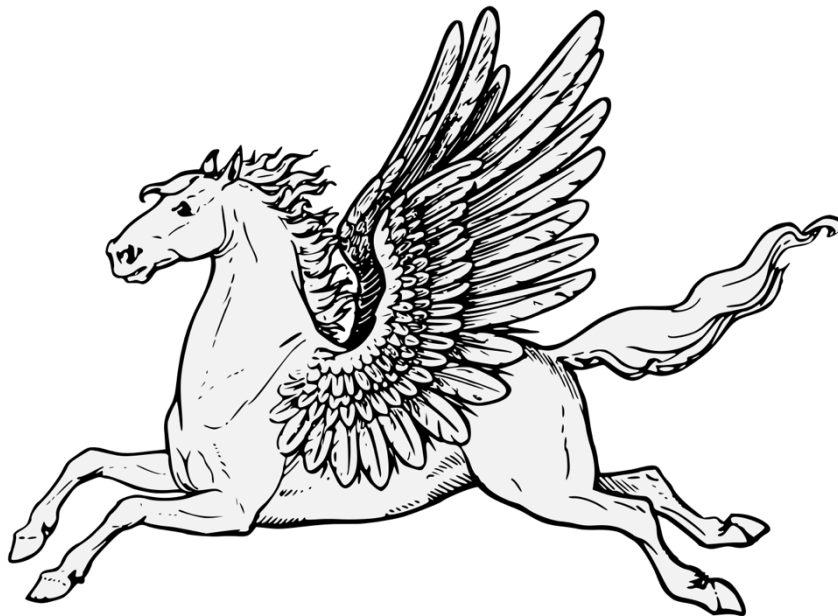


Why is Greek Mythology Such a Successful Device for Creating a Brand?



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Abstract

This dissertation will aim to answer the question whether or not Greek mythology is a successful device for creating a brand. It will start by exploring the core elements of Greek mythology, before delving into how it is still used in modern popular culture.

The second chapter will be a comparison between the brands Nike and Adidas, one who takes advantage of the myths and one who does not. Finally, there will be an exploration into other brands who are in the tops of their respective fields, and the way they do, or do not, take inspiration from Greek mythology.

Figure of Images

Figure 1: Pandora, painted by Charles Edward Perugini in 1893. Available at: <https://science.sciencemag.org/content/343/6175/1058.1/tab-figures-data> [Accessed 2 Dec. 2019].

Figure 2: Hope is Power, created by The Guardian. Available at: <https://musebycl.io/advertising/butterfly-offers-hope-guardians-artful-ad-dark-times> [Accessed 1 Dec. 2019].

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Figure 5: Red-figure Nolan Amphora: Nike pouring a libation of wine and young male running, ca. 480–475 B.C. Available at: <https://artmuseum.princeton.edu/collections/objects/135190> [Accessed 4 Dec. 2019].

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Figure 10: Dove Logo, designed by Ian Brignell. Available at: <https://1000logos.net/dove-logo/> [Accessed 4 Dec. 2019].

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Introduction

This dissertation will aim to answer the question whether or not Greek mythology is a successful device for creating a brand. Once attention is drawn to the use of Greek mythology in current branding and advertising, there are ample examples to study and examine as a whole.

To begin, the core elements of Greek Mythology will be discussed. What is Greek mythology? What is it about Greek mythology that differentiates it from tales and stories? And, how have these myths endured over thousands of years? The key elements that underpin Greek mythology are the very tenets that make Greek mythology ideal for current advertising and branding campaigns. The rudiments of Greek Mythology are fundamental to the human condition. The myths tackle human passions, hopes and fears – all just as relevant today as they were 4,000 years ago.

Although the Greek Mythology catalogue is extensive, there are a few key characters and myths that will be useful to discuss to appreciate their influence on modern branding and advertising campaigns. In Chapter One, the myth of Pandora's box, and the characters of Nike and Heracles will be explained. These characters from Greek mythology all have attributes, lessons, and inspiration for current advertising campaigns. The story of Heracles has recently been made into a Disney film for children, showing emphatically that the ancient Greek myths have truly entered our modern popular culture.

