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What Women Want: Masculine Images and Gender Construction in the Old Spice and Dos Equis Ad Campaigns

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Abstract

The award-winning Dos Equis "The Most Interesting Man in the World" and Old Spice "The Man Your Man Could Smell Like" campaigns are unique not only for their creativity and humor, but also for their portrait of ideal men. These campaigns propose idealized images of masculinity which engage societal conceptions of manhood in the 21st century. Using rhetorical criticism, we can identify underlying ideologies in these campaigns, which combine the traditional and modern masculine constructs to present a new identity that aims but ultimately fails to be universally pleasing. The campaigns also reinforce sexist views of women as child-like and superficial and homosexuality as unnatural.

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Most of us are identified by our gender before we are even born. Peering at our blurry image on the ultrasound machine, the doctor immediately gives us our first label: “boy” or “girl.” From the moment it is realized, this designation has immediate and lasting consequences. It will determine the type of name our parents choose, the color walls they paint our nursery, the type of clothes they will buy for us. Shortly after entering the world, we are given a hospital band reading “Baby Boy” or “Baby Girl” and bestowed with a small hospital cap in pink or blue---pink for a girl, blue for a boy. Later it will influence the way we speak, act, and even dress.

Based on our gender, society develops certain expectations which we are all expected to adhere to. One of the most significant mediums through which it conveys these expectations is the media. Two interesting artifacts that offer a window into the ways media constructs gender are the commercial advertising campaigns of Old Spice (“The Man Your Man Could Smell Like”) and Dos Equis (“The Most Interesting Man in the World”). Both of these television commercial campaigns have been largely popular, and both present an idealized and unrealistic depiction of masculinity. Although the primary characters of the two campaigns differ in appearance and outward characteristics, at their core they present some similar heroic and romantic ideals.

In their spokesmen, both campaigns present clear attributes of the ideal man. He is confident, charming, and suave. He is secure in his own identity. The company of both women and men is superfluous to him-- he might choose to engage them if he wishes, but since his success in all his endeavours is assured, he is not really interested. He is independent and free to

make his own decisions. This, the media claims, is the masculine ideal. While presenting their Adonises in physical form, however, both Old Spice and Dos Equis proceed to poke fun at the ideal. Both ads satirize the image of the heroic male with unrealistic and dramatic displays of heroism and masculinity. This conflict--- between laughing at the ideal while embodying it--- pokes fun at the way the media has constructed gender identity, even while accepting some of these constructs as a reality that can be used to sell a product. While drawing viewers' attention to the impossibility of achieving the ideal (and therefore the absurdity of attempting it), the campaigns acknowledge that it is desirable. Notably, the construction of male identity in both ad campaigns also implies a construction of female identity developed from the interaction between the two genders. While not ostensibly making any statements about women, the actions of their spokesmen imply a subtle disinterest and disrespect towards females. Similarly, they refuse to acknowledge feminine characteristics in their ideal, thus rejecting homosexuality as a possible attribute of the ideal man.

In presenting their masculine ideal, Old Spice and Dos Equis reinforce many of the positive characteristics of the old ideal of masculinity while solidifying its negative characteristics of homophobia and sexism. By studying these two examples, we can better understand the ways in which the media reflects the ideas of society and influences the way individuals see themselves and their world.

I. Gender and Media

As anyone visiting a hospital nursery can see, the difference between the sexes is emphasized from the beginning. One of the fundamental divisions of our social system is the division of gender (Hare-Mustin 36). Based on our biological sex, it is expected that we will

develop tendencies to think and act in ways that are unique to our sex (West and Zimmerman 127-8). As we grow, these designations are not limited to baby names and color preferences of nurseries. They affect the way we are raised and the expectations society has for us. It is assumed that as we grow, we will develop natural "differences in behavior, attitudes, and dispositional traits" which will lead to "gender stereotyping" (Marini 98). This stereotyping reflects the differences that society expects to see between the genders, rather than legitimate biological variations. Although some changes have been made in the way we view gender, we still live with these social expectations---different for the sexes---that form what scholars know as our "gender construction."

Although biology and common sense both argue that differences do exist between the sexes, these differences do not account for the wide gap placed between them by their societal roles. Here scholars differentiate between the words "sex" and "gender." Sex is something you are born with; it refers to the unique differences between the blue and the pink clad babies. Gender is a concept you identify with over time. We mistake it for being innate because it is nearly inseparable from actions that we repeatedly perform on a daily basis. It is this regular repetition of gender that constitutes our ultimate gender identity (Milestone & Meyer 14). It is a product of one's social environment, not a biological inevitability. "Gender is a culture's conception of the qualities considered desirable for women and men, a construction created and maintained through various forms of rhetoric" (Foss 157). It is tradition and society's expectations that put girls in pink nurseries and boys in blue, not the inevitable result of biological forces beyond our control. While there are legitimate differences "between the sexes, what we often consider as being 'masculine' or 'feminine' are the results of repeated performance of societal expectations, rather than the result of nature" (Milestone & Meyer 12).

These social processes influence the way we construct our identities, fundamentally altering the way we view ourselves and each other.

For researchers West and Zimmerman, sex and gender are not interchangeable, but uniquely different terms. They define sex as, "a determination made through the application of socially agreed upon biological criteria for classifying persons as males or females" while gender is "the activity of managing situated conduct in light of normative conceptions of attitudes and activities appropriate for one's sex category." Men and women do things considered "feminine" or "masculine" as a daily proof of their gender category (127). In their notable 1987 article, "Doing Gender," West and Zimmerman argued that Harold Garfinkle's 1967 research with a transsexual had proven that "gender is created through interaction and at the same time structures interaction." The transsexual's successful mental and emotional transition from male to female demonstrates that gender is something that may be learned, even later in life and without the usual resources and social cues (131). Men and women are not so incapable of understanding each other, and are perhaps more similar than they may believe. According to West and Zimmerman, we act according to preset expectations for our behavior (called "gender roles") to show our gender. This "doing gender" solidifies our identities as being either male or female more than any biological influences do (127).

While changes in culture and, in particular, the advent of feminism have had some success in altering these expectations, they have by no means disappeared. With the rise of feminism and the increasingly vocal minorities of homosexuals and transsexuals, the social norms that were once assumed to be natural are no longer considered as concrete as those obvious biological differences. Women are no longer expected to act as the weaker sex, both physically and intellectually, with interests that do not extend beyond children and the home, but

they are still considered to be the primary care givers of their children and are expected to maintain their domestic chores in addition to their new career-related responsibilities (Hare-Mustin 36). Scholars attribute women's lack of attention to the inequality of this situation to their sense of gender identity. "As feminist scholars have noted, many women view the performance of domestic labor as both a demonstration of their love and concern for family members and as a crucial means of identity construction" (Erickson 340).

