THE GRAPHIC DESIGN PROFESSION:

FROM MARGINS TO MAINSTREAM

by

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ABSTRACT

Graphic design is the largest and fastest growing occupational group of all the design disciplines in North America. Its boundaries and identity have shifted significantly over the past century. However, despite its size and age, it is often referred to as an adolescent among the design disciplines because of its lack of respect for rules and traditions. But, beneath the teenage façade is an industry that has worked hard to establish its professional status, keep pace with change, and reinvent itself to suit social, technological, and economic conditions.

The goal of this study was to identify how graphic design changed its status from a trade to a profession, and particularly: 1) to analyse graphic design's professionalization processes in the United States and Canada over the course of the 20th century, 2) to provide a comparative analysis of issues pertaining to accreditation, registration, certification, post-secondary education, and employment in the United States and Canada, and 3) to identify areas for action by the Canadian graphic design community.

This study examined historical, social and cultural foundations of the graphic design profession in the United States and Canada. It analyzed how the industry talked about itself in relation to professionalization and its position in the arts' community, public sphere, and marketplace. Professionalization was problematized and a comparative analysis of graphic design in the United States and Canada was constructed using perspectives from inside and outside the industry. Data sources included journal and magazine articles, books, conference proceedings, newspaper articles, online sites (including articles, surveys, opinion polls, and job searches), among others.

The study employed two theoretical frameworks: interpretive and post-structural. The graphic design industry was scrutinized using an interpretive framework and the concept of professionalization. Four processes of professionalization were isolated as the major categories for data analysis because they are common to most modern occupations seeking professional status: (1) developing professional organizations and associations; (2) gaining recognition as a distinctive occupation; (3) securing rights to specialized knowledge and education; and 4) controlling access to the marketplace and employment. Professionalization processes were further categorized into three major areas using a post-structural theory of capital, specifically social, cultural, and economic capital. Thus, this study connected graphic design's professionalization processes to capital exchange values in social arenas.

The graphic design industry in the United States has been engaged in a professionalization project since 1914, with the establishment of the American Institute for Graphic Arts (AIGA). It has been acknowledged as a distinct profession with specialized knowledge and skills, as well as products and services. The Canadian graphic design industry is younger and approximately one third the size of the industry in the United States. Yet, despite being the fastest-growing design discipline in Canada,

misperceptions about the role and responsibility of graphic designers have precluded its recognition as a profession by government, business, and the general public.

This study identified three problem areas for graphic design's professionalization project in Canada: 1) graphic design is still regarded as a trade or vocation; 2) Canadian graphic designers are not as well educated or as highly paid as their American counterparts; and 3) access to Canadian undergraduate and graduate degree programs in graphic design is inadequate.

Professionalization in graphic design is not just about making money. It is also concerned with increasing the social and cultural status of the industry and its members -- particularly recognition of practitioners as members of a distinct profession with a specialized knowledge base and skills. In terms of social, cultural, and economic capital, graphic design in the United States is more highly valued than in Canada. Designers in the U.S. are recognized as professionals rather than tradespeople (social capital); on average they spend four years in school pursuing a degree, but also reap increased economic benefits for their credentials (cultural and economic capital); and a wealth of opportunities exist in the U.S. for post-secondary graphic design education, from undergraduate degrees to PhDs (cultural capital). In Canada, students of design as well as practitioners do not enjoy the same 'capital benefits' as Americans.

Recommendations to increase capital benefits for graphic design in Canada include: 1) a coalition be formed by the GDC and RGD Ontario; 2) the coalition pursue Canada-wide recognition of the profession, as well as 3) certification and accreditation of educational programs and practitioners, and 4) increased access to post-secondary graphic design education. In the final analysis, in order for the graphic design industry to move forward with its professionalization project in Canada, increase its capital value in social arenas, and compete in the global marketplace, territorial fences must be torn down and a collective pathway charted by stakeholders.

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Finally, this work is dedicated to the memory of my wonderful parents, Josephine and George Damon.

CHAPTER ONE

POSTCARDS FROM THE EDGE

What is Graphic Design?

Graphic designers -- aren't they the ones who design magazine layouts, posters, and things like beer bottle labels and packaging for dog biscuits? Don't they do desktop publishing, use clip art, salivate over fonts, drool over illustrations, and fool around with image and photographic manipulation software? Aren't they dedicated to creating the consummate 'eye candy', the most compelling ads and flashy web sites, or clever packaging and promotional programs for everything from cars to toasters, to laxatives and Barbie dolls? Don't they help us find our way through places like airports, shopping centres, community centres, cities, and Disneyland? And, aren't they responsible for branding the West with 'swooshes', golden arches, and a mind-numbing multitude of other logos and trademarks that appear on everything from t-shirts to airplanes? What is graphic design anyway -- a trade, a profession, an occupation, a field, an industry -- or is it just a handy label for a wide array of practices, products, and processes in the service of corporations, governments, and institutions?

Graphic design is hard to pin down and revels in perpetuating its own mystique. It whines about being maligned and misunderstood while also promoting its reputation as a wild, incorrigible, and renegade discipline that refuses to follow rules, play nice, or stay neatly in its box. It isn't orderly and well behaved like architecture or interior design, nor are its credentials as firmly established as its illustrious parents, the fine arts. Often referred to as the teenager or adolescent among design disciplines (McCoy, 1998, p. 3), graphic design refuses to clean its room, respect tradition, and be clearly defined. "The profession has been behaving like a spoiled brat, flaunting its youthful brashness even at the risk of being mistrusted and misunderstood" (Dewey, 1989, p. 4).

The Graphic Design Identity Crisis

ICOGRADA (International Council of Graphic Design Associations), a Belgium-based, professional body that promotes graphic design worldwide, conducted an opinion poll on its web site in 2002 or earlier, asking participants to respond to the following statements: "Graphic Design is an adolescent profession. Or is it even a profession at all?" (http://www.icograda.org/web/opinion-pollresults.shtml).

The constituency and number of opinion poll respondents is not identified, but it probably was composed of graphic designers, print and production technicians, educators, students, and others, including the general public. The mix inherent in the

respondent constituency would, however, have had a significant impact on responses to the question. Typically, ICOGRADA posts questions on its web site and invites visitors to express their opinions, however, it is not necessary to be a member of ICOGRADA, or even a graphic designer to participate. Careful reading of the question and multiple-choice answers in Table 1 suggests results were probably skewed by the way in which they were framed. Nevertheless, it is still interesting to note approximately 30% of respondents do not think of graphic design as a professional undertaking.

Table 1.
ICOGRADA Opinion Poll Results - Is Graphic Design A Profession?

Opinion Poll		
"Yes, graphic design is a profession".	"No, graphic design is still a trade, on the doorstep of becoming a profession".	"I think graphic design is really only an activity, and neither a trade or a profession".
Approximately 73% of respondents	4% of respondents	26% of respondents

(Note: Number of respondents unknown and date of poll unknown. "Totals shown may be more or less than 100% due to rounding," http://www.icograda.org/web/ opinion-pollresults.shtml, Past Polls section. Retrieved February 6, 2002 and July 18, 2004).

There is also dissension 'in the trenches' regarding graphic design's status in the labour market. In 1991, super-stars Kalman, Miller, and Jacobs stated, "Graphic design isn't so rarefied or so special. It isn't a profession, it's a medium" (Kalman et al., 1994, p. 25). The Canadian Oxford Dictionary defines 'medium' as the means by or through which something is communicated, such as the medium of television. But, reducing graphic design to a medium may be overly simplistic, because it is inherently multi-media. Advertising flyers, product packaging, billboards, and web sites are a few examples of media.

> Web design itself is just one form of media... Interactive Media is delivered on television, CD-ROM, interactive DVDs, video game titles, and Web and Internet applications. We use it everyday but probably don't realize when we interact with it. These include [sic] household appliances, ATMs, in-flight systems, automobiles and much more (Webster, 2003, p. A8).

Following fairly close upon the heels of the proclamation by Kalman, Miller and Jacobs was Salchow's 1993 provocative article entitled, *Graphic Design is Not a Profession* (p. 83). But, Salchow doesn't follow through on the title, and instead states:

> In any discipline... a great deal of training, dedication, education and practice are required of anyone who hopes to excel. The doers who get paid for such activities are professionals, even when their turf may not constitute a discrete dictionary-defined occupation (p. 83).

Despite disagreements as to what constitutes graphic design, people come into contact with its end products more often than most other forms of design and fine art combined. Graphic design is in our faces every day. It is communication design tied to the needs of diverse clients who want to broadcast their messages to a wide range of audiences. Graphic design can be found in the streets, on buses, and in homes and institutions. It's design on billboards, in airports, video arcades, shopping malls, community centres, and on the cover of CDs. It's in magazines, corporate reports, textbooks, cookbooks, and comic books. It's on the side of trucks, on envelopes, televisions, computer screens, gum wrappers, and clothes. Graphic design is an enormous part of the fabric of our daily lives, yet most people rarely give it much thought. "In today's world, design is an invisible profession," observes Viemeister, who goes on to state, "The general public has such little awareness of our profession that they wouldn't miss us if we all packed our bags and went to Rome" (2001, p. 230).

Designers 'R' Us?

The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary and the 2000 edition of the Canadian Oxford Paperback Dictionary do not acknowledge the term 'graphic design'. Interior design and industrial design are given separate entries in bold print, whereas the catch phrase 'graphic arts' is used as a label for "the visual and technical arts involving design, writing, drawing, printing, etc." Could a dictionary be any less specific?

The statement "Mom, if it's not in the dictionary, it's not a real word," caused Wheeler, a graphic designer, to contact editors of the Random House Dictionary of the English Language and the New American Dictionary (Wheeler, 1993, p. 84). Her goal was to shame them into rectifying their omission of the term *graphic design*, especially since non-Western countries such as Japan give it a separate entry in their dictionaries (p. 85).

In a document entitled *Shaping Canada's Future By Design*, Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) appeared unsure how to deal with the graphics industry when it categorized the *communications design sector* as encompassing a field frequently referred to as *graphic design* (HRDC, 1996, p. 22). Even the American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA) seems uncertain of what it wants to call itself: "The purpose of AIGA is to further excellence in communication design as a broadly defined discipline, strategic tool for business and cultural force" (http://www.aiga.org). What happened to the *graphic arts* in the association's title? Should it now become the American Institute of Communication Design?

Debates over naming, defining, and 'pigeon-holing' the graphic design field have been raging for decades and occur on official fronts, in educational institutions, public forums, and in the trenches.

> Most of the definitions of design are descriptive definitions, and they are frequently metaphoric. They are as varied as the insights of human beings and as varied as the causes that may account for design. Some speak of the power of design; other[s] speak of the material constraints; still others speak of the forms and processes of design and product development; and, finally some speak of the end or purpose of design... as "making things right" (Buchanan, 2001, p. 8).

This view is echoed in part by Keeley, who the profession has not evolved to the point where designers can articulate why they believe what they believe (1998, p. 213). "This is not because what we believe is silly or naïve but rather because [the graphic design field] is vexingly complex, layered, and hard to fully understand" (p. 213).

A Professional Landscape in Flux

While the field of practice enjoyed some stability in the 1950s and 1960s, in the last few decades it has become a landscape of ambiguity. Its boundaries, identity, and audiences are in constant flux. New technologies and global networking, for example, have recently played a pre-eminent role in reshaping and redefining the landscape.

Historically, each major shift in the landscape has caught the industry between an increasing complexity of practice and the public's lack of understanding of the profession. For example, in an effort to generate even more distance from the sentimentality and chaotic eclecticism in nineteenth century design, it became fashionable in the late 1960s to think of the graphic designer as a "rationally objective professional" who was the "neutral transmitter of the client's message" (McCoy, 2003, p. 3).

> These white lab coats make an excellent metaphor for the apolitical designer, cherishing the myth of universal, value-free design -- that design is a clinical process akin to chemistry, scientifically pure and neutral, conducted in a sterile laboratory environment with precisely predictable results" (p. 3).

Given graphic design's long-standing alignment with marketing and advertising, attempts to repackage the profession as offering "scientifically neutral design" have added to the public's confusion about what graphic designers do.

With its boundaries and identity in flux, the industry has tried to keep pace with immense and rapid changes in technology, marketplace conditions, business practices, and social and cultural phenomena. For some designers, survival has meant becoming

expert shape-shifters capable of working in two-dimensional print-based media; three-dimensional, experiential spaces; or four-dimensional, interactive, cyberspace milieus. In addition to being general, full-service graphic design practitioners, many have enhanced their market expertise to include strategic development and long-term planning; promotional event planning; or perhaps even television advertising or film title design; while others have found their calling in electronic games design; exhibit design; and environmentally sustainable design.

While some graphic designers may be working on everything from logos to annual reports, web sites, snowboards, and pet store interiors, others are creating new market niches for their services. Consider Bruce Mau, a Canadian graphic designer who now bills himself as 'just a designer'. His projects run the gamut from interactive art installations, sustainable design projects in Third World countries, corporate identity programs for large-scale clients, to co-authoring books with world-class architects such as Rem Koolhaas.

An Educational Challenge

While the dynamic nature of the marketplace demands fluidity on the part of graphic design practitioners, this ambiguous and constantly shifting backdrop is a challenge to post-secondary design educators and administrators. Institutions across Canada and throughout the United States must prepare graduates to enter a field where goal posts are not fixed and the tectonic plates that underpin the marketplace are constantly shifting. Each addition of new knowledge areas into graphic design curricula means something must make way or be relegated to a program's margins. Consequently, many graphic design educators find themselves juggling old and new curricula within the confines of the academic year and the timeframe of any given program. Whereas one-, two-, and three-year programs were once considered viable, today even an undergraduate degree is being questioned for its ability to adequately prepare graduates to compete for entry-level design positions.

In the past decade, it has been common to see cash-strapped public institutions in Canada turning to tuition hikes to make up for revenue shortfalls. Between 1990/1991 and 1999/2000, Canadian university and college tuition rose by an average of 9.6 percent a year, however, the largest average tuition hike in Canada occurred in British Columbia from 2002/03 to 2003/04 with an increase of 30.4 percent (www.campusprogram.com/reference/en/wikipedia/t/tu/tuition.html, p. 1, retrieved July 19, 2004). The demand for increasing amounts of new technology in the classroom is adding further stress to shrinking budgets, while, at the same time, students, parents, and education ministries want guarantees expensive, technology-heavy, graphic design programs will translate into well-paying jobs. Students try to 'guesstimate' which curricula, of the estimated 2,000 to 3,000 graphic design programs in North America, offers them the best chance to meet their particular career goals while giving the most 'bang' for an increasing amount of educational 'bucks'.

"Anyone interested in studying [graphic] design faces a hodgepodge of choices from two week Designers-R-Us desktop publishing workshops to expensive, sophisticated, four-year schools, many of which follow diverse and conflicting philosophies" (Gold, 1999, p. 21). Applicants, counsellors, and employers are equally bewildered by the complex array of programs with differing foci offered across North America. If a three-week course in graphic design was good enough to propel the former sociology instructor, David Carson, into instant graphic-designer stardom with *Ray Gun* magazine, then why wouldn't students question spending four years (and its ensuing mountain of debt) getting a degree? In contrast, the average European design program is six years in length. "Most European schools are supported by their governments too, so they're less expensive to attend. Europeans can afford to stay in school longer than their American counterparts, and they aren't harried by debt after graduation" (Vrontikis, 1999, p. 20).

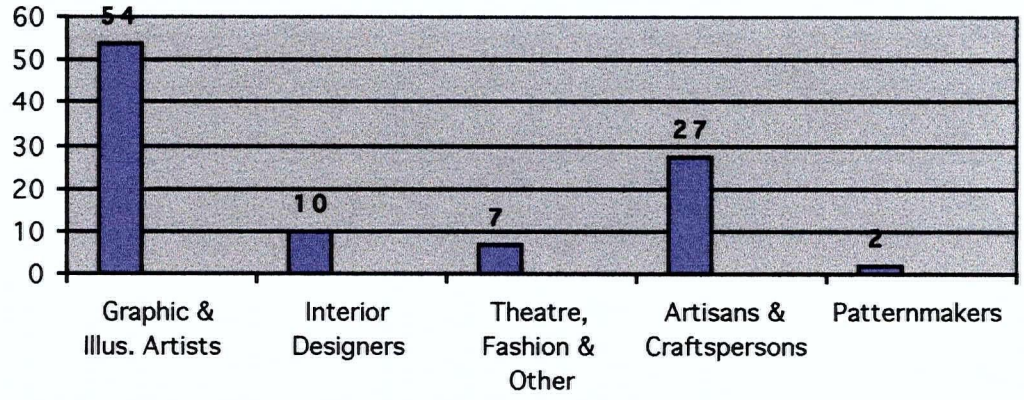
While Canadian cities have been faced with economic downturns, increased unemployment, and rising costs of living, salaries for graphic designers have not kept pace and full-time design positions have become a scarce commodity. Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) described the *Graphic Designers and Illustrating Artists* category as "very volatile" in their report entitled *Mapping the I.T. Labour Market* (http://www. itac.ca, p. 3). Their findings suggest the graphic design labour market is akin to a roller coaster ride. For example, in 1999, an estimated 54,700 workers were employed in this category Canada wide, but January 2000 saw numbers plummeting to a low of 18,000 workers, only to be followed in July 2001 by a phenomenal rise to 80,000 workers (p. 3-4).

> Shills for design courses may suggest there are jobs aplenty, but this grossly misleading sales pitch may turn to dust after graduation. Design graduates struggled to find work in the heyday of design 20 years ago. I know. I was there. Things haven't changed. The marketplace is tougher than it has ever been (Snaydon, 2004, p. A25c).

In a contrary view, the B.C. Work Futures report of 2003 describes the *Creative Designers and Craftspersons (524)* occupational group as very large, employing 11,860 people as of 1998 (http://www.workfutures.bc.ca/En/def/occs/524_e1.htm, p. 7). Figure 1 illustrates the breakdown of the occupational group by percentage and indicates that approximately 54%, or 6,404 people, are graphic designers or illustrating artists. By way of comparison, only 10% are interior designers, 7% are theatre, fashion, exhibit, and other creative designers, 27% are artisans and craftspersons, and the remaining 2% are patternmakers (p. 7).

The Canadian Occupational Projections System (COPS) forecasts employment growth for the occupational group (524) at 3.1% per year to 2008, but predicts *faster than average growth for graphic designers and illustrating artists*, with an estimated 4,120 employment openings to the year 2008 (p. 8, emphasis mine).

Figure 1.
Distribution of Creative Designers and Craftspersons in Occupational Group NOC 524 in B.C. for 2003



British Columbia - 2003
N=11,860

A. Graphic Designers & Illustrating Artists **54%** = 6,404.4 people
B. Interior Designers **10%** = 1,186 people
C. Theatre, Fashion, Exhibit, and Other Creative Designers **7%** = 830.2 people
D. Artisans & Craftspersons **27%** = 3,202.2 people
E. Patternmakers **2%** = 237.2 people

(Data from: http://www.workfutures.bc.ca/En/def/occs/524_e1.htm, p. 7, retrieved February 2, 2004)

Ontario Job Futures provided even more impressive numbers for the year 2002. They estimated 22,000 people were employed in Ontario as graphic designers and illustrators, with 81% being full-time employees, 19% part-time employees, and 27% self-employed (http://www1.on.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/ojf/ojf.jsp?lang=e&section= Profile &noc=5241, page 2). Echoing the predictions of COPS for B.C., the Ontario report states: "Employment for this occupation is expected to grow more rapidly than the average for all occupations through the year 2007" (p. 2).

The U.S. Department of Labour, Bureau of Labour Statistics reported similar findings in their *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2004-05 Edition* online. "Designers held about 532,000 jobs in the United States in 2002," and approximately 212,000 were employed as graphic designers (http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos090.htm, p. 4). The Bureau forecasts employment of designers will grow at an average rate through to the year 2012 but, "among the design specialities, graphic designers are projected to provide the most new jobs" (p. 7). They predict demand for graphic designers will increase substantially

due to the expanding market for web-based information, DVD and CD-ROM entertainment, as well as other forms of interactive media (p. 7).

Background

Graphic design is the largest, most dynamic, and fastest growing occupational group of all design disciplines (such as fashion design, industrial design, interior design) in Canada and the United States. Over the course of the last two decades, the graphic design profession has witnessed widespread and accelerated change particularly with regard to new technology, new media, and the growing crop of specialisms emerging in an expanded field of practice (such as interactive media design, web design, wayfinding design).

Graphic design practice and education reflect the social, cultural, political, and economic factors of any given time period, including the ideology guiding professional associations and practitioners, educational institutions and faculty, and design's clients and audiences. Therefore, this study begins by examining the historical, social and cultural foundations of graphic design in the United States and Canada and, in particular, how the industry has been shaped and defined by design associations, governments, educators, practitioners, and other interested parties.

This study is *not* concerned with questioning whether graphic design is a profession, which is a moot point given the myriad ways *profession* can be defined. As well, within the graphics industry there is ongoing debate concerning whether or not graphic design should be classified as a profession at all. Therefore, attempts to 'pigeon hole' graphic design as a professional versus non-professional occupation are best left to others who may be more concerned with studying particular traits professions may have in common.

Writing about the sociology of professions in 1963, Hughes suggested asking the question "Is this occupation a profession?" would only result in leading sociologists down a false path of inquiry, whereas a more relevant line of inquiry would be to look at "the circumstances in which people in an occupation attempt to turn it into a profession and themselves into professional people" (Hughes in Macdonald, 1995, p. 6). Taking a cue from Hughes, this study has analysed *processes of professionalization* occurring over time in the graphic design industry and the impact those processes have had on education and professional practice.

- what impact has professionalization had upon graphic design practice and graphic design education in North America?

- how has professionalization affected the social, cultural, and economic capital of the graphic design industry?

The concept of professionalization (Larson 1977) underpins this study and is used as an analytical tool to examine how the graphic design industry has moved itself from a marginalized trade or vocation, into the mainstream as a major design discipline. Graphic design's efforts to professionalize are similar to those in other fields such as medicine, law, or accountancy, where the occupational group acquires capital by securing exclusive rights to specialized knowledge areas, creating regulated and standardized knowledge bases (i.e. education), and exercising control over access to employment.

Bourdieu (1986) emphasises that in order to understand capital it must be analysed in the context of the field of power in which it is being used or exchanged. A field of power is the particular social arena in which various forms of power struggles take place. In the social arena, individuals and groups are recognized and defined by the types, amounts, and value of capital they possess. Of particular concern to this study, therefore, is the social and cultural capital collectively amassed by graphic design-related associations as part of the industry's professionalization process, and the forms of capital attached to educational and professional credentials in the marketplace.

Purpose of the Study

There has been a wealth of graphic design discourse in the last decade that attempts to locate the industry within various social, historical, technological, and educational frameworks. But, the picture of the profession in North America is still incomplete. Therefore, this study had three purposes:

- to analyse the graphic design industry in the United States and Canada with respect to professionalization processes and capital, and

- to provide a comparative analysis of issues pertaining to accreditation, registration, certification, post-secondary education, and employment in the United States and Canada, and

- to contribute to the Canadian graphic design industry by identifying three major areas for further action.

Postcards from the Edge

This study originates from an interest in graphic design education and widens out to incorporate social theory. My viewpoints, however, have been constructed from the edge as a design educator who teaches in programs that include, but are not exclusively restricted to graphic design, and as a designer, mildly apologetic for having professionally practiced interior design rather than graphic design. Moreover, as an

interior designer, I do not bear the scratches, scars, or medals that graphic design practitioners wear as proof of being 'in the trenches'. My viewpoint from the edge, therefore, can be interpreted as providing the objectivity that comes from an arm's-length distancing from the subject under inquiry – 'She's not one of them' -- or as proof of a glaring deficiency – 'She has never been there, so can't possibly know or relate to the graphic design industry.' Yet, twenty-five years combined experience as an interior design professional and multi-disciplinary design instructor should not be discounted as unrelated or irrelevant to the study at hand.

This analysis of the graphic design 'professionalization project' has, as its foundation and inspiration, experience working as part of a team that recently created and launched a new graphic design degree in British Columbia. My study of the graphic design profession in North America is offered as postcards written from three vantage/advantage points:

- as an observer/participant from the margins of the graphic design industry,
- as an educator within the mainstream of design education in B.C., and
- as a graduate student, working within the traditions of educational sociology and the sociology of the professions.

Overview of the Study

In Chapter One, graphic design has been described as a dynamic profession whose boundaries, identity, and audiences have shifted and changed over the past 100 years in response to social, economic, and technological challenges. Graphic design has not only survived the winds of change, but has continued to evolve and grow as a distinct discipline. Canadian and American labour statistics support the claim graphic design represents the largest and fastest growing occupational group of all the design disciplines North and South of the border, and occupational forecasts suggest this trend will continue in the foreseeable future. Subsequent chapters unfold as follows:

- Chapters Three and Four establish the historical and social contexts for the practice of graphic design and examine its struggles to create a distinct identity and free itself from its ties to fine art and commercial art.

- Chapter Five is concerned with graphic design's fight for public recognition and the establishment of professional associations, exclusionary tactics regarding the industry, and the development of connections to education.

- In Chapter Six, attempts to regulate the graphic design industry are examined in more detail, particularly with regard to the accreditation of educational programs,

the certification of practitioners, and the trend towards more post-secondary education for entry into the profession.

- Chapter Seven considers post-secondary education with regard to the social, cultural, and economic capital credentials may accrue for graphic design professionals.

- Chapter Eight provides conclusions regarding the findings of this study and recommends further opportunities for investigation.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

Analytic Approaches

Theoretical Framework: Larson

Larson's (1977) work in the sociology of professions can be described as interpretive or interactionist and is "a complete break from the functionalism that dominated mid twentieth-century social theory and which traced its origins back to Durkheim (1958)" (Macdonald, 1995, p. 2).

Functionalism was primarily concerned with identifying 'traits' of professionalism and using them as classifying and measuring mechanisms. Larson suggests the traits approach towards "ideal-typical constructions [does] not tell us what a profession is, only what it pretends to be" (Larson, 1977, p. xii). Instead, sociologists of the professions should be guided by Hughes' (1963) approach in order to question "what professions actually do in everyday life to negotiate and maintain their special position" (p. xii). Therefore, this study is concerned with analysing various processes the graphic design industry has employed in its struggle to position itself, including recognition as a distinct profession, establishment of associations, delineation of educational benchmarks, and guides for professional practice. Larson's interpretive framework serves as an ideal theoretical model, particularly because of her interest in the ways and means used by professions to change their status, enhance leverage in the marketplace, and control access to their professions.

Interpretive sociology, according to Burrell and Morgan, is primarily concerned with understanding the everyday world as it is at the level of subjective experience, particularly "issues relating to the nature of the *status quo, social order, consensus, social integration and cohesion, solidarity and actuality"* (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p. 28- 31, emphasis in original).

> [Interpretive sociology] sees the social world as an emergent social process which is created by the individuals concerned (p. 28).

Theorists who contributed to the "intellectual foundations" of the interpretive paradigm include Dilthey (1833-1911) and Weber (1864-1920), among others, who were concerned with drawing distinctions between the natural and cultural sciences (p. 229).

> Whereas the natural sciences investigated external processes in a material world, the cultural sciences were essentially concerned with the internal processes of human minds. Even though these processes may be translated into relatively

> tangible cultural phenomena such as art, poetry, institutions and the like, it was maintained that they could only be fully understood in relation to the minds which created them and the inner experience which they reflected. Cultural phenomena were, in essence, seen as the external manifestations of such inner experience and hence, it was argued, could only be fully appreciated with this reference point of view (p. 229).

Larson's interpretive model examines the ways professions organized themselves to attain market power and collective social mobility, which in turn allowed them to restrict access to their professions, regulate competition, and standardize and control education (Larson, 1977, p. 70-71). In the context of graphic design, the move to gain market power and social mobility can be traced to the development of professional graphic design associations in the United States and Canada. Associations played an increasingly active role in restricting access to the graphic design profession, setting standards for membership and professional practice, and determining the requisite knowledge and skills to be passed on to the next generation of practitioners through the education system.

Larson uses the term *professionalization* to refer to the various types of processes occupations engage in to carve out and control their market niches (p. xvi), and she employs Weber's ideas on social stratification to examine the importance of qualifications and expertise with respect to monopolizing knowledge and economic opportunities (Macdonald, 1995, p. 9). She is quick to point out, however, the professional project is not static, requiring an occupation to constantly "defend, maintain, and improve its position" (p. 16). Therefore, this study is concerned with analysing graphic design's professionalization processes over time in order to map the significance of the professionalization project.

In particular, Larson's study draws upon the symbolic interactionism (part of the interpretive paradigm) employed by Friedson (1970) in his study of the professions in the United States (p. 4-5). "The researcher starting from interactionist assumptions finds that members of society, often working in pressure groups and occupational associations, are actively striving to change the system of stratification to their own advantage" (p. 13).

> Professions are knowledge-based occupations and therefore the nature of their knowledge, the socio-cultural evaluation of their knowledge and the occupation's strategies in handling their knowledge base are of central importance (p. 160).

This study reveals strategies employed by the graphic design industry regarding its knowledge base, such as the Society of Printers' involvement in the establishment of a two-year printing program at Harvard, and the controlling mechanisms they were able to set in place. As will also be discussed in a subsequent chapter, in the late 1990s, the AIGA (American Institute of Graphic Arts) forged an alliance with a federal agency that accredits post-secondary institutions and determined the requisite knowledge, skills, and even the type of credential the federal agency would endorse (and the AIGA would

sanction) for entry into the graphic design profession. These strategies connect directly to Larson's major premise that "...professionalization is thus an attempt to translate one order of scarce resources -- special knowledge and skills -- into another -- social and economic rewards" (Larson, 1977, p. xvii). With this statement, Larson suggests researchers of the professions need to consider the ways in which occupations construct their professionalization projects so they not only control access to education and potentially the curriculum itself, but also access to membership and employment. In this regard, a major component of the professionalization project would be for an occupation to position its associations as the gatekeepers for the profession.

Larson's interpretive analysis of professionalization provides the primary theoretical framework upon which this sociological analysis of the graphic design industry has been constructed. Table 2 provides an outline of the basic framework used by this study.

