

Student Name: Ross Downie

P Number: 2312833

Programme of study: Product & Furniture Design

Module: ADAD4022

Tasks in the order I received them:

Task One: Manifesto - 510

Task Two: Observational Writing - 479

Task Three: Practice-Based Writing - 512

Manifesto

1. **Account for the future of the product** – or more importantly the future that your product will exist in.
2. **Perfection through iteration.**
3. **Must serve a purpose** - no making things just for the sake of it.
4. **Nature as the ultimate inspiration** -Nature has always found a way to adapt and improve itself over time. Whether that be from regenerative design or aerodynamics. Having natural inspiration at the forefront enables good practice.
5. **Empower the user** - A good design should push the user further and make their lives easier.
6. **Repairable.**
7. **Always pushing the envelope** - A belief to hold yourself at the highest standard to mark an industry standard.
8. **Make an emotional connection** - The product must resonate and create a culture that is passionate about the ethos.

1. In a field that can feel oversaturated and at a tipping point, it is surprising to see the lack of accountability or a real care for the impact a designer can have on our planet. Consumerism being at the forefront for most modern design (in any avenue) has led us astray from the real heart of what design is about. It is easy to forget that designers are problem solvers.

The scope of debate is shrinking; it must expand. Consumerism is running uncontested; it must be challenged by other perspectives expressed, in part, through the visual languages and resources of design. (Barnbrook et al., 2000).

We need to pay more attention to the things that really matter, the environment, mental health, working conditions for labour, etc. We are fully distracted by the spotlight that virality, social media influence and flaunting wealth has taken. As designers we should be rallying for our products to be made more fairly.

Ethical consumption is nowadays commonly associated with the need and the opportunity to preserve social and Ethical Consumption. However, ethical consumption encompasses a wider range of concerns, ranging from animal welfare to working condition standards, from human rights to health issues. (De Angelis, p.2, 2020)

We are so often caught up in our own issues and seldom consider other species.

2. Iteration is one of the finest tools we as designers can use. It is arguable that iteration in any field is powerful but as designers it can be used to creatively and productively form new designs. From many different design methods iterations can be used through every process. From sketching to model making to 3D CAD design. Taking the design and exploring every avenue to further develop can show you your

own capabilities but also open your mind to designs that you would not initially have thought of. Iteration through modelling breathes a whole new life into the design as you can get a real sense of scale and ergonomics that would have been previously impossible just on paper. Iterative design truly is the most expansive and detail-oriented method. The best outcomes from trial and error.

8. A need to create a culture that supports your design and enhances a greater brand image. A well curated ethos will make users feel connected to the character of the brand. Make your designs fit a lifestyle that associates similar designs by comparison. When the most common language is consumerism “we differentiate ourselves from other people by what we buy” (Williamson, 1978: 46). We are trying to resonate with people that have a distaste of current affairs and world state. With a heavy influence from biomimetics which can create a great juxtaposition between the shrinking natural world and the current trajectory of inevitable technological dystopia. This is a great way to draw consumers in and get them interested in the aesthetic and open their mind to how they can make different ecological choices. By supporting designs that integrate sustainability we are encouraging others to follow suit to think more about the impact their consumption has.

Bibliography

Jonathan Barnbrook, Nick Bell, Andrew Blauvelt, Hans Bockting, Irma Boom, Sheila Levrant de Bretteville, Max Bruinsma, Siân Cook, Linda van Deursen, Chris Dixon, William Drenttel, Gert Dumbar, Simon Esterson, Vince Frost, Ken Garland, Milton Glaser, Jessica Helfand, Steven Heller, Andrew Howard, Tibor Kalman, Jeffery Keedy, Zuzana Licko, Ellen Lupton, Katherine McCoy, Armand Mevis, J. Abbott Miller, Rick Poynor, Lucienne Roberts, Erik Spiekermann, Jan van Toorn, Teal Triggs, Rudy VanderLans, Bob Wilkinson. (2000) *First Things First 2000: A Design Manifesto* [Preprint]

Kaufmann, H.R., Khan, P.M.F.A. and De Angelis, M. (2020) *Handbook of Research on Contemporary consumerism*. Hershey, PA: IGI Global.

Williamson, J. (1978) *Decoding advertisements: Ideology and meaning in advertising*. London: Marion Boyars.

