

Portfolio of writing

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Programme of Study: Graphic Design

Module number: ADAD4018

Tutors: Jon Pugh, Martin Bush

Tasks in the order I received them:

Task One: Reflection (Jon's task) = 450 words

Task Two: semiotic analysis (Ryan's Task) = 474 words

Task Three: Manifesto (Julia's Task) = 516 words

Task 1 - Jon Pugh-Reflective Writing: Do you know what you think?

A reflection of Shepard Fairey's 'HOPE' poster (2008) using the influence of Kolbs experiential learning cycle and practical experimentation.

'Street art' is a movement often enveloped by political issues. In 2008 America where undergoing a general election and Shepard Fairey's work was at the forefront of it. This election saw the rise of former president Barack Obama, the first African American president the country had ever elected, a huge milestone for the country. Fairey was known in the past for his works political influence and was an avid follower of Obamas campaign and therefore wanted to portray him as 'both an exciting progressive and a mainstream patriot with vision' (Fairey, 2011).

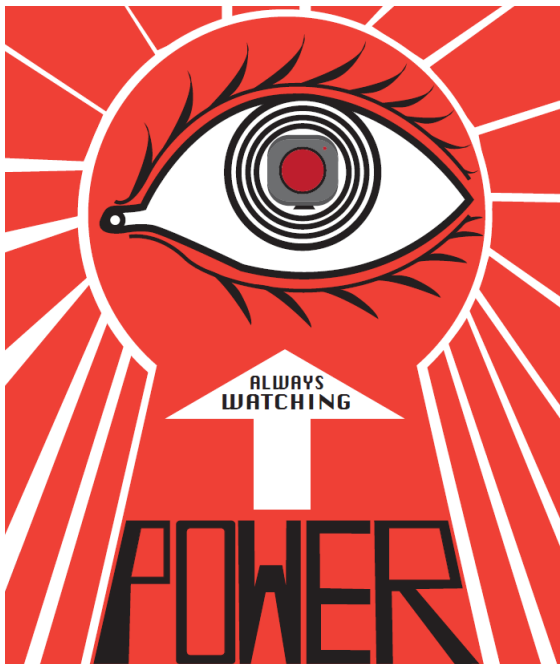
The poster comprises a portrait of Barack Obama signified in the nation's colours (red, white and blue), boasting the message of 'HOPE'. To further understand this bold choice of stylistic colour I employed the words of Goffman (1959) 'a group will always read a newcomers visible information'. Therefore, the newcomer (Barack Obama) is implied to be a symbol of 'hope' through his nationalistic colours, making him a 'classic political archetype of a leader with vision' (Fairey, 2011), this is furthered by his use of the American flag pinned to his chest. This now allows the public 'to apply their previous experience with individuals roughly similar to the one before them' (Goffman, 1959:13) therefore adhering to a nation who pride itself on patriotism. Another adhering factor is the use of 'GOTHAM' typeface which establishes a sense of authority perhaps allowing the public to further expand upon their previous experience and apply 'untested stereotypes' (Goffman, 1959:13) to him. The work has therefore stood the test of time and remains Shepard Fairey's defining moment.

The work today is a prominent part of the elections history and has gone on to influence many artists. As a result of this Fairey reproduced many variations of the iconic poster as the 290 copies first created sold on the first day of print. I too shared the impact of the poster as I began to take a closer look at Fairey's style and began to produce my own work from his influence within my GCSE'. I have later found his influence a great value as his use of type and imagery resonates well with the tasks I have been given within my practice. I found myself again employing Goffman's words 'a group will always read a newcomers visible information'(1959) to understand how such a message like Fairey's 'hope' can be conveyed through something as simple as colour as I set about designing a series of book covers for my first brief within university. Carrying out this practice I believe on reflection resulted in a success.



