REAL LIFE. REAL BEAUTY. baby Dove

#BeautifullyRealMoms

Advertising

Dove – 'Beautifully Real Moms' campaign

Overview

Dove launched the 'Campaign for Real Beauty' in 2004. The campaign was about embracing and celebrating differences. The aim was to empower women and make them more confident. In 2017 Dove launched the Real Moms campaign that focused on celebrating mothers on their personal and unique journey through motherhood. The concept of the campaign is centred around challenging stereotypes placed on motherhood and the message it aims to communicate is that the 'perfect mother' is a construction and only real ones exist.

Campaign objectives:

- To launch a product line that is able to compete in a competitive market where Johnson and Johnson have a majority market share (63.7%) with J&J Baby and Aveeno Baby products.

- To empower mothers.

- To unite women on their journey through parenthood.

- To enable 'real people' to see themselves represented in advertisements.

- To challenge seemingly 'perfect' images of women and 'picture perfect' babies and young children, and target 'everyday' millennial mothers.

Here are some key points to consider when studying this text. There is a variety of links at the end of this worksheet used to support the construction of this resource including references that can support the teaching of the following:

Media language

Codes, conventions and the communication of meaning

Here you should consider how the advertisement is an example of consumer branding. The advert uses codes and conventions from the genres of beauty and lifestyle to appeal and communicate meaning to the intended audience of millennial mothers. It uses technical and persuasive conventions to communicate specific messages about the range of products and encourage the target audience to consume them.

The text is clearly identifiable as an advert through the use of technical conventions. You should explore the use of:

- Shot type – wide shot is used with deep focus photography to provide the audience with multiple signifiers to read. The shot type makes the audience feel as though they are in the kitchen with the mother and her children, this personalises the mother and gives the advert emotional appeal.

- Slogan – 'Real life. Real Beauty'. Repetition of the word 'real' ensures the advertisement is seen to depart from the use of celebrities and models.

- Logo – Dove is an established, recognised and trusted brand who have championed diversity and inclusivity.

- Location – shot in a kitchen the advert departs from typical studio settings and constructs realism.

- Typeface/font – sans serif fonts are often used because they appear impactful, bold, contemporary and neutral.

- Costume and make-up – the choices and decisions made help construct realism and connote everyday real life.

- Anchorage – the written text amplifies the message of 'real'.

- Intertextuality – the advertisement references the wider campaign which adopted a multiplatform approach.

- Hashtag – appeals to the digital native. It encourages audience interactivity and participation.

- Composition and layout – the slogan and brand name are in the top left third of the frame which is where the eye naturally falls first. The hashtag is positioned in the lower right third, the last thing the audience will see. The primacy and recency effect concludes that audiences tend to remember the first (primacy) and last (recency) thing they encounter.

- The absence of a product image subverts typical genre conventions and demonstrates how Dove are selling a lifestyle rather than an individual product.

The text uses persuasive techniques to sell the product range. You should explore the use of:

- Persuasive language – the word 'real' constructs realism and departs from the luxury lifestyles depicted in a lot of consumer branding advertisements. The use of the adverb 'beautifully' makes 'real' appear attractive and challenges the stereotype of beauty perpetuated through celebrity culture.

- Lifestyle – the advertisement challenges the concept of privilege and luxury and makes the brand appear affordable and appealing thus subverting typical genre conventions.

- Beauty appeal – the advertisement focuses on natural and raw beauty.

The use of the hashtag 'BeautifullyRealMoms' signifies the impact of developing technologies on media language. You could discuss the inclusion of this element and how it will appeal to the digital native because it makes them feel part of a group and gives the campaign a sense of personalisation. The hashtag invites mothers to participate in the campaign, subsequently empowering them, by enabling them to upload images of themselves. This technique not only unites women but also helps Dove's campaign go viral and aid their global reach.

Intertextuality

You could explore the way the advertisement references the wider campaign through the use of the slogan and hashtag. You should explore the multiplatform approach that the campaign adopted and the recurrent elements of media language that were used.

Beautifully Real Moms (sites.wpp.com)

The campaign consisted of:

- a 360 degree photo library

- a 10 second video

- print campaign that focused on six real mothers from a variety of different backgrounds

- audience participation via the hashtag.

