

# COMD 3503

Kyasia Brown • April 25, 2018

## SYMBOLS

### Assignment 6

It's amazing to think we're surrounded by design all the time in our daily lives but have grown so accustomed to it we don't even bat an eye. The power in symbols is rooted in their deceptively simple styles- clutter free and easy to understand. Signs all around us- such as the kind found on restrooms or even minimalist wayfinding guides is embedded in our memory, though, I'm sure non design students barely even notice how design has affected their lives in such a muted yet punctuated way.

We learned about semiotics, the study of signs and how it helps to relay unique message. How these messages are interpreted are culture, age and gender specific. Because America is home to many races, messages are as generalized as possible to reach a variety of audiences. Icons on the other hand are realistic objects such as a magnifying glass in the search bar, Wi-Fi symbol or Nike's logo and what it means to our culture. Indexes are tricky to me still, because I don't quite understand what it means. Although, I'm sure I can somewhat recognize what it is.

Seeing symbols at work was most prevalent within the short film we were shown- it had no dialogue, no fancy backgrounds- just symbols representing the mundanity of life. Through use of these symbols, a tale of a young man's transition in life was clearly shown, including the array of emotions he experienced. I had never seen something like this before so the story resonated with me a lot as did my fondness for symbols, too. Before this lecture I had never known that a story could be so telling using just basic, simple shapes, but now I realize that there's a strength in being able to identify these symbols and create from them. During the Olympics, each nation had their own iconography that was built off of the ones everyone was most familiar with. Not many nations succeeded, but China's added a gracefulness. At first it seems simple to use what you have, but when it's already perfection how does one make it their own while keeping what makes it so iconic?

### **The Daily Heller**

This week was an interview with an artist who has just published a book that showed "fluency with commercial language and their function in both informing and enlivening society." This topic stood out to me because function and art keeps coming up lately, so hearing Ryan McGinness' opinion was interesting. The reasoning behind his love of color and image and that leads to him revealing how he became interested in formally learning graphic design.