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ENG 1121

5/14/20

Word Count: 2136

Title: Graphic Design

Part 1: General Analysis

History and Social Impact

Every day we come across some form of graphic design. There are many aspects to graphic design, it even dates back to the early beginnings of life. Since graphic design is under the general aspect of art it comes in many different forms, Meggs and Pervis describes forms of graphic design which includes writing, symbols, pictures, etc. as, “a graphic counterpart of the spoken word or unspoken thought” (5) therefore, graphic design has always been around since it takes on so many forms. Some of the most popular forms of graphic design would be pictures and writings. Early forms of graphic design include drawings that cavemen made that were discovered in caves. Other works of art that can be classified as graphic design is the paintings, symbols and the list goes on. A more general form would be paintings. Painters were more popular during the medieval times whereas there was no type of camera technology or phones so the only way to capture a moment would either be to remember it in your head or to have a painter paint it. Paintings were usually made of kings or people with high status especially since in those times society was split between nobles and peasants so it makes sense that nobles usually have paintings of themselves because they are able to afford it. An earlier sign of graphic

design is the drawings people made in the pyramids. However, since then graphic design has changed in many ways and continues to evolve every single day. Although graphic design was great production of modern graphic design was low, that is until the invention of the printing press in 1440. This invention paved the way for modern day graphic design. Now anyone can mass produce graphic designs as long as you have a computer. There is even a program on windows called paint where anyone can go on and create designs easily. Or even if you do not have a computer you could draw something on a paper and print multiple copies of it with a printer. Technology also helps us make better designs than before whereas designs nowadays can be as colorful and creative as you want.

Graphic design is not like other products whereas when you create something people might not remember the name of the person who created a design but they'd remember the design itself. For example, the American Flag which was made hundreds of years ago is very popular. Mostly because America is a great country but it also depends on which region of the planet you live on but for the most part a lot of people know about the American Flag. But it would be rare for someone to know the name of the person that made the flag. Nevertheless, her name is Betsy Ross. The flag is a great representation of one popular design because it's in people's minds every day and the flag has lived on so long and most likely is going to live on even longer. Other popular works of graphic design includes logos to different brands. A great example would be the apple logo. Everyone knows when they see an apple on a phone or computer that means it was made by the brand apple. That just comes to show how impactful graphic design is. You can spot different things based on the design. Another aspect where graphic design comes in place is with fashion. Everyone who wears clothes is wearing graphic design and another way graphic design is impactful is with the logos of different fashions. If you

see a check mark on a shoe or some type of clothing, you instantly know it was made by NIKE. Or if you see the jump man symbol on any type of clothing you would instantly know it was made by Jordan. That is how generalized graphic design is in our society today. However, some known graphic designers include Alan Fletcher, Peter Saville, and Milton Glaser. As well as the best software to use for graphic design include Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator.

Discourse Community

When it comes to discourse communities related to graphic design the variations are endless whether it the relation is direct or indirect. In modern day society graphic design goes with almost any and everything. Some discourse communities linked to graphic include but are not limited to, fashion, reading, painting, posters, typography, technology, advertisements, organizations, religion, etc. The main discourse community linked to graphic design would be art. There also are communities within graphic designs which include, art and illustration design, visual identity design, marketing design, etc. Graphic designers share similar goals. Some designers design to get better and test their creativity, some design to make money, some design just for fun. The overall goal that is common throughout all designers is to test the limits of their creativity. Some people also use designing as a way to express their artistic sense and use their art to distract themselves from the reality of life, or to make people aware of their feelings towards societal problems. Methods of communications every designer uses is through social media. For example, on twitter you can find yourself in the design community and communicate with other designers to help improve your skill. If you post your designs to twitter then people that are interested in the aspects of the design you posted can find your page and you guys can communicate. Another way is posting your designs to Instagram you could use Instagram's

explore page to your advantage and essentially use your design to communicate to the world.

One example of designers using their art to communicate to the world is the black lives matter design. People came up with a concept that related to the problems them and many black African Americans go through. Another way of communication can be through YouTube. Designers can post tutorials on YouTube to help potential designers or current designers become better artists.

