aiaVT

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president's column

david epstein, aia, leed ap
2005 president aiaVT

In June the board of aiaVT met for our annual day-long retreat at the Lake Champlain Yacht Club in Shelburne. The retreat has evolved into a yearly tradition and is a time for board members to take a step back from program planning activities and look at the future of the organization.

Under Michael Hoffman's able guidance, we began by taking stock of our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Some of you may recognize this exercise as a SWOT analysis. After developing some fairly exhaustive lists, we voted on the three or four items as most important items for each category:

Our Strengths

- Strong, Active Board of Directors
- Diversity of Programs and Approaches
- Big Tent Approach - collaborative and inclusive with allied professionals and public
- Stable Organization – smooth leadership transitions, financial stability

Our Weaknesses

- Engagement in the Public Arena – advocacy, civic and political
- Publicity and Communication – internal and external
- Young Architects – IDP, mentoring, support
- Lack of Perceived Value – many saw this as a result of inadequate publicity and communication

cont.

excerpt from:

'is designing hermeneutical:'

adrian snodgrass and richard coyne
architectural theory review
journal of the department of architecture,
the university of sydney
vol.1,no. 1, pp65-97 [65]
1997

It is commonly supposed that design activity can be described, codified and explained in terms of an algorithmic logic model derived from language theory. The model, exemplified in the work of Stiny, Mitchell, Yoshikawa, and Coyne et al., is the basis of much of the current research in design methodology and CAD.1 Mitchell gives an elegant description of the model. 2 He claims that design can be described in words that make up a critical language and such word descriptions can be formalized using the notation of first-order predicate calculus. Design worlds, he says, consist of "graphic tokens which, like words, can be manipulated according to certain grammatical rules." He sees design processes "as computations in design worlds with the objective of satisfying predicates of form and function stated in a critical language." 3 Mitchell specifies that there

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The Opportunities

- •Promote the Profession
- •Education and Awareness of Design
- •Long Term Planning

Threats to the aiaVT and the Profession

- •Irrelevance
- •Encroachment by other groups
- •Economic Downturn

This analysis occupied the morning session. I should note that there were many more items on the original lists than didn't make the cut. In some cases, this was because we felt were already addressing an opportunity or need. A good example of this is our Learning by Design Program, which will bring design –related educational programs to K-12 kids.

Interwoven into this discussion was a general consensus to develop a strong theme each year for our programs. The theme serves as an organizing principle making it easier to organize and promote the year's events. Such a principle creates a cohesive understanding of our mission, raises the profile of the profession, and boosts attendance for chapter events.

After lunch, we tackled the more difficult task of how to address our weaknesses as an organization. After much discussion, four committees were created. They were tasked with creating an action plan for our next board meeting in August. The action plan will be a one page outline of the participants, the goals, and the schedule for each group. And while board members are leading these committees, members are encouraged to make a difference by getting involved.

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are three main parts to this model: "First… the relationship of criticism to design may be understood as a matter of truth-functional semantics of a critical language in a design world. Second…design worlds may be specified by formal grammars. Third… the rules of such grammars encode knowledge of how to put together buildings that function adequately. Thus the relation of form to function is strongly mediated by the syntactic and semantic rules under which a designer operates." 4 [66] He says that, "the first step in precise formulation of a design world is to specify the primitives (kinds of elementary graphic tokens) out of which designs may be assembled." 5
This model presupposes that the process of designing is analogous or equivalent to the process by which we use language; that the process can be described in terms of primary tokens (for example,

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news from aia new hampshire

IDID is coming in October this year!

The third Integrated Design/Integrated Development Conference will be at the Appalachian Mountain Club: Highland Center at Crawford Notch, Bretton Woods, NH. The Highland Center is a newly constructed environmentally innovative facility in one of the White Mountains' most spectacular settings. It has received many honors and accolades. It is the perfect site for a conference on sustainable design and development, and at the perfect time of year, October 6-7. The foliage will be brilliant. Be sure to mark your calendar and join us for our third Integrated Design Integrated Development Conference.

The theme of this year's conference is "The Human Face of Green Design." For conference information: http://www.aianh.org/action/idid.shtml

It's a good idea to make overnight reservations now, as this will be in the height of foliage season, up north!! Reservation information for the Highland Center lodging is at: http://www.aianh.org/action/ididfee.shtml.

