THE BOOK OF IPSUM
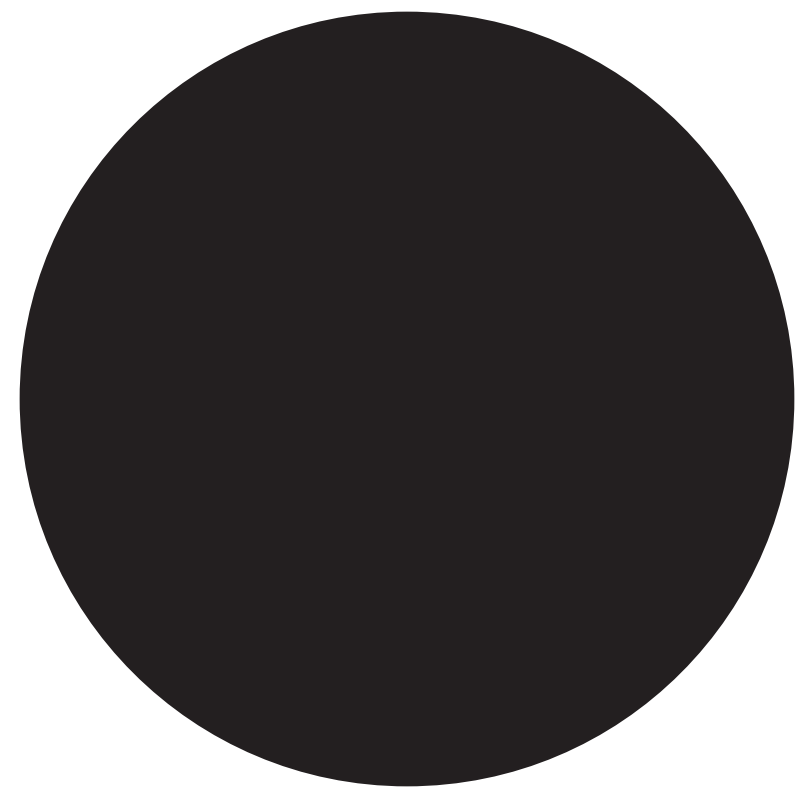
by Thomas Gheorghiu
with the guidance of Sergei Sidorov

INTRODUCTION

To some it's just some bogus dummy text in latin, do others it's a useful helper in managing their designs. Either way, Lorem Ipsum has been used over and over again for hundreds of years. In this book, we will decompose and learn more about it and it's importance in typography.

01

02.

03

If
you're a design-
er, this phrase is every-
where. Known as "filler text"
or "Greek copy", people use it
to simulate the appearance
of whatever text will ulti-
mately be used in a
design.

04

Its use is somewhat con-
troversial but because no-
body would mistake it for
their native language, Lo-
rem Ipsum is also less like-
ly than other filler text to
be mistaken for final copy
and published by accident.

05

GOOD TYPE DESIGN MAY BE PRACTICED ONLY BY AN ARTIST WITH PECULIAR CAPABILITIES.

