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GRA 491 Graphic Design Portfolio

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8-2 Final Project: Professional Reflection

While working on my projects throughout this course I chose to focus more of my print portfolio around graphic design more so than Animation. The challenges I faced a lot especially with my magazine ads and covers came down to layout and readability, whether it be the font that I chose, or the color schemes I worked with along with the images I chose for the projects. For example, with the Amethyst Bay Magazine Ad and the Banner I struggled with layout and readability. I wanted to stay true to the color scheme of the project, but with such a busy background and staying true to the colors within the background posed some issues for me. Some of the feedback I received for my initial cover was to remove or select a different color for the font choice because the yellow used was distracting and visually hard to read on the rocky background. There was just too much going on. As I worked on those changes I kept in mind to find something to make the words on the page stand out more, use bolder text, or a different color for text as this will help with readability.

This goes for the Pop Culture Magazine ads. I had an issue with some of the text being hard to read on a grainy background and a brown opacity background with yellow text was difficult to read. I made the change and switched it around and added a curved edge to the ends of where the text lies and it changed the whole setting and style of design for the better. Having the collaboration with students and instructors is vital because it allows you to try new things and adapt to different structures that are not your own when it comes to formatting or designing. Everyone has their own methods and styles as to how they work and create their art. By collaborating with others, it not only allows for communication, but increases critical thinking and adaptability. Being open to have work critiqued by peers is something that I know will happen in the professional world. The work that is critiqued can hold some value in how to make

a project flow more efficiently and can bring more quality to the design which is an important part of professional and personal growth. Another critique I received for the Bedeviled project in particular was to maybe apply a glow in the background of some of the text to allow the words on the page read better. I took that idea and ran with it creating a neon glow behind the text for bedeviled to add a bit of flare and intrigue. I wanted something to capture the meaning behind the word, which I feel presented well in the long run. This one definitely showed some creativity and, in the end, turned out how I envisioned it.

I have learned so much throughout this portfolio class, and all the other courses I've taken here at Southern New Hampshire University. I have learned that there are programs I feel more comfortable in than others. I have also learned that it is okay to make mistakes while working through some of these many different programs because the more mistakes you make now the more you learn and grow from them. I will keep this with me as I enter the professional world of design.

The takeaway from All of the courses I've experienced is to be more open to critiques as they can help improve the quality of work, I have learned that it is okay to rework projects that you aren't 100 percent about and that sometimes creative blocks are definitely a thing so taking some time away from the computer and drafting in a sketchbook or taking a drive through town to gain inspiration can really help with creative flow and functionality and this will be one of the many practices I will be doing because it is important to find a healthy balance of creativity and analytical thinking. I also found that going to the library or Barns and Noble really helped rejuvenate some creativeness while looking at some of the artwork on book covers or looking through illustrations in children's books helped gain a bit more perspective.

Some of the goals I have for my professional life is to work more on time management. I struggle with this sometimes, especially when I have creative blocks and struggle to come up with new design ideas. Things I have done to help with time management is to make a journal and write down what I want to complete that day. Sometimes when I am in a funk I take on new projects to help come up with a design. I can work on time management and creative blocks by doing the not so fun project first to get it done, or figure out when I am more productive. I have a very analytical brain so creativity doesn't really spark until evenings for me. What I can do is schedule my work days to take on analytical tasks in the morning when my brain is more set to structure and then schedule afternoons for creativity to ensure I am making due with my time and still getting the stimulation I need to continue to work efficiently. Other things I can put in place is to get outside more and explore what is around me to help break free from creative blocks.

The other big goal for me is to eventually do something with illustration and animation. This is where my true passion lies. I am open for different opportunities that do come my way. For now I plan to do some passion projects or freelance work that will help build my portfolio and expand my design skills to something more specific down the road.

The skills I have acquired over the past few years has helped me expand and grow my knowledge in the adobe creative cloud software. I have also learned the importance of asking for help when I need it and accepting criticism. Communication plays a large role in most companies, so having good communication and being able to solve problems is key to a successful business. One thing that I know I've heard some graphic designers in the professional world talk about is troubleshooting and research. More often then not learning how to create a powerpoint presentation deck, creating a layout, designing a glow effect, are often things that will need to be learned from on the job. Most of what I hear is "look it up." This is something

I've not only learned from school, but something that I do on the regular when I need an answer to something. I know in the long run I will be a forever student whether that is taking classes on the side or constantly reading up on new trends, new ways of designing, or watching tutorials to continue to move forward in the professional world of graphic design or animation.

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