

Design in the real world

September 13, 2017

Today

ABC Activity

Housekeeping

Good / Bad Design Examples

Sharing of stories of objects

Discussion of readings

Break

Digging into the major design project

Housekeeping

Introduce Ben

Next class

(Podcasts due)

ABC activity

Objects & Their Meaning

Shareout

Readings

Week 3

Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Halton, E. (1981). *The meaning of things: Domestic symbols and the self*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 7: Persons and Things

Related links:

- [**What They Saved: Texans Reflect on Treasures Plucked From Harvey**](#)
- [Girls and their dolls: A mirror on growing up in America](#)
- Material World ([Book](#)) and a [sampling from the NOVA website](#). Photo-journalist Peter Menzel photographs of the material lives of average families around the globe.
- [Avatar: A slides show](#) (NYTimes). Photographer Robbie Cooper captures individuals and the avatars they play as in a variety of online games.

Questions

My question is, how have we operationalized how to give a provide a good experience (and I don't just mean keep people happy, I mean experience on a deeper level). How do designers go about providing objects that can be cherished?

Thinking about perception and recognition, I'm wondering how these take place in schools. Or, perhaps more specifically, I'm wondering about the ways we design learning experiences to be one or the other. As a run onto that thought, which of the two, or what combination of them, is better for learning? Are each of them, perhaps, better for a particular kind of learning?

what would a 'perceived' learning experience look like, and what would a 'recognized' one look like? Also, are there benefits to each (we know routine is important for younger students)?

But my question is: what does “culmination” mean here? Is it defined as the moment our ultimate goals of the purpose mode of transaction between people and things are achieved? If not, what's the relationship between the culmination state and the third mode of people-things transaction?

In that sense, we can build for ourselves a bubble in which to ignore reality. The thing is, what if our flow only occurs within that bubble?

Objects are not static entities whose meaning is projected onto them from cognitive functions of the brain or from abstract conceptual systems of culture.... The modes of transactions that we consider essential to cultivation are: the aesthetic quality unique to the specific transaction; the channeling of psychic energy within the transaction; and the outcome or goal of the transaction.

For Dewey, recognition describes a falling back on some previously formed interpretive schema or stereotype when confronted with an object, whereas perception involves an active receptivity to the object so that its qualities may modify previously formed habits or schemes.... Perception is essential to aesthetic experience and leads to psychological growth and learning. Recognition, or the interpretation of an object or experience solely on the basis of already existing habits, only serves to condition a person further to a life of convention.

What is important is that the object of interaction has some influence on the experiencer's interpretation because of its own intrinsic qualities - for this is the essential way that learning occurs in Dewey's aesthetic perspective.

Aesthetic experiences, which are often considered subjective and hence inessential by social scientists, thus actually may be one of the essential ways 'we learn to become *objective*, in the sense of coming to recognize the pervasive qualities of the environment in their own terms,

Perception, on the other hand, involves an active, critical receptivity to the object so that its qualities may modify previously formed habits or interpretive associations. In perception the objective qualities of objects are intrinsic to our experience; in recognition they are extrinsic. An experience of perception means that the scheme through which we interpret an object is changed or enlarged, which is how learning occurs, by enlarging or changing the habitual framework of interpretation.

What distinguished the two groups (creative v.s. uncreative artists) was that the former tended to approach a task as a "discovered problem," whereas the latter faced it as a "presented problem."

Every conscious experience lies on a continuum ranging from boring sameness at one end to enjoyable diversity at the center and, finally, to anxiety-producing chaos at the further end. It is in the enjoyable middle regions of experience that one's attention is fully effective. This optimal state of involvement with experience, or *flow*, is in contrast with the extremes of boredom and anxiety, which can be seen as states of alienated attention.

Key elements of the flow experience: a merging of action and awareness;

- a centering of attention on a limited stimulus field
- a loss of ego or sense of self
- control over one's actions and over the environment
- coherent noncontradictory demands for action
- Clear feedback to a person's actions
- Intrinsic rewards

Valued possessions involve outcomes in the sense that these transactions reveal intentions or goal-directed purposes; that is, they tell us what "it all adds up to," and how these goals are being realized.

STUDIO 680

Next step

Some connections

Craig Mertler

Rachel Hallquist

Developing a Design Brief

Coming up

Week 4 (9/20): Roots of Innovation (Individual, Part 1)

1. Cross, N. (2006). *Designerly ways of knowing*. Springer. [Chapter 4: The Creative Leap](#)
2. Cross, N. (2006). *Designerly ways of knowing*. Springer. [Chapter 5: Creative Strategies](#)

Remember

- Podcast is due September 20
- Share your google doc notes with Melissa and me