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Questioning the Nature of Design Activity Through Alasdair MacIntyre's Account of the Concept of Practice

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ABSTRACT   This study examines the nature of design as a professional activity with regard to Christopher Higgins' conceptualization of what counts as a practice. Inspired by the work of American moral philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre, Higgins identified 14 criteria to determine if an

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activity can be considered a practice or not. As MacIntyre suggested in his book *After Virtue* (2007), practice consists of socially established human activities that respond to recognized norms of excellence. Under the tutelage of that model, our study suggests that design, in the current state of things, cannot genuinely claim itself to be a practice.

Introduction

Over recent decades, research undertaken in and by the broad field of design allowed it to clarify the scope of its object and raise its credentials as a scientific discipline (Cross 2018, 2001; Findeli 2016). In the meantime, many design professionals continued to struggle to see their skills and expertise be fully recognized despite transformative progress leading to some significant shifts in regard to design's primary objective. Muratovski (2015) suggested that design's central aim moved from styling to problem-solving to problem-seeking. While some designers hold strategic roles in product development, Perks, Cooper, and Jones (2005) have demonstrated that designers mostly are considered custodians of technical skills. Moreover, unlike other professional fields, no one outside of the design community is overly annoyed or bothered by amateur practices claiming to be design. In contrast, it does not take long for the public to seek advice from experts when urban developers start pushing projects impacting cities and social landscape (Porter 2015). In a similar vein, intense debates arise when the pharmacy starts selling homeopathic medicine (Pharmacy Magazine 2018). This public lack of concern for the threshold of the house of design is typical of an activity in which goods remain esoteric. In other words, the fact that design's expertise, its specific ways of posing and addressing problems, can be overlooked is indicative of some indeterminacy in regard to the nature of its practical activity.

This situation is starting to become a pressing issue as design practitioners, from industrial designers to architects, are moving away from their traditional core businesses (Vial 2018). Business models, services and public policies are all considered contemporary problems or situations that can benefit from designers' inputs.

Within the last couple of decades, design has become a rather broad concept, dealing with extra-material sides of life, such as social behavior, cultural ideas, psychological and cognitive stereotypes, experience design, emotional design, or even mind design. This shows the huge impact of design in today's society, both as a profession and as a field of knowledge, but at the same time, the lack of boundaries might also be seen as a sign of crisis.

Design is surely an expanding field, but in the same movement it might also become a vaporizing field (Raahauge 2015, 1.1).

The broadening of design's scope of activities paved the way for acrimonious quarrels about what is and what is not design. These quarrels rose to a point at which some designers appear to be on trial for heresy for pushing their activities to the margins.[1]

All these black clouds hanging over design call for a closer look at the nature of its activity. Rather than taking a defensive stance to answer all these questions, we consider those critics the symptoms of the inability of design to seize the essence or transcendent commonality of its activity. Many among the design community get Herbert Simons' (1996) idea of design as any form of human activity engaged in transforming a situation into a preferred one. Yet even such a broad definition does not succeed at closing debates. This calls for more research about the intricate nature of design activity. In line with research in other fields facing similar struggles, namely education, we take a somewhat bold stance and question whether design is even worthy of being considered a practice. By taking on such a line of questioning, our goals are twofold. First, we aim at identifying objects of contention preventing design's public emancipation as an expertise, and second, we identify elements that may provide new clues to addressing the quarrels about the boundaries of design.

To address these questions, we look at the activity of design in light of Alasdair MacIntyre's (2007) concept of practice. MacIntyre's definition offers an account of practice through the 'goods' pursued by those who engage in the activity. This approach allows understanding what may foster design professionals into a community of practice. The notion of community, as Cyril Lemieux (2009) suggested, can be defined as the 'horizon called by any actions or judgments'. To examine design activity through the prism of MacIntyre's concept of practice, we rely on the method developed by philosopher of education Christopher Higgins (2010a), who identified 14 criteria from MacIntyre's conceptualization of practice. Higgins' method offers insight into the nature of an activity and allows determining if said activity is worthy of being considered a practice in MacIntyre's perspective.

Through this paper, we aim to present MacIntyre's concept of practice and Higgins' criteria to look at how design activities resist it. The identification of points of contention preventing design from being considered a practice, in MacIntyre's perspective, offers the design community future research cues that may serve to settle current issues encountered by professionals in the course of their daily activities.

