

‘Can you read this? Are you hip?’ — Rick Griffin’s experiments on the edges of writing

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Rick Griffin was a leading figure of the psychedelic design movement in late 1960s San Francisco. This paper argues that although not an overt theorist, in his lettering for posters and comic books, Griffin reveals aspects of the visual semiotics of writing that provide insights for the semiotic study of graphically-embodied language. Griffin was preoccupied with the visual substance of writing. Not only was Griffin a student of myriad styles of letter (including, cholo graffiti, comic book lettering, Jugendstil and Victorian typography), but he was also preoccupied with how writing functions and how letterforms attain meanings. Through an analysis of Griffin’s comic book and poster lettering, this paper will discuss aspects of the visual semiotics of alphabetic writing including: the relationship of embodied tokens to alphabetical symbols, the socio-semiotic function of styles of letter, and lettering as aesthetic signification.

KEYWORDS graphic ideologies; aesthetic signification; the alphabet; lettering; psychedelic design

Introduction

Rick Griffin was an artist, illustrator, graphic designer, and comic book author central to developments in psychedelic poster design and underground comics (or ‘comix’) in late 1960s San Francisco. Of the psychedelic designers, Griffin was not only the most formally innovative, but also the most semiotically experimental. Griffin’s work demonstrates a highly idiosyncratic style of lettering and an experimental approach to conveying meaning through letterforms.

In the introduction to the English translation of Gerard Genette’s *Paratexts*, Richard Macksey (1997: xi–xii) describes novelist Laurence Sterne as the ‘pioneer anatomist of the physical body of the book’; not only a novelist but a ‘theorist in jester’s motley’. Griffin was something similar: through his experimental lettering, exploring the outmost territories of

writing, Griffin was not simply a graphic artist but someone who studied the visual semiotics of written language, not as an overt theorist, but as a *grammatological adventurer*. Not only was Griffin a master of the craft of lettering, but he was also preoccupied how writing functions and how letterforms convey meaning. Yet, as an adventurer rather than a theorist, Griffin was not systematic: therefore, the discussion below will touch on a variety of semiotic issues, including: the semiotic structure of the letter; socio-semiotics of lettering; and aesthetic signification.

Section one provides background on the psychedelic poster scene. Section two models aspects of the semiotic structure of the letter. Having established these contexts, section three discusses the socio-semiotic function of illegibility in psychedelic poster design, and section four analyses Griffin's aesthetic idiolect in detail. Finally, some provisional remarks are included on Griffin's approach to imagery as it relates to his approach to lettering.

1. The psychedelic scene

Rick Griffin, along with Alton Kelley, Stanley Mouse, Victor Moscoso and Wes Wilson, are collectively known as the 'big five' of San Franciscan psychedelic poster design (Criqui 2005: 14). Beginning around 1966, they designed posters for LSD-fueled dance concerts in San Francisco that would have a huge impact on design and visual culture. Their posters were designed primarily for concerts promoted by Bill Graham at The Fillmore and Chet Helms' Family Dog at the Avalon Ballroom.

While each of these designers had their own style, in general psychedelic posters shared the following characteristics: they were dense and highly ornamented, opposing the then dominant international/modernist style; they featured hand-rendered lettering rather than typography (apart from small print at the bottom of the design) and the lettering was frequently difficult to decipher; finally, colors were intense and highly-contrasted, often featuring two vibrant colors from opposite ends of the spectrum, so as to produce an optical illusion of vibration. Such ornamentation, fluid lettering and intense color were facilitated by the use of offset-lithographic printing which allowed for the reproduction of meticulously-rendered drawings in which lettering and pictorial elements were fluidly combined and (although at times labor intensive) gave great freedom in the use and combination of color (Binder 2010). In addition to the above characteristics, the posters often included appropriated and combined art- and design-historical materials as well as historical photography.

