

The Art of Visual Literacy

UHON 222-015 | T | 9:30-12:00 | SHC 8 | 25057

Regina Araujo Corritore

Tony Kushner put it best when he said, "Art can't change anything except people- but art changes people and people can make everything change." Posters as a form of mass culture first emerged in mid-nineteenth-century Europe, but the poster as popular art was actually reinvented in Latin America during the mid-twentieth century and exploded throughout North America. The simplicity and directness of the poster made this art form a powerful instrument for announcing a society's mood of the moment, transmitting political and cultural messages, and mobilizing mass action. Susan Sontag argues that the poster "aims to seduce" by commanding attention within the public sphere, not on the basis of its message or information, but through its visual appeal. With so many images and ideas competing for our attention, it is particularly important that we learn both to understand the images that surround us and to express our own desires for change in our world through our own images. In this class, we will use *The Design of Dissent* by Milton Glaser and Mirko Ilic and George Orwell's classic yet still very current *1984*, as well as others, to guide us in dissecting the historic goal of visual propaganda in current and earlier cultures to consolidate the power of the state. We will also examine the art of the outsider, who serves as a social critic using the art of mass culture as a looking glass to offer viewers new perspectives. Students will not only read and discuss the assigned texts, but will also produce and self-publish their own visual media/graphics projects. Much of this course will consist of hands-on experience creating art through basic printing techniques as a means of understanding the theoretical concepts in the readings. Students do not need art experience or training to succeed in this class.

Readings

Susan Sontag, *On Photography*

Milton Glaser and Mirko Ilic, *The Design of Dissent*

George Orwell, *1984*

Roni Henning, *Water-based Screenprinting Today: From Hands-on Techniques to Digital Technology*

Additional readings or film viewings may be taken from the following sources: *Graffiti World: Street Art from Five Continents* by Nicholas Ganz; *Wall and Piece* by Banksy; documentary film *Bomb It: Street Art is Revolution* by Jonathan Reiss

Requirements

Students will be required to: Attend class and participate regularly in all class discussions, create several short art projects to include a collage, printed poster, bumper sticker, among others; one oral presentation on selected readings or an artist's works; one short research paper; a final portfolio to include a formal, written artist's statement.

About the Instructor

Regina Araujo Corritore has more than twenty years of making art and exhibiting professionally. Originally from New York, she received her B.F.A. in Advertising Design from the NY Institute of Technology and her M.A. in Fine Art/Printmaking from UNM. Regina has taught at UNM-Valencia since 2000 and UHP since 2008.