

Project 4A: Surface and Style (revised: 05.12.05)

An analogy is inert and at rest only if both terms are present in the world; when one term is absent, the other becomes an active conspirator for the exile's return.

– Elaine Scarry, *On Beauty* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ 1999).

ASSIGNMENT

Redesign and reproduce a two-dimensional surface used to package, promote and/or protect a media product. First, do a bit of research about the genre (and corresponding time period) you chose (or were assigned) in lab. Next, chose a surface to redesign. Choices include: **a.)** a book cover (ex: novel, textbook, cookbook, etc.); **b.)** an (audio) cd booklet cover; or **c.)** a (film) dvd cover. All other proposals are subject to instructor approval.

Note: Redesign ONLY the FRONT cover (no spine or back).

SIZE

The redesigned surface must be the same size as the original. The orientation of the original and the redesigned surface can be either horizontal (landscape), or vertical (portrait) format, but their size must be an exact match. Shrink, if necessary, both the original and redesigned covers to fit on a sheet of black board. Do NOT mount any surface larger than 8.5 x 11 inches.

A typical cd booklet cover measures: 4.75 x 4.75 inches.
Avoid unusual sizes.

A typical dvd package cover measures 5 x 7.25 inches.
Avoid unusual sizes.

There is no standard size for a book cover.
However, avoid oversized covers (larger than 8.5 x 11 inches).

TYPE

The redesigned surface must incorporate text. You can add new text, but you must also include ALL text (words) found on the original. However, typefaces, styles, sizes, weights and placement may be different from the original.

IMAGES

The redesigned surface must incorporate at least one image that qualifies as an illustration; however, the image *cannot* be the same one found on the original surface (or an alternate image from any part of the cd case or booklet). Examples of illustrations include, but are not limited to: **a.)** a drawing; **b.)** a photomontage; **c.)** a collage that includes any combination of photos, drawings and/or line art; or **d.)** a *conceptual* photo/ illustration. Photo/illustrations may include: line art, drawings, photographs, parts of photographs or scanned objects. They may incorporate the use of filters, masks, text and/or layers. Still not sure? — ask a TA!

Note: Layering photographs on top of each other, without integrating them in some way, is NOT a photo illustration.

COLOR

The redesigned surface may use any color, or combination of colors, that can be printed effectively. Color choices are open.

BORDERS, MARGINS

Avoid white borders around the edge of your new surface. White borders are discouraged, unless they represent a component of a design strategy. However, images and/ or text (or type elements) may bleed; bleed areas are encouraged.

PURPOSE

This project affords students with opportunities to: (1.) consider how design conveys meaning; (2.) employ design principles as tools of self expression; (3.) select and combine appropriate typefaces and/ or styles; (4.) explore appropriate letter, word and line spacing configurations; (5.) select and/ or experiment with appropriate imagery, including the use of digital (or other) photographic manipulation processes, and/ or digital (or other) illustration methods; (6.) explore and expand technical and aesthetic abilities; (7.) produce representative materials for presentation in a professional environment; and (8.) manage a basic design assignment and learn to meet deadlines.

GRADING

Students will be evaluated according to: (1.) creation/ use of design elements (and/ or other visible strategies) to assist a reader in accessing information, and/ or decoding a message or messages; (2.) overall schematic/ creative ability; (3.) effectiveness in attracting/ maintaining attention; (4.) readability and legibility of text and/ or images; (5.) overall craft and technique; and (6.) professional presentation/ behavior.

Note: Sloppy presentation, typographical errors and/ or not following instructions will incur significant point deductions.

FURTHER REQUIREMENTS

The creation of meaning is required on this project. Your redesigned cover should reveal a clear purpose and intention. If the instructor concludes that all you did was create a piece of “abstract art,” or something “cool,” or that you relied on a tired or clichéd image, and quickly slapped some type on it, your (low) grade will reflect that. Thought and effort count. You must be able to explain how your design concept functions, how it relates to content, how it communicates particular messages, and how it targets specific audiences.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

1. Center and mount the original cover (on the LEFT) and the redesigned version (on the RIGHT), on a 20 x 16 inch sheet of black board. Leave one inch (or: six picas) of board space between covers. Attach a tracing paper overlay.
2. Type, on a separate sheet of letterhead — one sheet only — a double spaced “Letter of Explanation” to the instructor, discussing your work.
3. Place the letter in a pocket folder. Check to be sure a business card is still in the folder's business card slot.
4. Place the folder and the mounted poster in your portfolio case. Be sure your business card is still neatly attached to your portfolio case (upper flap, lower right corner).

Note: Additional guidelines may be available elsewhere, along with further mounting instructions or diagrams; ask your TA or the instructor.