Postmodernism & Punk

Examining a Counterculture's Significance: The Creation of a Digital Exhibit

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Abstract

As an IDT major, my focus is on graphic design and the visual arts. Examining where we have come in terms of graphic design aesthetics is important to continue to grow as creators. We take inspiration and develop something either similar to what we have learned or something completely new, which we would not know without learning about what past designers have done. Design is essential, it is used in every aspect of life, whether it be acknowledged or not. Without design, we cannot always communicate effectively. We incorporate design into advertising so that people will understand a product or just share information. Graphic Design is not just used for monetary profits though. Design is a way for artists to share their creativity with the world. Each designer has their own style that is unlike any others, just like significant design movements in the art world. The point of art is to establish yourself as different from the rest, so why were movements like postmodernism and punk dismissed when that is exactly what they sought to do? We must share in all forms of the visual arts and not decide what can or cannot be art.

<u>Literature Review</u>

Postmodernism is one of the most influential movements in the graphic design world. Postmodernism focused on the individual and expanded upon their own creativity rather than regurgitating the styles of decades prior. The deconstruction and expressionism of the postmodern movement is what has made it stand out from others. Postmodernism has no rules. It is a set of ideals in which anything can be art. It is a commentary on society itself and a reaction to the modernist movement, in which designs are considered to be "cookie cutter," spewed out and assimilated by corporations. This attitude is highly reflectant of another infamous movement that was also occurring in the late 20th century, punk. Punk values include individualism,

non-conformity and anti-establishment. Punk culture represents anarchy, and a rejection of mainstream ideals. These two movements have been highly criticized for their lack of direction and "ugliness." Punk and postmodernism made their mark on their respective cultures and continue to do so to this day. Not only is their influence on designers still relevant, but the ideals that came from these movements are still apparent as well. Artists today are individuals, set on creating visuals that will create a new narrative and perception of the world. Punk and postmodernism were considered to be countercultures and they were not well received during their time, but they both have had an impact in the art world. Art is not limited by rules or meaning and postmodernism set out to prove that rules limit our creativity. This movement and the punk subculture were both highly criticized for their individualism and lack of beauty, but today, we can recognize each movement for its innovation. "Punk design in its rawest forms was barely recognized by the professional mainstream, let alone accepted as a valid form of design" (Poynor, 2003, p. 41). These criticisms proved to be unsound, because both postmodernism and punk have had significant impact in graphic design in the 20th century and present day. In my research I set out to discover the parallelisms between punk and postmodernism, and my results have proven that there are many. These two movements shared similar design methods of destruction, rebellion, unappealing visuals, and the use of pastiche and parody as commentary (Barnard, 2013). Postmodernism and punk's ideals are what established themselves as countercultures and impacted the design world, the music scene and social movements surrounding disenfranchised youth. There is no denying the commonalities of these two infamous movements and their influence on present day artists.

The Postmodern Movement in Graphic Design

Modernism vs. Postmodernism

What began as a reaction, not a rejection, to the modernist dogma, the postmodern movement erased the idea that graphic design needed to follow the rules in order to be successful (Keedy, 1998). Modernism focused on functionality and order, while postmodernism became the poster child of deconstruction. Modernism reflected an organized, no-nonsense art of design while postmodernism came along to destroy modernist values (Keedy, 1998). What modernism lacked was personal expression and resulted in designs that lacked humanization (Outhouse, 2013). Feelings of being stifled by rules, such as Gestalt theory, is what led a new generation of designers to express themselves in unique ways.

There are No Rules

Postmodernism does not cover a "coherent theory or ideology, a specific set of social institutions, a bounded collectivity or any other clear-cut part of reality" (Wilterdink, 2002). Instead, it becomes a conceptual experience (Outhouse, 2013). The authenticity and deconstruction of postmodernism makes it accessible to those unfamiliar with the rules that most graphic designers follow. Postmodernism seeks to destabilize concepts such as presence and identity and diminish the univocity of meaning (Aylesworth, 2015). The design movement comprises the use of multiple weights in typography, popular culture imagery that has been deconstructed and no clear form of unity.

