



Design Histories

Credit points: 7,5 ECTS

Course code:

Responsible department: Umeå Institute of Design

Main field of study: Industrial Design

Level: PhD

Specialisation in relation to degree requirements: Doctoral degree in Industrial Design

Subject area: design history

Grading scale: Pass / Fail

Any programme affiliation:

Confirmation: This syllabus was approved by the Research Council at Umeå Institute of Design, Umeå University, on 2015-04-22 and is valid from the spring term of 2015.

Contents

The course will be about the history – or better: histories – of design and design research. More specifically, it will be about how industrial design has articulated, related to and reflected upon its past, present and future. As such it is less oriented towards the historical narratives that have evolved largely under the umbrella of art history, and more attuned towards historical examples of how industrial design itself has articulated its project, its purpose, privileges and positions.

The purpose of the course is thus not to give us a comprehensive overview of all design history relevant to industrial design, but rather to inquiry into some examples that seem to have a certain bearing on our current design practices and forms of research. Most texts will be historical in the sense that they are now part of our history, not in the sense that they address historical matters. Indeed, much of the literature are calls for change, manifestos, etc., thus representing historical projections into what then seemed to be the future.

Looking into the evolution of industrial design, we will try to understand the historical context of practices still present in educational environments such as Umeå Institute of Design. In particular, this involves asking questions about the relations between developments in design and the changing conditions and needs of society and industry. However, since the orientation of the course is around unpacking notions that seem to have had a significant impact on current practices in places like UID, many of the examples will stem from American, British, German and Nordic perspectives. In a sense, to be able to discuss the implications of having a narrow view, we must also see what this narrow view actually looks like.

Expected learning outcomes

- A deepened understanding of the history of design and design research.
- An ability to locate, articulate and critique issues pertaining to historical and contemporary design research and design practice, including to critically examine one's own research and practice in its historical contexts.
- An ability to articulate and make use of design research methodology related to historical studies and the humanities.

Relation to general study plan

Courses in this thematic area should address the following learning goals in the general study plan:

Primary: 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.3, 2.3.1

Secondary: 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.5, 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 2.2.2,

Required knowledge

Qualifications for admission to the PhD programme in industrial design, or equivalent.

Form of instruction

Lectures, seminars and workshops.

Examination modes

Examination is held both orally and in writing, individually and in group. The assessment of the course is based upon active seminar participation, an individual oral presentation in seminar form, and one individual written essay (as instructed during the course).

Grades on the course are awarded when students have passed all examinations and compulsory course elements. After completing the course, one of the grades Fail (U) or Pass (G) is awarded the student. A student who for two consecutive examinations for the same course has not been passed, has the right to have another examiner appointed, if there are no special reasons against this (Higher Education Ordinance chapter 6, 22 §). The request for a new examiner shall be made in writing to the Research Council of Umeå Institute of Design.

Academic credit transfer

Equivalency credits for this course can only be given if it can be shown through transcripts and course plans that a similar course has been passed and after the supervisor and examiner for the PhD education have evaluated and approved the students' individual level of skills and knowledge.

Course literature

Note: the following literature represents an example, but may be subject to change in each instance of course.

Albers, A. (1968). Oral history interview with Anni Albers, 1968 July 5, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. Available at: <http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/interviews/oral-history-interview-anni-albers-12134>

Attfield, J. (1989). FORM/female FOLLOWS FUNCTION/male: Feminist Critiques of design. In Lees-Maffei, G. & Houze, R. (Eds.) (2010). The design history reader. London: Bloomsbury.

Branzi, A. (1988). Those monks on the hill. In Branzi, A. Learning from Milan: Design and the second modernity. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Branzi, A. (2001). A Homeless Country: Experimental models for the domestic space. In Bosoni, G. (Ed.) Italy; Contemporary Domestic Landscapes 1945-2000. Milan: Skira.

Buckley, C. (1986). Made in Patriarchy: Toward a Feminist Analysis of Women and Design.