Table 2.
Larson – Framework of Professionalization

Major Professionalization Processes	
Form organizations and associations	Secure rights to specialized knowledge areas
Gain social recognition as distinctive occupation	Control access to marketplace

Aspects of other social theories are incorporated to add further dimensions to this study such as Friedson's's view of the professions, and Collins' and Brown's perspectives on credentialism. Bourdieu's work relating to capital serves as the secondary theoretical framework that underpins this study.

Theoretical Framework: Bourdieu

Capital, depending on the field in which it functions, can be considered in three fundamental ways:

> ...[A]s economic capital, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalised in the form of property rights; as cultural

> capital, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalised in the form of educational qualifications; and as social capital, made up of social obligations ("connections"), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalised in the form of a title of nobility (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 47).

However, while cultural and social capital can be converted to economic capital under certain conditions, they remain distinct.

Capital, in its social form, emphasises social resources such as the collective value of social networks, connections, and relationships. The transmission of social capital provides individuals or groups with privileges and distinct advantages over others who do not have access to the same bank of social connections. The value of a social network lies in the reciprocal social relations and social interactions that serve an individual or group as actual or potential social resources.

In its cultural form, capital has three distinct aspects of existence: in the embodied state (the individual or collective mind and body), in the objectified state (cultural goods), and in the institutionalized state (credentials and qualifications) (p. 47). Cultural capital refers to the culture of a particular class or group. Some cultural capital is more highly valued, particularly if it is the cultural capital of the dominant class or group(s). Historically and socially constructed rules and guidelines are used to legitimize and promote the interests of the dominant group(s) that controls access to resources (social, economic, political), while also ensuring the maintenance of the status quo.

Professional organizations and educational institutions have considerable clout because of their ability to confer capital, particularly social and cultural capital, upon their members or participants (such as faculty or students). For example, this study examines the ways in which membership in professional graphic design organizations can provide individuals with social capital, provided they meet certain requirements for membership (membership fees, letters of support, testing mechanisms). Membership can also be conferred at various levels such as full membership, associate membership, student membership, and so on. Likewise, educational institutions play a role in disseminating graphic design's cultural capital when they award individuals citations, certificates, diplomas, or degrees which attest to a graduate's ability to reproduce the cultural capital of the dominant class or group.

There are also many ways capital can be acquired (or forfeited). The volume of social capital an individual possesses depends upon "the size of the network of connections" that he or she can draw upon, as well as the volume of capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed by individuals who constitute the network of connections (p. 51). "The point about the various forms of capital is that they are recognised as having value and they can be traded for desired outcomes within their own field or within others" (Webb et al, 2002, p. 109-110). With regard to graphic design, this study discusses the value others place upon particular forms of capital such as membership in professional associations and educational credentials, and how these determine the degree of access an

individual has to social mobility (such as employment, occupational status, and monetary rewards). Further, social clout for professional associations can be translated into cultural influence, particularly with regard to certification of members and the education of new professionals who will become future members of associations.

> Education via a system of apprenticeship continued, but it was judged inadequate to the task; formal schooling was required to master the knowledge and skills now needed for these vocations. The establishment of professional schools, a self-administered code of ethics, and the existence of strong professional associations were three significant markers of professionalization (p. 86).

Bourdieu's conceptualization of capital, represented by Table 3, has been used throughout this study to assess the relationship between graphic design's professionalization processes and their exchange value in the social and political spheres of society.

Table 3.
Bourdieu - Framework of Capital

Categories of Capital		
Social	**Cultural**	**Economic**
Social networks, connections, relationships, privileges represented by social status and/or resources	Individual/collective culture of a class or group, cultural goods, as well as credentials and qualifications	Convertible into money, property rights, economic privileges. Other forms of capital may also be converted into economic capital

Methods and Approaches

This study used Larson's interpretive framework and Bourdieu's post-structuralist conception of capital to analyze the graphic design profession in North America. Analyses of contemporary graphic design literature were conducted to provide subjective professional viewpoints pertaining to professionalization. To that end, comments and observations of members of the graphic design industry and academia were incorporated into this study -- from debates about the profession's historical and social origins, to the formulation of associations, to issues relating to professional practice, and the regulation of educational institutions and practitioners.

Using an interpretive framework to examine current literature has been critical to this study because it facilitated the development of a comprehensive picture of graphic design's particular professionalization project, and revealed how professionalization is

viewed from *inside* the industry, as well as from the margins. For example, in 2004, despite a century or more as a viable occupation, graphic design is still referred to as a teenager among design professions. This was also the case in 1964 when Spencer tackled the same issue: "The [graphic] design profession, emerging from a long period of adolescence, seems now to be wavering as though undecided whether to accept its adult obligations or retreat to the nursery" (Spencer, 1964 in Heller & Poyner, 1999, p. 157). Subsequent chapters provide insight into graphic design's struggle for recognition as a profession and its desire to retain its maverick reputation.

Although the graphic design profession has been active in North America for more than a century, there is scant information about the early years of design practice, primarily because it was not recognized as separate from the printing industry. Consequently, voices of early practitioners have not been preserved in many texts. In recent years, however, authors such as Meggs, Hollis, Heller, and Thomson have made significant contributions to graphic design's historical record in North America, and many of their findings have been incorporated into this study.

Additionally, government reports and online resources dealing with topics relating to the graphic design profession were also invaluable resources. Information was accessed online over a two-year period from web sites of associations representing graphic design practitioners including: AIGA (American Institute of Graphic Arts), ICOGRADA (International Council of Graphic Design Associations), GDC (The Society of Graphic Designers of Canada), and RGD Ontario (The Association of Registered Graphic Designers Of Ontario). This included articles relating to professional practice, post-secondary education, survey and opinion poll results, examination guidelines for certifying practitioners, and even 'listserv chats' about contentious issues in Canada and the United States. The purpose of this aspect of the study was to *get inside the head* of the current graphic design industry and understand how it thinks and speaks about itself as a profession, as well as to listen to individual voices from 'the trenches'.

Various sources were accessed for qualitative and quantitative surveys relating to graphic design practitioners, salary levels, and education, although in some cases the methods used for gathering, filtering, and generating the information were unknown or questionable.[1] In addition, online job searches were also incorporated into this study in order to build comparisons of the graphic design industry in Canada and the United States.

Overall, this study provides a comprehensive interpretive and post-structuralist analysis of professionalization processes employed by the graphic design industry in North America in the past century.

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[1] Wherever evidence was thought to be questionable, it has been brought to the attention of readers, especially where it has been used to create Tables or Figures. As well, in several instances sample sizes for some studies were inordinately small, but because they were the only sources of statistical evidence available directly related to this study, data was presented with appropriate caveats.

CHAPTER THREE

THE CHANGING FACE OF GRAPHIC DESIGN

What Do They Do?

> *Graphic designers get little respect in the boardroom and are constantly trying to justify their existence to clients. ... Many of us are members of professional graphic design associations. While these associations succeed in bringing us together, some may fall short of elevating our profession to the status of professions that are respected in the business world (lawyers, engineers, and accountants). ... [Graphic] designers remain at the bottom of the communications chain -- below advertising professionals, communication consultants, and marketing strategists. As long as we are seen only as visual enhancers, we will never command the respect (or fees) that other professionals do* (Saldanha, 2003, paragraphs 5-7).

When reviewing contemporary graphic design literature, it is common to come across authors in North America who share the sentiments Saldanha posted on the *Beyond Graphic* web site. Many graphic design practitioners believe their profession is maligned, misunderstood, and given short shrift. Authors such as Dilnot observe: "Design not only suffers from a general unwillingness of the culture to grant it the status of an activity worth studying and defining -- an unwillingness shared by design practitioners who want design defined merely in terms of what designers do -- but also from a fundamental ambiguity that the concept of design possesses" (1989b, p. 233). This may, in part be due to what Bonsiepe refers to as the bipolarity between theoreticians and practitioners, and in particular, "This either/or proposition has its roots in the origin of our profession, namely vocational training with its deeply ingrained anti-intellectual attitude" (in Fathers, 2003, p. 52).

One fairly general definition of a profession is that it is an organizational form with a regulatory body that ensures the public of a minimum standard of performance by its individual members, enforces a code of conduct and ethics, manages knowledge or expertise that is the basis of the profession's activities, oversees training, and is often responsible for licensing and controlling the numbers of practicing professionals. However, there are many other definitions of *profession* that are just as valid and may or may not include the elements mentioned above. As well, the meaning of *profession* has evolved over time to suite changing social conditions and structures. To complicate matters further, there is no consensus about how professions should be defined, which occupations should be called professions, and which elements, traits, or attributes should be emphasized in theorizing (Friedson, 1994, p. 14). Moreover, some occupations have

been able to transform themselves into professions based solely upon their own definitions.

Once a vocation, trade, or occupational group decides it is time to change its status to a profession, what are the processes involved? Is a change in status conferred when appropriate professionalization processes have been successfully completed? Who determines the processes to be followed, and who makes decisions about entitlement? The issue of professionalization has broad social implications because professions are agents who create and advance knowledge embodied in disciplines (Foucault in Friedson, 1994, p. 7). Their members project that knowledge into human and state affairs.

An Untidy Profession

"The two 'professions' who head up and preserve the power structure of simple societies are female and male providers (gatherer-hunters) and the shaman (a religious leader who 'solves' problems with magic and reassuring rituals)" (Rossides, 1998, p. 9-10). From the seedlings planted by these two simple society "professions" come later developments that add to the complexity of their social structures and result in further divisions of labour. Rossides suggests professionalism in the West began in the rationalist culture of ancient Greece: "By the fifth century B.C., Greece had generated (in addition to the typical professions of warrior and civil servant) a number of unique professions and practices: professional politicians, freelance teachers, and autonomous academies of learning encompassing many of the basic fields of knowledge found in today's undergraduate curriculum" (p. 15).

In a contrary view, Larson suggests "professions are ... relatively recent social products" which date "from the 'great transformation' which became visible in England toward the end of the eighteenth century" and were "originally shaped by the historical matrix of competitive capitalism" (1977, p. 2). However, one page later, readers are told "architecture, whether private or official, was considered by Cicero and Vitruvius as 'one of the *learned professions* for which men of good birth and good education [were] best suited' in the *ancient Roman world*" (p. 3, emphasis mine).

Given the complexity of the term *profession;* differing views of when and where concepts of profession emerged in Western societies do not come as a surprise. As Friedson suggests:

> Much debate, going back at least as far as Flexner (1915), has centred around how professions should be defined -- which occupations should be called professions, and by what institutional criteria. But while most definitions overlap in the elements, traits, or attributes they include, a number of tallies have demonstrated a persistent lack of consensus about which traits are to be emphasized in theorizing. No small part of the criticism of the traditional literature on the professions has been devoted to pointing out a lack of consensus (1994, p. 14-15).

Even a well-established profession such as architecture is subject to some degree of contention concerning its early professional status. For example, although it can be traced back to at least the 1st century when Vitruvius, a Roman architect, wrote the first known treatise on architecture, epistemologically the profession of architecture in the United States traces its foundations to significant milestones such as the establishment of the American Institute of Architects (1857), the advent of the first collegiate school of architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1865), and the first architectural licensing law (1897).

However, anyone attempting to pinpoint the emergence of graphic design as a distinct discipline, field, occupation, or profession will find the endeavour akin to stepping on eels. Today, there is still no agreement on what the field should be called, or exactly what it entails. "Are we graphic designers, graphic artists, commercial artists, visual communicators, communication designers, or simply layout men and pasteup [sic] artists?" asks McCoy, a prominent graphic designer and educator (1998, p. 3). While the "field" is literally tripping over the debris of too many aliases, having too many aliases also poses a problem for anyone attempting to chase down graphic design's pedigree. Although examining the historical roots of graphic design is challenging, it is integral to understanding the professionalization processes that have taken place over time.

Friedson suggests a phenomenological research strategy could be utilized to examine professions at the grass roots or "folk" level to avoid becoming bogged down by "determin[ing] what profession is in an absolute sense" (Friedson, 1994, p. 20). He maintains when a theory of profession is freed from having to make broad generalizations, it opens up new opportunities for enquiry such as:

> [W]hy particular occupations came to be labelled professions by their members and recognized as such by others; how and why official classifications employing the term developed; why the occupations so classified changed over time; or what the consequences were of membership in such classifications for both the organized occupation and its members (p. 25-26).

With Friedson's strategy in mind, it is important to ask where and when graphic design began its journey towards social acceptance and professionalization. When did social processes of organization and governance become important to practitioners regarding the production and reproduction of design activities, and the production and transmission of the field's culture and status?

The Creation Myth

> *Graphic design historians more or less accept the creation myth that it just happened and have done little to substantively explore the cultural, economic, and technological shifts that gave life to this new profession* (Heller, 1998a,

p. 84).

Design historians and educators such as Meggs and Friedman suggest graphic design emerged with the first writing systems in ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt (circa 3,000 B.C.E.) and in China (circa 1,800 B.C.E.) (Meggs, 1992, p. 4. Friedman, 1997, p. 1). However, Meggs also appears to be willing to push the arrow even further back to the Palaeolithic and Neolithic periods (35,000 B.C.E. to 4,000 B.C.E.) when some humans were busy painting in caves. "This was not the beginning of *art* as we know it," he says, "rather, it was the dawning of *visual communications*, because these early pictures were made for survival and were created for utilitarian and ritualistic purposes" (p. 4., emphasis mine).

Meggs makes the point that early visual communications (a.k.a. graphic design) involved cave painting for ritualistic purposes. If this is considered in conjunction with Rossides' contention that shamans (religious leaders who solved problems with magic and rituals) constituted a *profession* in simple societies, then by extension, early graphic designers, who created ritualistic cave art, may be considered part of the "shaman profession". Contemporary graphic designers, therefore, could conceivably argue by virtue of their ancestors they can lay claim to professional status from approximately 35,000 B.C.E. onwards. Following Friedson's notion of a profession as a "folk concept" (1994, p. 20), it would thus be possible to trace the phenomenological development of graphic design back to the first *professional* visual communicators whose medium of convenience was a cave wall, and whose intended audience was probably the clan or the immediate community.

However, many design historians find Meggs' references to cave art to be problematic and overly retrogressive, and instead suggest graphic design began with the birth of the printing press in Germany (circa 1450), or with poster designs in nineteenth century France and England. There are also design historians who view history through the filters of twentieth century Modernism, and therefore disregard any design considered pre-modern. In the early 1900s, several art and design movements paved the pathway to Modernism; however, the lion's share of the credit is given to the Bauhaus school, established in Weimar, Germany in 1919. It was philosophically and ideologically in opposition to the pro-historicism of the French Beaux-Arts academy, and therefore, the Bauhaus banned all forms of historicism, including the study of art and design history, as ideologically suspicious and totally irrelevant for its students (Findeli, 1995, p. 43). Of course, the only relevant history for design students, at least in the Bauhaus' view, began with the Bauhaus.

> More than any other movement, the Bauhaus was identified as that absolute laboratory of modern design [becoming] a point of reference for situating progressive trends in both preceding and succeeding periods. Because historical representation gestured to specific and exclusive genealogies, it became incumbent upon historians to ignore or condemn "unprogressive" historical moments and praise "progressive eras" (Schwarzer 1995, p. 185).

The Bauhaus was so influential in revolutionizing design education in other parts of Europe and across North America that it became trendy for most design schools to 'modern up' and dump pre-1920s art and design history off the curriculum, particularly in the years following World War II. Any discussion or investigation of the origins of graphic design would have been suppressed by Bauhaus-influenced anti-historicism. However, anti-historical sentiments were already in place a decade earlier than the Bauhaus, when the Futurists were muzzling history. "Why should we look back?" declared the *Manifesto of Futurism*, published in the Paris newspaper *Le Figaro* on February 20, 1909 (Harrison & Wood, 1993, p. 147). Futurism's avant-garde proponents believed humanity must move forward with no regard for the past. Humanity's past – traditions, standards, and values – needed to be eradicated so they wouldn't get in the way of the future.

Nevertheless, as Heller observes, "the true origin of graphic design begins long before Futurists [1909], Constructivists [c. 1917], and Dadaists [1917] changed all the rules of typography and page composition. After all, they had to change it *from* something" (Heller, 1998a, p. 84, emphasis mine). Heller is on the right track, for if design historians relied on using an early modernist's historical telescope to locate the origins of graphic design, they would overlook the work of Egyptian scribes and artisans; Renaissance typographers and printers; nineteenth century Victorian illustrators and poster designers; and a wealth of others who contributed to graphic design's colourful past. An early modernist would also disregard important social and cultural issues relating to the struggle for equality in the arts.

Looking past early modernism, the timeframe for the emergence of graphic design is pushed back almost 70 years before the Bauhaus in a feminist article by Thomson challenging patriarchal canons of design history. "The concept of graphic design and the *professional graphic designer* evolved in the United States during the second half of the nineteenth century" (1995, p. 64, emphasis mine). In her book *The Origins of Graphic Design in America 1879-1920,* she adds:

> It begins in 1870, shortly after the Civil War, at a time when the technological changes we associate with the Industrial Revolution were beginning to transform American society, and it concludes fifty years later, in 1920, when World War I had ended but before the advent of Modernism. ...As an activity, in contrast to a profession, graphic designing had been part of the colonial world; printing, advertising, and illustration were integrated into early settlement life. Colonists brought the graphic arts to America at the same time as they brought commerce and law (1997, p. 2-9).

Graphic Design: A Contentious Pedigree

What becomes particularly clear when consulting various historical interpretations is that design historians have not reached consensus concerning the origins of graphic

design and its emergence as a profession. Should the pedigree begin 30,000 years ago with European cave art, or 550 years ago with Gutenberg's invention of the printing press in Germany, or should it skip to the 1800s in France, England and America?

Handlin points out, "Practically nothing is known about the history of the professions in the United States," but, recent [sociological] studies have begun to fill in some of the gaps in the historical record, at least for some professions (Handlin in Larson, 1977, p. 105). Twenty years after his observation, Thomson has shed some important light on early design, but the record is still far from complete:

> The Bureau of the Census listed "designer" as a job category as early as 1890 without specifying in which industries the designers work. Enumerators were instructed to describe "designers" as professionals, along with dentists, clergymen, actors, and civil engineers. ...In 1910, however, designers were included as employees in "Printing and publishing establishments." They were distinguished from the engravers, engineers, machinists, compositors and typesetters, lithographers, and pressmen who were also listed under this heading. According to these figures, there were 393,000 designers in printing and publishing: 355,000 men and 38,000 women (1997, p. 9-11).

While there was some recognition of design as a profession in the late 1800s, it is not at all clear how long this status was actually accorded, because by the early 1900s design was primarily positioned as a trade or vocation.

Design history is itself a fledgling discipline, having broken free of the constraints of fine art history only in the late 1970s. The murkiness of the pedigree of graphic design is thus compounded, because only recently has there been any attempt to systematically map its historical roots. A great deal has yet to be uncovered.

Design Versus Crass Commercialism

"As a profession, graphic design has existed only since the middle of the twentieth century; until then, advertisers and their agents used the services provided by commercial artists," states Richard Hollis, the author of *Graphic Design: A Concise History* (Hollis, 1994, p. 8). While Hollis skillfully avoids any mention of graphic design's birthplace with this statement, he places its birth around the 1950s, which is about 100 years later than Thomson's estimation. At the heart of Hollis' statement, however, is the key to understanding the confusion regarding the emergence of graphic design and its status as a profession. Hollis implies that *graphic design* is somehow distinct from *commercial art* precisely because it became a *profession* in the middle of the twentieth century.

Commercial art is a term with a stigma attached to it. Its reputation is tied to mass commercialism such as the design of posters, flyers, and product packaging, and

therefore, any art done in the service of business was discredited, shunned, and ridiculed by artists and critics of the 1800s who saw the *fine arts* as encompassing much higher or loftier ideals.

> In a period when hierarchies of artistic value were recodified [sic] and the distinction between elite and popular taste intensified, many professionals took part in a public debate about the place of applied arts and design education in a democracy and the increasing use of art in advertising. The applied arts -- and graphic design was considered to be in that category -- were scorned by an intellectual elite that elevated some arts, notably oil painting and sculpture, to a place outside popular comprehension (Thomson, 1997, p. 106).

Tension existed between romantic notions associated with the pursuit of fine art, and commercial art for being in bed with business was well known. Even as new forms of artistic opportunities appeared such as print advertising, art direction, and photography, many fine artists dug their heels in to maintain their established traditions of professional authority, prestige, and influence, despite the shifting landscape.

> These instabilities, combined with disagreements about the relationship of means to ends in art, resulted in charges of "commercialism" against some artists. This unflattering but highly fluid term became a repository for all of the ambivalent feelings that artists had about the new technical and marketing possibilities (Bogart, 1995, p. 6).

However, it wasn't long before fine artists began to court the business world. Commercial patronage was considered to be crass, however, it gave artists opportunities for greater public visibility and opened up new and expanding income sources. At the beginning of the 1900s, fine art still wielded a tremendous amount of cultural weight, and "that influence extended far beyond the immediate sphere of its creators to business and society at large. Art and aesthetic discourse penetrated the representations and organizational worlds of commerce, and were privileged to a remarkable degree in advertising practice" (p.7).

At the same time fine art was influencing business and advertising, commercial art was being called into question for appealing to a popular audience, while also manipulating the public by using images to sell products.

> A great deal was at stake for all involved. Control of the discourses of art meant ...the power to assert class and self-legitimacy in a society in which shifting economies, technologies, and social demographics were rapidly calling old ways of life and power relations into question. Power was a crucial variable. Three issues in particular help to highlight these changing relations of authority: the tension between romantic ideals and commercial activity; the vacillating attitudes toward art's relation to commodities; and changing interpretations of the relationship of art and audience (p. 7).

While fine artists were busy promoting themselves to business and the buying public, commercial artists were stereotyped as all too willing to line their pockets while promoting the interests of business. In the early part of the 1900s, where one stood on the continuum had more to do with artistic pedigree, social status, power and authority, and far less to do with artistic output.

In the business sector, attitudes towards commercial art changed more willingly than entrenched opinions held by fine artists. By the end of the 1920's, business was looking for commercial artists and designers able to combine an understanding of the advertising industry with the latest trends in market research and consumer psychology. Design was viewed as having the ability to help competitors gain the edge by adding value to their products and boosting sales, and by promoting a company's image to the public. For example, William Teague was hired by Henry Ford to demystify Ford's manufacturing process, keep the public entertained, and instil brand loyalty through a series of dramatic displays created for the Chicago Century of Progress Exhibition of 1933/34 and the New York World's Fair of 1939/40. Teague was one of many designers who shifted his professional practice from an obscure, behind-the-scenes activity to the forefront of the corporate enterprise through his involvement in projects for companies such as Kodak and Texaco (Woodham, 1997, p. 68). The designer became regarded as the expert who could apply science to designs that would contribute to economic growth for a company.

Fortune magazine, founded in 1930 by the publisher Henry Luce, set high standards in editorial design circles, and also featured self-promotional articles by designers such as Raymond Loewy, Norman Bel Geddes and others, while actively promoting design "as an important adjunct of business" (p. 67). These designers enjoyed considerable public acclaim and social prestige. Loewy who defined 'good design' as "an upward sales curve" was employing 150 people in his design studio by 1947 and, by 1949 had achieved celebrity status through his appearance on the cover of *Time* magazine (p. 68).

By the 1950's, many companies were viewing design as an integral part of their businesses. T. Watson, Jr., who took over IBM from his father, is well known for extolling his beliefs about the power of design:

> In the IBM Company, we do not think that good design can make a poor product good, whether the product be a machine or a building or a promotional brochure or a business man [sic]. But we are convinced that good design can materially make a good product reach its full potential. In short, we think that good design is good business (1999, p. 250).

By the 1980s, consumerism had reached an all time high, with *designer labels* appearing on every type of product imaginable. Corporate intentions to use design to add tangible value to products and services for consumers was called into question, especially

when mass-produced designer items began to display a general lack of quality, without a reduction in the price.

However, distaste for commercialism began to surface once again in the 1990s and with it came the resurrection of old stereotypes about commercial art and design. Graphic designers and advertising 'creatives' doing work for corporations promoting consumerism were lambasted by political groups such as the Vancouver based Media Foundation, which publishes *Adbusters* magazine. In recent years, issues of *Adbusters* demanded artists and designers do 'the right thing' by abandoning the corporate-controlled media bandwagon. Instead, they were urged to redeem their souls by joining the 'culture jamming' revolution to topple (or 'uncool') corporate America.

All those involved in the pursuit of commercialism were stereotyped as evildoers, including graphic designers. Art and design in the aid of commerce were talked about in hushed tones, relegated to the back rooms of design studios, and possibly even kept in plain, brown wrappers. The stigma attached to commercial art was back with a vengeance.

CHAPTER FOUR

A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME

Outside the "True Brotherhood"

The continuing marginalization of commercial artists is reinforced by Wild when she describes Fella, a pre-eminent graphic designer in California, as an "artist of design here in Los Angeles, who mutated himself from a *commercial artist* to a designer of the highest calibre" (1998, p. 50, emphasis in original). The stigma of the commercial art label is further reinforced when prominent authors such as Heller refer to graphic designers as having to pull themselves out of "the *primordial commercial ooze*" from whence the profession began (Heller, 1998a, p. 84, emphasis mine).

Commercial art and graphic design are viewed as separate endeavours by Goldfarb, the owner of a New York headhunting agency, in the opening chapter of her book *Careers by Design: A Headhunter's Secrets for Success and Survival in Graphic Design* (1993, p. 28). "Tell someone at a party you're a graphic designer and you'll probably find they will consider you part of the advertising world. Or, worse, somebody may say, 'Oh, I understand, you're a commercial artist', which is a totally archaic term" (p. 25). Her comments underscore the continued marginalization of the commercial artist, but she also suggests there is a separation between graphic design, advertising, and commercial art. This becomes evident when she says, "Advertising differs from design in many ways. ...The message is to sell a product or service. The key word here is 'sell'. Never underestimate that intent" (p. 28).

No doubt unintentionally, her book promotes the idea that advertising design, and thus its "archaic" relative commercial art, are somehow slimy because of their association with 'selling', while graphic design is more ethical and virtuous. But, attempts to distance graphic design from commercial art are common. For example, Byrne, a contemporary designer, expresses sentiments shared by many of his colleagues:

> It was a relief not to have to explain that graphic design meant "good design" and commercial art meant "bad design". Never mind the obvious flaws in the argument -- it worked. ...This elitism extended to our relationships with others whose work is not so unlike our own. If they happen to have had the bad luck to have gone to the wrong school, where the words *commercial art* were used rather than *graphic design*, or -- God forbid -- found themselves working in advertising after they got out of school, or (worst sin of all) working for a marketing firm, or (the newest sin) taking a job in desktop publishing, they were and are, for the most part, considered not to be of the *true* brotherhood (1997, p. 86, emphasis in original).

Although commercial art made its appearance in England and France more than 100 years ago, the term still elicits derogatory comments in North America. Discrediting 'others' who are outside of the 'true brotherhood' seems to be a necessity. What becomes critical for upward movement in a profession is the constant maintenance and legitimising of the stratification system that has been set in place. This follows Larson's contention that while the 'professional project' is able to adapt to major changes initiated elsewhere in the society, there is still "the persistence of social structures, the stubbornness of vested interests, [and] the unconscious rigidity of habits and ideology" (1977, p. 105). The usual approach is to try to widen the gap between one social group and another to draw attention to distinctions in characteristics and abilities.

In a tongue-in-cheek definition, Holland succinctly captures stereotypical attitudes still held today: "Commercial art: Anything done by an artist with a cash register by the door. Commercial art is traditionally delivered to a client in a brown paper bag with an invoice stapled to the outside (B. Holland, 2001, p. 235).

Name-Calling

"Because printing was, at one time, the only means of distributing communication and information in the business environment, it was associated with graphic design" states the design sector report of the Canadian government (HRDC, 1996, p. 75). Traditionally, a graphic designer was categorized as someone organizing text and images to be reproduced using print technology. Many contemporary designers are still involved in designing print-based solutions for clients; only today they use an array of software packages, primarily on a Macintosh computer platform. Graphic design has become an umbrella term for an increasingly diverse assortment of *specialisms* that have evolved out of the needs of the marketplace and the emergence of new technologies. This has led many designers and educators to conclude *graphic design* is an outmoded term for a profession that has outgrown many of its ties to printing technologies.

Those who want to see graphic design erased as the nomenclature for the profession want a new term that better reflects expanded boundaries and new horizons of practice that have emerged in the last two decades. Bonsiepe suggests a "reorientation of graphic design" would result in the "*liberation of graphic design from its ancillary status in the domain of advertising and promotion*" (1994, p. 49, emphasis is original). Further, he believes there is a need to "*shift the role of the graphic designer* from translation of information from a non-visual state into a visual state, to the *authorial organization of information"* (p. 48, emphasis is original). He therefore proposes the term *information designer*, or the shorter form*: info-designer* as a more appropriate descriptor (p. 48, emphasis is original).

Support for Bonsiepe's proposal is found in an article, *Information Design: Emergence of a New Profession*, in which Horn describes information design as "the art and science of preparing information so it can be used by human beings with efficiency

and effectiveness" (Horn, 2000, p. 15). Horn is one of 18 contributors to a book entitled *Information Design*, which suggests graphic and information design are related, but information design "has its roots in a variety of disciplines -- including information theory and the cognitive sciences -- and brings together design and research" (Passini, 2000, p. 85). Horn and his collaborators position information design higher on the hierarchical scale than graphic design because it can be defined as both an art and a science. The book goes on to cast graphic design in a shallow light by describing it as displaying a tendency, particularly in the last few decades, of emphasizing appearance and giving expression to "certain contemporary aesthetic values" (p. 85). While these positioning and discrediting tactics may sound familiar, in this case it is graphic design (as opposed to commercial art) on the receiving end of the stick, charged with creating aesthetic 'eye candy' for popular audiences.

Practitioners and educational programs have sought escape from what they perceive as constrictive 'pigeon-holing' caused by the term *graphic design.* Over the years, this has resulted in name changes from "commercial art to advertising design to graphic design to visual communication, and sometimes back to graphic design" (Swanson, 1998, p. 17). Some educators believe the term *graphic design* perpetuates the notion of a *trade* and an association with *vocational training* no longer valid for most contemporary diploma and degree-granting programs. Swanson, for instance, states: "Graphic design education is not, for the most part, education. It is vocational training, and rather narrow, specialized training at that" (p. 17).