The influence of Art Nouveau/Jugendstil/Vienna Secession on San Franciscan psychedelic poster design has at times been overstated.¹ This (mis-)perception is most likely due to the work of one of the big five designers — Wes Wilson — who frequently combined Art Nouveau-like imagery with a style of lettering derived from Secessionist designer, Adolf Roller

(Tomlinson 2005: 123, 132 n. 5). Wilson's formulaic approach to lettering and design was emulated by lesser psychedelic designers (Peterson 2002: 312), including Bonnie McLean and Detroit-based Gary Grimshaw; and later, Wilson-like lettering appeared in commercial design beyond the psychedelic scene (Terry 2017: 43). However, for the other four of the big five, Art Nouveau was but one of many sources.²

Colleen Terry (2017: 38) argues that psychedelic design's adoption of Art Nouveau is best understood as part of a postmodern design strategy in which 'poster artists "sampled" a variety of popular and cultural sources'. Such materials included, food packaging design, comic and cartoon imagery, Victorian typography, and photography recycled from contemporary magazines and turn of the century sources (Peterson 2002).

If one graphic style and theme predominated, at least in the initial phase, it was not Art Nouveau, but the Wild West. The poster which is said to have initiated the psychedelic design movement — referred to as 'The Seed' — was a 1965 poster for The Charlatans designed by band members George Hunter and Michael Ferguson (Terry 2017: 31). The Seed established the theme of a romanticized American West, through its combination of hand-rendered interpretations of late nineteenth-century wood type letters, Victorian ornament and depictions of The Charlatans in turn-of-the-century garb. The San Franciscan designers pursued and developed this theme, appropriating motifs and structures from turn-of-the-century American commercial graphics and using Western imagery — often Native Americans standing as (racially naïve, by today's standards) symbols of opposition to the dominant consumer capitalist society.

By 1968 this theme and style became less central, or was mutated beyond recognition. The lettering styles of both Griffin and Moscoso — the two most original and innovative letterers of the big five — began in interpretations of Victorian typefaces (see Figure 1).³

Moscoso



19th-century
French Antiquaire



Moscoso,
March 1967



Moscoso,
September 1967

Griffin



19th-century
Tuscan



Griffin,
March 1967



Griffin,
February 1968



Griffin,
September 1968

Figure 1. Nineteenth-century typographic sources of Moscoso and Griffin's lettering

Moscoso's signature lettering derived from reverse-stress 'French Antique' typefaces. Moscoso exaggerated the top and bottom emphasis, packed horizontally-compressed letters closely, and warped the letters into undulating patterns. Griffin's lettering style derived from ornate, spiked-stem nineteenth-century typefaces (such as the 'Tuscan' style). He then processed this style through Jugendstil whiplash curves and the angular distortions of cholo graffiti, mutating the alphabet into spider-leg and tendril forms.⁴ To this he added multiple outlines and three-dimensional projection. As we will see below, Griffin developed highly-intricate letters, in which the skeletal bases of letterforms became submerged in style, and at times, completely disappeared. But first: what is a letter?

2. The semiotics of the letter

Although commonplace, letters are nevertheless peculiar in semiotic terms.⁵ When we think about how letters communicate, we most often consider letters in terms of the systems (usually orthographies) in which they are used. But there are many systems that use letters in which they have different functions (orthographies, mathematical and logical notation, license plates, etc.), therefore a letter has a semiotic existence structurally independent of any system in which it is exploited. It is this level that is of concern here.

Most basically put, a letter is a *symbol* in the Peircean sense — recognized and understood through established convention. As a symbol, a letter exists outside of any instance of its embodiment. A particular rendering of a letter is a *replica*, or *token*, of that symbol. It is in the relationship of token to symbol that letters are unusual.

In order to be recognized, a token must adhere to characteristics of what Umberto Eco (1976: 245) calls the *type*: 'a type [is] a set of properties that have been singled out as pertinent, the token is obtained by mapping out the elements of the original set in terms of those of the token set'. Embodied letter tokens stand to their type in what Eco calls 'ratio facilis', meaning that the 'expression-type establishes some features pertinent, and some others as variable and inessential for isolation of the given unit' (184). To approach it from the opposite direction, we can say that the token may include properties that are not proper to the type.

To provide a concrete example: in the case of a typical uppercase <A> we could list the following three properties of the type: from an apex a diagonal slants leftward, another rightward, and a horizontal line joins the diagonals (see Figure 2).

