

POLITICAL POSTER AS MEANS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL INFLUENCE OF HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS AND BEHAVIOR

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Abstract: This article is based on the power of elements in political poster on a research study. The aim of article is to explore the differences of perception, reaction and interpretation that major groups of compositional elements of graphic design, such as sensory, structural, and dynamic as they emerge as part of professional reflections and critical positions that design students are likely to take in this regard.

The conclusions that emerged from the discussion of the research findings allowed the emergence of a new model of visual graphic design that is culturally adapted. Findings emerging from the research allow to visual graphic design to be presented as a universal language that is culturally adapted.

Key words: Poster, design, psychological influence, propaganda, consciousness, behavior.

Introduction

This study sought to explore the differences of perception, reaction and interpretation that major groups of compositional elements of graphic design such as sensory, structural, and emerging compositional elements of posters affect the delivery of a messages. To examine how compositional elements of graphic design convey political messages, and to explore the impact of poster design elements upon Israeli audience. The population of research participants were graphic design students from Ashkelon and Rehovot Colleges, Israel.

In my many years as Head of Graphic Design College and as a Graphic Design Lecturer, I realized the tremendous importance of understanding the design language of all the elements that make up poster. Therefore, I begin with a review of the literature of research study. Draws on theoretical approaches to graphic design and visual culture (Baudrillard, 1981; Gottdiener, 1995; Jakobson, 1958; van Niekerk and Jenkinson, 2011), compositional elements of graphic design (Heyman, 2000), political posters as communication media (Seidman, 2008), and methodological aspects of visual analysis (Hook and Glaveanu, 2012). And I and with a discussion of the findings in theoretical and practical terms. Since the emphasis of the present research lies on an examining the effectiveness of various visual design elements in conveying their message, this study has taken advantage of the qualitative research method of semi-structured interview. In order to explore the interrelationships between different design elements and individual assessments

of their effectiveness, this research examined the main topics emerging from the eventual interview transcripts (Silverman, 2011).

1. Theoretical Perspective

The father of the term "graphic design" was an American, William Addison Dwiggins. William was a successful designer who produced advertising material in the form of posters pamphlets and adverts in newspapers and periodicals Dwiggins saw graphic design as almost entirely concerned with the preparation of the artwork to be printed. Graphic design is the most universal of all the arts. It is all around us identifying the world's imposing meaning, in graphic form. The term graphic design can refer to a number of artistic and professional disciplines that focus on visual communication and presentation. Graphic design is a popular and practical art, an applied art, and an ancient art. It is the art of visualizing ideas, in the design elements of posters, which convey messages with components such as color, typography, composition and images in a poster form.

2. The Poster as tool of Expression

The poster is a form of useful art, raised for socio-everyday needs including propaganda, advertising, criticism and decoration. The political poster is, designed in different styles, colors and shapes. The purpose of the announcement is to reflect the position or worldview he wanted to present to the designer in an interesting and compelling way. These posters help to educate, inform, or convey relevant information about a particular political campaign in a biting, kicking and powerful statement. The poster has a number of prominent features that distinguish it from the rest of the images making it an image that serves certain needs: symbols, shapes, and colors. Headlines and slogans, which reflect the poster's theme in a short, clear, bright and succinct manner, allow anyone to understand and use it.

3. Elements of Graphic Design in Posters

Visual elements in printed advertising have been, and have been shown to be powerful factors in enhancing the remembrance, recognition and appeal of poster messages (Edell and Staelin, 1983); Moriarty, 1987). Constituting the primary appeal of printed advertisements, visual elements are the primary focus of attention that 90 percent of their audience pay for posters and magazine ads, while processing of their graphic intent follows in 65 percent of cases. In other words, the transmission of textual information is secondary to the primary attention to images, as only 2 percent of the written content of advertisements is being, processed, by their viewers (Franzen, 1994). With regard to poster advertising, the size of the graphic images appears to correlate positively with correct brand association and product recognition (Franzen, 1994; Rossiter, 1981). There is also a positive relationship between the share that visual elements occupy in the poster and the recognition, of advertising posters as well as their later recall (Hendon, 1972).