Integrated Design/Integrated Development Awards

We are seeking submissions for the annual IDID Excellence in Sustainable Design and Development Awards, which will honor work that contributes, by its design, to the creation of a sustainable world. The awards are to be presented to outstanding buildings; urban, regional, and rural planning; landscape design; interior design; historic preservation; renovation; and rehabilitation projects. We are looking for built projects that successfully incorporate minimum impact design components and move toward sustainable development practices, demonstrating excellence in design and the beneficial synthesis of an integrated design process.

Submissions will be accepted for projects of any type anywhere in the world by any New England design professional, or projects in New England by design professionals elsewhere.

Please go to http://www.aianh.org/action/ididcall.shtml for a Call for Entries.

The four committees are:

- Long Range Planning – board member recruitment, yearly themes, future staffing, board of advisors
- Public Policy – Legislation, Codes, Communities
- Publicity/Communication – Internal and external, promoting design, our members and the profession, website development, branding
- Young Architects – IDP, NCARB, mentoring, site visits, social gatherings

These committees are in addition to several exciting initiatives whose groups meet on a regular basis. Both Learning by Design and Canstruction meet on a monthly basis. (For the uninitiated, Canstruction is a design competition/ charity event using canned goods).

While we welcome new board energy, these committees offer an alternative way for members to get involved in an issue-focused way. If you would like to participate, don't hesitate to email me at depstein@truexcullins.com. Your involvement could make a big difference.

geometric shapes) which equate words; and that these primary elements can be manipulated according to grammatical rules so as to build up coherent structures in the same manner that words can be combined in accordance with the rules of logic to form meaningful sentences. The model derives from a Positivist theory of language, which relies for its cohesion and integrity on the concept that verbal atoms (words) correspond to objects in the real world. These primary verbal tokens combine to form larger information segments such as sentences. To be meaningful, say the Positivists, these combinations of verbal tokens or word atoms must be assembled according to the

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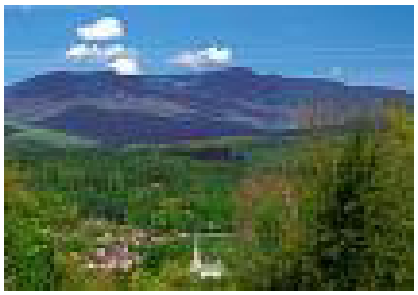
living in a green home one in five new houses is certified "energy star"



(This is Part 2 of a series of articles and was published in Le Devoir, Montreal on March 6, 2005 and translated from the original story by reporter Louis-Gilles Francoeur.)

Burlington – For 24 years, Bart Frisbie has been building houses in Vermont that are unusually energy efficient. They exceed by an average of 30% the energy efficiency of houses built to the state's standards because of their insulation, their tightness, and their systems of heating and air conditioning which meet the standards of the voluntary Energy Star certification program, one of the most stringent in North America.

The president of Sterling Construction proudly gave us a tour of a luxurious home in Burlington which will sell for about $600,000 US. Even the closest inspection would not reveal a single sheetrock panel that wasn't perfectly sealed at the floor. None of the baseboard trim was nailed for fear of creating microscopic air holes. The insulation factor of most of the windows equals or exceeds that of the walls of most older houses. Openings for natural light and photometers will reduce the lighting bill. Electronic thermostats in each room will parsimoniously distribute the hot water from the gas furnace which also provides the domestic hot water to minimize losses.
When this magnificent three-story 4000 square foot home is finished, experts will temporarily install a pump in a door to put the whole structure under negative pressure to see if air infiltration is low enough to meet the Energy Star standard. "Bart", who is also known in Burlington as a star player of the Ripkens, a local baseball team, is as confident of passing the Energy Star test as he would be facing a visiting team.

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rules of formal logic. If they do not conform to these rules they are meaningless and the statements they convey are false. In the following we shall attempt to show the limitations of this view of language, a view which underpins many prevailing assumptions concerning the nature of the design process, in particular those which make appeal to logic, formal systems, and the computational paradigms of Artificial Intelligence.

