Advertising and Color Use: How It Affects Our Emotions

Advertisements are a part of peoples' lives around the globe whether we like it or not. Advertisements reach us through television in the form of commercials; advertisements appear in printed media such as magazines, newspapers, or billboards, they're on websites in general and are on social networking sites such as Facebook, Myspace, and Twitter to name a few. Kevin Tavin (2002) states:

Advertisements penetrate and pervade our visual culture and play a significant and profound role in the symbolic and material milieu of everyday life. Contemporary life can be better understood by critically investigating advertisements as part of a larger social construction of the visual experience. (p.38)

In this curriculum, the students will be viewing advertisements and analyzing how color usage and imagery affects emotions. The students will deliberate whether or not an advertisement is trying to sell something or is plainly trying to get a message across about an issue. In the first five lessons of this curriculum, the students will have had in-depth discussions about colors, human emotions, and the analyzing of advertisements. As a result of the discussions, the students will design their own advertisement dealing with an issue they may identify with on a personal level.

Color plays a big part in advertisement development and design. Color is thought to be a tool that is used to induce powerful communications across networks and to viewers around the globe. If you're looking at a foreign website, advertisement, or if you're visiting a foreign country, although you may not understand the verbiage, the understanding of color meaning can be your answer to any

questions regarding an advertisement, website, or even artwork.

Suk and Irtel (2008) state:

The perception of color is essential to human's visual experience and is the most powerful information channel among human senses… viewing color from other visual experiences proclaiming that the connection between the central characteristic of the physical properties and the experience of color is arbitrary, unlike some visual qualities such as shape, depth, location, and movement. This makes color a compelling visual cue for persuasive communication purposes. (p. 64)

In order to motivate students about color, I feel they should be asked first if colors have hidden meanings. Since this curriculum is targeted for the middle school aged student, particularly eighth grade, it would be interesting to hear the individual responses or general consensus of the class. It has already been concluded that colors have meanings- in fact according to the PANTONE reference guide, colors have many meanings positive and negative. As a teacher, I understand students may want to question and understand why they are using PANTONE guides. What's so different about PANTONE compared to the generic color wheels we're used to learning from in our art classes? Well, there's really no difference between the two other than the fact that PANTONE plays a major part in advertising because PANTONE claims to be a "world-renowned authority on color" and color matching. According to the PANTONE website, the name actually came from its founder Lawrence Herbert in 1963. PANTONE is known "worldwide as the standard language for color communication from designer to manufacturer to retailer to customer". A good example to use with art students of PANTONE (other than using a book for reference) would be paint samples from a home improvement store or paint store. This will give students an opportunity to have their personal handheld visuals to analyze the

meanings of selected colors.

Why is color important to know and understand when advertising is involved? Leatrice Eiseman (2006) says:

Color informs, bringing instant comprehension, calling attention, delivering information, creating an identity and explaining the characteristics of a product (or service). Above all, colors evoke emotions and these emotions must somehow connect with the essence of the product in the advertisement. (p.66)

Colors have meanings, they evoke emotions, and they must be powerful enough to persuade its viewers. Take for example the ASPCA website. The website is about the prevention of cruelty toward animals. If a viewer looks at the website, it's primarily composed of shades of gray with imagery of helpless, sad looking animals (also known as propaganda). However, there is the dominating orange toolbar at the top of the webpage with words such as "Fight animal cruelty!"; "Adopt"; and "Donate" to name a few. My students will be lead to analyze these colors and imagery. According to the PANTONE guide, orange is a positive color. If a viewer pays close attention they will notice the "P" of "ASPCA" is the only letter in color, which is orange. The "P" means prevention, which in this case of animal cruelty, prevention is a good thing- it's a positive thing. A goal to be reached by students in this class is to be able to find hidden meanings and be able to analyze what they see with a critical and color savvy eye.

As said earlier, colors evoke emotions. In my opinion, an abbreviated definition of human emotions is feelings felt by an individual or individuals; it encompasses both positive and negative responses. Human emotions can be expressed physically through body language or can be characteristically expressed through the face by an individual. Human emotions can be spawned from personal issues in an individual's life such as a happy event, a tragedy, something that scares the person, a

comedy, etc. World issues such as the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States, the tsunami in Thailand, the earthquake in Haiti, or more recently the presumed death of twenty-nine miners from New Zealand (who were victims of a major mining explosion) can evoke a series of emotions. Human emotions are a psychological trait; it's the mental or behavioral characteristics of an individual or individuals.

