

Question: When will advertising embrace diversity, gender, and race equality, and start reflecting the real world? Critically discuss and respond. (Delivered by Martin Bush)

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Diversity is something that advertising needs more of to embrace more of people's lives. In advertising there are several types of ways to put your brand on the market and brands that can do this diversely, that is in a way can convey a message which speaks for everyone that is when a brand is a good advertiser, and they can be praised for it. Sometimes, Ads can be misleading and put out there to have a conversation start going through social media. Gender and Race are a problem with advertising as I have seen throughout the years which need to be changed. Many people do not understand that this is a problem, and it is not acceptable to ignore it. The pandemic although an effecting 1.5 years it has been, for brands advertising was solely based on the pandemic and it was easier to advertise with the pandemic for some brands but even then, you still need to be careful with what you advertise as the minority of people are sensitive to major politic subjects that can affect them in a diverse way like how people advertise wrongly against race, gender, diversity, etc. Even in 2021 things like this will still happen and no one will say anything until it is too late. We need to start embracing diversity in advertising in a respectful way.



Figure 1. Dove (2017)

In 2017, The campaign for 'Reverse Selfie' surfaced on the internet from Dove. Dove started a Self-Esteem project in 2004 and this was meant to be a part of it. It backfired to racism; Dove created an ad that does not convey a message this is diverse or particularly sensitive, it feels insensitive and as if the ad were rushed to be posted which made them not think through what they were doing and how the campaign could come across to other people. The ad conveys a message to young kids that it is better to be white and that they are teaching youth to be something they are not, as *Someone found "little evidence that black pupils were treated unfairly in lessons or that they were misallocated to ability groups; moreover, he re-examined the evidence of Rasim found in earlier studies and found it methodologically flawed"* (Silverman, D. 2011), I think people don't understand that black women or even black young people can be impacted in a way that can hurt them by ads like this. I think their intention for this ad was good. It was aimed to show the products' universal application for all skin types which came across in an awful way that became racist. The Advertisement looks unprofessional and does not look like good marketing for their brand image and their future campaigns. The campaign of course gained a lot of attention, the ad was supposed to be a part of a global strategy that will empower young people to go online and understand to fight back on social issues. They had good intentions, however, Dove needed to put their message across in a separate

way from what they produced. There has been a history of racism in soap ads. "Some noted the historical legacy of racism found in soap ads." (CBS News, 2017). This included back in 1884 when Pears' Soap did an advertisement for their soap using an image quite like doves and portraying that black skin is 'dirty' and white skin is 'clean'. "...insinuating she is Black from dirt." (Atlanta Black Star, 2014). Not only have dove done almost the same ad for their company, had they done their research it would've come up as already done 133 years ago ... however, in 1800s this was the 'norm', racism was at its peak and black people were and still are treated differently in the advertising industry and in all other industries too. "One has to ask, were the boys destined for Dove marketing kicking on at the pub instead of going to their History of Advertising lecture, the one with the 1884 Pears' soap ad PowerPoint?" (Scroll. in 2017).



Figure 2. Pear Soap (1884)



Figure 3. Fairy Soap (1875)

I think Fairy soap did an awful job for marketing in the 1870s, Scroll. In assumed it was a man who made the ad which I do agree on because in the 1800s women were sexualised to only cook, clean, and they still are and men to work. Genders still don't have equality, especially in this time.



Figure 4. NHS (2021)

This is an example of gender discrimination in present day. NHS, in 2021 posted this marketing on social media. It shows only women doing chores and looking after children and 1 man sitting on the sofa. People didn't react well to this which is understandable, I think it was irrational for them to post this and who ever made it shouldn't be making posters for the NHS anymore as the NHS is meant to be a safe place to help people but somewhere that discriminates against people of different genders and races. *"Reinforcing the view that it is a woman's job to homeschool, clean, do the childcare."* (Dr. Agarwal 2021). Boris Johnston insisted it *"does not reflect the government's view on women, which is why we have withdrawn it"* (Huffington Post, 2021). But I think that's an obvious answer to reply with for that type of marketing and he could have explained why it was made, who it was and what they did to resolve the problem instead of gaslighting and telling people the obvious.



Figure 5. Burger King (2021)

Furthermore, also in 2021, this tweet appeared on the internet from Burger King, I remember this day, Burger King got 'roasted' by a lot of brand names especially other fast-food chains, KFC Gaming replied with a meme about how they should at once remove the tweet.



Figure 6. KFC Gaming on Twitter (2021)

This tweet was posted on International Women's Day and was unironically sexist and was removed after 12 hours of being up. They went ahead to do 2 follow-up tweets (most likely to cover themselves or it was the plan already). The tweets were 'if they want to, of

course, Yet only 20% of chefs are women. We are on a mission to change the gender ratio in the restaurant industry by empowering female employees with the opportunity to pursue a culinary career. #IWD' and 'We are proud to be launching a new scholarship program which will help female Burger King employees pursue their culinary dreams!' I think the thought of encouraging women to pursue their careers is good, on the other hand, I know a lot of women who hate men telling them what to do which can cause controversy. *"The other discourse consisted of stories about gender, racial, and ethnic discrimination encountered by the superintendents and by other women in pursuing their careers"* (Silverman, D. 2011), as said, I think it is right to let women pursue their careers but not by listening to other people. I see where they are coming from, a good place however, I think this way of advertising a scholarship for women was not exactly the right way because, although they got the attention, they needed for the campaign they could have easily used a different method to advertise than using sexism, people reacted angrily to this, and it backfired to the point.



