

DESIGN OF PUBLIC CULTURE

Instructor

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Office Hours

Wed 2:30-4:30p PST or by appointment

Class Meetings

Mon 3:00-5:50p PST

Remote Classroom

COURSE SCHEDULE

W1 1.6	Introduction
W2 1.13	Topic + Research + Forces
W3 1.20	Structure + TOC +Type Studies
W4 1.27	Layout Design
W5 2.3	Representation Strategies
W6 2.10	Information + Data Design
W7 2.17	Investigate Insights
W8 2.24	Overview Review
W9 3.3	Cover Tests
W10 3.10	Presentation of Rough Draft

AN INTRODUCTION

Take the simplest, most everyday event; say stopping at a traffic light. You've done it successfully a hundred times. But the simplicity evaporates when you consider the event intently.

Now think, How much design is actually involved? The light contraption, the colors of the light, the markings on the road. The placement of the car's controls, the signals and indicators on all vehicles.

Why does this event look the way it does? How does the procession happen? How do you know these things? What happens when the light doesn't work normally? How does that change the event and the cues we rely on?

What are the forces that led up to this moment, and how have their consequences affected my behavior? There are the big sweeps of history: the history of car design, urban planning, the social contract and common understanding between drivers and pedestrians and bicyclists. Then there are also the specific elements that affect each occasion differently: the weather, the time of day, our own concentration and mood, the song on the radio, our passengers, our frantic schedule.

DESIGN OF PUBLIC CULTURE

AN ACCUMULATION OF FORCES

Every event is an accumulation of forces, sometimes cooperative, often competing. Public events combine “top down” and “bottom up” forces. There are “top down” pressures, such as official commemorations, grand openings, parades, tours, which may also include the energies used to control—police presence, boundaries and maps, civic information sources. Then there are the “bottom up” pressures, which may be spontaneous events like protests and celebrations, mischief and crime.

Private and semi-private events add personal, biographical forces to the mix. These may include family history, psychological and medical makeup, personal taste and eccentricities, and just plain good or bad luck.

And all of these must contend with the natural forces of science—the weather and its potential calamities, birth and death, the plant and animal kingdom, even the phases of the moon.

DESIGN

We can use design not simply as a generator of new stuff, but as a way of looking at the world as a designed place. All events are designed in one form or another. Whether we mean pageantry, staging, costumes or hand-scrawled signs and impromptu memorials, all of the forces that make an event happen also contribute to its design. The experience of an event, which is different for each participant, is a direct result of the planned and unplanned, science and biology, media and culture, private and public, as well as one’s perceived relationship to the event (participant, celebrant, trespasser).

Our contemporary culture includes a wealth of private streams that record individual impressions of events as a counter to the “official” documentation from standard news sources. The differences between the two are continually producing their own news stories, often beating the official sources at their own investigative game.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF AN EVENT

THE PROJECT

1. Choose a single, specific event of which you have some intimate knowledge and involvement. It could be personal or public, major or trivial. But here are a couple warnings:

- Don't feel obliged to make your topic "important" or "impressive." A trivial event can produce rich results. The choice is not a factor of inherent value, but rather how you uncover value through your project. Avoid huge sweeping historical moments. For the project to have its greatest impact, consider something small.
- Do not disclose anything about yourself you would rather not. The project will not be judged on empathy or radical biography.
- Please don't turn this into a massive research project. You won't be able to cover everything and develop your typographic and design skills, too. That is why you must limit yourself. This is why you should have enough intimate knowledge to be able to jump right into proper source material or at least know where to immediately look.
- Because you will be working with this topic for the full quarter, be sure it is of sufficient interest to you. Otherwise you will be driven crazy by week 5.

2. Compile a list of forces that may have contributed to the design of the even. Think broadly about this and consider how you would define "design" in terms of what you are examining. Some things to consider:

- For every force that you can see, there is probably at least one oppositional one. Don't forget to take those into account.
- Events are often designed after the fact. How is an event recorded, reported, documented and historicized? Does this affect its understanding? How and to whom?
- How far back into history, or broadly in geography should one go? What boundaries will you set for yourself? (this is where structure will come into play.) Do you start with driving a car and roll backwards to the invention of the wheel?
- Is the relative reliability of sources important? How can that be measured? How is reliability implied?

3. Your final project will be an encyclopedic compilation of the forces that have combined to create one single, carefully defined event. In order to succeed with the brilliance to which you are fated to aspire, you must consider all of these factors:

- How do you indicate relative weight and importance of the information you are compiling?
- What sorts of typographic and design structures work best to convey each type of information your presenting? Prose? Maps? Charts? Diagrams? Illustrations? Interviews? Poetry? Newspaper reprints? Private thoughts? Important quotes? What are the denotative and connotative tools you can employ?
- How do you unify the disparate types of information and presentation methods so they feel like they belong to the same book?
- How should you organize the material? What are the implications of the different possibilities?
- What sorts of typographic language, guideposts and symbols should you establish to make the information manageable and user-engaging?
- Who is your audience? What knowledge should you assume they already possess?
- A neutral point-of-view is not a necessary component of this project. Because of the event's connection to you, how can you convey a personal voice?

