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The Authored Voice: Emerging approaches to exegesis design in creative practice PhDs

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ABSTRACT

In 2004, Robert Nelson noted in creative, practice-led research degrees that the exegesis had been reconceptualised as a cultural contribution to scholarship. He suggested that the challenge this posed was the need for writing to interface effectively with the nature and calibre of the creative work. A decade on from his observation, this article employs a case study to discuss emerging approaches to the exegesis in the work of graphic design doctoral candidates at AUT University in New Zealand. Accepting the multi-perspectival and multi-voiced nature of the practice-led exegesis writer, it discusses approaches to both structure and presentation. In so doing, it also considers specific issues, including negotiated relationships between the role and the nature of the designer's voice, systems of narration, and issues impacting upon both digital and print formats.

Introduction

The word exegesis is derived from the Greek word *exegeisthai,* meaning to interpret, guide or lead. Originally, it described a specific form of theological writing concerned with explanation and critical interpretation (Soanes & Stevenson, 2008, p. 498). In contemporary creative practice-led theses, the word contains all of these elements, but it is the product of a very different scholarly culture.

Although writers like Dena (2005) have described tensions between written work and the creative component of the PhD thesis as dysfunctional, Kroll (2004, p. 4) argues that the exegesis offers a form of 'authorial announcement' … where 'writers reveal their personalities as well as their methodologies.'

As Hamilton (2011) notes, the exegesis requires reconciliation between 'the disinterested perspective and academic objectivity of an observer/ethnographer/analyst/theorist [and] the invested perspective of the practitioner/producer' (para. 2). This much-discussed tension remains the substance of ongoing debates (Arnold, 2012; Brabazon & Dagli, 2010; Downton, 2012; Hamilton 2011; Hamilton & Jaaniste, 2010; Hecq, 2012; Paltridge, Starfield, Ravelli, & Nicholason, 2011; Stock, in press).

However, within this situation, candidates and supervisors negotiate richly productive territory. Accordingly, the exegesis as a communicative artefact has become a site of considerable negotiation as writers seek to draw greater congruencies between practice and its contextualisation. Moreover for graphic designers,[1] professional concerns with clarity, emphasis and expression mean that traditions of the thesis document as something conventionally set in twelve-

point Times Roman type, with written text double-spaced on one side of a prescriptively margined, white, portrait, A4 page are being challenged.

Methodology

Employing a case study of graphic design PhD theses at AUT University in Auckland, New Zealand, this article discusses candidates who have considered the multi- perspectival and multi-voiced nature of the exegesis as both a written and graphically designed expression. Although this approach is not a ubiquitous practice in PhD exegeses, it builds upon the nature of the discipline and emerging approaches adopted in both academic and professional scholarship in the field. A case study methodology is employed because it enables one to consider a small participant pool, drawing conclusions only about that group and only within a defined context. As such the methodology does not focus on the discovery of a universal, generalisable truth, nor does it seek cause–effect relationships; instead, its concerns are primarily with consideration and description (Feagin, 1991).

The article focuses on four related ideas. These are the exegesis as an expression of both reflective subjectivity and objective review (Brabazon & Dagli, 2010; Hamilton 2011; Paltridge et al., 2011). It then considers both the poetic (Hamilton & Jaaniste, 2010; Nelson, 2004), and the narrative voice (Scrivener & Ings, 2009) of the writer.

Examples are then discussed that demonstrate of how these concerns have led to distinctive deliberations of space, volume, typographical tone and emphasis within the design and architecture of five candidate's theses. Finally, consideration is given to issues impacting on the exegesis as an archival and examinable document that is positioned within an increasingly digital environment (Dunham, 2011; McKiernan, 2002).

Archaeology

Although there has been much written since the mid-1990s about the exegesis and its role, it is useful to consider its position in a slowly morphing trajectory of scholarly discourse.

