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‘How has art refocused consumers’ attention within a visual world  
through the exploration of package design?’

by  
Frances M. Hackney

A thesis submitted to the faculty of the University of Mississippi in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors  
College.

Oxford  
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Dedicated to my family for all of their support in my academic pursuits.  
Special thank you to Professor Emily-Bowen Moore for her help.

## ABSTRACT

The study of art in a modern visual world through the exploration of package design.

The art of design has refocused the attention of consumers as they have entered into a visually demanding world. While this concept is complex and perplexing, stemming from endless influencing factors, the elements of design can be broken down into areas of focus to dissect the visual world of marketing. A simple way to communicate the influence of design on the consumers is to unveil the answers through the study of art.

In this thesis, the study will turn to the world of art to learn more about consumerism. The goal is to understand how visual images and the ongoing influence of art function within a consumer culture based on package design. Lengthy investigation into artists, elements of art and design, and consumerism are used to evaluate products and brands that have withstood the test of time to reveal how art has refocused consumers' attention within the modern visual world.

Findings are based on primary and secondary research. Studies were conducted through surveys, observations, and interviews to gather data on how consumers are influenced and associate elements of art and how those elements can change package design.

It is concluded that package design is the most important factor in selling a product by influencing a consumer's symbolic, semantic, and aesthetic associations. The packaging plays a huge role in modern visual culture, thus the elements that compose it are the direct source of creating an image in the eyes of consumers. Package design has evolved to a form of art and art has evolved to reveal secrets to successful package design in the 21st century visual culture.

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## 1. TERMS

**Art of Marketing:** an approach to marketing that employs principles of art in order to reach a specific target market through their senses

**Art Infusion Effect:** associating art with a brand, package, or product in order to increase its overall perception (Hagtvedt et al.)

**Consumer:** used to refer to both the individuals involved in purchase decisions and those individuals who are part of the ongoing process of visual consumption

**Consumer Behavior:** how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources, such as time and money, on consumption-related items

**Consumerism:** the promotion of the consumer's interest, preoccupation with and an inclination toward the buying of consumer goods ("Definition of Consumerism")

**Gestalt's theory:** a theory of perception, states that the whole is more than the sum of its parts. It describes the human ability to recognize patterns and make associations; group objects that are closer together into larger units, and relate objects into a group based on similar shapes. ("Gestalt Theory in Art").

**Isomorphic Correspondence:** responding to some images very strongly, based on one's experience in the physical world; for example, an image of thanksgiving turkey may stir up emotions of warm, happy, family dinners (Luchins)

**Pop Art:** stylish, colorful, humorous, unsettling; Pop-Art is highly recognizable and visually appealing, any art that depicts images and iconography culture and mass media out of its original context with the goal of holding a mirror up to society which created it ("Art Influences in Design: Pop Art")

**Proximity:** Gestalt's Law of Proximity; spatial or temporal proximity of elements may lead the mind to perceive a collective totality of the objects present

**Sensory Marketing:** engages consumers' senses and alters their behavior

**Serial imagery:** object is repeated over and over again, such as how a product would realistically appear on a shelf

**Visual culture:** the theoretical approach to the interstices of consumption, vision, and culture

**Visual consumption:** begins with the consumer's eyes; involves looking, watching, browsing, etc. through a variety of mediums of images digitally or tangibly

## 2. INTRODUCTION

The art of design has refocused the attention of consumers as they have entered into a visually demanding world. While this concept is complex and perplexing, stemming from endless influencing factors, the elements of design can be broken down into areas of focus to dissect the visual world of marketing. Elements of design such as color, shape, size, proportion, and contrast all play a role in appealing to consumers. However, a simple way to communicate the influence of design on the consumers is to unveil the answers through the study of art.

A term to summarize this suggestion is the 'Art of Marketing'. The art of marketing is an approach to marketing that employs principles of art to reach a specific target market through their senses. The concept of the art of marketing has redefined what a consumer is. A consumer is an individual involved in purchase decisions and who is part of the ongoing process of visual consumption (Schroeder). This is the foundation of consumer-to-brand relationships.

In this thesis, the study will turn to the world of art to learn more about consumerism. The goal is to understand how visual images function within a consumer culture based on package design. I will focus on different artists, elements of art and design, and consumerism by evaluating products and brands that have withstood the test of time to reveal how art has refocused consumers' attention within the modern visual world.

Package design is the most important factor when it comes down to selling

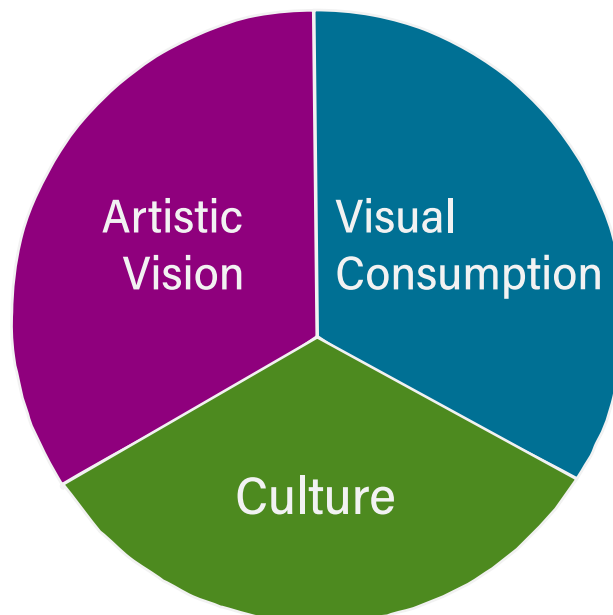


a product by influencing a consumer's purchasing decision. While the basic role of packaging is to keep the product safe and transport products from producer to consumer, today packaging is one of the most effective advertising tools to promote sales. 70% of all brand and purchase decisions are made in-store at the moment of the buying, this removes all outside influences of advertising and solely sells a product based on the package design (Behzad). The packaging is directly correlated with the success or failure of a product in increasingly competitive markets (Mohebbi). The packaging is used as a promotional tool through its design elements; color, logo, design, materials, and shapes. While advertising and marketing do a lot for a brand name and brand awareness, the actual package is the only physical element grabbing consumers' attention in the store at the time of purchase.

The packaging plays a huge role in modern visual culture. A package is a functional object meant to deliver a product from a brand to consumers, but it has evolved to a form of art.

This overlap between the art of marketing and consumerism is often coined as 'visual culture'.

## Visual Culture



Visual culture refers to the theoretical approach to the interstices of consumption, vision, and culture. Contemporary visual consumption involves looking, watching, browsing, etc. through a variety of mediums of images digitally or tangibly. Secondary and primary research will be used along with quantitative and qualitative studies to gather further information on the visual world of package design. Surveys, observation, and interviews will be conducted to gather this primary research to determine how elements of design have created a visual world within marketing.

Art can be applied as a marketing tool to tap into the senses and send a direct message to the consumer. For example, when you choose an art piece to hang in a business, it directly makes a viewer feel a particular way when they walk in that space and contributes to that particular brand image. With package design, art plays an identical role. Art has a constant and continuous influence on the visual culture of the modern world.

Certain elements of design make different brands and products stand out and communicate the brand image, my goal is to dissect this. To do so, different images, colors, shapes, logos, and products are introduced to participants and studied to determine which elements influence the “consumers”. This is an anthropological approach that focuses on influences of culture and society on the individual consumer’s behavior along with (Tian) the art of marketing and sensory marketing. The knowledge gained from the secondary research will be used to gather support on the question being explored, ‘How has art refocused consumers’ attention within a visual world through the exploration of package design?’.

The participants in these studies were interviewed at random, based on who was

willing to sign up. A majority of these participants are between the ages of 19 and 23, both males and females, and from a variety of regions in the United States. All of these participants were interviewed in Oxford, Mississippi at the same location. They were interviewed based on the time they felt they would be able to answer the questions best. This created an environment for participants to be interviewed without negative stressors influencing answers.

Art and Science differ in many ways such as motive, means of execution, production, and intention, however the questions that artists and curators struggle with overlap and attract those of which market researchers focus on. This area of overlap includes a focus on a package's logo, design, color, and shape and the role it plays in visual consumerism. This paper will focus on the area where these two worlds overlap, intending to study how art has refocused consumers' attention within a visual world with an emphasis on package design.

Traditionally, artists and consumers are two distinct groups of people, yet, when competing in the modern world, these two groups have overlapped. Pop Art stems largely from the relationships and remodeling of brands and their associated products which create symbolism within advertising. It can be argued that Pop Art supports and reinforces the consumer society. Pop Art builds the bridge between art and consumer goods, brand names and expression, and advertising and art.

William S. Burroughs II, American writer and visual artist, once said, "I see no reason why the artistic world can't absolutely merge with Madison Avenue. Pop art is a move in that direction. Why can't we have advertisements with beautiful words and beautiful images?", in regards to the merging of art and marketing (qtd. in "Art Influences

in Design: Pop Art”). Think about the number of advertisements that have become framed pieces of art in people’s homes. Marketing design is art.

Pop Art divorces an object from its already understood meaning by altering its size, repetition, and color. The separation in meaning and design elements is what opens up a question to be answered; ‘How has art refocused consumers’ attention within a visual world?’.

Art becomes an integrated part of a product, it somehow has the power to influence consumer perceptions (Hagtvedt et al.).

It is natural to refer back to the analysis of pop art and materialism beginning with Andy Warhol in order to better understand the role of a package. Andy Warhol, accompanied by many other artists who will later be discussed, explored the importance of brand and product communication that is so important within the modern, materialistic world. Instead of Warhol making art for the intention of producing advertisements, he made advertisements into art, providing the answers on how art forms a visual culture within consumerism by analyzing art backward into its original form of advertising.

Andy Warhol mirrored consumerism within society so that society could see themselves directly. He did so by refining the object down to its basic elements so that the focus of consumers was no longer on the mass-produced good, but the science behind the refined elements of the good. Refining a product down to its single elements of color, shape, type, and logo then provide answers as to how these elements communicate to consumers. When an object is taken into focus, it forces consumers to reflect on what it means to you. This forces one to come to terms with that which is in focus, as replicated in my studies.

Warhol famously painted a study on the mass production of an everyday product as it appears on a shelf (Figure 1). A simple can of Campbell's Soup truly contains so much truth in the development of product design.

Figure 1.

[1.1]



[1.2]



[1.3]



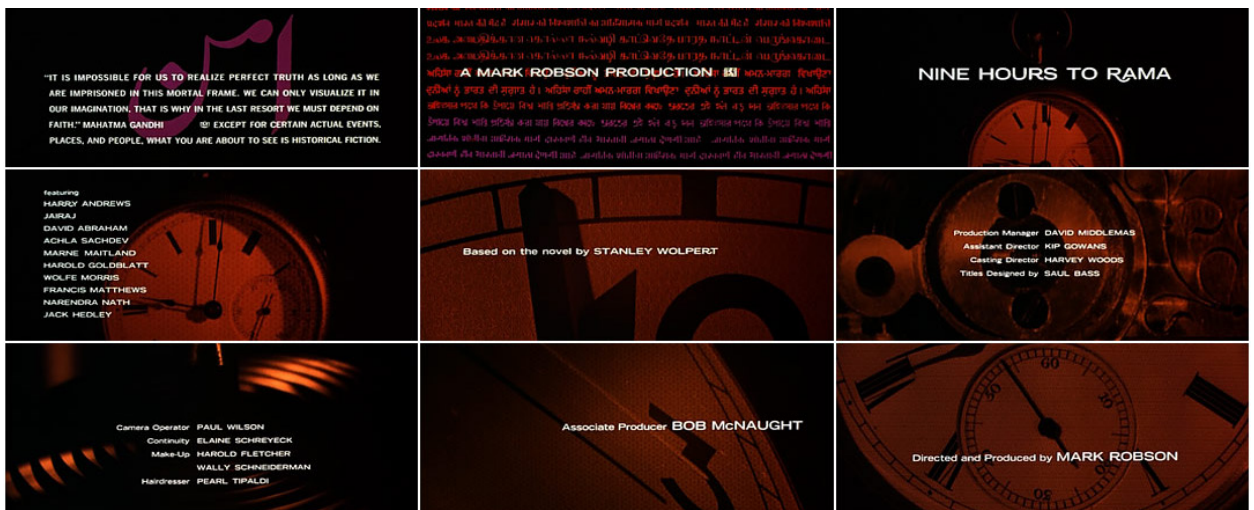
*Campbell's Soup Cans (1962), Andy Warhol*

The images in Figure 1 made such an impact on the art and marketing world because Warhol found a way to relocate a mundane, everyday object, Campbell’s Soup cans, into a focal point of modern society.

Warhol did not create something new, instead, consumers see a packaged product in a new light. He revealed the elements of Campbell’s Soup cans that make the product so successful. Saul Bass, a famous graphic designer, once said that the most challenging part of any creative endeavor “...is to deal with ordinary things, things that we know so well that we’ve ceased to see them; deal with them in way that allows us to understand them a new- in a sense making the ordinary extraordinary” (qtd. in The Academy).

Good design, an often neglected visual tool, begins with ordinary things. It can enhance products, environment, communications, and corporate identity by dealing with the ordinary to recreate them in a new light.

Figure 2.



*Nine of Hours to Rama (1963), Saul Bass.*

Saul Bass created the title sequence for *Nine Hours to Rama* (1963) (Figure 2), with the intention of establishing marketing and strong graphics (Van Rompay et al.). The

title sequence resembles an identical concept to Andy Warhol's Pop Art movement of studying everyday products of mass consumption. Bass explained,

“By taking a clock, that most ordinary of objects, and subjecting it to an unrelenting examination, I hoped to create an intensification of one's awareness of each moment- and of the inexorability of the passage of these moments” (qtd. in *The Academy*).

The design of *Nine Hours to Rama* title sequence is based on the idea of taking a clock, an object overlooked by the visual consuming world, and using it to make consumers think about how a clock is the source of measurement for a particular moment (*The Academy*). Bass created a symbolic meaning of art within the world of marketing in order to draw consumers' interest towards *Nine Hours of Rama*. Bass captured the emotions, themes, and plot of films and translated these elements into thought-provoking works of graphic design, or art.

When observing *Campbell's Soup Cans*, it is important to comprehend that Warhol is taking the place of the machine. He is the producer of these 'products'. Instead of the products being placed on the shelf, he is placing them into the visual culture to be analyzed upon their deeper meanings.

Symbolic meanings reflect properties of a product that are not literally a part of the appearance. Features of product design, with respect to brands, can reflect symbolic brand characteristics that shape a brand's image. Products have developed into an important means of self-expression and brand identity (Crilly et al.).

The ways that symbolic meanings and representations match and mismatch on a product appearance affects the way a brand or product is evaluated. Three important

factors that impact the flow of symbolic meanings are congruence, processing fluency, and impression formation (Crilly et al.). Processing fluency states that stimuli easily processed are perceived in more positive terms (Van Rompay et al.). As a result, fluent elements of art are experienced as more visually pleasing and memorable than non-fluent elements (Crilly et al.).

