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 *A Collection of Typographic Cocktails* 



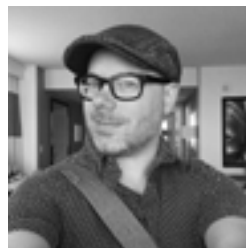
Lost Type

In all likeliness you have seen this symbol before. It is also likely you can quickly interpret its meaning. They can be drawn in a myriad of styles through different eras but they are generally showing the same thing: a small human hand clenched into a fist with the index finger extended. A pointing hand. These little hands have their origins in handwritten manuscripts, and have evolved alongside the evolution of printing in the west.

Then, with very little trace, the hands vanished from our lexicon. Occasionally we may see them carved out of wood and in place of a trade sign. Seeing one for the first time, it might not occur to anyone now that these were once one of the most prolific marks in punctuation. All that remains are pages upon pages of Victorian clip-art.

These are the stories of this and other symbols that have almost been lost to time, but have at least fallen out of use.

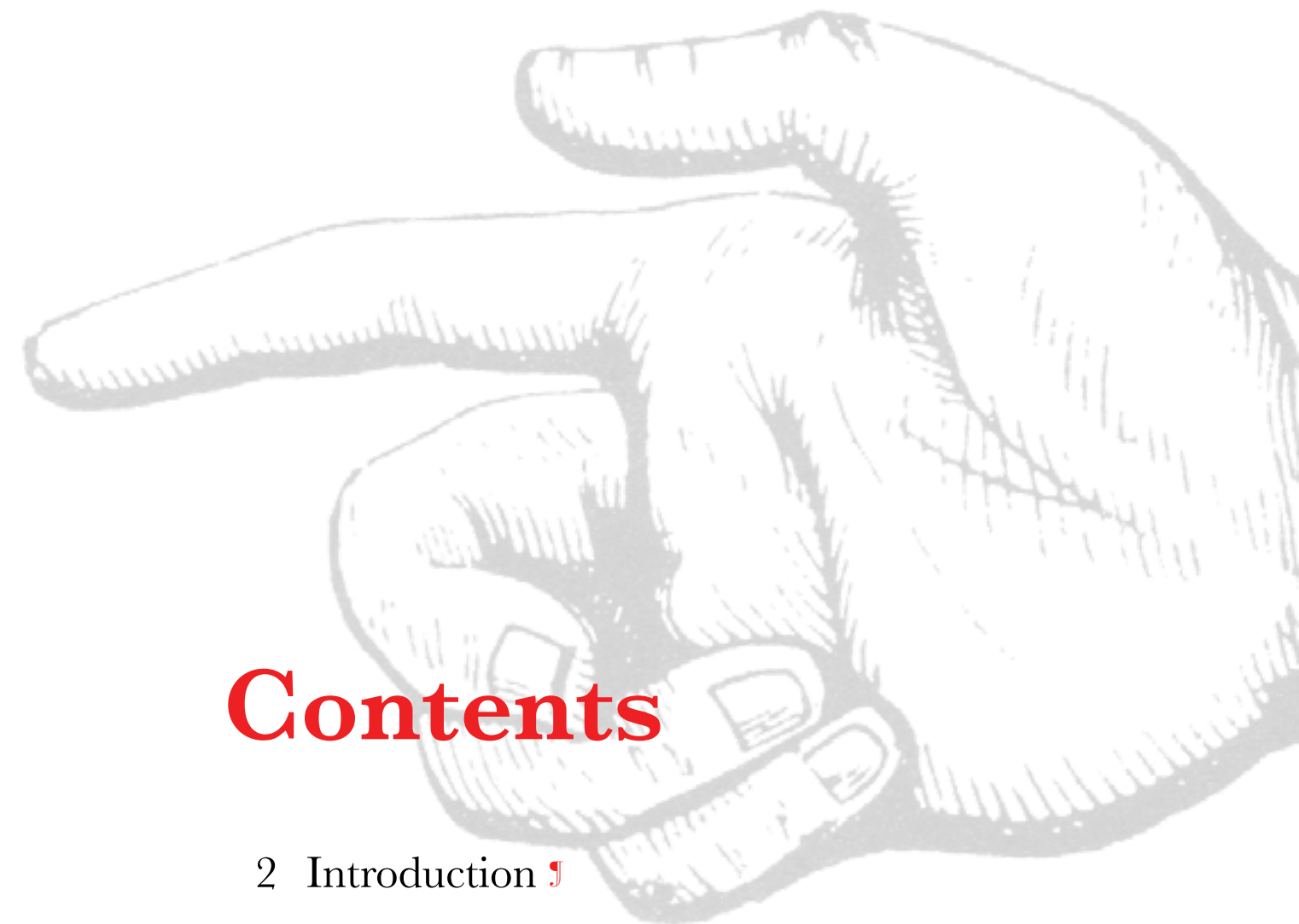
About the Authors



Nick Boxwell is a multimedia artist living and working in Portland Oregon. Nick specializes in video, photo and design and places a lot of emphasis on educational content. Nick dreamed this zine up while researching old type symbols that are no longer used, and wanted to find a way to bring them back.



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BISHOP'S FIST

½ oz Benedictine
¼ oz Bonal Gentaine
1 oz Brandy
1 bottle Saison



In an tall Collins or beer glass, build the liquors and stir with a long spoon. Top with ice and pour the Saison (or a light, carbonated beer of choice) over until glass is full. Garnish with a lemon curl and bud of hops.




Little Hands


We sometimes take for granted that our written language is set in stone. In fact, during the Roman days this could literally be the case. But western writing has changed and evolved over a millennium to become the standard that we know it today. Most alphabetic glyphs and marks that we utilize now look nothing like their ancestors, nor do they mean the same thing. Some marks like the asterisk and dagger have become more ornate. Some like the question mark were simplified. The & began life as a simple ligature of et. And some, perhaps the result of an industry ruled by ruthless editors, were completely abandoned. Whether because of obsolescence or redundancy, those punctuation marks have fallen completely out of use. Such was the fate of the little hand.

