

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY IN TYPOGRAPHY**

**Rakesh Kumar Chaudhary**

*Asstt. Prof., Amity University, Haryana*

Reference to this paper  
should be made as follows:

**Rakesh Kumar  
Chaudhary,**

*PSYCHOLOGICAL  
THEORY IN  
TYPOGRAPHY,*

Artistic Narration 2018,  
Vol. IX, No.1, pp.1-7

[http://anubooks.com/  
?page\\_id=485](http://anubooks.com/?page_id=485)

### **Abstract**

*As an professor, I am interested in how we train students in the visual discriminations that are required of typographers and what characterizes typographic expertise. But I am also concerned with the more general question of how we, as readers, recognize letters regardless of the typeface which changes their visual form. Although readers are not typographic experts, they are experts in letter perception, just as listeners are expert in speech perception. Whether or not we realize it, design plays a big role in how we perceive the value of a product. From books, to snacks, to beauty products, the power is often in the packaging. So when it comes time to design an ad, or a product label, or a logo, put some thought into the fonts you use. There's a good chance they can influence how people perceive your marketing content and your product.*

**Keywords :** *font, typography, visual perception, font psychology*

## Introduction

We can say that the history of mankind began with writing. With writing, it is possible to convey today to tomorrows and the next generations. Everything the human kind brought up until today has been possible through letters and numbers. Letters and numbers came side by side in order to create meaningful words and sentences. And these were used in every science to preserve knowledge and to convey them for later times. It's the idea that certain colors elicit a certain emotional response from us like yellow = happy, White = peace, Red = Danger, blue = sad).

But have you heard of font psychology?

In the intersecting worlds of marketing and design, quite a bit of thought has been put into how fonts affect our perception of products. Similar to how colors have associations, fonts also have unique characteristics.

## Objectives

- It makes it possible to quickly scan your text.
- It entices your readers to engage with your text.
- When done well, it enhances the message it presents.

## What is typography?

On originating from the Greek words of “typos” (form) and “graphia” (writing), typography means to write in accordance with form. Broadly, typography is “*the art or skill of designing communication by means of the printed word*”. Solomon defines it as “*the art of mechanically producing letters, numbers, symbols, and shapes through an understanding of the basic elements, principles, and attributes of design*” (1986), and Lupton describes it as “*the design of letterforms [fonts] and their organization in space*”.

## Basic Element Of Typography

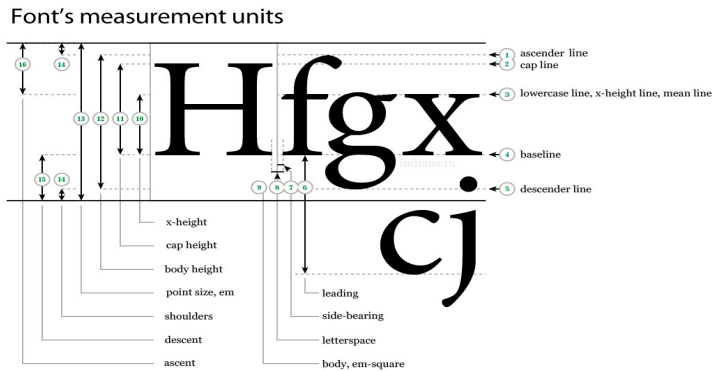
The “basic element of typography” is the individual letter or character, but this in turn has several components. The baseline is the foundation of a letter and the primary point of reference between different letters. The vertical space occupied by all lowercase letters is referred to as the x-height. An ascender is that portion of a lowercase letter that protrudes above the x-height, while a descender is that portion of a lowercase letter that protrudes below the baseline. The enclosed spaces such as those found in the letters e, a, g, and p, are referred to as counters.

Finally, the main body of a character is referred to as its stem.

Typefaces themselves have **four major qualities**, commonly referred to as the ‘elements’ of type. These are :- line, weight, orientation and size.

## Font

All composition of a typographic character composing letters, numbers, punctuations and other symbols is called a font. Capital letters, small letters, numbers, punctuations, mathematical symbols are the elements of a font.



### **Choosing Fonts**

Fonts are not symbols that represent voices, they are communication tools with cognitive qualities that aid telling stories. Therefore the designers focus not only on what is being said but also on how it is delivered.

### **Font Family**

The font family composes all sizes and styles of a typeface. A font family basically comprises roman, italic (or oblique), bold, bold italic type scripts. All variations of a designed font with respect to weight or width compose a family. Every font family has a name. These names are sometimes the name of its designer (Bodoni, Garamond etc.); and sometimes it is named after the place it was created (New York, San Francisco etc.).

### **Font Types**

In order to make ease in specifying the specialties of writing, specialists categorized fonts into defined groups. Still it is difficult to say that there is a complete uniformity. Font types can be reviewed in four main groups: *Serif - Sans-serif - Hand Writing -Decorative*.

### **Serif**

The top and bottom corners of the letters have serif marks like extremities that give these scripts the name of serif or footed. These lines keep the figure of each letter the same and make the transition from one letter to another easier. Writings in this group have subgroups such as roman, classic roman, new roman, square serif, round serif etc.

### **Serif Font Psychology**

Serif is the most commonly used font category. These easy to read fonts are so old and common that they can accompany any personality. That is, these fonts are neutral and just like old men of the family, these fonts are

- Reliable
- Respectable
- Dependable

- Reputable
- Conventional
- Neutral

Sony uses a subcategory of Serif known as **Slab Serif** (Egyptian fonts) which is a block-like serif and have slabs at the end. Slab Serifs are known for their **solidity & confidence**.



