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THE TALE OF TWO CREATIVES: THE MATURING OF INTERGRATED VISUAL COMMUNICATION

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The Tale of Two Creatives: The Maturing of Integrated Visual Communication

Synopsis:

The maturing of visual technologies into visual culture has provided a glimpse into the future life of creative mediated communication. As mass communication and visual art become more intimately intertwined they bear offspring. The study investigates contemporary research and practice leading to IVC (Integrated Visual Communication) through professional experience, academic articles, discipline-based trade magazines and professionally based textbooks—1979 through 2015.

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The Tale of Two Creatives: The Maturing of Integrated Visual Communication

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Abstract

The maturing of visual culture into a burgeoning visual literacy has provided a glimpse into the future life of mediated communication. As mass communication and visual art become more intimately intertwined they bear offspring. This paper suggests that integrated visual communication (IVC) is one of those “children” and may ripen into its own multi-dimensional discipline. Two creatives, one from a mass media perspective the other from a graphic arts perspective, discover that the most effective way to mediate contemporary storytelling is to learn each other’s skill sets and merge their talents. The study investigates contemporary research and practice leading to IVC through professional experience, academic articles, discipline-based trade magazines and professionally published textbooks—1979 through 2015. The resulting descriptive model constructed from this research visually maps the convergence that forms IVC. The model includes a charting of higher education imaging content instruction and construction housed in the silos of visual arts and mass communication. Ultimately, democratization of technological invention is the hinge on which, the model’s parts are based. Discussion of this review suggests that IVC is imminent if not inevitable. Conclusions built on the examined literature reveal that artistic visual communication (AVC) and media visual communication (MVC) are uniting into a nascent integrated visual communication (IVC) discipline.

Keywords: integrated visual communication, new media design, new new media, multimedia arts, journalism, mass communication, convergence, art education, artistic education, visual literacy, visual culture, mediated communication, intertextuality

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The Tale of Two Creatives:

The Maturing of Integrated Visual Communication

Typically, the first concern potential students and their parents convey when researching and making decisions about enrolling at colleges and universities is something related to, “What kind of job is my daughter/son suited for after getting a degree in (fill in the blank)?” When choosing traditional artistic education, students generally learn and practice drawing, painting, sculpture and printmaking while in mass communication they generally learn about journalism theory and practice, broadcasting, public relations and advertising (Layng & Layng Rosner, 2004; Siegesmund, 2013). Therein lies the problem. An apparent disconnect between education and the concomitant professional industry as to what students need to learn and practice emerges. In his landmark work, *Art as Experience*, John Dewey (1934) establishes the need in our society to experience art objects and make them ordinary again. Dewey explains that, “the forces are those that have removed... fine art from the scope of the common or community life,” unwittingly removing the “high” arts from our everyday lives (p. 5). Living in our culture, visuals are an inevitable slice of our routine experiences.

At the same time communicatively, some research estimates conclude that we are exposed to around 3000 mediated messages per day (Pavlik & McIntosh, 2015). Therefore, it is important that post-secondary educators recognize and adapt to the changing professional environment and adjust their pedagogy to reflect these vicissitudes. It is evident that the two creatives, one from a mass media perspective the other from a graphic arts perspective, must discover that the most effective way to mediate contemporary storytelling is to mingle their talents.

This paper attempts a wide-ranging literature review concerning the history and evolution of teaching visual communication in contemporary, collegiate environments. It is an inquiry regarding integrated visual communication (IVC) instruction and focuses on two distinct but potentially

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convergent educational disciplines: visual fine arts and mass communication. The main questions addresses IVC directly: Why was it born; How has it matured; What is its future life? The secondary questions are specific and concrete pertaining to education. If we accept that mass communication education necessarily must integrate issues related to contemporary visual culture, then what possible discursive formation or site of interdisciplinary activity could institutions of higher education create in terms of integrated visual communication convergent with artistic education? Additionally, should IVC be “a call to look self-reflexively both inwardly toward the limitations of one's own discipline and outwardly to the opportunities made available by others” (Morra & Smith, 2011, p. 3)?

As an instructional participant at higher education institutions, administrating and teaching for the past 13 years in a mass communication program and for the prior 12 years in visual arts programs, I detected that an alternate pedagogical model was needed (Figure 1) to deal with *visuality* as it bumps, cooperates and at length, converges in IVC (Natharius, 2004).