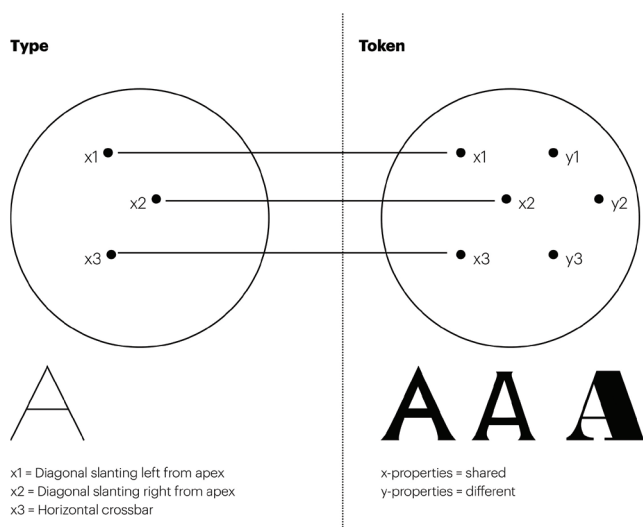


Figure 2. Type/token ratio in letters

While tokens will generally adhere to this, there will be additional characteristics in each actual embodied token that are not essential to the recognition of the type, such as weighted strokes, serifs, and variations in line quality.⁶

It does not take lengthy reflection to realize that this discussion of type/token relationship is an incomplete account of the embodiment of a letter symbol. There are and have been many 'types' of 'A', both diachronically (and many historical versions of 'A' would not be recognized today), as well as synchronically — the uppercase 'A' and lowercase roman 'a' and italic 'a' (see Figure 3)

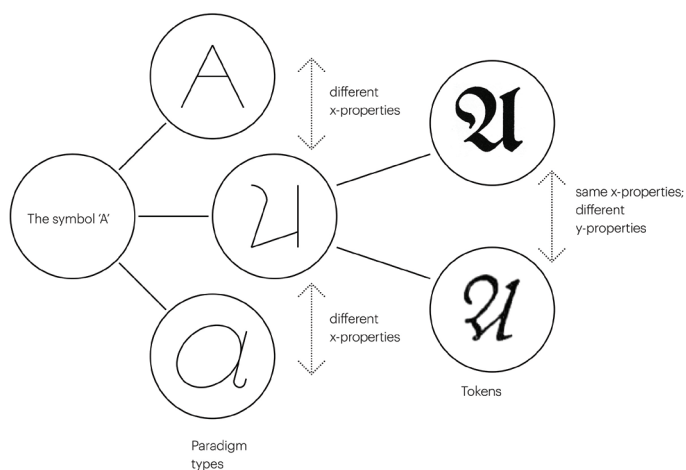


Figure 3. Symbol, type, token

These synchronically co-existing types are not simply ‘graphetic’ variants (akin to the subtleties of variation across individuals’ handwritings), but established paradigms. Admittedly, such paradigms are soft edged — the result of a ‘composite photograph’ of prior tokens, as Peirce might say. Yet, they are sufficiently synchronically established to provide the model that each new token approximates. Therefore, the letter, as symbol, is a sheer abstraction — its realization as a token is mediated by a paradigm type.

Let us call those properties pertinent to the recognition of the type *x-properties*, and those properties of the token that are not essential to the type, *y-properties*. In so far as letters function in writing systems, they function at the level of *x-properties*: what matters is the recognition of the type, not the specifics of the token’s substance. But *y-properties* allow letters, even when used within an orthography, to partake in extra-orthographic semioses. Figure 3 shows three schematic renderings of types of ⟨A⟩: on the top a roman uppercase, at the bottom an italic, and in the middle a now more or less defunct ‘u’-like ⟨A⟩ that once served as the paradigm for German Fraktur and Irish typefaces. Each of these paradigm types of the same letter has different *x-properties*. On the right we see two tokens of the ‘u’-like type (German above, Irish below), which generally share the same *x-properties*, but are stylistically different due to differences in *y-properties* (e.g. the German ⟨A⟩ has heavier strokes).

Such *y-properties* are rarely independent to each token — usually a token embodies a type according to a particular stylistic program, such that many *y-properties* of an individual token are shared by a full alphabetical set. Figure 4 shows two Fraktur characters (⟨A⟩ and ⟨P⟩) which differ in *x-properties*, but share the following *y-properties* commonly found in Fraktur typefaces: vertical stress, ‘broken’ curves, and ‘schnörkel’ flourishes.

