

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Problem

In a sophisticated era like today, marketing a product no longer needs to use the services of billboards, posters, or even advertising on television. There are many ways to market a product in a way that is more unique and interesting. This is done of course also to attract customers' attention to the brand. The use of technology to advertise a product is often encountered in this era, especially in famous brands. One of the newest ways a brand markets its products is by making short films. This is often done by using YouTube as the platform. One of the advantages is that by using short films the brand can provide more space to introduce its products and provide additional information.

Advertising is one way for a company or brand to market and promotes their products. According to <https://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/advertisement-defin-advertisement/4>, retrieved on June 15th, 2020, advertising consists of all activities involved in presenting to a group a non-personal, oral or visual, openly sponsored identified message regarding a product, service, or idea. Whether it is verbal or non-verbal, advertising is used as one of the most effective media so that customers can be interested in and understand a product that is being advertised. It is also a way for a brand to convey messages and communicate with customers through the advertisements they make. Yet, over time the ads have developed and have many forms and variations on various platforms.

According to <https://gillette.com/en-us/about/our-story>, retrieved on July 18th, 2020, founded in the late 19th century, Gillette is an American brand of safety razors and other personal care products including shaving supplies. King Camp Gillette the founder of Gillette is a pioneer in the grooming category as well as the barbershop industry. Back in the late 1800s, there was a rapid change in men's facial trends. Clean chins and cheeks and a well-manicured mustache were a popular style among men in that era. Before Gillette's shaving razor was invented, men could go to a barber two to three times a week or shave themselves. Unfortunately, this is considered dangerous at the time and also very inconvenient and unpractical. We can see that Gillette is a brand that has a big influence on the

men community. With historical background on changing the men's community in term of appearance and style with their product, Gillette takes a step forward and brings men's culture for a campaign for their products.

In January 2019, Gillette published an advertisement with a title “We Believe: The Best Men Can Be” in the form of a short film with a duration of 01:48 (one minute and forty-eight seconds). This advertisement is very controversial, especially in America where Gillette brand is originated. Both, the advertisement and the brand itself receive a praise and criticism from the people who have watched the advertisement. This is due to the many different opinions that arise from various people about the message contained in this advertisement. According to <https://time.com/550315/gillette-razors-toxic-masculinity/>, retrieved on July 20th, 2020, a new Gillette commercial calling out “toxic masculinity” has sparked both praise for and criticism of the razor company. The new “We Believe” ad — a 48-second spot that Gillette shared on its social media accounts on Monday — plays on the company’s tagline of “Is this the best a man can get?” to address issues like bullying, sexual harassment and the #MeToo movement. “Is this the best a man can get? Is it?” a voiceover says in the ad. “We can’t hide from it, it’s been going on far too long. We can’t laugh it off, making the same old excuses. But something finally changed. And there will be no going back. Because we...We believe in the best in men. To say the right thing. To act the right way. Some already are, in ways big and small. But some is not enough. Because the boys watching today will be the men of tomorrow.” Since the commercial’s debut, some have voiced their support for its rebuke of the “boys will be boys will be boys will be boys” mentality while others have threatened to go so far as to boycott both Gillette and parent company Procter & Gamble. However, despite backlash, it sounds like the company has no plans to pull the spot. “We expected debate. Actually a discussion is necessary. If we don’t discuss and don’t talk about it, I don’t think real change will happen,” Pankaj Bhalla, Gillette’s North America brand director, told CNN Business.

According to <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jan/15/gillette-metoo-ad-on-toxic-masculinity-cuts-deep-with-mens-rights-activists>, retrieved on July 22nd, 2020, Engaging with the #MeToo movement, the company’s new

advertising campaign plays on its 30-year tagline “The best a man can get”, replacing it with “The best men can be”. The advertisement features news clips of reporting on the #MeToo movement, as well as images showing sexism in films, in boardrooms, and of violence between boys, with a voice over saying: “Bullying, the MeToo movement against sexual harassment, toxic masculinity, is this the best a man can get?” The advertisement shows men intervening to stop fights between boys and calling other men out when they say inappropriate things sexually to women in the streets. “We believe in the best in men: To say the right thing, to act the right way. Some already are in ways big and small. But some is not enough. Because the boys watching today will be the men of tomorrow,” the voiceover says. Gillette has also promised to donate \$1m a year for three years to non-profit organizations with programs “designed to inspire, educate and help men of all ages achieve their personal “best” and become role models for the next generation”.