Observational Writing

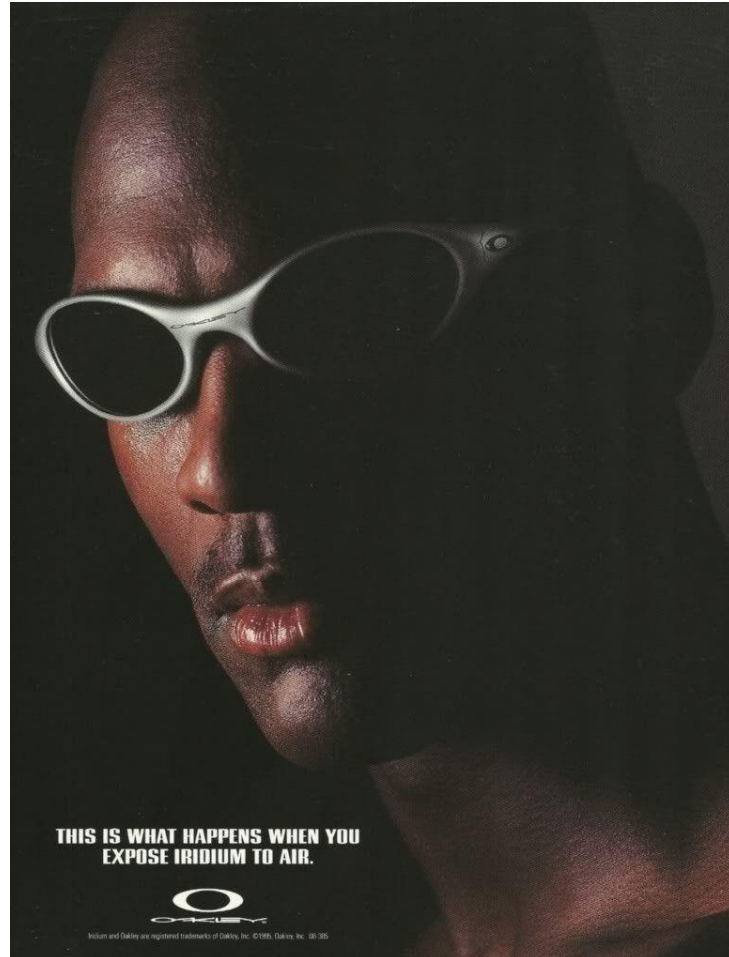


Fig. 1, This is what happens when you expose Iridium to air, Oakley Eyewear, 1997

Semiotics, the study of signs and symbols and the meaning behind them is used to further understand culture. Semiotics directs our thinking and how we perceive images. These images can be artwork, photography, advertisements, etc. Semiotics is the study of the sign and the interplay between it and a thing representing something.

The sign is the union of a form which signifies, which Saussure calls the *signifiant* or signifier, and an idea signified, the *signifié* or signified. Though we may speak of signifier and signified as if they were separate entities, they only exist only as components of the sign. The sign is the central fact of language, and therefore in trying to separate what is essential from what is secondary or incidental we must start from the nature of the sign itself (Culler, 1991, p. 19).

In this image, the signifier is Michael Jordan in a pair of Oakley sunglasses looking at the viewer with a serious expression on his face. The signified is the intended response we get from this. The advert is

dark and creates a brooding atmosphere. He looks like an apex predator ready to strike from the shadows. It gives the advert an edgy feeling. The tagline "THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU EXPOSE IRIDIUM TO AIR." Is a direct reference to his nickname of Michael 'Air' Jordan from his successful shoe line with Nike. "Celebrities are often used in advertisements in the hope that some of the celebrity's qualities will become associated with a brand" (Rose, 2016, p.178). Jordan's commitment to excellence in athletics aligns well with Oakley's reputation for producing innovative eyewear. It aligns the brand with his image of excellence in sports culture. Specifically at the time of the advert's release in 1997 where he had just won his fifth overall NBA Championship.

The colours used in this advert are black, brown and silver. Dark colours used in advertisements often convey a mystique to captivate the audience. "Use of colour is simply a technique, used primarily in pictorial advertising, to make correlations between a product and other things" (Williamson, 1978, p. 24). Dark colours are often associated with alternative lifestyles/ cultures and are heavily utilized to align with rebellious or unconventional audiences to sell to them. Williamson also goes on to say, "We differentiate ourselves from other people by what we buy" (Williamson, 1978: 46). This is especially true when applied to the target audience who stand out with their choices. It could be argued that at this time Michael Jordan was *the* individual. You would assume that the sunglasses would be the focal point of the advert. The fact that the glasses are not vertically or horizontally centred in the ad puts more emphasis on Michael Jordan but by extension the wearer of the glasses. This infers that the glasses are the finishing touch on an already unique, alternative individual.

Bibliography

Culler, J. (1991) *Ferdinand de Saussure*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press.

Rose, G. (2016) *Visual methodologies*. Sage Publications.

Williamson, J. (1978) *Decoding advertisements: Ideology and meaning in advertising*. London: Marion Boyars.

List of Figures

Figure 1: This is what happens when you expose Iridium to air, Oakley Eyewear, 1997

<https://www.movieposters.com/products/michael-jordan-oakley-sunglasses-promo-mpw-130063>

Practice-Based Writing

Sustainability - “the idea that goods and services should be produced in ways that do not use resources that cannot be replaced and that do not damage the environment” (Cambridge Dictionary) or “the ability to be maintained at a certain rate or level” (Oxford Languages).

