

Unit 2: Week 1

Positions Through Iterating

Positions

UNIT 2: WEEK 1
POSITIONS THROUGH ITERATING

I chose a 'snippet' from Methods of Translating from Unit 1 as my Positions Through Iterating iterations.

I created a women's magazine cover as a translation of the film *Moulin Rouge*. I did this in the style of *Grazia*. Writing the cover lines for the magazine highlighted the lack of female representation, multiple layers patriarchy, croynism and capitalism.

I have taken this translated magazine cover as iteration 000 and an actual *Grazia* cover as my first iteration in which to further explore female representation.

"Grazia has a highly targeted demographic of 25-45 year old women and more AB profile readers than Vogue and Elle. She's a savvy, affluent, confident, busy and modern woman who actively participates in the world around her."

Iterations 000-009

UNIT 2: WEEK 1
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000

Snippet from Methods of Translating



003

Scan of actual Grazia cover



004

Iteration of Grazia cover remade so I can work with all the elements



005

I didn't know where to start so I just did 'something'. Drawing glasses on already changes how women are framed and draws attention to how serious the cover actually is



006

More silliness to push the extremes of poking fun at the seductive, coquettish, pose, and cheapening the luxury, high end fashion and accessories that have been carefully curated to create a 'representation' that is suppose to appeal to women... Does it appeal more to the genre of magazine as opposed to actual women?



007

Body hair - intentionally to represent what is natural to women that is consistently removed in Western culture to be 'attractive'.



008

Eyes are the window to the soul and used to connect with the reader on the newsstand. Removing the eyes and their implied emotion I thought would change the meaning, but she remains suggestive and provocative through her body language



009

Uncomfortably covering the eyes completely to explore the connection we make with a cover image without eye contact. This has more severe implications are it feels abusive to women somehow

Iterations 010-014

UNIT 2: WEEK 1
POSITIONS THROUGH ITERATING



010

Covering the mouth is hugely uncomfortable, more so than the eyes. Draws attention to what is being said, what isn't being said, who is censored and who is censoring who



011

The body language through the positioning of the arm and hair were suggestive and I wanted to remove this suggestiveness to see what the eyes were saying by cropping in on the face



012

Straightened the head to remove the coquettishness of the pose, removing the sexuality already feels more genuine and truthful and authentic



013

Cropping in closer drawing attention to the mouth that is subtle, but suggestive



014

Cropping in on the eye for unspoken communication but not getting much. Looks a bit lacking in emotion which is interesting in itself. Gillian Anderson is a credible actress and stood up for women's rights on many occasions. Her 'book' on 'what women want' feels like a commercial proposition to remain relevant - I wonder if she agrees?

Iterations 015-021

UNIT 2: WEEK 1
POSITIONS THROUGH ITERATING



015

Substituting the eye for another female eye. The intensity changes and it feels more meaningful and intense, more purposeful for women



016

A male eye, so close there is almost a disconnect to meaning, it feels cold



017

An animal eye. Instantly recognisable as not a human eye, which if you glanced at in a shop and didn't read the cover lines you would think it was a wildlife magazine, its lost all connection to women visually, but highlights the generic typography as being applicable to many magazine covers, therefore not representing women particularly? Other than as 'same'?



018

An eye shape created by individual glass jewels - the inside of a chandelier? Bizarrely this is quite fitting with the cover lines and feels quite feminine in a stereotypical sense; that there is a connection to sparkly things - diamonds, sequins - traditionally assigned to females



019

An architectural eye. This shifts the power dramatically. This makes you feel you are being watched or monitored. The angle evokes a higher power of authority. The railings initially looked a bit like eye lashes, but on realisation they are railing adds another layer of authority, confinement, being contained. Which draws attention to a magazine being a container. A container of words and images that are transient. Or is it containing women? Reining in women? Through repetitive notions masquerading as female ideologies? Handmaid's Tale vibes. Which of course are sinister, patriarchal, all about power, authority, control, constraint, particularly females not having a voice



020

A more feminine eye all be it not a real eye. Represents women as softer, stereotypically pink and a connection to nature and the universe, connoting women as natural and connected to the natural world. BUT not really having any authority, highlighted by its juxtaposition to the previous cover - 018



021

Abstract eye. Long lashes. Gaze averted. Flower type surround. Soft grey/blue. Connecting and representing women as soft, made up and floating islands?

