

2019

The Illustration Game

Jaleen Grove

Rhode Island School of Design, jaleen@gmail.com

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THE ILLUSTRATION GAME

Help Jack and Jill up the hill of their illustration careers, 1959-2019

by Jalen Grove

Watch out! The career path to the pot o' gold at the wishing well is full of graphic perils...



What's wrong with publishing today is that nobody has guts... young people have a rough time coming in.
MAURICE SENDAK 1985

Do psychedelic cover for friend's debut album. It goes to #1.
In 1968 I painted Che Guevara as if he were a sort of saintlike figure... when that cover and then the poster appeared, Evergreen's of Pic got firebombed.
PAUL DAVIS 1985

Art critic Clement Greenberg decreed that sub text matter was verboten.
JAMES McMULLAN 1985

The children's book especially should be a conveyor of good taste... an antidote to the creeping horrors of our time.
FRITZ EICHENBERG 1960

Each player starts with 50 points. Roll to advance. Add/subtract accordingly. Are you Jill? Wait 1 full turn to begin, unless you do children's books!

RECESSION Miss a turn
1990

Graphic designers do your job with Photoshop -3
Win a Pulitzer for your graphic novel +3
Illustration hero dismisses your work because it's digital -1

Spot illustration pays \$100 +1
Ignore computer word recurring for some struggling start-up called Pixar -3

Get MASSIVE following of 1000 subscribers for punk zine +1
Garner commissions despite your minority identity +1

Draw naughty comic +1
Tech job clogs -1

Escape iron curtain with your cool Polish poster style +2
Studio closes and Saturday Evening Post folds -3

Spot illustration pays \$100 +2
Lose commissions because of your minority identity -3

It's not easier, but at least it's OK to have a family now. You don't have to be a closet mother anymore.
LINDA HINRICHS 1994

Illustration has been looking rather sick of late... in the age of digital type, even the best illustrators' work has suffered... looking less urgent, exciting or timely... the likeliest development is that the collage impulse will migrate from paper illustration to the more fluid and dynamic screen. Designers will then become type and image constructors... This will not make illustrators redundant, but it may well force a reassessment of their role.
RICK POYNOR 1993

I think the initial change of the future is to move off the single page. The narrative form, the time sequence, and the space sequence can be explored.
MARSHALL ARISMAN 1985

Make limited edition offset prints on spec and lose studio space -2
Two years' work on kid's book nets Caldecott Medal & grocery money +2

Magazines order photography -3
I have noticed an attitude on the part of art directors who assumed that Leo does the work and I function mainly as rep even though we have always signed our work as Leo & Diane.
DIANE DILLON 1991

Spot illustration pays \$100 +2
Lose commissions because of your minority identity -3

Work for Push Pin and badmouth Norman Rockwell +3
Live in Westport CT Drink martinis daily +1

Art dealer rejects your work as too illustrative -1

Stock merchants have begun to prey on entry-level artists... the young artist who once could have expected a few \$400 illustrations a month may now have to settle for the lesser half of a \$300 stock sale. The controversy over stock houses has divided the illustration community as nothing before has done.
BRAD HOLLAND 2000

While the MOMA has admitted graphic design into its collection, it has not legitimized illustration.
ELLEN LUPTON 1996

Students are interested in things that are so immediate, so new that we can't keep up with the change. When someone like Keith Haring is an influence already, it's mind boggling. He's only been alive a few years.
ROBERT ANDREW PARKER 1985

Female students show me their drawings. I try to encourage them any way I can, but there is no support system for these women.
SUE COE 1985

There is not, to my knowledge, a single major magazine left which consistently uses illustration on its covers.
DUGALD STERMER 1977

In the 70s, it was a commonplace that British illustration was simply the best, and its influence was international.
ROBERT MASON 2000

Still no computer? Go back 10 paces
WANDS 2000

Sell rights to stock art company Miss a turn
Move to LA and go lowbrow +1

Get fax machine +2
Sell graffiti art in Manhattan gallery +1

Airbrush clogs -1
Attend the Illustrators Workshop +2

Paint abstracts and call it 'real art.' FORFEIT GAME
Go to PCA and become radical -2

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Dot-bomb and 9-11 -2
Rockwell speculative art +2

Learn Flash +2
Mouse ball clogs -1

Game company studio never wants you to go home. Ever. -2
Fine art dealer digs your 'post-illustration' style +2

Pirated by a designer label -3
Drawing superhero comics while female +1 or -1? Your opponent decides

Get tax machine +2
Sell graffiti art in Manhattan gallery +1

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FINISH FIRST? +5!
Wait for other player to catch up. High score wins.