The development of this thesis is built up as concepts and terms are dissected. Through the process of reviewing existing research, gathering primary research on specific artistic elements of package design, and answering the thesis question in a progressive structure of dissection and exploration, the following goals are accomplished:

1. Organizing existing research from different areas of study will provide the framework for which the significance of art in improving package design can be constructed
2. Theories will be introduced that can guide readers through the significance of art in the world of package design that this paper explains
3. Existing research provides a basis and point of reference to build on and identify missing areas of information
4. Primary research will prove and support my argument



### 3. CONSUMERS

Consumers are an emotionally driven group that makes decisions subconsciously, influenced by feelings and emotions (BBDO, New York City). For reference, *consumer* refers to individuals who are a part of the ongoing process of visual consumption (Crilly et al.). For the remainder of this paper, relate the consumer to the same experience that a viewer of art has, someone who gazes upon a piece of art and has an emotional connection in response to it.

Consumers are similar to tourists in a most simplified form of comprehension, “they are sensation-seekers and collectors of experiences; their relationship to the world is primarily aesthetic; they perceive the world as a food for sensibility- a matrix of possible experiences” (Schroeder). Identity drives these consumers, or “sensation-seekers”, creating patterns and habits that reflect their cultural values. Products are marketed to a specific audience, identified through market research, in order to relate with their personal cultural values and consumer patterns.

The visual consumer behavior theory is an important concept to get familiar with before understanding the image on package design. Representation is a “...central concept within the humanities but not well researched within consumer behavior” (Tian). The visual representation of products is a critical determinant to consumer response, and thus product success (Crilly et al.).

Visual consumption of design is crucial to visual culture,

“Despite our resistance and growing cynicism, we remain to one degree or

another caught in the light of what we see- what we are shown. Images show us a world but not the world [...] When we look at images...what we see is the product of human consciousness, itself part and parcel of culture and history” (Art And The Committed Eye: The Cultural Functions Of Imagery).

Sensory design engages consumers’ senses and alters their behavior. It is used to create subconscious triggers for consumers that create abstract notions of a product without them even understanding that it is happening. Consumers react based on what they see, and what they see in a product is what they are shown. Consumer judgments, in regards to a product, based on visual information are made upon perceived elegance, functionality, and social significance. These judgments relate to the perceived attributes of products and most often center on the satisfaction of consumer wants and desires, more so than their needs (Crilly et al.).

These visual triggers are the most effective way to engage consumers into a brand. Understanding these sensory triggers used on consumers provides an understanding of perception and how it influences consumer behavior. That is what opens up the research to the brand image stimuli that attract or detract consumers from package design.

#### 4. THE IMAGE

A key characteristic of the 21st century is the visual image. The image refers to symbols a brand uses that connects them and their products with consumers. Brands are developed and products are advertised based upon the image. In modern marketing practices, the brand image succeeds in contemporary society, and the product is merely a variable that represents the brand image.

Visual consumption begins with the eyes. The image observed serves as a stimulus that drives cognition, interpretation, and preference (Van Rompay et al.)s. Humans, in general, respond to images very strongly, based on our experience in the physical world, a concept known as isomorphic correspondence (Luchins). Basically, when a consumer comes into contact with a product stimulus, their brain is making connections based on past associations, memories, or tendencies. Art and design taps into this network of associations to connect with visual consumers (Bowen). In a world of mass production, the image distinguishes one brand from another.

In marketing practices, the brand most likely to succeed will be the brand that employs the image as the primary marketing focus. The actual product is merely a secondary variable that represents the image. Consequently, people are no longer buying items based on necessity, they are purchasing a brand image, just as an art viewer purchases a piece based on how it makes them feel. It is crucial for a brand to be able to sell a product to the eye so that the viewer can form a relationship with that brand. (Schroeder).

Communication through design cannot be stressed enough. In general, artists do not have access or influence on their clients, only their work does. Similarly, in general, a

consumer has no previous influence from a package designer. Therefore, the image is the source of communication to a consumer.

#### 4. 1 THE SEMIOTIC APPROACH TO THE IMAGE

The semiotic approach to product design views products as the sign that represents the brand (Crilly et al.). While this is an important approach to marketing and art, for the purpose of this study, I will explore how the package forms the image, which then communicates to the consumer, resulting in a consumer's decision. It is important to understand that the "image" I am referring to is not a physical entity. The image is the connection between the package and the consumer.

Figure 3.

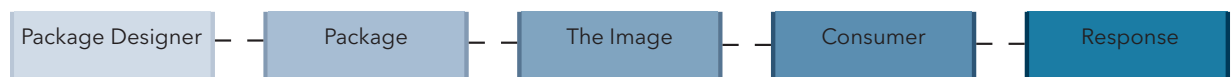


Figure 3 above represents the significance of the image package design, beginning with the package designer and ending with the response. The three center steps in the process are crucial to establishing the emotional connection between designer and consumer, resulting in response behavior.

To dissect the image, I took apart the artistic elements that construct it by isolating color, shape, logos, serial imagery, etc. in the studies further discussed later in this paper.

For the sake of understanding the image in the semiotic approach, imagine a designer who has made a package containing jewelry. The package designer did not design the jewelry, but the case in which the jewelry is transported and sold to a consumer. When a consumer comes in contact with this purple, velvet package, they begin making connections and assumptions about it. These connections and assumptions

form the “image”. For example, based on the Color Block Study, this consumer may form an image of luxury based on symbolic color associations of ‘royalty..high class...[and] expensive...’ (Study: Color Block, Participant 8) . This consumer is creating an image of the jewelry box they feel a connection to, despite that it is their first contact with the jewelry package, this relays the sensory design concept mentioned earlier.

Visual connections made in-store happen without the consumer opening the package. That is the importance of the image in package design. After the image is created, the consumer interprets, and a purchasing decision is made. The purchasing decision is what will be referred to as the result of consumer behavior. While some decisions are more habitual, others more interpretive and complex, but at some point, every consumer endures this process of package semiotics.

#### **4.2 THE IMAGE AS A REPRESENTATION**

Universally, a significant portion of our conscious and unconscious understanding of the self and the world are framed in the image. Advertisements influence consumers to create new ideas for their sense of self, beliefs, individuality, and social status. Similarly, art has influenced the world since the beginning of time, altering views and perceptions. Package design does the same thing (Art and the Committed Eye: The Social Functions of Imagery).

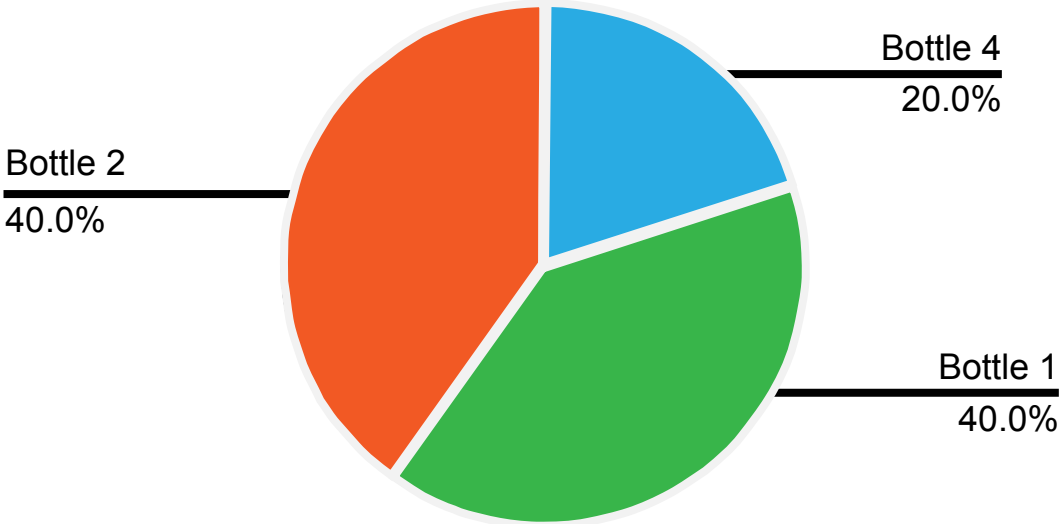
In the Water Bottle Study, four Water Bottles were presented to participants and they were asked a series of questions following. The water bottles were presented with no labels and no product within the bottles, or packages. Participants were asked which water bottle represented higher status, 100% of them had a definite answer, mostly between Bottle 1 and Bottle 2 (Figure 4) (Study: Water Bottle).

Figure 4.



Figure 5.

Which bottle do you associate more with status?



Just as Pop Artists use their work to alter the perception of consumer goods, designers are using water bottles to alter the view of personal status by creating an image that sells. A majority of participants believed that Bottle 1 (40.0% of participants) and Bottle 2 (40.0% of participants) represent an image of higher status (Figure 5). It can be concluded that these participants correlate consumers of these packages with a higher status.

In a museum of art, the Louvre, for example, visitors walk around with a sense of poise, quietness, and sophistication because the pieces of art are of high status and prestige. However, a print of a Monet in an individual's home does not have the same effect because the print is not regarded with the same degree of authenticity. This is parallel to the effect the image of status has on participants in the Water Bottle Study.

The image is created with the intent to alter the way people think, act, and feel (you would be happier with this, this will make you more successful, etc.). It seems to promise future contentment by being satisfied in the present. Nike uses its famous orange swoosh on all of its products and advertising that says to consumers, be fast, be athletic, have what professional athletes have.

Yet, an image cannot fulfill the longevity of future happiness. Instead, it secures a purchase and allows a consumer to keep coming back to fulfill that same sensation. Images show consumers a world but not show the world itself (Schroeder), "Images are not the things shown but are representations thereof: re-representations" (Art and the Committed Eye: The Social Functions of Imagery). Images represent wishes, desires, dreams. They are the product of human consciousness; "...they are constructed for the purpose of performing some function within a given sociocultural matrix" (Art and the

Committed Eye: The Social Functions of Imagery).

To dissect the brand image of 21st-century visual consumption, questions arise in efforts to make sense of it all. How do images communicate with a consumer? How does a consumer understand the image? How does the image circulate in the visual culture? What is the foundation of consumption in the visual culture? Once again, the answer is revealed through the study of art.

### **4.3 The Image Over Necessity**

Andy Warhol employed the image semiotic approach in studying Campbell's Soup cans. He opened up the early exploration of image dissection. The idea that when a single consumer walks down an aisle in a grocery store, one product amongst the countless mass-produced items will grab the consumer's attention for some reason that must be discovered.

Americans no longer want to buy for means of necessity, they want to buy an image. Consumers want to be influenced by something, to become the image itself. In the Water Bottle Study, this is exactly what occurred, people wanted to buy an image for their personal aesthetic pleasure.

While this is not a psychological focused paper, I want to introduce readers to the following viewer responses that are applied to both art and package design. These responses are important to consider when analyzing the studies, but not crucial to the purpose of this paper.

The image creates three kinds of potential cognitive responses in consumers. These are not descriptive words towards a package design, but are descriptive towards the response to the image. They fall under the response segment in Figure 3.



The aesthetic response is a response to beauty, attractiveness, and elegance. The aesthetic response to a package as interested artists and designers for centuries, “As such, Baxter describes the inherent attractiveness of visual form as that most elusive and intangible quality” (Van Rompay et al.).

The symbolic association is the perception of what a product says about its owner or user. This is the personal and/or social significance of a design, whether in art or package design. It is culturally defined. (Van Rompay et al.)

Semantic Interpretation may be defined as what a package is seen to say about the function and qualities that it holds (Crilly et al.). This interpretation is made by usefulness or functionality to the consumer. (Van Rompay et al.)

The affective response is an umbrella term used to establish a product’s emotions, moods, and feelings, the affect. The affective response is geared towards a consumer’s “psychological response to the semiotic content of the product” (Van Rompay et al.). Visual consumption is based on aesthetic impressions, symbolic associations, and semantic interpretations.

Finally, the psychological responses, listed above, created as a result of the package design, leading to the image, influence the consumer behavioral response.

Consumer products and visual communications are complex stimuli comprising multiple visual elements, shape, logo, and color, through which symbolic meanings are communicated (Van Rompay et al.).

It is important to understand the different elements of art and design used to reach different groups. Every individual forms their own image of a package and for themselves, with some similar areas of interest. Therefore, different elements such as

color, shape, contrast, brightness, and placement communicate different messages, attract different people, and form particular images.

## 5. ART IN MARKETING

The Fine Art movement today has been absorbed into the world of design aesthetics. Modern designers are making use of this movement in package design. Paul Rand, one of the most timeless graphic designers once said that,

“Most great art is perceived as something different, existing on a pedestal, not part of one’s day to day experience. On the other hand, most designs (great or otherwise) of printed ephemera, logos, advertisements, brochures, posters, and television commercials are so much a part of everyday experience that eventually it finds itself not on a pedestal but on a rubbish heap” (Rand).

The reason that the product was even purchased in the first place was because of its visual integrity. Design in marketing is no longer irrelevant to brand success, it is the brand success.

A large pool of research exists that studies consumer response. While this is useful, the world of marketing struggles to always make sense of the information because of its “... lack of conceptual framework” (Crilly et al.) that can make sense of the findings. Therefore, this information is difficult to apply to the development of successful, unique package designs. The study of art in relation to package design, specifically, is undernourished, yet it is the missing link between visual consumption of consumers and package design.

Art is an easier way to understand consumer research in a deeper level. I am not proposing that art is more convincing in marketing, I am arguing that art is more

relatable to consumers. As later shown in the Color Block Study (10.1 Color Block Study), Water Bottle Study (7. Water Bottle Study), Logo Study (12.1 Three Logo Study ), and Shampoo Study (5.3 Shampoo Study), each individual has symbolic associations to design elements in relation to package design. Marketing encourages symbolic associations through a variety of design elements; color, shape, logo, repetition, proximity, negative space, etc. Art influences these symbolic associations, therefore allowing art to be the connection between marketing and symbolic associations (Crilly et al).

Marketing ← → Art ← → Symbolic Associations

Marketing associations become highly complicated and hard to produce because consumer's past associations and experiences influence image associations. Therefore, art in marketing can send subtle, yet powerful, messages. These messages tap into the senses to send a distinct message. Therefore, art plays a powerful role in connecting with consumers to create a brand identity and teaches designers a lot about consumers. (Van Rompay et al.).

The design of the *Anatomy of a Murder* (1959) poster by Saul Bass, which has influenced designers for 50 years now, is a rather simple design. It is made from cut-outs of black paper on a colored background to form a human figure. It is a “somewhat ragged version” of Matisse's cut-paper figures. In this comparison of works (Figure 6), it is clearly apparent how the design influence of artists have carried over into creating successful marketing hits (Kuperminc).