Anti-Establishment: The New Counterculture

With this newfound creative movement, another movement was forming in the underground music scene; punk. Postmodernism and the punk subculture of the 20th century philosophies are tied in many ways. Both movements believe in authenticity, whether it be of art

or social behavior and the Punk DIY aesthetic is represented in much of the postmodern graphic design movement's artists and work. The timelines of each movement also line up nearly perfectly. Beginning in the late 1960s, blooming by the late 1970s and evolving throughout the 1980s and 1990s, both postmodernism and punk established themselves in their respective cultures (Wilterdink, 2002).

<u>The Punk Movement</u>

No Future

The disenfranchised youth of the late 1970s sought to express themselves in a way that derived them from conformity (Chantry, 2015). The punk movement formed as a rejection of modern ideals and the acceptance of individuals who were deemed different from society (Smith, Dines & Parkinson, 2018). Punk values stem from individual freedoms and authenticity. This subculture was true to their values and philosophies of anti-establishment and anti-authoritarianism, basically the youth did not want to be suppressed by authority, they wanted to express themselves in ways that were not always socially acceptable (Errickson, 1999). Punks were individualists who refused to follow along to modern traditional values. They rejected authority and were strongly anti-establishment. Their dismissal of tradition is comparable to postmodernism's desire to go against the rules. The punk cultural rebellion had a large impact in the design world that critics did not believe would occur (Chantry, 2015).

DIY Art

Every part of punk culture is meant to be a statement and represent their philosophies, whether that be commentary on government, religion or other traditional values, punks had something to say and in the most offensive way possible. "Clothing and the use of horrific

symbols as jewelry speak to their philosophy. Punks wear the sign of the anarchists (an "A" surrounded by a circle), not to necessarily say they are anarchists, but to imply that they hate the idea of organized government" (Errickson, 1999, p.13). Punk design is similar in the sense that it aims to challenge traditional forms. Fanzines became increasingly popular in the punk subculture and also faced the criticism of having ugly design. The punk aesthetic relished in having repelling visuals in their art, clothing and music (Errickson, 1999) in order to prove that they were not conformists to the traditional ideals of beauty.

Impact in the Art World

The punk culture centered around the music, it was loud, aggressive and offensive, the music is what united punks around the world. Bands like, The Ramones, the Sex Pistols and Siouxie Sous and the Banshies established the punk culture in the art world. It was against everything mainstream, but their impact on the art and music world cannot be denied. To this day, musicians emulate these artists and have pushed the punk music scene in new directions. The punk aesthetic had been adopted into late postmodern designs of the 90s thanks to designers such as Jamie Reid and David Carson. These designers adopted the no rules aesthetic of punk culture and bridged the gap between punk and postmodern (Chantry, 2015).

Postmodernism & Punk

The Relation of Two Countercultures

Although the two movements are discussed separately, they share very similar characteristics. Both punk and postmodernism were highly criticized for their disregard for traditional values. Punk deconstructed the mainstream ideals and challenged tradition and authority. Both punk and postmodern aesthetics were deemed to be unstable and chaotic

(Lees-Maffei & Maffei, 2019). Both movements had similar philosophies that focused on expression and individualism. The DIY aesthetic of punk incorporated appropriation, deconstruction, and obstruction, all characteristics that closely relate to postmodernism and the methods of design that graphic designers would follow (Smith, Dines & Parkinson, 2018). Graphic artists that were associated with punk rock instilled the movement into their own designs, revelling in "deviation and chaos" with deconstructed designs (Poynor, 2003, p. 38). Deconstruction was intended to instigate and destabilize the design world and created an adventure in visuals. These chaotic designs refused to acknowledge error and set out to disrupt traditional designs, something both punks and postmodern designers were known for. Not only was the critical reception of each movement similar, but the design aspects were as well. Both postmodern design and punk disregarded "professional design's orderly methods and polite conventions, revelling in deviation and chaos and refusing to acknowledge any such category as 'error'"(Poynor, 2003, p. 11), basically anything could be art. The unpredictability of style can be related to both postmodern design and the punk movement (Lees-Maffei & Maffei, 2019).