Historically these hands went most of their lives without a standardized name or even purpose. In 1824 author John Johnson collected information and history of printing in a book called *Typographia* and written under the symbol of the little hand: “in most instances explain themselves.” While other symbols might have been fairly abstract, It seems like in the case of the pointing finger this is fairly accurate. Many more terms referenced throughout the ages include index, pointer, digit, finger, hand, indicule, printer’s fist, bishops fist, maniple... Historian William H. Sherman spent a good deal of time tracking many of these examples down and, without a singular word for them settled on Manicule; Latin for *Little Hand*.

Manicules are interesting in the history of writing because it’s a mark that wasn’t created by a writer or an editor. Rather, they were originally used by the readers and owners of some of the first objects we now regard as “books”. Early books were hand-made, hand-written and usually created for a particular (wealthy) person to do with as they pleased. As such it is common to find additional notes and marks in the wide margins of these books. This was a time before anyone had drawn an arrow to mean anything other than the physical object. Manicules could be used to indicate exactly the lines of text the owner wanted to find later. The hand drawn nature of the manicule left itself to many personal interpretations. Some are small and stubby. Some are long and ornate. Some are barely a script like scribble, abstracted beyond their literal recognition. Some ornate manicules cleverly wrapped their finger around longer passages. Additional notes could sometimes be found scribbled under the arm (if there was one). What was left behind was a rich history of what the long dead owners of these books were partial to, as well a little bit of their personality.

Of course, industrialization is the great equalizer and the invention of the printing press was no small influence on the recorded word. Despite their hand-drawn origins with readers, manicules flourished as practical sorts in the typesetter’s drawer. It’s not really known why the first type-smiths added these pieces to their sets, but writers and editors were quick to pick up new uses for them. With a manicule they could now draw the reader’s attention to important passages and phrases. Because the hands were conveniently the same height as the character

 This is an example of a manicule in use on the margins of the page.

 Sherman literally wrote the book on manicules, called *Used Books and published in 2008*.


 The earliest use of the arrow as a symbol is found in an illustration of a waterwheel in Bernard Forest de Bélidor’s book *L’architecture Hydraulique*, from around 1737.



Fig. No.1 Pointer

glyphs, for a time publishers also started putting the hands within the body of the text after an important word, intending to point towards the notes in the margins. This practice would eventually fall out of favor when notes and asides were moved from the margins alongside the body copy to the bottom of the page*. Because of the distance a manicule didn't really work well this way and was replaced by the asterisk and its many accomplices (more on that later).