History and Background

Artistic Visual Communication

The history of visual communication has been well documented dating back to the caves of Lascaux where primitive paintings were found in France estimated to have been created about 25,000 years ago (Lester, 2006). These visual communication beginnings are a harbinger of continual and increasing attempts for humans to mediate messages and convey those results to future humans. An analysis of the history of visual communication distinguishes a taxonomy of three eras: handcrafted, mechanical and digital--milestones in visual communication technology trends (Layng & Layng Rosner, 2004). The handcrafted era is the longest trend lasting about 30,000 years and may be defined starting with the aforementioned discovery of the southeastern France cave paintings to approximately 1450 C.E. This era concluded with the invention of the printing press and increasing mechanical inventions—in particular Photography. Adding to the exposure of public artwork,

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visual communication became more important as a means of persuasion and advancing public knowledge through journalistic practices.

The mechanical era originated during the industrial revolution, approximately 1790-1840 C.E. This era was defined visually and in practice by early posters and advertisements, which eventually matured into the media driven advertising industry prevalent after WWI. Between the end of the nineteenth and the late twentieth centuries, the advertising industry exploited print and broadcast visual communication to inundate western culture (and arguably eastern culture) with mediated messages promoting consumerism. Ostensibly, the digital era was inaugurated in 1963 with Ivan Sutherland's invention of the electronic sketchpad. To some extent, the mechanical and definitely the digital era began a practice of visual communication rhetoric, highlighting consumerism as the primary goal in graphic design habituated in advertising and promotions (Layng & Layng Rosner, 2004).

That technological innovation promotes, drives, even defines mediated messages between sender (producer) and receiver (audience), is not a shocking idea. Journalists, operating in the mechanical era, readily adopted printing press technology and further technological improvements to spread their stories to a mass audience. Storytelling, in its commodified faces, became the primary function of mass communication. The digital era ushered in contemporary visual communication technologies, which essentially blurred the definition of producers and consumers when interpreting audience. Most media professionals agree that the days of one-to-many, corporate broadcasting through television, radio and traditional print (newspapers and magazines) is quickly being usurped by the more democratic many-to-many model clearly exemplified in the social media and the mobile media revolution. Paul Levinson (2009) aptly defines the distinctions between "new media" and "new new media". The former including web sites, video gaming and cell phone technologies and the latter being free, interactive social media communication for example but not limited to *Facebook* (an enormously successful visual and textual personal blogging interface), *Tumblr* (a web

service that allows users to post multimedia to a short-form blog) and Kickstarter (an Internet for-profit company founded in 2009 that allows users to fundraise for their own creative projects via *crowd funding*).

Historically, artists' production and art educators' teachings were distinctly compartmentalized for institutional and societal purposes. Richard Siegesmund (2013), suggests this otherness being recognized in artistic practice, unnecessarily separated it from contemplative theory.

...this Transcendentalist view of Art Education was ultimately replaced in the latter part of the nineteenth century by a British model of Artistic Education based on training industrial designers...By the end of the nineteenth century, state educational systems were modeled on industry, with the metaphor of the assembly line, embodying efficient mass production, held forth as the standard for best educational practice. Artistic Education, which sought to produce individuals who could produce culturally significant objects, could readily adapt to this model. Aesthetic Education, which prized object identification, could also thrive (p. 305-305).

Siegesmund's research begins a discourse recognizing that the practice of learning to create art can be distinguished from the education of artists to become critically discerning, erudite citizens. If we accept the concept of "artistic education" as Siegesmund defines it, then it can also apply to visual communication curriculum in fine arts and therefore could be defined as artistic visual communication (AVC). Extending this concept further to mass communication curriculum, practical education in "visual journalism"— combining written copy with photography, graphics and possibly multimedia to produce meaning through mass distribution—therefore could be defined as media visual communication (MVC). Bringing significant skills entrenched in AVC and MVC together is a

natural progression driven by technological invention, changes in social communication practices and consequently industry professional's demands from their employees.

Media Visual Communication

It follows then that in terms of journalism and mass communication education, the ideologues supporting theoretical instruction over practical instruction have been in conflict since the discipline was conceived in the 1950s. Similar to what is happening in AVC education, media educators have struggled with what should be the balance between theory and practice in curriculum and instruction. Individuals who first shaped the field differed in their philosophies about what would make it successful, creating an identity crisis that has never fully disappeared. Even early in journalism's history some administrators wanted a curriculum and research emphasis that would make journalism and later mass communication central to the mission of the university. Others thought it was the role of the new field merely to train future journalists (Daniels, 2003, p. 6).

