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*Sunbrella Advertisement*



As everyone goes about their business something that everyone encounters in their daily lives is advertisements. Whether you're walking down the street, watching tv, or scrolling through social media an advertisement is bound to pop up any second for you're viewing. At first glance, most ads are understandable to the viewer as their goal is to get some sort of message across. However, if a viewer were to take a closer look at an ad and examine it there may be some things that they didn't notice. There may also be some things that makes clearer sense in

why a designer of an ad did what they did. Within an advertisement, there are coded and non-coded messages that can be pulled out if you were to closely examine an ad.

An advertisement that I stumbled upon in a magazine and thought would be somewhat interesting to closer examine would be this Sunbrella ad. This ad shows an outdoor setting with people who we're assuming are friends enjoying an evening together out in the backyard. Looking at the ad it's showing a warm and relaxing day which is perfect for get-togethers. The purpose of this ad is to sell fabrics for outdoor furniture such as chairs. According to the ad these fabrics are comfortable, long-lasting, weather-resistant, and fade proof. Now some of the first things that we see while looking at the ad would be the people, the table, chairs, plates, trees, and the fabrics. Using Roland Barthes's terms these things or items that I pointed out are part of the non-coded message of the ad as they are the objects and items that the viewer sees while looking at the ad. The viewer doesn't do much with the non-coded messages of an ad as it doesn't rely on the viewer to make any type of connections or connotations. What the viewer sees is what it is and nothing more.

Another way that we can read and examine this advertisement by using Barthes's terms would be by looking for the coded iconic messages. which is the symbolic part of the message. This is where the viewer makes connections and connotations to understand the ideas of the ad. Now looking at the ad we understand that the setting is outdoors and we get a comfortable warm environment. There is a sense of comfort, relaxation, and peacefulness. The sharing of foods, drinks, and conversations are signs of friendships between the people in the ad. In this comfortable environment, the people in the ad are enjoying themselves and are living in the moment. This brings in a perspective in which the viewer can also share this type of setting with their family or friends if they were to purchase what this ad is selling which is fabrics. The fact

that you can see the trees and they are pretty big can also give a sense of security as you are in the comfort of your own space away from everyone else who can't see you.

While we looked at and examined the non-coded messages and the coded messages of this advertisement Barthes also goes on and talks about the linguistic messages. Within the linguistic messages that he talks about, there are two types of messages denotational and connotational. I would say the word Sunbella would be denotational as it's just the name of the company. There is nothing more to the word other than it's just the name of the company. Now the copy "Our outdoor fabrics are made to last for moments like this" is connotational. This copy from the ad opens up ideas to the viewer and draws some sort of personal associations from reading the text. A viewer can bring up ideas such as "can my moments last like this?" or "how can I make moments like this?" The message from the ad is really just that if you purchase these fabrics for your chairs you can make moments like this or they can look like this. If you purchase these fabrics you can enjoy your backyard with family or friends and enjoy countless moments like the ad is depicting.

It's interesting to see what you can decode while looking at an advertisement or really just any image while keeping in mind Barthes's terms. The viewer gets a better understanding of the ad's composition, placements, and overall message. Roland Barthes's take on the Panzini advert opened up how viewers can look at and understand ads. When thinking about the different messages such as the linguistic messages and the coded messages it opens up a better or different understanding of an image.