The rise of interest in gender studies and the term "gender" began with the advent of feminism (Milestone and Meyer 12). Given their long-held role in society as the inferior sex, women were historically viewed only through the lens of male thought. Pointing to males' complaints that women are impossible to understand, modern feminists questioned how the history books could provide an accurate description of what it meant to be female. Feminists demanded a new, more realistic view of women and what it meant to be women, beyond what men wanted or expected. With scholars focusing on women and their story, men were, for many years, ignored as a subject for research. History was overwhelmingly the story of men, after all, so why should they be given continued attention? However, as scholars sought to find women's place in history, they also began to question where men's place was. An account of kings and battles does little to help us understand what it means to be a man. "As women's studies brought women into history, men's studies began to ask how women had experienced history as *men*, as carriers of masculinity. To be 'masculine' is to have a particular psychological identity, social and cultural script, place in the labor force, and sense of the sacred" (Milestone and Meyer xii). The 1990's saw increasing interest in learning what it really means to be of the male gender (Gill 29).

Scholars agree that in our world of mass communication, the media plays a significant role in

shaping our identities. From the images it presents us with, we draw conclusions about society's ideals and expectations for both genders. Advertising in particular has an incalculable effect on our world (Gill 73). In his 1970 research, Stewart Hall created the encoding/decoding model for analyzing how messages are "encoded" in the media and then "decoded" by viewers, causing a variety of conscious and subconscious interpretations of the portrayed message (Milestone and Meyer 156). The images the media portrays are reflective of cultural expectations and are used by viewers in the development and confirmation of their gender identities, such as the classic TV mom from the 1980's serving to represent the ideal of motherhood from that time period (Milestone and Meyer 164-8). Studying these images, therefore, gives us a better understanding of what these gender identities really are.

II. Previous Research

Reflecting the scholarly understanding of this influence, Margaret Mooney Marini in her article, "Sex and Gender: What Do We Know?" defines gender as "the social construction of differences between women and men" (95). Such studies in gender construction discuss the way our gender and our understanding of gender roles inform the development of our identities as individuals. Basing much of her article on prior research, Marini explains that although the genders do behave differently (both in verbal and nonverbal discourse) there are actually fewer real differences "in abilities and dispositional traits" than is commonly believed (99). We are not destined by biology to fall into the roles society has labelled for us and legitimate differences in our physical and mental capabilities do not require us to fit into those roles. This, Marini points out, is the difference between sex and gender: the genuine measurable differences and the social constructs that we find ourselves put into.

The study of gender construction is a growing field, in which increasing research is being done. In his book *Manhood in America*, Michael Kimmel claims that in spite of the argument of feminist scholars that nearly all of history has been a history of men, this account of deeds and battles tells us little about what it means to be a man. Finding one's manhood has been a rite of passage for centuries, but men receive little instruction in what that manhood really means. According to Kimmel, Freud believed that discovering their gender identity was an extremely difficult task for men, since it required them to disconnect from their mothers and identify with their fathers instead, who often seemed the more awful of the two figures (ix). Kimmel claims that the modern white male feels trampled on by extreme feminists and minorities in what he terms "reverse sexism." Men, he claims, say they "are the victims of discrimination– in divorce courts, custody hearings, and the military. It is men who lose their jobs to women and minorities. And it's men who are portrayed as ignorant louts, drunken oafs, or violent dangerous rapists" (viii). So besieged, modern men are seeking to recover their manhood and reclaim their masculinity. The difficulty is that no one is quite sure what that means anymore. In his book, Kimmel seeks to find an answer to the question for the meaning of masculinity by tracing its development through American history. Whether the true man is a brutal warrior, a sexual beast, a self-possessed man of the world, or a respectful, emotional gentleman is difficult to say, as the answer has been different across the centuries. Homophobia is another part of this sense of masculinity, Kimmel argues, as homosexuality is seen as the antithesis of masculinity, causing a man to become effeminate (8).

In Chapter 9 of the book, "Wimps, Whiners, and Weekend Warriors: The Contemporary Crisis of Masculinity and Beyond," Kimmel focuses on the contemporary man: the man of the 1990's. This figure simultaneously fears being seen as a wimp while being afraid that asserting

their masculinity will result in accusations of sexual harassment or worse (299). Some scholars such as Warren Farrell even assert that it is men who are the new "oppressed sex" (303). Although there is concern over the existence of reverse discrimination, as yet no solution has been found for it.

In his essay "Masculinity as Homophobia," Kimmel argues that from a historical perspective, masculinity is a "flight from the feminine" (126). He explains this using Freud's theory of the development of sexuality. According to Freud, boys experience their first awareness of sexuality by being attracted sexually to their mothers. Their fear of their fathers causes them to identify with the object of their fear, however. As they grow into their masculinity, they strive to distance themselves from their mothers, since they feel their mothers have the power to make them reliant on women, thus effectively emasculating them. Subsequently, the boy avoids acceptance of all traits connected with his mother or considered to be feminine, thus establishing himself as the bearer of the opposing, "masculine" traits. As this is a life-long process, Freud argued that the concept of masculinity was tenuous at best. He connects this theory with the homophobia that men often experience, as homosexuals frequently exhibit feminine traits and seem to represent the emasculated male. He argues that this fear of homophobia or feminization has been a cause of sexism and racism (129-30).

Basing his hypothesis on West and Zimmerman's 1987 argument that individuals "do gender," Alex Walker in his article "Couples Watching Television: Gender, Power, and the Remote Control" researched how gender roles are shown and reinforced in daily life. He performed a case study on a varied group of 36 individuals in a couple relationship, both hetero- and homosexual, studying how each couple dealt with the issue of possession of the television remote control. He argues his research is justified based on past research which proves that social

structure can be seen in the performance of gender roles in the most basic of daily interactions, including leisure activities. These studies have shown that women tend to do more housework than men and often taken on the less desirable of the household chores. The disproportionate labor distribution is evidence of the disproportion in gender roles.

