Liv'd is a semi-annual publication produced in the Pacific Northwest, dedicated to the intersection of art, design, culture and how these influence lived experience. The publication includes contributions from professional artists, designers and the wise — many of whom do not participate in the dominant mechanisms of culture production.

Liv’d pays homage to the inspiring and idealistic efforts of the early twentieth century avant-garde, balancing the academic with the personal and experimental.

Issue 15.1 includes contributions responding to the following prompt: Sherrie Levine. Such a limited prompt is deliberate, allowing for the various ways Levine’s work has influenced our concept of art, design, self, and issues still central to the lives of women. Levine, a pioneer of post-modernism, most notably called into question white male privilege, authenticity, and identity through her response to the photographs of Walker Evans. She is still a dissenting voice, arguably more relevant than ever.

Contributions by:
Nicole Dyar
Meredith James
Lisa Jarrett
Sarah McCoy
Hayden Roma

Advisory Council:
Miriam Abelion
Andrea Cardinal
Briar Levit

Layout, imagery, and editing:
Meredith James

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A significant part of me wonders even now if we have enforced too much physical ease into our westernized lives. The mind-body balance is out of whack as it is. Life in reality, is struggle. We've lost our relationship to our bodies, we've lost our relationship to nature, and as women, this is even more bizarre as we are recurrently reminded of what nature is through our bodies.

The life of a woman is intensely personal. The problems of a woman are intensely personal. Because the problems we face slice right to our biological, physiological origins. Our core and most vulnerable selves.

Our daily fears are comprised of climates that act as invisible behavior modifications. These are not evidence of freedom. Abuse, neglect, victimization, control — these are not evidence of freedom. They are evidence of oppression. They're all still here, a little more sneaky, and now there is more shouting. Most of us agree such acts are wrong. It seems to me the current dilemma is not assigning value scales to wrong actions, but getting those who engage in such actions to acknowledge what they've done as being wrong (including the complicit). I would much prefer it if villains just claimed their villainousness.

In Buddhism, the teachings are regularly challenged through inquiry and practice. I subscribe to this effort. Or in the words of Eve Ensler, change the verb.

My argument is not to destabilize or aggravate existing structures. I have no interest whatsoever in mastering patriarchy / changing the system from within. My argument is to step outside of the entire paradigm altogether. Shake it off.

In my argument, the claims made by Virginia Woolf over a half a century ago are highly in line. To have enough money, and a safe space to live, what sorts of genius could be produced? What sorts of ideas, not bound by existing frameworks could develop? The question is inspiring.

There is a balance that must be struck between measuring external information against lived experience, and allowances for empathy. Don't ever accept what someone else tells you on face value – critical inquiry is crucial. But this must be tempered with empathy for others. An acknowledgment that my specific lived experience and perceptions are different from yours, and allowing these differences to exist. I should not have to defend or justify my need for social justice, because my lived experience tells me inequity exists. And that should be enough of an argument for you.

And thus, the need for empathy. Does it have to happen to you specifically for it to be an issue that needs addressing? This is one of only two questions I will directly answer in my contributions to this publication: No.

There is something wonderful about difference. About letting someone else share with you their life or perspective. The wonders of discovery. Articles contained within this publication are written by individuals who have something worth listening to. None of them come from the dominant art and design mouthpieces, and for this I am glad to no end.

As for me personally, I specifically and directly walk away from sex-based inequity, feminism, gender studies, etc., over and over again, in search of work and an identity not bound by these constructs. Yet other people keep forcing them into prominence. This is really crucial here. I choose to focus my energies on being at peace with myself, exploratory art and design, and laughing once in a while. Yet consistently, regularly, I have to fight through events related to my body and sex in order to focus on the life I choose to live. So, issue one of this publication is acknowledging such disparities, allowing them to exist, admitting the role they play (wanted or unwanted) in my life, and purging some relatively specific demons so I can again, move forward.

Thank you Duchamp. As much of a prig as I think you really are, there is some laughter there. Thank you Sherrie. For reminding me that I get to choose how I see things. To rekindle my sense of humor, often and quickly lost to the traumas of life. I don't agree with either of you, but love that you exist.

Sherrie Levine reminds me to stop taking all of this so seriously. Art is, art. Design is, well...
Art + Design are not bound by the rigors of the natural or social sciences. Art + Design are framed and bound only by the imagination.

Art and design follow their own rules for scholarship, these ‘ways of knowing’ are just as valid

A ‘designerly’ form of scholarship would be reflective of the discipline, easily moving between theory and practice.
Articles + Authors in Order of Appearance

I Am a Reproduced Reproduction
Nicole Dyar
Subject: Sherrie Levine’s implications on women’s identity; pop-culture
Type: Criticism

For D.E.S. In Loving Memory.
Lisa Jarrett
Subject + Type: Obituary, Love-Letter, Poetry

Early Women Printers
Sarah McCoy
Subject: Colonial women printers
Type: Academic / Historical

The Dismantling of an Icon
Hayden Roma
Subject: Barbie, sexuality / gender, includes extreme body modification through plastic surgery
Type: Scholarly + Personal Hybrid

Sex-Based Inequity, A Question Set
Meredith James
Subject: The complicity of women and ongoing male violence in sex-based inequity; design thinking applied to sex-based inequity
Type: Academic / Theoretical

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Lorem Ipsum
Subject + Type: FPO, Metaphor
Barthes expands upon Marx’s “false consciousness” to extrapolate a sort of cultural Nirvana—she is adopting them as her own. She has incited both disgust and praise for her plagiaristic works; her style has long waned. She is no longer deliver quite the same punch she once could (Rimanelli, 1994). Yet when I am consumed with and simultaneously eaten away by almost everything that exists outside of ourselves, we lose ourselves in light of trying to be something other than who we truly are. Instead of becoming ourselves, we end up becoming one another. We become culture.
While I must digress, there have been some changes in the ways in which women are being perceived and being treated. This is surprising to see in mass media. Increasingly, women are being celebrated for their talents and achievements, rather than their physical appearances. Women are being portrayed as strong and independent, and their stories are being told in a way that empowers them.

