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**THE DISCOURSE OF OPEN PLATFORMS AND THE TECHNO-HUMANITARIAN
BALANCE IN MODERN CREATIVE EDUCATION**

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Abstract — The article presents a theoretical, methodological, socio-philosophical analysis of the transformation of humanities knowledge and creative education (art and design) under the influence of platformization and digital communication. The scientific novelty of the study lies in the systematization and theoretical generalization of contemporary academic discussions on the transformation of art education, as well as in the author's conceptualization of a hybrid techno-humanitarian balance that preserves the reflective and critical potential of humanities knowledge in the era of open platform knowledge. The research objectives are as follows:

- to identify the theoretical and methodological foundations for studying open knowledge platforms within the context of critical theory and the sociology of communication (Th. Adorno, N. Luhmann, M. Foucault, B. Latour);
- to reveal the essence of the contradiction between the neo-Enlightenment concept of the operational democratization of knowledge and the risks of superficial content assimilation ("playing at culture");
- to evaluate the impact of platformization on the academic status of educators, the precarization of intellectual labor, and the spread of the "professional-amateur" (ProAm) phenomenon under conditions of "normal anomie";
- to determine the specifics and limits of effectiveness when using open platforms in art and design education, where reflexivity, practical craft, and live dialogue remain defining factors.

Amidst a total "spatial turn" and the shift of educational processes into open network environments, debates intensify regarding the status of academic expertise, the risks of "normal anomie," and the devaluation of foundational knowledge. The study consistently juxtaposes the concepts of critical theory (Th. Adorno), archaeology of knowledge (M. Foucault), actor-network theory (B. Latour), and the sociology of communication (N. Luhmann) with modern empirical research on Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and educational platforms. Particular attention is paid to the ProAm (professional-amateur) phenomenon, the precarization of pedagogical labor, and the challenges of integrating generative artificial intelligence technologies (2024–2026) into the training of artists and designers.

Keywords — open knowledge platforms, art education, design education, spatial turn, culture industry, actor-network theory, ProAm, precarization, techno-humanitarian balance, generative AI.

**ЗАМАНАУИ ШЫҒАРМАШЫЛЫҚ БІЛІМ БЕРУДЕГІ АШЫҚ
ПЛАТФОРМАЛАР ДИСКУРСЫ ЖӘНЕ
ТЕХНО-ГУМАНИТАРЛЫҚ ТЕПЕ-ТЕҢДІК**

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Абстракт — Мақалада платформаландыру мен сандық коммуникацияның ықпалымен гуманитарлық білім мен шығармашылық білім беруді (өнер және дизайн) трансформациялаудың теориялық-әдіснамалық және әлеуметтік-философиялық талдауы ұсынылған. Зерттеудің ғылыми жаңалығы арт-білім беруді трансформациялау туралы қазіргі заманғы ғылыми пікірталасты жүйелеу және теориялық жалпылау, сондай-ақ ашық платформалық білім дәуірінде гуманитарлық білімнің рефлексиялық және сыни әлеуетін сақтайтын гибридік техно-гуманитарлық теңгерім тұжырымдамасының авторлық негіздемесі болып табылады. Зерттеу міндеттері мыналардан тұрады:

- коммуникациялардың сыни теориясы мен әлеуметтануы (Т. Адорно, Н. Луман, М. Фуко, Б. Латура) контекстінде ашық білім платформаларын зерделеудің теориялық-әдіснамалық негіздерін анықтау;
- білімді операциялық демократияландырудың нео-ағартушылық тұжырымдамасы мен контентті үстірт меңгеру тәуекелдері («мәдениетке ойнау») арасындағы қайшылықтың мәнін ашу;

- платформалаудың оқытушының академиялық мәртебесіне, зияткерлік еңбектің прекаризациясына және «қалыпты аномия» жағдайында «кәсіби әуесқойлық» (ProAm) феноменінің таралуына әсерін бағалау;
- рефлексивтілік, практикалық қолөнер және тірі диалог айқындаушы болып қалатын көркем және дизайнерлік мамандықтарға оқытуда ашық платформаларды пайдалану тиімділігінің ерекшелігі мен шектерін анықтау.