Walker concludes that in heterosexual families husbands and sons exert greater control over the remote than wives and daughters. The study implies this behavior is the result of a feeling of entitlement, since it appeared more often in employed husbands than in unemployed, who may feel they lack the right given by society because they are unemployed. This is another display of the power struggle between genders. Women are frequently frustrated over their partners' behavior with the remote. This pattern is repeated in homosexual couples, where one partner usually maintains dominance of the remote, although the study found a tendency for greater equality on choice of program to be watched in these couples.

In her article "Family Change and Gender Differences: Implications for Theory and Practice," Rachel Hare-Mustin suggests that in spite of apparent changes in social structure brought about by the modern feminist movement, the basic interactions between males and females show that they are still considered to have fundamentally different roles. Since feminist theory has found that gender relations mirror societal power structures, this study is particularly important. She argues that the most basic category in social structures is that of gender. Traditionally, gender constructions have placed humans into male-dominated structures. Men are considered the heads of their families and of societies while women's primary function is as care-givers and child-bearers. Because of this there are distinct differences between men's work and women's work and it is distasteful for one sex to be doing the job of the other.

Since modernization has taken primary production out of the family, women's work has

been increasingly looked down upon because it does not convert into monetary gain, while the work her husband does is given greater value because he brings home money with which to support the household financially. Citing Hare-Mustin (1978), Hare-Mustin points out that those who do not earn money such as women, children, and the elderly have an uncertain standing in society and therefore do not have the solidified and confirmed role (and consequently the authority) that those who do earn money have. Hare-Mustin claims that industrialization and the consumer-driven economy have caused people to undervalue the work that women do in the household because it produces no tangible product, which has consequently encouraged the undervaluing of women. Men have not been expected to work within the home, while such work has been considered to be what women are expected to do and, therefore, are most comfortable doing. Similarly, responsibility for children is placed most on the mother, who is the first to be called whenever the child is need. Opposite from having home life as part of their work, men are more likely to bring their work into the home, further separating them from the family.

Hare-Mustin reflects on the dichotomy of society both idolizing mothers and undervaluing their work. Interestingly, Hare-Mustin cites studies showing that children often cause their parents to adopt a more traditional family structure, which is often more stressful and less fulfilling for women. Mustin cites a 1955 study (Parsons and Bales) in which the authors argued that women were “expressive” and men “instrumental” (38). They emphasized the uniquely different roles of the two, making it seem that the two spheres could not mix-- a concept which became widespread in American society (38). Furthermore, when one sex tried to become involved in the other’s sphere, it caused friction and discord between marital partners. Maintaining these set roles was considered to be essential to preserving family harmony and a well-managed home.

Men and women have long been considered to be entirely different-- as polar opposite, as separate and distinct as black and white or night and day. This categorization leads to biases and prejudices (alpha bias) as well as the too strong denial that there are any differences (beta bias). Both these biases are oversimplifying the issue, according to Mustin. This is particularly true in regards to women, who face contradictory expectations and have dual roles to fulfill. So far no solution or new family model has been developed to address these problems. Mustin neglects to point out an additional problem in her analysis, however, as she notes that "ultimately the search to define gender is the search to define women," a statement which seems to exclude the need to understand men's gender roles (40).

Previous research seems to agree that biological forces do not destine us to fit into the neat box society presents for our gender. However, the lack of biological inevitability does not prevent or distract from the existence of these gender constructs. In *Gender and Popular Culture*, Milestone and Meyer track the existence of three separate masculine constructs over the course of history. The first is the traditional view, clearly evident in the 1940-50's, which sees men as aggressive and dominant. They are notable for their logical thinking, their strong sexual drive, staunch heterosexuality, and their competitiveness. Men and women are viewed as fundamentally different, even polar opposites of each other. Male self-respect comes through their success in the career world, their financial security, and their authority over women and lesser men. The "new man" replaced the "old man" in the 1980s with a focus on the sensitive side of men. The "new man," it was argued, is capable of emotions and not inclined to sexism or racism. The "new man" is more cultured, but remains a good career man. Although they still see women as fundamentally different, "new men" are more willing to engage with their female counterparts. The "metrosexual" developed in the 1990's as a free thinker concerned with gender

equality, current trends, and family life, causing him to play with the boundaries of hetero- and homosexuality. The 1990's also saw the rise of the "new lad" which reacted against rising gender equality with crude mannerisms and a focus on "football, drinking and sex, which are often enjoyed in a loutish and aggressive manner" (Milestone and Meyer 118). Sexist and homophobic, the new lad rejects gender equality by seeing women as sexual objects only.

In "Gender, Status, and Domestic Violence: An Integration of Feminist and Family Violence Approaches," Kristin Anderson notes that the role of gender in domestic violence issues has caused numerous debates. Feminist sociologists argue that it is the primary factor since it is so closely connected with power issues and controversy, while others argue that the patriarchal system is just one of several factors including age, socioeconomic status and stress levels. Some scholars argue that individuals who feel inferior due to these and other factors may turn to violence as a means of maintaining and asserting control over a relationship. Studies have conflicted in their attempts to determine whether males tend to be more violent when the woman is more dominant versus when she is more subservient. Anderson questions why gender makes a difference in domestic violence. For one thing, studies have shown that women tend to report cases of domestic violence more often than men do. This could be because a man who allows a woman to treat him violently is looked down upon as emasculated.

In *Misframing Men*, Michael Kimmel points out the imbalance between the amount scholarly attention that has been given to the female gender experience versus the male experience. The feminist movement prompted considerable research into what it meant to be female, but males were neglected in this study. Men struggle with the need to emphasize and prove their manhood, but while history gave them numerous opportunities, today's society gives them no such arena. Kimmel suggests that men feel lost in a world that no longer welcomes

displays of dominance or brute strength. Matters are further complicated by the media, which is continually "misframing" the issue. "It is through media images that we come to know what that performance is supposed to look like" (3). Kimmel writes of the power of the media to model what society expects a true man to look and act like. Because of the 'gender system,' society believes that it is fundamentally impossible for men and women to be the same. Because they are biologically different, they must also be characteristically different.

According to Kimmel in *Misframing Men,* traditional masculinity saw a resurgence of the old ideals of masculinity with the events of 9/11 and the subsequent actions of the Bush administration. With increased militarism the old ideas of masculinity were revived, only to be hurt by the subsequent economic downturn. Now it has been suggested that, in Obama, Americans have their first feminist president (8). Today, "men are trumpeted as the new victims of feminism run amok, the new "second sex" (8). Not all of this noise is without foundation, however, as men are presented by some as "biologically driven, violent, rapacious beasts, uncommunicative sexual predators for whom rape is synonymous with 'dating etiquette' and fatherhood just another word for 'absentee landlord'" (9). Kimmel labels those who promote these ideas as "anti-feminists," as these are the same people who claim feminists are being overdramatic and presenting false facts. Kimmel explains the importance of the body in presenting masculinity. True men, he claims, should look masculine (5).