According to Rorty (1978),

The significant cause of an emotion is the set of events-the entire causal history-that explains the efficacy of the immediate or precipitating cause. Often the significant cause is not in the immediate past; it may be an event, or a series of events, long forgotten, that formed a set of dispositions which are triggered by the immediate cause. (p. 143)

On the List of Human Emotions website, it is thought by many psychologists that human emotions are categorized into a group of basic emotions; emotions as basic as happiness, sadness, anger, fear, disgust, and surprise. From the basic emotions group each emotion has a subcategory. For example, sadness is a basic emotion; if one lists off depression and/or grief, those would be varieties or subcategories of sadness. Like the PANTONE guide of color, human emotions have many traits just like colors have many meanings, positive and negative.

Since students will learn about the meaning of colors, how colors are used to evoke emotions, as well as the basic human emotions- how do all of these concepts collaborate and transpire into what we know as an advertisement. Xu and Wyer (2010) believe that advertisements are intended to persuade. In advertising, creativity is a main component to its success. "Consumers are often in a defensive processing stance because ads are vested-interest sources" (Smith & Yang, 2009, p.936). When looking at an issue such as persuasion in advertising, I feel it's directly linked to subliminal messages or images. The students will be allowed to focus on an issue and pass a

message along subliminally through their color choices and imagery or directly through choice of words- allowing them to exert more control in the ad according to Klass (1958). Advertisements such as anti-drug campaigns use words in their ads to add extra meaning to their cause. Students will be made aware that in advertising, not only does color matter with imagery, but it also matters with text.

The students will discuss all aspects of ads, websites, and print media in regard to color choice and what types of emotions are intended for the viewer. I feel that teaching students about how color in advertisements can evoke our emotions is important not necessarily because this curriculum will help them read ads better and become better consumers in popular culture, but the overall concept is for the students to learn about how to describe what they see, analyze the parts of what they described, and interpret the meaning of everything they viewed. In addition to why I feel this curriculum is important to teach, I feel this curriculum will aid students in gaining a sense of awareness of the world around them and help them continue to grow as intellectual individuals.

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Curriculum Theme: Advertising and Color Use: How it affects our emotions

Teacher: Caryl Cathou

Grade Level: Middle School —8th grade

State Fine Art Goals: I. VA8-1.2; III. VA8-3.2; VI. VA8-6.3

State Media Arts Goals (if any): n/a

State Language Arts Goals (if any): n/a

General goals for the curriculum (describe in 2-5 sentences):

In this curriculum, the students will explore advertising and the meanings behind color. The students will discover through mass media such as television, websites, and magazines how the colors, music, and issues in the advertisements affect our emotions. In advertising there is a reason why certain colors are being used. It will be up to my students to study and figure out why certain colors are used in advertisements. The end result of this curriculum is for students to design an advertisement about an issue they may identify with.

Lesson title (name each lesson to reflect a general unit theme)	Visual Exemplars (list specific images and artists, TV shows, and/or books that you plan to use for each lesson)	Motivation / dialogue (list basic issues and questions to be explored during classroom dialogue and any other motivational strategies that you plan to use for each lesson)	Media / process (list artistic processes that your students will engage in during each lesson)	Concepts and/or design principles to be learned during each lesson	Closure (list an assessment strategy that can be used at the end of each lesson)
Lesson (class period) 1 What do you mean color?	I will bring in a book to class called Color: Messages and Meanings A Pantone Color Resource. We will be discussing this class period about the basic and in depth meanings of colors from a Pantone color source which is typically used in advertising.	"Ok, so today we're going to learn about color beyond the color wheel. Meaning beyond the basic concepts of color that you've learned about so far (primary, complementary, analogous, etc.). Who can tell me about color? Do colors have meanings? What kind of meanings or feelings can you think of that certain colors evoke? Critics and experts such as Leatrice Eiseman say that colors evoke our emotions. Do you agree or disagree?"	Part I: Students will participate and lead in a critical analysis of color meanings. Part II: Students will be placed in groups and develop their own color tests to carry out on competing groups.	The concept of this lesson is for students to understand that colors have meanings and they need to be able to understand the meanings of color choice especially in advertising which is what we will explore later on.	Through discussion the students will be able to discuss, understand, and recall the meanings of color learned earlier in the class period.

