

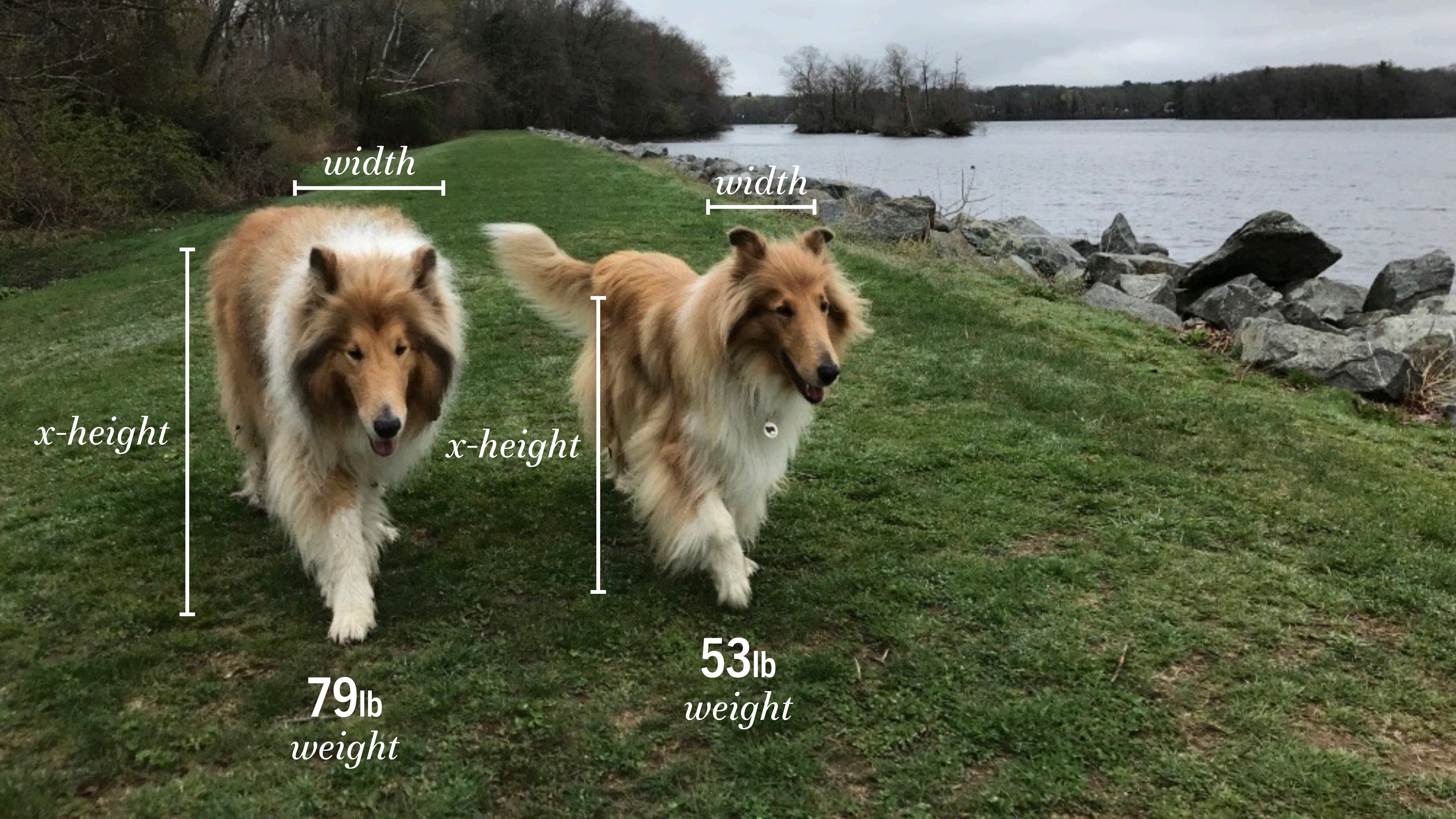
Practicing

Intentional Typography

in Dynamic Systems

Jason Pamental | @jpamental
Design/Technology Thinking & Tinkering
ATypI Montréal 2017





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I'm Jason, and I'm a
web typographer

Words communicate meaning;
typography either amplifies or dilutes it.
Every detail that's just 'ok' lessens our words' impact

First—as @kupfers points out—we have to ask

What is good typography?

