DISTANCE 02

with essays by

Cassie McDaniel
Sharlene King
Francisco Inchauste

http://**distance.cc**

DISTANCE 02

concerns *extracurriculars.*

Wherein:

Cassie McDaniel asserts that we can change the world more easily when we're embedded in foreign situations.

Sharlene King wants us to create homework for ourselves, so we can improve our own skills.

Francisco Inchauste proposes a way to restore meaning and significance to what and how we build.

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DISTANCE's essays don't exist in a vacuum. We encourage you to excerpt and discuss these essays with others. You have free reign to quote as much as you need to get your point across. Good writing begins conversations, and we're listening. Visit *Distance*'s website at http://distance.cc to read and remark on others' responses.

If you have any questions, email us at we@distance.cc and we'll make it right.

Publisher's thoughts

by **Nick Disabato**
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Nary a month after our first issue's launch party, our second issue is in the can. I'm extremely proud of our authors and their essays, and I'm honored and humbled that you have chosen to stay with us.

I have two goals with *Distance*: to elevate the quality of conversation about our field, and to expose unheard, talented people to a wider audience. I know that neither goal is terribly novel or interesting, but they're increasingly difficult to achieve. I'm patient enough to know that it may take a long time before we start to see any meaningful change. In the meantime, I love helping others make each issue that we put out the door.

Our first issue was a grab bag: each essay had a different subject area, critical angle, and research direction. This is my first attempt at refining and focusing a conversation around a specific goal. As I line up authors for each future issue of *Distance*, whomever signs on first will be able to determine the issue's theme—which, in turn, will affect the other two essays. Themes are broad so an author's goal can stay open-ended, though: interesting ideas may come from far-flung places, resisting immediate connection and inference.

As you might have guessed from the front cover, *Distance* 02 is about **extracurriculars**. What do we do outside our day-to-day work? How does our work environment affect us? And how can our work be meaningfully received by our audiences? We offer one way forward for each of these questions, and we seek your input.

Our website, at http://distance.cc, provides a handful of ways you can join the conversation—but the easiest is on your own turf. Post about our essays on your blog. Tweet your initial thoughts @distance. Send us an email, at we@distance.cc, about what you think. Rip our work apart; make it better.

Thanks again for reading, and for all of your ongoing support. Hope you're well.

Nick Disabato
May 30, 2012

Authors' thanks

Cassie McDaniel: An enormous thank you to my husband, Mark Staplehurst (aka @britburger), for putting up with months of late nights and stolen weekends while I worked on this essay. Not only did he consistently break one of our rules by cooking for me *and* doing the dishes, he also helped me un-muddle my expressions, offering suggestions and improvements to the writing when they were most needed. Thanks as well to Nancy Kay Clark, editor of Design Edge Canada; and to the writers group at High Park Library in Toronto, who helped me focus the essay and spurred me on toward the finish line with nice things things to say (even if they weren't true).

Sharlene King would like to thank the Chicago Public Library for their incredibly low late fees, extenuating patience, and proximity to work; Nicole, my partner, who in spite of her unending disinterest in design has found me interesting and tolerable; Nick Disabato, for his perpetual state of concern and generosity; and the entire Chicago design community—you know who you are, you pretty young things.

Francisco Inchauste would like to thank the kind editor of this wondrous publication, Nick Disabato, for asking me to be a part of this special thing. Through this essay, I was able to synthesize a perspective on the kind of design I believe in, and hope more of us can practice it in the future. I appreciate some early feedback from Rian van der Merwe that helped to hone the premise. Thank you, reader, because this idea will only come to life through your interpretation, dissidence, and proselytizing. I'm indebted to the writings of Umair Haque for providing great insight into how we can measure meaningful things. I'd also like to thank my wife, Megan, and our amazing kids for showing me what a meaningful life is all about.

