confined. designed. but credited?

"A man is right in being a man; it is the woman who is in the wrong" (p. 163)

men ⚥ ⊕ positive   negative ⊖ ♀ women
⊜ neutral

men have always been represented by the positive/neutral

women on the other hand, represent the negative, and only the negative.

In saying this, Beauvoir is implying that men and women have never shared the world in equality.

When children grow up with this patriarchal societal thinking, the cycle of frustrations and irritations of subjugation & oppression will continue. This will largely affect the chances of future women and girls succeeding in careers that they are passionate about.

(For example, graphic design)

"The sphere to which she belongs is everywhere enclosed, limited, dominated, by the male universe: high as she may raise herself, far as she may venture, there will always be a ceiling over her head, walls that will block her way." (p. 167)
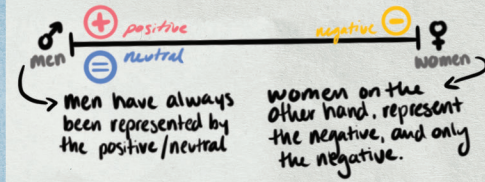
The Second Sex

In Simone de Beauvoir's text, *The Second Sex*, she highlights the frustrations women have in every aspect of their lives regarding their gender.

Women make up half the population, yet "we are told that femininity is a danger; we are exhorted to be women, remain women, become women" (p. 162).

Alms for Oblivion:
The History of Women in Early American Graphic Design

Printers   **Illustrators**   **Ad Artists**

Women in print were well represented. In fact, several presses were run by them; for example the Cambridge Press. Women were often trained in the printshops in the home, in contrast to the boys who trained in apprenticeships.

From 1890 to 1920, C. Jance Gover showed that photography was a profession adopted by economically secure women who found it a personal freedom but were still tied to Victorian gender definitions.

In 1897, Arts and Crafts Societies spread all over the U.S. and were one of the few clubs that included women.

1880-1890 was the Golden Age of Illustration. The need for illustrations for magazine covers & stories, outdoor ads, and popular fiction grew exponentially which provided more opportunities for women designers.

| 1607 onwards | 1800 – 1870s | 1880 – 1900s | 1910 – 1930s |

By 1868 there were 200 women typesetters in New York City, which was 15-20% of the printing trade workers. The Women's Typography Union No.1 was also founded during this year.

December 3, 1850
The School of Design for Women was established in Philadelphia at the request of Sarah Peter. 94 students enrolled and expanded rapidly.

During 1880, the introduction of new technology, especially the Mergenthaler Linotype, increased opportunities for women. However, successful women in the printing industry were seen as unfeminine and grotesque.

In 1913, Elizabeth Cowell was the first and only woman to be featured in the *Graphic Arts* issue.

In 1911, Elizabeth Shippen Green, Violet Oakley, May Wilson Preston, and Jessie Wilcox Smith were the only female associate members of the all-male Society of Illustrators.

The Bauhaus

When the Bauhaus opened in 1919, both men and women applied; but that begs the question:

"Why have we never heard about the women?"

WALTER GROPIUS, first art director

"there would be **"no difference between the beautiful and the strong sex"**—those very words betraying his real views" (The Guardian, 2009)

HYPOCRITE

The leadership of the school and Gropius shared the same views; that design processes & materials were gendered.
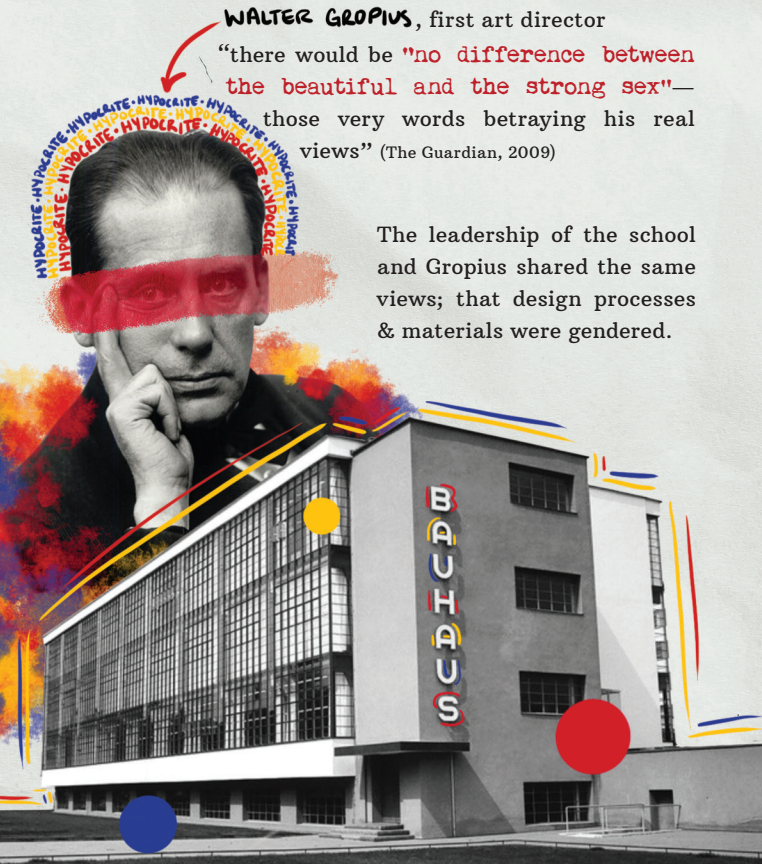
Women were allowed to attend the school but could only take courses in the more "feminine" specialties; weaving and ceramics (Frieze, 2018).

