

# Reviews

## **Safety At Home, At Work and In Between**

Mandy Ballam, Michael Holroyd and Alasdair Hogarth  
*London: Edward Arnold, £1.95.*

This is an excellent resource book dealing with safety education. As the title suggests, the book is divided up into three sections — dealing with safety at home, at work and 'in-between' with the latter part concentrating almost entirely on roads and transport. Each section contains double page spreads on a variety of topics and every topic contains a mixture of information and suggestions for possible student activities. All this is liberally illustrated by photographs and line drawings and even by comic-strips on some occasions.

The message is clear throughout the book — 'everyone should make a habit, a rigid, unfailing, unbreakable habit, of working and living safely at all times at work, on the road and at home'. The book is certainly provocative in its treatment of accidents and hazards but maintains a balance between sensationalism and a lively presentation of valuable factual information. One criticism I do make is that there is an enormous amount of material packed into so few pages, perhaps too much in some cases, and that the breadth of material is staggering. Some of the questions posed to the students at the end of activities suggests that the authors intended the book to be used for individual study. I would like to suggest that this publication would, by the nature of its material and presentation, be unsuitable for independent study, but if used judiciously would provide the backbone for a varied and valuable course in health and safety for young people.

Yvonne Garson

## **Working with Acrylics: An Introductory course**

Peter Thomas  
*London: Heinemann, 1979, £6.00.*

During recent years there have been a number of changes in the methods of teaching craftwork, with a much greater emphasis on problem solving through design and technology. These methods make much greater demands on the individual pupil in terms of research and investigation, and still greater demands on the teaching staff if account is not to be taken of the ways in which 'follow up' information can be made available to the pupils.

Work cards are one of the ways in which many of the basic skills relating to different materials, can be used to reinforce demonstrations by the teacher.

The Technique and Information Cards on Acrylics by Peter Thomas would be a valuable asset in this type of working situation. There are twelve double sided cards, with an easy to read

hand printed text, coupled with clearly drawn black and white illustrations.

The illustrations have been drawn by the author, who has obviously used his experience in teaching children through the use of materials, to select the techniques to be illustrated.

The cards are divided into two groups, eight covering techniques related to working acrylics, and four giving information dealing with some fundamental design arrangements.

Care has been taken not to suggest finished articles, although some of the techniques that could be used with other materials, seem to hint at jewellery. The design cards might prove to be useful with some pupils. However with such a wide ranging subject that is difficult to condense, it might be better to cater for this area of study on a general basis at the onset of the course, and more specific account taken of the individual needs of each pupil as the design problems occur.

It is difficult to design one set of work cards to cover the full range of ability, at all ages, but this set would be suitable for children ten years old and upward, of average and above average ability.

In all the set would be a very useful addition to the resource area of a progressive school workshop.

J.W. Thompson

## **Drawn Fabric Embroidery**

Edna Wark  
*London: Batsford, 1979, £7.50.*

To the uninitiated in the techniques of embroidery by the counted thread the title of this book may be misleading. Drawn fabric embroidery is more widely known as pulled thread embroidery and it implies the use of stitches to pull the fabric into clumps and bundles of threads, to create an infinite variety of decorative patterns. It should not be confused with drawn thread embroidery which implies the removal of threads from the fabric, thus altering its character, before further modifying it by stitchery. This distinction Edna Wark is careful to make in the introduction.

The book, written by an amateur for fellow enthusiasts, contains an historical survey of the subject, descriptions of experimental techniques, things to make, instructions for finishing and presentation and a stitch dictionary. It concludes with a list of museums, suppliers of materials in the U.K., U.S.A., Canada and Australia, and an index.

In recent publications there is a noticeable tendency for embroiderers to look back and examine in detail the historic origins of their craft. This is not so much a counter-move against the free-for-all school, but a *reculer pour mieux sortir* — a re-charging of the batteries. The historical section is one of the main strengths of this book. In it the economic circumstances

which led to the popularity of pulled work in Western Europe in the eighteenth century and the fashions which resulted, are explained. The text is supported by many excellent photographs of work that is breathtakingly beautiful. These will repay close study and should provide a humbling experience for any self-satisfied embroiderer.

