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Transport Design

Module ADAD4018

Ways of Thinking, Julia and Gwen

Portfolio of Writing

- Task 1 - Julia Lockheart-Manifesto Writing: "What do I believe in?"
 - Word count: 530 words
- Task 2 - Jon Pugh-Reflective Writing: Do you know what you think?
 - Word count: 529 words
- Task 3 - Ryan Moule-Observational Writing: Identify an image and write a semiotic analysis
 - Word count: 541 words

Task 1 - Julia Lockheart-Manifesto Writing: "What do I believe in?"

1. Cleaner bolder car design with a focus on aerodynamics.
2. Autonomous and self-driving technology will reduce congestion and pollution.
3. There is still a future for internal combustion engines.
4. Charging infrastructure needs to improve for electric cars to be more convenient than petrol or diesel.
5. Variable speed limits on motorways increase as well as slow down when roads are quiet.
6. The digital displays and touch screens in modern cars are as much of a distraction as using your phone so should be simpler with physical controls.
7. Improving roads in cities to improve traffic flow will reduce pollution.
8. Crash protection systems like autonomous emergency braking systems should become standard features like seatbelts.

Cleaner bolder car design with a focus on aerodynamics

In a time when the future of cars and how they will be powered is uncertain it is surprising that more manufacturers are not changing their designs to look more futuristic and efficient.



Honda Civic



Mazda3

The current Honda Civic has large air intake grills on each side of the front and rear bumpers, but it uses small turbo engines that do not need the extra cooling or air so the grills are fake, there simply for styling to make the front look sporty and aggressive.

Mazda recently facelifted its range with decluttered bumpers and slimmer headlights. This style was exaggerated on the all new Mazda3 which has a sporty, powerful stance with its long bonnet over a concave grill and flared wheel arches. However there are almost no sharp edges or creases on the body work. This creates a far more modern style and has the advantage of lowering drag.

Autonomous and self-driving technology will reduce congestion and pollution

Self-driving technology is starting to become more mainstream with options like adaptive cruise control, lane keeping assist and autonomous braking systems becoming available. Together these systems mean many modern cars can effectively drive themselves although most are limited to motorway driving where inputs are small and usually still don't allow you to take your hands off the wheel. Tesla is one manufacturer getting close to autonomous with Full Self-Driving Capability for motorways where the car navigates and can even change lanes with no inputs from the driver. However, this is level two and three autonomy and there are still no fully autonomous (level five) cars where you set the sat nav and the car will complete the journey navigating traffic and junctions. In Paul Horrell's article he explains "if you met an autonomous-car engineer 10 or so years ago, they'd have said we'd get self-driving cars in cities first" (Horrell, 2019), but despite the higher speeds motorways are much easier and more predictable.

"Level 5 cars won't even have steering wheels or acceleration/braking pedals" (Synopsys, 2019), if these cars were able to communicate with each other to move as one in traffic congestion and pollution could be significantly reduced. If autonomous lorries could slow down and accelerate together they could drive closer reducing drag and fuel consumption. Early autonomous cars will have a harder task when they are on the road with people driving who are not always predictable.

There is still a future for internal combustion engines

An engine is what gives a car character and makes it feel alive. Getting the most out of a small engine with a manual gearbox is a far more involving experience than driving an electric car. Porsche now make the electric Taycan focusing on handling and how it feels not just outright speed like many performance electric cars. Internal combustion engines are improving in efficiency, performance and refinement to meet new emissions standards. They are getting smaller using turbos and hybrid systems to make the same power as older bigger engines so even as electric cars take over to lower emissions in cities there should still be a future for internal combustion engines.

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Task 2 - Jon Pugh-Reflective Writing: Do you know what you think?



A reflection of my first car and its meaning to me. I bought my first car, a Vauxhall Corsa from 2000, with plans to restore it for a school project involving physical work on the car with research into methods for repairs as I had no experience of this sort of work.

