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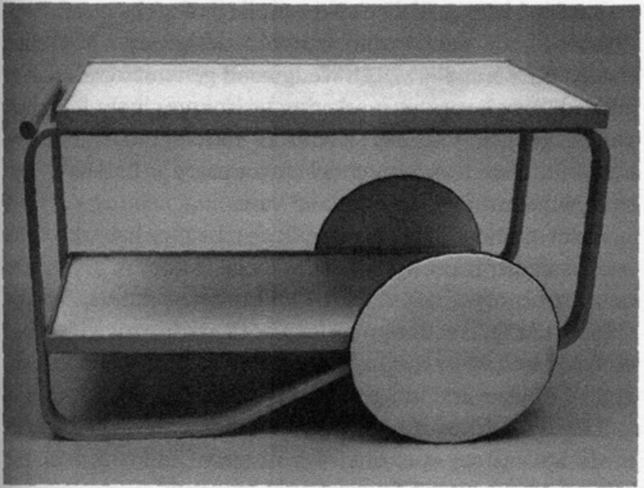
Jerry Palmer and Mo Dodson

History and Theory

The history of design—the focal subject matter of the field or discipline of design history (Walker, 1989)—is replete with sketches, plans, prototypes, manufactured objects, mass-produced images in the form of graphic designs such as advertisements, posters and packaging, manufacturers' and retailers' catalogues, and written accounts. Design historians study these designed artifacts, images, and related documents to examine the past practice and products of design and to contribute to histories of society, culture, gender, technology, and other related fields. Design history is concerned to understand design broadly defined, from automotive technical advances to styles in hair dressing, and from the design of patterns of service in restaurants to that of artificial limbs. It therefore encompasses subfields such as the history of dress, graphic design history, interior design history, and the history of industrial design, each of which have their own specific concerns. In addition, design history benefits from interaction with a range of neighboring fields, including design studies and design research, that undertakes interdisciplinary academic analysis to move design practice forward, as well as material culture studies, design anthropology, popular culture studies, cultural studies, histories of art, architecture and technology, and film and media studies (Huppatz and Lees-Maffei, 2013). Unlike design studies and design research, design history places temporality, chronology, and history at the core of its exploration. Design, broadly defined as an intention or plan, has a history as long as that of human endeavor (Huppatz, 2010). However, design historians have generally regarded their subject of study as coterminous with (1) the separation of design and manufacture attendant upon the industrial revolution and (2) the development of Western consumer societies reliant upon designers working with manufacturers to provide a continual succession of new products (Lees-Maffei and Houze, 2010).

The History of Design: Aesthetic Approaches. If Kant associated aesthetics with the senses, and the scholarship of aesthetics has foregrounded taste, value, or beauty, then an aesthetic approach to design history can be understood as privileging the visual. The history of design is rich in examples of work that may be harnessed to a view of design practice as an aesthetic enterprise. This is particularly foregrounded in an approach that equates the history of design with a history of styles in which, for example, neoclassicism is followed by Gothic, or Gothick, and then a flurry of Victorian eclecticism including Gothic revival, neo-Gothic, and the Arts and Crafts Movement and its variations. In nineteenth-century Britain, the aesthetic movement's belief in art for art's sake met its correlative in design with the work of William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement designers. They practiced an approach to surface pattern design, for instance, which eschewed naturalistic illusions of depth in favor of simplified decorative motifs, drawn from direct observation of nature (Pevsner, [1936] 1991, p. 46). Many design histories tell us that Art Nouveau's organic, whiplash lines were followed by Art Deco's conversely geometric step forms, but not all stylistic change is the result of revolution; some shifts occur in a more nuanced, diffuse, and piecemeal



Tea trolley (laminated wood), Aalto Alvar. Designed 1936 for Artec Finland. ERICH LESSING / ART RESOURCE, NEW YORK

fashion. While some design historians and commentators have been guilty of representing diverse design practices reductively in the interests of their historical narratives, it is the case that other, later, design historians have unpacked familiar episodes in their more nuanced and complicated accounts. For example, Paul Greenhalgh (2000) has shown that Art Nouveau existed in many forms around Europe and the United States, from Jugendstil to the Vienna Secession, while Nicolas P. Maffei (2003) has traced the Egyptian, Mayan, classical, modernist, and moderne influences in Art Deco. The Arts and Crafts Movement principles of fitness for purpose and truth to materials were adapted from hand crafting methods into design for mass production by the architects and designers who led the Modern Movement. Their work required a redefinition of beauty as being based on utility. A teapot, for example, did not need to be decorated because its shape, based on geometric forms, could be intrinsically beautiful (Naylor, 1985).