As of 1998, the U.S. Department of Labour agreed with him. Their *Index of Occupational Titles* classified graphic design as a trade not requiring any training for people to succeed in the field (Gold, 1999, p. 22). In the 1992 *Occupational Outlook Handbook* there were no recommendations for any particular education for graphic design career hopefuls and they were advised just to focus on the development of a portfolio of work (D.K. Holland, 1992, p. 24).

There are some educators and designers who believe that without a name change, it will be difficult for the public's perception of graphic design to move away from a skilled "wrist-for-hire" trade or vocation, to a more respected and higher paid "visual-intellect" profession (Bernard, 1999, p. 23-25). However, if the public is confused about graphic design, it is debatable whether a name change will make any difference.

Despite considerable inroads made to establish the profession, today the term *graphic design* continues to be maligned in much the same way *commercial art* was derided some 100 years earlier. Helfand elaborates:

> Some years ago, a professor of mine went to his dentist to have his teeth drilled"... "So!" inquired the dentist. How's commercial art?" Insulted at the insinuation that he, a serious, trained graphic designer, would be considered in the same category as, say, a sign painter, the professor looked the dentist squarely in the eye. "So!" sneered the professor, "How's dental hygiene?" (Helfand, 2001, p. 73).

The profession's struggle to define itself is due to the fact graphic designers are unable to reach consensus, precisely because they "lack a central forum" for talking things out, face-to-face (Gold, 1999, p. 22). However, with approximately 300,000 people working as graphic designers in North America, reaching consensus on a hot-button topic like a name change seems almost impossible. Many designers with high profile corporate and public sector clients want to distance themselves from untrained designers and desktop publishers masquerading as professionals. Separating the wheat from the chaff is critical when both groups may be competing for the same jobs. While desktop publishers and graphic designers produce some of the same materials, desktop publishing is defined as mechanical production rather than creative design.

Defending turf is essential for an occupation to maintain and strengthen its position in society. Therefore the moves it makes to create a job market monopoly depend upon its ability to help potential employers/clients distinguish the 'real' professionals from the interlopers. Endless battles over turf cannot be avoided, according to Larson, because they are inherent in all professionalization projects (Macdonald, 1995, p. 16). Professions commonly use discriminatory actions to gain social mobility and market power, as well as to control access to their profession. But, how does graphic design gain status and power when it is continually engaged in a process of identity definition and reinvention?

For more than two decades, designers and educators have claimed design is given little consideration by the general public precisely because its role in society has not been well conceptualised or defined. But, the struggle for definition continues to this day. Part of the reason is the pressure for change caused by new technology and new market opportunities, and the resulting struggle to find commonality amongst an ever-widening range of specialisms.

The Name Game

The *Charter of Graphic Design*, a manifesto publicly presented by a group of Italian graphic designers at the Politecnico of Milan in November 1989, asserted graphic designers in the 1990's must assume greater responsibility for creating meaningful communication and play a greater strategic cultural role (Margolin, 1994, p. 67). In response, Margolin commented "perhaps donning the new title of *interface designer*" would better reflect the graphic designer's role in "the new expanded field of global communication" (p. 68, emphasis mine). Other terms such as *interaction designer* have also been suggested to better reflect how human beings relate to each other through the products created by graphic designers.

The 1996 HRDC report, *Shaping Canada's Future By Design*, uses the term "communications design" to encompass graphic design, multimedia, and computer

interface design (HRDC, 1996, p. 22). In 1997, Bruinsma, the editor of *Eye* magazine, took a stand regarding graphic design's name game when he stated:

> Visual communication has become such a complex territory of design disciplines that are intricately linked through a great diversity of media: different publication formats in print, television, film, advertising, on-line media, CD-ROMS, exhibitions, and performances. Within the broad province of the arts, design and visual communication, GRAPHIC DESIGN will remain recognizable as a discipline for some time to come. But it will merge more and more with the other disciplines. ...But it may become rather hard to distinguish the individual input of the graphic designer from that of the product designer, the text or copywriter, and the editor. ... So graphic design is not an isolated or even subservient discipline. In the information age it is (or should be) at the core of this field of cultural production called VISUAL COMMUNICATION (1997, p. 3-4, emphasis is original).

During the October, 2000 Millennium Congress of ICOGRADA (International Council of Graphic Design Associations) held in Seoul, Korea, a group of international designers produced an "action" document supporting Bruinsma's position, entitled the *Design Education Manifesto*:

> The term "graphic design" has been technologically undermined. A better term is visual communication design. Visual communication design has become more and more a profession that integrates idioms and approaches of several disciplines in a multi-layered and in-depth visual competence (Poggenpohl & Ahn, 2002, p. 54).

Not surprisingly, when confronted with ICOGRADA's manifesto and the proclamation of a new name for the graphic design industry, Conradi, the education editor for the magazine *Visual Arts Trends*, groaned "On no, not again!" (2000, p. 1).

> Any designer over the age of 40 is well aware that our profession took a stand in favour of "graphic design" over the outdated "commercial art". We have spent years teaching prospective students and their parents that "design" was the proper name for our endeavours -- that "commercial art" implied a hired pair of hands with skills detached from brains, problem-solving, and professional status. It's [sic] taken time, but we finally succeeded in burying the old term and indoctrinating the general public into at least a vague awareness of what a designer is. Now we want to change again? (p. 1).

But the term *visual communication design*, as proposed by ICOGRADA is not new. For the past ten years, AIGA career guides and directories aimed at potential students frequently referred to graphic design as a form of visual communication involving the use of any visual medium to communicate a message. As of 1998, the AIGA career guide was still entitled *Professional Practices in Graphic Design.*

Designers argue *graphic designer* perpetuates the notion of an aesthetic stylist or copyist and doesn't fit the reality of today's marketplace (Neumeier, 1997, p. 20).

> Graphic design today is a hybrid of the visual and the verbal, and each form of composition has its own capabilities and limitations. For example, the visual is often well suited for capturing attention or expressing emotions, while the verbal is better at constructing arguments or delivering data. But when you put the visual and the verbal components together, magic happens. You generate the power to *communicate*. Expressed as a simple formula: design + writing = communication (p. 20).

The Profession's New Shoes

Graphic design continues to evolve into an ever more interdisciplinary industry and has moved well beyond the confines of two-dimensional print into the realm of the "virtual." For the graphic designer, the question remains: How does one go about renaming an industry that has grown exponentially in recent years, but has also become increasingly fragmented and specialized?

Until designers are able to articulate just what is distinctive about the field of graphic design -- or commercial art, or visual communication, or information design, or communication design, or interaction design -- and convey this in a meaningful way to government, business, and the general public, attempts to repackage the industry with a snazzy new name and identity may be a waste of time. While it is easy to understand the dilemma of being stuck with footwear that no longer seems to fit; leaping into a new pair of shoes may result in nothing more than a different set of blisters.

> Six years ago, Clement Mok [president of the American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA)] took the stage at a New York AIGA business conference and proposed the term "information architect" as a more accurate title for what most graphic designers -- especially those engaged in new and complex media -- do for a living. My view then was the same as now: as long as we are choosing new titles, I would like to change mine to 'brain surgeon'. ...Architecture is architecture, information be damned. What we design, as novel and revolutionary as it might seem at the time of our designing, is still just design. Simply stated: Graphic design is probably not going to kill you if it falls on your head" (Hefland, 2001, p.22).

The historical record suggests the graphics industry has referred to itself as the graphic arts since 1914 with the formation of the AIGA, and graphic design since 1922, when Dwiggins, a designer, wrote a newspaper article describing himself as a graphic design professional. It can be argued that in the ensuing 80 to 90 years, contrary to what some members of the profession may claim, the public has indeed developed some understanding of graphic design.

If The Shoes Fit, Keep Wearing Them

An opinion poll isn't necessary to determine familiarity with the term *graphic design*; one has only to look at the number of institutions offering graphic design programs in North America. In Canada, there are less than 50 programs in graphic design, but, at last count, approximately 2,300 schools in the United States offer "dedicated and ancillary graphic design programs graduating about 50,000 students each year" (Heller & Fernandes, 2002, p. 306). It is fair to assume at least 50% of these programs refer to themselves as *graphic design* programs. Nevertheless, as authors Heller and Fernandes point out: "Not every high school graduate [in the United States] knows what graphic design is. Because design is considered something of an arcane profession, most guidance counsellors do not vigorously promote it as a viable career option" (p. 307).

If those outside the profession don't understand or respect what graphic designers do, one has to question why professional associations have not been more diligent in educating government, business, and the public. Further, why would members of a profession that already bemoans its supposed "invisibility" want to risk the possibility of further alienation with another change of name? If the name of a profession already signals a particular meaning in a society, adopting a new name would require the social learning process to begin anew. Graphic design, if it were to adopt a new alias, would be back to square one. It would have to gain recognition for its distinctiveness, renegotiate its position in the marketplace, and stake new claims for professional status, privileges, and territory.

CHAPTER FIVE

PROFESSIONALIZATION AND POLITICS

Staking Out the Territory

Graphic design's situation changed for the better in the 1950s, when, after a lengthy divorce from commercial art, it finally emerged as a shiny, new "*profession,*" according to Hollis (1994, p. 8, emphasis mine). His use of the term *profession* implies graphic design was somehow imbued with instant legitimacy and some type of collectivity was created. *Profession* also conjures up a vocation or calling involving qualifications, self-regulation, advanced learning or science, and a group of people who share the same allegiance to a particular occupation, knowledge base, and/or set of beliefs.

Others claim graphic design's professional status began in the 1920's when Dwiggins used the term *graphic designer* to describe his *professional* activities (Meggs, 1992, p. 187, Heller, 1998a, p. 84, emphasis mine). Dwiggins has been given credit for "coining this now quotidian term" ['graphic designer'] says Heller, but "the coinage came long after the profession had come into existence and had already developed an infrastructure of professional journals and associations" (Heller, p. 84).

Many years earlier, in 1914, a group of people had already attempted to establish the disciplinary positioning of graphic design as a *profession*, when the American Institute of Graphic Artists (AIGA), "the oldest *professional graphic design* association in the United States", was founded in New York (Meggs, 1992, p. 399, emphasis mine). Professional associations also helped designers "to define the common interests of their membership and gave them professional legitimacy" (Thomson, 1997, p. 86). Professional status was seen as the means to separate graphic design from its historically maligned and marginalized relative, commercial art, and to attempt to garner higher socio-economic benefits for members of the association.

It is generally acknowledged authority and prestige are accorded to members of a profession, but not to members of a trade. "The professional carries a certain prestige within the social hierarchy. A title or an acronym after a name is a class signifier, a sign or position and community approbation" (Rock, 1977, p. 169). As well, *profession* has an air of legitimacy about it and suggests exclusive rights to specialized knowledge and practices. "The prestige associated with a profession is linked to demonstrated competence in an area that a society requires and values. ...By joining a variety of associations designers found a means to advance their professional aspirations" (Thomson, 1977, p. 86-87).

The move towards professionalization usually involves four significant factors: 1) the development of professional associations that promote the common interests of their members; 2) a self-regulated code of professional ethics and standards; 3) the establishment of schools to educate the next generation of professional practitioners; and 4) the use of mechanisms to control marketplace access. *Professionalization* is the process by which associations representing producers of special services try to put in place and control a market for their expertise. "Because marketable expertise is a crucial element in the structure of modern inequality, professionalization appears also as a collective assertion of special social status and as a collective process of upward social mobility" (Larson, 1977, p. xvi-xvii).

Belonging to a professional association, therefore, goes beyond accessing networking opportunities, exchanging information, sharing common interests, and providing social spaces and camaraderie for its members. It also provides a strategic platform from which a collective can negotiate social and economic status for its members, as well as various types of market control within the larger social structure.

Prior to the establishment of the AIGA in 1914, there were many different types of early associations and organizations that reflected the particular interests of their members, and these included printing and graphic design-related organizations. "Like all professional organizations, graphic design associations were created from a mixture of motives and conditions, by individuals and groups not always in accord" (Thomson, 1997, p. 87). Membership in early professional associations was generally limited to white, middle-class males, despite the substantial number of non-whites and females involved in the graphic design industry (p. 88).

> For the most part, clubs and associations opened their doors only to those deemed completely acceptable through a system of nominating and electing new members. And these associations were not exempt from the racism and sexism that pervaded American culture. Women were excluded from most professional organizations either formally or by custom. ...Non-Caucasian groups were never acknowledged...(p. 88).

The United Typothetae of America (1887) was an association of master printers in the United States and the Dominion of Canada who "set prices and work[ed] out mutually beneficial practices among competitors" (p. 91-92). They dealt with issues relating to such things as price wars, union demands, ethical procedures, copyright laws, and problems with the apprenticeship system. The association originated in New York in 1862 and prided itself on being the *first employers' organization* in the United States (p. 93).

In England, ten out of thirteen principal national professional associations (as defined by H. Wilensky in 1964) were established between 1825 and 1880, and in the United States eleven of the same thirteen professional associations were organized nationally between 1840 and 1887 (Larson, 1977, p. 5). What constitutes a "principal"

national professional association is not defined, however the list includes doctors, veterinarians, librarians, accountants, social workers, teachers, and others. It is curious Wilensky's list does not include the national association of master commercial printers (the United Typothetae of America) which was established in the same time span – between 1862 and 1887 -- as the other associations, especially when the Typothetae was the first national employer's organization in the United States.

The Society of Printers was formed in the United States in 1904 and run by a nine-man council of printer-publishers (Thomson, 1997, p. 95). In the next decade, in addition to actively supporting the founding of the AIGA, part of their mandate was to contribute to the advancement of professional standards, as well as to "support trade schools to teach the Society's ideas" (p. 95).

> In addition, society members convinced the dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration to offer a two-year program in printing. Called 'An Introduction to the Technique of Printing', the curriculum included internships, laboratory work, and most important, a lecture series on the history of printing" delivered by one of its founding 'council members' (p. 95).

Graphic design, like many other early occupations in North America, looked for opportunities to collaborate with universities as a means to advance their professional status. The vocational openness of American universities reinforced the tendency toward professionalization suggests Larson, "because aspiring occupations of less 'genteel' professions could realistically strive for university affiliation and hope to emulate the successful path followed by medicine and the law" (Larson, 1977, p. 154). Further, between 1880-1910, business leaders became the predominant group on most university boards of trustees, however, there were many who "denounced the subordination of higher learning to big business" (p. 152-53).

> The *kind* of knowledge that each profession could claim as distinctively its own was therefore a strategic factor of variation in their organizational effort. However, a cognitive basis of any kind had to be at least approximately defined before the rising modern professions could negotiate *cognitive exclusiveness* -- that is, before they could convincingly establish a teaching monopoly on their specific tools and techniques, while claiming absolute superiority for them. The proved institutional mechanisms for this negotiation were the license, the qualifying examination, the diploma, and formal training in a common curriculum (p. 15, emphasis in original).

The Society of Printers had scored a huge success with the establishment of the two-year printing program at Harvard. They negotiated cognitive exclusiveness through the development of the printing program with Harvard's Graduate School of Business Administration, and were able to establish a control over the *commodity* the printing industry provided through their direct involvement in teaching components of the curriculum. The acknowledged need for formal training and the establishment of

educational programs becomes a status indicator for the profession because the ability to control the production of the producers (i.e. the printing professionals) suggests there is a *distinctive commodity* they produce that cannot easily be produced by others without the requisite education. Thus, the status of the printing profession is elevated in the marketplace. However, Larson cautions: "The monopolistic and standardized production of professional producers is a necessary step in the march toward market control, but it is by no means a sufficient one" as there are many other variables determined "by the broader social structure" before a profession can gain considerable social power (p. 17-18).

Early graphic design associations actively promoted themselves to gain recognition as experts and thereby establish a role in market control practices. In addition to the United Typothetae of America and the Society of Printers, many other professional associations were organized such as the Franklin Society of Chicago (1870-81), founded by printers and related tradespeople; the Grolier Club (1884), founded in New York by printers, publishers, and others interested in fine printing; the Society of Illustrators (1901), founded in New York to promote the art of illustration; the National Arts Club (1911-12) founded in New York by graphic arts professionals; as well as a host of associations to promote the interests of advertising professionals such as the American Advertisers Association (1899) and the Advertising Clubs of America (1906) (Thomson, 1997, p. 93-102).

Most early associations aggressively promoted their professional status, established standards, and provided forums for speakers, exhibitions, and exchanges of information. In 1913, The National Arts Club was engaged in a membership drive to attract "those interested in the graphic arts throughout the United States, including artists, printers, publishers, etchers, engravers, photographers, lithographers and electrotypers" (p. 97). The published goals of the institute were:

> To stimulate and encourage those engaged in the graphic arts; to form a centre for intercourse and for exchange of views of all interested in these arts; to publish books and periodicals, to hold exhibitions in the United States and to participate as far as possible in the exhibitions held in foreign countries relating to the graphic arts; to invite exhibitions of foreign works; to stimulate the public taste by school exhibitions, lectures and printed matter; promote the higher education in these arts, and generally to do all things which will raise the standard and aid the extension and development of the graphic arts in the United States (p. 97).

In Canada, the Art Director's Club of Toronto was founded in 1947, to be followed a few years later by the Art Directors Club of Vancouver. The Society of Typographic Designers of Canada began in Toronto in 1956, but by 1968 it had expanded its mandate to include all aspects of graphic design, and changed its name to the Society of Graphic Designers of Canada (GDC) (HRDC, 1996, p. 44).

> In the 1970's, GDC chapters and other professional design organizations across Canada rapidly expanded. La Société des graphistes du Québec (SGQ) was

established in 1972. (Recently the SGQ changed its name to la Société des graphiques du Québec [SDGQ]). During the same period, the Graphic Artists Guild in Vancouver and the Society of Graphic Designers of Alberta were founded; they would later join the GDC. In 1976, the GDC was granted a National Charter of Incorporation.

As it is committed to international professional standards, the GDC is a member of the International Council of Graphic Design Associations (ICOGRADA). ICOGRADA is made up of graphic design organizations from more than 60 countries and has consultative status with both the United Nations and the Council of Europe (p. 44).

Historical evidence confirms graphic design has been engaged in professionalization processes in North America since the late 1800s. Professionalization has included the establishment of powerful professional organizations and the influence they were able to exert over the marketplace and university. As Larson points out, given the emergent social order in America, "the professions first had to create a market for their services... gain special status for their members and give them respectability" (Larson, 1977, p. 8). However, recognition of a profession is not simply a case of that profession (i.e. the majority) marking out the boundaries of its domain in bargain with the state; it has to fight other occupations to maintain its place in the pecking order (Macdonald 1995, p. 33). No profession can rest on its laurels.

No Riff-Raff Allowed

While the graphic design industry has seen the establishment of numerous professional associations that helped "define the common interests of their membership and gave them professional legitimacy," the "authority and honour of medicine or law were not available to them, nor was the spiritual superiority claimed by the fine artist" (Thomson, 1997, p. 86). Early associations were often composed of individuals from disparate occupations who looked to their memberships as providing "a means to advance their professional aspirations," as well as establishing "communal identities," networking opportunities, and social functions (p.87).

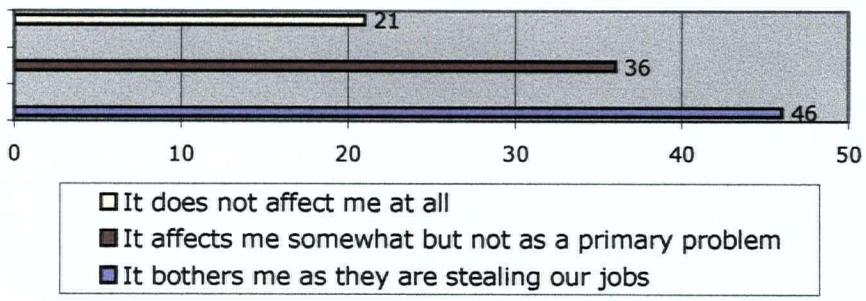
Using a loose Weberian frame of analysis, the establishment of associations with membership criteria can be interpreted as an attempt to signal to the state and public a widening of a profession's jurisdiction. At the same time, the action can be used to garner support for restricting access to an occupation, and thus to economic opportunities to those considered outsiders. Outsiders would be deemed as inferior and therefore ineligible for membership. "Any convenient, visible characteristic, such as race, language, social origin, religion, or lack of a particular school diploma, can be used to declare competitors to be outsiders" (Murphy, 1988, p. 8).

With respect to graphic design, the International Council of Graphic Design Associations (ICOGRADA) conducted an opinion poll on its web site a few years ago (http://www.icograda.org/web/ opinion/opinion-pastpolls.shtml). One of the 'opinions' was clearly designed to call attention to the outsider status of *amateurs working as designers*, but it also served to reinforce the discrimination against outsiders who were supposedly taking jobs away from professionals while also undermining their fee structure for professional services. While the opinion poll does not mention desktop publishers by name, unquestionably they are the targets.

Figure 2.
ICOGRADA Opinion Poll Results – Amateurs

Opinion – Amateurs Working as Designers

Advanced computer technology has made it easy for anyone to work on a computer. To some extent it has made our lives easier, but on the other hand, it allows amateurs to present themselves as designers and enter the market. These amateurs work as designers and pull the prices so low that it sometimes creates a problem for the professionals. How does this problem affect you?



Represents % of Respondents (N = unknown)

(Source: http://www.icograda.org/web/opinion/opinion-pastpolls.shtml, retrieved February 6, 2002, emphasis in original)

In the case of early graphic design-related associations, injunctions against outsiders were particularly telling, such as this edict published in the *Pacific Printer* of 1885:

> [E]very printer in business [should] refuse to allow a Chinaman to work in his office, and also refuse to give employment to any white man that has worked in a Chinese office. Form a club. Spot every man who patronizes a pigtail office, and let the entire fraternity withhold their trade from that man, and use their influence with others to the same end (Thomson, 1997, p. 89).

For several decades, embargos and racial slurs against African-American, Chinese-American, American Indian, and Jewish publishers, printers, and artists were successful in preventing them from infiltrating white, male-dominated associations, and, even more maliciously, were used to undermine or destroy non-Caucasian groups as competition in the marketplace (p. 88-9).

Women faired better than other 'outsiders' in the graphics industry in America. In the 1800s, many women worked in the printing industry "in limited, gender-based capacities," but attempts were made to force them out of the printing trades "because male-dominated unions argued that the work was too physically demanding even as it became less so" (p. 134).

> Local printing unions, which had existed in a variety of forms during the first half of the [nineteenth] century, formed a national organization, the United Typographical Union, in 1852. In contrast to their progressive tradition, these all-male organizations were highly ambivalent about unionising female workers. Many printers hired women at lower wages under the guise of giving them an opportunity to learn the trade, and women often worked as scab labour during strikes. The unions had two options: either fight for equal wages and unionise women or ban them from the industry. They tried both tactics (p. 141).

Yet, despite this, by 1868 there were 200 women typesetters in New York City, representing approximately 15 to 20 percent of all printing trade workers (p. 139). By 1910 that number had swelled to 38,000 (p. 11).

Weber's work analysed ways in which professional groups aim for a closed monopoly on their occupation in order to restrict social and economic opportunities for outsiders (Macdonald, 1995, p. 28). Early graphic design unions attempted to keep women out by offering them less pay than their male counterparts. "In Boston in 1831, for example, men were paid three times as much as women and boys: the 687 men in printing earned $1.50 a day, whereas the 395 women and 215 boys in printing earned just 50¢ a day" (Thomson, 1997, p. 139). Of course, Weber acknowledged that professional groups (status groups) can only monopolize opportunities if they have the power and authority to do so, and that over time, there are different rules of exclusion at work in different segments of society (Murphy, 1988, p. 9).

Parkin, a Weberian closure theorist, denounced anyone who participates in any practice of exclusion whatsoever as an *exploiter* (p. 99). Exploitation, using Parkin's definition, was certainly rampant in graphic design in America in the 1800s where men were given extended apprenticeships to become skilled at a variety of jobs in the printing industry, whereas women were "taught for six weeks without pay and then put to work setting plain matter and redistributing type" (Thomson, 1997, p. 140). Parkin further suggests: "Unions which do not vigorously defend minority groups are judged to be engaging in 'exploitation by proxy' (Parkin paraphrased in Murphy, 1988, p. 99).

In the early years of the graphics industry in the United States and Canada blatant acts of racism, sexism, and elitism were designed to ensure undesirables did not infiltrate its white, middle-class, male ranks. Today, women employed in the graphic design industry "still do not earn as much as men in the field, and while the gap seems to be closing, differences in money and power at top-earning, corporate-service levels of the profession are significant" (Lavin, 2001, p. 108).

Filters, Hoops and Badges of Honour

Exclusionary tactics and barriers to entry into professional groups are as common today as in the past, although, generally speaking, many have evolved to reflect more socially acceptable practices. For example, The Society of Graphic Designers of Canada (GDC) requires Professional (MGDC) and Licentiate (LGDC) applicants to submit a membership application form, resume, and undergo a confidential portfolio review, whereas other membership categories such as Honorary Fellows (Hon/FGDC), Associate, Graduate, and Student applicants have different or lesser requirements (http://www.gdc.net/aboutgdc/membershipcategories, para. 2). But, employment in the graphic design industry is usually not contingent upon membership in a professional association.

> [In Canada,] there are virtually no legal barriers to entry in this business. ...It is easy to say "I am a graphic designer". The Society of Graphic Designers of Canada (GDC) has some restrictions for membership, albeit not stringent, but it has no authority to restrict anyone from doing business in the industry" (Matecha, 1998, p. 10).

Commonsense suggests exclusionary tactics and barriers are necessary to restrict access to some occupational groups such as surgeons, airline pilots, and munitions experts. Within the design field, however, groups such as interior designers are able to legitimise their regulatory and exclusionary practices by ensuring the public of minimum standards of practice from their professional members. These practices are also used to elevate interior design's perceived status from vocational to professional. "History proves that unless a profession defines itself, sets firm standards of preparation, performance, and behaviour, and monitors the institutions that educate its practitioners, it will be regarded as a "trade" -- which is exactly how the U.S. Department of Labour classifie[d] graphic design [in 1999]" (Gold, 1999, p.21).

Generally speaking, monopoly and exclusion are socially acceptable so long as there is the perception, real or imagined, that a profession is adding value to the social structure. While it may be stretching the point to compare The College of Physicians and Surgeons and the Society of Graphic Designers of Canada, it is interesting to note both groups view themselves as adding value to society: the physician or surgeon through rigorous adherence to the Hippocratic Oath and membership in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, and the graphic designer through membership in the GDC (or the AIGA) and adherence to the association's goals and objectives. These include such things as

improving the quality of life, fostering public awareness of design, promoting professional and ethical standards across the country, and eradicating visual and sensory abuse (http://www.gdc. net/aboutgdc/goals& objectives, p. 1).

Physicians and surgeons risk having their licences revoked for malpractice. However, it is difficult to imagine a graphic designer being stripped of membership in a design association for committing visual malpractice (i.e. visual and sensory abuse), such as using inappropriate fonts. If this were the case, American graphic design super-star, David Carson, known for his abuse of text and image, would have his AIGA membership unequivocally revoked!

But the process of organization for market control has to be relatively advanced before a profession can offer its members substantial and secure *economic* rewards in exchange for regulating professional behaviour (Larson, 1977, p. 73-74). In David Carson's case, it is doubtful the AIGA would attempt to regulate his creative output, so long as he adhered to their standards of professional behaviour (typographical abuse not withstanding!).

Membership in professional associations and organizations has the potential to increase economic rewards for individuals. However, they come with the price tag of annual membership dues. When membership in a professional association is voluntary, it must imbue the individual with a sense of pride, so those who have passed through whatever processes and filters are required can wear it like a badge of honour. If there is an elevated social or cultural status associated with the 'badge', then fees for membership will be willingly exchanged for increased social or cultural capital. Even in the case of required membership in professional associations, such as the College of Physicians and Surgeons, the 'badge' must be respected or members will rebel. Of course, regardless of whether membership is voluntary or required, the honour connected to a badge depends upon the exchange value of the association's social and cultural capital in the broader social structure, and the degree of power and control the association wields in the marketplace.

Professional Power Struggles

Today, the AIGA is the "largest membership association for professionals engaged in the discipline, practice and culture of visual communications and graphic design" and represents more than 16,000 designers throughout the United States (AIGA, 2001, p. 16). It has adopted "standards of conduct for designers as a model for professional performance. ...The AIGA standards have emerged from professional dialogue on current practices within the profession and the ethical guidelines of other professions," states Grefé (1998, p. 245). He goes on to say:

> The AIGA [Statement of Policy on Professional Practices] is consistent with model codes in many other countries as well. It is based on the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct published by the International Council of Graphic

> Design Associations (ICOGRADA) and refined to reflect practices within the United States. As with most professional codes, this policy covers the relationships between designers and their clients, their colleagues and the general public. For many professions, it is this code of conduct that separates a profession from a trade (p. 246-7).

As well, included in the AIGA statement are policies relating to compensation for work, *pro bono* work, as well as the thorny issue of speculative work:

> 4.1 A designer shall not undertake any work for a client without adequate compensation, except with respect to work for charitable or nonprofit organizations.
>
> 4.2 A designer shall not undertake any speculative projects either alone or in competition with other designers for which compensation will only be received if a design is accepted or used. This applies not only to entire projects but also to preliminary schematic proposals (p. 249).

These policies are clearly designed to communicate the market value of professional design work to AIGA members and clients. Grefé elaborates: "Issues related to the value of a designer's work offer a forceful means of impressing upon clients that graphic design is a profession, not a craft" (p. 248).

Major goals of professionalization include creating and affirming collective worth, securing supports for individual dignity and careers, creating income and other status indicators, establishing autonomy over working conditions and technical content of work, and exacting deference and compliance in personal interaction (Larson, 1977, p. 157). In a recently published brochure, -- *Business and Ethical Expectations for Professional Designers* -- the AIGA issued guidelines for professional standards of practice with the proviso: "AIGA stands firmly for these standards and members are expected to demonstrate them in their daily practice" (AIGA, 2001a, p.2). The document, intended for AIGA members and clients, outlines such things as general statements about compensation and financial practices, ethical standards, design competencies, and the designer's professional responsibility to clients and others.

