THIS IS DESIGN NEWS

Hierarchy

Design is the conscious effort to impose a **meaningful order.**
Victor Papanek

Hierarchy is the order of importance within a social group (such as the regiments of an army) or in a body of text (such as the sections and subsections of a book). Hierarchical order exists in nearly everything we know, including the family unit, the workplace, politics, and religion. Rankings of power and position define who we are as a culture.

Hierarchy is expressed through naming systems: general, colonel, corporal, private, and so on. Hierarchy is also conveyed visually, through variations in scale, value, color, spacing, placement, and other signals. Expressing order is a central task of the graphic designer. Visual hierarchy controls the delivery and impact of a message. Without hierarchy, graphic communication is dull and difficult to navigate.

Like fashion, graphic design cycles through periods of structure and chaos, ornament and austerity. A designer's approach to visual hierarchy reflects his or her personal style, methodology, and training as well as the zeitgeist of the period. Hierarchy can be simple or complex, rigorous or loose, flat or highly articulated. Regardless of approach, hierarchy employs clear marks of separation to signal a change from one level to another. As in music, the ability to articulate variation in tone, pitch, and melody in design requires careful delineation.

In interaction design, menus, texts, and images can be given visual order through placement and consistent styling, but the user often controls the order in which information is accessed. Unlike a linear book, interactive spaces feature multiple links and navigation options that parcel content according to the user's actions. Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) articulate the structure of a document separately from its presentation so that information can be automatically reconfigured for different output devices, from desktop computer screens to mobile phones, PDAs, kiosks, and more. A slightly different visual hierarchy might be used in each instance.

The average computer desktop supports a complex hierarchy of icons, applications, folders, menus, images, and palettes—empowering users, as never before, to arrange, access, edit, and order vast amounts of information—all managed through a flexible hierarchy controlled and customized by the user.

As technology allows ever greater access to information, the ability of the designer to distill and make sense of the data glut gains increasing value.

Seeing What Matters Even though the designer pixelated and abstracted the content of this simulated newspaper page, visual cues enable readers to understand the basic hierarchy. Chen Zui, MFA Studio.

Basic Typographic Hierarchy

The table of contents of a printed book—especially one with many parts—provides a structural picture of the text to follow. When books are marketed online, the table of contents is often reproduced to allow potential buyers to preview the book. A well-designed table of contents is thus not only functional but also visually exciting and memorable.

The basic function of a table of contents is to help readers locate relevant information and provide an image of how the book is organized. Does the text fall into a few main parts with various subdivisions, or does it consist of numerous small, parallel entries? The designer uses alignment, leading, indents, and type sizes and styles to construct a clear and descriptive hierarchy.

A poorly designed table of contents often employs conflicting and contradictory alignments, redundant numbering systems, and a clutter of graphic elements. Analyzing tables of contents— as well as restaurant menus and commercial catalogs—is a valuable exercise.

CONTENTS

What's Wrong with this Picture?
The function of a table of contents is to list the elements of a book and help readers locate them. In the table of contents shown here, the page numbers are stretched across the page from the chapter titles, and the word "Chapter" has been repeated twenty-four times. *Manners for the Millions*, 1932.

SUMMARY

Second Part

GREATER PARIS

Lost in Paris In this table of contents for a travel guide, the designer has used a muddled mix of centered, justified, and flush-left alignments. The desire to create an overall justified setting dominates the logic of the page—hence the long first lines and rows of dots at the top level of information. The three titling lines at the head of the page are centered (a traditional solution), but the result is awkward in relation to the irregular mass of subheads, which weight the page to the left. The whole affair is further confused by the elaborate system of indents, numerals, and letters used to outline the book's subsections. *Blue Guide to Paris*, 1957.

Book as Billboard This table of contents serves as a billboard for the book as well as a functional guide to its elements. The designer has approached the spread as a whole, with content stretching across it horizontally. The page numbers are aligned in columns next to the article titles, making it easy for readers to connect content with location. (No old-fashioned leader lines needed!) Chapter numbers aren't necessary because the sequential page numbers are sufficient to indicate the order of the pieces. The book has many contributors, a point made clear through the type styling. Nicholas Blechman, *Empire*, 2004.