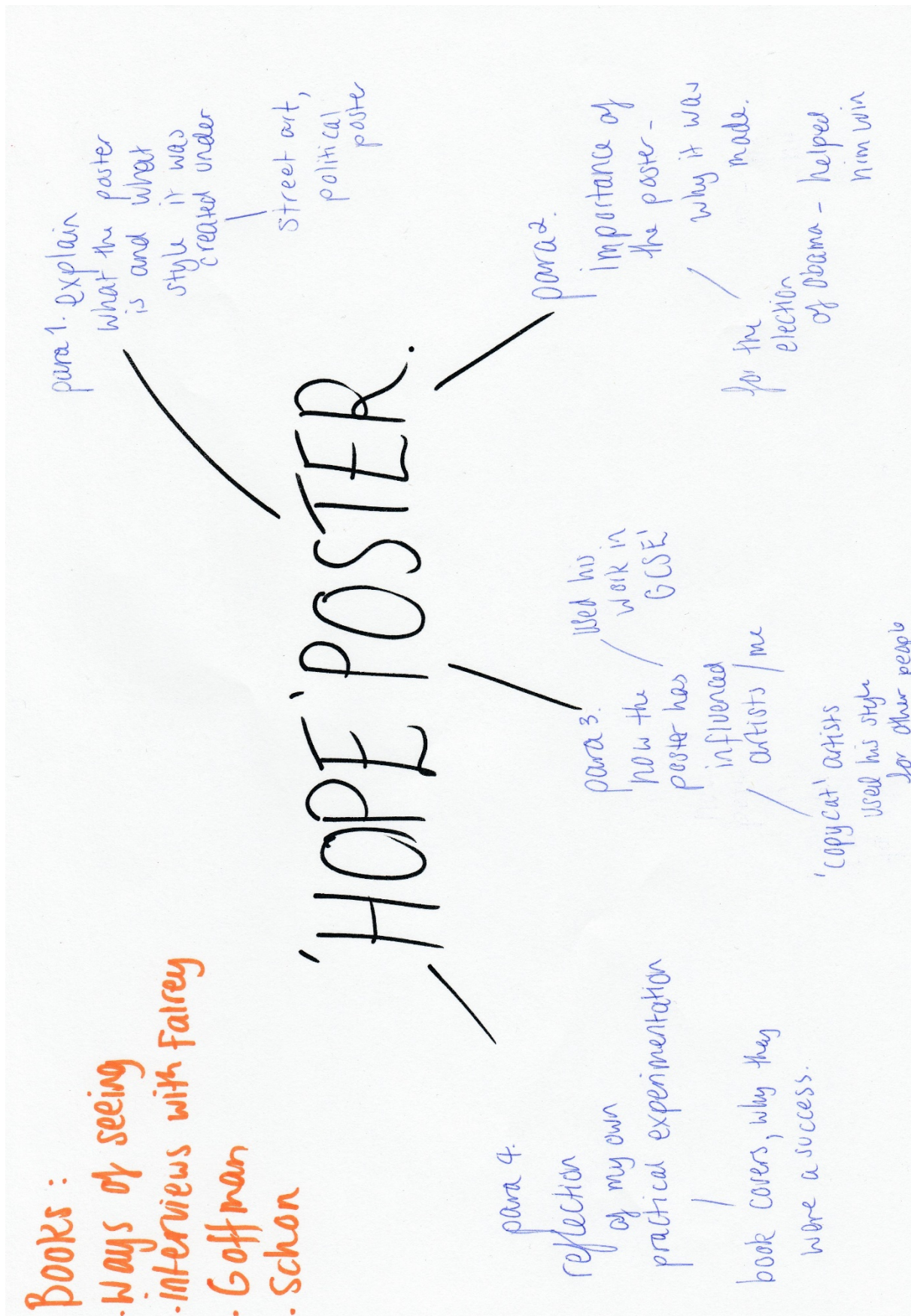
Image taken from:

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/gallery/2012/oct/17/obamas-hope-the-work-of-shepard-fairey>



Images created within my practice leading on from the influence of Shepard Fairey and the 'hope' poster.