Note on citations

Distance exists in quite a few forms: book, PDF, ePub, and Kindle. We know that people read all sorts of ways, and we want the text to fit your reading habits, not the other way around. 1

Most citation methods refer to a work's page number, but only two of *Distance*'s forms have discrete pages. Consistent, understandable citation by page number is impossible, so wayfinding must exist within the actual text. 2

In an attempt to solve this problem, *Distance* doesn't have page numbers. Instead, each essay's paragraph has a little number to the right, as seen here. *These numbers will always be consistent among each format of an issue of Distance.* 3

This is similar to the convention of "purple numbers" in blogging,[1] and it will remove any ambiguity about what's being referenced. As a rule of thumb, where a page number would go, use the **paragraph number** instead. 4

For example, MLA citation should look like Whipple, Jon. "What Designers Know." *Distance* 01: 14–17 for the 14th through 17th paragraphs of Jon Whipple's essay in our first issue. 5

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1.   See also CIM Community, "Purple Numbers", http://dsn.tc/01x-01 and Simon Willison, "PLinks", http://dsn.tc/01x-02.

I sense a new attitude of buckling down to change entire organizations, to increase public and governmental awareness of the importance of our work, and to seek out opportunities to affect the lives of millions.

—Cennydd Bowles, *A Changing Tide*,
at http://dsn.tc/o2x-o2

The multiplexed multiplicity of personality and identity drives us deeper into the self to search for what cannot be reproduced, devalued, commodified, into the world of intentions, subjective states, secrets. We flock to the aura of the artwork and to the Platonic self: an unmediated self of inimitable, irreducible, meaningful purity. We vigilantly test for forgeries and phonies.

We want what the camera cannot show: a person's fidelity to his innate truth. We want the soul we doubt, the core we have learned isn't there. We want the antidote to personality, the desperate and neurotic fictions of the performative self. We want the inner, abiding fact: may it abide beyond death.

—Mills Baker, *Authenticity and the Deformation of Character*,
at http://dsn.tc/o2x-o1

Do Your Homework

Research towards cultural development.

by **Sharlene King**

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Few things anger me more than professional inadequacy. In art school, our education heavily relied on critiques. I was vicious in critiques. I drew tears from ill-prepared students who couldn't articulate their work. It was infuriating to have my education affected by students who couldn't bother with our industry's vocabulary; from the day you set foot in a classroom, you bear responsibility for understanding your industry. My peers all chose design, and they should have known and defended their craft.

1

Being self-righteous wasn't productive, though. My own flaws and weaknesses were obvious to everyone but myself—living by my ego crushed my self-awareness, and I wasn't practicing what I preached.

2

Homework is *research and practice with the goal of improvement.* Homework isn't client work; it happens outside of your daily practice. Without it, you'll be working in a vacuum, sheltered from any real measurement or development. When you do your homework, you reap the benefits of competitive knowledge, skills, and the undercurrents of your industry.

3

Homework in context

Even if we do homework, we may not be doing homework *right*. Homework demonstrates how well we've absorbed a lesson, but usually we simply mimic the lesson to the teacher's liking. Steven Pinker says that intelligence comes from processing accrued information;[1] simply having that information doesn't help you put the pieces together in the long run—and tests may inhibit creativity. Academically, measurement works best when an objective

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1.   Steven Pinker, *How the Mind Works,* W.W. Norton, 2009, pp. 64–79.

conclusion can be determined, but that makes it hard to accurately measure success in creative fields. [2]

When you haven't done homework in so long, it's easy to presume you've understood something immediately. Likewise, it's easy to believe you know the true nature of your own aesthetic responses. Your shaky preconceptions aren't revealed until you're asked to articulate how and why you reacted the way you did. But practice forms expertise—and it's hard for us to measure how good we are. Elliott Jaques made a similar point in his *Creativity and Work*: [3]

> Systematic observation of these issues calls for a special attitude, an attitude of detached involvement, to be achieved only with intense mental toil. By mental toil I mean that creative act in which our conscious beliefs, principles, and concepts are held not as perfect and immutable, as hard-and-fast currency, but as flexible counters, always uncertain and incomplete, and always under scrutiny for modification in light of the reality of experience – concepts, ideas, principles, models, constantly subjected to the modifying influence of common perception.