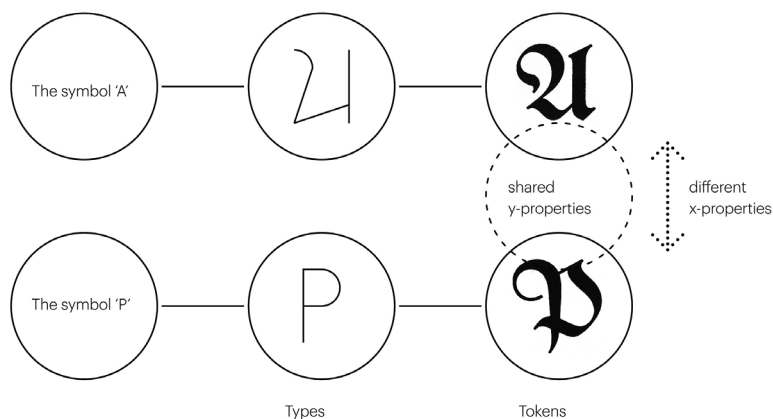


Figure 4. Shared *y-properties*; different *x-properties*

In this way, we can see that *y-properties*, although often more nebulous than *x-properties*, can also be analyzed into sub-units. In section four we will see that Griffin has a tendency to

mask x-properties with a superabundance of y-properties, and that sometimes he even isolates and shows y-properties independent of x-properties.

3. The socio-semiotics of illegibility

One approach often taken in the analysis of the visual semiotics of letterforms is to attribute semantic connotations to stylistic features (y-properties).⁷ Perhaps Griffin's tentacle-like lettering could be said to connote a certain atmosphere or tactile experience, and certainly they convey the visual distortions produced by hallucinogenic drugs. However, as Jurgen Spitzmüller (2012) has argued, we should avoid the temptation to move from such an observation to an attempt to establish general principles about how specific aspects of letterforms convey meaning. The extra-orthographic meanings attributed to graphic aspects of lettering are established in particular social contexts, and therefore

it does not make sense to set up a context-abstract 'grammar' of visual elements or to look for distinctive semantic characteristics of specific graphic features. Due to the dynamic nature of graphic elements, such attempts are bound to fail. (Spitzmüller 2012: 258)

Instead, Spitzmüller proposes that we investigate 'the socio-semiotic values attributed to given graphic elements [and] the actual use of such elements'.

In a short span of time, the style developed by the psychedelic poster designers was co-opted and diluted by mainstream consumer culture and advertising (Heller 2002: 16). Yet, initially the posters were targeted at a very specific community — the youthful counterculture concentrated in the Haight-Ashbury area of San Francisco as well as the students of Berkeley campus (Peterson 2002: 311). As densely-populated and pedestrianized areas, posters and handbills were the appropriate media for communicating with this audience (Terry 2017: 48). As Scott Montgomery (2012: 366) has put it, 'within the matrix of the San Francisco counterculture, there [was] a close relationship between psychedelic style and countercultural self-identification'. Therefore, the interesting question in relation to the lettering used on psychedelic posters is not simply how is it that styles (or aspects) of letters convey meaning, but rather how did the particular lettering strategies used in psychedelic posters communicate with this group? Or, in Spitzmüller's terminology, what were the *graphic means* of the psychedelic countercultural *graphic ideology*?

One of the things most frequently noted by design historians about the lettering of psychedelic posters — particularly, but by no means exclusively, those of Griffin — is that they are difficult to decipher, and 'only legible to the initiated' (Montgomery 2012: 367). For example,

Philip Meggs, in *History of Graphic Design* (2012: 449), notes that 'respectable intelligent businessmen were unable to comprehend the lettering [...] yet they communicated well enough [...] with a younger generation who deciphered, rather than read, the message'.⁸ Moscoso has directly stated that this use of lettering to distinguish audiences was intentional — the posters asked their viewers 'can you read this? are you hip?' (in Rudick 2015).

What is clear then, is that such highly-stylized letters, though difficult to read, are nonetheless serving a communicative function — they not only target a particular audience, but exclude another, and thereby partake in the construction of the counterculture identity as defined in opposition to the 'straight' mainstream culture. To borrow Spitzmüller's words, designers who use this approach in their lettering 'presuppose that the anticipated addressees share their graphic knowledge and that they understand their semiotic hints' (268).