Although Nobel (1994) notes that the doctorate has an eight hundred year history, the first Doctor of Philosophy was not awarded in an English university until 1920. The next year Oxford and Cambridge Universities awarded a D. Phil and a PhD, respectively (Brabazon & Dagli, 2010). In Australia, the first PhD was awarded in 1948 (Johnson, Lee, & Green, 2000) and in New Zealand, after its abolishment in 1926, the PhD was reintroduced in 1944 (Victoria University of Wellington, n.d.).

Traditionally, the PhD degree comprises a single written thesis of between 80,000 and 100,000 words, related to an original, independent body of research (Hoddell, Street, & Wildblood, 2002). With the advent of Doctoral degrees in design and visual arts, this word count lowered as new relationships between research as writing and practice-led inquiry were negotiated. These degrees are a relatively recent introduction into the scholarly landscape. Indeed, in the USA, the Master of Fine Arts was until recently considered the terminal degree in the discipline (Jones, 2006). Although prac- tice-led research degrees in Art and Design surfaced in Australia and New Zealand in the 1980s and 1990s, Paltridge et al. (2011) note that Australia's first practice-based PhD in these disciplines was awarded in 1988.[2] New Zealand's equivalent was not awarded until 2005 (Ings, 2005).

Architecture

The exegesis has diverse architectures. In fields like Art, Design, Creative Writing, Performance and Music, its structure has been shaped by its need to bridge (in authentic ways) practice, and writing about and through practice. Approaches to, and emphases within the form have been discussed by

a number of writers (Barrett & Bolt, 2007; Biggs & Büchler 2009; Downton, 2012; Hamilton 2011; Hamilton & Jaaniste, 2010; Hecq, 2012; Nelson, 2004; Sullivan, 2005). Milech and Schilo (2004) identified two models of PhD exegesis; the 'context model' that adopts an objective academic voice and provides a theoretical or historical context for the practice, and the 'commentary model' that offers a first-person reflection on practice. However, Hamilton and Jaaniste's (2010) content analysis of fifty-nine Masters and PhD exegeses identified a less dichotomous model they called the 'connective exegesis'. This model they noted, 'assumes a dual orientation-looking outwards to the established field of research, exemplars and theories, and inwards to the methodologies, processes and outcomes of the practice' (Hamilton, 2011, para. 1). They noted that around 85% of the exegeses in their sample contained a combination of differently oriented approaches.

At AUT University, in New Zealand, the graphic design exegesis comes closer to their 'connective' model because it is designed to both contextualise and explain the practice. In this regard, it does not seek to illustrate theory with practice, nor is it an amalgam of Milech and Schilo's context and commentary models. Instead these exegeses grow as a form of living discourse with practice through iterations of work and ideas surfacing from it. The exegesis is seen as *part of* the creative work because its discussion with practice is also shaped by that practice. As such, graphic design candidates 'synthesise various perspectives, subject positions, writing styles and voices into a unified and coherent text' (Hamilton, 2011, para. 2). Moreover, they *design* these works as communicative documents that draw on both literary and visual communication skills.

Accordingly, their exegeses are often multi-perspectival and voiced by more than one manifestation of the writer. Distinct writing and layout styles are adopted to address both the formal analysis of the theorist and the insightfully subjective voice of reflexivity. Thus, the voice that narrates a positioning of the researcher, a discussion of methodology, or offers a commentary on aspects of the work, may be very different to the voice that critically contextualises practice in relation to existing knowledge, or critiques ideas in relation to existing theory.

Although Paltridge, Starfield, Ravelli, and Tuckwell (2012, p. 333) offer a discussion of organisational patterns in written texts submitted practice-based doctorates, they note that there have been no significant cross-university studies of what the standard exegesis should look like. This issue relates to a wider observation made in Hamilton, Carson and Ellison's recently released report on creative practice higher research degrees where they note, 'there remains … much debate around what the paradigm of 'artistic research' entails' (2013, p. 25).

