

## J Fidler

### RESEARCH QUESTION

*Should graphic designers be active creators of cultural artefacts within their community or reactive curators and synthesisers of existing culture for commercial gains?*

*Does graphic design taint the authenticity and truthfulness of culture through their process?*

*Can Graphic Designers tell the stories of others faithfully?*

The research aims to demonstrate that, (or pose the question whether,) graphic designers have not the only ability, but the responsibility to use their visual storytelling skills to elevate the unheard, unseen and under-represented within their location, and/or even to amend history.

Should design and by extension, designers create participatory processes aimed at capturing voices beyond their own – should they be a tool for creation rather than the creators? Should they be in service to a community and a more passive participant in the creation and production of content? And can design amend history?

Graphic designers will continue to work commercially, translating business needs into visual stories. However, with the advent of technology and automation lowering the threshold to production and creation, does the future graphic design have an opportunity to work outside of the commercial realm and use their storytelling skills to more expressive voices of culture. If they are trained to aid commercial entities in telling their stories, do they not have a responsibility (or at least ability) to use this for non-commercial representation?

Los Angeles is a city that is globally recognised yet not truly understood; this is partly due to its use as a film set, and because Hollywood – and by extension, Los Angeles – is a metonym for the entertainment business. The lives of many or most of its citizens are eclipsed and rendered meaningless. The incredible amount of (visual)media created by and about this city borders on mendacity. Should graphic designers be engaged in active curation, collation, and celebration of cultures around them, and in what way does the author influence the story?

I currently envision this to be a researched-based, academic piece of writing; however, during the process, it may make sense to develop an actual physical entity as a case study.

### RESEARCH EXAMPLES

#### Yerba Buena

By Convening Dialogue Among Diverse Communities, Yerba Buena Creates Culture That Stirs Civic Action

[The Arts don't need new audiences, they need communities](#)

[Josh Kun](#)

[Tsion Avital](#)

[Do participatory research methods 'give voice'? - Dr Daniel McCulloch](#)

[Artefacts in cultural transmission – Aleksandra Nikolić](#)

[Visual Poetry – An International Anthology](#)

[Eleonora Lupo – Connecting design, cultures, artifacts and heritage](#)

[How to Read Donald Duck – Ariel Dorfman And Armand Mattelart](#)

[Ulrich Beck](#)

[Education for Socially Engaged Art –Pablo Helguera](#)

[Jürgen Habermas](#)

[Mixing Messages : Graphic Design in Contemporary American Culture – Ellen Lupton](#)

### COLLABORATORS/CONNECTIONS/CONTACTS

#### Jamila Fairley

'Documentary film producer of compelling content with a commitment to inclusive storytelling.'

#### Leland Anderson

Writer/Screenwriter

#### Steve Boyer

Designer/Architect/Professor California State University Long Beach

#### Tanya Aguiñiga

Artist/designer/community activist

I am confident that I will want and need to add additional persons and institutions to this as the project develops; these could be writers' groups, community centres, design students, or simply individuals within Los Angeles's neighbourhoods.

**J Fidler**

**USELESSLY VAGUE PATH**

