

EVOLUTION, RELATIONSHIP, AND CLIENTELE

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Evolution, Relationship and Clientele

Research Document Proposal for The Big Idea

The purpose of this proposal is to explore my chosen keywords and finding relatable imagery, information, and key practitioners which will help me to justify and expand on the words and why I have chosen them. I strive to understand more about how these words fit into the course and how they link together. These keywords will relate to Graphic Designers I have looked at including; El Lissitzky (Evolution), Tracey Emin (Relationship), Paula Scher (Clientele). The philosopher included in the document was, Ernst Kapp (Evolution), Mary Parker (Relationship). I have provided the key images that I have found and want to include aiding my question.

Evolution

“Evolution is a process of gradual development in a particular situation or thing over a period of time.” (Collins English Dictionary, 2021)

Exploring the word Evolution. I investigated how evolution links into graphic design and also how design has evolved. This led me to look into the start of Graphic Design. There is always a start to something and everything is constantly changing. The roots of graphic design are said to age back to 105 AD – 1530 AD, this was subject to the invention of paper. “(in 1045 AD), moveable type was invented, which allowed characters to be placed individually for printing” (customlogos.com, 2021). This shows the start of typography and printing. The first computer was made in 1943. We can look at the

philosopher Ernst Kapp, Kapp was said to be “the first to use the term ‘philosophy of technology’ in his book *Eine Philosophie der Technik* (1877 [2018]), Kapp was a philologist and historian.” (Franssen, Lokhorst and van de Poel, 2009) this shows the consideration of technology long before it was introduced.

The idea had risen from the following questions. Looking at how design has changed from the start, and how design is still developing today. Will it always develop or is there a stopping point?

Before looking at the evolution of technology and seeing the growth of digital work, we can understand how the increase in gadgets, computers, and software allowed designers to have a new platform to with. I looked at the surge in technology, and discovered how rapidly technology boomed “*Within the services sector, employment growth was most rapid among software publishers, Internet service providers, and computer systems design firms, with average annual growth rates of 11 to 15 percent.*” (Daly and Valletta, 2004) This proves that the growth had a positive effect on employment and services provided. This lead to an increase in design firms and other digital-based careers. The selected quotation also shows us how the growth rates in employments also increased annually. The improving technology provided room for more designers.

Preparatory to research analysing to my keyword, “Evolution”. I examined the work of a designer who was a part of the evolution of graphic design. The first artist/practitioner I looked at was *El Lissitzky (Figure 2)*. *Lissitzky* was said to have greatly influenced the Bauhaus and constructivist movements (1890 to 1941). *Lissitzky* was designing before the invention of computers and a lot of technology (1943). Nevertheless, you can still see how influential his design has been in today’s age of design. Furthermore,

we can see a strong influence from the Bauhaus movement within Lissitzky's work. *Figure 1 - "Beat the Whites with the Red Wedge"* is said that the red wedge is to symbol the revolutionaries who were penetrating the anti-communist white army. Lissitzky is also said to have used a specific colour palette of red, white, and black which has meanings within the piece reinforcing the name of the piece. *Figure 1 - "Beat the Whites with the Red Wedge"* was created in 1919 which was the start of the era of the Bauhaus movement, with the school running until 1933. Referring to *Figure 1* it is clear to see how design has evolved and designers have become more creative. Furthermore, if we were to look at modern/current designs we can uncover pieces that are still heavily inspired by the Bauhaus movement.



Figure 1 – "Beat the Whites with the Red Wedge"

However, we can also look at evolution from a negative perspective and we can become aware that there is an end and according to a paragraph in the book, and there could just be a jump to something new, *Graphic Design Theory: Readings from the Field*, we are told

that art is a single event in time and the evolution of art can be seen as other variations of the same themes in a loop, it is said that, *“it goes on ’til, after being performed over a long period, this work of art becomes so automatic-mechanical in its performance that the mind ceases to respond to the exhausted theme; then the time is ripe for a new invention.”*

(Joseph-Armstrong, 2009) This implies how design has phased in evolution and how we choose what is a movement or a trend, etc. However, Armstrong does say, “time is ripe for a new invention” which shows design can carry on. However, it is a matter of time before history starts repeating itself and the same designs will be produced.

I agree with Armstrong in the sense that the work of art can, *“become auto-mechanical and the mind doesn’t want to further with the dragged-out themes that have been visited before.”* (Joseph-Armstrong, 2009) this states how designers can tend to produce the same style of work as others. Furthermore, this implies again that design can become repetitive.



Figure 2 - Key Practitioner: El Lissitzky

To conclude my first keyword, we can see how evolution links within design, and we can begin to see how it has evolved before researching the subject matter. I believe design will keep evolving with technology.

