

## **Networks and Transactions (G752a)**

Fridays 1:30-5:30

9 Sept – 2 Dec, 2005

Dan Michaelson

*Prerequisite: Interactive 1 (G742b) or equivalent experience. The class is intended for second-year graduate design students, but first-years who have completed G742b are also welcome.*

For me, some of the most exciting possibilities in design, arise when design's job is to connect multiple networks of information and of people, all of which are in motion. This class will allow each student to select from two assignments. In addition there will be a three-week workshop with Antenna Design. Together, the assignments focus on exploiting and activating network connections in the city, in our studio, and online.

Students are expected to customize the given assignments to suit their own thesis. It's expected that students will work in HTML, Flash, Director, Processing, DrawBot, or another technology; but non-technological solutions could be possible.

We will also discuss how to site, show, or publish work that is inherently transient, in ways that are appropriate to each student's thesis.

Choose one of the following assignments, or do both.

### **Assignment 1: Junction**

“The contemporary image is typified precisely by its generative power; it is no longer a trace (retroactive) but a programme (active).” – Nicolas Bourriard, *Relational Aesthetics* (1998)

Identify two flows in the city of New Haven (or New York). For example, cups of coffee sold at Dunkin Donuts, live music listings, bus schedules, historical change in areas of the city, weather patterns, or the circulation of people within and between neighborhoods.

Consider how these two flows might intersect. For example, could a display in a bodega tell customers about lectures at Yale. How would its design engage both the bodega and the university?

What is an appropriate and beautiful typography and movement for the junction you're creating?

### **Assignment 2: Messenger**

“Last week, 745 human lives were saved from perishing by the wireless. But for the almost magic use of the air the *Titanic* tragedy would have been shrouded in the secrecy that not so long ago was the power of the sea ... Few New Yorkers realize that all through the roar of the big city there are constantly speeding messages between people separated by vast distances, and that over housetops and even through the walls of buildings and in the very air one breathes are words written by electricity.” – *New York Times* (21 Apr 1912)

Design an instant messenger. I will provide Flash and/or Processing code that allows you to send and receive messages to a similar program running on another person's computer. What interface will you create for sending and receiving messages, and what are the possible typographies for these messages?

Structure of the class:

You're expected to make substantial progress each week. For each assignment that you undertake, you should follow this structure so that we all agree on how to proceed:

**Phase 1 (1-2 weeks): Research**

Through explorations outdoors, in the library and online, research possible subject matter and design approaches. At the in-class crit, present findings and ideas in printed form (as xeroxes, binder, posters, etc.) or as a slide presentation, so you can get feedback from your peers and also so your ideas might be useful to others. In addition to direct typographic or field research, consider what existing projects or precedents could help inform your work. The product of this phase should itself be beautiful and worth discussing.

**Phase 2 (2-3 weeks): Initial design**

Design the product which you will make, in a way which is clear enough that we can comment on it but also flexible enough that you can change it. Begin also to consider and research how you'll implement your design or prototype.

**Phase 3 (3-4 weeks): Design development and implementation**

Develop and complete your design, either as a fully working product, or as a demonstration that allows us to envision a possible future "world." In either case, the purpose is not to show off some technology (especially if you won't be deploying a fully working product), but rather your use of typography and design to create something new.

Class schedule:

2 Sept ... Introduction and discussion of the assignment

9 Sept ... Desk discussions

16 Sept ... Desk discussions

23 Sept ... In-class crit

30 Sept ... Desk discussions

7 Oct ... In-class crit

14 Oct ... Desk discussions

21 Oct ... In class crit

**28 Oct ... Antenna workshop (project introduction: Green Hall intervention)**

**4 Nov ... Antenna workshop (walking critique)**

**11 Nov ... Antenna workshop (final presentation)**

18 Nov ... Desk discussions

2 Dec ... Final in class crit (guest critics to be announced)