

Student Name: Kaan Hanrahan

Student Number: 1904580

Programme of Study: Computer Games Design

Module: M4X01560

Task's are laid out in the order I received them:

Task One: Semiotic Analysis (Ryan's Task) = 536 words

Task Two: Manifesto (Julia's Task) = 573 words

Task Three: Reflective Writing (Jon's Task) = 581 words

Ryan L. Moule.

Task One: Semiotic Analysis (Ryan's Task)

This first task will show me deconstructing an interesting Public Service Announcement picture that was shown to the world, at a first glance this image conveys a simple message, but through theories of semiotics, another view can be seen of the same image.

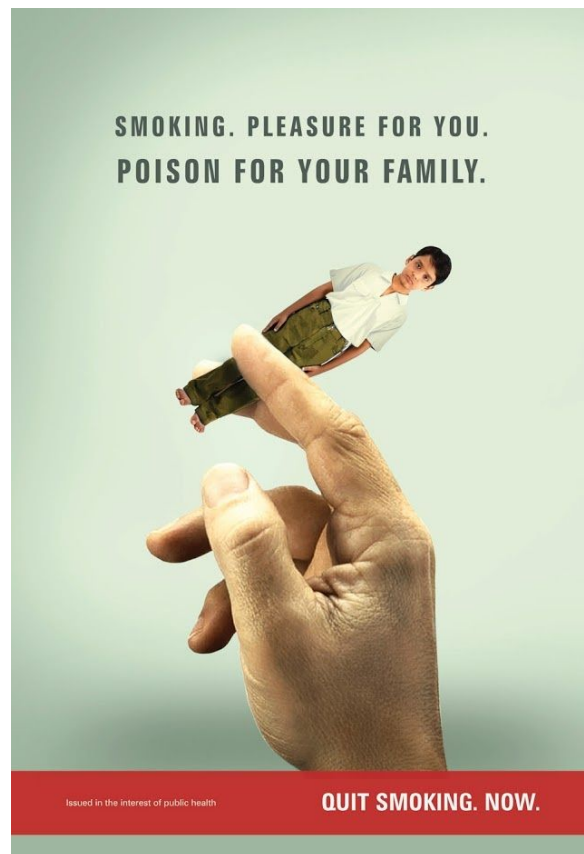
Many popular authors have talked about the idea that our age is defined by 'fake news' (Carson, 2018), 'alternative facts' (Blake, 2017) and 'false narratives' (Phillips, 2018), so this raises the question of do we see what they want us to see? Through these subtle changes in our culture, we have been somewhat conditioned to believe that what we see is what it is, but this whole idea can be turned upside down when you start using semiotics to break down a piece of culture and determine the true aspects.

Charles Peirce Sanders states that "nothing is a sign unless it is interpreted as a sign" (1931: 58). The forefather of semiotics portrays that there are sign of empty vessels until they are invested with meaning, these signs can take the form of words, objects, images and the human senses, smell and taste.

When analysing a piece of information using semiotic formulae, there are keywords that must be understood - denoted and connoted. Denoted is described to be a sign of

something, to indicate and to take as face value. While connoted is quite the opposite, it means to invoke a deeper feeling or idea in addition to the literal (denoted) meaning.

Rolan Barthes's seminal publication, *Image, Music, Text* (1977), he uses these words to create a better understanding of a basic semiotic model for communication and to create a further distinction between the previously mentioned words. He also introduces the idea of 'Photographic Paradox', which is aimed to 'break the photographic image into two' (1977: 88), while using denoted and connoted's true meaning.



This is a Public Service Announcement picture/poster that uses direct scare tactics to import a fear into what seems to be parents that smoke. On the surface, the image shows that the 'parents' hand' is 'smoking' the child, indicating that the parent is smoking their child's life away.

But using semiotic formulae, we can uncover that there are a few more details that can be found. First, I have found that the child is looking directly at the viewer, I believe this to be because eye contact can be used as a subtle but effective way to carry more empathy the other person, and empathy is a powerful tool to persuade so this makes us as the viewer and more importantly the target audience feel more connected and empathetic towards the child. More empathy for the child will create a higher level of guilt for the target audience, the parent that smokes will feel connected to this child and start to assume their child in that spot instead, making the viewer more aware of the danger they are putting their child into.

