

Doft i bild. Om bilden som kommunikatör i parfymannonsens värld

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Abstract

This study evolves around advertising and image communication, especially concerning the image of scent, as in perfume. The image of scent is discussed from the perspective of how fragrance is depicted in advertising. Since the product itself, the scent, is invisible, the marketing has to communicate through metaphors. The advertisement has to depict the desired effect of the scent, rather than the scent itself, as the only visible object is the bottle. The study also explores the connection between consumption and status, and discusses image strategies that are used to enhance product status in the examined advertisements.

The theoretical part of the study deals with *scent*, as in perfume, and *image*, as in advertisements. In the first part, the cultural history of perfume, fragrance production and the connection between perfume industry and fashion industry are discussed. The second part of the study deals with image communication and the role of images in advertising. This is also the empirical part of the study and it is based on perfume advertising during the twentieth

century (1900–2000) and a closer analysis of the images in contemporary perfume advertisements from 2000–2005. Perfume advertisements in *Vogue* magazine, from the American, French and British editions are studied. The study is also an inventory of main theories concerning the function of perfume both on a psychological level as well as in a social cultural context.

The motif and the message in the images are analysed, together with their interaction with the text and the fragrance name/brand in the advertisements. The aim is to map out contemporary advertising imagery, viewed in relation to an historical background, and study in what ways the image of scent may present itself today, and how it has changed since the beginning of the 20th century. The differences between the communicated message and the characteristics of the advertised product (the scent itself), as they appear in perfume criticism and systematic scent systems, are examined. Based on this material, images and their role as means of communication are discussed.

KEYWORDS: perfume advertisement, fragrance, scent, *Vogue*, image, image communication, marketing, advertising.

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