The pertinent social community emerging from these histories defines the extant practices of visual communication. This foreshadows future dilemmas for professional communicators due to technological advances in the practical—pointedly online digital tools—supporting post-modern mass communication. Kerry Freedman (1997) added her commentary about the all-encompassing nature of visual culture and its relationship to technology in her research. “The meaning of technological images cannot be simply understood in terms of what has been called ‘visual literacy,’ which has generally meant the semiotic reading of signs and symbols... Rather, a broad view of creative production and interpretation in relation to multiple meanings and visual qualities is called for if we are to understand and teach about the use of images in contemporary life” (p. 7).

Freedman (1997) accurately predicts in her article, *Visual Art/Virtual Art: Teaching Technology for Meaning*, that simply using digital technology, no matter how powerful, does not result in a rich understanding of how images communicate meaning. Consequently, “focusing only on the technical aspects of visual technologies, such as manipulating computer software or

animating film, in curriculum may result in the loss of a vital aspect of imagery in students' lives" (p. 7). Therefore, in our postmodern world, defining visual arts and media production in the pedagogical practices seems to support the emergence of a new discipline, IVC, derived in both fine art and mass communication education which would embrace theory, practice, and technological innovation, leading into the professions engaging a student's understanding of how images communicate *visual intellectuality* (Lunenfeld, 2010).

Methodology

A pragmatic discovery of academic research and writings tackling the main questions about IVC (why was it born; how has it matured; what is its future life?) is the methodology for this literature review and is used to produce the descriptive model articulating IVC. The source review is limited to primarily academic, peer-reviewed articles however, a select few commercially published articles and books were included to supplement the search because although both concentrations, visual fine art and mass communication, are educational foci, they also arguably hinge on professional industry trades to exist. An attempt is made to find sources that expose history, evolution, technology, production and display, as it pertains to higher education visual communication instruction housed in the visual arts discipline and parallel instruction housed in the mass communication discipline.

Limitations of Review

The scope of this study encompasses what has been historically termed "graphic design" in the visual arts and "layout/ graphics" in mass communication. Practically speaking, graphic design and layout/graphics have had the same definition but from different perspectives in VART and MCOM respectively. This author posits that graphic design has a broader definition, relegating graphic layout as a subset of graphic design. Generally, layout merely refers to the effective organizing of graphic and pictorial elements in a grid system for an audience. (Specific definition characteristics

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of these terms will be discussed later in this paper.) The disciplines of visual arts and mass communication are limited for the purposes of this review within the instructional content areas of what is commonly referred to as “visual communication” in both disciplines. Consequently, more specific concentrations such as architecture and interior design and the like in visual arts, journalistic writing and scripting in mass communication and the like, are not directly addressed as they are professions which have common fundamental coursework with visual communication but are not generally considered direct descendants of the graphic arts discipline. The ideas of dominant influences of meaning are not directly addressed because those far-reaching issues are beyond the scope of this paper.

Additionally, this inquiry does not explicitly enlist international mass communication education because the aim is to give an overview of what is currently practiced in higher education implicating mass communication and visual arts programs in the United States; therefore, this research is determined nationally. Nevertheless, many experts agree that mass communication higher education programs in the U.S. often drive what is happening in the discipline abroad. While American Journalism/mass communication educators work to internationalize their own curricula, it is hard for them not to be cognizant of how their decisions can impact journalism education abroad. After all, journalism/mass communication as a field of professional practice and intellectual inquiry has had a much longer history in the United States. “Countries have generally looked to U.S. media practitioners and journalism educators to provide them with the resources and training to use media in support of national development and other goals. For this reason, some of the same confusion about what sort of higher education preparation is the best for this field can be seen in journalism education abroad” (Daniels, 2003, p. 13).

Method of the Review

Given the described sources, the terms and phrases used that produced relevant results in the academic search primer were: mass communication, art education, visual culture, visual literacy, media literacy, visual communication, graphic design, graphic arts, design, education, images, visuals and convergence. The terms were combined in Boolean search phrases such as “art, education, mass communication education and convergence” which provided richer content for this review. Although the results of the search were unpredictable, the breadth of references used to develop this study is primarily inclusive and intentionally diverse in point of view.

Significant research sources related to visual communication as an educational curriculum of study and a professional practice, are included in this review but the possibility of dismissive research tendencies due to the enormity of the subject matter was acknowledged. Therefore, an honest attempt by the researcher to discover noteworthy references published, was conducted but is recognized to be by no means exhaustive. As evidence of the effort, the following is a partial list of source publications consulted in this review:

1. International Journal of Education and the Arts
2. International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics
3. International Visual Literacy Association
4. International Journal of Art & Design Education
5. Journal of Communication Studies
6. Studies in Art Education
7. Journal of Art and Design Education
8. Journal of Aesthetic Education
9. Journal of Visual Literacy

