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TRANSPARENCY

What's the Buzz?

Rachel has just graduated with an M.A. in Advertising and taken a job at a major agency in account services. In school, she studied buzz marketing, a relatively new communication technique with the objective of seeking out trendsetters in target communities and subtly pushing them to talk up the brand to their friends and acquaintances. In essence, these people were hired to generate favorable word of mouth.

Rachel has been assigned to work as an assistant account executive for a major automobile client that is introducing a new sports car. The account team was recommending an interesting buzz marketing technique. Rather than spend a lot of money on 30-second commercials, opinion leaders in key markets would be recruited and given one of the new sports cars to drive for six months. The responsibility of these individuals would be to talk the car up and to hand out literature and trinkets to anyone who expressed an interest in the car. However, the individuals would have to agree not to tell anyone that they had been given the car to drive and in essence had been hired by the company to create favorable word of mouth.

Rachel felt uncomfortable about this aspect of the promotion that her account team was recommending; it seemed deceptive to her. She had heard that the client loved the promotion. She also wondered what harm the promotion could cause. It seemed that the worst that would happen is that someone would get a ride in a nice sports car and some free trinkets.

QUESTIONS:

1. What, if anything, is ethically problematic about this case?
2. Who, if anyone, is potentially affected by this approach and how?
3. What ethical guidelines apply in this case?
4. What options are available to Rachel and her team?

Infomercial Uncertainties

You are assigned to the creative team working on a 30 minute infomercial for a wrinkle-reduction face cream, Smoothinelle, owned by one of your cosmetic company clients, Cosmelle Corp. Everyone is happy to hear that TV actress Patricia Heaton, the wife on *Everybody Loves Raymond*, has agreed to be the paid spokesperson for the cream.

The plan for the infomercial is fairly standard for the genre – Patricia will be the host in front of a live TV audience, having some scientific info given by a male dermatologist, complete with testimonials from users with before and after photos. Four of the testimonial women will appear in a cozy living room setting sharing “girl talk” with Patricia about how much they all love the product. The audience will be encouraged to ooh, aaahhh, laugh, and applaud at appropriate moments. It sounds straightforward enough, but it turns out there are a lot of gray areas when it comes to the honesty and integrity of the infomercial. Consider the following examples:

- Upon reading the script, Patricia is concerned that no mention is made that she has had a face-lift, and she is afraid it might be seen as dishonest. Your creative director explains to her that some people already know about her penchant for plastic surgery since she was upfront about it years ago in her book, but to focus on the face-lift in this commercial might unfairly take away from the benefits of the product. After all, Patricia has been using Smoothinelle now for three months, so it responsible for her current skin complexion.
- You happen to know that a line in the text is also misleading, but Patricia hasn't mentioned it because she probably doesn't realize it. It is a line where she says “It's the only cream I know of that has been clinically tested to reduce fine-lines and wrinkles by 20% over a 4-week period.” While it is true that the clinical tests did show that, it is possible that other creams can also boast that, however the term “only cream I know of” gets Cosmelle out of any legal trouble.
- During the photo shoots for the “before” and “after” photos, one of the women pictured was concerned that the “before” photos looked worse because of the poor lighting that cast shadows on her face and chin, where the “after” pictures are lit in a more flattering way. While this is true, the creative director explained that the viewers can clearly judge this for themselves, and it is not abnormal for “before” pictures to be unflattering. Consider all the weight loss or makeover “before” pictures where people are shown slumping, with a sullen expression, with unkempt hair and a frumpy outfit. This adds a bit of drama to the reveal and is standard for the genre. At least the Smoothinelle photos weren't as overly dramatized as that, since their hair and clothing were not that frumpy.
- Another issue is that the infomercial briefly mentions that Smoothinelle is not tested on animals, but an intern at your agency asked why Cosmelle Corp wasn't on any list of cruelty-free companies produced by animal protection groups. The creative director explained that the text on the jar states “this finished product was not tested on animals.” While it is true that Smoothinelle was not smeared in rabbits' eyes, Cosmelle is not considered a cruelty-free company by animal protection groups because some of

Cosmelle's ingredient suppliers do conduct animal testing. However, what is written on the product is not a lie.

- As the commercial comes together, you begin to notice that overall it makes women look shallow, silly, and insecure about their looks and the natural aging process. As a feminist, you know that perpetuating this image of women does not help women gain status in society to command leadership roles, such as President of the United States.

Due to some of the complaints and its possible affect on morale, the creative director calls a meeting with all staff to discuss these issues.

QUESTIONS:

1. Rank these issues in order of your concern, assigning #1 to your biggest ethical concern down to #5 as the one you consider the least troublesome.
2. Does the fact that this is an infomercial mitigate some of these ethical concerns, as the genre is known for being slightly exaggerated and entertainment/drama-oriented? This isn't the news, after all. In general, viewers already make fun of infomercials for this reason and only admit with embarrassment when they are sucked into buying something they saw in an infomercial. Cosmelle is using this format because it allows enough time to fully explain the benefits and share true success stories.
3. If the infomercial ran as is, would there be any negative consequences for involved parties? If so, what and how important are they?
4. Should any part of this infomercial be redone, and if so, what solutions do you propose and why?
5. If you were a creative director assigned to do any infomercial, what would be your biggest ethical concerns going into the project? In what way might you be innovative with the genre?
- 5.

