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Media Literacy

GoDaddy.com “Enhancement” Commercial

While most people say they watch the Super Bowl to root for their favorite football team, it could be argued that the thing people talk about the most the next morning is the commercials. This past year was no exception. One commercial in particular had many people talking at the water cooler the next day, as it was the most watched commercial of the game. According to the Associated Press, GoDaddy.com’s “Enhancement” advertisement, played during the fourth quarter of the game, was viewed by 103.2 million people (this figure also includes people who subsequently played back the ads on DVRs). The reason this commercial in particular was the most watched may have a great deal to do with the fact that it aired before the end of an extremely close and exciting game, but also because of the strategically placed attractive women (including Danica Patrick) featured in the ad. As a whole, this commercial’s success can be directly correlated to this factor, but more importantly it also describes the current worldview on these factors, especially the view of women, men’s behavior towards females, and celebrity culture.

The commercial features a group of young men (presumably college students) who are controlling the actions of the famous Indy Racecar driver, Danica Patrick. They decide to control her as she takes a shower and bring another attractive female into the shower with her. A few things can be said about the worldview of this universe through the basic plot alone. In this world, women are nothing but simple objects which are to be used by men to do their biddings.

Specifically, these teenage boys get to fulfill their chauvinistic fantasies by watching a famous female bathe along with another female. They literally control the women's every action, including what environment they are in and what they are supposed to be feeling, and they can obtain all this power by simply registering with a domain name at GoDaddy.com. The values engrained in this ideal are extremely evident: women are inferior to men in the grand scheme of natural power. Boys are being taught at a young age that women can be controlled, albeit not in this fashion, but certainly when it comes to harnessing their emotions against them for their own twisted purposes.

The use of a pseudo-celebrity as the woman being controlled states a great deal about celebrity culture. Just as the boys in the commercial can control the every move and thought of Danica Patrick, so can the audience and general public in the real world, or at least in their minds. To most Americans, celebrities are simply objects and there is usually no consideration for their feelings or personal life, especially by paparazzi and the press. They put themselves in the limelight by their own will, so therefore they are up for grabs for us to use and exploit whenever we feel it is necessary. Even without the use of this supernatural technology in the commercial, at any point in the day, any person can go on the internet and find manufactured or real videos of celebrities doing a countless number of things, most of which being lewd or sexual in nature. It once again gives the implication that celebrities are objects that are meant to be used and manipulated in whatever fashion we want. Beyond this, it shows the general population's infatuation and preoccupation with the celebrity culture and their need to draw anything out of celebrities that they can, including vulnerable moments and activities.

What may be even more disturbing than the thought of being able to watch women in this state or control their actions is the implication in the ad that they are complacent and may in fact

enjoy the treatment. Although her actions are fairly robotic, Patrick's announcement that she is going to go into the shower is certainly not one of shock, disappointment, or anything else that would imply that she does not want to be watched or exploited for the boys' entertainment. In a way, this ad is teaching young girls that it is okay for men to exploit them for their sexual fantasies and that they should be submissive when it comes to this behavior. As another female joins Patrick in the shower, the commercial concludes with an invitation to the website that will allow the viewer to continue on in the adventures of the young women. This is directly giving girls the thought that they should also invite men into their lives in this fashion so they can watch the girls' every move and exploit.

More so than any other Super Bowl commercial, the GoDaddy.com advertisement can be viewed years down the road as how our culture operates, not only through the types of media and communications devices that we use, but also how we deal with and view different varieties of people. The values and cultural attitudes engrained in the commercial are fairly shocking upon in depth analysis, and most people in our society would hope that these views are not anywhere close to being true. However, the ad did accomplish something that few commercials are able to do: people were talking about it at the water cooler the very next morning.

Work Cited

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