A Genealogy of Graphic Design in Victoria

Thesis · January 2005

DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.17285.14567

1 author:

Alan Young
Deakin University
6 PUBLICATIONS **35** CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

A Genealogy of Graphic Design in Victoria

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Alan S. Young
B.A. (Design)(Hons.)

School of Applied Communication
Art, Design and Communication Portfolio
RMIT University
January 2005

Declaration

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; and, any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged.

Alan S. Young

Date: 17 January, 2005

Contents

Summary

This thesis uses Foucault's notions of discourse and genealogy to explicate the emergence of graphic design in Victoria. As opposed to traditional histories which tend to portray graphic design as an unproblematic evolution from either ancient origins, or origins grounded in what has been called the industrial revolution, this enquiry sees graphic design as the confluence and selection of certain practices, and not others, some previously known as commercial art, and some not. It sees the emergence of graphic design as the gathering together of these practices within the discourse of design. In particular, it sees this gathering as a political exercise, where they are aligned with other design discourse components such as product or interior design. Using this methodology we have been able to explicate this emergence in terms of the workings of power through discourses—through the creation or reconstitution of objects like typography; languages like 'modernist principles'; hierarchies as we find in design organisations which can confer or withhold credentials from certain practices and practitioners; and through educational institutions which formally legitimise these objects, languages, and hierarchies through histories and theories. This thesis has taken the approach that histories work to promote a certain way of understanding these practices such that their position within a particular discourse appears self-evident. It sees histories as always political.

This thesis takes up Bourdieu's perspective that the language of art is a language of exclusion which privileges certain social groups over others. I develop this concept to argue that design and graphic design are similarly implicated in the maintenance of social distinction. Thus the various historical emergences of design and graphic design are regarded in terms of how they work to shift power.

The thesis excavates the meanings of terms such as 'design', 'graphic design' 'commercial art', and 'graphic art' in their historical specificity bringing to the surface the conditions and politics of their use. As opposed to seeing graphic design as a natural continuation of commercial art, I argue that graphic design emerged out of a complex set of relations between fine art discourse, design discourse, and the advertising industry, and that this emergence was made possible or necessary because of social shifts and changing work practices and technologies. The thesis argues that the ascendency of graphic design over commercial art is politically charged and relates directly to notions of social distinction. It also explicates the role of educational institutions in the emergence and consolidation of graphic design through legitimising histories and theories. A central theme of this thesis is that these shifts work to maintain notions of 'legitimate' creativity as the possession of a privileged few.

Acknowledgements

Any PhD candidate a year or more into their thesis is aware of a huge debt owed to the many people who assist in their journey. My thanks and deepest respect go to my supervisors Cathy Greenfield and Keith Robertson, both of whom shared their knowledge, skills and professionalism unwaveringly, in the face of my doubts and ignorance. I must also thank Cal Swann who could not have given me a better start on this journey and for whose wisdom I will be forever grateful. Doing this thesis would also have been impossible if not for the support of my wonderful partner, Bronwen, and the ludicrous joy given me by our children, Carla, Millie and Sophie.

Finally, I am so thankful for the privilege extended me by all of those I interviewed, who kindly allowed me into their homes and workplaces and shared their memories. Their stories were without exception, fascinating and inspiring and I'm only sorry that I could not do more with them, than an academic thesis. They should be shared far beyond those few sad souls who actually read PhD's. Maybe the next project?

There are so many others that should be thanked, that the size of the list would only do a disservice to each of the individuals on it. I can't thank enough all of my friends and colleagues who helped out in this adventure, and I am indebted to you.

Chapter 1: Methodology

Introduction

Graphic design is a term that denotes a specific way of approaching a range of practices and ways of knowing these practices as bound by certain relations. It is currently located in histories, professional practices and educational courses within a framework of other related practices known generally as 'Design'. Numerous histories of both graphic design and design have been produced which attempt in various ways to understand their principles and the relationships of these principles to each other—in effect, to understand the meaning of graphic design and design in a number of different contexts. Graphic design has also been seen to come under the titles Graphic Art, Commercial Art, Industrial Art, Design Arts, Decorative Arts, Applied Arts, the Minor Arts and Visual Communication, and while this has occasionally posed minor problems for historians, something akin to an essence of the object under question has usually been identified and to some extent its history traced.

This thesis takes up Bourdieu's (1984) perspective that the language of art is a language of exclusion which privileges certain social groups over others. I develop this concept to argue that design and graphic design are similarly implicated in the maintenance of social distinction. Thus the various historical emergences of design and graphic design are regarded in terms of how they work to shift power. I will focus primarily on certain institutional structures through which particular ways of conceptualising design and graphic design have been configured—ways which see some groups as better disposed than others to take up and utilise these concepts to maintain or consolidate their own power. I regard design as a discourse in the Foucauldian sense, whereby certain practices are brought together as a unity. Through this process, previously disparate components of the discourse are linked and officially sanctified through a professional language with concurrent systems of accreditation which specify what may be practiced and who may practice it. An important part of the process of gathering together these disparate practices is the defining of various sub-categories such as graphic design, industrial design, interior design and the like. In graphic design, the subject of this thesis, the traditional practices of aesthetic construction of type elements on a page (designated by the term 'typography') and the 'laying out' of images and type together, as well as many other traditional and modern practices, are drawn together under the 'graphic design' banner, whilst other previously related practices, such as the preparation work for printed media are excluded. Precisely what is chosen to be included and what remains excluded from the category 'graphic design' and thus what is and is not to be considered within the boundaries of design discourse are seen here in terms of the historical power struggles of various social and institutional groups. This is quite different to most histories of

these subjects, which either explicitly state or implicitly assume that the categories are naturally occurring and evolving and that certain essential natures of graphic design and design have always existed, albeit under different titles and embodied in a variety of different historical practices throughout this evolution. These histories tend to regard either technology or the will of inspired individuals as the driving force of change. Whilst recognising their importance this thesis does not privilege either the role of individual characters or of technology, but instead regards them as part of a complex matrix of events, whereby their importance lies in the strategic advantage they afford to different parties at different times. Importantly I do not regard the history of graphic design as a continuous evolution of some essential character, ability or process. Instead I take the Foucauldian perspective, which regards history as the ordering of discontinuous events from a location in the present. The form that this ordering takes is always imbued with relations of power.

In this thesis I re-evaluate, using Foucault's genealogical method, the emergence of graphic design in Victoria as a particular set of institutionalised practices conceived and promoted as part of the general discourse of design. I attempt to explicate how and why such an emergence has been possible or required as certain groups manoeuvre for position. Before beginning this enquiry it is necessary to define precisely the terms being used—those of genealogy, discourse, the related notions of power and knowledge, and by indicating the currently dominant uses of the terms 'graphic design' and 'design'. By then problematising these two terms we are able to reveal the political nature of traditional histories and offer an alternative genealogical approach and the reasons that such an approach may be useful.

Foucault's notions of discourse and genealogy

The two major analytical concepts I shall employ in this project are those of discourse and genealogy. In The Archaeology of Knowledge (Foucault 1972), discourse is characterised as '…a field of regularity for various positions of subjectivity… It is a space of exteriority in which a network of distinct sites is deployed' (p.54). Foucault's often obscure language has been the cause of much criticism directed against his approach. I suggest it is both his greatest weakness, and ironically, his greatest strength. Some see a definition like the one above as mystification—as the making complicated of something quite simple, and it has been argued that the degree to which his definitions make available a number of interpretations, and thus, varied applications, has contributed significantly to his popularity. Added to this, of course, is the preference in much academic writing for just this kind of obscurity. However, it is important to recognise the danger of oversimplifying what is legitimately a complex argument (Booth 2003, pp. 124-5). Let us see then whether we cannot translate this definition into a simpler account without sacrificing Foucault's intended meaning.

Discourse

Discourse can be characterised as ways of seeing ourselves and certain elements of our environment in terms of specific unities. In any particular perceived unity, or grouping, we may see ourselves as actors within that unity, in one or more of a number of available roles, or we may see ourselves as outside of that unity. An example given us by Foucault is that of medical discourse, which we may experience as doctor or patient, nurse, psychiatrist or in a range of other positions. In the emergence of medical discourse, certain practices, like surgery or dentistry, became perceived as legitimate elements of the discourse whilst others, like certain herbal treatments, the laying on of hands, and the like, were excluded. What is excluded is as important as what is included, and the qualifier in medical discourse, and thus a part of medical discourse, is scientific validity. This is not a simple qualifier and many areas, like psychology, still have elements on the fringe or outside of the borders of medical discourse. There is never a total agreement on which practices constitute the discourse and there is a constant shifting of its boundaries as new discoveries are made, new links are formed or broken and as different parties gain or lose power within the discourse. It should be noted here a point that becomes important later in our appraisal of the emergence of design discourse. This is that those practices which are excluded in the formation of a particular discourse do not necessarily become part of another discourse, but they may, in response to being left out of the legitimate discourse, be seen to have a new grounds for being linked.

As well as primarily approaching discourse from the sense of sites and availabilities of certain subjectivities Foucault, in his early works, particularly his Archaeology of Knowledge (1972), regarded it as a formally organised structure, as systems of dispersion of statements and practices that his analysis may have been able to reveal. He thus saw it as practices in which can be discovered specific rules of formation. Discourse can be regarded as 'ways of knowing' within and through a particular framework. Foucault attempted to discover the rules of formation of these frameworks. These rules form a kind of toolkit through which discourse can be approached analytically and Foucault characterises them in the following way:

The formation of objects
The formation of enunciative modalities
The formation of concepts and
The formation of strategies

The formation of objects

Out of a field of differentiation, on the surface of a complex set of knowledges, a discourse constitutes (makes 'manifest, nameable and describable' (Foucault 1972, p.

41) its object. For example, in medicine, amongst other objects, a disparate array of signs, behaviours and statements were constituted as the object, 'madness'. In design, typography is constituted as an object, although there is also value in regarding design itself as both discourse and object. Thus, although there had previously been a term 'typography' and a range of elements known under that term, the constitution of 'design' was coextensive with a new way of knowing typography. A variety of objects emerge in relations of resemblance, proximity, distance, difference, transformation to other objects. Objects cannot be created out of nothing. They emerge in a system of discursive relations, which must be established 'between institutions, economic and social processes, behavioural patterns, systems of norms, techniques, types of classification, modes of characterization' (Foucault 1972, p 45). They are not embodied in things, nor can they be specified in the domain of words, but emerge out of ruptures and discontinuities and in relationship with the following set of phenomena: the formation of enunciative modalities, concepts and strategies.

The formation of enunciative modalities

This is the formation in discourses of the various speaking positions, that is, who can speak to whom and about what. Hunter gives a particularly useful description of enunciative modalities in the case of medical discourse:

> the outcome of an assemblage of statuses (that of the doctor as a socially sanctioned and valorised expert), sites (the hospital as a machine of observation permitting pathologies to appear in a field of frequencies) and techniques (of questioning, statistical calculation, technically transformed perception) . . . [thus] the things said and seen by the doctor are merely one effect of a complex institutional creation of fields of perception and speech and their distribution across differentially qualified and related human agents.' (1991, p. 46)

The formation of concepts

The formation of concepts entails the system of arrangement of statements, or the style of enunciative series which are possible; in effect the language of the discourse, which is at once internal, yet validates its domain. These are a set of rules particular to the discursive field, yet not specifically stated. They operate '. . . according to a sort of uniform anonymity, on all individuals who undertake to speak in this discursive field' (Foucault 1972, p. 63). In the example of design discourse, we might observe how the language of graphic design reconstitutes the work of Lautrec as part of the 'Icons of Graphic Design', (Heller, 2001) at once appropriating Lautrec's fine art credentials and validating design discourse through both Lautrec's presence and the use of the well-established language of connoisseurship, whilst simultaneously

consolidating the borders of design discourse. In effect the formation of concepts looks at the ways of observing, ordering and structuring information that the discourse makes available by relation to, or exclusion of, those forms accepted in previous discursive formations or available through connected discourses. In particular it regards these concepts not through some postulated historical progression and unrelenting evolution but rather through various connections being made from a specific location. These connections are seen not through any putative vertical 'movement' through time but instead through a kind of horizontal availability and use. This perspective becomes a significant factor in the opposition of genealogical enquiry to traditional histories.

The formation of strategies

The organization of objects and types of enunciation form strategies or 'theories and themes'. These occur out of initial dispersions or 'points of incompatibility' and come to form discursive sub-groups, wherein they are regarded as theories, themes, or concepts, which possess an unquestioned unity. These may be determined with respect to relations between the discourse and related discourses—the 'discursive constellation' (Foucault 1972, p. 67). As an example of the possible relationships, one may consider those discourses with '…relations of mutual delimitation, each giving the other the distinctive marks of its singularity by the differentiation of its domain of application…' (p. 67), as may be regarded in the case between design and art. In this relationship, certain possible statements – 'conceptual systematizations, enunciative series, groups and organizations of objects' (p. 67) are excluded through a kind of negotiated discord.

I diverge from this notion of discourse in one important regard. Whereas Foucault's early writings see discourse as a structure of an essentialist nature, which has a set of rules which may be 'discovered', I am taking discourse itself as well as its 'rules' from Foucault's later approach as expounded in The Birth of the Clinic (1994, orig 1973), The History of Sexuality (1980a, orig 1976), and Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings (1980b) as a toolkit which may be used to consider the ways in which certain practices have been institutionalised. This approach serves to illuminate and emphasise the workings of power through these formations. To this end notions of objects, enunciative modalities, concepts and strategies are valuable, but not seen as a priori conditions of some essential discursive form. In short, I use the Foucault's later notions of discourses and their local formations, liberated from any ahistoricism. With the emphasis on power relations and the interplay of discourses, the genealogical methodology is able to liberate from history those discourses that embody the theories or practices which were excluded from institutionalised discourses because they represented dissenting opinions or were considered for some other reason to be non-legitimate.

Basson (1997, p. 237) gives a particularly useful account:

> The space of the discursive enfolds an imprecise and multiple array of relationships that are random, transitional and discontinuous and quite separate from any structuralist view of things. Furthermore, within the space of the discursive . . . there is no single layer of meaning or organization at work.

The Genealogical Approach

In The Order of Things (1994) Foucault contends that his critique of traditional ways of viewing history stems from a passage in Borges which describes a 'certain Chinese encyclopaedia' which gives the following classification of animals:

> (a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame, (d) sucking pigs,
> (e) sirens, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dogs, (h) included in the present classification,
> (i) frenzied, (j) innumerable, (k) drawn with a very fine camelhair brush,
> (l) et cetera, (m) having just broken the water pitcher, (n) that from a long way off look like flies.
> (Foucault 1994, p. xv)

Foucault uses this fiction as an example of a way of thinking that cannot make sense to us. It need not have been a historical account but the value of such an account is that Foucault is then more easily able to move to a critique of traditional historical accounts of the world. Foucault begins with the simple notion that history in the way it has been presented is also a fiction but in this case a fiction because it presents the unknowable as available to be apprehended by contemporary scientific methods of discovery and evaluation. He refutes the assumption in much traditional history that 'words had kept their meaning, that desires still pointed in a single direction, and that ideas retained their logic' and suggests instead that 'the world of speech and desires has known invasions, struggles, plundering, disguises, ploys' (Foucault 1984, p. 76). Rather than seeing histories as discoverable, Foucault regards them as constructions, organisations, ordering of data that necessarily delivers them in specific forms for specific types of consumption. Thus scientific methods are only one such way of structuring data to their own ends. In opposition to traditional historical methodology, Foucault develops the Nietzschian notion of genealogy which 'rejects the metahistorical deployment of ideal significations and indefinite teleologies. It opposes itself to the search for "origins"' (p. 77). Most importantly genealogy rejects any claim to the essential nature of historical phenomenon; it seeks in fact to de-essentialise and

fragment the objects of history. Instead of seeing history as an unfolding continuous progression which presupposes a unity from origin to some necessary totalising finality, genealogy sees history as discontinuous and our present social formations, institutions and regimes of truth as contingent, rather than as historical artefacts. It asks 'How did this state of affairs rather than some other emerge?', 'What are the gaps, the discontinuities, what is left out, to present the kind of knowledge that has been produced?' Most importantly Foucault uses genealogy to emphasise the power relations that underpin historical phenomena. He defines genealogy as:

> The union of erudite knowledge and local memories which allows us to establish a historical knowledge of struggles and to make use of this knowledge tactically today. (1980b, p. 83)

Thus we must not only recognise that traditional histories from their location in the present, are equally imbricated in the relations of power, but rather than attempt an impossible methodology that is somehow more objective, we must articulate the politics of our genealogical work as an essential part of its methodology.

Foucault's Notion of Power

To understand the relationship between discourses and power, it is necessary to first consider Foucault's definition of power. In Foucault power is characterised by neither the capacity nor the right to act, both of which centre arguments about power on notions of legitimacy. Instead Foucault's approach focuses on the effects of power and how these effects are produced, that is, 'the techniques and rationalities of power' (Hindess 1996, p. 20).

Rather than being wielded through underlying social causes and ideologies, Foucault treats power as:

> Something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localised here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organization. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. In other words, individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application. (Foucault 1980b, p. 98)

Thus the much-quoted notion that power is not regarded by Foucault as 'top down'. In addition, it is not considered a negative force, but as: 'a productive network of forces that make connections, produce objects for knowledge, and utilize the effects of knowledges' (Grosz, 1990 p. 85). So too power and knowledge, whilst remaining different entities, are tied to one another. Indeed in discourse they are intricately connected such that Foucault regards them in the indissoluble relation 'power-knowledge'.

Power relations are exercised through discourse as the production of 'truths'. Truth is not a philosophical entity—'is not by nature free, . . . its production is thoroughly imbued with relations of power' (Foucault 1980a, p. 60). Foucault suggests that it is only through discourse that we can know things—discourses are the frameworks through which truths can be produced. These frameworks specify particular techniques, languages and practices, patterns of how things may be known and who may specify what constitutes truth. Rather than acting as a subjugating system of repression of what already exists, power is internalised through discourses as ways of knowing and acting which bring new states of affairs and social relations into being.

> In a society such as ours, but basically in any society, there are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterise and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse. There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth which operates through and on the basis of this association. We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth. (Foucault 1980b, p. 93)

Foucault has tended to concern himself mostly with how discourses constitute differentiation of subject positions and the concurrent differentiation of exercise of power, for example medical discourse and the constitution of the patient. This also involves the analysis of discourse in terms of the constitution of the institutional participants, that is, doctors in medical discourse or the police in legal discourse. This thesis concentrates on the practitioners within design discourse yet it is important to recognise that this discourse also constitutes other positions. These include the 'client' and those who are ultimate end-users of 'designed' goods and who can be seen to view the worth of these goods and to who some extent define who they are in terms of their designed consumables.

We may conclude that the production of meanings is never outside of relations of power and always invested with some form of defining or re-defining of subject positions. In medical discourse both doctor and patient are loci of various effects of power relations entered into through the discourse, however neither is committed to a given course of action. Power is only available through the various ways in which it is continuously negotiated, exercised or resisted.

> What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression. (Foucault 1980b, p. 119)

Discourses make available certain ways of knowing and experiencing things. The experience is ordered, informed, regulated and made available, in specific forms—one can only know things through discourse. The value of this notion is that it negates any need for recourse to Marx's deterministic notion of ideology in the sense of false consciousness, which assumes the problematic notion of a real consciousness and of what it might consist. Although consciousness is only possible through discourse and in this sense discourses can be seen to create audiences[1], these audiences are not passive. This is because discourses are power-knowledge relations and, as we have noted, power can always be resisted, that is, power relations always maintain agency.

This notion of active audiences opposes traditional structural models of society, which regard individuals as products of their social location (usually defined as class) where course of action is solely determined by that social location. Hindess (1989) provides a useful insight into the notion of agency, which avoids the irreconcilable debate between the incongruous paradigms of structural models (human subjected to system of social relations) and of those of the constitutive subject (human as creative subject beyond social location) and instead addresses the specific nature of decision-making and action in their occurrence.

Hindess regards both structural and subjective models as similar in a significant regard:

> What is shared here is the conception of the human subject as characterized by essential attributes of will and subjectivity: as a condition of its creative activity in the one case and of its subjection to its position in the structure in the other. (1989, pp. 1-2)

[1] Although this thesis concentrates on the experiences of designers, graphic designers and educators, it is important to recognise that these individuals also constituted at other times, audiences as students in design education, and audiences for the design and graphic design publications which were directed toward them. I use 'audience' here in the relational sense, as exemplified in Nightingale (1996) and not in the traditional social science sense of 'people'.

He sees both of these approaches as essentially based on the 'portfolio' model of intentional behaviour, which sees the individual making choices out of a specific range available to them (as in a portfolio). From this perspective the only difference between the structuralist and subjective models is that in the structuralist model 'the content of the portfolio is a function of the actor's social location' (p. 2).

Whilst acknowledging that both models have their strengths, Hindess argues against the reductionist portfolio models and proposes instead a model where the actor is seen as a 'locus of decision and action' (p. 3). This allows firstly for the recognition of 'techniques and forms of thought employed by [actors] in assessing the situation of action, and of the social conditions on which they depend' (p. 4) and secondly, for a definition of the actor which may go beyond the human subject and recognize as actors those agencies such as political parties, trade unions, and the like. An important feature of Hindess's model is that it demands an observance that actors must be in a position to 'act', that is they must be able to make decisions and act upon them and so previous notions of non-human actors must be re-evaluated in terms of whether they indeed ever had a means of reaching and formulating decisions and then acting upon them. This clearly problematises many approaches which treat class, society, or gender as collective actors. Where there is no vehicle for decision-making within the structure then the notion of the structure being an actor makes little sense. Thus class is a useful way of categorising a group of people of a similar economic location where members may be seen generally to share certain experiences or characteristics. However we must be wary of attributing to class the power to decide upon a particular course of action, to make assessments of a situation or to formulate their interests. These are things that actors, equipped with particular discourses which guide their decisions and actions, do.

Bourdieu's notion of distinction

Bourdieu posits that in capitalist society the dominant class is maintained in its position not by the traditional transmission of material possessions, but by the transmission of power through the inculcation of certain values, skills, languages—ways of knowing things—that Bourdieu terms 'cultural capital'. Thus children of bourgeois parents have acquired codes that predispose them to a certain advantage over those without the codes, in institutionalised settings which support and reproduce these codes. Although institutions support, continue and categorise through the learning of these codes, Bourdieu emphasises the way in which these codes are already in place before a child experiences institutionalised learning. Familiarity with these codes is invested in early family life through the practice of living, of making

sense of the world and developing ways of knowing things. Although Bourdieu discusses this in relation to art perception, it should be noted his notion of habitus covers the acquisition of codes of perception for the entire range of values, interests, abilities and languages of different classes.

> In a sense, one can say that the capacity to see (voir) is a function of the knowledge (savoir), or concepts, that is, the words, that are available to name visible things, and which are, as it were, programmes for perception. A work of art has meaning and interest only for someone who possesses the cultural competence, that is, the code, into which it is encoded. (Bourdieu 1984, p. 2)

In Distinction (1984) Bourdieu identifies high art as the mechanism by which one class excludes and defines another as 'uncultured' for not possessing its language and the tastes and interests which the language enables. In Foucault's terms we may regard art discourse as entailing enunciative positions—artist, critic, educator, student, historian, buyer; by a language of art—concepts and categories such as genre, period, an oeuvre, an artist's life; and the institutions—the studio, the academy, the hallowed gallery. Art discourse thus creates particular subject positions through a way of knowing art that is invested with the maintenance of particular social categories.

Kitsch, as an antithesis to good or real art—art, that is, for those who do not know any better or who, in Bourdieu's terms are not vested with the language to distinguish one from the other, for example, can be seen as an object created in discourse which maintains the exclusivity of art. This occurs, however, in a less 'deliberately orchestrated' sense than a strictly Marxist reading might suggest. Kitsch emerges simultaneously with the shifting of power that makes possible the construction of the subject in art. This occurs as we have noted, not through some class-imposed false consciousness but as an emergence in the field of possible ways of knowing. This argument can be made in an almost identical fashion within design.

By representing design in a particular way, that is, as something which contains, teaches and represents various notions of taste—whether it be modernism, pure functionalism, historicism, or otherwise—design discourse operates in much the same way as the discourse of art. Indeed it is less a task of this thesis of showing how design objects also act as fine art objects with regard to creating various subject positions which maintain social distinctions and hierarchies, as indicating how design discourse lays claim to certain 'art' objects already investigated for their attributed cultural value in the approaches of Bourdieu and in particular in the work of Bennett et al (1999), which is based on Bourdieu's methodology but which is specifically Australian.

Bourdieu's work Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste (1984) classifies a wide range of survey respondents according to their social origin and early upbringing, through their furniture, fashion and food purchases and compares this to their preferences and ways of describing (that is, their language of) art. Here we have a case of discursive border objects or the area of 'negotiated discord' between discourses mentioned earlier as many of the criteria Bourdieu uses to establish a correlation between a language of art and social status are often seen as objects of design discourse. Food design is often presented in magazines and interestingly its use in Barthes (1980) has been taken up in many design theory courses and may be considered one of the points of emergence in design of semiotic approaches. Fashion, too, is often considered one of the objects of design discourse with numerous educational institutions featuring fashion as part of their design faculty, whilst furniture is one of the most dominant objects of design discourse firmly entrenched in design histories, design museums, taught in design curricula and boasting numerous doyens of high design in business and popular culture. Bourdieu (1984) makes the following statement regarding the purchasing preferences:

> Nothing, perhaps, more directly depends on early learning, especially the learning which takes place without any express intention to teach, than the dispositions and knowledge that are invested in clothing, furniture and cooking or, more precisely, in the way clothes, furniture and food are bought. Thus the mode of acquisition of furniture (department store, antique-dealer, shop or Flea Market) depends at least as much on social origin as on schooling. (p. 78)

Bennet et al. consider many subjects that are often found in current design discourse including photography, television and film, as well as automobiles (industrial design). It should be noted here that the points of connection between art and design discourses are so numerous, the issue of where they rightfully belong is contentious and it is, in fact, this contention that is explored in this thesis in terms of how a discourse of design emerges.

I do not wish to place too fine a point on design discourse in terms of its role in maintaining a particular social order as is common in readings of Bourdieu's work. These have tended to place too much conviction on the power of a single discourse. This is of course ill considered as discourses present ways in which things may be known, and make available subject positions, but these are themselves discursive materials to be used by actors. Design and art discourse must be seen as contributing in a range of ways to hegemonic forms of knowledge through which social inequalities are maintained, but their specific role in this must be recognised alongside

of discursive forms of appropriation, negotiation and resistance. Bourdieu notes the attempts of artists to criticise their relationship to the high art-buying public:

> All the strategies which intellectuals and artists produce against the 'bourgeois' inevitably tend, quite apart from any explicit intention, and by virtue of the structure of the space in which they are generated, to be dual-action devices . . . [thus] the 'bourgeois' can so easily use the art produced against them as a means of demonstrating their distinction. (Bourdieu 1984 p.254)

This returns us to the notion of discourse as mutually constitutive relations of power that only work when they work both ways, which recognises the subject as constituted through numerous discourses which intersect, support each other, clash and in which the subject is at once designer, business practitioner or student, family member, consumer—effectively the locus of numerous knowledges which may at times work together or be incompatible. It is, in this sense, important to recognise the subject as actor in the sense proposed by Hindess[2].

In this thesis we consider in particular how design discourse has emerged, and regard graphic design as the reconfiguring of certain practices which help constitute, and simultaneously exploit, the emerging discourse. We consider how power relations are being shifted in the reconstitution of these practices and through the emergence of the discourse itself, and also explicate how overarching notions like modernism have been used to at once facilitate these shifts in power, and at the same time, obscure the political nature of these discursive formations. The thesis is concerned with these changes not as international 'movements', but more so in their perception and presentation as international movements and the effects of this within local and institutional specificities.

These shifts are not seen to occur in isolation but are coextensive with a range of social and industrial changes that allow for, or necessitate the emergence and constitution of, the discourse of design. Although we are interested in how certain individuals and groups are benefited and others disadvantaged by these formations, this is not seen as a simple cultivation of a given area by an elite class, but rather a complex range of inter-related alterations of capacities and possibility whereby some are better disposed than others to benefit.

Before moving on to the role of histories in the emergence of design discourse it is worthy of note that there are numerous discourses which act as boundaries of design discourse and that, as already noted, the relation of each of these to design discourse

[2] It should be noted that 'the subject' here should not be confused with that sense allegedly objectively described by the psychoanalytic theory influential in later concepts of ideology.

is a kind of negotiated discord. Although this thesis concentrates on only a few of these there are others of considerable significance to which we could direct our attention. In particular the jostling for position between design and architecture is an important area to which an entire thesis could be devoted. Unfortunately such a vast area of study must remain outside of the scope of this thesis, and whilst we touch on it in places, for example, in Pevsner's approach to design history, it will have to remain in the large part for others to explore.

The role of histories in design discourses

Of particular import in this thesis are the scholarly texts on design and graphic design including theories and histories on the subjects, in particular the attempts by design and graphic design historians to describe the 'evolution of design' (Meggs 1998, p. ix) from disparate activities (for example illumination of manuscripts, printing and etching) to a single phenomenon (field, area, discipline and the like). I do not approach these as disinterested observations and overviews that merely attempt to understand or to place in perspective the array of graphic design subjects. Rather they are seen as thoroughly implicated in the production and legitimisation of the discourse of graphic design.

Using Foucuault's notion of discourse allows for the observation not only of related activities and practices, but also of hierarchies of authority and subjectivities and approaches available to theorise or develop concepts. It thus demands a consideration of questions such as 'What is legitimate design and what is not?' and 'Who may make such judgements and how they are enforced?' Most importantly it also allows an entirely different way of viewing 'the history of design'.

Histories are one of the most significant forms of the textual production of knowledge and power. Histories act to validate discourses. They do this by calling up a number of concepts which are underpinned by the assumption of an a priori condition of continuity: notions of tradition, influence (with its reference to causal process), development and evolution (and the principle of coherence), and spirit of an age or epoch (Foucault 1972). Traditional histories work by making connections, noting similarities, 'revealing' a continuous flow of thought, processes and objects — they also require judgements that disregard information deemed unnecessary, unprofessional, or unwanted. They are written in institutions and require certain ways of framing, accounting for, referencing, producing, and validating information. They are discursive artefacts comprised of specific power-knowledge relations. Traditional histories then are no less political than other discursive elements. This is not to be regarded as some form of internal conspiracy; merely that histories are enmeshed within a range of political conditions which always render them 'histories of the

present' rather than of the past. The Foucauldian genealogy used in this thesis is an alternative to traditional histories.

This thesis sets out to show how graphic design has emerged historically, how certain forms of knowledge were included whilst others were excluded, how different 'bordering' discourses altered to accommodate such an emergence, and how hierarchies were created which accredit certain fields of work while others are discredited as illegitimate. It sets out to uncover in particular how design and graphic design have been formed through discourse.

The questions I will ask are these: What were the previous ways of knowing the objects that currently sit within design discourse and to what uses have these previous ways of knowing them been put? What is the difference between graphic design, commercial art and other such categories, not in a phenomenological sense but in the context of their specific emergences and use, in their relation to work practices, educational institutions and historical representations? How have design and graphic design histories contributed to the creation of ways of knowing their objects? What kinds of things have been excluded in the constitution of these histories? What subjectivities have become available for ordering the experience of design and graphic design work and study, and how have power relations been shifted in this ordering?

The benefits of a genealogy are numerous. In the first place, a genealogy avoids the format of traditional histories, which, through its privileging of mostly white, middle-class, well-educated males, maintains and supports a dominant mainstream hegemony. As well as this, however, by concentrating on the politics underlying historical events (asking not so much who, or what, but under what conditions was something or other made possible) a genealogy allows us to view contemporary states of affairs from a different perspective. A genealogy is history told from the concerns of, and thus acting as intervention in, the present. Instead of asking, for example, whether the renaming of graphic design as visual communication gives a more accurate title, or one that somehow embodies what designers do more 'truthfully', we are led to ask, who benefits from such a change. By illuminating the political aspects of the discourse, we are better positioned to make more useful and constructive choices about how we will maintain and promote its constitution. This provides a powerful tool with which to ensure that the discourse remains effective whilst at the same time open it up to greater possibilities for inclusiveness and social change. As an example of inclusiveness, a genealogical approach is better able to see the dearth of female designers, as a political problem whereby the definition of what has constituted legitimate design has had parameters set by what powerful men design, thereby tending to exclude women by definition. Thus, we can reconsider those designs

produced by women and often relegated to the realms of 'craft', in terms not of their illegitimacy as 'real' design work, but in terms of the power of those who define what is legitimate design and what is not. As an example of how a genealogical approach works towards social change, it resituates questions like 'Are sustainability issues really legitimate parts of design discourse?' to questions like "Do we need to constitute design discourse such that sustainability is an integral component of it?' and "How might we best do this?' We are also able to remove from notions of 'legitimacy', the aesthetics of home-decoration which privileges personal trinkets, family photographs and comfort over high modernist minimalism, or the aesthetics of Women's Day as opposed to Vogue. By recognising that questions asking 'what design truly is' have always had a political imperative, we are better able to shift these questions to the more useful 'what should design be?' and locally 'what should design be here?'

Chapter 2 gives a summary of the current state of enquiry into the areas of design and graphic design and considers a number of histories and analyses. It concentrates on those which impact most directly on how these areas are conceptualised and practiced in Australia. Chapter 3 considers early art practices and education in Australia. It looks at the nineteenth century emergence of the design schools and the South Kensington system in Britain and traces the importation of these approaches to art teaching in Australia. Through this we are able to excavate the politics of fine art discourse and note how teaching practices worked to keep from the working classes, forms of creativity considered at that time the rightful property of a privileged elite. This is contextualised by an explication of the growing dominance of fine art discourse, as a language of distinction in Australia, and from this we can observe the separation of commercial art as 'poor relative' of fine art. Chapter 4 considers the emergence of design discourse in Australia with emphasis on the effects of the international experience of the Bauhaus on a 'core' group of Australian designers. It covers in some detail the meanings of design from original Bauhaus notions to its ratification in limited form through notions of high modernism. It then explores the related emergence of Australian industrial design organisations, noting how perceptions of both Anglo-centricism and elitism in these industrial design organisations underlined difficulties for graphic design to emerge as part of design discourse, as opposed to how other areas had emerged. Chapter 5 then excavates the specificity of the emergence within design discourse of graphic design, looking at the complex relations and battle for supremacy between the notions of graphic design and commercial art. This is explored in particular through the character and writings of one of the early core group, Richard Haughton James, whose interests traversed the boundaries of fine art, commercial art, advertising, and design. Chapter 6 then explores in detail how typography, as a key component of graphic design, worked as a language of exclusion. We explore typography as the reconstitution into 'design'

elements, of certain practices, many of which were traditionally in the printing trade. We will note how this worked as a kind of strategic argument, based on a combined language of high art connoisseurship and modernist aesthetics, which enabled graphic design to become acceptable as a legitimate component of design discourse, in that it provided the required social distinction. Typography here is compared to ticket writing, an example of practices which were excluded in the formation of graphic design, because of their inability to confer social distinction. Chapter 7 then compares the field of advertising and explicates its relative absence from design and graphic design histories, noting how its absence is related not only to its inability to provide social distinction, but to its role as antithesis to high modernist arguments of forms and function, and thus problematic relationship to graphic design. Chapter 8 looks at the consolidation of graphic design within design discourse, through professional practice—in particular, the professionalisation of design practices within the advertising industry—and the emergence from this industry, of the consultant designer. Its sees this emergence in terms of the ascendency of Euro-American over Anglo-centric business and aesthetic approaches, and the favouring of these through new technologies, and social and market changes. It notes here the significance of the founding of the Australian Graphic Designers' Association and its legitimising role for graphic design. Chapter 9 sees the consolidation of graphic design as component of design discourse finally achieved through the instigation of courses in graphic design at universities, which not only promote certain ways of knowing design and graphic design, but also, importantly, confer the legitimacy of a lineage of historical tradition and theories. We note here the powerful effect university status has in terms of dictating who may be a graphic designer and who may not, and as such, we can explicate how notions of legitimate creativity are, through discourses, maintained as the possession of a privileged few.

Dilnot's task

In 1983, Victor Margolin, a well-known design theorist, critic and editor of the journal Design Issues, sent a letter to Clive Dilnot setting out the brief for an article on the current state of design history. Part of the brief suggested the 'value in giving a topography of the "methodological, political, social, and design theoretical positions" that underlie current design historical work' (Dilnot 1984, p. 213). In accordance with this Dilnot produced the article 'The State of Design History' in two parts, which were published in consecutive issues of the journal. In 1989 these were collated along with other articles selected from the journal to produce the volume Design Discourse: History Theory Criticism (1989), edited by Margolin.

The blurb on the back cover gives a description of the range of the discussion contained within the volume as well as its general perspective and position within current theory:

> The collection begins with a discussion of the various expressions of opposition to the modernists' traditional, purist approach toward design. Drawing on postmodernist theory as well as other critical strategies, the writers examine the relations among design, technology, and social organization to show how design has become a complex and multidisciplinary activity. The second section provides examples of new methods of interpreting and analyzing design, ranging from rhetoric and semiotics to phenomenology . . . A final section, related to design history, shifts in emphasis to ideological frameworks, such as capitalism and patriarchy, that establish boundaries for the production and use of design.

The blurb goes on to state the (largely successful) intentions of the book:

> This much needed anthology will serve as essential source material for teachers, design students, practitioners, and scholars interested in the connections between design and cultural theory.

In line with the critical assault on modernism across many disciplines, the writings represent a significant critique of previous ways of thinking about design and this collection of papers, and in particular Dilnot's response to the brief, act as a starting point for my thesis. Although many avenues of postmodern thought have been explored Foucault's work has been largely overlooked, and using Foucauldian notions of discourse and genealogy, I adopt a different critical perspective to the notion of design discourse presented by Margolin, and depart considerably from the notion of design history proffered by Dilnot. This allows for a quite different evaluation of how design has been presented historically. This thesis analyses the accounts of what design is, what graphic design is, and how design and graphic design history have been presented through a number of what are currently considered key texts in education and industry.

The notion of discourse in Margolin

In his introduction, Margolin criticises Habermas because he 'develops a typology of social action that makes no reference to designing as a central human activity, although elsewhere he does have such a category for art' and similarly Lyotard and others who 'postulate a more fragmented and less rational society [yet] don't make design visible as a distinct sphere of cultural transformation' (Margolin 1989, pp. 7-8).

It is precisely this making visible of design that I propose to interrogate here. The act of 'making visible' can be conceived in two different ways—either as 'revealing' something that was there all the time yet obscured, that is by changing something other than the object in question, or by reorganising what is there to create something new, that is by changing something to create the object. Margolin takes an approach which sees design as 'obscured' by other things, as something the essence of which has always existed yet has failed to be revealed or has been revealed only partially in these previous analyses. A different viewpoint is that by shifting the objects, by categorising them differently and by naming our new arrangement we may also 'make visible' the object design. This thesis takes the second perspective that making design visible is part of the work of constructing it.

In the case where design is presented as a kind of object that is yet to be fully revealed we need to ask how this object is constituted in its partially hidden state. From Margolin's 'Introduction', we can suggest two general forms. In the first instance it is existential—a particular activity, profession, practice, way of thinking, an approach, an attitude, a description, a way of describing. In the second it is more expansive. It also entails a kind of grouping category which contains all of the above and more—components that exist undiscovered, hidden in the labyrinth of theory and practice (design, art, technology, sustainability, or subjects so far undiscovered) that have yet to be brought to the surface, and elements that as yet do not exist but will be formed by technologies of the future. All of these together constitute the promise of a discoverable unity, rather than a particular experience. Both approaches are then unproblematically accommodated by Margolin's particular use of the term 'design discourse' which although acting as the title of the compilation is not explained in either the introduction or closing essay. The presumption is that discourse is a kind of conversation embodied in the range of approaches to design taken throughout the text and which also acts as a kind of larger categorising term than 'issues', in that design essays are presented in the journal Design Issues, key articles of which are collated from different journal issues into the text Design Discourse. One might wonder if discourse in this sense then is simply a kind of wider discussion, a more refined discussion, or one that has some greater legitimacy in terms of the editor's intentions or collating techniques. If the latter then discourse becomes the active word in a particular author's or editor's argument, in the sense of a selection and gathering, rather than a general communicating among interlocutors. In whichever sense it is used however, discourse is presented as an unproblematic and somewhat self-evident category, rather than as an object of study.

In Margolin's use the two terms discourse and design act as unifying concepts which are presented to suggest a relatedness through a matrix of connections and common characteristics whilst maintaining the independence of the distinct practices and fields they are given to contain. The stated intention of the volume is not to 'meld them all into a new, comprehensive profession', but to 'define new points of contiguity and to facilitate greater collaboration between different types of designers' (Margolin 1989, p. 4). Margolin states that the essays in the first section 'do not outline a coherent new design paradigm' (p. 11) yet each presents a different facet of, or approach to the anti-modernist or postmodernist conception of design from Selle's direct criticism of modernist paradigms to essays by Vitta, Diani, Morgantini, Branzi and Moles which 'make direct or indirect reference to postmodernism or specific postmodern theorists' (p. 11). Given the call for a 'new discipline of design studies' to address the problem of previous writing being 'fragmented, not integrated within the context of a coherent definition of what designing is', one might indeed suggest that Margolin is offering this volume as representative of a new paradigm in design theorising.

The sense we are given is that the first step has been taken—the common ground of different practices is assumed—there is 'a field'. Margolin suggests the next step is 'to begin mapping the field of design itself according to a broadened definition, and to start organizing existing research into related areas' (Margolin 1989, p. 6). That such a field exists has been assumed or asserted in numerous texts before and since Margolin's call for its mapping, yet its existence is still not without considerable contention. In 1998, for example, Buchanan still saw the need for a statement that the field had emerged and for a significant justification of this position. His definition of field was that it was constituted 'by a coherent subject matter, a body of methods and processes, and a community of individuals who seek to understand the operating principles that shape the field' (1998, p 64). This emergence was through what he referred to as the development of a 'critical mass' of:

> Individuals who are motivated to understand the nature of design and to act on their understanding in order to affect design practice . . . individuals within design as well as individuals in other disciplines, all of whom see the possibilities for new inquiry in what is surely one of the most important and least recognized arts of human culture. (Buchanan 1998, p. 64)

In this way the field is given as a specific set of practices and rules and importantly a recognisable community that has awareness of themselves in relation to these things. The notion of a 'coherent subject matter' is of interest in that coherence may be taken as both a unity and as something that 'makes sense'. It stands for both an 'agreed upon' object as well as a sense of a phenomenologically real object.

We can see that Buchanan's use is very much with the latter, which is reinforced by his observation that the field is shaped by operating principles that the community attempts to 'understand'.

It is with this sense of a design field that Margolin calls for a mapping of the terrain to discover the precise relations of its components. Certain areas have already been established, such that Margolin can state that 'we presently divide design . . . into discrete forms of practice such as industrial design, graphic design, stage design, interior design, or fashion design' (Margolin 1989, p. 4); but others areas may be yet to find their place, or be recognised as sub-categories of the design field and presumably also be notated as 'something or other' design. This thesis enquires into this general structuring of design and is specifically directed at the reasons for, and effects of, the category 'graphic design' within this structure.

In this thesis I consider design as a discourse, but not in the sense that Margolin uses the term which implies a general and open communication among and for interested parties, but rather in that second sense of a specific grouping which entails not only gathering, but sorting, categorising, excluding, explaining, judging, and presenting as the way of knowing design. An important difference is that the object 'design' is not viewed as something the meaning of which the discourse can discover but rather as that which the discourse enables. Nietzsche has suggested that 'where there is meaning, it is possible to trace the struggles, battles and violence that produced it' (Danaher et al. 2000, p. 27) and in a sense we are trying to explicate the political struggles out of which 'design' and 'graphic design' have been given meaning. Rather than ignoring or disguising the political interests of the parties involved, we are intent on bringing to the fore the power relations out of which meaning is created. To a considerable degree this is accomplished through the process of defamiliarising, de-essentialising and problematising the object design—distancing oneself from design as the hero of the text. Although we take Margolin's general structuring of design (and its subcategory graphic design) as a starting point we are considering this structure as a discourse out of which the object graphic design is constructed.

History which reveals the true object design

In 'Narrative Problems of Graphic Design History' (1994) Margolin criticises the expansive narratives provided by authors like Meggs, Craig and Barton, and Satué for being too 'farsighted' in their concept of graphic design, suggesting that they 'assert a continuity among objects and actions that are in reality discontinuous' (p. 237). Instead he calls for an approach that maintains the separation of practices that come into graphic design from other areas. The problem with Margolin's approach here is that whilst recognising the discontinuity between the different fields, he fails

to recognise the process by which each field itself has emerged out of discontinuities. Not only attempting to differentiate the continuities assumed by these authors, Margolin also suggests key professionals whose work is 'missing' (p. 240) from their accounts of graphic design history. Margolin thus reads history as a continuity of facts, which are discoverable, and which can form 'a narrative structure that can begin to explain graphic design' (p. 236).

Baker notes that in the 'Design History or Design Studies' debate of 1995, the editors of Design Issues attempted to find a safe ground on which to base their minimal definition of historical writing. Their solution was that it meant 'to provide the facts about a subject' (qtd. in Baker 1997, p. 65). Clearly both of these viewpoints position a notion of historical facts as discoverable and existent 'prior to' their articulation in discourse. A genealogy does not take this view. 'All we have are material effects and material acts; there is no essential meaning to things—no essential subject behind action, nor is there an essential order to history' (Lechte 1994, p. 111).

Dilnot's 'The State of Design History'

Dilnot has produced a comprehensive and perceptive account of where design histories are currently situated with respect to each other and to histories of other areas. He asks a number of significant questions and produces a work of great importance to design discourse—a fact noted by Walker in his similarly impressive work Design History and the History of Design (1989). Because Dilnot has created such a comprehensive account I have taken this to outline some of the differences in my approach. Having said that it is important to recognise that where I bring a different approach Dilnot is not so much incorrect but that before any other differences, we have altogether different tasks and different criteria of success.

The problematic relationship between the definition of design and the history of design are evident and usually stated in most histories of the subject. Although Dilnot's second paper sees this relationship as problematical, I would contend that in a number of ways his work still presumes an essence of design that is somehow embedded and discoverable within history and that it indicates the best direction to take in order to discover it.

Dilnot prefaces his exploration of the state of history which will putatively surrender or at least point the way to an understanding of what design is, with a statement of the importance of reaching this understanding and reaching it quickly: 'We are becoming more and more a designed and designing society' (p. 214). He presents the following two quotes:

> Whereas once technological systems, especially the largest, evolved, now more and more and larger and larger ones are designed, constructed, and managed by man. (Hughes, qtd. in Dilnot, p. 214)

> Design is the indispensible [sic] leavening of the American way of life. It emerged with the need of the colonists to transform the wilderness into a secure haven and expanded as a natural component of the industrial revolution in the New World. The United States was in all likelihood the first nation to be designed—to come into being as a deliberate consequence of the actions of men who recognized a problem and resolved it with the greatest benefit to the whole. America did not just happen: It was designed. (Pulos qtd. in Dilnot, pp. 214-5)

Whilst noting the somewhat overblown nature of Pulos's words, Dilnot's use of the quotes nevertheless creates a quite dramatic and expansive notion of design. This allows him to posit that: 'Clearly then, both understanding of design and its public communication are not only necessary professional demands, but also urgent social needs' (p. 215). Thus before embarking on any documenting of design history, Dilnot has already given a significant and powerful definition of this thing design he means to explore. The design used in these examples is the notion of planning and its importance is conveyed by the content of what it is that is being planned, namely, the United States of America. Clearly the planning of one's wardrobe or tonight's meal has less dramatic effect but could also be encompassed by this definition of design. The problem with this, however, is that it becomes contentious whether in fact we are becoming 'more and more a designed society' and whether indeed design or planning is now more pervasive than it was in, say, the Nineteenth century. Dilnot's recourse to a kind of grand scheme of things is part of the rhetoric of political positioning of design as an area that needs to be studied. If we regard design, however, in terms of a gathering together of a range of activities, from the laying out of type to the building of a bridge, we may suggest that the practices have in many cases preceded the current category design, and that, although they may have been conceptualised differently, they were being handled perfectly well prior to this categorisation. Of course Dilnot is attributing to design an inherent importance beyond that which would be given to simply 'planning', and indeed recognises its association with notions like sales, the decorative arts, architecture, art and the like.

Dilnot then moves on to making a case for a history that maintains the distinctive groups which go into the general field:

> In the case of design, [historians] have made repeated efforts to collapse historically different and precise forms of designing into a single system, usually one dominant at the time the history was written. (Dilnot 1984, p. 215)

Dilnot suggests that with a 'careful study of history' history can maintain the varieties of design. He goes so far as to suggest that 'design . . . can be understood in toto by making the varieties of design historically credible' (p. 215) (my italics).

What is observable here is the way that design is already being constructed as a unifying element over a number of different individual practices. Dilnot then begins to explore the production of design history. He notes that before 1939 there were few 'areas of design historical activity'. He propounds the histories of the decorative arts, Pevsner's Pioneers of Modern Design (1960), and typographic histories. The period between 1936 and the late 1960s is seen as a gap in design histories which Dilnot attributes to a number of factors—the historical and intellectual weight that histories provided was required by neither product nor graphic design except for the areas of typography and illustration. These two categories are seen as components of graphic design, yet, of what they consist and how and why they came to be regarded as graphic design is not questioned.

At each stage Dilnot provides a deepening definition of the structure of design discourse through its subcategories and objects. If we consider that Dilnot's history defines design in a particular way by this kind of grouping operation, by reference to specific texts and key figures, then we can recognise that design is given a particular form, that is, it is to be known in a certain way. Although the impact of Dilnot's work may or may not be deemed significant, before Dilnot design was not known in quite precisely the way it is after his account. We must be cognisant that in some sense design history is being created anew in Dilnot through his techniques of observation, categorisation and the various calls for judgement at each point as to what should rightly constitute design history, and be equally aware that this involves the exclusion of certain other realms of practice. The presenting of certain notions of design history from Pevsner's 1936 account or from Morris in the 1880s becomes problematic in conceptualising what is meant by design at those times. We must consider Dilnot's current perception of design and precisely how it allows for, or necessitates the inclusion of say, decorative arts histories within a cataloguing of design histories.

Dilnot states that although there is no 'single, organized discipline with defined aims and objects' there has been an emergence of a new design history with the following

principles (Dilnot 1984, p. 221):

- It studies professional design activity
- It studies the results rather than the form of that activity
- An equally natural orientation was added to design in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries
- It focuses on individual designers

He notes it is also characterised by the following absences:

- Little explicit consideration of aims, methods, or role of design history regarding audience
- Little consideration of design history's origins, except in an education and institutional sense
- Lack of historical, methodological, or critical reflection

Dilnot categorises four areas of design history work:

(i) An extension of the traditional histories of decorative arts
(ii) An emphasis on the role and effects of design in modernism
(iii) Contemporary design organisation into specialised activities and effects
(iv) Design theory and social context

We can note that these histories have taken the perspective of design as a continuous development towards an eventual unity which Dilnot, in part, identifies through: key figures like Nikolaus Pevsner or Victor Papanek; movements such as the arts and crafts movement or modernism; theories or themes like 'form follows function' and the establishment of a canonical list of 'important' designs. All these are contextualised by the conditions and influences of their particular epochs. Of the relatively recent emergence of social histories of design, Dilnot writes:

> The fourth area . . . is a natural outgrowth of the focus on issues of design organization. The more design and designing are studied, the more important a broad context becomes. (p. 228)

This conclusion posits a kind of 'natural' and broad development that de-emphasises the local politics of academic institutions and the emergence of communication and cultural studies approaches. There are possibilities other than the one Dilnot presents here, which rely less on the broad perspective of 'natural outgrowth'; for example, the effects of the emerging polytechnics and the associated influx of students from lower

to middle backgrounds, which, as these individuals gained their post-graduate and teaching positions, arguably altered the emphasis theory placed on social origins and context.

Dilnot's categories follow a rational chronological progression. The completion of Dilnot's task is through his second paper, which addresses the problems that face the 'movement toward creating a discipline of the history of design' (p. 233), and attempts to offer solutions to these problems. The first problem is the multiple uses of the term design and thus ambiguity of meaning, which Dilnot sees as having two negative effects: firstly it obscures the 'material' existence of design—'a noun and a verb, and also one that denotes a form of representation, an activity, a practice, a product, etc., etc., at one and the same time' (Teymur qtd. in Dilnot, p. 234); and secondly it tends to produce 'lineage studies whose aim it has been to extend present trends in design practice back into history, to claim history for the present' (p. 235). Like a number of other critics, Dilnot uses Pevsner's Pioneers of Modern Design as an example of this. However Dilnot sees this only in a sense of collapsing the multiplicity of design activities into a single model rather than as a political activity of threading those activities together into an overarching discourse. Again Dilnot's prima facie aim is to maintain the independence of different facets of this discourse whilst the way of knowing design is always through the discourse which thereby demands an assumption of some underlying cohesion beyond the character of the individual components. By contrast, if we compare, for example, a history of graphic design which begins with cave paintings (Meggs 1998) with histories of product design that begin with the onset of the industrial revolution (Forty 1995) or with the emergence of the recognised professional practice of 'product design' in the early twentieth century, we problematise these notions of design as a singularity.

The second problem that Dilnot raises is that of identifying the audience for design histories, asking if design histories should be for design practitioners, educational institutions or someone else (p. 238)? This is an important point because it begins to open up the notion of 'what histories do'. It leads to questions of their outcome in terms of who benefits and perhaps who is disadvantaged by certain historical approaches. Unfortunately Dilnot here falls back to notions of a 'correct' answer, with questions like 'Is it better to think of design history as part of history in general?' and 'Does not design history potentially deserve to be linked with cultural studies . . . (p. 238) (my italics).

The third concern Dilnot raises is:

> The problem of constructing a discipline that can address itself to roles in a

> specific manner and that can develop the status and meaning of the subject in relation to wider academic, public, and professional issues. (p. 238)

This is perhaps Dilnot's strongest and most direct call to action. It begins to deal with the specific effect of the discipline and takes a more self-aware and constructive approach. Rather than focussing on the meaning of design and design histories or their 'rightful' place and roles, it asks how it should fulfil the tasks that are most significant within its sphere of practice. Dilnot's fourth problem brings us to the general philosophical question of the point of histories. In attacking how writers such as MacCarthy and Bailey try to 'limit and reduce design history and its potential' (p. 242), he paints a heroic picture of the importance of the true design historian (that is, one who does not limit the subject area) through Walter Benjamin's quote: 'Only that historian will have the gift of fanning the spark of hope in the past who is firmly convinced that even the dead will not be safe from the enemy if he wins'. Dilnot here not only warns of the dangers of too narrow a scope for design history but goes on to suggest that all history study and in particular social history may be better off (to say the least) for a recognition of the great significance of design.

Whilst the intentions here are admirable, the outcome (which is the concern in any genealogical analysis) is not only to once again anchor the notion of design as the wide category of 'making' within the expanse of 'all made things' and their meanings and impact in social history; but also to heroise the discourse, a particular tactic of validation that occurs in numerous design texts. By this I submit that validation is not a detached logical and objective process but one that is politically charged and relates directly to forms of subjectivity.

I realise that in critiquing Dilnot's text, I have already begun the genealogical task of analysing works within a whole technology of representing design. Although the aim of this thesis is to investigate the specific location of graphic design in Victoria, it is the condition of the present that works such as Dilnot's provide not only a description of current perceptions and methodologies, but are also actors within the discourse, particularly within educational institutions. Dilnot's work was chosen primarily because it does both tasks so admirably. Other texts that perform a similar function to Dilnot's but were either less expansive, effective or are histories rather than texts about histories will be discussed in the relevant sections. It is important to note however that texts about histories are as much implicated in ways of knowing design as histories themselves.

The use of oral history sources

Graphic Design in Victoria has had little documentary history. The documents that do exist tend to portray a field that is part of the continual progressive and natural development of ideas and technologies, which has been nurtured by the efforts of a few special individuals. The history of institutionalised Graphic Design as presented in this thesis attempts, through the exploration of many sources, including oral sources, to direct attention precisely to the multiplicity of diverse sources out of which the achieved status of the discourse has emerged. Oral history has no less legitimacy than documentary forms, and one might regard that the reading of either involves a relationship which is invested with as much ideology and as many techniques of persuasion as the other.

In the later chapters of this thesis I have made considerable use of oral sources—namely a series of interviews with people connected with the design profession or related professions which throw light upon the emergence and constitution of graphic design as a discourse in Victoria. I do not intend to undertake a lengthy discussion on the validity of oral histories, as the case has been well-made in the past.[3]

One must ask, though, how oral history figures in the genealogical process. Firstly it must be recognised that oral history is not a single unproblematic discipline and that among oral historians there exists a wide range of approaches some of which are more based in scholarly research and others more populist. Similarly there are those who regard oral history as fundamentally different from traditional historiography and those who tend to see it as more of an extension of traditional approaches where varying degrees of the legitimacy of oral sources are accepted. There are a number of points of contingency between some of these approaches and genealogy, the most apparent and significant of which where oral history attempts to bring to the surface the political nature of histories. Oral historians however tend to be questioning the legitimacy of the methodology of traditional history rather than its purposes and effects as a genealogical approach does. There is almost always a deference to a notional reality albeit now multi-dimensional, which oral history is seen to better illuminate. This is perhaps best expressed in Thompson (1998):

> Reality is complex and many-sided; and it is a primary merit of oral history that to a much greater extent than most sources it allows the original multiplicity of standpoints to be recreated. (p. 24)

Thompson goes on to contrast the political nature of traditional histories with the more comprehensive and thus 'fairer' account provided in oral history:

[3] For an excellent account see Passerini (1988), Borland (1998), Grele (1998), Portelli (1998) and also the numerous battles and negotiations in this field presented in the Oral History Association of Australia Journal (1983), which extracted a range of articles and replies regarding the identity, validity and use of oral history, over numerous months from Quadrant magazine.

> Modern professional historians are less open with their social message than Macaulay or Marx, since scholarly standards are seen to conflict with declared bias. But the social message is usually present, however obscured . . . . Oral history by contrast makes a much fairer trial possible (p. 24)

Although this should be recognised as an improvement on histories that concentrate on the stories of great men it tends to understate its own politics. Genealogies recognise that the 'social message' in traditional histories is always present because the writing of history is always political.

Oral history technique

The technique of interviewing employed for this thesis has been quite formal, with relatively little prompting—this is because I have been dealing largely with professionals who have had limited time and who I felt needed to see the process as important and historically valuable. Whilst having a prepared set of questions I have not been overly regimented and have, where the occasion required, allowed for other threads of conversation to emerge along with other questions that may have arisen from this. I have also noticed how on some occasions I have allowed interviewers to believe that I have less understanding of the industry, whilst with others it seemed important for their confidence to feel I was more on par with their knowledge. It is important to recognise that this is not deceitful or manipulative, any more than any conversation between two people; and we need recognise that we all wear different hats in different circumstances. In large part communication is the process of finding an appropriate mutual language, which is never prior to communication but coexists and is constantly adjusted in minor ways in response to the situation. I recognise that the techniques I have used may be less useful when interviewing a different group of people or for a different kind of history—say for survivors of the September 11 attacks or for interviewing people of vastly different cultural backgrounds. Whilst scholarly methodologies demand quite specific constraints and considerations in the interview process, one must nevertheless appreciate the dangers of a reduction of methodology to a set of ready-to-use rules and regulations that will at times be inappropriate, unproductive or even insulting.

This argument is not designed to show the superiority of oral history over documentary history, but to highlight the adjustment of focus that can be fruitful for all historical enquiry. Many of the putative problems of oral history are the same as those in traditional histories. Just as in the traditional histories, oral history can tend towards a heroic view. Interviewees are unlikely to regard themselves as 'failures' in business or poor decision makers. Indeed one of the difficult aspects of oral history

is that the historian is perhaps less inclined to employ critical perspectives which may place their interviewee—a very human contributor who has consented to help with an enquiry—in a negative light, where they may have had fewer qualms about being critical of the writer of a piece of documentary evidence—the documentation acting as a kind of emotional screen between historian and writer. What this highlights, however, is less that oral sources need to be approached with a more scientifically neutral and dispassionate gaze, but that documents are written by people and need be treated with the same respect and appreciation. It must be noted, however, that the information provided orally by people must be treated with considerable care and attention given that in many cases interviewees are not in a position to respond to interpretations (through either comments made by the historian or through editing) of the material they have given.[4] It also needs to be recognised that we can be less guarded about statements made verbally than those which we are about to enshrine on paper for posterity and that, even knowing that all comments made may eventually be documented, we are tempted by the very processes of verbal communication and response to be more flippant. This is one of the strengths of oral history but one, which, at the same time, requires that participants be treated with considerable respect. For this reason it is necessary that participants, wherever possible, be shown the work before publication and be given the right to edit their comments. This can sometimes tragically result in the loss of important material but no historian has the right to place their work over the rights of those who make the work possible.

