

# Sexuality in Underwear Ads

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# Sexuality in Underwear Ads

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## Abstract

Advertising as an agent of capitalism has a variety of ways to send the message and to give the effect expected by the advertisers to the public. One way in which the advertising industry to continue to perform community hegemony is to utilize the discourse of sexuality that exist in society. Probe a variety of existing ads, dress' ad is the most consistent in presenting the elements of sexuality on each display ads. Sexuality in clothing ads are very interesting to study. Because the clothing ads can't be separated from the human body is private, so it will indirectly contain various elements of sexuality. Various elements of sexuality in lingerie ads will be clearer when analyzed with different kinds of sexual information that be displayed.

Key Word: Sexuality, Underwear Ads

## Introduction

Entering the world of media consumption as it is today clearly has a major role in supporting the establishment of public consumption. Media such as advertising has a tremendous role in shaping the false consciousness; this has resulted in high levels of consumption due to stimulation of different types of ads. So by Stuart Ewen, advertising not only be captains of industry, but also has shifted into captains of consciousness. Advertising as an agent of capitalism has many ways to send their messages and produce the effect as expected by the advertiser to the public. One of the ways in which the industry can continue to do the advertising for the hegemony of the community is to utilize the discourse of sexuality in society.

Talking about sexuality is still taboo and less good in our society.

It is utilized by capitalism through advertising to deliver elements of sexuality in advertising impressions. As Michel Foucault exposure, when sex is repressed or undergo repression then everything about sex can be used as a commodity. Sexuality when it has become a commodity in an ad then it helped shape the image of the advertising community. Despite the fact that advertising that contains sexuality always be banned or trivialized, but ads featuring images of sexuality are always the most purchased product by consumers. Perhaps because of this, it's causing more and more encountered various ads that contained of sexuality in various media, both print and electronic.

Underwear ads have consistently demonstrated elements of sexuality at any of its image. It's proved in every performance of the models in the ads always feature variety of elements of sexuality, from nudity to seductive facial expressions. So, researchers are concentrating on seeing various elements of sexuality in underwear ads. Sexuality in underwear ad is very interesting to study. Because the underwear ads can't be separated from the human body, so it will indirectly contains many different elements of sexuality. Various elements of sexuality in underwear ads will be more apparent when analyzed with different types of sexual information displayed.

### **Repression sexuality as a commodity**

The discourse of sexuality in society has been restricted by the power from generation to generation makes the discourse is so interesting if raised in the media, especially in advertising. But before discussing sexuality in the commodity cycle, sex itself has meaning in Indonesian dictionary. A word related to sexuality is only sexual words, it's related to gender (male or female), or related to men and women (Laoli: 2007). While the Oxford English Dictionary describes sex as an organic part of each human being distinguished as male and female, they are seen collectively (Parrinder, 2005: 2).

However, sexuality in advertising is seen as a sex appeal that could affect the community to remember the ads for a long time so the products are in high-level advertising sales. So, Baudrillard (2009: 186) explain sexuality is a part of the consumer society, which determine all the areas spectacular marker of mass communication. All information is seen and heard, with a blatant take sexual tone. Of course at the same time sexuality is consumed alone.

Discussing the repression of sexuality by Michel Foucault (2008: 20 & 25), the inside of sexuality not only exist, but should not be present and immediately quelled as appearing in the action or speech. That's the hallmark of repression, and that's what differentiates it from legal restrictions (sex should be eliminated), but also as a command to silence or otherwise no sex. Even, he states that sex is not unfettered or more precisely say that between sex and no relationship repressive power might be just a barren paradox.

Michel Foucault in his thesis statement about the repression of sexuality really opened our eyes that there has been an emphasis and restriction the sex itself. So, the discourse of sexuality has been locked in a long time. Then it becomes a natural thing when we talk about sexuality clearly, it will be a lot of scorn that will come to us. The phenomenon of the repression of sexuality in society is used by capitalism to make it into a commodity, and advertising as an agent of capitalism tries to blend and mix the discourse of sexuality in the products they sell in bulk. When subjected to the repression of sexuality, it is a taboo to talk about, so when ads with sexual themes appeared in television or print media, our subconscious will quickly respond and save it. The sexuality ads can influence people to buy a product, because it is actually a direct order from the subconscious.

### **Sexuality Main Parts Industrial Culture**

The phenomenon of cultural industries including media advertising can't be separated from other components of sexuality. Frankfurt School, such as T.W. Adorno, Max Horkheimer and W.F. Haug saw the culture industry production is always within the domain of sensuality. Various potential sensualities produced as part of the cultural industry. The sensuality effects are part of the creation of the illusion, manipulation, as a way to dominate the cultural tastes of the public and also as a vehicle to create awe and mass hysteria (Yasraf, 2009: 384).