To basic elements of graphic design belong line, shape, texture, color, and space. Line direction creates mood with respect to the appearance of a represented object. Shape organizes the pictorial surface within two dimensions while making use of the properties of visual representation that can give it a three-dimensional appearance. Furthermore, text and images can bring positive or negative connotations to bear on the pictorial space of the poster. Texture emerges with the variation of the pattern of light and dark areas of either an object or its background. Graphic design uses color in accordance with the theoretical expectations of which color combinations and color properties have a particular visual and symbolic impact on an individual person. Moreover, with the help of computer technology, it became possible to make instant changes to design layout or typography and texture. Since the 1990s, graphic design poster theory has been further responding to the growing influence of the internet on the amount of visual information that contemporary society processes on a daily basis, since web pages routinely include rich image and video content into their design. Moreover, graphic design software programs, such as Adobe Photoshop, have largely entered standard usage for design sketching, visual rendering and graphical composition (La Brecque, 2008). As opposed to the innovations in the graphic design media, the visual function of images has remained to represent textual claims they illustrate. Moreover given the cognitive universality of images, graphic design as a set of principles for coordinating visual and textual information recognizes the mutually supporting role of images and text (Salinas, 2002). Due to the ability of images to reach large audiences, poster design has historically been concerned with effective mass communication. Moreover, the visual vocabulary of graphic design has been, routinely used to draw attention to large-scale problems or social issues (Lavin, 2001). At the same time, the mobilizing effect of graphic design and visual media on the public has led to the targeted use of poster campaigns for political goals (Heller, S and Ballance, G. 2001). Thus, propaganda posters have been instrumental in persuading the public to support military action in the course of the First and the Second World Wars. The principle of simplicity and directness also marks effective graphic design. Conveying broad and current ideas and eliciting strong and shared emotions, graphic design poster can only transmit its message to the public with ease when a balance between its elements is, achieved likewise, color choice and their combination can enhance the effectiveness of the message. Limiting the number of fonts, being used also, helps draw attention to important information. Thus, the spatial arrangement of design elements should reduce the impact of secondary information on viewer attention. In this respect, posters have historically been a preferred vehicle for spreading ideas, promoting causes or raising arguments. The impact of posters on public opinion also depends on their visual effectiveness as media of communication. The communicative effectiveness arises from a complex interrelationship of design elements, such as words, symbols, images and

colors, which translate poster messages into social action. At the same time, the simplicity of the message is an important part of effective poster communication (Heyman, 2000).

4. Conceptual Approaches to Visual Political Posters

Baudrillard's (1981) work combines Karl Marx's theorization of the capitalist processes of commodification with semiotic investigations into the functioning of signs and signification systems (Kellner, 1989). Originating from the work of Ferdinand de Saussure (2011) and Charles S. Peirce (1991, 2011), semiotics approaches investigate the influence of organized systems of signs, such as language, on the constitution of knowledge and understanding in everyday life (Gottdiener, 1995). Extending the application of semiotics beyond language, semiotic approaches have been applied to the study of various cultural forms and systems of signification, such as architecture, food or fashion (Gottdiener, 1995). Thus, Baudrillard (1981) analyzes signification systems in terms of their connection to political and economic relations, in a manner similar to how Marxist critique interpreted processes of commodification in terms of their political and economic significance (Gottdiener, 1995). According to Baudrillard (1981), the consumption of sign values now constitutes the primary form of consumption, while adding additional semiotic dimensions to the use and exchange values of commodities, as they were, formulated in Marx's theory. However, Baudrillard (1981) differs from Marx in that he does not conceive of use value as any more concrete or real than exchange value, since in his argument both use and exchange values are abstractions that are constitutive of commodity fetishism. In this regard, Baudrillard (1981) complements these commodity-related categories of Marx's analysis with sign-related theorizations of consumption that in contemporary society additionally follows the differential logic of sign value and the logic of symbolic exchange. The consumption of sign values, thus, is organized within hierarchical economic, political, cultural and social relations, while socially integrating individuals into a symbolic system where they can be harnessed for the purposes of consumption (Baudrillard, 2001). Consequently, differentially valued signs serve to stratify consumers into status groups (Baudrillard, 1988). According to Baudrillard (1998), consumption also serves communicative needs through the production and exchange of coded sign values that communicate the moral values and intellectual appeal of the consumer. Whereas symbolic values imply the positive value of the sign, symbolic exchange exists in the ambivalent realm that is radically different from the exchange value and the sign value, due to its presumed ability to rupture the political economy of the sign (Baudrillard, 1981). However, in his later analyses of the symbolic exchange, Baudrillard (2001a, 2001b) loses his conviction that symbolic systems of signification, such as poster designs, can ever lead to political ruptures or revolutionary changes, which explains his later writings on totalizing