Persistence Pays Off

In 1998, almost 85 years had passed since the formation of the AIGA, yet the industry was still struggling for professional recognition. "Graphic design's professional status is by no means universally accepted. For instance, the U.S. Immigration Service and Department of Labour remain uncertain if graphic design is a profession, although they clearly recognize the professional status of other design fields, including architecture and industrial design" (McCoy, 1998, p. 3). In particular, recognition by government is a critical component in graphic design's professionalization project because it results in

increased social status for individuals and the industry as a whole. Larson states "[whereas] traditional professions sought sponsorship from the upper class ... emerging professions seek it today from particular groups in the legislative or executive branches of government" (Larson, 1977, p. 158).

In the United States, persistence with the government paid off. After three years of intense negotiations, the AIGA finally made substantial progress in defining the role and business of graphic designers. In 2000, the term *graphic designer* was reclassified in the *Standard Occupation Classification system* of the American Department of Labour, to "include all elements of communication problem solving." For the first time, graphic design was given its own classification rather than being a subset of *commercial artist* (AIGA, 2001b, p. 1). The AIGA also worked with the U.S. Census of Business in June 2000 to expand the "product list" for the graphic design profession to 39 products or services, including such things as:

a) advertising and promotion design,
b) corporate identity design,
c) design strategy and management,
d) editorial design,
e) exhibit design.
f) signage design,
g) interaction design,
h) motion graphics design,
i) packaging design,
j) illustration,
k) information design, and
l) design production, among others (2001, p. 3).

The list is significant because it includes new media such as interaction design and motion graphics, as well as contentious products/services such as information design, an area of practice also claimed by 'information designers' who view their work as higher in status than graphic design (Horn, 2000, Passini, 2000).

It was also important for the AIGA inform its membership of the significance of its work with the American Department of Labour and U.S. Census of Business, particularly the collective social and cultural capital to be gained from its lobbying efforts. Thus, in a political move, the AIGA Communiqué of July 2001 announced:

> This is a significant step forward in our campaign to change perceptions. It defines the activities for which data will be collected in future censuses of business and which data will be credited to our profession. Hopefully, it will be a precedent for modifying the Department of Labor [sic] occupational handbook that is used by many high school and guidance departments; working with the Small Business Administration to direct new businesses to seek appropriate services from designers; guiding the Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis to capture the contribution our profession makes to the Gross

Domestic Product (including the large interaction and motion-graphics design disciplines); and advocating federal policies that support our profession.

An indirect advantage is that it may result in AIGA being seen as the authoritative source on these disciplines, with the opportunity to use AIGA's member directory as the key source of qualified professionals (http://www.aiga.org/common/newsletter/source/communique_july01.html, p. 2-3).

What About Canada, Eh?

Work with government agencies is the major avenue for changing the American public's perceptions about the function of graphic designers and their contributions to society. In a similar vein, the National Design Alliance (NDA), a cross-Canada consortium of professional design and promotion organizations, including the Society of Graphic Designers of Canada (GDC), worked with Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) to compile a comprehensive study of the design sector in 1996. One of the conclusions of the study concerned a general lack of design awareness amongst government, the public, and the business community. The report identified four critical areas for improvement: developing and sustaining a design-literate market, fostering design appreciation by business, cultivating design sensitivity in the upcoming generation, and creating a design-supportive legislative environment (HRDC, 1996, p. 22-26).

Despite the 1996 collaboration resulting in these recommendations, the HRDC web site for the 2000 National Occupation Classification (NOC) system did not list specific occupational profiles for *commercial artists*, *graphic artists*, and *graphic designers*. By 2001, the situation had been partially rectified with HRDC occupational group classifications including separate listings for *graphic designers* and *illustrators*, *graphic arts technicians*, *other creative designers*, *web designers and developers*, and *interactive media developers*. The 2001 listing, however, separates these occupations into major and sub-groupings. *Graphic designers* and *illustrators* are listed under the major grouping of: *Technical and Skilled Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sports*, whereas *web designers and developers* are classified under the major grouping of: *Professional Occupations in Natural and Applied Sciences* (HRDC, Job Futures, 2002). Apparently, people in government are of the opinion web designers and interactive media developers are engaged in *professional* pursuits, whereas graphic designers belong in the *vocational/trade category.*

There are probably many graphic designers shaking their heads at these arbitrary classifications because a significant part of their professional practice includes various types of interactive media design (which includes web design), as well as print-based activities. However, government classifications represent widespread misperceptions about roles and responsibilities of graphic designers. In general terms, "measures of success and power within a profession tend to flow, ultimately from outside, from the

central power structure of the society" (Larson, 1977, p. 226). With respect to the graphic design profession in Canada, attaining success and power within society is contingent upon gaining recognition as a distinct occupation with a specialized knowledge base.

Credit Ratings

It is within the social arena that struggles for social distinctiveness and control of resources take place. According to Bourdieu, "individuals, institutions, and other agents try to distinguish themselves from others, and acquire capital which is useful or valuable [in] the arena" (http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/bourd.htm, p. 2. Retrieved July 20, 2004). In the social arena, occupations acquire capital when they are recognized as professions by governments.

> The state, Pierre Bourdieu intimates, is first and foremost the 'central bank of symbolic credit' which endorses all acts of *nomination* whereby social divisions and dignities are assigned and proclaimed, i.e., promulgated as universally valid within the purview of a given territory or population" (http://www.homme-moderne.org/ societe/socio/wacquant/capital.html, Section III, emphasis is original. Retrieved July 19, 2004).

In other words, the state plays a pre-eminent role in the distribution of symbolic capital through its ability to legitimize or articulate the power of the dominant culture.

Therefore, if we follow Bourdieu's premise that government functions as a 'symbolic credit bank', then Canadian graphic design has been unable to gain recognition or legitimization as a professional occupation because it hasn't 'banked' enough symbolic capital to influence the habitus of the dominant cultural fraction, represented by government. Bourdieu refers to habitus as individual and collective patterns of thought and behaviour acquired through upbringing or education that link social structures to social practice and incorporate dominant value systems.

What differentiates the AIGA from its Canadian counterpart, the GDC, is the symbolic capital it has been able to exchange for recognition of the graphic design profession's distinctiveness and legitimacy in the United States.

Clutching Old Idols?

Despite the achievements of the AIGA and significant improvements to the profile of graphic design in the American public sector, within its own ranks, members are still regarded as recalcitrant children. Witness a recent article entitled *Time for Change* by Mok, the national president of the AIGA, wherein he chides members as a "divided, fractious lot" that have contributed to graphic design's identity being "in a state

of incoherent disarray verging on crisis" (Mok, 2004, para. 1). While one is left to ponder what the impending professional crisis might be, Mok goes on to state: "A shared sense of seriousness and idealism, however differently expressed, would go a long way toward remedying the disjointed, undefined slackness of our professional culture" (para. 13). Whatever constitutes "undefined slackness" must be hard to explain in the context of professional culture, but whatever it is, Mok feels that remedying it would "unquestionably serve to enhance the prestige and influence of the field" (para. 13).

> There has clearly been a steady decline in the design profession for over 30 years, and the source of that decline is the profession's intractable stasis. We are unchanged professionals in a changing professional climate: clutching at old idols while failing to create new offerings, failing to reinvent and reinvigorate the practice when needed, failing to inculcate a professional culture that is accessible and fair (para. 7).

How can Mok's statement be accurate for an industry that has embraced so much change, particularly in the last two decades? Nevertheless, no sooner has he railed against "clutching at old idols", than he spins 360 degrees to suggest the 1960s and 1970s were the good old days when "designers pioneered ideas and reconfigured their services in response to market needs and a refreshingly energized zeitgeist. ...Great design programs and institutions and best practices came out of that -- and back then design had a seat at the management table" (para. 8).

It is a contradictory and curious tirade. The article, posted on the AIGA web site, does little to instil public confidence in the AIGA and the graphic design profession, and instead, serves to undermine what Mok identifies as the basic challenge "to professionalize the profession" (para. 13). Usually, 'internal prestige evaluations' are transmitted to the general public in an effort to legitimise power by fusing it with excellence (Larson, 1977, p. 226). However, in the case of the AIGA, it is Mok's power as an elite within the organization that allows him to air the profession's dirty laundry in public (on the AIGA web site) without being challenged.

As Larson points out, "the more organized a profession is, the less its elites are challenged, and the more the profession will be identified with its oligarchic spokesmen" (p. 227). What seems to be missing from the AIGA 'professional' equation is Larson's contention "it is always an elite that speaks to the relevant outsiders for the whole profession, maintaining the image of a unified and solidary community, or projecting the achievements and identity of a specialty" (p. 227). This is not the case with *Time For Change*, however, which projects a negative picture of a profession in disarray, and contains very little of the 'rah, rah, rah' of solidarity. Rather, the graphic design professionalization project for Mok is quickly reduced to a lecture to the AIGA membership about "design process" which he goes on to illuminate in some in detail as "three phases with four distinct steps in each phase" (Mok, 2004, paragraph 28). It is a condescending move to lecture a membership of professional designers about 'design process' – fundamental to all graphic design education. Therefore, it is an odd move for the president of a national design association to use design process as a tool to punish

AIGA members, and also recontextualize design process so it resembles a twelve-step program for 'Designers as Unprofessional Dolts', or DUDS anonymous.

Beneath the surface of solidarity presented to the public there are always alternative viewpoints that operate within professional associations to challenge the status quo:

> Alternative *standards* and alternative definitions of professional morality and worth do, in fact loosen the grip that the tacit and explicit norms of a discipline or profession have on the self. This is the significance of dissenting groups or movements within a profession: while the entrenched elites always tend to rule them out as 'unprofessional', these groups generate their own norms and solidarity. They may arise out of an effort to gain recognition for a new specialty, or out of full-fledged 'paradigmatic battles', or out of the challenge to a profession's notion of its social function (Larson, 1977, p. 228, emphasis in original).

Larson's analysis is useful because it offers insight into one of the most puzzling aspects of the graphic design profession: why current literature still contains references to graphic designers as renegades, non-conformists, awkward teenagers, and adolescents.

> ... [I]s professionalism an anathema to our traditional core values of intuition, individualism, [and] the artistic maverick? Do we still cherish the romantic notion of the heroic designer, blazing new trails from his garret studio? Does professionalism dictate a predictable sameness, a [sic] uninspired plateau of competency, or a bland lack of passion? Or is professionalism an indicator of a mature discipline? (McCoy, 1998a, p. 7-8).

In the United States, the industry's view of itself as a rebellious teenager or daring trailblazer (McCoy, 1998, Keedy, 1998, Poyner, 2002) reflects the efforts of some individuals to resist the dominant culture in the AIGA. Resistance is directed towards those in power in the association who want all members to conform to an idealized notion of what constitutes professional behaviours and standards.

However, conformity of members is necessary for occupational socialization, a term Larson uses to describe the process of identifying people with their work roles, and "also with the stereotypes of those roles that are held in the larger society" (Larson, 1977, p. 228). Likewise, education plays a pre-eminent role in occupational socialization through the transmission of specialized knowledge, skills and behaviours, and by exposing students to the culture of the profession through guest speakers, field trips, and other learning activities.

CHAPTER SIX

REGULATING THE INDUSTRY

From the Margins to the Mainstream

In the early 1900s in America, most graphic design education was taught in correspondence schools such as the International Correspondence Schools in Scranton, Pennsylvania; the New York School of Design in New York City; Lockwood Art Lessons in Kalamazoo, Michigan; the Frank Holme School of Illustration in Chicago, Illinois; and the Washington School of Art in Washington, D.C. (Heller, 1998, p. xi).

> But the biggest of all was the Federal School of Commercial Designing founded in 1919 in Minneapolis. It occupied a three-story-high, block-long headquarters, had branch offices in New York and Chicago, boasted over seventy-five advisors and full-time faculty members, claimed over three thousand home-study students annually enrolled, and offered "a well-rounded, practical preparation for a profession." ...The average duration of a correspondence education, however, was [only] months (p. xi-xii).

Exposure to the graphic design culture and occupational socialization processes were severely limited for students in correspondence schools in the early 1900s. Written interactions between faculty and students in correspondence settings provided scant exposure to the graphic design industry, and socialization processes were hindered by the extremely short duration of educational programs.

By way of contrast, in Europe in the early 1920s, the Bauhaus school used a master/apprentice approach for teaching design fundamentals and simulating professional practice. "The Bauhaus Basic Course was the first in design education to declare that basic design principles underlie all design disciplines, [and] that primary design education should begin with abstract problems to introduce these universal elements" (McCoy, 1998, p. 5). Students would have to complete the one-semester (later two-semester) 'Preliminary' Course (a.k.a. Basic Course) before being considered for further study in more specialized workshops. The Bauhaus represented a radical new attitude to education because of its strong emphasis on design fundamentals, abstraction and experimentation, and its rejection of traditional formulas and approaches (p. 5).

By the end of World War II, part, if not the entire Bauhaus educational model had been adopted by most major design schools in North America. German politics of the 1930's had caused many Bauhaus instructors to immigrate to the United States, bringing their Bauhaus/Modernist educational ideas with them. Walter Gropius, László Moholy-

Nagy, Herbert Bayer, Marcel Breuer, and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe count amongst the most influential transplanted Bauhaus instructors.

Additional influences on North American design education later came from Swiss designers in the 1950s and 1960s, who introduced the rational approach of the "Swiss school" of graphic design to practitioners at first through design magazines and books, and later through design education innovations. Swiss teachers and their graduates, primarily from Armin Hoffmann's Basel school, began working in North America in schools such as the Philadelphia College of Art, University of Cincinnati, and Yale (p. 7). "These Swiss innovators applied the Bauhaus functionalist ethic to a systematic graphic method that shared the Bauhaus' values of minimalism, universality, rationality, abstraction, and structural expressionism" (p. 6).

The American Educational Scene

However, by the 1940s there was still no systematic approach to design education across the United States. In 1944, a federal agency known as the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) was established "to improve educational practices and maintain high processional standards in art and design education" (http://nasad.arts-accredit.org /index.jsp, retrieved July 21, 2004). NASAD is responsible for accrediting art and design schools across the nation, including schools with graphic design programs.

> NASAD is recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education as the institutional and specialized accrediting body for the field of art and design. This recognition enables NASAD to function as a gatekeeper for the purpose of Title IV funding eligibility for independent schools of art and design not otherwise institutionally accredited" (http://nasad.arts-accredit.org/index.jsp?page=Accreditation. Retrieved July 21, 2004).

In a general statement of its purposes, dating from 1996, NASAD listed the following aims and objectives (among others):

- to establish reasonable standards centred on the knowledge and skills necessary to develop academic and professional competence at various program levels.

- to foster the development of instruction of the highest quality while simultaneously encouraging varied and experimental approaches to the teaching of art and design.

- to evaluate, through the process of accreditation, schools of art and design and programs of studio art and design instruction in terms of their quality and the results they achieve, as judged by experienced examiners.

- to invite and encourage the cooperation of professional art and design groups and individuals of reputation in the field of art and design in the formulation of appropriate curricula and standards (http://www.arts-accredit.org/nasad/pur.html. Retrieved October 1, 2002).

Despite their mandate, NASAD was criticized for its "overly general, fine arts-based criteria [that] handicapped efforts to improve the overall quality of design programs" (Davis, 1998, p. 27). "Many of the best programs in the country forego NASAD accreditation in the belief that its standards bear little resemblance to the professional practice of graphic design and out of frustration that accreditation teams rarely even include designers", wrote Davis in 1998 (p. 27). But, bad press for NASAD would soon be over.

A Finger In the Educational Pie

Views on the effectiveness of NASAD have radically changed in recent years due to a complete revamping of its accreditation standards and processes underway since 1998. As of 1999, NASAD had 210 member institutions and, by 2003 the number was up to 240 (http://www.arts-accredit.org/aboutnasad. Retrieved April 11, 2004).

In 1998-99, in 'consultation' with the AIGA and the Industrial Design Society of America, NASAD set in place new, up-to-date criteria for accrediting educational institutions as well as educational standards for entry into design professions (Gold, 1999, p. 21). Consultation, in this instance, refers to the advisory role played by the AIGA to inform, advise, and make recommendations to NASAD regarding graphic design education. In an AIGA document intended to help students make choices about educational goals, it states: "AIGA participates with NASAD in determining appropriate standards and essential competencies and in reviewing schools for compliance" (http://www.aiga.org, Making choices about the study of graphic design, p. 2. Retrieved July 21, 2004).)

On its web site, the AIGA promotes accreditation as beneficial to students, educational programs, and the profession as a whole, and lists various types of social and cultural capital that accrue for NASAD member institutions:

- evaluation by peer experts against national standards that describe what students should know and be able to do to enter the profession comprehen-sively [sic] prepared,

- engagement with a review process that respects and encourages local goals, methods, and creativity,

- external support from an historic national body widely recognized for

nurturing improvement in everything from curricula to the resources necessary to fulfil specific educational objectives,

- public and professional recognition as an accredited program, and

- participation in the work of NASAD, including standards development, eligibility for service in the evaluation process, involvement in issues and projects with accomplished leaders of schools and programs (http://www.aiga.org/content.cfm?ContentID=148. Retrieved July 21, 2004):

Today, as Table 4 indicates, there are 30 institutions across the United States with NASAD accredited graphic design programs listed on the AIGA web site (http://www.aiga.org/content.cfm/design_schools. Retrieved July 21, 2004):

Table 4.
NASAD Member Institutions With Accredited Graphic Design Programs - 2004

State & University	State & University
Alabama:	**Arizona**:
Auburn University	Arizona State University
University of Alabama in Birmingham	University of Arizona
University of Montevallo	
University of North Alabama	
Arkansas:	
University of Arkansas at Little Rock	
California:	
Academy of Art College	California State University, Long Beach
Art Centre College of Design	California State university, Sacramento
California College of Arts and Crafts	Loyola Marymount
California Institute of the Arts	Otis College of Art and Design
California Polytechnic State University	San Diego State University
California State University, Chico	San Francisco State University
California State University, Fullerton	San Jose State University
Connecticut:	**Florida**:
Hartford Art School	Florida State University
University of Bridgeport	University of Florida
University of Connecticut	
Georgia:	**Washington, DC**:
Atlanta College of Art	Corcoran College of Art and Design
Georgia State University	
University of Georgia	

NASAD's primary responsibility is the accreditation of education programs in art and design:

> Accreditation is a process by which an institution or disciplinary unit within an institution periodically evaluates its work and seeks an independent judgement by peers that it achieves substantially its own educational objectives and meets the established standards of the body from which it seeks accreditation. Typically, the accreditation process includes 1) a self-evaluative description (self-study) of the institution or unit, 2) an on-site review by a team of evaluators, and 3) judgement by an accreditation decision-making body, normally called a Commission. Accreditation reviews focus on educational quality, institutional integrity, and educational improvements (http://nasad.arts-accredit.org/index.jsp?page=Accreditation. Retrieved July 21, 2004).

The AIGA's involvement in NASAD's accreditation process can be considered as a major coup for the graphic design industry in the United States because its national professional organization (AIGA) has been positioned by NASAD as the voice of authority concerning graphic design educational standards. Currently, visitors accessing the AIGA web site are told: "As the national professional organization of graphic designers, AIGA plays a critical advising role to NASAD in the development and evaluation of standards and in recommending individuals to be trained as NASAD visiting evaluators" (http://www.aiga.org/content.cfm?ContentID=148. Retrieved July 21, 2004).

Bourdieu's concept of the state functioning as the "central bank of symbolic capital" is particularly useful at this juncture to interpret the social and cultural status of NASAD and the AIGA. In the case of NASAD, the state is represented by the U.S. Secretary of Education, which operates on behalf of the state as the symbolic capital bank. The state has recognized NASAD's authority as "the institutional and specialized accrediting body for the field of art and design" (http://nasad.arts-accredit.org/index.jsp?page= Relationships. Retrieved July 21, 2004). In exchange for symbolic capital, the state has given NASAD access to symbolic power (and elevated status), and enabled it to "function as a gatekeeper" on its behalf. In 1944, through this act of "nomination" by the state, NASAD's authority was legitimized, and its social and cultural status and power were endorsed as a an agency empowered to act on behalf of the state in matters relating to the accreditation of art and design schools in the United States.

Similarly, NASAD as a representative (of a representative) of the state, and therefore an agency with some access to the symbolic capital bank, engaged in an exchange of symbolic capital with the AIGA in 1998/99, and through this exchange recognized and legitimized the AIGA's authority as it relates to graphic design. Because NASAD is twice removed from the centre of power (i.e. a representative of a representative of the state), its ability to confer symbolic power operates on a lesser scale.

A significant indicator of a professional association's organizational strength "is the emergence of a professional association recognized as representative by the public authorities or by a significant sector of the public," and the external recognition of the professional association by the state (Larson, 1977, p. 70). However, Larson stipulates the state must be given the "appearance of neutrality necessary to guarantee the 'objectively' superior competence of a category of professionals" (p. 70).

External recognition, and the AIGA's role in the accreditation of educational institutions, represents a significant component of the professionalization project for the graphic design profession in the United States. However, as Larson points out, "Internally, the emergence of a professional organization as "representative spokesman" for the profession is possible only if the organization is not challenged by another one of equal credibility" (p. 70). Given the AIGA's status as the oldest and largest professional association for the graphic design industry in the United States and worldwide, it is not likely that its organizational strength will be challenged anytime soon.

The AIGA, through its consultative role in NASAD's evaluative processes, is also involved in a process of collective social mobility, or "gaining status through work":

> ...The professional project of social mobility is considered as a collective project, because only through a joint organizational effort could roles be created -- or redefined -- that would bring the desired social position to their occupants. ...The aims of this collective mobility project are, ultimately, individualistic, although the project and its means are collective: it is through the upgrading of an occupation -- with the attempts to control the individual members which this involves -- that prestige is to be attached to the professional roles, and by extension to their occupants (p. 67).

Larson's interpretive framework makes it feasible to view the AIGA's consultative work with NASAD as adding status to the AIGA. As well, the organizational prestige and authority it gains through endeavours with NASAD are transferable to AIGA members in the form of collective social mobility.

Today, 30 post-secondary institutions offering graphic design degrees are accredited by NASAD using criteria and standards developed with the AIGA. As accreditation becomes more socially, culturally, and symbolically valuable to governments, the public, and the graphic design profession, the number of NASAD accredited member institutions will rise. The AIGA actively promotes NASAD accreditation. In a document geared towards helping students "make choices" about the study of graphic design, the AIGA states:

> The presence of graphic design content in college courses or curricula, or even its designation as an area of emphasis or concentration, does not automatically indicate that the degree program adequately prepares students for professional practice. ...Given the tremendous diversity among programs with graphic design content, any claim that all curricula offering some graphic design study produce

> the same outcome – a student fully qualified for entry to the profession – is misleading. Students are encouraged to compare college curricula to the standards [Standards for Accreditation of Professional Degree Programs in Graphic Design] and essential competencies for professional practice defined by AIGA and NASAD before making choices to enrol in particular programs (American Institute of Graphic Arts, 2000, Making choices, p. 1).

However, when a large majority of practitioners come from educational institutions accredited as "legitimate" by a profession as a whole, this is an even more significant indicator of organizational clout (Larson, 1977, p. 70).

Credentials 'R' Us

> *There are an estimated 2,300 schools (two and four years) with dedicated and ancillary graphic design programs graduating about 50,000 students each year [in the United States]. Each year more schools are adopting some kind of graphic design program that ranges from basic instruction of computer programs (Quark, Photoshop) to advanced typography and layout (Heller & Fernandes, 2002, p. 306).*

Other than the 30 NASAD accredited programs in the United States, there is no consistency in the more than 2,200 undergraduate design programs that all claim to prepare graduates to handle entry-level graphic design positions. As well, American graphic design programs run the full gamut from three-week programs, to two-, three- and four-year programs, to MAs and PhDs.

In the 1950-51 academic year, Yale University became the *first American educational institution to offer a degree program in graphic design* in a new Department of Design that was chaired by Josef Albers (Kelly, 2001, p. 3, emphasis mine). Albers was a former student, professor, and department director at the Bauhaus in Germany before immigrating to the United States in 1933. "The program [Albers established at Yale in 1950] was described as a four-year course with a revised professional curriculum in painting, sculpture, and the graphic arts. The design program would culminate in a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree" (p. 3).

There are numerous BA and MA programs in graphic design in North America and Europe, and PhD programs in institutions such as the Institute of Design in Chicago, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Washington (Seattle). There are also doctoral programs in universities overseas such as the Royal College of Art in London, the University of Wuppertal in Hanover, Germany, the Milan Politecnico in Italy, the Helsinki University of Art and Design in Finland, and Istanbul Technical University in Turkey. There are also new design doctorates being proposed around the globe in Mexico, Australia, the U.S.A., and other countries.

At the opposite end of the educational spectrum are programs such as those offered at the Art Institute Online, where students don't need to set foot in a classroom to obtain an Associate of Science Degree in Graphic Design, a Bachelor of Science Degree in Advertising, or a Bachelor of Science Degree in Game Art & Design (http://www.aio.quinstreet.com/programs). The American InterContinental University Online advertises: "With AIU Online's accelerated degree programs, you can learn the skills you need to succeed in today's competitive work environment. Plus you can get your degree fast: *13 months* for an Associate or Bachelor's degree, *10 months* for a Master's degree" (http://www.aiudegreeonline.com/form1_short.jsp, emphasis in original).

No doubt, many students are duped into believing these "accelerated degree programs" can adequately prepare them for careers as professional graphic designers in the United States. While these programs may assist them to get a foot in the door of the graphics industry, it will more than likely be as a *technical assistant*, but rarely as an *entry-level professional designer.* However, the urgency to enter the job market and the availability of accelerated and online courses, sets students up for unrealistic expectations upon graduation. In any professional field, acquiring knowledge and skills for entry-level positions takes time and an increased ability to solve complex problems directly relating to the field. With the commodification of education, however, come familiar caveats: "You only get what you pay for" and "Let the buyer beware".

> [N]ot everyone who uses a computer and a few fonts becomes a professional graphic designer -- a good image maker or organizer -- just in the way that not everyone who picks up a pencil becomes a professional writer or a good storyteller. ...Bad design will always be with us. ...Our job is to define and promote the values of good design to those who are disposed to listen, willing to pay, or otherwise eager to participate in the processes that make it possible (Fried & Scott, 1998, p. 171-176).

Gatekeepers for the Profession

Given the large number of schools offering art and design in the United States in the 1940s, it is not surprising NASAD was appointed as the official "gatekeeper" for post-secondary art and design school standards, even though accreditation was pursued on a voluntary basis by institutions. Today, the number of public and private schools offering art and design credentials has increased significantly; underscoring the public's need for quality assurance in post-secondary education. In order for an institution to be accredited by NASAD, a review of curricular programs, resources, and student work must be carried out to determine whether NASAD standards have been met. NASAD standards and the processes have become much more rigorous due to the involvement of two powerful professional organizations -- the AIGA and the Industrial Design Society of America (IDSA). In particular, the AIGA and IDSA developed a set of minimum core

competencies, liberal/general education requirements, and work-related experiences (such as practicums/work placements, mentoring opportunities) considered essential for entry-level positions in their respective design professions.

The AIGA has posted a series of briefing papers on its web site prepared by working groups of the AIGA and NASAD.[2] NASAD worked with the AIGA task force to map out accreditation criteria, incorporating the AIGA's delineation of a common body of knowledge and a broad range of skills deemed necessary for entry-level, professional practice as graphic designers. Additionally, standards and guidelines, recommendations for general studies, essential competencies, relevant competencies, and essential opportunities and experiences are spelled out in detail for the guidance of 'professional' degree programs seeking accreditation.

Four-year programs with less than a major in graphic design, or four-year liberal arts degrees in art or design are not recognized by NASAD/AIGA. Programs that do not follow the guidelines for four-year, graphic design degree programs will not be accredited as professional degrees. Two-year programs are considered "insufficient to prepare an individual for entry into the field as a graphic designer or strategist" (p. 3).

While the AIGA and NASAD do not require a rigid curriculum to be followed, they do specify "a minimum threshold of competency for professional practice in graphic design that generally can be acquired only within a four-year undergraduate professional degree program that provides a comprehensive education in the discipline" (p. 2). Primarily, they advocate 'professional degrees' with majors in graphic design where "the overwhelming majority of credits (at least 65%) are dedicated to design or design-related course work with at least 25% in graphic design. The remainder are taken in the liberal arts. The program is specialized rather than broad-based" (p. 2). The document goes on to further specify:

> Curricula to accomplish this purpose normally adhere to the following guidelines: studies in graphic design comprise 25-35% of the total program; supportive courses in art and design, 20-30%; studies in art and design history, 10-15%, and general studies and electives, 25-35%. Studies in the major area, supportive courses in art and design, and studies in visual arts and design history normally total at least 65% of the curriculum (p. 5, Appendix B, VIII, J. 1).

It is apparent the AIGA (and by extension its membership) made a savvy political move in graphic design's professionalization project when it collaborated with NASAD, a federal government agency, and the Industrial Designers Society of America. The collaboration placed them in a symbolically powerful position from which to exert considerable influence over the education of future graphic designers.

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[2] It should be noted that the AIGA/NASAD Briefing Papers reflect the results of the consultative process between these two groups. Official accreditation documents that include detailed information regarding NASAD accreditation standards are available from the NASAD web site: http://www.arts-accredit.org.

> AIGA is designated as the professional association responsible for defining the criteria for evaluating four-year and graduate design programs by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (American Institute of Graphic Arts, 2001a, p. 8).

AIGA ideology regarding education for the profession is made manifest through a published commitment to maintaining educational standards for the industry, including the delineation of required elements in the education of its future membership.

