

ENNEAGRAM COLLABORATIVE OBSERVATIONS

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ABSTRACT

The way we interact is important so that we can have successful and efficient lifestyles. The way we treat people is important. We create different environments with the interactions we choose to make, and sometimes those interactions are often confusing to understand. Human connection boils down to open communication and honesty. Does knowing somebody's personality type make it easier to collaborate with them? This project looks at the interactions between creatives based on their Enneagram Personality type. The Enneagram is broken down into 9 interconnecting personalities. These numbers represent more apparent personality traits as well as common-ground and compatibility factors between the numbers. When it comes to collaboration, especially in a creative field, working with others is inevitable, and empathy for others is crucial. This attitude engenders a healthy relationship between people, and it allows us to think more objectively with a basic understanding of the other person's needs. By using my peers as a foundation for my artistic expression, I had the opportunity to learn more about each number in depth, and create displays that show interactivity between enneagram numbers to support the methods in creative collaborative learning.

Keywords: personality, collaboration, art, design, empathy, meaning

ENNEAGRAM COLLABORATIVE OBSERVATIONS

According to the Enneagram Institute website, the Enneagram is “one of the most powerful and insightful tools for understanding ourselves and others. At its core, the Enneagram helps us to see ourselves at a deeper, more objective level and can be of invaluable assistance on our path to self-knowledge.” The off-the-bat questions I’ll probably be asked is “Why would you look at the Enneagram?”, “What makes it different than other personality tests?”, “How can you be sure of its accuracy?”

I wanted to look at the Enneagram based off my own personal experience with knowing my number. It’s given me a pathway of understanding, a way of thinking. What makes this different than other personality tests is that it relies on honest survey responses and utilizes a long list of simple questions designed to reveal a number as true to your personality and diminish any leading questions– the Enneagram is more similar to the HEXACO model than a BuzzFeed quiz. It does not steer the user into a certain category, but instead uses the process of elimination to figure out which number you best fit to. The best answer to the third question is– we really cannot be sure of the accuracy. Everybody views the world through a different lens, usually in a way that fits our needs or wants. So, how do we know that this test offers valuable information about personality? While our own personal experiences have meanings, and our answers to this test are accurate, how do we know that the test does not generalize our human experiences?

Taking this information about the Enneagram, I personally sought out to find if having more compatible numbers would yield a more successful collaborative project, or at the very least, successful communication. Then, I took this information to attempt to create visual aids for visual learners in hopes of allowing them to use the Enneagram for their own collaborative needs. The Enneagram Institute website has extensive information on each number: the general description, healthy traits, unhealthy traits, which number we go to when we’re in stress, levels of development, misidentification, addictions, and much more. With this

project, I focused mainly on the accuracy of the overview description of each type as well as weaknesses in terms of disagreement.

PROCESS

At the beginning of the semester, I asked my class to take the Enneagram test so I had all of their numbers written down. This was just preliminary as I was interested in knowing everyone's number for my personal knowledge. As we started forming collaborative groups, my project was still in its infant stage, and I had not yet figured out what I wanted to do with the knowledge I had. Once everybody established groups and moved forward with their own projects, the scope of mine had changed drastically, and it made sense for me to start creating work that reflected interactions between numbers.

Our regular collaborative experience in the Graphic Design Program pushes the idea that working together with others yields more unique and innovative work. With the groups that were already formed, I looked at their numbers, and used that as a foundation for my creative expression. The main goal of this project was to create a visual aid for visual learners that described my perception of enneagram interactions.

Project 1: FASHION SHOWCASE

This group consisted of three individuals. It included a male 6 wing 7, a female 6 wing 7, and another female 3 wing 2. The Enneagram type Six is known as the Loyalist: the committed, security-oriented type. Sixes are engaging, responsible, anxious, and suspicious. They tend to be “reliable, hard-working, responsible, and trustworthy.” When they see problems, they try and cooperate as best as they can; however, in some cases they can become defensive and stressed out. In disagreement, they can become “reactive, defiant, and rebellious.” They often have problems with self-doubting and suspicion.¹ Two of the three people in this group were 6 wing 7s which made an interesting pairing. The third collaborator

¹ Type Six. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/type-6>

was a 3 wing 2: the Achiever.² The Three is the success-oriented, pragmatic type. They tend to be “adaptable, excelling, driven, and image-conscious.” While Threes can be very hard-working and competent, they also have the ability to get competitive and get caught up too much in their own personal self-image. According to the Enneagram Institute, the relationship between the Loyalist and the Achiever has the ability to be both very powerful or very conforming. When both numbers are at their healthiest, each brings hard work, a sense of optimism, a positive energy, and a desire to communicate with others. The Achiever, being goal-oriented, brings a sense of self-confidence that success is imminent. The Loyalist attributes perseverance during hard times and personal loyalty to the Achiever. Both types are work-oriented, so when they’re both in their healthiest mindsets, they can achieve anything they put their mind to.

Despite each type’s ability to be all-powerful goal-oriented workers, like any human being, they have the ability to become negative and stubborn. In my experience, I noticed Type 3s and Type 6s clash frequently. Both types can ignore their deeper feelings and push their emotions to the side to reach their goals— this creates a dishonest almost hostile work environment if the communication between them continues to be evasive. Eventually this creates disinterest from both sides.¹

The project included designing branded promotional materials for the annual Apparel Design and Merchandising 2020 Showcase. According to their project brief, the deliverables for the Showcase consisted of a unified design system to promote the event as well as physical promotional material, all of which would appropriately represent the nature of the show and the goals behind the creatives presenting at the event. The beginning of this project started out very strong, and each collaborator was excited to start branding this show. The designers dedicated their time and effort to bringing in exactly what they discussed. Graphic designers, in my experience, tend to be very head-strong, and each of these collaborators

² Type Three. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/type-3>

came in with a unique idea in which they would ultimately discuss one final direction. I noticed that it was difficult for this group to move toward a final decision because each of their ideas were so different from each other. This is one of the most frustrating parts of collaboration—letting go of your ideas and moving forward for the best of the group.

Something I appreciated while watching this group work together was their ability to take risks. All of them approached the design problem from different angles giving them more kinds of work to choose from for their final deliverable; however, it ended up leading to some disagreement about design decisions. In a collaborative environment, it makes sense to start out with hundreds of ideas then start to narrow down the approach by figuring out what the client likes. At the beginning of this project, this group successfully came up with many unique and well-thought out ideas; however, collaboration with this group felt somewhat strained because they could not pick one direction to go into. Instead of working on a singular idea with dedicated parts from each student, all of them worked individually. By the time they reconvened, their discussion seemed to hit dead ends, resulting in frustration from all parties.

Each collaborator brought something different to the table. With the amount of talent in this group of collaborators, I knew this group was going to come up with something amazing. The biggest issue they ran into was just honest and open communication, and that is understandable. Designers take their work seriously, and it is difficult to let go of an idea that you've put your time into. In some groups of three, there can be two against one, and it becomes unfair to the unlucky third opinion. While their ideas seemed to be relating to each other in some way, the work they produced in the end still seemed to be handled individually rather than as a group. Collaboration can be difficult because you want to push for what you want while simultaneously not walking all over somebody else's ideas. However, in order for this specific group to maximize their potential, they needed to take the best skills from each person and put those at the forefront. Open communication with each other is the most

important part of collaboration no matter what kinds of people are involved. It makes for a smoother process and fewer mistakes.

Overall, I felt like for this specific group, there was a slimmer chance that they would work well together than not work well together. Sixes and Threes have similar unhealthy traits, so when one leans toward the unhealthy side, both will likely end up falling into unhealthy traits. Both traits are natural makers, and both want to feel accepted. With this group, I noticed that the 3 was the most soft-spoken compared to the others, and in turn it caused her to feel unheard and sometimes isolated. The end of this project was a success even though the communication could have been better throughout. Due to the COVID-19, the Fashion Showcase translated from a physical platform to purely digital, but all the deliverables were completed successfully. I think this group is a good example of how sometimes clashing personalities can still produce good work. For my own creative inquiry, this tells me a few things about working past the small bumps in the road— just keep moving forward.

Project 2: US & I

The Us & I Body Positivity Campaign includes all-female 7 wing 8, 3 wing 2, and 9 wing 1. The Seven is known as the “Enthusiast” — the busy, spontaneous, versatile, and scattered type.³ Sevens tend to be more extroverted than introverted. They are high-spirited and up for any kind of adventure; however, they can become over-extended and scattered if they turn to their more unhealthy traits like becoming unorganized and impulsive. In a group setting, Sevens can be leaders. They become excited about things that they’re interested in. Sevens are curious and are deep-thinkers, becoming sporadic and exhilarated when faced with a new problems to solve.³ Threes, again, are the “Achiever”— the goal-oriented and adaptable type.² Return to previous section for more details on this number. The Nine is also known as the “Peacemaker.” They are relatively easy-going and agreeable, sometimes

3 Type Seven. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/type-7>

to the point of complacency. The Nines are the trusting ones— they tend to be creative and optimistic. They enjoy supporting others and willing to compromise in order to keep the peace. Nines dislike conflict because it causes them discomfort, but in that they can also ignore important issues without dealing with them causing unwanted tension. Sometimes their state of mind can hinder progress due to their lack of comfort with change and disagreement.⁴

According to the Enneagram Institute, the compatibility between a Seven and a Three is highly complementary. Each type has high energy levels and is more extroverted than introverted. Both types have optimistic outlooks as they work on projects, willing to try everything they can before giving up. While Threes are able to work more independently than Sevens, both still thrive in a collaborative work environment. Sevens bring a sense of fun and spontaneity, and sometimes this can negatively affect a Three if their main focus is to accomplish a specific goal. If both numbers are healthy, the interactions between them can be fun and full of life making an exciting couple of people to work with. If these numbers are unhealthy, it can feel as if there's almost too much energy at once. It can be exhausting to exude that much effort all at once, both personalities at one time. Sevens can end up not taking a project as seriously as a Three would like, in turn causing tension between the two. A Seven can feel as if they only exist to be a supplementary character in a Three's work environment.⁵

Nines and Threes work very well together for the most part, in fact it is a pretty common pairing. The Nine brings words of affirmation, a support system, the role of the encourager. The Three is the role that accomplishes, and with the Nine in their corner backing them up, Threes have the ability to explore their abilities as a professional. With a Three and a Nine together, there's a sense of relaxation and calmness. The Nine allows

4 Type Nine. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/type-9>

5 Type Three with Type Seven. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/relationship-type-3-with-type-7>

the Three to calm down and relax. Both types allow work to get done in a healthy manner. However, if these numbers run into trouble spots, it can almost be “too much of a good thing.” The Nine can seem aloof while the Three requires the basic need to feel appreciated, and the Nine may not seem like they really care for them at all. If the two numbers are unhealthy, a Three can feel as if a Nine is too suffocating, while the Nine can feel like the Three is too demanding. The compatibility between a Nine and a Seven. They have an interesting mix of similar and dissimilar qualities.⁶

In their most basic forms, a Seven and a Nine are both optimists— they prefer to avoid conflicts and maintain friendly and sociable personalities. They prefer to look forward and not spend so much time looking at the past. In a way, this makes them progressive, but also a bit naive. Sevens can take initiative more easily than Nines who are likely more generous or willing to help others and make them happy. They can be passive. The only place where Nines and Sevens can run into trouble are when they’re both faced with the negative or painful parts of working together. Sevens can talk about what they’re feeling much easier than Nines can, but both have the capability of just completely shutting down and ignoring what’s bothering them.⁷

The Us & I Body Positivity Campaign focuses on different topics such as body image and marks, personal stories, and fighting against social norms. This group of designers wanted to create work that was inspirational and that encouraged us to empathize with those who may have negative or positive personal-image thoughts. Whether the designs were typographical, illustrative, or interactive, the Us & I Campaign wanted to share design-based narratives that focuses on the beauty in being different. Because this group is all female, the focus was primarily on those who are females or female-identifying. Originally, the first few trials of the project did not attract much of a male audience, so the natural direction to go

6 Type Three with Type Nine. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/relationship-type-3-with-type-9>

7 Type Seven with Type Nine. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/relationship-type-7-with-type-9>

into was shifting the lens to an all-female audience. The deliverables for this project included online posts to their Instagram page (@us_and_i) as well as a book series that tells the story of different topics they talked about, curated by each group member.

The beginning of the semester was an unfavorable start for this particular group. There were many loopholes that hadn't been filled quite yet, and the class critiques were relatively harsh. Many of the issues with their project were due to the fact that it was an audience-reliant project. In order for Us&I to have content, people in the art building had to submit stories or photos and tag them. There was no incentive for their audience, so there were no submissions. The project could not continue if people did not interact. From this point forward, the group focused more on self-generated content sectioned off into different topics for each week of the semester. This was more successful, but something still felt like it was missing. The goals of this project were not outlined clearly enough, and their audience did not know what they were supposed to learn from it.

In this example of a wing 8, a Three, and a wing 1 working together, I noticed that they all had a similar underlying motivator which was focusing on the bigger picture: the end goal. No one had in mind that their part of the project needed to be the most important—there was a sense of equality between these collaborators from the start. This made the group work especially well together since they believed they were on the same playing field. These designers were comfortable with fast-paced, hands-on work, and they were ready to go even if the idea had not been fully thought out. The 3 wing 2 of the group, the Achiever, acted as the creative director, making sure things were going as planned and organizing the future weeks. In most scenarios, it is helpful for a collaborative project to have a project lead to keep the group on-track. She analyzed and redirected the kinds of variations and changes that were thrown at them. Each member had a very go-getter attitude, and they did not let negative critique hold them back, instead they bounced back even stronger. I sat and watched this group of women try countless methods and forms for the end result. The Nine of the group,

the laid back, easy-going member, played a large role in supporting the group emotionally and physically while their ideas were starting to change. The project continued to evolve in a positive way, allowing me as an audience member to see the possibilities of this project. This group understood the importance of compromise and sacrificing ideas in order to reach their goals by the end of the semester. I appreciated experiencing the amount of hard work put in by this group. They did not have a hierarchy, but rather they had assigned roles to clearly lay out the duties of each person. This created a more smoothly running project.

Each member went in with a positive attitude even when there were setbacks. Critique questions from the class were, “What is the goal of this project?”, “How can you make your concept clearer?”, and comments like, “What are you trying to accomplish? I’m not sure I can see the vision you’re explaining in your work.” They managed to stay true to their original concept while experimenting with different forms. I envisioned the 7 wing 8 as the drive of the group, the 3 wing 2 as the organizer, and the 9 wing 1 as the glue that holds everybody together at the end of the day. Each person acknowledged everyone’s role and holds everybody accountable for their part in this collaboration. When they ran into problems, I could see the gears turning in their minds. Instead of becoming upset and slowly giving up, they maintained envisioning the goal that they had in the beginning. It was pretty inspiring. Nothing held them back, and each of them supported each other which made them productive collaborators. These women were very clear in communicating. If they had an issue, they talked about it and in a respectful way. There was no finger-pointing, but a collective effort to make the project better. In conclusion, this group of women ended up working very well together. In this particular scenario, each of their strengths played to the project’s advantage, and the end result was a project-well-done.