The Study of Practice

Given its pragmatic nature and the concreteness of its goals, design is naturally considered a practice. The coupling of design and practice is well established in the everyday language of the trade. For instance, it is common to hear about the practice of design or the relationship

between theory and practice. However, one who dives seriously into a review of definitions of the concept of practice sees that linking design to practice might be more problematic than expected. Even if most make little case for it, the concept of practice is polysemic and conceptually heavily loaded.

Concern for practice truly started at the turn of the 1970s, when social sciences started showing interest in studying human activities (Balstad-Brewer 1997). Among the central figures of this practical turn are the proponents of the Chicago School of Pragmatic Sociology (Goffman 1969; Garfinkel 1984) and scholars like French sociologists Pierre Bourdieu (1977), who wrote *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, and Michel de Certeau (1984), who published *The Practice of Everyday Life*. The central characteristic of this practical turn was a shift of focus from beliefs, desires, emotions, or goals to the analysis of human practices, i.e. capacities, skills and know-how (Hager 2013). As such, practices are considered 'the central location and mode of the production and passing on of social and cultural meaning' (Mareis 2016, 36). The study of practices allows a new domain of social life to become understandable. As such, practices can be described as locations in which human and non-human actors intertwine to give meaning to the norms explaining, at least in some capacity, the ways of acting, thinking, and doing.

As this research trend developed, the notion of practice became more complex and harder to circumscribe (Kemmis 2011; Green 2009). In seeking to provide a framework for distinguishing the different uses of the term, Elena P. Antonacopoulou (2008) identified five extensions to the notion of practice: (1) practice as action; (2) practice as structure; (3) practice as an activity system; (4) practice as social context; and (5) practice as knowing. Each extension deals with a particular dimension of practice. The coexistence of these different perspectives demonstrates all the complexity behind the notion, but mostly, it invites us to recognize that not all organized human activity should be considered practice.

The Concept of Practice As Defined by Alasdair MacIntyre

In regard to practice as a system of activities, philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre offered an interesting conceptualization. Mostly known for his work in moral philosophy, MacIntyre discussed the concept of practice in his book *After Virtue.* He characterized a practice as:

> … any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended. (MacIntyre 2007, 187)

Among the significant elements to take away from his characterization is that not all activities should be considered practices.

> Tic-tac-toe is not an example of a practice in this sense, nor is throwing a football with skill; but the game of football is, and so is chess. Bricklaying is not a practice; architecture is. Planting turnips is not a practice, farming is. (MacIntyre 2007, 187)

According to Knight (2008), to be considered a practice in the Aristotelian perspective MacIntyre is based on, an activity has to imply more than technical proficiency. The originality of MacIntyre's conceptualization lies in the fact that a practice is closely linked to an ethic. MacIntyre posits that practices are places in which the outlines of moral norms are developing and expressed. Each true practice carries distinctive attributes and a special understanding of the common good. According to Christopher Higgins, 'practices do not sit at the endpoint of ethical reflection, passively awaiting ethical understanding to guide them, but are themselves formative of our ethical understanding' (Higgins 2010a, 237). In other words, it is through practices that our 'goods' are determined. As Higgins defined it, ' … a good is something we judge to be worthwhile to have, achieve, attend to, or participate in' (Higgins 2010a, 238). MacIntyre further suggested making a distinction between the internal and external goods of the practice. He defined as external the goods that someone acquires through the engagement in an activity, like money or fame. Internal goods are different because they cannot be obtained. Internal goods are qualities, standards of excellence, to achieve in carrying out an activity. For example, the good of professional cycling does not solely lie in crossing the finish line in first place, but also on a set of ideals that includes the strength to ride fast without relying on performance-enhancing drugs. Internal goods are the essence of a practice that underpins its coherence and gives meaning to the rules. As Antonacopoulou pointed out, 'practices provide an arena in which the internal goods of practice can be exhibited, while external goods may be potentially earned' (Antonacopoulou 2008, 119).

By considering internal goods, MacIntyre turns practices into places in which contours of the common good are determined. As Higgins puts it, 'practices such as architecture, baseball and chemistry do more than just produce buildings, pennant races and periodic tables: each discloses a different aspect of human flourishing' (Higgins 2010a, 240).