Lesson (class period) 2 Human Emotions	Today I would like to discuss with the students about the 6 basic human emotions. I will use the book Emotions revealed: Recognizing faces and feelings to improve communication and emotional life by Paul Ekman as well as show images of the facial expressions. The six basic emotions are happiness, sadness, anger, disgust, fear, and surprise. It is believed that these emotions are the "root" of other emotions such as love, depression, pride, anxiety, etc.	Part I: "Today I would like to discuss this class period about human emotions. Since we just discussed yesterday about colors and color meaning we're going to match up color to emotions. Although human emotions are not the focal point of this unit, they do play a role in our final assignment about advertising." Part II: "Who can tell me what different emotions we experience from day to day? Does anyone know what the six "basic" emotions are? From what you learned yesterday, you may refer to notes, who can match up colors to these emotions?"	The students will engage in a "bowl" game developed by the teacher. The teacher will have sets of questions to ask the students to review them on color meaning and human emotions.	The concept of this lesson is to understand the basics of human emotions and their subcategories and match the appropriate color(s) to those emotions. (This will help them in color choice for their ad campaigns later in the unit)	Through discussion the students will be able to discuss, understand, and recall the meanings of color and the basic human emotions.
Lesson (class period) 3 How do we express emotions through color?	I will discuss with students how colors and emotions go hand in hand. I will show artwork by Gerhard Richter; Andy Warhol; and Roy Lichtenstein.	"So today is where we make the connection between color and emotion in work. What artworks have you seen that you believe stirs up emotions just by its color? Or color on imagery?"	Make a list of the artworks discussed today- describe why you think the color has meaning in the work.	The concept of this lesson is to make the connection in work between colors and emotions.	The students will reflect on the artworks discussed in a journal entry.
Lesson (class period) 4 Advertisements: How do they make us feel?	In this lesson we will discuss advertisements and logos that may catch our eye or may be about an issue that we feel strongly about. I will show many magazine ads, websites, and videos from you tube of advertisements. To name a few examples, I will use the ASPCA website; I will play the song Kodachrome by Paul Simon; Folgers "Peter comes home for Christmas"; Hallmark logo/website/commercials; Pampers "Peace on Earth" commercial.	"We're getting closer! Since we are talking about advertisements, what advertisements or logos do you know of that make you feel some type of emotion? The reason why I'm throwing logos in here is because most logos are a part of an advertisement- shoe logos, card logos, food logos, electronics logos, etc. Let's start a list of advertisements- positive and negative…who wants to start?"	Part I: The students will brainstorm about issues that evoke emotions. A discussion on ads and which ones grab their attention will be discussed and viewed. Part II: The students will complete a minimum of 5 thumbnail sketches of an issue or issues that they may relate to on a personal level.	The concept of this lesson is to understand messages and meanings that an ad is trying to convey across to its viewers.	The students will show proof of their brainstorming through thumbnail sketches.
Lesson (class period) 5 Analyzing the combination of color and emotion in advertising	In this lesson I will discuss with students about colors in advertisements and/or logos and how they are meant to evoke our emotions. I will use the same examples as used in lesson 4, but analyze color usage in a more in depth discussion. Lesson 5 is the "meat and potatoes" lesson. This lesson is going to be the end result of everything we've learned so far about colors, emotions, and advertisements.	"Ok! So now that we have learned about the background meanings of colors, we've learned about the basic emotions, we've learned about how emotions and colors collaborate, we've learned about advertisements—what can you tell me about how color and color choice work together in an ad to evoke emotions? Color choice is obviously important, imagery is important, and what kinds of emotions are evoked from an ad and by the viewer are important. Who can tell me about an ad that has struck an emotional chord with you? Can you recall the colors used? What was it about?"	The students will pick one of the 5 thumbnail sketches and begin to develop a more concrete idea about their advertisement.	The concept of this lesson is to finally put to use all of the discussions and research on color, color meanings, emotions, and advertisements and be able to pick apart ads to understand why they use the colors that they use.	The students will pick their best idea from their thumbnail sketches and develop a more concrete idea- labeling, notes, etc.

