Gender in Advertising



When it comes to representations of gender, advertisers often fall back on well established gender stereotypes.

ACTIVITY ONE

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1. Describe how gender is represented in the above advertisements. When describing these representations, make sure you refer to the use of codes such as written language, clothing, colour and body language.

2. Find ten representations of gender from current magazine advertisements and describe how these representations are constructed referring to appropriate codes.

3. What differences and similarities are there between these old advertisements and the modern advertisements you’ve examined?

4. According to Codes of Gender, men and women are often represented differently in advertising. Men are often shown alert and conscious of their surroundings, standing upright, eye open, bodies controlled, a mean expression on their faces, gripping things tightly in their hands, hands in pockets, serious and physically active. Women, on the other hand, are often shown touching themselves, caressing objects, lying on the floor, sitting in a bed or on a chair, with their eyes closed, not alert, confused, vulnerable, body contorted, dressed like children, holding an object or a man for support, as sexy or sexually available, seductive and playful. To what extent is this true of the advertisements you found?

GENDER STEREOTYPES IN ADVERTISING

Advertising frequently relies on gender stereotyping to sell products. The disparity between how men and women are represented in television commercials is brilliantly satirised in this [sketch by comedias Mitchell and Webb](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M9fFOelpE_8). Here are just a few examples of how men and women are often stereotyped in television advertisements.

**OBJECTIFICATION**

In advertisements targeted at men, women are often objectified to sell objects. This can be seen in advertisements like [*Spray More, Get More*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9StnvQfs6dE) and [Spot and Share](http://vimeo.com/36462173). In some cases, women are reduced to mere body parts like legs or breasts.

**THE HOMEMAKER.**

If you thought representations of women as homemakers are something from the 1950s, think again. Women are often represented as housewives and mothers whether scrubbing[germs from their child’s hands](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oDDeu6nBaAE) or [scrubbing toilet bowls](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L0YPsuZYZIY) despite an abundance of family members who could be helping.

**DOPEY DAD**

Or [dopey husband](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CvmrPW4kO_E). Or [dopey boyfriend](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sgMl-iZ3tZM). Being a man in a commercial means that you’re[pretty much clueless](http://youtu.be/vj3gJUAX7xQ) and [irresponsible](http://youtu.be/IW5SDMaxc6E), especially [when it comes to housework](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3y26RywKArM). This stereotype is brilliantly lampooned by Sarah Haskins in [Target Women: Doofy Husbands](http://current.com/shows/infomania/90569059_sarah-haskins-in-target-women-doofy-husbands.htm).

**ACTIVITY TWO**

1. Describe how gender is represented in these commercials referring, where appropriate, to codes such as clothing, colour, music, acting, camera techniques, mise en scene, editing, lighting and sound.

**Objectification:**[Spray More, Get More](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9StnvQfs6dE), [Spot and Share](http://vimeo.com/36462173), [Lynx](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EfeVEAZkJqM), [Godaddy Marketing](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nvpD_eQgTo).

**The Homemaker:** [Dettol](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oDDeu6nBaAE), [Magic Eraser](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L0YPsuZYZIY), [Ajax Spray and Wipe](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vsQbMexoU_E), [Shower Power Blossom](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QQlebN2SwfE), [NRL Women](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6mbx182oag).

**Dopey Dad:** [Vanish Napisan Power Shots](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CvmrPW4kO_E), [Glade Sense and Spray](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3y26RywKArM), [T-Mobile Smart Guys](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IW5SDMaxc6E), [Libra Invisible Pads](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sgMl-iZ3tZM).

FURTHER READING

[101 Shockingly Sexist Vintage Ads](http://thevine.com.au/life/thoughts/sexist-vintage-ads/gallery/0?utm_source=FD&utm_medium=rainbow&utm_campaign=sexist-ads)

[The 5 most insulting ways products are advertised to men](http://www.cracked.com/article_19758_the-5-most-insulting-ways-products-are-advertised-to-men.html)

Due Date March 23 direct to me or by March 25 via email