

# Alcohol advertising analysis

Business



Anthony Taylor Dr. Price ENGWR 300 23 September 2010 Happiness Fresh From the Factory The product of interest within this advertisement is clearly an alcoholic beverage; more specifically, a concoction of bourbon manufactured by Maker's Mark. Emphasized in a black background, the bourbon exudes an aesthetically pleasing hue of amber housed within a carefully engineered glass bottle labeled by the Maker's Mark Company.

As an attempt to captivate the essence of this bottle of liquor, a quote to the left reads: "Your Bourbon has a great body and fine character, I wish the same could be said for my girlfriend. It is noticeable that the words "great body" and "I wish" are typed in a font relatively larger than the rest of the words composing this statement. Another important detail pertaining to this advertisement is the almost subliminal reflection of the bottle of bourbon. The reflection represents a very nicely toned mid-section of an attractive female, highlighting her busty curves as an indication of her "top shelf quality" exquisiteness. A simple analysis of this advertisement above quickly points out various emotional appeals that are being targeted by the schemers responsible for creating this ad.

The first of which are our needs for prominence and to dominate, which have the strongest association to the visuals comprising the advertisement.

The other, rather less apparent, themes present in the ad are the need for aesthetic sensations and the need for attention. This advertisement is not unique from the majority of alcohol related ads as its main drive is to feed into the consumer's unconscious desires in order to sell the product.

The advertising agency hired by Maker's Mark put special effort forth in this ad towards manipulating its consumers through the use of emotional appeals and even a minor application of contemporary psychology. It is, however, unfortunate that an effort this impressive is responsible for such exploitative, despicable, and overall distasteful themes and implications that make up the core message of this advertisement. This advertisement is a prime example of manipulative and misleading ads for its poor representation of society's values, its underhanded efforts to communicate through emotional appeals, and negative impact on the health and wellbeing of society as a whole.

First and foremost, this advertisement reveals a crude representation of society's lesser values. The lesser values include the demoralization of women. The ad's comparison of women and alcohol is the highlight of this advertisement that makes it so brutally offensive. It is powerfully implied in this ad that alcohol and women exist for one grand purpose, to meet the high standards of men.

One could easily translate the quote in this ad to: " If you feel that your woman does not satisfy your need for high standards perhaps you should consider this bottle of alcohol as a means of compensation. " Only ignorant-minded individuals could interpret this association presented in the advertisement and go on pursuing the product for that specific reason.

However, this could merely be evidence that the creators of the ad have chosen to target this demographic (ignorant-minded individuals) for optimal effectiveness.

Another example of lesser values depicted in this ad is the general suggestion that a product such as this can actually create an image of class or shape your character to something that is more desirable. It is a sad realization after you spend a fortune towards a product in an effort to satisfy some spiritual need. Jean Kilbourne deserves credit for accurately stating, “ Seeking the outcomes of a healthy relationship through products cannot work. Sometimes it leads us into addiction. However, at best the possessions can never deliver the promised goods.

They can't make us happy or loved or less alone or safe. If we believe they can, we are doomed to disappointment. ” Secondly, this advertisement is dreadfully guilty of trying to manipulate its audience through the use of emotional appeals. The visuals within this advertisement revolved mostly around the human needs for prominence and to dominate. For example, an individual who reads the quote within the ad can quickly identify that the company is trying to describe the bottle of bourbon as something that is respectable and demonstrates a sense of prestige.

The promise implied by this description is that the consumer will improve themselves with a “ dose” of these qualities through the simple transaction for the product being advertised, ultimately aiming to make them feel powerful.

Jib Fowles does an absolutely fantastic analysis on how advertising agency's work their black magic: Human beings, it is presumed, walk around with a variety of unfulfilled urges and motives swirling in the bottom half of their minds. Lusts, ambitions, tenderesses, vulnerabilities – they are constantly bubbling up, seeking resolution.

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These mental forces energize people, but they are too crude and irregular to be given excessive play in the real world. They must be capped with the competent, sensible behavior that permits individuals to get along well in society. However, this upper layer of mental activity, shot through with caution and rationality, is not receptive to advertising's pitches. Advertisers want to circumvent this shell of consciousness if they can, and latch on to one of the lurching, subconscious drives.

On a more rudimentary level, it is also noticeable that the ad implements the use of contemporary psychology techniques. The specific technique that the ad takes advantage of is called classical conditioning, which is a type of associative learning: " Many contemporary advertisers use classical conditioning in some way" (King 254). An example in this ad is the use of the attractive image reflecting from a bottle of liquor. In this case, our unconditioned stimulus is the attractive representation of the female body, which provokes our unconditioned response of being attracted and feeling good.

This ad makes use of classical conditioning by associating the attractive figure with the bottle of Maker's Mark bourbon.

Therefore, the consumer has been taught to respond favorably (conditioned response) to the Maker's Mark bottle (conditioned stimulus). Finally, the product being highlighted in this advertisement is a form of alcohol that is responsible for many tragedies in American society. Alcohol puts a risk on the proper functioning of society entirely. In fact, according to the Marin Institute, " More than 1, 700 college students in the U.

S.

are killed each year—about 4. 65 a day—as a result of alcohol-related injuries. ” It certainly must be difficult for companies to sell a dangerous drug that is extremely hazardous to a persons’ health and well-being. Alcohol is the leading cause of teenage accidents on the road. Certainly alcohol can guide people to enjoyment through socializing more comfortably; however, the risks and dangers of alcohol are what should be emphasized by these advertising companies and not the false promises that this substance stands for.

Overall, the Maker’s Mark advertisement simply represents how much companies are willing to cross any boundary necessary to sell you their product.

It is difficult to image that in our culture it is even socially acceptable to try glamourizing an audience through the use of manipulation and deception to sell something as destructive as poison. It is overwhelming to realize that these advertising agencies stoop so low as to demoralize women, manipulate consumers via emotional appeals, and try to make a poisonous substance desirable all in the same picture.

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