The Scholarship of Critical Engagement Symposium 2016

Abstract/individual paper proposal
Session 1: Engagement & Radical Pedagogy

[Fig.1]

[Paper title]:
**Critical consciensization: co-designing pedagogies
to address real time societal challenges**

Designed products, services and spaces are often presented in the media as something only the affluent can afford, and design school curricula often does little to challenge this. Students are more likely to be encouraged to design with commercial rather than civic intention, and are seldom set briefs that task them to design to address societal problems, or even work resourcefully within a budget. Indeed, such stipulations are often dismissed as creatively constraining. The negative societal and environmental implications for this - once students become professionals - are inevitably concerning. Increasingly however, radical and risky models of socially-engaged design pedagogy (Harriss, 2015) are starting to emerge, resulting in some transformative projects that demonstrate the importance of students addressing global problems in their studio work.

This paper will examine what characterises critical, socially-engaged and collaboratively generated pedagogy, with reference to the author's recent pedagogic case study, an MA Interior Design students' wearable refugee shelter [Fig 1.].

The project involved students engaging interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary expertise, known to, 'confound the disciplines and create a vacuum of institutional context,' (Penny, 2009, p.31), and subsequently resulting in design outcomes that are fit for purpose. It will briefly outline the risks associated with tackling politically and socially challenging projects as part of a design school program, whilst emphasising the importance of setting assignments that build students passion and capacity to address these problems within their professional lives too. It will also advance the argument that getting students to respond to these problems involves an intense yet galvanising form of critical 'consciensization' (Friere, 1968, p.109), 'liberates [them] from the circumstances that enslave them' (Horkheimer 1982, p. 244) and enables students to transition from design curricula consumers to civic curricula co-creators.

Keywords
Design Pedagogy, civic-engagement, autodidactic learning, critical consciensization, civic-engaged scholarship, curricula co-creation

Indicative (not comprehensive) bibliography
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