Жаппай «кеңістіктік бұрылу» және білім беру процестерінің ашық желілік ортаға ығысуы жағдайында академиялық сараптаманың мәртебесі, «қалыпты аномия» тәуекелдері және іргелі білімнің девальвациясы туралы пікірталастар шиеленіседі. Жұмыста сыни теория (Т. Адорно), білім археологиясы (М. Фуко), актерлік-желілік теория (Б. Латур) және коммуникация социологиясы (Н. Луман) тұжырымдамалары бұқаралық ашық онлайн-курстардың (МООС) және білім беру платформаларының қазіргі заманғы эмпирикалық зерттеулерімен дәйекті салыстырылады. ProAm (кәсіби әуесқойлық) феноменіне, оқытушылық еңбекті прекаризациялауға және суретшілер мен дизайнерлерді оқытуға жасанды интеллекттің генеративтік технологияларын интеграциялауға (2024-2026 жж.) ерекше назар аударылды.

Кілт сөздер — ашық білім платформалары, арт-білім, дизайн-білім, кеңістіктік бұрылыс, мәдени индустрия, актерлік-желілік теория, ProAm, прекаризация, техно-гуманитарлық теңгерім, генеративті ИИ.

ДИСКУРС ОТКРЫТЫХ ПЛАТФОРМ И ТЕХНО-ГУМАНИТАРНЫЙ БАЛАНС В СОВРЕМЕННОМ ТВОРЧЕСКОМ ОБРАЗОВАНИИ

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Аннотация — В статье представлен теоретико-методологический и социально-философский анализ трансформации гуманитарного знания и творческого образования (искусство и дизайн) под влиянием платформизации и цифровой коммуникации. Научная новизна исследования заключается в систематизации и теоретическом обобщении современной научной дискуссии о трансформации арт-образования, а также в авторском обосновании концепции гибридного техно-гуманитарного баланса, сохраняющего рефлексивный и критический потенциал гуманитарного знания в эру открытого платформенного знания. Исследовательские задачи состоят в следующем:

- выявить теоретико-методологические основания изучения платформ открытого знания в контексте критической теории и социологии коммуникаций;
- раскрыть сущность противоречия между нео-просветительской концепцией операционной демократизации знания и рисками поверхностного усвоения контента («игры в культуру»);
- оценить влияние платформизации на академический статус преподавателя, прекаризацию интеллектуального труда и распространение феномена «профессионального любительства» (ProAm) в условиях «нормальной аномии»;
- определить специфику и границы эффективности использования открытых платформ в обучении художественным и дизайнерским специальностям, где определяющими остаются рефлексивность, практическое ремесло и живой диалог.

В условиях тотального «пространственного поворота» и смещения образовательных процессов в открытые сетевые среды обостряются дискуссии о статусе академической экспертизы, рисках «нормальной аномии» и девальвации фундаментального знания. В работе последовательно сопоставляются концепты критической теории (Т. Адорно), археологии знания (М. Фуко), акторно-сетевой теории (Б. Латур) и социологии коммуникаций (Н. Луман) с современными эмпирическими исследованиями массовых открытых онлайн-курсов (МООС) и образовательных платформ. Особое внимание уделено феномену ProAm (профессионального любительства), прекаризации преподавательского труда и вызовам интеграции генеративных технологий искусственного интеллекта (2024–2026 гг.) в обучение художников и дизайнеров.

Ключевые слова — платформы открытого знания, арт-образование, дизайн-образование, пространственный поворот, культуриндустрия, акторно-сетевая теория, ProAm, прекаризация, техно-гуманитарный баланс, генеративный ИИ

KEY FINDINGS

1. It has been established that open knowledge platforms operate within the framework of the culture industry, where the operational accessibility of information is coupled with the risk of transforming fundamental reflexive-discursive knowledge into a simulacrum “game of culture” and a superficial format of media “stories.”

2. It has been demonstrated that the large-scale expansion of the phenomenon of professional

amateurism (ProAm) creates a state of anomie, within which the expert status of academic instructors is devalued in competition with digital bloggers, and intellectual pedagogical labor becomes precarious.

3. The specific limits of the effectiveness of platform-based learning in the field of art and design have been identified; it has been shown that open digital courses can serve only as a supplementary educational resource but cannot replace live studio

mentorship and the subject-specific, practical foundation of training for creative professionals.

