

## An Introduction to Type and Typography

FYI: Hope you read as far as the bibliography on p. 178 (perhaps of interest re: Critique readings)

- We begin by acknowledging that publications have personality
  - Think of a publication you read regularly: (on board)
    - What is it?
    - Describe its personality
    - Why do you describe it that way?

**(SHOW & TELL STUFF)**

-- connection between content and design

CONTENT obviously?? most important component of a publication

DESIGN is the overall “look” of a publication – incorporates the decisions that have been made about how type, art, space will be used on a page – the “master plan” for the publication’s visual presentation

- GOOD design is purposeful (planned) . . . it doesn’t just happen . . . .
  - it’s the result of numerous decisions (big and small) made **before** issue 1 is ever printed
    - e.g. we decide to publish a campus newspaper to compete with the *Cigar* . . . first we must have a content agenda . . . we choose a page size . . . type of paper . . . then we begin to work out how we will use that space (traditional? Old-fashioned? Playful? Radical?) . . . finally we figure out how to use type and space and art to convey personality

- SO . . . **typography** (the type used and how it is arranged) reflects a publication's personality . . . typography aims to create to create a desired effect on readers
  - that's made explicit to readers when a publication decides to change its typography (see text comments on WSJ p. 165) . . . or consider this clipping about the NYT going to a new headline typeface (**attached**)
- Once a publication's overall typography has been determined, individual staffers on a day-to-day basis "follow" it . . . so one day to the next we know we are reading the WSJ or New York Post or People or Vogue or whatever . . . importance of **consistency** . . . value of a **typographic stylebook**
  - **SHOW & TELL w/ Missourian handbook**
- You need . . . to be able to talk the talk -- i.e. know terminology . . . to understand the **why** behind rules and guidelines of your publication's design . . . to be able to work within the parameters of these to create pages . . . AND this requires a basic understanding of type

### **meaning of typeface**

- (aka type, fonts) = letter shapes that distinguish one style of letter from another
  - type specimen books (ala combo p. 167/all the size available & p. 174/all the members of a type's family)
  - on-line resources (many)
  - creating fonts

## what to look for in differentiating typefaces

- by size, family, weight, width, style
  - size . . . more in a minute
  - family = all the variations of a typeface, as just mentioned (p. 174)
  - weight = visual blackness / heaviness . . . expressed as regular (medium), light, bold, extra-bold (p. 173 text)
  - width = horizontal space occupied (see p. 169) most often-used is regular width; also condensed and expanded
  - style = defining characteristics of the typeface
    - most common =
      - (with) **serifs** = small cross strokes at end of main stroke of letter (p. 170)
      - **sans serif** . . . without serifs
      - **italic** . . . slanted

## how to measure type for printing

-- In addition to inches, printers talk about points and picas

-- Points are used to measure type (height)

1 inch = 72 points = 6 picas (so 1 pica = 12 points)

## type sizes

-- What is size range for **text/body type**? . . . standard sizes = 6-13 points (and in increments of 1) (see text p. 168)

-- What is size range for **display type** (headlines/titles)? . . . standard sizes = 14+ (and typically increments of 6, starting with 18) (see text p. 167)

- impact of computers

**(PLAY WITH typefaces, styles, sizes ON YOUR COMPUTER**

**\*\* hand out pica rulers \*\***

-- How do we measure type? (p. 168 text)

-- ascenders . . . descenders

[look at p. 352 #9]

### **x-heights**

-- height of lowercase letters without ascenders / descenders . . . impt.

re: visual impact; see p. 244 text)

[ look at p. 352 #10]

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### **widths (general concepts, common sense, rules of thumb)**

- generally expressed in picas
- optimum line length formula:  $O = [\text{width of}]lca \text{ (lower-case alpha)} \times 1.5$   
(see text p. 170) . . . why it is important . . . EXAMPLES of how it can be used

### **spacing within words**

- kerning = altering space between letters (+ or -)
- typically programmed in . . . but you can play with and see effects
- how it affects readability

## **leading**

- space between lines
- expressed in terms of points . . . size of the type relative to size of the leading e.g. 8 on 10 (p. 170 text)
- typically programmed in . . . but you can play with and see effects on readability

Legibility Tips p. 175 text . . . use these as a guide when you make choices about type use!

- might want to photocopy for handy reference

**-- No homework because your first Critique is due Wednesday and easing you in. BUT I suggest that you look at one or more publications and think about what you see in terms of what we have talked about today. E.g. measure some type, look at type choices, find examples to go with new terms, etc.**