Mind map:



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- William W. Fisher III, Frank Cost, Shepard Fairey, Meir Feder, Edwin Fountain, Geoffrey Stewart & Marita Sturken. *Reflections on the hope poster case*. Harvard Journal of Law & Technology Volume 25, Number 2 Spring 2012
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Image reference:

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Task Two: Ryan Moule – Observational writing: identify an image and write a semiotic analysis:

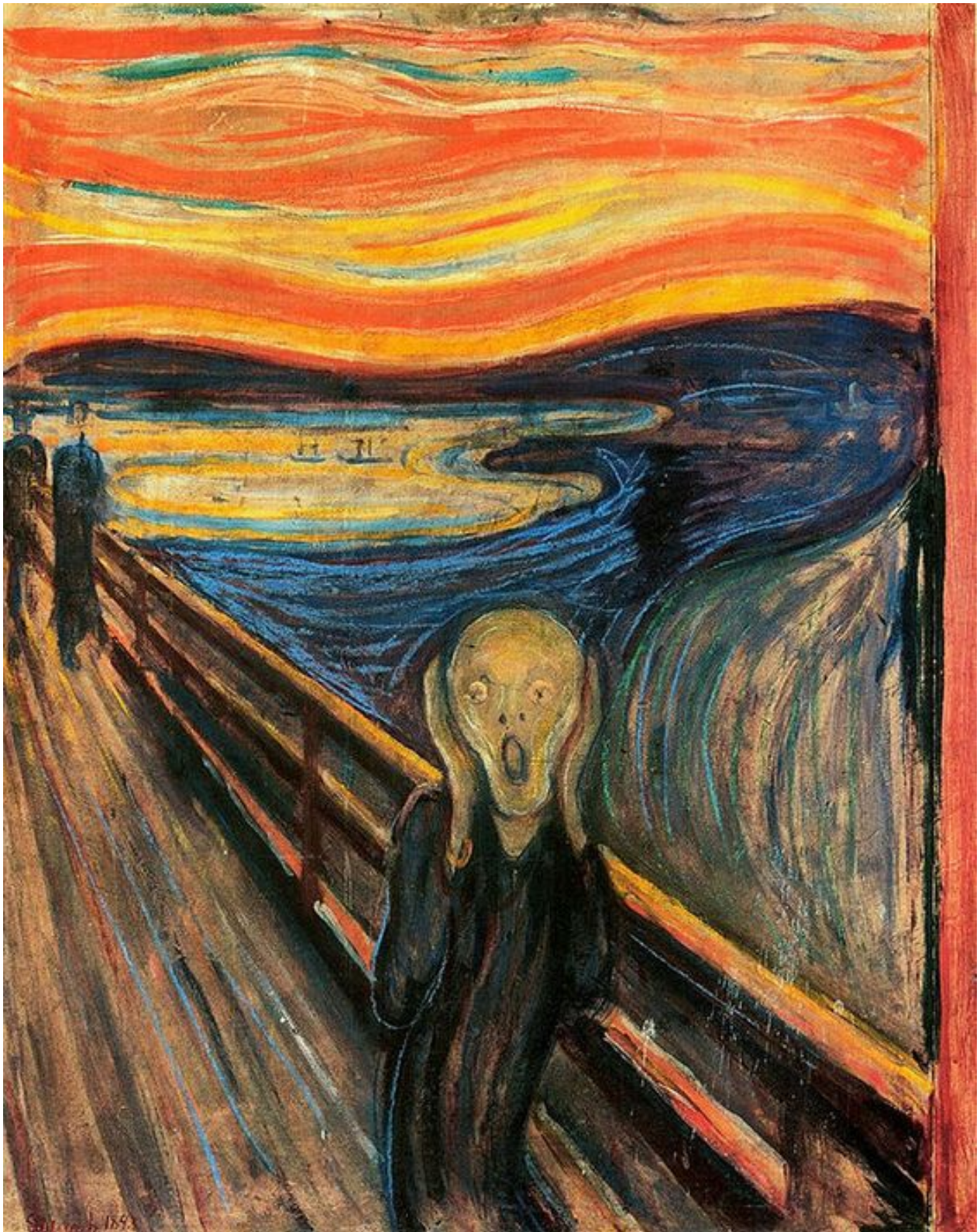
Images are defined by the message they convey. These messages are often hidden and in order to access them they must be deconstructed. Within this task I am going to take a popular artwork and deconstruct it using semiotics.