To a generation for whom pulled work has been synonymous with Scandinavia the section on pulled work in the Near and Middle East is of particular interest. There are two photographs of Indian work, but it is a pity that there are none from the Benaki Museum (Athens) nor the Topkapi Palace (Istanbul). The amazing riches of Turkish pulled work remain to be discovered. The use of colour and metal thread in what we think of as a monochrome medium may eventually add a new dimension to pulled thread as worked in this country.

The book contains some interesting information on experimental techniques, using two layers of fabric of different thread counts to achieve a wider variety of texture, and the use of needle-made lace techniques for working, instead of framing up the work. The section on finishing is full of sound, clear advice, and there are some new ideas for presentation.

The section on things to make is disappointing. These include a belt, book-mark, needle-case and pincushion and their ordinariness is a sad reflection on the expected skill of the reader, and in contrast to the lovely historical work, quite painful. The section on design is a little thin, but there are photographs of good modern work.

In the stitch dictionary each stitch is given a written description, a diagram and a photograph. Taken together they make the most complicated stitches possible to make. The scale of the diagrams is almost too large, as it is hard to relate from the huge grid to the actual fabric in the hand. The photographs are not particularly good. All the stitches have been worked in a strongly contrasting thread, which does not always show up their true nature. For instance, in Diagonal Drawn Filling, what is shown is a dominant zig-zag of thread. In actual fact the thread virtually disappears as it is pulled tight, and a delightful pattern of little linen crosses appears. This is hardly to be discerned. Though there are only twenty seven stitches given, these include a number of Eastern stitches which do not find a place in other books.

This book is very much a personal statement of the author's involvement in drawn fabric embroidery. Her style is a little chatty at times, but it does communicate her enthusiasm.

Dorothea Kay

## Introductory Design Problems

Keith Balkham and Richard Mills  
London: Heinemann, 1979, £1.95.

## Craft and Design Briefs

Bryan Gunstone  
London: Edward Arnold, 1979, £1.20.

If we take the view that 'design education' stands for some significant developments of aspects of learning and of teaching then we should expect to find new language. New language is a necessary concomitant of changing and developing practice and especially when developments are of a radical or potentially radical nature.

In the field of design education we appear to be in the particularly interesting position of seeing new conceptual tools emerge alongside developments in practice. But, understandably and even necessarily for a time, emerging language can be innocently used of well-established practices – in which context, usage of the 'new' is probably rhetorical – as well as to indicate genuinely changing practices. The language of design education over the past ten years or so repays some attention, for to focus upon it may be to enlarge our knowledge and understanding of learning and of teaching (and of design activity). For instance, more particularly, it may lead to useful distinctions being appreciated between design activity, professional design activity, and design-educational activity. Obviously the first and last are not necessarily, and certainly not always, discrete. They should certainly be distinguished: not to do so is to run the risk of using 'the designer' as our educational model. The nature and the functions of the professional design activity are significantly different from the nature and the functions of design-educational activity. But to revert to the point on language. One of the more interesting developments is in the changing conceptions and understandings of – as examples – 'problem', 'solution', 'brief', 'design process' which are held and shown in practice by some of the 'new wave' of teachers.

Keith Balkham's and Richard Mills's *Introductory Design Problems* and Bryan Gunstone's *Craft and Design Briefs* contain some of the emergent design-educational vocabulary, but their meanings and usages hardly demonstrate significant developments in practice nor do they indicate the radical possibilities hinted at in recent developments in practice.

Balkham's and Mills's book aims to provide 'teachers and students in secondary and middle schools with a variety of design problems which can be solved using a range of materials'. These design problems consist in a range of artefacts. The format of the book is simple. A 'statement of problem' is given in relation to each of the artefacts, together with (design) 'considerations'

and 'tasks' which are planned to lead students through a 'design process'.