Iterations 022-027

UNIT 2: WEEK 1
POSITIONS THROUGH ITERATING



022

Illustrated multiple eyes on an urban wall. I find this empowering and feminine. The strength to say no to all those eyes and choose one eye that you want to look through, be seen as, I feel there is choice here and I don't feel patronised by pink, eye lashes or other stereotypical female semiotics



023

Eyes but no eyeballs. I thought this would create no connection between the cover and the reader, but strangely there is life in the nose and mouth. Maybe in contradiction to the eyes. Looks a bit phallic. Women are dead behind the eyes? Women are more than just eyes? Communication takes place in all of the face not just one part?



024

Your own eye reflected back on yourself, of yourself. This image represents the complexities of being a woman? The complexities of design? Encourages you to reflect on yourself, your inner self, your true self? Taking the focus away from beauty and the exterior



025

Removing the beauty aspect and magnifying wrinkly skin through an elephant's eye. Challenging magazine covers that are airbrushed, made up, photoshopped, created, iterated and translated into 'beauty' that are 'representations' of women. The elephant's eye is sad. The tone changes



026

An eye formed from the land in a drone shot of the countryside. Connections to nature and the natural world again feel representative of women from a softer angle



027

Rotated image changes significantly from a human shaped eye to a tree 'eye'. or knot. Suddenly the connection to an eye is lost, as is the representation of women?

Iterations 028-030

UNIT 2: WEEK 1
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028

A distorted eye in red.
Really challenging in
colour and composition
and style. Immediately
feels horror movie vibes.
The power of colour and
emotions. Represents
women as dark and
haunted



029

The image was of two
eyes and I really wanted
to get both on the page
as the composition was
really different. I could
only achieve this by
rotating the image which
highlighted the
placement of the cover
lines and how they work
with the cover to create a
totality that has a
stronger representation



030

Rearranged the cover
lines to work better with
the image. Doesn't really
reflect on female
representation. Feels a bit
comedy

Iterations 031-038

UNIT 2: WEEK 1
POSITIONS THROUGH ITERATING



031

I accidentally deleted the image before replacing it and was left with a white page as the cover lines all disappeared on the white background. This drew attention to the content being there, but not being visible. Reminded me of Invisible Women by Perez, and draws attention to how women are invisible in patriarchal and capitalist society

032

I thought about content being there, but not being seen more and created a page with invisible ink that can only be seen with the right equipment. This drew attention to access and knowledge as powerful tools. What is womens access to these tools? Do we live in a world where these tools are primarily created by men for men and do magazines represent this

033

Thinking about accessibility further a cover in braille highlights how some women can't access a printed copy of this magazine and are not represented at all through this

034

Braille as text highlights language, punctuation and spacing of the words. Removing the image and the cover lines rendered as they would be through braille exposes the hierarchy constructed on a magazine cover and draws attention to the impicit and explicit wording and how that is representing women...

035

An iteration / translation / interpretation of the cover lines explicitly stating the impicit meaning and poking fun at the intentions of the cover lines which reduce women to consumers and interested in 'light' articles about the home and desire

036

Opposing 034 and reducing the cover lines down to the minimum number of words, in the style of a telegram from the 1940s. It becomes a list of instructions or derivatives that represent women as primarily consumers of items to make themselves look nice

037

Iterating the telegram as spoken word as it's pre-iteration would have been. The punctuation is drawn out as a word which draws the attention to the lack of punctuation on a cover and how we read the cover lines as little blocks cohesively that jump from one topic to another without questioning it...

038

Magnifying the punctuation changes it's meaning. The text now seems to be shouting to STOP the insepide content representing women as not wanting this triple!

Iterations 039-043

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POSITIONS THROUGH ITERATING

GRAZIA GRAZIA GRAZIA

BUY CLOTHES DOT BUY MAKE UP DOT ROYAL
FAMILY BODIES DOT PW'S HOUSEHOLD CARES
DOT MONEY WORRIES DOT WOMEN'S DESIRES
DOT

GRAZIA GRAZIA GRAZIA



039

Changing the word into the word for the symbol is represents. It doesn't say much about representation, other than maybe we need to start joining the dots to change this?