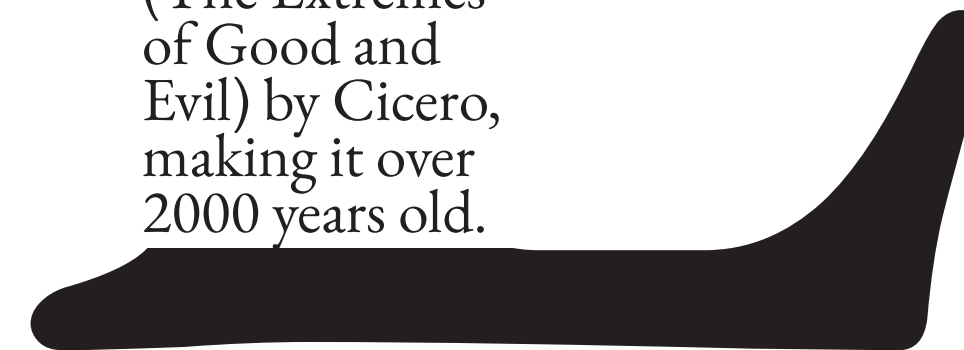06   07

Contrary to popular belief, it is not simply random text. It has roots in a piece of classical Latin literature from 45 BC, de Finibus Bonorum et Malorum" (The Extremes of Good and Evil) by Cicero, making it over 2000 years old.
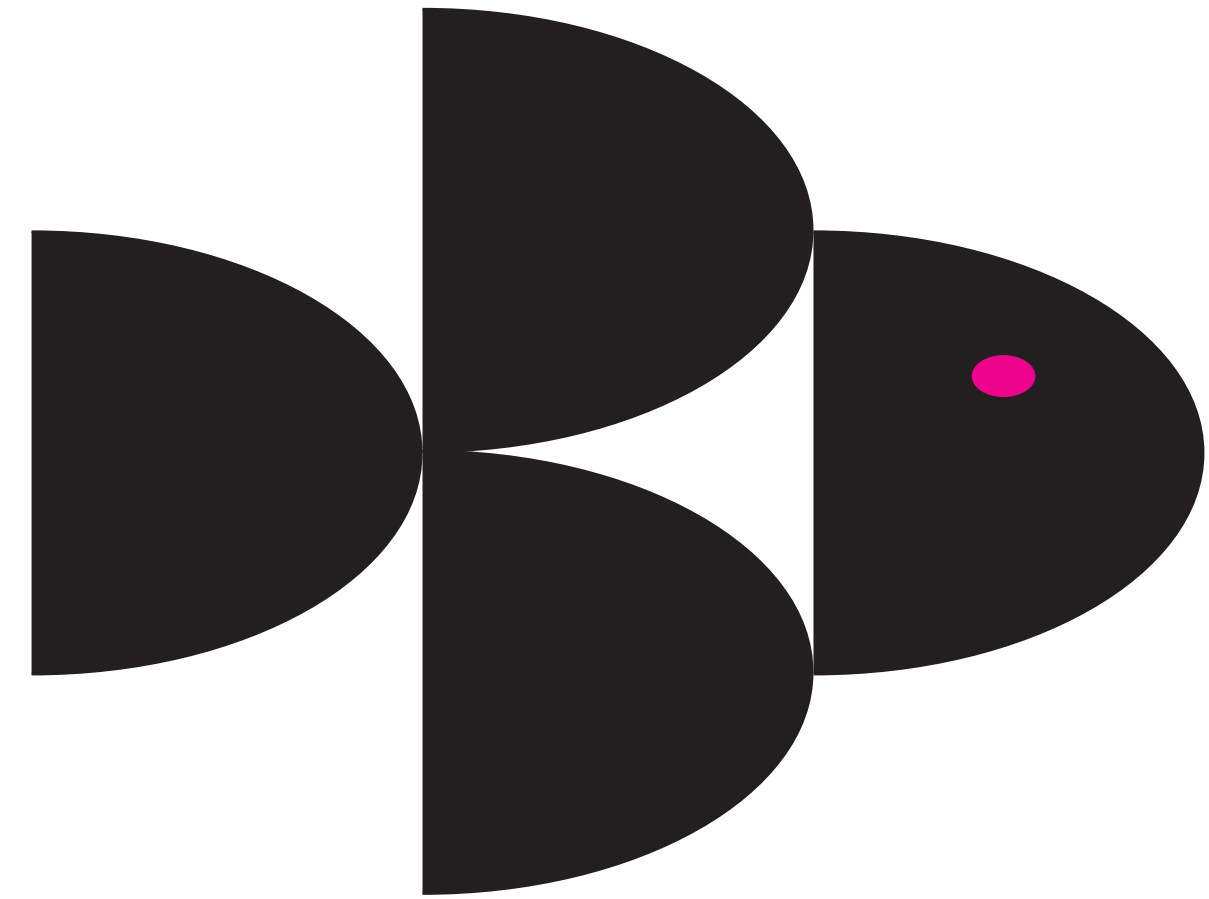
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The thing is, one of the great things about Lorem Ipsum is that it really looks like real language. The words are a reasonable length, individual characters are used with about the right frequency.

10

11

Cre-
ating a standard-
ized, professionally accept-
ed written gibberish is even
harder, which is why Lorem Ip-
sum is such a godsend for designers.

12.

13

What is this incantation we wrap every prototype we make in, before filling it with the text we hope will make it great? It turns out that Lorem Ipsum is such a good tool in these ways because its half invented and half discovered. It does actually mean something. Here's how it got from the pen of a Roman philosopher to your browser window, and how a medieval typesetter might have scrambled it on the way.

It has survived not only five centuries, but also the leap into electronic type-setting, remaining essentially unchanged. There are many variations of passages of Lorem Ipsum available, but the majority have suffered alteration in some form, by injected humour, or randomised words which don't look even slightly believable.

