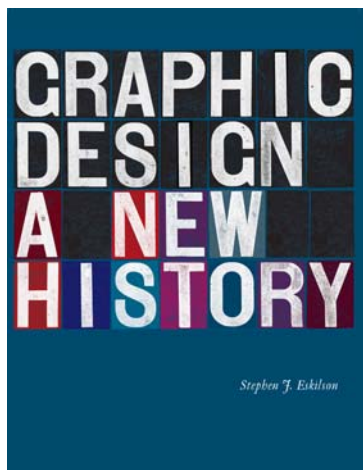


**Graphic Design: A New History** / Stephen J. Eskilson.--New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, October 2007.--464 p.: ill.--ISBN-13: 978-0-300-12011-0 (cl. alk., paper): \$65.00.



Eskilson, associate professor, Art Department, Eastern Illinois University, begins this survey with a swift, fifteen-page review from Gutenberg through early developments in typography up to the late nineteenth-century. Each of the following ten chapters highlights stylistic movements of each era, by examining the work of prominent designers. Chapter one, "Art Nouveau," treats the major figures, including William Morris, Jules Cheret, Alphonse Mucha, William Bradley, Aubrey Beardsley and the Beggarstaff Brothers. The other chapters cover the movements of Modernism, Constructivism, the Bauhaus, International Style, and post-modernism and their participants. The profiles are concise and are extensively illustrated.

Eskilson draws parallels between graphic design and avant-garde developments in the fine arts, devoting discussion to Dada, Cubism, De Stijl and architectural movements. He provides extensive treatment of the propaganda art of all sides of World War I and II. Sidebars on pertinent topics such as photography, the influence of Japanese prints, photomontage, and the fashion photography of Conde Nast appear throughout. Later chapters attempt to bring coherence to more recent times. Eskilson examines the influence of the concepts of post-modernism on graphic design, including the multi-contextual de-construction of type, two dimensional surface, and unified compositional structure. He also brings fresh analysis to design in the innovative areas of web design, motion graphics, and digital entertainment.

Here we have a rich visual survey that is a substantial contribution to the field of design history. The excellent and extensive illustrations provide a fine introduction to the epics and heroes of graphic design. It will be of most use to undergraduates in graphic design, and art history, as well as the advanced general reader. The standard text is *Meggs' History of Graphic Design* by Philip B. Meggs and Alston W. Purvis (Somerset, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.), now in its fourth edition, but *Graphic Design: A New History* is a worthy alternative. The work contains 480 illustrations, mostly in color; many are full or half page and none are smaller than quarter page. The work also includes a brief glossary, a bibliography of 218 entries, an index, and an online student and teacher guide at <http://yalepress.yale.edu/yupbooks/eskilson/index.asp>.

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