speculative design

critical design & design noir
dr. carman neustaedter

riddle questions

What is the biggest difference between critical design and design noir?

What's the different between reflective design and reflection in action?

this week's goal:
to think about different user needs and engage in critical reflection

critical design

critical theory

a discipline focused on critiquing culture
the goal is to better understand society

critical theory

verbal descriptions – not designs
anti method – methods are suspicious or irrelevant

emphasizes meanings and effects of cultural artifacts over their creation

critical design

move beyond typical consumer values
embody cultural critiques
new ways of looking at the world
provocative
can easily backfire

critical design

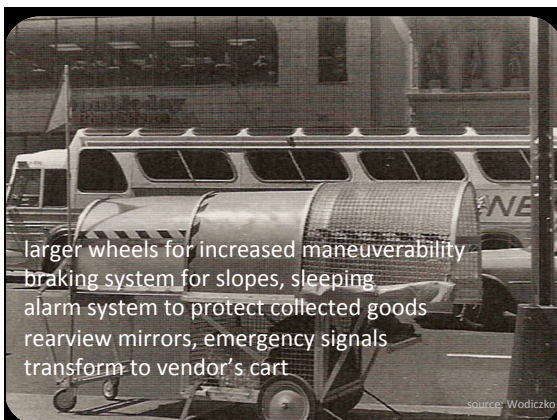there is no real 'method' to create a critical design

critical vehicles

large amounts of homeless in NYC
design a vehicle to fill the gap in shelter needs
offer a critical reflection on homelessness

source: Wodiczko

source: Wodiczko

larger wheels for increased maneuverability
braking system for slopes, sleeping
alarm system to protect collected goods
rearview mirrors, emergency signals
transform to vendor's cart

source: Wodiczko

question

what do you think of when you see a homeless person and did your view change after seeing the new shopping cart?
(be honest, there is no right or wrong answer)

did the critical design fulfill its goal with you?

no change in perspective

After reading Wodiczko's "Critical Vehicles" article, I feel that I learned more about the homeless than I knew before. However, my views of the homeless didn't change. I know it is hard for them to have so little to try to survive in this modern society. But there is always a cause of the result of being a homeless. They are no different than any other people to begin with. They can have education when they are young, elementary and high school....I think the creation of the vehicle would help the homeless with their shelter problems, but it wouldn't make them think critically of their future. So in result, they will still be on the streets. It might even encourage them to continue being a homeless (for those that might have a chance to change their life). I think there can be better ways of helping them, like giving them a job instead (maybe help cleaning the streets or something related). If they can earn more they might be able to have a chance of changing their life of being a homeless.

change in perspective

When I see a homeless person I usually feel uncomfortable and wonder what had happened to them that they ended up on the streets. I thought of them as being normal people who were down on their luck, were defeated by whatever life had thrown at them, and had essentially given up on life. After reading about the new shopping cart I began to think of them as a a completely different culture/group of people who were not just poor people without homes, but almost had a different society than the one we live in. The new shopping carts reminded me of Gypsy caravans, and as a result the homeless people began to look more and more like Gypsies to me, who had their own culture and lifestyle and lived their lives on the road.

riddle question

My question is, when we adding new properties to a specific thing, Is it correct that we focus more about the new properties than the original usage, even sometimes give up the original usage?

like the Shopping Cart in Wodiczko's article, it looks like the designer is only trying to design a shelter-use shopping cart, but not considering normal public (the customers) needs of it.
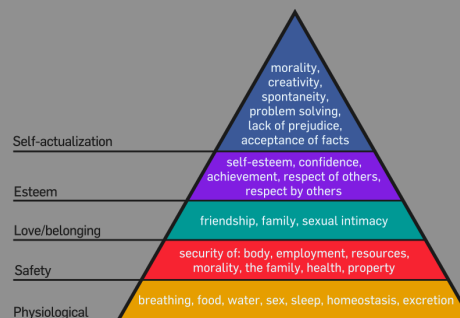
riddle question

Since this new type of shopping cart seems so reasonable and useful. Why it has not been adopted into the modern society? Maybe the government should pay more attention to such invention in order to help more homeless people in an efficient way.

what needs does design usually address?

productivity
user friendliness
what other needs exist?

Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Self-actualization — morality, creativity, spontaneity, problem solving, lack of prejudice, acceptance of facts

Esteem — self-esteem, confidence, achievement, respect of others, respect by others

Love/belonging — friendship, family, sexual intimacy

Safety — security of: body, employment, resources, morality, the family, health, property

Physiological — breathing, food, water, sex, sleep, homeostasis, excretion

what other needs could design address?

deception
loneliness
paranoia
lust
...

design noir
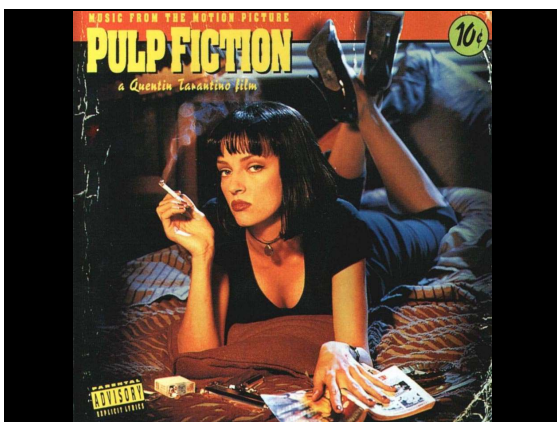
noir

a genre of film with a dark or disturbing tone
1940s-1950s, classic "noir" time in America

image source: politicsofwellbeing.com

basic instinct

design noir

design that addresses the darker, underrepresented needs of people

riddle question:
is design noir the same as design fiction?

what kind of design constitutes design noir, because some of the examples don't seem to have anything to do with death or a dark topic

the focus of design noir

design should enrich our experiences
move away from a narrow view of design
perplex rather than comfort
cause drama and narrative

"Norman's approach results in products that will not confuse or disappoint (which is clearly not enough)."

- Anthony Dunne

"Camcorders have many built-in features that encourage generic usage; a warning light flashes whenever there is a risk of 'spoiling' a picture, as if to remind the user that he or she is about to become creation and should immediately return to the norm."

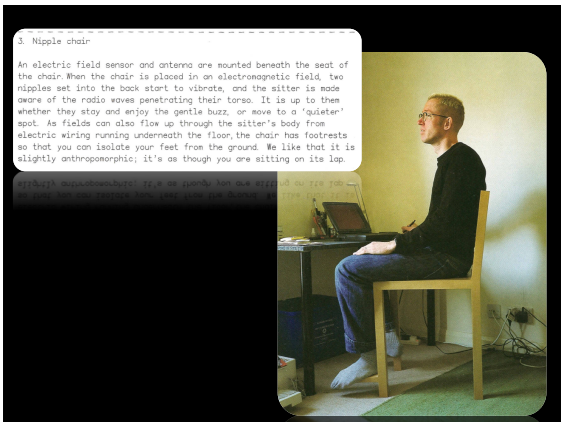- Anthony Dunne

dunne and raby interview

the placebo project

8 prototypes exploring electromagnetic fields
placed in people's homes
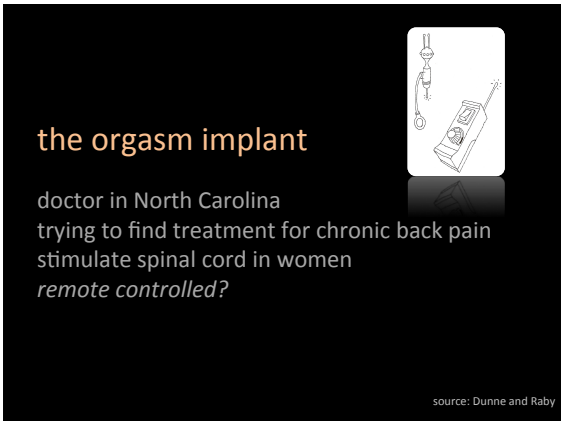elicit stories about objects: factual and imagined

did the object generate any discussions? were there any disagreements between you and your friends over its meaning?