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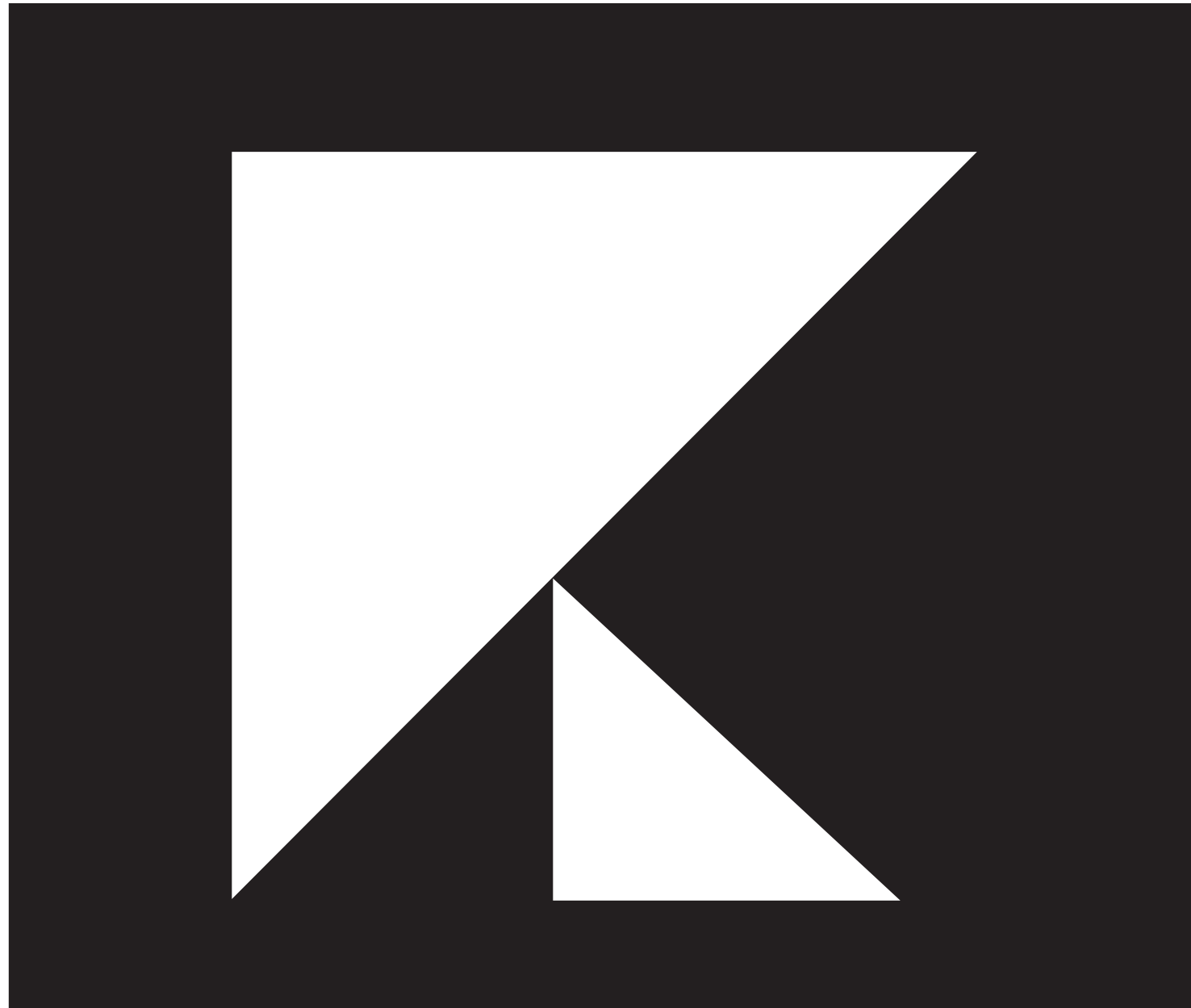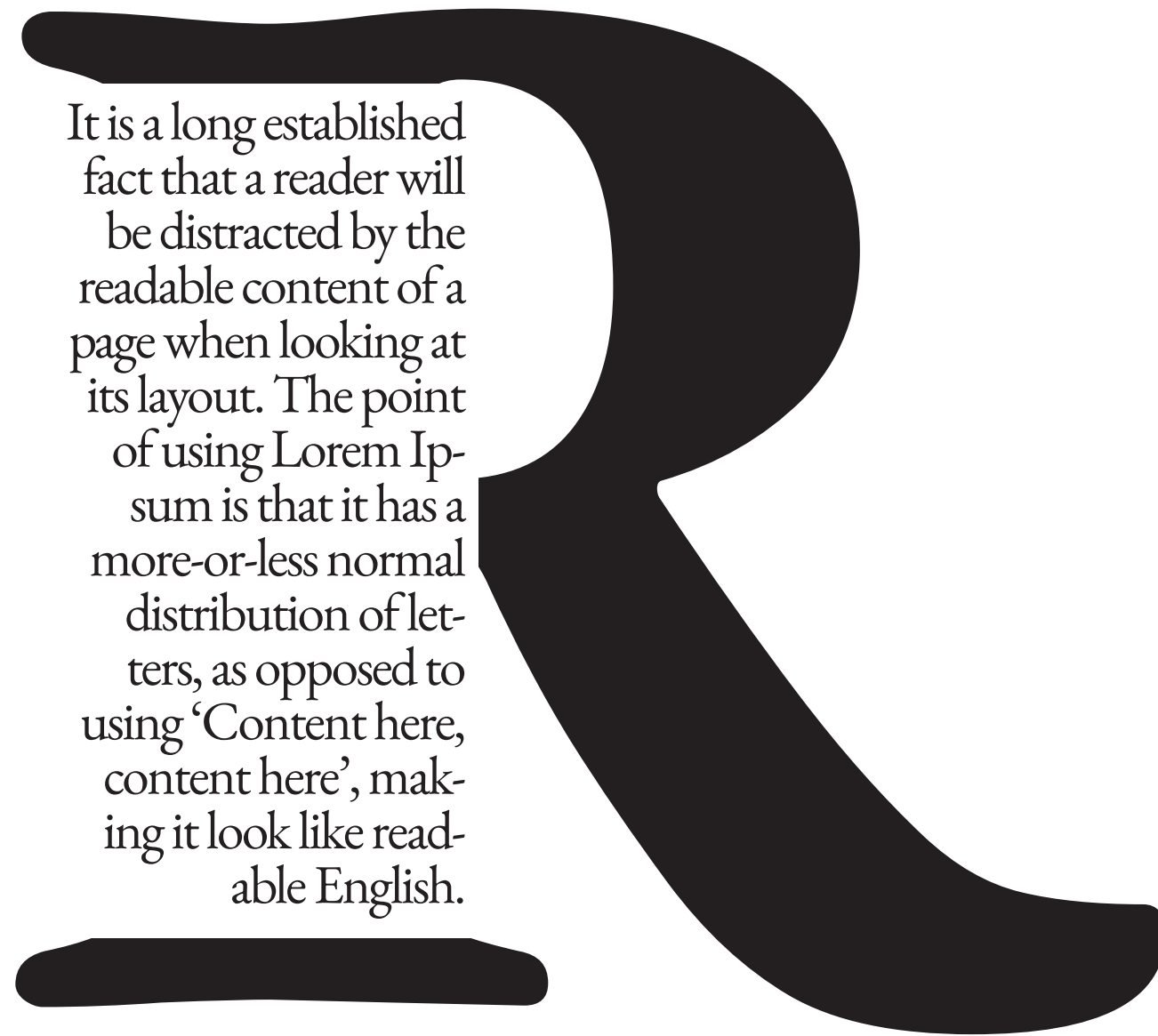
It is a long established fact that a reader will be distracted by the readable content of a page when looking at its layout. The point of using Lorem Ipsum is that it has a more-or-less normal distribution of letters, as opposed to using 'Content here, content here', making it look like readable English.