Graphic design exegeses at AUT University contain standard written material between 40,000 and 50,000 words (AUT University, 2013, p. 105); they are often heavily illustrated and their architecture varies in relation to the nature of the research undertaken. However, an exegesis normally contains:

- an introduction,
- a positioning of the research and researcher,
- a review of contextual knowledge,
- a discussion of methodology and methods,
- a discussion of critical ideas underpinning the project and
- some form of critical commentary on the work produced.

Although traditionally documentary evidence of the creative work has been formatted as a DVD, a slide portfolio, a CD-ROM or a comprehensive printed catalogue (AUT University, 2013, p. 112), more recently both the exegesis and records of the creative work have engaged with newer modes of presentation, including filmed documentaries and interactive PDFs.

Voice

The issue of professional graphic designers finding an authentic voice in the academy has built incrementally since the emergence of practice-led theses in higher education. Burdick (1992) proposed that designers must consider themselves authors, not facilitators. This shift in perspective, she argued implied both responsibility and voice. Her position has been developed by a number of theorists concerned with ideas of origination and agency in graphic design (Ings, 2013; Rock, 1996; Scrivener, 2000; Scrivener & Ings, 2009; Wood, 2004). This emerging emphasis on voice is understandable when one considers that traditionally the graphic designer has been largely anonymous in society. The populace sees designers' campaigns in print, follows their way- finding systems through airports and cities, and navigates their architectures on the Internet, but individual designers are rarely identified. As graphic design has moved into an academic environment where responsibility for ideas is an expectation, framings within the discipline have moved beyond conceptions of anonymous service provision towards a recognition of the importance of ownership (including in the practice and exegesis of the thesis).

Arnold (2012, p. 15) suggests that 'envisaging the PhD as a place of contestation in structure as well as substance enables the academic world to do more than validate a pro-forma or template PhD model'. By critically embracing the idea of *effective* (rather than simply traditional) modes of knowledge design and dissemination, the academy is able to engage usefully with shifts in the ways wider society presents and consumes information.

To illustrate approaches graphic designers have generated in exploring the exegesis as a mode of discourse, I would like to consider five theses in relation to two ideas. In discussing ethos, poetics and narration, and emerging deviations from the realm of print, I will refer to practice-led, creative research projects undertaken at AUT University between 2005 and 2013.

Ethos, Poetics and Narration

Paltridge et al. (2012, p. 342) note that multiple and valid options for presenting doctoral writing 'do not necessarily have to fit with a pre-conceived template, or indeed straight-jacket.'

For the graphic designer whose work journeys into both the self and the realm of new knowing, finding the voice[s] for a text that authentically speaks to one's practice can be as much a design issue as the thesis project itself. Although academic conventions often narrow discussions of the exegesis to considerations of writing, the ethos and content of such documents are substantially richer than this.

Critical writing in graphic design has a long history of expression through typography, layout and image/text interfaces. Indeed some of the discipline's most respected professional and academic journals, such as *I.D* (est. 1954), *Visible Language* (est. 1967), *Creative Review* (est. 1980), *E´migré* (est. 1984) and *Eye* (est. 1990), are noted for their ability to capture both the content and visual ethos of the material they publish.

The nature of written discourse for the graphic design doctoral candidate is there- fore something that engages both the content and the spirit of the text. This idea may be likened to Nelson's (2004) and Hamilton and Jaaniste's (2010) discussions of the 'poetics' of the exegesis. Here the exegesis reaches beyond the dispassionately prosaic; it touches something of the humanity of the designer. It is reflective and personally insightful. It makes lyrical links between the researcher and the researched. As such it 'explores scope for emotional content within the academic' (Nelson, 2004, para. 22).

In such exegeses, although the candidate negotiates relationships between the subjective and the objective voice, he or she also engages with considerations of space, volume and emphasis that might usefully be employed to lift the exegesis to higher levels of clarity.

