

# Annotated bibliography

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## • Reading list

1. Donna Haraway's dissatisfaction with theories of praxis and positionalism is that they merely add the 'subjective' to the 'objective' without reflecting on the problems of objectivism itself. Feminist STS research should not be concerned with position, but with positioning. Donna's feminist theory of knowledge aims to produce a radically different knowledge and reality through a rethinking of the division of labour, power, and dualism, arguing that all knowledge is contextualised. This feminist objectivism articulated by Donna has some links to the Primark trousers we studied in the project. The reality of a situation where the majority of those working in Bangladesh's sweatshops are female labourers, where women are the represented rather than the representing, where they suffer unfair and unobjective treatment in a brutal class struggle that has been dominated by an ethic, a politics, a science, has a long way to go. What we need, as Donna says, is a partial and responsible exchange and dialogue, with our own unique and well-reasoned voices and an insistence on open reason. There is no doubt that her views have theoretical and practical implications for our understanding of the issue of objectivity in science, feminist views of science that cannot be ignored.
  
2. What is critical graphic design critiquing? This is a question I always ask myself when I am designing, because sometimes I think I choose to stop thinking, or I am afraid to be subversive. The word I see most often in MA GCD brief and in my own presentations is 'critical', as if I can subconsciously say or write 'my critical graphic design/thinking is...' But am I actually meeting the criteria for criticality? Am I seriously communicating my critical approach to the research project? But it is undeniable that during my five months of study at MA GCD, I began to focus on my own critical thinking and on the development of open-ended learning. I am deeply convinced that no outcome can be achieved overnight, but requires deep exploration and reflection. In particular, in the contextualised methods project, my group members and I practised a lot of studio-based methods on the black trousers label. We did not deliberately pursue or stay at a certain stage, but continued to deepen our positions through diverse experiments to present our critical thinking.

- **Beyond the reading list**

1. We rarely think about something very ordinary for more than three minutes, unless you are particularly interested in it. It is such an unassuming black trouser that carries behind it the innocent deaths and injuries of countless poor class labourers, cheap labour, a terrible industrial disaster, an opaque fast fashion industry, a looming environmental crisis... It is heartbreaking, so we need to end fast fashion to minimise the harm and damage. Although I have heard and generally understood the news about sweatshops in Bangladesh for a long time, it would be hard for me to relate this horrible man-made disaster to an object we see so often without the museum/website adding descriptions to it, because the subconscious is used to accepting the facts and not good at questioning why, where and how it came from. I respect the CADD section's Rapid Response Collecting strategy of collecting these trousers as a collection, which allows us as viewers and graphic communication designers to develop and disseminate some of our attitudes in our own professional sphere. This includes our latest iteration of the experiment, which uses the actual black trousers as a vehicle for critiquing the fast fashion industry.
2. This Clean Clothes Campaign website supported our group to further develop a project based on The collapse of the Rana Plaza factory building in Bangladesh, as it contains many authentic accounts and voices from survivors of the disaster, such as 'Pay Up'. Based on my position as 'Labour behind the label', I incorporated these words of recourse, obscurity and resistance into my cataloguing and iterative experiments. When I wrote these words by hand, I was extremely difficult and conflicted because I could not really empathise with the real situation of these garment workers and imagine their despondency and fearlessness in the face of this terrible tragedy. To this day, the fight for justice for the Rana Plaza workers and a safe factory for all is ongoing and I will contribute what I can and what I think. History has not been forgotten and our concern for deathtrap workplaces within the garment industry will continue.

- **Design practices/projects**

1. Samin Ahmadzadeh's 'Memento' series was a great inspiration for our group. Using 'Photo Weavings' he shredded and wove together two photographs of his father representing different experiences to reshape the fragments of memory into an abstract image—a recall of his father's unconscious being formed as a result of his life experiences between an Eastern and a Western society. Our group loved these abstract visual images with a sense of vivid storytelling, where the people in

the images seem to be narrating the story from across time and space. We therefore used this weaving inspiration to learn in an iterative experiment, because it is random, original, able to demonstrate subjective ideas and has emotion. Using the studio-based methods, we delved into developing iterative experiments that put our positions/information/knowledge in the form of weaving into different labels. This is the first time I have tried paper weaving, and although it is not difficult, it requires a lot of experimentation and exploration, including the choice of materials and weaving techniques that need to be considered.

2. I am really drawn to Sho Shibuya's minimalist work, which is as wonderful as dyed cloth and offers a comfortable visual relief to the audience. Throughout Sho Shibuya's creative experience, I have found him obsessed with capturing fleeting moments, like a diary, where the calm of the sky and the anxiety of the news inspire him to dialogue through inspiring art. I admire the positive qualities in this artist who uses his art in a gentle way to offer generosity and peace to those in need. However, his work is both aesthetically appealing and in tune with current events, demonstrating his political stance and personal expression. Sho Shibuya was also much appreciated by our group members for his euphemistic, softly spoken critique of the injustices of the world, but always maintaining an undying hope for life. We wish the labourers of the Rana Plaza factory building in Bangladesh the same love and peace that will come their way.

#### Reference list

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