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The Positivist concept of an exact and determinate language made up of symbols which correspond to a unique set of atomic facts traces to Plato. He speaks of the "weakness of the logos,"6 by which he means that spoken language is treacherous, that it has a tendency to slip out of our control so that meanings disappear into the thickets of

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In addition, he says, the future owner will get, along with his Energy Star certificate, the certainty that the annual costs of heating and cooling will be reduced by an average of $2173, according to the calculations of Efficiency Vermont (EVT), the organization in Vermont charged with reducing the demand for electricity. “In the 70’s,” Bart explains, “developers interested in energy efficiency wondered how the customer would react to the costs – often very steep — of building in energy-saving features. Today, a certain clientele is looking for this certification, which explains why one new house in five in Vermont is now Energy Star certified. This percentage is as high as 70% in the Burlington area.” In 2003, 300 new one-family homes were Energy Star certified, in other words one in four that exceeded by at least 20% Vermont’s energy standards for new construction.

His employees, he says to give an example, understand this new way of building so well that they no longer find themselves on a cold morning with a tube of silicone that’s too cold to seal the walls. The tubes now arrive in a thermos that stays warm in one of Stirling’s trucks. And no employee would think of sealing around a window with fiberglass insulation for fear of allowing air leaks and risking the jibes of his or her co-workers. In total, there are extra costs of about $20,000 for the house we are visiting, “but it seems insignificant in a total cost of $550,000 to $600,000. And the future owner will have one of the most efficient 3800 square foot houses available.” he says.

2500 square feet for two people

However, when it is pointed out that building such a big house for two or three people would create unusually high energy bills, Bart Frisbie not only agrees but adds, “The increase in surface area and volume of houses is certainly what explains why, despite the increased energy efficiency, the demand for energy in the residential sector continues to grow. Between 2000 and 2003, the average surface area of houses in Vermont went from 2000 to 2500 square feet, a 25% increase!”

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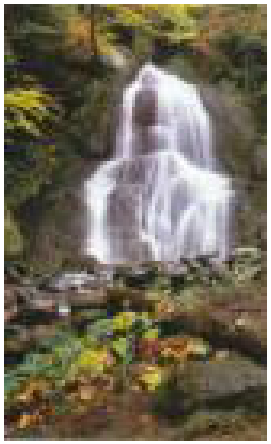
ambiguity, self-contradiction and paradox. 7 Ordinary spoken language is unequal to the task of representing reality; it does not directly correspond to its referent. Ordinary language must be replaced by a system of signs which corresponds exactly to the structure of what is. To control our thinking we must resort to a system of signs that can be controlled, a formal language that always behaves according to the dictates of logic. For Plato, the paradigmatic expression of such a language was the language of mathematics; the ideal language for thinking is one in which words function like numbers. In this way, “the word, just like the number, becomes the mere sign of a being that is well-defined and hence pre-known.” 8 Only statements expressed in such a formal language could lay claim to certainty.

cont.



Steven Maier, who represents Middlebury in the Vermont House of Representatives and is sponsor of a bill on the regulation of greenhouse gas emissions, acknowledges that legislators have avoided until now this aspect of the problem that impinges on a fundamental part of U.S. culture. “Even if I personally prefer to live simply and have a small house, I know that, in general, people here prefer to buy a big SUV rather than a smaller, cheaper car that works just as well. It’s the same for houses.”

Confronted with this contradiction, the director of EVT, Blair Hamilton, who is often reminded that there are financial barriers to making Energy Star homes accessible to everyone, points out, backed up by statistics, that “90% of affordable home construction projects in Vermont” have also had design review from his organization.

“We even combine our resources with those of other programs, state or federal, like the 0.5% fee on energy sales to help low-income Vermonters, to help improve the plans and estimates of architects and to finance a portion of these improvements in order to reduce energy bills in future construction.”

David Epstein, an architect specialized in energy-efficient buildings, explains that the requirements of the public, of developers and of professionals, increase every year because of EVT’s work. “From one project to the next,” he says, “everyone learns about what the competition is doing. And the public and developers understand more and more that it is a worthwhile investment.”

Visiting a publicly-subsidized apartment building under construction, the EVT employee in charge of the project, Mary Jane Poynter, explains that around 40% of the funds required to increase efficiency to meet Energy Star standards are in general paid to the developer. In 2003, 353 housing units in multifamily buildings were constructed in Vermont to meet Energy Star standards, the same level of efficiency and excellence built into Bart Frisbie’s luxury homes.

