

History
of **Graphic
Design**

Arts **2015**

Binghamton University

Arts 215 History of Graphic Design

Instructor: Mike Wesko

Office Hours: By appointment only

Required Text Book:

Meggs' History of Graphic Design by Philip B. Meggs and Alston W. Purvis
John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
Copyright 2006

Class Description:

This course surveys the pivotal events and achievements that led to the current state of graphic communication. The unceasing quest to give form to ideas is traced from the pictographs painted on cave walls to the latest imaginative designs. Through lectures, presentations, discussions, field trips, research and studio projects, students are introduced to the creative thinkers, important innovations and breakthrough technologies that have shaped the evolution of visual communication.

Weekly reading assignments from the text book will be the basis for classroom discussion and outside assignments. Each student will be responsible to research related topics, designers, and design work. Outside research/studio projects will follow the format directed by the instructor. Tests will be also be given throughout the class during the semester.

Class Goals and Objectives:

To appreciate contemporary trends in graphic design it is important to understand the events, individuals and progression that led to our current design approaches.

- Students will be able to identify major designers/design movements that had a significant impact on graphic design.
- To develop an understanding of the chronology of graphic design periods and styles.
- To place graphic design schools and movements in context of world events.
- To understand the effect of popular culture on graphic design trends.
- To understand the effect of changing technologies on the field of graphic design.
- To develop an appreciation of the complex forces that direct change in the field of graphic design.
- To develop the ability to identify the usage of historical styles of graphic design in contemporary graphics and to question its appropriateness.

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Procedures and Requirements:

1. Projects: Outside research/studio projects related to the sections in the text book will provide additional information to enhance the period being discussed.

You will be required to produce five outside research (creative brief) and studio projects (one for each section studied) during the semester.

2. Tests: There will be five tests during the semester after each section. Tests will consist of multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the blank, short essays/identification of art/artists work.

3. Field Trips: I am planning 2-3 local field trips throughout the semester that relate to our class materials and discussions. These are required attendance as part of the class.

3. Evaluation: Projects will be submitted on the assigned dates at the end of class or a grade of "F" will be given for that project. Failure to attend the critique when the assignment is due will also result in a failing grade of "F".

I will make every effort to grade tests/projects and return them to you by the next class following the due date.

Proof everything! There is no excuse for misspelled words or bad grammar. Whether it's in an email message or on an assignment for any one of your courses including this class!

4. Attendance: Students are expected to attend all classes and to remain in class for the full class period or until I excuse you, breaks will be provided. Be on time. Class starts at 11:40 am, which means that you are in the classroom prior to 11:40 am and ready to begin. The class meets twice a week for three hours, any absences are discouraged. The only excused absence is illness or death in the family.

If you have a valid excuse to be absent in advance, contact the Art Department office (Room 223) 777-2667 or email me at mwesko@binghamton.edu

5. Outside Research Work: The time outside of class will vary for each student depending on their skills. The Design Computer lab will be available for your use. If there are questions regarding the programs available, please contact the instructor.

I will announce in class what will be required for the next class period. Should you fall behind or are confronted with difficulty in doing the work, you should immediately meet with me to work out any problems.

6. Disability: If you have a documented disability that requires accomodation, you must notify me in writing during the first week of class.

Should you have any concerns or questions on the above, please feel free to discuss them with me.

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Rules and Grading:

General Rules:

- Please be on time for each class.
 - Being late by 15 minutes or more will be considered an absence.
- Bring all required tools and materials to class
 - Textbook, notebook, pencil/pens, sketchbook, flash drive, CDs
- No distracting noise that might disturb classmates.
- No cell phones, ipods (except as backup devices) or MP3 players allowed during class time.
- No food or drink in the classroom (a short break will be given if necessary).
- Clean your work space before leaving for the day.
- Before leaving, copy your files to your folder on the server and backup on appropriate device
 - Flash drive and/or CD, make sure you take it with you!