Figure 6.

*Anatomy of a Murder* (1959), Saul Bass*The Fall of Icarus* (1941), Henri Matisse

Saul Bass's use of a nearly identical abstraction of a figure to the one in *The Fall of Icarus* by Matisse introduced the graphic design world to another iconic design. When art is infused in the marketing world, it is referred to as the art infusion effect, or associating art with a brand, package, or product in order to increase its overall perception (Hagtvedt et al.). Learning from the design elements of Matisse, Bass was able to infuse a successful image into the *Anatomy of a Murder* poster to create an artistic perception.

When designers apply the art infusion effect to package design, identical results occur; increase in package perception (Hagtvedt et al.). In a survey given out through a social media poll, I was able to collect data on the art infusion effect by comparing the perception of the status of Bottle 1, from the Water Bottle Study, when it is associated with art and not associated with art (Figure 7).

Figure 7.



*Bottle 1 associated with a plain, pink label compared to Bottle 1 associated with Water Lilies (1914-1917) by Claude Monet.*

Both of these bottles are identical in size, product, and color, only the label was altered to infuse or not infuse art with the package. The Art Infusion Survey yielded that out of the 83 participants who voted, 54.2% of voters thought that when Bottle 1 was infused with art that it inherited a higher status (Figure 7, B). Thus, art increases the aesthetic appeal of a package as seen in this survey and supported through the research of Henrik Hagtvedt.

Realistically, not all packaging will appear as a gallery for Monet's work, but the idea is that elements of artworks can be translated to package design to yield the same aesthetic and symbolic results as art.

## 5.1 POP ART AND VISUAL CONSUMPTION

Pop Art is a fine art movement that celebrates the commercial arts. The All-American dream of affluence and abundance that came about in the 50s and 60s became quite appealing to American culture (“Art Influences in Design: Pop Art”). The style takes consumerism and mass marketing “...out of its original context with the goal of holding a mirror up to the society which created it” (“Art Influences in Design: Pop Art”).

Figure 8.



*The use of Pop Art in package design by Pepsi.*

*Examples of Pop Art in Packaging.*

This window of materialism was applied to the marketing world to invite the consumer in and ask them to participate in their product. The product was no longer just a product, but a means of visual consumption.

Pop Art is user-friendly in comparison to other images. When it is used to represent a product on a package that image no longer represents the product but instead creates an association between art, creativity, materialism, and imagination. The bright colors, heavy outlines, and bold imagery are extremely eye-catching and relevant to

popular, present design trends.

Andy Warhol is one of the most famous Pop Artists and Marketing designers, one that has heavily influenced the findings of package design. Warhol started his career as a product marketer which heavily influenced his artistic career (Waller). He glamorized and transformed everyday objects into art.

Figure 9.



*Original Volkswagen logo (1938, Germany)*



*Volkswagen 358 (1985), Andy Warhol; rebranding efforts of the Volkswagen brand image*

Warhol's work is the ideal example of how connecting with consumers represents a perfect balance of image, text, and simplicity. His work was so great that he revamped Volkswagen (*Volkswagen 358*, 1985) (Figure 9) after Hitler adopted it, publically, as his favorite car (Waller).

Warhol acknowledges the commercial nature of American society and urges consumers to continue to buy iconic imagery that will continuously provide them with a new and exciting product. In Warhol's case, the use of art enhanced products,



environment, communication, and brand identity represented in visual culture. (Waller).

Today, art is becoming more relevant to marketing practices. Contemporary Pop Artist Ashley Longshore has become the face of Bloomingdale's. Why? Because they have hired her as the in-house artist for their company. While her work is depicting Bloomingdale's, and seems rather unrelated, having her work represent Bloomingdale's helps resonate with consumers based on personal and cultural associations and implies a status to the store. Longshore's work not only represents herself, but it is seen anywhere as a form of indirect advertising for Bloomingdale's.

As of 2019, design trends have moved towards vibrant color, hand-drawn illustrations, pops of hues, strong typography, and eye-catching work, such as Bloomingdale's has adopted. Thus, Pop Art is becoming more and more relevant and common in the world of package design as design trends have changed. (McCready).

## 6. PACKAGE DESIGN

In a 1986 New York Times article, “Designer Packages That Sell”, author Richard Stevenson describes how the Kraft cheese package was redesigned to improve product identity. Kraft became an equivalent noun for ‘cheese’ at the time. Rising competitors mimicked Kraft package design, increasing competition and the need for an updated package. The author of the article mentioned, “These days war on the shelf is more intense than ever, with products and brand names proliferating at a dizzying pace. That has put a premium on packaging that is easily visible and communicates the brand’s identity and a sales pitch as well” (Stevenson). Determining the intrinsic value of package elements such as a logo, color, shape, material, and overall design are all critical factors in this redesign (Rand). With an increase in logo size, a change of color scheme, and a reorganization of the Kraft package, the product regained its title.

Visual perception is intimately a part of taste and design. Today, “packaging is proved to be one of the significant factors in the success of promoting product sales” (Mohebbi).

Because the basic function of packaging is to keep the product safe and transport the goods. Today, consumers’ perception of a product runs parallel to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs,

“[It] is a...theory in psychology...often depicted as hierarchical levels within a pyramid. Needs lower down in the hierarchy must be satisfied before individuals can attend to needs higher up. From the bottom of the hierarchy upwards, the needs are: physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-

actualization” (Mcleod).

This suggests that when utility, safety, and comfort are met, visual attributes of a product are regarded with higher importance than its tangible properties (Crilly et al.). Today, packaging is used to promote sales.

### **6.1 Packaging Influence**

Packaging exerts an influence on two key factors; brand equity and consumer loyalty. Brand equity is the commercial value that derives from consumer perception of the brand name of a particular product or service, rather than from the particular product itself (Annadi). Consumer loyalty is the result of consistently positive emotional experience, physical attributes based on satisfaction, and perceived value of an experience. (Mohebbi)

Product packaging is important in identity formation (Crilly et al.). A brand does not get to meet a consumer face to face in order to form a relationship. Instead, the package is the initial introduction that forms an impression. Consumer products are “embedded within a context comprising non-visual elements (brand slogans and evaluations)” (Van Rompay et al.). The meanings of products are often determined by factors external to the package.

The major functions of packaging are to protect, contain, communicate information, promote the product, and enhance the relationship between brands and consumers (Mohebbi). One key role of packaging is to foster product sales. Designers are creating an image that sells, not a package. This thesis focuses on enhancing the relationship between brands and consumers to foster sales through visual elements of package design; graphics, color, size, and shape.

Cohesiveness is key in successful packages-to-consumer communication. Think of a stop sign that was switched to green, but still displayed the command ‘Stop’ (Figure 10).

Figure 10.



People probably would not stop as often in response to the green sign. Despite the text in Figure 10 reading ‘Stop’, visual consumers’ understand the sign as ‘Go’. The same concept goes for a men’s body soap that was designed with pinks and rounded shapes (Figure 11). These alterations would cause confusion to a consumer because the understood societal associations would no longer make symbolic sense because the intended product message is unclear (Tian). Basically, a package must maintain cohesive colors, shapes, and visual cues in order to communicate to create positive processing fluency with consumers.

Figure 11.



*Dove Men+ Care packaging features dark, masculine colors, typography, and package shape.*



*Dove Pink/Rosa soap for women that features light, feminine colors of pink and white. The typography is light in weight and the package shape is long and lean.*

Between the male and females interviewed in the study, their color preference evidently differed in their personal preference of color (Study: Color Block). The males tend to be more attracted to muted or darker color palettes, such as blues, navy, dark green, whites, blacks, and grays. Whereas females have more variation. Therefore, Dove targets their soap products to two different target markets, simply by changing the colors of their package, as well as other elements, such as typography, gradient, etc. Historically, males are categorized with a darker color attraction and females are stereotyped with brighter color schemes.

When a package's visual elements are used effectively, it positions products, and their companies, at a vantage point in a highly competitive marketplace by increasing the likelihood of consumer purchase. Simply put, a consumer's decision to choose a brand is

based on package aesthetics. (Mohebbi). By understanding consumers, brands can feed their products into the hands of consumers.

## **6.2 Package Shape**

A package is the most influencing factor in a purchasing decision when its form is in congruence with the remainder of its elements (Mazhar et al.). According to Paul Rand, “Everything possesses the form of some kind, good or bad, pleasing or not...there is no such thing as formlessness” (Rand). Form, package design shape, and content are an interactive relationship, mutually dependent on one another. Form manipulates its content as in a way to intensify, obscure, or even change its meaning. (Rand)

In general, as discussed in Chapter 12.1 Three Logo Study, sharp and angular is perceived as potent and masculine, whereas rounded and curved forms are perceived as feminine, due to human figure associations. The same idea is employed in the three-dimensional perception of packaging. Content can not hide behind the form, instead, the form has the power, when designed well, to dictate the interpretation of the content.

## **6.3 SHAMPOO STUDY**

As discussed in 6.2 Package Shape, the form has a strong communicative role in content, so the Shampoo Study removes the content to dissect the importance of form.

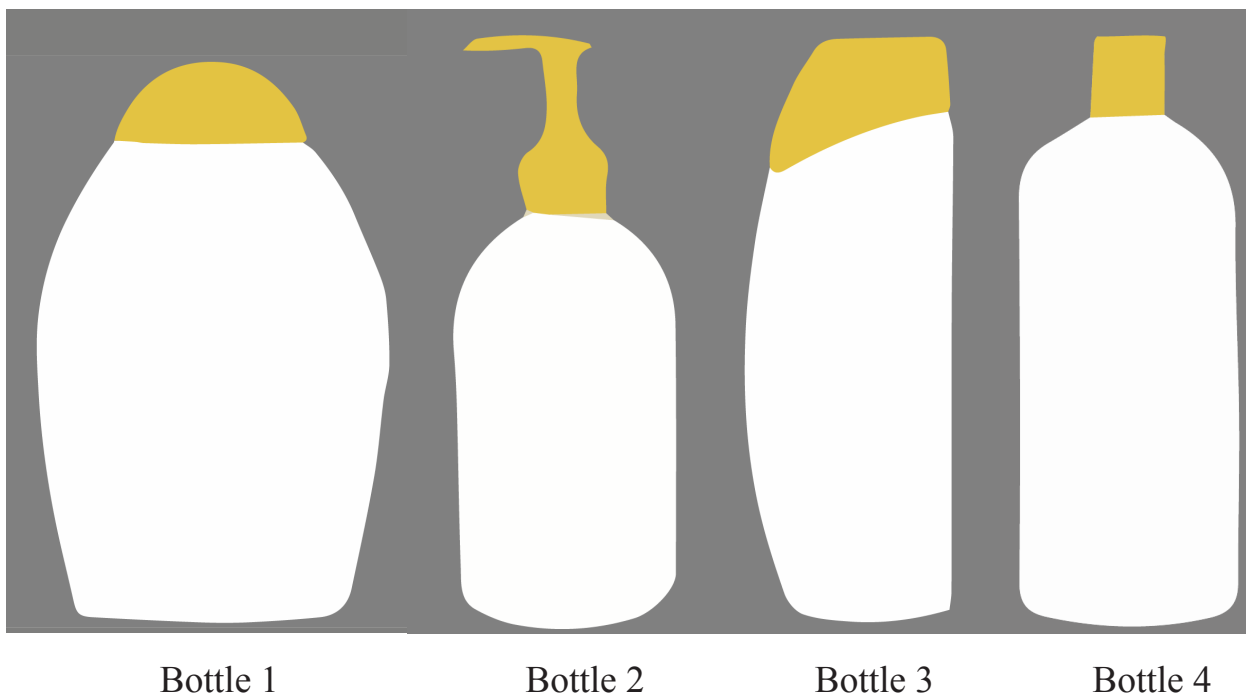
The purpose of the Shampoo Study is to isolate a specific product category in order to understand the role a package’s shape plays in consumer behavior. This includes how they associate past shapes, what the shapes symbolize, and how they personally relate to a package shape. Consumers were asked questions that led them to describe each bottle based on the package’s physical appearance. These questions revealed symbolic associations, semantic interpretations, and aesthetic responses as a result of the four

shampoo bottles shown to them in order to determine what role shape plays in package design.

Remember, packaging plays three important roles in marketing; communication of information, promotion, and enhancing consumer to brand interaction. A majority of participants had never analyzed the impact shape has on shampoo in relation to package design. Many of them were surprised to discover that they really did have strong opinions regarding which package they prefer and why they prefer it, expressing isomorphic correspondence (Luchins).

The four bottles that were introduced to study participants are shown in Figure 12 as they appeared to the participants.

Figure 12.



All four of the bottle shapes resemble existing bottle packages. Therefore, participants found these shapes were familiar to them based on the individual participant's past relations with the bottle shapes. Nine out of the fifteen participants in this study had personal associations with the presented bottle packages, such as associating the shape of the package with a particular brand or a past memory of that influences their feelings towards the bottle. For example, Participant 6 associated Bottle 2 with "my sister always had it and it always fell and annoyed me" (Study: Shampoo Packaging, Participant 6).

Bottle 2 stood out as the most appealing to the majority of participants because of the pump feature. These participants felt that the pump stood out as a unique feature between all of the bottles, as it was the only one that featured it. This is a semantic interpretation. Consumers are defining a package by what it is seen to say about the functional qualities. This interpretation is dictated by usefulness to the consumer.

Therefore, this study proves that people purchase based on associations and features that stand out as a unique user experience.



## 7. WATER BOTTLE STUDY

Form manipulates the content in which displays. Most of a consumer's purchasing decision occurs at the shelf. Even if shopping with specific products in mind, package design exerts such a strong influence on consumer's decision making, that 70% of all brand decisions by consumers are made at the moment of purchase in-store (Mohebbi).

The Water Bottle Study evaluates why decision purchases are made the moment of purchase based on package shape and also how these shapes influence future interactions with a product. The bottles were chosen based on a variety of different shapes and aesthetic appeal, not based on variation in price. Figure 4 below shows the shapes of the bottles used, labels and fluid were removed from the bottles.

Figure 4.



Bottle 1

Bottle 2

Bottle 3

Bottle 4

The participants were asked to label each bottle with one adjective beginning with Bottle 1 through Bottle 4. Participant 8 described these bottles as “sharp”, “elegant”, “basic”, and “convenient”. Bottle 2 was the most appealing water bottle to Participant 8 and associated with status perception. Participant 8 claimed that all the other bottles are more functional for everyday activity, but thought Bottle 2 was more visibly appealing. However, this participant was not willing to pay for the more appealing package shape. This participant used symbolic association and aesthetic response in establishing this decision.

When evaluating a product, appearance is the attraction and price is a contributor to the decision making process. Because Participant 8 consistently chose to find a cheaper alternative to the bottle he found the most attractive, it is conclusive that he most likely thought that Bottle 2 was the most attractive and he could see it representing a sense of higher, “elegant” status, yet he was not willing to pay more to obtain this status for himself. Consumers evaluate themselves and people based on their product associations.