There were some women that took advantage of the fact that they were allowed to attend this school, and excelled at these disciplines.

These are some of those women:

Alma Siedhoff-Buscher
German Woodworker & Toy Designer

Benita Koch-Otte
German Weaver & Textile Designer

Gunta Stölzl
German Master Textile Designer

Marguerite Winldenhain
American Ceramic Artist

Ilse Fehling
German Costume Designer

Marianne Brant
German Metalsmith & Designer

There were women who took a step further and challenged the "gender norms" around design and excelled in the more "manly" disciplines: metalwork and woodworking.

# Women Designers in Britain in the 1920s and 1930s: *Defining the Professional and Redefining Design*

When analyzing the historical relationship between women and design, you primarily see women as consumers of design rather than the maker/designer.

However, in March of 1944, an exhibition featuring women designers from the displays "a high degree of skill was evident...it was possible to see the legacy of a sophisticated level of art and design education" (p. 178).

Sadie Speight, Architect

Over Sadie Speight's career, most of her works have often been attributed to her husband, and became increasingly frustrated about it. "She had specific talents as a designer, and a desire to establish a career for herself which was not continually in the shadow of her husband's" (p. 185).

Women designers often expressed that they had to sell their work in a more forceful manner than their male counterparts. Their ordinary, everyday events were challenges to be recognized as professionals;

they cut their hair shorter so they would be taken seriously dressed "semi-feminine"
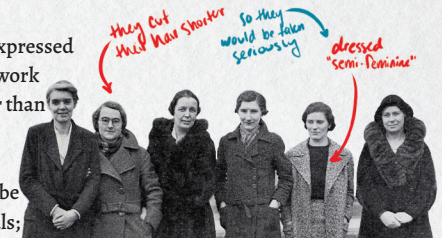
so they defied the conventions of femininity.

Caroline Haslett, Electrical Engineer

Caroline Haslett was a determined and effective campaigner for women's involvement in the electrical industries with design. She challenged the class differences within the feminist movement. "As a feminist, Haslett wished to work for all women, in the workplace and the home" (p. 190).

Alison Settle, Journalist

Alison Settle is not considered a designer, but her professional life was devoted to improving standards of design. She was also an editor of British Vouge in 1929.

Ursula Mommens, Ceramic Artist

Over Ursula Mommens' career, her work has not been adequately promoted and her contributions to the Studio Pottery movement has been undervalued (p. 186).
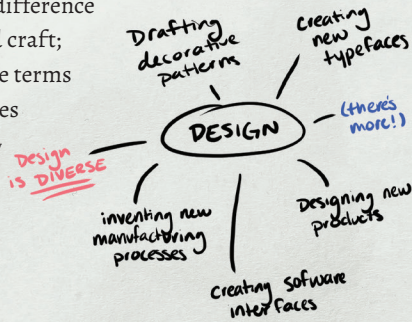
It is necessary to understand the work of the women described in a way that brings together discussions of equal opportunities with a celebration of feminine, whilst not allowing them to destroy or cancel each other out. (p. 179)

Reshaping and Rethinking:
Recent Feminist Scholarship on Design and Designers

How does a designer differ from a craft person?

Over the years, the term "design" has taken on new meanings and functions. However, it is not easy to distinguish the difference between design, art and craft; mostly because the three terms have changed many times over the centuries (History of Modern Design, p.12).

Drafting decorative pattern

creating new typefaces

DESIGN

(there's more!)

Design is DIVERSE

inventing new manufacturing processes

*Designing new products*

creating software interfaces

This lack of consistent and clear definitions has made it difficult to identify women designers.

Quilting and embroidery share many similarities with design and the design process. So it begs the question:

"Should they be considered apart of design history?"

