The Future of Furniture

Objectives
As an industrial designer with a focus in furniture, I am interested in seeing where furniture has come from and where it will go in the future. I will be studying popular furniture of the past as well as the historical context surrounding these eras in order to see trends through time which will help inform key aspects of future furniture. To demonstrate the styles that would be seen in the future I will be modeling a prospective piece of furniture for ten years in the future using CAD software.

Methods
Research from the following past furniture eras: Early American, William & Mary, Neo-Classical, Queen Anne, Chippendale, Sheraton, Empire, Shaker, Victorian, Arts & Crafts, Art Nouveau, Art Deco, Bauhaus, Depression, Mid-Century Modern, Scandinavian, Minimalist, and Memphis. This list is so long due to the fact of needing to form a complete picture of the trends over time and how those have led to each other. Historical events during the times of these eras was also studied to understand how context effects the styles of the time.

From this research there are three major aspects of furniture pieces including Mobility, Variety, and Detail of Design. In order to understand what the users will desire for furniture there was a in-person, three-question survey given to thirty-five participants with the following questions:
1. Do you believe that people will be more, or less mobile in the next ten years?
2. Do you believe people will converge to similar, more popular, designs, or diverge to unique designs with more variety?
3. Do you believe that furniture will become more ornate, with a higher level of detail, or more minimalistic?

Some factors that played into the final decisions of the respondents include technology allowing the processes to be more exact and efficient, home and work are increasingly becoming the same location, and currently many young adults are likely to have multiple residencies throughout their lives. Mobility can be accomplished in numerous ways including being easy of packing, stacking, and storing. Similarity can be achieved through common shapes, textures, and materials to name a few. When designing minimal furniture, it is important to pay close attention to the details and how they are executed because mistakes stand out more.

Results

Options:

- Seat Materials
  - Red Leather
  - Black Leather
  - Fiberglass
  - Cloth

- Arms and Legs Materials
  - Walnut
  - Oak
  - Rosewood
  - Aluminum

Conclusion
The future of furniture holds many possibilities for stylish and cohesive furniture pieces that can fit in any home. Some of the aspects that will be seen are more minimal designs with more similarity in overall shape. There will be the ability to have customized pieces so that they fit with the styles of individuals yet still fits in the style of the time. There will be higher mobility for the majority of people and furniture will fit this necessity. This chair slides into other for easy stacking and storage. The juxtaposition between traditional and modern components as well as between geometric and organic shaping make this a unique piece that is suitable for all homes. The design goes beyond the physical appearance to the feel and comfort. The ergonomic curves are fit to the user with a recurved back and seat for comfort on the whole body. This piece would fit with ease into any existing home and be appropriate for use in any way from watching a movie to working from the comfort of home.