One of the most difficult questions for oral historians is in the choice of who to interview. Whilst some historians claim oral histories are invalidated because they are not statistically an accurate representation of a population, this is a misplaced perception of the problem, which as Grele (1998, p. 41) notes is a historiographical rather than statistical one. We often require, in qualitative research terms, a non-probabilistic judgement sample (those who have the knowledge required to answer the questions). The difficulty in our particular instance is that choice of interviewees may be read as those that constitute key figures in the area, thereby promoting a 'correct' reading of how the events should be seen. There are a number of problems with such an approach. First is the obvious problem that individuals or groups may be overlooked that may have significant impact on, or be significantly affected by, the historical events. Secondly the weighting of participants from one or another area may give a skewed perception of their importance in the resulting constitution of design discourse. In the case of this thesis I have largely selected interviewees on the basis of recommendation from others and I believe this does give a distorted perception of the discourse. However, as my approach in fact analyses the process of discursive formation, and part of this process is the professional and institutional connections that are made and out of which a perception of discourse emerges, then

[4] An interesting and useful account of the emergence and handling of a disagreement about interpretation of an interview is presented in Borland (1998).

the imbalance in fact represents the discursive perception. To counter this imbalance somewhat and hopefully inform the discourse rather than simply re-state its self-perception, I have also included interviews with workers and educators who have been outside of the core group of 'key figures' in the industry. These people have been more peripheral to the core group either in popularity, geographical location, or industry and offer different perspectives from those within this group. In previous oral histories I have found a considerable (if sometimes subtle) pressure from the more active power-brokers in communities to centre the work around the known key figures and I would stress that oral historians need to be aware of this effect. It is often the case that the known key figures tend to be the ones whose perspectives have previously been documented and who tend to present the mainstream historical perspective. This is not always the case and neither is it to say that their perspective is any less valid but the less vocal or those given less importance within the community or discourse may have as much to contribute and because they have often been previously overlooked, may have entirely new and valuable perspectives to contribute to the historical account.

When quotations from interviews are displayed in this thesis they are indented and begin with the surname of the interviewee, also indented. For example:

> Ripper: One would more likely work within the studio of an agency and there designers functioned as designers and there was something of a blur . . . between an art director and a designer.

Oral history sources appear from chapter 4 on, when we move from early history to more recent history where personal recollections are possible. A list of interviewees is available in Appendix 1. All interviews were taped and transcribed. I have not provided full transcripts along with this thesis because firstly, there is no textual analysis of transcripts, and secondly, all excerpts, where possible, were provided to interviewees prior to appearing in this thesis, so that they could make any changes they deemed necessary to maintain their original meanings. As such these excerpts may differ in some minor regards from the initial transcripts.

References

Barthes, Roland 1980, *Mythologies*, Granada, London.

Basson, Steve 1997, The Public Gaze: An Historical Analysis of Public and Private Space, (Thesis) School of Architecture and Fine Arts, University of Western Australia, Perth.

Booth, Wayne C., Colomb, Gregory G. and Williams, Joseph M. 2003, *The Craft of Research*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Borland, Katherine 1998, ''That's not what I said': Interpretive Conflict in Oral Narrative Research', in *The Oral History Reader,* eds. Robert Perks & Alistair Thomson, Routledge, London, pp. 320-332.

Bourdieu, Pierre 1984, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Buchanan, Richard 1998, 'Education and Professional Practice in Design', *Design Issues*, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 63-66.

Danaher, Geoffrey, Schirator, Tony & Webb, Jen 2000, *Understanding Foucault*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, NSW.

Dilnot, Clive 1984, 'The State of Design History, Part 1: Mapping the Field', in *Design Discourse: History Theory Criticism*, ed. Victor Margolin, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, pp. 213-250.

Forty, Adrian 1995, *Objects of Desire: Design and Society since 1750*, Thames and Hudson, London.

Foucault, Michel 1972, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Tavistock, London.

Foucault, Michel 1980a, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*, Vintage-Random House, New York.

Foucault, Michel 1980b, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings,* The Harvester Press, Great Britain.

Foucault, Michel 1984, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History' in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow, Pantheon, New York, pp. 76-100.

Foucault, Michel 1994, (French version, 1966) *The Order of Things; an Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, Vintage Books, New York.

Grele, Ronald J. 1998, 'Movement Without Aim: Methodological and Theoretical Problems in Oral History', in *The Oral History Reader*, eds. Robert Perks & Alistair Thomson, Routledge, London, pp. 38-52.

Grosz, Elizabeth 1990, 'Contemporary Theories of Power and Subjectivity' in *Feminist Knowledge: Critique and Construct*, ed. Sneya Gunew, Routledge, London and New York.

Heller, Steven 2001, *Icons of Graphic Design: Lautrec*, Thames and Hudson, London.

Hindess, Barry 1989, *Political Choice and Social Structure: An Analysis of Actors, Interests and Rationality*, Edward Elgar, Aldershot.

Hindess, Barry 1996, *Discourses of Power: From Hobbes to Foucault*, Blackwell, Oxford.

Hunter, Ian 1991, 'From Discourse to Dispositif: Foucault and the Study of Literature', *Meridian*, 1991, no. 10, pp. 36-53.

Lechte, John 1994, *Fifty Key Contemporary Thinkers: From Structuralism to Postmodernity*, Routledge, London.

Margolin, Victor (Ed.) 1989, *Design Discourse: History, Theory, Criticism*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Margolin, Victor 1994, 'Narrative Problems of Graphic Design History', *Visible Language*, vol. 28, no. 3, pp. 233-43.

Meggs, Phillip B. 1998, *A History of Graphic Design*, John Wiley & Sons, New York.

Nightingale, Virginia 1996, *Studying Audiences: The Shock of the Real*, Routledge, London & New York.

Passerini, Luisa 1998, (orig. pub. 1979), 'Work Ideology under Italian Fascism', in *The Oral History Reader*, eds. Robert Perks & Alistair Thomson, Routledge, London & New York, pp. 53-62.

Pevsner, Nikolaus 1960, *Pioneers of Modern Design: From William Morris to Walter Gropius*, Penguin Books, Middlesex.

Portelli, Alessandro 1998, 'What Makes Oral History Different', in *The Oral History Reader,* eds. Robert Perks & Alistair Thomson, Routledge, London, pp. 63-74.

Taylor, William Max 1993, *Function (and the Limits of Representation)*, Department of Architecture, University of Western Australia, Perth.

2: Literature Review

Other design and graphic design histories

The consideration in this thesis of design and graphic design histories has two functions. Firstly, to place the thesis in the context of current research and secondly, because of the particular methodology employed within this thesis, it is necessary to observe precisely how these histories themselves work to construct ways of knowing design and graphic design. It is not simply their information or their way of presenting this information that needs to be considered here, as it may normally be, to set the stage as it were. My perspective requires that they are also seen as dynamic and political objects in themselves and therefore need to be recognised for their direct effect in terms of enunciative modalities. Whilst ostensibly examining the history of design, they in fact demonstrate notions of what the object design is, who may speak about it, and in what terms. Histories have the effect of consolidating and justifying particular ways of knowing design. They construct relations to other discourses, demonstrate the legitimacy of certain techniques and practices, and present various canonical references. They present past success stories and heroic figures indicating a quite specific range of ways one is able to think of oneself as practitioner, educator, student or consumer of design.

Histories are embedded in the matrix of educational practices[1] providing information to be known, examined and graded, propagating the system of knowledge expert and disciple—a system which invests the knowledge with power and which continues to operate beyond the educational system and into the professional realm. Rather than regarding these texts therefore as simply the starting point for the thesis, the current state of knowledge in the area being studied, we need to analyse the texts themselves to see how they determine and affect precisely what the area to be studied is. For this reason only a few histories are examined here but these are explored in considerably greater depth than one might normally expect to find in a literature review. Other histories and philosophical or theoretical works will occasionally be explored in their role in particular trajectories of design and graphic design, but they will appear in other chapters as their relatedness to other elements of the discourse and their historical specificity are the crucial factors in their inclusion.

[1] Hoskin (1993) describes as a historical 'discontinuity', the dramatic change in how students 'learned to learn' that took place in the early nineteenth century. Through the techniques of examination, grading and 'an insistent process of writing by students, about students, and organizationally around students' (p. 272) a transformation to a formal and numerical system took place. This system becomes one of self-disciplining through the promotion of competition with peers and for marks as a 'currency that denotes self worth' (p. 273), whilst simultaneously creating a new form of knowledge-power through the creation of the new disciplines that emerged out of this system offering a powerful 'economy of knowledge' (p. 274).

There are numerous texts currently regarded as key texts in graphic design and design history. The following have been chosen because they contain specific arguments and approaches that need to be addressed before I embark on a genealogy of graphic design in Victoria. This is not to say that each text represents a general chronology or approach to history although such texts are often used in this way, for example in Dilnot's 'The State of Design History, parts I and II (1984) and Walker's *Design History and the History of Design* (1989). Nor is it to suggest that the individual assumptions or methodologies are unique to any text although the particular collecting and ordering of these techniques will be. Because I take a quite different approach to the meaning of these histories per se, it is also necessary to provide an account of, and to apply the same methodological evaluation to, the current ways that design histories generally have been analysed and presented previously, as these analyses are no less implicated in particular ways of knowing graphic design. In this regard Dilnot (1984, 1989) (whose account we have already noted), Walker (1989) and Fry (1988) provide the most significant examples. Before turning our attention to these historiographical analyses, however, I would like to consider three specific histories—two of design and one of graphic design which illuminate current approaches to the subject and which, each for different reasons, have particular significance for this enquiry.

Graphic design as order and clarity

Phillip Meggs's *A History of Graphic Design* was originally published in 1983 and had its third edition printed in 1998. Although it is a very popular text it demonstrates what many would regard as a conservative historical approach. A daunting volume with the first edition consisting of over 500 pages and 1000 illustrations and even more in the second edition, it has a definite presence on a library shelf and obvious uses to the undergraduate design student searching for references. It does the job of placing a piece of work into a historical context so that the student receives not only an illustration or two of key works, an account of the designer, but most significantly a *sense* of chronological and cultural location. Underlying this is a sense of design—a particular way of knowing design—that is embedded in Meggs's account. Some of the characteristics of this are as follows:

- Graphic design as a certain essence that undergoes an evolution from prehistoric to advanced
- Current design practice as the professionalisation of this essence
- Graphic design as heroic
- History as a series of periods (some naturally occurring)
- Progression occurring largely through the activities of special individuals
- Graphic design as a category of design

Meggs begins with a definition of the essence of graphic design: 'Since prehistoric times, people have searched for ways to give visual form to ideas and concepts, to store knowledge in graphic form, and to bring order and clarity to information' (p. xiii). This promotes a quite popular notion that in essence graphic design is a way of bringing order and clarity through the visual representation of information. It is at once neutral with regard to power (the swastika is simply a *clearer* representation of the party) and heroic in the sense that its purpose is to help individuals and society. It advances civilisation. The breadth of this description allows Meggs to trace this essence through history:

> The contemporary graphic designer is heir to a distinguished ancestry. Sumerian scribes who invented writing, Egyptian artisans who combined words and images on papyrus manuscripts, Chinese block printers, medieval illuminators, and fifteenth-century printers and compositors who designed early European printed books all became part of the rich heritage and history of graphic design. (p. xiii)

In locating graphic design across such a vast historical space (all human existence) there are potential difficulties with overlapping discourses like those of art, literature, religion, labour, to name but a few. However works such as these strengthen and validate the contemporary discourse in two ways. Firstly, through the weight of the historical lineage they outline. Key historical events are portrayed as bringing to the previous disorder a more organised structure. In this way graphic design is recognised as the most advanced and sophisticated form of the earlier activities:

> It was not until 1922, when the outstanding book designer William Addison Dwiggins coined the term 'graphic design' to describe his activities as an individual who brought structural order and visual form to printed communications, that an emerging profession received an appropriate name. (p. xiii)

Secondly it works to place design alongside disciplines with similarly expansive histories, such as medicine or law, and thereby to lay claim to a similar legitimacy. That Meggs presents an account of graphic design as an essentialist form rather than as specific historical practices and subjectivities demands a sense of historical continuity and evolutionary progression. It involves the telescoping of history, which places contemporary graphic design as the natural point from which the history can be told and from which its historical trajectory is already self-evident. Meggs states: 'In making painful decisions about which material to include, a line of descendancy toward contemporary graphic design in post-industrial culture was a primary

determinant' (p. xi). Another of the techniques Meggs uses to choose what to include is through the 'attempt to distinguish works—and their creators—that influenced the ongoing evolution of the discipline' (p. x). This takes form in the text as section title, for example 'The Modernist Era: Graphic design in the first half of the twentieth century', followed by a timeline which presents the key moments in chronological succession and in relation to other 'world events' and moments from other related fields (see table 1). This is followed by the chapters in the section; for example 'The Genesis of Twentieth-Century Graphic Design'. The entries in Meggs's timeline, whether movements or events, are almost entirely anchored by reference to specific individuals or organizations. For example, one may read across the table:

Table 1.

HEADING	EVENT
World Events	1905 Einstein, Theory of Relativity
Genesis of 20th Century Design	1906 Behrens, Anchor Linoleum pavillion and graphics
Influence of Modern Art	1907 Picasso, *Les Demoiselles D'Avignon*
Pictorial Modernism	Hohlwein, PKZ poster
New Language of Form	1910 Mondrian learns of Cubism

In this way the role of Peter Behrens in design history is presented in relation to Picasso's role in modern art and to Mondrian and the language of cubism. Each are key figures which signify a major step forward or coming together of key influences at a chronological period contextualised by another key figure, Einstein, and the publishing of his theory of relativity. Thus design as a unique category (or discourse) is related to certain other threads of history, privileging these over other possible historical connections or configurations. Meggs's choice of events presents and reinforces a traditional historical model of predominantly male heroes, wars and revolutions, asserting for design a legitimate place in the progression. Although none of the headings is specifically titled 'graphic design' it is throughout this section of the text and through the process of drawing together the connections of these other historical phenomena classified in this way, that Meggs is able to construct a framework out of which graphic design as a unique discipline may emerge, or have its 'genesis'. This establishes certain power relations whereby the matrix that Meggs creates reinforces the traditional perspectives of history, supporting the structures of power built out of these perspectives and simultaneously legitimises graphic design through the foundation of these connections. Inherent in this is a notion of current graphic design as that natural and advanced stage from which the evolution can be seen. This approach also negates difference, presenting a common thread of humanity that traverses chronological, national and class boundaries.

Meggs notes that the history is a collection of accounts from which certain sections have been excluded, and indicates the reasoning in his decision making process. However in this explanation he fails to recognise firstly his general disposition to the works, which become 'key works', to the 'designers' upon which certain heroic status is conferred, and to their chronological progression, which relies on and further promotes notions of historical periods. Secondly, the process obscures the historical conditions of *availability* of what is there *to choose from,* which for a variety of reasons (reasons such as prejudice, expedience, consistency, profit, opportunity, duty or admiration) have been 'chosen' before. Although there is no correct or incorrect way a history is constructed, I wish to emphasise the political nature of histories; a different point from the well recognised perception that histories are necessarily subjective or 'inaccurate'. Meggs presents the latter perspective:

> History is in large measure a myth, because the historian looks back over the great sprawling network of human struggle and attempts to construct a web of meaning. Oversimplification, ignorance of causes and their effects, and the lack of an objective vantage point are grave risks for the historian. When we attempt to record the accomplishments of the past, we do so from the vantage point of our own time. History becomes a reflection of the needs, sensibilities, and attitudes of the chronicler's time as surely as it represents the accomplishments of bygone eras. As much as one might strive for objectivity, the limitations of individual knowledge and insights ultimately intrude. (p. xiii)

This is scientific rationalism. The sense here is that truth is striven for but that the 'reality' which history documents will always evade us because of our limitations—our inability to find a purely objective perspective from which everything is visible. The approach I take is that even the objective 'vantage' point to which one might strive is no less political—it merely utilises and supports a politics of scientific rationalism. That is, truth is not identifiable through some kind of disinterested process but rather, 'relations of power are . . . embedded in the rules for the production of truth and knowledge' (Lenoir 1993, p. 73) with the production of truth 'thoroughly imbued with relations of power' (Foucault 1980, p. 60). Meggs' scientific rationalism stems from the Enlightenment metanarrative that would propose that the perceptions of both prince and pauper could both be included in some hypothetical rationalised viewpoint. The problem with such a viewpoint is of course that neither prince nor pauper had any other than their own viewpoint. The scientific rationalist position merely creates a third viewpoint. Much has been written in critique of the shortcomings of traditional objectivist positions and their maintenance of various hegemonic perspectives—masculinist, heterosexual, Westernised, educated and other such perspectives, as in

Thornam's (1998) accounts:

> The 'universal subject' of Enlightenment modernism, far from being ungendered and 'transcendent', was not only gendered but very specific: a Western, bourgeois, white, heterosexual man. (p. 43)

Meggs's account of graphic design history is open to such criticism. Furthermore this account not only utilises the scientific rationalist perspective but also works to reinforce such a perspective in terms of the greater Enlightenment project of the total apprehending and documenting of history:

> The immediacy and ephemeral nature of graphic design, combined with its link with the social, political, and economic life of its culture, enable it to more closely express the Zeitgeist of an epoch than many other forms of human expression. (p. xiii)

In reinforcing the notion of graphic design as a sub-category of the wider category *design*, Meggs necessarily relates it through its position in the discourse to other design categories, such as product design, which can then be utilised in discussions of areas like 'the Modernist era'. Thus Meggs is able to account for this development of graphic design through the following five chronological periods:

1. The prologue to graphic design: from prehistoric cave paintings to illuminated manuscripts
2. A graphic renaissance: from the 1200s and the beginnings of printing in Europe to the end of the eighteenth century—presenting graphic design as book design and introducing typography as a key element of graphic design
3. The industrial revolution: this expands on typography; and introduces photography; covers new technologies and graphics of the Victorian era and introduces the poster as graphic design; there is a noticeable shift here in emphasis towards significant historical 'styles'—the Arts and Crafts movement; and Ukiyo-e and Art Nouveau
4. The Modernist era: from about 1900 to about 1950 includes the influence of modern art and positions style as the underlying historical theme and places a greater emphasis on individual characters whilst continuing to describe the effects of technological change
5. The age of information: from the 1950s to the 1990s with an emphasis more strongly focussed on key characters and works and further technological change up to his final section: 'the digital revolution'

Clearly teleological histories have their own politicality, which works to trace a linear sequence from the past to the present, ignoring elements that do not support this particular trajectory, that is, contingencies which undercut what are presented as inevitable 'developments'. Because of a number of reasons generally related to the rise of fascism in Germany there was an exodus during the 1930s of significant Bauhaus members and those regarded as sympathetic to the Bauhaus style, from Europe (primarily Germany) to the United States. One might question, if such a movement had not occurred along with a concurrent set of conditions in the U.S. which conferred upon a number of these immigrants positions of significant power and also provided a wider audience of those interested in design issues, to what extent the original Bauhaus school itself would be entrenched in modern design histories. If instead there had been further growth in the U.S. of what most writers consider the populist approaches to design, through Streamlining and the like, would modernism have been a more flamboyant concept and would design studies be housed in Advertising Institutions or Schools of Commerce? Such projections are obviously fantasy yet for many years the emphasis on the history of modernism within, or as forms of, design histories could be seen to overshadow these 'lower' commercial forms of design. Certainly there are quite different historical approaches, which we shall see shortly in the work of Penny Sparke and Adrian Forty and which therefore have a necessarily different impact on the way in which design is known.

Although Meggs attempts to incorporate examples of graphic design from other countries the history itself is presented as largely Eurocentric in early periods and later taking on general North American conditions, thereby de-emphasising local conditions and practices of design. One of the effects of this work is that it requires a continuous negation of the day-to-day circumstances and actions which designers deal with, and instead an insertion or potential insertion of these into a structure of greater causes and meanings. Their individual legitimacy becomes contingent on, and they become knowable only within, this sphere of recognised relations. The price of such an expansive and heroic vision of design is that it demands a severely limited vision of the specific practicalities of the subject. The heroism of graphic design intrinsic to Meggs's approach is dramatically stated:

> There is a growing awareness of the need to restore human and aesthetic values to the man-made environment and mass communications. The design arts—architecture, product, fashion, interior, and graphic design—offer one means for this restoration. Once more a society's shelter, artifacts, and communications might bind a people together. The endangered aesthetic and spiritual values might be restored. A wholeness of need and spirit, reunited through the process of design, can contribute in great measure to the quality and raison d'être of life in urban societies. (p. xiii)

Meggs attributes to his broadly conceived process of design a considerable urgency and importance. Aside from the debatable assertion that such a humanising groundswell of opinion exists, the effect of such writing is twofold. In the first place, as we have seen, it removes designers from the mundane day-to-day practices and local policies (i.e. organisational politics) and works along with positioning of graphic design into the wider discourse of design. Secondly, to see them instead as ideologically heroic through this locating of design as an essential humanising practice, Meggs implies a significant responsibility that designers (as heirs to their distinguished ancestry) must accept. Yet rather than implicating designers in the social problems to which he refers, Meggs's approach has a tendency to place designers outside of this and into a realm of social evangelism and reform.

By heroising the activity of design, those considered worthy of inclusion in such a history tend to be representative of an established canon. This invokes a 'connoisseurship' model where work considered insufficiently artistic or insufficiently grounded in the significant movement of its time may be excluded even when it is vastly successful in terms of numbers produced or sold, or in terms of its impact on a particular society. Histories of this kind often ignore the work which makes up ninety percent of conception, preparation and presentation of commercial products—that is, the production of the paraphernalia of the every day in many societies, the stuff that exists as the background to life—cups, plates, bulldog clips, pens, ironing boards, the vast array of cheaper jewellery, the unremarkable in cars, homes, bicycles and boats, furniture and clothes; the massive quantity of industrial machinery and the never ceasing flow of graphic production in leaflets, tickets, instruction manuals, receipts and the like. When the mundane, everyday practicalities of the subject are de-emphasised through this historical formulation, then so too are a range of possible questions and ways of knowing design. The approach tends to ignore questions about the way designers perceive themselves, their relationships with other designers or artists, the impact of their personal circumstances and family background on their work, office politics, or the influence of their education. Questions about volume, cost and waste tend to become eclipsed by discussions of form, beauty, and truth to materials. This is not an error, a lacking or ignorance inherent in these histories—indeed for many years, a connoisseurship approach was the most dominant form of history. With a rationale of order and clarity and a general connoisseurship approach to questions of aesthetics, Meggs's history continues the modernist project as it has been theorised from the Enlightenment. As such it has much to offer the student of design history, particularly as a neat and easily digestible overview. What needs to be

stressed is that it is one possible construction of how graphic design, design and their histories can be thought. Other histories take quite different approaches, emphasising different questions and by necessity placing less importance on others, yet are no less political in their construction of knowledge.

Design as art

As well as the general perspective that sees the various practices considered graphic design to be a subsection of design generally, one can observe that the largely technological emphasis in Meggs's account gives a particular perspective of graphic design that aligns it more readily with product design than with fine art. Jervis's *The Penguin History of Design and Designers* (1984), is presented briefly here as an example of an alternative positioning of design and graphic design—design itself as a close relative of art. Jervis gives the following introductory passage to his text:

> The types of design covered here are not precisely delimited; ceramics, furniture, glass, interior decoration, metalwork, ornament and textiles get frequent mention, while graphic design, consumer durables and typography surface only on occasion. Heavy industrial design, theatre design and dress design are almost wholly excluded . . . . because the history of design is here regarded as closely linked to the history of art and architecture . . . it has been possible to use the literature and works of reference in those fields, pride of place going to Thieme and Becker's monumental *Künstlerlexikon,* as is usual with art-historical dictionaries (p. 9).

It is of much interest that graphic design here may be regarded as being on the fringes of the design discourse presented by Jervis and in a sense closer to 'heavy industrial design' than to ornament and textiles and thus from his own account, to art; particularly given that many accounts of design, which are inclusive of Jervis's frequently mentioned types as fringe dwellers to a discourse centred on industrial design, find difficulty with the area of graphic design which is less artefact-based. Not only are the arts and crafts more heavily weighted than engineering in Jervis's account, but he takes considerable exception to the placement of design history in the polytechnics for 'practical design students' (p. 11). Jervis offers his first entries from about 1450 and regards with some disdain that only the past few hundred years are considered 'relevant' to the polytechnics that place an unjustifiable emphasis on modernism and the effects of the Industrial Revolution. This, he notes, has resulted in designers who on looking to escape the modernist style can only draw on Art Nouveau, Arts & Crafts and Art Déco. Jervis sees this bias as also having influence in the displacement of the original term design from the Italian *'disegno'* meaning 'a drawing to serve as a model and thence the making of such drawings' (p. 11) to the

current use of the term in many areas to denote simply 'industrial design'. In point of fact the OED indicates that in the 16th century *disegno* (also *dissegno* and *designo*) had the senses 'purpose, designe, draught; model, plot, picture, pourtrait'. John A. Walker, in his 1989 exploration and critique of design historiography *Design History and the History of Design* explains *disegno* as 'the inventive, conceptualizing phase which generally preceded the making of paintings, sculptures and so forth' (p. 23). Interestingly, after being taken into the French language in this specifically art-related sense, a gradual differentiation occurred such that *dessein* refers to 'purpose, plan', whilst *dessin* refers to 'design in art'. In English the term 'design' underwent no such differentiation (OED). We shall return to Jervis in following chapters but it must be noted from his approach that the seemingly straightforward history of graphic design presented in Meggs and indeed any histories of design with such a modernist emphasis are contentious. Indeed Jervis's account understandably raised the ire of polytechnic historians who considered that his exclusion of fashion and engineering gave too narrow a definition of the subject, to which Jervis responded that the polytechnic design history had been 'created by committee' (qtd. in Walker 1989, p. 30). Walker has pointed out that the exchange demonstrates how 'different institutions—museums, polytechnics—tend to generate different, antagonistic conceptions of design based upon their separate histories and social functions' (p. 30). In this regard Meggs's account sits far more easily in an educationalist perspective.

Nationalising Design

Michael Bogle's *Design in Australia 1880-1970* (1998) is similar in many regards to Meggs's text. I include Bogle's account not because it is a key text in design history but because it is one of the very few accounts of Australian design history. As such it is a well-researched document that provides a general record of design movements, significant designers and design products in an Australian context. However Bogle has attempted to create at once an attractive and interesting 'collector's' book (indicating the current market in design texts), and a significant account in text and images of the historical trajectory of graphic and industrial design in Australia. This as a project in itself is problematic and, at the least, unlikely to be accomplished with much success in one hundred and fifty pages, especially given the significant inclusion of often large images.

In terms of its theoretical perspective Bogle's history takes what most would consider a conservative approach and, as a recent work, is open to criticism for not taking account of current debate on historical methodologies. In this regard it is similar to the modernist work of Meggs (1998) and provides a useful comparison to more theoretically informed works such as Fry's *Design History Australia* (1988) and makes a useful springboard for discussion about certain notions of design, graphic design and national histories.

Bogle's book is layed out 'designer' style—folio satin stock, gold headers with many illustrations and photographs. The scratchy monotone prints ostensibly provide hard evidence of the truth—a glimpse of genuine experience of the period, whilst the prints bring up colour ranges now considered 'retro'. Bogle simultaneously emphasises the 'character' of the early designers, for example in his descriptions of John Furphy who was 'notably inventive', made 'substantial contributions to the cultural life of [the] town' and 'had a regional reputation as a shirt-sleeves manager more likely to be found in the shop than in the office' (pp. 22-3). Thus Bogle creates a tale of heroism, inventiveness and the Australian ability to 'make-do' in a harsh environment. If the text was less heroic, less about the character of the nation and the characters that made it, the images might not seem such an overwhelmingly nostalgic treatment. However as it stands, Bogle's book is ideologically replete with the interrelatedness of the growth of a discipline, an occupation and a nation and in this way the heroic nature of its key figures differs somewhat from Meggs's whose heroes are more timeless whilst Bogle's are grounded in, and serve to develop, a certain Australianicity.

Bogle's stated purpose to examine 'some of the events and themes of Australian design' (p. 7) presents the history as primarily a national history of design. Histories with this perspective tend to assume and support a certain homogeneity that is open to considerable criticism. Walker (1989, pp. 118-125) illuminates a range of criticisms that have been levelled at such histories, one of which is the tendency to exclude or de-emphasise notions of mixtures of races, cultures and languages.

Whilst including a chapter 'Shared Culture: Aboriginal Art and the Search for an Indigenous Style' and the occasional mention of women in design, Bogle's approach supports a sense of designers placed firmly within the hegemony of mainstream social perspectives. Of the numerous examples of Bogle's perfunctory handling of indigenous culture, the chapter heading itself is clearly problematic. Given that aboriginal art is regarded as timeless and authentic in quotes throughout the chapter, the title 'searching for an indigenous style' demonstrates the author's insensitivity to the indigenous perspective. Indeed Bogle's handling of issues of sensitivity to indigenous culture indicates not only the severe limits of this type of history, but the way such a history can work to disempower a particular cultural identity by presenting it as a partly unresolved fragment of white Australian design history. In this regard a national history can become even less representative of local cultures and practices than a general history such as that of Meggs. It is unfortunate that Bogle sees as significant only the surface of the historical documentation used in this chapter, regarding it merely as evidence of a particular historical approach to graphic design, as it in fact provides an interesting textual document of attitudes to aboriginal culture per se from the 1920s to 1990s. Instead Bogle, whilst presenting a way of regarding

oneself through the notion of national pride, simultaneously limits the range of subjectivities for practitioner of design or graphic design. In his choice of subject categories to be considered for the book Bogle also presents a certain character of the objects design and graphic design.

Bogle cites Australia's involvement in the major industrial exhibitions, enhanced communications with 'the rest of the world' and the following as the reasons for beginning his book with the late 1800s:

> The acceleration of technological change since the colony's 1888 centenary has meant that many Australians who once drove a horse and cart were able to adapt themselves to designing and using trains, automobiles and aeroplanes. This extraordinary condensation of technological experience during the nation's early political transition from colony to nation is a rich field for investigation. (p. 7)

Bogle's reason for a national history is supported by the claim that by 'Australia's second century . . . British models of design and design education . . . were being eroded by international themes' (p. 9). A quote is given to suggest the strength of nationalism in design at that time: 'We are content . . . to take intellectual wares, stamped with the London brand, long after we have begun to compete in the more material manufactures' (anonymous writer for *The Argus,* 1888) (p. 9). Although this does not mention design, it forms the basis for an historically grounded way of seeing design from a nationalistic perspective.

> The cultural tension created by the three strong polarities of Australia's design community— a profound attachment to Britain, the seductiveness of the International Style of Europe and America, and the continuing call for a regional philosophy of design — is a recurring issue in this book. (p. 10)

Bogle continues this theme through his first chapter, stirringly titled 'Advance Australia'. A number of problems are apparent on analysis of this argument. The most significant is that it requires a conviction that design is what is at stake in these early nationalistic arguments. This demands a very limited definition of what design is. When Bogle talks of early design it is an interesting kind of design that he means:

> New South Wales-designed and manufactured railway appliances, wool presses, patented stump-pullers, iron swing gates and agricultural machinery made up much of the court displays. (p. 19)

This is prior to the Deutche Werkbunde or any Bauhaus sensibility so it is difficult to imagine any current aesthetic appreciation of the mechanical or functional aspects in themselves. Certainly there would have been what many regard as decorative elements on the structures (many of the kind later disparaged by the Arts & Crafts movement), but this is not what Bogle is referring to when he talks of their design. Instead he places these products within the context of the colony's growing manufacturing industry and links the concept of design directly to the conversion of raw materials in the manufacturing process.

What is the character of this design? It would in many cases be considered 'invention' or the adaptation of already present forms to meet the different requirements of new environments and different needs. Bogle's examples of the Sunshine Harvester and Furphy & Sons' water cart aligns such a perspective with those who locate, for example, the Wheelwright's Shop (George Sturt 1963) as early design (see Fry who maintains the distinction of product design which he relates to traditional craft skills through Sturt (p. 135, n. 8) or Walker (p. 42)). Yet this notion of design is far from the notion of design suggested by Bogle's second and third chapters—that of the early design schools and the alignment of design with fine art where drawing, painting and sculpture feature almost entirely. In these chapters nearly every image is either an illustration or plaster relief, yet Bogle moves effortlessly from the one sense of design to the other. This authorial quick-step is made possible by our desire for a complete and comprehensible packaging of the disparate phenomena into manageable themes and objects which reinforces the sense of history as an unfolding continuity.

To unravel precisely where graphic design is located in the text and why it might sit there we can observe in Bogle the following account:

> Design, for the purposes of this book, could be synonymous with decorative arts, industrial arts and the applied arts. But these terms have too much resonance. For clarity's sake, in this investigation design is defined as the visualisation of objects, graphics or structures initially conceived for multiple or serial production. (p. 7)

I do not take the perspective that design could be synonymous with decorative arts, industrial arts and the applied arts, nor that graphic design is synonymous with applied art, industrial art or decorative art. By presenting the perspective that each of these names is synonymous, what becomes reinforced is the notion of a continuous and unproblematic history of the essence of design. In fact, what Bogle does for 'clarity's sake' is to de-emphasise the differences, discontinuities and politics of the practices which surround these various signifiers. Although he underestimates their

importance, Walker (1989) recognises a significance in the terms used:

> Any comprehensive history of design . . . . would also need to clarify the meanings and usages of older expressions such as 'art manufactures', 'the industrial arts', 'the applied arts', 'commercial art', 'ornament' and 'the decorative arts'. An examination of the fluctuating fortunes of these terms would be valuable because changes of nomenclature are one sign of changes in material reality. (p. 24)

Foucault perhaps best describes the degree of attention that should be given to the emergence of terms in his explication of the term 'sexuality':

> The term did not appear until the beginning of the nineteenth century, a fact that should be neither underestimated nor overinterpreted. It does point to something other than a simple recasting of vocabulary, but obviously it does not mark the sudden emergence of that to which "sexuality" refers. The use of the word was established in connection with other phenomena: the development of diverse fields of knowledge . . . the establishment of a set of rules and norms—in part traditional, in part new . . . and changes in the way individuals were led to assign meaning and value to their conduct. (Foucault 1984, p. 3)

While we need not regard language as a privileged surface, changes in the use of terms can be approached as indicative of other significant changes. This is not to say that stability in language necessarily denotes an unchanging social or institutional order of things. Bogle seems less concerned by the use of different terms noting their emergence as a general historical development or specialisation of the essential nature of design: 'As twentieth-century Australia's manufacturing base slowly expanded, it began to offer opportunities for "industrial design", a term popularised in the 1930s . . .' (p. 11). We shall look at the meaning of this particular change in more detail (particularly through Read's *Art and Industry* (1956)) but can note here in Bogle's definition that even given some 'resonance', it would be extremely difficult to conceive of the invention of Furphy's water cart ever being categorised under any of the historical definitions of decorative arts, industrial arts or applied arts. 'Visualisation' gives the definition a graphic sense but is in fact broad enough to encompass even the act of simply thinking about something or in the specific product or industrial design sense used elsewhere—'planning'. Thus Bogle's definition manages to bundle together two quite distinct and incongruous concepts. The discourse of design is thereby made wide enough to encompass the range of products and phenomena which Bogle presents as examples of Australian design, whilst not straying beyond the

boundaries into other discursive space. He goes on to say that: 'While the conception and production of these physical forms can be an independent, imaginative creative act . . . ' (this runs the risk of aligning design too closely with the discourse of fine art), 'in practice, design is a communicable process . . . ' (here Bogle removes that danger by suggesting the process must be communicable whereas artistic process often allows for, indeed one might argue, depends on, its unexplainable nature), 'subject to social, political, psychological and economic forces that shape the final product for production, marketing and sale' (p. 7). Bogle ends by incorporating the current communication and cultural studies theoretical perspectives that address context and subject, and again reinforces the notions of production, marketing and sale—all terms in art discourse, but of considerably less popularity there. Bogle presents design as an essential act that is quite removed from art discourse, the result being that he is able in his historical study to move seamlessly from the notion of design as invention and adaptation of products to design as illustration and decoration. Two major difficulties can be encountered here. Firstly, the communicable nature of design is not as well-recognised as Bogle suggests—especially in historical approaches to design in the sense that Bogle speaks of. For example, in 1876 Christopher Dresser in his text *Studies in Design* remarks:

> But the influence to which I would call special attention is more nearly allied to inspiration . . . at times every true artist is the subject of peculiar yet, unfortunately transient power, which for the time renders him superior to his common self. These are moments . . . in which he knows no law, and in which he appears to be raised above the necessity of appealing to scholastic learning. It is at these moments that Genius comes to his aid and guides his hand. (p. 4)

Secondly, the distinction between art and design is far less clear historically in illustration work than in say, the creation of the stump-jump plough, which would unlikely be regarded in any sense fine art.

That design has a certain essence, which has evolved through various incarnations, is further presented in Bogle:

> The visual and written accounts of Eurasian Australia's second century demonstrate that the British models of design and design education that dominated the first one hundred years of the colony were being eroded . . . (p. 9)

In this way he presents design as an already formed object in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but what this object actually was at that time is questionable.

The first Mechanics' Institute in England did not open until 1823 and then to provide instruction to 'artisans in design'. We shall look more closely at the meaning of this in the next chapter, but it also should be noted that before the Mechanics' Institutes (the first Government funded attempt at training artisans) there had been only trades apprenticeships available and for many years there were few tradesmen in Australia at all. Any argument that suggests this as the domination of 'the British model' is rhetorically placed to inspire a nationalistic response whilst directing our gaze away from the particular practices that actually constitute these notions of 'design' and 'design education'.

Bogle's main argument then is on the existence of a second object: Australian design. His argument opposes Fry's comments regarding Australian design and made ten years earlier:

> . . . there is no such thing as Australian design . . . . there are very few purely Australian conceived and designed products. Certainly there are not enough to 'cobble' together a movement or style even as a convincing fiction. This is not to say that the accounts of innovation, adaptation and modification of products made in Australia are not worth telling. They are, but not as a dressed-up package of aesthetic pretension called 'Design History'. (Fry 1988, p. 14)

Bogle attempts to locate design as an altogether different object to 'innovation, adaptation and modification'. What is of much interest here is that two texts produced within ten years of each other in a country where few major design texts exist, can take such different positions. One must be drawn to the question of precisely what makes a text either a history or a 'dressed-up package of aesthetic pretension'. What occurs to make something untenable at one point (and I do not mean necessarily one chronological point) and completely justifiable at another? The ways that Bogle forms categories for his information then becomes of considerable interest.

After the first chapter devoted to the notion of design as product maker, the second chapter details early design education through programs largely influenced by John Ruskin's aesthetic and philosophical doctrines. Ruskin is noted as 'the public face of English art' and throughout the chapter a range of terms are used in historical quotes which Bogle provides in relation to design education, including 'applied arts', 'industrial art', 'design', 'art and design', 'applied art and design', 'drawing and design courses', and a note that 'the term "mechanic" was synonymous with "artisan" in nineteenth-century Britain and Australia'. It is interesting to note that in South

Australia in 1892 the 'Design School' was renamed the 'School of Design, Painting and Technical Arts'. Bogle notes that the school had been running since 1861, but 'did not initially satisfy the aims of the Chamber of Manufacturers', but after the Ruskinian director Harry P. Gill took over and eventually the school was placed under control of the Public Library, 'it was renamed . . . to reflect its new role' (p. 41). In areas such as this where Bogle's account is necessarily limited by the kind of text he is constructing, a considerable amount of important information is omitted. In the following chapters I provide a more detailed account of how art and design were known in these periods and how certain differing perspectives were fought over. This provides a quite different viewpoint, which makes the sweeping assumption of design and graphic design as complete and individual entities throughout this period less tenable. Bogle's third chapter concentrates mostly on illustration of uniquely Australian flora and fauna, which is depicted as a way of the nation searching for its identity. He quotes Carroll who 'characterises the process as part of a "psychological settling of the country"' (p. 44) to which Bogle adds 'a subconscious absorption of a landscape of Australian flora and fauna'. This is presented as largely the result of the early educational institutions of design—Mechanics Institutes and the Working Men's College and the influence of two key figures, Lucien Henry and R.T. Baker. Bogle attempts to then relate a number of designers to an Australian version of the Art Nouveau style, but again goes into little detail, resulting in a less than conclusive picture of disparate works being lumped under the category mainly to serve Bogle's desire to follow a particular historical succession. This is maintained in the following chapter, which introduces the influence of modernism through the appearance in the 1920s of 'the Smart Set'—a term used by Nancy Underhill in 1991 to represent 'Australia's sophisticated, fashionable people' (p. 57) borrowed from a popular New York magazine of the '20s. Bogle defines the Smart Set in Australia as certain key publishers, designers, a 'sophisticated' audience with certain characteristic attributes—jazz music, international travel and communication, expendable wealth and a certain sense of 'style'. Bogle states: 'Naturally, a Smart Set appeared in England and Australia', yet one must question whether this was in fact a 'natural' emergence or a shift in ways of regarding a few individuals, as a romanticised group postulated by some writers some time after the putative period, as representative of Australian culture at a particular time. Certainly such a view assists Bogle in nominating an orderly historical segment in design history, which renders available and necessary a range of related processes and trajectories:

> The appearance of this exclusively urban class shows a distinct shift of cultural interest from 'The Bush' in Australian design, art and literature toward more European concerns. The process of internationalisation had begun before the war . . . but now the trend accelerated. The city setting for the Smart Set meant changes in the social order as well. (p. 57)

Through these tactics of defining a key period, and identifying as part of it, a movement, key characters and institutions, Bogle continues throughout his text to build up a sense of Australian design history as neat and unproblematic continuity. Specifically what it *is* that constitutes design is shifted this way and that to accommodate the flow of his narrative and difficulties such as the manifold struggles for legitimacy and supremacy of particular approaches as legitimate forms of design, fine-arts, or even architecture, are obscured. Most significantly what is excluded works as powerfully to present a significant picture of what design history is, as what has been included. That is, those forms of what might be considered design but as implied by Bogle's history, fall outside of the field, have only marginal importance, or are simply insignificant—crafts, for example, often considered more a 'women's area' and not 'serious' design; or the everyday products, advertisements, and the like which are not considered noble, are usually titled *kitsch* yet in their number and ideological matter may have dramatic social effects. These exclusions are made possible because Bogle gives little attention to what certain products, representations, and tactics *do* to a community or an individual, instead concentrating on what or who brings 'important' designs about. In this sense his work relates well to Meggs's text as a history based largely on the connoisseurship model.

Walker's Tightrope

As stated earlier, I do not intend giving a detailed chronological account of the numerous design and graphic design histories as part of this literature review. In part this is because Walker (1989) and Fry (1988) have both done excellent jobs presenting a considerable range of such histories as well as the philosophical or ideological positions these histories tend to support, with Fry in particular giving insightful and sometimes quite unforgiving critiques of various approaches. Also, histories are regarded in this thesis as an important part of the process of specifying, consolidating and legitimising the discourse of design and, at times, its objects including graphic design, and the choosing and presentation of what legitimately constitutes design and graphic design histories, and the placing of them in a specific order (of meaning, relevance, chronology or otherwise) represents a specific political manoeuvring—precisely the effect I wish to examine. For these reasons a more useful and indeed a necessary approach for this thesis is to consider both Fry's and Walker's documenting of design historiography to regard not only their content but their effects in design discourse and how they differ from each other and from a genealogical enquiry.

Walker's *Design History and the History of Design* (1989) sets out to explore the specific educational discipline 'design history' and how various writers have approached this subject, rather than exploring the history of design per se, that is the subject *of*

the discipline design history. It analyses the various problems, methodologies and results of design history writing. It has been presented as a kind of recipe book for teachers and students of the 'fledgling' educational discipline 'design history'. Walker presents a comprehensive and very useful catalogue of different historical approaches, tools and techniques and gives an analysis of their various strengths and weakness, indicating examples of their use.

Walker makes an interesting comparison to Margolin's use of discourse. Walker gives the following description:

> Linguistics regards a discourse as a unit of language longer than a sentence. In common usage it is day-to-day communication and conversation. Design may be metaphorically described as a 'discourse' in the sense that a flow of objects, documents and talk is generated by the daily activities of designers, clients and design institutions. Designers can, therefore, be said to be engaged in 'a discursive practice'. (p. 14)

Walker also raises the concept of meta-discourse, whereby there is a certain hierarchy of discourses. He uses the examples of level one being the discourse of design and level two 'the meta-discourse of writings and photos representing design in publicity, design magazines, etc' (p. 14) and the next level, a meta-meta-discourse of writings by design historians about the previous two, and the next level writings about the writing of design history, in which he places his account. Whilst this provides a helpful structural way of conceiving a range of activities around design, this linguistic model is fraught with difficulties. As well as the limitations imposed by reducing discourse to a language and thus a strictly structuralist concept, it suggests 'design' as a single privileged concept at the first level and from which all further meta-discourses are constructed and to which they finally refer. This de-emphasises the mutually constitutive relationship of the discourse and meta-discourses and obscures the relations of power between practitioners, teachers, historians, theorists, and others within the discursive field.

Although Walker's stated aim is to 'raise questions rather than to reproduce conventional wisdom' (p. viii), he nevertheless confers a certain way of knowing design and design history by means of his specific form of categorising design history approaches (empirical study; research and information gathering; theoretical work; writing and communication; professional activities; and employment). What is problematic here is precisely what constitutes a *legitimate* topic of empirical study, research, etc. Thus Walker's method of classification supports certain established ways of defining the topic, and thereby, of consolidating the boundaries of the discourse.

If we compare this to the account of past histories presented in Fry's *Design History Australia* (1988), which takes a more social history-based critical stance, Walker's account shows a certain compatibility to modernist emphases on clarity and order as exemplified in Meggs. It is also presented in such a manner as to suggest a general progression, a developing understanding of what the object design is and what design history actually *should* entail, rather than simply what it has entailed. Let us look for example at the use Walker makes of the three following definitions of design. Firstly Stephen Bayley's (pp. 27-28):

> Design is what occurs when art meets industry, when people begin to make decisions about what mass-produced products should look like.

The second is from Hesket (p. 28):

> Industrial design is a process of creation, invention and definition separated from the means of production, involving an eventual synthesis of contributory and often conflicting factors into a concept of three-dimensional form, and its material reality, capable of multiple reproduction by mechanical means. It is thus specifically linked to the development of industrialisation and mechanisation that began with the Industrial Revolution in Britain around 1770 . . .

The third is from Mercer (pp. 28-29):

> The industrial designer is a technical specialist in visual appeal . . . [he] is retained by a manufacturer with one object only: to increase the demand for his products through their increased attractiveness to the consumer. He is paid by the manufacturer according to his success in achieving that object. The industrial designer stands or falls upon his ability to create and maintain profitable trade. He is first and foremost an industrial technician and not primarily an educator of public taste. Under existing conditions his business must be to make profits for his employers.

Walker states of Hesket's definition that: 'clearly, this is a more complex and sophisticated definition' (p. 28). The use of the notion 'sophistication' suggests a more advanced or highly developed definition. He then presents Mercer's definition with a note about its 'frankness' and reference to social context (capitalism). Although these accounts were not written in the chronological sequence given in Walker the presentation is of a progressively more *correct* definition. What Walker fails to notice is his own stake, that is, *his context* in the analysis. To see this more clearly we may

look at how Walker notes the 'weaknesses' in Mercer's description of design: that design is limited to visual appearance; design is considered only as profit-based; only men appear to design; and the definition of designer is considered to give too much weight to the designer's role as 'author', and too little sense of the consumer. Walker's comments in fact indicate shifts in politics since the 1940s—shifts that place emphases on different things than some of the definitions he produces and reduce the emphasis that has previously been placed on others. Walker introduces new elements which at the time of the definition in question (1947) may have made little sense (would have been outside of any way of knowing design) in the context of a definition of design, yet seem almost natural in the later climate of sensitivity to sexism and the awareness of cultural studies based theories of reception. Today one might also suggest as a 'weakness' that Mercer places a clear separation of designer and consumer, when one might question whether a designer is ever not also a consumer, in either the sense of a consumer of other goods or as the self-imagined consumer of their own design. Again, however, this type of questioning would have been outside of any way of knowing design in 1947 (and therefore outside of what design theory or history could then have been concerned with). In response to the problematic notion of design essence Walker posits Wittgenstein's notion of 'family resemblance' to account for the different design areas—fashion design, graphic design, product design, and so on. However, by regarding these various definitions as 'lacking' in some respects in their account, he inadvertently reinforces a sense that the definition is progressively becoming more accurate, that is, closer to *the truth*—in fact promoting essence (of what design actually is and what design history should be about) over 'family resemblance'. Although the task Walker sets himself of showing a range of design history approaches 'to orientate the novice historian' is admirable, there tends to be a certain ahistoricism in Walker's presentation of his examples. By not emphasising how and why design has been variously defined in this way or that in past histories, there is a sense of somehow encapsulating the whole range of possible definitions in one. The effect of this is to in fact produce a new definition in itself and one that is wider than even the more expansive in the history texts themselves. For example Walker suggests a particular range of areas that fall within his explication of the 'scope of the subject':

> As yet London does not have a museum of industrial design. One is due to open at Butler's wharf in 1989 [since opened], but even then the design historian will still need to visit many other places and institutions if the full range of design is to be scanned. For instance, London has museums of applied arts, science and engineering, furniture, aircraft, transport, weapons of war, plus several eighteenth-century stately homes and a William Morris museum, all of which contain examples of designed artefacts. As far as architecture is concerned, the whole city provides a conspectus of design

> through the ages. In terms of consumer goods, no design museum, however large, is likely to be able to match the quantity of contemporary examples to be found in large department stores like Selfridges and Harrods. (pp. 25-6)

Although the breadth of his research and perception is commendable, the difficulty can be seen in the chapter title: 'Defining the Object of Study'. Rather than seeing various definitions in their historical specificity (although he does point out their connection to particular ideologies), Walker seems drawn into an attempt to answer the question 'So what is design really?' instead of 'What counts as design?' The result is a definition which encompasses artefacts, practices, economics, social conditions, other disciplines, and so on, even suggesting other areas that 'design historians could, *legitimately* extend their object of study [to] . . . ' (p. 33) (my italics). His desire to apprehend all approaches and subjects that might come under the discipline 'design' is foreshadowed in his opening quote from Harris: 'It cannot be said too often that the progress of intellectual life requires confrontation between the widest possible variety of theories and hypotheses . . . ' (qtd. in Walker, p. xii). Yet the problems of an uncontrollably expanding definition become clear and he states:

> A mere accumulation of different perspectives will tend to produce a relativistic confusion; again discrimination is essential . . . . also, unless the object of study of design history is precisely defined the sheer magnitude of its possible subject matter will reduce the researcher to impotence. The young discipline could dissipate itself among a thousand topics and find itself disputing the roles and territories of a dozen existing academic disciplines. (p. 36)

This is Walker's tightrope. How to be comprehensive without diluting the discourse (in the Foucauldian sense)—that is, without giving the concept of design such a wide range of meanings and so many points of contact and impact on other fields that it becomes meaningless, or, one might argue, powerless.

Like Margolin's claim to a critical mass, Walker states that the awareness of a distinct discipline occurs when 'a sufficient number of practitioners become self-conscious about their activities and begin to join together to discuss common problems and interests' (p. 1). Walker then posits a progression towards the formation of professional organisations (he cites the formation of the Design History Society in 1977 (p. 2)), which, in turn, occasions the associated elements: elected officers, a newsletter, a scholarly journal, an annual conference.

Again this perspective maintains a sense of progression, a general growing and professionalising of the discourse, but fails to take account of the numerous false starts, back-tracking, emergences of organisations which then collapse or never 'move on' or those which are not considered for inclusion into the discourse but then later, under different conditions and with different perspectives on what design is, become worthy of inclusion, such as might be seen in the appearance of the paper 'Archaeology of the Art Director' (Leathlean 1993) promoting nineteenth-century art direction as a legitimate topic in a design history journal; or in the way that feminist discourse has made available new ways of appraising the role of the 1930s Women's Industrial Arts Society. There is perhaps a more critical problem with Walker's account of design history however. He suggests firstly that two historians will likely produce different accounts of the history of a subject, but then uses the analogy of map-making (in the same sense as Margolin's 'mapping of the terrain') where different maps may be drawn of the one environment where each focus on different qualities of the terrain. Walker suggests that they do not contradict but complement each other and taken together give 'a more complete account of the terrain', which he states 'can be compared to the terrain in order to judge their accuracy' (pp. 2-3). Implicit in Walker's approach here is a positivist or phenomenological nature of enquiry into history presuming the possibility of a kind of comparison with a 'real' terrain against which the accuracy of any given account can be measured. Walker posits the methodological difficulty with this as being that 'the terrain—the past reality they represent—no longer exists as a totality' (p. 3), rather than the theoretical difficulties of notions like 'reality' and 'totality' *per se*.

Walker comes close to raising the matter of power when he comments that although for those outside of the discipline the various esoteric debates may seem trivial, the significance is that 'beneath the surface different conceptions of the subject are at stake'. (p. 18) He notes how 'the discipline is not static; indeed one could say it is a site of contest between different factions' (p. 19). Walker suggests that the various histories of design are not neutral, but sees this not in terms of power so much as in their specific effect, that is, their feedback may be to encourage stylistic revivalism. Walker also relates Stephen Bayley's endorsement of expensive goods as an example of economic and *ideological* use of the authority of a popular design historian. (cf. Tony Fry's critique of Bayley's book—the portrayal is of 'bad guys' of design histories). However, these perspectives drop out of view. Noting that 'in the twentieth century the various arts have tended to go their separate ways', Walker presents a general natural progression and when he discusses the categories of design Walker tends to promote them as naturally forming. When he talks about the scope of the subject, looking at the Design Centre Bookshop in London and the titles displayed, he

says 'the list is apparently endless' (p. 25) and goes on to say 'It would be possible to arrange them [the titles] in an order: central, closely related, marginal.' (p.25) From whence this order came is not questioned.

Interestingly, in his chapter 'Defining the Object of Study', Walker suggests a significant approach of this thesis:

> It is clear . . . that any comprehensive history of design ought to include a history of the evolution of the concept 'design' as well as a history of designers and designed goods. Such a history would need to explain the emergence of design as distinct from art and craft, and trace its subsequent development in relation to the changing status of the latter as a result of the transition from feudal to a capitalist mode of production and the growth of industry, engineering, technology, mass production and mass media/ communication. It would also need to clarify the meanings and usages of older expressions such as 'art manufactures', 'the industrial arts', 'the applied arts', 'commercial art', 'ornament' and 'the decorative arts'. An examination of the fluctuating fortunes of these terms would be valuable because changes of nomenclature are one sign of changes in material reality. (p. 23-4)

He further states that definitions are 'inadequate and provisional' because 'language . . . is subject to historical change' (p. 23). It is inspirational that Walker considers these things, but unfortunately does not utilise such an approach in his own account of the histories themselves, nor recognize why it is not just 'helpful' but necessary to consider these phenomena.

The main body of Walker's text begins with an analysis of the types of design histories and studies that have been produced, for example craft history, biography & monograph, social history, designed goods, institutions and processes and the like. He then makes a valiant attempt at a diagrammatical model (p. 70) of how each of the 'partial' accounts can be related as 'Design History's Field of Research'. This represents a particular way of understanding design, in which he explicates the relations of design processes to those of production and consumption. Although his model quite comprehensively indicates a substantial terrain for design history (the educational discipline), as a model it remains quite a limited conception of design. In the first place it regards design as product design and therefore accounts rather poorly for graphic design or for someone who designs say Magazine Advertisements, who, in Walker's model, would sit in the 'Circulation/Distribution' area and therefore outside of the labour force of designers (in Design Process) and their related 'organizations', 'social demands' and 'resources'. In attempting to restrict the diagram to largely

material means of production and consumption it also remains too simplistic for more complex philosophical questions. Ideology, for example, sits neatly packaged with other resources (namely material and financial) in the 'Design Process' section where we find 'social demand', 'research', 'invention', & 'creativity' (as part of 'Labour Force' of designers and architects) and does not reappear throughout the journey through the manufacturing process, the circulation and distribution (which includes 'marketing' and 'advertising') or the 'consuming and customizing' section. This would seem to suggest that the entire social impact of production is related to ideology but only in the early conceptualising phase of a product's life. This is an unusually limited notion of ideology which many theorists would have difficulties with. Such a diagram emphasises some things at the expense of others. For example the role of advertising seems quite minor in this overall approach to design, while some would contend that advertising is of much more significance—indeed there are schools of advertising in which design is but a subject. This diagram represents Walker's attempt to deal with the tightrope mentioned earlier. It bears a somewhat uncomfortable resemblance to an electronic circuit diagram in its complexity and contains difficult and often quite fluid concepts (such as designers, public for design, owners and managers) in neat hierarchically structured boxes. Arrows suggest unidirectional and singular relationships between different categories and in some cases appear to represent a causal relationship (for example where educational organisations 'leads to' designers) and in other cases a production or even power relationship (such as where manufacturers 'leads to' research and development which 'leads to' engineers). As an effort to provide a comprehensive view, including 'postmodern' concerns such as consumption theories, again it betrays Walker's leaning towards structuralism and demonstrates his affinity with modernist accounts like that of Meggs.

The third section of Walker's text tackles general problems with history writing—problems with data; separation of past and present; the effect of narrative presentation; periodization; causation; and the like. In section four Walker relates the various approaches (with comments on the related difficulties) in design history writing — materials/techniques approaches; that of making comparisons between products, designers and the like; content analysis; typological (grouping objects through type) approaches; national histories; anthropological perspectives; social history; and structuralist and semiotic approaches. Some of these are quite specific in terms of method, whereas others are more general theoretical perspectives. Here, the neatness of Walker's categories deflects the view from what is in fact considerable overlapping and confusion of 'levels' of significance.

Walker also infuses these with his own way of knowing design as can be seen in his *explanation* of craft history and its relationship to design: 'craftpersons generally engage

in design and the mass production of designed goods frequently relies upon craft processes' (p. 38). He posits the differences between crafts and design as largely the result of industrialisation—division of labour and the aesthetics of mass production. He then notes the format for such design histories as founded on fine art history with an emphasis on biography (life of the designer) and monograph (work of the designer). These are seen to have 'limited value because they present mountain peaks without foothills' (p. 47) which he regards as one of the reasons current studies have tended to reject this approach, although one might suggest that texts like Bayley's *In Good Shape* (1979) do the same thing for the product itself rather than for the designer or the style.

Fry's 'corrected' model

Tony Fry's *Design History Australia (Fry 1988),* states: 'It has become almost an orthodoxy in nearly every book on design to start by offering a definition of what the author thinks design is' (p. 15). This enables him to offer up four definitions from key figures in the discourse (Anthony Bertram, Victor Papanek, W.H. Mayall and Penny Spark) as examples from which he can then state that there is no 'common' understanding. From here Fry begins to build a case for his own approach:

> The book's emphasis is on industrial design, not as a fixed object but as a general terrain of multiple design activity. In this context it is possible to focus upon products, product ranges, brands, the design process of manufacture, corporate design and corporate structures, product promotion and 'lifestyles' design. (p. 12)

Fry suggests instability and fluidity of the category 'industrial design', regarding it 'not as a fixed object'. Yet in seeing it as a 'terrain of multiple design activity' Fry indicates that certain activities can be identified and known as specifically 'design' activities. He asserts that: 'most people can of course correctly identify some aspects of design' (p. 16) belying the notion that indeed there are inherently identifiable characteristics of the object which can be identified *correctly*. Thus, in Fry, the knowing of which activities constitute design activities will indicate for us the broad landscape from which this terrain 'industrial design' has been drawn. In this case industrial design fits effortlessly into the broader category 'design' as if the greater category were constituted through some natural order and, by a process of analysis, had been divided up into its more specific minor categories. The legitimisation of certain activities as industrial design comes first through their acceptance as 'design' activities and then their further ability or natural tendencies to be grouped or discovered as the grouping 'industrial design'.

When Fry turns his attention to the product itself, however, he immediately affirms how a product cannot be defined without reference to its mediation—in Fry's terms 'how, for example, it has been written about, illustrated, photographed, displayed, advertised (p. 12)'[2]. He states: 'the history of products is not a natural history, or one which speaks through the products themselves. It is, above all, a social history' (p. 13).

