

Spring 2021

Connecting with Covid - Pandemic Pandemonium

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Pandemic Pandemonium - Spring 2021
Student Winner based on Assignment

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Semester taught assignment: FA20

Course Title: Design in Society

Assignment Title: Connecting with Covid - Pandemic Pandemonium

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Connecting to COVID - Pandemic Pandemonium

In your own lives, close proximity or distance from friends, family, and university - and the changes Covid has wrought - have become something you experience everyday. Many of our most familiar social encounters and activities -- which contribute so much to a meaningful human existence - have dried up or are disrupted until the pandemic is over. Ongoing self-isolation has given us an opportunity, though, to reflect upon what a *social species* we are, or can be, or are not; and how we are deeply dependent upon one another--and upon social space--in the best and worst of times.

Find a design in your life, your home, your neighborhood, at your workplace; that has made a significant difference during the last 8 months. It can be a good or bad influence, but it must be related to the situation of the pandemic - something that you spent time with, used for some reason, wore, inhabited, or enjoyed, that improved or aided your situation. Not a mask, a smartphone or cellphone/tablet, or laptop. These are obvious.

Suggested type of item/design/place: *craft, stuffed animal, bike, car, old sweater, game, "pet rock", favorite mug, poster, photobook, building, jewelry, instrument, lamp, dinner table, garden, patio, or other item or place. If you are in doubt - email me! Do not leave choosing until the last minute.*

Research journal articles related to your Topic. *For instance, find an historical or art historical or design connection. **Examples:** design and psychology, painting history, toys and stress, materials and comfort; designing with light, designing with salvaged wood; personal belongings and their relevance to human identity, cleanliness and decluttering.*

- You need a minimum of 3 entries (articles/book), alphabetized by author, in your Bibliography.
- Write a maximum 2 pages double-spaced of writing, plus a Bibliography page including a *credited* photograph of the design.
- Write a detailed description of the design:
 - What it is: Size, color, material(s) made from or used, layout or plan if needed, special detailing; location; where made and by whom; if foliage, what type. Include further description about the design's cultural heritage or origins, if known or relevant.
- Connect the design/place to design history, history, art history, pandemic history.
- Connect the design/place briefly to your emotional state, creativity, routine habits -- during the pandemic. Think about: What is important about choosing this? What about the design/object or place's design has meant something unique? Is it a comfort or protective factor? Has it been a discomfort in contrast to something else? Has it been something challenging? **Will you remember it as significant to this period of time, if so, why?**
- Conclusion (this can be a sentence or two - see below)

Example: Introduction - A mid-century modern 5'3" Alana floor lamp with a 7" straw-weave lampshade located in the front doorway of "home" will be written about in terms of the quality of its light and the meaning of that light to the household during Covid 19 isolation.

The light cast is warm and inviting. The special LED lightbulb sheds a warm, honey-colored light through the straw lampshade. Because of the warm light, the lamp gives off a secure, homey, and comfortable feeling to the house. The light from the lamp is similar to the light used to illuminate the wall in a Vermeer (fig. 1) given that it is a focused and not distributed light and because Vermeer's paintings are intensely interior pictures. In "The Milkmaid", 1656, light is used to form the space in which a calm woman, the milkmaid, is pouring a liquid. The image is serene. The Alana lamp gives off a similar serene feeling.



fig. 1 Johannes Vermeer, "The Milkmaid"

Also, the lamp is left on for whenever someone arrives and until the house is quiet, just like the quiet in the painting. The lamp has been left on every day at home, since I moved off campus, loaded my car with all my belongings, and drove to Sacramento in March. The lamp was a welcoming "beacon" then, and still performs that function after 8 months. The action of turning it "on" everyday has become a comfort. New bulbs were ordered so that they could be easily replaced and the lamp would not stand and be dark even for an afternoon. The repetition of turning it on and off is comforting and has associations with home, interiority and peace.