In this case, there are two types of signs that the writer finds in this advertisement. The first one is a verbal sign which is conveyed in speech or texts form. The second sign is a non-verbal sign which is conveyed through gestures in the video. The main focus of this research is linguistics, specifically a semiotic study. This research will use semiotic theory from Roland Barthes involving denotation, connotation, myth and hegemonic masculinity theory from Raewyn Connell.

Mythologies theory from Roland Barthes will be the main theory used for this research for interpreting the myth. In which, theories regarding masculinity will also be used to complement this research. The theory is the hegemonic masculinity by Raewyn Connell. As we all know gender issues have been a topic that often brought up whether it is from a feminist or a masculinity perspective. Hopefully, this theory will give more insight into what masculinity is and a better understanding of its concept.

1.2. Identification of the Problem

Based on the background mentioned above, the writer identifies the main problem in Gillette’s short film “We Believe: The Best Men Can Be” is the myths that appears through non-verbal signs in the advertisement.

Based on the identification of the problem above, the writer assumes the myths that appears in Gillette's short film "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" could form the image about masculinity and convey the message about the product to the people through the myths which are created in that advertisement.

1.3. Limitation of the Problem

There are several limitations that need to be noted in this research to make it more focused. First, the data in this research will only be taken from Gillette's short film "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" advertisement. Specifically the video will be downloaded from Gillette's official YouTube channel that is available on YouTube for public. Second, the writer will analyzes video per scene. The writer examines every scene with a possible sign appearance to interpret the meaning of that particular scene.

In this research, the writer uses two semiotics theories, first, Barthes's theory of mythology to interpret the myth in each scenes of the advertisement. Lastly, to support this research the writer will uses the hegemonic masculinity theory as supporting theory.

1.4. Formulation on the Problem

Based on the limitation of the problem, the writer classify the problem into the form of questions as follows:

1. What are the myths interpretation found in the "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" short film?
2. What is the relation between myths interpretation and masculinity?

1.5. Objective of the Research

Based on the formulation of the problem above, the writer aims to show that the objective of this research. The writer makes several steps as follow:

1. To find out the myths interpretation found in the "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" short film.
2. To find out the relation between myth interpretation and masculinity.

1.6. Methods of the Research

This research uses qualitative approach. Berg (2009:2) defines qualitative approach can often be far more involved, intense work, and produce data that require hours of analysis that cannot be done solely by a software program, It means that uses mostly non-numeric data such as narrative text. The writer uses descriptive method. According to Manuel and Medel (1998:25), descriptive method involves the description, recording, analysis and interpretation of the present nature, composition, or process of phenomena. The focus is on the prevailing conditions, on how a person, group, or thing behaves or functions at the time of the study. Sanchez (1980:24) cite the process of descriptive method as going beyond mere gathering and tabulation of data. It involves the element of interpretation with the meaning or significance of what is described. Thus, description is often combined with comparison and contrast involving measurement, classification, interpretation and evaluation.

The data source are taken from Gillette YouTube Channel, by watching it through <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=koPmuEyP3a0>. Data used for this research are the scenes in Pepsi advertisement. The data analysis for this research are as follows: 1) watching the videos, 2) divides the advertisements into eleven scenes, 3) analysing the first order of signification, 4) analysing the second order of signification, 5) interpret the myth based on the analysis of the first and second order of signification, 6) find the relation between the interpretation of the myth and masculinity, 7) making conclusions based on data.

1.7. Benefit of the Research

This research is expected to provide benefits and support in the semiotic field. By focusing the research on myth interpretation, hopefully, it can be a reference in the future research about myth specifically Roland Barthes's mythology theory. From this research, we can understand what message the advertisement delivered to the audience from visual and oral views through myth interpretation.

1.8. Systematic Organization of the Research

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the writer explains about background of the problem, identification of the problems, limitation of the problems, formulation of the problems, objective of the research, methods of the research, about the analysis of myth interpretation about masculinity in Gillette's "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" advertisement through semiotics theory.

CHAPTER 2: FRAMEWORK OF THE THEORIES

This chapter explains the theoretical framework of linguistics. This chapter explains more specifically about myth according to Roland Barthes and hegemonic masculinity according to Raewyn Connell.

CHAPTER 3: THE MYTH INTERPRETATION ABOUT MASCULINITY IN GILLETTE'S SHORT FILM 'WE BELIEVE: THE BEST MEN CAN BE', A SEMIOTIC STUDY

In this chapter, the writer examines and analyzes the data in order to answer the research questions. It consists of the writer's analysis on myth about masculinity that appears in Gillette's short film "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" advertisement that was released in 2019 and the myth relation to masculinity in American culture.

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the writer concludes the analysis to complete study. The chapters above are followed by references, scheme of the research, research poster, curriculum vitae, and other required attachments.