One of the Frankfurt School scholar, WF Haug, in his work on Critique of Commodity Aesthetic: appearance, sexuality and Advertising in Capitalist Society, describes the development of modern forms of commodities in capitalist society, are directly related to the domain of sensuality, that is how the potential sensuality of the body is used as part of social communication commodities (Yasraf, 2006: 342). Haug critics' increasingly clear about the use of sexuality by capitalists to continue to

reap the benefits, and it goes straight when sexuality plays a major role in the discourse of capitalism that make the illusion and manipulation as a way to dominate people's tastes, especially the use of sensuality effects. WF Haug also uses the term technocracy of sensuality to explain how cultural values are masked by the values of sensuality, glamour and eroticism. So, it comes cultural eroticism and sensuality brain, the brain and culture is filled by various forms of sensual thoughts (Yasraf, 2009: 384)

Technocracy sensuality is an attempt to control and influence the community through sensuality appearance that produced artificially. Value for sexual illusion lies in the satisfaction given voyeurism, a satisfaction that is obtained through the mechanism of vision (seeing), which saw the body or body image, causing sexual arousal and satisfaction from it. Because the look is very dependent on the presence of her image (image) is captured by the ability of perception, the satisfaction produces imaginary satisfaction (illusory satisfaction), because people just faced image of a body, not the reality of the body itself, people just look at the body's pleasure, not the pleasure of having his own body (Yasraf, 2006: 343).

### **History of Lingerie**

Clothing is one of the primary needs of human beings since the beginning. Early humans began to use clothing as a protective skin and body from the weather and insects. As an emerging culture system, usability clothing is used as social functions. This function looks of clothing serves as a marker of gender and social levels of society, from clothing made from animal skins until the discovery of cotton fiber and clothing made by hand. After the industrial revolution, starting clothing made in bulk, thanks to the invention of spinning machines and sewing machines.

Egyptian society has been using underwear made of linen since 2000 BC. A simple structure and is used for daily wear. For formal occasions, they added linen pleated skirt shaped ridden, while the nobility adding pleated linen robes and jewelry. Once the importance of underwear, so there is some backup in the tombs of the pharaohs. Ancient Greek society did not use the underwear; they wear chiton, a piece of woolen cloth without stitching brooch pinned to the bone / gold / bronze called fibulae. Upon their new robes called himation. Ancient form of clothing in the closest modern underwear is used by Roman. In the era of Queen Victoria, undershirts were used. Overall, socks and underwear (drawers) are made by hand from wool, cotton or silk. Colors used to be limited

to white. While in America before the civil war, underwear made of wool flannel drawers along the knee.

The industrial revolution allowed cotton yarn spinning with the engine, so the underwear can be mass produced. In this period; men, women and children from all walks of life can buy underwear in the store. Most of the used underwear (briefs shaped canal) called union suits with buttoned openings at the back for easy defecation. Designations stockings man: "long john" came from the boxer's famous Long John Sullivan in 1880s, he was wearing a costume boxing. After the 16th century, colonialism began to bloom among European royalty. Besides spices are the main objectives, they also bring new plant varieties as explore the world of new discoveries. The discovery of rubber in the Malay Peninsula is very important in the history of underwear. Rubber material is used for a wide variety of products, from catapults to tire life (with gas). Elastic properties of rubber, making the inventors try to use this new material as fasteners underwear. Thomas Hancock (UK) mixed with sulfur and put it in the spun yarn. Besides it is easier to be woven, rubber is also more resistant to hot and cold temperatures. Elastic thread is growing continuously so found elastex and spandex (Gabriela Bertie Alia: 2008).

### **Sexual Information on Advertising**

Advertising by Monle Lee and Carla Johnson (2004: 3) is a commercial and non personal communication about an organization and its products transmitted to a target audience through a mass medium like television, radio, newspapers, magazines, direct mail, outdoor billboards or public transport. Related to advertising efforts in transmitting its products to the public, an ad would not exist without the message. Without a message, the ad will not be intangible. When in print, he is just an empty room with no writing, pictures or any form: when in the medium of television, and the picture does not look any noise; then he can't be called advertising because there is no message (Renda, 2009: 17).

Spearheading the success of an ad is when the message to the consumer and making advertising products as a commodity in society. Book itself has a variety of information that should be communicated to consumers. One type of information readily accepted by connoisseurs of advertising is sexual information. Sexual information according to Harris (1994) is any representation that describes or shows sexual interest, behavior, or motivation, and it gels together in various ad elements such

as images or non-verbal acts (Reichert & Lambiase, 2003: 13). So that the various form of sexualities in advertising merge into one in the overall message conveyed by the advertisement.