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The Logical Positivists attempted to formulate a “language of science,” constructed on the base of mathematical logic. Their aim was to define a precise, certain and [67] meaningful language that is clearly demarcated from meaningless pseudo-sentences. 9 They based their enterprise on the concept of logical atomism, the notion that words have a direct correspondence to things which are discrete, explicit and determinate; that words and what they stand for are like atoms or primary elements; and that words, as primary elements of language, can be brought together in logical sequences to form statements that are meaningful because they are certain, possessing a truth that can be tested against the rules of logic and against the things or facts they represent. These efforts culminated in Wittgenstein’s Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus. 10 (the “bible of Logical

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In the case of publicly subsidized housing, Blair Hamilton explains, "we negotiate and spend enough to come to an agreement which allows us to raise the project more or less to Energy Star standards." Annually, he says, EVT spends at least 1 million of its $15 million budget on low-income multifamily projects and 1.2 million for low-income single family homes or separate dwellings.

"We must," he says, "according to our own rules, invest 15% of our budget in publicly-subsidized housing because that's the proportion of low-income people in our state. If Canada spent what we spend in Vermont on public housing, you would spend $350 million per year on that alone. But even at that price, it's cost effective for everyone because each kilowatt saved costs 2.9 cents in contrast to the utility cost of 6 cents."

Ski resorts

The services available to developers like Bart Frisbie, architects like David Epstein or businesses in general explain why a big part of the energy savings that Efficiency Vermont achieves are in the industrial or commercial sector, in particular in ski resorts, huge consumers of electricity in winter. EVT closely tracks the projects of members of the Vermont Ski Area Association to offer them, each time they have to install a new piece of equipment, help in finding the least energy-intensive option. And, as always, they share some of the resulting additional cost with the owner.

Hundreds of snow-making machines that operate on ground level have thus been exchanged for new towers that loom above the ski trails. "We suggest for example," Blair Hamilton explains, "installing bigger pipes which activate the pumps less often and use less electricity: we always analyze the efficiency advantages. We make a proposal to share the additional cost and come to an agreement. In 2003, 14 out of 17 ski resorts in Vermont worked on at least one project with us, which will save them $28 million over 15 years."

cont.

Positivism"), the definitive exposition of the Positivist theory of language, in which he specified just such a precise and perfect language, one which would escape opinions, purposes, values, and intentions. All subjective notions and purposive meanings were banished from the domain of concrete experience. He maintained that "the ultimate constituents of the world are a unique set of atomic facts whose combinations are pictured or mirrored in the relations among symbols in a logically perfect language," that "the world can be described completely by knowing all these atomic propositions," and that "there is one basic use of language: to convey information…"

cont.

The industrial sector, which receives 60% of EVT's funds since it contributes in this same proportion to its financing through a 2% fee on electricity purchases, uses EVT support to replace hundreds of motors of all types every year. The replacement of old industrial machines by less energy-intensive ones is, by itself, the source of 35% of all energy savings achieved by EVT in its four years of operation.

The dairy farms of Vermont, whose milk is famous as the raw material for Ben & Jerry's inimitable ice cream, have also entered into the dance of energy efficiency. Approximately 650 farms have asked for EVT's help or have responded to its proposals over four years. Invited to give help in assessing a particular purchase, EVT will often do an energy audit for the whole farm. With the help of a bank specializing in agricultural loans and with financial assistance from EVT, the farmer ends up with monthly loan payments that cost less than he or she used to waste in energy, an immediate savings which will turn into huge long-term gains.

But the EVT strategies that target businesses only constitute one part of a multifaceted approach that has allowed them, in only 3 years, to reduce by 3% the overall electricity consumption in this small state on the border of Québec.

(This is the second article in a four-part series that aiaVT has had translated and will be republishing in the newsletter. Look for Part 3 next month: Vermont defies orthodox economics.)

It follows that "all language which conveys information is exact and determinate." 11 The Tractatus thus defines the world in terms of a set of atomic facts which can be expressed in logically independent propositions. Everything can be expressed in the formal language of logic. "The limits of my language mean the limits of my world. Logic fills the world: the limits of the world are also its limits." 12

In summary, Wittgenstein's radical attack on the atomic model of language is based on the argument that the meanings of words do not derive from a logical calculus. Firstly, we cannot give a precise

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new proposed vermont energy code update promises stricter standards and more educational needs for architects and engineers

donna j. leban, aia, lc
light/space/design

A new proposal for updating Vermont's Commercial Building Energy Standards was unveiled on June 10th at a meeting at Burlington Electric Department. As you may be aware, compliance with this code is mandatory for all projects receiving funding from the state of Vermont- including schools, as well as all projects requiring an Act 250 permit. These tend to be the larger new projects in Vermont, many of which are designed by architects and engineers.

