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Proposed question for Independent Project (Part One in Independent Project in Year Three) - "Can branding and advertising have a negative effect on society and how has this changed through the rise of new media?"

In this essay I will be exploring three key words that will include three key images and three visual artists/philosophers. My three key words history, media and culture will investigate topics that will support my independent research document in the third year and help me to form a question I will use for my research. Next year I will be looking into branding and advertising for illustration with support from my key words and topics I choose. For my practise I would like to look into packaging, specifically with tattooing products. I will be looking into philosophers such as George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Marshall McLuhan and Clifford Geertz.

History is the study of past events, particularly in human affairs. Throughout the years history has always had a big impact on art and how its produced. Many art pieces have been made throughout the centuries and have affected society constantly. Famous artwork has always been questioned and has opened various discussions that alter the way we see it throughout time. Hegel was a philosopher of history who looked at the development of freedom and the consciousness of freedom over the course of world history. With this he also delved into art history and the aesthetics of this. "In all these respects art, considered in its highest vocation, is and remains for us a thing of the past. Thereby it has lost for us genuine truth and life, and has rather been transferred into our ideas instead of maintaining its earlier necessity in reality and occupying its higher place. What is now aroused in us by works of art is not just immediate enjoyment but our judgement also." (Hegel, 1998) Through looking at the aesthetics of art, Hegel also acknowledges that art has become much more than it was before and instead of enjoying a piece from a base level, there is almost a new science of what makes a piece of art good from bad. The over analysis of art throughout time has grown increasingly stricter and more analytical. Through the internet and media there is so much more criticism and competition online when it is about art.



Michelangelo, Last Judgment, Sistine Chapel, altar wall, fresco, 1534-1541

This piece by Michelangelo named “The Last Judgement” is what I feel encapsulates what people used to think was good art. It has an historic and older aesthetic with meaning added. As time has gone on the meaning of what good art is has changed. Before art was to be looked at mainly and admired, but nowadays art is to be mass sold and strategic. Branding and advertising have come into the art scene massively than what it used to be with companies paying artists as clients and using work in a much more quick and efficient way. “Artistic-based communication is essential in today’s world because consumers are more conscious of design elements, and their choice of products and whom to use as a service provider reflects this.” (Art and Branding – The Secret Love Affair, 2022). The world we live in now is consumer based and unlike what it was before, more and more people are making livings out of being and artist. There are so many clients out there who all are looking for different types of work for their business, so there is room for many different artists with various types of style and aesthetics. To thrive in a world that is so competitive and fast pace you need to stand out in your own unique way. This can be through media outlets and showing what makes you different from other competitors. The industry being fast past and big can have its benefits as clients are constantly looking for work and artists to work with in advertising, articles and product design for example. There is a constant need for artists to produce work as there are constantly products being released. This can also be negative due to the competitiveness and amount of artists trying to make a living from their work too.

The term media describes mass communication such as the internet, broadcasting, and publishing. The word media is the plural word for medium which describes any channel of communication. The media plays a huge role in the development of thoughts and ideas in society and how we think. A philosopher named Marshall McLuhan studied media theory and his most famous idea was “the medium is the message”. By which means that the important thing about media is not the message they carry but the way the medium itself affects human consciousness and society at large.” (Staunton, 2016) McLuhan describes how much subconsciously the media ingrains messages into our head for their own benefit without us knowing. People base their views and beliefs on what media is telling them to be right and not how they feel. In the past media outlets such as publishing was the main way people got their names out there, unlike nowadays with the internet. We are constantly bombarded with opinions, articles and how we should feel about certain topics. “But when information travels at electronic speeds, the linear clarity of the print age is replaced by a feeling of “all-at-onceness.” Everything everywhere happens simultaneously. There is no clear order or sequence. This sudden collapse of space into a single unified field “dethrones the visual sense.” This is what the global village means: we are all within reach of a single voice or the sound of tribal drums. For McLuhan, this future held a profound risk of mass terror and sudden panic.” (Wolf, 1996) McLuhan shows how we are constantly looking at media all at once and processing an excess amount that isn’t normal. When linking this to branding and advertising, it shows how strategic you must be to get your work out there and stand out from the crowds of presence in the media.



2019. S.O.S. [Oil on canvas].

This painting by Afriani shows the effect media can have on a person. Being in an industry where your online presence is essential nowadays can be draining but can also have its benefits. Whereas before you couldn't get your work out there easily, with the media it's a quick way of people being able to see all your work and for clients to reach out. The media is a crucial part of branding and marketing your work, and can really help you find work and clients that fit what you are doing. There are all different media outlets you can go into that isn't just on social media, such as magazines, television, websites, and newspapers. There is an endless number of routes you could go down with branding and getting your art seen. Afriani shows emotion through her art that a lot of people could relate to. This is a positive trait to have as through media that is the best way to relate to people as you don't get a lot of time to make an impression. Social media and its negative effects are a massive topic in today's society with the popularity of it so a lot of people, specifically young people will relate and enjoy this art piece. Being able to relate to certain groups of people is very beneficial in helping your brand thrive.