Lesson (class period) 6 Photoshop	Today we're going to go over the basics of the Photoshop program. In order to design their ads, students will need to know and understand their way around the computer program. (The program itself will be my visual exemplar as well as a handout on the basic tools.)	"Today class we're going to learn the basics of Adobe Photoshop. Who in here knows how to use this program? Those of you, who have used this program, think of this class period as a refresher on Photoshop."	Today the students will become familiar with the tools of Photoshop. Students will be allowed to access the internet and use Google images to copy and paste to a blank document. This will give students a chance to manipulate an image.	The concept of this lesson is for students to become computer literate and see the benefits of using technology in the art classroom.	The students will have "practice" works from Photoshop.
Lesson (class period) 7 Image Search	The students will be searching for images today or they may use the in-class digital camera and photo area to come up with their own images. Before getting started, they will be briefed about avoiding copyrighted materials. Visual exemplar will be Google Images.	"Before we get started today, I know you can't wait to pull images or scan ones of your own, but it's important that I clear copyright information with you first. Who knows what a copyright is? Provided you DO NOT sell your finished products, under the Fair Use Law for Educational Multimedia you may use images for educational purposes in your work. Refer to this website: http://www.educationworld.com/a_curr/curr280d.shtml	The students will be searching for images through Google images or they may scan their own personal images that they may be able to use for manipulation in their ad.	The concept of this lesson is to be aware of copyright infringements.	The students will work on pulling images and will reflect on the meaning of copyrighting in a journal entry.
Lesson (class period) 8 Image Search (continued)	The students will finish searching for images today. The students should have a variety/collection of images on hand that relate to their chosen issue for their ad. Visual exemplar will be Google Images.	"Today we're going to finish collecting images. Once you finish collecting images I'm going to give you the rest of the class period to sort through the images that you pulled-maybe categorize them so it will make things a little more organized and easier for you to gather your thoughts about the issue you have chosen for this assignment."	The students will review the images pulled for their advertisements and judge whether or not it would work for their composition. They may make marks on their sketches of particular images they may want to use in certain areas of the advertisement.	The concept of this assignment is to help students become organized with their collection of images.	The students will continue pulling images for their advertisements.
Lesson (class period) 9 Ad development (continued)	The students may refer back to their chosen best thumbnail sketch/idea for their issue and begin manipulating images for their ad. Visual exemplar will be teacher's demonstration and other printed ads.	"Today you all are going to start placing images on your blank document today. If any of you need help please raise your hand and I will come to you. I will be coming around anyway to check on everyone. Please remember you have your sheets with the Photoshop tools information on it- use these as a reference!"	This will be the students' official work day on their final assignment.	The concept of this lesson is to be able to make decisions on their work and figure out problems on their own by referring to notes.	The students will be working on furthering the development of their idea using technology in the classroom.
Lesson (class period) 10 Ad development and design (continued)	The students will continue working on their ads. Visual exemplar will be teacher's demonstration and other printed ads.	"Today you all will be working on your ads. Most of you should be either halfway or almost halfway through. Pace yourselves on your time. If you've sketched everything out and you have your images you shouldn't have a problem finishing on time."	Students will be using this day as a studio day.	The concept of this lesson is time management.	The students will continue designing their advertisements.

Lesson (class period) 11 Ad development and design (continued)	The students will continue and finish their advertisements today. Visual exemplar will be teacher's demonstration and other printed ads.	"Ok, so tomorrow we're going to be discussing these works. I'll have this written on the board tomorrow, but you will want to start thinking about how to discuss your work. All of you will want to be able to Describe, Analyze, Interpret, and Judge the works as well as your own- these four words are known as Feldman's Method of Art Criticism. So as a heads up just be ready to discuss these aspects of your work tomorrow in class."	Students will be using this as a final work day for designing their ads.	The concept of this lesson is time management. This is the last day for students to complete their work. They have been given three days to complete the final assignment-so much like real advertisers- they need to understand they have a deadline to meet.	The students will continue to design and complete their advertisements.
Lesson (class period) 12 Ad presentations	The students will discuss and carry out peer to peer critiques of their works. Visual exemplars will be student work.	"Did everyone enjoy this assignment? How many of you are going to have a more critical eye on advertisements? Today we're going to hang our work on the wall and we're going to discuss and give peer to peer critiques on the works. When we get to your work I'm going to ask the class what issue they think your ad is about. Then we're going to have you, the artist, describe your work and after you do that you will pick a classmate to critique your work- positive comments are encouraged since you all have worked hard on developing your ideas and putting them on paper. We'll try to get all of these in today- if not we'll finish first thing the next time we meet."	No processes today- just discussion and peer-to-peer critiques.	The concept of today's lesson is for the student to be able to discuss their work as well as have one of their peers give a critique on the work.	The students will orally discuss their works in front of the class using the Feldman's Method of Art Criticism.

