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Visual Essay



Audience Strategy

My intended audience for this piece is the same as my audience for the op-ed. The main audience is minorities from New York. I chose this as my target audience because they are an audience that would most likely understand the meme I created. Because the answer on the buzzer is “churro lady”, a latino woman who faced an injustice by the NYPD, discussed in my op-ed, she is someone my audience can relate to. I assumed that minorities from New York would be aware of this incident because the latino woman who dealt with this is a minority as well. Additionally, in the bottom picture, I included the words, “good answer”. A minority who understands the struggle the “churro lady”, Elsa, faced, would sense the sarcasm in the post and obviously understand that this is not a good answer. Furthermore, in the question on the top picture, Steve Harvey is asking for an answer that only New Yorkers would know. Although this incident with Elsa went viral for people all over the world to see, the question is specifically targeting New Yorkers.

Another audience that this piece is intended for is a younger generation. Since this is a meme, the audience is also the younger generation because memes are found on social media platforms. The top picture with the hand and the buzzer is a very popular meme found on Instagram and Twitter. Therefore, it is something that social media users are familiar with. Since the majority of young people use social media, they would be an audience for this meme.

I wanted my audience to be able to laugh at how ridiculous the NYPD performs their job. I wanted them to understand that the NYPD focuses their energy on harmless incidents rather than true “threats”, as written in the post, and I wanted them to find humor in how poorly the job

is being done. Although it is not my goal for my audience to laugh at the situation and the lives that are affected by this issue, I wanted minorities to be able to come together and laugh and ridicule the system.

Reflection

The genre I chose was a meme because despite this being a very serious topic, I wanted minorities, the target audience, to be able to laugh at and ridicule this insane system that rules over us. Additionally, a meme is something young people would understand and they are also a targeted audience and I find that many people part of the younger generation like to find humor during dark and scary times to find some relief in the issue.

I chose the first picture with the hand and the buzzer because I have seen it used many times on Twitter and Instagram. Therefore, it is something the younger generation would understand and recognize right away. In addition, many videos of absurd answers from the show, Family Feud, have gone viral on Instagram and Twitter. For that reason, I assumed that seeing a photo of Family Feud in that context would be easy for the audience to understand that the answer is not meant to be taken seriously.

The hand in the first photo is white and labeled, "NYPD". I did this in order for the audience to understand that the issue is coming from racist, white policemen. The second picture shows a family screaming, "good answer," as Steve Harvey does his iconic disappointed look. Since the show is Family Feud, the second picture is supposed to represent the family of the racist police officer who suggested that a churro lady selling food without a license is a major

threat to society. However, they are also meant to represent all the other racist, privileged people living in New York who support the actions of the NYPD.

My tone for the meme is sarcastic. The question being asked is to name a threat to New Yorkers. The answer that the policeman says is “churro lady”. That answer is not meant to be taken seriously and neither is the response to the answer, “good answer” because obviously it was not a good answer. I decided to appeal to pathos because a meme is supposed to make people laugh. As previously stated, the audience is intended to have a good, simple, laugh, only because they understand how corrupt the system truly is. To reiterate, it is not to say that this matter should be taken lightly, however, humor often is a way of coping with difficult problems and that is what I was intending to do with this meme.

Creating a visual essay was very different in comparison to writing a traditional essay. I found that I was able to show more of my own personality through this piece as I displayed the type of sense of humor I have along with a coping mechanism I have which is humor. I used an app called Superimpose to put the photos together along with the writing on top of the photos. It also took me a while to figure out a sensitive way to find humor in such a serious topic without offending anyone affected by the issue. With a traditional essay, I don’t tend to worry so much about offending anyone because for the most part a traditional essay is composed of fact after fact. With this piece however, I found it especially important to make sure I did not offend anyone because it is a meme which is something found on social media. The thought of being “cancelled” on social media for a post which wouldn’t even make it to social media was an ongoing reminder to make sure I was sensitive to the topic while still being humorous.