You could explore how the 'Beautifully Real Moms' campaign fits into Dove's overarching campaign that starts a conversation about the stereotype of the perfect mother.

Is there a 'Perfect Mum'? (dove.com)

Media representations

Ideology and viewpoints:

Some key ideologies and viewpoints that can be explored when studying this text include:

- consumerism

- celebrity culture

- feminism

- multiculturalism.

Stereotypes

You should explore the stereotype of the mother. Arguably the media has constructed a societal stereotype of the mother as a woman who cooks, cleans, cares for her child and is happy and fulfilled in this role. In a digital world the 'good' mother has been represented as an individual who is calm, loving and organised. Her children are well behaved, polite and obedient. The advertisement reinforces elements of this stereotype through the location of the kitchen – reinforcing domesticity and represents the mother as the primary caregiver but it also challenges it. The images depict a chaotic kitchen, children throwing breakfast cereal around and a mother trying to maintain control.

You should also explore gender stereotypes. Women as domesticated, dressed in stereotypical clothing, wearing make-up and being nurturing and caring. The advertisement challenges this by depicting a woman in an oversized t-shirt, wearing no make-up and looking stressed.

However, the representation here is positive because it normalises this situation – the children look happy and cared for – the fridge is full.

Social groups

The advertisement represents **women** positively by challenging stereotypes associated with beauty. Glamour and luxury are stripped away, signifying that being natural is beautiful, and is challenging the concept of perfection. The sole use of a woman in the advertisement reinforces women as the primary caregiver.

Social class can be explored. The mise-en-scene connotes a middle class lifestyle and breaks down societal barriers by suggesting that the middle class can lead chaotic and unorganised lives – a representation that has often been associated with working and lower classes.

Ethnicity is represented positively, celebrating and reflecting a multicultural society. The advertisement represents an often under-represented group – an Asian family and challenges the historical dominance of white representation in beauty advertisements.

Audience positioning and response

Using a woman/mother in the advertisement is a deliberate choice to target a female demographic. The advertisement is part of a campaign that uses women from a variety of social groups in an attempt to unite women and to see themselves in advertisements.

The advert can be seen as feminist because it challenges stereotypes of beauty perfection and suggests that there is no perfect way to parent. Moreover, it challenges the belief that mothers are constantly happy and rejoice in parenthood. The lack of celebrity endorsement connotes that Dove products are for the everyday woman.

Media contexts

Cultural context:

- We can argue that the rise of and power of celebrity culture has had a significant impact on the ideology of motherhood.

- Millennials are digital natives, and it can be argued that they have been subjected to a continuous stream of celebrity images that perpetuate idealistic body image, and more recently an influx of celebrity and influencer mothers who post images, reels and videos of their picture perfect families, postpartum bodies and their weight loss journeys and offer parenting advice.

- WPPed Cream conducted research that found that millennial mothers feel under pressure to be perfect, that what they are doing isn't good enough and they feel unable to cope at times.

- More recently there has been a rise in social media accounts and podcasts set up to challenge the concept of perfect parenting and idealised body image – a counter culture. Many of these can be found on Instagram.

- Dove are arguably capitalising on this, promoting consumerist purchases of products that seemingly appeal to the everyday mother by acknowledging their insecurities and empowering them.

Social context:

- According to recent research mothers are still the primary caregiver for their children despite a change in societal attitudes regarding parenting.

- The research suggested that just under half of parents don't think that fathers are held to the same standards by society as mothers.

  [Women still primary carers in most households](yourmoney.com) (yourmoney.com)

- The Office for National Statistics (ONS) found that during the first few weeks of lockdown women were carrying out, on average, two thirds more of childcare duties per day than men.

- For families with children under 5 ONS data suggested that mothers/women spent much more time on childcare than men.

  [Parenting in lockdown: Coronavirus and the effects on work-life balance](ons.gov.uk) (ons.gov.uk)

- It can be concluded that while societal attitudes towards parenting are changing, mothers are still typically the primary caregiver.

