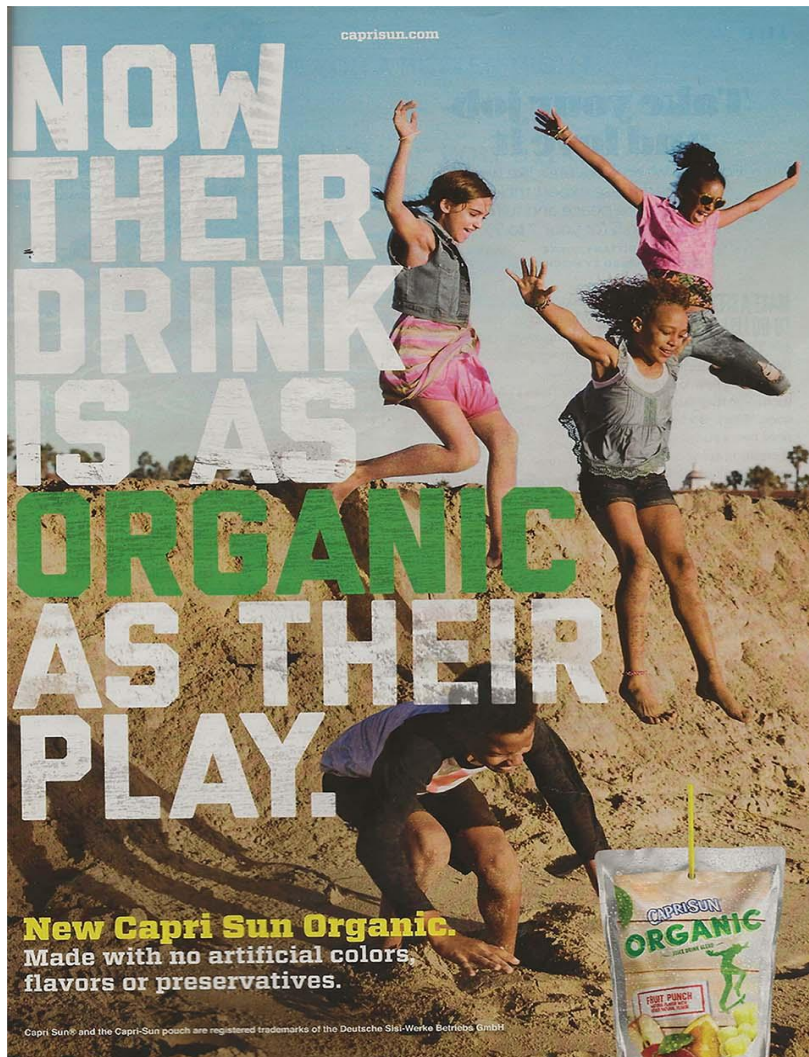


“Barthes Response”

Advertisements have taken many different forms of giving a reader or viewer messages. Some advertisements are more direct with their call to actions than others, while some utilize a more unique style in an attempt to grab the viewer’s attention before giving a message. In an article written by Roland Barthes titled “Rhetoric of the Image”, there is an interesting perspective to how advertisement is presented and constructed for viewers of different media.

Barthes goes into detail the different aspects of an advertisement, one of the most important being the usage of images in combination with text. However an issue mentioned in Barthes’ article is how an image is given to the viewer, whether the call to action comes from the image itself or the text instead. In some cases, both elements may conflict with one another’s message or appear as redundant depending on how the viewer interprets each image and text. Another aspect of advertisement is the usage of linguistics and how the message given is constant and contextual with how it is being presented using its own elements presented.

An example of an advertisement that can relate to the article can be seen from the Redbook printed magazine, in one of the many pages lies an advertisement for the Capri Sun Organic beverage. The advertisement itself displays an imagery of a group of children at a sandy beach-like area jumping and landing onto a nearby ground where a Capri Sun Organic pouch is, with their clothing and usage of the scene’s sunlight depicting a warmer environment akin to summer. The advertisement also displays bold text describing how the drink is as organic as the children playing outside, along with the product’s name and information regarding the organic ingredients which is placed next to the beverage pouch on the same plane of view. One of the texts being “Organic” is highlighted in a different color from the other words as well.



When further examining this magazine advertisement, there are some elements found within that can relate to Barthes' article on linguistics and the usage of text and photos to give the viewers a message of some sort. One of the important aspects within the advertisement is its usage of photos and text, which do relate to one another to create a message of selling the beverage with the notion that it is organic and natural as outdoor activities for young people. As a usage of linguistic language, the message is able to be interpreted within the elements shown and the product being sold for consumers to be organic. It can be viewed more as a connotation

since both text and photos when viewed together helps the advertisement's message more clear. However, one could argue viewing the image without the text may not be in context to the advertisement's call to action with just children jumping onto the sand and a beverage being placed onto the corner of the image. But given that according to Barthes' article, there are not infinite possible messages to come from an advertisement so it is possible for one to understand what is and isn't part of what the advertisement's set goal. In a way the text itself adds to the image's message without appearing as a denotation to seem redundant, even its non coded iconic message is a clear description of the product to coincide with what is happening in the image. All these different elements make the advertisement's message of selling an organic beverage directed towards a younger demographic while also being able to dissect using the article given.

Many different advertisements found within media such as magazines are constructed in many different ways, and Barthes' article on how people interpret certain messages within advertisements. Some messages may appear limited due to how much can be shown in a single image or alignment of text, and sometimes it is possible for both elements to appear denotational where it repeats a message more than once. The use of linguistics, connotations and denotations, images, text, and many different elements help advertisements accomplish their goal while standing out from many other similar advertisements within the media, including magazines and newspapers. In terms of the Organic Capri-Sun magazine advertisement, it can be seen through many different perspectives and interpretations depending on how one sees both the image and text together, but the message becomes more clear when taken to account of how Barthes' article analyzes advertisements' elements and how to find if a message within is clear to understand.

RedBook

May edition, J&JCI, 2016

Rhetoric of the image

Roland Barthes