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Ethics & Visual Representation
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Object & Objectification:

Advertising Angles for the Gender Specific

The female nude has a long and prestigious foothold in the history of visual imagery. Despite its all too iconic and reverent reputation in artistic circles, contemporary viewing culture, particularly that of the advertising world, has created a number of accessory facets for the classic female nude bearing cynical, sexual and even obscenely gravid purposes. It is the goal of this essay to deconstruct two of BMW's 2008 (Ultimate Driving Attraction and Pre Owned), advertisements and apply the feminist ethical theories of Lynda Nead to their construction; thereby proving their content to be both overtly sexist and no less offensive or dehumanizing to women than mainstream pornography.

Originally articulated by John Berger, it is now common knowledge that the aim of advertising is to sell product, but more specifically advertisements persuade the consumer to believe the product will bring them pleasure both directly and indirectly. The consumer is then able to access said pleasure directly upon purchase by simply owning the item, and indirectly as well by being the envy of all their friends (Cortese 75). So it can be inferred that advertising sells products as well as self-love for an affordable ticket price. In 1964, Herbert Marcuse had concluded that "the masses are no longer able to distinguish personal freedom from manipulation" (Crotese 6), one might only assume the degree to which contemporary advertising has escalated matters nearly fifty years later. As manipulated as the masses have allowed themselves to become by advertising, "one could argue that they are able to oppose, subvert and

neutralize codes of manipulation...” (Cortese 6) as well. By simply being able to deconstruct the symbology within an advertisement consumers are able to balance the majoritive influences of the media. Cortese maintains, “Critical reflection on media representations deprives the industry of their undisputed power” (Cortese 1).

That being said, it seems only appropriate to move forward with the deconstruction of the two advertisements up for discussion. The image to the left is titled “The ultimate attraction” (2BMW) advertisement selling the X3 model. The text indicating the model of vehicle being sold is somewhat small within the upper right hand corner of the image, so one might assume the more important message here is the emboldened BMW branding. BMW is effectively selling their brand in three ways: one of which is the half-clothed, rather attractive female in the submissive reclining pose on the bed. The second is the strong, virile man in a dominant pose atop the woman, his gaze utterly transfixed on the third indicator of the image; the iconic reference to the ‘centerfold,’ occupied by said BMW.



Image 1

Image two is entitled, “You know you’re not the first.” (1BMW), selling BMW’s



Image 2

Premium Selection Used Car Models. In this ad BMW is only using two symbolic indicators to sell their product; the first being the incredibly attractive and confrontational, presumably naked teenager in the submissive, reclining pose at the center of the image. The second indicator of sale is the implied joke of her virginity, represented by the headliner, “You know you’re not the first.” (1BMW).

In order to begin dissecting what the advertisements are actually saying, it is important to first discern the condition of the bodies the two females pictured are in. There is any number of

ways to present a viewing of a female body in an image or representation, but the symmetry of frame, integrity and cleanliness of form are all indicative of psychoanalytic hints in reading an image effectively (Nead). Therefore, the differentiation between a naked body and a nude body become crucial in grasping the potency of the images.

Clark differentiates the naked and the nude... a distinction between bodies deprived of clothes, 'huddled and defenseless', and the body 'clothed' in art: the nude is the body re-formed rather than deformed, 'balanced, prosperous and confident'. The transformation from the naked to the nude is thus the shift from the actual to the ideal - the move from a perception of unformed, corporeal matter to the recognition of unity and constraint, the regulated economy of art. It is the process of transfiguration that renders the nude the perfect subject for the work of art. (Nead 14)

When addressing the content of image one (2BMW), it is important to note that despite the black bra and fall of the sheet folds the woman pictured is still categorized as a naked body. Without her head and limbs, she falls heartbreakingly short of Clark's "balanced, prosperous, and confident" (Nead) ideal. Ironically the ideal form, or the point of transfiguration occurs in this image with the vehicle being substituted as nude or 'work of art.'

In image 2, the female is most certainly a naked as well. There is not a shred of clothing within the image bounds and her form is cropped by the framing area limiting her to only a head and fingertips; therefore the whole-form or 'body as work of art' here is not the logical choice of woman but simply the implied used BMW. More specifically, any and all Premium Used BMW Cars (1BMW) on the planet are her implied equal, suggesting her competition is quite staggering.

The reason these two ads are so successful is the same reason they're offensive. BMW is relying on a universal lexicon of symbolic imagery and twisting it just enough to supplement their predatory consumerist aims. The particular point of reference in this case is the male/female relationship or the founding opposition within western metaphysics (Nead).

Historically, woman has occupied a secondary or supplementary role in western philosophy and religion. As Eve, formed from one of Adam's ribs, woman was created to fill Adam's own insufficiency...The two terms share a structural link (that is, Adam's rib) but they are not equal. The primary subject is Adam; Eve has a supplementary function, secondary but threatening since her existence always testifies to the original lack in Adam... (Nead 18)

Based on that reference alone, it is suffice to say, woman is intended in her creation to emblematically fill Adam's own insufficiency (make him whole). In image one (2BMW) the car becomes the replacement for the female both literally and figuratively. If this is true, then the car logically becomes the completing/supplementary factor for 'Adam' in both advertisements. The car is not just suggested to be the male supplement for 'wholeness' like a female, but better in the sense that the car is not a threatening independent entity like Nead states, but much less threatening as it is quite obviously not a male equal but an alluring symbiote, reliant on his command to function.

While addressing value oppositions, it may be beneficial to examine one more in the male/female category. According to Nead:

the male signifies culture, order, geometry ...then the female stands for nature and physicality. Woman is both mater (mother) and materia (matter), biologically determined and potentially wayward. Now, if art is defined as the conversion of matter into form, imagine how much greater the triumph for art if it is the female body that is thus transformed- pure nature transmuted, through the forms of art, into pure culture. The female nude, then, is not simply one subject among others, one form among many, it is *the* subject, *the* form. (Nead, 18)

The female nude has undoubtedly been the paragon of artistic representation for centuries, thus making the two ads up for discussion quite controversial as they have committed a crime against the most canonical archetype known in representational art. Simply stated, BMW has usurped the power of the female nude, denying her original transcendent purpose by bequeathing a

history of symbolic potency to an inanimate object. While it may be an exaggeration of trespass, these ads do read bitterly as they are in direct opposition of years of representational tradition.

