Graphic design is something that has very little impact on my daily life. The current trend in graphic design is not one that interests me, nor is it one that is beneficial to my existence, or that of the human race. Graphic design is an absurd characteristic of the human race. the basic necessities in life have nothing to do with graphic design. The constant consumption of goods, and creation of waste is perpetuated by graphic design.

Most communications that take place through graphic design are not crucial to my way of life. Certain crucial pieces of graphic design do exist in the modern world of constant consumerism that man has created in the past few decades. Stop signs are one good example of design. There is no artistic presence in a stop sign(one of its strong points), unlike many other so called contemporary pieces of design. The stop sign is a utilitarian device created through human necessity, and faithfully serves humans with little interaction. There is little thought that takes place when a stop sign in encountered, demographics are not a factor in your stopping, your mood is not a factor, your personal brand preferences are not a factor, your income level is not a factor. The stop sign works as a piece of graphic design because it cannot be called art, there is nothing artistic about the creation and installation of a stop sign. Since there is no level of interaction other than the presence to stop when encountered with this signage, it has only one interpretation, no ambiguity; a great design choice.

Graphic design is art. The products of graphic design must be considered art and not as designs. This semantic difference can be seen as profound if explored. Graphic design, "the art or profession of using design elements to convey information or create an effect"(Webster), creates communications that are designed but they are not themselves 'designs'. Design is the purpose behind something or the act of arranging or conceiving of it. Everything people do has a design behind it, or a plan, but that doesn't necessarily make what they do designs. The illustration for a logo is more a piece of art than it is a 'design', however it has been designed and there may be designs leading up to its finish; plans and drawings. If graphic design can be seen as the creation of art, more responsible design choices will be made when creating communications, and making choices of what to communicate.

The commercial consumer condition that drives the force that is graphic design is a foolish reason to create art but none the less it can be a reason. Art can be created just for art sake. It may not always be considered fine art, and it will not always sit in a gallery or museum, but it can be considered art. Art in the contemporary society says anything goes; experiences can be art, places can be art, ideas can be art, poetry can be art, trash can be art, and even purposeful utilitarian items can be elevated to art in the right situation. So why do we create a distinction between art and 'design' in the United States, and most of the world?

The tangible manifestations of graphic designs are not art, they are trash. The original concept for the graphic design is the art, the labor put into its creation is the art. What this form of art says is complicated if it says anything at all. Even though a piece of graphic design created to sell cigarettes, mostly does that, there is still other things that can be analyzed.

Whenever I see graphic design I see it as art. I do not become interested in the advertised good or service I purely contemplate the reason for its existence. I consider the choice of color, the medium, the typography, the composition, the voice; I analyze everything presented by the design. The analysis may take place in an instant, and the piece of art may fail, but it is still a piece or art in my mind. The characteristics of art are all around us, we ourselves can even embody what it means to be art. Most humans are not art, rather they are consumers, which is more similar to cattle than to art. Humans have no reason for being put on this earth. No one is born with a reason for existing. Existence must be justified by contribution, not consumption. I cannot state a reason for being but it is definitely not to consume and create junk and pollute our home, the earth.

The reason for graphic designs existence is one that should be reconsidered. As a race we are newly empowered with a better understanding of our home, the earth, mainly through commercial education, like Al Gore's inconvenient truth. An understanding of our impact on our habitat and all aspects of society should be analyzed, scrutinized and reformed. Why should our wasteful habits continue? Why should constant consumption be the trend in modern living? Why is excessive disposable packaging popular? Why does McDonalds need to advertise? Why do local businesses need to advertise on the internet? Why is there so much variety in toothbrushes, underwear, and cell phones?

Just as important as considering our habits is considering our modes of thinking. Why does graphic design work? Is graphic design the most efficient way of communicating? Is it easy? Do humans inherently have a need to be shown images with text to convince them to buy things they need? What do humans need? What do they think they need? Is graphic design mostly utilized for things humans need? Does graphic design have a brainwashing effect? Does it create group think? Do people want iPods so that they can feel like the beautiful people on colorful billboards?

No new matter is created in the universe. Everything we see around us has come from the resources on this planet. Everything we make, and everything we throw away has come from the earth in some way. Clothes come from the earth. Plastic and paper come from the earth. The clunky television that most humans are throwing in the trash so they can make room for a streamlined flat version came from the earth, and so does the liquid crystal in the new one. Most things we create from the earth's plentiful resources are returned to it. It is very rare that an object is utilized for all of time, most things become trash. Even things that are recycled create trash in the process of being recycled. Energy is obviously needed to recycle, and graphic design is necessary for recycling awareness, and so are specialized receptacles, and specialized trucks for the drivers, and suits for the drivers, and patches to be embroidered on their hats; national ad campaigns to promote saving our earth take lots of time and money, much of which will in turn create trash.