Project 3: SLANTED EDITIONS

This particular project was unique because the collaborators had inverse personality numbers. I am a 1 wing 9, and my collaborator, a 9 wing 1. A Nine, the Peacemaker, and a

One, the Reformer, working together was quite interesting. This was my own project, and it gave me the chance to really evaluate my own actions, something the Enneagram as a whole should help provide for anybody who chooses to take it. Like I noted before, the Nine is a Peacemaker. Nines are easy-going and like to keep the peace.⁴ The One, myself, is quite different. Ones are the Reformers—obsessed with perfection, self-controlled, and principled. Ones tend to be conscientious and believe deeply in right and wrongs. They often strive to make positive change and maintain high standards of living. They tend to have issues with impatience and resentment, and they can sometimes be too busy being right instead of reasonable.⁸

Ones like to be useful, they like to have a sense of purpose. They feel like they have to be morally right, and when they feel otherwise, they justify their actions with excuses instead of explanations. I know as a One myself, I try to have a reason for doing everything. It allows myself to understand why I commit to those actions, but in times where I feel I am being questioned, I will have an answer for them. At a healthy level, Ones are accepting and realistic of the world around them. They try to have a clear sense of right and wrong, ethical values, and they wish to be as rational and mature in all actions. At an unhealthy level, Ones can become “dogmatic, self-righteous, intolerant, and inflexible.” They can pin wrongdoings on everybody else but themselves, and they can be obsessed with perfection. At Ones’ most unhealthy level, depression and anxiety come into play and destructive and depressive personality disorders may also appear.⁸

As a 9 wing 1 and a 1 wing 9 work together, there will begin to see idealistic visions and motivation to change the world for the better. Nines are more in tune with their emotions, allowing them to bring a more interpersonal connection to the table. The Ones bring the rational side, the more robotic side, full of realistic ideals and organized thought. While Ones are the more rigid type and the Nines are the more steady, flowing type, there still manages

8 Type One. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/type-1>

to be a sense of personality harmony between the two. The Nine tends to remove some of the harshness of the One, letting the One let go of some of the tension they may be holding in. The Ones' personality can remind the Nine to continue maintaining the goals and aspirations.

When Ones and Nines get into arguments, it's a matter of how they deal with conflict, and they tend to deal with them in opposite ways. As a One, much of the frustration is reflected onto themselves, thinking that they are not doing a good enough job at something. Ones begin to tense up, having a very outwardly frustrated attitude. They begin to assume that whoever is involved with the problem is not properly doing their jobs, and eventually becoming completely dissatisfied with the situation overall. Instead of looking at their own issues, they try and find fault in everybody else. Part of this is due to the fact they suppress so much emotion and all of it bubbles into anger, eventually spilling out when things start to blow up. However, on the opposite side of this scenario, Nines are not favorable of confrontation or conflict. They rarely step up and discuss if they are upset about a subject, then it usually gets swept under the rug or never talked about. Instead, they tend to be passive, sometimes passive aggressive. Ones believe this is an unhealthy way of coping, suppressed rage, but there is no good way for a One to confront a Nine without feeling like the other person might deny that they feel angry or upset at all.⁹

Slanted Editions is a book-making project that allows the creators to have a space and a place to purely make. The lack of creating from last semester inspired this project– a non-stop generative project that would result in a book each week from both collaborators. Every week, we would sit down and discuss the topic of the book, themes, color choices, typeface, and so forth, to give us parameters. Each book had to be related in some way to the previous book as well as the collaborator's book. The beauty in this project was that both designers had creative freedom to design however they wished to, but there were still a few rules that each designer had to follow that forced the books to look unified. The way this project was

⁹ Type One with Type Nine. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/relationship-type-1-with-type-9>

structured was so that neither collaborator had to sacrifice their own design style for the sake of the other. I was personally interested on the different takes each of us had, so that when we got back together at the end of each week, we would have a sense of each other's work ethic and design style. The reason for this project was due to the previous semester's lack of work, but also a way for those who did not have a ton of time to read could. These books were meant to be simple and quick.

My collaborator and I rarely ran into issues because our mindsets were so similar. This project was hands-on at the individual level, and we collaborated at the end of each week. Most of our meetings were quick catch-ups in the beginning of the week to check in to how each of us were doing on our publication. Many of the problems that arose were less conceptual and more technical. If we ran into a problem, the solution was easy: just talk about it. As a One, I was able to bring up any problems I felt were important, and she as a Nine was able to address her issues calmly and clearly. I feel like most of the issues in collaborative projects stem from not wanting to hurt the other person's feelings— as if your concern with their idea is a personal attack on their character and not fully about their actions. Before this project with her, I did not know her very well. I saw this as an opportunity to learn about her as a designer, but also as a person. I thought about this project as a learning opportunity with collaborative projects in a sense, but also as learning to communicate with somebody I did not know very well. This kind of attitude can be helpful moving forward in a creative workplace because you don't always know those with whom you're working. It's an important skill to have especially in the design field where you're constantly working with clients that you may not be familiar with.

Because she is a Nine, I had a feeling she may be agreeable. Knowing that as a One who likes a clear plan, I made sure to ask as many questions as possible in order to get my ideas across and give her a chance to voice her ideas. I have been told in the past my honesty or up-front language can translate as aggressive or rude, so I made sure to be aware of this

with somebody who may be more soft-spoken. I let her know that this might happen, and to let me know when I am pushing her boundaries. I usually speak from my gut first, and not my mind, so things may come out very straightforward. There was a point in the middle of the semester where we had a check-in with how we were feeling about the project. We both expressed that we were unsure of how to communicate with each other because we were both afraid of stepping on each other's toes when it came to deciding on themes for our next books. This was pretty comical for me because I knew I could come across as rude, but for her it was because she didn't know to have healthy confrontation without feeling like she was being too pushy. We both approached this at completely different perspectives which I found interesting.

The successful parts of our project went as well as we could have hoped. For almost every week, we were both diligent—turning in our books on time, relating themes, and unifying color schemes. If either of us fell behind, we were sympathetic with each other—conceptualizing then designing and producing a full book every week takes a toll on your brain, and it is easy to get burnt out. Overall, we managed to complete what we could in a realistic time. I thought this project was successful in terms of completing what we originally wished we would. We worked well together given the new circumstances of COVID-19, and we can both look back and appreciate all the hard work we've put into every book we've made. This project was a daunting task, but we succeeded in finishing what we came here to do. As a creative project, it was a good exercise to showcase the balance between individualism and collaboration.

Project 4: RABBIT HOLE

The Rabbit Hole Project: this was the last creative project that led to my design inquiry, and possibly the most entertaining to follow. This group consisted of four men, a 7 wing 6, 4 wing 5, 7 wing 8, and a 9 wing 1. The newly introduced numbers are 7 wing 6 and a 4 wing 5, so I'll be mostly describing their interactions in this section.

A 7 wing 6 is known as the “Entertainer.” These people identify most with the Seven, but share many similarities with Sixes. Their basic desire is to feel fulfilled and happy by finding the positives in all situations, even if the situation may be bad. They rationalize their feelings, and they can sometimes convince themselves they are happy even when this is not true. In this project, the 7 wing 6 was an imperative member– he supported the group during rough patches or setbacks, somewhat of a morale booster. They are the ones who can remain optimistic during stressful scenarios who think quickly and intelligently. On the other hand, 7 wing 6s can become easily influenced by other peoples’ opinions, overriding their individual thoughts, doubting themselves and losing focus on their goals. These kinds of people are motivated by explorations and discovering new ideas, and they thrive with confidence given choices or options. Sevens excel in large groups, so having a Seven in a collaborative project is a major positive for both the communication of the group and for the project as a whole. When a 7 wing 6 is at an unhealthy level, they can start to feel bored and lose interest in the project, becoming aloof and unhelpful. In order to communicate the best with a Seven, people should try to remain upbeat and listen carefully to what they say. Additionally, they can become unstable, trying anything they can to find new experiences, even in toxic ways. Their biggest fear is getting bored or running out of things to do resulting in impulsive behavior.¹⁰

The Four is known as the Individualist, and with the wing 5, the “Bohemian.” A basic Four is introspective, sensitive, and reserved. While Fours are very in touch with their emotions, they can also let those emotions overwhelm them. They can sometimes withhold their emotions with the fear of feeling like they themselves are defective. At their best, Fours can become creative and full of motivation, inspired to create and make. As the Individualist, Fours want to be as real as they can be, expressing themselves in the best way they can– their emotional needs require a certain amount of support from their friends and peers. In order for a Four to feel important, they must feel as though they are different than everybody else. They must feel as if they have something special, a unique talent or a gift that is different

10 Type Seven. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/type-7>

than all other ones. Healthy Fours maintain a basic honesty within themselves, but unhealthy Fours tend to deny their emotions and hide themselves from others. Because they're always searching for that special quality about themselves, they can get lost in that mission. They may feel as if they're missing a part of their personality because they have trouble identifying what exactly they're missing.¹¹

Fours can have issues letting go of old emotions. Instead of dealing with them head-on, they will suppress them and hold onto them longer than they need. They see what they want about human nature, and in turn, can be blinded by what's truly in front of them. If Fours reach very unhealthy levels, they can be overrun by feelings of hopelessness and may cope with self-destructive tendencies— pushing away those who want to help them, frequent emotional breakdowns, and avoidant behavior.¹¹

This last project was unique because the project itself was exploratory in nature, which made the collaboration between the designers more free. When Fours, Sevens, and Nines work with each other, you can have a few different dynamics. Starting with the Seven and the Four:

Fours can be very introspective, more introverted overall while Sevens speculate all possibilities— always looking for the next adventure. These numbers are virtually opposites in terms of social preferences; however, both can happily exist in a space where emotions, happiness, and spontaneity thrive. They become interested in each others' ways, fascinated with the unknown and unexpected. When a Four and a Seven get to talking, they will never stop. They can enjoy expressing their takes on what life is meant to be like, an endless conversation about their goals. As these numbers reach an unhealthy level, there will also be a feeling of disconnection, resulting in a loss of interest from both sides. When disagreements begin to become more frequent, each type ends up more frustrated with each other and become more disappointed in their own personal lives. Fours may feel like their energy is being drained from a Seven's natural ability to bounce back, always onto the next

¹¹ Type Four. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/type-4>

activity. Sevens can become impatient with Fours because while they want to talk about their emotions and feelings in that certain moment, Sevens may want to keep moving forward and not dwell on the past. They can even become evasive, just wanting to move toward something upbeat and positive.¹²

In terms of this project, the designers involved did a fantastic job at communicating with each other, both with emotions and with expectations of what they wanted from this experience. The project Rabbit Hole is a way to take a break from everyday prompted assignments. It offers a space to recharge any lost inspiration while still pushing productivity and creation. It relies heavily on the experimental process. This group of four came up with this idea in a similar way that the Slanted Editions project did: a lack of work being produced in the previous semester. Not only just that, but also the feeling of monotony in each project that was professor-supplied— nothing felt creative enough. By using this project as an outlet to start making for purely art's sake, their final goal was to remove themselves from this creative rut they have been in. Another goal is just finding balance between art, design, and craft. In the eight weeks of the semester left, this group established a calendar that gave roles to each member as well as parameters for the creative process. The outcome of this project was to have one finalized page spread a week to be put into a final project/process book that records the effects of different variants on the creative process. This looks at the creator as a machine rather than an artist, and it inputs and documents how those variants directly affect the output of what was to be created.

A few starting rules to this project included that each spread would be modified and passed to all four group members, each participating as a separate role. Each member was to modify the page spread with one digital and one analog process before sending it to the next member who would be repeating those steps. One member will be the 'creator' each week setting the parameters of the project. The creator was also in charge of documenting the final

12 Type Four with Type Seven. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/relationship-type-4-with-type-7>

piece at the end of each week as well as writing a reflection analysis before the start of the new making process. The experimental variants include location, material, environment, state of mind, and physical being. The way that these collaborators worked seemed beneficial due to the experimental nature of the project. A majority of this project was completed virtually due to COVID-19— this collaboration was almost fully virtual. The idea of this project was to pass on an image to the next person who would then make changes and continue passing it along until the end of the week. Face-to-face communication was already limited, but they still had to meet weekly to discuss the next set of parameters.

As they work online, it's become different, but not any more difficult to complete the tasks given. Most of the work that's completed is through a shared online folder. The successes that they shared with me were that they finally felt as if they were creating again, one of the overall goals of their project. Secondly, each spread they created brought up new ideas, new concepts for the future spreads. The group mentioned making this collaborative not just for themselves, but on a platform that other creators can participate in. The similar underlying idea that each member was excited about was finding a way to understand the creative process through experimentation in varying creative lenses. Each member approached the project at a different angle, in turn changing the way the next member manufactured the spread for the week. While the project was the main event, learning about the creative process as individuals remained a goal as well. They felt as if they could capitalize on what collaboration could bring for personal growth as designers. By giving the power to a different member each week, they also had the opportunity to experience a position as an “art director” in charge of junior designers.

Each group member agreed that this project was less about the authority role as an art director, and more about the handling of variants each week. Another positive part about this project is that they were willing to extend this to not only themselves but to the public. Rabbit Hole was to expand into more of a creative community with a public drive

in mind accompanied by an introductory manual explaining the process. This drive would include assets and previous projects to be used as examples. It would serve as a choose-your-own-path online game for people to observe or participate in. One of the amazing parts of collaborative projects is that they have the opportunity to grow past just a singular group. Some of the best art in the world was created through multiple artists' participation.

In terms of unsuccessful parts of this project, the main issue was not having the deliverables in on-time. When this happened, it set back the other group members. Instead of criticizing each other for not being responsible for their part, they treated each other with empathy and understanding. As designers in multiple studio classes at a time, we understand the rare amount of spare time we have. Each member was willing to pick up the slack of the other ones in order to get the piece done in time. Rabbit Hole was less about time and more about freeing your mind to the creative process. The members described this process as very 'laid back.' They would wait for the next person to make what they needed to— it was just the pure nature of the project to be scattered.

The members circulated through three main roles: One was the mediator, one was the experimentalist, and one was the calculated designer. The members took turns being each role. When it came to the hurdles of the project, it was clear communication that helped them get through it. At the end, this project served as a creative palette cleanser, ridding the rut and allowing each member an innovative escape from the dull regularity of other design projects. Overall, I think these group members set each other up for success. This type of project allowed for more buffer room for mistakes and a place to learn and improve while learning to rely on and trust the other collaborators. These Enneagram types leaned more toward the experimental and quirky side of personality which matched the project nicely. All of the members handled their issues maturely and with open communication.

RESEARCH/CONCLUSION

The use of the Enneagram in creative environments for artists and designers was a

way to illuminate the already-existing collaborative methods we use in the classroom. It's already being used in professional practices and already documented by published research papers. The Enneagram can be used as a way to offer a look into one's own experiences as a creative in the field to boost empathy and understanding meanwhile strengthening and reinforcing tactics that designers use already. Collaboration should be seen as a habit— you start to do it everyday, then it becomes a necessary part of the way you work. In 2016, Google announced that they had discovered the secret to a perfect creative team. After doing research with more than 100 teams, they found that team performance was based on emotional intelligence and a high degree of communication between team members.¹³ Sometimes it may not be purely about skill, but more about the way you interact with others. If collaboration were purely about ability, then most great designers could easily come together and make magic happen. However, this is not the case. It takes a minimum amount of shared empathy and emotional intelligence for a group of people to work well together. I noticed with some of the groups that I worked with, open-communication made collaborating so much easier, not having to guess what your peers or coworkers were thinking.