However, there are still instances of self-acceptance and authenticity present in popular culture. Culture that feels like a somewhat hollow fantasy. Take for example singer Meghan Trainor's song "All About That Bass" (2014). The song is a cheeky pop tune with a premise that is dense with the dense that dense and celebrates self-acceptance, attempting to combat body image. However, upon hearing the song, I found myself growing uncomfortable with the lyrics. I see the song as an attempt to make a clear point about these cultural standards.

Trainor sings, "Yeah it's pretty clear, I ain't no size two..." I find myself struggling with the Beyoncés of the entertainment industry who are perceived to appear a certain way to avoid criticism of those who question female representations. It's why I find myself struggling with the Beyoncés of the entertainment industry who are perceived to appear a certain way to avoid criticism of those who question female representations.

Following a recent trend in popular culture, self-love and authenticity are something that needs to be more and more prominent in the ways in which women are perceived and treated. It's why I find myself struggling with the Beyoncés of the entertainment industry who are perceived to appear a certain way to avoid criticism of those who question female representations.
Dear Meredith,

Not today. Any day but today. Time is running out. Sherry Levine (read Post-Modernism) ceases to matter when you are losing a loved one. What is Art and/or the Great Unknown? What, after all, is appropriation’s value in light of such questions? Each contradiction amplified by anticipation of this loss. So, what denotes a life? Which lens will focus? What frames the bitter taste? Lemon. Peppermint. These come to mind.


This is a photograph—sans Levine’s sleight of hand—a copyright. This is mine. I am claiming it with my frame.

But.

How else will I remember you, Des? This picture of a picture of a specter is my fleeting loving memory in hand. Charlatan pixels mimicking a process, in the process of becoming, which is to say imitating life. A document. Will it stand in for ___ ___ ___ and change my perspective, thereby offering some semblance of what you gave? In parts.

And.

If you take it for yourself is it yours to give away in the name of Art/Americanisms/Sherry Levine? Is it only the thought that counts, Mother? If you pray to a god-not-your-own is it still a prayer? Where does Art happen? Is a picture of a picture merely a sign pointing? (You are here.) If you can’t un-ring a bell can you re-ring it? Not again, but over?

No.

Maybe.

Perhaps there is value, another assertion, in the thin veneer of re-packaging. Perhaps the primacy is less about consumption and more about resilience. It is possible that the time spent listening, looking, seeing is meaning. Will you see what I see? To honor the source by claiming its frame, this too is enough. Nobody was looking but me.

Respectfully,

Lisa

For D E S
In loving memory.
*THE HISTORY OF FEMINISM IN SIX LINES*

1. WE NEED TO VOTE.

2. I want to work at an office. And so should you.

3. Where are all the black people? The queers? Wait, what about prostitutes?

4. I have a vagina / cunt damnit.

5. What even is feminism. The category is problematic, the assignment is problematic, it’s all problematic.


Was all that shouting just the guerrilla girls? Ugh.

Cats ? . . . sloths.

categories + sloths = <3

still...
The early colonial print shop was most commonly a family endeavor, started by a father and son, or sets of brothers (such as the Bradfords, Franklins, and even as early as the Incunabula period, with Peter Schöffer and Johann Fust). Since the early 15th century, however, women worked as printers, typesetters, type casters, punch cutters, type drawers and type designers, albeit predominantly out of necessity (Demeter, 1979). Many of the women discussed here were unknown until they married or after they continued an existing business in the event of a partner’s death. In light of their unexpected hardship, these women were concerned (like many contemporary working mothers) with securing provisions for their young family and maintaining whatever small income they could for a continued existence. The weight of daily survival was constant, as many buried their own children who had succumbed to diseases and early deaths. These women faced the seriousness and hardship of life with intense focus and perseverance.

**ELIZABETH GLOVER**

Origins of the Harvard University Press

According to Joseph Blumenthal’s landmark text, *The Printed Book in America*, the first woman involved in printing in the United States was Mrs. Elizabeth (Harris) Glover. Glover and her husband were from Surrey, England. He was a nonconformist minister who sought new freedoms to print religious materials for the colonies, and so they set out across the Atlantic. He unfortunately died en-route, but Glover carried on. With few children by her side, and aided by her husband’s technician, Stephen Daye (who composed type but was barely literate), Glover successfully set up a press in Cambridge, Massachusetts (Blumenthal, 1989). Glover’s first issued work was a printed broadside, and a small Almanac entitled, *The Freeman’s Oath* (Harvard Library, 2013). Her most ambitious and difficult work was a fire by seven inch, 300-page rough paraphrase of the Psalms entitled, *Boy Psalm Book*.

Her printing life was cut short by her death in August of 1643. While the body of her printed work is relatively small, she was able to remain steadfast to her goal of a thriving print shop and laid much of the groundwork for the future Harvard University Press. It was only after her death that second husband Henry Dunster inherited her printing press, plates, and paper, and effectively bridged Glover’s pioneering efforts with the Harvard Corporation.

In 1913 (over two hundred and fifty years later), the Harvard Corporation established the Harvard University Press. The University Press has since gone on to publish many works from luminaries such as T.S. Eliot, Igor Stravinsky, and Leonard Bernstein, to name but a few. Only through Glover’s perseverance of forging ahead to a new land (without any certainty) to establish her press, was this literary foundation laid; quite an accomplishment for just one small brave woman.

**DINAH NUTHEAD**

A First for the Colonies

Dinah Nuthead was one of the most well-known early women printers. She was based in the Province of Maryland and is believed to have been the first woman ever to be licensed as a printer in the thirteen colonies.

Nuthead lived in St. Mary’s City, printing standard legal and clerical government work. She was illiterate, and how she understood enough of the business to run a press without employing someone who understood, is beyond our knowledge (Demeter, 1979). But, she did know enough about her abilities and limitations to know that she could print commercial and legal forms with relatively little need for literacy and still have steady work.

In 1695, Nuthead petitioned the Maryland General Assembly to grant her a license to print all bonds, bills, and warrants of attorney. She paid £100 to be granted the license to print (Demeter, 1979). Her work was neither glamorous nor novel, but she understood the value of specialization by defining herself within a specific market.

