
A critique of loves baby soft perfume advertisement

In the 1975, Love's Baby Soft had a controversial advertisement for cosmetic fragrance that featured a head shot of a very young girl about eight to ten years old with a white teddy bear. Her hair is shoulder length brown with bouncy loose curls parted to one side. Her right shoulder is yielding a white ruffle strap from the dress she is wearing; while on her left there is a white fuzzy bear. She has piercing blue seductive eyes with the bright red lipstick similar to the teddy bears'. Her lips are slightly open, which makes them look as if she is pow-ding. Full make-up with brown mascara, brown eye shadow on her white porcelain skin seems fake and plastic like a doll. Her hand, which is the size of a grown women's hand, is slightly bent at the wrist over the white bear in the classic Barbie doll manner, two middle fingers together while the index and pinky are separated. The overall hue of the picture is pink and fuzzy. In the lower left corner is a picture of four long phallic shaped bottles of the company's product with a caption that reads,

"Love's Baby Soft is that irresistible, clean-baby smell, grown up enough to be sexy. Its soft smelling. Pure and innocent. It may be the sexiest fragrance around"

Above her head is a passage that also reads,

"Love's Baby Soft. Because innocence is sexier than you think."

Which by first glance, seems to be a sweet innocent advertisement. Looking deeper at it, it is anything but innocent. The mental picture, as can be imagined, is in a sexual and seductive mannerism. This ad was designed to lure women's attention by praying on woman insecurities of attention, appearance, age, sex; they are all very sensitive desires women strive for and try to maintain daily in hopes to attract the opposite sex. Society's expectations on women's looks have really gone too far. The female gender has always desired to look older when they are "too" young and younger when they are "too" old. It is because of ads like this that children are viewed as sexual candidates by sick pedophiles. Advertising company rely on these types of insecurities to convince the consumers to purchase their product. Meanwhile, symbolic subliminal messages subtle or not are being portrayed with total disregard to the older women at the same time eroticizes this child in a sexual pornographic manner as a marketing strategy.

As mention earlier, Love's Baby Soft is a company that sells cosmetic fragrance and has for over four decades. Using these types of marketing techniques to appeal to any audiences are unnecessary and absurd and yet somehow they were overlooked. Sex and a young child should never have been in the same thought much less the same advertisement. In Fowles essay, he breaks these ad techniques down into fifteen categories. This particular ad has approximately

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five:

1. The need for sex.
2. The need for nurture.
3. The need for dominance.
4. The need for attention.
5. The need for aesthetic sensation.

Most of the ads contain both illustration and text as does this one. Ad researchers donate large sums to testing consumers' responses to different colors, shapes, and layouts. Especially in recent decades, advertisements often have been composed with meticulous attention to detail and extensive pre-testing so even the smallest facet of an ad may reflect its' marketing strategy. Deliberate and intentional details also reveals something about the assumption and perceptions of those who created it. A hairstyle, a print font, a border design or in this case all of the above.

In a photographer's point of view the photo itself is really left up to the eye of the beholder whether it is inappropriate or not. It is the words chosen that are literally offensive and states clean-baby smell, pure and innocent as if implying that grown women are neither clean nor innocent, but by buying and using this product the consumer can become pure and innocent.

"Grown up enough to be sexy" As a parent, a child is never grown up enough to have sex or to be sexy at any age especially under ten years old. Exploitation of children is a major problem that all societies face and should not be taken lightly.

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