



“The Typographer’s Manifesto” by Trace  
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### The Typographer's Manifesto

The dot on the top of an “i” is called a tittle. This microscopic smudge is a bolt holding the alphabet together. It levitates over the head of everyone’s second-favorite vowel and bears the critical responsibility of distinguishing a lowercase “i” from a lowercase “l”. Too tight of a tittle and the text will feel chaotic; too distant of a tittle and the letters will appear insecure. It’s a micrometer difference -- but it matters to me.

I am a fanatical font-isseur and a fierce opponent of the Times New Roman-12 point standard. I could spend hours silently admiring the distinct mountains and valleys each font molds a line of text into; no two are alike, like strands of typographical DNA. I’m captivated by the sensualness of serifs and the curvature of scripts while simultaneously hesitant of a sans-serif’s simplicity. Yet, nothing seems to pacify me like the cerebral nature of a monotype or an italic’s overwhelming taciturnity.

This passion stems from my handwriting, a kind of hieroglyphic that people can rarely decipher. I think it has something to do with my aggressively crossed T’s, inconsistently looped Y’s, and the cursive-print fusion that my writing has evolved into. I grew addicted to exploring the naturally occurring nuances of longhand and have since shifted my focus to the endless minutiae accessible on “dafont.com”.

It’s at this cellular level that I get lost in language. Through linguistic meiosis, the fonts shape into letters, the letters combine into words, and the words lead to discovery. In middle school, my greatest discoveries came from shows like *Sherlock* and *Arrested Development*. I’d watch, listen, and record like an astronomer mapping the sky -- writing down words that mystified me, like “anesthetize”, “ignominious”, and “elucidate.” I observed, measured, and tested vocabulary, always eager to incorporate the newest specimen into my writing.

It's as a storyteller that I've always been most infected by fonts. Even the best stories will grow septic in the default Arial setting. Injecting the right typeface can bring color to the palest of narratives and revive pulseless plots. For me, the elegance and subtle rigidity of Droid Serif flawlessly tranquilizes an explosive family drama, and Courier's inflexibility is consistently prescribed to complement the coldness of a satirical whodunnit.

But beyond stories, handwriting, and language, fonts make up the lens I experience life through. With this major chapter of my life nearing its denouement, I've begun reflecting on the telling of my own story rather than those of fictitious figments. I like to think that my life would make a gripping New York Times bestseller, complete with a foreword by Stephen King or my mom. I've performed at the world's largest outdoor theatre, held an Oklahoma swimming record, and worked as the campaign manager for a state congressional bid. My life has twisted and turned like a Sophoclean drama, and to write it in Times New Roman would be like teaching genetics without the D, the N, or the A. My story deserves a mosaic of fonts -- switching between types mid-chapter or mid-sentence. It deserves passages in Droid Serif and chapters in Calibri. It deserves sentences in Roboto and paragraphs in Century Gothic.

Despite my taste for typography, the English language will someday go extinct. When it does, and my auto-biography is discovered stuffed away in a dusty attic somewhere, linguists will find my story in the fonts, not the translation. The typographical mountains and valleys will morph the blobs of ink into moving images, and the transitions between Comic Sans and Cambria will reveal the complex workings of my mind. The words may fail, but the typeface will speak. So for my future's sake: the serifs must be perfect, the spacing should be proper, and the tittles that decorate each "i" should be just right.