Your final grade for the semester will be based on:

- the outside project grades,
- the test grades,
- effort,
- attitude,
- attendance,
- and participation (that includes class discussions, field trips and critiques).

At mid-term, any student not working up to expectations will be told verbally. It is assumed that as a student in this class, you are interested, motivated, and willing to work to complete the given assignments.

Arts 215 History of Graphic Design Spring 2010

Schedule of Reading/Classes:

Class Date	Chapter	Pages	Work Due
	Section I The Prologue to Graphic Design		
	Chapter 1: The Invention of Writing	4-17	Ready to discuss
	Chapter 2: Alphabets	18-30	Ready to discuss
	Chapter 3: The Asian Contribution	31-41	Ready to discuss
	Chapter 4: Illuminated Manuscripts	42-59	Ready to discuss
	Review and Assign Outside Projects		Due February 11th
	Finish discussion of Section I, review for test, work on outside projects		
	Test on Section I – Chapters 1, 2, 3 & 4		
	Outside Assignment Due for Section I – Short Critique		
	Section II A Graphic Renaissance		
	Chapter 5: Printing Comes to Europe	64-77	Ready to discuss
	Chapter 6: The German Illustrated Book	78-93	Ready to discuss
	Chapter 7: Renaissance Graphic Design	94-116	Ready to discuss
	Chapter 8: An Epoch of Typographic Genius	117-130	Ready to discuss
	Review and Assign Outside Projects		Due March 2nd
	Finish discussion of Section II, review for test, work on outside projects		
	Test on Section II – Chapters 5, 6, 7 & 8		
	Outside Assignment Due for Section II – Short Critique		
	Section III The Bridge to the Twentieth Century		
	Chapter 9: Graphic Design and the Industrial Revolution	134-166	Ready to discuss
	Chapter 10: The Arts & Crafts Movement and Its Heritage	167-189	Ready to discuss
	Chapter 11: Art Nouveau	190-220	Ready to discuss
	Chapter 12: The Genesis of Twentieth-Century Design	221-243	Ready to discuss
	Review and Assign Outside Projects		Due March 18th
	Finish discussion of Section III, review for test, work on outside projects		
	Test on Section III – Chapters 9, 10, 11 & 12		
	Outside Assignment Due for Section III – Short Critique		

Schedule of Reading/Classes (continued):

Class Date	Chapter	Pages	Work Due
	Section IV The Modernist Era		
	Chapter 13: The Influence of Modern Art	248-268	Ready to discuss
	Chapter 14: Pictorial Modernism	269-286	Ready to discuss
	Chapter 15: A New Language of Form	287-309	Ready to discuss
	Chapter 16: The Bauhaus and the New Typography	310-335	Ready to discuss
	Review and Assign Outside Projects		Due April 13th
	Chapter 17: The Modern Movement in America	336-352	Ready to discuss
	Finish discussion of Section IV, review for test, work on outside projects		
	Test on Section IV – Chapters 13, 14, 15, 16 & 17		
	Outside Assignment Due for Section IV – Short Critique		
	Section V The Age of Information		
	Chapter 18: The International Typographic Style	356-373	Ready to discuss
	Chapter 19: The New York School	374-398	Ready to discuss
	Chapter 20: Corporate Identity and Visual Systems	399-423	Ready to discuss
	Chapter 21: The Conceptual Image	424-446	Ready to discuss
	Chapter 22: National Visions within a Global Dialogue	447-465	Ready to discuss
	Chapter 23: Postmodern Design	466-487	Ready to discuss
	Review and Assign Outside Projects		Due May 6th
	Chapter 24: The Digital Revolution and Beyond	488-530	Ready to discuss
	Finish discussion of Section V, review for test, work on outside projects		
	Test on Section V – Chapters 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 & 24		
	Outside Assignment Due for Section V – Short Critique		

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Projects:

1. Projects: There will be five outside research/studio projects related to the sections in the text book that will be assigned throughout the semester.

They will consist of the following:

- **A studio project**
 - You will have a choice from several options.

