

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. Indeed, the ranking of order defines 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 the 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 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.

Inverted Hierarchy This package design project asks students to redirect a product line to an unexpected audience. This design for cleaning products reorders the hierarchy and voice to spark the interest of young, progressive consumers who may be new to housekeeping. The brand name is subtle and sits back, while the offending soil takes center stage. Oliver Munday, Advanced Design. Jennifer Cole Phillips, faculty.



Clorox
germs
stains
spots
scrub
grime

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

	PAGE
Introduction	vii
Chapter 1 Intelligence Test	1
Chapter 2 Introductions	5
Chapter 3 Shaking Hands	17
Chapter 4 At Table	20
Chapter 5 The Sprayer Family	64
Chapter 6 The Child's Hands	65
Chapter 7 The Birthday Cake	67
Chapter 8 Personality	68
Chapter 9 Visiting Cards and Calling	85
Chapter 10 Intruders	88
Chapter 11 Expectorating (Spitting)	90
Chapter 12 Picking	92
Chapter 13 Belching	93
Chapter 14 The Sniffer and the Snorter	94
Chapter 15 The Moistened Finger	95
Chapter 16 Hands Off!	97
Chapter 17 Odors	98
Chapter 18 Odoriferous Foods	105
Chapter 19 The Human Sponge	106
Chapter 20 The Sense of Humor	108
Chapter 21 Making One's Toilet in Public	109
Chapter 22 Chewing Gum	113
Chapter 23 Smoking	115
Chapter 24 Loud Talking	116

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

I. W. and N. W. district : the valley of the Seine below Paris	313
¹ The first loop of the Seine :	
A. The Bois de Boulogne, 314.	
B. Boulogne-Billancourt, 318.	
C. Neuilly-sur-Seine, 319.	
D. Levallois-Perret, Clichy, Saint-Ouen, 321.	
² The L. Bank of the Seine below Paris :	
A. Issy-les-Moulineux, Meudon and Bellevue, 323.	
B. Sèvres, 329.	
C. Saint-Cloud and Saint-Cloud Park, 331.	
D. Suresnes and Mont-Valérien, 335.	
³ The second loop of the Seine :	
A. From Paris Maillot to Nanterre, 338.	
B. From Nanterre to Saint-Denis, 341.	
II. N. and N. E. district : the plain of Saint-Denis	342
¹ Saint-Denis and surroundings, 342.	
² From Paris to Pierrefitte via Aubervilliers and La Courneuve, 350.	
³ From Paris to Le Bourget :	
A. Via the route de Flandre, 351.	
B. Via Bobigny and Drancy, 352.	
III. E. and S. E. district : from the Ourcq canal to the Seine	353
¹ From Paris to Le Raincy :	
A. Via Pantin, Bondy and Les Pavillons-sous-Bois, 353.	
B. Via Les Lilas, Romainville and Noisy-le-Sec, 355.	
C. Via Bagnollet, Montreuil-sous-Bois, Rosny-sous-Bois and Villemomble, 355.	
² Vincennes and the Bois de Vincennes, 357.	
³ Nogent, Champigny and the loop of the Marne :	
A. From Paris to Nogent and to Bry-sur-Marne, 370.	
B. From Paris to Joinville and to Champigny, 371.	
C. From Paris to Charenton and to Saint-Maur-des-Fossés, 373.	
⁴ Between the Marne and the Seine : Maisons-Alfort, Alfortville, Créteil, Bonneuil, 375.	
IV. S. district : from the Seine to the Seine	376
¹ From Paris to Châteaufort, 376.	
² From Paris to Juvisy, 378.	
³ From Paris to Bourg-la-Reine and to Anony :	
A. Via the valley of the Bièvre, 379.	
B. By the route of Orléans, 381.	
⁴ From Paris to Sceaux, 382.	
⁵ From Paris to Clamart :	
A. Via Châtillon, 387.	
B. Via Vanves, 388.	

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.