### Sans

These typefaces do not have serifs; the letter ends have a straight look. The thickness of each letter is the same; that is there are no thin or thick lines. They can be used in every script. This type of writing is divided to subgroups of Gothic and single line sansserif writing.

### Sans Serif Font Psychology

Just like Serif font, sans-serif is also an old and widely used font category. It acts as neutral but is contemporary. Sans Serif fonts have the following characteristics:

- Clean
- Simple
- Contemporary
- Straight Forward
- Futuristic
- Neutral



### Hand Writing

The fonts that fall into this category have four sub groups as well: Script, Cursive, Text and Calligraphic writing.

### **Script**

It looks as if it is leaning to the right. There are extensions between the letters. So the letters can be connected with each other. This is especially preferred in wedding and meeting invitations. It has a very elegant appearance. It is used to make scripts look fancier.

### **Script Font Psychology**

Script fonts are carefree and have a creative outlook. These are used to express creativity and emotions. Script fonts with more curves show femininity.

Script fonts are used to express

- Creativity
- Interest
- Emotions
- Femininity



### **What Is A Modern Typeface?**

· [Modern typeface](#), also called Didone, has been present since the eighteenth century. These fonts have thin horizontal serifs and thick & thin transitions in the strokes. There is no slant on the letters. Like Futura, Bodoni, Orgreave, Bodoni, Empire

### **Modern Font Psychology**

Modern fonts are very structured and eye catchy. These fonts have a vertical stress and can be considered determined (sometimes cold) because of no inclination.

Modern fonts are used to express

- Elegance
- Intelligence
- Distinctiveness
- Smartness
- Determination
- Forward-Looking Ideology

### **Different fonts have different characteristics**

Different fonts have been designed for different purposes. For example, designers have worked hard to develop both Serif and Sans Serif fonts for maximum readability. But many designers have also created fonts that are meant to be weird and out there, for special uses only.

So when it comes to choosing fonts for your designs, which should you spring for? Something more conventional, like Arial or Cambria? Or something more gaudy like Impact or Monotype Corsiva?

### **What movies title can teach us about font Selection**

It was interesting to think about the intent behind font selection on certain TV show posters. In some cases, the fonts heavily reflected the themes of the shows—those fonts tended to be Decorative. In other cases, the fonts seemed to evoke a certain time period, like in the case of some of the Serif fonts.

1. The poster for *Shrek* and *Igor* also uses a child-like Handwritten font. This helps create the expectation that there will be a childish innocence to the show (or, as viewers will quickly find out, a comedic loss of innocence thanks to puberty).
2. In the poster of Harry pottor and Van Helsing used Sarif Font and written as Horror and Misterious
3. For example, the *Guardians of the Galaxy* and Avengers posters uses a custom Sans Serif font that conveys the strong and brave feeling of the movie. The modern-looking font is suggesting there's something broken about war.
4. Some of the fonts in this category could also have perhaps been categorized as Decorative as well, since many Headline fonts have some sort of decorative element. Like the movie title of Inkheart and Narnia.
5. Creating your own Decorative fonts can be an investment but they will certainly give your content a unique look. More and more companies are opting to create their own custom fonts and illustrations for their websites and marketing collateral—in fact, custom illustrations Decorative fonts don't have to be as theatrical as that. They can be as simple as putting a creative twist on an otherwise more conventional font—like the R in the poster for *Tron*. And O in the poster fr *Frozen*

### **Conclusion**

Font psychology isn't an exact science. Fonts alone don't make people see a poster and think, "I could spend the next many hours watching this movie."

One person's reaction to a font may vary from another person's reaction. Like with any marketing content, it's important to test different designs and copy to see what resonates with your audience.

Put some careful thought into the fonts you choose for your designs. When you're browsing social media or walking around your neighborhood, think about what the fonts you see in ads are saying to you. How can you apply what you see to your own designs?

### **References**

1. S.A. Chunawalla and K.C. Sethia, "*Foundations of Advertising: Theory and Practice*," Himalaya Publishing House, Bombay: 2002.
2. S.A. Chunawalla, "*Advertising, Sales and Promotion Management*," Himalaya Publishing House, New Delhi: 2002.
3. Chunawalla, Sethia and Subramanniam, "*Advertising Theory & Practice*," Himalaya Publishing House, Bombay: 2001.

4. Chunawalla and Appannaiah, "Advertising and Marketing Research," Himalaya Publishing House, Bombay: 1999.
5. Dines Gail, M. Jean Humez, "Gender, Race and Class in Media," Sage Publications India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi: 2003.
6. Dr. G.M. Rege, "Advertising Art and Ideas," Career Polytechnic, Pune: 1973.
7. Amundsen Gupta (2002) "Ethical in Advertising", Indian Journal of Marketing, vole-xxxii, no-8, August, 2002, PP-10-13.
8. Aruba, M.C & Aruba, M.L (1999), "Ethical Standards in Advertising", Journal of Business Ethics, No-19, PP-159-169.
9. Austin, M.J & Reed, M.L (1999), "Internet Advertising Ethics Issues", Journal of Consumer Marketing, 16(6), PP-590-601.
10. Blair, J.D, Stephenson, J.D, Hill, K.L & Green, J.S (2006), "Ethics in advertising", Journal of Legal Ethical and Regulatory Issues, 9(2), PP-199-118.