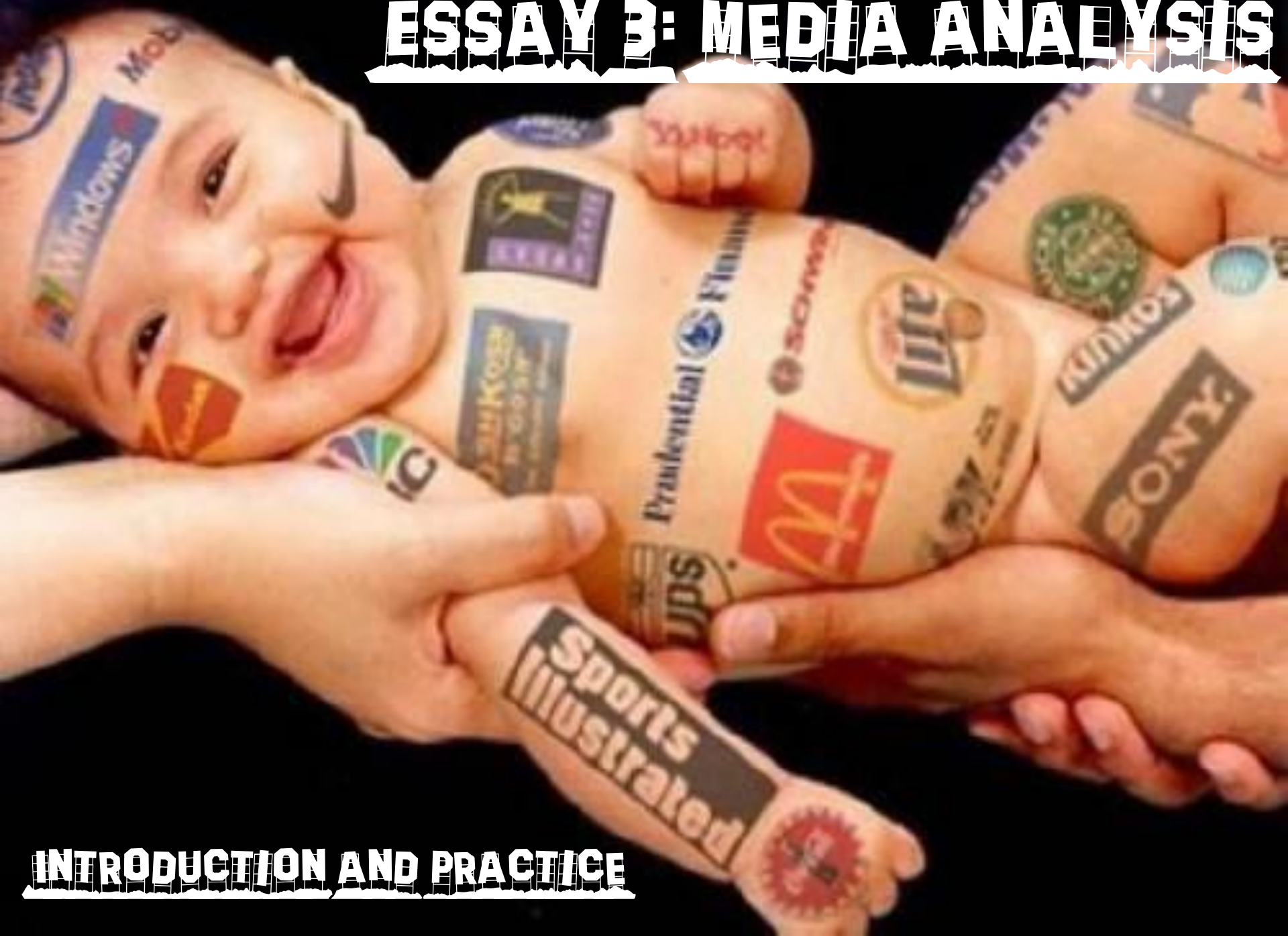
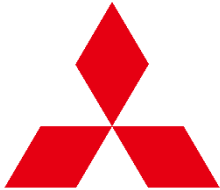
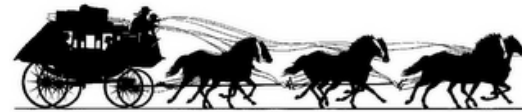
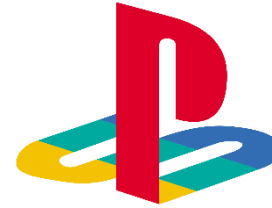


