

ENG 280

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Rebellions, Sexuality, and Advertising

Advertisements are joined by one common theme, the usage and creation of ideology, or a false view of the world. This usage and creation can be seen in a series of three ads that all employ and create a specific idea of femininity. They portray sexuality, while also portraying this sort of sexuality as a rebellion against society, as if and contribute to this ideology.

The first piece is an advertisement for Kingston memory cards, featuring a teenage girl standing in what is presumably her bedroom, attacking her skirt with a pair of scissors, with text superimposed to the side and at the bottom of the image.

(Kingston) The second is an advertisement for Proactiv starring Katy Perry staring into

tone of the text is reminiscent of a teenage child mocking or imitating their parent after being told to behave a certain way. The text fits quite well with the model, who is in fact doing a couple of the things that the text warns against. She is wearing a miniskirt (which she is in the process of cutting even shorter), and her hair has a highlight in it. In

conservative suburban white society that expect women to behave themselves and repress their sexuality. This offers a real and tangible sense of rebellion, as if buying this product will let the consumer join Katy in her rebellious sexuality, and set them apart from and against the rest of society, much like how in the first advertisement buying a Kingston memory card will give the consumer personal space. The text at the

fight's ba

purpose of this text is to further tie the knot between the product and this construct of rebellious femininity.

The third advertisement, a Got Milk ad featuring the Olsen twins also contributes

that these once-child stars are now becoming adults, and therefore beginning to embrace their sexuality. For most people, milk and adolescent sexuality are not too closely related. However, just as with the other advertisements, the creators are attempting to connect an unrelated product with a social construct readily available in society in order to better sell. In this case the construct is the idea that adolescent women should begin embracing their sexuality. As the advertisement puts it, they are not little girls anymore. The main difference between this ad and the other two is the lack of a rebellious aspect. While the models are poised in a slightly sassy way, it is not enough to give the piece a rebellious feel as with the other two works. But it does share the main theme of adolescent femininity, and its relationship with its sexuality.

(California)

The creators of this ad, the Proactiv one and the Kingston one, have used an abstract idea of what adolescent femininity should look like, and attached it to an unrelated product. They do this in order to effectively advertise and sell their product, but it has a side effect. The usage of this construct of femininity also contributes to the perpetuation of the idea that adolescent women should begin to embrace their sexuality and with the exception of the Got Milk ad, also simultaneously learn to repress it, because embracing it would entail an act of rebellion. As Ramamurthy says,

never sought to challenge the status quo within society (since they are only produced to sell products) have also aided in the construction and perpetuation of stereotypes, to

seek to comment on the pictures of femininity they have set forth; their sole purpose is to use the stereotypes to sell. Kingston and Proactiv are not attempting to challenge the notion that young women should not embrace their sexuality. In fact it is quite the opposite. They are using and inadvertently encouraging this idea, and capitalizing upon the accompanying sense of rebellion. The only difference with the Got Milk ad is that it capitalizes upon the sexuality itself, and not the rebellion. All three are exploiting these ideologies, for better or for worse.

Works Cited

California Milk Processing Board. Advertisement. June 2004

Kingston Technology. Advertisement. June 2008

Proactiv. Advertisement. June 2010

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2nd ed., Routledge , New York , NY, 2000, pp. 165 214.