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# **The Influence of Street Culture on Brand Identity in Graphic Design**

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A thesis submitted to the  
College of Imaging Arts and Sciences  
in candidacy for the degree of Master of Fine Arts

Graduate Graphic Design Program  
School of Design  
College of Imaging Arts and Sciences  
Rochester Institute of Technology

**Holly Parshall**  
June 2008

This thesis is dedicated  
to my parents,  
Paul and Sally Parshall,  
and my family,  
Robert and Madison Reader.

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# **The Influence of Street Culture on Brand Identity in Graphic Design**



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**Holly Parshall**

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## Abstract

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### Problem Statement

This thesis explores the influence of street culture on brand identity in graphic design. Aspects of street culture include skateboarding, hip-hop, rap, punk, and street art. Street art is traditionally thought of as illegal or rebellious mark-making of public property or property that does not belong to the person making marks on it. Street art can also be defined as a means of crafting personal expression through the enhancement or augmentation of a natural or man-made environment. In this study, brand identity is defined as "the controllable and fundamental elements of a company, product, or service brand, such as the core essence, positioning, brand name, tag line, messaging, and experience" (Perry, 5).

The premise of this investigation will be to examine how corporate identities have been influenced by street culture, more specifically street art, as part of the larger realm of pop culture that has originated from the New York City hip-hop scene in the late 1970s. Street art has relevant applications in the design of corporate branding, especially in the fashion and music industries since the solutions can be influenced from the ephemeral and vernacular everyday actions and objects that can be found in urban settings.

This study specifically focuses on the styles, mediums, and processes that are local and specific to street art that have transitioned into more public, formalized, and mass-produced graphic design solutions for corporate identity and associated branding strategies. By comparing, contrasting, and studying how actual examples from street culture influence brand identities and strategies, it is hoped that new methods and processes will be discovered that could help graphic designers learn how to reappropriate street culture in terms of generating aesthetic solutions, conceptual directions, and voice or tone in brand solutions.

### Selected Key Questions

- 1 In what ways has the overall street art idiom influenced some graphic designers and/or their clients?
- 2 How has street art inspired and influenced designers to explore new methods and processes when creating or using imagery and typography in graphic design solutions?
- 3 What are the different ways in which type and image have evolved as trends, or perhaps clichés, in brand identities for the music and fashion industries?
- 4 How has street art been a general influence on branding in the music and fashion industries?
- 5 How has street culture influenced visual communication intended for different age groups?
- 6 Are there varying motifs, elements, and themes that have emerged from street art and influenced brand identities and/or branding strategies?
- 7 How have different levels of abstraction and complexity of imagery or typography been used in brand identity systems? Have these abstractions been influenced by street art?
- 8 How have brand identities and/or branding strategies been interpreted with respect to the hip-hop subculture?

### Project Relevance and Importance

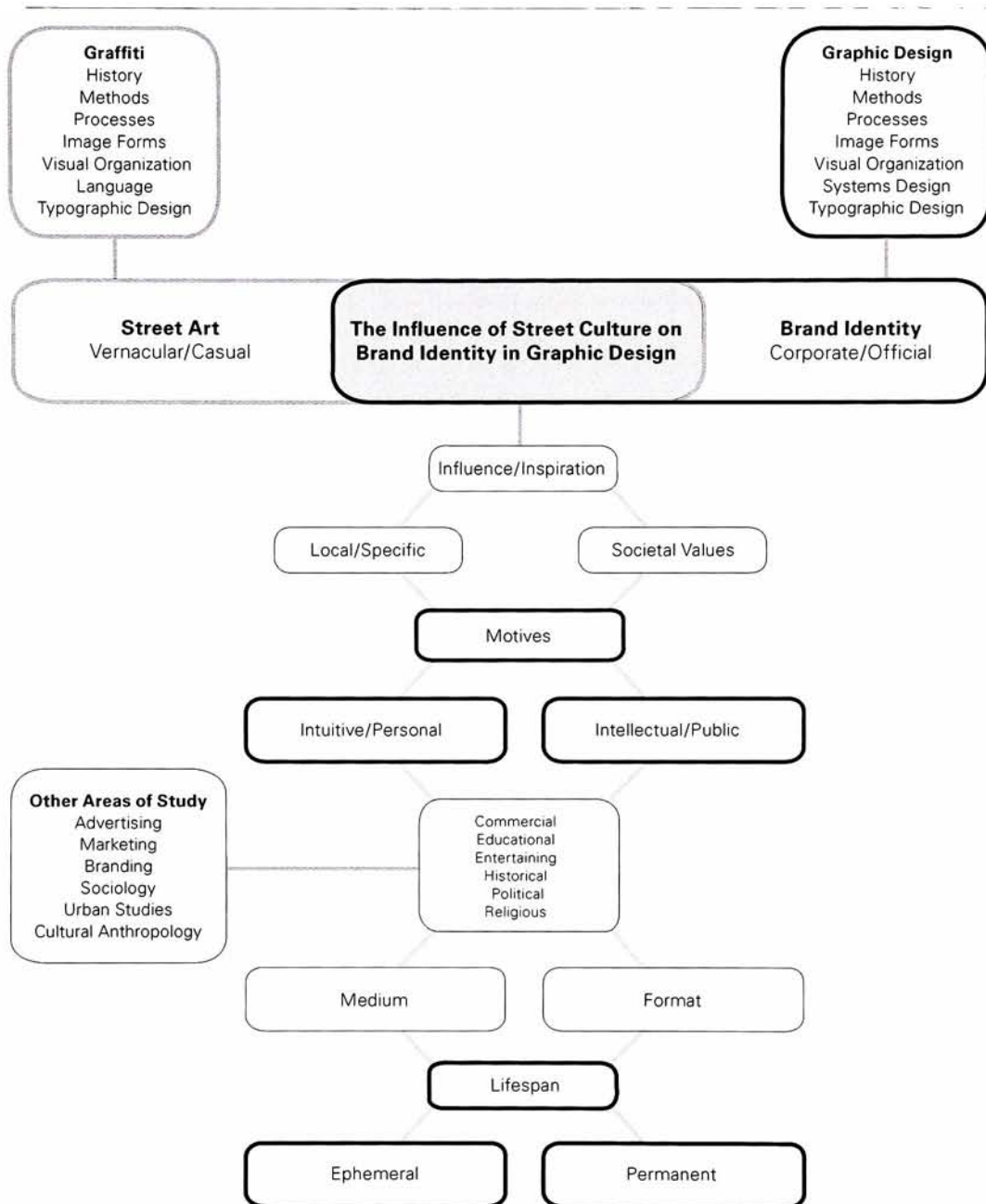
This study recognizes that street art is an art form, created by artists, and as such is worthy of respect and acknowledgement.

This study explores design strategies and issues related to reappropriating street art in corporate identities and related branding strategies with an aim to present new methods and processes that designers can apply toward more meaningful, long-lasting identity solutions that do not misrepresent urban culture.

## Project Definition

Associated Areas of Study	Graphic Design Advertising	Marketing Branding	Sociology/Urban Studies Cultural Anthropology
Potential Application	<p>A potential application for this thesis could involve the creation of a brand identity and/or associated brand strategy that misappropriates street art and needs to be thoughtfully amended, and one that studies a brand that does not use street art as an influence but could have in order to create a new successful solution. By comparing both approaches and how the actual solutions can be improved, it will demonstrate that the street art idiom within a larger pop-cultural perspective can offer new design strategies that could inspire graphic designers to present more appropriate and respectful design solutions.</p> <p>A second potential application of this study would be to define the syntax of vernacular signs and symbols that have emerged from generation-specific icons from street art for appropriate, noncommercial design solutions in a less expected and under-investigated area of industry. The design solutions, therefore, would represent an alternative way to communicate visual information to a specific audience without disrespecting the hip-hop subculture. The designs would also be placed in areas where the viewing experience to a passerby would appear to be a spontaneous or unexpected experience of message-making.</p>		
Project Goals	<p>The goals for this study are to discover how street art is currently reappropriated in brand identity and associated branding solutions and what strategies designers could explore to find influence from street art to communicate to a wide range of age groups within a specific and appropriate area of industry. Another important aspect of this study is to discover how street artists who are part of the hip-hop subculture use their talent and knowledge within the subculture to reappropriate the art from within their own branding solutions in graphic design. Based on how street artists' interpret their actions and behaviors through graffiti writing or tagging, designers who do not directly belong to the hip-hop subculture could benefit from this study to better understand how they could use the influence from the art form in branding solutions to positively contribute to the design field in a noncommercial way that is respectful, meaningful, informational, and the mode of communication operates similarly to the way the art form did when it was first conceived to communicate messages.</p> <p>Another goal of this thesis is to prove how street art is misappropriated in many design solutions for different industry areas to promote commercial sales in such a way that misrepresents and disrespects the hip-hop subculture. It is important for street art to be represented in a way that goes beyond meeting the bottom line so that the influence of street art in brand identity can be used for a more functional purpose in which the medium and mode of communication is used in a way that is highly informational, educational, and serves a purpose other than to sell an idea or product.</p> <p>A final goal is to implement the theoretical research into a real-world application.</p>		

# Explanatory Diagram



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## Precedents

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The examples in this section include case studies, book chapters, models, and other findings that are resources for information on the influences of street culture in brand identity and/or branding strategies in graphic design.



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## Precedent A Street Art: The Spray Files

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Bou, Louis. *Street Art: The Spray Files*. New York: Harper Collins, 2005.

### Graffiti History

In *Street Art: The Spray Files*, Louis Bou recognizes graffiti street art as a cross-cultural phenomenon that “explores popular styles, mediums, recurring characters, and influential artists” that has been popularized and is now entering mainstream design use. This book defines and explains the difference between street art and graffiti. Street art is defined as an art movement that was started in Harlem, New York, in city spaces and train cars in the 1970s. The specific art form started as a means to express one’s spirit and reaction to political and cultural events in society. The graffiti art movements in New York and Philadelphia were cross-cultural art forms that were recognized and accepted as a new form called “street art.” Since street art has been recognized, it has spread globally and caught the attention of people who do not belong to the subculture because it rivals fine art for wall space in galleries. The art form has been called “post graffiti” by street artists and non-street artists.

Bou states that in present-day graffiti, street art has evolved into a language for street artists and graphic design professionals alike who have generated new ways of creating design solutions by using software and/or traditional processes as a means to create typography and imagery to reappropriate designs to achieve the style of street art. Today, street art is emulated by both graphic design students and professionals to create corporate identities and branding strategies to establish a long-lasting mark of authorship and/or to brand a message that is legal but may not be a positive interpretation or intended for noncommercial purposes that respect the hip-hop subculture. Street art, however, is truly changing the way graphic design is approached.

### Analysis

This book is important to this thesis because it offers ways of studying the communication goals that are discussed with featured street artists’ work and their individual approaches to different techniques, mediums, forms, and content to create a distinctive style. Below are some examples from the book of characters street artists use as a way to brand or author their personal work.



Characters / Authorship



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## Precedent B American Graffiti Gals

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Ridely, Jane. "American Graffiti Gals: Trailblazing NYC Women Bring Street Art to the Forefront."  
*Daily News* 12 November 2006, Sunday ed. Sunday NOW, pp. 2–3.

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### Article

In the newspaper article "American Graffiti Gals: Trailblazing NYC Women Bring Street Art to the Forefront," Jane Ridely discusses a female graffiti artist, Sandra Fabara, who is known as Lady Pink. The article tells the story of this woman and her love for graffiti art, a hobby she picked up at the age of fifteen. Among the 10,000 male street artists, she was the "lone" female who participated in the rebellious activity. Today, Lady Pink's work appears on buildings she "tagged" only after she obtained permission from the owner of the building.

The author mentions that Lady Pink now finds inspiration for her artistic endeavor by looking to other more recent female graffiti artists whom she admires. One artist in particular is Kathleen Howie-Garcia, a Canadian professional artist and educator, who had been inspired to join in graffiti "tagging" and "writing" after her involvement in the skateboarding scene and her membership in a neo-feminist group called the "riot Grrls." The riot Grrls are described in the article as interested in equal rights for humans.

Lady Pink receives private commissions for doing street art work for others. Her street art is in the "Hall of Fame" event that is held annually in East Harlem in New York City where graffiti was conceived. It is also used in competitions or sold in art galleries, and she works with city youth programs to create legal murals in the city. Graffiti is becoming more of an acceptable medium to state and government authorities and is part of the forefront in the street art today.

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### Significance

"American Graffiti Gals: Trailblazing NYC Women Bring Street Art to the Forefront" illustrates how street art is a growing phenomenon that has begun to recognize females who are contributing to its evolution. Today, graffiti artists are demanding, or at least receiving, access and publicity for their artwork—art that was once anonymous and classified as a crime.

This article is important to this thesis study because it highlights how street art today is not only part of the street art movement but has become an act or expression of people of differing race, ethnicity, religion, and gender.

This article raises awareness about a segment of street artists who are not usually recognized and will offer new ways to explore how they have contributed to the street art movement. For instance, street artists' work could be studied to understand the artwork semiotics, which include form, meaning, and concepts that will provide information on how the influences from street art may be used to reappropriate rather than to misappropriate brand identity solutions and/or associated branding strategies.

## Precedent C Visual Research: Mapping Meaning

Noble, Ian, and Russell Bestley. *Visual Research: An Introduction to Research Methodologies in Graphic Design*. London: AVA Publishing SA, 2005. pp. 67–81.

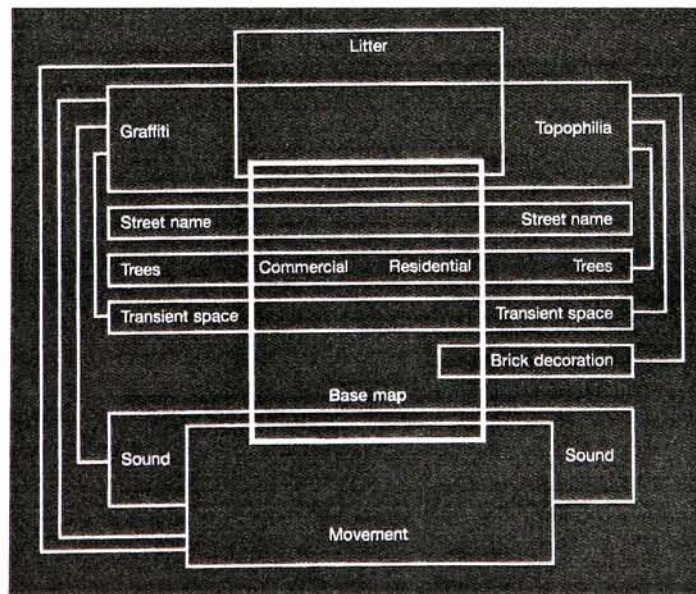
### Case Study

The case study *Visual Research: An Introduction to Research Methodologies in Graphic Design* presents an investigation by designer and educator Alison Barnes, who has explored the reasons, purposes, historical and contemporary meaning(s), and potential of the uses and influences graffiti has as an art form for visual message-making when applied to an information design solution. The solution requires the use of cartographer “tools” to investigate why urban or traditional maps, which according to the author “often lack the graphic expressions of the human dimension” (Noble and Bestley, p. 72), could be influenced by graffiti. Barnes’s investigation was an attempt to show how street art is used as a potential influence or voice for authorship, self-editing, and visual communication in and around urban landscapes. Her main interest in the study, however, was to investigate alternative signs’ potential to visually illustrate and inform human intervention and uncover the roots of sign and/or map use as an architectural and social space. The investigation of using graffiti as an influence on mapping and sign solutions resulted in a final application in New Bastford in Nottingham, England.

The ideas represented in the model below (Noble and Bestley, p. 67) are useful for this study in order to better understand how corporate branding can be compared with street art. The study that is diagrammed below investigates the parallels between a company’s functions and purposes. More specifically, the diagram indicates the geographic space and functions of where street art is found to get an idea of how it could be reappropriated to represent values, different meanings, tone, and voice. Investigating street spaces and corporate spaces will aid in understanding how a company that wishes to reappropriate graffiti street art in their brand could make appropriate connections to a specific target audience.

### Model

Below is Barnes’s diagram of the study “Mapping Meaning.” (Noble and Bestley, p. 77)



### Significance

Barnes’s case study will offer new ways of thinking and exploring graffiti as a means for human visual communication and integration. This study will also offer an alternative approach to exploring graffiti street art as a way of denoting information or placing emphasis on brand identities and associated branding strategies as well as further thinking on the interrelationships between an urban environment and its social use of space for human interaction and expression.



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## Precedent D Corporate Identity: Reasons for Change

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Kim, Kwiryun. *Corporate Identity: Reasons for Change*.

MFA Thesis, Rochester Institute of Technology, New York, 2004.

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Thesis

This precedent, an MFA thesis *Corporate Identity: Reasons for Change* by Kwiryun Kim, is a study of how the design of corporate identity in today's society is constantly changing, and how the potential to have a positive outcome or to do harm by changing the brand identity or associated branding strategies may cause confusion to a consumer.

Model

To achieve successful corporate identity change, Kim suggests that the redesign must differentiate visually from other companies. A company that is redesigning their brand identity must make considerations that will determine what the main message is and how it will communicate to the target audience. Therefore, five stages were suggested for successful change. They can be divided into two separate categories (Kim, p. 11), which are:

### Stage 1

#### Market and Design Research

Conferences

Creative problem solving

(to achieve distinction, interrelation, and innovation)

### Stage 2

#### Presenting Stage

Occurs after new corporate identity is completed

Develop strategies for implementing new identity

Informing audience of change

Application exploration

### Design Stage

#### Distinction

Does the corporate identity change or help the company stand out from the previous identity and among its competitors?

#### Interrelation

Does the corporate identity change have influence and representation from each area of the company?

#### Innovation

Does the corporate identity change creatively set new standards for the market?

### Presentation Stage

#### Communication

Does the corporate identity change effectively state what the company does?

#### Affection

Does the corporate identity change influence its viewers on an emotional level?

Significance

Kim's study will help this thesis investigation by suggesting ways in which individuals (professional and nonprofessional) or companies could approach street art and use it as influence for designing or redesigning brand identities by studying its potential positive and negative interpretations.

## Precedent E Vernacular Letterforms

Liete, Georgiana. *Vernacular Letterforms: An Expression of Culture and Social Values*.  
MFA Thesis, Rochester Institute of Technology, New York, 2000.

### Thesis

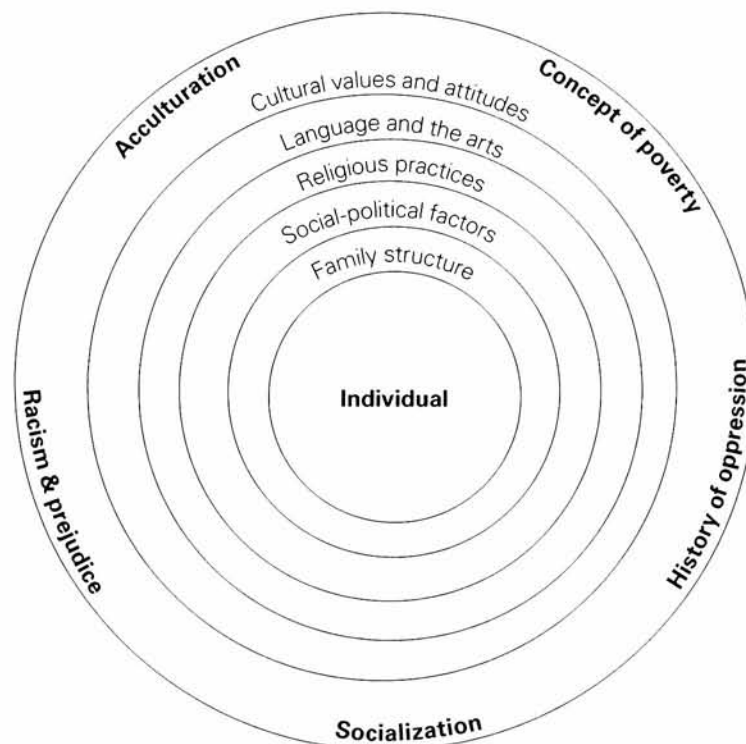
This precedent is an MFA thesis by Georgiana Liete, whose study, *Vernacular Letterforms: An Expression of Culture and Social Values*, is an investigation of how handlettering in street art could be an influence in graphic design solutions to make connections to human emotions, and cultural and individual values.

### Analysis

This thesis study will aid in understanding the basic elements of culture and how they play a role in making the design more meaningful for the target audience. The model below explains the relationship between an individual and society and the values being expressed within cultures.

The model (Liete, p. 23) was part of Liete's study, which was adapted from Don Locke's model for multicultural understanding and has been adjusted by Paul Grebinger and MFA design student Yih-Chi Wang. The model can be interpreted in two parts: the concentric circles represent subsystems of cultures. The individual at the center is embedded in these subsystems but is also the product of socialization through experience of his or her particular history of oppression, racism and prejudice, poverty, and acculturation (indicated on outer circle of the model).

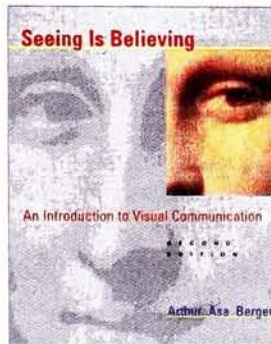
### Model



### Significance

The model above will provide meaningful considerations for the ideation phase of this thesis. The designer must keep in mind positive influences when reappropriating street art in a design solution without misrepresenting or disrespecting the hip-hop subculture.

## Precedent F Seeing Is Believing



Berger, Arthur Asa. *Seeing Is Believing: An Introduction to Visual Communication*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. California: Mayfield Publishing, 1998.

### Chapter Highlights

This introductory book in visual communication provides models that aim to teach readers how to establish “visual literacy.” Communication models discussed in the book are based on topics such as ethics, semiotics, color, language, postmodernism, symbols, icons, and many others related to the thesis study.

In the first chapter of *Seeing Is Believing*, the idea of viewing images and interpreting their meaning is described as a complicated process. The act of seeing is a task of our eye, but the interpretation of an image is determined by what we believe, or our perception of things, which is rooted in the social aspects of our everyday life.

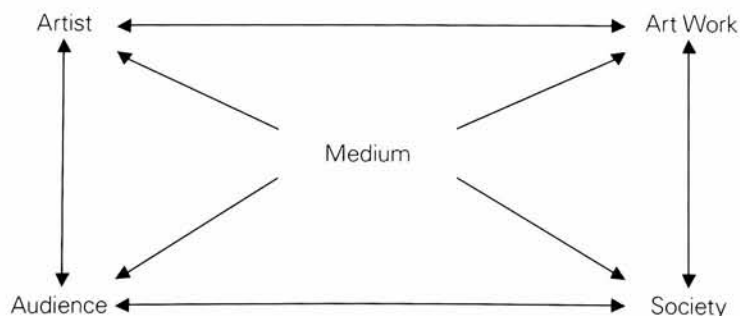
Included in the first chapter is a model created by the political scientist Harold Lasswell. Based on information sources within the process of the communication, Lasswell asks:

Who?	Says what?	In which channel?
To whom?	With what effect?	

Berger took Lasswell’s questions and devised the model below to include the different focal points in the communication process. This model focuses on how to interpret the communication process between the relationships that occur in the interpretation of artwork. The model below includes the most important elements as focal points: the audience (those who will receive the message), the medium used, and the artist.

### Model

*Focal Communication Points in the Communication Process* (Berger, p. 25)  
Created by Harold Lasswell and visually interpreted by Arthur Berger.



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## Precedent F Seeing Is Believing

Chapter Highlights	<p>The second chapter of <i>Seeing Is Believing</i>, "How We See," explains the principles of semiotics, which is the science of signs and symbols that help people understand how perception of messages occurs, through seeing and interpreting images in conventional, everyday life.</p> <p>The third chapter, "Elements of Visual Communication," discusses the basic elements of design such as line, color, scale, volume, spatiality, balance, perspective, lighting, and typography for interpreting and understanding communication goals in design.</p>
Significance	<p>The chapters in the book <i>Seeing Is Believing: An Introduction to Visual Communication</i> offer ways to study street art and how it currently influences branding solutions in design based on general categories such as elements, aspects, tones, or genres. More specific categories that aid the study are color, lettering, imagery, line, and shape.</p>

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## Research

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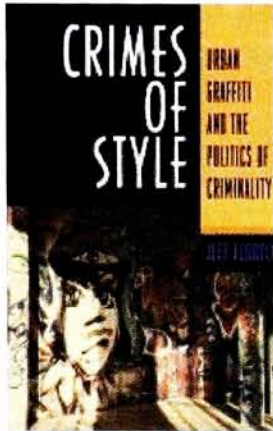
Street art was examined in subject areas such as design history, fine art, popular culture, cultural anthropology, sociology, and other associated fields of study to aid in the investigation of how street art could have more positive and intelligent influences on branding messages.



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## Research Crimes of Style: Urban Graffiti and the Politics of Criminality

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Ferrell, Jeff. *Crimes of Style: Urban Graffiti and the Politics of Criminality*.  
New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1993.

### Graffiti History

In Jeff Ferrell's book, *Crimes of Style: Urban Graffiti and the Politics of Criminality*, graffiti is a part of urban culture that is associated with many different forms and styles that have many different meanings and motives, and has "colorfully illuminated" city streets in the past few decades.

Ferrell discusses street art that first appeared in Denver, Colorado, and was primarily meant to bring attention to the issue of racism and to invite reaction in the suburbs. Street art was used as a means to visually communicate criticism against the U.S. government and political leaders. Street art later represented youth who belonged to street gangs and who identified themselves and their territory by spray painting typographic letterforms and imagery as "tags" and/or symbols in city landscapes.

Ferrell points out that there are many forms of graffiti, and that the street art that deals with crime and vandalism is not as worthwhile to study. He states, "this [his] study focuses tightly on Denver's dominant form of graffiti writing—thereby omits street gang, neo-Nazi, and other sorts of graffiti—not because these other types are unimportant but simply because they are 'distinctly different'." He states that graffiti street art has too often been misconceived and misunderstood by the public as being an art form that is purely a product of crime and vandalism. Part of what makes Ferrell's work important is that he aims to study the cultural and social aspects of graffiti that offer ways for the public to associate graffiti street art with a new perspective that is positive and rich with meaning.

Ferrell asserts that street art is not just "the ugly edge of a culture." Therefore, street art can no longer be regarded as an art form that is produced by a marginalized group of people who fit a demographic of being young, financially burdened, and part of an ethnic-specific class.

### Analysis

Ferrell's study offers this thesis a richer insight on how those in or outside of the hip-hop subculture could find new added value in what the art form offers without always having to be associated with crime and vandalism. Ferrell suggests that there are many forms of street art, and that graffiti writing in terms of language, form, and meaning will vary based on the geographic location that it is conceived from, and how it is used to communicate a message. Therefore, by investigating street art and analyzing how it is used in a branding strategy, it is important to consider how the art form speaks to a specific audience and how it represents the hip-hop subculture of a given location, whether it is New York City, Denver, or a smaller city such as Rochester, New York.





*Style Wars*. Exec. Producers Henry Chalfant, Gary Hustwit, and Tony Silver.  
Director Tony Silver. Public Art Films, Inc., 2005.

### Documentary

*Style Wars* documents the evolution of the hip-hop subculture and street artists' actions and written language, which is known as graffiti. In the film, graffiti is described as the act of defacing public property that does not belong to the graffiti writer using various vehicles and mediums to create personal marks of expression.

Throughout the documentary, the values and beliefs of artists and public representatives are explored. New York City street artists, a parent of one of the artists, fellow citizens, City Mayor Edward Irving Koch, Metropolitan Transit Authority, and other public figures were invited to express their views on the controversial phenomenon of graffiti, an art form that belongs to the street art idiom, which is also part of the larger realm of popular culture.

In the film, street art is evolving and fighting to stay alive as an art form that is used to energize city spaces. Graffiti, or street terms that imply the actions of message-making on a surface, is known as "bombing," "tagging," or "writing." The intuitive acts and expressions of street artists cost cities, especially New York City, millions of dollars to remove. Graffiti writing has since invited public reaction and response to what some believe to be a meaningless way to vandalize a city.

The hip-hop subculture first started practicing graffiti writing on New York City trains in the 1970s. Street artists and their crews spray painted their coded street name as beautifully, or as many times, as they could in hopes of catching the public attention to their work.

Having caught the attention of the public and officials of New York City, street artists' work created a media buzz and put pressure on Mayor Koch to stop the activity. The subject matter that was graphically depicted caused the public to express opinions about the city's aesthetic and resulting safety concerns. This caused street artists and their graffiti work to be viewed as a form of criminal activity that was often associated with burglary, theft, rape, murder, and so on. Therefore, street artists were marked by society and authority figures as vandals and a threat to the city.

In *Style Wars*, a mother of an active street artist was interviewed. She expressed concern for her son's safety and did not approve of his actions. She stated: "He owns nothing in the subways" and, therefore, should avoid vandalizing property that does not belong to him. The son responded by speaking out about how the street art movement is unique in that it was created through an ethnic mix of teenagers who are out to express themselves by creating experimental modes of visual communication that people are inherently drawn to, whether they agree with the message and/or motives or not.

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## Research Style Wars

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### Documentary

During the same interview street artist MAZE shared that street artists discussed their work as having meaning rooted in their culture. Values such as pride, respect, acceptance, and family are expressed in street artists' work. Their work illustrates their experimentation and deconstruction, which helps form and content achieve a style based on the vehicles they use to communicate messages, which could be chalk, marker, spray paint, and so on. Color is an important factor of how well street art "pops" or speaks to an audience. Street art is also the result of what "feels right" to the street artists in order to convey an intended message and achieve an overall style that is individual or personal to each artist. The author of the street art must consider how he or she will create original artwork based on direction, tone, and voice.

In an attempt to combat those who were marking up the trains to make their name known, the Metropolitan Transit Authority tried to persuade street artists to stop practicing graffiti writing on shared public spaces. The first initiatives taken by the MTA were to hire a vandal squad to put up signs and barbed wire fences, place watch dogs on yards, and "buff" the trains to wash off the spray paint. The goal of the city was to discourage street artists from working on spaces that did not belong to them. Street artists who were caught faced the possibility of being convicted and spending time behind bars.

Other efforts were made to bring attention to the problems with teenage youth who were participating in street art on the trains. The MTA responded by posting signs in urban areas that read: "Make your mark in society, not on society." One anti-graffiti campaign that reached Washington, D.C., resulted in poster design solutions in which celebrity wrestling figure images were placed next to typography that read: "Take it from the champs, graffiti is for the chumps." In the meantime, the MTA continued to "buff" the trains to erase spray paint by using a chemical spray that washed away unwanted graffiti imagery and typography. The MTA also decided to have trains make shorter stops at the yards. Trains no longer sat idle for days, instead, only for a few hours. All the efforts by officials and public authorities to stop street art from appearing on trains were challenging street artists to become more efficient and more creative when choosing what canvas to practice on. New canvases on which street artists began to practice were walls and city landscapes. Because walls couldn't move, they offered street artists time to complete more complicated image and typographic work. This further promoted street art competitions and "wars."

In *Style Wars*, the act and expression of graffiti is competitive. Sometimes street artists did not care about the beauty of their piece, as long as it blanketed numerous walls and covered a lot of acreage. Graffiti artwork earned respect from other street artists when the work wasn't about the size but was more about the beauty and how well the content presented itself with the color, form, and shape of the illustrative drawings. Similar to the trains, however, city walls did not promise a permanent, long-lasting lifespan. One challenge remained the same: how long artwork would stay up before it was defaced by someone else who was also looking for fame and respect. A street artist whose work was respected and valued was large in size and/or based on the number of times their work was presented without being tampered with. Another important aspect of street artists' work that won respect depended on the overall message and/or the motive of the message and how it was artistically expressed. When an artist's work was defaced, this created disrespect and jealousy and caused the "war" and competition to go back and forth.

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## Research Style Wars

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Another canvas was introduced, however, that would hybridize graffiti and allow street artists' work to become more permanent and less ephemeral. The canvas this time wasn't meant for outdoor purposes of displaying coded messages and imagery to the public, street art had now appeared in pop art galleries that were interested in presenting a new form. In the 1980s, pop art galleries needed a new form of art to keep the art scene alive and fresh, to hold the attention and interest of the public. In the documentary, one gallery owner and a few of the attendees to the gallery's open house responded positively toward street art entering the realm of fine art and retail business. One individual in particular commented on how the street art on the canvas "possessed energy and intensity" that is similar to the graffiti found in urban landscapes.

Street artists took advantage of displaying and selling their work in galleries. This added to the twist in the trends and evolution of street art. The hip-hop subculture that once earned little to no respect outside their culture was now being recognized, and their talents and personal message-making later evolved and entered computer and print graphic design.

### Analysis

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The documentary *Style Wars* pinpoints important people, places, events, trends, and issues that will help this thesis study in terms of analyzing the street art idiom's evolution. Based on the information provided in the film, street art is defined in terms of who was part of the subculture and how it has evolved as an influence on contemporary graphic designers.



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## Research The Case of the Grinning Cat

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### Documentary

On November 5, 2006, the Dryden Theatre at the George Eastman House in Rochester, New York, shared a film by Chris Marker titled *The Case of the Grinning Cat*. This 2004 French documentary discusses how a cartoon Cheshire cat emerged in street art and mysteriously appeared and disappeared in urban landscapes such as subways, rooftops, the sides of buildings, trees, streets, and other random places. The film also investigates how the cat appears in political rallies within the sea of vernacular signage and how it was used as a symbol for masks worn or seen on large placard signs in other countries, including Britain and the United States.

The research of “Mr. Chat” throughout the film focuses on how the politics and events leading up to and occurring before, during, and after the 9/11 (September 11, 2001) attacks on the New York twin towers in the United States had an impact on countries around the world. The film documents the political events surrounding that event and Mr. Chat’s appearances from when the artwork first appeared on locks in canals to when it ultimately disappeared in the public realm.

The narrator of the film recognizes the cat graphic as a symbol that represented the creation of a new culture signifying social values of peace, liberty, and freedom, which united French citizens of lower to middle class, who ultimately used Mr. Chat to influence citizens of Paris as well as other countries and their societal values. Mr. Chat’s street art character and lighthearted appearance promoted community and cultural values.

Throughout Marker’s film, Mr. Chat represents a powerful symbol with a growing reputation—an idea that transcended from being graffiti on the wall to representing a powerful moving force in culture. This film presents graffiti as meaningful and unique in that it recognizes the potential and power street art can have on society as it sends an intentional message to the public.