"Friedson [in his study of the medical profession] examines the potential for producing ideology that is inherent in the status of profession" (Larson, 1977, p. xiii). He suggests ideological production is part of the path an occupation constructs as it moves toward professional status and, once reached, "this structural position allows a group of experts to define and construct particular areas of social reality, under the guise of universal validity conferred on them by their expertise. ... The profession is, in fact, allowed to define the very standards by which its superior competence is judged" (p. xiii). The AIGA, through its collaborative process with NASAD, has not only determined what will constitute a minimum educational threshold for professional practice, but also has delineated the length and type of degree, and curricular content it considers to be most appropriate for students.

Ideological production can be linked to the AIGA in three particular ways: first, as it relates to creating guidelines of appropriate professional end ethical conduct for a group of people, namely the AIGA membership (including student membership); second, as it relates to its advisory role in the delineation of a system of conduct for graphic design education programs and faculty on a national level; and third, as it relates to its function as the voice of authority of the graphic design profession in the United States. In essence, the AIGA has participated in the construction of a very important set of gates through which *graphic design programs* and *faculty* must pass if they seek NASAD accreditation, and has positioned itself as the authoritative voice of the profession with NASAD, as the official gatekeeper, to look after the accreditation process.

Accrediting Institutions Versus Certifying Practitioners

For the purposes of this study, terms *accreditation, certification,* and *registration* are used to signify different processes:

- accreditation refers specifically to the process of 'making credible' the curriculum of a graphic design educational program, faculty, and institution by officially recognizing that particular standards have been met (see also Appendix A: Glossary of terms);

- certification refers to 'attesting by certificate' that a graphic designer is qualified or competent and has met the requisite standards for professional practice (graphic design associations do not issue business licenses or permits to practitioners); and

- registration refers to the registered status of designers who have been certified by their associations and are thus able to indicate their registered status – Registered Graphic Designer (R.G.D.) -- on all business related materials.

It is confusing to find these terms used interchangeably, although they signify different concepts to the professional bodies empowered to grant accreditation and certification, such as NASAD and the Association of Registered Graphic Designers of Ontario (RGD Ontario).

Therefore, to reiterate, the *AIGA/NASAD Briefing Papers* are concerned with the *accreditation* of graphic design educational programs and credentials held by faculty. However, there is *no professional licensing or certification of individual graphic designers* in the United States. NASAD and the AIGA do not have mechanisms in place for testing and certifying practicing designers, however, in Canada, the Ontario chapter of the Graphic Design Society of Canada (GDC) put a process in 1996.

The Canadian Scene

On April 18, 1996, the Association of Registered Graphic Designers of Ontario (RGD Ontario) was created by an Act of the Ontario Legislature (Bill Pr56), and Royal Assent was given April 25, 1996 (HRDC, 1996, p. 44). RGD Ontario is an independent Ontario Corporation and no longer falls under the jurisdiction of the GDC, however, it has chosen to remain an affiliated member organization of the GDC. (The Association of Registered Graphic Designers of Ontario, 1999, p. 15).

> The Act gives the association the right to set standards and criteria for the Registered Graphic Designer and R.G.D. designation, and to grant this exclusive title to graphic design practitioners, managers and educators who qualify. ... The Examination Board for Registered Graphic Designers was incorporated in Ontario in 1999, with the Association of Registered Graphic Designers of Ontario as founding member (p. 15-16).

"This accreditation legislation [or certification legislation to be more precise] is the first for communications designers in Canada, and the second in the world, after Switzerland" (HRDC, 1996, p. 44). RGD Ontario's goals and objectives include establishing, promoting, and regulating uniform, province-wide standards of knowledge, skills and ethics for all persons engaged in the practice of graphic design, and functioning as the governing and disciplinary body for its members (The Association of Registered Graphic Designers of Ontario, 1999, p. 15).

> The aims of accreditation [or more accurately certification] for Ontario graphic designers were to ensure and enhance professional standards in graphic design; to encourage high standards in graphic design education; to promote rules of professional conduct and ethics; and to protect and promote the professional rights of graphic designers. The objectives included developing the status of the graphic design profession and its recognition by the government, the business sector, other professions and by the general public.
>
> ...The Association grants graphic designers who qualify the right to the exclusive use of the designations Registered Graphic Designer and R.G.D. and is the governing body and disciplinary body for its members.
>
> The Association's mandate is to serve the best interests of both the graphic design industry and the public in the province of Ontario by establishing and promoting uniform standards of professional knowledge, skill and ethics for all graphic designers in Ontario (http://www.icograda.org/web/feature-past-single.shtml?pfl-feature-single-2.param&op2.rfl-21, p. 1-2).

What is a Registered Graphic Designer (R.G.D.)?

A Registered Graphic Designer (R.G.D.) is a graphic design practitioner, manager or educator who has met the Association of Registered Graphic Designers of Ontario's qualification criteria and has been granted the right to use these professional designations. No one else may use these designations. Persons in Ontario who are not members of the Association are not excluded from practising graphic design. It is an offence to use the designations Registered Graphic Designer or R.G.D. or to imply, suggest or hold out to be a Registered Graphic Designer if that is not the case.

(Excerpt from RGD Ontario/Aquent National Survey of Graphic Design Salaries & Billing Practices, 2003, p.4, from http://www.rgdontario.com/pubs/survey.php, retrieved March 12, 2004).

RGD Ontario grants graphic designers *who qualify* the right to the exclusive use of the designations *Registered Graphic Designer* and *R.G.D.* and, through provincial legislation it has been given the capacity to act as the governing body for RGD Ontario members. Currently, it is the only graphic design association in Canada to have such legislation (http://www.rgdontario.com/aboutus/rgdontario.php).

> Government has to grant the legal right (legislative act) to the regulating body, which through the accreditation process has proved its worthiness (e.g. Track

> record as the GDC), and that it has the mandate of people practicing that profession (through grandfathering, etc.) to do so.
>
> RGD accreditation is not granted by the government, but through the RGD alone. The Ontario government has no input in the setting of standards for accreditation. RGD accreditation is an industry-regulated endeavour. (http://www.gdc.net/search_listserv.php. Retrieved April 18, 2002).

Applicants applying for membership in RGD Ontario must meet eligibility requirements, pay application and examination fees, as well as write an exam and attend a portfolio interview. In the *R.G.D. Handbook for the Registered Graphic Designers Qualification Examination*, written examination topical outlines, sample questions, suggested texts, and even appeal policies and procedures are delineated, as well as individual criteria relating to portfolio requirements for design practitioners, design educators, and design managers (The Association of Registered Graphic Designers of Ontario, 1999, p. 12-13).

In addition to writing an exam, having a portfolio reviewed, and attending an interview to demonstrate competence in the field of graphic design, RGD Ontario candidates must also provide evidence of:

> • Seven years of education and professional practice (a minimum of three years of post-secondary graphic design education, with a completed diploma/degree, and a minimum of three years of professional practice), or
>
> • Seven years of relevant professional experience prior to the year 2000 and continuous professional engagement in the field from the year 2000 to the present. (p. 2).

Professional groups, in order to establish "social credit" and to legitimise and enforce their "monopolistic claims of superiority for their commodities," have to "negotiate cognitive exclusiveness" for knowledge they claim as distinctively their own (Larson, 1977, p. 15). By an Act of the Ontario Legislature, RGD Ontario was granted 'cognitive exclusiveness.' It has been legislated the right to certify (officially recognize as meeting certain standards) and register graphic designers, design mangers, and graphic design educators, and through this certification and registration process it is able to set exclusionary barriers in place for individuals who do not have RGD designation.

This is not to suggest the RGD Ontario can run uncertified practitioners out of town, but the lack of an RGD designation can severely limit an individual's ability to access jobs; particularly high-paying, senior graphic design and design management positions, as well as teaching positions in the province of Ontario. It can be argued graphic design in Ontario is in the process of becoming a 'closed shop'. For example, in February 2004, RGD Ontario launched a new feature in the 'members only' section of its web site entitled "Looking for Work," where registered graphic designers and provisional members looking for employment can list their resumes along with samples of their

work, and prospective employers can "check out the talent that's out there" (http://www.rgdontario.com/news/rgdontario/php, retrieved March 12, 2004)[3]. However, no one may access the "Looking for Work" feature, unless they are members of RGD Ontario.

There are three levels of membership: Registered Graphic Designers (RGD), Provisional RGD (graduates of three or four-year graphic design programs who have not accumulated three or four years of work experience and do not qualify to write the RGD exam), and Student Membership. In 2003/2004 RGD Ontario set up "automatic student membership" agreements with nine post-secondary institutions offering three or four-year graphic design programs: Algonquin College (Ottawa), Cambrian College (Sudbury), Durham College (Oshawa), George Brown College (Toronto), Georgian College (Barrie), Sault College (Sault Ste. Marie), St. Lawrence College (Kingston), and York University/Sheridan College (Toronto/Oakville) (http://www.rgdontario.org/news/services.php, retrieved March 12, 2004).

No one can become a Registered Graphic Designer without successfully completing the RGD Qualification Examination process. More importantly, professional membership in the Society of Graphic Designers of Canada (GDC) is not transferable to RGD Ontario, so any graphic designer moving to Ontario from another Canadian province, regardless of their status as professional members in the GDC, must also meet RGD Ontario's threshold requirements, write the examination, and go through a portfolio review in order to become a fully-fledged member of RGD Ontario (The Association of Registered Graphic Designers of Ontario, 1999, p. 14). The reverse, however, does not apply because RGD Ontario is a member association of the GDC.

In its professionalization project, therefore, RGD Ontario is able to wield considerable power, including legitimising and enforcing what Larson refers to as "monopolistic claims of superiority for their commodities" (Larson, 1977, p. 15). By 2002, approximately 3,000 graphic designers in Ontario were able to use their RGD Ontario membership and 'registered status' to build and enhance their social, professional, and economic capital.

The Future of the Profession in Canada

In 1998, the founding president of the RGD Ontario released the following statement concerning the association's goals for the future regarding the accreditation of *educational institutions*:

---

[3] Similarly, the GDC and AIGA encourage prospective employers to advertise on their web sites and also offer exclusive access to job opportunities for members only.

> The Registered Graphic Designers Qualification Examination is a vital part of realizing the aims of *accreditation.* It will encourage better design education and professional development, both of which are key to achieving our goals. I believe the examination will become the blueprint for graphic design accreditation across all of Canada (The Association of Registered Graphic Designers of Ontario, 1999, p. 17, emphasis mine).

Certifying graphic design practitioners and accrediting institutions (offering three or four-year graphic design programs) are two important aspects of the professionalization project of the graphic design industry in Canada. The primary motivation behind certification in Ontario was to secure public recognition and acknowledgement of individual graphic designers as possessing specialized skills and knowledge, and differentiate RGD Ontario members from others who might be engaged in similar types of work, such as desktop publishers. Through restricting access to the profession to those who have met specific standards, RGD Ontario certifies that anyone hiring a designer with the designation 'R.G.D.', will be hiring a 'professional' designer rather than an amateur.

RGD certification also extends to graphic design educators who must pass the same qualifying exams, interviews, and portfolio reviews as graphic design practitioners and design managers. As RGD Ontario moves closer towards its goal of accrediting educational institutions, the control they are able to exert over graphic design practitioners and education in the province of Ontario will increase. Once accreditation becomes part of their purview, the organizational clout they wield, in relative terms, will exceed that of the AIGA.

In the meantime, they continue to promote professional design certification to the rest of Canada:

> As graphic design organizations in other provinces are granted legislation to accredit [or, more precisely, to certify] graphic designers, they may join the [RGD Ontario] Examination Board as members and use the Registered Graphic Designers Qualification Examination to accredit [or certify] graphic designers in their province. Ultimately the examination will become a national examination for obtaining Registered status (http://www.rgdontario.com/examboard, Retrieved March 12, 2004).

However, not all chapters of the GDC have bought into RGD Ontario's ideas of certification, registration, or accreditation, and the topics have sparked a great deal of heated debate. While some GDC chapters are interested in looking into the possibilities of certifying and registering their membership, they question the viability and appropriateness of the process model constructed by RGD Ontario.

Table 5 provides excerpts of a "list serve discussion" of the pros and cons relating to certification that were expressed in a GDC online forum as of April 18, 2001. At that time, GDC online forums were freely accessible by the public, however, today the forums

are accessible only by members of the GDC (www.gdc.net/search_listserv.php. Retrieved April 18, 2002). It is important to note the terms *accreditation* and *certification* have been used interchangeably in the discussion to refer to the registration of individual practitioners.

Table 5.
Excerpts from a GDC Online Forum Relating to Certification Issues – 2001/02

PROS:	CONS:
In the long term accreditation can improve design education, inform the public about our profession and strengthen our association. That is why we believe accreditation is worthwhile in Manitoba.	If to get my accreditation I simply need to drop a couple grand – someone let me know before I waste another year in school. Beware the students [who] are graduating. [I don't] wish to place blame on the association but really... if accreditation is so important someone should be watching our education system.
No longer content with being merely the 'Whipping Boy of Marketing', Graphic Design is evolving into a true profession, and is adopting all that comes with professionalism – practice standards, a code of ethics, criticism, and accreditation.	Am I seeing a tremendous marketing of design to the marketplace because of RGD? Answer: No.
RGD is a very young organization and it will take another 10 to 15 years before we see the full benefits of accreditation. If you think RGD's goals are worthwhile, then invest in the future of graphic design; your membership fees today will help to build that future.	I believe the former GDC when it operated in Ontario and specifically Ottawa offered its members much more than the RGD does now. The GDC seems to be alive and well in BC though.
Nova Scotia is looking into accreditation very seriously. Preliminary steps are underway and a consultant has been retained to lead the initial phases and studies.	There are a lot of qualified designers who would take exception to the RGD brand being presented as the only solution. ...[T]he fact is that the majority of qualified designers are not RGD members and yet are still qualified and experienced...
[A]s of the GDC National AGM in Halifax a few days ago [2001], Manitoba is anticipating being the second province to achieve accreditation within the next year. Atlantic is also starting the process as well. RGD Ontario had a very good progress report so it seems that they are finally getting over their growing pains.	The "gummit-accredited" [government-accredited] REAL designers would be able to ratchet their billings through the sky, just like MDs and other professional folk, while protecting society from the horrors of desktop publishing. Etc.
For the life of me, I simply can't see why any competent graphic designer would argue against accreditation. Seems to me your [sic] just shooting yourself in the foot.	
One of the crucial aspects of accreditation (of any type) is that it is official sanctioning of your profession by the government. ...As the business community now uses qualified accountants, lawyers, architects, etc., in an accredited world they wouldn't even imagine using a non-registered designer.	

(Data from: http://www.gdc.net/search_listserv.php. Retrieved April 18, 2002).

While the Manitoba and Nova Scotia chapters of the GDC have been looking into certification processes for several years, coast-to-coast there has been strong opposition to the concept of certifying designers and educators, as well as disagreements about the appropriate type of process. In recent months, however, there has been a major shift and, at the GDC Annual General Meeting in Victoria in 2004, a renewed interest was expressed in reopening the discussion of certification at the local and national levels. The president of the GDC Manitoba chapter summarized the discussion:

> [The GDC Annual General Meeting in Victoria] was a great session that focused on our future. In brief, some of our immediate goals are to work together more efficiently coast to coast to coast, and not only to continue our quest for certification (locally and nationally), but to start acting more like a certified body by integrating the ideals and standards that will make us collectively stronger as a national organization (http://www.gdc.net/manitoba. Newsletter, May 2004, p. 7. Retrieved June 9, 2004).

To Be Or Not To Be Certified

> *Journals are peppered with articles entitled "Making Accreditation Work" or "Board Certification: An Idea Whose Time Has Come." ... The logic runs that if we could develop a set of standards, either through the school system or through an exterior organization, we could produce a measure against which we would conclude who is, and who isn't a graphic designer (Rock, 1997, p. 168).*

Rock wrote this in 1997, prior to the AIGA's involvement with NASAD, and his concern relates directly to the notion of measuring designers against an arbitrary set of standards. The issue of certification of individual designers has been a hot topic in the United States and around the world for more than a decade. For example, in an online opinion poll conducted by ICOGRADA in 2002, 92% of designers responding to the poll did not have access to professional certification in their countries (Icograda eNews 13/02, March 31, 2002, from http://www.icograda.org/web/opinion/opinion-pastpolls.shtml, retrieved August 1, 2004).

In a follow-up opinion poll one week later, ICOGRADA asked designers whether having a professional certificate or license was desirable. As Figure 3 reports, 84% of the international respondents to the poll felt that certification was a good idea.

In the United States, certification is resurrected as a recurring agenda item at AIGA board meetings, but Shapiro reports the debate always ends up the same way with no progress having been made (1977, p. 156). The debate continues to this day with just as many graphic designers and educators arguing for certification of practitioners as against it.

Figure 3.
ICOGRADA Opinion Poll Results - Certification

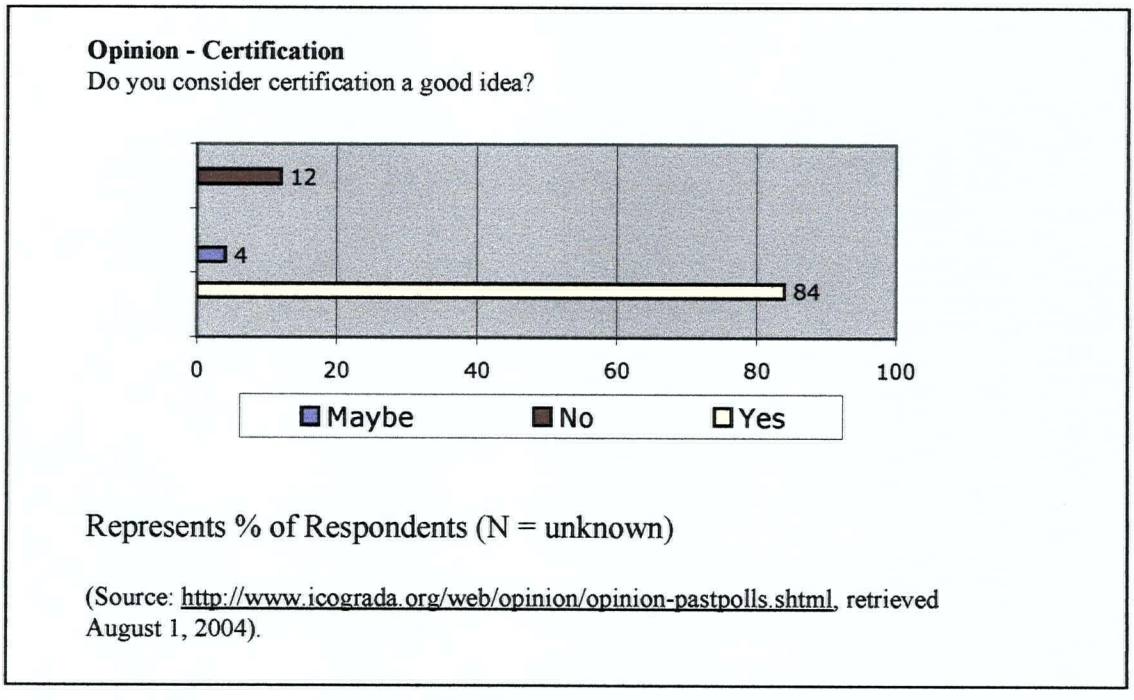


Table 6 looks at the American response to the certification debate and provides examples of arguments from designers on both sides of the fence who have published their views in books, journals, and online.

But, what is the AIGA's official position on the certification of practitioners? In an online newsletter prepared for its membership in August, 2001, the AIGA stated:

> Members regularly ask AIGA's position on certifying designers, as some other professions do in registering those qualified to practice. This is an issue on which our membership is split. The value of certification is clear to all; yet a large number of our members believe it would simply be too difficult to find a meaningful way to certify designers. Many also feel that certification is an inappropriate way to define the kind of judgement that good designers offer their clients.
>
> Consequently, AIGA has chosen to develop accreditation standards for design programs in colleges. This effort would begin to identify those programs that would be expected to prepare students adequately for the rigors of today's professional requirements. At the same time, we are observing the experience of the Society of Graphic Designers of Canada, which recently began a registration process (and where they, too, are struggling with the challenge of examination and requirements)... (http://www.aiga.org/common/newsletter/source/

communique_aug_2001.html, p. 3. Retrieved February 6, 2002 and July 22, 2004).

Table 6.
Examples of American Opinions Regarding Graphic Design Practitioner Certification

PROS:	CONS:
In short, it's time for Graphic Designer Certification people. At this moment in the United States, graphic design is the only [one] of the five core design disciplines (graphic design, interior design, architecture, industrial design, engineering) that does not have some form of certification or registration. On the other hand, certification efforts have already been started in countries like Canada, Denmark, South Africa and Australia. What exactly are we waiting for? http://www.creativelatitude.com/licensed, retrieved July 22, 2004,	Certification only means that you're minimally competent – not that you are any good. Whatever the merits of certification, it has always been a big hit among those who get to do the certifying.... How about we appoint an august elite (made up of our own august selves plus some of our august pals) to judge. We will divide the world into betas, who will be allowed to work in the field and gammas, who will not. In the process we will be demonstrating that we ourselves are alphas. What a brave new world! http://www.interactionbydesign.com/thoughts/perspectives/00000002.html, p. 1-2, retrieved July 22, 2004).
People don't like to subject themselves to rigor and to possible failure, but when you have a benchmark to measure yourself against, a standard to rise to, it all pays off (Swick in Shapiro, 1997, p. 164).	Standardizing graphic design is like standardizing dance or fishing. It may all go by one name, but it's not the same thing. ... The strength of graphic design is its diversity. A successful certification program would threaten that diversity (Swanson, 1997, p. 166).
Certification raises professional standards and educates the public on the importance and benefits of graphic design in business and everyday life. It enhances the profile of graphic designers, raises respect for the profession and creates business opportunities. Initials after your name tells your clients and employers that you are a professional – that you have the experience and education to understand not only their design needs, but their business objectives as well (Baram, from http://albangy.gag.org/resources/essays/l_baram_essay.html, retrieved July 26, 2004.)	In addition to narrowing the activity and severing design from other forms of mass communication, the imposition of professional standards shifts the field from a meritocracy, or leadership by the talented, to an artificial system of rules and dictates. And so professional certification by a group organized to serve those same practitioners would only stultify design, ensuring that a single value system remains predominant and unchallenged (Rock, 1997, p. 169).

In general terms, American designers fear the high costs involved in set up and administration of a certification process (estimated at US $500,000) will be born by individual practitioners who will see little return on their investment (such as increased earnings, higher status). As well, designers argue it should be a mandatory testing process for all, while others argue just as passionately and logically for a certification process that is purely voluntary.

Those in favour of certifying individual designers say it offers some assurance of a standard of performance as opposed to the unreliable levels of skill and knowledge demonstrated by some graduates of American graphic design degree programs (Shapiro, 1997, p. 159). "It should be possible to say to a potential client that a given designer appears to adhere to a robust code of ethics (no free pitching, etc.) and understands what professional practice (e.g. managing the design process, production constraints, written contracts, copyright, etc.) are about" (Lam-Po-Tang quoted in Lange, p. 4). Other designers see certification as a way of preventing "our good collective name" as graphic designers being bandied about by "the great PageMaker unwashed -- that growing legion of wannabees [sic] calling themselves graphic designers" or "usurped by every clown with some stolen software and the price of a Macintosh lease" (Swanson, 1997, p. 165).

Many graphic designers and educators in the 1990s viewed certification as a means to "assure true professionalism" and offered up the certification process of the interior design profession in North America as one of the models for graphic design to follow:

> All U.S. and Canadian interior design organizations subscribe to the impressive testing program administered by the National Council for Interior Design Qualification (NCIDQ). To be eligible to take the test, an interior designer must have at least six years of combined educational and practical experience. This includes combinations such as: a four-year degree in interior design plus two years of professional experience; a two-year certificate plus four years of experience, etc. (Shapiro, 1997, p. 159).

In particular, those in favour of certification regard testing processes as viable for examining a designer's professional capabilities and skills such as "problem-solving, analysis, organization of information, communication, and presentation," and, to a lesser degree, graphic design production (p. 159). In her proposition for professional certification, Shapiro states: "It is intended to determine whether an individual has attained the level of skills required to serve a client independently and without supervision -- or to open his or her own office" (p. 161).

Naysayers caution interior design certification isn't all it purports to be. For example, Swanson reports "...certified interior designers I have talked to complain that their certification test doesn't reflect abilities, hasn't improved business, and is necessary only because of the threat that licensing is just around the corner" (Swanson, 1997, p. 165). Swanson and others maintain that graphic design isn't all that similar to interior design or other disciplines that certify practitioners in the U.S., and therefore they question the wisdom in trying to copy certification ideologies and processes. "If you can do something demonstrably better for a client than a desktop publisher can, then do it. If you can't, certification isn't going to make you rich or gain you respect" (p. 167).

The most frequent argument against the certification of graphic design practitioners on both sides of the Canada/U.S. border relates to the belief one set of standards cannot possibly be used to effectively test such a diverse profession with so

many specialisms. The opposition argues it is impossible for one exam to fit all professional situations. They question how someone who specializes in packaging design or annual reports can be tested by the same examination mechanism and criteria as someone who specializes in film titles, web sites, or exhibit design.

Registration of Graphic Designers – Does It Really Make A Difference?

The *2003/04 RGD Ontario /Aquent National Survey of Graphic Design Salaries & Billing Practices* indicates certification is having a positive impact on membership numbers with regard to RGD Ontario.

Figure 4 represents Canada-wide responses to a question about membership in professional associations. Based on 1,028 responses, approximately 30% (308.4 designers) are RGD Ontario members (http://www.rgdontario.com, RGD Ontario/Aquent 2003/04 National survey, p. 8, retrieved Feb. 19, 2004). It is particularly interesting to note only 12% (123.36 designers) are members of the GDC, a nationwide association with regional chapters, while 57% (585.96 designers), the majority of graphic designers in Canada participating in the survey, chose not to belong to a professional association at all.[4]

There may be many things to account for the large percentage (57%) of designers who are not members of an association. For example, there may be a lack of awareness concerning the function of a professional association and a designer's relationship to it. Some designers may not see any tangible benefit in membership to justify paying $300 or more per year in membership fees, or designers who practice in small towns may not have easy access to a regional chapter house. As well, some designers may be working in positions not directly related to design (administration, sales); while others may object to entry requirements such as portfolio reviews, interviews, or exams; or they may not qualify for entry into an association (no formal schooling, not sufficient education plus the requisite number of years of practice, no portfolio of work). For whatever reason, 57% of the Canadian graphic designers who participated in the RGD Ontario/Aquent survey have said "No" to membership in a professional association.

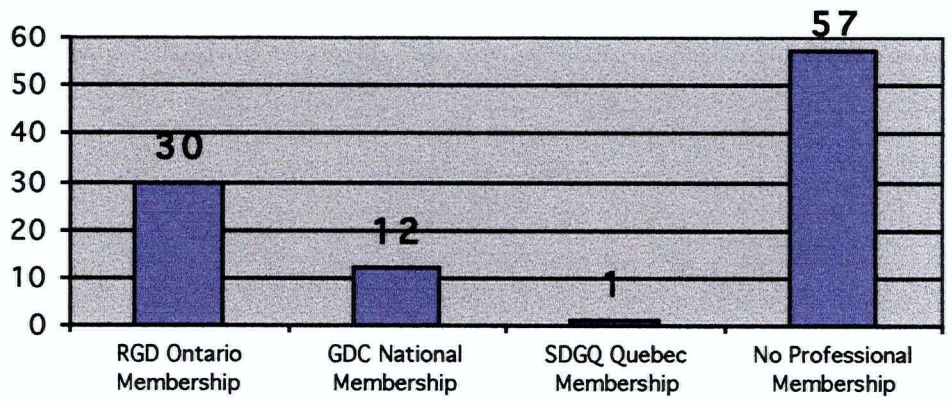
Potentially, respondents who are against membership might also vote against certification of designers, particularly if they do not see it as adding value to their professional status or practice. Of the many charges levied against the certification or

---

[4] (Note: RGD Ontario/Aquent collection methods and a province-by-province breakdown of the number of RGD Ontario/Aquent survey responses are reported as Table A1 in Appendix A).

licensing of practitioners, the most prevalent is that it will make no difference to the profession in terms of social status or economic rewards.

Figure 4.
Canadian Membership in Professional Graphic Design Associations – 2002



Base: 1,028 respondents
Chart represents % of respondents with professional graphic design association membership

(Data from http://www.rgdontario.com, RGD Ontario/Aquent 2003/04 National survey of graphic design salaries and billing practices, p. 8, retrieved Feb. 19, 2004).

Table 7 isolates 2002 data from the RGD Ontario/Aquent survey for Canadian salaries for five of the most common career categories in graphic design:

- Owner/partner/principal
- Creative/design director
- Senior graphic designer
- Intermediate graphic designer
- Junior graphic designer

Certification only takes place in Ontario. However, certification doesn't appear to have much effect on provincial salary levels, particularly average and median wages for the five career groups outlined above:

- Owner/partner/principal: Ontario average $91,220 ($21,220 higher than the next highest average by province) and median $73,000 ($7,000 higher than the next highest median by province),

- Creative/design director: Ontario average $70,694 ($306 lower than Alberta) and median $65,000 ($5,000 lower than B.C.),

- Senior graphic designer: Ontario average $49,768 ($6,268 higher than the next highest average by province) and median $48,000 ($3,000 higher than the next highest median by province),

- Intermediate graphic designer: Ontario average is $37,519 ($3,481 lower than Atlantic Canada) and median $37,000 ($1,000 lower than Atlantic Canada), and

- Junior graphic designer: Ontario average is $30,275 ($1,625 lower than Alberta) and median $30,000 ($3,500 lower than Atlantic Canada).

It is only at the high end of the salary spectrum where Ontario designers lead in four out of five of the career group categories from the survey:

- Owner/partner/principal ($250,000, which is $150,000 higher than the corresponding top paying job in another province),

- Creative/design director ($220,000, which is $136,000 higher than the corresponding top paying job in another province),

- Senior graphic designer ($96,000, which is $36,000 higher than the corresponding top paying job in another province),

- Intermediate graphic designer ($60,000, which is $4,000 higher than the corresponding top paying job in another province).

However, Ontario also leads the way in salaries at the low end of the salary spectrum for three career group categories: Owner/partner/principal, Creative/design director, and Junior graphic designer. Ontario also has the widest gap between the highest and lowest annual salaries for the same three career group categories.