Of the many problems with The Simpsons' Apu, perhaps the most worrying one is that, as a cartoon, he's immortal - an offensive caricature from 1989, given new life every Sunday night on Fox... The most effective answer to Flaved art is different and better art... there's a rising generation of desi ready to make that art. JEET HEER 2013

The allure of the digital now over, the discipline has seemingly retreated into an analogous world of craft-driven aesthetics, where point pleasantries are exchanged... Where is the content? Where is the comment?... Illustration has withdrawn from the big debates of our society to focus on the chit-chat and little-tattle of inner-sanctum nothingness.
LAWRENCE ZEEGANI 2012

In the silicon-world of 3D modeling, perfection is possible... Strangely, however, artists and illustrators have been slow to make use of its artistic potential.
ADRIAN SHAUGHNESSY 2007

A formal shift from the digital to the analogue is clearly taking place... Hands are snipping, drawing and sticking again... flawed and trashy, and it is precisely this that makes them poetic... Drawing is currently the leading illustration method again.
CLAUDIA MARCEI 2007

Projects which are out in public spaces seem to go on appearing. I was invited to illustrate a bus. The Book Bus travels around Zambia...
QUENTIN BLAKE 2007

One of the more amusing occurrences in the world of fine art... is the recent discovery that Norman Rockwell was, in fact, a very good artist.
DUGALD STERMER 2000

Though many fine illustrators employ Photoshop as a tool, it is far more threatening to the practice than any previous technological development.
STEVEN HELLER 2000

6-7 years ago publishers got in a terrible spin about picture book apps replacing the physical book, but the book crossed itself big time... bookshops are now alive with wonderful displays of beautifully designed and produced big books that are awash with embossing, debossing and lamination.
MARTIN SALISBURY 2019

The business of illustration is literally nonexistent today... Where do kids starting out today take their talent? I would say they're fucked. There is nothing for them. They can't follow the path that Bernie Fuchs and I followed any longer.
ROBERT HEINDEL 2005

In an industry with firmly entrenched boys clubs... why is it surprising that Newsweek felt that a male illustrator was qualified to address the cutting pain women experience in another industry?
CELINE LOUP 2015

In articles and media mentions, illustrators regularly get left out... When illustrators read articles by people in our own book industry... who focus solely on the writer, we feel like we're fighting a losing battle.
SARAH MCINTYRE 2015

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ELLEN LUPTON 1996

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Female students show me their drawings. I try to encourage them any way I can, but there is no support system for these women.
SUE COE 1985

I love it that self-publishing has become so much more accessible through print and through the web. Almost anything is possible at the moment.
DEANNE CHEUK 2007

Not covering expenses tabling but at least the pot-holders sold out -1
2010

Magazines today are timid. They have no self-confidence... We don't look at a new magazine with the idea of seeing exciting graphics.
GIPE PINELES 1985

The New Illustration was a show that sparked controversy. Opinions ran the gamut. NY SOCIETY OF ILLUSTRATORS 1984

Younger artists brought up in an era of growing visual creation... and even visual violence (day-glo colors, strobe light and the 100-frames-in-20-seconds effect), especially those who spent their childhood watching television rather than reading, have never developed sensitivity to the written word... For them, all the nuances of a sub text must be compressed into immediately recognizable visual symbols.
LEE KINGMAN 1978

Some quotes have been slightly amended for space but are mainly in the speaker's own words. For full sources and further reading see www.jalengrove.com