Fry's work is more closely compatible to my thesis than the others presented thus far, particularly through his depiction of what design is *not*. He suggests that design is neither containable nor fully explicable in the sphere of the aesthetic. Nor is it:

> Reducible to a feature, a surface or a property of an object . . . [neither] being *in* something or applied to an object . . . [nor] something which is singular or discrete—it is not independent from a material object or process. (p. 16)

Furthermore he rejects reductivist definitions of design which regard design in the following ways:

> (i) Types of design occupations and divisions of mental labour, such as product, graphic or interior design(er)
> (ii) Types of design objects (like posters, packaging, product)
> (iii) Types of design processes (like ergonomics, visualisation, typography). (p. 16)

Instead he regards design as 'an interactive set of variable relations between a multiplicity of objects, effects, operation and functions' which 'cannot be synthesised into a unity' (p. 16). We can regard in the following where Fry's approach begins to differ from that taken in my thesis. He states: 'it follows that because no common understanding exists, a definition must be given as a reference point, so that some rough consensus of the meaning of design can be established' yet this definition will be one without 'assertive statements about what it is or is not' (p. 16). Not only are there difficulties foreseeable in attempting a definition which does not assert what something is or is not, but Fry is indicating from the onset that he has a particular conception of 'what design is' perhaps incorporating elements of, but itself quite outside of, or beyond, those definitions that he has taken from Bertram and the like.

[2] It is of some interest that Fry does not discus the relationship of other 'sub-categories' of design to industrial design, yet much of what Fry considers within its realm is often regarded by other writers as graphic design. One might note that the original cover of the 1988 edition of the book is from one of his case studies of industrial design—an advertisement complete with illustration and text—suggesting a clear connection or at least an avenue worthy of exploration.

When Fry states that: 'design pervades the outside and inside worlds in which we live' (p. 17) he says this with the sense that design came *before* our knowing it, before our construction of it as a way of knowing things. Design simply is, and however difficult to define precisely, it exists as an object with recognisable characteristics. We may regard in a similar way Fry's statement that: 'by the 1820s . . . design activity was being taken out of the heads and hands of craftworkers and made a form of mental labour, a specialisation, in its own right.' (p. 17) This presents quite a specific way of appreciating 'design activity' which is not only different in some regards to the approaches of certain other writers (Jervis's for example), but clearly assumes a particular way of knowing what design activity constitutes.

Fry then sets out to identify specific types of historical approaches which he exemplifies with particular texts. He then critiques these in considerable detail indicating where they are in error and then offers an approach more firmly related to cultural theory and economic and social history. I have no objection to Fry's reading of these texts but it is important to note what is at stake here—that is, the notion of *the correct account*. Fry works to shift perspectives currently employed in design history towards a different way of knowing design, whilst still supporting a general essence of design—albeit one that is considerably more fluid. The effect of his argument is to firstly present a 'corrected' view of design — one which *encompasses* the social and economic within the construction of the object — and secondly to present a criticism based on a truthful rather than illusory conceptualisation of design history.

In Fry's critique of Stephen Bayley's *In Good Shape—Style in Industrial Products 1900-1960*, he produces evidence to show that Bayley's claim that product design did not exist before 1900, is incorrect. Fry shows that Bayley has neglected vernacular design thus giving an incorrect date of introduction of product design. What Fry is referring to here is clearly not the definition 'product design' (which did not exist as a title until some time later), but the *real thing*, defined, recognized, or not.

We may note the way Fry further identifies the object:

> Design needs to be recognised as one of the major means by which the world in which we live (at least as members of industrial nations) is prefigured and manufactured. Design is used to order, organise, make operational, make visible, and to promote the 'modern' world. Design is essential in the economic and cultural production . . . of our world as well as in its economic and cultural consumption . . . is implicated in how our cultural and economic circumstances are reproduced.
> (p. 17)

Thus Fry stakes a claim to some way of knowing design which takes into account the range of 'restricted' ways of knowing it elsewhere and adds his contribution which brings to the definition Marxist notions of the reproduction of cultural and economic circumstances. He further incorporates terms (and their conceptual implications) from social and communication studies, such as 'multiplicity of objects', 'knowledges' and 'textual appearances' (p. 16). This is how Fry's definition of design works as a contribution to the fundamental activity of constituting the object. It is not possible to speak of an object defining its major characteristics and thus giving it substance, without bringing one's perspective to it.

Fry's approach to design as a socially constructed set of relations acts, in itself, as a kind of definition of design in a sense to stabilise the object in a form useable in the construction of a new historical methodology. This he identifies as 'genealogical'. It 'can have no general meaning outside specified purpose . . . [and] any general or universal theory of design will be flawed'. Yet rather than identifying this 'purpose'—that is, how each of the different definitions of design might work in any system of power relations—Fry is content to critique past design histories and definitions in terms of their correctness or their errors. Fry in fact briefly mentions Foucault, yet his approach suggests that, whilst attempting to use Foucault's notion of 'histories of the present' to legitimate his approach, he is nevertheless drawn into an account which is still fundamentally essentialist in structure.

Fry states of design that 'its independent history — that is, its history as separate from its accommodation within either art or architectural history — is only about twenty years old' (p. 13). Although Fry is referring to the emergence in the 1960s of the specific academic discipline 'design history', there is also conveyed a sense here that the object 'design history' somehow existed within these other histories—was 'accommodated' there—until it was able to emerge in its own right as an 'independent' history. If instead of this perspective one views the emergence of design history as a negotiation and re-organisation of elements of architectural history, along with elements of art history and a number of other histories which then are titled 'design history' as a new unity, then the notion of its previous existence within these other areas, and its subsequent discovery is less tenable.

Similarly when Fry suggests that there is 'no such thing as Australian design' the conclusion has been reached by looking at how closely the 'facts' of Australian design history fit with the existing and legitimate object 'design history'. When he states his reason for this conclusion, that 'there are very few purely Australian conceived

and designed products' (p. 14) his criteria for legitimacy are amount, purity of national input, place of conception and place of design—criteria founded upon the acknowledged format of traditional histories to define a legitimate object of study. He then proposes a range of *other* activities which revolve around products that do not constitute an Australian history of design: 'This is not to say that the accounts of innovation, adaptation and modification are not worth telling. They are, but not as a dressed-up package of aesthetic pretension called "Design History"' (p. 14). In each case Fry interprets, utilises and further legitimates a particular way of regarding design and history.

I do not raise these points to disagree with Fry's judgement about whether Australia has a legitimate design history or not, but to indicate Fry's use of the a priori condition of the object 'design' and assumptions or proposals about what can and cannot constitute its history in any particular context, geographical or otherwise. Fry's approach is further reinforced in his explanation that: 'while much has been written about design in Australia which is interesting, it is not and should not be cast as design history but rather be viewed as primary material in need of historical interrogation'. (p. 14) In a discursive sense Fry sets the rules for how things are to be seen, in what context and for what purpose.

Fry's critique of other approaches to design history identifies what can be seen as their 'errors'. When discussing Bayley's (1979) approach, Fry suggests Bayley's product selection is 'apparently arbitrary' and remarks of Bayley's claim that they are 'stylistically united because of their quality' (qtd. in Fry 1988, p. 22), that this is a 'contextualising mechanism ripped out of any historical place'. (pp. 22-3). He goes on to say that 'around the exposition of products is de-contextualised material, applied to provide "context"' (p. 23). Having said this Fry goes on to note that the approach is linked to the British Design Council's 'didactic crusade' to 'develop sensibilities toward design generally and toward good design specifically, (which, along with its art catalogue style of format suggests a scholarly work is not fully the intention[3]. However, rather than see this as part of the elusive context for Bayley's project, Fry concludes the approach as 'simplistic'. His reasoning is that the book takes into account neither the changeability of, nor the social structure that defines as legitimate, notions of 'taste'. Perhaps aware that these reflect upon his own perspective as much as on Bayley's, Fry then suggests that Bayley's approach is anachronistic given its 'Modernist affirmation' in a period of crisis (around 1979) which Fry notes 'has been characterised as the end of the modernist notion of progress' (p. 23). In a way Fry is suggesting (quite rightly) that Bayley has not taken account of current cultural theories, yet Fry uses this to impress that Bayley has therefore produced a less than

[3] The text is published by the Design Council

valid account. Similarly Fry's critique of Penny Sparke's *An Introduction to Design and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Sparke 1986) suggests her selection of material also to be 'arbitrary', critiques her definition of the term 'culture' as 'meaningless and dysfunctional abstraction', and regards many of her accounts 'so slight as to be both inadequate and misleading' (p. 38).

Fry suggests for us a general chronology of historical approaches (the 'standard' and 'conventional' questions) along with his additional perspective (which 'go further' and 'above all') thus:

> The history of a particular product can be approached in terms of standard questions: Who designed it? Why? For whom? What governed its appearance? How did it work? It is also conventional to ask: where does it fit in the history of style, both generally and as a specific example of a certain kind of product? However, we can go further by questioning the contemporary and historical cultural meaning of product, form and use. Above all, we can ask what it tells us about the economy and culture out of which it came and in which it operates. (p. 12)

To illustrate my point we might consider for example the description of an object like a cup, where we may think about its colour, shape, a pattern or illustration on it, the slight discolouration of its porcelain from light, its staining or fractures from use. We may think about it as an example of Rococo crockery, as a much loved object which 'could tell many a story', a physical object which refracts and reflects light in a particular way, or has a chemical composition of such and such. We could think about it as something that could be drawn by an artist or by a child or used as a paperweight. The possibilities are literally endless.

When we think about the 'design' of an object, we categorise our object so that the ways in which it can be thought are limited. Where previously writers have suggested we may think about it in terms of its shape, its form, the material of which its made, the way that material breaks down over time and other considerations which may have gone into the 'planning' and constructing of the object, other writers have introduced questions such as: What location were the materials taken from? What social factors led to Rococo being a preferred style for such an object at that time? What were the costs of such an object and how did it fit into the socio-economic structure of its culture, what different techniques were employed and how was the labour divided?

What we are led to ask is: 'What questions does any particular way of understanding design allow for?' The answer involves the complex political negotiations and general agreements on what design is permitted to encompass. When Fry talks of design as 'a constantly changing field of activity' (p. 16) he does not seem to credit the significant role of design histories and their *very* contextualised struggles for the adoption of particular ways of knowing design. This is not to say that Fry regards history as essentially the search for truth. The way in which he tackles the problem of histories is through a comparison of history and myth. Fry sees history as 'causal narrative explanation, founded upon a theory of knowledge, which acknowledges a materially or socially constructed model of reality of objects, events, change and human agency' (p. 83). Myth he regards as 'a socio-historical explanation, which, like history, informs understandings upon which actions become predicated' (p. 83). He makes it clear that they are to be 'regarded as points, at variable distance from each other on a narrative continuum of telling the past from numerous cultural loci' (p. 83). Such a viewpoint, whilst in certain regards critical of a direct claim to truth, gives little clue as to how or why any particular explanation is given, what the relations of the various explanations might be, or why they might even be worth considering. In this regard one might question Fry's claim to a genealogical approach.

What Fry is doing here is working on the definition of product design. Fry's design is one that takes into account those people and conditions otherwise neglected by other historians, in particular the elitist notions of design presented by the *connoisseurship* model of design history. This is commendable and a pleasure to read however it seems whilst Fry states that 'no consensus of values exists in any one period, within the class, ethnic, and gendered matrix of societies' (p. 25) he in fact downplays his own contextual shift in reading Bayley. Fry posits the *connoisseurship* model as an incorrect model, supplanting it with the (more 'advanced') Marxist account; yet without fully grasping Foucault's genealogical approach and in particular its rejection of the notion of gradual advancement through better and better models, Fry's account maintains a sense of historical continuity and progression.

Caban and the traditional perspective

Another work which I will discuss in further detail, as well as draw upon considerably in future chapters is Geoffrey Caban's 1983 text *A Fine Line: A History of Australian Commercial Art.* This is a thoroughly researched and quite comprehensive history illustrated with numerous works by the artists. It is similar in size and shape to Bogle's volume but has not the referencing of information that Bogle has, positioning it more for popular consumption than as an academic text. It also offers few theoretical or

methodological considerations. Interestingly, however, its quirky typography has dated the work and the numerous black and white illustrations give it a bland feel that one associates more with academia.

Caban states at the outset:

> The listed occupation of 'commercial artist' has just about disappeared . . . Nowadays those who practice in the diverse field of commercial art . . . tend to be known by names such as graphic designer, art director, illustrator and typographer. (p. 1)

Although Caban's history is of commercial art rather than graphic design, he suggests the latter is a development of the former:

> The gradual adoption of the term 'graphic designer' is the result of certain developments in the area of visual communication, developments which have, to some degree, altered the old role of the commercial artist. (p. 1)

Caban sees these developments as the growing influence of the Bauhaus and a new interest in type. He also considers as significant the 'added prestige', which the 'adoption of the term "graphic design" and the accompanying shift in emphasis' (p. 3) has given the field. However, he maintains that the 'ground rules' of the profession have not altered much 'in a hundred years' (p. 3) He sees these ground rules—what one might consider his notion of the essence of the profession—as three qualities: the basis of the work is economic; the skill is 'largely a measure of how aesthetically pleasing . . . images can be within the context of the design task'; and the work is client oriented rather than self-indulgent (p. 3). One might suggest here that Caban makes a case for graphic design in terms of its similarities to, and differences from, fine art. In fact Caban's work stands at that juncture between commercial art and graphic design, and most of his historical content, as the title suggests, refers to a time of 'commercial art' practices rather than those of graphic design or design discourse, although he uses the terms interchangeably throughout the text.

In terms of his historical methodology, the continuous and progressive nature of history is emphasised:

> I have not attempted to discuss the work and careers of all the notable artists and designers, but rather by selecting examples I felt were typical of important developmental stages, I have tried to give a feeling for the times and conditions under which they worked, the influences acting upon them, and the inspiration they provided for others. (p. 3)

The blurb on the back cover sums up the approach thus: 'most people are unaware of the rich and talented heritage of Australian commercial artists. These heroes and their work have remained unsung . . .' I have previously stated how a genealogical approach differs from this presentation of inspirational heroic figures and the gradual evolution of a discipline from humble origins to professional practice. However Caban's text is also important for its heralding of the field as one which has 'long been treated as a poor and tainted relation of the fine arts' (p. 2). His volume makes the argument that graphic design (as continuation of commercial art) is not only connected in a complimentary nature to the fine arts, but also deserving of equal status.

The authority of academic texts

The historical and theoretical texts considered thus far work in different ways and at different points in institutional design discourse. The works by both Meggs and Fry are educational texts, where Meggs's account is a general and comprehensive overview with a traditional historical approach and Fry's is a more theoretical and philosophical text. Where Meggs's account is more likely to be used in earlier undergraduate years, Fry's would more likely be a text for later undergraduate or postgraduate research. Bogle's work is neither as comprehensive as that of Meggs, nor as theoretical as Fry's. As mentioned earlier, the considerable use of visuals as well as the kind of graphic treatment employed, positions the text as a quite sophisticated coffee-table book. Bogle is a lecturer in the field and the information is well researched and referenced and may have application in educational institutions. However, in semiotic terms, neither the look nor the content with its sparse methodological explanation 'speaks' the language of a scholarly text, and indeed there is no reason that it should. As discussed above, Caban's work is similarly directed for popular consumption even though it may be as well researched as an academic text.

The key difference between scholarly texts and texts for popular consumption is that scholarly texts are thoroughly embedded in the institutional discourse and whilst Fry's *Design History Australia* has the initial appearance of a popular text rather than a strictly academic one, it nevertheless has the legitimacy of its academic language. Academic texts have an official legitimacy bound up in the rules of their communication—the rigour of academic research demonstrated through the positioning of the text in terms of similarly legitimate academic works and a historically situated argument. Scholarly texts are therefore imbued with an authority conferred by their observance of the rules of, and by their position within, a tradition of research and expression. Implicit in this tradition is the sanctity of the expert—one who is at once validated by

their knowledge of the rules and simultaneously propagates those rules as a system of validation.

Renaissance 'disegno'

Before any attempt is made to explicate the conditions and effects of the emergence of design and graphic design in their historical and geographical specificity in Victoria there is much value in considering another incarnation of 'design'. This is a notion of design in the Renaissance that is given significant attention in numerous histories of design.

As we have noted there are two main ways in which design has been historically presented—firstly, as an essential human attribute which is observable in practices as historically distant as cave-painting, and secondly, as a set of work practices which came into being with the industrial revolution. In all approaches, however, there is presented an intricate relationship between design and art. In Caban, for example, the notion of graphic design is regarded as a historical development of commercial art and, along with many other commentators, he notes how it has often been perceived as a 'tainted' relation to art. Jervis's view, as described previously, could be seen to link art and design even more closely, and in Meggs the relationship is constantly referred to, with entire chapters devoted to practices, works and practitioners thoroughly embedded in art history. It is this complex relationship between art and design (and particularly graphic design), which has been the principle element in the shaping of design discourse—not just in philosophical terms, but in work practices, institutional formations and in the general dispersal of power. One of the principle arguments of this thesis is that when graphic design emerged as a component of design discourse in the twentieth century, it did so for many reasons, but the most compelling of these was as a response to the current perceptions of art discourse.

Meggs's (1998) chapter 'Renaissance Graphic Design' sees the Renaissance as an important transitional period in the 'evolution' of graphic design. He combines a traditional viewpoint of the Renaissance ('revival' and 'rebirth') with the perspective that during this period there occurred 'the flowering of a new approach to the design of the book …' (p. 90). This reaffirms our perception of the Renaissance period as one 'immensely superior to all ages since the fall of the Roman Empire' (Murray & Murray, 1963, p. 7) whilst the relating of this to design creates the sense of 'what was happening in the area of design' seem natural and almost self-evident giving it the legitimacy of a Renaissance history. It thus becomes another example of how the Renaissance was somehow artistically exquisite.

Some writers also regard the Renaissance as the period during which the seeds for the separation of fine art from design were sown. Herbert Read states the following:

> The actual phrases, "Fine Art" and "Applied Art", may be largely the creation of the machine age, but the underlying distinction is a product of the Renaissance. Before the Renaissance, the so-called Fine Arts (architecture, sculpture, painting, music and poetry) were not explicitly named, nor distinctly recognised, as a separate class . . . (1956, p. 18)

As we shall explore in future chapters Read takes from this an argument that art and applied art were at one time the same thing and that this argument should form the basis of a reappraisal of design in the twentieth century, which directs it back to just such a condition.

Finally, many accounts of design and graphic design theory and history make reference to the origin of the term design in the Renaissance 'disegno' and claim a historical continuum from the schools of design of the Renaissance to current design education (Read 1956, Pevsner 1973, Blunt 1970, Bell 1963, Walker 1989, Fry 1988). Rather than taking the view of *disegno* as an origin from which a history of design naturally springs we must evaluate it in terms of what it meant separate from current notions of what design is. That is, we must regard the effects of the events of the Renaissance related to the emergence of this term as well as the way they have been reported. Walker (1989) approaches this in considering one of the problems with definitions:

> During the Renaissance *'disegno'* (which in practice meant drawing) was considered by art theorists such as Vasari to be the basis of all the visual arts; consequently these were often referred to as 'the arts of design'. At that time *disegno* described the inventive, conceptualizing phase which generally preceded the making of paintings, sculptures and so forth. All artists engaged in design as part of their creative activities, hence design was not yet considered the exclusive concern of a full-time professional. (p. 23)

Walker goes on to say that: 'Designers as such only emerged later as a result of the growing specialization of functions which occurred in Europe and the United States as part of the industrial revolution of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries' (p. 23). This repositions design in line with its more industry- or profession- related definitions, as exemplified in Julier (1993) who makes the following pronouncement:

> My primary definition of design is that it is the creative invention of objects destined for serial reproduction (i.e., manufactured in numbers greater than one). This prevents the blurring with decorative arts that it has suffered. (p. 12)

It is interesting to note that most writers are content to recognise in the early use of the term *disegno* the origin of design, but give scant or no coverage of the specific conditions of its emergence and use. If we consider that emergence within its historical specificity and we find that the term was, ironically, less an origin of design, than one of the vehicles for the emergence of art discourse. It can be seen that it was precisely this Renaissance formation that denoted certain classes of work, study and the like, as superior, shifting them towards the liberal arts, and denoted others, many of which were to later become key components of design discourse, as inferior. This occurred largely through the use of the notion of 'disegno' and in particular, in its institutional forms in the first academies, and as an attempt to rest power from the guilds.

The emergence of a discourse of art is accompanied by the coextensive emergence, in Foucault's terms, of concepts, or the *language* of the discourse. Blunt states that the 'essential difference between the guilds and the academies was that the latter treated the arts as scientific subjects to be taught theoretically as well as practically whereas the guilds had mainly aimed at fixing a technical tradition.' (Blunt 1970, p. 57). Alberti had expounded the connection of art and science much earlier, in his introduction of the notion that through geometry and perspective, mathematics was as much the underlying structure of the arts as it was the sciences. However, one can see through the Renaissance the introduction of a theoretical training in art as a principle tactic in separating the arts from the crafts. This separation emerges in Leonardo's theories, which were later to be incorporated into the Academy. Pevsner notes that Leonardo's aim is that: 'art is to be sundered from handicraft. The painter is to be taught knowledge more than skill' (Pevsner 1973, p. 35).

Leonardo calls for a division of the arts into a higher and lower categories and it is here that he that he employs the term *disegno.* In Leonardo's view, the regarding of painting as a mechanical art is a crime, and 'the very name of handicraft as applied to art, a "vile cognome"', because as Pevsner shows, to Leonardo painting is 'the art of "disegno", and without "disegno" none of those sciences could exist' (Pevsner 1973, p. 30). The distinction is one of intellectual activity being placed above manual activity and can be clearly seen in Leonardo's pronouncement that sculpture was not to be included in the sciences but must remain in the mechanical arts because "it produces sweat and physical fatigue in the workman" (pp. 30-1). It was this use of *disegno* in

distinguishing certain of the arts from others by linking them to the higher processes of science and mathematics that Vasari was later to put into practice in his *Accademia del Disegno*. In Pevsner's account, the *Accademia's* use of the term *disegno* is as a political tactic in which the school insists on *disegno* as the 'expression of the soul'[4] (p. 46) and not a specific area of practice, thereby allowing for the membership of numerous artists from different guilds into the creation of a new organisational structure. It simultaneously enabled a far stronger alignment with a more intellectual approach to art study.

What then may we say about the notion of design in the Renaissance? The word is certainly significant, but to suggest an unproblematic historical lineage to any notion of design today deflects attention from the important political dimensions of its use. *Disegno* stands at the centre of a complex play of social and political actions, which occurred at a time when certain artists were becoming more powerful in the market and breaking from the tethers of both the guild system and the control of those who commissioned their works. As the decisions about what an artwork should consist of were taken into the domain of the artists themselves, the separation of certain arts practices as intellectual activity away from those activities regarded as more manual and skills-based emerges. In its trajectory the use of 'design' moves further from the regions that might be termed 'graphic' only to again emerge in this form under a set of quite different conditions and with an entirely new political agenda. By the time 'design' is imported to Australia and Victoria numerous gaps and re-emergences have occurred and what becomes the history of graphic design is often an account which acts to smooth over a somewhat difficult and tortuous terrain.

As stated earlier, histories are thoroughly implicated in relations of power, and for the last forty years the authority of the academic expert-historian has been challenged from a number of directions. One of the most significant challenges has been through the emergence (or re-emergence) of oral history traditions within the field. In later chapters of this thesis, I have used a number or oral sources and it is necessary to first make clear the status I attribute to these as historical research in the context of my approach generally.

[4] espressione e dichiarazione del concetto che sia nell' animo (Pevsner 1973, p. 46)

References

Bayley, Stephen 1979 *In Good Shape: Style in Industrial Products 1900 to 1960,* Design Council, London.

Bell, Quentin 1963, *The Schools of Design,* Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.

Blunt, A 1970, *Artistic Theory in Italy: 1450-1600,* Clarendon Press, Oxford.

Bogle, Michael 1998, *Design in Australia 1880-1970,* Craftsman House, North Ryde, N.S.W.

Caban, Geoffrey 1983, *A Fine Line: A History of Australian Commercial Art,* Hale & Ironmonger, Marrickville, NSW.

Dilnot, Clive 1989, 'The State of Design History Parts I and II,' in *Design Discourse: History Theory Criticism*, ed. Victor Margolin, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, pp. 213-250.

Dresser, Christopher 1876, *Studies in Design*, Studio Editions, London.

Foucault, Michel 1980, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction,* Vintage-Random House, New York.

Foucault, Michel 1984, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 2: The Use of Pleasure,* Penguin Books, London.

Fry, Tony 1988, *Design History Australia,* Hale & Iremonger, Marrickville, NSW.

Hoskin, Keith W. 1993, 'Education and the Genesis of Disciplinarity: the Unexpected Reversal' in *Knowledges: Historical and Critical Studies in Disciplinarity*, eds. Ellen Messer-Davidow, David R. Shumway, & David J. Sylvan, University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville and London, pp. 271-304.

Jervis, Simon 1984, *The Penguin Dictionary of Design and Designers,* Penguin Books, London.

Julier, Guy 1993, *The Thames and Hudson Encyclopedia of 20th Century Design and Designers,* Thames and Hudson, London.

Leathlean, Howard 1993, 'The Archaeology of the Art Director?: Some Examples of Art Direction in Mid-Nineteenth-Century British Publishing', *Journal of Design History,* vol. 6, no. 4, pp. 229-245.

Lenoir, Timothy 1993, 'The Discipline of Nature and the Nature of Disciplines', in *Knowledges: Historical and Critical Studies in Disciplinarity*, eds. Ellen Messer-Davidow, David R. Shumway, & David J. Sylvan, University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville & London, pp. 71-102.

Meggs, Phillip B. 1998, *A History of Graphic Design,* John Wiley & Sons, New York.

Murray, Linda & Peter 1963, *The Art of the Renaissance,* Thames and Hudson, London.

Pevsner, Nikolaus 1973, *Academies of Art: Past and Present,* Da Capo Press, New York.

Read, Herbert 1956, *Art and Industry,* Faber and Faber, London.

Sparke, Penny 1986, *An Introduction to Design and Culture in the Twentieth Century,* Allen & Unwin, London.

Sturt, George 1963, *The Wheelwright's Shop,* Cambridge U.P., London.

Thornham, Sue 1998, 'Postmodernism and Feminism, or Repairing our own Cars', in *The Icon Critical Dictionary of Postmodern Thought*, ed. Stuart Sim, Icon Books, Cambridge, pp. 41-52.

Walker, John A. 1989, *Design History and the History of Design,* Pluto Press, London.

3: Early Art Practice and Education in Australia

Introduction

Prior to the emergence of graphic design, art itself had very different forms in both practice and education in Australia. Of commercial art, Caban (1983) has stated: 'Nowadays those who practice in the diverse field of commercial art . . . tend to be known by names such as graphic designer, art director, illustrator and typographer' (p. 1). This suggests a simple splitting and historical development of the original practices of commercial art. Yet this simplifies what is, in fact, a more complex process involving the re-categorising of certain practices and the appropriation of others from altogether different domains, along with the addition of a set of new practices, through a range of institutional formations and the re-organising of ways of thinking to accommodate the new discursive arrangements. This thesis takes the perspective that the notion of commercial art arose as a kind of non-discourse, as a set of practices excluded from the emergent discourse of fine art, and in this sense left the ground open for graphic design to emerge. In order to explicate the complexities of graphic design's emergence in Australia and its relationship to practices such as commercial art, we must first map out the terrain from which the notion of commercial art is seen to arise. To this end we must look at the ways of understanding art, socially, in practice, and in education. Prior to the twentieth century, many of these notions were imported in various forms from Britain.

The South Kensington System in Britain

A number of important conditions were to act as catalysts for a new way of understanding art and design in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Britain. Perhaps most significant of these was the industrial revolution, which was firmly underway by the 1780s. Partly in response to this was the rapid expansion, and increased wealth, of the middle class. The industrial revolution created a massive growth in the availability of new products and the greater disposable income of the middle classes produced a burgeoning market throughout Britain and much of Europe. The defeat of Napoleon and the re-opening of trade between England and France in the early 1800s saw a great influx of French goods for sale in England, and raised fears in English industry of the very successful French competition.

This perceived threat from international markets led to the hearings of the 1835 Select Committee on Arts and their Connection with Manufactures. These hearings effectively set the approaches to art education for the next forty years in Britain and for many years beyond that, in the colonies. It was clear from these hearings that fine art training was to be the privilege of an elite few, specifically, members of the Royal Academy, whilst any art training for industry was to take a vastly different

form. A number of witnesses, and in particular, the principal art witness, Dr. Waagan, Director of the Berlin Museum, stressed the value of trade training for artisans, rather than fine art academic training (Weston 1991, p. 18) whilst Papworth, another witness, commented that workers should not even be allowed to see works of art other than vases and bronzes for fear that they would be tempted into the vocations of high art:

> For one of the events to be feared of an exhibition is, that by those higher departments of art, where human figures are the chief matter, young men might be tempted to leave the intended object to pursue that which is more accredited and honoured and to the disadvantage of the manufacturing arts. (qtd. in Rifkin 1988, p. 96)

Whilst some of the reasons put forth by the committee come from the sense that there was not enough work for a great influx of workers to the fine arts area, there is also a clear sense that social distinction of the classes needs to be maintained and that the fine arts was one of the key markers of this social distinction. Cockerell made the following pronouncement:

> I do not think such (artistic) knowledge compatible with the occupations of artizans, and the encouragements to it would mislead them, and interfere with their proper callings, and right division of labour, in which excellence already requires all their ability (qtd. in Rifkin 1988, p. 96)

Macdonald (1973) has noted that:

> During the period of the Schools of Design (1837-1852) the type of art work done in these institutions was laid down by the fine artists on the Council of the Central School and its headmasters, almost all Royal Academicians, whose brotherly object was to see that no rival institutions to their Academy would flourish. Richard Burchett, a well-indoctrinated member of staff of the Central School, later its headmaster, said: 'We wish to teach art, but to teach it in a way that it should not interfere with that kind of art which comes within the province of the Royal Academy.' (p. 90)

The result of the Select Committee hearings was the setting up of a number of Schools of Design, which were to teach art in a form specifically catering for the manufacturing industries. Macdonald (1973) has noted that:

> During the period of the Schools of Design (1837-1852) the type of art work done in these institutions was laid down by the fine artists on the Council

> of the Central School and its headmasters, almost all Royal Academicians, whose brotherly object was to see that no rival institutions to their Academy would flourish. Richard Burchett, a well-indoctrinated member of staff of the Central School, later its headmaster, said: 'We wish to teach art, but to teach it in a way that it should not interfere with that kind of art which comes within the province of the Royal Academy.' (p. 90)

When William Dyce was appointed to the Schools of Design, he stated:

> It is extremely necessary, that, during the progressive studies of the pupils, distinct reference should be had to their ultimate employment in life; in the first place, to prevent the inclination to a rambling, desultory and unprofitable course of study . . . and, in the second to guard against an ambition, extremely foolish in very many cases, of ranking among the students of fine art. (qtd. in Bell 1963, pp. 81-2)

A highly regulated system of art training in purely 'ornamental art' was introduce, which consisted of the National Course of Instruction, the National Competition, and the National Graded Examinations in Art. We should note the types of skills being taught at this stage: the copying of large capital letters, then diagrammatical renderings of simple objects, copying of ornament and symmetrical forms, followed by simple solids and casts of ornament, and geometry and linear perspective. The purpose, as Weston notes, was to produce 'the highly skilled copyist' (p. 24). Macdonald (1970) reveals the degree of regulation this course entailed:

> Exact uniformity was ensured by the National Course of Instruction and no examination could be passed, no prize won, no grants made, nor certificate obtained, except in specified stages of this course. (p. 188)

The course was developed by the Inspector General for Art, Richard Redgrave and comprised four Divisions of Instruction to give twenty-three Stages of Instruction, all of which, except for Stages 22 and 23, were purely 'imitative' exercises of copying and for which thousands of prints and casts were made. The effect was not only to check the enterprise of any local Schools of Art, but to absolutely eliminate the possibility of creativity or expression in the students. Weston (1991) also notes that discipline was also applicable in controlling the class:

> Many of the [provincial art schools] pupils were barely teenagers, and issues of discipline in art were also to be closely related to issues of discipline in the classroom. Dyce and his successor, Wilson, were to maintain regulations

> aimed at discipline: students had to sit down in their proper places immediately; talking was not to be permitted and nor were students to be allowed to move about unnecessarily. (p. 21)

The Demise of the South Kensington System in Britain

In 1884 a Royal Commission on Technical Construction was appointed and, during the course of this, commissioners noted that the original intentions of the Schools of Design, 'the practical application of ornamental art to the improvement of manufactures', had not been successfully adhered to. This was to herald the demise of the Schools of Design in their current form. Thirteen years prior to this, in 1871, the Slade School of Fine Art had been set up, using as a model, the French system. It presented as a favourable alternative to the design schools approach. However the purpose of the School was to train professional artists rather than give technical education, and its students were of private means, drawn from the middle and upper classes (Macdonald 1970, p. 269). A number of these students, however, were interested in the application of the arts to industry. This represents a significant shift in perceptions about what design was, and who should undertake to study and practice it. That is, something other than the previous notions about the 'mechanical arts' and the location of these practices within the domain of working class employment was beginning to emerge. The Slade School represented the application of fine art sensibility, through studies of nature, to design, but did not present them as 'available to all'. One might imagine that this may have impressed those speakers of the 1835-6 Select Committee who expressed the fear that teaching fine art principles might raise the trades above their station.

Stankiewicz (1990, p. 98) states the following perspective:

> At least two approaches to design study can be found in nineteenth century art education: the rule-based approach of South Kensington, and the Romantic Idealist approach, typified by Ruskin, which placed artistic personality above rules. By the end of the century, both approaches mingled as boundaries between fine and applied arts broke down.

Stankiewicz is inaccurate here, as the South Kensington system remained essentially the same for many years into the next century, outside of Britain. Chalmers (1990), for example, argues that the South Kensington system itself was 'kept alive by patterns of colonization and concepts of education and society that required a built and psychological environment reminiscent of "Home"' (p. 71). Also, the issue of whether the boundaries between fine and applied art have ever broken down is contentious. Before exploring how these forms of art education transferred to Australia, it is

necessary to understand the different conditions this country presented and how notions of art formed here.

Caban's notion of early artists as commercial

We have already noted how Bogle (1998) presents those who created new inventions, or remodelled old ones, to deal with Australian conditions, as early members of Australian design discourse. Similarly he presents Lucien Henry and his ornamental illustrative work, called by Henry 'decorative arts'[1] (p. 47), as another early *designer*. However, although this presents historical events and characters as part of a general evolution of *design*, we need also note that, prior to this, Geoffrey Caban had presented an Australian history of *commercial art* which, in some respects, was similar, but in others, substantially different. Caban's (1983) history was written just as graphic design was becoming recognised by a significant number of practitioners and educators, as a part of design discourse. As noted in Chapter 2, Caban regards graphic design, to some degree, as an altering of the role of commercial art. However Caban's historical account gives virtually none of the sense of relation to product design that we find in Bogle and the reference to graphic design seems almost an afterthought. Instead, Caban presents a history of art applied commercially, and connected closely with fine art—a history that seems to run parallel to Bogle's but quite unconnected. There are common elements, yet they present as similar characters appearing in quite different novels. In fact, Caban creates the same kind of historical continuity, as does Bogle, except that Caban's is that of 'commercial art', rather than 'design'.

Geoffrey Caban's work *A Fine Line: A History of Australian Commercial Art* (1983) provides an excellent description of early Australian artists who worked commercially, from selling landscapes and portraits to creating advertising posters and the like. However, although he suggests the history of 'commercial art' in Australia begins in 1839 with Samuel Thomas Gill, the 'artist of the goldfields' (p. 5), again we need to recognise this as essentially an anachronism. In fact the term 'commercial artist' was not used in the Working Men's College prospectus until 1922 and the O.E.D. finds the first published use of the term in 1922 in the journal *Commercial Art*. Although this suggests the term was commonly known by then, Sands & McDougall's Melbourne Directory of listed occupations—a kind of forerunner to Australia's yellow pages business directory—has no such category until 1926. Again it appears the term was well understood by that stage, as its first appearance lists no less than twenty-three names. We can also gather from the fact that all addresses were in city, mostly in Little Bourke and Little Collins streets, that these were businesses rather than individuals working from home. From this we can infer that, although the terms commercial and art may have been used in conjunction before 1900, there was little sense of an artist being 'a

[1] This is consistent with the South Kensington school approach to the kind of art their students should do.

commercial artist' at this time. It appears also that artists were seen as much the same whether they worked in ornamental design or produced drawings for mechanical reproduction or produced portrait paintings to be sold. When in the 1880s there was considerable work for artists through the *Bulletin* and the *Picturesque Atlas* (in Sydney), W. Lister-Lister makes the comment that: 'It was a great time for black and white artists but a poor one for painters' (qtd. in Moore 1980, p. 232).

To return to Caban's (1983) notion of Gill as the first commercial artist, we can see from the descriptions how a particular historical lineage is being suggested in his account. He notes that although there were other painters, Gill is *more deserving* of the title commercial artist than others because of a few notable attributes of his work, namely he created 'correct likenesses' of a size '"suitable for home conveyance" (to relatives in England)' (pp. 6-7) which placed him as 'Australia's first postcard designer' (p. 7) and importantly Caban notes he 'added headings with a graphic flourish and heightened borders by the addition of ornamental details and illustrations' (p. 7). By 1852 he was selling lithographic sketches and by 1855 was being advertised as 'a first class lithographic artist' (p. 8). Gill was engaged in 1855 to 'design the bank notes for the new Colonial Bank of Australasia' (p. 8). These were 'designed' by Gill and 'engraved' by Campbell and Fergusson. In this *design* is meant as 'conceived' and 'drawn' whilst *engraved* is bring made ready for printing through transferring of the drawing to a printing plate. These descriptions present a set of technologies and outcomes which designate, in opposition to any current conception of fine art, the field of 'commercial art'—namely postcard and banknote design, the use of typographic and decorative elements, and the use of mechanical reproduction processes (although we might question here whether, indeed, 'headings with a graphic flourish' quite constitutes typography). Notably, all of these activities were components of what a recognised and designated commercial artist of, say, the 1960s, would undertake or produce. That is to say, what makes Gill deserving of the title 'commercial artist' are those things that Caban is only able to recognise because of his current notion of commercial art. We need to be aware that these activities may have been quite different in their constitution, how they were approached or undertook, in their *meaning*, in fact, to their current counterparts; and also that these activities are chosen from a range of things that Gill did and that the gathering of precisely these ones and the disregarding of others, allows for Gill to be seen in this light.

In this period much illustration work done for publication in newspapers and periodicals was done by 'artist-engravers' and where artists were unable to engrave their own work those who specialised in the process were employed to engrave an artist's illustration. Caban (1983) notes that *Melbourne Punch* relied heavily on woodblock engravings and notes also that, after the first edition, which was illustrated

entirely by a Mr. Gill (no relation to S.T. Gill), Nicholas Chevalier was appointed the paper's official 'cartoonist' (p. 11). Charles Atkinson is described as an architect who became one of the first 'lithographic artists' in Australia. Lithographic presses had been introduced to Australia as early as 1821 and provided another process by which artwork could be printed. Yet another was the process of etching and Caban names a number of those who worked in these processes. We can see that commercial art, as late as 1898, was still not the common term and, although Caban describes that Harry J. Weston worked as a commercial artist in Tasmania, the *Launceston Examiner* of 1898 does not use this terminology. It states merely that 'for some years past he had been engaged as an artist at the office'. It also notes that he was an exhibitor at the exhibitions of the Launceston Art Society (qtd. in Caban 1983, pp. 49-50).

Moore's Story of Australian Art

A useful comparison to Caban's text is William Moore's 1934 volumes—*The Story of Australian Art: from the Earliest Known Art of the Continent to the Art of Today* (1980). This even more comprehensive work is from a perspective which one is tempted to suggest as fine art, for, although it covers in part areas discussed in Caban, it presents a lineage which leads to artists and artworks which today fall within contemporary discourses of fine art rather than commercial art. Having said this, it is interesting to note that the sense of a fine art discourse is far less dominant in this work than in similar works of ten or twenty years later.

Moore (1980) notes that early Australian works were topographical, botanical or anthropological sketches, oil paintings or watercolours, which were occasionally taken back to England to be converted into plates in books and journals. In the early 1800s lithographic and engraving works were being produced by artists such as John Carmichael and Joseph Lycett (pp. 15-16) and in these times, Moore notes, 'artists were to be found in all classes of the community' and indicates as well as convicts 'two governors . . . a bishop, scientists, architects, surveyors, explorers, and military officers' (p. 16). Early architects were often also painters and painters were often also engravers or lithographic artists and with little market in Australia turned their hands to whatever other work was available to survive including the painting of signs, restoring of pictures and a number attempted, ill-fatedly, to set up schools. Moore describes Edward La Trobe Bateman, who was:

> A fine designer . . . [and] friend of Rosetti and other members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood; and under Owen Jones he was in charge of the arrangement and decoration of the Fine Arts Court at the Great Exhibition in 1851. (p. 25)

Moore's account of his work covers sketches of the gold-fields, the design of a house, drawings of various buildings, water-colours of wild flowers, the design of the initials and tailpieces for the Catalogue of the Melbourne Public Library, and 'the cover designs and poem titles in *Some of My Bush Friends in Tasmania* by Louisa Meredeth' (p. 52). In 1857 the first artists' society—the Victorian Academy of Arts—was established. Some of the members indicate the kind of work areas in which relatively established artists could be found. Aside from Buvelot, there were:

> Thomas Wright, an art teacher; Frederick Woodhouse, 'who for some years always painted the winner of the Melbourne Cup'; William Pitt, the scenic artist; Richard Shepard, government lithographer; Gregory, the marine painter and H.L. van den Houten, 'employed by the Board of Education for a number of years. (Moore 1980, p. 158)

Tom Roberts worked as a photographers' assistant and later found work in (Richard) Stewart's photographic studios in Melbourne. Whilst studying art, Frederick McCubbin completed his apprenticeship as a coachbuilder, and Arthur Streeton was apprenticed as a lithographer to Troedel and Company, painting in his spare time (p. 71). Norman and Lionel Lindsay were contributing to the *Freelance* as well as supplying a hundred Sunday-school pictorial texts at half a crown a text (p. 78). Norman Lindsay became a cartoonist on the *Bulletin* whilst producing his series of pen drawings (p. 81). Will Dyson worked as a caricaturist in Melbourne and Alf Vincent drew the Melbourne page of the *Bulletin.*

The consolidation of fine art discourse in Australia

To understand how certain practices were consolidated into fine art discourse in Australia and others were excluded, we must recognise some powerful shifts in perception of not only what art was, but also of what Australia *was*, and importantly, of what society was. Palmer has stated:

> There has grown up a legend of the Australian nineties as a period of intense artistic and political activity, in which the genius of this young country had a brief and brilliant first flowering. Something new, it is claimed, emerged into the light. A scattered people, with origins in all corners of the British Islands and in Europe, had a sudden *vision of themselves* as a nation, with a character of their own and a historic role to play, and this vision set fruitful creative forces in motion. (Palmer qtd. in Ward 1969, p. 97)

What constituted the fine arts had been the topic of discussion for some time in Britain and the continent. However, we can see that, even up until the late 1800s in

Australia, any strict distinction between the fine and applied arts has little meaning or relevance for those who utilised the arts in actual day-to-day work practices. Even the membership of early arts societies indicates a range of occupations. Up until this point, questions of survival, safety and economics took precedence over issues of class distinction, and thus the issue of how arts practices should be categorised in social terms was of little significance. With the economic development after the gold rushes and the growth of Australia's manufacturing industries, Australia set up its own Schools of Design, of which we shall speak momentarily. This period also saw growth of its middle class, and with this, the issues of social distinction began to affect ways of regarding the arts. Many writers have regarded the period after the 1880s as a blossoming of Australian culture, and at the same time, as a coming-to-consciousness of the Australian people. Ward (1969) states: 'In the thirty years or so between about 1885 and the First World War Australians became conscious, not to say self-conscious, of their nationhood' (p. 97). The portrayal of this coming-to-consciousness gives the impression that it was a nationwide phenomenon across all classes and independent of its documenting. What needs to be recognised is that most of these perceptions are, in fact, perceptions of a middle class that is in the process of constituting themselves *through* these concerns and interests. One phenomenon does not precede the other but instead the two are inextricably linked. Only when art becomes available as a tool in distinguishing one class from another, does its clear definition become crucial. In cases like that of the impressionists, however, there was also an initial public outrage and the formulation of opposing sides—an occurrence instrumental in the crystallising the form of art discourse in Australia.

Impressionism & the fine artist in Australia

Tom Roberts organised the first exhibition of impressionistic works in Australia on 17 August 1889, and this marks the emergence of the new relation of fine and commercial art. Impressionism has been regarded as a statement of artists against what had been traditionally acceptable as fine art, and was viewed at first with either outrage or amusement. The leading art critic in Melbourne described the exhibition in the following terms: 'Of the hundred and eighty exhibits catalogued on the present occasion, something like four-fifths are a pain to the eye' (Moore 1980, p. 75). One of the effects of the initial disparagement of impressionism is the strengthening of a sense of unity of certain artists against an 'ignorant public'. Yet Impressionism had been making strong headway as a legitimate art form in the continent and Australians were quick to respond.

Pollock (1992) revisits the Impressionists using the techniques of *reference, deference* and *difference,* through which she identifies avant-gardism as 'a kind of game-play' and which she opposes to the traditional art histories of heroic individuals. She appraises

the Parisian avant-garde in the following way:

> To make your mark in the avant-garde community, you had to relate your work to what was going on: *reference*. Then you had to defer to the existing leader, to the work or project which represented the latest move, the last word, or what was considered the definitive statement of shared concerns: *deference*. Finally your own move involved establishing a *difference* which had to be both legible in terms of current aesthetics and criticism, and also a definitive advance on that current position. (p. 14)

In considering the economic conditions of the art discourse—the process whereby the work can be incorporated into a public discourse (to 'become cultural capital and make cultural profit')—Pollock identifies the crucial role of the personality of the artist which:

> Increasingly involved the manufacture of a public identity for the artist/producer which would stabilize and secure additional value for the product/art. The promotion of the self—the artist as author—was a specific effect of the processes of commodification which this stress on personality and individuality might seem to belie. The relations between the product and producer invert the typical ideological formation under capitalism—namely, the fetishism of the commodity—by creating an excessive mystique for, and overvaluation of, artistic personality. (p. 16)

Although fine art discourse undergoes considerable shifts throughout the twentieth century, what we see here is the emergence of a substantial set of relations that are to remain largely intact and constitute a vital component of the discourse to the present day. Here, a new sense of 'the artist' replete with myth is able to finally take up the notion of genius in the body of the artist rather than in the work. In this discourse the power of the work is bound up in knowledges—knowledges of the artist, the relation of the artist to the work, the work to the genre and so on. The object of representation in the work recedes.

That is, art discourse of the Impressionists created the possibility of a language of exclusion to distinguish those who can appreciate the autonomous form, from those who are not equipped with the language to do so. With the Impressionists in Australia, the fine arts began to crystallise into a discourse, legitimised by the patronage of an Australian middle and upper class, institutionalised in fine art galleries and schools like the Gallery School in Melbourne. Critics showed how to speak of, understand, and appreciate art whilst books, magazines, and newspapers contributed to a way of

seeing fine art as something special—a discourse, in fact, of an intellectual and social elite.

Even prior to the Impressionist exhibition in 1889, a number of associations were forming in the arts. In 1886 the 'professionals' led by Arthur Streeton, Tom Roberts, and Charles Conder broke away and formed the Australian Artists' Association. In 1888 the Victorian Academy of Arts and the Australian Artists' Association merged to form the Victorian Artists' Society (Moore 1980, p. 160). The Prehistoric Order of Cannibals was established in Melbourne in 1893. In this period the land boom was over and work was again hard to find, even for many of the more established artists. However, by then a greater bond was being forged between the fine arts and Australia's middle and upper classes. Haese (1981) states that the 1890s are often referred to as the 'Golden Nineties'.

> They were years of exuberance, the bohemian character of which found expression in the irreverence and energy of gatherings such as those of the 'Prehistoric Order of Cannibals'. This had brought together such diverse talents and personalities as, for example, Percy, Norman and Lionel Lindsay, Ernest Moffit, Will Dyson, Hugh McCrae and Max Meldrum. (p. 3-4)

The Society of Artists in Sydney first met in 1895 and was named by Tom Roberts. Sydney Long recalls that 'he was the first artist to sign his name in the visitors' book at Government House, and so he started a movement which gave the society's exhibitions a certain social attraction' (qtd. in Moore 1980, p. 168). The relationship of the arts societies and the wealthier echelons of Australian society became considerably stronger and along with the first exhibition being opened by Sir Henry Parkes:

> There was a series of afternoon entertainments arranged by a ladies' committee, the fixtures at one exhibition including separate afternoons for doctors, lawyers, musicians, army men, university professors, journalists, and members of the French community. (qtd. in Moore 1980, pp. 168-9)

The late 1800s and early 1900s saw a surge in the formation of societies associated with the arts, including the Australian Water Colour Institute, the Younger Group of Australian Artists, the Australian Society of Black and White Artists, the Australian Art Society and many others. In 1912 the Australian Art Association was established in Melbourne; in 1917 the Society of twenty Melbourne Painters began; in 1919 the Australian Arts Club, Sydney, was formed; in 1920 the Australian Painter-Etchers' Society, Sydney, was founded by Gayfield Shaw, with Lionel Lindsay as president, with

Sydney Ure Smith on the council. In 1923 the Australian Ex-Libris Society formed from the first exhibition of bookplates held in Australia and presented a number of bookplates to figures like 'the Duke and Duchess of York, Lady Forster, and Sir Dudley and Lady de Chair'—designs carried out by Adrian Feint. The Collectors' and Connoisseurs' Society of New South Wales was established in 1922 'to improve the appreciation of what is genuine in the fine arts'. In 1925 the Australian Print Collectors' Club was formed.

We need to recognise here that the growing connection of the fine arts with the wealthier classes and its institutionalisation as a discourse of an educated elite, is not necessarily representative of those who practiced in the arts. We might recall Wordsworth's disparagement of the use of the term 'taste' by those unfamiliar with the actual practices of art-making, and recognise that artists themselves, in fact, have often used their medium to criticise the way art is seen and used by the public. However, as we noted in Chapter 1 attempts by artists to criticise the relationship between artist and the 'bourgeois' patrons are doomed to failure as their critique is equally available for appropriation by the 'bourgeois'. Indeed, its political content often increases its value. If this, then, was the way in which fine art was to be understood, by association, it became how commercial art was to known. If fine art was to be 'Art', then commercial art becomes a kind of non-art. As stated, this was not necessarily the perspective of the practitioners in the area, and for a long time, many people continued to produce a range of artworks, some of which would be characterised as fine art and others not. It was also the case that most of those who worked specifically in one area had considerable respect for those who worked in another. The emergence of this discourse was primarily concerned with distinction for the patrons.

Artisans' Schools & the Gallery School

After the discovery of Gold in Victoria in 1851, a range of calamitous changes occurred including dramatic economic development, a huge influx of labour and capital, as well as new technology and an expansion of production to meet local needs, and which, within a relatively short time span, was able to have an effect on inter-colonial and overseas trade. Largely to deal with the perceived need to train artizans for industry, twenty-three new Mechanics' Institutes were established in the state within six years to add to the previous total of three. These proved to be ineffectual in these aims, however, and by 1869 a Technological Commission stated: 'It would appear these places miscalled Mechanics' Institutes are mostly used for reading rooms and occasional lectures, etc.' (Bleasdale qtd. in Candy 1994, p. 12). The Technological Commission set out to create Schools of Design: a system of 'genuine' technical education, to be carried out by School of Mines institutions.

Numerous such schools emerged in country districts of Victoria and later, those in the metropolitan region of Melbourne answered the call by forming the Melbourne Working Men's College (later RMIT) and shortly thereafter the Easter Suburbs Technical College (later Swinburne).

The complex nature of art education in Australia and the changes it was undergoing prior to the turn of the century is well illustrated through an analysis of two significant educational institutions—the Artisans' Schools of Design and the Melbourne National Art School attached to the National Gallery in Victoria. The first attempt to create schools for 'instruction in fine and applied art in Victoria' was made, according to Moore (1980) with the establishment of the Artisans' Schools of Design in 1867 (in fact, two years before the Technological Commission had called for Schools of Design). The main school was situated at the Trades Hall in Carlton and here was taught model drawing, figure drawing and at one stage under Louis Buvelot, landscape painting.

Among its pupils were Frederick McCubbin, C. Douglas Richardson, Peter Kirk and R.W. Bugg, whilst at another Artisans' School in Collingwood were Tom Roberts and John White. This account is given of White, who became well known as a landscape painter:

> His 'Silver and Grey' was regarded as the landscape of the year when shown at the Academy in 1883. He drew the well-known poster which represents a buxom girl saying to a sweep, 'Good morning. Have *you* used Pears' Soap?' (Moore 1980, p. 217)

This is perhaps the best description not only of the effect of the Artisans' Schools, but of the general conditions and expectations of 'the arts' in Victoria at the time. At this point artists were quite likely to apply their hand at a range of works. In terms of practice, illustrating an advertisement was regarded as no less noble than painting a landscape on commission, or in the hope of selling it independently, although there was still a sense of the *fine* artist as something outside of commercial aims and industrial practices.

The Melbourne National Art School (or the 'Gallery School'), started teaching in 1870. Lindsay (1978) reports that the School was in fact set up as two schools—a School of Painting and a School of Design—that 'were run as separate institutions although the School of Design was expected to prepare students for the School of Painting' (p. 1). While students at the School of Design worked at 'drawing from the round, from flat examples, and from the living model' (qtd. in Lindsay 1978, p. 1),

those at the School of Painting worked from life and from copying the works in the gallery. This is similar in method to the Royal Academy in London and the Gallery School might be considered a kind of miniature South Kensington School attached to and acting as a feeder to the 'real' school—the painting school. Thus while artists may have worked across a range of artistic applications, the distinction between fine and applied arts was reinforced along with the notion of the fine arts as superior in some sense to other applications.

What made the fine arts, and not the useful or commercial arts, available as a discourse of social distinction was the notion of 'disinterested pleasure'. Applied art as a form of employment, that is, 'interested', was therefore impotent as vehicle of class distinction. In the face of this quite dramatic emergence of the discourse of fine art, 'commercial art' was born—not as a distinct discourse, but as a response, whose parameters were located firmly within the discourse of fine art. Although many of those who worked within the discourse of fine art also worked commercially, that is, in the creation of work in which the personality of the artist was less significant, there was an emerging sensibility of one as the 'poor relative' of the other.

One needs to be careful here to recognise that if 'design' as it was used in the sense of the Schools of Design (and their South Kensington system of art education) is to be considered an early emergence of 'design' discourse, which is acceptable given that the object 'design' was used politically to legitimise it through national competitive benefits, it is certainly not the same 'design' of a century later. By comparing a more current use of the term 'design' with the early emergence and use of the term in education courses we can see quite specifically what was meant by design at the turn of the twentieth century and how that conception shifted over time.

A comparison of courses from RMIT and the Working Men's College

I would like to first briefly outline a typical graphic design course from 2002. I have concentrated on the institution of RMIT, previously known as the Melbourne Technical College and before that the Working Men's College—Melbourne, to show the trajectory of design and graphic design study: other courses while differing in some aspects have generally followed a similar pattern. When significant differences have emerged these have been referred to in the text.

As of 2002 at RMIT, the major course which covered graphic design practices and which, it was stated in the handbook and website, would prepare students for work in the Graphic Design industry, was titled Bachelor of Design (Graphic Design). The key areas of study were listed on the website as follows:

> Identity design, design for advertising and marketing, three dimensional design (packaging, display and exhibition design), information design, typographic design, publication design, and design for digital media. (RMIT University website, http://www.rmit.edu.au [2002])

It should be noted firstly the comprehensive defining of all subjects as some form of 'design'. There can be no mistaking the discourse in which these subjects reside and that any implied trajectory from which they are derived must be associated with a modern notion of design. The areas listed all instruct the prospective student on the eventual uses of design knowledge (advertising, marketing, packaging, display and exhibition), as much as on the specific areas that come under the banner of graphic design (identity, 3D, information, typographic, publication and new media design). What isn't specified here is 'what design is'. What is missing is, in fact, a group of elements generally related as *design principles*. That they are taught is made clear in the following section:

> Students of Graphic/Communication Design at RMIT are educated to develop a unique visual language based on a thorough knowledge of design principles combined with their individual design aesthetic and an understanding of the appropriate technology. (RMIT University handbook, 2001-2, p. 50)

When looking at RMIT's categories we should note that 'typography' has emerged as an individuated skill that has to be imparted separately from all of the other areas in which it would quite likely be applied. It is clear that typography's role as a key design practice is important and we shall investigate this in detail in chapter 7. Furthermore, we have a clear indication that design is regarded as in part a set of principles or rules, and in part an individual *aesthetic.* This understanding of what graphic design is, the particular subjects of which it is composed, and how it can be taught, is certainly not the way design has always been understood. As opposed to any assumption that this *version* of design is in any sense a natural evolution of some earlier manifestation implying some sort of continuity of an essence of design, we must excavate the precise meanings of design in their historical specificity with an awareness of their political and social meanings and effects.

When the Working Men's College originally opened in 1887, there was no course in the area of graphic design or commercial art. Indeed these subjects did not exist in any institution for some time and when art was initially introduced at WMC it took a form common to most other institutions at that time, which saw a differentiation

of fine art and applied art in terms of the name of the department—'Art and Applied Art', but no distinction in structure with subjects chosen as students saw fit. Because the WMC was not under Government control it did not formulate any clear educational objectives in its course structures and thus generated courses largely dependent on what would attract students. This resulted in a large number of quite disparate subjects and courses, which did indeed suit students' individual needs, but was strongly criticised for its somewhat mercenary approach. The system was effective however with the WMC attracting many more students than they could provide places. By 1895 the spread of courses taught in the Department of Art and Applied Art were as follows:

Practical Plane Geometry
Perspective
Freehand Drawing, 1st grade
" " 2nd grade
" " painting
" " women's class
Modelling
Graining and Marbling
Signwriting

These indicate little attempt to provide any sort of comprehensive *program* of instruction and a lack of any philosophical legitimising structure is evident. Notably the term 'Design' is absent from the curriculum.

By 1899 a significant change was able to occur in the curriculum as, for the first time, day classes were available with more full-time staff being employed. The Department of Art and Applied Art offered a three year course which was described as follows:

> The work of these classes takes up Drawing for beginners . . . from the flat and afterwards from the round; and deals with such examples as are best calculated to give Students a sound training in the knowledge of form, and practice in the art of Drawing from a carefully graduated series of examples. (WMC 1899, p. 52)

The influence of the South Kensington system and the general emphasis on a rigid and orderly system through which drawing skills are to be acquired is clear. The course description continues:

> The work of the Advanced Classes deals with the Principles of Design and the study of Historic Styles; drawing in light and shade, from casts of Higher Nature forms, and the more complicated examples of ornament, of animal life, flowers, fruits, etc., and their application to design (p. 52).

Murray-Smith et al. describe this class as the only successful one of four offered by the department, with painting, modelling and wood carving attracting only a few students (1987, p. 64). Here the term design makes its appearance and we can note through the notion 'principles of design' and its combination with 'study of historic styles', an underlying structure and philosophy becoming evident. Although there is no mention of typography or lettering, the Prospectus does state somewhat emphatically that 'students intending to proceed with Painting, Modelling, Wood-carving, or Sign-writing should be able to draw', indicating that sign-writing is certainly taught, whilst emphasising the importance given to drawing as a skill across wide ranging occupations—a belief which was to dominate for many years. The main area to cover lettering in some form was in composing and machining classes for printers.

At the Eastern Suburbs Technical College (now Swinburne) in 1909 when art classes were first given, the Department was simply termed the 'Department of Art' and classes were advertised as 'Freehand and Model Drawing for Trade Classes' (Swinburne 1909, p. 21) and included the following:

First grade: drawing in a variety of media (with some examples chosen from the trade classes)

Second grade: the same, but from more difficult examples

Lettering and Inscriptions: this includes 'the application of lettering for use in architectural and other drawings, titles, inscriptions, etc. Various alphabets, capitals and small letters will be given, and the construction and their arrangement in words will be explained. The setting out of titles and headings, numbers, marginal lines, etc., will also be dealt with'.

Painting: students here are taught 'to make *workmanlike* paintings . . . from geometrical models and common objects; casts of ornament and figure; sprays of foliage and flowers from Nature and the human figure from Life'. A note is added that 'no student will be allowed to join a Painting Class who has not passed the first year's drawing course.'

The final subject is Design and is worthy of special mention as it gives an excellent description of how the term was used at this time with particular emphasis on ornamentation:

Design—General and Modelled Design:

In the elementary stages of this course, students will be taught to adapt simple freehand drawing examples for purposes of ornamentation, and to make designs to fit given spaces; to design vertical, horizontal and circular borders, diapers, etc. such design to consist of geometric ornament, simple scroll work and floral forms.

In the advanced stages the students will be taught to make designs suitable for adaptation to some specific purpose, as, for example, a spandril, frieze, tile, book cover, etc., and for a special method of execution, such as modelling and carving, painting, stencilling, etc.

