

Handwriting

This is not a page designed to go into any depth on a little-appreciated but still very useful art. We needn't go much further than to acknowledge the way graphology operates, because as that becomes clear it further validates the importance of making correct use of space and symbols on websites. Handwriting analysis assesses people's characteristics by observing the lines produced by brain impulses and recorded in space. The blank paper is perceived as space, and the pen operates in response to the dominant impulses of the person holding it. Writing is as unique as individuals, because no two of us are exactly the same. When the writing hand is lost in an accident, and the writer is forced to use the remaining hand or even a foot to hold the pen, in time the writing ends up just as it was when the dominant arm was driving it.

The first overt understanding of the symbolism of space came from a graphologist. The principles of up, down, left and right are followed in the handwriting just as in much else described on this site. Handwriting brings other dimensions as well, such as pressure, which varies in where it's applied heavily in the stroke, and where relaxed. But this only confirms the same story, because a skilled handwriting analyst will arrive at similar conclusions about a personality from a variety of aspects of the subject's writing. They all compound and build up a picture of the writer.

Graphologists will often use known character typologies to gain an overview of a person's writing. For instance, for the best part of 2,000 years, the study of human character has often incorporated the Four Temperaments of Hippocrates. Another and much newer framework is that of the Four Functions as described by C. G. Jung. A third is the European system of the Eight Characters, propounded by Le Senne. Any handwriting is likely to have elements which could point to the broad personality type of the writer as seen within any one or more of these typological systems. There are usually enough regular stylistic movements of the pen (found in such elements as the letter size, the thickness and pressure of the stroke, the spacing between letters and words, the strokes that connect letters, and so forth) for links to be made with a person's psychology. The square bra and the shotgun frame

People usually giggle when they see a picture of a square bra because they don't have to think about it – they just know that bras should be round.

Why aren't there any square breasts?

The reason is that if there were, it would be very inconvenient for babies. Nature's known this all along. When we want to lie down and sleep, we tend not to do it on rocks. We go for roundness and smoothness, because if we were to lie down on a point, then the body weight on a small area would magnify the discomfort. A baby looking for comfort needs to find smoothness and regularity. That's why there aren't any square brassieres.

Hold the note and change the key…

In about 1870 in England there were a lot of gunmakers and they produced their wares with early steel for a population that used firearms frequently for subsistence hunting. At around that time an important development took place. The explosions produced by gunpowder started to increase in force about then, and so the frames that held shotgun barrels in place started cracking. This was a severe problem for engineers of the time.

The usual place for these square-sectioned pieces of forged metal to give way was in a line leading away from the junction of the two flat surfaces.

The answer, when someone discovered it, swept through the industry and in no time at all, everybody was doing it. The trick was to take that square corner and put a small radius into it, so the arc could dissipate the energy over a wider area. It didn't need to be big to be effective.

These are principles. The breast conduces to passivity and nourishment, because smoothness and softness form the basis for comfort. The square metallic frame with its sharp edges reflects precision and energy management, because energy rises off angles.

These are just two simple examples of principles that go right through human life, and surface in many places, including handwriting. When the eye falls on an image of squareness and sharpness, the brain recognizes its potential for pain, but also progress. When it falls on an image of roundness and regularity, the brain recognizes the potential for loving security, but also passivity.

On the basis of the principle as outlined above, it doesn't take all that much to figure out which script is written by a person with a quick temper or a tendency to fire ideas rapidly, and which is written by a person with a loving or communicative nature. The different formations are evident in people's writing just as soon as we know what to look for. Handwriting analysis takes into account more than just shape. For instance, it looks at direction, including the degree and the forward (or backward) slope of the letters, which is all about the right-and-left elements of space, but also the trend of lines to rise or fall across the page, which covers the up-and-down elements. In the perception of space, the directions have known values, as we've seen, and when a right-handed person slopes the writing backwards it represents a different brain-state from that shared by people slope their handwriting forward, or placing it vertically.

This is how handwriting analysis works – as writers put pen to paper the brain sees them as acting out their roles in space, and treats the paper accordingly, leaving a record of their impulses. This is unconscious, but consistent to the point where a whole science of personality analysis has been developed from it throughout more than a century. We don't hear a lot about it these days because of the diminishing role of handwriting in daily life as keyboards take over, but that doesn't mean it's any less valuable or appropriate as a means of interpreting character and behaviour. The designers of websites are in effect displaying a kind of handwriting to the world, because it has all the spatial elements in it. In handwriting there are about 26 known signs (out of more than 2,000) that convey insincerity. When we design a website, we need to ensure that we aren't unwittingly displaying any of these symbols or spatial allocations, because these signs cut straight to the subconscious of the reader. If we choose to become aware of what those elements are, and use them carefully, then we satisfy the unconscious mind that everything's in order and there's no danger or dishonesty conveyed by the site.