The uncompromising formalism of the high modernists at the Bauhaus school in Germany was adapted in turn by those who sought to design for a mass market. A group of early consultant and industrial designers working in the United States in the 1930s subscribed in differing degrees to the anti-modernist notion of design as styling, in which form did not follow function so much as usurp it. Raymond Loewy is one of the best known of these designers, who simultaneously defined the roles of the industrial designer and the consultant designer for the twentieth century, and mediated modernism for the mass American public. Loewy, particularly, built his career on styling and restyling products in which working parts were sheathed and concealed. The outcomes of this approach were modern in their simplicity and anti-modern in their dissembling function. Similarly, modernism in design achieved popular acceptance in Britain through a series of modified modernisms, known variously as moderne, Hollywood style, and later—in the United Kingdom—Festival style, after the 1951 Festival of Britain.

Following decades in which modernism dominated the theory and practice of design, postmodernism simultaneously continued, and reversed, the project of its predecessor. Postmodernism in design replaced the serious modernist aim of improving the lives of twentieth-century citizens through good design with the playful, referential pleasures of ornament and pastiche. The visual noise of post-modernism—*From Matt Black to Memphis* to borrow the title of a 1980s anthology of design journalism (Sudjic, 1989)—was eschewed in a turn to minimalist design in the 1990s and early twenty-first century. The current century may be characterized by an eclecticism in which the production of a succession of styles is replaced with their conterminous consumption in a practice characterized by an enthusiasm for "retro" styles (Guffey, 2006).

Increasing concerns about sustainability in the late-twentieth and twenty-first centuries have led designers to seek to dissociate themselves from a design practice based on styling yet more products to fuel Western consumer society. Designers of industrial, product, fashion, and automotive products, to name but a few fields, have all been asked to consider the longevity, recyclability, and "greening" of their work (Fry, 2008). Graphic designers are particularly vulnerable to accusations of their work as window dressing, characterized as the arrangement and rearrangement of layouts and minute typographic nuances. Yet, as communicators, graphic designers are arguably better equipped than designers of other kinds to persuade consumers to adopt sustainable consumption practices, and to persuade other designers and manufacturers to embrace sustainable production processes.

In design practice and the analysis of design alike, aesthetic considerations take their place among others including function, ethics, and tradition. Jerry Palmer and Mo Dodson rightly state in their overview of design and aesthetics in this volume that "design as a concept necessarily occupies an ambiguous position in the analysis of the aesthetic."

Distinguishing Design History. The historiography of decorative art displays a continuing concern for beauty and style (Frank, 2000). The value judgments about good design that characterize Nikolaus Pevsner's seminal history of design (1936) rooted in a tradition extending from the Arts and Crafts Movement socialism of William Morris & Co., to the utopian modernism of Walter Gropius at the Bauhaus in Germany, were enormously influential. Early works of design history followed suit in presenting the history of design as a chronology of successive styles, a tendency that lingered well into the 1980s (Collins, 1987). Even today, examples remain, for instance at the Geffrye Museum in London, where a history of domestic furnishings is displayed in a linear sequence of rooms, which foreground stylistic change, albeit with accompanying contextual information panels. As a result of this emphasis on stylistic change, design history has been dismissed as superficial, literally preoccupied with surface appearance and its aesthetic significance, as though design were a branch of art. Anthropologist Daniel Miller infamously judged design history "bizarre," a "form of pseudo art history" (Miller, 1987, p. 142). The type of design history Miller lambasted privileges design with a capital "D" or "high design" (Dormer, 1990, 116ff). High design is the famous kind, featured on stamps (in recent years, Royal Mail, U.S. Postal Service, and Canada Post have featured famous industrial designs on their stamps) and celebrated as "iconic," due to some distinguishing point of recognition such as an unusual shape or silhouette (Lees-Maffei, 2014). Examples include Charles and Ray Eames's "Lounge Chair" (Eidelberg et al., 2006) and Carl Jacob Jucker and Wilhelm Wagenfeld's *Bauhaus-Light* (Droste, 1997). Works such as *In Good Shape* (Bayley, 1979) have contributed to a canon of good design and prioritized "an aestheticized understanding of design appreciation akin to a now-outmoded art historical approach based on a history of styles and connoisseurship" (Lees-Maffei, 2009, p. 355). John A. Walker has noted that while aesthetics have been important in the connoisseur attitudes adopted by design collectors (Walker, 1989, p. 62), some practice seems to demand an art historical approach. For example, the serious purpose with which Arts and Crafts Movement adherents viewed craftsmanship continues in the culture surrounding contemporary crafts, "Artist-craftpersons think of themselves above all as creative, inventive beings. Like fine artists, they experiment with materials, techniques, forms, colours and imagery. Since the aesthetic dimension is all-important, the functional aspects of their artefacts tends [sic] to have a lower priority" (Walker, 1989, p. 40).