Deceptive or Expedient?

Bradley has just graduated with an MA in Advertising at a prestigious university and has been hired as an account planner at a large advertising agency. In talking with some of his new colleagues, he heard of a practice that concerned him. Several account planners had an assignment to do some research on the competitor firms of one of the agency's major clients. The assignment proved to be unusually tough. The account planners decided to conduct a telephone survey, but when they identified themselves as agency employees, important sources refused to participate in the study. The deadline was quickly closing, and the planners desperately needed the information. Then one of the planners, who had recently graduated from a local university, suggested that they identify themselves as "university students who were doing research for a class project." This case worked like a charm. Everyone was willing to help the "students" out, and the agency secured the important competitive information that it needed.

The research was finished on time and within the budgeted cost. The client was immensely pleased. Bradley is concerned about the manner in which the planners deceived the respondents, but he thinks that this might just be part of doing business. In addition, as the newest planner, he does not want to rock the boat, and he very much wants to win the respect and acceptance of his new co-workers.

QUESTIONS:

1. What, if anything, is ethically problematic about this case?
2. Who, if anyone, is potentially affected by this approach and how?
3. What ethical guidelines apply in this case?
4. What options are available to Bradley?

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Party Time

Tim has recently taken a job in account services at a venerable agency. He was surprised to learn that rumors abounded regarding the behavior of some of the agency's staff. Tim heard that a number of the agency's key employees had gone on multiple outings to expensive downtown strip clubs, which were hosted by one of the agency's key vendors—a printer with whom the agency's clients spent millions of dollars. These parties were said to last about four hours and to cost about \$5,000 each. Some at the agency claimed that this was just a part of doing business and that it was important both to keep the morale of key employees high and to solidify the relationship between the printer and the agency. After all, it was not the agency hosting the outings; the agency staffers were only guests. But Tim worried about potential ramifications. He knew that such lavish expenses would have to somehow be built into the printing bills of the agency's clients, and he wondered about the objectivity of the agency staff involved when they next would make decisions about which printer to use. Tim also wondered about the impact of practices such as this on women employees.

QUESTIONS:

1. What, if anything, is ethically problematic about this case?
2. Who, if anyone, is potentially affected by this activity and how?
3. What ethical guidelines apply in this case?
4. What options are available to Tim?

POTENTIALLY HARMFUL ADVERTISING In the Eye of the Beholder?

Sarah has recently been hired as a creative director at one of the hottest agencies in the country. It is her dream job. She is leading an award winning team that is working on the agency's largest and most lucrative account—a world renowned women's fashion brand. Her team is currently under a great deal of pressure to prepare a dynamite campaign for a new product introduction—a new line of fashions for teenage girls. Since sales of its flagship women's fashion brand have been stagnant, the client believes that this campaign is crucial to the continued viability of its business. Furthermore, the client has hinted that if the campaign is not an unqualified success (that is, truly sensational), then the entire account will go out for competitive bidding, and a new agency will likely be selected. Sarah is eager for the team to continue its winning record under her leadership, and she knows that losing this account would be devastating to the agency.

However, an issue related to the campaign has begun to concern her. Specifically, the models selected for the campaign are young and exceedingly thin—heroin chic thin. Sarah recently has read some research regarding the negative effects that ultra thin female images in the media can have on teenage girls and their conceptions of beauty, and she feels uncomfortable about the images of beauty portrayed in the campaign. When she questioned one of her staff about this, he told her that the client liked this type of model, which had been used in its previous campaigns, and that it was the client's prerogative to use any type of model he wanted. Sarah knows that any questions that she raises could have negative effects on her staff. Since she is new, Sarah very much wants to win the respect and confidence of her team. She does not want to tinker with the team's winning formula, and she does not want to do anything to constrain their creativity.

QUESTIONS:

1. What, if anything, is ethically problematic about this case?
2. Who, if anyone, is potentially affected by this approach and how?
3. What ethical guidelines apply in this case?
4. What options are available to Sarah?

A Contested Contest Over Soda in the Schools

The marketing meeting for Vibe lime-flavored energy soda was well underway, headed by the Department's new Manager, Jessica Denton, and attended by other employees, Mike, Angela, and Jamal. The drink, which had only been on the market for two years, was finally starting to gain a bit of ground in its target market of young adults, especially males, in this highly competitive soda market. But if we couldn't increase sales significantly within the next year, the product was going to be pulled. In brainstorming ideas, Mike, the Assistant Manager, mentioned trying to go a bit younger and hit the middle schools. He suggested something like a contest in the schools, like for a new slogan. "We have an energy drink, and what creates more energy than a contest!"

"But we just invested a lot in branding our 'Get your Vibe on' slogan," Jamal protested. "And it's going well, so let's not abandon it." The others agreed.

"OK, so what about some other kind of contest, like for a TV commercial," Mike suggested with excitement.

Angela fed off this idea and said "Yes, it could be good for the middle school video, arts or advertising classes to get some real world marketing experience. Do they even have advertising classes in middle school?"

"I don't know. But it would look good on their resume to have a national commercial under their belts at the ripe old age of thirteen or whatever," Jamal chimed in. "And it certainly would get kids thinking and talking about Vibe, which is what we want."

"I think the idea of a commercial contest is intriguing," Jessica contended with some skepticism. "But I worry about the implications of targeting so young an age as middle school for an energy soda. Even high school is pushing it."