This course will extend over three years, the last year including the application of human and animal forms for ornamental purposes.

At the college then lettering was not only available but encompassed to a great degree the elements now covered in typography, yet this was a separate course from either design or painting, neither of which makes any reference to the study of lettering, although both require drawing as a prerequisite subject (or modelling in the case of the design course). By 1911 the Department had placed Lettering and Inscriptions into its Trade Classes' category, whilst Drawing Painting and Design were in the 'Art and Art-Craft Classes' category.

Even in 1920 when the course at what was now called the Melbourne Technical School was offered, there is no specific mention of typography or lettering. The curriculum for the four year certificate maintains an emphasis on drawing and there is still no specialisation into design disciplines or for that matter any categorisation to suggest a distinction between the way one would learn fine art or applied art, even though the title of the department remains 'Art and Applied Art':

Melbourne Technical School: 1920

FIRST AND SECOND YEARS
Drawing from Natural and Common Objects
Geometrical Drawing
Perspective
Blackboard Drawing
Animal Drawing
Design
Illustration
Craft Subjects

THIRD AND FOURTH YEARS
Design
Animal Drawing
Anatomy
Life and Antique Drawing
Drapery and Costume
Outdoor Studies
Figure Composition
Still Life
Modelling Design
Modelling Life and Antique
Craft Subjects

Design is emerging as a key term, appearing as a subject in its own right in both two-year periods and also in its application to Modelling, even though there is no evidence to suggest that this technically entails anything further than the planning out and drawing or modelling of ornamentation as it did in the past. We can see that the South Kensington system is still strongly influential here[2]. Prior to 1930 the Art School relied on its 'extensive collection of plaster casts, classical sculptures, ornamental friezes and the like' (Murray-Smith et al. 1987, p. 228).

During this period the approach to art teaching was maintained by Thomas Fisher Levick, the head of the school, and Ponsonby May Carew-Smyth, the former inspector of art, who was the supervisor of the Education Department art courses, and another student describes that he spent the entire first term drawing a bust of Voltaire before Levick was satisfied with the result.

By 1924 the school is titled the School of Applied Art and is almost entirely vocational in the subjects offered. The Prospectus states that the curriculum 'embraces a thorough training in Drawing Design, Modelling and Casting, Painting, Craft Work, etc.' and includes classes in the following:

> Perspective, sciagraphy, geometry, anatomy, ornament weaving, dressmaking, millinery, art needlework, lithography, process engraving, sign writing, ticket and showcard writing, drawing for builders and artisans, etc.

It further indicates its vocational emphasis stating quite explicitly that 'Courses of instruction are laid down for . . . Art teachers and teachers of drawing, commercial and fashion artists, decorative designers, . . . printers, . . . furniture makers . . . painters, decorators, . . . etc.' (WMC 1924, p. 72)

[2] Swinburne (Eastern Suburbs Technical College) also promoted its art course at this time as based on the principles of the South Kensington system.

We can note here that although no specific subject is suggested, the notion of commercial art makes its first appearance as a possible employment prospect. It is also stated that 'students are prepared for the Art examinations of the education department, and for all other drawing examinations belying one of the main areas of art education—that is, the education of art teachers[3].

Decline of the South Kensington System in Australia

Thomas Fisher Levick, and Ponsonby May Carew-Smyth, the two main proponents of the South Kensington system at the Working Men's College retired in December 1930. The 1930s also saw a significant shift occurring with Commercial Art now an independent course quite separate from General Art:

> **General Art Course (Graphic or Plastic)** was similar to the earlier art courses with an emphasis on drawing and painting, the inclusion of Lettering in years 2 and 3 and again the subjects Design (all years) and Modelled Design (2nd year).
>
> **Commercial Art Course** was defined as follows:
> This course has been framed to give students a thorough training in commercial art, commencing with the principles of drawing and design and the use of the pencil, pen and brush. A knowledge of lettering is necessary and this subject is practiced extensively in each stage of the course. Fashion drawing, newspaper advertising, magazine and catalogue illustration, poster and show card design are studied, and at certain periods students are required to attend classes in Process Engraving and Lithography to gain a knowledge of methods of reproduction. A special class on air brush work is conducted during the final year of the course, and also one session weekly is given to the study of practical commercial photography.

Interestingly a subject titled 'Art Appreciation' is also included in 2nd, 3rd, and 4th years, whilst no such subject is offered in the General Art Course. It is also worthy of note the use of the term design in 'poster and show card design' and the staff list indicates a number of teachers over the entire department of *design* subjects:

> Design
> Poster Design
> Furniture Design
> Dress Design

[3] Murray-Smith et al. (1987) note that 'from the time of the establishment of the college, the teaching of art had formed an important part of its activity' (p. 227), and that 'in the early part of the twentieth century the college had established training courses for Education Department art teachers.'

Other courses were Signwriting, Ticket Writing and Home Crafts. We can gather from this information that design was becoming more prevalent as the general term for the planning, laying out or composing of certain types of work and in areas like poster, advertising, showcard and catalogue illustration a knowledge of typography has become an essential feature. We can also see a consolidation of a certain range of subjects as a significant grouping—the commercial art 'course'—leading to a profession which utilises that range, whilst other subjects remain outside of this grouping, like signwriting and ticket writing. However the use of the term design is still connected at this time with the nineteenth-century tradition of ornamental work and both senses of design are in use as the following examples show:

Decorative Needlework
This course includes a subject titled *General Design, which* is designated 'the study of historic ornament as applied to needlework'.

Dress Design
The method of this course is given as 'to teach students how to represent their ideas on paper, and, when approved, to transform the design into a cheap material on to a dress stand.

Interior Decoration
As well as various techniques and applications of drawing, this course includes a subject termed *General Design* 'which includes the complete decoration of interiors, woodwork, plaster, tapestries and furnishings, as well as the architectural design of walls, doors, windows, floors, ceilings, etc.

The sense of design as an approach which considers all aspects of the final product is foreshadowed in the third example and it is worthy of note that this is in the area of interior decoration, a field closely associated with architecture and one in which practitioners were already beginning to consider themselves in terms of a connection to Bauhaus approaches. It is here where design begins to lose connotations of decoration or simply 'planning' and begins to take on a single comprehensive meaning which is associated with a philosophical approach as well as a set of specific practices, hierarchies of authority and a unique professional language. In other words what we can begin to see here is the emergence of design as a discourse.

Conclusion

With the gold rushes, a growing manufacturing industry raised utilitarian concerns, which, through the Technological Commission, saw the development of Australian Schools of Design. Whilst these attracted greater numbers from the working classes,

the system by which they were taught art was the South Kensington system—a sterile scientific form of instruction which worked against personal creativity and had little connection to the creative 'fine' arts—a system, in fact, of ordering, classifying and categorising, and monitoring, where the act of creativity itself is reduced to minutely detailed instructions. Where either an appreciation of fine art, as practiced in the Royal Academy, or skills in industrial art might empower the working classes, the South Kensington system provided neither. The discourse of art was to emerge almost entirely outside of this system and based on a fine arts training and knowledge conferred overseas or by institutions like the Gallery School. The South Kensington system was to remain for many years the mainstay of training at technical colleges throughout Australia maintaining a theoretical, practical and cultural distance between the fine and commercial arts. Up until the 1930s the term Design tends to denote decoration of quite a specific kind—the layout and use of the frieze and the like. This could easily fit into a definition of applied art—the application of artwork to an object, which in most cases is already made. In the 1930s 'Design' begins to denote more general principles and practice of planning and constructing a piece of work, as in Dress Design,

We have seen how terms like applied and industrial arts when located in their historical specificity have, in fact, been replete with ideological and social meanings. In particular, they have often been used to separate practices from the fine arts in ways that maintain or support forms of social distinction. As we have seen the mechanical arts has been in many ways a term that emphasises certain art practices as lacking those characteristics of the higher faculties—intellectual ability, taste and genius. Decorative arts came to prominence with the South Kensington system as a strictly regimented form of arts practices, stripped in many ways, of creativity and independent thinking.

Whilst the South Kensington system had sprung from a perceived need to provide artistically produced goods to compete in a growing international marketplace it also acted to keep *legitimate* creativity for a privileged elite. The emergence of fine art discourse emphasised *real* art as disinterested, and created a correlative disparagement of those art practices which were related to industry and commerce. The emergence of design discourse was revolutionary in its effect on the status of many of these practices, however, as is so often the case with revolutions, this was not a working classes assault, but rather a shifting of power among a well-meaning and idealistic middle class, as we shall see in the following chapters.

References

Bell, Quentin 1963, *The Schools of Design,* Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.

Bogle, Michael 1998, *Design in Australia 1880-1970,* Craftsman House, North Ryde, N.S.W.

Caban, Geoffrey 1983, *A Fine Line: A History of Australian Commercial Art,* Hale & Ironmonger, Marrickville, NSW.

Candy, Phillip 1994, ''The Light of Heaven Itself': The Contribution of the Institutes to Australia's Cultural History' in *Pioneering Culture: Mechanics' Institutes and Schools of Arts in Australia*, eds. Philip C. Candy and John Laurent, Auslib Press, Adelaide, pp. 1-28.

Chalmers, F. Graeme 1990, 'South Kensington in the Farthest Colony' in *Framing the Past: Essays on Art Education*, eds. Donald Soucy and Mary Ann Stankiewicz, National Art Education Association, Virginia, pp. 71-86.

Haese, Richard 1981, *Rebels and Precursors: The Revolutionary Years in Australian Art,* Allen Lane, London & Ringwood, Victoria.

Lindsay, Frances 1978, *Von Guerard to Wheeler,* Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne.

Macdonald, Stuart 1970, *The History and Philosophy of Art Education,* University of London Press, London.

Macdonald, Stuart 1973, 'Articidal Tendencies' in *Readings in Art and Design Education: 2 After Coldsteam*, ed. David Warren Piper, Davis-Poynter, London, pp. 89-99.

Moore, William 1980 (orig. published 1934), *The Story of Australian Art: From the Earliest Known Art of the Continent to the Art of To-day,* Angus & Robertson, Melbourne.

Murray-Smith, Stephen, D. & Dare, Anthony John 1987, *The Tech: A Centenary History of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology,* Hyland House Publishing, South Yarra, Melbourne.

Pollock, Griselda 1992, *Avant-Garde Gambits 1888-1893: Gender and the Colour of Art History,* Thames and Hudson, London and New York.

Rifkin, Adrian 1988, 'Success Disavowed: the Schools of Design in mid-nineteenth-century Britain. (An Allegory)', *Journal of Design History,* vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 189-102.

RMIT 2002, *RMIT University Handbook,* RMIT University, Melbourne.

Stankiewicz, Mary Ann 1990, 'Rules and Invention: From Ornament to Design in Art Education' in *Framing the Past: Essays on Art Education*, eds. Donald Soucy and Mary Ann Stankiewicz, National Art Education Association, Virginia, pp. 88-101.

Swinburne (various dates), *Prospectus,* Swinburne Technical College, Hawthorn, Victoria.

Ward, Russel 1969, *Australia,* Ure Smith, Sydney.

Weston, Neville 1991, 'The Professional Training of Artists in Australia, 1861-1963, with Special Reference to the South Australian Model' Doctorate in Art, South Australian School of Art, Adelaide.

WMC (various dates), Working Men's College, Melbourne.

4: The Emergence of Design Discourse

Introduction

The emergence of graphic design in Victoria involves a shift from the more disparate groups of commercial artists and others, to a more highly visible unity of people, institutions, and organisations. We can view this shift through two events—the emergence of design discourse and, some time later, the consolidation of graphic design as a subsection of this discourse. This is not to suggest there was a historical or philosophical continuity underlying these phenomena, but that there was a relation in the possibilities for ways of understanding and positioning work practices. This chapter explores the emergence of design discourse, which allowed for a recognition of these practices as professional, as well as creating a public perception of the industry. The emergence of design discourse takes place through the establishment of a broad philosophical basis and the development of a language of design, the formation of local organisations, the reconstituting of specific work practices as elements of the new discourse, and the introduction of these new forms of knowledge into educational courses and wider discourses. It is tempting to state that modernism played a central role in the emergence of design discourse. Yet this would confer upon the notion of modernism at once, a sense of unity, and at the same time, a sense that it somehow *acted*. The notion of modernism is important in the emergence of design discourse, not because it *did* anything, or even *was* anything, but rather because it could be used as if it had these abilities and properties. It provided a perceived unity through which the philosophical and moral structure of design discourse could be articulated. This chapter considers the emergence of modernism and the philosophical argument for design discourse, their impact on various work practices and the articulation of this argument as a common ground out of which local organizations were formed in Australia. Before tackling the complexities of modernism it is necessary to outline the emergence of the Bauhaus, which was to prove so fundamental to how modernism was to be constructed within architectural and design discourses. Yet we must remain cognizant of the politics of the reporting and documenting of this emergence that has come to form the myth of the Bauhaus. By contextualising these events as much as possible in terms of the experiences of Australians at that time, we may to some degree revisit these sites less encumbered by the gravitas of the Bauhaus myth and thereby view them in terms of the relations of power.

Histories of design, graphic design and commercial art trace graphic design's *lineage* to a group of people considered early designers or graphic designers, although none at the time actually had the title 'graphic designer' and the few that considered themselves 'designers' used the term with only a few of the connotations the term

today implies. The others came under a range of titles such as letterers, illustrators, poster artists, and the like. Where they once may have been classified as commercial artists, the recognition of design as either innate human characteristic (from the stone-age) or professional practice (from the industrial revolution) allows for them to now be re-classified as designers. The following chapters problematise the notions of design and graphic design showing how the two areas appeared separately, and how this did not consist of the simplistic structure whereby graphic design was a natural subcategory of the wider field of design, even though this is the structure often used in most modern literature regarding design and graphic design history and theory, as exampled by Bogle's *Design in Australia* (1998). This chapter looks at the core group of designers and their international connections given in Australian histories, and, in particular, considers how they were seen to take up and promote ways of understanding design predicated on approaches from the Bauhaus. Most importantly it considers the significant effects of this new conception of art practices in terms of a social structuring of the class.

The Early Core Group

Caban (1983) presents a certain core group of early 'graphic designers' which emerged in the 1930s and 1940s, and who tend to be seen as the founders of graphic design, through a number of historical documents and recollections of contemporary designers in Victoria. If other groups or individuals were equally significant historically but for whatever reasons did not come to form the lineage to the current group, their history has been lost (for now at least), whilst the documentation of those making up the core was maintained because either they were already seen to be important or became seen as important through their involvement in the 'scene'. One must also be cognisant that a document which includes someone because the author considers the person important has the result of increasing the apparent significance of that person because of the simple fact that they are now 'documented'—an effect often liable to snowball. Figures who become recognised as significant characters then have the effect through their own recollections, the recollections of others or the work of researchers, of creating a kind of matrix of associations—those who acted as mentors or inspirations for them and those for whom they acted as mentors or inspirations either through their personality or the work they did. Work becomes regarded as important and is taken up by galleries and museums, and the media. They develop an aura of authenticity and a place in history—a location, a source of influence and a point of continuity for previous influences. These figures become deeply embedded within the discursive framework through the actions of industrial organisations which award them certain accolades as significant figures, for example the Australian Graphic Design Association's *Hall of Fame*, which presents recipients at an annual ceremony where speeches are made, names are added to the *Hall of*

Fame, along with a short account of the recipient's significance to the industry and so on. Such activities work on one level to validate the efforts of the recipients and on another level, in suggesting the thanks of the current industry figures, give a indication of who may make decisions, in the Foucauldian sense—that is, those who are considered legitimate speakers for the industry. It therefore also works to further legitimise and promote the organisation, its members and the discourse itself. We need to be aware of course that both membership within a group and the notion of 'importance' are often related to other issues like class, race, gender, sexuality and the like—issues which work to maintain a dominant hegemony. This is not to suggest that the core group are not important, but to note the social and discursive mechanisms by which *importance* is conferred.

The perceived constitution of this early core group is interwoven with the perception of a 'scene', that is, a centre of activity, which has become regarded as the founding base of graphic design in Victoria. One of the most dominant characteristics of this early group is that members either came from England, or worked professionally (did their time) in England for some period. The significance of this can be seen from, among other things, the title of Caban's chapter which deals with this emergence: 'Overseas Experience'. The group tends to be represented by Geoffrey and Dahl Collings, Alistair Morrison, Gordon Andrews, Grant Featherston, Douglas Annand, Richard Haughton (Jimmy) James, Richard Beck and Max Forbes, all of whom have a direct connection with England. It should be noted that only some of the group worked in Melbourne, but are still included because the Sydney-Melbourne connection was regarded as a further legitimising factor, in much the same way as the England-Australia connection. Already the issue of a certain amount of privilege in the early core group is implicated through the recognition that overseas travel was only an option for those workers who could afford the time, money and a sensibility of the importance of such journeys, that is, Bourdieu's 'cultural capital' as discussed in Chapter 1.

Geoffrey and Dahl Collings travelled to London in 1935, with Alistair Morrison joining them later that year and Gordon Andrews arriving two years later. Much has been made of the association of the Collings's and Morrison with László Moholy-Nagy. Moholy-Nagy had been one of the key figures at the Bauhaus school and both Dahl Collings and Alistair Morrison worked for him for some time. This figures as one of the most crucial events in Australian design discourse.

The Bauhaus

The significance of the Bauhaus in graphic design and design histories cannot be overstated. Whitford (1984) has called the school 'the most celebrated art school of

modern times' (p. 9) and describes it thus:

> During its brief existence the Bauhaus . . . precipitated a revolution in art education whose influence is still felt today. Every student now pursuing a 'foundation course' at an art school has the Bauhaus to thank for it. Every art school which offers studies of materials, colour theory and three-dimensional design is indebted in some degree to the educational experiments carried out in Germany some six decades ago. Everyone sitting on a chair with a tubular steel frame, using an adjustable reading lamp or living in a house partly or entirely constructed from prefabricated elements is benefiting . . . from a revolution in design largely brought about by the Bauhaus. (p. 10)

Whitford also offers a quote from Wolf von Eckardt stating that the Bauhaus 'created the patterns and set the standards of present-day industrial design; it helped to invent modern architecture; it altered everything from the chair you are sitting in to the page you are reading now' (p. 10). It is almost unthinkable that a history of design today would not include the Bauhaus and most likely in the form of a link between the Morrisian approach to craft and the geometrical forms and absence of ornamentation of the International Style, which we shall discuss momentarily. The Bauhaus offers to architecture and design discourses one of the cornerstones of modernism. Whilst an exploration of the full effects of the Bauhaus on Australian design is outside of the scope of this thesis, two quite specific effects it was to have on the emergence of design and graphic design need to be discussed. Firstly, the bringing together of a wide range of disparate activities, and secondly, how design emerged as a form of 'truth'.

Before embarking on an explanation of these three elements, it must be understood that the Bauhaus is often regarded as a singular influence on design, when in fact it was a short-lived institution, which underwent a number of radical changes in staff and approaches during its time. The Bauhaus was a singularity of neither practices nor philosophy but a dynamic system through which a range of practitioners operated, taught and studied. Indeed, it was Moholy-Nagy's violent disagreement with the approach of Hannes Meyer that led to his resignation from the Bauhaus in 1928. Although it reached some fame during its existence part of this can be seen as the result of its ability to attract a number of famous artists as teachers—an ability assisted by the Depression period. One may further suggest that its greater significance can be much attributed to a range of factors which occurred after it had disbanded, not least of which includes the placement of a number of ex-Bauhaus teachers and students in significant positions in the U.S. and the dramatic effect the formalised modernism in architecture, known as the International Style was to

have on American architecture. One must also note that changes in technology and marketing made any approaches that emphasised geometric shapes and dissuaded the use of ornament more favoured. We shall consider this in more detail presently, but it is important here to note that the philosophical and pedagogical approaches from the Bauhaus constitute a considerable range of sometimes contradictory positions[1], and those for which it has become famous are the ones which tend to have found the greatest applicability in later years and in other locations.[2]

Bauhaus as a range of practices

The bringing together of a range of different activities works on a number of different levels and is intertwined with the effect of uniting art and industrial practices. Gropius in his 1924 essay 'Concept and Development of the State Bauhaus' relates the Bauhaus approach within the following lineage:

> Ruskin and Morris in England, van de Velde in Belgium, Olbrich, Behrens and others in Germany, and finally the Deutscher Werkbund, all sought and finally found the basis of a reunion between creative artists and the industrial world. (qtd. in Banham 1970, p. 280)

The aim of the Werkbund, of which Gropius had been a member, was 'the reconciliation of art, craft, industry and trade . . . ' (Whitford 1984, p. 20). Underlying the approaches to this unification was a clear social disposition as can be seen in the original manifesto:

> There is no essential difference between the artist and the craftsman . . . . The artist is an exalted craftsman . . . Let us then create a new guild of craftsmen without the class-distinctions that raise an arrogant barrier between craftsman and artist! (qtd. in Whitford 1984, pp. 11-12)

If the Bauhaus was unsuccessful in eliminating the distinctions between artist and craftsman—considerable friction emerged at the school due to the clear privileging of the artist-teachers over the craft workers—it seems they were nevertheless very

[1] Kinross (1992) states: 'To some considerable extent, the idea of the golden cultural era of the Weimar Republic has been fostered by the émigré imagination. For example, the reputation of the Bauhaus rested for many years on the exhibition about it held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1938, and more especially on the book that accompanied the show. In this publication, Walter Gropius and colleagues from his years as the school's director put forward a partial account of the institution, which suppressed internal conflicts and played down the early expressionist phase and the later developments under the direction of Hannes Meyer. The success of this account can be seen in the fact that for many years "Bauhaus" and "modern" were, and sometimes still are, synonymous terms' (p. 100).

[2] Whilst Wolfe's *From Bauhaus to Our House* (1983) presents a decidedly mischievous and sometimes caustic critique of the explosion of Bauhausian principles and their subsequent reverence throughout the United States, there is undeniably considerable substance underlying his assault.

successful at inculcating in students these widely divergent practices. Whitford (1984) notes:

> The most striking characteristic of the moderately successful as well as the subsequently famous Bauhaus students is their extraordinary versatility. It would not be an exaggeration to say that most of them had turned their hands to everything before leaving the school and continued to develop an expertise in a wide variety of areas afterwards. They could paint, take photographs, design furniture, throw pots and sculpt. Herbert Bayer and Marcel Breuer could design buildings as well. (p. 70)

The effect of this range of practices is that each person was imbued with a sense of a *whole* that is simultaneously being formed. Although the Bauhaus formalised the practical application of this notion it was certainly not a unique concept at the time. Whitford (1984) makes the following observation that is interesting for us in both its description of the context from which the creation of the Bauhaus might be favoured and also in his translation of the actual terms:

> The desire for educational reform led in Germany to two fundamental demands. The first was that all art education should be based on craft-training; the second that, since students were forbidden to specialize, the schools should embrace as many activities as possible. The fine arts were to find their place alongside the greatest possible variety of craft skills and, wherever possible, architecture and engineering as well. The term *Hochschule für Gestaltung* (best but imperfectly translated as Institute for Design) was coined to describe this novel kind of establishment long before Gropius applied it to the second incarnation of the Bauhaus at Dessau. (p. 27)

This is of interest not only for the combination of art, craft, architecture and engineering, prior to the Bauhaus, but also for Whitford's translation. 'Gestalt' does not translate easily into English, but perhaps the most pertinent translation comes from its use in psychology. Here, Gestalt is translated as:

> Form, pattern, structure, configuration; an integrated whole, not a mere summation of units or parts. (Drever 1976, p. 108)

Gestalt psychology is a school of psychology where 'the basal contention is that mental processes and behaviour cannot be analysed, without remainder, into elementary units, since wholeness and organization are features of such processes from the start.' (p. 108) As 'gestalt' and 'design' begin to come together, we see a

new understanding of the meaning of design beginning to emerge—a design that somehow brings forth a unity from art, architecture, craft and engineering.

What is significant here is that the term *Gestaltung* and one of its translations, 'Design', become available to take on this sense of a single practice complete with an overarching philosophy and a wide range of skills which relate art to industrial practices. The philosophical and theoretical basis is an essential characteristic of certain discourses and we shall see how it becomes significant in the discourses of design and graphic design shortly. However, it is worth noting that Moholy-Nagy provided one of the earliest examples of this combination in his own practice and one can suggest that his relative importance in design histories is partly attributable to his ability to embody these elements.

Design as a form of 'truth'

We can note that the Bauhaus approach through Moholy-Nagy is to a large degree the recognition or construction, and emphasis, of a 'core' of significant knowledge and practice over otherwise 'peripheral' practices. Dahl Collings states of working with Moholy-Nagy that 'It was absolutely stunning, because all the training I'd had in Australia had been so peripheral' (Caban 1983, p. 72). Similarly Geoff Collings comments: 'I think I could sum up Moholy's magic . . . in that complete desire to get at the truth, the core in everything. Peripheral stuff was of no interest to him at all (p. 72). We can see the relation of this desire to reach an underlying core of truth, to his belief in the totalising effect of these practices in the person of the designer themselves. Indeed this political and philosophical position is visible in his letter of resignation from the Bauhaus, in which he gives the school's veering away from this direction as his reason for leaving:

> Among the students, this reorientation is noticeable in their increased demand for technical skill and practical training above anything else . . . . I can no longer keep up with the stronger and stronger tendency toward trade specialization in the workshops . . . . We are in danger of becoming what we as revolutionaries opposed: a vocational training school which evaluates the final achievement and overlooks the development of the whole man. (Moholy-Nagy qtd. in Passuth 1987, p. 398)

The following two quotes from Moholy-Nagy indicate the way in which the notion of design as an understanding of some essential truth sits comfortably for him in the sphere of industrial practices, while the commercial arts are also beginning to be seen in the same terms although the description is limited to display of products:

> Design . . . is not a matter of façade, of mere external appearance. Rather, it is the essence of products and institutions. It is indivisible. The internal and external characteristics of a dish, a chair, a table, a machine, or a city are not separable . . . . Training in design is training in appreciation of the essence of things. It is penetrating and comprehensive. It includes development of various skills in using materials, but goes far beyond that. It involves development of attitudes of flexibility and adaptability to meet all sorts of problems as they arise. (Moholy-Nagy qtd. in Passuth 1987, p. 359)

His view of the commercial arts was stated then as follows:

> In the commercial arts, design for display is a major factor. Planning of exhibitions, expositions, fairs, store displays, and display windows is being increasingly based on the principles of stage design. Here the display is considered as an active principle, where sound, word, color, rhythm, and form are supported by motion. (p. 358)

Moholy-Nagy and the Australians

After the Bauhaus period Moholy-Nagy went to London where his main income was derived from working on the interior design and display work for Simpson's department store in Piccadilly. Caban (1983) notes the total design approach that he undertook there: Moholy-Nagy was responsible for everything—the total public image, from window displays to the weaving of cloths for the restaurant (p. 72). Passuth (1987) describes how by the 1930s Moholy-Nagy was at this time internationally famous throughout most of Europe (p. 194) and we can see by Passuth's description how easily his work there can be read as a continuation of the Bauhaus themes:

> Failing anything better, the shop-windows of Simpson's took over the role of the earlier avant-garde exhibitions and theatres. The shop-windows dressed by the artist come alive, they are no longer mere shop-windows, but a late evocation of the Bauhaus spirit . . . For a short time, the shop-window became a Bauhaus platform and absorbed the artist's attention entirely and exclusively. (p. 65)

It was this sense of design that was to impress itself on the likes of the Collings's and Alistair Morrison. How much of it was considered 'Bauhaus' and how much was simply Moholy-Nagy's approach is difficult to ascertain, as the reminiscences are some considerable time after the event and after the fame of the Bauhaus became an international phenomenon. Certainly Dahl Collings was aware of Moholy-Nagy's

fame and connection with the Bauhaus and she considered her meeting with him to be 'the single greatest influence on her career' (Caban 1983, p. 71). She also states that:

> The versatility of Moholy-Nagy, his willingness to explore the possibilities of various media, had an enormous effect . . . on other Australian designers working in London at the time. Apart from working on Simpson's, he was making films, writing books, experimenting with photograms and sculpture. (p. 71)

We need to be careful here not to take the approach that regards the Bauhaus as some kind of idealist influence that permeates ways of knowing design, outside of specific practices. Indeed Dahl Collings notes that Moholy-Nagy employed her because her work demonstrated a use of 'watercolour, fabrics and other materials in a way he hadn't seen before' (p. 71). If we look at the Collings's and Morrison's association with Moholy-Nagy we must remove it from the echelons where great historical legends reside, from the approaches of traditional histories which work to instil and solidify these legends (thereby instilling their own place in the telling of these stories) and attempt to separate events from their positions in these narratives and the meanings with which they have been invested. We need also be aware that these approaches were not comprehensively taken up by designers. Most product designers were purely product designers while those who designed interiors rarely turned their hand to products or graphic work outside of occasional signage necessary for their interior design. At the same time commercial artists worked almost exclusively in ticket-writing and signage, with a few of the more fortunate gaining significant commissions or being employed by advertising agencies. What can be seen however is a groundswell of belief and excitement among a few people that they were involved in what seemed an entirely new approach, where design meant, in Dahl Collings's words that 'you were capable of doing anything' (p. 72). It is important too, not to overstate the actual working association of the Collings's and Moholy-Nagy—their time together was short—the actual working association was only with Dahl Collings and this lasted only from February to early May 1936, (although the Collings's were to correspond with him until his death) (Allen 2002) and Morrison was to join the team *after* being introduced by Dahl Collings. By the time Andrews arrived in London, Moholy-Nagy had already left for Chicago.

The overwhelming perception is that a Bauhausian sense of design was carried back to Australia by those practitioners who had worked in England. When Gordon Andrews returned to Australia he took on a vast range of work including 'packaging, furniture, sculpture, jewellery, photography, exhibition design and signage' (Caban

1983, p. 77) and the Collings's, apart from working across a wide range of areas set up the Modern Design Centre in Sydney. Alistair Morrison's work remained almost entirely graphic but was used across a wide range of applications and he gained considerable fame for his Strine Books, which, Caban notes, 'were written, illustrated, designed and produced by him' (p. 77).

On returning to Australia these designers were to have considerable impact not only through exhibitions but through their activities to promote better design practices. The Collings's, for example, teamed up with Richard Haughton James to form the Modern Design Centre in Sydney and held an 'Exhibition of Modern Industrial Art' in 1939 for which James wrote the foreword. Aside from these and a few other 'designers' who worked in areas primarily graphic, the emergence of a discourse of design in Victoria at this point was predominantly within the realms of industrial design—that is, the design of products, and it is principally through this kind of design that a sense of professional design begins to be perceived. We shall consider this emergence momentarily, but first it is important to recognise how certain Bauhaus principles became manifest as modernism gained popular recognition.

Bauhaus separates art from design

One of the Bauhaus ideals was to attempt to unite art and industry in a way that removed social distinction. This was an aim that was felt passionately by Moholy-Nagy as is indicated by his attitude to art itself as expressed in his diary (15th May, 1919):

> During the war I became conscious of my responsibility to society and I now feel it even more strongly. My conscience asks unceasingly: is it right to become a painter at a time of social upheaval? Can I assume the privilege of becoming an artist for myself when everybody is needed to solve the problems of simply managing to survive? During the last hundred years art and life have had nothing in common. The personal indulgence of creating art has contributed nothing to the happiness of the masses. (qtd. in Whitford 1984, p. 127)

Although Whitford regards Moholy-Nagy's appearance—'Moholy sported the kind of overall worn by workers in modern industry' (p. 123)—as proclaiming his artistic sympathies, that is, as an 'image of sobriety and calculation', one might suggest it was also proclaiming his political sympathies. The following was given in 1923 as part of the Manifesto of the Constructivists co-written by Moholy-Nagy:

> We are aware that Constructivism today is increasingly developing bourgeois traits . . . . For this reason, we make a distinction between the aestheticism of bourgeois Constructivists and the kind of constructive art that springs from our communist ideology.

A perhaps unforseen result of the combining of a range of practices into a total unity which proved itself unable to break down the traditional class distinctions present in discourses of art, was a stronger definition of the entity 'design' as separate from the fine arts. The Bauhaus, in using a number of known and respected artists who were progressive in their thinking, helped to legitimise a discourse that was in fact quite different from art discourse. To this extent Alistair Morrison is able to state that up until he met Moholy-Nagy 'he had seen no real difference between what he understood to be "art" and what he understood to be "design"' (qtd. in Caban 1983, p. 73). The effect is not only that design exists as the consolidation of a set of practices into a unity, but that it could be perceived as a discourse in some sense as significant as fine art, a quality that 'commercial art' was not able to achieve. It needs to be remembered that at this point the distinguishing between 'high' and 'low' art had become a critical point of discussion—Walter Benjamin's 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' was published in 1936, with Clement Greenberg's significant work 'Avant-Garde and Kitsch' published in 1939 and Adorno and Horkheimer's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* appearing in 1944. The notion that work being produced for popular culture could have any substantial philosophical basis was an important foundational argument in the theoretical underpinnings of the new discourse.

High Modernism

The arguments of Greenberg and the like came about largely because the first half of the century saw an explosion of product manufacturing, from household sewing machines, telephones, wireless, to automobiles and aeroplanes—along with related advertising material. The effect of this was also seen in the spread of mass culture as information through popular press and the wireless became much more accessible to the general population. The second world war itself provided a vast new range of opportunities for designers and the years following the war saw previously inconceivable growth in manufacture and housing which had been stalled throughout the war years. It is within this context that the newfound importance of the industrial designer emerged, with not only national growth becoming significant but national image with the spread of mass culture, and an increased sense of international competition. The emergence of design discourse in Australia can be seen by the sudden increase during the late 1940s and the 1950s of new organisations related to the fields of design, commercial arts and advertising and to a large degree it is out of the discord between these fields that graphic design was eventually to emerge.

Before considering in detail the effects of these approaches in Australia, it is necessary to consider how some of these principles of the Bauhaus came to be seen as basic tenets of High Modernism, and the repercussions of their widespread popularity in Western society. The growth of high modernism in the United States and in Britain was dramatically amplified by the migration of European designers throughout the 1930s. Kinross notes the émigré presence included: 'Herbert Bayer, Joseph Binder, Will Burtin, Alexey Brodovich, Leo Lionni, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Ladislav Sutnar, among others' whilst in Britain Hans Schleger and F.H.K. Henrion (both of German birth) were among the early consultant designers after the war' (Kinross 1992, pp. 110-111).

Over the next few years high modernism was effectively sanctified when the Museum of Modern Art in New York presented in 1932, what Lupton and Miller (1989) have called 'a restricted model of "true" Modernism', (p. 44) which was followed in 1938 with the 'first American survey of work from the Bauhaus'. Berman (1988) gives the following account of Hitchcock and Johnson's *The International Style*, published in 1932 under the auspices of New York's Museum of Modern Art.

One of the main achievements of this book, which enabled it virtually to define the modern canon for the next forty years, was its own distinctive style: an Olympian voice that proclaimed with serene certainty and absolute authority what modernism was, and what it must be. (T.S. Eliot had been writing in this voice in literature since the early 1920s. Clement Greenberg would learn to use it on painting in the 1940s.) (1988, p. 43)

Thus 'the Museum of Modern Art positioned itself as an arbiter of modern design' (Lupton & Miller 1989, p. 44). This conferred the crucially important recognition and legitimisation of art discourse upon the work of certain designers, that is, those who recognised design as based on the Bauhaus principles, and who could position themselves within the now official discourse of design.

As such, design in many instances came to embody a disparaging critique of, and maintained a safe distance from, popular culture and ideologically at least, from advertising. In effect, modernism in design and architecture was able to provide as powerful a language of social distinction as that of fine art. But this legitimacy was a double-edged sword. One of the most significant reasons for modernist design being regarded as the *only* design is the art-connoisseur approach that Museums and critics have tended to maintain and encourage. Meikle (c1990) notes that MoMA's collection policy was derived from the fine arts and therefore 'mitigated against inclusion of

work by designers whose commercial assignments demanded an appeal to popular middlebrow taste' (p. 59). In fact this positioned high modernist design in a certain fashion as 'disinterested' and it has been this same approach instilled in the pedagogy of the majority of art teachers who for many years have been the principal educators of graphic designers.

The central theme is often considered to be 'functionalism' and Marcus (1995) suggests objects are functionalist if they fulfil certain characteristics, namely—they should be 'simple, honest, and direct; well adapted to their purpose; bare of ornament; standardized, machine-made, and reasonably priced; and expressive of their structure and materials' (p. 9). This definition, however, could be seen as the idealised notion of early modernist design from the Bauhaus on, tending to fetishize the object, concentrating on its inherent properties, and its success or failure in terms of idealised outcomes and meanings. It tends to negate the discursive nature of the object's emergence and value. In architecture, the functionalist 'aesthetic' became the 'International Style' and Berman relates its progress and problems thus:

> In the 1930s the International Style was still a utopian dream. A generation later it would materialize with overwhelming power. Late in the 1950s, the pioneers of 'the Style' and their now numerous followers obtained something like a mandate to rebuild America's cities. (Berman 1988, p. 44)

It is difficult to imagine any large Western city without the architecture of the International Style—its vast monolithic towers of glass now dominate cityscapes. Its success, however, is only partly attributable to the utopian aspirations of the early modernists. The simple fact is that the style was successful in being cheaply mass-producible and this, quite aside from any socialist aspirations, played a large part in its popularity. In fact the success of the modernists was more easily demonstrable in the pervasiveness of the style, than in the functionality of their designs, and the entire approach has been criticised from early days. But we are getting ahead of ourselves.

Both heroic utopian ideals of modernism and the increased need for, or perceived advantages in, specialisation and professionalisation saw changes take place in ways of understanding the notion 'design'. One of the main effects was the portrayal of design as heroic contributor, where design appears to have a life of its own, beyond a simple approach or a set of practices. In his *Design After Modernism* (1988), for example, Thackara states:

> Design occupies an important place in the history of modernism. In contrast to the fine arts, or to political theory, design has expressed in material

> form the ideas that modernism has thrown up: the progressive nature of technology, celebration of the machine, an awareness that the present is radically different from the past. Designed objects express ideas clearly. The century provides us with a stage play of objects charting modernism's trajectory . . . (p. 12)

The Society of Designers for Industry

In 1948 the Society of Designers for Industry (SDI), which was later to become the Design Institute of Australia (DIA), was formed in Victoria. The committee included Haughton James, William Falconer-Green, Francis Burke, Peter Hutchinson, Victor Greenhalgh and Charles Furey (Healy 1983, p. 5). Ron Rosenfeldt has written a history of the DIA (March 1999) which exemplifies the common understanding of design history generally and positions the emergence of the DIA as a natural development of Australian design discourse firmly contextualised within the English lineage of industrial design:

> The specialist who could design for industry was not unknown in England in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Such men as Pritchard, Stephenson, Thompson, Sir Joseph Paxton and Sir Benjamin Baker were in fact industrial designers in the true sense of the word . . . (n.p.)

In this account the progression moves from these key figures through to John Ruskin and William Morris who are still given to represent part of the historical lineage even though they 'turned their back on industry and endeavoured to recapture the golden age of medieval handicrafts'. During this time Rosenfeldt contends that 'product design became more of a mechanical process, its practitioners ranging from managing directors to shop foremen' and in this sense Ruskin and Morris are given the role of cultural guardians of artistic theory and craftsmanship during a period more concerned with practical mechanical development. This view presents a development which sees in the twentieth century mass production creating a situation where 'the brains behind the conception of the product could be separated from the output of those who were responsible for its physical production.' At this point Rosenfeldt discovers the designer:

> Ultimately the missing technician was identified and took his place in industry to assist in production of new and better products. (n.p.)

Related directly to product design, the designer is seen as the 'brains' behind the production. This conception is developed further to include a development from

intuitive or inventive capacity in the designer to one which also includes awareness of market requirements—a development we will see again in the emergence of graphic design discourse:

> Only when markets began to tighten and industry found itself faced with competition, both within Australia and without, did manufacturers and distributors alike realise the necessity of improving the products they made or handled. The stage was gradually being set for the advent of the industrial designer in his rightful role. (n.p.)

It is out of this background that Rosenfeldt proposes that the Society of Designers for Industry (SDI) developed.

I would like to consider some of the political implications of the emergence of this society and its eventual transformation into the DIA. In the first place, the SDI set for itself a number of objectives—that it should 'govern the designer's professional behaviour within the Society and the relationship between the member and his client' (n.p.). It was also to concern itself with working 'towards improving the professional standards and the public acceptance of the designer.' The SDI was involved in a sense with a particular way of defining 'the designer' for themselves, the industry and for the public. They set about constructing and projecting a certain image of how design was to be understood. A significant part of this construction can be seen to come from the English model. Rosenfeldt states that the intention was to establish 'a sort of "Council of Industrial Design", perhaps something along the lines of the CoID [Council of Industrial Design] in London'. In fact, although the English organisation provided a useful model on which to base the Australian institution, one must recognise that at least a part of this approach lay in the sense of *relation* to the English emergence and English culture generally.

Anglocentricity in the emergence of design in Victoria

To understand the class associations with England one needs to appreciate Australian culture in, and prior to, the 1950s. Although Australians often prefer to think of class distinction as a predominantly English phenomenon that was thankfully much reduced or even absent in Australian culture, the view is unfounded. Certainly class distinction in Australia is often represented in different forms, but the same privileging of wealthy Australians can be seen not only in education and employment opportunities, but also in terms of specific modes of behaviour including consumption and language. The work of Bennett, Emmison & Frow, *Accounting for Tastes: Australian Everyday Culture* (1999) is an exploration of 'how the tastes that are evident in the cultural choices and preferences of contemporary Australians are pre-eminently social

in their organisation and character' (p. 1) and follows from Bourdieu's *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (1972), the definitive work in this area as applied to French culture. Bennett et al. argue that:

> The social pattern of cultural tastes in contemporary Australia is enmeshed within complexly interacting forms of social and cultural power by means of which differences in cultural preferences are used as markers of social position and, in some circumstances, as a way of unequally distributing cultural life-chances. (p. 1)

Although Bennett's work is contemporary we must note that Australia's 'cultural cringe' was even greater in the first half of the twentieth century with much emphasis placed on the cultural legitimacy offered by at least a 'spell' in the mother country. It must be remembered that in 1939 the Prime Minister was Robert Menzies, who Clark (1969) describes as a man for whom a 'ruling passion of his life was the veneration—indeed, almost superstitious respect, for British institutions' and who 'believed passionately that the British had created the highest civilization and the greatest degree of liberty known to man' (p. 235). It has been commented by a considerable number of interviewees that, for all its excellent and very worthy intentions, in the early years of the SDI and its transformation to the DIA, a degree of elitism was perceived as a correlate of its undercurrent reference to the English system—a factor that was to have significant consequences for the eventual shape of the discourse in years to come. It should be noted that even though the organisation itself presented as somewhat elitist, this is not to say that individual members came across this way. However, even when, in 1958, the SDI underwent a change to the Industrial Design Institute of Australia (IDIA) the society's reference to English culture can still be observed through the fact that that one of the names to be considered for the new incarnation was to begin with the qualifier 'Royal . . . ' (Healy, 1983, p.5) Whilst the name change occurred with the combining of the SDI with the Interior Design Association of Australia (IDA) Lionel Suttie (2002) explains that part of the change was also to do with a professionalising of the organisation whereby applicants would have to show that they had studied at a recognised institution and could show industry experience or would have to provide a folio of completed work to become a member of the organisation.

Product design and graphic design in the SDI

Almost all of the members of the SDI were involved in product design until the organisation combined with the IDAA when Interior Designers joined with the group. Rosenfeldt notes how in 1948 students studying Interior Decoration at Melbourne Technical College approached the Head of Architecture to rename the course

Interior Design. Following this they formed an organisation—the Interior Design Association of Australia (IDAA) the members of which in 1958 joined with the SDI and the Industrial Design Institute of Australia (IDIA) (later shortened to the Design Institute of Australia (DIA)) was formed.

Only a few practitioners who worked in the area of graphic production considered themselves 'designers'. These people tended to see the area of design in the same sense that Moholy-Nagy had suggested and included Gordon Andrews and Alistair Morrison who by 1958 were elected respectively president and vice president of the NSW chapter. In Melbourne the organisation remained dominantly product and interior designers. The following interviewees describe elements of both the constitution of the early Design Institute and the perception of a degree of Anglo-centricity it sometimes presented. It must be noted here that, although noting this Anglo-centricism, all interviewees expressed considerable admiration for the important work of these ground-breaking designers.

> Leydin [on the Design Institute]: They were a sort of group that tried to propagate the English thing that you had to have certain credentials, and you could call yourself MSIA and that's like something they did in England.

> Robinson: [In] the DIA . . . there were an awful lot of industrial designers—furniture designers like Featherston. The graphic designers were well represented but it was slightly elitist . . . and what [they were attempting] was to make the community aware of design, educate the community, because a lot of them were furniture designers and they wanted to crack this horrible nexus of waterfall front lounge suites.

Alex Stitt has a different recollection of the proportion of graphic designers in the DIA (which may be attributable to the recollections being from different periods):

> Stitt: I also became a member of the Industrial Design Institute of Australia. They held occasional social gatherings. There were very few graphic designers; it was mostly product designers.

When Ron Rosenfeldt's (1999a) article 'The History of the DIA: 1947-1969: The Establishment of the Society of Designers for Industry and its Development into the Industrial Design Institute of Australia' appeared in *Artichoke* magazine, it listed in the aims of the new IDIA:

(A) To promote, support and protect the character, status and interest of the profession of Industrial Designers generally and in particular those who are engaged in:

(i) the designing of goods for mass production by industrial processes (hereinafter referred to as Product Designers)

(ii) the designing and/or laying out interiors of buildings and other constructions (hereinafter referred to as Interior Designers)

However, Rosenfeldt's unpublished notes from the same year and from which the article was drawn, lists a third category:

(iii) the production of designs or illustrations for publishing, merchandising or publicity (hereinafter referred to as Graphic Designers) (1999b, n.p.)

It is unclear why graphic designers were omitted from the published article and indeed, they appear again in the article as it appears in the 'History of the DIA' section of the official website (http:www.dia.org.au; [2005]); but it is an important point that the IDIA as early as 1958 officially recognised the term 'graphic designer'. This was not, however, unproblematic and, as we have seen, the IDIA seemed remote to graphic designers. There are a number of possible reasons for this. In the first place there was a clear disagreement amongst the members of the IDIA, who were mainly product designers, about whether interior and graphic designers should be included; so much so that a breakaway group formed on these grounds in late 1958 under the title The Society of Industrial Designers, which maintained its separation until 1965. In defence of this position, Rosenfeldt presents an important argument:

> It was considered that the word 'industrial' was essential to the relevance of the product designer in industry and should not be confused by the addition of other disciplines. This was a valid argument in the early formative years of a young profession struggling to establish itself in a hard commercial world where aesthetics was still considered to be part of the art and craft era. (1999a, n.p)

Even by 1967 the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design had the following to report of various terms in design:

> The term 'graphic design' raised difficulties due to its close associations with advertising and with specialist activities in lettering and typography. It proved impossible to find an alternative which was short and which clearly described this essential subject and ther [sic] term was finally included. (ICSID 1968, p. 12)

We can read from this that graphic design was still problematic for those who regarded design as the total practice rather than something applied to the product, but also that there was a clear distinction between design from advertising, a notion we shall explore in chapter 7. In Australia, a number of graphic designers felt that the IDIA was something of 'the old school' thinking which, at the time, was less suited to the younger generations and where entrance by examination was discouraging to those new to the industry. We shall return to these issues in chapter 8 when we discuss the consolidation of graphic design in Australia.

Prior to the SDI there had been virtually no association for people in this area in Australia, and only through considerable effort and much enthusiasm did they achieve their very successful results. Yet perhaps the most significant factor in the perception of heroic founding figures can be seen quite simply by the fact that when relatively few designers worked individually, or in small teams, the chances of their individual acknowledgment is much greater, whilst, with the growth of design consultancies both in size and number, these chances are reduced. Meikle (c1990) describes how the membership of the Industrial Designers Society of America, begun in 1944, included fourteen names. By 1951 this had grown to ninety-nine, by 1969 to six hundred and to twelve hundred by 1983 (p. 51).

Rosenfeldt describes the early design generation in Australia thus:

> It was the immediate post-war period and we were all, like Robin Boyd, Sir Roy Grounds and others of that generation, inspired with the task of building a new world. We were full of optimism and confidence. It was the era of the Bauhaus legacy and Corbusier's dictum, 'There exists a new spirit' . . . and we all believed that good design, honest design was part of the way to a better world . . . . Looking back now it seems we were favoured with some larger than life characters with memorable personalities. (Rosenfeldt 1989a, n.p.)

We can see that these early design organisations in Australia had two main (and not entirely compatible) historical bases—the first, a deeply felt connection to the English system with, what some might regard as its related notions of tradition, and the second, an equally powerful recognition of design, in the Bauhaus tradition, as, in a sense, an evangelistic crusade.

Design as total package

This evangelical tone was consistent with approaches in both America and Europe and an example can be seen in Meikle's description (c1990) of the essentialist view

of Walter Dorwin Teague that 'each type of machine slowly evolved toward its ideal form' (p. 52). The role of social architect became more and more prevalent in design language, seen in how Teague's approach to designing gas-stations for Texaco also considered their expansion across the continent and the factory-produced housing to accommodate them; and in how Geddes, who was hired by Shell to develop an advertising campaign on efficient traffic flow, went as far as designing a 'finely detailed system of urban expressways, elevated pedestrian walkways, and transcontinental superhighways—and then promoted its adoption as an actual blueprint for development by city planners and federal highway officials' (p. 57).

Although the SDI in Australia was to take on the British model of design organisations and reference to American influence in the history of the organisation is minimal, the American influence in actual business practices was strongly present and the high visibility of emerging design discourse in America was to have considerable effect here. Rosenfeldt (1999, n.p.) describes, with tongue in cheek, how one of the early members of the SDI, Lester Bunbury, saw himself as, 'an Australian Raymond Loewy'. As well as the promotion of the evangelical notion of design, the business practices, particularly in larger firms, were directed towards the comprehensive design solution. Teague designed for Kodak 'not only its photographic equipment but also its logotypes, packaging, showrooms, and temporary exhibitions' and for the Ford Motor Company 'showrooms, corporate office suites, and many exhibition buildings' (Meikle c1990, p. 53).

Rosenfeldt outlines the content of a 'typical' monthly meeting of the Australian SDI in 1957 as including the following lectures:

- 'Design of the Olympic Book', by Eric Maguire
- 'Influence of Materials on Design' by William Irwin
- 'Design in Photography', by Dacre Stubbs
- 'Typographical Design', by Beatrice Ward [sic]
- 'Design in Book Production', by John Overton

It is important to note here the banner 'Design' and the diversity of practices that were seen to come under it. It is also of interest to note that, even given difficulties with the notion of graphic design, the greatest proportion of talks in 1957 meetings were on matters of a 'graphic' nature. A number of interviewees have stated that the SDI and IDIA were not only instrumental in the emergence of the discourse of design in Victoria, but also instituted a number of practices and approaches which were to be taken up by those outside of the organisation and employed in the areas of commercial art, and were thus instrumental in the emergence of

graphic design discourse itself. I have used on a number of occasions the notion of 'professionalisation' but it is important to understand that this term in fact refers to the instilling of practices that legitimised a discourse. However, although many of the original Bauhaus practitioners like Moholy-Nagy saw their approach as intrinsically socialist in nature, the institutionalisation of these practices and the overarching philosophy of design through organisations with quite different political agendas worked inadvertently to construct a way of seeing design that could be seen to work against socialist philosophies. As has been noted by many commentators of modernism, the main recipients of the power of this emerging discourse were primarily from the middle class, who then conferred the products of their unified creative abilities on an otherwise ignorant public. When the SDI changed to the IDIA, as we have noted, one of the changes to professionalise the organisation was that applicants were required to have studied at a recognised institution and show industry experience. Whilst this is an important step for any such organisations, changes of this nature also work to shift the discourse towards the province of an educated middle class through the formalisation of specific requirements as legitimate and necessary for acceptance into the organisation, especially as trade qualifications gave way to university qualifications—the topic of chapter 9.

As we have seen, the emergence of design discourse did not immediately provide opportunities for commercial artists to come under the design banner. Although something of this nature eventually did occur, the process was not a simple one. Product designers, who, in their practice had little historical connection to fine art discourse, could see mostly benefits in an alternative discourse that acted to professionalise their industry. However, the rejection of fine art discourse and alliance with a design discourse predominantly controlled by industrial designers was not an easy path for many commercial artists and other workers who felt closer to fine art in their general sensibilities, their history, and through their education. The shifting of these perceptions was a slow and complex process, and as we shall see, was as politically charged as that which accompanied the emergence of design discourse in Australia.

Conclusion

From about the 1930s on, the discourse of design can be seen to be emerging. For many, the notion of a separation of art from practical everyday use was anathema. Whilst some, like Herbert Read (1956) called for a return to less elitist conceptions of art, others instigated a proactive socialist approach to art, through institutions like the Bauhaus. It was this latter approach which came to prominence in Europe, and shortly thereafter, in the United States after a number of key figures from the Bauhaus emigrated there during and after the Second World War. With Australians travelling

overseas, the migration of Europeans and Americans to Australia, and wider availability of European journals and the like, this approach arrived in Australia, and through a range of social, commercial and industrial conditions was able to gain ascendancy. Here we see the notion of modernism becoming available to a range of discourses including design, as more than just a philosophical banner, but as a kind of evangelical mission. It provided internationally a source of power which greatly assisted in the emergence of the discourse of design. In the second stage, changing social and economic conditions affected types of work in commercial industries. These changing conditions disadvantaged certain areas of commercial art and made alliances between industrial and interior designers attractive. Design, defined as an underlying set of principles manifested in widely ranging work practices, and with the emphasising of it as an appropriate and, in some cases, more socially responsive and responsible approach to art, provided a sense of unity which commercial art practitioners had never been able to achieve. This unity was not merely philosophical—its perception was manifest in attitudes and work practices. The next chapter discusses these further with particular reference to advertising.

Part of the reason for the acceptance of this discourse is the dominance of the theoretical model of design as a totalising perspective and activity that operates across a range of applications of which graphic design is but one. Rather than take the approach that this discourse is dominant because it is based on 'the truth', one needs to regard this truth in light of the institutional structures and hierarchies that it serves. As we seen in previous chapters the notion of design has had different meanings and historical uses and the emergence of design as a unifying process with specific subcategories accepted in most twentieth-century literature comes out of a variety of political, industrial and social changes of the period.

In Australia these notions of design could best be utilised by a fairly elite group of practitioners. This being the case the discourse here became simultaneously enmeshed with certain unspoken yet clearly dominant notions of social class and Anglo-centricism. Much has been made of the inherent arrogance of high modernism, whereby putatively *good* design is defined by an intellectual elite and imposed (often with adverse results) on an unwitting public:

> 'Modernism . . . [is] often chided by the left as the elitist, arrogant and mysterious master-code of bourgeois culture . . .' (Huyssen 1986, pp. 16-17)

Yet it is not the task of this thesis to judge modernism good or bad, indeed such a judgement would make little sense given our approach. We are interested not in any inherent right or wrong, but in the effect. As each author critiques modernism

on their own grounds, they at once contribute to the solidification of the notion of modernism as movement, moral philosophy, style, or the like, whilst simultaneously attempting to shift power towards their perspective, and importantly towards the particular institutional formation from which they speak—that is, they strengthen their position in the discourse.

We have noted in this chapter how the discourse of design was constructed out of a range of disparate practices and we have seen here how there became available a legitimising and somewhat evangelical philosophy through which these practices were able to be regarded as a unified whole. The next chapter explores the struggle for ascendency between graphic design and commercial art that was necessary before graphic design was able to be fully consolidated as a legitimate component of design discourse.

References

Adorno, Theodor W. and Max Horkheimer 1944, *Dialectic of Enlightenment,* The Seabury Press, New York.

Allen, Jenny 2002, *Two Sights: One Vision. Dahl and Geoffrey Collings*, Masters (unpublished), Monash.

Banham, Reyner 1970, *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age,* The Architectural Press, London.

Belanger, Terry 1995, 'Beatrice Warde at Columbia', (viewed 2002) http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/byform/mailing-lists/bookarts/1995/04/msg00093.html

Benjamin, Walter 1969, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', in *Illuminations: Walter Benjamin*, ed. H. Arendt, Schocken, New York.

Bennett, Tony, Emmison, Michael and Frow, John 1999, *Acounting for Tastes: Australian Everyday Culture,* Cambridge U. P., Cambridge.

Berman, Marshall 1988, 'The Experience of Modernity' in *Design After Modernism, ed.* John Thakara, Thames & Hudson, London & New York, pp. 35-48.

Bogle, Michael 1998, *Design in Australia 1880-1970,* Craftsman House, North Ryde, N.S.W.

Bourdieu, Pierre 1972, *An Outline of a Theory of Practice,* Cambridge U.P., Cambridge.

Caban, Geoffrey 1983, *A Fine Line: A History of Australian Commercial Art,* Hale & Ironmonger, Marrickville, NSW.

Chen, Ken 2002, 'Man of Letters', (viewed 2002) http://www.readsatellite.com/culture/2.4/crewdson.chen.2.4.1.htm,

Clark, Manning 1969, *A Short History of Australia,* Mentor, New York.

Drever, James 1976, *A Dictionary of Psychology,* Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex.

Greenberg, Clement 1986, 'Avant-Garde and Kitsch', in *Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism*, Vol. 1, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, pp. 5-22.

Hagan, J. 1966, *Printers and Politics: A History of the Australian Printing Unions 1850-1950,* Australian National University Press, Canberra.

Healy, Ted 1983, 'The Beginning of Life, the Universe and the Institute', *Design in Australia,* November, pp. 4-6.

Heller, Steven 1997, "Advertising: Mother of Graphic Design" in *Looking Closer 2, eds.* Michael Bierut et al., Allworth Press, New York, pp. 112-119.

Huyssen, Andreas 1986, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism.*, Indiana UP, Bloomington.

Industrial Relations Appeal 1996, Ref. No.173/96 Print M9412, Industrial Relations Commission, Sydney.

Kinross, Robin 1992, *Modern Typography: An Essay in Critical History,* Hyphen Press,

London.

Marcus, George H. 1995, *Functionalist Design: An Ongoing History,* Prestel-Verlag, Munich & New York.

Meggs, Phillip B. 1998, *A History of Graphic Design,* 3rd edn., John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York.

Meikle, Jeffrey L. c1990, "From Celebrity to Anonymity: The Professionalization of American Industrial Design" in *Raymond Loewy: Pioneer of American Industrial Design, ed.* Angela Schönberger, Prestel, Munich, pp. 51-60.

Passuth, Krisztina 1987, *Moholy-Nagy,* Thames and Hudson, London.

Read, Herbert 1956, *Art and Industry,* Faber and Faber Limited, London.

Rosenfeldt, Ron 1999a, 'Historical Notes on the Establishment of the Society of Designers for Industry and its Development into the Industrial Design Institute of Australia: 1947-1969', in *Artichoke: The Journal of the DIA*, Design Institute of Australia, Melbourne.

Rosenfeldt, Ron 1999b, *Historical Notes on the Establishment of the Society of Designers for Industry and its Development into the Industrial Design Institute of Australia: 1947-1969,* (unpub.)

Rowlands, E. H. (Deputy Industrial Registrar) 1940, 'Notice of Application for Change of Conditions of the Eligibility for Membership of an Organization', *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette,* Vol. 1940, no. 92, no page number.

Stiff, Paul 1996, 'Instructing the Printer: What Specification tells about Typographic Designing', *Typography Papers,* Vol. 1, pp. 27-74.

Suttie, Lionel 2002, 'Conversation on the Formation of the DIA', (personal communication).

Thackara, John (Ed.) 1988, *Design After Modernism,* Thames and Hudson, London.

Venturi, Robert, Scott Brown, Denise & Izenour, Steven 1972, *Learning from Las Vegas: the Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form,* MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.

Whitford, Frank 1984, *Bauhaus,* Thames and Hudson, London.

Wolfe, Tom 1983, *From Bauhaus to Our House,* Abacus, London.

Yellow Pages, 2003, Telstra Corporation Limited, Melbourne.

5: Commercial Art And Graphic Design

Introduction

We can now explore how these perceptions worked, on a local level, with particular respect to the formation of graphic design as a component of design discourse, and to the relation of this emergence to the field of commercial art. As we have seen the late 1940s saw the emergence of a number of key art and design organisations including the SDI. These organisations were the result of the experiences of a growing number of people who were positioning themselves as working in a professional capacity in an industry that they regarded as having been misunderstood or overlooked in Australia. The organisations were instrumental in constructing unified understanding among members of their professional practices and of their places in Australia and the international context of modernism. Yet organisations did not have this effect alone and one can see that the participation of individuals was essential through their role in creating a perception of continuity among these organisations and professional practices, in linking the discourse of design to international structures and to other discourses such as fine art, and through these activities, forming connections with other individuals. In this chapter we look at a point of conflict between the fine arts, commercial art, advertising and design, as it occurred in Melbourne. In particular we observe this clash through the person and activities of Richard Haughton (Jimmy) James, who not only provided a locus around which various organisations and individuals came together, but in a sense embodied many of these conflicting viewpoints and approaches. In all of the areas above, James was one of the most significant figures in Melbourne in the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s. He also provides an excellent example of how issues of class and cultural and national background permeated this conflict.

