LITERATURE

Below is the list of the literature for this course. As you can see in the schedule, four literature sessions are scheduled. This is how it works:

– Each Literature session consists of 4-5 texts, with questions associated with them. You do not have to answer all questions - only four per literature session, but belonging to different papers.
– An answer should be ca 1/2 page long (ca 300 words), so ca 2 pages in total per session.
– You work in study teams of 4-5 people. Within your study team, make sure you answer all questions (which means that some questions may be answered by more than one person). Share the answers with each other, and discuss them. You have time allocated for this in the schedule on Tuesday afternoons.
– You send in your answers individually, as .doc (preferably) or .pdf no later than the deadline. Name the file first_name_lastname_litt[no], e.g. sus_lundgren_litt1.doc
– If you meet the deadline you earn 5 points each time, which helps improve your grade.

The collection of papers can be downloaded at the home page:
http://www.ixdcth.se/kurser/aoi
The book excerpts (Norman + Löwgren & Stolterman) will be copied and handed out.

LITERATURE SESSION 1: CHARACTER AND COHERENCY

DEADLINE: 1st of November


IMPORTANT! The contents of this paper will be addressed in the exercise on Friday the 29/10, so you must have read it until then!

– What is the difference between using character as a way to imply how something works, and to use non-functional metaphors? Do you think that it is easy to combine them?

– What is the difference between inscribing character into an object, and describing beliefs and values into it?


– Pick any two of Löwgren's beliefs and try to strengthen his argumentation with new comments and examples.
– Pick any two of Löwgren's arguments and try to argument against them. Why is he wrong?


and


– If you were to reformulate Sullivan’s text as the three (five?!) levels of aesthetics suggested by Lundgren, what would you put on the different levels?

– This article contains the famous statement “form follows function” (although misquoted!) that became the mantra of the entire functionalist movement (alongside van der Rohe’s “less is more”). Look back on last spring’s design project (in case you made one; otherwise pick some other project of yours)... if you were to formulate a slogan for that, what would it be, and why?


– Take either the “good” or “bad” product you chose for your home work, and analyze it in terms of icons, indices and symbols. Is the design coherent or not? Why?

– Westerlind writes: “Therefore it is crucial that when we are developing a new product, we should design in such a way that the user can construct a reasonable character for it.” What does he mean?

**LITERATURE SESSION 2: CRITICISM & EMOTIONS**

**DEADLINE: 8th of November**


– Which two of the designs presented in the paper do you think "best" serve the overall design goal to "promote energy conservation in everyday life". Why?

– Compare the STATIC! project with Dunne's Hertzian Tales. What are the differences, and what are the similarities? Which one do you think works best for changing people's behaviors. Why?

- Analyze The Faraday Chair, The Pillow, Tuneable Cities and Thief of Affection. Which one do you think best highlights the issue of all the invisible signals that surround us? Why? Can you improve the design further to state the point even stronger?
- Which one provokes you the most? Why is that, what is it that triggers this response in you? How could you make it more provoking? Less provoking?


- Consider your cell phone. Redesign it, inscribing either ambiguity of information, ambiguity of context or ambiguity of relationship into it. How do you think the redesign affects use? Does it intrigue, challenge or provoke?
- Enhancing ambiguity of information is comparably easy, but can you come up with other ways to enhance or create ambiguity of context and relationship, respectively?


- For each one of the four pleasures, give one example of an interactive product (not already mentioned by Jordan), that strongly evokes this pleasure.
- Make a four-pleasure analysis of either Superman, Harry Potter or any main character from the TV-series "Friends". Motivate your conclusions.


- Norman writes "Negative affect can make it harder to do even easy tasks; positive affect can make it easier to do difficult tasks." and arguments around this. Although he has a point, how do you think this rhymes with things like scary movies, stressful games and other things that we "use" despite the fact that they make us feel stressful or uneasy?
- Norman exemplifies with three teapots that he likes for different reasons. Can you give a similar example of three similar artifacts in your everyday life to whom you relate in very different ways?
LITERATURE SESSION 3: PLAYFULNESS & SENSING... AND A LITTLE TIME

DEADLINE: 15th of November


- In section 1.2 the authors describe three factors which they think play a role in aesthetics of interaction. Choose one of the following design examples described in the paper: The videodeck, the digital camera, the programmable heating controller or the alarm clock. Analyze them in the terms of these three factors. To which extent do they exist? And, is the design coherent? Could it be improved in this aspect?

- In section 1.1. the authors introduce the concept feedforward. Additionally they describe three factors which they think play a role in aesthetics of interaction in section 1.2. For each of these four things, give an example from an interactive product in your own life.


- Analyze your favorite game. Describe at least three mechanic, three dynamic and two aesthetic qualities.

- How do the authors see (or define) aesthetics? Do you agree? Why, or why not?


- Analyze your favorite game in terms of the gameplay properties the authors describe. Which if the mentioned ideals do you think it is closes to?

- Do you agree with the authors' suggestions of aesthetic ideals of gameplay or do you think that the list can be improved? Are some ideals missing or could some be merged? Write your own suggestion.


- Try out Echo or Perspective at http://demo.iconara.net/temporal-paint/. How do the temporal aspects affect your interaction?
– Do you agree with the author’s suggestions of temporal themes or do you think that the list can be improved? Are some themes missing or could some be merged? Write your own suggestion.


– How do the authors define pragmatist aesthetics?
– The authors propose that the Aesthetic Interaction is the fifth element of interaction (the fifth perspective). Do you agree or not. Why?

LITERATURE SESSION 4: PROPERTIES OF INTERACTION
DEADLINE: 22nd of November


– Compare Landin’s form properties and expressions with Löwgren’s use qualities. Differences? Similarities? Which view do you prefer (if any) and why?
– Compare and Landin’s form properties and expressions with Lim et al’s gestalt attributes. Differences? Similarities? Which view do you prefer (if any) and why?


– Do you think that the list of gestalt attributes is correct? Can it be improved? Perhaps some attributes are missing, or others are too alike? Create a better version of the list.
If you come up with new properties, write a short description.
– Pick any one of the following attributes in Table 1: Continuity, Directness, Movement, Orderliness, Pace, Time-depth. Check out the examples for the attribute you chose, and then try to find two new examples that feature this attribute and that are somewhere in between the two extreme points. Then, try to write a richer description of the attribute.

and the more extended and improved but less elaborate list:


- Pick any two of the following use qualities: Seductivity, Elegance, Identity, Flexibility, Surprise and/or Parafunctionality. Give one or two examples of each, taken from some interactive software or artifact you're familiar with.
- So, according to Löwgren & Stolterman, the list is incomplete. What could be added and why?


- What is the difference between an aesthetic interaction quality and a use quality, do you think? (No, Löwgren is not at all clear on this; do your best to speculate!)
- If comparing with Löwgren & Stolterman's collection of use qualities, it seems Pliability and Fluency were the only ones worth to be "upgraded" to aesthetic interaction qualities. Do you agree? Would you suggest adding other use qualities too? Why or why not?