Advertising

River Island – 'Smooth Moves Only' campaign

Overview

The 'Labels Are For Clothes' campaign, created by Studio Blvd, is a diverse campaign that features people of varying ages, gender, ethnicity and abilities. The aim is to challenge societal and global stereotypes by featuring under and often misrepresented groups. River Island wanted to show that their clothes are for everyone, and this is arguably one of their most inclusive campaigns to date. Subsequently, River Island collaborated with the anti-bullying charity 'Ditch The Label' and created a series of inclusive t-shirts and sweatshirts. **#LabelsAreForClothes x Ditch The Label** (riverisland.com)

Campaign objectives:

- To challenge outdated stereotypes.

- To promote inclusivity and diversity.

- To celebrate individuality and not define individuals by their ability or stereotype.

Here are some key points to consider when studying this text. There is a variety of links at the end of this worksheet used to support the construction of this resource with references that can support the teaching of the following:

Media language

Codes, conventions and the communication of meaning

Here you should consider how the advertisement is an example of consumer branding. The advert uses codes and conventions from the genre of fashion to appeal and communicate meaning to the intended audience. It uses technical and persuasive conventions to communicate specific messages about the range of products and encourage the target audience to consume them.

The text is clearly identifiable as an advert through the use of technical conventions. You should explore the use of:

- Shot type – a medium long shot is used so that the audience can view the model's outfit but also see that they are a wheelchair user.

- Composition and layout – the brand name and logo are in the lower third of the frame which is the last thing the audience will see. The slogan and hashtag are centre framed signifying the importance of the message but not detracting from the model's facial expression. The model's eyeline falls in the top third of the frame – empowering him and also creating direct address with the audience.

- Slogan – 'Smooth moves only' can be read as the individual effortlessly moving through life. He is not defined or restricted by his disability. According to River Islands official Instagram post 'We're introducing @jordan.luce, there's one stereotype Jordan is happy to perpetuate; he's French and super romantic with it. ❤️ Born with Congenital Pseudarthrosis of the right tibia, he relies on a wheelchair when walking gets too much, but feels just as confident in and out of his chair. 🙌' riverisland (instagram.com)

- Logo – River Island is an established, recognised and global brand who are celebrating diversity and inclusivity.

- Location – shot in a studio the advert places emphasis on the model and the red background carrying connotations of love and passion which is in keeping with River Island's description of Jordan Luce as 'super romantic'.

- Typeface/font – sans serif fonts are often used because they appear impactful, bold, contemporary and neutral.

- Costume and make-up – the choices and decisions made help demonstrate that fashion has no restrictions – individuals can be fashionable regardless of their ability.

- Anchorage – the written text amplifies the message of inclusivity.

- Intertextuality – the advertisement references the wider campaign which adopted a multiplatform approach.

- Hashtag – appeals to the digital native. It encourages audience interactivity and participation.

- The product being advertised is the clothing, but the anchorage suggests that River Island are selling more than clothes, they are trying to challenge limiting stereotypes.

The text uses persuasive techniques to sell the product range. You should explore the use of:

- Persuasive language – the word 'smooth' carries connotations of being suave and polished. This will persuade the audience to purchase clothing from River Island because it can transform them.

- Lifestyle – the advertisement challenges stereotypes and suggests that River Island clothing is for everyone – there are no restrictions, everyone can be fashionable.

- Beauty appeal – the advertisement focuses on empowerment and celebrates the individual.

The use of the hashtag 'Labelsareforclothes' signifies the impact of developing technologies on media language. You could discuss the inclusion of this element and how it will appeal to the digital native because it makes them feel part of a group and gives the campaign a sense of personalisation. The hashtag enables individuals to participate in the campaign, subsequently empowering them, by enabling them to upload images of themselves, loved ones or friends. This technique helps the campaign go viral and aid their global reach. You can explore some of the audience uploads on Instagram and Twitter.

Intertextuality

You could explore the way the advertisement references the wider campaign through the use of the slogan and hashtag. You should explore the multiplatform approach that the campaign adopted and the recurrent elements of media language that were used. The campaign consisted of:

- print campaign

- social media – River Island announced the campaign on their official Twitter account @riverisland on 17th September 2018.

