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Task one – Declarative Writing

Manifesto - A Rolling Stone Gathers No Moss

Principles

- The world can be so much better, and it's change begins with us.



fig. 2 (untitled, Kruger, 1997)

- Destroy everything you thought you knew and destroy everything afterwards, do not be bound to what you deem fact.
- Accessibility for all.

When I say accessibility, I mean for design to be accessible to everyone, to be experienced by everyone without limitation regardless of monetary status or disability. I believe that we need to expand design beyond the visual realm, into touch, smell and sound to create an inclusive common ground of shared experience “sensory design supports everyone's opportunity to receive information, explore the world, and experience joy, wonder, and social connections regardless of our sensory abilities” (Lupton & Lipps, 2018, p9) We can also draw upon Marxist theory for how designers during the 1960's-70's translated this theory into practice, they sought to destroy the class separatism in art and design to make

it accessible for anyone to experience and create which is what we want. “...in a bourgeois society, formational and organizational activities remained the prerogative of a small caste of art specialists, the proletarian society made methods of artistic organization accessible to everyone.” (Laanemets, 2017, p 5).

- Question everything and see it for what it is and all its possibilities.



fig 3. (Cut with a Kitchen Knife Through the Last Cultural Beer Belly Epoch of Weimar Germany, Hannah Hoch, 1920)

- Design and who we are, exist in conjunction with one another.

We do not need to be in harmony with nature to be ourselves, nor is the authentic self something to be gained externally. “Nature held me close and seemed to find no fault with me.” (Feinberg, 1993, p.12). It is the opposite, harmony with ourselves is harmony with nature, we are already ourselves and that is nature, even the performance of becoming. We can use this to nourish our inner worlds and psychic realities and as a consequence change reality by doing, thinking, feeling, and interacting as our authentic selves forged by change. When we consider this manifestation of interpersonal self in the material reality, we explore the possibilities within ourselves and objects, transforming them into tangible things, “The transition from the object-function to the object-thought... In this perspective, the object transforms from an exclusive commodity with normal function into a thing full of

meaning and expressive possibility. Such objects are connected to the individual and the intellectual relationship they establish” (Scarpitti, 2024, p.165).

- Forever in transit.



fig. 1(Catharsis, Davies, 2023)

- Be a fluid anchor. We are driven by more we would like to admit, balance is important.
- To be realistic is to be absurd.

We are in a reality that is unpredictable, seemingly imaginary and impossible things happen all the time which breaks the linear ways of thinking and disrupts the majority's routine. We all wish we retained our sense of childlike wonder, so why not? Be governed by imagination and become the exception, we will be the ones that most closely reflect the world. Absurd to others, but we are the ones most true-to-reality. Sometimes we will not know who we are or what we stand for but there is strength in knowing what you will not represent, knowing what you will not represent can also provide knowledge of who you are not. It is enough to do what you want to do. "I rebel- therefore we exist" (Camus, 1951, p.73).

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Fig. 1. Davies, F. (2023) *Catharsis* [photomontage]

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Fig. 2. Kruger, B. (1997) *Untitled* [Silkscreen print]

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Fig. 3. Hoch, H. (1920) *Cut with a Kitchen Knife Through the Last Cultural Beer Belly Epoch of Weimar Germany* [photomontage]

<https://www.bing.com/images/blob?bcid=qP3ZX5unU7kH.Q>

Extra reading

The System of Objects, Jean Baudrillard

https://librarysearch.uwtsd.ac.uk/permalink/44WHELF_UWTSD/a9ute4/alma99100490302802421

The Materiality of Nothing: exploring our everyday relationships with objects absent and present, Helen Holmes.

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Designing mind-friendly environments : design and architecture for everyone, Steve Maslin

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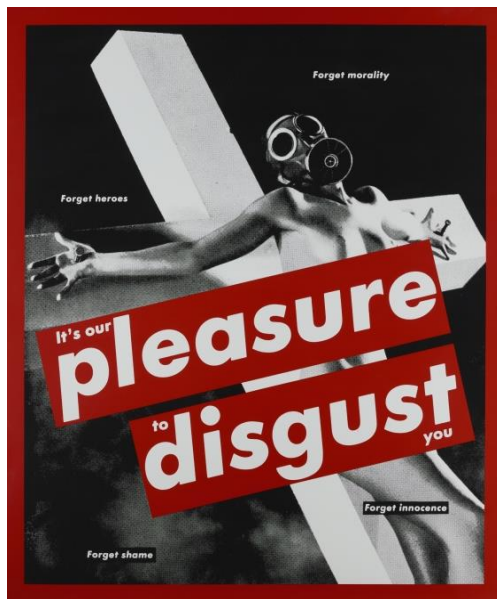
Absurdist Rebellion: Negotiating the Moral Boundaries of Participation, Victoria Gerrard