Reasons for Doubting Design Qualifies as a Practice

When he tried to distinguish what type of activity can be considered practice, MacIntyre referred to architecture, which we consider part of the general design field. In this context, why should we doubt design is a practice? First, as Higgins later suggested, to determine

whether an activity can be considered a practice, we have to rely on descriptions from those engaged in the activity. The goods are said to be internal because they find their specificities only within the framework of the practice, and such goods can only be identified and recognized by those engaged in it (Hager 2013). In this context, even though MacIntyre categorized architecture as a practice, this criterion, for he is a philosopher, has not been met. The second reason to doubt MacIntyre's endorsement of architecture can be traced to an argument he mobilized to deny education the status of practice. MacIntyre refused to recognize education as a practice because its purpose, its ultimate end, does not rest in itself. He stated that education remains an activity in the service of other practices. Music is a practice, and education is an instrument of its mastery. If we follow this syllogistic strand of reasoning, doubt can be raised about architecture's and design's qualifications as practices. The outcome that stems from design activity, may it be a material object or immaterial thing like a service or a system, is likely to be the instrument of something else rather than an end in itself. Analogically to what education is to music, we could say that cookware, as products of design activity, find their true purpose only in their use by the chef preparing a meal. This inconsistency in MacIntyre's reasoning has been highlighted by Joseph Dunne (2003), who has long debated with MacIntyre about the declassification of education:

… with respect to architecture: its end is indeed good buildings – but 'good' here is not specifiable solely by architects without reference to the goods of other practices. For, with respect to any particular building, it will matter whether it is, for example, a family home, an office, a cathedral or a football stadium; in each case it will have to serve the practice properly housed in that kind of building. (Dunne 2003, 355)

If Dunne used architecture to make a claim for reconsidering education as practice, we see it instead as a call for questioning the validity of design qualification as a practice.

Toward of a Definition of Criteria for Determining what Qualifies as Practice

MacIntyre's disqualification of education has provoked many critics from the education science research community (MacIntyre and Dunne 2002). Critics issued insightful investigations that turned out to be instrumental for the clarification and identification of formal criteria for distinguishing what is, from what is not, a practice. On that specific matter, Christopher Higgins shed light on certain ambiguities about MacIntyre's characterization and identified certain issues to facilitate a dialog with the philosopher.

Table 1. Summary of practice criteria defined by Christopher Higgins.

Categories	Criteria
Internal qualities	1. Evaluative teleology
	2. Standards of excellence
	3. Moral phenomenology
	4. Excellence of character of the practitioner
	5. Good of a biographical genre
Formal and social external qualities	6. Complexity
	7. Coherence
	8. Social roots
	9. Community of practice
	10. Traditions
	11. Learning rituals
Properties related to how the activity reverberates in its social realm	12. Rely on institutions
	13. Moral virtues have distinct breeding grounds than their institutions.
	14. Esoteric goods become exoteric.

Higgins' Criteriology

Higgins took MacIntyre's characterization of practices, synthesized its essence, and developed a list of 14 criteria for determining if an activity qualifies as a practice. The 14 criteria are divided into three categories: (1) five internal qualities; (2) six formal and social external qualities; and (3) three properties related to how the activity reverberates in its social realm (see Table 1).

Internal Goods

To start determining if an activity is worthy of being called a practice, Higgins suggested examining whether the activity 'has grown into a rich and idiosyncratic ethical world' (Higgins 2010a, 258). This can be assessed by looking at five internal criteria. First, a practice implies that the activity: (1) has its own evaluative teleology, that is to say, a particular way to problematize[2] a situation. This supposes that the practitioner acting according to this teleology has internal goods to strive for. This makes it possible, for example, to distinguish the praxeology of medicine from that of nursing (Bonnet et al. 2013). If the physician and the nurse can both work at the same place and time and on the same patient, their respective roles and their contributions remain distinguishable. Because each of these professionals looks at the patients' problems from a particular stance, both of these activities have a specific teleology. The physician's job is to look for symptoms, make diagnoses, and determine courses of treatment. The nurse has the responsibility of caring for the patient and administering prescribed treatments to ensure that all goes well during the patient's recovery (Magnon 2001).