Fig. No.2 Bishop's Fist

The advent of the footnote might have been an early end to the editorial use of the manicule but there was one more trick up its "sleeve". The Victorian era saw the first major boom in advertising. While the most successful early advertisements featured illustrations, the boom created a market for less expensive ads made completely with type to fill the surplus of magazines and newspapers that now flooded the market. The manicule was a great fit for this because it expressed movement and excitement, and was available in almost every type drawer as a standard character. In general type during the 19th century became much more elaborate and showy (although some consider it a low point in typographic history), and the "printer's fist" was no exception. Also, compared to everything else in the drawer, it was already illustrative and anthropomorphic, creating contrast among a sea of letters.



Fig. No.3 Index

Though its use in advertising might have been its heyday, the manicule's usefulness had almost run its course. Perhaps it was this overuse that burned people out to its effectiveness in advertising and signage. The creation of new photographic processes to quickly reproduce original artwork also probably helped usher it out the door. Throughout the modern era the manicule shows up occasionally only as an anachronistic flourish. Computing in the 80's and 90's might have had a slight nod to the manicule with its pointer finger, a way to literally let the user reach into the computer and point at what they want to click, but even that has given way to the much more abstract arrow. Despite being absent from all style guides for the past two centuries, the manicule can still be found represented in modern fonts that have exhaustive sets. It's not terribly useful anymore, but diving deep in the special character to find it can reveal many more characters that one might not be familiar with or know their strange origins.



Fig. No.4 Mutton Fist



Fig. No.5 Dingbat

* Also called a footnote.



Horticultural Dingbats

J At one time writing was a new thing. Our civilization learned to speak long before it learned to write, and so as we tried to record our thoughts and stories, the first few steps of writing were not very graceful. We wrote the way we spoke and we don't exact say our punctuation out loud.

Early writing in Mesopotamia and Egypt tried to replicate an entire word as one character onto the recording medium, and it had not occurred to anyone to leave any space between the characters. Greek writing replicated what was said but had no standard way to imply how it should be said essentially filling up the tablet or papyrus from left to right and then back again in what we today would consider a very long run on sentence. The reader would have had to read the words out loud in order to parse out semantics of the passage, feeling out the pauses as they went.

¶ Breaking up the text of the western world evolved slowly over hundreds of years, but first began with the Greek paragraphos, marks that played many roles throughout the years but generally served to start a new thought, a new voice, or even a new line of a poem. Sometimes they were even used to break sections of large groups of thoughts up further, creating what we now refer to as paragraphs. These Markings resembled anything from being a straight line to more fanciful symbols, and the most ornate and recognizable of these was the headera, or ivy leaf, what we now refer to as a fleuron. ¶

¶ When the Roman Empire flourished they tried to model their civilization in many ways after the Greeks, but for some reason the Romans were not very keen on punctuation and some of the paragraphos marks were completely ignored. But as the middle ages came Christianity began to codify many of the marks and practices of writing that we now take for granted. Scribes began placing a capital C for Capitulum at the beginning of Chapters and their assistants flourished them with extra bars. This practice created the wonderfully expressive and strange pilcrow that we know and love today.

The pilcrow eventually made its way further into the body of text, separating out whole paragraphs rather than just chapters. But as time went on, rush jobs on writing left an empty little space at the beginning of paragraphs where the Pilcrow should have gone. By the time the printing press made its debut it was common to simply ignore the small spaces where the pilcrow had traditionally gone and that simplicity is now the convention we refer to as an indentation. The pilcrow remains invisible to this day, a hidden character in word processors on your computer, waiting for you to flip a switch and highlight its presence again.

In printing occasionally decoration would be called for in more considered books and since then the fleuron has probably been the most common. Type sets often included the curious little leaf and while nothing more than an embellishment, its organic and solid form must have been eye-catching compared to the angular characters that make up the roman alphabet. Besides filling up the empty space left by the pilcrow it would occasionally find itself breaking up longer chapters by floating ominously between empty lines. Moving into the industrial revolution fleurons were created in multiple styles and deployed almost anytime empty space on the page needed to be filled. Creative typesetters created ornate lines and borders using the little leaves and flowers and found other creative ways to decorate title pages or call attention to headings. The fleuron and its ilk have all but disappeared probably because they were not terribly useful in the first place.

