

Desing and Democracy. Project brief

Abel Crawford ⁽¹⁾ and Birger Sevaldson ⁽²⁾

Dagens Næringsliv
Arotin Hartounian 2018

There have been two worrying trends developing over the last decade or so. The first is that newspapers and journalistic organizations have continuous financial challenges as the landscape and habits of media consumption are changing rapidly due to digitalization. The second trend that is far more worrying is that the trust and stability of democracies all over the world are on a constant decline. For democracies to stay healthy, there must be easy access to accurate information and engagement and participation among the citizens. This was the backdrop of this project by one of the master's students at the SOD unit of AHO. The project was done in close collaboration with Dagens Næringsliv, the main business newspaper of Norway. The Newspaper acted as a case and information source and to a degree a codesigning partner.

The theme of democracy has long been a concern in the SOD group and several classes where working with this theme since 2015. We believe systemic designers can provide important contributions to the redesign and revitalization of democracy, a task that seems ever more important.

To see the democracy projects follow this

<https://systemsorienteddesign.net/category/design-for-democracy/>

⁽¹⁾ **Abel Crawford** is a systems designer and educator based in Oslo, Norway, specializing in regenerative systems design, bioregional governance, and alternative economies. He has a distinguished academic and professional background at the Design Institute of the Oslo School of Architecture and Design (AHO) and Aalto University (Finland). He is currently part of the Digital Strategy Studio team at the consultancy Halogen and actively collaborates with the Systems Oriented Design community, participating in applied research projects such as NATURACT.

His current practice and research focus on organizational capacity building, the redesign of economic models, and the visualization of complex systems. As a facilitator and educator, he promotes the convergence of systems design and alternative economic theories, using visual methodologies and large-scale mapping (visual canvases) to operationalize macroeconomic concepts in local-scale institutional, financial, and community solutions.

⁽²⁾ **Birger Sevaldson**, Dr Birger Sevaldson [dipl NCAD PhD] is a professor at the Institute of Design at the Oslo School of Architecture and Design (AHO), Institute of Design. He

is trained as an interior architect and furniture designer. He has been practising in various fields of design, including architecture and interior design, furniture design, industrial design and art-based projects. He has a PhD in creative design computing and has been researching systems thinking in design since 2006. He is central in the development of Systems Oriented Design, and his research focus is to develop systems oriented design thinking and practice for meeting the increased challenges of globalisation and the need for sustainability. He publishes on various themes, including Systems Oriented Design, creativity, and research by design. Birger is a member of the council of the Design Research Society and is the founder of the Relating Systems Thinking and Design Symposia and a co-founder of the Systemic Design Association.