Jaques argues that we need the objectivity of systematic discipline to create reliable and consistent concepts. Without systematic discipline, your work is just speculative imagination. He further argues that this discipline creates shared perceptions—a collective consciousness—when it's practiced broadly. [4] According to Robert Florida, collective consciousness defines the creative class; your accomplishments hold weight against a community of like-minded people. Without establishing a discipline around our work, it's much harder for us to participate in our own field, [5] so we need a way to know that we're improving.

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2. Teresa M. Amabile corroborates this in *The Social Psychology of Creativity*, Springer-Verlag, 1983, pp. 142–149 by demonstrating that repeated, rigorous evaluation may not lead to the kind of flexibility in thinking that is needed for a creative mind-set.

3. Elliott Jaques, *Creativity and Work*, 9th edition, George H. Pollock, 1990, pp. 10–11.

4. *Ibid.,* pp. 9–13.

5. Robert Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, Basic Books, 2002, pp. 67–82, 88–96.

In order to develop your own homework, you need to analyze your own needs and reassess those needs over time. Without knowing where you want to go, you'll only make trivial improvements. Homework without iteration won't help you, either.[6]

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Your work needs strong critique in order to improve, and that comes through **constructive criticism**. According to M. Neil Browne, good critical questions may include:[7]

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- Are you asking the right questions?
- What makes the answer correct?
- How has your emotional involvement affected your discovery?
- Who cares? Will the uncovered information be valuable to anyone else?
- Do the answers provoke more questions?
- What evidence informs your opinion?
- Do you understand the reasons for the conclusion?
- How are you measuring your success?

We all need solid criticisms. You'll probably be wrong at first—but through criticism and repetition, you'll get closer to being right. Homework involves creation, reaction, conversation, and systematic evaluation—all without client intervention.[8]

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What homework means for us

While systematic discipline determines the quality of your homework, it is practiced through repeatedly exercising your skills. Culturally branching out is an exercise in *research*; designing Swiss-influenced punk rock gig posters is an exercise in *practice*.

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6.   Mike Monteiro and Katie Gillum, *Let's Make Mistakes* #14, "Not Your Friend". http://dsn.tc/02b-02.

7.   M. Neil Browne, *Asking the Right Questions: A Guide to Critical Thinking,* 2nd edition, Prentice-Hall, 1981–1986, pp. 1–8. Browne discusses the merits of systematic evaluation and specifically names examples of good critical questions. Being critical isn't about the destruction of an idea, he posits, but elaborating the path of a thought.

8.   *Ibid.*

King

Swissted is a personal side project of Mike Joyce that redesigns punk rock posters in a strict Swiss style, using simple geometric elements and lowercase Akzidenz-Grotesk to express minimalist concepts.[9] As of this writing, over two hundred posters have been made.

You could argue that Joyce is anti-design, with his generous use of neutral elements on subjects with broad appeal. As a personal project, though, it doesn't have to answer to client concerns or business needs. Swissted is a great example of homework: it's a personal side project combining and exploring two passionate interests. As Joyce progresses, his Swissted posters have become more polished and marketable, even though that may not have been the intended goal. Swissted makes Joyce a better designer, more capable of articulating a specific part of his visual language.

Design has many different disciplines, but they all share "the planning and patterning of any act towards a desired, foreseeable end".[10] Success happens when we close the gap between our intentions and the resulting design. Exercise through homework gets us closer to that end goal, no matter our creative passions.

Measurement

In traditional education, a teacher uses grades to communicate how well you understood the curriculum. Outside of an educational setting, grading has a few analogies: professional accomplishments, likes on Dribbble, or maybe a flurry of links to something you've created.

As Jaques describes, systematic observation helps us logically group concepts so we can communicate better with each other.[11] Towards that end, measurement is about *consistency* in how we communicate: after all, a system of measurement is only reliable if it's consistent.

