

Portfolio of Writing

Student Name: Jamie Skipper

P Number: 2004138

Programme of Study: Graphic Design

Module: ADAD4018

Ways of Thinking Lecturer's Name: Martin Bush

Tasks in the order I received them:

Task 1: Manifesto Writing = 493 words

Task 2: Observational Writing = 491 words

Task 3: Practice-based Writing = 505 words

Task 1 - Manifesto Writing

- **Self-Belief:** I have always believed in myself, which is directly linked to how I was brought up, this belief has allowed me to develop an ambition to succeed and to give me faith in what I set out to achieve.
- **Dedication:** This belief has helped me to be resilient when facing life's challenges. I stand by my mantra of 'follow your dreams' and this keeps me motivated.
- **Self-expression:** Allowing self-expression has given me the confidence to completely be myself in everyday life, and this has had a huge positive impact on my social experiences.
- **Trustworthy:** Having trust in someone and to be trustworthy is crucial. I rely on my friends and family to help me in everyday life. Therefore, I need to have trust in them to allow me to open up and ask for help whenever I need it.
- **Positivity:** Being positive is a key belief I try to stand by. This is because if you focus on the positive parts, you can achieve much more than if you let the negatives get in the way. I try to remain positive in every situation.
- **Respect / Equality:** Having respect and understanding that everyone is equal is one of my strongest beliefs. Appreciating that there are always two sides of an opinion is very important for someone to learn good morals and grow as a person.
- **Patience:** Having patience is one belief which I find difficult to maintain most of the time. Although, I strongly believe it is very important as not everything happens at once and sometimes you need to keep working and wait for the outcome.
- **Loyalty:** Being Loyal is one of the fundamental characteristics which I think everyone should obtain. I am no different, I would like to consider myself to stand by people that trust me and help them whenever they need it.

Self-Belief is a principle that is about having the confidence in your own abilities to take on and complete activities. I have always tried to believe in myself and it has allowed me to develop an ambition to succeed. Personally, another reason why self-belief is a fundamental value is that it plays a big part towards my faith, as it develops assurance when taking on challenges. One of my preferred quotes is "To accomplish great things we must not only act, but also dream; not only plan, but also believe", quoted France, (Parragon, 2010, p.80). This quote enlightens me and articulates that although we all must act and plan, we also require the need to believe. To really flourish in your work and general life, being able to have the belief within yourself will support that in every aspect. Think of self-belief as exploring a path you never thought you would encounter, as this may well be your dream.

Dedication is another important belief, it links to self-belief, but in the way of hard work and resilience to stick to a task when facing hardship. Being dedicated has always helped me to endure resilience when facing challenges. I stand by my mantra of 'follow your dreams' and it has supported me to stay motivated. A quote that I often refer to is "When have you been at your strongest" asked the boy. "When I have dared to show my weakness." "Asking for help isn't giving up" Said the horse "Its refusing to give up" (Mockery, 2019) This passage reminds us that it is okay to ask for help and the majority of time we will benefit and grow from the experience. This links to dedication through the idea of never giving up, even when you have to seek guidance. It is a powerful reminder that we are not on our own and it should be encouraged to learn off one another.

Respect and Equality for me is the most powerful belief, by having respect and understanding that everyone is equal. This is my strongest value as I always try to listen, observe and understand everyone's point of view. With this, I find that dealing with situations is easier as I have an understanding of what the other person is concerned about. I often reflect and have appreciation that people often have different opinions, this respect for others is very important attribute to develop good

morals and grow as a person. A strong quote that I raise frequently is “Never look down on anyone unless you’re helping them up” quoted Jackson, (Parragon, 2010a, p.28). I personally find this quote very empowering as the human race we are all quick to judge people, yet we don’t consider how it would feel if someone judged us or those we love. Therefore, I find this quote fits perfectly with my belief as we should all encourage to help one and another rather than look down and judge.

Bibliography

Charlie Mockery. (2019) *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse*. Ebury Publishing

Parragon Books Ltd (2010) *Believe and Achieve: A Collection of Inspirational Thoughts and Images*. Anatole France.

Parragon Books Ltd (2010a) *Daily Strengths for Daily Needs: A Collection of Motivational Quotes and Images*. Jesse Jackson.

Task 2 - Observational Writing

Nirvana's iconic 'Nevermind' album (figure 1) is in the top 10 recognisable albums of all time (Billboard, 2020). Although, there is a limited number of elements within the design. It can be seen that there are many cultural and political values that are trying to be portrayed. This essay will analyse three aspects of semiotics, the first being anchorage text, the signs within the image and the code behind the signs. Along with the conclusion of how these change the overall understanding of the album cover.

There is limited amount of text on the cover, which includes the artist's and album's name. This is written in bold capitals with the trademark serif font for 'Nirvana' and a warped font for 'Nevermind'. This would be considered an anchorage text, the meaning between a word and image, and used to relate to the background image of being under water. To add to this, the text is placed at the bottom of the design, which allows the audience to feel like they are submerged with the text. To support this statement, Robert Fisher quoted:

"I wanted the word Nevermind to look kind of underwater and wavy. So I had the type printed out and I held it on a Xerox machine. As it was scanning I wiggled the image and it put waves through it. Then I scanned it again and wiggled it in another direction. That's how I got the wavy type."

Campbell, (2016) quoted Fisher.

