

individual talents and skills to a collaborative team. Interior design education needs to capitalize on its intimate relationship with clients and their needs to define user-centered research as one of the strengths of the discipline.

Doblin Group, a firm that practices “strategic design planning,” assists clients in understanding change and utilizes such understandings to transform industries through directed use and application of design knowledge. They believe that designers have “the vision and the values needed to invent holistic, integrated concepts for the future, fixing many parts of everyday life.” The firm gives designers the tools needed to be coequal to financiers, marketers, organizational design experts, researchers, engineers, and manufacturing experts. Utilizing innovative user-centered research, the firm surveys human activity and use with commonplace technologies. Disposable cameras, videotapes, and digital tape recordings are analyzed in depth before design concepts are initiated. “The truth is, no designer or engineer, in my judgment, can reinvent something unless and until it’s broken down to the point where their common sense, logic, intuition, spirit, and brilliance can wrap around it adequately.”³³

WHAT ARE THE FUTURE IMPLICATIONS FOR DESIGN EDUCATION?

In a critique of design education, John Chris Jones, professor of design at the British Open University, writes that the available design skills are still inadequate to the scale of difficulties that the new technologies are bringing to them. Interior design education will be impacted by a blurring between the traditional allied disciplines of architecture, industrial design, and furniture design. In transitioning from proscriptive to inscriptive approaches, it will graduate designers less and less as technicians than as creative leaders critically and competently able to reconceptualize how we create, renovate, and habitate space. It will accept and design for change. At the same time there must be continued respect for the skills and abilities of all contributors. According to Duffy, “not everyone has all the skills—no one of us has all the

abilities.”³⁴ It is important in understanding change to acknowledge that no one discipline will have all the answers.

A recent survey of interior design educators, practitioners, and firms by FIDER published in *Interiors & Sources* (March 1999) identified the need to develop the traits and values of good interior design practice: attributes such as creative and analytical thinking, ability to focus on user needs, ethical practice, global understanding, and appreciation of diversity were cited; embrace technological use as a design, communication, and presentation tool; increase awareness of protection of the client and consumer through understanding and application of codes and regulations. These goals speak to the desire to acknowledge the cultural contribution of the interior designer. This is in keeping with the IIDA/E-Lab Report, which calls for the development of a distinct identity for interior design—an identity that as a practice provides a “human-centered” sensibility to the design of the built environment. This human interaction and emphasis should be the catalyst that unites the various schools, the public, and the industry. From the point of human interaction comes this more expanded definition of interior architecture.

For interior design education, the problem with design suggests that designers and design educators need to redesign the problems they face; they need to accept breakdowns in disciplinary barriers, and collaborate. Interior design education will expand its arena of knowledge and expertise to include the branding of environments based on human need and activity, sustainable practices, user-centered research, interactive information architecture, smart spaces, immersive environments, and design knowledge as value design. Eva Maddox and Associates works with clients holistically reconceptualizing attitude and appearance, redefining image, marketing, and interiors based on the company’s history and projected future. The work of Diller and Scofidio employs video surveillance as interaction between users of space both interior and exterior. The Virtual Guggenheim and the New York Stock Exchange “interiors” by Lise Ann Couture and Hani Rashid of Asymptote bring information about stock movement graphically alive and engage the viewer in an interactive on-line tour of galleries and works of art. “Smart spaces” proposed by Richard Rogers and others offer sensible interactions with space serving our comfort, security, and use through sensors and embedded technology. Knowledge of user behavior and interaction with