The way we view men is continuing to change in our modern society. In her book *The Male Body: A New Look at Men in Public and Private,* Susan Bordo discusses some of these changes, particularly as they pertain to men's bodies. Bordo explains the discomfort men tend to feel with their bodies as sexual organs since society believes that it is women who are ruled by hormones and their emotions, not men. When sexuality is involved, men are expected to be

dominant and so are very concerned that their bodies are fully masculine. Impotence has been among men's greatest fears for centuries (59). Fearful of the shame and rejection, men are reluctant to discuss such problems and put on a stoic face (64). Even as children, boys are encouraged to be tough, and are often admonished for crying once they have passed a certain age. "To be exposed as "soft" is one of the worst things a man can suffer in this culture." This concept continues into adulthood as men remain fearful of showing any emotion that will cause them to be labelled as weak and effeminate (55-56).

Later in her book, Bordo points out the contradiction between encouraging boys to be unstoppable beasts on the football field and then chastising them to be gentlemen in date rape seminars (232). Men are encouraged to show their primal side in scenes of love and war, but looked on with scorn when they take this too far and turn into supposed beasts. She points out that it shouldn't be surprising that so many violent crimes are committed by young athletes, who are encouraged to let it all out on the playing field (236). Often these boys are protected by the phrase "boys will be boys" until they go too far and receive heavy consequences. Typically, girls rather than boys are blamed for not having known better or not being in control of the situation (238-9). Additionally, boys are afraid that if they show too much sensitivity or lack of interest in the manly arts, they will be labelled as gay. They are endeavouring to reach manhood, and are afraid they can never get there if they don't play the role of the jock (240).

According to Bordo, the dual expectations for men can be seen in the examples of Tarzan and Beauty and the Beast. Tarzan is uniquely primal, but he is ultimately moral and gentlemanly. The Beast is, of course, a beast with a bad temper, but he is cultured, with an enormous library, and kind, although there is no denying his power and strength (242-3). Bordo cautions against the assumption that men are sexual animals who think of only one thing, as so many girls are

warned (257), and that we can admire strong men without encouraging “alpha male” mentalities. (265).

Already confused about what is expected of them in society, Messner and de Oca argue that men are often faced with negative images of themselves in the media. In their article “The Male Consumer as Loser: Beer and Liquor Ads in Mega Sports Media Events,” Messner and de Oca examine ads from the 2002-2003 Super Bowl and *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issues. These ads, they argue, portray white males as “losers” in a new type of young white masculinity (1182). This “lifestyle branding” shows men making fun of their own inadequacy and engaging in voyeurism with sexy fantasy women while rejecting genuine relationships with real women. It divides women into “hotties” who they cannot have or “bitches” who they are trapped in a relationship with, while other men are “buddies” with whom they can drink beer while escaping from their controlling mothers and girlfriends and dreaming about the sexy women they can never have (1887).

III. Methodology

These acquired gender constructs play a key role in how we view ourselves and how we relate to both our own gender identity and to the gender identity of the opposite sex. Although feminist studies have criticized the presentation of society’s often unrealistic expectations of women, not as much research has examined these expectations of men.

In my analysis of these two ad campaigns I have used rhetorical criticism. In her book, *Rhetorical Criticism: Exploration and Practice*, Sonja Foss defines rhetoric as “the human use of symbols to communicate” (3). Symbols are created by humans to explain and define their world. Rhetoric is the study of the use of these symbols and rhetorical criticism, according to Foss, is

the "process of thinking about symbols, discovering how they work, and trying to figure out why they affect us" (3). Humans are unique because they create much of their own reality by using symbols. Our interpretations and interactions with our world are largely affected by which symbols we choose to use. One of the purposes of rhetoric is to define these realities, which will be my focus during this project.

Of the various types of rhetorical criticism, I have focused on ideological criticism, a type of rhetorical criticism, which analyzes the underlying values and assumptions contained in a given artifact. Ideological criticism deals with the way the rhetoric in an artifact reveals the ideology of a particular group. According to Sonja Foss in her book *Rhetorical Criticism: Exploration and Practice*, an ideology is "a pattern of beliefs that determines a group's interpretations of some aspects of the world." These aspects may involve political, economic, social, or cultural "beliefs, values, and assumptions" (209). Ideologies are made up of "evaluative beliefs," which are beliefs based on a situation which could have more than one interpretation. These beliefs come together to form a group's dominant or hegemonic ideology that is considered the social norm. Through ideological criticism, a critic seeks to uncover the primary ideology that the artifact promotes. These underlying beliefs are "evaluative beliefs" which may have multiple interpretations. Ideological criticism assumes that every society has multiple belief systems, but only one dominant one which provides a norm reference. By studying various artifacts of a society, ideological criticism identifies this norm and questions its validity. Ideological criticism is often informed by feminist theory, which includes, among its various focuses, the way rhetoric is used to construct gender.

Because my analysis has focused on artifacts dealing with issues of gender construction, I have made some use of feminist theory in my methodology, although it has not been my primary

focus. “Feminist criticism is the analysis of rhetoric to discover how the rhetorical construction of gender is used as a means for domination and how that process can be challenged so that all people understand that they have the capacity to claim agency and act in the world as they choose” (Foss 157). In challenging these constructions, feminist criticism questions why we have existing societal expectations and argues against considering their existence to be a foregone conclusion.

Although it grew out of feminism, feminist criticism is not limited to the study of the construction of femininity. Rather it can be used to consider all relationships in which domination is a feature. It is “an analysis of how women and men, femininity and masculinity, are depicted in an artifact, using as units of analysis ones drawn from the artifact itself that provide clues to the construction of gender in an artifact” (Foss 158).

Since ideologies are present in virtually every aspect of human life, nearly anything may serve as an artifact for ideological criticism. For my analysis, I have studied two advertising campaigns: The Man Your Man Could Smell Like (produced by Old Spice from Winter, 2010-Spring, 2011) and The Most Interesting Man in the World (produced by Dos Equis from 2006-present) (“Effie Awards”). These campaigns are unique both in their use of a rather eccentric recurring character characterized by their intense masculinity, and by their success. Both campaigns won Gold Effie Awards, marketing communications awards given to recognize marketing campaigns that show particular effectiveness in advertising. “Effie” is short for Effectiveness, which the Effies seek to encourage and stimulate in the advertising community (“Effie Awards”). In my analysis, I have chosen to focus specifically on the original campaign commercial for Old Spice (which debuted during the 2010 Super Bowl) and on the Dos Equis commercials series. Since the Dos Equis commercials use the same basic formula every time, I

am able to view multiple commercials as part of a larger whole for the purpose of my analysis.

