



Kids and design

Ellen and Julia Lupton

Kids are constantly assaulted with brand images and corporate cartoons, making the typical family birthday party a consumer-fest of licensed goods. Yet children are great artists and designers themselves. Encourage them to value their own creativity and help them put their personal mark on objects and media of their own design. Learn something new by making stickers, t-shirts, Web sites, and other stuff with your kids or your younger friends and siblings. Kid-designed products make great gifts for grandparents, and you might even want to keep some of these next-wave designs for yourself. As kids make their own stuff in response to their own publics, they will learn to navigate the shiny happy world of consumerism in a new way. Outfitted with the tools of taste, technology, and attitude, they just might make better choices for a better world.

GIRL POWER No need to be a fashion victim (or a Disney slave) when you can put your own fabulous drawings on a t-shirt. Use scissors to customize the fit of an ordinary shirt, and apply graphics using iron-on transfers, screen printing, or fabric markers. (See our T-SHIRT chapter for instructions and more ideas.) Younger kids will need assistance; teens can get going themselves and launch their own personal fashion lines.

T-SHIRTS

These screen-printed shirts feature original graphics by the next generation.

Design: Hannah Reinhard and Ruby Jane Miller

Production: Ellen Lupton

Models: Isobel Triggs and Ruby Jane Miller

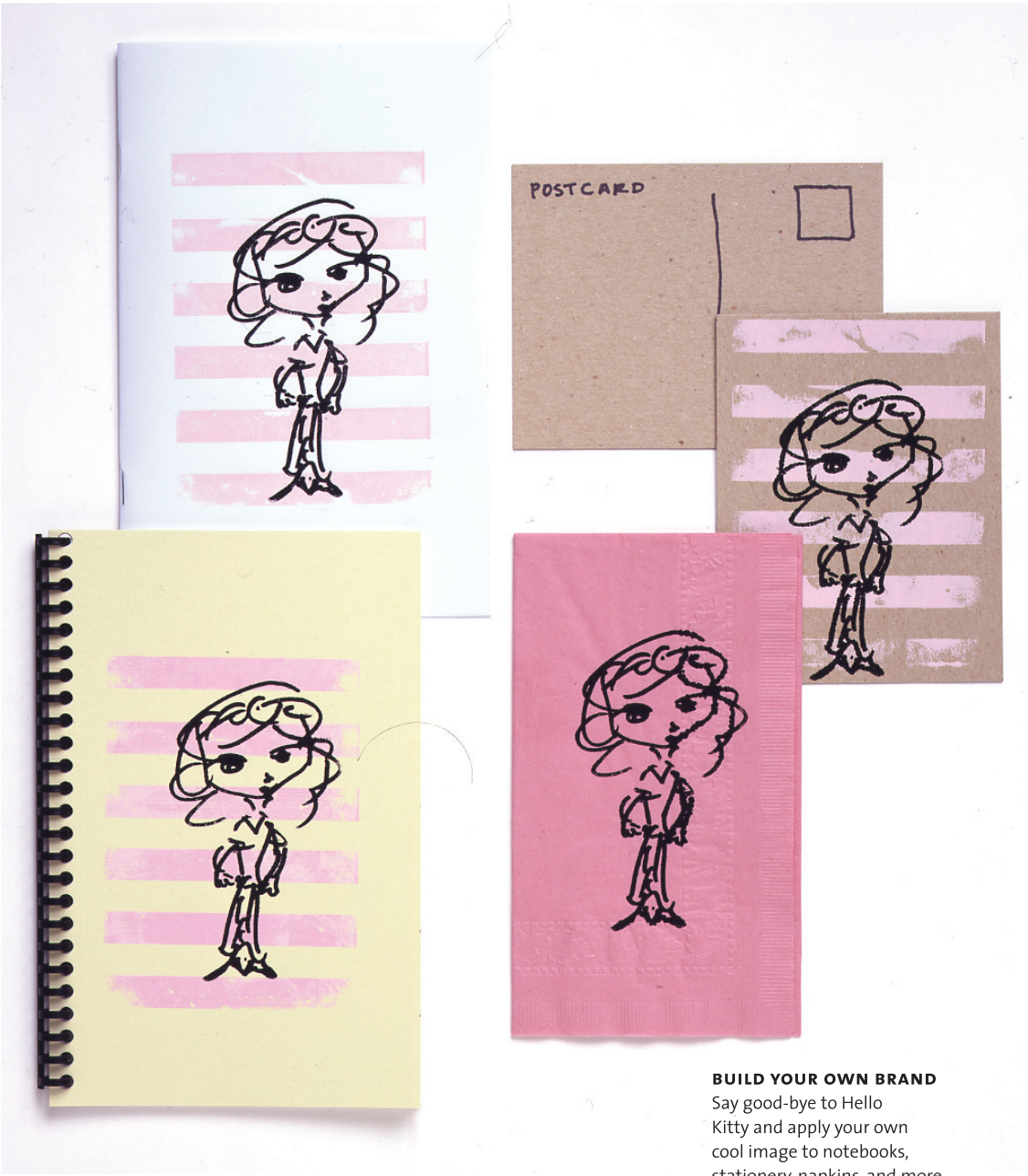
Photography: Nancy Froehlich



D.I.Y. CHARACTER DESIGN

Two eight-year-old girls got together and designed their own family of characters. Mom helped build a Web site, with biographies written by the kids.