Think with the Senses
Feel with the Mind.
Art in the Present Tense
Venice Biennale
52nd International Art Exhibition
10 June – 21 November
National and Regional Pavilions
and Presentations.
Parallel Exhibitions and Projects

No hierarchy

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Parallel Exhibitions and Projects

Contrasting weight

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Contrasting color

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Alignment

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Art in the Present Tense

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Spatial intervals

Think with the Senses
Feel with the Mind.
Art in the Present Tense

VENICE BIENNALE

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Uppercase and spatial intervals

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Weight, color, space, alignment

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Scale, space, alignment

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Italic, scale, color, alignment

Hierarchy 101 A classic exercise is to work
with a basic chunk of information and explore
numerous simple variations, using just
one type family. The parts of a typographic
hierarchy can be signaled with one or more
cues: line break, type style, type size, rules,
and so on.

Top-left panel (PAZO — rotated tables)

PAZO

PAZO GRAND TABLE FOR SIX $229

PAZO CLASSICAL CATALAN TABLE FOR TWO $54

PAZO MEDITERRANEAN TABLE FOR TEN $199

PAZO SICILIAN TABLE FOR TWO $69

Top-right panel

pazo   tapas

CHORIZO	white bean puree & pork jus	6 | 18
MANCHEGO & MANZANA	sheep's cheese, apples & walnuts	6 | 18
EGGPLANT DIP	cucumber and sesame	4 | 12
MIXED OLIVES	house marinade of vinegar & herbs	4 | 12
EMPANADAS	spiced veal & pork in pastry, salsa verde	6 | 18
WHITE ANCHOVIES	with first press Sicilian olive oil	5 | 15
LAMB ON FOUGASSE	rotisserie lamb, aioli, green olives, red onion	6 | 18
JAMON IBERICO	aged Spanish ham & local peaches	6 | 18
CALAMARI FRITTI	crispy calamari, lemon, chilis & aioli	5 | 15
FIRE ROASTED ALMONDS	unfiltered olive oil & sea salt	3 | 15
BRUSCHETTA	slow-roasted shallots & goat's cheese	5 | 15

vegetables

GRILLED MUSHROOMS	lemon, rosemary & sea salt	4 | 12
PAPPA FRITTA	abundant ripple-cut chips with aioli	4 | 12
SAUTÉ OF SIX LOCAL	fresh lemon & basil	5 | 15
GRILLED ASPARAGUS	romescu sauce	6 | 18
PEPPER BRUSCHETTA	grilled peppers, manchego & pignoli	6 | 18
WILTED SPINACH	garlic & pignoli	4 | 12

salads

ARUGULA SALAD	pecorino & crispy shallots	5 | 15
COPPA & PEAR SALAD	grilled fennel & spicy cured pork	6 | 18
ROMAINE HEARTS	sweet peppers & sherry vinaigrette	6 | 18
PANZANELLA	ripe tomato, zucchini, basil, onions, pecorino	6 | 18
INSALATA CAPRESE	buffalo mozzarella & local tomatoes	7 | 21

Bottom-left panel

PAZO

BREADS · CHEESE · RAW · FISH · MEAT · VEGETABLE · SALADS · TAPAS · PASTA

Bottom-right panel

PAZO

the heart and inspiration of our cuisine is to be found on the coast of spain, the italian islands, campania and the south of france. our kitchen uses classic methods and both authentic and natural local ingredients to create soulful dishes that represent the tradition of the region. tony foreman

TAPAS

shrimp & apple pinchos	$5	dill vinaigrette sauce
eggplant dip	$5	cucumber & sesame
fire roasted almonds	$5	unfiltered olive oil & sea salt
chorizo	$6	white bean puree & pork jus
white anchovies	$6	with first press Sicilian olive oil
manchego & manzana	$8	sheep's cheese, apples, walnuts
calamari fritti	$6	crispy calamari, lemon, chilis & aoli
jamon iberico	$8	aged Spanish ham & local peaches
mixed olives	$4	house marinade of vinegar & herbs
bruschetta	$5	slow-roasted shallots & goat's cheese
lamb on fougasse	$6	rotisserie lamb, aioli, olives & red onion
empanadas	$6	spiced veal & pork in pastry, salsa verde

PIZZA

sausage arugula	$11	buffalo mozzarella & tomato
pizza bianca	$11	white pizza, local mushrooms
pizza siciliana	$14	grilled eggplant, peppers & olives
pizza cristina	$12	buffalo mozzarella, tomato & basil
pizza catalan	$10	serrano ham & white mushrooms

CHEESE

fresh mahon	$4	(minorca-cow) mild, semi-soft
pecorino	$4	(pienza-sheep) creamy, rich, tangy
garrotxa	$4	(catalonia-goat) rustic, mildly spicy
idiazabal	$5	(navarra-sheep) smokey, nutty, firm
tetara	$4	(pyrenees-sheep) creamy, earthy, mild
cabrales	$5	(spain-cow/sheep) pungent, creamy blue

HyunSoo Lim
Katie MacLachlan

Claire Smalley
Anna Eshelman

Menu of Options Designers use scale, placement, alignment, type style, and other cues to bring visual order to a body of content. Expressing hierarchy is an active, inquisitive process that can yield dynamic visual results. Typography I. Jennifer Cole Phillips, faculty.

