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The Smell of Sensualism and a Sweet Escape

Advertisements are unique. Sometimes a viewer isn’t shown the actual product being sold until the last two seconds of the ad. Instead of seeing the bottle of perfume or the bottle of beer the advertiser is trying to sell, the viewer sees half naked models or a male dominant relationship with a woman. Why might that be? The advertiser is trying to draw our attention into their advertisement, how? They come for our weak spots, our desires and our fears to tell us what we need and what we’re scared of. Sometimes we don’t even know what our true desires and fears are until we see these ads, that can be scary in and of itself.

I took a look at a Dolce and Gabbana advertisement to show how effective advertisements are at tapping into the desires and fears of their targeted audiences in order to sell their product. I analyzed and concluded that the advertisement successfully relates an image of a man and a woman’s body to the effects of a perfume bottle, given that the product is geared towards a generation that heavily invests in their physical appearance.

The first thing that I looked at was the demographic of the magazine from which the advertisement was published. The ad was published in Glamour Magazine in January of 2019. The demographic of the magazine is women of age range of 18-44, specifically those of 25 years of age. Most readers are of higher or above average income and are employed. A funny statistic that was based on the demographic of the magazine was that “61% of Glamour readers consider themselves to be shopaholics” ([Condenast.ru](http://condenast.ru)). This helped me infer that the readers of this magazine have desires to be trendsetters and to have the best of the best products and very much value their looks. According to Fowles’ in his “Advertising’s 15 Basic Appeals”, the appeal that most clearly pertains to this demographic would be the appeal of the need for prominence. So, I broke down the ad to show just how effective the advertisers did to target this desire.

The models are the focal points of the advertisement. The first thing and almost the only thing the viewer sees in the advertisement are the two models, front and center. The man and woman (the models) are using the appeal of sex to draw the viewer into the ad. The woman is in a small bikini, with the stereotypical ideal body type (high cheekbones, light striking blue eyes and a slender figure). Same for the man, with not much clothing, light striking blue eyes and a stereotypical strong and muscular built figure.: This ad tells viewers it will allow them to be desired by the opposite gender if they use this perfume.

The Background of the ad is another focal point that draws the viewer in. The luxurious background gives off the “luxurious vacation vibe” and appeals to the audience’s desire for prominence. The basic features of the two models also set a standard for the type of people that are meant to buy this particular perfume. The crystal blue waters, the blue sky and beautiful caves in the background correspond with the eye color of the two models AND the bottle cap of the perfume. Essentially, it’s connecting the most beautiful things: the beautiful caves, water, and, of course the perfume. The background of the advertisement appeals to the audience’s desire to escape. Also, blue eyes are seen to be “more beautiful” than the average brown eyes, so the advertisers are trying to make their product seem more foreign and high-end by photographing models with “beautiful” eyes and its pulling you’re attention back to the bottle, similar to the Tommy Girl advertisement and how her hair flowed back to the bottle. the pretty water, the caves the blue sky and the sun hitting their oiled skin. The luxurious background of the ad appeals to the audience’s desire for an escape from their day to day life to a vacation setting and the luxurious background appeals to the middle-class, young readers of the magazine. The advertisement is trying to *sell* the idealistic depictions of a “vacation” almost. Essentially asking readers the question “do you want to be on a vacation that looks like this?” then buy our perfume it’s the next best thing.

The Size and Placement of the Wording is another thins that ties the viewer in. The text is minimal as to not take away from the message that the image of the semi-naked woman is trying to get across. The text is located at the bottom of the ad in very plain and simple font, and not covering any valuable part of the woman’s body but it is also subtle enough to lead you to the picture of the perfume bottle and the end of the words. The positioning of the ad and its wording insinuating that the important part of the ad is not the bottle of perfume but the people, drawing your attention to the ad in general.

The perfume bottle itself is yet another key aspect of the effectiveness of the advertisement**.** The size of the perfume bottle is a nod towards the importance of sexualizing the models. The bottle is not the central image and is located on the bottom right-hand side of the poster, as to not distract from the image of the two very fit bodies in bathing suits. The goal on the advertiser’s end is to put out an image of what they want their average customer to look like and to give the customers a sense of inclusivity when/ they buy the product. The main point of the advertisement is not the perfume bottle but the people and therefore demonstrates a marketing tactic.

All in all, this advertisement does a really effective job at tapping into their demographic’s deepest. Their demographic of middle class, higher income, employed shopaholics are most definitely intrigued by this ad’s beautiful models and high-end vacation type of vibe.