Or it could be used like Twitter and Instagram where they just post their art on YouTube. A final and the most vital way designers communicate with each other is through a website called

Behance. This website is used mainly by graphic designers to post their portfolios consisting of a collection of work they made. People go on Behance either for inspiration, entertainment or to view the work of a potential hire. Designers communicate outside their community with their work where as I stated before they can spread awareness to different problems through their art.

According to Kotin, “we challenge teens to be more creative and more thoughtful in their engagement with the world and their communities...” (1) which makes graphic design so much

more important, the world needs more graphic designers. Graphic Designers come from many different regions so language may vary but for America the primary language would be English or another way designers can communicate is through the language of creativity and colors. For

example, the color blue indicates sadness, the color red indicates anger and orange usually indicates happiness so they could use colors to show how they feel. Things you need to know

before becoming a designer is knowing how to be creative. Creativity isn't something that is taught but it is something that is inherited. People are born with creativity; anyone can learn how

to design but not everyone can be creative with their designs. The program you use however doesn't matter as long as you have an artistic or creative sense to make your art stand out.

Rules and Messages

When on the topic of graphic design rules may vary. It all depends on the reason to why you are designing what you are designing and who your expected audience is. If you are designing for fun and trying to be creative the sky is your limits because there are no rules. There are many pieces of art that contain nudity or violence. However, when you are designing for a specific reason there is a lot to think about. If your audience is kids, then you should not use nudity or things suggesting violent behavior or inappropriate language. This would go for corporate designs as well. Livingston stated whenever you are designing you “need to be aware of ‘design thinking, human centred design, design action and wicked problems’ when designing for social causes but also the theory of semiotics – signs and symbols that underpin design outcomes” (50). When designing something like a presidential campaign poster it would be unprofessional to use nudity or inappropriate languages. You also would have to create your design within the color scheme of the party and using the signs and symbols that relate directly to the party you are designing for. If you are designing a presidential campaign for someone of the Republican party, then your main color would need to be red as well as you would have to use the symbol of an elephant since these are already set to represent the party and if it is for someone of the Democratic party then the main color would need to be blue and you would need to use a symbol of a donkey. The rules of designing differentiate from the piece of art that you are making to the audience it is intended to and category it is in. The main message for social media designers is to make art that is welcoming and pleasing to the eyes, social media designs could include posters for basketball or any other category, forms of these designs can be twitter headers, avi’s, etc. Logo designing would be more marketing where colors and symbols matter

way more than a social media design. The main message would be to make something that represents the company you are working with. Entertainment design includes YouTube Thumbnails, YouTube banners, or anything related to entertainment. Therefore, the message would vary depending on the topic of the video you make the thumbnail for or the genre that the YouTuber you are making a design is associated with. Nevertheless, at the end of the day the message being sent from the designer is their ability to express their creativity. But it depends on the intended audience whereas the common goal may tend to diverge.

Part 2: Focused Analysis

The example chosen for the focused analysis is the NBA logo:



For the example the category is sports/logo designs. More in particular the NBA logo design. The name of the person that created the NBA logo is Alan Siegel. The original concept is a picture of NBA player Jerry West dribbling the ball up the court. At the time Jerry west was a point guard for the Los Angeles Lakers. The goal of the logo was to create something simple, yet complex and iconic to represent the National Basketball Association. He used Jerry West as a symbol in the logo and the perfectly contrasted colors of red, blue and white to make the logo appealing. The intended audience of the design was for the NBA watchers and the basketball

fans of the time and the future. Millions, maybe even billions have known or seen the NBA logo in their lifetime, that is how iconic Siegel's creation was. That also is part of the impact of graphic design. This work of art is important to me because it is very inspiring to see that someone created a logo that is known by millions, it inspires me and many designers to become better and to hopefully create something like Siegel's logo that truly will live on forever. It is also important to me because I am a fan of basketball and it is good to know that we have a symbol that represents me and all of the basketball fans in the world. Personally, I also am a fan of minimalism when it comes to art. There is something about the way simple looks, things like that are very appealing because it is eye catching, you can look at something like that all day and not get bored of it and it has the attribute to fit in so perfectly. Simple yet complex.

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