

## Media Essay

The principle of advertising is to sell a product, or to sell a lifestyle. There are several brands of jeans on the market, but they are all marketed and advertised in a different way. They wish to associate certain values, ideas, and dreams with the product. It is then hoped that the consumer will want to buy into that lifestyle and the product becomes a passport to the lifestyle.

Another purpose of advertising is to reposition or rebrand a product. It may be that a product is becoming old, or sales are falling. Advertising campaigns can rejuvenate sales. A classic example is the Levi's ad with Nick Cave in the launderette, where sales were falling and the ad had sent sales soaring. In addition, advertising is also used to globalise a brand. Pepsi and Mc Donalds are a good example. These are consumer companies known all around the world. Moreover, advertisements aim to inform people about what a product or company is offering; an advertisement also needs to persuade people to buy their product. Furthermore, advertising could be used to get a product into the public consciousness or even into collective subconsciousness.

As a class we looked at a whole range of various Levi Jeans adverts. We then analysed (denoted) each advertisement and noted down the slogan, the music type, who the people were, the action taken in the advertisement, we noted down what they were doing, and understood what the advertisement was trying to imply. (Connotations).

We then looked at a particular Levi advertisement. We looked at the classic advertisement with Nick Cave in the launderette, and noted down each and every move in detail, by understanding and interpreting what he was doing. We co notated each shot, and noted down what the actor (Nick Cave) was trying to imply.

Following this, we were put into groups, and were told to make our own advertisements, using the knowledge we had learnt from our previous work. We all made posters based on denim jeans which were called- Ripper 999, and were told to set out our advertisement very cautiously, making sure we were not implying anything which would portray a pessimistic image, or anything which would degrade the jeans in a negative manner.

Target audiences are very important when advertising a product. A target audience is the audience you are making your advertisement for. Magazines like "Sugar" have a target audience of teenagers who are aged 12 to 17, and as such include lots of features that would appeal to that audience. It also means the layout appeals to that type of audience too. Advertisers would use different ideas and values to associate their product with their target audience. Professional advertisers appeal to their target audience by addressing the interest of that audience and excluding the interests of others. For example, advertisements made to appeal the elderly usually exclude the interests of the young. An advertisement might appeal to its target audience by portraying their likes in a positive way and portraying their dislikes in a negative way.

Levi's jeans have a target audience of teenagers and young adults aged 13 to 25. Their advertisements have young beautiful people who portray rebellion. Before the 1950s young people were not really seen as a category in themselves. They were either seen as children who had no spending authority or as adults. Throughout the fifties nearly everybody, quite suddenly it seemed, had a lot more money than they did in tough times following the war. Young people had their own spending power as consumers, they became known as teenagers: a new group waiting for fashions and lifestyles on which to spend their money, looking for heroes to follow and interests to pursue. Levi's aimed to give teenagers more freedom and to persuade people that teenagers were a separate category who must rebel to obtain their rights. And now, teenagers are thought to rebel against their parents as it naturally occurs in them, but this isn't true, as advertisements have in fact influenced them to be this way.

Denim jeans blasted onto the global consciousness with the release of a movie- 'Rebels without a cause' (1955) starring James Dean. In this movie, the rebellious young hero wore blue jeans, black leather jackets and white tight t-shirts. James Dean soon became a sex symbol. This young American non-conformist image connected with youth all over the world who were struggling to define their own role in society. Jeans became a symbol and expression of individualism.

By the mid 1960s youthful rebels had become long haired hippies in tie-dyed t-shirts and bleached, faded or patched jeans. Girls joined boys and non-conformist youth suddenly became a huge potential consumer group. The denim and jean industries became partners in supplying this fresh youth fashion wave and have surfed it ever since.

Advertisers have to create a strong image for their product. The image that Levi Jeans are setting out is REBELLION. From the mid 1950s onwards, jeans have been especially associated with particular types of male American youth heroes, such as James Dean. He had become a figure of youth and rebellion in almost all Western cultures. There are many examples of rebellion in the Levi advertisement; a good example is where a young man smuggles his American goods into Russia (his Levi jeans). This was illegal at the time, the man had broken the law, and therefore this act was shown as rebellion.

