

Communication Design Theory Writing Portfolio

Reading Responses

#1: This reading gave some understanding of collective authorship and how objectivity in design works. The original intention of graphic design was to send a message from an objective voice rather than one's personality. Maholy Nagy described objectivity with truth and clarity. He believed graphic artists must detach from their emotions to be more rational and universal in messaging. These post WWII ideologies approached design with a robotic and depersonalized methods. and a lack of expression. The 60's followed which artist began to break the norm by following their emotions as they create work. In retrospect, design has changed with the evolution of technology, software, structures, grids and hierarchy. As designers continued to emerge, these universal systems work together to help designers work with a structure regardless of aesthetic or expression.

#2: The Futurist Manifesto was written in 1909 by FT Marinetti and a group of Italian poets. Marinetti was inspired to write the manifesto after a car accident with an old bicycle. This text was written as poetry, but Marinetti believed it could serve as a real movement for progress. The manifesto rejects traditional values to focus on the future and technology. Throughout the text, it references aggression, the glorification of war, violence, genocide, and the destruction of learning institutions. The text also references the glorification of hard work and misogyny multiple times. These messages are communicated in an aggressive manner. These ideas printed and distributed these ideals to the public using flyers, posters, and books. The designs used a deconstructed typography arranged with twisted asymmetrical type elements to aggressively communicate his message. The end of the manifesto encourages the reader to embrace the possible and imminent future.

The Constructivist Manifesto was written in 1922 by Russian artist and sculptor, Alexander Rodchenko. The manifesto was written in the wake of the Russian revolution. The wake of world war I and the Russo-Japanese war left Russia in disarray. The country was already suffering economically and could not take care of its own people. The war caused a catastrophic blow to the country and tensions boiled over until the working class rebelled in the streets. Many people were injured or killed by Romanov's troops during the unrest. The Romanovs The Revolution was led by the Bolsheviks who took over the Romanov Dynasty, making Czar Nicholas II the last Czar of Russia. Nicholas Romanov and his family were removed from power in 1916 and executed a year later, most likely to prevent a rescue.

This manifesto focuses heavily on construction, technology, and hard work to move forward as a society. Rodchenko, Stepanova, and Gan's names are mentioned once however the word "we" throughout, not mentioning anyone specific. The parties involved wanted to make a statement with their names present -a form of collective authorship.

#3: This was the era in design where artists wanted to approach visual communication with clean fresh ideas. They believed that older ornate aesthetics did not make type easy to read. Avant-garde artists at the time were looking forward to convincing the commercial world that media should be designed to have energy and movement, but simplified styles. Maholy-Nagy, the father of Typophoto (using photo and typographic elements in design) curated a show in Berlin that highlighted applications of this fresh style on over 78 image and type plates. The show also introduced standardized paper sizes, sans-serif typefaces, asymmetrical designs, asset organizational systems, and “uncapitalization.” Designer Herbert Bayer believed sans serif typefaces were easier to understand and potentially more economical.

Maholy-Nagy predicted technologies that would allow easier creation of photomontage and make hands-on typesetting obsolete. This prophecy came true in 1930 when the first photosetting machine was created and into the 1960s more widespread use. These systems used a combination of photographic technologies that allowed photosensitive media against typesetting plates to scale and create type much faster than hand setting. The style, weight, and kerning were easier to create and modify.

The Berlin exhibition at Kunstbibliothek was a moment in history that marked the beginning of a new era in design. Simple fresh approaches at design and eventually the technology to create. Jan Tschicold was the inventor of The New Typography. This new style used asymmetry, sans-serif type, use of and use of color, and photography. He believed necessary elements including type can be used in a “functional design.” He emphasized the “abolition of ornamentation,” which also ensures that messages can be understood en masse. These new styles all sought to use a structured but modular format for laying out type and photography. Each of these artists sought to make type easier to understand and create.

#4: Gertzner described a “programmes for solutions” grid type system for design. In this system, there was a series of systems that determined by using art and mathematical formats. He believed that design involved a process for determining which elements to use and how to combine them. The type-grid is used at a regulation system for where type and photography and other design elements are arranged in line with the grid. The grid allows the designer to place these elements to a system aligned with columns and rows to optimize use of the space.

Muller-Brockmann believed in using the grid system to place subjective design elements and place them within the grid to give a sense of stability. His work popularized the grid and spread the ideas of the Swiss style of Design.

References:

David Karson

PaulaScher

Both Muller-Brockmann and Gertzner believed in the rationality and of design and looking forward to approach design with a fresh mind.

#5: I appreciated reading about Tre Seals and the Vocal Type foundry. I enjoyed hearing about how he sources inspiration, including receiving a variety of visual inspiration via a supportive online community. Through social platforms via Pinterest and Instagram, he is able to source visual inspiration from photographs, archives of signs, and other historical materials. The foundry has created typefaces and has been inspired by different historical events, including the women's suffrage movement in Argentina, which inspired the typeface Eva after Eva Perón.