According to Harvard Business Review, each person plays two roles: 1. a functional role which is based on skill level, and 2. a psychological role which is based on the kind of person someone is.¹³ Companies largely focus on the functional role which is why you submit an application— something that shows your abilities.¹³ Once you reach the interview stage, this is where you can show off your personality, become less rigid and more who you are as a character rather than a machine. Knowing your place in both roles is important as a worker and as the employer. The best teams are made up of a good mix of both skill and personality. Too much of either can lead to a poor overall performance. I believe that the Rabbit Hole Project group adhered best to what would make up the best mix of collaborators. Each person was agreeable, willing to compromise, open to new ideas, and communicated with each other clearly and quickly.

13 Great Teams Are About Personalities, Not Just Skills, <https://hbr.org/2017/01/great-teams-are-about-personalities-not-just-skills>

This project allowed me to explore different collaboration methods and discover for myself which types of methods work better than others. Anna Sutton, a Senior Lecturer in Organizational Behavior at Manchester Metropolitan University Business School, wrote “But is it *real*?”, a review of research on the Enneagram. She writes that much of our knowledge on the Enneagram has been developed through personal experience, and this information should not be deemed unusable because of its anecdotal nature, but seen as justification to use this test to gather more information. Part of her role is to show that the Enneagram is not just something that is trendy, but that the experiences people have and are documented will soon be able to show the similarities and differences between personalities. One thing that Sutton emphasizes is that as humans, we will always view the world from slightly skewed perspectives to match our expectations and wants. Part of research is common sense. In another study Sutton looked at by Wagner, a doctoral dissertation, they prove that the Enneagram is reliable and valid— 75% of the time, the self-initiated tests were accurate.¹⁴

In my personal experience in this class, knowing my Enneagram type has benefited me in collaborative projects. I find that I am more confident in my words and actions, and I can trust myself to rely on others to do their part. In another study that looked at team training and emotional intelligence, it was proven that team effectiveness improved, and participants had enhanced self-awareness and personal growth.¹⁴ Much of the power of the Enneagram comes from understanding your emotional intelligence. Skilled workers may not always be successful collaborators, and that is something I personally have experienced. I have been looking at my Enneagram number and allowing myself to recognize my own flaws and strengths within the design environment. Recently, it’s been beneficial to me because senior year is full of collaboration and giving myself room to trust others and their personal creative processes. In my opinion, knowing your Enneagram number may boost your emotional intelligence by encouraging empathy and giving yourself space to fail and to grow. Becoming aware of yourself in a creative space should help foster comfortability to express

14 Sutton, Anna (2012) “But is it real?” A review of research on the Enneagram. *Enneagram Journal*, 5, 5-20

freely and room to think beyond your regular creative process– to break the barrier and find alternative ways to make. In Appalachian State University’s design program, collaboration is heavily pushed, and pushed especially during the last semester of study as we are required to complete a collaborative final project. There will be people you do not necessarily agree with all the time, but to know you are capable of designing past your own personal understandings by accepting the ideas of others is an important skill to have. You may be the most capable designer, but if you are not willing to take on the task of developing your personality, then you may struggle to be more than just a capable designer.

Overall, this project was a valuable learning experience for me. It gave me the opportunity to see myself through a psychological lens and be able to look at and ask questions. Each personality type brings something different to the table. The Enneagram can be used as a tool to know yourself better, therefore getting to know how you work with others better. It should also be clear that the Enneagram isn’t meant to put you into a box, but to show you how you are interconnected with all of the personality types and possibly give you a foundation for understanding yourself. Humanity is more complex than just a number, but the I know the Enneagram can be a way to start simplifying the complex nature of collaboration.

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Enneagram Collaborative Observations

by Veronica Romero

Honors Thesis Spring 2020
Appalachian State University
Graphic Design

The Enneagram is a system of personality typing that describes patterns in how people conceptualize the world and manage their emotions. The Enneagram model describes nine different personality types and maps each of these types on a nine-pointed diagram which helps to illustrate how the types relate to one another.

Enneagram Collaborative Observations—

observations within the senior studio class, discovering what kinds of creative collaboration emerges between different enneagram types to learn about successful group dynamics.

6-7

PROJECT BRIEF

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THANK YOU

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COLPHON

PROJECT BRIEF

The purpose of this project is both for myself and for my peers. The Enneagram is a personality test that is split up into 9 different numbers. Each person is categorized into a number and a wing based on their most expressive traits, but all the numbers are intertwined showing that everybody is a little bit of all the personality types. **My purpose of this isn't to box people into categories, but to illuminate the fact that everybody has something in common with everyone in some way or another.** Knowing my own enneagram number has proven to help me understand others better when collaborating— you know how they communicate and you know how you communicate the best. I'll be observing different group projects and analyzing the interactions I see between different numbers.

I've been told the best audience for this project is creatives who are looking to collaborate. This narrows down the way I may be presenting this information, plus it's helpful to myself and my peers to know how to best work efficiently with others, knowing the strengths and weaknesses of their collaborators. I feel like many people, not just creatives, can utilize this personality test to their benefit because in almost every scenario presented, it's useful to understand who you're working with and how you can be the most beneficial to your group using your strengths. Having a physical representation of real groups that are creating real projects is just the start of possibly using this test as a teaching tool. There are already businesses that utilize personality tests to gauge which people work the best with others. *We can easily do this here too.*

I had already been writing down numbers of friends that had taken the test, mainly from a close group of girls I spend the most time with in a week. I was making mental notes of their actions with other numbers just to start out. And it's possible that this group of people just happen to reflect exactly what their numbers were, but I noticed that they were all pretty predictable in their reactions to certain situations. From there, I collected the numbers of my classmates and got working on my project.

*** The enneagram is really special to me because I felt like for the first time, a personality test accurately described me, and it didn't feel like I was being put in a box. It explains certain things that I never realized before.

It explains why I'm so one-track minded about certain things, why sometimes I can be stubborn. It offers me alternative ways to think about life through multiple perspectives. The Enneagram is not just a test that tells you how you are, but it gives you the opportunity to reflect on your actions and how you interact with those who are different than you.

SEE, WHAT HAPPENED WAS

Originally, I wanted this project to be a poster series. At the start of the semester, there was going to be some sort of diagnosis book in a way, something to visually communicate the data I had been collecting all semester. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, there had to be a change of plans. Instead, I've decided to document the process from the beginning of the year into this book. I think that the way this book is going to be laid out makes much more sense than to do a poster series because it's a very research-based, observational project that gave me a lot of insight into how collaboration may look like in the future. I've made sure to include my actual thesis paper within this book to show the process of all my findings.

turn to page 46 for thesis paper



ze trials

1 My first attempt was to create a symbol system defining each characteristic per enneagram number. This would hopefully organize the way we see each number—maybe make it clearer when each numbers' healthy and unhealthy habits arise. This attempt however was too straight forward and seemed to be a mere regurgitation of information rather than solving a design problem. This began as a card set, possibly made into a game of some sort to distinguish each enneagram number.

2 The second attempt at this project was to do a diagnosis in a way. I took some of the data I collected from each group and put it together in a poster form. There was a gradient to the background that I felt matched the vibe of the group and meshed in a full description of the behaviors at the bottom. There still needed to be more work done, somehow it didn't feel quite finished. There were a lot of loopholes that many people probably didn't quite understand from the information that I provided.

PROCESS ON NEXT PAGE →

This attempt was the more solid attempt—I was paying more attention to real life scenarios throughout class rather than just repeating information that anybody could find on the internet. This part of the project went the most in-depth, but then COVID-19 caused myself and my other peers to evacuate school, and many of our resources were cut off. This is what I had up until that point in time.

I've taken a handful of personality tests, most of which are completely inaccurate and useless (@buzzfeed).

But, while they're not accurate to personality, they are kind of fun and exciting to take. Even if it's not completely true to who you are, you can still manage to find meaning in your outcome no matter what it says. That's one of the really intriguing things about personality tests— you can find meaning in them and relate the information back to yourself to help you form a better understanding of who you are.

1

My very first set of notes. I just took to the drawing board and started writing down personality traits from all the numbers and assigning symbols. I thought about each symbol as movement, even if the word attached to the imagery didn't necessarily have a concrete look.

This part of the project was just to get a start on making something—the idea of just starting to make something, anything so that you have something to work off of.

Each personality had positive and negative traits, and I wanted to make it clear that there were healthy and unhealthy pieces of all personalities.

On the bottom, you'll see my attempts at making these card-like forms, describing the personality traits using the symbol system I created on the left as imagery.

The symbols remained at the bottom for clarity as well as used in the background as an image alongside the name of each enneagram name.

Positive Symbols

① Rational = ↑
Principled = √

② Caring = ♥
generous = ↗

③ adaptable = ~~~
driven =))

④ expressive = ☆
honest = Δ

⑤ innovative = ☁
perceptive = ⊙

⑥ committed = []
engaging = -o-

⑦ versatile = L7
spontaneous = X

⑧ powerful = λ
confident = ⊏

⑨ easy-going = ~
reassuring = ✓

Negative Symbols

cruel = \
contradictory = ✕

possessive = ✕
aggressive = m

vindictive = ∠
jealous = ⇄

self-absorbed = ⊙
temperamental = ⊥

secretive = -
isolated = (.)

anxious = ↖
suspicious = ∩

distracted = 2h
impulsive = {

confrontational =]I
omnipotent = ·0·

repressed = ⊙
unaware = ?





♥ ↻ ~ ~ ~ A



↑ \ x ~



♥ ~ ~ ~ A



☾ ☪ ↻



★ △ ☼ ⊥



☾ — ☼



☐ --- ↻ ↻



⊥ x % ⊥



^ ⊥ || ⊠



~ ∨ ☼ ?

BREAKING DOWN
THE IDEA.



T
Y
P
E
T
H
R
E
E



Symbol System

This was a really fun experiment just to try out. **Your first idea will never be your final idea.** I had to get that engrained in my brain at the start of this program.

So as you can see on the left, I made it so that the name of the personality was in text, the number itself in smaller text, and I used the symbols as imagery for the card.

It's pretty obvious that I didn't think through this part of the project so much, but that's alright because getting this out of the way for my next few trials was a solid start. It helped me start making something.

You could say it was aesthetically pleasing, but that was pretty much it for this process. Nothing more. Kind of unfortunate really, but on to the next page...

This would be the direction I would have stayed in if it was for some sort of card game. Individual meetings helped me sort out what direction I wanted to go into.

I needed something more solid, something that wasn't just repeating what anyone could find online.

There needed to be some sort of human connection.

They suck so badly... I feel like they talk about me behind my back all the time. There was one person who was just being really vague even though they know **EXACTLY** what we need to do for this project.

They argued about what we needed to do because she was **lazy**. They just didn't want to do it. We argued about what was needed to be done even though it was just about this person's laziness. They just didn't want to do it. Apparently, we're just doing what "I'm telling everyone to do... (yesterday), **"Can I just drop the project?" "This is so much work!"** they made an Instagram w/o saying anything. I want to see deadlines. I want to see this work done by a certain time.

When it's someone else's idea, they check out. But, when they're meeting people, they talk the whole time which is good. I'd say I'm both a leader and a follower, it just depends on what's happening. I know I stay more shy with strangers than with people I know. So far, I'd say the project is going smoothly. I feel good about it. We just need to pick up the pace.

Sometimes I feel like I just have to take the lead.

So far, we've done Save the Date. and we've divided the work on that. I think at this point, we're all playing the same roll. There's this weird complex where ~~is taking control... the whole time? But they're arguing due to logical reasons.~~

acts so different when is around. They're actually pretty agreeable.

first attempt at making a poster.

THE FORM CHANGED DUE TO COMPLICATIONS.

One of the groups I observed seemed to be having issues communicating, and I wasn't sure how to properly express their interactions because many of the interactions were negative. They weren't sure how to communicate well with each other, and much of their feedback to me was in poor taste. Due to the process-book-nature of this book, I'm going to include it. I won't include the names for confidentiality; however, this is the direction my project started taking, and I did not like it. This was supposed to be a fun expressive way of showing collaboration.

This wasn't meant to be a bashing session.

This group gave me interesting personality traits to work with when I was creating the poster. Because they were having communication issues, I got interesting feedback about the way they were collaborating. To visualize their lack of communication and negativity toward each other, I felt that using black and white only showed the contrast and harshness that this group displayed.

"Can I just drop the project? This is so much work."

"At this point, we're all playing the same role. There's this complex where "someone who shall not be named" is taking the control the whole time. But they're arguing due to illogical reasons."

"*Someone who shall not be named* acts so different when "another person who shall not be named" is around. They're actually pretty agreeable."

"When it's someone else's idea, they check out. But when they're meeting people, they talk the whole time."

"We just need to pick up the pace."

"Sometimes I feel like I just have to take the lead because no one else is standing up."

Generalizing and Synthesizing.

So that's exactly what I ended up doing. I removed much of the controversial bits and pieces, and dulled it down to the bare bones. I made sure not to point any fingers, it's not a gossip column.

This project was starting to be something in which I was becoming more invested. I payed greater attention to not only just the interactions that these group members had with myself, but the change in dynamic as they worked together after speaking with me.

I noticed that even with their concerns with each other, none of them were willing to come up with some sort of compromise that checked off each of their wants for the project deliverables.

This is where instead of fixing their internal issues, members started to blame me for their problems.

I was not about to take the fault for something that I'm observing.

This project relies on typography as imagery for much of the visuals. I took some quotes from the class and used dynamic typography to enhance the meaning of their words.

These case studies are not evidence of whether or not two numbers can work together, but they are my own observations in my personal opinion. I was looking at their ability to collaborate to look for traits indicative of their Enneagram numbers.

Since this project was supposed to be accurate representations of number interactions, I wanted to be sure that I included interactions that were negative as well as positive. This poster in particular served well for the negative side of collaboration when things don't go the way people want to always. It happens in real life, and it happens hypothetically too.

Generalizing stereotypical traits of a 6w7 and 3w2 respectively



Case Study No. 3

Enneagram 7w8 & 3w2 & 9w1 | Collaborative Observations

gd / sp 20

7w8 THE REALIST

assertive
go-getter
goal-oriented
all/nothing person

talk to people to know what's happening on the outside

positive
uncomfortable w/ negative difficult

realist (7w6)
working well together and give and take to a conversation

open
to suggestions nervous that it won't be deep enough- think to depth of things

3w2 the achiever

work really well with others

similar thought process
good w/feedback and sharing

take ideas and make better/flexible

achiever/helper
considerate, achieve a substantial direction move toward goal

working with a 7w8 is nice because they're a very guiding presence, they take ideas and make it more better/flexible

9w1 the peacemaker

assertive
go-getter
goal-oriented
all/nothing person

talk to people to know what's happening on the outside

positive
uncomfortable w/ negative difficult

-realist (7w6)
working well together and give and take to a conversation

open
to suggestions nervous that it won't be deep enough- think to depth of things

A wing 8, a 3, and a wing 1, all are motivated by achieving their goals and working hard. There are a few differences between them that create an interesting trio of collaborators. For example, the 7w8 is mainly driven by just going and creating- they are comfortable

project in particular has gone through many variations and changes. There have been minor setbacks, but each group member has maintained a go-getter attitude and hasn't backed down from their original goal. The 9w1 in this group is like the middle man in a



Case Study No. 1

Enneagram 6w7 & 3w2 | Collaborative Observations

gd / sp 20

6w7

can be a leader or follower
circumstantial,

depends on who's around
very good communicator
, can be

persuasive
very good sense of initiative

can shy away when feeling
ordered around
likes things a certain way

can sometimes be difficult to be
a-follower due to having such
large ideas that want to be heard
and followed through



achiever

speaks on things that are necessary, but
doesn't want to stir up any harsh feelings.

incredibly hardworking, but seems to be afraid
to take charge, wants to be the achiever, but
without stepping on people's toes.

doesn't appreciate laziness.
definitely aware of hypocrites

needs to think out loud to get everything out on
the table in order to work forward.

needs deadlines and hard evidence of work.