and self-perpetuating symbolic systems. Accordingly, Baudrillard's early work has been, understood as a materially semiotic approach to systems of cultural signification (Gottdiener, 1995). Rejecting Marxist ideologies in his later work and turning toward postmodernism, Baudrillard (2001, 2001) shifts from the analyses of the sign value to the fatalism of symbolic exchange. Charting the postmodern transition from the real to the hyper real, the implosion of simulation and simulacra, and the blending of the meaninglessness with the surfeit of meaning, Baudrillard's works describe the over-saturation of reality with an ecstasy of communication. In other words, Baudrillard proposes a postmodern semiotics that, however, neglects the material and social dimensions of semiotic processes. In contrast, Mark Gottdiener (1995) reinstates the importance of the material culture against its idealist reduction by postmodern theorists, such as Baudrillard. Gottdiener's (1995) socio-semiotic theory attempts to incorporate both the systems of signification and the materiality of their expression. Thus, later readings of Baudrillard's works have sought to pay equal attention both to the commodification of reality and to the reality of commodification, in an attempt to maintain a critical hermeneutics of the processes of signification (Best, 1994). While systems of signification attain a degree of autonomous existence, the process of signification occurs in semantic environments that constrain and direct the production, consumption, and circulation of signs, as Gottdiener (1995) contends. Since Gottdiener (1995) concedes that structures of power and knowledge influence and constrain systems of signification, it is possible to conclude that dominant discourses and their representations can exert such an influence on signification systems. Baudrillard's exploration of signification systems stems from Saussure's (2011) work on semiotics in which he argues that the sign consists of the signifier, the signified and the arbitrary connection between them (Gottdiener, 1995). Collapsing to some extent this Saussurean distinction between the elements of signification, Baudrillard (1981) argues that the signifier is as real in its implications as is the referent. The postmodern focus of Baudrillard's (1981) analysis lies in questioning the existence of an underlying reality behind the referent, while affirming that the referent does not constitute an autonomous reality on its own. Thus, the graphic design of commercial advertisements is usually, saturated with signs of their products. However, these signs lack an autonomous reality or a real connection to the conditions of their production. Hence, the final reality of signification in advertisement posters is the sign itself. The commodification of, culture also engenders its homogenization so that in the postmodern system of consumption cultural objects, such as consumer products, architecture designs, and posters, are functional, artificial and standardized (Kellner, 1989).

5. Main research question

1. How do design students perceive, react and interpret major groups of compositional elements of graphic design, such as sensory, structural, and dynamic as they emerge as part of professional reflections and critical positions?

5.1. Subsidiary research questions

1. How do different sensory, structural, dynamic and emerging compositional elements of posters affect the delivery of a similar message?

2. How do compositional elements of graphic design convey political messages?

3. How do poster design elements impact Israeli audience?

6. Research Methodology

Since the emphasis of the present research lies on an examining the effectiveness of various visual design elements in conveying their message, this study has taken advantage of the qualitative research method of semi-structured interview. In order to explore the interrelationships between different design elements and individual assessments of their effectiveness, this research examined the main topics emerging from the eventual interview transcripts (Silverman, 2011). From the pilot semi-structured interviewees. Conducted within the framework of the present research. I compared between number of posters by Israeli Graphic Designers, with respect to the revival of the state of Israel and actual political reality, at different points in time, it emerges that having a single dominant visual element or a clearly defined composition of design elements is highly effective, in conveying the message of political posters. I examined the research results, it is possible to deduce that a combination of two prominent design elements, such as the words “We will never forget we will never forgive” and a monochrome photograph of Yitzhak Rabin and Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu’s profiles, carries with a high degree of effectiveness the main message of political posters. Thus, a female, secular undergraduate interviewee clearly indicated that a poster could transmit its message effectively due to the minimalist simplicity of its design and the dominant presence of the typographic elements on the pictorial surface: “The typed words on the background image contributes to the power and conspicuousness (of the poster’s message)”. Similarly, the male, secular, and undergraduate interviewee highlighted that spare design transmits the message of the posters in a clear manner. However, they also added that using a simple font that has no historical connotations conveys the universality of the message that the poster transmits: “The simplicity of the chosen font does not indicate any temporal reference”. Similarly, technically sophisticated presentation of an abstract political message, such as associating between Ze'ev Herzl’s image with brands (point and counterpoint – the prophet of the revival of the state of Israel is transferred to figure commercial brands) as an opposite cultural attribute, can be effective. However, it appears that more messages are also conveyed via interrelation between different design elements, such as