SIGN TYPES

A collection of popular typefaces used in signage and logos

1929 MEMPHIS

Futura with serifs.

● ○ ○ ○ ○

GATORADE
Polaroid

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg
Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn
Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu
Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz
1234567890

Designed by the legendary Rudolph Wolf, the Memphis font family was one of the most popular display faces of its time. Often referred to as "Futura with serifs" and named after the ancient Egyptian capital of Memphis, the slab serif was the first modern Egyptian of its time and paved the way for many other slab serif revivals to come.

1957 HELVETICA

Virtually everything.

○ ● ○ ○ ○

New York City Subway
TOYOTA
THE NORTH FACE
TARGET
American Apparel
Jeep

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg
Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo
Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu
Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz
1234567890

Helvetica is one of the most popular and widely used typefaces ever created and continues to be one of the most sought after and frequently specified sans serifs. It has clean lines, readability and good clarity that make it perfect for a wide variety of applications such as corporate identity, newspapers, signage and advertising.

2000 GOTHAM

Building lettering.

○ ○ ● ○ ○

Obama's 2008 campaign
GQ Magazine
One World Trade Center
Discovery Channel
HGTV Channel
Rite Aid Pharmacy

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg
Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo
Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv
Ww Xx Yy Zz
1234567890

Gotham is a frequently used geometric san serif. It was designed by American type designer Tobias Frere-Jones in 2002. Gotham's letterforms are inspired by a form of architectural signage that became popular in the 20th century. It is most notably instantial throughout NYC.

1845 CLARENDON

First registered typeface.

