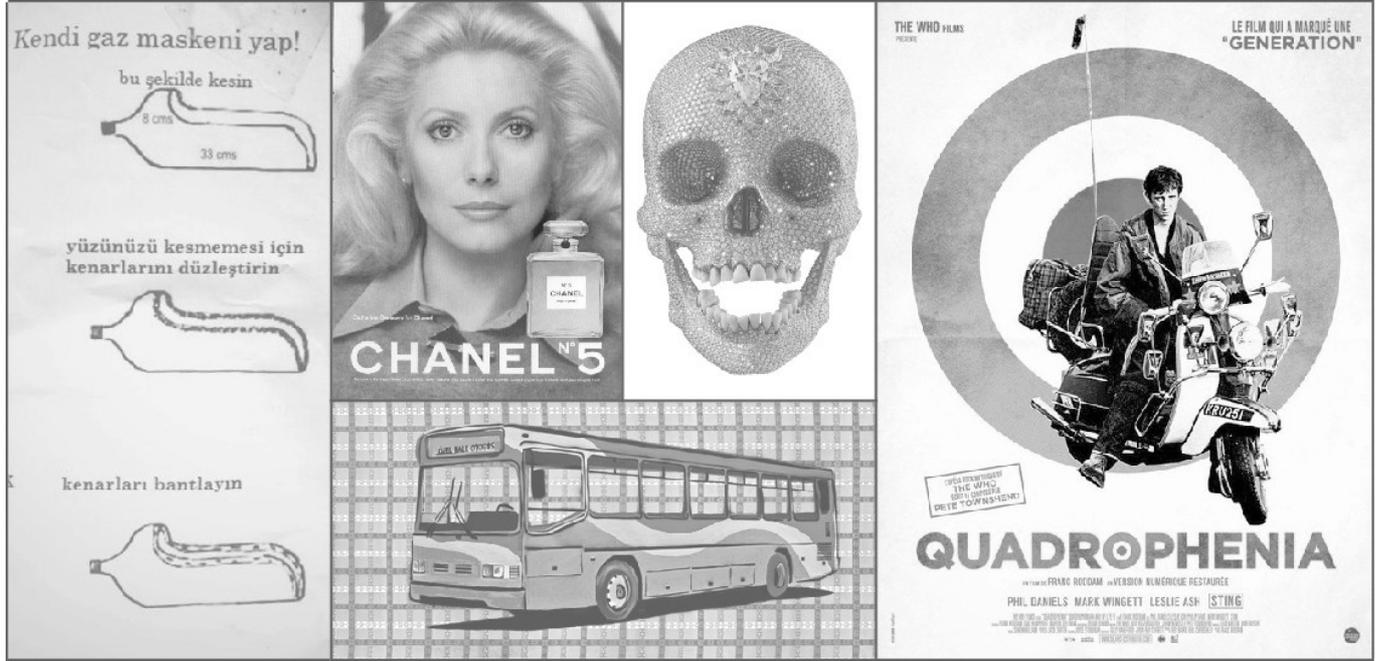


ID321 MEANING IN DESIGN

ID321, Spring 2013-14

Harun Kaygan, Sedef Süner, Nur Nagihan Tuna

Monday, 9.40-12.30, FEAS (İİBF) Building B, G106



Course description *

The objective of the course is to help you make sense of the cultural meaning and significance of design today. This will be done in four parts.

Part 1, "Design and designers", will review the contemporary "field" of design. It will first challenge existing conceptions of what design is and who designers are. Then it will provide a deeper understanding of the design profession as practised within a specific social and economic context.

Part 2, "Consumer culture", will go into further detail of that context. In this, it will focus on "consumer culture", to which design largely serves. It will review what consumption is, and how design serves it.

Part 3, "Meaning in objects", will turn to objects themselves. Specifically, it will study how designed objects become carriers of meaning. Here, you will also learn about "product semantics".

Part 4, "Issues", will apply what we learned in the previous parts to three separate topics: gender, sustainability and globalisation. Doing this, it will help you develop a critical attitude towards the various hegemonic discourses and practices diffuse in today's design cultures.

Having completed the course, you will have improved your understanding of the social and cultural context and significance of design practice. While we will use images, objects and videos in lectures, critical reading and writing are the primary skills you are going to use and develop in this course. You will encounter a variety of texts and engage in critical writing exercises to this end.

* Images, from left to right: Anonymous, "Make your own gas mask" pamphlet, 2012; first row, Chanel No.5 ad with Catherine Deneuve, 1970s; Damien Hirst, "For the love of God", 2007; second row, Nalan Yirtmaç, "Lütfen arkaya doğru ilerleyiniz", 2011; poster for the film, Quadrophenia, 1979.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE COURSE

Readings

Each week is assigned a number of key texts on the week's topic. You will find the readings in bound format at the library photocopy office. You are expected to read the material before lecture every week. This is not only a requirement of the course but fundamental to the in-class exercises and discussions. At times you may feel that either the language or the concepts used in the reading is difficult, but do not forget that reading is like riding a bicycle: it gets better with practice.

Response papers

In addition to reading and understanding academic texts, you are also expected to engage with them critically in writing. For this purpose you will be writing "response papers".

You are required to submit four response papers, 600-1000 words each. See "Response paper writing guide" for further explanation.