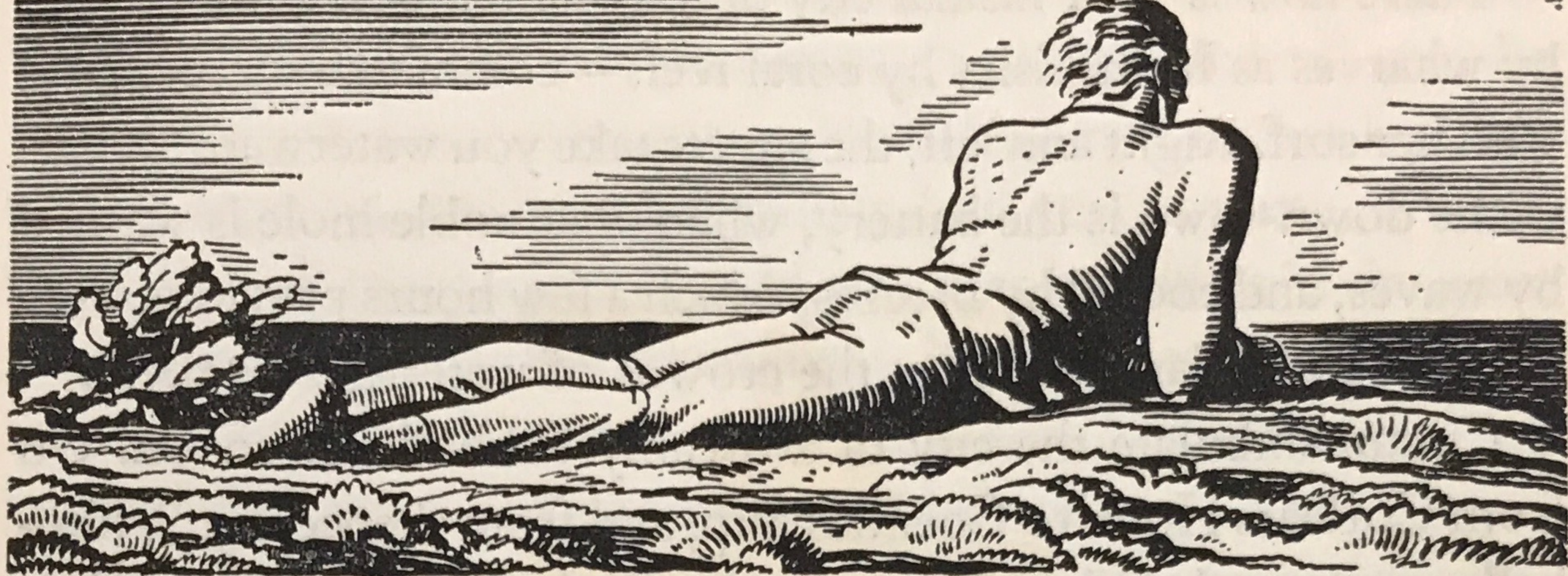


Moby Dick

By Herman Melville

CHAPTER 1. Loomings.

Call me Ishmael. Some years ago—never mind how long precisely—having little or no money in my purse, and nothing particular to interest me on shore, I thought I would sail about a little and see the watery part of the world. It is a way I have of driving off the spleen and regulating the circulation. Whenever I find myself growing grim about the mouth; whenever it is a damp, drizzly November in my soul; whenever I find myself involuntarily pausing before coffin warehouses, and bringing up the rear of every funeral I meet; and especially whenever my hypos get such an upper hand of me, that it requires a strong moral principle to prevent me from deliberately stepping into the street, and methodically knocking people's hats off—then, I account it high time to get to sea as soon as I can. This is my substitute for pistol and ball. With a philosophical flourish Cato throws himself upon his sword; I quietly take to the ship. There is nothing surprising in this. If they but knew it, almost all men in their degree, some time or other, cherish very nearly the same feelings towards the ocean with me.



CHAPTER I

LOOMINGS

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A COMMON MAXIM AMONG type designers is that drawing a typeface isn't about drawing beautiful letters: drawing a typeface is about making beautiful words. A typeface is a collection of separate parts, but these parts have to work together in every possible combination to form unified words.