**ELIZABETH TIMOTHY**

The South Carolina Gazette

Elizabeth Timothy, her husband, and their four children arrived in Philadelphia in 1732 to set up a shop as printers, typesetters, and cutters. Timothy’s husband arranged a six-year franchise contract to revive the South Carolina Gazette, a weekly newspaper in Charleston, South Carolina in 1733.

In 1738, Timothy’s husband still had one year left in his six-year contract with Franklin before they could renew terms or choose to part ways, but unfortunately, that was the year he died. Timothy assumed control of the paper and fulfilled the final year of the contract. In her new role, we see an excellent example of steadfastness and the ability to mix motherhood with business: she understood that if she could successfully keep the Gazette running she had a chance to purchase the paper outright from Franklin in a year and thus, ensure the ability to provide for her family in the long term.

Years later, Franklin wrote about Timothy’s management: “On her husband’s decease, the business was continued by his widow, who being born and bred in Holland, where, as I have been informed, the knowledge of accounts [sic] make a part of female education, she not only sent me as clear a state as she could find of the transaction past, but continued to account with the greatest regularity and exactitude every quarter afterwards, and managed the business with such success that she not only brought up reputably a family of children but at the expiration of the term was able to purchase of me the printing-house and establish her son in it” (Demeter, 1979).

Ever the progenitor of new ideas, as early as 1746, Timothy opened a stationary and book store adjacent to the Gazette to further develop her business while staying in close proximity to her then son’s printing house in 1757, she died.

**ANN SMITH FRANKLIN**

Rhode Island, Early Efforts

Benjamin Franklin, ever the entrepreneur, was also connected to the colony’s first female newspaper editor, Ann Smith Franklin. Franklin, sister-in-law of Benjamin (married to his older brother James) was born in 1696 and published Rhode Island’s first newspaper, the *Rhode Island News and Mercury* in 1728. She was the first woman to write an almanac, and the first woman to print information and opinions that would have been popular, as well as these provocative and noteworthy. She was careful to allow all perspectives in her paper, while herself remaining neutral. Thus creating a balanced newspaper and maintaining readership. Timothy and Franklin were both aware of the consequences of printing controversial work, but knew that doing so was a virtuous stance worth the risk.

**keywords:** colonial, printing, american, graphic design history, dinah nuthead, elizabeth timothy, ann smith franklin, sarah updike goddard, margaret draper, sarah mccoy
The boldness of early printer Margaret Draper.

MARGARET DRAPER

James Jr. running the operation of the presses, and daughters Mary and Elizabeth typesetting text. It was said that her daughters were correct and quick compositors at the case, they were sensible and amiable women (Thomas, 1874).

While she printed official colonial work, Franklin continued to explore entrepreneurial possibilities by supplementing her income through printing sermons, and popular British novelists. Franklin's most notable work was compiling and publishing five editions of the Rhode Island Almanac, for the years 1737-1742. At the age of sixty-five she gave much of her business responsibilities to son James Jr. and took on printer Samuel Hall (a former son-in-law) as a partner, under the imprint "Franklin & Hall." She died in 1763.

While the work Franklin published was predominantly conventional, utilizing women in the print shop was not. As stated, her daughters were as industrious and courteous as their mother, facts known throughout the colonies.

Franklin's many years of publishing resulted in a large body of printed works. She was integral to the circulation of intellect and overall colonial culture of the day.

MARGARET DRAPER

Multiple Viewpoints

The boldness of early printer Margaret Draper, may have come from the fact that she—"in her own right—was in direct lineage from the earliest printing family in the American Colonies. She was a descendant of Samuel Green, the first official printer of the Massachusetts Bay Colony" (Demeter, 1979).

As publisher of The Massachusetts Gazette, she reminded many of her editorial adversaries of the responsibilities of the press to print contentious points of view, even if they didn't agree with the commonly rising Patriot perspective. She faced much opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition. She faced much opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists. Such steadfastness in the face of opposition for her fair treatment of the Loyalists.

Goddard was an active printer/publisher all the while encouraging children William and Mary Katherine in their endeavors to develop newspapers such as the Pennsylvania Chronicle, The Maryland Journal, and later The Baltimore Advertiser. Throughout his time as a publisher, William was engaged in several political and personal confrontations. Goddard is noted as sending several admonishing and encouraging letters to her son, reminding him of his principal duty to live at peace with his fellow man (Goddard, 1770). She writes: "But remember, we are not under the old law of retaliation, an eye for an eye, etc. forever blessed by our gracious Redeemer, who has abrogated it, and substituted a much more glorious one in its place, no less than the law of universal love. Above all you will see a few unreserved sentiments of a parent extremely desirous of your present and future happiness, and how satisfied they will meet with kind reception, as the design is to promote love of God, and benevolence among men. That you may taste the unspeakable comforts that flow from a life of peace and purity, and live on the glorious expectations that attend, the spirit of universal love may ever be the ruling passion of your soul, it is unfaimed and urgent prayer of your ever affectionate mother, Sarah Goddard" (Goddard, 1778).

Goddard's moral convictions drove much of her paper's content, as we see with her expressed opposition to the Stamp Act. She utilized her pages as a place to educate her audience about constitutional issues and policies, and very clearly presented information and opinions about taxation and representation, and their subsequent consequences for the local townsfolk.

Much of what we can take from Goddard is her intense conviction to print what she deemed instructive and of immediate importance to the Colonies' emerging social and political arenas.

MARY KATHERINE GODDARD

A Legacy of Printing

Goddard's work wasn't finished at her death, her daughter Mary Katherine continued printing and went on to become Baltimore's first Postmaster in 1775. At the time, her post office was the busiest in the nation. Mary eventually found fame for publishing the first certified copy of the Declaration of Independence in January of 1777, including the signatures of all state delegates revealed. Six months prior many had not wanted their signatures to be known since it would have been treasonous to make declarations against an established government (Hudak, 1978).