Figure 7, McCains (2017)

Figure 8. McCains (2019)



Figure 9, McCains (2020)

In 2017 (fig 4) McCains created this beautifully made ad and the ad celebrates diversity and culture. They did the 'We are family' Ad again in 2019 (fig 5). This campaign was one of the best in the past few years and in 2019 (fig 6) they made a covid related one called 'McCain Here's to Love' which has the same message because it shows how family can be anything and everything no matter the diversity. In the ad, they touch upon race, gender, disability, and diversity in families which shows the correct way to show love and appreciation for this problem of diversity in the 21st century. *"Existing social scientific literature on photography tends to distinguish between family, snapshot, amateur and professional photographers. Similarly, distinctions are made between home movies and professional videos. For photographers themselves, these categories and the distinctions between them can be important."* (Pink, Sarah. 2013). McCains seem to focus on the diversity of their ads and help reflect on what the real world is like they tell a story, which in my opinion is incredible to see a brand do this even if it is just for chips. The main point is that the message they convey is that family are family no matter who they are. Family is important and a diverse family is what the ads show. The videos are touching and have a meaning that no other video ad has shown before.



Figure 10, Benetton – Blanket (1990)

"Men are dogs and women are cats. Womens are from Venus and men are from mars." (Sheehan, K. 2012. Page 89, Chapter 7: Cats & Dogs on Venus and Mars: Gender and Advertising). Diversity in gender and race were of course issues just not in the 21st century and the 80s/90s Benetton showed this with their diverse, controversially, incredible ads. Figure 7 is an ad called blanket; it shows an interracial homosexual family. *"In the 1990s gender became a central theme in discussions of ethnographic research methodology"* (Pink, Sarah. 2013). Which at the time of this photo being a Gay couple was not good however, Benetton proves that it is okay. The photographer is Oliviero Toscani, I think Toscani has made this image look fantastic because it conveys a special message for this time in the 1990s. Toscani focuses his work on issues like racism, homophobia, etc. and he perfectly represents the image of what it is. In my opinion, Benetton / Toscani created a great campaign, which is still the message conveyed now in 2021 with their brand and it should be, they showed how diverse people can be and how the world is changing in the 1990s and how to normalize same-sex couples and interracial families. The overall campaign for this brand is such an inspiring message more brands need to take note of and work with diverse people of all races and genders.

Homophobia is still prominent in this present day. *"Most images of lesbian relationships used for advertisement to this day are fetishised and heavily sexually suggestive."* (Vogue 2017). Especially in Politics, media and Advertisements. In media we don't ever see many same sex couples when we do its usually men same sex couples.



Figure 11, Tide (2014)

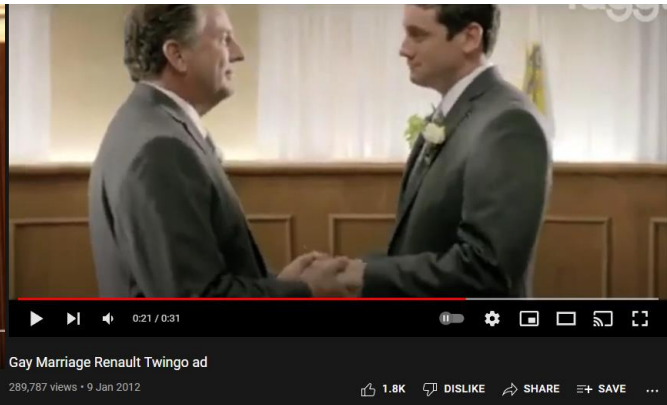


Figure 12, Renault (2012)

Gay women are so sexualised in modern day and have been forever, women feel the need to dress a certain way or be a certain way for society or just for men and men don't feel that way "...we would expect women to experience more sexual guilt than men." (*Psychology Today*, 2012). I do think in the future women will dominate over men in a way that will help the world with advertising and politics. But be equal to men so they can work together with each other to create diverse communities. We as a community need to report and inform advertising companies that we want to see more same sex couple in ads as well as people part of LGBTQ+. As a Bisexual female I know social media acts like gay couples are 'scary' or its disrespectful to straight people, there's so many odd communities especially on twitter that think this and are the reason why companies don't push their boundaries for Ads. People see men and women gay couples in diverse ways even though they are the same. Men are a significant reason women feel the way they do, and it comes from centuries ago where men will still live up to their grandparents' ways. "In other scenarios, boys might grow up believing they have a right to sex and that it's OK if women don't enjoy it." (*HealthLine*, 2020).



Figure 13, Channel 4 (2020)

Channel 4 found a way to embrace disability through the Paralympics and I think it is an excellent way to express the individuality of the Paralympics, the posters come with a campaign called 'Superhuman'. The poster itself focuses on when you grow up your parents tell you 'It is rude to stare' at people that look and act different to you. But in they have proved it is not rude at all for the Paralympics, it is an honour to look at people that have achieved that much. We don't see disability as a flaw anymore and we see it as a variance of human ability. *"...a disability interpretive lens focus on disability as a dimension of human difference and not as a defect"* (Creswell, J.W. 2013. Page 33)

Overall, we can conclude that companies need to start embracing diversity in race, gender, disability and equality in a civil way where it can be shared to people all over the world just like McCain's have done. I have learnt about how advertising can affect a person and how it can affect a company, as companies need to research and be careful what they put out there, like Dove, they didn't think about it, so it came with consequences, so companies need to think and listen to their audience. Advertising needs to be something we can embrace for our future creators and for companies to show that their brand can be diverse. Advertising can be so many things that we don't know yet and can show this through marketing by using diverse ways to advertise with different genders and race and include people from the LGBTQ+ community. Men and Women need equality to work together to create these things. We should take action, go write to your favourite brand about this and make them aware of the situation and what they can do to solve it.

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