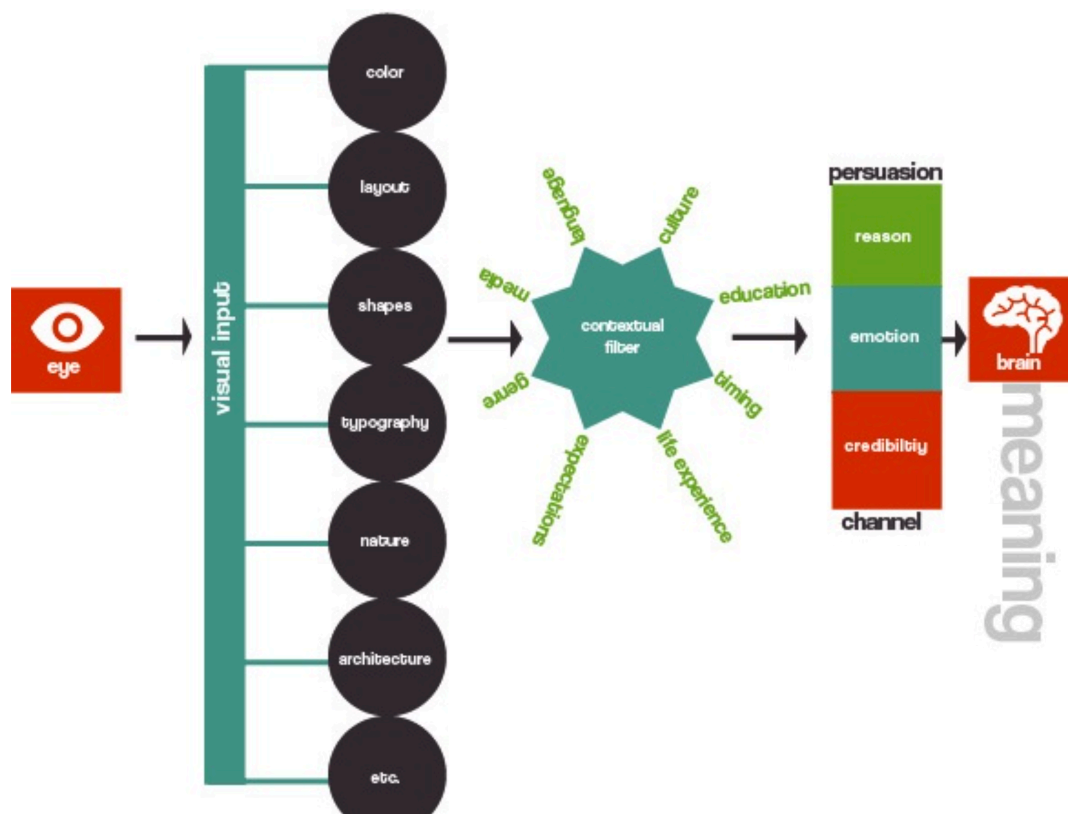


# WEEK 6 - Visual Rhetoric

## Intro to Visual Rhetoric

Visual Rhetoric refers to how we are persuaded by the things we see.



Rhetoric: The art/study of writing or speaking as a means of persuasion.

“Visual rhetoric is the art of effective communication through visual elements such as images, typography, and texts. Visual rhetoric encompasses the skill of visual literacy and the ability to analyze images for their form and meaning.[1] Drawing on techniques from semiotics and rhetorical analysis, visual rhetoric expands on visual literacy as it examines the structure of an image with the focus on its persuasive effects on an audience.”

*Wikipedia - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visual\\_rhetoric](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visual_rhetoric)*

Rhetoric is typically known as the “art of persuasion”

When we look at the diagram above, we can see there are some parts to this.

The eye - Which sees the visual presentation.

The Visual Input - The presentation which has [color] [layout] [shapes] [typography] [nature] [architecture] and so on

The contextual filter - [genre] [media] [language] [culture] [education] [timing] [life experience] [expectations]

The Persuasion - [reason] [emotion] [credibility]

The meaning - The meaning behind it all

These are very important. As we know, things like color can effect the way people feel and thus can change the outcome of the presentation.

The contextual filter is also important. For example different cultures will / will not tolerate certain things. Timing is also

another good example, one of which is in comedy. The difference between a good joke and a bad joke can often be the timing. Did people have enough time to “get over it?”. There are examples for every context.

Persuasion is also important because we need to close the deal. To do this we need to speak to the viewer on some level. We either need to appeal to their emotion, appeal to their logic or convince them we are credible. Is this manipulation? The answer to this is subjective and subject to context. IMHO it is up to /and the responsibility of the individual to be able to spot lies. My rule of thumb is believe nothing because it's all fake. In most cases, we are the subject of an attempt at manipulation. We can go further onto this topic and

raise the argument that everyone does this to some degree. Either way, the outcome is/should be the sale of the product or thing.