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF AN EVENT

THE SUCCESSFUL PROJECT WILL INCLUDE

1. At least three major pieces of writing. These can come from any source you deem important. They can be essays, articles, chapters, etc. Their originating source should be annotated clearly.
2. A variety of thoughtfully chosen sources and vehicles of information. These must include at least 10 photographs or artifacts, at least four informational graphic devices (maps, charts, diagrams), and a series of smaller sub-articles or side-bars.
3. A clearly established navigational system (beyond page numbers, please).
4. A cover (save this for week 8 or 9, please).
5. Front and back matter (title pages, table of contents, index and/or glossary. We will look at these things more closely through-out the quarter).
6. **Most importantly, a conceptual framework on which the project rests. You must demonstrate your ability to imply the meaning (and all that entails) of your piece through the graphical language. This is a primary objective of the course.**

WHAT THIS PROJECT IS NOT

1. This project is not a tastefully minimal coffee table fine art book. It is an encyclopedic record, and should exhibit a wealth of information and opportunity within its pages.
2. This project is not a chance to repeat past successes in typography or design. As in Vis 41, you will be expected to try things that extend past your comfort level. That is the only way to learn and grow. Otherwise, your just marking time. It is my job to be sure that you are challenging yourself.
3. This project is not about experimenting with stuff that “looks experimental” or “feels edgy”. It is also not about mimicking encyclopedic media you have seen before or are familiar with, but about working with a graphical language in support of your conceptual framework and of your own imagination/madness.
4. As with your work in Vis 41, this project is not about coming up with a successful idea. It is about developing a process of investigation and analysis that builds toward a satisfying, confident, articulate and compelling final product.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF AN EVENT

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

This project requires an elaborate series of decisions each of which will open doors of possibility as well as further chains of decisions. You will be handling large amounts of text, text together with images, various hierarchies of information, and a variety of sections. All of these must tie together thematically and visually. Because you are already familiar with the subject the research aspect of the project should not dominate your workload. That won't always be true, but in this case it frees up time to focus on the details of your graphical language.

Here are some questions you should consider as you design:

1. How do I start? I have a lot of ideas but all seem kinda dumb. How do I keep from choosing the wrong path?
2. How do I choose a format? What makes one format better than another? What size? How many pages? What kind of binding? How will these decisions impact the typography? When is the best time to make this decision?
3. What kind of typographic language is right for my project and where does it come from? Is it as simple as choose a font and a grid structure? Is there more to it than that? If so, then how will I discover it?
4. When are my typographic choices "too much"? When does the form obscure the points being made? When does it enhance the content and the object? How do I maintain a balance between these extremes?
5. Is there a role for decoration in a project like this? How do I tell the difference between decoration and content? How can I weave them together so they seem natural or does that even matter?
6. How is typographic form read? How does it suggest authority? Formality or casualness? Respect? Intimacy? Can the typography imply or reference complex, subtle relationships?
7. Does the method I use to reproduce the "artifacts" affect the typography? How so?
8. Does the development of a narrative happen before, during or after the design process? How might his order affect the outcome?

SCHEDULE

SUBJECT TO CHANGE

WEEK 01 //

General introduction and discussion. Presentation of assignment. Examining a few examples, discussion of content generation. Question: How do you start a project?

WEEK 02 //

Share your choice of event, beginning list of forces, beginning collection of data, information, sources, photographs and artifacts. We want to complete the initial selection quickly in order to concentration on the language of design that develops around it. Question: What does it mean to experiment and explore with type? What sorts of strategies can you use that are meaningful to your content and conceptual idea?

WEEK 03 //

Review beginning typography experiments and studies. Format, outline of full encyclopedia (so far). Discussion of structure and table of contents. Question: How to critique your work. How do you determine if an experiment is successful? Decision-making as a vital component of design.

WEEK 04 //

Further explorations and studies involving full page structures, hierarchies, navigation. Is your structure and format working? Question: How do you determine when your font choice is working?

WEEK 05 //

Refinement of typographic decisions and their application to all sections of the booklet. How should artifacts be represented in the universe of your booklet? Question: How do you move from a series of studies and examples to a well-conceived typographic/graphic language? What is the importance and value of a typographic language? How do you develop a language that is both sturdy and flexible?

WEEK 06 //

Development of information graphics and ancillary content. How does this related to your typography and artifactual content? Question: How do you integrate complex and competing information on a single page? How do you determine the best format?

