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English 100

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A Price Tag on a Cigarette

The face value of a pack of cigarettes in the U.S. is \$5.51 (Prices of Cigarettes). This is a small price that accumulates over time, that hurts both one's wallet and health. It is common knowledge that most drugs are harmful to the body, cigarettes are not an exception. It may take time some effects to appear, but each cigarette that one smokes puts a timer on a life. The Real Cost Commercial "Your Skin" is an anti-smoking advertisement that portrays a smoker giving up a part of her body as a consequence of buying a cigarette. Smoking has many dangers that are widely known, however not everyone is informed enough to understand that an eventual debt will be paid in a smoker's livelihood more so the actual bills used to pay for a pack of smokes. Anti-smoking ads can be an effective way for smokers to get help by giving them the consequences of long-term smoking, using unique visual rhetoric.

Music allows the audience to be distracted, different settings can be bent out of context depending on the music that is being used. But when there is no music being played, the intended message becomes a lot clearer. The ad quickly starts in the setting of a convenience store where smokers can purchase their packs of cigarettes. Some

commercials use jubilant music and catchy phrases because they want to grab their target audience's attention. Other ads use depressing music if they want their customers to feel sad and unimportant because they can't do anything to help, however this anti smoking commercial does not use any music at all. The only sounds that can be heard are the buzzing lights and the conversation between the cashier and the customer. The Food and Drug Administration is responsible for public health and safety in the forms of food and drug control. The FDA uses a horrific approach of symbolism: the customer peeling off her skin as a form of payment (Your Skin 0:12).

While watching this ad, it's important to understand where the audience's eyes are focused at. The camera angle is centered in the middle where they postured the cashier and the customer. The background would blur a little, removing the smaller details that someone can pick up on. The audience's eyes would focus on the girl peeling off her skin. They wanted that to be the central "wakeup call", they don't want wandering eyes focusing on a bag of chips or what it was in the fridge. The facial expressions that the female smoker makes shows regret. She makes very little eye contact with the cashier, spending her attention on the lack of money and the pack of cigarettes. After the purchase, the cashier mentions "See ya again." (Your Skin 0:24), knowing that she will be back tomorrow. It is too late for long time smokers to quit because the damage is done, but it is not too late to quit while the body is still young and the damage is not too severe.

Smoking causes premature aging, wrinkling, and impaired skin healing (Your Skin 0:27). The given information may not be common knowledge because the effects

of smoking are not as visible as other drugs. It takes time for the effects of cigarettes to appear. This includes lung cancer, tooth decay, etc. Society knows that smoking is bad, but irrational teenagers don't have to think about future consequences because their mindset is focused on the present. This commercial wants to target smokers who want to quit but don't have a good enough reason to. The specific group of smokers that they are trying to target with this ad are teens or young adults who are in their early twenties. This is evident by the fact that the commercial used someone in their teens and not an adult. Long term smoking is a problem that is addressed at the source of the problem. Young smokers can be oblivious to the skin problems that smoking can cause. It is fairly common to understand that smoking causes respiratory issues, and gum disease. People will not drop their cigarettes after watching this commercial, addiction is a problem that they have to overcome with the help of others. The FDA has a hotline for people to quit, but they must make the choice of quitting. The FDA does not need to assume that smokers want to smoke, but they need to smoke.

The use of logos is essential to this commercial because they need to apply to the reasoning side that smoking has consequences. Giving them facts may not be enough, using a visual representation of someone peeling off their skin, it's easier to reflect skin cancer and premature aging. The FDA is using a scare tactic, scaring people into thinking how dangerous smoking can be, which makes teenagers less likely to try smoking. When the female customer has to give up a part of her body to enable herself to smoke, it's an effective way to see that shame is no longer an issue. The cashier herself had a depressing and shameful expression, allowing the female

customer to give up her skin for a pack of smokes. The target demographic is focused at Americans. Comparing smoking in America to other asian countries like China and Korea. Smoking is much more prevalent and widely accepted in asian countries (Mahto, Anjali). Smoking is allowed everywhere: public restaurants, schools, hotels, etc. It is not seen as a “private” activity that people do to avoid annoying glares from others around you. While in the U.S. there are signs that read: “No Smoking”, and if people are annoyed by the presence of a smoker, complaining to security is not uncommon. The U.S. cares about the public health of Americans using facts and restrictions to lower the amount of cigarette usage.

There are emotions when buying a pack of cigarettes, not just simple actions of walking in and walking out. This commerical describes the exact feelings that people go through when purchasing a cigarette with a proper use of pathos. The lack of background noise, filling the empty sound with the lights of a convenience store buzzing reflects what it feels like to buy a pack of cigarettes. Buying a pack of cigarettes don't include a cheerful person on the other side of the counter with some music in the background. It's a simple of process that eventually becomes a habit, a habit that they can't break When the commerical finally questions the audience “What are cigarettes costing you?”(Your Skin 0:29) smokers won't questions themselves immediately, but the question will be in the back of their minds. When they go out to buy a pack of cigarette, they can question their actions, weighing the pros and cons of each cigarette they smoke. After each cigarette is taken, there is no stopping the constant hunger for another one.

After the audience is finished watching the main part of the commercial, they get to see who made this ad - Food and Drug Administration (Your Skin 0:28). The FDA has built up their ethos over decades. When people go to restaurants, and see the FDA approved logo, there is very little risk of dining there. By making this commercial, the FDA acknowledges the importance of anti-smoking, using horror tactics to keep people away from trying. For people who are already hooked in and can't listen to reason, they can hear from the FDA are experts in their field. When family is not enough to keep people away from smoking, listening to what professionals have to say can be a better option.

Anti-smoking commercials are targeted towards current smokers. However it includes the friends and families of a smoker as well. The general audience of non-smokers shouldn't ignore this commercial if they already know the consequences of smoking. They should take initiative to convince friends or family to seek help if they wish to quit. Although the FDA's audience may be more inclined towards smokers, it does provide knowledge to a general audience. People need to understand the consequences by having the right information, which should be used to inform friends or family the dangers of smoking.

Works Cited

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AzoNetwork, 08 Oct.2015. Web. 18 Feb. 2017.

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4 February 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ixMEEI0Zq9g>.

Final Grade: 13.5/15

Point breakdown

- Introduction: 4/4
- Body Paragraphs: 4/5 Body paragraphs were revised from the original draft and showcased better organization and thought. Some sections were a little short and could've been expanded on slightly to help the paper “flow” better and further strengthen the ideas being presented. That being said, the body paragraphs still did an excellent job addressing the key points of the prompt and provided a well-written and accurate analysis of the ad
- Conclusion: 4/4
- Readability: 1/1 Slight grammar and spelling errors were present throughout the paper, but these errors did not impede the meaning/clarity of the work as a whole
- Formatting: 0.5/1 Please make sure you list your sources in your Works Cited page in alphabetical order

Great job, Collin! If you have further comments, questions, or concerns, please feel free to see me during office hours.