Overall, the interactions between a 3w2 and a 6w7 are pretty docile. They both have the potential to work well together just like any pairing. However, with this group of people, the problem lies where both types really want to have the project go the way they want, and it's difficult to find compromise when all of the ideas are wildly different. The best way to go about this collaborative project is just to make sure that all of their ideas are heard- just have everything out on the table for discussion. Groups disagree all the time on creative decisions, but it's how you solve them that creates harmony or creates chaos. This group of collaborators are all talented and balance each other out with their strengths and weaknesses. There's a lot that is brought to the table, it's just a matter of who is the one to take the reins on it. 3w2s end up bottling up their thoughts which can be a bad thing if they need to talk about something that's bothering them while 6w7s like to just go.

Case Study No. 2

Enneagram 1w9 & 9w1 | Collaborative Observations

gd / sp 20



1w9

The Reformer

both can be **calculated**
 -- good
 and observant
communicator, just
 afraid of changing the other person's
 wants everything to be
 ideas to favor their own
open and out on the
table
 finding themselves **quick to**
judgment sometimes,
 having to take a step back

9w1

the peacemaker

finds
independence
calming and peaceful
 enjoys moving to the beat of own
 drum maintains **firm grasp**
doesn't like to
disagree, on realism vs getting too
 tied to emotions-
 but is willing to have that
 conversation in order to move
 forward with the project
 good at **separating** the
 two ideas

This pairing is interesting because they're exact opposites- a 1w9 has a wild work ethic, but is afraid that they'll cause disagreements if they do too much. A 9w1 likes to go with the flow, but remain individualistic. A 1w9 likes to be a leader, but they make sure that everyone has a role so that they don't feel as if they're taking over a project. 1w9s are very observant of the social dynamic between themselves and others. 9s tend not to get very defensive or upset, but they do make sure nothing is wrong, hence the "Peacemaker"

Both are willing to push each other, and sometimes it can get stressful. Both numbers in this group don't want to offend each other by wanting to push an idea in fear of making the other person change their idea completely. Both hate disagreement- they'd rather just say what they're thinking and take on problems one at a time. It is hard to bring up problems because nobody wants to have them to start with, but they try to discuss everything. These collaborators are understanding of each other especially in times of stress.

Case Study No. 1

Enneagram 6w7 & 3w2 | Collaborative Observations

gd / sp 20

6w7

the loyalist and the achiever

can be a leader or follower
 circumstantial,
 depends on who's around
very good communicator
 persuasive
 very good sense of initiative
 can shy away when feeling
 ordered around
 likes things a certain way
 can sometimes be difficult to be
 a follower due to having such
 large ideas that want to be heard
 and followed through

3w2

achiever

speaks on things that are necessary, but
 doesn't want to stir up any harsh feelings.
 incredibly hardworking, but seems to be afraid
 to take charge. wants to be the achiever, but
 without stepping on people's toes.
doesn't appreciate laziness.
 definitely aware of hypocrites
 needs to think out loud to get everything out on
 the table in order to work forward.
 needs deadlines and hard evidence of work.

Overall, the interactions between a 3w2 and a 6w7 are pretty docile. They both have the potential to work well together just like any pairing. However, with this group of people, the problem lies where both types really want to have the project go the way they want, and it's difficult to find compromise when all of the ideas are wildly different. The best way to go about this collaborative project is just to make sure that all of their ideas are heard- just have everything out on the table

for discussion. Groups disagree all the time on creative decisions, but it's how you solve them that creates harmony or creates chaos. This group of collaborators are all talented and balance each other out with their strengths and weaknesses. There's a lot that is brought to the table, it's just a matter of who is the one to take the reigns on it. 3w2s end up bottling up their thoughts which can be a bad thing if they need to talk about something that's bothering them while 6w7s like to just go.

The Peacemaker and The Reformer

1W9

CALCULATED

1W9

both are calculated and observant
afraid of changing the other person's ideas
to favor their own

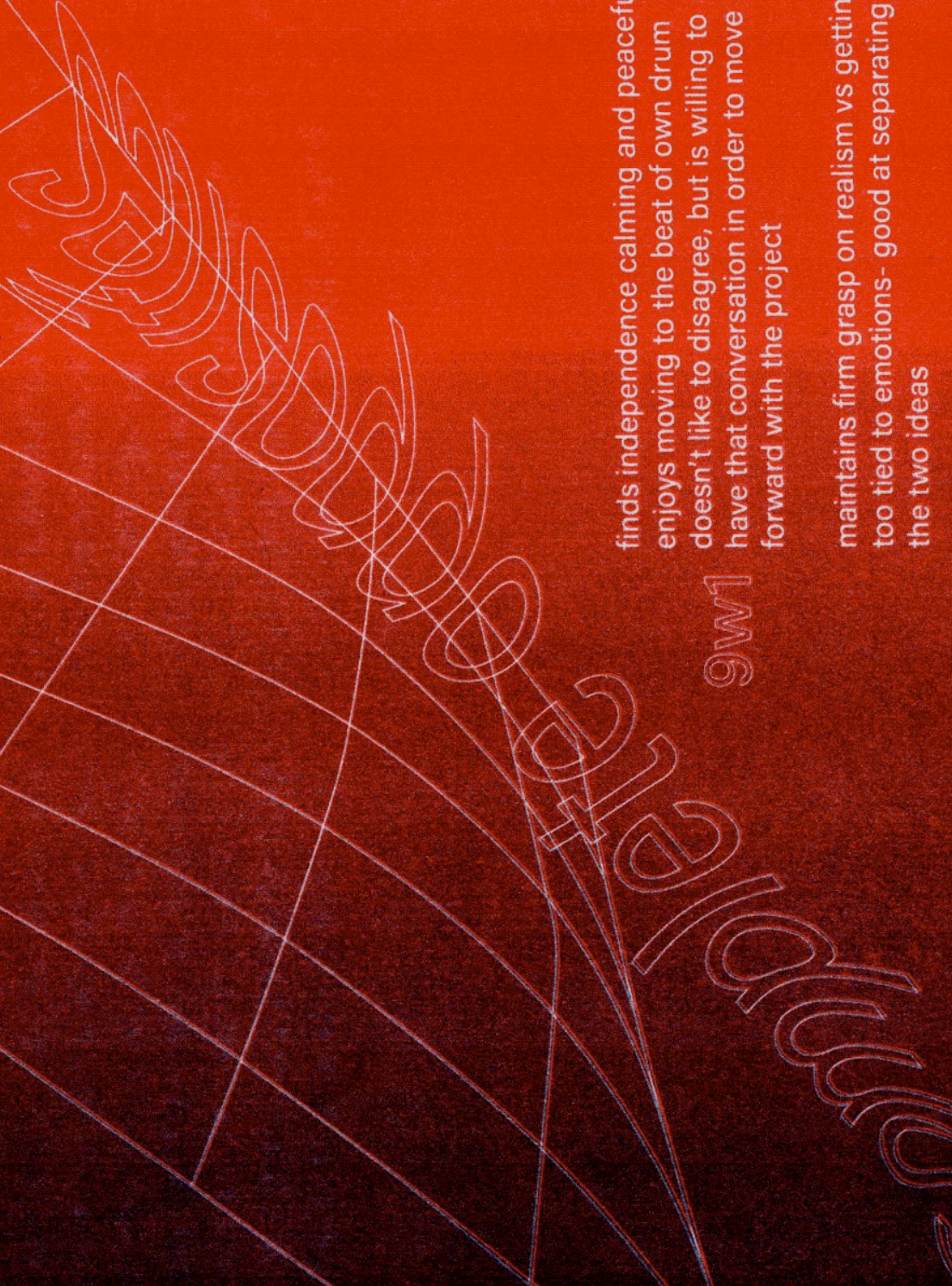
finding themselves quick to judgement
sometimes, having to take a step back
-- good communicator, just wants
everything to be open and out on the table

We even tried rising the project
because why not?

9W1

finds independence calming and peaceful
enjoys moving to the beat of own drum
doesn't like to disagree, but is willing to
have that conversation in order to move
forward with the project

maintains firm grasp on realism vs getting
too tied to emotions- good at separating
the two ideas



6WZ

can be a leader or follower
circumstantial,

depends on who's around

very good communicator

persuasive

very good sense of initiative

can shy away when feeling

ordered around

likes things a certain way

can sometimes be difficult to be

a follower due to having such

large ideas that want to be heard

and followed through



the loyalist and the achiever



achiever

speaks on things that are necessary, but
doesn't want to stir up any harsh feelings.

incredibly hardworking, but seems to be afraid
to take charge. wants to be the achiever, but
without stepping on people's toes.

doesn't appreciate laziness.
definitely aware of hypocrites

needs to think out loud to get everything out on
the table in order to work forward.

needs deadlines and hard evidence of work.

After more feedback >

These posters still didn't seem to give off enough information about the project or the numbers. Am I supposed to be giving advice to these collaborative groups? Consulting with each group to show them a more efficient way of going about their project?

Honestly, I wasn't completely sure what I was supposed to do. I thought all I was doing was recording what I saw and trying to find a way to visually represent the interactions between numbers.

Okay, so what's the next step?

Well... I did exactly what I was told. I put more information on the poster. But since I didn't have a ton of room on the front, then to the back I went. Then that raised questions like— so do I need to change the form now? If it's now front and back, does it need to be a book? How can I show this information accurately and clearly?

Other feedback I received was that there didn't seem to be enough information on the front. Why are there those forms there? What's the importance of them? Do they need to be there?

Is there something else you could use to symbolize each personality trait? Do you need to have some sort of key to explain what each symbol is? Would the key be on the front? Back? Etc. There was a lot for me to think about before the next round of posters.

changes.

- clearly labeled case study number
- clearly visible enneagram type with information listed below
- more diagnostic looking
- symbol system utilized as imagery that interacts with text in an interesting way
- uses masking to abstract other images within symbol forms
- utilized riso to help add color and dimension

BEFORE



AFTER

Case Study No. 1

Enneagram 6w7 & 3w2 | Collaborative Observations

gd / sp 20



THE LOYALIST

can be a leader or follower

circumstantial,

depends on who's around

very good communicator,

can be *persuasive* **very good sense of initiative**

can shy away when feeling ordered around **likes things a certain way**

can sometimes be **difficult to be a follower** due to having such **large ideas** that want to be

heard and followed through

wants to be listened to and helpful.

can feel

pushed away easily



the achiever

speaks on things that are necessary, but doesn't want to stir up any harsh feelings.

incredibly **hardworking**, but seems to be afraid to take charge. wants to be the **achiever**, but without stepping on people's toes.

to get everything out on the table in order to work forward.

needs deadlines and hard evidence of work.

doesn't appreciate laziness. definitely aware of hypocrites

needs to think out loud to get everything out on the table in order to work forward.

needs **deadlines** and hard

evidence of work.

Overall, the interactions between a 3w2 and a 6w7 are pretty docile. They both have the potential to work well together just like any pairing. However, with this group of people, the problem lies where both types really want to have the project go the way they want, and it's difficult to find compromise when all of the ideas are wildly different. The best way to go about this collaborative project is just to make sure that all of their ideas are heard—just have everything out on the table for discussion.

Groups disagree all the time on creative decisions, but it's how you solve them that creates harmony or creates chaos. This group of collaborators are all talented and balance each other out with their strengths and weaknesses. There's a lot that is brought to the table, it's just a matter of who is the one to take the reins on it. 3w2s end up bottling up their thoughts which can be a bad thing if they need to talk about something that's bothering them while 6w7s like to just go.



Case Study No. 2

Enneagram 1w9 & 9w1 | Collaborative Observations

gd / sp 20

1w9 The Reformer

both can be **calculated** and observant
 - - good **communicator**, just afraid of changing the other person's ideas to favor their own
open and out on the table
 finding themselves **quick to judgment** sometimes,
 having to take a step back

9w1 the peacemaker

finds **independence**
calming and peaceful
 enjoys moving to the beat of own drum
 maintains **firm grasp**
doesn't like to disagree, on realism vs getting too tied to emotions-
 but is willing to have that conversation in order to move forward with the project
 good at **separating** the two ideas

This pairing is interesting because they're exact opposites- a 1w9 has a wild work ethic, but is afraid that they'll cause disagreements if they do too much. A 9w1 likes to go with the flow, but remain individualistic. A 1w9 likes to be a leader, but they make sure that everyone has a role so that they don't feel as if they're taking over a project. 1w9s are very observant of the social dynamic between themselves and others. 9s tend not to get very defensive or upset, but they do make sure nothing is wrong, hence the "Peacemaker" part of them.

Both are willing to push each other, and sometimes it can get stressful. Both numbers in this group don't want to offend each other by wanting to push an idea in fear of making the other person change their idea completely. Both hate disagreement- they'd rather just say what they're thinking and take on problems one at a time. It is hard to bring up problems because nobody wants to have them to start with, but they try to discuss everything. These collaborators are understanding of each other especially in times of stress.

Numbers at a Glance

The Reformer- Enneagram Type One
 The Rational, Idealistic Type: Principled, Purposeful, Self-Controlled, and Perfectionistic

Ones are conscientious and ethical, with a strong sense of right and wrong. They are teachers, crusaders, and advocates for change: always striving to improve things, but afraid of making a mistake. Well-organized, orderly, and fastidious, they try to maintain high standards, but can slip into being critical and perfectionistic. They typically have problems with resentment and impatience.

- ↑ RATIONAL
- ↘ CRUEL
- ✕ CONTRADICTORY
- ✓ PRINCIPLED

The Peacemaker- Enneagram Type Nine
 The Easygoing, Self-Effacing Type: Receptive, Reassuring Agreeable, and Complacent

Nines are accepting, trusting, and stable. They are usually creative, optimistic, and supportive, but can also be too willing to go along with others to keep the peace. They want everything to go smoothly and be without conflict, but they can also tend to be complacent, simplifying problems and minimizing anything upsetting. They typically have problems with inertia and stubbornness.

- ☺ EASY-GOING
- ✓ REASSURING
- ☹ REPRESSED
- ? UNAWARE

Relationship
 The Reformer and the Peacemaker

These types understand each other from the inside as it were, and for better or worse, can see many of their own traits in each other. On the positive side, each type brings a certain idealism and desire to change the world to make it a better place. Nines bring a more interpersonal orientation than Ones to their idealism, but both can be self-sacrificial and hard-working, and willing to put their personal needs and interests aside for the welfare of others. Both are able to delay rewards for a long-term good they seek.

Ones bring clarity and rationality and the ability to articulate ideals and understandings. They strive to improve themselves and their environment, are conscientious, have high ethical and moral standards, and are fair and consistent. Nines bring a gentle, accepting quality that nurtures and supports others without as much explicit demand for self-improvement. Nines tend to take a bit of the rough edge off the criticality and seriousness of ones. They can be a highly altruistic couple who balance idealism with humanity.