Nead elaborates: “the female body is naturally predisposed to the contours of art; it seems simply to await the act of artistic regulation. ...The female nude is meant to transcend the marks of individualized corporeality by means of a unified formal language; when this fails, both the image of the body and the feelings of the viewer are profaned, that is desecrated or violated” (18). Again this is quite the problem, as the images are suggesting the artistic contours belong to the vehicle, not the two females presented. The branding and their products then become the timeless/plastic force in the advertisements. Consequently, this leaves the consumer with only the lingering profanity of a semi-humorous one liner proposing a car was meant to assume the role of a transcendent female form but falling tragically short of its intended purpose.

The two ads presented are obviously insulting to women, but could one go so far as to label them in the realm of the obscene? In order to come to a clearer understanding of obscenity, one has to but to simply consider how much of their female forms are left out of the image frame. “The etymology of ‘obscene’ ... may be a modification of the Latin ‘scena’, ... literally what is off, or to one side of the stage, beyond representation. ... the art/obscenity pairing represents the distinction between that which can be seen and that which is just beyond representation. The female nude marks both the internal limit of art and the external limit of obscenity.” (Nead 25) Taking that into consideration, it becomes immediately apparent that the advertisements are quite obscene. The majority of the two women’s form is frankly thus, just ‘beyond representation,’ one being but a torso and the other being a non-motile visage. They have no identity outside of representative sex object or clear bench mark for the implied potency of BMW’s manufacturing prowess. By fragmenting/dismembering the female form within the ads, the images begin to destabilize as more and more of the familiar ‘she’ is obliterated or left

beyond representation. This severed depiction of human form is known in the advertising industry as body chopping or from dismemberment. According to Cortese:

Dismemberment or body chopping appears to occur in advertising much more frequently for women than men. The implication is that women are objects and therefore less than human. Advertising that depicts women's bodies without faces, heads, and feet implies that all that is really important about a woman lies between her neck and her knees. The lack of a head symbolizes a woman without a brain. A faceless woman has no individuality. A woman without feet is immobile and therefore submissive. (Cortese 42)

In correspondence with Cortese's conclusions, BMW consumers may be left with even more of a misogynist message than mentioned above. Image one (2BMW) clearly illustrates 'all that is really important about a woman' lies between her shoulders and hips not necessarily 'neck and knees;' with no individuality, no brains, and being completely immobile the model makes the car an unmistakably superior alternative. In image two (1BMW) the symbolic implications of the model's form are a little more complex, in that she has a head and face but arguably no brain or identity outside of 'object', who's only desire is to be the 'desired'. Again, she is depicted legless and non-motile, making her utterly dependent on the male's appeal and interest to activate her very limited identity. The limiting of personhood or identity seems to be the most disturbingly abject about both advertisements as Kristeva points out in *Powers of Horror*; "[It is] not lack of cleanliness or health that causes abjection but what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules. The inbetween, the ambiguous, the composite." (Nead 32). Fragmentation of the body is no doubt disturbing, but the two women in the ads put together don't even make a singularly whole identity. Worse yet these women, even with missing parts, are without question exceptionally 'beautiful.' However what kind of message might these ads be sending to every other woman in contemporary society about their bodies or even their identities? Beauty may only get one close to men but even the beautiful stand no chance against

a fast, European car, leaving the masses with only the implied offense: suggesting a woman is only as good as her vagina is tight and sometimes not even then.

What's most disturbing, the objectification of women, or worse, further dehumanizing them to the role of receptacle? Instead of simply being used for sex based on the quality of physical characteristics, let's instead simplify matters even more suggesting that a female's only redeeming quality, her looks, is no matter at all. Instead let's consider that she is only as useful as her male counterpart's imagination. As implied by BMW's ads, a woman's sexual anatomy is but a catalyst for disturbing object fantasy. Identity is of no consequence, she simply becomes but a convenient fluid depository for his vehicular visions. All this is temporary until he can afford purchasing said dream and then 'she' is no longer needed; thereby transforming the argument on the two images at hand from obscenity to the pornographic. "Pure aesthetic experience is posed as a consolidation of individual subjectivity; it can be seen in terms of the framing of the subject. In contrast, the experience of pornography is described as a kind of disturbance; it presents the possibility of an undoing of identity." (Nead 28).

Alongside the ruination of identity, pornographic imagery also relies on emblematic indicators of ritualized subordination and body streamlining or encapsulation to capably deliver powerful messages. These indicators become readily apparent in the poise and pose of the individual in question in addition to the heightened level of physical polish to their form. In regards to ritualized subordination, it is important in mainstream pornography to maintain the classic roles of power play between the two sexes, men dominate and women submit, so as to charge the images with subliminal hierarchy of subjects as well as literal. In both ads, the women are depicted in reclining positions. In image one (2BMW) the male is confidently posed directly on top of his female counterpart. He is assertively posed with both hands stably anchored to the bed as she anchors herself to him, no confusion necessary. In image two (1BMW) the lady is

reclining as well. Even though her gaze is direct, her visage is turned ever so slightly to the side, politely shying away from a forceful role. Her dominator is implied as commercial audience by the aerial perspective of the camera. Her disarming and submissive pose is inviting to whomever cares to take on the role as judge or dominator. Cortese states, “People in charge of their own lives typically stand upright, alert and ready to meet the world. In contrast, the bending of a body conveys unpreparedness, submissiveness, and appeasement... A similar symbol of deference is lowering oneself physically.” (46).

The second half of pornographic indication is reliant on the seamlessness of the female body. Because the natural and honest human form is essentially abject, full of imperfections, constantly leaking and decaying, it is important for the hyper sexualized human forms of pornography to be sealed up, clean and pristine so as to exude a heightened sexuality or fantasy status (Nead).

Ads portray women as sex objects or mindless domestics... The exemplary female prototype in advertising, regardless of product or service, displays youth (no lines/wrinkles), good looks, sexual seductiveness (Baudrillard), and perfection (no scars, blemishes, or even pores, Kilbourne). The provocateur is not human; rather, she is a form or hollow shell representing a female figure. Accepted attractiveness is her only attribute. (Cortese 59)

In both images one and two the woman portrayed are flawless. Aside from missing limbs, their hair is meticulously coiffed, skin is smooth, dirt, wrinkle and pore free, nails are manicured and makeup is soft and natural playing up only the most desirable of features while indicating youth, great health and hygiene. What more, could anyone possibly want out of a provocateur... perhaps a BMW?

