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The Guardian Advertisement

The Guardian ad is a good example of effective and simple design. As I turned the page from my eye was drawn towards the outer edges and quickly focused on the Guardian name in positive space. Since my eyes had grown accustomed to the normal negative space of magazine pages the balance of the design, not keeping me too long in one place, and the overall simplicity of the design made it an enjoyable reprieve from black text and white background. With a main focal point in the middle, the three main groups of graphics provide a nice progression along a line from the bottom right to the top left.

Balance, proportion, and grouping are the elements of design most heavily relied upon in this ad. Since the ad is not very busy, surprise was best established by having the color not match the expected. Small amount of contrast between object in the ad keep any overstimulation to a minimum and gently send the viewer off and to the left of the page and into the Guardian, somewhere.

In conclusion the ad works well. I would have made the link easier to see and made the center graphic more “informative”, even if it is made up info. Also, I would have made the center graphic smaller and the upper left ‘g’ larger.



The Dow Advertisement

I am not fond of this ad. Mostly it is because the center focal point, layered by the Hu script and the face is unsettling. Once I look at the image I feel trapped and confused at where I should look next. My eyes followed a tilted figure 8 path from the nose to the 98 back to the center and then down to the 7 billion. The message is appropriate and I enjoy the links between all the images but I am distracted by the half chopped off ears and chilled by a hospital white to near blue overtone cast on all the images.

Proportionally the face is too large. The size of the face confuses my eye. I can't say for certain if the face is being labeled or is the face giving meaning to the other graphics. The lack of unity and an odd major focal element disrupt the message of the ad.

In conclusion the human element campaign was very successful for Dow because it caused people to think about the ad and who was paying for the ad. Individually the ads were not effective. Nowhere on the add is Dow mentioned. A viewer was already supposed to know about the ad and the company and message it represented.