Logo Design in Card Games

The origins of logo design roots from human self expression and the will to find an identity in a certain symbolism. Symbolism in itself is the main element for logo design, a single logo can have multiple meanings depending on its context. During the third millennium B.C., symbols carved on architecture and caves were a way for humans to communicate with each other when limited to time and distance. Afterwards, in the fifth-century B.C., Greek citizens would seal personal documents using a molded stamp with personalized animal illustrations to represent oneself as a tradition that predates well-known animal logos such as Lacoste and Penguin. Each symbol varies in meaning depending on the cultural reference (Redding, 2010). One of the first foundries in using logos dated way back in ancient Egypt in the form of *hieroglyphics* serving the function as identifying one's possession, it was only during medieval times where graphic imagery first pathed its way in the design industry. It's purpose is to differentiate between the statuses of various nobilities. (Anna, 2017)

During the 1870s, the first abstract logo that we are now more familiar with was created. It was the *Bass Red Triangle* logo. Logos only become a staple for brand owners when printing and advertising was introduced (Anna, 2017). In 1960, the *Chase Logo* was invented. The particular reason this specific logo was a revolutionary design is due to it being one of the first abstract symbol used in modern design. The *Chase Logo* established a more minimalistic approach towards logo design. However, it still maintains a distinguishable symbol. An additional designer whom impacted the industry incredibly is Paul Rand. Paul has designed well known logos such as IBM, AMC, UPS, etc… He successfully convinced the business industries to recognize the importance of logo design which helped designing become an official occupation (Anna, 2017). Other notable designers whom too helped build a reputation for the industry are Milton Glaser and Alan Fletcher (Redding, 2010).

During the television era, logo designing had another breakthrough. MTV being one of the leading channel during early 1980's, broke the boundaries of traditional logo designs with it's never before seen motion picture logo. Animated logos were not common during this era. Manhattan Design, creator of the MTV logo, designed it with the intention of making a more suitable format for television. Hence, the MTV logo being animated (Redding, 2010). Currently in the twenty first century, logo design has immensely developed adapting to cultures and trends that have risen over the years. Technology is also a great influence on the advancement of logo design. Business industries now recognizes the importance of logo design, using it as an identity through original designs and color scheme. We can compare this to the 15th century where logos were also seen as a formal way of identifying a family uniform or religious symbolism. Furthermore, designers now are more open towards experimental logo design, wether it leans towards simplicity or abstract (Anna, 2017).

An example of a product utilizing the art of logo design is playing cards. The origins of playing cards is unknown, scholars have speculated it was the Chinese whom invented it around the 9th century, throughout the time of the Tang dynasty. However, it is still debated to this day due to the lack of concrete evidence. Playing cards were then imported to Europe in the late 1200s and early 1400s from the Middle East (Roya, 2018). It was proven from the early European tax which resembles the *Mamluk* deck (consisting of 52 cards with 4 suits). The Europeans evolved the cards

by adding images which reflects the European royalty which was known as ‘Knave’. The Knave was illustrated by a picture of a soldier. They were then met with a obstacle when they attempted on placing initials on the top and bottom of the card. The abbreviation ‘KN’ for ‘Knave’ was too similar to ‘K’ for ‘King’. An American card maker Cemil Hart found a solution, he made the ‘Jacks’ as a replacement for ‘Knave’.

The *King* was the most well known design on a card, being the highest ranking in all decks. In France, each *king* represents a different historical figure. The club represents Alexander The Great, the heart represents Charles VII, the spade represents David and lastly the diamond represent Julius Caesar (Design Shack, 2011). Earlier decks did not have the *queens.* They were instead represented by different offices of Kings of different ranks. The *queen* card found it’s way into the deck we are now familiar with through France card makers. Just like the kings, the queens represents different important figures, the queens of spades, hearts diamonds and clubs are, respectively; Pallas, Judith, Rachel and Argine (Design Shack, 2011). Historically, the Ace was a lower ranking. Old European decks represented Ace as the number 1. During the French Revolution, society despises the King, which is why Ace resulted in being the highest card. The *joker* card only came about when Americans created it as a trump card for the game of *Euchre* (Roya, 2018). Earlier decks did not have red and black cards. The French were the first to introduce color separation and symbols (spade, club, diamond and heart). In the late 19th century, edge indices of a card was invented to help players hold it in a fan. Standard cards we are now have today with are designed with perfected symmetry and efficient usability.

As written above, a card’s design and meaning has gone through a deep historical evolution. Card games hold a special value to me as a player. In my environment, people of all ages play it as a source of entertainment. Back in High School, students would secretly play cards in class to pass time. Outside of school, people play it as a way to bond with each other. A common card game which inspires me to create this project is a game called *capsa. Capsa* is a card game similar to poker which has been played for decades created by Chinese folks. I was first introduced to the game in late 2019 by a close friend. Then during early 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic happened. This unfortunate occurrence limited everyone’s freedom which includes entertainment. Being an extrovert, I was faced with the difficulty of being indoors for a long period of time. It stripped away my main source of happiness, and isolation challenged my will to keep living my day to day to the fullest. That is when I started playing *capsa* more often. I often play it with my family and a close friend who lives right next door, resulting in bringing me closer to my loved ones. Once I mastered the game and understood the strategies, it was tremendously therapeutic. It brought me a sense of healing having a certain activity I am capable of improving on. It was more than just gambling, *capsa* trained my mind to see the bigger spectrum of things. I was never one to be fond of strategy games hence surprising myself for being dedicated to it. Nonetheless, this card game was a helping hand for me to get through this difficult time.

Card games are the last thing I would expect to be my rescue. Who knew a simple deck of 52 cards would bring on a chain of happy events. The intricacy of a card has brought many people a more intimate bond. It is an extraordinary method of assisting individuals to train their brain whilst having fun. *Capsa* and many other card games are the reason why I am able to keep my head up. This incredible invention has undergone radical transformation but somehow still holds the value of connecting people.

References

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