When considering Table 7, it is critical for readers to be aware the numbers are based on respondents that are RGD Ontario members AND non-member, non-registered designers (von Richthofen, 2004, emphasis in original). Of the 687 respondents from Ontario represented in Table 7, 290 designers or 42.2% are members of RGD Ontario, but the level of membership -- i.e. whether it is registered or provisional -- is not known. The affiliations (or lack of affiliations) of the remaining 397 graphic designers in Ontario are also unknown. They may, or may not, belong to the GDC.

Table 7.
Salaries of Canadian Graphic Designers - 2002

2002	HIGH	LOW	AVERAGE	MEDIAN	RESPONDENTS
OWNER/PARTNR/PRINCIPAL					
National	$250,000	$25,000	$83,561	$70,000	104
B.C.	$80,000	$27,000	$54,300	$51,000	10
Alberta	$100,000	$42,000	$64,500	$60,000	6
Prairies	$38,000	$35,000	$36,333	$36,000	3
Ontario	$250,000	$25,000	$91,220	$73,000	74
Quebec	$85,000	$60,000	$70,500	$66,000	6
Atlantic	$45,000	$45,000	$45,000	$45,000	1
CREATIVE/DESIGN DIRECTOR					
National	$220,000	$20,800	$67,747	$65,000	70
B.C.	$72,000	$70,000	$71,000	$70,000	2
Alberta	$75,500	$24,000	$51,125	$40,000	4
Prairies	$51,000	$50,000	$50,500	$50,000	2
Ontario	$220,000	$20,800	$70,694	$65,000	53
Quebec	$84,000	$30,000	$62,400	$65,000	5
Atlantic	$65,000	$65,000	$65,000	$65,000	1
SENIOR GRAPHIC DESIGNER					
National	$96,000	$20,966	$47,399	$46,000	183
B.C.	$57,380	$30,000	$41,548	$40,000	8
Alberta	$45,000	$35,800	$39,978	$40,000	9
Prairies	$55,000	$20,966	$37,593	$39,000	15
Ontario	$96,000	$27,000	$49,768	$48,000	129
Quebec	$53,000	$33,000	$42,985	$42,000	10
Atlantic	$60,000	$24,000	$43,500	$45,000	6
INTERMEDIATE GR. DESIGNER					
National	$60,000	$20,000	$36,987	$37,000	126
B.C.	$50,000	$24,960	$36,995	$36,000	8
Alberta	$56,000	$20,000	$36,890	$34,786	11
Prairies	$45,000	$22,000	$35,022	$35,000	8
Ontario	$60,000	$21,120	$37,519	$37,000	76
Quebec	$43,500	$25,000	$34,622	$35,500	9
Atlantic	$48,000	$37,000	$41,000	$38,000	3
JUNIOR GRAPHIC DESIGNER					
National	$47,000	$20,000	$30,042	$30,000	50
B.C.	$36,015	$24,000	$29,338	$28,000	3
Alberta	$47,000	$24,000	$31,900	$29,500	5
Prairies	$29,500	$22,000	$24,625	$22,000	4
Ontario	$46,300	$20,000	$30,275	$30,000	32
Quebec	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a
Atlantic	$38,000	$20,800	$31,460	$33,500	5

(Data from 2003/04 RGD Ontario / Aquent National Survey of Graphic Design Salaries & Billing Practices, retrieved February 19, 2004)

As well, low response rates from some of the provinces for some of the career group categories may have skewed the results of the RGD Ontario/Aquent survey. For example, there were no junior graphic designers from Quebec responding to the survey, and responses were consistently very low for Atlantic Canada.

Therefore, while the data presented in Table 7 is very informative regarding Canadian salaries at the national and provincial levels for specific occupational positions within the field of graphic design, it does not provide conclusive evidence regarding the relationship of RGD Ontario certification to salary levels. In some instances, salary levels in Ontario are considerably higher than in other parts of the country, while in other instances, they are the lowest. Ontario salaries do not lead the country in all career categories, across all wage levels (high, low, average, median). In other words, based on the 2002 salary levels for graphic designers in Canada, one cannot say unequivocally that RGD Ontario membership results in higher paying jobs for all graphic design career categories.

Certification of practitioners and accreditation of educational programs are two types of mechanisms used to control access to the graphic design profession in North America and constitute major components of the professionalization project. The education of practitioners is an equally important component of the project. Therefore, next chapter analyses relationships between education levels of practitioners, credentials required for employment, and wages.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PROFESSIONALIZATION AND EDUCATION

How Much Education Is Enough?

"What this country needs is a good five-year design program" states Heller in a recent article published on the AIGA web site (2004, p. 1). The article is premised on the notion most BFA (Bachelor of Fine Arts), four-year programs include a foundation year, which he considers "a questionable squandering of significant design teaching time" (p. 1). Drawing, painting, sculpture, and fine arts history courses are usually part of a B.F.A. foundation line-up. Heller argues the addition of a fifth year would enable students to achieve a higher proficiency with design languages (primarily type and typography) and technology, and would allow the inclusion of more courses in history, criticism and theory, as well as "longer and more varied internships" (p. 1-3).

In Europe, "the average design program... lasts six years: time enough to smoothly integrate knowledge with practice, get grounded in liberal studies, and gain personal maturity. European schools are supported by their governments, too, so they're less expensive to attend" (Vrontikis, 1999, p. 20). While a six-year degree may be common for graphic designers in Europe, what is the most common length of time for graphic design programs in the United States and Canada?

Four design salary surveys were conducted online by Coroflot, providing an overview of international salaries and education levels from 2001 to 2004. The findings are reported as Table 8. Coroflot describes itself as a career site for designers that "hosts individual creative portfolios, a global design firm directory, and a database of job and project openings" (http://www. coroflot.com/ public/aboutus.asp, retrieved February 9, 2004). Students and designers visit the Coroflot site to post portfolios for potential employers, check and compare salary and education levels in various countries, and participate in online discussions.

As part of their 'community' resources, Coroflot administers an online salary survey on a yearly basis and publishes the results. The four Coroflot surveys are the only known international salary surveys to date. The survey covers 11 questions and requests information for such things as the respondent's area of design concentration, job title, country, education level, and annual salary converted to U.S. dollars (see Appendix C for the full questionnaire). Visitors to the site complete the survey on a voluntary basis, however, Coroflot does not request visitor identification, nor does it appear to monitor how many times a visitor might complete the same survey. Data amassed by Coroflot is presented as a tool for graphic designers to use to determine what they should be earning/charging for their services in various countries and regions, and provides

education levels as another means of comparison. No attempt has been made by Coroflot to interpret data they provide.

Table 8.
Coroflot - International Education Levels for Graphic Designers 2001-2004

	Education				Respondents
	HS	**BA**	**MA**	**PHD**	
Spring 2001 Graphic Design	14% 129.78	80% 741.6	6% 55.62	0% 0	927
(Location of Respondents to Survey: U.S., Canada, Australia, Austria, Bosnia, Denmark, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Ireland, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, St. Thomas, Sweden, Taiwan, United Kingdom, and Venezuela)					
Spring 2002 Graphic Design	18% 83.52	77% 357.28	5% 23.2	0% 0	464
(Location of Respondents to Survey: U.S., Canada, Australia, Belgium, Dominican Republic, Finland, Germany, Hong Kong, Iceland, India, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Ireland, Spain, Switzerland, Taiwan, and United Kingdom)					
Spring 2003 Graphic Design	10% 15.3	85% 130.05	5% 7.65	1% 1.53	153
(Location of Respondents to Survey: U.S., Canada, Australia, Brazil, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, Italy, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Republic of Ireland, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, and United Kingdom)					
Spring 2004 – Graphic Design	31% 35.96	66% 76.56	3% 3.48	1% 1.16	116 **
(Location of Respondents to Survey: U.S., Canada, Germany, Mexico, Netherlands, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland, and United Kingdom). (**Note: Survey for 2004 in progress)					

(Source of data: http://www.coroflot.com/ community/results.asp?t, retrieved May 26, 2004 and July 26, 2004).

The Coroflot survey indicates 2003 witnessed a significant increase in the post-secondary education rate for graphic designers internationally:

- 2001 - 86% of respondents have post-secondary education
- 2002 - 82% of respondents have post-secondary education
- 2003 – 91% of respondents have post-secondary education.

However, two things prevent reliable analyses of survey findings: 1) countries represented by respondents to the survey vary from year-to-year, and 2) the number of respondents varies from year-to-year. The inconsistency in the sample sizes from survey-to-survey is particularly problematic. For example, there is a large decrease in respondents -- down almost 50% -- from the 2001 survey to the 2002 survey, and another large decrease in respondents -- down almost 30% -- from the 2002 survey to the 2003 survey.

No explanation is given for the sharp decrease in respondents for the three surveys conducted between 2001 and 2003, but this is probably because Coroflot functions as a job search site, providing survey results so job hunters can informally compare their qualifications and salary expectations to others around the world. The decrease in respondents from year-to-year suggests less people visited the Coroflot site from one year to the next. This might be a reflection of declining levels internationally of unemployment amongst graphic designers, or it might be an indication of declining interest in the Coroflot site as a viable job search tool.

Table 9 shows the percentage of Coroflot respondents with degrees in the United States and Canada for the years 2001 to 2003. The Mid Atlantic region of the U.S. consistently provides the largest number of respondents in all three years of surveys. In 2001, 96% of respondents in the Mid Atlantic region (65.28 people) had BA degrees, while 6% (4.08 people) had Masters Degrees. In 2002, with only 28 respondents in total from the region, the number of BA degrees decreases to 86% (29.08 people), while Masters Degrees rise in percentile to 14% (3.92 people). In 2003, the total number of Mid Atlantic respondents plummets to 10 people, with 80% (8 people) having achieved BA degrees and 10% (1 person) achieving Masters Degrees.

However, when Coroflot data for all regions is examined closely, it becomes clear some respondents may hold more than one BA degree (see Spring 2003, U.S. - California), and some respondents may have counted their degrees as well as high school diplomas (see Spring 2002, U.S. - New England). As well, the number of Canadian graphic design respondents fluctuates and in some cases is non-existent, and does not allow a reliable comparison of Canadian and American education levels.

The Coroflot site appears to be the only online source of *international* statistics relating to graphic design salaries and education levels freely accessible to Internet users. However, survey data is useful for interest purposes only.

Table 9.
Coroflot – Education Levels of Graphic Designers in U.S. & Canada - 2001 to 2003

	Education				Respondents
SPRING 2001	**HS**	**BA**	**MA**	**PHD**	
Graphic Design - Entry Level					
United States - New England	17%	100%	0%	0%	6
United States - Mid Atlantic	15%	96%	6%	0%	68
United States - South East	7%	88%	5%	0%	41
United States - Mid-West	12%	92%	2%	0%	49
United States - South West	28%	83%	0%	0%	18
United States - Rocky Mountains	22%	78%	0%	0%	9
United States - Pacific	0%	125%	0%	0%	4
United States - California	20%	83%	7%	0%	60
Canada - Eastern	15%	85%	0%	0%	13
Canada - Western	33%	67%	0%	0%	3
SPRING 2002	**HS**	**BA**	**MA**	**PHD**	
Graphic Design - Entry Level					
United States - New England	25%	125%	0%	0%	4
United States - Mid Atlantic	25%	86%	14%	0%	28
United States - South East	0%	114%	0%	0%	14
United States - Mid West	14%	93%	0%	0%	14
United States - South West	0%	100%	0%	0%	1
United States - Rocky Mountains	50%	50%	0%	0%	2
United States - Pacific	14%	71%	14%	0%	7
United States - California	33%	83%	0%	0%	6
Canada - Eastern	0%	100%	0%	0%	4
Canada - Western	20%	60%	20%	0%	5
SPRING 2003	**HS**	**BA**	**MA**	**PHD**	
Graphic Design - Entry Level					
United States - New England	50%	50%	0%	0%	2
United States - Mid Atlantic	20%	80%	10%	0%	10
United States - South East	75%	50%	0%	0%	4
United States - Mid West	0%	100%	0%	0%	8
United States - South West	0%	100%	0%	0%	4
United States - Rocky Mountains	0%	100%	0%	0%	1
United States - Pacific	no data	no data	no data	no data	no data
United States - California	0%	114%	0%	0%	7
Canada - Eastern	0%	100%	0%	0%	1
Canada - Western	no data	no data	no data	no data	no data

Source of data: (http://www.coroflot.com/ community/results.asp, retrieved May 26, 2004.)

Educating the Professionals

The university is the main centre for the 'production of professional producers,' according to Larson, and "even for the younger and less established professions, reaching the university means that they can develop their own distinctiveness: they are, indeed, under tacit command to develop their specific body of 'theoretical knowledge' from a firm institutional base, which gives them academic control of a captive audience" (Larson, 1977, p. 201). In order for professions to successfully establish claims to expertise and control training and access, she suggests affiliations or connections to the university are of paramount importance (p. 200).

In the case of the AIGA, it has established connections to the university through its work with NASAD. The AIGA has specified a distinct body of theoretical knowledge and particular design and technical skills are necessary for entry-level graphic designers, and has also prescribed the length and type of degree for entrance into professional practice, including the percentages of the curriculum to be devoted to particular curricular topics. In this way, any institution with a graphic design program seeking accreditation from NASAD must adhere to its official accreditation standards as well as the standards set by the AIGA. While the AIGA has no direct power to ensure that institutions comply with its standards, indirectly it is able to do so through its affiliation with NASAD. Further, through NASAD, the AIGA has gained access, albeit limited, to the academic control of the 'production of professional producers,' but only in universities *voluntarily* seeking NASAD accreditation.

An online review of occupational information published by each state in the U.S. indicates most stipulate a degree and a comprehensive portfolio of work are required for entry into the profession. In California, for example, a bachelor's degree is listed as the minimum education required for an entry-level graphic design position. Most states follow the criteria established by the Bureau of Labour Statistics, Office of Employment Projections (http://www.acinet /org/acinet/help.asp#wage). As well, the U.S. Department of Labour, Bureau of Labour Statistics provides excerpts from its *Occupational Outlook Handbook 2004-05 Edition* online. For the occupation of designer it states: "Creativity is crucial in all design occupations; most designers need a bachelor's degree, and candidates with a master's degree hold an advantage" (http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos090.htm). While the U.S. Department of Labour reports most graphic design positions in the U.S. require bachelor degrees, they do not go so far as to stipulate the degrees must be in graphic design, or graduates must be from NASAD/AIGA accredited institutions.

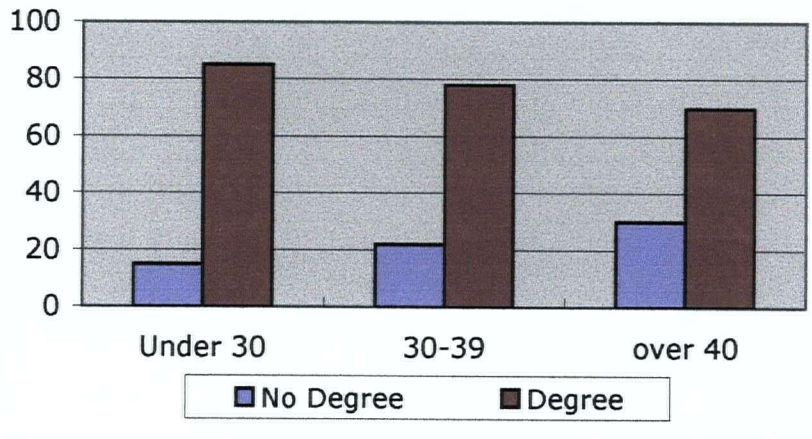
Do Graphic Designers Have Degrees?

A recent study was conducted by HOW Magazine with 523 American graphic designers who responded to questions about their age and education levels. Figure 5

represents the HOW survey findings, which categorized respondents into three age groupings: under age 30, ages 30 to 39, and over age 40. The survey indicates an overwhelming majority of graphic designers in all age groups hold degrees in the United States (http://www.howdesign. com/db/index.asp).

The types of degrees held by respondents have not been specified in the HOW survey (i.e. whether they are two-, three- or four-year degrees, and whether they are BA degrees, Masters, PhDs, Associate Degrees), nor is there any indication of whether the degrees are held in graphic design, or in some other field. Nevertheless, the survey suggests most graphic designers in the United States recognize the necessity of holding some type of degree as a means to entering the profession.

Figure 5.
2002 - HOW Magazine Survey (U.S.) - "Who has a design degree?"



N = 523 U.S. Graphic Designers

- Under Age 30 — 85% of graphic designers have degrees
- From Age 30 to 39 — 78% of graphic designers have degrees
- Over Age 40 — 70% of graphic designers have degrees

(Source of data: http://www.howdesign.com/db/index.asp, Retrieved May 26, 2004)

Figure 5 indicates 85% of designers under the age of 30 have a degree. The statistics are equally impressive in the other two age groups, confirming a majority of survey respondents hold degrees, regardless of age.

How do statistics for American graphic design degree-holders compare to Canadian counterparts? One of the most comprehensive surveys is the *RGD Ontario/Aquent 2001 National Survey of Graphic Design Salaries & Billing Practices*, published in October, 2001 (RGD Ontario and Aquent, 2001, p 1). The report concludes:

> • Over half (57%) of respondents have completed a three- or four-year diploma/degree in graphic design.
>
> • Completion of a diploma/degree in graphic design is lower in the prairie provinces [Saskatchewan and Manitoba only] where only 44 percent have completed a diploma/degree.
>
> • More respondents in Ontario and Quebec have completed a three-year program; completion of a four-year program is higher in the Atlantic Provinces [New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, P.E.I., Newfoundland], B.C. and Alberta (p. 7).

While these are impressive statistics, the number of respondents varies considerably from province-to-province. For example, while 643 responses were received from designers in Ontario, only 117 were received from Alberta, 230 from B.C., five from New Brunswick, and only one was received from P.E.I. Given the wide range in the number of respondents, the trustworthiness of the data is called into question.

Table 10 compares the educational background of Canadian graphic designers across two surveys by RGD Ontario/Aquent (Aquent is the major job placement agency for designers in North America). Discrepancies between the base figures and the percentages reported in the surveys should be noted. Nevertheless, the findings indicate a 1% decrease in the number of designers holding *three-year graphic design diplomas or degrees*. The decrease in numbers becomes slightly more significant as it relates to *four-year graphic design diplomas or degrees* where a 5% decrease was reported between 200/2002 and the 2003/04 surveys. The number of *fine art diplomas or degrees* rose 5% between the two surveys, *other design degrees or diplomas* are up by 10%, whereas the number of *master's degrees* is down by 2%.

There appears to be a general trend towards more education for Canadian graphic designers and a decrease in the number of self-taught practitioners and apprentices. The data is difficult to interpret because degrees and diplomas have been classified as either two-, three-, or four-year credentials, with no differentiation between diplomas or degrees; other classifications such as "other mentions" and "partial degree" are not explained; the classification criteria have changed from one survey to the next; and no explanation is given to account for decreasing levels in credentials.

Table 10. Comparison of RGD Ontario/Aquent National Surveys - Educational Background 2001/02 And 2003/04

CANADIAN GRAPHIC DESIGNERS	2001/02 Survey *	2001/02 Responses *	2003/04 Survey *	2003/04 Responses*
3 year graphic design diploma / degree	32%	386	31%	315
4 year graphic design diploma / degree	25%	302	20%	203
University undergraduate (other)	12%	145	15%	153
2 year graphic design diploma / degree	10%	121	16%	163
Partial college	10%	121	-	-
Diploma / degree (fine art)	7%	85	12%	122
New media design diploma	7%	85	-	-
Other design degree / diploma	6%	72	16%	163
Masters degree	6%	72	4%	41
Other Mentions	5%	60	7%	71
Partial design degree	4%	48	-	-
Partial degree/college	-	-	3%	31
Self taught	3%	36	-	-
Self taught/apprentice	-	-	2%	20
Partial degree (other)	2%	24	-	-
University undergrad. (marketing & visual arts)	2%	24	-	-
1 year degree/diploma	-	-	1%	10
Base: 2001/02 = 1,207 Base: 2003/04 = 1,017	131% *	1,581 *	127% *	1292 *

* Note: there are discrepancies between the base figures and percentages reported in the surveys (Source of data: RGD Ontario/Aquent 2001/02 National Survey of Graphic Design Salaries & Billing Practices, p. 7, retrieved February 13, 2002, and RGD Ontario/Aquent 2003/04 National Survey of Graphic Design Salaries & Billing Practices, p. 8-9, retrieved February 19, 2004).

What Good Is A Degree?

> *A generation ago, one could convincingly argue that art or design school was not necessary to a good graphic design education. On-the-job experience was a more than adequate means of acquiring necessary skills -- and, after all, talent is inborn. Today, the self-taught graphic designer is unusual... " (Heller & Fernandes, 2002, p. 305).*

The standard buzz regarding the U.S. labour market suggests jobs for graphic designers with little or no design education are becoming scarce. For example, a job

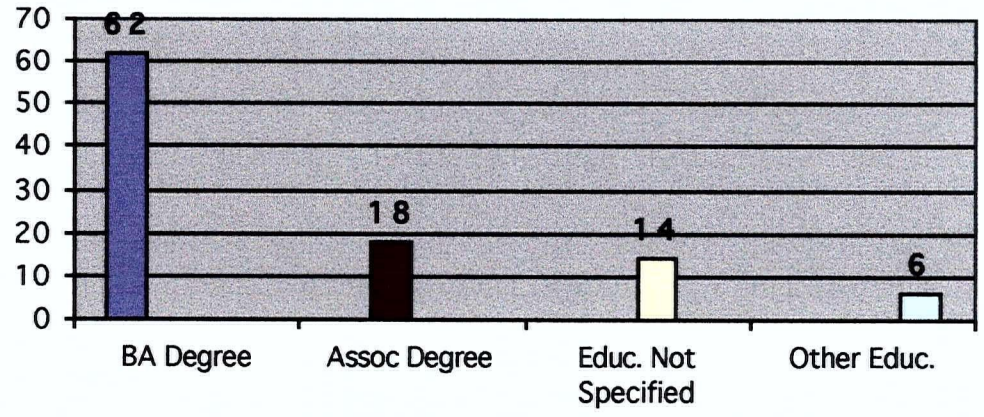
search in June 2004 for 'graphic design' at *one* American web site -- www.hotjobs.com -- located an impressive number of current listings -- 792 to be exact -- for jobs related to graphic design in the United States. Most jobs posted on the web site asked for a university degree as well as work experience and, as with all jobs in the design fields, submission of a 'dynamite' portfolio..

Figure 6 highlights the results of the June 2004 job search based on the first 50 job listings for the job titles of graphic designer or graphic artist.[5] Of the 50 American online job listings:

- 31 employers (62%) required a minimum education level of a bachelor degree;
- 9 employers (18%) required a minimum of an Associates degree;
- 7 employers (14%) did not specify any requirements; and
- 3 employers (6%) asked for some art school or high school.

The findings indicate graphic designers with little or no design education (primarily self-taught practitioners) would qualify for 6% to 20% of current job listings.

Figure 6.
Education Levels Required of Applicants for Current Graphic Design Jobs in the U.S.



N = 50 U.S. Graphic Design Jobs
Chart represents % of job listings and education levels required by applicants

(Data compiled from online job search at http://www.hotjobs.com, retrieved June 7, 2004)

[5] The online U.S. job search was capped at 50 listings to create a viable comparison with the number of Canadian jobs located in online searches (reported in Figure 7).

A different picture emerges from an online Canadian job search conducted on June 7, 2004. Figure 7 provides Canadian findings as well as a comparison of education levels required for job applicants in Canada and the United States. Online postings for Canadian graphic design jobs are difficult to locate and may be due to two factors: 1) it is not as common for graphic design positions to be posted with online job search agencies in Canada as it is in the U.S. and, 2) Canada has a significantly smaller job market for graphic designers than America (as outlined in Chapter One).

A total of 72 current, Canadian graphic design-related positions were located from several different sites, including www.hotjobs.ca and www.gdc.net. However, when the listings were restricted to the job titles of graphic designer or graphic artist (to match the job search limitations for U.S. graphic design positions), only eight employers had job offerings that matched the two job titles. Of the eight Canadian job listings:

- 4 employers did not have any specific education requirements at all;
- 2 asked for college diplomas, and
- 2 asked for either a diploma or degree.

Because the sample was so small, a further search was done on June 20, 2004 via www.monster.ca, but it yielded disappointing results. Again, *graphic design* was used as the keyword for the search, and while 78 graphic design-related listings appeared, only 12 specified graphic designer or graphic artist in the job titles. Of the Canadian listings:

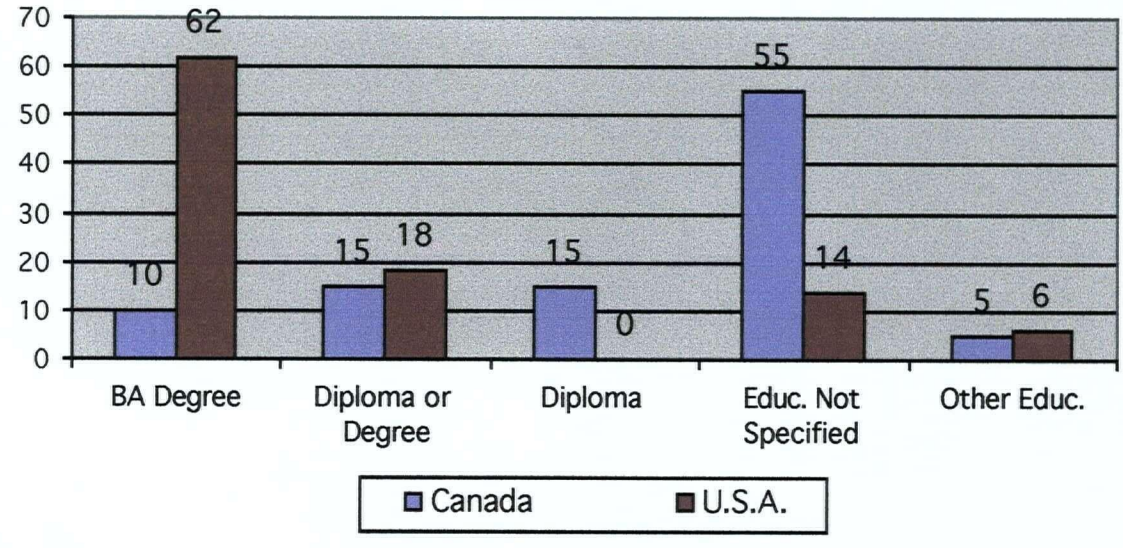
- 7 employers did not ask for specific education requirements;
- 1 asked for a college diploma;
- 1 asked for any education at the post-secondary level;
- 1 asked for either a degree or diploma; and
- 2 employers specified their preference for graphic design degrees.

A comparison of the results of both Canadian job searches and the U.S. job search reported in Figure 7 revealed the following:

- The Canadian statistics represent the combined findings from the two Canadian job searches (8 + 12 = 20 job listings) and the education requirements for applicants:
  - 2 employers (10%) specified graphic design degrees as requirements;
  - 3 employers (15%) asked for either a degree or diploma;
  - 3 employers (15%) asked for college diplomas;
  - 11 employers (55%) did not specify education requirements; and
  - 1 employer (5%) asked for other education (at the post-secondary level).
- The U.S. statistics in Figure 7 reiterate the findings from Figure 6, based on 50 job listings.

U.S. employers generally ask for job applicants with two-year Associate Degrees in graphic design rather than 'college diplomas.' However, it is common for Canadian institutions to consider two-year U.S. Associate Degrees in graphic design equivalent to two-year Canadian graphic design diplomas for transfer credit purposes, and vice versa.

Figure 7.
Comparison of Education Levels Required of Applicants for Current Graphic Design Jobs in Canada and U.S.A.



N = 20 Graphic Design Jobs in Canada & 50 Graphic Design Jobs in U.S.
Chart represents % of job listings and education levels required by applicants (Note: Two-year U.S. Associate Degrees have been included in the percentage for Diplomas or Degrees)

(Canadian raw data from http://www.hotjobs.ca and http://www.gdc.net, retrieved June 7, 2004, and from http://www.monster.ca, retrieved June 20, 2004. American raw data from http://www.hotjobs.com, retrieved June 7, 2004).

Figure 7 highlights major differences in current education level requirements for positions as graphic designers and graphic artists in Canada and the U.S.:

- In the sample group of job listings, the middle range is represented by the categories 'diploma or degree' and 'diploma'. A total of 30% of Canadian employers asked for some form of a diploma or degree, whereas 18% of American employers asked for a minimum of a two-year Associate Degree.

- In the BA Degree category, only 10% of Canadian employers asked for some type of BA Degree as a job requirement compared to 62% of American employers, and

- 55% of Canadian employers did not specify an education level as a requirement for applicants, whereas only 14% of American employers did not provide education specifications.

Although the samples were relatively small -- 20 job listings for Canada and 50 job listings for the U.S. – this analysis of the job market indicates employers in the U.S. prefer applicants with degrees in graphic design or related fields because they are readily available. Why ask for applicants with less education when you can demand more and get more?

In Canada, the labour market for graphic designers is not as strong as the market in the U.S., nor is there as large a pool of degree-holding professionals. The most common credential for graphic designers in Canada is a two- or three-year diploma, particularly in British Columbia and the Atlantic and Prairie provinces. The sample results from the online, across-Canada job search indicate employers of graphic designers in Canada are either not aware of what constitutes the most common graphic design credentials in the industry in Canada, or do not regard credentials as necessary requisites for positions (which ranged from senior designers to junior designers).

As was fully anticipated, *all* job listings in Canada and the United States required applicants to submit portfolios of design work. This is common across all of the design disciplines (graphic design, interior design, fashion design, etc.).

