

Undergraduate Sociology Dissertation: Methodology Sample

The elevation of art through commerce: An analysis of Charles Saatchi's approach to the machinery of art production using Pierre Bourdieu's theories of distinction.

Methodology

Having already established the basis of the theoretical outlook of this dissertation, which is also pertinent to the lens to which the evidence collected will be looked at, it is now necessary to reflect upon how evidence will be collected to support the arguments espoused in this dissertation. There are numerous approaches to social research, but in endeavouring to explore the impact of one individual in a particular field, the use of historical analysis via life biography is relevant to this dissertation (Babbie, 2001). There are a number of ways in which to create a well researched picture of Saatchi's function in the British art scene. Firstly, it would be important to establish the history of the gallery and how this came about. This can be done through secondary sources such as *Supercollector: A Critique of Charles Saatchi* (Hatton and Walker, 2000) and the few interviews given by Saatchi in *The Guardian* and on the BBC. The artists and exhibitions Saatchi has been a patron of will reveal the general aesthetic of the art dealer which ranges from United States contemporary artists, to the nineties movement focussing on young British artists and to movements such as Neurotic Realism to the latest exhibition of Chinese artists called *The Revolution Continues: New Art From China*. A good source of primary information of these can be found in the books that are produced with each exhibition, showcasing the works and artists with introductions. Another source will be interviews with Saatchi's protégés such as Tracy Emin and David Hirst, who, in some instances, have revealed how they were 'discovered' by the gallery owner.

As already mentioned, newspaper articles chronicling the response to Saatchi's exhibitions will be catalogued. It is assumed in this dissertation that although Saatchi is not known for giving interviews, that a mastermind of advertising and marketing would be communicating via his work, or his patronage of gallery exhibitions, with the media. The newspaper articles will be organised by exhibition, creating a chronological overview of the media response. In an effort to find a

substantial range of responses, articles will be collected from *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *The Sun* and *The Daily Mirror*. These articles will be read and the range of responses will be catalogued in an effort to provide a statistical overview of how Saatchi has been perceived by the printed media. This overview will then be compared to how successful each exhibition has been considered financially and by the critics.