

A critical response to a misogynistic message in kenwood's advertising "the chef" ...

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



I am writing to you in response to Kenwood's latest advert on their new product, "The Chef". I came across it in a magazine and I was truly surprised by the message it was portraying. The image shows a man and his wife standing behind a kitchen appliance, next to them a slogan stating that, "The Chef does everything but cook-that's what wives are for!". The lady is hugging the man and they are both smiling, as if it were the food mixer that is causing their happiness. I was quite perturbed by the misogynistic message that your company is transmitting to the public. Being a young, married woman myself, I strongly believe that our society should no longer aspire to such a mentality.

Do you really believe that a woman's role is to stay in the kitchen and take care of her hungry husband? This stereotypical attitude towards the roles of men and women is demoralizing wives all around America, implying that their place is in the kitchen and making them feel they can't have a career, expecting them to dedicate themselves to their husbands for their whole life. This advert could also reinforce a sense of superiority in husbands which is outdated, recalling our past society, where men have claimed to be superior and have continuously emphasized the "inferiority" of women. In the image, the woman is holding on to the man, who is taller (representing a figure of power and strength), once again referring to this sense of "superiority" in men. She is smiling, implying that she is happy and accepts the fact that she has to look after him as well as being satisfied about the fact that he is giving her "The Chef" as a present, already suggesting that she will be the one that will have to use it.

Do you really believe that this assumption is fair on women? Your company is implying that women are compliant and subservient, obeying what their husbands command. It also seems as if the man is giving her the present in order for her to take care of him in the best way, showing how a woman is only a means to benefit her husband, as if she were another “ machine” just like The Chef, linking to the slogan of the advert. Your company is dehumanizing women, seeing us as lifeless appliances which are expected to nothing but work in the household. The fact that the lady holds on to the man as they both stand there smiling suggests the idea of a happy marriage, we deduce this from the wedding ring on her hand. The advert is an implication that their happiness is because of the food mixer, resembling the perfect husband and the perfect wife, which everyone aspires to be. They both know what their jobs are and therefore their marriage works perfectly. They are a stereotypical 1960's American family, attracting customers to be like them. However, you are also leading readers to unconsciously adopt the mentality from the advert, expecting women to stay home and cook while husbands are out there doing the “ hard work”.

The advert brings connotations of wealth, an appliance like this is quite expensive to the average home. The wife is also “ perfect” with her hair, makeup and clothes and the man is “ perfect” as well with combed hair and a suit, symbolizing wealth. The suit represents bankers and bankers represent wealth, also the glass of wine sitting on the table represents wealth. This implies how the company wants people to think that by buying The Chef, their lives would immediately improve. This also links to the smiles

on their faces and how the advert wants you to believe that by buying The Chef wives will be satisfied with the appliances in the kitchen and therefore cook for their husbands in the best way. One of the main aspects that caught my attention in the advert is the large text which states that, " The Chef does everything but cook-that's what wives are for!" The voice clearly has a male form, probably a husband recommending The Chef to a friend of his, implying that the audience is mainly husbands which are being persuaded to buy an appliance for their wives in order to have them cook for them. This shows how your business already unconsciously expects women to be the cooks in the household. The phrase also takes up a lot of space and has an eager tone in order to emphasize the greatness and effectiveness of the food mixer. The man is happy knowing that he will be taken care of with the new food mixer he got for her, we can deduce this by the words written on the bottom right of the advert, " I'm giving my wife a Kenwood Chef. "

Instead of saying he bought it for the house or for the family overall since he is expecting that only the wife will use it. The message that your company is portraying is that by buying The Chef, as a man, you will make both your wife and yourself happy, benefitting you in every way. From here we can deduce that the main target of the advert is a husband. You want men to buy the product for their wives and the benefits are evident through this advert. Is this how you want to increase sales? By degrading women, your appliances will be only be a reminder of a misogynistic society which we all want to avoid. Even if there wasn't any text, the message could still be deduced. The woman is also wearing a chef hat, suggesting that she is the

one who is going to use the food mixer and not the man, who is wearing a suit, meaning that he won't stay in the house and he will be working for the household in an office or somewhere else from home.

The wife also stands almost in awe of her husband, who comes home late and expects her to prepare him dinner, probably implying that he is hungry and deserves it after his hard day at work. The hat also represents that it is her job to cook and that the present is only for her to use. Your advert not only implies that women are not capable of doing “ difficult” jobs (like for example working in an office) but it also states that they are only able of dealing with more manual an easier jobs like taking care of the house and cooking. Are you implying that women aren't as smart as men? What about those wives who work hard in their careers and are then expected to take care of the household due to the expectations of society? I must say I am very disappointed with this Kenwood advertisement since I would never expect such a company to pursue this type of mentality and to enforce it through the announcement of a new appliance. I hope you consider my thoughts in order to improve your company's idea of the contemporary society. Yours sincerely, Ottavia Bassetti