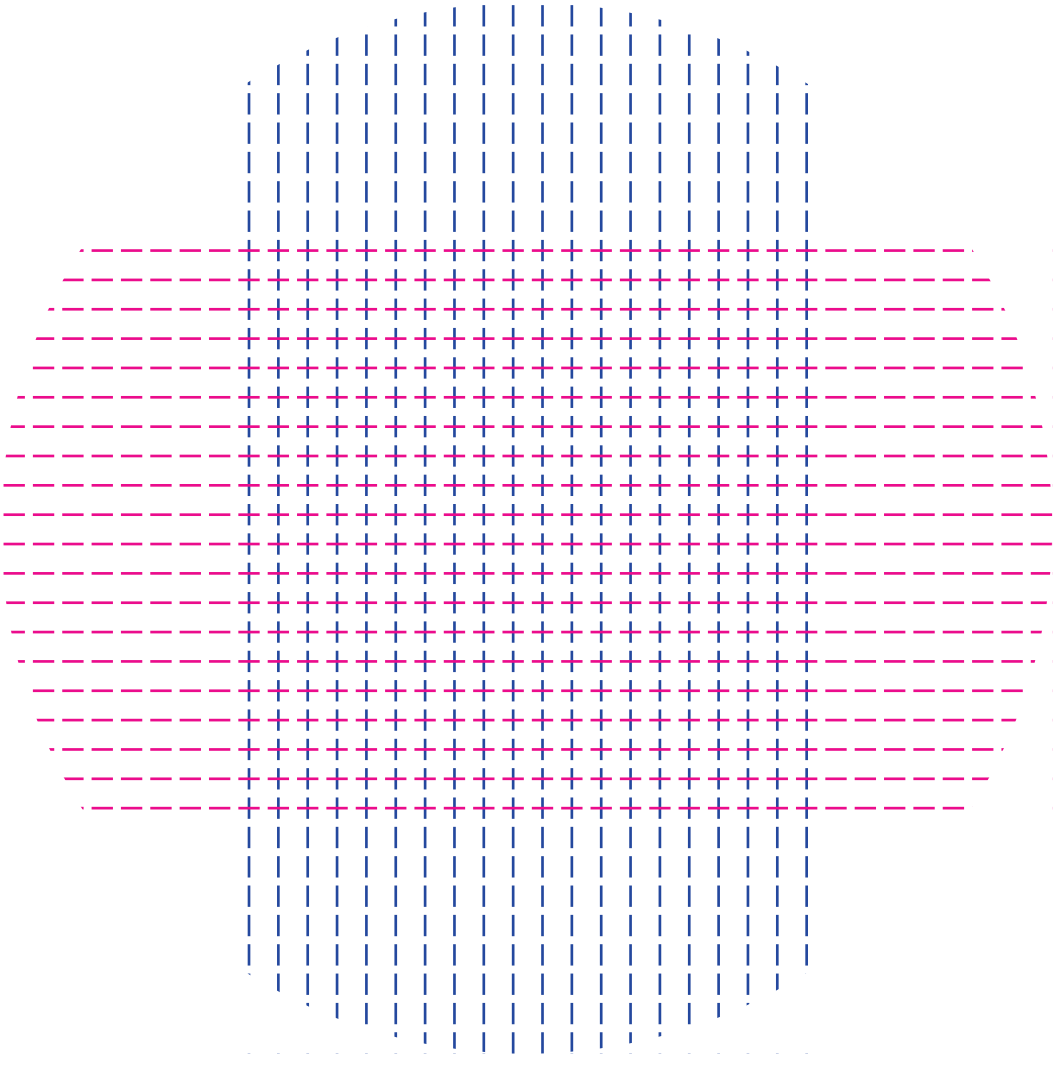

Addenda · Corrigenda

Vlad Atanasiu, *Ugraphia: The Pursuit of Perfect Legibility*, Brest: Fluxus Editions, 2025.
Updated 2026.08.19

A Reader's Guide: Where to Begin! A busy reader once asked the author which section of the book should take precedence. For those looking to navigate the 'legibility kaleidoscope' without reading from cover to cover, but diving and skimming as it were a candy shop catalog, here are a few suggested entry points: *For font designers:* Quite possibly, the most legible section would be the one set in the typeface of your own design. Check the list of used fonts on pages 2138 and 2139. (And heartily thank you!) ⇛ *For visual readers:* Hop from picture to picture! Hop, hop! ⇛ *For those who wish to see everything at once:* Consider pages 2067 and 2068 for synoptic overviews. ⇛ *To discover the humorous side of legibility:* Page 2095 (no pun!). ⇛ *For typography nerds:* Look carefully in the 'Who's Who' section of the Index, pages 2128 to 2130, for Eastern eggs. ⇛ *For readers who also wish to be writers and send mail to the author:* Page 2144 is for you! ⇛ *For the 'cherry-pickers':* Many of the book sections are quite independent of each other, so feel free to make your own choice from the menu provided on page 1906. ⇛ *For the gourmets:* Of course, you could also just contemplate the cake on page 1904 — until satiation.