Indicative of this is Nepia's (2013) PhD thesis *Te Kore – Exploring the Māori concept of void*. The exegesis accompanying this thesis was in three volumes. The first called the reader into the research through segments of creative writing and images that positioned the thesis in relation to whakapapa (genealogies) and korero (narratives) from personal, family and tribal histories. This material formed a substrate from which Te Kore was explored as generative space; a realm of social and creative potential. The second and third volumes unpacked the critical ideas and methodology related to the research. In terms of design, these two volumes renegotiated the nature of the footnote in the manner of kinaki (accompaniments, chants or song chosen to relish, augment or support the main content of an orator's whaikōrero or speech). Thus, important historical and contextual information was inserted on red half-sheets between the main pages (Figure 1). Because these notes operated as important explanations, they were not positioned *beneath* the feet of the thesistic narrative. Instead they sat parallel. They spoke *directly to* the body text, adjacent as in conversation rather than below as subservient adjuncts.

Similar attention to considerations of structure and stock (paper choice) can be seen in King Tong Ho's exegesis for his 2008 thesis, *The Poetics of Making*. This exegesis was bound in 11 volumes using traditional Chinese string bookbinding systems. The photographic images were printed employing contemporary digital inkjet print- making technology on to Chinese traditional painting paper (Xuan Zhi). The quality of the print work in the exegesis went far beyond what one would normally encounter, but this emphasis was in concord with the thesis that sought to attain a congruent, culturally informed poetic aesthetic.

The exegesis, while containing large sections of purely written material, also breathed with a delicate grace. Its pagination, dimensions and texture spoke with the reverence of a researcher who had dedicated much of his adult life to the subtle nuance of photography as an expression of Chinese sensibilities (Figure 2).

Ho's integration of the ethos of his thesis into the design of the exegesis can also be seen in Williams' (2011) exegesis for *Beyond words: An investigation into aspects of meaning articulated through the material forms of 'old' media as expressed in a polysemous narrative*. In her thesis, Lisa considered a new form of novel design that unfurled through a range of artefacts including a novella, a television newscast, newspaper journalism, an audiocassette recording and archive photography. The chapter pages of her exegesis referred to the range of redundant media she used in formatting components of her novel.

Figure 1. Double page spread from Volume 2 from Moana Nepia's exegesis *Te Kore – Exploring the Māori concept of void* showing interleaved footnotes (Image by permission of M. Nepia).

Figure 2. King Tong Ho. Double page spread from his exegesis *The Poetics of Making*, showing the subtle monochromes of a photographed landscape. This is elegantly supported by design decisions for pagination and layout that reinforce the delicate lyricism of the work (Image by permission of K.T. Ho).

Writing around practice-led research needs to find appropriate voices for distinctly different modes of telling. Scrivener and Ings (2009, p. 3) describe such exegeses as potentially 'a carefully constructed kind of storytelling with a particular audience in mind'. These documents they suggest, may be … 'not just written, [but] also designed and directed' (ibid., p. 2).[3] This may be likened 'to a choral work that while understood as a single unit, orchestrates a concordance of voices' (ibid., p. 3). An example of this form of research writing is elegantly realised in David Sinfield's award-winning exegesis for his 2009 thesis, *Under the surface: reflections on workers' narratives from below the minimum wage*. In this text, we encounter oscillating narrators. One is the analytical scholar who examines contexts and critical ideas surrounding his work. The second, however, is the voice of the designer as a vernacu- lar commentator. Parallel to the main text he tells stories from his childhood and research in the field. These stories contextualise and accompany his inquiry. In them, the tone of the writing is intimate and expressive (Figure 3).
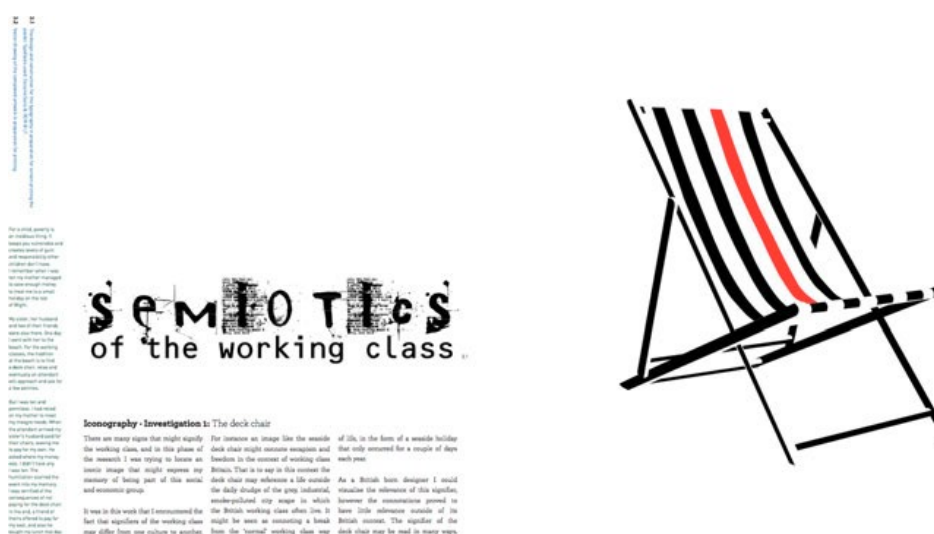

