

Failed Design (New York, 24 Apr 09)

Rebecca Klassen

Failed Design: What were they thinking?

Graduate Student Symposium

April 24, 2009

The Bard Graduate Center for Studies
in the Decorative Arts, Design, and Culture
410 West 58th Street, New York, NY

Design is a process, yet in our success-driven world, we tend to focus on the end result. Why do some designs succeed and others fail, and who decides? What is the distinction between bad and failed design? Does studying "failure" offer the prospect of a unique historical perspective?

The 2009 Graduate Student Symposium at the Bard Graduate Center has gathered student speakers and graphic designer and critic William Drenttel to explore failed design and the insight it offers into societies and individuals.

Keynote speaker William Drenttel works in partnership with Jessica Helfand at Winterhouse, a design consultancy focused on publishing and online media, cultural and educational institutions, and design and social innovation initiatives. He is design director of Teach For All, founding editor of Design Observer, president emeritus of the American Institute of Graphic Arts, a fellow of the New York Institute of the Humanities at New York University, and senior faculty fellow at the Yale School of Management.

Please R.S.V.P. to GradSymp@bgc.bard.edu.
www.bard.edu/bgc/research/graduate_student_symposium_09

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COFFEE 9:00am

MORNING SESSION 9:30am

"The Monsanto House of the Future: Domestic Architecture in the American Collective Unconscious," Erin Leary, University of Rochester

"The Beginning of the End of the World: Climatic Architecture in the 1950s and the Thermoheliodon of Victor and Aladar Olgyay," Daniel Barber, Columbia University

"The Failure of Designers Thinking About How We Think: The Problem of Human-Computer Interaction," John Vines, University of Plymouth, UK

"The Mystification Machine: The Eames Office and the IBM Pavilion at the New York World's Fair 1964-1965," Jesse Stein, School of the Art Institute of Chicago

AFTERNOON SESSION 1:30pm

Keynote address, "Transforming Failed Models - Design for Social Change," William Drenttel, Winterhouse Design

"Reversing the Suburban Tide? Rhetoric versus Reality and the Failure of Urban Renewal Housing," Francesca Russello Ammon, Yale University

"Harnessing the Ethereal Fire: Medical Electricity and the Electrotherapeutic Chair," Kevin M. Brown, University of Delaware

"Re-engineering Loss: Building a Science of Failure in Japan," Carla Takaki Richardson, University of California Santa Cruz

Reception to follow.

Reference:

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