Epilogue

The tale is told, the argument is made. I must admit, I am more inclined to inscribe “Q.E.D.” at this point than I am to write “The End.” Whether or not the argument is convincing is another matter. It stands or falls, I think, on its rational and theoretical approach to the question of whether or not ICT is as beneficial to design educators and practitioners as enthusiasts claim it is. Little attempt has been made to gather mountains of empirical data to back up the argument. Such an approach is more fitting to a single journal article. Few people want to read more than two hundred pages of methods and findings and discussions. Besides, the fact is, there has been little actual empirical evidence forthcoming to indicate that ICTs have any beneficial impact whatsoever on cognitive learning or professional designing. The most that can be said about ICTs is that students sometimes “like them,” and because of this possibility, ICTs might find a place within the constructivist learning paradigm. Much has been said about the opportunities for distance learning that ICTs bring to design education. Be that as it may, such a discourse is irrelevant to the question this book tries to answer – namely, “What is the good of ICTs to the design process?” The answer seems to be, “Not much.”

One last time: Design requires thinking with imagination in order to visualize images of new buildings and products. The most human way to translate these images from ideation to materiality is to draw them by hand. One of the articles of faith of this book is “Drawing is thinking.” Computers cannot think, really. They can only react to stimuli as they have been programmed to react. Computers can organize data with amazing speed and accuracy, but they cannot think the way a person thinks when he or she is drawing a visual design. The mystique surrounding the mental powers of computers is in great need of debunking. Computers cannot imagine. Therefore computers cannot design. ICTs may be used to assist designers in various marginal ways, but they can never become co-designers. In human-computer interactions it is the human who is vastly superior in thinking. Anyone with even a superficial acquaintance with neurology knows that immediately, but too many champions of high-tech information appear to lack that kind of knowledge.

It might be interesting here at the end to list some key authors of books and articles that have proved to be especially useful in the writing of this book. Anyone who is seriously interested in architecture, engineering, and design is likely to find much in these sources to ponder and debate.
ADDITIONAL READING