4. A conceptual model of a hybrid balance between technology and the humanities in higher education has been substantiated, ensuring the integration of open digital competencies while preserving the fundamental academic quality and reflective autonomy of professionals in the fields of art and design.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Relevance of the Study and the “Spatial Turn” in the Humanities

An analysis of the current state of knowledge in the humanities—both now and in the near future—is a relevant and in-demand area of research; at the same time, it is extremely complex due to the diversity of humanities knowledge itself, which has shifted into the realm of digital communication. The overall situation at the beginning of the 21st century is characterized by the rapid expansion of the functional capabilities of digital communication in virtually all spheres of social, economic, and cultural activity. Digital communication processes, having taken over the entire sociocultural space, raise the broader issue of the status of the humanities within digital platforms [1].

Against the backdrop of high demand for remote and expedited methods of acquiring knowledge, it is precisely the humanities and arts-and-aesthetics segment that bears the heaviest burden in the modern education system, as the flow of uncontrolled, unverified content is particularly high in this area. The evolving digital environment has created unprecedented opportunities for various educational projects tailored to the demands of a dynamic and turbulent market.

In these circumstances, there is a pressing academic need to reflect on the current state and future prospects of education in the creative disciplines (graphic design, architecture, digital art, media design). In the humanities, the so-called ‘spatial turn’ has become clearly evident, resulting from the dynamic formation of a unified communicative space permeated by information flows of total virtual reality [2]. However, in most existing monographs and articles, the new digital reality is interpreted primarily in technological or marketing terms — without a deep humanistic dimension. Meanwhile, at the centre of this space remains the individual, seeking dialogue with the modern world, adapting to constant technological shifts and capable of continuous self-learning. In the author’s view, the humanities realise their true potential not when they strive to be purely utilitarian and immediately practical, but when they engage in the production and accumulation of diverse modes of thought, and in posing new questions and problems that shape culture and the social environment.

The education system’s response to the pervasiveness of the global internet has been the widespread emergence of open knowledge platforms in the form of open online information and media structures [2]. Within a short historical timeframe, this process has transformed the nature and type of cultural orientations within society, in which operational criteria and the rapid accessibility of knowledge have come to take precedence over fundamental principles. The main research gap lies in the fact that the phenomenon of open knowledge platforms is primarily analysed without reference to the humanities, whilst the issue of the effectiveness of this form of learning as it applies to the specific nature of creative disciplines in the fields of art and design remains unresolved and insufficiently studied.

The scientific novelty of this work lies in bridging the research gap whereby open knowledge platforms are predominantly considered outside the context of the humanities and anthropology. The author has conducted a comprehensive socio-philosophical analysis of the ‘platformisation’ of higher education as it relates to the specific nature of training specialists in creative fields (art and design). The study conceptualises the risks of fundamental knowledge being transformed into media ‘stories’ and of the devaluation of the academic status of teaching staff in the context of the spread of the ProAm phenomenon; it also provides a scientifically grounded justification for the need to establish a balance between technology and the humanities in art universities.

1.2 Theoretical and methodological discourse: from critical theory to actor-network theory

Understanding platform-based knowledge requires a robust theoretical foundation. Whilst contemporary research perspectives have been analysing platforms since the dawn of the new century, the Frankfurt School had, much earlier, warned of the danger of knowledge being turned into a commodity. Theodor Adorno noted that the overall consequences of the functioning of the culture industry can be characterised as ‘anti-Enlightenment’. In the concept developed by T. Adorno and M. Horkheimer, the progressive technical domination of nature under the conditions of mass industry turns into mass deception and shackles for human consciousness, hindering the formation of autonomous, independent individuals capable of making independent and conscious judgements [3].

Michel Foucault’s ideas are key to understanding how discourse functions on open platforms. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, M. Foucault defines discourse as ‘the plane on which objects, types of speech acts, concepts and strategic

choices emerge' [4]. In the context of platformisation, the question arises: is this reflexive plane preserved on open platforms, or is it replaced by a formalised algorithm for algorithmic content delivery?