### Analysis

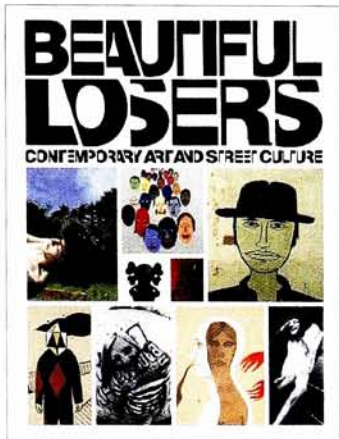
The documentary film *The Case of the Grinning Cat* illustrates how street culture can have an impact on political, social, and cultural life of a community. Mr. Chat was a significant graffiti character that became known to those who recognized and understood the cat as a symbol of a new culture. The graffiti Cheshire cat is a successful example of street art representing a powerful branded message that had changed based on the events that occurred post-9/11 as a reaction that graphically interprets a variety of tones, voices, and messages. Mr. Chat represents and reflects the original purposes of graffiti to speak out about politics and serves as a vehicle to promote change through visual expressions with powerful imagery. The most important aspect of Mr. Chat is that the graffiti character is a concept that is noncommercial and promotes ideals of community, collaboration, hope, and peace.



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## Research Beautiful Losers: Contemporary Art and Street Culture

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Rose, Aaron, and Christian Strike. *Beautiful Losers: Contemporary Art and Street Culture*. Cincinnati: Louis & Richard Rosenthal Center for Contemporary Art, 2004.

### Definition of Street Culture

The lifestyle, behaviors, and expressions of individuals who unite closely to work together and share similar beliefs, values, and practices expressed in their artwork that can be found in urban landscapes.

In the book *Beautiful Losers*, edited by Aaron Rose and Christian Strike, essays contribute to the recognition and documentation of street culture, including street art as a creative and contemporary movement in art history. In the prologue of this book, street culture is recognized as artwork that defined "the prevailing underground youth subcultures of the time, such as surfing, skateboarding, graffiti, independent music, and other forms of 'low' culture (Rose and Strike, p. 19)." Artists who belong to the street culture reflect their lifestyles in their artwork and usually have no formal training in art. Artists of the street culture movement, especially graffiti street artists, work intuitively and closely in groups to practice their craft through innovative experimentation. The goal of any street culture artists is to create new art forms that possess raw energy. Today those artists' works have entered the mainstream.

Rose and Strike explain that artwork from street culture has become mainstream due to the DIY, (Do-It-Yourself) belief of artists in today's generation, which has caused artwork to become more open to a variety of mediums, such as painting, photography, film, athletics, and design. Although street art is part of the street culture that is entering into new realms of media, the art form is still without boundaries and alive with spirit.

The authors also explain that "not since the 1960s have we seen a group of creative individuals with such a unified aesthetic sense who can incorporate so many facets of culture. The world of art has surely been affected by their accomplishments, but their influence reaches far deeper, into the worlds of fashion, music, literature, film, and ironically, due to the growing popularity of skateboarding, athletics" (Rose and Strike, p. 19).

### Analysis

By reviewing the history and context of street art that resides largely outside the mainstream culture and surveying cultural expressions in street art, its history and style can be studied to understand how and why the art form has emerged and evolved since it was first introduced and recognized as an art movement. This book will aid in the understanding of how street art has influenced graphic design over the past forty-seven years and how it has had an impact on brand identities and strategies of today.



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## Research Fieldwork: The Free Wall

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In the month of October 2006, two trips were made to visit business property near Anderson Avenue to view street art located on buildings that are called the "Free Wall." Located in an urban section of downtown Rochester, New York, the Free Wall is an outdoor art exhibit. This particular pocket of privately owned land informs and welcomes street artists to practice *legal* street art. Photographs were taken of most of the graffiti tags and murals for this thesis study.

Artwork was produced by artists at different levels of experience. Materials such as spray paint, chalk, markers, photocopies, various silk-screening techniques, stickers, and found materials (wood, metal, etc.), were used to generate the artwork. During the time spent at the Free Wall, only two street artists actually walked by. Both seemed carefree and eager to practice their "writing" techniques on the wall.

From the street art observed and photographed, the imagery and typographic expressions on the wall appeared to be layered with multiple artworks.

After a week had passed, the Free Wall was again observed to note what changes had occurred to the previous documented artwork and what new artwork had been created. Little had changed.

That same week, signage in close proximity to the Free Wall was observed in order to examine vernacular imagery and letterforms used for local company identities. Also, street art that was next to the Free Wall on trains was documented for investigation. This was relevant to the study since street artists' work in its pure form represented itself as an art form that is an act and expression that is used for and by the hip-hop subculture in Rochester, New York, but local companies may have mimicked the style to help attract a target audience to sell a product or idea, or just to serve as means of expressive mark-making on products within the urban community.



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### Analysis

The fieldwork investigation was an opportunity to explore street art and what it offers to a specific community. The research was beneficial for expanding and cataloging a framework for the study, such as mediums, imagery, genres, motifs, and lettering in urban spaces. The fieldwork also provided visual examples that help answer key questions of this study.

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### Analysis

There was a good mix of styles and themes on the Free Wall. Images ranged from simple to complex. Many of the more simplified images portrayed objects, such as a dog bone or a bicycle. People were portrayed in a variety of ways: sad, happy, humorous, or even sexualized.

The expressive marks that were found at the Free Wall also showcased a variety of styles of hand-drawn letterforms. The artists who wrote on the wall used mediums such as spray cans, markers, stencils, or silk screening, which was presumed by the designer to have been created at another location and brought to the Free Wall and applied within the space.

Other aspects and elements that were observed during the fieldwork investigation were aspects of imagery and handlettering, such as arrows, bubble letters, decorative letterforms, outlined and shadowed letterforms to create depth and add dimension.

The letterforms displayed at the Free Wall were studied based on their formal aesthetics. Color added to the communication of the message that was created by the anonymous artists and their work. Color helped to set the mood, create an immediate connection to tone, aid in the beats or rhythm of the design, and add vitality to the work.

Besides color, the use of language offered an insight into the artists' use of verbal language and slang, which is local and specific to the downtown Rochester, New York area. The next few pages include a few examples of street art language and slang that were present at the Free Wall.

The lettering that has been observed at the Free Wall was a mix between beginning and advanced skills of street art "tagging." Some of the more simple tags were found painted on the wall with little to no care about the final size, legibility, and readability. The larger handlettered examples on the Free Wall were far more complex and coded, and more captivating in their larger sizes, color relationships, and amounts of layering. Overall, the space in which the work was displayed became an outdoor gallery for those who pass by or live in proximity to the wall.

Photo documentation from the Free Wall is presented on pages 25 through 27.



## Lettering Stencils





## Lettering

Stencils



Sticker

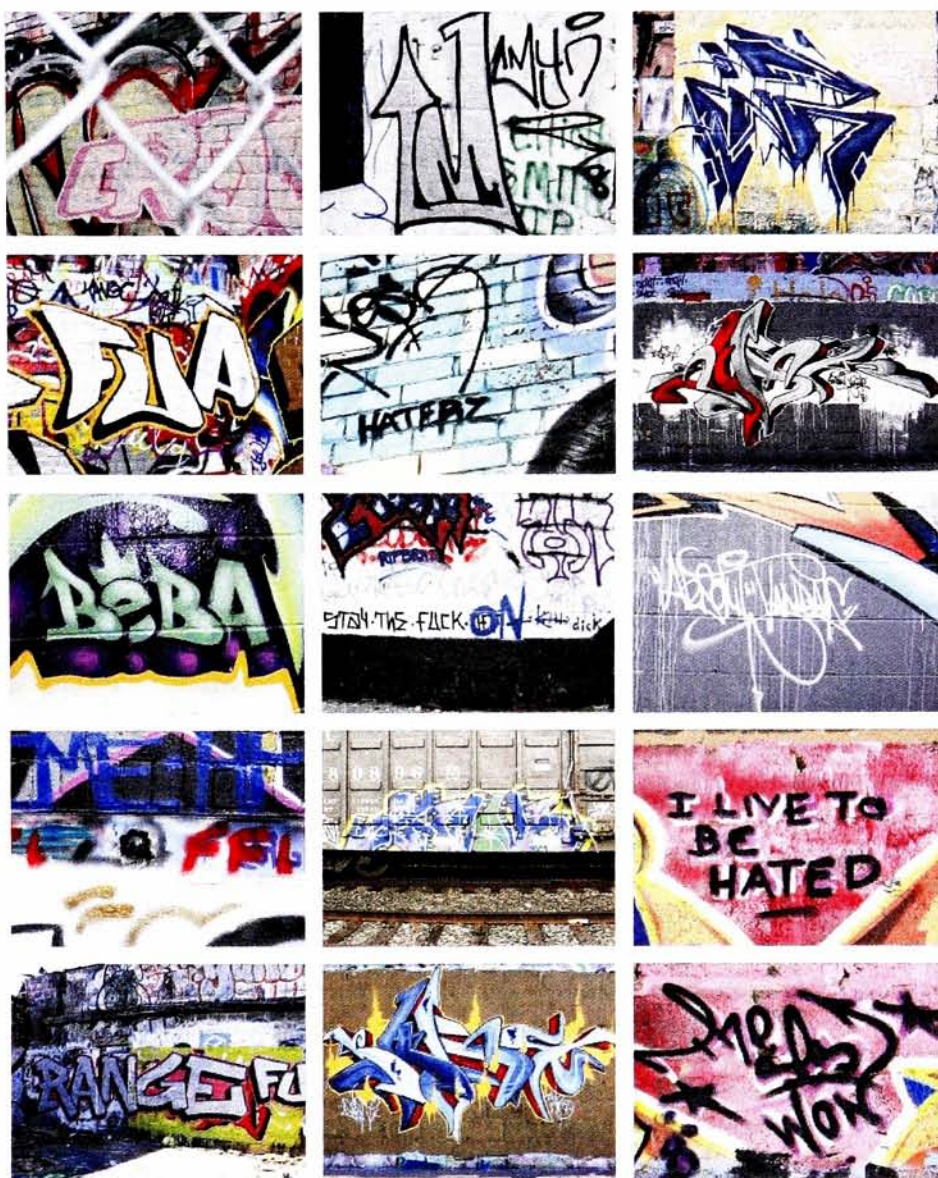


Spray paint





**Lettering**  
Spray paint



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## Research Shaping the New Language of Visual Culture

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Washington, Michele Y. "Shaping the New Language of Visual Culture."  
*International Review of African American Art* 20 no. 2, 2005. pp. 12–15.

The article, "Shaping the New Language of Visual Culture," written by Michele Y. Washington, a principal of Washington Design in Brooklyn, New York, and associate professor of design at Pratt Institute, discusses how street art is showing up in pop culture to interpret music, signage, and illustration. The author urges the reader to "flip through the pages of popular culture magazines like *Vibe* and *Spin* and pop editorial design and advertising that could compete with text works and photo/text combos by fine artists (such as Glenn Ligon, Jenny Holzer, and Lorna Simpson) for a place on a museum wall" (Washington, p. 12). Washington recognizes street art as a new and popular influence in design. He also discusses how the visual arts have the potential to push the creative and technical ways in which artists approach their individual strategies and styles when reappropriating street art.

Washington gives an example of one fine artist and designer who took advantage of an opportunity to explore hip-hop culture and street art: Jean-Michel Basquiat. His famous "tag" and brand of SAMO, which stood for "same old shit," was found on streets in New York City. In the article, Washington states that "in the strictest sense, Basquiat wasn't a 'graffiti artist' because he didn't use the aerosol can or airbrush, but like the graffiti artist, he was a 'writer'" (Washington, p. 12).

Jean-Michel Basquiat  
(1960–1988) was an  
American painter who  
was also a street artist  
in New York City.



Typography influenced by graffiti handlettering today is offered as a font and often used in print design, and still or motion graphics for films and the Web. According to Washington's article, contemporary graffiti is becoming a part of professions, practice, and study, especially in graphic design. In the history of design, the use of street art is included and recognized as New School design, which borrows from modern design movements such as Dada, Futurism, Bauhaus, and Russian Constructivism. New styles and treatments have been borrowed from the modern movements and interpreted further, helping street art enter into the realm of postmodern design.

Graffiti is still often found in urban landscapes as well as in contemporary culture in fine art and design applications in mass media, namely print. Washington acknowledges that street art is unique and can be used in meaningful ways as long as it does not misrepresent urban culture and become a trend in which color, typography, coded messages, and presentation purposes misuse the art form to market to different age groups in specific industries. Washington notes that graffiti styles have been used mostly by corporations and designers who want to target youth (mostly Generation Xers).



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## Research Shaping the New Language of Visual Culture

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Washington mentions that designers, especially typographers, are concerned with the overuse of graffiti-like typography in student design projects. The aesthetic of graffiti as an influence in design is acknowledged as an "outgrowth of hip-hop music" that first came about after the black power movement to address political and social issues. Graffiti as a language of street art is helping to shape the messages of designers and is the "hop beyond" what was once hip on the streets and is now hip on a page or on the computer screen, but for different, more abstract or purely aesthetic purposes.

Washington explains that in May 2005 a panel discussion was held at the Bronx Museum of the Arts called the "Hip-Hop in Post-Millennial Visual Arts"; such visual artists as Luis Gispert and Nadine Robinson and street artist Jackie Salloum participated. Salloum talked about how her work "spans a global perspective" and was inspired from the hip-hop scene that she was deeply familiar with. The hip-hop scene helped shape the content and message of the work that today represents something more than graffiti: the beats, sounds, tones, and forms of the New School and postmodern movement. Her treatments of typography or imagery explored something more meaningful: her social and cultural values.

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### Analysis

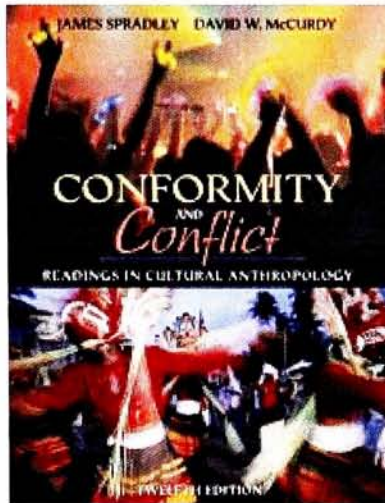
This article helps explain how graffiti has been an influence in popular culture and how fine artist Basquiat explored street art as an influence in his paintings. The history and concern with graffiti and its influence on different art forms and how it is interpreted in design expresses and reinforces why it is important that this study be conducted in a specific area of design, such as corporate brand identity and/or associated branding strategies. Basquiat's paintings and his recognition as an artist who has had a profound impact in the art world in the 80s is debatable because of how controversial his work is.

Like Basquiat's paintings, the influences of street art in design could be interpreted and perceived just as controversial and charged when used for a company's brand identity and/or branding strategy as a design solution. Today, street art as an influence in design solutions may not always consider how hip-hop subculture is represented or how the motives and messages of the art idiom may send the wrong message to a target audience. Street art also has the potential to be meaningful for informational or educational design solutions that represent the culture in a reappropriated, noncommercial, positive way.

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## Research Body Art as Visual Language

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Schildkrout, Enid. "Body Art as Visual Language." *Conformity and Conflict: Readings In Cultural Anthropology*, 12<sup>th</sup> ed. Edited by James Spradley and David W. McCurdy. Boston: Pearson Education Inc., 2005, pp. 85–92.

### Chapter Highlights

Enid Schildkrout's article, "Body Art as Visual Language," discusses how humans use sensory language to convey meaning. One form of sensory body language that is discussed is tattooing. Tattoos are one way humans represent their identity, beliefs, and values. Every culture is known for using tattooing as a means to represent their ideals of beauty, important transitions in one's life, religious beliefs, personal rebellion, and the social status category that one belongs to. According to Schildkrout's article on body art, with more emphasis on tattooing, these are the parallelisms that make connections with aspects of street art:

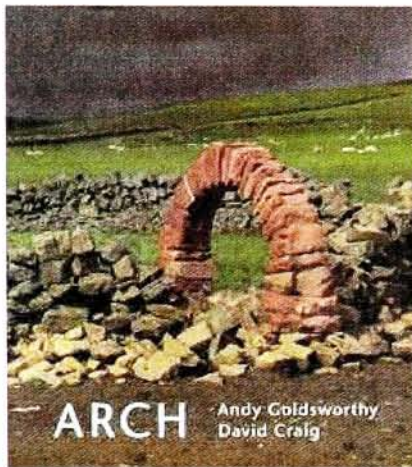
#### Parallelisms to Street Culture

Use of nonverbal symbols	Ephemeral/temporal art (unknown motives)
Sign of individuality	Original cultural meanings rarely understood
Sign of social status	Refers to alternative way of life
Cultural identity	Powerful visual metaphors
Visual language	Represents cultural differences
Mark of a moment	Follows a fashion
Enhancement of physical space	Ideals of beauty
Eccentric	Ornamentation of design
Covering up/Application to outer layer	Variety of mark-making materials

### Analysis

This article is important to the thesis study because it offers an introduction to cultural anthropology and ways in which a reader can understand and interpret visual communication elements that are found in body art, namely tattooing, which has similar goals or values to street art. The topics discussed are the following: personalization, ephemeral, short-lived designs, and the mark-making of the body (in terms of the body being the vehicle) and the ink being applied to the body as the medium of communication.

These essays will help generate new ways of thinking and conceptualizing street art as being personal versus public, insider versus outsider, and offer insight into how street art can be used in a graphic design solution to brand messages based on the conceptual aspects of street art.



Goldsworthy, Andy, and David Craig. *ARCH*.  
London: Thames & Hudson Ltd., 1999.

Andy Goldsworthy is an artist who is internationally known for his work with natural materials and his ability to collaborate with other artists. His work focuses on constructing temporary sculptural pieces that appear in public and private areas around the world. *ARCH* is co-written and edited by David Craig, who teaches creative writing at the University of Lancaster and has written several books based on his travels with Goldsworthy through Lowther Hills, Cumbria, and Lancashire, Scotland, in search of thought-provoking places to construct a sheepfold arch. A sheepfold arch is a device that was used before railways were built in the mid-nineteenth century in Cumbria as a way to connect main routes across landscape to herd sheep and cattle. The traveling arch that Goldsworthy works with is made out of red sandstone from Locharbriggs, Scotland, carried by vehicle, and then intuitively placed in a variety of locations to direct sheep and mark the landscape with his personal mark of authorship.

Goldsworthy's arch was not placed randomly. The arch was an ephemeral mark that was always photographed by the artists and documented on a map along with written notes. The map below (Goldsworthy and Craig, p. 7) illustrates all of the locations where the sheepfold arch had been erected. To the right of the map is a photograph (Goldsworthy and Craig, p. 75) that reveals some of the work involved in the process of building the arch.





## Research ARCH

Goldsworthy's and Craig's work of building a sheepfold arch in a variety of positions and places was an experiment to test the artists' skills and techniques. Their actions marked the tradition and evolution of the materials used today as compared with the materials that were used in the past, such as rails, fences, and posts. They write that "the arch is 200 million years old, the geologists would say" (Goldsworthy and Craig, p. 27). The most current material, however, is the Permian New Red Sandstone that is almost 100 percent quartz created by Earth, then transformed into sand from thunderstorms and floods, and compacted in the early years of Earth's existence. For Goldsworthy and Craig, the stone is a flexible material for their sculpture work.

Putting the stone pieces together to build an arch was meaningful work to Craig and Goldsworthy for a variety of reasons. Both artists considered their work as an act of goodwill. Their intentions were not to disturb the area, people, and animals that inhabited the region surrounding where the arch was erected. Before constructing the arch, they made sure that landowners and public officials were willing to cooperate.

By having permission to erect the arch, Goldsworthy and Craig collaborated on the design and technique of their work. Some considerations that were thought out prior to the erection of the arch included:

Balance	Simplicity
Dimension	Shape
Utility	Quality
Abstraction	Metaphor
Use of space	Legality
Color	Time/Season
Potential harm to people and/or animals	Potential audience
Integration with public or private landscapes	Position

According to the artists, the mark of the arch is not temporary. Wherever the arch travels and rests along their journey, the memory lives among those who witness and talk about it. The artists state: "the memory of the arch will give life to the story told not just by records of my work, but by the people who see it" (Goldsworthy and Craig, p. 57). Whether it is known as an anaconda or a worm made of stone, or a reflection of the arches of a building, the arch is uniquely different based on how the artists decided to intuitively construct it.

Like street art, Goldsworthy's arch is a mark that relies on how the materials are constructed and interact within a given environment. While the creation of the artwork moves across a landscape, it represents an ephemeral mark and mode of communication to those who encounter the work in its macroexhibition in urban or rural settings.

Also, the function of the sheepfold arch to help herd a flock of sheep and cattle across land allows the device to be used as it once was in its original purpose, while allowing the device to take on a second meaning as a mark of authorship and branded signature of authorship for Goldsworthy, especially since his work with the arch has been recorded and permanently built in safe keeping in North Yorkshire, Scotland.

## Research ARCH

Below are examples (Goldsworthy and Craig, p. 45 and 63) of the completed arch that was erected during Goldsworthy's and Craig's journey.



### Analysis

Goldsworthy's arch is an ephemeral mark of intuition. The arch is an act and expression that is similar to street art in that it is a mode of communication that Goldsworthy has explored with his artwork of the sheepfold arch. The arch was originally used to herd and guide sheep on a specific journey, from a beginning to an end destination. Goldsworthy's arch was explored with an intent that is broader than its original purpose, and it serves as a meaningful, aesthetic ornament and art form that makes connections between the physical form of the structure and how it interacts with the surrounding environment in which it is placed. The form is a trail mark of a journey, an expression where the meaning may or may not always be known to passersby and always changes in its macroexhibition, whether it is in a rural or urban setting, which is illustrated in the photographs above. Also, and more importantly, the mark of the sheepfold arch is Goldsworthy's mark, or branded identity, that he has created and used to promote his work with natural materials and sculptural pieces in the outdoor environment, which has contributed to his fame and recognition as a famous artist.

Like Goldsworthy and Craig, street artists use their intuitive actions and behaviors with a variety of mediums to create a mark as a personal brand or trademark. Whether artists create work for commercial or noncommercial purposes, it represents values and beliefs from their own personal experiences and cultures to which they belong. Corporations today, however, often adapt artwork styles to represent a brand identity and/or associated branding strategy to appeal to a target audience without respect to how they have adapted the artwork and represented the style from which it originated.



# Research Mail Art

## Definition

Mail art is an art form in which individual messages are sent through a delivery system and act as a medium in visual and written communication: a sender and receiver use a decorated postcard or envelope as a means to deliver a personal message. Mail art is a contradictory form of message making by communicating through a manner that was initially for governmental purposes of sending and receiving mail. The art form currently offers a new way of expressing oneself through the print medium by using different styles of illustration, postage or rubber stamps, stickers, and other means of making decorative, intuitive marks of expression that possesses aesthetic qualities and values that represent one's self and culture. This evolved art form is unique in that "it represents a new way of relating to one another and creating our own culture, by minimizing the aesthetic and material trappings of the market economy, working with, and when necessary, the grain of both popular and high culture maximizing our collective human souls." Mail art is also considered to be a "democratic form of fine art" (Ragged Edge Press).

Below are examples of artists' mail art found on the Ragged Edge Press Web site.



- A Nothing Much Productions
- B Thomas Kerr
- C Wild Wubber Woman
- D Indianadan
- E Wild Wubber Woman

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## Research Mail Art

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### Definition Continued

Mail art is similar to street art in numerous ways. One connection between the two art forms is that they both use an established method of communication. For instance, mail art relies on the postal system to send or transfer the information from one place to another. This very act in which mail art is sent from the creator to the intended audience, or where the graffiti artists have “tagged” a train – that invites response from those who wish to observe, participate, or receive the visual information that is often times abstract and the original meanings are not necessarily always known. Mail art and street art “tagged” train cars allow the communication process to involve anyone who wishes to participate in the activity.

Another important parallel that exists between mail art and graffiti is their ability to represent a personal expression on a larger scale, a cultural community to which the creator of the art form belongs to or associates with. Mail art and street art are both forms of art that have evolved and are now contradictory to their initial purposes. Both forms of art were once considered “low” forms of art, but in recent years they rival fine art and its space on gallery walls.

### Analysis

Mail and street art are connected in their art forms and use a visual tool or medium for sending and receiving messages as an evolved, new, and inventive action that is contrary to its initial use. The investigation into mail art is significant to this thesis since it exemplifies how art movements have evolved in the postmodern era of art and design, suggesting new ways in which corporate branding could benefit. Both mail and street art rely on the actual format, physical material, medium, and viewing experience to communicate messages in ways that purposefully appear random or spontaneous. This could offer corporations a new way to use the methodology of the art idiom in a more conceptual way where branding and/or associated branding solutions communicate similarly to street art. The use of street art as an influence in branding solutions in this particular way has yet to be explored in a more inventive way as graphic interpretation and means to send messages that inspire audiences to react to mark-making. Images retain their power and speak to many on a level that can be understood in a positive manner. There is opportunity for street art to be an influence in design that is highly conceptual, intelligent, and will leave a more permanent mark of visual expression. Its use can serve a greater purpose than to sell a product or an idea.



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## Research Postmodern Design

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Meggs, Phillip B. *A History of Graphic Design*.  
3<sup>rd</sup> ed. New York: Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1998.

### Postmodernism Defined

In Phillip Meggs's book *A History of Graphic Design*, chapter 25, "Postmodern Design," discusses the precursors and characteristics that led designers to reject modern design and explore postmodern approaches that would "feel" right in the 1970s.

Postmodernism was the result of designers having challenged and rejected the modern movement. "Postmodernism sent shock waves through the design establishment as it challenged the order and clarity of design, particularly modern design" (Meggs, p. 432). This movement was characterized as art that was political and social, and displayed values that were popular to designers during the 1970s (the same time when graffiti street art was recognized for the first time as an art form). Also, it was at this time in design history when "historical references, decoration, and the vernacular were disdained by modernists, while postmodern designers drew upon these resources to expand the range of design possibilities" (Meggs, p. 432).

Meggs notes that the designer Robert Venturi (b. 1925) was a designer who explored the use of large-scale graphics on architectural space. A few examples of Venturi's work are below.



The term coined for these large graphics was *Supergraphics*. The idea and notion of this term and its practice are similar to the function and meaning of street art in that both art forms use graphic elements, material, color, and a style to send messages on a large scale in outdoor spaces. According to Meggs, Supergraphic was the first of its kind because it was an experimentation with branded graphics that communicated messages in large scale in an urban and outdoor environment. Similar to the graffiti that was becoming noticed at the time, the goal was to create reaction and response in a public environment. Meggs notes in his book that Venturi's vision of the building's purpose and function was to "urge designers to learn from the hyperbolic glitter of Las Vegas. He saw the building not as sculptured form, but as a component of the larger urban traffic/communication/interior/exterior environmental system" (Meggs, p. 432).

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## Research Postmodern Design

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Throughout the chapter, Meggs notes characteristics of postmodern design elements, which include the following:

- Computer-generated processes slowly replaced letterpress typography
- Abandonment of the grid – graphic elements are random and intuitively placed
- Large range of possibility and experimentation
- Lack of rules and ideology
- Design intensity – visual effects/energized space
- Typographic invention – readability and legibility were sacrificed
- Playful and unexpected typography – diagonally aligned/mixing serif and sans serif
- Imperfect geometric shapes
- Visual effects – position, weight, scale, slant, letterspacing, clustering, symbolic gesture

### Analysis

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The chapter on postmodern design in Phillip Meggs's book is important to the study of how large-scale designs have possibly been influenced by, or have had parallel goals to, street art. Because postmodern design and street art were first introduced in the early 1960s and recognized by the public in the 1970s, it is important to investigate how street art and graphic design exploration at the time have shared similar goals, purposes, meanings, aesthetics, styles, and viewing experience locations.

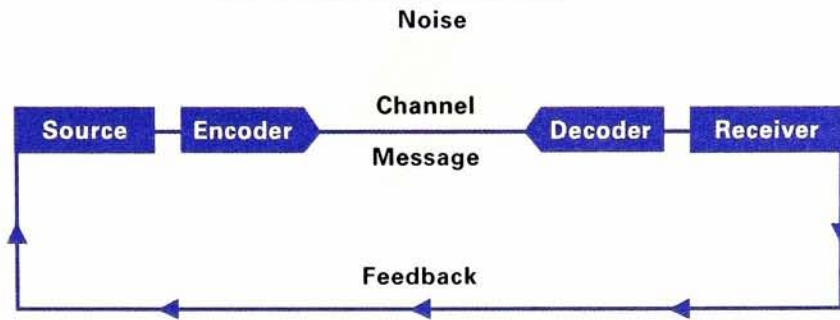


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## Research Shannon-Weaver Communication Model

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### Model Interpretation



Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver created a model of communication that explained the general mode of communication, which occurs in different forms of communication in media technologies, such as when someone speaks over the telephone, listens to the radio, watches television, surfs on the computer, speaks, gestures body language face to face, or visually interprets written or visual messages. The action or expression of communicating information can be broken down into a system to explain what takes place, how it is transferred, and how the message is received, then responded to in the feedback loop.

The model above is the designer's interpretation of the Shannon-Weaver Communication Model, which explains the transmission and reception of the same communication actions and expressions that occur when a graffiti artifact sends messages to an intended or unintended audience. When the artwork is witnessed by the passerby, which could include a designer who could find the work influential, that individual can choose whether to react and respond to the vehicles of communication in hip-hop culture, such as etched glass, spray paint, chalk, acrylic markers, paint, stickers, and others.

The Shannon-Weaver Communication Model explains how an information source, such as a symbol, as a model of visual communication, sends a signal of the visual information and message through a channel to the decoder, the passerby or designer. The decoder receives the visual message and interprets its meaning as that individual understands it and puts the information received in code to express it in a form that ultimately is sent to an audience. The message that is sent to an audience could have taken the ideas from the source and interpreted its meanings in a variety of ways that could correctly and respectfully represent the original thoughts, sounds, written, or visual acts of expressions of communication in a reappropriated manner based on the author's intent, involvement, awareness of the original meaning, and so on. The noise distraction source that can get in the way of the message and its interpretation can cause a misunderstanding of the message that is being transmitted to the receiver who interprets the mark-making and the various ideas and representations to understand the meaning of the work visually. A few examples of "noise" distractions are visual impairments, cultural differences (such as language, meaning of color, symbols, gender representations), and many more. After the message is decoded, the receiver can continue the cycle of communication by sending feedback by re-creating the source to continue the cycle of communication.

## Research Shannon-Weaver Communication Model

Below is an example of how the Shannon-Weaver Communication Model has been an inspiration and visual tool for assessing street art. The source of street art is shown as an information source in which the originator is not known but has been an influence to a passerby, a designer, who has hypothetically reinterpreted the art form in a design solution to a more specific target audience and reappropriated it for a brand identity and/or brand strategy in a graphic design solution. The source, which is represented by the light blue square, has been interpreted by its elements in two different ways. The first design interpretation from the influence of street art is used in a way that is disrespectful to the art idiom and is denoted by the triangle shape found under the label Channel & Message and is shown in one hundred percent blue saturation. The second hypothetical interpretation of the street art is in a respectful, meaningful way and is denoted by the square shape that is located under the "Channel & Message" label and above the Design Artifact label that is color coded in one hundred percent saturated blue. The shape therefore remains true to its original shape and the color is changed slightly to represent how the street art influence has changed from its original, pure form.

Communication  
Model

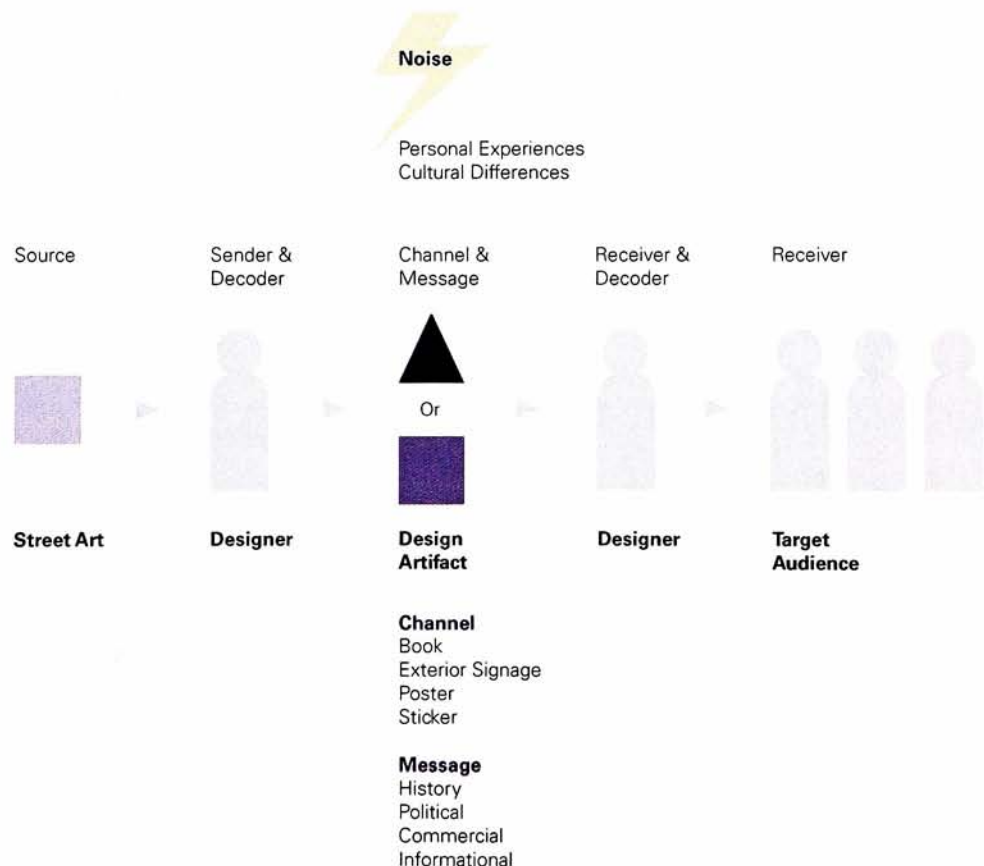


### Misappropriated ( - )

To take influences from street art and interpret their elements in a meaningless and indirect way that does not respect the hip-hop subculture.

### Reappropriated ( + )

To take influences from street art and interpret their elements in a meaningful and direct way that respects the hip-hop subculture.



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## Research Hidden Track: How Visual Culture Is Going Places

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Klanten, Robert, and Sven Ehmann.

*Hidden Track: How Visual Culture Is Going Places.*

2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Berlin: Offizin Anderson Nexö, 2005.