Chapter Two is a detailed study and comparison between the two sportswear giants: Nike and Adidas. Both companies have similar products and similar mission statements; however, the Nike Inc. company blatantly uses Greek mythology for its renowned brand and logo. Nike Incorporated is the more successful of the two brands,

largely down to their use of the 'swoosh' logo based on the goddess Nike's wings. Looking closely at both companies' logos and analysing their effectiveness in their branding, concluding with which is the better of the two.

Within Chapter Three, several other brands and logos which use Greek mythology will be explored. The modern jewellery brand Pandora has used several features of the Pandora myth to create their brand and advertising. Pandora was given a precious box that she looked upon with intrigue and wonderment, something that the modern-day jewellery company of the same name wish to achieve with their gift boxes containing, not the evils of the world but, beautiful jewellery inside.

The Dove soap company too has used Greek mythology within its logo design and company mission statement. Using Aphrodite as their inspiration they have incorporated the golden dove, a bird that is often seen flying around Aphrodite. As well as the blue of the sea that the goddess was born in. Dove have also used in their advertising campaigns the themes of beauty that the goddess of love represents.

Starbucks is yet another company that explores Greek mythology within their branding. Their logo emblazons a two tailed siren, known within Greek myth to lure sailors to their deaths with beautiful songs. The name, taken from the story of Moby Dick (Herman Melville, 1851), links in again to mythology as the myths from ancient times were told through generations, much like stories themselves.

In comparison within chapter three this dissertation will explore the branding of Tesco, a large UK supermarket whose logo was designed by Wolff Olins. The Tesco branding took no inspiration from Greek mythology within this design, but instead looked at the colours of the British flag. Interestingly, both the United Kingdom's flag and Greek mythology are recognised across the globe. Using a universal idea such as Greek

mythology or a well-recognised set of colours can be equally effective branding tools.

This is because they are at the forefront of people's psyche.

An Exploration Into Greek Mythology

Introduction

To understand the use of Greek mythology in current branding and advertising, there is a need to explore the realms and meanings of Greek Mythology. What is Greek Mythology? Within these myths certain characters, gods and goddesses gain our attention. They entice us and gather us in; we are tempted to discover more about their capabilities and idiosyncrasies. How have these ancient stories and characters persisted over the millennia to still have a place in modern popular culture? This chapter will explore: the history of Greek mythology; the lessons the story of Pandora teaches; and how these stories and Gods are still used today in popular culture.

Greek Mythology

The ancient Greeks lived over 4,000 years ago and their legacy has shaped the culture of our modern western world. The Ancient Greek Empire spread throughout Europe. In 800BC, the Greeks split their land into city-states. Each had its own laws, customs and rulers. The ancient Greeks used stories to help them learn about and understand their world; these are known as Greek Myths (National Geographic Kids, 2017). They often featured heroic battles and creatures. The myths taught the importance of bravery, intelligence, right, and wrong. They showed that even the gods, like mortal men, could be punished or rewarded for their actions (National Geographic Kids, 2018). Greek mythology is a compendium of tales that were cultivated over many thousands of years, which inform and make sense of the world for people. The stories act as warnings, lessons, and explanations. Greek mythology has endured from its earliest beginnings in the Bronze Age to today (History.com Editors, 2018). These

stories have crossed the globe and are universally understood. They carry with them meaning and relevance for human life.

In ancient Greece, the stories about gods and goddesses and heroes and monsters were an important part of everyday life. They explained everything from religious rituals to the weather, and they gave meaning to the world people saw around them (History.com Editors, 2018).

So fundamental were myths to Greek culture that the myths were often accepted as fact and were undisputed. Thus, it stands that, “Myth is generally held to be not a passing enjoyment, but something important, serious, even sacred” (Burkert, 1982, pp.3-4). Unlike the Bible, the Greek myths have no single original text; rather, they are part of an oral tradition passed down through the generations. The characters and content within the myths “Satisfy a need to imagine a meaning in our hunger to believe that muck and chaos does, after all, tend somewhere” (Gaiman et al, 2002 p. Preface). The myths are often seen as simply stories that were told over the generations, but in fact reveal morals and warnings to the people that heard them. They explained how the world was made and how everything happened from the sun rising and setting, to people walking the earth. Greek mythology was not simply stories, but a religion and an explanation for thousands of people for thousands of years.

