



Intercultural Awareness

examples of culturally influenced design

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For this assignment I have collected several examples of culturally influenced design and connected each design to a corresponding cultural dimension featured in Geert Hofstede's book *Cultures and Organizations*. In my selection I tried to include a variety of design disciplines and different cultural dimensions.

Sweets with tradition



Left: Fruitella packaging in Europe - Right: Adapted version for the Chinese market

Fruitella, part of the Dutch/Italian confectionery manufacturer Perfetti van Melle, sells sweets all over the world. The original packaging design for their gums featured monsters on a flat brightly colored background.

For the Chinese market the company decided to change the design. An illustration with no background is unacceptable in China, so a landscape has been added to the packaging. Like other Asian countries, China scores high on the index for Long Term Orientation (LTO). LTO has a connection with several values that are part of Confucianism, for which one of them is respect for tradition.

The sweets shows how that works out in practice: tradition in a modern form.

Source: Visser, E. (2009). China. In *Packaging design: A cultural sign* (p. 63). Barcelona: Index Book.

Neighborhood as a school



Left: Before the painting project of Bairro Escola Right: After the project

The Brazilian public-school system often doesn't give access to a good and complete education, because of inadequate funding. Gilberto Diemenstein tries to solve that with the social design project Bairro Escola (Neighborhood as a school). In this project the youth of São Paulo can use their creative and intellectual energy in various programs, like for example painting the walls in their neighborhood with patterns inspired by modern art and Brazilian heritage.

The program brings the youth together with parents, artists, government and other community members to collaborate on improving their neighborhood. Bairro Escola has a clear connection with the dimension IDV, specifically collectivism. The project tries to make the youth part of the local community, and a lot of parties in that community work together to help these children to have some fun and a good education. A thing from which the community can benefit in the future.

Source: Design other 90 Network.

<http://www.designother90.org/solution/bairro-escola-neighborhood-as-school/>

Mocking the queen in advertising



In the weeks before Kingsday (former Queensday) in the Netherlands, lots of companies make advertisements featuring the royal family. Often the marketing agencies use humor to sell their product, for example by making fun of the king and queen.

For example: the Dutch brewer Bavaria made an advertisement with former queen Beatrix watching the broadcast of queensday with the new king Willem Alexander, while drinking a beer. The practice of mocking the authorities is typical for a society with a low Power Distance Index. It is even seen as positive when a person with power is portrayed as a normal being.

Source: Verse Reclame, *De mooiste inhakers op Koningsdag*. <http://www.versereclame.nl/2014/04/24/de-mooiste-inhakers-op-koningsdag/>

My first rifle



Amy, 7 years old, posing with a Crickett rifle. Photo by An-Sofie Kesteley.

American sporting arm producer Keystone has a special line of 0.22 caliber rifles for kids. It is called 'Crickett'. The manufacturer sells their weapons in a wide range of colors including pink. The United States have a masculine culture. In these kinds of cultures values power and self defence is seen as a virtue amongst men and women. In combination with the right to 'keep and bear arms', this creates a society where a big subculture finds it relatively normal for 7-year old kids to have their own lethal gun.

Source: Crickett Firearms.

http://www.crickett.com/crickett_22_LR.php

Image: An-Sofie Kesteley, My First rifle.

<http://www.wired.com/2014/04/an-sofie-kesteley-kids-with-guns/>