Yet, the development of design history has involved efforts to distinguish it from art history. In Britain, design history was fostered in the design studios of art colleges, following the Coldstream reports of 1960 and 1970 which stipulated a contextual written element for BA Honors degrees in art and design (Lees-Maffei, 2009). It was judged that textile designers and product designers might have more to learn from the Bauhaus than from the paintings of François Boucher, for example. Design historians seek to understand design practice and designed outputs in a range of contexts, as the products of specific times, places, designers, and manufacturers.

An example of design history's concern for developing a contextualized understanding of objects is provided in the treatment of the work of Josiah Wedgwood. Stylistically, Wedgwood's work displays neoclassical tendencies, which suit the interior design work of, for example, architect and interior designer Robert Adam and his brothers. However, Wedgwood's output has been used by design historians and economic historians alike as exemplary of an innovative approach to the relationship between design and marketing (McKendrick et al., 1983). Wedgwood generated sales of his goods through various marketing techniques including royal patronage, akin to today's celebrity endorsement, and publicity stunts such as issuing tickets for entry to his showroom to view his copy of the Portland vase.

As an offshoot of art history, design history has taken with it ideas and approaches from the social history of art and the new art history (Fallan, 2010) and the new cultural history (Hunt, 1989). But design history borrows from a wide range of fields united by a concern for the understanding meanings of objects and images.

Theories in and of Design History. Pevsner's impact in design history was one of a range of influences on the subject's development from the mid-twentieth century onward. The widespread influence of Marxism on twentieth-century intellectual history and, particularly, the work of the Frankfurt School, informed the development of cultural studies in Britain, and centered on the Birmingham School. Just as the Annales School in France promoted the study of everyday life, so British cultural studies introduced into British academic thought the notion that the culture of the working classes was worthy of overdue analysis, while in the United States folklore studies, material culture studies, and popular culture studies each addressed everyday cultures albeit in different ways. Roland Barthes's structuralist and then poststructuralist close readings of the details of quotidian popular culture paved the wave for later design historical analyses of the products of mass consumption. At the same time, Barthes's work on readerly and writerly cultural artifacts (with a dominant meaning or the capacity to accommodate a range of interpretations, respectively), joined that of other continental philosophers such as Michel Foucault, in shaping theoretical models for design history attentive to consumers/viewers/users reception of and interactions with designed objects.

While cultural studies championed the study of working-class culture, so second-wave feminism created a theoretical context for the re-evaluation of women's experiences in general, and women's cultural production in particular, as important. This directly informed a reassessment of women's design practice and of the significance and agency embedded in women's work as consumers of design (Attfield and Kirkham, 1989).

Another theoretical strain that has exerted considerable influence over design history is that of postmodernism. Prefigured as a cultural tendency in literary practice, the most visible incarnations of postmodernism occurred in architecture and design as a playful, anachronistic, patchwork of styles and intertextual pastiche references found in popular and vernacular forms. Venturi et al. ([1972] 1977) formed a seminal rejection of modernist design dogma about the primacy of function over decoration.

In design theory and design history alike, postmodernism provoked a heightened sensitivity to issues of commodification and identity (Foster, 1983; Jameson, 1991) while postmodern approaches have been critiqued as unhelpful to the feminist project in design history (Buckley, 1999). Goods or commodities have formed the majority of design history's subject matter, therefore design historians must engage with postmodern theories of design and material culture which critique the extent of commoditization within Western cultures.

The conjunction of poststructuralism, reception theory, and postmodernism has produced a theoretical position suitable for analyzing remix culture and processes of mediation, as additions to the accepted design historical approaches to production and consumption. The notion that goods themselves mediate between producers and consumers owes a debt to Actor Network Theory, popularized by Bruno Latour and applied to design history by Kjetil Fallan (2010), as well as to Thing Theory (Candlin and Guins, 2009) and Igor Kopytoff's biography-of-things approach (1986).

All of these mutually informative theoretical directions—cultural studies, feminism, and postmodernism amongst others—have functioned together to underpin design historical concern for the everyday (Highmore, 2009). Design historians seek to understand designed objects and design practices in context, to the extent that aesthetics are not the primary focus of the field. At the same time, design historians are trained to avoid subjective value judgments and to treat all cultural production as equally worthy of academic attention. For these reasons, the assumption that design history is concerned principally with aesthetics is simply wrong; rather, design history rejects aesthetics, understood as a concern for both visuality and taste, along with the exercise of value judgments.