"Jessica, surely you want to create life-long customers for Vibe," Mike explained. "And it's not like middle school kids aren't drinking soda already. Heck, I think I had Pepsi in my baby bottle." The others laughed.

"I like soda just as much as the rest of us," Jessica countered. "But we are old enough to know about nutrition and not drink caffeinated and sugary products in excess. As a parent of a pre-teen, I don't think middle school kids are savvy enough to make good food choices yet."

"That's certainly a nice idea to care about kids, I do too. Certainly it would be easier on our consciences if we were marketing carrots or vitamins or something," Mike argued. "But the fact of the matter is that we have an energy soda. It's not poisonous, and there are lots on the market, and it's our job to help sell it. It isn't like we're trying to get them hooked on beer and cigarettes."

Jamal and Angela looked a little uncomfortable as the tension increased in the room between Jessica and Mike. Perhaps he was resentful that he didn't get the promotion to Department Manager. Mike certainly wasn't letting Jessica come in and push him around.

Jessica tried to proceed firmly but tactfully to assert her new authority. "I appreciate the dilemma that we are in with trying to market a, shall we say, 'non-health food' to young adults. You are right that we are hired to sell it and need to compete. But that doesn't mean that we abandon our ethics or sense of social responsibility toward children in the process, even if other companies are. We just have to be smarter than they are and work around the limitations. Why don't we consider putting this contest out for the general public?"

"That isn't really creating a buzz around youth when it comes to creating early loyal users and it doesn't allow us to get inside the minds of young people to know their lifestyles and preferences," Mike replied. "Kids can't compete with adults when it comes to making commercials. I think it either needs to be done at the middle school level or it isn't worth doing. When we start targeting adults, we compete with alcoholic drinks. With kids, all they really can choose is soda."

Jamal chimed in rather sheepishly to try to break the tension "It's not like they have to drink it anyway, they just get to be creative and work on a cool commercial. It's a creative and business endeavor more than a nutritional choice. It gets our name out there."

"Yes," Angela said. "And maybe we could donate their prize money to their school, so the whole thing ends up being charitable. That way it gives the school administration an incentive to encourage their students to participate as a class project."

"Yeah," Mike said with a smirk, "We can say the money has to be spent on a school vegetable garden, that way they get some vitamins with their caffeine after all. Everyone's happy."

The three of them waited for Jessica's response.

QUESTIONS:

6. How would you rank the different ethical concerns with this middle school contest scenario and why?
7. Can you identify who is using utilitarian arguments and who is using more duty-based arguments?
8. If you were Jessica, how would you respond to this idea about a middle school contest to create a new TV commercial for Vibe energy soda, knowing that you need to create some buzz for your new product or it might get yanked off the market? Is there a way to make it more ethical, or does the idea need to be discarded?
9. What if it was proposed as the high school or college level? How much of a difference would that make, ethically, and why?

To Beat ‘em or Join ‘em?

Nancy, the owner of the L.A. ad agency for which you work, has just called you into her office for an exciting announcement. “What’s the good news?” you ask expectantly. “A potential new client –a big one!” she exclaims, coming out from behind her desk to join you at the conference table, “And after the downturn in the economy lately, we sure could use it!” She plops down a fast food bag from Carl’s Jr. and asks if you want a fry. “No thanks,” you say, “Shouldn’t we be celebrating with something a little fancier?” “Not in this case,” Nancy replies as she pops the fry in her mouth, “because the client up for grabs *is* Carl’s Jr.!”

You know Carl’s Jr. as a major fast food chain in the Western U.S., and with the amount of advertising they do, particularly TV commercials, you agree it would be a needed money-maker for the agency, and your new largest client. Yet they are infamous for their outrageous and over-the-top advertising, aimed mainly at males. In fact, you and many others have been offended by some of their more sexist and insensitive ads – like girls eating burgers while riding mechanical bulls, Paris Hilton seductively washing a car in a leather bikini, and showing live chickens with the statement that all they are good for is eating. As a creative director, you immediately begin having concerns over how to pitch to this kind of client.

“So should we come to the pitch dressed up like Paris Hilton?” you ask sarcastically, “If we eat their food, we certainly wouldn’t look good in a bikini!” “Well, we can’t let our feminist political views get in the way of getting this account,” Nancy replied seriously. “If we expect to win them over, our campaign needs to match their playful style and appeal to masculine interests.” “Some might say *sexist* or *insensitive* and not *playful*,” you add, wrinkling your brow, “and that’s not our agency’s style.” “True,” Nancy admits, “It is a concern. But I’m afraid if we try a campaign pitch that’s too moderate or toned-down from their normal style, we’ll lose the account. After all, they left their other agency because of some personal disagreements and a merger, not because they were unhappy with the campaigns, from what I understand.”

“Well, should we pitch an over-the-top campaign to win the account and then as we form a closer relationship with them, try to engage them in discussions of another direction?” you ask. “That’s a possible strategy,” Nancy says thoughtfully, “I suppose that is better than them ending up at an agency with less integrity, but how honest is that? What they likely enjoy about their current strategy is that it generates a lot of water-cooler conversation and some free publicity, albeit often critical. Their first objective is to make money in a competitive market, and if their current image is successful at gaining attention and appealing to men and young people, then who are we to pass judgment and tell them it’s wrong. Besides, not all women hate it. After all, Paris Hilton apparently eats there,” She says with a laugh. “But seriously,” she concludes as she walks with you out into the hall, “Why don’t you mull it over with your team and let’s talk again tomorrow about how we’re going to play this pitch so we can get started on design ideas this week.”