Using Sonja Foss's ideological coding system (214-220), I have identified the significant "presented" and "suggested" elements in the ad campaigns and used these to construct my analysis. Foss defines presented elements as "the basic observable features of the artifact" (214). Suggested elements are the "ideas, references, themes, allusions, or concepts that are suggested by the presented elements" (216). This process was used to determine the dominant ideology and secondary ideologies as they relate to the construction of gender in each of the campaigns.

IV. **Analysis**

The American economy thrives off of competition, meaning that to make their mark upon consumers, companies must make a product that stands apart. For years, bar soap has been the traditional choice for men, who preferred it to the more feminine body wash their female counterparts used. In recent years, body wash for men has gained interest in the male consumer market, however, and the top brands have begun to offer competing body washes tailored to appeal to men. Facing intense competition, Old Spice recognized the need to develop an image for its product that would appeal to both the men who would use it and the women who would purchase it. Their solution was to offer an image— an ideal of masculinity. This ideal took form in the person of Isaiah Mustafa, who became the new spokesman for Old Spice's men's body wash campaign. Wearing only a towel and a smile, Mustafa appeared on viewers' screens freshly washed and smelling like a real man. Ambiguous though the concept was, it had a remarkable affect. After its debut during the 2010 Super Bowl, the highly successful ad campaign quickly gained popularity among viewers ("Effie Awards").

In the Old Spice campaign the ideal takes the form of a handsome, suave African-

American male stepping out of the shower. In the initial commercial, he confidently addresses a female audience, poking fun at the traditional image of the romantic hero, even as he embodies him. The obvious implication for men is that this is what women want them to be like. Dos Equis takes this idealized masculinity a step further. For the self-proclaimed “most interesting man in the world,” attracting beautiful women is merely a bonus that comes with being himself. He is confident and self-assured and exudes masculinity as a result. Although he is a middle-aged white male, age has only increased his appeal, giving him time to achieve the collection of experiences and accomplishments that have made him the man that he is. Although he is fawned over by beautiful women young enough to be his daughters, he is unconcerned by their attention, and secure in his own masculinity. He doesn’t need to drink Dos Equis beer to distract himself from his life; he chooses to drink it because he can.

One of the easiest observed suggested elements both ad campaigns present are the attributes of the ideal man. He is confident, charming, and suave. He is secure in his own identity. The company of both women and men is superfluous to him-- he might choose to engage them if he wishes, but since his success in all his endeavours is assured, he is not really interested. He is independent and free to make his own decisions. This, the media claims, is the masculine ideal. While presenting their Adonises in physical form, however, both Old Spice and Dos Equis proceed to poke fun at the ideal. Both ads satirize the image of the heroic male with unrealistic and dramatic displays of heroism and masculinity. This conflict--- between laughing at the ideal while embodying it---pokes fun at the way the media has constructed gender identity, even while accepting some of these constructs as a reality that can be used to sell a product.

The physical appearance of the two men is perhaps the most obvious presented element in an analysis of their appeal. As human beings we use sight as one of our primary means of

gaining first impressions of individuals. We are often immediately attracted to or repelled by individuals based on their physical appearance. Advertisers are conscious of this and choose their models with care to give consumers the desired impression of the product. According to Lindstrom's *Buyology*, however, the presentation of physically attractive models in advertising is "less about sexual attraction than about visions of one's ideal self. Thanks to mirror neurons, just looking at those idealized bodies lets all those average guys out there feel as confident and sexy as though those bodies were theirs" (190-191). Concepts of hero worship, which is a tendency to select certain individuals as representative of the ideal, thereby placing them on a pedestal and honouring them with acts of "hero worship," cause us to admire these people once we accept them as adhering to the concept of the ideal (Klapp 54). Old Spice and Dos Equis's spokesmen were chosen to represent a societal ideal. Men, it was implied, could aspire to this ideal with the aid of the product being sold.

The Old Spice man, portrayed by Isaiah Mustafa, seems immaculately put-together. Although he wears nothing beyond a towel, his toned muscles, close-cut hair, and pristinely shaven beard all give them the impression that he takes great pride in his appearance, which few would not consider handsome. The still running shower behind him which he presumably is about to step into implies cleanliness, which, as we know, is next to godliness. Indeed, he would not seem out of place on the set of a *Percy Jackson* or *Clash of the Titans* film, where the ancient gods once more roam upon the earth.

The Old Spice man knows he is attractive and assumes viewers know it as well. He shows no unease at finding a camera intruding on him in his bathroom, rather he welcomes it. Connecting directly with the consumer, he locks eyes with the camera, forming a connection that will not be broken, even as he moves from one scene to another. "Hello, ladies," he begins in the

initial commercial, addressing female viewers directly in a deep, rich voice. “Look at your man, now back to me, now back at your man, now back to *me*,” he directs, encouraging a comparison between himself and other men. His pride and self-assurance cannot be daunted– it is clear he cannot conceive of the idea that the man sitting beside them might be preferred. “Sadly, he isn’t me,” he says in a sympathetic, but factual tone. Within the first few seconds, he has already placed himself on a pedestal to be the image of masculinity, designed to appeal to women. The indirect message to the men is clear– this is what you want to be, because this is what women really want. Since you can’t attain this goal, however, you can at least get a little closer if you take this guy’s advice.

His advice is to use Old Spice Men’s Body Wash. Clearly, he is too uniquely masculine for any other man to measure up to. But if they at least stop smelling like women (presumably the fault of all the other male body washes, as well as a nod to the previous stereotype of body wash as a uniquely women’s product), they could be a little more like him. His prescription to smell like a man rather than like a lady is no less than a condemnation of other soaps and body washes which, it would be implied, serve rather to emasculate their users than anything else. Since society has often placed considerable emphasis on the difference between the sexes since the 19th century, being in any way comparable to the opposite sex is often considered an insult, particularly to the heterosexual world (Mustin 38). Although homosexuals have experienced increasing acceptance in modern society and media, a stigma and stereotype still exist. Societal pressure to be masculine is still so strong that to be suspected of feminine tendencies is tantamount to destroying the core of one’s gender identity. Some scholars argue that the traditional heterosexual male has been threatened by the rise of homosexuals and feminists, causing him to dig in, so to speak, to the more traditional values of masculinity. Although

aspiring to simply smell like an idolized figure may seem trivial, the implication that this will make them desirable to women is not something to be taken lightly, especially when the man on the screen unabashedly invites comparison, driven by his unconquerable conviction that he will always win in such a battle.

