

Advertising and sex assignment

[Art & Culture](#)



Sex and indecency are very mature areas and should not be used loosely. In today's society almost anything goes. This should not hold true for certain areas; like sex. I intend to use many examples of sex in advertising and various studies to show how this strategy is not only over used, but is improperly used and viewable to all consumers, including young children. The advertising industry has taken a low blow at society and needs to focus their attentions on preserving human decency and uphold a higher standard of moral concern. What are we really dealing with here?

As time grows older, the acceptance of more and more ideals is growing by the second. Not only ten years ago were standards different. I remember when girls couldn't wear shorts that came higher than four finger widths above their knees to school. Today this standard is not only unheard of, but laughed at. Foul language on television is more accepted. Video games are more graphic than ever before and advertisements are using the idea of sex or sexuality to sell products to all ages (including video games: they now have nudity in video games). Do we really want our children growing and learning room these explicit images?

How can companies sleep at night knowing they are using corrupt techniques to sell products to our children? We are talking about corporate social responsibility (CARS). CARS is defined that " a corporation should be held accountable for any of its actions that affect people, their communities, and their environment (McGraw-Hill, 1999, pag. 3). " Companies have two choices in this world today. They can either be for CARS or against it. This paper will use both sides of the coin to view the argument about sexuality in advertising. Is the burger really that good?

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The advertisement industry is a no-holds-barred industry where just about anything goes. Companies need to focus their attention on their CARS more than getting the edge in ads. We might ask ourselves, who exactly is watching these ads? Who are they intended for? What are they selling? Sometimes an advertisement can actually be confusing as to what is being sold. I do not agree with a sexual display for irrelevant products. The reason I take an anti- sexuality view on the subject started from a Carol's Jar. Commercial. In this particular commercial, Paris Hilton was displayed eating a Caracal's. Ambusher. While eating she was dressed in black bathing suit crawling over a Bentley. Some might find it attractive and enticing while others find this a little explicit for them. " This commercial is basically soft-core porn. The way she moves, the way she puts her finger in her mouth—it's very suggestive and very titillating (<http://money. CNN. Com/2005>). " Said Melissa Caldwell, research director for the Parents Television Council (APT). Carol's Jar. Responded by saying that " the group needs to get a life. This isn't Janet Concessionaire's no nipple in this.

It's a beautiful model in a swimsuit washing a car ([http:// none. CNN. Com/2005](http://none. CNN. Com/2005)). " The APT is very concerned about this matter considering this commercial airs in the hours of popular television shows such as The O. C. And sporting programs. Milton Friedman (1970) would agree with Carol's Jar. Friedman believes in the interest of the business and the business only. In his article with the title that speaks his opinion, " The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase Profits," Friedman states that " only people have responsibilities business as a whole cannot be said to have responsibilities (Freidman, 1970, Peg.). " From Friedman's point of view if this immemorial,

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which more than likely improved profits, did not air because of some social value or norm then the company lost money. More specifically they would be spending someone else's money; the stockholder's. The corporate executive made a decision to improve revenue for the company, which in turn makes more money for stockholders. He is not about to hold back from higher profits because of some social backlash. In the world of advertising sometimes bad press is good press. ! Hold! A Mexican restaurant showed a lasciar-clad woman posed with her hands on her hips over the headline 'Tickle my Taco' (Rotifer, 2003). In this case the owner probably thought this would be a good slogan to have. What he doesn't realize that the use of irrelevant sexual innuendos is actually more distracting attracting. He actually thought this was the best campaign he had ever had because of the numerous complaints he got. Another backfire experience involves a trucker business that had passed out calendars for his business with half naked women on each month.

This was thought to be a perfect ad scheme until most of the people with the calendars actually forgot the name of his company. " Advertising creators are so myopic as to believe that publicity from offending people is always beneficial. They do not see it as being a distraction from saying positive things about the restaurant or store (Rotifer). " Joe cool? Advertising is not created and used just to provide a smug example of public morality; advertising is honest because it has to be. What I mean by honesty is the product information is not all ways how it is displayed.