The above explains the function of illegibility in psychedelic posters, and in this regard psychedelic poster design shares characteristics with other subcultures in which the stylization of letterforms is an integral aspect of the visual expression and embodiment of that identity. Such 'alphabetical identities', as they might be called, include the Death Metal music scene (Van der Velden 2007), in which many band logos are heavily ornamented to the point of illegibility, as well as various graffiti subcultures including New York hip hop graffiti, São Paulo's *pixação* (Chastanet 2007), and Californian-Mexican cholo graffiti (Chastanet 2009).

4. Griffin's aesthetic idiolect

In section one we saw how turn-of-the-century American commercial and vernacular graphic design and Wild West themes were initially central to psychedelic poster design. Griffin's first psychedelic posters were very much in this mode — imagery of gold prospectors and Native Americans populate compositional structures appropriated from turn-of-the-century posters and product labels, in a kaleidoscopic carnivalesque. His lettering in 1966 and early 1967, similarly, involves combinations of multiple nineteenth-century lettering styles interpreted in a fluid and organic manner.

By 1968, these themes receded, as Griffin synthesized these and other influences and developed a unique repertoire of imagery and style of highly-ornamented letters. Unlike Wilson's lettering, Griffin's style was not easily adopted by others (although Kelley and Mouse at times used a simplified version of his style).

As Griffin's letters were idiosyncratic, the labor involved in decoding them cannot simply be explained as involving subcultural graphic shibboleths deployed and read by all members of the community, as could be said of certain graffiti cultures. Griffin — unlike a cholo or *pixação* tagger — was not partaking in a generally-adopted style, but following his own creative path in lettering. While the illegibility-as-such of his letters established rapport with the intended

audience, decoding Griffin's lettering requires familiarity with this individual artist's *oeuvre*. For this reason, they require assessment in terms of *aesthetic signification*, in the precise sense defined by Eco:

an aesthetic text involves a very peculiar labor, i.e. a particular *manipulation of the expression* [...] this manipulation of the expression releases [...] a *reassessment of the content* [...] producing an idiosyncratic and highly original instance of sign-function. (Eco 1976: 261)

While Eco was primarily discussing literature, we can apply this to other artforms, including *the art of lettering*. To do so, we must first distinguish the *content of writing* from the *content of the art of lettering*.

In so far as tokens operate within a writing system, we generally pass immediately to the linguistic content encoded in letter-tokens. But the art of lettering (as opposed to the everyday use of letters in writing) is one of formal developments in token design, such that the token is the *expression*, yet the *content* is the paradigm type that the token embodies. To quote Eco again,

A violation of norms on both the expression and the content plane obliges one to reconsider their correlation [...] In this way, text becomes self-focusing: it directs the attention of the addressees primarily to *its own shape*. (Eco 1976: 264)

In the art of lettering, 'shape' is very literal. Griffin's mature style of lettering (prevalent from 1968) involves a superabundance of *y*-properties irrelevant to (and an obstacle to recognition of) the type (see Figure 5).

The spiked stems and split baselines of Tuscan are extended into meandering tendrils of equal weight and length to the core strokes of the letterforms, which are themselves mutated into angular structures, thereby undermining the distinctive differences of each type. Frequently, a sharply-receding central perspectival projection further undermines each letter's distinctiveness by bonding the entire string of tokens into a solid three-dimensional unit. This excess of *y*-properties demands a reader willing to decode the type from the token; and this process brings to the reader's attention the normally unquestioned and invisible process of type recognition. We are dealing with an 'ambiguous and self-focusing text' (Eco 1976: 262).

Griffin's lettering, therefore, *anticipates* or *presupposes* an engaged reader familiar with his *aesthetic idiolect* — an addressee who will labor for the *aesthetic enjoyment* found in exploration of the sub-codes at work in the expression. Decoding the lettering — finding the types within the highly-ornamented tokens — is a game established by Griffin that the viewer enters.