computer graphic techniques to create textured symbols, rather than a single dominant approach:

“The poster transmits its message through illustration, technical design and the color brands (that it uses)” Similarly, more abstract messages, such as in the poster “Let my people go”, can be, conveyed through interpretation of fonts, colors and symbols (such as the USSR symbol). The effective communication of abstract messages appears to rely more on the visual interrelationships between different graphical elements, such as symbols and colors, rather than on any single dominating aspect, of the graphic design: The use of color creates [an impression of understated, and unrestrained motion [within the pictorial plane, while emerging from the constellation of color red areas emerges].

Thus, typographically sophisticated posters that rely on the interrelations between simple fonts, shapes and expressive visual colors can effectively reinforce the main poster’s message: “Everything is clear, even though the message is not spelled out.” In other words, via typographic means, well-chosen background imagery, and focused composition it is possible to communicate with great effectiveness the message of a political poster: “Clean colors and shapes create strongly contrasting images that reinforce the power of the typographic elements. In contrast, the use of color and photographic elements, appears as capable of decreasing the effectiveness of poster’s design. Especially if perceived as not matching the main message of the poster: I chose to deliver the poster message: “If you will it, it is no Dream”, red and blue colors, while possible with no photograph, as the font composition is sufficient to indicate the identity of the target audience. Additionally, a male, religious, end graduate interviewee noted that the color palette used in a poster design could fail to produce a contemporary impression: “Because of its trite colors, the poster looks outdated” .As well, the symbolism of colors, such as red and blue, which may signify the ambience, may not immediately be apparent. Colors are therefore not as effective at conveying poster messages as other design elements: “Colors do not allow understanding the poster message in an unambiguous manner”.

7. Research Sites and Research Population

The research approach is based on the sample included 46 research participants. The convenience sampling technique has been applied to elicit the participation of 16 males and 30 females in the research. The research questionnaires have been, distributed among the students of Ashkelon Academic College and among the students of Rehovot College, Israel. There were four posters for the selected questionnaire from the inventory available in various archives, research institutes and private collections. They open a window onto the period, allowing us to learn about both what was acceptable in the society and what it strove to achieve. Even though the images presented in the posters do not, depict reality, they do represent trends, desires and aspirations. In addition, the

questionnaires were, distributed to a number of lecturers at these educational institutions and to the relatives of the primary researcher. The individuals in the sample gave their agreement to take part in this research on a volunteer basis upon receiving a clarification that they could terminate their participation at any time. Research participants were also, assured that their privacy will be, preserved and that the data that would be, collected will serve only serve the purposes of the present research. Qualitative research has sought to conduct interviews within two focus groups of graphic design students at the Academic Colleges. One student recruited from the first year students and the other from the senior year graphic design students. Each group has included around 10 interviewees whose responses have served the purposes of comparing the process of meaning creation with respect to selected posters and the effectiveness of their different elements of graphic design as a function of the influences of lay opinions in one group and in the professional body of knowledge in the other.

The present research sample has taken as its basis the convenience of sampling techniques. The age of the research participants ranged from 20 to 64. With regard to other demographic characteristics, the respondents were single and married, male and female, and religious and secular individuals of different educational years.

7.1. Research instruments

Among the research instruments that were, used in the framework of this research is semi-structured questionnaire. Semi-structured interviews are, intended to be, conducted, to enable the exploration of the central themes that will emerge from interviewee's responses to various visual design elements. These interviews were composed of a series of questions that could be, where necessary, de-emphasized or expanded at researcher's discretion. The utilization of the semi-structured questionnaire enables the researcher to define with greater precision the interrelationships between the research variables (Holstein & Gubrium, 2012). In this research, semi-structured interviews have assisted in clarification of the relation between visual design elements and the communicative effectiveness of different posters. In the process of carrying out the present research within the research population, audio records have been made of the semi-structured interviews that were, conducted. On the, basis of these recordings, transcripts have been prepared upon receiving approval from the interviewees for any further research use of these materials.