Higgins went on to say that practices are activities that have: (2) standards of excellence that can be acknowledged in the characteristics of both products and performances. This means that the activity should produce an outcome that can be judged worthy. The practice of chemistry can be appreciated in the results of the experiment, but also in the creativity and audacity that went into designing the experiment or the rigor demonstrated in following the research protocol. Without standards of excellence in products, it would be alchemy, and without standards of performance, nothing would protect the public from flimflam. Higgins also mentioned that an activity worthy of consideration as a practice must demonstrate; (3) a moral phenomenology. This criterion means that practices participate in framing the contours of the common good. To fulfill this criterion, those engaged in the activity should establish a particular view on the conditions of human flourishing, but this view does not need to be intelligible to anyone outside of those who are engaged in the practice. Higgins gave the example of the painter and the priest who both maintain a contact with transcendence. Yet this contact manifests itself in terms that are very specific to either practice. Finally, he argued that practices are places in which there is: (4) excellence of character to be achieved by the practitioner; and (5) a good of a biographical genre. In education, as Higgins stated, a particular form of patience manifests itself. He demonstrated that to excel, the teacher must know how to wait until the learner understands the lesson without ever rushing it. This first set of criteria is internal qualities to practice. Indeed, these criteria concern each practice in a sense that is specific only to them.

External Qualities

In addition to internal qualities, the activity must also meet external criteria. Higgins noted six criteria of formal and social quality. First, to be recognized as a practice, the activity must present both: (6) complexity; and (7) coherence. This implies that the activity has structuring forces such as operating rules or processes. As a corollary, this means that a practice cannot be a simplistic activity. To use Higgins' example, it is the difference between chess and tic-tac-toe. While both these two games certainly meet the criteria of coherence, the degree of complexity of the tic-tac-toe is too insignificant to fulfill the complexity criterion. Next, practices are defined by the fact that they must have: (8) social roots. Higgins divided this criterion into two levels. First, the origin of the practice must be social. This leaves out all forms of activity based on individual tactics, such as a particular way of classifying one's personal library. Storing books by their spine colour is not the same as defining an information system to be used by public libraries. Then, the practices must be social in execution. Thus, all activities focused on the private life would again have to be excluded. This is what differentiates the nature of the activity of

cooking by the person who prepares the family meals from that of the chef in a restaurant. The practices are also social in the sense that they imply the existence of: (9) a community of practice, meaning the need for direct cooperation between practitioners. The visual communication designer designing a poster will likely have to rely on typefaces that were designed by typographers or images taken by photographers. The community of practice is also reflected in the realization that the activity is imbued with and influenced by other practitioners who have shared, even asynchronously, techniques, stories, problems, and so on. The community of practice criterion is thus intimately linked to the requirement to have: (10) traditions. Traditions represent a criterion in the sense that practitioners are inevitably in dialogue with those who preceded them. This does not mean that traditions should be thought of as fixed codes or rules, but as benchmarks on which practices are based, valued, and judged. The excellence of the practice has a direct link with its history. To excel, one must continually strive to exceed the standards to allow the refinement of weaknesses and the general expansion of the practice. For example, the contemporary evolution of the practice of the violin is only possible by engaging in a dialog with its history. Finally, the practices assume the existence of: (11) learning rituals. To continue the course of their development, but also to ensure dialog with their traditions, practices must equip themselves with institutions to ensure the transmission of their knowledge and the acquisition and development of their skill sets and know-how.

Social Properties of Practices

Finally, Higgins observed three properties of practices in their general relationships with society. First, practices: (12) depend on institutions, but they must be distinguishable. For example, doctors need hospitals to practice. That being said, hospitals do not define medicine. Correspondingly: (13) the practices' moral virtues should have distinct breeding grounds from their institutions. To protect themselves from the interference of institutions, practices need specific moral virtues. In the absence of specific breeding grounds, practices run the risk of becoming instruments of the institutions they serve. Without proper moral roots, practices have no means of freeing themselves from institutions. Finally, since they carry a conception of the common good, practices must: (14) have their esoteric goods become exoteric to a sufficiently significant degree to enrich the moral life of the community at large. This means that a practice cannot be totally and continuously turned in upon itself. At some point, the goods of a practice, internal and external, must also become those of the community. Didier Fassin stated that the way in which our societies value health is strongly bonded to the development of medicine and public health (Fassin 2006).

Submitting Design to the Test of the Concept of Practice

In a specific article, Higgins relied on these criteria to examine whether education met the requirements of a practice (Higgins 2010b). Given the space available here, it is not possible to submit design to the same kind of detailed analytical exercise. Nevertheless, we want to begin the process by stressing the criteria design is not obviously able to answer for and discussing what those shortcomings may entail.