While this essay may seem glaringly one sided and overtly feminist, perhaps it's also necessary to consider the public opinion as well. In order to effectively research these advertisements and their message efficacy to the public, twenty individuals were sampled at

random. Ten of which were female and the other remaining ten were male of varying ages, ethnicities and earning potentials. The males sampled responded initially the same, in that all ten interviewed opened with an immediate chuckle when viewing the advertisements. A little less than half those interviewed continued laughing well into the interview. One man named Dave insisted the ads were “hilarious and so true.” He went on to say, “if I could get away with putting a picture on my wife’s face I’d be set!” Luckily the remaining male interviewees seemed a little less taken with the image than Dave. Depending on where the men seemed financially vastly altered their responses, in that those more secure financially, responded much more positively to the imagery. One man who was most sympathetic for the women pictured stated the ads “only appealed to materialists” and that they “were fulfilling homoerotic fantasies” by selling lewd images of men and their cars. Regardless of where they drifted in response, the male group was overall positive in their reviews only a third of which admitted the ads weren’t effectively or directly selling cars but rather making a memorable joke instead.

As can be expected, the female perspective was incredibly one sided, yielding a plethora of negative responses such as: admitted discomfort with the images, nervous laughter, awkward silence and even one woman kindly excusing herself from questioning altogether. Many agreed that the advertisement was offensive especially since the two women pictured “obviously have a great body” (Kelley...). A girl named Cassie found the ad to be “revolting and sad,” going on to state that, “a full figured girl like myself has no place being here, according to these.” And even more unusual over half the women interviewed took offense to the male model seen in ad number one (2BMW), claiming he wasn’t attractive enough to be pictured judging such an attractive woman. Out of the entire sampling, both male and female majoritive responses agree that the ads were quite obviously not made with the female population in mind for potential consumers of the product.

Even out of the handful of people interviewed, the responses indicated that the consequences of the media's objectification of women are real and threatening. Women's bodies and relationships are being trivialized to benefit consumerist aims and there are serious consequences to be considered as a direct result. Cortese says that today's youth is being raised to think that we are 'intrinsically defected' and formalized body objectification is acceptable, even normal (75). This is not only a flawed approach to healthy self-viewing, but grossly detrimental to today's youth suggesting "Internalizing cultural standards of feminine beauty leads to increased shame and anxiety about the body and appearance... related to increased risk of psychological problems, including eating disorders, bipolar depression, and sexual dysfunction." (Cortese 61). The commodification of sex endorses self-objectification and consequently gender inequality. If media outlets continue to perpetuate object and objectification stereotypes of women it may only catalyze gender specific socially violent hierarchies.

MacKinnon fears that:

use can easily be followed by violence and abuse. Since women are things (as opposed to human beings), it seems to men that there is nothing problematic with abusing them. The object status of women, then, is the cause of men seeing nothing problematic with violent behavior towards women.

objectification is a consequence of gender inequality... [Making] women's sexuality into 'something any man who wants to can buy and hold in his hands... She becomes something to be used by him, specifically, an object of his sexual use.' (Papadaki/Zalta)

Reliance on erotic content in advertising progresses every year along with the overtness of the message. This natural progression in image potency may only cause more problems for potential consumers in relationships both topical and social but especially those intimate and personal in nature (Papadaki/Zalta). Reichert believes as general advertising trends progress the sexual content in advertising must clearly progress as well, becoming exponentially more extreme and

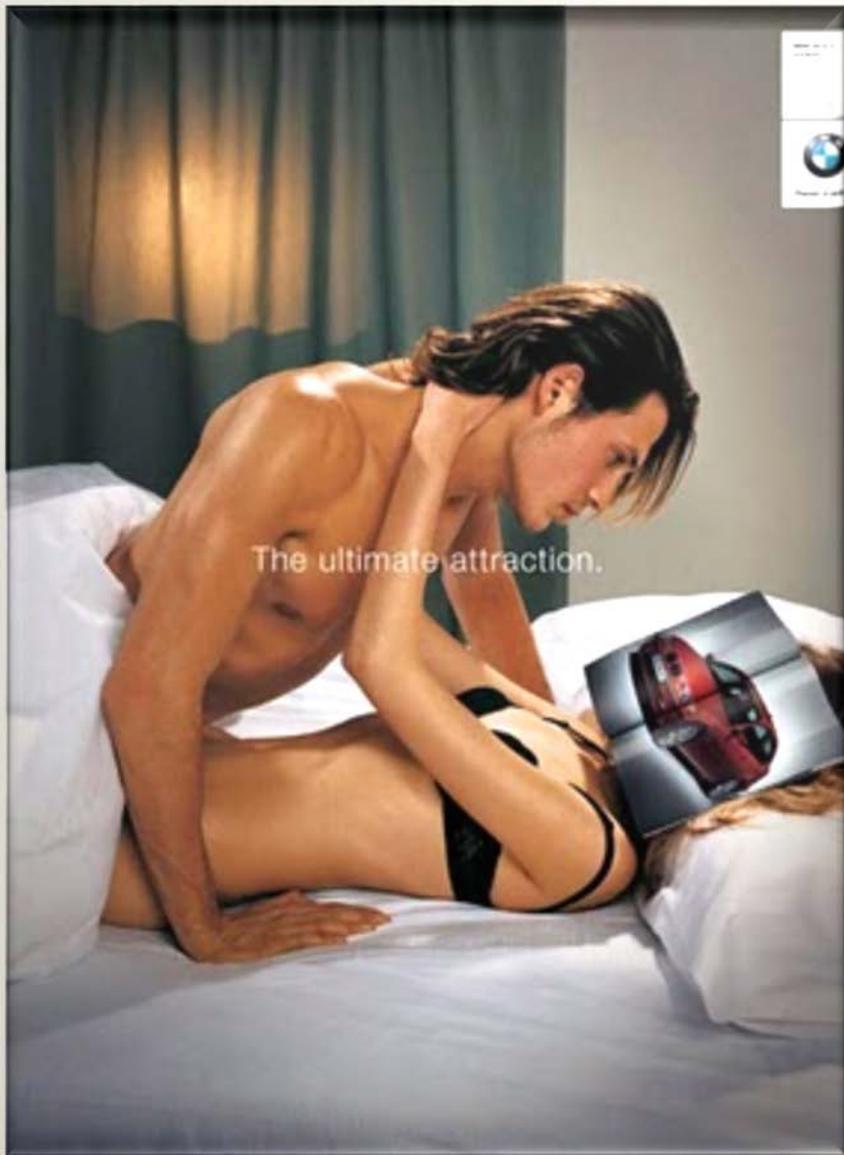
explicit over time (364). “What is not clear is just how perverse, erotic or naughty ads will have to be to sell products next year [and so on]. As advertisers hit the limits of what they can show, they package sex differently to keep it fresh... research has shown that viewers experience wear-out: the more they see scintillating sex, the more scintillating it needs to be to evoke the same effect.” (Reichert 365).

