

## **Advertisement Analysis.**

This essay aims to decode the representational symbols in an advertisement which is selling alcohol. The target receiver is a young adult male and the advertisements appeared in a music magazine. All advertisements contain signifiers that carry meaning to the receiver in terms of denotations and connotations.

Denotations are the images portrayed in the advertisement which clear for the viewers to see. While connotations are associated ideas suggested to the viewer by the content of the advertisement. The type of signifiers that are used to send messages in an advertisement include colour, focus, shape, camera angle, stereotype, positioning and all of these areas need to be considered.

Advertisement 1 is advertising Abbot Ale. The photograph consists of a young woman lying in bed with a look of pleasure on her face. There is a small statement at the top left hand corner of the page. In the bottom right hand corner of the page there is a picture of a pint glass filled with ale, with the ale's logo printed on. There is a beer pump with the ale's logo on it to the left of the glass with a statement that is directly related to the product.

Advertisement 2 is advertising Budweiser beer. The picture consists of five playing cards that are all kings. There are the four different suits and also a playing card that depicts two bottles of Budweiser. There is a slogan at the top of the page and there are three gambling chips in the bottom left of the page. Across the bottom of the page there is a black strip with a statement in the centre of it. On the tops of the beer bottles there are upturned bottle caps.

Advertisement 3 is advertising Beck's. There is a picture of a smashed bottle of Beck's, the sections with the brand name on remaining intact. There is some beer spilt over the background and there is a small amount of text in the bottom right hand corner of the page.

Colour is one of the most powerful signifiers and can send several messages to the receiver. The main colour used in advertisement 1 is the cream colour of the bedding. Other colours include the colour of the woman's flesh that appears to blend in with the bedding and the dark black of her hair. In the bottom corner these colours are repeated on the beer pump.

The only remaining colour is the golden, brown of the pint of Ale. The golden colour of the ale gives the reader the impression that the ale is clean and that it tastes good. The black hair provides a contrast to the cream bedding and draws the viewer's eye straight to the woman's face. This is important because she is the main feature in the advert and it helps in reinforcing the slogan. By using these same two colours from the beer pump on the advertisement it reinforces the image of the pump to the viewer. The colours black and cream are neutral colours the golden brown of the ale stands out more. By using only two contrasting colours the viewer is not distracted by anything else on the page.

The main colour used in advertisement 2 is red, as it is the colour of the background, one of the gambling chips, and three of the king symbols and suit. Other colours include white, which is the background colour of the playing cards and the text on the advertisement. The two remaining gambling chips are also white. The colour gold is used for the beer and the bottle caps. Black is used on the column at the bottom of the page and for the writing on the label of the beer bottle. The red background provides an effective contrast from the white on the playing cards that helps to grab the viewer's attention. By using the same two colours on the advertisement as the two colours on the beer bottle label it reinforces the colours of their product, this makes it easier for the viewer to pick out the product when buying it. Also by using the white on the red background it helps to make the image stand out and look more three-dimensional. The colour on the advertisement also makes sure that the viewer is drawn towards the advertisement that will help in the advertising process and possible selling of the product.

The colours used in advertisement 3 are: the white background, the green smashed bottle, the light golden colour of the beer, the orange and the red colour of the text, and the different colours on the bottles label. The bold bright colours of the bottle and beer make the image stand out really well from the plain white background. The viewer can clearly see that the colours on the beer bottle will be the colours used on the bottle you would buy in a shop. This would help them to recognise the beer easily. Each of the advertisements has successfully used colour.

The colour in advertisement 1 has created a contrast by using the colour cream of the background and the dark black of the woman's hair. This helps to attract the viewer.

The colours used in advertisement 2 are bright and bold. The red background attracts the viewer and also helps the advert to stand out.

The colours in advertisement 3 are used to make the image stand out. The white colour of the background creates interest for the viewer, as it is not a natural colour to use.