Storytelling is almost vital to humankind; it connects us to our humanity, linking us to our past, present and future (Ferreira, 2014). Before being able to read or write, people told stories through cave paintings and word of mouth. In medieval times it was only monks and priests who could read and write, so common people told stories orally that were shared over the generations. “Everyday events became stories to tell children, scribes and priests told stories of religious affairs, and leaders told heroic tales of their adventures” (Corson-Knowles, 2018). Storytelling is how humans engage with each other; we are drawn to stories that we see ourselves reflected in. They help us make

sense of the world around us and shape our perspective of the world. Stories are universal, timeless, a link to ancient traditions and legends. Through stories, we share our passions and fears, our sadness and our hardships, our loves and our joys. We find common ground with others so that we may connect and communicate with them (Corson-Knowles, 2018).

Gods, Goddesses and Myths

Certain themes and characters in Greek mythology have made their way into current advertising. The symbolism, meanings and messages from these myths and characters have attracted people's interest. From the vast catalogue of Greek mythology, it is worth examining in detail, the origins of some of these characters. Nike, the winged goddess of victory, has been used for the sporting company of the same name. It was believed that she granted humans the strength and speed they needed to be victorious in any task they undertook (Greek Gods & Goddesses, 2016).

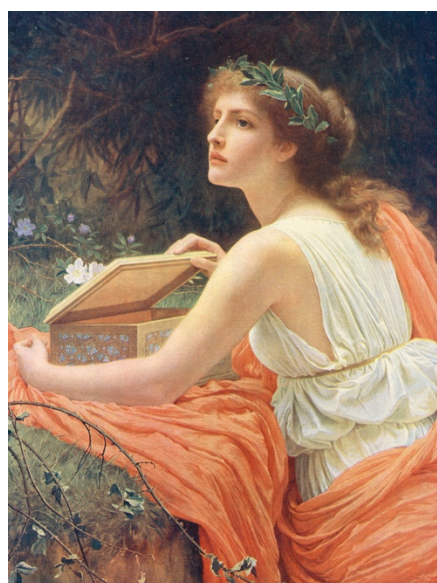


Figure 1: *Pandora*

Pandora, seen in figure 1, is known as the first woman on earth and has a more teachable story: Zeus was furious with his son Prometheus for stealing fire and giving it to the humans, so chained him to the side of a mountain for the rest of eternity. However, Zeus felt that this was not enough punishment for Prometheus and decided to punish him further. He commissioned the other gods to create a woman, Pandora, and sent her to be with Prometheus. Prometheus ignored her, believing it to be a trick from the gods. His brother, Epimetheus, fell in love with Pandora and married her. One day, Hermes went to the couple with a box from the other gods. It was a gift for Pandora, but she was never to open it. Pandora was infatuated with the box, staring at it for days on end wondering what was inside. Eventually her curiosity overcame her, and she opened the box. As she raised the lid all kinds of evil flew out from the box – envy, sickness, hate, disease. Pandora slammed the lid closed, but it was too late. Epimetheus heard her weeping and ran to her aid holding her close. He heard a faint noise in the box and believing that nothing could be worse than what had already left the box, he opened it. Inside there was a small butterfly named Hope that Hermes had hidden amongst the evils, taking pity on mankind. Slowly, the butterfly emerged from the box and smiled at the couple before thanking them for its freedom and leaving their home. Since then, humans have been able to have hope to survive the evils that Pandora had released.

The butterfly is still recognised today as a sign and representation of hope and endurance (Edwards, 2019). As can be seen in the September 2019 advertising campaign entitled, 'Hope is Power', by the Guardian newspaper, seen in figure two.

We wanted a visual icon for the idea. Something simple and memorable. We kept trying to find icons for hope [...] then we went back to what really sat behind the idea of 'Hope is Power': a belief in change. The butterfly is the icon of change, but too often is represented in a soft way [...]. We figured if we could

redefine the fragile image of the butterfly, we could redefine the fragile perception of the word hope (Gianatasio, D. 2019).



Figure 2: *Hope is Power*

The lesson of the butterfly is to let go of troubles and leap forth into the next phase of existence (Phillips, 2019). As the butterfly gave hope to Pandora, it too gives hope to humanity to move forward through the struggles they experience. The message, so significant in the myth of Pandora's Box, of the power of hope has been the principle influence on the Guardian newspaper's advertising campaign, 'Hope is Power'.

Greek Mythology in Popular Culture

Although ancient, Greek myths and characters have maintained their intrigue over thousands of years and are continuing to teach, influence and entertain the public today. Disney used the Greek myth of Heracles to create a children's film entitled, 'Hercules' (1997). Note that Hercules is the Roman name for the Greek hero Heracles. In both the myth and film, the protagonist Heracles must overcome obstacles, "to expiate his sins he needed to accomplish the twelve labours; such as, killing monsters like the Hydra – as seen in figure three, cleaning stables, or bringing back the three-headed dog Cerberus from the underworld" (Salzgeber, 2017). There are significant lessons and themes within the myth that are as relevant today as they would have

been in ancient Greece, such as the fact that people are stronger than what they think, and that they have to believe in themselves. Heracles constantly had to perform deeds that required his superhuman strength. There is a moment in the Disney movie where Heracles is stuck under a rock and is unable to free himself and save Megara. However, when he starts to believe that he can do it, he moves himself out from under the rock and heads to her safety. He always had the strength, he just needed to believe that he could. "No one will believe in you until you believe in yourself" (Rohleder, 2014). Like Hercules, individuals are all stronger than what they believe themselves to be. Many of the stories within Greek mythology are still significant and relevant today as they carry important lessons on morals, and the characters represented within these myths are shown to be role models. These role models and lessons are timeless and can be applied to anyone in the modern day not just to their predecessors of ancient Greece. "The legends are built off [...] of immoral choices that then cause grief to [the] individual" (Dee, D. 2014). These are lessons on being the best a person can be, both physically and emotionally. Showing that there is a consequence for making the wrong and bad choices but also reward for making the right and good choices. Therefore, using Greek mythology in popular culture can generate a positive influence on the intended audience, as it can persuade people to feel as if they will be rewarded for their good deeds.



Figure 3: *Hydra Battle*

The Goddess Vs The Three Stripe Company

Introduction

One of the biggest brands to have used Greek mythology within their branding is Nike Incorporated. Their biggest competitor is Adidas, who have not taken any influence from Greek mythology within their branding. Within this chapter the dissertation will explore a comparison between the two brands and the success that Nike has achieved over Adidas, proving that using Greek mythology in branding can be a successful device when creating a brand.

The Greek Goddess Nike



Figure 4: *Swoosh*

Nike Incorporated, is a sports brand that manufactures sports shoes, sporting goods and clothing. The company was first established in 1964 under the name 'Blue Ribbon Sports.' This was before rebranding and changing their name to Nike in 1972. The Nike logo is a widely recognised 'swoosh' or 'tick' symbol, as seen in figure 4. By the 21st century, this logo was recognised on a global scale, as well as Nike now being a household name. An analysis written for the Panmore Institute by Nathaniel Smithson about the Nike Inc. mission statement states that their aim is: "to bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete in the world" (Smithson, 2019). This shows that as a sports

brand, Nike aims to appeal to their demographic of existing athletes and aspiring athletes, to do better.

The tick symbol benefits from semiotic representation, as a 'tick' is recognised globally as a sign of approval, or confirmation, which the consumer can perceive as a positive aspect from the brand. The 'swoosh' logo is the most obvious part, other than their company name, that connects Nike and Nike branding to Greek Mythology. An article by Stefan Andrews, written for the Vintage News on the Nike company logo, mentions that the ancient Greek goddess Nike is known as the goddess of victory, often portrayed with wings. It can be theorised that the logo can represent the wing of the Greek goddess Nike, demonstrating further how much Greek mythology has been used and considered when creating the brand of Nike Incorporated (Andrews, 2017).



