Essay Three Topic: Persuasive Ad Analysis and Synthesis

Essay Description: Essay three will consist of a four-to-six page (minimum 1000 words) typed analysis of a group of print or television advertisements on one related theme. In this analysis, you will include evidence from at least three essays on advertising in WRAC and/or from material provided through the course reserve or listserv or from scholarly databases. You will select one group of print ads covering a common theme or a common topic (for instance, cigarettes, automobiles, etc.) from the section “A Portfolio of Advertisements, 1945 – 2003,” or you may analyze a group of related print ads from current media sources (newspapers, magazines, T.V., etc.). If you choose to analyze ads from an outside source, these ads must be included and submitted with your rough draft and final draft. If you choose to review television ads, please include a still picture of one scene from the ad and a brief description of the ad’s content.

For this paper, you will conduct an analysis of advertisement in which you apply a theoretical “lens,” or viewpoint, to your ads in order to understand them better or in order to draw conclusions about their value, effects, merits, content, themes, etc. Your task will be to bring together examples of advertising and articles on advertising in order to present a detailed analysis of your ads that reveals new ideas and uncovers hidden implications.

Your paper should have a clear, specific, narrow, arguable, assertive, and risky thesis statement. In choosing a topic, remember that it should be narrow enough to cover fully in four-to-six typed pages. Remember that your thesis should consist of a statement with which most people will not automatically (or initially) agree.

Body and Evidence: The body of your paper should analyze your ads in detail, and should support and defend your position (thesis). You should spend considerable time presenting specific evidence in support of your thesis (detailed descriptions of the ads, quoted ad copy, and quotations, summaries, and paraphrases from your sources). Please rely on sources obtained through the class or through the databases at Dacus. All citations must be formatted correctly according to MLA guidelines, and your paper should include a Works Cited list at the end.

Possible Essay Topics: You may address any of the synthesis or research topics listed on pages 609 through 613 in WRAC. These topics and research activities should function as starting places for your analysis of your ads. You may also wish to read the questions covering individual ads (pp. 595 – 608) in order to generate ideas for your analysis. Your goal is to narrow your topic to a manageable focus and then generate a specific persuasive point you wish to make on your chosen print ads. This persuasive point (thesis) will be based both upon your
own thinking and analysis on the ads, and on the research essays and sources you use. You may wish to apply the Fowle’s categories, for instance, to a group of ads in order to uncover their persuasive appeal and in order to evaluate whether or not they are successful in their appeal. You may wish to address depictions of gender, age, etc., in a group of ads. You may wish to consider the logical fallacies listed on Tim Holt’s webpage LogicalFallacies.info and uncover how some of these fallacies operate within your chosen print ads. Fallacies such as the appeal to wealth, appeal to novelty, begging the question, the straw man and others are often inherent in the persuasive arguments advertisements make, and uncovering these fallacies can lead you to an enjoyable and insightful paper topic.

**Mandatory Components of the Essay:**

- Persuasive, Specific, and Arguable Thesis Statement.
- Body which includes sophisticated analysis and specific evidence (quotations, paraphrases, summaries, etc.). Your paper must contain at least three sources in addition to the group of ads you will be citing and analyzing.
- Correctly formatted Works Cited page and parenthetical references (MLA style).
- Conclusion which sums up the paper’s main points.
- Standard forms of grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

**Due Dates:**

**Friday, Oct. 22**  
**Rough Drafts Due in Class:** Bring three copies with you to review.

**Wednesday, Oct. 27**  
**Final Drafts Due in Class.** Turn in final draft in a folder with peer reviews and rough drafts. The final draft must also be submitted by midnight on this date to Turnitin.