

Explicit sexualization of both men and women media essay



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It is quite evident that gender, sexuality and advertising are all directly linked with one another. 7

Marketing minds have finally realized that sex sells.

Advertisements in mainstream magazines have increasingly relied on explicit sexualization of both men and women to sell products.

“ Ads sell a great deal more than products. They sell values, images, and concepts of success of worth, love and sexuality, popularity, and normalcy. They tell us who we are and who we should be. Sometimes they sell addictions” They provide impossible body images for women to strive towards, and sadly, many women do The female body is repeatedly objectified in advertising, and whenever a human is turned into a thing, violence is going to follow. Rapes and beatings often result from the dehumanization of women

Slide 2

In this advertisement for Calvin Klein Jeans, the female model is depicted lying on vacant beach. This type of advertisement creates many troubled stereotypes and ideologies for our modern day society. This image can be critically evaluated using Goffman's (1979) model of gender advertising. Goffman claims that image advertisements often place women in subordinate positions. He also discusses a set of codes called, “ ritualization of subordination”. This concept addresses the physical position of a woman in an advertisement. Women are often seen on their side or lying on their back.

What is Calvin Klein selling in this advertisement?

This is a Calvin Klein jeans advertisement...

It conveys a lot of message to the consumers.... The woman is lying on her back.

All you need is the touch that transforms the gender oppressive product into a gender celebratory product...

You can see the main focus in this advertisement is Brad Pitt and not the watch...

As he is wearing the watch his fans would think that he wears such kind of watches which is not true because he is just advertising for it and this causes people to buy this watch. It's like cheating on the people and the fans and misleading the consumers.

Play station 2

What better way to sell one of the hottest video game machines around than sex? http://www.americaninventorspot.com/files/images/Play_Station_Two_Sexy_Woman.jpg

There is no image of PS2 (the good which they are trying to sell). The female in the picture is source of attraction to the consumer to buy this product. The product is a gaming console mainly for the young people who can easily be distracted through such ads.

Slide 3

Figures 1 and 2 use the same approach of photographic imagery of the sea and shore, the colours – blue and white – associate with water hence the fragrance name ‘Cool Water’ and the text for the advert. Figure 1 shows an attractive, confident female model passive on the shore resting her head on a rock and gazing at the reader. Figure 2 shows a muscular male model in water, who is active (splashing water) and seems he has just ‘jumped’ out of the water.

Although the adverts appear to be similar on the surface, the adverts have been gendered to send a clear message to the desired reader. The message from ‘Cool Water for Women’ clearly states that as a woman, this product will make you look and feel fresh, cool, relaxed and confident, so confident that you do not need to wear anything else but the fragrance. This plays on the ideology that most women do not have the self confidence to show their body but using this product will restore that confidence. The ‘Cool Water for Men’ implies that not only will the product make you as a man, feel cool and fresh, but it will give you full of energy so that you ready for any action.

This aggressive targeting has mainly had an impact on women more than men as they have become extremely self conscious, and research proves that women spend more money on looking good than men. Billions of Pounds are circulated each year in the beauty industry alone.

Men dream of being James Bond or aspire to his charisma, and those who see him as a ‘role model’ will copy his image. Advertisers have emphasised that Omega is James Bond’s choice of wrist watch brand, and the advert states that Omega is the sign of excellence; connotating that ‘James Bond

only wears the best and so should you'. It plays on men's desire of becoming a hero as we see a 'scene' from a Bond film in the background – explosion in the air. The message is very clear; men who wear the watch can relate to James Bond, become suave, sophisticated, and successful.

In contrast, figure 4 demonstrates that women are more laid back, and prefer indoor events. The indoor décor in the background resembles a sophisticated, upper class restaurant. The advert emphasises that this gold, slim Omega watch, is Cindy Crawford's choice. She is wearing a red dress associated with the 'lady in red' (attractive). Her watch is worn as part of her outfit, almost as if it is gold jewellery. The message conveyed here is as if Cindy is speaking out to the reader saying, 'look at what I'm wearing'. She appears to be wealthy and attractive and is urging women that it is a must have piece of jewellery that will make you look like 'a million dollars'.

