

Design and Democracy

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Symbolic Systems 100

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Design

- Art (beauty and artistic meaning)
- Graphics (visual representations)
- Engineering (problem solving)
- Social science (studies of user experience, usability, psychology, ethnography)
- Production (efficiency)
- Marketing (persuasion, media)
- Tool development (meta-design)

Aims of Design

1. Consumption



2. Creativity



3. Cooperation



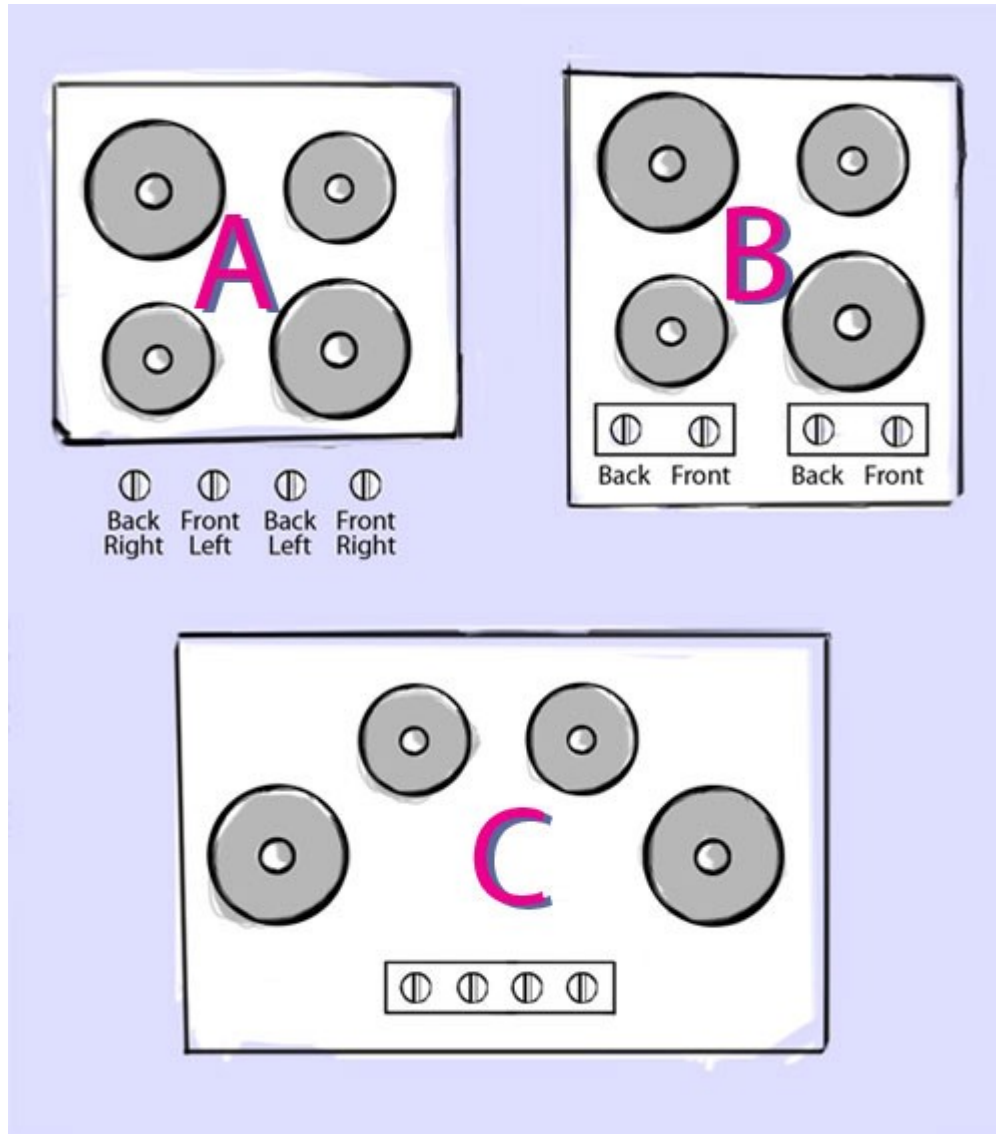
4. Control



McLuhan's Tetrad of Media Effects (1988)

- What does the medium enhance?
- What does the medium make obsolete?
- What does the medium retrieve that had been obsolesced earlier?
- What does the medium flip into when pushed to extremes?

Design



Norman's User-Centered Design (1988) – key concepts

- Affordances – features that make action available, visual cues
- Simplicity
- Forcing functions and designing for error

Information Technology Design



V. Bush, “As We May Think” (1945)

- logical reasoning
- search, databases, SQL
- addressability
- voice interfaces
- associative memory
- personal computer (but didn't anticipate integrated circuits)
- augmentation

Douglas Engelbart (1927-present)

- Augmenting Human Intellect
- mouse
- graphical user interfaces
- hypertext
- computer-supported cooperative work
- collective IQ
- bootstrapping

Haraway, “Cyborg Manifesto” (1991)

“Though both are bound in the spiral dance, I would rather be a cyborg than a goddess.”

Liberal democracy

- liberal – individual rights, social equality
- democracy – participation of people in decisions that govern their lives

Habermas, “The Public Sphere” (1964)

- public sphere is the arena in which people affect government
- requires equal access, and access to information
- competes with “publicity”
- society is private – e.g. nonprofit orgs

Howard Rheingold (1947-)

- co-founder of the Well (1985)
- interactivism
- smart mobs
- cooperative technology

Skinner, Beyond Freedom and Dignity (1972)

- tradition versus science
- dangers of individualism
- making the environment as an alternative – social engineering

Lessig (2000)

“Code is law”

Benkler (2006)

The Wealth of Networks: How Social Production
Transforms Markets and Freedom