Remember that this is theory. It is not black and white. For example, can we argue that everything in nature that is visible to the eye a product of visual rhetoric? Possibly. I argue that it is very possible.

Others argue that for something to be visual rhetoric, someone must of intended for it to communicate it like in an ad or something like this, which I personally do not agree with as nature itself does seem to me to try to communicate things to us.



Ever notice that a lot of animals and plants that are poisonous have very bright characteristics to them visually? I argue that it is nature's way of warning everyone to back off. In a way you can say it is visual rhetoric.

### Rhetorical Effect:

When an image moves us emotionally or intellectually.

Visual Rhetoric: The ability of images to

persuade and influence the emotions, views, and behaviours of viewers.

<https://thevisualcommunicationguy.com/2014/02/13/what-is-visual-rhetoric/>

<https://colorado.aiga.org/2013/01/visual-rhetoric-an-introduction-for-students-of-visual-communication/>

<https://colorado.aiga.org/2013/01/visual-rhetoric-part-2-tools-for-design-and-analysis/>

Book: Rhetoric in Graphic Design by Barbara Emanuel

Slide examples:

- <http://tinyurl.com/y6wjysb6>

- <http://tinyurl.com/yb9u68dq>

## Basic Characteristics of Visual Rhetoric:

### Symbolic Action

- To qualify as visual rhetoric, an image must go beyond serving as a sign, however, and be symbolic, with that image only indirectly connected to its referent.

### Human Intervention

- Visual rhetoric requires human action in the process of creation and in the process of interpretation.

### Presence of an Audience

- Visual elements are arranged and

modified by a rhetor not simply for self-expression but also for communication with an audience.

## Rhetoric as a basis of communication

(According to Aristotle) Persuasion comes from 3 places.

### Pathos (Emotion)

- To make the audience feel something about what is presented to it
- Children, animals, illness, memories, etc... “Tugs at your heart strings”

### Ethos (Ethics)

- To make the audience decide right or wrong about what is being presented to it
- Political issues, national beliefs,

religious issues, etc...

- Typically has contrasting colors symbolizing the difference between good and evil.

Logos (Logic)

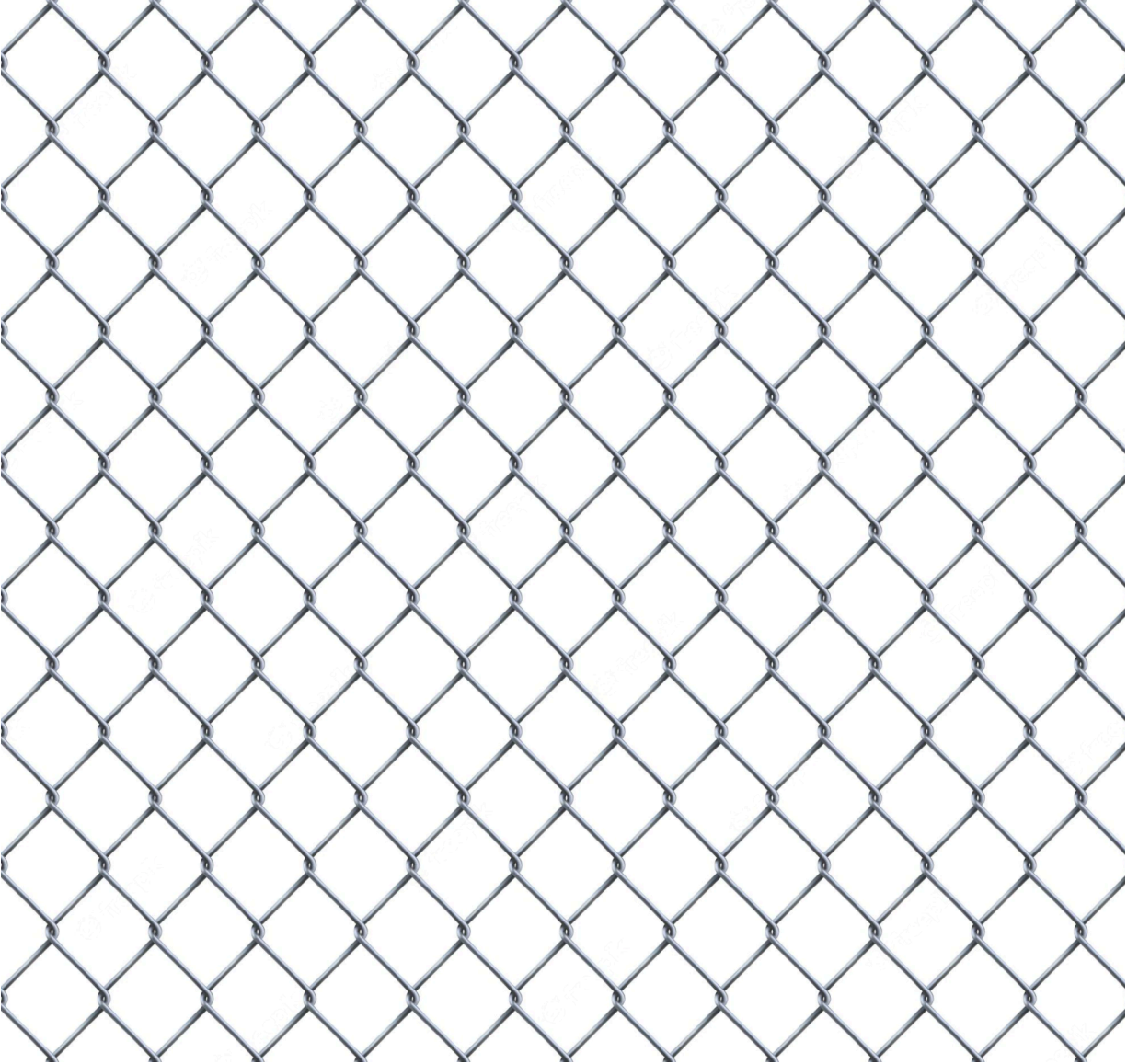
- To make the audience think about what is presented to it
- Statistics, facts, authorities, etc...
- Very straightforward, and has a very scientific, factual approach.
- Appealing the Pathos (emotion), Ethos (ethics), and Logos (logic)
- Forming a good argument & the components of a good argument (logos)

