What Does Knowledge and Truth Mean for Design?

1. What is Design about? [group discussion / show slides]

2. What do you Design? [group discussion / show slides]

3. What process do you use to design? [group discussion / interactive / show slides]

4. How could you characterise knowing in the design process? [group discussion / show slides]

5. What role does identity play in the design process? [group discussion / show slides]

6. What significance is truth and meaning for design? [group discussion / show slides]

7. What are kinds of design knowledge? [group discussion / show slides]

8. What is repeatability in the design context? [group discussion / show slides]

9. What does design thinking have to offer? [group discussion / show slides]
What is Design?
The word *Design*?

**Design** = an activity *(to design)*

= a profession *(of design)*

= a discipline *(in design)*

= a way of thinking/doing *(by design)*
What is Design?

“The habit of calling a finished product a Design is convenient but wrong. Design is what you do, not what you’ve done.” (Flecher, 2003, p.412)

Yearbook Dutch Design 05  
by Ami Kealoha

Juice Squeezer  
Phillip Stark

Bilbao Guggenheim  
Frank Gehry

This is not design, but the photogenic styling is highly addictive
What do you design?

Where would you position design? In what context?
Between the here/now and where we might be

Design = the management of choice towards change

In the context of the Ecology of the Artificial?

(Bonsoni, 2001)
Ecology of the Artificial?
The Design Process?

Something goes in > Something happens > Something comes out
The Design Process?

Something goes in > Something happens > Something comes out

This is the Design bit
The Design Process?

Brief → Concept

Research → Concept Development

Design Outcome → Presentation
The Design Process?
The Design Process?
Neurotic?
Knowing the Design Process?

What are the characteristics of knowledge in the Design process?
Design knowledge oscillates within the equilibrium of **Practice** and **Theory**, with each informing the other.
Playful?
"Design is a quintessentially constructive activity!" (Glanville, 2006, p.62)

"The question of Mind Independent Reality (MIR) scarcely raises its head because designers are too busy making things for and in their assumed real world to ask questions about it" (p.61)
Identity?

The I is central to design.

The designers identity is central to the design process and a designerly way of knowing.

We design ourselves...little pieces of me....

Something goes in > Something happens > Something comes out
Truth and Meaning?

Design is not searching for **truth** nor is it overly concerned with absolute **meaning**.
Truth and Meaning?

Favourite Modernist Design Sayings:
- ‘Form follows function’
- ‘Truth to materials’
Design Knowledge?

For Design, knowledge is enacted
i.e. It exists within the context of doing
Kinds of knowledge?

**Practical Knowledge**
Knowledge of how to do something.

**Factual/Propositional knowledge**
Knowledge that something is the case.

**Knowledge by acquaintance**
Knowledge of something’s existence.

“It is simple to see designers as needing and deploying these three types in their activities.... Minimally, an amount of each of the types sufficient to commence the design task is necessary; the need for more knowledge and the type and scope of what is required is typically understood during the process. Here design research leads to not only an increase in knowledge, but experiments and explorations that make the need for more knowledge clear.”

[Downton, 2005, pp.62-63]
Kinds of Knowledge?

**Tacit Knowledge**
Knowing through doing

Knowing without language
A conversation that has no language.
Repeatability?

If identity defines the design process then what happens when someone else repeats the process?

What happens when you work in a research context where your **goal is not truth, identity is central** to the process and **repeatability gives variation**?

Marco Zanuso  Gio Ponti  Alessandro Mendini  Enzo Mari  Angelo Mangiarotti

[Bonsoni, 2001]  [Home]
What can Design offer?

Tools to manage change
Post Industrial perspective
Ecological context
Enabling design
Design-led methods

A traveller’s guide?
What can design offer?

An Un-Natural World: Designer as Tourist

The designer as tourist (researcher)

Travels widely in the Un-natural (theoretical) world.

On returning...
What can Design offer?

An Un-Natural World: The Designer as Tourist

the designer engages with the three bodied problem of the natural, artificial and un-natural worlds

creating designs that help bind these worlds together
What can Design offer?

- Current Practice
- Design-Led Method (e.g., Cultural Probs)
- Enabling Design
- Innovation
- Changed Practice

D (design)
X (client)
D (designer)
References:


