

Group Advertisement Analysis

This assignment will give us the opportunity to practice the analytical skills we have worked on this semester. After forming your group, please select an advertisement that appears in print, digital, or television media and that is engaging to analyze. In your group, please use the following steps to analyze the ad and then create a short presentation of your analysis. You may create visuals to enhance the presentation, lead class discussion, or use PowerPoint or something similar. Please make sure everyone participates.

To successfully complete this assignment, you will need to engage in a close reading of the selected advertisement. Your close reading should include a discussion of author/product, audience, the appeals to the rhetorical triangle, and the claims, reason, and assumptions made by the author, and the cultural implications or arguments present in the advertisement.

What to examine:

Context/Observations—What is the rhetorical context for the advertisement, or why is the ad relevant right now? Are there people in the ad, why or why not; and if so, what role do they play in the ad and what are the people like—what class, sex, and gender are they and how are they represented—why is this important? What is unique about the camera angle, lighting, or setting of the advertisement? What is emphasized by the advertisement? How is the loyalty and experience marketed to consumers?

Author/Product/Audience—Who is the author and why do they have credibility? Is there someone famous in the ad, and if so, what is her or his purpose? What is their purpose in creating the advertisement, besides selling a product? How does the author support the argument? Who is the target audience and what does the author do to appeal to this specific audience—think about pathos here?

Claims, Reasons, Assumptions—What claims and reasons do the authors make? How are they supported? How are they presented in the argument? What assumptions are made about gender, sexuality, race and class—are these realistic or accurate, and why is this important? What assumptions are made about real-life problems and how are they addressed? Does the author use the Rhetorical Triangle (ethos, pathos, and logos)—how does the author make appeals to all three points of the rhetorical triangle? Is the appeal balanced? Are logical fallacies present, and what do they do for the advertisement?

Cultural Implications—What are some possible consequences of the ad, beyond simply buying and selling a product—how are they attempting to influence or respond to public opinion? How are expectations represented in the advertisement? What does the advertisement say about social change or responsibility?