George Lois’ Revolutionary Creativity

“To be a great advertising person or a great designer of anything, you have to be courageous, you have to be a fighter. You have to not only have talent, but you have to be a fighter. Talent isn’t enough, to tell you the truth.”
George Lois: The Basics

George Lois (born 1930) is an American advertising executive. He is known for his innovative and controversial advertising campaigns, including his famous "I'm Your Huckleberry" and "30 Days of Politics" ads for the political action group Common Cause. Lois is a lifelong student of art history and has written several books on the subject. He is also known for his advocacy of social and political causes, and has worked with clients such as the World Wildlife Fund and Amnesty International. Lois is a recipient of numerous awards, including the National Medal of Arts, and is a member of the Society of McQuade, a group of advertising legends.

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HELLENIC LEADERS

George Lois: His Revolutionary Creative Views

By Angelina Conte

George Lois, a creative maverick and maverick, was born in 1930. He is best known for his innovative advertising campaigns and his revolutionary views on the role of creativity in business. Lois is a self-described “ad guru” who has been called “the most controversial advertising executive of his generation.”

Lois is the founder of Lois, an advertising agency that he started in 1960. He is also the author of several books, including “How to Unleash Your Creative Power” and “The Art of Advertising.”

Lois is known for his controversial and often shocking ads, which have included images of blood, incarceration, and other graphic elements. He has also been known for his political activism, including his work with the anti-war movement.

Lois is a prolific speaker and writer, and his influence in the advertising industry is widely respected. He is a frequent guest on talk shows and has appeared in numerous documentaries and films about advertising.

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Lois takes pleasures in campaigns that make giants out of little fish, and was “dazzled" when rock star asked studio to demand TV from their cable provider.

Keeping the copy minimal was the secret to many of company PKL’s greatest successes. Lois' books

Good sailing, however, was not always a toughness, but only an act of survival. Lois' story about being kept on the national landscape.

His energy is unbeatable.”

George Lois was sad to tell his father, Haralampos, that he wasn't just about the job. It was about the piece or art that he just pur- chased. His mum was sitting by, noting: “The thing I do, every ad I make, I just do it. And like my father, be- cause I was always Greek each day. Compar- ing my life to Aristotle Onassis. His ad phi- losophy was: “I'm going home… da-boom.” In addition to adver- tising, George Lois also became famous as an eloquent, swift and pure- nceful mathematician.

One of the best ways to get to know George Lois is by reading his writing. Working as well as anyone who has ever worked in an agen- cy, Lois has taken on “an almost unlabo- rating” role of writing about 100 of his Big Ideas. Lois’ Books

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The people in Lois' agencies didn't let anybody hurt my work or my clients, he said. It was as if they were my whole life in that way. Nothing's going to make me run back on that. You can't kill if you are not going to hit back.

An agent in his early years, a tough guy to deal with. There was always a toughness, but only an act of survival. Lois' story about being kept on the national landscape.

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On his parents’ Napoli origins. “My father’s village is on the very, very top of the mountains. Neither the Turks nor the Nazis ever got that high. I’m not joking.”

On his parents’ Naftaktos origins. “My mother said when she walked into the room and saw Harmonious Lois, she almost fainted, he was so handsome. And a couple of weeks later, they got married and lived a long life.

On his parents’ 14th Street sitting area, “I have a picture of Rosie and me five minutes after we met. And I always think, ‘Well, she is coming up here into the room and saw Haralampos Lois, she almost fainted, he was so handsome, and a couple of weeks later, they got married and lived a long life.’”

On the shock value of good advertising, “I make a new brand from a brand that is in trouble.”

On convincing then-unknown designer Tommy Hilfiger to apply, “In the ‘60s and ’70s, you had to do great advertising. It was an art. You had to make people think. Today, you have coffee. There was only seven, eight, ten agencies making great work out of thousands, but those ten agencies were making a big impact on American culture. Today people only talk about advertising for Super Bowl ads. They know the ads cost four, five, six million dollars to run, so it’s a big thing. It’s a big empathy.”

On his parents’ love story. “In the ‘60s and ’70s, you had to do great advertising. It was an art. You had to make people think. Today, you have coffee. There was only seven, eight, ten agencies making great work out of thousands, but those ten agencies were making a big impact on American culture. Today people only talk about advertising for Super Bowl ads. They know the ads cost four, five, six million dollars to run, so it’s a big thing. It’s a big empathy.”

On “an insane, crazy day” in his life, “I say, ‘Look at the screen, there is nothing on the screen. Get out and go into the bathroom and look in the mirror and work with yourself.’”

On Calvin Klein’s reaction to the Hilfiger ad, “It’s amazing. It’s one of the greatest days of my life.”

On working on the award-winning video for Bob Dylan’s “Jokerman,” “I grabbed his finger and said, ‘Shmuck, why take 20 years when you can do it in 20 days?’”

On the Quotable Lois: As Told to TNH

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On convincing then-unknown designer Tommy Hilfiger to apply, “I make a new brand from a brand that is in trouble.”

On the need for courage in advertising, “It is a great of b---s, they are evil.”

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On the Occupy Wall Street movement and politics. “I am always anti-capitalist. I am left wing tried and true. Until 9/11, I was an American and an idea and a community, but the banks are just as bad as the corporations. One country can’t be compared to another. In the United States, unfortunately, for the Republicans, those one of b---es, they are evil.”

On New York City. “This is the only city in the world. It’s not to live. We work, the best and the worst of everything. The Occupy Wall Street movement was a great movement, a great country.”