Figure 3. Double page spread from David Sinfield's exegesis for *Under the surface: reflections on workers' narratives from below the minimum wage*. Adjacent to the main copy that opens a discussion of the semiotics of the British working class, we read a first-person narrative of the writer's experience as a child of a seaside holiday (Image by permission of D.L. Sinfield).

In contrast to the analytical voice of the body text, Sinfield's parallel narrative reads evocatively.

For a child, poverty is an insidious thing. It keeps you vulnerable and creates levels of guilt and responsibility other children don't have.

I remember when I was ten my mother managed to save enough money to treat me to a small holiday on the Isle of Wight.

My sister, her husband and two of their friends were also there. One day I went with her to the beach. For the working classes, the tradition at the beach is to find a deck chair, relax and eventually an attendant will approach and ask for a few pennies.

But I was ten and penniless. I had relied on my mother to meet my meager needs. When the attendant arrived my sister's husband paid for their chairs, leaving me to pay for my own. He asked where my money was. I didn't have any. I was ten. The humiliation scarred the event into my memory. I was terrified of the consequences of not paying for the deck chair. In the

end, a friend of theirs offered to pay for my seat. (Sinfield 2009, p. 26).

These approaches to voicing the exegesis through renegotiations of form and narration are not new. Early experiments in Australasia may be traced back at least to Armstrong's (2002) doctoral project, *Towards an Ecosophical Praxis of New Media Space Design*, where his written document used non-standard approaches to orientation, leading and columnisation.

Shumack (2008, p. 59) suggests the exegesis is written 'as a way to explore the edges and spaces of design practice'. As such the spaces and content of exegetic dis- course become part of an integrated whole. As it exists in print, such negotiations still largely operate inside the conception of the thesis as a discrete text. However, recent developments in both scholarly publishing and interactive thesis design suggest potentials that might reach beyond these constraints.

Deviations from the Realm of Print

Like exegesis, the word thesis is also derived from ancient Greek. Historically it meant a proposition, a setting down or placing (Soanes & Stevenson, 2008, p. 1497). In scholarly practice, the methods we use to 'place' our ideas in the public domain have changed substantially. Lancaster (1985) discussed the inevitability of electronic publi- cation replacing print, he perhaps foresaw that by 2011, digital bytes would 'convey and store formal discourse among researchers more than printed words' (Dunham, 2011, para. 3). Online environments have changed the manner in which academics research, share, receive and store knowledge. These environments offer cheaper, more rapidly disseminated, versatile and interconnected capabilities. In fact, many universi- ties now lodge examined theses online so the dissemination of thinking becomes more accessible. As Dunham (ibid., para. 11) notes, such forms of disseminated research do not stand alone but are 'intrinsically embedded within a greater semantic world, a dynamic, relational landscape of content, resonance and searchability'. This said, the potentials of online environments do not come without their challenges. Primary among these is the need for ongoing stewardship. Digital theses need to be safely pre- served and where necessary, migrated to new formats.