10. Journal of Thematic Dialogue
11. Journal of Communication Management
12. American Behavioral Scientist Journal
13. Encyclopedia of International Media and Communications
14. The Encyclopedia of Literacy and Cultural Theory
15. Communication Arts (Professional trade publication)
16. HOW Magazine (Professional trade publication)
17. New Media and Society (Professional trade publication)
18. United States Bureau of Labor Statistics: Occupational Outlook Handbook

Literature Review

The literature reviewed inspired and informed the resulting integrated visual communication (IVC) model and the items listed were derived from the references with consideration about the various researchers' conclusions. The visual communication sources intellectually and practically settled into the three areas as described in the model: 1. Art/Media History, Theory & Instruction domains, 2. Visual Culture & Media Literacy subjects, and 3. Art Studio/Exhibition & MCOM Journalism/Broadcast practices. The three areas are described and analyzed as sections reflected in the model resulting from this research (Figure 1).

Art/Media History, Theory & Instruction Domains

In 2001, Gillian Rose synthesized the methodologies artists and audiences use to analyze created artifacts, in her landmark book, *Visual Methodologies*. She realizes that artists' works are driven by the technologies available thereby influencing the content produced and spectator's understanding. Contemporary technological channels of communication are derived from the methodologies defined by Rose. Cynthia Freeland (2003) applies art history to inform the evolution of art theory and criticism in her text, *Art Theory: A Very Short Introduction*. Freeland cogitates about the nature of contemporary human endeavors to create beauty through image, "...the views of Enlightenment

thinkers like Kant and Hume still reverberate today in discussions of quality, morality, beauty and form,” satisfactorily categorizing postmodernist’s attempts in teaching art theory and the variance of conclusions in these forays (p. 104).

Similarly, media history and theory is addressed by Paul Martin Lester (2006) in *Visual Communication: Images with Messages*, in which he defines the evolution of graphic design as it relates to commercial practices such as advertising and public relations. Lester delineates a historically linear continuum presenting an overview of mediated messages using the ever more diverse channels of communication. However, Lester stops short of committing to a complete convergence between art and communication professional practices. On the other hand, Lynne Cooke (2005) in her article, *A Visual Convergence of Print, Television, and the Internet: Charting 40 Years of Design Change in News Presentation*, posits relatively modern cases defining media history and theory and concludes that visual convergence is inevitable in the mass communication profession. “The analysis is broken down by decade, beginning in 1960 and ending in 2002, and the findings indicate that a visual convergence of media has become more pronounced over the decades as the acceleration of information has increased over time” (p. 22). In short, these authors build cases based on inventionary technologies and consequent practices employed by artists and designers to convey increasingly complex messages to an audience. Although it has gradually become evident that a mass audience no longer exists, past practices informs us that producers of visual communication will find ways to reach whatever audience(s) necessary by whatever means available, digital or otherwise.

Visual Culture and Media Literacy Subjects

Hilligoss and Howard (2002) published an influential set of guidelines instructing traditional journalists in the practice of effective visual communication, clearly recognizing that understanding visual culture and using it, is vital for the success of contemporary journalism and mass communication professionals. “Visual communication is part of the writer’s task because the visual

elements of a text affect how readers interact with the words. The interaction is rhetorical, and the importance of visual communication in documents is also supported by empirical research” (p. 2).

On a parallel track, art educators were developing a discipline grounded in our image culture led by researchers like Kerry Freedman (1997), who was publishing about visual art and virtual art pedagogy in the late ‘90s . Patrick and Kelli Fuery (2003) continue Freedman’s suppositions making connections between visual culture and media literacy by critically addressing the audiences’ relationship to an image with the veracity of the image. The Fuerys refer to this complexity between text and image by employing notions of intertextuality. “In a way we can read this as a type of intertextuality (sic) with one occurrence/text immediately demanding reference to another” (p. 112). Natharius (2004) weighs in on this critical discussion by defining intertextuality as “...the cognitive connections we make when we see something and understand that the visual (or written) text references an earlier text [or image]” (p. 241). Natharius is publishing through a behavioral science lens and readily admits that previous audience knowledge would essentially define what is seen and therefore inextricably and cognitively connect text and image.

Freedman’s (2003) text, *Teaching Visual Culture: Curriculum, Aesthetics, and the Social Life of Art* along with fellow researcher’s work, Sturken and Cartwright (2001), essentially legitimized this emerging discipline in an educational context. In the ensuing years, W. J. T. Mitchell (2005) and Cristina de Almeida (2009) bookend discussions questioning the impact and ramifications of combining rhetoric and aesthetics in light of ever advancing distribution and display technologies practiced in design education. De Almeida proposes that there is a civic responsibility by artists and particularly designers as to the mediated messages they create. While Mitchell contends that there is no independent visual media because every message is a combination of intellectual, sensory and aesthetic experience. These authors tended to agree that there is a rhetorical aspect attached to visual communication and an entelechy or soul, that has generally been neglected by producers.