Having blatantly pointed out his physical desirability to women and his superiority to other men, Mustafa continues to build his image as the ideal man— at least the ideal man to a woman. He showers her with gifts that appear like magic in his hands— "tickets to that thing you love," and every girl's best friend: diamonds. He is thoughtful and attentive enough to have noted what women like, even if he is not interested in it himself, a fact evidenced by the careless way that he tosses the tickets to "that thing" and drops the shell spewing a waterfall of diamonds. This carelessness serves to avert any possible threat to his masculinity that may be caused by being too sensitive, a characteristic that would lead to the dreaded implication of homosexuality. Keeping up a constant address to the women watching and never breaking eye contact with the camera, Mustafa moves through a series of fantasy destination scenes, encouraging women to feel they are in the scene with him by directing them to "look down, now back up" during transitions.

Moving from the shower scene, Mustafa steps between sets to next appear on a boat, where he proceeds to shower his viewers with gifts, not neglecting to remind viewers that they are on the boat with "the man your man could smell like." He acquires pants and a shirt tied around his shoulders in this transition, but remains without a shirt. His self-confidence needs no covering. In the final frame, he appears on the shore, presumably where the boat has landed for a romantic getaway. "I'm on a horse," he informs viewers matter-of-factly as the camera pans out to show him on a white steed. The romantic implications are obvious, a fact Mustafa knows since

he sees the need to do no more than point out the fact that he is now astride a noble mount to solidify the romanticized nature of the situation.

With the considerable effort that Old Spice goes to place their spokesman on the pedestal of ideal manhood, it is notable that while they build their figure up, they simultaneously poke fun at him and all that he represents. Having created their image of what they believe women's ideal to be, the sheer absurdity of the character's over-done masculinity makes him, and the societal expectations he adheres to, laughable. His confidence is so extraordinary as to be ridiculous and his address to the audience is so over-the-top that it is clear that viewers are not expected to take him seriously. While nodding to the masculine ideal, he invites viewers to look and laugh at it, simultaneously acknowledging its existence and rejecting its reality. Viewers walk away laughing, and hopefully remembering, the absurdly manly man, and maybe still wanting to be just a little like him as well. After all, no man wants to smell like a lady.

While much can be said of the appeal of the commercial itself, a brief mention should be made of one of the more unique aspects of this ad campaign. Not content with leaving their character on the television screen, Old Spice sought to bring fantasy to near reality by allowing the Old Spice guy to interact with consumers via Twitter. Old Spice recorded hundreds of video responses to viewers' tweets. While some of these were to celebrities such as Demi Moore (or "Mrs. Ashton Kutcher"), most were to everyday people. These personal video messages ranged from simple answers to queries, to flirtation, and even one proposal. This personalization of the ad campaign not only caught consumer's interest, but helped to make it the remarkably successful campaign that it was.

In its ad campaign, Dos Equis also created a persona of masculinity, although it is toting a very different product. Although most beer ads feature "everyman" type characters that may be

average or even slightly less appealing specimens of manhood, Dos Equis created an image of masculinity that men would aspire to. Facing stiff competition in the beer industry, Dos Equis sought to distinguish themselves by creating a persona that would appeal to men.

The Dos Equis persona takes a different approach to the ideal from Old Spice. The spokesman, Jonathan Goldsmith, is 73— hardly an age implying masculinity in its prime. Unlike Mustafa, he is not young, and is more distinguished than handsome. He also remains fully clothed, wearing a white suit and black jacket that look comfortable, but not casual. Harkening back to older ideas of masculine beauty, he sports a full beard, which he has not been afraid to let turn naturally gray. He exudes an aura of confidence and calm, clearly at ease with himself and his surroundings. If Mustafa calls to mind images of gods and demigods of far away realms, Goldsmith is a man of the world, confident and experienced.

As a man of the world, Goldsmith is characterized by his own self-possession. He makes it clear that he is in charge of his own life and adheres to no one else's plans for him. Rather than drinking beer as an escape from life, he drinks it because he feels like it. Furthermore, he makes it clear that he is not limited in his choices. He is not hindered by ordinary concerns like cost or tradition, he is free to drink whatever and whenever he feels like it. As he points out, "I don't always drink beer, but when I do, I prefer Dos Equis."

Unlike Mustafa, who though absolutely self-assured and confident in his masculinity, is nevertheless a woman's man, Goldsmith is a man's man, aware that he is appealing to women, but essentially uninterested in them as more than accessories to his life. Rather than catering to them as the Old Spice character does, he mostly ignores them. His indifference is not the result of a lack of confidence, however, as it is clear that he is aware of his attraction for women. He is confident in his masculinity, which has by no means diminished with age. Rather, age has served

to increase his charms, as time improves a bottle of wine. Far from being considered over the hill, he is appealing to considerably younger women, as is evidenced in some of the ads by the trio of girls draped around him in the circular booth where he sits, indifferent to their presence, drinking his beer. He knows that he could have any of them if he wanted them, but he does not need them to feel confident in himself. His masculinity is undeniable, regardless of whether or not it has a nearby female object to be compared with.

This attitude towards women is unique. Beer commercials frequently show images of objectified women, but they are often presented as being out of the main character's league and merely someone he might ogle without hoping to ever attain or, if he's very lucky, briefly dance with if the beer can get them both drunk enough, as argued by Messner and de Oca. Goldsmith expects women to be naturally drawn to him, but he makes no effort to attempt to please or attract them. He is confident in their continued interest without any effort on his part, and seems indifferent to their interest at all. Similar to his fellow beer commercial stars, he has no apparent need or interest in any kind of long term, mutually fulfilling relationship with a woman. His irrepressible masculinity does not brook such weakness.

To add to his other charms, Goldsmith possesses the sense of the exotic. His low, husky voice and Mexican accent seem to call to mind images of hot summer nights at outdoor bars beside the ocean in places with exotic names like Acapulco and Huatulco. The logo of the beer itself adds to this impression, reminding readers that it is imported beer. The charm of the exotic adds to the appeal of the persona in addition to the often sexualized connotations that accompany the stereotype of the Mexican male.