Designer presentations

Every week, two teams of students will be making short presentations, displaying and briefly commenting on the work of a practising designer, a company, etc. The presentations will take 10 minutes (plus a 5-minute discussion), show a number of designs, and include a brief discussion about what is significant about the designs. The teams, the list of designers and the presentation schedule will be announced in the first week.

See "Guide for designer presentations" for further explanation.

Grading

Your final grade will be determined by your response papers (10% x 4), the designer presentation (10%), and a final exam (50%).

Note that attendance is obligatory. Not attending the course for more than three weeks without any official excuse will result in failure with an "N/A" grade.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a disciplinary offence, and will result in disciplinary sanctions in addition to outright failure.

Plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas without specifically stating so. It often happens when a student copies words or borrows ideas from online and offline sources, but getting other people to do one's work and collaborating in individual assignments are other forms of plagiarism.

Plagiarism can happen unintentionally, when students fail to clearly distinguish in their writing their own words from those of others. Even if it is unintentional, it still counts as an offence. To avoid plagiarism, take extra care to give accurate references. Most importantly, (1) if it is someone else's ideas, start your paragraphs/sentences with phrases, such as "According to Marx (1844)...", to indicate where you borrowed the idea from. And (2) put quotation marks around exact phrases and sentences that belong to others. Note that rearranging someone else's sentences is still plagiarism, and easily detectable; so use your own ideas and words.

(For more information on plagiarism, go to <http://www.fbe.metu.edu.tr/plagiarism>)

Course outline

Week 1: Introduction (17 Feb)

Week 2: Design and designers I: Definitions (24 Feb)

John A. Walker, "Defining the object of study", in *Design History and the History of Design*

John A. Walker, "Production-consumption model" diagram, in *Design History and the History of Design*

Week 3: Design and designers II: Beyond the individual designer (3 Mar)

Adam Richardson, "Death of the designer", *Design Issues* 9.2

Nick Crossley, "Field", in *Key Concepts in Critical Social Theory*

Pierre Bourdieu, excerpt from *The Purpose of Reflexive Sociology*, interview with Loïc J. D. Wacquant.

Week 4: Consumer culture I: Commodities (10 Mar)

Peter Osborne, Chapters 1 and 4 from *How to Read Marx*

Ursula Le Guin, excerpt from *The Dispossessed*. Also available in Turkish: *Mülksüzler* (Metis, 1999)

!! Last week to submit the first response paper !!

Week 5: Consumer culture II: What is consumer culture? (17 Mar)

Celia Lury, "Introduction: What is consumer culture?", in *Consumer Culture*

Jean Baudrillard, excerpt from *Consumer Society*

Pasi Falk, "The genealogy of advertising", in *The Consumption Reader*

Week 6: Design and designers III: High design (24 Mar)

Guy Julier, "High design" in *The Culture of Design*

Thorstein Veblen, excerpt from *Theory of Leisure Class* in *The Design History Reader*

Richard Jenkins, excerpt from "Distinction" in *Bourdieu*

Week 7: Meaning in design I: Premises and concepts (31 Mar)

Stuart Hall, excerpt from "The Work of Representation", in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*

!! Last week to submit the second response paper !!

Week 8: Meaning in design II: Meaning of products (7 Apr)

Judith Williamson, "Introduction" and excerpt from "Differentiation", in *Decoding Advertisements*

Roland Barthes, "The new Citroën", "Toys", "Ornamental Cookery", in *Mythologies*. Also available in Turkish: *Çağdaş Söylenler* (Metis, 2003)

Jean Baudrillard, excerpt from *The System of Objects*

Week 9: Meaning in design III: Product Semantics (14 Apr)

Klaus Krippendorf, "The axiomatization of meaning", in *The Semantic Turn*

Klaus Krippendorf, "Product semantics: Exploring the symbolic qualities of form"

Ali Berkman, excerpt from "The influence of ergonomics on marketing and product styling"

Week 10: Consumer culture III: Creative consumers (21 Apr)

Daniel Miller, excerpt from "Houses: Accommodating theory" in *Stuff*

Dick Hebdige, "The meaning of mod", in *Resistance through Rituals*

!! Last week to submit the third response paper !!

Week 11: Issues I: Design and gender (28 Apr)

Jane Freedman, "The biology debate: Sex and gender", in *Feminism*

Dick Hebdige, excerpt from "Object as image: the Italian scooter cycle"

Roger Miller, "The Hoover(R) in the garden", in *The Consumption Reader*

Judy Wajcman, excerpts from *Feminism Confronts Technology*

Week 12: Issues II: Design and sustainability (5 May)

Stuart Walker, "Design process and sustainable development: a journey in design" in *Sustainable by Design: Explorations in Theory and Practice*

Andres R. Edwards, Chapters 5 and 6 from *The Sustainability Revolution: Portrait of a Paradigm Shift*

Week 13: Issues III: Nationalism, globalisation and activism (12 May)

Benedict Anderson, "Introduction" to *Imagined Communities*

Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and difference in the global cultural economy", in *Modernity at Large*, from *Theorizing Diaspora: A Reader*

World Social Forum, "Porto Alegre Call for Mobilization", in *The Globalization Reader*

!! Last week to submit the fourth response paper !!