

Derek Jackson

Ad Analysis

1. Selected Visual Argument for Analysis.



<http://momsdemandaction.org/kinder-egg/> (The linked image is broken, so it is provided [here](#))

2. Explanation and introduction of the image:

This image is from the advocacy group Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America and is attempting to call for further gun control in America. It features two children (a boy and girl) standing in a dark, grim looking classroom with a blackboard behind them with the word “agenda” written on it in chalk. The children stand side by side. The girl, who has blond hair and a purple and white striped shirt, stands staring out at the viewer holding an assault rifle. The boy, who wears a red shirt, is shorter and stands delicately holding a plastic egg. The text above their heads reads “ONE CHILD IS HOLDING SOMETHING THAT’S BEEN BANNED IN AMERICA TO PROTECT THEM.” Then in red text, “GUESS WHICH ONE.” The small text running across the bottom of the ad reveals a little more information in the form of a question “We won’t sell Kinder chocolate eggs in the interest of child safety. Why not assault weapons?” This is followed by the website for the advocacy group and their logo in the bottom right corner.

3. Why I selected this image:

I chose to work with this ad because it offers startling imagery, yet its message is problematic.

4. Analysis:

This Ad from Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America is immediately striking for the imagery of the young children in the presence of an assault weapon and especially for the young girl who is wielding it. This ad appeals to parents by using children to illustrate the issue of gun safety. Not only does it put a gun in the hands of a young girl, but it puts her in the same environment as another child who is immediately put at risk as well. Also, using a school room as the setting alludes to the many shootings that have occurred in many American schools, evoking difficult memories for many people. The ad also furthers its impact on parents by using a setting where parents have little control of their children and what happens to them. The ad leaves them with the thought that anyone, even another child, could bring a gun to school and put their child's life in danger. This is all underlined by the word "AGENDA" written in chalk on the blackboard behind the children. The ad is saying – Look. These laws do not make sense. Help us fix that.

Analyzing the imagery further reveals how they accomplish sending this message. The lighting of the ad shines a spotlight on the two children to highlight and contrast the children and what they are holding. The rest of the picture appears dark and grim, setting the tone of the argument. Color further plays an important element here as the girl's purple and white striped shirt gives her a feminine and innocent appearance accentuating her young age while contrasting starkly against the black of the assault weapon. The boy is in a red shirt which echoes the red text above asking the viewer to guess which item has been banned, directing the viewer's attention and making it clear what the correct choice is. Even this red text itself is using color to taunt the viewer into being shocked at the ads revelation about chocolate eggs being banned in America while assault weapons are not by grimly highlighting the main interaction of the ad – "GUESS WHICH ONE." This statement is the obligatory demand from the Moms *Demand* Action group and is illustrated thus by being printed in all capital letters.

Another element that stands out here is the ads use of the girl to hold the assault weapon and the boy to hold the chocolate egg. In American society, boys would be thought more likely to play

with toy guns, so the ad uses the girl to hold the assault weapon and further creates a visual dichotomy creating a more shocking and eye catching image. However, the girl is nearly a head taller than the boy making him appear more innocent or at least less threatening. The body language also plays a part here as the girl holds the assault rifle in the same manner that a soldier might, while the boy stands with his shoulders scrunched delicately holding out the egg evoking the idea that it is harmless. Also, both children are staring straight out at the viewer, making eye contact and begging the question that the small text at the bottom of the ad asks – if you care about the safety of your children, why would you ban a chocolate egg and not an assault rifle? The ad leaves this text small at the bottom because it knows that once the ad has grabbed the viewer's attention the viewer will seek out the text to fully understand the message of the ad, which would ultimately lead them to the website for the advocacy group.

5. Final Assessment of Image's level of Success:

I think this ad succeeds in grabbing the attention of any viewer. The imagery is surprising, which leads the viewer to analyze it more closely. This is what begins the dialogue with the ad as the viewer tries to decode the main riddle. However, there are a few issues that come to mind as this ad presents a broad issue on gun control. First, the ad presumes that a gun could not be used to save the life of a child. Also, while the use of the classroom adds to the worrying nature of the ad, it is problematic in that it insinuates that this is an issue that relates to the classroom though there are clear laws that prohibit guns in school zones. The use of the Kinder chocolate egg is also an issue as many people may not understand the reference. This does seem to be something a parent would be aware of, which furthers my belief about the intended audience of this particular ad, but it does leave potential interested parties scratching their heads. My first thoughts in response to the ad were “what is that kid holding” in response to the egg and then “aren't guns already banned in schools.” Ultimately, while the ad proves problematic in a few areas, it succeeds for Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America by grabbing the attention of a wide audience and entering into a dialogue with that audience about their cause.