16

R

17

ALL LATIN TO ME.

The Roman empire had the technology of written language, and a lot of their records, written in Latin, survive today. Unfortunately those records are shrouded in many dense layers of propaganda: they've been selectively preserved and presented by academics over the millennia, to support whatever political, religious, or philosophical cause; and of course, many of them were spun to the political needs of the Romans who wrote them in the first place. As a consequence, most ancient history should should be taken with several grains of salt. Nevertheless, as the Roman empire, Lorem Ipsum has traveled across the world, leaving it's mark wherever it landed.

18

19

CICERO

In the first Century BC, there was a man named Marcus Tullius Cicero. He was a lawyer, statesman, and philosopher, and he was very good at oratory. In fact he might have been the best orator who has ever lived, and the most influential.

"It is more important to have greatly extended the frontiers of the Roman spirit than the frontiers of the Roman empire."

-Julius Cesar-

20 21

ALL THE GENERATORS REPEAT PRE-DEFINED CHUNKS, GIVING LOREM IPSUM A REASONABLE LOOK.

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Many more words and fragments of the longer multi-paragraph form of Lorem Ipsum can also be found in this passage of De Finibus. The passage, in its entirety, relates to hedonism, and how sometimes we do unpleasant things to reach pleasurable goals.

22.

23.

Some claim lorem ipsum threatens to promote design over content... while others defend its value in the process of planning.

24

All the generators on the Internet tend to repeat predefined chunks as necessary, making this the first true generator on the Internet. It uses a dictionary of over 200 Latin words, combined with a handful of model sentence structures, to generate a reasonable look.

25

Marcus Tullius Cicero
Roman Statesman

FAST FORWARD

Lorem ipsum was popularized in the 1960s with Letraset's dry-transfer sheets, and later entered the digital world via Aldus PageMaker.

2.8

DIGITAL IPSUM

Star Trek and Doctor Who also resurrected Cicero—or at least what used to be Cicero—in an attempt to make the days before computerized design a little less painstaking.

Letraset, a French lettering company, manufactured a set of dry-transfer sheets which included the lorem ipsum filler text in a variety of fonts, sizes, and layouts. These sheets of lettering could be rubbed on anywhere and were quickly adopted by graphic artists, printers, architects, and advertisers for their professional look and ease of use.

Aldus Corporation, who later become Adobe Systems, ushered lorem ipsum into the information age with its desktop publishing software Aldus PageMaker. The program came bundled with lorem ipsum dummy text for laying out page content, and other word processors like Microsoft Word followed suit. The more recent growth of web design has helped future designers proliferate lorem ipsum as a place holder text for future text.

2.9

Lorem ipsum passages were
popularized on Letraset
dry-transfer sheets from
the early 1970s, which
were produced to be used
by graphic designers for
filler text. A variety of
software today can gen-
erate[8] semi-random
text which looks like
jumbled Latin. Apple's
Pages and Keynote
software employs such
jumbled text as sam-
ple screenplay layout.
Lorem ipsum is also
featured on Joomla!,
Google Docs, and
WordPress web
content manag-
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30
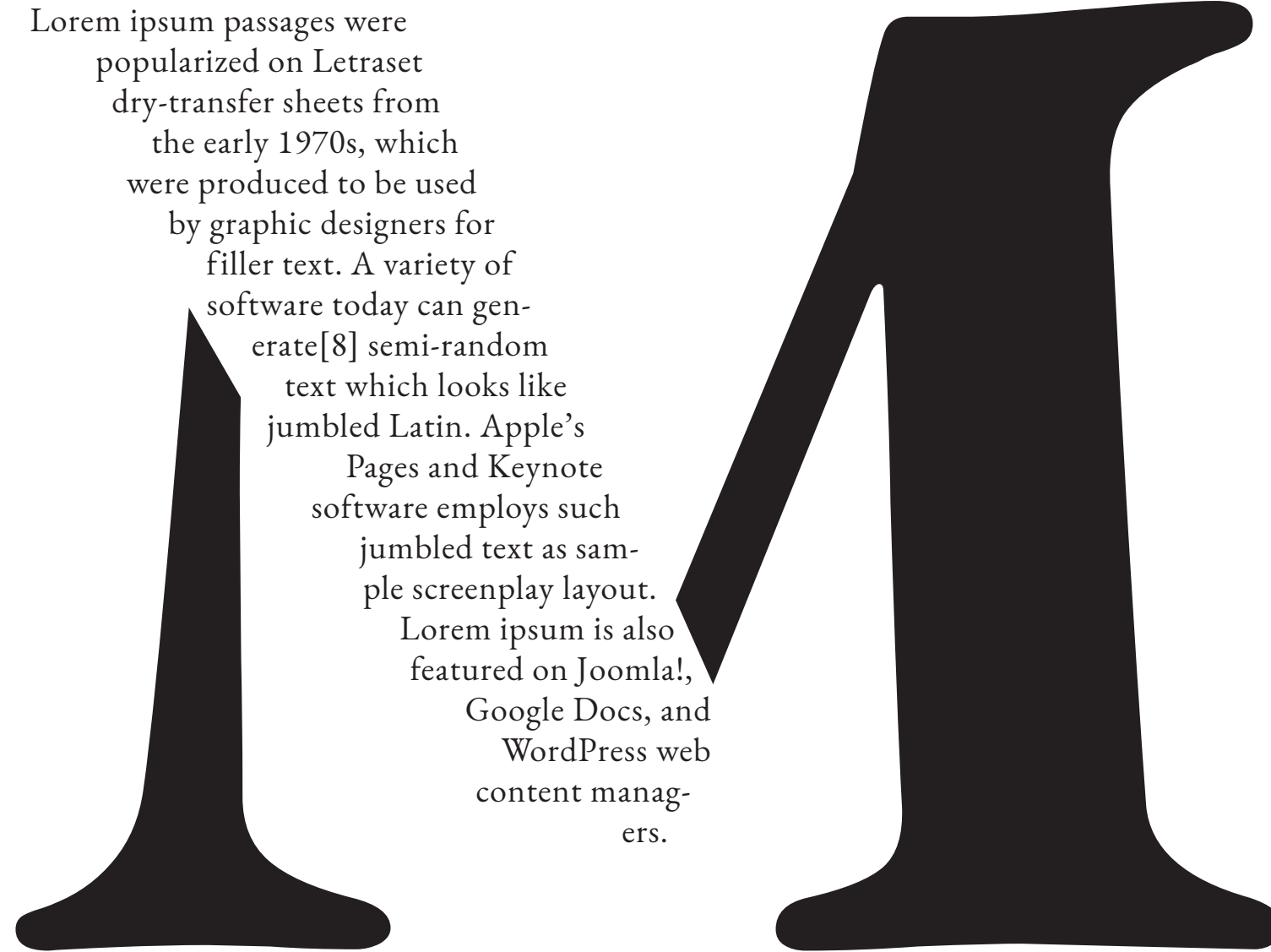
31

