

### Project 3: Visual Rhetorics

**Readings in CWM:** Chap 4 Analyzing Visual Arguments; Chap 14 Using and Citing Sources; handouts

**Assignment.** For Project 3: Visual Rhetorics you will create a visual argument on a particular public issue you've chosen and researched. You'll choose a genre and media that best conveys your message given the rhetorical situation for your visual argument—a public service announcement (PSA) or a PSA campaign (a series of PSAs on an issue), a flyer, poster, power point or Prezi presentation, an infographic, a brochure, a Kickstarter video with transcript, and so on. (SEE BELOW: Assignment Options for more details.)

**The final project will include:** a “text” in a genre you've chosen that uses both text and visuals (in color) to convey a message effectively to a particular audience; a written explanation of the following: the rhetorical situation surrounding the text; the research /information you've chosen to work with and why (e.g. sources relevant to the project); a description of transformation features in your project; an annotated bibliography.



**Transformation:** You may *transform* the proposal into a visual argument. Although the issue may be the same, the rhetorical situation may be different—audience, purpose, exigency and so on, thus you'll need to do additional research. For instance, you transformed a proposal advocating a

new recycling program on campus into a series of flyers that calls students to participate in a recycling initiative on their campus. Some of the same research from your proposal may be re-worked for this new situation of your visual argument (flyer).

**Format/Design:** The success of a visual argument is determined in part by all the elements working together effectively: written text; images; graphics, colors, arrangement on the page; headings & subheadings; font style and size. All of these elements serve the rhetorical situation for your visual argument. See CWM Chap 4 for examples of visual arguments.

**WebLinks:** [www.adcouncil.org](http://www.adcouncil.org) = Ad Council (Public Service Announcements); Duke University Digital Archives; Getty Images for usable images.

**Annotated Bibliography.** Most visual arguments don't include a works cited page (brochures, however, sometimes include a list of sources), so you'll submit with your visual argument a separate annotated bibliography in MLA

format of sources from which you've drawn information for your visual argument: logos, graphics, photos, claims and research, websites, and so on.

**Evaluation:** Your visual argument will be evaluated on whether or not it meets the criteria that we have discussed that makes for an effective visual message.

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**Assignment Options:** As you choose the genre and medium to work with for your visual argument, remember to consider first and foremost the rhetorical situation driving your visual argument. Below are some ideas, but feel free to come to me with another idea you have in mind.

**Create a PSA (print or video)** on a compelling, contemporary social issue. Remember in PSAs, it's important to establish for readers who the agency, org or advocacy group is who produced this PSA—know their mission, philosophy, etc. If you choose a video PSA, you'll need a transcript to accompany the video.

**Create a brochure** to persuade or inform your audience about an issue that affects their community such as preventing STDs among college students; the services offered by a local food bank and why they should volunteer; a group or org they'd want to join locally or on campus; a place or recreational activity they'd want to try on their next vacation.

**Create a flyer or poster** announcing an upcoming meeting or event sponsored by a group or community organization you belong to, and persuade readers why they might want to attend (e.g. create for instance a flyer detailing the latest "build" or shack a thon by the local Habitat for Humanity group). Use visuals and text to move them to join the group, attend a workshop or event, and so on.

**Create a poster of a research project** you'd present to academic audiences at a conference in your major or workshop on campus.

**GROUP PROJECT:** You can work in groups of 2-3 students to create a visual argument of your choice. For instance, you might create a series of PSAs (at least 3) in a campaign produced by a particular advocacy group on a cause or issue they support (e.g. If You See Something, Say Something, Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving, and so on). For each PSA, address a different audience who might be invested in the issue; although the catch phrase might be the same, the way it moves the audience may vary (e.g. different text, visuals, research, and so on).

### Thinking Rhetorically About Your Visual Rhetorics Project 3

Choose an issue or idea you want to convey for Project 3: Visual Rhetorics. **Transformation:** Use one of your other writing projects and transform some of the research and idea from it into your visual rhetoric project for an appropriate (new) audience.