040

Dots, and of course telegrams, were also pre-iterated by morse code. Changing the DOT words to morse code removes all visual female representation

041

Iteration of a limited number of words to communicate is prevalent in Twitter / X so I iterated the telegram as a Twitter / X post which makes it opinion driven, emotive and uses symbols and words to communicate emotions and feelings as well as tone. It also redacts the content. This represents women more emotionally and strongly, but also feels less authoritative and there for more easily dismissed? Which represents women as irrelevant and to be ignored. This draws attention to the power of printed cover lines in the context of a magazine. Does this mean that what it is saying about women and how women are represented is subconsciously stronger through print. Bi-weekly covers projecting a consistent representation of women becomes incredibly powerful? Which makes it even more important?



042

Tweeted / X'ed all the cover lines and it loses its authority as a printed material. This speaks volumes about how we subconsciously 'read' a cover ... as well as opening up the debate on print v digital...



043

Re-wrote the cover lines, using the same core content, but removed the bias on consuming and appearance; whilst pushing more feminist issues to the fore

Iterations 044-051

UNIT 2: WEEK 1 POSITIONS THROUGH ITERATING



044

Replaced the image I was in the middle of replacing which draws attention to the centre of the cover and the implicit value and meaning that is derived from this area. The cover lines circle around placing a spotlight on the centre and the dominance of the image and therefore its pose, exterior and facial expressions are representing women explicitly



045

Re-arranged cover lines to work better on the image but doesn't say much about female representation, but does speak about where cover lines are placed (down both sides, sometimes along the bottom) and why they are placed like this - drawing the reader in



046

Placed all the cover lines in the centre - where the attention lands - and made them all the same style - to fit - but also removes hierarchy from cover lines which makes them more equal. Does this make the representation of women more equal?



047

Made all cover lines the same size. This again highlights lack of punctuation and also how styling magnifies or reduces the value of some words. Does this make these words more implicit (mainly the consumption encouragement and stereotypical 'interest' areas)



048

Without punctuation you would read across so I slide the second column flush to the first so the lines read make nonsense. The only lines to survive in tact are the most reductive to female representation "Gillian Anderson on her mission to discover what women want in bed"



049

I thought 047 was how a screen reader would read the content so I put it through a screen reader, but it read in two columns, which I had been led to believe wasn't a possibility. Also it was a male voice in the style of the X Factor host which made the whole thing commical and reduced female representation to tatters



050

The lack of punctuation led the screen reader to phrase the content as above. Reducing the mast head to mere copy and highlighting 'chores' representing women in a very traditional sense!



051

On closer listening he doesn't punctuate at all and I had automatically put line space and spaces between words. So I removed these. I used the page traditionally as reading from the top (!) but I had to place all but the first line diagonally to fit them on which challenges the traditional design of magazine covers. What does this say about representation?

Iterations 052-053

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052

I put this version back through the screen reader which came out as gobbley di goop and highlights one word YELLOW that didn't originally exist. Female representation as complex?



053

Created the cover lines as a continuous line and ignored conventions and made them follow on from where the last one was to keep it on the page. This was weird, but then it felt it represented women as complex and the wider systems of complexity involved in the process and industry

Iterations 054-061

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054

Changed the image to a female face again to see how this felt. Reflects the lack of diversity in the original cover. The female represents strength and beauty without being sexual or suggestive which to me is a stronger and more authentic representation of women



055

Replaced the masthead which makes the whole more commercial, but I think the image maintains its integrity



056

Adjusted the cover lines to fit under the masthead. UNDER. MAST(er)head. Master. Male. Top of the page. Authority, The connotations of the masthead dominates the narrative? Implicit representation?



057

Grazia is translated as Grace. Iteration of Grace rather than Grazia. Grace as in beauty? Grace as in graceful? Grace as to give grace? To say Grace? To be thankful? To thank? Submissive?