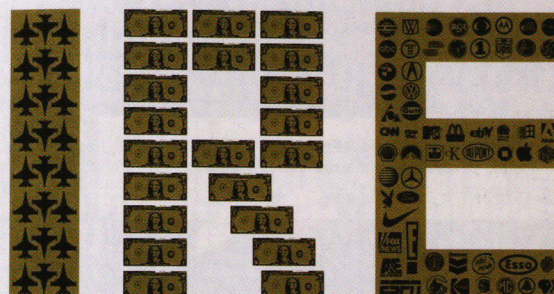
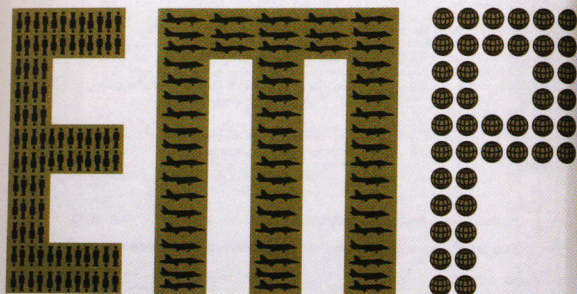
CONTENTS

04 FOREWORD by Knickerbocker and Jesse Gordon
 11 CECI N'EST PAS UNE COMIC by Peter Kuper
 13 AM I AN IMPERIALIST? by Johnny Sweetwater
 14 I AM NOT AN IMPERIALIST by Stefan Sagmeister
 16 WAR IS NOT THE ANSWER by Luba Lukova
 17 THE AVENGELISTS by David Sandlin
 21 DAY AT THE OFFICE by Jeffrey Fisher
 23 UNTITLED by Lutz Widmaier

24 EMPIRICAL OBSERVATIONS by Gary Clement
 25 EMPIRICAL DATA by Wink
 40 GLUTTONOUS by MK Mabry
 42 NARCISSISTIC by MK Mabry
 44 CLANDESTINE by MK Mabry
 46 THEIRS/OURS by George Hardie
 47 ODD COUPLE by Edward Sorel
 48 PEOPLE OF BAGHDAD by Michael Bierut

51 PAUL WOLFOVITZ by Paul Sahre
 52 WAR CULTURE by Ward Sutton
 54 THE EAGLE HAS LANDED by Johnny Sweetwater
 57 CIRCLE OF CYNICISM by Knickerbocker
 58 CAPTAIN STAR by Steven Appleby
 61 WALKER by Brad Holland
 62 GLOBALIZED by Jesse Gordon and Knickerbocker
 64 ONLINE ROTATING GLOBES by David Reinfurt

66 ALTARS TO THE EMPIRE by Jesse Gordon
 68 DAM by Jason Fulford
 70 EMPIRE, AMERICAN STYLE by Ward Sutton
 72 WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION by Stephen Savage
 75 CONDOLEZZA RICE by Paul Sahre
 76 TUNF WAR by Monika Aichele
 78 OIL AND THE U.S. MILITARY by Amy Balkin and Josh On
 80 UNTITLED by Lutz Widmaier



81 AXLES OF EVIL by David Sandlin
 82 AMERICAN OLIGARCHY Lewis Lapham interviewed
 by Elizabeth Amon
 91 EVERYBODY'S UNCLE by Seymour Chwast
 92 UNTITLED by Seth Tobocman
 93 MASTERMIND by Knickerbocker
 94 DONALD RUMSFELD by Paul Sahre
 96 WHY ME? by Jeffrey Fisher

97 AMERICA by Charles S. Anderson
 102 THIS CAN'T MISS by Robert Grossman
 103 NATIONAL I.D. PROGRAM by Wink
 104 DOD™ by Open
 106 UNTITLED by Art Chantry
 108 MARTHA STEWART by Robbie Conal
 109 COLLECTABLE CORPORATE STICKERS by Wink
 110 KEVIN BACON by Jennifer Daniel

111 SEE AND SAY by John Pulbrook III
 113 THE MYSTERY OF ST. HELENA by Henning Magenbreth
 137 THE GREAT VILLAINS OF WORLD HISTORY
 by Peter Buchanan-Smith and Amy Gray
 145 OUR DAILY BREAD by R. C. Blechman
 149 IT'S PLACEBO! by Wink
 150 UNTITLED by Lutz Widmaier
 151 BIG BRAND by Whitney Sherman