However, since 2009 some candidates have designed their exegeses as static and interactive PDFs.[4] These digital formats offer a number of advantages. Interactive PDFs offer higher levels of versatility than print documents. Where once candidates were reduced to discussing sound design via wave diagrams, they are now able to embed complete audio files. Where sound becomes a component in how a design is read (as a voice-over, interview or an agent in an information graphic or film segment), the composite document is accessible in its complete form. Transitions (like editing styles or animated sequences) in spatio-temporal work can also be shown with high degrees of accuracy because reporting is not reduced to a series of awkward frame grabs. This means that candidate's reflections on work can be more deeply textured because they can discuss experiments adjacent to the original texts.

Static and interactive PDFs are also more durable. Some universities still request that exegeses are printed on archive quality paper. However, the average candidate employs photocopiers and laser printers that use an electrostatic process to produce copies of their work. Because different models of copier have different properties in their toners, there is rarely either standardisation or quality control. For students whose exegeses use a significant number of colour images, this presents a significant, but rarely acknowledged problem. Colour electrostatic images do not last as long as black and white copies, and most international archival institutions do not recommend the permanent or long-term storage of these prints (National Archives of Australia, 2014). In addition, when a 'carrier' (an iron powder coated with resin) is added to toner, the heat-sensitive polymer and pigment may adversely affect the longevity of the document. Thus, while many universities still insist on candidates using archive paper, many have little idea of the compromise posed by the non-archive quality printing processes used in reproducing their work.

For many graphic designers, working with digital colour information in the exegesis is necessary. Because the PDF does not have to shepherd richly composed pallets through the compromise of print technology, candidates normally feel confident that what people see on their screens is close to what has been designed or illustrated.[5] Moreover, researchers are able to present this information in their exegeses without the crippling cost of printing three full-colour editions for examination purposes.[6]

Indications of designers and artists in practice-led programmes moving beyond the limitations of print media in Australian and New Zealand universities can be traced back at least to 1992 when Brabazon included in her Master's thesis a sonic appendix featuring 'aural footnotes' (Brabazon & Dagli, 2010). In 2005, Ings' PhD thesis contained an exegetic documentary on DVD that discussed issues of transition, rhythm, spatiotemporal iconography and sound in the project work.

Waldner's (2013), Master of Philosophy exegesis was formatted as an interactive PDF. Adopting a third-wave feminist analysis, her thesis creatively considered how animated typography might articulate issues relating to commodification and identity among young New Zealand women. The interactive PDF offered her a number of useful features. Firstly, because she referred to a number of television and online commercials, she was able to embed these texts as complete files. A reader simply clicked on them and they played (Figure 4). This meant critical, contextual or analytical commentary could be positioned adjacent to the media artefact under discussion.[7] In the thesis, she was also able to embed segments of participants' interviews.

This was important because not only was she analysing the content of the material but also its paralinguistic qualities. These qualities were integral to her decision-making related to typographic expression.[8] By being able to embed both audio and video files in her exegesis, Waldner was also able to provide examples of early experiments that engaged kinetic type in relation to sound and rhythm trials.

Connection and Currency

An interesting challenge of course lies in the extent to which the thesis and its exegesis engage with emerging approaches to disseminating knowledge in the wider academy.

Although strong arguments can be made for moving the exegesis into digital formats, so far the thesis has been largely considered as a discrete, finite text. However, by utilising emerging electronic features, the potential exists to extend levels of functionality and currency in the exegesis.