- YouTube videos. An example can be found here [Autumn/Winter 2018 Collection | Labels Are For Clothes | River Island](youtube.com) (youtube.com)
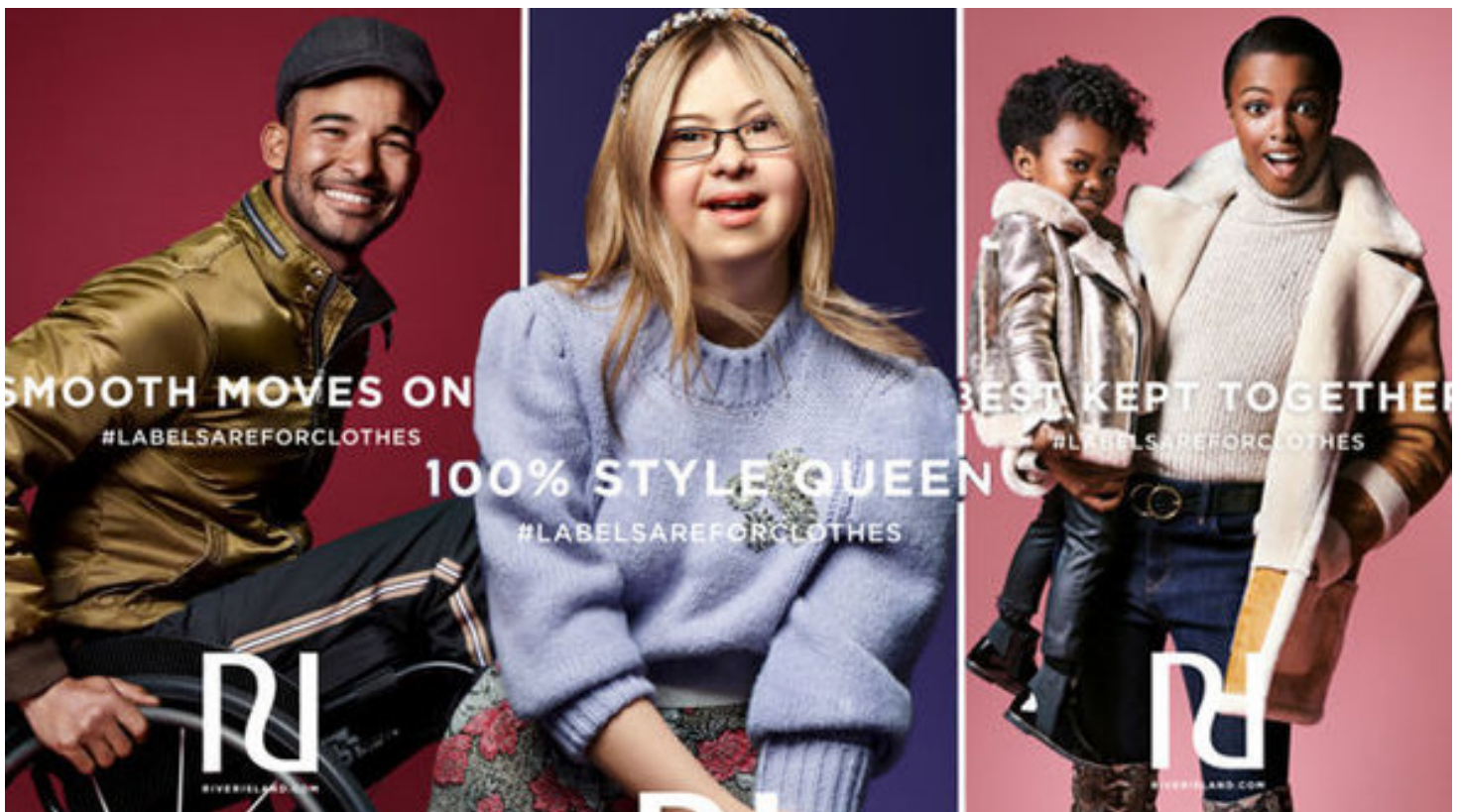
Media representations

Ideology and viewpoints:

Some key ideologies and viewpoints that can be explored when studying this text include:

- consumerism
- celebrity culture
- ableism
- individualism
- multiculturalism.