“Will do,” you reply confidently. But as you walk back to your office, you are filled with anxiety over the right way to proceed. You decide to think it over for an hour before you assemble your creative team for input.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who are the concerned parties in this case, and what amount of loyalty or consideration do you owe each one? In answering this question, mention which approach might be “right” or preferable for each party.
2. Is freedom of speech the main issue here or social responsibility? Do they have to be opposites?
3. How much should your own values be imposed on a client’s account? What level of responsibility do you have for your client’s choices?
4. If you tried to get Carl’s Jr. to take a less offensive approach and they refused, could you then feel okay about representing them, having given them a more “ethical” or “responsible” option?
5. List three possible basic approaches to this pitch, and explain the ethical pros and cons of each, taking into consideration consequences and all parties’ perspectives/interests. Defend one of these approaches as your favorite.

POTENTIALLY OFFENSIVE ADVERTISING

When a “gift” may offend

You are a junior account executive for the Watson-Holmes advertising agency in Chicago. Your agency has just taken over the Pop-Cola account. Pop is a new entry into the Cola wars, and is young, hungry organization. It has already captured a small but growing share of the soft drink market. Instead of concentrating on the youth market, though, Pop is going after the 30-50-year-old market on the belief that they can successfully shift their allegiances by using icons and symbols they are familiar with and remember with nostalgic fondness.

Last year, under another agency, Pop-Cola ran a fairly successful series of ads playing off such cultural symbols as disco dancing (they got permission to use the iconic song “Staying Alive” from *Saturday Night Fever*), and peace rallies complete with crowded scenes of happy hippies chanting for Pop-Cola and peace. Although they were reasonably pleased with the results, they are seeking an agency with an “edge” to pump their product up a notch. You’re hoping to play an integral part in accomplishing that feat.

Your creative director has already come up with a series of ideas playing off childhood memories of home, school, and holidays. However, she is also pushing the creative envelope to obtain that “edge” that Pop-Cola seems to want. The proposed ads feature various nostalgic touchstones that should resonate with the target market, and with enough of a twist to get attention. For example, one ad shows a classroom full of bright-eyed 10-year-olds eagerly responding to questions about history from the teacher. The usual clichéd students appear—the smart girl, the dumb boy, the “pretty” girl, and the smart-alack. Pop-Cola is cleverly inserted into the scene via the smart-alack, complete with a comic twist edged with just enough sarcasm to make it both nostalgic and hip. So far, the Pop-Cola people are very happy with the approach.

Yesterday, the account executive, your immediate boss, ran the latest idea by the team prior to a meeting with the Pop-Cola people today. It is designed to come out during the Christmas holiday, a few months away. The team as a whole loves it, and there’s good chance the Pop-Cola execs will too. Here is the script treatment for a kick-off, 60-second television commercial.

SCRIPT TREATMENT: POP-COLA
“GIFT OF THE MAGI” 60SEC.

Open on peaceful evening over desert landscape. Small town is seen in the distance from hilltop view. Stars are coming out in the sky. One is obviously brighter than others.

Figure suddenly fills screen in foreground, then moves off with others quickly filling in behind. Sounds of clanking and shuffling along with snorts of animals.

Cut to cluster of people in heavy robes, animals snorting and stomping as figures dismount. We see that the animals are camels. Quick flashes of faces, bearded and grimy. Boxes are dropped on the ground making loud thumps. Turmoil surrounds the unloading.

The robed figures approach a rundown building. A light can be seen coming through the windows. As the figures pass the window, we can see a quick glimpse inside of other figures and animals. It looks like a barn.

As figures enter, close-up on woman's face as she looks up. It is radiant, head covered with a long scarf. Quick close-up of a man's face as he looks up, bearded, concerned.

The robed figures approach, seen from behind. They part slightly to reveal a rough, wooden box, packed with straw, in which a baby appears to be lying. Quick close-up of the baby's face, bright, serene.

The first robed figure places a box on the ground in front of the baby and opens it. It is full of gold coins. The woman's face lights up in close-up as does the bearded man's. The baby cries... we see its face, unhappy.

The second robed figure opens a similar box in front of the baby. It is filled with blocks of something wrapped in colored papers. Again, the woman's face lights up in close-up as does the bearded man's. The baby cries again, even more mournfully... we see its face, still unhappy.

The third robed figure opens yet another box. In it is a bottle of Pop-Cola. Same reaction from woman and bearded man, except now the baby stops crying and actually smiles, then beams his pleasure.

The voices of a heavenly choir rise in unison singing the Hallelujah Chorus.

The camera zooms quickly out until we're outside the building, now emanating bright light. Chorus rises to crescendo.

Announcer: "Pop-Cola. Always the right thing to bring."

QUESTIONS:

1. What, if anything, is ethically problematic about this case?
2. Who, if anyone, is potentially affected by this ad and how?
3. What ethical guidelines apply in this case?
4. What options are available to you?