'seeing comes before words' (Berger, 1972), meaning that sight comes before speech. From this we can decipher that in order for the development of speech and language we must refer to prior knowledge of sight. We expand upon this as 'from birth we are taught how to read signs and symbols' (Berger, 1972) and it is this notion of the 'signifier' and the 'signified' (Barthes, 1977:56) that leads us to establish a connection with such things as colour. The traffic light system is something engraved into our brains at an early age, red means stop, green means go, and it is this collective knowledge that can allow us to convey such meaning within our artwork as 'my language is the sum total of myself' (Charles Pierce Sanders, 1867-1893). Signs can take many forms such as objects, images, smell, these however are only signs due to the meaning we have been taught they have.

As well as 'the signifier' and the 'signified' Barthes discusses such things as the 'connoted' and 'denoted' (the literal and implied meaning) from these we can further our analysis through establishing the context of the sign and therefore understand what a sign could be trying to say.

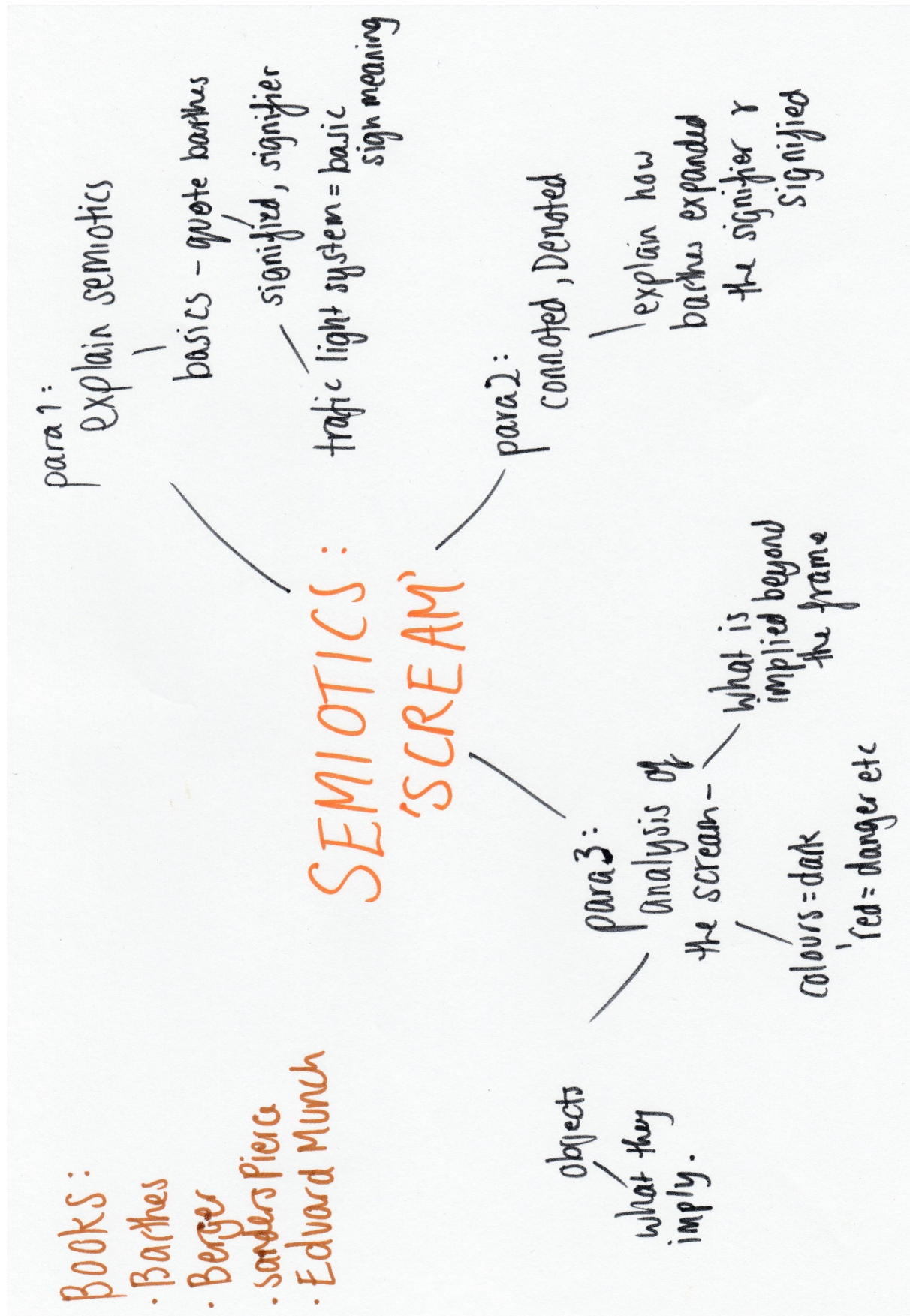
The piece I have chosen to analyse is 'The scream' by Edvard Munch (1893). As proposed by the title the artwork depicts a figure screaming. There are many signs we can pick on within this image to understand its meaning. As earlier stated colour, 'the signifier', (Barthes, 1977) allows us to understand part of this. The painting uses a broad range of colour that connotes different meaning. The dark blue of the sea and the individuals clothing creates a feeling of sadness associated with the pieces title, an expected outcome on first impression. The vivid red of the sky signifies danger which is offset by the bright Orange conveying perhaps that a change has occurred creating this danger. We can also discover meaning through the use of objects. The denotation of the fearful figure's expression creates a sense of anguish and confusion along with the curved strokes perhaps connoting a nauseating feeling. All these factors allow us to also imagine what can be pictured outside of the frame. From the fearful expression and the figures line of sight we can only deduce that there is something horrifying occurring beyond the bridge on which he stands again conveying the feeling of danger.

