Almost 36 million people worldwide were living with dementia in 2010 (Breslow, 2012). Data from 2015 says an estimated 5.3 million Americans are currently living with Alzheimer’s disease (Alzheimer’s, 2015). This number is expected to double every 20 years, estimating that 65.7 million in 2030, and 115.4 million in 2050 will be living with some type of dementia (Breslow, 2012). Dementia is a neurocognitive chronic and progressive disorder of the brain that disrupts the brain’s ability to function properly due to the decline in a person’s memory, thinking, orientation, comprehension, calculation, learning capacity, language, and judgement. Alzheimer’s disease is the most common form of dementia making up 60-80% of the cases. Dementia and Alzheimer’s disease take away the ability for people to recognize who they are in present day, and who they once were. The memories these people once had have become almost impossible to recall, and leave them feeling lost in life. The Environmental Docility Hypothesis states that people who have health or cognitive constraints cannot always adapt the environment to their specific needs, so they are dependent on environmental cues or differences for help (Marquardt, 2011; Morgan & Stewart, 1997). Stimuli in the environment cause a behavioral response in humans, and disruptive behavior makes up the majority of those with dementia. Disruptive behavior occurs when a person’s stress threshold is surpassed, therefore designing facilities that lower levels of stress can have drastic improvements on behavior (Morgan & Stewart, 1997). It is important to keep these key behavioral elements in mind when considering the design of an environment or product for a person with dementia or Alzheimer’s disease, and for the aging population who are living longer than past generations. Because there are no current treatments, preventions, or cures for this disease, and the longevity of life is increasing, designers should create products and environments that provide comfort, care, and help improve the quality of life for those living with Alzheimer’s disease and dementia (Alzheimer’s, 2015; Breslow, 2012). The purpose of this presentation is to share findings from the research and design of a care facility aimed at providing adult day care services for people with Alzheimer’s and dementia. The
research utilized multi-methodological data collection methods including observations, questionnaires, focus groups, and interviews to better understand the needs of staff and participants of the facility. The study population included those with Alzheimer’s disease who currently attend the adult care program as well as volunteers and care staff. The observations, questionnaires, and interviews contributed to a greater understanding of how each user interacts with the environment, people, and products of this facility. By utilizing these research methodologies, and analyzing the data, appropriate design decisions were made to create an adult day care facility design proposal that improves the quality of life for those with dementia.

REFERENCES

In 2013 the United Nations published a comprehensive report on aging populations that included two powerful statistics; the first that the number of people 60 years and older will more than double by 2015 reaching over 2 billion, the second that older persons are projected to exceed the number of children for the first time in history in 2047 (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, xi). These statistics provide us with an opportunity to explore the issues centered upon aging, and to envision new approaches and environments to support this major shift in our population. The aim of this course was to provide a series of experiences for students to interact with individuals and caregivers to explore the process of aging and the impact of empathy on the design process. The course was divided into three sections; the first was an intense period of readings, case studies and discussions that introduced aging and end-of-life issues to provide a framework for the design projects. The connection between the senses and healing was introduced through material culled from Sternberg’s text, Healing Spaces, used as a guide in exploring case studies. The crucial topic of death was introduced in Atul Gawande’s work as a physician confronting the challenges of body and mortality in Being Mortal. These explorations culminated in an aging visualization presented by each student. The second project partners with a local hospital and hospice service providing students with an opportunity to interact with caregivers and patients to propose new designs for patient rooms and public spaces using interviews as a basis for design and a deeper understanding of end-of-life care. The semester culminated in the design of a community center based upon the Village Movement Model created at Beacon Hill, that supports seniors in their desire to age-in-place. This group project explored a local neighborhood and looked to identify resident needs and ideas for multi-generational inclusion. These examples will illustrate one of many possible approaches to introduce students to an important and often overlooked asset to our community to challenge their preconceptions as they evolve as designers.
Enduring Design Demands an Enduring Profession: The Academy’s role in Advancement of the Profession of Interior Design