Figure 5: Red-figure Nolan Amphora

Relating the company to a goddess, as seen in figure 5, shows that Nike have considered their mission statement within their branding. Using a goddess alludes to greatness, as it helps the consumer feel that if they were to use Nike products they could aspire to greatness and be on the same level as a goddess. Specifically, using the goddess of victory is especially beneficial to the Nike brand, as it implies the

consumer can be victorious with their sporting endeavours and become a successful athlete.

The story of the goddess Nike, as referred to on the Trip Savvy website by Detraci Regula, suggests that it is obvious that Nike is an ideal character to represent the Nike brand, which could be a leading factor in the success of Nike Incorporated. Regula writes of how one of her [Nike's] strengths aside from her wings is her fast running ability (Regula, 2008). One of Nike's most popular products are their range of sports related shoes and trainers, including running shoes. It is implied that, the consumer can have confidence that using Nike shoes would improve their running ability and help them to run faster, much like the Greek goddess. This helps the Nike products to stand out and could persuade a customer to choose a Nike product as opposed to a product from one of their competitors. Regula also writes of how the goddess is often portrayed flying around battlefields rewarding victory, glory and fame by handing out laurel wreaths (Regula, 2008), this also implies that Nike products would lead an individual to be victorious and become rewarded for their effort. As Nike aim to bring inspiration to every athlete in the world, the implication that the consumers would be rewarded for their sporting efforts successfully inspires athletes to do better, to aspire to victory, as if they will be rewarded for it at the end.

A Comparison with Adidas

Branding for Nike needs to stand out, as sporting goods is a large and oversaturated market, with many businesses trying to compete for market share. One of the strongest competitors for Nike in this market is Adidas. Adidas was founded in 1949 in Germany with the goal of providing athletes with the best possible equipment. The Mission Statement Academy website states that Adidas:

Strives to be the global leader in the sporting goods industry with brands built on a passion for sports and a sporting lifestyle. We are committed to continuously strengthening our brands and products to improve our competitive position (Mission Statement Academy, 2019a).

This proves how Adidas are aiming to lead in the market of sporting goods. To achieve this goal in their mission statement their company would have to compete and stand out against other brands such as Nike.



Figure 6: *Three Stripes*

The Adidas logo, as seen in figure 6, is a familiar pattern of three stripes, originally belonging to the Finnish sportswear brand Karhu, and sold to Adidas for the price of 1600 euros and two bottles of whiskey. In an article on the three stripes logo by Gregk Foley, 'Here's How Adidas's Three Stripes Became World Famous', he mentions how even in the early days of the brand, the founder would refer to the brand as 'the 3-stripes company' showing how the founder intended for this logo to become iconic and recognisable, so that whenever someone would see the three stripes the name 'Adidas' would instantly come to mind (Gregk Foley, 2017). Even though Adidas has used many different logos since the creation of the company, and to this day still use different variations for various different products, the logos have always, in some form, included three stripes to ensure the consumer can recognise the Adidas brand.



Figure 7: Adidas Trefoil

The Adidas 'trefoil' logo, as seen in figure 7, was first used in 1972. This shape features not only the three stripes but also a triple intersection. Angelika Rihter, in her article about the history of the Adidas logo, writes how the triple intersection is to represent the variety of brands of Adidas (Rihter, 2019). This will show to the consumer how Adidas as a company do not stick to one type of product but instead feature a range across their sportswear products. Whilst this is an effective way to market the extent of products Adidas create, it may not be an effective way to persuade consumers to choose their brand over a potential competitor. This logo may show that Adidas has a large array of products; however, it does not necessarily suggest high quality. On the other hand, the Nike 'swoosh' logo representing the goddess of victory in Greek mythology, as mentioned above, is a more effective way of implying their products are high quality, goddess-like and therefore, can help Nike stand out in the sportswear market as a strong brand.