### Design Project Highlights

This book discusses how ornamentation is entering mainstream design and becoming a product of trendy aesthetics that have been popularized in society because affordable computer and photographic software became accessible in the middle of the 1990s. New graphic applications were explored and celebrated. As a result, vector images and other desktop publishing software became easier to use. Thus, a change in aesthetics yielded simple, clear graphics that would serve as examples of design solutions that are influenced from street art.

With more emphases in visual culture on the aesthetic, everyday objects changed from having little to no visual information applied to them to being enlightened by graphic ornaments. Character was added to give an object the human touch as well as to create a visually stimulating interaction between the object and its given environment. "If there is a real, all-encompassing, cultural tendency nowadays, it is the desire for spatial experience" (Klanten and Ehmann, p. 1). Because of the need to portray and experience a reality-based world in a digital perspective that encompasses the five human senses – to hear, touch, taste, view, and smell – today's trend in commercial design is to capture an artistic experience through interpretation of art forms, such as street art, to make money.

In a similar manner, street art is discussed as a fairly new art movement in which the city landscape is the canvas that acts as an outdoor museum or stage that transforms common objects in a playful way. The use of the materials and how they are explored to create visual marks within a given space offers an exponential number of original results, just as a computer and its digital contents can be manipulated and reinterpreted many times over to create an interesting variety of results.

Within the contents of the book *Hidden Track: How Visual Culture Is Going Places*, graphic artists showcase their work and discuss how street art has inspired, influenced, and aided inventive interpretation in their design work.



## Research Hidden Track: How Visual Culture Is Going Places

Viagrafik is one example of a design agency whose work was highlighted in the book. They are a team of artists and a graphic designer from Wiesbaden, Germany, who have contributed to the design field with the project "Get Alive." The designers were commissioned by Music Television (MTV) in Germany to create a sculptural piece for their show that incorporated a graphic logo. The overall structure that was created was made of lath, wood, and cardboard to create a distinctive street art look.

Viagrafik's work has mostly been done for large corporations and involves thought-provoking use of materials and presentation to put the overall design in a context that reminds viewers of street art. Viagrafik describes their work as:

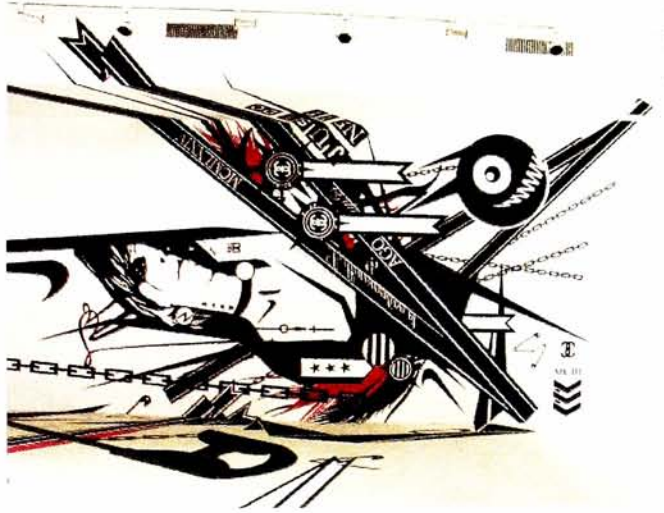
most often a symbiosis of imperfection and perfection. For us, there is no need for an expensive object. We find beauty in the destroyed, rotten wall and like to design using its texture, some spraypaint and acrylics. Or take the plain white wall; that can be inspiring as hell.

The project process for MTV's "Get Alive" (Klanten and Ehmann, pp. 50–51) is shown below.



## Research Hidden Track: How Visual Culture Is Going Places

Another project that was highlighted from the book as an example of street art as a primary influence in a branding solution was an acrylic wall space of Nike's iD Space, or what was formerly called the Art Space. Their headquarters are located in the United States in New York. This project was from 2004 and was done by Kenzo Minimi. His past experience as a movie title sequence designer helps to add a dramatic and dynamic effect to his work. This "explosive" artwork was primarily meant to capture the dimensional look of graffiti when represented on a computer screen but is shown here placed on wall and ceiling spaces in the Art Space.



Nike's Art Space  
*Reconstruct*



## Research Hidden Track: How Visual Culture Is Going Places

Public spaces have also been explored by designers who are trying to put a spin on official street signage. "Graffiti and street art are the two more recent attempts at subverting or superimposing onto the symbolic systems we call cities" and are highly prone to criticism because of the themes they follow. Although graphics along city streets may irritate or annoy citizens, the work invites reaction to the defacement of official sign systems in an anti-establishment attitude to established rules in a rebellious, playful manner. "In this way artists who apply themselves to a remodeling of public space are similar to hackers; they embed their own messages into the official code of the city (Klanten and Ehmann, p. 59)." The message that has now been established with the increased use and influence of street art on branding solutions has caused street artists and graphic designers to promote "Ad-busting" as an anti-consumerism motive to the underlining message and language of their work.

Below is an example of Kandardo design agency's experimentation in which photographers and graphic designers promote a language of symbols in the street art style within a public space. The signage solution was a collaborative effort of designers who represented the work of many international artists. The work was displayed in an artistic exhibition and a reality-based environment where the solutions contrasted with the existing signage. The new "signage" that was installed in proximity to the real and official signage created a false sense of traffic signs to those who experienced and viewed the work.





## Kandardo's Street Symbols



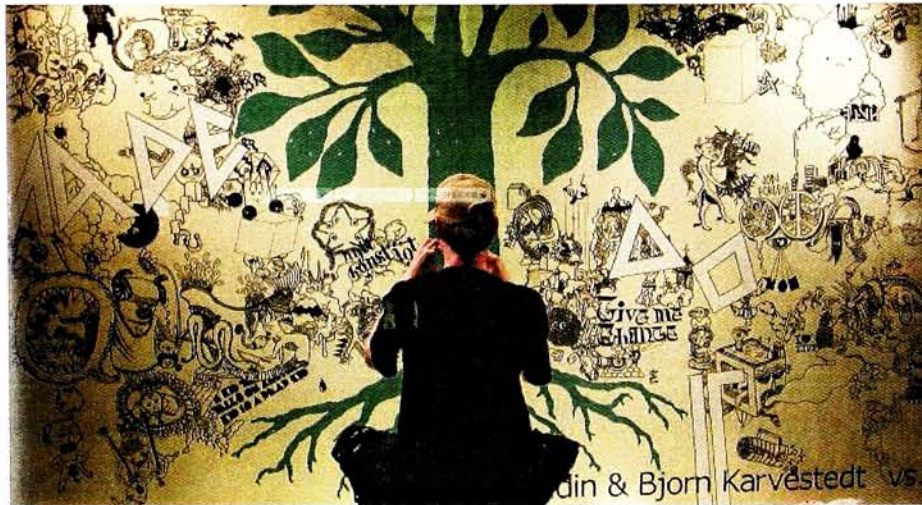
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## Research Hidden Track: How Visual Culture Is Going Places

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Another project that was highlighted in the book was the work below, titled "Graffiti Meets Window," which was done by Karl Grandin and Bjorn Atldax. Both designers were working for a Japanese client, a Hangkyu department store, to combine illustration, graphic, and interior design in the street art context.

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Graffiti Meets Windows

The above exhibition in the summer of 2004 was a strategy to attract customers. Not only were the windows painted but also a perfume bottle sticker was designed for Jean-Paul Gaultier in the same graffiti style. The work proved that graffiti styles were reappropriated for commercial use.

### Analysis

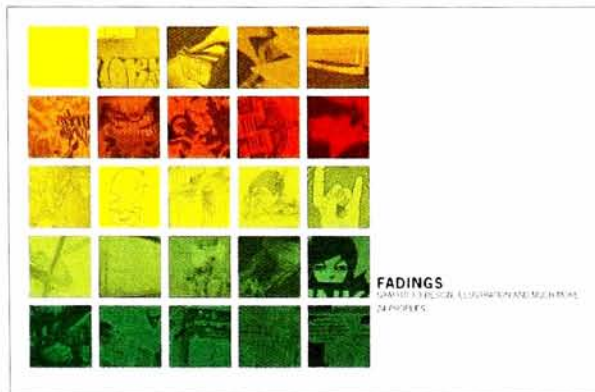
The book *Hidden Track: How Visual Culture Is Going Places* is important to this thesis study because it evaluates how street art is now recognized in high and low art forms. Street art, which was once considered ephemeral and part of everyday life is now part of design, found among fine art in museums, on apparel, and as an influence for a broad range of industries. The art form is an example of a way in which a company can attempt to create their own unique and individual identity, whether it be internal or external company branding.



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## Research Fadings: Graffiti to Design, Illustration and Much More

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Shlee, Saggi. *Fadings: Graffiti to Design, Illustration and Much More*.  
Corte Madera, CA: Gingko Press, Inc., 2005.

### Street Artists and Design

This book illustrates graphic design solutions that have been influenced by street art for corporate brand identities and associated brand strategies. This book recognizes design agencies and freelance designers who use graffiti for design solutions that belong to a variety of industry areas. The majority of the design solutions have been targeted to youth in the industry of popular culture, which includes subcategories of retail, sportswear, and entertainment. This book offers insightful design solutions, methods, and processes that design agencies and freelancers are experimenting with in order to create more meaningful, long-lasting, and thought-provoking corporate brand identity solutions and/or branding strategies. Most of the projects that have been documented present solutions that are influenced by some of the most talented artists who are part of street culture; also it provides examples of how street art could be applied respectfully to wide variety of industries.

This book not only offers insight into street artists as solo or collaborative thinkers in the creative realm of graphic design but also includes a CD that documents and discusses a brief history of street art and its evolution. The CD included with this book gives a more in-depth history of the conception of the art form and how different designers and design firms reappropriated street art in graphic design solutions for a variety of clients.

Artists who are highlighted in this book showcase their work on the street for a variety of graphic design solutions for packaging, posters/flyers, iconography/logotypes, stickers, CD covers, and other design solutions that fall into the category of brand identity for the music and fashion industry.

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A few of the companies and artists considered in this study of street art and graphic design are Viagrafik, Mister E., and 123 Klan. Here are some examples of the artists' work.



A Viagrafik, Skateboard Designs  
B Viagrafik, Brand Identity Solution



## Research Fadings: Graffiti to Design, Illustration and Much More

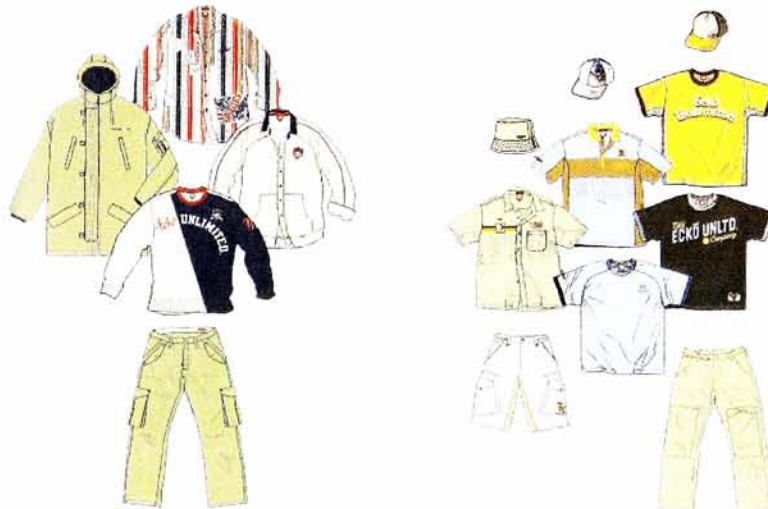
### Design Solutions

Below are examples of product design by 123Klan that appear in *Fadings: Graffiti to Design, Illustration and Much More*.



123Klan, Product Designs

The examples below are ECKO Unlimited clothing company designs created by Mister E.



Mister E, Apparel Designs

### Analysis

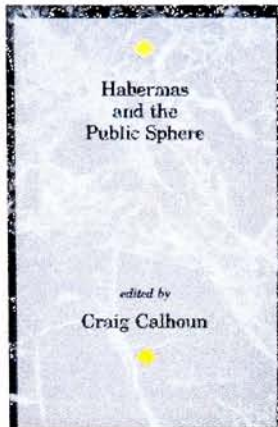
This book will help investigate how graphic design is evolving by street artists who work in the field. The examples on this page and the previous one demonstrate street artist's talent, knowledge, and ability to collaborate efforts toward creating design solutions that aim to reappropriate the art form in a variety of ways to represent and respect the hip-hop subculture.

Many examples from this book will be compared and contrasted to investigate how well a design solution influenced by street art has adapted in graphic design. The solutions will be evaluated based on audience awareness, designer intent, informational use, and communication mode.

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## Research Habermas and the Public Sphere: The Mass Public and the Mass Subject

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Calhoun, Craig. *Habermas and the Public Sphere*.  
Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1992.

### Street Art and Mass Consumption

In the preface of *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, Craig Calhoun explains how street art as a genre is a metalanguage. Metalanguage can be defined as a language that describes a different language, such as tattoo art work is a metalanguage for the modern primitive subculture. Within a given contemporary public sphere, Calhoun believes graffiti is an example of a metalanguage for street art.

Calhoun suggests that graffiti is a complicated and subjective metalanguage that is a meaningful medium and/or mass audiences. He explains that people within localized or regional communities who are from a specific class in a public sphere come together to represent a mass subject, who ultimately try to achieve individuality through materials they associate with, which are part of the mass media that also help to define the mass subject. One specific example of a material that people associate themselves with is print. Because a medium depends on an established metalanguage and the mass media, the two are mutually dependent on one another to define their identity within the public sphere.

Calhoun explains that when graffiti street art first appeared in the public sphere, it was introduced through the subculture of hip-hop music and the black male youth in urban cities. Graffiti has recently evolved to become a new and contradictory form of art that cities once paid millions of dollars every year to erase or cover up. It is now viewed as an inspirational artifact that is accepted and looked to for inspiration in print mass media as a way to construct an artificial identity to promote mass consumption and represent urban culture.

Calhoun mentions Susan Stewart, a writer and researcher, who has studied graffiti tagging in terms of its influence on branding and political identities within the mass public. He asserts that "Stewart makes roughly the same observation when she remarks that the intrication of graffiti, as a local practice, with systematic themes of access... access to discourse, access to goods, access to reception of information" poses a methodological problem, "calling into question the relations between a micro- and macro-analysis: the insinuating and pervasive forms of mass culture are here known only through localizations and adaptations."



## Research Habermas and the Public Sphere: The Mass Public and the Mass Subject

Calhoun borrows a portion of Stewart's article, which describes her findings:

Graffiti may be a petty crime but its threat to value is an inventive one, for it forms a critique of the status of all artistic artifacts, indeed a critique of all privatized consumption, and it carries out that threat in full view, in repetition, so that the public has nowhere to look, no place to locate and avert a glance. And that critique is paradoxically mounted from a relentless individualism, and individualism, with its perfected monogram, arose out of the paradox of all commodity relations and their attempt to create a mass individual; an ideal consumer; a necessarily fading star. The independence of the graffiti writer has been shaped by a freedom both promised and denied by those relations – a freedom of choice, which is a freedom among delimited and clearly unattainable goods. While that paradise of that consumption promised the transference of uniqueness from the artifact to the subject, graffiti underlines again and again an imaginary uniqueness of the subject and a dissolution of artifactual status per se.

Like Calhoun, Stewart points out that graffiti is an act of expression that is personal and subjective, an act of abstraction and self-realization that offers many different ways of representing identity and status. The semantics (the branch of linguistics concerned with the nature, the structure, and the development and changes in the meaning of the speech forms, or with contextual meanings) of the graffiti language have been defined by the mass media in such a way to have caused the art form to evolve and take on a new form. The graffiti that was once viewed as a criminal or vandalous activity is now used to represent a higher status category and is used for contradictory purposes: to attract and to sell.

### Analysis

The preface of this book offers insight about researchers and their philosophical findings and the different ways one could critically examine the historical and semantic shifts of graffiti as a language and as a subject. The connections that are made between the subculture and the broader culture of people as a mass and how that mass chooses to publicly represent itself within status categories to fulfill needs of political or personal identity through mass consumption is of value to this thesis. The investigation of how people use a local or an adaptive subject such as street art and how it is reappropriated in broader use for the public sphere can prove how people of a status category can sustain or corrupt another culture's way of identifying itself through its own micro or macro methodological analysis. Depending on how street art is reappropriated in the mass medium of print for publicity could be a potential threat and problem. In print graphic design, there is possibility of misrepresenting and exploiting the hip-hop culture and the black male youths who first introduced graffiti as a means of political and personal expression. Used by a mass of people as a false identity or as means to create an artificial identity as a way to bring people together who associate with graffiti is threatening and contradictory to its initial purpose, although it offers new inventive ways for street art to sustain a longer lifespan without being viewed as an act of crime.





Sheets, Hillary M. "Ballerinas, Unicorns, and Boom Boxes."  
*ARTnews*, April 2007, pp. 118–121.

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### Description

In the Web site [graffitiresearchlab.com](http://graffitiresearchlab.com), street artists have posted their work with the intent that others could view and understand the new, innovative ways in which graffiti has evolved.

One project in particular that was posted on the web site was called "Postal Chairs." This brief video acknowledged an urban issue in New York City: the lack of green space, which was inhibiting community interaction. Street art concepts of placing messages within a public sphere to attract attention were used effectively by constructing "Postal Chairs" out of materials found at any United States Postal Service (USPS) location. Throughout the video documentation, street artists were filmed going to this neighborhood's USPS store, where they took packaging tape and cardboard boxes and constructed chairs for people to sit in, allowing the people to congregate.

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### Analysis

The Postal Chairs project was a successful solution for branding a message that addresses a social and current issue in New York City. The project called attention to urban sprawl and the lack of a venue for the community to congregate and get to know one another.

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## Research Ballerinas, Unicorns, and Boom Boxes

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Sheets, Hillary M. "Ballerinas, Unicorns, and Boom Boxes."  
*ARTnews*, April 2007, pp. 118–121.

### Description

In the article "Ballerinas, Unicorns, and Boom Boxes," graphic design work by Ryan McGinness was discussed as being strongly influenced by street art. Throughout the article McGinness explains his passion for creating graphic icons in the style of street art.

Today, McGinness continues to use street art elements and aspects in his work to express himself based on his intuitive responses to the shape and form of everyday objects. His exploration of street art includes designing icons based on absurd or surreal imagery that "mimics the hard-edged silhouettes of advertising graphics; these images are lollipop trees, unicorns, vegetation run amok, and even a human figure sprouting antlers and riding a porpoise" (Sheets, p. 118).

Whether McGinness is designing on paper or on a canvas, his methodology to create imagery or icons is based on principles related to composition, form, and color. His marks of expression investigate a wide range of genres, motifs, and objects, which help unite the icons into a system that shares the common thread of shape, color, composition, or a combination of variables.

McGinness's work is a vocabulary of creative marks that communicate on a visual level. His icon vocabulary is one that reappropriates street art on many levels in design. His work has remained true to the designers' cause, as well as a sincere and genuine intent to promote the artists' research work. "McGinness, however, is adamant about maintaining his independence. He filed lawsuit in 2002 against the retailer Urban Outfitters, which was selling bootleg versions of his T-shirts. He prevailed, and the company had to pull all the T-shirts from the shelves worldwide" (Sheets, p. 121). He has turned down offers by major corporations to use his work for commercial purposes. He noted, in response to making his work commercial, that "my work should have no one else's agenda attached to it" (Sheets, p. 121).

Please see the following page for examples of McGinness's graphic icon work.

## Research Ballerinas, Unicorns, and Boom Boxes

### Description

Below are examples of graphic icon design work created by Ryan McGinness that were illustrated in the April 2007 issue of *ARTnews*.



### Analysis

McGinness's work is a successful example of how street art has been adapted in graphic design. His work serves as a useful resource for the ideation phase of this study because it offers insight on how a designer can approach a design solution that is influenced by street art without having a commercial agenda attached to it. Also, McGinness's process work is a valuable reminder to other designers to explore edgy imagery, shape, color, line, lettering, and composition in an imaginative and thought-provoking way.



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## Research Orange Alert: Detroit Artists Use Color to Draw Attention to Urban Blight

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Zacks, Stephen. "Orange Alert: Detroit Artists Use Color to Draw Attention to Urban Blight." *Metropolis*, June 2006, pp. 61–62.

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On Detroit's East Side, the neighborhood is full of abandoned homes that have been marked with a "D" by the city as a code for demolition. Since the city has not done anything to fix the problem in a timely manner, a few artists who are part of a city activist group by the name of Object Orange have made marks of expression with a bright "Tiggerific Disney Orange" paint to bring attention to abandoned houses that need to come down. Not only are the abandoned buildings an eyesore for the citizens of the city, but they pose a threat to the city's ability to attract tourists. The expressionistic marks that have been placed on the dilapidated houses range from polka dots to handlettered writings that resemble Basquiat's street art style.

### Analysis

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The Orange Alert article is a successful example of how artists have collaborated to use street art as a positive act of vandalism to attract attention to an urban community issue. The act of painting or marking a house with orange paint is also a branded message by an artistic community to inspire change through urban revitalization.

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## Synthesis

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In this section of the thesis, examples of pure street art and renegade designs are shown, as well as brand identity and/or associated branding solutions that have been influenced by street art. Examples are highlighted and cross referenced to discover aspects, elements, motifs, genres, and themes found in original street art and how it has been adapted in branding solutions in design. Visual examples that are highlighted have been analyzed in a variety of ways to better understand how images and handlettered or typographic qualities have been rendered or mimicked in design. The intended goals of this section are to answer key questions that have been established in the beginning of this study and to discover ways in which street art could influence or inspire a final application for a brand identity or associated brand strategy that reflects the research and synthesis findings.

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### Selected Key Questions




















- 1 In what ways has the overall street art idiom influenced some graphic designers and/or their clients?
- 2 How has street art inspired and influenced designers to explore new methods and processes when creating or using imagery and typography in graphic design solutions?
- 3 What are the different ways in which type and image have evolved as trends, or perhaps clichés, in brand identities for the music and fashion industries?
- 4 How has street art been a general influence on branding in the music and fashion industries?
- 5 How has street culture influenced visual communication intended for different age groups?
- 6 Are there varying motifs, elements, and themes that have emerged from street art and influenced brand identities and/or branding strategies?
- 7 How have different levels of abstraction and complexity of imagery or typography been used in brand identity systems? Have these abstractions been influenced by street art?
- 8 How have brand identities and/or branding strategies been interpreted with respect to the hip-hop subculture?

## Synthesis Analyzing Street Art

Definition of Matrix	A way of comparing information using an X and Y axis to make reference to parts of a whole in order to draw conclusions, make connections, or explain a relationship.
Aims	The found examples of graffiti street art and graphic design brand identities and strategies have been investigated in a matrix and in categorized levels to draw conclusions and make inferences from comparing their interrelationships.
Goals	The goals of investigating found examples of graffiti street art and graphic design brand identities and branding strategies on this page are an analysis of methods and techniques for visual communication in street art.

### Matrix A

#### Cross-Referencing Graphic Design Decisions with Medium

		Mediums							
		Chalk	Collage	Spray Paint	Sticker/Paper	Stencil	Marker	Charcoal	Photocopies
Graphic Design Decisions	Dimension								
	Shape								
	Symmetry								
	Repetition								
	Placement								
	Size								
	Acreage								



## Synthesis Analyzing Street Art

### Aims




























The found examples of graffiti street art as an influence on graphic design brand identities and strategies are investigated in the matrix below.

### Goals

To compare the emotional goals of street art with decisions related to the use of design elements in order to better understand how street artists visually communicate emotions related to their personal and cultural values.

### Matrix B

#### Cross-Referencing Emotional Goals with Syntactical Decisions in Design

		Emotional Goals in Street Art									
		Cryptic	Rebellious	Corporate	Elegant	Unusual	Political	Humor	Grief	Feminine	Personal
Syntactical Decisions in Design	Character										
	Imagery										
	Line										
	Dimension										
	Shape										
	Contrast										
	Symbol										
	Texture										
	Typography										

## Synthesis Analyzing Street Art

### Aims

The found examples of graffiti street art as an influence on graphic design brand identities and branding strategies has been investigated in a matrix below and categorized to draw conclusions and make inferences from comparing interrelationships of the different emotions expressed through the use of syntactical decisions made by the graphic designer.

### Goals

The goals of investigating found examples of graffiti street art and graphic design brand identities and branding strategies in the matrix below are to investigate what design decisions are made to achieve an emotional goal that is influenced by street art.

### Matrix C






























#### Cross-Referencing Emotional Goals with Syntactical Decisions in Design

		Emotional Goals in Street Art								
		Loud	Dark	Messy	Elegant	Trendy	Masculine	Feminine	Humorous	Fresh
Syntactical Decisions in Design	Color									
	Organization									
	Shape									
	Scale									
	Pattern									
	Texture									
	Line									

## Synthesis Analyzing Street Art

Aims	The found examples of street art and graphic design brand identities and branding strategies have been investigated in a matrix and in categorized levels to draw conclusions and make inferences from comparing interrelationships.
Goals	To compare vehicles in branding solutions in design with street art mediums for the purpose of representing a corporation's identity to reflect the look and style of the art idiom.

### Matrix D Cross-Referencing Vehicles in Graphic Design with Street Art Mediums

		Vehicles in Graphic Design									
		Apparel	Magazine spread	CD cover	Poster	Web site	Labels	Icon	Exterior signs	Interior signs	Book covers
Mediums	Chalk										
	Markers										
	Stickers										
	Spray paint										
	Mixed media										
	Photocopies										
	Stencils										



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## Synthesis The Influence of Street Art on Designers and/or Their Clients

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### Key Question 1

**In what ways has the overall street art idiom influenced some graphic designers and/or their clients?**

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On the next few pages design agencies and freelance designers will be highlighted as examples of street artists who have been recognized for their work in books, such as *Fadings: From Graffiti to Illustration and Much More*. The designers, however, are unique in that they are directly related to the hip-hop subculture and are interpreting their own intuitive marks into more permanent, formal expressions that represent brand identity and/or associated branding strategy solutions in graphic design. Therefore, by highlighting the work they have done for clients and examining the work that has been produced that interprets street art is important to help other designers understand how their work respects the culture and beliefs they are directly familiar with, as opposed to a designer who is not directly connected to the subculture.

### Goals

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The main goal of assessing the work of a street artist who is also a designer is to be able to objectively judge whether the way in which the street artist is translating the street art in design is reappropriated based on mode of communication, designer intent, and audience awareness. One of the concerns is that although street artists' work may represent strong formal aesthetics, concepts or the intent (to sell or not to sell) could get in the way of representing the subculture in the most meaningful or respectful way.

# TYPEHOLICS



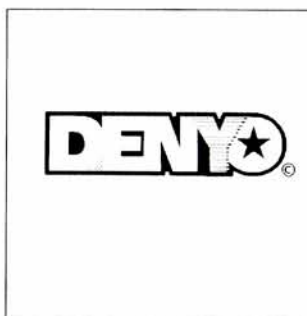
[http://www.typeholics.de/index\\_pop.htm](http://www.typeholics.de/index_pop.htm)

## Description of Design Agency

The design agency TYPEHOLICS is based in Hamburg, Germany. The team is composed of four graphic designers and street artists who are familiar with the hip-hop scene and are known for adapting their own personal graffiti work into design solutions for their clients.

The agency's design focus includes but is not limited to brand identity, logos, CD/record covers, product design, books, brochures, catalogs, poster/flyers, font, interior, and façade designs. Some of the clients that TYPEHOLICS created brand identity and/or associated areas of branding strategies for include corporations such as Sony Music, Columbia, Universal Music, *Greenpeace* and *Blond* magazines, Mojo Club, Pitch Football Wear, Vicious Gallery, and other consumer-related businesses that are in the popular culture industry.

Below are examples of logo designs that TYPEHOLICS have created.



## Synthesis Case Study: TYPEHOLICS

TYPEHOLICS created skateboard designs that related in style to the hip-hop subculture. Below is an example of one set that was designed for a client called Cleptomany.



Other projects that the design agency has worked on that are less consumer-driven but still influenced by street art are book, catalog, and map designs.





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## Synthesis Case Study: ZEDZ

### Key Questions 1 and 2

**In what ways has the overall street art idiom influenced some graphic designers and/or their clients?**

**How has street art inspired and influenced designers to explore new methods and processes when creating or using imagery and typography in graphic design solutions?**

ZEDZ (est. 1971) projects include a wide range of designs and promote creative collaboration with professionals in many areas of design, such as architecture, graphic design, and fashion design. Examples of ZEDZ client work showcase some of their most creative processes and methods that explore street artists and designers. The agency is constantly looking to expand their collaborations with other designers to create some of the most thought-provoking designs that are influenced from street art, pushing their creative imaginations to new heights.

The next few pages offer good examples of ZEDZ design work for corporate branding solutions that adapt street art through processes such as 3-D modeling and typographic design influenced and derived from handlettered graffiti writing.

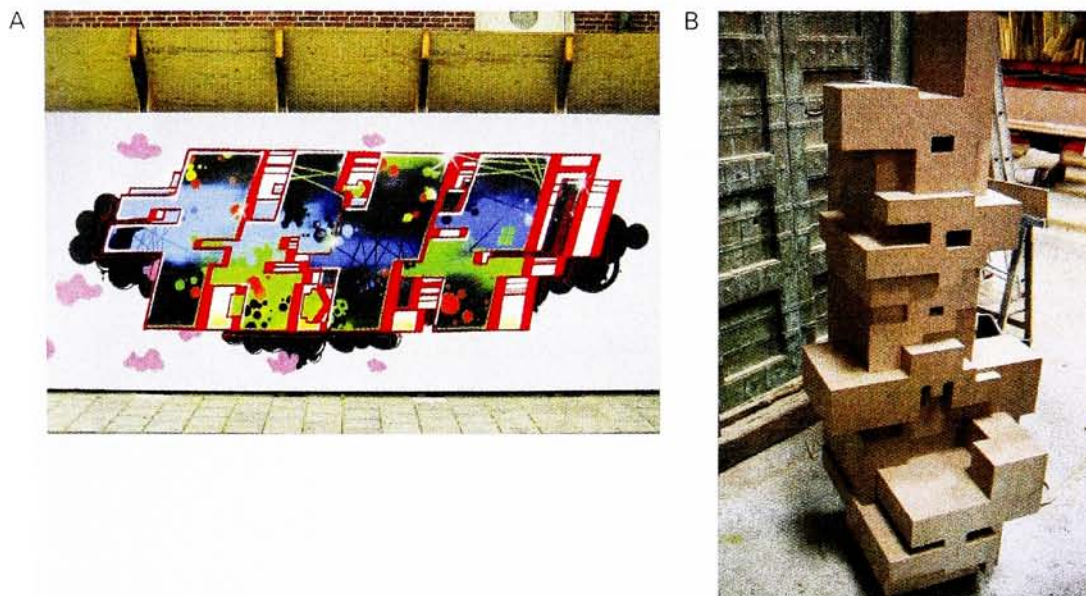
The photo below is an example of original artwork created by ZEDZ.



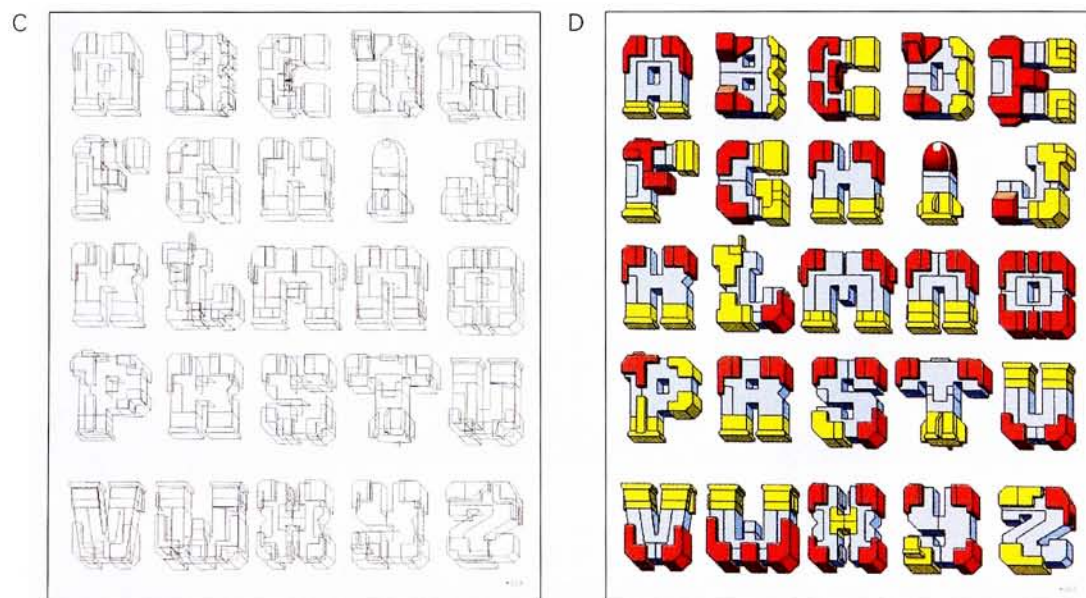
## Synthesis Case Study: ZEDZ

### Description

Image A is an example of street art that was used to inspire the creation of the 3-dimensional creation of abstract typography shown in image B. (Both images can be found on pp. 5.3, 5.4, and 5.5 in the book *Fadings: Graffiti to Design, Illustration and Much More.*)



A 3-dimensional figure was created (Image B), which then inspired the computer-generated typeface shown below (Image C and D).



