

Back in my  
day??????? a look at  
the outdated gender  
stereotypes of the  
21st century...

[Art & Culture](#)



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Imagine a man and a woman. Dress them up like paper figurines in your mind. Add the details of how they look, what they're wearing or even better, what they're doing. Now take that picture and flip it, so that the woman is wearing what the man was wearing and doing whatever it is that he was doing and vice versa for the man. Is this acceptable? Or does it challenge your idea of what a man and a woman should be? Advertising firms take it for granted that we'll just continue to accept the roles they have assigned us in our specific genders.

This Beckham Signature fragrance ad definitely promotes the standards set upon men and women by society through the ages. The first things the eyes are drawn to are the faces of the two very recognizable models of this product. The very well known David and Victoria Beckham are featured with individual photos one on top of the other. Right off the bat the ad is using ethos to capture the audience's attention by hooking them in with a popular female idol and a popular male idol. With Victoria being a style icon, her presence supports the feminine ideal.

She's chic, trendy, sexy; she is all that a woman should idolize. Then you have David, the "man's man," who plays sports and appears as the rugged athletic hero the man hopes to one day embody. But just in case famous faces don't quite do the trick, there's always more. Even the lighting has an interesting effect. Victoria's image is stacked on top and the lighting is set in a softer which allows the text to emphasize her physique, perfect, blemish-free skin, perfectly manicured nails and expertly done makeup.

The dim light of the image, in this case, is showing that in order to be feminine, we should be soft, sensual and sexy. In a stark contrast we have David Beckham's photo set in shadows, showing the male in a mysterious and darker light, which would represent a masculine tone because men are supposed to have that fearless quality. Half of his face is hidden in shadow, giving him a sexy kind of edge but we still aren't a hundred percent sure about this man, we just know that he's intriguing.

Just the way David gazes intently at the product shows us he's supposed to be strong and "macho" because men are supposed to believe that wearing this cologne is going to give them that mystique, the edge that they need to be as irresistible and cool as David Beckham. As for Victoria Beckham, her gaze appears more intimate, as if she were looking upon her lover. She wants women to believe that being doused in her fragrance makes them appealing and gives you sensual powers over your partner. The poses that Victoria and David have assumed say a great deal as well.

Victoria is posed in a very intimate scene that would have viewers picturing her lying down in bed, with her head tilted back. By portraying this intimate encounter, she touches on the female desire to be appealing and the male desire of wanting a woman to appeal to him that way. Her position also suggests a more submissive docile role as the woman being on her back. David, on the other hand, appears to be in a more dominant position lying on control. This man, David Beckham, is in control. Though his photo is beneath Victoria's we still sense the dominance of the male presence.

The overall mood is set by the colors, which create a dark, cozier atmosphere. The text is photographed so that you feel close to the models. It imitates a strong intimate connection that normally lovers would only share. But the ad is sharing this with you, peeking in on an exclusive moment so that you're apart of it. The effect makes the average man looking at this feel a little manlier and the average woman feels a bit sexier when theyre allowed to share this moment. When the viewer eventually sees the product in the lower right hand corner you notice two things.

The male version of the fragrance is in a short but wide bottle in kind of a darker purple, whereas the female version of the fragrance is set in a taller, thinner bottle in a bright pink with a fuchsia floral design adorning the outside of the bottle. It feels like theyVe even imposing the ideals of men and women on the bottle designs. The female's bottle being designed hinner and taller gives the feeling of women being tall and slender. While the shorter bottle for men denotes more emphasis on being sturdy, with a more solid shape.

All these factors and more play a subtle, and not so subtle, role in supporting the roles that society has set for our genders. We may, one day, rise above these outdated notions but nothing us going to change unless people start challenging these ads that help keep those ideas alive. Remember the man and woman you imagined not long ago? Help make it Ok for the reverse to be just as acceptable as the original. The media should be challenging gender stereotypes. It's the twenty irst century and there are no longer caveman roaming the earth.

It is now known that a woman is just as capable of being strong and independent, just as a man is capable of doing the dishes or the laundry. The point is these views of what a woman and man should be are prehistoric and outdated. But as long as people are responding positively to advertisements, such as the Beckham Signature Fragrance ad and as long as their sales keep improving, nothing is going to change. A standstill is the most we can hope for at present time but hopefully in the future we can work on a strong image for the woman and a softer, gentler side of men.