Relationship/s

“The way in which things are connected or work together.” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2021).

Exploring the word Relationship/s. I analysed how design also can make us feel and how it make us feel.

Analysing sources such as the PDF STRATEGICA we can begin to extinguish how relationships can be introduced within design and working with clients. In the PDF it is stated that *“Building long-lasting relationships with customers is simply profitable because customers who are offended by poor service quality often do not return to the company in which they are badly served, while well-serviced buyers can bring new consumers to the company.”* (Brătianu, Zbucnea and Vițelar, 2018) This initially shows how important gaining positive relationships can be for any company, this highly relates to design. To break down the quote, if customers have a negative experience they are likely to not come back. However, if the experience is positive and friendly you are more likely to gain trust and show you are reliable. Which will entice customers or clients to return to you. Clients are important within design. Therefore this PDF became relevant.

Within A life of its own (Townsend, 2014). Townsend looks in-depth at how artists can have a deep connection to their work, and a relationship to the pieces they make. They can challenge themselves as what they can and cannot do, which gives excitement. According to Townsend, *“The artist begins to work with her medium experimenting with*

ideas in her mind to help themselves become more aware of potential problems and limitations of what is possible. "(Townsend, 2014) I still completely agree with my point of the artist gaining a connection and relationship with their work as they can use it to challenge themselves and understand what they can do. The art makes them feel.

Prior to researching the keyword, I analysed Tracey Emin, a chosen key practitioner in which I felt was relevant to the keyword (*Figure 2*). Emin is an English artist known for her autobiographical work. (Tate, 2021)



Figure 1 – "My Bed" (1998)

Emin clearly relays the idea of relationships with your work and being able to portray that within an art form. In *figure 1*, Emin is portraying negative emotions and a negative relationship she had with a partner and also with herself. The piece is said to show a bedridden episode in which Emin went through, before a breakup. The piece shows many items splayed across the area in which her bed is said to be. Items such as tissues, condoms, empty vodka bottles, etc. (Cohen, 2018). I feel these items help you to understand her coping mechanisms and the way she was living through this time. I believe Emin would have

a strong relationship within this piece of work as it does show a hard time in her life. This is not the only piece Emin has that shows her relationship with her work. Looking at Emin's work strongly provided me with the essence of the keyword. This gives credence to the theme of "Relationship" in design work as *Figure 1* shows Emin's Relationship with herself and with her work.

The theorist Mary Parker was said to have, *"Noncoercive power of sharing, which she called integration, to describe how power operates in an effective organization. She wrote about the "group principle" that characterized the whole of the organization, describing how workers and managers have equal importance and make equal contributions."* (Theories of Group and Teamwork, n.d.) This implies to us that working as a group and building a relationship with our co-workers can provide equal contributions and even out the workload, creating a more effective and fair way of working.



Figure 2 – Key Practitioner: Tracey Emin

Briefly to conclude my second keyword 'Relationship'. We can also see how relationships connect to design. Whether it be through the artists expressing their relationships through their work or even through the clientele. Relationships are important in design.

Clientele

"The clientele of a place or organization are its customers or clients." (Collins English Dictionary, 2021)

To proceed with research on the keywords, I analysed the word Clientele/Clients. I explored ways in which you can gain clients. The blog, The Art of Finding (and keeping) clients state that *"To get new clients, you need a portfolio that shows you have what it takes to meet their needs."* (Vogels, 2017) This implies that to gain a customer/client base you need to display and advertise the work you are producing. This allows consumers to gain an understanding of what you do and how well you do it. The blog shows us how to gain clients and how to put ourselves out there in a positive way.

To further my research I looked at the book, The Graphic Designer's Guide to Creative Marketing, *"the design basic objective of marketing is simply to get and keep a customer."* (Cooper Bowen, 1999) This was aimed towards designers. This statement implies that all business owners have one goal, and that is to gain a client base. We can begin to understand that clients keep business flowing and are very important. Bowen labelled having customers/clients as a 'basic objective'.

To persist with the research I uncovered the podcast Building Relationships with Your Graphic Design Clients by Mark Des Cotes *"Having a good relationship with your client*

means you've gone beyond just being their graphic designer. It means you've become the person they can go to for advice, get ideas from, or just vent. And when you've become that person chances are they won't look elsewhere when it comes to a service you can offer them.” (Cotes, 2021) As Cotes says, a good relationship with a client means you do go beyond working for them! I am in agreeance. If you work hard and show them that you are there to do what you are paid for and gain a positive reputation, you can build trust and build a relationship with the client. You can also gain a reliable customer who comes back to you when they trust you.

