Experiment with Typography

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For ENC1101

Objective: Student writers will create a typographical experiment that demonstrates an understanding of audience and visual rhetoric.

Place: This assignment fits into **Strand I: Engaging Cultural Mediums** as we prepare to finish Paper 3: Creating an *anti-advertisement*. In the third paper, students analyze an advertisement, critiquing its subtext. Students also create an anti-advertisement that spoofs the first ad. Obviously, students must keep the prospective audience for their anti-ad in mind as they design it, and typography plays an important role in the visual rhetoric of their composition.

Materials: computers, Word, Paint or Photoshop.

Procedure:
1. Show students a " typography lesson" on YouTube.
2. Show students a selection of typographies.
      Pirates of the Caribbean
      Pulp Fiction
      Ford F-150
3. Discuss the typographies. Talk about what they **learned**, the **function of typography** in print, how typography connects to an **audience**, etc.
4. Give students a few minutes to write a journal entry about their collegiate experience: what have they loved, what have they hated, what's a favorite class/moment, what new friends have they made/clubs have they joined, etc.?
5. Have students rewrite their journal entry twice: once to *parents* and once to **high schoolers**.
6. Show students (quickly) how to manipulate text in Word, Paint and/or Photoshop. Present assignment: students will create a **typographical demonstration** of their journal entry for one of the two alternate audiences (parents or high schooler). Turn loose for the rest of the period to create typographies. Post to blogs when finished.

Examples:
- **Kevin** (scroll down for typography)
- *Jessica* (scroll down for typography)
- Bonny
- Allie (scroll down for typography)

Reflection: The benefits of this assignment were twofold: students were able to experiment with visual rhetoric in a low-key, familiar environment and to learn textual tools in various software programs. Some of these experiments were, I think, very successful. We had some technical difficulty converting from WordArt into a post-able jpeg, but I think this lesson will be considerably smoother now that these kinks are worked out. Most students came away from this lesson with an increased understanding of the textual role of advertisements and visual composition in general. The anti-advertisements I've seen so far reflect this knowledge. I also plan to talk to Kevin after the semester to get a few tips on using his above-and-beyond approach for future students who want to experiment with dynamic visuals in a similar way. I think this would be especially effective for students who want to create video pieces as their multimodal or radical revisionist compositions.