However, a lot of projects not covered by this code are not designed by architects and engineers. Efficiency Vermont staff indicated that buildings not designed by architects and engineers are less likely to use more efficient equipment, but we don't really know if overall they use more energy per square foot. That would be an interesting study. If they do use significantly more energy, that would seem to indicate a need to institute a commercial energy code for all of Vermont, not just the Act 250 and state projects.

Anyway, changes to the energy code will eventually make it less likely that projects required to meet the code would obtain energy efficient lighting incentives to the degree that is currently available. This is due to a significant tightening of lighting power densities when compared with ASHRAE 90-1-99 and the 2000 Version of the International Energy Conservation Code, the basis of the current Vermont

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definition of a word because its meaning is forever changing according to the situation in which it is used. Meanings differ with context. The meaning of a word is precisely its use. We cannot, therefore, discern the meanings of words and sentences in isolation or in the abstract. A word is polysemic; it does not have a single meaning, and its various meanings merge, interpenetrate, are in a continual flux that eludes definition and rules. The definition of the word is blurred and continually changing; it is infinitely flexible. Secondly, we define terms. We construct meanings, and the use of a term is determined by arbitrary convention. So similarly, grammars

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aiaVT website: http://www.aiavt.org/

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aiaVT welcomes

david hofmann, *aia, williston*
kenneth kaliski, *professional affiliate, white river junction*

"energy code". As part of the June 10th discussion, a comment was made by Teigh Southworth from State Bldgs and General Services that it would seem to make sense to pay incentives to owners who use architects and engineers in the design of their buildings when they are designed to meet and exceed the code.

I for one, along with many others at the meeting, applauded his comment. Those who consistently perform design using the best energy efficient design practices realize that it does take more time and skill to design and coordinate an energy efficient design, and even more when other "green" factors are included. Paying for additional design time needed to work out all the details and make the efficient design a reality should be a priority, particularly as lighting equipment incentives are reduced. Then we can not only feel good about the great job we've done, but we can also get paid for the extra work!

So, what can we as architects and engineers do about it? If we, for now, consider only the issue of lighting design and the efforts to do good lighting with reduce lighting power density requirements, here are some positive suggestions that will benefit architects:

1. Architects need additional lighting education (and/or professional lighting design assistance) to ensure that reduced lighting power requirements do not negatively affect overall building design. Currently when a lighting design professional is not involved, engineers and lighting manufacturers provide lighting specs and layouts, with architects often providing aesthetic input. Stricter energy requirements are going to require a more integrated and knowledge-based approach.

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do not exist until we construct them; and we construct them according to conventions. Because of the porosity and flexibility of meaning that inheres within language we cannot specify a universal and transcendental grammar. The forms that language takes are determined by its usage: language is intimately related to particular human actions and anticipations and expectations of such actions. Rules are not imposed on the language from without and as upon an object, but inhere within a particular language game played in a particular life situation, which forms part of a socially constituted set of conventions. Wittgenstein's description of language as a game highlights the point that the meaning of language does not depend on its fragmentary units having a one-to-one correspondence to things in an extra-linguistic world, units that combine to form logical structures. The meaning of language depends, rather, on the way it is used in a context. The bewitchment of language that Socrates deplored in the Cratylus [71] cannot be avoided by replacing its ambiguities and paradoxes with precise symbols designating a reality that stands

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aia**VT** is edited by Andrea Murray, AIA. Published views are the author's and not necessarily the views of AIA Vermont or any other organization.

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AIA Vermont reserves the right to edit articles for available space and determine appropriate content prior to inclusion. Submissions must be received by the 15th of the month prior to publication.

2. Architects with a reasonably good handle on math and physics can utilize lighting design tools just as easily as electrical engineers. These CAD based tools help the designer develop a much better feel for the capabilities of specific lighting products and techniques. Programs such as Lumen Micro and GSI32 can also help incorporate daylighting design into preliminary design. However- and this is a critical warning- these programs alone do not qualify an architect (or engineer) to do lighting design on day one. You need to develop (over time and with continuing education) a feel for the technical, physical and physiological factors of lighting design. You also need to spend time getting a feel for the tools before you can start producing good lighting design. However, that said, I think that architects have more of the inherent skills needed to do good lighting design than engineers.

