

Commodification of Sexuality in Advertising Representation

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Abstract

Advertising is part of the overall form of marketing that aims to influence consumers to do things according to the message content of the advertisement. Women with all their sexual attractiveness are a very important part in advertising. Social statuses can be produced through advertisements distributed through various media, print media, audio media and films, statuses can be constructed based on gender, class, race and sex. Ads for AX Indonesian ad-heaven on earth (full version) persuade consumers from the sexual domain by distributing stimulation, seduction, temptation, pleasure, passion, desire or lust without limits, demonstrating the presentation of the commodification of women. This research aims to understand how signs are arranged to be communicated to the public and how the message structure commodifies women. The method used in this research is semiotics combined with a feminist perspective. The practical benefit to be gained is that advertising should pay attention to ethical dimensions and values in every effort to engineer advertisements for a product, instead of relying solely on the effectiveness of persuasive messages just for the sake of profit.

Keywords: advertising, commodification, sexuality

1. INTRODUCTION

Advertisements with all kinds of product types offered in attractive packaging are present in people's daily lives, advertisements appear and represent themselves in various communication media such as advertisements on television, magazines, newspapers, the internet, and so on. Advertising is a translation of the English word advertising, advertising itself comes from the Latin word ADVERTERE, which means diverting attention. Thus advertising can be interpreted as a tactic to attract the audience through various strategies, and evaluate them, so that they can analyze the effectiveness between the source and the decorer [1].

The appeal communicated by advertising includes emotional appeal, rational, sexual appeal, fear appeal. This attraction tends to influence consumers in consuming a product. Sex appeals are becoming very common in advertising nowadays [2]. Therefore, [3] emphasized that advertising depicts women more as sexual objects than as women. Objectively expressed sexual messages communicate to women that if they use a certain shampoo, whitening cream, or body lotion, they are more likely to be liked by handsome men. Similarly, advertising has been identified as an important contributor to the formation of gender stereotype identities and the reinforcement of sexist cultures in society.

The commodification of sex through advertising has been going on for a long time. According to Tom Reichert, a professor of communication and advertising, marketers' efforts in the West to promote products by utilizing sexual images have occurred since the 1850s (Disc Communications, edition 290-04/2008, p. 22), the same thing was expressed by M Suyanto in "The World's Top Television Advertising Design Strategy", also mentions that sex appeal has an initial attraction and can last for a long period of time. Sex appeal can enhance message

point recall and emotional response. Sex appeal usually uses attractive models and provocative poses [4].

Commodification is the transformation of goods, services, ideas and people into commodities or trade objects [5]. Another definition is a process in which material objects, services, and ideas become commodities that are traded in the market.

Based on the phenomena presented above, the researcher intends to analyze the Indonesian version of the Axe advertisement aired by the internet media YouTube, namely the Axe Indonesian advertisement ad-heaven on earth (full version). This advertisement is the object of research because it presents the process of commodification of women. Through the advertisement of Axe Indonesian ad-heaven on earth (full version), the audience is continuously given knowledge and awareness that the image of women is only to satisfy men's needs and that women are portrayed as messengers to increase the selling power of Axe products. The existence of sensual women in advertisements reinforces the negative stereotypes of women which are depicted as objects to be traded or as commodities.

Several previous studies on the existence of sensuality in advertising can be examined as follows. First, research conducted by Ratu Nadya Wahyuningratna with the title Representation of Female Sensuality in New Era Boots Ads on Television, which specifically discusses the concept of commodification of New Era Boots ads using sex appeal in attracting the attention of consumers who arouse sexual suggestions by showing some the vital body fragment exclusively, and it represents the sensuality of the female image. The results of the study show that the commodification concept of New Era Boots advertisements uses sex appeal in attracting the attention of consumers who arouse sexual suggestions by showing several vital body fragments exclusively, and this represents the sensuality of the female image.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study aims to determine the commodification of women's sexual attractiveness in Indonesian ax ad-heaven on earth (full version) advertisements broadcast on YouTube. The research method used is a qualitative method in the form of Ferdinand de Saussure's Semiotics analysis method. The research subject in this research is the advertisement for ax Indonesian ad-heaven on earth (full version) on YouTube, while the object of research is the exploitation of women's bodies in advertisements for ax Indonesian ad-heaven on earth (full version). The researcher uses semiotic analysis from Ferdinand de Saussure to discuss about the study of signs in texts. The sign includes two aspects, namely the signifier and the signified. The signifier can be understood as a physical form/form. Markers can be in the form of sounds, pictures, letters, visuals and the like. While the signified is the concept of what is marked. The relationship between the two is "made up" (arbitrary), which means there is no natural relationship between the signifier and the signified. Thus semiotics is a tripartite relation, namely a sign which is a combination of the signifier and the signified.

To find out the elements of women's sex appeal contained in the Silk Condom Ads of the Mantap Mantap Makin Mesra Version. After that the researcher analyzed the meaning of connotations, denotations, and myths in the data that had been obtained. The results of the study show that the packaging with a sexual smell from women is packaged in such a way as to attract the attention of the audience. The snippets from several scenes shown in this advertisement represent the commodification that occurs both in Denotative Meanings, Connotative Meanings, to Myths, describing the reality that women's beauty and body shape are still being exploited and perpetuating patriarchal concepts that have long been conceptualized hierarchically in society. This is done solely to get the attention of potential consumers which ultimately has an impact on the decision to buy the product.

Operationally, in this study semiotics is practiced by conducting a study of the signs contained in the ax Indonesian ad-heaven on earth advertisement (full version). The

advertisements studied are placed as text which is a knitting of various signs. The signs in the form of pictures, writing, and sound are taken from the shoots and scenes in the ax Indonesian ad-heaven on earth advert (full version). At the research results stage, the researcher will convey denotative and connotative meanings, which will then be followed by a discussion that analyzes research findings with intertextuality with various relevant theories.

