

Design Brief

Project 4A (Brain : Context : Discourse)

Last revised: 11.02.05

text n., 1. Wording or words of something written or printed. 2. Body of a printed work as distinct from a preface, footnote or appendix. 3. Scriptural passage to be read and expounded upon in a sermon. 4. Subject; topic. 5. Textbook. [< Lat. textus < p.part of texere, weave.]

– **American Heritage Dictionary**, 4th Ed. (NY: Dell Publishing, 2001).

"We now know that a text is not a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning (the 'message' of the Author-God) but a multidimensional space in which a variety of writings, **none of them original**, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centers of culture."

– "The Death of the Author," Roland Barthes (Stephen Heath, transl.), in **Image Music Text** (NY: Fontana Press, 1997). [Orig. essay: 1968.]

Assignment

Select a text (or texts) with which you have a vital, personal connection. (You do not have to be the author.) Design, interpret and re/produce the text(s), in order to emphasize typographic skill and awareness, while creating a new object or series.

Examples of texts (whole or sampled) that might fulfill this brief:

- published matter reflecting your ideas, values or beliefs
- a manifesto, declaration, pledge or philosophical treatise
- an interview you conducted or that was significant to you
- the lyrics from a song (pop, rock, country, hip-hop, etc.)
- a published essay, article, report, poem or short story
- an excerpt from a novel, film, play or performance
- dialogue from a film, or a TV, radio or Web broadcast
- a list of contents, a set of instructions or a legal document

Requirements

- The design of text -- the passionate and strategic application of typography to communicate information and convey meaning -- is required, and is the primary focus of this project.
- Use of images is optional and unrestricted.
- Use of color is optional and unrestricted.
- Methods, materials and media (ex: print, screen, paint, plastic, film, metal, glass) are open, but subject to instructor approval.
- A "series" consists of three or more of something (panels, page spreads, posters, etc.) and is subject to instructor approval.
- The text (or texts) must be of sufficient length and interest; all texts are subject to instructor approval.

Analysis

Each of us carries within us information that separates us, and the way we communicate information, from others. And yet, while it may spring from a variety of sources, it is tenuous to label any part of this information "unique"; perhaps, only the combination or format is. As we are informed and inspired by the world around us, so we represent a source of information and inspiration to others. Representation, appropriation, reproduction and experimentation are among the issues and practices under consideration here. Within the project's parameters, designers can broaden their understanding of what is possible or effective in representing themselves -- their thoughts, ideas, fears, dreams, values and beliefs -- in a cultural context.

Grading

You will be evaluated primarily according to your effort and level of commitment. You will lose points for sloppy presentation, typographic errors, unwillingness to experiment, or not following instructions.

Submission

All parts of Project 4 must be formally submitted together. Refer to: Mounting Guide: Project 4, available on the course Web site.

--

© 2005 Shawn M. McKinney