How can we create objective metrics in a discipline that is so dependent on subjective observation? By relying on each other. That's why the design community is so important. Our work constantly requires cultural assessment

9. http://www.swissted.com.

10. Guy Julier, *The Culture of Design,* 2nd Edition, Sage Publications, 2008, p. 40, quoting Victor Papanek in his book *Design for the Real World,* Academy Chicago, 1972.

11. Elliott Jaques, *Creativity and Work,* pp. 9–13.

and critique for aesthetic and business objectives, and collaboration is the best way to make that happen. [12]

For instance, the portfolio reviews of groups like AIGA, the HOW Conference, and National Portfolio Day Association offer a rudimentary re-view process—they're short and superficial. Each process is connected to the professional or educational industries—AIGA and HOW's reviewers tend to be in a position to hire you, while NPDA assesses how well you'd perform in a school—but general portfolio reviews rarely connect you with people you end up pursuing professionally. 17

These days, though, most designers take to Twitter, Forrst, and Dribbble. For example, I have developed many professional relationships with col-leagues on Twitter, and I email them work for critique and discussion. Their answers help provide context to my work, but they don't have a personal stake in any of my projects. They are, however, professional compasses that inspire me. 18

Here in Chicago, 2 Night Stand is a hack weekend[13] organized by design firm Bright Bright Great. [14] Teams end up mentoring each other, whether or not they share the same experiences, disciplines, or talent. Hack weekends prioritize who you work with and how you collectively reach a goal, instead of how you earn a paycheck—which forces a dependency on the process. 19

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12. Robert Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class,* pp. 35, 79, 293–297. Florida expands the discussion to address how the pursuit of diversity is actually self-serving for creatives; when our ideas and talents oppose normative culture, they are typically rejected in a conservative environment; likewise, a liberal workplace is less likely to punish the unconventional. He correlates a diverse environment to the tolerance of creativity. For example, in his research, cities with high family-friendly scores also ranked high with gay people.

13. 2 Night Stand, http://www.2nightstand.com. Prospective designers send in portfolios, and participants are drawn from the applicants. The organizers attempt to represent a variety of disciplines and styles, and organize everyone into a few small groups, who spend a few days on creative deliverables for a single imaginary client.

14. Bright Bright Great, http://brightbrightgreat.com. *(Full disclosure: Bright Bright Great sponsored this issue without knowing they would be cited, and Sharlene had no knowledge of their sponsorship while writing her essay. —ed.)*

Practice and mistakes

Mistakes are one of the best ways to improve your practice, and some of them have led to great inventions.[15] Homework gives us the freedom to make mistakes; with less pressure on our output, we can be okay with screwing up. The real world often accounts for this, too: if you're editing on Wikipedia, for example, there is a sandbox available so you don't destroy a live article. Interactive agencies and large websites separate their staging sites from production, too.

In David Bayles and Ted Orland's *Art & Fear*, an entire chapter is devoted to discussing the profound lack of control we have over our creative processes.[16] Creative success is built on those who quit before us. We are successful not by talent or intelligence, but by our perseverance. We continue to create because we have learned how to continue—and continuing means we know how not to quit. Practice is an act of endurance; endurance requires you to keep going.

Practice has to exist in safe environments, free from responsibility and pressure. As designers, we have to grow our reputation, build our skills, and pay our rent. But while design may depend on bridging the gap between intention and result, we possess a remarkably small amount of control over the whole process. We can control our intentions, but we can't control our audience's or client's responses.[17] Homework frees us from that scrutiny, and that makes us more comfortable with failure.

Ramifications

It's impossible to pinpoint precise cultural shifts: the factors are esoteric and numerous enough to overwhelm most people. Most of us willfully ignore most culture, popular or no, because we may not be interested in the majority of artistic work. It takes effort to actively absorb culture, especially work we don't immediately like; it's much easier to stay comfortable with the things

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15. Many inventions were accidental. Coca-Cola was originally a headache cure; in the pursuit of refrigeration, Roy Plunkett invented Teflon; saccharin was discovered by a scientist who didn't wash his hands after working, and noticed that his food tasted sweeter.