Joanne Mora and Marquard Smith (2011) in *The Encyclopedia of Literacy and Cultural Theory*, outline the integrated, multi-disciplinary nature of our emerging visual culture.

The objects, subjects, media, and environments embraced by visual culture studies can include anything from painting, sculpture, installation, and video art, to photography, film, (terrestrial, cable, satellite) television, the internet, and mobile screenic devices; fashion; medical and scientific imaging; the graphic and print culture of newspapers, magazines, and advertising; the architectural and social spaces of museums, galleries, exhibitions, and other private and public environments of the everyday (p. 1).

From the perspective of media literacy, Mitchell Stephens (1998) tackled the seemingly inevitable dominance emerging in postmodern culture of visual communication over textual rhetoric. Stevens submits that with the steady march of advancing technological innovations, eventually, visuals will usurp the prevalence of textual information—where our cultural communication is primarily through images to a visually literate audience able to accurately interpret multimedia messages. Referencing *The Encyclopedia of International Media and Communications* visual communication is defined as “a process of providing pictorial and written information to an audience through the integration of photography, graphic design, or computer applications with the intent of solving communication problems” (Daniels, 2003, p. 2). From the perspective of typical journalists, this delineated the mistakenly narrow role of visual communication. Further, this encyclopedia defines “convergence” from the lens of information technology, “a term for combining personal computers, telecommunication, and television into a single delivery for media messages” (p. 1). In comparison, Denis McQuail (2005) defines rhetoric as “the art of public speaking for persuasive intention” which is clearly omitted, as a learning outcome, in visual arts education (p. 566). In practice, much of the hegemony in education and the profession, find that visual communication is bursting out of its current boundaries. There seems to be a disconnection between mass communication and visual

arts programs that requires the building of a pedagogical bridge. Ideally, students should learn visual communication using both lenses—visual arts and mass media (Layng & Layng Rosner, 2004).

Art Studio/Exhibition & MCOM Journalism/Broadcast Practices

Gregg Berryman's (1979) *Notes on Graphic Design and Visual Communication*, Amy Arntson's (2003), *Graphic Design Basics* and Ian Noble's & Russell Bestley's (2005), *Visual Research: An Introduction to Research Methodologies in Graphic Design*, encompass traditional and emerging practices in graphic design and visual communication. Notably, as late as 1979, graphic design texts showed little awareness of the looming digital revolution (Berryman, 1979). Within two decades, this changes dramatically. Arntson, Noble & Bestley include extensive discussion and instruction in their textbooks about computer applications, the digital practice of visual communication, and how images/graphics/animations are distributed and displayed. However, Berryman is aware of the content confusion between commercial and studio art. "Graphic Design is not art. The fine artist has an audience of only one...the graphic designer deals with a mass audience...often graphic design looks like art (and vice versa). Materials and techniques are similar. Both artist and designer solve visual problems" (Berryman, 1979, p. 3).

Arguably by 1984, with the invention of the Apple Macintosh personal computer and the advent of desktop publishing, graphic design education was dramatically changed. Straddling the twenty-first century, author Robin Williams (2008) began a successful series of practical books beginning with her text, *The Non-Designers Design Book*, now in its 3rd edition. Williams recognized and acknowledge in the "non designers" series that customarily many non-art professionals are creating, publishing and distributing visual mediated communication and were in dire need of direction. This portends the emergence of a new educational concentration—IVC.

David Therkelsen, and Christine Fiebich (2001), describe how visual communication is a vital part of the media production and distribution process in their article clarifying a *communication effectiveness model*. Nonetheless it should be noted, mass communication experts typically tend to minimize visual communication as a practice of merely making the produced artifact “aesthetically pleasing” although they do stress the importance of understanding eye-tracking studies and Gestalt Perceptual theory. On the other hand, Peter Lunenfeld (2010) is interviewed about a series of “pamphlets” which he produces featuring new media professionals and artists. He addresses his concept of the visual intellectual, “a suggestion that the new digital tools have made making something other than ‘text’ a distinct possibility as the ‘result’ of many kinds of intellectual inquiry” (p. 152). He comments that having designers/artists work with rich content producers was actually very simple and they worked well together. Again, David Natharius (2004), instructs, “the media-literate individual must be educated in the processes of visual perception and how the media use the visual channels to transmit and often distort information. The media literate person understands the meaning of primary axiom of visual communication—the more we know, the more we see—as well as the next most important axiom: What is not seen is as important as what is seen” (p. 238). Natharius warns educators that being media literate as he defines it, in visual perception and current media distribution channels, is a necessary lesson for the conscientious creative professional. Consequently, visual arts educators need to be media literate.

