

Épinal Manipulation: Studies in Subliminal Advertising

by Florent Boucharel

The case studies here presented in book format date from the years 2015-2016 when I did intensive research on subliminal advertising after reading the inspiring books of Wilson Bryan Key (1925-2008). They are taken from my blog www.florentboucharel.com, where they can be found in the Subliminals Series.

Épinal refers to the French town of that name in Lorraine, where images embedded with visual puns were made, as a tradition and commercial occupation, for people's enjoyment. It was an early usage of techniques now massively relied-upon in contemporary advertising. Chapter VII provides some more details about Épinal images.

One way to get the clearest picture of what is going on in the cases presented is to download the photographs from my blog, focusing on the embeds, outlined and not (for instance, pictures 1-2 and 1-3 below), then opening both on your computer and shifting the mouse on the lower screen bar from one to the other, so that my delineation of the embeds will project on the photograph, and then leave it again according to the mouse's movement, the photograph staying in place, as one is only the duplicate of the other plus the embeds outlined. This procedure will make the embeds obvious to the most impercipient, I believe. – If you don't wish to download anything from the blog, it always helps to enlarge the pics by clicking on them, or even by enlarging the internet window through command "Ctrl plus +" (press Ctrl and + at the same time, as many times as you want the window enlarged).

An alternative solution is the two-page display of the PDF. Odd-numbered pages will show up on the left, even-numbered pages on the right. I placed the photographs so as to make observation easiest, but I was limited regarding the pictures' size and in the final analysis, at least in a few cases, you may want to resort to the former solution.

With more than a hundred adverts, I believe the reader of this book, even if unconvinced in some or even many cases, cannot fail to conclude to the reality of subliminal techniques in advertising. The first analyses are the simplest, and they become more sophisticated as reading

advances, for this was a work in progress where I learnt at the same pace that I was publishing the results piecemeal.

This is the companion work of another of my books, *The Science of Sex: Competition and Psychology* (2016), a study of the scientific theories of sexuality, which was started in order to infer the use advertisers make of these theories in their professional practice, and which became an investigation in its own right.

*

As a personal note, one of the great upshots of this research for me was the acquaintance with late Prof. Eric McLuhan, whom I reached out to and who kindly engaged in an exchange on the subject, with which he was familiar. Marshall McLuhan had prefaced W. B. Key's book *Subliminal Seduction*.

In annex to the present work, the reader will find excerpts from my correspondence with Eric McLuhan, as well as some of his own research material on subliminals, which had remained unpublished until he allowed me to disclose them on my blog.

Eric unexpectedly passed away in May 2018, while he was still making lecture tours. The present book is dedicated to him.

F. Boucharel
March 2023

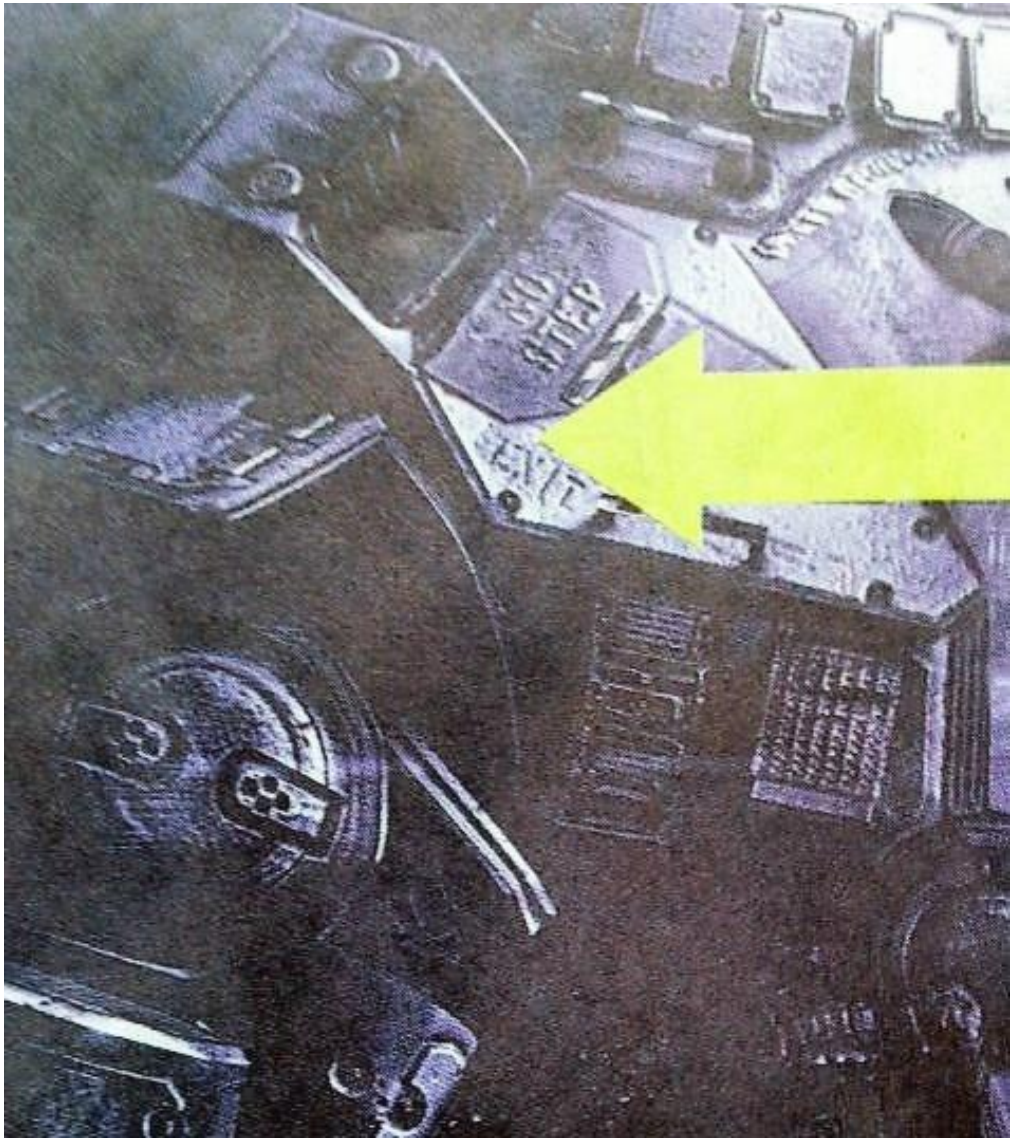
In memory of Eric McLuhan (1942-2018)