Adidas have also used another variation of the three stripes logo, which features three bars each leading upwards and getting larger to represent the form of a mountain. Rihter also writes about this logo, mentioning that it forms "a mountain of tasks to be faced and at the same time goals to be achieved" (Rihter, 2019). This illustrates, how athletes have goals that they set to achieve, such as improving their current abilities. Using this representation in their logo allows the consumer to relate to the brand and

therefore, successfully targeting a large demographic of their potential market. However, this is not as effective as Nike's branding as there is no implication that the consumer will be successful with achieving these tasks. The Adidas 3 bar logo could be argued as counterproductive in terms of trying to reach this audience as the representation of a 'mountain of tasks to be faced' could be taken negatively. A mountain of tasks can be related to a person getting overwhelmed and struggling and then even giving up if it becomes too much. One issue with this logo is that it leaves the connotation behind the 'mountain of tasks' up for debate, as opposed to being a clear answer. This is where Nike's method of using the goddess of victory from Greek mythology is more successful, as it is clear they are implying that the person, as the consumer, can achieve victory with their products.

Applying Greek mythology as part of the Nike branding has proved effective for a number of reasons, when compared to the marketing of its competitors such as Adidas. Cally Russell writes in his article about Adidas and Nike, how in terms of revenue, Nike is the:

Larger business overall and the market leader in the global sports footwear industry with revenues from their footwear of over \$24.2 billion in 2018, compared to Adidas footwear revenue of \$15 billion (Russell, 2019).

One of the key factors in Nike's success is the branding and marketing of their company and products. As Greek mythology is universal and known by many people across the globe, this could be a reason behind the success.

The Nike logo is instantly more recognisable and correlates with a feeling of positivity, making the consumer feel as if they are safer to purchase a Nike product featuring their logo as opposed to a competitor such as Adidas. Victory and success are key ambitions motivating athletes towards their competitive goals: whether it be self-

improvement or wanting to win. So, incorporating these tenets into the Nike brand means that it is more likely to reach a larger demographic within their target market and not a specific niche. Nike have clearly used Greek mythology in an effective way to specifically target the consumers' needs of a product that can help them reach their goals, this is evident with Nike being the market leader in the sportswear industry globally. This is one example of why Greek mythology is a successful device for creating a brand, as it is universally recognised and therefore effective at reaching a larger audience.

Pandora, Aphrodite and Sirens

Introduction

Many other brands also take inspiration from Greek mythology. They have used it in their branding and also sometimes in their advertising. Pandora is one of the more obvious brands to have taken inspiration from the myths, and within this chapter I will explore their use along with other companies such as Starbucks, Dove and Tesco.

Pandora Jewellery and Pandora the Woman of the Myth



Figure 8: *Pandora Logo*

Pandora is one of the largest jewellery brands known worldwide and their jewellery is often given as a gift. The name, coming from the Greek myth mentioned in Chapter One, means all gifted. Pandora was infatuated with the box and curious as to what was inside – similar to how curious people are when given a gift in one of Pandora's white boxes. Each charm is hand crafted, again much like the female from the myth, making it even more special. It could be questioned as to why Pandora Jewellery named their company after a character that brought misery to mankind; it is something that is difficult to comprehend. Perhaps the reason is the individualities of each charm used to create a bracelet that is unique and each with their own identity (Rio Regio, 2008).

When they are all combined to create one piece of jewellery, that piece of jewellery exudes elegance and class. In this aspect you could say that every piece of Pandora ... Jewellery [is] 'all gifted' (Rio Regio, 2008).

The Pandora logo and name, as seen in figure 8, has become an iconic household name. When people see a box with the branding of Pandora emblazoned on it, they become curious and excited to open it, much like Pandora from the myth. Within the Greek myth of Pandora are all the elements essential for the branding of the modern Pandora jewellery brand. It is known, as explained in Chapter One, that Pandora was beautiful, well-loved and admired. She had been worthy of a precious gift. The gift box held untold treasures, imagery of enticement, anticipation and curiosity - all symbiotic with emotions felt when being given a treasured gift today. Once opened, Pandora's box released evils into the world, but most importantly, still contained the hidden gem that Hermes had placed inside - hope. As with the modern intention of the Pandora jewellery brand, contained within each box, most importantly, is hope. The hope of the giver to have selected the exact perfect expression of uniqueness and love for their intended recipient. This is evidence of Greek mythology being used as a successful device in branding, working in favour of the company approaching their target audience. They wish to draw women in as being worthy of a precious gift, of being individual and unique and through this, have become one of the largest jewellery brands in the world. Pandora currently has over eight-hundred charms available to choose from and stores in over one-hundred countries worldwide (Be Charming Blog, 2016).