Resulting Theory

The resulting descriptive model constructed from this literature review and my teaching practice visually maps the convergence that forms IVC. The model includes a charting of higher education content instruction housed in the two separate but merging silos comprising the visual arts (VART) and mass communication (MCOM) curricula determined from the evidence discovered. The two discipline silos are organized into three groups of instructional content ranging from theoretical to practical instruction and application in visual communication:

Group one: Definition, Evolution & Instruction

VART domains: Art History, Art Theory & Criticism and Art Education

MCOM domains: Media History, Media Theory & Criticism and Media Education

Group two: Visual Culture & Media Literacy

VART subjects: Artistic Visual Communication (AVC) = Graphic Design + Computer

Graphics (CG) + New Media Design

MCOM subjects: Media Visual Communication (MVC) = Digital Photography (Photo-journalism) + Special Effects (FX) + Visual Journalism

Group three: Production, Distribution & Display

VART practice: Artistic Studio: Painting, Sculpture, Printmaking, etc., Exhibition: Museum, Gallery and Events

MCOM practice: Journalism, Public Relations (PR), Advertising, etc., Broadcast: TV, Radio, Newspapers, Print

Model Explanation

Feedback arrows in cyan (VART) and magenta (MCOM) respectively, circle entirely around the silos showing how education and the profession informs curriculum and vice versa. The circle is illustrating a typical student's path starting with her educational tenure culminating in her professional life. In the center of the circle lives "CONVERGENCE" unifying visual arts curriculum (indicated by the color cyan) and mass communication curriculum (indicated by the color magenta). This is the place of evolving discipline convergence I call INTEGRATED VISUAL COMMUNICATION (IVC). The yellow diamond expanding from the center between the two silos represents the expanding of this convergence. The yellow perimeter line partially around each discipline silo, intentionally absent on the left (visual arts silo) and right (mass communication silo) also indicated by "soft color bleeding", symbolizes the breakdown of hard separations between

VART and MCOM as discrete curricula. Ultimately, technological invention is the hinge on which, the model's parts are based.

The subtractive color system used in the model is symbolic. The use of cyan, magenta, yellow and percentages of black (CMYK) is intentionally mimicking the traditional inks used in commercial graphic arts full-color, process printing. The specific items are in 100% black text printed over the cyan and magenta gradient rectangles representing the discipline silos of visual arts (VART) and Mass Communication (MCOM). Notice that the cyan and magenta colors are converted by the yellow convergence diamond to the secondary colors of green and orange suggesting overlapping visual communication subject content between the silos. In the middle of the model, vertical dark gray double-headed feedback arrows portray a spiral curriculum structure expanding between content areas which tracks students' journey between educational efforts and professional work.

Further, the orange and green background visible only because of the overlap of the yellow convergence diamond is predominantly highlighting IVC—the technological invention- driven and distribution-display coursework in both discipline silos. In VART these units have traditionally been identified by graphic design and exhibition; in MCOM these units have been identified by old media: television, print and photojournalism. The literature review and my teaching experience have witnessed these “earlier” subjects maturing into computer graphics (CG) and new media design in VART to ultimately create artistic visual communication studies (AVC); and maturing into special effects (FX), visual journalism and new new media in MCOM to ultimately create MVC studies (Levinson, 2009; Sonvilla-Weiss, 2010; Garcia & Riebstein, 2013).

Conspicuously in the middle of the yellow convergence diamond, the gradient blends into a white background circular burst—which in the additive color mode, red, green and blue (RGB) used in monitor screen technology, exemplifies 100% saturation or white light. This is the center point of the model, where integration has occurred and the parent content spaces of AVC and MVC have

born integrated visual communication (IVC), further demarcated by the horizontal, double-directional, purple feedback arrow.

Decisively, the model's yellow diamond stretches horizontally to touch both extreme edges of the silos at only one point symbolizing that there is still significant separation between the visual arts discipline and the mass communication discipline in the content areas of "definition, evolution & instruction" however, the yellow diamond's lower point stretches partially over production, distribution & display substantiating the coinciding of VART and MCOM in these areas. The bleeding of cyan and magenta from lower parts of the VART and the MCOM silos signposts that the exhibition/distribution of their respective professions is overlapping as well. Every day, artists and producers practice while audiences witness this phenomenon when they engage in *new new media* such as YouTube, Wikipedia, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, Pinterest, etc. (Layng & Layng-Rosner, 2004; Natharius, 2004; Lester, 2006; Almeida, 2009; Levinson, 2009; Lunenfeld, 2010; Sonvilla-Weiss, 2010; Garcia & Riebstein, 2013).