Sports Team Names

You are the marketing director for the Watertown, New York, Mohawks, a minor-league baseball team. Watertown is a mid-size community of about 200 thousand people. It has two city colleges and a dozen high schools. The Mohawks have been around for nearly 50 years, and have been a source of much pride to the growing community. Last year, especially, the community got behind the team when it took a run at the state championship against a traditionally stronger rival from down-state. The Mohawks won and eventually went all the way to the regional level before being defeated by a much tougher team from Albany.

The Mohawks have been a popular attraction for summer visitors to Watertown, and a perennial source of pride for the community as a whole. However, recently there have been rumblings of discontent from the head of the History Department at Watertown City College. In a letter to the editor of the Watertown Daily News, the professor criticized the team and the city for allowing the name of a distinct group of Native Americans to be trivialized by its use as sports-team designation. Both the editor of the paper and the citizens of Watertown are familiar with the growing controversy over using Native American tribal names and generic references to American Indians in general for sports teams. The ongoing brouhaha over the Washington Redskins, Atlanta Braves, and Cleveland Indians is still fresh in most people's minds. However, this was hitting too close to home for many in Watertown.

The battle lines have already been drawn, and the arguments are familiar to both you, as the marketing director, and most of the people in a position to affect your decision in some way. Basically, the arguments in favor of keeping names such as Redskins, and Braves cite other ethnic designators for sports teams that don't seem to garner controversy: the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame, and the Minnesota Vikings, for instance. Some cite fan loyalty, tradition, and shared history as reasons for not abandoning traditional team names. Others say that naming a team after a Native American tribe is a sign of respect for the bravery of the American Indian in general. The other side of the argument cites the ongoing oppression of the Native American cultures by the now-dominant "white" culture of this country. Native Americans resent the use of logos as depicting them as mascots and call it racism, pure and simple. They feel that the continuing use of American Indian names for sports teams accomplishes nothing positive in the continuing struggle of Native Americans to regain their place in our society.

The newspaper hasn't taken a position on the name controversy yet, and the community hasn't had time to coalesce into camps over the issue. However, as marketing director for the team, it's your job to consider the ramifications of all potential consequences to your client before they happen—if possible.

Analyze this situation using the moral checklist in this chapter.

IMAGE VERSUS REALITY

Social Responsibility for SUVs: an Oxymoron?

Your agency has had the Lexus auto account for a year now – which is your pride and joy. As a young copywriter, you consider yourself lucky to be working on such a prominent account. You are involved in the roll-out of the launch of their latest SUV. One of the creative concepts that is most beloved by the account execs and your creative director is a humorous campaign featuring people who bought the new Lexus SUV going out to buy more upscale items to match the luxurious style of their new vehicle – like a bigger house, designer clothing, and a pedigree dog. The campaign slogan is “everything else is going to have to step it up a notch.” We see their old clothing being put in the dumpster, their smaller house being demolished, and their new shitzu turning his nose up at their orange tabby cat.

You have a good rapport with your boss so you go ahead and express your concern that this campaign seems to promote environmentally-unfriendly, over-consumptive lifestyles and shallow, materialistic values. He reminds you that the campaign is meant to be light-hearted but portray the new SUV as the most luxurious and stylish thing a person owns. “At least they aren’t replacing their kids,” he jokes. “But seriously, the only values we are worried about are making this product valued as a hot new item to buy,” he states pragmatically. “Come on, you know it will appeal to the middle to upper middle class urban and suburban demographic Lexus is targeting,” he goes on to explain, “and besides, people who are buying SUV’s aren’t die-hard environmentalists anyway, so the campaign won’t upset them.” “Yes, but they aren’t the only ones who are exposed to this national campaign,” you counter cautiously, “nor are they the only ones affected by the extra greenhouse gases the car emits or the pet overpopulation problem.” “Well you know that Lexus is currently working on an eco-friendly hybrid SUV that will be launched in a few years,” he explains, “when that comes out we can worry about less consumptive values at that time, when it is more appropriate to the product’s USP. For right now, you should remain focused on the fact that we are selling a luxury SUV, kiddo.” Recognizing the concern still showing on your face, he softens and offers you a chance to pitch an idea to him next week that you think is more responsible but still meets the client’s needs for premier image and sales. You thank him and head off to your cubicle to figure out how to make an expensive SUV promote responsible values – perhaps what you are asking for doesn’t make sense after all.

QUESTIONS:

1. What are the specific ethical problems you see with the “step it up a notch campaign” as it stands (consider interested parties, values, means, and ends)?
2. Explain how Kant, Aristotle and John Stuart Mill might have felt about this campaign.
3. What points, if any, did your creative director make that make the “step it up a notch” campaign seem more ethically sound than you might have originally thought?
4. If the product is not environmentally sound, and it is a luxury product aimed at people who like luxury, what obligation, if any, do ad agencies have to make the campaign more socially responsible than the product itself?
5. What solution do you see for the launch of this new vehicle, and what ethical improvements (or totally new concept) would you end up proposing to your boss?

DECEPTIVE ADVERTISING

A drink is a drink is a drink

A large manufacturer of distilled liquor has recently developed a series of television and print advertisements it has called “public service announcements” (PSAs). These PSAs demonstrate graphically* that the alcohol content of a single beer, a glass of wine and a mixed drink containing 1.5 ounces of distilled liquor is essentially the same. Their purpose, stated within the PSA, is to make the public aware that a person consumes the same amount of alcohol in each of these drinks and, thus, is just as likely to become intoxicated from one as from the others. The name of the company is given in the PSA as the sponsoring organization.