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This project serves to allow me to observe how certain designers work with others. We collaborate with others every single day of our lives especially within the design realm. In theory, we'd be the most efficient working with others by understanding ourselves and them. By using the Enneagram, we are naturally enforcing empathy among each other.

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Understanding Enneagram Collaboration

The collaboration between these two is very interesting because they're opposite numbers. Both collaborators have a little bit of each other in them which makes for a very good team. They balance each other out well.

It's been an interesting time reflecting on this project of opposites. Both of the collaborators are pretty easy-going, one a little more easy-going than the other, but they work together pretty well. The 9 in both people don't want to step on the other person's toes, and it makes for a smooth-sailing project, but it can also be unhealthy if there are no steps to stride forward. Criticism is key in order to make improvements.

So far, the biggest issue this group has run into is just finding concepts that relate to each other every week. That, or figuring out what to match to each other whether it be color or typeface. It's difficult to stay true to one's design style while adhering to parameters set by the other one. These designers usually talk at the beginning of the week in order to sort out the kinks before the creating begins.

Both people in this group chose to work together on this project because they wanted to have a way to continually create without thinking, and I think this is the 1 in both of them. They're working toward a similar goal, and they have the drive and motivation to push them. The imagery I decided to use for this pair was a black and white chess set. Chess is a strategy game. It takes a lot of brain power and thinking ahead in order to successfully win. Like a chess game, these two collaborators have to think before they make a move in the right direction. In chess, you have an opponent, and I can see this project as being somewhat competitive. It's healthy competition. The pieces are black and white, they're opposites. But, they depend on each others' moves in order to plan their own.

I think this group is doing really well so far. If they have issues, they talk about them, and so far, they've had little to no issues. This group adheres to the standard relationship between a 1 and a 9.

Case Study No. 2
 Enneagram 1w9 & 9w1 | Collaborative Observations

1w9
 The Reformer

both can be **calculated** and observant
 - - good **communicator**, just afraid of changing the other person's ideas to favor their own
open and out on the table
 finding themselves **quick to judgment** sometimes,
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9w1
 the peacemaker

finds **independence**
calming and peaceful
 enjoys moving to the beat of own drum
 maintains **firm grasp**
doesn't like to disagree, on realism vs getting too tied to emotions-
 but is willing to have that conversation in order to move forward with the project
 good at **separating** the two ideas

Individual Characteristics

- ↑ RATIONAL
- ↘ CRUEL
- ✕ CONTRADICTORY
- ✓ PRINCIPLED

- ☺ EASY-GOING
- ✓ REASSURING
- ☹ REPRESSED
- ? UNAWARE

Relationship
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1w9 work ethic

1w9 and 9w1 in stress

Understanding the Poster



Case Study No. 1

Enneagram 6w7 & 3w2 | Collaborative Observations

gd / sp 20

6W7

THE LOYALIST

can be a leader or follower

circumstantial,

depends on who's around

very good communicator,

can be *persuasive* very good sense of initiative

can shy away when feeling ordered around **likes things a certain way**

can sometimes be **difficult to be a follower** due to having such **large ideas** that want to be

heard and followed through

wants to be listened to and helpful.

can feel

pushed away easily



3w2

the achiever

speaks on things that are necessary, but doesn't want to stir up any harsh feelings.

doesn't appreciate laziness. definitely aware of hypocrites

incredibly **hardworking,** but seems to be afraid to take charge. wants to be the **achiever**, but without stepping on people's toes.

needs to think out loud to get everything out on the table in order to work forward.

needs **deadlines** and hard

to get everything out on the table in order to work forward.

evidence of work.

needs deadlines and hard evidence of work.

Overall, the interactions between a 3w2 and a 6w7 are pretty docile. They both have the potential to work well together just like any pairing. However, with this group of people, the problem lies where both types really want to have the project go the way they want, and it's difficult to find compromise when all of the ideas are wildly different. The best way to go about this collaborative project is just to make sure that all of their ideas are heard- just have everything out on the table for discussion.



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Numbers at a Glance

The Loyalist- Enneagram Type Six

The Committed, Security-Oriented Type:
Engaging, Responsible, Anxious, and Suspicious

The committed, security-oriented type. Sixes are reliable, hard-working, responsible, and trustworthy. Excellent "troubleshooters," they foresee problems and foster cooperation, but can also become defensive, evasive, and anxious—running on stress while complaining about it. They can be cautious and indecisive, but also reactive, defiant and rebellious. They typically have problems with self-doubt and suspicion.

-  COMMITTED
-  ENGAGING
-  ANXIOUS
-  SUSPICIOUS

The Achiever- Enneagram Type Three

The Success-Oriented, Pragmatic Type:
Adaptable, Excelling, Driven, and Image-Conscious

Threes are self-assured, attractive, and charming. Ambitious, competent, and energetic, they can also be status-conscious and highly driven for advancement. They are diplomatic and poised, but can also be overly concerned with their image and what others think of them. They are typically have problems with workaholicism and competitiveness.

-  ADAPTABLE
-  DRIVEN
-  VINDICTIVE
-  JEALOUS

Relationship

The Loyalist with the Achiever

Threes can bring hard work, optimism, energy, a desire to communicate to and connect with people, and a feeling of unlimited potential both personally and in the relationship itself. Threes can bring an enormous sense of self-confidence and the hope of success that is assured- that this relationship is a winning team or that this couple is the best ever. Sixes bring grounding, industrious hard work, perseverance in difficult times, and personal loyalty to the Three. Sixes provide warmth, support, and a great deal of practical good sense.

Both believe in applying elbow grease toward goals- in short they are both doers. Unless their relationship is healthy and well-stabilized, they can tend to bring out the worst qualities in each other. Both want to feel socially accepted. Both can be conformists of various kinds, doing what is expected of them, and both avoid looking at their deeper feelings or discussing their emotions. At their worst, sixes and threes can become dishonest and evasive. Eventually there becomes a disinterest from both sides.

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Understanding Enneagram Collaboration

This group has a lot of bright personalities, and while most of the time this can lead to big ideas and risk-taking, it can also lead to disagreement and dishonesty. This group has a lot of potential, but it becomes lost when the end goal of the project is forgotten.

This group was really interesting to follow because I have never really seen sixes and threes work together closely. Knowing each of the collaborators, I knew there was going to be some amazing work produced. Each person has the potential to create some super unique work because they all came from different backgrounds, and if they worked together successfully, something spectacular.

I think the biggest issue this group ran into was just communicating with one another- or if the issue wasn't communicating, then it was listening to what everybody had to say. A group of three can be tricky, there tends to be ganging up on somebody, and it becomes unfair to the unlucky third opinion. The beginning of this project started off rocky just because it can be difficult to go from working independently to depending on not just one, but two people to pull their weight. While the ideas seemed to be intermingling, the work they produced still remained single-handedly created which defeated the purpose of collaborating. This is completely understandable. Designing with others is difficult because you want to push for your ideas and not completely run over somebody else's. But in order for this group to maximize their potential, they needed to work together and put their best skills forward.

For this group, the imagery I chose to use was a chameleon. I did this for a few reasons. Chameleons are very adaptable, and this project was client-work, so they had to be ready to change their concept at any given moment. I also chose the chameleon because it symbolizes being able to hide, to camouflage. When I spoke to members of the group, they seemed to have qualms, but they were afraid to speak up on it, for reasons I'm not sure of. Like a chameleon, this group also adapted to each other, compromising and changing ideas to fit everybody's needs.

3w2 6w7 relationship

3w2 traits

Understanding the Poster

Enneagram 6w7 & 3w2 | Collaborative Observations



Case Study No. 3

Enneagram 7w8 & 3w2 & 9w1 | Collaborative Observations

gd / sp 20

7w8 THE REALIST

assertive
go-getter
goal-oriented
all/nothing person

more comfortable w/
positive
uncomfortable w/ negative
difficult

talk to people to know
what's happening on the
outside

realist (7w8)
working well
together and give and
take to a conversation

open to suggestions
nervous that it won't be
deep enough- think to
depth of things

3w2 the achiever

**work really well
with others**

similar thought
process
good w/**feedback**
and sharing

take ideas and make
better/**flexible**

achiever/helper
considerate, achieve
a substantial direction
move toward goal

working with a
**7w8 is nice because
they're a very guiding
presence**, they take
ideas and make it more
better/flexible

9w1 the peacemaker

assertive
go-getter
goal-oriented
all/nothing person

more comfortable w/
positive
uncomfortable w/ negative
difficult

talk to people to know
what's happening on the
outside

-realist (7w8)
working well
together and give and
take to a conversation

open to suggestions
nervous that it won't be
deep enough- think to
depth of things

A wing 8, a 3, and a wing 1, all are motivated by achieving their goals and working hard. There are a few differences between them that create an interesting trio of collaborators. For example, the 7w8 is mainly driven by just going and creating- they are comfortable with fast-paced, hands-on work, and they're ready to just go-go-go even if the idea isn't fully fledged out. The 3w2 in this group aims to be the achiever with a hinge of helper in them. This makes the 7w8 and the 3w2 a great pairing because the 7 will drive the making while the 3 will make sure everything goes smoothly and according to plan. This group's





project in particular has gone through many variations and changes. There have been minor setbacks, but each group member has maintained a go-getter attitude and hasn't backed down from their original goal. The 9w1 in this group is like the middle man in a sense- the 9 in them is agreeable and supports the ideas of everybody else while the 1 in them continues to help make suggestions and plans to move forward while visualizing the big picture. When push comes to shove, this group knows how to sacrifice and compromise in order to reach their goals by the end of the semester.



Numbers at a Glance

The Enthusiast- Enneagram Type Seven
The Busy, Variety-Seeking Type:
Spontaneous, Versatile, Acquisitive, and Scattered

Sevens are extroverted, optimistic, versatile, and spontaneous. Playful, high-spirited, and practical, they can also misapply their many talents, becoming over-extended, scattered, and undisciplined. They constantly seek new and exciting experiences, but can become distracted and exhausted by staying on the go. They typically have problems with impatience and impulsiveness.

-  **VERSATILE**
-  **SPONTANEOUS**
-  **DISTRACTED**
-  **IMPULSIVE**

The Achiever- Enneagram Type Three
The Success-Oriented, Pragmatic Type:
Adaptable, Excelling, Driven, and Image-Conscious

Threes are self-assured, attractive, and charming. Ambitious, competent, and energetic, they can also be status-conscious and highly driven for advancement. They are diplomatic and poised, but can also be overly concerned with their image and what others think of them. They are typically have problems with workaholicism and competitiveness.

-  **ADAPTABLE**
-  **DRIVEN**
-  **VINDICTIVE**
-  **JEALOUS**

The Peacemaker- Enneagram Type Nine
The Easygoing, Self-Effacing Type:
Receptive, Reassuring Agreeable, and Complacent

Nines are accepting, trusting, and stable. They are usually creative, optimistic, and supportive, but can also be too willing to go along with others to keep the peace. They want everything to go smoothly and be without conflict, but they can also tend to be complacent, simplifying problems and minimizing anything upsetting. They typically have problems with inertia and stubbornness.

-  **EASY-GOING**
-  **REASSURING**
-  **REPPRESSED**
-  **UNAWARE**

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Understanding Enneagram Collaboration

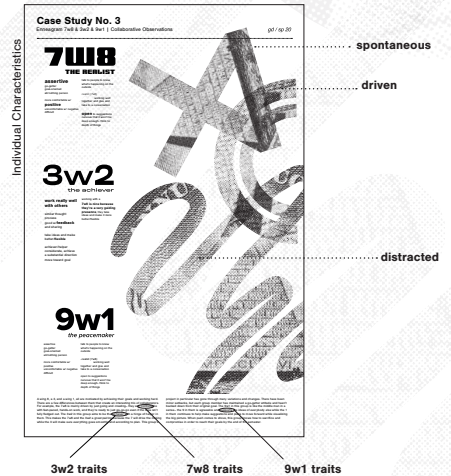
With this group, I felt like everybody had a good sense of motivation, and each person I talked to had a very positive attitude about the project even when they had setbacks.

During each critique, there were many questions raised like, "What is the goal of this project?", "How can you make your concept clearer?", "I'm not sure I understand what you guys are trying to do here," and so forth. This created a few setbacks with the making process. I observed this group take all the feedback and try a multitude of different ideas. They never let the it get them down, and they managed to stick to exactly what they were trying to do in the beginning, just with different forms.

The image behind the symbols I chose to use was a one dollar bill with an emphasis on the eyeball that sits above the pyramid. The dollar symbolizes the yearn for success or money or a goal. Each person in this group has expressed their desire to make this project go really well because they all have the drive to make this a success.

The eyeball to me symbolized the visionary on all of them. Each person knew what they wanted this project to be, and they never let that final goal fade throughout the critiquing process. For the more informational part of the poster, I highlighted some of the key traits I saw for each individual. Like I explained on the front, the 7w8 has the drive, the 3w2 has the organizational skills, and the 9w1 is the glue of the group. They make sure that every part of the group has a voice and are heard.

Overall, this group is a great set of collaborators, and I know the end of this project will be successful just knowing these three designers. Each of them have the same goal in mind and are understanding with each other, and that's all you can ask of each other. When problems arise, everybody is confident in communicating with each other so that the issues can be addressed and it's easier to move forward. This group is both work efficient and socially efficient.



Understanding the Poster

Enneagram 7w8 & 3w2 & 9w1 | Collaborative Observations

**THIS IS MY THESIS,
BUT IT'S ALSO
A QUARANTINE**

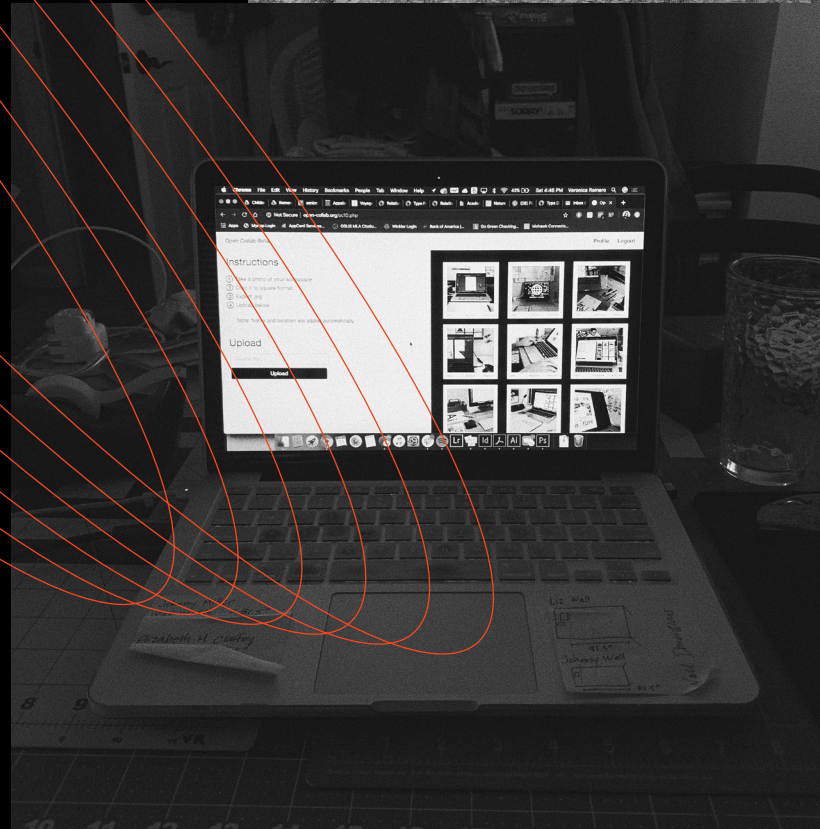
**COVID-19, YOU ALMOST
RUINED MY SENIOR YEAR.**

**Then COVID-19 hit, and everyone
paused. The world paused. The class
had to evacuate and start working
from home. This completely changed
the course of my project. It was
significantly more difficult to work
in a space I wasn't comfortable.**

**212 was my safe place to spread
out and work. I had face-to-face
interactions with these groups
of people. I could see work being
created in front of my eyes.
And now, nothing. It definitely
threw everyone for a loop.**

**I can look back on this experience as
a learning process. When something
as drastic as this happens, you have
to be quick on your feet. Something
says to stop, to quit. But you shouldn't
because what better time to learn
something new than now?**

What do I do now?