WEEK 07 //

Reviewing for opportunities. Where is the project falling short? What insights have you gained during your process and in crit that could inform additional design intelligence and moments?

WEEK 08 //

Looking at full project for typographic/content pacing, consistency, transitions, surprise. Consideration of title and subtitle. Question: Is it too late to experiment? What are you forcing and what naturally wants to emerge?

WEEK 09 //

Further refinement. Review cover tests. The importance of detail and the pleasure of its execution. Begin thinking about printing and binding solutions.

WEEK 10 //

Share rough output as a printed object.

WEEK 11 [FINAL] //

Submit PDF of design files and photographic documentation of your printed object

COURSE POLICIES

Participation

You can elevate your grade based on your participation in class. If you are a 'synchronous' student, you are required to engage fully in the crits during the Zoom meeting. Don't be afraid of saying something wrong—being right is not the point and just showing up is not enough. This part of your grade is cumulatively evaluated over the duration of the quarter. 'Asynchronous' students who cannot attend section should utilize discussion-threads and office-hours as a means to contribute some degree of discussion and participation in the class. Students who do not participate in any of these three ways will see reduced points for participation in their grade.

Assignments

Effort trumps 'good design'. I want to see that you're iterating and testing yourself. You'll be asked to show and submit substantial proof of work each week which will cumulatively contribute to your overall grade. Unlike Vis 41, the intimate setting of this course allows for a bit more flexibility around 'assignment mandates'.

CRITIQUE ETIQUETTE

Critiquing Another's Style

Avoid calling into question the legitimacy or favorability of someone's style; your taste for the genre of another's work is not relevant. Instead, help your classmates determine whether the style they are working with is coming across as they intended or whether it's supporting the content they're giving expression to.

Forcing Your Personal Vision onto Someone Else's Work

A primary course objective is to help students identify a pathway to a practice. Since it's almost certain that no two individuals' creative codes are identical, it is of no service to yourself or others to cut and paste your code onto theirs'. Of course, the visual arts breed overlap and intersection between its practitioners, but everyone's path is uniquely their own. In providing feedback, step into the universe of others' work and the laws that apply there—**become a citizen of their study**.

No One is Special

Keep your ego appropriately in check. This is not about accumulating gold stars or gaining some traction in class hierarchy. Success in this course is defined by **your willingness to engage with your peers and dive into honest inquiry about yourself** as a creator, not by 'being the best.'

Making it Personal vs. Offering Meaningful Feedback

The focus of crits is entirely about honing in on the objective of the work presented. Though content may draw in personal references, do not use crits as an opportunity to personally attack others. Look for insightful and constructive ways to offer meaningful (not 'mean') criticism. To that end, welcome less-than-positive feedback as useful guidance to take your work to the next level, **without taking it personally**.

Arguing with Feedback

If you're doing it right, **you will fail periodically** throughout the course project. Skilled communicators fail fast and fail often. In this way, exploration, investigation and experimentation are guaranteed ways of finding your edge—but some of your iterations are not guaranteed to work. If you argue with feedback because its not a glowing review, you've missed the point entirely.

Being Too Honest or Not Being Honest Enough

Respectful debate is both expected and encouraged. Challenge one another to find the gold in each others' inquiry. When your goal is to uplift your peers to produce honest and engaging work, your approach to doing so will **neither coddle nor cut** them, but elevate, encourage and motivate.

Be Curious and Supportive

The best way to give meaningful feedback is to find a way to **be interested in the work of others**. The best way to be interested is to **be curious**. Approach your classmates' work with a beginner's mind, ask questions and try to locate what's uniquely emerging from their investigation.

GRADE FACTORS

Overall Grade Distribution //

	<i>Grade System</i>		<i>Weighted Grade Scale</i>	
Participation (10%)	Weekly Submission	A-F	A+	100%
Section attendance, utilizing office hours and participating in discussion boards on Canvas are ways you are acknowledged for participation.	Participation	0-100	A	99-93
	Final	A-F	A-	92-90
			B+	89-87
			B	86-83
			B-	82-80
			C+	79-77
			C	76-73
			C-	72-70
			D+	69-67
			D	65-66
			F	0-64

Academic Integrity //

Integrity of scholarship is essential for an academic community. The University expects that both faculty and students will honor this principle and in so doing protect the validity of University intellectual work. For students, this means that all academic work will be done by the individual to whom it is assigned, without unauthorized aid of any kind. This includes downloading templates or design bundles from the internet to submit as your own creation. <http://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating-Procedures/Senate-Manual/Appendices/2>

