

VISUAL ARGUMENTS

Scholars have recently suggested that pictures (individual images, slide presentations, or motion pictures) may present viable arguments, which can just as easily persuade a reader as text (in fact, as they suggest, this persuasion may occur much easier and even much more successfully).

EX:



Visual arguments can be both concrete (easy to understand) and abstract (not as clear, requiring a bit more work on the part of the audience). Abstract visual arguments, like abstract paintings usually work to attract the reader then work on a longer time frame to disarm the reader mentally before allowing the reader to admit their intent/purpose or thesis (the point of the persuasion).

When approaching a visual argument, asking these questions can help:

1. Who is the Author? (What we know about the author may help us to understand the nature of his/her work).
2. Who is the Audience? (Who is the intended audience of this work?)
3. What do you believe is the Purpose/Intent?
4. What is the Context? (Where is it located and how does this fact affect its distribution or the extent to whom or what it persuades?)
5. What is the medium? What might you expect from work created in such a medium to have?
6. Ask yourself, how do you perceive the work initially? (What do you see first?)
7. Does this work require some sort of cultural interpretation/translation (e.g. Determining Symbols, Icons, or Words?)
8. Does the Name of the Work help you to determine its intent/purpose/audience, etc?
9. Does the author make use of visual association (associating color with objects -> Blue like the sky, Black and Yellow like Bumblebees -caution, etc)?
10. Are there visual ornaments, or is there any form of visual ornamentation used? Special Effects? Image Processing?
11. Would you consider the visual and its corresponding elements more organic or inorganic? Are these traits intentional or not?