It is clear from the above examples that men and women are targeted according to their social beliefs and attitudes towards their self perception brought on by advertisers and society, enforcing them to adopt certain buying behaviours to influence purchasing decisions. These certain methods have had negative impact on women than men as we are aware that women appear more emotional and unconfident in contrast to men. Women are increasingly concerned with their physical appearance due to the pressure of looking good by society.

Klein is not alone in his use of controversial images in advertising. After all, the whole point of advertising has always been to attract attention, and fashion advertising is notorious for its exploitative use of young men and

women. But one senses that there is a new conservatism among consumers, who are fed up with X-rated images hawking everything from beer to video games. In continuing to push the envelope, designers like Klein may find that they have pushed the patience of their consumers too far.

A possible backlash to this campaign occurred in 1999, when Klein launched an ad campaign for his children's underwear line. The campaign involved three different photos, two depicting two little boys playing on a sofa and clad only in CK underpants and the third depicting two little girls playing on a sofa and clad only in CK undergarments. These images appeared as full page ads in the New York Post and prominent magazines, and as a huge billboard in Manhattan's Times Square.

Due to public furore, these ads were pulled 24 hours later. A Calvin Klein spokesperson claimed that these ads were intended "to capture the same warmth and spontaneity that you find in a family snapshot." The general public disagreed, with numerous experts citing that these ads were pornographic because they featured high definition, sexualized images of young children. In many cases, those who were against the ads cited Klein's previous track record as sufficient proof that these images were exploitative.

“Chocolate man” ad too sexy for Indian audience

A deodorant advert that showed an apparently irresistible chocolate man being gnawed on by scantily clad women has been banned in India. An advertising executive in the country explains why it was so offensive.

The Indian blogosphere is having a tantrum over the decision to withdraw a commercial for Axe Dark Temptation deodorants for men, which are <https://assignbuster.com/explicit-sexualization-of-both-men-and-women-media-essay/>

flavoured with a hint of chocolate. Created by Argentinean advertisers and aired on Indian television, the ad shows crowds of attractive young women nibbling and licking at a young man wearing the deodorant. Although parts of the clip had already been censored to appease the regional audience, the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) received so many complaints about the ad that they decided to remove it. It follows a collection of commercials flaunting, amongst other things, sexy underwear and flavoured condoms, which have been taken off air or censored for being “ indecent, vulgar and repulsive”.

Slide 4

This slide includes the knowledge issue.

Through these real life examples we came up with knowledge issue which says

“ To what extent is the use of sexuality in advertisements ethical?”

There are different opinions of people and different ways of knowing.

Reason

Emotion

Perception

Language

Reason

Money

Better profits and sales

Brand name

To attract consumers

More knowledge issues

What responsibility, if any, does a company have for honestly educating the consumer about its product?

Should advertisers be allowed to suggest that a product will make a person more sexy/interesting/beautiful/successful/etc?

Is it ethical to use celebrities to sell products they probably don't even use themselves?

Is it the buyer's responsibility to be aware of these strategies and not allow them to manipulate their emotions?

Language

Communicating a message – Cause

Influence purchasing behavior & thought patterns – Effect

Persuasive & Informative – Enabler

Language is the key criteria for effectiveness of these three aspects.

Message must be communicated in a language which is comfortable to the

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audience and influence them in a positive manner. At the same time it will be more effective if the communication is persuasive and informative.

Language to be used in an advertisement should be determined based on the product and the user group for the product. For instance, advertisement for a luxury good should be publicized in English whereas same for a necessity is preferred to be done in local language for greater communicability and mass reach.

Two Indian Americans, Aradhna Krishna and Rohini Ahluwalia of University of Michigan and Minnesota, respectively, examined the role of language in advertising in India. Their results indicate that multinationals marketing products, among bilingual populations, should pay special attention to language.