Famous postmodern designers have been linked to the punk movement during their early design years including artists such as Neville Brody and Peter Saville. Brody began designing for the punk community and recognized the importance of the punk music scene in "developing his approach to design" (Lees-Maffei &Maffei, 2019, p. 94,). The punk scene during the late 1970s allowed young designers to explore different methods of design and create a work that was a polar opposite to the work of modernists such as Paul Rand and Jan Tschichold. David Carson, another famous postmodern designer also employed punk aesthetics into his work. In his infamous Ray Gun magazine, there were no consistent typefaces or layouts. He went as far as to

include an interview in a completely illegible and unreadable typeface as a form of commentary (Poynor, 2003). Their defiance of traditional design demonstrates how a designer should follow their intuition to create visually striking designs instead of what society deems is acceptable.

Semiotics

Both punk and postmodernism symbolize destruction and individualism. The lack of legibility and use of pop culture imagery and destroying it are just two design elements that these movements have in common. The undecidability of a sign (Barnard, 2013) in these movements is what deviates them from traditional norms. In modern art, symbols are used to represent a specific meaning, whereas in postmodernism, meaning is completely up to the viewer. There is no right or wrong answer in art. Meaning is unstable and functionality is not taken into consideration (Barnard, 2013). Within these two movements, there are no boundaries and no limits to interpretation. Type and image choices in punk and postmodern are anarchical and ambiguous, leading audiences to understand that as long as it goes against norms, it can be postmodern. Although designers during this time period sought to deviate from the norm, they still managed to incorporate the norm into their designs, but not in the way you may think. Pastiche and parody are two common principles of postmodern designs, both of which take previous designs and completely alter it. "Postmodern parody simultaneously borrows from another's work and explores its absurd nature, while pastiche appropriates another's ideas and styles without any inherent mockery of the borrowed work" (Outhouse, 2013, p. 11). One design from the punk movement in particular is best representative of parody in postmodern design, the Sex Pistol's, *God Save the Queen*, album cover. Designer Jamie Reid wanted to "detourne the media-to turn it back on itself" (Poynor, 2003, p. 39) by changing the communicative message

and giving it new context. With this album, the audience was pushed to question the "status quo and what is considered normal" (Poynor, 2003, p. 40). Through these examples and shared design characteristics, it is clear to see how punk design and postmodern design are extremely similar.

Impact

Postmodern and punk ideologies helped establish a new culture. In a world where traditional values are not to be deviated from, these two movements created generations of individualists. Youth culture became increasingly relevant within the mid 20th-century, creating generations that did not want to follow the cultural norm, also known as, their parents. Subcultures such as punk, helped them discover who they were and who they wanted to be. It created individuals who questioned authority and challenged the world to become more than what society wants them to be (Errickson, 1999). The newfound confidence and ideology has left a lasting impact on how the youth think today. Punk and postmodern design encourages creativity and the freedom of individual thinking, traits that are apparent in youth culture. From a design standpoint, the influence of postmodernism is still felt today. Many designers today take inspiration from famous postmodern designers such as April Greiman, David Carson and Jamie Reid. Their commitment to creating visuals that go against tradition paved the way for future designers to follow their intuitions, instead of the rules. These designers followed their passion with disregard to the rules and still created works of art that changed the way we see design. "One of the most significant developments in graphic design, during the last two decades, has been designers' overt challenges to the conventions of rules" (Poynor, 2003, pg 12). Graphic design is becoming an increasingly popular field and the growth in technology in the 21st century assists artists in

enhancing their designs even further. Designers such as Marta Veludo, Leta Sobierajski and Ben Grandgenett are establishing themselves in the design world today and it is evident in their work the influence that postmodernism and punk design has taken (Wood, 2018). Generations of designers are exposed to the history of graphic design much more easily than in centuries before due to the increase in digital technology. Therefore, these past movements have been able to teach us and have a large influence on the art we create today.