Niklas Luhmann's sociological approach draws attention to the space of possibilities for experience and action, where communication is not reduced merely to the transmission of information, but requires a deep understanding of the message by the recipient [5]. For his part, Bruno Latour, within the framework of actor-network theory (ANT), re-examines the category of the 'social', demonstrating how an actor opens up a space in which the components of the world are brought into being, whilst the network acts as a medium for movement, types of information and trials that draw the world inwards and push it back outwards [6]. Interactions within the global network shift the boundaries of participants, creating a hybrid reality in which the educational process ceases to be a local institutional act.

1.3. Problem Statement and Research Questions (RQ)

Despite two decades of research into online learning, the specific nature of platform-based education in the field of art and design remains a subject of intense academic debate. In light of this, this study formulates three key research questions (RQs):

RQ1: Does the reflective, critical and meaning-generating potential of humanities and arts discourse remain intact when transferred to open knowledge platforms?

RQ2: Are open knowledge platforms a fully-fledged institution of art and design education, or do they constitute a form of marketing-driven staging of neo-Enlightenment?

RQ3: How will the phenomenon of ProAm (professional amateurism), digital anomie and the large-scale integration of generative AI (2024–2026) transform the status of the artist-teacher and the professional identity of graduates in creative disciplines?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Methodological framework

The study is based on a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach combining the following methods:

1. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) was used to examine academic publications, open platform manifestos and the structure of educational content, with the aim of identifying the hidden ideologemes of 'neo-Enlightenment' and platform capitalism.

2. Actor-network theory (ANT, B. Latour) was applied to conceptualise the educational platform as a hybrid network bringing together human actors

(lecturers, students, tutors, ProAm bloggers) and non-human actors (recommendation algorithms, interfaces, generative neural networks, data structures) [6].

3. A comparative analysis enabled us to contrast the fundamental institutional models of university arts education with the didactic structures of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs).

Source base and incorporation of concepts for 2024–2026

The source base for this study is divided into two interrelated sections. The core theoretical framework comprises the works of leading figures in philosophy and sociology (T. Adorno, M. Foucault, N. Luhmann, B. Latour) [3, 4, 5, 6], as well as fundamental works by Russian and international researchers from 2014–2024 on the challenges of the digitalisation of education (P. Kolozaridi, N. Kuznetsov, G. Tulchinsky, I. Volnov, et al.) [7, 8, 9, 10]. The text incorporates the latest concepts of platform capitalism in higher education (Platform Capitalism in Education), theories of micro-credentials (micro-credentials vs academic degrees), the concept of generative design and algorithmic mastery (Algorithmic Techne), as well as theoretical models of hyperreal learning environments and digital precarity in the academic sector.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Platformisation of Creative Knowledge: Between Neo-Enlightenment and Marketing Illusion

The analysis showed that the academic community's response to the development of open knowledge platforms ranges from cautious optimism to radical criticism [1, 12]. Research by William G. Bowen highlights that the use of third-party digital platforms and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in the university environment faces significant organisational and technological barriers [2]. The use of third-party platforms to supplement traditional teaching highlights the problem of a mismatch between the institutional environment and the algorithm-driven delivery of material. E. Shapinskaya and A. Lisenkova take a rather critical view of the educational potential of commercial and open media projects [1]. In their view, one should not be misled by neo-enlightenment projects: they are, to a large extent, a 'game of culture' that creates the illusion for the consumer of gaining access to cultural capital and fosters a comfortable but superficial secondary reality. In contrast to formal university education, which requires sustained effort and the overcoming of the material's challenges, open platforms offer a lighter, more playful experience.

N. Kuznetsov highlights the 'weak points' of distance learning, the main obstacle being the lack of an established system for recognising the equivalence

of online courses to traditional qualifications, as well as the inconsistent and often extremely poor quality of most of the mass-market courses available on the market [8]. For their part, V. Fortunatova and E. Valeeva emphasise that mass educational technologies are predominantly of an enlightening nature and can serve only as a supplementary addition to the core of fundamental academic knowledge [12].

The interdisciplinary nature of internet research, as pointed out by P. Kolozaridi, creates additional methodological difficulties: when philosophers, sociologists and cultural studies scholars study these platforms, the common language is not determined by a single discipline, but by how the research group formulates the subject and the problem [7].