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ABSTRACT

QUESTION The Interior Design academy has a strong history of indoctrinating responsible business practices as an integral component of a successful career in Interior Design. The choices for textbooks from practitioners like Piotrowski (2014) and Coleman (2002), along with the Body of Knowledge (Martin and Guerin, 2004) in this regard are numerous; each being helpful as educators prepares students for individual design careers. But does the permanence of these resources provide the most current and unbiased information that allows us to fully inform our students as they begin to understand their chosen career path? Given the current state of the profession, what is the responsibility of the academy to instill fundamental powers of informed advocacy that will help our students create an enduring and valued professional service to society?

HISTORY The instruction of professional design practice and fundamental business skills has been an integral component of Interior Design pedagogy since the inception of interior design education as formalized by the Interior Design Educators Council (IDEC) and validated by what is now named CIDA. Indeed, it is this attention to ethical business acumen that has allowed interior design to legally proclaim itself as a profession, as opposed to a mere occupation (Harwood, 2006; Martin 2008).

FRAMEWORK There is an ongoing and seemingly intractable identity crisis facing the profession as documented by research pertaining to our nomenclature, our title, societal understanding and stereotyping, among many other concerns (Moody, Petit and Giglio, 2015). These, along with our constantly evolving legal and political efforts to validate our status within the regulated design professions ultimately confuse our students regarding their actual legal rights to practice to the fullest extent of their knowledge and training. Concerns of contradictory identity issues,
how we define our own profession versus how others may define us (White, 2009); along with the legal and current political dogma may all factor into our students career paths. CONCLUSION While it makes sense that such information is conveyed within courses that address business practices, any opportunity to introduce limitations regarding the scope of “Interior Design” and how laws, codes, and ordinances truly impact this effort must be taken advantage of. This presentation will review the academy’s obligation to address these issues, from all perspectives, in an open and frank manner, so that our students are better prepared to make larger career decisions that affect not only their personal futures but the future of the profession that we teach. The intent of this plan will empower students with knowledge so that they may design their own future.

REFERENCES


ABSTRACT

Statement of the Problem Design thinking as a process has been backbone of the education of the student in interiors (Orthell, 2015) and product design for many years and yet has been formalized as a business process, popularized by IDEO and other strategic thinking firms (Brown, 2009). By focusing upon the five stages as defined by the business strategy, students gain an understanding of both the empathetic needs of the end user, but also begin to understand the profit needs of a business. Characteristics of good design include both discoverability and understanding; how is the design supposed to be used? Can the design be used by all- is it universal (Norman, 2013)? Does the creative end result also have marketability and a potential for investors? Methods In a multi-disciplinary special topics class, focused upon product design, the students were challenged to create a tangible item (loosely defined) that would help a person with cognitive disabilities live a more independent life. To that end, they were introduced via video conferencing and in person to a group of young differently abled adults and their parents who answered many questions about how they lived and worked and what types of things may help them live either on their own or be less dependent upon their caregivers. From this perspective, coupled with an extensive literature review, students followed the five step process of (empathy, define, ideation, prototype, test) to create items that provided the end users an opportunity at freedom and order in their lives. Outcomes The class worked in collaboration with both the business school and the school of psychology to not only gain a better understanding of the needs of the end users, but also to learn how a product may come to market. Methods of Journey mapping, User Experience (UX) , Universal design(UD), branding and venture capital needs were explored, and the results were presented both to end-users and potential investors. Projects ranged from a portable, self-contained architectural “fort” to scheduling and clothing organizers and memory care applications. Products were prototyped, presented and then modified upon end-user feedback. Final presentations were made to the business school to create interest for possible production. One student has made the
product she designed (a memory care application for people with dementia) the cornerstone of her graduate thesis and presented to a local venture capital consortium and will participate in the venture capital bootcamp in the following semester. Future implications The students learned many valuable lessons that they can apply to any design project. One was empathy for a special population—the young adults they interviewed are of the same age as they are and are struggling with very similar issues (making friends, managing their time, learning to live on their own). Secondly, in order to properly design a product, defining the problem and prototyping the item is one of the best ways to gain valuable feedback. Third, products need more than just good design to be successful, but they also need funding and a business plan. Overall the special projects class on product design has sparked interest from a variety of students, from students of the business and communications schools in addition to interior design and architecture students. With this inter-disciplinary approach, all the students gained insights not only from the potential end-users but also from each other.