Ethos, pathos or logos?

Examples:



+



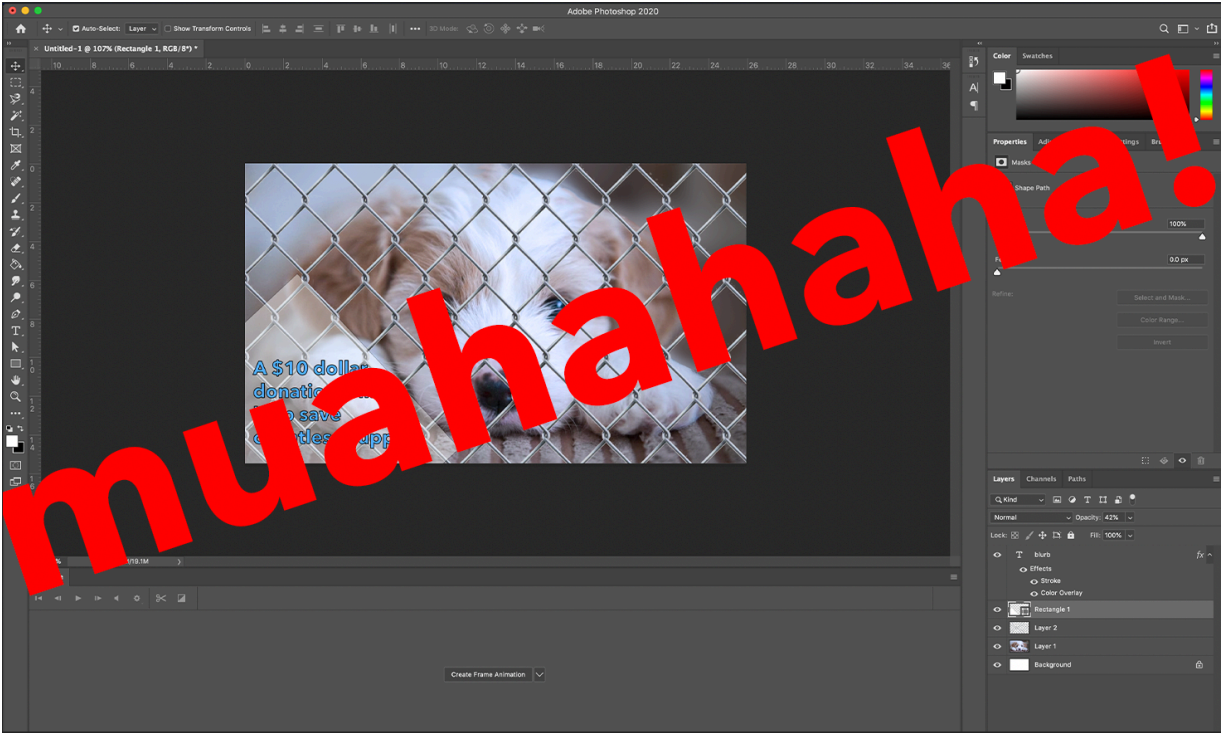
||





A \$10 dollar  
donation will  
help save  
countless puppies

But really...



