Introduction

Over the past decade there have been occasional suggestions that the term "design" is worn out from overuse by writers who snatched onto a trend without really understanding its meaning or dynamic and now want to move on to another trend, which they also do not understand. The term is no longer suitable/acceptable/desirable/persuasive/relevant/attractive for general use. It may be too dangerous or threatening, requiring too much thought or explanation for the wider audiences that are now involved in the work of design, whether as makers or consumers. It may not fit the current trend of popular conversation in this year or that year of business publications or academic programs or social programs. The term should be discarded or disguised or hidden from view, avoided in company names, book titles, journal articles and on business cards in favor of terms that are less challenging or difficult to understand, in favor of terms that are more vague and euphemistic. Readers may make a list [here   ].

For the design community, however, there is less ambivalence about the term. Popular trends may come and go, but the core of design remains in the mind and imagination—and in the discipline of professional practice. This takes us to *Design Issues*, whose goal is to provide a forum for the discussion of the role of design in contemporary life, involving, as it must for deeper understanding, the interplay of history, theory and criticism as well as the pluralistic interplay of contrasting perspectives and approaches among those who practice design as well as those who study it. This goal is evident in the selection of articles for this edition of the journal. They address a wide range of issues that demonstrate not the decline of a term but its growing significance and maturity as a key concept of cultural life.

One of the terms often substituted for design without careful thought is "innovation." In the first article of this edition, however, Mike Hobday, Anne Boddington, and Andrew Grantham explore the relationship of design and innovation, offering an "innovation studies" perspective on design. As they explain, this is part of "a broader question of where design could be positioned within the social sciences as the subject expands across an increasingly wide range of business and social activity." This is the first of a two-part series in which they provide valuable definitions of key terms and show how innovation papers have, indeed, revealed the central importance of design in business innovation. In the second part of this series, to be published in the next issue of the journal, they examine "the emerging field of design thinking" in relation to innovation studies.

The next article, "The Design Stance in User-System Interaction," addresses the issue of how users interact with designed systems. In addition to discussing situated interactions and the humane approach of treating people as active, intelligent human beings and not simply passive elements in complex systems, the author, Nathan Crilly, addresses the issue of sophisticated users who have the capacity to recognize that designed systems have been designed. He develops the idea of a "design stance," a term coined by philosopher Daniel Dennett. This is a novel approach to interaction design that suggests a subtle and complex relationship between designer and user in situations where the designer has been more like the Cheshire cat, invisible but for his smile.

From the user's recognition of the designer in the system, we move to "The 'Designer'—the 11th Plague": Design Discourse from Consumer Activism to Environmentalism in 1960s Norway." The central theme of this historical study by Kjetil Fallan is the transformation of critical design discourse in Norway in the 1960s, where Victor Papanek's concern for "design for the real world" became part of a broader effort to move design "out of its comfort zone" in postwar Scandinavian work. It is a move from consumer activism toward environmentalism, pointing toward, in the words of novelist Dag Solstad, a change in modernity "from aesthetics to politics."

The origins of design in craft, where the designer and maker are one and the same person, are echoed in the contemporary world, where craft continues to take a variety of forms of practice ranging from crafting of software to shaping objects of everyday needs and rituals. In "Subtle Technology: The Design Innovation of Indian Artisanship," Ken Botnick and Ira Raja suggest this as a point of departure: "Looking closely at craft-driven cultures still alive in the world can provide remarkable insights into contemporary problem-solving. For models of sustainability and economy, nothing could improve on the working methods of the craftsman, sourcing his materials locally, wasting nothing, delivering custom goods made to order—again, locally." This is the beginning of a discussion of craft in Indian culture and of several themes that cross between design and craft. The goal of their study is to challenge what they call the hierarchy separating professional design from craftsmanship as well as the opposition that privileges individual identity above undifferentiated communal identity.

In "Gestalt and Graphic Design: An Exploration of the Humanistic and Therapeutic Effects of Visual Organization," Julia Moszkowicz questions the overall assessment of the effect of Gestalt theory on the discipline of graphic design. Recognizing the connection of Gestalt psychology and the origins of graphic design in the twentieth century, she challenges a tendency in later interpretations, including postmodernist writing, to view the connection in negative terms. She argues that the negative view comes from a reductive view of Gestalt theory, shaped around the isolated study of abstract

form. Instead, she counters "the negative impressions of Gestalt theory with detailed historical work, revisiting the primary texts of its early proponents and highlighting its development into a recognized therapy. At a time when graphic design is engaging actively with notions of interactivity and audience participation, Gestalt theory offers productive ways of thinking about possible structures for orchestrating positive human experiences." This suggests a useful reassessment of the nature and role of the Gestalt approach in design.