Inseparable though they are now, Eastern paper and Western books did not exactly rush into each other's arms. With a vastness of Asian steppe, desert, and mountain between them, it took centuries for the paper of Marquis Cai to reach Europe, and yet more time to inveigle itself into common use. Paper's usefulness in bookmaking, in fact, was only one of the many forces that drove its journey: of equal, if not greater importance, were humanity's parallel obsessions with religion, war, and underpants.



The secret of paper, as with silk before it, was jealously guarded by the ancient Chinese. Traditionally, those who attempted to smuggle out any of the key components of silk production were punished harshly or even executed. Silk cocoons, silkworms, and the mulberry trees

Type Classification at a Glance

The typefaces in this book are arranged by classification. This makes similar designs easier to compare and introduces a vocabulary that will not only make you sound smart at parties, but will also help you identify, select, and combine typefaces.

But first, a warning: there is no universal classification system. Just like any attempt to apply a set of genres to creative work, be it music, literature, or art, typeface classification is inherently problematic. After all, type is not biology—a typeface doesn't have a genetic code like



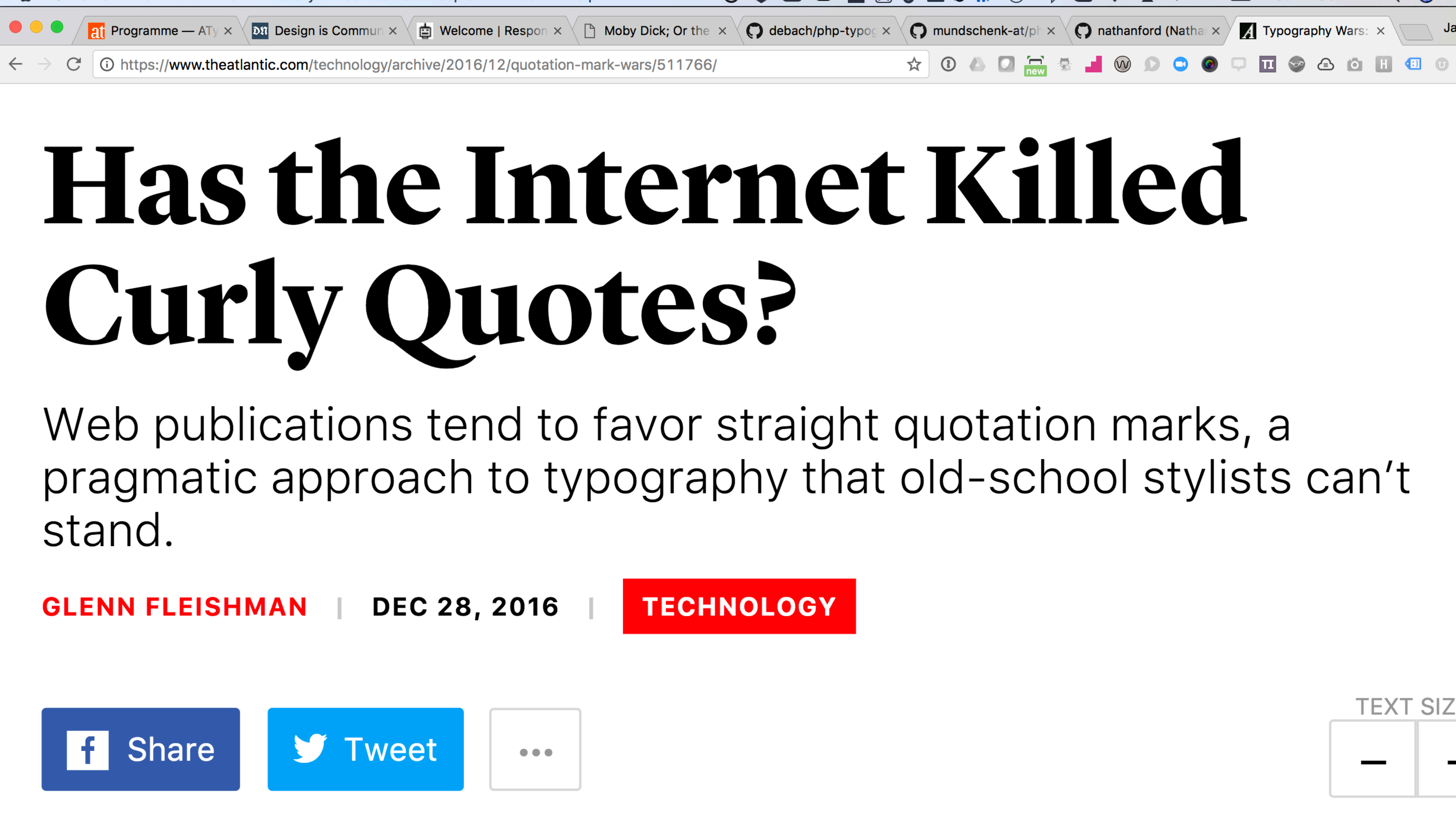
Humanist
Very calligraphic, consistent, and modern contrast. Basic asymmetry.



