

Group Ad Analysis

1. Within your group allow each person to share his/her ad.
2. Choose the one ad that the group finds most interesting, persuasive, shocking, etc. This is the ad that the entire group will work with.
3. Analyze the ad as a group using the following comments/questions. Each group member should take his/her own notes. Depending on time left in class, you may be asked to present your findings, so elect a speaker.

Audience & Rhetorical (Communication) Situation:

Where was the advertisement published and when? What kind of company is it coming from? What does the type of publication tell you about the probable audience? What does the ad itself tell you about the audience? Is there a certain gender, age, income level, education level, etc. in mind here? What message is this ad trying to send?

Ethos (Appeal to Writer's Credibility):

Companies work carefully to build a recognizable brand image and advertisements play a big role in creating/maintaining that image. What kind of image does this ad create for the company? How does it try to build credibility (keep in mind who you think the target audience is)? Look at verbal cues, as well as images. What type of company do they want the audience to believe they are?

Logos (Appeal to Logic – Reasons Used to Support Claim):

Identify the main claim of the ad. What logical reasons does the advertisement use to support this claim? Remember that the reasons may not be stated explicitly – they may be implied by the images, verbal cues, etc. How are the images composed? What sorts of props, characters, etc. are included? How does the camera relate to the images? What effects do these factors have on the argument?

Pathos (Appeal to the audience):

Think about the emotions, values, and beliefs contained in the ad. As *Writing Arguments* leads you through example advertisements, advocacy ads, and posters, they remark on the power of symbols. “These symbols derive potency from the values they share with their target audience” (147). For example, consider the discussion of the “Save the Children” advocacy ad –Color Plate E. The mother and child appeal to familiar ideas that we all share – “a mother’s love for her child and the tenderness and strength of this bond” (148). This mother and child might remind us of every mother and child and the bond mothers and children supposedly have. As Westerners, it may also remind us of the Madonna and Child. Notice that no background images are used in order to heighten the perception that this mother and child is like all mothers and children regardless of nationality. How does the composition of the ad appeal to the audience? In other words, why set it up this way? What symbolic presentations appear in your ad? Why are they appealing? You may also consider the effects of colors, etc.

Consider, as Neil Postman does in “The Great Symbol Drain,” (PO p. 545) the strength of the images presented in your ad. Do these images/symbols really grab your attention? Do they seem commonplace or shocking? Do symbols really have much meaning to us anymore? Have we trivialized things that were once important (consider Postman’s example of Christ selling wine)? Why does Postman think trivialization has occurred? Why do you think it has/has not?