Stereotypes

You should explore the stereotypes associated with disability. Often people with disabilities are marginalised and represented as inferior, weak and vulnerable. Individuals with disabilities have historically been absent or under-represented in fashion advertisements.

The River Island advertisement challenges this stereotype but gives a platform to people with disabilities and throughout the campaign there are a variety of disabilities foregrounded. For example one of the models featured in the wider campaign has Down's syndrome.

Jordan Luce is an ex-pro athlete, so the advertisement uses a positive stereotype of disabled sports persons.

Social groups

The 'Smooth Moves Only' advert uses mise-en-scene to positively represent people with disabilities. Jordan Luce is shown to be happy – he is smiling and the composition of the shot, which creates direct address, enables an emotional connection to be made with the audience.

The advertisement also represents racial diversity and celebrates multiculturalism. Moreover, Jordan Luce is French which helps the brand appeal globally. France has also been renowned for its fashion and this value transfers to Jordan Luce and subsequently River Island.

You can explore more about the model Jordan Luce here [Jordan Luce's Guide To Cuffing | 100% Smooth Moves](#) (riverisland.com)

Audience positioning and response

Using Jordan Luce deliberately targets men and also people with disabilities. The advert challenges stereotypes of white, able bodied patriarchy. The advert is positioning the audience as liberal and progressive with a belief in equality and diversity. Ultimately it is a consumer branding advertisement that is encouraging consumption of products from River Island, using positive and non-limiting representations to achieve this.

Media contexts

Cultural context:

- Celebrity endorsement and models with a specific body image have often dominated fashion advertisements.

- Millennials are digital natives, and it can be argued that they have been subjected to a continuous stream of celebrity images that perpetuate idealistic body image. Subsequently audience members often feel under pressure to achieve what are arguably unrealistic goals.

- More recently there has been a rise in social media accounts and podcasts set up to challenge idealistic body image and beauty with individuals calling out the editing of images.

- People with disabilities are being represented more in media texts. An encouraging number of television dramas and films star people with disabilities.

Social context:

- Research concludes that imagery in fashion advertisements is largely idealised and when represented can have a negative impact on individuals and their self-esteem.

- Research suggests that fashion advertisements can have an impact on consumers and can impact expectations and beliefs. Research also suggests that brands can have a positive impact when they avoid harmful stereotypes. [The Impact of Fashion Advertisements on Consumers](#) (digitalcommonsyant.edu)

Advertising
Shelter campaign

Overview

The Shelter advertising campaign, created by Amplify on a not for profit basis, focuses on the distress caused to people due to poor housing conditions and homelessness. The aim is to raise awareness of the issue and to persuade people who are facing a housing crisis to seek help. The Drum quotes Kay Boycott (Director of campaigns, policy and communications at Shelter): '*In these tough economic times, more and more people across the country are struggling to keep their heads above water and are in desperate need of our help*.'

Campaign objectives:

- To challenge outdated stereotypes of homelessness.

- To raise awareness of issues of homelessness and poor quality housing and conditions.

- To encourage individuals to seek early help and advice.

- To encourage donations to the charity.

Here are some key points to consider when studying this text. There is a variety of links at the end of this worksheet used to support the construction of this resource with references that can support the teaching of the following:

Media language

Codes, conventions and the communication of meaning

Here you should consider how the advertisement is an example of charity advertising. The advert uses codes and conventions that differ from consumer branding advertisements to appeal and communicate meaning to the intended audience. It uses technical and persuasive conventions to communicate specific messages about the charity to encourage individuals to seek help, donate and raise awareness of the issues of homelessness and poor quality housing.

The text is clearly identifiable as an advert through the use of technical conventions. You should explore the use of:

- Shot type – a big close up of each individual creates direct address and reduces proximity with the audience. This enables the audience to read their facial expression, creating empathy and melancholy.

- Composition and layout – the brand name and logo are in the lower third of the frame which is the last thing the audience will see. Similarly the website is placed in the lower third encouraging the audience to visit the website after they have consumed the content of the advertisement. The rhetorical questions are placed over the face of each individual signifying the magnitude of this problem in their lives. A search bar is clearly visible appealing to the digital native audience.