058

Remove the G highlights highlight race and female representation or lack of diverse female representation? Highlight representation of race in the cover lines which is actually comparatively quite good.



059

Changing the G to an F brings focus on the face on magazine covers, explicitly and implicitly spoken here. Women are represented by their face? Highlight the cover lines that are connected to appearance or consumption of products for appearance which is dominant and repetitive



060

Reduced all cover lines their subject matter and changed the masthead to space to explore the space that is inhabited by the representation within the cover. Again an abundance on appearance and consumption, but also some credible topics of economy, politics, culture and social issues which is a nice contradiction



061

Removing the core cover lines exposes the subject matter that is representing women in this instance. A split between visually led stories and more value on 'the world around her'

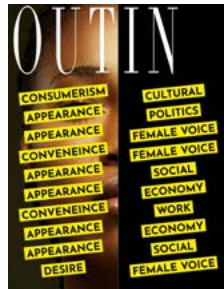
Iterations 062-067

UNIT 2: WEEK 1
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062

Splitting the cover lines into two categories. And enlarging both. Confining the image to the half that speaks to appearance and how you look and separating out the values



063

Splitting the lists of female representation to things that are on the outside and things that are on the inside and how these contradict / juxtapose one another



064

The authentic content is hidden under the appearance of fashion, beauty and stereotypical 'female' cover lines. It's like it's skin. The cover being the skin of the magazine. The glossy outside that cares about it's appearance and projection; the content inside being the meaty bit. The magazine cover directly reflects itself through layout, language and values



065

Replacing the image with a Norval Morrisseau, a Canadian artist who painted images in an x-ray fashion where you could simultaneously see what's on the inside as well as the outside. The magazine cover and cover lines are the 'outside' projecting an 'image' but the valued content is 'hidden' inside. Why do females (magazines?) feel they need to represent like this?



066

Iterated the font on the masthead to better represent this notion of a skin, being skin deep, thin, a facade, interface, iteration, construction. creation but allowing the interior to be visualised and let out through the skin starts to challenge this notion?



067

Placing the image within the skin of the masthead to represent the skin but also the inside explicitly through the masthead setting the tone and values of female representation

Iterations 068-075

UNIT 2: WEEK 1
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068

The overwhelmingly dominating representation is appearance, consumption, capitalism, male gaze and convenience all of which are at cost to the female representation. Ironically they masquerade as by women for women. Duplication of these negative representations iterates this implicit notion. Who or what is behind this?



069

Placing the authentic values in a relative size to the negative values to further iterate this implicit culture



070

In reducing the negative representations by 50% leads to the masthead only partially visible, showing the transient nature of skin? What does that mean? Transient nature of magazines? Commercial women's magazines are skin deep?



071

Reducing the negative representations again by 50% makes them less dominant



072

Reducing by 50% again and the values seem to feel more equal challenging the representation of females within the cover



073

Reduced by 50% again the authentic values are now central to the cover and start to highlight a more deep and varied range of female representation



074

Increasing the size of the marginalised value gives them more prominence, pushing them forward



075

Increasing them further so they are stronger

Iterations 076-081

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076

Filling the cover with the varied values brings a different tone and feel to the cover that feels independent and stronger, less patronising and sexual. Feels more like a poster for change - this isn't a good thing. Social constructs of typography and layout?



077

Moving the masthead down to reduce its importance / dominance. Making it a more integral part of the inside?



078

Removed the background and leaving just one of each value, doesn't denote female or male, is more neutral? Representing all?



079

Adding in the original cover line detail to start to flesh them out in a new space



080

Changing the font of Skin to a 'neutral' font (courtesy of Azza Alameddine from the lecture Typographic Neutrality) alters the visual of the word, it feels a bit more connected to beauty products? I read skin more like beauty which wasn't the intention!



081

Created new cover lines that represent the values and women in a stronger, less patronising, less sexual, less stereotypical way

Iterations 082-089

UNIT 2: WEEK 1
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082

Replacing the image of a female face to bring it back to looking like a cover to see how that represents women in the new space of cover lines. It was quite hard to find an image that wasn't sexual, had a tilted head, wasn't pouting, wasn't serious, wasn't sad, wasn't patronising or stereotypical. Not sure this 100% does it



083

Re-configured the cover lines to a more traditional layout for comparison of new cover lines and a female face. It feels like it represents more strength and independence?