As McKiernan (2002, p. 313) notes, readers of scholarly journals can now comment on published material by using web-based response forms. In discussing publications like *Conservation Ecology* (www.consecol.org) he says, 'Readers may submit brief comments … or contribute extensive commentary of full articles containing charts, tables, and graphics … If a response is accepted for publication, it is linked to the original article and designated as a response.' Features like this suggest

2:3:2 · Kinetic typography in popular culture

The popularity and currency of this form can be evidenced in a number of ways. Vimeo has an entire channel dedicated to kinetic type (MarcoPapale, n.d.). Popular music artists employ kinetic type in their videos including Katy Perry (Martinez, 2012; McLaren, 2012), Gossip (Price, 2012), and P!nk (RCA Records, 2012) (see figs. 2:28–31).

Recent examples of kinetic type in the tertiary education domain include commercials for AUT University (Consortium, 2012, 2011) and Unitec (Morton, 2012) excerpts of which can be viewed in figures 2:32–33. This form of typographical discourse (as user generated texts) is now almost ubiquitous on YouTube.

The most innovative developments in this area may arguably be seen in film and television titles. Significant recent examples being MK12's sequence for *Stranger Than Fiction* (Mark Forster, 2006) and Danny Yount's work on *Six Feet Under* (Ball, 2001), parts of which can be viewed in figures 2:34–35.[12] In these instances, kinetic type refers to but ultimately sits outside of the narrative.[13] When animated type appears within the body of a film it often appears as part of technology as in *Iron Man 2* (Favreau, 2008) and *Quantum of Solace* (Forster, 2008). This can be seen in figures 2:36–37. Kinetic type within a film is also sometimes used to reinforce information referred to in the script, as in *Fight Club's* IKEA sequence (Fincher, 1999) or *Zombieland's* rules to avoid zombies (Fleischer, 2009) in figures 2:38–39.[14] Interestingly, the recent feminist film *Miss Representation* (Newsom, 2011) incorporates kinetic type into its trailer.

The above examples build on a rich history of title sequences that include the work of Saul Bass (1959, 1960), Maurice Binder (1968) and Kyle Cooper (1994, 1995, 2005). Titles created by these designers often progressed the role of type beyond the presentation of titles and credits. Being kinetic, the type in their sequences was able to operate with sound, light, and pace. Thus typography was able to engage with the ethos of the film and become part of the diegesis of the work itself. Normally these sequences pre-empted the narrative but in cases like Cooper's (1995) title sequence for *Se7en* (Fincher, 1995), it was used as a divider between acts two and three in the narrative.
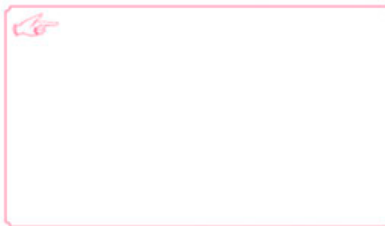
Figure 2:28. Jessie McLaren. (2012). *13 second excerpt from Katy Perry's Dressin' up lyric video*. This video is a good example of how meaning can be emphasised or implied through kinetic type.

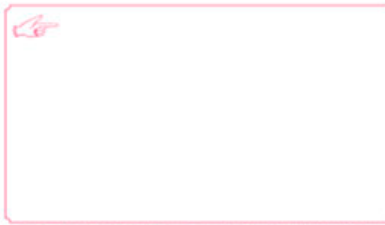Figure 2:29. Emilio Martinez. (2012). *11 second excerpt from Katy Perry's Part of me lyric video*.

Figure 2:30. James Price. (2012). *14 second excerpt from Gossip's Move in the right direction music video*. This clip displays how kinetic typography can be integrated with live action in order to imply a 3-dimensional space.

12 · For a further selection of title sequences that use kinetic type see http://www.artofthetitle.com/ and use the search word 'type'.

13 · As such it may be understood as extra-diegetic. In other words, it speaks to but exists outside of the core content of the film.

14 · The exception to this is the silent film *Boy* (Ings, 2004) which uses type to reinforce narrative.

