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The Truth in False Advertising

In today's generation, advertisement companies are able to use a wide variety of ways to try to push a product into the consumer world. Advertisement companies purposely try to manipulate the consumer into buying the product that is being advertised by using certain words, colors, backgrounds, and people. There are three examples of three different products and how marketers use different techniques to lure the consumer into buying the product being advertised.

In *Us Weekly* Magazine's March 24, 2008 issue, there is an ad introducing a new fragrance for "Dove" bath products. The new fragrance is called "go fresh," using scents from grapefruits and lemongrass. The magazine's readers are mostly women, so the ad company included the ad as a way to grab the female audience because this product is aimed directly at women. The main focus of the ad claims that women who use these products will receive that "tingly feeling" that a girl get from a guy. The ad company makes sure the catchy phrase for this ad is in the center of the page, using big, bold lettering that will grab the reader's attention instantly. The marketers want to convince the reader of the feeling of being fresh by using a young woman in the ad who appears to have just taken a shower using this product. The young woman pictured in the ad is smiling, which apparently shows signs of happiness and satisfaction with the product. The ad company also uses the colors white, yellow, and pale orange that can be interpreted as relaxing colors or as a way to introduce the product as a fragrance for the spring and summer seasons. The ad also offers a web site for readers to go to in order to get more

information on the products. Last, the ad shows a picture of all the different Dove products that the new fragrance offers.

Unlike the previous ad, another one is targeted toward men, but specifically African-American men. In *Vibe* Magazine's April 2008 issue, Gillette is advertising its Fusion-Phenom disposable razor. The marketers for this product try to convince the readers to use this product by having an African-American man pictured. The man is dressed in business attire with colors that match those of the razor. The ad is outlined in the color black, which gives the man pictured in the ad a "portrait" look. The man's face is lightened to show his smooth skin, which gets the reader to believe that he too can obtain smooth skin with the use of this razor. Unfortunately, the ad company fails to reveal the most important part of the face where razor bumps are more likely to occur. In the actual ad, the lower chin and neck are blackened out. This gives the reader a false interpretation of the razor's ability to prevent razor bumps. In "Illusions Are Forever," by Jay Chiat, Chiat states, "The real lie in advertising—some would call it the "art" of advertising—is harder to detect."(399). This is an explanation of how the reader may have to look harder and longer at an ad to see if there is truth in what the ad company is saying, or are the marketers trying to manipulate their readers? Along with the man's face, the ad also contains an enlarged picture of the razor. This is an attempt to show the reader the razor's detail. Gillette also conducted a study that included African-American men to convince the reader, According to Gillette, "Fusion is preferred 22 to 1 by African-American men by reducing razor bumps over the leading disposable razor." This helps lure the African-American man to purchase this

product. Gillette goes as far as to display a comment from a man that the company interviewed named Demar Mills, who claims his razor of choice is Gillette Fusion-Phenom.

In this last ad, the marketers of Sun Chips use a different approach to grab the attention of the reader. In *Us Weekly Magazine's* March 24, 2008 issue, Sun Chips displays an ad announcing that its snacks are made with the use of solar energy. This ad differs from other ads because the main focus is not on the actual product, it is on the environment. The ad doesn't mention anything about the taste or about how healthy the chips are. The ad also differs from most because a stage set or models are not used. Instead, the ad company traveled to the Sun Chips plant in Modesto, California, to show the actual sun collectors that are used to manufacture the snacks. The targeted audience of this ad would be environmentalists and energy-conserving readers. With all the discussion about global warming, the consumer will be satisfied to know that Sun Chips is doing its part in reducing the use of fossil fuels. The ad also gives a brief statement to ensure readers that the makers of Sun Chips snacks are not just interested in how well the product sells, but they indeed care about their company's effects on the planet. The ad states at the top of the page, "We're living up to our name," as a way to catch reader's attention by using big black lettering. The phrase is highlighted by the sun's rays pictured in the ad. The ad gives the reader one last thing to remember by showing a bag of the Harvest Cheddar flavored chips. The chip bag is orange in color, which stands out from the rest of the ad because the background is the color of the sky. This contrast helps the reader to remember the product when it comes time to purchase a bag of chips.

After reviewing the three ads and the different techniques that ad companies use, we can definitely say that marketers give us (the consumers) the belief in a falsified lifestyle to lure us into buying their products. Can we as consumers admit that the techniques that are used by marketers are actually successful in their intent to lure us? Before we can answer that question, we need to ask ourselves, “Would ad companies still be in business if the gimmicks they use didn’t work?”

Work Cited

Chiat, Jay. "Illusions Are Forever." Keys to Successful Writing. Ed. Marilyn Anderson. New York: Pearson Longman, 2008. 398-400;