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Media Literacy

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Context Analysis

The Nike television commercial “ Never too old” is an example for the new trend of advertising which focuses on ordinary people instead of perfect, good looking, high class people. They are imperfect people who need motivations for their lives. The ad has a traditional and simple structure for TV commercials. It also has clear, simple slogan for specific target audience. The worldview depicted in the ad is an uncomplicated worldview, which has real-life situation with stereotyped characters. The ad also illustrates Canadian’s new attitude towards old people. The purpose of this ad is to change the target audience attitude on aging. First, let’s have a look at who this ad is for and what it wants to change.

1. Target audience: they are Canadian seniors who are over 50 years old.

2. The aimed attitude of the ad: Without the product (Nike) they are unhappy, suspicious, dissatisfied and left out. They are afraid of being forgotten. Even though they need a change, they don’t have enough confidence and strength to do it.

3. *Purchasing behavior*: They are price conscious and they prefer discount stores.

Old people who watch the major worldview in ads, which presents a major worldview of beautiful, pretty, successful people, may lose their self esteem and confidence that leads to the thought: “ I am too old to do this and that”. It limits their ability.

By looking at the context that the target audiences live their lives from their own perspectives, the communicator is succeed in fulfilling the target audience’s need. It’s something to help them to gain strength, confidence and fight for their rights. The need of confidence and strength is their inner motivation for using Nike.

In the introduction of the advertisement, an old woman appears as a victim in need of help and sympathy. The world ignores her and she is helpless to adapt to the surrounding environment. A tragedy occurs to her with the robbery. She is presented as being completely helpless and pathetic. In that situation, Nike shoes appear and she gets the needed help to help herself.

The character of the product is depicted in the ad clearly and vividly that Nike is everywhere (as it can easily be found because some people on a street has a new pairs of Nike). It is so convenient to use- presented by the action of zipping the shoes and be ready. The product is the symbol of youth, success and victory.

The ad supports its claim “never too old”. The ad uses an unfinished statement to let the audiences fill in the rest of the statement. It’s ”Never too old” to defeat your enemy, never too old to do some things even at old age.

The emotion invested there is the guilt-to-yourself if old people don’t use the product. They will lose their opportunity to be young and strong without the product and returns to the old, weak selves. But basically, it triggers the need of searching for identity of old people whose fear is being forgotten and inadaptable to the modern world.

The ad has a traditional structure: introduction (the setting, showing the woman), the body-the woman is robbed and thrown into chaos, and the ending ---she defeats her opponent with the help of Nike shoes on her feet.

The ad uses the old woman image making it conventional and clear that she is old and venerable by the way she is dressed (the scarf, the stocks), the way she walks and the old shoes she wears. The robber is depicted as a person who represents the bad people in the new and young generation. He is wearing a dirty sweater with a hat concealing his face. It is a prototype image of villain who doesn’t want others to recognize him.

Latent message: Nike is the youth and motivation you need. Change yourself, Nike will help you get what you need. Another small latent message is the action of zipping the shoes and the sound of zipping can be associated with the sound of being ready to cope with everything on your way.

The characters in the ad don't say a word but everything is clear by action, which demonstrates the main message and made it unforgettable. It also shows the major brand characteristic- Nike- the brand of action.

Worldview: The world depicted in the ad is an uncomplicated world where old people can find fulfillment, gain confidence and youth by buying the Nike shoes. The product solves the problem. The worldview presented in the ad is that old people are vulnerable and helpless. They don't adapt to changes in the fast life around them. The life depicted in the ad is of an old woman who is succeeding in doing great change in her life.

Nike shoes are depicted as the savior in that situation. When the old woman sees the shoes, she knows that they are what she needs. Changing the shoes in this situation is depicted as changing an attitude. Once she's found her right shoes, Nike, she becomes positive, active, fast, youthful and be able to defeat her enemy. It also makes the target audiences think that they can be renewed and adaptable people. They can be proud of their ability. They are stereotyped as advanced seniors that impress even the young.

The last scene also captures the old woman image defeating the robber as the status of unforgotten victory. This ad also associates with the hierarchy of values; it's patriotism in the last scene. The old woman is in a proud victorious position with the background a monument that has the read:" The garden of the unforgotten". The background is the war monument to remember Oshawa citizens, who lost their lives in World Wars I, World War II and Korean war. With the camera angle from the low position looking up to the woman and the

background of a war monument, the latent message in this scene is that she will be remembered as a war heroine as well as the symbol of victory and glory.

Cultural context: The ad relates to advertising and popular culture in cultural element emphasizing on aging. Canadian as well as other developed countries want to see people with youth, beauty and success. Age is considered as the stereotype of a failure, a weakness, and associate with uselessness. It's bad enough to be old but being a woman is even worse. Canadian as well as American culture values youth.

The old woman in this first part of the ad is the stereotype of an unhappy old people to Canadian citizen.

The plot dramatizes the characteristics of Nike shoes. We see the significant effect of them on the woman's life. It is not only shoes. Nike shoes are the owner of the youth driving the old woman.

The ad ends with the promise "Never too old" which is the slogan that is right in Canadian cultural which values youth and preoccupation of being old. They are afraid that being old means being passive, pathetic, helpless and useless as the old woman first depicted in the ad. Instead of racially insensitive in Germany in the past, Canadian and other industrial countries have the age fear.

In addition to that, the ad shows that we should all become aware of the aging barriers, or the battery of Canadian. The ad breaks away from the old image and includes a diversity of ages view in advertising. Maybe we are not all young, fit, athletic, and attractive, but we all need the benefit of physical activity

and recreation that will make us change in a positive way. We have the power to change perceptions, attitudes, and stereotypes.

Cultural myths: The ad supports changing process of old people. It appeals to change yourself, change your shoes, your attitude towards yourself and give yourself the appropriate shoes instead of the old fashion, action inconvenient shoes that you wore.

This ad also signals the change in attitude towards old people. Its purpose is to change attitude of age as a barrier from success and make a new attitude that contrasts to the previous attitude considering being young is a critical and essential element.

Conclusion: The ad impresses us with the contrast in the woman's image, action and attitude change at the beginning of the ads and the last scenes. It's amusing due to the speedy and great change. The ad leaves affection, fun and impression to the target audience and other audiences. This ad can be shown in America, France or Britain and has the same general effect as it is shown in Canada. It is because there is no language barrier due to the fact that they don't talk in the ad and it's successful in combining a specific emotion with the product. The ad makes us smile with satisfaction and supportive attitude towards the woman who finally gains confidence, defeats the bad, and gains victory that she deserves.

Reference:

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2. "We will remember" World monument in Canada, World wide website,
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