

Modern typography: an essay in critical history

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Chapter 1: Modern Typography

- viewing design as “the product” results in a view “which ends in equating design with ornament” (19)
- “In this essay, ‘design’ is understood not as a noun but as a verb: an activity and a process. And, in this light, ideas become as real as inked sheets of paper.” (19)
- “That histories of typography — not excluding the present text — should pay so little attention to intermediate products is another sign of their superficiality.” (20)
 - Would this imply that deeper respect and understanding of processes in generative design is also necessary?

Chapter 2: Enlightenment origins

- “The essential modularity of printing would not be fully realized, and capitalized on, until common standards of description and manufacture had been worked out and adopted. Progress towards this state depended on published information and discussion.” (23)
 - standardization, discussion, cooperation
 - ★ W3C design / protocol (include criticisms, identify the management type)
- “Modern typography exhibits a rational impulse, both internally in ordering its own workings, and externally in the face it presents to the world.” (23)
- “The ‘romain du roi’ can be seen as an innocent anticipation of the conditions of type design and text composition in the later twentieth century.” (26)

Chapter 3: The nineteenth-century complex

- “Nineteenth-century typography has commonly been characterized in terms of loss of standards under the pressures of industrialization, and then regeneration. . . Any examination of the question of what was modern in nineteenth-century typography must

include both technical and stylistic changes, but there are other factors too. A consideration of these other aspects, especially of attempts to describe and rationalize typography, suggests that the story of decline and regeneration is too simple.” (34)

Chapter 5: Traditional values in a new world

- “High standards of design and production were achieved notably by the university presses, which could provide ideal conditions for good work: serious books with real problems of design to be resolved, in conditions free of the more extreme demands of the market place.” (58)