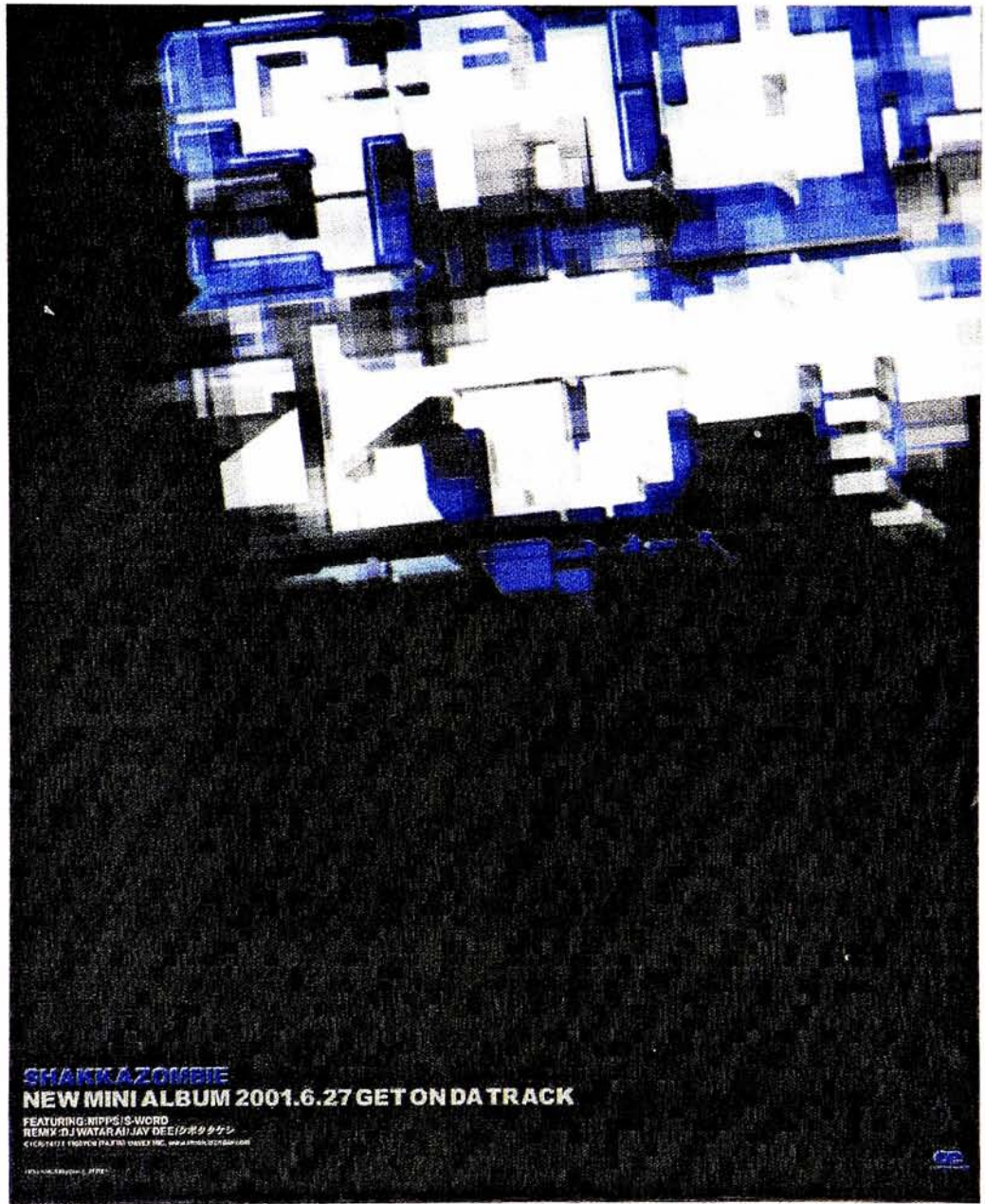
Process continued on the next page



## Synthesis Case Study: ZEDZ

After the type was created, it was then implemented in an album cover for the client, Shakkazombie.

E



### Analysis

This multi-step process by the design agency ZEDZ, consisting of designers who are street artists, demonstrates how street art inspires their design work. The designers examined, replicated, and transformed their work into a 3-D model, then moved to the computer to adapt it to a branding strategy for graphic design. This example demonstrates how street art can be appropriated through interpretive deconstruction and reconstruction of the art form in traditional design processes.



## Synthesis Case Study: ZEDZ

The design agency ZEDZ experimented with using transparent colored tape to create the imagery below that inspired a design solution in the book *Fadings: Graffiti to Design, Illustration and Much More* (Shlee, pp. 5.4–5.5).



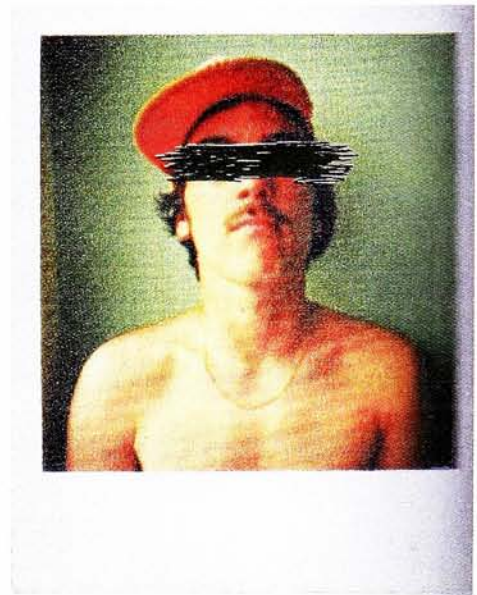
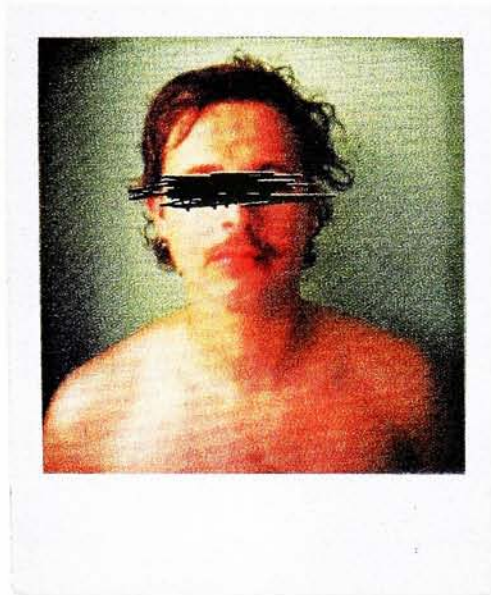
### Analysis

Although this example is not a brand identity or branding strategy solution, it offers a creative approach using traditional processes and methods that are focused on the hands-on aspect of generating design ideas before reaching the computer.

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## Synthesis Case Study: HELLO

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HELLO (1999) is run by French street artists HEKS and HEP, who focus their talent on book, font, and graphic design. Both creators promote design collaboration.

### Key Question 2

**How has street art inspired and influenced designers to explore new methods and processes when creating or using imagery and typography in graphic design solutions?**

### Case Study

In *Fadings: Graffiti to Design, Illustration and Much More*, Siggie Shlee discusses graphic designers who are also graffiti artists. The graphic designers are unique in that they prefer to be called or recognized by their street name, such as “HELLO.” They present new and traditional approaches to design. The graffiti artwork they create has been influenced by the work of others, which they have found in natural settings in urban landscapes.

On the next few pages, HELLO’s process and methods are presented to offer ways of exploring how to reappropriate street art in design without misrepresenting the hip-hop subculture.



## Synthesis Case Study: HELLO

### Description

The images below illustrate how HELLO has photographed street art lettering and has done handwritten renderings on Polaroids. The handwritten letterforms explore potential design solutions, which would be digitally created on the computer for branding solutions in print media.



### Analysis

This example provides a way to begin exploring typography and design based on graffiti-style handlettering. The idea of using Polaroid pictures of street art solutions has the potential to be investigated further to compare or contrast the design considerations that were made to inspire potential typographic lettering solutions.

This process uses actual examples of street art as influences for typeface designs.

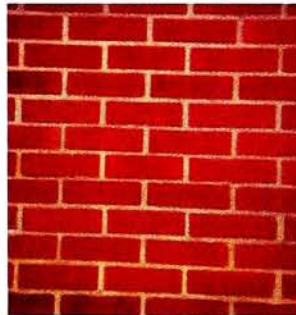


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## Synthesis Case Study: HELLO

### Description

The design agency HELLO looks to urban environments to find inspiration for design solutions. The images below (Shlee, p. 10.3) from the book *Fadings: Graffiti to Design, Illustration and Much More* exemplify how designers can be influenced by their surrounding environment to study patterns, textures, colors, and imagery to create graphic design solutions.

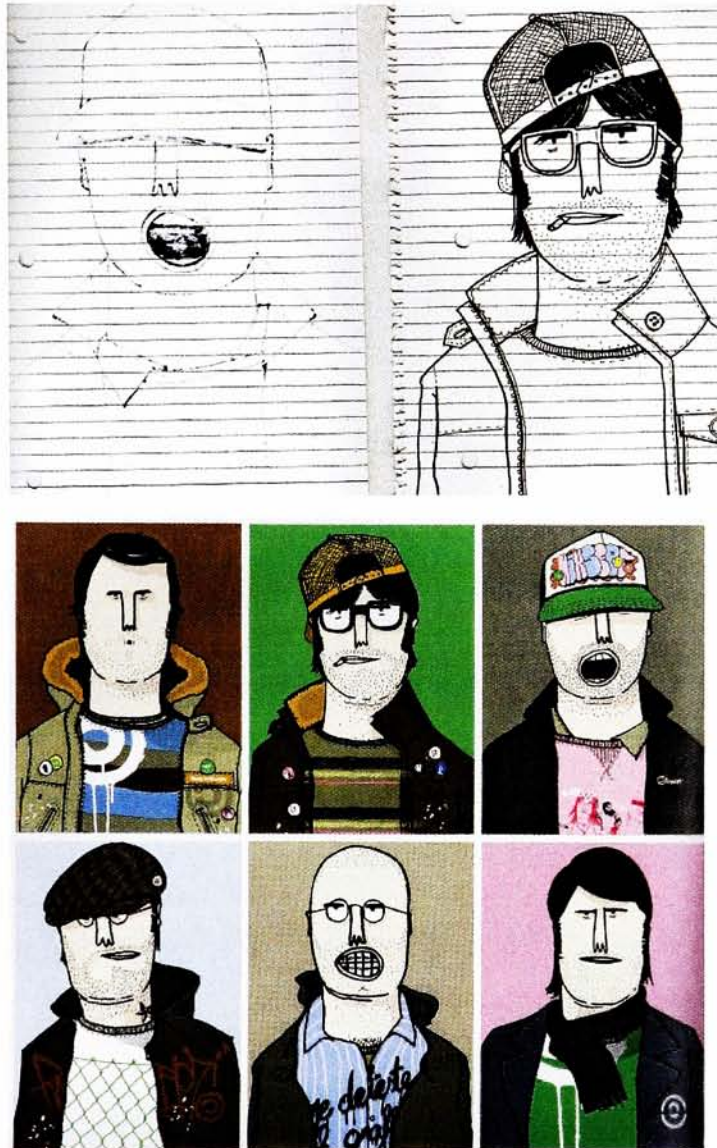


### Analysis

The above T-shirt designs juxtaposed with photo documentation of urban environments make it easily recognizable that the design solution is derived from a study related to street art without reinterpreting the vehicles of the mark-making, such as spray paint, stencils, chalk, and many others. This example is one possible approach to investigating street art and interpreting it in varying levels of abstraction in a more meaningful way that does not disrespect or misrepresent the hip-hop subculture.

## Synthesis Case Study: HELLO

The images below (Shlee, p. 10.3) in the book *Fadings: Graffiti to Design, Illustration and Much More* illustrate the traditional use of sketches that the design agency HELLO implements when creating imagery that is used in design application for print.



### Analysis

The sketches above have been translated as more finished forms of illustrations, which have been computer generated as an example of a process where imagery is first created by hand then explored by using a marker that bleeds through paper to the back and can create possible differences in perspective when the paper is flipped. Sketching is a traditional way to create illustrations for exploring ways to solve design problems without initially relying on the computer.



## Synthesis Case Study: HELLO

Below is an example (Shlee, p. 10.4) from the book *Fadings: Graffiti to Design, Illustration and Much More* of how the design agency HELLO created a typeface from the inspiration of typographic street art that was found in an urban landscape. The typographic solution mimics the texture and roughness of bricks and how the spray paint was applied to the wall of the building.



**A B C D E F G H I J K L M**  
**N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z**  
**a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z**  
**0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9**



### Analysis

This example of a typographic solution based on actual typographic street art shows how typeface design can recreate the look and feel of art that is found in its natural settings. By designing typography based on street art, it proves there are endless possibilities for creating expressive and experimental typefaces.



# Synthesis Image and Typographic Trends/Clichés Found in Brand Identities across Industries

## Key Questions 3 and 4

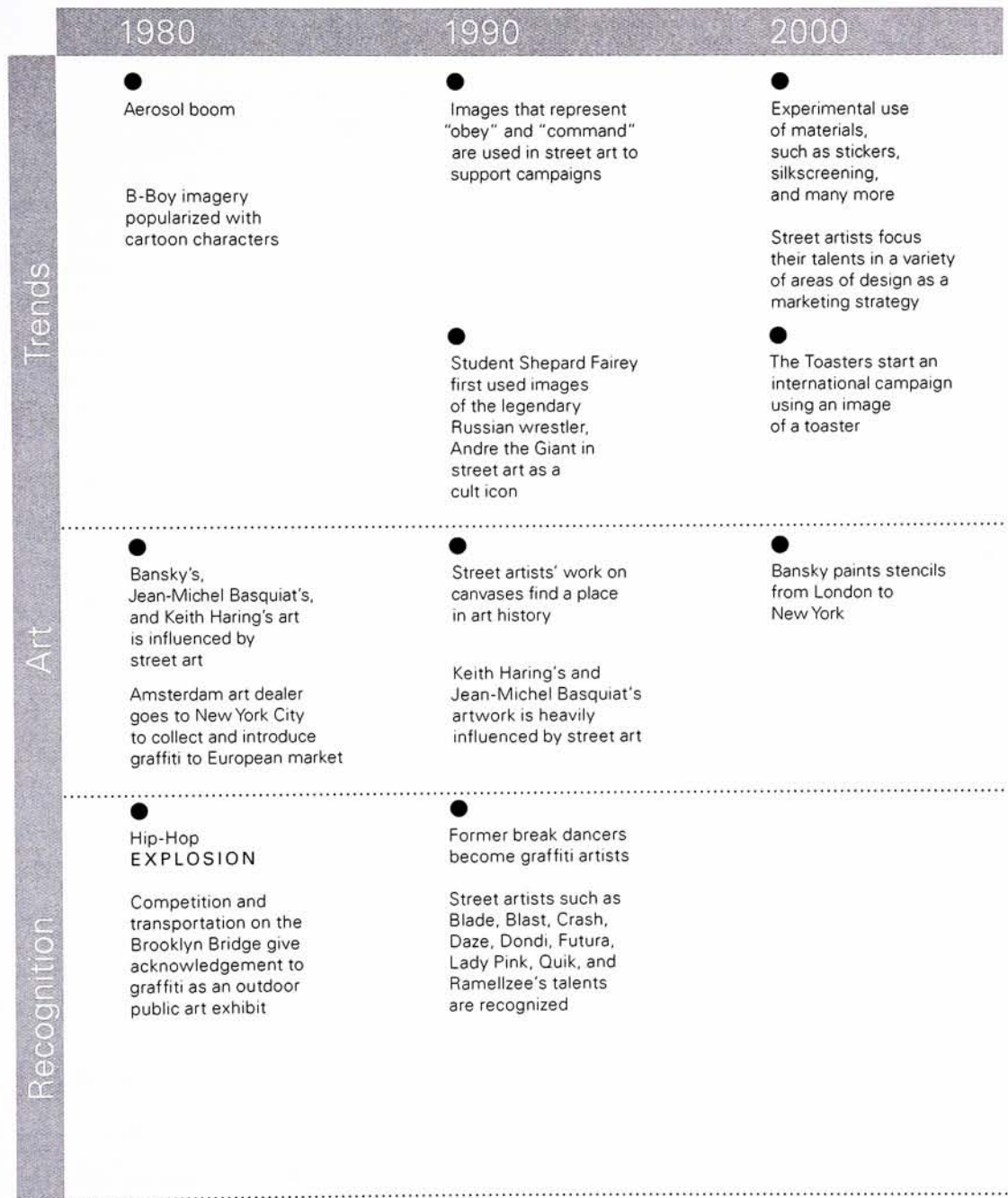
How has street art been a general influence on branding in the music and fashion industries?  
How have trends in street art evolved since the art idiom was first conceived?

Timeline

	1950	1960	1970
Trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Iconography is a popular use of stencil graffiti</li> <li>Repetition is used in graffiti</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poster art developed</li> <li>Board sports imagery appears in street art</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bubble Letter Font and 3-D letter created by Phasell</li> <li>Presence of arrows intersecting letter and image forms</li> </ul>
Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pop Art galleries reject supremacy of "high art"</li> <li>Warhol's work uses repetition to emphasize mass-production</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pop Art EXPLOSION</li> <li>Minimalism is used in corporate designs and is viewed by some as being soulless corporate products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Art market suffers and needs new way to attract buyers to galleries</li> <li>Proliferation of DIY (Do-It-Yourself) attitudes in the gallery market</li> </ul>
Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graffiti street culture is born and is represented by artists, such as DJs, break dancers, and Rappers, who were of mixed ethnicity and mixed ages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Street Art addresses political and social issues—graffiti as an ancient expression found a new contemporary voice that was beginning to be noticed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early beginnings of hip-hop subculture and the skateboarding phenomenon in American inner cities, such as New York City</li> <li>UGA (United Graffiti Artists) and NOGA (Nation of Graffiti Artists) promote writers to express their work</li> </ul>

## Synthesis Image and Typographic Trends/Clichés Found in Brand Identities across Industries

Timeline  
Continued



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# Synthesis Street Art Influence Directed toward Different Age Groups

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## Key Question 5

**How has street culture influenced visual communication intended for different age groups?**

---

### Description

In *Fadings: Graffiti to Design, Illustration and Much More*, design solutions are documented from a wide range of industry and age group categories. The design agencies and freelance creators who are highlighted in the book have been directly involved in, or have researched, the hip-hop subculture. Based on their own experiences, beliefs, and practices with the art idiom, their design solutions have contributed to brand identities and/or strategies in design. Other design examples have been researched and included to investigate street art and its influence on different age groups based on appropriation and misappropriation.

Although there are many examples in the book that display how street art has been adapted in positive or negative ways in graphic design in mass media, not every design solution manifested successfully in its intent, motive, or message for communicating to different age group and target audiences. Examples that are cross referenced in the matrices on the following pages have been evaluated based on terms such as:

#### **Audience Awareness**

How appropriate the design solution is for the intended or target audience

#### **Authorship**

How involved the designer was to investigate and interpret street art elements to directly represent the street art concept and style

#### **Informational Use**

How well the influence of street art has been interpreted in a branding strategy solution in graphic design as an educational or informational source

#### **Design Intent**

The ability of the designer(s) in using the influence of street art for meaningful purposes that are genuine and sincere

#### **Communication Mode**

A design solution's ability to express the street art concept and/or styles in such a way that the message reflects the original purposes of the art, that is, what was first created by the hip-hop subculture

### Matrix Key

The symbols below indicate how well a street art branding solution represents and respects the hip-hop subculture based on the key terms above.



*Weak example*

Neutral

*Neutral Example*





*Strong Example*



## Synthesis Street Art Influence Directed toward Children

### Description


Below are some examples of design projects for children that have been influenced by street art.

		Design Considerations				
		Audience Awareness	Authorship	Informational Use	Design Intent	Communication Mode
Branding Solutions in Design	 <p>Gap Inc., Interior Signage</p>	—	—	—	—	—
	 <p>Boo Beanies, CD Cover</p>	Neutral	+	—	—	—

# Synthesis Street Art Influence Directed toward Teens and Young Adults

Description





Below are some examples of design projects for teens that have been influenced by street art.

Branding Solutions in Design	Design Considerations				
	Audience Awareness	Authorship	Informational Use	Design Intent	Communication Mode
		+	+	+	+
	Bulb, Magazine Cover				
		-	-	-	Neutral
	Footlocker, Interior Sign				
Branding Solutions in Design		-	-	-	-
	DOE, T-Shirt Logo				
Branding Solutions in Design		-	-	-	-
	Gorilaz, CD Cover				
Branding Solutions in Design		+	+	-	-
	DVS Shoe Co., Product Design				

## Synthesis Street Art Influence Directed toward Adults

### Description

Below are some examples of design projects for adults that have been influenced by street art.

	Design Considerations				
	Audience Awareness	Authorship	Informational Use	Design Intent	Communication Mode
 Carhartt, Clothing tag	—	+	—	—	—
 AIGA, Poster	+	+	+	+	+
 mtadigital, Magazine Ad	Neutral	Neutral	—	—	Neutral
 EXPRESS Jeans , Clothing Tag	—	—	—	—	Neutral



## Synthesis Significance of Branding Strategies Directed toward Differing Age Demographics

### Summary

Based on the design solutions sampled and analyzed in matrices on previous pages, one design solution directly and respectfully reappropriated street art. *Bulb*'s cover designs were meaningful, noncommercial, educational, and had informational value for their young audience. *Bulb* magazine is published by a nonprofit communications group that addresses social issues dealing with cultural misrepresentations by mass media. Below are the examples of cover designs that incorporate street art.



## Synthesis Analysis of Street Art to Express Imagery by a Particular Mood

	Color					Line					Style					Placement					Position					Arrange					Content				
	Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Blue	Black	White	Grey	Gold	Silver	Abstract	Realistic	Stylized	Cartoonish	Minimalist	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Coastal	Mountain	Forest	City	Subway	Street	Public	Private	Political	Religious	Commercial	Personal					
Cultural																																			
Elegant																																			
Dramatic																																			
Formal																																			
Fac/Emotive																																			
Humorous																																			
Iconic																																			
Political																																			
Religious																																			

### Description

The complete matrix above titled *Analysis of Street Art to Express Imagery by a Particular Mood* is also included on pages 79–82 as a guide. The orange shading highlights the particular section being displayed on each page.

### Visual Qualities

Triad Relationship

## Street Art Examples


















## Synthesis Analysis of Street Art to Express Imagery by a Particular Mood

	Color			Line			Style	Placement	Position	Message	Content
Cultural											
Elegant											
Dramatic											
Feminine											
Fun/Energetic											
Humorous											
Innocent											
Political											
Rebellious											

### Visual Qualities



















#### Line

		Soft	Harsh	Straight	Curved	Angular	Jagged	Tapered
Street Art Examples	Cultural							
	Elegant							
	Dramatic							
	Feminine							
	Fun/Energetic							
	Humorous							
	Innocent							
	Political							
	Rebellious							

# Synthesis Analysis of Street Art to Express Imagery by a Particular Mood

	Coke				Lew				Style				Placement				Position			
Cultural																				
Elegant																				
Dramatic																				
Feminine																				
Fun/Energetic																				
Humorous																				
Innocent																				
Political																				
Rebellious																				

## Visual Qualities

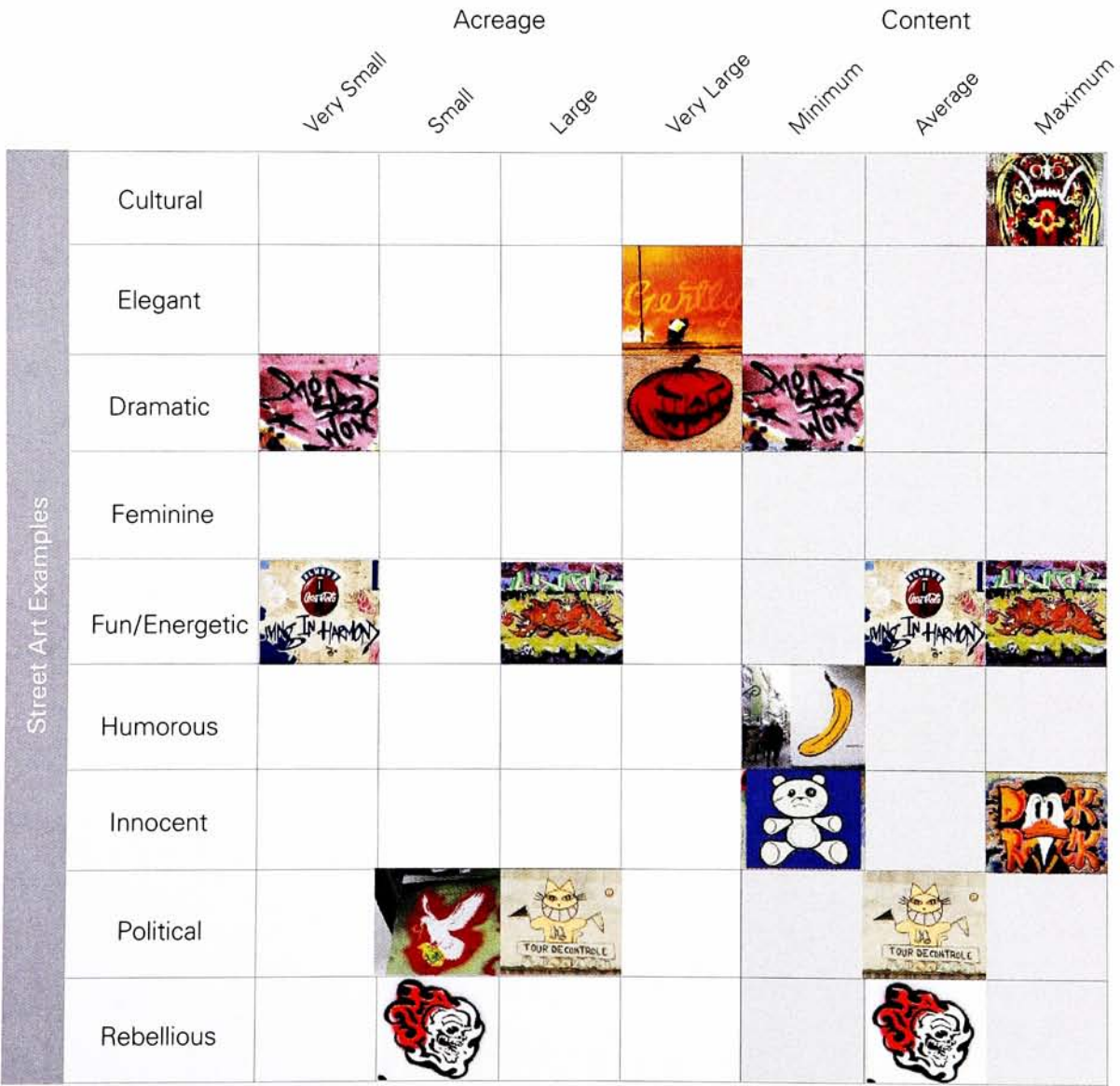
		Style			Placement			Position	
		Realistic	Abstract	Mixed	Right Axis	Left Axis	Centered	Foreground	Background
Street Art Examples	Cultural								
	Elegant								
	Dramatic								
	Feminine								
	Fun/Energetic								
	Humorous								
	Innocent								
	Political								
	Rebellious								



# Synthesis Analysis of Street Art to Express Imagery by a Particular Mood



## Visual Qualities





## Synthesis Street Art Themes

		Color				Line				Style				Placement				Position				Aesthetics				Content			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Visuals	1																												
	2																												
	3																												
	4																												
Context	5																												
	6																												
	7																												
	8																												

### Description

The complete matrix above titled *Street Art Themes* is also included on pages 84–86 as a guide. The orange shading highlights the particular section being displayed on each page.

# Synthesis Street Art Themes

	Color					Line			Style			Placement			Proportion			Subject			Content		
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Animals																							
Comics																							

## Visual Qualities

		Color						
		Monochromatic	Contrast	Complementary	Split-Complementary	Double-Complementary	Analogous Relationship	Triad Relationship
Street Art Examples	Animals							
	Comics							

### Visual Qualities











85



# Synthesis Street Art Themes

	Color										Line				Style				Placement				Position				Acreage				Content																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																															
	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///

## Visual Qualities

		Placement		Position		Acreage			Content				
		Right Axis	Left Axis	Centered	Foreground	Background	Very Small	Small	Large	Very Large	Minimum	Average	Maximum
Street Art Examples	Animals												
													
													
													
													
													
	Comics												
													
													
													

# Synthesis Street Art Themes

		Color				Line				Style				Placement				Production				Aesthetics				Context			
		/ / / /				/ / / /				/ / / /				/ / / /				/ / / /				/ / / /				/ / / /			
Objects																													
Figures																													









Description

The complete matrix above titled *Street Art Themes* is also included on pages 88–91 as a guide. The orange shading highlights the particular section being displayed on each page.

# Synthesis Street Art Themes

	Color	Line	Style	Placement	Position	Arrangement	Context
Objects							
Figures							
							
							
							
							
							
							

## Visual Qualities

		Color						
		Monochromatic	Contrast	Complementary	Split-Complementary	Double-Complementary	Analogous Relationship	Triad Relationship
Street Art Examples	Objects							
								
								
								
								
	Figures							
								
								



# Synthesis Street Art Themes

	Color				Line				Style				Placement		Position		Image		Context	
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Objects																				
Figures																				

## Visual Qualities

Line

Style

		Soft	Harsh	Straight	Curved	Angular	Jagged	Tapered	Realistic	Abstract	Mixed
Objects											
Figures											

# Synthesis Street Art Themes

	Color				Line				Style				Placement	Position	Acreage	Context
Objects																
Figures																
Figures																
Figures																
Figures																
Figures																
Figures																
Figures																

## Visual Qualities

		Placement			Position		Acreage			
		Right Axis	Left Axis	Centered	Foreground	Background	Very Small	Small	Large	Very Large
Objects										
Figures										

# Synthesis Street Art Themes

	Color				Line				Style				Placement				Position				Aesthetics				Content			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Objects																												
Figures																												

Visual Qualities































Content

Minimum  
Average  
Maximum

Street Art Examples	Objects				
	Figures				



# Synthesis Street Art Themes

		Visual Elements																																					
		Color						Line						Style						Placement						Protagon						Accessories						Context	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2						
Genre & Style		•																																					
			•																																				
																																							
																																							
																																							
																																							
Cult Figures																																							
																																							
																																							
																																							
																																							
																																							
Protagon																																							
																																							
																																							
																																							
																																							
																																							
Characters & Context																																							
																																							
																																							
																																							
																																							
																																							
Total																																							
																																							
																																							
																																							
																																							
																																							

Description

The complete matrix above titled *Street Art Themes* is also included on pages 93–96 as a guide. The orange shading highlights the particular section being displayed on each page.










# Synthesis Street Art Themes

	Visual Qualities									
	Color	Line	Style	Placement	Position	Image	Content	Color	Line	Style
Good/Evil	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cult Figures	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Protest	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Obey & Command	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Tribal	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

## Visual Qualities

### Color

Monochromatic  
Black/White Contrast  
Complementary  
Split-Complementary  
Double-Complementary  
Analogous Relationship  
Triad Relationship

Street Art Examples	Good/Evil		•							
				•						
				•						
	Cult Figures			•						
	Protest		•							
						•				
	Obey & Command		•							
	Tribal					•				
						•				

# Synthesis Street Art Themes

	Color				Line				Style				Placement		Position		Arrange		Content	
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Good/Evil																				
Cult Figures																				
Protest																				
Obey & Command																				
Tribal																				

## Visual Qualities

		Line				Style				
		Harsh	Straight	Curved	Angular	Jagged	Tapered	Realistic	Abstract	Mixed
Street Art Examples	Good/Evil									
	Cult Figures									
	Protest									
	Obey & Command									
	Tribal									



# Synthesis Street Art Themes

	Visual Qualities									
	Color		Line		Visual Quality		Style		Placement	Position
Street Art Examples	Good/Evil									
	Cult Figures									
	Protest									
	Obey & Command									
	Tribal									
	Total									

## Visual Qualities

Placement

Position

Right Axis

Left Axis

Centered

Foreground

Background

Street Art Examples	Good/Evil		Placement					Position	
			Right Axis	Left Axis	Centered	Foreground	Background	Foreground	Background
					●			●	
					●			●	
					●	●			
	Cult Figures				●			●	
	Protest				●	●			
					●			●	
	Obey & Command				●			●	
	Tribal				●	●			
					●	●			

# Synthesis Street Art Themes

	Visual Qualities									
	Color		Line		Style		Placement		Position	
Good/Evil	Color	Line	Style	Placement	Position	Color	Line	Style	Placement	Position
	Good/Evil	Good/Evil	Good/Evil	Good/Evil	Good/Evil	Good/Evil	Good/Evil	Good/Evil	Good/Evil	Good/Evil
Cult Figures	Cult Figures	Cult Figures	Cult Figures	Cult Figures	Cult Figures	Cult Figures	Cult Figures	Cult Figures	Cult Figures	Cult Figures
	Cult Figures	Cult Figures	Cult Figures	Cult Figures	Cult Figures	Cult Figures	Cult Figures	Cult Figures	Cult Figures	Cult Figures
Protest	Protest	Protest	Protest	Protest	Protest	Protest	Protest	Protest	Protest	Protest
	Protest	Protest	Protest	Protest	Protest	Protest	Protest	Protest	Protest	Protest
Obey & Command	Obey & Command	Obey & Command	Obey & Command	Obey & Command	Obey & Command	Obey & Command	Obey & Command	Obey & Command	Obey & Command	Obey & Command
	Obey & Command	Obey & Command	Obey & Command	Obey & Command	Obey & Command	Obey & Command	Obey & Command	Obey & Command	Obey & Command	Obey & Command
Tribal	Tribal	Tribal	Tribal	Tribal	Tribal	Tribal	Tribal	Tribal	Tribal	Tribal
	Tribal	Tribal	Tribal	Tribal	Tribal	Tribal	Tribal	Tribal	Tribal	Tribal

## Visual Qualities

Acreage

Content

Very Small

Small

Large

Very Large

Minimum

Average

Maximum

Good/Evil



Cult Figures



Protest



Obey &amp; Command








Tribal



Street Art Examples

## Synthesis Street Art Genres





		STREET ART GENRES																
		Color			Line			Style			Placement		Position		Acronym		Context	
Street Art Genres	Screen Starts																	
	See Objects																	
	Face																	
	Face																	
	Face																	

### Description

The complete matrix above titled *Street Art Genres* is also included on pages 98–101 as a guide. The orange shading highlights the particular section being displayed on each page.