Figure [4. 4]



Bottle 4

Participant 8 described Bottle 4 as “convenient”. After completing the Water Bottle Study, it is conclusive that because this participant is not concerned with paying for a high-status package, they tend to buy based on functionality within an acceptable, personal price range. Participant 8 thought Bottle 4 was the most functional for everyday activity, the best for work or class, the best to carry to the gym, and the best to purchase an entire case of. This participant associated this bottle as the most functional because of its convenient, semantic qualities.

A second participant I want to point out is Participant 6. This participant described each bottle, beginning with Bottle 1 and ending with Bottle 4; “trying too hard”, “subtle, just grabbing a water for an everyday person”, “person who needs water but doesn’t like it so gets whatever”, and “reminds me of my mom, we used to get this as our fun thing”. After describing each bottle, Participant 6 said that Bottle 4 was the most appealing package. The reason this package is the most appealing shape is because of this participant’s personal association with it. In addition, Participant 6 would most likely take Bottle 4 to the gym, an everyday activity, and purchase a whole case of this package. Of all four of the bottles presented, Bottle 4 was the only one that brought up a personal association, backing up her description that this “reminds me of my mom, we used to get this as our fun thing” (Study: Water Bottle, Participant 6).

Based on the results in entirety, when Participant 6 walks into a store, to purchase a water bottle for the day, this individual is not looking to purchase a bottle that proves status (Bottle 1 would do that), but knows enough to not purchase a bottle that is at or below the average Bottle 3, one that targets a “person who needs water but doesn’t like it so gets whatever”. Participant 6 wants a bottle that can serve a functional role in

daily activities. Bottle 4 has a vantage point in appealing to Participant 6 because this participant symbolically associates the shape with a past memory. This attachment and the desire for functionality is so meaningful that Participant 6 is willing to pay more for this bottle, even if it were the most expensive bottle on the shelf.

While package shapes are crucial in establishing a relationship with a consumer, it is also vital in maintaining the consumer relationship through time. Artistic attributes are vital in maintaining that relationship.

### **7. 1 WATER BOTTLE STUDY: Symbolic Associations to Status**

In the Water Bottle Study, Participant 4 described Bottle 1 as “creative” and additionally associated it with a higher status. This brings up the art infusion effect again, as initially introduced in Chapter 5. Art in Marketing (Hagtvedt et al.). This effect states that packages associated with art, or artistic effects, bring higher status to the product. Therefore because this participant is identifying this bottle as being more creative, they are associating it with a higher sense of status.

Figure [4.3]



**Bottle 3**

Meanwhile, Participant 4 said that Bottle 3 was “average”, which led the participant to state that if all the bottles were to contain an identical product of equal quality, such as if each bottle had the exact same liquid from the same source, that Bottle 3 would be the only package that seemed to be worth less than the value of the water. Because this bottle seems “average”, it has less artistic appeal and therefore is valued at a lower cost with less status.

When each participant was asked “Based on the packaging appearance, do you believe the quality of the packaging resonates the quality of the product within it?,” the only bottle that was stated to not resonate with the quality of the product was Bottle 3. In translation, if all these bottles were seen as options in a store, Bottle 3 would communicate to consumers that its water was of a lower quality than its competing brands.

Bottle 3 was conclusively the least appealing bottle overall. It was described with adjectives such as “voluminous”, “ugly”, “grippy”, “average”, “odd”, “I don’t like it”, “basic”, “spunky”, “Dollar Store”, “gremlin”, etc. For the majority, this bottle received highly negative feedback in regard to its packaging appearance. This created a direct correlation with the low status and perceived low quality of the bottle.

As seen below, when asked “Which bottle shape is the most appealing to you?” (Figure 13), only 6.7% of the 15 participants answered that Bottle 3 was the most appealing bottle. When asked “Which package is associated more with status?”, 0% of participants answered that Bottle 3 was associated more with status (Figure 14).

Instead, Bottle 2 (40.0%) was highly associated with status, along with Bottle 1 (40.0%), as shown in Figure 14. Yet, only 13.3% of participants found Bottle 2 to be

the most appealing and 20% of participants found Bottle 1 the most appealing, while 60% said that Bottle 4 was the most appealing. Therefore, it is safe to assume that the packages that convey status are set for a smaller, niche group of consumers who are looking for a bottle that conveys status. The remainder of consumers recognizes that this product associates with status, but want their main priority in a bottle that is sleek or cool but is more functional for their tasks, such as Bottle 4. This creates another category of consumers to design for. (Study: Water Bottle)

Figure 13.

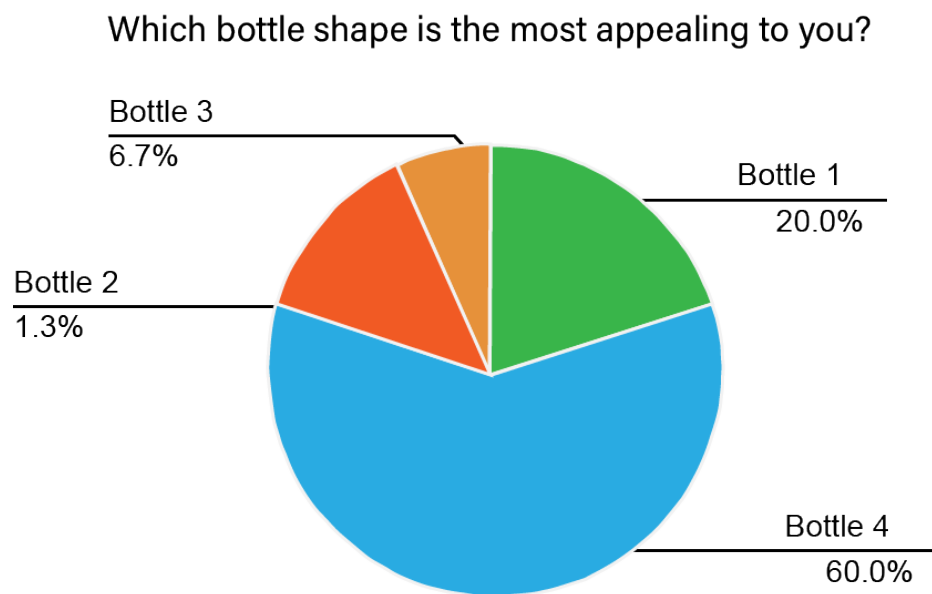
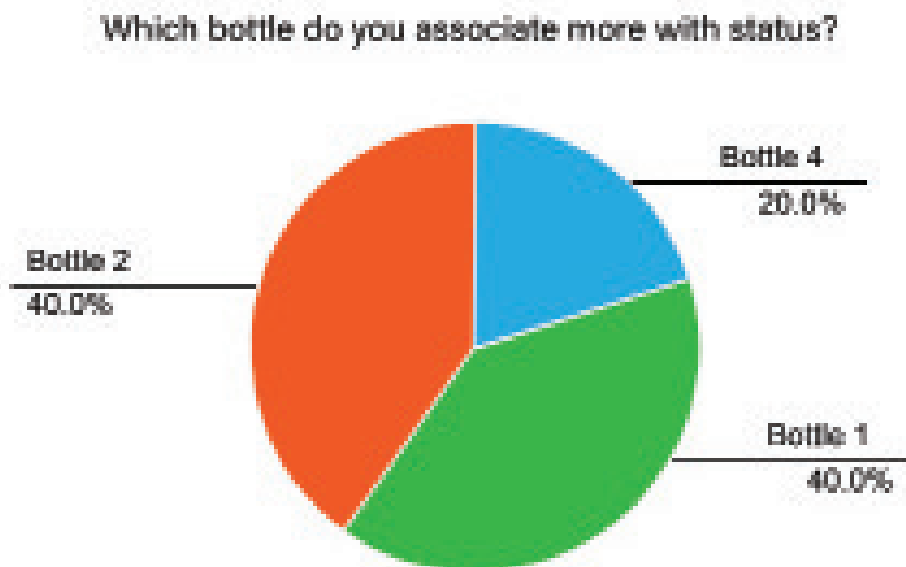


Figure 14.



Bottle 4 was described as “sleek”, “basic” “clean”, “efficient”, “slim” “classic”, “convenient”, “Starbucks”, and “useful” (Study: Water Bottle). These are examples of how consumers use this bottle. While it is probably not the most expensive bottle on the shelf it is similar to Starbucks, described with elements in a minimal modernist style, and highly functional. Think of the number of consumers who choose to carry around a Starbucks cup (Figure 15) over a McCafe cup (Figure 16).

Figure 15.



*Package design of a Starbucks cup served nationally. This package has a significantly more modern design, intended to represent the amount the consumer paid for it.*

Figure 16.



*Package design of McCafe cups served nationally throughout the country. This package feels out of date and less likely to be an object of state, more so an object of convenience.*

The price difference in a small latte between a Starbucks and a McCafe cup is close to \$.60. While this price difference may not seem like a significant amount Starbucks and McDonald’s are marketing to two different target markets, one who cares about the experience and status and the other one who just wants a fast, convenient cup of coffee. The same goes for these water bottles.

Packages are a means of identity and image. When a consumer chooses to consume Starbucks, they see it as a way to show who they are, what they spend, and where they spend time. It is not really about the coffee in this scenario, it is about

the status, the self-expressive, and categorical symbolism (Crilly et al.). Objects consumed reflect and contribute to identity, which Thomas J. L. van Rompay reinforced, “Possessions may impose their identities on us...we regard possessions as parts of ourselves”. Symbolic association is broken down into self-expressive symbolism and categorical symbolism. Self-expressive symbolism, associated with packages, allows the expression of unique personality qualities. Categorical symbolism, in relation to packages, allows the expression of group membership, social position, and status (Crilly et al.).

As discussed earlier, with the rise of consumerism necessities are no longer the primary focus. Judgments of packages are made on visual elements such as “...elegance, functionality, and social significance. These judgments relate to the perceived attributes of products” and revolve on the satisfaction of consumer wants and desires, not needs. (Crilly et al.). Water is a necessary element of survival to every consumer, yet through the development of consumerism, and proved this study, appearances are more important than tangible properties of a package. Consumers are not just buying a product, they are buying value “in the form of entertainment, experience, and identity.” (Crilly et al.). Consumers want to find an image in a necessity.



## 8. LA CROIX STUDY

In the La Croix Study, participants viewed the six La Croix cans under the impression that it was a mock shelf of a familiar product that is, arguably, a staple to this decade. The participants were shown Figure 17, but on a larger scale, and asked a series of questions in response. The purpose of this study is to dissect the impact that serial imagery has on consumer behavior and what design elements affect participants' responses in relation to their responses in the other studies and their interaction with inverse similarity.

Figure 17.



Can 1



Can 2



Can 3



Can 4



Can 5



Can 6

When LaCroix is analyzed through serial imagery, it is a masterpiece of serial consumption. The serial imagery creates a piece of art on the shelf that allows it to stand out to consumers.

La Croix falls under the category of water, more specifically sparkling water, and more specifically canned sparkling water. While the can separates La Croix from non-canned sparkling waters by material and shape, the artistic features are what distinguish La Croix from its closest competitors.

The kaleidoscope design certainly stands out amongst otherwise minimal sparkling seltzer packages. La Croix rebranded its design in 2002. LaCroix's parent company, National Beverage, disliked the splashy, kaleidoscope look, however, consumer research revealed that consumers loved the neon masterpiece. Now, La Croix is at the top of the seltzer space, partly because of the unique design ("35 Awesome Packaging Designs").

The overall thought of packages repeated over and over again on a shelf is too often ignored. While the individual package plays a huge role in perception, status, associations, and loyalty, the initial encounter with that package begins on the shelf, pre-sale, or pre-revenue to the brand, the ultimate goal of a brand is to sell products.

To understand the importance of serial imagery in visual consumption, I will unveil it through art. Serial imagery is a concept seen in Andy Warhol's work and other pop artists. An object is repeated over and over again, as it would realistically appear on a shelf. When objects are displayed across a shelf, it is harder for the eye to establish its own focal point, or package that grabs its attention amongst competing brands, if a package does not stand out amongst those around it.

Figure 18.



*Andy Warhol and Campbell's  
Soup shelf in the grocery  
store.*

Figure 19.



*Campbell's Soup on the soup can aisle and how it  
compares to other products serial imagery.*

In Figure 18, Andy Warhol is on the soup aisle scanning the cans he found so intriguing. No matter the flavor of the soup, the cans appear in uniformity. The bottom halves of the cans make a white stripe and the top halves of the cans make a red stripe. While serial imagery has an effect on the perception of a singular can, on a larger scale, serial imagery creates a pattern across the shelf. Notice how strong of an effect this has on the eyes. The cans surrounding Campbell's section on the shelves seem to not even exist in the foreground, thus creating a strong visual interest from the consumers.

In the La Croix Study, six different La Croix cans appear in alignment similar to how they would appear on a shelf (Figure 17). The color of the logo is the only element changing on each can. Andy Warhol started to alter color in his serial imagery "...to create a semblance of variety within a framework of sameness, as in assorted flavors of the same products" (Danacioglu). The comparisons of Figure 19 and Figure 22 represent this concept.

Figure 17.



*La Croix (Serial Imagery) Study*

Figure 20.



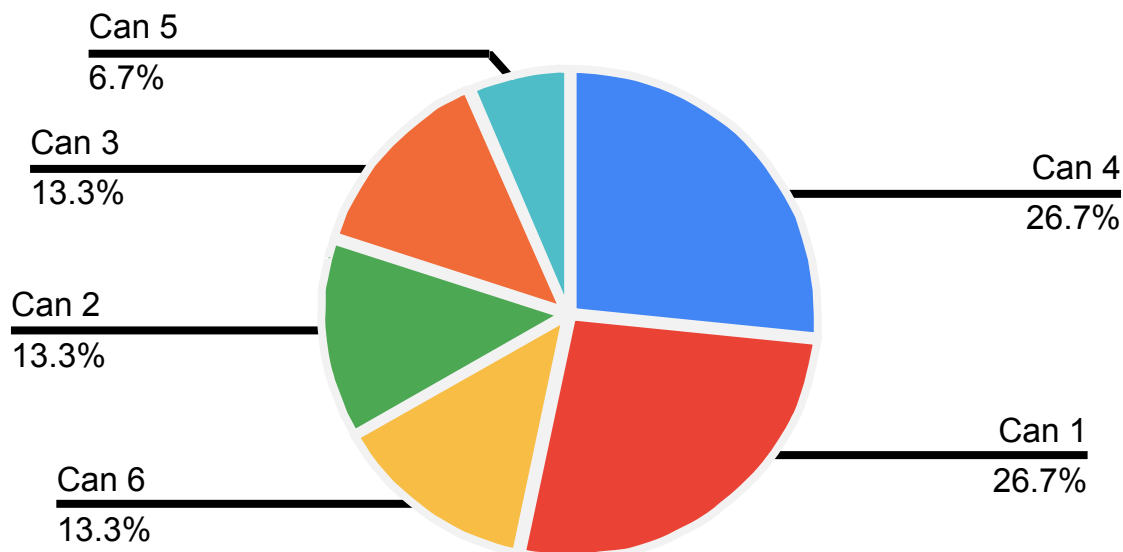
*Marilyn Monroe (1967), Andy Warhol*

Figure 20, *Marilyn Monroe*, and, Figure 17, La Croix (Serial Imagery) Study, demonstrate how showing the same figure over and over again with a change in color creates an inverse similarity effect. The idea of inverse similarity in the La Croix Study explores how there is little room for variation between packages of a specific product, yet the variation is crucial. The technique of serial imagery used in Figure 20 is more dramatically used than the inverse similarity scale in Figure 19. Yet, in Figure 17, the variance in color helps consumers distinguish between the different flavors of the La Croix sparkling water.