In advertisement 1 little attention is given to shape. The main shapes are found on the image of the woman. Her arms are the most significant aspects because they stick up from the flatness of the bedding and her head is thrown back with her chin jutting up. These shapes are used to show enjoyment and pleasure. The shape of the abbot ale pump in the corner could be a phallic symbol as the underlying connotation is that the woman has enjoyed a pleasurable experience in bed, which can be linked with the messed bed sheets.

In advertisement 2 they have given a fair amount of attention to shape. The main shape is of the fan of playing cards as it is the focal point. The shape of the fan consists of a number of different curves. Representing each individual card. The gambling chips are curved and are overlapping which creates an effect as though they are right in front of you. The beer bottle also has curved edges but the beer bottle lid has quite sharp edges which help it look like a kings crown.

There are many different types of shapes in advertisement 3 this is because of the bottle that has broken into random pieces. The edges of the glass are sharp and pointed which helps them stand out from the background. The spilt beer however has very smooth an edge, which creates a successful contrast from the sharp, pointed edges of the glass.

Each advertisement has used shape to help promote their advertisement. The shape used in advertisement 1 is quite hard to pick out. The main shape is of the arms of the woman that are next to her head. This attracts the viewer to the image of the woman. The shapes used in advertisement 2 are very curved. These appear on the gambling chips and cards. This makes the viewer think that the beer is smooth and may attract them into buying the product.

The shapes used on advertisement 3 are very sharp. This creates interest for the viewer. The sharp edges are all found on the fragments of glass, all but the piece with the label on, which is smoother than the rest. This attracts the viewer as they want to see why that particular one is like that.

The positioning of the woman in the centre of advertisement 1 signifies that they want you to look at her as the focus point. They have done this because she is the image that is most likely to attract the audience. The text is at the top left hand corner of the page and the bottom right hand corner of the page. This creates balance for the eye. Also beginning at the top left hand corner of the page would be the natural place to start reading something. The positioning of the playing cards in the centre of advertisement 2 goes as followed: The playing card with the beer bottles on is facing upwards with all of the other cards fanning out lower and to the left of the card. They have placed the card with the image of the beer glasses at the top as it is the king of all beers, it also gives the viewer the impression it's the best beer because it is on top of everything else.

The positioning of advertisement 3 is very simple, as they have not used many images. The product label, which survived the fall, is in the centre of the page with smashed fragments of glass around the outside. The text is at the bottom right hand side of the page. The label is in the middle of the page to make it stand out from the other fragments of glass.

The positioning of each advert attracts viewers. All of the Advertisements have the product in the centre of the page, which helps to keep it the focal point; it also helps the viewer to clearly see the product and draws their attention to the product image.

The camera angle of an advertisement can make the advertisement successful or unsuccessful.

On advertisement 1 the picture of the woman in bed is taken from the angle of which the viewer would look at her when looking at the advert. This is done to make the lady look more realistic as she appears to the reader to be just in front of them. This creates more attraction for the viewer when they look at the advert.

In advertisement 2 the camera has been positioned above and slightly to the bottom of the playing cards.

They have done this to create the effect of the viewer being at the gambling table with the five cards in front of them. Which would create more of an impact when seen.

On advertisement 3 the picture of the Beck's bottle is taken from directly above it. This may be to create the effect of somebody dropping the bottle on the floor and then looking down at the smashed glass.

The camera angle of advertisement 1 is taken from the direction of which the viewer would look at her if she were in front of them.

This helps the image of the woman more realistic.

The camera angle of advertisement 2 is taken from the angle that the viewer would look at the cards if they were on a table in front of him. This also helps to make the image look more realistic.

The camera angle on advert 3 is taken from directly above. This makes the viewer think that he is looking at the smashed bottle after he dropped it. This links in with the words "Juggler," and the word "Apprentice."

The focus of advertisement 1 is clear and natural. This is reinforcing that the beer is a clear golden brown colour. They have done this to try to make it look realistic. They are trying to reinforce that the beer tastes good in real life.

