Gender and advertising

GENDER PORTRAYAL AND STEREOTYPING
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Some concepts

Gender - biological sex

Gender - cultural interpretation of the biological differences between men and women.

Gender research - research that focuses on different cultural patterns and power structures related to sex.
Why is it important to change the current gender patterns?

• Gender plays a major role in society. Educational opportunities, occupations, salaries and positions are gender-marked. It is not an absolute regime once and for all is given. Gender Patterns are moving phenomenon, and people can be with their actions affect both our own and others’ potential.
• Girls learn early of the environment to nurture, maintain order and generally be good and help.
• Boys learn early to take place, they usually get more praise than girls when they do something good.
• These patterns can be linked to how gender representation looks in society.
What is advertising?

Advertising is as old as Humanity: indeed, much older; for what are the flaunting colours of the flowers but so many invitations to the bees to come and "buy our product". Everything is already there: the striking forms, the brilliant hues, even the "conditioning of the customer".... Advertising might be defined as any device which first arrests the attention of the passer-by and then induces him to accept a mutually advantageous exchange.

James Laver (1899-1975)
What is advertising?

Advertising is a complex phenomenon — intimately tied to society, culture, history, and the economy — that defies any simple or single definition. Some aspects of it are universal, whereas others are culturally specific. It is personal salesmanship transformed into mediated communication. It sometimes provides new information, often cajoles, and always attempts to persuade. In addition to selling messages, it encodes cultural values and social ideals. And depending on your point of view, it is a positive or negative force in society and the economy.” (O’Barr: 2005:14)
This is what I'm going to talk about today

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Self regulation or laws?

Is advertising in all its forms important in the name of free speech?

The question is whether half-naked women with sexual yearning glances displayed everywhere in the public space is a right that we must uphold, ie it is ultimately about freedom of expression? Or is it, instead, as some media critical network claim, the pollution of the public space?
Advertising effects

- Long-term ⇒ short term
- Direct ⇒ indirect
- Individual ⇒ group
- Intentional ⇒ accidental
Sexist advertising

- In Sweden - 38% of the complaint is about gender discrimination

- Sweden feel they have come a long way in these matters - we even sometimes perceive us as the best in the world

- We have a feminist government!!!
Sexist advertising defined...

• 1. Advertising that portrays women or men as mere sex objects and may be considered offensive (objectifying advertising).

• 2. Advertising that shows a stereotypical view of gender roles and thereby produces women or men in a derogatory manner (stereotype advertising).

• 3. Advertising in any other degrading manner is evident gender discrimination for women or men.
Where are the broads?

• The Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP)

• Who makes the News?
  1281 newspapers, television and radio stations in 108 countries.
  The material covers 16,734 news reports

• 20769 reporters
  35,543 news subjects (sources)
Who appears in the news

24 percent women

76 percent of men
When women appear in the news, it is as…

- Ordinary citizens 44%
- Expert 20%
- Spokesperson 19%
- 81% of spokespersons and 80% of the experts in the news are male
Popular culture and advertising

• Here are all the broads

• A majority of women who are constantly smiling, slender and attractive, and almost never does anything more than possibly applying some kind of cream on the skin.
Men in advertising

- Is active, they do something - off-piste skiing, sailing or sitting at the office
- They are often used together with other and they always seem to have so much fun…
Women in advertising

• Is often alone
• Have a direct oncoming eye - which gives the viewer a feeling of being seen and acknowledged. The look is both contact striving and introspective.
• Women in advertising are to be considered and different from the dominant male gaze that advocates a heterosexual identity.
Slim, sexy women and strong muscular men

- What is attractive and desirable is different obviously between different cultures and periods.

- Popular culture and advertising contribute ideas about the perfect body in a given epoch.
Do beauty ideals affect us in general and youth in particular?

• Research shows that children and young people who are unsure of their identity probably in greater extent internalize advertising beauty ideals - and this may contribute to greater mental illness among the young who are already weak.
Let's go back to ...

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But underwear advertising should be allowed to show nudity?

• Couple of years ago the Swedish Advertisers Association posed the following question in an ad:

• Should politicians' personal views decide how much skin that may appear in advertising?
Lektion nr. 59
Tåmj honom milt.
Idag 20% rabatt på valfri Wolfordstrumpa

sensi
UNDERWEAR

Grottningatan 11, Helsingborg
Advertising for socks

• The question is whether the fact that two men - fully clothed - in the background is justified to promote the product?
Is it relevant

• Yes, advertising is part of our culture
• The advertising need not of course be subversive but you can make a difference
Ica - Advertising
This advertising

• Have had an enormous impact on not only people with Down syndrome but for all people with some form of disability

• The importance of visibility with respect for people, regardless of gender or ability
Thus, one can make a difference…

• And it matters to how we see ourselves and each other