3. RESULTS and DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

The meaning of the advertisement ax Indonesian ad-heaven on earth (full version) is discussed in terms of denotation (primary signification) and connotation (secondary signification).

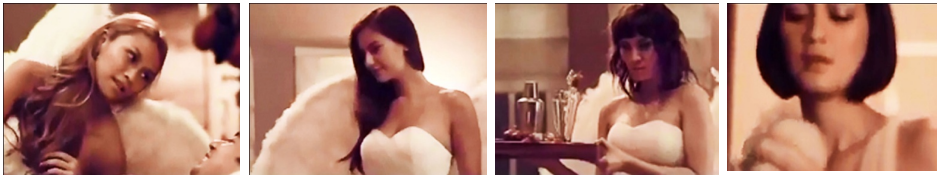
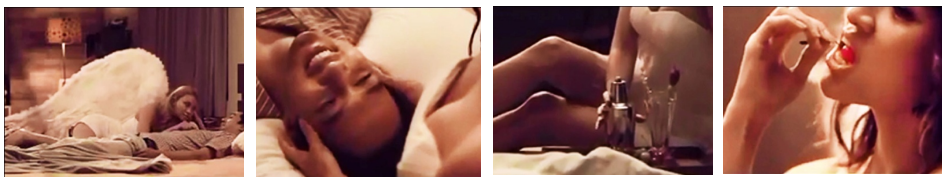


Figure 1. Indonesian axe advertisement ad-heaven on earth (full version)

Meaning of Denotation: the image markers above are four women who represent beautiful angels with various appearances of long hair and short hair with white skin and slim bodies in white clothes with minimal clothing and low cleavage.

Connotation meaning: a woman with a beautiful category is a woman with clean white skin and slim body. The four women in the advertisement for the Indonesian ax ad-heaven on earth (full version) wear all-white and minimal clothing with low cleavage and lower garments above the knee, further emphasizing sexiness and beauty. All the elements attached to a woman's body in advertisements signify the image of an ideal and perfect woman that men desire

Myth, the presence of women in the media is nothing but a sexual object for men. Women seem to be considered inferior and have no value in the media. This is because many media use women's bodies to attract attention and use them as commodities. Women are required to look perfect in the sense of having a slim body, long hair, and a beautiful white face. In this case, it is clear that the media shows how commodities exist in advertising.



Gambar 2. iklan axe Indonesian ad-heaven on earth (full version)

Meaning of Denotation: sharp gaze, massage, touch, intimacy, bite shows activities that contain elements of sexual exploitation.

Connotation Meaning: expression, attitude, behavior that offers sensuality/sexuality that triggers male sexual imagination.

Myth: sexual attraction has a vital role in the process of commodification. Sexual attraction produces better memories if the advertising execution has the right relationship to the advertised product. This commodification process can be seen from the women's bodies which are exploited in such a way and described both physically and non-physically. Physical exploitation is shown by exposing several body parts such as lips, shoulders, and body language

which supports the formation of a sexy image. Whereas non-physically it can be seen by presenting women in various characters such as easily seduced, sexy, and aggressive [6].

3.1 Discussion

This ad clearly creates an image of a frame and an image of competition for women. Frame image is an image that places a woman physically as beautiful, long-haired, soft, and various other feminine characteristics and social image is an image that presents a woman as beautiful, attractive, and graceful so that she deserves respect in society [7].

Frame image can be seen from the beauty of the face, body beauty, and attractive physical appearance. Meanwhile, the image of the contest can be seen from the sensual body language with clothes that are generally tight and open. Ax's ad visualization is part of a series of product positioning, namely marketing communications, selection of creative and media strategies, Ax's ad visualization including consideration of the presentation of the dominant role of women in the show. Representation like this is also called Fethistic scopophilia, which is showing beautiful women as objects and shown simultaneously to male actors and also to the audience, when women's bodies are represented only as objects in a spectacle. Again, this is a way of representation meant for male actors in films and for male moviegoers, the female character is shown for them.

The research led to findings where female figures tend to have their dignity reduced because of their behavior, especially in terms of the clothes they wear and the gestures they display. This is of course an act that violates the moral ethics of society, violates the ethical standards of advertising in Indonesia, so that it can be categorized as violating legal ethics because of the pornographic scenes in the advertisement. Furthermore, sex is presented as something that is most important in a relationship, and the greatness of the relationship is then linked to the ability of Axe products to attract and enhance sensuality that makes men become the charm of women. Verbal expressions in the ad contain connotative meanings that are inappropriate to be conveyed in public spaces. This of course has ruled out ethics in promoting the product.

4. CONCLUSION

The meaning of the representation of female sensuality in the advertisement for ax Indonesian ad-heaven on earth (full version) is related to the meaning of the denotation, namely in the form of a negative representation of female sensuality. Through the signs contained in this advertisement, it shows how the exploitation of women's bodies is. Women are only used as objects of view for men. The meaning of the representation of female sensuality in the advertisement for ax Indonesian ad-heaven on earth (full version) is related to the connotative meaning, namely in the form of a negative representation of female sensuality. Through meaning in advertisements by showing women displaying expressions, attitudes, gestures that offer sensuality/sexuality to trigger sexual imagination in men. The meaning of the representation of female sensuality in the advertisement of ax Indonesian ad-heaven on earth (full version) is related to myth, namely in the form of a negative representation of female sensuality. Through messages in the form of word choice that most men want it to be easy to get a lover, even though in reality men often find it difficult to get a lover. So the aggressive behavior of women in this ad creates the impression of sensuality from women to make a profit. Because women have a big role and are believed to be able to strengthen advertising messages.

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