C
YOUR EYES

L

O

S

E



FOR A

**E N N E A G R A M
COLLABORATIVE**

OBSERVATIONS

observations within the senior studio class, discovering what kinds of creative collaboration emerges between different enneagram types to learn about successful group dynamics.

S E C O N D

and you'll realize
m a y b e
this won't

matter in a year or two.

final thoughts →

I made the decision to turn this into a book rather than a poster series. It only made sense considering the current social and environmental climate. There's really no point in designing posters for an exhibit that will never happen. Rather, I'd be content creating a book that can document my work as a senior at Appalachian State forever.

So congratulations for making this far, I hope you enjoy my findings from this semester. It was truly a pleasure getting to know these people better not only as designers but as friends and colleagues.



ENNEAGRAM COLLABORATIVE OBSERVATIONS

Veronica Romero

Honors Thesis Project

Appalachian State University

Submitted to the Department of Art

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Bachelor of Fine Arts

May, 2020

Tricia Treacy

Dr. Mira Waits

Dr. Christopher Holden

Abstract

The Enneagram has the potential to be used as more than just a personality test—it can be used as a tool to delineate personality types in an accurate way. People surround people every day. The way we interact is important so that we can have successful and efficient lifestyles. The way we treat people is important. We create different environments with the interactions we choose to make, and sometimes those interactions are often confusing to understand. Human connection boils down to open communication and honesty. Does knowing somebody's personality type make it easier to collaborate with them? This project analyzes the interactions between creatives based on their Enneagram Personality type. The Enneagram is broken down into 9 interconnecting personalities, each with their respective wings. These numbers represent more apparent personality traits as well as common-ground and compatibility factors between the numbers. The wings represent the marginal-error in the test, a secondary-type that you learn toward; however, we aren't just numbers. We could be everything, and we could be nothing. What matters about this test is that it offers a way for one to look introspectively in order to better their connections with others. When it comes to collaboration, especially in a creative field, working with others is inevitable, and empathy for others is crucial. This attitude engenders a healthy relationship between people, and it allows us to think more objectively with a basic understanding of the other person's needs. This test may be used as a tool for future creative projects in order to sort which personality types may work best with other personality types. By using my peers as a foundation for my artistic expression, I had the opportunity to learn more about each number in depth, and create displays that show interactivity between numbers in healthy and unhealthy ways.

Disclaimer: This project is a reflection of my own personal interest in learning about Enneagram types in the context of collaborative environments like art and design. None of my findings are meant to serve as evidence in exemplifying how types interact with one another. This is all in the interest of exploring my personal experience with different types.

Keywords: personality, collaboration, art, design, empathy, meaning

Enneagram Collaborative Observations

According to the Enneagram Institute website, the Enneagram is “one of the most powerful and insightful tools for understanding ourselves and others. At its core, the Enneagram helps us to see ourselves at a deeper, more objective level and can be of invaluable assistance on our path to self-knowledge.” The off-the-bat questions I'll probably be asked is “Why would you look at the Enneagram?”, “What makes it different than other personality tests?”, “How can you be sure of its accuracy?”

I wanted to look at the Enneagram based off my own personal experience with knowing my number. It's given me a pathway of understanding, a way of thinking. What makes this different than other personality tests is that it relies on honest survey responses and utilizes a long list of simple questions designed to reveal a number as true to your personality and diminish any leading questions— the Enneagram is more similar to the HEXACO model than a BuzzFeed quiz. It does not steer the user into a certain category, but instead uses the process of elimination to figure out which number you best fit to. The best answer to the third question is— we really cannot be sure of the accuracy. Everybody views the world through a different lens, usually in a way that fits our needs or wants. So, how do we know that this test offers valuable information about personality? While our own personal experiences have meanings, and our answers to this test are accurate, how do we know that the test does not generalize our human experiences?

Taking this information about the Enneagram, I personally sought out to find if having more compatible numbers would yield a more successful collaborative project, or at the very least, successful communication. Then, I took this information to attempt to create visual aids for visual learners in hopes of allowing them to use the Enneagram for their own collaborative needs. The Enneagram Institute website has extensive information on each number: the general description, healthy traits, unhealthy traits, which number we go to when we're in stress, levels of development, misidentification, addictions, and much more. With this project, I focused mainly on the accuracy of the overview description of each type as well as weaknesses in terms of disagreement .

Process

At the beginning of the semester, I asked my class to take the Enneagram test so I had all of their numbers written down. This was just preliminary as I was interested in knowing everyone's number for my personal knowledge. As we started forming collaborative groups, my project was still in its infant stage, and I had not yet figured out what I wanted to do with the knowledge I had. Once everybody established groups and moved forward with their own projects, the scope of mine had changed drastically, and it made sense for me to start creating work that reflected interactions between numbers.

Our regular collaborative experience in the Graphic Design Program pushes the idea that working together with others yields more unique and innovative work. With the groups that were already formed, I looked at their numbers, and used that as a foundation for my creative expression. The main goal of this project was to create a visual aid for visual learners that described my perception of enneagram interactions.

Project 1: Fashion Showcase

This group consisted of three individuals. It included a male 6 wing 7, a female 6 wing 7, and another female 3 wing 2. The Enneagram type Six is known as the Loyalist: the committed, security-oriented type. Sixes are engaging, responsible, anxious, and suspicious. They tend to be "reliable, hard-working, responsible, and trustworthy." When they see problems, they try and cooperate as best as they can; however, in some cases they can become defensive and stressed out. In disagreement, they can become "reactive, defiant, and rebellious." They often have problems with self-doubting and suspicion.¹ Two of the three people in this group were 6 wing 7s which made an interesting pairing. The third collaborator was a 3 wing 2: the Achiever.² The Three is the success-oriented, pragmatic type. They tend to be "adaptable, excelling, driven, and image-conscious." While Threes can be very hard-working and competent, they also have the ability to get competitive and get caught up too much in their own personal self-image. According to the Enneagram Institute, the relationship between the Loyalist and the Achiever has the ability to be both very powerful or very conforming. When both numbers are at their healthiest, each brings hard work, a sense of optimism, a positive energy, and a desire to communicate with others. The Achiever, being goal-oriented, brings a sense of self-confidence that success is imminent. The Loyalist attributes perseverance during hard times and personal loyalty to the Achiever. Both types are work-oriented, so when they're both in their healthiest mindsets, they can achieve anything they put their mind to.

1 Type Six. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/type-6>

2 Type Three. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/type-3>

Despite each type's ability to be all-powerful goal-oriented workers, like any human being, they have the ability to become negative and stubborn. In my experience, I noticed Type 3s and Type 6s clash frequently. Both types can ignore their deeper feelings and push their emotions to the side to reach their goals— this creates a dishonest almost hostile work environment if the communication between them continues to be evasive. Eventually this creates disinterest from both sides.¹

The project included designing branded promotional materials for the annual Apparel Design and Merchandising 2020 Showcase. According to their project brief, the deliverables for the Showcase consisted of a unified design system to promote the event as well as physical promotional material, all of which would appropriately represent the nature of the show and the goals behind the creatives presenting at the event. The beginning of this project started out very strong, and each collaborator was excited to start branding this show. The designers dedicated their time and effort to bringing in exactly what they discussed. Graphic designers, in my experience, tend to be very head-strong, and each of these collaborators came in with a unique idea in which they would ultimately discuss one final direction. I noticed that it was difficult for this group to move toward a final decision because each of their ideas were so different from each other. This is one of the most frustrating parts of collaboration— letting go of your ideas and moving forward for the best of the group.





Something I appreciated while watching this group work together was their ability to take risks. All of them approached the design problem from different angles giving them more kinds of work to choose from for their final deliverable; however, it ended up leading to some disagreement about design decisions. In a collaborative environment, it makes sense to start out with hundreds of ideas then start to narrow down the approach by figuring out what the client likes. At the beginning of this project, this group successfully came up with many unique and well-thought out ideas; however, collaboration with this group felt somewhat strained because they could not pick one direction to go into. Instead of working on a singular idea with dedicated parts from each student, all of them worked individually. By the time they reconvened, their discussion seemed to hit dead ends, resulting in frustration from all parties.

Each collaborator brought something different to the table. With the amount of talent in this group of collaborators, I knew this group was going to come up with something amazing. The biggest issue they ran into was just honest and open communication, and that is understandable. Designers take their work seriously, and it is difficult to let go of an idea that you've put your time into. In some groups of three, there can be two against one, and it becomes unfair to the unlucky third opinion. While their ideas seemed to be relating to each other in some way, the work they produced in the end still seemed to be handled individually rather than as a group. Collaboration can be difficult because you want to push for what you want while simultaneously not walking all over somebody else's ideas. However, in order for this specific group to maximize their

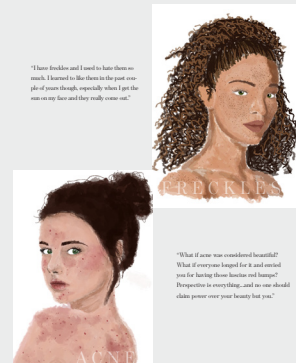
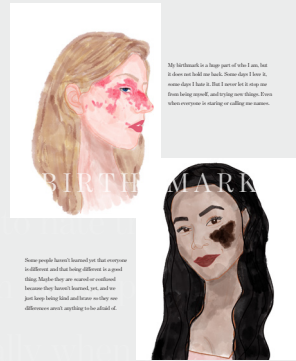
potential, they needed to take the best skills from each person and put those at the forefront. Open communication with each other is the most important part of collaboration no matter what kinds of people are involved. It makes for a smoother process and fewer mistakes.

Overall, I felt like for this specific group, there was a slimmer chance that they would work well together than not work well together. Sixes and Threes have similar unhealthy traits, so when one leans toward the unhealthy side, both will likely end up falling into unhealthy traits. Both traits are natural makers, and both want to feel accepted. With this group, I noticed that the 3 wing 2 was the most soft-spoken compared to the others, and in turn it caused her to feel unheard and sometimes isolated. The end of this project was a success even though the communication could have been better throughout. Due to the COVID-19, the Fashion Showcase translated from a physical platform to purely digital, but all the deliverables were completed successfully. I think this group is a good example of how sometimes clashing personalities can still produce good work. For my own creative inquiry, this tells me a few things about working past the small bumps in the road- just keep moving forward.



Project 2: Given Form

Given Form includes all-female 7 wing 8, 3 wing 2, and 9 wing 1. The Seven is known as the “Enthusiast” — the busy, spontaneous, versatile, and scattered type.¹ Sevens tend to be more extroverted than introverted. They are high-spirited and up for any kind of adventure; however, they can become over-extended and scattered if they turn to their more unhealthy traits like becoming unorganized and impulsive. In a group setting, Sevens can be leaders. They become excited about things that they’re interested in. Sevens are curious and are deep-thinkers, becoming sporadic and exhilarated when faced with a new problems to solve.³ Threes, again, are the “Achiever”— the goal-oriented and adaptable type. The Nine is also known as the “Peacemaker.” They are relatively easy-going and agreeable, sometimes to the point of complacency. The Nines are the trusting ones- they tend to be creative and optimistic. They enjoy supporting others and willing to compromise in order to keep the peace. Nines dislike conflict because it causes them discomfort, but in that they can also ignore important issues without dealing with them causing unwanted tension. Sometimes their state of mind can hinder progress due to their lack of comfort with change and disagreement.⁴



3 Type Seven. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/type-7>

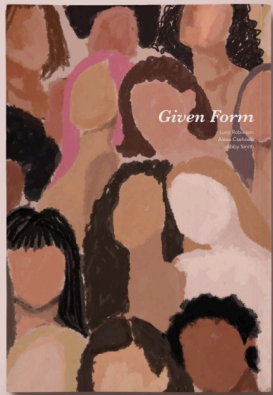
4 Type Nine. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/type-9>

According to the Enneagram Institute, the compatibility between a Seven and a Three is highly complementary. Each type has high energy levels and is more extroverted than introverted. Both types have optimistic outlooks as they work on projects, willing to try everything they can before giving up. While Threes are able to work more independently than Sevens, both still thrive in a collaborative work environment. Sevens bring a sense of fun and spontaneity, and sometimes this can negatively affect a Three if their main focus is to accomplish a specific goal. If both numbers are healthy, the interactions between them can be fun and full of life making an exciting couple of people to work with. If these numbers are unhealthy, it can feel as if there's almost too much energy at once. It can be exhausting to exude that much effort all at once, both personalities at one time. Sevens can end up not taking a project as seriously as a Three would like, in turn causing tension between the two. A Seven can feel as if they only exist to be a supplementary character in a Three's work environment.⁵

Nines and Threes work very well together for the most part, in fact it is a pretty common pairing. The Nine brings words of affirmation, a support system, the role of the encourager. The Three is the role that accomplishes, and with the Nine in their corner backing them up, Threes have the ability to explore their abilities as a professional. With a Three and a Nine together, there's a sense of relaxation and calmness. The Nine allows the Three to calm down and relax. Both types allow work to get done in a healthy manner. However, if these numbers run into trouble spots, it can almost be “too much of a good thing.” The Nine can seem aloof while the Three requires the basic need to feel appreciated, and the Nine may not seem like they really care for them at all. If the two numbers are unhealthy, a Three can feel as if a Nine is too suffocating, while the Nine can feel like the Three is too

5 Type Three with Type Seven. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/relationship-type-3-with-type-7>





demanding. The compatibility between a Nine and a Seven. They have an interesting mix of similar and dissimilar qualities.⁶

In their most basic forms, a Seven and a Nine are both optimists— they prefer to avoid conflicts and maintain friendly and sociable personalities. They prefer to look forward and not spend so much time looking at the past. In a way, this makes them progressive, but also a bit naive. Sevens can take initiative more easily than Nines who are likely more generous or willing to help others and make them happy. They can be passive. The only place where Nines and Sevens can run into trouble are when they're both faced with the negative or painful parts of working together. Sevens can talk about what they're feeling much easier than Nines can, but both have the capability of just completely shutting down and ignoring what's bothering them.⁷

The Us&I Body Positivity Campaign focused on different topics such as body image and marks, personal stories, and fighting against social norms. This group of designers wanted to create

6 Type Three with Type Nine. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/relationship-type-3-with-type-9>

7 Type Seven with Type Nine. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/relationship-type-7-with-type-9>

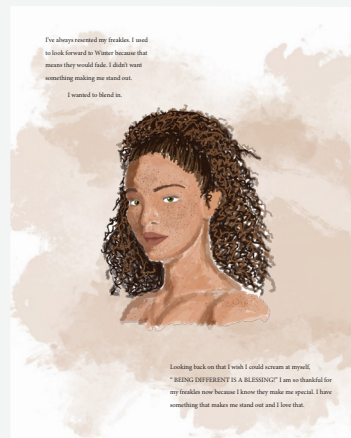
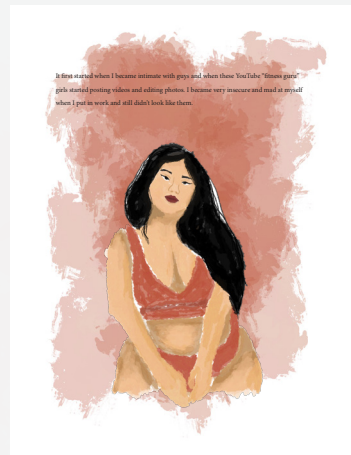
work that was inspirational and that encouraged us to empathize with those who may have negative or positive personal-image thoughts. Whether the designs were typographical, illustrative, or interactive, the Us&I Campaign wanted to share design-based narratives that focuses on the beauty in being different. Because this group is all female, the focus was primarily on those who are females or female-identifying. Originally, the first few trials of the project did not attract much of a male audience, so the natural direction to go into was shifting the lens to an all-female audience. The deliverables for this project included online posts to their Instagram page (@us_and_i) as well as a book series that tells the story of different topics they talked about, curated by each group member.