It is also widely known among marketing experts and others that sales of distilled liquor have suffered while sales of wine and beer have risen. This may be due in part to the fact that advertisement of distilled spirits is not currently being done in the broadcast media (although it is widely used in print). This is not an actual law, but an informal and longstanding agreement among advertisers, manufacturers and broadcasters. The president of the liquor company has denied any relationship between declining sales and the PSAs; however, the word within the company is that the two are, in fact, related. In addition, the three major television networks have refused to run the “PSA” calling it an advertisement for distilled spirits; however, the “PSA” has been subsequently run in *TV Guide* under the headline “Why are ABC, CBS and NBC afraid to run this message?”

Questions:

1. Is this a true public service announcement?
2. Is this a message in the public interest?
3. Is this an advertisement? If so, for what exactly?
4. What ethical theories justify either running or not running the spot on television.
5. What ethical justification, if any, can you cite for running beer and wine ads but not ads for “hard” liquor? If there is no ethical justification for this, what (ethically) is wrong with this differentiation?



ANALYZING PRINT ADS

Each of the following ads have potential ethical implications. For each ad, answer the following questions concerning its potential effects.

1. What do you think this ad is advertising?
2. What sort of publication do you think would run this ad?
3. What kind of audience would this ad be targeted to?
4. What sociological, political, economic or cultural attitudes are indirectly reflected in the advertisement? An advertisement may be about a pair of blue jeans but it might, indirectly, reflect such matters as sexism, alienation, stereotyped thinking, conformism, generational conflict, loneliness, elitism, and so on.
5. Who is affected by the ad and how are they affected?
6. Based on your answers to 4 and 5, what, if anything, is the ethical issue surrounding the ad?
7. Which of the ethical theories we have discussed have a direct bearing on your assessment of this ad? In what way?
8. Would you run this ad as it is?
9. If not, what would you do differently to sell this product (if you'd sell it at all)?



HEY,
WHAT DO YOU KNOW,
SHE THINKS
YOU'RE
FUNNY AGAIN.



A DIAMOND IS FOREVER

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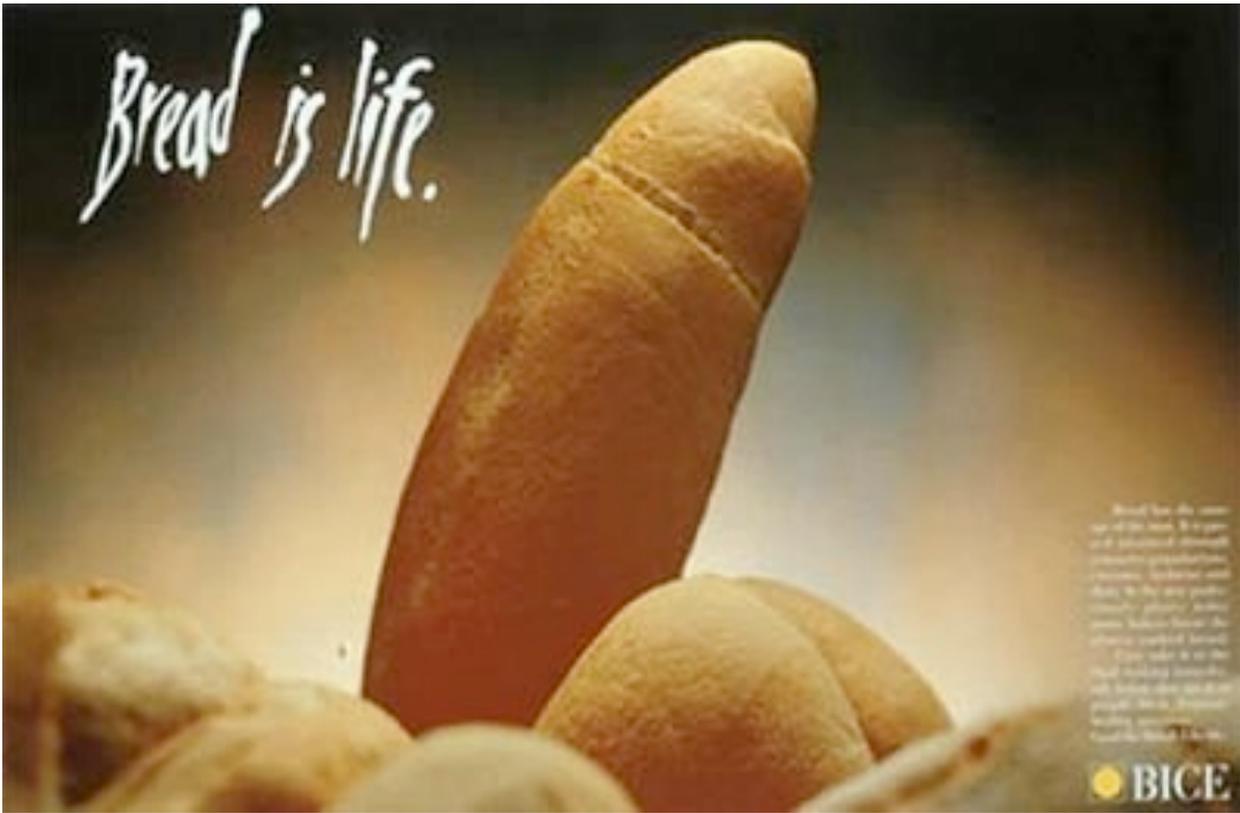