- Typeface/font – sans serif fonts are often used because they appear impactful and bold connoting the impact homelessness / poor housing conditions are having on the individual.

- Costume and make-up – the lack of make-up and costume makes the advert appear raw helping to create sympathy and empathy in the audience.

- Colour palette – the use of red and black is impactful but also signifies the danger and misery caused to the individuals by the situation.

- Anchorage – the written text amplifies the message of homelessness being caused by a variety of situations and circumstances.

- Intertextuality – the advertisement could be read as a triptych where each advertisement uses media language in a similar way to compound the message.

The text uses persuasive techniques to sell the product range. You should explore the use of:

- Persuasive language – the language used creates personalisation and sutures the reader into the position of the individual in crisis.

- Rhetorical question – the advertisement urges the audience to consider the individual circumstances. This technique elicits sympathy from the audience.

- Fear – the use of three individuals from different social groups suggests that homelessness is non-discriminatory and can happen to anyone, including the audience.

The advertisement demonstrates the impact that digital technology has had on media language. The reader is directed to the website and encouraged to search online for further information and advice. Moreover, the reader is provided with details to text a donation – acknowledging the convenience created by technological convergence.

Intertextuality

You could explore the advertisement as a triptych. You should explore the multiplatform approach that the campaign adopted and the recurrent elements of media language that were used. The campaign consisted of:

- print campaign

- social media

- Shelter has a YouTube channel that has a variety of advertisements and short films that use similar elements of media language to the print campaign. youtube.com/@shelteruk

Media representations

Ideology and viewpoints:

Some key ideologies and viewpoints that can be explored when studying this text include:

- social inequality

- belief in welfare

- individualism.

Stereotypes

You should explore the stereotypes associated with homelessness. Often people facing homelessness are misrepresented. There are some prevalent stereotypes associated with homelessness:

- white men

- criminals

- lazy and choose not to work

- people are homeless due to addiction.

Often the stereotypes blame the individual for their situation.

The Shelter advertisement challenges these stereotypes by featuring three people from different social groups with different circumstances and anxieties.

The advert suggests that homelessness can occur to anyone, at any point in their lives.

Social groups

The advertisement features men and women. There is racial ambiguity connoting that homelessness can affect people from different ethnic groups. The advertisement implies, through the use of the pronoun 'we', that families are affected by homelessness.

These deliberate choices mean the advert can appeal to a wider audience because they can identify with a social group affected thus making the advertisement more personal and appealing to individuals to donate or the situation resonates with them, and they will seek help and advice from Shelter.

Audience positioning and response

The advertisement positions the audience to have a belief in welfare and understand that homelessness can happen to anyone for a variety of different reasons – dispelling common myths and challenging stereotypes. It positions the audience to be empathetic and help those less fortunate than themselves. However, the advertisement can also create identification and encourage individuals to seek help and advice.

Media contexts

Cultural context:

- The advertisement uses conventions of consumer branding that audiences are familiar with, to encourage the audience to consume the messages provided and encourage donation.

Social context:

- Social anxieties surrounding economic poverty.

- Social anxieties surrounding family circumstances that can lead to homelessness.

- Concerns surrounding rogue landlords, social housing and social care.

- Issues of social inequality and asking those who are in a position of privilege to donate and help.

The response of the audience will depend on their individual background and experience.

Sources

Beautifully Real Moms (sites.wpp.com)

Baby Dove - "Baby Dove Beautifully Real Moms" (adforum.com)

The Best Fonts for Advertising (colourgraphics.com)

The good, the bad, and the ugly of the Dove Campaign for Real Beauty (in-mind.org)

River Island: Labels Are For Clothes by Studio Blvd (thedrum.com)

Twitter is LOVING River Island's diverse ad campaign (cosmopolitan.com)

#LabelsAreForClothes x Ditch The Label (riverisland.com)

River Island ads (commarts.com)

Shelter launches new advertising campaign with Amplify to drive people to seek advice earlier (thedrum.com)

Common Myths and Stereotypes of Homelessness (my.neighbor.org)

Cunningham, Louisa (2019) *Media Studies: Component1: Media Messages*, Hodder Education, London.

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