Talking about sexual information Reichert & Lambiase (2003: 14-27) there was some kind of sexual content is:

1. Nudity: Nudity ad is virtually ignored the fact that nudity is important source of sexual information. Terms nudity does not mean that the model is not completely dressed; the term generally refers to the amount and style of clothing worn by the model. An assumption in this study is that sex is synonymous with nudity, and the risqué clothing, or lack of fiber, is a major determinant of sexual response. In fact, other aspects of the model most clothing also contributes to sexual perceptions as physical attractiveness, facial expressions and eye contact with the audience.
2. Sexual behavior: sexual behavior includes teasing, eye contact, posture and movement of body language, nonverbal and verbal communication. It covers the interaction between two or more people, usually hugging, kissing, voyeurism and sexual behavior in a more intimate. Sexual behavior can be woven into advertising in two ways, first as an individual behavioral or interpersonal interaction. Model in ad shows the sexual behavior by making eye contact with the audience, teasing, provocative and moving. Second. Models engage in sexual behavior (together) is another form of sex in advertising, simple contact (holding hands), more intimate contact (kissing and embracing) and depictions of a sexual relationship as a couple in Durex ad will be categorized at the most intimate.
3. Physical attractiveness: The physical beauty of the model in general, often mixes from facial beauty, skin, hair and physical. As Joseph (1982) points out, there is little discussion of what constitutes physical attractiveness in photos, but most likely this is related to facial features. Attractiveness ratings by respondents are models hair, face, skins, eye contact, clothing, physical and behavioral.
4. Sexual referents: Teasing-allusions and references to the objects and events that have meaning double intender and sexual innuendo, also includes facilitating factors that enhance or contribute to the sexual meaning as music settings, lighting, design elements, camera and editing techniques. In advertising, sexual referents can be defined as the elements of the

message (visual or verbal) that serve to get sexual thoughts. Although this definition can include all kinds of sexual information, but it is intended to refer cases of sexual innuendo and allusion. Sexual referents differ from other forms of sexual information because they rely on the receiver to interpret the message. In this way referents play on sexual mind of the audience, and this conflict implicit in making ads.

5. Sexual embeds: sexual embeds a kind of sex in advertising because they are composed of sexual information-though small and invisible. So many plays on the subconscious recipient, such as the type of sexual embeds the kind words, objects shaped or positioned as genitalia and sexual acts, as well as sexual information such as small hidden pictures of naked people. Sexual embeds finally able to arouse sexual desire and the motivation of the recipient to consume the advertised item.

### **Sexuality on Underwear Ads**

The phenomenon of sexuality and repression had turned into a really successful commodity utilized by underwear ad and continued marketing their products through models that show nudity and other sexual expressions that make consumers remember the product for a period of time. So when we see sexuality in it, it will be widely found various types of sexual information. Underwear ad that use sexuality as very strong aroma, this is in line with Yasraf (2006: 345) that the image has a very big role in causing the sexual arousal or satisfaction, as the substitution of the actual body. The importance of image and the image is shown by the tendency of men (or maybe women) to develop various forms of fantasy when looking at a pornographic image. A text, images, images or objects in various forms of commodities can cause an arousal and sexual gratification from the way it is displayed - the shape, pose, position, posture and expression.

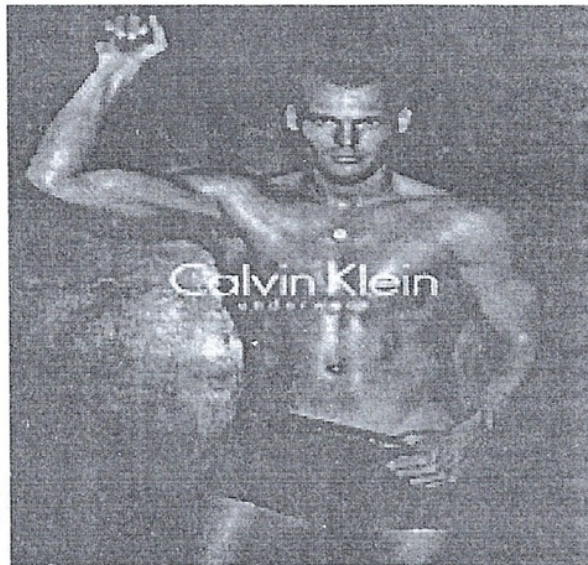
The term "expose" on underwear ads through various types of sexual information is not free of sexual content in commercials such as nudity, sexual behavior, physical attractiveness, sexual referents and sexual embeds. Speaking of nudity in advertising, it will show the amounts of clothing used by the model are minimal, and underwear ad, it does include nudity. The clothing using the model is very open and almost nude, so it made sexual stimulation for the recipient. For example Calvin Klein ads, where men and women models make such movements like they would take off their panties (see figure 1 and 2).