3. Putting electrical engineers without a lighting design background in charge of your design may result in less than aesthetically satisfactory results, according to many architects. Overlighting is also a common complaint. Many engineers spend a minimum of time developing a lighting "design". Rules of thumb and hand calculations are slowly giving way to CAD based modeling tools, but some larger projects are sent directly to a manufacturer's rep for production of both the layout and schedule- often with little knowledge of the client's needs or desires, aesthetic goals, or local energy codes. Architects should point out to owners that good lighting design is an investment- and something best not left up to the suppliers.

cont.

outside of language. Whatever reality "out there" might be, it is inextricably interwoven with language, and cannot be considered except in the context of language as it is spoken in ordinary discourse. Language is not a sign system, a language of symbols; nor is it an information system. 19 It is a language game, and as such it breaks out of the limits that any symbolic system necessarily implies. It is not made up of atomic tokens which represent or correspond to elements of reality in an extra-linguistic world; and it cannot be forced into the straitjacket of formal grammars without altering what it really is.

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The Hermeneutical Circle

Hermeneutic studies attempt to answer the question, How does understanding arise? How, for example, do we understand everyday language if, as we have seen, it does not follow the rules of logic and is shot through with ambiguities and imprecision? Philosophical hermeneutics answers that when we understand language, or

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Note: Having a manufacturer's rep produce a lighting layout may cost the client more money in the long run, particularly in a competitive bid situation. The lighting specs are often based on products where the manufacturer has a bidding edge, and there may be more fixtures and lamps specified than actually needed since manufacturers often assume higher illuminance requirements than clients actually need or want.

Newer efficient lighting technologies and lighting controls are rarely if ever specified by mfrs in these situations, as this would put the rep in a competitive bidding disadvantage. If during construction, inferior or "unequal" products by another manufacturer are substituted by the contractor to gain better pricing, the architect and engineer may not know whether they are inferior or not, and have no one to ask- since the original mfr/specifier is no longer part of the picture. Resulting operating or maintenance costs may be higher, and the owner may get a less than satisfactory result.

4. Many electrical engineers who do perform lighting calculations tend to focus on numerical design alone rather than qualitative decisions about lighting. This is reason enough for electrical engineers and architects to better educate themselves about lighting, and help avoid costly design errors. IESNA (Illuminating Engineering Society of North America) provides two major conferences per year that provide good training opportunities. The lighting track at the Better Bldgs by Design conference also provides excellent information, although lighting design is best learned in a studio setting with real or imaginary projects. Lighting design qualifications and standards are established by the NCQLP (National Council of Qualified Lighting Professionals), an international qualifying exam for lighting professionals started 7 years ago. While NCQLP certified individuals may not all be great lighting designers, at least they understand the technologies and the process sufficiently to pass a fairly tough exam.

cont.

anything else for that matter, it is because of the working of the hermeneutic circle. 34 The hermeneutical circle has to do with the circular relation of the whole and itsparts in any event of interpretation. We cannot understand the meaning of a part of a language event until we grasp the meaning of the whole; and we cannot understand the meaning of the whole until we grasp the meaning of the parts. That is, we cannot understand the meanings of the words that make up a sentence until we can locate them in the context of the sentence as a whole; and we cannot understand the meaning of the whole sentence until we understand the meanings of the words that it comprises. By extension, the meaning of a concept depends on the context (or the horizon) 35 within which it occurs; but this context is made up of the concepts to which it gives meaning. Any act of understanding

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cont.

5. Organizations like Efficiency Vermont have a financial role to play, and often have some useful suggestions. However, the architect and engineer have the ultimate decision and liability, and must choose the best overall solution. If the result is both a high quality and efficient design that exceeds the code, we would hope for financial compensation of additional time spent to develop the more energy efficient design.

As you can see, most of these suggestions are based on improved education for professionals and those involved in the design process. To this end, I am working with a lighting manufacturer's rep, organizations aimed at promoting energy efficiency, and state government to organize a series of classes focused on lighting education for architects, electrical engineers, lighting suppliers, and even contractors who may be interested. While up to now there have been no local opportunities for training in lighting design, there is now an opportunity to combine lighting design and lighting energy code training in a way that focuses on design as well as energy use, and can utilize some of the financial resources available for code training.