152 THINK DIFFERENT by Prem Krishnamurthy
 155 THE EMPIRE by Lobrow
 DEADLY ALLIANCE (cover) by Knickerbocker
 STATES OF THE UNION AND THE REAL EMPIRES
 (inside covers) by Christoph Niemann
 EDITOR: Nicholas Blechman
 EDITORIAL COLLABORATOR: Jesse Gordon
 DESIGN: Knickerbocker Design

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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Contrasting weight

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Contrasting color

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Alignment

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Spatial intervals

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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.

```

void setup()
{
    size(200, 200);
    frameRate(12);
    sx = width;
    sy = height;
    world = new int[sx][sy][2];
    stroke(255);

    for (int i = 0; i < sx * sy * density; i++)
    {
        world[(int)random(sx)][(int)random(sy)][1] = 1;
    }
}

void draw()
{
    background(0);

    for (int x = 0; x < sx; x=x+1)
    {
        for (int y = 0; y < sy; y=y+1)
        {
            if ((world[x][y][1] == 1) || (world[x][y][1] == 0 &&
world[x][y][0] == 1))
            {
                world[x][y][0] = 1;
                point(x, y);
            }
            if (world[x][y][1] == -1)
            {
                world[x][y][0] = 0;
                world[x][y][1] = 0;
            }
        }
    }

    for (int x = 0; x < sx; x=x+1)
    {
        for (int y = 0; y < sy; y=y+1)
        {
            int count = neighbors(x, y);

            if (count == 3 && world[x][y][0] == 0)
            {
                world[x][y][1] = 1;
            }
            if ((count < 2 || count > 3) && world[x][y][0] == 1)
            {
                world[x][y][1] = -1;
            }
        }
    }
}

int neighbors(int x, int y)
{
    return world[(x + 1) % sx][y][0] +
world[x][(y + 1) % sy][0] +
world[(x + sx - 1) % sx][y][0] +
world[x][(y + sy - 1) % sy][0] +
world[(x + 1) % sx][(y + 1) % sy][0] +
world[(x + sx - 1) % sx][(y + 1) % sy][0] +
world[(x + sx - 1) % sx][(y + sy - 1) % sy][0] +
world[(x + 1) % sx][(y + sy - 1) % sy][0];
}

```

Code Hierarchy Computer code is written with a structural hierarchy; functions, routines, and subroutines are nested within each other in a way that determines the performance of the code. Indents and line breaks are used to make this hierarchy clear to the programmer.

```

void setup() { size(200, 200);
frameRate(12); sx = width; sy
= height; world = new
int[sx][sy][2]; stroke(255);
for (int i = 0; i < sx * sy * den
sity; i++) { world[(int)
random(sx)][(int)random(
sy)][1] = 1; } } void draw()
{ background(0); for (int
x = 0; x < sx; x=x+1) { for
(int y = 0; y < sy; y=y+1) {
if ((world[x][y][1] == 1) ||
(world[x][y][1] == 0 &&
world[x][y][0] == 1)) { world
[x][y][0] = 1; point(x, y);
} if (world[x][y][1] == -1)
{world[x][y][0] = 0;
world[x][y][1] = 0;} } } for (int x =
0; x < sx; x=x+1) { for (int
y = 0; y < sy; y=y+1) { int
count = neighbors(x, y); if
(count == 3 && world[x]
[y][0] == 0) { world[x][y][1]
= 1; } if ((count < 2 || count
> 3) && world[x][y][0] ==
1) { world[x][y][1] = -1; } } }
int neighbors(int x, int y) {
return world[(x + 1) % sx]
[y][0] + world[x][(y + 1) %
sy][0] + world[(x + sx - 1)
% sx][y][0] + world[x][(y
+ sy - 1) % sy][0] + world
[(x + 1) % sx][(y + 1) %
sy][0] + world[(x + sx - 1) %
sx][(y + 1) % sy][0] + world
[(x + sx - 1) % sx][(y + sy
- 1) % sy][0] + world[(x + 1)
% sx][(y + sy - 1) % sy][0]; }
}

```

Flat Hierarchy The visual hierarchy makes no difference, however, to the machine. All that matters from the software's point of view is the linear order of the code. Although the visually flat sequence shown here functions for the computer, it is confusing for the human programmer. Yeohyun Ahn, MFA Studio.