In the interview process of the La Croix Study, participants were asked to express which can grab their attention first. Figure 21 represents the results of the participant's initial attraction to the cans shown.

Figure 21.

If these cans were presented on a shelf, all containing the same flavor of La Croix sparkling water, which package do you find the most attractive and appealing to the your appetite and senses?





Can 4, the navy blue label, and Can 1, the magenta logo, hold the largest percentages (26.7%) of participants who were initially attracted to it. Cans 1, 2, 3, and 6 all have warmer tones in their logo. Overall, more participants were attracted to cans with a warm tented logo (66.6%) than a cool tented logo (33.4%), such as Can 4 and Can 5. Warm colors tend to stand out more than cooler colors, which fall to the background. While the percentages were spread out amongst Cans 1, 2, 3, and 6 based on color preferences, overall, the warm tones stood out more based on initial attraction.

Can 4 was also attention-grabbing because of its strong contrast. In total, 26.7% of participants (Figure 21) found themselves attracted to Can 4 upon introduction to the shelf because it has the most contrasted. Figure 22 below reveals the strength of Can 4 when converted to a grayscale.

Figure 22.



Can 1



Can 2



Can 3



Can 4



Can 5



Can 6

Hence, Can 4 was most likely chosen due to its contrast, not color preference. Participants did not verbally express the contrast of Can 4 originally, instead, they justified their can selection based on color (aesthetic appeal) or symbolic association with sparkling water. This response proves that consumers do not always recognize the motive of attraction to an element of design. In this case, the contrast was unrecognized by participants in the color version, but effectual in grabbing their attention.

Participant 5 chose Can 6 to be the most attractive to their senses and appetite, "...because it is the brightest and how the colors contrast...but thinking on other cans [in the market] there are already a lot of blue and white." Can 6 is significantly more muted than its surrounding cans, which would normally cause a can to fade out of consumer vision. In the Color Block Study, this participant declared white to be a color most drawn to, that muted palettes are more attractive than vibrant, and their home is predominately muted colors. This fact reveals Participant 5's attraction to a fairly neutral and low contrast can amongst surrounding colorful cans. Personal color coordinations, such as Participant 5's with Can 6, make up nearly 93.3% of La Croix package preferences when shown on the mock shelf.

Lastly, 42.9% of the participants said that Can 4, the navy logo, best represents the "pure", non-flavored, version of La Croix. Correspondingly, 46.7% of the participants felt that blue had a connection with water (Study: Color Block). Conclusively, the association of blue with water affects consumers' perception of serial imagery.

Serial imagery is strongly affected by color contrast, symbolic associations of color, and inverse similarity. It is an important factor in the success of a product sold on store shelves, dictating what a consumer will choose to purchase.

## **9. OBSERVATIONS: Serial Imagery**

When a consumer is browsing an aisle's shelves for a product, they are scanning items based on packaging. The moment of first encounter between a consumer and a package is the introduction point. For example, if a consumer is shopping for wine. That consumer will scan the store to find the kind of wine they want, then move to that section to browse for the exact package they want. Wine is a good example because it comes in so many package designs and has so many package variations at different price points. The consumer hits the introduction point and familiarizes themselves with the products and then moves to the comparison point where they compare packages to purchase. At the decision point, consumers compare specific features that appeal most strongly to them to make a purchasing decision.

On the other side of the consumer scale is the habitual consumer, or the consumer who has a predetermined idea of what they want to purchase, such as a water. A habitual consumer has an idea of the kind of water they want to consume so that when they walk into a store they show no attention to the remaining bottle options and therefore do not make any associations with those bottles. Instead, this consumer is fixated on finding the one bottle familiar to them, that they trust, and connect with confidence.



## 10. COLOR IN DESIGN

Color is a purposeful tool used in art that affects viewers' sensations, desires, and symbolic associations. Color evokes a consumer to draw on memories and experiences in the visual consumption process to create life in a package.

The color of packaging plays a huge factor in package impact and effectiveness by triggering different moods and signaling different functions (Rand). In fact, 62-90% of a person's assessments and evaluations of a visual stimuli are based on color (Mohebbi). Branco Chocolate packaging (Figure 23) shows striking similarities to *La Perruche Et La Sirene* (Figure 24) by Henri Matisse, who mastered the life of color in his cut-paper art.

Figure 23.



*Branco Chocolate Bar Packaging*

Figure 24.



*La Perruche Et La Sirene (1952), Henri Matisse*

The shapes and colors of Figure 23 and Figure 24 are nearly identical. The similarities in color and color proximity between the two figures evoke similar feelings of the joyous life of childhood. Color has dramatic effects on thoughts, feelings, and

behaviors of a consumer. The three main functions of packaging color are voluntary and involuntary attention, aesthetics, and communication through symbolism (Role of Graphics and Color).

Color evokes many reactions and emotions not obtained through other elements of design (Behzad). Georgia O’Keeffe, “the Mother of American Modernism” (Smith), once said, “I found I could say things with color...that I couldn’t say any other way... things I had no words for” (qtd. in Smith). In O’Keeffe’s work, she struggled to find meaning in her forms without color, because, to her, color translated the significance of an object she was painting to her viewer. Color evolves a designer’s work into a form of symbolism and life.

Many aspects influence the interpretation of colors. Factors such as cultural background, age, gender, geographic location, interests, personal experience, and exposures all play a role in how individuals associate with particular colors. As stated in the Logo Study (Chapter 12.1 Three Logo Study), the shape comes before color. Therefore, a color must work with shape in order to properly function in the visual world.

It is difficult to prove that a particular color creates a universal reaction through the visual world, yet, it can be studied to gather useful insight. In Henri Matisse’s speech from 1907, he confirmed his inspiration for his spontaneous use of color was based on his understanding, “My choice of colours does not rest on any scientific theory; it is based on observation, on sensitivity, on felt experience” (qtd. in Ktos). The research gathered in the Color Block Study is not based on a complex scientific formula, similar to Matisse’s expression, instead, it is based on consumer understanding and emotional associations (Ktos).

Consumers interact with color in package design by choosing products that resonate with personal associations. Color is too dependent on personal associations to create a unanimous consensus for the visual world, but broader messaging patterns appear.

So how does color association occur in the minds of a consumer?

In this competitive visual culture that fills the shelves with endless options, color differentiates brands amongst the competition. Picture a cereal aisle with two blue cereal boxes standing next to one another. Consumers will struggle to immediately register these packages as two different brands. However, a blue box next to an orange box will distinguish two brands in a clearer manner. Colors play a crucial role in distinguishing brands and creating smooth processing fluency to establish brand relationships, thus inducting brand loyalty.

### **10.1 COLOR BLOCK STUDY: Broad Messaging Patterns**

The Color Block Study began with an introduction to a series of selected colors. The Color Block study investigates the correlations visual consumers have with colors and how the correlations affect the ways the visual consumers interpret products with a given color. A series of six blocks of color, shown in Figure 25 below, were presented to each participant in their interview followed by a series of questions. During the study, the color blocks were not labeled by color name, the participants were to interpret the color based on their own visual understanding.

Figure 25.



The Color Block Study dissects the association each participant has with the six particular colors used in the study in relation to their past experiences, internal and external influences, and personal associations. The findings are important in further understanding the other studies. The findings lead to a grasp of the importance of color in the art of marketing in the 21st-century visual culture.

Based on the research findings, trends, and conclusions, consumer reliance on color becomes apparent. Color is a complex stimulus to study as it dives into the science of psychology. Yet, this study focuses on proven data from participant interviews, not psychological data calculated. This method is just as effective in collecting information on the artistic importance of color.

Color reveals strong insight into the connection of color to consumers. Participants became increasingly frustrated in trying to connect color with a description or memory. They did not realize, prior to this study, how often their brain associates color

with a description or memory. Participants had similar and varying answers describing the color blocks presented, and different reasons as to how they made these associations.

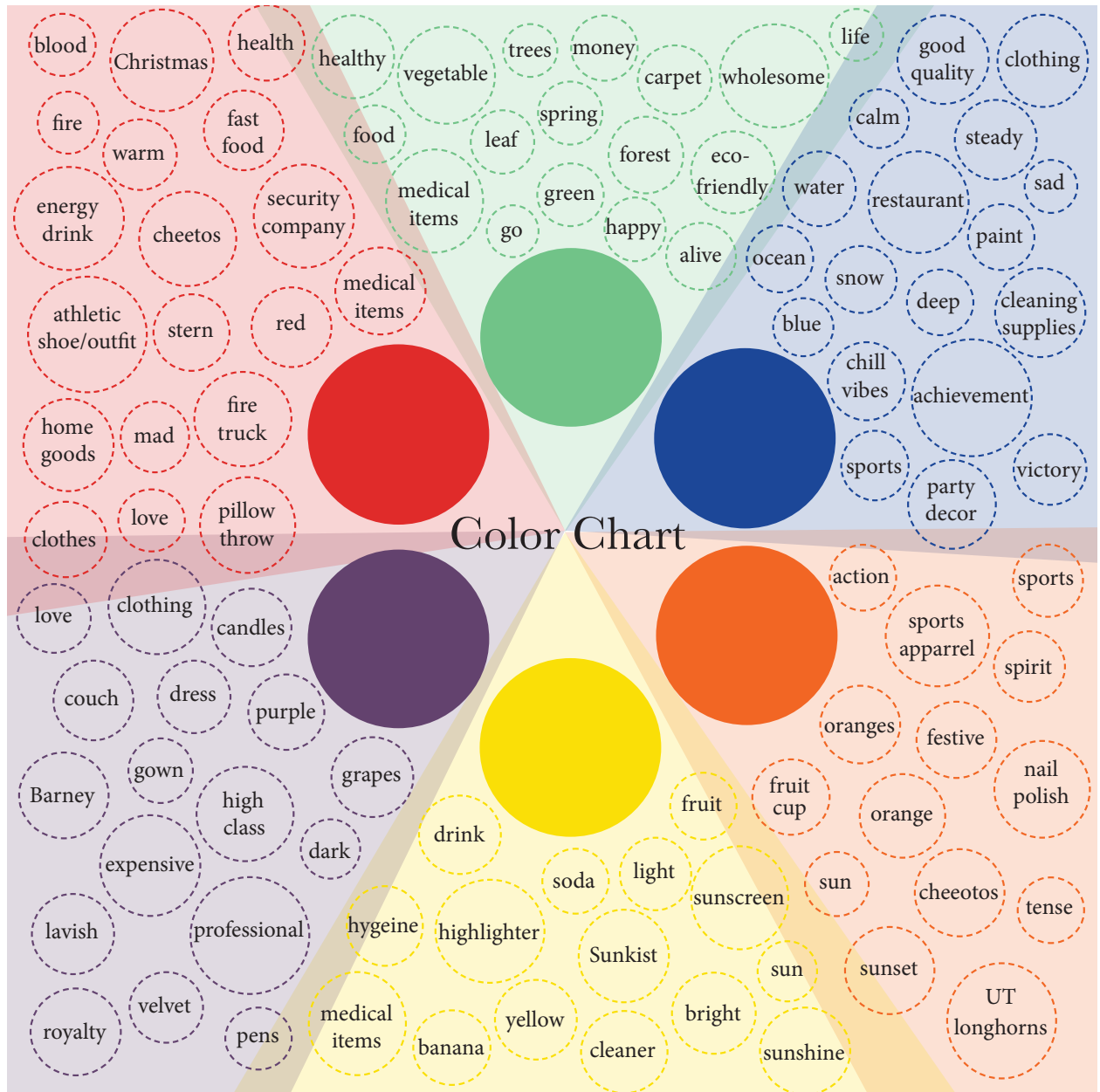
For example, when shown the green block, Participant 1 associated it with a “leaf” and “vegetable products”. Participant 2 associated the green block with “go” and “carpet”. Participant 8 describes the green block as “alive” and associated it with a “wholesome product like a protein bar” (Study: Color Block). These associations are learned connections from interacting with the visual culture. The visual culture teaches consumers to associate green as a soothing, harmonious, natural color in both the natural and design world.

The adjectives were recorded for each participant as they were shown the color blocks, as with the above participants. This data was placed into a Color Chart (Figure 26) to categorize participants’ associations and descriptions of each color block presented in the interviews. The Color Chart provides an easy visual to recognize similarities in associations amongst participants.

Reading through the descriptive words in The Color Chart (Figure 26), categorized by color, it becomes evident how consumers perceive colors as an individual, but more importantly as a society. For example, looking at the orange block category you can see words such as “action”, “tense”, “festive”, “sports”, “spirit”, and “sun”. (Study: Color Block)

To further expand on the participants’ color associations, Figure 27 displays examples of well-known logos that are predominantly one color. Each logo’s color and shape are important in communicating its brand identity. This communication is due to the fact that color changes the way the logo is perceived and understood as a brand image.

Figure 26.



*The above chart represents the six different colors of the six blocks used in the Color Block Study. The words and objects used to describe each given block is displayed in the appropriate section based on the color itself and its relationship or similarity to the color next to it.*

Figure 27.



The above chart represents the six different blocks used in the Color Block Study. The logos are displayed based on the predominant color of the logo/brand. This chart parallels the format of the Color Chart in Figure 25 to compare the descriptive words of the color blocks to the logos.

In Figure 27, the orange category displays brands such as Nickelodeon, Sunkist, Reese's, Gatorade, Tostitos, and Nike. All of these brands have a connection with the descriptive words for the orange block in Figure 28; action, tense, sun, spirit, and sports. If these brands were to adopt a new color, the brand image would also change. For example, if Reese's logo changed to green instead of orange it would look similar to Figure 28, and communicate a different message.

Figure 28.



