

MSU 2020 Comics Forum Abstract

Superman v. Trump:

Model and Anti-Model in the Struggle for Social Decency in Our Modern Political Climate.

Superman has always been political. From his very first adventures in *Action Comics #1* he has fought for justice, and often clashed with political figures and entities along the way. In his first appearance he broke into a governor's house to save an innocent woman and ended by kidnapping a lobbyist trying to push through arms bill. He even demonstrated how he "would end the war" by kidnapping Hitler and Stalin and delivering them before the League of Nations. Superman has from the get-go involved himself in politics in America by standing in as a watchful warrior for justice against the evil and corrupt. This is Superman's true power, his greatest strength: to serve as an exemplar, a model for the behavior and ideals America seeks to project. Chaim Perelman and Laurie Olbrechts-Tyteca, in *The New Rhetoric*, note that a rhetorical model helps promote imitative-worry behavior, while an anti-model, say a Lex Luthor, demonstrate behavior we should condemn. Donald Trump should be an anti-model. He lies, manipulates, demeans others, and behaves "un-Christian," and yet he is not repulsive to some. To some, many of whom have political interests of their own, Donald Trump's anti-model behavior is papered over, excused, and blow off to the effect of making him a model for behavior some might deem un-American. Reconciliation of this dilemma requires a deeper examination of how such modeling resonates so strongly to be defined for generations by a fictional character from comic book.

243 Words

Presence and Possibilities

Challenges and Possibilities of Visual Engagement of Student Via eLearning Environment

By Jonathan Evans and David Andrews

The students served at colleges and universities today come to such institutions with a wide variety of needs: guidance, special assistance, and more. These students come from the complex and ever-changing world and return to it when they graduate. The complexity of the world creates puts priority in professors to integrate new modes, ideas, materials, and technologies together to build the scaffolding our students build their writing. This is done to prepare our students. One way is to meet the students in the online environment and do whatever can be done to make that online environment as adaptable to their needs. As Aristotle said, and as I take as my implied mantra, "observing in any given case the available means of persuasion." This is what I wish to always do as an instructor, and to that in I have worked closely with art instructor and friend David Andrews. David is the artist behind the avatar version of myself I use to engage students both in class and online as a means of livening up material and instruction. Recently, David and I have begun speaking about deploying a more focused way of making sure the visual forms of communication I am using that he created are able to reach the full range of students,

particularly eLearning students who may have issues with color blindness and/or hearing impairment. It is at this intersection that we want to discuss the impact and importance of addressing accessibility in the eLearning Environment.

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Dr. Jonathan Evans is an Assistant Professor of English at Claflin University teaching First Year Composition as well as focusing on visual rhetoric and comic books. Mr. David Andrews is a veteran art teacher based working currently for Gonzalo Garza Independence High School in Austin, TX. He is also a certified instructional designer with accreditation from Oregon State University. Dr. Evans and Mr. Andrews have long collaborated on Dr. Evans' teaching blogs: www.whynotcomicbooks.com and www.whynotgraphicnovels.com.