Unlike the manicule, the fleuron doesn't have a completely obvious meaning and is now purely a decorative element. In his book *The Elements of Typographic Style*, Robert Bringhurst refers to these sorts of elements as "horticultural dingbats" and only recommends them used as a structural element in the opening paragraph of a chapter (but seems to prefer wide variety of versals and drop caps).



FLEURON NO 2

2 dash Lavender Bitters

2 oz Blanco Tequila

¼ oz. Lemon

¼ oz. White Wine Shrub

¼ oz. Egg White

Bar Spoon of Honey

Combine all of the ingredients in a shaker and shake vigorously to mix. Add two Ice cubes and shake again to chill. Strain once into a glass and then strain a second time into an old fashioned glass over a single large Ice cube.



ASTERISM

3/4 oz Genever
3/4 oz Gran Classioco
3/4 oz Lemon Juice
Dash Grapefruit Juice
Absinthe Rinse

Rinse a coupe glass with Absinthe and discard the excess. Shake the remaining ingredients in a shaker with ice and strain into the coupe glass. Garnish with three star anise.



Small Constellations

While the lives of readers are very passive and writers are the icons of the literature world, there is another unsung hero in between those roles who's job is to polish the work into it's final product. That is the job of the editor.

Dedicated to the muses, the Library of Alexandria was quite possibly the largest library in the ancient world and a was legendary even in it's own time. Aristarchus of Samothrace was a librarian and one of the ancient library's directors and grammarians. One of his tasks was overseeing a group of scribe's copying Homeric works but errors appeared frequently enough to merit a shorthand way to call attention to them. He marked those lines with a small star shape, ✱, the asteriskos, and used it to recommend additions to the text.

The use of the asteriskos became a convention that passed along from editor to editor and eventually, this complex shape simplified over time and became what we now call the asterisk*. It's use as an editing mark continued into the middle ages, and was even used for a while, like the manicule, to direct the reader towards notes in the margins.

In the Industrial Revolution, when notes moved from the margins to the bottom of the page, the manicule stopped being an appropriate mark to use (for some reason, manicules always were pointing left and right. Up and down were remarkably rare). In this case the abstracted star symbol was used as a way to cross reference items that might not exist in parallel on the page. A new convention in page layout was born: the footnote. By directing the the reader to all of the additions collected at the bottom of the page, space was saved and notes were easier to ignore if needed, providing less distraction.

The asterisk is one of the most common used symbols in modern writing, but there are similar children symbols that were all born from it. The reference mark the double asterisk features two stars stacked upon each other **. This mark has fallen almost completely out of use, but you are more likely to catch the fancy asterism though: three asterisk formed into a triangle.

The name asterism is the same one astronomers use to refer to a group of stars in the sky; not quite a constellation but identifiable nonetheless. Like the Fleuron the asterism was mostly used to mark minor breaks in text, kind of like a sub-chapter, or a smaller passage of time. It's a quiet, subtle mark that implies the user to stop and take a breath, reflect on the chapter thus far, and then move forward through time. Occasionally you would catch them used as a purely decorative element, filling the empty space with stars.



Asteriskos



Asterisk



Double Asterisk



Asterism

†
†

The Obelisk

While we are on the subject of footnotes, What do you do if you need to add another footnote but you've already used an asterisk? Well, the dagger † of course.

The dagger shares an origin story with its close partner, the asterisk. In the fourth century BC, Zeno was the original director of the ancient Library of Alexandria and the first person to create any kind of editor's mark. He drew a small line next to any passages he thought should be deleted from his student's work. This simple line was meant to resemble a skewer, and its name was the obelus, meaning "roasting spit". The skewering and cutting of lines was important at the time in a place where the translation and copying of older text was the most frequent practice, and the obelus eventually found itself being used in conjunction with the asterisk as the most common marks for editing.

The use of the obelus alongside the asterisk continued through the ancient world and even developed two little dots of its own. This version turned into a lemniscus, what we now know as the division symbol, and of its another use that it implies "cutting". While the lemniscus continues to be used in mathematics until today, the obelus used in writing continued to evolve in its own subtle ways, eventually turning sideways and merging

with the dots to resemble a Christian cross. This form obviously appealed to scholars during the middle ages, and it was used extensively in biblical notations. The ornate version of the obelus that we now refer to as a dagger developed during this time as well. To this day, most serif fonts use this version of the dagger while sans serif fonts tend to use a more simplified cross shape.