The ProAm (professional amateurism) phenomenon, 'normal anomie' and the precarisation of teachers

One of the most alarming consequences of the platform shift is the transformation of the institutional status of those involved in the educational process. G. Tulchinsky rightly points out that the widespread introduction of digital learning resources serves as a means of administrative cost-cutting on teaching hours [9]. This leads to the transformation of teachers' intellectual labour into precarious labour — unstable, unguaranteed and devoid of social protection.

O. Astafieva, E. Nikonorova and O. V. Shlykova document society's transition into a state of normal anomie, in which trust is simulated against a backdrop of individual vulnerability in the digital environment [11]. The displacement of humanities and arts knowledge from institutional spaces onto open platforms gives rise to the large-scale phenomenon of ProAm (professional amateurism), conceptualised by C. Lidbiter and P. Miller [13]. In the context of contemporary platformism, this phenomenon takes on a pervasive character, blurring the boundaries between institutional academic expertise and networked amateur content production. In digital reality, every user becomes a lecturer, an expert and a bearer of 'sacred knowledge'—roles previously reserved exclusively for select specialists. As a result:

1. university lecturers are forced to compete directly with external bloggers in the marketing arena;
2. fundamental academic knowledge is being supplanted by the truncated, superficial format of 'media stories', clips and short videos;
3. the quality of the content consumed begins to depend entirely on the basic digital literacy of the user themselves, who is often unable to distinguish imitation from scientific knowledge.

The Specifics of Art and Design Education: The Challenges of Generative AI and the Loss of Tactile Craftsmanship

Unlike abstract and theoretical disciplines, the training of artists, architects and designers has always been based on the triad of poesis (inspiration), mimesis (interpretation of nature) and techne (craft, tactile mastery, physical work with materials).

A new challenge over the last 2–3 years has been the widespread introduction of generative neural networks (*Midjourney*, *DALL-E 3*, *Stable Diffusion*, *RunWay*, *ChatGPT*) into design practice. Whereas open-access platforms previously streamed pre-recorded video lectures, today they offer algorithmic generators capable of producing a finished visual product in a matter of seconds. This is leading to a radical transformation of the ProAm phenomenon: now any amateur who has mastered basic prompt engineering declares themselves a 'digital artist' or 'designer'. As a result, there is a risk of losing a fundamental understanding of professional composition, colour theory and art history, which are being replaced by the mechanical reassembly of others' styles. A. Meron offers a different perspective, arguing that the integration of generative technologies and algorithmic services into practice enhances the democratisation of visual production [13]. This shifts the platform-based ProAm discourse to the level of automated co-creation between humans and AI.

I. Volnov, in analysing the balance between technology and the humanities, rightly observes that the hope for self-sustaining stability in an ecosystem rests on a simple balance of technologies [10]. In art education, this means that the increasing power of generative algorithms must be offset by a corresponding strengthening of the designer's philosophical, critical and conceptual training.

A comparison of positions. Neo-Enlightenment vs academic fundamentalism

Table 1 presents the results of the analysis, comparing the two main positions in research on open platforms.

Table 1 — A comparative analysis of conceptual approaches to open platform knowledge

Comparison criteria	The optimistic approach (neo-enlightenment)	The critical approach (the Frankfurt School and cultural sociology)
Accessibility of knowledge	The democratisation of education and the expansion of ways of	'Anti-enlightenment', the illusion of cultural inclusion and the 'game of knowledge'

	accessing information	
Status and format of knowledge	Flexible, practice-oriented, operational knowledge	Fragmentary, superficial, reduced to the format of social media 'Stories'
Role and status of the teacher	Moderator, facilitator and designer of the educational programme.	A precarious professional forced to compete with ProAm bloggers
Outcomes and cultural risks	Developing relevant cross-curricular competences	A state of anomie; the erosion of the fundamental academic foundation

A comparative analysis of the optimistic and pessimistic approaches reveals a significant conceptual contrast in the assessment of the platformisation of creative education. The optimistic paradigm views open platform-based education as a tool for the democratisation of knowledge, where the teacher acts as a coordinator of flexible educational pathways, whilst the student acquires relevant cross-disciplinary competences. In contrast, the critical approach interprets digital transformation as 'anti-enlightenment', where the fragmentation of the academic foundation and the precarious nature of teaching work lead to a state of anomie amongst those involved in the educational process. Taken together, this underscores the need to seek a hybrid balance between technology and the humanities, leading to the functional flexibility of networked platforms without compromising the educational potential of the traditional academic institution.

