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2004308

Surface Pattern Design Year 1

Module: ADAD4018

Ways of Thinking Julia Lockheart

Tasks in the order I received them:

Task 1: Observational Writing = 522words

Task 2: Manifesto Writing = 0 words

Task 3: Practice-based Writing = 0 words

Task 1: observational Writing

Signs do not directly evoke things (Saussure 1916). What we see, is truly revealed through what our eyes interpret to our mind and how we deconstruct these elements to construct a new/better way of understanding. In this text I will demonstrate the use of semiotics within advertising to show how the signifier and the signified allow us to see what is and isn't present (what is denotated and what is connotated).

The study of signs and symbols is something most have grown up learning. The ability to read from pictures is something we use in our everyday life, whether its road signs or texting using emojis as some examples. Our minds are programmed to know that a red circle with a line through it means no entry, and the connotation of red immediately symbols danger within this interpretation. Therefore, the connotation gives a better insight to the denotation. *It is neither the thing nor the meaning alone, but the two together* (Williamson 2010). This is the theory of semiotics.

Semiotics provides context through visual communications. The founder of this theory Ferdinand De

Saussure, states that language is a sign system where you need the signifier and the signified to fully understand the construct on what is being communicated. Roland Barthes develops this theory by suggesting that the signified can divide into the denotation and the connotation. He also continues to say that connotations can create a 'myth'. Myths are assumptions we make that create stories based on our beliefs and culture to reinforce

values. *By treating "collective representations" as sign systems one might hope to transcend pious denunciation and instead account in detail for the mystification which transforms petit bourgeois culture into a universal nature* (Barthes 1957). To expand on this theory, I will deconstruct a perfume advertisement.

In 2018, The French perfume brand *Dior* created a new women's fragrance called *JOY*. What I can denote from the ad is that it stars Jennifer Lawrence. A blonde-haired actress wearing a white dress and red lipstick, sunbathing above the water in a posed position with her eyes shut (not looking into the camera). The blue water implies a sense of tranquillity and peace, we are kept in the dark of where this place is. The mystery allows viewers to see this as their own personal dreamland/fantasy. The white of her dress connotes purity and a heavenly atmosphere with a certain innocence perhaps even a cleanliness. This accentuates and even contrasts with the red lipstick giving seductive connotations. These colours imply that she is an angelic luxury, an object to please the male gaze. This is further defined through her closed eyes not looking into the camera. Her open arms feel like an invitation to look and indulge. The ad makes her appear to feel like the only girl in the world, which is how traditionally every girl wants to feel for their significant other. Therefore, by using this product you will feel as special and as angelic and Jennifer Lawrence. This is the myth. By deconstructing and analysing semiotics, we are opened up to understand further details which we did not initially see.



Bibliography

Barthes, R.B., 1957. *Mythologies*. France: Les Lettres Nouvelles.

Saussure, F.S., 1916. *Course in General linguistics*. New York City: Columbia University Press.

Williamson, J.W., 2010. *Decoding advertisements: ideology and meaning in advertising*. London: Marion Boyars