

Yashlee Francois

Professor Bartoo

COMM423-010

Apr. 3, 2024

Advertising is a powerful tool behind business and creative industries. It's more than just a simple sign that says "buy this", it's a form of art and storytelling in a professional world. Advertisers make calculated decisions on how to structure their ads, who to communicate to through the ad, and where to place the ad. Since everything is calculated and intentional, one can dissect and analyze an ad for what it truly means. After scouring a multitude of magazines, I found an advertisement to use for this deep dive analysis. In a February 2024 copy of the international contemporary art magazine, *Art Review*, on the very last page is a full page ad for Ruinart's Blanc de Blancs champagne. (Image can be found at the bottom of the essay) Though there may not be much on the page itself, there are still a lot of elements to analyze and understand using methods of analysis from Arthur Asa Berger. This ad will be dissected with semiotic, sociological, and political methods.

As mentioned before, there aren't many elements on the page itself but there are still signs and signals for a semiotic analysis. First the simple design with empty space, lack of text and lack of other items is a minimalistic style common amongst luxury items signaling cleanliness and elegance. "Note that the design of the advertisement is formal and has a good deal of empty or white space. This kind of design is typical for expensive, upscale, products. (Berger 156). According to market forecasts and outlooks, champagne is usually targeting millennial consumers around 26 to 40 years old, and minimalistic styles appeal to that younger demographic. In accordance with Berger's definition of an index, the shadows would be considered one between the sun and maybe warm weather around spring and summer. Since the champagne has flavor notes of fresh fruits (citrus, white peaches, pineapples) and white

flowers, the presentation of the drink should match the fresh and light taste of the drink. Giving the audience an idea of what they will experience as a consumer. Along with the shadow of the leaves signals being out outside around nature, especially since they are expensive chardonnay leaves which is what the champagne is made from. Lastly the use of gold adds to the fancy theme apparent. Gold symbolizes luxury, success, royalty, and fortune. The major themes displayed from the signs are minimalism, luxury, warmness, nature, freshness, and expensiveness.

Next, there are aspects to consider under the sociological lens. But to set the premise of who the audience is, it's good to know where this ad was found. The Art Review magazine is a long standing international contemporary art magazine sold online for about 10 to 13 dollars, which is significantly pricier than a typical magazine. So we already know the audience is international, creative, high culture, people with money to spend. So it makes sense to see this ad in a place like this rather than Sports Illustrated. Also the brand Ruinart has a long history with contemporary art, since it was founded during the enlightenment era. Ruinart says "Trustful that art can enlighten and connect us." which is similar to what a drink like champagne can do. Bring people together to connect. Knowing all these elements of the ad such as the mix of French and English copy stroking the ego of bilingual consumers, the small "enjoy responsibly" pushing aside the logical brain to uplift the emotional and creative one, really attest to the type of people this ad targets. Also the sheer fact a champagne ad is in a magazine with creative viewers pairs well since champagne is a party and celebration drink. The consumer can envision themselves buying a high quality expensive bottle for their gallery opening, or book release, or fashion show. An opposite brand such as Bud Light wouldn't target a demographic of people likely to drink at events like these. This ad would impact the consumer's sense of cognitive consonance of indulging in high culture such as art and then hoping to drink alcohol associated with high culture such as champagne.

Finally similar to the sociological lenses, this ad can be looked at from a political or Marxist viewpoint. Berger uses this method to conclude that the Fidji snake perfume ad suggested exploitation of people in third world countries and how it “encourages capitalism.” (Berger 161) Since both perfume and champagne both fall into the high class luxury category you can make these same claims for a “snobby” French champagne ad. Instead of focusing on society issues and things that need to be done, one could claim indulging in a personal want like champagne is only a distraction and a waste of time. “We revel in our personal luxuries as our society disintegrates into chaos.” (Berger 161) Like mentioned before the copy “Enjoy responsibly” is interesting, though it's only two words the choice of saying “enjoy” instead of “drink” appeals to pathos rather than logos. Suggesting you don't just drink our champagne, you enjoy it. And it being in such small print supports the idea of not thinking of the logic and reality of drinking alcohol.

This Ruinart ad was conceived and made by professional advertisers with a goal, to appeal to a certain audience and sell them that champagne. That's why they make all these calculated decisions like placing the ad in a high priced artistic magazine, using luxurious colors such as gold, creating a natural and fresh atmosphere with the sun and leaves, and keeping design to a minimum. Depending on the target audience and the image of the company, these elemental decisions can vary in many different ways. But whatever those may be, they can always be analyzed through closer lenses such as the analysis methods from Berger.



Ruinart

LA PLUS ANCIENNE MAISON
DE CHAMPAGNE



Enjoy responsibly.