In order to provide the best educational content, as well as attract dedicated students, the course would be provided for a fee to participants, but may be subsidized where funding is available. An initial location for these classes in a new facility in South Burlington is being planned for late fall 2005. Other locations will be determined where there is sufficient interest.
Please do contact me if you or your firm have an interest in participating. Also, please pass along the opportunity to electrical engineers that you may work with. Anyone is welcome to attend, and all participating architects will receive AIA CEU credits. Also, all feedback is welcome.

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language involves an interplay of text and context. The whole and the part give meaning to each other; understanding is circular. Thus we understand what someone says to us or something we read because of a reciprocal relationship between the whole and the part. These are inseparable in the process of interpretation. The meaning of the sentence as a whole reflects back and modifies the meanings of its component parts, the words. The whole can only be understood in terms of its constitutive parts and these parts in turn can only be construed in terms of the whole which they constitute. This formulation may appear simple or even banal, but the apparent simplicity is deceptive, concealing complexities that are proving powerful enough to pose a real threat to philosophical concepts that have been considered foundational since Descartes. The circle

cont.

1.0 tips for developing a successful web site

nathaniel richman, web designer/developer
juliet austin, ma, marketing coach & consultant

1. Be clear on your purpose.
Building a web site can be a long and arduous procedure if you are not sure what you are doing. However, if you have a clear focus as to what you expect your web site to do for your business/organization, things will flow much more smoothly. The purpose can be anything from selling widgets online to keeping members of your soccer team updated. Regardless, figure that out before setting sail on your journey.

2. Establish your target audience.
Your target audience will affect what sort of content your site includes as well as how it will look and function. Obviously, writing for kids will be much different than writing for adults. For business web sites, a narrow and specific target market, will not only make it easier for you to market your product or service, it will also make it easier for customers and clients to find you.

Also, consider how many graphics and "bells and whistles" you'll want. If your audience is not very computer literate and generally includes people with slow Internet connections, it doesn't make sense to include large, slow-loading graphics, animations, and video clips. You want your site to be user friendly and don't want your visitors to leave because they've become frustrated with the navigation or because your web site loads too slowly. Conversely, if your audience is the younger generation, including flashy graphics and other "fun" elements might be more appropriate and even necessary to grab their attention.

cont.

involves a logical contradiction: if we must understand the whole before we can understand the parts and yet the parts derive their meaning from the whole, then understanding can never begin. We cannot start with a whole that has no parts; and we cannot start with the parts until we understand the whole. This paradox does not imply that the circle is vicious, but merely that logic is inadequate to the task of understanding the working of understanding. Yet understanding occurs, so there must be some leap that enables us to understand the whole and the parts at the same time, however contrary to the rules of logic this may seem. Looking at this from a slightly different viewpoint, the logical paradox implies that we can only understand the sentence after it has been construed as a whole, so that the meanings of its constituent parts can then be understood in retrospect.

cont.

3. Determine your budget.
One can spend anywhere from $99 to $10,000+ on having a web site developed. Your purpose should help you decide on your budget. Remember, a web site should ideally be a work in progress. Don't worry if you can't do everything you want with it initially — you can always add to it later, and it will work better for you and your customers if you keep it up-to-date and fresh.

4. Assess the value of your time.
Many people have undertaken to create their own web sites, especially with the advent of desktop publishing programs. Still, they expend a huge amount of time and energy and end up unsatisfied with the results. While it may be true that "anyone" can design a web site, the same could be said about any type of work. If it takes you hours and plenty of frustration to cut your own hair, wouldn't you be better off going to a barber or hairdresser? If you have a flair for design, feel confident in your writing and marketing skills, and have the time, knowledge, and passion to build your own web site, go for it! If your time would be more productive doing your own work and contracting out the web creation, that might be worth considering.

5. If hiring a professional designer make sure you are comfortable working with him/her.
Do you feel he or she understands your vision? Does he or she provide useful ideas and solutions you hadn't thought about? Have you looked through his or her past work? Do you feel like you're getting professional service? Is the price right for your budget? What is included in the fee you will be paying?

cont.

