

# Analyzing a visual

[Life](#), [Emotions](#)



Analyzing a Visual Americans are bombarded with ads and public service announcements every day. They come in the forms of media including television, newspapers, and other forms as well. Because Americans are bombarded with so many ads and public service announcements, the composers need to have reasonable and credible arguments and keep the viewers attention, and to persuade them. Public service announcements are a special kind of ad whose intention is to encourage beneficial actions or donations for a specific cause. A good example of a PSA is the SPCA commercial with Sarah McLachlan which is intended to persuade its viewers to donate money in order help save animals from abuse. The PSA announcement by the SPCA I effective because of its use of pathos and logos; however, the unnecessary length and possibly distractive endorsements/incentives may have distracted viewers from watching the ad in its entirety, or from donating to the organization. The SPCA ad has very strong pathos to convince the viewers that the animals need their help. The commercials use of images, music, and written dialogue all helped to establish ads pathos. The images that were used, were intended to induce a feeling of pity in the viewer, which they did a very good job of doing. The images are used because they are intended to make the viewer believe that if they don't send the money, the very animals that they are seeing will die, and that it will be essentially their fault. The pathos of the ad is further strengthened through the music Played while the images are being shown. Somber music adds to the feeling of pity, and strengthens the SPCA's argument for more money to be donated. The ad further draws on the emotions of the viewers when the written words appear in the ad. Word such

as “ every hour an animal is beaten or abused” or “ they suffer alone and terrified”, all cause an emotional reaction from the viewer. According to Aristotle, strong emotions such as pity, have a very large influence on our judgments and decisions (Cite this). And the ad does a very good job of invoking such emotions through the use of pathos, and other rhetorical strategies. Another rhetorical strategy that was effectively used in the SPCA ad was logos, or the logical appeal to the audience. This ad appeals a person’s logic by telling them that an animal needs their help and that they can help. The audience of the ad will be more inclined to donate if it makes logical sense to them. The logic in this particular ad is that if you donate, then an innocent animal will be saved. Another form of a logical argument that is used is an endorsement by a famous person, in this case Sarah McLaughlin. Her appearance in the ad suggests that if she supports the foundation then the viewer should too. Although the proper message is most likely received by the majority of the audience, not all aspects of the ad work to its favor. One element of the ad that works against its self is the length; it is over 2 minutes long. Considering the average length of a television ad now days is around 30 seconds, 2 minutes is a very long time for a single ad( CITE THIS). The images in the ad could have been shown for a shorter time, and cutting out the unnecessary incentives would all shorten the length, and help to hold the viewers’ attention longer. This length, coupled with the extreme emotional appeal causes some viewers to change the channel, or block out the message. Yet another shortcoming of the ad is the distractive incentive that is given during the middle of the advertisement. The incentive is for a free tote bag and a picture of an animal in a shelter

that your donation will help. This is distracting to the advertisements audience because for the people the rest of the ad is geared toward, the incentive will not make a difference in encouraging them to donate. This is because the ad is geared towards the emotional viewer, and traditionally emotional decisions are not influenced by free gifts and such. The uses of images in the ASPCA ad are an effective means of persuading the viewer to donate money to the organization. However, the addition of somber music further increases the tone of the ad, and also instigates more emotion to the viewer. Also, the strong text appeals to the logic of the viewer which when combined with the emotion forms a very strong argument to the benefit of the advertisement. However, the excessive length of the ad causes viewers to lose interest, which will limit the number of people who will actively donate to the foundation. Also, the incentive for a free tote bag was an unnecessary one, and was most likely a distraction to the viewer rather than an incentive. Although the advertisement has a few short comings, the overall message will be received by most viewers, and the correct rhetorical strategies were used to reach the intended audience. Andrew, You've done a good job of identifying the rhetorical appeals and what components are working to help build those in this PSA. Also, I am so happy to see you seem to have gotten the hang of counterarguing! I think you just need to provide some additional information about the components to provide for a more substantial analysis. You are really close to passing this essay, with a few tweaks I think this will pass! Please feel free to contact me if any of my comments are unclear! Also, make sure to include your citations and Works Cited page in your final draft. | Works Cited <http://losangeles.cbslocal>.

com/2011/05/04/is-the-aspcas-tear-jerking-commercial-deceptive/  
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