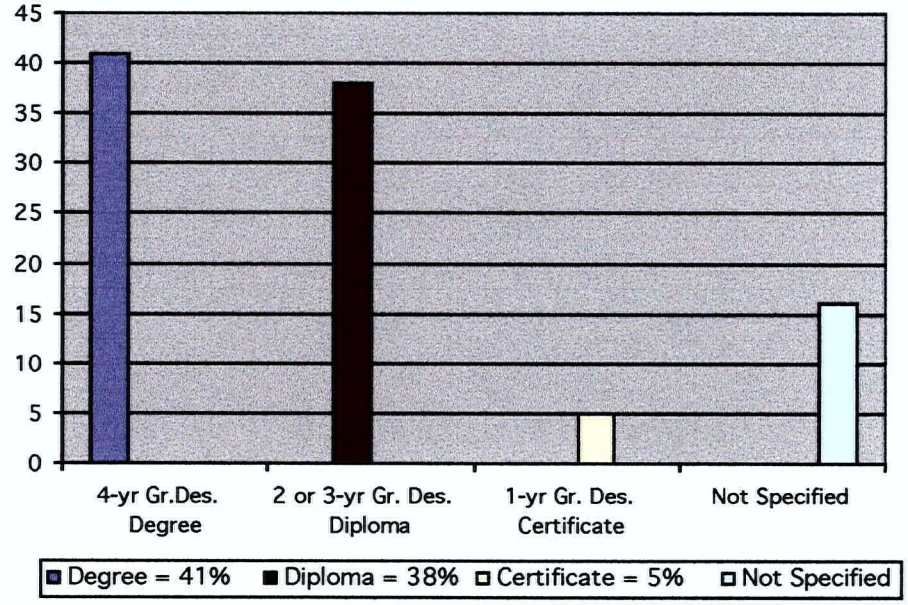
The Scene in British Columbia

Figure 8 provides statistics from a survey carried out by this author for Kwantlen University College in 2001 as part of the Graphic Design for Marketing degree development process. The findings relate to the preferences of B.C. design firms (with primary services relating to graphic design) regarding education credentials for entry-level graphic design positions (Kwantlen University College, Full Program Proposal, June 2002, p. Appendix H.1). Two hundred and thirty surveys were mailed out, with responses received from 55 design firms and 1 non-design firm -- a response rate of 24%. The 55 design firms had an average of 4.445 designers per firm and represent a total of 244.5 designers in greater Vancouver.

When the survey was conducted in 2001, only the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design (ECIAD) offered a degree in Communications Design in the province of B.C. The most common form of credential was a two- or three-year diploma in graphic design.

Most design firms responding to the survey would have graphic designers on staff that graduated from diploma programs. Thus, credential preferences indicated in Figure 8 for entry-level graphic designers reflects past practices of design firms where diplomas were the most desirable credentials, as well as future 'wish lists' for designers with degrees.

Figure 8.
Level of Credentials Preferred for Entry-Level Graphic Designers by Firms in B.C. in 2001



N= 55 Graphic Design firms & 1 Non-Design Firm in B. C.
% = Education levels preferred by firms for entry-level graphic designers in B.C. for 2001. 16% of firms did not specify education levels.

(Source of data: Kwantlen University College, Full Program Proposal for Bachelor of Applied Design in Graphic Design for Marketing, 2002, p. Appendix H.1)

Pathway to the Stars or Riding the Educational Treadmill?

A general rise in educational requirements for various types of employment has been provoked by "the increased supply of educated personnel rather than by new *job-performance demands* of those positions" according to Collins (paraphrased in Murphy, 1988, p. 164, emphasis mine). When employment credentials are increased, more people

are compelled to acquire higher education, and this starts off a process he refers to as a continuous *educational status elevator* (p. 164, emphasis mine).

In the United States, 62% of employers asked for degree credentials from graphic design job candidates (reported in Figures 6 and 7). This may reflect a general trend towards higher education across the board in America, but it would be just as easy to speculate employers are taking advantage of what the labour market will bear, or may be responding to the AIGA/NASAD accreditation process for schools with design degrees (assuming they are aware of these bodies).

No employers asked for a master's degree or higher, but it is safe to assume someone holding master's credentials would have an advantage over someone who didn't (assuming all other things being measured were equal). Master's degrees in graphic design are readily available in the United States, as are PhDs. In Canada, the situation is different -- only one master's degree is offered in visual communications and one MFA degree in design (no specific discipline), but there are no PhDs focusing exclusively on graphic design (this will be discussed in more depth later in this chapter). If the job search undertaken for this study had been extended to include design educators, presumably the requirement for master's and PhD credentials would have shown up there, and also if the search had been widened to include job listings requesting more specialized design knowledge and skills.

No doubt, a North American job search a decade ago would have yielded different results concerning the level of credential required for most graphic design jobs. For example, in the not too distant past in Canada, a portfolio would have provided sufficient tangible evidence of technical acumen and design abilities. Today, with the advent of computers, clip art, interactive media, and teamwork on projects, the portfolio (whether in traditional or digital format) is becoming harder to assess for authorship and originality, as well as an applicant's design knowledge and technical skills.

An academic credential, therefore, can support the credibility of a visual portfolio because the institution providing it confirms an individual has successfully demonstrated an acceptable level of performance. The viability of the credential also depends upon the reputation of the design program, however, and this affects the amount of cultural capital an individual will accrue with a degree, diploma, or certificate. A program's reputation also determines how easily the capital can be transferred or exchanged for other things such as employment or further education.

Many North American educators and designers would argue graphic design degrees (rather than diplomas or certificates) have become the currency of opportunity specifically because they provide students with the breadth and depth of knowledge, skills, and abilities designers need to function as entrepreneurs, freelancers, employees, or employers. Degree programs can also provide graduates with job-networking opportunities through increased exposure to the industry via guest speakers and field trips, and depending upon the length of time provided for internships, mentoring, or

co-operative components in a degree program, can potentially offer a student easier access to the job market.

The acquisition of four year's worth of graphic design cultural capital in school (skills, knowledge, and professional practice) helps students sell themselves in the marketplace. Employers wanting to avoid extensive on-the-job training are most interested in entry-level designers capable of 'hitting the pavement running'.

> Technology has allowed designers to do more and be more, resulting in expanded job opportunities and tasks, which are reflected in current design curriculums [sic]. ... Teaching technology in design programs has an immediate impact on the student and the potential employer: when the student is technologically literate, the employer doesn't have to train them (Justice, 1998, p. 53).

Increased entry-level job performance demands in the past two decades are a result of the profession becoming increasingly technologically dependent. Another contributing factor is the demand for graduates to have well-developed critical thinking skills, as well as a solid understanding of such things as marketing and business, design theory and history, social and cultural issues, as well as a portfolio exhibiting a breadth of project experiences (brochures, annual reports, packaging, web design, and so on). Credentials have become keys to attaining well-paying jobs and upwardly mobile, middle-class lifestyles.

In the case of graphic design, therefore, it can be argued Collin's contention educational requirements "reflect the interests of the groups that have the power to impose them more than they reflect the technical needs of positions" rings only partially true (Collins paraphrased in Murphy, 1988, p. 162). While the AIGA has played a pre-eminent role in raising educational standards in the United States, it is not solely responsible for increased requirements. Technology is also a major driver because it has changed the nature of the work graphic designers do by expanding the types of products and services they offer, including production. In the past, printing houses looked after most aspects of production, however, today, computer software applications such as Photoshop, Illustrator, Quark Express, and InDesign have placed a great deal of the production responsibilities in the designer's hands.

Brown suggests, "the more technologically advanced a society becomes, the greater [the] demand for technical, scientific and professional workers who require extensive periods of formal education and training" (Brown, 2003, p. 146). He refers to this as the *opportunity trap* and equates it to a lifelong race for a livelihood. When the supply of qualified people holding credentials exceeds the demand of jobs available, credential competition pushes people to seek higher-level degrees and professional specializations. Ultimately, a PhD "would be worth no more [than] a job in a fast food restaurant, and the competition would move on to still higher degrees" (p. 149).

Although bachelor degrees are currently the credential of opportunity in the United States, it is conceivable the demand for greater technological skills and knowledge could add increased pressure on professionals to obtain upper level degrees.

Are Degrees Worth The Price of Admission?

There is a considerable difference in education levels demanded by employers on each side of the border, however, this is probably due to the limited number of graphic design degrees offered in Canada (although these have been increasing over the past decade). Although students in Canada may earn BAs in Fine Arts and Visual Arts in most provinces, undergraduate degrees specializing in graphic design are currently offered at a small number of institutions. Two- or three-year diplomas are still the most common credentials for entry-level graphic design positions on a national basis.

Table 11.
Canadian Institutions Offering Graphic Design Degrees

Province	University	Credential
BC	BC Open University & Ontario College of Art & Design	BDesign (Graphic design focus)
BC	Emily Carr Institute of Art & Design	BDesign Communications Design
BC	Kwantlen University College	B. Applied Design in Graphic Design for Marketing
AB	Alberta College of Art and Design	BDesign Visual Communication
AB	University of Alberta	BDesign Visual Communications Design MDesign Visual Communications Design
ON	Ontario College of Art & Design	BDesign Graphic Design BDesign Communication and Design
ON	York University & Sheridan Institute of Technology	BDesign Communication Design
QC	Concordia University	BA Design Art (graphic design focus)
QC	Université du Québec (Quebec City)	BA Graphic Design
QC	Université du Québec å Chicoutimi	BA Graphic Design
QC	Université du Québec å Montréal	BA Graphic Design
NS	Nova Scotia College of Art & Design	BDesign Graphic Design MFA Design

At the beginning of 2004 there were only twelve public, post-secondary institutions across Canada offering bachelor's degrees in *graphic design or visual communications design* (Note: this does not include institutions offering highly specialized bachelors, masters, or PhD programs in information technology, interaction design, web design, interactive media, or graphic design management). Table 9 shows only two Canadian institutions offer master's level degrees in design (although Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design (ECIAD) has one in the planning stages).

Canada is approximately 1/10 the size of the U.S., therefore 12 Canadian institutions offering graphic design bachelor degrees would be on par with the 60 or more institutions offering BAs in the United States. At the graduate studies level discrepancies appear, with master's degrees and PhD degrees commonly offered across the U.S., but not in Canada. Even at the diploma and certificate level, Canada's approximately 36 graphic design programs cannot compare to the more than 2,000 American colleges and private institutions offering everything from certificates to diplomas, and 2-year associate degrees.

Possession of a four-year graphic design degree is almost a *must* in the United States. At the current time in Canada, however, a degree is not a required credential for most jobs, with a two- or three-year diploma being considered sufficient for entry-level positions. Nevertheless, a degree in graphic design would provide a Canadian applicant with a distinct advantage for some types and levels of positions, particularly if they involved such things as strategic planning and knowledge of business and marketing. Regardless of the position, however, or whether a job is being offered in the United States or Canada, a portfolio of current design work adds another dimension to whatever academic credential an applicant holds.

Today in the U.S., a bachelor's degree is a required credential for most graphic design jobs, and a master's degree regarded as 'icing on the cake' that can help a candidate with a good portfolio look even more desirable. In Canada, a three-year diploma (or less) is the most common credential for entry-level design positions, and a bachelor's degree is the Canadian equivalent of 'icing on the cake'. In general terms, there is a one level differential between the most common credentials required for entry into the profession in the U.S. and Canada. For desktop publishers and low-level graphic design positions, however, less formal education is required on both sides of the border. One-year certificates relating to some aspect of graphic design, or on-the-job vocational training are often sufficient levels of education for employment, particularly as desktop publishers (Bear, 2003, p. 1).

Even with higher costs of post-secondary education in North America, many studies have been done correlating time spent in school with increased wages. For example, based on 2001 Census data, the B.C. Ministry of Management Services released the following report in March 2003:

> University graduates [in British Columbia] saw an average increase of more than $3,000 per year between 1995 and 2000 while those without their high school

> graduation saw a decline in earnings of $1,000. ... Over a lifetime career, the University Grad sees regular salary increases while the non-High School Grad's increases are minimal. By the end of their careers, the University Grad is earning 72 percent more than the non-High School Grad (http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca, p. 1).

All jobs are basically skill-selling endeavours that attempt to masquerade as some form of status culture, rather than "wage labour", according to Larson (1977, p. 210-11). She suggests skill selling is connected to education and social stratification:

> Professional aspirants must acquire specific skills with a view to their sale. They normally acquire them through a relatively long process of training in monopolistic centres for the "production of producers". This training -- or this passage -- connects the sale of professional labour power with the educational system -- that is to say, with the principal legitimator of social inequality in advanced industrial capitalism. This intimate connection disguises the stark characteristics of wage labour by covering it with all the structural and ideological advantages derived from status stratification and from the specific ideology of professionalism" (p. 210-211).

Once the appropriate rite of passage has been granted, i.e. the credential conferred, graduates discover they are competing in the same job market as everyone else, including diploma and certificate holders. A degree becomes one way for professional aspirants to separate themselves from others in the same occupational group who do not hold credentials, thus gaining 'a leg up' on the 'educational status elevator.'

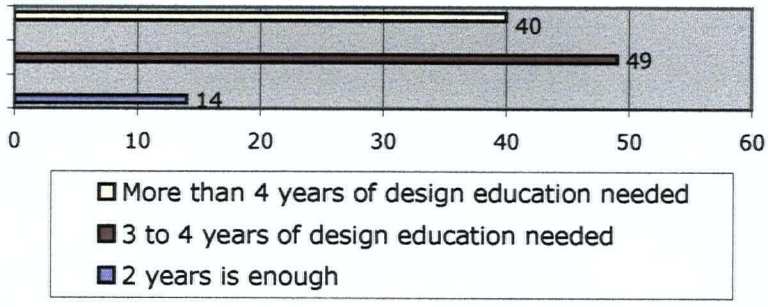
Figure 9 shows the results of a recent opinion poll conducted by ICOGRADA asking international respondents to consider time needed in school to become a professional designer. While the number of respondents is not known, most felt two years of design education is not enough, while an almost equally large number felt more than four years of design education was warranted.

While there is no way of knowing the countries represented by ICOGRADA opinion poll, in general terms respondents around the world believe more time in school is necessary to produce the next generation of graphic design professionals. Perhaps this indicates the 'opportunity trap' is at work on an international basis.

Figure 9.
ICOGRADA Opinion Poll Results – Education of Professional Designers

Opinion
Many design schools around the world offer two-year programmes. Some say that two years is enough to teach the basic design skills, which can be further developed on the job. Others say that it is better to spend more time in school to learn both technical skills and theoretical knowledge.

Is two years of design education enough to be a professional designer?



Represents % of Respondents (N = Unknown)

(Note: "Totals shown may be more or less than 100% due to rounding", From http://www.icograda.org /web/opinion-pollresults.shtml?pfl=poll-pastpollsdisplay-2.param&op2.rfl=170, retrieved July 18, 2004,)

Credentialing the Field

Viewing graphic design credentials through the lens of Bourdieu is particularly useful because he questions how education functions as the transmitting mechanism for social values and relations passed from one generation to the next (Webb et al, 2002, p. 105).

In 1998, when the AIGA (with NASAD) determined the common body of knowledge and skills for entry-level graphic designers, they also defined exactly what post-secondary credentials were appropriate for transmitting social and professional values. In universities, individuals are rewarded with credentials which serve as signals to the field the acculturation process has been satisfactorily accomplished.

In addition, "cultural capital, such as a university degree, can be exchanged for a desired job" (p. 110). In the case of the United States, Bourdieu's position is confirmed by the job search study discussed earlier in this chapter wherein 62% of job listings for

graphic designers and *graphic artists* in June 2004 required a university credential as the minimum amount of capital to compete for a job (Figure 6).

> Knowledge tends to be seen as good in itself, but linking it to the concept of cultural capital helps us to see how it operates in terms of social inequality. Certain forms of knowledge, such as those associated with formal learning, are concerned with much more cultural capital than those forms of learning associated with practical activities like riding a bike. Because the cultural capital of knowledge is inequitably distributed, tending to favour those who occupy positions and dispositions that provide access to these socially legitimated and valued ways of knowing, knowledge becomes a marker of distinction and social privilege (Webb et al, 2002, p. 110).

Credentialing the field, therefore, becomes an essential part of the process for reproducing the *status quo*, i.e. the social values of the profession and the expectations of society. Further, credentials are a means to ensure entry is only given to those who have acquired 'socially legitimated and valued knowledge. Designers who have not advanced beyond the informal knowledge of the self-taught (the equivalent to riding a bike in Bourdieu's terms) are already being squeezed out of the system in the United States. In Canada, the lines of distinction between the forms of knowledge required as a passport to the profession are not as clearly defined. Nevertheless, the cultural capital associated with a graphic design degree will soon become the desired credential for an increasing number of jobs in Canada, as more and more institutions across the country offer graphic design credentials above the diploma level.

Do Credentials Equal Higher Wages?

With regard to professionalization, what impact does educational credentialing have on salaries in the U.S. and Canada? Table 12 reports graphic design salaries for 2002 from two separate national studies by Aquent -- one in collaboration with AIGA, and the other with RGD Ontario. In both surveys, the same career position categories (or definitions of positions) have been used. Salaries for the AIGA/Aquent survey have been converted to Canadian dollars to facilitate comparison (conversion rate of 1.5 CDN$ = 1.0 US$ as of July 2002).

Table 12 represents responses of 612 Canadian graphic designers and 7,240 American graphic designers (for a total of 7,852 respondents) and provides evidence Canadian graphic design salaries lagged behind their American counterparts in 2002. The six career position categories under analysis are:

1) owner/partner/principal,
2) creative/design director,
3) art director,

4) senior designer,
5) intermediate designer, and
6) entry-level graphic designer.

Table 12.
Comparison of U.S. and Canadian National Graphic Design Salaries For 2002

2002 NATIONAL SALARIES				
Position Description	**LOW SALARY CDN $**	**MEDIAN SALARY CDN $**	**HIGH SALARY CDN $**	**Number of Responses**
UNITED STATES				
Owner, partner, principal	$90,000	$120,000	$187,500	946
Creative/design director	$94,500	$120,000	$150,000	797
Art director	$72,000	$90,000	$105,000	1,248
Senior designer	$67,500	$78,000	$93,000	1,716
Intermediate designer	$52,500	$60,000	$67,500	1,872
Entry-level designer	$39,000	$45,000	$52,500	661
CANADA				
Owner, partner, principal	$25,000	$70,000	$250,000	104
Creative/design director	$20,800	$65,000	$220,000	70
Art director	$21,000	$52,000	$105,000	79
Senior designer	$20,966	$46,000	$96,000	183
Intermediate designer	$20,000	$37,000	$60,000	126
Entry-level designer	$20,000	$30,000	$47,000	50

(Source of data: RGD Ontario/Aquent National Survey of Graphic Design Salaries & Billing Practices 2003/04, and AIGA/Aquent Survey of Design Salaries 2003. Conversion rate: 1.5 CDN$ = 1 US$ as of July, 2002 (per Brown, T.D. Canada Trust, 2004)

The median annual salaries for 2002 in Table 12 indicate Canadian wages were significantly lower than American wages for **all** of the graphic design career categories listed above.

- Owner/partner/principals in the U.S. received $120,000 whereas Canadian salaries for the same position were $70,000, which is $50,000 or **42% lower**.

- Creative/design directors in the U.S. were paid $120,000. Canadians received $65,000 for the same job, which is $55,000 or **46% lower** than American salaries.

- Art directors in the U.S. received $90,000, whereas Canadians were paid $52,000, which is $38,000 or **42% lower**.

- Senior designers in the U.S. were paid $78,000. Canadians received $46,000 for the same job, which is $32,000 or **41% lower** than American salaries.

- Intermediate designers in the U.S. earned $60,000, but Canadians earned $37,000, which is $23,000 or **38% lower** than Americans were paid.

- Entry-level design positions paid $45,000 in the U.S., while Canadian designers earned just $30,000 annually, which is $15,000 or **33% lower** than Americans receive.

Overall, the disparity between Canadian and American wages ranged from 33% to 46% for all graphic design positions, with Canadians being paid an **average of 40.3% less** than their American counterparts for the same career positions. Most American graphic designers hold degrees and this may account for some of the disparity, as will be discussed further in this chapter.

In general terms, at the low end of the salary scale, the career position doesn't seem to make much difference to wages in Canada. For example, the position of Owner/partner/principal, a high status position, is paid only $5,000 higher per annum than the salary for an Entry-level designer, the lowest status position of all design career categories. This may be a reflection of the number of freelance, self-employed Canadian graphic designers with limited work experience, unpredictable earnings, or part-time employment, who describe themselves as Owner/partner/principals in response to the surveys.

Earning Versus Learning

What is the relationship between wages and time spent in school in Canada and the United States? The findings of the job search study reported in Figure 7 indicated most American job postings (62%) required a bachelor's degree as the minimum credential for applicants. The findings of the Canadian job search study, also reported in Figure 7, paint a different picture, with most Canadian job postings (55%) not specifying any level of education at all. Further, the findings indicated only 10% of employers in Canada required a bachelor's degree.

Table 12 provided evidence American designers in six major career categories for graphic design, earn on average 40.3% more (in Canadian funds) than Canadian designers doing the same type of work. However, while graphic designers in the United States have higher credential requirements for jobs than Canadian designers, they also make more money. Salary levels in the U.S. confirm a degree is definitely worth the investment in time and money, particularly when designers move into higher status career

positions. Degrees equal higher wages for graphic design professionals in the United States.

As the online job search indicated in Figure 7, most Canadian employers still seem to be trying to come to terms with specifying credentials for graphic designers, therefore, a degree may or may not be a ticket to higher wages over the course of a typical Canadian career. The general trend for employers in Canada is to request diplomas for entry-level graphic design positions.

In B.C. employers have lower credential requirements than in the U.S., however, the preference for entry-level designers with degrees increases to 41% as shown in Figure 8.

Canadians investing in graphic design and other degrees in British Columbia are being told by the B.C. Ministry of Management Services these will result in an average increase in earnings of more than $3,000 per year (http://www.bcstats.gov. bc.ca, p. 1). Given the median Canadian annual salary for entry-level graphic designers indicated in Table 12, if the B.C. Ministry's projections are correct, an increase of $3,000 per year of work experience would help offset the cost of a degree.

The following chapter provides a summary of processes involved in graphic design's professionalization project, particularly with regard to social, cultural, and economic capital and exchange values for different types of credentials. It also provides the conclusions of this study as well as recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER EIGHT

GRAPHIC DESIGN'S PROFESSIONALIZATION PROJECT

Overview

Most professional associations in the United States and Canada were founded in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and were based on European models such as divinity, law, and medicine. Graphic design was one of many fields that sought to raise its status from a trade or vocation to a profession, following European precedents. Industrial capitalism and the entrepreneurial environment of North America are often cited as the impetus for modern professionalization because businesses were supported and promoted by governments who saw them as necessary contributors to the construction of national structures of commerce. Today, an estimated 250,000 to 350,000 people are employed in the graphic design industry in North America.

As the preceding chapters have outlined, the graphic design industry has been engaged in a complex and comprehensive professionalization project for more than 100 years. Communication is at the heart of the industry. Because communication is a social act that involves the sending and receiving of messages between people, it also involves a wide array of media and technology used in the transmission of messages -- newspapers, brochures, web sites, packaging, books, television, billboards, and so on. Communication also relies on shared meanings. These change over time and in different contexts and demand flexibility and fluidity on the part of graphic design practitioners as they try to keep pace with changing social, cultural, economic, technological, and political conditions.

One of the most fascinating aspects of the graphic design profession is its chameleon persona, reflected in efforts to change its identity and reinvent professional practice to suit new conditions. Although Larson, in her study of the professions did not deal specifically with the graphic design industry, she would, no doubt, recognize various strategies and processes the field has employed as common to most 'new' professions, particularly in North America.

The Processes

This study has used Larson's interpretive framework to analyse the processes of professionalization used by the graphic design industry in the United States and Canada. Table 13 outlines the framework used for this study. The left column represents major objectives of professionalization, while the right provides a breakdown of specific processes relative to graphic design and most other professions. Each process has been

analysed in previous chapters of this study relative to graphic design. In particular, the chart reflects processes used to reposition graphic design – moving it from the margins as a trade or vocation, into the mainstream of 'design' as a viable, professional discipline.

Table 13.
Larson - Interpretive Framework of Professionalization

Framework for Analysis	
Developing professional organizations & associations	Establish historical origins and contexts Establish professional associations (self-assertion of the profession Unify the profession through membership Control access to membership Regulate behaviours of members (colleague control)
Gaining recognition as a distinct occupation	Claim the production of distinct commodities Gain acknowledgement for distinct commodities Gain recognition of professional services adding value to society Standardize professional services
Securing rights to specialized knowledge and skills	Standardize the production of the producers (education) Develop common body of knowledge and skills (cognitive base) Establish professional relationships with the university Negotiate recognition of professional association's claim to expertise & authority by public & governments Elevate social status and economic rewards for professionals
Controlling access to the marketplace & employment	Control markets for professional services Control access to the profession Construct a 'monopoly of credibility' with the public & clients Widen the gap between legitimate professionals and others Gain status for the profession through work Increase economic rewards for professionals

This study has also employed Bourdieu's concept of capital in order to assess graphic design's collective upward social mobility; access to the profession and its associations; education of graphic designers; and how graphic design has positioned itself in the design community, public sphere, and marketplace.

The overriding goal of this study has been twofold: to contribute to the sociology of the professions through an analysis of the graphic design industry's professionalization project (using the frameworks of Larson and Bourdieu), and contribute to the field of graphic design through a comparative analysis of various processes of professionalization in the United States and Canada. In the following pages, three major issues relating to

professionalization processes in Canada are identified and recommendations made for action by the Canadian graphic design community.

Accruing Capital

The following pages provide a synopsis of graphic design's professionalization processes identified elsewhere in this study. However, the goal of this section is to link professionalization processes to 'capital' gains.

In the 1800s, graphic designers sought the same kind of prestige accorded to medical practitioners, lawyers, and priests. They recognized the idea of the *professional* carries a certain prestige within the social hierarchy that is denied to members of a trade. Therefore, groups of likeminded individuals formed associations in order to use their collectivity to garner higher social, cultural, and economic benefits for members, especially in the form of professional legitimacy. Belonging to a professional association was seen as a collective assertion of special social status and an integral part of a collective drive for upward social mobility (Larson, p. xvi-xvii). Membership in graphic design associations conferred social capital upon individual practitioners. Access to associations, however, was limited and barriers consisted of discriminatory filters involving race, sex, colour, economic status, age, and so on. While barriers allowed elites to function as self-appointed regulatory bodies to control membership in associations, they also allowed them to regulate the industry by controlling access to the marketplace and thus to economic capital.

When the Society of Printers became involved with the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration and set in place a two-year program in printing, it scored a major success relating to cultural capital, and gained upward social mobility for the graphic design profession as a whole. The Harvard program was an acknowledgement of the profession's *cognitive exclusiveness*, including the power to establish control over the *commodity* the printing industry provided through involvement with the curriculum.

Since 1914, AIGA policies have been designed to communicate the market value of professional design work to members and their clients as well as the general public. Policies also function as important means to create and affirm collective worth, create income and other status indicators, establish autonomy over working conditions and the technical content of work, and delineate appropriate professional behaviour for members. Social, cultural and economic capital have been enhanced for members of the AIGA through a wide range of initiatives and endeavours the association has made to promote the value of design in American society:

- Negotiations in 2000 with the U.S. Census of Business to gain recognition for graphic design as a distinctive profession, including recognition of a lengthy list of professional services that graphic designers provide;

- Negotiations in 2000 with the American Department of Labour to give graphic design its own classification (instead of being subsumed under 'commercial art'); and

- Collaboration with NASAD in 1998-99 to create new educational standards for entry into the graphic design profession and the accreditation of educational institutions.

Through various processes with government agencies the AIGA was able to elevate the collective social status of graphic design. Recognition of the distinctiveness of the resources provided by the graphic design profession has added social and cultural capital to the profession's 'capital account'. More importantly, the AIGA participated in the construction of a set of gates through which graphic design programs and faculty must pass if they seek NASAD accreditation. Thus it was able to exchange symbolic or social capital for connections to power through its association with NASAD.

In Canada, RGD Ontario, a semi-splinter group of the GDC, made a similar move to control aspects of the graphic design industry. In 1996, it was created by an Act of the Ontario Legislature and was given the right to set standards and criteria for the R.G.D. (Registered Graphic Designer) designation, as well as function as the governing and disciplinary body for its members. RGD Ontario is the only graphic design association in North America to have such legislation, making Canada the second country in the world, after Switzerland, to have an association with the power to 'certify' individual designers. Social capital, therefore, has been invested in RGD Ontario through the Ontario Legislature and exchanged for the power to certify, register, govern, and discipline its members.

As of 2002, approximately 3,000 graphic designers in Ontario had RGD Ontario membership. While members were able to use their 'registered status' to build and enhance their social and cultural capital (professional capital), only a few designers in higher status career positions reaped the benefits of added economic capital. However, higher economic capital is often a reflection of one's social status within a profession and can be enhanced through such things as years of professional experience, receipt of design awards, work for high status clients, projects published in graphic design annuals, and so on. In 2002, almost half of the Owner/partner/principals in Table 7 had more than 16 years of experience as graphic designers, and the remaining half had five or more years of experience. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude high status within the graphic design profession has contributed more significantly to increased economic capital for some design practitioners, than R.G.D. status (which had only been in place for five years when the survey was conducted in 2002).

RGD Ontario is unique in North America in that it functions as an examining and governing body determining province-wide standards of knowledge and skills necessary for professional practice, and administers exams to test practitioners for minimum

competencies. Social and cultural capital (in the form of a certificate, and the conferring of R.G.D. status) are accrued by members who have been certified and registered by a body consisting of their peers. Exchanging R.G.D. social and cultural capital for economic capital, however, depends on the value the market assigns to R.G.D. status at any given time.

While the lack of R.G.D. status does not prevent a graphic designer from practicing in the province of Ontario, it has the *potential* to limit an individual's ability to access jobs; particularly high-paying, senior-level positions and teaching positions. In the interior design profession, R.I.D. (Registered Interior Designer) status can literally open doors to some manufacturer's showrooms, or provide a designer with additional discounts to be passed on to clients. R.I.D. status is commonly required for anyone teaching in a FIDER (Foundation in Interior Design Education Research) accredited interior design program. In the graphic design profession, as employers and educational institutions become more familiar with the R.G.D. designation and what it certifies, it will become one of the credentials of opportunity, along with education credentials and work experience, that will serve to limit a non-R.G.D. designer's ability to exchange social capital for access to professional work (economic capital).