As a contemporary viewing culture, let's be wary of the messages being thrown at us daily through billboards, commercials, magazines and internet advertisements. As consumers, it is necessary for us to educate ourselves in the language of subversive advertising so that there is potential to “oppose, subvert and neutralize codes of manipulation” (Cortese 6). It is not the intended purpose of the female body to sell commodities through sex, and even more importantly she is not an object for sale. Kant once said:

Sexual love makes of the loved person an Object of appetite; as soon as that appetite has been stilled, the person is cast aside as one casts away a lemon which has been sucked dry. ... as soon as a person becomes an Object of appetite for another, all motives of moral relationship cease to function, because as an Object of appetite for another a person becomes a thing and can be treated and used as such by every one. (Papadaki/Zalta)

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The ultimate attraction.



You know you're not the first.

BMW Premium
Selection
Great Cars

www.bmw.jp



Sheer
Driving Pleasure

Source Philosophy:
The Female Nude, Lynda Nead

Advertising Angles for the Gender Specific

AD DECONSTRUCTION IS THE ANALYSIS OF ADVERTISING IN SUCH A WAY AS TO REINTERPRET IMPLIED MEANINGS AS SYMBOLIC RITUALS OF POST MODERN SOCIETIES... CRITICAL REFLECTION ON MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS DEPRIVES THE INDUSTRY OF THEIR UNDISPUTED POWER. -CORTESE

GENDER REPRESENTATIONS IN ADVERTISING ARE INTRICATELY LINKED TO SOCIAL ARRANGEMENTS AND POWER STRUCTURE. MARCUSE MAINTAINS THAT THE MASSES ARE NO LONGER ABLE TO DISTINGUISH PERSONAL FREEDOM FROM MANIPULATION & BECAUSE OF THIS, AD COMPANIES HAVE QUITE THE LEG UP.

- PERSUADE THE CONSUMER THAT THE PRODUCT WILL BRING YOU PLEASURE BUT MORE SO THE ENVY OF ALL YOUR FRIENDS WILL BRING YOU MORE; SELF LOVE FOR A SMALL TICKET PRICE

Disclaimer: may experience mild obnoxious feminism

Representations of such marginalized groups (women) may be contrasted with the dominant producers of mainstream culture—a set of white, male, upper-middle- to upper-class, heterosexual ideologies.



WHAT'S SELLING?

- A BMW X3

The Ultimate Driving Attraction

HOW?

- female half clothed & submissive pose
- strong, virile man, gaze transfixed in dominant pose
- the iconic reference to the centerfold, occupied by said BMW.

Let's Play... Ad Deconstruction

WHAT'S SELLING?

- BMW Premium Selection Used Cars

HOW?

- female presumably naked, youthful, delicate, dirty & submissive pose
- The implied joke of her virginity – “You know you’re not the first”

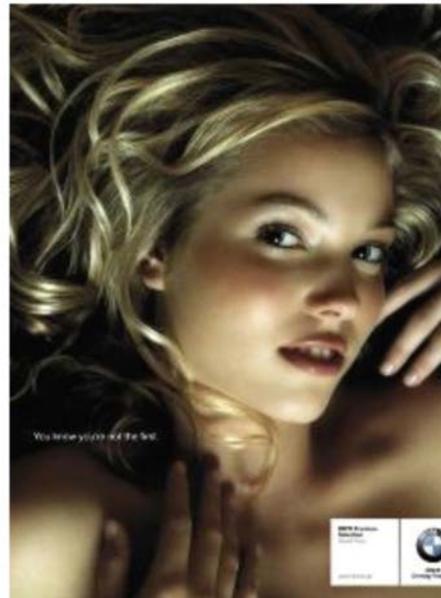
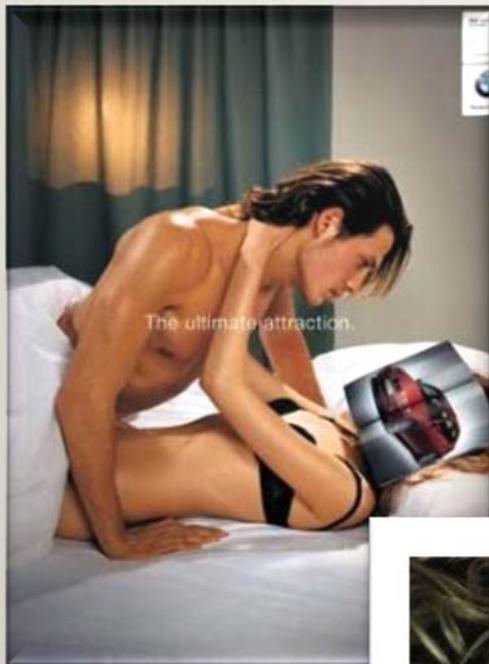


Let's Play... Ad Deconstruction



CLARK DIFFERENTIATES THE NAKED & THE NUDE...A DISTINCTION BETWEEN BODIES DEPRIVED OF CLOTHES, 'HUDDLED AND DEFENSELESS', & THE BODY 'CLOTHED' IN ART: THE NUDE IS THE BODY RE-FORMED RATHER THAN DEFORMED, 'BALANCED, PROSPEROUS AND CONFIDENT'. THE TRANSFORMATION FROM THE NAKED TO THE NUDE IS THUS THE SHIFT FROM THE ACTUAL TO THE IDEAL - THE MOVE FROM A PERCEPTION OF UNFORMED, CORPOREAL MATTER TO THE RECOGNITION OF UNITY & CONSTRAINT, THE REGULATED ECONOMY OF ART. IT IS THE PROCESS OF TRANSFIGURATION THAT RENDERS THE NUDE THE PERFECT SUBJECT FOR THE WORK OF ART.

The reason it's successful is the same reason it's offensive.

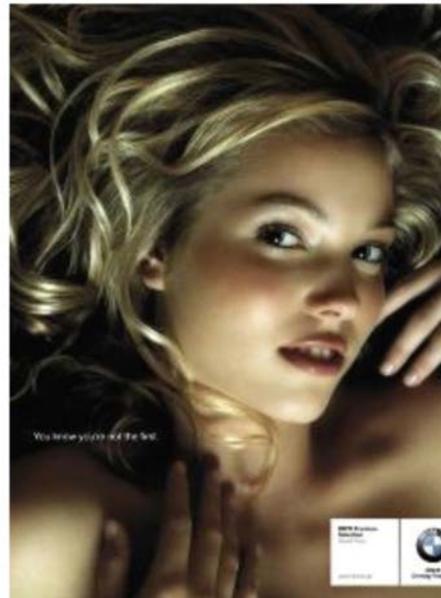
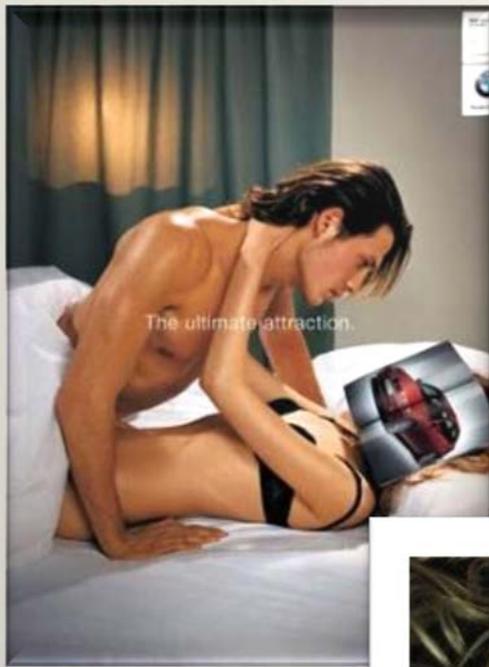


HISTORICALLY, WOMAN HAS OCCUPIED A SECONDARY OR SUPPLEMENTARY ROLE IN WESTERN PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION. AS EVE, FORMED FROM ONE OF ADAM'S RIBS, WOMAN WAS CREATED TO FILL ADAM'S OWN INSUFFICIENCY...THE TWO TERMS SHARE A STRUCTURAL LINK (THAT IS, ADAM'S RIB) BUT THEY ARE NOT EQUAL. THE PRIMARY SUBJECT IS ADAM; EVE HAS A SUPPLEMENTARY FUNCTION, SECONDARY BUT THREATENING SINCE HER EXISTENCE ALWAYS TESTIFIES TO THE ORIGINAL LACK IN ADAM...

founding opposition within western metaphysics

IF THE MALE SIGNIFIES CULTURE, ORDER, GEOMETRY (GIVEN VISUAL FORM IN VITRUVIAN MAN), THEN THE FEMALE STANDS FOR NATURE AND PHYSICALITY. WOMAN IS BOTH MATER (MOTHER) AND MATERIA (MATTER), BIOLOGICALLY DETERMINED AND POTENTIALLY WAYWARD. NOW, IF ART IS DEFINED AS THE CONVERSION OF MATTER INTO FORM, IMAGINE HOW MUCH GREATER THE TRIUMPH FOR ART IF IT IS THE FEMALE BODY THAT IS THUS TRANSFORMED- PURE NATURE TRANSMUTED, THROUGH THE FORMS OF ART, INTO PURE CULTURE. THE FEMALE NUDE, THEN, IS NOT SIMPLY ONE SUBJECT AMONG OTHERS, ONE FORM AMONG MANY, IT IS *THE SUBJECT, THE FORM.* -LYNDA NEAD



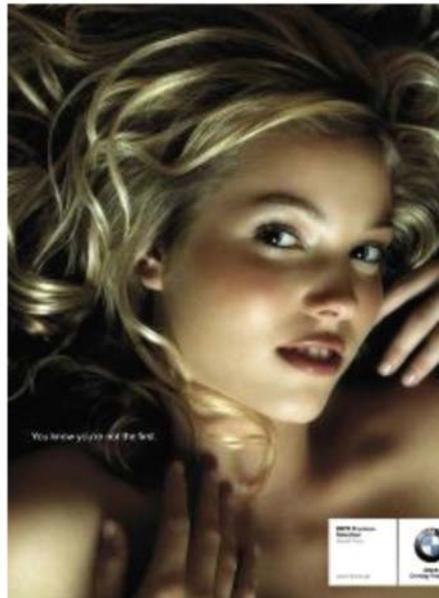


ACCORDING TO THIS RATIONALIZATION, THE FEMALE BODY IS NATURALLY PREDISPOSED TO THE CONTOURS OF ART; IT SEEMS SIMPLY TO AWAIT THE ACT OF ARTISTIC REGULATION. ...THE FEMALE NUDE IS MEANT TO TRANSCEND THE MARKS OF INDIVIDUALIZED CORPOREALITY BY MEANS OF A UNIFIED FORMAL LANGUAGE; WHEN THIS FAILS, BOTH THE IMAGE OF THE BODY AND THE FEELINGS OF THE VIEWER ARE PROFANED, THAT IS DESECRATED OR VIOLATED. -NEAD



Dismemberment or body chopping appears to occur in advertising much more frequently for women than men. The implication is that women are objects and therefore less than human. Advertising that depicts women's bodies without faces, heads, and feet implies that all that is really important about a woman lies between her neck and her knees. The lack of a head symbolizes a woman without a brain. A faceless woman has no individuality. A woman without feet is immobile and therefore submissive.