Even though she led a forthright life, Mary was not immune to the prescribed gender roles of colonial America. She held her postmaster position until 1789 when she was removed and a man put in her place (Archives of Maryland, 2015). The National Archives contains a letter to George Washington from Mary Katherine Goddard on December 23, 1789 petitioning him to reinstate her as there were no legitimate grievances against her other than her sex. Both Goddards, Sarah and her daughter Mary, established a legacy of fortitude, determination, and good will towards their fellow man.
The Dismantling of an Icon

HAYDEN ROMA
"Fulla" is sold as an alternative to Barbie. Yet, the highest demand is for the imported children’s preferences, such as in Islamic and Middle Eastern countries, where a doll named marketed specifically towards collectors are predominantly white Barbies. Also noted are studies have shown that the white dolls are most popular, and that higher priced dolls reflect American cultural domination. Among Barbie collectors and consumers, already championed as a symbol that readily represented a white, privileged, heterosexual doll, giving her distinctly Caucasian features (Kosut, 2012). In the 1970s, Mattel later towards representing diversity were dwarfed by the use of preexisting molds for the Francie who debuted in 1968 as the first African-American Barbie doll. Mattel’s good intentions sister Skipper—and adding to Barbie’s momentum-gaining controversy—“Colored Francie,” and an excessive lifestyle. the epitome of post-war consumerism, extravagantly revolving around material possessions and embellishments available to purchase and adorn her with. Barbie’s world became wanted her to be; furthermore, an extension of herself (Forman-Brunell, 2001). Much of the not be a suitable role model for girls by claiming that the doll could become whatever a girl Barbie. Handler first unveiled Barbie to a skeptical audience at the American Toy Fair in New York; Handler and husband Elliot had previously founded Mattel Creations in 1945, and used the company to launch the premiere of Barbie.

Designed with pale skin, ruby red lips, blond hair, long legs, and a voluptuous figure, Barbie sparked controversy with the general public. Mattel thwarted accusations that Barbie would not be a suitable role model for girls by claiming that the doll could become whatever a girl wanted her to be; furthermore, an extension of herself (Forman-Brunell, 2001). Much of the doll’s success and success can be largely equated with the abundance of clothes, accessories, and embellishments available to purchase and adorn her with. Barbie’s world became the epitome of post-war consumerism, extravagantly revolving around material possessions and an excessive lifestyle.

Barbie’s success generated an onslaught of famous counterparts, such as boyfriend Ken, sister Skipper—adding to Barbie’s momentum-gaining controversy—“Colored Francie,” who debuted in 1968 as the first African-American Barbie doll. Mattel’s good intentions towards representing diversity were thwarted by the use of preexisting molds for the Francie who also sported distinctly Caucasian features (Kosut, 2012). In the 1970s, Mattel later created a line of Hispanic, Asian, and Native American dolls, yet upon their arrival, Barbie was already championed as a symbol that readily represented a white, privileged, heterosexual lifestyle and lacked credibility as another ethnicity or identity. Further complications arose when Mattel costumed the dolls in stereotypical ethnic clothing (Rogers, 1999), reinforcing myopic attitudes towards other ethnicities among the majority of Barbie consumers, who are largely Caucasian.

The visual language of Barbie is one of artifice. Her success as the most popular toy in history (Dickey, 1991) is evidence of white privilege, false representations of female beauty, and a reflection of American cultural domination. Among Barbie collectors and consumers, studies have shown that the white dolls are most popular, and that higher priced dolls marketed specifically towards collectors are predominantly white Barbies. Also noted are children’s preferences, such as in Islamic and Middle Eastern countries, where a doll named “Fulla” is sold as an alternative to Barbie. Yet, the highest demand is for the imported dolls—white Barbies in Americanized attire (Rogers, 1999). This is an indication of an apparent racial hierarchy and the overabundance of white culture and values projected onto white-dominated societies. Not only do white Barbies reinforce internalized racism, but also underpins the cultural and ethnic versions of Barbie as “exotics” or “others.”

Although Barbie may appear to have an open ended identity, her overemphasized femininity is strengthened by societal norms constituting female beauty. The physical characteristics of the major complications, such as blonde hair, blue eyes, fair skin, and an anorexic body type paired with enormous breasts have encompassed an identity and visual standard for the dolls. Although Barbie’s hair color, makeup, and careers have changed over the years, her image is permanently cast as an icon of all-American beauty and American lifestyle. Before the emergence of Barbie, all dolls were baby dolls; thus the introduction of Barbie demanded a different kind of play for a doll who had a different kind of identity. Observing the transformations Barbie has undergone through the years mirrors the changing values and societal expectations about femininity and women in general. Barbie was designed to be desirable, and playing with Barbie often involved girls projecting themselves into her universe of social abundance, glamour, and ultra femininity (Forman-Brunell, 2001). Unlikely baby dolls intended to teach motherly skills and caregiving, Barbie reflected an entirely different set of values and expectations about womanhood, self image, and gender roles.

Mattel has claimed that the doll was never intended to be a role model (Dickey, 1991) yet Barbie has made her way into the home of nearly every girl in America and many overseas since her introduction. The doll has generated a desirable image and visual representation of female beauty, and the female body. Barbie, first and foremost as the Teenage Fashion Model, was designed to be undressed. With a plethora of clothes in her wardrobe, changing Barbie’s attire is a large part of playing with the doll. Difficult to overlook, is the large breast size in contrast with Barbie’s lack of genitalia and smooth, synthetic body. It is also important to note Barbie’s body shape has changed over the decades; thus a reflection of societal preferences about women’s figures. Barbie’s physical representation aligns with expectations that women aesthetically should be sexless, yet still use their sexuality for success, have little to no body hair, and maintain an exaggeratedly slim figure absent of hips and thighs. Literally and figuratively, Barbie is plastic. She encompasses a body capable of endless remodeling and redesigning, both reflecting present ideals and also shaping them. If I were to change anything about Barbie, I would be unfair to claim that Barbie is solely responsible for women’s discontent with their physical attributes. Societal expectations and imagery pertaining to female beauty cannot be fully associated with Barbie and her universe. However, the parallels of Barbie and her excessive feminality can be equated to gender norms and expectations surrounding feminality both constructed partially by women and also reinforced by women. Many women attempt to change their looks because images of successful, sexually desirable women are embedded in perceptions of youth, slimness, and beauty (Rogers, 1999).