Page 1914, note 4. *Legibility factors:* Sang 2025 is a recent review of forty-two studies, comprising 3,323 participants, of seven graphical characteristics influencing legibility (serifs, typeface, type style, letter case, type size, spacing (letter and line), and line length).

Page 1915. *Spelling convention:* 'Sanserif' is but one of the many variants spilling from the term's spelling cornucopia, next to syrupy 'sans-surryph' and neoclassical 'sans-serif'.[1] Ironically, it is also likely a lexicographer's misspelling or a printer's typo[2] — reason enough to be used in Ugraphia as an symbol of unattainable legibility.

Page 1939. *Typeface personality: typographic graphology and sepulchral legibility:* A delightful compendium by the British publisher GraphicDesign& presents seventy layouts and as many interpretations of the famous opening paragraph of Dickens' *Great Expectations*, in which Pip imagines the faces of his parents from the type shapes on their tombstones.[3]

Page 2038. *Add new section:* Mirage — Misspellings are perfectly legible and, when resulting in readable text, they produce the ugraphic mirage of optimal communication, subverting legibility unbeknownst to the reader.[4] (Visual) legibility becomes a (semantic) trap. The phenomenon has spawned the academic discipline of stemmatology, the profession of proofreading,[5] its relative demise by software spell-checkers, and the panoply of steel and rubber erasers, correction tapes and fluids, and similar rectification office supplies. All this Sisyphean intellectual and material effort being driven at dispelling the mirage of Ugraphia! One, however, that has utility as a cryptographic method: the string of misspelled letters may be the code's key, or that significant off-set pixel value may hide inconspicuously among the unaltered picture mass, or, indeed, every letter may be substituted such as to give an innocuous looking message. Ugraphia as an esoteric, conspiratorial, paranoid metaworld.

1 OED: 'sanserif, *n.*'

2 Mosley 1999: 53–55

3 Wikipedia: 'Crossed letters'

4 The reader may be a machine, an A.I. from which the human wants to shield a text from being read. ShieldFont is such an instrument, a font that uses ligatures to generate words that look on the screen differently from their symbolic encoding (e.g., rendering "potato" as "horse") as a means to preserve texts abusively being used to train large language models. ☇ https://shieldfont.org

5 For an exploration of the sources of premodern misprints in various domains and historical techniques used to rectify them ☇ Della Rocca de Candal 2023.

Page 2047. *Palimpsests: change this <Why, soon enough...> to this:* <Why, palimpsesting Victorians used to save money on paper and postage by writing on the same letter sheet once horizontally, once vertically, and, with enough skill, also diagonally, such is the power of human visual cognition and the limits of the importance of legibility.[1] Soon enough...>

Page 2070. *Additional studies to very long term communication with particular focus on marking nuclear waste deposit sites:* Hauser 2021.

Page 2071 note 2. *Legibility in literature:* The Amnesia Font — Written by French font designer Lucas Descroix, the science fiction short story 'Somewhere in there' describes a typeface that causes readers to almost instantly forget the text they have just read.[2] The story translates the issue of technological obsolescence into the realm of legibility — a theme illustrated by its companion font, Ferro. First, through the predictable obsolescence of digital formats in which Ferro was instantiated (otf, woff) and that of the Renaissance metal font that inspired it. Second, through the stylistic spectrum of the font family that spans from classical to increasingly technological, decadent, and ultimately illegible (Ferro > Ferro > Ferro > Ferro).

Technological obsolescence is a phenomenon that resonates with the unattainability of Ugraphia, the subject of this book, as it points to the tie between legibility and technology, and the inherent instability of the former in view of the perpetual evolution of the latter. Furthermore, both the Ferro typeface and the narrative on an amnesia-inducing font gesture towards questions distinct from, yet directly affecting, legibility. One such question is typeface memorability. It may well be that illegible typefaces are stylistically so striking that they are better remembered — much like traumatic events — than familiar, legible counterparts. Readers will eventually determine if this holds true for Ferro too, long after it has dissolved into digital rust.

1 Roberts 2012
2 Descroix 2025

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Della Rocca de Candal Geri, Anthony Grafton, Paolo Sachet (2023) — *Printing and Misprinting: A Companion to Mistakes and In-House Corrections in Renaissance Europe (1450–1650)*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Descroix Lucas (2025) — 'Somewhere in there', *Missing Sign*, Lyon: Plain Form, pp. 10–17, https://ferro.plain-form.com.

Hauser Susanne (ed.) (2021) — *Und in alle Ewigkeit... Kommunikation über 10000 Jahre: Wie sagen wir unseren Kinderskindern wo der Atommüll liegt?*, *Zeitschrift für Semiotik*, 43 (3–4).

Roberts Lucienne, Rebecca Wright (2012) — *Page 1: Great Expectations*, London: GraphicDesign&.

Sang Brian Ho, Diana Petraca (2025) — 'Beyond (Type)Face Value: A Systematic Literature Review Examining Design Factors Influencing the Legibility and Readability of Typography', *Visible Language*, 59 (3): 262–294.