

Description of visual rhetoric



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

According to Blakesley and Brooke, naming of objects through words and images can be considered as mainly rhetorical. In visual rhetoric, it is the perspective and the attitude of those who name which are essential. They are influencing others by injecting their own, personal opinions regarding something, or in the case discussed by Blakesley and Brooke, the pipe (Blakesley, Brooke and Miltner). The painter of the pipe who placed the words saying that it is not a pipe is mainly influencing the observers what to think about that painting.

Since the person who created the painting says it is not a pipe, then it may not really be a pipe, even though by convention, it looks like a pipe. It influences the interpretation of those who see or hear about it, and basically affects their outlook towards the object. Even though they are oriented that the one on the painting really look like a pipe, the observers were made to be believed that is not a pipe by the one who painted it by putting words into it saying it is not a pipe.

Basically, the visuals and texts that we see greatly affect our judgment, where both visual and textual representations are linked in the “parallel acts of believing, interpreting, persuading, and identifying,” according to David Blakesley and Collin Brooke. The third person, according to Miltner, is created by the collaboration of two people. These two breathe life to another being, someone invisible yet separately different from the two. This third person emerges from the difference in perspectives of the two working artists, where they have both contributed in the third person’s existence.

As these two artists collaborate and contribute, they are feeding or giving life to the third person. Even though this third person is invisible, he is

manifested by the two artists themselves who are working in unison. Their output is not theirs alone, it is to be shared by both of them, along with the third person that has been created through their collaboration. These two working artists may be different from each other, but as soon as they contribute to create as certain task, their contributions breathe life to the third person.

It is also known as the third mind, the fusion of the two independent minds or ideas, wherein it is brought about by their contributions and their collaborations in coming up with a certain work. Also according to Mitler, the meeting of the verbal and the visual keeps an open dialogue between the poet and the artists, instead of fully combining their works. It is an “ongoing discussion” wherein the debaters are the eyes and the ears. According to Mitchell, the photographic essay is the dramatization of various questions on itself in a way that it is presented as “an emergent form of mixed, composite art. (Mitchell)”

This is comparatively the same with the Enculturation picture theorists’ idea where it is mixture of composite art, of verbal and visuals for the enculturation theorists, and of language and photography for the photographic essay. Photography and language are terms different from each other, but in the context of photographic essay, these two are closely linked. Photographs are then considered as a “message without a code,” but with the introduction of language, it absorbs meanings in itself, turning photography into a language capable of conveying messages.

The photograph itself is the code that needs to be identified in order to convey the messages it is supposed to convey. Photography then becomes

rhetorical, similar to the verbal-visual confusion - or collaboration. Nowadays, pictures - photographs are not only for the aesthetic sense. They hold in themselves several messages whose meanings would depend on the observers to interpret for themselves. But usually, what the observers interpret are the intended messages brought about by those who took the photograph.

It can be their way of saying what they want to say; they are the ones who impose the meaning of the photographs firsthand. With the complexities of photography and language, there were several ways made in order to fully understand them. The photograph alone is considered as the message without a code, and adding the textual description or the language; you are putting the code inside the message for it to be understood by the recipients of the message. A way to understand the messages brought about by these photographs are by putting them into two divisions, the connotation and the denotation.

It is the same as what is meant literally or from the outside or what is meant beyond the words or meant from the inside, if you would care to look further, deeper in the photographs. The photographic essay composed both of the picture and the texts are said to be a process of continuous exchange between the artist or the photographer and the writer. The text is a separate entity from the photograph, and is used individually to highlight points in each other, like for the text, it highlights points found in the photograph, or the photograph itself highlights what is on the text.

Both stand alone yet both works in unison in the composition of the photographic essay. The photographic essay is usually associated with

political reforms and leftists agenda that is why it offers a certain resistance. It is a fight against the convention, and has been the subject for criticism, for it is also used to criticize beliefs or established ideas. Photographic essay in its truest sense captures in total stillness the facts about life, that as you subjects it to criticisms, the more it gains experience, the more it is able to serve its purpose of giving out the opinions of both the artists and the writers.