Hierarchy through Contrast The Russian constructivists discovered that the dramatic use of scale, photography, and color imbued their political messages with a powerful and provocative voice. These pioneers used contrast in the size, angle, and value of elements to create hierarchical separation.

This project asked designers to build a hierarchy by combining an image of their hand with a list of autobiographical facts. Elements were restricted to 30 or 45 degree angles; scale, position, color, and transparency were employed to control the transmission of information. Viviana Cordova, MFA Studio.

PAZO GRAND TABLE FOR SIX \$229

two glasses wine
grilled salmon pincho
ribcage
steak
mushrooms & mushrooms
pasta
piza bianca
piza bianca

two glasses wine
grilled salmon pincho
ribcage
steak
mushrooms & mushrooms
pasta
piza bianca
piza bianca

PAZO CLASSICAL CATALAN TABLE FOR TWO \$54

grilled salmon pincho
ribcage
steak
mushrooms & mushrooms
pasta
piza bianca
piza bianca

PAZO SICILIAN TABLE FOR TWO \$69

grilled salmon pincho
ribcage
steak
mushrooms & mushrooms
pasta
piza bianca
piza bianca

PAZO MEDITERRANEAN TABLE FOR TEN \$399

grilled salmon pincho
ribcage
steak
mushrooms & mushrooms
pasta
piza bianca
piza bianca

PAZO

tapas

white bean puree & pork jus 6 | 18
sheeps cheese, apples & walnuts 6 | 18
cucumber and sesame 6 | 18
house marinade of vinegar & herbs 4 | 12
spiced veal & pork in pastry, salsa verde 6 | 18
with first press Sicilian olive oil 5 | 15
rotisserie lamb, aioli, green olives, red onion 6 | 18
aged Spanish ham & local peaches 6 | 18
crispy calamari, lemon, chilis & aioli 5 | 15
unfried olive oil & sea salt 5 | 15
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
SAUTE OF SIX LOCAL fresh lemon & basil 5 | 15
GRILLED ASPARAGUS romesco sauce 6 | 18
PEPPER BRUSCHETTA grilled peppers, manchego & pignoli 6 | 18
WILTED SPINACH garlic & pignoli 4 | 12

salads

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

PAZO

SALADS

COPPA-LAMB PEAR \$4
LOCAL SPINACH MANICATA \$4
ARUGULA SALAD \$5
INSALATA CAPRESE \$5
ROMAINE HEARTS \$5

BREADS

WHOLE WHEAT FOCACCIA \$4
PAN MICHIELLE \$5

CHEESE

FRESH MAHON \$4
IDZAZABAL \$4
GARROTTA \$4
CARNABALE \$5
SEGNA DE ESTELLA \$8

PIZZA

PIZZA BLANCA \$11
PIZZA SICILIANA \$14
PIZZA CRISTINA \$12
PIZZA CATALAN \$10

PASTA

MALLORQUESA ALLA NORMA \$18
GOAT'S CHEESE ARDHOLOTTI \$24
ARROZ "LA BOMB" \$7

VEGETABLE

MALLORQUESA ALLA NORMA \$18
GOAT'S CHEESE ARDHOLOTTI \$24
ARROZ "LA BOMB" \$7

MEAT

GRILLED LAMB CHOP \$14
GRILLED SALMON \$14
GRILLED SALMON \$14

FISH

GRILLED SALMON \$14
GRILLED SALMON \$14
GRILLED SALMON \$14

TAPAS

JAMON IBERICO \$18
WHITE ANCHOVIES \$18
CALAMARI FRITTI \$15
SHRIMP & APPLE PINCHOS \$15
CHORIZO \$18
EMBRANADAS \$18
LAMB ON FONGASSE \$18
FIRE ROASTED ALMONDS \$15
MIXED OLIVES \$12
BRUSCHETTA \$12
BRUSCHETTA \$12