Students with Disabilities //

Students requesting accommodations and services due to a disability for this course need to provide a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter issued by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD), prior to eligibility for requests. Receipt of AFAs in advance is necessary for appropriate planning for the provision of reasonable accommodations. OSD Academic Liaisons also need to receive current AFA letters. For additional information, contact the Office for Students with Disabilities:

- 858.534.4382 (V)
- 858.534.9709 (TTY) - Reserved for people who are deaf or hard of hearing
- osd@ucsd.edu
- <http://disabilities.ucsd.edu>

RESOURCES

Online //

Adobe Color CC color.adobe.com/
 YouTube
 Lynda.com (now LinkedIn Learning) www.lynda.com/
 Linotype Font Explorer www.fontexplorerx.com/
 Typekit typekit.com/
 FOUNT fount.artequalswork.com/
 Hoefler & Co. www.typography.com/
 House Industries houseind.com/
 Process Type Foundry processtypefoundry.com/
 Fontsmith www.fontsmith.com/
 MyFonts myfonts.com
 League of Moveable Type www.theleagueofmoveabletype.com
 Lost Type www.losttype.com/
 Font Squirrel www.fontsquirrel.com/
 Google Fonts fonts.google.com/
 Transtyp www.transtyp.com
 Fontstand www.fontstand.com

Zoom In-Meeting File Sharing //

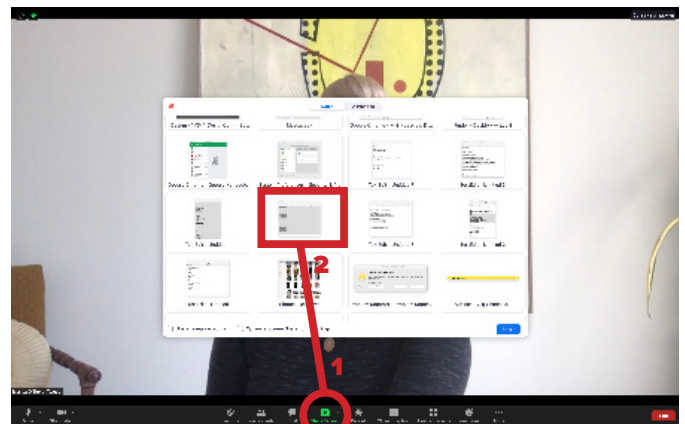
Presenters

During section, if you are part of the group that is presenting ROUND 1 work, you will need to share your screen when it is your turn.

1. Click the 'Share Screen' button on the bottom nav bar of your Zoom window.
2. Select a screen from your computer to share. This will usually be a PDF in Adobe Acrobat.

Books on reserve //

Meggs' History of Graphic Design Phil Meggs
About Face: Reviving the Rules of Typography David Jury
Thinking with Type Ellen Lupton
Ten Commandments of Type Phil Meggs
Grid Systems in Graphic Design Josef Müller-Brockmann
Visual Communications Reader Various
Looking Closer: Critical Writings on Graphic Design 1 + 3
It is Beautiful, Then Gone Martin Venezky
Subculture + The Meaning of Style Dick Hebdidge
Making a Splash Various
Pen + Mouse Various
Influences: A Lexicon of Contemporary Design Practice
 Anna Gerber + Anja Lutz
Robert Brownjohn : Sex and Typography Emily King
Hand 2 Eye Various
Fashion Illustration Next Various

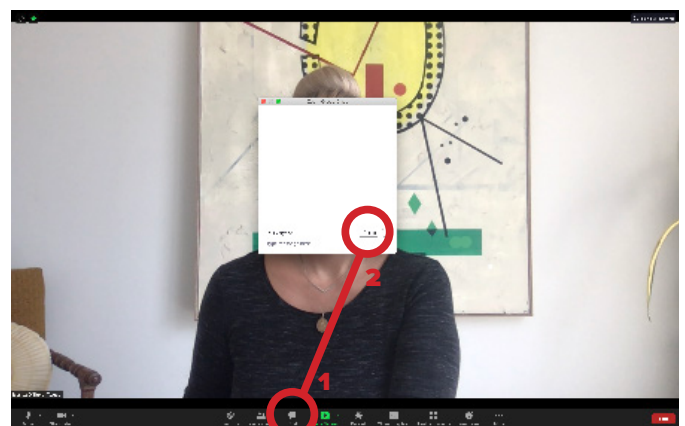


SHARE SCREEN (FOR STUDENTS PRESENTING ROUND 1 WORK)

Non-presenters

During section, if you are part of the group that is **not** presenting but need to share ROUND 2 work, you will upload it to the chat space to make it available for other students to view.

1. Click the 'Chat' button on the bottom nav bar of your Zoom window.
2. When the chat window appears, click the 'File' button on the bottom right.
3. Select the file you wish to circulate to the group.



SHARE FILE (FOR STUDENTS SHARING ROUND 2 WORK)