**Introduction Assignment #1 - Constructing Reality**

**Value 20 marks**

1. Choose a magazine, Internet or YouTube advertisement which depicts a constructed view of reality. This can be a print ad like in a magazine or Internet ad, or a video of a commercial. Copy and paste or provide the link for the advertisement (include the link or source with the image).
   1. What is the OBVIOUS purpose of the ad? What is it trying to sell or promote?
   2. Any advertisement has a target audience, a group of people the ad is intended to reach and influence/inform, such as teens, young adults, tweens, etc. What is the ad's target market? Make sure to state the gender and age range.
   3. Describe how the ad is constructed, AESTHETICALLY, and in detail.(That means visually, no judgement). As a hint, imagine you’re describing the details of the ad to a friend on the phone. Examples:
      * *The ad is on a white background.*
      * *The main text is red, and is at the top of the ad.*
      * *The word “Microsoft” is in large text at the bottom.*
      * *The background photo is of horses pulling a wagon in the snow.*
      * *The teens in the ad show no emotion and are starting at the viewer.*
   4. What messages about the product or service are being transmitted to your brain either obviously or on an unconscious level? What values and assumptions are being transmitted?

Example:

* + - *This is from an ad for Proactive acne treatment. The assumption is that all teens want clear skin free of acne. From the before and after photos, the ad suggests teens are much happier with clearer skin, possibly even more popular. There seems to be no strong racial or gender messages. According to the ad, the product can lead to greater self-confidence, contentment, and makes it easier to be social.*
  1. What reality is the ad attempting to construct for the viewer? Is this reality accurate, exaggerated or false? Explain.

Example:

* + - *The ad suggests that the entire family will love a trip to Disneyland. It suggests that everyone will be happy, have fun, and enjoy great weather. This may be an accurate reality for many people, although it might be impossible to sustain such excitement for an entire trip.*
    - *The Axe deodorant commercial is suggesting that guys who wear the deodorant will instantly attract women who will even fight for their attention. This is fantasy and not reality.*
  1. In your opinion, is the ad effective in getting consumers to buy or bring attention to a brand or product? Why or why not?

1. View the three Photoshop Effect videos on page 12 of the course content and comment on the following.
   * 1. Consider the teens at your school. Give an example of how media has influenced a friend, yourself or classmate about their body image, perception of beauty or attractiveness. Remember, media refers to many possible forms, such as magazine or billboard advertisements, television commercials and infomercials, magazine covers, and videos. (100 words minimum)
     2. Google for a story or image to show an example of the controversy surrounding a photoshopped celebrity. Include a link to the site, story or image(s), but make sure they are appropriate for school. Do you think media’s use of Photoshop is out of control? Why or why not? (100 words minimum)
     3. After viewing the videos, comment on the following (minimum 200 words): It's been said that many advertisements prey upon people's fears in order to get them to buy a good or service. For example, an anti-perspirant commercial might show a person who is very shy about lifting their arms until they use the product. A breath mint commercial might show a teenager nervous about bad breath before a date. A hair gel commercial may show a teenager who won’t go out on a date until they get their hair just right. Do you think most commercials unfairly target people's fears, or are these simply a clever way to advertise? Support your opinion with example and/or details. This site and podcast may help: <http://www.cbc.ca/undertheinfluence/season-2/2013/01/05/welcome-to-the-latest-phenomenon-1/>