- **A one page creative brief**
 - It will consist of one piece researched and written by you that is related to the studio project
 - You will layout the information and image to a supplied template
 - You will be required to print it out in color and turn it in with your studio project.

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Creative Brief:

The Creative Brief

Knowledge of and appreciation of the creative brief can be adapted for your projects outside of this class as well. There are seven questions to be answered in the creative brief.

1. Identification

Last name is okay if that's all you can find. Date should be as specific as possible. If you aren't sure, start with the century, then see if you can get more specific: early, middle, late; or which decade, or early, middle, end of which decade.

2. What is the project/piece and the problem?

This is the basic description of what we are looking at, and the problem that the designer/artist was given to solve. Be specific. For instance, a corporate identity system for a Fortune 500 company, a logo for a trendy fashion company, or a fresco painting for a church.

3. Who is the client?

Who was the project/piece/painting, etc. designed (created) for? Again, be as specific as possible. Who hired the designer/artist and what was the role? Someone in the Catholic Church, possibly a local priest but more likely a bishop or the Pope hired Giotto to do his frescoes for the church in Florence. Be descriptive. If it is Coca-Cola, you can describe it as a worldwide soft drink giant, for example.

4. Who is the intended audience?

Who is the work meant for? Sometimes there are a few different audiences, perhaps one being primary and one being secondary. A billboard's primary audience might be 30-40 year old males earning \$50,000 or more that are in the market for a new car, but a secondary audience might be a much larger group who will see the billboard and be impressed with the overall brand message (who might buy the car in 5 or 10 years, once they have achieved a certain level of success).

5. What is the core message?

This is the message, what the client and the designer/artist, etc. wants to communicate. One part of the message is literal, and can easily be understood by reading the copy or looking at the painting, etc. Another part of the message is symbolic, and is an important part of what the designer/artist contributes through its visual form. A poster for a music concert might literally say "The Dead Kennedys are playing at the Crystal Ballroom on Thursday, April 1," but the visual design might also say "this will be a really weird concert of punk retro."

6. What is the hoped-for outcome?

What does the client want this work to do? What problem does it solve? Why did the client pay the designer to do the work? Why is the work valuable? For example, a design firm was paid \$100,000 to design a branding and packaging strategy for a new consumer product. The hoped-for outcome is for the product to compete with other products in its class on store shelves, thus increasing sales while communicating to the consumer that the product is trustworthy. Another example, illuminated manuscripts of the Middle Ages were valuable in transmitting the Gospel to people who couldn't read, and also in converting people to Christianity. It can be helpful to use the list of "utilities" that follows to get a general sense of a design's purpose, then drill down to the specifics from there.

7. What is the graphic strategy?

Ask yourself how the designer or artist figured out the solution to their problem in visual terms. How is the message conveyed visually? How did they go about trying to achieve the hoped-for outcome in visual ways? How is the audience being addressed? Are the client's concerns being met? This is an opportunity to use visual analysis, contextual knowledge, and historical understanding to explain how the particular piece works to achieve its goals. You must use at least 2 examples. Each example should be in this form: "The designer (artist, etc.) did in order to..."

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Creative Brief: List of Utilities

List of Utilities

When analyzing images for your creative brief, use this list of “utilities” to understand the general reason for the design/painting/sculpture/manuscript, etc. in order to lead you to knowledge of the hoped-for outcome. For instance, knowing that the George Lois cover design for Esquire Magazine has a utility of “Marketing and Publicity” might help clarify that part of the outcome was to sell more magazines (see example that follows). Utilities are not hoped-for outcomes, they are only guides: you need to be specific when writing for the creative brief.

Activism and Reform

Art, Literature and Entertainment

Business and Commercial

Community and Public Service

Domestic, Lifestyle and Leisure

Educational and Informational

Experimental and Exploratory

Identity, Ownership and Territoriality

Institutional and Governmental

Marketing and Publicity

News and Current Events

Propaganda

Religious, Mythological and Philosophical

Writing, Recording and Documentation

Esquire Magazine

George Lois

The March 1965 cover design.