The main text "Quit Smoking. Now." is short and abrupt, leaving no room for misinterpretation. It is also on a red coloured banner, this is intentional as the colour red conveys certain emotions. Cao (2018) mentions that the colour red can be used as "aggressive" and "important".

Bibliography

Barthes, R. (1977) *Image, Music, Text*. London, Fontana Press

Blake, A. (2017). "Kellyanne Conway says Donald Trump's team has 'alternative facts.'"

Which pretty much says it all". *The Washington Post*, 22nd January. Available at

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2017/01/22/kellyanne-conway-says-donald-trumps-team-has-alternate-facts-which-pretty-much-says-it-all/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.c3dc92148083 (accessed 1st January 2020)

Cao, J. 2017. "12 colours and the emotions they evoke". September 27th. Available at:

<https://www.creativebloq.com/web-design/12-colours-and-emotions-they-evoke-61515112> (accessed 1st January 2020)

Carson, J. (2018) Fake news: What exactly is it – and how can you spot it? *The Telegraph*, 28th September. Available at:

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/0/fake-news-exactly-has-really-had-influence/> (accessed 1st January 2020)

Peirce, C. S. (1931): *Collected Writings* (8 Vols.) in Charles Hartshorne, Paul Weiss & Arthur W Burks [Eds.]. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Phillips, M. (2018) How Journalists should not cover an online conspiracy theory. *The Guardian*, 6th August. Available at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/aug/06/online-conspiracy-theory-journalism-qanon> (accessed 1st January 2020)

Task Two: Manifesto (Julia's Task)

1. Motivation should be healthy and based on the idea to grow.
2. 'Work Tunnel Vision' should be avoided.
3. Every artist should be allowed total creative freedom.
4. An artist's mindset shall never be cast in stone.
5. Truthfulness is key.
6. Honesty with yourself and others is required at all times.
7. Always be vigilant to keep up to date on all life's aspects, being political, social, religion and your area of expertise.
8. Understand that your opinions are exactly that, and don't disregard other people's ideals - instead consider them and contribute them into yours.

Keywords and Images

2. 'Work Tunnel Vision'



'Work Tunnel Vision' is a term used to describe when a person in a creative field is stuck or attached to one single idea or not paying attention to the world around them. While the medical term for tunnel vision is described as "a medical condition that makes someone see only things that are directly in front of them" (dictionary.cambridge.org), if we take the literal meaning out of the equation and look at the connoted meaning - we can apply this to a person's work ethic. A lot of time invested into a project can make the person lose focus on their surroundings and start to get disconnected - this ties to statement 7 of the manifesto also.

'Work Tunnel Vision' can contribute to many different side effects that can be negative to a person, enthusiasm can decrease, problem solving skills can diminish, concentration and communication skills can be buffered as well as your overall alertness and mental health. Having experienced these symptoms while working for deadlines - it is important to take breaks and 'recharge'. Codesqueeze.com (2020) has a small article on this topic which reinforces my 2nd statement, and it mentions that "Time away from work helps realign priorities, which in turn **allows us to be more productive when we are at work**. We know what has to be done before we go home, and we know what is more important, therefore we will work smarter and faster to accomplish it while we are there".

6. Honesty



This picture represents a sign that a lot of desirable traits of people are tied or linked with honesty and how being honest can create a better worth ethic with others and a closer relationship - which in turn increases productivity.

Throughout any creative venture in life, working with others is a given - so through my personal experiences I have discovered that being honest, for better or for worse is always more beneficial in the long term than lying or avoiding the truth would ever be.

“Honesty is the first chapter in the book of wisdom” Thomas Jefferson (1819) is a famous excerpt quote from a longer message sent to Nathaniel Macon. The excerpt perfectly encapsulates the whole message in basically saying that being honest with yourself and others is a perfect first step to improving relations and your personality to be more desirable to others.

7. Always be vigilant



This picture shows a very sensitive and current political predicament that the United Kingdom is experiencing during the time of writing in 'Brexit'. This is one of the main political points of view that should be given thought by everyone, being oblivious and vigilant to these topics is important our future depends on the beliefs created today.

This statement is less about my area of expertise and more about the world around you. Being more connected to the world around us can also lead to issues of distrust and 'fake news' (Carson, 2018), especially with politics. On the 23rd of June 2016, Britain was voted to leave the European Union, and since then, a lot of conflicting and distrustful information have been released which has created a more postmodernist society with a lot more people questioning the true motives and the truth. In John D.

