

# Representation of Women in Television Advertisement of *You.C 1000 Vitamin Drink* Presenting Miss Universe Models

Hudha Abdul Rohman<sup>1</sup> and Yulasteriyan<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Humanities, University of Padjadjaran, Bandung, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup> Faculty of Social dan Political Sciences, University of Padjadjaran, Bandung, Indonesia

**Abstract:** *Television and advertisement are of culture construction outcome presented in an audio-visual form. The presence of advertisement in television turns out to be an important element in order to bargain for new ideologies and purposes. This study examined the advertisement of You.C 1000 Vitamin Drink presenting the winner of Miss Universe models. You.C 1000 always features the winner of Miss Universe models with appreciable content and Indonesian setting with cultural and artistic touch. This study focused on the phenomena of women's representation in a product advertisement by employing the perspective of television codes by John Fiske in three levels, namely reality, representation, and ideology. The analysis comprises brief explanation on You.C 1000 Vitamin Drink advertisement presenting the winner of Miss Universe model, brief explanation on television media and advertisement, representation of women in the advertisement, the construction meaning and social ideology, and women and body image. Nowadays, Western standard still appears to be the reference and world trend setter in terms of women's beauty. This somehow offers an interesting social phenomenon to be examined since the issue of beautiful women's body image becomes an opportunity for any enterprises to attract consumers from television audiences and subsequently to establish a new ideology. This eventually proves that women and their body image has become the selling point on the promoted product of enterprises.*

**Keywords:** *advertisement, representation, females, body image, miss universe*

## 1. Introduction

Television and advertising are of culture construction outcomes presented in an audio-visual form. The presence of advertisement in television turns out to be an important element in order to bargain for new ideologies and purposes because interpellation in an ad occupies an important place. Advertisement presents not only a product, but also an imagination and conception to the audience. According to the author's point of view, the subject of television advertisement appears to be an interesting topic to discuss due to its great opportunity to provide beneficial ideas and perspectives employed as the cultural representation that might sustainably develop.

Through this paper, the author would like to outline the perspective of television codes by John Fiske, which is divided into three levels, in which the three of them are inseparable one another. In his book, *Television Culture* (Fiske, 1987:5), television codes are classified into three levels of discourses. In elaborating television codes of John Fiske, the author picks a subject of television advertisement presenting Miss Universe models, which is *You.C 1000 Vitamin Drink*. The main reason of this is that *You.C 1000* advertisements have always been displayed in several versions presenting the winner of a world beauty contest with such an appreciable content; not to mention the setting of Indonesian natural spots with its beautiful touch of art and culture.

The author begins the discussion by elaborating John Fiske's conception on television and advertisement, women representation on advertisement, construction meaning and social ideology, and finally women and body image. In order to assist the elaboration of theories and objects of the advertisement, the television codes proposed by John Fiske is applied holistically within three levels, namely reality, representation, and ideology. Firstly, the author begins the discussion with the elaboration of advertisement in television.

## 2. Discussions

### 2.1. Advertisement as an Important Element in Television Media

A product advertisement in television media is generally displayed repeatedly. This aims to influence the audience so that they could be “hypnotized” so that they are willing to see, to pay attention, and eventually to purchase the product. Advertising is considered as the most powerful method for any enterprises to introduce and to market their product to the public. It is employed as a communication tool to motivate the potential buyers and to promote the seller of a product or service. This, definitely, is intended to influence the public opinion, and also to win the public support so that they could think and act in accordance with the purpose of the advertisers. Therefore, advertising in television media plays an important role to shape new ideologies in a society.

The creation of an advertisement brings the message of a product, and the presentation would apply any kinds of persuasive approach in order to attract, to persuade, and to convince the consumers to consume the product. Such approaches are recognized as the enterprises’ strategy to influence and to incapacitate consumers’ mind without any violence but ideology internalization as attached in its “product branding”. Within their subconscious minds, the consumers are motivated to confirm the offers without criticizing them. This, as what stated by Jacques Ellul regarding the concept of propaganda, is a way to achieve some power by manipulating a group of people or the mass by psychological ways, or by employing such a power with the support of the mass (Marlin, 2009:19).