The most essential of these is the ability to discover beauty in abstract form.

32.

33

SECTION 1.10.32 OF CICERO'S "DE FINIBUS BONORUM ET MALORUM"

The original Latin passages from which Lorem Ipsum was derived.

"Cicero's influence on Latin prose was so great that subsequent prose -- not only in Latin but in later vernacular languages up to the 19th century -- was either a reaction against or a return to his style."

Merriam-Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature

negative space. It is created by the interrelationship between positive and negative space. A composition based on both symmetric and asymmetric forms. A composition based on both symmetric and asymmetric forms. A composition. A string of a text is a balanced composition.

36
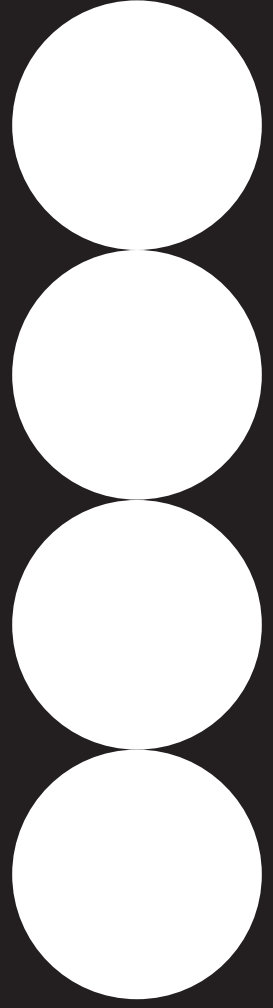
37

Sed ut perspi-
ciatis, unde
omnis iste na-
tus error sit
voluptatem
accusantium
doloremque
laudan-
tium, totam
rem aperiam
eaque ipsa,
quae ab illo
inventore ver-
itatis et qua-
si architecto
beatae vitae
dicta sunt,
explicabo.

38

But I must ex-
plain to you
how all this
mistaken idea
of denouncing
of a pleasure
and praising
pain was born
and I will give
you a complete
account of the
system, and ex-
pound the ac-
tual teachings
of the great
explorer of the
truth, the mas-
ter-builder of
human
happiness.