RAW

TRONCO DE BUEY \$18
VALLE DE CAJON \$18

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

PIZZA

sausage arugula \$11
pizza bianca \$11
pizza siciliana \$14
pizza cristina \$12
pizza catalan \$10

CHEESE

fresh mahon \$4
peccotto \$4
garrota \$4
idzazabal \$5
lamb \$4
calabrese \$5

tapas

white bean puree & pork jus 6 | 18
sheeps cheese, apples & walnuts 6 | 18
cucumber and sesame 6 | 18
house marinade of vinegar & herbs 4 | 12
spiced veal & pork in pastry, salsa verde 6 | 18
with first press Sicilian olive oil 5 | 15
rotisserie lamb, aioli, green olives, red onion 6 | 18
aged Spanish ham & local peaches 6 | 18
crispy calamari, lemon, chilis & aioli 5 | 15
unfried olive oil & sea salt 5 | 15
slow-roasted shallots & goat's cheese 5 | 15

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GRILLED MUSHROOMS lemon, rosemary & sea salt 4 | 12
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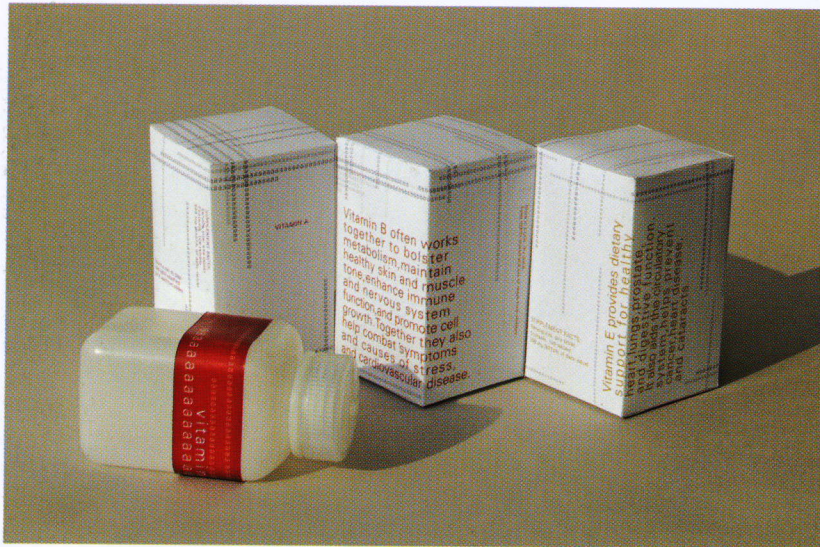
HyunSoo Lim
Katie MacLachlan

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. Typograpy I. Jennifer Cole Phillips, faculty.

Claire Smalley
Anna Eshelman



Robert Ferrell



Emily Addis

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 counterpart 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.

Typography Across Three Dimensions

A visual hierarchy is often necessary for objects in a series. In these designs for vitamin packaging, students have expressed the identity of the individual product as well as the overall brand. Typography II. Jennifer Cole Phillips, faculty.