Caputo's book *Truth* (2013), he states that "If you ask a postmodernist, 'what is truth; they are likely to squint and say, 'It depends'". (2013:34)

Bibliography

Caputo, J. D. (2013). *Truth; Philosophy in Transit*. London, Penguin.

Carson, J. (2018) Fake news: What exactly is it – and how can you spot it? *The*

Telegraph, 28th September. Available at:

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/0/fake-news-exactly-has-really-had-influence/>

(accessed 3rd January 2020)

Dictionary.cambridge.org. (2020). *TUNNEL VISION | meaning in the Cambridge English*

Dictionary. [online] Available at:

<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/tunnel-vision> (Accessed 3 January

2020)

Codesqueeze.com. (2020). *Work Tunnel Vision – Why It's Bad For Your Mind*. [online]

Available at: <https://codesqueeze.com/work-tunnel-vision-why-its-bad-for-your-mind/>

(Accessed 3 January 2020).

Jefferson, T. January 12, 1789. *Quotation to Nathaniel Macon from Thomas Jefferson*.

Ford, 10:119.

Task Three: Reflective Writing (Jon's Task)

A practical reflection of the release cinematic for a new *World of Warcraft* expansion.

World of Warcraft is an immensely popular *MMORPG* (*Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game*) video game, created by *Blizzard Entertainment* released on November 23rd 2004. The game features traditional 'bad' and 'good' sides, being 'Horde' and 'Alliance' respectively, the player can join these sides with a newly created character, these characters are molded by the players' choices and will 'level up' when the player completes quests and experiences with them.

The *Battle for Azeroth Cinematic Trailer* (*World of Warcraft*, 2017) shows the very beginning of the conflict throughout the game's new expansion where the two sides are fighting over land called Lordaeron. Throughout my experience of this game, I have usually been on the side of the Alliance, but this trailer did a stellar job at portraying both sides as an equally deadly force, this made me suddenly question my in-game loyalties. The trailer starts with a bird's eye view or a long shot of the entire battlefield, this makes me as the viewer feel the extent of the battle and the wreckage that has already occurred, for a returning player like me, it was a subtle but clever way in showing that the war has been spread out a long time.

The first half of the trailer shows the typical 'bad' side being bested until it cuts to a 'close up' camera angle of the main leader *Lady Sylvanas* does an impressive feat and cries out the Horde warcry "For the Horde!", the troops suddenly gain a massive burst of

morale and start to counter against the Alliance. The close up angle intends for the viewing to see the very excellent job that is the character facial animations, it gave me a certain atmosphere based off the character's facial expressions, "It's used when you want to highlight the facial features of your character without any other distractions in the shot", (Sudhakaran, 2019) Everytime I view this trailer, this part always gives me a rush of euphoria and suddenly makes me side with the Horde as the 'underdogs' of the two sides.

The trailer then shows the Alliance on their back foot, and seemingly about to lose, until the leader *Anduin Wrynn* performs his own feat of strength and mass revives many of his allies that have fallen, then shouts "For the Alliance!" which comes with a massive morale boost for his side, due to me being sided to the Alliance, it conveyed really strong emotions of euphoria and excitement to see how this battle will play out now that it seems to be a fair sided battle. The trailer continues to suddenly stop just before any combat is properly seen between the morale-boosted teams. As much as I wanted to see the outcome of the battle, I feel like they ended at such a perfect time where it leaves me as the viewer wanting more.

When the new expansion released around 6 months after the publishing of this trailer, the video game puts your character of choice right at the time and place of the battle shown in the trailer, playing through the game was an engaging experience as I felt a more personal connection to my side and the main characters as I, in-game, could see their turmoil and struggles before and after the fight of the cinematic was shown. This increased my immersion significantly as I felt like I was part of the battle.

Bibliography

Blizzard Entertainment (2004) *World of Warcraft*. (Online) PC. California, USA. Blizzard Entertainment.

Sudhakaran, S. (2019). *15 Essential Camera Shots, Angles and Movements*. [online] Wolfcrow.com. Available at:

<https://wolfcrow.com/15-essential-camera-shots-angles-and-movements/> (Accessed 4 Jan. 2020).

World of Warcraft (2017). *World of Warcraft: Battle for Azeroth Cinematic Trailer*.

(video) Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jSJr3dXZfcg> (Accessed 4 Jan. 2020).