Perhaps instead of having to recycle so much as a consequence of our way of living, we should change our way of living. How often do plastic bottles of water really become necessary? Why is it in this generation that bottled water has become popular? Is it because graphic design has blinded everyone to the true origin of things. do people realize their consumption in turn creates waste? A particularly successful graphic artist, Chris Jordan, created a photo-montage of two million plastic beverage bottles, the number used in the US every five minutes with great detail on a massive canvas. This is an example of a responsible graphic designer creating art that truly communicates.

Graphic design itself creates tons of waste. New products are introduced by the thousands each day, and each one typically involves some sort of graphic design; a logo, a

package, a page in a magazine, a billboard, a coupon, a t-shirt, a pad of paper. If people are easily persuaded by graphic design to purchase something thats harmful to our existence, over and over and over again, I believe they are blind. And if the countless forms of graphic design around them do not confuse, enrage, or enlighten them, but instead populate their minds with thoughts of consumption, then they are brainwashed.

Graphic designs as I said earlier can be art. Myriad reproductions of art devalue the original as they are turned to trash. If the design is created with the intention of being discarded in the future, then perhaps it should not be created at all. Perhaps a new mode of production to satisfy the same purpose should be designed, what ever that purpose may be. Why create garbage? Many humans tendencies are revealed during the rare trip to camp in the forest or desert or any type of wilderness. Many parks in the greater Los Angeles area are filled with trash, a lot of it is graphic designs, the beaches and the ocean are polluted up and down the south bay. Why? In the Santa Monica mountains there is trash too. Malibu Creek, behind Peperdine is littered with discarded trash of all sorts. As you travel farther out into the wilderness the trash diminishes, but not in all places, dirty humans can get to anywhere on this planet. For people who camp the basic rule when in the wilderness is leave nothing behind but footprints. In the ideal situation things people bring with go back home, or at least into a trash receptacle provided by the park, if you are at one. This is not a difficult thing to do; not polluting the earth. If all humans embrace a mind set similar to this, and extended it into everyday life, graphic design would have to be analyzed as unnecessary, along with many other habits that have been developed since the modes of mass consumption and consumerism have taken over existence.

The earth is becoming polluted because we are making everything we do more complex and more difficult. The commute to work is so long in the morning and at night that people need to be able to purchase a plastic bottle of water for the ride, and there's no way that one brand of water will always satisfy. People's lives become so demanding that getting food in their hands and then in their stomach can take no longer than 5 minutes. People desire new clothes, new shoes, new earrings, new hairdos, and new brands for almost every new occasion. Information of new products must be delivered constantly in mass. All of the things that consumers purchase

are based on decisions perpetuated by graphic design. "The air is full of customers…" William Golden wrote this in 1950, "for a massive campaign to attract attention and sponsors to CBS" (289). This piece of graphic design history is CBS's way of making money; an advertisement for advertising. The advert says customers are in the 'air', they are listening to the radio, so why not pay us to push your product or service for you. Magazines and television do the same thing. The material in a magazine or on television is what draws 'sponsors' to pay to promote themselves. The material is as much an advertisement as the advertisements themselves. The material is what advertises the brand of the magazine or television station, and draws in more 'sponsors' and consumers. Consumers are in the air because graphic design defines and perpetuates such a condition. "a blurring between commercialism, innovation, and progress in design is a phenomenon… in [Japanese] economic policy… with [consumption] creating its own justification" (289). Raizman speaks of Japan in the 50's in this passage but, this idea can be extended to all consumer markets. The market defines a justification for existence not the consumer.

Consumption does not have to be considered pejorative. If socially responsible progress and commercial consumption are one in the same, and planned obsolescence is recognized as wasteful and if the mass media is no longer constantly exploited perhaps a from of responsible consumerism can be found (289 paraphrase).

It is hard to say who controls consumer consumption. People seem to know what they want, but is it truly because they are told what they want by persuasive graphic design, or are there truly inherent needs that humans instinctively satisfy through consuming. "Market velocity and consumer uncertainty demands a new era of market intelligence for today's retail and package goods marketer". Bigresearch.com would say that people need to be told what to purchase and how. "We live in a new world that revolves around demand. How to create customer demand. Meet customer demand. Those are the issues. And they aren't likely to change no matter how hard we try". Don E. Schultz, Professor of Integrated Marketing Communication at Northwestern University says customer demand needs to be created by someone other than the customer. Bigresearch.com says its not easy telling people what they want, "Our current media planning and measurement methodologies do not account for multiple media or simultaneous media usage and totally ignore any type of inter-media

interaction. it seems obvious a new approach is needed". Informing consumers is no longer just the job of graphic design, every form of media must be exploited, simultaneously.

      The result of media exploitation aimed at creating conspicuous ubiquitous consumption is a futile exploitation of the earth, the mind and the body. Graphic design sucks.

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