*This is a representation of what Reese's would look like if the package were not orange and yellow, but green. Referring to the graphs below you can analyze the effects the color shift has on Reese's brand image.*

The Reese's product would no longer be perceived with the qualities associated with orange; spirited and festive. Instead, it would most likely cause confusion amongst consumers because, based on the package appearance, they would read Reese's product based on green associations; "eco-friendly", "all-natural", "healthy", and "wholesome" (Study: Color Block). Not many packaged chocolates and candies are represented by a green packaging for a reason. The green creates a turbulent processing fluency contradicting a brand image with its visual elements. Color carries an essential purpose in establishing visual associations in the modern marketing world.

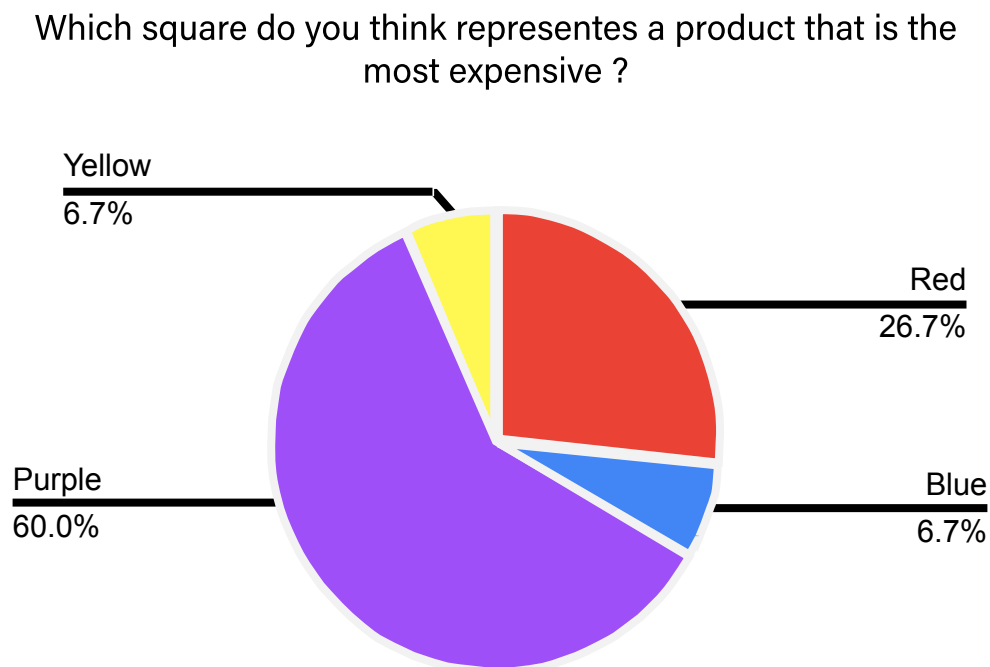


## 10.2 COLOR BLOCK STUDY: Broad Messaging Associations with Price

Colors also have broad messaging associations with the price. Because consumers have effortless associations of what colors communicate from prior exposure to the visual world, they also have developed associations with a price. This concept is similar to how consumers associate elements of design with either a higher or lower sense of status.

Of the six color blocks in the Color Block Study, 60% of the fifteen participants chose purple as representing a package the most expensive and 26.7% of the participants chose the red block as representing a package the most expensive, shown in Figure 31.

Figure 29.



Interestingly, the participants who said that purple represented a product that was the most expensive described purple as “long gown, something royal, professional” (Participant 6), “clothing” (Participant 13), “royalty” (Participant 4), “anything lavish”

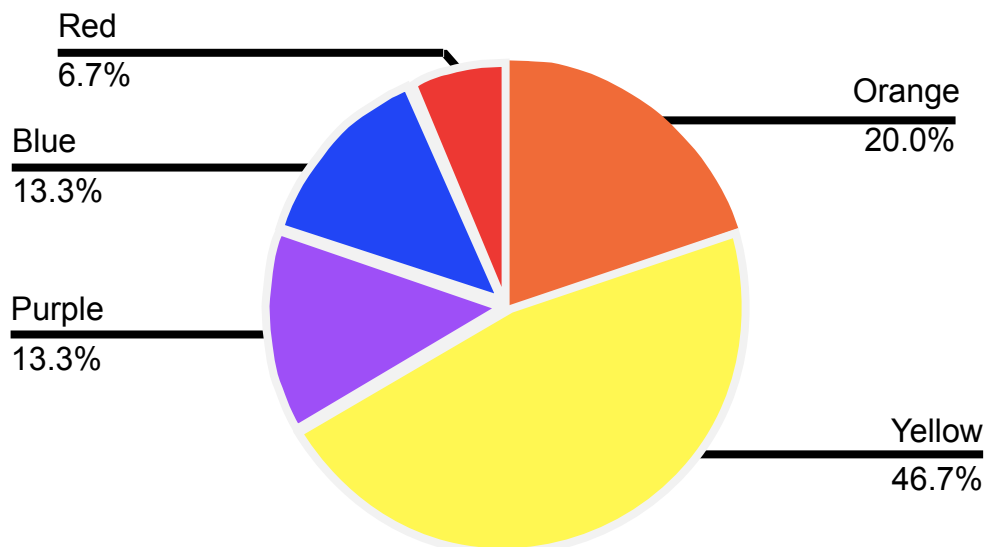
(Participant 5), “high class, expensive watch” (Participant 8), “velvet” (Participant 11), to name a few examples. These consumers associated the purple block with these descriptions prior to labeling the purple as the most expensive (Study: Color Block).

Figure 29 shows the data proving that yellow is most often associated with a lower price point (Study: Color Block). Looking at Figure 29, you can see that 46.7% of the fifteen participants indicated that yellow represents a package that would be the least expensive out of the 6 colors options given.

The yellow block descriptions in Figure 28 consist of light and accessible objects, such as the “sun”, “food”, “fruit”, “drinks”. You can see how yellow as a color represents broad messaging associations with “clean”, “bright”, “sun”, “soda”, “drink”, “hygienic”. This trend is seen in Participant 10’s interview. Participant 10 labeled yellow with “sun” and “banana”. This participant also thought yellow was the most convenient color and the least expensive of the six color blocks (Study: Color Block). Correspondingly, Participant 11 also said that the yellow block was the most convenient and the least expensive.

Figure 30.

Which square do you think represents a product that is the least expensive ?



Participant 11 described yellow as “sun” and “drink”.

Three of the seven participants who said yellow represented a package the least expensive, also said that yellow represented convenience. Whereas, participants who thought orange represented a product the least expensive (20.0%), did not find it to be the most convenient (0% of participants deemed orange the most convenient).

Yellow is very energetic, which is emotionally and metabolically stimulating, and attention-grabbing (The Color Psychology of Yellow). The fast-food industry has adopted yellow for this reason, they represent a place that is quick and convenient. However, 0% of participants find yellow to be trustworthy (Study: Color Block).

Think of McDonald’s brand image, what they are known for. Children love it, it is the home of the “Happy Meal”. Consistency from brand personality, to brand message, to brand package all play a role in influencing a consumer to buy a particular product for a particular reason. In this example, yellow influences consumers to find a quick piece of happiness and brightness in their day at a cheap price point. A yellow package, for example, may grab attention quicker than a blue package, for example, but it is most likely the cheaper product on the shelf and has a shorter consumer attention span because of its visual aggression (The Color Psychology of Yellow).

Consumers’ brains store information associated with a color and use it in visual decision-making processes. If you refer back to Figure 27, you can associate each color of the logo categories with both their adjectives in Figure 26 and their price perception in Figure 29 and Figure 30 (Study: Color Block section).

### **10.3 COLOR BLOCK STUDY: Personal Color Associations**

The Color Block Study not only reveals insight into broader messaging

associations but how personal associations also govern a consumer's decision-making process in regards to a package. While colors can be universally understood, most interaction with color is based on symbolic, or personal, associations (Color Psychology: Does It Affect How You Feel?). Personal associations heavily dictate consumer buying behavior and how one interacts in the presence of a particular color. The Color Block Study reveals an abundance of correlations between personal connections and interaction with the six different colors presented.

In the Color Block Study, Participant 6 described the green square as "my mom" and associated the color green with a "sweater" (Study: Color Block). These responses indicate that Participant 6 understands green based on personal connections, individually unique. Participant 6 later answered that she most closely relates to the green square of all six squares shown, and is most drawn to shades of green. These responses indicate that Participant 6 has a deep personal association with the color green, therefore this participant has a symbolic association with the color causing them to interpret green differently than another consumer.

When asked which color resonates with a past memory that is meaningful, Participant 6 said "blue and orange remind me of my home and parents" (Study: Color Block, Participant 6). This participant also said that she decorates her home with shades of blue and orange like her mother's house and that blue is one of the colors she finds most trustworthy. Clearly, blue is a trustworthy color to Participant 6 because it is emotionally familiar. Meanwhile, orange reminds Participant 6 her father. Conclusively, Participant 6's consumer behavior is heavily influenced by personal association.

Furthermore, 33% of the participants said that the same color that resonated

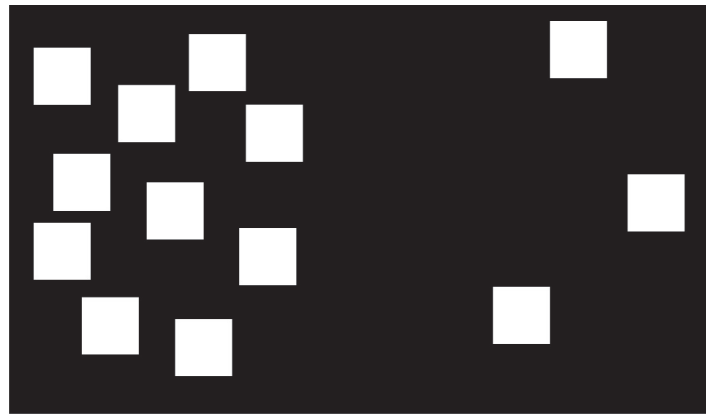
with a past memory also is the color they most closely relate to. Therefore, many color associations are shared amongst a large number of consumers, but for many consumers, colors are judged based on an endless number of personal experiences (Study: Color Block).

## 11. PROXIMITY

People tend to group things together based on similarity. Relation, association, link, bond, correlation, interrelation, etc. are all terms sparked through the similarity and relationships of artistic elements; shape, color, alignment, angle, size, value, and color.

When a group of items has a similar appearance, then the brain focuses on the differences in these appearances in order to distinguish them (see Figure 31). This is one of Gestalt's theories known as proximity. (Bowen)

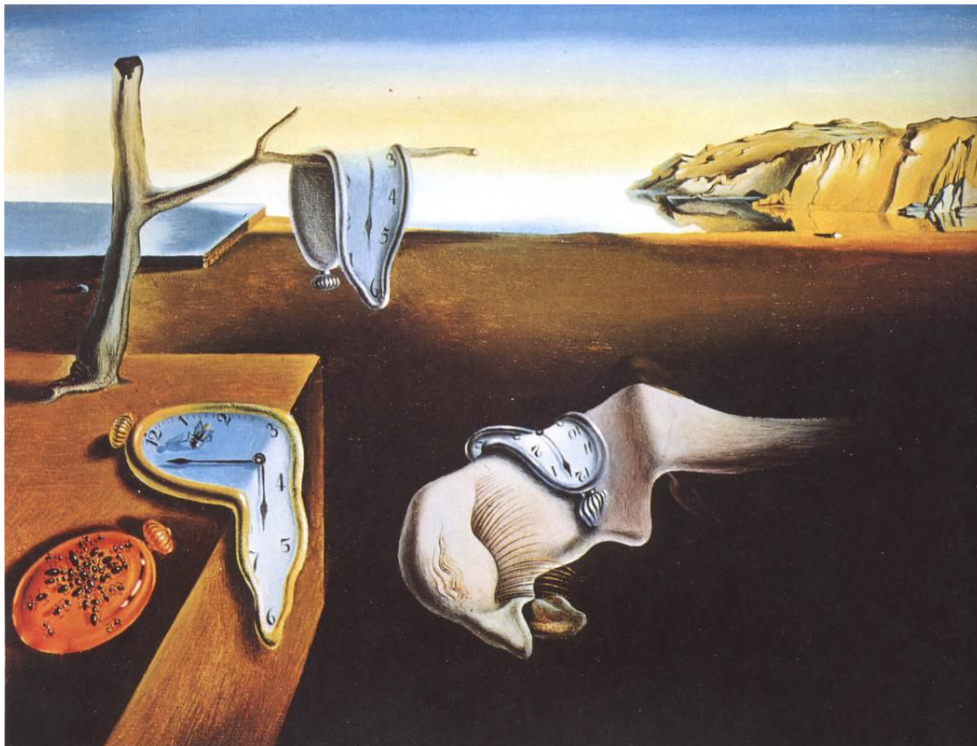
Figure 31.



*In this figure Gestalt's theory of Proximity is being shown. The squares on the left side of this gray square that are closer together are understood as being related to one another, whereas the squares on the right right side of the square that are further apart from other squares are seen as individual units.*

Objects close in relation to one another are understood to be related. Similarly, objects are perceived as related when they follow the same path. These relationships between objects are known as proximity. In any element of design, the arrangement of objects affects how the object is understood. If you look at the work of Salvador Dali (Figure 32), you can see that the different objects are all independent, however, because they are placed at a particular distance from one another, the brain analyzes them with the impression that they share a relationship. This painting displays four clocks that are not their original shape, not the same color, and not the same size as one another. The clocks are also placed in the front of the painting, the mountain in the back. The physical distance between the mountain and clocks represents literal space in the landscape and also the separation of time and distance between the two objects metaphorically. (Schneider)

Figure 32.



*The Persistence of Memory (1931), Salvador Dalí.*

*The Persistence of Memory* by Salvador Dali (Figure 32) is a great example of how objects placed in proximity to one another, form a relationship. In package design, proximity is important in developing a fluent communication path between a package and consumer. The placement of colors, repetition, and product/brand information are important considerations. In the development of a logo, proximity is vital. The placement of objects sets the viewer's visual path, creating emotions, or even meaningful impressions.

In the Grayscale Block Study, a few of participants' responses indicated that participants associated a shown block with surrounding objects based on similarity, or its relation to an object around it. In reply to 'What is the first word that comes to mind when you see each square?', Participant 3 said, "your shirt because it is the same shade" (Study: Grayscale Block, Participant 3), in response to Block 3. This statement concludes that objects can be associated based on proximity and similarity of color as well. Block 3 was seen as related to my gray sweater, though it was completely unrelated to the study. The relationship objects have with one another based on their placement is crucial to a successful piece of art or package design, allowing for clear visual communication.



## **12. LOGO IN DESIGN**

The logo is a very effective element in communicating a brand image to a consumer through a package. To create a credible logo, the design of the message requires symbolism of the source represented (Haig).