After deconstructing the image my original impression of the piece has been conveyed. The horror of 'the scream' was amply backed by the choice of colour, objects and implication of what lies beyond the frame.



The scream 1893 by Edvard Munch available at:
<https://www.edvardmunch.org/the-scream.jsp>

Mind map :



Bibliography:

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:https://www.edvardmunch.org/the-scream.jsp

- **Task 3: Julia Lockheart- Manifesto writing: “what do I believe in?”:**

1. Art is for everyone, art is everywhere.
2. Make time for friends and family, life doesn't last forever.
3. Look for innovation it won't find you.
4. Always start a design with thumbnails. Do not throw them away, conceptual art is important.
5. Stop using social media for every conversation of the day, live in real time.
6. Only produce positive vibes, suicide should never happen.
7. We are only here for a finite number of years, seize the day.
8. Comic sans to be used only for comics. NOTHING else.

Key words and images:

Innovation:



Image of the Eastman Kodak company building taken from:

https://secure.i.telegraph.co.uk/multimedia/archive/02014/kodak_2014662b.jpg

3. Look for innovation it won't find you.

Pictured above is the Eastman Kodak company building a company who were at the height of popularity within the photography community, but however are a prime example of a lack of innovation and therefore filed for bankruptcy in 2012 as they failed to keep up with innovation in the digital age.

"An innovation is a new thing or a new method of doing something." (collins English dictionary). Therefore 'innovation' is a fundamental of all design, a creative thought, integral to progression in life. In order to progress and grow then we must strive for this innovation. In the words of Peter Drucker 'if you want something new, you have to stop doing something old', this resonates in an age where technology is everywhere and progressing at an astounding rate. In order to progress we must therefore continue to strive for it, 'look for innovation it won't find you'.

conceptual art:

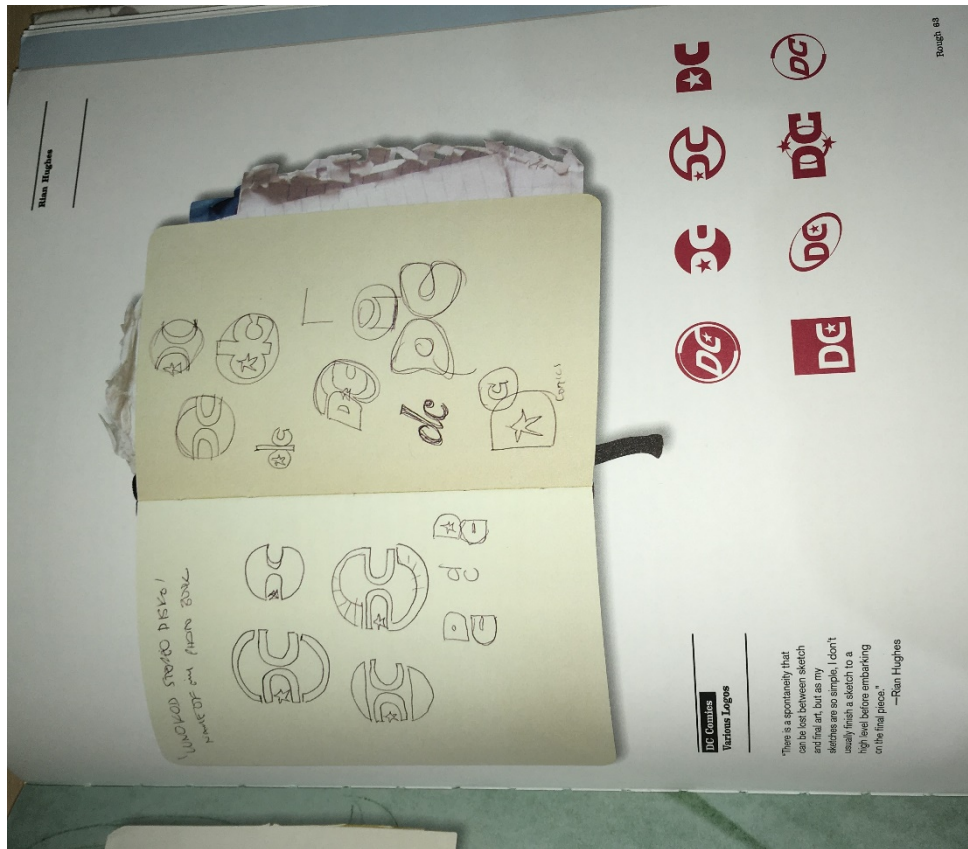


Image taken from 'conceptual drawings from the world's most influential designers'(Timothy O'Donnell, 2009:63)

4. Always start a design with thumbnails. Do not throw them away, conceptual art is important.

Pictured above is an image taken from 'conceptual drawings from the world's most influential designers'(Timothy O'Donnell, 2009:63). As stated, the book comprises all conceptual drawings (thumbnails) carried out within peoples processes of design.

According to the Collins English dictionary conceptual art is 'art in which the idea behind a particular work, and the means of producing it, are more important than the finished work'. Therefore, the significance of conceptual drawing is paramount and should be thought of highly as 'the idea becomes a machine that makes the art' (Sol LeWitt,1984).

I stress this point as from my own personal experience within my practice I see time and time again people neglecting such important parts of their process due to lack of

self-belief within their drawing ability. I find this an interesting point as the representation of oneself has become paramount in an age dominated by the opinions of others.

Comic sans:



Image taken from: http://greynotgrey.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/police_cars.gif