8. Data Collection

By means of the analysis of the themes that have emerged from the semi-structured interviews, it has been possible to deepen the existing understanding of the meaning that different visual design elements have within the research population. Within the framework of the analysis of these interviews, there was conducted a content analysis of the central themes that have most commonly arisen from the semi-structured interviews (Silverman, 2011).

9. Method of Analysis

This research is, based on the constructivist qualitative approach; this approach looks at the rural phenomena of our construction. One of its key features is the holistic approach to phenomena thus, in analyzing the data. I based the "grounded theory" developed by Strauss and Glaser in Almond, 2003. Furthermore, the concept of a phenomenon relates to a particular situation in the field of data and to a systematic analysis of the line of scrimmage and phrasing before the danger- - operative narrative. The story line was, then attributed to Strauss and Corbin. Corbin and Strauss (inductively investigating the particular phenomenon. Data analysis in qualitative research is, characterized as "an analytical process, usually non-statistical, with intuitive foundations or characteristics aimed at providing meaning, interpretation and inclusion Gibbon, 2001). As such, it can be, understood as a steps edited by research. Data analysis extends beyond the above definition when used by the researcher to decide on the continuation of the study and its course (Shaked, 2003); Morse, 1994) Data analysis, data collection, and conceptual framework make analysis an element of research. Analysis is not confined to a particular place in the research sequence, and it even simulates at the heart of Qualitative study (Gibson, 2001). The study was, created through a five-step combination of research tools:

1. Analysis of Obama presidential election posters.
2. Analysis of Israeli political posters.
3. Semi-structured interviews with graphic design students from both colleges.
4. Closed questionnaire on focus group of two graphic design student groups.
5. Statistics.

The information collected on the basis through the five-step combination of research tools helped define an initial framework for the through combination of the research tools. In both, the quantitative and qualitative research results of the present research present consistently indicate that it is the interrelations between visual design elements, such as color, typography composition and technique, which significantly contribute to the communicative effectiveness of posters. These results are being studied by, Hook and Glaveanu (2012), which corroborates the research approach to image analysis that they advocate. Based on the results of the present research. The quantitative methodology and the qualitative methodologies, applied within the framework of this thesis, have drawn closely related and mutually supportive conclusions regarding the interrelations between color, typography and composition of political posters as critical to their communicative effectiveness, rather than to the effectiveness of any single of these design elements alone. Furthermore, based on current research, it is possible to support the first research hypothesis stating that the communicative effectiveness of political posters

will be, positively connected to their design elements and their interrelations. Specifically, quantitative research results indicate that the composition and typography elements are, positively and, meaningfully connected to the color elements of political posters as factors that contribute to their communicative effectiveness. Similarly, a positive and meaningful connection was, found between composition and typography elements and the joint use of typographical and compositional elements in the design of political posters. At the same time, no inter-correlation has been, found between color and typography and between composition and typography. However, the second research hypothesis stating that the communicative effectiveness of political posters will be significantly dependent on a single design element has not, however, been confirmed. Based on the qualitative research results, it is possible to indicate that the effective communication of poster messages is significantly, connected to the visual interrelations between different graphical elements, such as colors, rather than to a single dominant aspect of graphic design. At the same time, the third research hypothesis stating that both quantitative and qualitative research results will indicate similar design elements of political posters and their interrelations as the source of their communicative effectiveness has been, corroborated. Both quantitative research results and qualitative research results have indicated similar interrelations between color, composition and typography as design elements that are likely to increase the communicative effectiveness of political posters.

On the basis, of the current research, it is possible to recommend conducting more, detailed inquiries into the interrelations and between different design elements of posters dealing with the same topic. However, allowing for a wider berth in interpretations of their message, such as social advertisements or ecological awareness posters. Creating design posters, with their, formal components gives the viewer an experience and response, esthetic illustrated and emotional, which is the basis for understanding the poster message in our cultural environment.

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