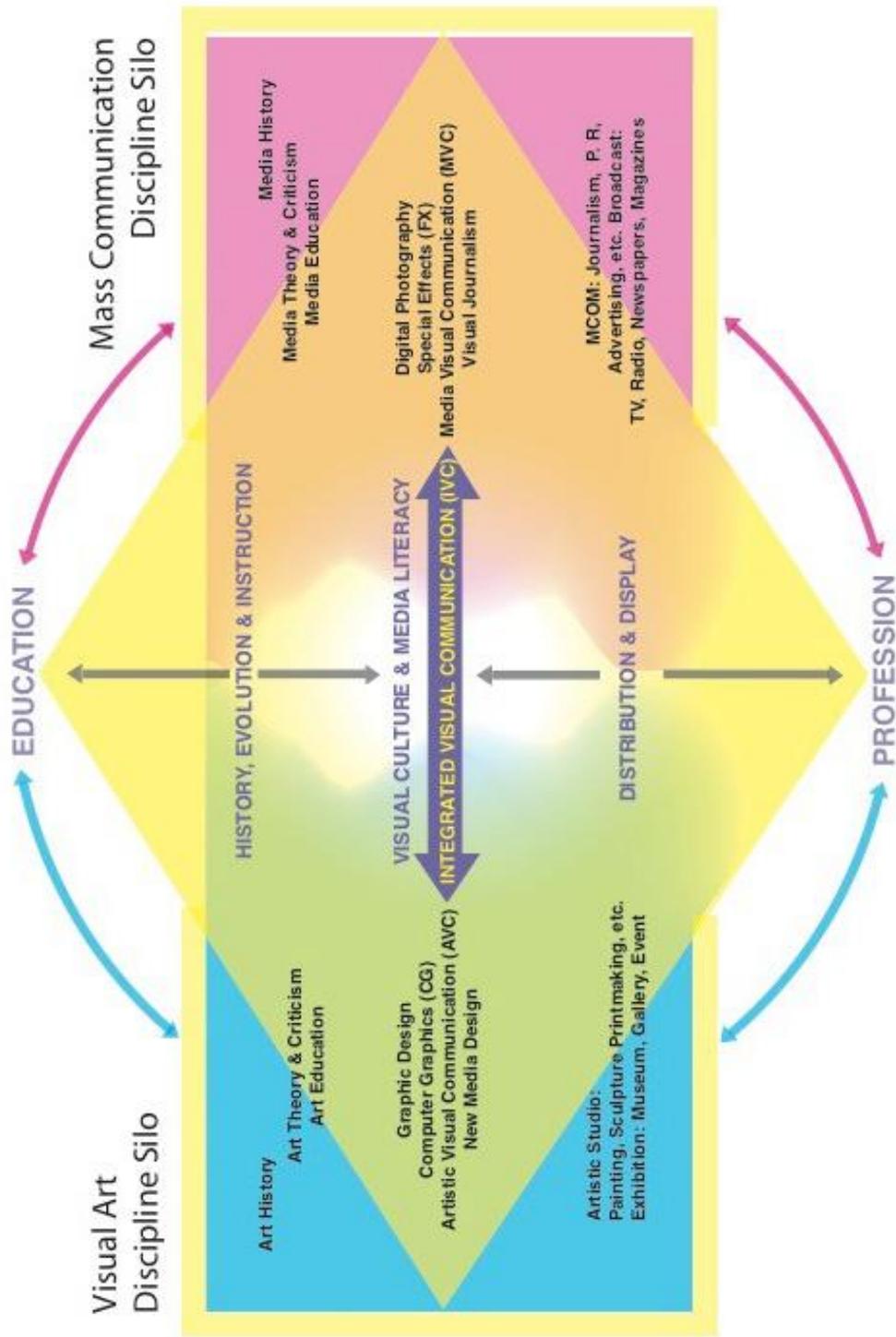


Figure 1: Integrated Visual Communication Discipline Model

Discussion

The veracity embedded in the maturity of IVC is demonstrated in the work of senior art director, Mario Garcia and innovative graphic designer, Reed Liebstein (2013), as they explain their decisions in the creation of an *eBook*.