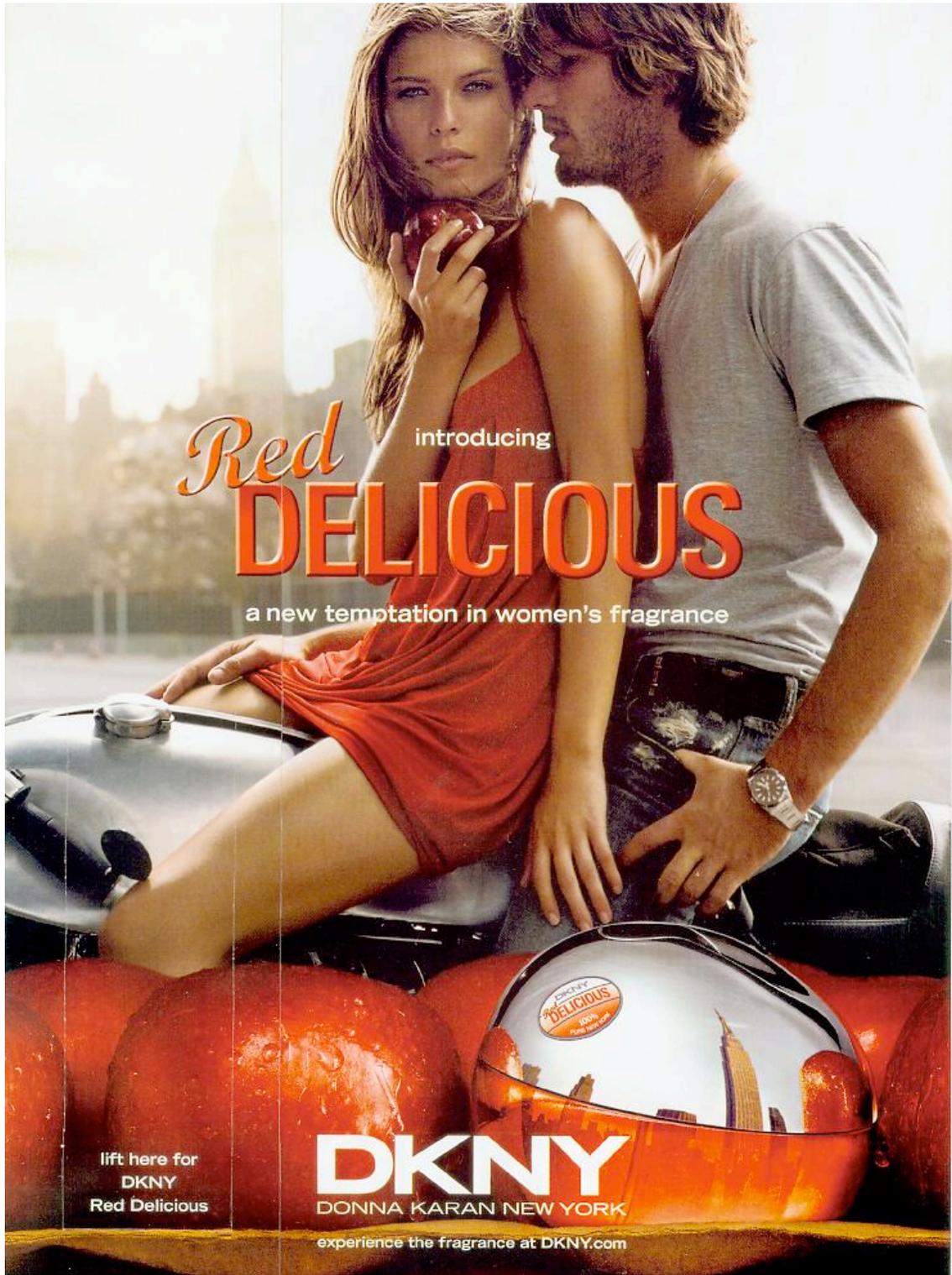










A romantic couple is featured in a city setting. The woman, with long brown hair, is wearing a red dress and holding a red apple. The man, with short brown hair and a beard, is wearing a grey t-shirt and jeans, leaning towards her. They are on a motorcycle. In the foreground, several red apples are scattered, and a silver motorcycle helmet is visible, reflecting the city skyline. The background shows a cityscape with a prominent skyscraper under a bright sky.

