

WRT 105

Unit 2—VisRhet---The Body

Recognizing and Fixing Weak Thesis Statements

WA Chapter 12

Write a thesis statement about your visual rhetorical analysis topic that...

1. Makes no claim

Example: I am going to talk about the representation of the male body on the cover of *Men's Health* from May 2011.

2. Is obviously true or is a statement of fact

Example: Male bodies are represented all the time in the magazine *Men's Health* and the images tell us a lot about ourselves and our culture.

3. Restates conventional wisdom

Example: Male bodies, as represented on the cover of *Men's Health*, shape the way American men perceive themselves.

4. Offers personal conviction as the basis for a claim

Example: I don't think it's right that the standard for masculinity set by *Men's Health* rules people's lives.

5. Makes an overly broad claim

Example: The masculinity on display in *Men's Health* magazine points to all kinds of problems currently occurring in American culture.

And then, take one (or more) of the weak thesis statements from the front of the page and “*move toward specificity in word choice, in sentence structure, and in idea*” (WA 3rd ed. 130).

Example (combining and refining bad theses #1 and #2): The cover of the May 2011 issue of *Men's Health* [which features a shirtless Aaron Schock, a 29 year old Illinois congressman], seems to be about celebrating and promoting male health and fitness, but it's *also* about sexualizing, even fetishizing the male body at the expense of attending to other issues specific to men's “health,” like aging, obesity, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, etc.