

## METHODS OF CONTEXTUALISING

### Written Response

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This project centres on exploring the intersection of personal identity and cultural narratives. From critically interrogating Tom of Finland stamps using our positions, perspectives, ethics, experiences, and identities help us frame how we engage with this particular subject and tend to raise a lot of questions about stereotypes and positions on queer community over time and how it's affected by our own cultures. To understand more about our positions, we decided to engage with queer archives of our country because it is an excellent reflection of the society in which they exist. Archives show how we have been shaped and how it affects our view of this topic and leads to how we project it to our work which is a set of stamps. By combining a piece of archive curated with our standpoint, we use this set of stamps as a translation from our point of view as well as a reflection of our thoughts on the subject.

This reference discussed how documents are a form of media that are shaped by and help to shape the broader media environment in which they exist and how the study of documents is essential for understanding the history of media and communication. The author also emphasizes the importance of paying attention to the materiality of documents. She notes that the physical characteristics of documents, such as their size, shape, and texture, are not incidental to their meaning and use but rather integral to their social and cultural significance. This way of seeing led us to look back to our project in which working with prints, especially with stamps as a media, by paying attention to the media itself and the meaning behind the stamps, how the stamps help us shape and understand the history of the queer community and how they can be used as a tool of communication of our own positions.

Gitelman, L. (2014) *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents*. Durham: Duke University Press.

**Beneficence and contemporary art: when aesthetic judgment meets ethical judgment by Barb Bolt**

Bolt's argument about the overlap of aesthetic and ethical evaluation in contemporary art is relevant to our inquiry. Bolt argues that ethical considerations, particularly the principle of beneficence, have become increasingly important in modern art, especially with regard to art that engages with social and political issues, so it is important to consider ethical implications, and also a balance must be struck between aesthetic and ethical considerations, and that the principle of beneficence can serve as a useful framework for evaluating the ethical implications of contemporary art without compromising the aesthetic experience. As our project focuses on the LGBTQ culture and community, which also could be considered and touch the subject of social and political issues, we as a designer must take into account not only the visual appeal of the imagery and materials we use but also the messages that our design conveys, find the balance between aesthetic and ethical and avoiding works that appropriate indigenous cultural artefacts or use images of suffering or trauma without the subject's consent.

Bolt, B (2015). 'Beneficence and contemporary art: when aesthetic judgment meets ethical judgment'. *Visual Methodologies*, 3(2), pp. 53–66.

## **Queer Times, Queer Becomings by E. L. McCallum and Mikko Tuhkanen**

In *Queer Times, Queer Becomings*, the authors argue that queer theory can help us challenge normative conceptions of time, open up new possibilities for different ways of being and becoming, and discuss how queerness can help us understand how historical and social contexts shape memories and affect. Looking back to our project, we are engaging with archives of queer history that serve as a mirror of the society in which they exist and can be seen as a collective memory. Our engagement with these archives offers us a chance to gain insights into how history has unfolded over time and how it influences our thoughts. This approach resonates with the argument explored in "*Queer Times, Queer Becomings*," which emphasize the importance of reconsidering the past, engaging with the present and looking into the future. Our project aims to explore how attitudes towards the queer community have evolved over time and how queer theory and history can inform and support one another.

E.L. McCallum & Tuhkanen, M. (2011). *Queer Times, Queer Becomings*. New York: State University of New York Press.

## **The Cultural Legacy of Postage by Krystal D'Costa**

The article "The Cultural Legacy of Postage" endorses our decision regarding the medium, which is a stamp and challenge our perception of how we use it to present our topic. The article explores the historical and cultural significance of postage stamps. It articulates how postage stamps have served a variety of functions beyond their obvious use, such as showcasing national identity and values, shaping public opinion, and promoting political agendas. By using this as a lens to view and reflect on our project, it prompts us to consider how to communicate the diverse cultural and historical narratives over time through this medium and also makes us think about how the stamps can be circulated in the sense of sharedness and think more about the audience in which our project will communicate with. This article also mentioned how stamps could be used to show the interests and standpoints of the individual, which reveals the connection to our project, where we use them to reflect on our positions.

D'Costa, K. (2012). *The Cultural Legacy of Postage*. Available at: <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/anthropology-in-practice/the-cultural-legacy-of-postage/> (Accessed: 17 February 2023).

## **Zoe Leonard works**

Zoe Leonard's practices are often associated with gender, sexuality, loss, gentrification, and the urban landscape. In her work, Leonard involves the viewers forcing them to consider the act of looking itself and drawing them into an awareness of its meanings. Especially her well-known 1992 poem "I want a president" is associated with our project and has inspired how I approach my own set of stamps. "I want a president" is a series of declarative statements that express the speaker's positions and demands. Leonard uses the medium, which is a poem, to reflect on her position and invites us to rethink our assumptions on the subject which is the same approach I use for my project. I try to put up my own position and voice to show my standpoint on the "Marriage Equality" subject and demand the right that belongs to all people, especially queer community in Thailand. Instead of using a poem like Leonard, I use the stamp as a medium to not only raise questions about the stereotypes over time but also state my opinion on this subject.

Leonard, Z. (1992) *I want a president* [Prints]. Available at: <https://whitney.org/collection/works/62454> (Accessed: 20 February 2023).

## **Yinka Shonibare works**

Yinka Shonibare's practice frequently prompts inquiries into the legitimacy of contemporary cultural and national identities in the era of globalization. By exploring race, class, and the formation of cultural identities, his pieces offer commentary on the complex interweaving of economic and political histories. "Decolonised Structures (2022)", one of his recent works, resembles our project in how our works both draw on historical research by using archival materials. Both of our projects also evoke a discussion around the relationship between the current position and the past. His work challenges us to look back to the past and consider how it shapes our societies and how can we present it in a way that will raise awareness and prompt the audience to think about their own position. By engaging with archives and historical materials only shows how the context has changed and shifted over time. Still, we, as a designer, hold the power to reshape what has been collected.

Shonibare, Y. (2022) *Decolonised Structures* [Sculpture]. Available at: <https://yinkashonibare.com> (Accessed: 20 February 2023).