Meanwhile according to Paul Copley, “*advertising is by and large seen as an art – the art of persuasion – and can be defined as any paid for communication designed to inform and/ or persuade*”. Based on the conception above, advertisement is basically a means of communication for enterprises or producers to promote their products or services to public, especially their customers, through the mass media. Besides, any kinds of advertisement are meant for the same purposes, which are to provide information and to persuade the consumers to try and to consume the product or service presented in the ads. Several enterprises would even allocate most of their budget for advertising, and one of them is the producer of *You C 1000*, which advertises their product by featuring the winner of Miss Universe, in which the shooting takes place at several exotic places in Indonesia.

*An advertisement could impact the society more effectively if presented within the prime time, which involves a complete audience segmentation in terms of ages and social status. This, somehow, is in accordance with Jean Seaton’s opinion on Determinism “that the power of media is applied collusively with the ruling class” (Barton, 2008). Such an explanation implies that media is the authority for distributing information quickly and massively with the help of financial support through the compensation of fund network distribution means of a product, in which the target indicates several signs of similar purposes. In the perspective of communication, television advertisement is a series of mysterious message covered in a storyline broadcasted through the transmission of electromagnetic waves toward the audience to provide information of a product or to offer a product or service through the reflection of television advertisement.*

The notion above is supported by the perspective of Novianti (2002), which states that advertising plays an important role in several ways. Firstly, it forms and develops positive image of an enterprise and its products through a planned and systematic socialization process. Secondly, it shapes positive public opinion toward the enterprise and its product. Thirdly, it develops public trust toward the product and the enterprise. Fourthly, it establishes effective and efficient communication with the public, so there would be similar understanding of a product or service offered by the enterprise. Finally, it develops knowledge transfer of an enterprise that allows people to own sympathy, empathy, and even in relation to any kinds of public activities.

*You.C 1000 Vitamin Drink* advertisement has the power to form massive public opinion. The understanding of this advertisement offer obtains exceptional attention through its tagline, which is *Vitamin Orange*. By looking on the tagline, the audience would notice that the beverage is a healthy stuff which is free of any harmful chemicals. However, the ingredients used and labeled as natural substance are not entirely natural due to the use of several synthetic chemicals that might be harmful. These ingredients include flavoring, color enhancer, *calcium*, *lactate*, and *niacinamide*. Considering the ingredients used in the product, the public opinion, which initially assumes *You C 1000* is a healthy beverage with vitamin, would probably change.

Further, in describing John Fiske’s codes, the author firstly attempts to interpret the *You C 1000* advertisement within three levels. The first level is reality, which comprises several social codes namely appearance, environment, behavior, gesture, and expression. The second is representation, which comprises several social

codes namely camera, lighting, editing, and music. The third is ideology, which comprises several social codes namely gender, race, class, capitalism, patriarchy, and feminism and its development. These three levels are employed to describe the meaning of *You C 1000* advertisement that displays the representation of beautiful and healthy women.

## 2.2. “Western” as the Global Beauty Trend Setter

Western somehow happens to be the global trend setter in terms of women beauty standard, in which it becomes the reference for most women in the world. Beautiful inside and outside, which is commonly symbolized by thin, sexy, and tall body with bright skin, appears to be the dream for women across the world. Physical appeal still becomes the main consideration for women to be recognized as beautiful figures. Thin and tall women are recognized as beautiful whereas fat and short women are classified otherwise.

According to Melliana (2006), such a standard is different from the one of 1950s, in which the society admired women with fat body. Subsequently, during 1960s thin body becomes the symbol of beauty, supported with the current fashion trend of mini skirt that displayed a pair of long and concave legs. 1960s mass media gave rise to thin figures without any specific processes to initiate this to appear in the public. Within those years, there was a model named Twiggy whose height was approximately 170 centimeters whereas her weight was only 49 kilograms. Twiggy, at that time, was able to alter the women body-shape image in the West, and even women in various part of the world connected with media industry had been also making the idealization of women’s body shape. In addition, Twiggy’s physical appearance was admitted as the symbol of Western beauty at that era. This eventually becomes the background of how thin body becomes the symbol of beauty for women –not those with fat and short body. In *You C 1000* advertisement, it is clearly visible that the healthy “vitamin” beverage enterprise carries a new ideology that the real definition of beautiful is those with thin, slim, and tall physical appearance through the pick of Miss Universe winners as the models.

Indirectly, *You C 1000* advertisement offers plenty of meaning sphere from various perspectives. Perceived from the social codes level proposed by John Fiske, the issues of gender and feminism arise. The codes put women as the main object in promoting the beverage product. In spite of the product, these codes rather focus on the models of the advertisement, the winners of a world beauty contest called *Miss Universe*. Women turn out to be the main attraction for the enterprise to introduce a vitamin beverage product to the public. In promoting *You C 1000*, the producer perceives women as promising commodity toward the sale of the product.