39

07
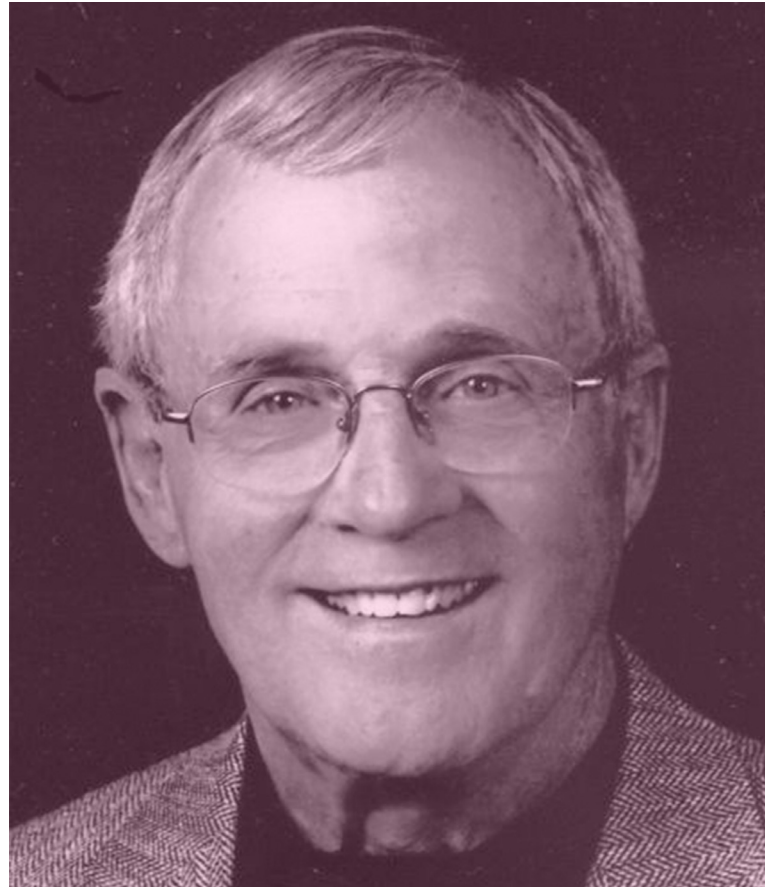
41
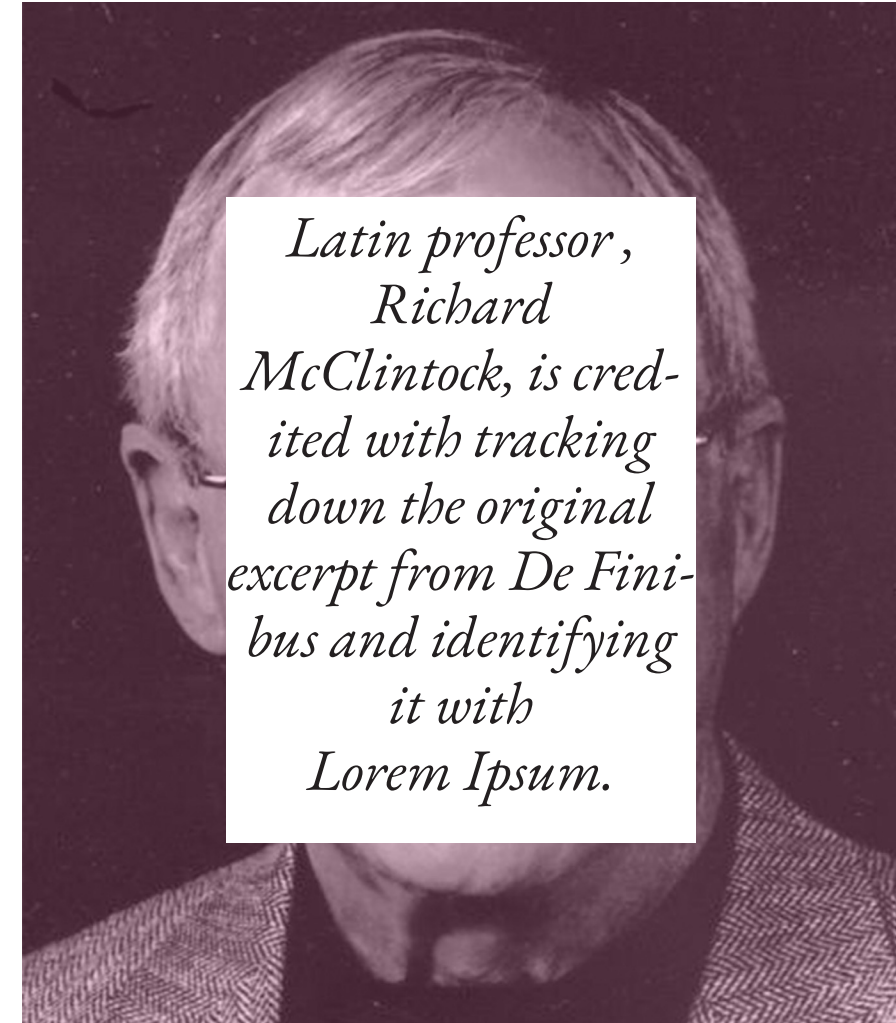
Latin professor , Richard McClintock, is credited with tracking down the original excerpt from De Finibus and identifying it with Lorem Ipsum.

At some **point**, likely in the middle ages, a typesetter had to make a type specimen book, in order to demo different fonts. He got the idea that if the text should be insensible, so as not to distract from the page's graphical features. So he took a handy page of non-Biblical Latin -- Cicero -- and scrambled it into mostly gibberish. "Lorem" isn't even a Latin word -- it's the second half of "dolorem," meaning "pain" or "sorrow". Thus Lorem Ipsum was born, and began its long journey to ubiquity.

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Space in typography is like time in music. It is infinitely divisible, but a few proportional intervals can be much more powerful than a limitles choice of arbitrary quantities.

44 45

HOW FONTS USED TO WORK.
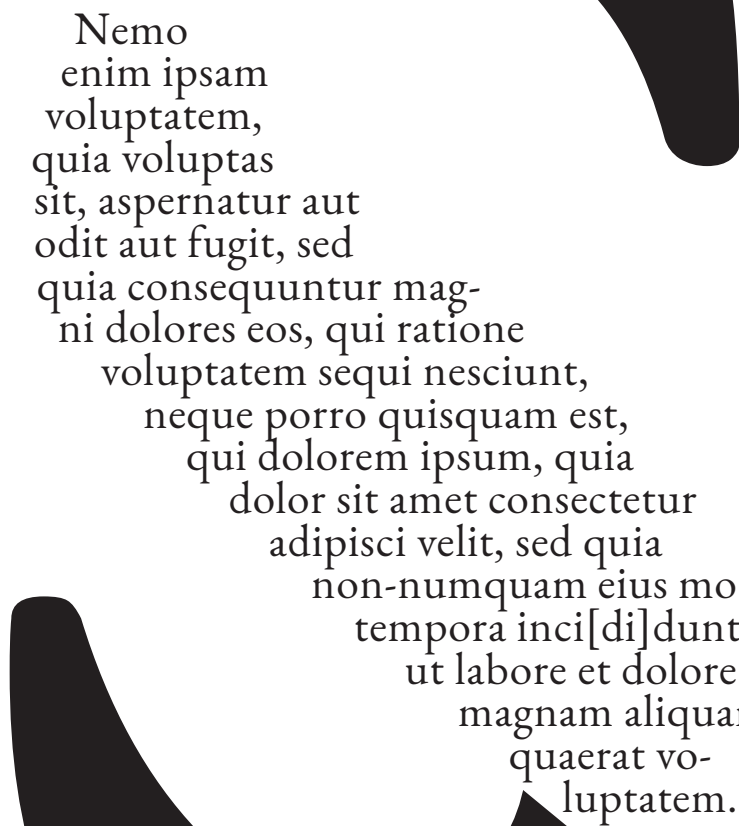
There were probably then, and still are, many options that designers can turn to for filler text. But in the 20th Century, Lorem Ipsum took over as the industry standard.wherever it landed.

