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THE PROBLEM THAT HAS NO NAME

Men are dogs and women are cats. Women are from Venus and men are from Mars. Writers, filmmakers, psychologists and advertisers have all used the idea that men and women are different to develop stories, create conflict and provide persuasive images. Not only do advertisers view men and women differently, but men and women bring different perspectives to advertising [1].

Gender and advertising focuses on how women, and more recently men, are portrayed in paid-for commercial messages designed to encourage consumers to purchase the product being promoted. The issue has been considered important in terms of morality since the late nineteenth century, when some advertisers were accused of using images of scantily clad women to sell unrelated products. From the 1960s, an additional concern was that restricting the image of women in advertising to that of sex object or housewife limited women's aspirations by presenting them with a limited range of roles with which to identify. More recently, concerns about the representation of women have been joined by concerns about the representation of men [2].

The importance of advertising in shaping gender stereotypes is immense. Not only does it provide information about goods and services, but it also creates relevant images

of men and women and clearly depicts different types of interpersonal relationships – family, friendship, social and even political. It is on these that people's self-esteem, perceptions of others and views of life and events depend. The use of images of men and women in modern advertising seems to be effective in achieving specific marketing goals.

Gender stereotypes are preconceived, usually generalised, views about how members of a particular gender behave or should behave, or what traits they have or should have. They are intended to reinforce gender norms, usually in a binary (masculine vs. feminine) way. Some stereotypes are oversimplified, one-sided representations, and gender stereotypes are no exception. Nevertheless, gender is often used as a starting point for audience segmentation. Gendered advertising is a common practice for marketers because it allows them to follow a well-trodden path: take the characteristics of both genders and develop an ad for the target audience. However, these characteristics are often outdated and do not reflect current realities.

The earliest powerful critique of the advertising industry as a major contributor to the oppression of women came from Betty Friedan, who in the early 1960s set out to investigate what she called "the problem that has no name", the ennui that pervaded the lives of many American women in the wake of the Second World War. For Friedan, one of the main causes of this dissatisfaction was advertising, which, instead of showing women how new labour-saving devices could give them the free time to become astronomers or astronauts, offered them only the opportunity to be better wives and mothers.

In recent years, the once powerful second-wave critique has been replaced by a renewed focus on gender difference, popularised by John Gray in a series of books under the generic title *Mars and Venus*. This focus has been complemented by a widespread belief that most, if not all, of the goals of feminism have been achieved and that women now live in a 'post-feminist' era in which feminism and femininity are no longer incompatible. In terms of gender and advertising, this has disarmed the critique of advertising that uses highly sexualised images of women. Since the 1990s the world of advertising has showcased a much broader range of roles for women [3].

Towards the end of the twentieth century, the emergence of masculinity studies led to a focus on the changing representation of men in advertising. Advertising now focused on the male body as a site of erotic contemplation – men were no longer just looked at, they were to be looked at. In the early 1990s, some critics claimed that the new stereotype was that of the 'girl on top' and that men were now the target of advertising humour. One of the many advertisements cited as evidence of this trend was a Coca-Cola ad showing various female office workers and executives waiting for the arrival of the 'Body Beautiful' – a handsome young worker, shirtless, drinking his can of Diet Coke. Other critics, however, have offered a more complex reading of this ad – noting that the class and power dynamics contained within the ad are not straightforward, with the man's lack of awareness of being looked at and the overall comic tone of the ad undermining the possibility that this man is being portrayed as a sex object in the same way that women have traditionally been portrayed. Whichever reading one adopts, it is clear that the increased sexualisation of the male body in advertising has not been at the expense of the

objectification of women. The best that can be said is that both men and women are now equally subject to objectification [4].

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SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING AIMED AT CHILDREN: STRATEGIES AND IMPACT

In this day and age, youngsters have a tendency to spend a significant amount of their time on the Web. Children who were born in the last decade are still subjected to conventional modes of promotion, such as hoardings, TV commercials, print media, etc. However, they are the first generation to be bombarded with internet-based advertisements and exposed to social networking platforms since birth.

The aim of our research is to analyze a particular social media platform – TikTok, define the types of advertisements on it, and demonstrate the disadvantageous sides of each type that have a detrimental effect on youngsters.

Marketing experts have recognized that children are highly valuable customers due to their susceptibility to influence. Although they may not possess their own money, their young minds can be easily swayed. The more exposure they have to a specific brand, the stronger their loyalty towards it becomes. Winning over a child's loyalty can translate into lifelong customers [1].

For this reason, many online marketers focus on targeting children. But how do they do it? Social media platforms are a prime location for this type of marketing. Young people place great importance on their social status, and social media is the epitome of this phenomenon. When combined with viral marketing, social media provides the quickest and most economical means of reaching these young consumers.

Our research is aimed at examining children's exposure to TikTok and all its components, including various types of advertising.

What Is TikTok? TikTok was originally called Musical.ly and used to mostly feature teens doing karaoke overtop their favourite songs. Within years with the