These sorts of advertisements lead young people into doing things which are absolutely unacceptable. They infiltrate in the mind of teenagers, and are convinced into being rebellious by adverts; they start to feel that they have the authority to do anything. These young minds are persuaded to be cool and so join the popular culture of being rebellious.

When they put their acts into practice, they annihilate all their decent values, such as respecting people, listening to their parents, speaking the truth, good conduct, kindness, dignity, modesty, all these civilised manners are savagely destroyed. People undertake immoral actions, they rebel everywhere, judging that they have the free will to do as they like. They drive back peoples good morals and corrupt the society with their attitudes.

These erroneous acts gradually become acceptable, and the government becomes complaisant. Rebellion thus becomes a global trend, pushing back barriers, rules, and

laws that make up society. Acts lose their accountability, and people become careless. No one is blamed for undertaking immoral deeds, no one is left guilty for rebelling, and nobody is then held responsible for such shameful conduct.

The world becomes obsessed with rebellion to such an extreme, that people don't seem to realise that they aren't achieving anything. This cycle just carries on, degrading society as it goes on, and who is to blame? These influences from television are to blame; these role models who guide the young innocent minds into doing vile things are to blame.

Though we can't see it, and don't realise it, advertisement have a great impact on young innocent children. The aim of being rebellious is to indicate the illusion that one has free will, when in fact we need to observe limits for our own safety, and these limits are destroyed by rebellion. As a result, these advertisements have become successful. They have possessed people to become rebellious and this only brings the world closer into corrupting itself. This succession leads many people to go astray. This suggests that people are naïve and immature, they need to safeguard themselves from any pressure that can cause them any physical or emotional harm.

All Levi advertisements imply that their jeans are sexy. The advertisements frequently show men either taking off or putting their jeans on. This implies that if one were to purchase a pair of Levi jeans and wear them, they would instantly look sexy.

The settings of the adverts have a hot and steamy atmosphere. This also implies that the jeans look hot and sexy. We can use the example with the advert of Nick Cave in the launderette. It is packed with a hot and clammy environment. When you have sex you sweat, and this represents that the jeans are sexy. The hot and steamy environment contrasts with the Levi jeans making them stand out, trying to portray the jeans in a cool way. The jeans mix in with the cold colours such as blue implying that the jeans are fresh and cool, whereas the hot and steamy environment mixes in with the hot colours, this is effective as it portrays the jeans in a hot and sexy way.

The music in the advertisements was all of the same type. They often played motown music, which was incredibly popular in the 1950s. This could draw people's awareness to the advertisement when they hear the music, and associate it with the jeans whenever they see them. This is how people remember adverts that attach into their unconsciousness.

There is always an attractive young man and a beautiful young woman who play a certain role in the advertisements. When the young man wears his jeans, the woman always finds the man to be very attractive. An example is when a young man walks into a bar, and plays an old man a game of pool. The barmaid looks at the young man with intentions of becoming an item. She finds him irresistible. This implies that if one were to go out and buy a pair of Levi jeans and wear them, all women would be mocking around you and one would instantly become a female attraction.

Almost all of the Levi advertisements enhance the jeans and make them stand out by shooting them from the rear end (with the camera). This is where all the detail of the

jeans are, the pockets, the zip, the logo, it is vital that quality is shown in advertisements so that customers are not fooled into buying something that looks good on television, but isn't so good in reality. It is vital that adverts show a sense of honesty and respect to satisfy customer and consumer needs.

The colour blue is often used in the Levis advertisements. This is because the denim is blue, and certain items could correspond to the jeans. An example is the advertisement with Nick Cane in the launderette. At the beginning of the advertisement, a blue car passes by. The classic blue car represents the jeans. The car is blue; therefore the jeans are blue. The car is expensive; therefore the jeans are expensive. The car is impressive; therefore the jeans are impressive. Inside the launderette, the colours of the walls are blue. Yet again this represents the jeans. Blue jeans represented rebellion in the 1950s.

One thing I noticed was that the men in the advertisements had striking bodies. They were all very hunky and muscular. They were always made to reveal the top half of their body. The fact that these men were well built represents strength and power in the jeans. It shows that they are well developed and well made, just how the muscles are.

