

Imagining the “Hard Sell”

For homework, you read an excerpt from Sarah Schulman’s novel, *The Cosmopolitans*, in which Valerie demonstrates the concept of the “hard sell” to Bette and Hector. She explains how to convince consumers that they *need* to buy a product even if they don’t really need it. She says, “If I need to sell it more than you need to buy it, you will buy it” (Schulman 128).

For Essay 1, you have been analyzing a print advertisement or commercial that is trying to sell something to its audience, and you have thought a lot about who that audience might be. Now I want you to imagine what was going through the minds of the people who *created* the ad and write a scene, poem, song, narrative, or graphic image modeled after this scene from *The Cosmopolitans* that shows your readers how you imagine they came up with the idea for the ad and why they thought this particular approach would best convince consumers to buy the item.

On March 7th, Sarah Schulman will be on campus to talk about her book and read some selections from it as part of the Literature Roundtable! I encourage you all to attend the Roundtable at 2:30 p.m. in the Atrium Amphitheater on the Ground floor of the Atrium Building (at the bottom of the ramp). Please consider **sharing what you have written/created OR asking a thoughtful question**.

Requirements:

- **Focus:** Write or design a scene, poem, song, narrative, or graphic image that imagines and conveys the behind-the-scenes process that went into creating the ad you have been writing about. Show how you think the creators developed the idea and why they thought it would work as a “hard sell.”
- **Length:** One page, minimum
- **Submission:** Post your completed assignment on OpenLab. If it is a song or graphic, you may attach a file or link out to an external site. Before you submit, categorize your post by clicking “The Hard Sell” on the right side of the page.
- **Due:** March 7th before 11:30 a.m.
- **Participate (optional):** Come to the Literature Roundtable at 2:30 p.m. in the Atrium Amphitheater and share what you have written/created OR ask a thoughtful question.
- **Weight:** 25 points in the Active Participation category