○ ○ ○ ● ○

US National Park logos
Trader Trunk Brand
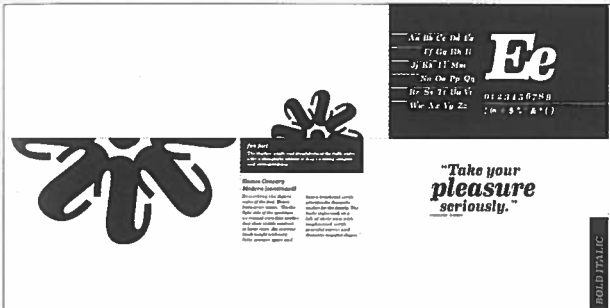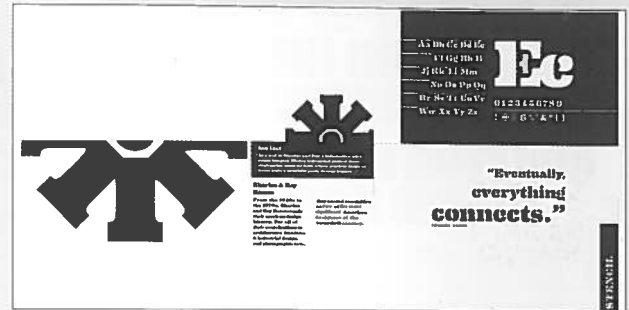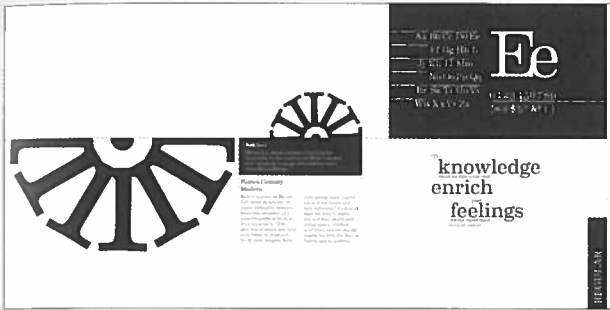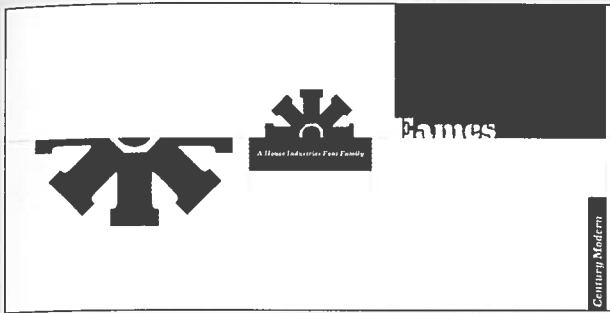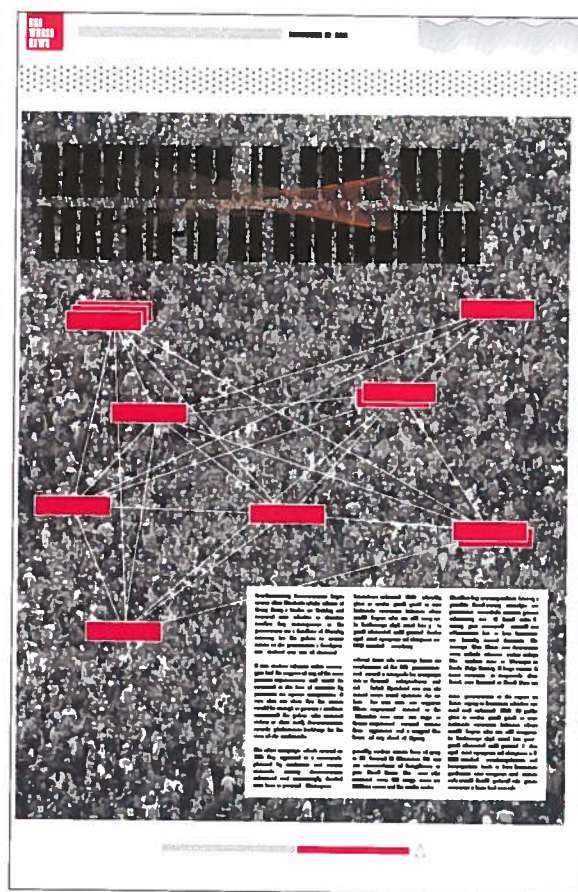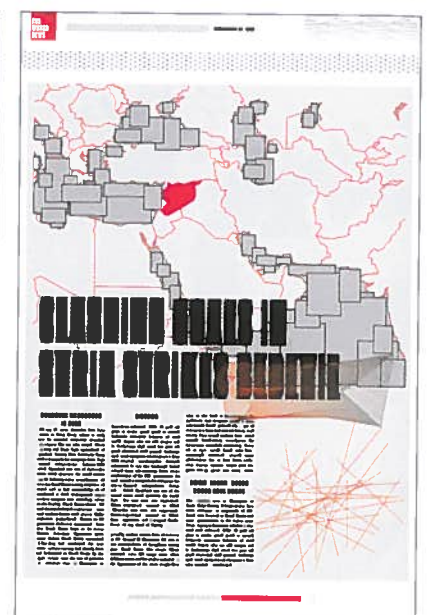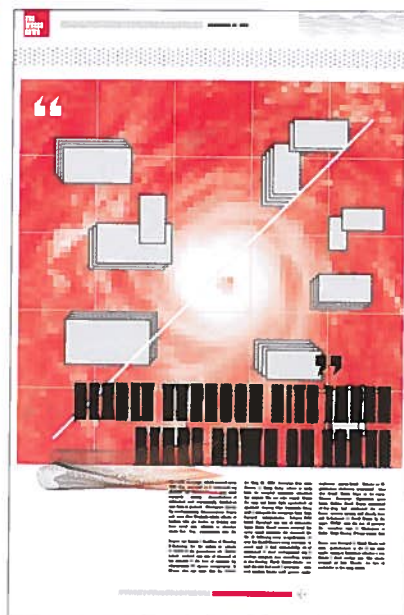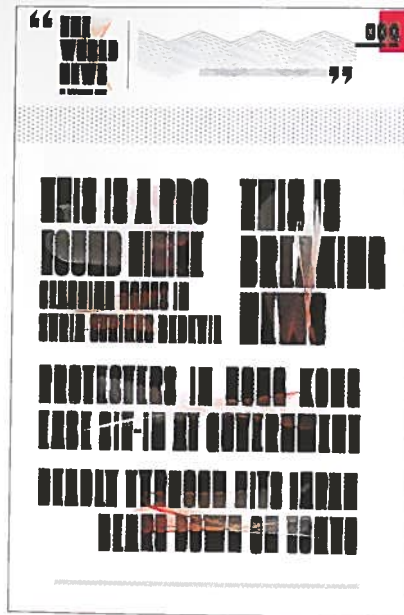Great Western Railway
WELLS FARGO logo
Readers on Wheel of Fortune

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff
Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll
Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq
Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww
Xx Yy Zz
1234567890

Clarendon was first designed to serve as a display letter in a choice of text type, and was for sub-headings in many dictionaries and reference books. It is an English slab-serif typeface that was created in England by Robert Besley in 1845. He tried to protect the typeface, as Clarendon is now known as the first registered typeface. When it became popular, it was copied by other founders. It established the use of bold faces to pull out parts of the text.