Lesson # 5

Title: Analyzing the combination of color and emotion in advertising

Grade: 8th (middle school)

Teacher: Caryl Cathou

Length: 45 minutes

State fine arts goals: I. VA8-1.2; III. VA8-3.2; VI. VA8-6.3

State media arts goals (if any): n/a

State language arts goals (if any): n/a

Objectives:

- The students will recall the meaning or connection of colors and emotions.
- The students will identify color meaning and intended emotions in advertisements.
- The students will apply creative thinking to develop a concrete idea for their advertisement.

Concepts and vocabulary:

Advertisement: Also known as an "ad", this is something either visual or audial that can be broadcast over airwaves or displayed in public on a sign. An advertisement is typically trying to sell a product or it may be there to seize your attention about an issue in the world whether good or bad.

Logo: A logo is part of visual imagery- it's an identifier of

a particular product.

PANTONE: PANTONE is a "world-renowned authority on color" and color matching. The name came from its founder Lawrence Herbert in 1963. PANTONE is known "worldwide as the standard language for color communication from designer to manufacturer to retailer to customer".

Imagery: Images/pictures describing a characteristic. Ex. The clothes designer used a lot of sexual imagery in his ad.

Emphasis: The focal point of a particular area of a composition.

Teacher materials:

- Computer/Smart Board (project imagery from websites and videos of advertisements from You Tube and Google Images
- Variety of printed materials such as magazines and newspapers to show in print what advertisement looks like
- Examples, I will use the ASPCA website; Folgers commercial "Peter comes home for Christmas"; Hallmark logo/website/commercials; Pampers "Peace on Earth" commercial; AThinLine.org website- this deals with issues that students can relate to; etc.

Student materials:

- Paper
- Pencil

Motivation:

- What can you tell me about colors and emotions?
- Today we're going to discuss how advertisements use imagery and color to "spark up" our emotions or cause a reaction.
- We're going to start the class by viewing and discussing advertisements, logos, websites, videos, and print media. So let's begin!

Procedures (detailed step-by-step description including dialogue):

1. Discuss advertisements and/or logos that evoke our emotions (20 minutes)

- The students will view and discuss advertisements, logos, websites, videos, and print media such as: ASPCA website; Folgers "Peter comes home for Christmas" commercial; Hallmark website/logo/commercials; Pampers "Peace on Earth" commercial; students will listen to a song called Kodachrome by Paul Simon; AThinLine.org (about digital discrimination and other issues amongst young people); Toxel.com or TheTruth.com (anti-smoking ads); Declare Yourself.com (a page about voting); and Anti-drug ads. (Students will be encouraged to name sites or commercials that may come to mind for the class to view.)

Questions

o   Have any of the advertisements shown today made you feel any type of emotion? If so which ones?

o   Is there a particular ad not mentioned that you feel strongly about?

o   Which ads do you think are meant to get a message across?

o   Which ads are meant to sell something?

o   Why do you think some ads make you feel the way you do? Is it a personal connection with the imagery used or is it the colors or an emphasized color that draws you in? Is it both?

   2. Analyze colors used in advertisements (15 minutes)

   ▪ The students will analyze in-depth the colors used in the selected advertisements.
   ▪ The students will discuss their opinions on color choice in the ads viewed.

Questions

o   Do you think that the colors used in these

advertisements determine whether or not the ad is meant to sell or spread a message? Why or why not?

o   Who can tell me what PANTONE is? We discussed this earlier in our vocabulary review.

o   Why do you think some printed ads or even television ads, especially anti-drug campaigns use white letters in their ads?

o   Do you think the advertisers made good or reasonable color choices to capture the overall "feel" for the ad?

Closure: Design decision and Dismissal (5 minutes)

- ▪ The students will use the remaining class time to pick one of their 5 drawn thumbnail sketches about an issue/issues (drawn from the day before).
- ▪ The students will be dismissed.

Learning center/ back up activity:

- ▪ After picking their best/favorite thumbnail sketch, the students will develop a more concrete idea for the design.
- ▪ The students will begin labeling/making notes about

image ideas and color choice.