

Elements of Visual Design Video Transcript

When analyzing propaganda art work, you should consider the following design tools:

- Colour
- Light and shade
- Movement and line
- Scale and proportion
- Point of view and eyeline
- Implied narrative

First, let's look at colour. How is colour used? How does it pull your attention or make you feel? How would the message be altered if the colours were changed?



Here are two posters with the same message to avenge Pearl Harbor, but the colours are different. When you look at the two posters, is your reaction and feelings the same, or are they different?



Second, let's look at light and shade. Where has the artist chosen to pull our focus using light and shade? How does that guide your eye? What if the light and shade changed?



Here are two posters with the same message to join the military, but the lighting and shadow are different. When you look at the two posters, is your reaction and feelings the same, or are they different? What do you think the first poster is appealing to? What do you think the second poster is appealing to? Perhaps it is appealing to your sense of patriotism because the lighting is focused on the flag, whereas the first poster is not focusing on patriotism.



Third, let's look at movement and line. Freshen your eye by looking away from the image, then go back. Where does your eye wander to? How has the artist guided your eye? Does the movement go beyond the page? Such as when one looks 'beyond'?

Forth, let's look at scale and proportion. How do the different elements in the poster relate to each other? Is the enemy large and overbearing? Or is he small and vulnerable? How does scale affect how you "hear" the text on the poster?



Take a look at these two posters. Both are using scale and proportion to communicate a message. In the first picture, the Japanese soldier is very large compared to Australia. Size and proportion is used to instill fear. But what about the second picture? What do you think the artist is trying to show here?



Fifth, let's look at point of view and eyeline. When viewing the poster, are the figures looking down on you? Up to the sky? Directly at you? Or away and down? How does each perspective influence the countenance of the image? Does it feel strong? Hopeful? Vulnerable? How does it affect your relationship with the image? Do you feel targeted? Encouraged? Admonished? Or victimized?



Take a look at these two posters. In the first one, the eyeline is looking directly at the viewer, whereas in the second poster, the eyeline is looking away at something else. What effect do you think each poster is trying to achieve?



Lastly, let's look at implied narrative. Often, art captures our imagination not just with what is illustrated, but by suggesting what happened before, or what might happen after. Another way this is done, is by suggesting character when drawing a figure, such as the benevolent mother or the evil Nazi. All of those devices combine to create the intended message.

As mentioned before, it is very obvious that this poster is implying that the Nazis are "watching you" because the soldier is clearly wearing a Nazi helmet. What do you think is the implied narrative in the second poster?

