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politics. this is more



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In this day and age, companies are pushing their designs in order to tackle the world's biggest problems, many of which occur in politics. This is more successful when the political angle aligns with the brand's core mission and purpose. When it doesn't align, consumers are more perceptive and it can cause throwback.

This is the reaction that no advertisement agency or brand wants to experience as this causes a bad reputation in the long run. Different design decisions lead to different results from the general public. Brands are aware that consumers are more intelligent with their buying choices towards brands that are genuinely trying to make a positive difference, both politically and sustainably. With the Brexit vote still very up to date, a lot of companies are trying to channel towards pro-Britain or pro collaboration with other countries depending on which vote they support – Remain or Leave. Within this essay, I will put forward examples of three brand advertisements/campaigns in order to show how designed artifacts can be political and assess their efficiency. Moreover, I will compare and contrast the ways in which they do and don't work. The three examples are all political debates including; Pro-Immigration, Brexit and Black lives matter movement. In October 2017, Jigsaw Clothing Brand released a bold pro-immigration advertisement campaign.

Figure 1 : Jigsaw's Love Immigration Campaign located at Oxford Circus Underground Sourced: 02. 01. 18 Eliza Williams wrote an article about this on Creative Review, stating ' Jigsaw as a company announces how much it relies on global collaborations to create its Beautifully British brand.

In doing so it takes a decidedly political stand.” (Eliza Williams, 13. 10. 17)

This reasoning of why they took a political stand makes sense to the consumer. The brand is thinking about its main core mission, i. e.

to create clothing, then thinking about the way in which they do so, showing the truth that their ‘ Beautifully British” clothing brand only works with the collaboration of other ethnicities other than British. They are therefore taking a huge current world problem, immigration and emphasising the reasons as to why they are pro-immigration, and wanting to make a political stand. Jigsaw has made design decisions throughout this Campaign in order to clearly show their political beliefs. They had to choose specific language and tone of voice. The posters spoke with the truth and were ethically and politically correct.

Here follows the transcription of the poster: “ British Style is not 100% British, In fact, there is no such thing as 100% British. Or 100% Dutch, French, American, Asian or European. Whatever your opinion, at some point in your ancestry someone moved in and unsettled the neighbours. Because none of us is the product of staying put. And we’re no different. As a clothing brand, we couldn’t do what we do if people weren’t free to move around. Without immigration, we’d be selling potato sacks.

We need beautiful minds from around the world. Working with beautiful things for people around the world. Fear, isolation and intolerance will hold us back. Love, openness and collaboration will take us forward. JIGSAW – Beautifully British since 1970.” (Creative Review, 13. 10. 17) They have used a non-aggressive tone of voice, more of a positive and empathetic manner.

The use of “take us forward” shows they are wanting to work as a team within this disjointed and divided political problem that is immigration. They have also only used the word “immigration” once within this huge pro-immigration campaign, highlighting how all of the design techniques and decisions have come together on a human level rather than shouting at the audience. This is through the use of photography, model casting and good copy text that talks about all the different countries they need within their Beautifully British brand. This was also noticed by The Independent, “The models in the campaign adverts are from diverse ethnic backgrounds and are wearing Jigsaw’s Autumn/Winter 2017 collection, which is sourced from and manufactured in 16 countries.” (Emma Featherstone, 13. 10.

17) This shows they have thought about what they are trying to say and portraying it through photographs rather than just words. By giving the audience facts, also backs their message and alignment of politics within their brand. The brand also executed the Campaign in a genuine manner. Mr Ruis, the chief executive of Jigsaw told The Independent, “we could just talk about clothes, but with what is going on around us it seems hypocritical and superficial to not accept the debt we owe to immigration in its broadest sense.” (Emma Featherstone, 13. 10.

17) In this statement, it shows the brands empathy towards politics generally. They are not ignoring it, they are striving forward and empowering people to believe in what they think is right. This is because they have noticed that their brand would not exist without the input of 16 different countries. Another design decision to take into account is the location of the campaign. Obviously, they advertised it on their social media and website

but they also posted it on Oxford Circus tube station underground. At this location, you achieve large footfall. You also get the waiting time, which allows people to read and take photos, using the hashtag #loveimmigration. Marketing week online praises the campaign, “ the campaign fits into a wider move to centre the Jigsaw brand around having a social purpose as part of its ‘ Style and Truth’ ethos launched back in 2014.” (Thomas Hobbs, 11.