# Synthesis Street Art Genres

		Visual Qualities									
		Line	Line	Style	Placement	Position	Allyage	Content	Line	Line	Style
Screen Stars		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Sex Objects		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Faces		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

## Visual Qualities

Color









Monochromatic  
Contrast  
Complementary  
Split-Complementary  
Double-Complementary  
Analogous Relationship  
Triad Relationship

Street Art Examples	Screen Stars		•								
	Sex Objects					•					
				•							
							•				
	Faces			•							
				•							
							•				
				•							
							•				

# Synthesis Street Art Genres

		Visual Qualities												
		Color			Line			Style		Placement	Position	Actuage	Control	
		/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Screen Stars		•							•		•		•	•
Sex Objects		•		•			•				•		•	
						•			•		•		•	
Faces		•				•			•		•			•
		•			•			•		•	•			•
		•				•	•		•	•				•
						•			•					•
						•			•					•
						•			•					•
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						•			•					•
						•			•					•

## Visual Qualities

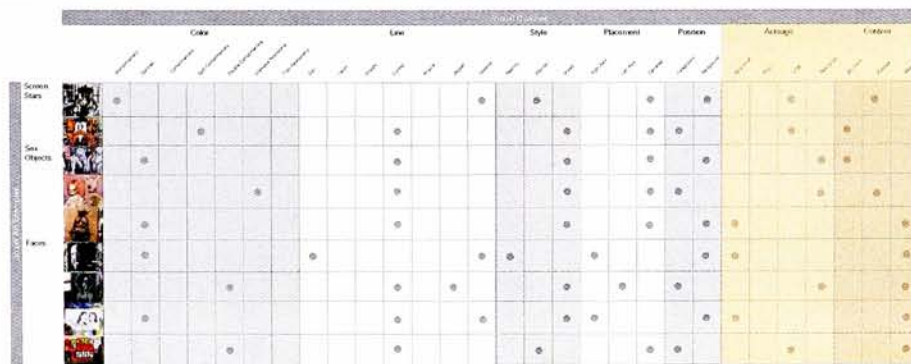
		Line					Style				
		Soft	Harsh	Straight	Curved	Angular	Jagged	Tapered	Realistic	Abstract	Mixed
Street Art Examples	Screen Stars										
											
	Sex Objects										
											
	Faces										
											
											
											
											
											
											

## Visual Qualities

100



# Synthesis Street Art Genres

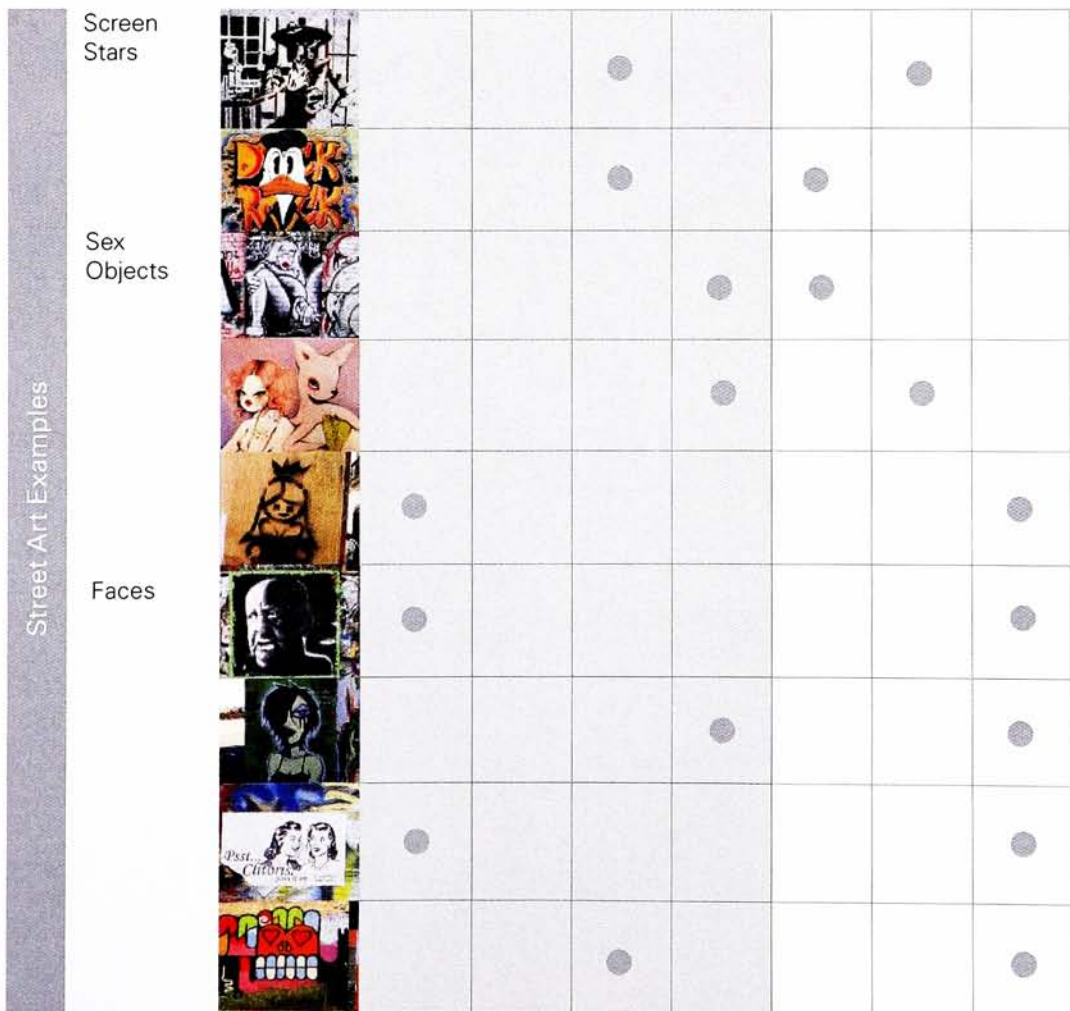


## Visual Qualities

Acreage

Content

Very Small Small Large Very Large Minimum Average Maximum



## Synthesis Street Art Lettering Motifs

		Letter Case										Punctuation									
		Uppercase					Lowercase					Special Characters					Punctuation				
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
Abstract Letter	Abstract Letter																				
	Abstract Letter																				
	Abstract Letter																				
	Abstract Letter																				
	Abstract Letter																				

### Description

The complete matrix above titled *Street Art Lettering Motifs* is also included on pages 103–107 as a guide. The orange shading highlights the particular section being displayed on each page.

# Synthesis Street Art Lettering Motifs

Lettering Qualities													
	Color				Letterform		Typeface		Weight	Dimension	Alignment	Change Priority	Process
Abstract Letters													
Arrows													
Colorful Letters													
Black Letters													
White Letters													
Yellow Letters													
Red Letters													
Blue Letters													
Green Letters													
Purple Letters													
Orange Letters													
Pink Letters													
Grey Letters													

## Lettering Qualities

Color

Contrast  
Monochromatic  
Complementary  
Split-Complementary  
Double-Complementary  
Analogous Relationship  
Triad Relationship

Lettering Examples	Abstract Letters							



# Synthesis Street Art Lettering Motifs

	Color				Letterform				Height	Emphasis		Alignment	Character Proximity		Fontface
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Abstract Letters															
Arrows															

## Lettering Qualities

### Letterform

### Typeface

Ascender

Descender

X-Height

Thick/Thin Contrast









Serif

Sans Serif

Abstract Letters

Arrows

Lettering Examples

Synthesis Street Art Lettering Motifs

Lettering Qualities										
	Color	Letterform	Texture	Weight	Dimension	Alignment	Character Proximity	Position		
Abstract Letters		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Arrows		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Lettering Qualities

Weight                      Dimension

Italic      Light      Medium      Bold      2-D      3-D

Abstract Letters

Arrows

	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Lettering Examples

# Synthesis Street Art Lettering Motifs

		Style			Letterform			Spacing			Alignment			Character Proximity			Positive		
Lettering Examples	Abstract Letters																		
	Arrows																		

## Lettering Qualities

### Alignment

### Character Proximity

Left Center Right Overlap Flush Close Far

Abstract Letters

Arrows

Lettering Examples	       	Left	Center	Right	Overlap	Flush	Close	Far



Synthesis Street Art Lettering Motifs

		Lettering Qualities																Position			
		Cube				Letterform				Topology				Weight				Connect			
		Angle	Size	Shape	Color	Stroke	Form	Detail	Texture	Line	Area	Volume	Surface	Thick	Thin	Heavy	Light	Join	Separate	Align	Offset
Abstract Letters	Example 1																				
	Example 2																				
	Example 3																				
	Example 4																				
Arrows	Example 5																				
	Example 6																				
	Example 7																				
	Example 8																				


Lettering Qualities

Position

Horizontal  
Vertical  
Sphere  
Diagonal

		Position			
		Horizontal	Vertical	Sphere	Diagonal
Lettering Examples	Abstract Letters				
	Arrows				
	Example 1				
	Example 2				
	Example 3				
	Example 4				
	Example 5				
	Example 6				

## Synthesis Street Art Lettering Motifs

		Color										Letterform										Surface										Weight										Direction										Alignment										Character Features										Position																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																		
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																			
Bubble Letters																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																										

### Description

The complete matrix above titled *Street Art Lettering Motifs* is also included on pages 109–113 as a guide. The orange shading highlights the particular section being displayed on each page.

### Lettering Qualities

Contrast      Monochromatic      Complementary      Split-Complementary      Double-Complementary      Analogous      Triad

Reappropriated

A 10x10 grid with 10 black dots plotted at the following intersections (row, column) starting from the top-left corner (0,0):

Row	Column
1	2
2	1
3	2
4	4
5	5
6	5
7	1
8	1
9	3



Synthesis Street Art Lettering Motifs

	Color				Lineform				Topform				Weight				Extension				Alignment				Character Proximity				Position			
	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		
Bubble Letters																																
Experimental																																
																																
																																
Reappropriated																																

Lettering Qualities

Letterform

Typeface

Ascender

Descender

X-Height

Stress

Serif

Sans Serif

Bubble Letters



Experimental



Reappropriated



Lettering Examples

# Synthesis Street Art Lettering Motifs

	Color				Letterform				Style				Composition				Alignment				Character Proximity				Position			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Bubble Letters																												
Experimental																												
Reappropriated																												

## Lettering Qualities

Weight

Dimension

Very Light

Light

Medium

Bold

2-D

3-D

Lettering Examples

Bubble Letters


























































Experimental



Reappropriated



# Synthesis Street Art Lettering Motifs

	Color				Letterform				Topline				Height				Downstem				Alignment				Character Proximity				Position			
	Color	Letterform	Topline	Height	Downstem	Alignment	Character Proximity	Position	Color	Letterform	Topline	Height	Downstem	Alignment	Character Proximity	Position	Color	Letterform	Topline	Height	Downstem	Alignment	Character Proximity	Position	Color	Letterform	Topline	Height	Downstem	Alignment	Character Proximity	Position
Bubble Letters																																
Experimental																																
Reappropriated																																

## Lettering Qualities

### Alignment

### Character Proximity

Left Center Right Overlap Flush Close Far

Bubble Letters



Experimental

Reappropriated





# Synthesis Street Art Lettering Motifs

	Color				Letterform				Texture				Weight				Emphasis				Alignment				Graphic Priority				Position			
Bubble Letters																																
Experimental																																
Reappropriated																																

## Lettering Qualities

### Position

Horizontal  
Vertical  
Sphere  
Diagonal

### Lettering Examples

Bubble Letters



Horizontal



Horizontal



Sphere



Horizontal



Horizontal



Sphere

Experimental



Horizontal

Sphere



Horizontal



























Sphere

Reappropriated










Horizontal

## Synthesis Street Art Lettering Motifs

		Color										Letterform				Typeface				Weight				Dimension				Alignment				Character Proximity				Position																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																														
																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																		

Description

The complete matrix above titled *Street Art Lettering Motifs* is also included on pages 115–119 as a guide. The orange shading highlights the particular section being displayed on each page.

Lettering Qualities							
	Color						
	Contrast	Monochromatic	Complementary	Split-Complementary	Double-Complementary	Analogous Relationship	Triad Relationship
					●		
		●					
		●					
						●	
	●						
	●						
				●			



## Lettering Qualities

		Letterform				Typeface		
		Ascender	Descender	X-Height	Stress	Serif	Sans Serif	
Lettering Motifs	Gradient				●	●	●	
				●				●
		●	●			●		
				●		●		
	Hearts			●				●
					●	●		
	●	●	●	●	●			

# Synthesis Street Art Lettering Motifs

	Color				Letterform		Typeface		Lettering Qualities				Alignment		Character Proximity				Position			
	Color	Color	Color	Color	Letterform	Letterform	Typeface	Typeface	Weight	Weight	Weight	Weight	Alignment	Alignment	Character Proximity	Character Proximity	Character Proximity	Character Proximity	Position	Position	Position	Position
Gradient																						
Hearts																						

## Lettering Qualities

Weight

Dimension

Very Light

Light

Medium

Bold

2-D

3-D

Gradient












































































Hearts

Lettering Motifs



	Very Light	Light	Medium	Bold	2-D	3-D
Gradient						
Hearts						







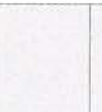

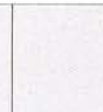








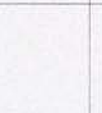

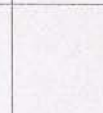









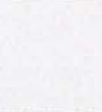
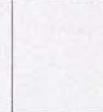
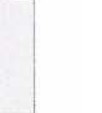









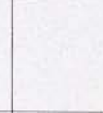











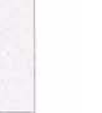












Synthesis Street Art Lettering Motifs

		Color										Lettering Qualities										Position																																																												
		Color					Letterform					Typeface					Weight					Dimension					Alignment					Character Proximity					Position																																													
		Color	Color	Color	Color	Color	Letterform	Letterform	Letterform	Letterform	Letterform	Typeface	Typeface	Typeface	Typeface	Typeface	Weight	Weight	Weight	Weight	Weight	Dimension	Dimension	Dimension	Dimension	Dimension	Alignment	Alignment	Alignment	Alignment	Alignment	Alignment	Character Proximity	Character Proximity	Character Proximity	Character Proximity	Character Proximity	Character Proximity	Position	Position	Position	Position	Position	Position																																						
Gradient																																																																																		
																																																																																		
																																																																																		
																																																																																		
Hearts																																																																																		

Lettering Qualities

Alignment

Character Proximity

		Alignment							Character Proximity						
		Left	Center	Right	Overlap	Flush	Close	Far							
Gradient															
Hearts															
															
															
															
															



### Lettering Qualities

Horizontal      Vertical      Sphere      Diagonal

119

## Synthesis Street Art Lettering Motifs

Texture and Pattern	Color										Letterform				Typeface		Weight				Dimension		Alignment		Character Proximity				Position			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	1	2	1	2	3	4	1	2	1	2	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

Description

The complete matrix above titled *Street Art Lettering Motifs* is also included on pages 121–125 as a guide. The orange shading highlights the particular section being displayed on each page.

# Synthesis Street Art Lettering Motifs

Texture and Pattern	Lettering Qualities																																			
	Color							Letterform				Typeface				Weight				Dimension				Alignment				Character Proximity				Position				
	hue	value	chroma	saturation	temperature	contrast	texture	shape	stroke	detail	ornament	style	form	weight	thickness	height	width	angle	direction	size	scale	proportion	balance	center	left	right	top	bottom	middle	left	right	center	top	bottom	middle	

## Lettering Qualities

### Color

Contrast      Monochromatic      Complementary      Split-Complementary      Double-Complementary      Analogous Relationship      Triad Relationship

Texture and Pattern

Lettering Motifs




# Synthesis Street Art Lettering Motifs

Texture and Pattern	Lettering Qualities												
	Color		Letterform		Typeface		Weight	Dimension	Alignment	Character Proximity		Position	
													

## Lettering Qualities

### Letterform

### Typeface

Ascender

Descender

X-Height

Stress

Serif

Sans Serif

Texture and Pattern

Lettering Motifs


Synthesis Street Art Lettering Motifs

Texture and Pattern	Color										Lettering Qualities										Position									

Lettering Qualities

Weight

Dimension

Very Light

Light

Medium


Bold

2-D

3-D

Lettering Motifs	Texture and Pattern								
									
									
									
									
									
									

Synthesis Street Art Lettering Motifs

Texture and Pattern	Lettering Qualities																							
	Color				Letterform				Typeface				Weight				Dimension				Alignment			
	Color	Letterform	Typeface	Weight	Dimension	Alignment	Character Proximity	Position	Color	Letterform	Typeface	Weight	Dimension	Alignment	Character Proximity	Position	Color	Letterform	Typeface	Weight	Dimension	Alignment	Character Proximity	Position
																								

Lettering Qualities

Alignment      Character Proximity

Left      Center      Right      Overlap      Flush      Close      Far

Lettering Motifs	Texture and Pattern								
									
									
									
									
									
									



## Lettering Motifs

## Position












Horizontal

Vertical

Sphere

Diagonal

## Texture and Pattern

---

## Synthesis Street Art Lettering and Their Influence on Brand Identities

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### Description

Below are examples of some of the imagery that has been pulled from the matrices to further investigate the archetypes and how they have emerged in the evolution of street art.

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### Bubble Letters in Street Art



Reflection of light

Drop shadow

These bubble letters emphasize the roundness of the letterforms. The letterforms are sans serif, meaning the ends of the letters have no tails. This example is the epitome of bubble letters, especially since they have highlighted white areas to illustrate how bubbles reflect light.

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Rounded letterform

Depth and dimension

Gradient

The letterforms represented in this image are a classic example of bubble letters found in street art. The edges of the top of the letterforms have highlights that indicate or give the illusion of bubbles. There are round tops on the letters. The use of color variation diagonally from the bottom to the top portrays the use of a gradient in the letterform to appear somewhat flat to round. The outline around the letterforms adds dimension to the bubble letters.

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Highlight and emboss

Shadow

These letterforms are not as obvious in their bubble letter stylization. The visual clue that groups these in the bubble letter genre is the highlight that illustrates the embossed letters to achieve shape and dimension.

---

## Synthesis Street Art Lettering and Their Influence on Brand Identities

### Description

In street art, bubble letters can be described as a motif in which the form of an image or letterform appears as if it were created by spherical or globular shapes of air or gas. Corporations currently use the motif as a way to brand an idea or product with a style that evokes a particular mood and creates the look and feel of street art for commercial purposes. Below are some examples in which bubble letters are being used in branding for a design solution.

### Bubble Letters in Graphic Design



— Rounded letterform

— Shadow

The image above is an example of how MasterCuts, a retail hair salon, has incorporated street art in an exterior signage solution to promote sales and attract customers. The bubble letters that are used in the example above read “FREE Body Balm” along with other written details that follow the headline. This example of bubble letters has a clean, refined, rounded look to the end of the letterforms. A viewer could recognize the motif of bubble letters and the connection to street art since the look is supported with a drop shadow that appears to mimic the look of purple spray paint. The design solution above is a very obvious way of using bubble letters to signal an influence from street art.



## Synthesis Street Art Lettering and Their Influence on Brand Identities

### Description

According to the DVD documentary *Style Wars*, the use of arrows was a trend that was introduced by the street artist Phasell in the 1970s and continues to be used in many street art designs both on and off the street.

### Arrows Found in Street Art



Arrow;  
extension of stroke

This "tag" was created by a street artist and uses the arrow as part of the actual letterform of the "M" to create a more personal mark of authorship.



Arrow;  
extension of letterform

The graffiti "tag" and "writing" above uses an arrow as an extension of the letter "N" in the word "won." This particular tag was a mark of authorship found next to a larger piece of street art.



Arrow;  
extension of letterform

Arrow;  
stylization of letterform

Here is an example of how arrows can be included in less obvious ways. The letterforms or lines that make up the letter "A" (and others that make up the unknown word) are examples of how abstracted the arrows can appear in street art.

## Synthesis Street Art Lettering and Their Influence on Brand Identities

### Description

In corporate companies that hope to use brand identity and/or associated areas of branding strategies, designers have used arrows that intersect imagery and typography in graphic design solutions to represent the look and feel of street art in subtle to more obvious ways.

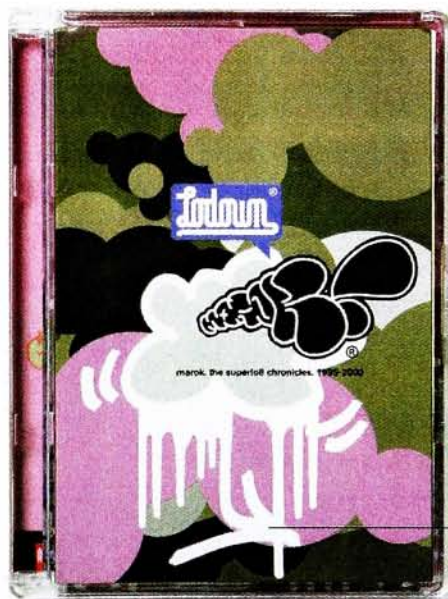
### Arrows / Letterforms in Graphic Design



Arrow;  
extension of letterform

The image above is an example of how Gap, a retail clothes merchandiser, has incorporated street art in exterior window signage to attract the attention of customers and to sell their clothes that resemble the hip-hop, urban culture. The ascender, which is the extension of the letterform of the "U," with the added arrow is a very obvious way of using arrows to signal street art as an influence to the overall design solution. Typography that has rounded edges and that looks like chalk are also visual clues that suggest street art as an influence.

### Arrows / Imagery in Graphic Design



Arrow;  
extension of image

The DVD *Lodown* is an example of a subtle way a designer can use arrows to visually suggest street art as an influence in the design solution.



## Synthesis Street Art Lettering and Their Influence on Brand Identities

### Description

One of the most common aspects and distinguishing features of street art is the use of gradients. Below are examples of how gradients appear in street art and are used to add color and dimension to the work.

### Gradients in Street Art



Gradient  
(yellow to red)

The letters in "Southern Comfort" are a classic example of gradient use in street art. The colors, which fade from one color to another lighter or darker shade of that color, add dimension to the letterforms, appearing more three-dimensional.



Subtle gradient  
(yellow to red)

Gradients can be used to transition in a more subtle way from yellow to red to make the abstracted letterforms appear to have energy and motion.



Abrupt gradient  
(purple to yellow and blue)

The use of colors in hand-drawn letterforms can have more harsh transitions to emphasize the letterforms as having shape, energy, motion, and dimension.



Continued

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## Synthesis Street Art Lettering and Their Influence on Brand Identities

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Description

Below are examples of how street art gradients have been an influence on abstract representation in graphic design solutions.

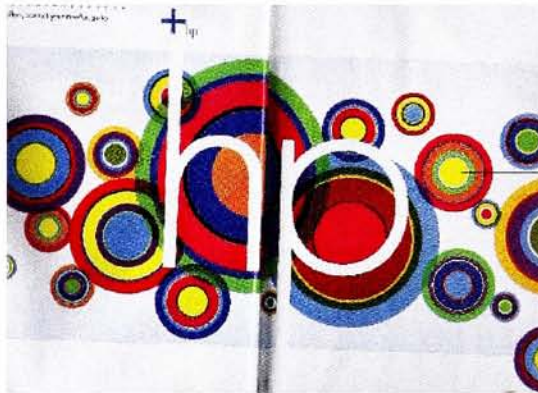
Gradients / Letterform  
in a Design Solution



Subtle gradient  
(orange to yellow)

The logotype for the Underground Station uses street art handlettering in which the connection to street art is obvious with the use of gradient to resemble spray paint in the actual letterforms. Other clues to the street art style of this logotype are the highlighted (black) region of the "S," the drop shadow behind the letters that make up the word "Station," and the shift in horizontal alignment that splits the word "underground" almost in two.

Gradients / Imagery  
in Graphic Design



Abrupt gradient  
(yellow to pink)

A magazine spread for Hewlett-Packard, a computer technology company, uses circle shapes and colors to resemble street art imagery and gradients in an abstract representation.

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## Synthesis Levels of Abstraction of Type and Image in Brand Identity Solutions

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### Key Question 7

**How have different levels of abstraction and complexity of imagery and typography been used in brand identity systems? Have these abstractions been influenced by street art?**

### Levels

Varying levels of abstraction and/or complexity of imagery and typography are illustrated on the following pages to investigate how street art is reappropriated in different ways to convey or mimic the hip-hop subculture in type- and image-based solutions.

### Goal

The goal of providing examples of visuals from least to most abstract and/or complex in branding solutions is to investigate how a design can reveal too easily, just enough, or too little until it is too abstract and/or complex to the viewer.

### Image Solutions Graphic Design

Least Abstract



DJ Cousen, 2002



OUTBURST

Outburst Records, 2002

Most Abstract



Faultier Nachhilfeinstitute, 2002

## Synthesis Levels of Complexity of Imagery of Type and Image in Brand Identity Solutions

### Type Solutions Graphic Design

Least Complex

Most Complex



N6 Toys, 2003



Ciscal 831, 2002



Get Alive MTV, 2002



NECURA 831, 2002



NECURA 831, 2002



Miri BenAri Records, 2002



33 Mailorder, 2002

The above examples of typographic logos show a progression in complexity left to right as the details of the letterforms become more experimental and abstract. All the logotypes hint at street art techniques, such as stencils, dimensions, or gradients. These techniques have been reappropriated in the logotypes to suggest street art as an influence in each case.



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## Synthesis Street Art Influence on Branding Strategies in Design

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### Key Question 8

**How have brand identities and/or branding strategies been interpreted with respect to the hip-hop culture?**

### Description

On the following pages, branding solutions in graphic design have been examined to better understand how well key terms such as audience awareness, authorship, informational use, design intent, and communication mode were considered when they were created. Below are key term definitions.

### Key Terms

#### **Audience Awareness**

How appropriate the design solution is for the intended or target audience

#### **Authorship**

How involved the designer was with investigating and interpreting street art elements to directly represent the street art concept and style

#### **Informational Use**

How well the influence of street art has been interpreted in a branding strategy solution in graphic design as an educational or informational source

#### **Design Intent**

The ability of the designer(s) in using the influence of street art for meaningful purposes that are genuine and sincere

#### **Communication Mode**

A design solution's ability to express the street art concept and/or styles in such a way that the message reflects the original purposes of the art as first created by the hip-hop subculture

### Matrix Key

The symbols below represent how weak or strong a branding solution is based on the key terms defined above.



*Weak Example*

Neutral

*Neutral Example*



*Strong Example*

## Synthesis Street Art Influence on Branding Strategies in Design

### Key Question 8



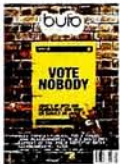



How have brand identities and/or branding strategies been interpreted with respect to the hip-hop culture?

### Goal

The goal of the matrix below is to show the varying levels of how re- or misappropriated a design solution is to interpreting and reflecting street art elements.

### Matrix







Analysis of the Levels of Influence of Street Art on Branding Solutions

	Design Considerations				
	Audience Awareness	Authorship	Informational Use	Design Intent	Communication Mode
 mtadigital, Magazine cover	—	—	—	—	—
 AIGA, Poster	+	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
 Bulb, Magazine cover	+	+	+	+	+
 Gap Inc., Magazine cover	—	—	—	—	—
 Footlocker Co., Exterior Signage	Neutral	—	—	—	—
 Gorilaz, CD cover	+	Neutral	—	—	Neutral

# Synthesis Street Art Influence on Branding Strategies in Design

Matrix

Analysis of the Levels of Influence of Street Art on Branding Solutions

	Design Considerations				
	Audience Awareness	Authorship	Informational Use	Design Intent	Communication Mode
 Camel cigarettes, Direct mailer	—	—	—	—	—
 Post No Lies, Book Cover	+	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
 Bulb, Magazine cover	+	+	+	+	+
 Old Navy, Gift card	—	—	—	—	—
 JNCO Jeans, Apparel design	+	—	—	—	—
 Underground Station, Store logo	+	Neutral	—	Neutral	Neutral



# Synthesis Street Art Influence on Branding Strategies in Design

Matrix

Analysis of the Levels of Influence of Street Art on Branding Solutions

	Design Considerations				
	Audience Awareness	Authorship	Informational Use	Design Intent	Communication Mode
 <p>Camel cigarettes, Direct mailer</p>	—	—	—	—	—
 <p>Saul Zonana, CD cover</p>	+	—	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
 <p>Miri Benari, CD cover</p>	+	+	Neutral	—	+
 <p>Method Man, CD cover</p>	+	—	—	—	+
 <p>Nextel, Boost campaign logo</p>	Neutral	—	—	—	—
 <p>Express Jeans, Clothing tag</p>	—	—	—	—	—

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## Ideation

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This section documents ongoing ideas that reflect the research and synthesis findings. This section also shows working progress toward implementation goals of this thesis project. Goals include using the influences of street art for noncommercial purposes that positively contribute to the graphic design field through branding a solution in design that is respectful, meaningful, and informational. The project must operate in a mode of communication similar to the way the art form did when it was first conceived.

## Ideation Approach A Sketches

### Approach A

Below is an approach for a design solution that brands a message. This particular example is for the Rochester Urban Revitalization organization. The street art style is reflected in the imagery by mimicking mediums that are used in street art, such as paint, marker, and stickers.

### Postcard Examples



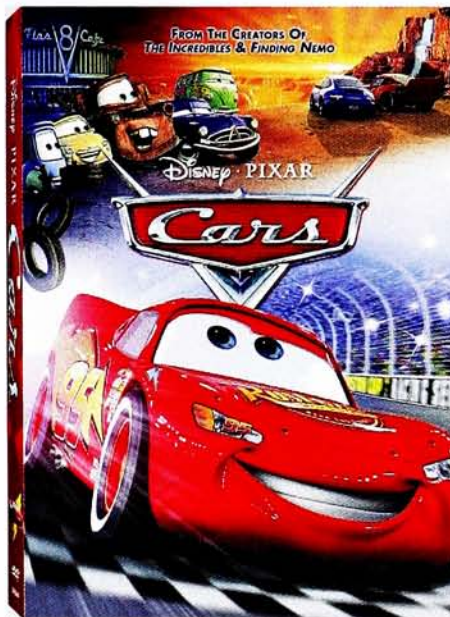
### Goal

The goal of this sketch is to create a branding strategy using street art style that will appeal to people across broad age groups, urging them to reach out as volunteers to help the community. Other possible clients, industries, mediums, and vehicles could be explored playing off words "empowerment," "pride," and so forth. For example, for the word "empowerment," "power" could be highlighted as the focus of the design system. Playing off the word helps an audience recognize that the design is strongly based on a noncommercial, informative, and educational theme, thus allowing the intent of the interpreted street art in design to act as it once did in its original, raw format.



## Ideation Approach B Research

### Inspiration



<http://www.ultimatedisney.com/cars.html>

### Film Concept

The Disney/Pixar movie *Cars* emphasizes that U.S. superhighways have taken away from the traditional American experience of traveling on roads such as Route 66. The construction of superhighways has affected smaller, rural community's businesses and neighborhood livelihood. The car characters in the movie exemplify that people take for granted, or minimize, what small towns can offer to neighborhoods. The movie captures how Americans tend to be impatient with and unappreciative of travelling through small-town communities. Today, Americans are in a hurry to get from one place to the next without any concern as to what they might be missing by not taking a more scenic route, unbeaten path, or a road less traveled.

### Green Space

In some local rural and suburban areas, concrete bypasses have been erected as a structural component of superhighways. Towns and cities have decided to build bypasses that direct traffic flow away from, or near to, but not directly through the community. The bypass eases congestion, and may reduce the risk of pedestrian or vehicular accidents, as the bypass divider acts as a shield so that drivers can stay focused on the road. But, it is also a negative divider or mask, preventing a community from displaying its identity to passersby.

### Superhighway Examples

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Tunghannock, Pennsylvania  
Corning, New York  
Elmira, New York

## Ideation Approach B Influences



TRB Publication NCHRP Research Results Digest 210.  
"Effects of Highway Bypasses on Rural Communities and Small Urban Areas"  
Accessed May 9, 2006. [http://www.trb.org/news/blurb\\_detail.asp?id=3079](http://www.trb.org/news/blurb_detail.asp?id=3079)

### Bypass Research

The Transportation Research Board of the National Academies of Science has recently posted a proposal called the "NCHRP Project 20-5," to conduct a study of Synthesis of Information Related to Highway Problems, to determine what the negative and positive impacts were when a highway bypass was constructed in or around rural communities and urban areas that had a population less than 50,000 people. Current practices and the knowledge of how to plan a bypass were part of the study.

"The study involved a survey questionnaire to all U.S. state and Canadian provincial departments of transportation and a review of published literature and agency supplied studies. The literature review determined that there is no clear consensus on study procedures and analysis methods that should be used in bypass impact studies. The studies reviewed suggested that, for the most part, bypasses seem to have favorable impact on rural communities and small urban areas but evidence in these studies is often weak."

What was discovered was that the outermost part of the community where the bypasses were located, the "fringe" areas of the new route, provided improved safety and helped ease traffic congestion and other undesirable traffic conditions from occurring in the more direct, innermost parts of the towns or cities from which traffic had been diverted. Also, in most cases, businesses tended to keep loyal customers from within the community, although non-local business plummeted after a new bypass opened. The study revealed that many solutions are possible in terms of preventing negative results within a community after constructing a bypass; however, "the research literature provides no particular guidance on whether such measures have significant effect on bypass impact."



## Ideation Approach B Influences



### Goal

The goal of this design approach is to use environmental graphic design strategies to create a branded message that promotes travel in rural communities, which can aid in bringing in business and tourism to neighborhoods that are not already saturated with commercial businesses.



## Ideation Approach C Influences

### Inspiration

A collaboration called *Make The Connection* was started between the Cancer Research and Prevention Foundation (CRPF) at Merck Co., Inc., and the Step Up Women's Network. The mission is to inform and educate women about making routine checkups with their doctor and being more aware of how the human papilloma virus is linked to cervical cancer. The design solution and mode of communication makes this a successful example of how a single postcard can send a branded message from one woman to another to help spread knowledge and awareness on how to prevent cancer and make healthy choices.

