



desire, and femininity, communicating that the kiss is an act of marking territory. The bold typography of the tagline “Mark Your Man” conveys confidence, clarity, and strength, reflecting the woman’s power through her ability to mark her man. This portrayal of gender roles is key to understanding how the ad communicates its message.

According to Roland Barthes' “Rhetoric of the Image,” the signifiers used in this ad are the lipstick, kiss mark, and the slogan. The message behind these elements is the woman’s control over her romantic partner, which is achieved through beauty and physicality. The linguistic message of this ad is the text “Mark Your Man,” which reinforces the idea that the lipstick allows a woman to secure her partner. This reflects the coded iconic message within the ad, where the woman’s beauty and the lipstick become tools of possession and control. However, the non-coded iconic message is simply a woman wearing lipstick and kissing her partner. The denotation and connotation of the ad are closely related to the coded and non-coded iconic messages, as both highlight the themes of marking and possession.

Using Barthes’ semiotic terms, the polysemic sign is the “kiss mark.” It can mean different things, like love and intimacy, but the ad makes its meaning clear through the tagline and images, focusing on ownership and control. Additionally, his idea of naturalization shows that the ad presents this message as a natural truth about relationships, making it seem obvious and unquestionable. Moving to Ferdinand de Saussure’s semiotic theory, he emphasized that the relationship between signifier and signified is arbitrary and culturally constructed, meaning that the kiss mark comes to symbolize romantic control only within the context of 1960s gender

norms. Charles Peirce's model of signs provides further understanding, where the kiss mark can be understood as an icon, resembling an actual kiss; a symbol representing beauty and attention, and an index indicating the action of kissing.

Lastly, the ad reflects common beliefs about gender roles. It suggests that a woman can mark her man, supporting the idea that relationships are about possession and power. A common belief in 1960s advertising, a woman's success and identity were often seen as dependent on her ability to attract and keep her man. Stuart Hall's theory adds another layer to the analysis by examining how audiences understand and respond to media messages. In addition, today's audience might respond to this ad with criticism and discomfort because they value gender equality and individual achievement. Thus, they may see it as promoting harmful stereotypes that undermine women's independence. Overall, the "Mark Your Man" ad seems outdated compared to today's values, leading to calls for better representation of women.

In conclusion, the "Mark Your Man" advertisement demonstrates how the media can reinforce biases using stereotypes. By analyzing it through the lenses of Barthes, Saussure, Peirce, and Hall, we see how semiotic tools are used to fix meaning and persuade the viewer.

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