Haughton James

As we have noted previously, James entered into a partnership with the Collings's to form the Modern Design Centre in Sydney and was also instrumental in setting up the SDI in Melbourne. He is widely regarded as one of the central figures of the Melbourne art and design 'scene'. Designer Max Robinson gives a vivid sense of James's background:

> Robinson: He was a commercial artist and a well-known graphic designer . . . He was one of the seminal influences in Australian design. Jimmy James was about to go into business with Briggs but it was a big secret. They were to start a business called Briggs & James, an advertising agency, which became very, very famous. [James] was 'hot' and he was part of that extraordinary group of Australian designers, maybe the Sydney ones. Jeffrey and Dahl

> Collings had worked in Sydney with Alistair Morrison and Jimmy James in this. For those days, this must have been the '30s, I think, an incredibly generalist design company. They used to make films. They used to make radio. And they did all the designer things. They made exhibition stands. Advertising. You name it. It was just an extraordinary atmosphere. Jimmy James was part of that, and then he came down to Melbourne.

As well as being part of the 'international' Australian designers, James became widely known for his fervent promoting of design to the wider public. Caban (1983) notes the following:

> James, who was working as a design consultant in Melbourne, had made quite an impact on the design scene. After arriving from England in the early 1950s[1] [sic] he set up a studio in Collins Street, Melbourne, and immediately began to demonstrate his great energy and versatility. Apart from his displays for the Victorian Government Railways he was instrumental in promoting the value of good product design, and he was a key figure in the Industrial Design Society. He maintained an interest in fine art, and took over the publication of the *Australian Artists' Magazine*. His familiarity with all facets of art and design and his exceptional gifts as a conversationalist made him a valuable ambassador for the developing design scene in Victoria. (pp. 103-4)

James can be seen in some sense as the embodiment of a complex range of characteristics and interests in all of which he was deeply involved and contributed intensely—the same range of elements which was to eventually shape the discourses of design and graphic design. Before emigrating from England in 1938 James had worked as a creative director in London and 'had a senior position with a large international American agency' (Briggs 1985, n.p.) and Smith (2002, p. 57) suggests that 'James had been trained in industrial art and advertising management in London, Paris and Rotterdam'.[2] The guide to The Arts Festival of the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games (Olympic Civic Committee of the Melbourne City Council 1956) states that James was in fact a Council member of the Society of Industrial Artists (SDI) in England and drafted their Code of Fair Practice in 1935 (p. 162). The sense of a rich artistic community in which James's Sydney studio was set up is conveyed by

[1] James in fact emigrated in 1938, initially to Sydney and later moved to Melbourne—he was running Haughton James Services in Collins Street, Melbourne at least as early as 1951 although Ray Marginson, a designer and the Vice Principal of Melbourne University, recounts: I first met Jim in the late 40s at Olinda when Jim was already a force in the Melbourne design and art world. These were exciting times; he was passionately involved in the Australian art and design scene and central to the action in a period, the atmosphere of which is now hard to appreciate. (Marginson 1985, n.p)
Similarly, Bogle (1998) records James's move to Melbourne in the late 1940s (p. 113).

[2] This information was most likely gleaned from Olympic Civic Committee of the Melbourne City Council (1956, p. 162).

Smith (2002), who describes how the Teachers' Branch of the Communist Party in 1939 resided at Federation House and provided its time and free space for a range of groups and activities:

> Federation House, centrally positioned just off Martin Place, made an ideal centre for such activities. Sydney Ure Smith had recently moved there from his old Bligh Street address. Haughton James, together with Dahl and Geoffrey Collings, set up their Modern Design Centre there and the third floor was occupied by the Journalist's club. The building was a hub of cultural activity and Sam [Lewis] saw its political value. The Federation Players held their plays there and a Music Club was established by Lindsay Gordon. A Writers' Club that met fortnightly was established in 1940 . . . (p. 43)

This is not to suggest that James necessarily had any communist leanings. Indeed writer Phillip Adams (1985) makes the following contribution to the picture of James's personality:

> Jimmy could be terrifyingly haughty and aloof and then, suddenly, magically, twinkly-eyed and gentle. He didn't mind the slightest that his newest staff member [Adams], who was paid five quid a week for delivering stereos to Harry Markby's, was a member of the Communist Party. The thought that someone slaving in the galleys of capitalism was, after hours, a subversive trying to destroy Free Enterprise struck Jimmy as vastly amusing. (n.p.)

James was deeply involved in the fine arts, working as designer for *Art in Australia*, considered 'the foremost journal for art criticism and comment' (Haese 1981, p. 113) and later became a key figure in the Melbourne art scene when he took on the editorship of *Genre* magazine transforming it into the dynamic publication *Australian Artist.* He saw a strong relation between the fine and applied arts, promoting the same sense of design which the Collings's had embraced—design as a wide range of activities which took up from Moholy-Nagy the connection between life experience and design ability. In 1939 James wrote the following in his foreword for the Collings's Exhibition of Modern Industrial Art and Photography:

> Their habit of commonsense analysis, which is the prelude to every job, opens up wide fields to them. They have no need for narrow specialisation. In this respect there is basically no difference between planning a poster, an electric iron, an exhibition stand or the scenario for a documentary film. Further to that, there are only two absolute requisites to the solving of any problem—technique and experience of life. The one can be acquired, and the other the Collings already have. (qtd. in Caban 1983, p. 77)

James was also highly active in promoting the standards of design in Australia through lectures and the publication of numerous papers. Smith (2002) relates the following of his involvement with James from the early 1940s:

> His lecture in September 1940 was called 'The Practical Applications of Abstract Art' . . . and his lecture mainly addressed the dire need for the development of industrial design in Australia. As he was to put it in the abstract for his lecture, 'Australia has no popular publication dealing with design in manufactured goods, no system of exhibitions of manufactured articles to which people can come before shopping, no Government finance for research into the possibilities of new materials, no guide for the manufacturer or designer who wishes to understand the relation of his work to contemporary life except examples imported from abroad, no body for actually bringing about improvement. The ring of the axe can still be heard in her cities'. (p. 57)

In Sydney he was involved with the formation of the Australian Commercial and Industrial Artists Association (ACIAA) in 1938 as well as the formation of the Design and Industries Association (DIA) in 1940 (Bogle 1998, p. 113). This should not be confused with the DIA (Design Institute of Australia), which formed out of the IDIA (Industrial Design Institute of Australia) from the SDI (Society of Designers for Industry) of which James was also a founding member. It appears the Design and Industries Association was a short-lived organisation, which included a far wider spectrum of occupations with publisher Sydney Ure Smith as president and James as secretary. In Melbourne James was a very active member of the SDI and eventually became president of the organisation. Perhaps most important in the construction of a design discourse however was James's ability to create a sense of a design *community*. In Melbourne James set up the studio *Haughton James Services* and in 1952 went into partnership with John Briggs to set up the advertising agency *Briggs & James.* This agency was significant in 'supporting new talents in the design field like Ron Thompson and Phillip Adams' (Marginson 1985, n.p.). Adams (1985, n.p.) notes that James:

> Filled the art department of B & J with extraordinary talents like Arthur Leydin, Eric Maguire and Brian Robinson who went on to found the Swinburne Film School. Indeed for a while B & J was a creative Camelot. In every office, another living legend.

Authors Morris Laurie and Geoff Taylor were also employed by Briggs & James while Wes Walters and Verdon Morcom added their contribution to the final products (Field 1985). Designer Gary Emery notes that not only did Leydin, Walters and Morcom work closely with Briggs & James but:

> Emery: Across the road was Grant Featherston who was the famous furniture designer of the time—I used to go to Featherston's in LaTrobe Street. Around the corner was Latrobe Court with Latrobe Studios, which had Helmut Newton and Henry Talbot. Helmut Newton is one of the great photographers, one of the greatest living photographers of all time and he was over the road . . . . it was an enclave of people that serviced the agency, I guess. And the catalyst of that enclave would have been Jimmy James.

As noted, James brought to this community his connection with the fine arts in Australia. He was a keen painter and had always been interested in the arts and, as well as editing *Australian Artist,* he was a close associate of many artists, art-critics and buyers. Robin Boyd designed his house and he was a contributor to the establishment of the National Gallery and at one stage held the presidency of the National Gallery Society (Marginson 1985, n.p.). He was also a key witness in the Dobell case and had been a major figure in the Victorian Artists Society.

There is a distinct danger here of reading James's story as a that of a key figure who almost single-handedly created what design was at a particular period in Australia's history. However a more useful perspective is to regard James as a dynamic character who acted as a kind of locus attracting a range of personalities and attitudes and it was out of this combination that a sense of design, as an important and singular entity, became visible. Part of the nature of this emergent discourse was that it worked as a connective tissue between a number of seemingly larger-than-life characters. Another part was its predominantly English character, and another part, which we shall discuss presently, was its institutional basis across a number of organisations and employers. One of the difficulties in understanding the effect someone like James had on the constitution of the discourse lies in this great diversity of interests.

We have already noted the anglocentricity of Australia's early design community and certainly the person of Haughton James presents no argument against this; he epitomised the English gentleman, indeed Peter Clemenger (2002, n.p.) describes him as 'a very English Englishman'. John Briggs (1985, n.p.) describes him as 'elegant and effective writer, speaker, teacher, typographer of distinction, designer and man of culture', while Phillip Adams (1985, n.p.) notes of James his 'elegance, his splendid egotism and . . . his ineffable sense of style' and states that 'while John Briggs taught

me the rudiments of advertising, Jimmy opened my eyes to Culture' (n.p.). James's erudition is praised by a number of both writers and interviewees. Field states of him: 'He could design, illustrate, cartoon, paint. He could write excellent copy and always come up with "the big idea." He was the complete package in one person'. Field (1985) also gives an interesting insight to James's character:

> His driving habits revealed a lot of the James character. He preferred sporty cars—English, of course—and at one time drove a stylish but temperamental Alvis. He drove with spirit rather than speed. (n.p.)

Caban (1983) discusses the formation of a society in Melbourne in the early 1950s of 'commercial artists and designers' including Richard Beck, Lance Stirling, Owen Foulkes, Eric Macguire, Joe Greenberg, Ron Thompson and Arthur Leydin, and notes of their discussions that:

> Richard Beck had worked in England and largely because of his continued interest in the English scene the society spent some of their time discussing the work of the English poster artists F.H.K. Henrion, Abram Games and Hans Schleger . . . (p. 101)

Herbert Read and the Death of Applied Art

During this period the notion of 'graphic design' had not fully emerged out of the wider discourse of design, and the notion of commercial art was still prevalent in most areas of graphic production. 'Applied art', however was falling out of favour as Bauhaus notions, through writers like Herbert Read, came to greater prominence. In James's 1949 *Australian Artist* the sentiment is clear:

> Admirable as is the enterprise of Silk and Textile Printers Ltd. in the enlistment of 'fine' artists such as Drysdale, Gleeson and Cant to make decorations for their fabrics, the principle of using persons totally untrained for industrial design tasks is seldom possible or wise. Where 'art' can be 'applied' literally, as to cups and saucers or scarves, it is nice and often dandy. But adding decoration to an existing article is exactly what good industrial design is *NOT*, and this fact needs echoing daily from the housetops. For the best explanation of what industrial art *IS*, we recommend the perusal of Herbert Read's 'Art and Industry,' Faber and Faber. (p. 52).

In *Art and Industry* (Read 1956) published in 1934, Read brought into question the entire concept of applied art:

> As a result of [the Ewart] committee's deliberations, art schools were opened, museums were founded and exhibitions were organised. For the Queen's Consort a man of taste was found, and he busied himself almost exclusively in this great task to discover the best art of all periods, to teach it in schools and colleges, and apply it, always apply it, to the productions of industry . . . . the fallacy underlying the whole of this movement is by no means yet fully exposed. In the minds of our manufacturers, underlying the activities of our art schools, is still the supposition that art is something distinct from the process of machine production, something which must be applied to the manufacturing process. (p. 18)

Read articulated the contemporary problem of the role of the artist in industry:

> If we decide that the product of the machine can be a work of art, then what is to become of the artist who is displaced by the machine? Has he any function in a machine-age society, or must he reconcile himself to a purely dilettante rôle—must he become, as most contemporary artists have become, merely a society entertainer? (p. 14)

He resolved this problem by asserting, or in his view, re-asserting, a perspective where art is not bound by its use:

> The actual phrases, 'Fine Art' and 'Applied Art', may be largely the creation of the machine age, but the underlying distinction is a product of the Renaissance. Before the Renaissance, the so-called Fine Arts (architecture, sculpture, painting, music and poetry) were not explicitly named, nor distinctly recognised, as a separate class . . . (p. 18)

Read here noted how the artist, once 'essentially an artificer' who might be called upon as 'architect, sculptor, painter or craftsman indifferently, according to the need' (p. 23) had, because of specific social changes—'the growth of wealthy oligarchies, the diffusion of culture, the growth of a purely secular culture' (p. 23)—to specialise, and a distinction emerged between the artist who satisfied a practical purpose and the artist whose purpose was the 'delectation of individuals' (p. 24).

What Read does is to distance his approach to art from his reading of its contemporary understanding. He was suggesting a new way of approaching art, which he saw in fact as the older, original way of seeing art—that is, in a purer form as an underlying essence which presents it not as something that could be 'applied' but as something that is intrinsic to the processes of conception and production of

any object. This, in effect, traced a lineage of modern product design back to early art forms, and rejected as a kind of aberration, contemporary art discourse that Read took as positioning art as social entertainment. In fact what Read does here is to confer upon design the legitimacy previously afforded to fine art. Whilst incorporating much of the Bauhaus principles in his approach, there is a conferring, along with the lineage of fine art, of a degree of the elitism entrenched in fine art discourse—an elitism which we saw in the previous chapter remained alive and well in many practitioners and organizations in architecture and product design for the next forty years. Yet in many respects this heroic legitimacy of design was necessary for the shift from commercial art to graphic design to occur.

Publications on commercial art and design in Australia

One of the earliest publications on design in Australia is *Design in Everyday Things* (No author 1941), which is a booklet of 80 pages outlining a series of talks broadcast on the ABC from March 17, 1941. Much can be gleaned of how a particular way of knowing design was being presented at this time through the choice of authors and the information conveyed in this booklet. The speakers were: the Press Relations Officer of the Royal Academy of London; a Sydney poet, journalist and playwright; two architecture Travelling Scholars; a 'professional interior decorator, recently returned to Sydney from London, where she was for a time Director of Studies of the Arnold School of Interior Decoration, Mayfair;' a Melbourne dress designer and interior decorator; Sir Raphael Cilento the Director General of Health and Medical Services in Queensland; a 'Chairman of Directors of a large firm of men's outfitters'; and a Lecturer-in-Charge of the Department of Art at East Sydney Technical College. Outside of their respected positions, these commentators have little in common and come from widely ranging backgrounds. Interestingly there are no industrial designers present with the term design only being used only in the Melbourne 'dress designer', while those who work in interiors are 'decorators'. Yet the topics under discussion are predominantly about the design of products, furniture and buildings and the term 'design' is a dominant feature of every chapter. The work included also features a radio cabinet designed by none other than R. Haughton James and the front cover is by Alistair Morrison.

We can see how ill formed the constitution of a design discourse is at this stage in Australia through the choice of authors here. Today it would be unthinkable to have such a series of talks without the involvement of any designers—that is, any 'experts' in the field. We might compare this to a series based on the law in Australia without input from any lawyers, or one on medicine without comments from a doctor of any description. The need for specialisation in design and thus the emergence of these experts at this time in Australia was in an adumbral phase, with the ACIAA

(which included industrial 'artists' rather than designers) barely formed and the Society of Designers for Industry still a number of years away. The only other design organisations existent at the time were the short-lived Design for Industries Association and The Women's Industrial Arts Society (WIAS)—a society formed in 1935 out of the Sydney Society of Women Painters and which included those who worked in the graphic arts, design, painting and jewellery (Phelp 1994, p. 1)[3]. Both represent a similarly wider spectrum of occupations than the later organisations. *Design in Everyday Things* indicates its high modernist leanings through discussions of American design. Authors Alleyne Zander and Frank Medworth's first essay states:

> America points the way in that her manufacturers of mass-produced objects have achieved a synthesis of industrial skill and individual craftsmanship. This method naturally places good design within the reach of every pocket.

In product design, commercial modernism is perhaps best represented by the streamlined style. With little or no functional basis, streamlined products from cars to pencil sharpeners were designed in the style of space rockets, pushing the notion of modernity towards the concept of 'the future'. The final essay by Zander and Medworth attacks streamlining, asking: 'What is the function of "streamline"? The approach to design is strongly resonant of purist modernist principles and the introductory essay makes this clear in pointing out the aesthetic of the Elizabethans as: 'without rhyme or reason', 'by accident and not by design' and producing clothes, for example, that were 'voluminous, heavy and riotously decorated' (p. 11). This is compared to the aesthetic of those of the eighteenth century, the 'Age of Reason', where town planning was begun, 'streets formed architectural wholes, all the façades though slightly different, blending to make a pattern of great simplicity, often severe.' Furniture is seen as 'much lighter, exquisitely made' and clothes regarded as 'of finer material and simpler in design' (p. 11). This comparison of ages is then applied to the Victorian period and the period of the publication itself. Victorian design is considered 'pompous . . . over-decorated, disparate, ostentatious, unregulated' (pp. 11-12). In contradistinction to this contemporary design is presented as 'more simple, more "functional" than ever'. Design as a total essence encompassing the conception and production of the artefact as well as its external features is promoted clearly: 'We are rediscovering that "to design beautifully" does not mean beautifying ugly things, but building or making things beautifully.' The modernist notion of 'faithfulness in design' is stated and the position is made clear: 'Good design is inherent in the thing itself; it isn't tacked on or overlaid; it is part of the object as much as the raw material from which it is fashioned.' Although the Bauhaus is not mentioned, of four general background bibliographic references given, two are from Herbert Read, *The Meaning*

[3] It appears this society lasted until some way into the Second World War (Phelp 1994, p. 6).

of Art and *Art and Industry*. The Anglo-centricity of the approach is observable in that all of the publications are from notable English art critics, the other two being Eric Gill and John Gloag.

Although design discourse was emerging successfully with an allegiance to, and the blessings of, art discourse, there was little danger that industrial products could ever displace the products of fine art. The case was not so clear with products of a commercial and graphic nature, which, as we have seen, were often created by artists who also painted fine artworks. The categorising of work as 'commercial art' made clear that it was not fine art, but if the Museum of Modern Art could endorse high design, then where might graphic design stand in relation to high art? A discursive struggle for power, even existence, needed to take place between commercial art and graphic design, perhaps without even the recognition of those involved, before graphic design could become a legitimate component of design discourse. The co-existence of these two approaches is perhaps most notably observable in four essays from 1956, 1961 and 1962.

The Arts Festival Catalogue of the 1956 Olympic Games devotes one chapter (of one and a half pages) to Commercial Art, written by Oliver Gardner, and one chapter (of four and a half pages) to Industrial Design. Gardner uses the term 'designers' under the general area 'commercial art' when he states: 'Advertising needs more designers, layout artists, letterers and, particularly, more first-class figure artists' (p. 29). He talks also of 'advertising art and design' suggesting:

> In recent years, one of the most noticeable developments here has been the realization—both by purchasers of artwork and the suppliers—of the importance of design. This new appreciation has meant that many of our best advertising artists have specialized in this branch of commercial art . . . Typography, too, has progressed greatly. (p. 29)

Gardner draws attention to the emergence of typography as part of the discourse of design, as well as the general overseas influences on the industry:

> It is only in the last five years or so that typography has been generally recognized here as an essential ingredient of a good advertisement or package . . . . Australian advertising art has, of course, always been strongly influenced by overseas work, particularly that of the United States of America, and it is gratifying to notice that there does appear to be emerging at the present time a more individual Australian character which, while still strongly affected by American trends, also shows the influence of British and European styles.

Rosenfeldt's argument however is more philosophical suggesting how 'Australia can contribute towards the progress and well-being of civilization as a whole' (p. 31). His argument is based on product design and conjures truly heroic visions of the struggles of past industrial designers—indeed some of Rosenfeldt's later *History of the DIA* is constructed here. Although Max Forbes and Richard Haughton James are given as founding members of the SDI, the term 'commercial art' is conspicuously absent.

Two publications were put out in the early 1960s as part of the series *The Arts in Australia.* One was written by Colin Barrie, an RMIT Industrial Design educator and director of the Industrial Design Council of Australia and titled simply *Design* (1962) and the other by Haughton James titled *Commercial Art* (1963). These further illuminate the discord between two different positions on commercial art and graphic design as part of an overall design discourse.

Barrie (1962) writes of engendering 'a collective attitude to design' (p. 2) which although most strongly expressed through the design of products including glassware, furniture, lighting, and a lawn sprinkler, also covers textile design and 'graphic design' and presents work including a logo by Richard Beck, lettering by Max Forbes, a record jacket by Max Robinson, and a book cover by Gordon Andrews. Interestingly all of these people were independent designers rather than designers working in advertising agencies.

James's work, on the contrary, presents entirely graphic work and includes work from both independent design consultancies and advertising agencies. The range of work covers illustrations for a number of applications including press ads, full advertisements in themselves, record jackets (including the same one by Max Robinson used in Barrie's publication), posters, brochures, television graphics, Christmas cards, annual reports, exhibition panels, packaging and logos. The contributors present a veritable 'who's who' of commercial artists and designers (especially from Melbourne) of the period and include Bruce Petty, Wendy Tamlyn, Wes Walters, Frank Eidlitz, Eric Maguire, Max Robinson, Alex Stitt, Arthur Leydin, Al Morrison, Gordon Andrews, Richard Beck, as well as James himself. Agencies represented are Walker, Robertson, Maguire; Briggs, Canny, James & Paramor; Hansen Rubensohn-McCann Erickson; USP-Benson; Ralph Blunden Pty Ltd; Alfred Heintz; Boyd Carrick; Lintas; Castle Jackson Advertising; and Noel Paton Advertising.

James begins *Commercial Art* (1963, p. 2) with the phrase 'Is commercial art simply a lower form of fine art?' and replies: 'The answer is a firm No. Advertising art can never be judged on purely aesthetic grounds'. This suggests that there is still a point

of contention regarding the status of work done as commercial art and unwanted comparisons of this work to fine art. James indicates both his sense of fine art as a high art which *can* be judged purely on aesthetic grounds as well as his sensible functionalist approach to the problem. He states of commercial art that:

> Its very reason for existence is to carry out a specific selling task. Its first duty may be to inform, to describe, to praise or to create an aura of glamour around a product . . . . It has then a second duty to perform—to do its job with grace.

Yet even here James insists on the functional aspect of the aesthetic value 'since aesthetically pleasing art has intrinsic and added power to interest and move the beholder.' He predominantly uses the term 'commercial art' yet not exclusively and frequently employs the term 'design': 'Commercial art being an article designed for mass production . . . ' (p. 3); 'The advertising designer . . . ' (p. 9); '. . . well designed magazines and newspapers' (p. 12), and states at one point:

> Design in the Australian packaging industry has also vastly improved. The greatest opportunities for a young artist lie in visualization (basic advertising agency creative layout), in design (particularly that which relates lettering, typography and symbolism, as in packaging), and in straightforward realistic figure illustration. (p. 29)

This is of interest not only for its alternating use of the term 'artist' and 'design' but also for the application of the term 'design' as a relation of 'lettering, typography and symbolism' which not only emphasises the key role typography is to play in the discourse, but also anticipates the removal of 'illustration' and in particular, realistic illustration, from design discourse; whilst 'artist' is still being used in conjunction with the notion of 'layout'. By comparison the term 'commercial art' is not used at all in Barrie's publication (1962), which in discussing the symbol work of Richard Beck, refers to him as the 'designer' (neither graphic nor otherwise), and denotes the decorative wrapping paper from Douglas Annand as a 'design'. There is reference to a symbol on a building as three-dimensional graphic design and under the general area of graphic design Barrie states 'The other examples illustrate the legibility, subtlety and dignity of good typography' (p. 21). He also terms Max Robinson's linocut record jacket (perhaps the most illustrative or 'arty' technique employed) as record cover 'design'. One can read the entire publication as an argument where all the component parts of design discourse are being presented unified under the single phrase which represents a modern approach—'A design attitude . . . ' presented as a national imperative, and which acts to unite production processes,

our place in our environment, and our experience of the objects we use. If we compare this publication to the 1941 *Design in Everyday Things*, we can see that the earlier publication contained no examples of graphic work, the closest being Frances Burkes' fabric prints; although, interestingly, the publication contained numerous advertisements which were highly illustrative, but clearly not recognised as related to the official content. It is during this period that graphic design has emerged, although its relation to commercial art is still not quite resolved. Whilst Barrie has clearly embraced graphic design, including logos (symbols) as well as the clearly illustrative record covers, presenting a general philosophical approach with reference to specific designer's works, James (1963) still seems to find the distinction problematic, giving a more direct account of the specific tasks as if directing it to those wishing to join the industry, with the only philosophising, functionalist:

> The advertising designer naturally yearns to display his skills, to be 'creative'. In advertising terms, he may be on dangerous ground. It isn't hard, by novel subject matter or treatment, to attract attention. But let us soberly call to mind Mr Pickwick's opinion on doctors. A young surgeon friend thought an operation was successful if it was skilfully done. Mr Pickwick, on the other hand, thought it was successful if the patient got well. (p. 9)

To understand James's approach more fully it is worth recalling a 1949 article from his *The Australian Artist*—a digest of a lecture at Melbourne University given by Milner Gray, President of the British Society of Industrial Artists:

> There are still some people who think of the designer as an artist only, but he is also a man of science and of business, concerned with facts and with figures. Whilst he is no specialist in their techniques, he is involved equally in the problems of the production engineer and in those which face the production manager and the sales executive. He is as interested in the researches of the metallurgist and chemist as in those of the industrial psychologist and market research expert. He is concerned not only with how things are made and how they will work when they are made, but with marketable commodities—that is goods with a human appeal over and above their functional value. (p. 31)

Clearly there are many parallels here with James's approach to design and commercial art, the main emphasis being not on the specific work practices but on the range of different knowledges being brought to bear on the task and the ultimate goal of a successfully marketed end product. The difference between James's approach and Barrie's may seem minor, but it is in fact significant. James puts the emphasis

on the success of final product and whether it 'does the job' and this equates well with the emerging notion of design as the consideration of the visual, psychological, and functional attributes of a product as a *totality*, but it is not quite the same thing. Without this overarching philosophical basis of design as totality, James finds individual work practices are still dogged by questions of form and what category a particular process fits into. This leaves him vacillating between design and commercial art. Barrie's more evangelical approach, however, regards everything in terms of design—the conceptualising, making, and promoting of the product or message, no matter what form it may take.

It would seem a major stumbling block to a unified discourse of design which encompassed both industrial design and commercial art appears through the difficulty industrial designers seemed to have with 'designers' who worked in advertising agencies—an area where workers were generally doing well enough anyway not to require the blessings of industrial designers, an area we shall cover in chapter 7.

Peter Clemenger (2002) has said of James that he was 'very commercial' as opposed to say someone like Richard Beck who had 'terrific design skills' but was less commercial. What we see here is an altogether different set of circumstances and responses that emerge out of independent designers working for themselves as exampled by Richard Beck and those who worked for advertising agencies.

The challenge to commercial art

We shall explore these changes momentarily but in order to appreciate the demise of the notion of the commercial artist as general practitioner in the sense used in James's *Commercial Art* publication and the situating of it in a new sense of a quite specific illustrator, sans layout, sans typography, and the relation of this to the emergence of design and graphic design, we turn to the observations of those who worked across these fields during the period.

On the use of 'graphic designer' as a title:

> Francis: I think it was an attempt to elevate themselves above the level of Commercial Art in the sense that they were attempting to carry out design with some sense of strong purpose and following perhaps the philosophy and the influences of the Bauhaus. Perhaps I could refer, at this stage, to my experience a bit further back . . . I came in contact with the designer, Arthur Leydin . . . . and he handed me the volume saying, ' this is what you should be reading—Paul Rand's 'Thoughts on Design'. Really, it summed up what he was attempting to do, at that time, I think most of the good design . . . was

> coming more through Industrial Design rather than Commercial Art. It was linked probably closer to Industrial Design and Architecture than it was to Commercial Art. It was more refined and it did bring together typographic images and less blatantly commercial, shall we say but still fulfilling a commercial brief . . . . I'm really saying in terms of how progressives became aware of Graphic Design as such, apart from the reading of the philosophy and course content of the Bauhaus, but actually the practical designers.
>
> There were two major personalities at that time. Frank Eidlitz was one of them. He was linked with the advertising agency USP [Eidlitz joined them in 1957] as was another, an American, Les Mason. Now, he was a very loud very effervescent personality who just did wonderful work. He was also retained by the Agency [Mason joined USP in 1961] . . . Frank was largely employed to create what was then a new, very refreshing corporate design for Shell . . . Frank was a European. Les was a west coast American and they both made an incredible impact on industry and really established a new credibility to what designers could be. In other words, they were a voice rather than just a skill and a talent to be used within agencies. In many cases, Creative Directors didn't exist, even Art Directors. Victorian designers were an emerging force. I must say that at that time I was not aware of much happening interstate. In fact, I was always led to believe that there wasn't much happening interstate in the way of design, except Douglas Annand. It was Melbourne that seemed to have the attitude and the influence, and probably through courses like Swinburne and RMIT. RMIT particularly, where some of my earliest contacts with graduates went through this course. Extremely talented people. Max Robinson, who is still practising. Bruce Wetherhead who established the very important partnership with Alex Stitt — Wetherhead & Stitt. Max Robinson, for instance, he was given quite a lot of encouragement through the Clemenger Agency. See, there were two or three, four of them. I've mentioned USP. I've mentioned Walker Robertson McGuire, Eric McGuire. There's another one, Briggs & James—they were hugely influential because their Principal, Haughton James, was a very aware erudite artist-designer. Arthur Leydin transferred from Holeproof there. Philip Adams was . . . one of their major writers. A very creative group, and they did have enormous influence on the recognition of emerging designers.

Francis also notes that one of the significant reasons for the preference for 'graphic designer' as a title, rather than commercial artist, was directly related to the hierarchy of power in advertising agencies:

> Francis: I think it was legitimising Design or giving it a status, elevating it above the Commercial Art mode which was seen to be secondary in most people' s minds—in advertising anyway—as a creative force. The accountants, the writers, had all the power. Art was something in the back room just to be accommodated. I think the designers came into their true field through packaging where it was something away from the print media. It was something 3-dimensional. It was, in many cases, linked with product design (for example, Max Forbes). So it saw the emergence of these designers who had these dual talents. The best of them, I think, came through the Industrial Design course at that time, and through Architecture.

Designer Brian Sadgrove comments on the work he did when he started in the industry:

> Sadgrove: There wasn't Graphic Design then, it was Commercial Art. I don't know at what point it became the descriptor. When I applied for the job at BHP it wasn't as a graphic designer—probably publication design or layout artist, or something like that. So somewhere between the late 1950s and late 1960s, it was known as graphic design. It became a useable descriptor but I'm not sure when.

Through Sadgrove's following comments on commercial artists, we can see the early connection of them with drawing skills, the arena to which the notion of 'commercial artist' would eventually be relegated, as 'graphic designer' became more and more a notion incorporating a wider range of abilities:

> Sadgrove: A commercial artist was usually someone who could draw very, very well, like Wes Walters and the other people—Peter Bennett and people like that. The very good ones called themselves illustrators, not commercial artists . . . When I say there weren't any design practices, [there were] groups of people who practised in a commercial art studio. One was called 'Dimensions' and one was called 'Art and Design' . . . . they were loose knit groups of what could have been called commercial artists, certainly . . . but none of these practices evolved into a design practice, although the individuals involved later did.

Conclusion

This chapter has focussed on the point where the emerging design discourse begins to encounter commercial arts in Australia. Prior to the 1950s, Australian international

experience of design discourse was limited and had had little impact on either the practices or ways of thinking about those practices for most of those in commercial graphic work. The formation of a powerful community of practitioners, speakers and writers on design and its application in Australia throughout the 1950s led to a questioning of the relationships between design, industry and art. Through Haughton James we can see these points of contact, not simply as conflict but as a kind of negotiation for position, as new languages and new ways of regarding certain practices begin to take precedence. Throughout this discursive formation issues of fine art and its role are constantly being re-thought, but this is not simply a philosophical deliberation. It involves the formation, reconstitution or removal of structures, organisations, positions of power and as we have said, languages. In these transformations, however, let us not lose sight of the issues of class, which can be seen to underlie much of these negotiations. We have already discussed the role that fine arts has had in the distinguishing of classes, and how design discourse emerged with its philosophy and legitimacy provided in many instances through the tenets of a modernism ratified by fine arts discourse. We have also seen how commercial arts and design were not particularly compatible. Certain shifts had be made for a reconstituting of certain commercial arts practices, along with other practices outside of this area, to be able to come under the umbrella of 'design'. One of the shifts that facilitated this process can be seen in typographical work practices. We have seen how typography has consistently appeared in both industrial practice and education as a major feature of design discourse. Typography is more than a simple component of graphic design. Indeed, through an explication of its reconfiguration as modernist aesthetic in practice, and also as a part of graphic design, we can see one of the most significant reasons that graphic design itself was able to gain a foothold as a component of design discourse. This is the topic of the following chapter.

References

Adams, Phillip 1985 *Ad Magazine,* September.

Barrie, Colin 1962 *Design,* Longmans, Croydon, Victoria.

Bogle, Michael 1998 *Design in Australia 1880-1970,* Craftsman House, North Ryde, N.S.W.

Briggs, John 1985 *Ad Magazine,* September.

Caban, Geoffrey 1983 *A Fine Line: A History of Australian Commercial Art,* Hale & Ironmonger, Marrickville, NSW.

Clemenger, Peter 2002, [personal communication], 18 Nov. 2002.

Field, Noel 1985 *Ad Magazine,* September.

Haese, Richard 1981, *Rebels and Precursors: The Revolutionary Years in Australian Art,* Allen Lane, London & Ringwood, Victoria.

James, Richard Haughton 1949 'Editorial', *Australian Artist,* vol. 1, no. 1, p. 52.

James, Richard Haughton 1963 *Commercial Art,* Longmans, Croydon, Victoria.

Marginson, Ray 1985 *Ad Magazine,* September.

No author 1941, *Design in Everyday Things,* Australian Broadcasting Commission, Sydney.

Olympic Civic Committee of the Melbourne City Council 1956, *The Arts Festival of the Olympic Games, Melbourne: a Guide to the Exhibitions with Introductory Commentaries on the Arts in Australia,* The Olympic Civic Committee of the Melbourne City Council, Melbourne.

Phelp, Angela 1994, 'The Sydney Society of Women Painters', in *Wallflowers and Witches: Women and Culture in Australia*, ed, Maryanne Dever, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia, Queensland, pp. 1-12.

Read, Herbert 1956 *Art and Industry,* Faber and Faber, London.

Smith, Bernard 2002 *A Pavane for Another Time,* Macmillan Art Publishing, South Yarra.

6: Typography and ticket writing

Introduction

As graphic design emerged as a part of design discourse, there was a concomitant inclusion of certain practices as legitimate graphic design concerns, and the exclusion of others. This chapter explores two of these practices. The first is typography, which is seen as the gathering and reconstituting of certain printing practices as graphic design components, particularly by their legitimacy through the language of high art, and by their connection with high modernism. These served, by their connection to graphic practices, as a kind of strategic argument for the constitution within design discourse of graphic design. We also observe the battle fought between the printing union and the Australian Commercial and Industrial Arts Association to gain control over these practices. The second practice is ticket writing, an example of those practices which were excluded from graphic design in its formation as a component of design discourse. Through this exclusion, we can see a further example of how graphic design emerged primarily as a set of practices which not only distinguished certain social classes from others, but also maintained and supported the notion that 'legitimate' creativity was the possession of a privileged few. This chapter pays particular attention to the social and technological changes that allowed for, or necessitated these discursive shifts.

Typography

Almost all design and graphic design historians have included the practices of typography as a significant part of the history of graphic design, and although most current designers regard that typography has always been a significant part of graphic design and its history, we shall see how this is not the case. Caban's history anachronistically presents as commercial art, a range of practices which were in place long before the term commercial art came into use. Typography features in Caban's history, although in a slightly different sense than it appears in most graphic design histories. Typography in Caban tends to be seen as a distinct practice. For example, in his discussion of Sydney Ure Smith he states that Smith 'provided opportunity and encouragement for talented illustrators, typographers, photographers and layout specialists' (Caban 1983, p. 67). Although Caban regards these practices under the general banner 'commercial art' his history is more cognisant of these work practices as discrete. This is because, as we have seen, commercial art is a term of difference to fine art discourse, rather than a component of the singular discourse of design. As work practices shifted and design discourse emerged, typography emerges as a significant part of graphic design, along with its own substantial historical lineage to add to the legitimacy of design discourse. Yet we should note that typographic practices have previously been deeply entrenched in the history of printing. How is it

that it came to be available as part of graphic design and thus, of the wider discourse of design? What effects does this shift in the way of seeing typography have? Who has benefited from this shift? Aynsley (1994, pp. 135-6) presents the commonly held perspective:

> Illustration and typography had long and interesting histories of their own, but in the nineteenth century these had been combined, in many instances prompted by the changing function of word and image within industrialized society. The poster, combining word and image as a visual form, as well as mass-circulation magazines, newspapers and books, all required new kinds of organisation and 'design' for print.

This presents the convergence of type and illustration histories as a function of modernity, and presents the role of technologies and changing work practices as the cause in the sense of a kind of neutral progression. Certainly histories can be seen, in a sense, to have combined, but this combination should be seen in the context of many shifts brought about by the industrial revolution and should not be regarded as a neutral progression. The following chapter attempts to explicate the complexity of some of these shifts with particular reference to the discontinuities that are present in this apparent progression, and the effects of power in this apparent neutrality.

The use of type features as a prominent element in both graphic design courses and in books on graphic design practice, theory and history. White's *Elements of Graphic Design* (2002) is divided into the sections: Space, Unity, Page Architecture, and Type, whilst Meggs begins his *History of Graphic Design* (1998) looking at ancient markings on caves and moving immediately to early forms of writing, the creation of letterforms and so on, up to the work of scribes, Renaissance books and the development of the printing. If one could consider that institutional discourses have a secret language—a language known primarily within that discourse and which acts to distinguish those in the discourse from others—then much of graphic design's language is the language of typography. It is taught largely as a system of aesthetic formalist regulations, which have undergone changes, revolutions, and usurpations over a long and revered history.

Typography is one of the practices used to distinguish graphic design from art. It acts to position graphic design as primarily concerned with communication, rather than self-expression. For all that, it is still based very much on the same standards, methodologies and systems of value as those of fine art. This might seem surprising when one would expect that functionality in typography would be of great concern—after all, the prime objective of words on a page is usually to be read. And yet typography is far more than this. Typography in design today consists of skills

and knowledges which include the ability to recognise particular typefaces; to be conversant with their historical lineage; to know those considered 'classic' faces; to be able to distinguish, through its individual features, the truly beautiful typeface—the work of art—from the fly-by-night faces; to be able to recognise the face and from the face, the creator. This is connoisseurship, but with a notable difference from that in fine arts. In design, the typography connoisseur is expected to be able to create work. Even so, there are connoisseurs and collectors of fine typography who do not work in design. Typography, to some commentators is, in fact, an art, and if one were ask designers to visually represent its position within design discourse it would most certainly be positioned along, and in some instances crossing, the borders of fine art and design. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (2002) (defines typography as a 'secondary art'—secondary because its content (alphabets) are given, the typographer is limited by reading conventions (pp. 92-3), and finally, because:

> just as the typographer uses letter forms and reading conventions over which he has had little control, so too what he contributes comes into being only through the intervention of a mechanical process that, as often as not, in the 20th century at least, has become the province of the printer. (p. 93)

Interestingly the same volume uses different formats of the following statement to illuminate some of the rules to which typography is tethered:

> Typography as an *art* is concerned with the *design*, or selection, of letter forms to be organized into words and sentences to be disposed in blocks of type as printing upon a page. (p. 93)(my italics)

To understand how typography comes to sit so auspiciously within the discourse of design we need first explore its manifestations within the field of printing, an area that has a somewhat uncomfortable relationship with design discourse. We might regard printing as a bordering discourse to design, maintaining a relationship, in the same sense as that of fine art and design, of a kind of negotiated discord. Printing discourse presents its own history and by observing the changes in specific practices and practitioners throughout this history, we can excavate the relationship between typography's emergence in design discourse and the shifting relations of power that accompanied this emergence.

Printing

Printers had been, for many centuries, craftsmen who had a privileged position over other skilled tradesmen, in that they were largely responsible for the creative construction and use of lettering. They were thus literate from a time when very few

people had such a skill. The history of Australian printers has been regarded as an effectively British lineage originating from William Caxton and his 1476 London press (Hagan 1966), a history now largely subsumed and presented by authors like Meggs (1998) as part of the history of graphic design.

During the eighteenth century, printers were held in high regard but as the need and desire for printed material grew and printing shops grew along with them, specialisation meant that for most, the skill of composing type became the unique job of the compositor, with pressmen doing the actual printing work and correctors proofing the work. This was coupled with the growth in the production of texts in the vernacular with fewer compositors having to be versed in other languages.

Hagan notes that in the 1850s there was virtually no printing industry in Melbourne outside of the newspaper industry—an industry by no means insignificant. From 1871 to 1881 the number of dailies increased from 14 to 18 and the number of less frequently published papers from 82 to 180 (p. 39). A comment from the 1876 report of the Melbourne Typographical Society gives some sense of the range of abilities possessed by members of the printing industry:

> Among others, the craft had produced twenty-six newspaper proprietors, seven parliamentarians, four managers of large businesses, two Lord Mayors, and two squatters. There were also an odd dozen said to have become famous as authors, poets, actors, and critics; and one historian and one inventor. (Hagan 1966, p. 51)

Economic growth in Victoria throughout the 1860s and 70s meant that the expanding printing industry underwent considerable diversification as new purposes for printing arose. The application of photographic techniques to woodblock engraving allowed for a much faster production of illustration in printing and thus the development of the periodical and illustrated paper, including the *Australasian,* the *Weekly Times*, the *Leader*, the *Australian Journal, Melbourne Punch,* and the *Melbourne Post.* The sixties also saw the development of advertising and Hagan notes that 'posters and hoardings . . . became "an institution"' (p. 38).

One of the dramatic results of this growth was that the volume and simplicity of the material being printed generally meant that cheap unskilled labour could be employed to carry out the process and throughout the period the numbers of boys used for such work increased dramatically. The amount of work continued to increase such that the *Monthly Circular* commented on the 1880s printing trade, that, after the recession of 1879-80:

> The call upon printers proved to be of such magnitude that existing houses were totally unable to execute the great amount of work offering, and it became, not a question of what particular house would get the work, but who was in a position to take fresh orders. (qtd in Hagan 1966, p. 58)

What we see is a gradual degradation in the creative aspect of practices, occurring largely through the implementation of new technologies, the Australian metropolitan environment and new markets being created by the social and technological changes taking place. It is through these changes in work practices that the more creative practices came to reside in the hands of a relatively small minority, although it is important to note that this minority was not, as a group, significantly privileged in terms of income or social status.

The introduction in the late 1890s of the Linotype machine further depleted the degree of traditional skill in the printing workforce and increased proportion of unskilled labourers. After 1900 the emergence of the use of colour in printing, along with greater buying power of the market, saw a massive expansion in packaging and advertising. Hagan notes that in 1901 there were 285 people employed in the making of paper boxes and bags in New South Wales and in ten years this number had increased by almost a thousand (Hagan 1966, p. 144).

Discursive changes which affected the printing industry

With free and compulsory education the distinction between compositors and other tradesmen had ceased to exist while new discourses were emerging out of art, applied art, and commercial art which appropriated the traditional practices of the printing trade. Paul Stiff in a perceptive article on modernisation and its effects in the printing industry (Stiff 1996) relates that as early as 1928 Stanley Morrison complained to the British Federation of Master Printers that:

> People in publishing and publicity have lost faith in the printer. They do not believe that he has intelligence enough or resourcefulness enough, or brains, types or anything else of value to them . . . . Printers have become hewers of wood and drawers of water. (p. 33)

Stiff further draws our attention to a publicity manager's address to the British Typographers Guild in 1931 cited in Moran:

> A printer's representative calls ... and asks me to let him handle some of our work. When I ask him if his firm employs a good typographer, he looks blank

> and answers that they employ a good foreman-compositor, and implies that I am a crank for asking for the services of a typographer. (p. 33)

Stiff states that Beatrice Warde as Monotype Corporation's publicity manager:

> Spoke on behalf of its customers in the printing trade, robustly defending the domain of craft skills and the compositor's space for decision-making against the encroachment of ill-informed outsiders - 'layout men' who had never worked in a printing office' . . . . Her conviction was that a 'typographic reformation' (which she partly invented by energetically promoting) could be effected by educating the trade in typography and so by raising standards from within. (p. 34)

Although Warde may have attempted to raise the standards of type in the printing trade her effort was largely taken up by those outside the trade and the 'layout men' who were, Stiff suggests, 'probably a more enthusiastic audience' (p. 34) than printers. This perhaps misses an issue which was very much at stake here—that typography was being presented not just as something which could be improved, but as the creative aspect of printing and, as such, the rightful property of an educated intellectual class. On the one hand, it remained distinct from fine art discourse by its functionality as communication, but, on the other, it was *distinguished* from other aspects of printing by the rhetoric of fine art discourse. It was to become, along with so many other areas deemed 'creative', part of a discourse unavailable to the working class. This is not to say that the working class is not creative, but that what is regarded as *legitimate* creativity is constantly reconstituted so as to be outside working class practices. The one does not precede the other but occurs simultaneously.

Before considering further the shift that is exemplified by Warde's approach, it is necessary to see the somewhat different historical lineage that Warde in fact comes from. This is a historical perception that emphasises the creative lineage rather than the social conditions. This lineage tends to follow the same historical progression as that of printing history up until about the time of the Arts & Crafts period of the late 1800s, when fine art and printing reach a climactic embrace.

The Arts & Crafts founders, and William Morris in particular, are seen as having great importance in Graphic Design histories, although in many cases their aesthetic values and disparagement of machine production puts them somewhat at odds with those who were to take up working within the conditions of mass production. The utopian historicism of the Arts & Crafts followers has been shown to be more romantic idyll than historically accurate account. Whilst the socialist stance of

Morris has been criticised on many occasions for its equally romanticised politics (Morris's products were almost entirely one-offs and, as such, financially beyond the reach of all but the most well to do), it is also clear that the politics of Morris was only available to be appreciated by those of a sufficiently educated and discerning sensibility. In 1891 Morris founded the Kelmscott press, one of the key highlights of typographic histories in design literature. Morris's press was to spawn a generation of artistic printing but more importantly was to set a language for typography as it could emerge in the discourse of design. Shortly after the Kelmscott Press opened, Charles Ricketts founded the Vale Press (1896-1903) and Kinross (1992) makes the following observations:

> He may stand as one of the clearest representatives of a new figure who appears in printing and publishing at this time: the book designers. Ricketts worked in this capacity for commercial publishers . . . attempting to take control of the design and decoration (the two aspects were nearly synonymous) of the whole book, especially its binding and displayed elements. Before the appearance of the book designer, 'designer' had, in the context of publishing, meant essentially 'illustrator'. The work of Ricketts, and other designers for commercial publishers of the late nineteenth century, represents the incursion of art into machine production; and even Vale Press books were printed on powered presses at the Ballantyne Press. Though sharing some stylistic resemblances with Kelmscott books, the work of these designers was without qualms about 'the machine', was without any social impulse, and participated in the satanic-erotic spirit of the 1890s. (p. 38)

One might suggest they were 'commercial', not that Ricketts was in any sense working class. Indeed Rickets was a book designer, theatre designer, illustrator, painter, avid art collector, writer and critic. He was a well-connected member of the arts milieu in England at the turn of the century and is often referred to as a 'connoisseur'.

What is important here is the shift in practices—not in the sense of one set of practices replacing another, but rather the emergence of an approach to printing practices that provides a different way of understanding what printing is and what its history has been. What we may note here is the discontinuity as a new history begins to be created, which, whilst leaving the old history to be continued by its interlocutors, takes certain aspects of it, whilst ignoring others, and fashioning a quite different narrative. Thus even expansive texts on 'printing', for example, Steinberg (1955), McMurtie (1972), or Clair (1969) make no mention of design discourse, nor do they refer to graphic design or graphic arts, yet Meggs's (1998) equally expansive history of graphic design firmly places printing as one of the key components of graphic design.

This new narrative emphasises different structures and players, and allows for a new language to be articulated across different institutions and through new technologies. This thesis sees these new languages in terms of social distinction. Kinross (1992) notes:

> Artistic Printing was taken up by letterpress printers, and a large part of their motivation was a wish to outdo in decorative freedom the lithographic printers who were beginning to provide significant competition. Aestheticism could lend intellectual sanction to a style that was commercially motivated. In Britain . . . artistic printing occurred at the moment when a change in taste became apparent: between highbrow and lowbrow, between a minority and a mass-market. (p. 40)

There is not space here to review the entire lineage of printing as an art, and indeed it is not necessary. It is sufficient to recognise that a lineage had been created and it was this lineage that Beatrice Warde put into effect through her position at British Monotype Corporation. Warde is not the cause of printers losing the creative aspects of typography, but she embodies to some extent the shift in perceptions and practices that allowed for typography to become a part of Design.

Beatrice Warde

Beatrice Warde [nee Becker] was the daughter of May Lamberton Becker the celebrated children's librarian and writer on children's literature. She married the typographer Frederic Warde and after working for a short period for the American Typefounders Company Library, she and her husband emigrated to England. During the 1920s Warde did research into historical typographers and achieved some fame with an article which showed that certain typefaces which had been attributed to Claude Garamond were in fact the work of Jean Jannon. She worked alongside some well-known figures in printing history in Stanley Morrison and Eric Gill (one of whose woodcut prints is of Warde's profile). Belanger (1995) gives the following account of her work for British Monotype:

> Beatrice Warde gave a talk pretty much everywhere; for many years she was the British Monotype Corporations's [sic] promotion director, and part of her job was going around talking up good typography in general and Monotype typefaces in particular. In England, between the Wars and for a long time even after World War II, she was virtually the only woman holding a senior-level professional position in the printing trades—so much so that it was a standing joke that after-dinner speeches at industry events in London would begin with the words: "Mrs Warde, gentlemen, . . ." (n.p.)

We are fortunate to have a first hand account from Tony Russell of one of Warde's visits to Australia in which we can gather a sense of her presence and the significance of her work:

> Russell: In 1958, I also became involved in helping establish the Design Council of Australia[1] and . . . as part of that . . . we brought out from England, a very distinguished lady called Beatrice Warde. Now Beatrice Warde had been a very strong figure in the British Design Council, but besides that . . . was one of the world's great experts on typography. And she at that time, was a senior executive of the Monotype Corporation, which was one of the big producers of typefaces. And so they asked her whether she would come out to Australia and give the opening address to launch the Design Council. Now [during] that process, one of my colleagues in Canberra, in writing to her to arrange a visit . . . she said she'd never been to Australia before, [and] she'd very much like to come via Perth . . . And at the same time Monotype said 'Well while you're doing that you can do a bit of work for us too, you can get us more market penetration'. Because Australia was emerging of course, as a vulnerable market area for everybody. And so she wrote to me and I'll always remember her letter—it was the most beautiful handwritten letter in chancery script, the most beautiful letter I think I've ever had—and all she suggested was that while she was in Perth, she would be very happy to meet . . . the designers if there was . . . she didn't say if there were any . . . she just assumed there were; and the members of the printing industry and so on and so forth.
>
> And I then got in touch with the Master Printers and I explained this and they all were dead cold on the idea. They'd never heard of her, which showed how far back they were . . . They'd never even heard of the woman. I think few of them even recognized who Monotype was, which was even more surprising. But I pursued it and I arranged her a venue and put on this lecture for her. And finally they realised there was something going on and they came to me and they said 'Well OK yes, We'll come to that lecture' you know, 'but . . . what would a bloody woman know about typography to start with', the whole idea of a woman in print was absolutely extraordinary to them . . . And they . . . arranged to have a dinner for her. It was held at the old Adelphie hotel . . . [which] was THE premier hotel in Perth. It was the Society hotel—that's where all the blue-rinse ladies used to go for their cocktails and afternoon teas . . . And so we had this dinner, they were such . . . rednecks, they . . . weren't prepared to invite me and . . . Beatrice said

[1] When the IDIA was formed in 1958 the governing body was incorporated as the Industrial Design Council (thereby, one might remark, bringing them one step closer to the CoID in England)

'Well you're coming aren't you?' and I said 'I haven't been invited'. She said 'I'm sorry . . . you're coming' and . . . so I went. And she . . . was a wonderful person . . . And we sat around . . . we had this dinner, which was all very fine . . . She travelled . . . she drank beer, she loved drinking beer. Beer and honey was her favourite diet, as I recall, and . . . she had this dress on, it was the most beautiful silkscreen dress and it had every typeface, it was made up of every Monotype typeface . . . especially made for the trip . . . a wonderful lady. Anyway, we were sitting around after dinner, and I noticed, and she noticed that every . . . Master Printer had a little book at the table with them. And when I peered at it, I realised what it was, it was the first book published locally . . . This little thing you could see. They were sitting there like little time-bombs in front of them . . . this was our big dinner, the after-dinner speech or talk, and she looked around the table and she said 'Well gentlemen . . . I must thank you for the hospitality, and . . . Perth is a wonderful place . . . ', she said 'I see you all have a book in front of you' and she said 'is there some significance in this . . . is there something you want me to . . .' and they all said '[rowdy gruff kind of noises]' and . . . so on. So one was handed to her and she said 'Gentlemen, what do you . . . what do you wish me to do?' And they said 'Well . . . what do you think of it?'. She looked around the table and as she opened the book there was a deafening crack as its spine cracked . . . and they all, sort of, looked at each other, you know. She smooths it down. . . and she started. She said, at the front page, she said 'Well gentlemen, let me take the front page, let me take the frontispiece. Wrong fount. Wrong fount. Wrong fount. Wrong fount . . . And she *tore* it to pieces in the most gentle way. These blokes got purpler and purpler in the face. They were rude, you see, . . . they threw it down like a gauntlet, and she picked it up and she hit them, bang! . . . And she was dead right, she was dead right.

Russell [On whether the problem was in the form of typographical errors]: No . . . it wasn't a simple typo. [It was] in selecting . . . Printing in itself, and if you go back, . . . setting out a page conventions sort of grew up. The Bauhaus of course sort of railed against the traditional print . . . they broke the rules, and they broke it as a matter of stylistic convention . . . But within that . . . if you were setting a page out and . . . you want to break it into headings . . . or subtitle chapters and so on, these people had used a different typeface . . . and it was wrong . . . . they didn't know, [they didn't] have . . . the sensitivity to see that it actually jarred, it actually spoiled the look of that page. It wasn't simple carelessness. It was . . . just, *what* they'd done . . . The point being that if they knew anything about printing, if they knew anything about the history of printing, you know, they would never do that.

> I remember we were having cocktails . . . and she said to one, 'Oh Mr. So and so and where is your printing office . . . And he said 'In Subiaco'. 'Oh how wonderful' she said. And he looked at her . . . 'Oh wonderful' she said, 'and I met somebody yesterday who had their work at Kelmscott', she said 'Brilliant'. And these blokes were looking totally bemused you know, 'What the hell's she talking about?'. Well of course, what she was talking about is Subiaco is the home . . . of the classic Roman typeface. It's where it came from . . . And Kelmscott of course was the Renaissance of British printing—Kelmscott Press! In England. But these guys who worked there had no . . . I mean that's how far away from their craft they were.

Whilst Warde is clearly a delightful personage[2] we can see the obvious difficulty in her attempts to communicate her message to the apprentice-trained printers. Warde is perhaps best known for her book published in 1955 and the title paper, originally published in 1932, *The Crystal Goblet,* in which she presents what is often considered the quintessential modernist perspective of typography and also in which she is considered to have coined the term 'transparent-' or 'invisible-' type. Through this text, typography and a relation to social distinction becomes apparent.

Following is an excerpt from *The Crystal Goblet:*

> Imagine that you have before you a flagon of wine. You may choose your own favourite vintage for this imaginary demonstration, so that it be a deep shimmering crimson in colour. You have two goblets before you. One is of solid gold, wrought in the most exquisite patterns. The other is of crystal-clear glass, thin as a bubble, and as transparent. Pour and drink; and according to your choice of goblet, I shall know whether or not you are a connoisseur of wine. For if you have no feelings about wine one way or the other, you will want the sensation of drinking the stuff out of a vessel that may have cost thousands of pounds; but if you are a member of that vanishing tribe, the amateurs of fine vintages, you will choose the crystal, because everything about it is calculated to reveal rather than hide the beautiful thing which it was meant to contain.
>
> Bear with me in this long-winded and fragrant metaphor; for you will find that almost all the virtues of the perfect wine-glass have a parallel in typography. There is the long, thin stem that obviates fingerprints on the bowl. Why? Because no cloud must come between your eyes and the fiery heart of the liquid. Are not the margins on book pages similarly meant to

[2] Indeed one feels somewhat coarse calling her 'Warde'

> obviate the necessity of fingering the type-page? Again: the glass is colourless or at the most only faintly tinged in the bowl, because the connoisseur judges wine partly by its colour and is impatient of anything that alters it. There are a thousand mannerisms in typography that are as impudent and arbitrary as putting port in tumblers of red or green glass! When a goblet has a base that looks too small for security, it does not matter how cleverly it is weighted; you feel nervous lest it should tip over. There are ways of setting lines of type which may work well enough, and yet keep the reader subconsciously worried by the fear of 'doubling' lines, reading three words as one, and so forth.
>
> Now the man who first chose glass instead of clay or metal to hold his wine was a 'modernist' in the sense in which I am going to use that term. That is, the first thing he asked of his particular object was not 'How should it look?' but 'What must it do?' and to that extent all good typography is modernist . . . . Type well used is invisible as type, just as the perfect talking voice is the unnoticed vehicle for the transmission of words, ideas.

Although the extensive touring done by Warde for the Monotype Corporation was for the clients of the company—at that time more so those in the printing trade itself rather than designers—her message is ironically ill suited. Whilst the wine may have been an exciting and comprehensively palatable drop the glass was anything but invisible—indeed the whole thing demanded the attention of a connoisseur and discouraged the unrefined palate. In fact Warde's whole disposition set an entirely different client as the beneficiary of her advice—that is, those educated not only in the history of type but in the aesthetics and politics of modernism. A typical example of Warde's real audience was Alistair Morrison who commented about typography:

> I like the discipline of it. I've always had the feeling of satisfaction of belonging to an international and almost timeless brotherhood which included people like Bodoni and Aldus Manutius, a feeling that I am just another link in the chain. When I see certain alphabets I am aware of the thousands of years it took to produce that particular shape, of the sort of cultural background or epoch which makes some things soft and squashy and some things sharp and severe, of that little emphasis which is retained and which becomes modified again in the next hundred years. (Caban 1983, p. 73)

What we can see is the positioning of typography into an intellectual tradition—one which had for some time been rendered unavailable to almost all of the printing trade apprentices. Of interest is Warde's espousal of the relation of typography to fine art:

> We may say, therefore, that printing may be delightful for many reasons, but that it is important, first and foremost, as a means of doing something. That is why it is mischievous to call any printed piece a work of art, especially fine art: because that would imply that its first purpose was to exist as an expression of beauty for its own sake and for the delectation of the senses.

I wish here to note the prelude to a recent interview of a noted typographical designer in the journal *Satellite* (Chen 2002):

> He walks into the basement of Eshleman, our interview spot, and homes straight in on a framed poster leaning against a corner. 'THIS IS A PRINTING OFFICE,' the elegantly printed and not entirely subtle sign says, 'CROSSROADS OF CIVILIZATIONS, REFUGE OF ALL THE ARTS.' Andy Crewdson stands next to the sign, his neck craned down at it, and says practically without introductions: 'That's a Beatrice Ward from 1932. That's really cool.'
>
> I look at the sign and he's right (the sign is a reprint), but he's right on both counts. Andy, a senior who has more or less devoted his free time to typography and reviving long out-of-use typefaces, goes on for about a minute about the history of the sign (Ward created several important typefaces), the methods of printing it (Letterpress), and its rarity ('You don't see many of those'). He has all this to say about a sign hanging in my own office, a sign that I'd only given half a look at about three years ago, and it occurs to me that this is what graphic design is all about: recognizing type. (n.p.)