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Figure 4. Interactive pdf page from Lisa Waldner's exegesis chapter reviewing contextual knowledge. To activate the video file one clicked on the appropriate icon and the text played out. Video files could also be accessed directly from the table of images, and could be viewed multiple times (Image by permission of L. Waldner).

new ways of considering currency and dissemination of ideas developed by designers and artists. Instead of a thesis being a static record, it might be dynamic; it might contribute to *and accumulate* knowledge. For example, readers might suggest emerging references including journal articles, exhibitions, presentations and other experimental material. This facility is current practice in certain existing academic journals (McKiernan, 2002). By metatagging and linking, the digital exegesis might be conceived as some- thing more than a static object preserved in a time vacuum. Instead the creative work, its contextualisation and commentary might become part of a discoverable landscape, collectively navigated through discourse and connections to content in emerging repositories of knowledge.

Conclusion

Oscar Wilde once said, 'A dreamer is one who can only find his way by moonlight, and his punishment is that he sees the dawn before the rest of the world' (1976, p. 1058). This idea might also apply to the nature of the exegesis. As a scholarly form, it must accompany diverse journeys through new territories of knowledge. Its strength resides in its mutability and responsiveness to the needs of individual research projects.

None of the exegeses discussed in this paper used the conventionally recommended Times Roman or Arial fonts. Typefaces were carefully selected so they spoke with the subtle dialect of the writer. The leading and kerning of each choice was finely tuned to facilitate elegant and fluid levels

of reading. The tone and volume of the designer's voice was pitched between the scholarly and the subjective. Among the exegeses that were printed, none appeared on 80gsm white photocopy stock, and nothing was bound with a plastic spiral punched through the spine of the document. These were works of design, proud, elegant and scholarly. They were the voices of thinkers who understood communication as something that reaches its most sophisticated and poetic potentials beyond conventional framings of written scholarship. In doing so, these texts do not forsake the rigour and integrity of scholarship, but lift it closer to the ethos of the exegesis … towards its etymological origin.

Notes

1. Graphic design traditionally describes the art of communication, styling and problem-solving through the use of type, space and image. Traditionally the term referred to print, but since the 1980s it has also included design for digital (spatio-temporal) environments. Graphic design may be considered a subset of communication design. However, in New Zealand and Australia, the terms are often used interchangeably.

2. The writers note, however, that one practice-led PhD in composition was awarded at the University of Queensland the year preceding this.

3. In describing the exegesis as a form of storytelling, the authors extend the concept beyond descriptive narration. The exegesis 'story' is also critical, reflective and contextual.

4. The PDF (Portable Document Format) is a standard Adobe file extension used for exchang- ing documents.

5. Candidates submit with their digital file(s), a profile that enables examiners to view images very close to their intended spectrum. This is important because when images are printed they lose the intensity of certain colours (especially rich blues). This is because print operates inside the small gamut of CMYK colours, compared to the richer RGB spectrum used in digital environments.

6. An anecdotal survey of the cost of print-based theses discussed in this article averaged at NZ $300.00 per copy. Post examination, with the additional costs of printing and binding library and supervisor's editions, most candidates had to budget on average $1500.00. This may be compared to the printing and spiral binding a purely word-based thesis in other disciplines where the cost normally averages between $30.00 and $40.00 per copy.

7. Currently, a variety of e-journals from across the academic spectrum incorporate multimedia components to enhance reader understanding. Indicative of these are the *Internet Journal of Chemistry* (www.ijc.com), *The Journal of Multimedia Communication* (http://multimodalcommunication.com), *An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies* (http://www.acme-journal.org/Home.html), and *Expert Reviews in Molecular Medicine* (www-ermm.cbcu.cam.ac.uk).

8. A similar concern may be evidenced in Sinfield's (2009) thesis that translated segments of participant's interviews into large, typographical expressions of both the *tone* and the *content* of their narrations.

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