Barbie does, however, symbolically represent a body and image that is deemed to be of value by Western culture. Fabricated versions of real-life Barbies are not unusual, but some examples have reached the extreme. Valeria Lukyanova is one such woman. Known as the “real-life Barbie” or the “Human Barbie,” she has gained a huge following due to her surgically enhanced doll-like appearance. When asked about modeling her appearance after Barbie, Lukyanova stated in an interview, “I always wanted to be a Barbie, because I always imagined myself as a human idol” (Nemtsova, 2013). The twenty-nine year old model has received global attention for her resemblance to Barbie; standing 5’9” with a 39” bust, an 18” waist, and 12” hips. Weighing 92 lb, Lukyanova claims to not eat, and survives solely on “light and air” (Human Barbie, 2014). Modeling one’s image acutely after Barbie seems radically extreme, and Barbie’s plasticity may leave much to be desired, yet it is important to note how body image and appearance are a central part of Barbie as a cultural symbol and icon.

Sociologist, Mary F. Rogers states that, “Today Western cultures provide a rich and meaningful context for artifacts like Barbie—indeed, they promote the values and norms capable of making Barbie iconic” (1999). Barbie’s make-believe world praises appearance, wardrobe, and roles over the decades, Barbie’s over-emphasized femininity remains intact almost as a
form of currency. Her success in the professional world is visually emphasized by her ability to maintain clear lines of distinction in the masculine domains. Barbie demonstrates that appearance is the key to success, and her material abundance reinforces societal notions about women as mass consumers.

The post-war 1950s marked the dawn of modern consumerism, due to the expansion of domestic markets, the emergence of the nuclear family as a feasible social unit, and the suburban landscape. It was a time when the market’s choice of goods and services symbolized the freedom of post-war America (Nava, 1987). A consumer society began to gain momentum during the 1950s and 60s, when Barbie catapulted into the market’s stratosphere. Betty Friedan, author of The Feminine Mystique, theorizes that the rise of mass consumerism can be partially attributed to women’s oppression in the post-war climate and the buying of products often constituted for lack of identity, purpose, and confinement to cultural roles (1963). Barbie embodied post-war abundance and the doll was marketed as a vehicle through which girls would learn the rules of conduct, as well as find their place in the world of consumerism (Forman-Brunell, 2001). Since her introduction, Barbie has come to represent a society that values material gain, especially among young women, and a prosperous lifestyle that is connected to social and economic class. Barbie has managed to encompass the white, upper class, heterosexual American dream most Americans have conceptualized, yet never fully attained as a reality.

The reflection of American ideals about femininity and traditional gender roles can be traced back to the interest in teenage sexuality that began to surface as the first wave of baby boomers in the late 1950s were reaching puberty (Forman-Brunell, 2001). A teenage culture existed for the first time in history, and the appropriation of youth was promoted through television, music, and magazines. As young women came of age, the importance of appearance and sexual identity became an indispensable form of credibility in society. Dating, or perhaps the aspiration of it, became an activity. Over seventy-five percent of girls who played with Barbie as children pretended Barbie dated (Dickey, 1991). The Ken doll debuted in 1961, as the boyfriend counterpart to Barbie, yet aft er over fifty years, he still has not married Barbie. Barbie is and has been in a perpetual state of dating since her introduction. The fact that Barbie has neither married, nor had children has never been problematic, yet it raises some eyebrows pertaining to her sexuality over the years. It generates the possibility that Barbie may not be heterosexual, in spite of her marketing as such. In this respect, Barbie has always displayed an independence that strays from the cookie cutter’s preconceived notions of femininity. Her lavish lifestyle, suggests one of male privilege in a material world and her possessions demonstrate no suggestion of female subordination.

Her sexual ambiguity could perhaps suggest Barbie is at a minimum, bisexual. Barbie, as a vehicle for fantasy has undeniably been placed alongside best friend Midge, as lovers by girls and boys in at role plays. Narratives about gender and sexuality are often innocently explored through playing with Barbie and Ken. Upon introduction, Mattel wanted to promote Ken as Barbie’s boyfriend, without bluntly posing the idea that she had a possible sex life. Barbie, was and has been in a perpetual state of dating since her introduction. The fact that Barbie has neither married, nor had children has never been problematic, yet it raises some eyebrows pertaining to her sexuality over the years. It generates the possibility that Barbie may not be heterosexual, in spite of her marketing as such. In this respect, Barbie has always displayed an independence that strays from the cookie cutter’s preconceived notions of femininity. Her lavish lifestyle, suggests one of male privilege in a material world and her possessions demonstrate no suggestion of female subordination.

Some speculation suggests the possibility that Barbie is a drag queen (Rogers, 1999). By the use of mainstream femininity as a masquerade, Barbie does indeed exhibit the same ultra feminine presence drag queens personify. Her physical characteristics, such as long legs, flat hips, and shimmering evening gowns suggest this possibility. In fact, the queering of gender is frequently intertwined within gay culture. Barbie has become as much of a gay icon as Madonna, Liza Minnelli, or Marilyn Monroe. Drag queens such as RuPaul cite Barbie as an influence, and many gay men are Barbie collectors and enthusiasts. In 1993, Mattel released Earring Magic: Ken, adorned with an earring in his left ear, a sheer purple mesh top, bleached blond hair, and what could be interpreted as a cock ring dangling around his neck (Galindo, 2013). Soon after its release, the doll was deemed controversial, and pulled from shelves. Yet, it still managed to become the best selling Ken doll of all time. In rebuttal to the accusations of a gay Ken, Lisa McKendall, Mattel’s manager of marketing and communications offered up this statement: “We’re not in the business of putting cock rings on the hands of little girls” (Savage, 1983).

Within Barbie’s manufactured, ambiguous sexuality, and the possible implication that Barbie may be a representation of non-gender roles, or even non male, femininity, the concept of her as an icon of femininity cannot be escaped. Central to Barbie’s cultural identity as an icon for girlhood, she is also is associated with gender deviance and rejection of stereotypical gender roles in children. Majority of parents and children even before they are born, and children themselves are active participants in the construction of meaning by processes of dress, behavior, toys, and expected societal roles (Kane, 2006). The rejection of Barbie from females inclined to totem toymaking is common, yet less common or accepted are boys who favor traditional play associated with femininity or the established roles of females. Kane goes on to say that engaging in play with Barbie by male children contributes to arising fears that male femininity is linked to homosexuality, or that certain toys are capable of shaping one’s sexual orientation (2006). While many parents aspire to stray from enforcing traditional conceptions of gender, heterosexual fathers particularly play an active role in establishing dominant ideals about masculinity to male children. One middle class, heterosexual father commented on his son’s gender non-conformity by stating, “He likes pink, and I try not to encourage him to like pink just because, you know, he’s not a girl... There’s not many toys I wouldn’t get him, except Barbie, I would try not to encourage that” (Kane, 2006).