Levi's main method of appeal was to use handsome men and beautiful women in their advertisements. Attractive people are usually very eye catching, and so every time someone good-looking were to come across the television screen, people would not be able to resist watching the advert, and they would want to watch the advertisement over and over again, just to see those gorgeous people. But during this course of action, these people become brainwashed, the advert is fixed behind the back of their minds, and they want to become stunning young people just like those in the advertisement. They start to think that if they buy the jeans, they will instantly become beautiful people. They begin to worry about their appearance, noticing that there is a great deal of competition in the world. They start dieting if they think they are too fat, they get depressed if they think they are ugly, they become miserable young people who want to be just like those models in the advertisements, but they never accomplish anything. This pressure from the media causes many people to experience rejection, and this is where cruelty comes from. The media tells people that they should be attractive young people with the ideal figure, and if they aren't, then they are an outcast of society.

Of course, adverts make us spend money - that's their aim. We simply MUST pay extra for those fashionable brand names; this is why they stick logos on everything that can be SEEN. Logos create the brands awareness, and in reality, this is all that the people pay for. They don't care whether the product is long lasting or good quality, they want the logo to be shown, so people can see that they wear costly clothes, and that they are seen as part of the in-crowd. The bitter facts hidden behind advertising are evil. It is harming society by placing too much pressure on people to spend, spend, and spend. Parents have to squander a large sum of money to buy their children branded goods just so they can be accepted by other people.

The advert that my group and I made was for jeans called Ripper 999. Ripper represents the danger in the jeans. Jack the Ripper was an evil man who killed many people. The word 'Ripper' derives from Jack's name. It shows that the jeans are dangerous.

My advert shows a house on fire in the far background. The door number is 666. This is the devil's number. The devil is associated with the evil spirit, hell and fire. The number 666 derives from the number 999 in the logo. When you turn the numbers 999 upside down, you notice that the numbers 666 come to mind. Again, this represents the devil that has started the fire, he arouses trouble, makes things difficult for people, and this is what the door number represents.

The image my advert was trying to set out was a sort of punky image. We researched into the style, and established that it was fast becoming a global trend. Famous people such as Jennifer Lopez and Britney Spears influenced us in making our jeans different from others. We wanted our jeans to be unique and original. So we decided to make our jeans fireproof, we also agreed to give the jeans a twist between a punky and stylish image.

Our group decided that it was vital for our target audience to noticeably see that our jeans have a sense of uniqueness to them. The fact that our jeans were made fireproof meant that we had to show this making sure the message is portrayed clearly. We decided that a woman should be possessed by fire, (only the top half of her body). She'd be wearing the fireproof jeans, which will visibly shield her from the fire. This implies that the jeans are strong. They were the only thing that survived in the fire. The jeans are tough, well made, and powerful. This shows that the jeans are of a high quality, and are one of the top brands.

Our advertise was targeted at young adults of any race, aged 16 and over. They were unisex jeans for either males or females. To be evident for our jeans being for any race, we made sure that the woman was entirely surrounded by fire, and that we couldn't see her skin colour. This implies that the jeans are for people of any culture, race, sex and religion. We wanted as many people as possible to buy our jeans.

Our jeans were targeted at people who were 16 years or over. This was mainly because the idea of our jeans being dangerous would not be suitable for young children. We didn't want to influence them at a gullible age. However targeting young adults was better as they can observe their own limits, and make their own choices and decisions.

The words 'Ripper 999' arises from the fire. This shows the rise of the devil, again showing the dangerous side of the jeans, making people aware that the jeans are for daring people only. This portrays a sense of rebellion.

Red was one of the main colours we used for our advertisement. This choice was mainly made to symbolise the devil, death, and immorality. This was to show the risky side of the jeans, and yet again, portraying that the jeans are made for people who are up for a challenge. We used the idea about contrasting from the Levi's campaign. We made the jeans stand out in the fire by using the colour blue to contrast with the whole area

surrounded by red fire. This makes the jeans more distinct from the rest of the atmosphere.