Garcia...I immediately saw the iPad™ as a marvelous stage on which stories could be told in exciting new ways. When colleagues would tell me that they weren't interested in the tablet, I reminded them that we trained to be storytellers. With readers obtaining news on so many platforms—print, web, mobile and, now tablet—these are truly the best times to tell stories—Reibstein...I found two strategies we could adopt. We could either create a PDF, available on all platforms but effectively static, or create a more interactive, iPad™ -only app. Given Mario's interest in exploring the tablet's potential with video, audio galleries and graphics, we decided to pursue the app. [application] (p. 180-181).

This interview describes how the two creatives, one from a mass media perspective the other from a graphic arts perspective, discovered the most effective way to mediate contemporary storytelling is in an *eBook*. That conclusion further persuades this researcher to theorize that IVC has grown up.

Researchers supply a variety of names for similar visual culture concepts but as yet unsatisfactorily—even as they seem to attempt a consensus. It is evident that researchers and professionals are searching for an answer to the problem of visual convergence encountered in this interdisciplinary limbo in the phrases and terms they employ: visual imaging, visual media, visual intellectuality, visual culture, visual literacy, verbal/visual communication, visuality, visual mass media, transmedia communication, design/visual presentation, visual knowledge building, etc. If images cannot be read like text and cannot be defined as “visual media” because they employ senses

in addition to vision then the image matrices that are being produced, displayed and distributed must necessarily be something else, something more or something different (Mare', 2006; Mitchell, 2005). This is concretely implicated in the job industry, in which graduates of high school, vocational and collegiate visual art, design and media programs are employed, indicating IVC exists as a profession. However, it seems that secondary and higher education institutions are not paying attention because these students appear ill equipped to tackle the demands of the marketplace. Anecdotal evidence of territorial issues between studio art, graphic design, art education, mass communication and media literacy seem to impede any significant attempts at creating new multidisciplinary curricula made by cross disciplinary pioneers. Conversely, the pleas of most visual culture and media literacy academics has been consistent; students must be prepared to embrace multi-disciplinary written and visual communication practices while understanding the implications of their messages through the study of visual culture.

Conclusions

Revisiting the main questions about IVC: why was it born; how has it matured; what is its future life, one has to consider the mountain of academic literature concluding that as Peter Lunenfeld (2010) experiences while working with artists, designers and writers, someone has to be the “producer”. Lunenfeld finds that this producer must bring together the various disciplines and make a cohesive work of storytelling by determining how the artifacts will be distributed in the myriad of platforms available through traditional and digital channels. IVC practitioners are born and mature from industry necessity driven by massive changes and advances in production tools and the dramatic drop in cost of formally specialized equipment, as well as paradigmatic shifts in telecommunication and computer distribution channels and finally layperson access to world-wide publishing technologies. The future life of IVC is tenuous in terms of artistic and mass communication education. If territorial issues between higher education academic disciplines with

the concomitant fear concerning loss of control over absolute content, continues to prevail then IVC will languish as a fractious entity in the shadows of the visually creative disciplines.

If we accept that mass communication education necessarily must integrate issues related to contemporary visual literacy, then what possible discourse or nexus of interdisciplinary practices could institutions of higher education create in terms of integrated visual communication convergent with artistic education? Additionally, should IVC be a demand for taking a critical look at our individual disciplines to find ways to reach into other's silos? In sum, journalism education has expanded to include mass communication and these undergraduate programs offer significant diversity in concentrations with expected confusion about where visual communication using new media tools should be housed. In evidence of visual convergence, few universities are separating journalism from mass communication and more are combining in interdisciplinary efforts.

A look at some of the 11 exemplary journalism programs that Jerold Footlick, former senior editor at Newsweek, named in a 1989 article in the Gannett Center Journal shows little agreement about the boundaries and subject matter of the field...the University of North Carolina has undergraduate sequences in news-editorial, electronic media, advertising, public relations and visual communication. The school's mission stresses a liberal education strong on mass communication technique and theory...Louisiana State University (one of the 11) ...has also forged links with other departments...running a joint program with the College of Design that will produce graduates skilled in journalism and graphics (Daniels, 2003, p. 7).

The technology in digital communication has exponentially advanced so rapidly that resistance to change even if only discursive in nature is counterproductive and possibly damaging to students interested in becoming artistic and media creatives. Art narrative practices begin to address the aspect of storytelling as the primary function of mediated communication to a

target audience. However, this practice also neglects to encompass the whole by dismissing the need to study media literacy housed in communication education. Working in an industry without appropriate preparation means those who produce and distribute the most powerfully persuasive messages in known history to our world populations are designing without sufficient intellectual depth and concomitant skills. On the other hand, as educators we can open ourselves to obvious fresh directions and satisfactorily prepare our students for their future as producers of visual and media culture.

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