ESSAY 3: MEDIA ANALYSIS



INTRODUCTION AND PRACTICE



Consider this question:

Are you going to watch that game?

How does it change if it's asked

By a man to another man?

By a woman to a man?

By a woman to a woman?

By a child to an adult?

What the question really means depends on a lot of things, but to figure it out, we have to read between the lines. This is our goal.

In this essay, your job is to

write a formal essay in which you look carefully at an advertisement and explain what this ad reveals about contemporary culture: values, goals, acceptable roles in society, etc.

This essay will include:

An introduction that

- Sets the context
- Provides the topic for discussion
- States a thesis that discusses how and what ad reveals about contemporary culture: values, goals, acceptable roles in society, etc.

A body that

- Describes the ad
- Analyzes the topics in the thesis
- Uses specific evidence from the ad to support the argument

A conclusion that

- Brings it all together and puts it into perspective of the larger community or society

In this essay, the biggest pitfalls are to:

- Spend too much time on description
- Evaluate the product being sold in an ad
- Just talk about whether you like it or not.

Instead, remember, your job is to:

- Discuss what's between the lines
- Describe the ad
- Use specific examples to support that claim
- Explain how that represents something broader in society.

Shall we practice?

Look closely at these ads.

Just notice the details.

What do you think they say between the lines?





NEVER LET THEIR TOYS DIE
THE WORLD'S LONGEST LASTING BATTERY



So, what's to notice here?

Initially, this ad makes most of us smile. It's made to do that. To analyze it we go beyond that and look more deeply at the details of it and draw conclusions, reading the message between the lines.

This is that early-childhood moment of "I'll show you mine if you show me yours." We know from child development that this is not a sexual or dirty thing—this is natural. Babies go from only knowing themselves, to understanding their family structure, to realizing others are different from them. The curiosity about anatomy is natural. But this ad adds something else.

The text says "Never let their batteries die." It's stated as a warning or admonishment. It's telling parents that if they do let their kids' toys with batteries die this could result.

In reading it that way, it becomes a warning that this is a bad thing. In essence, it makes a natural part of human development something that should be avoided.

What else is there to notice?

A clean playroom? Pink walls? A sense of isolation in the room?

What do those things say between the lines?



Here's another ad designed to get a chuckle. We have a SWAT team consulting a delivery guy for directions. The obvious conclusion is that the delivery service knows where everything is, so they can deliver your package with ease. But what's between the lines?

One of the common myths in the media is that of the bumbling donut-eating cop. This is only a step beyond that. Since the cops have to stop and ask the delivery guy for directions, it implies that they are not familiar with their territory. Now, we all have to ask for directions sometimes, but here we have an image of law enforcement as inept at their jobs.

Can you think of other media images that create this picture?

What about the idea that law enforcement is out to get everyone instead of serve and protect?

Note: This is an interesting ad to look at, but it's probably not one I'd choose to write a paper about. I'd want to have a number of different things that reinforce the myth, value, or stereotype I'm looking at. However, I could use this ad with one or two others that make some comment about law enforcement and talk about what myth, stereotype or value they all present.



2011 Jeep Grand Cherokee

This Jeep ad is one that caught me by surprise on August afternoon. As I watched it, something bugged me. But first, let's think about the layers we can read into with video ads.

