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KNOWLEDGE PROJECT
Advertising
Essay and Analyze



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Lasalle College Fall 2017

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**You know you're not the first. But do you really care?**

**In today’s world we come across plethora of advertising and what we call “mass-marketing”. It can be clearly seen in the 21st century that advertising appears everywhere possible in our daily life, even pops up unwantedly when we are surfing on the Internet. We are surrounded by something very difficult to escape because of the essence of its purpose. Advertisement is a vital part of the economy and the success of business. If done ethically, advertising is beneficial to advertisers as well as consumers. However there are concerns about using unethical methods of advertising, and concerns about the “too much, too often” which is according to me having a devastating effect on the society.
On this essay I will mainly focus on the advert I choose to analyze but also on the advertising force itself. The BMW’s ad here is kind of provocative, which I really like and perfectly representing the concept of sex in advertising, a very common and controversial practice.**

**Ten years ago I discovered the show Mad Men, happening at the beginning of the modern marketing concepts during the 60’s in an advertising agency in New-York. Starting there, I developed a passion for advertising which can be very creative, funny and sometimes pure genius. I always used my critical mind to analyze what the exact purpose of an ad could be and what the marketers thought when they did it. Growing up in a world where the trivialization of consumerism is getting stronger and where I often feel like an “ultra-capitalism’s prisoner” I want to escape, rejecting the idea of being like a human product buying products and services.
This is the concept; advertising is now a form of cultural pollution. I’m talking about cultural pollution because like a pollutant can damage the Nature and our physical environment, advertising causes the same effect to our mental environment. How to behave, what to buy, how to dress, what to think, what a woman or a man should look-like, we are living in a dictatorship leading by advertising lobby. The effect on our society is devastating, especially for young people and teenagers with the reign of social media like Instagram** (Marsh, 2016)**. Girls ready to do anything to look like this or that, and feel like an “Insta” model, be virtually loved. Guys posting pictures at the gym because if you don’t have abs you’re not a man, you know. Advertising has become so powerful that even random people are part of it and play the game; everyone is a useful slave of the system and the industry.
That being said, I will now focus on the ad I chose to write about, meaningful about beauty standards, woman place in nowadays world, sex and sexism. I will discuss the good and bad parts of it, but I have to say that I really love this ad and the genius behind it amazes me.**

**This provocative advertisement was created in Greece for car manufacturing giant BMW as part of their used-car marketing campaign. The image features an attractive, youthful blond female model with a seductive and inviting look and the slogan that is actually composed of a question “You know you’re not the first. But do you really care?” The advertisement uses a literary device as its only text content to persuade the viewer by asking a rhetorical question. This advertisement however assumes that men (the primary target audience) would not refuse this woman’s irresistible sexual advances. The suggestive message behind the ad would undoubtedly be seen as offensive to many members of the general public,
Research by Smith and Engel (1968) investigated the impact of a physically attractive model in advertising on a person’s perception of automobiles. They found that participants rated the automobiles more highly dependent on the attractiveness of the model; rating the cars as more appealing, faster and of higher quality, among other positive attributes. Interestingly this effect was not just seen among men, but also women** (Strum, 2014)**. When considering this research, it is obvious why BMW chose to use “sex appeal” to sell their cars. Sex in advertising has been the theme of much 20th Century advertising. It seems like all we see these days are advertisements which use the human body and sexuality to sell all kinds of products. It is virtually impossible to tune into any type of media they days and not encounter some type of ad which uses sexuality to sell its product. Most of the time sexuality and the use of the product in a real world setting are irrelevant, but for centuries if sexual connotation is put upon the use of a certain product then the product has been a success in the market place. The objectives of any company using the concept of using ‘Sex’ in it are advertising campaigns are clear. The company wants to appeal to the conscious level of the target market to sell its product. The company wants to appeal to the consumer who appreciate sexuality and sexual content and will spend all the money required to look especially sexy.
Concerning the BMW ad, it could be debated that the consistency rule is linked to this advertisement, making the audience consider buying a used car by implying that they would not be put off by a ‘used’ woman, as the ad denotes. The thought of sexual availability and purity being likened to a used car can be, of course, seen as a very offensive and sexist thing. What does it mean about women? On the other way the association between the image and the text leaves a little margin of interpretation and make you smile. It is ingenious, powerful, funny and gets into your head.**

**After a few research I found out that the ad was withdrawn after an outbreak of fury among the general public. It is quite obvious why, but I personally think that people, especially women always going to go against these types of ads only seeing bad aspects of it. Nothing is neutral in our world but I can observe that nowadays everything as always to be politically correct; not letting place to dark humor or provocative content. People stand for what they think bad not seeing the good, not using a total critical mind. I personally totally approve the ad analyzed on this essay, there is nothing choking about it. What I disapprove is woman being used as a pure object of consummation to sell more and more, it is still the case but going to (hopefully) change in the future with all the protest movement around the occidental world. Let’s also hope that the advertising pollution we are facing going to disappear and that the industry sees a ”healthy restructuring.”**

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