FOUNDATION plans to invest at least \$25 million over five years in the search for bold community news and social media experiments"(6). This is a counter-structure which opposes the controlling nature of contemporary privatized mass media. Knight Foundation has directly funded projects titled SPOT JOURNALISM, TOOLS FOR PUBLIC ACCESS TV, and COMMUNITY RADIO IN INDIA, and TRANSPARENT JOURNALISM. COMMUNITY NEWS NETWORK is the descriptive name of a project created by Dharmishta Rood (DMA) and Anthony Pesce, UCLA students. Later named POPULOUS, "because it means "people" or "crowd" in Latin, and really our ultimate goal for the entire project is to empower all of the different people that will be using it"(7). The POPULOUS website lists another ultimate goal, "provide any, and every, college newspaper with the tools necessary to have a great website that easily incorporates web 2.0 features and industry trends"(7). I am proud to know UCLA educates students motivated by the populous.

Conceivable counter-structures to economic profit driven by consumer exploitation are abundant, but are at the same time limited in reality. I have faith in change but I don't have the conviction to participate in a structure that runs counter to contemporary motivations. I have desires to abandon the monetary structure I have placed myself into but I fail to see a real opportunity given my current situation of self-imposed debt. I do however pursue this area of discourse on an increasing frequency.

DESIGN IS THE WEAPON OF CHOICE FOR PROFIT SEEKING COMPANIES.

Design is the metamorphic blueprint working with in a blossoming world of information that solves problems of an emergent structure known as mass consumption. This prevailing structure that defines what design communicates is a misunderstood mass market created by the world economy. The economy is now recognized by all to have major faults. These faults are not only a part of the overall financial structure but are due to the misinterpretations and misguided decisions of consumers. Consumers imagine money as representing value, when it more accurately represents debt. Consumers incorrectly interpret our financial structure as being universal. To be truly free our country requires an understanding of practiced economic principles

History has shown me that most designers must be on an intellectually equal level with consumers when it comes to consumption motivations and economic principles. If designers imagined a socially progressive world they would not participate in a structure which in many ways opposes liberty, freedom, and justice. Contemporary designers have the power to influence consumers in mass culture with increasing foresight. Mass media chooses what to show people. Mass culture chain stores choose what brands to covet. Companies produce throwaway products at every price level. Consumption driven profit perpetuated by the current financial system dictates more than just design, it dictates classes of people.

The field of study that I decide would foster the most interesting career has educated me that its contemporary structure is absurd. I must make the conclusion that I am absurd if I do not change my current discourse in some way. I came to the field of design | media art from motivations like advertising design, branding, packaging, and logo making. History has taught me that these fields of enterprise exist due to poorly founded philosophies like progressive obsolescence. Before thoroughly examining the institution of design, I did not fully realize my intentions to become a designer would help, so directly to further the ill intentions of money greedy capitalists while prolonging the current state of the union.

Designers have the power to advance the human condition.

The current design structure demands that designers work within a static realm of perpetual consumption. Designers can break free from the fixed state of consumption that restricts and dictates if the focus of contemporary designers in all industries is exclusively progressive.

1 <http://action.aclu.org/reformthepatriotact/whereitstands.html>

2 <http://whatreallyhappened.com/RANCHO/LIE/lie.html>

3 <http://paulgrignon.net/firms.com/MoneyasDebt/references.htm>

4 <http://www.federal-reserve.net/healthemoneysystem.htm>

5 http://american_almanac.tripod.com/warfare.htm

6 <http://www.newschallenge.org/about>

7 <http://populousproject.com/>

8 Raizman, David. History of Modern Design Prentice Hall Inc. 2004. Upper Saddle River New Jersey