Transitional
Slightly calligraphic with variable contrast and usually

**“It turns out one of the leading
concrete experts in the country
is Harry Hill’s dad!”**

Andy Altmann



Has the Internet Killed Curly Quotes?

Web publications tend to favor straight quotation marks, a pragmatic approach to typography that old-school stylists can't stand.

GLENN FLEISHMAN

DEC 28, 2016

TECHNOLOGY

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Design is Communication

And if you can't explain it, you're not done designing it yet

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paragraph or two, but if you couldn't explain in clear language the reasoning for your typeface selection, color palette or any other visual language, you just weren't done.

“Without explanation, you can do is evaluated not effectiveness”

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work clearly and convincingly on a regular basis, they're far more likely to do so with clients. This is critical, because in all but the rarest of cases, our clients aren't designers. They don't know what we know, or speak the same language we speak. We must be our own translators, and educate the client along the way. If we can't bring them along to the view we have created, why should they believe us when we say it's the right one?



Detail of the matchbox set made of steel, oak & black-and-white photos on acetate

At Isovera we've been bringing practices like this back into our daily routines. When we talk about work, we talk about why it's effective. When a designer works on a project, they present it to the client. If two designers are working, they each present their own. Not only does this give them the opportunity to practice this kind of communication, it also gives them the chance to show the work they have done. The client is the one who gets to shine.

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MIKE MONTEIRO PUT IT SO WELL IN *IS A JOB: IF YOU'RE NOT THE ONE*

, you didn't finish designing. 🍷

But we were talking about systems

Design is Communication

And if you can't explain it, you're not done designing it yet

By Jason Pamental | Monday 12 September 2016 12.00 BST

A while back I wrote an article about one of my most influential experiences studying Graphic Design: the requirement of one of my instructors that we show up for any 'first crit' with no fewer than 30 thumbnails. But there was another experience, with another instructor, that perhaps had an even greater impact on me and on the way I guide and teach other designers.

While [Hee Mong Kim's requirement](#) centered on the start of any project, Nancy Bockbrader's signature element came at the finish: every project, no matter how big or small, had to include a paper explaining the 'why' behind the design decisions made in the course of the assignment. It could be as short as a paragraph or two, but if you couldn't explain in clear language the reasoning for your typeface selection, color palette or any other visual language, you just weren't done.

“Without explanation all we can do is evaluate execution, not effectiveness”

Moby Dick

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There now is your insular city of the Manhattoes, belted round by wharves as Indian isles by coral reefs—commerce surrounds it with her surf. Right and left, the streets take you waterward. Its extreme downtown is the battery, where that noble mole is washed by waves, and cooled by breezes, which a few hours previous were out of sight of land. Look at the crowds of water-gazers there.

