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**Psychoanalytic, Marxist and Feministic Criticism of Womens' Representation in a Series of Advertisement**

**Introduction**

Advertisements play an important role in the capitalist economy through the provision of the impetus for the flow of some goods and or services in the market. Through the adverts, potential clients for the products are threaded based on the reflection of the author. Adverts have not only changed the purchasing behavior of individual consumers as their primary mandate but have additionally transformed the behavior of the people in line with the advertisements. Advertisements using women’s subjects can be construed in different perspectives such as psychoanalytic, Marxist, and Feminist critics. The rising competition in the fashion industry calls for continuous and consistent advertisements to promote sales and reminds customers of the changes in quality or prices. Most of the civil societies and women representatives have raised numerous complaints regarding the roles of women in advertisements and the need to transform their duties to allow them to take influential positions such as managers and directors. In spite of the numerous attempts by women to enjoy equal status as men, the fashion industry continues to undermine their efforts by portraying them as objects of sexual desire, as well as assigning them traditional roles such as mothers and spouses (Black and Morton 333).In this work, a series of adverts are criticized from the three perspectives to expose how women representations in the advertisement industry are championing for gender-based inequalities in social roles.

**Psychoanalytic critic**

Psychoanalytical theory reiterates that the behavior of humans is a function of the thoughts in the mind which takes the form of the subconscious. Human behavior can be connected to the dream or the unconscious thoughts (Forest 338). In terms of the advertisement industry, an advert can be analyzed psychoanalytically by focusing on the advert itself, the author, and the perception it creates to the audience. Considering the women subjects in the fashion industry as depicted by a series of fashion adverts, it can be construed that the models used in such an advert are characterized by unquestionable beauty, good shape, skin color, and hairstyles. It is also necessary to note that the models employed in fashion adverts are not just picked anyhow but the author develops the idea that appeals to the unconscious thoughts in the mind after which an individual of similar or near similar nature is searched. Unlike in male adverts that employ different known male figures especially people talented in sports, the female subjects in adverts are majorly characterized by beauty and exposure of body parts.

The authors of such adverts create an impression through the models that the use of products being advertised will transform their body to match the level of beauty characterized by the advert subjects. Although the subjects do the adverts making the moves as directed by the author in order to get money, their actions create a thread to the audience that further creates a level of awareness that increases the thread of their unconscious influence. The images or the moves depicted through the fashion adverts create a picture within the unconscious thoughts of the audience thus developing the desire to be similar to the models (see Mac Cosmetics np). Through the morality principle, the superego of the audience develops a feeling of guilt is the desires of the moral rules are violated. The moral rules herein refer to the way society construes the women and the association to beauty. Violation of beauty construction or something less of that makes the audience (women) to develop the desire to purchase such items being advertised with the sole intention of achieving the desired level of beauty. As a result, the purchasing behavior is changed with the author reaping from the increasing sales of the products, the subjects benefiting from the commercials, while the people applying such cosmetics eliminates the guilt.

**Marxist critic**

Marxist theory is a class-related theory that posits that individuals are positioned in different classes within the societal hierarchy in the realm of economic power (Jaquette 243). The position of an individual within the societal hierarchy determines the behavioral extent of an individual. Marx believed that the social structure, religion, and social morality are all societal aspects that are linked with economic power.

In the realm of advertisements in the fashion industry that are heavily inclined towards the female subjects, the Marxist critic can be anchored on the exposure of body parts of the models and depiction of sexual orientation. According to Marx, society is founded on the aspects of values, norms, and standards which define the moral aspects of a culture. Within society, there are values and norms based on accepted standards and morals. Individuals within the society are supposed to construct themselves in a certain manner that is accepted within the society (see Mac Cosmetics np). In line with this discussion, one such aspect is instituted on the confines of morals surrounding sexuality. Society approves sex as a basic need but the moral behind sex is only allowed provided that it is not disclosed to the public. The desire to achieve economic power, however, makes the subjects in the fashion industry adverts to go against the morals of the society by exposing their sexuality through the adverts in order to gain economically. Adverts are paying heavily but also their ruin the morals of the subjects. Choosing to do an advert knowing well that the contents exposed through the advert are contrary to the societal expectation implies that economic power is overrated more than the social integration through societal morals.

**Feministic critic**

A review of most of the adverts with female subjects reveals that most of the advertisements portray women as objects of sexual satisfaction. It is also clear that women are assigned junior roles such as motherly duties and being spouses. Some adverts give women the leisure roles with specific such as reading, sweeping, and watching televisions as reported by Grover (28). This goes against the ideals of the theory of feminism which advocates for equity in society across gender. When women are assigned lower positions, the element of equity as outlined under the feminism theory is undermined. Similarly, the portrayal of women as objects of sexual desire goes against the values championed by feminism (Calkin 97). Feminism advocates for a moral society in which that does not lower the dignity of any person irrespective of their gender.

Objectification of women is a common issue in the fashion industry. Cosmetic firms employ young beautiful ladies to do their adverts while putting on such make-ups (see Mac Cosmetics np). The implication of the images is more of the sexualization of the women rather than promoting the products. Mark-ups over from their faces and lips are highly attractive. For the targeted consumer, instead of focusing their attention on the impacts of their products to women or human beings, they emphasize on beauty (Grover 28). As such, adverts used by cosmetic industries to promote their products using the female subjects are more of a beautification less on content promotion.

To understand the perception of the society regarding the adverts and how they are changing behavior, intended or otherwise, it is important to consider the perspective of the viewers of such adverts. A review of the target audience, whether men or women, shows that the people love the sexually objectified images. Black and Morton (333) narrate that both men and women have are attracted equally with the physical state of women used in the advertisement. Unlike men, modern advertisements assign young women attractive and decorative roles. Such attractiveness arouses women making them desire the intimacy act. Black & Morton also noted that the use of romantic images is a clear show of the serialization of women's bodies. They, however, believe that beyond the physical appearances and the desire for sex, women still find other attractive things such as wealth and status during advertisements. Due to their attractive nature, many companies prefer using sexualized objects as they believe such objects will capture the attention of a large number of targeted viewers. Applying such images or strategy ensure that attention to sexual stimuli is drawn which leaves a long-lasting memory in the minds of targeted consumers. Black & Morton maintain that while such Ads may be useful and profitable to companies, they consistently stereotype women by portraying them as attractive and sexually desirable. As such, more women tend to align their duties and deliberations within the aspects of beauty and leisure related jobs while their male counterparts are subjected to manual and high tasking job profiles. The outcomes are that adverts play an important role in enhancing gender inequalities in the job profile.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, women’s discrimination still exists in modern society. It occurs in different forms and at different places. In the fashion industry, women stereotyping takes the types of sexual objectification and assignment of lower responsibilities. Most of the fashion adverts tend to expose women as beautiful objects of sexual satisfaction. Others assign women lesser responsibilities such as being mothers or spouses. Few adverts have given women the opportunities to take management positions. However, depending on the different criticism perspective, the decision to be stereotyped or otherwise lies on the choice of women either based thread of unconscious personality in reflection to the adverts (Psychoanalytic perspectives), on materials or desire to gain an economic advantage (Marxist perspective) and or on the desire to align a behavior based on the gender-related roles (Feministic perspective).

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