Open College of the Arts

Tutor report

Student name	**Linda Mayoux**	Student number	**509455**
Course/Module	**Book Design 1**	Assignment number	**Three**

Overall Comments
This part of the course explored the principles of book design including typography, working with images, layout and the rules of good and bad designs.

Overall your response to part three has been very good, especially in terms of your contextual research. The next stage of development is to find ways to embody typography and book design with sets of ideas and principles. For example, making typography genuinely readable, finding opportunities to meaningfully experiment with type, or finding ways to talk your GAME work in the spirit of the processes that you work with.

Project: Typography
Very good investigation into the classifications of typefaces, You have developed a resource that you can use for future project work, with this in mind you may want to continue adding to these definitions, by adding additional typefaces you use regularly.

Excellent summary of the history of typography which picks up on major developments and provides some interesting detail. Given your day-to-day practice is often located outside of Europe, I'm struck at how Eurocentric this history is. This is not a criticism of your project work, rather a general comment on the tendency to link typography to industrial (and therefore western) developments. I wonder if there's a line of enquiry about alternative histories of non western typography you might want to touch upon? This could simply be some visual research in your learning log in which you gather older typography from the countries you visit and begin to piece together typographic cultures (and their evolution) from different locations. I'm not suggesting you have to do this, but given your visits and overall interest in communication, this might be a useful ongoing line of research to feed into your work.

A thorough and analytical investigation into reading and legibility, which you've tested well in your examples. Good background research into experimental type. I wonder whether you need to connect these two sets of ideas together, for example David's Carson clearly rejects the orthodoxy you've outlined. What, if anything, is gained through his experimentation? Can you be experimental and still make things readable and legible?

Project: Layout
Your Jabberwocky images worked very well. I liked the dark uncertainty you created with your layered images. When you do return to this exercise, I wonder if it's worth considering how you select the most successful elements. For example, your layered images on the page are quite small, which means you can see the repeat patterns of the layering. Working with bigger images or selecting sections will hide some of the joins of your collage. Equally your choice of typography runs counter to the images you've created – it's much more upbeat, generic and unified. Can you bring your collage methodology to your creation or choice of typeface? Here's a good opportunity to put into practice your research around experimental type design.

Your travel layouts were good and show a clear understanding of how to use a grid layout successfully.

Your gender and youth balance tree layout initially followed on from this, but in the process made the designs feel more of an experiment or part of a teaching system rather than in the spirit of how this form of visual communication operates. Can you design layouts that embrace the way that this process works rather than presenting it at a distance? Your full page image on lined paper with text and digital illustrations, as well as pages 2-3 were much closer to this idea because you'd prioritised the group's drawings over the facilitator's narrative and made the images the prominent element, which your typography worked around.

Project: Layout
It was good to see you develop a range of layouts as part of this project, from standard grids to more layered designs. You might want to bring in thumbnail drawings into the process, so you're not always defined by the limitations of the software you're using.

Feedback on assignment
Creative and analytical thinking, Visual and Technical Skills

The covers for your Little Book of Good & Bad Typography ironically shared elements of both good and typography. The bad cover was much more visually engaging in terms of confidence use of colour and layout, if unreadable at the level of body text. The good cover was a lot plainer and less inviting as a cover, which maybe suggests an underlying idea of excess and restraint when it comes to what you think constitutes good and bad typography? This idea of excess and restraint has echoes of modernist / post-modernist values, which is perhaps something you may want to explore a little further. Certainly your quotes on good typography are mostly coming from modernist sources and positions.

The title shared a similar strategy of broken text, in terms of breaking the *T* from *ypo*, which made the title quite hard to read. Your subheadings followed on from this, creating text within a box that felt both utilitarian and quite ugly. The grey boxes of quotes were similar and perhaps the detail of how the text

sits within these grids should be considered more fully.

The content of the articles were better laid out when it come to the body text and italicized quotations, and your use of subheadings with a short grey line felt more considered and balanced, though try and be more precise in how you apply these – are they a fixed length or do they relate to the length of the works you are underlining?

Your pages on legibility and communication were quite fractured in terms of having lots of different baselines operating in parallel with one another. Following your logic on good typography, I wonder how extreme you can be in the simplicity of your designs? With this in mind you might want to look at the work of modernist / International Style typographers in more depth or contemporary designers such as James Goggin who works at Practise: http://www.practise.co.uk/

It might have been interesting to test out some of these pages with some of the underlying principles of bad typography you have established. Does the addition of colour and a more dynamic layout help or hinder your designs?

Sketchbooks
Research and idea development, Context

Your sketchbooks are evident from your learning log, but perhaps find ways to use them more as a tool for proposing and exploring ideas prior to working digitally.

Learning Logs or Blogs / Critical essays
Research and idea development, Context

Your learning log is doing a good job of documenting and reflecting on your progress.

Suggested viewing/reading

Given my suggestion of using the countries you visit as a potential source of typographic research you may want to look at some of these Eye Magazine articles:

http://www.eyemagazine.com/blog/post/signs-of-a-city

http://www.eyemagazine.com/feature/article/beyond-latin

http://www.eyemagazine.com/blog/post/Pride-and-posters-in-Eritrea

Pointers for the next assignment
In the next assignment you will use a found book and experiment with form and materials to create a personal book, this should be a great opportunity to continue with your interests in collage and artists books.

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Date	2 April 2016
Next assignment due	Early June 2016