

application project 3:



SCHEDULE:

November 15	Brief OUT
November 21 Onscreen Presentation in 5080	<p>Arrive with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. who? (user or user group) b. why? (THEME: scenario or opportunity) <p>NOT A THING!!!!</p> <p><i>*we'll describe below what we mean by "theme", "scenario" and "opportunity", so that there is absolute clarity of this</i></p> <p>_You will arrive at these by use and application of the IDEO Method Cards specified. Week one method Cards (see further below for details): 1 Cross-Cultural Comparisons 2 Long-Range Forecasts 3 Five Whys? 4 Behavioral Archaeology 5 Affinity Diagrams You must show evidence of how you did this.</p> <p>_You will also read the chapter from IDEO, "The Art of Innovation" on "Brainstormers" and show that in a model. _You will need to show evidence that you have looked back and considered the implications of the readings we have done in the course to date in MEANINGFUL ways. The readings include: Drucker, the agglomeration and innovative cities materials, Maeda, Hebdige etc.</p> <p>_You need to show: 3 lateral process options (3 users + 1 theme or three themes + 1 user) _You MAY and are encouraged to develop further and to extend out from a theme you've already successfully developed in the course in Application Projects 1 + 2. BUT: only if that theme received favorable criticism from the panel. My goodness don't try and develop what was already a bad idea!! SOME of the teams have one of these. Many do not yet.</p> <p><i>***at end of your presentation a SOLID direction MUST be clear to the panel. If we cannot select one of yours, we will impose on your group both the user and the theme. At this point in the course it is EXPECTED that all can find a good idea. If you can't we will not let you go forward with a bad one. This should be a point of honor for your team. Make no mistake: we WILL not pull punches here.</i></p>
November 28 Onscreen Presentation in 5080	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Restate your idea: user/theme _ you have to in the week move this forward _ you have to communicate with EXACTITUDE the range and scope of your theme and user. _synthesize your process 2. "Who is your user/audience", should not be in any doubt. How can you make this clear? _ journey frameworks _ ethnographic observations (a day in the life) _ cultural probes _ cognitive maps _ affinity diagrams _ other METHODS for synthesizing 3. User-Centered Design Research: _ see above PLUS _ you must select 2-3+ IDEO Method Cards Methods. BUT: it's all about choosing the RIGHT methods

	<p>to drive your specific project and its research needs. And show EXPLICITLY how that can and HAS affected you design process this week. These will all be about and help you develop: USER EMPATHY, to allow you to get into the “user’s headspace”.</p> <p>4. YOU READ Bill Moggridge, “Designing Interactions”, Chapter 8, “Multi-Sensory + Multi-Media” and you model that and show EXPLICITLY how that can and HAS affected your design process this week.</p> <p>5. we need to at this point see ACTUAL research into your user groups. NOTE: these MUST NOT be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _yourselves _people like you _your friends _your classmates _your teachers _people you know _your mom or family <p>6. a “user group” needs to be SPECIFIC. Example a: alternate reality gamers in Brazil or b. Independent shopkeepers in Yaletown. You must define the SCOPE of the user group. LAZY “testing” will be rejected and you will told to re-do.</p>
December 06 Prototyping: Show in 5140 Same class times	<p>1. YOU COME IN WITH ONE IDEA. One SOLID idea.</p> <p>2. NOW: you PROTOTYPE as a way to move forward design process and you SHOW US that process. Specifically: you show AT LEAST two separate iterative processes. We want to see how it iterated. We want to see HOW you got to this point.</p> <p>3. You will READ and model (and present THIS component onscreen), from IDEO's book, “Art of Innovation”, the chapter on “prototyping”</p> <p>4. You also need to show one or more interaction design precedents (Per will provide an initial list to indicate what we mean, but you must find your own) that will/could inspire your design direction. NOT merely through form, but through how it can develop your THEME.</p>
December 13 Prototyping: Show in 5140 Same class times	Specifics to be communicated. Final presentation of your “THING” or “WHAT”. But one that is DEVELOPED through THEME.