### Postcards



### Analysis

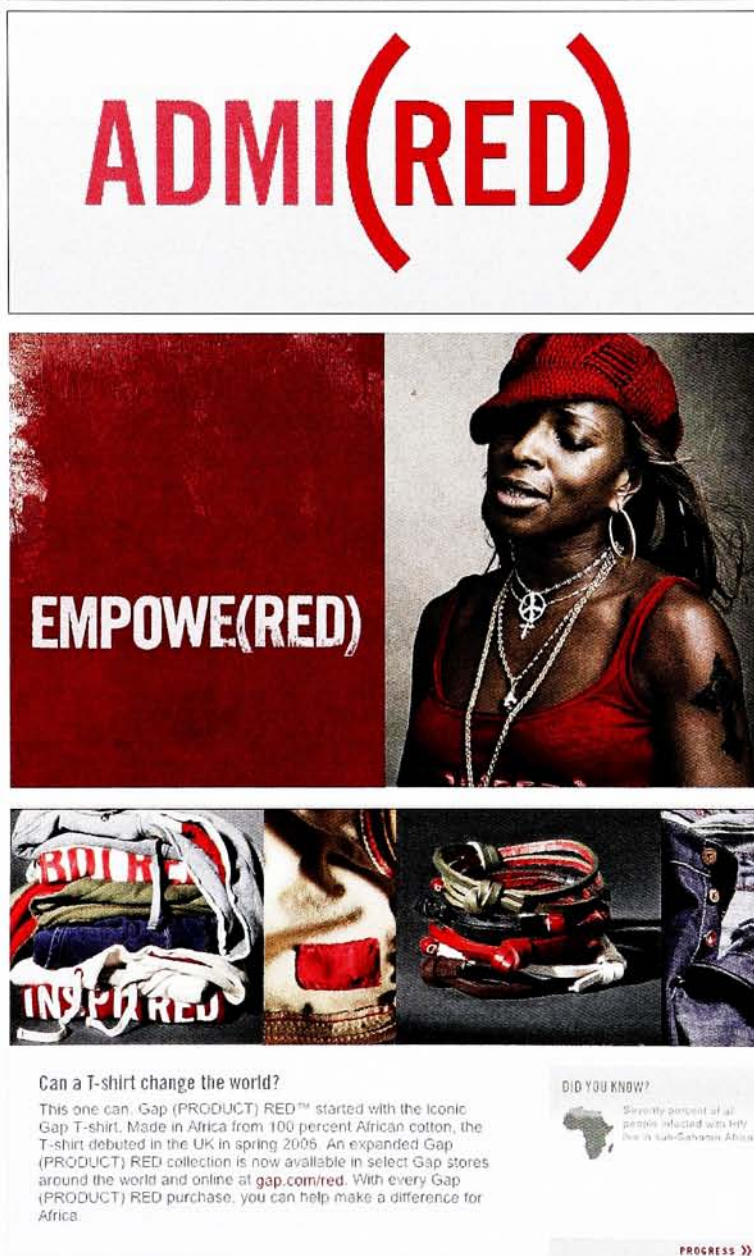
Although the message being branded is intended to be a positive one, it still has a commercial purpose of promoting and supporting Merck Co., Inc. The postcard as a mode of communication that is passed from one person to the next within a given community of women, in a given time and across space, is similar in function to mail art and, more relevant to this thesis, street art.

## Ideation Approach C Influences

### Inspiration

A collaboration among Gap (PRODUCT) RED™, Bobby Shriver, and Bono (a celebrity singer and songwriter) supports women and children in Africa who are affected with HIV/AIDS and works to eliminate the terminal disease by promoting and selling products. Gap, Inc., one of many global partners of (PRODUCT) RED, has made a commercial commitment to contribute half of the profits from Gap (PRODUCT) RED sales to the Global Fund. Whether or not one should believe Gap's claims that buying into "individuality" through the purchase of street art inspired RED products will give you "style," at least the financial commitment helps a good cause.

### Fund-raisers



**ADMI(RED)**

**EMPOWE(RED)**

**RED**  
**INSPIRED**

**Can a T-shirt change the world?**

This one can. Gap (PRODUCT) RED™ started with the iconic Gap T-shirt. Made in Africa from 100 percent African cotton, the T-shirt debuted in the UK in spring 2005. An expanded Gap (PRODUCT) RED collection is now available in select Gap stores around the world and online at [gap.com/red](http://gap.com/red). With every Gap (PRODUCT) RED purchase, you can help make a difference for Africa.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Seventy percent of all people infected with HIV live in sub-Saharan Africa.

**PROGRESS >>**

### Analysis

The Gap (RED) campaign not only uses street art to brand a message to promote and sell product but also fund-raises money to help eliminate a deadly disease in a third world country that can positively benefit from financial support. The downside to this campaign in terms of appropriating street art is that the design intent is to sell products to generate company revenue.



## Ideation Approach C Influences

### Inspiration

A collaborative group called thetruth.com appears to meet the goal of "infecting" truth in as many people as possible about tobacco companies and the harm tobacco use has done to humans and the environment. The project was originally based on the idea of communicating messages in a convention similar to street art, using messages that visually shock, inform, invite reaction and response, and that base people's interaction with messages on spontaneous experiences.

The campaign was funded by GlaxoSmithKline, a health care company that claims to improve people's lives by helping them to live healthier and longer; however, they have been successful at carrying out an alternative agenda by placing tobacco-related advertisements in venues that promote tobacco sales.

### Web site

The top screenshot shows the 'Infect' website interface with a red and orange background. At the top, there are navigation links: 'PSP', 'TOILET TALK', 'QUICKIE #21', and 'UNICORN SCREENSAVER'. Below these are links for 'ALL INFECTIONS', 'TV', 'FACTS', 'GAMES', and 'EMAIL CENTER'. The main section is titled '\*featured infection' and features 'Int: HAIRY-MAIL.COM'. The description reads: 'SEND MESSAGES TO YOUR FRIENDS WRITTEN IN THICK, LUSH BACK-HAIR. Go to hairy-mail.com, write a message on a hairy man's back and send it to friends e-cards style. Just what your friends have always wanted.' There is a 'LAUNCH' button and a 'DIFFICULTY LEVEL' indicator. A 'DOWNLOAD' button is also present. On the right, there is a section titled 'IT'S NOT JUST A GROWTH' with a '155,346 infections spread this year' statistic and a '400,000' goal. A 'Barcode' is visible on the right side.

The bottom screenshot shows the same website interface but with a different featured infection: 'Int: 1NFECT.COM'. The description reads: 'GO TO A PUBLIC COMPUTER AND TYPE THE MAGIC WORDS. Type 1nfect.com at a computer store, library or any public place with an Internet-ready computer. Then walk away and watch the infection take over as tobacco facts start displaying on-screen.' There is a 'LAUNCH' button and a 'DIFFICULTY LEVEL' indicator. On the right, there is a section titled 'Tobacco kills over 20 times more people than murder' with a 'Barcode' visible on the right side.

<http://www.thetruth.com/>

### Analysis

The above Web site examples are branded messages that were applied in mass media, originally as sincere attempts to spread factual knowledge and awareness of the harm done by tobacco use. The marketing strategy, however, was carried out with the intention of meeting the bottom line in business: to sell a product and/or idea.



## Ideation Approach C Research

Potential Client	Taking inspiration from the preceding examples, found on previous pages, the concept of branding a message can be applied to design a solution that follows the same form and function of street art. Since street art is a spontaneous, random act and expression of mark-making, the following design considerations have been made to create a design solution for a project in urban, public city schools.
Rochester, NY City Schools	East High School School of the Arts Thomas Jefferson High School Wilson Magnet High School
Goal	To encourage students, staff, and faculty to recognize and emphasize what everyone has in common and not to focus on differences. Also, to raise awareness of a community and making a contribution.
Research	Below is a list of urban issues that have been written about and documented in the past thirty issues of the <i>City Newspaper</i> , in Rochester, New York.
<b>Urban Issues</b> Content Analysis	<p><b>City Spaces</b> 38.24%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urban trails</li> <li>Performing Arts Center</li> <li>Sculptural Park</li> <li>Casino</li> <li>Under or over- development of city buildings and homes</li> <li>Blighted neighborhoods</li> <li>Poverty</li> <li>Zoning issues (Children/homes)</li> </ul> <p><b>City Schools</b> 20.6%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bullying</li> <li>Closings</li> <li>Dropout rate</li> <li>Economic divide</li> <li>Lack of enrichment or after school programs</li> <li>Need of enhancement programs–JROTC</li> <li>Racial divide</li> </ul> <p><b>Crime</b> 17.65%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Homicides</li> <li>Shootings</li> <li>Curfew</li> <li>Prostitution</li> <li>Lack of workshops and programs</li> </ul> <p><b>Politics / War</b> 11.76%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Soldiers in Iraq</li> <li>Taxes / Cost of living</li> </ul> <p><b>Public Behavior</b> 2.94%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vulgarity in public</li> </ul>

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# Ideation Approach C Considerations

Audience	Graphic design solutions will be placed in and around high school property to brand messages as an alternative means to address real and current issues that are local and specific to Rochester, New York.	
Application	The design solutions will be placed in areas of congregation in and around high school property, such as lunch rooms, hallways, bathrooms, gym locker rooms, and so on. These specific areas are navigational nodes and most likely congregation areas where the use of street art influence in design solutions could communicate branded messages of hope, empowerment, and peace to students, teachers, and staff.	
Street Art Influences	The design solutions will be placed in what will appear to be unexpected or random areas within the high school with hopes that passersby will discover the messages. The following variables will be controlled by the designer:	
	Lifespan of Message	Materiality
	Message Content	Medium
	Viewing Context	Color
		Typography
		Imagery
Goals	The goals of implementing design solutions in a high school community are to effectively and successfully convey messages where students can interpret the elements and concepts of street art in a manner that respects the hip-hop subculture. Other goals of this project are to inspire community interaction and urban revitalization.	

## Ideation Teen Youth Issues

Matrix

Issues that will be addressed include the following:

General Issue

Behavior / Message

Solution

Person to Self



**Disrespect**

**Skipping**

Education is important



**educate before vacate**

**Failure**

Time will pass, will you?



What are your aspirations?



Have confidence in yourself





# Ideation Teen Youth Issues

General Issue	Behavior / Message	Solution
---------------	--------------------	----------

Person to Self



## Disrespect

### Smoking

Make healthy choices



Want another cigarette?

### Vulgarity / Gossip

Passing notes is mean



HAVE A CODE THAT OPERATES  
ON INTELLIGENCE?

Gossip is nasty



Be nice to others

EXPRESS  
with kindness



### Self Esteem

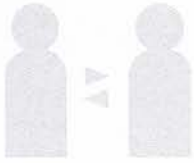
Be yourself and  
don't follow others

## General Issue

## Behavior / Message

## Solution

Person to Person

**Intolerance****Name Calling**

Don't pick on others

**HELLO****I AM HUMAN**

(ARE YOU?)

**Clothing Style**What messages  
do your clothes  
communicate?

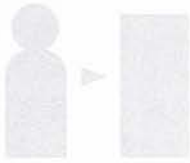
Is dressing sexy safe?



# Ideation Teen Youth Issues

General Issue	Behavior / Message	Solution
---------------	--------------------	----------

Person to School



## Disrespect

### Destruction of Property

Your school is your second home. Respect it.



### Stealing

Don't get caught red-handed

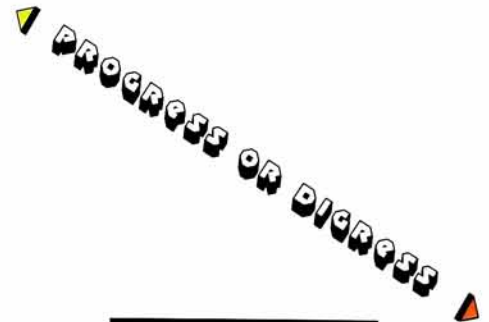


### Skiping Class

Will you graduate?



Make good decisions





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## Ideation Application

### High School Social Cause Campaign Stickers

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Application	High School Social Cause Campaign Stickers	
Target Audience	High school students attending Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School in Rochester, New York are the target audience for this design application for the following reasons:	
	Proximity to “pure” street art	Diversity/Ethnicity
	Urban setting	Number of police officers present at school
	Student-related issues (failure, skipping class, destruction of property, and so on)	2006 New York State High School Report Card results for the Rochester City School District (RCSD)/aptitude statistics
Form	The design application will be in the form of stickers, which unlike posters and other mediums, are artifacts that can be placed on a surface to become part of the spatial experience. The stickers will include an ephemeral message, but promote a concept that leaves a more long-lasting positive influence or impression on those who view the sticker.	
Function	The stickers will be placed in specific high school areas, such as locker rooms, cafeterias, bathrooms, and exit doors. Stickers will be discovered spontaneously, in the way street art is discovered by a passerby.	
Content	Imagery, typography, and color will be important aspects of the final design applications. Main concepts and compositions for the design solutions will include visual and/or written information that addresses day-to-day issues pertinent to students at Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School. The stickers will encourage students to evaluate their actions and behaviors in terms of how they affect the school, other people, or themselves within that specific community.	
Goals	Goals for implementing the stickers include using the influence of street art as a communication tool with high school youth. By using aspects of the street art idiom to brand messages in graphic design solutions, the designer hopes to inspire students to think about how their actions and behaviors affect themselves, others, and the high school community.	

## Ideation Sticker A Sketches

### Summary

A cursory content analysis of three teen magazines was conducted from April 11, 2007 to April 25, 2007. The magazines that were sampled included *Teen*, *Seventeen*, and *Allure*. Main headlines to stories and fashion ads that highlighted fashion clothing and sex appeal were examined. The magazine articles and ads suggested that jeans, shirts, and shoes would increase attractiveness and/or sex appeal when purchased.

To better understand if risky clothing was a student issue that Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School was dealing with, the designer and author of this thesis contacted Mary Beth Steele, a school administrator. Steele confirmed that risky or sexually suggestive clothing was an issue, especially with the change to warmer spring weather.

Based on teen magazines and the conversation with a Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School representative, the designer created initial sketches for a sticker ("Sexy Shoes are Safe," "Is Sexy Safe," and "Are Sexy Shoes Safe"). The goal for the sticker was to use imagery that referred to fashion and implied a double meaning of sexy and risky. The language explored the double meaning of whether the shoes were sexy and could send the wrong perceptual messages to an intended or unintended audience when worn, while also taking into consideration the potential physical risks of wearing shoes with high heels.

### Sketches

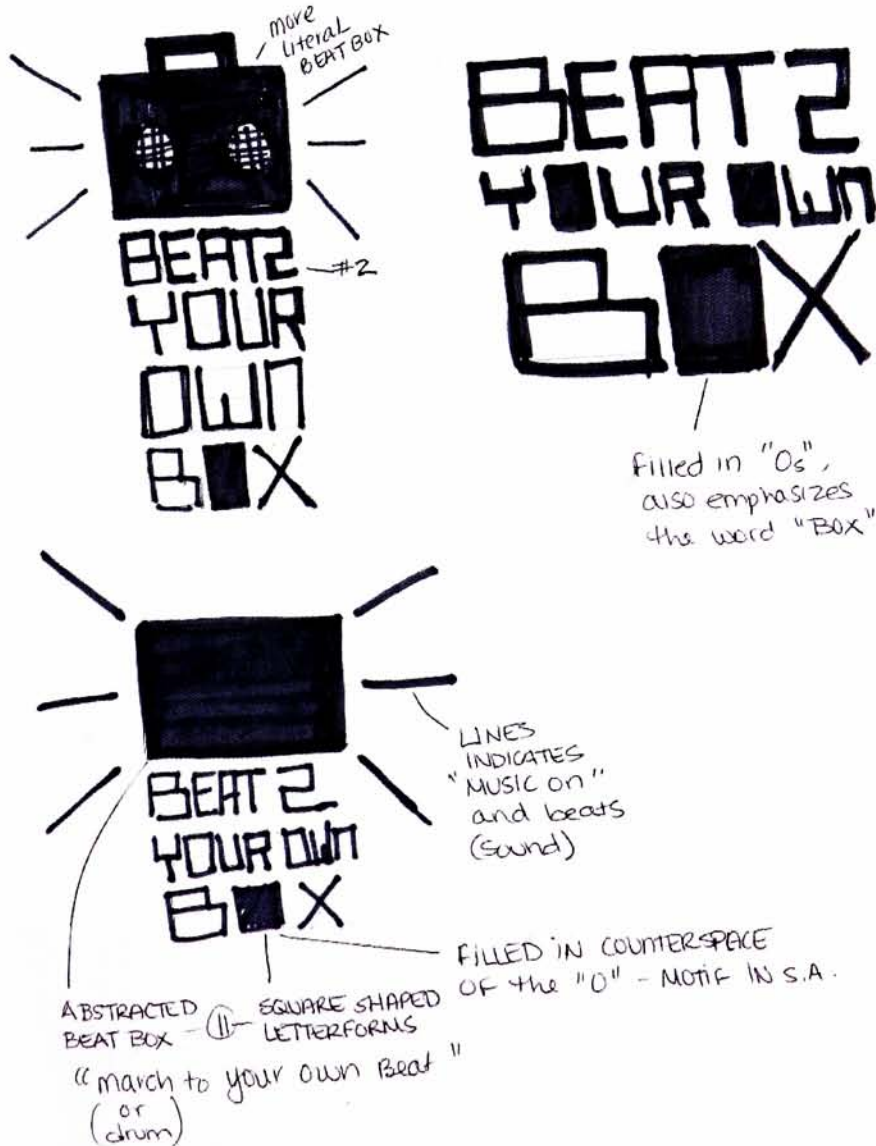


## Ideation Sticker B Sketches

### Summary

The sketches below explore slang language and wording of "Beat 2 Your Own Box" as part of the written (graffiti) and spoken language (rap/slang) of the hip-hop subculture. The decision to use imagery and/or words that mimic the geometric shape of a beat box refers back to previous research and findings of stylistic motifs and design considerations discussed in the documentary *Style Wars* (see p. 159). For instance, the motif being explored in the above sketch includes filling in the counterspace or middle of the "O" letters. The message *Beat 2 Your Own Box* is similar to saying "beat to your own drum," "march to your own beat," "drum to your own beat," which suggests to viewers to be yourself and not follow others' actions or behaviors.

### Sketches





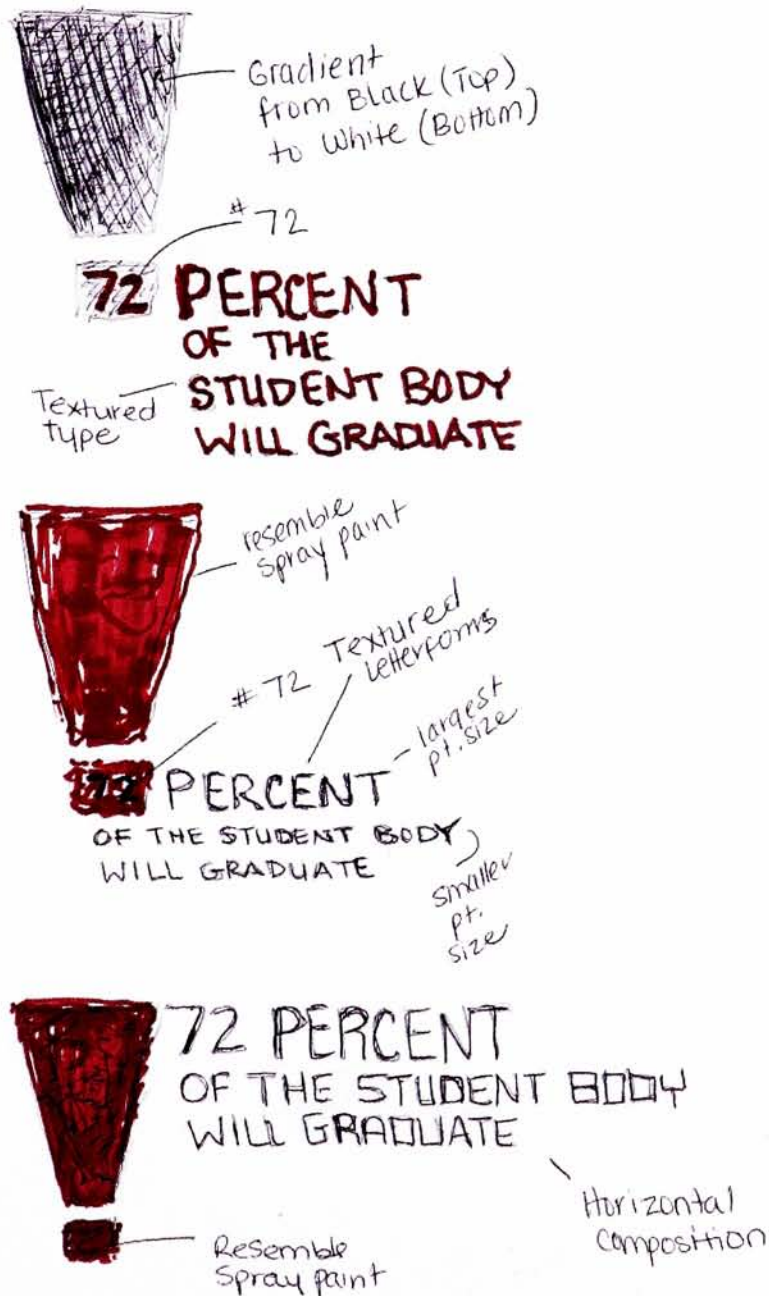
## Ideation Sticker C Sketches

### Summary

Statistical information was researched on a New York State government Web site, which displayed the 2006 New York State High School Report Card results for the Rochester City School District (RCSD). Considering RCSD's 72 percent graduation rate, the sketches explore conceptual approaches that might amend a student-related issue of lack of motivation.

The sketches above display a variety of street art influences with color, imagery, typography, and composition.

### Sketches

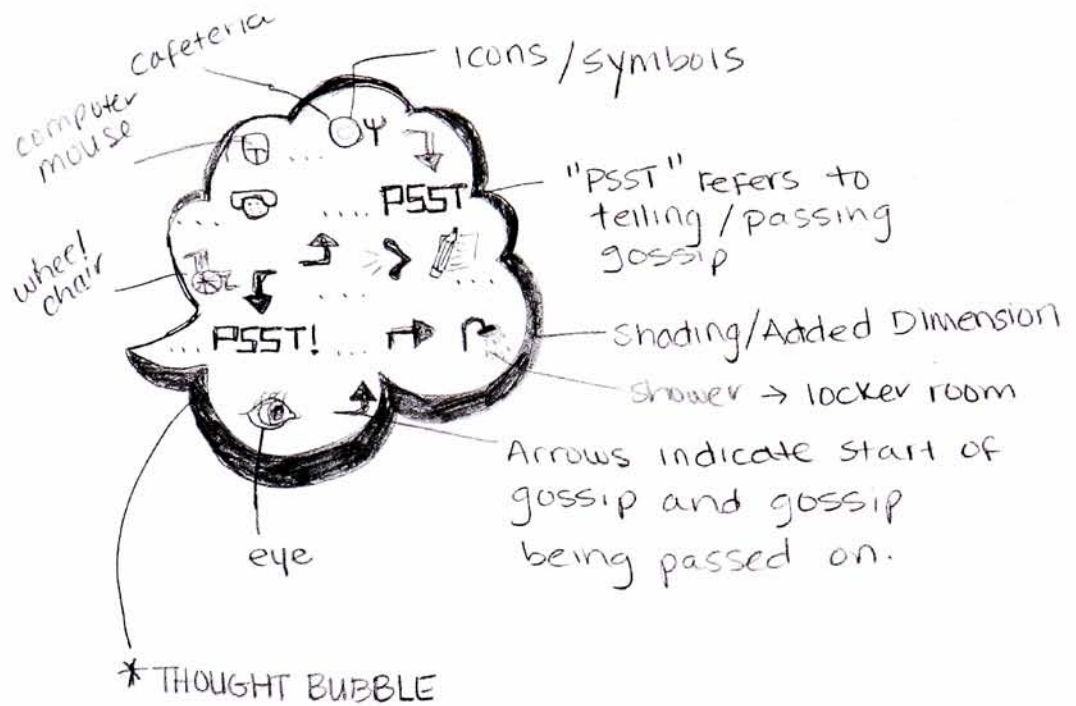


## Ideation Sticker D Sketches

### Summary

Above is a sketch that attempts to amend a general issue of disrespect that students may have toward themselves and toward other students and teachers through the act of gossiping. The thought bubble represents how gossip starts and is spread by students in different places and through various vehicles of communication. The thought bubble mimics the street art style that was studied earlier in the thesis as an imagery motif, while the shadow adds dimension to the bubble.

### Sketches



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## Intermediate Evaluation

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This section of the thesis includes excerpts of committee meeting conversations that provided advisor feedback to help the design student refine, develop, and produce final applications that reflect the goals of this thesis as outlined on page 6.



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## Intermediate Evaluation

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### Meetings

In meetings with Chief Thesis Advisor Deborah Beardslee and Associate Thesis Advisors Alex Bitterman and Paul Grebinger, initial designs were discussed in the context of the goals established in the project definition of the thesis (see page 5).

Designs A through D shown on pages 159–166 were discussed in a single committee meeting on April 26, 2007, at the Rochester Institute of Technology with Beardslee and Grebinger. Another meeting with Beardslee and Bitterman took place on May 1, 2007 to review the application work-in-progress.

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### Potential Constraints

Before implementing the final design solutions, the designer met with, and communicated via e-mail and telephone with, administrative staff at Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School, which included Kim Garlock, Commencement Academy Director, and Mary Beth Steele, Assistant Academy Director.

Initially the designs at the school were to be placed in and around the high school community. A more realistic solution, however, was to concentrate on two classrooms at the high school. (This was determined after considering the size of the school, the logistics of sticker placement, the quantity of stickers that would be need for adequate coverage, and the time frame available for viewing.) The designer worked with two motivated participants, Monica Brockmyre, a tenth grade English teacher, and Juliet Rice, a twelfth grade English teacher, who would allow the designer and author of this thesis to implement the designs. A few days after the implementation, Brockmyre and Rice agreed to distribute and collect a survey of student responses to the sticker solutions.

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## Intermediate Evaluation

### Sticker A

### Potential Solution

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#### Design Process

The sketches below were chosen by the designer and author of this thesis to present in a meeting with Chief Advisor Deborah Beardslee and Associate Advisors Alex Bitterman and Paul Grebinger. The computer-generated sketches are a synthesis of decisions explored and represent an attempt to mimic the look of street art to communicate with students. The message may encourage students to examine and amend their beliefs and behaviors.

#### Committee Suggestions

In the meeting, Professor Beardslee suggested that the boot height could be exaggerated to emphasize the point about female students who wish to gain attention from the wrong audience by wearing risqué footwear. She also mentioned that the content of the sticker design lends itself to being more effective in a location other than on the mirror in the bathroom, such as inside a stall or in a particular and meaningful location closer to the floor. These suggestions were given prior to when limitations were placed on where the stickers could be placed in only two classrooms of the high school.

Grebinger commented that placement of the sticker in the stall and close to the floor and close to the students' feet may not be as effective given that the viewer is preoccupied with what they are doing in the stall. He also commented that because the sticker may be tampered with in the stall it would not be an effective location. He suggested that the mirror could be a better context as female students are fixing their hair and makeup and may be thinking "I look great, I look hot" and then notice the sticker and begin to question their actions and/or behavior. The color of the boot and typography were also discussed. The red as compared with the purplish-pink color used in the imagery and/or typography was questioned as to which was more effective.

Beardslee and Grebinger agreed that although both designs were effective, there was room for more exploration with the wording. For instance, the phrase on the sticker could read "sexy is safe?" or "safe is sexy?"

#### Iteration A



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## Intermediate Evaluation

### Sticker A

### Final Solution

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**Final Solution**  
(Actual Size)



#### Summary

Based on committee feedback and further exploration, the design above represents the final solution of the sticker discussed on the previous page. The adjustments that were made include emphasizing the height of the heel and using the color red to highlight only the word "risky."



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## Intermediate Evaluation Sticker B

### Potential Solution

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#### Design Process

The sticker below is a synthesis of earlier hand-drawn sketches that represent aspects of the language, rhythms, and tones of street art through imagery and typography. The image was presented to committee members as a stronger, more refined sketch that evolved from earlier sketches.

#### Committee Suggestions

Professor Beardslee suggested that the term “beat box” may not be appropriately interpreted or recognized by the high school community around Rochester, New York. Professor Grebinger stated that he believed that the term originated in New York City, but was common talk among inner-city youth and those who relate to the hip-hop subculture. Professor Beardslee suggested that the term be researched to make sure it would be familiar to a high school, student-based audience.

Beardslee questioned what the sketch contributed to graphic design. The designer replied that the sketch reflects findings based on her research and photo documentation. She explained that street artists tend to fill in the counterspace (negative or white) or middle of the “Os” and other letterforms that could be filled in to create a solid shape. The designer expressed that filling in only one “O” letterform was a hint to the street art. The language used in the phrase *Beat 2 Your Own Box* was another decision based on coded language that is often used by street artists who tag a wall. Beardslee suggested that by filling in the “O” in the words “YOUR” and “OWN” the illusion of depth and heads in a crowd could be implied, perhaps even at a rap concert. Grebinger agreed with Beardslee’s suggestion and recommended that using the red from the “Is Sex Safe?” sticker could interconnect the stickers through the use of the colors black, grey, white, and red. Professor Beardslee mentioned that colors could create a subtle system so students could recognize that the sticker designs are linked, if it turned out that the black, grey, red, and white colors were appropriate for the other three design approaches.

#### Potential Solution B



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## Intermediate Evaluation

### Sticker B

### Final Solution

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**Final Solution**  
(Actual Size)



#### Summary

Based on feedback from the committee in May, the sticker was revised. Cropping the boom box and moving the typography to the lower edge of the sticker emphasize the abruptness of street art. The corners of the boom box were rounded to mimic the shape of the letterforms. The grey horizontal and diagonal lines next to the boom box were changed to red to signal that music is playing.

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## Intermediate Evaluation

### Sticker C

### Potential Solution

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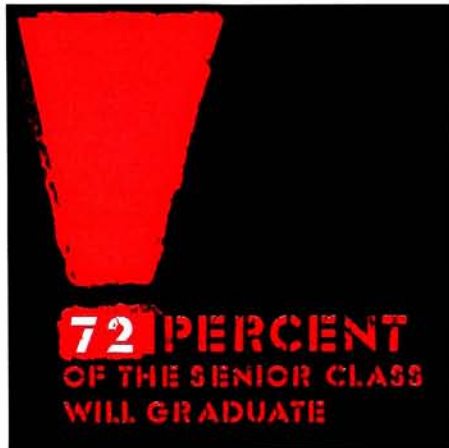
#### Design Process

The sticker below is a synthesis of earlier hand-drawn sketches. This layout was presented at the thesis committee meeting on April 26, 2007. Considerations of color, typography, imagery, and influences of street art made this sticker the strongest iteration.

#### Committee Suggestions

Professor Beardslee suggested that the exclamation point should look even more hand generated (the top corners are too sharp and clean in the image above). Grebinger agreed with the suggestion. He felt that the enclosure of the number in the point of the exclamation was an effective design choice.

#### Iteration C





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## Intermediate Evaluation

### Sticker C

### Final Solution

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**Final Solution**  
(Actual Size)



#### Summary

Minimal changes were made to the sticker design shown above. Changes included making the top left edge of the exclamation mark less computer generated and more harsh to appear as though paint was thrown down as an immediate and strong reaction to the issue being addressed. Minor changes to the exclamation mark make the influence of street art in the design to appear more noticeable and dynamic.

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## Intermediate Evaluation

### Sticker D

### Potential Solution

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#### Design Process

The sketch below represents a more refined computer iteration of the hand-drawn sticker layout found on the previous page. This sketch was shown to the thesis committee meeting on April 31, 20007 in a thesis committee meeting as a representation of icons/symbols that represent gossip (starting and spreading). The use of directional arrows within the thought bubble are influenced from street art. The line contour that outlines the thought bubble represents depth through shading, which is commonly used in street art "tags" or "writings." The minimal use of color and written information within the thought bubble allow the icons/symbols to suggest inside or coded messages rooted in the concept of gossip.

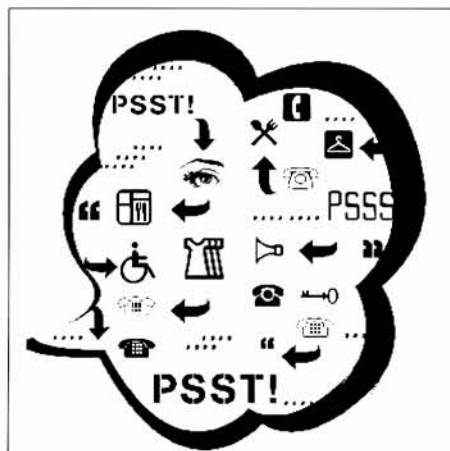
#### Committee Suggestions

Beardslee and Grebinger agreed that this layout design solution needed the most revision. One of the changes discussed was the amount of visual and textual graphics placed inside the thought bubble.

Another suggestion was to make the thought bubble a gradient of white to dark grey. This technique will help push the nasty rumors concept, which are started and passed along in high school settings such as cafeterias, bathrooms, locker rooms, hallways, and so on.

Beardslee and Grebinger also suggested including a line of text underneath the thought bubble to make an explicit statement that rumors are nasty in order to suggest that viewers not pass them on. Professor Alex Bitterman agreed with the others and emphasized that the next steps of refinement would be to make all the designs communicate social messages that immediately and clearly call attention to issues or behaviors in need of amendment. Otherwise, the stickers will allow the intended or unintended audience that encounters the messages to misinterpret the design or to read it as an implicit message, which is just the opposite of what the designer intended.

#### Iteration D



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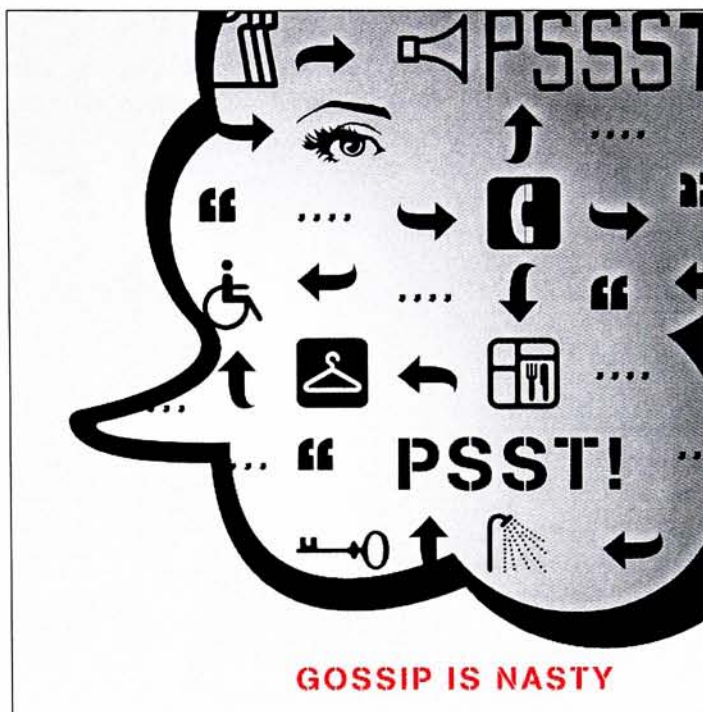
## Intermediate Evaluation

### Sticker D

### Final Solution

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**Final Solution**  
(Actual Size)



#### Summary

Above is the final design solution for the sticker based on the suggestions that were made in the thesis committee meetings. The use of the color grey helped emphasize the concept that rumors are murky or hidden in shadows. The cropping to show more of the textual and visual graphics inside the thought bubble makes the message more personal and suggests the riskiness of spreading gossip. When implemented in the classrooms, the stickers were placed on many different viewing contexts and on a variety of surfaces, such as sides of desks or cabinets, behind chairs, and on the teacher's desk.



