

AIGA DESIGN EDUCATORS CONFERENCE

NEW CONTEXTS / NEW PRACTICES

Moderator Anne Burdick and
writer Holly Willis have a report
on Shifting paradigms: Tools
and systems.

Shifting paradigms:
Tools and systems

Trends and areas of impact:

From Thorburn:

- **Instability of Platforms**
- **Perpetual Flux (endless Phase I)**
- **Media Transitions have a history**

In the Design Classroom:

- **Tools are constantly changing and proliferating**
- **Platforms are constantly changing and proliferating**
- **Students are both authors and makers**
- **Students know more than instructors**

Shifting paradigms:
Tools and systems

Trends and areas of impact:

In the Design Culture

- **New Tools= changing values, practices, identities**
- **Dropping the “graphic” from graphic design**
- **Anxiety around tangible artifacts vs. intangible, experiential systems and the expertise of the designer**

Perceived shift from:

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| • autonomous | networked |
| isolated | social |
| cohesive | open/permeable |

Shifting paradigms:
Tools and systems

Dilemmas:

- **What are the defining aspects of our professional and disciplinary identity? Tools? Processes? Outcomes?**
- **Does the studio classroom model of design pedagogy still fit?**
- **Can we imagine an emergent curriculum and learning situations built upon systems thinking?**
- **What will design workspaces and classrooms look like in a mixed digital/physical future? How does that change the relationship between student and teacher? What are the resource impacts: \$\$ and time?**
- **What does the digital divide mean for designers and design education?**

Shifting paradigms:
Tools and systems

Dilemmas:

- **What can we learn from other fields? Systems theory, HCI, anthropology, education theory, the Humanities, etc. (many are asking the same questions)**
- **How might we resituate communication design history from one of seemingly stable media forms to forms in flux that are always, already socially, politically, economically embedded?**
- **What other disciplinary histories are relevant to the work being practiced today?**
- **Consider design as “iterating in public” and see what happens.**

Shifting paradigms:
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Hotspots:

- **Experiment with teaching strategies; reexamine teaching philosophies**
- **Teach the flux, teach instability, identify and analyze forces, history**
- **Create projects without predetermined outputs or formats**
- **Create courses that recognize students' existing knowledge and reposition them as lifelong learners. Emphasize learning to learn and learning to be comfortable with unfamiliarity**
- **Consider how design can be used as a conduit to connect to community**
- **Consider both formal and informal learning strategies, learning that is engaged in the world and happens outside the classroom**