On Typography

• The study of Type
• Type facilitates
  – Communication
  – Information Design
• Choosing the right type can have profound impact on the design

History of Type Styles

• Classical/Old Style (Bookman): 1450-1700
  – Type sets based on handwriting/calligraphy styles
• Transitional (Baskerville): 1700-1800
  – Greater contrast between thick and thin strokes
  – Increased type delicacy required improved letterpresses
• Modern (Big Caslon): 1800-1900
  – Sharp contrast between thick and thin strokes
  – Hairline thin serifs
• Bauhaus (Bauhaus 93): 1900-1960
  – Geometrically designed sans serifs
• Contemporary (Trebuchet): 1960-Present
  – Development of fonts specific to purpose or medium (e.g., Adobe Postscript fonts)

Modern Typography

• Gutenberg’s Press
• Photo typesetting
• Bauhaus type movement
• Computer-enhanced
  – Bitmapped fonts
  – Postscript fonts
  – Screen fonts
    • TrueType
    • ClearType

Readability vs. Legibility

• Ease of reading is called Readability
• The ability to recognize letters is Legibility
• Readability measures ease of reading
• Issues affecting them:
  – Font Size
  – Font Style
  – Leading
  – Tracking/Kerning
  – Proportions
  – Alignment
  – Word Spacing
  – Line length
Use of Type

Good type is often overlooked
Bad type is noticed by all

• Traditional setting
  – Serif font
  – 120% leading
  – Full use of page, equal margins
  – Large to small data hierarchy

• Modern setting
  – Sans-Serif font
  – Lots of white space
  – Creative use of letters
  – Stretching the bounds of type

Creative Use of Type

• Letters are (also) graphics
• Words are (also) images
• Consider variation in
  – Direction
  – Contrast
  – Form (capital vs lowercase)
  – Edges of screen/paper
experimenting with the baseline

Line length

experimenting with the baseline

Line length
word as image

HAIR

The Birds

O TANGO

THE MISSING LNK

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Monty Python's Complete Videos So Far
experiment,
familiarize yourself with the tools

BUT remember...
just because you CAN do something...
...doesn’t mean you SHOULD