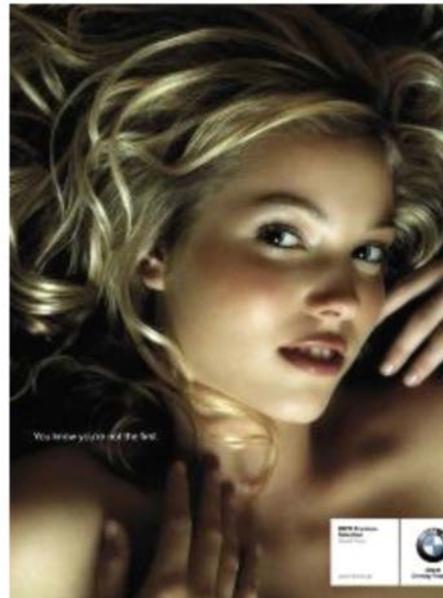
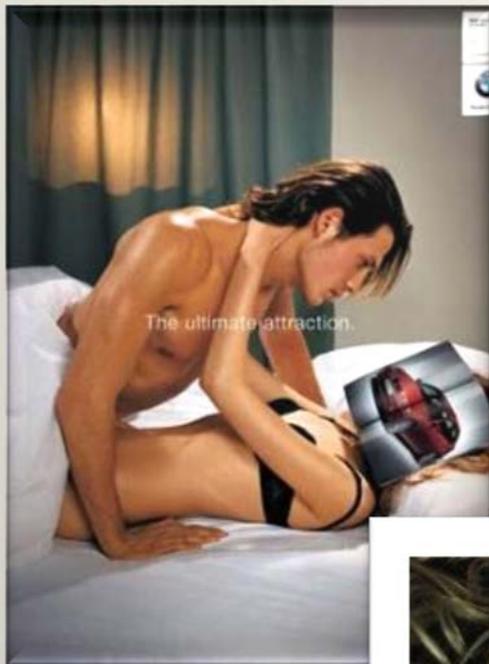
-Cortese



THE ETYMOLOGY OF 'OBSCENE' IS DISPUTED BUT IT MAY BE A MODIFICATION OF THE LATIN 'SCENA', SO MEANING LITERALLY WHAT IS OFF, OR TO ONE SIDE OF THE STAGE, BEYOND REPRESENTATION. WITHIN THIS CONTEXT, THE ART/OBSCENITY PAIRING REPRESENTS THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THAT WHICH CAN BE SEEN AND THAT WHICH IS JUST BEYOND REPRESENTATION. THE FEMALE NUDE MARKS BOTH THE INTERNAL LIMIT OF ART AND THE EXTERNAL LIMIT OF OBSCENITY.

-NEAD

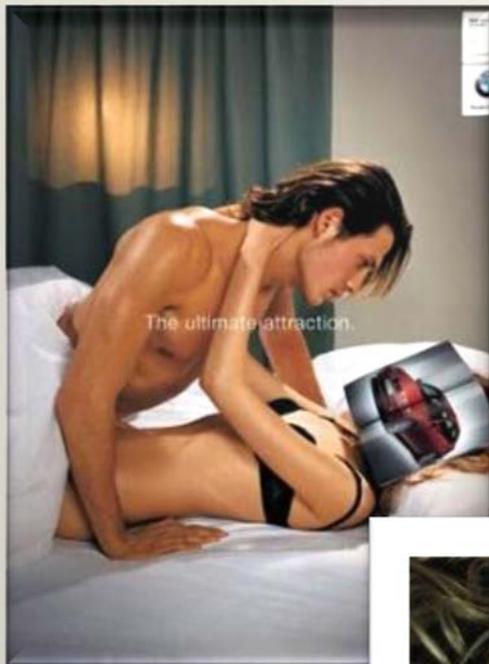
Obscenity



PURE AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE IS POSED AS A CONSOLIDATION OF INDIVIDUAL SUBJECTIVITY; IT CAN BE SEEN IN TERMS OF THE FRAMING OF THE SUBJECT. IN CONTRAST, THE EXPERIENCE OF PORNOGRAPHY IS DESCRIBED AS A KIND OF DISTURBANCE; IT PRESENTS THE POSSIBILITY OF AN UNDOING OF IDENTITY. –NEAD

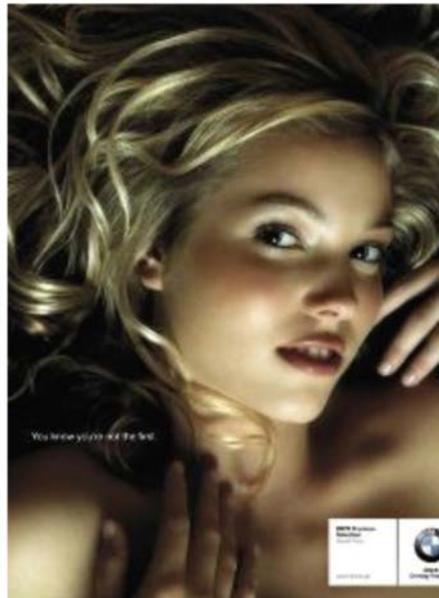
KRISTEVA, POWERS OF HORROR. [IT IS] NOT LACK OF CLEANLINESS OR HEALTH THAT CAUSES ABJECTION BUT WHAT DISTURBS IDENTITY, SYSTEM, ORDER. WHAT DOES NOT RESPECT BORDERS, POSITIONS, RULES. THE INBETWEEN, THE AMBIGUOUS, THE COMPOSITE.

Obscenity VS Pornography



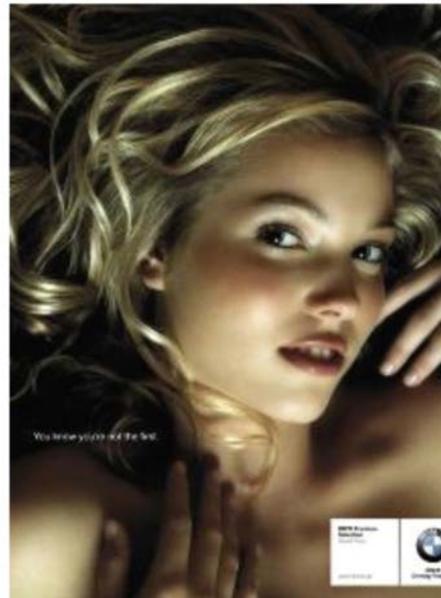
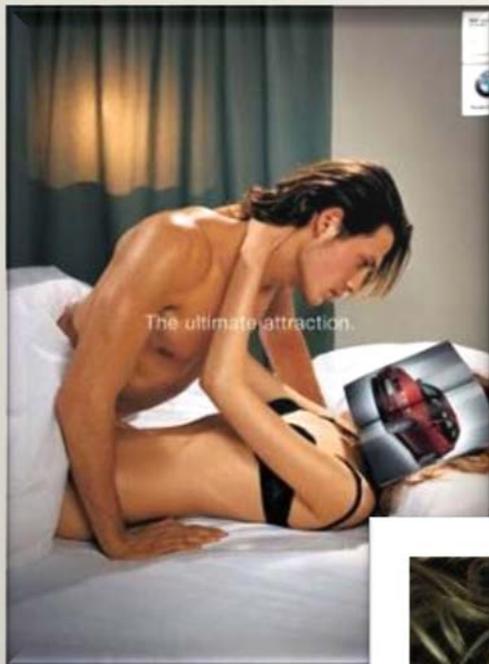
Ads portray women as sex objects or mindless domestics... The exemplary female prototype in advertising, regardless of product or service, displays youth (no lines/wrinkles), good looks, sexual seductiveness (Baudrillard), and perfection (no scars, blemishes, or even pores, Kilbourne). The provocateur is not human; rather, she is a form or hollow shell representing a female figure. Accepted attractiveness is her only attribute.