Conclusion

My literature review has revealed a connection between postmodernism and the punk movement. Although there are places in which more information is required, a general statement can be made that the two are indeed connected. Their ideologies and impact on their own movements must be acknowledged for their relevance to design today. Not only have these movements influenced generations of designers, but they have also had cultural impact. The late 20th century saw a boom in the youth's desire for individualism. The youth was more likely to question authority and challenge the world to make imperative changes. Could this be due to the cultural movements surrounding them? Seeing posters and magazines with complete disregard to the rules of design, exemplifies how important it was to be a free thinking society. Punk challenged popular culture and pushed for acceptance of those who were different. Younger generations wanted to be heard and movements such as these assisted in those goals. Punk gave the youth a voice, one that could not be ignored, just like postmodernism in graphic design.With these sources analyzed, I will be able to continue my research and not only continue to prove the connection of postmodernism and punk, but also their impact on society. Movements that were looked down on could still have an impact in a social and cultural sense. By researching and

explaining the relation and significance of these movements, other designers can realize that their art can be just as impactful, even when it is unconventional. It is the "weirdos" that have the most significance in the world. My research may be influential and inspiring to designers who also want to make their mark on the world. What they create may not be conventional or well-received, but that does not mean that it shouldn't exist. Punks and postmodern designs have always been seen as "ugly" and deemed unfit to be considered art or artists. But in retrospect, their aesthetics have dominated the design world and defied traditional values and cultural norms. As artists, we are always criticized for what we create. Movements such as postmodernism and punk were, but today they are viewed as significant contributors to the art world. These countercultures created worlds in which people could connect with those with similar ideologies. With my project, I hope to share with other creators that although our art will not always fit in, we know that it is important to someone. By demonstrating that people were not always receptive to things that were different, artists will be encouraged to keep creating and that someday, people will realize that all art matters.

Proposal

<u>**Background**</u>

Postmodernism is not an easily defined movement, but it is one of the most significant movements in the graphic design world. Postmodern design is the framework for everything that goes against normal art standards. It was a reaction to the unified and highly acclaimed, modernist movement during the mid 20th century (Keedy, 1998). Postmodernism evolved from modernism, but unlike modernism, it is unbound by the universal rules of graphic design. The postmodern movement focused on deconstruction and social commentary, much like another

cultural movement at the time, punk (Chantry, 2015). The punk music scene is infamous for anarchy and individuality, something that postmodernists can relate to. Punks did not want their voices to be stifled and authenticity was important to them (Errickson, 1999). Each of these movements faced criticism for their non-traditional aesthetics and ideals that went against the social norm, which is why I set out to show that not only are these two movements related, but they also had a large impact, culturally and socially, that often goes unrecognized. Much research on these topics do not go into detail on how these movements coincided and left their mark in the art world or even society itself. Although each movement is now recognized for their individual mark in their respective "scenes," they are rarely compared in great detail or even acknowledged for the impact they had on the world around them. With my research, I have set out to show that each of these movements impacted one another, their scenes and society as a whole. With this information, I have created a virtual exhibit that will showcase the visuals from postmodernism and punk, including graphic design and photographs.

I have investigated each movement and determined whether or not they truly had affected one another during their movement's peak. My data comes from scholarly authors and researchers who have examined these topics in detail and I will be making the deeper connections between postmodernism and punk in my writeup. My study focuses on bridging the gap between postmodernism in graphic design and the punk scene of the late 20th century. From the 1970s through the 1990s, these movements grew into cultural phenomena and were both heavily criticized for their opposition to traditional norms, such as organization, legibility, and function. Both movements promoted individualism and shared similar design concepts, which are ways in which postmodernism and punk are also connected.Through my digital exhibit, I

intend to demonstrate how postmodernism and punk are related and had significance culturally and socially. With my research and digital exhibit website, I want to demonstrate how a graphic design movement can impact more than just the art world and how not all art should have to be the same in order to be culturally significant.