- Write about your item/design/place's **symbolic value**. What is symbolic value? How might it have symbolic value that only you know, or that is known culturally?

Example: The lamp has symbolic value because lamps represent knowledge or "illumination" (cite the article). They also represent love, desire, or other positive feelings depending on the type of lamp. A floor lamp can mean "home" or a reading space, or a space for thinking or solitude. Lamps also light up eyes, faces, sidewalks, doorways and prevent us from having darkness in our lives or not being able to see, which is scary, foreboding or less comfortable than to have light.

Warm light also reminds humans of fire, or can even symbolize fire. The sun, candlelight and interior illumination are all parts of our lifestyles and we have positive associations with these good things. The floor lamp was purchased during the holiday season when everyone was in a good mood. This gives us good associations and the holidays are a time of symbolic light. In Jewish culture, Hanukkah is a festival of light.

- Write about some connection you make between researched article(s) and the selected item.

Example: *In addition, according to Stanford University studies on depression, subjects bathed in light daily are less likely to become emotionally depressed. (cite the article!) Researchers have demonstrated that during the winter months in Northern California when it rains for weeks on end, people are more likely to become depressed or moody than they are when the sun comes out. Using light to ward off depression is a good way to use design to influence the environment around us and to control our emotional states in a positive way. During the pandemic, this lamp has had this effect upon my household.*

- Conclude with a brief paragraph (one or two sentences) which states something about what you learned from writing this short paper.

Example: *Finally, writing about this floor lamp has improved my overall understanding as a designer of what 'light' itself means and how necessary and desirable it is to provide quality light in spaces where we spend a lot of time. Self-isolation has made me closer to my parents' home again, and has made me appreciate the quality of light in the spaces, but especially this welcoming lamp just inside the doorway. The paper has also given me an opportunity to think about how I use light and where I could cut down and save energy by not leaving lamps on all the time. However, LED bulbs barely take up any energy and the lamp can be left on. As a result of this lamp, the time of Covid 19 isolation has been more enjoyable and comfortable, while at the same time being an inconvenience in many other ways.*

PARTS of PAPER

- 2 pages of writing, maximum. Include a Title, and name, date, course name, my name. 1inch margins. Times New Roman.
- Introduction, description, symbolic meaning, connection to history of design/art or both, conclusion.

- **At least one correctly-used and formatted Chicago Manual of Style citation in your text referring to an article in your Bibliography.**

Bibliography - 3 entries minimum, alphabetized by author. Use peer-reviewed journal articles or reputable newspaper articles - from our Library databases. Provide the citation, not the link. Links I cannot open will result in points lost. One can be a book on or about or related to the topic. No websites or videos. Citation must show author, title, DOP, etc. in Chicago Manual of Style format for Art History.

Include one photo with caption/credit. (Put photo on bibliography page.)

Your best academic writing with citation(s) where needed. If you state a fact, then cite the source. Avoid I/me and SLANG. Spell out contractions - is not, cannot, do not, will not - and use your best spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Hint: Use subheadings where you are changing from one section to another.

All questions can be emailed to me! I will try to respond asap.

Submit paper as PDF to this Assignment on Canvas - No later than midnight, Friday November 20th.

Submissions are subject to Turnitin! No copying without attribution or you Fail.

USE YOUR OWN WORDS TO WRITE YOUR PAPER.

USE QUOTES AND CITATIONS WHERE YOU ARE BORROWING WORDS FROM AN ARTICLE OR PERSON. The Library site has an easy Citation tool!

PLEASE AVOID WRITING YOUR LIFE STORY.

WRITE ABOUT THE DESIGN AND ITS MEANING and its CONNECTION TO THE PANDEMIC....HOW HAS IT WORKED TO IMPROVE OR CHANGE YOUR LIFE?

Rubric (will become more detailed)

Relevance to topic/theme (40%)

Communication of idea (20%)

Depth of analysis (20%)

Skill in writing/presentation (20%)