

Student Name: Erin Harvey

P Number: 2100502

Programme of Study: BA (Hons) Graphic Design

Module: ADAD4018 Ways of Thinking

Tasks in the order I received them:

Task One: Semiotic Analysis = 474 words

Task Two: Manifesto = 473 words

Task Three: Practise-based writing = 499 words

Semiotic Analysis



Fig. 1, Advertisement, 2015

One of the founders of semiotics, Saussure, believed semiotics to be “the life of signs within society,” (Chandler, 1994). Semiotics is important because it can help us not to take 'reality' for granted. It shows us that reality is not something which has a purely objective existence which is independent of human interpretation, (Chandler, 1984). Saussure's (1916) work in linguistics was further applied to sign systems with Peirce work noted that a 'sign can never have a definite meaning because it must be qualified' (Reilly, 2018). Meaning is not simply contained in posters, books, etc. and 'transmitted' to us; we actively create it ourselves. This involves an intricate interaction of codes or conventions. Semiotics teaches us that the interaction between icon, index and symbol work in reality as a system of signs, codes and connotations, of which we are normally unaware. We will now look at the chosen image and use three key ideas in semiotics, signs, codes and connotations to break down the meaning.

Saussure defined a sign as being composed of a 'signifier' - the form which the sign takes; and the

'signified' - the concept it represents. In relation to the image, I have chosen we can see that, several signs which consist of a 'sign', a 'signifier' and 'signified'. For example, the sign is the chocolate bar.

In the image, the chocolate bar wrapper is open and looks ready to consume this would be the signifier. The signified is that the chocolate entices people and influences them to spend their money on this chocolate because the company is being 'open' about their product, and it feels like you have already purchased the bar just from the poster.

According to Beasley and Daensi (2010) advertising uses signs and codes to influence attitudes and consumer behaviors by covertly suggesting how we satisfy our inner most urges and aspirations through consumerism. Looking at another sign in our image, the woman, she is represented healthy and happy. The signifiers are her large smile, her red lips, big shiny eyes and her rosy cheeks. This implies that buying this chocolate will make you happy and be like this woman.

Conclusion

Semiotics has taught us that we live in a world full of different signs and that the only way we can understand everything is through the signs and the codes in which they are organized. Semiotics ultimately allows us to filter the suggested meaning we see every day, protecting us against becoming passive victims of a situation. Having increasingly more visual signs to be aware of day to day, we need to learn that even the most 'realistic' signs can be something they do not appear to be. It is through the study of semiotics, that we become more aware of reality as a construction and of the parts we, and others, play in constructing it.

Bibliography

Chandler, D. (1994) *Semiotics for beginners*. Volume 4, p.16 PDF Ebook

[PDF] from

academia.edu https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/34512504/Semiotics_for_Beginners-with-cover-page-v2.pdf?Expires=1636219479&Signature=VSMfTINFbIP4B1oWtLYyPlt9MDqly-cl9uifpnk61uSlnI~oUIQ~N84ufUQBpzTnt3uk9JZHcxUJsNNJfZqE7Fi2HI3NwNzX2kBahhgyZygt0sJn1ZA VFavIV8Vrf5TSorYebDnNaA9za3fXui3ugafNUnp81t1oBNn1AliVCq1cdcRRpebANwIol5n8AdWVi-kX8xjPvDSZVJ8qM5MGv1Wg0WeqzKcrW63RkiLYiPeDs2xyc-A8jOBN1WmLhWGp0H647wCXkr5p-0G~sy8Mw80ur1qJIGnbGCaEAGTqcoDw3izCTs6MsRiSSVnEZ7vZb1~prW0VvBYgukZV~EeLg_&Key-Pair-Id=APKAJLOHF5GGSLRBV4ZA

Chandler, Daniel (1994) *Semiotics for Beginners* [WWW document]

URL <http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/S4B/semiotic.html> [Accessed 10/08/2021]

Chandler, D. (2007) *Semiotics: The basics*. 2nd edn. London, Routledge

DOI <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203014936>

Beasley, R. and Danesi, M. (2002) *Persuasive signs: The Semiotics of advertising*. Mouton de Gruyter

[BOOK] [Persuasive signs: The semiotics of advertising](#)

R Beasley, M Danesi - 2010 - [books.google.com](#)

Walter de Gruyter, 14 Dec 2010 - [Language Arts & Disciplines](#) - 204 pages

Google books accessed 11/6/2021

https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=KsdJ4T_lF4C&dq=signs+in+semiotics&lr=&source=gbs_navlinks_s

Francis E. Reilly, S.J. (1970) *Charles Peirce's Theory of Scientific Method*, 1st edn. Fordham University Press

[BOOK] [Charles Peirce's theory of scientific method](#)

FE Reilly - 2018 - [books.google.com](#)

Saussure, Ferdinand de ([1916] 1983) *Course in General Linguistics* (trans. Roy Harris). London: Duckworth

Manifesto

1. Design the past, present and future
2. Life is an experiment
3. Brilliance lies within us
4. Be passionate about the work you do
5. Never stop learning, never stop growing
6. There is always something to be grateful for
7. Learn more, do more, be more
8. Don't give up when you make mistakes learn from them

