Exploring How Visual Images Communicate and Persuade

OSHER 713-001
Dates: Wednesdays, 03/30/16- 05/11/16, No Class on 04/27/16
Times: 1:30 – 3:00 PM
Location: Commander's House, Fort Douglas
Instructors: Kathleen Bingham, Ph.D.

Course Overview

Have you ever wondered how visual images reach out and grab your attention? How it is that images intrigue, communicate, manipulate, and persuade our emotions? We are all audience to a full range of images: movies, photography, cemetery monuments, national parks, art on display. Visual communication or visual rhetoric (persuasion) is often said to deal with appearances rather than reality. Why do we "suspend our disbelief" (Coleridge) when we are audience to images? This class will explore basic theories of visual perception and analyze how images create emotional messages in visual media and in every-day experience.

This class explores basic theories of visual perception and visual analysis of images as contexts for the study of visual messages. Students identify basic principles that underlie understanding and analysis of visual arts, media, photography, and visual theory. Explores: 1) specific types of visual communication: photographs, period artifacts, visual language, graphic and iconic media; 2) visual elements such as color, design, composition, form, etc.; 3) how images persuade (visual rhetoric).

Textbooks


Articles

I will email the articles to you at least one week prior to the class period.
Note: I am happy to exchange any of the articles listed in the syllabus for ones you prefer in “Texts and Selected Articles.” We can talk about this option in class.
Reading Assignments

I will send an email with an attachment of readings at least one week prior to class. You can let me know the articles you want to discuss.
This syllabus is subject to change.

Perception, Image, and Aesthetics

March 30  Plato (Allegory of the Cave, image by email)
           Bang, (6-91)

April 6   Barry, “The Nature and Power of Images” (excerpts)
           Prelli, “Death on Display,” Morris (204-226)

Ap. 10    Barry, “The Language of Images” (excerpts)
           “National Park Landscapes and the Rhetorical Display of Civic Religion,” Holloran, S. Michael; Clark, Gregory (excerpts)

           Rhetoric of Image

Ap. 16    Aristotle, On Rhetoric (handout)
           Hill and Helmer’s, “The Rhetoric of Visual Arguments,” Blair (excerpt)
           Barthes, “Rhetoric of the Image” (33-51)

           Photography, Media, Art, and Film

Ap. 23    Sontag, (excerpts) (3-112), (115-208)

Ap. 27    No Class

May 4     Helmes, Marguerite, “Framing the Fine Arts Through Rhetoric”

May 12    Barry, “Film Logic and Rhetoric,” (191-252)
           Silent and Avant-garde film selections

Texts and Selected Articles


“The Psychology of Rhetorical Images,” Hill Charles A.
“Framing the Fine Arts Through Rhetoric,” Helmes, Marguerite.
“The Rhetoric of Visual Arguments;” Blair, Anthony J.
“Defining Film Rhetoric: The Case of Hitchcock’s Vertigo,” Blakesley, David.


“Visualizing a Bounded Sea: a Case Study in Rhetorical Taxis,” Prelli, Lawrence J.
“National Park Landscapes and the Rhetorical Display of Civic Religion,” Holloran, S. Michael; Clark, Gregory.
“Epideictic and Its Cultural Reception: In Memory of the Firefighters,” John C. Adams.


“Mediating Hilary Rodham Clinton: Television News Practice and Image-Making in the Postmodern Age,” Parry Giles (375-392) (readings)

“To Veil the Threat of Terror: Afghan Women and the Clash of Civilizations in the Imagery of the US. War on Terrorism,” Cloud, Dana.