

The way we communicate in today's internet age has changed and developed extensively. We share things through blogs, listen to our president through Twitter, and post videos to YouTube and Facebook. Naturally, the way we visually communicate has evolved in the last 10 years because we can share media in seconds. The video is a revolution of its own YouTube being one of the most used sites on the internet. At first, it seemed like a cool way to share moments but now acts as a platform for complex discussion on any topic. The video essay is now a current format some YouTubers have adopted to present arguments while visually stimulating the audience. Essentially, the video essay is a regular argumentative essay voiced over visuals. This eliminates reading for the viewer and allows the speaker to voice their personality more when making their argument. In this analysis, I will be using Lindsey Ellis's video essay on Hercules to see how she deconstructs how the movie was made, the plot of the movie, and how it performed. I will be analyzing how video and audio make her arguments more compelling.

Ellis' video format allows her to make compelling arguments in a more accessible way. Throughout the video essay she shows examples from the work by playing short clips she finds compelling to her argument. Minute 2:45 of the video Ellis wants to clarify the movie wasn't that bad all things considered (Ellis). She shows a notably funny clip from the movie that speaks to that. This is just one example of the multimodal format, specifically visual mode (Ball et al 6). She informs the reader that the movie has some quality aspects then transitions to her thesis being "The parts of the movie outweigh the work as a whole" (Ellis 4:10). This way of citing her sources allows the viewer to be more engaged with the media. A notable visual from her video is the introduction to her topic. She uses an animation of the Disney producers in a comedic way to establish the context of when the film was being produced (Ellis 0:00-2:40). This animation is a great example of how animation is used as a tool to inform and engage with the reader. "The technological capabilities of the Web and various software packages are also encouraging many people to experiment with animations inspired by poetic structures (and sometimes by the practices of experimental film), mixing type, color, drawings, photographs, and movement" (Wysocki 11-12) Since the dawn of the internet creators have used this method for websites and now their videos. This format has developed to the point where it can be used to inform the viewer on not only stories but the context around stories as well. This visual experience informs Ellis's audience while simultaneously hooking them into listening to it making her argument more compelling.

The way video and audio functions in this format helps Ellis show her personality and allows the source material to stir up memories in the viewer. Periodically, Ellis will have a comedic tone in certain segments of the video. In the introduction of her video essay, she has a section in which she herself is on screen. The ideas being said might be taken literally by the reader if in a regular essay (Ellis 3:20-3:49). But Lindsey casually sipping a beer and eating onion rings makes the information being presented more funny and compelling to her character. A regular written essay would not be able to capture this tone just by reading. This gestural mode (Ball et al 12) allows an author to vocalize their points and show their personality when doing so. Presenting the information this way allows the author to establish their argument in a memorable way that sticks with the viewer but also speaks the author's

ethos (Selzer 284). Since Ellis is taking a comedic tone the viewer gains appeal to Ellis because you wouldn't typically get such a laid-back tone in an academically approached essay, giving strength to her argument.

Another aspect audio allows to persuade the viewer is the appeal of the actual source material itself. Like I stated before, Ellis is able to use clips to cite her sources. It's one thing to have visuals but, the audio from these clips allows the viewer to remember the film in the way they watched it when they were younger. Geary Hobson, an author mentioned Kristine Blair's writings elaborated on storytelling as a way to remember events. "Hobson claims that the act of storytelling nurtures "the sense of remembering" for people or for culture. Storytelling is as old as communication itself, and the role of orality, or verbal literacy, is just as important as physical space" (Blair 82). Having the content of the film speak for itself ignites nostalgia for the targeted audience. This factor in the video attracts Disney fans and film critics alike and makes her work more compelling. Without the audio from the original film, the citation wouldn't be as effective on the audience.

Overall, the video essay can be a very compelling way to make an argument. Using the video format to discuss a topic in a unique way allows the viewer to be more engaged with the content being presented and the arguments being made. Having visual freedom to establish complex topics makes the text easier to consume and attracts a wider audience base. It also allows the author to approach the argument in a creative way making their argument unique and full of charm. Using audio creativity also allows the author to establish their personality in a way that the written essay could never do justice to. Humor is the approach Ellis took with her video but using audio to establish any type of emotion or stance is immediately more compelling than reading it. Audio also allows the audience to directly engage with the media being questioned and in this case, calls on old memories to connect with the viewer. By presenting her topic this way, Ellis takes advantage of the digital age by using video and audio to discuss her topic in an engaging and memorable way making her argument more compelling.

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