REFERENCES

Experiential learning: the Role of Industry Exposure in Student Development

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ABSTRACT

Statement of the Problem Students of design are oftentimes given a theoretical problem to solve and asked to provide risk-taking, creative, out-of-the-box solutions utilizing sometimes impossible and impractical products and materials (Ellis and McNeely, 2015). These unknown parameters may stress out the student who seeks more concrete knowledge and an understanding of expectations (Smith and Lily, 2016). Once in the profession, designers do not use the scholarly research provided by academia (Huber, 2016) and find they do not fully know of the myriad of products available to them. They are not prepared for the realities of the profession (Black, 200) which involves data-driven information, client communication, product knowledge, and understanding of budgets in addition to design talent.

Classroom teaching can be supplemented and enhanced by experiential learning via attendance at industry conferences. Methods A hands-on approach is effective in teaching the students about the profession of interior design as demonstrated by visiting the industry’s best and biggest conferences and shows. NeoCon, ICFF and High Point, among many others, provide to the student the chance to meet future employers, other designers and product manufacturers. Exposing the design student to this type of conference takes planning and effort on the part of the instructor but may reap many benefits to the student and ultimately the university. Outcomes Providing information and personal guidance to a group of students attending Neocon allowed them to meet re-known designers, discover new products and to physically experience products to further their understanding of the tools used daily in the profession. Students were given meaningful learning opportunities as they participated in product demonstrations and tours of showrooms. Two students participated in a design charette and one student, in an independent study, is in process of creating a book of her journey highlighting the designs of products; this book will also provide reflections of the city’s art and architecture in addition to her personal growth as a designer. This presentation will chronicle the journey of 10 students from three different universities and provide methods of organization, exploration, scheduling and communication.
with the students. Reflections from the students will further define the value in such an expedition. As one student said, “The opportunity to meet people in the field of design is endless and can be very beneficial to one’s future.” Future implications The journey provides a study “abroad” concept; one that better prepares the student for their future in the profession and enriches their studies. By creating an experiential learning option, attached to an industry related showcase of products, the students gain confidence in their abilities and talents. Networking skills are honed as they learn to speak the language of the professional, no longer just the student.

REFERENCES

ABSTRACT

What place does aesthetics provide in our common life? How is the play impulse related to the realm of aesthetics? Nineteenth century scholars including Schiller proposed notions of the play impulse in their theories of aesthetics and enlightened knowledge. Twentieth century anthropologist Gregory Bateson includes the nature of play in his theories for the patterns of biological growth as they relate to human thinking and understanding. These theses provide meaningful background for discussing and understanding the role in society that the natures of aesthetics and play provide. Play itself has been described as a framework for action more than a set of rules. It is considered as a learning practice that does not define the actions of its content. It is not constrained by a reinforcement of rules. Play embodies the human exploration of potentials and limits, and provides a self-validating experience, regardless of the product of its outcome. Aesthetic endeavors include the natures of play and its tendency towards an indifferent posture. Ideas are neither subjectively nor objectively contingent, and impose neither outward nor inward necessity. Proceeding from a prompt, or a need, efforts move from physical inquiry through a series of oscillating imaginations zigzagging between the random and the selected, process and the form. Play provides a forum where two worlds from opposite directions are perceived in a holistic disposition. Realizations of unifying ideas proceed from a whirl between the empirical, the contingent as one set of vantage points, and the free, the intuitive as the other. The demands of both capacities are brought into harmony with one another. This approach, native to aesthetic endeavors, unites matter and form, sensuousness and reason. Embedded in the practice of aesthetics and play are the attitudes approaching independence, at least from a distance, and the free movement which is itself an end and a means. As soon as the experience has reached the point of distinguishing appearance from actuality, form from body, the scholar is in a position to dissociate the one from the other. At full development, the aesthetic endeavor of play may provide an enlightened realization that is at the same time as meaningful to the individual as to culture, that is, as representative of the culture in which it is embodied. ‘Beauty alone makes all the world happy, and every being forgets its limitations as long as it experiences her enchantment’ (Schiller). Aesthetic ideas
lead knowledge out of the mysteries of science into the arena of common wisdom, and transforms playfully discovered visions into an available property for all of human society. Seen with the full complement of powers and laxity of determination in the contexts of play and aesthetics, we may experience at times in its purest expressions, a prelude to the infinite. The scholar, representing fully both individual and cultural human perceptions within the boundaries of available knowledge, in dissociated interest, records a unique place in the human experience that forever transcends the present and provides the unknown with a newly delineated place for human consideration.