Questions

1. What characteristics of design do punk and postmodernism share? What exactly makes them equal besides their overall aesthetic? What establishes postmodern design from the punk style?

2. In what ways did postmodernism create an impact on the graphic design world, and in what ways was it simply a reaction of designers interested in disrupting traditional values?

3. Are punk and postmodernism still relevant today. In what ways are designers still using methods established by postmodern designers of the late 20th century?why or why not? Does the DIY punk scene still exist alongside the bold fashion choices and deconstructed designs?

Methods

My solution was to research each of these movements individually first. I then connected them to one another and to culturally significant moments during the 20th century and in the present through comparisons in design principles. In order to properly understand and discuss postmodernism and the punk scene of the late 20th century, I engaged in exploratory research and exemplified the connections that each movement shares. During this research, I employed a

few different methods that provided evidence of my theory to be true, that postmodernism and punk are very similar and significant in the history of graphic design.

My first method was A/B testing. Although A/B testing is normally used in the scientific fields, I tailored this method to fit my research by comparing the two movements design principles. Postmodernism in graphic design and punk in the music scene are two separate worlds, or so we think. Each movement was significant in their own "scenes" or environments during the same timeframe and both shared similar characteristics. A/B testing is a great way for quick understanding of my initial questions, especially when comparing design movements. Although this method focuses on specific tests, it still proved to be relevant to my topic. Instead of starting with a normal test, I can question and compare these movements to one another or to a drastically different movement in order to demonstrate a point. For example, postmodernism is a reaction to the modernist movement that occurred prior during the mid 20th century. Through A/B testing, I have exemplified what made postmodernism stand out in the graphic design field by comparing it to the popular and universally followed design principles of modernism. Although it is not a typical research method for my topic, it still gave me relevant answers to any question I had that relates one movement or principle to another (Gallo, 2017).

Another key research method that I used was artifact analysis. These movements created some of the most memorable pieces of art in graphic design. In order to prove that these movements had real significance, I needed to examine specific works and connect them to my theory. Graphic designers such as Neville Brody, April Greiman, and David Carson are some of the most well known designers of the postmodern movement and their works are the prime example of postmodernism. Brody and Carson also began their careers as designers within the

punk scene, creating posters for gigs and underground zines (Smith, Dines & Parkinson, 2018), essentially influencing their transition into postmodern design. This fusion of postmodernism and punk is just one example of their connection and where I have shared design work that relates to one another. These are only a few of the designers of the postmodern and punk movements that I shared examples from on my digital exhibit. Aside from sharing famous postmodern design pieces, I also looked at the punk DIY style and how it connects to the visual art of postmodernism. Punk is infamous for its over the top, deconstructed style, which carried over into their own graphic design pieces as well (Chantry, 2015). Concert posters and albums represented the styles of eradication from punks and are important artifacts to analyze for their cultural significance (National Archives, 2018).

Postmodernism and punk cannot be done proper justice unless viewed through photographs and visuals. We live in a technologically advanced world, more so than that of the 20th century. So, why should my final research be limited to the amount of words on paper? Graphic design is a visual art, one that pushes us forward everyday. We use it to communicate in ways that we never could before. Visual arts not only create successful campaigns for businesses, they also evoke emotions and connect us to one another. The beauty of the postmodern graphic design movement and the punk scene of the 20th century must be shared with the world. Therefore, my final project should be exemplified through visuals. I created a digital exhibit that shares visuals of my two researched movements in a way that is easily accessible to any audience. Although an exhibit created in real life is the best way to appreciate the art of graphic design, the best way for my proposed project is to share my digital exhibit on a website. I created a website that will act as a host for images from the punk movement and graphic design

