

*The ConTEXT Test Quotes*

*August 7, 2001*

*We thrive in information-thick worlds because of our marvelous and everyday capacity to select, edit, single out, structure, highlight, group, pair, merge, harmonize, synthesize, focus, organize, condense, reduce, boil down, choose, categorize, catalog, classify, list, abstract, scan, look into, idealize, isolate, discriminate, distinguish, screen, pigeonhole, pick over, sort, integrate, blend, inspect, filter, lump, skip, smooth, chunk, average, approximate, cluster, aggregate, outline, summarize, itemize, review, dip into, flip through, browse, glance into, leaf through, skim, refine, enumerate, glean, synopsisize, winnow the wheat from the chaff and separate the sheep from the goats.*

— tufte —

## Quotes

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*We thrive in information-thick  
marvelous and everyday capacities:  
out, structure, highlight, group,  
synthesize, focus, organize, compare,  
choose, categorize, catalog, classify,  
look into, idealize, isolate, distill,  
screen, pigeonhole, pick over, sort,  
inspect, filter, lump, skip, smooth,  
impute, cluster, aggregate, outline,  
review, dip into, flip through, skim  
through, skim, refine, enumerate,  
now the wheat from the chaff  
from the goats.*

*Thus, I came to the conclusion that the designer of a new system must not only be the implementer and first large-scale user; the designer should also write the first user manual.*

*The separation of any of these four components would have hurt  $\text{\TeX}$  significantly. If I had not participated fully in all these activities, literally hundreds of improvements would never have been made, because I would never have thought of them or perceived why they were important.*

*But a system cannot be successful if it is too strongly influenced by a single person. Once the initial design is complete and fairly robust, the real test begins as people with many different viewpoints undertake their own experiments.*

*— knuth —*

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*Coming back to the use of typefaces in electronic publishing: many of the new typographers receive their knowledge and information about the rules of typography from books, from computer magazines or the instruction manuals which they get with the purchase of a PC or software. There is not so much basic instruction, as of now, as there was in the old days, showing the differences between good and bad typographic design. Many people are just fascinated by their PC's tricks, and think that a widely-praised program, called up on the screen, will make everything automatic from now on.*

*We thrive in information—this marvelous and everyday capacity to select, structure, highlight, group, synthesize, focus, organize, compare, choose, categorize, catalog, clas-*

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*Donald Knuth has spent the past several years working on a system allowing him to control many aspects of the design of his forthcoming books—from the typesetting and layout down to the very shapes of the letters! Seldom has an author had anything remotely like this power to control the final appearance of his or her work. Knuth's  $\TeX$  typesetting system has become well-known and available in many countries around the world. By contrast, his METAFONT system for designing families of typefaces has not become as well known or available.*

*In his article “The Concept of a Meta-Font”, Knuth sets forth for the first time the underlying philosophy of METAFONT, as well as some of its products. Not only is the concept exiting and clearly well executed, but in my opinion the article is charmingly written as well. However, despite my overall enthusiasm for Knuth's idea and article, there are some points in it that I feel might be taken wrongly by many readers, and since they are points that touch close to my deepest interests in artificial intelligence and esthetic theory, I felt compelled to make some comments to clarify certain important issues raised by “The Concept of a Meta-Font”.*

— douglas —

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— zapf —

With most science fiction films, the more science you understand, the less you admire the film or respect its makers. An evil interstellar spaceship careens across the screen. The hero's ship fires off a laser blast, demolishing the enemy ship—the audience cheers at the explosion. But why is the laser beam visible? There is nothing in space to scatter the light back to the viewer. And what slowed the beam a billionfold to render its advance toward the enemy ship perceptible? Why, after the moment of the explosion, does the debris remain centered in the screen instead of continuing forward as dictated by the laws of inertia? What could possibly drag and slow down the expanding debris (and cause the smoke to billow) in the vacuum of outer space? Note too the graceful, falling curve of the debris. Have the cinematographers forgotten that there is no gravity—no 'downward'—in outer space? Of course the scene is accompanied by the obligatory deafening boom. But isn't outer space eternally silent? And even if there were some magical way to hear the explosion, doesn't light travel faster than sound? Shouldn't we see the explosion long before we hear it, just as we do with lightning and thunder? Finally, isn't all this moot? Shouldn't the enemy ship be invisible anyway, as there are no nearby stars to provide illumination?

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With most science fiction, we understand, the less you are makers. An evil interstellar screen. The hero's ship fires at the enemy ship—the audience. But why is the laser beam in space to scatter the light back toward the enemy ship? At the moment of the explosion, do we see the ship in the screen instead of coming by the laws of inertia? Why slow down the expanding cloud (to billow) in the vacuum of space? the graceful, falling curve of the clouds. Have the cinematographers forgotten that there is no gravity—no 'downward'—in outer space? Of course the scene is accompanied by the obligatory deafening boom. But isn't outer space eternally silent? And even if there were some magical way to hear the explosion, doesn't light travel faster than sound? Shouldn't we see the explosion long before we hear it, just as we do with lightning and thunder? Finally, isn't all this moot? Shouldn't the enemy ship be invisible anyway, as there are no nearby stars to provide illumination?

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