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To Feel the Space: Body, Form, Color, Sound and Making of Interior Skin

Jiangmei Wu

There is an increasing interest in interior design theory that focuses on understanding interior spaces as both the specifics of objects and environments within the interior and the subjects who experience them through their bodily presence (Semper, 1851; Taylor & Preston, 2006; Weinthal, 2011). If a theory of interiority cannot simply be characterized by reference to qualities such as walls, ceilings and floors in a Cartesian space and by the objects and finishing contained in it, and we wish to engage physical and psychological body-space relationships as well, then what are some new spatial expressions that can affect our perception of space? What is our perception of a space? What does it mean to feel a space?

According to Gestalt psychology, when we enter an interior space, what is first and immediately perceived is neither the subjective sensation nor shapes, colors, or objects, but rather, atmosphere. German philosopher, Gernot Böhme (Böhme, 1993), in his seminal work, Atmosphere as The Fundamental Concept of a New Aesthetics, articulated the interrelationship between the subjects and objects in atmospheric space. According to Böhme, atmospheres are neither something object nor something subject. Instead, atmospheres are both object-like, articulating their presence through qualities, and at the same time subject-like, presenting a bodily state of being of subjects in space. This art installation, To Feel the Space, is an attempt to explore the potential object-like and subject-like expression of interior atmosphere by focusing on the ephemeral status between subject and object and capturing the fleeting moments of body-space experience. At the center of the installation is a large folded interior skin, borrowing from the metaphor of ‘Bone and Skin’ in architecture. An architectural skin, referred to generically as the boundary between indoor and outdoor, has to negotiate with both exterior and interior presences. In contrast, interior skin, mediated by architectural skin, can be understood as a series of layers demarcating various interior enclosures: inside and outside demarcation is erased and dichotomy becomes relevant only to the presence of the body. Situated within a large public space, for example, an exhibition hall, the form of the interior skin, digitally fabricated from folded plates is not the result of the design generated from a specific program, but the result of parameterizing the dome-like structure to the bodily dimensions and movement. The interior skin, as the object in space, actively engages with the subjects as they walk into the exhibition space. Digital sensors capture the colors palettes from the clothing people wear in space and send the live color information to be project-mapped onto the interior skin. Microphones capture snippets of people’s conversations when they move inside the interior skin, and the snippets of conversations are added to a
sound database and played back through the speakers. When people move outside of the interior skin, they will step into a roomful of chattering noise as if the space is present with the traces of bodies even if the bodies are absent in space. Therefore, the atmosphere is neither objective nor subjective, but infused with the fleeting interplay between the object and the subject that is felt through the body and met with the eyes and the ears.
To Feel the Space

Interior skin, mediated by architectural skin, can be understood as a series of layers demarcating various interior enclosures. Inside and outside demarcation is erased and dichotomy becomes relevant only to the presence of the body.
To Feel the Space

The form of the interior skin, digitally fabricated from folded plates is not the result of the design generated from a specific program, but the result of parameterizing the dome-like structure to the bodily dimensions and movement.
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