Today, design history has two interlinked theoretical impetuses: globalization and sustainability. Design history has been criticized for its Western bias, derived from its focus on mass produced goods for Western consumer societies. Attempts to redress this imbalance are ongoing (Adamson et al., 2011). Simultaneously, design historians need to reconsider the history of design in the light of today's increasing demand for decreasing resources and the realization that the period of industrialization, design history's core subject matter, has relied on unsustainable practices that must be reconsidered (Tonkinwise and Lopes, 2014).

We have seen something of the extent to which design history borrows from a wide range of neighboring fields, from qualitative social science research to anthropology, but its impact on those fields remains limited. However, mainstream historians are increasingly recognizing the potential of studying visual and material culture to understand the past, and are thereby joining the design historical project.

[*See also* Anthropology; Anti-Aesthetic; Architecture; Artifact; Barthes, Roland; Bauhaus; Commodity; Craft; Cultural Studies; Decorative Arts; Derrida, Jacques; Feminism; Globalization; Graphic Design; Icon; Iconography and Iconology; Jameson, Fredric; Kant, Immanuel; Le Corbusier; Modernism; Morris, William; Museums; Popular Culture; Postmodernism; Poststructuralism; Reception Aesthetics; Taste; Text; *and* Thing.]

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GRACE LEES-MAFFEI

DESTRUCTION OF ART. Far from being a phenomenon strictly confined to the past, the deliberate damaging or destruction of artworks continues to play a key role in the evolution of art and society.

Destruction for Social Purposes. The iconoclastic spasms of the Byzantine period and Protestant Reformation are the most well-known instances of the destruction of art for social purposes, but religion is only one of the social, political, and aesthetic motivations for concerted attacks on art.

Destruction during Regime Changes. Artworks honoring or associated with a particular political regime are often attacked in times of political turmoil or regime change. Martin Warnke (1973) divides these attacks into iconoclasms "from below" and "from above." Those who lack political power carry out iconoclasms "from below" as acts of protest that result in partially mutilated works. Those who have newly secured political power carry out iconoclasms "from above," in which a new political regime eradicates art associated with the former regime while creating new symbols of power. While iconoclasts "from below" are criticized as mere vandals, iconoclasm "from above" often succeeds in disguising its destructive nature through the creation of an aesthetically valuable new work. For example, Pope Julius II is praised for the construction of the new Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome in the sixteenth century. Often forgotten is that Julius, eager to celebrate his consolidation of the political as well as spiritual powers of the papacy, ordered the destruction of the old Saint Peter's Basilica, built by the e peror Constantine in the fourth century, in order to m way for the new church.

The perceived legitimacy of the destruction of art afte regime change has undergone an interesting historical e lution. From Antiquity until the Early Modern period, t destruction was accepted and sometimes even highly organiz For example, after the death of Akhenaten, the fourteen century BCE heretical Egyptian pharaoh who introduce monotheistic religion in worshipping the sun god, his su cessors returned to traditional polytheism, defacing imag of Akhenaten and destroying his art-filled capital city. Sin larly, the Romans practiced *damnatio memoriae* (condemn tion of memory), officially ordering the destruction of images of those deemed enemies of the state, such as t emperor Domitian. At times, the destruction could exte to whole classes of artworks, as when French revolutionari destroyed huge numbers of works commissioned by, or po sessed by, the aristocracy, even when these were not portra images, on the theory that these works symbolized t luxury and vanity of the nobility.

The modern idea of art for art's sake both privileges ae thetic value and conceives of the artist as essentially existin apart from the demands of politics, even accepting of pol ical patronage. The growth of this new valuation of art led t a change of attitudes about the politically motivated de struction of art, the beginnings of which were felt during th French Revolution itself. Feeling newly hesitant to com pletely destroy artworks, the revolutionaries evolved a serie of alternate techniques to change their symbolic meanin including renaming or rededication, replacement of inscriptions, and removal of works to museums or other sites i which their display and interpretation could be controlle The world wars of the twentieth century solidified the beli that the destruction of art as a political act was impermissible when, after each of the two conflicts, widespread protests were raised against German treatment of art, which included the bombing of the cathedral in Rheims, France during World War I and the burning of modern art deemed to be "degenerate" during World War II.

While the belief that art should be protected from politica vicissitudes has remained strong, it has not stopped the politically motivated destruction of art, for example, the large-scale destruction of Communist-era monuments after 198 These contemporary destructions are usually marked by the insistence that the targeted works are bad art, ugly, or otherwise lacking in the aesthetic value that should spare "true" artworks from destruction. Of course, fluctuations in taste will eventually leave all forms of art open to this justificatio for destruction.

Destruction for Social Order. Historical architectur and monuments are often demolished by authorities wh intend to modernize an urban space by improving housin stock, hygiene, transportation routes, and so on. At times