Let's address the issues of what we care about, the way we raise our children, our ideas of right and wrong conduct, these in my view are all

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together. Let's take a look at liquor and tobacco advertising. The image of the Marlboro Man is one example. This type of advertisement depicts a buff, handsome, cool man smoking a cigarette. What message is this conveying to our young people? That it is cool to smoke. We all know it has been proven that smoking cigarettes can cause cancer. This type of advertisement causes the consumer to subliminally change their opinion of various items.

This is why most advertising is geared towards the younger more susceptible crowd. Firebombed and who? The Caracal's. Case is not alone in sexual content. Sex is everywhere we look in today's society. In "The Prevalence of Sexual Imagery in Ads Targeted to Young Adults," Firebombed & Fitch made an advertising attempt at combining a magazine with a catalog. They call it the "analog." In this analog they target young adults by using sexual imagery throughout their products. They increased their revenues from \$50 million to over \$1.5 billion in 2001.

From these numbers one could say that sex does sell. In a survey taken in 2001 results found that "44% of young adults (age-24) said they are more likely to buy the clothes if the ad contains sexual imagery (Richter, 2003)." Others may not agree that sex sells. Most people (61%) report that sexual imagery in ads makes them less likely to buy the products (Richter)." This quote was taken from the same article, but was used as a generalization about all people young and old. Other than being aimed at a much too young audience, there are more issues that are raised with sexuality in ads.

Who wants to look like a celebrity? Let's talk about images. For example, most advertisements for clothing (I. E. Bathing suits etc), show shapely thin

women and men. This has led our country to think that fat is demeaning and not socially accepted. This type of advertising has caused everyone to want to look like the people in the ads. Diets of all sorts have been developed to try to meet these expectations. But when their goals are not reached it causes depression, low self-esteem that in turn causes a poor image is developed.

In my opinion these advertisements have a negative outreach. Who is to say only thin people look great? Advertisements do. These ads also have created anorexic teenagers, which has led to serious health problems and even death. Advertisements often do not explicitly urge the consumer to buy a given product; rather they promise that the products will enhance a person's life. " If a stunningly attractive person claims to use a beauty product, that product may be assumed to be an element of the beauty formula.

Ads arguing that consumers will be more attractive, accepted or appealing to other offer relevant to teens and young adults, for whom dating and group memberships are important (Richter). I' What's it gonna be? From one of my readings I have gathered two hypotheses about advertising that find relevant to our study. Hypothesis 1: A higher proportion of ads with sexual imagery appear in ads targeted to young adults compared to those targeted to mature adults. Hypothesis 2: Overall, ads contain a higher proportion of sexually dressed women than men (Richter).

These two combined show that most advertising is targeted towards young males and that females are the primary source of sexual content in media and advertising. This could possibly lead to a bad outcome. Studies have

shown that males viewing these sexual ads of women are far more accepting of sexual aggression towards females, including rape. These studies agree with the theories of Moses Papa (1997). Papa believes that there are four criteria to our thought of social responsibility and that there is a trade-off between three of these four.

These areas are; local knowledge, level of responsibility, shared consensus and relationship to financial performance. We find that most of the time local knowledge and relationship to financial performance are the one being traded off. Local knowledge would mean that the company designing the ad would know the background of the product being displayed and the target audience. Most of the time they do not take the product and audience into consideration, as we have seen. These companies are more focused on the relationship to financial performance: making a profit.

Reaching perfect social responsibility seems very unattainable. These four criterion were setup as a guideline to reach such a goal. " No program will meet all of these standards. They are purposely couched as ideals to be pursued, rather than as minimalist goals to be obtained easily (Papa). " Who's doing it right? The idea of Corporate Social Responsibility is an optimistic outlook for today's society. A perfect example would be the Cummins Engine Company. Year after year this company insisted on donating to charitable foundations. And year after year they were threatened by bankruptcy.

Any business or economics professor will tell you that their choices were not the smartest in the world. Their short term benefits suffered greatly because

of these choices. Their long term, however have not suffered. They now produce over \$5 billion in revenues each year. " The iron law of responsibility states that in the long run, those who do not use power in ways that society considers responsible will tend to lose it (McGraw-Hill, peg. 4). " Cummins Engines saw their long run capabilities and stuck with them. They prove the stewardship Renville that profits and social responsibility can coexist.