They determined how the language hits viewers mind in relation to a product category. This happens as different products have different user groups. They found that participants' perceptions of advertisements changes significantly when different languages are used. " While Hindi is associated with belongingness (close, personal, friendly, family), English is associated with sophistication (global, cosmopolitan, urban, upper class)," they wrote. They found that whereas detergents can be advertised effectively in Hindi, English is preferred for Luxury items like chocolates. Airtel, Coca Cola, Fevicol are some of the brands which advertise in local language in two and three tier cities. But as far as Cadbury is concerned, they prefer Hindi or mixed language.

The researchers also found that people responds favorably to mixed-language advertising. A classic example for mixed-language advertisement can be that of Frooti the first tetra pack fruit juice of India by Parle Agro Foods. They use the jingle “ Mango frooti, fresh-n-juicy” with their Hindi advertisement effectively. Whereas use of Bengali language by all major advertisers for their products during Durga Pooja in Kolkata (rather whole Bengal) can be an example for use of local language to influence masses.

History of Women in Television Advertisements (AOK)

There are many different stereotypes of women in advertising. Throughout history there have been many studies that proved women were mainly portrayed on television advertisements as housewives or occupations that are subservient to men. Studies also show the disproportional ratio of women to men in TV advertisements. In the 70's, it was reported that women were found on camera only 21 % of the time. Allan and Coltrane conducted a study that showed inversely, in the 80's female appearance on TV advertisement were 5. 8% less compared to the 50's! (Pierce, 1999) In 1996, the Kaiser Family Foundation and Children Now calculated that women were on camera 42 percent of the time. Though this was an increase percentage wise from previous decades, gender inequalities still are rampant. This fact is proved a study conducted by Professors Daniel J. Bretl and Joanne Cantor of the University of Wisconsin (1995) which found that 90% of voice-overs used in advertisements were male, despite some of the products were aimed predominantly to females.

Effects of Advertising on Women

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Advertising has many effects on society as a whole. As a result of not being in as many commercials, at very young ages boys and girls conclude that girls are valued less than boys. The commercials that females are mostly in are ones that portray them as them and thin and beautiful while some how also being subservient to men. The negative effects of advertising on women fall into a huge range of problems. The most common would affect be the constant increase of women's struggles with dieting and eating disorders. As, Wilson and Blackhurst point out, "...fifty-six percent of all women are on diets (Pipher, 1995) ...and eighty percent of girls have dieted by the time they reach eighteen (Brown, 1993)." Unfortunately as girls were raised, they were always taught to be submissive and dainty. It almost seemed like they are told their opinions don't matter and that they should just sit there look pretty or be fragile like glass dolls. Many ads use this to their advantage. They make girls think that the only thing they should do is work on their appearance, because their opinions don't matter. This results in several girls falling into depression or developing eating disorders. The inner struggles of keeping the pain in cause some girls to want to commit suicide before wanting to be fat.

A Charlotte, N. C. real estate firm says business is booming, thanks to their sexy new marketing plan that involves hiring models to pose in listings photos of luxury homes.

During the boom years of 2006 and 2007, Peters and Associates Real Estate was the No. 1 seller of high-end homes in the Charlotte region. Then the market crashed and real estate sales dried up for most of 2008 and 2009.

Peters and Associates owners Nick and Miriam Peters then decided to spice up their marketing and have been having tremendous success ever since.

The couple creates an image by spending thousands of dollars on clothing and cars; and they photograph their listings with sexy, attractive people.

Peters caters to high-profile and high-net-worth individuals, such as professional athletes, coaches, entertainers, executives and other VIPs.

These clients are looking for a lifestyle and amenities much different from the average homebuyer.

The buying experience for Peters clients begins with being picked up at the airport in an exotic car and then whisked to a luxurious spa for a relaxing day of pampering, or to a private club for a round of golf. Once they are totally refreshed, they are ready to tour homes.

How effective is the campaign? Peters did a controlled online test, with one listing showing the typical real estate pictures. Visitors to that listing stayed an average of 40 to 60 seconds. Visitors to the listing with “lifestyle photos” stayed an average of 4 to 6 minutes.

Statistics suggest that the more time a potential buyer spends looking at a listing, the more likely they are to request a showing. Peters’ listings used to get three to four clicks a week, and now they get 10 to 20 a day.