Gunstone's work is a large collection of 'briefs'. These are, in fact, named artefacts or their descriptions. The briefs are intended for use in the Craft and Design area of Craft, Design and Technology as distinct from Design and Technology. They are arranged in five groups indicating the 'degree of complexity in terms of designing'. This 'degree of complexity in terms of designing' appears to be thought of as independent of the capability of the pupil. Apart from that, its meaning is not clear, for Gunstone suggests that the design problems are *not*, in practice, hierarchically arranged: the 'less complex' ones and the 'more advanced' ones can be attempted by the 'A' level student and the 'talented 12 year old'. There is another minor particularity in the Introduction which many teachers may question. The author states that many schools 'now have design departments or — a more encompassing title — departments of Craft, Design and Technology'. For many teachers, of course, Design Departments encompass Craft, Design and Technology — alongside other subjects and disciplines too. In this book again, a model 'design process' is offered.

The two books raise — because they appear not to consider them — some fundamental questions. In both, the 'statement of problem' or 'brief' relate to nominated products: an identification tag and a stylized animal are the first two in Balkham's and Mills's; and a bath rack and a bedside mirror are the first two in Gunstone's.

The design educationist might ask: In what sense are artefacts to be construed as design problems? or as design-educational problems? The hierarchical arrangement of briefs in Gunstone's (that is, from the less complex to more complex) is problematic immediately. For example, the counting toy (a member of the least complex group) exists in relation to an extremely complex activity. The activity constitutes the problem(s), to which the 'designer' responds. Whether he responds with 'a counting toy' is a matter for decision, but a counting toy is neither inevitable nor necessary. But this kind of fundamental judgement is, apparently, not to be raised for, or by, the pupils. The activity of counting and the design activity in relation to it are complex: it is the complexity that many design teachers would wish to confront. In the exemplars, most of the difficult and interesting questions, decisions, matters of judgement, that are at the core of design activity, are hidden. The design activity, on the view offered by these books, consist in producing pre-determined artefacts which may (or may not) be resolutions of problems. The states of affairs which constitute design problems are not formulated and considered. Fundamentally, then, an approach which might help pupils towards identifying and formulating design problems is not indicated in the books. In Balkham's and Mills's, a typical 'statement of problem' is: 'Your coat pegs at home are often overcrowded

with garments, so you decide to make another'. As a problem of designing or as a design-educational opportunity this begs important questions. It appears to assume that a coat peg will be made; and as it stands it closes options through its singular vision of a 'solution' and confusion of that particular 'solution' with 'problem'. A pupil, given an opportunity, might equally decide that the appropriate design activity required might be to reduce the number of garments. What, apparently, is to constitute the experience of design activity is, simply, the production of a peg. As one of the tasks associated with this 'problem', the pupil is invited to look at other pegs and to ask: Do they work? Do they look good? What such questions actually mean or what their functions might be, on examining pupils' responses is difficult to decide: what criteria would necessarily render the possible range of answers as valid and not-valid? The difficulty that the books raise is that what many design teachers are trying to develop appears to be different from that which is displayed here.

The methodological efforts of innovative design teachers may be rather badly indicated as follows. Neither artefacts nor descriptions of them are design problems or design educational problems. Problem states of affairs are prior: prior to the means of their attempts at resolution (although, obviously, one might quite legitimately 'start from' an artefact and 'work backwards' to a formulation of the original conditions giving rise to that particular response. But then a pupil might well decide against that particular artefact). Artefacts are not entailed in design activity, although they can be, and often are, properly central to that activity.

Hence, the questions raised include: How do we help pupils to recognise and formulate *their* problems in *their* particular circumstances? What methodological help (including conceptual tools, procedural strategies) can we devise to enable pupils to tackle design educational problems? What can teachers devise so that they can reflect upon, and understand better, design pedagogy? What distinctions and correspondences can be nominated in relation to design problems and design educational problems? What, if any, is the structural commonality between activities located in differing disciplines and areas of Design, and sharing the problem-solving label? Does a design 'brief' necessarily differ in an educational context from the professional designer's brief? To what extent do educational problems offer possibilities of significant choice in determining the nature of the design activity? Is it our pedagogy that is insufficient to the complexity of design activity rather than the 'weaknesses' of our pupils? What principles can we formulate so that we might help develop our pupils' (and our own) knowledge and understanding of and competence in design activity?