16. David Bayles and Ted Orland, *Art & Fear,* Capra Press, 2000.

17. *Ibid.,* pp. 9–21.

we *do* like. *Art & Fear* describes our collective **conceptual inertia** as so stubborn that we only recognized a round earth when all flat-earth believers died.[18] But research can provide us with valuable cultural insights. We can learn where design practice came from, and that teaches us new ways to work with design going forward.

Likewise, if you plan on communicating in a relevant way, you can't only listen to the delayed echo of mass culture. Designers are the gatekeepers for communicating culture—whether a gig poster, a coupon for Mac & Cheese, or a new smartphone app. When you wait for cultural change to happen, you cease to be a participant in your own field.

As technology improves, we can give more of our time and attention to enjoying culture. That extra attention is referred to as a **cognitive surplus**,[19] which was coined by Clay Shirky in reference to cultural inventions that occupy a populace's time—like London's gin obsession during the Industrial Revolution, as well as the proliferation of reading after the invention of the printing press.

For our purposes, the Industrial Revolution isn't much different from the technological revolution we're facing now. Both involve the convergence of millions of people, and both of them bring about a significant shift in our standards of living. Both revolutions needed a way to bring levity: London had gin, we have short jokes on Twitter.[20]

In the years before the industrial revolution, mass printing was viewed as a cultural abomination by many intellectuals who didn't want to see reading brought to the masses.[21] Just as today's intellectuals chide television, video games, and other digital forms of entertainment, earlier intellectuals viewed the proliferation of reading with the same condescending disdain of popularized culture. Edgar Allen Poe declared in 1845:[22]

18.   *Ibid.,* p. 57.

19.   Clay Shirky, *Cognitive Surplus,* Penguin, 2010, pp. 1–12.

20.   *Ibid.*

21.   *Ibid.,* pp. 46–48.

22.   Edgar Allan Poe, *Marginalia,* 1840-1849, as quoted in Gorton Carruth and Eugene Ehrlich, *The Harper Book of American Quotations,* Harper & Row, 1988, p. 35.

The enormous multiplication of books in every branch of knowledge is one of the greatest evils of this age; since it presents one of the most serious obstacles to the acquisition of correct information by throwing in the reader's way piles of lumber in which he must painfully grope for the scraps of useful lumber.

Today, pop culture undermines our ability to measure objective quality. The democratization of measurement leads to inconsistency and corruption; we, too, have to "painfully grope for the scraps of useful lumber." But the core problem changed: the medium doesn't matter as much as our potentially limited viewpoints.

In *The Information Diet*, Clay Johnson says diversity of knowledge supports the integrity of our opinions.[23] Only seeking knowledge that confirms our opinion is the informational equivalent of junk food. But junk food is fine to eat sparingly: after all, we'll always bond with like-minded people, and it's certainly more enjoyable to do so. Dependence on that kind of information has a way of corrupting our thinking. Once you lean towards a given bias, you move further from the complex synthesis of personal contribution to a greater society.

Shirky draws many parallels between different cultural shifts, positing that our ability to synthesize and address many social contexts defines our creative abilities. Put another way: it isn't how many wheels we can invent, but how many purposes and uses we create for them.[24] We must be critical and analytical if we are to maintain consistent quality in our work. Being critical isn't about the destruction of a given idea, but elaborating on the train of thought behind that idea.[25]

23. Clay Johnson, *The Information Diet,* O'Reilly, 2012, pp. 113–115.
24. Clay Shirky, *Cognitive Surplus,* pp. 184–213. Shirky cites more examples throughout *Cognitive Surplus.*
25. M. Neil Browne, *Asking the Right Questions: A Guide to Critical Thinking,* pp. 1–8.

