Eng. 299

Spring 2012

Essay Assignment #2 - Explanatory Paper (Explaining a concept in an ad).

For this assignment, show your reader how an advertisement uses a certain concept as its strategy in appealing to readers. Consider the various appeals we discussed in class as you describe your ad, and analyze how the ad specifically uses a particular strategy of attracting an audience. Another way to define your goal in this assignment is to speak of the ad's "hidden agenda." Remember that the sneakier and more subtle the ad is, the better your paper will be since you are the one finding things others might not easily see. So try to find an ad that is complex and that seems to be doing one thing while actually doing another. For example, a car ad that may seem on the surface to emphasize safety might have hidden references to a flashy style or to other things not safety-related at all. As we discussed in class, you may also choose to use two ads for this paper, with two, your goal for the paper will be the same, but you can also ad some complexity by adding more material to draw from if you have two ads.

Choose a printed ad(s) that you will attach to your paper (if your ad is a black and white copy, make sure you indicate the colors on the copy of the ad itself). This ad can come from a magazine, a website, a flyer in the Sunday paper, or anything that is printed. If you use a video ad (commercial), it can be on a DVD, or a website such as YouTube. If you use a website, please attach a link to the website on your essay. Keep in mind that you are explaining how the ad uses a certain concept or concepts (for example, romantic love, sexual attraction, masculine pride, snob appeal, etc. – see our discussions in class). You will show how these concepts show up specifically in the ad, but remember that you are in the role of a detective finding and pointing out these hidden appeals. You are writing to convince your audience that there are indeed hidden appeals in the ad, and that these will attract a certain audience. As with the first assignment, your paper should have an identifiable argument somewhere near the beginning (usually at the end of the introductory paragraph). This thesis (or center, or central argument) should then guide the rest of the paper. Remember that your paper will need to sustain the reader's interest throughout; you don't want the reader to tire of reading obvious points. Also avoid discussing the concept too much and forgetting that you are referring to a specific ad.

Consult our readings for helpful direction and examples. We will talk about the readings in class, and we will look at some sample papers.

Length: Two *double* spaced pages, minimum. Can be more than two pages, but should be at least two full pages. Format to standard MLA form. Remember, the more complex and in depth your essay is, the better it will be overall.

Draft due date: Tuesday February 28th – in class for workshop

Revision: Due Thursday March 1st – at the beginning of class.

Remember: Also save the drafts that are commented on during peer review groups. These should be stapled to the final draft of your essay. Also, if you use a print ad, please attach a copy to your final draft. This can be a black and white copy, but remember to indicate the original colors on the copied ad.