Gender Advertising

The Gaze
The Mirror Effect
Elements of Gender Advertising

gender advertising: sex sells
the male gaze --- the female object
the male gaze enables the woman to be
a commodity that helps sell the product

mirror effect
women encouraged to view themselves
through the lens of the photographer and
buy the product to become more like the model

Gender Advertising Images:
Major Elements
- Roles
- Settings
- Ranking
- Age
- Touch
- Authority
- Family
- Crisis
- Glamour
- Dismemberment
- Abuse-affection cycle
- Packaging
- Product Types
- New Constructions
  - Gender Role Reversals
  - Ethnic Identification
  - Interracial Couples
  - LGTB
Roles
- Men shown in twice as many roles as women
- Men and women depicted in traditional roles
- Women more often featured in family roles
  - Wife and Mother
  - Men usually beneficiaries of these activities
- Men more often featured in professional roles
  - Businessmen
  - Authority figures
  - Athletes

Settings
- Women in domestic settings
  - Inside the home
  - Decorative asset
- Men professional setting
  - Outside the home
  - Active, athletic activities

Functional Ranking
- Women
  - Ritualistically subordinate
  - Lowered position
    - Sitting/lying on the floor or bed
    - Reclining and suggestive
  - Dominant position
    - Suggestive overtones
    - In crisis
- Men
  - Dominant
  - Authority figures
    - especially when collaborating with women
Age

- Women are younger than men
- Women can’t grow old
- Men are all ages

Touch

- Signals authority or sensuality
- Feminine touch:
  - Women barely touch object
  - Fingers trace the outline of an object
  - Caress a surface creating a seductive image
- Masculine grasp:
  - Firmly grasp objects

Authority

- Voice-overs
- Product representatives
- Men more secure, powerful and serious
Family

- Stereotypical social structure
- Mothers more often depicted with children than fathers
- Same-sex tendency:
  - Mothers relating more to daughters
  - Fathers relating more to sons

Crisis

- Women more emotional and irrational or in a state of crisis
- Men more calm and cool

Glamour

- Women excessively concerned about grooming, glamour and appearance
- Men achieve well-groomed look effortlessly
- Women beauty and age-defying products
- Men skin supplies and grooming gear
Dismemberment

- Women’s bodies often objectified by treating them as separate parts
- Perpetuates myth that women’s bodies not connected to minds
- Implies that women solely exist to physically satisfy men
- Justifies treating women as objects
- New Trend: Male body parts

Abuse-affection Cycle

- Abuse often rewarded with affection
- “She got what she deserved”
- Normalize violence against women

Packaging

- Colors and shapes
- Feminine and pastels
- Masculine and bold
  - Gold, brown and black
  - Sports: red, white and blue
  - Sense of power
Product Types

- Women
  - food
  - household products
  - nonprescription drugs
- Men
  - large product purchases
  - insurance
- Children: sex-typed
  - Girls
    - games
    - food
    - dolls
  - Boys
    - games
    - cars
    - planes

New Constructions:
- Role Reversals
- Gender Equity
- LGBT Relationships
- Interracial Situations

- Men with children
- Men in domestic settings
- Men pampering themselves
- Women in powerful roles
- Women in business
- Women athletes
- Women larger sizes
- Women busy moms
- LGBT relationships
- Interracial situations