When analysing design activity with Higgins's method, we see that some criteria can be easily met. For instance, previous research offers a significant amount of evidence supporting the claim that design can meet the six external qualities (criteria 6–11). With regard to complexity and consistency (criteria 6–7), little effort is needed to find empirical or theoretical information demonstrating that these qualities characterize the professional activities of designers. The positive reception given to the ideas associated with the complexity paradigm and systemic thinking is a clear testimony to the fact that design has been recognizing itself in the ideas put forward by these approaches (Jonas 2007). More precisely, the complex dimension of design is revealed by the degree of sophistication needed to illustrate and make comprehensible the nature of design activity.[3]

An argument Higgins used to demonstrate the complexity of education can also be applied to design. Citing the work of Donald Schön (1983), he asserted that because of the complex nature of its activity, the educator must be ready to fly without a net (Higgins 2010b, 373). Planning efforts are to be understood as only sketches from which they must be able to move on to address problems as they arise. That said, despite the complex nature of its process and problems, design, like education, maintains a certain consistency. Design remains an activity with a clear objective that most will relate to, at least in some capacity (Huppatz 2015). The shared version of this objective was probably best stated by Herbert A. Simon, who said that design aims 'at changing existing situations into preferred ones' (Simon 1996, 111). While other definitions and more sophisticated formulations of design's purposes exist, most of them have roots in Simon's statement.

Similarly, the social roots of design (criterion 8), the existence of a community of practice (criterion 9), traditions (criterion 10), and learning rituals (criterion 11) are all criteria for which it will be easy to gather evidence of design's capacity to fulfill them.

In contrast, the criteria (1–5) related to the internal quality of the practice prove more demanding. For example, proving that design has its own teleology (criterion 1) is challenging. Addressing this criterion requires looking into all forms of design activities to verify they share enough commonality in terms of how they frame problems. For one, conceptual and speculative analysis will offer weak and inconclusive evidence. To really show that design has a consistent and shared way of problematizing a situation would require empirical

demonstrations. Theoretical frameworks, like Boutinet's (1990) anthropology of the project, could well support such kind of endeavour. But at this point, what is important to acknowledge is that such indeterminacy around a design teleology renders the appreciation of the general scope of the activity problematic. The telos of a practice acts as a point of reference, a horizon, on which internal goods are defined. It is in this horizon that the originality of a practice sits. Without clear points of references from which may emerge internal goods, design would fall, like bricklaying, into the category of technical activity. Stressing design telos is therefore a way to examine and demonstrate it is conceptual thickness. Failing to answer for this criterion may also limit the appreciation and valuation of design activities. Without clear ideas around the internal good of design, only external good would be available to assess and judge the quality of designers and design products. This would imply, for instance, that only famous or rich designers, independently of the actual quality of the work, would have to be considered good designers, because no standards of excellence can be used to evaluate them. This would be like saying a pop musician is good because he draws large crowds during live shows and generate lots of clicks on digital music platforms. On the contrary, a classical musician would be considered bad, because he could not claim this type of measurable achievements, regardless to the fact that such goods remain essentially external to the actual mastery of music. The need for answering this criterion of a practice is therefore exacerbated by the current extension of design boundaries. In other words, the indeterminacy around design teleology limits the capacity to recognize as good designers those who set their activity at the fringe. Indeed, recognizing the essence of an activity in a way that transcends its external outcomes can pave a constructive way out the current debates about what is and is not design.

Lack of agreement on design teleology also jeopardizes the possibility of being able to answer for Criterion 2 concerning the existence of standards of excellence with regard to both product and performance. This challenge calls for putting on trial designers of all kinds to uncover the conceptual specificity of the activity they are engaged in. At a time when design products are exploding in form and nature, ranging from furniture to digital apps to public policies, it seems tortuous to settle on standards that all can relate to without becoming overly normative and close-minded. However, without establish standards of excellence, design exposes itself to relativistic fracturing. As a result, nothing could stand in the way of undue instrumentalization by institutions. Without standards of excellence, judgments on design would be condoned to the worst possible kind of arbitrariness. This is true for the appreciation of outcomes, products designed, and the process engaged. For instance, the way management theory makes use of design thinking (Martin 2009), as a mere instrument, is hard to condemn as a form of cultural appropriation

without a clear view of the standard design as the minimum to live up to. The discourses one can hear or read about in the scientific and professional design media suggest that at this moment in time, the design community does not seem to be able to arrive at a shared definition of such kind of standards, which calls for targeted research on the matter. More than providing evidence that design can be considered a practice, answering such criterion finds relevance in the fact that it would strengthen discussions about design epistemology but also would supports professionals in dealing more rationally with the judgments made about their designs.