Appearance is certainly a major presented element in the characterization of Goldsmith, but our first impression of the self-titled "Most Interesting Man in the World" is made by his

introduction. In fact, the man himself is seen for only a few short seconds at the end of the commercial, where he sits drinking his beer with his women on his arm. His fame precedes him, as the narrator recounts one dazzling fact after another in conjunction with a series of images apparently taken from a variety of places and times. These enhance Goldsmith's credibility as a worldly man, since he appears to have been everywhere and done everything. His list of credits supersedes that of the great Chuck Norris himself. "People hang on his every word, even the prepositions," the narrator announces. "He could disarm you with his looks, or his hands, either way. He can speak French in Russian. He's been known to cure narcolepsy just by walking into a room. His organ donation card also lists his beard." Each commercial is peppered with phrases like this, recounting all of the reasons why Goldsmith is a superior man. This, the commercial argues, is someone you would want to be: confident, world-wise, accomplished, intelligent, attractive— a real man. A real man who drinks Dos Equis, but only when he wants to.

Of course, the outlandish claims made about Goldsmith are clearly intended for laughs. Some of Goldsmith's accomplishments are impossible, most are ridiculous. Both Dos Equis and Old Spice are unique in their decision to use humor to sell their products. Rather than prancing sexy and scantily-clad men and women across the screen in a romanticized scene of obviously unattainable pleasure, the two companies take the idealized image to the point of absurdity, thus inviting readers to laugh at it, even as their laughter acknowledges the truth behind the idealization. Like Old Spice, Dos Equis does not expect viewers to take their character too seriously. He represents an ideal that is impossible and even illogical. His accomplishments border on the absurd.

In spite of the laughter at the expense of their spokesmen, however, both Old Spice and Dos Equis send a clear message to viewers—this, in a more natural form, is what men ought to

be. If they were a little more like these men, they would be respected and admired. Women would want them; men would wish to be them. Most importantly, they would be able to respect themselves. It is doubtful that those who designed these clever campaigns intended to make a statement about masculinity. However, by depicting their men as dominant, independent, desirable, and even heroic, they emphasize traditional ideas of masculinity. Although they poke fun at the absurdity of society's ideal as embodied in any one person, they nevertheless acknowledge that this is what the ideal is, unattainable as it might be.

The implications of this message are very interesting. In their creation of ideal men, Dos Equis and Old Spice effectively reinforce Milestone and Meyer's traditional masculinity. Dos Equis enforces the old ideas of women as secondary objects to men: attractive ornaments to hang on one's arm and ignore until they are wanted. If any attention is paid to them, it should be patronizing and even insincere. This can be seen in Old Spice's over-the-top behavior. Outwardly he is trying to please women and appeal to them, but he does so in a teasing and insincere manner—less respectful than patronizing.

Although women are not directly featured in either commercial, they are not left out of consideration. Although they are scarcely mentioned in the Dos Equis commercials, they are seen at the end when the modern "most interesting man in the world" makes his pronouncement on the best beer. In this final shot, two or three women are seen on either side of Goldsmith. In some commercials they appear to be laughing and enjoying each others' company, while in others they simply watch in apparent awe as Goldsmith speaks. Although they are clearly part of his entourage, they make no effort to engage with him, nor does he attempt to interact with them.

While the camera angle does not clearly show it, it is suggested that there are even other men present, who the women seem to include in their conversation. Goldsmith himself appears

above both their conversation and their admiration, as he neither acknowledges their rapt attention, nor appears interested in their discussion. In some commercials, we see his arms spread out behind the women, but he seems more concerned with being comfortable than flirtatious. He has no doubt of their interest in him, and therefore makes little extra effort to attract them.

Even when he does attempt to interest women, it is half-hearted. For example, in the commercial which asks him for his opinion on careers (in which he gives the enlightened advice to figure out what one does not have a talent for and avoid careers that require that skill), we see him release a butterfly from his hand, to the delight of the young woman sitting beside him. As there is no logical reason why he should be playing with a butterfly, one can only assume it is for this woman's benefit. In spite of doing what many would consider to be a uniquely romantic gesture, however, he appears bored with his own actions. He transfers the butterfly rapidly from one hand to the other and when it flies away he spreads his hands with a wry expression on his face, apparently disinterested. He does not even turn to see the woman's reaction, but instead looks back at the camera.

Here women are seen purely in a supporting role. They serve as a part of Goldsmith's entourage– a means to promote his image. However, he shows no real interest in them, either physically or intellectually. One has the impression that they follow him and he simply accepts their company. He shows no desire to develop any kind of emotional connections to them, nor does he appear to take an interest in their lives or personalities. Unlike in other beer commercials, his women are not unattainable, but they are similarly unnecessary.

Mustafa takes a very different approach to women by addressing them directly throughout the commercial. He refers to them as "ladies," a term that brings up images of white

gloves and beaded purses and gender roles governed by a strict etiquette. The use of the term also immediately brings to mind its counterpart: “gentlemen.” Indecently as he may be dressed, Mustafa nevertheless presents himself as a gentleman. His focus is on his viewers— he looks them in the eye, focusing on them rather than on their bodies, avoiding one of man’s longstanding faults in the eyes of women. His manner and speech are aimed at promoting the impression that he is concerned with his viewers. He woos them with yachting trips and gifts— gifts that he knows they will “love” because he knows them so well. He sits astride a white horse as the image of Prince Charming.

All of this effort is designed to promote Mustafa as the perfect man– the man all women want and that all men would want to be like. However, while Mustafa spends considerable effort convincing women he will give them everything they want, his behavior can easily be viewed as patronizing. From his salutation, he clearly aims to please and believes he can win women over with the ripple of a muscle, the arch of an eyebrow, and the flash of a smile. His gifts are extravagant, but cliché: tickets, diamonds, a yachting trip. If women haven’t been won over by his physical appeal, they soon will be swept off their feet by his wealth. In his focus on being a gentleman, Mustafa treats women as a gentleman of old would. He patronizes them, as one would a child with attractive things and presents. His appeal is that of a Casanova– sweeping across women as a whole without displaying an interest in getting to know them individually. He certainly does not ignore them as Goldsmith does, but he does not give the impression of holding them in much higher respect. He seeks to appeal only to their senses, thus revealing his true impression of them: as superficial, childish people easily influenced and easily led. This decidedly negative ideology seems all the more grievous when one considers the research that has been done on the increasing responsibility that has been put on women. In drawing back to

the older view of the strong and dominant male, however, the campaigns have unfortunately also pushed women back into a role that, if still not as restricted as it once was, is nevertheless denied its true worth.

