**Outline:**

-Doge defines own identity

-writes own description on poster and caption on magazine

-language and not image defines identity

-Mocks reality (feeling and accomplishment)

-Blending of formats on both posters🡪creates sense of verisimilitude (pseudo-reality)

-One is web to real, other is real to web

-Mocks real-life situations

🡪Replicates but devalues traditionally valued/desirable things (money and awards)

🡪Plays with concept of time itself

-Advancement but regression

-Comic sans

-Ungrammatical phrasing

-Breakdown of communication on poster

🡪 Ultimately, definition of identity has devolved (“much person”)

**Analysis:**

Anyone who spends more time on the internet than outdoors is familiar with Doge. Looking at a Shiba Inu dog give side-eye, suggesting he has the power to peer into men’s souls, is already a surreal experience, but it is only the beginning of Doge’s ability to break the barriers of consciousness, reality, and ultimately, humanity. Two examples of the popular Internet meme demonstrate Doge’s self-defining nature (see Appendix A, B): a fake TIME magazine “Person of the Year” cover, and a lost dog, or Doge, poster. Both feature Doge speak in places that would traditionally define the subject, giving the impression that Doge has the ability to define himself. Instead of a physical description of the missing dog, you hear Doge’s internal monologue: “SUCH TRUBBLE,” “SO SCARE” (see App. A), while Doge of the Year declares this to have been “such year” (see App. B). It is Doge speak itself that defines Doge, as it is recognizable without a picture, unlike a traditional lost dog poster, suggesting identifiable pattern of thought and language, generally referred to as a personality. Even the accepted capitalization of Doge’s name suggests agency and identity.

Doge in all ways creates a sense of verisimilitude: both images are easily recognizable, and maintain the traditional formatting of magazine covers and homemade posters. However, this reality is distorted as one image is a real flyer that borrows from a virtual reality (see App. A), while the other exists in .jpeg form only, but portrays a very real and reputable publication (see App. B). The lines of virtual and actual, or Doge and dog, have blurred. And intentionally so, as typically heart-felt poster is written in Comic Sans, a font no one takes seriously (see App. A), and the water-color style portrait of Doge seems to mock more than add grandeur to being named “Person of the Year” (see App. B). Doge doesn’t seem to find any of humanity’s typical vices valuable: namely the “MUCH REWARD” you receive for his return (to himself), or the prestigious award from “TIEM,” or TIME, magazine. Money and reputation don’t mean a thing to an animal.

Because Doge is, ultimately, still a dog. For all of the advancement implicit in an animal thinking and speaking, let alone writing his own posters and winning awards, Doge only does so in the most basic ways. Comic Sans only appeals to elementary school students, and his phrasing is simplistic: never more than two words, and ungrammatical. Doge is, at best, a non-native speaker of the English language. Moreover, his thoughts are all fragments—they ironically lack a subject. He has a mind, but is not aware of it, like a child who exists, and presumably thinks, before understanding the idea of self. The playful arrangement of off-putting phrases seems unintentional, and his communication breaks down with his grammar as he transitions from assessing the situation as “SUCH TRUBBLE,” to emoting, “SO SCARE,” to simply “WOW” (App. A), a word that expresses a loss of words more than anything else. The combination of his font and content creates communication befitting a person speaking to a pet more than any sort of actual person. That is what Doge is. Not a person, but merely the reflection of man. In humanity’s desire to advance and anthropomorphize animals, the definition of personhood has eroded. Or perhaps exploded. As “much person,” Doge is simultaneously more and less than any one person—the internet has both expanded and eliminated individual identity.