The first artist I found which is strongly liked to this keyword is Paula Scher (Figure 2). Scher has always been an Influential designer to me. Scher has worked with large companies looking for work within the design industry. Scher has worked with clients such as, *among others, Bloomberg, Microsoft, Bausch + Lomb, Coca-Cola*, and many more (Paula Scher, n.d.). Coca-Cola is said to be one of the most consumed brands of fizzy drinks in the world. (Brand Finance, 2019).

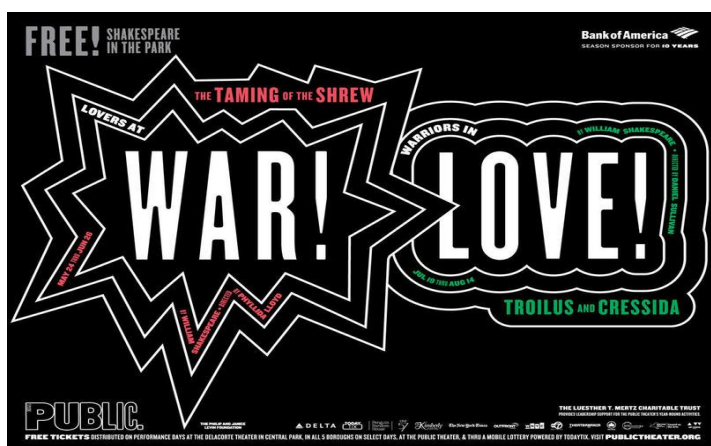


Figure 1 - War/Love Poster, The Public Theatre 2016-17 season campaign, 2016.

Figure 1 was a campaign designed by *Scher (Figure 2)*. (Figure 1) War/Love Poster at the public Theatre 2016/-17 season campaign by Paula Scher (2016) is a campaign created for the client 'The Public Theatre', it is also a very well-known design by *Scher*. In an interview, *Scher* was said to talk about 1993 which was an incredibly important time for *Scher* as she gained a client with The Public Theatre. In the interview, she said that *"I got a call from the director of The Public Theatre, and I got the best job of my career. I still have it to this day. I've been their creative director and designer for 26 years. I'm always changing the way they do their posters. I go around and mess around with the theatre. I have a complete art department down there, separate from my art department at Pentagram. It's a great relationship."* (Beautiful Thinkers: Paula Scher, partner at Pentagram, on fighting the inner and outer critics and..., 2021) This shows that if you have a strong relationship with your clientele you can constantly develop with the company and gain that strong bond, prove yourself to the company and they will want to work with you are professional and polite. Clients want a friendly face who is reliable.



Figure 2 - Key Practitioner: Paula Scher of Pentagram

In summary, the keyword 'clientele' allowed me to gain an understanding of how people communicate to come up with ideas and solutions to solve problems within the design industry and how working with clients is important.

Question idea (Subject to change, not final)

"How does Graphic Design allow us to have a relationship with the work we produce and the people/clients we work with. "

Contextualise: (How have I ended up with this question?)

Finalising my research for these 3 keywords, 3 Practitioners, and 3 Key Images have allowed me to pursue ideas, thoughts, and paths in which my final question could follow. All three of the keywords link, you can see how evolution, relationship, and clientele all link within each other and graphic design. The question I have proposed for The Big Idea, *"How does Graphic Design allow us to have a relationship with the work we produce and the people/clients we work with. "Is to go alongside a working individual project. However, the question is not 100% finalised although I would like to take it further. The question stemmed from other ideas such as, 'How has relationships within design with clients evolved over the last 100 years and is it important?', 'is having clients a relationship or is it just a transaction, and do people all have the same understanding of working with clients' and 'How have clients and design evolved from the very start, what was working with clients like before the surge in technology.'*

The question produced from this research document allowed me to consider how I could further it with a practical project. The idea for the practical project I came up with is subject to change. However, currently, I am thinking about creating a book and campaign

about relationships within design and how they have developed, looking at working with clients also. I feel this links strongly with the question and gives me a base to start visualising the project.

I would like to pursue these keywords further in the module of The Big Idea. These keywords I have analysed provided me with a strong research starting point, I believe the question is relevant to the module and field I am studying in. I conferred in a feedback session with my lecture Donna to establish whether the question would be successful. I would like to further explore these keywords for the independent working project as I feel there is so much more to look at within the next few months in advance of starting the final project.

Proposed Question for Independent Project...

“How does Graphic Design allow us to have a relationship with the work we produce and the people/clients we work with. “

Proposed Practice-Based Project....

The idea for the practical project I came up with is subject to change. However, currently, I am thinking about creating a book and campaign about relationships within design and how they have developed, looking at working with clients also.

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