We can see here how the author recognises the language of typography as the language of graphic design, but it is equally important to understand the nature of this language—that is, one which now has all of the mystification of the discourse of fine art. Aside from the misspelling of Warde's name (a common mistake), and the dubious contention that Warde created 'several important typefaces' there is an unmistakable quality of traditional fine art connoisseurship within this article. 'That's a Beatrice Ward from 1932' smacks of the elevation of the artist's significance over the work, similar to how one might say 'The Picasso is in the hall' or 'We've just purchased a Rembrandt'. The author is quick to point out the work is not an *original* but a reproduction, even though the work is a piece of printed copy. Although Warde stated that typography is not art, a connection is simultaneously being made through language and politics. Perhaps the difficulty lay in Warde's failing to see either art or typography as politically invested—a failing which is certainly likely if one is to regard the two with a modernist purity which effortlessly separates form from content. Stiff

illuminates a contradiction in Warde's approach where on one hand she demonstrated a sensitivity to the craftsmen of the printing trade when in 1952 she described 'the problem of etiquette':

> Whereas it is always proper and helpful to show a craftsman what effect one wants, it is improper and thoroughly bad manners to offer to show him how to obtain that effect. (qtd. in Stiff 1996, p. 34)

Whilst on the other hand she was capable of the remark that 'real' book readers constituted: 'a relatively small élite ... distinguished by their ability to concentrate continuously on one fairly long piece of reading matter'. (qtd. in Stiff 1996, p. 39)

The intention here is not to disparage Warde, but to note the *effect* of her presentation was to present a way of knowing typography (rather than typesetting or compositing) as a subset of a system of practices with a philosophical and theoretical basis in modernism—practices which involved a language, and a historical lineage, in short, as a discursive object, the politics of which were to favour the college-educated graphic designer over the trade-skilled printer.

The decline of skills in the printing trade in the face of rapidly changing technologies and a discourse that is constantly under threat is a point of considerable consternation for printers and printer educators who attempt to address the problems in printing schools. However one must recognise that for those working in the print industry, particularly in the emerging areas of design, experiences with printers could be frustrating and costly. Max Ripper describes one such experience:

> Ripper: there's a 16-page brochure which I did for Astor, the electrical company that was in business in those days . . . I've designed the whole 16-page booklet . . . In this case, the printing was appalling and our advertising agency which had ordered a quarter of a million copies said they wouldn't pay for it, but unfortunately, *Woman's Weekly* were the people that had printed it. The *Woman's Weekly* said, 'If you don't take delivery, we'll never accept the placement of another ad from you'. And if the agency handled a wide range of clients just because they had trouble with one client, it would have meant they couldn't have used the printer for any of their other clients . . . . [the printing was by] the *Herald Sun,* owned the *Woman's Weekly* in those days, and they printed it at the *Herald Reviewer*—the actual owner, in this case. The finished art was impeccable - it was excellent. It was just that the printing was appalling. It was out of registration so badly and that's a printing problem. The art work was fine. And of course, I'd designed it. I would have liked a beautiful print.

Ten years prior to the first meetings of the SDI, commercial artists founded an organisation which in many ways was to have a profound impact on the possible practices of the printing trade and the eventual re-establishing of much of those practices within the discourse of graphic design.

The Australian Commercial & Industrial Artists Association

Caban (1983, p. 122-3) states that the Australian Commercial and Industrial Artists Association (ACIAA) had been founded in 1937 although it seems it did not become registered as a union until 1940. Caban makes the parallel between the activities of the ACIAA through Jimmy James and the Aspen Design Conference initiated by Walter Paepcke and Herbert Bayer, and Will Burton's 'Vision 65' conference, organised because the 'design world had to create a focus for itself if it hoped to maintain a resonance with the industrial world' (Caban 1983, p. 142). According to Caban the ACIAA came out of a desire to improve salaries and working conditions of commercial artists (p. 122) Following some successes (a Victorian award) and some failures (a NSW award) it concentrated on promoting the field and attempting to raise standards. He notes that three annuals were produced, designed by respectively Frank Eidlitz, George Waddington and Arthur Leydin, which reproduced what they considered to be the best work being done at that time across a range of categories. These included:

> Advertising Design, General and Fashion Illustration, Packaging, Booklets and Record Covers, Annual Reports, and Television Graphics. (p. 122)

The ACIAA also held some of the earliest exhibitions of graphic and industrial design work in Australia. Arthur Leydin states:

> The ACIAA in those days was a cohesive factor in many respects. You felt much more part of a profession because independent designers were more numerous . . . The ACIAA helped me, as it helped others like Frank Eidlitz and Wes Walters, because we tried to make each job we did a little better, against incredible pressures not to. (qtd. in Caban 1983, pp. 122-3)

Alex Stitt recalls Leydin's role in the ACIAA:

> Stitt: Arthur pushed it beyond being a union and turned it into a forum for graphic designers, advertising designers. Under Arthur's auspices they held several annual exhibitions and they published annuals. There were three or four ACIAA annuals that were the first books of that kind to be produced

> in Australia. There'd always been 'Modern Publicity' in England, but there was absolutely nothing here in Australia. The ACIAA produced those first few books. One of the unsung people, Leydin — he was a very good designer himself.

Caban makes the following observation:

> Whilst blessed with energetic organisers the ACIAA flourished, but over a period of time interest flagged, and by the mid-seventies the association existed in name only. In 1975 it failed to lodge a financial return with the Federal Conciliation and Arbitration Commission and was deregistered as an industrial association. In recent years designers have become concerned at efforts to have their professional interests represented by a trade union, the PKIU, and have begun reviving the ACIAA. A national network has been re-established, and a new journal published. These moves will no doubt please those who saw the advantages of an active organisation in the fifties and sixties. (pp. 122-3)

Although this perspective of the ACIAA no doubt gives a useful account and the organisation was clearly a great help for many individual designers as well as a significant move forward for the discourse of graphic design, in fact this is a perspective that presents a somewhat heroic and incomplete account of the ACIAA and its role. It should be noted that part of the role of the ACIAA was as a registered union, and thus able to be used as a lever against attempts by other unions to take commercial artists and designers under their control. Both the Printers' Employees Union and the Operative Painters and Decorators Union lodged objections to the first registration of the ACIAA in 1940. One can appreciate the unions' objections in the 'Art of Advertising' case where the *Canberra Times* had made redundant their compositing section to send out work across the road to a small company called 'Art of Advertising'. In this period graphic artists/designers could also be hired straight from college and paid considerably less than the award wage of a compositor to do the same work and as a non-unionised body they had little say in their wage or work conditions. The PKIU argued that the Art of Advertising were undertaking work related to the printing industry and that therefore their staff should come under the printers' union, while the ACIAA (in fact at that time through the MEAA—Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance—with which they had amalgamated) argued that as graphic designers the staff were distinctly different from compositors and should not be part of the PKIU but of the MEAA. The PKIU won this case. In Victoria, the main case was a demarcation case under section 118A of the Workplace Relations Act where the PKIU sought exclusive coverage of those involved in the graphic design

area in particular in advertising agencies. The PKIU's position was that traditional compositing and basic layout work being done in trade houses was being taken out of their control by trade houses changing their title to 'advertising agencies'. The ACIAA view is well expressed by Max Robinson:

> Robinson: The Australian Commercial and Industrial Artists Association . . . was terrific. Mainly in the 60s. They had exhibitions. They had big exhibitions of good work in the '50s, but they didn't actually produce a book until the '60s . . . And that was great, and then it sort of dwindled off but every now and then the printers' union would decide that they wanted to take control of all the commercial artists . . . They wanted to create trouble in the advertising industry . . . to be able to pull all the artists out of advertising and cripple advertising. That was basically the idea . . . So they would try and take over the commercial artists (on the basis that they felt these people should have been in the printing industry). When that happened, the ACIAA would be reformed and they would fight it. And they did that two or three times.

There was a general case for the printers' union that compositors were being replaced by, in some cases, clerical staff who could, through new technology, now by-pass compositors and input directly into computers for reproduction purposes, and in some cases, graphic designers who were seen as engaged in the same work practices but were accessing the trade through avenues other than traditional printing trade schools and apprenticeships. In some cases, like that of the *Adelaide Advertiser,* it was felt that by calling the processes employed 'clerical' rather than 'production' a lesser award was able to be used and staff could be paid less than they would under printers' union protection. This was to become a greater problem as more and more independent graphic design courses emerged.

Aside from the expected union perspective that the ACIAA was in fact working more for employers than workers—a suspicion that was aired in the ACIAA's initial formation in 1940 and which resulted in the ACIAA having to specify that eligibility was limited to those who employed 'one junior commercial or industrial artist only' (Rowlands 1940)— a quite legitimate criticism from the Printers' union of course may be that the ACIAA was not a substantial enough union to defend the award. This was partly ameliorated with the ACIAA merging with the Australian Journalists' Association shortly afterwards in 1991 and two years later with the even larger Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance.

Why might the ACIAA wish to oppose the PKIU given that the PKIU was a union of significant strength which may have been able to offer benefits to graphic

artists working for under-award wages or in unfavourable conditions? A number of arguments may be presented for this. In the first place, there was a perception in the ACIAA that the PKIU was principally directed at increasing its own strength—an aim that would be immeasurably facilitated by gaining coverage of graphics workers, which would give the union access to the advertising industry. Graphic artists were working across a range of different media and any union that could control workers across such a range could effectively 'bring advertising to its knees'. Secondly, although the PKIU suggested that graphic artists are significant within the printing industry, there was also the case raised by the ACIAA that there were significant commonalities of practice across commercial and industrial artists and that whilst commercial artists may represent some proportion of the printing industry, industrial artists which made up a significant proportion of the ACIAA, had little or no connection with the printing industry. Thus we have a clear political advantage in the consolidation of a professional discourse that encompasses these different artists—a discourse of design. A third argument is that the perception by graphic designers of the graphic work, including layout and typography undertaken in the printing industry was far below the standard of work being done by professional graphic designers. This is directly related to a perception that printing was a trade whereas graphic design was a profession where a certain type of education is preferred—that is, a liberal education in the arts sense, which places at least as much emphasis on theoretical and historical knowledge, as on practice. It is not the intention of this thesis to judge one organisation more or less 'right' than the other. The important point here is that the battles between the ACIAA and the printers' unions were significant in the emergence of a discourse of design and a recognition of graphic design as more of an intellectual and creative practice than those practices of the printing industry.

Ticket Writing

Graphic designers today must be proficient in a number of practices. Generally the work involves the layout out of type and images in some kind of medium, (page or series of pages, poster, sign, website, and the like) with the images generally produced by either an illustrator or photographer. The typefaces are usually chosen by the graphic designer and laid out in detail, with consideration given to a vast array of variables, for example, line spacing (leading), letter spacing (kerning), type size, and the like. Perhaps the most important part of the task, however, is the final construction, where the range of different elements is made to constitute a single consolidated unity, to give a desired effect.

We have discussed how typography has come to be part of graphic design, but I would like to consider an example of a practice that was historically part of the range

of practices a commercial artist may have undertaken and which relied strongly on typographic skills and yet is not part of the work a graphic designer would today undertake. As we have noted new technologies and business practices had a dramatic effect on the printing industry and concurrently assisted in shaping the boundaries of graphic design discourse. At the same time radical changes in another industry were to have their own effect in shaping this discourse. I am referring here to the practices of signwriting, showcard and ticket writing and window display—the area that Moholy-Nagy brought into the discourse of design. If we refer to the early courses at the Melbourne Technical College and Swinburne we can see that lettering was often connected to such occupations with ticket writing generally a subject in itself. As part of the emergence of graphic design as a profession with its foundations coming to specify a distinction between university education and trade education, areas like ticket writing and related occupations like window dressing tended to be relegated to the trades arena. Yet within a period of a few years the occupation went from being a major source of employment to being almost non-existent, with only a handful of workers being employed in specialist roles. Judith McGinness did an apprenticeship at The Melbourne School of Painting, Decorating & Sign Crafts, a government trade school in Lonsdale Street, Melbourne. I have included the following account largely intact as it gives an excellent description of the period and social conditions, as well as the changes in work practices that occurred.

> McGinness: There were maybe half a dozen girls the whole time I attended who did apprenticeships, out of several hundred boys. When I went for the interview to enrol, the Principal told my father that since I was female, it would probably be a good thing if I did the Advertising/Display course [which] placed a lot of emphasis on display and window-dressing and included sign work and other things. They felt that was more suitable for the ladies [as opposed to] . . . . just doing sign writing or painting and decorating all the time . . . . For a long time, painting, decorating and sign writing were classed as one craft. Painters and decorators often did the lettering. It's no longer the case, but that was how it used to be. Yes, I guess they thought maybe we'd get dirtier if we were apprentices . . . . I didn't understand what was going on. All I cared about was leaving school and painting signs and I didn't care what course I belonged to, just as long as I got into that School.
>
> I did the course for three years . . . or two and a half because I came midway through the First Year, but by the time the end of the year had come around, I'd been there six months, the other students had been there twelve months but I won a scholarship at the end of that six months . . . We did a lot of display work - mostly display work - and any sign writing we did was there to

> support the display work. We did showcards for potential window displays. We did ticket writing and showcards . . . . Showcards are signs used in displays but are on cardboard rather than on metal or timber. Signwriters use enamel paints primarily. Ticket writing and showcard writing was exclusively just water-based paint on cardboard or paper . . . . Showcard writing has to have a few elements of design. Ticket writing was just writing out price tickets. Some of the showcards we used to do, had they been done by a graphic design studio - . . . probably would have attracted a higher fee than the Shop Assistants wages we were paid. There was really no difference in the skill of some of the showcard writers compared to the graphic design staff. They could use the fonts and the layouts to good advantage and create designs just as well. We often used to design posters for screen-printing around the stores and we never got additional payment or the prestige of being a graphic designer. It was purely a prestige thing, depending on where you worked. If you worked in a department store, you were at the low end of the scale. If you worked in a studio, you were at the high end of the social scale . . . . I remember when I was a bit discontented. I approached a couple of studios and asked if they needed anybody, but I just didn't like the atmosphere. I generally didn't like the people who worked in them because there was a lot of pretentiousness. If you'd come from a department store situation, you were like a second-class person. It didn't matter how talented you were, or how long you'd gone to Trade School. I decided I didn't want to work for a studio. No, they weren't my sort of people. Some of them were very arrogant.

On the term 'graphic design':

> McGinness: During my time at trade school I never heard the term 'graphic designer'. To me, a graphic designer was somebody who worked in a whole different area—not with lettering as such, but genuine artists illustration. We did a little bit of drawing to complement the signs that we were making. We could design a logo—no problem about that—but anyone who was employed in a studio that could design a logo, they were 'high fliers' compared with us. I'm not talking about the 'wannabe studios' . . . there were also many genuine advertising agencies. They were different again . . . and I had little or nothing to do with advertising agencies. We just weren't in the same universe, so to me, graphic designers belong to advertising agencies. They create TV commercials, billboard design, that sort of thing. See, there was a bit of a pecking order in the industry. In the scale of things, an advertising agency would be as high as you could go back then. We basically were products of a trade school. You know, get your hands dirty, wear overalls, and I was happy

with that. I worked in some very grotty places. No frills. But they gave me great experience.

On the demise of ticket writing:

McGinness: About the mid-1970s, screen printing became more prevalent. In addition, there was this ghastly machine that Myers and other stores were getting in called a Print-A-Sign machine. It was a dreadful thing . . . . It was very cumbersome and it relied heavily on solvents to clean it. It had this really rank oil-based ink and . . . you inked the rollers in the morning and it had a big metal plate with A-B-C-D etc with all these little holes. The little metal tube used to come down when you manoeuvred it and as you'd push it down through the hole, it would print the letter and you could make words by just manoeuvring this gadget along and printing. I used it only under sufferance! They used to get girls in from the shop to do it—basically, the 'checkout chicks' that had left school early and who just did general 'dogs-body work' in the stores. Anybody could use it.

Texta pens were another thing that were a death knell for ticket writing. The stores could get the shop girls to write the signs themselves. Many times I have been into a shop and saw a girl at the desk with a Texta in her hand, writing out the price tickets. I see it all the time . . . . with neither training nor artistic skill. The fact is, it's a cheap way of doing things. The boss is paying the girl to serve behind the counter, so she may as well do the price tickets as well . . . . It's been rampant for so long now, it's become the norm . . . . In the 1970s, it was the Print-A-Sign machine, the Texta, the screen printing. In the 1980s the computer started to come in, and worse still, the computer vinyl machine.

Then central ticketing was implemented. They were going to get rid of all the ticket writers around the individual stores. This was starting to happen in all chain stores around that time. They got these horrible Print-A-Sign machines in and were gradually phased out handwritten signs in the stores. Showcard and ticket writing was a huge industry that went on for many decades and then bang! It just vanished in the 1970s. The machine and screen-printing took over. They'd employ juniors so that they didn't have to pay a lot of wages. Any inexperienced school leaver could come in and work this dreadful machine or do the screen printing . . . . so I said, 'I'm not working that machine. I'm a craftsperson and I'd sooner go out before I have to be reduced to that. I'll go somewhere else.' So I did.

> The union was as good as useless . . . . We all came under the Shop Assistants Union because we worked in a department store. And it didn't make any difference if you'd gone to trade school for three years. You were paid the same wages as the shop assistants unless you negotiated . . . . But there were so many ticket writers around in those days, it's not something you were game enough to do. And because the industry was so tenuous at that point, you knew that you were probably going to be out on the street in a few months anyway. So I went from one department store to the other. I ended up at Waltons . . . . I was very happy there and got diverse experience. I stayed about three years at Waltons until the same thing happened again. Everything' became centralised. They were going to have everything 'Print-a-Signed' and screen printed. We just went in to work one day and there was a meeting at nine o'clock and we were told the department was being disbanded . . . . There was no such thing as compensation and retrenchment pay - nothing in those days. You know, we'd go in at nine o'clock and they'd say, 'There's a meeting at nine o'clock. We've just disbanded the department. You can collect your pay. You can hang around or go'. No luxuries of severance pay, not a chance.

Today a store like Myers would have a comprehensive corporate identity design in the form of a style manual. Such a design would include logos and logotypes as well as colour ranges, and specify the fonts to be used and their treatment (degree of letter-spacing and the like), the hierarchy of information, placement of images and any other visual elements. In design terms this is known as 'branding', whilst the term employed by the company is usually 'visual merchandising'. The technique is absolute standardisation, which it is hoped works by minimising the cost to the company whilst maximising the company's profile and the impression they wish to confer on consumers. The task of creating this standardised design is handled by specialists—that is, it is produced through an advertising agency or more often, a design consultancy. Currently a store like Myer would still employ a few 'ticket writers' but only as part of their in-house design team in their head office, where a computer-generated price ticket would be created using the font dictated by the style manual, and a PDF file would then be emailed to all retail outlets. Coles Myer and Woolworths currently employs 'a total of 300,000 people, 1.5% of the population' (Heathcote 2002, p. 64).

Conclusion

Typography is a key component of graphic design and design discourse. It features prominently in current graphic design courses, theoretical and historical literature and is seen as a crucially important part of the practice of working graphic designers. Its

lineage as presented in graphic design histories goes back to the scribes and further. However, a similar although not equivalent history is presented in the discourse of printing. The emergence of design discourse and graphic design shifted the emphasis in printing from the secret practices of the guild, to a language of art, thereby disempowering previous practitioners and empowering new ones. Indeed we might suggest that, had it not been for typography, graphic design may not have been able to emerge as a component of design discourse. This is not only because design was seen as the 'total' creative production, but also because typography conferred a certain high art legitimacy and language, which could be attached to graphic design. These discursive shifts were assisted by a range of social and technological changes which dramatically impacted on the printing industry, as well as on practices such as showcard- and ticket writing. This is not to say that the prime intention of the ACIAA was to confine graphic design practices to an elite minority, or that Myers' intention was fundamentally to cut staff numbers, but the reconstitution of typography within graphic design offered opportunities to those educated in this new language and with these new technologies and mitigated against the inclusion of those without them. As technologies and work practices changed to benefit those with graphic design skills, and as these skills moved into the realms of higher education, there were resultant social effects, which we shall consider in detail in chapter 9.

Whilst exploring some of the issues of the emergence of graphic design and design discourse generally, I have attempted to flag the numerous mentions of typography (and there is little need to further explain the lack of references to ticket writing, sign-writing, or showcard-writing). However, there have also been numerous mentions of 'advertising', yet its relationship to graphic design is, almost exclusively perceived to be one of a vastly different character to the relationship between typography and graphic design. The issues here are crucially important to this genealogical enquiry, and the following chapter will look at them in detail.

References

Ashwin, Clive 1978, 'Art and Design History: the Parting of the Ways?' in *Design History: Fad or Function?*, Ed. Terry Bishop, Design Council, London, pp. 98-102.

Aynsley, Jeremy 1994 (orig. 1987), 'Graphic Design' in *Design History: A Students' Handbook*, Ed. Hazel Conway, Routledge, London, pp. 134-161.

Belanger, Terry 1995, 'Beatrice Warde at Columbia', http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/byform/mailing-lists/bookarts/1995/04/msg00093.html, [accessed 24 Oct. 2002].

Caban, Geoffrey 1983, *A Fine Line: A History of Australian Commercial Art,* Hale & Ironmonger, Marrickville, NSW.

Chen, Ken 2002, *Satellite,* vol. 2, no. 4, 2002, http://www.readsatellite.com/culture/2.4/crewdson.chen.2.4.1.htm.; [accessed: 11 Dec. 2002], also avail. at http://www.kenchen.org/writing/crewdson.htm [accessed 14 Jan. 2005].

Clair, Colin 1969, *A Chronology of Printing,* Cassel, London.

Cody, David n.d., *The Victoria Web: Literature, History & Culture in the Age of Victoria*, http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/morris/kelmscott.html, [accessed 7 Feb. 2004.]

Hagan, J. 1966, *Printers and Politics: A History of the Australian Printing Unions 1850-1950*, Australian National University Press, Canberra.

Heathcote, Andrew 2002 'Retail Pulls Them In', in *Business Review Weekly*, pp. 64.

Industrial Relations Commission 1996, Industrial Relations Appeal: Appeal to the Full Bench, Report No. 173/96 Print M9412, 1996, Sydney.

Kinross, Robin 1992, *Modern Typography: An Essay in Critical History,* Hyphen Press, London.

McMurtie, D. 1972, *The Book: The Story of Printing and Bookbinding,* Oxford U.P., London.

Meggs, Phillip B. 1998, *A History of Graphic Design,* John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York.

Rowlands, E. H. (Deputy Industrial Registrar) 1940, 'Notice of Application for Change of Conditions of the Eligibility for Membership of an Organization', *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette,* 1940, no. 92 n.p.

Steinberg, S. H. 1955, *Five Hundred Years of Printing,* Penguin Books Ltd., Harmondsworth, Middlesex.

Stiff, Paul 1996, 'Instructing the Printer: What Specification tells about Typographic Designing', *Typography Papers,* vol. 1, pp. 27-74.

UBC [online], University of British Columbia, http://www.library.ubc.ca/spcoll/middleages/case5.html, [accessed 7 Feb. 2004].

White, Alex W. 2002, *The Elements of Graphic Design,* Allworth Press, New York.

7: Advertising

Introduction

In the previous chapter we saw how the inclusion and status of typography as a component of design discourse has been largely unquestioned, yet exploring the historical terrain we find not only discontinuities and different trajectories in its manifestations in printing and design discourses, but also a disparity between the modernist doctrine of 'invisible type' and the high art sensibilities attached to typography. Indeed we might suggest that Warde's invisible type is in fact a prime example of Bourdieu's 'language of distinction', where, in fact, it is the very *visibility* of certain type characteristics, and the knowledges required to make these characteristics visible, to a specific audience, that works to distinguish one social group from another. In this chapter I would like to explore through an altogether different perspective, how a significant part of the emergence of design discourse and graphic design has been as a means of social distinction.

We have already seen that much of the work for commercial artists came from advertising agencies, yet, in graphic design histories, where reference to modernism and art are frequent and often form the context from which graphic design is to be understood, reference to advertising has been scant and even less prominent in histories of design. Meggs's *A History of Graphic Design* (1998) hardly touches on advertising, and Sparke's *Design in Context* (1987) barely mentions it. Neither Ferebee's *A History of Design from the Victorian Era to the Present* (1970), nor MacCarthy's *A History of British Design 1830-1970* (1979) reveals a single inclusion of 'advertising' in their indexes. Yet Sparke notes that the first mention of the term 'industrial design' was in 1919 by Joseph Sinel to describe product drawings for advertisements (1987, p. 168) and Dwiggins who first coined the term 'graphic design' also worked in advertising (Heller 1997, p. 112). Indeed many of the figures who appear in design histories, in fact worked for advertising agencies, and often under the advertising agency title 'art director' rather than 'designer'. We must ask: 'Why then does advertising feature so little in the discourse of design?', and more importantly: 'What is the effect of this absence? — What does it do to design and graphic design histories, and to the discourse of design?' Whilst there is neither space nor need to explore in detail the complex history of advertising, some important aspects of its relationship with both art and design, and especially with respect to notions of modernism, must be considered. This chapter looks at the split between high art and mass culture, with particular reference to advertising. As part of this, we explore how art became aligned with certain aspects of design discourse through high modernism. We consider how and why design discourse emerged firmly aligned with the discourse of fine art rather than the profession of advertising. In particular, this chapter suggests that not only was

advertising tainted by its *interestedness*, its association with psychological manipulation, but also art discourse conferred both legitimacy, and a language of distinction on design. The price was a form of disinterestedness that was to cause considerable problems for the later incorporation of graphic design in the discourse.

The great divide

Numerous cultural texts of the twentieth century have described the opposition between high art and mass culture, with advertising firmly in the realms of the latter. By the late 1970s this dichotomy was being questioned by many commentators and in the eyes of some, began to break down. To understand how design came to be aligned with one side rather than the other, we need to first understand some important aspects of this perceived conflict. Indeed some current conceptions of design are precisely *as* a kind of combination of the two, and without their initial opposition, design histories could conceivably have been constituted with equal components of the two.

In 1928 German art critic and museum director G.F. Hartlaub took the stance that 'all art is advertising' (1993, p. 72) and that contemporary advertising was a historical evolution from earlier forms of traditional art. Hartlaub's position was that 'Industrialists . . . need to realize that with advertising design an immeasurable task of educating the public is in their and the artists' hands' (p. 74). Yet this was not to be accomplished through unnecessary self-expression:

> The artist must . . . 'yield' by sacrificing whatever does not fit the desired advertising goal. Any exaggeration of arbitrary expressiveness to the financial detriment of the client always backfires—it saps the client's good will in the long run, not merely to the disadvantage of public art in general but to the harm of the artist who, in a time in which 'high' art is commercially hopeless, can most easily survive in the service of business and industry . . . . The mood of the times has changed greatly since the war. Propaganda and advertising art must palpably reflect this change; they have the right, if not the duty, to be modern since their goal is to be neither more nor less than art for the moment . . . (pp. 74-75)

Clearly Hartlaub's view that art *was* advertising and that advertising was a continuation of a historical lineage from traditional art forms, did not gained ascendency. Instead the perceived distance between art and advertising increased.

Bogart (1995) states of art practice in the twentieth century, that: 'the terrain of art practice expanded and became more stratified, but the ideological borders of fine art

narrowed and rigidified' (p. 5). Clement Greenberg's 1939 paper 'Avant-Garde and Kitsch' (1986) provided the rallying cry for a strict distinction between fine art and its threat—the overwhelming forces of mass culture, or *Kitsch.* According to Greenberg, the masses who, as a result of industrialisation and urbanisation, had expendable income but not the leisure time necessary for the refinement of taste, created a new market in:

> Ersatz culture . . . using for raw material the debased and academicized simulacra of genuine culture . . . Kitsch is mechanical and operates by formulas. Kitsch is vicarious experience and faked sensations . . . Kitsch is the epitome of all that is spurious in the life of our times. (Greenberg 1986, p. 12)

A factor that exacerbated any antagonism between fine art and advertising was that by the late 1920s the very language of art itself had become an exploitable commodity for advertisers.

Commercial Modernism

In chapter 4 we considered modernism in terms of its role in providing both a language and a legitimacy to the emergent discourse of design. This concept of modernism, sanctified by the Museum of Modern Art, and associated primarily with architecture and the Bauhaus, became known as 'high' modernism, distinguishing it from 'commercial modernism', which Heller (1995) describes as, ' a marriage of radical art and strategic merchandising' (n.p.). This was the commercial appropriation in advertising of the styles in art, design and architecture that reflected a sentiment of enthusiasm for the modernisation of culture, particularly from the 1925 *Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes*, the exposition from which Art Deco was named. The application of modern style in advertising was designed to create a novel and 'artistic' feel presenting common objects in an 'artistic' way:

> Toasters, refrigerators, coffee tins - were presented against new patterns and at skewed angles; contemporary industrial wares were shown in futuristic settings accented by contemporary typefaces . . . (Heller 1995, n.p.)

An important point of distinction between commercial and high modernism was that the motive behind commercial modernism was perceived by most, to increase sales:

> It was the profit motive, not any utopian ethic, or any esthetic ideal, that paved the way for commercial modernism in the U.S. . . . (Heller 1995, electronic source, n.p.)

Although this was the general perception and certainly the perception of the significant fine art critics like Greenberg, it is not entirely accurate. In fact many advertisers themselves were from the social group that 'appreciated' fine art and were understandably happy to see the language of fine art used in their advertising.

> The majority of upper-level creative staff in advertising agencies were college men of Anglo-Saxon Protestant descent. For art directors, the degree, even college attendance, was crucial for acceptance among other advertising professionals, signalling a level of class and refinement (as sociologist Pierre Bourdieu would characterize it, 'cultural capital') that distinguished them from other artsy types: the degree gave the art director a tie with other professional men who might under other circumstances take art directors' aesthetic proclivities less seriously. (p. 344, n. 22)

Jackson Lears regarded advertising executives as 'an extraordinarily privileged elite, increasingly elevated above and isolated from the concerns of ordinary Americans', and relates a 1936 in-house survey of J. Walter Thompson copywriters which found that 'more than half had never lived within the national average income of $1,580 per family a year, and half did not know anyone who ever had . . . [and] while 5 percent of American homes had servants, 66 percent of J. Walter Thompson homes did' (Lears 1994, pp. 196-7).

Thus the inclusion in advertising of the objects and language of fine art is not altogether unexpected. The practice was, however, to have dramatic impact through the traditionalists of art discourse who saw in it an assault on the sanctity of art and a threat to the very existence of art itself. A clear distinction needed to be drawn between precisely which forms of modernism were acceptable within the hallowed halls of fine art.The growing dominance of high modernism saw critics deprecating its commercialisation, as exemplified by Frederic Ehrlich, who called it a 'dark cloud', and Walter Dorwin Teague who saw in it the exploitation of modernism for novelty value (Heller 1995, n.p.). This signals a growing perception (which was to be finally encapsulated so dramatically by Greenberg in 1939), that 'real' culture was being displaced by commercial kitsch.

It is important to note here another, and perhaps more significant, reason for the decline of commercial modernism. For most advertisers there work was a profession, and results tended to be measured in sales rather than aesthetics. On utilitarian grounds many advertisers saw that the 'artiness' of commercial modernism appealed to a specific audience but was being used more because it was the fashion rather than because of its effectiveness. In 1931, shortly after what Heller has described as the

'zenith' of commercial modernism in 1929, Chief of N.W. Ayer advertising agency, Harry A. Batten wrote:

> [I]nstances existed - and still exist - of advertising in which the product was lost sight of in preoccupation with creative technique. Even today we . . . see advertisements so 'fancy,' so 'arty' and artificial, that they neglect to sell the goods. (qtd. in Heller 1995, n.p.)

This signifies perhaps the most significant distinction between fine art and advertising. As I stated earlier, the disinterested aspect of high modernism,—the language of the emerging design discourse—had a closer alignment with fine art than with advertising and the opposition between the two was perhaps amplified by commercial modernism. However, the notion of 'interestedness' that is, the intention and promise of reward, can be seen as fundamental to the establishment of the advertising industry, which ultimately gained its credentials through the promotion, and ultimate acceptance that *it worked*. It did this by aligning itself not with art, but with science. Psychology provided its language and perhaps this, more than any other factor lead to its ultimate demonising and further distanced it from the discourse of design.

The alliance of advertising and science

As noted in the previous chapter, large scale education was underway throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century and as literacy levels increased so too did reading material. In addition to the newspapers, in Australia, *Dawn: a Magazine for Australian Women* arrived in 1888; *New Idea* in 1902*; Women's Budget* in 1906; the *Australian Woman's Mirror* (later to become *Woman's Day*) in 1926 and in 1933 the *Australian Women's Weekly* was launched (Hand n.d., p. 4). The early 1900s brought the large department stores and other retail outlets. Large manufacturers often had their own advertising section, but by the 1920s in Australia, advertising agencies were becoming more prolific. These agencies offered a range of services, including market information as well as advertising space (Reekie 1993, p. 137). The incorporation into advertising agencies of research departments with their language of statistics and graphs increased perceptions of the advertising industry as scientifically based, further enhancing traders' confidence in them as a necessary part of their business approach.

The growing perception of a new business approach along with the notion of the consumer market as an entity created an increased interest in the use of advertising as a tool to communicate and influence this group. Reekie notes that in Australia:

> Most major firms employed advertising managers by 1905, and a new journal containing advice from men prominent in the Australian retail industry,

> was established in 1908. Retailers assumed a prominent position within the fledgling Australian advertising industry from its outset: more than one-third of the delegates to the first Australasian Conference on Advertising held in 1918 were connected with the retail trade . . . . An explicit attention to advertising and publicity was the keystone of the large retail institutions' mass marketing policies by the 1920s. The Retail Traders' Association claimed in 1929 that 'we have passed through a great production era and are on the threshold of an advertising and selling one.' (1993, p. 50)

A major factor contributing to the increased role of advertising at this time lies in the surge of interest and faith in the new 'science' of psychology. In advertising, psychology became regarded as the tool *par excellence* for persuading customers to buy goods, and worked to increase retailers' confidence in the advertising industry, as psychology became increasingly a feature of its language.

The application of scientific psychological principles to the evaluation of customer motivation was an important part of this approach. In the 1890s numerous trade articles began to appear relating psychology to advertising with the first American books, namely Walter Dill Scott's *The Theory of Advertising* arriving in 1905 and in 1908 *The Psychology of Advertising.* In 1913 Walter Dill Scott, stated: 'Advertising has as its one function the influencing of human minds. Unless it does this it is useless and destructive to the firms attempting to use it' (qtd. in Craig 1990, p. 20).

In Australia *The Reason Why*, a journal devoted to the science of advertising, was established in 1908 and argued that 'it was a "psychological fact" that illustrations arrested the eye' (qtd. in Reekie 1993, p. 51). The *Draper of Australia* advised retailers as early as 1902 that a study of psychology was necessary because the sales assistant needed to a 'mind-student' to recognise and deal with each customer as an individual. Furthermore, an article from *Printer's Ink* reproduced in the *Draper* in 1918, 'revealed how one advertising expert used modern psychology and the "unconscious" in selling to women'. So highly regarded was psychology by traders that 'The Retail Traders' Association of New South Wales was a member of the Institute of Industrial Psychology from its formation in 1928' (Reekie 1993, p. 51).

> Components of advertisements which were later to become key elements of design discourse—illustration, typography, colour, and the like—were evaluated in terms of their psychological effect. Craig (1990) describes a 1920s advertisement in the trade journal *Achievement in Photoengraving and Letterpress Printing*. The ad uses a full-colour image of a fly-fisherman at work, with the headline 'The Lure of Color'. Craig states:

> The advertiser compares the attractive power of color to the artificial lure used by the fisherman to fool and entice fish. This is the kind of unthinking behavioral response that was sought by the behavioral psychologist working in the advertising field at that time. (p. 26)

Heller (1997) indicates two quite different perceptions of typography emerging: 'While typography was often written about as a separate aesthetic field, it was also addressed in terms of its function in advertising' (p. 118). He notes that Calkins, one of the pioneers of advertising who is credited with bringing modernistic influences to the United States through advertising, 'early on proposed that fine typography be a component of successful advertising' (Heller 1995, n.p). As early as 1916, advertising executive and critic Charles Higham had voiced the recognition of the persuasive powers of type, stating:

> A clever manipulator of type can make it serve the purpose of publicity with a forcefulness that the uninitiated always feel but seldom understand. (qtd. in Craig 1990, p. 21)

Already we can see here the difficulty that a design discourse which champions the purity of form, as exemplified by Warde's Crystal Goblet, would have with an approach from the altogether opposite direction, whereby form is seen as principally 'persuasion'.

The tainting of advertising

> The absence of advertising from design discourse is not simply because advertising was seen as 'interested' in results. Partly because of its apparent success in the use of psychology, the image of advertising became tainted during the 1950s and 1960s. This was at a crucial time in terms of the struggle between commercial art and design discourse. Heller (1997) notes that in the 1930s, 'the word "advertising" was not regarded as derisive' (p. 118), yet at some stage perceptions shifted.

The critiques of mass culture and social manipulation, from writers like Adorno and Horkheimer are well known in academia. However, more significant by their wider circulation in popular culture, were the works of journalists like Vance Packard. In Packard, the very psychology that convinced clients to invest in advertising agencies was revealed to the public as a dark manipulative force that could control the minds of innocent consumers. This was vastly different to the popular image of the tonic-selling charlatan, which inspired caution—where if some consumers were

tricked, more fool them. The perception created by Packard was of being influenced mysteriously through one's subconscious—made to do things over which one had no control. It is no coincidence that this perspective arrived around the time of the McCarthy era. 'Mind control' was not only a popular topic for TV shows and science-fiction films, but was a term associated with foreign invaders and atomic holocaust. 'Americans' wrote Packard, (1957) 'have become the most manipulated people outside the iron curtain' (p. 9). Not only was Packard's audience much wider than the few intellectuals who had heard of the Frankfurt School, but also certain 'newsworthy' stories were able to fit the packaging requirements of television news programs. Stories of subliminal advertising techniques ('subthreshold effects' in Packard's terms) used to manipulate entire movie-theatre audiences to rushing out at interval to buy a product flashed imperceptibly on screen during a film, set up a certain paranoia far beyond fear of being tricked. Packard (1957) contended:

> The use of mass psychoanalysis to guide campaigns of persuasion has become the basis of a multimillion dollar industry. Professional persuaders have seized upon it in their groping for more effective ways to sell us their wares—whether products, ideas, attitudes, candidates, goals, or states of mind . . . . This depth approach to influencing our behaviour is being used in many fields and is employing a variety of ingenious techniques. It is being used most extensively to affect our daily acts of consumption. The sale to us of billions of dollars' worth of United States products is being significantly affected, if not revolutionized, by this approach, which is still only barely out of its infancy. Two thirds of America's hundred largest advertisers have geared campaigns to this depth approach . . . (p. 11)

Packard's books were spectacularly successful. *The Hidden Persuaders* was originally published in 1957 in the USA and released in Britain in the same year. With numerous reprints it sold over a million copies and Packard went on to lecture tours and promotions. The effect on the public's perception of advertising is impossible to determine but advertisers were well aware of the damage to their industry. The 1960s saw consumer groups demanding and winning tougher controls over advertising and product packaging. Widely publicised cases were brought against major advertising companies and advertisers were required 'to have 'supporting data' for any performance claims they made' (Cohen 1999, n.p.).

By 1959 Alfred Hitchcock was able to portray his lead character in *North by Northwest* as an advertising executive: a man of dubious morals. Cary Grant plays the debonair rogue, whose monogram spells out the word 'ROT'. When asked what the 'O' stands for, he replies 'Nothing!' He defends an offhand lie which enables him to steal

another man's taxi thus: 'In the world of advertising, there's no such thing as a lie, there's only expedient exaggeration!', and states in another scene: 'I'm an advertising man . . . I've got a job, a secretary, a mother, two ex-wives and several bar-tenders dependant upon me'. Although the ad man is mistaken for an FBI agent, a number of comments about his wardrobe and demeanour indicate he is clearly of a higher class than the usual FBI agent. The femme fatale who seduces him matches not only his sophistication, but interestingly, presents herself as an industrial designer.

We might suggest here that given the extreme opposition of advertising and fine art, the advertising industry never had any chance of achieving the ratification conferred by the discourse of art upon modernist design. We might further surmise, however, that given the privileged class from which many advertising executives sprang, there emerged an attractive identity of the roguish sophisticate that proved an effective counterpart to the sometimes stuffy and somewhat effete image of the high art wallah. Indeed it would appear advertising has historically been secured by its effectiveness and its ostensibly scientific foundations and never coveted the sanctification of art discourse.

The effect of advertising's absence from graphic design

Greenberg's examples of Kitsch included popular, commercial art and literature, magazine covers, illustrations, advertisements, pulp fiction, comics, tap dancing and Hollywood movies. Greenberg's Kitsch has become what we might regard as the things of everyday existence. Certainly the work of most graphic designers would constitute Greenberg's understanding of kitsch. One might expect then that graphic design, with its emphasis on 'the client', and ostensibly at least a reliance on functionality, would be unproblematically aligned with advertising rather than fine art, yet as we have seen, quite the reverse is true.

Heller (1997) makes the following observation:

> The word 'advertising', like 'commercial art', makes graphic designers cringe. It signifies all that sophisticated contemporary graphic design, or rather visual communications, is not supposed to be. Advertising is the tool of capitalism, a con that persuades an unwitting public to consume and consume again. (p. 112)

Clearly the tainted image of advertising does not sit well with graphic designers, but I would argue that a significant reason for the absence of advertising in graphic design literature is precisely the fact that graphic design emerged as part of a general discourse of design, a discourse which had been since the 1930s aligned with high art.

The disinterested pleasure that was conferred upon modernist design was also made available to practices of a graphic nature that came to be a part of design discourse. Importantly, what advertising, a thoroughly *interested* practice, lacked was the ability or intention to confer social distinction on its practitioners. Where art throughout the twentieth century saw greater emphasis placed on the act of creating, advertising placed emphasis on the effect. Where art emphasised the creator, advertising directed more and more attention to the viewer, and where art represented a cultural elite, advertising saw both prince and pauper on the same level—the level of the consumer. This, of course, is simplification, but the dichotomy is clear. Seeing graphic design more closely related to art than to advertising presents numerous problems, many of which remain to some degree within the pedagogy of graphic design today. To emphasise in graphic design, the act of creation rather than the effect, the creator rather than the viewer, or to speak to a privileged elite rather than address the needs of all audiences, maintains and supports a severely limited conception of graphic design. Indeed, advertising, which measures success in terms of sales, could be seen in some regards as the antithesis to discourses that support any set of aesthetics, be they modernist or otherwise, as superior to others. This signifies a fundamental difficulty with a notion of graphic design tethered to either fine arts or high modernist discourses. If the cluttered pages of Women's' Day prove successful in terms of sales, and thus, in terms of 'function' (as, it seems, they do) then this would sit well with advertising philosophies. However, few design courses would teach this aesthetic as part of their 'design principles'. The approach of advertising serves to emphasise that form and function continues to be problematic for graphic design.

Whilst most historical and theoretical writings on advertising over the last thirty years have come from the discourse of sociology (most of which continue to demonise the field), recent years have seen design and graphic design literature begin to incorporate elements of advertising as legitimate components of design discourse. In 1989 Lupton and Miller, for example, constructed a 'Timeline of American Graphic Design' (pp. 24-65) conveying a range of events and social conditions they regarded as significant in graphic design history. A number of key events concern advertising, promotions or general news media. By 1997, Stephen Heller, a prolific writer on a wide range of design topics, positioned graphic design quite differently from most other writers, stating that it originated 'as a tool of advertising' (p. 112). He states:

> Graphic design history is an integral part of advertising history, yet in most accounts of graphic design's origins advertising is virtually denied, or hidden behind more benign words such as 'publicity' and 'promotion'. (p. 112)

Thus for Heller advertising becomes the wider discourse and graphic design one of

its component parts. In his view the denial of graphic design's place in advertising discourse 'not only limits the discourse, but also misrepresents the facts' (p. 112).

Conclusion

Advertising features little in the histories of design and graphic design because the discourse of design was constructed in such a way as to maintain social distinction. For the significant role that advertising was to play in promoting elements of modernism to the general public, indeed even in constructing to some degree how modernism and design themselves were to be understood, advertising had an altogether different politics from design or any of the other modernist discourses. Whilst modernist discourses, as we have seen, sprang in part from socialist concerns, much of the success of their emergence *as* discourses was in fact, due to their elitist constitution and effect. We might apply the following statement by Bogart (1995) as much to design as to art:

> Control of the discourses of art meant more than just management of day-to-day activities. It meant the power to assert class and self-legitimacy in a society in which shifting economies, technologies, and social demographics were rapidly calling old ways of life and power relations into question. (p. 7)

Although we have considered the relationship of advertising, art and modernism, these have been broad brush strokes on a largely international canvas. These observations do little more than provide a context from which we may observe how events in Australian occurred. Indeed we shall see that broad brush strokes give a considerably skewed impression when compared to the specificity of local and personal experiences.

References

Bird, Jon 1978, 'The Politics of Advertising' in *Design History: Fad or Function?*, ed. Terry Bishop, Design Council, London, pp. 49-55.

Bogart, Michele H. 1995, *Artists, Advertising and the Borders of Art,* University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Cohen, Stanley E. 1999, 'The Battle over Truth and Fairness in Advertising Led to Closer Government Examination of Business:'Protecting' Consumers', *Advertising Age,* March 29, C120.

Craig, Robert 1990, 'Ideological Aspects of Publication Design', *Design Issues,* vol. VI, no. 2, pp. 18-27.

Featherstone, Mike 1991, *Consumer Culture and Postmodernism,* Sage Publications, London.

Ferebee, Ann 1970, *A History of Design from the Victorian Era to the Present,* Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, New York.

Gaines, Jane 1990, 'From Elephants to Lux Soap: the Programming and "Flow" of Early Motion Picture Exploitation', *Velvet Light Trap,* Spring 1990, pp. 29-44.

Hand, Tim n.d., *Australian Mass Media Through 200 Years,* Kangaroo Press, n.c.

Hartlaub, G.F. 1993 (orig. pub. 1928), 'Art as Advertising', *Design Issues,* vol. IX, no. 2, pp. 73-76.

Heller, Steven 1995, 'Commercial Modern: American Design Style 1925-1933', *Print,* vol. 49, no. 5, pp. 58-69.

Heller, Steven 1997, 'Advertising: Mother of Graphic Design' in *Looking Closer 2*, eds. Michael Bierut et al., Allworth Press, New York, pp. 112-119.

Kinross, Robin 1992, *Modern Typography: An Essay in Critical History,* Hyphen Press, London.

Lears, T. J. Jackson 1994, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America,* BasicBooks, New York.

Lupton, Ellen and Miller, J. Abbott 1989, 'A Time Line of American Graphic Design, 1829-1989' in *Graphic Design in America: a Visual Language History*, eds. Mildred Friedman and Phil Freshman, Walker Art Center, New York, pp. 24-65.

MacCarthy, Fiona 1979, *A History of British Design 1830-1970,* Allen & Unwin, London.

Meggs, Phillip B. 1998, *A History of Graphic Design,* John Wiley & Sons, New York.

Meikle, Jeffrey L. c1990, 'From Celebrity to Anonymity: The Professionalization of American Industrial Design' in *Raymond Loewy: Pioneer of American Industrial Design*, ed. Angela Schönberger, Prestel, Munich, pp. 51-60.

Nelson, Roy Paul 1990, 'Tracing the Circuitous Route of Publication Design', *Communication World,* vol. 7, no. 6, pp. 46-8.

Osborne, Graeme and Lewis, Glen 1995, *Communication Traditions in Twentieth Century Australia,* Oxford U.P., Oxford.

Packard, Vance 1957, *The Hidden Persuaders,* Penguin, Harmondsworth, Middlesex.

Passuth, Krisztina 1987, *Moholy-Nagy,* Thames and Hudson, London.

Reekie, Gail 1993, *Temptations: Sex, Selling and the Department Store,* Allen & Unwin, St. Leonards, N.S.W.

Rokicki, John 1987, 'Advertising in the Roman Empire', *Whole Earth Review,* Spring pp. 84-88.

Schwitters, Kurt 1993 (orig. pub. 1928), 'Modern Advertising', *Design Issues,* vol. IX, no. 2, pp. 69-71.

Sparke, Penny 1987, *Design in Context,* Bloomsbury, London.

8: The consolidation of graphic design in Australian industry

Introduction

This chapter explores the ascendency and consolidation of graphic design in Australia. It explores this through the specific role of advertising agencies in Australia in terms of professional hierarchy they created and the introduction of European and American talents and their work practices. This is seen to incorporate a shift from Anglo-centric traditions to Euro-American ones in terms of both powerful business practices and also in terms of the introduction of a modernist aesthetic largely based on the International Style. It also explicates how this aesthetic, along with changes in markets and technologies allowed for a new breed of graphic designers—the consultant designers—to emerge, quite independent from the advertising agencies. The consolidation of graphic design as an independent profession and legitimate component of design discourse is seen to occur with the establishment of graphic design publications and the inauguration of the Australian Graphic Design Association.

Although the term 'graphic designer' had been used as early as 1922 when, as we've noted, Dwiggins used it to describe his work (Heller 1997, p. 112), it was not until the late 1950s and early 1960s that it began to appear as a professional category in Australia. It is important to note that this was not a simple re-naming of commercial arts, but a coextensive emergence of the notion of graphic design that subsumed many of the commercial arts practices and thereby reduced their number. However commercial art as a term persisted, with a particular emphasis on illustrative work, and could still be found in telephone directories in 2003 in the form:

Artists—Commercial
See also—
Cartoonists & Caricaturists
Designers—Graphic
Illustrators

In 2003 the number of commercial artists in the *Yellow Pages* was about 20 percent of the number of graphic designers, with most listings under commercial artists being sole traders and those which constitute companies being listed under the headings of both 'graphic designers' and 'commercial artists'.

In Australia the first appearance of the term Graphic Designer as a job description occurs within the advertising agencies and is related to the importing of American experience. Bob Francis gives the following account of the early 1960s:

> Francis: There's always been this conflict of status in what is a Commercial Artist and what is a Designer. At that time, there were just Commercial Artists and there was a difference in what they were doing, the type of work they were doing. Frank Eidlitz was always extremely outspoken in every respect . . . He was retained by one of the agencies—it was the first time that I' d heard the term, that's why I' m mentioning it—a graphic designer. He was a Graphic Designer with an advertising agency.

This thesis has taken the approach that advertising and advertising agencies were crucially important in both commercial arts work and the constitution of graphic design practices. In the previous chapter we noted how most authors of design and graphic design histories have tended to neglect advertising in their approaches. Geoffrey Caban's text (1983), on the other hand, is a history of commercial art and, as such, is not underpinned by the politics of constituting a notion of design discourse as a particular way of knowing design or graphic design. He therefore pays considerable attention to advertising agencies and their relationship to commercial artists.

In observing early advertising agencies it becomes clear that the practitioners of this field came from the same mixture of backgrounds that Caban and Moore find in commercial and fine art. Caban notes that the first advertising agencies in Australia were formed from the ranks of salesmen who had been employed by the newspapers 'trudging the streets peddling advertising space' (1983, p. 49). They would write up the copy and occasionally produce an illustration if needed, and as they gained clients eventually were able to charge service fees and commissions and finally some were able to set up as independent agents. Caban also notes how the early agencies rarely employed in-house illustrators as most advertisements were all-copy (that is—they consisted of words only), and stereo illustration blocks (an early form of 'clip art') were popular[1]. However we should note that two of the earliest agencies in Australia were founded by Harry J. Weston and by Sydney Ure Smith in partnership with Harry Julius. We have already discussed Weston, whom Caban has called, in some instances, a commercial artist, and in others, an illustrator, but who appears at the time to be known as simply 'an artist'. Certainly Weston was deeply involved in what would now be considered fine art. He been an artist at the *Examiner* Office in Tasmania and had exhibited at the exhibitions of the Launceston Art Society before moving to Victoria. Here he met up with Blamire Young and Lionel Lindsay and worked on poster illustration. Caban notes that: 'he exhibited posters and postcards through the Victorian Art Society, and was a member of the Black and White Club and the Prehistoric Order of Cannibals' (1983, p. 50). In 1901 he set up the Weston Company in Sydney which was a studio/agency and in 1904 placed an 'advertising consultant'

[1] Roger Welsh, who worked for an early advertising agency, recounts the use of stereo illustration as 'a sort of idea-for-all-situations. A typical one would be a fellow walking around with a pennant which said something like "Don't Miss These Bargains" or "Greatest Opportunity Ever"'. (qtd. in Caban 1983, p. 52)

as manager so that he could concentrate on the illustration work. In describing the Smith and Julius agency, Caban notes that 'two young artists' who had studied at the Julian Ashton School of Art (known as the 'Julien Academie'), Sydney Ure Smith and Harry Julius, reasoned that the demand was sufficient in Sydney in 1906 to set up a specialised studio doing 'quality artwork'. Sydney Ure Smith had been a linear draughtsman and a 'first-rate etcher' (p. 52) with an interest also in painting. (He was later to set up *Art in Australia*). Harry Julius had worked as a journalist with the *Evening News* drawing caricatures and sketches.

In Melbourne in 1904 Hugh Paton's Advertising Service was opened and the practices of the agencies was so little known at the time that Paton was able to recount:

> Those I talked to mostly could not understand how I, unfamiliar with their particular trade, could write advertisements about it. (qtd. in Caban 1983, p. 50)

Initially advertising agencies in Australia tended to be quite small but the growth in popular media created a vast opportunity and a couple of major firms including USP and Clemengers grew rapidly to encompass a range of media outlets. John Clemenger Advertising or Clemenger Productions, as it was known in radio and television, was founded by John (Jack) Clemenger on March 25, 1946, after leaving Leyshon Publicity where he had worked as Radio Manager at a time when radio was the main outlet for advertising in Australia (Hewat & Rankin 1996).

> In the years immediately after World War II, newsprint was in short supply, press advertising space was on a quota, and television was still a decade away—these were radio days. (Hewat & Rankin 1996, p. 4)

Ray Brown reports that during this period:

> Newspapers would ring the media departments to give you an allocation for the next month —like: 'You can have two 'eight inch by two columns' for Guest Biscuits on February 12 and 26.' There was a 'take-it-or-leave-it' attitude, and new press clients were put on a waiting list. (qtd. in Hewat & Rankin 1996, p. 25)

At the beginning, the press department of Clemenger's consisted only of Jack's son, Peter Clemenger, and [Anthony] John Briggs with two main accounts—Kia-Ora canned foods and cordials and Spencer Jackson real estate. Jack's other son, John,

took charge of the air media—radio and television advertising—and the two brothers coordinated the air media and print media themes. At first advertising agencies tended to defer to the client in the final approval for their ideas. We can regard a shift which occurs where agencies were able to take increasingly greater control over the creation and production of advertising. When Clemenger's won a contract with the paint company Glazebrooks, their sales manager Cliff Knight allowed Clemenger's to take a significant amount of control over the production including planning and even approving the ads. Peter Clemenger (qtd. in Hewat & Rankin 1996) notes that this 'taught them to take authority'. He states: 'We were not only creating the ads, but being 100 per cent responsible for the way they read, the way they looked and for their factual correctness' (p. 27).

> These early intuitive talents carried the business into the fifties, and during this period press space became more readily available. Thus press advertising began to grow and despite modest billings, under son Peter, some of the country's best designers and photographers became involved. (Hewat & Rankin 1996, p. 4)

The use of the term 'designer' here is Hewat & Rankin's anachronism and the description we get from Peter Clemenger is perhaps a more accurate one, which indicates the working relationships in the agency in the 1950s:

> Briggs . . . was a salesman, an enthusiast and a big thinker . . . . John Briggs wrote the ads. Jimmy James, who was a terrific art director, designed them. And I used to go to the papers every Friday night to check the copy—all the type was set by the papers at no cost. From about eight to eleven I did the rounds, altering the layouts if I thought they should be looking better. (qtd. in Hewat & Rankin 1996, p. 26)

Hewat and Rankin (1996) note that in the late fifties:

> Another major change was occurring in the industry. The intuitive skills which underpinned the early years began to give way to more professional skill. Marketing . . . was emerging as a new discipline in manufacturing industry and agencies were challenged to match the intellectual capacity of their clients. Research, pre-testing, post-testing and market analysis began to influence the way advertising people thought and acted. Gradually, the creative process which was once free ranging, occasionally assisted by a good lunch, began to feel the embracing pressures of the new 'disciplines'. And so the agency research department emerged. (p. 6)

Ad agencies and job status

Clemengers employed John Briggs and consistently used the services of James before Briggs and James set up their own agency. It had also employed the services of Richard Beck as well as Max Forbes. We have already discussed the significance of Briggs and James in the formation of a community of diverse workers and Clemengers was no less significant. Agencies acted as a magnet for a design community because they not only employed staff full-time to construct advertisements, but they also used the services of individuals and studios that specialised in providing elements of the advertisements. They were also high volume producers, and had connections with ranges of different media and access to the credibility offered by high profile characters. One of the principle effects of the advertising agencies on a sensibility of design was through the implementation of an organisational hierarchy with a compartmentalisation of skills and practices, and while the role of designer was considerably stabilised by this environment it came to sit under a new position unique to the advertising industry—that of the art director. Max Ripper worked in advertising agencies after finishing his Advertising Art course at RMIT and describes the relationship between designers and art directors thus:

> Ripper: One would more likely work within the studio of an agency and there designers functioned as designers and there was something of a blur . . . between an art director and a designer.

The role would differ with the size of the company, the sort of clients they worked for and the type of work they handled. Brian Sadgrove indicates the sense that art directors tended to direct the work of others whilst acting as a liaison between the client and those carrying the ideas developed through to production.

> Sadgrove: Then it was that if you were an Art Director you didn't get to design as much from my point of view . . . you'd work with copywriters who would work, figure out photography. It was mostly photography and typography. I suppose my interest went actually beyond that, being interested in publications.

Trevor Flett describes the multiplicity of roles that art directors played:

> Flett: Just playing with strategies and nurturing people – playing the team game, you know, being able to advise and counsel, to encourage a designer to work up a bit of typography. I just had a very good skill in that area. The other thing is that I learnt marketing at my old man's hardware shop. How to deal with customers, and I claim still that the best design work comes from the customer's shoes.

Arthur Leydin notes the important role art directors played in relation to designers:

> Leydin: the agency Art Director was the person that supported designers. It was an industry, in that sense. It was the early Art Directors like Bob Caldwell and Colin Uren perhaps . . . who commissioned me as a budding designer, if you want to put it that way, or commissioned Les [Mason] as a designer, but . . . outside industry was slower, in that regard. Peter Clemenger was a terrific catalyst.

Thus, by their responsibilities for directing the work of others as well as liaising with clients, the art director had a higher status than the designer (when a company was large enough for the separation of tasks to exist). In these cases an art director could consult with the client to develop a brief, which would then be passed on to the other workers.

In chapter 7 we also saw how a growing perception of professionalisation had affected the advertising industry in America. This set up a perception throughout the rest of the world that Americans were less concerned about aesthetic ideals than about commercial success. Whether this was true or not is debatable, but certainly by the late 1950s the commercial successes of the USA were being sought after in other places. A 1959 economic commission of the European Community concluded that 'European industry could become more flexible and increase productivity by abandoning outmoded critical standards and by adopting frankly commercial American industrial design practices' (Meikle c1990, p. 60). At the same time Australian advertising agencies like USP and Clemengers started looking to recruit some of those with American experience. This brought to Australian advertising the likes of Les Mason, Arthur Leydin and other designers who had done *their* time in the United States.

The importation of a Euro-American business attitude and aesthetic

The Americans who came to Australia were faced with advertising and manufacturing industries that appeared less 'advanced' than the ones they had left. Part of this can be seen in the way that Australian business was to eventually go the way of American practices yet at that time was still dominated by the British approach. There may also have been less of a sense of urgency given the lesser development of manufacturing industry and competition both nationally and internationally—a situation that was to change rapidly. As already noted, Australian agencies tended in the early period to be more concerned with the total production and less concerned with typography, leaving that side of things to the print industry.

A number of commentators have noted that what Les Mason brought to the industry was a business ethic, where professionalism could be equated with meeting deadlines, liaising with clients, making certain that all details of the work, including the typography, were professionally finished and overseen by the designer. Mason, in fact, was known around this time as a 'designer' and we can see that what was being introduced to Australia here was a more consolidated discourse of design, in which control over a wider range of processes, including typography, was acquired by the designer working for the advertising agencies. 'Graphic designer' was not being used here, for although Francis's recalls that Eidlitz was known as a graphic designer in an advertising agency around the same time, the term did not come into widespread use in Australia until a few years later.