11. 17) They spoke to Alex Kelly the head of marketing at Jigsaw who explains, “ there’s no question that immigration is a controversial issue in British politics right now but if you risk making people potentially disagree with you then I think it’s worth it as that still creates a powerful emotional engagement.” The general public also like to see brands going against the grain and not playing it safe. It is evident that it paid off and showed people a different angle on how to look at Brexit and immigration.

Alex Kelly also made the point that “ we were conscious we didn’t want to approach this with a Pepsi – Kendall Jenner mentality and to make a political statement just for the sake of it.” (Thomas Hobbs, 11. 11. 17) This shows that they were aware of brands jumping on the political bandwagon, and maybe by seeing the backlash Pepsi experienced, they knew not what to do. Jigsaw used the real people of today’s society, giving more real-life visuals and points in order for the public to relate to their message. Kelly makes a perfect point, “ One of our products could have Mongolian wool, Turkish satin, Chinese silk and Italian buttons, so the campaign will celebrate that diversity at a product level but also a broader level too with the DNA tests all our employees are doing. If other fashion brands follow suit then that’s great

because there seems to be a lot of fear in this industry around taking a stand.

“(Thomas Hobbs, 11. 11. 17) By celebrating diversity at a product level and then thinking about the whole ethos of the campaign, really backs their ideas of who they are and where they stand within politics.

They have done a great design job of bringing politics into their brand identity by producing enough reasoning and aligned every design decision to their brand mission. This is why the general public believes them and support their views. To give the brand an even more solid foundation for the campaign, Kelly concludes, “ This campaign really fits into our core brand values as our founder John Robinson started the business by bringing an Afghan coat back to the UK in the 1970s. Our brand is built on immigration.” In January 2018, HSBC broadcasted their new Advert, “ Together we thrive.” This is another politically designed artefact that Eliza Williams wrote about for Creative Review.

Williams starts her article, “ While it doesn’t mention the B word, HSBC’s new advert is a clear statement of the benefits of Britain having a global outlook.” (Eliza Williams, 02. 01. 18)The point here, similar to Jigsaw’s campaign, you do not need to mention the main word much, or at all in this case. You use design decisions such as; a tone of voice, script, location and objects or actions that hold connotations to do with the subject matter.

Figure 2 : Richard Ayoade the Comedian, showcasing in HSBCs Global Citizen AdSourced : 03. 01. 18As a worldwide bank, HSBC is catering for everyone.

If this is their brand core mission, being seen to have a global outlook throughout this Brexit orientated time, it gives the people strength and reasoning for why Britain needs collaboration. The advert gives a positive outlook on other countries influences on Britain. Here is the advert's transcription taken from youtube to show this: " We start the day with a Colombian, Guatemala, piping hot Costa Rican and a Danish to go. We drive; German, German, Japanese, German. And we ride Taiwanese.

We watch American movies on Korean tablets. Struggle with Swedish flatpaks. Our heroes hail from Chilli, Argentina, Brazil and often Belgium. We eat Chinese, Italian, Indian and we go Dutch. Some of our best friends are Mexican, Sybrian, Hungarian and French. We live on a wonderful little lump of land in the middle of the sea, but we are not an island, we are part of something far, far bigger. Together we thrive.

" (HSBC UK youtube, 31. 12. 17)The tone of voice used in this advert is very light-hearted. This is due to the script and also the use of Richard Ayoade who is a comedian, as the main character. He automatically brings a cheery atmosphere to what is quite a dull topic in today's news. HSBC tells ' Campaign Live'; " the campaign highlighted its commitment to an open-looking ethos: " We have been connecting the world through trade for 152 years.

Our new Campaign reflects our proud international heritage and our commitment to helping people, businesses and communities in the UK to thrive." (Alex Brownsell, 02. 01. 18)The advert definitely reflects the statement " proud international heritage" through all of the examples given

but it is questionable where “ commitment to helping people..” is shown in the advert. This is where the political angle doesn’t quite align with the brand’s core mission, which makes us question the efficiency of the link between the political message and the company. This is because they are showing us what we all do and use as a country, but does not show them helping people in the UK.

In contrast to Jigsaws pro-immigration campaign, HSBC has avoided direct mention of Brexit, whereas Jigsaw mentions immigration and its connotations quite frequently. This is only evident after comparing the two. HSBC has done this by mentioning all of the countries we collaborate within everyday life in Britain, examples such as “ struggles with Swedish flat-packs” is a very subtle and witty add-in. This is because everyone goes to Ikea the home of Swedish furniture, whatever income or political view they have. It also captures every age group which is very good design, in order to cater for everyone. This shows HSBC are thinking about who their target audience is.

