Making Connections 02

Introduction—

A diagram is a graphic representation of a structure, situation or process.

Diagrams can depict the anatomy of a creature (or type), the hierarchy of a corporation, or the flow of ideas.

Diagrams allow us to see visual relationships that would not be evident in a straight list of verbal or numerical data. (i. e. charts and graphs)

Diagrams often function to illuminate and explain complex ideas, playing a pivotal role in the service of information architecture. Making complex and copious amounts of data accessible and readable is a graphic designer's job.

Numerical data is easily represented on a chart or a graph, but how do you depict, for instance, a list of visual influences?

You will design a diagram that depicts subjective data, a facet of your own personal history, into a systematic visual expression.

This project extends the idea networks expressed as centralized, decentralized, or distributed (connect the dots).

Task—

Identify a facet of your life that expresses who you are: the places you have lived or travelled, your evolving taste in music, schedule during a busy workweek, or the elements in your apartment.

Gather together all the content to be included in your diagram. Study the relationships among the elements. Will they be arranged chronologically? Geographically? Do elements overlap or conflict with each other?

Create a graphic language (points, lines, boxes, curves, colors) and a spatial organization for your data. Allow form, color, and configuration to grow out of the hierarchy and nature of the content. Include a key or legend in your design.

Editorial challenge—

Author the information (components). This project asks you to provide information using yourself as a subject—a relatively easy thing to research. Professionally, you could be asked to design information you know little to nothing about. You may need to do research on your own to more intelligently design with provided information, or better yet, be asked to both author and design a given project. In the latter case, you can charge much more money having to wear two different hats!

Basic directions you can take in the authorship of your personal history:

• structure
• situation
• process
• journey (from your home to the school)*
• description

Once you have gathered enough data on the *[structure-situation-process-journey-description]* you wish to make visual, assign visual form to the components.

Design challenge—

1. create and assign a visual reference to the components
2. depict relationships and overlapping influences
3. arrange the data

Specifications—

Include a legend in your design…. An explanation of the symbolism you have employed, like a map. (i.e. ∆ = online PS class; = classes taught on a Mac; blue = daytime jobs both teaching and non-teaching; purple = night classes)

Work in a large format 11 x 17 or 12 X 18 so you can have it printed in its final version. Use InDesign if you feel comfortable enough with the interface; Illustrator is fine, too. Consider your printing situation if designing with a bleed!

Include your name | © | date. After all, it is about you.

It's okay to use images in a limited way, window dressing rather than the main scenery; the garnish on the edge of the plate that nobody eats but still looks pretty, not the featured entrée.

It's okay to show off some of your Illustrator and Photoshop skills as tools in the development of visualizing a facet of your life. Feel free to include the use of shape tools and blending modes, transparencies and tonal changes, pathfinder effects, etc.

Up to 3 fonts of your choice are okay, as are boxes, rules, shapes, colors, etc.

Examples—

- Every object found underneath the furniture of your apartment depicted as a map of the apartment diagramming the spaces where said items were found.
- Schedule of a busy college student showing their daily routine.
- Job history charting time spent at the job, job location, duties, perks, hazards, pay, benefits, etc.
- Musical experiences and influences of an international student.
    i.   influences: classical, electronic, ethnic/folk, rock (text)
    ii. continents: asia, north america, south america, europe, australia (color dots)
    iii. countries: south africa, united states, turkey, cypress, egypt, japan, south korea (concentric targets)

*The following exercise illustrates a journey typographically (from your home to the university). A journey is a kind of process. You may use this as a basis for your design.
http://www.typographicdesign4e.com/project_directional_poster.html