084

I wondered how it would sound. Created the 'longest black mass' of each letter as Maarten's does in her study of rhythm in typography to see if I could hear it and what it represented



085

Removed the words to reveal the 'sounds'. I masked them in generic bright pink so I could see them but it was cohesive with the pink on her face so left it and despite it being a stereotypical colour for women, the shapes and juxtaposition doesn't feel patronising



086

Tried them in white with pink so they were clearer and loved the shapes they formed, but I don't feel any rhythm from them



087

Joining some shapes to replicate musical notes to see if that helps with rhythm and representation, but it starts to look like letter forms again that are quite angular. Very unfemale which is interesting...



088

Extending the lines and challenging myself to look beyond the traditions of music phrasing is interesting, but I'm not sure what it's saying



089

The individual long line of 087 was partially like a stave so I put all the 'notes' onto 'staves'. I am still not getting anywhere so I wonder how else I can hear the words

Iterations 090-097

UNIT 2: WEEK 1
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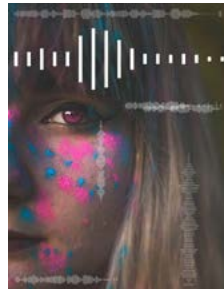
090

Overlaying the sound waves from the screen reader immediately gives flow and nuance to me despite it being a male voice



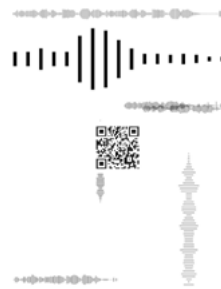
091

Removing the rhythmic notes the sound waves I can start to hear and it feels more feminine. Is that my own bias and connotations of shape (round, soft, flow?)



092

Positioning the waves from what I see visually in them (tear drops, fish swimming along the bottom of the sea, a temple) and the size to further explore what they represent and how that can alter the representation of women



093

Created a Spotify playlist with a song for each sound wave shape. Mortified later I realised most were male artists.
1. I should have thought about FEMALE representation.
2. Highlights lack of choice or over use of male artists on the radio, promoted, in life.



094

Re-created cover lines in a font that represents the song to explore typography styles and representation. This many fonts on one page should not work. This gives a more rounded representation of females with a variety of fonts for a variety of women, better representing individuality



095

Made the whole cover smaller to show a wide margin. Not sure why, just wanted to alter the scale, but not sure this says much, other than obviously Bobbi becomes prominent



096

Left the content small and made the image larger to challenge the proportions of a cover. There is more dominance from the image and this reduces the cover lines importance. Not sure how this effect representation of women yet...



097

Continued to make the image larger and the cover line set smaller. It no longer feels like a cover and all expectation of a cover is gone, and it feels intriguing? On the printer version you can see the imperfections in the skin, which is a truer representation of female skin, but admittedly not particularly joyful to look at highlighting why covers are retouched? Cycles

Iterations 098-104

UNIT 2: WEEK 1
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098

Continued to make the image larger and the cover line set smaller. The text now feels like digital information, which makes the image feel more in the digital space which is an interesting representation of women, as it feels less feminine due to the connotations of tech women being a bit quirky.
STEREOTYPES!!



099

Reminiscent of a QR code I made it a QR code which disconnects the cover and the graphic (QR code), they seem at odds with each other. Females don't feel represented here at all really? QR code links to a mobile version of the cover in the relevant format.