The beginning of the semester was an unfavorable start for this particular group. There were many loopholes that hadn't been filled quite yet, and the class critiques were relatively harsh. Many of the issues with their project were due to the fact that it was an audience-reliant project. In order for Us&I to have content, people in the art building had to submit stories or photos and tag them. There was no incentive for their audience, so there were no submissions. The project could not continue if people did not interact. From this point forward, the group focused more on self-generated content sectioned off into different topics for each week of the semester. This was more successful, but something still felt like it was missing. The goals of this project were not outlined clearly enough, and their audience did not know what they were supposed to learn from it.

In this example of a wing 8, a Three, and a wing 1 working together, I noticed that they all had a similar underlying motivator which was focusing on the bigger picture: the end goal. No one had in mind that their part of the project needed to be the most important— there was a sense of equality between these collaborators from the start. This made the group work especially well together since they believed they were on the same playing field. These designers were comfortable with fast-paced, hands-on work, and they were ready to go even if the idea had not been fully thought out. The 3 wing 2 of the group, the Achiever, acted as the creative director, making sure things were going as planned and organizing the future weeks. In most scenarios, it is helpful for a collaborative project to have a project lead to keep the group on-track. She analyzed and redirected the kinds of variations and changes that were thrown at them. Each member had a very go-getter attitude, and they did not let negative critique hold them back, instead they bounced back even stronger. I sat and watched this group of women try countless methods and forms for the end result. The Nine of the group, the laid back, easy-

going member, played a large role in supporting the group emotionally and physically while their ideas were starting to change. The project continued to evolve in a positive way, allowing me as an audience member to see the possibilities of this project. This group understood the importance of compromise and sacrificing ideas in order to reach their goals by the end of the semester. I appreciated experiencing the amount of hard work put in by this group. They did not have a hierarchy, but rather they had assigned roles to clearly lay out the duties of each person. This created a more smoothly running project.

Each member went in with a positive attitude even when there were setbacks. Critique questions from the class were, “What is the goal of this project?”, “How can you make your concept clearer?”, and comments like, “What are you trying to accomplish? I’m not sure I can see the vision you’re explaining in your work.” They managed to stay true to their original concept while experimenting with different forms. I envisioned the 7 wing 8 as the drive of the group, the 3 wing 2 as the organizer, and the 9 wing 1 as the glue that holds everybody together at the end of the day. Each person acknowledged everyone’s role and holds everybody accountable for their part in this collaboration. When they ran into problems, I could see the gears turning in their minds. Instead of becoming upset and slowly giving up, they maintained envisioning the goal that they had in the beginning. It was pretty inspiring. Nothing held them back, and each of them supported each other which made them productive collaborators. These women were very clear in communicating. If they had an issue, they talked about it and in a respectful way. There was no finger-pointing, but a collective effort to make the project better. In conclusion, this group of women ended up working very well together. In this particular scenario, each of their strengths played to the project’s advantage, and the end result was a project-well-done.



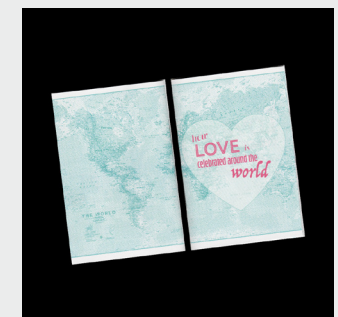
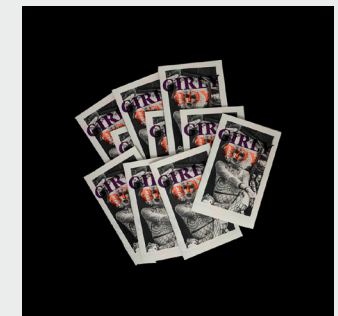
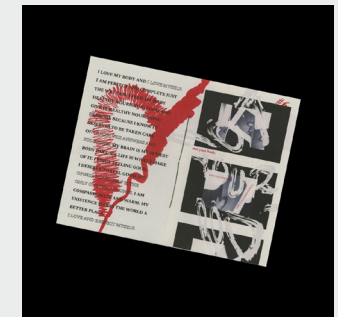
Project 2: Given Form

Project 3: Slanted Editions

This particular project was unique because the collaborators had inverse personality numbers. I am a 1 wing 9, and my collaborator, a 9 wing 1. A Nine, the Peacemaker, and a One, the Reformer, working together was quite interesting. This was my own project, and it gave me the chance to really evaluate my own actions, something the Enneagram as a whole should help provide for anybody who chooses to take it. Like I noted before, the Nine is a Peacemaker. Nines are easy-going and like to keep the peace. The One, myself, is quite the different. Ones are the Reformers– obsessed with perfection, self-controlled, and principled. Ones tend to be conscientious and believe deeply in right and wrongs. They often strive to make positive change and maintain high standards of living. They tend to have issues with impatience and resentment, and they can sometimes be too busy being right instead of reasonable.⁸

Ones like to be useful, they like to have a sense of purpose. They feel like they have to be morally right, and when they feel otherwise, they justify their actions with excuses instead of explanations. I know as a One myself, I try to have a reason for doing everything. It allows myself to understand why I commit to those actions, but in times where I feel I am being questioned, I will have an answer for them. At a healthy level, Ones are accepting and realistic of the world around them. They try to have a clear sense of right and wrong, ethical values, and they wish to be as rational and mature in all actions. At an unhealthy level, Ones can become “dogmatic, self-righteous, intolerant, and inflexible.” They can pin wrongdoings on everybody else but themselves, and they can be obsessed

8 Type One. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/type-1>



with perfection. At Ones' most unhealthy level, depression and anxiety come into play and destructive and depressive personality disorders may also appear.⁸

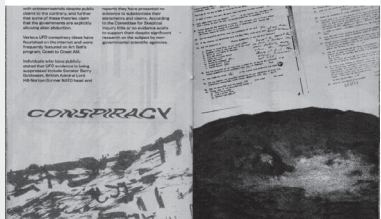
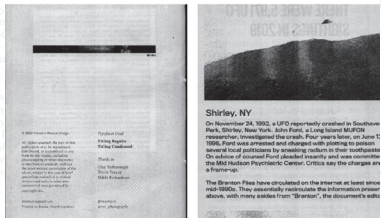
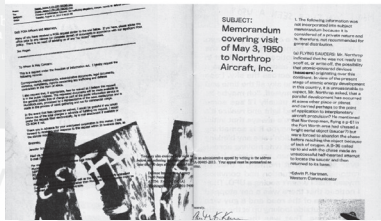
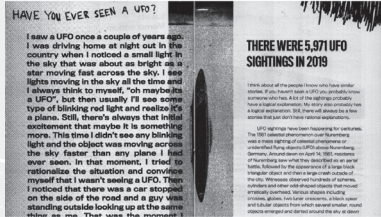
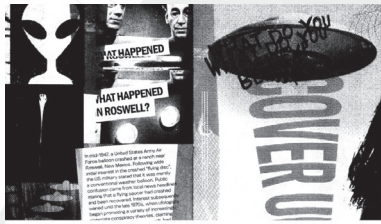
As a 9 wing 1 and a 1 wing 9 work together, there will begin to see idealistic visions and motivation to change the world for the better. Nines are more in tune with their emotions, allowing them to bring a more interpersonal connection to the table. The Ones bring the rational side, the more robotic side, full of realistic ideals and organized thought. While Ones are the more rigid type and the Nines are the more steady, flowing type, there still manages to be a sense of personality harmony between the two. The Nine tends to remove some of the harshness of the One, letting the One let go of some of the tension they may be holding in. The Ones' personality can remind the Nine to continue maintaining the goals and aspirations.



When Ones and Nines get into arguments, it's a matter of how they deal with conflict, and they tend to deal with them in opposite ways. As a One, much of the frustration is reflected onto themselves, thinking that they are not doing a good enough job at something. Ones begin to tense up, having a very outwardly frustrated attitude. They begin to assume that whoever is involved with the problem is not properly doing their jobs, and eventually becoming completely dissatisfied with the situation overall. Instead of looking at their own issues, they try and find fault in everybody else. Part of this is due to the fact they suppress so much emotion and all of it bubbles into anger, eventually spilling out when things start to blow up. However, on the opposite side of this scenario, Nines are not favorable of confrontation or conflict. They rarely step up and discuss if they are upset about a subject, then it usually gets swept under the rug or never talked about. Instead, they tend to be passive, sometimes passive aggressive. Ones believe this is an unhealthy way of coping, suppressed rage, but there is no good way for a One to confront a Nine without feeling like the other person might deny that they feel angry or upset at all.⁹



⁹ Type One with Type Nine. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/relationship-type-1-with-type-9>



around why I had once again let things change for the worst, and a confusion as to what exactly had changed. I can't quite put my finger on it all, it's a somewhat blurred image. All I know is that everything felt different.

Slanted Editions is a book-making project that allows the creators to have a space and a place to purely make. The lack of creating from last semester inspired this project- a non-stop generative project that would result in a book each week from both collaborators. Every week, we would sit down and discuss the topic of the book, themes, color choices, typeface, and so forth, to give us parameters. Each book had to be related in some way to the previous book as well as the collaborator's book. The beauty in this project was that both designers had creative freedom to design however they wished to, but there were still a few rules that each designer had to follow that forced the books to look unified. The way this project was structured was so that neither collaborator had to sacrifice their own design style for the sake of the other. I was personally interested on the different takes each of us had, so that when we got back together at the end of each week, we would have a sense of each other's work ethic and design style. The reason for this project was due to the previous semester's lack of work, but also a way for those who did not have a ton of time to read could. These books were meant to be simple and quick.

My collaborator and I rarely ran into issues because our mindsets were so similar. This project was hands-on at the individual level, and we collaborated at the end of each week. Most of our meetings were quick catch-ups in the beginning of the week to check in to how each of us were doing on our publication. Many of the problems that arose were less conceptual and more technical. If we ran into a

problem, the solution was easy: just talk about it. As a One, I was able to bring up any problems I felt were important, and she as a Nine was able to address her issues calmly and clearly. I feel like most of the issues in collaborative projects stem from not wanting to hurt the other person's feelings- as if your concern with their idea is a personal attack on their character and not fully about their actions. Before this project with her, I did not know her very well. I saw this as an opportunity to learn about her as a designer, but also as a person. I thought about this project as a learning opportunity with collaborative projects in a sense, but also as learning to communicate with somebody I did not know very well. This kind of attitude can be helpful moving forward in a creative workplace because you don't always know those with whom you're working. It's an important skill to have especially in the design field where you're constantly working with clients that you may not be familiar with.

Because she is a Nine, I had a feeling she may be agreeable. Knowing that as a One who likes a clear plan, I made sure to ask as many questions as possible in order to get my ideas across and give her a chance to voice her ideas. I have been told in the past my honesty or up-front language can translate as aggressive or rude, so I made sure to be aware of this with somebody who may be more soft-spoken. I let her know that this might happen, and to let me know when I am pushing her boundaries. I usually speak from my gut first, and not my mind, so things may come out very straightforward. There was a point in the middle of the semester where we had a check-in with how we were feeling about the project. We both expressed that we were unsure of how to communicate with each other because we were both afraid of stepping on each other's toes when it came to deciding on themes for our next books. This was pretty comical for me because I knew I could come across as rude, but for her it was because she didn't know to have healthy confrontation without feeling like she was being too pushy. We both approached this at completely different perspectives which I found interesting.

The successful parts of our project went as well as we could have hoped. For almost every week, we were both diligent- turning in our books on time, relating themes, and unifying color schemes. If either of us fell behind, we were sympathetic with each other- conceptualizing then designing and producing a full book every week takes a toll on your brain, and it is easy to get burnt out. Overall, we managed to complete what we could in a realistic time. I thought this project was successful in terms of completing what we originally wished we would. We worked well together given the new circumstances of COVID-19, and we can both look back and appreciate all the hard work we've put into every book we've made. This project was a daunting task, but we succeeded in finishing what we came here to do. As a creative project, it was a good exercise to showcase the balance between individualism and collaboration.

Project 3: Slanted Editions

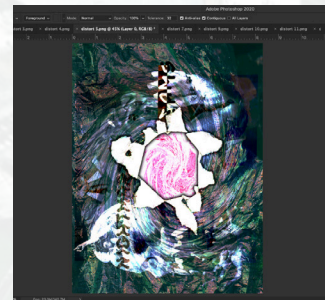
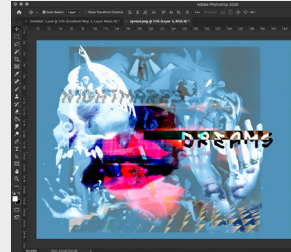
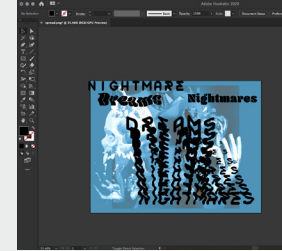
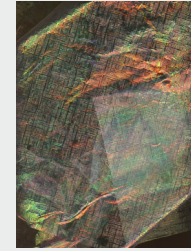


ability to bounce back, always onto the next activity. Sevens can become impatient with Fours because while they want to talk about their emotions and feelings in that certain moment, Sevens may want to keep moving forward and not dwell on the past. They can even become evasive, just wanting to move toward something upbeat and positive.¹²

In terms of this project, the designers involved did a fantastic job at communicating with each other, both with emotions and with expectations of what they wanted from this experience. The project Rabbit Hole is a way to take a break from everyday prompted assignments. It offers a space to recharge any lost inspiration while still pushing productivity and creation. It relies heavily on the experimental process. This group of four came up with this idea in a similar way that the Slanted Editions project did: a lack of work being produced in the previous semester. Not only just that, but also the feeling of monotony in each project that was professor-supplied— nothing felt creative enough. By using this project as an outlet to start making for purely art's sake, their final goal was to remove themselves from this creative rut they have been in. Another goal is just finding balance between art, design, and craft. In the eight weeks of the semester left, this group established a calendar that gave roles to each member as well as parameters for the creative process. The outcome of this project was to have one finalized page spread a week to be put into a final project/process book that records the effects of different variants on the creative process. This looks at the creator as a machine rather than an artist, and it inputs and documents how those variants directly affect the output of what was to be created.