Ideas, social behaviour, and customs of a specific group in society is what culture is described as. Cultural differences between various societies can be dramatic with where you are born, to how you are raised socially. Within big societies there are also subcultures that include a smaller group of people, normally with a strict way of how to act and behave. Culture in art can be a big focal point for artists and is an important topic to make people aware of. Using culture in art can show inclusivity for people and make them feel more seen if there's not much representation out there. Showing different cultures within branding for companies is also crucial and has recently become more popular to do. People in society want to feel included and see different types of people being shown rather than a minority group that only makes a specific type of person feel validated. "He argued that culture is made up of the meanings people find to make sense of their lives and to guide their actions. Interpretive social science is an attempt to engage those meanings." (Clifford Geertz: Work and Legacy, 2022) Culture is made up as so many people practise so many different types because that's what they know. Clifford Geertz created the term 'thick description' which means providing cultural context behind people's thoughts and actions instead of just factual reasons. He looked at why people do things the way they do based on how they grew up in their culture. This could have a negative effect because you might be using people's beliefs and how they grew up against them, by manipulating them to notice your branding and buying the product. Linking this to my practise I would like to investigate subcultures in society such as punks in the 70/80s. A challenge with looking at Clifford Geertz is by following his beliefs you may be preying on people's vulnerability by purposely trying to promote your brand to them. This could also be a positive thing too because it might better a person by seeing or buying your brand for their own benefit.



Keay, L., 2012. Lip Service. [spray paints & stencils size].

This piece of art is by an artist called Leon Keay who creates bright, colourful work with meanings behind them. He also makes political art with a punk feel to them and uses graffiti style in most of his pieces. Linking this to the branding side I would like to make striking art with a punk style to them. When creating a brand, you need a distinctive style people recognise which is what Leon Keay has. In my work, I want to include different cultures and types of people to keep the progression going in art and talk about and show people who aren't the norm. Examples of this negatively happening in media is just showing white, thin models in advertising and drawing one type of person in your work. I think things like these could be worked on to include everyone's culture, so they have representation in branding within the media. Leon Keay does a good job at this by having many pieces of artwork with different genders, religions, and ethnicity. I enjoy looking into artists who know what art they want to produce and have a distinctive style as that is what I want in my work, and it is inspiring to see. "Your brand is what impression you give people, it is a timeless concept. As an artist, your brand essence is a blend of your artwork, your attitude, your story and your goals." (O'Neil, n.d.) Everyone has a personal style without knowing it and showing how you became your brand is essential to clients seeing how you have progressed.

The three key words I have chosen, history, media and culture have helped me decide on a question I will use for my research. In my question, I want to discuss the effects these key words have had on the branding and advertising side. For the word history, I will look at how branding has developed in the past years with the rise of new media, and whether this has had a positive or negative affect on society and creators. For media, I will be looking at branding in terms of media and the competitiveness of creators due to the amount of people in the field. For culture I

want to investigate different cultures of people and subcultures to see how this affects them from group to group. I think these three words cover a good number of topics I can talk about, and they also relate to my practise I was to investigate. "Even without easy tracking and measurability, brand advertising campaigns still add tremendous value. With more consumers aware of your brand, the more they trust and stick with you throughout the buyer's journey. This makes them more likely to take action when they see a performance-based ad (and even become a loyal customer) in the future:" (Mialki, 2021). Brand advertising through media creates a more accessible way for people to find you compared to when there weren't any social apps. Using my knowledge of the history behind how we have progressed to this multimedia branding you can learn the trends and science behind making a good brand for yourself and product. This helped me find a question I thought fit what I want to look at because I want to look into everything behind branding and what it once was to the present day. Culture comes into this by also acknowledging how branding can differ through different societies, how culture can affect how we perceive certain branding, and how branding can become more inclusive such as advertising on tv for certain products. Throughout history branding on tv through animation or real life has been exclusive to the majority of society and targeted certain groups of people deemed as superior.

My question I have chose for my independent project extended essay is "Can branding and advertising have a negative effect on society and how has this changed through the rise of new media?". This question can spark topics such as the history of branding and how it was much more simplistic before, has media had a negative effect on the branding and advertising side or has it helped artists? And I

would like to write about how branding is different in cultures and has also changed throughout the decades. Branding and advertising can also target subcultures for positive and negative reasons. I want to explore different sides of branding and the psychological reasons people gravitate to certain products compared to others and how branding has turned into a science to get people to buy your product. For my practise of branding an advertising I will be designing packaging for tattoo products such as aftercare products. I enjoy looking at tattooing in general and the illustrative side of it, but I have never properly looked into the branding. Due to all tattoo artists being talented at art I would believe they mostly do the art side of branding themselves. However, the market is big, and it is more likely they would like to hire other artists to help them and to showcase art on their products. Looking at packaging sounds interesting to me as it's a whole new way of designing work for a client and seeing it on their products.

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