Griffin was very conscious of the game-like nature of decoding. In the 1968 masthead to the alternative magazine, *Promethean Enterprises* (Figure 5, bottom), we encounter what at first appears to be lettering in Griffin's mature style, with the usual whiplashing mesh of tenta-

cles and three-dimensional projection. Its position at the top of the magazine cover indicates that it must be a masthead, and so the name of the publication is anticipated. Yet, close scrutiny reveals that the 'lettering' in questions is in fact a gibberish of *pseudo letters* — the game of decoding is only completed upon the reader's realization that there are no types to be revealed beneath the encasement of y-properties.⁹



1972



1969



1968

Figure 5. Griffin's aesthetic idiolect.

No embodied token can perfectly reproduce a paradigm and a paradigm alone. Every token is the result of specific events and decisions, and therefore even the most schematic renderings of x-properties (such as the skeletal representations of paradigm types shown in

figures two to four) carry their own y-properties. It would also seem natural to assume that y-properties without x-properties should also be impossible — one cannot stylize a letter without a letter being present — but Griffin provides counter evidence.

Griffin's most sustained interrogation of the visual semiotics of writing occurs in his 1972 comic book, *Man from Utopia*. Following several pages of ambiguous imagery — in which spermatozoa and mute speech bubbles swim and swarm in amniotic fluid and vulvic folds — the following occurs: two pages of what appears to be text, presented in two columns subdivided into paragraph-like blocks, with additional seeming title and caption areas. The 'text' in question is in fact a series of up-and-down zigzagging lines. Its spatial arrangement and general pattern allows it to be recognized as writing, however it is writing in a pre-formed *in utero* state — the meaning potential of textual distribution (layout) has been formed, but not yet the graphically- and communicatively-precise elements of the alphabet.

After several more pages the 'story' resumes. This time, however, the 'text' has developed. No longer simple zigzags, the meaningless textual pattern now features (somewhat) more clearly-differentiated shapes, and (*significantly*) has developed the y-properties of Fraktur blackletter — vertical emphasis, forty-five-degree angles, broken curves — and even umlauts, yet still no discernible letters. As we know, Fraktur is associated with German national identity, and therefore can, and has, been associated with Nazism.¹⁰ Griffin exploits this connotation, and 'illustrates' his text with warmongering horses and eyeballs garbed in galea and Stahlhelm, bombarded by cannonballs and spermatozoa careening in chaotic orbit around a central swastika.

Yet, on the next spread the associations are different. The still Fraktur-styled pseudo-text is now complemented on the verso page by a title reading 'Passionetta' rendered in Griffin's signature style, accompanied by an image of a dagger and heart garlanded with roses and wrapped in a ribbon reading 'Madre'. Blackletter is also deeply ingrained in Mexico (Paoli 2007), and in this context can connote gravitas and tradition. These are precisely the connotations the y-properties exploit on this and the recto page, upon which a skeletal Virgin Mary with a labial hood and ovular halo appears.

What is happening? What Griffin has done here is, firstly, to isolate formal qualities of styles of letter, independent of letterforms and, secondly, to show that these formal properties do not inherently carry semantic values. Rather, in his own explorative way, Griffin confirms and enacts the analysis of Spitzmüller (albeit forty years in advance): styles of letter come to mean what that mean through cultural association.

5. Image as (illegible) text

The subject of this article is Griffin's approach to lettering. However, some points can be made in relation to Griffin's use of imagery here, in so far as his pictorial strategies relate to his

strategies in lettering. As a comic-book artist and poster designer, for Griffin text and image are not binarily opposed. This, of course, is not unique to Griffin. As David Scott has shown,

[in posters] when text and image meet on the same sheet of paper [...] they tend, in a process of mutual contamination [...] to borrow from each other elements of structure and articulation. So the text, whose semiotic status is primarily symbolic and arbitrary, begins to change into an icon, that is an image which, benefiting from a certain spatial liberation, tends to reproduce in part the form of its object. On the other hand, the image begins to become fragmented to facilitate a more logical or syntactical disposition of the spatial elements that constitute it. (Scott 2010: 13)

Griffin's earlier posters show a preoccupation with legible images with fixed symbolic meanings, such as heraldry and the motifs of US currency (McClennan 2002: 18). One of the ways in which Griffin blurs the distinction between text and image in his earlier psychedelic posters is through the use of rebus signification, wherein the object depicted does not function as a simple icon, but instead stands for the phonetic value of the name of the object (Harris 1986: 32–34). Griffin's 'Goldrush' poster of 1967 features a central image of a Native American man smoking a joint sitting in a large pot with wings. The rebus/pun is clear: the poster is not about flying receptacles, but rather the 'pot' is to be read for its sound value — 'pot' being American vernacular for cannabis, appropriately winged in order to get 'high' (Medeiros 2001: 75).