We used the slogan 'Never Underestimate the Power of the Ripper'. We came up with this slogan from the playstation advert and changed a few words. The meaning behind the slogan is that many people would expect the jeans to be burning in the fire. But the Ripper 999 jeans are so strong and powerful, that they can guard one from fire. This shows the strength, the power, and force that the jeans have. It tells people not to misjudge the jeans just by appearance. It teaches people not to be prejudice.

The logo we used was of a Lion with sharp teeth biting on a metal plate which had Ripper 999 engraved onto it. Around the sharp teeth, there is a sign written 'Parental Guidance'. The metal plate represents the jeans. It shows that not even a Lion with sharp teeth can annihilate the jeans. It portrays high quality. The 'parental guidance' implies that the jeans are very dangerous, and only children who have permission by their parents can wear them.

I don't think our advertisement would have a great impact on our target audience, especially when we portrayed countless negative points in our ad, such as the devil, evil spirits, danger, fire; all these terrible things could easily drive our target audience away. We didn't portray a safe, positive image. We didn't have anything that could link our jeans to being the least bit punky, and we didn't research into the punky culture enough to advertise it. Instead, we associated punks with evil. But in fact, this isn't true. Punks aren't evil (well not all of them). Many of them are kind hearted people who have established their own sense of style. They are looked down upon society because of their lifestyles. They may not look like the cleanest people, but their wacky sense of fashion can bring out the best in them.

There are many ways in which we could have improved our advertisement. Firstly, I feel that if we had done more research then the message we were setting out could have been more optimistic. I also feel that we should have analysed the connotations and denotations of the advertisement before finally showing it to the rest of the class. We could have altered the negative points, or changed anything that didn't suit us. I also feel that the innovation of our jeans being fireproof wasn't useful. It's not everyday that a house is set on fire. I think there should have been a different type of uniqueness in the jeans that would make them more practical in everyday life.

The Levi's advertisements are all very successful, especially the one with Nick Cave in the launderette. It was highly effective, and it sent sales soaring. My advertisement wouldn't have such a great impact on my target audience, as we portrayed signals which implied death and fatality. On the other hand Levi advertisement had used the image of being sexy, which many people liked because they people WANT to look more attractive. They used a lot of sex appeal, and this was a good way of making an advertisement more effective.

Our main method of appeal was to use fire. Fire represented many things such as danger, devil, fatality, evil, hell. Not many people are, or want to be devil worshippers, and I feel that my advertisement would have had a greater effect on devil worshippers rather than an average person. Levi's main method of appeal was to use beautiful people in their advertisements, and many people want to look gorgeous. They think that if they buy the jeans, they will instantly look like attractive young people like those pictured in the advertisements. Levi's has a more positive effect on their audience, and my advertisement has a more negative effect on my target audience.

The characters in the Levi's advertisements are rebellious, whereas the character in my advertisement is daring. They both associate in the same kind of way. One who is daring is rebellious, and one who is rebellious is daring.

The storylines in the Levi's advertisements are very simple yet effectual. The storyline in my advertisement isn't so simple. The message that I am trying to put across to my target audience isn't clear. It takes a long time, and a lot of thought to work out what my advertisement is actually saying, whereas with all the Levi's advertisements, each message is so obvious to understand. We can tell when one is being rebellious, or sexy. In my advertisement, it takes a long thought to work out what each thing means.

The setting Levi's advertisement are very predictable. They are set in normal everyday places like motels, laundrettes, airports, and offices. However my advertisement is set in the middle of nowhere. Yet again, Levi's make their advertisements short and simple, the result is a truly effective.

The colours used in my advertisement and the Levi's advertisement are very similar. We both used red and blue. However both these colours portrayed different feelings. In the Levi's advertisement, red symbolised sex, and blue symbolised cool. In my advertisement, red symbolised the devil, and blue contrasted to symbolise the Ripper jeans.

The Levi advertisements show topless men, only wearing jeans. On the other hand my advertisement shows a woman who is half on fire. The topless men represent sex and strength, whereas the woman who is on fire is possessed by evil. She represents strength.

In conclusion, all the Levi's advertisements have become successful. They influence teenagers to be rebellious and sexy; they drive the world closer to being corrupt. They influence people to spend as much money as possible so that their company can establish a profitable organisation, and people later realise they have nothing left. These are just luxuries, and personally, I wouldn't let and advertise win me over.

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