examples of postmodernism and punk of the late 20th century. My website will be set up in a way that is similar to traveling between rooms of an exhibit. Each "room," or webpage, will serve as a host for each theme of the exhibit. Each page shares a different piece of the exhibit, the experience of each movement individually, their similarities, and their impact. I also have another page for my analysis and final write up. I don't want my audience to have to read too much text across the site, so there should be a place for further information and my final thoughts. I don't think that simply sharing examples from this time will demonstrate their long-term significance. I will also be searching for current designers who still employ the characteristics and ideologies of postmodernism and punks today and the relevance in their current scene.

In order to best exemplify what the art of these movements looked like, I followed design principles from postmodernism and punk, so that my audience would understand the aesthetics of each movement. These design principles are very similar, so it will be much easier to combine the two movements into one somewhat cohesive design across the website. However, these design movements did not follow standard graphic design rules. There were no grids, no simplified imagery, and it was not always legible (Poynor, 2003). When I am not showing real examples of punk and postmodern work, I have designed my exhibit with other imagery that will overlap and look as though it has been deconstructed. I did not want my site to look modern with postmodern graphic design examples, as that is not truly authentic to each movement. Instead, I felt that my website needed to reflect each movement as well, even if it meant creating my own postmodern designs to do that. Although these movements are well known for illegibility, not every design was illegible and for what my project entails, mine should not be either. I want my

audience to learn about these movements and if they are unaware of them prior to visiting my virtual exhibit, they will still leave confused about punk and postmodernism and their impact in the design world. Each page will be a standalone design, different from one another. The most important principle from postmodernism and punk is that it follows no rules (Poynor, 2003). Therefore, each page on my site is reflective of that specific page and not as a whole design. Although each piece is slightly different from one another, my audience will realize that it still follows the same "principles" of postmodern design.

There are many scholars who have researched the postmodern movement, and some who have explored the punk movement. In rare cases is it that a person has researched both and has connected them to one another. I collected data through several different sources such as the SUNY Polytechnic library database and google scholar, so my data is multifaceted. My data will span over the course of four decades that demonstrates the change and effects of postmodernism and punk. By collecting data from different time periods, it is easy to see where each movement began and the negative opinions that surrounded it, to present day opinions where punk and postmodernism have been deemed culturally significant by multiple scholarly authors. My research comes from books, websites, and some more modern information technologies, such as videos and digital photographs. I focused on sharing real photographs from the early punk movement to demonstrate the overall aesthetic and shared graphic design visuals from that movement as well. I also took a deeper look into the works of famous postmodern designers such as April Greiman, David Carson, Neville Brody and others. I also collected current designer's work through online research that shared up and coming modern designers who share the same design characteristics as punk and/or postmodernism.

The data collected went through rigorous content analysis. I have prior knowledge of postmodernism as a designer, and punk as somebody who has always been interested in modern music history so throughout my years of education, I have learned how to analyze and interpret data to deem whether it backs up my theory or does not. The data collected focused on proving that postmodernism and punk have characteristics that have impacted the graphic design world and the world around them.

To create my website, I used tools most familiar to me. I have the most experience with creating websites on Wix, so that is my platform. I used a blank template for the site that allowed me to drag and drop each piece and determine the layout myself. On some pages, I also placed imagery in the gutters for those who view my exhibit on a larger screen. My primary focus was to share the designs that came from these movements so that my audience can see the unconventional visual that became so impactful, but I also wanted to "decorate" the pages with designs that would reflect each movement. My information focused on the background, design principles and impact of each movement. I did not share information on their impact outside of the art/graphic design world, as that would be too much information to share and my topic would become too generalized. One final addition to my site included music. I chose to share music relevant to each movement to further immerse my audience into that counterculture and feel as though they really were there during that time period.