#### Take the issue you've chosen and do some writing about the rhetorical situation:

**Social situation /Exigency for visual arguments:** Think about what's happening NOW in socially, culturally, politically: trends, hot topics, concerns, conflicts, and so on. What makes this piece of visual rhetoric important / significant now? Write down some possibilities.

**Writer/producer:** The group or organization who is producing the VR is a member an advocacy group, state or federal agency, or other organization. The group cares about the issue. How should you present the ethos of the group given their goals, mission, issues for which they advocate?

**Purpose:** Decide on the purpose of your VR. What do you want to accomplish by writing this VR? If you want to inform, state specifically what you want to inform readers about. If you want to persuade, state what you're trying to persuade readers of.

**Message:** Think about the messages from the VRs we've examined. Then, consider your audience and your purpose in your VR.

- Write down some possible **messages** this audience needs to hear. Does the message lend itself to **a slogan or a catch phrase** for the VR?

**Audience:** Decide on your *particular public* audience for the VR.

- What type of people are you trying to reach in your VR? Why would they care about the issue and what do they need to know? Write it down.
- Generally, what should you tell them about the issue and what visuals might make sense given your readers?
- What should readers do, if anything? What action or reaction is your VA asking for?
- Think about where the VR would be published or read--location. **Example:** A PSA about nutrition education for children might be posted in a school cafeteria.

#### Research:

- What kinds of research do you have, or what might you need, to support your claims or message? Case studies, examples, anecdotes, statistics, expert opinions, definitions?
- What information would best engage your audience? What are their concerns or questions you should answer?

### Guidelines for Drafting Your Visual Rhetoric Project 3

**Decide on the genre for your visual argument.** What genre makes the most sense for the issue, your purpose and your audience? As you draft, keep your audience and purpose for the visual argument in mind. The rhetorical situation determines *what you include* in the visual argument and *how you arrange* it to make your argument effective.

**Gather Information.** What arguments and claims are important to include in your visual argument given your audience, purpose, and “message”? **Transformation:** Look back at the arguments and research in your other writing projects. Would these arguments be useful for the rhetorical situation of your visual argument?

**Choose Your Message.** List some possible messages for your visual argument. Then, for each one, list one or two key points (claims) you might include. Remember, a visual argument uses all its elements to convey the message.

EX. If you are writing *a brochure*, for example, what main points should readers learn about the issue in your brochure? What message(s) is the brochure sending? If you are writing *a PSA*, create a “slogan” for your campaign such as “Think B4 You Speak” or “Click It or Ticket.”

**Choose Research.** Check your “facts”—do your research. Your visual argument must be accurately researched. Just because it’s brief, or uses visuals and text does not mean your research is less important.

**Transformation:** Look back at your other writing projects: Is there any research that makes sense for your visual argument? How could it be re-written to work in your visual argument? **Write down the research you might “recycle.” Write down additional research** that makes sense for your audience and message—will the research appeal to them?

**Appeals to Your Audience.** *Pathos appeals:* what are readers’ values, beliefs, emotions: how could you move them to listen? *Logos appeals:* what kind of reasoning might work with them? *Ethos appeals:* how could you get them to trust in you, the writer(s)? Your credibility? What could you include to do so?

**Using Visuals & Graphics.** Visuals and text must work together to convey the message. Decide what images, graphics, icons, colors, font styles and so on will help to

- Emphasize your message
- Support your claims or audience needs
- Draw readers in to your visual argument

**Spatiality/Arrangement.** Think about the location of the text and images persuading readers as well as the content.

- Where do you want readers eyes to go first as they read your visual argument?
- How could you arrange text and visuals to send the message clearly?
- What would appeal to your audience: images, text, colors, arrangement, and so on. What would make the VR compelling?
- How can you lead the readers through the “story” of your visual argument?