In the next article, "Indigenous Knowledge and Respectful Design: An Evidence-Based Approach," Norman W. Sheehan introduces a theme that some in design have considered only at a distance, the theme of indigenous knowledge and indigenous knowledge systems. Indigenous knowledge is defined variously as knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society or an information base that facilitates communication and decision-making in local circumstances. It is regarded as dynamic and constantly influenced by experimentation and creativity at the local level, contrasting with external or universal knowledge systems generated through institutions such as universities. Sheehan, an Aboriginal designer, educator, and researcher, introduces the concept of indigenous knowledge as an ontological concept because it situates inquiry "within an intelligent and intelligible world of natural systems, replete with relational patterns for being in the world." With echoes of the dialectical method of physicist and philosopher David Bohm, he explains that indigenous knowledge understandings "arise in partnership with these existent and sustaining patterns of relation." The goal of the paper is to promote a more socially responsible and environmentally engaged vision for design. One of the features of the approach that is explored in the paper is the concept of "respectful design." For Sheehan, respect "is based on this ancestral understanding that we all stand for a short time in a world that lived long before us and will live for others long after we have passed." In turn, respectful design "is founded on how design positions itself in relation to natural systems and the social world." Sheehan discusses different aspects of this concept and gives special attention to the process of conversation or discussion that grounds design in a local community and also to the importance of "visual dialogue." At first, this article may seem remote in its references and applications, grounded as they are in Aboriginal culture in Australia. As reading unfolds, however, one may well begin to understand how closely connected this approach is to some emerging ideas about participatory design and co-designing, related to the design of systems and environments grounded in community—sometimes in this journal called fourth order design.

The final article is Per Galle's "Foundational and Instrumental Design Theory." The author focuses on the relationship between these two approaches to design theory and then, based on that

relationship, moves on to explore more closely the nature of foundational design theory. The initial step is to consider three works in design literature, classic works by Herbert Simon and Donald Schön and then Klaus Krippendorf's more recent book. Though none of these authors employ the theme of foundational and instrumental, as Galle acknowledges, he seeks to compare the works in the light of that distinction. Following a useful and insightful discussion of these works, the author then discusses the features of a "good" foundational theory of design. This discussion includes insights into the nature of a possible convergence of definitions in such a theory. This essay is a meaningful contribution to investigations of the theory of design, and the discussion of important works by design theorists is, in itself, a contribution that should encourage others to engage in further treatment of important texts in the field.

Following the articles in this edition, we have a review by Kipum Lee of a recent service design conference held in Boston in October 2010 and organized by the Service Design Network. This review is valuable for its contextualization of service design as well as for its assessment of the recent conference held in Boston. It is clear that service design is an emerging practice, and one that stands in need of more theory and reflection. Lee provides an extensive review of previous conferences in this area held in Europe and the United States. He identifies key concepts as well as the evolving themes of practice and theory.

We are also pleased to offer several book reviews that will interest many readers. Nathaniel Boyd and Jack Henrie Fisher review *Uncorporate Identity,* Metahaven by Daniel van der Velden. Kjetil Fallan reviews *Design and Truth* by Robert Grudin. Brian Donnelly reviews *Unimark International: The Design of Business and the Business of Design* by Jan Conradi. Jesse O'Neill comparatively and in combination reviews *The Transformer: Principles of Making Isotype Charts* by Marie Neurath and Robin Kinross and *From Hieroglyphics to Isotype: A Visual Autobiography* by Otto Neurath, edited by Matthew Eve and Christopher Burke. Laura Forlano reviews *A Fine Line: How Design Strategies are Shaping the Future of Business* by Hartmut Esslinger. Finally, Erik Stolterman reviews *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* by Jane Bennett.

Bruce Brown
Richard Buchanan
Dennis Doordan
Victor Margolin

In the *Design Issues* Introduction of the Spring 2011 issue, the editors made a mistake in the pronoun usage when referring to Ashley Hall. We regret the mistake and apologize sincerely for it.