The newly minted characters provided the theme for some younger siblings' birthday party, appearing on homegrown shirts, stickers, goody bags, and activity books. *Designers: Hannah Reinhard and Ronnie Hecht*
Tech support: Julia Reinhard Lupton



BUILD YOUR OWN BRAND

Say good-bye to Hello Kitty and apply your own cool image to notebooks, stationery, napkins, and more. *Design: Hannah Reinhard*
Production: Ellen Lupton
Photography: Dan Meyers

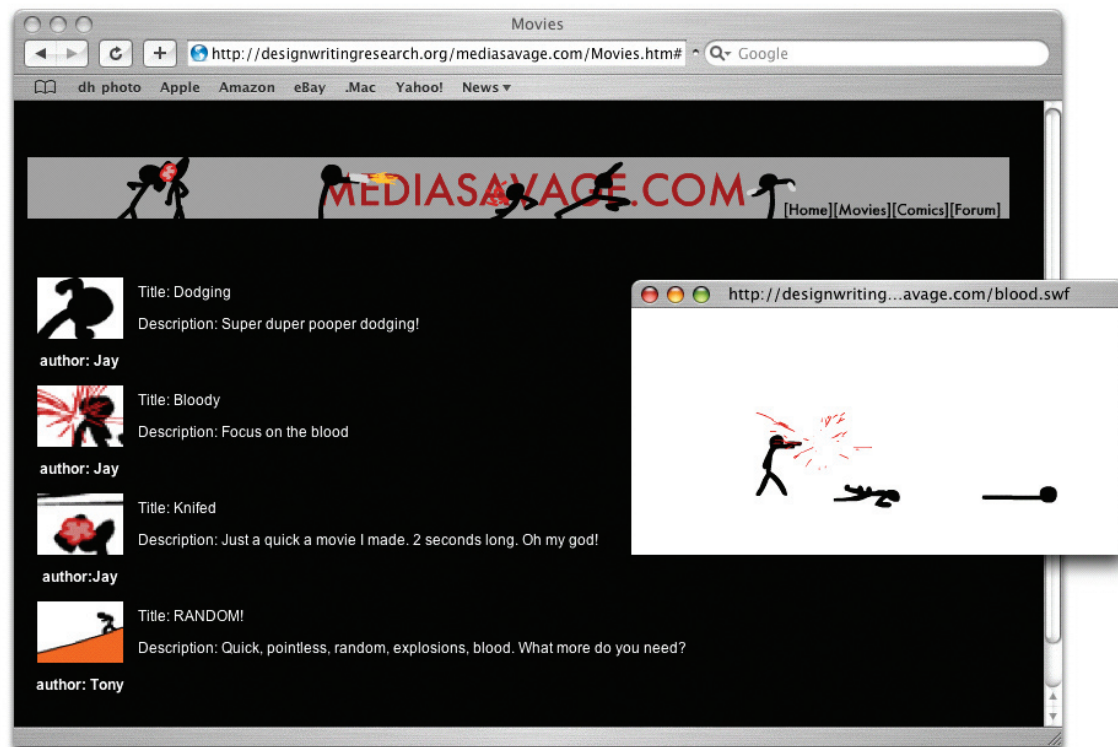
BE A MEDIA SAVAGE

MediaSavage.com is the ever-evolving Web site of Jay Lupton Miller. His mom helped him build the site when he was nine, and he quickly learned to expand and maintain it on his own

using Dreamweaver and Flash. Jay and his friends create short animated movies and post them on the site. Stick-figure animation (which has a vibrant subculture on the Web) provides an easy-

access introduction to the art of animation. Kids and other beginners can create action-packed narratives without having Pixar-quality rendering skills.

Design: Jay Lupton Miller

**BAGS WITH A CUSTOM RING**

Mom was eager to retire her oversized Kate Spade tote. She wanted a bag just big enough for phone, cards, keys, and cash. She ordered small cotton bags on-line (they cost a dollar each), and commissioned her kids to draw her phone in Sharpie. She keeps a stock of blank bags on hand, and when she needs a new bag, presto, she gets a new drawing.

Design: Jay Lupton Miller and Ruby Jane Miller for Ellen Lupton