

A list of excerpts from *Designer as Author* (Michael Rock, 1996)

	TOPIC	ARGUMENT	STRUCTURE
<i>What does it mean to call a graphic designer an author?</i>	The meaning and importance of “authorship”	<p>“Authorship” connotes seductive ideas of origination and agency</p> <p>How designers become authors depends on how to define the term and the criteria you choose.</p> <p>Authorship suggests new approaches to understanding the design process.</p>	Rock uses a rhetorical question to express the essay’s fundamental theme, as well as to arouse readers’ thoughts about perceiving designers as authors.
<i>What is an author?</i>	The evolution of the meaning of “author”	<p>The way in which authorship is viewed has changed with historical events and the hierarchy of society.</p> <p>Authorship and what creates it is a difficult notion to pinpoint. It is ambiguous and subjective.</p>	In order to certify the developing process of the relationship between author and text, author and reader, he cites several practitioners in chronological sequence from 1946 to the twentieth century. This gives a good outline of the general thoughts during times of change.
<i>Is there an auteur in the house?</i>	Auteur theory requirements, essential criteria, application in the field of graphic design	<p>Any inner meaning must come through the aesthetic treatment as much as from the content.</p> <p>The graphic auteur must both seek projects that fit his or her vision and then tackle a project from a specific, recognizable critical perspective.</p>	This text uses some examples of film theorists to illustrate the importance of building an author's concept. Followed by an analogy between the role of the designer and that of the film director, to convey the importance of deeper internal meaning in the designer’s approach to the project.
<i>Designer as translator</i>	Designer as translator	<p>Designer is the intermediary between form and spirit.</p> <p>The act of design is the clarification of material or the remodeling of content from one form to another, that reaches a new audience.</p>	Rock presents the ideas directly and then illustrates them with corresponding examples. The structure of this section differs from the basic concepts and historical background of the previous sections, making the ideas clear and easy to understand.

MEANING: Overall, this argument-driven article establishes a strong understanding of the term “author” and then connects it to design in contemporary art. Michael Rock’s reexamination of the nature of the designer adds more insight to the design community.