Moby Dick oder Der weiße Wal

Erstes Kapitel

Als ich vor einigen Jahren – wie lange es genau her ist, tut wenig zur Sache – so gut wie nichts in der Tasche hatte und von einem weiteren Aufenthalt auf dem Lande nichts mehr wissen wollte, kam ich auf den Gedanken, ein wenig zur See zu fahren, um die Welt des Meeres kennenzulernen. Man verliert auf diese Weise seinen verrückten Spleen, und dann ist es auch gut für die Blutzirkulation. Wenn man den scheußlichen Geschmack auf der Zunge nicht loswerden kann; wenn man das Frostgefühl eines feuchten und kalten Novembers auf der Seele hat; wenn man unwillkürlich vor jedem Sargmagazin stehenbleibt und jedem Leichenzug nachsieht, wenn man sich der Schwermut nicht mehr erwehren kann, daß man auf die Straße stürzen und vorsätzlich den Leuten den Hut vom Kopfe schlagen müßte, dann ist es allerhöchste Zeit, auf See zu gehen. Das ist für mich Ersatz für Pistole und Kugel.

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Da liegt von langen Kais eingefast, wie die Indianerinseln von Korallenriffen, unsere Inselstadt

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Looking ahead: *Variable Environments*

Moby Dick

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Circumambulate the city of a dreamy Sabbath afternoon. Go from Corlears Hook to Coenties Slip, and from thence, by Whitehall, northward. What do you see? Posted like silent sentinels all around the town, stand thousands upon thousands of mortal men fixed in ocean reveries. Some leaning against the spiles: some seated upon the pier-heads:

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A more modern redux



Author



Editor



Designer

The world's best blog post

View

Edit

Delete

Revisions

Devel

The current state of design on the web is stalled. We made a huge leap forward with the widespread availability of web fonts starting in 2009, and then were confronted with the advent of responsive design just a year or two later. While many interesting things have come from that evolution, we’ve also struggled with coming to grips with the complexity of designing for infinite screen sizes whilst being equally concerned with performance. Contending with ever-shortening attention spans ([Google research gives you about 3 seconds](#) before you lose half your audience) we’ve had to constrain our typographic systems to just a few fonts to keep the impact on load time to a minimum.

These constraints have forced us as designers to make compromises when considering type size, line length, and overall visual hierarchy and differentiation. Considering things like a narrower font on smaller screens to achieve a slightly longer line length without sacrificing size. Or utilizing ultra-thin or ultra-heavy weights for added emphasis and variety of expression—all luxuries we can’t embrace due to the burden it would place on site visitors—particularly those on shaky wireless connections.

One

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for the text on this page*

Moby Dick



CHAPTER I. Loomings.

Call me Ishmael. Some years ago—never mind how long precisely—having little or no money in my purse, and nothing particular to interest me on shore, I thought I would sail about a little and see the great wide world. I came forth from the portals of my cell

Though I cannot tell why it was exactly that those stage managers, the Fates, put me down for this shabby part of a whaling voyage, when others were set down for magnificent parts in high tragedies, and short and easy parts in genteel comedies, and jolly parts in farce though I cannot tell why this was exactly; yet, now that I recall all the circumstances, I think I can see a little into the springs and motives which being cunningly presented to me under various disguises, induced me to set about performing the part I did, besides cajoling me into the delusion that it was a choice resulting from my own unbiased freewill and discriminating judgment.

Chief among these motives was the overwhelming idea of the great whale himself. Such a portentous and mysterious monster roused all my *curiosity*. Then the wild and distant seas where he rolled his island bulk; the undeliverable, nameless perils of the whale; these, with all the attending marvels of a thousand Patagonian sights and sounds, helped to sway me to my wish. With other men, perhaps, such things would not have been inducements; but as for me, I am tormented with an everlasting itch for things remote. I love to sail forbidden seas, and land on barbarous coasts. Not ignoring what is good, I am quick to perceive a horror, and could still be social with it would they let me since it is but well to be on friendly terms with all the inmates of the place one lodges in.

By reason of these things, then, the whaling voyage was welcome; the great flood-gates of the wonder-world swung open, and in the wild conceits that swayed me to my purpose, two and two there floated into my inmost soul, endless processions of the whale, and, mid most of them all, one grand hooded phantom, like a snow hill in the air. 🍷



Jason Pamental | @jpamental
isovera.com

<http://bit.ly/jpintentionaltype>

typefaces:

Essonnes (JTD)

Trade Gothic Next (fonts.com)

Louvette VF (CJ Dunn)

Amstelvar VF (Type Network)

Gimlet & Output VF (DJR)

Axis-Praxis.org by @lorp

photography:

unless otherwise noted,
photos by @jpamental