

Helvetica



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Helvetica critical review assignment Helvetica is a documentary film released in 2007 by Gary Hustwit about the creation of the most-used typeface in history and the ways in which type on the whole has an effect on our lives. The audience is made aware of the universal use of the typeface Helvetica, pointing out the beauty and uniqueness of the type.

After interviews with many well-known people from the design world, there is a clear distinction between those who actively support the wide spread use of Helvetica, those who admire the font but allow themselves room to play with it, and those who loathe against the ancient belief that type should be impersonal. Everywhere heads turn there are different typefaces saying different things to the world, but the one seen the most is Helvetica. The type is described as most difficult to evaluate as it is almost like air, its everywhere.

Designers are the people putting the wires into society, and many of them use Helvetica because it gets the job done but others advocate the use of the a typeface, which is graphically explaining a word. In the film, older designers such as Massimo Vignelli talk about Helvetica as common clear type that is good for everything. Even joking that trying to portray passion or hatred, Helvetica can get the point across effectively either way. " I can write the word dog with any typeface, but it doesn't have to look like a dog, but there are people that when they write dog, it should bark. With the history behind the birth of Helvetica, Rick Poynor a design writer helps the viewer to clearly see how in 1957 the need for sensible typefaces leads to Helvetica. " Helvetica was able to be applied to all kind of contemporary information... and present any visual expressions of the modern world to the public in an

intelligible and legible way. " The viewer is made to realize the ways in which type may be apart of our lives, without realization. It's all around us and we take it all for granted.

The way in which typefaces are used will determine the way the viewer processes the information being delivered. Passionate Dutch designer Wim Crouwel believes in clarity and legibility. " I started gradually using grids for my design... for me it's a tool for creating order and creating order is typography. " His description of Helvetica is one of neutralism. " And neutralism was one that we loved. " It meant that the machine type showed no manual detail, which then meant that it showed no meaning in itself. The meaning is in the content of the text, not in the typeface and that is why we loved Helvetica very much. German typographer Erik Spiekerman believes that every letter should be its own person and with Helvetica there is no individuality. His concern is not so much legibility but is more about disparity and pattern to make a more character based type. " My handwriting is away from Helvetica or anything that is considered legible, but we can read it cause it has rhythm and contrast to it, but Helvetica hasn't got any of that. " Spiekerman humorously lays off Helvetica as the typographical equivalent of Junk