Fences have been built since the time of the Greeks and the term was coined in the 14th Century from the term ‘Fens’, shorthand for defence or protection. Fences have been used since then to restrict flow or maintain ownership of land. A *classic* definition of a fence is, “**A barrier, railing, or other upright structure, typically of wood or wire, enclosing an area of ground to prevent or control access or escape**” (Oxford Languages).

Recently there has been an influx of research into fences and the effect they can have on an ecological level and therefore environmentally. A fence can be defined “as a physical linear feature with vertical load-bearing components (e.g., poles) and noncontinuous structures (e.g., boards, wires, rails, nettings) spanning these vertical components” (McInturff et al, 2020, p. 972).

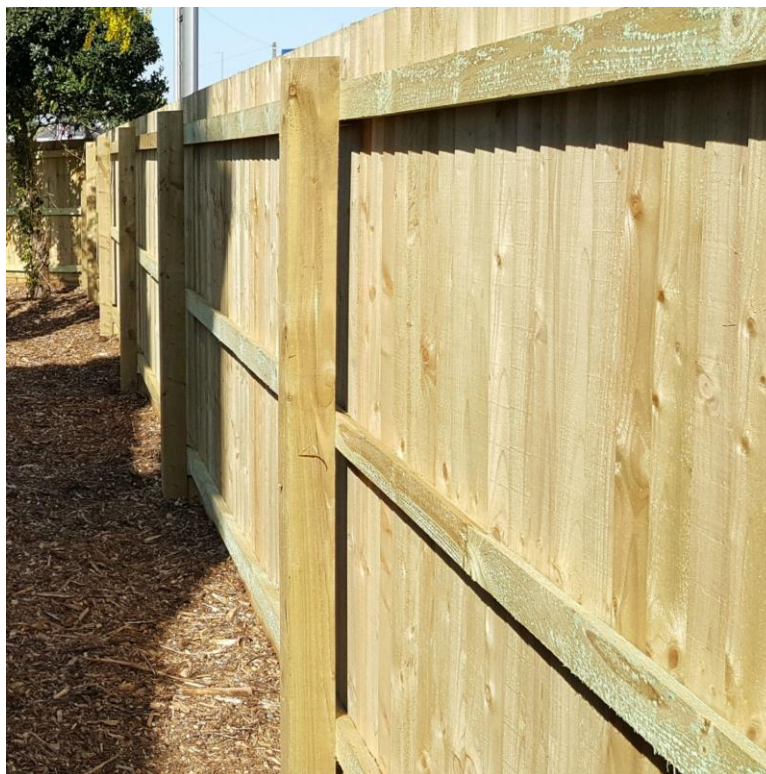


Fig. 1, Example of contemporary fencing.

Their study focuses on the ecological effects on local wildlife and how damaging these structures can be. Currently fences are constructed on a basis “short-term functionality prioritized over long-term consequences” (McInturff et al, 2020, p.972). This follows the modern consumerist model.

Furthermore, because fencing materials have become cheaper and more widely available, their use is accelerating... The rapid increase in fencing further highlights the importance of understanding their effects on nature (McInturff et al, 2020, p. 974).

It appears there needs to be action of slowing use down and more studies based on local effects a fence would have.

There is a broad range of designs when it comes to fencing. The modern residential standard is thin timber along rails connected to posts. “During the Victorian era, there was a huge demand for decorative cast iron gates and railings” (Victorian Emporium, 2011). Fences were made with highly malleable wrought iron to create ornate designs, it’s special as it can be “straightened and reused rather than replaced” (Victorian Emporium, 2011).

With the widespread use of fences globally it could be argued that they have influenced culture and general society. The fence is interesting as in its most basic form it serves a purpose rather than aesthetics. Fences could be seen as a bad thing but “Good fences make good neighbors.” (Frost, 2000). Frost is saying that for good relationships there needs to be privacy and boundaries between people.

It is paramount that sustainability is considered before anything else as “fences are one of the most widespread manmade features on Earth, and they may outstretch roads by an order of magnitude” (Jakes as cited in McInturff et al, 2020, p. 971). More sustainable materials such as reclaimed timber or metal should be used before firsthand materials. Materials that last longer are preferred as they do not have to be replaced often. An underappreciated alternative fence option is hedges, which should be further encouraged as they provide sanctuary for wildlife and can improve air quality in larger numbers.

Bibliography

Emporium, T.V. (2011) *History of gates and railings: Publications - history, The Victorian Emporium*. Available at:
https://www.thevictorianemporium.com/publications/history/article/history_of_railings
(Accessed: 05 January 2024).

Frost, R. (2000) *Mending wall*. Seattle, WA: Holburne Press.

McInturff, A. et al. (2020) ‘Fence ecology: Frameworks for understanding the ecological effects of fences’, *BioScience* [Preprint]. doi:10.1093/biosci/biaa103.

List of Figures

Figure. 1, Example of contemporary fencing, n/d.

<https://www.withamtimber.co.uk/timber-concrete-and-plastic/timber-fencing/wooden-posts/sawn-posts/wooden-fence-posts-75x100mm.html>