

Global Visions Joint Session fall 2013  
Campbell and Filonowicz  
English 16C and Philosophy 61

You have been hired by big business to participate in four working committees, focus groups if you will, who are evaluating the merits of selected advertisements.

**Focus groups:**

- A. doctors--M.D.s--who specialize in nutrition, weight management, diet
- B. professional trainers in exercise and physical fitness (especially for women)
- C. cosmeticians, hairdressers, fashion designers, 'makeover artists'
- D. rhetoricians, advertisers, web designers, producers of commercials

**Part 1: Reading the advertisements**

Those running the focus groups have purposely left some ads either partially captioned or without captions. So each focus group will have to speculate to answer the following basic questions about the ads.

1. What is being advertised?
2. Who is the audience for the ad?
3. Where does the audience live?
4. When was the ad publicized?
5. Why was the ad produced?

**Part 2: Debating the merits of the advertisements**

Now that you have more or less interpreted the advertisements, big business wants you to look at them through a rhetorical lens, both classical and modern. From the perspective of the roles in your focus groups, judge particular ads based on the following criteria (and any other you can think of).

1. The merit of the product advertised.
2. The moral character behind the ad.
3. The ways in which the ad appeals to its intended audience (and unintended audience?).
4. The ways in which the ad fulfills its purpose.
5. The ways in which the ad affects society, for better and for worse.

Cite sources from Philosophy and English 16C as you develop your ideas about your ads.

Follow-up writing assignment:

In a blog post of 500-700 words, show your readers how this joint session has affected your understanding of rhetoric. Given what you've learned in Philosophy 61 about Socrates' notions of rhetoric in *Gorgias* and what you've learned in English 16C from Bitzer's idea of "The Rhetorical Situation," demonstrate how this joint session has complicated and/or clarified your thinking about rhetoric. Use texts and advertisements to support your discussion.