

First Draft Due: Next Week During Conferences, at least 3 pages.
Final Due Date: Monday, March 18th

Advertisement Analysis

Advertisement is everywhere. It promotes, ensnares, convinces, and alters our perceptions. The very best advertisements work subtly, changing minds and ensuring sales without consumers even realizing how the ads affect them. The worst go about their work obviously, failing to sway anyone because of how transparently they try to do their thing. Your task for this essay is to select an advertisement and analyze how it works. Select one of the prompts below, and use the guiding questions they ask and the techniques we discuss in class to respond to a print advertisement or commercial. You do not have to answer all of the questions, or address them in any particular order. They are meant to get you thinking and point you in useful directions. You must make an argument about what the fundamental goal of your advertisement is, and how it achieves that goal.

Requirements:

- A strong thesis statement that makes clear what you think your ad's goal and methods are.
- 12 point font, double spaced, Times New Roman
- 4-6 pages
- A copy of the print advertisement or a link to the commercial you use.

Prompt 1- Print ads make a complex argument in a very limited space. Analyze a print advertisement of your choosing (it may be helpful to pick one you feel strongly about). Look at the visuals and text. How do they sell the ad's product or message? How do they affect the audience? Who is that audience? You will need to describe the advertisement, but do so briefly, sprinkling the relevant descriptive details throughout as they become necessary. Some other things to consider: Who is in the ad? Are they famous? Is there some other purpose for them to be there? How does the ad use of color, space, text, and general design influence the message? Where did you find it, and what does that say about it? What is its most basic message? You must include a copy of the advertisement, either at the bottom of the essay, in the final email you send to me, or a physical copy delivered in class or in my office. Naturally, if you include it in the essay, this will not count towards your page count.

Prompt 2- Live action commercials work in slightly different ways from print ads. They often include plots, characters, and music in addition to the strategies employed by print. Choose a commercial (it may be helpful to pick one you feel strongly about) and analyze its elements. How do they sell the ad's product or message? How do they affect the audience? Who is that audience? You will need to describe the commercial, but do so briefly, sprinkling the relevant descriptive details throughout as they become necessary. Some other things to consider: Who is in the commercial? Are they famous? Is there some other purpose for them to be there? How does the commercial use of color, space, text, and general design influence the message? What channel or website did you find it on, or during what show, and during what time of day? What does that say about it? What is its most basic message? Also, pay attention to the mechanics of film. How is it shot? How do the dialogue, lighting, sound, and plot contribute to the ad? You must include a link to the commercial, either in the email or essay, so that I can watch it. Naturally, if you include it in the essay, it will not count towards your page count.