100

Mobile version of the cover returned to print. The shape makes it feel less like a cover, but there is clear connection between the image and the cover lines that suggest this is for women. ??? This highlights our deep rooted connotations of form in that the same image in different proportions looks like a magazine cover



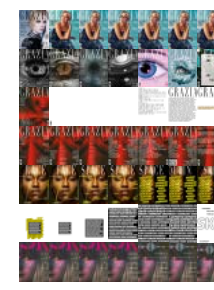
101

Pushing the cover into a digital space should utilise what digital is good at. Digital isn't primarily for static images, so incorporating animation, movement and sound. This starts to produce more of an experience which can represent women in a more rounded and complex way, potentially... Could also do the opposite



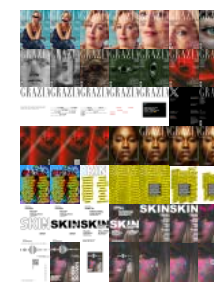
102

Desktop version returned to print highlights format and orientation. I like the forced orientation of the female face which to me challenges stereotypes and what is expected of women in the commercial media space and this is a good thing



103

Print constraints multiples of 8 pages so a summary of 50 covers



104

Print constraints multiples of 8 pages so a summary of 50 covers

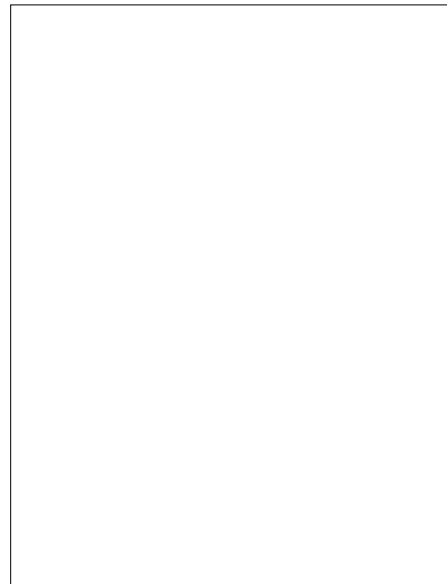
BACK COVER

105

Back cover. Always an ad. White space highlights this.

Key Issues

UNIT 2: WEEK 1
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Eyes

An architectural eye. This shifts the power dramatically. This makes you feel you are being watched or monitored. The angle evokes a higher power of authority. The railings initially looked a bit like eye lashes, but on realisation they are railing adds another layer of authority, confinement, being contained. Which draws attention to a magazine being a container. A container of words and images that are transient. Or is it containing women? Reining in women? Through repetitive notions masquerading as female ideologies? Handmaid's Tale vibes. Which of course are sinister, patriarchal, all about power, authority, control, constraint, particularly females not having a voice.

Accessibility

The blank covers drew attention to female representation in a patriarchal and capitalist society, drawing on Invisible Women by Perez it highlights the invisible labour of women through caring responsibilities. Further highlighted how access and knowledge are powerful tools and how women are discriminated or marginalised by a patriarchal society. Further highlighted disabilities particularly for partially sighted or blind females who can't access a printed magazine's content at all.

Implicit

Implicit representation was prevalent through hierarchy of text. Small text held heavy representational issues (Beauty, Money, Fashion). Arrangement of cover lines down each side draw more attention and dominance to the image that is placed centrally that is sexualised, stereotypical and often the object of the male gaze, despite being masqueraded as positive female role models. Punctuation, phrasing, language, hierarchy and layout all contribute to these implicit representations that are negative to females.

Exterior v Interior

Despite the dominance of consumption, convenience and appearance there are wider representations of women through economy, social, cultural and political themes. These seem to be hidden under 'soft' cover lines that are stereotypical and patronising to women. There is a contradiction between the outward appearance / projection of who a female is and the interior values / issues of the female. It's like a skin. The cover is the skin of the magazine (whose contents has opinion and strong female values and views). Drawing attention to a magazine as a container, a transient container of values and meaning in a given time in space.

