

CMST 1001.02 20th and 21st Century Visual Rhetoric

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R 2:35-3:50pm (ten weekly 75-min. sessions: 1/12-3/23)

Course Description

Visuals long have helped structure the ways in which identities and ideologies are communicated rhetorically—that is, they shape our perceptions about who represents a nation’s ideals, what constitutes a family, or whether a political movement should be taken seriously. As the twentieth century progressed, images from newspapers, magazines, film, and television became an increasingly pervasive part of public and political culture. From anti-suffrage postcards at the turn of the twentieth century to images of napalm during Vietnam, visual rhetoric has contributed to our conversations about politics, culture, and community, in ways that continue to matter for democratic engagement.

This class will examine various moments during which images played an important role in shaping debate about national culture and practices of citizenship. The primary texts for the course will be images, television clips, and digital media, alongside essays that introduce students to concepts in visual rhetoric and theories of communication. The course will meet for ten 75-minute sessions and might include guest lecturers from the Department of Communication Studies. In addition to those listed above (anti-suffrage postcards and photographs from Vietnam), representative image-texts and artists include:

- Norman Rockwell (*Four Freedoms, The Problem We All Live With*)
- Andy Warhol (*Jackie I, Jackie II, Jackie III; Red Jackie; Orange Marilyn*)
- *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*
- Guerilla Girls (*Do women have to be naked to get into the Met Museum? George Bush, “The Education President”*)
- News and photojournalism coverage, Hillary Rodham Clinton
- The Civil Rights Memorial
- The 9/11 Memorial
- Obama administration (Flickr photograph site; Instagram; Vines)

Evaluation

Students will be evaluated based on class participation (10%), three short (2-3 page) image analyses (60%), and a small group leadership/write-up (30%).