Phil Roberts

### Modern Design in Metal

Richard Stuart  
*London: John Murray*

This is a companion volume to *Modern Design in Wood* by the same author and follows a similar layout, with sections dealing with sculpture, jewellery, silverware and others. The normal practice of illustration by clear photographs is used. A nice balance is struck between industrial design in metal and the work of artist craftsmen.

As a source book for students of design it has all the obvious limitations of photography, but provides a useful volume for inclusion in design studies and workshops.

David R. Jones

### Cabinet Making for Beginners

Charles H. Hayward  
*London: Evans*

This book is an exposition of traditional cabinet making practice by an author well known for his work. Although the book deals in detail with much of the art of cabinet making, it offers very little which is new if compared to the author's previous books.

One inclusion in the book, that of the section on the circular saw, does not conform to the recent Health and Safety at Work Act in that it is stated that the circular saw may be used for tenoning, grooving and rebating. These operations are prohibited by the new Act unless a tunnel guard is fitted to the machine. It is also inadvisable to bury the teeth of any normal saw blade in the wood; the cut should be completely through the material being sawn.

The book will be a useful acquisition to people who are interested in the craft of cabinet making but will add little to the store of information already available in Mr. Hayward's earlier works.

David R. Jones

### Design Illustration

David Beasley  
*London: Heinemann, 1979, £1.95.*

Looking back, it is tempting to think that the teaching of one of the principal potential functions of drawing – the expression and the transmission of information – has been seriously neglected in recent years. Teachers of Technical Drawing seemed to deal only with a range of representations related,

somewhat narrowly, to engineering. Art teachers seemed to be largely concerned with the expression of the personal and the idiosyncratic.

Design education developments have revealed the need for a more general 'graphic language', one which might accommodate and, necessarily, go beyond these apparently exclusive positions. For one of the appropriate means of communication between teachers and pupils involved in design activity is through drawing. Certainly, drawing is invaluable in self-communication: as a means towards exploring, expressing, and possessing personal ideas. It is also invaluable as a means for seeing in 'the mind's eye' how things might be. Against this background, this book, which intends to show how some techniques of drawing can be learned – by anybody – is welcome. It de-mystifies the activity of depicting in two dimensions what exists three-dimensionally. By using photographs of everyday objects and scenes and showing how these can be depicted in simple and effective drawings, it should encourage the pupil to use skills which too often are collectively considered a mystery revealed only to a chosen few. The book offers 'a basic course in graphic skills'; it is simple and should be useful to pupils in design-based courses. With subsequent expansion of its content, it should help in the development of a valuable aspect of language.

Phil Roberts

### The Irene Wellington Copy Book

Irene Wellington  
*London: Pitman, 1979, £1.75.*

Desmond Flower, writing 'A Brief Survey of English Handwriting' over forty years ago, said:

'Of the teaching of handwriting today little good can be said. The eighteenth century slighted the scribe, but the twentieth has cast him out altogether, and our children are taught by a school ma'am whose own writing is often a disgrace to civilization' (*Signature* 4; Nov. 1936).

Anyone working in secondary schools today will read that with a spine-chilling sense of its pertinence to the present day. It follows that since 1936 no real advance has been made in techniques for raising the general standard of handwriting, and any attempt to put matters right must be warmly welcomed.

Irene Wellington, whose handwriting copy books are now republished in an omnibus edition, has been for many years one of the leading calligraphers in the country. She works in the tradition of Edward Johnston whose lectures she writes of with affection. Indeed, she includes for copying a quotation from Johnston's *Writing and Illuminating and Lettering* about the need to base a personal style of calligraphy on 'a good model, full of possibilities of development'. Clearly, a good

model is what *The Irene Wellington Copy Book* offers.

But Johnston was referring to calligraphy, and not to handwriting. His artistic contribution was to restore beauty to calligraphic and printed letter forms which had become debased through lost contact with their origins. On handwriting he was strikingly unforthcoming.

The point has been made before that handwriting is essentially cursive and, in an accelerating world, must be capable of being written at speed while remaining legible and beautiful. Flow and rhythm are fundamental to handwriting and this must influence the individual letter forms evolved by the calligrapher.

