

Hamburgers Are Not Only for Men

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Society tends to create certain images around different themes and people. It just depends on how they behave and think in terms of whether they'll start putting labels on people. Everyone does these kinds of things at least once in their lives. Even in advertisements, audiences notice different stereotypes that a group of people, no matter their gender, race, or nationality, can have. In the case of men, advertisements use different stereotypes to describe them and get their attention to buy the product or service. In a number advertisements for Carl's Jr., it's easy to notice the sexual content that it is just favoring the heterosexual men. By using this sexual content in their advertisements, it maintains and spreads among society the stereotype that men just think of sex and beautiful women rather than important matters, furthering negative stereotypes of men.

In the commercial "All natural" by Carl's Jr. (2015), it shows how the media uses sexuality to catch the attention of the audience. In the fifty-three second commercial the model Charlotte McKinney appears. She starts walking through a farmers' market. After a moment she says "I love going all natural" while she is walking and waving her hair (Carl's Jr., 2015). Men start looking at her making a face of "what a woman." She is walking down the street and different things like fruits and ice are covering her body, creating the illusion that she is completely naked. She keeps walking and says again "it just makes me feel better" (Carl's Jr., 2015). The commercial keeps going and two cantaloupes appear covering her breasts while she is saying "nothing between me and my 100% all natural juicy grass-fed beef" then she appears with a hamburger and an announcer presents the new natural burger without hormones, antibiotics, or steroids (Carl's Jr., 2015).

With a first look, the viewer will notice the high sexual content of the commercial, obviously directed to men. In this case, it shows this stereotype of men thinking only of sex and implies that a man only looks at a well-developed feminine body and does not consider the way she might think or her feelings. In *Advertising's Fifteen Basic Appeals*, Fowels (1996) explains that when "sexual imagery is used, it conventionally works better on men than women; typically a female figure is offered up to the male reader" and this is what is occurring in this commercial ("Need for Sex," para. 5). Showing the almost naked McKinney will take the attention of most of the men creating this assumption that men just think of women as sex objects.

This persuasion technique tends to be really attractive to men. The method of "Association... tries to link a product, service or idea with something already liked or desired by the target audience" (Media Literacy Project, n.d., p. 7). It creates this need to buy a hamburger like the one that the model is eating at the end of the commercial, creating the association in the consumer's mind that they are eating the same thing that models like to eat; if men start consuming this product, beautiful women like Charlotte will appear and ask for a date with them. Also, the theme of the commercial influences the viewers in this suggestive aspect, for example, the almost naked model presenting the new "all natural" hamburger, which creates an association between sexuality and food.

Carl's Jr. noticed the effectiveness of this technique to catch up the attention of possible new consumers, especially heterosexual men. This is not the only advertisement that uses the same explicit content. There is another ad from Carl's Jr. that also includes sexuality in it. In the ad, the audience can see a big quote on the left side where is written "She'll tell you size doesn't matter. She's lying" on the other side there is a photograph of Paris Hilton wearing a suggestive suit and having a hamburger with the left hand (Carl's Jr., n.d.). This advertisement also uses the

association technique to get the attention of men. With the double meaning quote and the image of Paris Hilton it is sufficient to prove that Carl's Jr. wants to get the audience know that hamburgers are for men and that they will become more attractive if they eat their hamburgers.

Several people especially women started to criticize these commercials and they have reasons to do it. Some people might classify the advertisements as sexist and vulgar. What it is true is that thanks to these advertisements society still think that men are as vulgar as Carl's Jr. shows. Ads that stereotype groups, don't just hurt others, but they hurt the group itself. Yes, these ads are insulting to women, but they're also insulting to men. They limit them to no more than animals that run on instinct. They further the cycle of "being a man" as something that must fit into this antique stereotype and therefore inform not just young boys, but also young girls, that to be a man means to focus on women's sexuality more than anything else. This vicious cycle effects how men and women see themselves and the roles think they must play around one another. Looking at these commercials however, it's clear to see that sex sells, and it is alarming how much it sells because it just shows the culture that we all unconsciously took in by watching television. It is time to stop stereotyping and judging by the image. Nobody should think that a man is a superficial person when he is not. It is essential to start thinking about what really matters.

References

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