

Essay 2

Keon Johnson

Design Theory

Advertising comes in a number of different mediums. As technology advances the methods for these advertisements to be executed expands enabling a new set of ways to reach potential consumers. One form of advertising that has been a go to medium for some time is the “print advertisement”. These sorts of advertisements are more physical in a sense and are usually in books or posted onto something outside, reaching massive amounts of people as they would flip through a book or pass by on a roadway somewhere. One medium that made good use of this method of advertising was magazines. Then throughout the years until magazines were not as popular anymore, advertisements would be posted all throughout magazines essentially communicating with customers on a closer level.

One image of a well executed example of a print advertisement in a magazine in my opinion is an ad campaign by Toronto's Livegreen organization. “Littering says a lot about you” was the slogan for this anti littering campaign and it was very effective. The campaign featured a lot of different popular snack food brands shown sprawled onto the ground with each ad. The idea was to show that littering is a bad idea for the environment and it also shows the sort of person you are. The advertisements are really subtle in all actuality but the twist is where the viewer realizes the familiarity in the items that are thrown on the floor. This was a rather clever technique to reach the audience on a personal level being that a likely large number of viewers may have thought they were guilty of throwing this article of trash on the ground. That's why

using very popular big name brands in this campaign was a clever move in terms of garnering appeal.

The advertisement in particular I'll discuss is the advertisement depicting a bag of las discarded onto the ground. The clever part with this is that the bag says "lazy" this time, an effective way of subtle communication with the viewer. Essentially calling the perpetrators of littering lazy in the form of a catalyst being the lays bag which is coincidentally being in an anti littering campaign so there is a lot of "stacking" so to speak with the amount of indirect communication this ad is portraying. So the "hit close to home" aspect is the approach this entire campaign went for and this advertisement with the lazy bag is most likely the loudest example. The factors at play here in the image is the popular snack, the city environment, the headline, the tug at the viewers conscious with the word "lazy".

Although the headline is present, its role in this is more for identity within its family that is this campaign. The image itself is really strong on its own, but if the image was a standstill on its own separated from its campaign family id say the type is needed for only that instance. The powerful effect of this subliminal imagery and its subtle hidden messages, scattered throughout its facade is a basic example of how good imagery and simple type can work cohesively to spread a message without being so blatant and obnoxious. There is no clashing of any color present. Being that the background for this image is the ground itself, the ground is reminiscent of a city street in a dark gray. This gives way for the advertisement to flow smoothly, in terms of visibility and in no way restricting the agency of any visuals to come. The bright yellow bag stands out more as well. This dark floor as a background also has a hand in granting the typeface

legibility regardless of its size due to the sharpness of the white colored type onto the darker background. Light and dark contrast, a classic form of visibility mediums, more or less.

This image is an effective advertisement in that the imagery gains attention to its intended audience. As alluded to earlier, a powerful advertisement with no need for type is a successful one. However there is a refutation to this aspect. According to Barthes' the distinction between the literal message and the symbolic message is purely operational. Being that you never encounter an image in its pure state in advertising mainly, this is a perfect correlation to this advertising campaign on littering. The message itself and the items depicted are dictated by what the words are intended to convey to the audience. This is where wordplay is what in turn rules an advertising pitch. The imagery is taken one way by the viewer but on the other hand, the wording is as well. The entire advertisement is all dependent on how it is ultimately perceived by it's viewer. Relating to linguistics how that perception's impact is measured is dependent on the viewers own beliefs and thinking.