Back in the 1960s, if you were prototyping an advertisement and wanted to include machine-lettered text, you usually didn't type it unless you wanted the very specific font and gauge of your typewriter. One thing you could do was take a transfer sheet.
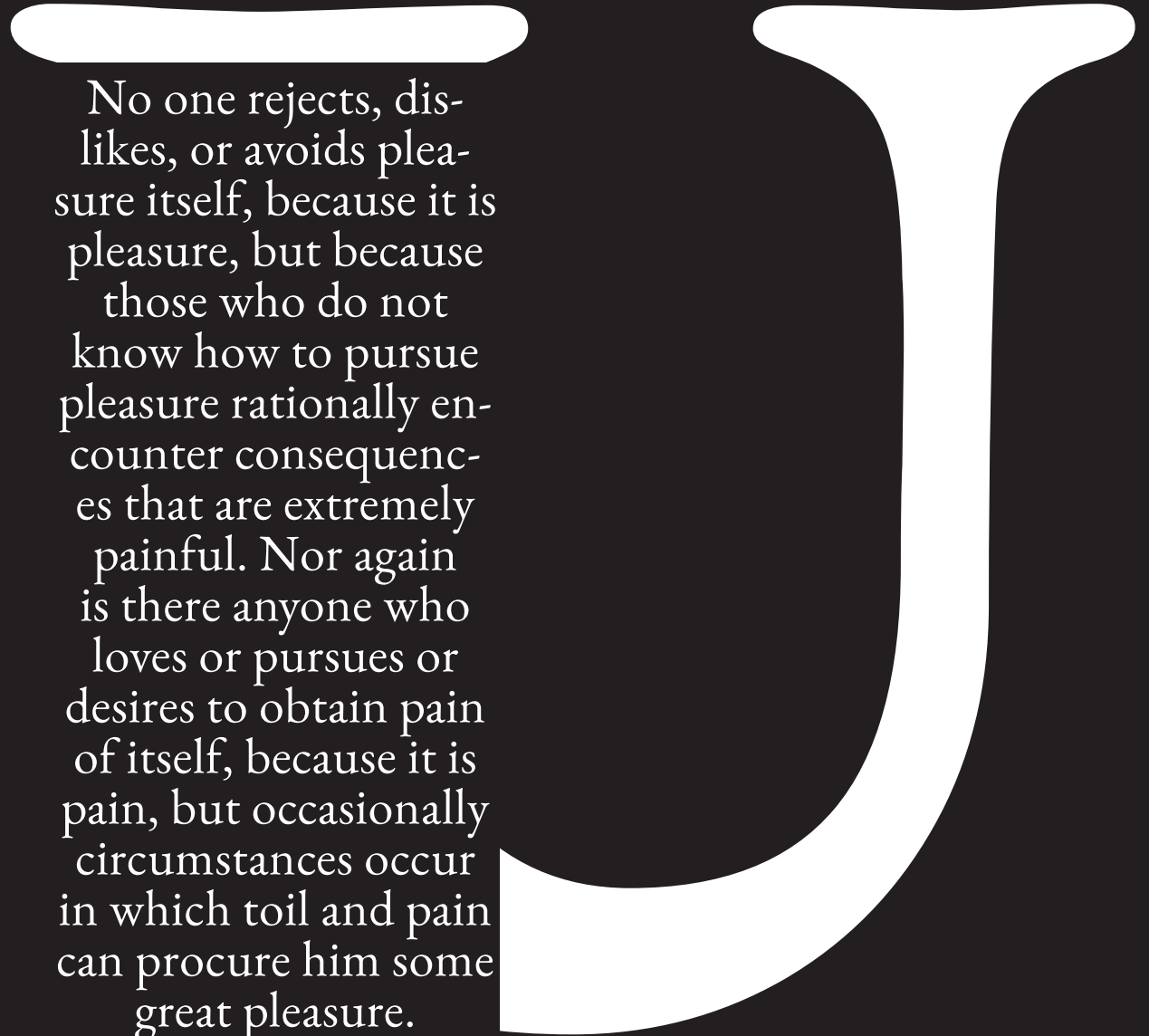
With the transfer sheet you could use to basically iron-on the fonts you wanted where you wanted them. A company called Letraset made these sheets, and included paragraphs and paragraphs of Lorem Ipsum among its offerings -- in various fonts, sizes, and formats.

46

47

Nemo
enim ipsam
voluptatem,
quia voluptas
sit, aspernatur aut
odit aut fugit, sed
quia consequuntur mag-
ni dolores eos, qui ratione
voluptatem sequi nesciunt,
neque porro quisquam est,
qui dolorem ipsum, quia
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non-numquam eius modi
tempora inci[di]dunt,
ut labore et dolore
magnam aliquam
quaerat vo-
luptatem.