Clarification of Meanings:

***regardless of how others define the below, this is from this point forward understood to be what WE mean by these terms and thereby we seek to create a distinct shared understanding of core concepts.*

1. **A theme is not a thing.** That should be clear by this point in the course. If you end up with a mere “thing”, or a mere “what” in four weeks: YOU WILL FAIL THIS PROJECT. PERIOD. Get this really clear. If you fail this project you can still fail this course.
2. So: WHY is a theme not a thing? And **WHAT is a theme?**
A theme is a way of developing the “what” and “who” first as design process. You will be asked in this project to develop the “why” and “who” separately and the “user” is the “who” at a certain level. BUT: a user SHOULD imply more than just raw data or marketing trends. AND a theme **EQUALLY** developed BOTH why and who. But it probably **BEGINS** from “WHY”, and then weaves “WHO” around it as you go along.

Let me be precise:

A theme could be THREE things that gets at "why" and "who" first and not what directly, but that may LEAD to "what", eventually. Hopefully making BETTER what's:

- _a problem
- _a scenario
- _an opportunity

We are going to SPECIFICALLY ask you to make sure that HOW you develop this THEME and what we agree it means FOR THIS project is NOT the first: **a problem**. We DO NOT want you to set out to nor to believe that you are being asked to "solve a problem". Why? Because inevitably then students come in with proposals that are about "fixing existing issues" or "improving/enhancing" products. That is NOT what we want.

So, it is an issue of SCALE that you need to come in at. And "problem solving is the LOWEST scale. We'll get to why this is not desirable in a moment.

First, what is the second type of theme: a scenario?

A scenario is specifically when we come at an issue from the BIG, BIG PICTURE, and in which we can try things out that have important meanings and may difficult to "solve". We are in this mode INTENTIONALLY not beginning by seeking an answer, BUT through the discourse created this LEADS to a set of meaningful observations that can lead to meaningful human interventions. THEN this usually DOES lead to new answers and even problem solving, but within this new context and ENLARGED PROBLEM SPACE. So how is this not an "opportunity"?

An opportunity: is when you IMMERSE yourself for a week or more into a user group and/or thinking of tasks, systems perhaps, that *lack fluidity*. It is specifically: seeing opportunities where design can make a difference in everyday PRACTICE. So, that is why it is not a "what" or a "thing". In a way it is "fixing" the status quo, but it is not getting at fixing a product.

3. The THEME you develop may in some ways be a blend of "Scenario" and "Opportunity" but it specifically MUST not be a "problem", nor a "problem-solving" exercise. WHY? We began this discussion above:

It is an issue of "SCALE". If you come in at the scale of problem solving you will inevitably be unable to break free of the CULTURAL SCALE of the MASS MARKET, of mass products, mass production and MASS CULTURE. The world does NOT need anymore of this. I don't care whether you wish to debate this or not. In THIS course that is NOT what we are after. You can do that elsewhere and may be encouraged to do so. But AFTER this course you will know the difference and understand that you are MAKING A CHOICE. So, the scale of a theme would run like this in descending order:

- i. scenario (i.e. Superstudio + Italian Radical Design)
- ii. opportunity (i.e. Scandinavian Design)
- iii. problem or problem solving (Industrial Design)



Why?

Because what you develop or design will inevitably reach people at a **CULTURAL SCALE**. This course is premised on the following:

That the goal of design today **SHOULD NOT** be to develop ideas intended for the mass market. You should let the market **DECIDE** what it wants, needs or desires. This is a “bottom-up” approach. Most design and marketing is the old-school modernist “top-down”. Society is **FAR** too developed in differentiated markets and niches. This is what we call **SEGMENTATION**. Society is not homogeneous it is **HETEROGENEOUS**. And that is not even taking into account National, and local differences of culture. Mass Market means **WORLD** market and sees all people in all countries as the same. National markets see people as homogeneous within a culture defined by nation. This is of course absurd: Quebec and the West in “Canada”, Tibet in China being two of dozens of examples. **BUT** you also can’t design **EVERYTHING** for **INDIVIDUAL USERS**. That’s absurd as well. So how can we find somewhere in the middle where we can get **CLOSER** to the Individual user and their needs wants and desires? How can you get at the “segmented audience”? How can we understand where to target in the mass for our ideas and innovations?