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Gender Trouble, Judith Butler

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Task two – Observational Writing



This is an untitled piece by Barbara Kruger. This image has a limited of colour palette as the images themselves are monochromatic but the border and the words “It’s our pleasure to disgust you” are in red with writing in the bold white Futura 1 oblique typeface. We also see more slogans backed in black which read “Forget morality,” “Forget Heroes,” “Forget innocence” and “Forget shame.” In this image we see a nude woman with her hands and feet nailed to a crucifix, the woman also wears a gas mask, completely obscuring her face and eyes. This artwork gains your attention due to its limited use of colour with the red offering a bold contrast to the, muted in comparison, colours of the subject matter that is behind the big red writing. The contradicting word pairing “pleasure” and “disgust” in a bigger size than the rest of the writing also grab the viewer’s attention and piques their interest and brings their attention to the wider message of the artwork. This artwork also can bring multiple audiences together as the signs can be interpreted differently by different social groups, for example, men and women. There is a message in this text but

depending on the individuals cultural and social upbringing, the reaction it evokes can differ hugely.

Kruger positions the woman in such a way that she is being crucified, akin to the iconic sign of the suffering and pain or sacrifice of Jesus Christ, a global religious figure, who was crucified for his good deeds, making the act, or sign, of crucifixion, a final act of redemption,”... the crucifixion is interpreted both as an act of gods greatest love... and as a lesson of love for man”(Samokhvalova, 2015, pg. 3).

In this iconic sign being employed by Kruger, we clearly see a power dynamic further evidenced by the angle between the viewer and the artwork, the artwork confronts the onlooker about why they are being brought into this dynamic. This power dynamic references to the patriarchal powers in force in America, especially in 1989 with third-wave feminism slowly taking hold to come into full effect in the early 1990’s. With context included this can mean women are being punished for a structure they did not create, nor have a choice in partaking, it was by the power of men. “Those who are deemed indecent are marginalized to locations of struggle and often met with violence” (Parker, 2019, pg.1) Due to the nature of patriarchal ideology no woman can truly win yet women suffer the most which is why Kruger has put a woman in a highly visible position to be seen by an audience, to be scrutinised and humiliated by men which could also be further evidenced by the fact the woman is nude, men love a modest woman and a nude woman, the punishment and social behaviour differs in retaliation depending on the threat to their masculinity, “...hegemony of masculinity that produces a toxic masculinity. It is the competing demand for men to act in a certain way and produce results that ultimately leads to violence against women.” (Parker, 2019, pg.10), A perfect example of the social politics and punishments related to the Madonna/whore complex.

The fact the woman is nude may mean men do not even take in what the message is about, but rather just gaze upon the nude woman. For women this can mean something else, they relate to the social pressures and ostracization that can come from trying to please men and the social punishment that comes with the failure of meeting the impossible standard and feeling like they are less than of a woman for it. “...third-wave feminism seems to have morphed into being all about choice with little examination of how chosen desires are constructed or recognition of how an aggregation of individual choices can have a negative impact on gender relations at large.” (Snyder, 2008-09, pg. 15) This coupled with the gas mask can represent suffocation due to the strict roles that are expected of women, with the crucifixion and suffocation themes this can point to the repression of women under the patriarchy.

The words in black and help the viewer draw this conclusion as these are all feelings a woman is all too familiar with; however, these words can also reference the patriotism of America especially during Reagan's presidency and his attitudes towards the cold war and nuclear anxiety. This coupled with the iconic sign of the gas mask can reference the political and social anxiety and political paranoia that was present and pervasive in all aspects of American society at the time. Taken more literally it can mean the fear of getting bombed as gas masks are often given to ordinary citizens if it is a possibility of themselves getting hit by bombs, evidenced in the highly prolific world wars and the American presence in Vietnam from 1955-1975. "Johnson administration's invasion of the Dominican Republic and expanding military commitment in Vietnam as exaggerated responses to Cold War tensions, ... a potent mainstream anticommunism that proved impossible to ignore." (Brown, 2009)

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Fig1. Kruger, B. (1989) *Untitled* [Silkscreen print]

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