

Leo Groarke:

Dissecting Images: From Aristotle to Advertising

We are surrounded by images. Many of them are designed to convince us to buy something, support a cause, or see a company or a product in the best (or worst) possible light. Images of this sort are key elements of argument and persuasion. This underscores a major gap in traditional theories of argument and persuasion, which, for thousands of years, have assumed that arguments are made up of words. This was always a questionable assumption. It is increasingly problematic in a world in which images and non-verbal sounds have become a major vehicle for communication. This reflects a move from a print age to a digital era defined by pictures, sounds and stories.

For more than twenty years, my interest has been the use of visual images and non-verbal elements in argument and advocacy. Analyzing images being used in these ways requires some new ways of thinking, but they are ways that can be developed as an extension (rather than a rejection) of the traditional accounts of argument. In this talk, I will introduce some of the methods of analysis that can make understanding non-verbal persuasion possible, look at how they can be applied to advertisements (a key locus for argument and persuasion), and discuss the ways in which we need to teach critical thinking in a multimodal world.

Leo Groarke is President and Professor of Philosophy at Trent University. In addition to his teaching and administrative work, his areas of research and scholarly interest include ancient philosophy, higher education, the history of ideas, social and political thought, ethics and "informal" logic. His most recent work examines the role of visual images in reasoning, argument and persuasion -- a role that is heightened in digital communication. His scholarship includes the textbook, *Good Reasoning Matters!*, co-edited with Christopher Tindale, a former Trent professor. He and Professor Tindale serve as Editors-in-Chief of the book series *Windsor Studies in Argumentation*.

Mon, 26 November 2018

2:00 PM - 3:30 PM EST

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Location

Ted Rogers School of Management

575 Bay Street

Room: TRS 3-129

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