

Global Advances in Business Communication

Volume 7 | Issue 1

Article 1

Cultural Nuances of Visual Rhetoric

David A. Victor

Eastern Michigan University, dvictor@emich.edu

Peter Cardon

University of Southern California, cardon@marshall.usc.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.emich.edu/gabc>

Prior to Vol.4 iss.1, this journal was published under the title *Global Advances in Business Communication*.

Recommended Citation

Victor, David A. and Cardon, Peter () "Cultural Nuances of Visual Rhetoric," *Global Advances in Business and Communications Conference & Journal*: Vol. 7: Iss. 1, Article 1.

Available at: <https://commons.emich.edu/gabc/vol7/iss1/1>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Business at DigitalCommons@EMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Global Advances in Business Communication by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@EMU. For more information, please contact lib-ir@emich.edu.

Cultural Nuances of Visual Rhetoric

Peter W. Cardon
University of Southern California
cardon@marshall.usc.edu

David A. Victor
Eastern Michigan University
david.victor@emich.edu

The call for this special issue of the *Global Advances in Business Communication* sought research in one of two types: (a) empirical studies of visual rhetoric from a cultural perspective; and (b) teaching and training about cross-cultural visual rhetoric. This issue contains both types of research, and each article demonstrates the potential for additional research about visual rhetoric with a focus on cultural nuances.

In the first article, Orlando Kelm presents an innovative approach to teaching and learning about cultures. The project involves assembling photography portfolios of other cultures. The portfolios include pictures that reveal unique aspects of the cultures. Students use the pictures to reveal understanding of various concepts in the LESCANT model. Kelm demonstrates with many examples how students gain a rich understanding of other cultures and pictures provide a unique window of understanding. One of the strengths of this approach is it has been tested and demonstrated effective in multiple cultures. Of note, Kelm equips students with the tools to become expert observers of other cultures.

In the second article, Stephanie Kelly, Stephen Croucher, Todd L. Sandel, and Fei Yu conduct an experiment of student comprehension of ten infographics, each of which includes a language they are unfamiliar with. They conducted the study in China, New Zealand, and the United States. They show that infographics are effective ways to communicate in cross-cultural communication, although they demonstrate that some infographics are not as clearly understood by all cultures.

In the third article, Peter Cardon, Honqing Li, and Hanjing Shi explore the nature of professionalism and status displays and individuality and expressiveness displays in professional profile pictures in China and the United States. They find that generally Americans and women in both cultures tend to engage in more expressiveness displays, whereas Chinese and men in both cultures tend to engage in more status displays. They also identify five typologies of professional visual rhetoric in these profile pictures.

The articles in this special issue each make important contributions to the study of visual rhetoric in a cross-cultural environment. Collectively, they demonstrate the value of teaching and researching cross-cultural visual rhetoric. We recommend continued study of cross-cultural

visual rhetoric that focus on but is not limited to the following: business events (e.g., meetings, conferences, banquets); symbols (e.g., corporate logos, symbol design); signage (including cross-cultural variation in sign usage, sign content and design); and business attire, dress codes and uniforms.

Finally, we have included in this issue an article that is not part of the special issue: Steven Sacco's *Multilingual Franca: Workplace Language Use Within Multinational Corporations In French West Africa*. Sacco's study extends his work (published in the *GABC Journal's* last issue) on the role of the efficacy (or lack thereof) of an assumed workplace lingua franca. In this article, Sacco examines the role of French as a lingua franca in a West African business setting. This extends his research (Sacco 2017) from the role of English in a primarily Spanish-speaking US workplace setting published in the *GABC Journal's* last issue, "Challenging the Myth of English as a Lingua Franca in International Business." Since the current article published in this issue builds on the role of presumed workplace lingua franca usage, we did not want to delay the publishing this article and so have included it here.