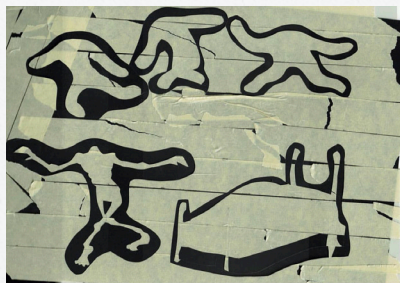
A few starting rules to this project included that each spread would be modified and passed to all four group members, each participating as a separate role. Each member was to modify the page spread with one digital and one analog process before sending it to the next member who would be repeating those steps. One member will be the 'creator' each week setting the parameters of the project. The creator was also in charge

12 Type Four with Type Seven. (2019). Retrieved April 5, 2020, from <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/relationship-type-4-with-type-7>



of documenting the final piece at the end of each week as well as writing a reflection analysis before the start of the new making process. The experimental variants include location, material, environment, state of mind, and physical being. The way that these collaborators worked seemed beneficial due to the experimental nature of the project. A majority of this project was completed virtually due to COVID-19— this collaboration was almost fully virtual. The idea of this project was to pass on an image to the next person who would then make changes and continue passing it along until the end of the week. Face-to-face communication was already limited, but they still had to meet weekly to discuss the next set of parameters.

As they work online, it's become different, but not any more difficult to complete the tasks given. Most of the work that's completed is through a shared online folder. The successes that they shared with me were that they finally felt as if they were creating again, one of the overall goals of their project. Secondly, each spread they created brought up new ideas, new concepts for the future spreads. The group mentioned making this collaborative not just for themselves, but on a platform that other creators can participate in. The similar underlying idea that each member was excited about was finding a way to understand the creative process through experimentation in varying creative lenses. Each member approached the project at a different angle, in turn changing the way the next member



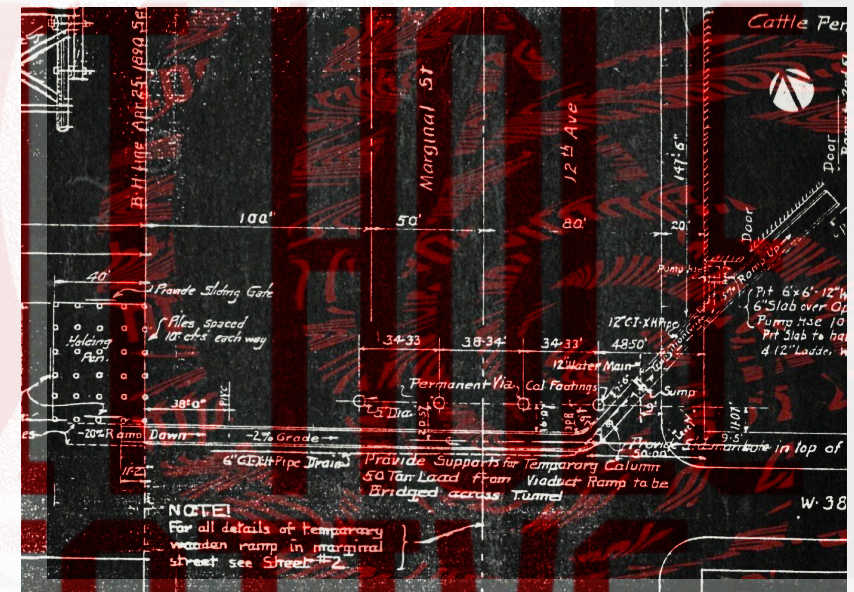
manufactured the spread for the week. While the project was the main event, learning about the creative process as individuals remained a goal as well. They felt as if they could capitalize on what collaboration could bring for personal growth as designers. By giving the power to a different member each week, they also had the opportunity to experience a position as an “art director” in charge of junior designers.

Each group member agreed that this project was less about the authority role as an art director, and more about the handling of variants each week. Another positive part about this project is that they were willing to extend this to not only themselves but to the public. Rabbit Hole was to expand into more of a creative community with a public drive in mind accompanied by an introductory manual including assets and previous projects to be used as examples. It would serve as a choose-your-own-path online game for people to observe or participate in. One of the amazing parts of collaborative projects is that they have the opportunity to grow past just a singular group. Some of the best art in the world was created through multiple artists’ participation.

In terms of unsuccessful parts of this project, the main issue was not having the deliverables in on-time. When this happened, it set back the other group members. Instead of criticizing each other for not being responsible for their part, they treated each other with empathy and understanding. As designers in multiple studio classes at a time, we understand the rare amount of spare time we have. Each member was willing to pick up the slack of the other ones in order to get the piece done in time. Rabbit Hole was less about time and more about freeing your mind to the creative process.

The members described this process as very ‘laid back.’ They would wait for the next person to make what they needed to– it was just the pure nature of the project to be scattered.

The members circulated through three main roles: One was the mediator, one was the experimentalist, and one was the calculated designer. The members took turns being each role. When it came to the hurdles of the project, it was clear communication that helped them get through it. At the end, this project served as a creative palette cleanser, ridding the rut and allowing each member an innovative escape from the dull regularity of other design projects. Overall, I think these group members set each other up for success. This type of project allowed for more buffer room for mistakes and a place to learn and improve while learning to rely on and trust the other collaborators. These Enneagram types leaned more toward the experimental and quirky side of personality which matched the project nicely. All of the members handled their issues maturely and with open communication.



Project 4: Rabbit Hole

Research/Conclusion

The use of the Enneagram in creative environments for artists and designers was a way to illuminate the already-existing collaborative methods we use in the classroom. It's already being used in professional practices and already documented by published research papers. The Enneagram can be used as a way to offer a look into one's own experiences as a creative in the field to boost empathy and understanding meanwhile strengthening and reinforcing tactics that designers use already. Collaboration should be seen as a habit— you start to do it everyday, then it becomes a necessary part of the way you work. In 2016, Google announced that they had discovered the secret to a perfect creative team. After doing research with more than 100 teams, they found that team performance was based on emotional intelligence and a high degree of communication between team members.¹³ Sometimes it may not be purely about skill, but more about the way you interact with others. If collaboration were purely about ability, then most great designers could easily come together and make magic happen. However, this is not the case. It takes a minimum amount of shared empathy and emotional intelligence for a group of people to work well together. I noticed with some of the groups that I worked with, open-communication made collaborating so much easier, not having to guess what your peers or coworkers were thinking.

According to Harvard Business Review, each person plays two roles: 1. a functional role which is based on skill level, and 2. a psychological role which is based on the kind of person someone is.¹³ Companies largely focus on the functional role which is why you submit an application— something that shows your abilities.¹³ Once you reach the interview stage, this is where you can show off your personality, become less rigid and more who you are as a character rather than a machine. Knowing your place in both roles is important as a worker and as the employer. The best teams are made up of a good mix of both skill and personality. Too much of either can lead to a poor overall performance. I believe that the Rabbit Hole Project group adhered best to what would make up the best mix of collaborators. Each person was agreeable, willing to compromise, open to new ideas, and communicated with each other clearly and quickly.

This project allowed me to explore different collaboration methods and discover for myself which types of methods work better than others. Anna Sutton, a Senior Lecturer in Organizational Behavior at Manchester

Metropolitan University Business School, wrote “But is it real?”, a review of research on the Enneagram. She writes that much of our knowledge on the Enneagram has been developed through personal experience, and this information should not be deemed unusable because of its anecdotal nature, but seen as justification to use this test to gather more information. Part of her role is to show that the Enneagram is not just something that is trendy, but that the experiences people have and are documented will soon be able to show the similarities and differences between personalities. One thing that Sutton emphasizes is that as humans, we will always view the world from slightly skewed perspectives to match our expectations and wants. Part of research is common sense. In another study Sutton looked at by Wagner, a doctoral dissertation, they prove that the Enneagram is reliable and valid— 75% of the time, the self-initiated tests were accurate.¹⁴

In my personal experience in this class, knowing my Enneagram type has benefited me in collaborative projects. I find that I am more confident in my words and actions, and I can trust myself to rely on others to do their part. In another study that looked at team training and emotional intelligence, it was proven that team effectiveness improved, and participants had enhanced self-awareness and personal growth.¹⁴ Much of the power of the Enneagram comes from understanding your emotional intelligence. Skilled workers may not always be successful collaborators, and that is something I personally have experienced. I have been looking at my Enneagram number and allowing myself to recognize my own flaws and strengths within the design environment. Recently, it's been beneficial to me because senior year is full of collaboration and giving myself room to trust others and their personal creative processes. In my opinion, knowing your Enneagram number may boost your emotional intelligence by encouraging empathy and giving yourself space to fail and to grow. Becoming aware of yourself in a creative space should help foster comfortability to express freely and room to think beyond your regular creative process— to break the barrier and find alternative ways to make. In Appalachian State University's design program, collaboration is heavily pushed, and pushed especially during the last semester of study as we are required to complete a collaborative final project. There will be people you do not necessarily agree with all the time, but to know you are capable of designing past your own personal understandings by accepting the ideas of others is an important skill to have. You may be the most capable designer, but if you are not willing to take on the task of developing your personality, then you may struggle to be more than just a capable designer.

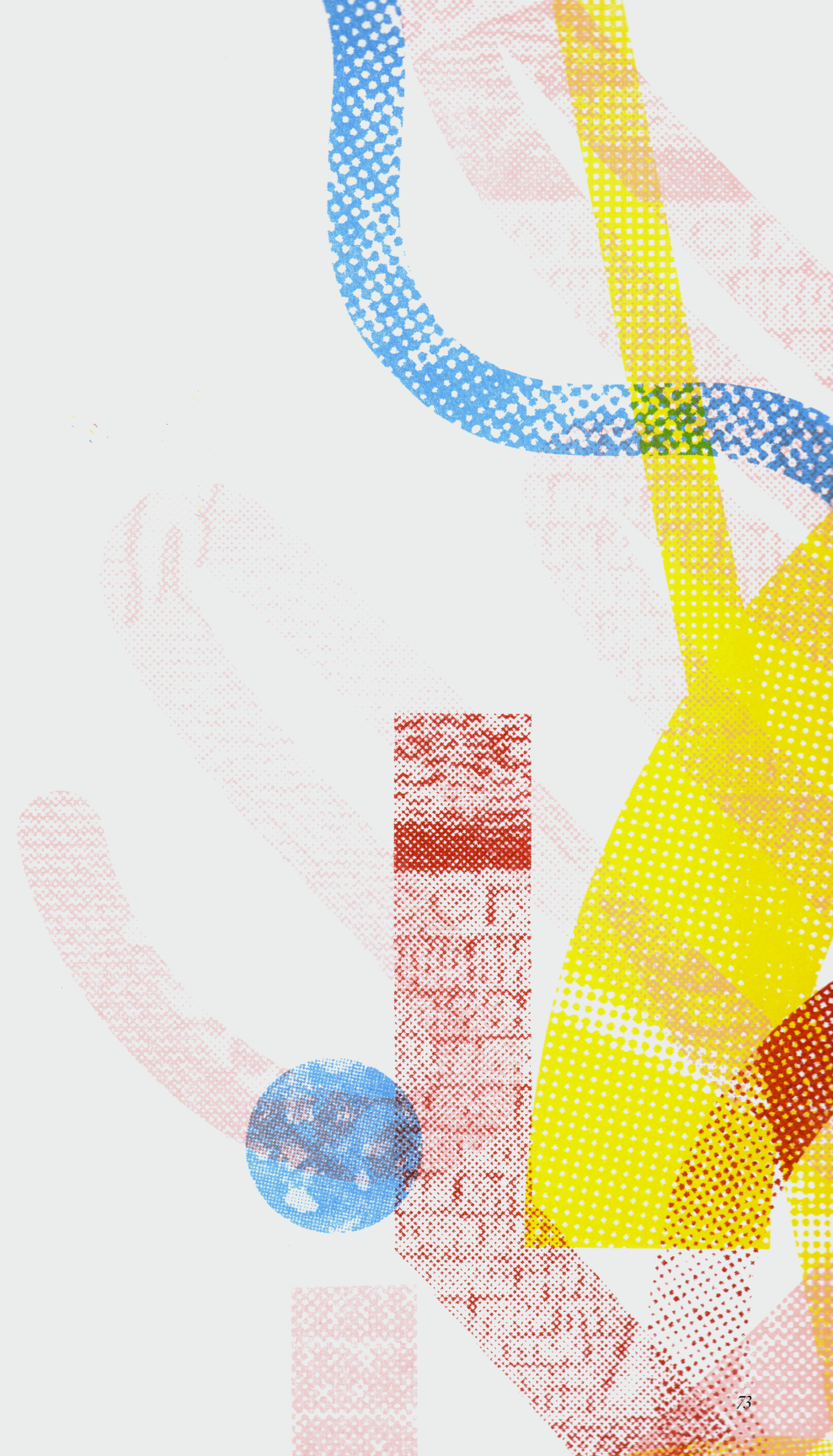
¹³ Great Teams Are About Personalities, Not Just Skills, <https://hbr.org/2017/01/great-teams-are-about-personalities-not-just-skills>

¹⁴ Sutton, Anna (2012) “But is it real?” A review of research on the Enneagram. *Enneagram Journal*, 5, 5-20

Overall, this project was a valuable learning experience for me. It gave me the opportunity to see myself through a psychological lens and be able to look at and ask questions. Each personality type brings something different to the table. The Enneagram can be used as a tool to know yourself better, therefore getting to know how you work with others better. It should also be clear that the Enneagram isn't meant to put you into a box, but to show you how you are interconnected with all of the personality types and possibly give you a foundation for understanding yourself. Humanity is more complex than just a number, but the Enneagram can be a way to start simplifying the complex nature of collaboration.

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Thesis Reflection

At the end of this project, I can say that I've been taught a few things that will help me later on in life. I believe that we all have a purpose on this Earth, and that whomever we meet, we were meant to meet. However we choose to interact with these people is up to us, but the most inspiring, the most worth-while interactions, are the ones with whom we take the time to create genuine connections.

As a designer, I know I'll be meeting many people and getting to know their work ethic as it exists alongside my own. A large part of this project was to discover real people communicating with each other and deciphering how we can communicate better. Part of this project is understanding that skill can only take you so far, and that emotional intelligence has equal or more importance in collaborative work. I know that I've had my struggle with collaboration just because I'm used to working independently, and it's been extremely helpful that Appalachian's design program really pushes it with all of their students— this was one of the main reasons I decided to take on this project.

As the semester finishes up and I move onto bigger things in bigger places, I reflect on the work I've put into this project and the new information that I'll use to establish new relationships going forward in the world. The Enneagram has truly been a massive help in my own confidence, and I'm glad to see that it has a place not just in my personal life but also in the way I view my work. I hope that any findings that I've included in this thesis can potentially help others struggling to understand how their role fits into collaborative projects in the creative world.

-v

Thank You

Thanks to Tricia Treacy for mentoring me through this project. It's been an odd process with the world ending and all... I really do appreciate all the time commitment that you give with your hectic schedule 24/7. I will look back on my final year of school knowing that I had support along the way and could always look to you for advice.

A big thanks to Mira Waits as well for helping make this possible and guiding and organizing my thesis. I am very thankful for our meetings and your willingness to connect and talk about my ideas and make them concrete.

notes

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