-Cortese



PEOPLE IN CHARGE OF THEIR OWN LIVES TYPICALLY STAND UPRIGHT, ALERT AND READY TO MEET THE WORLD. IN CONTRAST, THE BENDING OF A BODY CONVEYS UNPREPAREDNESS, SUBMISSIVENESS, AND APPEASEMENT... A SIMILAR SYMBOL OF DEFERENCE IS LOWERING ONESELF PHYSICALLY. ADVERTISEMENTS OFTEN SHOW WOMEN RECLINING OR LYING... [DOWN, ONLY UNDERSCORING A BLATANT HIERARCHY OF GENDER WITHIN THE IMAGE.] -CORTESE

Ritualization of Subordination

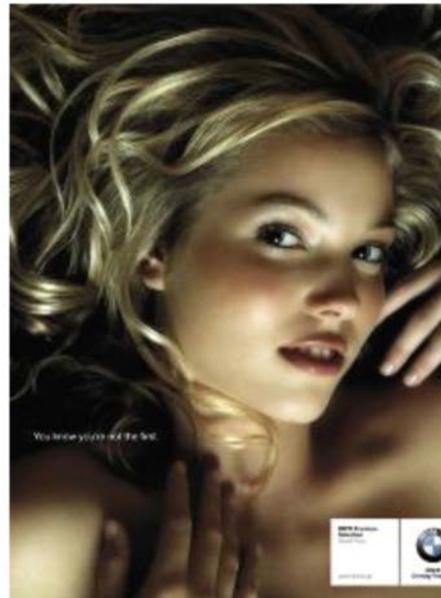
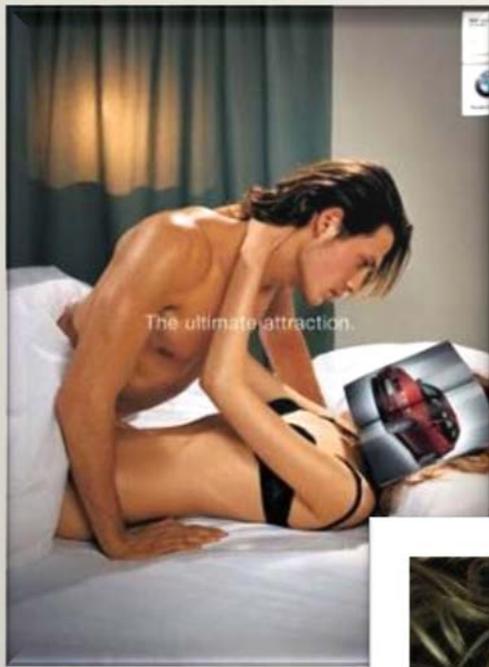


ALTHOUGH THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER IS NOT FRESH, THIS PERSPECTIVE HAS MORE RECENTLY BEEN FORMALIZED IN OBJECTIFICATION THEORY (FREDRICKSON AND ROBERTS).

ACCORDINGLY, BEING RAISED IN A CULTURE THAT OBJECTIFIES THE FEMALE BODY AND SEXUALIZES WOMEN LEADS THEM TO INTERNALIZE THIS OBJECTIFICATION. THIS IS CALLED SELF-OBJECTIFICATION. ...INTERNALIZING CULTURAL STANDARDS OF FEMININE BEAUTY LEADS TO INCREASED SHAME AND ANXIETY ABOUT THE BODY AND APPEARANCE... RELATED TO INCREASED RISK OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS, INCLUDING EATING DISORDERS, BIPOLAR DEPRESSION, AND SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION.

-CORTESE

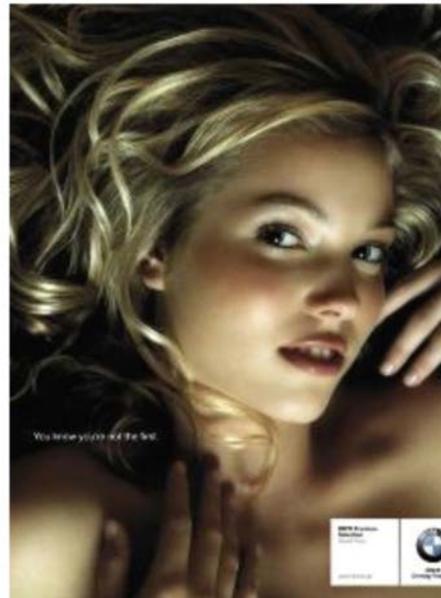
Consequences



OBJECTIFICATION IS A CONSEQUENCE OF GENDER INEQUALITY... [MAKING] WOMEN'S SEXUALITY INTO 'SOMETHING ANY MAN WHO WANTS TO CAN BUY AND HOLD IN HIS HANDS... SHE BECOMES SOMETHING TO BE USED BY HIM, SPECIFICALLY, AN OBJECT OF HIS SEXUAL USE'. MACKINNON FEARS THAT USE CAN EASILY BE FOLLOWED BY VIOLENCE AND ABUSE. SINCE WOMEN ARE THINGS (AS OPPOSED TO HUMAN BEINGS), IT SEEMS TO MEN THAT THERE IS NOTHING PROBLEMATIC WITH ABUSING THEM. THE OBJECT STATUS OF WOMEN, THEN, IS THE CAUSE OF MEN SEEING NOTHING PROBLEMATIC WITH VIOLENT BEHAVIOR TOWARDS WOMEN.