"I think some thought it was totally pointless, because it wasn't a table and it said it was a table, so it's misrepresenting itself as a table. My flatmate agreed that it looked nice, but I don't think she saw why you'd ever have a need for such a thing."

when you talk to your friends, how do you describe the object?

"It's really difficult to get the concept across – you tell them it's a nipple chair and they think of something really kinky. Then you try and explain that it's a bit of furniture which detects electromagnetic fields. Most people say 'Why would you do that?' I just say it's interesting, it's like having a sort of living thing in your house."

the orgasm implant

doctor in North Carolina
trying to find treatment for chronic back pain
stimulate spinal cord in women
remote controlled?

source: Dunne and Raby

question

It's the night before your best friend's birthday and you realize you forgot to buy a gift (bad friend!). The only store open is the Dunne and Raby Design Shop. You can purchase any of the items described in Chapters 3 - 5 of their book. What do you buy for your best friend and why?

the truth phone

a real product by Counter Spy shop
lie detector + phone
focus is not on interaction
focus is on psychological experiences
user is protagonist in a story

image source: unrealitymag.com

practical

I would probably purchase a truth phone for my best friend. With the advent of globalization, technology and material wealth, a huge majority of the masses has ceased to abide their personal lifestyle with any semblance of personal integrity or moral ethics. Having this truth phone would allow my best friend to decipher the "fake-ness" that is surrounding him and allow him to glean the truth. It serves as a device to protect himself from the "fake-ness" in our current world as well as to provide a medium for him to differentiate himself from this current scene of social networking.

practical

I would buy my best friend the A3P3 non-lethal gun. She has a phobia of being home alone or alone in potentially threatening environments for fear of being raped. Placed in a dangerous situation, however, she would not want to kill her pursuer, but rather stun him to get away safely, and that is why this gun would be perfect for her. This gun would provide a level of comfort for her, knowing that she has the means to successfully protect herself.

life counter

set how long you want to live
watch it count down

source: Dunne and Raby

going against weird

If I were to only choose a gift from the Dunne and Raby Design Shop for my best friend, I will choose one of the Placebo objects. This is because they seem to be less creepy and less weird compared to the other objects. The Placebo objects seem like furniture which seems normal. The one I picked would be the phone table because I find it interesting how instead of the annoying ringing sound from an incoming call, the top of the table would glow gently. This can be used as a decoration in the house because of the gentle glow it creates with an incoming call. It would be in great use if you do not want to be disturbed.

wrong!

The night before my best friend's birthday I will buy him something to remember because as we know best friend means the world to you, so why not give him or her something to remember our friendship. Therefore, I will **buy ipad** for him or her because ipad is good for him or her with his or her education. Also, with now technology ipad can have lot of information to find whenever it needs it just go on internet. Or he or she can carry with it with school work to take a notes ect.

alibi CD

ace-alibi.com
CD of background sounds
street sounds, airport announcements, bars, …
make calls from places you shouldn't be

affirmative vs. critical design

affirmative design:
reinforces now, conforms to culture & expectation

critical design:
design that asks carefully crafted questions rejects how things are now

conceptual design *vs.* design noir

conceptual design:
what products might be like
can describe in a book

design noir:
users become protagonist and co-producer of an experience (and the design)

value fictions

science fiction:
realistic technologies, conservative social values

value fiction:
realistic technologies, fictional social values encourage viewers to question values

riddle questions

A lot of the designs in this week's reading are interesting but not being introduced to people's life due to the non–realistic feature. Why there are still a lot of designs like that and why there are still lots of designers enjoying them?

examples of design noir

see videos from previous terms

wrapping up

readings for next week
questions