

## Excerpt: Typography That Makes the Reader Work

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Book typography today basically follows the same configurations on the page that it has since books have been printed with moveable type. Except for relatively minor alterations, the reader of today's book is confronted with page after unrelieved page of blocks of type. But that may be changing. As McLuhan notes, the works of artists are often far in advance of what later becomes common usage. If this is so, then the work of several novelists and designers today may presage a new use for typography on the book page in the future. This new use for typography is based on erratic type arrangement which pulls the reader in as an active participant, and makes reading a creative act rather than passive absorption of information.

Of course, there is precedent for this. The use of odd line lengths and line placement in poetry—as an aid to metrical scanning—is now an established practice. And concrete poetry—employing blocks of type to convey meaning through visual impact, rather than through word meaning—is many years old. But today we are seeing wider applications of unconventional type placement; it may represent a new pattern in the imaginative use of typography in publishing.

Where will the trend go from here? There are sure to be misuses of the technique as it becomes defined—misuses based on the appeal of the “now” thing to do, regardless of its intrinsic value. But a movement must not be judged by its misuses, but by whatever enduring value it may have for its creative practitioners and for its ultimate users.

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WITH
YOUR
HANDS
UP
HEY!
SHUT IT!
I'LL GET HIM
D_T_S_G

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*Informed Sources (Day East Received)* is a novel by Willard Bain (Doubleday, 1969) written in double-spaced capital letters on 8½ × 11-inch sheets to simulate a teletype printout. The story is told as a series of messages supposedly sent over the Associated Press wire service as the service is being taken over by hip revolutionaries. There are misspellings, crossed out letters, many code numbers, and pictures formed using the teletype-writer keys. Some incidents, such as the surrounding of the Green Dreams by the capitalist establishment, are represented graphically with alphabet characters, rather than with words. The reader finds that he must decode the messages and becomes involved as a receiver reading messages sent by "Informed Sources."

Dan  
 country, and he couldn't see accurately with electric  
 fight. He quickly sorted the eggs into racks. Just  
 "thimute I have a few more here." He finished up  
 and turned to Peter Prince. "Now what?" He squinted.  
 Ach. It is you. My boy wants to see you. He's always  
 about you." The man grabbed hold of Peter  
 "He's had his appendicitis." He tugged Peter Prince  
 to the apartment where Sloop was recuperating.  
 There lay the Creep under a huge featherbed, the  
 first Peter Prince had ever seen, with a stocking cap  
 on top of his twisted head. The sight made Peter  
 Prince laugh, and that good humor brought smiles to the  
 parents' faces, who were standing shoulder to shoulder  
 beside the bed, he still in his blue coveralls, she in  
 faded gray and yellow flowered smock. The boy seemed  
 to laugh and cry when he saw Peter Prince, and he looked  
 at him with so much love that it embarrassed Peter  
 Prince.  
 The boy was wallowing in bedside gifts: books,  
 dolls, puzzles, kaleidoscopes, games. "They operated  
 on me and took my appendix out." He spoke with a thick  
 lisp. From the midst of a pile of fluffy dolls on  
 a bedside night-table next to him he pulled out a corked,  
 sealed bottle, with a thing floating around in it like  
 a small yellow sausage. "This is it. This is my own