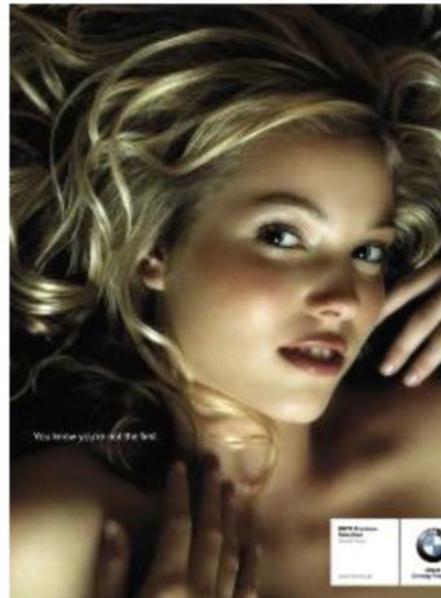
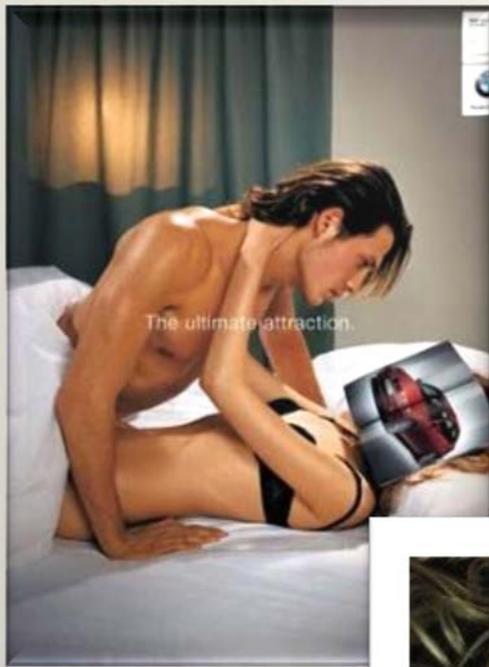
-MACKINNON

Consequences



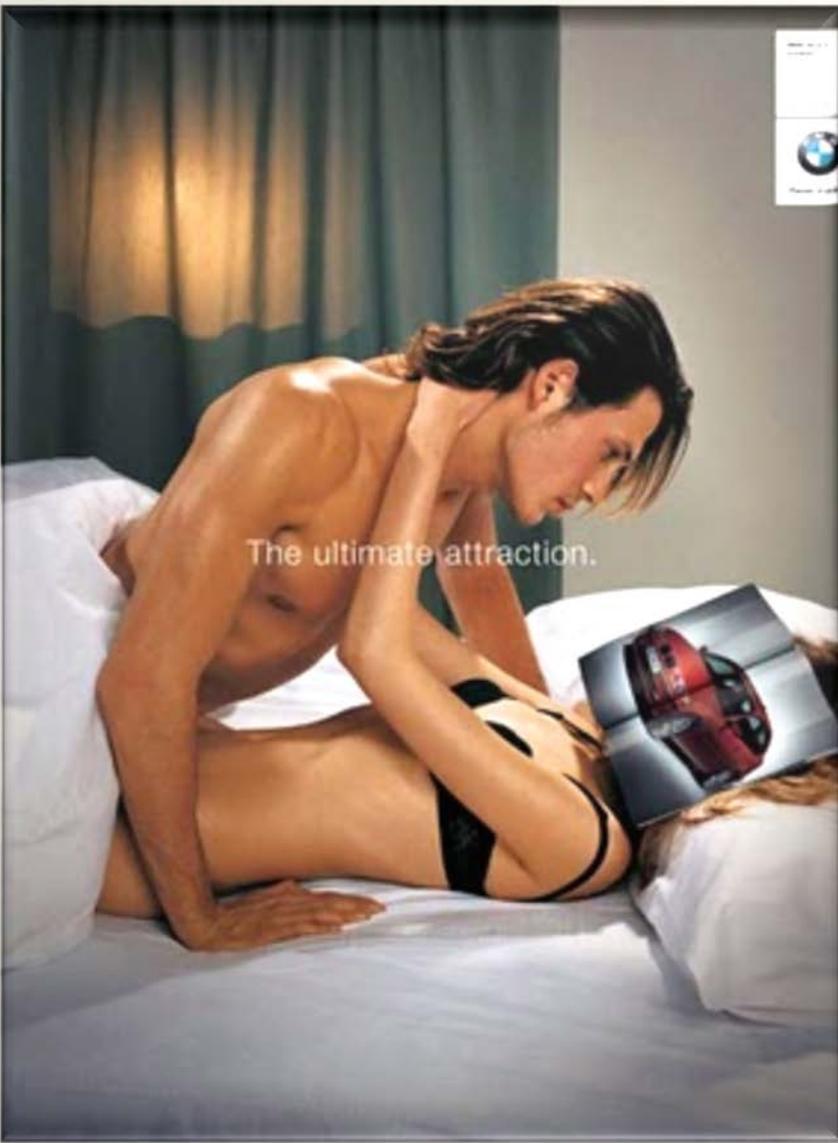
OVER TIME, THE GENERAL TREND APPEARS TO BE THAT SEXUAL CONTENT IN ADVERTISING HAS (AND CONTINUES TO) BECOME MORE INTENSE AND MORE EXPLICIT... WHAT IS NOT CLEAR IS JUST HOW PERVERSE, EROTIC OR NAUGHTY ADS WILL HAVE TO BE TO SELL PRODUCTS NEXT YEAR, THE YEAR AFTER THAT AND THE YEAR AFTER THAT... AS ADVERTISERS HIT THE LIMITS OF WHAT THEY CAN SHOW, THEY PACKAGE SEX DIFFERENTLY TO KEEP IT FRESH... RESEARCH HAS SHOWN THAT VIEWERS EXPERIENCE WEAR-OUT: THE MORE THEY SEE SCINTILLATING SEX, THE MORE SCINTILLATING IT NEEDS TO BE TO EVOKE THE SAME EFFECT. -REICHART

Consequences



SEXUAL LOVE MAKES OF THE LOVED PERSON AN OBJECT OF APPETITE; AS SOON AS THAT APPETITE HAS BEEN STILLED, THE PERSON IS CAST ASIDE AS ONE CASTS AWAY A LEMON WHICH HAS BEEN SUCKED DRY. ... AS SOON AS A PERSON BECOMES AN OBJECT OF APPETITE FOR ANOTHER, ALL MOTIVES OF MORAL RELATIONSHIP CEASE TO FUNCTION, BECAUSE AS AN OBJECT OF APPETITE FOR ANOTHER A PERSON BECOMES A THING AND CAN BE TREATED AND USED AS SUCH BY EVERY ONE. -KANT

Closing Statement: Don't Become a Lemon



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