Being analytical is something learned, honed, and then applied. Focus on the habits you need to develop to analyze your own practice.[26] This can apply to any field. For instance, if you like music, you can reach out to a community of equally passionate people, be analytical about the music you enjoy, and try to appreciate as many different styles as possible. By doing these three things, you can develop a healthier appetite for what you already love.[27]

Homework's effect on design communities

THE INFLUENCERS AND THE INFLUENCED

In 1953, William M. Ivins, Jr. wrote *Prints and Visual Communication* to shed light on the artistic and cultural impact that printmaking left on society. He wrote that visual communication and design wasn't limited to printmaking:[28]

> While the number of printed pictures and designs that have been made as works of art is very large, the number made to convey visual information is many times greater. Thus the story of prints is not, as many people seem to think, that of a minor art form but that of a most powerful method of communication between men...

For Ivins, printing had cultural impact as a repeated statement. People get informed, and culture progresses, through repeatable communication.[29] In this way, our work is only as valuable as how it's received. The influential share their ideas; the influenced repeat those ideas. The sharing is more important than the inception.

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26. Jessica Hische, "Inspiration vs. Imitation", http://dsn.tc/02b-01. While I'm encouraging critical skills for your overall improvement, Hische says it is also a preventative measure that can help professionally.

27. William Duggan, *Strategic Intuition,* Columbia University Press, 2007, pp. 39–54. Duggan specifically cites the work of psychologist Gary Klein, who developed empirical studies on how experts are able to quickly react in high-pressure situations: for example, the firefighter who senses a backdraft behind a closed door, or a nurse who recognizes when someone is about to go into shock. Intelligent memory allows us to react quickly and instinctively, based on our accrued experiences.

28. William M. Ivins, Jr., *Prints and Visual Communication,* MIT Press, 1953, p. 158.

29. *Ibid.,* pp. 1–20.

The Professional Undercurrent

We're competitive by nature. We aspire to a higher position within society, and we want to be more capable than our peers. Elliott Jaques studied the social structure of factories and found that their success relied on a successful definition of hierarchy. It wasn't that workers were happily content in their roles; rather, they were given a specific path for improvement. Conversely, if workers weren't given goals and structure, communication and internal relationships quickly broke down. Without a point of reference for self-identity, people have no direction for self-growth.[30]

Since the design industry evaluates work in a qualitative way, it often relies on social comparisons. We establish our own perspective by comparing ourselves to one another —giving us recognition, a title, or personal validation. The desire for social dominance is known as our **status imperative**, which has historically provoked conflicts from trivial sibling rivalries to global class wars.[31]

Cultural leaders have always had a tenuous relationship with popular cul- ture: they may *represent* popular culture, but often shirk involvement with those who *consume* popular culture.[32] Because popular culture requires little effort to access, it becomes stigmatized by representing the underclass. Peter Savile once coldly summarized this when he said "cultural codes are being used to legitimise banality".[33] It takes a lot of work to keep tabs on how culture works, but it's required if you're going to effect any cultural change. Savile's specific grievance is that designers move into art practice without the

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30. Elliot Jaques, *The Changing Culture of a Factory*, Tavistock Publications, 1951, pp. 300–305. Jaques defined role confusion: without a clearly defined hierarchy, workers adopted more responsibilities than they were capable of fulfilling, believing themselves to be higher on the ladder than they really were.

31. David L. Weiner, *Reality Check,* Prometheus Books, 2005, pp. 195–233. For example, a husband might make a demeaning comment to his stay-at-home wife; as a result, the husband takes possession of a positional dominance, and the wife loses power accordingly, forming a rift of inequality between them.