Socially and culturally, there are numerous negative associations with Barbie for boys, however, the rejection of Barbie among girls is also widespread. In the Child Consumer’s Project conducted in 2006, child consumers aged seven to eleven (boys and girls) showed negative responses towards Barbie dolls. When asked in interviews about their experiences with Barbie, the destruction of the toy was prevalent. Types of mutilation varied from cutting off Barbie’s hair, to burning, breaking, and destroying her. Cultural symbolism that Barbie represents, this often results in Barbie dolls being targeted as an act of rebellion and defiance against femininity. Yet, recorded accounts of doll destruction are centuries old. Nineteenth century American mothers in response to changing cultural forces, class values, and political ideologies, would give female children dolls to shape and construct expected female roles within the family (Forman-Brunell, 2011). Dolls were used as skills as mothering, raising children, and caregiving. Resistance towards doll play has been noted in many female children as a rejection of the cultural roles and expectations placed upon them. Doll funerals often symbolized chickens eating restrictive parental authority, social customs that were repressed towards gender, and girls desiring to construct their own notion of girlhood (Forman-Brunell, 2011).

Just as dolls of the nineteenth century were destroyed as a deeply symbolic rejection of the roles of mother and wife, the destruction of Barbie bears similar relevance today. Barbie has taken on a distinguished importance within contemporary mass culture, bearing both iconic and contradictory meanings. Barbie’s representation often mirrors an individual’s experiences with her, yet she exaggerates aspects of our perceptions of femininity, gender roles, sexuality, and consumerism. Barbie’s world represents extremity in every atom, and plastic molded into whatever we choose it to be, yet still possessing the power to change with modern times and be reshaped according to circumstance.

The dismantling of Barbie’s iconic status is essential to understanding that her popularity is a reflection of a culture that values what she represents. It is easy to criticize Barbie, to denounce, and write her off as a continuously pending implication of the plasticity of American culture. Yet, we can learn from Barbie’s world; as her world is composed of the dreams, hopes, aspirations, and even failures of ours. Both the idolization and detestation of Barbie are a psychological manifestation of complex and unique personal experiences. Her dialogue is continuously being written and her constant revision is as historically important as it is contemporarily. Barbie has been destroyed and then erected into new representations of power, femininity, gender, and lifestyle.

After all, Barbie can be anything.
“Every woman, or at least almost every woman... has, at one
time or another of her life, charge of the personal health
of somebody, whether child or invalid,—in other words, every
woman is a nurse... It is recognized as the knowledge which
every one ought to have—distinct from medical knowledge,
which only a profession can have.

If, then, every woman must, at some time or other of her
life, become a nurse, i.e., have charge of somebody's health,
how immense and how valuable would be the produce of her
united experience if every woman would think how to nurse.

I do not pretend to teach her how, I ask her to teach
herself, and for this purpose I venture to give her some
hints.”

“We know nothing of the principle of health, the positive of which pathology is the negative, except from
observation and experience. And nothing but observation and experience will teach us the ways to maintain or to bring
back the state of health. It is often thought that medicine is the corrective process; it is no such thing; medicine is the
surgery of functions, as surgery proper is the of limbs and organs. Neither can do anything but remove obstructions;
neither can cure; nature cures. Surgery removes the bullet out of the limb, which is an obstruction to cure, but
nature heals the wound. So it is with medicine; the function of an organ becomes obstructed; medicine so far as we
know, assists nature to remove the obstruction, but does nothing more.”

“In watching disease, both in private houses and in public hospitals, the thing which strikes the experienced
observer most forcibly is this, that the symptoms of the following are often considered to be symptoms and incident to
the disease are very often not symptoms of the disease at all, but of something quite different—of the want of fresh air,
or of light, or of warmth, or of quiet, or of cleanliness, or of punctuality and care in the administration of diet, of each
or of all of these.”

“Not but that these laws—the laws of life—are in a certain measure understood, but not even mothers think it worth their while to study them—to study how to give their children healthy existences.”
of all my experience with the sick, that, after a close room, what hurts them most is a dark room. And that it is not only light but direct sunlight they want.

"It is the unqualified result that second only to their need of fresh air is their need of light;"

- Florence Nightingale, Notes on Nursing: What It Is, and What It Is Not, 1859
December 9, 10:48 PM
Nicole
Contact

Take note. I don’t think you are utilizing your sloths to their full potential. Take note.

I don’t think you are utilizing your sloths to their full potential. Take note.

Fair criticism.
I don’t think you are utilizing your sloths to their full potential. Take note.

Nicole

December 31, 9:35 PM
Nicole
Contact

Happy New Year from Detroit!

And from me!

And this cat who loves shiny things.

HNY Cat.

December 31, 9:35 PM
Nicole
Contact

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HNY Cat.
The solipsistic individualism that is the foundation of western culture absolutely must be dismantled if we are to advance as human beings. I do not matter more than you, you do not matter more than me, and we do not matter more than dirt, sun, air, water, fire, insects, animals or plants — for real. To put oneself above all else is the definition of inequity. To demand change of others without first addressing yourself is the definition of inequity. To take what is not yours to take is the definition of inequity. This charge is directed at all of us — men and women and everything outside and in-between.

Where there is imbalance, there is inequity.
Was all that shouting just the guerrilla girls? Ugh.

In the tradition of Muriel Cooper rather than platitudes and polemics I offer the following:

In the tradition of Muriel Cooper rather than platitudes and polemics I offer the following:

Each and every difficulty a woman faces in her lifetime – sheerly from the fact of being a woman – is not isolated to the actions of men. No matter how many of them are currently behaving like sociopaths.