SCALES.

You are looking for a “sweetspot” that is below “mass”, and then further below, below “demographics”. This might get us into “cohorts” and cohort theory. But even this is not far enough down toward individuals and what’s makes them tick. So, we are scaling down here:

- 1 Mass market
- 2 National Audience
- 3 Demographics
- 4 Generational Cohorts + Defining Moments

And what is just below this line? Where can emerging trends be spotted as “microtrends” **BEFORE** they become “macrotrends”? That’s right: in subcultures. Subcultures form and reform constantly, but new un-processed ideas constantly form **IN THEM**. So research companies like **CHESKIN** spend most of their time seeking out emergent and forming subcultures in order to “Braille the culture” to see where things are going for **PEOPLE** at a level that is close to what they **VALUE**. **Subcultures are the sweetspot.** The sweetspot between Mass and Individual.

- 5 Subcultures
- 6 Individual Users

So why does this matter?

Because as we already said: themes are used a method for getting at why’s and who’s driven by scenarios and opportunities. **They work at the higher DESIGN scale to get at the LOWER audience scale.** Problem Solving gets at and leads directly **TO MASS**. It will **NEVER** get you to Individual. The companies that matter in Interaction Design today **ALL** know this and practice it: IDEO, Google, Apple, etc. can a company thrive **WITHOUT** this? Of course: this is the **OLD** model and it has worked so companies keep doing it in whole or in part. The mass market **SELLS**. But it is, it could be argued, no longer **SUSTAINABLE**. In a variety of ways and meanings. And as we have clearly seen in the course: it does not lead to innovation. No innovation: no agglomeration. No agglomeration in the new post-industrial context: cities wither and die. They can “grow”, but cannot attract knowledge and creative workers. As we learned, you can have a “big” city, because it is already in decay. If you learn how to do this, you will become invaluable to employers in the new and emergent knowledge-based economy.

4. SO: you are asked here to use this knowledge to work at a scale of design problem that can direct you toward a cultural scale that should ensure that you don’t in the end propose something that is “mass market” bound.
5. You will use actual research using user-centered design methods to ensure this and to ensure that you find and test “extreme users”. The “average user” is operating in the “mass market” paradigm, and that won’t tell you anything. Or anything new. So why bother? To say you did the testing? DON’T bother. You don’t want the average user of “television” as an example. You want the extreme user who either: NEVER watches TV or the user who **ALWAYS** watches TV. **THEME NOT THING**.

Method Cards: week one in detail

1. Cross-Cultural Comparisons

HOW: Read texts written by a person of a culture different from your own, or from a subculture you are unfamiliar with. Make a table listing the differences in behaviour and artifacts between yourself and this group.

WHY: This increases the team's understanding of diversity, cultural factors and the implications for their projects when designing for unfamiliar and/or global markets.

2. Long-Range Forecasts

HOW: Write up a scenario that describes how social and/or environmental trends might influence people's behaviour and their use of environment in the future.

WHY: Predicting changes in behaviour can help you understand, and communicate, the implications of design decisions.

3. Five Whys?

HOW: When you think you have an answer for the 'Why' of your theme, challenge it by asking five more 'Why?' questions in response to the consecutive answers you come up with.

WHY: This exercise forces you to deeply examine your reasons behind the choice of theme.

4. Behavioral Archaeology

HOW: Look for the evidence of people's activities inherent in the placement, wear patterns, and organization of places and things.

WHY: This reveals how artifacts and environments figure in people's lives, highlighting aspects of their lifestyle, habits, priorities and values.

5. Affinity Diagrams

HOW: Cluster, and make connections between, design elements according to intuitive relationships such as similarity, dependence, proximity, etc. Similar to mind-maps.

WHY: This method is a useful way to identify connections between elements and reveal innovation opportunities.