The typeface Martin was inspired by signs created in the wake of Dr Martin Luther King's death and the well-known Memphis Sanitation Workers Strike signs that read "I Am A Man." He was also inspired by the early infographic designs created by WEB DuBois and his students that were displayed at the 1900 World Fair in Paris. He also took inspiration from the 1969 LGBTQ riots of Stonewall to create the typeface of the same name.

Designers of color have historically had limited access to design tools and resources. As more folks have access to these tools and the ability to express their voice, it is important to make sure to go back and help young up and coming designers to make their path easier to cross. As the technologies and software continue to change and incorporate the use of AI, it's important to continue to teach students the foundational information of design but keep them abreast with developing technology. It's also important not to overload students with antiquated information that might not be relevant. Organizations like AIGA are constantly sourcing information about emerging technologies, tools, and information to keep institutions up to date. This will help prepare students to learn and adapt as the world of design changes.

#7: Linguistic: In the advertisement, the first message seen are the words on the advertisement or linguistic messages. This includes both the caption and the text labeling on the packaging. The caption is written in French and "tells" the customer what is seen in the ad –the pasta, the sauce, and the parmesan cheese. The L'Italienne De Luxe written in French is sending a message to the customers that these ingredients associated with "Italian-ness." Although this is an advertisement for a French brand, it's still conveying the familiarity to Italy based on the colors and the fresh ingredients.

Non-Coded Iconic: The objects themselves are a message with literal messaging:

The name branded products in the bag – tomato sauce, pasta, and parmesan cheese – these all bear the name and are labeled based on contents. The viewer is looking at a product labels that bear the brand name and logo and understands this is an advertisement for the products seen.

Coded: fresh veggies, open grocery bag, contents spilling out meant to evoke the idea of freshness of the ingredients and make the connection to advertised product -this product is just as good as fresh. It could also encourage the customers to purchase additional ingredients to accompany the product.

QUESTIONS:

How is the advertisement trying to persuade and influence the viewer?

Why is the ad written in French? Could there be a play on words?

Are the raw ingredients for decoration?

What are some other ways the ad could have communicated this message?

Was the ad meant to signify freshness of the ingredients?

Was the ad meant to get customers to purchase additional products?

Artist Manifesto:

1. To think and decide for self.
2. To be open to (be) inspiration from (to) all things
3. Reflect on the past and seek refinement
4. Always being open to engaging in feedback
5. To capture experiences and essences
6. Learn to use tools and technology as they continue to evolve
7. Observe and listen internally and externally!
8. To combine photo and type in a defined aesthetic
9. Transferring skills between mediums.
10. Become the change you wish to see, and beyond...

Select Art of Noticing Exercises

#1: Before class today I stopped by the deli. I noticed there was a lady dancing across from someone selling phones and tablets. I am not sure if she was connected to the sales table, but she seemed to be having a great time. I notice those tables where the person is selling phones and tablets and Internet service sometimes there are two or three of these vendors throughout the blocks near downtown Brooklyn.

#2: Daily I ride the train and see several hundred people pass through the cars. Typically, half of the train car passengers wear all black one sometimes wonders where these folks are headed or where they are coming from someone might be wearing a suit or have on something professional looking. Some folks are wearing all black dressed down in jeans or joggers, hoodie or T-shirt sweatpants. A good way to tell where they might be going is to look at the shoes sometimes the shoes might be a giveaway if they work in a particular industry if they have orthopedic style or professional looking shoes.

#3: Last night I visited Pleasantville NY for an opening at the Gordon parks foundation gallery. The resident artist was Andre Wagner. The first thing I remember about the night was how quiet the city was. The only sounds were cars passing by the train and the buzz at the gallery. At the end of the evening, I heard crickets on the platform. I am not accustomed to hearing crickets often in the city. On the train car it was filled with photographers that had been at the show chatting about the experience and sharing there are work and experiences. After getting off on my stop I passed by a patch of green and happened to hear crickets.



#4: I like to take walks in my neighborhood in the mornings and evenings if the weather permits. Most of the time I enjoy listening to music in apple music. Although I try not to use my phone on walks I somehow managed to end up on social media. Sometimes I remove my headset to be present depending on the noise of the environment. The best quiet hours are early mornings around 7 or 8 AM.

#5: This morning I went on a coffee walk and forgot my phone yet remembered my wallet. I was initially going to go back to get my phone but decided not to. Typically, I listen to music but I decided to think about the things that I needed to do for the week and started to cycle through different class assignments and personal things I needed to tend to. Moments like this give me