Lack of empathy + manipulation + narcissism + charm + emotional vacancy

I would argue that sex-based division lines have shown an entrenchment that will not soon resolve, and furthermore distract us from some highly important conversations. If we are to have division lines, empathy-aphathy is more conducive to progress.

To get stuck within a problem is an uncomfortable space, to say the least. But to get stuck within a paradigm, this is a challenge far greater. If we cannot see the fishbowl we live in – nor the possibility that there are other fishbowls, other structures, other paradigms to invent and choose from – things will not change. It would be so tidy to draw neat little lines between men and women, but measured against an actual lived experience, this would be a deception.

The following pages include questions that are not yet resolved for me.

Good questions are infinitely more valuable than mediocre answers.
A  P R O B L E M  O F  I N F O R M A T I O N

Preliminary Inquiry
Can we agree to a series of definitions and terms (sex vs gender) when discussing sex-based inequity that help clarify the underlying issues rather than confusing them (not just in establishing definitions, but more so in implementing them consistently)?

Inquiry 1
As Diane Halpern highlights, there are tens of thousands of academic documents centered around sex and cognition alone. The topic of sex-based inequity is even broader, and equally riddled with all sorts of biases, perceptions and conflicting theories. If Halpern, a woman who has spent decades of her career on the topic hasn’t been through all of the material, none of us will. This is not isolated to sex-based inequity, we are producing such a volume of information that there isn’t yet a model in place for sitting through this information, analyzing its legitimacy / quality, nor is there a practice in shared intellectual effort. Digital technologies have disrupted the dominant information channels to such a degree that we are inundated and overwhelmed. If the medium truly is the message, our current message reads “good luck finding anything.” It is important to credit and cite authors for their specific contributions, but if we could let go of some individualism and tangential consumption patterns, good ideas would live longer. What do we do with so much data? What do we do with great information that crosses disciplines, or finds relevance to multiple disciplines? How can we address contemporary needs regarding information (academically, educationally, economically, and for our own sanity). And, can we start valuing the categorization and dissemination of quality information (the conversion of information into knowledge) as equally (or perhaps more) important to the origination of new information? Can we let go of that which is unbeneficial?

A  C H A L L E N G E  T O  B O T H

Bias

Inquiry 3
Inequities exist based on assignment, the disconnect between how women are treated based on their heteronormatively perceived role as a function of biology (mother, wife, daughter, grandmother, stranger, threat, enemy, etc.) In this particular inquiry, inequity exists because a woman is evaluated based on the category or role she fills in relation to another. This is a form of subjugation. How various women are treated differently due to biologically- and socially-driven roles they play in society?

Inquiry 4
From whom are we seeking liberation? Since the conception of suffrage, equality for women has always had silent addendums. Equality for women (with men). Women’s liberation (from men). Reproductive rights for women (from men). These are inaccurately adversarial positions. It’s not so simple as men vs women. We can’t be separated out in such a way. There are no examples of a woman’s life experience separate from that of men (or vice versa). We are all too intertwined. The same goes for race and economic status. We do not live in isolation. We talk about feminism as women’s liberation, with the understood “from men” added, and often, with the latent assumption of that liberation being white. What about liberating women from other women, what about the entire web of complicity? And what about the racial, economic, or even selfish influences that pit woman against woman?

Accountability

Inquiry 5
This question namely deals with complicity, as few women are active perpetrators of crime. An example here is appropriate. The Department of Justice reports 22% of incarcerated rapists are married. Coerced rapes have wives. Sex crimes involve witnesses, bystanders, friends, family, and countless others. They are not all men. Women play key roles in these events. There is a complete lack of internalization of one’s own role in the problem.

Inquiry 5B
Additionally, we know in rough numbers how many women in the US who have been assaulted or raped. We have no clue as to how many men are actually doing the assaulting or raping. The suggestion is that a percentage of the male population (6-15% of college age men) will self-report if words are chosen wisely. (Lisak)

Characteristics of imprisoned rape and sexual assault offenders from Greenfeld’s Sex Offenders and Offenders: An Analysis of Data on Rape and Sexual Assault

Also quoted in Flowers, Sex Crimes: Perpetrators, Predators, Prostitutes, and Victims

#YesAllWomen
What would our world look like if it had...?

These questions center around the assignment of culpability and the built environment includes all man-made constructions.

Like pants zippers, seriously, even these are defaulted for men making an appearance.

Transgender bathrooms are starting to make an appearance.

In a great introduction to Inclusion by Design from the UK’s CABE (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment), it includes a variety of perspectives to consider in design (eg. how different people experience parks or bathrooms).

ART AND DESIGN PROPER

Inquiry 6
What most healthy, empathic people don’t quite understand, is that those who commit egregious acts present the same as those who don’t. We have a very hard time identifying the baddies among us. An example: how does a woman know the difference between a man who will harm her and one who won’t? Initially, both will present the same. And once she discovers the badness, how likely is she to be viewed?

The large quantity of male and female voices shaming, refusing, blaming and down-playing sex-based crimes only muddies the waters.

Inquiry 7
Who bears responsibility for which part of the wicked problem? And further, who is to be the enforcer? These questions center around the assignment of culpability and the appropriate person responsible.

It is crucial that we hold baddies accountable, and in a way that is not orchestrated to further shame, humiliate or traumatize the victim. For example, what if men were to start policing themselves regarding violence against women? What if the responsibility and effort were shifted from the victim to the perpetrator?

Inclusive design seeks to rectify this. Inquiry 8

How the built world participates in inequality. What would our world look like if it had been designed and built predominantly by women, to suit the perceptions and requirements of being a woman? Just to imagine such a vastly different arrangement of things is an interesting question. I am not so much interested in answering this specific question, as to bring awareness to the implicitly sexism or otherwise biased environments, structures and social contracts that exist already and are much more easily perceived by “others.” For example, a first experience of mobility, transportation, architecture, environments, and spaces from a wheelchair immediately communicates a profound and frequent sense of exclusion. These structures were not built for me, for my body, nor with concern for me in mind.