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## Implementation

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This section of the thesis includes photo documentation of the stickers at Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School to provide a context. Following the visual examples of each sticker, the designer describes in a self evaluation what improvements could be made to further refine, develop, and produce a final application that reflect the goals of this thesis as outlined on page 6.

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## Implementation Sticker A at Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School

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### Classroom Context



Sticker A was placed in Ms. Brockmyre's classroom on the mirror of a projector.

### Summary

In Ms. Brockmyre's class, the sticker was placed on a mirror of a projector that, according to Ms. Rice, was used mainly by female students to put on makeup before and during class time. In Rice's classroom, the sticker was placed in the back of the classroom on molding close to the floor and close to students' feet.

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## Implementation Sticker A Evaluation

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### Sticker A Self Evaluation

*Are High Heels Risky?* was created to encourage students to think about the potential risks they take when wearing provocative clothing. The double message that the designer intended to convey to the high school audience was the possible physical harm that high heels can cause as well as the possibility that clothes are communicating intended and unintended messages to intended and unintended audiences.

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#### Message

Originally, the messages on the sticker that were explored were "Are Sexy Shoes Safe?" and "Sexy Shoes Are Safe?"; however, the word "sexy" was not approved by the Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School administration. The change in wording conveyed a similar concept but, may have hindered the intended message that the designer was aiming to communicate to students.

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#### Typography

The message, "Are High Heels Risky?" was aligned diagonally with the image of the boot. This approach called attention to the height and stance of the boot, supporting the main concept.

The letterforms in the written message resemble hand-generated marks found in street art. Future revisions to improve the mark-making aspects include making the sticker more iconic to street art through increasing the level of complexity and grittiness seen in the typographic treatment of the letterforms.

---

#### Imagery

The image of the boot is suggestive of the main concept but portrays two meanings: sexy clothing can send the wrong messages to intended or unintended audiences, and that people who wear high heels could physically hurt themselves or be hurt by others. The exploration of the boot's height and the thin heel exaggerated the intended message and signaled danger and risk.

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#### Color

The color of the black boot helps reinforce particular moods or feelings of risk, sexiness, and danger. The words "Are High Heels Risky?", with exception to the word "Risky" helped highlight and color code important aspects of the sticker.

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#### Viewing Context

The sticker solution was placed in Brockmyre's classroom on a mirror of a projector (as shown on the previous page) and in Rice's classroom on a closet door close to the floor and to students' feet. The position of the sticker on Brockmyre's projector might have appeared riskier if the top of the sticker was placed closer or flush to the edge or frame of the mirror. The sticker solution placed in Rice's room was conceptually strong, although the see-through transparency factor of the paper on which the sticker was printed interfered with an accessible and readable message.

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#### Summary

Overall, the sticker could have been stronger and conveyed a clearer message to students if the wording on the sticker solution was not changed. A stronger influence of street art, however, could have supported the revised message of "Are High Heels Risky?" One last change that could help to convey the sticker solution would be the use of alternative adhesive papers that would enable placing the stickers on different colored materials without interference from the see-through transparency.



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## Implementation Sticker B at Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School

### Classroom Context



Sticker B was placed in Ms. Brockmyre's classroom on a pole that was close to an actual boom box.

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### Summary

In a thesis committee meeting on May 17, 2007, final sticker layouts and photos of their implementation contexts were presented. The designer and author of this thesis discussed how the *Beat 2 Your Own Box* phrase on the stickers placed near boom boxes in Brockmyre's and Rice's classrooms helped connect the concept of the sticker to music and individuality.

After the stickers were implemented in Brockmyre's and Rice's classrooms, student surveys were administered to evaluate the sticker layouts.

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## Implementation Sticker B Evaluation

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### Sticker B Self Evaluation

"Beat 2 Your Own Box" was created to motivate students to be their own selves and not to follow others. Slang and coded language as well as lettering motifs in street art were explored and adapted in the sticker solution.

#### Message

"Beat 2 Your Own Box" was an approach to connect the solution to a phrase similar to "beat to your own drum," but with words instead drawn from the hip-hop/street art subcultures that high school students might better relate with.

#### Typography

The position of the typography near the sticker's edge was reminiscent of a similar approach found in street art. The counterspaces of the "Os" were filled in to mimic the letterform motifs found in street art.

#### Imagery

The image of the boom box on the sticker supplements the written message and represents musical beats and rhythms. The dynamic imagery presented a graphic interpretation of the written message on the sticker.

#### Color

The colors red, black, grey, and white in this sticker aid viewers in identifying a color system and possible designer/author of the four sticker solutions in this thesis project. The red lines were an attempt to allude to music, beats, and sounds of a beat box that is on and playing.

#### Viewing Context

The viewing experience for this message was a clear and accessible location on a pole near an actual boom box in Brockmyre's classroom. The sticker location in Rice's classroom was on a black boom box, which was not as effective because the black image on clear sticker paper did not stand out from the background. Exploration of alternative sticker paper or positioning on physical materials that are white or clear could remedy this problem. Positioning the sticker on the physical material in a different orientation could allow the message to appear in a more unexpected manner, similar to the way in which a viewer comes upon street art.

#### Summary

Overall, the sticker was a thoughtful solution that emphasized the importance of individuality through decisions related to typography, compositional space, imagery, and color. Considerations for future projects include rotating the orientation of the sticker and varying the sticker paper on which the design is printed (for greater access regardless of the background surface color).



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## Implementation Sticker C at Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School

### Classroom Context



Sticker C was placed in Ms. Rice's classroom next to the door at eye level for students to see when exiting the room.

### Summary

When implemented in the classrooms at Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School, the sticker was placed next to the door opening of the classroom. The designer hoped that by placing the sticker in this location, students would view and read the sticker when exiting and then feel more motivated to return.



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## Implementation Sticker C Evaluation

### Sticker C Self Evaluation

"72 Percent of the Student Body Will Graduate" revealed statistical data in an attempt to amend student-related issues of lack of motivation and failure from school. The exploration of street art influences and typographic hierarchy were important to the success of the final sticker solution.

#### Message

The use of statistical data was an effective approach for emphasizing an immediate and urgent issue that directly related to students at Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School. Some students thought the number was surprisingly low, others thought it was encouragingly high; regardless of that perception, the sticker worked in terms of raising awareness and prompting students to think about which side of the 72 percent they were on.

#### Typography

The emphasis on the 72 Percent part of the message presented a sense of proportion: just how many students will or won't graduate? Further exploration of typographic hierarchy could make the sticker more meaningful, for instance, setting the word *Graduate* to the same size as 72 Percent might help readability, making the core message more readily apparent. Also, changes to size and color could convey an even greater sense of urgency. Another important aspect of the typographic decision-making was the stenciling of the letterforms, which brought in the street art influence.

#### Imagery

The image of the exclamation point drew immediate attention to the problematic issue of student failure. This literal, text-driven approach was well received in committee meetings.

#### Color

The red color of the exclamation point reinforced the urgency and importance of the main concept of student failure in school. The white letterforms of 72 and the red letterforms that read "Percent of the Student Body Will Graduate" highlighted the text message.

#### Viewing Context

This sticker was placed in Rice's and Brockmyre's classrooms on or next to the door frame at eye level for students to view when they exit the classroom. The placement of the sticker helped enforce and motivate students to attend class.

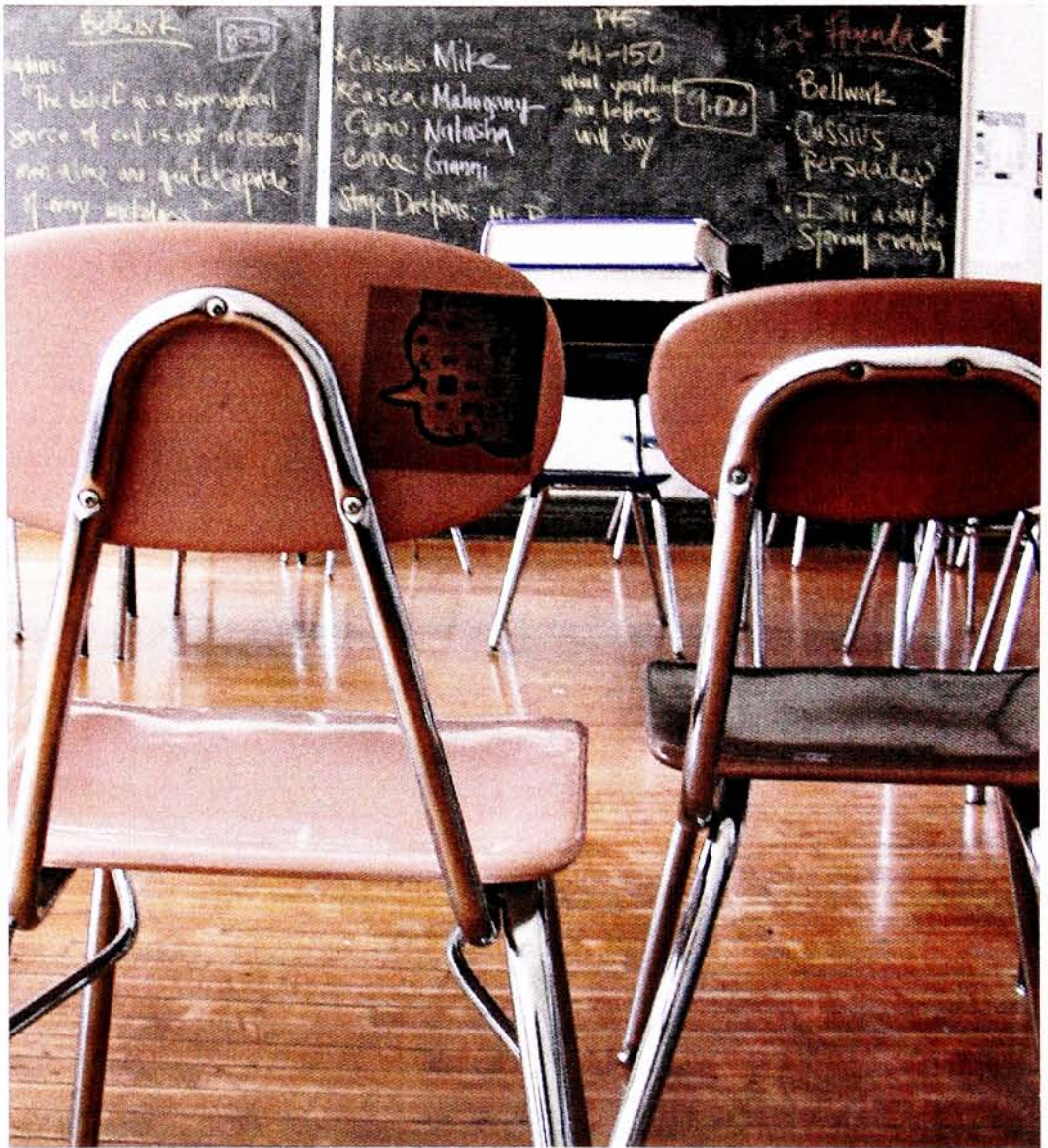
#### Summary

Overall, the sticker solution communicated a clear, straightforward message. Improvements for a future study could include alternative typographic hierarchy decisions that might better connect the words within the message. Possible improvements to heighten the look of the sticker's street art roots and conceptual message would be to elaborate on the hand-generated aspects of the exclamation point to resemble the style of spray paint.

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## Implementation Sticker D at Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School

### Classroom Context



Sticker D was placed in Ms. Rice's classroom on the back of a chair.

### Summary

Above is a photo of the viewing context of the sticker design that was implemented in Ms. Rice's classroom. The sticker "Gossip Is Nasty" was placed on the back of a chair and in other areas, such as sides of student desks and on the side of a book shelf near a pencil sharpener. Three stickers were placed in the classrooms in areas adjacent to where students would potentially start gossip, or in areas that would allow a passerby to spontaneously experience the message.

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## Implementation Sticker C Evaluation

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### Sticker D Self Evaluation

"Gossip Is Nasty" was an attempt to modify a general student issue of disrespect, and more specifically, the behavior of gossiping and spreading rumors. The use of icons within a thought bubble was explored to represent the negative aspects of how gossip starts and spreads throughout the high school community.

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#### Message

Initially the design solution was not supported by a phrase. During the author's presentation at a committee meeting, phrases were considered as part of the sticker design to help support the "Psst!" and the imagery inside the thought bubble. Phrases that were discussed included "Rumors Are Nasty," "Don't Pass It," and "Gossip Is Nasty." The "Gossip Is Nasty" phrase was selected for the final sticker solution because it seemed to best support the main concept of the design.

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#### Typography

The stenciled letterforms of "Psst!" were drawn from aspects of street art. The "Gossip Is Nasty" phrase is positioned to align with graphic icons that suggest how gossip starts and spreads and the negative impacts it can have.

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#### Imagery

The image of the thought bubble was used in this sticker design to present a variety of ways in which street art can be graphically interpreted in a design solution. The variation in line weight that is used to construct the shape of the thought bubble adds dimension and shading to the form, which often can be found in street art motifs. The icons inside the thought bubble portray topics that can generate rumors and show how gossip starts and spreads in a high school environment. Improvements to strengthen the message could include simplifying the number of icons and/or using other imagery that might be more readily recognized by high school students. Revisions made to crop the thought bubble for the final solution were considered beneficial to presenting a dynamic composition; cropping seemed to move the message into a closer, more personal space.

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#### Color

The minimal use of color in this message accentuates the main concept that rumors and gossip thrive in dark, shadowy, whispered backgrounds, and that they can hurt feelings and cause problems, leaving people feeling dark and overwhelmed. The grey gradient within the thought bubble strengthens that association as well.

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#### Viewing Context

This sticker was placed in Rice's and Brockmyre's classrooms on the back of students' desks and chairs, as well as on the sides of book shelves. The placement of the stickers was significant to reinforcing the concept of how and where rumors start and spread within the high school.

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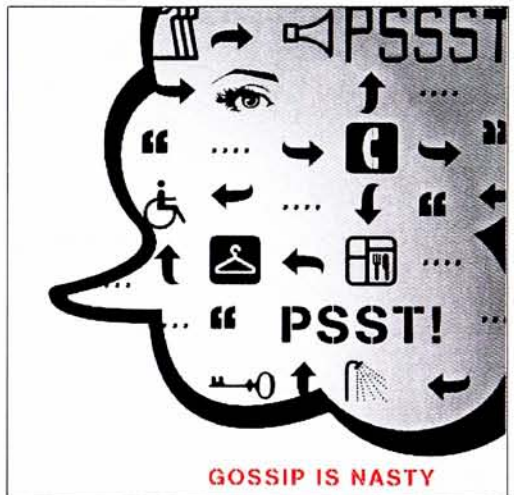
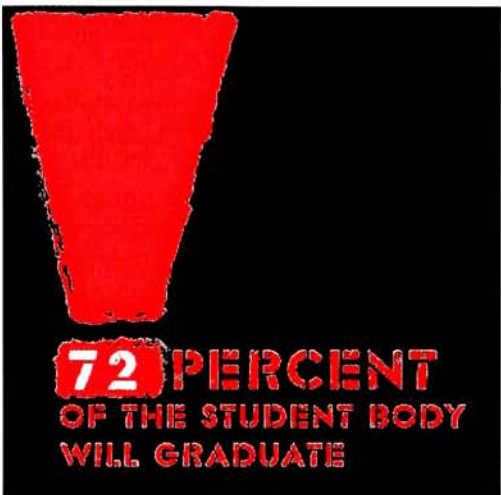
#### Summary

Overall, the sticker was an effective solution for portraying a message through the use of icons, minimal color, typography, and composition. Although students related less well to the imagery and message in this sticker, they did understand the sticker's concepts and intent. Future improvements to the sticker could include revisions to the icons, replacing them with other imagery to enhance the clarity of the message and avoid possible confusion for the given target audience in a given environment.



## Final Four Sticker Solutions

(Shown at  
54 percent size)



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## Dissemination

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This section describes short-term and long-term approaches for distributing information about the goals, concepts, and contributions this thesis offers to the graphic design field. It also describes how the designer finalized the social cause campaign sticker layouts, implementing final decisions in Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School classrooms, and evaluating student responses.

## Dissemination

### Thesis Exhibition

A series of Spring 2007 RIT Bevier Gallery Thesis Exhibitions included work from students in the Graphic Design MFA Program. The exhibition was comprised of information panels and interactive elements that highlighted each student's thesis project. The panels in the gallery included a project overview, precedents, research, synthesis, ideation, and work-in-progress.

The Graphic Design MFA students each participated in one of two exhibitions to demonstrate their ability to select a topic and conduct research, using appropriate methods, design process, theory, critical thinking, and conceptual problem-solving skills. The finished result should demonstrate the student's educational experience at the graduate level, and the research and final application should contribute to the graphic design field based on the study's goals and documentation of process.

The author of this thesis was included in the second Bevier Gallery exhibition on April 6, 2007. The gallery layout was composed of panels that were split into two major sections; one section focused on the scholarly study and the second included the photo documentation of the original, "raw" street art. The two layers of information transformed the gallery space into a viewing experience that allowed the public to see pure, appropriated, and misappropriated forms of street art at many different angles. The layout also allowed the project to take on an expanded spatial context, where the freestanding wall with photo documentation symbolized a "Free Wall," which is known to street artists as a place to tag or write on a building legally or illegally.

The thesis exhibition in the Bevier Gallery helped others in the community to better understand how corporations are currently adapting the influence of street culture, specifically street art in the form of graffiti, to sell an idea or product. In turn, the misinterpretation of street art as an influence on brand identity or associated strategies in graphic design may well be promoting mass cultures to disrespect and misrepresent the art form through buying into a false sense of identity without knowing the real meanings or beliefs of the graffiti artist and the hip-hop subculture.

Exhibition Space





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## Dissemination

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### Project Goals Short-term

The thesis application offered an opportunity to communicate messages to an appropriate audience, such as youth in Rochester, New York, specifically students who attend Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School. The branded messages within the final designs offer students an opportunity to react and respond to how their personal actions and behaviors may affect themselves as well as the school community to which they belong. This social cause sticker campaign is an example of how street art can be interpreted in graphic design solutions to positively represent and respect the hip-hop subculture. The final application demonstrates how community revitalization groups like Habitat for Humanity or organizations that work with school communities, such as Drug Awareness Resistance Education (DARE), could benefit from using design solutions that reflect research, design process, theory, critical thinking, and conceptual problem-solving skills to address an appropriate audience using street art as an influence. Other organizations such as the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) could benefit from this thesis study to call attention to student-related issues that are specific to a high school community, such as sexual orientation, alcohol/drug abuse, body image, and so on. The use of color within each part of the sticker system could provide clues of authorship.

The final application is one example of how a well designed sticker system can communicate messages to a target audience. Other projects could draw influence from street art and explore a similar process when approaching message-branding solutions. For example, the effects of superhighway bypasses on an urban community could be researched to pinpoint specific issues in need of amendment. Messages could draw influence from actual street art found on or near the bypass to amend hypothetical issues, which might include: the demolition of trees (lack of green space); small business bankruptcies (economic growth); and an increase in the number of vehicular casualties/injuries (safety hazards). These issues could be explored in solutions that consider the appropriate use of materials, viewing contexts, and content of messages. Street art styles could be investigated through uses of typography and imagery, as well as color and language, to represent the art form and hip-hop subculture. Solutions that successfully adapt street art should also appear in unexpected or surprising ways to bypassing drivers.

The short-term goals of this thesis project are meant to demonstrate the potential use of street art in design solutions for appropriate audiences; and with appropriate, well researched messages. The design solution should aim to inform, educate, and use an effective mode of communication to positively promote long-term goals of hope, peace, and empowerment as street art once did for noncommercial purposes.

Another short-term goal of this thesis is to spread a more well rounded, constructive awareness of street art. Organizations, such as the American Institute for Graphic Arts (AIGA) could host a conference or workshop to discuss this study and its findings. Professional sponsors, such as *HOW* magazine, could host a convention that discusses the frequent misappropriation of street art with the goal to encourage design students and professionals to be more aware of how the art form is adapted in design solutions in order to represent and respect the hip-hop subculture.

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## Dissemination

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**Project Goals**

## Long-Term

This study could continue to spread the awareness of street art and how it influences design solutions in other ways. The author and designer of this thesis could set up a Web site to solicit examples from designers and street artists in order to provide samples of this phenomenon to the general public. By continuing to present and exchange ideas about this study, it is possible that more articles will be submitted to design journals, such as *Design Review*, or appear in *PRINT*, *CMYK*, or *Communication Arts* magazines to address the concerns of street art misappropriation in design. Scholarly articles about this study could also be submitted to journals and magazines in other related fields of study. Some vehicles for sharing across disciplines could include: *ARTnews*, *American Art Review*, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, *Journal of Communication*, and *American Business Daily*. The designer and author of this thesis hopes this study will inspire students and professionals across multiple disciplines to further investigate the evolution and misrepresentation of street art in design.

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## Retrospective Evaluation

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This section of the thesis documentation assesses the final application in which strengths and weaknesses are evaluated by the designer and outside evaluators. This section also provides insight on why and how the sticker layouts could be further improved.



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## Retrospective Evaluation

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### Summary

Two teachers at Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School, Monica Brockmyre, a tenth grade English teacher, and Juliet Rice, a twelfth grade English teacher, allowed the designer to implement the final sticker designs on Monday May 11, 2007. After the designs had been installed for five days in the classrooms, students responded to the final sticker solutions on May 16, 2007 through a survey created for this purpose. Student responses provided feedback in regards to improvement of the sticker solutions related to the designer's use of imagery, typography, language, color, and how well the stickers connect to the street art idiom. A blank evaluation survey is provided on the following two pages.

### Evaluators

Out of 57 students who potentially could have responded to the survey in Brockmyre's and Rice's classes, 28 students participated. Out of 28 student evaluators, 9 were male and 19 were female. Below are the criteria on which evaluators judged the design considerations:

Whether the sticker communicated anything to the viewer/reader  
Connection to specific art style  
Color/Mood  
Typography  
Message  
Imagery  
Suggestions for improvement



### Overview

On the following pages, student responses to survey questions are categorized to determine how well students connected to each sticker based on the design considerations listed above. Student responses to "No" and "Yes" questions are numerically represented and tabulated on the following pages. Answers to open-ended questions are summarized and included to represent students' connections to each sticker layout and to suggest what revisions the designer and author of this thesis might consider for future improvement.

# Retrospective Evaluation Student Survey

## Survey Instrument

Students at Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School were given an opportunity to respond to a two-page survey after the sticker approaches were implemented in Monica Brockmyre's and Juliet Rice's classrooms. Student responses to the sticker designs indicated their reaction to the designer's decisions and use of imagery, language, typography, and color to communicate and interpret the street art style. Students also identified specific points of improvement the designer could explore to create even more powerful design solutions.

Survey Stickers at Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School		
Age _____		
<input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female		
	<b>Solution A</b>	<b>Solution B</b>
Does this sticker communicate anything to you?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
What?	_____	_____
Did this sticker connect to any other artwork style you've seen?	_____	_____
	_____	_____
Did the colors catch your eye?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
What mood did they create?	_____	_____
	_____	_____
Does the writing on the sticker make sense?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Why or why not?	_____	_____
	_____	_____
Does the drawing on the sticker make sense?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Why or why not?	_____	_____
	_____	_____
How well do you connect with the overall message?	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Fair <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Fair <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent
What could the designer have done to make this sticker message even more meaningful?	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____

# Retrospective Evaluation Student Survey

Survey  
Instrument

## Survey Stickers at Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School



**Solution C**

Does this sticker communicate anything to you?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

What?

Did this sticker connect to any other artwork style you've seen?

Did the colors catch your eye?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

What mood did they create?

Does the writing on the sticker make sense?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

Why or why not?

Does the drawing on the sticker make sense?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

Why or why not?

How well do you connect with the overall message?

- ☐ Poor  
☐ Fair  
☐ Good  
☐ Excellent

What could the designer have done to make this sticker message even more meaningful?



**Solution D**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

- ☐ Poor  
☐ Fair  
☐ Good  
☐ Excellent



# Retrospective Evaluation

## Solution A Survey Results



Does this sticker communicate anything to you?

Male	Yes	2	No	6	n/a	1
Female	Yes	7	No	10	n/a	2

Does this sticker connect to any other artwork style you've seen?

Male	Yes	6	No	2	n/a	1
Female	Yes	1	No	11	n/a	7

Did the colors catch your eye?

Male	Yes	3	No	4	n/a	2
Female	Yes	5	No	11	n/a	3

Does the writing on the sticker make sense?

Male	Yes	3	No	4	n/a	2
Female	Yes	9	No	6	n/a	4

Does the drawing on the sticker make sense?

Male	Yes	3	No	4	n/a	2
Female	Yes	11	No	5	n/a	3

How well do you connect with the overall message?

Male	Excellent	1	Good	1	Fair	1	Poor	4	n/a	2
Female	Excellent	3	Good	1	Fair	7	Poor	3	n/a	5

---

# Retrospective Evaluation

---

Solution A  
Survey Results



Survey Results

---

## What does this sticker communicate to you?

Male and female students indicated that they did not connect to the intended messages being communicated by the designer. Male students who responded to the question of what does the sticker communicate, responded with *are your chances risky, no because I am a boy, and take a higher course*. Females responded to the question with *high heels cause problems, set goals and anything is possible, heels cause harm to oneself, and heels can hurt you*. Female respondents connected to two possible and intended meanings of the sticker message—that wearing heels are dangerous and can cause pain to someone who could potentially fall or trip while wearing them, or that risky shoes could send the wrong messages to intended or unintended audiences.

## Does this sticker connect to any other artwork styles you've seen?

Male respondents indicated that the sticker connected to artwork styles they had seen before, although no examples were given. Female student respondents indicated that the sticker did not connect to any artwork style they had seen before.

## What mood did the colors create?

The majority of male and female students responded that the colors on the sticker did not catch their eyes, and the question of what mood did the colors create brought a mixed reaction from what the designer intended. Many of the male students claimed that they didn't understand the message on the sticker, although they indicated the mood that the designer was trying to evoke through color, for example, *curiosity, danger, fear, risk*, and one response of *bored*. Female responses included *something is wrong, scary, sexuality, curiosity*, and unintended responses of *motivational* and *great* moods.

## Did the writing on the sticker make sense? Why or why not?

Male survey respondents indicated that they did not connect to the written message on the sticker. Some male responses to the written message on the sticker included *it was a good idea, the image connected to the text well*, and that they *did not get the point* of what the designer was trying to convey. Female responses included that the written message was *very obvious, high heels are risky, makes reader think of all the ways high heels can be risky*, and *the language is clear, but I did not understand what the heels are risky to*.

## Does the drawing on the sticker make sense? Why or why not?

Male and female students responded that the boot and its composition indicate risk. Male responses included *tilt of boot symbolizes riskiness*, and *variables connect well* (image and text). Female responses included that *risk is high, the boot is very high, the height of the black boot, height of heel, and the drawing is clean*.

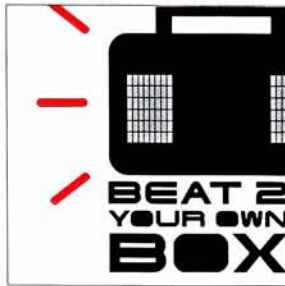
## What could the designer have done to make the sticker even more meaningful?

Based on the feedback from the student respondents, the "Are High Heels Risky?" sticker needs the most revisions for students to connect to the intended message. Male and female students made similar suggestions to the designer, including *make a better sticker, use more words and a different image, make the sticker less ambiguous*, and *tilt heel more* to convey riskiness.

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## Retrospective Evaluation

Survey Results  
Solution B



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Does this sticker communicate anything to you?

Male	Yes	8	No	1	n/a	0
Female	Yes	15	No	4	n/a	0

---

Does this sticker connect to any other artwork style you've seen?

Male	Yes	1	No	3	n/a	5
Female	Yes	3	No	6	n/a	10

---

Did the colors catch your eye?

Male	Yes	7	No	2	n/a	0
Female	Yes	7	No	12	n/a	0

---

Does the writing on the sticker make sense?

Male	Yes	9	No	0	n/a	0
Female	Yes	16	No	2	n/a	1

---

Does the drawing on the sticker make sense?

Male	Yes	7	No	2	n/a	0
Female	Yes	18	No	1	n/a	0

---

How well do you connect with the overall message?

Male	Excellent	6	Good	1	Fair	1	Poor	1
Female	Excellent	3	Good	10	Fair	4	Poor	2



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# Retrospective Evaluation

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Solution B



Survey Results

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## What does this sticker communicate to you?

Based on the evaluations (89 percent of male and 75 percent of female respondents) students connected to the sticker message and successfully understood the intended message.

## Does this sticker connect to any other artwork styles you've seen?

The respondents did not make the connection between the graphics in the sticker layout and street art. One male student responded that the artwork style on the sticker looks similar to many game graphics he had seen. A female student responded that she connected the style of the sticker to Keith Haring's work and a typeface she has commonly seen in magazines. Another female student responded that she connected to the artwork style although she could not pinpoint it at the moment, while another student responded that it looked like a music graphic. Overall, none of the students stated that the sticker made a direct connection to street art.

## What mood did the colors create?

The male student evaluators responded that the colors on the stickers created an *attractive, exciting, relaxing, or interesting* mood. Female students responded that the colors created the mood of *power, confidence, joy, school pride, interest, energy, beauty, lack of emotion, bored*; or they answered with uncertainty.

## Did the writing on the sticker make sense? Why or why not?

Male student evaluators unanimously responded that the writing on the sticker made sense. Three out of nine students who responded with specific reasons as to why the sticker made sense indicated that *it just does, to be your own individual, and it was the artist's way of conveying the message*. Female students also indicated that they understood the written message on the sticker by responding that *the words are easy to interpret, it is self explanatory, the message is similar to beat to your own drum*, and so on. Two females responded *I don't know*, or *I don't talk like that*.

## Does the drawing on the sticker make sense? Why or why not?

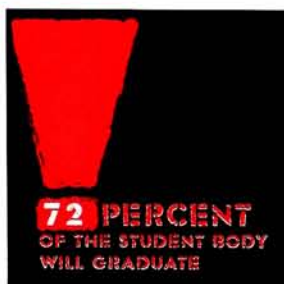
Students indicated that the drawing on the sticker made sense. The students also indicated that the red lines close to the image of the boom box helped to communicate that the radio was on in support of the written message. Male respondents answered why the drawing did or did not make sense through their responses of *a radio makes noise, radio and beats are clear, that the different interpretations were understood, or I have no clue*. Female respondents indicated that *radio, beats, and sounds connect well, the beat box represents a person beating to their own music, that the red lines communicate that the radio is on, the image goes with the text*.

## What could the designer have done to make the sticker even more meaningful?

The male and female students indicated the sticker solution could use minimal refinements such as showing the entire radio graphic, making the image more abstract, and by exploring other written messages on the sticker. Overall, both genders indicated they connected well to the sticker.

# Retrospective Evaluation

Solution C  
Survey Results




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Does this sticker communicate anything to you?

Male	Yes	8	No	1	n/a	0
Female	Yes	15	No	4	n/a	0

---

Does this sticker connect to any other artwork style you've seen?

Male	Yes	0	No	3	n/a	6
Female	Yes	1	No	6	n/a	12

---

Did the colors catch your eye?

Male	Yes	7	No	2	n/a	0
Female	Yes	13	No	4	n/a	2

---

Does the writing on the sticker make sense?

Male	Yes	7	No	2	n/a	0
Female	Yes	17	No	2	n/a	0

---

Does the drawing on the sticker make sense?

Male	Yes	7	No	2	n/a	0
Female	Yes	13	No	6	n/a	0

---

How well do you connect with the overall message?

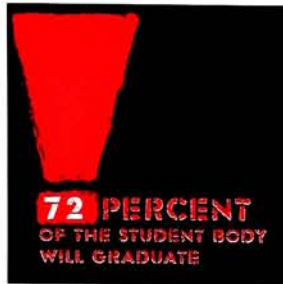
Male	Excellent	4	Good	2	Fair	2	Poor	1
Female	Excellent	7	Good	5	Fair	5	Poor	2

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# Retrospective Evaluation

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Solution C



Survey Results

---

## What does this sticker communicate to you?

Both male and female student evaluators overwhelmingly responded that the sticker communicated a message they could connect to, which was the percentage of students who will graduate, and understood the implied urgency.

## Does this sticker connect to any other artwork styles you've seen?

Out of 28 respondents, one female connected the sticker's style to modern art, or other work she would see in a museum. All other responses from male and female students indicated no response (n/a) or that the sticker did not connect to any artwork style they had seen.

## What mood did the colors create?

The students understood and responded well to the color of the sticker in communicating a serious and urgent issue about student graduation rate. Some of the male responses to the mood the colors created were *serious*, *urgent*, *anger*, and *curiosity*. Some of the unintended responses among male students that were created by the use of the colors red, black, and white were *excitement* and *happiness*. Female respondents indicated the colors created the moods of *sadness*, *shock*, *despair*, *disappointment*, *seriousness*, and *anger*. Unintended responses included *school pride* (connection to school colors) and *hope*.

## Did the writing on the sticker make sense? Why or why not?

Many student respondents understood the intent of the message because it included a factual statistic. Female responses revealed that students at Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School believe that a 72 percent graduation rate is low. The responses also indicated that viewing the sticker was a good way to inform and educate students, perhaps motivating them to realize they need to work hard to do well. Male responses to why the writing on the sticker made sense included that the message was *very specific and easy to understand*, *self-explanatory*, and *conveys truths/reality*. Female responses to the written message included *many students won't graduate*, *it's clear and in English*, *not enough students graduate because they don't try hard enough to do their best*. One unintended message the sticker communicated to a female student was that it *relates to a prom issue*.

## Does the drawing on the sticker make sense? Why or why not?

Most of the students who evaluated the drawing on the sticker claimed that it made sense and helped to suggest that an important issue needed to be addressed. Male student responses to the drawing on the sticker included *the font is symbolic of danger*. Female responses included *the exclamation point emphasizes importance* and *the drawing supports the stated fact*.

## What could the designer have done to make the sticker even more meaningful?

Overall, the students responded that the sticker was either good or excellent but had room for improvement by using different colors. Other suggestions included an increase in typographic hierarchy decisions to emphasize key words that are important to the message. For instance, one student suggested making the word "graduate" on the sticker much larger to be the same size as the number 72 and the word "percent."



### Solution D Survey Results



Does this sticker communicate anything to you?

Male	Yes	3	No	5	n/a	1
Female	Yes	13	No	4	n/a	2

Does this sticker connect to any other artwork style you've seen?

Male	Yes	0	No	2	n/a	7
Female	Yes	3	No	10	n/a	6

Did the colors catch your eye?