...translated into

No one rejects, dis-
likes, or avoids plea-
sure itself, because it is
pleasure, but because
those who do not
know how to pursue
pleasure rationally en-
counter consequenc-
es that are extremely
painful. Nor again
is there anyone who
loves or pursues or
desires to obtain pain
of itself, because it is
pain, but occasionally
circumstances occur
in which toil and pain
can procure him some
great pleasure.

48

49

*L*orem Ipsum's connection to Cicero was forgotten until McClintock noticed that the word "consectetur" was real Latin, but also a relatively infrequently used word.

50

51

Coming full circle, the internet has managed to remix the infamous Lorem Ipsum inso many ways, elevating it to pop culture status.

M

Any designer, web, graphic or even ux, who has stayed up late at night, designing around filler text, has been blearily blinking for hours at an encoded piece wisdom from a great man.

52. 53

DON'T BE AFRAID OF THE TRUTH.

Dummy text or not, Cicero's Finibus, or McClintock's discovery, or who ever you chose to consider the rightful bearer of it's origin, Lorem Ipsum hasn't floated through time, space, shape or color. It is nothing and everything and it's importance cannot be undermined.

54

55

I find out that more and more people expect to be respected simply because they are. The've done nothing, are nothing. I mean, one way or the other, the have simply floated on through. And if you don't evince an interest in their carbon copy souls, they anger, pout and blame you as the one who is lacking in humanity and heart. Its wearing and it never ceases. Well hell, what else is new?
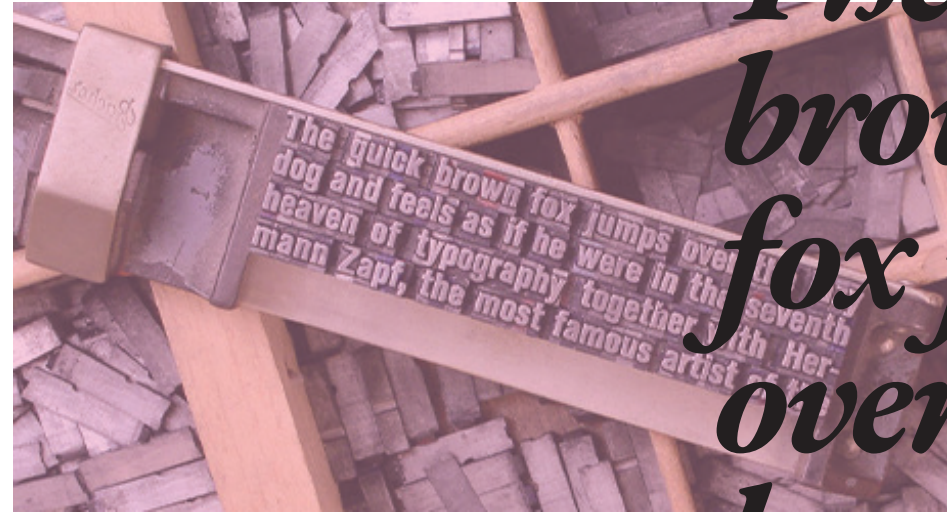
The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

An english pangram, or in other words, a sentence that contains all the letters of the alphabet. Also a widely used common filler text especially for the fact that it contains all the letters of the alphabet, its brevity and coherence. Even so, it's never reached the level of notority that it's latin counterpart has had.

Internet has nev-
er been the one to
let down. Lorem
Ipsum has been
redone and re-
kindled in many
different ways,
to the entertain-
ment and use of
different medias.

e
et

60

Because
Interne

"Bacon ipsum dolor amet chicken turducken spare ribs."

"Shoreditch direct trade four dollar toast copper mug."

62.

Cupcake ipsum dolor sit amet. Sesame snaps chocolate cake.

"Leveraging agile frameworks to provide a robust synopsis"

63

When do we use it?

64

To many, Lorem Ipsum might come as a bad case of fake suntan spray, or wearing a mullet in 2019. It just comes out wrong.

It looks unreal and makes you wonder if something is wrong. Of course the real things are always better, like butter compared to margarine, or wine without sulfur, looking to fill our text with real content. Not so fast, I'd say, there are some redeeming factors in favor of greeking text, as its use is merely the symptom of a worse problem to take into consideration.

65

Bear with me:

You made all the required mock ups for commissioned layout, got all the approvals, you decided on a content management system, got a license for it. Then the question arises: where's the content? Not there yet? That's not so bad, there's dummy copy to the rescue. But worse, what if the fish doesn't fit in the can, the foot's too big for the boot? Or to small? Too short sentences, too many headings, images too large for the proposed design, or too small, or they fit in but it looks iffy for reasons the folks in the meeting can't quite tell right now, but they're unhappy, somehow and a client that's unhappy for a reason is a

problem.

“

B

67

ut…

...lorem Ipsum isn't to blame.

It just shows what's going wrong. Chances are there wasn't collaboration, communication, and checkpoints, there wasn't a process agreed upon or specified with the granulari- *ty required. It's content strategy gone awry right from the start. Forswearing the use of Lorem Ipsum wouldn't have helped, won't help now. It's like saying you're a bad designer, use less* *bold text, don't use italics in every other paragraph. True enough, but that's not all that it takes to get things back on track.*

68

So is it bad?

69

It's actually quite helpful.

Typographers of yore didn't come up with the concept of dummy copy because people thought that content is inconsequential window dressing, only there to be used by designers who can't be bothered to read. Lorem ipsum is needed because words matter...

A lot!

70
71

CON-TENTS