TAG BODY SPRAY ADVERTISEMENT: SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

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What is Tag body spray?

- Tag body spray features advertisements that "warn" the viewer that women will be attracted to him which will cause them to attack him.

- The charcoal-grey aluminum cans have silhouettes of women, and fragrances named after dating milestones. Ex:
  - First move
  - After Hours
  - Midnight
  - Lucky Day
  - Wild Card
What is Semiotics?

- Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols as components of communicative behavior (Allen).
  
  Ex:
  - Language
  - Gestures
  - Clothing
  - Words
  - Images
  - And more

- Many things point beyond themselves to show more than a simple symbolic or objective meaning (Candler).

- There are two elements of a sign (Allen):
  - **Signifier** - the image that we see
  - **Signified** - the mental concept that is created in the mind once you interact with the signifier
Who is the Audience?

- The audience for this particular Tag body spray advertisement would be for females in a relationship with men.

- As the text at the bottom of the ad states, "... give your boyfriend the gift of TAG."

- This ad was found in a Cosmo magazine which is also targeted towards females.

- Although it was targeted towards females through the text and where the advertisement was found, it is apparent that this product really sells and attracts the male audience by the sexual appeal which is shown by the aggressive female dominating the male.

- This gives the idea that men who wear the body spray will have women all over them.
The boyfriend and girlfriend on the couch are probably in their upper teens or early 20s. This product is targeted for this age group but finds its way to attracting younger boys as well.

Young boys, who are starting to like girls, will see this advertisement and want to be like the older boy in the picture. This may push them to be more likely to buy the product to make them feel a bit older or in hopes that girls will be all over them because of it.
What are the signifiers?

- There are many signifiers found in this advertisement. Some of these signifiers include:
  - A mother holding a tray of cookies with a shocked look on her face
  - A father with a shocked look on his face while covering the eyes of a little boy
  - A grandmother with a shocked gasping look on her face
  - A girl on top of her boyfriend

- The representation of the family in this advertisement is very realistic in how their reactions are portrayed to what is taking place between the boyfriend and girlfriend. They signify the morals and values that people should have when it comes to not getting involved in such acts in the presence of others.
What is the Signified?

- The signified message in this advertisement as a whole would be the idea that if a man is wearing the Tag body spray, his girlfriend will engage in inappropriate behavior in front of her family.

- Men seem to be attracted to this underlying message.
How does this ad play off the desires of men?

- This advertisement alludes to fiction because of what it is suggesting.

- It suggests that happiness for men can be achieved by wearing this product.

- It is playing off the desires of men by saying that all they have to do is put on this body spray and a girl will be all over them.
How does the advertisement try to sell the product?

- The advertisement seems to be very thorough in trying to sell this product.

- The viewer's eye is drawn to the action between the girl and her boyfriend on the couch because everyone else in the picture is looking and pointing towards the two on the couch which really draws our eyes to it.

- Color is a very important factor in the advertisement as well. The Christmas theme works in the advertisement's favor with the red colors that are associated with that holiday. The color red also signifies danger, so it is appropriate to use the same color for the warning print.

- The bold red lettering stating "WARNING" in the center of the page creates a sense of curiosity, and this leads the viewer to also read the text below to look more into what the picture suggests.
What cultural myths are invoked in the ad?

- Media images are manipulated creations (Dillon).

- These images hold some meaning for us, and allow us to recall memories in order to create an association with the image. Advertisements play with our emotions.

- Many people can relate to products with a memory of happiness, sexual arousal, excitement, or enjoyment.

- This cultural myth tends to make the Tag body spray advertisement so convincing to men and blind them from seeing the fiction behind what it suggests.
What are some issues that could be raised by the public?

- This advertisement has many issues that could be raised by the public. Some are:

  1. The provocative images being portrayed in the picture between the two people on the couch. They use the provocative images to help sell their product but it is not appropriate for anyone of a younger age.

  2. The advertisements on TV for the same product are even more provocative and are shown to a larger variety of age groups.

  3. The signified message all together. The idea that if a man is wearing the Tag body spray, his girlfriend will engage in inappropriate behavior in front of her family is not a good message to give to anyone because it alludes to fiction.
My reaction to this Tag body spray advertisement

- I for one do not like the signified message behind this advertisement.

- Telling men that a body spray can get women to be all over them is demeaning to women.

- I've noticed more and more that companies are using sexual content and underlying messages to sell their products and I don't agree with this method at all.

- But unfortunately, no matter how much I disagree with this method of advertising, the company knows that they can play off of men's desires with the sexual signified message and be able to sell the Tag body spray product.
References