Male	Yes	2	No	6	n/a	1
Female	Yes	5	No	9	n/a	5

Does the writing on the sticker make sense?

Male	Yes	2	No	4	n/a	3
Female	Yes	14	No	2	n/a	3

Does the drawing on the sticker make sense?

Male	Yes	2	No	4	n/a	3
Female	Yes	13	No	2	n/a	4

How well do you connect with the overall message?

Male	Excellent	2	Good	3	Fair	1	Poor	2	n/a	1
Female	Excellent	7	Good	6	Fair	2	Poor	1	n/a	3

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# Retrospective Evaluation

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Solution D



Survey Results

## What does this sticker communicate to you?

Most male and female students understood the overarching message of the sticker that the designer intended to communicate. Male respondents indicated that the sticker referred to *dirty language, gossip and how it spreads*, and that *gossip is bad*. Female responses to the sticker included *gossip is bad, resembles people who gossip in school, and telling one thing leads to another*.

## Does this sticker connect to any other artwork styles you've seen?

Very few of the students connected the style of the sticker to street art. Two female students responded that the sticker connected to road signs and to Lichtenstein's artwork.

## What mood did the colors create?

Many of the male students responded they did not understand the sticker but their comments indicated that the colors created moods the designer intended, with the exception of the *good mood, bored, and makes me think of a hospital* comments. The female respondents indicated that the colors did not communicate successfully to them.

## Did the writing on the sticker make sense? Why or why not?

Male student respondents indicated that they did not connect with the writing on the sticker, with only one respondent indicating that *the sticker follows the way people think and how gossip spreads*. The female respondents indicated that they connected to the message being conveyed. Female students who responded that the sticker communicated to them successfully responded that the message *visualizes gossip, it shows how rumor starts*, and that *gossip is not good and causes problems*.

## Does the drawing on the sticker make sense? Why or why not?

Most of the males surveyed did not connect to the drawing on the sticker, although they recognized what the designer intended. Male responses to the imagery included *very creative way for designer to convey ideas* and *the drawing makes sense*. Female responses included *the drawing goes with the theme, the image conveys gossip, shows how gossip starts, or shows how gossip goes around*.

## What could the designer have done to make the sticker even more meaningful?

Based on the feedback from the student respondents, there were mixed reactions to the message being communicated. Male students responded that the sticker could *use more artwork, the symbols are too clean, use a better drawing, conveys gossip but not that it is bad, and nothing because it looked great*. Female students responded that the designer could improve the sticker solution by *using different clues, more color, and ways to communicate in a more literal way*.

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# Retrospective Evaluation

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## Overview

Based on feedback from student respondents, strengths and weaknesses were pinpointed to assess ways in which the final design applications for this study could be further refined and developed.

Students at Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School evaluated and provided feedback on how well they connected to the imagery, typography, colors, and messages on the sticker solutions. Student feedback indicated that the specific goal of communicating messages with a street art style was not entirely successful. Although some stickers were more effective than others, future projects could make even stronger connections to the street art. Student respondents indicated that future improvements to the final application could emphasize the hand-generated mark-making in the imagery and typography, and explore different colors, levels of abstraction and complexity, sticker placement and orientation, language, and overall visual hierarchy.

The designer also gained insight through trial and error on how the project could be improved in the future. For example, it was observed that the implementation of the sticker solutions presented problems because of the paper's transparency and because some of the selected sticker locations hindered the visibility and readability of the stickers. Future projects could consider placing the stickers in riskier, more unexpected or surprising positions. A better design and layout of the evaluation survey may have resulted in a greater number of responses from students. Face-to-face focus groups or other alternative methods for administering the surveys might encourage more in-depth responses.

Although the final project could have been further improved, or implemented differently, the goals for the final project were achieved. A branding solution in design was created that respectfully represents street art to an appropriate audience for informational, educational and noncommercial purposes.



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## Conclusion

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This section summarizes the designer's overall experience of the thesis process, including what was gained, what contributions have been made to the field of design, and what improvements or new approaches could be addressed in future related research projects.

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## Conclusion

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This thesis study began when the designer examined the phenomenon of street art transitioning into formal, mass-produced branding solutions in graphic design. This project was developed to document street art (specifically graffiti) as a current and popular influence in design. Street art and branding are defined in the project definition section of this thesis. In the precedents section of this thesis street art studies, media documentation, and a model of the process of communication are provided in support of how the street art movement has evolved. Resources and information included in the precedents helped strengthen terminology and encourage a more focused approach for this thesis study. The work of researching and documenting how corporate identities have been influenced by the “pure,” ephemeral, everyday actions and objects found in urban settings was initiated to investigate how branding solutions potentially misrepresent and disrespect the hip-hop subculture and its ties to street art.

### Information Gathering

In the beginning of the analysis of street art and how it transitions into branding solutions in graphic design, research was necessary in subject areas such as design history, fine art, popular culture, cultural anthropology, sociology, and other relevant fields of study. To understand how street art could become a more positive and intelligent influence on branding messages in design, the author narrowed the focus of the investigation. Research helped pinpoint important people, places, events, trends, and issues of the art idiom’s evolution and how its influence has thus far had an impact on branding and associated strategies in graphic design.

By researching design history and the conception of street art within the context of the hip-hop subculture in the late 1970s, the author examined the differences between graphic design and street art mark-making in urban settings. One apparent difference was that graphic design work was corporate/official and legal, whereas the street artists’ work was vernacular/casual and illegal. By investigating examples of street art, the author and designer of this thesis gained a better understanding of the syntactical or aesthetic decisions that street artists employ.

Branding examples in design were studied to examine their parallel connections and relationships they had to pure street art. The art forms studied helped clarify conceptual directions as to how street art could be used to communicate personal messages of authorship in a graphic design solution that reflected the tones, voices, and directions of street art. Other resources provided strong examples of corporate branding solutions from industry areas such as education, fashion, recreation, and transportation that respectfully represent the hip-hop subculture.

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## Conclusion

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### Information Analysis

Examples of “pure” street art from differing styles, mediums, and processes by artists who were directly connected to the hip-hop subculture were analyzed. Further study brought forth instructive samples of who was interpreting street art and how different aspects of the art form were transitioning into branding solutions in graphic design. Collected examples of “pure” street art and branding solutions were also compared and contrasted to identify aspects, elements, motifs, genres, and themes that have transitioned from street art into branding solutions in design. To determine how effective the designs were at interpreting street art, the Shannon and Weaver Communication Model was included as a visual tool for assessing whether branding solutions influenced by street art were portrayed in a positive (reappropriated) or negative (misappropriated) way.

An important goal of this thesis was to objectively evaluate branding solutions that adapted street art in design to validate this thesis study’s importance. In a committee meeting with Chief Advisor Deborah Beardslee and Associate Advisor Alex Bitterman, key terms were discussed and later defined to be implemented in matrices. These terms were pertinent to determining if and how street art was respectfully represented. Research was conducted to also understand how well branding solutions positively informed, educated, and influenced appropriate target audiences for noncommercial purposes. This approach offers graphic designers and corporations objective terms to consider when adapting the influences of street art in branding and associated strategies in design.

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### Implementation

The final project was initiated by investigating urban issues that needed immediate attention in the local Rochester, New York area. Specific teenage youth issues that were real and current in area high schools were identified, and an applied project to address these concerns was created. Stickers were used to communicate messages that addressed issues in need of amendment. Main topics chosen were gossiping, skipping/failing, being yourself, and risky clothing. The concepts for the sticker layouts were researched through statistical data from a 2006 New York State High School Report Card results for the Rochester City School District (RCSD) of aptitude statistics, and a content analysis of magazines that target teens

Projecting beyond the final application of the sticker campaign and the high school outcomes, this thesis offers a reference for designers when creating message-branding solutions that adapt ephemeral art work into design applications. This thesis stresses the importance of understanding art work in terms of where, when, and how it originates in order to better understand how to appropriately communicate messages to a specific target audience.

The designer and author of this thesis hopes that this study will contribute to future research projects that investigate and document how street art is interpreted in design, the motives for using it as a creative source for other purposes.



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## Conclusion

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### Closing Statement

This thesis explores the subject of street culture, specifically street art and how it is interpreted and incorporated in graphic design. Setting the stage for further research in design, this study encourages corporations and designers to recognize, appreciate, and respect the art idiom. The methodology of this investigation also encourages better decision-making when communicating messages through branding solutions that adapt the aspects and styles of street art. Information from precedents, research, synthesis, ideation, implementation, and dissemination clarify and provide a process to follow when investigating ways in which to improve how design projects are approached.

The designer of this thesis takes away from this study a better understanding of the challenge in designing a branding solution that interprets street art for a specific target audience in a meaningful and intelligent way. The process is complicated and involves intensive and eclectic research to engage in message-branding strategies that demonstrate positive interpretations of street art. This thesis project encourages designers and corporations to make ethically sound decisions when creating a brand identity. Throughout the process of developing a branding solution that communicates on a more permanent and thoughtful level, it is important for designers and corporations to test the potential positive and negative influences design solutions may have on the corporation itself, the target audience, and the hip-hop subculture.

The design process explored in this thesis provided an appropriate and logical structure to analyze branding solutions. Future advances that could be based on this research include introducing strategies for creating new market standards in which street art and its ties to message-branding are explored in other solutions that have noncommercial purposes. Designers and corporations could refer to the designer's interpretation of the Shannon and Weaver Communication Model to evaluate whether a message in a branding solution represents the hip-hop subculture in a positive, negative, or neutral way. The tools presented in this study could be modified to assess subcultures other than street art as well.

The author of this thesis looks forward to working on real-world design projects that spread awareness of street art and its relationship to design and visual communication. The hope is that this art form will continue to be explored for alternative ways to quantify and qualify branding solutions and the factors that influence them. Vernacular art forms are often usurped by mainstream mass media to the degree that the original sources are deemed unimportant and are forgotten. Using this thesis work as a starting point, the author can incorporate street art influences into future design work, contributing to the celebration of a genre instead of its demise.

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# Glossary of Terms

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**Abstract**

Expression of an object or realistic thing in varying levels of representations to summarize a formal quality, such as line, color, shape, idea.

**Acreage**

The measured amount of space occupied or activated by something.

**Angular**

Unbending lines that are measured in degrees from a central axis.

**Anthropology**

The science that studies the origins, physical objects, and developments of a culture's existence in humankind based on biological characteristics, social customs, and beliefs.

**Background**

The scene or surface against which designs, patterns, or figures are visually represented.

**Brand**

A distinctive name or trademark that identifies a specific product or a manufacturer.

**Brand Identity**

The controllable and fundamental elements of a company, product, or service brand, such as the core essence, positioning, brand name, tag line, messaging, and experience. (Perry, p. 5)

**Branding**

In marketing, the sum total of a company's value, including products, services, people, advertising, positioning, and culture. (Perry, p. 2)

**Buffing**

The official act of using a chemical spray to wipe or wash away images and typography that have been spray painted on a train.

**Centered**

Having a middle axis that is equidistant in an activated, or bordered, area.

**Color**

The quality of an object or substance with respect to light reflected by the object, usually determined visually by measurement of hue, saturation, and brightness of the reflected light; saturation or chroma.

**Corporate Identity**

The physical manifestation of a brand. (Perry, p. 5)

**Cultural Anthropology**

The study of a human culture's origins, history, and development as a specific branch of anthropology with consideration to the disciplines of archaeology, ethnology, and ethnography.

**Culture**

The sum of social behaviors, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other human production and intellect that are adopted by a particular social, ethnic, or age group.

**Curved (Line)**

A line without angles that bends.

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## Glossary of Terms

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**Data**

Information that is factual and organized for analysis or used to help make decisions.

**Ephemeral**

Something that has a short life span or has short-lived interest.

**Foreground**

The ground or parts situated, or represented as situated, in the front; the portion of a scene nearest to the viewer.

**Genre**

Categories of artistic composition that are distinguished by content, form, and style.

**Harsh (Line)**

Having rough qualities.

**Icon**

In semiotic analysis, anything that communicates meaning through resemblance.

**Jagged (Line)**

In reference to a line that has sharp projections.

**Left Axis**

Alignment to the left side of an activated area.

**Lifespan**

The time span that an object, piece of material, or thing is expected to last on average.

**Logo**

A design, which could be created with typography or imagery or both to establish an identity for a specific organization or company.

**Logotype**

A symbol, trademark, or abbreviation that is a graphic representation of an organization or company name.

**Medium**

One of the means or channels of general communication, information, or entertainment in society such as newspapers, radio, or television. Can also refer to the material or technique with which an artist works.

**Misappropriate**

To take the influence from street culture and interpret its elements in a meaningless way that does not respectfully or directly represent the hip-hop subculture.

**Phenomenology**

The investigation of occurrences, events, or facts that are significant to claims and require classification.

**Position**

Condition with reference to place, location, or situation.



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## Glossary of Terms

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### **Postmodern**

A term for works that use a number of different styles, and abandon a traditional, more linear narrative.

### **Realistic**

Having qualities that are close to the actual appearance of something.

### **Reappropriate**

To take the influence from street culture and interpret its elements in a meaningful way that respectfully or directly represents the hip-hop subculture.

### **Right Axis**

Alignment to the right side of an activated compositional area.

### **Scale**

A relationship of size between objects or elements.

### **Semiotics**

The science of signs that investigates the way meaning is produced and transmitted.

### **Sign**

A basic concept of the study of semiotics. Anything used to stand for something else (such as words, images, facial expressions, clothing, hairstyles), to help make connections and solve problems.

### **Signature**

A mark that represents a specific individual or company with personality.

### **Signifier/Signified**

A signifier distinguishes what is signified and how the person or thing is represented through one of the five human senses (see, touch, hear, smell, taste).

### **Sociocultural Anthropology**

The study of the different cultures, societies, and social institutions that are present and make up the modern world.

### **Sociology**

The science or study of the origin, development, organization, and functioning of human society; the science of the fundamental laws of social relations, institutions, and so forth.

### **Soft (Line)**

In reference to lines that have smooth edges.

### **Stenciling**

The process of using a device to apply a mark, pattern, design, or words to a surface. Stencilling involves using a piece of cardboard, metal, or other material where figures or letters have been cut out prior to placing on a surface and applying a color substance to rub, brush, or press over the sheet to allow a substance to pass through the perforations and onto the surface.

### **Straight (Line)**

In reference to a line that is without curves or angles.

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## Glossary of Terms

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### **Street Art**

A means of crafting personal expression through the enhancement or augmentation of a natural or man-made environment using photography, stickers, chalk, spray paint, felt-tipped markers, and so on.

### **Street Culture**

The lifestyle, behaviors, and expressions of individuals who unite closely to work together and who share similar beliefs, values, and practices.

### **Supergraphics**

The use of very large scale letters and words in an urban environment.

### **Symbol**

When the meaning of an idea is not conventional and must be learned. In ordinary use, anything that stands for something else, often on the basis of convention or association.

### **Tag**

A street artist's label or means of identification that acts as a signature placed on the surfaces in city spaces. "Tags" also act as brand names for street artists who write them quickly and with style until they get caught.

### **Tapered (Line)**

In reference to a line that gradually becomes more or less narrow.

### **Trend**

Very fashionable; faddish appeal; a prevailing tendency; the current style that is generally accepted.

### **Vehicle**

A means of conveyance, a tool that is used to help carry the message in the communication process.

### **Vernacular**

Using the native language or expression of a country or place.

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### Branding Studies

Book

Perry, Alycia. *Before the Brand: Creating the Unique DNA of an Enduring Brand Identity*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Boston: Mc-Graw Hill, 2002, 5.  
*This book is a resource for brand identity fundamentals and terminology.*

Thesis

Kwiryun, Kim. *Corporate Identity: Reasons for Change*.  
MFA Thesis, Rochester Institute of Technology, New York, 2004.  
*This thesis is significant to the understanding of corporate branding and the importance of representation through graphic design.*

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### Culture Studies

Books

Ferrell, Jeff. *Crimes of Style. Urban Graffiti and the Politics of Criminality*. New York: Northeastern University, 1996, 87–102.

*This book explores graffiti street art and its social impact and how it has become a popular art movement in the past couple of decades. This book also explains how street art has carried over into mainstream use as representational art for alternative and rap music genres.*

Schildkrout, Enid. "Body Art as Visual Language." *Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology*, 12<sup>th</sup> edition. Edited by James Spradley and David W. McCurdy. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc., 2005, 85–92.

*This chapter on the significance of body art in culture makes some interesting points that are parallel to street art. Some of the topics discussed are ephemera/sustainability and the mark-making of the art form and application to the medium, the skin on one's body.*

Spradley, James, and David W. McCurdy. *Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology*, 12<sup>th</sup> edition. "Language and Communication," Chapter 2. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc., 2005, 59–62.

*This chapter explains the principles of culture as a system of symbols that help communicate our experience with the world through a visual language.*

Thesis

Liete, Georgiana. *Vernacular Letterforms: An Expression of Culture and Social Values*.  
MFA Thesis, Rochester Institute of Technology, New York, 2000.  
*This thesis is significant to understanding the hip-hop culture's values and beliefs.*

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### Design History

Books

Meggs, Phillip. *A History of Graphic Design*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1998, 432–433, 455–463.

*This book discusses the precursors to postmodern design and how vernacular language developed in graphic design history. This book also covers design history details such as supergraphics and hand-drawn letterforms.*

Remington, R. Roger. *American Modernism: Graphic Design, 1920–1960*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003.

*In the seventh chapter, Remington discusses how the postmodern movement and the advancement of computer technology opened up the opportunity for designers and non-designers to experiment with computer-aided design tools and how visual culture, ephemera, and design trends emerged as a reaction to popular culture.*



## Bibliography

### Design Research

Book

Noble, Ian, and Russell Bestley. *Visual Research: An Introduction to Research Methodologies in Graphic Design*. SA: Ava Publishing, 2005.

*This book highlights a case study that discusses how a city could benefit from applying aspects of street art into the street sign designs to help brand a community for aesthetic and informational purposes.*

### Fine Art

Book

Goldsworthy, Andy, and David Craig. *ARCH*. London: Thames and Hudson, Ltd., 1999.

*This book explains the work of Andy Goldsworthy, which was natural materials to create a mark of ephemera throughout Scotland. His arch is significant because of its parallel connections to street art.*

Rose, Aaron, and Christian Strike. *Beautiful Losers: Contemporary Art and Street Culture*. Ohio: Iconoclast & D.A.P./ Distributed Art Publishers, 2004.

*This book describes the history and context to which street culture has entered the mainstream of popular culture and how "low" art forms are getting more attention and recognition by museums and galleries.*

Journal

Sheets, Hillary M. "Ballerinas, Unicorns, and Boom Boxes." *ARTnews*, April 2007, pp. 118–121.

*This article highlights Ryan McGinness's work as a graphic designer who has contributed to the field with his icon/symbol designs that are influenced from street art.*

### Reference

Neufledt, Victoria, and David B. Guralnik. *Webster's New World College Dictionary*. Macmillan: USA

Books

*This dictionary offers definitions for terms in the thesis study.*

### Street Art

Books

Bou, Louis. *Street Art: The Spray Files*. New York: Harper Collins, 2005.

*This book defines and explains the difference between street art and graffiti. Street art examples and their artists are shown to illustrate the trends and styles that are emerging from the art movement.*

Chalfant, Henry, and James Prigoff. *Spray Can Art*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1987.

*This book offers many visual examples and explanations of street art history and the reasons why street artists first started spray painting and "tagging" trains and walls in New York City to gain fame and recognition.*

Ganz, Nicholas, and Tristan Manco. *Graffiti World: Street Art from Five Continents*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2004.

*This book offers interesting insight into the very essence of graffiti artwork and how it has become a creative explosion during the last thirty years in a number of countries.*

Manco, Tristan. *Street Logos*. New York: Thames & Hudson, 2004.

*This book discusses how street artists use different mediums and vehicles to create their own "tag" or logo as unique self-branding.*

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## Bibliography

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Manco, Tristan. *Stencil Graffiti*. New York: Thames & Hudson, 2002.

*There are many vehicles of street art. One of the most widely used and practiced tool in street art is stencilling. Manco covers the history and the reasons why street artists use and prefer stencils to create their artwork.*

Schlee, Sigg. *Fadings: Graffiti to Design, Illustration and Much More*. Corte Madera, CA: Gingko Press, Inc., 2005.

*This book features designers who have been involved with the hip-hop subculture and whose graphic design work is heavily influenced by the street art idiom.*

### Films

*Style Wars*. Dir. Henry Chalfant and Tony Silver. 1983 Videocassette. Public Arts Films, Inc.

*This film offers valuable information that documents the history and evolution of street art, birth of graffiti, and the ongoing war between street artists and city officials.*

*The Case of the Grinning Cat*. Dir. Chris Marker. 2004 Documentary. Les Films de Jeudi.

*This film documents the appearance of a graffiti Cheshire cat character post-September 11, 2001 (9/11) attacks on the New York City Twin Towers. The graffiti cat symbol is a logo and mark that symbolizes a new culture.*

### Visual Studies Book

Berger, Arthur Asa. *Seeing Is Believing: An Introduction to Visual Communication*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1998.

*This book is a helpful introduction to explaining visual culture in terms of basic terminology associated with theories and models.*

### Web sites

<http://basquiat.com/biography.php>

*This Web site features Jean-Michel Basquiat's life work and biography.*

[www.graffitiresearchlab.com](http://www.graffitiresearchlab.com)

*This Web site features street artists' work that is ground-breaking.*

<http://www.stylewars.com>

*This Web site is street art related and is purely commercial but offers viewers a chance to view the differences between national and international street art.*

[http://www.raggededgepress.com/pages/mail\\_art.htm](http://www.raggededgepress.com/pages/mail_art.htm)

*This Web site offers imagery examples and a definition of mail art.*

<http://www.bulbmag.com/about.php>

*This Web site documents the cover artwork and designs for Bulb Magazine.*

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## Appendices

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This section of thesis documentation provides panel layouts that document the work-in-progress of the thesis study and photo documentation of the thesis panels in the Bevier gallery exhibition space on April 6, 2007.



## Appendix A Thesis Exhibition Panels

### Overview Panel

The exhibition panel below is a project overview that defines the study and terms for the project.



## Appendix A Thesis Exhibition Panels

### Precedents Panel

The panel design below describes examples of influential street art resources and precedents.



**Street Culture Phenomenon**

**Characters / Authorship**

**Faces / Motif**

**Stickers / Vehicle**

**Gender / Genre**

**Street Art: The Spray Files**

The street art movement started in Harlem, New York, in city spaces and train cars in the 1970s. The art form started as a means to express one's spirit and reaction to political and cultural events in society. Graffiti art movements in America were predominately in urban cities such as New York and Philadelphia, and soon afterwards ignited a cross-cultural phenomenon.

**POSTAL CHAIRS FOR...**

**PRIVATELY OWNED PUBLIC SPACES**

**LOVE**

**Graffiti Research Lab**

Graffiti Research Lab is a website that documents the work of street artists and the vehicles they use to brand messages. The Postal Chairs project is one example of how street artists made a social statement to address green space issues in response to urban sprawl and the lack of community interaction in New York City.

**Orange Alert**

On Detroit's East Side, the neighborhood is surrounded by abandoned homes that have been marked by the city with a "D" as a code for demolition. Since the city did not fix the problem in a timely manner, artists collaborated and created an activist group called "Object Orange." The artists used actions and expressions in likeness to street art as a means to create a branded message to call attention to the city's urban blight and to inspire change through revitalization.



## Appendix A Thesis Exhibition Panels

### Research Panel

The panel below describes the focus of the thesis study: graffiti street art.



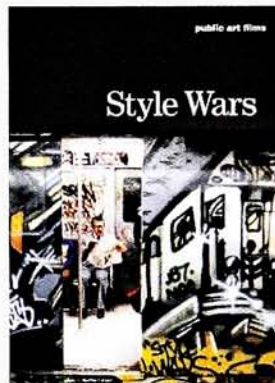
#### Street Art Focus



The Case of the Grinning Cat: Dir. Chris Marker. 2004 Documentary. Les Films de Joak.

#### The Case of the Grinning Cat

The documentary film *The Case of the Grinning Cat* illustrates how street culture can have positive impact on the political, social, and cultural life of a community. Mr. Chat was a significant graffiti character that became known to those who recognized and understood the cat as a symbol of a new culture, the cat represents hope, peace, and empowerment.



Style Wars: DVD. Producers Henry Chalfant, Gary Nardino and Tony Stone. Dir. Tony Stone. Public Art Films, Inc., 2005.

#### Style Wars

The DVD *Style Wars* documents the evolution of street artists' work and how they have been at "war" with officials who have combatted against their vandalistic mark-making activities. Their work has resulted in the evolution of art idioms adaptation in mass culture, using it for commercial purposes in brand identity or branding strategies in industries, such as music and fashion.



East, Thomas. Mail Art "Mail Art". [http://www.raggeddiggers.com/page/normal\\_art.htm](http://www.raggeddiggers.com/page/normal_art.htm). Accessed October 30, 2004.

#### Mail Art

Mail and street art represent an art form of personal expression as an ephemeral mark that have evolved from their initial purposes. Originally considered "low" forms of art, mail and street art now rival fine art for space on gallery walls.



## Appendix A Thesis Exhibition Panels

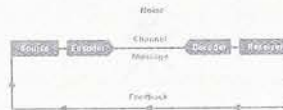
### Synthesis Panel

The panel below describes how street art has been misappropriated in branding design solutions.  
Synthesis Panel, part one



#### Street Art Interpretation

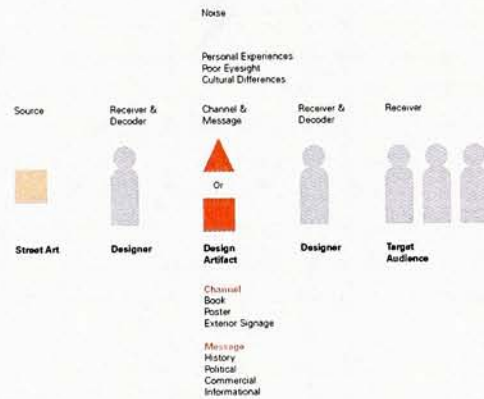
#### Shannon-Weaver Communication Model



**Model**  
Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver created a model of communication that breaks down the system to explain how information is exchanged and what takes place when messages are sent, received, and responded to.

**Misappropriated (-)**  
To take influence from street art and interpret its elements in a meaningless and indirect way that does not respect the hip-hop subculture.

**Reappropriated (+)**  
To take influences from street art and interpret its elements in a meaningful and direct way that respects the hip-hop subculture.



#### Interpretive Matrix

Brand identity and branding strategy solutions for corporate companies were evaluated and their relationships were compared to measure how well street art was interpreted by the designer(s).

#### Key Terms

##### Audience Awareness

How appropriate the design solution is for the intended or target audience.

##### Authorship

How involved the designer was in investigating and interpreting street art elements to directly represent the street art concept and style.

##### Informational Use

How well the influence of street art has been interpreted by a branding strategy solution in graphic design to be educational or informational.

##### Designer Intent

The ability of the designer(s) in using the influence of street art for meaningful purposes that are genuine and sincere.

##### Communication Mode

A design solution's ability to express the street art concept and/or styles in such a way that the message reflects the original purposes of the art form when it was first created by the hip-hop subculture.

##### Analysis

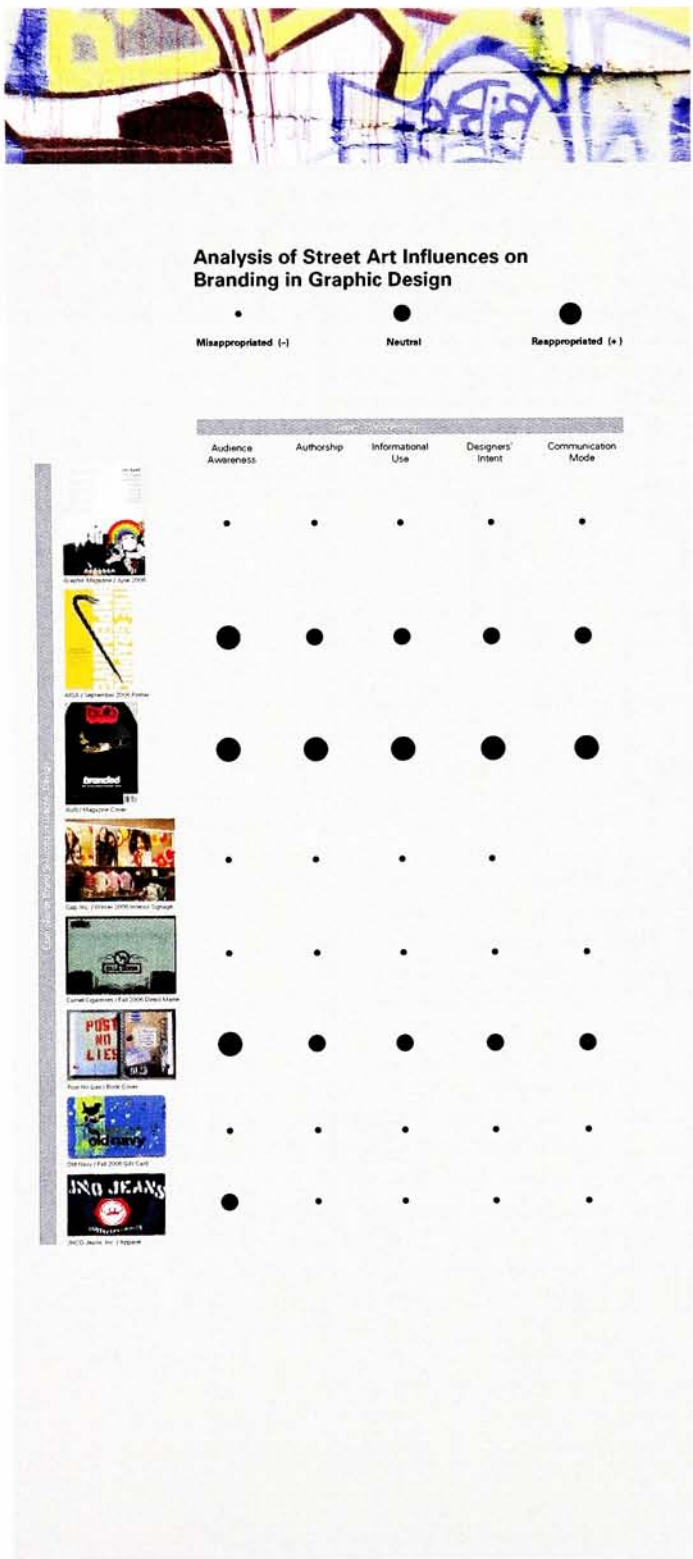
Based on the design solutions sampled and analyzed, one design solution directly and respectfully reappropriated street art. Bulb's magazine cover designs were meaningful, non-commercial, educational and had informational value for their intended audience. Bulb magazine is a non-profit communications group written for and by young people and addresses social issues dealing with how subcultures are misrepresented by mass media.



# Appendix A Thesis Exhibition Panels

Synthesis Panel  
Continued

The panel below describes how street art has been misappropriated for branding solutions in design.



Synthesis Panel, part two

## Appendix A Thesis Exhibition Panels

### Application Panel

The panel below illustrates initial application approaches that reflect the thesis project goals.





## Appendix A Thesis Exhibition Panels

### Exhibition Panels

The panels below are examples of photo documentation of actual street art in Rochester, New York. This material was included in the thesis exhibition for additional contextual elaboration.

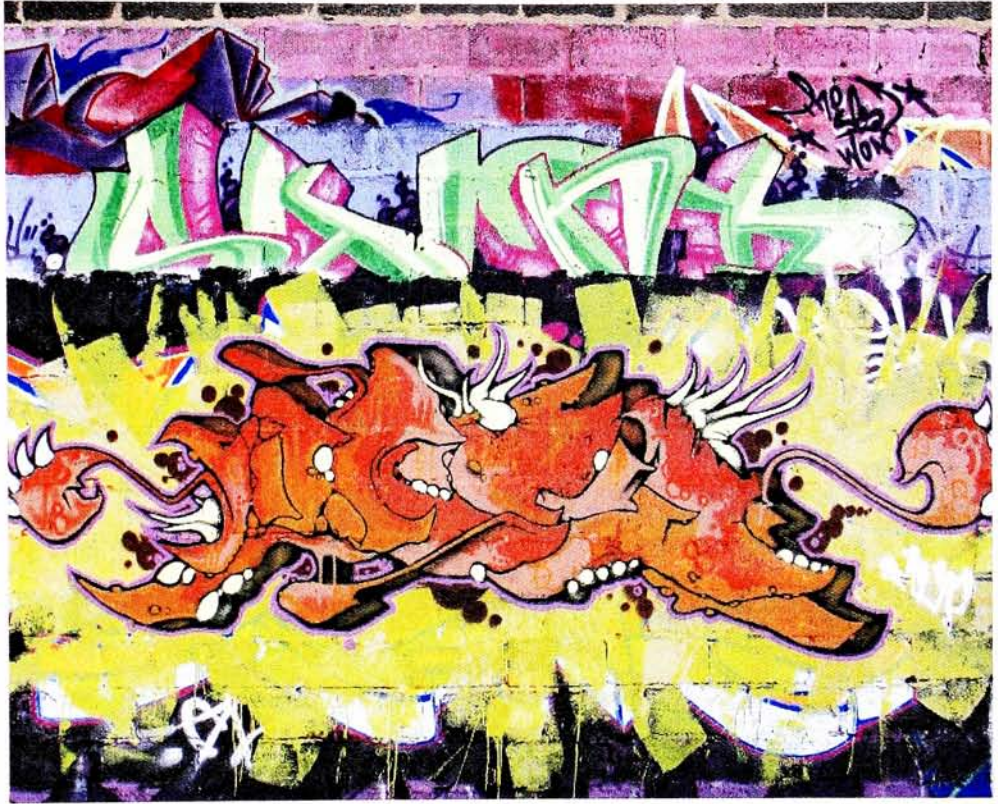




## Appendix A Thesis Exhibition Panels

### Exhibition Panels

The photos below were included as part of the photo documentation presented in the thesis exhibition. These examples were documented by the designer and by Rajat K. Khullar, a fellow student in the RIT Graduate Graphic Design Program.





## Appendix B Thesis Exhibition Installation

### Thesis Exhibition

Below are photos of the exhibition space during the opening reception on April 6, 2007.





## Appendix B Thesis Exhibition Installation

### Thesis Exhibition

Below are examples of the designer's thesis exhibition installation.





## Appendix B Thesis Exhibition Installation

### Thesis Exhibition

The photos below are examples of the misappropriated branding solutions in graphic design that were displayed on a glass-covered pedestal.