Results

We live in a world that is reliant on visuals. We digitize almost everything for ease of access and comprehension. Our dependence on technology isn't inherently a bad thing though. The internet affords us the ability to connect, learn and entertain ourselves and my digital exhibit

will do all of those things. My audience will leave with more information about postmodernism and punk and establish a connection to these designers and their work. The visuals I shared are much more entertaining than simply reading about each movement and learning about the characteristics. Instead, my audience will see the art that these designers have created that have shaped the world of graphic design and establish an emotional connection to their dedication to their art. These designers followed their passion with disregard to the rules and still created works of art that changed the way we see design.

The process of creating a digital exhibit is not easy. Since I planned on my exhibit being visible to a larger audience, I needed to use a website builder as a host. Creating a website is complicated and tedious for somebody who is not an expert at web design. I have enough experience to create a well designed website, but it becomes very time consuming. My research took up much of my time, as I wanted to understand each topic in depth. Scholarly resources exploring the connection between postmodernism and punk are scarce, but I was able to find sources within my timeline fairly easily, as most was written post-1990s. There were many hours of research and web design involved in this project and I have discovered that a project like this deserves that much time. Although I considered learning html in order to create my website from scratch, I realized that I would not have enough time to accomplish that task in the time being. I also discovered Wix's ability to create a site without a template, thus influencing my final decision to create on Wix.

Although I sought to gain knowledge from the postmodern and punk movements in graphic design, I also discovered much more about creating an exhibit. First, I learned that simplicity is key. My original research process was overly complicated and too broad, so I

narrowed it down to simply sharing the two movements' history and impact through visuals. If I had tried to incorporate too much information, like I had originally planned, my project would have not only been stressful for me, but it also would have distracted from my main points. Simplicity is also a necessity in web design. Websites that have too much text become overwhelming and unappealing to the audience and they are more likely to leave the site. Having a simple, user friendly design, with some postmodern elements (like deconstructed imagery and a loose grid) was the best way to share my digital exhibit and I feel that my website will be much more impactful and engaging due to these choices.

Discussion

With my research and digital exhibit, I am establishing a new outlook on postmodernism and punk since, normally, each movement is examined separately due to the differences in the culture surrounding them. Punk revolves around the music scene while postmodernism lies within the world of graphic design. Through my research, I was able to connect these two subcultures and relate their characteristics, theories and ethics to one another. My research guided me through the history of punk and postmodernism in graphic design to where it is now and I now understand where they came from, how they evolved over time and their significance then and now. Those who read my analysis will have a great understanding of their connections without having to dive into multiple sources, like I had to. My audience will discover that these highly criticized and controversial movements grew to shape the world of design in which we see today. Their influence on one another was not focused on in many of my resources and since I gathered the information and connected it, readers will easily understand that punk and postmodernism had many similarities. Through my research, I was also able to show that the two

movements have provided designers with inspiration for decades, thus establishing the cultural impact of punk and postmodernism.

Many authors did not take the time to connect punk and postmodernism in depth. In their writings, they grazed over how the two influenced one another. For example, in *Reading Graphic Design in Cultural Context*, only a few paragraphs connected designers Neville Brody, Peter Saville, and David Carson to their punk roots (Lees-Maffei & Maffei, 2019, p. 92-95). The rest of the postmodern chapter focused on comparing postmodernism to modernism. Six out of ten of my original sources did not mention both punk and postmodernism and their relation or effects on one another. Those that did make those connections, did not add much detail in their comparison of postmodern and punk characteristics and ideals and explain why they mattered in the world of graphic design. My findings helped me piece together these two movements as coexisting members of graphic design. I was also able to discover how these movements further established a sense of rebellion in the youth of then and now. The literature that I explored also did not discuss the implication that postmodernism and punk are still relevant to designers today. Much of the literature focused on sharing famous artists' work during that time period, but did not reflect upon whether their work had an impact on future designers. Without my deep research into multiple different sources that discussed punk, postmodernism and their effects, there would be limited resources as to how these movements coincided and changed a generation of artists and individuals.