We can see in the advertisement that all women (Miss Universe) has flawless appearance with sexy body and bright skin. Beautiful inside and outside is symbolized with the beauty of Miss Universe models, which somehow motivates the audience to follow the healthy lifestyle, and one of them is by consuming the “vitamin” beverage. This definitely raises new public opinion and ideology on capitalism of a product that the definition of beautiful is delivered by the models of *You C 1000*. Western culture in this ad has successfully dominated the ideological views of society that the winners of Miss Universe become the role model of beauty (inside and outside) women in the whole world.

*You.C 1000 Vitamin Drink* advertisement presents the figures of Miss Universe winners from year to year. The first model was Leila Lopez, the winner of Miss Universe 2011. In the ad, the models were displayed having unbright skin, wearing batik, and there were also several women with different skin color and loose hair. Then in the second advertisement, a woman figure with loose hair, who was the winner of Miss Universe 2008, Dayana Mendoza, was featured. She was presented as a Balinese woman figure drinking the product together while smiling and laughing, which implicitly means she is a healthy woman with such a joyful life. In the next version of advertisement, there was a figure with unloose hair, Miss Universe 2012 named Olivia Culpo, playing around with kids. Then, the winner of Miss Universe 2014, Paulina Vega, starred the next version of the advertisement, in which she acted as a Balinese woman drinking together with her colleagues as well as displaying several men cruising her boat. This indicates that women are displayed in Western version with flawless appearance, tall, and healthy-looking in doing their activities in the advertisement.

Furthermore, to support the models performance, the advertisement also displayed the winner of Miss Universe 2013, Gabriela Isler, who was dancing with unloose hair. She was displayed as a Balinese woman learning to dance together with several kids. In the last version of the advertisement, a woman figure with unloose hair, Pia Wutzbach, who is the winner of Miss Universe 2015, was described having a great time enjoying the beauty of nature. This version somehow had a richer composition than the previous one with the displays of a woman being applied make-up, a man holding a baby, and a woman helping a cat. She was also

displayed doing several activities with a group of women wearing kebaya, also with environmental activists along the sea shore, with several female *Pendet* dancers and male *Kecak* dancers, and also the view of a swimming woman. The description of these advertisement compositions featuring several Miss Universe models indicates that in order to be beautiful, sexy, and healthy women with all of their activities, we have to consume You C 1000, as presented by the models of Miss Universe.

Besides, the role of Miss Universe models in this advertisement is also employed to direct public opinion on the symbol of beautiful and healthy women after consuming this vitamin beverage. Beautiful and healthy women, which in this case is represented by Miss Universe, comprises new interpretations. The physical appearance of Miss Universe, who is beautiful, sexy, and healthy, might indirectly manipulate what has been perceived by the public about the advertisement. It turns out that the body of Miss Universe models, whom considered beautiful and healthy, contains a lot of dangerous chemicals as the result of the consumed vitamin drink. This definitely contradicts the tagline advertisement, which is orange vitamin drink made of natural ingredients. Viewed from the advertisement components, we are able to figure out that all models starred in the advertisement applied Western beauty standard, which apparently becomes the reference for women across the world.

### 2.3. Body Image and Women

The concept of body image has been employed by many experts to examine human's understanding on his own body. Body image is a multidimensional phenomenon including the aspect of cognition, affection, and attitude (Cash, 2002). Body image is a complex concept that affect how people feel about themselves and how they behave. It has been defined as "the picture of our own body which we form in our mind" (Cash and Pruzinsky, 1990)". This means that body image is a complex concept that affects one's feeling of his or her body and how they behave. It can also be defined as "one's body image shaped by their own mind (Cash & Pruzinsky, 1990).

Concerning on the body image explanation, there are several definitions proposed by several experts regarding body image. Cash (1994) stated that body image is one's evaluation and affective experience on his or her characteristics, and it might be said that investment on physical appearance is of the major part of self-evaluation. Meanwhile, Cash and Pruzinsky (1990) proposed that body image is the combination between image, fantasy, and individual meaning regarding body's part and function, which is classified as the part of self-image components and basic self-representation. Women and body image is strongly associated in the making of advertisement in order to deliver the meaning and purpose of the producer.