Mrs Wellington stresses the need for rhythm. In her writing patterns she owes something to the work of Marion Richardson, whose teaching of handwriting is based on the exploration and development of drawn and painted rhythmic patterns which later grew into writing. Irene Wellington does not, however, satisfactorily link the rhythmic pattern of handwriting and the individual letter shape. She reverses Marion Richardson's progression, concentrating first on individual letter forms, and introducing joining strokes only at a later stage. These links may be incidental to calligraphy, but they are inherent to handwriting. When looked at in detail, some of her linking methods and letter forms, although undoubtedly possessing great calligraphic beauty, nevertheless tend to be torn apart by being written at speed. Her method of writing a lower-case 'b' in the same way as a figure '6' is an example. In some respects therefore, the copy book is not related to the needs of an 'everyday' handwriting.

It is not entirely clear for whom this book is intended. If it is directed at ordinary schoolchildren, then I suspect that the language the book uses would be foreign to most of them. Delightful though Walter de la Mare may be, he is no longer any competition for the attention of children brought up on the popular literature of the 1970's. Furthermore, it is an ageing experience to read in this book 'Bugloss 1/9 per ounce', and then to realize that few children know the meaning of '1/9', and that 'ounce' will shortly be in the same category.

Furthermore, there does seem to be something curiously dated about the whole concept of a 'copy book'. Not only does it refer back to a long time before the rise of free expression, but also, in this age of conservation of resources, it seems odd that publishers should print pages in the book for examples to be copied into. Where two lines are left, is it the intention that the examples should *only* be copied twice and a new book then purchased? But if the intention is to copy the examples onto separate sheets of paper, why include any blank spaces at all?

In conclusion, I have serious doubts about the fitness of this book to achieve its implied purpose of providing a handwriting course. It remains valuable, however, as a means of contact with the

work of a distinguished calligrapher, and from such contact much may be learned. Nevertheless, we still await an effective contemporary means of teaching handwriting.

Duine Campbell

### Toys from Wood

Peter Scaife (ed)  
*London, Evans, 1976*

The contributors, Albert Lain, Brian Brooks and John Money, are now professional designers after initial careers in education. They have combined the use of wood, as a traditional material, with a sophisticated approach to the design of wooden toys with appealing characteristics for children. The designs incorporate sturdy construction with pleasant aesthetics, styling and finish. The range of the examples, which incidentally is not classified in order of difficulty, includes some elementary work with painted cubes — through to advanced constructions requiring considerable ability to read a drawing and a skill in working wood equal to 'O' level standard.

The presentation of the book can only be described as immaculate — with clear photographs, fully detailed drawings and precise instructions set in a clean Univers type-face. The drawings include exploded isometrics, cutting lists and orthographics. Though the latter do not always appear in consistent systems of project, they are, nevertheless, perfectly understandable.

The book is highly suitable as a library copy, while its use within the design departments of schools will perhaps be limited to reference or research. The creative student would not wish to copy any of the examples, yet he would gain much from them in working out his own ideas. Many of the larger designs would involve him in anthropometrics and ergonomics, while some, such as the sandbox, are solutions to practical problems. On the artistic side, space, shape and form have been imaginatively exploited, and other models, including the crane and noise machine, develop the use of elementary mechanics.

With the addition of freehand sketches of further ideas, and an appendix of resources, the book could have been somewhat improved. As it is, used sensibly, it will be an adequate source of inspiration for design students, and a welcome aid for parents who find delight and satisfaction in making things for their children.

Ray Heaton

## Graphic Communication and Observation

J.A. Austen

Kent: Hodder and Stoughton, 1979, £1.95.

Graphic Communication and Observation is a serious attempt to provide an instructional programme for pupils between the ages of 10-16 in the area of graphic communication. It rightly points out in the preface that in our increasingly complex and technologically oriented society, the role of visual communication is being recognised as a more essential feature for understanding between social groups. The place for the development of visual/spatial ability in our education system is now more important than ever before.