Dove Soap and the Goddess Aphrodite

Dove soap is another company that have used Greek mythology in their branding. The name and logo both come from the Goddess Aphrodite with the dove being one of her many motifs. Aphrodite is often depicted with doves fluttering above her or resting on her hand. Much like the Goddess herself, the dove symbolises love, beauty and romance. Its spirituality represents optimism and sends a message of hope, peace, renewal and life (AM, 2017). The Dove company has implicitly adopted these same values and symbols. The company's mission statement states:

Dove believes that beauty is not one dimensional; it is not defined by your age, the shape or size of your body, the colour of your skin or your hair – it's feeling like the best version of yourself. Authentic. Unique. Real. Women have always been our inspiration. Since the beginning, we have been wholly committed to providing superior care to all women and to championing real women and real beauty in our advertising (Unilever, 2018).



Figure 9: *Dove Real Beauty Campaign*

Dove's advertising, as seen in figure 9, features an array of women from early twenties to early forties, all with varying stature and height. They are all seen in comfortable white foundation wear, as opposed to hypersexualised lingerie. The use of the white show's purity and cleanliness, a fresh look into what women really look like. They are

women that exist in the real world, they are not glamorous as opposed to the models seen in Victoria Secret adverts, and they represent women everywhere. Top brand cosmetic and perfume companies often employ supermodels to advertise their products, not taking into consideration that the majority of their target audience look nothing like them.

Dove believe that much like Aphrodite, every woman is beautiful. Dove wish for their customers to feel beautiful in their own skin, as if they themselves are the goddess Aphrodite. Aphrodite is eluded to through the symbolism of the white garment as Aphrodite was often depicted wearing white (Diehl, E. 2014). Being the daughter of Zeus, Aphrodite is one of the highest-ranking Greek goddesses. She empowers not only beauty and appeal, but also, the power of womanhood. So too, the Dove branding uses this powerful imagery of women's intrinsic beauty, minus the fashion and make-up, to portray the power and beauty of women.

Women have always been our inspiration. Since the beginning, we have been wholly committed to providing superior care to all women and to championing real women and real beauty in our advertising. In a world in which girls are too often held back by low self-esteem and anxiety about their looks, Dove's social mission is to ensure that the next generation grows up enjoying a positive relationship with the way they look, to help them raise their self-esteem and realise their full potential (Unilever, 2018).



Figure 10: Dove Logo

The logo, as seen in figure 10, consists of gold, a warm colour, associated with prosperity, luxury and quality. It draws attention to itself as one of the most beautiful and affluent colours. Blue represents the sky, indicating freedom, loyalty and stability. In many cultures blue is significant in religious beliefs, bringing peace and love, much like the image of a dove. The use of the dove connotes that by using the products made by the company, people will have beautiful skin, will radiate beauty, much like the Goddess of beauty. The goddess Aphrodite, “is often described as being golden, and as being dressed in beautiful clothing and lovely jewellery” (Diehl, E. 2014). She is said to have been pulled by a grand chariot pulled by swans or doves (Diehl, E.2014). These images have all been incorporated into the logo for Dove.

Starbucks and the Siren

When Starbucks was founded in 1971, it was originally going to be named ‘Pequod’ after Ahab’s boat in the classic tale Moby Dick. After a friend tested the tagline – “have a cup of Pequod”, the founders instead decided to name the company after Captain Ahab’s first mate, Starbuck. The original logo for the company was designed to reflect the seductive imagery of the sea, donning the image of a siren that Terry Heckler found in a 16th century Nordic woodcut (Roos, 2010). Within Greek mythology the siren is known to lure sailors to their deaths with their beautiful siren song. The founders of Starbucks thought that by using the siren in their logo, it would lure people in to buy their coffee and they were right.



Figure 11: Starbucks Logo

Brands Outside of Greek Mythology

Many of the brands discussed in this dissertation are leaders in their respective markets, however, can the use of Greek mythology in their branding take the credit for this success? Wolff Olins is one of the leading brand consultancies' and their work includes many recognisable market leaders such as Tesco, Uber and Google.