Another, equally concerning, suggested message is that effeminate men are not to be tolerated as real men. Goldsmith is constantly emphasizing his masculinity through his prowess and strength. Mustafa doesn't even bother to put on a shirt, and spends his time emphasizing just how masculine he is in the eyes of women. The message is that effeminate men are not real men. Real men are hypersexual, proud and confident in their masculinity. There is no room in their persona for genuine emotion or feeling. The old ideas of power and dominance are emphasized and adulated. Both men are undeniably masculine. The subtle suggested element is not in this fact, but in the lack of the feminine in them. Although both present a cultured view of masculinity rather than the blood-thirsty warrior ideal of yore, there is nothing feminine in their mannerisms. The barrier between the sexes is clearly maintained, as Mustafa blatantly states with his slogan that appears on many of his magazine ads: "Smell Like a Man, Man."

Equally unfeminine is Goldsmith, whose well trimmed beard, slightly agape shirt, and deep accented voice bring to mind the hyper-masculine stereotype of the Mexican lover. The effeminate has no place in their world and nor, one can assume, does homosexuality. While Goldsmith shows little interest in his companions, the only ones clearly shown in the bar scene (which is the only time we see Goldsmith apart from flashbacks) are women whose femininity is emphasized with styled hair and fitted dresses. In his commercial, Mustafa never acknowledges his male viewers beyond instructing women to compare them to himself. The appeal of the masculine body, intellect, and prowess are emphasized while the concept of a feminine or homosexual masculinity are either ignored (as with Goldsmith) or treated with implied distaste

(as with Mustafa). In keeping with Milestone and Meyer's traditional masculinity, they are "staunchly and unambiguously heterosexual, focused on the sexual conquest of women" (115). Men who like flowery body wash and smell like women are clearly inferior to these demigods. Similarly, none of Goldsmith's accomplishments include feminine activities. There is certainly no indication given by either man that they would ever consider a same-sex relationship. As Kimmel argues, they seem determined to build a wide gulf between themselves and all things feminine. (Kimmel, "Masculinity as Homophobia" 126)

Although the ads don't go so far as to laud the primal animal side of male dominance, they nevertheless re-emphasize old gender constructs. Those scholars who have bemoaned the emasculating of the male by the demanding and angry forces of feminists, homosexuals, and minorities would rejoice at this image of masculinity, and it is true that the image isn't all bad. In both men, self-confidence is key. They are comfortable and happy with themselves. Although we again see an emphasis on the lack of emotional need for others, self-confidence is certainly not something that men do not need.

In spite of their detachment from their fellow humans, both men show that men should behave in a cultured and gentlemanly way. They should have an easy knowledge of the world and their place in it and be able to move in it freely and confidently. They should treat women with respect, although they should not need to be dependent on them as a partner or a helper. They should be able to stand alone, not needing anyone else.

This suggests that emotion or emotional dependence on anyone should be avoided. Goldsmith shows no emotion and Mustafa only acts for women, who are emotional and should be easily swept off their feet by his charm. Neither seeks a strong relationship--- their independence is enough for them. They have no need to form ties to women or to other men, and

in fact declare themselves to be above the other members of their sex.

Rejecting the trend of advertising to present men as objects of ridicule (the ridiculous, oafish creatures seen in Messner and de Oca's research), both companies also refuse to portray them as objectified objects of sexuality. While it is undeniable that both men possess potent sexuality, their primary appeal is not pent up in that. Unlike Calvin Kline or Abercrombie and Fitch models, the focus is not on bare chests, muscular arms, and pants pulled low enough to play with the boundaries of decency. Goldsmith remains fully clothed in comfortable but distinguished attire, his shirt open just enough to reveal a flash of skin. He exudes sexuality because of his sense of worldliness and mystery, not because of his show of skin. Although Mustafa shows considerably more skin, appearing at first in only a towel and never truly putting on a shirt throughout his commercial, the viewer is captivated by his voice and movements, not by his body. He maintains eye contact with viewers, capturing their gaze with his own– refusing to allow them to objectify him.

The emphasis is clear. Men are to be respected. They aren't drunkards in bars, striking out with girls who they know are out of their league. They aren't lascivious frat boys looking to get as many shots and one-night stands as possible before being forced to "settle down." They aren't balding, dull-witted middle-aged family men who can't seem to escape the taint of the women's world in picket-fence suburbia. Regardless of age, race, and ethnicity, they deserve to be respected. Furthermore, they demand respect. This is the call of both Old Spice and Dos Equis– a call back to the values of traditional masculinity. However, it is not traditional masculinity alone that is emphasized. Neither Mustafa nor Goldsmith is brutish or aggressive. Their interests are not limited by purely masculine pursuits, as both show themselves able to enjoy the finer things in life. In spite of their underlying rejection of women as equal partners,

they treat them with respect and without any outward display of dominance over them—characteristics that are recognizable in the "new man" portrayed by Meyers and Milestone.

V. Conclusions

According to Foss, rhetorical criticism ultimately endeavours to improve communication. By studying the appearance of rhetoric in our world, we can begin a more extensive dialogue with each other. "We are less inclined to accept existing rhetorical practices and to respond uncritically to the messages we encounter. As a result, we become more engaged and active participants in shaping the nature of the worlds in which we live" (Foss 8-9). In becoming active participants, we can begin a dialogue that not only identifies the societal expectations with which we live, but questions their validity. Through such a questioning, we might ultimately come to an identification of the various inequalities and injustices that still exist in our society.

In creating their ideals, Old Spice and Dos Equis combine what they consider to be the best traits of the "old man" and the "new man." Their ideal is the best of both worlds. The new man can keep his cultured taste and his appeal to women through his increased sensitivity, while maintaining the respect commanded by the "old man's" blatant physical and mental strength and superiority. The result has its appeal. Although both campaigns poke fun at the impossibility of their construction, they do not deny that there is something desirable in it. The humor lies in the impossibility of achieving such an ideal, not in the ideal itself. Unfortunately, while appealing, the proposed ideal is not as flawless as we might like to believe. Retained in this patchwork construct are the undertones of sexism and homophobia—seeds which effectively destroy the desirability of the "ideal." If this interpretation is reflective of the mindset of society, it seems we have yet a long road to travel before we reach true equality.

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