The book contains many diagrams and analysis of visual forms, how these may be comprehended as three dimensional forms from different angles, together with the drawing techniques for translating these shapes into clear 2-dimensional forms.

The author refers to 'graphicacy' as an under developed skill in the majority of the community. His book could help to increase visual comprehension if his exercises are taken up at secondary school level.

Unfortunately, as so often happens with the more objective and 'scientific' analysis of graphics, there is a very large gap between the technical drawing methods and the more instinctive and aesthetic marks made by those with a natural gift for 'visual literacy'. This book demonstrates this gap most clearly as it is very poorly produced in terms of typeface, layout, and some of the drawings are extremely crude. This almost total lack of visual sensitivity may repel art teachers from using its content, and the lack of aesthetic component in the technical draughtsman's approach will perpetuate the gap between the two fractions. The geographers will no doubt write-off the art and graphic designers as 'self expressionists' and so the divisions continue.

However, the book contains much material which only has to be taken up sensitively and it can only be hoped that it will be present and read in all art departments in schools and colleges.

Cal Swann

## Roman Lettering

L.C. Evetts

London: Pitman, 1979, £2.95.

This is a modest book of some 90 pages dealing almost entirely with a study and analysis of the structure of the lettering on the Trajan column. The author follows this up with a brief description of how this Roman alphabet has developed and influenced lettering in Britain up until this century.

With the exception of a few photographs from the Trajan column, the illustrations are all by the author.

What is particularly impressive are the very accurate but simple drawings showing the construction of the Roman letters which take up most of the book. Mr. Evetts has a fine feeling for the letters and the ability in his writing to describe the form of the letters – how they were arrived at and why – with clarity and insight. There is not a great amount of text, but what there is is both informative and a pleasure to read.

It should contribute to any student's appreciation and understanding of the development of the Roman alphabet and it is a pity that there isn't more written about the subsequent evolution of the alphabet through writing. However, perhaps this has been sufficiently covered in other words.

One has the impression of the author as an artist who is very sensitive and loving to the Trajan ideal – it would have been interesting to have his reaction to the post-computer letter forms we are now being subjected to, and the awful degeneration of the alphabet with such displays as Ceefax. He has however, stopped short with the lettering of Edward Johnston – perhaps comment enough!

Cal Swann

## Creative Drawing and Design

Ray Heaton

Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1977, £2.20.

In the introductory notes to this book, Ray Heaton makes a plea for involving the individual in the work in an imaginative way. Without doubt the scope of the examples he has chosen and the kinds of work are imaginative enough, ranging from familiar trade symbols, typical craft applications, street and site plans, mapping and ergonomics through to pictorial story telling, fun figures and art forms. Much of the underlying geometry is covered and many conventions are illustrated and explained. The general appeal is essentially masculine but there are some concessions to the fair sex. Numerous exercises are included throughout the book but many of these simply involve copying.

Mr. Heaton suggests that 'the assessment of the work should consider the two main criteria of good ideas and good draughtsmanship (his emphases) as the determinants of empowered creative ability' – whatever that might mean! Whether one agrees with these objectives or not, it is encouraging to see them expressed. So many authors give little thought to the educational intentions of the subject beyond the mastery of mechanical draughting skills and the interpretation of conventions. These are of doubtful marketable

value and even less utility – I often wonder whether teachers and examiners of technical drawing *ever* use the skills they so prize outside the pedagogic context. If they ever construct for their own needs or enjoyment I would wager that they do so from *sketches* and not from elaborate mechanical drawings.

The major objective of technical drawing is surely and largely non-verbal communication of technical ideas and information. For what the Newsom Report so aptly called 'Half our Future' (and for much of the other half as well) technical drawing provides an *alternative* mode of communication and understanding. Whereas *verbal* expression or explanation would defeat them, sketches and drawings may facilitate their understanding and expression. Indeed, sketching in its own right may be the very crux of the matter, for it is a prerequisite imperative for 'creative drawing and design'. Does *any* designer put his preliminary ideas on paper via the drawing board and drawing instruments? Would any team of designers at the creative stage communicate with each other or with their shop floor colleagues via perfectly drawn plans, elevations and the like? I strongly doubt it – the one indispensable channel of communication in any such situation is the sketch pad. Any pupil who leaves school with the ability to make good clear technical sketches using accepted conventions will have acquired a skill which will serve him or her throughout life.