32. For instance, the aforementioned example of Edgar Allen Poe's disdain for popularized reading.

33. Peter Saville, *Grafik* #159, "Confessions of an Art Defector", p. 69.

education of critical analysis: "Artists realize they only have themselves to give, whereas design covers that up all the time."[34]

Similarly, it's common for cultural leaders to disdain the uninitiated. Many famous designers build their own popularity through studying esoteric branches of culture. As cultural leaders amass recognition and attention for their own good work, they distance themselves from those with less cultural reception. It's one of the darker sides of the creative class: we claim a meritocracy, but the quiet elite is protective of their success, and many junior-level designers have more questions than answers.[35] I believe success comes through homework: the projects we do separate from our day-to-day work, that help us *live* design rather than simply *work in* design, allow passionate designers to break through.

A way forward

Design only makes sense in context. Learn to differentiate work culturally and qualitatively. Enjoy everything you love, but be analytical about why you love it.[36] It's okay to like something for its own sake, but you can't use personal taste to justify your work.

You have to practice in order to turn out good work, but you also have to cultivate your knowledge of the difference between good work and bad work. Develop new habits. Make lots of mistakes. Relish those mistakes. Analyze those mistakes and make something better. Don't obsess about any of your successes; you'll stop learning and repeat yourself.

We are each individually responsible for advancing design, so get out of your office and participate. Nobody will carry you along if you aren't already willing to keep up. Homework indulges our inclinations, strengthens our skills,[37] and provides access to an inspirational community.
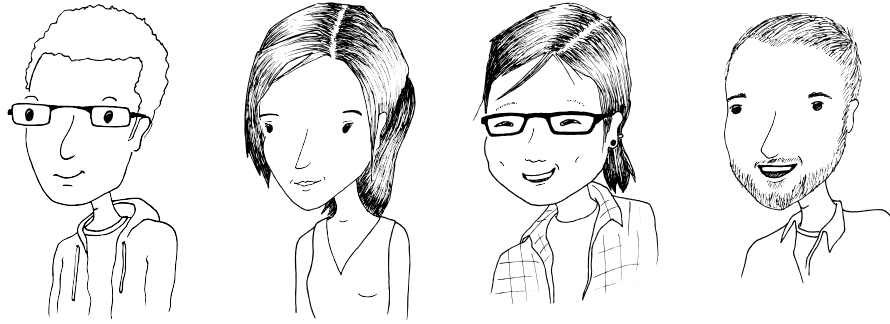
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34. *Ibid.,* p. 70.

35. Robert Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class,* pp. 78–79. Florida discusses meritocracy largely in a positive light—mentioning, for instance, its ability to upend a caste system.

36. M. Neil Browne, *Asking the Right Questions: A Guide to Critical Thinking.*

37. Steven Johnson, *Where Good Ideas Come From,* Riverhead, 2010.

About the authors

Nick Disabato helps other people make *Distance*. He once made *Cadence & Slang*, a very small book about interaction design; and he also founded The Publication Standards Project, an advocacy organization for a saner and more humane digital publishing landscape. An interaction designer by trade, he cares about the way that we talk with each other, and he wants to make our conversations more constructive and meaningful. He can usually be found on his bike somewhere in Chicago.

Cassie McDaniel is a designer at University Health Network in Toronto. She blogs regularly about the murky intersection of healthcare and design in what is probably a lame attempt to get other designers to join the healthcare cause. You can also find her speaking at various events, on Twitter sharing favorite discoveries, or making some kind of to-do list. You will rarely find her doing nothing (if you do, call for help). She has previously been published in *Freelance Switch*, *Smashing Magazine,* and *A List Apart*.

Sharlene King is a designer living in Chicago with two cats, a partner, and a fantastically large collection of matchbooks. She designs on the weekend, in the after hours, and with a mouthful of food for a variety of clients—from global pharmaceuticals to incorrigible startups. Other people named Sharlene King include a pilates instructor, a British MMA fighter, and a wombat conservationist.

Francisco Inchauste is a designer and writer who tries to create meaningful digital things—which he's found is a lot harder than it sounds. He's an interaction designer, working at Universal Mind, and currently the UX Design editor for Smashing Magazine. He likes to tweet a lot (@iamFinch) and sometimes finds time to blog at GetFinch.com.

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