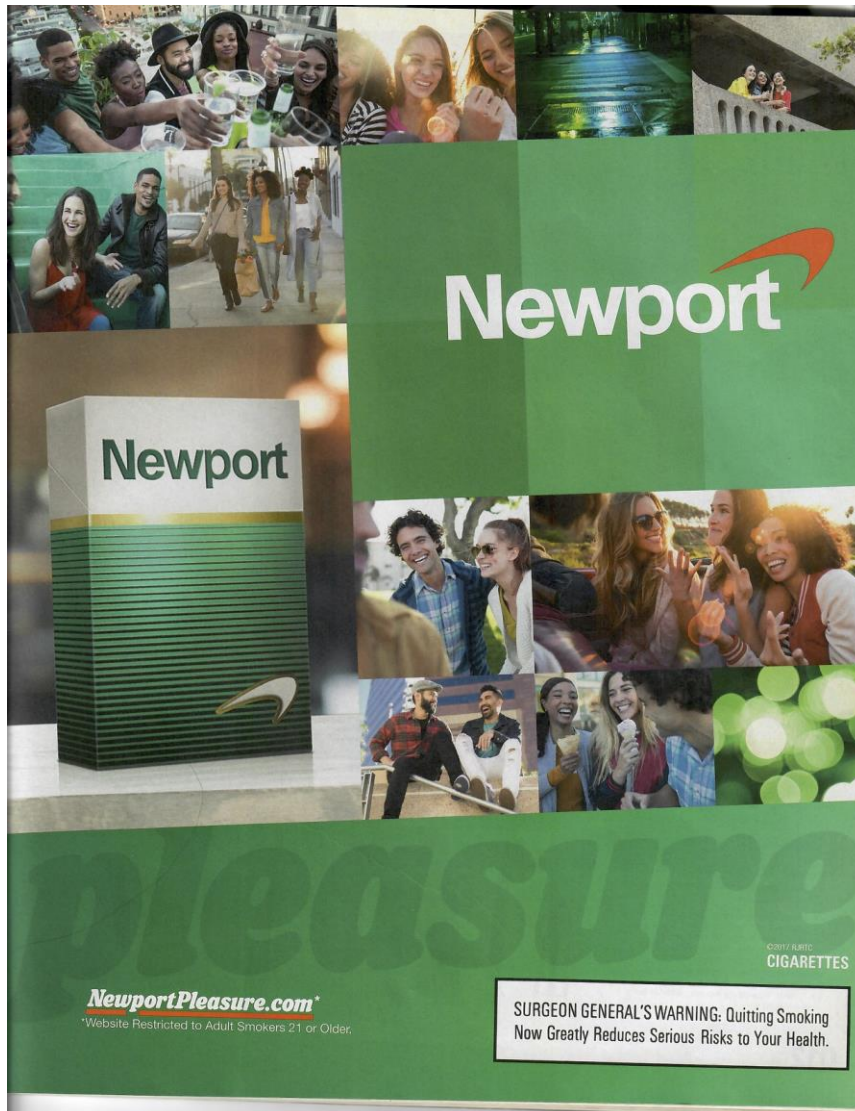


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Advertising is everywhere and we are constantly being bombarded with them every day. Therefore, advertising has become a science in communicating the exact message it wants. When looking at an advertisement you are supposed to get the message right away, even though it

might not be communicated through words or pictures. Often there are coded messages in advertisements that imply certain messages that when paired with words and pictures, gives you a complete comprehension of what the message is. In the reading, "Rhetoric of the Image" by Roland Barthes, he thoroughly analyzes an advertisement and breaks down its elements to three messages : linguistic messages (what it written) , iconic messages (which is a description of what the imagery is) and the coded iconic message (what is the implication of certain imagery, what is connotational). I will be analyzing the ad above in a similar way.

The ad is for Newport cigarettes, I found this ad in an old Nylon Magazine (August 2017 issue). Starting with the iconic message, we see numerous photos in a collage like fashion of people socializing. In one image it shows a diverse group of 20-30 years old people drinking, the other images show the same thing, a group of friends just hanging out and having a fun time. The images follow a green color palette, the same green used in the Newport cigarette packaging. The ad also shows The box of cigarettes themselves that is significantly larger than the images of people socializing. Nowhere in the advertisement is a person smoking. The linguistic messaging from this ad is the label "Newport" on the cigarettes and on the advertisement alone, their tagline "pleasure" enlarged to fit the width of the whole page and in a slightly darker green color than the background so it almost blends in. You can also see the website newportpleasure.com with the phrase "website restricted to adult smokers 21 or older in fine print. Also shown is the surgeon general's warning which reads "quitting smoking now greatly reduces serious risks to your health". What stands out most to me is the manner in the way the word pleasure is displayed. It is very big, the entire width of the page, yet at the same time it is almost as if the designer wanted to hide it by choosing a color slightly darker than the background. Overall, what the linguistic message is saying is that there is pleasure in smoking, however you must do so at

the risk of your health. The warnings are there only by requirement though, so they make the warnings small as legally possible to draw your attention away. With the combination of the linguistic messaging and the iconic messaging, we can come up with the coded iconic messaging which is what is being implied in the advertisement. From the iconic imagery we can say that the signifier is people together having fun, and because this is an ad for cigarettes, we can come to the conclusion that the signified is smoking cigarettes is a social activity or will make you more social. The iconic coded message often refers to culture as well, and this ad is referring to social activities that people in their 20 and 30s in America tend to do, go out drinking, getting together and going outside. I can also note that all the images are of people outside, and I believe that is denoting the fact that smoking is an outside activity. I believe most of the imagery is connotational because there are no actual images shown of anyone smoking. This may be because of the bad reputation tobacco companies have of glorifying cigarettes and a combination of laws that restrict that type of imagery. It is also the reason they need to put up all those warning signs. I believe therefore the ad is done in a more subtle manner that implicates that people are outside to smoke instead of showing people smoking. It is also the reason why the tagline "pleasure" is so big yet kind of hidden, because they want you to know its pleasurable so you want to buy it while at the same time being subtle because of the many negative implications that come with smoking. As you can see, even though cigarette companies have a lot of restrictions and regulations on how they can advertise, it does not stop them from getting their message across. Even in an ad where no one is smoking, the message that smoking is a fun social activity is still communicated.

Works Cited

Roland Barthes 1977 essay, *Rhetoric of the Image*