The logo at its core communicates basic business, it is a trademark image that identifies elements of a brand. When you add artistic elements of design to a logo, then the logo becomes a messenger to consumers, delivering the brand image through a symbol. This is done by thinking of the logo as a non-verbal, purely visual expression. Credible logo design requires a good artist to symbolize the company's business (Haig). Visual elements, such as the logo, are perceived in terms of their formal properties but also in terms of their symbolism (Van Rompay et al.).

### **12. 1 THREE LOGO STUDY**

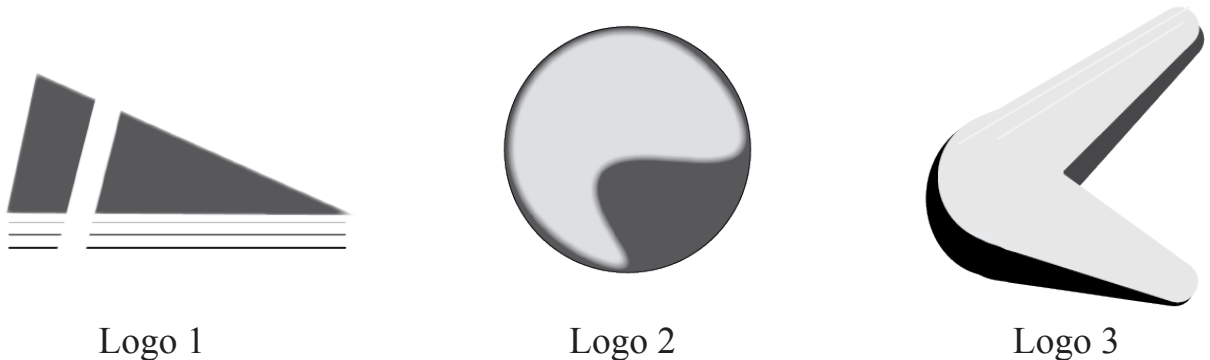
The Three Logo Study was conducted in order to better understand, from a consumer's perspective, how a logo can communicate a brand image and create symbolism. Three logos that I designed on a grayscale were shown to consumers, similar to how the Color Block Study was conducted. Each participant was asked a series of questions in regard to the logos.

The logos were designed without color to isolate the function of the shapes, symbolism, and overall design. The three logos are shown below in Figure 33. Logo 1 was designed to be more angular, masculine, and dynamic. Logo 2 was designed to be subtle, harmonious, and feminine. Lastly, Logo 3 was designed as a combination of the

two extremes of angularity and roundness (Van Rompay).

When shown Logo 1, the most common words used to describe it were “striped”, “sharp”, and “triangle” (Study: Three Logo). Participants expressed that this logo was intended to communicate that the brand wanted to show they are “moving forward”, “cool”, “clean”, and “organized”, along with other similar indications seen in the study results. Most people associated Logo 1 with “shoes”, “sports”, “athletics”, or “fitness brands”, in fact, 60% of the participants connected this logo to an item related to movement (Study: Three Logo).

Figure 33.

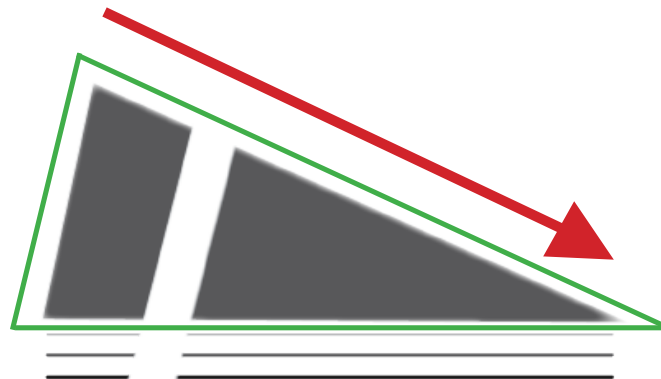


Logo 1 has a unique aspect of design that affects its interpretation by consumers. A consumer reads the diagonal relationship of the lines from left to right, first, then, the gradient of lines below the triangular shape. A lot of movement is taking place, thus communicating dynamic traits. When a consumer views this logo, the eyes register the movement, then the brain makes past associations with movement and connects movement to a product of fitness or athletics, as a majority of participants in the Three Logo Study suggested. Figure 34, below, represents the path the eye takes when Logo 1 is observed, and how the brain groups the lines and shapes present based on Gestalt’s theory

of proximity (Bowen).

Logo 1 is not actually a traditional triangle. It consists of lines and shapes to compose the overall logo. I discovered that the eyes start at the top left peak of the logo and follow the line's movement downwards to the right point, despite the white gap in the triangle. As discussed in Chapter 11. Proximity, people perceive separate objects as related if the objects follow the same visual path. This concept be coined as momentum, an eye tends to keep moving in the same direction until signaled to changed directions (Bowen).

Figure 34.



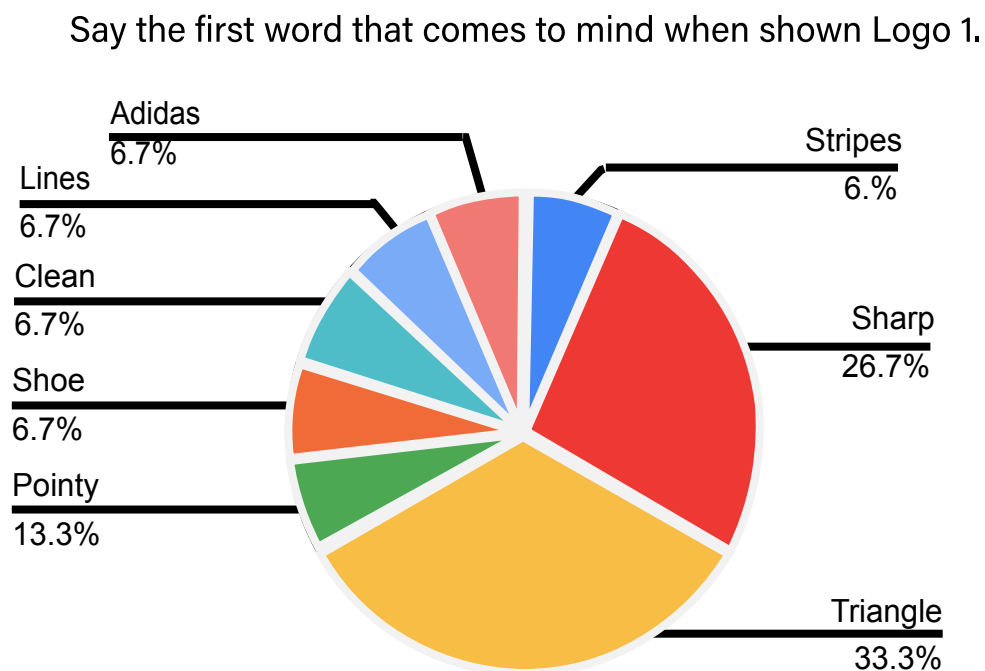
*Simulation of how the eye, in communication with the brain, moves along a path to analyze a shape based on proximity, hierarchy, and similarity.*

When creating logos for a package, momentum is an important concept to keep in mind when communicating with consumers. An eye will follow a line or a curve when it is presented. This represents Gestalt's closure theory, or when the mind perceptually completes familiar shapes when incomplete (Bowen), such as with this triangle. Closure further enhances the dynamic interests of a group of objects. The brain uses Gestalt's theory to not only see individual items but items as one whole. The object

is communicated as one because the objects presented are following the same paths (Bowen).

Referring to Figure 35, you can see that a total of 33.33% of participants said the first word that came to their mind when shown Logo 1 was “triangle”, the shape revealed through proximity. 13.4% of the fifteen participants were able to connect the shape to an existing shape, “shoe” and “Adidas”. Additionally, 46.8% of the participants associated the first word that came to their mind in response to Logo 1 with its unique attributes such as “sharp”, “pointy”, “stripes”, and “lines”. This reveals that 46.73% of the participants made an immediate connection to the overall shape, while 46.8% of participants made an immediate recognition of the attributes of the intended triangular shape.

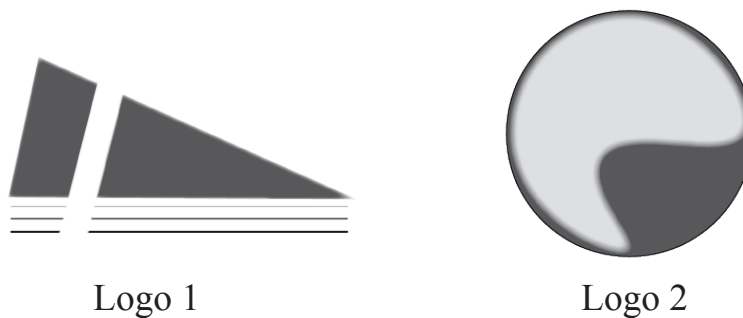
Figure 35.



Logo 1 communicates movement because, on a perceptual level, angular shapes introduce confrontation between a stimulus and its surroundings, leading to a harsher appearance. In contrast, rounded shapes present harmonious energy to the viewer because a clash between the stimulus and its surroundings is non-existent (Van Rompay). This concept is shown in Figure 33 comparing Logo 1 and Logo 2.

Logo 2 represents the concept of congruence. It is highly successful in communicating a brand image to consumers because nearly all of the participants interpreted a similar theme. Participants congruently thought that Logo 2 symbolizes that it is “comforting and goes with the flow” (Study: Three Logo, Participant 2). The congruence of Logo 2 sparked nearly identical responses through participants in this study.

Figure 33.



63.4% of the fifteen participants first associated Logo 2 with a round/circular notation, 20.1% first associated Logo 2 with smooth/fluid qualities, and 20.1% first associated Logo 2 with peaceful associations. Participant 1 and Participant 5, said Logo 2 resembled yin and yang, a brand that offers a lot to consumers, and represents emerging equality (Study: Three Logo). Circles tend to communicate trust and community in logos because it establishes a focal point in and of itself (Feldsays).

Wassily Kandinsky, a famous German artist, painted *Concentric Circles* (Figure 36) to study the importance of both color and the circle. The circles and squares are visually contradicting, creating a lot of emotion in this piece. The circle is inviting to visual consumers because it resists the distraction of vision, it is the most perfect of geometric shapes. All of its points are identical to one another creating singularity. Meanwhile, the square has four geometric points which create a distraction (Feldsays). Therefore, a circle creates its own focal point and does not allow your imagination to be guided in different directions.

Figure 36.



*Color Study: Squares with Concentric Circles (1913), Wassily Kandinsky*

The same visual tension that is seen in Concentric Circles between the sharp angles of squares and the circular objects is seen between Logo 1 and Logo 2. Logo 1 draws a visual consumer through it with momentum, whereas Logo 2 forms a soothing message that draws a consumer into it. The formation of shape plays a strong role in communication between the designer and the visual consumer in both art and marketing (Feldsays). Figure 37 outlines the different perceptions of Logo 1 and Logo 2 according to the responses given in response to ‘If you were to describe the physical appearance of this logo, which two adjectives would you use to describe it?’ (Study: Three Logo).

Thus, one can clearly identify the importance of selecting a shape in design. A circle shape compared to an angular shape yields strikingly contrasting perceptions of a logo, which contributes to the brand image.

However, many shapes combine elements of angles and curves. Logo 3 was designed as a combination between Logo 1 and Logo 2, intended to appeal to both the geometric distractions of angles and round fluency of circular shapes.

As a result, Logo 1 and Logo 3 are the most likely to grab consumers’ attention first (Figure 38). This attraction is linked to the fact that the angular features are most distracting and visually attention-grabbing.

Figure 35.



Logo 3

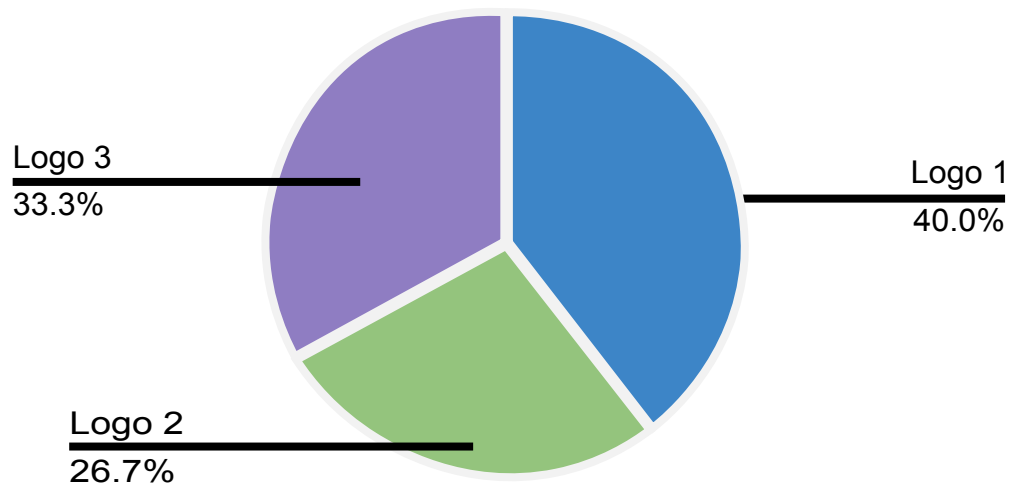
Figure 37.

<i>'If you were to describe the physical appearance of this logo which two adjectives would you use to describe it?'</i>		
Participant	Logo 1	Logo 2
1	sharp, concise	circular, fluid
2	clean, aggressive	artsy, creative
3	dark, thin	pac-man, light, curvy
4	triangular, sharp	circular, colorful if not black and white
5	triangular, sharp	round, marble, embryo
6	graphic, sharp, distinct	abstract, circular
7	sharp, confusing	sleek, calming
8	sharp, sleek	flowy, round
9	pointy, geometric	simple, round
10	pointy, focused	biomorphic, light
11	modern, organized	confusing, weirdly shaped
12	fun, exciting	boring, bland
13	jagged, linear	smooth, round
14	pointy	interesting
15	outdated, boring	calm, slow



Figure 38.

When shown these three logos at once, which logo grabs your attention first?



However, the descriptions of Logo 3 show an evident combination of both Logo 1 and Logo 2. When you add Logo 3's descriptions into the table of Figure 39 the overlap between the logos can be seen.

Overall, I found consumers to form three distinct brand images for each of the logos. Participants believe Logo 1 represents a brand that is 'concise' and 'cutting edge', Logo 2 represents a brand that is 'comforting' and 'sustainable', and Logo 3 represents a brand that is 'edgy' and 'open' (Study: Three Logo). Evidently, there are many individual and personal interpretations, but also broad areas of overlapping perspectives.

The shape is a crucial element in logo design as seen through art and the Three Logo Study.

Figure 39.