Bruce Willen

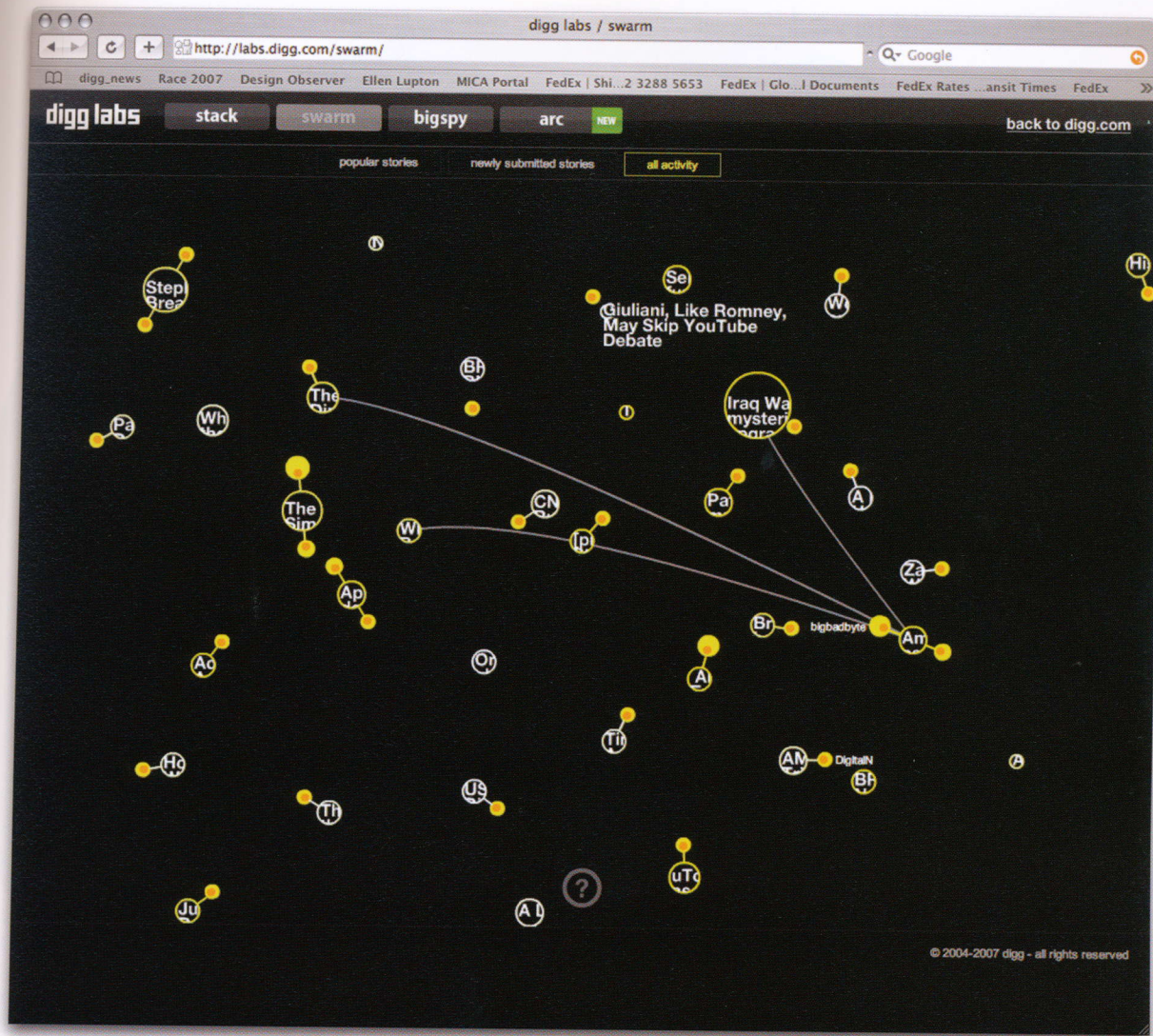
Unexpected Hierarchy This project takes existing brands and redirects them to unexpected audiences. Here, the designer focuses on a generic food line and reverses the usual order of emphasis by placing the nutrition facts front and center; instead of words, images of the actual product are used to promote what's inside. Advanced Graphic Design. Jennifer Cole Phillips, faculty.



Web Hierarchy In a complex website, numerous systems of hierarchy are at work simultaneously. Here, the navigation consists of a global menu along the right edge as well as a more finely grained index positioned in the main content window.

A "data cloud" uses different sizes of type to automatically represent the frequency with which these tags occur. In many sites, such data clouds change in response to user-added content. The search feature allows users to cut through the hierarchy altogether. William Berry, Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum.

Dy
dis
the
cor
are
in t
the
hie



Dynamic Hierarchy This popular web portal displays stories in swarms as authors submit them in real time. The interface feels like a computer game, where trigger-fast selections are needed to engage the content. Elements in the field grow and gain color according to the number of "diggings," reflecting a changing hierarchy. Stamen Design.