My Corsa was the last year before the new model came out and had been in production since 1993 with some changes in 1997 to improve economy and handling as well as a subtle change to the front bumper and radiator grill. This was the Corsa B, the first Vauxhall Corsa that replaced the Nova. When the Corsa came out it was all new with a far more modern design compared to the Nova that had been in production for 10 years and also compared to other cars in its class like the Ford Fiesta and VW Polo. When the Nova was released in 1983 3D CAD was still a new method for car design meaning many had a simple design with straight lines and edges. At the time this looked futuristic but aged quickly. The Corsa B had almost no straight lines or creases on the bodywork or interior. "Beyond the design of an object, there is a personal component as well" (Norman, 2004, p. 6), something that makes it more than just a material possession. Cars can feel alive with the sound and feel of the engine and how involving they are to drive as well as how they look, whether they are futuristic or retro like a Mini. The when the new Mini was launched in 2002 the New York

Times observed that “it is fair to say no new vehicle in recent memory has provoked more smiles” (Swan, 2002, section 12 p.12).

The biggest problem with my car that became to focus of the project was rust on the rear wheel arch. This is part of the quarter panel and cannot be replaced like the front wing so the rust had to be cut away. This is a very difficult process, especially without the correct tools or any experience. Despite this I was able to cut away the rust using a hacksaw and a jigsaw, welded on a new wheel arch and covered the join with filler. Once the rust was repaired and the car had passed its MOT test it was time to address its faded, peeling and very green paint. Starting by sanding down what was left of the lacquer to primer it before spraying it a more contemporary blue from the new Corsa VXR.

The paint wasn't perfect but all the work I put into to car made it unique to say the least and mean more to me than it would to anyone else. Considering it's just a little city car it drove very well until a road trip around Europe, probably a bit far for a 19 year old car and upon my return it finally broke down beyond repair after burning through four litters of oil. After all the work and two years driving it was very hard to replace what was a very surprisingly fun car.

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Task 3 - Ryan Moule-Observational Writing: Identify an image and write a semiotic analysis

analysis

A semiotic analysis of the photographs used on the Morgan website marketing their cars.



<https://www.morgan-motor.com/plus4/>

“Semiotics is defined as the theory of signs” (Hall, 2012, p. 5), what they are and how they can be read and interpreted. Roland Barthes developed the terms connoted and denoted in his 1964 book *Elements of Semiology*. “Denotation refers to the literal or primary meaning of a sign” (Marsen, 2006, p. 59) for example the photos on the Morgan website are pictures of people driving their cars. “Barthes suggested that signs often connote additional meanings that are often not plainly visible” (Boradak, 2010, p. 219), here this is the idea of what you would do and where you would drive if you owned one of the cars.

In *Designing Things* Boradkar uses Barthes’ model to analyse the Hummer, a car originally developed for the US Army in 1984 and later became available to the public in 1991 as the Hummer H1 followed by the H2 and H3. The denotative is the same as a Morgan, transport to get from one place to another, however they have a different connotative meaning. The Hummer, an “expensive car signifies status, adventure and affluence” (Boradak, 2010, p.

222). While the Morgans still signify wealth it's classic styling make it more understated than other sports cars or the Hummer.

Morgan Motor Company is a British manufacturer that has been traditionally hand crafting cars in Malvern since 1909. To reflect this traditional style the photographs don't appear to be edited and there are very few studio photos or computer-generated images. Instead they show the cars on country roads like you would find near the factory in Malvern.

Advertisements are "aimed at communicating the brand meaning and engaging the consumer/spectator into the brand world." (Oswold, 2012) To do this Morgan uses a series of pictures for each model with the same car and driver to create a narrative that prospective buyers can aspire to. This is the implied meaning constructed by the viewer.



<https://www.morgan-motor.com/roadster/>

The page for the Morgan Roadster shows a couple starting their journey in a city and then out driving on open country roads followed by close up shots of the car back in the city. The car used is silver with brown leather, black wire wheels and grill that add a modern side to the classic design so the car fits in in urban environments and stands out on the road.

Morgan also have a range of clothing and watches that the people in the cars are wearing to add to the proposed lifestyle. In Communication Studies Marsen explains that "signs assume different implicit meanings depending on the shared assumptions of those who use them"

(Marsen, 2006, p. 59) for the photos on the Morgan website this means that many people will only see the literal denoted sign as a Morgan won't appeal to everyone, it is not a practical car that people buy because they need to get around. It is a car to enjoy described by Morgan as "a fitting antidote to mass-produced automotive manufacturing" (Morgan Motor company, 2019). A car to go for a drive through the countryside and this is the connoted meaning that will appeal to someone looking for a sports car.



<https://www.morgan-motor.com/44car/>

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