Griffin's approach to textual content is unusual in its pursuit of illegibility and its, at times, complete meaninglessness. In his mature style, just as his lettering becomes increasingly ambiguous so too does his imagery. By 1968 he had developed his own symbolic-iconic repertoire — including flying eyeballs, beetles, hearts, skulls, snakes, Hopi masks and reproductive organs (often presented as graphic puns such that skulls become phalluses or the sun becomes an ovum, as in his design for the Grateful Dead album *Aoxomoxoa*). The placement and repetition of these motifs suggests that they should not simply be viewed as icons, but *read* as legible symbols. However, much like in his pseudo letters, a fixed signified is suspended. In a manner somewhat akin to Belgian surrealist Paul Delvaux — who appropriated the appearance of the symbolism of academic painting, yet evaded final signifieds¹¹ — Griffin apes the look of unambiguous symbolism in pursuit of ambiguity.

Conclusion

Steven Heller (2002: 71) has argued that Griffin was 'among the most innovative — and visionary — of all the underground letterers'. Griffin's visionary innovation resides not simply in the daring originality of his letterforms, but in his experimentation with the communica-

tive potential of the alphabet. Griffin does not simply knowledgeably exploit the connotative potential of styles of letter, but tests and plays with this potential — as his modulation of the connotations of Fraktur (from Nazi and destructive, to Mexican and traditional) across the pages of *Man From Utopia* demonstrates. He does not simply deploy a complex style of letter in order to communicate with a community with a specific graphic ideology and exclude another; but, with great wit, Griffin metalinguistically comments upon this phenomenon by pushing it to the extreme through the use of pseudo letters.

In recent years semioticians and sociolinguists have begun to pay more attention to how language functions in its graphic manifestation. But this is a new approach (or several new approaches), not a new area of study. Palaeographers, printing historians and typography theorists have long studied this subject. And that is not all. This investigation into Griffin's lettering shows that for those of us interested in the semiotics of graphically-embodied language, we should take seriously (as fellow investigators rather than objects of study) those who have investigated this topic for the longest time — that is, practitioners of typography, calligraphy and lettering.

NOTES

1 See Binder (2010: 6), Glaser (2005: 7), Montgomery (2012: 370), and Owen and Dickson (1999: 20–28). It should also be noted that the contemporaneous English psychedelic designers were heavily influenced by Art Nouveau (Miles 2005: 105).

2 Mouse and Kelley at times directly appropriated imagery from Czech Art Nouveau poster designer, Alphonse Mucha (Owen and Dickson 1999: 22).

3 For the history of nineteenth-century display typefaces, see Gray (1938).

4 The influence of cholo lettering on Griffin is overtly graphically evident for those familiar with this style. Griffin's most explicit and direct interpretation of the cholo letter occurs in a later work, a 1980 album cover for the group Rank Strangers, but is also evident throughout his lettering from 1968 onward. For discussion of the influence of cholo on Griffin, see Heller (2009).

5 For a more detailed account of the semiotics of the letter, see Fuller (2014).

6 In fact, as the 'A' in the Samsung logo demonstrates owing to its lack of horizontal, not all properties of the type need be present for the token to be recognized, with sufficient contextual information.

7 This is the approach taken by Van Leeuwen (2004, 2005). Van Leeuwen claims to locate 'distinctive features' (analogous to those of phonetics) with 'meaning potential', yet nevertheless attributes semantic values to particular graphic forms.

8 This observation was also made in contemporary sources. For citations of contemporary sources, see Terry (2017).

9 Griffin first used pseudo letters in a 1967 poster co-designed with Moscoso, and again in a 1969 poster advertising a Van Morrison concert at the Avalon Ballroom. Pseudo letters can be found throughout his comic book work, for example in issue three of underground comic *Zap*. Alton Kelley also used an excellent pseudo letter in a 1970 poster for the Fillmore West.

10 Cf. Newton (2003), Spitzmüller (2012), and Willberg (1998).

11 For a detailed study of Delvaux see Scott (1992).

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