Images: Pounding of a railroad spike, train speeding across a bridge, a factory, a early airplane, a man carving wood, a factory, a sewing machine running, a skyscraper, hoses running, jeeps rolling down the road (probably in the 40s), parades of returning soldiers, baseball, a telegraph, a train, more jeeps, a man swinging a sledge hammer, a switch being turned on, a man in a face-shield helmet, flashing lights, the new jeep speeding down a wet dirt road, a hammer pounding a railroad spike in, the new jeep driving away down that road, the interior of the new jeep, the factory where the new jeep is made, a man working on the factory line, the jeep's upholstery, the steering wheel, the jeep in the woods.

That's a lot of imagery. In analyzing the images in this, we have to think about how those images tell the story, and what story they tell. They are all strong working images. They are all specifically American images. They are all very white images.

Sound: The sound track that is layered behind these images is a very repetitive and strong sound. The pounding beat and strong rhythm have a certain strength behind them.

Text: The things that make us American, are the things we make. This has always been a nation of builders, craftsmen...men and women for whom strait stitches and clean welds are matters of personal pride. They made the skyscrapers and the cotton gins, colt revolvers, Jeep 4x4s, these things make us who we are. As a people, we do well when we make good things, and no so well when we don't. The good news is, this can be put right, we just have to do it. So we did. This, our newest son, was imagined, drawn, carved, stamped, and forged here, in America. It is well made and it is designed to work. This is once a country when people made things, beautiful things. And so it is again. The all new Jeep Grand Cherokee.

So, how does this all add up to something more? Well, one of the things that disturbs me about this ad is in the text: “The things that make us American are the things we make.” Now, I was the young girl who carried around a pocket sized Constitution—yep, I did. I love this country. I believe we should return jobs to the economy and families. Factory jobs were not perfect, but they provided an income that allowed a family to buy a small house and a modest car. They provided a retirement and basic benefits. The loss of the good factory job has been a huge hit to our lives. I believe in supporting our economy by buying American-made goods when they live up to their quality. However, there’s something unsettling about the idea of things making us American.

When it’s layered with the images that play on the ideas of nostalgia—let us not forget that while women and minorities made great strides during World War I, it was still a time of segregation and unequal pay—it seems to point toward a push for consumerism. Additionally, calling the vehicle “our newest son,” personifies the object so that it implies a family relationship between the vehicle and the maker, and therefore perpetuates the view of it as something we should ourselves see as equal to a human.

In short, the ad implies a focus on material things and raises them to the level of people. It creates a value in materialism and equates that with patriotism. It says that stuff makes us American. Is it stuff that makes us who we are?

Compare these:



<https://youtu.be/CfxwXneCtEM?list=PLC2C87D2AD245841C>



<https://youtu.be/T6f1f74c5CU?list=PLC2C87D2AD245841C>

What's the value narrative in each one?
What does each society value or not value?

Remember, in this essay, your job is to

write a formal essay in which you look carefully at an advertisement and explain what this ad reveals about contemporary culture: values, goals, acceptable roles in society, etc.

Final notes:

I love TV and I laugh just as much as the next gal at funny ads and silly antics. I don't always analyze everything, and this assignment is not designed to make you lose your enjoyment of any of that. It does, however, ask you to dig below the surface of what is being sold or the story being told and look for the messages.

Sometimes those messages are negative, sometimes they're positive, but they're always there. Being able to analyze them is a skill of critical thinking.

The biggest pitfall in this essay is to simply retell the story or talk about the product. Remember, that's not what your essay is about. Your job is to talk about the myth, value, stereotype, or assumptions that are being sold between the lines and then comment on what that says about society's ideas of those things.

As we go through this we'll look at samples. Please remember that you will not be revising this essay. It and the final one are like your final exams. It's important you think it through carefully and get as much feedback from your classmates and the writing center as you can. Remember to make use of the online writing center as well. There's a link to that at the top of my webpage: www.kelli.ninja



Windows

Mob

McDonald's

NBC

Sanikoba
in Gold

Prudential Financial

McDonald's

Life

SONY

Sports Illustrated

Yuhoo!

SONY