The first key sign, the image and meaning in this album cover, would be the baby, this can symbolise many values. Explained by Mantasonica Audio (2015) as the symbol is a new-born, it can be seen as a representation of youth and purity. In addition to this, the nude new-born can also be an idea of vulnerability within society. The other key sign would be the dollar bill, Mantasonica Audio (2015) also stated that the dollar bill that is attached to a fishhook could represent how the younger generation is being driven by money and that desire for value starts from an early age.

The semiotic code, the holistic meaning behind the image, would suggest that in today's society capitalism is forced upon the younger generation through the pressure of wealth and entitlement (Communist Party of Nashville, 2019). Nirvana's wanted their 'Nevermind' album to express their feelings towards society and how it has changed. This idea was stated by Azerrad (1993).

"The music expressed the feelings they felt. The band expressed strong feelings about feminism, racism, censorship and especially homophobia. This was passionate music that didn't pretend. Getting into Nirvana was empowering for a generation that had no power."

(Azerrad, 1993, p.5)

To conclude, Nirvana's iconic album 'Nevermind' was a very influential album that portrayed very strong feeling towards the negative elements of today's society. Looking at the bigger picture, there is definitely much more meaning to what is shown than first sight, making the album cover extremely meaningful.



Fig 1. Nirvana, *Nevermind* Album, 1991

Bibliography

Billboard. (2020). *The 50 Greatest Album Covers of All Time*. Available at: <https://www.billboard.com/photos/6715351/best-album-covers-of-all-time> (Assessed: 29 December).

Communist Party of Nashville (2019) [Facebook] 29 October. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=537100933750074> (Assessed: 29 December 2020)

Michael Azerrad. (1993). *'Come As You Are: The Story of Nirvana'*. Doubleday

Ollie Campbell. (2016). *In the Work Behind The Work*. Available at: <https://milanote.com/the-work/the-designer-of-nirvanas-nevermind-album-cover> (Assessed: 29 December 2020).

List of Figures:

Figure 1. Nirvana, *Nevermind* Album, (1991). Available at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nevermind#:~:text=The%20album%20cover%20shows%20a,Geffen's%20art%20director%20Robert%20Fisher> (Accessed: 29 December 2020).

Task 3 - Practice-based Writing

This Practice-based writing will reflect on a design process which I constructed last year for The Wave Santa Run supporting the RNLI. To help reflect on this learning process, I will use Donald Schön's theory of practice of learning 'Reflection before, during and after a learning process (Schön, 1983)' to break down this thinking and reflect thoroughly from the experience.

John Dewey described that:

Reflective thinking is always more or less troublesome because it involves overcoming the inertia that inclines one to accept suggestions at their face value; it involves willingness to endure a condition of mental unrest and disturbance. Reflective thinking, in short, means judgment suspended during further inquiry; and suspense is likely to be somewhat painful.

(Dewey, 1910, p.14).

My brief was to produce an illustration associated to the RNLI Lifeboat with a Christmas theme. This artwork would be printed onto fundraisers t-shirts. My initial thoughts and feelings of the task were anticipation and excitement. However, with the brief being limited, this would be a challenge for me to produce something creative due to information available. To enable me to bring the brief to life I decided to undertake some research into the RNLI.

The first part of the process was to learn a new illustrative software skill to improve the quality that was required. This was a new experience and one that I found difficult, to help me learn the skills required I undertook a few sessions of an Adobe Illustrator CC masterclass course. Perhiniak, (2019). This helped me to develop the skills needed to complete the task and allowed me to create a first draft (*figure 1*). I wanted to gain feedback from the RNLI to ensure the design was suitable. The response I had was beneficial as they liked the concept. Although I was required to change parts of the illustration which included replacing the smaller boat style that I proposed, to the larger and newer model boat they currently used. I took on board this feedback and agreed that the design would generally appeal better to the overall brief. Once I re-designed the illustration, I communicated regularly with the RNLI to finalise the work (*figure 2*). I found this on times frustrating as I had never worked with clients before, and often their brief despite being very limited at first became more complex as the process went on.

My immediate insight after submitting my final design was a mix of enthusiasm and relief, once I had time to reflect on the overall process, I was proud of what I had achieved. Especially, when the fundraiser took place and seeing my design everywhere (*figure 3,4,5*). What I valued the most was the resilience I showed throughout the design process as this was a new experience. If I were to do a similar event in the near future, I would definitely plan out my ideas out using mind maps. This would make a huge difference because each section of the map identifies and reveals extra ideas which would've made the initial creative process quicker. (Buzan, 2010, p.109-110)



Fig 1. Primary image (2019)



Fig 2. Primary image (2019)



Fig 3. Primary image (2019)



Fig 4. Primary image (2019)



Fig 5. Primary image (2019)

Bibliography

Donald Schön. (1983) *Reflection before, during & after learning process*. Available at: https://birmingham.instructure.com/courses/11841/pages/reflection-before-during-and-after-learning-process-schon-1983?module_item_id=330419 (Accessed: 31 December 2020).

John Dewey. (1910) *How We Think*. D. C. HEATH & CO.

Martin Perhiniak. (2019) *Illustrator CC Masterclass Part 1* [video]. Available at: <https://go.platformpurple.com/play/146511?e=ecourses4youcom> (Accessed: 31 December 2020)

Tony Buzan. (2010) *Use Your Head*. Pearson Education Limited

List of Figures:

Figure 1. Primary Image. (2019) (Assessed: 31 December 2020)

Figure 2. Primary Image. (2019) (Assessed: 31 December 2020)

Figure 3. Primary Image. (2019) (Assessed: 31 December 2020)

Figure 4. Primary Image. (2019) (Assessed: 31 December 2020)

Figure 5. Primary Image. (2019) (Assessed: 31 December 2020)