1931 DIN

German traffic signage.

○ ○ ○ ○ ●

Autobahn German Signage
iPhone iOS 7 Camera App
THE WOLF OF WALL STREET

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg
Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn
Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv
Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz
1234567890

DIN 1451 standard is a commonly used default font for traffic signs. It is also used in street signs and house numbers and until 2005 it was used for German license plates. In 1995 type designer Albert Jan Pool created the DIN 1451 into a more polished form used most often in graphic design and publishing. It is referred to as FF DIN

Typeface Specimen Book

Graphic Design I

May 2014

Melissa Hecker

Five Fonts In this twist on the classic type specimen book, designers curate a collection of five typefaces and design a typographic hierarchy. Key content includes the typeface name, designer, year created, and descriptive or historical text. The compositional landscapes also contain a character set and some visual element focusing attention on the typeface's expressive or formal qualities. In structuring multiple pages, students consider continuity and pacing. Covers and colophons become graceful extensions of the interior. Typography I. Jennifer Cole Phillips, faculty.

Melissa Hecker

Eames
A House Industries Font Family

Century Modern

"The *details*
are not the details.
They make the product."

**knowledge
enrich
feelings**

REGULAR

"Eventually,
everything
connects."

STENCIL

"Take your
pleasure
seriously."

BOLD ITALIC

"Beyond
the age of
information
is the age of
choices."

LIGHT
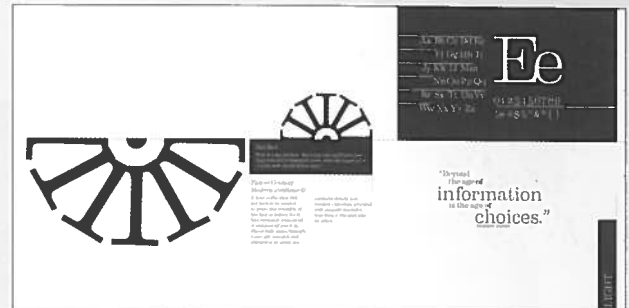
Theresa Bonaddio

Content Vacuum In this project the designer purposefully abstracted the content of newspaper pages, thereby drawing attention to the visual hierarchy. Chen Zui, MFA Studio.

Content Glut This program for an arts festival contains multiple levels of typographic and photographic information, requiring the designer to establish clear and consistent visual signals of separation across all hierarchical levels. Amy Hushen, Advanced Graphic Design. Jennifer Cole Phillips, faculty.

Dimensional Hierarchy

Messages applied to three-
dimensional form have the added
challenge of legibility across and
around planes. Objects sitting
in an environment are bathed in
shadow and light. Unlike books
that can conceal elaborate worlds
inside their covers—automatically
separated from exterior contexts—
environmental messages must
interact beyond their boundaries
and become either a harmonious
or poignant counterpoint to
their neighbors.

Notice in these examples
how type, color fields, and graphic
elements carry the viewer's eye
around the dimensional form,
often making a visual if not verbal
connection with neighboring
packages when stacked side by side
or vertically.

Dynamic Dosage A visual hierarchy is often
necessary for objects in a series. This bold
design for vitamin packaging magnifies
unexpected product details and provides
a surprising spout for dispensing tablets.
James Anderson, Typography II. Jennifer
Cole Phillips, faculty
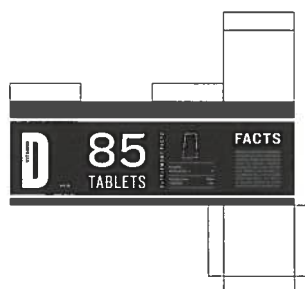
Architecture of Snacks This design series for iconic snacks discards the usual overt cacophony of branding language in favor of a clear, stripped-down information hierarchy that situates the brand name neutrally with typography that sits back, while the celebrated ingredient takes center stage in exploded axonometric renderings.
James Anderson, Advanced Graphic Design. Jennifer Cole Phillips, faculty

Going with the Flow The designer has built a visual language for a line of tampons that elevates the aesthetics for a more welcome place in the medicine cabinet. Visual pattern density signifies relative absorbency.
Heda Hokschirr, Advanced Graphic Design. Jennifer Cole Phillips, faculty