Understanding of language, however, does not proceed in this retrospective manner, but at the same time as the language event takes place. We understand words as they are uttered. On a larger scale, we cannot fully understand the parts of a text except in the light of the text as a whole, but we nevertheless understand the parts as we read them and before we have completed reading the whole text. How is this possible? "A person who is trying to understand a text," says Gadamer, "is always performing an act of projecting. He projects before himself a meaning for the text as a whole as soon as some initial meaning emerges in the text. Again, the latter emerges only because he is reading the text with particular expectations in regard to a certain meaning. The working of this fore-project, which is constantly revised in terms of what emerges as he penetrates into the meaning, is understanding what is there." 36 When reading a text or hearing a speech utterance, we have initial intimations and expectations of what the meaning of the whole will be, and interpret accordingly what we are reading or hearing at the moment. We pick

cont.

6. Think about how you'd like the site to look and function.
Often you will have a logo and/or other graphics you'd like to build a design around. You probably have some colour and style preferences. Perhaps a certain font has caught your eye. If you're stumped and lacking ideas, go surfing! Look through a wide variety of web sites — both your competitors' and other successful businesses/organizations. Write down (or bookmark) the sites you like and what appealed (or didn't appeal) to you. Do the same with magazine ads. You'll get a lot of inspiration.

7. Organize and formulate a layout for the information you'd like to include.
Assign page names to each distinct "chunk" of information and, if the total number of pages is sufficiently high (over 12, as a rule of thumb), group them into sections. This will make navigating through your site that much easier. Your designer should be able to make some recommendations in this area.

8. Make sure you understand the importance of effective web copy (text).
Your web copy will be determined by your purpose and your audience. On the Internet, people have very short attention spans. If they don't get the information within a few seconds they'll usually move on to the next web site — possibly your competition's. Furthermore, the more you know about writing web copy, the more customers you will draw in. You can learn some basic copywriting skills yourself, or you can hire a professional copywriter to write it for you. Always make sure you know what you want to say and say it concisely. If you have the need for a lot of text that can always follow further down the page or on another page.

cont.

up clues and cues from the parts, and from these construct an antecedent formulation of the whole, which then functions in a dialectical fashion to refine and redefine the parts. We move from partial and disjointed insights to an understanding of the whole and back to the yet-to-be-understood portions of the text. As soon as we initially discover some elements that can be understood, we sketch out the meaning of the whole text. We cast forward (or fore-cast) a preliminary project, which is progressively corrected as the process of understanding advances. Interpretation brings with it an anticipation, albeit vague and informal, of the meaning of the whole; and the light of this anticipation plays back to illuminate the parts. This prior understanding is in turn corrected or confirmed, and gradually specified, as the details react upon it. [73] That is to say, we project a meaning of the whole even as we begin to read the text or hear the speaker and understand the parts accordingly. This preliminary projection is continually revised as the reader or listener penetrates deeper into the meaning of the parts. The projection, at first unclear

cont.

9. Choose a domain name and find a hosting company.
Your web site will need to reside somewhere so that others will be able to access it. And, you'll probably want to register a domain name, such as www.mybusiness.com. Doing so rather than using the long, awkward name (and free web space) provided by your Internet Service Provider (ISP), sounds much more professional and is much easier for customers to remember. Choosing a good domain name can also help you get found in search engines, such as Google. You'll also get related email addresses, such as info@mybusiness.com, which, again, sound professional and reinforce your domain name. There are plenty of hosting companies out there at a variety of prices. Find one that suits your needs. Your web designer or marketing consultant should be able to help you with all of the above.

10. If you have a business web site, develop a strategy on how you will market it.
Having a web site without visitors will get you nowhere. An analogy is writing a fantastic book, hiding it in the library, and not telling anyone about it. You will need to drive traffic to your site. There are numerous ways to do this. You can either learn to do this yourself, or hire a marketing professional to help you. Although hiring someone will increase your initial costs, it can pay off in the long run when you have more potential customers visiting your site, and ultimately increasing your sales.

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and only existing in outline, plays back into the interpretations of the parts, requiring their revision even as the projected meaning itself is continually revised in the light of the interpretation and increasing understanding of the parts. By this process of to-and-fro reflection the understanding of the whole gradually emerges.

As Habermas puts it, the future exists as a horizon of expectations, which fuse hypothetically the fragments of previous experience into an intuitively grasped totality. We anticipate end states by reference to which events, both past and present, smoothly coalesce into "action-orienting stories." 37 This is a cycle of anticipation and revision. We anticipate the outcome of our activities and interpretation proceeds in the ambience of an anticipated outcome. The outcome permeates our present understanding. Understanding thus involves a process of projection, but what is the nature of this projection?