Visual Analysis Essay “Both Time and U.S. News and World Report cover the same events, but each magazine interprets them differently. All toothpaste ads claim to make teeth "the whitest." Saddam Hussein was supporting terrorists—or he wasn't, depending on which politician is speaking. Those are but three examples that demonstrate why we need to be careful, analytical readers of magazines and newspapers, ads, political documents, even textbooks. Not only does text convey information, but it also influences how and what we think. We need to read, then, to understand not only what texts say but also how they say it” (Bullock, 38). For this assignment, you will analyze a painting, an advertisement, or picture. You will need to explain to the audience what the picture is, demonstrate your understanding of the subject, and persuade your audience to believe your opinion about it. You will want to include visuals with your analysis. Your essay should be typed, double spaced, and in MLA format. Point Value: 50 The text of your essay should be a minimum of 4-5 pages in length. Four pages of text means the essay text should continue onto the fifth page (this does not include visuals OR works cited pages). You must correctly format your essay and meet the minimum requirements. Any less than the minimum requirements and the paper will receive an automatic 50%. Reading: In your book, you are to have read Chapters 11 and 13. Additionally, you should be familiar with Part 1 and Chapters 21, 23, and 24. Prewriting: To write a good visual analysis will require you to be familiar with your subject. You should choose a subject that makes an impression on you, whether for its unique composition, controversial message, or impact on your emotions. • Study your chosen subject and write down all your thoughts, feelings, and observations. • Come up with a main point/claim that will help focus your observations. • Support your claim with visual details. Make sure as you point out visual details and describe them, you demonstrate why these details support your claim. • Areas to focus on: o Audience – Who is the intended audience? How do you know? o Purpose – What is the purpose of your subject? What message is the painter/artist/ad company trying to convey? How do you know? o Context – Where might someone see this painting/ad/picture? When? How? Drafting: While there isn’t one specific way a visual analysis should be written, there is a general outline that often works. • Describe o Spend at least one paragraph describing the subject. You can focus on colors, objects, people, composition. Give enough detail that the reader can “see” the subject. • Respond o A good visual analysis will answer questions like “How does this subject make me feel?” “What does it make me think about?” “Does it make me want to do something?” “Can I make connections to anything in my past?” “Does the imagery interest you? The composition? The larger context?” • Analyze o Discuss how the visual information and your reaction to the information do or do not support the subject’s purpose. Make sure that you are able to tie your description and response to the questions you asked earlier – “What is the purpose of the subject?” “Who is the intended audience?” “What effect does the subject have on the audience?” “Does the message get across to the audience?” o After thinking about these questions, decide if you are going to need additional research to back up your thoughts and ideas. If you choose to use more research, make sure you evaluate the research you choose and use only research that adds and supports your argument. Assignment Objectives This assignment is intended to meet the following course objectives: • Develop and support a thesis for different purposes and readers. • Employ the writing process, which includes invention, planning, drafting, and revision. • Demonstrate expository and argumentative writing techniques using the principles of organization, unity, coherence, and theme development. • Use documentation principles in a piece of writing. • Demonstrate critical thinking skills. • Use outside sources to synthesize ideas from multiple perspectives. • Draw informed conclusions from writings and observations. • Argue reasoned interpretations. • Critique one’s own writing and the writing of others.