Everyone has made mistakes. Mistakes are made multiple times a day by many different people. It is a natural part of life. Some people believe that making mistakes is shameful however, it is an opportunity to grow, improve and better yourself every day. Making mistakes gives you the chance to not repeat this error in the future. Without making mistakes nobody would learn from them therefore there would be no personal development. "A man who never makes mistakes never makes anything" (Anonymous, 1889, p. 360) Mistakes are beneficial in all aspects of life including design. If you do not make mistakes when designing, you would not make any progress or see ways of improvement in your own work. Making mistakes during the design process can lead you into a piece of work that you would have never created if it was not for that mistake. Sometimes those pieces of work are the best outcomes. As said by Bob Ross "We don't make mistakes, just happy little accidents" (Economy, 2018).

Alongside mistakes, passion is a vast part of design. If you are designing for a client and you are not passionate about the piece you created, then it would be difficult for the client to be pleased with the piece. If you are passionate about something there is a bigger chance of it being successful as it was made with passion and truth. As written by Hegel "Nothing great in the world has ever been created without passion" (1837, p. 24). If you are passionate about something most people will put their mind to it and not stop until they have succeeded and that is the power of passion.

On the other hand, it is also important to be grateful for as much as you can in life. If a child in poverty and a child in more fortune were given the same toy for example. It is more likely that the child in poverty would be more grateful for their toy as it could be a rare occurrence for them. Whereas the more fortunate child might have grown up with family that have given them toys often, leading to that child being less grateful for their toy. Being grateful when your young is based on your background and how you grew up, but you can learn those ways when you become an adult. "We have thousands of opportunities every day to be grateful. There's opportunity upon opportunity to be grateful" (Nelson, 2020, p. 136)

I believe that these points are important to keep in mind when trying to live a happy life. It helps to remind yourself to be grateful, passionate and that it is okay to make mistakes. They are also useful to think about in the eyes of design as they could take you a long way if you keep an open mind.

Bibliography

Hegel, F.W.G. (1837) *Lectures on the philosophy of world history*. Volume 1. Bell

Anonymous. (1889) *The unitarian review*. Volume 31. Massachusetts: Office of the unitarian review.

Nelson, K. (2020) *Wake up grateful*. Storey publishing, LLC

Economy, P. (2018) 17 Bob Ross quotes to inspire your happy little accidents. Available at: <https://www.inc.com/peter-economy/17-bob-ross-quotes-to-inspire-your-happy-little-accidents.html>. (Accessed: 03/01/2022)

Practise based writing



Fig. 2, My typeface, 2020

I was presented with a task to investigate the lettering of a chosen theme, in which I picked gin bottles. I had to digitally build a typeface that would relate to my theme. I decided on gin bottles as my theme as I thought it had the most variety of typefaces. When doing my research most of the gin bottles I found had typefaces that were unusual which meant that it was slightly out of my comfort zone to design a typeface in that style.

I feel that when I was reflecting on my outcome, I had quite a few hurdles to cross throughout this project and I came to the conclusion that it did not go as I originally planned. I did some further research which helped me overcome this problem and I now understand the value of taking the time to research. For example, according to Harris and Ambrose “The human eye “scans” the text using ascenders and descenders to recognise words rather than constructively reading each and every word” (2005, p. 23). When creating my typeface, I mistakenly made the letters the same x

height with no ascenders or descenders however my letters were also lowercase which meant they could not be used as small caps. Looking at my typeface I realised it was imprecise and changed my typeface to lowercase with ascenders and descenders.

Even though I think I made some mistakes throughout this project, on reflection, I believe I produced an innovative typeface. From my research, I liked the idea of adding angles to some of the letters to make the typeface stand out and so that they all have similarity. As this typeface was going to be used for gin bottle packaging, I wanted to create something that stood out against the rest of the other bottles for sale.

Strals, Lupton and Willen wrote “The power to harness multiple weights and styles of a typeface gives typographers an arsenal of tools and extra choices if a particular font weight refuses to work” (2009, p. 118) and on reflection, I have learnt that it is important to think about different weights of the typeface which would give different options if a certain weight is not compatible. I also learnt that taking time to do reflective practise is a key aspect to improving my work.

As Tarrant writes:

They consider that being professional means that they have to have a commitment to “get on and do a good job” and may feel that stopping to discuss what they do and how they do it is an intrusion to them getting on with it.

(2017, p. 64)

I have realised how important it is to reflect on the work I have done because it enables me to think if I could have improved any aspects of the project and if so, what would they be. Overall, I am pleased with the result of the typeface I produced but have also learned the value of reflective practise.

Bibliography

Harris, P. and Ambrose, G. (2005) *Typography n. the arrangement, style and appearance of type and typefaces*. 2nd edn. Ava Academia.

Strals, N. and Lupton, E. and Willen, B. (2009) *Lettering and type: Creating letters and designing typefaces*. 1st edn. Princeton architectural press.

Tarrant, P. (2013) *Reflective practice and professional development*. 1st edn. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.