The focus of advertisement 2 is clean and realistic. This reinforces the effect of the cards being in front of the viewer. They may have done this to make the advertisement stand out to the viewer. They may have made the focus clear so the viewer can look in detail at the beer being advertised, which may help the product to sell. This also helps the effect of the viewer being at the gambling table.

The focus of advertisement 3 is sharp and detailed. The advertising company have done this so the individual pieces of glass (which are what catches the eye of the viewer) will be clearly seen and look even more realistic.

The focus in advert two has successfully been used to attract the viewer and also helps to reinforce the realistic effect.

The focus in advertisement 2 is clean and realistic. This helps to make the product easier to see, as it is quite a small image.

The focus in advertisement 3 is clear because it helps the different fragments of glass look more realistic and helps them to stand out.

The text colour of advertisement 1 is black and written in cursive joined up writing. The slogan on this advert says, "Some things get better given longer." There is also a sentence that says "Brewed for a fuller more distinctive flavour." Both of them are written in lower case and are quite small. It is presented like this so that the viewer does not get distracted away from the focal point of the picture. The text is merely there to back up the picture on the advertisement. This reinforces the beer being a traditional one. The text on advertisement 2 is bold and can be clearly seen. The text at the top of the page says "The king of beers." There is also some text at the bottom that says "5% premium larger." Both of these are written in white makes it stand out from the background well. It is written in upper case so it catches the viewer's eye. There is not much text on advertisement 3. One of the parts of text that are there is on the label and is the brand name "Beck's." The other is at the bottom of the page and says "Juggler," and also the word "Apprentice." They are obviously depending on the brand name to sell the product. The main text that is there is written in orange, red or silver.

The text used in advertisement 1 has been cleverly used. It has been written in traditional handwriting, which reinforces that it is a traditional beer. This helps to promote it.

The text in advertisement 2 is big and has been written in uppercase letters. This helps to make the text stand out and also lets the viewer clearly see the slogan. This also helps in the selling process.

The text used in advertisement 3 is quite small. This is because it isn't as important. It is just adding humour by explaining why the glass is smashed. This helps the viewer to understand the advertisement more easily.

The anchor in advertisement 1 is the sentence "some things get better given longer" because it links to the woman and helps to pin down the second meaning of the sentence. It is a sentence that refers to both the beer (brewed longer for a better taste) and the woman (knowing that the longer, what is clearly an enjoyable moment lasts, the better).

The anchor in advertisement 2 is the word King. It is white, so it stands out from the background. It is written in clear bold writing. The word King is also quite a powerful word, which may attract viewers because they will associate the position of a King in society with this being the leading of all brands. The word King also links back to the playing cards and the upturned bottle cap. The anchor in advertisement 3 is the word "Juggler" and also "Apprentice" because it links to the smashed bottle by saying a jugglers apprentice dropped it and also gives the viewer an idea of why it was dropped. (This adds a little humour into the advertisement)

The anchor used in advertisement 1 is creating humour for the viewer and also explaining why she has a look of pleasure on her face.

The anchor in advertisement 2 is attracting the viewers because of its size and is also helping to get the message across that the beer is the best.

The anchor used in advertisement 3 is adding humour and it is also explaining why the bottle has been smashed.

The stereotype used in advertisement 1 is the image of the young beautiful woman who has just enjoyed being in bed. This stereotype attracts male receivers and female receivers wanting to attract men. This ensures that the advert is aimed at a broad audience. The connotation is that the longer you are in bed the better it will be, this also links to the beer because the longer it is brewed for the better tasting it is.

There is no stereotype used in advertisement 2. The producing company has done this to ensure that the advertisement is aimed at a wider audience and can be sold to many more people.

There is no stereotype used in advertisement 3, as there is no reason to have one in the advertisement. The advertising company have chose to leave off a stereotype because they want the advertisement to be purely the brand name that advertises the product.

