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Abstract

Advertising and visual messages have long been a source of public debate due to the gray area they occupy within biases and half-truths, especially since the advent of social media. Online targeted communications can spread rapidly with little external validation. This thesis represents a creative exploration of the power personally held by visual communications developers, with a focus on how information and design can be manipulated to present different viewpoints. The final product is a series of 6 ads depict opposing viewpoints that Americans may have on the social issue of Muslim populations in America. These advertisements, developed for social media, namely Facebook, are made in pairs that feature the same sources of information as arguments for and against three specific concerns regarding Muslim Americans: terrorism, cultural adaptation, and economic and societal participation. The purpose of the advertisements is to demonstrate not only the decisions that an advertising designer can make based on his or her own goals and biases, but to give viewers pause in thinking about how they receive, validate and accept information in the realm of social media communications.

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