As cited by Cash & Pruzinsky (2002), Tiggemann stated that media provides ideal description of women and men figures, which might influence one's body image. Tiggemann (in Cash & Purzinsky, 2002) also suggested that mass media is the most influential aspect in socio-culture context. Kids and adolescents nowadays spend most of their time by watching television. Television audiences are frequently shown several advertisements with women figure as self-beauty representation. They might be the advertisement of soap, shampoo, detergent, food, beverage, and any other products. Women's body image becomes the asset for any enterprises to attract consumers from the television media through the presented advertisement. Furthermore, the advertisement of *You C 1000* is presented in several versions with different models and settings.

The high consumption of media might influence consumer's perspective. The shows in media frequently describes women beauty standard as those with thin body. Otherwise, media describes the standard of ideal men as those with muscular body. Enterprises are competing to display beautiful women according to the beauty standard nowadays. If the local version of beauty still cannot represent the beauty standard, enterprises would spend more of their budget to employ women of international version for the advertisement models, like the winner of Miss Universe. Due to the intense exposure from the television, most women would gradually internalize that beautiful women are those with Western characteristics.

Women figures have always been presented in several advertisements, including *You C 1000 Vitamin Drink*. Miss Universe models become the symbol of women beauty with healthy and flawless appearance as it is a world beauty contest that requires the participant to possess admirable physical appeal and personality. Women femininity in advertisement becomes the focus in order to attract consumers despite, in fact, there are several advertisements that are actually unrelated to women's product. This phenomenon is proven by Prabasmoro (2007) who stated women sexuality could be co-modified. There are various products which are actually unrelated to women's body, but advertised by women figure. It merely aims to benefit the women body to increase selling point of the product. The vitamin drink product displays Miss Universe models with the nuance

of Indonesian women hospitality, with the display of Indonesian culture and art such as batik and several tourism spots like Bali Island.

Within the context of this advertisement display, beautiful and healthy women are symbolized by the winners of Miss Universe who regularly consume the vitamin drink. This proves that both women's body and Indonesian art and culture becomes the commodity to sell with the purpose to influence the public perception. Such a discourse authenticates that beauty and women's femininity cannot be separated from social and cultural construction.

### 3. Conclusion

Many television advertisements are created and developed by the industry of television media with various ideologies. These advertisements represent the culture and ideology of capitalism. The implied message in every image product would somehow give impacts toward the emergence of new lifestyle in a society, especially women in releasing their consumptive and hedonistic desire. The effect of television advertisement would turn to be negative if people (in this case women) are not able to filter it. If such a phenomenon is not well anticipated, other people especially teenagers would internalize the values for they tend to live by imitating what is presented in television advertisements. Subsequently, it can be concluded that women representation in this advertisement tends to visualize the gender bias toward modern women. Women are not aware that they have been used by enterprises for reckoning that such a standard is the urge for them to fulfill their needs (to be a healthy and beautiful woman). The global standard of beauty still applies Western version with bright skin and tall physical appearance, like what is presented in *You C 1000* advertisement. This somehow proves that women and their body image become the selling point of the promoted product.

### 4. Acknowledgment

The author would like to acknowledge and express gratitude to the Indonesia Endowment Fund for Education (LPDP) for their support of Hudha Abdul Rohman's research.

### 5. References

- [1] Burton, Graeme. *Media dan Budaya Populer*. Penyadur: Alfathri Adlin. Yogyakarta: Jalasutra. 2008. **(Book style)**
- [2] Butler, Judith J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and The Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge. 1990.
- [3] Cash, Thomas F. *The Body Image Workbook*. New York: New Harbinger Publications. 2002.
- [4] Fiske, John. *Television Culture*. London: Routhledge. 1987.
- [5] Marlin, Randal. *Propaganda and The Ethics Persuasion*. Canada: Broadview Press. 2002.
- [6] Novianti, Ratna. *Jalan Tengah Memahami Iklan*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar. 2002.
- [7] Prabasmoro, Aquarini Priyatna. *Kajian Budaya Feminis: Tubuh, Sastra, dan Budaya Pop*. Yogyakarta: Jalasutra. 2007
- [8] Rowbotham, Sheila. *Women in Movement: Feminism and Social Action*. New York: Routhledge. 1992.
- [9] S. Melliana, Annastasia. *Menjelajah Tubuh: Perempuan dan Mitos Kecantikan*. Yogyakarta: LKiS. 2006.