**Figure 1.**



**Figure 2.**



Furthermore, it's about sexual behavior in advertising. Sexual behavior itself has two aspects, aspects of interpersonal interactions and group interaction. For example, interpersonal interactions, including eye contact or movements and provocative teasing, can lead to sexual stimulation. The first aspect can be seen from eye contact several models Calvin Klein of men and women who are so seductive and provocative in creating incentives for the receiver (see Figure 3 and 4).

Figure 3.

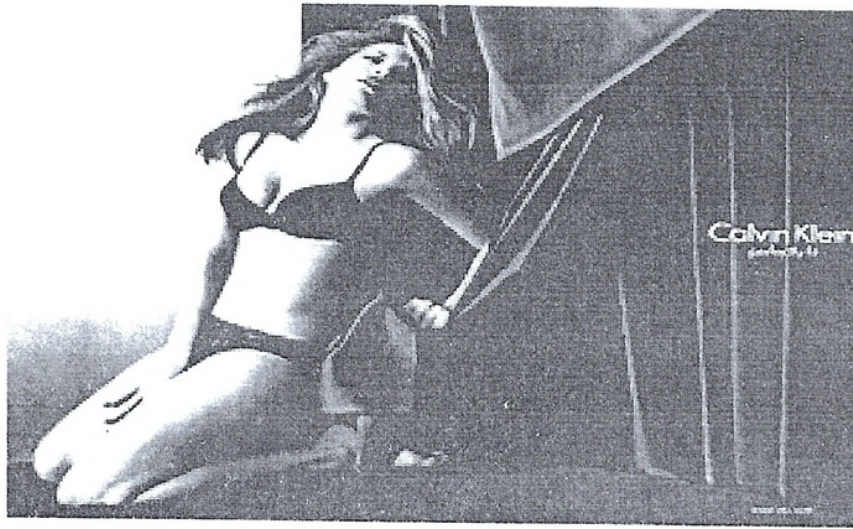


Figure 4.



The second aspect is group interaction, the simplest example can be done by holding hands or holding the body together of one to another. As an example can be seen in one of Calvin Klein ads featuring four models (two male and two female) next to each other holding the body (see figure 5).

Figure 5.



Physical attractiveness is sexual attraction that can be interpreted as hairstyles, beauty skin, to the beauty of the whole body that can lead to sexual stimuli. All underwear models have physical attraction, because underwear ad showing overall physical beauty that may be covered only a small part by underwear product itself. Sexual referents in underwear ads concentrate more on satire and the factors that enhance or contribute to the sexual meaning as music settings, lighting, design elements, camera and editing techniques so that it is more implicit. Examples can be seen in advertisements Man Sport GT underwear featuring a soft touch text capital where the text is loaded insinuation that by wearing the pants the male genitalia is protected and stay smooth (see figure 6).

**Figure 6.**



While the factors that increase sexual meanings such as lighting and shooting techniques of the model can be found in almost all underwear ads. Lastly, is sexual embeds that plays on the subconscious as the recipient of sexual information displayed little. So the highlight is the sexual symbolism that represents sexual attraction like sexual acts, often characterized by both pictures and hidden words. This sexual symbolism contained in Calvin Klein ads where we can see the model touch his self (see figure 7).

**Figure 7.**



## Conclusion

Sexuality has undergone extraordinary changes when entering the world of consumption. Currently, sexuality transformed into a commodity in the capitalist industry which is used as a powerful weapon to get consumers, making it virtually invisible that sexuality suffered repression from generation to generation. But it illustrated in this paper that sexuality into a commodity in society has shackled and suffered from repression for a long time, so when the media take advantage of the discourse of sexuality for the benefit of the industrial capitalist the sexuality will be shown in almost all media, as a way of telling unconscious vision of modern society.

Media advertising as one of the spearheads of capitalism able to capitalize on this opportunity by slipping the discourses of sexuality in almost every appearance, and ads that provide sexuality can increase the number of consumers. One of the potential products is underwear. Various underwear ads, if observed or analyzed, we will find variety of scents of sexuality, both explicitly and implicitly. This was proven when we see sexuality in clothing ads with different types of information, such as **1** nudity, sexual behavior, physical attractiveness, sexual referents and sexual embeds which lay on public eye but difficult to detect. So as of this writing at least be able to open our eyes about sexuality in underwear ads.

Finally, it can be concluded from this paper that we should not underestimate sexuality in ads, even if it's only a little, because the ads because the relationship between sexuality and or purchasing power is quite significant and promising. So, we should aware that sexuality will appear in many ads because of this.

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# Sexuality in Underwear Ads

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