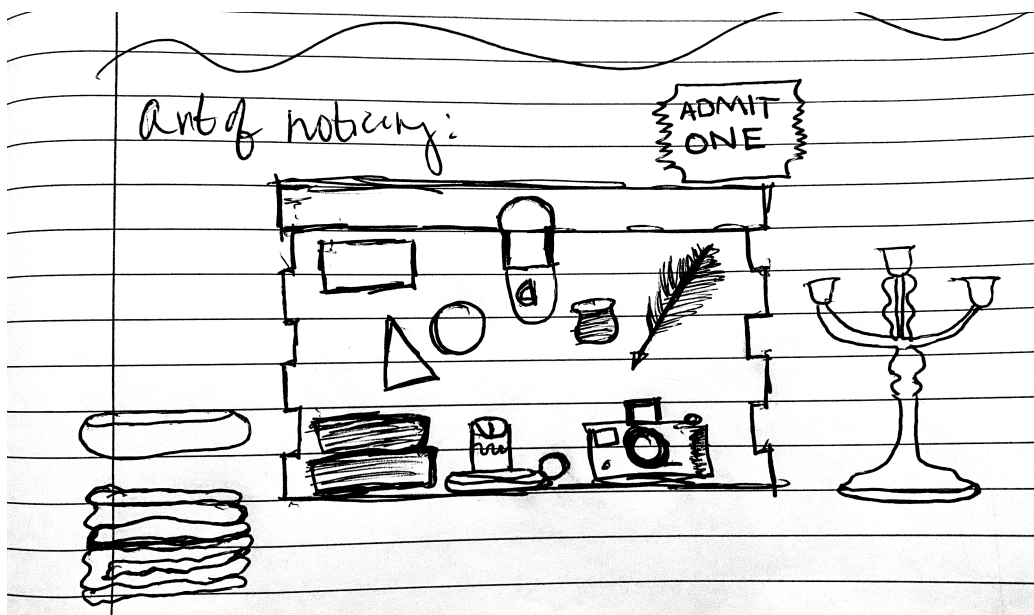
an opportunity to refresh my mind and prepare. Now I try to incorporate silence or no device occasionally during my walks.

#6: I decided to interview the 18 karat gold and diamond egg ring that Selena wore as a gift from Yolanda Saldivar, the woman who killed her. I'd like to know the moment Yolanda purchased you why didn't she choose from the other rings? What other rings were there to choose from? I wonder what she said to The jeweler when she saw you I wonder if the jeweler asked her who it was for And if she told him. Whose money did she use to purchase you? With all of the financial fraud Yolanda had been committing while working under Selena, she also spent money on gifts for herself as well. I would like to know what Selina said when she first saw you. Did she say Oh my? What did Selena wear when she first saw you? Were you at her home or the salon or the office?



Did Yolanda brag to her family and friends and other people that she bought you for Celina? I imagine you and Yolanda had a conversation in the car as you as you left the jewelry store. What did her family and her husband Chris say? Did they call you ugly? Like yolanda? Did Yolanda hear someone make a comment about the ring? Did Yolanda expect Selena to always wear the ring? It was said that Selena wore the ring always and almost never took it off. What happened the night Selena confronted Yolanda and what happened in the hotel room the day Selena was killed?

#7:



Essay Theses:

#1: Don't Blink, You'll Miss It: Analyzing the Poster Art

I decided to write about the film poster for the documentary "Don't Blink" created by New Jersey based designer and artist Yolanda Cuomo. The film documents the life and works of Swiss photographer and film maker Robert Frank, who is known for his iconic black and white imagery of American life. The poster contains a variety of elements and aesthetic choices that align with early 20th century avant-garde design movements including constructivism, DeStijl Bauhaus, and The New Typography. This essay will compare this work with these movements.

#2: Analyzing Stereotypes & Representation: Calvin Gets a Job

This paper seeks to analyze the "Calvin Gets a Job" Mc Donald's commercial series and creator's used encoded messages to encourage young black men to apply for employment. The messaging of this commercial will be deconstructed in part using Barthes', Saussure's, and Peirce's semiotic terminology and Stuart Hall's representation theory. These frameworks will be used to identify the image's linguistic (words that convey a meaning) and iconic (images used to convey meaning) messaging in this three-part commercial series. Stuart Halls representation theory explores how this messaging is encoded by creators and decoded by an audience. The creator's intended message is known as the dominant or preferred reading while an oppositional reading is rejected by the audience. These structures in tandem will review the different encoded messages and what images were used to represent the target audience, young black men.

End of Year Reflection:

As the semester concludes, I would like to reflect on its challenges and highlights. This has undoubtedly been one of the most demanding periods in my college career, marked by a heavy workload, responsibility, and personal challenges throughout the year. Considering these factors, I have gained valuable insights from this class.

I've acquired the skill of analyzing and deconstructing advertisements and applied these methods and frameworks to reshape my approach to design. By incorporating what we learned about semiotics and insights from historical design movements, I've successfully applied this knowledge in my package design and design studio classes. In package design, I was mindful semiotics, iconography, and linguistic messages to create ad campaigns for the products, providing clarity on the choices I made in the design process.

Despite the challenges posed by the research project, I appreciate how it contributed to the development of my senior project proposal. The research aided in finding additional resources for my proposal and facilitated the creation of a presentation I believe will gain approval next semester. The project is a guerilla magazine concept will explore logo and typographic design, branding, and advertising strategies. This piece will serve as both a cohesive portfolio piece and an expandable project adaptable to various professional requirements.

Approaching graduation, I look forward to leaving equipped with the knowledge and experiences garnered from both academic studies and real-life situations. Thank you, Professor, for encouraging deep thinking into design theory and reflection throughout our careers. I am confident that a substantial portion of what we learned will be applicable in the real world. Best wishes and I hope to cross paths with you again next semester.

Best,

Nicolas J. Harris