Key Issues

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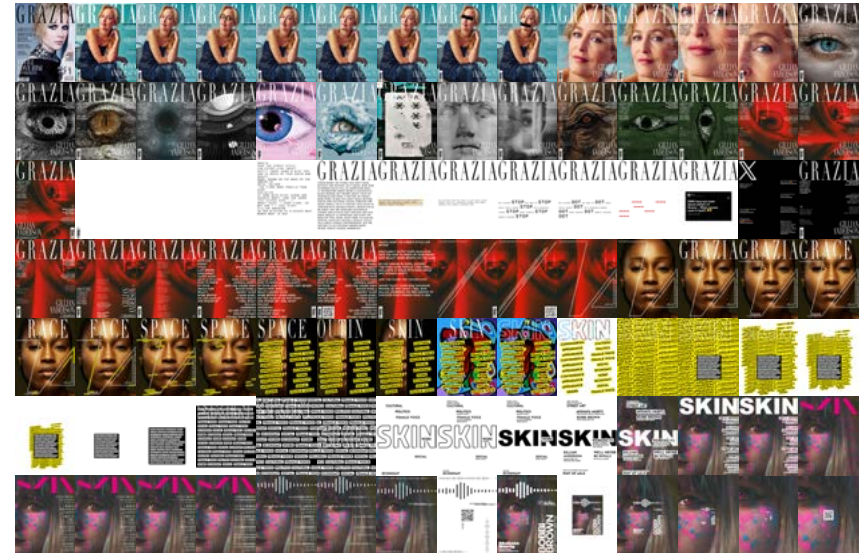
Sound

Female representation can be enhanced by varied sound, it can also be further harmed by the wrong sounds - stereotypical 'female' singers and song would further perpetuate what commercial women's magazines are representing. Sound can also be used to aid accessibility issues, working positively for female representation.



Digital

Raises the print v digital argument. Simple creating a static cover in the digital space initially at least needs redesigning for format. But digital offers what print can't - which is movement, freedom of format, picture quality, video, sound. A more rounded, lived experience. Can this improve female representation in commercial women's magazines?



Sections

It was an interesting observation that as I iterated the covers, they instinctively broke themselves up into sections, just as magazines are broken up into sections. This makes me question the brain and its attention span, or need for a change of pace, that happened instinctively here that is reflective of printed publications flow and pace.

Eye see you

I thought all the communication would be in the eyes, but I found on multiple covers that the body language and other facial features speak as loudly.

Printing

Covers have a different structure to the interior pages as they only appear on the front and never with something next to it. In printing a magazine of covers this becomes clear as cover lines disappear into the gutter highlighting practicalities of magazines design and formats.

Skin tone and representation of skin in printed media

Image resolution needs to be higher so there is less flexibility with image usage

Restriction of a 'page'

How to print economically - this format doesn't fit on an A3 so it had to be reduced to be able to create the format

Finish of paper, cost of paper, glossy v matte, cover stock

Once its printed you can't change it!

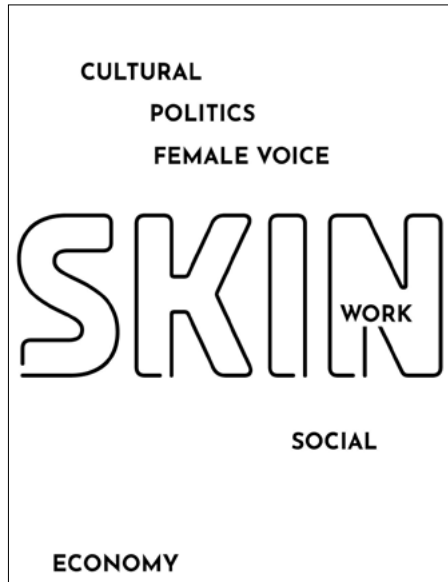
Right choice?

In retrospect this wasn't the best way to publish this project. I stand by it as an experiment to print it in as similar dimensions, stock and pagination to the original, but the tangents and how the ideas flowed would of benefitted from an alternative layout, placing it in a linear row was uncomfortable for the content and the process

Sequential - flick through a magazine, tutor started at the back. Not a good format for a sequence of events.

Crits & Reflections

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Complicated

It was raised how covers are complicated, that I had boiled the cover down to its simplest form, then built it up again. This isn't something I had been aware of. I was surprised by this and it highlighted how immersed in magazines I have been, and am, and how this can blind me to seeing. I am so use to their conventions and practices. It also highlights how far magazine cover conventions have developed and connects, furthers and deepens my exploration of language, punctuation and systems within the cover.

Development

I am going to iterate the digital mobile cover further as I am interested in the digital / print hybridisation / translation / iteration that is current in society and culture. This arose at the end of my 100 iterations and is something I am keen to develop further.

Other areas I could of developed more deeply were hierarchy, punctuation, language, accessibility.