Design Issues, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Autumn, 1986), pp. 3-14.

Dilnot, C. (2015). History, design, futures: contending with what we have made. In Fry, T., Dilnot, C. & Stewart, S.C. (2015). Design and the question of history. London: Bloomsbury.

Fallan, K. (Ed.) (2012). Scandinavian design: alternative histories. London: Berg

Fleishmann, A. (1924). Economic living. In Kolocotroni, V., Goldman, J. & Taxidou, O. (Eds.) (1998). Modernism: an anthology of sources and documents, p. 302. Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press

Forty, A. Debate: A Reply to Victor Margolin, pp. 16-18.

Margolin, V. A Reply to Adrian Forty, pp. 19-21

Foster, H. (2002). Design and Crime (chapter). In Foster, H. Design and Crime. London: Verso.

Gropius, W. (1919). Manifesto of the Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar. For example in: Conrads, U. (Ed.) (1964). Programs and manifestoes on 20th-century architecture, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, USA pp. 49-53, or <http://bauhaus-online.de/en/atlas/das-bauhaus/idee/manifest>

Gropius, W. (1926). Bauhaus Dessau – Principles of Bauhaus production. For example in: Conrads, U. (Ed.) (1964). Programs and manifestoes on 20th-century architecture, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, USA pp. 95-97.

Jones, J.C. (1970/1992). Design methods, chapters 2 and 3. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.

Lloyd Wright, F. (1901). The Art and craft of the machine. In Lees-Maffei, G. & Houze, R. (Eds.) (2010). The design history reader. London: Bloomsbury.

Loos, A. (1908). Ornament and Crime. In Lees-Maffei, G. & Houze, R. (Eds.) (2010). The design history reader. London: Bloomsbury.

Maldonado, T. (1958). New Developments in Industry and the Training of the Designer. In Ulm 2, Quarterly bulletin for the Hochschule für Gestaltung Ulm, October 1958.

Maldonado, T. (1991). Looking back at Ulm. In Lindinger, H. (Ed.). Ulm design: the morality of objects: Hochschule für Gestaltung Ulm 1953-1968. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press

Maldonado, T. and Gui, B. (1964). Science and Design. In Ulm 10/11, Quarterly bulletin for the Hochschule für Gestaltung Ulm, May 1964.

Margolin, V. (1995). Design History or Design Studies: Subject Matter and Methods. Design Issues, Vol. 11, No. 1 (Spring, 1995), pp. 4-15. Including (from the same issue):

Morris, W. (1884). Useful work versus useless toil. In Kolocotroni, V., Goldman, J. & Taxidou, O. (Eds.) (1998). *Modernism: an anthology of sources and documents*, pp. 27-31. Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press

Papanek, Victor (1977). *Design for the real world: human ecology and social change*, Chapters 2-4. St Albans: Paladin

Pevsner, N. (1936, 1949). The Modern movement before nineteen-fourteen, excerpt from *Pioneers of Modern Design*. In Lees-Maffei, G. & Houze, R. (Eds.) (2010). *The design history reader*. London: Bloomsbury.

Rittel, H.W.J. (1991). The HfG legacy? In Lindinger, H. (Ed.). *Ulm design: the morality of objects : Hochschule für Gestaltung Ulm 1953-1968*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press

Semper, G. (1852). Science, industry, and art. In Lees-Maffei, G. & Houze, R. (Eds.) (2010). *The design history reader*. London: Bloomsbury.

Sparke, P. (1995). As long as its pink: the sexual politics of taste (introduction). In Lees-Maffei, G. & Houze, R. (Eds.) (2010). *The design history reader*. London: Bloomsbury.

Thackara, J. (1988). Beyond the object in design. In Thackara, J. (Ed.). *Design after modernism: beyond the object*. London: Thames and Hudson

Woodham, J. M. (1995). Resisting Colonization: Design History Has Its Own Identity. *Design Issues*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (Spring, 1995), pp. 22-37.