

Outline and Discussion Questions

- 1) Introduction of the problem
 - a) Expectation for novices to design information without traditional patterns to fall back on
 - b) Attitude of novices that they have no basis for making design decisions
- 2) Research question – describe the responses of non-professional designers to known issues in information design
- 3) Public signs as the object of study
 - a) Reasons to study signs
 - b) Signs as artifacts
- 4) The nature of the task facing the non-professional sign maker
 - a) Praxis
 - b) Information design
 - c) Information representation
 - d) Technical knowledge and skill
- 5) Method
 - a) Artifacts
 - b) Analysis
- 6) Discussion and findings
 - a) Non-professional designers appear to grapple actively with the primary issues of information design and representation
 - b) Non-professional designers appear to struggle with technical and skill problems that interfere with implementing basically sound design decisions
 - c) Non-professional designers do not appear to employ processes that would help them to avoid unintended or undesirable outcomes of basically sound design decisions

Discussion questions

What makes a sign “apparently non-professional”? By implication then, what are the standards of professional signage design?

How are novice designers in college courses different than the population of designers represented in the collection under study? What differences might this make in their praxis?

What are the limits of inference from visual artifacts in a study like this one?