Many of the differences that the Americans found between their own work practices and the Australians in fact can be seen in the large degree of anglocentricity in the Australian approach. The Americans may have been more keenly sensitive to this due to the popularising of the International or Modernist Style, which had at this stage made a greater impact in the United States than it had in Britain. This is of much import and we will consider it in more detail in the next section. Leydin describes the particularly English aesthetic:

> Leydin: There's a couple of English people I like, as you know. Richard Haughton James, I think, had a lot to do with it, but I couldn't get with a lot of the English typography . . . . The English were very picture-oriented . . . they had some very good illustrations, but they married illustration and typography in a very English sense.
>
> Leydin: Of course, the other thing is true that the start of design, if you want to put it that way, in England was the Festival of Britain in 1951[2]. They got known as 'exhibit designers' and a lot of the 'names' of design came out of that. Then, of course, before the group that was Pentagram, was the Design Research Unit. They had a big influence on Max Forbes and the Sydney designer, Alistair Morrison. They used to do packaging design you'd think was done in England, but it was done in Australia.

[2] Kinross (1992) has described The Festival of Britain in the following way: 'Beneath some modernist trimmings, the spirit of the Festival was essentially that of cheerful revival and especially of an espousal of the late eighteenth-century "picturesque": an eclecticism, irregularity and charming incident . . . . The prevailing spirit of design-conscious typography in Britain was thus one of eclectic inclusion' (p. 117).

> [on English design]
> Leydin: I always use the word 'conservative' but it had the tradition behind it. I think you've got to look at it that way. It had a graphic tradition and an illustrative tradition behind it so they were very slow-moving. But they were superb craftspeople.
>
> It's hard to break it down into an English school, but you can always generally tell whether it's English. I don't know why.

The American concept of the advertising agency designer is one that was only made possible by the way advertising worked as a body of recognised practice, for it sits quite apart from most other kinds of legitimate forms of either labour or creativity. As an industry it employed a large number of people and had numerous industrial organisations. There was an Art Directors' Club in New York as early as 1920 (Hollis 2001, p. 97) and the Melbourne Art Directors' Club (MADC) was established in 1955. With a unity provided by the fact that many of the members worked in agencies and worked in similar ways on similar projects, not to mention the fact that their permanent employment often made them considerably more financial than independent designers, the club became quite substantial. A number of interviewees praised the efforts of the club. Interestingly, in 1999 the MADC, formerly the Melbourne Art Directors' Club changed its name to the Melbourne Advertising and Design Club. We might regard this as in part the result of the emergence and growth of consultancy design, a phenomenon we shall also explore momentarily.

The International Style and Graphic Design

We have discussed the International Style with particular reference to architecture, but this style also had a particularly graphic aspect. Kinross regards the following emergence of graphic design:

> In the 1930s, in the larger field of graphic art, and in poster design, above all, modernist approaches had become well established in Switzerland: simplified images; integration of text and image; the use of photographs, especially as photomontage. In such work, where image was reduced to type-like simplicity, and where type was given a graphic, image-like presence, the categories of 'typography' and 'graphic art' were broken down and fused to produce what then became known as 'graphic design'. (Kinross 1992, p. 123)

From the perspective taken in this thesis, any such lineage is simplistic, but the preponderance and eventual pervasiveness of the Swiss approach undoubtedly had a significant effect in the emergence and popular use of graphic design as a designated

set of work practices and, in particular, with the linking of these practices to the modernist aesthetic and moral philosophy. Indeed the style was to become known as the Swiss International Style, or International Typographic Style. As we have seen, histories tackle the role of *style* in different ways. In some cases key figures are seen to originate a particular style, whereas in others, technological changes are seen as the generators of stylistic change. Some have privileged the style itself as a kind of evolutionary thread, which flows through history and can be spoken of in terms of movements and the linking passages between them. More recent histories have tended to emphasise the significance of cultural and social changes out of which a style is seen to emerge. This thesis takes the approach that style is a product of discourse. As with the Bauhaus itself, the Swiss style emerged out of a range of events and conditions. Practices connected with the Bauhaus were taken up in numerous countries, by many different practitioners. Again, those that reflected the ethos of, and lineage to, the Bauhaus and modernism in architecture and design, tended to be seen as legitimate.

The Swiss style has been seen to have emerged, at first to a limited and quite localised extent, out of certain Bauhaus approaches and politics, and in particular, their application to typography. In the early stages at least, the Socialist aspects of this 'New Typography' were regarded as fundamental. Kinross describes the difference between what came to be called 'the New Traditionalists'—typographers who sprang from the approaches of William Morris and the Arts and Crafts movement—and the 'New Typographers' which, it is regarded, had their origin with Tschichold.

> The common term used often disparagingly of the new traditionalists was 'book-artists' and this was partly because their typographic works were mostly books and in most cases, for collectors . . . . New typography . . . resisted the idea that literature should enjoy a separate, special status: it was another design problem. And perhaps more interesting than 'literature' for new typographers were industrial catalogues and other texts with complex problems of ordering and configuration to be resolved. Here the contrast with the traditionalist artist-typographers became complete.
> (Kinross 1992, pp. 95-7)

Most typography carried out by the New Traditionalists was a painstaking process that rejected the use of machinery, and resulted in the making of 'artistic' books, which were entirely unaffordable by the majority of people. In opposition to this, the New Typographers aimed at making a 'functionalist' typography that was simple, uncluttered by unnecessary ornament, yet readable. Importantly, this was a typography designed to be mechanically reproducible and therefore able to be used

to benefit the general public. The details of emergence of this approach and its diffusion throughout mainstream practices is too complex to consider in detail here[3], but a few important points need to be made. It should be recognised that even the initial popularity of the style was more than a matter of a universal aesthetic. Kinross has shown how political and cultural conditions in Switzerland were particularly conducive to its growth:

> The fundamentally aesthetic approach of Swiss typography, lying behind its claim to functional effectiveness, becomes evident enough when viewed historically . . . In Switzerland, the idea that life might really be improved by infusing it with purifying abstract art did perhaps have some reality, as it did not in other less constrained societies. (Kinross 1992, pp. 132-3)

We have noted the emigration of a considerable number of designers from Europe to the United States and Britain, and many of these were practitioners of the Swiss style. Furthermore, the aesthetic and ethos was carried internationally in the 1950s by a number of magazines, such as:

> *Neue Grafik / New Graphic Design* (1958-65) and the book *Die neue Graphik / The new graphic art* (1959). *Graphis* had been around since 1944, but only in 1959 published its first article on the new movement, by Emil Ruder (p. 124). Perhaps most significant was *Gestaltungsprobleme des Grafikers / The graphic artist and his design problems*, published in 1961 by Müller-Brockmann. (Kinross 1992, p. 127)

The Swiss approach was not constrained to book design. It was a system that was applied to a range of graphic media including advertising, and thus its social dissemination was particularly appropriate for those championing modernist principles. The Swiss Style had considerable impact on the vernacular visual language as well as on the language of design discourse:

> "Type is becoming simpler every day," wrote Batten, comparing it with what he called the "modernistic" movement of 1929, which often failed to take into account that "advertising is primarily to be read." Similarly, layouts were inclined to be economical. "There was a noticeable lack of fussy ornament, an increasing cleanness and crispness of line. . . . Fewer rules and type ornaments were used than in the first flush of 'Modernism.'" (Heller 1995, n.p.)

[3] Numerous texts have been produced on the subject and Kinross in particular has provided a very useful resource in *Modern Typography: An Essay in Critical History* (1992).

However, although the Swiss style came to be seen as one of the principle arms of modernism and was regarded as supremely functionalist in its rigid grid structures, clean sans serif typefaces and dramatic use of photographs, we must not make the mistake of regarding this style as *the* style of an era. Its emergence and popularity was the popularity of the political perspective of modernism and, as such, was part of a particularly high aesthetic:

> The strong moral content of this vision of abstract art was clearest in Max Bill's book *Form* of 1952: her 'good form' (abstract form) becomes the principle that might save civilization from the onslaughts of North American streamlining and kitsch. Western civilization—or, at least, western capitalism—allowed Bill's good form to develop in only a partial embodiment. This was the moment of the Swiss ascendancy, in which (even as late as 1967), typography could be serenely described as 'an expression of technology, precision and good order'. (Kinross 1992, pp. 132-3)

Although some graphic work was easily categorised as Swiss Style, a general modernistic approach became popular—a style of simplicity, lack of decoration, photographic or typographic emphasis rather than illustration, with the layout of these elements becoming more prominent. Robert Rooney discusses the stylistic distinction between artists/illustrators and designers during the 1950s:

> Rooney: The distinction wasn't always that clear but I think probably with [Paul] Rand, you'd say, 'There's a designer' whereas the others tended to be more illustrators rather than designers. Although Ralston Crawford, who was one of the precisionists—American precisionist painters—did some covers for Fortune magazine, which are rather designie but they're paintings as well.
>
> Interviewer: What does 'designie' mean?
>
> Rooney: 'Designie'! . . . They just look like they've been designed by a designer . . . . I think illustration was the important thing, even for Andy Warhol. It's the illustration rather than the design side of things, whereas Paul Rand . . . they looked like designs.
>
> Interviewer: Would it be [that] the typography was more significant?
>
> Rooney: And the layout . . . So you admired those people as designers but you didn't think of them as artists in the same sense.

It is important to note here that other graphic approaches continued to exist and, although the Swiss style became considered the legitimate 'design' style, and was to affect other graphic treatments, it was by no means universal. A wide range of other approaches to graphic work in packaging, book-covers, advertising, and the like, persisted. What did occur however was that the legitimacy of the more pure modernist style allowed it to appropriate a certain niche market of educated elites—that is, the more style-conscious end of the market. Bogart makes the following note:

> Straight photography also became a crucial design element in the boldly modern, asymmetrical editorial layouts and bleed-edge pages (in which the image extended to the edge of the page) of class magazines *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar*. Such visual devices became increasingly common in advertising aimed at the higher end of the market in the 1950s and 1960s. (Bogart 1995, pp. 199-200)

How and why this occurred can be seen by a return to the notion of social distinction and how it may be conferred. As we have noted, the modernist aesthetic has been contrasted by various commentators from its early days, to the Victorian aesthetic where complexity was privileged over simplicity, at a time when abundance of ornament was affordable only by the very well off. As we noted through Forty's account, the industrial revolution made it possible for the masses to afford more ornate artefacts (printed fabrics and so on). Thus, semiotically, we might regard that any excess of decoration came to signify quite the opposite to what it had done previously. We might say that it ceased to function as a language of social distinction. As the masses purchased more, and became identified increasingly with a preference for the ornate, simplicity came to designate *class*, as the text of an advertisement from the 1920s demonstrates:

> Simplicity, as thinking people know, is a distinguishing mark of quality. During 26 years Pierce-Arrow has been simplified to the point of highest efficiency. In appearance and operation it exemplifies the unaffected charm and richness of classical art blended with superb performance and genuine economy in cost and maintenance. Pierce-Arrow is the chosen car of those who discriminate, who value it for its simple, impressive elegance . . . (qtd. in Craig 1990, p. 25)

This is to a large degree, an arbitrary signification in an area like architecture, or product design. Less is not necessarily more, when it comes to the cost of production. However in publication and advertising, less content is decidedly a deliberate option

for *style* over information (mindful, of course, that lack of content can be, in itself, extremely informative). For example, advertising space has to be paid for whether it contains images or copy or not. Thus the use of white space, that is blank spaces to achieve a particular aesthetic over the use of that space to convey product information and the like, becomes a language of quality and of wealth—a mark of distinction. As Robertson (1994) notes:

> In terms of graphic design, white space has been appropriated along with the Modern aesthetic, to represent the most expensive and desirable class of products being presented by modern consumerism. (p. 62)

The design consultant

As we have seen, the notion of graphic design is made possible by the emergence of modernism. Yet, although art directors tended to be from the wealthier classes, even they had difficulties locating the elitism that permeated modernism in their industry. Advertising simply could not be 'disinterested'. Advertisers have little control over what they choose to promote. Furthermore, notions of good or bad advertising are measured on success in a fickle and varied market place, rather than by any reference to universal elements. Graphic design may never have fully entered design discourse if not for the emergence of an altogether different group of people—the consultant designers.

There are many cases of individuals employed directly by manufacturers or distributors to confer or improve the visual impact of their product or company through graphic work and perhaps the most successful example from the 1950s in Melbourne is Richard Beck.

> Stitt: Dick Beck was one of the gurus in design in Melbourne at the time. He was one of the few practicing graphic designers. There were a couple of others around the place and in Sydney [including] Max Forbes, but Dick Beck had the reputation of being THE graphic designer at that time. He did the poster and the postage stamps for the Melbourne Olympics.

Beck was also born in England and after attending Seven Oaks School, went to the Slade Art School. After deciding to take up design, his parents agreed to send him to the highly respected Blocherer School in Germany. His move to Australia occurred as a result of travelling to New Zealand in 1939 to work on a mural and then finding himself unable to get passage back after the war broke out. Instead he took a ship to Sydney in 1940 and began work there (Beck 2001). In Melbourne Beck set up business as a 'design consultant' for advertising and industry, producing packaging, corporate

image designs, exhibitions and advertisements. Independent consultancy remained the main type of graphic practice outside of advertising agencies throughout the 1950s, but by the 1960s the amount and kind of work available, and the experience individuals had received from advertising agencies, led to a shift towards the setting up of studios of designers which worked on a range of graphic applications for both individual clients and advertising agencies.[4]

To appreciate the relationship between advertising designers and consultancy designers a useful approach is to consider the changes that took place in business practices during the first half of the twentieth century. These changes occurred later in Australia than in nations like the United States yet there are close parallels. Meikle (c1990) gives the following perspective:

> As the depression of the 1930s approached, manufacturers had trouble selling their goods. Encouraged by their advertising agents, businessmen began to hire commercial artists, advertising illustrators, and theatrical designers and to endow them with desirability by improving their appearance. (p. 52)

There is a clear difference between the role of advertising agencies and the role of consultant designers. The advertising agencies worked on the communication of the manufacturers' product or service to their perceived market, through the channels of popular media. They used whatever techniques worked best to attract the desired attention to the product including carnival-like displays, the linking of media personalities with products, radio and television commercials and so on. The consultant designer, on the other hand, worked on the look of the product itself, particularly its packaging and sometimes its point of sale application.

This shift in work practices was concomitant with the stylistic shift that encapsulated the modernist ethic discussed previously. Kinross indicates a direct relation between the European designers (and particularly those of the Swiss typographic school) and the emergence of consultant designers in the USA:

> If the few traditionalist typographers who left Cental Europe in the 1930s went to Britain, the second axiom of the emigration would be that the modernists did leave in significant numbers and that they went to the USA . . . 'Typography' may be too narrow a description for the fields in which these designers had begun to work on the Continent, and this change of practice from typography and illustration into graphic design was encouraged by American conditions. Their progress was, characteristically, from work in advertising and magazine design in the 1930s, to the work of the freelance

[4] In the USA, of course, studios were set up by Raymond Loewy and other designers as early as the 1930s, but these early studios tended to be industrial (product) design companies, which in some cases took on graphic work as well.

> consultant designer after the Second World War. The war years provided the ground for this transition: the switching mechanism by which the American economy was lifted out of depression and into full production, from which position the country was able to reap the riches of the post-war recovery of in the West. (Kinross 1992, p. 110)

Reekie (1993, p. 161) notes changes in terms of the 'branding' of products that occurred in Australia after the 1930s:

> Brand-name product advertisements, rather than those for the big stores, were the new models of progressive marketing. The slow decline of the department store with its predominantly local or state-wide market coincided with the rise of the Australian advertising profession and of nationally-marketed brands . . . Goods were promoted by brand advertising paid for by manufacturers and devised with the assistance of a host of product designers, copywriters, commercial artists, advertising agents, market analysts, newspaper and magazine proprietors, radio networks, and packaging and display experts.

Although most designers here worked for advertising agencies we can see the expansion of both goods and markets saw increased opportunities for designers working for themselves. These were also times where book publishing surged in Australia. Osborne and Lewis (1995) note: 'The 1930s had seen a distinct shift to Australian publishers with Angus and Robertson becoming important' (p. 81), and, although British publishers were still dominant, the war years saw a distinct burst of Australian publishing:

> The number of book titles published in Australia in 1939 was 421. By 1945, boosted by the diversion of skilled labour and materials in the United Kingdom and the United States and by wartime shipping difficulties, the number had grown to 1035. (Osborne & Lewis 1995, p. 81)

Here, commercial artists were able to gain a degree of autonomy from the advertising agencies and although many of the tasks were the same, the professional role of the practitioner began to widen. Those who had previously been employed entirely through advertising agencies, were finding work producing book jackets, in magazine production, in signage and packaging, and finally in television. In the 1950s an important change occurred with the emergence of the supermarket. It is difficult now to appreciate how radically this altered not only ways of shopping, but also a whole range of production and distribution technologies. Max Ripper gives the following insight:

> Ripper: When I was in secondary school, there were no supermarkets. You went to the corner grocer store and you said, 'I want a bottle of tomato sauce'. And the grocer would climb up the ladder and get you 'White Crow'. You didn't get a choice of a range of brands. You got what he had on the shelf . . . I can remember going to the first supermarket, which was Dickens, now Coles. But Dickens in Burke Road, Camberwell, was a funny little shop. You could walk around, pick up things and put them in a basket and they trusted you to pay at the cash register rather than to put things in your pocket. I thought it would never catch on. I thought they're going to run at a loss and it'll be a failure. It's worked out okay but you didn't have to have great graphics to sell there then. Nowadays it's vital to have strong pack graphics that have been researched.

By the 1960s many of those who worked as art directors in ad agencies went on to form independent design consultancies to work almost exclusively for an agency. Alex Stitt who had been an art director for Channel 9's animation studio was one who took this path. He comments here on the company Weatherhead & Stitt:

> Stitt: We operated for some five years or so. It was, I suspect, the first studio of its kind. Bruce and I were partners and designers. We had a staff of two or three or four people supporting us as designers. We were producing animations as well but most of the work, at that time, was for advertising. Our clients were mostly advertising agencies. That led to one or two others setting up in something the same way. One of them was Les Mason, who worked as an Art Director at USP. Les set up his own studio just a year or so after Bruce and I started. Frank Eidlitz had been an Art Director at USP as well and set up as an independent graphic designer. It must have been something in the water at USP. Len Trent, who had also been an Art Director at USP, set up with Colin Uren and they had a studio called Trent Uren. So within the space of just a couple of years of Bruce and I setting up, there were four or five studios in Melbourne. Then Ron Fletcher, who was an expat who had been in Canada for a long time, arrived back in Melbourne and set up a big studio in the American-style, which was called Art & Design. They set up with a fairly hefty staff, a couple of reps who were out on the road gathering the jobs and putting it through the studio and the factory.

Designer Ken Cato discusses this emergence and its early relationship with advertising agencies:

> Cato: We were just designers. In the most simplistic form of approach – if you want a brochure, we can do a brochure. If you wanted a package, we could do a package. It was very unsophisticated and we really had no clue. Worse, we were viewed with enormous suspicion by advertising agencies who thought that when we started going to clients directly, what we were really trying to do was to become an advertising agency through surrogate names. We were viewed with enormous suspicion by some and we were embraced by others. So advertising agencies became clients for us and we worked on the principle that if we simply did the job, there'd be more work. So that's actually what started to happen. We started to get clients. We were very fortunate. We worked with some small clients which, due to the work, became quite high profile, and the work also became high profile in the graphic design profession and in the advertising industry.

Computers

Many histories take a technological determinist approach. Although the twentieth century saw unprecedented changes in technology, and it is tempting to regard this as the driving force of all other changes, it is important to recognise that technological change does not occur outside of social contexts. Indeed, as Raymond Williams (1981) has pointed out, 'technology is always, in a full sense, social. It is necessarily in complex and variable connection with other social relations and institutions' (p. 227). A new invention or process will not successfully pervade work or leisure practices unless there are social factors that allow or necessitate its use. It is well documented that the printing press would not have had its original impact if not for the social circumstances which generated a recognised advantage for mass printed material at the time. An invention's success can also occur not only out of a need that exists, but also in many cases out of its ability to generate a new 'need'; yet this may not be at all the expected outcome. Fischer (1992) has described how, initially, those trying to convince the public to buy telephones had to also create 'uses' for it, and with this aim, they: 'broadcast news, concerts, church services, weather reports, and stores' sales announcements over their lines' (p. 66). Although this thesis has shown a matrix of connections out of which graphic design emerges, without privileging one set of causes, or one type of history over another, it would be remiss to ignore the significant effects wrought by the introduction of the computer. The computer is often regarded as the most significant invention in graphic design history, yet the effect of its deployment in industry is varied. Certainly it facilitated the decline of the compositor

in the printing industry: Alan Batten, the Assistant Secretary of the Printing Division of the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union of Victoria, relates the following:

> Batten: In the mid seventies, the first change to computerised 'setting' started to come in place. This caused massive redundancies in that particular trade, especially in the newspaper area. For example the 'composing room' as it was called, at *The Age* would have had about 300 people employed. It currently has 6.

In this case the technology had a dramatic effect, almost entirely replacing a workforce. It could be seen to effectively remove a large part of the conduit between the originator of a piece of graphic work and the printer of the final piece. The arrival of the computer in the graphic design industry, also acted in some ways to further delineate those workers as an independent group. Previously the designer, either in individual consultancy or working for an advertising agency, did not get the final piece of design ready for printing. Designer Liga Byron gives the following account:

> Byron: In some ways, I think it's fantastic for colour, for layout, for presentation design work. I also think it's fantastic for photographic manipulation because I can do that in-house now. I can get exactly what I want instead of telling somebody else what I want and not getting [it].

However, the correlative of independence is increased responsibility.

> Byron: It's put more strain on the graphic designer inasmuch as they're able to do more things and so they're expected to do more things . . .

Alex Stitt offers the following summation:

> Stitt: I don't have to mark-up the typist's work; I set it myself on the machine. I don't have to send out for bromides to do a scan; I do it myself. So I'm now totally self-contained, which is both good and bad. It's good in that the degree of flexibility you have overdoing the work is there. In the old days, if I'd been rendering some large coloured illustration I might have been working on it for two or three days. There's a tendency not to change it much because you've got such a huge investment just in that piece of board whereas on a computer instead of three days, it probably only takes you half a day because the whole process is quicker. At the end of the day you can save it and then you can change the background to red. So it adds a freedom and a flexibility that

> simply wasn't available before. The final result would look pretty much the same as it would have but I've had a lot of fun getting there . . . .

> Bad in the sense that I'm obliged to understand a lot more technical stuff than before. For instance, just learning Finalcut Pro in order to be able to do the same work that I was doing because there's no outside person to go to get it done. It's getting to the stage now where you have to do all the Photoshop work yourself because there aren't any specialists around. The days of specialist retouchers and specialist everything else are slipping away. I think that's a bad thing in two senses. First, because I'm stuck with doing it myself. Second, because there's no longer pooled information. If there was one retoucher who was doing work for a dozen different organisations, there was feedback. Information in and information out – it was a two-way street. People applying to the retoucher who would find out and tell it to other people and there was a spread of information. The computer sits you in much more of a cell in every sense and it's not as easy to find out how you do things or how they should be done. There's no conduit of information.

Although one might expect that the designer would benefit financially from the new work methods, Max Robinson relates the before and after situation with regard to the economic position of designers:

> Robinson: You know, the whole fee structure was different then . . . You charged fees for things then that you'd absolutely have no way of getting now. I don't quite know why that was. Well, I think I know why it happened. It was computers. It just seems you can do things more quickly on computers and indeed, you can. There's not the degree of hand work any more.

We need to recognise that the introduction of the computer was not a simple case of a technology being so powerful that, alone, it drove the change in work practices. Indeed we can note that many work practices, even stylistically, happened to be well suited for the introduction of the computer. We must recognise that the computer needed to be able to do for the designer, what he or she already did without it. In this the Swiss style of uncluttered pages with geometric forms and photographic images was significant. Brian Sadgrove gives the following insight:

> Sadgrove: I suppose the interesting thing about our own work is that now you can try it out on computers. We didn't have computers . . . it looked like it was done on the computer so we found the transition a non-threatening sort of thing . . . . we could do what we were already doing, which, in hindsight,

> was well-managed and organised and clean and not highly decorative and I suppose we just slipped into using it as a means of production . . . . That was late 1960s.

Thus those studios that preferred the use of Swiss style were advantaged by the incorporation of computer technologies because the transition was easier. At the same time, this helped to propagate the style. The computer and its related software were also instrumental in making available many graphic design practices to a wider population. Many designers have bemoaned the fact that computers allowed for industries to employ untrained staff (secretaries and the like) to produce their graphic work. There is also the perception that this has created massive quantities of poor design. Liga Byron makes the case:

> Byron: Because of desktop publishing and computers . . . there's a lot of really bad design out there. But people don't know the difference, so it's being accepted.

We can see in this quite a different perspective to that of many advertising agencies. Here we have a sense of a design being good or bad not so much because of its success or failure, but on its inherent aesthetic qualities—that is, an aesthetic that educated designers are aware of, but of which lay people and the general public may have no awareness.

AGDA

One final institutional formation of graphic design in Victoria that needs be included in this genealogy is the founding, in 1988, of AGDA, the Australian Graphic Designers Association. In 1987 an article had appeared in *Design World* (No author 1987) that outlined the concerns of a group of professional graphic designers in Melbourne—Mimmo Cozzolino, Wayne Rankin, Richard Henderson and Trevor Flett. They were envisaging the formation of an association for graphic designers. In 1988 a newsletter was sent out to people working in the fields of graphic design, advertising or design education. Its headline read:

> AGDA. Australian Graphic Design Association. Call to action. Here is your chance to be part of history.

Mimmo Cozzolino explains his involvement in the setting up of AGDA:

> Cozzolino: In 1983, there was a very viable Melbourne Art Directors' Club and I got on the committee and I basically worked very hard trying to

> raise money and all sorts of things and just be involved in the whole thing and that was well before the whole AGDA thing . . . my introduction to AGDA was mainly was a guy called Wayne Rankin . . . . He rang a mate of mine, Richard Henderson, of FHA Design, as it was known in those days. Richard rang me and said there's this guy who wants to start some sort of an association. A couple of people with a fairly high profile that might have a bit more pull with designers generally and he said, 'I thought of your name because . . . you know a lot of people in advertising and illustration and so on . . . I could see that something like this would be very, very useful to younger people . . . I basically thought it was a good thing for the industry as a whole to get together and to try and help each other and have some sort of standards that people could refer to. That's how the whole thing kind of started. As a preliminary to get together, then I called up a couple more people and the whole thing just snowballed . . . About the same time, there was a guy called Arthur Leydin who is an Australian designer probably the generation before me, and he'd set up a conference in Mildura . . . we'd already had a few meetings where we had 200-250 people turning up about AGDA. We said to him: 'You can use our mailing list we've built up and it would be fantastic. We could also talk a little bit about AGDA at this thing.' So it was a kind of branch of interest and it all kind-of happened about the same time.

[On whether, prior to the setting up of AGDA, there were organisations supporting a graphic design industry in Melbourne]

> Cozzolino: Besides the Melbourne Art Directors' Club, no, there wasn't. A lot of graphic designers were members of the Melbourne Art Directors' Club.

The venue chosen to gauge interest and appeal for the new organisation was the First Asia/Pacific Design Conference being held in Mildura, in July-August, 1988. It was a phenomenal success with quite unexpected demand for such an organisation. In a sense this might be seen as the final nail in the coffin of the 'commercial artist', as it worked to complete the professionalisation of a role which specified the term 'graphic design' and described the range of practices which that term encompassed. Again, this needs to be recognised not as a gradual evolution but as a reconfiguring of a set of practices, along with a shift in ways of understanding those practices within the wider framework and politics of the new discourse. We must continually recognise that these actions are fundamentally political in nature. We might ask for example, why there occurred the formation of the Australian Graphic Design Association at all,

rather than the simple re-forming of the Australian Commercial and Industrial Artists Association. Arthur Leydin offers the following perspective:

> Leydin: They were suddenly designers. The ACIAA was a union – it was a trade union . . . . Nobody wanted to belong to that and it just faded . . . . Besides, the younger designers never want to be part of an older group.

Similarly we might ask why AGDA was even necessary given that the DIA existed at the time. Most of the answers, of course, are the very things discussed in chapter 4 regarding graphic designers' perceptions of the DIA—that is, that it was mostly product designers, that it propagated an Anglo-centric and somewhat 'old-school' approach and did not feel inclusive. AGDA was directed not only to professionals, but also towards students of graphic design courses, to assist them in entering the industry. Where the DIA was in many ways about regulation—with educational qualifications and professional experience required for membership—AGDA was more directed towards the gathering and assisting of people. Interestingly, a number of the foundation members of AGDA were proudly non-English and/or from working class backgrounds. Trevor Flett makes the following observations of the DIA at that time:

> Flett: It was too generalist. It wasn't catering for . . . wasn't niche-ing into Graphic Design particularly. Graphic Design was a very serious industry and it is still an industry even though there are new categories now spawned from it. So DIA did not satisfy. It wasn't customer focussed. It put some rubber on the road. So that was a moment that probably we'll go back and recognise it as accelerated professionalism for the industry.

There are clearly a number of reasons that the DIA was not seen as the appropriate organising body for graphic designers at this time. To some extent there is a feeling that the DIA's battle had already been won, but little of the rewards was available to those in specifically graphic design practices. AGDA was necessary for the consolidation of these practices, and its successful emergence allowed for a more direct empowering of graphic designers.

Conclusion

In opposition to what many histories have regarded as a simple evolutionary development from commercial art, we have attempted to show the complex nature of the shift of industrial practices, technologies, and cultural and social conditions which led to the emergence of graphic design. We have seen that, although the advertising industry was instrumental in the emergence of graphic design, it was only with the migration of these practices away from advertising that allowed for a shift in their

meaning, which finally allowed them the legitimacy afforded by design discourse. This emergence involved not only a new way of perceiving these practices, but also the coextensive set of power relations that they encompass. The modernist aesthetic could again relate these work practices to notions of inherent skills or talent, over the notion of something which could be learnt and was accessible by anyone. This distinguished them from both those who did not have these inherent abilities or skills, and from commercial artists who were seen as limited to the creation of illustration, but did not have the design skills in the 'laying out' of a range of different components in line with the modernist aesthetic. The institutionalisation of these practices—their technologies, rules and regulations, their hierarchy of authority, their language and structures of legitimisation—is incomplete without an exploration of one of the most powerful forms of institutionalisation. This is the education industry. Arguably one of the reasons AGDA was so successful was that it targeted a considerable number of students who were by that time studying or had recently studied in 'graphic design' courses at RMIT and Swinburne. The emergence of graphic design in educational institutions is the topic of the next chapter.

References

Beck, Barbara 2001, [personal communication], 20th Oct. 2001.

Bogart, Michele H. 1995, *Artists, Advertising and the Borders of Art,* University of Chicago Press, Chicago & London.

Caban, Geoffrey 1983, *A Fine Line: A History of Australian Commercial Art,* Hale & Ironmonger, Marrickville, NSW.

Craig, Robert 1990, 'Ideological Aspects of Publication Design', *Design Issues,* vol. VI, no. 2, pp. 18-27.

Fischer, Claude S. 1992, *America Calling: A Social History of the Telephone to 1940,* University of California Press, Berkeley.

Heller, Steven 1995, 'Commercial Modern: American Design Style 1925-1933', *Print,* vol. 49, no. 5, electronic version, <http://web6.infotrac.galegroup.com/itw/infomark/1/1/1/purl=rc6_EAIM>.

Hewat, Tim & Rankin, Peter 1996, *Clemenger: First Fifty Years 1946-1996,* Clemenger, Melbourne.

Kinross, Robin 1992, *Modern Typography: An Essay in Critical History,* Hyphen Press, London.

Meikle, Jeffrey L. c1990, 'From Celebrity to Anonymity: The Professionalization of American Industrial Design' in *Raymond Loewy: Pioneer of American Industrial Design*, ed. Angela Schönberger, Prestel, Munich, pp. 51-60.

No author 1987, 'Not Before Time', *Design World*, no. 12, pp. 104-5.

Osborne, Graeme and Lewis, Glen 1995, *Communication Traditions in Twentieth Century Australia,* Oxford U.P., Oxford.

Reekie, Gail 1993, *Temptations: Sex, Selling and the Department Store,* Allen & Unwin, St. Leonards, N.S.W.

Robertson, Keith 1994, 'On White Space: When Less is More' in *Looking Closer: Critical Writings on Graphic Design*, eds. William Drenttel, Michael Bierut, Steven Heller & DK Holland, Allworth Press, New York, pp. 61-65.

Sparke, Penny 1986, *An Introduction to Design and Culture in the Twentieth Century,* Allen & Unwin, London.

Williams, Raymond 1981, 'Communications Technologies and Social Institutions' in *Contact: Human Communication*, ed. Raymond Williams, Thames & Hudson, London & New York, pp. 225-238.

9: Graphic design in education

Introduction

In chapter 3, we left our enquiry into the condition and effects of design education in Melbourne in the 1930s when the term 'design' was coming into use as a general category under which a number of practices were being gathered. This indicated a growing use of 'design' as a kind of essence where a range of individual practices were seen not only to contain an element of design, but to ultimately be a kind of physical manifestation of this essence. This also coincided with a decline in the use of the South Kensington system, a rigid and tightly regulated set of principles and practices which kept experience and expression of creativity to very limited forms; and in which design had had an equally limited meaning, referring almost exclusively to a particular tradition of decorative work.

In documenting the numerous shifts that have accompanied, allowed for or necessitated the emergence of design discourse in Australia and internationally, we have concentrated our attention on the changes in professional practices. Although we have considered the effects of and upon both individuals and organisations, we have not yet accounted for the consolidation of design practices into a discourse which has acquired the legitimacy afforded by historical writings, conference proceedings, manifestos and the like. In terms of legitimacy, one of the most significant forms of institutionalised practice is in education. This is because certain designated educational institutions themselves not only consist of a highly regulated system of procedures which is at once hierarchical and to a large degree, independently powerful, but they also have the ability to confer to a large extent legitimacy on those practices and the systems by which they are organised.

This chapter focuses on these educational institutions and the ways in which design discourse has come to be legitimised through them. We must ask how these institutions have constructed design and graphic design. Why have they been constructed in this way? What are the machinations by which this has taken place and what practices have been included or excluded in this particular form of gathering? Most importantly we must ask who benefits and who does not, or who is marginalised by this particular way of constructing the discourse. We must constantly recognise the politics that traverse these institutional constructs. For our perspective on educational discursive formation, we use Foucault's toolkit, but for the repercussions in terms of social class, we will return to Bourdieu. We take up our enquiry with the quite significant shifts that Swinburne Technical College underwent during the 1950s and 60s.

The emergence of graphic design at Swinburne

Swinburne Technical College at Hawthorn altered their course in 1951 from the South Kensington-based Art Training Certificate to a four year diploma course which consisted of a two year general certificate followed by two years to give either a Diploma of Art – Advertising Art, or a Diploma of Art – Illustration (Art of the Book). This indicates the growing significance of the advertising industry. Following this, and after the introduction of television in Australia in 1956 Paterson (1996) reports that staff noticed 'an increasing number of students being employed in television as graphic designers' (p. 4) the result of which saw the Advertising Art course shift to include subjects such as 'still photography, commercial storyboarding, programme introduction, flip cards, and set and costume design' (p. 4). Patterson reports that:

> By the early 1960s the Art School was in transition from a fine arts school to a school of design. Gradually the big painting studios were turned into design studios, the attendant craft activities were phased out and the Art School became dominated by graphics. (p. 3)

Precisely what is meant by 'a school of design' requires some elucidation. In 1960 Bob Francis joined Swinburne after some years working in the advertising industry. He introduced writing and photography to the course. Paterson notes that one effect of the introduction of writing was to shift the emphasis towards ideas rather than practical application of skills. In a sense we might regard this as a shift away from purely technical training to an education in more 'creative' areas. Francis indicates the nature of this shift:

> Francis: I came to a course which was of four years duration which was very broad. It involved mainly Fine Arts subjects: Painting, Figure Drawing, Pictorial Composition, Ceramics, Gold- and Silver-smithing, and a whole range of craft subjects. I had little of this background. I had, at the time, about twelve years in industry and I could only see it from the point of view of its application in industry and as such, I was asked to undertake studies at the upper level of the course because the first two years were, as I said, a bit basic and general. In years three and four they went into specialist areas like Advertising Art and Illustration (Art of the Book). I was given the task of reorganising the Advertising Art course which at that time consisted of, really, Still Life, Illustration of Furniture, Fabrics, and Objects. It was very, very formal and it had no conceptual considerations at all. It was the true craft, I suppose, of Commercial Art that you saw all the time . . . [I had] come from an advertising background which included a lot of writing and

> a lot of image-making and photography, particularly at Holeproof where I' d been working with photographers like Athol Smith, Helmut Newton and Henry Talbot. Photography was very much a strength at Holeproof which was against the grain of most advertising at that time, which was largely illustrative. So photography was being used quite creatively. I had had the writing experience and both these components I could see were obviously completely missing from the course. I could see that to be fully rounded in terms of being effective in industry as it was at that time, when the advertising agencies were starting to emerge in some structural strength, that they would need these skills. So, I introduced them . . . It really was a situation where in advertising you did an illustration and you slipped it under the door and the writer next door put a caption on it. That's the way it was. At this time, we had agencies like Briggs & James, Walker Robertson McGuire, with accounts Volkswagen, Avis, Ogilvy & May (Mather) expounding the philosophy of David Ogilvy where there was really great creative thinking which allowed artists, illustrators and writers to bring together ideas in a very dynamic way.

We can see that Francis brought to Swinburne his experience of the significant changes occurring in industry, particularly with respect to advertising. On whether what Swinburne had previously been doing was more 'commercial art' Francis had this to say:

> Francis**:** Very much so. Very formal. In fact, it was a highly skilled based which is what you'd expect and had to be, with lots of scraper-board illustration, very formal, tight-rendered material. I mean, no one had ever heard, for instance, of a layout, which is extraordinary . . . . [they were preparing people for] a Commercial Art industry that was completely anachronistic, in my opinion . . . . I could just see that industry was crying out for that type of person and I could see that the talents were there, but they weren't being directed to it . . . RMIT, Prahran, Bendigo, Ballarat, Geelong, the regional colleges . . . were all were all examined at a central point, all with common examiners, and I was overwhelmed by what they were doing. It was hugely labour intensive but completely lacking in any conceptual thought. The illustration work was amazing. There were people [photographers, illustrators, and the like], working in apparent freedom at RMIT, who were just extraordinary, for example Harold Freedman and Frank Campbell. I could applaud that sort of ability, but at the same time, I could see how much more interesting and exciting it would be if you used *ideas* to support the high level of technical skills that had been achieved.

Francis here describes the transition between the previous training approach of Swinburne, that is, in commercial art, and the new approach that embraced certain technical skills but placed an emphasis on creative ideas. As in the profession, this approach arrives concomitant with the emphasising of photography as a particular skill, and 'layout' as the general approach. At this point we still see a role where the practitioner creates, through their practical skills (photography as a notable inclusion), components of the final design, but with the emphasis now on layout the role of the practitioner becomes more as a *manager* of the final piece, deciding where the component parts go. This prepares the ground for some to specialise in photography and others to specialise in this managerial role.

It is important to note that this was seen as an attempt not to shift the emphasis of the school away from its traditional obligations as a vocational system, but as a response to changing industrial requirements. The impact of this shift from purely technical skills to intellectual creativity will be explored shortly, but it is useful here to consider our central theme, that is, the emergence of graphic design in terms of a division of a wider discourse of design. Max Ripper offers the following insights:

> Ripper: Swinburne, around about the time I was a student in 1956 sort of era, was realising that things were becoming more complex and they couldn't do everything. They decided that they would phase out, or quickly cease providing Art courses because they used to handle Painting, Printmaking, Jewellery making - all sorts of Art areas, just the same as RMIT. They decided that they couldn't handle everything and they moved into specialising in Graphic Design. It was one of their best moves. In the early days, they had Bob Francis, who . . . knew the industry and he was excellent. All the rest of their staff, were really the old Art staff which they evolved over into the Design staff. But that was okay . . . And with support there, generated a modest film program . . . From modest beginnings grew the high profile from the television school (which later was transferred to the Victorian College of the Arts). Now, in their new Design program - that would be Graphic Design - they had people like Ian McNeilage, a good administrator, a quality printmaker who understood, was good with graphic images, not necessarily a designer in the sense that we'd use it today, but he could evolve over and do a good job. And what happened was that their Drawing teachers became Illustration teachers and all through they did an okay job but Bob Francis, at the last year of the course, was able to build on these 'Arty' type foundations and turn the students into quality Design graduates. And every time someone left, they replaced them with a designer, and they became much stronger.

> They, also being a Council place, were not linked to the Education Department but able to do a logical way of appointing staff. For instance, they would have someone take long service leave. They'd appoint a casual person. If the person worked out, they'd offer them a contract. If the contract worked out, they'd offer them permanency. So they rarely, if ever, made a mistake when appointing staff because they did a type of preparatory relationship.
>
> Their courses were becoming better and better. . . . Somewhere [around] 1964-65 . . . the ACIAA - the Australian Commercial and Industrial Artists Association - had a member, Derek Watson . . . Derek wrote a book for the ACIAA [*Graphic Design Education in Australia*]. It was only a very small book . . . . major repercussions! I remember the Director at Prahran . . . sent me as a messenger boy down to get a copy of that document and it is the most significant document for its flimsy minuscule weight because it compared Ulm Institute and Swinburne and that gave legitimacy to their program and . . . . from then on, after that little book, Swinburne was just doubly good to anywhere else because it attracted excellent students and they were astute enough at Swinburne to select them into the course. And it happened quite quickly.
>
> [The book] was critical of Swinburne, but it was more scathing of everyone else. If I remember correctly, it said, 'Ulm was very good. Swinburne isn't in that league but is so much better than anywhere else in Melbourne - or Australia - that you've got to compliment them on being as good as they are. But this is what they should be aiming at' . . . it became much more a Design course all the time. It evolved quite quickly, but it wasn't an era of contract people. It was an era of permanency and as people retired, they were replaced with a designer.

There is some disagreement over the impact of Watson's text. Whilst Ripper sees it as having a profound effect on the course, Francis suggests there was negligible reaction to the book. Whatever the immediate reaction, however, it would appear that much of what Watson recommended can be seen in the pedagogical approach of Swinburne. I suggest that Watson's text provides, if not a direct cause of a significant change in graphic design education in Australia, the location where such a shift can be seen to occur. In many ways this small book is quite dramatically successful in gathering a specific set of practices, combining them with other practices with which they had not been connected previously, and out of this combination imbuing a previously unavailable legitimacy to the new unity. The text positioned this unity as an important component of design discourse and identified it as *graphic design,* taking much of

its approach from the Hochschule für Gestaltung at Ulm. It is clearly important to spend a little time indicating precisely the way that Watson conceived graphic design, but first it is worth regarding The Education of Industrial Designers Seminar (ICSID 1965), which was held in March 1964, the year prior to the publishing of Watson's text. The Chairperson of this conference was the highly respected Professor of Industrial Design, Misha Black from the Royal College of Art in London and, of importance, there was also present Tomas Maldonado, Vice-Director of the Hochschule für Gestaltung in Ulm. Maldonado made perhaps the most significant contribution to the seminar in terms of dominating conversation, making significant, constructive suggestions and referring a great deal to the Ulm approach[1].

The purpose of the seminar was: to allow exchange of information between experts in industrial design education; to establish basic principles for education in industrial design; to evaluate whether giving specific advice to different schools is possible; to consider the future role of industrial designers; to consider how public perception of industrial design can be broadened; to consider the relationship between I.D. educational institutions and industry organisations.

The definition of industrial design was given as follows:

> Industrial design is a creative activity whose aim is to determine the formal qualities of objects produced by industry. These formal qualities include the external features but are principally those structural and functional relationships which convert a system *to a coherent unity both from the point of view of the producer and the user.* [my italics]

Of interest is the time to be allocated to the parts of the proposed industrial design course:

1. Theory 20%
2. Practicalities, including technical studies and social sciences 30%
3. Design projects 50%

Thus we can regard the connecting of design to its legitimising theory, as indeed we saw 500 years earlier with the application of Leonardo's approach in Vasari's academy. Further legitimacy is offered by the incorporation of General studies to consist of 10-15% of the total five-year course, and included the following:

[1] I cannot be certain that Watson took part in, or even knew of, this conference, but as a Member of the Society of Industrial Artists in London, he would have been familiar with the topics under consideration there.

History of art and science
Music
Literature
Architecture
Philosophy
Psychology
Anthropology
Political science
Philosophy of science

There was some disagreement about how close art schools should be to industrial design from the notion that 'art schools are a bad environment' (Radic qtd. in ICSID 1965, n.p.), to the belief that 'students . . . must not be cut off from fine art and humanities' (Black qtd. in ICSID 1965, n.p.); however the diversity of interests with which industrial design was seen to connect was agreed upon. We can note the continued expansion of this range through a *Bibliography on Design* (1969) published by the same organisation, which shows from 1965 to 1969 an additional 250 entries, including the following:

> *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*; Jung's *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious;* Etienne's *Painting and Reality;* Hauser's *Social History of Art;* Kepes' *Graphic Form;* Kemeny's *Introduction to Finite Mathematics*; Kornhauser's *The Politics of Mass Society*; Nilsen's *The Cinema as a Graphic Art;* Nervell's *Computers and Thought;* Shrager's *Elementary Metallurgy & Metallography;* Ullmann's *Semantics.*

Watson's Graphic Design Education in Australia

Swinburne's course at the time of Watson's study in 1964, consisted of the following:

> A 2 year Certificate, (2nd year specialised) then the option of a further . . .
> 2 year diploma in Advertising Art, Illustration, Painting or Pottery.

By comparison, the Hochschule für Gestaltung in Ulm offered:

1 year foundation, then 3 years specialised course in either . . .

- Industrial Design Department
- Building Department
- Visual Communication Department, or
- Information Department (writing for press, television, broadcasting, and film)

Watson (1965) identified two major flaws in Swinburne's approach—a lack of specific skills directed towards industrial specialisation, and a lack of broad theoretical subjects, that is, an over-emphasis on craft-based subjects. Neither of these flaws was present at Ulm. Watson states: 'History, Perspective, in part Typography, and Craft, are the only subjects at Swinburne that may be concrete. The rest depend on perceptual/emotional judgements.' In contrast to this, Ulm involved the study of 'concrete' subjects like mathematics, physics and chemistry. Watson saw this 'balanced intellectual education' as better preparation for the business world, and quotes Fröshaug who attempts to have students learn 'a systematic approach—rather than merely to work intuitively; thus to acquire some knowledge of method' (p. 4). Watson estimated that 70% of Swinburne's subjects are 'clearly directed at picture-making' (p. 4), and noted a 'predominant concern with manipulative craft', which, he suggested, 'owes its inheritance to the old academic art schools, and . . . still claims adamant supporters' (p. 5). He postulates the reason for this is that it gives teachers concrete historical 'terms of reference'. He suggests that Ulm was able to provide their *own* material to work from. A second problem with teachers of the predominantly manipulative crafts is that it was required that prospective students could draw well, thereby excluding those who perhaps cannot, but are otherwise strong in 'discernment and intelligence' (p. 5). Watson clearly positions design here as a predominantly intellectual rather than craft-based discipline.

Watson makes the clear distinction between graphic design, commercial art and applied art. He suggests that although 'in Australia the type of education at Swinburne is the only one available for intending graphic designers' they indicate a lack of understanding of the responsibility of the graphic designer, suggesting their curriculum is based on tasks performed in the past by the 'layout man' or 'commercial artist'[2] (1965, p. 1). He also states: 'There are now countless young Australians struggling with tasks of applied art that are properly graphic design issues' (p. 4). Instead, Watson positions the designer as a specialist who shares the status of other specialists and indeed 'should be able to correlate many factors and the work of specialists in other disciplines' (p. 9). He notes that this is partly a problem of the profession itself whereby few Australian industries gave designers executive status, as opposed to overseas where 'progressive companies' frequently did. He relates the discipline to other professions and simultaneously distances it from fine arts discourse, as can be seen in the following statement:

> The impulse of the true designer is not simply to satisfy his own aesthetic taste, but to communicate. His constant problem is to find an imagery that will satisfy the public. He must be able to adapt the ingeniousness of his design to suit a particular audience. His own experience of life is often too

[2] Watson suggests that Swinburne's curriculum is 'lamentable', that RMIT's course is worse and East Sydney Technical College seems to fare no better (p. 7).

> limiting for his purpose. Consequently, he requires guidance to evaluate the standards of lives remote from his own. The psychologist and sociologist are able to provide the information which would prevent him from making a subjective or conventional decision when to do so would be wrong. (Watson 1965, pp. 11-12)

Importantly, Watson positions graphic design as the area where a number of modern technologies should rightly be taught alongside traditionally legitimated and legitimising subjects, thereby not only widening its discursive frame, but also signifying a shift of power both inside and outside the educational institution. We can see this in the problems he found with Swinburne's curriculum: photography and television are 'hardly touched', while sociology, perception theory, semiotics, typology, theory of science, mathematics, chemistry are simply 'not taught' (p. 7).

Watson also identified that: 'At present advertising is the principal outlet for graphic designers' (p. 9) but was quick to point out that *design* was of greater significance—that, at Swinburne 'the concentration on advertising seems to inhibit an understanding of design' (p. 13). Although Watson does not specifically define design, he presents as well as graphic design, the following categories of the discourse: typographic design, industrial (product) design, interior, furniture, and textile design.

Whatever the effect of Watson's book, by 1974 Swinburne was able to offer Australia's first Bachelor of Arts Degree in Graphic Design. This marks the first point in Australia of an education in graphic design emerging as a major designated area of study distinguished from the traditional studies in graphic arts, and afforded a legitimacy previously reserved for universities. It is at this point that the philosophy and historical lineage of design (as exemplified, for example, by the Ulm Institute) were to be established as the way of understanding certain current industrial practices. The role of educational institutions is most powerful in its 'gathering' of various practices into a coherent discipline. Decisions are made based on factors such as budgetary constraints, availability of suitable staff, and individual perceptions about which things are worthy of study and which are not, which practices are becoming more important in industry and which practices are dying out, and importantly, which areas are historically connected and thus rightfully owned by the emergent discourse and which have a tenuous connection or are too firmly entrenched in other discourses. Certain other institutions were to follow the lead of Swinburne including RMIT (to be discussed shortly) and it was in the eventual bestowing upon these institutions of University status that the final legitimacy of 'graphic design' was achieved and it was differentiated from the field of graphic arts and its connections to trades occupations. This newfound status cemented the importance of intellectual abilities alongside those

skills of the graphic arts as a new way of regarding the artefact through the modernist model of understanding *function*. Here again we are reminded of Watson's emphasis on 'satisfying the public' rather than referring to any inherent aesthetic appreciation. Max Ripper suggests how a relationship of aesthetics and function—the modernist tenets of industrial design—arrived at graphic design courses:

> Ripper: I like it the way I heard it from the industrial designers when they award quality design. It's got to look good and it's got to function. If it just looks good, it's not good design. If it just functions, it's not 'good' design. No one ever said anything like that during our course . . . in fact . . . much of what I did when I developed the course at Prahran, and at Preston, was a criticism of what I'd got in my own course.

What we see occurring here is not simply the inculcation of specific industrial practices in educational institutions, but the concomitant establishing of a quite new philosophical basis through which these practices were to be understood. Far from notions of applying art to industrial products—a process that had been taught previously as a technical skill—a new emphasis was placed on a direct and inseparable relationship between function and form.

Graphic design at RMIT

Although RMIT took some considerable time to adjust its course structure towards the newly emergent discourse, when it finally did so, it embraced the change with a vengeance. After the 1992 merger with Phillip Institute of Technology, RMIT was given university status (Kirby 1997). Prior to this RMIT had in their Arts Faculty a Department of Design that offered Industrial Design and Visual Communication.[3] In 1992 Visual Communication was a wide course of study containing the following subjects:

Graphic Design
Illustration, Photography
Methods of Production
2D & 3D Design
History of Graphic Design
Marketing Principles
Marketing Communications
Finished Art & Typography
Packaging Design
Design Management
Art Direction.

[3] This had changed its title briefly to Graphic Design/Visual Communication in 1990 but by 1991 had resumed the title Visual Communication.

In the meantime the Bundoora campus had a course in graphic design that had not quite yet broken the shackles of the fine arts. 1993 saw the first preparations for the merging of this course into a new structure. The Faculty at RMIT became the Faculty of Art and Design. At the city campus, Visual Communication became a course almost entirely directed towards advertising, with a name change of the award to Bachelor of Arts: Art Direction. Its course subjects changed radically to the following:

Communication & Strategy
Art Direction & Copywriting
Production
History of Art
Music as Mood and Expression
Contemporary Design Culture
Elective Specialisation

Whilst at the Bundoora campus of RMIT, out of the Department of Design, was offered a Bachelor of Arts: Graphic Design, which contained the following subjects in the first 3 semesters:

Basic Design
Drawing/Illustration
Image Concept Communication
Design History & Theory
Visual Communicaton
Computer Aided Design & Illustration

The final three semesters offered the following:

Graphic Design Major 1
Graphic Design Major 2
Graphic Design Major 3
Design Minor 1
Design Theory
Graphic Design Major 4
Graphic Design Major 5
Graphic Design Major 6
Design Minor 2
Design Theory
Graphic Design Major 7
Graphic Design Major 8
Graphic Design Major 9
Design Minor 3
Design Theory

The emphasis here is clear. Graphic Design is regarded as a clear and significant subject area, with Design as the overarching Department and Design Theory as the theoretical and historical context for graphic design. By 1994 the merger was complete with the graphic design course moving from Bundoora to the city campus. At this point the structure within the Faculty of Art and Design contained (among others) the following areas:

Department of Design
Bachelor of Arts
Field: Design (Graphic Design)

The previous units from the first three semesters were now designated, in semesters 1 & 2:

Design History & Theory A & B
Design Major A, B, C & D
Drawing / Illustration A & B
Image Concept & Communication A & B

Whilst in 3rd semester they were further simplified to:

Design Major E, F & G
Design Minor 1
Design Theory

The final three semesters remained similar to the previous year with all units titled either as Graphic Design Majors, Design Minors, or Design Theory.

Meanwhile Visual Communication became the Department of Visual Communication with Bachelor of Arts Degrees offered in the Fields of Photography, Media Arts and Advertising (Creative). The subjects offered in the latter course were the same as had been offered in the previous year with the addition of:

Concept Development
Visual Language
Production & Post Production
Film: An Introduction
Client Management

The subject 'Contemporary Design Culture' was given the new title 'Contemporary Culture and Society' and 'Design' no longer existed in the nomenclature of Visual Communication subjects, whilst in the Design Department, the titles 'design' and 'graphic design' were startling in their dominance. Clearly this occurred so that the two areas could be politically distinguished from each other after the merger, when sensitivity to repetition of programs was at a peak. However the effect was that the now 'university' students of Graphic Design could have no doubt as to the profession for which they were intended and about its position within the wider discourse of Design.

As has been noted the emergence of design required a marking of the boundaries of the discourse and one of the most important of these was the demarcation between art and graphic design, not merely as a disinterested philosophical point but as a formal pronouncement on who may speak in design. It is significant that Swinburne's teachers were replaced by designers. This is one part of the marking out of one discourse from another and the process is a difficult and complex one. Max Ripper gives further insight into this situation with regard to the situation at RMIT:

> Ripper: Well, a lot of people here would feel a close relationship [between art and design] but I've got a feeling that's because of their background . . . and there's a lot of it in the Senior Secondary too, because when you've finished your course, designers go off and they get a job and they get paid fairly well. Artists finish and did you know, we did a survey. Some Art graduates did not know that they couldn't get a job at the end of their course . . . So that's why you have a number that go into teaching, that go on and get a position. That's why at RMIT, in the TAFE sector that I was very critical of, they had a preponderance of artists.

Ripper also offers some insight on why the design area historically seemed less powerful than the arts area, given that the government was placing more emphasis on design at the time:

> Ripper: There was too much autonomy and the educators of the day were dominated by artists, the proliferation of artists who reluctantly had to teach. They definitely saw teaching as something that wasn't their first choice. They wanted to be an artist. They saw the Education Department as a patron and they would do whatever teaching they had to do. They did not fill out their tax form as educator, they filled it out as artist, in my opinion.

It is tempting from our current position to regard design as an object or practice, prior to its discursive emergence, and thus to see the preference for designers to teach the subject, as obvious. What has to be remembered is that design was in the very process of emerging and the rules about who could and who could not speak about it were also being fought over. It is important to observe these phenomena not in terms of the 'correct answer' but in terms of power shifts to a given result, which in itself is never final, but constantly altering as conditions change. In terms of what makes a good educator, this is an altogether different matter.

The politics of whether art teachers have a place in design education has surfaced a number of times over the past thirty years, particularly since small colleges have been absorbed into larger institutions. Ashwin makes the comment in 1978 that changing conditions demand a concurrent questioning of the place of art history in design studies:

> The establishment of new alliances and the withering of old bonds between design practice and fine art practice has led to a corresponding and understandable questioning of the value of the history of the fine arts to design students. The disciplines of design practice have in recent years acquired a new confidence and autonomy; a natural corollary is that they should demand an independent account of their origins and history. (1978, p. 99)

Thus even in the area of history and theory, there are arguments being made against the employment of traditional art history teachers—arguments that proffer a particular way of regarding what design is:

> It is claimed a balanced programme of study of the fine arts automatically provides the student with the background knowledge and the intellectual skills necessary for the intelligent study of artefacts and design. There is reason to doubt the truth of this assumption: the study of design often requires an economic, technological or sociological mode of analysis which plays little or no part in conventional courses in the history of art. (p. 99)

This tends to refer more to industrial or product design, and the distinction between graphic design and fine art may be more difficult to sustain, although Ashwin is careful to include in his argument 'the type-face from which Rembrandt read' as one of the legitimate design artefacts which 'have normally only be recognised as attaining significance when they impinge . . . upon the style, technique or iconography of painting' (p. 99).

We must place this in the context of wider arguments already mentioned of the perceived role of the arts and the effect on this role of a particular way of seeing mass culture. Bogart's text *Advertising, Artists and the Borders of Art* (1995) indicates how, during the twentieth century, 'the terrain of art practice expanded and stratified, but the ideological borders of fine art narrowed and rigidified' (p. 4). We have seen how at one time, artists turned their hand to a range of different practices, but with the emergence of mass culture, the fine arts community began to place greater emphasis on the fine arts as a demarcation point from mass culture. Even as late as 1974 Becker posits that:

> Art is the home of individuality and creativity, the arena of human activity in which people of great genius create extraordinary works of great beauty and originality expressing a unique ability in such a way as to provoke in an audience memorable emotional experiences. (qtd. in Sanders & Lyon 1976, p. 44)

Whilst this description seems ignorant of the political effects of art discourse, even Sanders & Lyon (1976), who raise the notion of a 'new artist' who attacks such approaches as outmoded and politically conservative, suggest their 'new artist' approach 'covers both the "serious" artist for whom art is a calling and the "commercial" artist who views art more instrumentally—i.e., primarily as a tool to achieve monetary and status rewards' (p. 45). Not only is the linguistic opposition of 'commercial artist' to 'serious artist' already problematic, but almost none of the concerns expressed in the rest of the text have any relation to a commercial artist. What we have instead are the narrow and rigid borders of fine art which Bogart identifies, and a powerful representation of the degree to which those borders are not only ideological borders, but how, even in attempting to breach them, their covert nature only makes them more effective. In terms of hegemony, Gramsci couldn't have given a more concrete example.

Current relationship between art and design in education

A recent research project provides a useful epilogue to the marking out of design discourse territory with respect to the subjects encompassed and the role of fine arts and fine arts teachers. In *Opening Pandora's Box*[4] (Connellan 2002 (unpub.)) the author researched the approaches twelve universities took in their history and theory components of design education. The results indicate that design history is a well-established area in itself and art history features little in the components of the courses. Instead far greater attention is paid to areas like 'visual identity', 'design

[4] As an unpublished work during the writing of this thesis, page numbers may not be accurate.

and culture' (p. 16), indicating the influence of communication and cultural studies disciplines and the theoretical arguments which have emerged out of notions of postmodernism, such as consumer culture, and feminist critiques in design (p. 18). Areas like semiotics and mythology also feature as new domains for design theory (pp. 34-5) as do studies that emphasise local design history (p. 36). Michael Dickinson from The University of Newcastle notes: '...the courses have been written for design students specifically not adapted from or related to art history' (Dickinson qtd. in Connellan 2002 (unpub.), p. 36). Both the University of Ballarat and University of Wollongong have substantial fine art history leanings, but Ballarat indicates difficulties through staffing constraints which do not '... permit the luxury of separate tailored units for Graphic Design students' (co-ordinator, Art History/Theory qtd. in Connellan 2002 (unpub.), p. 37) and Wollongong suggests their program is under review making the comment that in first year 'the subject had previously lent mainly towards the visual arts, a cause for some dissatisfaction amongst design students' (Sub-Dean, Faculty of Creative Arts qtd. in Connellan 2002 (unpub.), p. 38). It should be further noted that these courses tend to be courses for visual arts and design combined.

