

Women's roles in society essay sample



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Print advertising portrays females as sex objects. Different ads and commercials increase the sexual attention given to women in our society. Women are used through sex appeal to sell products that may attract males. An issue that results in this method of advertising could result in violent sexual acts that enable violence against women. The provocative clothing that women wear in print ads encourage no respect from males because the women themselves are not respecting their bodies' privacy. Women seek to be treated as more than sex objects, but males view these ads and see the way females are presenting themselves through the media.

Sex sells. Our society has proven through movies and songs that sex is always on our minds. It could be considered an obsession. Advertising often uses sex to help sell their product because they know it will appeal to a large part of our society. Products that primarily attract males will be advertised with a female figure having sex appeal. Whether it is a girl in a bikini seductively leaning on a Ferrari or a blond bombshell hugging a man using a Macho razor, the sex appeal will attract to possible male buyers. Francine Rosselli who studies the perceptions of women through the media, argues that women are victims in advertising because they are being used as sex objects. She claims that one of every two advertisements feature females in women's magazines as sex objects. This statistic proves that sex does sell, if it did not then half of advertisements would not base their possible sales on sex appeal.

A study conducted by Tom Reichert proves that the less clothing female models wear in advertising, the higher the sales will be. He assessed the levels of clothing in advertisements effectiveness. For example, his research

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consisted of four conditions of ads featuring a fragrance. The first ad was by itself without a female model, the next with a demurely dressed model, then a partially covered model, and a fully nude model. The sample of female and male undergraduates favored the ads differently depending on how much clothing the model was wearing. The fully nude model sold the most products. This proves that buys base their sales on the print advertisements that grab their attention in a positive way.

Reichert claims the sexual content in ads do not always have to be as dominant as a naked model. Sexual symbols in ads are also effective. According to Reichert, “[s]exual embeds and symbolism. A sexual embed is a small, imperceptible image of a naked person or sexual parts of a person placed into ad images by advertisers. Similarly, objects with shapes that connote genitalia and sexual acts (key inserted into a lock) are considered examples of sexual symbolism.” (243). This proves that sex appeal can be in a hidden message which will attract people’s attention. The mystery of whether or not a print ad is symbolizing a sexual act intrigues the viewers to study the product; essentially remembering the product’s name.

Advertisers will continuously use sex symbols in their print ads because it attracts more buyers, as proven through Reichert’s study. “ There is evidence that sexual information in ads receive the most recognition and recall. For example, recognition of sexual visuals in ads is significantly higher than that in similar ads without sexual image.” (250). He claims a research proved visual elements of sexual ads exhibited an advantage for visual recognition . In a test of visual playback, a sexual Calvin Klein fragrance commercial was described in great detail of a female advertising it and a <https://assignbuster.com/womens-roles-in-society-essay-sample/>

nonsexual Calvin Klein fragrance commercial. Two months after it was exposed, respondents continued to remember the sexual imagery in much greater detail than the nonsexual commercial. Again, this shows how women's nudity appeals to buyers.

The way females are shown in sexual advertisements make them appear to be inferior to males. This could lead to sexual violence for women because print ads make males seem stronger and in control of women.

Rosselli is concerned about sexual violence against women. She claims women are depicted as being under control by their male partner in print ads. Her main concern is how advertisers make violence against women appear to be normal, “[v]iolence against women is a serious public health and human rights concern and that the presentation of women as sex objects and victims in various forms of media increases acceptance of violence against women.” (583). She claims the most antagonizing factor that contributes to sexual violence comes from media imagery that presents women as both sex objects and as victims. With advertisements using females for only an image it appears that women are only good for one thing, sex. It does not enhance respect for females. Print advertisements make women look provocative lacking self morals. Advertisements make men appear to be aggressive and empowering over women. Rosselli claims violence can be an effect from this advertising because women are presented as less powerful than men and inferior.

In agreement with Rosselli, Cara Wallis also fears the way print ads impose male control over females. According to Wallis, “[g]ender displays primarily

reinforced stereotypical notions of women as sexual objects, and to a lesser degree, females as subordinate and males as aggressive." (161). Although males will not simply look at ads and be aggressive towards women, these ads speak loud words in our society. The way women are depicted in ads make women appear to be less important which could influence the amount of respect males give to females. She explains the way women are shown to be less superior, "[m]en's nonverbal behavior tends to parallel the behavior associated with dominance and power, whereas women's tends to parallel the behavior of the subordinate and powerless." (169). Male's intense dominance over ladies make other men think that they have to be in control of their partner like this as well.

Advertisements with sexual content often target certain types of women as well. Certain races are depicted as shown to be unworthy. The Latino women are often categorized for being flashy. They are often used as sex objects in ads. These methods of advertisements influence the way males think, as Judith Cofer encountered firsthand. Cofer is a Latino women who has been categorized by males as a sex object because of her gender and and nationality. Cofer claims men have been trained to react to certain clothing as a sexual signal. She shares a story of a men making an aggressive move on her lacking all respect for her. His response to her rejection was, " I thought you Latin girls were suppose to mature early." This proves that his mind has been taught the stereotype of treating girls as nothing more than a sex toy.

Print advertisements use women as ' sex objects'. These ads do not encourage respect for women because they are being exposed to make

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sales. It is a scary truth that the way women are shown in ads will entice males to feel and act superior to females. Women should stop portraying themselves to be only useful for sex so sexual violence could decrease.

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