As the books became more common and less expensive and the footnote became the preferred way to organize additional notes, the dagger was employed after the asterisk as a helpful symbol to connect two thoughts. This use of the dagger has given rise to the double dagger † (diesis) and the extremely uncommon triple dagger, both of which evolved as a way to help further organize footnotes. Organizing footnotes was a messy business and even though there are formal conventions, they might not necessarily be followed.

***An asterisk
makes a light
shine, the
obelisk cuts
and pierces.**

-Epiphanius

DOUBLE DAGGER

1 oz Bourbon
1 oz Rye Whiskey
1 dash Whiskey Barrel Bitters
1 dash Orange Bitters
1 bar spoon Maple Syrup

Add all ingredients and some ice to a small pitcher and stir. Strain into a Double Old Fashioned glass over a single large ice cube. Garnish with two orange peels and two whiskey soaked cherries skewered on two picks.



INTERROBANG

1 ½ oz Fernet Branca
2 oz Menta Branca
1 oz Kaluha
½ oz Becherkovka
Heavy Cream
Angostura Bitters

Stir the liquors together in a small pitcher with ice. Strain into a large shot glass. Whip some room temperature heavy cream until it has a medium thick consistency and carefully layer on top. For a garnish, we used a hand cut stencil to spray the Bitters onto the cream.



Modern Characters

In 1962 Martin Speker is working on an ad campaign. Advertising is in its heyday, with print, radio and television firing on all cylinders. After realizing that a lot of expressive ad copy was coming back to him with both a ! and ? next to each other, he realized that

there was a need to be filled: a mark that could be used for both situations at once. Immediately he put his staff designer Jack Lipton on the project and the Interrobang was born. Most punctuation marks that we are familiar with came about out of hundreds of years of use. The Asterisk and the dagger slowly evolved from a star and a skewer, respectively. The ampersand is simply a ligature of the Latin word “et”, which literally means “and”. But here is a glyph that stands out because it was designed in a very deliberate way. It does feature two already recognizable marks, probably the most used since the period. But that recognition doesn’t reflect the subtle effectiveness of such an “in your face” approach to typography.

How many times have you seen a sentence end like this !? You can almost hear in your own head how ridiculous the question even is, which is how our new punctuation gets its alternate name: the rhetorical mark. Why bother asking? Interestingly the exclamation doesn’t seem to inflict as much excitement or shouting as one might think when paired with a question mark. In fact, this mark might as well have been the WTF of its day. Even the interrobang’s name gives off a more excitement than the mark might itself does.

The ? was once called an “interrogation mark” (giving us the *interro* part of the interrobang.) It’s unknown how the ? got to be its current shape. Medieval forms look a little more like a lightning bolt or sideways tilde, perhaps to imply the musical intonation of the sentence. It’s also possible that mark was originally a lower case q over an o, a mark meant to be shorthand for the Latin form of question, *questio*.

**WHO
FORGOT
TO PUT
GAS IN
THE CAR**

Similar might be the origins of the exclamation point, being thought that it is was an I and o on top of each other, the Latin word for joy, *io*. But why add the word bang to name interrobang? It might seem strange to us but it would have been obvious to a typographer at the time. With pits of people working alongside each other with massive options of movable type it was common to shorten the name of some of the characters to speed things along in conversation with your co-workers. “Pass me the bang” was faster than saying “pass me the exclamation point”. *The term bang itself probably evolved from its gratuitous use in comic books.

The interrobang was met with much applause by designers and copy editors when it was revealed, but writers frowned on its use, thinking it unnecessary and showy. It must have been a natural fit for advertising though, the general populace didn’t seem to register that the mark was new or even that they could use it themselves. In the following years a few typewriters featured the symbol, but because the large sturdy printing presses already in existence had a set number of glyphs it could use, the interrobang never really caught on in a significant way commercially and within a few years had all but disappeared from memory.

Unlike other forms of punctuation, readers, writers and editors had little to do with the interrobang creation, making it one of the most stylish marks and giving it a cult following that has resurfaced in recent times. While not used in most books and periodicals, merchandise and artwork featuring the interrobang circulate and even pop up in logos; the most famous being the State Library of South Wales.