If that is the case, it would raise the common "wife/mother" everyday crafts (sewing, quilting, embroidering) to the 'art/design' status.
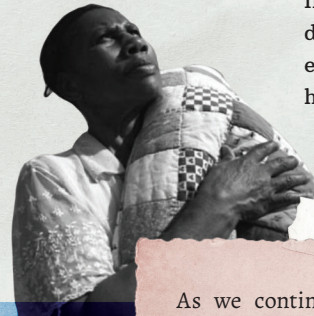
If you were to exclude craft from design history, you would then exclude much of what women have designed (p. 78).

As we continue to explore the definition of design, it is crucial that we are careful not to exclude women from the picture like they were throughout history.

Significant Women in Design

Over the last 100 years from all over the world

Sylvia Harris
Gail Anderson
Michele Washington
Dana James Mwangi
Antionette Carroll
Jewel Burks
Nakita M. Pope
Dian Holton
Gunta Stölzl
Benita Otte
Marguerite Wildenhain
Ilse Fehling
Alma Siedhoff
Marianne Brandt
Carolyn Davidson
Jane Davis Doggett
Paula Scher
Susan Kare
Jessica Walsh
Sarah Boris

Ebony Bižys
Supriya Bhonsle
Irma Boom
Leta Sobierajski
Adrianne Walujo
Marian Bantjes
Louise Fili
Dorothy Hayes
Anoushka Khandwala
Zuzana Licko
Astrid Stavro
Kelly Walters
Ray Eames
Elizabeth Friedländer
Zaha Hadid
Bea Feitler
Deborah Sussman
Cipe Pineles
April Greiman
Margo Chase

Debbie Millman
Muriel Cooper
Hilda Dallas
Ellen Lupton
Jiani Lu
Grace Fussell
Deborah Adler
Susie Cooper
Clarice Cliff
Judith Hughes
Grete Marks
Minne McLeish
Enid Marx
Ethel Mairet
Marianne Straub
Margaret Leischner
Anna Zinkeisen
Marion Dorn
Dorothy Braddell
Margaret Calkin James
Marian Pepler
Lilian Dring
Joyce Clissold
Wilhelmina Geddes
Ursula Mommens
Theo Moorman
Peggy Angus
Alison Settle
Caroline Haslett
Sadie Speight

Sheila Levrant de Bretteville
Frances Flora Bond
Lydia R. Bailey
Helen Marguerite O'Kane
Ellen Gates Starr
Helena De Kay Gilder
Alice C. Morse
Beatrice Tonnesen
Clara Tonnesen Kirkpatrick
Ethel Reed
Florence Lundborg
Blanche McManus
Helen Dryden
Jessie Wilcox Smith
Helen Elna Hokinson
Elizabeth Colwell
Helen Rosen Woodward
Sarah Peter
Elizabeth Shippen Green
Violet Oakley
May Wilson Preston
Jessie Wilcox Smith
Alice Barber Stephens
Emily Sartain
Rosina Emmett
Mary Hallock Foote
Bertha M. Boye
Shirley J. Boccaccio
Faith Ringgold
Kamla Bhasin

Statement of Intent

I designed *confined. designed. but credited?* to illustrate the history, or lack thereof, of women in the graphic design profession. In Simone de Beauvoir's text, *The Second Sex*, she helps enforce this frustration/idea by comparing and contrasting men's and women's lives. By delivering this research in the form of a zine, I salute one of the ways feminists can communicate their views. I began this project by choosing a primary source related to graphic design and women, *Alms for Oblivion*, and then compared the texts from our class outline.

The Second Sex and *Alms for Oblivion* bring attention to the disparities and struggles of being a woman trying to achieve a career. Beauvoir brings attention to existentialism, which focuses on the place of the thinking individual in society and how they navigate their lives through free will and the constraints on it. Throughout *Alms for Oblivion*, there are many instances where when a woman achieved employment in the design profession, it was often seen but not credited to or not recognized as that of an individual.

Despite the oppression and sexism, there were multiple women who achieved professional status as graphic designers. The other sources used in this zine highlight some of those women and how they had to defy the social standards during that time. The two sources on the Bauhaus explain how women were able to attend art schools, but were limited to the more "feminine" specialties. *Women Designers in Britain* highlights four women graphic designers and their stories. The last source used was *Reshaping and Rethinking*, questions the definition of design and how the lack of a clear definition has made it difficult to identify women designers.

All of these articles and websites help communicate the disparity women had to face while trying to achieve a career in design, and how historic women broke down the barriers for women in the field. I used a combination of photos, hand-drawn illustrations, and digitally rendered shapes & textures to help point to the main ideas of each article. Overall, the zine captures key concepts of limitations within a male-dominated world as well as the capacity and competence of women in design.

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The names of women graphic designers were sourced from sources listed above as well as these sources:

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Images were sourced from Unsplash.com, Google Images, Pinterest, and sources listed above.