The lighting is another important part of advertising as it can highlight certain aspects, which are important in attracting the viewer's attention. In advertisement 1 the light is focused on the woman from a range of angles because she is the most important image.

Even though the woman is being illuminated from different places. There seems to be brighter light shining onto her right side. They may have done this to make an effect on the viewer of an open window being right next to her. This reinforces the effect of her being in a bedroom.

In advertisement 2 the lighting is directed downwards from the top right corner to the bottom left. The playing cards are in the line of light as they are an important part of the advertisement. They may have positioned the lighting there so it creates shadow around the playing cards which helps the effect of making the playing card stand out and look more three dimensional. The lighting also reflects off the gambling chips. This helps them stand out, but not enough to put off the viewer and distract them from the playing cards, the focal point of the advertisement. The significance of the chips is probably that four Kings is a winning hand, so five Kings is a certain winner, another good association with the beer.

The lighting in advertisement 3 has been spread evenly over the page. The product has made no shadows so you can't tell which angle the light is coming from. You can see a little reflection on one of the smashed pieces of bottle, telling us that it is being lit from somewhere.

The lighting in advertisement 1 helps to create an effect of a window being there and also helps to illuminate the image of the woman.

The lighting used in advertisement 2 is across the page. They have made sure that the cards are in the middle of the path of light because it is the main focal point and will help it stand out.

The lighting used in advertisement 3 is spread evenly over the page this helps to make the images stand out.

The picture in advertisement 1 has been cropped just to include the head and shoulders of the woman. By not showing the rest of her body it leaves the viewer to use his/her imagination to fill in details that they would have been unable to publish. This helps to sell the product by encouraging the viewer to associate Abbot Ale with sex and pleasure.

The picture of advertisement 2 has not been cropped, but the gambling chips have been. They have been cut in half in order to keep the viewer focused on the playing cards and not the gambling chips. Once the viewer does see the gambling chips he may make an assumption that because you gamble in public this beer is one to be seen drinking in public.



Advertisement 3 has not been cropped. The advertising company may have done this to let you see the whole smashed bottle that has more of an effect on the viewer. It also makes it look more realistic. By seeing the product it helps to sell it to the audience. The cropping that has been used on advertisement 1 lets the viewer imagine what is going on to the bottom of the woman. This creates interest for the viewer. The cropping that has been used on advertisement 2 helps the viewer to stay focused on the playing cards, which are an important aspect in the advertisement. No cropping has been used on advertisement 3. This is because it creates more of an effect if you can see the whole product, also the image would look quite strange if half of it was cut off.

To summarise, advertisement 1 uses a combination of successful colour contrast and a powerful image of a woman experiencing pleasure in bed to attract both males wanting to attract females and females wanting to attract males. They would enjoy the link between pleasure in bed and pleasure drinking the ale. I think that the advertisement would be successful in today's society in interesting the young adult males it's aimed at.

Advertisement 2 uses a combination of successful use of colour, lighting and the slogan to attract its target audience. The viewer would like the humorous link between the advertisement and slogan. In today's society I think that this advertisement would do well in attracting its viewers because they would like the humour in the advert.

Advertisement 3 uses successful focus and shape to attract its viewers. Although the advertisement does not have much on it I think that it is still very effective and will make the viewers laugh because of the anchor. In today's society I think that the advertisement will do well in selling the product to the young adult males it is aimed at.

To conclude, all of the advertisements contain a wide variety of signifiers that are used effectively to attract a target audience. They all feature a large central image/picture and minimal text which makes the adverts easily understood and uncomplicated. Although the colours are different on each advertisement, they only consist of about two to three different colours to create the effect. The actual product being advertised appears somewhere on each of the advertisements but each one is linked to a different theme. The three themes used are sexual pleasure, gambling and subtle humour all of which are relevant and attractive to the people they are trying to target. In today's society I believe that all three advertisements should prove to be successful.

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