Inclusive design seeks to rectify this. Inquiry 9
How the types of questions we ask pre-determine the answers. When a problem is properly identified, the course of action is an organic, natural, and inevitable result. But when a problem is improperly identified, contingent other problems manifest. The unfortunate consequence of not fully grasping what this means, is evident in the progress traps we have set for ourselves. Situations that have only reinforced the entrenchment of existing (unworkable) paradigms. We need better questions, a better understanding of what is happening and why, and collective efforts towards implementing and sustaining better ideas.

Some progress traps related to sex-based inequities involve:

- Failing to recognize the individual nature of interpersonal dynamics
- The scape-goating of behavior on hormone or biology
- Equating promiscuity and adultery with sexual liberation
- Actively seeking a panacea

Being concerned about possible solutions before having been implemented

Failure to include voices outside of the white, heteronormative, privileged class incorrectly interpreted “women’s liberation” as permission for one woman to do whatever the hell she wants.

progress traps | improper problem-identification | course-correction | process | bias

Inquiry 10

Addressing complacency, or the daunting task of affecting change. As social constructions are entirely built (and sex-based inequality is a construction), they are completely up for discussion, debate, revision and alteration – change is always possible because it is inherent to our existence.

The interdependent system is one of the most overwhelming aspects of a problem as wicked as this, but it is also one of the ways out. Like a virus, resolve it and all symptoms evaporate. If we can pull on a few golden threads – the root-level issues that propagate and multiply – other ancillary issues will dissipate.

I would consider affirmative consent a golden thread. It is no secret that college is one of the most likely places an American woman will be raped or assaulted in her lifetime (High School is not any better). Campuses across the country are starting to institute “affirmative consent” policies (see CSB 967), the notion that only yes means yes. It’s that simple. Any answer other than an enthusiastic yes is a no. Affirmative consent is an example of a complete, nonviolent paradigm shift, one that eliminates ambiguity. Victim-blaming is removed, responsibility is set on the appropriate individuals and the concept encourages developing a language around sex and consent, resulting in more clarity for everyone involved.

Change is also possible through incrementation. This method is tried and true for product designers, and quite possibly may be the only way we undo some of the damage we have collectively done. We stepped our way into many messes, step by step we can walk ourselves right back out of them. Incrementation is one of many processes that designers use to approach problems regularly.

Unlike the scientific method, design processes are not bound by one strict (linear) path. There is more room for play and mess. The beauty in such processes is their honesty about change, iteration, and self-awareness. Each time an effort is made, the system adjusts and modifies (via feedback loops). This is the antithesis of fixed – which makes such a process align more with the lived realities of contingencies and contexts.

I would also suggest here the notion of a beta test. A beta test is a just a test. In design we use beta-tests often to gain feedback in order to refine or course-correct our efforts. Beta-tests are not final, they are not fixed, and there is an assumption of trying something out. Regarding affirmative consent in specific and other attempts at enhanced quality of life for women in general, why aren’t we as a society more comfortable with the idea of beta-testing a concept or action? Not everything needs to originate as fixed, concrete and unmovable (eg. a “law” literally and figuratively).

systems thinking | design processes | wicked problems | beta tests

Inquiry 11

This inquiry is to challenge an existing supposition that is groundless. Decoration is not seen nor is it gendered. Neither is intricacy, neither is an organic form. Our global aesthetic lexicon includes decoration, embellishment, and the organic. See: Owen Jones’ Grammar of Ornament, Alphonse Mucha, Pakistani Truck Painting, Thangkas, and any number of other works in architecture, typography, pattern, or textile.
Odalisques are the intersection of men + sex + perception of women + art. What would that look like inversed? Where is the artwork of how women perceive men + sex? This is again, almost impossible to parse out as the majority of constructed society and culture has a predominantly white male historical influence, and we do not live in isolation. But to ask the question, to envision what this might look like is an interesting and valuable line of inquiry (not as a challenge or response to existing or past inequity, such as the work of Judy Chicago, Sherrie Levine, Ida Applebroog, Guerrilla Girls), but as an area of study in its own right.

Inquiry 12
Can we let go of our selfishness and choose courses of action that benefit the many, even if we ourselves do not benefit? How are crimes against women, or inequity regarding women, a woman’s problem? Is it not also everyone else’s?

Inquiry 13
Is there a point at which we let some problems just be? In our quest to find the origins of or “answers” to things, and our equally futile quest to find why for everything else, we are missing some key questions—in many cases to things that cannot, nor should they be resolved. At the same time we are neglecting some key questions that enhance the quality of the life we do have. What if this wicked problem cannot be solved, or takes significant time and action to address in any meaningful way? In the meantime, we still live in this world together, and have to figure out how to navigate this moment.

Inquiry 13B
Can we learn to sit with difficulty? Can we learn to sit with the questions themselves? This again goes to the nature of life being struggle. The claim is not to abandon change, nor is it to acquiesce to crime and inequity. This question is a reality check on how resolvable some things actually are. We will never, never, never eliminate all of our problems. This foolishness must be abandoned. Which problems do we solve and which ones do we let just be? There are intensely destructive actions and behaviors that exist among us regardless of sex. Depravity is sex neutral. So is trauma. So is apathy. And so is cruelty.

Inquiry 15
The questions I leave you with.
How much of our desire to hurt one another, regardless of sex, regardless of gender, regardless of any demographic descriptor, is based upon our own (wholly inappropriate) inability to manage emotions and pain? And, how much of our desire to hurt one another is based sheerly on how easy it is to get away with?
wherever array the
quality written means.
quality means.
[ This page left intentionally blank.* ]

*Somehow, with the passage of time, and the deadlines that life imposes, surrendering became the right thing to do. ~ Randy Pausch
What a ridiculous clusterfuck of totally uncool jokers. I make my work about this kind of sadly foolish farce. I'm waiting for all of them to sue me for copyright infringement.

~ Barbara Kruger
Thank you Ashton Kutcher, for telling a room full of screaming teenagers that real sexiness is being smart.

Production of this publication would not have been possible without the financial support of a Faculty Enhancement Grant from Portland State University.

Thank you.

Dear Connie,

Hyphens serve a functional purpose. Can we agree to disagree?

Sincerely,

Meredith

* if we walked ourselves into this mess, we can walk ourselves right back out of it *