As we can see, this cute puppy can quickly go from being cute and probably happy, to being in a dog pound, locked up! Very sad... And not real. But the outcome is, how did it make you *feel*? Did it appeal to your emotions?

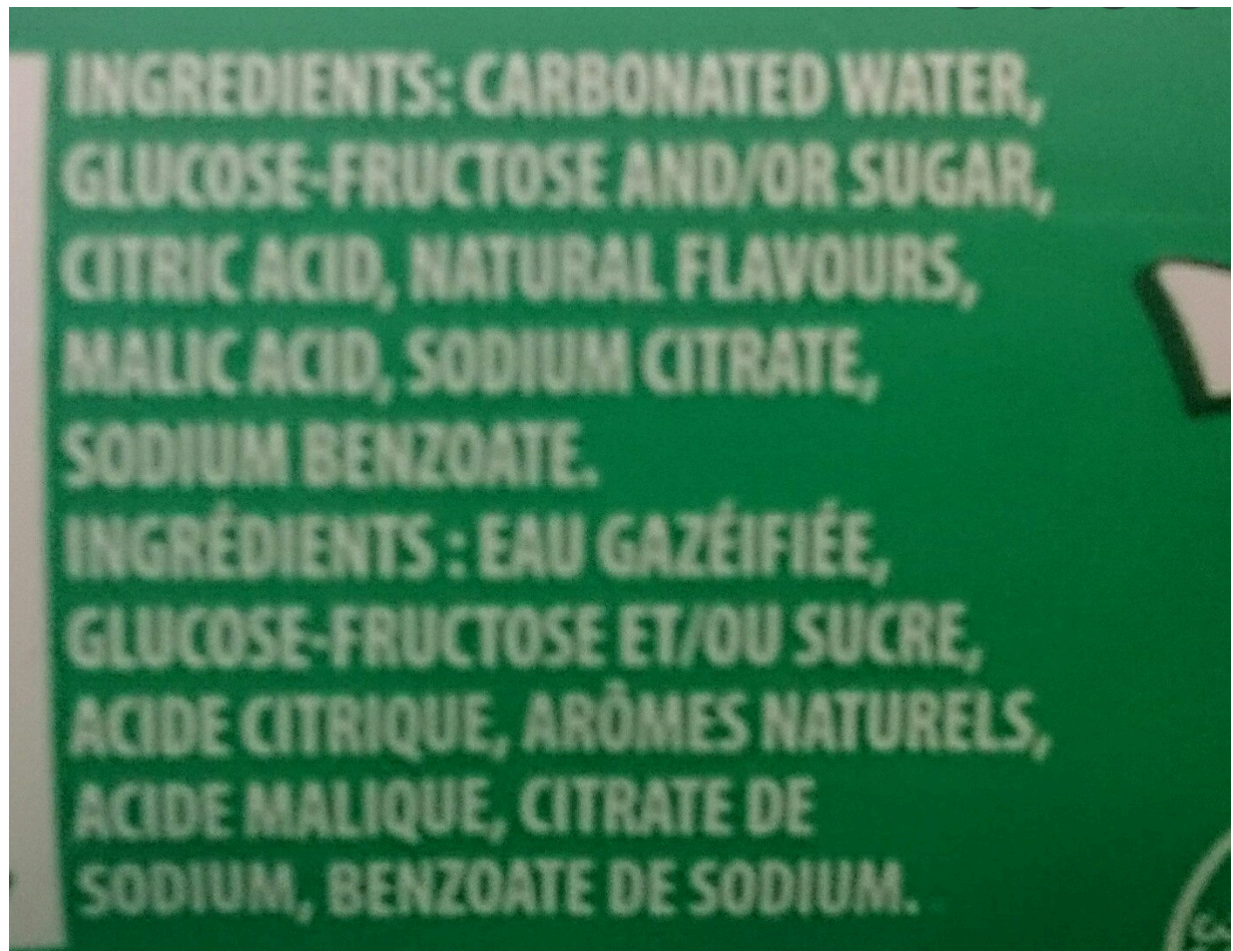
Let's see some more examples:



Wait, what? Is it really worth it to sacrifice **everything** for something you believe? What if what you believe is flawed? Define "everything". This is a good example of \_\_\_\_\_ though. This word salad nonsense makes people think that they are ethically onto something. Does Nike really care about ethics? Or sales of shoes and clothes?



Oooo! I guess its safe to drink a case of 7up a day now! No need to worry about sugar intake anymore because its all natural, So the logical thing to do is drink it all down!



Wait...

## Visual rhetoric devices

- Simile
- metaphor
- personification
- metonymy

- synecdoche
- pun
- hyperbole
- antithesis
- irony
- parody
- allegory

Refer to the link here to get more context on this as there is a lot!

<https://examples.yourdictionary.com/examples-of-rhetorical-devices.html>