Red introducing
DELICIOUS
a new temptation in women's fragrance

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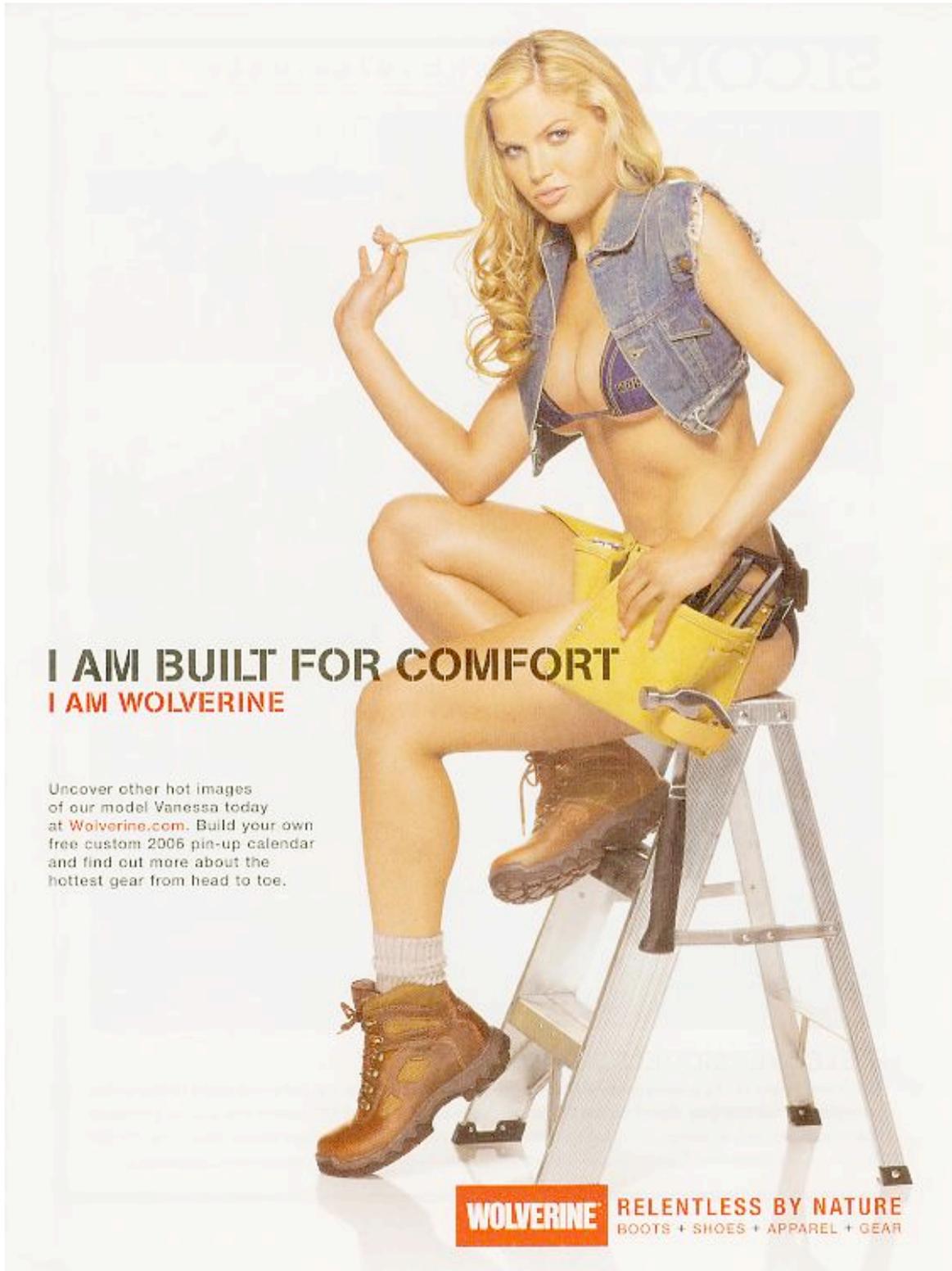
eye candy.

feast your eyes on the new MAXeye collection

A luscious, lashous collection: wet/dry shadow trios, dual applicators, perfecting mascara and precision liners. High-fashion, high-design indulgences from the new Max Factor. Tempted?

Carmen Electra's eye look: MAXeye Shadow Kits in Vintage Vixen and Premiere Pink, MAXeye Liner in Sage, and Lash Perfection in Richest Black. For a retailer near you and for personalized makeup tips, visit maxfactor.com

F A C T O R
makeup, maximized.



I AM BUILT FOR COMFORT
I AM WOLVERINE

Uncover other hot images of our model Vanessa today at Wolverine.com. Build your own free custom 2006 pin-up calendar and find out more about the hottest gear from head to toe.

WOLVERINE **RELENTLESS BY NATURE**
BOOTS + SHOES + APPAREL + GEAR

American Apparel is under 10 years of age – so it makes sense such a young brand has found a way into the hearts and wardrobes of the world's hippest kids.

From Seoul to Shoreditch, New York to the Netherlands, Fukuoka to France, American Apparel continue to put most of the high street to shame with their innovative designs - without resorting to copying designers. Their ads, complete with hot girls and boys from the AA staff, have a perfect Terry Richardson-style grunginess. The clothes live up to the ads' promises - and have ensured the brand's visibility in high class places. See the metallic leggings rubbing shoulders with Balenciaga and Givenchy in every fashion shoot for autumn/winter. And that bodycon low-back dress worn by headturners everywhere, in shades from black to grey to fuschia. They even expanded from cotton to jeans and cord – a hit with the East London teenage contingent. Children and animals get a look in too, with multicoloured babygrows and mini tees providing parents with an excuse to dress up Junior and Rover just like them. The latest demographic given the AA treatment is Kensington's locals. The brand recently opened their fourth store in the UK on High Street Ken. Get down there for some priceless pocket money style now. Lauren Cochrane americanapparel.net

Photography TUNG WALSH
Styling SAM RANGER

Sweeter than candy.
Better than cake.

Sasha wears leggings made into headress, dress and bodysuit by American Apparel.
Hair Pinos Papandrianos. Make up by Lucia Pica using Nars. Styling Assistance Abby Bennett. Model: Sasha at Verve.

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