For example, there is a football match scene with a young age range. This could also reach out to the adults, to subliminally ask them to think of the younger generations to come and what impact is the Brexit outcome going to have on them. The advert end line indicates HSBC voting the remaining side of the EU referendum and that the bank’s pro-global situation is nevertheless clear. Equal to Jigsaws Campaign, HSBC has taken a huge social risk ultimately there is a split view on Brexit to remain or leave the EU.

Whether it creates the social backlash or not, it most definitely gives an unaggressive point of view and is not offensive. It brings attention to HSBC bank and also gives the company a social purpose. The soft drink company,



Pepsi on the other hand, experienced a major backlash. This is why I am going to compare and contrast this advert against the two successful ones, by analysing the design decisions.

Figure 3 + 4 : American model, Kendall Jenner playing the main role in Pepsi's "Jump In" advert. Sourced: 03. 01. 18. Pepsi hopped on the political bandwagon, trying to support the Black lives matter movement. PepsiCo used Kendall Jenner, an American model and television personality as the main character.

It also featured the song "Lions" by Skip Marley. For a starter, they went big in order to try and be controversial and more importantly, noticed, by using celebrities. The advert has a strange art direction, panning through visuals of people opening a can of Pepsi and playing an instrument. It then navigates to a protest that is randomly happening in the street.

Figure 5 : Protest scene in Pepsi's advert, "Jump In" Sourced : 03. 01. 18. Peace and "Join the Conversation" signs are being held by a young looking crowd. We are then taken to a women's room. She is wearing a hijab and looks like a photographer. The camera then pans down into a view of French doors, close to where the protest is being held. This is where Kendall Jenner makes her first appearance in a silver statement dress, with a blonde wig on.

She is posing up against the glass door when she starts to notice the protest to the right of her. (which so happens to be metres away.) The people that were seen playing instruments at the beginning, notice the protest too and overlook whilst drinking a Pepsi. We are then taken back into the

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photographer's room, where she gets aggressive and pushes all of the photographs onto the floor.

She then sees the protest and grabs her camera with excitement. All of the characters seen at the start of the advert, start to collaborate together on the street. A musician from the crowd catches Jenner's attention and lures her into the protest crowd. Jenner rips off her wig, slings it towards the assistant, wipes her lipstick off and runs into the filled street. She walks through the crowd very model like in her now 'casual' outfit which fits with the Pepsi brand colours and approaches the line of police officers. She then passes the police officer a can of Pepsi, taken from a random bucket in the crowd. The photographer takes a photo just as the can is clicked open and the police officer takes a sip.

The crowd goes wild including Kendall Jenner. They all do a power walk forward, with phrases appearing, "LIVE BOLDER", "LIVE LOUDER", and "LIVE FOR NOW." (Youtube, Slakter Pepsis reklamefilm med Kendall Jenner, 2017) After analysing what actually happened throughout the advert, it shows us that Pepsi came up with a narrative around a political notion, but only just scratched its surface, trying to cram in as many ethnicities and cultures. The only thing relating to the brand is the fact they are all drinking Pepsi. Using Jenner as the "peacemaker" of Black Lives Matter movement, it is not surprising why Pepsi had to take the advert down within 24 hours. This was due to such a huge negative social media reaction. Their brand core mission here, unlike Jigsaw and HSBC, was not parallel with the political message they were trying to convey. The product had no link to why we

were watching a celebrity take part in a protest, resulting in no logic for the audience to understand.

BBC News report supports this, “ She was accused of undermining the Black Lives Matter movement. It was criticised for painting a “ privileged, white” model as a peacemaker between civil rights activists and police.” (BBC Entertainment, 02.

11. 17)This shows how on the surface Pepsi was with such a deep and complicated political notion. Design decisions were made but were only aesthetically driven. For example, the use of blue colours on the protest banners, the outfits and a delicately placed Pepsi filled ice bucket in the middle of a ‘ roaring’ crowd. The art direction of this advert was very superficial and this does not bode well for the public eye when dealing with such an emotion-driven political notion. In conclusion to all three examples, it is evident that designed artefacts can be political.

This is done by design decisions, backed by the brand’s core mission and purpose. These include language, the tone of voice, colour, casting, connotations etc. Throughout the points given, it is clear that the alignment of the product and political message has to be parallel in order to achieve a successful result.

Any object, image or advert can be political if they are trying to convey a message to the audience.