with Jorgen and the woman and her children, to follow the two who had headed for  
 the alley that led to Piazza Dante and he saw Nancy Nottingham's flowered yellow shirt  
 suddenly extinguished by the bright brick at the tower on the corner when she moved  
 out of sight. Nausea rose in him like a mercury column.  
 "She's not so very bad," Nilsen Jorgen said. "The only makes a lot of noise.  
 He'd be make Mike unhappy."  
 Peter Prince didn't want to follow any longer. Nancy Nottingham was trying to  
 make him unhappy and he wouldn't have that. He wouldn't have her annoying him and  
 staining his intellect. What were his intentions? He cooled with his eyes the lovely  
 Verso tower, the obscure alternating rows of brick and tufa, past the fine-armed clock  
 to the white, octagonal Kelly. That was what he wanted. Something like that. To observe  
 in himself the delicate structure of humanity's heritage and to get from these. That's why  
 Peter Prince had come to Luque, and not to follow Nancy Nottingham around with her  
 random Danes. He swallowed, had turned, and looked off the Danish girl.  
 "I'm sick of following them," he said. "We'll get on at a cafe and I'll buy you  
 a drink. We can wait for them to find us." He spoke placidly.  
 The Danish woman smiled at him, and they walked to the Calle  
 Filippo, Jorgen following, and sat down in high chairs of plastic cups facing the  
 market place fountain. The sound of water splashing settled on them, like sleep.  
 "What did Jorgen say your name was?" he asked the Danish woman.  
 "Mike," she said.  
 "Mike?"  
 "Like the Winged Victory of Samothrace," she said. "My father was inspired by  
 my birth. He was Nilsen's together once. He's a ceramist."  
 "I'd say that was pretty an original name," said Peter Prince.  
 "I don't know if I disappointed my father or not," she said. "We live in Paris now,  
 anyway, like my coffee."  
 "In Paris you live," he repeated, charmed by the thought.  
 "We have a house there," she said.  
 This Prince like it, thought Peter Prince, setting back to step his Campari Soda,  
 to sit in the sound of an Italian fountain splashing into drink and an ancient coin being  
 with separate Danes who have houses in Paris.  
 "What do you do?" Jorgen asked him.  
 Peter Prince decided that he liked even Jorgen, that marbled face held such  
 kindness in the eyes. "I don't know," he said, sympathetically. "I hope to write."  
 "Every American I meet hopes to write," laughed Jorgen. "What have you  
 written?"

The first short story in a collection by John Barth, *Lost in the Funhouse* (Doubleday, 1968), is called “Frame-Tale,” and consists of a single page, printed along one edge on both sides of the sheet forming a continuous mobius strip, and imprinted with the words: “Once upon a time there was a story that began. . . .” The flat sheet also contains the directions: “Cut on dotted line. Twist end once and fasten AB to ab, CD to cd.” The reader creates an “endless” story.



*Growing as Christians* (Sister M. Johnice and Sister M. Elizabeth; Allyn and Bacon, 1967) is a textbook using non-standard typographic page arrangement. According to the book’s designer, Morris Kirchoff, many text lines were set at an angle rather than horizontally—to attract students’ attention. Kirchoff reports that in a pre-publication field test, students were found to prefer slanted type to conventional horizontal type.

**A Community of Love 21**

Father Christian Hosken boarded the next steamer St. Angelo at St. Louis. He was bound for his mission field along the upper Missouri River. Ten days later, one of the fur traders on board fell sick. In a few hours he was dead, stricken by the dreadful disease cholera.

One after another, men were seized with fever, and in a few hours near death. Day and night, Father Hosken moved among the men, bringing medicine, calming the frightened, administering the sacrament of forgiveness, anointing the dying. Without fear for himself, he remained among the sick, ministering to their needs. He brought healing and comfort and love to each man, even at the cost of his own life. Father Christian Hosken died on board the St. Angelo, one of the last of the cholera victims.

How does Father Hosken reveal the action of the Holy Spirit?

Sixteenth-century Peru was under Spanish rule, with its capital at Lima. The Peruvian Indians, who had been made subject to Spain by Pizarro, lived a miserable life under the Spanish conquerors. But even more miserable were the Negroes, brought to Peru by Spanish slave dealers to work in the gold mines.

Late one evening the Governor of Peru was entertaining an important guest from Spain, the Knight of Alcantara.

"I have talked to you of the distressing problems of my office here in the capital," said the Governor.

"Now let me tell you of an unexpected joy. You will hardly believe me when I say that it is a little Negro boy who lightens the burden of my office."

"How you joke, Excellency!" interrupted the Knight.

"Not at all," the Governor retorted.

"This boy, a regular fat, fat of him and mischievous, amazes everyone in Lima by his goodness."

"Come now, enough of these pious words!"

"This I myself have seen," the Governor retorted, bringing his hat down on the table. "A poor young Negro does what Christ taught, helping everybody: the poor, the sick, the aged, the prisoner. I tell you, this boy Martin makes me feel that all is not lost in Peru!"

In what ways does Martin show that he is led by the Spirit of Jesus, the Holy Spirit?