8. Comic sans to be used only for comics. NOTHING else.

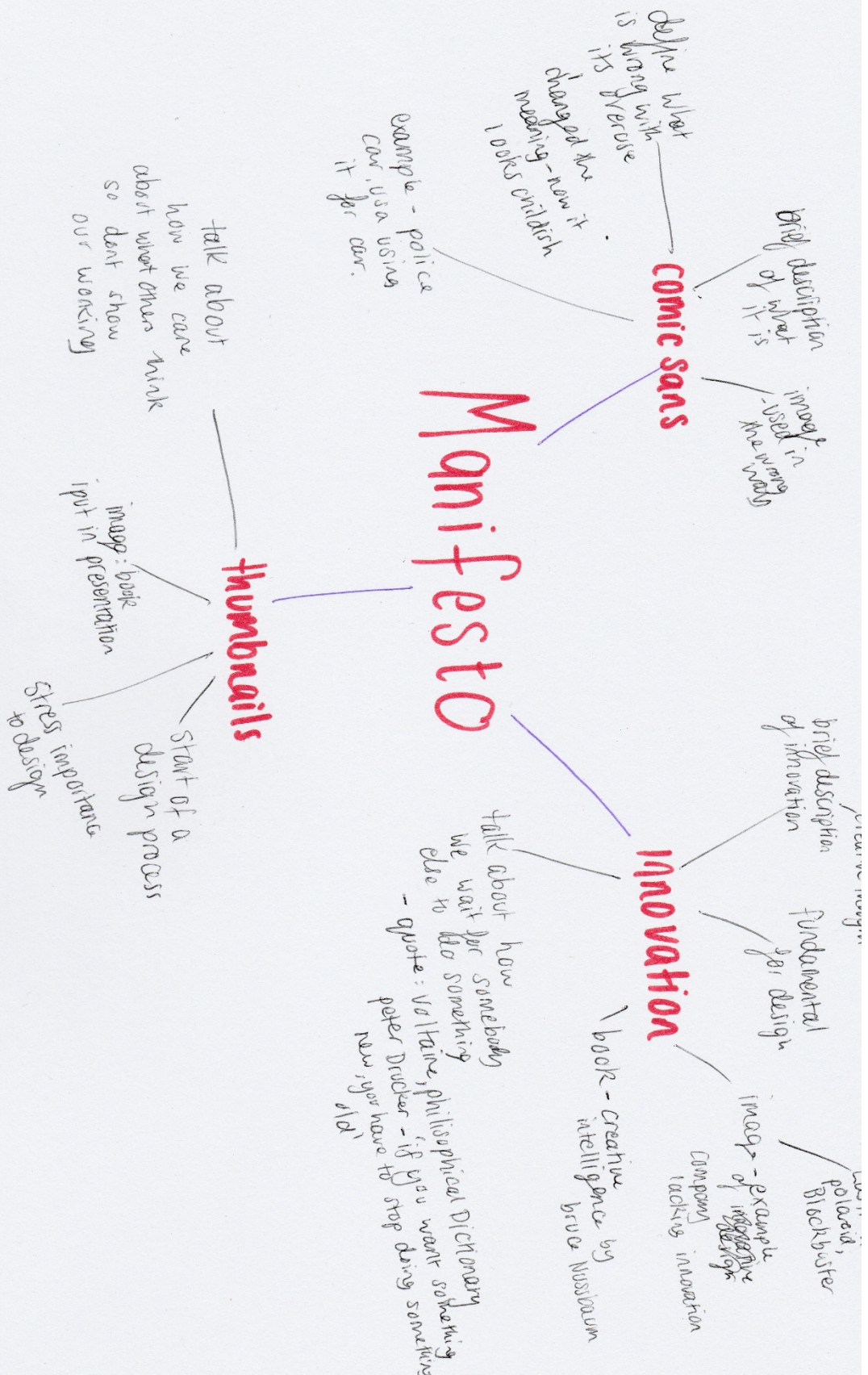
Pictured above is a prime example of the misuse of the 'comic sans' typeface. A typeface surrounded in much controversy in recent years due its 'overuse'.

'Comic Sans' is a typeface designed as the name states to be used within comic books. It evokes a warm, handwritten feel and therefore has been accused of being a 'childish' font. This stems from many people adopting the fonts use for every piece of writing work within such things as education giving it this 'juvenile' connotation. Therefore, we can see from the image chosen that such a typeface does not fit with the message an establishment such as the police should be trying to convey.

As I have discussed typeface's convey feeling and therefore have a proper use and place. The reason this statement features in my manifesto therefore is that the

misuse of this font infuriates me and is a prime reason why I will never use it in my practice. The font itself is a nice legible piece of typeface design but has now however been tarnished in what I could only describe as a pandemic.

Mind map:



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