Across Canada, the GDC and its regional chapters have common screens and filters in place for professional membership in the association including the submission of a résumé, the review of a portfolio of work, and an interview. Members are entitled to display their membership status, and thus the social and cultural capital gained through membership, provided their membership dues are in good standing. For example, professional members of the GDC are entitled to add the designation 'M.G.D.C.' (Professional Member of the Graphic Designers of Canada) after their names on all business-related materials. Membership in the GDC, while desirable for many jobs, especially teaching positions, is generally not a requirement for employment. However, as the various of the chapters of the GDC across the country follow RGD Ontario's lead and move towards certifying practitioners, the job market will follow suit to reflect current industry standards.

Credentials

Canadian graphic design associations do not play an overly active role in design education beyond making general recommendations for program improvement, encouraging student membership, and organizing ongoing professional development activities and workshops for their members. Although members of the executive of the GDC B.C. chapter are all volunteers, they often participate as guest lecturers, provide students with project critiques, and sit on the advisory boards of several graphic design programs around the province. This is typical of most of the GDC executives across the country. RGD Ontario has begun to work more closely with educational institutions regarding requisite knowledge and skills for entry into the profession and, conceivably

within the next few years, it make a move towards official involvement in accrediting graphic design programs in Ontario.

In the United States the situation is somewhat different. The AIGA, at the present time, is not concerned with certifying individual practitioners. Although the AIGA and all of its chapters have in place the typical screens and filters for membership -- résumé, portfolio, and interview where applicable, they do not administer formal examinations to individual designers to test for minimum standards of professional competency. While membership in the AIGA has different levels and requires corresponding annual dues, professional members in good standing are entitled to indicate their AIGA membership status on all business-related materials.

Neither the AIGA nor the GDC function as disciplinary or governing bodies for their membership (only RGD Ontario has that capacity). Membership in both associations is voluntary and work in the industry is not necessarily contingent upon AIGA or GDC membership. While the AIGA is the largest professional association representing graphic designers in North America (as of 2002, an estimated 212,000 people were employed as graphic designers in the United States), only 16,000 designers, less than 15%, were members of the AIGA. The GDC is in a similar situation with an estimated 80,000 graphic designers in Canada as of 2003, yet 57% of Canadian graphic designers have chosen to opt out of membership in one of the GDC chapters across the country (Figure 4, Canadian Membership in Professional Design Associations). In Ontario, RGD Ontario reports 2,800 of the estimated 22,000 graphic designers in Ontario (a scant 13.6%) have membership in their association.

In general terms, professional organizations and educational institutions have considerable clout because of their ability to confer capital, particularly social and cultural capital upon their members or participants. The amount of social and cultural capital an individual has amassed directly affects their ability to access economic capital. According to Bourdieu, the various forms of capital (including symbolic) are recognized as having value and can therefore be traded for desired outcomes within certain fields. The value that others place upon particular forms of capital -- credentials obtained from membership in professional associations (RGD Ontario, GDC, AIGA) and educational credentials (Certificate, Diploma, BA, MA, PhD) -- will determine the degree of access an individual will have to social mobility (such as employment, occupational status, monetary rewards, and so on).

Credentialing the field, particularly in the United States and to a lesser degree in Canada, is a critical component of the professionalization project for the graphic design profession because it represents the reproduction of the status quo, i.e. the social and cultural values of the profession and the expectations of society.

Further, credentials become the 'stamp of approval' in the marketplace (or in higher education) to signify credential-holders have acquired the legitimated and valued knowledge of the profession, and can demonstrate socially and culturally appropriate behaviours required for professional practice (or graduate studies). These behaviours are

rewarded with various forms of social and cultural capital (a credential, access to graduate studies, increased social and cultural status as a graduate, increased social status amongst peers, and so on) and, if the behaviours and credentials are valued in the job market, they can be exchanged for economic capital in the form of a job with wages. The higher the value placed on particular behaviours and credentials, the higher their exchange rate in the labour market. At the gates of the professional world, the professional minorities who control a field do not receive an undifferentiated mass of entrants, but a super-filtered, super-classified, specialized, and hierarchicized cohort (Larson, 1977, p. 204).

Capital Gains and Losses

Credentials more readily translate into higher economic rewards for professional designers in the United States than in Canada. In the online job search carried out for this study, over 60% of American graphic design job listings required applicants to have a minimum of a BA degree, whereas only 10% of Canadian graphic design job listings requested degrees (Figures 6 and 7). In B.C., the required credentials for entry-level designers were higher than the Canadian average (i.e. the average as reported in the online job search), with Figure 8 indicating 41% of design firms look for degree credentials and an additional 38% request diplomas.

More importantly, Table12 provided evidence American designers make significantly more money than Canadian designers (including designers in B.C.). Annual salaries for graphic designers in Canada are, on average, 40.3% behind American salaries, for the exact same career positions. Designers in the United States probably command a higher price tag because it reflects the cost of paying for four years of post-secondary education (resulting in the need for more economic capital to be exchanged for social and cultural capital). However, because degrees have become the credential of opportunity in the U.S., American designers with degrees have access to more job opportunities and higher wages in the design labour market.

Salaries in the United States are a reflection that a degree is the most common credential held by 70% to 85% of graphic designers (Figure 6). In Canada, as Figure 7 reports, approximately 40% of graphic designers hold a two- or three-year diploma, while only 35% to 40% hold some type of degree. Therefore, the significant difference in salaries between graphic designers in the United States and Canada has a great deal to do with credentials and their value in the marketplace.

Professionalization in the context of graphic design relates to salaried professionals (whether self-employed or freelance, employers or employees) who sell special competencies in the labour market. One of the major goals of professionalization is the monopoly of training regarding special knowledge and skills so they become "scarce resources" in the marketplace and can thus be translated into social and economic rewards (Larson, 1977, p. xvii). "Monopoly of training can give a relatively high

exchange value to the competence it produces, independently of the market; it allows, moreover, the creation of artificial scarcity, by means of which the theoretically inexhaustible knowledge resource becomes socially finite" (p. 223).

As more degrees are offered through Canadian institutions they will become the currency of opportunity in Canada. However, for graphic designers looking to work south of the border to take advantage of Canada/U.S. trade agreements, investing the time and money in a graphic design bachelor's degree is essential to compete in the American marketplace. On an international basis, an increase in the number of graphic designers with degrees is also on the rise. As Table 8 indicates, 85% of international respondents reported they held degrees; a reflection of changing times where credentials are becoming an internationally valued currency of opportunity.

Canadian students have only two choices of institutions in Canada offering master's degrees relating to design, and no opportunities to pursue PhDs in graphic design or any other design discipline anywhere in Canada. While the situation may not appear to present any difficulties for the majority of Canadian graphic design practitioners, it is a different story at Canadian universities and colleges witnessing the retirement of increasing numbers of design educators. Searching for faculty with upper level degrees to replace retirees is problematic. Over the course of the next five to ten years it is conceivable Canadian institutions will be faced with even more faculty vacancies as educators from the 'baby boom' generation retire. For institutions offering graphic design degrees, it is already difficult to find Canada-based educators with master's degrees or PhDs in relevant fields to fill faculty vacancies. What impact will a shortage of qualified educators have on graphic design programs in Canada?

In the graphic design job market, exchanging special knowledge and skills for social and economic rewards is not as easy as it sounds, particularly for Canadian graphic designers. Rates of exchange for social and cultural capital fluctuate depending upon market value, so the economic capital to be gained from an exchange reflects the current pulse of the marketplace. The Canadian labour market is smaller – just 80,000 graphic designers to America's 212,000 – and is less experienced when it comes to negotiating collective upward mobility for the profession. Whereas the American marketplace and the profession values credentials in the form of graphic design-related degrees along with an impressive portfolio; the Canadian marketplace, in general terms, is content with an impressive portfolio and lower level credentials, if they ask for any credentials at all. Lower standards for jobs in the Canadian graphic design market are reflected in lower salaries. With low economic rewards for graphic designers in Canada, how will the profession attract and keep designers at home?

With regard to credentials in the form of certification, it still remains to be seen whether or not R.G.D. status will be interpreted outside of the graphic design profession as adding value to the services performed by professional designers (the products of special knowledge and skills), and whether or not membership will ultimately translate into increased economic capital. The uncertainty of whether certification is worth the high price tag (estimated by the AIGA at $500,000 for start up) is one of the major

reasons why the GDC chapters in Canada and the AIGA in the U.S. have been hesitant about jumping onto the certification bandwagon. Unless RGD Ontario is able to provide tangible evidence R.G.D. results in increased social and economic benefits, certification will not spread to other parts of Canada. Without the promise of increased benefits, what would compel graphic designers to seek R.G.D. status and be tested for their professional knowledge and skills?

The Findings of This Study

Table 14 summarizes the findings of this study concerning the professionalization processes of the graphic design industry in North America, and charts the ways in which these processes are connected to the accrual and exchange of various forms of capital -- whether that capital is externally produced and bestowed, or self-produced and self-administered within the profession (or a professional organization).

It links Larson's analytical framework, previously outlined in Tables 2 and 13, to Bourdieu's conceptualization of capital delineated earlier in the study as Table 3.

Table 14, therefore, provides a matrix connecting the two analytical frameworks underpinning this study – professionalization processes and capital exchange values – to specific findings of the study.

Table 14.
Payoff of Professionalization Matrix for Graphic Design in North America

	Social Capital	Cultural Capital	Economic Capital
Early professional associations (Society of Printers, etc) AIGA, GDC, and RGD Ontario	• membership provides collective upward social mobility • change of identity from commercial art to graphic design increases collective social capital • individuals acknowledged by peers as members of elite group •AIGA, GDC, and RGD Ontario members advertise status in business-related materials • RGD Ontario confers special social capital on members of elite 'inner circle'	• members part of the dominant professional culture • early associations involved with apprenticeship system • Industry works with Harvard program, signals cognitive exclusiveness • AIGA develops common body of knowledge and skills • GDC and RGD Ontario authority through membership and involvement with schools • RGD Ontario develops common body of knowledge and skills for graphic design in Ont.	• early associations involved in 'price wars' with the competition • union demands • economic benefits from the Harvard program are not known • economic benefits of professional membership are not known
Prof. Associations and their Work with Government Agencies	• AIGA negotiates distinctiveness of the graphic design profession by U.S. government agencies • RGD Ontario negotiates distinctiveness of the graphic design profession with Ontario Legislature • AIGA recognized as authority for graphic design in U.S. • RGD Ontario is recognized as authority for graphic design in Ontario	• NASAD accreditation – allows AIGA role in controlling graphic design education, i.e. the production of producers • AIGA/US Dept. of Census negotiate expanded list of services (knowledge areas) provided by the graphic design occupational group • RGD Ontario granted the right to set standards and criteria for R.G.D. designation of practitioners • RGD Ontario has power to govern and discipline members	• economic benefits regarding the AIGA's work with government agencies are unknown • recognition of professional services may equate to increased accessibility to economic capital in U.S. for graphic design practitioners • economic benefits directly relating to R.G.D. certification are unknown
Education /Academic Credentials	• professional degree in graphic design, from accredited institution, signifies degree-holder has accrued social capital • credentials are keys to employment opportunities • education has some exchange value for membership in professional associations	• Yale University, 1950-51, first to offer a degree in graphic design • most U.S. graphic designers hold a degree • capital accrues at different rates - depends upon credential and the capital held by the institution • can be exchanged for access to graduate studies or other higher education pursuits	• credentials provide greater access to U.S. jobs for degree-holders • U.S. designers make more money than their Canadian counterparts • economic benefits to be gained from higher education levels in Canada are unknown
R.G.D. Designation	• R.G.D. certificate for individual practitioners who have passed RGD Ontario exams (internally produced)	• R.G.D. designation certifies the designer has knowledge and skills • R.G.D. belong to the elite in the 'inner circle'	• Non-RGD possibly disadvantaged in Ont. • unknown economic benefit to practitioners
Professional Practice	• capital accrued through years of experience, awards, published work, membership in associations, high status clients	• years of practice required for membership in associations • professional practice can be exchanged for capital	• economic benefits reflect value placed on experience in the marketplace • access to jobs

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study is comprised of a series of postcards written from the margins of graphic design, from a unique insider/outsider, educator/designer perspective, utilizing an interpretive and post-structural sociological framework for analysis. The postcards document and analyse the journey to uncover and interpret important aspects of graphic design's professionalization project and how they connect to various forms of capital.

Three major issues relating to the graphic design profession in Canada have come to light as a result of the interpretive lens used to guide this study: legitimization of the profession, certification of practitioners and accreditation of educational programs, and the education needs of the profession. The following paragraphs highlight the issues and recommend possible courses of action for consideration by the profession in Canada:

1. Legitimization of the Profession

It has been eight years since the HRDC report was published acknowledging significant contributions made to the gross national product by Canadian design disciplines, and recommending a plan of action by government and business regarding design-awareness and design-literacy in Canada. Yet graphic design continues to struggle for recognition as a distinct profession. Professionalization is not just about making money. It is also about status and recognition as a profession of knowledgeable and skillful practitioners.

In its efforts to legitimize the profession, the GDC has been unable to bank sufficient symbolic capital with government and, therefore, has been unable to exchange it for increased access to social, cultural or economic capital for its membership (this also applies, for the most part, to RGD Ontario). Graphic design's professionalization processes in the United States, however, have been much more successful in gaining recognition as a cognitively distinct profession with specialized knowledge and skills. The AIGA has amassed sufficient symbolic capital through various initiatives and endeavours to legitimize the profession in the United States and thereby enhance graphic design's collective social and cultural status as well as its economic capital.

In Canada, design disciplines such as interior design and industrial design have amassed considerable influence in the public and private sectors and have been given recognition as distinct professions. Yet, graphic design, despite being the largest and fastest-growing design discipline within the design occupational group (NOC 524), 'can't seem to get respect' for its specialized knowledge and skills in Canada. It is still most often referred to as a trade or vocation, rather than a profession, and public misperceptions of talent and creativity keep it tied to fine art's apron strings, instead of marrying it to business, marketing, and advertising. The AIGA, and the interior design

profession in the U.S. and Canada serve as excellent models for Canadian graphic design associations to follow in their professionalization project.

- If the GDC and RGD Ontario are truly seeking increased capital (social, cultural, symbolic and economic) and legitimization for the graphic design profession in Canada and their respective memberships, then the GDC and RGD Ontario must forge a partnership of solidarity to present a united front in their negotiations with various levels of government and business.

- Territorial fences get in the way of collective social mobility projects and need to be torn down if the profession is to gain recognition as a distinct profession.

- Currently RGD Ontario is developing a common body of knowledge and skills required for entry-level graphic designers in Ontario, however, what is most needed are GDC/RGD Ontario partnerships with industry that will delineate requisite knowledge and skills on a Canada-wide basis.

2. Certification and Accreditation

Certification and accreditation are contentious issues depending upon whether the perspective comes from North or South of the forty-ninth parallel, and East or West of Lake of the Woods. In the United States, the AIGA argues a certification process for individual practitioners cannot be justified by the capital required to fund the initial start-up. In Canada, RGD Ontario put a certification process in place in 1996 with the support of its members and by an Act of the Ontario Legislature. However, it is the only graphic design association in North America to certify and register its membership through a process involving testing, interviewing, and portfolio reviews.

The AIGA in the United States does not have any plans in the foreseeable future to move forward with certification, although debates around the issue have been going on for the past decade or more and probably will continue for some time. Instead, it has partnered with NASAD to accredit graphic design degree programs in educational institutions across the United States. Although RGD Ontario revealed its plans to accredit post-secondary programs in Ontario, where they currently stand in the process is not known.

At the GDC Annual General Meeting held in Victoria, B.C. earlier this year, several chapters of the GDC renewed their commitment to move forward with certification in their provinces, however, if previous years are any indicator, it remains to be seen if anything will come out of this year's initiative.

Certification will, no doubt, result in increased social and cultural capital for the graphic design industry across Canada, but as this study has shown, there is no tangible proof certification has resulted in increased economic capital for practitioners in the province of Ontario.

- In order to make Canada-wide certification a viable social, cultural, and economic endeavour, associations must determine how certification relates to capital in Ontario, and whether the economic benefits warrant a long-term investment.

- It is time for the GDC to take a stand about certification and decide whether or not it is the best course of action to move the profession forward in Canada.

3. Education Needs of the Profession

Graphic design degree graduates in Canada have just two choices of institutions (at extreme ends of the country) through which to pursue master's level studies in design (one graphic design-related program at the University of Alberta, and one design-related program at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design). There are no PhD programs in any design disciplines offered anywhere in Canada.

- To facilitate excellence in graphic design education and research, as well as the graphic design profession in Canada, access is needed to master's level graphic design programs in B.C., Ontario, and Quebec.

- At least one or two PhD programs in general design studies should be offered in Canada to encourage design expertise at the doctoral level, foster research to promote and advance the design professions (graphic design, interior design, fashion design, and industrial design) in Canada, and also attract scholars from around the world to study and teach in Canada.

Bachelor degrees in graphic design are available at 12 institutions across Canada, however, the most common credential is still a two- or three-year diploma. The U.S. presents a different picture, where the majority of designers hold a degree. A four-year degree in graphic design is considered by the AIGA to be the minimum amount of time necessary for students to acquire the knowledge and skills to function as entry-level, professional graphic designers.

The American marketplace reflects the notion degree graduates are expected to 'hit the pavement running,' whereas 38% of firms surveyed in B.C. still prefer to hire graduates from diploma programs and are prepared to provide additional training on the job. Differences in the expectation levels of employers with regard to the educational outcomes of graduates may account for Canadian designers earning 40.3% less on average than their American counterparts for the same career positions (with U.S. salaries converted to Canadian dollars).

- While B.C. government studies support the claim higher education levels (BA degrees and higher) result in increased economic returns for graduates, graphic design surveys mapping the salaries for the profession across Canada are not entirely clear in this regard and more work needs to be done to determine how salaries reflect education.

- A large percentage of graphic design graduates in Canada and the U.S. end up working as generalist designers who freelance, function as sole proprietors, or employers of one or two designers. To survive in the marketplace, they must 'hit the pavement running.' Two- and three-year diploma programs can no longer claim to adequately prepare graduates to compete as designers in the marketplace.

- Canadian graphic design associations need to follow the AIGA's lead and work with educational institutions to develop a common body of knowledge and skills graduates of *all* design degree programs demonstrate in order to survive and thrive in the marketplace as professional designers and entrepreneurs.

A bachelor's degree in graphic design or a related field currently translates into more opportunity and higher social, cultural, and economic rewards in the U.S. than RGD Ontario certification in Canada. Degree holders command higher salaries. Despite definitive empirical evidence, it is safe to assume Canadian designers armed with a degree will qualify for more jobs in North American and overseas job markets, including positions as educators. They will also have greater access to graduate studies. Graduate degree holders will have increased opportunities to focus careers on established or emerging specialty areas within the profession such as publication design or interactive design, as well as compete for teaching positions at the master's level or higher.

The Final Postcard

This thesis has been done in the Department of Educational Studies with a particular focus on the sociology of the professions, and therefore, it concerns education of the graphic design profession.

It has provided an interpretive and post-structuralist analysis of the professionalization project of graphic design in North America. In particular, it has examined various processes involved in graphic design's professionalization project including the development of design associations; regulatory practices; market controls; certification of practicing professionals; accreditation of educational institutions, graphic design programs, and faculty; and manoeuvres to increase the exchange value of professional and educational credentials in the marketplace. More specifically, the underlying premise of this study has been Larson's contention the principle goal of professionalization is an attempt to "translate one order of scarce resources – special knowledge and skills – into another – social and economic rewards" (Larson, 1977 p. xvii).

Although other analyses exist that historically chart graphic design's development as an occupation, particularly as it came of age in the United States, this study utilizes Larson's interpretive theoretical framework to construct a comparative analysis of graphic design's professionalization processes in the United States and Canada. Further,

this study links Larson's framework to Bourdieu's post-structuralist notion of capital, thus providing an analysis of the exchangeability of graphic design's professionalization processes for social, cultural and economic capital.

This analytical study contributes to the sociology of the professions through its examination of the graphic design industry and the processes used to reposition it as a profession -- from the margins into the mainstream. Additionally, it will assist the graphic industry to assess its history and chart a pathway for the profession building upon capital accrued over the past century.

Further studies of the profession might consider a wider-ranging analysis of the graphic design profession internationally (perhaps in conjunction with ICOGRADA), particularly with regard to educational institutions and graphic design associations in other countries. An international perspective of the profession would be valuable for laying the groundwork for cross-cultural exchanges of graphic design degree students. Such a study might also identify opportunities for Canadian students to obtain master's degrees and PhDs in graphic design in other countries, especially when few opportunities exist in Canada.

Another viable direction for further studies would be to track graduates of programs in B.C. In two year's time, graduates from Kwantlen University College's graphic design degree program will enter the marketplace to compete with graduates of the degree program at Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design, as well as diploma graduates from several institutions across the province. A study tracking graduate's job search and employment histories would be valuable in assessing and comparing the social, cultural, and economic capital gained from various levels of credentials in graphic design in B.C.

Graphic design has manoeuvred itself out of the margins into position as a mainstream player in the design professions. It has gone from being a socially maligned misfit in its former life as a trade or vocation, known as 'commercial art,' and successfully reinvented itself as 'graphic design,' a distinct, professional, discipline in its own right. The profession has lost much of its teenage awkwardness and angst through professionalization processes, particularly in the last five to ten years. Today, as it moves toward adulthood, the graphic design profession is projected to grow even more rapidly than all other design disciplines in Canada and the United States through to 2012. The profession has earned the right to the car keys and is definitely coming of age.

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Appendix A: RGD Ontario/Aquent

Provincial Distribution of Responses to RGD Ontario/Aquent 2003/04 National Survey

> Approximately 11,000 questionnaires were distributed to designers across Canada as part of an insert in the May/June edition of *Applied Arts* magazine. E-mail reminders were sent to designers for whom RGD Ontario had valid e-mail addresses. ... Sources for lists included RGD Ontario's membership roster, recent RGD Ontario contacts (from conference registrations and general inquiries), Aquent's client, talent and prospect lists, the membership and contact lists of the GDC and SDGQ, and the subscribers of *Applied Arts* magazine. ... Just over one thousand questionnaires were received from all parts of Canada...[6] (http://www.rgdontario. com, RGD Ontario/Aquent 2003/04 National survey of graphic design salaries and billing practices, p. 6, retrieved Feb. 19, 2004).

Table A1.
Provincial Distribution of Responses to RGD Ontario/Aquent 2003/04 National Survey

Received From	Number Received	Percentage of Total
Alberta	62	6.0%
BC	86	8.3%
Manitoba	32	3.1%
New Brunswick	6	0.6%
Newfoundland & Labrador	1	0.1%
Nova Scotia	18	1.7%
Ontario	687	66.4%
PEI	1	0.1%
Quebec	64	6.2%
Saskatchewan	22	2.1%
Yukon	1	0.1%
Not Identified	55	5.3%
TOTAL	1035	100.0%

(data from: (http://www.rgdontario. com, RGD Ontario/Aquent 2003/04 National survey of graphic design salaries and billing practices, p. 6, retrieved Feb. 19, 2004).

[6] The data appears with the following caveat: "These data should not be viewed as nationally representative statistical samples of all graphic design professionals, as the sample list was developed from selected sources and a modest response rate was achieved, particularly in some regions and among some job titles".

A breakdown of the RGD Ontario/Aquent survey responses by province is provided in Table 5. Figures for Ontario indicate a response rate (66.4%) that is considerably higher than in other parts of Canada, but unfortunately, RGD Ontario/Aquent does not provide an explanation. The high rate of return may be due to a variety of factors such as aggressive follow-up with its members by RGD Ontario, or because designers in larger cities tend to subscribe more often to *Applied Arts* magazine and therefore saw the questionnaire insert, or that designers in larger cities check their e-mail more often than their rural counterparts and therefore would have received the e-mail reminders (today, it is almost impossible to imagine a professional graphic designer without a computer or access to e-mail), or it might have simply been that RGD Ontario members felt the survey was important to the profession. For whatever reason, RGD Ontario members were *better represented in the survey*, than GDC members in all other parts of the country combined.

APPENDIX B: Glossary of Terms

Accreditation:
Accreditation refers specifically to the process of 'making credible' the curriculum of a graphic design educational program, faculty, and institution by officially recognizing that particular standards have been met. Accreditation, as defined by NASAD (National Association of Schools of Art and Design) in the United States, is a process by which an institution of disciplinary unit within an institution periodically evaluates its work and seeks an independent judgement by peers that it achieves substantially its own educational objectives and meets the established standards of the body from which it seeks accreditation. Typically, the accreditation process includes 1) a self-evaluative description (self-study) of the institution or unit, 2) an on-site review by a team of evaluators, and 3) judgement by an accreditation decision-making body, normally called a Commission. Accreditation reviews focus on educational quality, institutional integrity, and educational improvements (http://nasad.artsaccredit.org/index.jsp?page=Accreditation. Retrieved July 21, 2004).

Art director:
The art director establishes the conceptual and stylistic direction for design staff and orchestrates their work, as well as the work of production artists, photographers, illustrators, prepress technicians, printers and anyone else who is involved in the development of a project. The art director generally selects vendors and, if there isn't a creative director on staff, has final creative authority.

Capital:
Social capital emphasises social resources such as the collective value of social networks, connections, and relationships. The transmission of social capital provides individuals or groups with privileges and distinct advantages over others who do not have access to the same bank of social connections.

Cultural capital refers to the culture of a particular class or group. Some cultural capital is more highly valued, particularly if it is the cultural capital of the dominant class or group(s).

Economic capital is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalised in the form of property rights. Cultural capital is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalised in the form of educational qualifications. Social capital, made up of social obligations ("connections"), is also convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalised in the form of a title of nobility (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 47).

Symbolic capital is a form of capital or value that is not recognized as such. Prestige and a glowing reputation, for example, operate as symbolic capital because they mean nothing in themselves, but depend on people believing that someone possesses these qualities (Webb, Schirato and Danaher, 2002, p. xv-xvi).

Certify/Certification:
Certification refers to 'attesting by certificate' that a graphic designer is qualified or competent and has met the requisite standards for professional practice and certified practitioners are allowed to display their registered status (such as Registered Graphic Designer – R.G.D.) on business materials. No association in graphic design issues a license to practitioners – they issue a certificate. In graphic design, licensure is a business issue relating to a license to operate a business.

Creative/design director:
A creative director or design director is the creative head of a design firm, advertising agency or in-house design department. Key responsibilities can include the development of graphic design, advertising, communication and industrial design.

Entry-level/junior graphic designer:
An entry-level designer is a designer who has been out of school for less than two years.

Field of Power:
A field of power is the particular social arena in which various forms of power struggles take place. In the social arena, individuals and groups are recognized and defined by the types, amounts, and value of capital they possess.

Graphic design:
Graphic design is an interdisciplinary, problem-solving activity that combines visual sensitivity with skill and knowledge in areas of communications, technology and business. The graphic design profession specializes in the structuring of visual information to aid communication and orientation. Its members provide clients with the following services: research, costing, planning, coordination, project management, quality control, design and aesthetic judgement, desktop publishing, advertising and art directing. A graphic designer may specialize in one or more of these fields: print, packaging, signage, exhibit/display, audio visual, electronic media and multimedia.

Habitus:
Bourdieu refers to habitus as individual and collective patterns of thought and behaviour acquired through upbringing or education that link social structures to social practice and incorporate dominant value systems.

International Council of Graphic Design Associations (ICOGRADA):
Icograda is a world body for professional associations for graphic design and visual communication. It was founded in 1963 as a voluntary alliance of design associations (not individual designers) concerned with graphic design, design management, design promotion, and design education.

Intermediate graphic designer:
An intermediate graphic designer is responsible for the design of graphic applications such as collateral material, environmental graphics, books, magazines, corporate identity, branding, film titling and multimedia interfaces, from concept to completion.

Licence/License:
See certify/certification.

Median:
The median score typically is the one that lies on the 50th percentile.

National Occupational Classification (NOC):
The National Occupational Classification is a hierarchical arrangement of occupational groups. The NOC forms the basis of the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) 1991 which is used by Statistics Canada to report data on occupations from the Census. Minor differences exist between the SOC 1991 and the NOC. The NOC is the occupational classification system normally used in employment counselling and placement. Small differences between the two classifications occur where Human Resources Development Canada recognizes occupational distinctions that Statistics Canada could not implement due to the nature of Census responses.

Owner, partner, principal:
An owner, partner or principal holds an equity position and has major business responsibility for a firm having employees.

Profession:
A profession is an organizational form with a regulatory body that ensures the public of a minimum standard of performance by its individual members, enforces a code of conduct and ethics, manages knowledge or expertise that is the basis of the profession's activities, oversees training, and is often responsible for licensing and controlling the numbers of practicing professionals.

Registered/Registration:
A register is an official list or record used for official purposes, therefore, the term *registered* refers to an official record being made when someone is officially certified to do something. For example, in Ontario, RGD Ontario has the legislated capacity to certify its members and grant them the right to use the registered graphic designer designation (R.G.D.).

Senior graphic designer:
The senior designer is responsible for the design of solutions from concept to completion. In some firms, a senior designer directs the work of one or more junior designers, who generate comps and create layouts and final art. In some cases, senior designers do not manage staff, but are designated 'senior' because of their authority in design decision-making.

Appendix C: Coroflot Survey

COROFLOT Web Site:
http://www.coroflot.com/community/entry.asp?t=0?survey_id=4, Retrieved July 26, 2004

Design Salary Survey: Spring 2004

Job Information

** Area of Concentration	Choose one from pull-down menu
** Work Environment	Choose one from pull-down menu
** Job Title job title definitions available her	Choose one from pull-down menu
** Years of Experience	Choose one from pull-down menu

Location

** Country	Choose one from pull-down menu
** States/Provinces	Choose one from pull-down menu

Education

** Education Level	Choose one from pull-down menu
** Institution Name	Type in name of institution

Compensation

** Annual Salary convert your salary to US$ here	US$ Type in dollars
** Benefits	full medical / dental 401 K Other – Type in benefits
** Other Compensation 1.e. royalties, bonuses, profit sharing	Type in compensation

Submit your information and see the results