Figure 12: *Tesco Logo*

The Tesco logo for example takes a very simplistic approach and does not use any form of imagery within its logo, instead opting for a basic text look with each letter being underlined. Whilst this may seem ineffective it is in fact a widely recognised logo with the brand becoming a household name. In an article for Coventry Live, James Rodger analyses the various supermarket brands and their logos, including Tesco, to explain why they are effective. Rodger writes that the Tesco logo;

borrows from the basic colours of the British flag. The red colour in the logo represents prosperity and happiness, while the blue colour depicts excellence and trustworthiness (Rodger, 2017).

This shows that instead of specific imagery, the Tesco logo relies on the colours in the logo to represent their values. This has been effective for their brand as the name and colours are instantly recognisable, proving that a brand identity can still be effective without the use of Greek mythology.

On the other hand, this can help to explain why Greek mythology is an effective device for creating a brand. This dissertation has looked at brands both using Greek mythology and not using Greek mythology, and these brands share the theme of being

familiar. As Greek mythology is universally known, using it in branding can make a product or company familiar to the audience as it gives the consumer something to relate to, and something people can recognise. This adds a level of trustworthiness behind the brand. In a similar way to using Greek mythology to give a brand the image of being familiar, the Tesco logo uses the basic colours of the British flag to appear recognizable. As Tesco is primarily a British retailer, using these colours gives the brand an image of being trustworthy as the colours are identifiable with a British consumer, and therefore can tempt that audience to choose Tesco over a potential competitor.

Conclusion

This dissertation has discussed the success of companies that have applied Greek mythology to their branding. Within the first Chapter there has been an exploration into Greek mythology, the stories that the myths teach humanity and how they are still popular today. It has also looked in depth at the brand Nike, and their use of the Greek goddess of the same name and made a comparison of their success to their biggest competitor, Adidas. Within Chapter three, there has been an exploration into other brands that use Greek mythology successfully in their branding and how it has been applied, such as Pandora and Starbucks, as well as a comparison to another large brand that does not use Greek mythology in their branding but continue to be top of their respective field. Through this exploration into the use of Greek mythology in branding, it has become obvious that, while it is not essential to the success of a brand, taking influence from Greek mythology pushes towards their success.

As explained in this dissertation, Greek mythology consists of stories that teach the reader about morals and the difference between good and bad. Using these stories within a brand has proved effective at delivering similar messages to the consumer about these brands, such as how in chapter two it was shown that the brand Nike delivers the message that the customer can be victorious by using their brand, a direct reference to the goddess Nike in Greek mythology – the goddess of victory. The themes behind these stories can be expressed through the branding of a company successfully as an effective device to reach the intended audience and portray a positive message about a brand.

Similarly, as Greek mythology is universally known, it is an effective device as it can be familiar to many people across the world, which can help to target a worldwide

audience – crucial if a brand wishes to become a market leader and not just in a single country. For example, a customer may be looking at various brands for a product and if this customer is unfamiliar with all these brands, one using Greek mythology may stand out to them as opposed to those not using Greek mythology because it is something they are familiar with and can relate to. This makes it more likely for that consumer to trust that brand and choose one of their products over a potential competitor. However, this can be achieved through the use of other mediums and not just Greek mythology, such as how Tesco uses the patriotic colours of the British flag to allow the British public to trust their brand.

In conclusion, this dissertation displays how effective it can be to use Greek mythology as a device in branding and how brands can still be effective and become market leaders without using Greek mythology as a device. The brands that do not use Greek mythology use other devices to portray the values of that brand effectively, yet these devices are similar to the use of Greek mythology in that they are also used to make a brand appear familiar or appear as if it will have a positive impact upon the consumer. Proving that, Greek mythology can be an effective and successful device in branding, used to strengthen the image of a brand. Despite this, this dissertation also proves that the use of Greek mythology is not essential to creating a positive brand identity. Whilst it can be used successfully, the same results can be achieved through other devices. These devices however may be limiting, as Greek mythology is universal, whereas the example of Tesco using the colours of the British flag would be more effective in the United Kingdom but not so much worldwide. Greek mythology is a successful device for creating a brand and can be used to strengthen the image of a brand, but it is not fundamental in the creation of a brand.

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