I believe that my exhibit is an effective way of sharing the relationship between these two movements. The visuals provided will expose my audience to real examples of postmodernism and punk in a way that is graspable. It is much more difficult to understand the characteristics of

postmodernism without seeing them in a design, a discussion of pastiche simply isn't enough until you see a piece compared to its predecessor. Graphic design is a visual art, so it is imperative that we study design by seeing the art with our own eyes. A digital exhibit affords the audience the ability to see it from wherever they are, making art more available to them. By creating an exhibit online, I will be able to reach a larger audience than I would if I was to set up the exhibit in person. Although it is much more beneficial to see designs and photographs in person, a website is a much more feasible platform. With my digital exhibit, I will be able to shine a light on the characteristics of punk and postmodernism and my audience will be able to see the similarities and differences much more clearly than they would by reading about them. My project requires visuals. I cannot simply write about these movements without exemplifying what they really looked like and why they were so different from the standard traditional design style at the time.

Exhibit Layout

Since my exhibit is digital, I plan to use a platform that is more easily accessible for anyone. I feel that a website is a much better tool for creating a digital exhibit, since most people know how to access the internet and find a web page rather than create a pdf that would be more difficult to distribute to my audience. I used Wix to build a website as a host for my final project. Wix is the most user friendly website building application and I have prior experience with it as well, from building a website for a client to creating my own for my brand.

My home page will serve as the introduction to my project and give a visual overview of my project and what the audience will be learning about. The home page will have links to each separate page that will guide users through the postmodern design and punk movements

information. My audience will then follow the next page to my introduction to the punk scene, the beginning of the postmodern era followed by postmodernism, their similarities, their impact and finally a page that described the project. There will not be a lot of text, since it is a digital exhibit, but I will still be including general information in order to help guide my audience to a conclusion. Through the exhibit, the audience will find themselves discovering designs that incorporate punk and postmodernism and share how those designs came to be so important in the present day. Finally, I will be sharing the work of more recent designers who have been inspired by punk and postmodernism in their art, and share my own works as well.

As graphic designers, we primarily share visuals with the world and focus on telling a story through imagery. Therefore, it only makes sense to share these famous designs in a way that our audience can actually see them and not just read about them. Punk and postmodernism were movements that were designed to shock and start a conversation and without exemplifying what they really looked like, the audience will not be able to relate to them. My digital exhibit is the best way to tell the story of punk and postmodernism and I will be able to share that story with my audience on a platform that is easily accessible and enjoyable.

<u>Conclusion</u>

As artists, we are always criticized for what we create. Movements such as postmodernism and punk were, but today they are viewed as significant contributors to the art world. These countercultures created worlds in which people could connect with those with similar ideologies. With my project, I hope to share with other creators that although our art will not always fit in, we know that it is important to someone. By demonstrating that people were not always receptive to things that were different, artists will be encouraged to keep creating and that someday, people will realize that all art matters. These movements were dismissed and

deemed to be insignificant, but today postmodernism is a well respected design movement and the punk scene is still alive and brings together individuals who want to change the world. I wish to share these movements and the works of art they helped create with the world. So, my audience will leave my digital exhibit feeling as though they can share their works of art with the world, unapologetically.

Sharing my project through visuals is a necessity. It is not enough to discuss punk and postmodern design through an extensive paper, instead we must truly see what their designs looked like and how they used or didn't use specific graphic design principles. My exhibit will bring together artists and non-artists alike and share non-traditional works of famous graphic designers in order to validate their work and the work of upcoming designers. As we learn about the history of design, it is important to acknowledge how these artists changed the way we see design. Through my digital exhibit, it will be evident that postmodernism and punk shaped the graphic design world into something much more dynamic that will influence artists to come.

Link to Digital Exhibit: **https://manleyt7.wixsite.com/punkandpomo**

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