Criteria 3, 4, and 5 involve reflections about the ethical dimensions of the design activity. On such matters, we can rely on a productive research strand. Many studies deal with the ethical issues of objects and the ethics of the designer's activity. To answer for these criteria in a way that would satisfy MacIntyre, the study of practice may benefit from being examined through the lens of virtue ethics (Steen 2015). Studying design through such a perspective relies on valuation of designers through the prism of the practice's of internal goods to distinguish good from bad design, both in terms of products and processes. The essence of virtue ethics allows gearing the focus of attention on the character demonstrated by those engaged in the action rather than on the outcomes. Studying design activity through this stance could therefore empower designers to engage in their activity with reflective capacity to discern what is best to do.

Finally, verification is still needed on the matter of design's capacity to meet criteria 12–14 regarding the properties of the practice in its relationships with society. Proving design depends on institutions, which we could associate with any kind of clients or commissioners, may not prove contentious, but showing that clients' needs are not the breeding ground of design's moral virtue is another issue. For design to be able to claim the status of a practice, it must be able to demonstrate that in any circumstances, project development is informed by design's own moral virtue rather than those of its institution. The same difficulty will be encountered in trying to establish whether design's esoteric goods became exoteric. While some claimed that design, mostly through the rise of design thinking, played a significant in role in raising social concerns for empathy, this remains unproven (Koskinen et al. 2003). Moreover, unlike the previous criteria, determining that design can fulfill these properties will imply relying on other practices or sciences. Examining whether esoteric goods succeeded at becoming exoteric (Criterion 14) requires entrusting the task to ethicists or moral sociologists. Relying on para-practices is necessary because they look at the matter from a more detached and general standpoint, allowing more comprehensive understanding of design's socio-political contribution.

Higgins's criteria act as a benchmark allowing in-depth analysis of design's internal conceptual architecture. His framework also offers

the design research community issues to discuss and investigate. While some criteria are easy to answer for, others are proving more challenging. This is significant because failing to answer those criteria casts a shadow on the ranking of design as a practice. In challenging design's ranking as a practice, our goal was not to minimize or undermine its activity. Rather, our goal was to lay the groundwork to empower design professionals by shedding light on certain issues that may explain the struggles they encounter in daily practice. We consider that issues, like designers' capacity rationally to face judgment by clients, play an important role in preventing design from being fully capable of expressing its values.

Conclusion

Using Higgins' criteriology as a framework, the research sought to demonstrate that qualifying design as a practice, in the sense defined by MacIntyre, remains problematic. Aside from an academic endeavour, the interest of such examination resides in the fact that clarifying some of the issues limiting design's capacity to be considered a genuine expertise could provide new cues that could prove helpful to addressing the quarrels designers face in professional activities. Looking at the activity of design through the prism of MacIntyre's concept of practice is a way to thicken the sauce that holds the design community together. To maintain control over its expertise and expand the reach of its activity, the design community seems to have an interest in fostering a precise and faithful understanding of its specificity. We have sought to highlight criteria around which this community can come together to claim its specificity and the autonomy that comes with it. As we discussed, the specificity of design is not only expressed in terms of processes and products, but also in ethical terms. Referring to Christopher Higgins' criteriology, we initiated putting design through the practice qualification test. While more research is required, our analysis suggests some points of contention. Moreover, further analysing the activity of design with Higgins' method might provide us with information allowing proper judgment on the 'designerlyness' of current emerging extensions of design.

NOTES

1. Readers interested in such debate can have a look at discussion thread 'Help! Our field needs a new name: "Design" is far too misleading for much of what we do,' initiated on June 24, 2018 by Donald D. Norman on the PhD Design list. https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A1=ind1806&L=PHD-DESIGN&X=4AA97189C98992608A&Y.
2. For details about problematization as a conceptual construct, see Findeli (1994).
3. See, for instance, the 'Visual Stances' section in Gesche Joost et al., eds., *Design as Research. Positions, Arguments, Perspective* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2016), 107–25.

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Disclosure Statement

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