The Project:

A magazine cover for Esquire magazine that promoted an article titled "The masculinization of the American woman."

The Client:

Esquire Magazine is one of America's premiere men's magazines and has been since it was founded in 1933. Originally recognized as a showcase for literary writers, the magazine broadened its focus and increased in popularity during the 1940s thanks in part to the famous Varga Girls. By the 1960s, Esquire helped create the so-called New Journalism with controversial covers designed by George Lois that covered issues of the times such as the war in Vietnam, the assassinations in America, politics, race relations, the women's movement and America's obsessions with sex, drugs and doom.

The Intended Audience:

Aimed at an affluent male readership who were proud of their buying power and interested in being flattered for their worldliness.

The Core Message:

The cover made a controversial visual statement using humor and ambiguity about the women's movement in America and their liberation from traditional roles. Lois chose to illustrate the point, "where does sexuality end and confusion begin?"

The Hoped-For Outcome:

The first goal of the cover design was to sell you the magazine which in turn would increase circulation. The image tries to communicate directly with the audience by being political, daring, controversial, funny, and relevant. It also makes a meaningful cultural aesthetic statement in its own satirical way.

The Graphic Strategy:

The designer, George Lois maximizes the visual strength of the ad using pop graphics. The woman's face is an icon of female beauty (hair, mouth, eyes) even as it supports an image of masculinity (shaving cream). The visual intelligence of this concept is equaled by its expert execution with strong photography and quality printing. The conceptual strength of Lois's design lies in his capacity to turn complex ideas into very clear images.

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Spring 2010
Michael Wesko

.5" top margin

The masthead copy is set in 12 point Helvetica Regular, with 2 points of leading (12/14 pt.), flush left, ragged right

.5" margin from the right edge

Esquire Magazine

1.75" to Identification (Title)

The masthead copy is set in 12 point Helvetica Regular, with 2 points of leading (12/14 pt.), flush left, ragged right

George Lois

The March 1965 cover design.

.125" →

Body copy is set in 10 point Helvetica Regular, with 2 points of leading (10/12 pt.), flush left, ragged right, all heads should

2.75" to Top of Photo and beginning of copy



The Project: be set in 10 pt. Helvetica Bold
A magazine cover for Esquire magazine that promoted an article titled "The masculinization of the American woman."

The Client:

Esquire Magazine is one of America's premiere men's magazines and has been since it was founded in 1933. Originally recognized as a showcase for literary writers, the magazine broadened its focus and increased in popularity during the 1940s thanks in part to the famous Varga Girls. By the 1960s, Esquire helped create the so-called New Journalism with controversial covers designed by George Lois that covered issues of the times such as the war in Vietnam, the assassinations in America, politics, race relations, the women's movement and America's obsessions with sex, drugs and doom.

The Intended Audience:

Aimed at an affluent male readership who were proud of their buying power and interested in being flattered for their worldliness.

Column is 2.875" wide

The Core Message:

The cover made a controversial visual statement using humor and ambiguity about the women's movement in America and their liberation from traditional roles. Lois chose to illustrate the point, "where does sexuality end and confusion begin?"

The Hoped-For Outcome:

The first goal of the cover design was to sell you the magazine which in turn would increase circulation. The image tries to communicate directly with the audience by being political, daring, controversial, funny, and relevant. It also makes a meaningful cultural aesthetic statement in its own satirical way.

Column is 7" wide

The Graphic Strategy:

The designer, George Lois maximizes the visual strength of the ad using pop graphics. The woman's face is an icon of female beauty (hair, mouth, eyes) even as it supports an image of masculinity (shaving cream). The visual intelligence of this concept is equaled by its expert execution with strong photography and quality printing. The conceptual strength of Lois's design lies in his capacity to turn complex ideas into very clear images.

.5" bottom margin

1" margin from the left edge

Image area is not to exceed 5.625" vertically and 4" horizontally