

Essay 2: Critical Analysis of an Advertisement

2/27 Draft DUE (4 copies to class) No draft in class= -10 on paper

2/29 FINAL DUE first 10 minutes of class (late papers -10)

2/29 TURNITIN before class (-5 if late)

Assignment:

Write a 4-page critical analysis of a print advertisement.

Choose an advertisement that is compelling to you. An ad that enrages, excites or motivates you will be easier to analyze. Ads can be from magazines, newspapers, the internet, billboards (you can take a photo) or elsewhere. You must be able to email me the advertisement as Jpeg document or attach it with your paper. (If I cannot open the emailed ad, I cannot grade your paper.)

Before you write the paper, you should do the following:

Brainstorm in your journal: Ask yourself the questions we talked about in class & the questions below.

Make sure you are familiar with the product being advertised!

Look at the ad from top to bottom, left to right, taking note of anything that seems significant or grabs your attention.

What you will do in your paper and questions to consider:

1. Describe the ad (what you see, what is said, how it is organized and so on) and the ad's overall effect or tone. Is the ad old-fashioned, somber, disturbing, serene, purposely confusing, busy, funny, sarcastic, ironic, understated, sad, sexy, vague and so on? Does it sentimentalize, glorify, What grabs your attention? How do your eyes move across the page? Are the objects interacting in some way- implied or obvious? Is there implied movement? Foreshadowing? What is excluded? Be detailed.

2. Find the argument. What is the argument? What kind of lifestyle do you think your advertising tries to promote? What kind of values? What are the implied values? The explicit messages? What is the context? Discuss how the audience and the ad's message are linked. What kinds of knowledge or experience does the ad assume its audience possesses? What associations might the audience make with the images in your ad? How and why are these associations important? How do they connect with the product? How might these associations motivate viewers to purchase the product? Who do you think is the target audience and how do you know?

3. Prove the argument. Identify Rhetorical Strategies. What appeals are being used to support the argument?

Ethos? Credibility by name or brand or endorsement

Pathos? Emotions

Logos? Logic

Consider diction if there's text! Consider context.

4. What can you deduce about American culture in general by looking at this ad? How *should* the target audience or public react to this ad?

Organization:

Sample Outline

1. Introduction: What is the ad for? General summary of the context of ad, name the company or product, and your thesis—what is the ad doing or saying and who is the audience.

Thesis example for the Virginia Slims ad in class: “the advertisement conveys the message that modern women are empowered, confident and strong when they make their own decisions concerning their body. Empowered women rebel against societal judgment and warnings. The advertisement uses an emotional appeal to influence a young (ages 18-40) female audience who values these qualities.”

2. Body Paragraphs:

(Use evidence from the ad to prove your thesis)

A. Describe the ad. (1.)

B. Explain the Context & Target Audience. Where was the ad published? Who is the audience? Show the reader how the components of the ad are designed to target the audience. What are the values of the audience? (2)

C. Describe the visual strategies the ad uses to target the audience. (This is where you discuss ethos or pathos or logos.) (3)

D. Describe the textual strategies. Diction, tone, etc. and how this targets your audience/the values etc. (3)

3.. Conclusion: Recap and discuss cultural implications or ideas (4.)

Other:

This paper is an **Analysis:**

- Formal
- For your audience
- Remove your own voice
- Critical
- Showing your rhetorical work
- Rhetorical (making sense of the “who, what, when, where, why, and how” of an argument for your readers)

This paper is **not a Reflection:**

- Informal
- For you
- Personal
- Storytelling
- Explaining yourself directly to the reader
- Reflective (making sense of an event for your own personal reasons)

This paper must be written in MLA format. 12 pt. Times font. Double-spaced. Left corner: name and info. Right: numbered. 1 inch margins. No cover. No folder. No colors or graphics. Email your photo before class or include with hardcopy of paper. No excuses for printing or computer problems or inability to bring or send the picture of the ad.