As part of the research for *Opening Pandora's Box* a conference was held with panel discussions from which Connellan derived the following conclusion:

> It was eminently clear that the views of lecturers in the history and theory of design and those exclusively involved in industry and the studio practice of design, have different and even opposing views at times. Interestingly though, the tensions between industry and academia seemed to be less than those apparent between particular notions of art and design within the academy. However, as one delegate noted, art history paved the way for design history and theory, and art history has existed and grown over many centuries in the older universities. Could it therefore be a trifle ungrateful to dismiss the path and work that provided the inheritance? (p. 165)

It is interesting to note here how philosophical enquiry is reduced in the final analysis to appeals to tradition, fairness and, of particular note, a reference to 'inheritance'. Although graphic design educators tended to reject fine art history in favour of a specifically graphic design history with its foundation in the emergence of design and the changes which took place from the industrial revolution on, we can see that the social distinction afforded by fine art discourse was not removed from the graphic design education, but instead, became interwoven with this new theoretical and historical lineage.

Not only have graphic design histories neglected what some have considered the important role of advertising agencies, but graphic design courses in universities have tended to ignore the fact that many graphic designers worked in these agencies, and instead, have promoted a way of knowing graphic design as an aesthetic practice built on the high ideals of modernism. In his exploration of graphic design and social class, Keith Robertson (2001) reaches the following conclusions:

> Graphic design has largely been treated as a history of styles and movements related to the developments in fine art . . . Most of Graphic Design History has been tied up with the history of Modernism in the Twentieth Century, so much so that the economic has been largely neglected in Graphic Design Theory despite the fact that Graphic Design really only emerged as a popular title for the activity in the 1970s. Prior to that it was known as Commercial Art. The re-classification is indicative of the academic takeover of a field that was, before the 70's more openly and blatantly commercial. Simultaneously graphic design education developed as exclusive training grounds for fine designers in much the same way that art schools exist to train and reproduce fine artists. (p. 208)

> Graphic Designers . . . [miss] the main connotation of their design—that it is elite and that in so being is branding most of the design consumed in modern mass societies as inferior and bad. Not only do most university trained designers find the mass-market style repulsive, they mostly choose to ignore its existence. In a sense, to them it is not graphic design. (p. 208)

One of the factors that allowed for such an approach to emerge was the dominance of fine art teachers in the teaching of graphic design history. Their ways of understanding history, instilled in their own schooling, tended not only to emphasise the role of fine art, but also utilise a pedagogical methodology in which key practitioners, themes and movements, iconic artefacts and a general heroising of the discourse were maintained. Although some of the information was different to that of a traditional arts history, the *kinds* of historical information that came to the surface, were precisely those kinds which supported a traditional arts methodology. An academically pure apotheosis of modernism, distanced from advertising, and legitimised by its connection to fine art discourse—a distinguished and distinguishing modernism was thus constructed.

The politics of education

It is one thing to consider the interior workings of discursive formation but it is equally important to consider the wider framework of this emergence and the relationship between the emergent discourse and its context, particularly with regard to the effects of power. Bourdieu provides an approach to educational institutions which adheres to the basic tenets of Marxist philosophy, that is, an economically driven social inequality, but which presents a less deterministic model. Bourdieu posits that education plays a vital role in the reproduction of the relations of power in society. A key feature of his critique is the notion of habitus, in which it is proposed that young people are instilled with a system of dispositions that produce both appropriate perceptions and behaviour. In Bourdieu *pedagogic action* is a form of symbolic violence carried out by a range of actors in society including 'the system of agents explicitly mandated for this purpose by an institution'—that is, including institutionalised education—which imposes a 'cultural arbitrary by an arbitrary power' (Bourdieu 1977, p. 5). The following discussion indicates the continuing pertinence of some of the concerns of Marxism for without a recognition of the social power that educational institutions wield, any genealogy runs the risk of becoming a sifting through of the topsoil whilst the underlying caverns and constructions go untouched. Let me repeat what I have said at the outset—that we must be careful not to think of class as an actor. The following discussion should not be regarded as describing a *battle* of the classes, but as the effects of institutional histories by which some classes are privileged and others disadvantaged. The emergence of graphic design as a profession requiring a university education has been regarded in this thesis as the reconstitution of a range of practices, many of which were previously designated trade practices. As we have seen, the training for a number of these practices was at one time accommodated in the guild or apprenticeship system, and later came to be a part of the TAFE system. The emergence of graphic design saw a confluence of these practices with theoretical and historical knowledges, and also a range of well established scientific or humanities subjects. As we have noted, the courses at Swinburne and RMIT incorporated an increasingly greater emphasis on the thinking and communicative aspects of the discipline and a de-emphasising of what Watson has called 'the manipulative craft'. Concurrent with the emergence of graphic design has been the relegation to the trades of those skills which fall outside the discursive boundaries of design—that is, those which cannot be, or simply *are* not, seen as eligible components of the broader discourse of design—those subjects designated by their absence of historical and theoretical underpinnings. I say these subjects have been 'relegated' rather than 'left to' the trades, for although many of them resided previously in that area, the emergence of design discourse and its incorporation and reconstitution of certain practices, concurrently shifts the meaning and status of those practices not included as the other of design discourse.

If we return briefly to the work practices in the adverting agency, we can note the social differences not only between the art director and the designer, but also between designer and the trade area of finished artist. After receiving the brief from the art director, the designer would then take the graphic components (illustrations or photographs) and combine them with the text, adding any additional elements required to construct a unified whole, which would then be handed on to a finished artist who would convert the work into a format that the printer could use.

Max Ripper describes the difference between designers and finished artists:

> Ripper: A designer normally would work from a typed-up brief or a verbal brief. For instance, it could happen as when I did a packet for hay fever tablets where they'd explain the problem and be aware that it had to sell out of chemists and so on. You would design the graphics to suit . . . the brochure I did for Astor that I mentioned before . . . much of it was using illustrations that had been previously used in individual advertisements but I designed them to make a coherent booklet that would promote all their range of products. When that was approved, I didn't do the production of them . . . An excellent Dutchman prepared the art work ready for camera so he was the finished artist. Put it all down so that it could be put onto film and then onto the printing plates . . . . Designers tended to get paid more. What seemed common was a business practice [where] the finished artist actually only worried about the production and didn't have to spend thinking time, or meeting client time, or negotiating time, and it seemed to be a tendency of younger people coming into the business, [becoming designers and] being paid a reasonable wage for developing ideas and doing roughs. Thinking together to come up with an idea you could do a vision of it and once that was approved, it would go to the finished artist to turn it into ready for production. And the finished artists were often older people who worked nine to five more so and were getting locked into superannuation and things like that, that meant their remuneration didn't increase so well. In fact, to increase one's wage or income, you really had to change jobs.

We can note here a clear hierarchy of power and Ripper's account gives some indication of how this hierarchy maintained social or class hierarchies, where education related to 'thinking', client liaising, visualisation, and the like, are privileged over experience. Ripper observes the experience of the younger people coming out of colleges and into the company, who worked more on creative ideas, as opposed to the experiences of the finished artists whose background was one of practical experience:

> Ripper: They [the young people coming in] tended to end up more like Art Directors. We had an enormous number of English and Dutch finished artists. They had excellent courses back home. In fact, the Dutchman that used to work next to me . . . they'd come from a war background. He used to do forgeries and things like that during the war, and when he got to Australia, he had difficulty getting work. So he worked initially in an engravers in Tasmania, and that meant that when he did his finished art work later, he did a first-class job because he thoroughly understood the production side of what he was doing his art work for. But the English also provided excellent courses. In Australia, we were more superficial on that side, and worked more with ideas.

We might ask here the relation between an emphasis in education in 'ideas' and better paying jobs once in the industry.

> Ripper: I really haven't got a good answer to that! It really was a phenomena [of] younger people—it was mainly [in] advertising. There was a lot more pressure on the creative staff and there was a lot more movement there. I really haven't got a good answer [as to] why they should get more. But I know I did much better than the finished artists yet they had a lot more skills and they turned work into something that could be applied. There wasn't animosity between the two groups. They related well. The animosity was more between the designers and the printers as you might get a gulf between architects and builders. I think the parallel would be to say that the designers were like architects. The draftsmen matched the finished artists, and the printers matched the builders.

In chapter 7 we noted that Art Directors in the earlier years at least tended to be from a quite privileged social class. We also noted the attempts of Beatrice Warde to speak to the printers in Western Australia. This class difference is also apparent in Australia and Max Ripper indicates the class difference between the Art Directors' Club and the Imprint Society, who Beatrice Warde spoke to in Melbourne.

> Ripper: I used to be a member of the Art Directors' Club, and the Imprint Society. They were poles apart. The Art Directors' Club used to be very active, used to meet once a month over a lunch at 9 Darling Street - year in, year out. They would have eminent speakers . . . quality speakers, quality venue. It was very good but they were a little bit more like—you see it at Oscar performances—'Darling, where have you been?' . . . and all that

> performance. By contrast, you would go to the Imprint Society that met every month at the Duke of Wellington Hotel, upstairs. Quite a nice sized organization. You get this really heavy-handed Australian meal, quite a contrast to Number 9 Darling Street . . . You'd always get a big chunk of steak, a bundle of chips and frozen peas and carrots which I just dreaded soaking in that water. Anyway, their speakers were good. The people . . . were salt-of-the-earth people. So sincere by comparison to the Art Directors who were more flamboyant. And I can recall one of the speakers came and said, 'Well, you know, time is money and with computers now we just set things and if a widow turns up on a column, well, bad luck! These members are falling apart because if they'd got a widow[5], they'd be working back five lines to try and get rid of this daggy bit of type. New generation. New technology. In fact, you should be able to do something about it. They said, 'Oh no! We don't stop for that! We just keep going.' So these people were the old, traditional, slow and meticulous in getting things just right. Well, they fell by the wayside, too. But they were a 'love of the book' people. Excellent integrity . . . . much more on the production of books and it was nearly all publication. They were involved in the love of doing a beautiful book and they worried about quality typography. They would have someone from Monotype speak to them [Beatrice Warde] . . . . I went to one of her sessions. She had her little 12-point type with the whole of the Lord's Prayer on it.

The effect of the university system

The university system confers much more than the simple addition of historical and theoretical adjuncts to otherwise craft-based subjects. As well as supporting a whole new way of thinking about the subjects, it promotes a whole different kind of person for whom the subject is available. Once the emphasis becomes one of certain kinds of intellectual abilities and aesthetic sensibilities—those considered appropriate and legitimate in the university system—those people with opportunities and disposition towards this system tend to be favoured. Bourdieu notes that no appraisal of the education system [and we might say, *any* education system] can be successful unless its role in the reproduction of power relations is considered (Bourdieu & Passeron 1977, pp. 179-186).

Universities take their students almost wholly from those who have successfully completed year 12, and research has shown that a student's chance of reaching Year 12 is directly related to their socio-economic status (Welsh 1997, p. 207)[6]. Furthermore the type of school a student attends correlates directly with their retentivity, with

[5] A widow is the final word or line of type from a paragraph appearing at the top of the next column or page. Leaving it there is considered very poor typography.
[6] Findings originally published in Moore, W. 1973, *Loco Parentis* and cited in Edgar 1981, *Social Class Differences and the Structure of Education,* p. 215.

students from government schools having less than one third the chance of survival than their counterparts in non-Catholic non-government schools (Welsh 1997, p. 208)[7]. King and Young suggest that: 'One of the roles of the elite independent schools in Australia has been to perpetuate a privileged class' (1986, p. 105) and report that students from elite Catholic and non-Catholic private schools 'are found in disproportionate numbers in the most prestigious faculties in universities . . . ' (p. 105).

Hyde regards the 'role of universities as an agent of bourgeois hegemony in Australia' and contends that *two* institutional systems emerged to maintain this hegemony—the universities, which in his terms 'remained an elitist and essentially closed system to the majority of Australians' (qtd. in Meek 1990, p. 197) and their counterpart, the technical colleges:

> In terms of bourgeois hegemony, the universities drew their participants from the upper professional classes and provided them with the ideological justification to be future managers of Australian society. The technical colleges also served a hegemonic function, but in a different way. They instilled in their students that part of the bourgeois ideology that led them to accept the authority of the professional and managerial elites that would emerge from the universities. (Meek 1990, p. 197)

If we move from this general assessment of the role of universities and focus on Swinburne's new design course, we can note Patterson's (1996) assessment that:

> The decision taken at the School to concentrate on two specialised areas—advertising design and film and television [and, as we have noted, a basis of education in ideas rather than technical training]—was made in response to the changing needs of the film and television and advertising industries. It appeared to be a logical development in a college of technology whose economic rationale was that its graduates should be able to find work in industry. (p. 8)

However the issue is clearly a contentious one and Patterson makes the further comment:

> Although employment of its graduates had never been the *raison d'être* of the Swinburne Art School, the staff were conscious of an obligation to their students to equip them for industry, and of the necessity of convincing the Swinburne administration that the new course had a practical application. (p. 9)

[7] Welsh cites the 1973 Karmel Report *Schools in Australia*

As these courses became university courses, and therefore, as we have seen, less accessible to those of lower socio-economic classes, graphic design becomes, in its institutional form, a repositioning of certain creative practices away from those classes. Indeed, we can see that through the emergence of graphic design as a part of design discourse, the notion of what constitutes legitimate creativity itself becomes repositioned as the property of a relatively privileged minority.

Comparison of TAFE and University programs

The maintenance of a clear distinction between the 'higher' education of universities and the vocational training provided by TAFE is seen as crucially important in the operations of both systems. What then is the difference between graphic design as it is offered in higher education and in TAFE and how do these differences impact on how graphic design is to be practiced, and by whom? The following discusses the situation as of 2001/2002.

In the simplest sense, universities teach students to become primarily 'designers' with an emphasis on graphic design. As we have seen, this involves a strong component of 'design thinking' taught through theory, history and infused through its practical exercises. TAFE, on the other hand, teaches what is commonly known as 'graphic art' or 'finished art', whereby students learn the technical skills of prepress and printing—those technical processes that sit between the 'idea generation' of the graphic designer and the final product in printed form and output by the tradesperson.

Whilst the Graphic Arts Diploma at RMIT TAFE boasts a program 'designed to develop the skills and knowledge which will enable students to pursue careers in the graphic arts industry in a range of positions or to work as independent graphic artists in Australia and overseas', the term 'graphic designer' is notably absent. This is not a minor preference in terminology although prospective students may be unaware of its significance. In industry, however, the meaning of the term is clear:

> Francis: . . . all these things in combination led, I think, to the legitimising the profession as a graphic designer as distinct from a graphic artist which always tended to be linked with basic printing.
>
> Stenzil: . . . it was always talked about in my course as graphic design, not graphic arts, anyway, which was interesting in itself, that we were graphic designers . . . . They're different. I think, from my perspective, there was a greater emphasis in my course on understanding the full gamut of what the creative output and outcomes were.

The Boxhill Institute TAFE course which is a two year Diploma of Arts (Graphic Arts) promotes itself as follows:

> The course provides introductory and advanced level electronic skills to train you for a career in the Graphic Art industries.
>
> A Graphic Artist prepares concepts for a Graphic Designer or Art Director, by assembling artwork ready for graphic reproduction. (Institute 2003)

We may compare this to the Graphic Design Degree course at the National School of Design (Swinburne), which states the following:

> The aim of this degree course is to educate designers to work effectively in areas where information is conveyed by visual means, such as advertising, publishing, publicity, printing, merchandising, multimedia, education and research projects. The course is devised to produce imaginative designers, who, with specialisation and experience in the industry, should achieve positions in the design profession commensurate with their individual talents.

Education provides the discourse of graphic design with its most powerful form of distinction from the discourse of art, but more importantly it supports a way of seeing this discourse in terms of 'professional status' and the privileges that accompany that status. It is this form of distinction—the distinction from the working classes and their trade occupations—which university design education confers. This is accomplished through the *creation* rather than simply the *use* of a specialised knowledge; through the inculcation of a professional language of design; through the revealing of a specific field of expertise, a canon of professional work and a unique and legitimising history; and importantly, through the sense of what graphic design is not. In this final point the system of education, largely through the TAFE colleges, produces the worker whose knowledge, conditions of employment and attitude, reinforce the distinction. These categories reflect the sense of discourse as outlined in Foucault, and can be seen grounded in tangible conditions, institutional structures, and ways of thinking which directly and profoundly affect the lives of individuals. It should also be evident that whilst this approach does not preclude the agency of any of these individuals in affecting a change in their circumstances, it points to an inequality in the availability of options, in some cases by specific conditions of what can be afforded financially, but more importantly and effectively, by what is able to be thought. In the 1970s it was believed that the expansion of higher education might reduce social inequalities. By 1983 Anderson (qtd. in Beswick 1987) suggested that 'the evidence shows that higher education cements rather than reduces inequalities'. Anderson and Vervoorn

(1983) made the following pronouncement:

> Despite all the social idealism attached to education in the last decade, the hope that education would lead us to the threshold of a just society in which inequalities due to personal background and circumstances have been eliminated, higher education remains as much as ever the domain of those in least need of the greater personal opportunity and self-realisation it commonly brings (p. 170). (qtd in (Beswick 1987, p. 209)

Anderson and Vervoorn made this observation prior to the current trend towards the full fee paying courses in higher education. There is little doubt that this will further reduce the opportunities for those who are not financially well off, and one may expect that the language of design will become even more one of the languages of distinction and social power. Whilst the inequalities of opportunity certainly remain, one might question to what degree self-realisation is accomplished through higher education. This thesis argues that even self-realisation tends to be directed towards particular forms of realising the self—forms which are embedded in discourse.

Communication Design

As stated earlier the new status of graphic design occurred partly through the bestowing of degree status on educational programs and university status on institutions. This worked along with the increasing importance of intellectual abilities alongside traditional graphic arts skills to emphasise not only the form of the object, but the function. In the early stages of graphic design and design disciplines this function tended to be seen in terms of construction and use of an artefact, with some early appreciation of function in terms of designed communication (in, for example, the advertising of products). Increasingly in educational institutions, however, function has been seen in terms of the function of the designed communication or artefact in society—a viewpoint which has allowed for connections to the philosophical and disciplinary arenas of communication and cultural studies.

This shift has occurred concurrent with a social perception of a general shift in types of employment. This is at once an ascendency of the services industry over manufacturing, and simultaneously a perception that multiple employment models are supplanting career employment (thus an emphasising in educational pedagogy of the ability to self-educate, 'life-long learning', a de-emphasising of the expert, and the like). The importance of communication over creation can be seen in the way of knowing graphic design, not as artefact, but as communication. Ken Cato outlines this shift:

> Cato: the role of the designer, I think, is often more of an adviser and not necessarily a doer these days . . . The influence design has on corporations and on professions, I think, is not necessarily restricted to doing a brochure or a leaflet or a trademark, or whatever it is. Design is really about the harnessing of the resources the corporations have, about how it starts to take control of these visual resources, and about how you glue those together to start sending consistent messages. These are resources that corporations have. They pay for them. They may as well make use them and often these run to multi-millions of dollars. So the designer's role is really about helping corporations communicate with the huge resources that they are already spending money on, a heck of a lot better than has been done before . . . Everybody uses the word 'brands'. Those brands that we know tend to use their resources better than the brands that we don't know.

An important point to note here is how the role of the graphic designer has very much taken on the same status as other business professionals and how concomitant with this status is the notion of design as one part of an overall business strategy. Trevor Flett makes the following comments:

> Flett: One of the things that's very misunderstood about Graphic Design is, if you take what Graphic Design can do and I'll call it branding for a minute. It's power is unbelievable. It can mobilise internal morale. It can lift productivity. It can change belief systems. You know, if you brand a football club or a struggling company, you're playing with absolute core components. Now, I do change management. I don't do Graphic Design. I work back at house, so I get rid of dysfunctional behaviour with the Board of Directors because branding is the totality of the experience. The way someone answers the phone. The way a sign hangs on a board. The cleanliness of concrete trucks. They're all branding moments. They're all branding transactions. So I'm a brand- and a reputation-architect. That sounds high falluting but that's what I've been doing for five years. I used to be a Graphic Designer. I used graphic design technologies to put me on a slightly higher diving board. Clients don't go out to dinner parties and say, 'I've just spent $100,000 on my graphic design today'. Graphic Design is a manufacturing word. You've got to get into the client's language. The client's likely to say, 'Look, I've invested in my image today' or 'I've done some work on my reputation'. So we're part of a reputation architecture, which is a new category in this area, and we're designing reputation now . . . When two mega companies merge. You don't do it with a logo. You do it with a whole lot of meanings.

Thus we do not have a simple change in emphasis with a continuity of the essence of graphic design, but in fact, a shift in the understanding of what design and what graphic design are, in the very meaning of these terms. We can also see in this a political imperative to reposition designers as engaged in practices that are at once more broad, and at the same time, more specifically and strategically directed to professional business relations.

> Cato: I was reading an article two days ago. Skye & Washington were talking about what's happening to society and about the number of creative people that are actually determining the success of cities, communities, and everything else. He wasn't talking about graphic designers. They was talking about people with vision and creative skills, who could imagine outside the normal parameters, and how the percentage of them over recent years had changed. They were talking about how the community groups had changed, in terms of their influences and how those cities that we tend to admire actually had more creative people in leadership positions. We talk about the graphic design community. First of all, I think we should ditch the term. We should understand that what we have as a designer, is a set of skills and hopefully a very fertile mind that might help those that we work for, actually do things better. I see my role largely as a translator of strategies. The people I work for aren't stupid clients . . . Most of my clients, fortunately aren't stupid. They're highly intelligent people. They understand their businesses. They understand their markets. If there's something wrong, they understand what it is and they generally know how to fix it. Strategically, they're smart. They can come up with a plan to achieve the result. Where we come in is, we have the ability to take those strategies and be incredibly inventive within sets of parameters, that might actually help them to achieve those goals. So we're really translating some strategy, making the message visible . . . . Sometimes it's product. Sometimes it's services . . . . I think we can manage the resources they have available to them and make those things much stronger communication tools. I see the job of designers largely helping other people to communicate better. I see the job of the designer as being able to add value to business strategies by making them visible. Maybe the resources that attach themselves to those physical things, the people elements, the innuendo that comes with any piece of communication---maybe it's a way of managing those things better. So I see myself largely as a translator of strategy.

We can also see that certain aspects of the technological processes and their associated languages, which at one time were able to designate and legitimise design discourse, have been appropriated outside of the discourse and have thus lost their discursive

power. For example, TAFE courses, minor colleges and a multitude of individuals quite outside of any educational institution, have affordable access to both the hardware and software out of which most graphic work can be done. This requires a repositioning of the notion of what legitimate design is:

> Cato: These days, again, the technology allows us to make the marks more professionally. Anybody who sits in front of a computer can go and buy a package to do something aesthetically, smart and reasonably well crafted, without effort. You don't need the typographer's skill because someone has put some typefaces in there that you can just type out—you know, the typography won't be perfect but it won't be that bad. So if these skills are more readily available, what's the job of the designer? I think the job of the designer is to be able to think in a much more intelligent way, to know how to apply those skills to real, everyday problems. We better be selling that—selling our intellectual worth.

Communication Design in Education

We can note a current jostling for position between the rhetorical terms 'design' and 'communication', with communication having had for some time a 'self-evident' status as the key area in complex societies. Interestingly the Hochschule für Gestaltung in Ulm, which Watson used for his comparisons with Australian graphic design courses, had been using the term 'visual communication' as early as the 1950s:

> The task of this department is to design images in accordance with their function . . . typography, graphic design, photography, and exhibition design are treated as a single area which will shortly be augmented by . . . motion pictures and television. The term 'visual communication' has emerged to denote this area, in accordance with international usage . . . .

Currently graphic design courses have undergone a shift with greater emphasis on 'communication', with the term now sitting in place of 'graphic' alongside the title 'design'. The National Academy of Design at Swinburne has since 2000 called its course Communication Design whilst RMIT, instead of offering a Bachelor of Arts: Design (Graphic Design) out of the Faculty of Art and Design, now offers a 'Bachelor of Arts: Graphic Communication' out of the program 'Communication Design', in the School of Communication Studies, Faculty of Art, Design and Communication. This may change again in the near future with the school currently evaluating the options of a Bachelor of Design or a Bachelor of Communications. As this thesis indicates, these kinds of decisions arrive out of a range of factors including to some

degree the current state of the industry, but also the effects on finances, availability of staff, allowable teaching hours as well as the political advantages of aligning subjects with certain courses and not others. The results will be of interest in terms of the philosophical implications for graphic design. As argued in this thesis, it is precisely these political manoeuvrings that make available particular ways of knowing. The discourse of design promotes one particular way of understanding specific industrial and educational practices and institutional formations (and not others) as a coherent unity. 'Visual Communication' has long been available as a different emphasis and a potential disruptor to design discourse. If indeed a shift occurs away from graphic design and towards visual communication the reasons will be primarily in the changing politics of the discourse and its borders, rather than in the theoretical or philosophical arguments (which will no doubt be raised as legitimising factors for such changes). What graphic design or communication design or visual communication *is* cannot be found inside or beyond these political manoeuvrings, to be revealed in time through philosophical or historical enquiry. They are the surface of these events, constantly shifting and anachronistically discovering their legitimising philosophical and historical lineage for each new manifestation.

Conclusion

This chapter has considered how graphic design emerged within educational institutions, and what the effects of this emergence were. Derek Watson was commissioned by the ACIAA to produce a book on the education of the graphic designer in Australia and his comparison of the Australian schools with the Hochschule für Gestaltung at Ulm suggested a quite different approach to contemporary teaching models here. His suggestions can be clearly seen to spring from the Bauhausian approach to design, which emphasised design as a 'profession' with knowledges related to business, and to sociological, political and scientific concerns, as much as to the aesthetic concerns of production. Individuals like Bob Francis and Max Ripper brought their experiences of the changes that were occurring within industry, to education, replacing the teaching of highly illustrative and technical skills with an approach to graphic design that emphasised 'ideas'. Thus, a kind of intellectual creativity gained ascendency over technical creativity. We can see from RMIT's course structure, the dramatic shift from a range of somewhat disparate titles to a recognised consolidation of graphic design as a distinct and professional realm firmly within the discourse of design. Along with these shifts, both Swinburne's and RMIT's courses became university degree courses.

Subjects and approaches that were not included within the newly configured graphic design courses were either lost or relegated to TAFE courses. These courses, as we saw, presented the subjects under the name 'Graphic Arts' and they catered to the

trade positioned between the graphic designer and the printer—the task being to take the 'creative ideas' of the graphic designer, and technically prepare them for the printer.

In explicating the meaning of these changes in terms of power relations, we have noted that university education privileges certain social classes over others. These other classes find their opportunities lie more within the trade schools or the TAFE system. Although the emergence of graphic design within the university system was a commendable and crucial step in the professionalising of graphic design, one of the effects of this shift was a significant tendency to increase opportunities for certain classes and decrease them for others. If we regard this in terms of the changes taking place within the courses, we can see, as practices are separated into the those defined as 'creative' and those defined as 'technical', the creative practices tend to be institutionalised in forms which are more accessible to privileged classes, whilst those more technical are left to those with fewer opportunities. This supports one of the main themes of this thesis—that is, that certain discursive shifts work to maintain notions of 'legitimate' creativity as the possession of a privileged few.

References

Ashwin, Clive 1978, 'Art and Design History: the Parting of the Ways?' in *Design History: Fad or Function?*, ed. Terry Bishop, Design Council, London, pp. 98-102.

Beswick, David 1987, 'Trends in Higher Education' in *Australian Education: Review of Recent Research*, ed. John P. Keeves, Allen & Unwin, North Sydney, pp. 205-238.

Bogart, Michele H. 1995, *Artists, Advertising and the Borders of Art,* University of Chicago Press, Chicago & London.

Bourdieu, Pierre and Passeron, Jean-Claude 1977, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture,* Sage Publications, London.

Boxhill Institute [website http://www.bhtafe.edu.au/Courses/VAA13.htm], accessed 11 April 2003.

Connellan, Kathleen 2002 (unpub.), 'Opening Pandora's Box: Curriculum Research into History and Theory of Design in Australian Universities' in South Australian School of Art, University of South Australia, Adelaide.

ICSID 1965, *The Education of Industrial Designers,* International Council of Societies of Industrial Design, under the auspices of UNESCO, Bruges.

ICSID 1969, *Bibliography on Design,* International Council of Societies of Industrial Design.

King, R.J.R. & Young, R.E. 1986, *A Systematic Sociology of Australian Education,* Allan and Unwin, Sydney.

Kirby, Peter 1997, *Review of Melbourne TAFEs: Review of the Integration of TAFE Provision within the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology - Paper 8*. [avail http//www.otfe.vic.gov.au/publications/minrev/rmit.htm.], OTTE, accessed: 31 March 2003.

Meek, V. Lynn 1990, 'Differentiation in Higher Education' in *Schooling and Society in Australia: Sociological Perspectives*, eds. Lawrence J. Saha & John P. Keeves, Australian National University Press, Sydney, pp. 192-211.

Patterson, Barbara 1996, *Renegades: Australias First Film School,* Helicon Press, Melbourne.

Robertson, Keith 2001, 'The Sign in Graphic Design: A Sociological Exploration of Sign Production in the Postmodern Era' Doctoral Thesis in School of Sociology, Politics, and Anthropology, LaTrobe University, Bundoora, Victoria.

Sanders, Clinton R. & Lyon, Eleanor 1976, 'The Humanistic Professional: The Reorientation of Artistic Production' in *Professions for the People: The Politics of Skill*, eds. Joel Gerstl & Glenn Jacobs, Schenkman, New York and London.

Senate 2001, *NSW Submission to the Senate Enquiry on the Capacity of Public Universities to Meet Australia's Higher Education Needs*, [avail. http://www.det.nsw.edu.au/papers/ahed/ahed.pdf], accessed: 20 April 2003.

Watson, Derrick A. 1965, *Graphic Design Education in Australia*, Australian Commercial and Industrial Artists' Association, Melbourne.

Welsh, Anthony 1997, *Class, Culture and the State in Australian Education: Reform or Crisis?*, Peter Lang GmbH, Frankfurt am Main.

Conclusion

Histories of design and graphic design have tended to present graphic design as unproblematically and naturally evolving from either ancient origins, or origins grounded in what has been called the industrial revolution. In both accounts the current incarnation of graphic design is seen as an evolution from an earlier and less sophisticated form, in commercial art. This thesis has applied Foucault's genealogical methodology to the emergence of graphic design, seeing it, instead, as the confluence and selection of certain practices, and not others, some previously known as commercial art, and some not. It sees the emergence of graphic design as the gathering together of these practices within the discourse of design. In particular, it sees this gathering as a political exercise, where they are aligned with other design discourse components such as product or interior design. Using this methodology we have been able to explicate this emergence in terms of the workings of power through discourses—through the creation or reconstitution of objects like typography; languages like 'modernist principles'; hierarchies as we find in design organisations which can confer or withhold credentials from certain practices and practitioners; and through educational institutions which formally legitimise these objects, languages, and hierarchies through histories and theories. This thesis has taken the approach that histories work to promote a certain way of understanding these practices such that their position within a particular discourse appears self-evident. It sees histories as always political. Applying Bourdieu's notion of fine art as a language of exclusion to design discourse we explicate how histories of design and graphic design have worked politically to not only consolidate discourses, but also to support and maintain these discourses in terms of distinguishing certain social groups from others.

An example of how histories work has been seen in their promotion of the term 'disegno', as an historical origin of current notions of design. By excavating the specificity of its use, we identified it, in fact, as part of a wider argument to separate certain art practices and practitioners from others and from the power of the guilds, and to position them instead as legitimate inclusions in the liberal arts. This could be seen to occur through the connection of these arts practices to a philosophical and theoretical basis in science, allowed for through the economic and social conditions at the time. As well as providing us with an excellent example of the political manoeuvrings of emerging discourses, this also provided a useful counterpoint to the founding of the Schools of Design in Britain in the nineteenth century. Here we could recognise, in a sense, the reverse occurring through the instigation of the South Kensington system, a strictly ordered system of art instruction, ostensibly to equip the working class with skills to compete in the international market, but more significantly, to ensure that these classes not move beyond their station. At this stage, the fine arts was emerging as the exclusive property of a social elite, and the Schools of Design

were thus restricted severely in what they were allowed to teach. In fact, the working classes had little opportunity to attend them and, instead, the middle classes who saw in them a means for self-improvement appropriated the schools.

We noted these systems lasted about fifty years in Britain, but proved more resilient in the colonies because of their significantly different conditions and needs. In Australia, the gold rush and the rapid manufacturing and mining growth that followed, encouraged the founding of similar schools here. Again, however, these tended for many years to be appropriated by the middle classes who, through them, to developed an interest and skills in the fine arts, albeit on an amateur level. The effect was to further separate these classes from the working classes. By the beginning of the twentieth century in Australia we were able to observe a growing fine arts discourse and the emerging elements of social distinction it produced. Part of this distinction was the distinction between the fine arts as 'disinterested pleasure' and the commercial arts, as 'interested' and thus relegated to the role of 'poor relation' of the fine arts.

The first emergence of design discourse in Australia was seen to occur with the return to the country of a core group of individuals who had gained early international experience of the Bauhaus, primarily through contact with one of the key figures from that school, Moholy-Nagy. Certain elements of the Bauhaus teachings gained ascendency in Europe and the United States as a component of modernism, and it was these that were espoused by the returning travellers. Design discourse at this point was seen to constitute specific practices and philosophies brought together under the banner 'design'. This involved the reconfiguring of earlier notions of design into a kind of 'essence' of this range of practices. Concurrent with this, internationally, there emerged a number of key figures, institutions, and a language of design, all of which became consolidated in the form of high modernism—a quite limited form of design when compared to the wider ranging work practices at the time, but one which was legitimised by fine art discourse, through institutions like the Museum of Modern Art. These practices and philosophies provided a powerful foundation for the emergence in Australia of a discourse of design, which was implemented by a range of 'designer's, but primarily, industrial or product designers. Whilst graphic design was seen by some to be part of this discourse, its consolidation within that discourse involved a complex and difficult trajectory. As the making of industrial products bore little relation to fine arts, its constitution as product design within a wider discourse of design was not particularly problematic. However, the perception that graphic work and especially those practices known as 'commercial art' had a closer affinity to fine art, and along with their connection to advertising, meant their inclusion within design discourse was considerably more problematic. Far from seeing graphic design

as an unproblematic evolution from commercial art, we saw that these two areas in a sense struggled for ascendency. These difficulties were, in part, observed through the character and writings of Richard Haughton James, one of the 'core group' of Australian designers, who acted as a kind of locus for a range of issues and beliefs about fine art, commercial art, advertising and design.

By looking at typography as a set of practices reconfigured from others, mostly to be found in the printing trade, and becoming one of the key components of graphic design, we were able to see clearly how graphic design *was* able to provide a language of social distinction. Although modernist typography was considered 'invisible', a range of special knowledges of key figures and historical and philosophical theories, underlay this reconfiguring and effectively removed typography from those who were not educated to understand its complex language. We found that, in fact, typography uses much the same language of distinction and connoisseurship that we find in the discourse of fine art, forming what some have called as the 'secret language of design'. Thus the combining of typography with other graphic practices within the one discourse (some considerable time before the technology encouraged such a union), proved a strategic alliance by which graphic design could emerge within design discourse.

Histories of design and graphic design have largely ignored the role of advertising. This is curious given that the term 'graphic design' emerged largely in connection with advertising agencies and we noted possible reasons for this absence in that advertising was seen to be tainted by its overt manipulation of audiences, whilst at the same time, advertising could be seen to produce quite the reverse of the 'disinterested pleasure' of fine art, and thus did not provide social distinction in the way design discourse was able to. Indeed, advertising, where success is measured in sales, is seen in this thesis as the antithesis to discourses which support any set of aesthetics over others, be they modernist or otherwise. The approaches of advertising served to illuminate a fundamental difficulty with a notion of graphic design tethered to either fine arts or high modernist discourses.

We observed that the consolidation of graphic design as a legitimate component of design discourse involved the emergence of graphic designers outside of advertising agencies. This emergence was assisted by the popularity of the modernist aesthetic of the Swiss style—a style well suited to computer technologies. These technologies not only favoured this aesthetic, but, by removing a number of the steps between the creation and printing of work, imparted greater autonomy to this group of practitioners. The consolidation was almost complete with the founding of the Australian Graphic Designers' Association, a body that not only offered a sense

of unity to previously disparate practitioners, but also conferred a degree of professionalism upon this unity.

The final requirement for consolidation of graphic design as a component of design discourse came through its establishment within educational institutions. Although those involved in making education more responsive to the events occurring within, and the requirements of, industry, can only be commended for their perception, conviction, and perseverance, one of the effects of the establishment of graphic design as a university course is that a form of social distinction also becomes entrenched. Information that once was to be found in trades now moved from skill-based knowledge, to intellectual and creative knowledge. The TAFE and university systems work to maintain the separation of these knowledges as well as the social separation of those who can acquire them. Graphic Arts, taught in the TAFE system provides skills-based knowledges whilst the university system teaches Graphic Design, with knowledges, as we have seen, not only related more to thought and creativity, but also emersed in a culture of historical lineage and privilege. This system tends to emphasise the privileged position of the expert, and through the conveying of recognised credentials effectively reproduces its own system and hierarchies of power/knowledge for industry.

During the writing of this thesis, the term graphic design has been undergoing another shift, with a general movement in education and industry towards the term 'communication design'. If this shift continues it will be interesting to see whether histories unfold which construct new lineages with communication-linked areas and de-emphasise connections with graphic-based areas. The value of a genealogical approach is that it is able to view these changes not as a natural progression, but in terms of the movement of power. Thus we are better equipped to recognise who best benefits from these changes and make decisions about them more effectively and responsibly. If indeed, we wish communication design to gain ascendency over graphic design, we must also ask questions about who is best served by such a shift, about who is best equipped to teach students in these areas, and about how to best equip students for a communication design rather than graphic design industry. As an example, graphic design as part of design discourse can be seen as maintaining notions of the designer as gifted specialist who bestows their gifts on society, whereas seeing design as communication rather than as artefact manufacture opens up greater potential to explore with students the meanings of design, its effects, and how we can be more socially responsible whilst being responsive to the needs of clients and customers. Histories and theories that promote the heroic version of how things evolve from noble origin to eventual sophisticated perfection tend to support and maintain dominant ideologies. Genealogical enquiry may act here as intervention rather than merely celebration.

Reference List

Adams, Phillip 1985 Ad Magazine, September.

Adorno, Theodor W. and Max Horkheimer 1944, Dialectic of Enlightenment, The Seabury Press, New York.

Allen, Jenny 2002, Two Sights: One Vision. Dahl and Geoffrey Collings, Masters (unpublished), Monash.

Ashwin, Clive 1978, 'Art and Design History: the Parting of the Ways?' in Design History: Fad or Function?, Ed. Terry Bishop, Design Council, London, pp. 98-102.

Aynsley, Jeremy 1994 (orig. 1987), 'Graphic Design' in Design History: A Students' Handbook, Ed. Hazel Conway, Routledge, London, pp. 134-161.

Banham, Reyner 1970, Theory and Design in the First Machine Age, The Architectural Press, London.

Barthes, Roland 1980 Mythologies, Granada, London.

Basson, Steve 1997, The Public Gaze: An Historical Analysis of Public and Private Space, (Thesis) School of Architecture and Fine Arts, University of Western Australia, Perth.

Bayley, Stephen 1979 In Good Shape: Style in Industrial Products 1900 to 1960, Design Council, London.

Barrie, Colin 1962 Design, Longmans, Croydon, Victoria.

Beck, Barbara 2001, [personal communication], 20th Oct. 2001.

Belanger, Terry 1995, 'Beatrice Warde at Columbia', http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/byform/mailing-lists/bookarts/1995/04/msg00093.html, [accessed 24 Oct. 2002].

Bell, Quentin 1963, The Schools of Design, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.

Benjamin, Walter 1969, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', in Illuminations: Walter Benjamin, ed. H. Arendt, Schocken, New York.

Bennett, Tony, Emmison, Michael and Frow, John 1999, Acounting for Tastes: Australian Everyday Culture, Cambridge U. P., Cambridge.

Berman, Marshall 1988, 'The Experience of Modernity' in Design After Modernism, ed. John Thakara, Thames & Hudson, London & New York, pp. 35-48.

Beswick, David 1987, 'Trends in Higher Education' in Australian Education: Review of Recent Research, ed. John P. Keeves, Allen & Unwin, North Sydney, pp. 205-238.

Bird, Jon 1978, 'The Politics of Advertising' in Design History: Fad or Function?, ed. Terry Bishop, Design Council, London, pp. 49-55.

Blunt, A 1970, Artistic Theory in Italy: 1450-1600, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

Bogart, Michele H. 1995, Artists, Advertising and the Borders of Art, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Bogle, Michael 1998 Design in Australia 1880-1970, Craftsman House, North Ryde, N.S.W.

Booth, Wayne C., Colomb, Gregory G. and Williams, Joseph M. 2003, The Craft of Research, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Borland, Katherine 1998, ''That's not what I said': Interpretive Conflict in Oral Narrative Research', in The Oral History Reader, eds. Robert Perks & Alistair Thomson, Routledge, London, pp. 320-332.

Bourdieu, Pierre 1972, An Outline of a Theory of Practice, Cambridge U.P., Cambridge.

Bourdieu, Pierre and Passeron, Jean-Claude 1977, Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture, Sage Publications, London.

Bourdieu, Pierre 1984 Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Boxhill Institute [website http://www.bhtafe.edu.au/Courses/VAA13.htm], accessed 11 April 2003.

Briggs, John 1985 Ad Magazine, September.

Buchanan, Richard 1998, 'Education and Professional Practice in Design', Design Issues, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 63-66.

Caban, Geoffrey 1983, A Fine Line: A History of Australian Commercial Art, Hale & Ironmonger, Marrickville, NSW.

Candy, Phillip 1994, ''The Light of Heaven Itself': The Contribution of the Institutes to Australia's Cultural History' in Pioneering Culture: Mechanics' Institutes and Schools of Arts in Australia, eds. Philip C. Candy and John Laurent, Auslib Press, Adelaide, pp. 1-28.

Chalmers, F. Graeme 1990, 'South Kensington in the Farthest Colony' in Framing the Past: Essays on Art Education, eds. Donald Soucy and Mary Ann Stankiewicz, National Art Education Association, Virginia, pp. 71-86.

Chen, Ken 2002, Satellite, vol. 2, no. 4, 2002, http://www.readsatellite.com/culture/2.4/crewdson.chen.2.4.1.htm.; [accessed: 11 Dec. 2002], also avail. at http://www.kenchen.org/writing/crewdson.htm [accessed 14 Jan. 2005].

Clair, Colin 1969, A Chronology of Printing, Cassel, London.

Clark, Manning 1969, A Short History of Australia, Mentor, New York.

Clemenger, Peter 2002, [personal communication], 18 Nov. 2002.

Cody, David n.d., The Victoria Web: Literature, History & Culture in the Age of Victoria, http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/morris/kelmscott.html, [accessed 7 Feb. 2004.]

Cohen, Stanley E. 1999, 'The Battle over Truth and Fairness in Advertising Led to Closer Government Examination of Business:'Protecting' Consumers', Advertising Age, March 29, C120.

Connellan, Kathleen 2002 (unpub.), 'Opening Pandora's Box: Curriculum Research into History and Theory of Design in Australian Universities' in South Australian School of Art, University of South Australia, Adelaide.

Craig, Robert 1990, 'Ideological Aspects of Publication Design', Design Issues, vol. VI, no. 2, pp. 18-27.

Danaher, Geoffrey, Schirator, Tony & Webb, Jen 2000, Understanding Foucault, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, NSW.

Dilnot, Clive 1984 In Design Discourse: History Theory Criticism, ed. Victor Margolin, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, pp. 213-250.

Dilnot, Clive 1989 The State of Design History Parts I and II, in Design Discourse: History Theory Criticism, Ed. Victor Margolin, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, pp. 213-250.

Dresser, Christopher 1876, Studies in Design, Studio Editions, London.

Drever, James 1976, A Dictionary of Psychology, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex.

Featherstone, Mike 1991, Consumer Culture and Postmodernism, Sage Publications, London.

Ferebee, Ann 1970, A History of Design from the Victorian Era to the Present, Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, New York.

Field, Noel 1985 Ad Magazine, September.

Fischer, Claude S. 1992, America Calling: A Social History of the Telephone to 1940, University of California Press, Berkeley.

Forty, Adrian 1995 Objects of Desire: Design and Society since 1750, Thames and Hudson, London.

Foucault, Michel 1972 The Archaeology of Knowledge, Tavistock, London.

Foucault, Michel 1980a The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction, Vintage-Random House, New York.

Foucault, Michel 1980b Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, The Harvester Press, Great Britain.

Foucault, Michel 1984a 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History' in The Foucault Reader, ed. Paul Rabinow, Pantheon, New York, pp. 76-100.

Foucault, Michel 1984b The History of Sexuality, Volume 2: The Use of Pleasure, Penguin Books, London.

Foucault, Michel 1994 (French version, 1966) The Order of Things; an Archaeology of the Human Sciences, Vintage Books, New York.

Fry, Tony 1988 Design History Australia, Hale & Iremonger, Marrickville, NSW.

Gaines, Jane 1990, 'From Elephants to Lux Soap: the Programming and "Flow" of Early Motion Picture Exploitation', Velvet Light Trap, Spring 1990, pp. 29-44.

Greenberg, Clement 1986, 'Avant-Garde and Kitsch', in Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism, Vol. 1, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, pp. 5-22.

Grele, Ronald J. 1998, 'Movement Without Aim: Methodological and Theoretical Problems in Oral History', in The Oral History Reader, eds. Robert Perks & Alistair Thomson, Routledge, London, pp. 38-52.

Grosz, Elizabeth 1990, 'Contemporary Theories of Power and Subjectivity' in Feminist Knowledge: Critique and Construct, ed. Sneya Gunew, Routledge, London and New York.

Haese, Richard 1981, Rebels and Precursors: The Revolutionary Years in Australian Art, Allen Lane, London & Ringwood, Victoria.

Hagan, J. 1966, Printers and Politics: A History of the Australian Printing Unions 1850-1950, Australian National University Press, Canberra.

Hand, Tim n.d., Australian Mass Media Through 200 Years, Kangaroo Press, n.c.

Hartlaub, G.F. 1993 (orig. pub. 1928), 'Art as Advertising', Design Issues, vol. IX, no. 2, pp. 73-76.

Heathcote, Andrew 2002 'Retail Pulls Them In', in Business Review Weekly, pp. 64.

Healy, Ted 1983, 'The Beginning of Life, the Universe and the Institute', Design in Australia, November, pp. 4-6.

Heller, Steven 1995, 'Commercial Modern: American Design Style 1925-1933', Print, vol. 49, no. 5, pp. 58-69, electronic version, <http://web6.infotrac.galegroup.com/itw/infomark/1/1/1/purl=rc6_EAIM>.

Heller, Steven 1997, 'Advertising: Mother of Graphic Design' in Looking Closer 2, eds. Michael Bierut et al., Allworth Press, New York, pp. 112-119.

Heller, Steven 2001, Icons of Graphic Design: Lautrec, Thames and Hudson, London.

Hewat, Tim & Rankin, Peter 1996, Clemenger: First Fifty Years 1946-1996, Clemenger, Melbourne.

Hindess, Barry 1989 Political Choice and Social Structure: An Analysis of Actors, Interests and Rationality, Edward Elgar, Aldershot.

Hindess, Barry 1996 Discourses of Power: From Hobbes to Foucault, Blackwell, Oxford.

Hoskin, Keith W. 1993, 'Education and the Genesis of Disciplinarity: the Unexpected Reversal' in Knowledges: Historical and Critical Studies in Disciplinarity, eds. Ellen Messer-Davidow, David R. Shumway, & David J. Sylvan, University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville and London, pp. 271-304.

Hunter, Ian 1991, 'From Discourse to Dispositif: Foucault and the Study of Literature', Meridian, 1991, no. 10, pp. 36-53.

Huyssen, Andreas 1986, After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism., Indiana UP, Bloomington.

ICSID 1965, ICSID International Council of Societies of Industrial Design, under the auspices of UNESCO, Bruges.

ICSID (1969), Bibliography on Design, International Council of Societies of Industrial Design.

Industrial Relations Commission 1996, Industrial Relations Appeal: Appeal to the Full Bench, Report No. 173/96 Print M9412, 1996, Sydney.

James, Richard Haughton 1949 'Editorial', Australian Artist, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 52.

James, Richard Haughton 1963 Commercial Art, Longmans, Croydon, Victoria.

Jervis, Simon 1984 The Penguin Dictionary of Design and Designers, Penguin Books, London.

Julier, Guy 1993, The Thames and Hudson Encyclopedia of 20th Century Design and Designers, Thames and Hudson, London.

King, R.J.R. & Young, R.E. 1986, A Systematic Sociology of Australian Education, Allan and Unwin, Sydney.

Kinross, Robin 1992, Modern Typography: An Essay in Critical History, Hyphen Press, London.

Kinross, Robin 1992, Modern Typography: An Essay in Critical History, Hyphen Press, London.

Kirby, Peter 1997, Review of Melbourne TAFEs: Review of the Integration of TAFE Provision within the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology - Paper 8. [avail http//www.otfe.vic.gov.au/publications/minrev/rmit.htm.], OTTE, accessed: 31 March 2003.

Lears, T. J. Jackson 1994, Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America, BasicBooks, New York.

Leathlean, Howard 1993, 'The Archaeology of the Art Director?: Some Examples of Art Direction in Mid-Nineteenth-Century British Publishing', Journal of Design History, vol. 6, no. 4, pp. 229-245.

Lechte, John 1994 Fifty Key Contemporary Thinkers: From Structuralism to Postmodernity, Routledge, London.

Lenoir, Timothy 1993, 'The Discipline of Nature and the Nature of Disciplines', in Knowledges: Historical and Critical Studies in Disciplinarity, eds. Ellen Messer-Davidow, David R. Shumway, & David J. Sylvan, University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville & London, pp. 71-102.

Lindsay, Frances 1978, Von Guerard to Wheeler, Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne.

Lupton, Ellen and Miller, J. Abbott 1989, 'A Time Line of American Graphic Design, 1829-1989' in Graphic Design in America: a Visual Language History, eds. Mildred Friedman and Phil Freshman, Walker Art Center, New York, pp. 24-65.

MacCarthy, Fiona 1979, A History of British Design 1830-1970, Allen & Unwin, London.

Macdonald, Stuart 1970, The History and Philosophy of Art Education, University of London Press, London.

Macdonald, Stuart 1973, 'Articidal Tendencies' in Readings in Art and Design Education: 2 After Coldsteam, ed. David Warren Piper, Davis-Poynter, London, pp. 89-99.

Marcus, George H. 1995, Functionalist Design: An Ongoing History, Prestel-Verlag, Munich & New York.

Marginson, Ray 1985 Ad Magazine, September.

Margolin, Victor (Ed.) 1989 Design Discourse: History, Theory, Criticism, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Margolin, Victor 1994 'Narrative Problems of Graphic Design History', Visible Language, vol. 28, no. 3, pp. 233-43.

McMurtie, D. 1972, The Book: The Story of Printing and Bookbinding, Oxford U.P., London.

Meek, V. Lynn 1990, 'Differentiation in Higher Education' in Schooling and Society in Australia: Sociological Perspectives, eds. Lawrence J. Saha & John P. Keeves, Australian National University Press, Sydney, pp. 192-211.

Meggs, Phillip B. 1998, A History of Graphic Design, John Wiley & Sons, New York.

Meikle, Jeffrey L. c1990, 'From Celebrity to Anonymity: The Professionalization of American Industrial Design' in Raymond Loewy: Pioneer of American Industrial Design, ed. Angela Schönberger, Prestel, Munich, pp. 51-60.

Moore, William 1980 (orig. published 1934), The Story of Australian Art: From the Earliest Known Art of the Continent to the Art of To-day, Angus & Robertson, Melbourne.

Murray, Linda & Peter 1963, The Art of the Renaissance, Thames and Hudson, London.

Murray-Smith, Stephen, D. & Dare, Anthony John 1987, The Tech: A Centenary History of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Hyland House Publishing, South Yarra, Melbourne.

Nelson, Roy Paul 1990, 'Tracing the Circuitous Route of Publication Design', Communication World, vol. 7, no. 6, pp. 46-8.

Nightingale, Virginia 1996, Studying Audiences: The Shock of the Real, Routledge, London & New York.

No author 1941, Design in Everyday Things, Australian Broadcasting Commission, Sydney.

No author 1987, 'Not Before Time', Design World, no. 12, pp. 104-5.

Olympic Civic Committee of the Melbourne City Council 1956, The Arts Festival of the Olympic Games, Melbourne: a Guide to the Exhibitions with Introductory Commentaries on the Arts in Australia, The Olympic Civic Committee of the Melbourne City Council, Melbourne.

Osborne, Graeme and Lewis, Glen 1995, Communication Traditions in Twentieth Century Australia, Oxford U.P., Oxford.

Packard, Vance 1957, The Hidden Persuaders, Penguin, Harmondsworth, Middlesex.

Passerini, Luisa 1998 (orig. pub. 1979), 'Work Ideology under Italian Fascism', in The Oral History Reader, eds. Robert Perks & Alistair Thomson, Routledge, London & New York, pp. 53-62.

Passuth, Krisztina 1987, Moholy-Nagy, Thames and Hudson, London.

Patterson, Barbara 1996, Renegades: Australias First Film School, Helicon Press, Melbourne.

Pevsner, Nikolaus 1960 Pioneers of Modern Design: From William Morris to Walter Gropius, Penguin Books, Middlesex.

Pevsner, Nikolaus 1973, Academies of Art: Past and Present, Da Capo Press, New York.

Phelp, Angela 1994, 'The Sydney Society of Women Painters', in Wallflowers and Witches: Women and Culture in Australia, ed, Maryanne Dever, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia, Queensland, pp. 1-12.

Pollock, Griselda 1992, Avant-Garde Gambits 1888-1893: Gender and the Colour of Art History, Thames and Hudson, London and New York.

Portelli, Alessandro 1998, 'What Makes Oral History Different', in The Oral History Reader, eds. Robert Perks & Alistair Thomson, Routledge, London, pp. 63-74.

Read, Herbert 1956 Art and Industry, Faber and Faber, London.

Reekie, Gail 1993, Temptations: Sex, Selling and the Department Store, Allen & Unwin, St. Leonards, N.S.W.

Rifkin, Adrian 1988, 'Success Disavowed: the Schools of Design in mid-nineteenth-century Britain. (An Allegory)', Journal of Design History, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 189-102.

RMIT 2002, RMIT University Handbook, RMIT University, Melbourne.

Robertson, Keith 1994, 'On White Space: When Less is More' in Looking Closer: Critical Writings on Graphic Design, eds. William Drenttel, Michael Bierut, Steven Heller & DK Holland, Allworth Press, New York, pp. 61-65.

Robertson, Keith 2001, 'The Sign in Graphic Design: A Sociological Exploration of Sign Production in the Postmodern Era' Doctoral Thesis in School of Sociology, Politics, and Anthropology, LaTrobe University, Bundoora, Victoria.

Rokicki, John 1987, 'Advertising in the Roman Empire', Whole Earth Review, Spring pp. 84-88.

Rosenfeldt, Ron 1999a, 'Historical Notes on the Establishment of the Society of

Designers for Industry and its Development into the Industrial Design Institute of Australia: 1947-1969', in Artichoke: The Journal of the DIA, Design Institute of Australia, Melbourne.

Rosenfeldt, Ron 1999b, Historical Notes on the Establishment of the Society of Designers for Industry and its Development into the Industrial Design Institute of Australia: 1947-1969, (unpub.)

Rowlands, E. H. (Deputy Industrial Registrar) 1940, 'Notice of Application for Change of Conditions of the Eligibility for Membership of an Organization', Commonwealth of Australia Gazette, 1940, no. 92, n.p.

Sanders, Clinton R. & Lyon, Eleanor 1976, 'The Humanistic Professional: The Reorientation of Artistic Production' in Professions for the People: The Politics of Skill, eds. Joel Gerstl & Glenn Jacobs, Schenkman, New York and London.

Schwitters, Kurt 1993 (orig. pub. 1928), 'Modern Advertising', Design Issues, vol. IX, no. 2, pp. 69-71.

Senate 2001, NSW Submission to the Senate Enquiry on the Capacity of Public Universities to Meet Australia's Higher Education Needs, [avail. http://www.det.nsw.edu.au/papers/ahed/ahed.pdf], accessed: 20 April 2003.

Smith, Bernard 2002, A Pavane for Another Time, Macmillan Art Publishing, South Yarra.

Steinberg, S. H. 1955, Five Hundred Years of Printing, Penguin Books Ltd., Harmondsworth, Middlesex.

Stiff, Paul 1996, 'Instructing the Printer: What Specification tells about Typographic Designing', Typography Papers, vol. 1, pp. 27-74.

Sparke, Penny 1986 An Introduction to Design and Culture in the Twentieth Century, Allen & Unwin, London.

Sparke, Penny 1987, Design in Context, Bloomsbury, London.

Stankiewicz, Mary Ann 1990, 'Rules and Invention: From Ornament to Design in Art Education' in Framing the Past: Essays on Art Education, eds. Donald Soucy and Mary Ann Stankiewicz, National Art Education Association, Virginia, pp. 88-101.

Sturt, George 1963, The Wheelwright's Shop, Cambridge U.P., London.

Suttie, Lionel 2002, 'Conversation on the Formation of the DIA', (personal communication).

Swinburne (various dates), Prospectus, Swinburne Technical College, Hawthorn, Victoria.

Taylor, William Max 1993, Function (and the Limits of Representation), Department of Architecture, University of Western Australia, Perth.

Thackara, John (Ed.) 1988, Design After Modernism, Thames and Hudson, London.

Thornham, Sue 1998, Postmodernism and Feminism, or Repairing our own Cars, in The Icon Critical Dictionary of Postmodern Thought, ed. Stuart Sim, Icon Books, Cambridge, pp. 41-52.

UBC [online], University of British Columbia, http://www.library.ubc.ca/spcoll/middleages/case5.html, [accessed 7 Feb. 2004].

Venturi, Robert, Scott Brown, Denise & Izenour, Steven 1972, Learning from Las Vegas: the Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.

Walker, John A. 1989 Design History and the History of Design, Pluto Press, London.

Ward, Russel 1969, Australia, Ure Smith, Sydney.

Watson, Derrick A. 1965, Graphic Design Education in Australia, Australian Commercial and Industrial Artists' Association, Melbourne.

Welsh, Anthony 1997, Class, Culture and the State in Australian Education: Reform or Crisis?, Peter Lang GmbH, Frankfurt am Main.

Weston, Neville 1991, 'The Professional Training of Artists in Australia, 1861-1963, with Special Reference to the South Australian Model' Doctorate in Art, South Australian School of Art, Adelaide.

White, Alex W. 2002, The Elements of Graphic Design, Allworth Press, New York.

Whitford, Frank 1984, Bauhaus, Thames and Hudson, London.

Williams, Raymond 1981, 'Communications Technologies and Social Institutions' in Contact: Human Communication, ed. Raymond Williams, Thames & Hudson, London & New York, pp. 225-238.

WMC (various dates), Working Men's College, Melbourne.

Wolfe, Tom 1983, From Bauhaus to Our House, Abacus, London.

Yellow Pages, 2003, Telstra Corporation Limited, Melbourne.

APPENDIX

List of Interviewees

Interviewee	**Date**	**Location**
Batten, Alan	9/03/00	Batten's office, AMWU, Melbourne
Bevers, Russell	11/07/01	RMIT, Melbourne
Byron, Liga	13/06/02	Byron's studio, Oakleigh
Cato, Ken	17/07/02	Cato's studio, Richmond
Cozzolino, Mimmo	22/08/02	Cozzolino's studio, Prahran
Dearing, Rick	3/03/00	Rick's office, Printing Industries Assoc.
Emery, Garry	30/07/02	Emery's studio, South Melbourne
Flett, Trevor	24/05/02	Flett's studio, West Melbourne
Francis, Robert	29/05/02	RMIT, Melbourne
Hawley, Graham	26/07/02	Hawley's home, Ballarat
Leydin, Arthur	4/10/02	Telephone linkup with Mason
McGinness, Judith	29/08/02	McGinness's home, Geelong
Ripper, Max	13/11/01	RMIT, Melbourne
Robinson, Max	10/08/01	Robinson's studio, Fitzroy
Rooney, Robert	5/08/02	Rooney's home, Hawthorn
Russell, Tony	8/12/99	Russell's home, Perth
Sadgrove, Brian	12/06/02	Sadgrove's studio, Albert Park
Stenzil, Helmut	26/07/02	University of Ballarat
Stitt, Alex	19/06/02	Stitt's office, South Yarra