

Linguistics 305, Advertising Rhetoric

Prof. Jeff Heath,
email jheath@umich.edu (summers/leaves: schweinehaxen@hotmail.com)
Prof. Jeff Heath
dept: 1190 USB (Undergrad Science Bldg, behind Fletcher St. health bldg near Life Sci Bldg)
office: 1149 USB (enter through dept. office)
tel.: 764-0353 (dept), 647-2152 (direct office)
office hour: Th 3-4 or by appt

themes: dilemmas in selling familiar consumer products and services (banks, cars, jewelry, food, etc.); formulating rhetorical strategies to address these dilemmas; possibilities and limitations of a static and primarily visual (print) advertising medium; relationship between text (=copy) and visuals, including text as visual (typography); special features of radio advertising; advertising criticism; competing small creative groups designing magazine ads with Photoshop and radio spots with e.g. Audacity.

not covered: quantitative analysis (media mixes), ad placement, agency organization, linguistic theory

designed for students with a general interest in advertising and marketing but with limited creative ability; not open to students from the School of Art and Design

book for purchase (at big 3 bookstores; other readings will be provided online)
Daniel Harris, *Cute, Quaint, Hungry, and Romantic: the Aesthetics of Consumerism*

grades: two termtime exams (15 pts each), two small-group creative competitions (first, low-tech one 12 points, final "hi-tech" one 18 points), and two 6-page papers (15 pts each), 10 points for short homeworks, plus adjustments at instructor's discretion (down for non-attendance, up for exceptional participation). Course letter grades are curved.

Mo 1.8 organization

We 1.10 style and positioning
Williamson, fine-print discussions of ads A8-11, A14 (CTools Resources)
essays/articles in CTools-Resources or online (read in the order given below):
Gladwell, "The coolhunt," in Schor & Holt, eds., *The Consumer Society Reader*, 361-74 (original 1997, New Yorker). Get it online: http://www.gladwell.com/1997/1997_03_17_a_cool.htm
Piccalo, "Fads are so yesterday," NY Times 2005
Schneider, "Brands for the chattering masses,"
web surfing: google "street marketing" and "buzz marketing" (e.g. www.streetattack.com)

We 1.17 visualization and visual puzzles; visual environment in early department stores
Williamson: ads A25, A27-28, A30, A34-36, A88 (CTools

Resources)

historical background: William Leach, *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture*, 85-111 (children's toy sections in dept. stores, then "Fashion and the indispensable thing"), also look at the plates

magazines: VM&SD (Visual Marketing and Store Design)

surfing: "store design" (e.g. www.visualstore.com)

- Mo 1.22 positioning and line extension; creating a market (lawn products)
Ries & Trout, *Positioning*, 101-13, 127-36. 159-70
historical background: Virginia Jenkins, *The Lawn: A History of an American Obsession*, chap. 3, 63-88 ("Advertising the front lawn")
plus plates
- We 1.24 diamonds; girls' skin care
Harris: *Cute, Quaint, "the romantic"* (79-106)
cultural background: Joan Brumberg, *The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls*, 59-94 (skin care from the Victorian era to the present, based on girls' diaries)
website: <http://www.jewelry-paideia.com/reference/ref-diamond-jewelry.1/2/3>
website with links to articles: <http://www.skin-care-support.org/skin-care/>
paper #1 assignment given out
short in-class quiz on readings thru today
- Mo 1.29 automobiles
Williamson: auto ads: A24, A29, A65, A73, A83
historical background: James Flink, *The Automobile Age*, 140-68 (from chapters on "diffusion" and "the family car") and 229-244 ("Sloanism").
reading: Cook, *Discourse of Advertising*, 108-14
paper #1 due
- We 1.31 cigarettes
Harris: *Cute, Quaint, "coolness"* (51-77)0000.
- Mo 2.5 food advertising; Super Bowl spots
Nick Fiddes, *Meat: A Natural Symbol*, 65-70 and 87-93 [written by a vegetarian]
Harris: *Cute, Quaint, "deliciousness"* (153-78)
archived Superbowl ads: <http://www.superbowl-ads.com/2007/index.html>
(if that doesn't work, google "superbowl ads" or "superbowl commercials")
- We 2.7 **first student competition**
- Mo 2.12 liquor
- We 2.14 **exam #1**
- Mo 2.19 creative briefs (from concept to team creative work)
- We 2.21 covert and subliminal messages (facts and phallus-ies?)

- Harris: *Cute, Quaint,* "cuteness" (1-21)
- Mo 3.5 layout (2d geometry) and color
Harris: *Cute, Quaint,* "the natural" (179-208)
- We 3.7 simulation of 3D space
- Mo 3.12 photographic techniques
Harris: *Cute, Quaint,* "glamorousness" (209-32)
- We 3.14 PhotoShop workshop (Lang Res Ctr classroom, 2nd floor MLB)
Harris: *Cute, Quaint,* "quaintness" (23-50)
paper #2 assignment given out
- Mo 3.19 writing copy
Harris: *Cute, Quaint,* "zaniness" (107-26)
- We 3.21 writing, layout, physicality
Harris: *Cute, Quaint,* "cleanness" (233-61)
- Mo 3.26 typography
- We 3.28 logo design
Harris: *Cute, Quaint,* "futuristic" (127-52)
paper #2 due
- Mo 4.2 radio advertising
- We 4.4 **exam #2** [covers readings and technical material presented since exam #1]
- Mo 4.9 pitching to clients
Rothenburg, *Where the Suckers Moon*, 5-37 [real-world agency competition]
- We 4.11 **2nd student competition, part 1**
- Mo 4.16 **2nd student competition, part 2**