<i>'If you were to describe the physical appearance of this logo which two adjectives would you use to describe it?'</i>			
Participant	Logo 1	Logo 2	Logo 3
1	sharp, concise	circular, fluid	differing, unique
2	clean, aggressive	artsy, creative	different, creative
3	dark, thin	pac-man, light, curvy	chompy, nike-esque
4	triangular, sharp	circular, colorful if not black and white	depth, roundness
5	triangular, sharp	round, marble, embryo	interesting because three points that are rounded
6	graphic, sharp, distinct	abstract, circular	morph of other two logos, baby
7	sharp, confusing	sleek, calming	fun, contrast
8	sharp, sleek	flowy, round	futuristic, electric
9	pointy, geometric	simple, round	deceiving, busy
10	pointy, focused	biomorphic, light	fun, hands of a clock
11	modern, organized	confusing, weirdly shaped	creative, rounded
12	fun, exciting	boring, bland	smooth, ascetric
13	jagged, linear	smooth, round	triangular, pointed
14	pointy	interesting	different
15	outdated, boring	calm, slow	has no color but colorful, fast

## 12.2 INTERPRETING A LOGO

The first two things a consumer notices when looking at a product logo are shape and color. Color must be in congruence with what a shape symbolizes. Both of these factors create an overall interpretation of a logo.

In 1978, Saul Bass created the original Girl Scout logo, which has been redesigned since (Bigman). Saul Bass included important elements of design in this logo that has been around for nearly 42 years, with slight modifications.

As stated, Saul Bass, like Andy Warhol, focused on making the ordinary extraordinary. In the Girl Scouts logo (Figure 40), concepts and shapes are used that have existed for so long as fundamental practices for artists and designers (Bigman). Yet, when a consumer sees these elements in a new way, they become extraordinary to the eye.

Saul Bass took ordinary design elements, such as proximity, repetition, color, and shape to represent the Girl Scouts brand values and mission. Girl Scouts minimalistic logo speaks powerfully to the importance of color and shape.

The three female profiles repeated in a descending fashion strongly reach women and their call to be self-confident in themselves and serving those around them. The profiles are nestled in a group of three leaves that symbolize the three parts of the Girl Scout promise.

Figure 40.



*The original Girl Scouts' logo by Saul Bass, 1978.*

Because the three figures are placed in a certain pattern and proximity, the hairstyle seen on the first female appears on all three of the females, though it is really only one shape, because of the way that the eye groups objects seen in relation to one another. (Van Rompay et al.)

The rounded shapes of the logo communicate a feminine and welcoming feel, “rounded shapes present no clash between stimulus and surroundings” (Van Rompay et al.). As stated earlier in the Logo 2 analysis of the Three Logo Study, the circular points eliminate distraction and invite consumers in.

Furthermore, the green contributes to the symbolic associations. Through the Color Block Study, green represents emotions such as wholesome, natural, happy, healthy, nature, life, etc, which once again reflect the brand of Girl Scouts.

The eye and the brain work to associate all of these elements of art and design in order to make sense of the object present. Associations and impressions are made within seconds of coming into contact with a visual image. On average, it took participants one to four seconds to create a response to questions asked in these studies. This process exists in both art and package design in order to communicate a message to the visual consumers.

The structural relations between visual-spatial elements and symbolic meanings create a positively perceived brand identity for Girl Scouts (Van Rompay et al.). This logo by Saul Bass is an excellent example of how congruence in design can lead to positive brand evaluation (Van Rompay).

## 12. GRAYSCALE BLOCK STUDY

Color plays a pivotal role in consumers' decision making-process. When color is removed or converted to grayscale, the color associations are lost in the mind of the consumers because their brains are not reading the values in the same manner. In the Grayscale Block Study, the same colors used in The Color Block Study were converted to a grayscale (Figure 41) and the study was conducted in an identical fashion; the same wording and the same questions were used.

The shift from color to grayscale created a significant change in the participant's answers. While the color associations were somewhat difficult for consumers to form, the lack of color proved a dramatic decrease in their ability to form associations of any sort.

Figure 41.



Participant 5 answered the questions in the Color Block Study quite fluidly, making associations with each block of color presented. However, when this participant was introduced to the Grayscale Block Study, they no longer could make correlations with adjectives or products for each block presented. 41.67% of Participant 5's answers were 'No Correlation' in the Grayscale Block Study. This decrease in correlation suggests that grayscale packaging is less likely to form personal connections with consumers and will not create a lasting brand relationship with consumers.

In the Color Block Study Participant 6 was using words such as 'healthy', 'mad', 'royalty', 'happy', 'action', 'achievement' to describe the 6 blocks of color. Shifting to the Grayscale Block Study Participant 6's descriptions became a monotype array of words; 'low printer ink', 'winter time', 'cold', 'No Correlation', 'dusk', and 'off white'. Items that lack color have a narrower scope of descriptive opportunities. It is evident that a direct relationship exists between a loss of color and a loss of association.

It is important to notice the increase in 'No Correlation' as a response to the questions in the Grayscale Color Block Study. When asked 'Do any of these squares resonate with a past memory of yours that is meaningful to you?', 'No Correlation' increased as an answer by 33.3%. 'No Correlation' also made up 62 of the 270 responses in the Grayscale Block Study. In the color Block Study, 'No Correlation' only made up 12 of the 270 responses. These results prove that consumers have a significantly more difficult time relating to a package that lacks color, thus steering them away from that package, or brand.

One benefit that grayscale offers is the isolation of shape and typography. When images are shown in grayscale, the color no longer forms the association, the shape and

pattern do, as seen in the Three Logo Study. In the development of package design, the shape is always developed first, then color is applied to reinforce the message and make it clear, concise, and whole.

It is extremely interesting to note participants' ability to create a color where there is no color present. In the Three Logo Study, Participant 4 described Logo 2 as "colorful if it was not black and white". Similarly, Participant 15 described Logo 3 with "It has no color but somehow colorful...". The fact that a consumer can place color in a grayscale logo proves that the brain processes a shape with relevant color associations in mind. Correspondingly, in the Waterbottle Study, Participant 4 described Bottle 2, as 'colorful', however, there were not any colors present on the bottle. The color association was made solely on the visual formation of the bottle. I found that thorough designs communicate with a consumer so effectively that they can place color without color being present in reality. Color is associated with an object that lacks color when the consumer associates emotion derived from other visual elements and feels an emotion that color would have otherwise evoked.

### 13. PACKAGE TO LOGO CONTRAST STUDY

Analogous to what was mentioned in the Three Logo Study, when a group of objects has similarities consumers tend to focus on the differences between them in order to create a distinction. Again, this concept is known as inverse similarity and is important in distinguishing between packages. The Package to Logo Contrast Study was executed with the intent to gather the effects of contrast between a package's color and a logo's color and how these differences resonate with each participant.

Figure 42.



*These four packages represent the effects of changing the color of the logo in combination with the package. This results in variation in how a consumer perceives a product. The gray scale packages represent the role of color and isolates the importance of good contrast in a package.*



Figure 42 shows the visuals used in conducting the Package to Logo Contrast Study. The Package to Logo Contrast Study evaluated two different packages with inverse similarities, the logos. At first, participants were shown the navy blue packages with the orange logo and lighter blue logo, followed by a series of questions. These colors were chosen because they sit opposite each other on the color wheel and come from two different color families; warm, the orange, and cool, the blue. Then, participants were introduced to the same packages but converted to grayscale, followed by a series of questions.

The orange logo on a navy package displays two colors that share a similar intensity to each other and less contrast. The lighter blue logo is also on the same navy package but it has more contrast to the navy blue and comes from the same original hue.

To analyze this study I want to first focus on Participant 6's interviews. This participant was most attracted to the blue on blue package, finding it to be the most attention-grabbing, the highest price point, and the most likely to be purchased based on appearance over the navy and orange package. When asked to describe what each package communicates to consumers about its brand, Participant 6 said that the blue on blue was a "calm, safe option, you know it will work" and the orange on blue was "more fun and exciting, different" (Study: Package to Logo Contrast).

In Participant 6's Color Block Study, she stated that orange reminded her of her dad and the University of Texas Longhorns, and that blue reminds her of the ocean and water, or something at a restaurant. But what do these answers have to do with one another?

In the Color Block Study Participant 6 responded to the question, 'How do

you believe a product's packaging color impacts your decision after being exposed to the grayscale and the contrast?', by stating, "Color definitely makes it more attractive because now that it is in gray I can't read the blue on orange anymore, but the blue is sharper. It makes you think about the product in different ways."

Referring to the Color Block Study (Chapter 10. Color), it is clear that blue carries a calming, convenient, trustworthy meaning to the participant. And while this participant stated, "blue and orange remind me of my home and my parents", she still chose the blue on blue over the orange on blue. Therefore, it is fair to argue that the brain is still more attracted to the artistic association between this participant and the stimuli than her personal connection of the two colors that are found within her parent's home.

The orange may be more exciting, but Participant 6's eye is drawing upon the emotion of trust because this participant presumes the blue on blue package is more reliable. If Participant 6 is going to purchase a more expensive product, naturally, this participant wants to find trust, calmness, and the knowledge that it is a safe option.

However, not all participants are looking at the packages through the same eye. Overall, 80% of the participants said that the blue on blue combination of logo and package grabs their attention first when seeing both packages at the same time. When asked which package is sold at a higher price point, 55.6% of the participants said the lighter blue logo package, and 44.4% of the participants said the orange logo package. Orange is commonly used to convey action and engage consumers in impulse buying. While orange may increase sales, it also can decrease value. Therefore, price is an assumption made by each consumer based on personal perceptions.

Color contrast significantly affects consumer behavior in regards to their

perception of product quality, visual attraction, and, ultimately, purchase (Mohebbi). However, just because one color grabs your attention first does not necessarily mean that it sells, although it does win the first impression. These impressions are similar to interacting with someone with an overbearing personality, while some people enjoy it, others detract from it. The same goes for products.

Participants tended to see the lighter blue logo on the navy blue package at first because of the package's contrast. Many consumers are not aware of the role that contrasts have in the visual culture, especially on a package. To understand the intensity of contrast for those not trained to recognize it, it is easier to view the object on a grayscale. That is the reason the grayscale was applied to the packages in this study.

Converting Andy Warhol's Campbell Soup Cans to a grayscale displays the successful balance between the heavy red and light white, as seen in Figure [1.3] and Figure 43. The balance of contrast is important in properly using color design so that colors compliment each other harmoniously, and do not compete for visual attention.

Campbell's Soup was originally wrapped in orange and blue packaging in 1897, prior to the famous white and red label known today. So, what made the brand change its color scheme? The company's treasurer, Herberton L. Williams, went to the 1898 Cornell versus University of Pennsylvania football game. Cornell's white and red uniforms made such an impression on him that he thought Campbell's Soup needed to adopt it (Neilson).

The color scheme switched from orange, attention-grabbing, indicating action and spirit, paired with a blue, which evokes feelings of calmness, trust, and stability, to the red and white. Red generally suggests passion, intimacy, and warmth, and the white often coordinates with simplicity and lightness. Knowing Campbell's Soup brand that

Figure [1.3]



*Campbell's Soup Cans (1962), Andy Warhol*

Figure 43.



*Campbell's Soup Cans (1962), Andy Warhol*

America loves, the red and white color scheme properly suits the brand personality more than the orange and blue (Neilson). Campbell's is an inviting company that makes soup for the soul, not a brand aiming for immediate and short-term attention. As a reflection of the Logo to Package Contrast Study, a lot more contrast exists in the red and white Campbell's Soup packaging that has remained for nearly 122 years.

Participant 13 agreed with Participant 6 in that the lighter blue on navy blue package grabs their attention first. They said that this package is communicating that the package represents a brand that is "softer and not as flashy" (Study: Package to Logo Contrast). So, how can a package that comes off as softer and less flashy eloquently grab attention more than flashier contrasted items? The same reason as discussed in Andy Warhol's *Campbell's Soup Cans*. The proper use of color contrast creates a harmony that is strong, not flashy.

Participant 13 also stated that Package 1, the lighter blue on navy blue package converted to the grayscale, was more attractive, "I...like this one...because there is more contrast in it". Interestingly, in the Color Block Study, Participant 13 correlated the orange square with 'tense' and 'fast food'. This correlation reveals why Participant 13 finds the orange and blue package to be 'aggressive'. (Study: Packaging and Logo Contrast, Participant 13)

When the packages were in color, 80% of the participants chose the blue on blue package. When shown in the grayscale, 100% of the participants chose what was originally the blue on blue package. When the contrast became apparent in the grayscale, participants were able to see why the blue on blue package constantly seems more appealing to them.

In the Color Block Study, 20%, the second-highest percentage, of the fifteen participants said orange represents a product that is the least expensive, Participant 13 being a part of that 20%. In the Package to Logo Contrast Study, 60% of the participants claimed the orange on blue package was the least expensive package, the lighter blue on navy blue the most expensive. Once again, the relationship of participant responses between studies proves the consistency in how consumers associate elements of design to develop a purchasing decision.

The selection of colors on a package is vital to the impact that a product has on a consumer. The colors used impact color associations and how consumers isolate products on a shelf, resulting in purchasing decisions.

### 13. CONCLUSION

At the base of all of this research, well-designed advertisements, packaging, products, art, etc. allow a brand to shape its environment, reaching and influencing the taste of audiences. The elements of art have evolved to become a considerable factor in the 21st visual culture. In regard to package design, the simplest and most relevant way to communicate the influence of design on consumers in the visual culture is to dissect answers through art. By turning to the world of art to better understand consumerism, studies were developed in order to better understand the significance of the collision of marketing and art.

Pop Art is a very perceptive form of art that isolates products of mass consumption that are often forgotten about. Pop Artists, similar to graphic designers, such as Saul Bass, have allowed consumers to see products in a new light, based on deeper symbolic meanings and aesthetic understandings. Pop Art is a mock process of how marketing and package design is created with the intent of making the ordinary extraordinary.

Conclusively, the elements of color, shape, logo, package formulation, and contrast all play a significant role in determining the behavior of each individual visual consumer. These artistic design elements work together to communicate between the package and the consumer to form an image. The image reflects how the consumer perceives the package based on aesthetic impressions, symbolic associations, and semantic interpretations, and how the consumer perceives the brand.



While artists and consumers have traditionally been two distinct groups in the visual culture, this thesis has excavated the importance of these two worlds colliding to strengthen the understanding of package design. There is an abundance to be learned and applied to the world of marketing from studying art.

If art has the power to impose aesthetic responses, symbolic associations, and semantic interpretations of visual consumers, there is no reason to not transform the works of artistic masterpieces into the world of marketing. Elements of art have remained empowering for centuries, increasing the visual value of objects associated with it. Applying the same artistic elements used in paintings, from *The Fall of Icarus* by Henri Matisse to *Campbell's Soup Cans* by Andy Warhol, package design will transform the visual culture of the 21st century as it unravels and breaks through in developing images of higher value.

Through the studies conducted, research applied, and data inferred, art has truly refocused consumers' attention within a visual world through the exploration of package design, because at its core "...the most potent force for imaginative marketing and product strategy is a real partnership between marketing and [art]" (Rand).



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