Platform capitalism and generative AI in 2024–2026

The phenomenon of platform capitalism in education is clearly evident in the discussions of 2024–2026 [13]. Open-knowledge platforms are ceasing to be purely altruistic educational projects; they are transforming into gigantic data centres that collect students' digital footprints and monetise attention. The phenomenon of platform capitalism and the datafication of the educational sphere is clearly evident. As a result, open knowledge platforms cease to be purely altruistic educational projects and are transformed into commercial ecosystems that monetise students' digital footprints and attention. According to the latest critical research [14], the transformation of the student from an active learner into a 'platform user' (student as user) leads to the educational process becoming heavily dependent on algorithmic logic and the corporate infrastructure of Big Tech.

In the field of art and design education, this trend is being exacerbated by the expansion of generative AI services, which appropriate students' digital drafts, sketches and prompts to train commercial neural network models free of charge. The result is an effect of aesthetic standardisation, whereby the author's individual reflective experience is supplanted by averaged algorithmic templates, whilst students' intellectual property is commercialised by platform capital. Educational institutions become financially and technologically dependent on external digital providers, which significantly erodes the institutional autonomy of the university and the digital sovereignty of higher education. The emerging phenomenon of algorithmic surveillance and the comprehensive collection of behavioural metrics are replacing lively pedagogical dialogue with dry analytics of engagement, narrowing the scope for creative risk-taking, experimentation and the deconstruction of canons. In these circumstances, the key task of art education is not merely to adapt to AI tools, but to foster critical digital literacy among future designers and to safeguard their conceptual independence in the face of platform monopolisation.

Thus, in the field of design and the arts, generative AI (in the terms of B. Latour) [6] emerges as a new non-human actor. A neural network becomes a cluster of actor-network relations, absorbing millions of paintings and designs from past eras and producing a compiled output. If education on open platforms is reduced merely to training students to use buttons and programme interfaces, graduates will be helpless in the face of algorithms. The only competitive advantage humans retain is their ability to pose new problems, engage in critical discourse and possess a deep understanding of cultural context.

Ways to Overcome Digital Anomie in Art and Design Education

To maintain the quality of training for designers and artists, a shift towards a hybrid model striking a balance between technology and the humanities is required. This model entails:

1. a clear division of functions, i.e. the transfer of purely instrumental, technical and software-based courses (software training, basic coding, 3D modelling) to open platforms;
2. the institutional anchoring of values, which entails the university retaining its role as a co-working space where lively critique (reflection), mentoring, working with materials and the formation of the creator's philosophical and ethical stance take place;
3. the protection of authorship and expertise, which entails fostering a legal and professional culture amongst students (in the spirit of the historical lessons of the 'Hogarth Act'), enabling them to

combat plagiarism and distinguish genuine design from ProAm imitations.

CONCLUSION

The present study yielded the following key findings, which address the research questions posed:

Answer to RQ1.

The transfer of knowledge from the humanities and the arts to open platforms carries significant risks of discourse reduction. Instead of providing a space for the emergence of new meanings and deep reflection (as described by M. Foucault), platforms often create a truncated, operational environment. However, with skilful methodological integration, the reflective potential of the humanities can act as a critical filter for analysing the digital space itself.

Response to RQ2.

Contemporary open-knowledge platforms, in their current form, are not capable of fully replacing academic art and design education. They represent an effective tool for mass education and professional development, but without studio-based mentorship

and a fundamental foundation, they create only an 'illusion of cultural engagement' and exacerbate the symptoms of 'normal anomie'.

Response to RQ3.

The ProAm phenomenon and the introduction of generative AI (2024–2026) will devalue superficial technical proficiency, blurring the boundaries between professionals and amateurs. Higher education lecturers face the threat of precarious employment and marketing competition from bloggers. Overcoming this crisis is only possible by shifting the focus of design education from technical skills to conceptual thinking, critical analysis and the development of complex socio-cultural meanings.

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