Hence, although Mr. Heaton clearly recognises the communication function of technical drawing, he does little to emphasise the crucial importance of freehand sketching as a medium of creative expression. Perhaps more importantly, he does little either to emphasise the non-verbal or less-verbal nature of the subject. Not only are there as many as two hundred words on a single page, but they are at a comprehension or reading level far above that of the average secondary school boy or girl. One of the major criticisms of our primary and secondary educational system must be of its highly verbal approach, which is not understood by, and which makes little impact on far too many of the school population. Perhaps the greatest merit of craft in general and technical drawing in particular lies in their less verbal transmission of worthwhile knowledge, values and skills.

To summarise therefore, Ray Heaton's book seems to offer a viable, imaginative and challenging course of drawing and design for the able pupil. However, the average or less able pupil would be heavily dependent upon the understanding and explanation of the teacher, and in the time normally available, would be hard pressed to do more than the copying exercises in each new area of activity.

Finally, notwithstanding all I have said or implied about technical drawing, I for one still hope that one day we will teach a truly integrated subject under a one-word title, and not craft, design, technology, technical drawing, Uncle Tom Cobbley

and all, each in its own watertight or semi-watertight compartment and individually assessed.

Leslie Deem

## Design Technology in Metal and Plastics

G.H. Thomas

London: John Murray, 1979, £2.95.

An interesting little book for teachers and students of practical crafts. They will find many sound ideas which will assist them in their seek for suitable course work for metalwork and plastics.

Perhaps there are few new ideas – if indeed there is such a thing as a new idea at all, but there are plenty of sensible, practical, applicable ideas here.

This book deals more with the 'how' of the job than with its 'design'. Some early reference is made to design procedures, but none of the design solutions offered is arrived at in a structured or systematic way. The text jumps from the design problem, over research, sketches and development, to how the article is to be put together. To my mind teachers striving to teach the utilization of design based approach need to see the way in which research is carried out and annotated, the various possibilities considered and the convergence of these to give a preferred design solution, followed by constructional details. Alternatives are shown in one or two small areas like handles and their fixing, and the screwdriver shape and form discussion.

I am specifically critical only of the wiring diagram showing an important earth wire disconnected.

The book is rather mixed in that how to perform operations in various media are mixed up with the general theme of designing. Theory of technique of this nature I am sure would be better in a separate section. This applies particularly in sections 5 and 6 on table lamps and stool design, in which again many good ideas are put forward but we are not shown how the direction of the ideas develop.

The book progresses through a range of likely school jobs and ends with a fairly comprehensive set of specimen examination questions and an appendix on safety hazards in the use of plastics in schools, and hazards and precautions when working with common chemicals.

To me, sound material but it really doesn't live up to its promise of a Design Based Approach.

R.R. Tyson

### The Make-it-Yourself Shoe Book

Christine Lewis Clark

London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979, £4.95.

A rather light-hearted, though generally informative text on the art and craft of handmaking shoes. The Make-it-Yourself Shoe Book is a useful guide for the potential home shoemaker. However, in view of the depth and detail of the general content of this book, some of the superficial background information would be unlikely to appeal to the reader seriously concerned with the actual making of shoes.

The book gives a comprehensive guide to shoemaking materials and equipment available. Advice is also given on purchase of essential inexpensive alternatives to commercially produced tools. A useful list of suppliers complements this section.

Careful consideration is given to the structure of the foot and the importance of producing well-fitting shoes. This is further emphasised in

the sections on measuring and pattern-making, where full instructions stress the need for accuracy at all stages.

Included in the variety of shoe styles illustrated are moccasins, shoes, boots and sandals. For each type there are clear instructions for cutting-out, assembling and fitting. These instructions are usefully augmented by photograph illustrations and line diagrams. In the event of mistakes in the finished shoes there are suggested remedies for most eventualities and for the successful shoemaker further variations on the basic patterns provide scope for exercising new-found skills.

Patricia Littlefair

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