

Portfolio of writing

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Task One: Semiotic Analysis = 512 words

Task Two: Manifesto = 493 words

Task Three: Practice-based writing =

Task 1: Semiotic Analysis

For my Semiotic analysis, I am choosing to use the Heinz Ketchup advertisement image. This image reveals the cultural norms and values associated with a particular group of people. For people to decode signs, they must do it within their own sign system. Narratives are formed through different ways of seeing, and in this first task I will be deconstructing my chosen Heinz image, whilst referring to theories of semiotics and advertising. This will hopefully show the new ways of seeing.

Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols and their use of interpretation. It provides us with meaning and context, with the aim of heightening our intellectual encounter with a piece of visual communication and art.

Everyone has always been taught that everything has a sign which has a meaning. Signs are something which stands to somebody for something (Sander's pierce 1839-1914) although they are also interpreted with cultural significance and require decoding. Roland Barthes also developed a theory that unveiled signs as a vehicle of deception. For example, how wine can be considered a bourgeois activity whereas there are also health implications. How words and signs can generate concepts is the basics of a semiotic analysis.

In the book, Barthes and the empire of Signs (2001), Barthes makes basic representations between



(Fig.1, Heinz Ketchup Advertisement, May 2008)

daily life objects, e.g., the colour black represents death, while the colour green represents life. (2001, p.69). He works with the semiotic terms being denotation (the literal meaning of a sign or code) and Connotation (the symbolic or abstract meaning or intention created by a sign).

In the image to the left, the Heinz ketchup advert includes a signifier being the vivid red backdrop, a classic bottle of Heinz ketchup sliced with a tomato on top and white text which reads, "No one grows ketchup like

Heinz". This is a very simple advert, yet the combination of text and picture really reveals insight into the values of the targeted consumer. Ketchup is generally loaded with sugars and preservatives in order to make it more appealing to the consumer, however the bottle being sliced like a ripe tomato signifies health and freshness. Ketchup is also made in a factory and isn't "grown", however the text reads "no one grows ketchup like Heinz". This once again has been made out by the marketers that a sugary factory-made condiment is a whole, raw ingredient. This is not only giving a healthy connotation to ketchup, but they are perhaps trying to promote a healthier way of life. However, if the consumer isn't into a healthier way of living or preservatives the advert will not relate to them as much. A consumer may also see the bottle as a piece of art, as the design is in the form of a sliced ketchup bottle making it seen potentially as an abstract art piece.

The basics of semiotics can be applied to any image, as been shown above it can even be used in the biggest of advertisers in order to get an audience to think in different ways.

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List of figures:

Figure 1: Heinz sliced bottle, Heinz advertising campaign, 2008 Accessed:

<http://creativecriminals.com/print/heinz/sliced-bottle>

Task Two: Manifesto

1. Don't be afraid to try new things. New things create new hobbies and interests.
2. Don't give up after the first mistake, learn from it.
3. Treat everyone as you'd like to be treated.
4. If you can dream it, you can achieve it.
5. Listen to yourself. You're your own best advice.
6. Always try your best. Even if you don't love what you're doing.
7. Don't be afraid to start. If you never start you won't know what you can achieve.
8. Be confident in your work, confidence creates a better outlook.

How much do you believe in yourself? I believe that to create you must believe in yourself enough so that the outcomes are to the best of your ability. We create because we want a reaction, a reaction of anger, fear, love, admiration, peace or joy. The list goes on. To be confident in the work you are doing, not being afraid to start something new and if you dream it, you can achieve it are all manifestos that I believe in. People tend to give up at the first hurdle, making them not see what they are capable of or what they can achieve. My past experiences

when nearly giving up have been changed to trying again, and this is when I see my work is improved. Having faith in the tasks you achieve will make your outcomes a



(Fig.1, Squid game series 2020)

better standard which is something beneficial to everyone. These all connect as they are visions that people can have which can flourish into bigger and better opportunities. With a bit of motivation and help from other people your ideas can be whatever you make them. I think that if you believe in

yourself, you can achieve anything you put your mind to, but you must put in the work and stay committed. The series squid game was a massive hit on Netflix recently in 2021, but for nearly a decade no one wanted to even make it, yes, this is hard to believe, considering it was one of Netflix most watched series of all time, but to begin with the series seemed too brutal for television.

Wall street journal reported that the creator of squid game, Hwang Dong-hyuk first came up with the series a decade ago and no one was interested in it. He then had to sell his laptop in order to afford to try to make it recognised to the world. This is an example of trying time and time again even if your idea fails at the start. He didn't know if selling his laptop would help but he still took the risk and went with it. Then two years ago Netflix started producing the show and recently aired it for everyone to see. This relates back to my manifesto to never give up. No matter how much he got rejected, Hwang kept going and tried everything he could to get his dream work out to the world. If you carry on and don't give up, your ideas can develop into something better, that will then benefit you as you've come further than you thought you would.

In conclusion I think my manifestos are great advice to people who want to achieve to the best standard they can. It's aimed at an audience of success who are striving to beat the top without

giving up. I believe that people would benefit as they would now have the confidence to showcase their ideas rather than thinking they're not good enough.

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Task three: Reflective writing

As my chosen reflective writing task, I am using a drawing I completed for a starter task set for me by a university I attended previously. This task was to draw or create something I was passionate about and showcase my personality within it. I was stuck at first, as I think refining your personality into one image, drawing or object is a tricky task and as a creative person I had a lot of ideas that I was unsure which to go ahead with. As a child I always loved to dress up and the idea of putting different items of clothing together was something I wanted to do often. I think dolls were a major influence on how children wanted to be and wanted to look which I now think was a good and bad thing. I personally loved Bratz dolls as a child, I wanted everyone with all the different outfits and all the different hairstyles. When coming up with an idea for my task, Bratz was one of the top contenders of what I could draw. I wanted to make it more relevant to how people dress today and the type of things I'm interested in now, so I decided to use styles of

outfits from today and draw them onto the Bratz. The outfits relate to each Brat which gives the



dolls the different personalities. When drawing these Bratz I had to make sure each one kept the same colour theme throughout while showcasing the bold designs that I wanted to achieve. In the book (A designer's guide to finding inspiration and cultivating creativity) it talks about how "creative designers think in order to create unique and appropriate work for individual productions" and in this case, that's exactly what I had to do for my drawing of the Bratz doll. The image is what my outcome ended up like, a stylish

modern doll design with bright bold colours. The interpretation of this may be mixed from people as the Bratz doll was originally designed for children, but I have given the doll an older looking outfit to suit my likes and personality. When I created this design, I wanted the use of colour combinations to be like those of another brat designs so that it didn't look like a completely different doll. Having chosen the colour green I needed to make sure that I had relation in all the other colours I was using so that the design blended well together. I think the design is influential to people who see it especially people who enjoy fashion because it shows styles that can be worn and can also be used as a piece of art in fashion studios. I like the way it turned out as I think it shows my designs while keeping to the Bratz theme, but if I was to do this again, I would maybe have each outfit as a theme to a time in my life so that it had a bit more to do with my personality.

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