

Problem Statement

While not all people are artist, everyone still subconsciously connects colors to emotions. Why is this? Blue communicates a cold and sad emotion. Min-feng Lee conducted a study to see what colors brought on what emotions. Lee found that the color blue is connected to sleep and boredom, red is related to anger, and yellow is connected with happiness and excitement (15191). Perhaps these reactions to color are because of the natural colors in the world. When something is dark or cold, it tends to lean towards the blue tone. Blue is also another word for a person who is down. Red typically is related to anger and passion and heat. Most people have heard that in wild anger, a person can “see red”. This seems to fit quite well visually as well. Yellow communicates happiness and warmth. Yellow is like the sun, which radiates heat. Heat makes us think of the summer, which bring happiness and a care free spirit. Therefore, it is clear that color does relate to emotion, but how do primary colors successfully accomplish communicating emotion and feeling? The purpose of this photography project is to communicate emotion through only two things: color, and human expression.

Communication Objectives

Red is often times used in wrong situations. Which then leads to bad reactions. Adam Richards states, “Red feedback significantly increased the experience of negative emotion. Negative emotion significantly caused a reduction in essay grade, essay quality, and essay engagement” (1696). Therefore, within this project, red must be communicated with frustration, anger, and tension. However, Norbert Hagemann conducted a study that shows the effect of the color within the protective gear. Hagemann found that the competitor wearing red protective gear was awarded an average of 13% more points than the competitor wearing blue protective gear

(769-770). This shows that red brings about empowerment and motivation as well. Whereas blue does not.

Blue and yellow have reactions that are not quite as clear. It has already been stated that blue communicates a lack of motivation. Blue also has a coldness within it that stems from that natural atmosphere, and how most cold objects have a blue tone. Esther Burkitt and Lisa Sheppard conducted a study with children to see what emotions would correlate with what colors. They found that blue tended to communicate mixed emotions, and yellow brought joy and happiness (240-243). With that being said, not only should blue communicate lack of motivation and coldness, but also confusion. Whereas yellow should communicate happiness and warmth.

Visual Solution

Within each of these colors, an emotion seems to be connected to a temperature. The solution to this is to connect people within colors. I was inspired by the artist Alexa Mead to physically paint people within a picture. To relate life and color in an eye-catching way. For the blue, I painted the backdrop with quick sideways strokes, to communicate harsh weather. Then, the subject was painted in blue and posed with a sad and cold expression. The solution shows that the expression on the person and the feeling of the color coincide perfectly. For red, the backdrop has more of a hot and fire like pattern. The subject is then displaying anger yet is still oddly beautiful. This depicts the emotions that red brings on people. A feeling of anger and frustration, yet also motivation. For the yellow, a summer theme is portrayed through it all. The background is painted with round like strokes, like the sun. The subject then shows a carefree spirit. Showing how yellow is related to warmth and enjoyment.

These three images were then created in a similar like format, giving them likeness. The three images were given uniqueness by displaying the different emotions with different colors and strokes. Real live human beings were used to display the life that is in color. Giving the images an eye-catching effect. Making the viewer then think about the image, trying to figure out what is different about the images.

How it was Produced

This project was created by a mix of methods. The background was originally quite small. A simple two feet by three feet sheet of poster board was purchased and painted with the strokes needed for the background of the image. This was the cleanest and most efficient way to create the background. It used less paint, paper, and equipment to hold up the background. Later, after the image was taken, the background was manipulated in photoshop with tools such as clone stamp and content aware to fill the entire background.

The props were painted next. Various props were used to communicate emotion within the pictures. A winter hat was used for blue to communicate chilliness, sunglasses were used for the yellow to communicate warmth, and a wig was used for the red for protection of the model's real hair. These props were painted before hand so that they were dry by the time they were used during the actual photo shoot.

Lastly, the models were brought in and painted. This process had to be completed quickly because when the paint started to dry, the models would lose the ability to display certain emotions on their faces. The painting and photoshoot of one model would take about one to two hours. Once the images were taken, they were brought into Adobe Photoshop. Within Photoshop

the colors were intensified, and the background was expanded. The people were not manipulated at all, in order to preserve the raw emotion that they give the picture.

The final product then communicated exactly as anticipated. The blue images brings cold and confusing thoughts, the red displays anger and power, and the yellow displays warmth and joy.

Works Cited

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