Subliminal SEX Embeds in Ads: First Try, First Find

In the following ad for Microsoft Cloud (appearing in the Economy supplement of the French newspaper *Le Monde*, date March 17, 2015) is a stealthy SEX embed to be found. On the impressive Terminator-like machine reads the word EXIT. With the tiny S before, it makes SEX. And the arrow points to it! See pictures Intro-1 and Intro-2 below. This is subliminal advertising: unless brought to your attention, usually you won't notice the SEX embed at a conscious level – only your brain will have perceived it, subconsciously.



Intro-1



Intro-2

Subliminal Advertising I

The first authors who wrote on subliminal advertising, such as Wilson Bryan Key, pioneer in the field, (*Subliminal Seduction*, 1973; *Media Sexploitation*, 1976; *The Clam-Plate Orgy*, 1980; and *The Age of Manipulation*, 1989), adopted a Freudian viewpoint on the subject, assuming that the analysis made by advertisers themselves were on those kinds of lines. My guess is that this assumption is based on Vance Packard's exposure of *The Hidden Persuaders* (1957), in which for the first time the public was made aware of the extent with which so-called *motivational research* (MR) was used in commercial advertising; Packard seemed to believe MR was based on psychoanalysis. However, reading one of the first practitioners of motivational research, Ernest Dichter's best-known book *The Strategy of Desire* (1960) brings no confirmation of the importance of psychoanalysis in the latter's thought. In that book, Freud and psychoanalysis are mentioned a couple of times, but not in an altogether appraising way, and indeed Gestalt psychology is mentioned oftener and seems to have exerted a greater influence on the author. Be that as it may, there is no need to resort to Freudian unconscious to explain subliminal advertising, and the fact that Key relies so much on this theorizing is rather a weakness than a strength, since the validity of psychoanalytic hypotheses is quite shaky (see, for instance, Hans J. Eysenck).

Among the people presented by Packard, "the most genial and ingratiating of all the major figures operating independent depth-probing firms," motivational researcher James Vicary, started, the same year as *The Hidden Persuaders* appeared, a business called Subliminal Projection Corporation, intended to sell subliminal projectors for television and the silver screen. However, public outcry made him cancel his plans. Today, subliminal techniques, in the US, are prohibited on TV – but not on cinema. What makes the difference relevant according to the law? one may ask. As to paper advertising, it goes undisturbed.

Our brain is made of several parts, corresponding to the different stages of our evolution. The most archaic part is what we call the *reptilian brain*, located in the brainstem. Mammals have it in common with reptiles and birds. The other two parts are the *paleocortex* or limbic system (for emotions) and the *neocortex* (for thinking). We sometimes speak of an old brain (reptilian brain plus limbic system) and a new brain (neocortex). The reptilian brain is the organ of survival: in pristine conditions of life, it was continuously scanning the environment to detect threats. In primates and human beings, it is visual. Research has shown that it visualizes objects even before these enter our conscience. The principle of subliminal images is that they are visualized by the reptilian brain without entering our conscience. Advertisers believe this can impact consumer behavior, relying on a so-called *Poetzl effect*, after the name of the psychologist who discovered it, Otto Poetzl (1877-1962), according to which subconsciously visualized images are stored in an unconscious memory from where they can influence behavior. Subliminal advertising is mental manipulation.

March 2015

*

Case 1

Beachcomber Hotels (from French weekly *Le Point*, March 12, 2015)

A happy family is going to the beach. There might perhaps be something striking in the fact that her bath suit is a bit too large for the little girl on the right, and one does not see clearly either what the smiling lady is looking at; she seems to be gazing either in the void or just before the man's pelvis, that is at his erect penis, but these are only suggestive, non-subliminal or half-subliminal tricks. There is, however, a subliminal SEX painted on the man's shirt. (First picture shows the ad, second picture shows the shirt, third picture shows the shirt with the SEX delineated so you can compare with picture 2.)



1-1



1-2



1-3

Case 2

From *Time Magazine*, March 30, 2015, on a Briefing page, a soda can is shown to illustrate a news on diet sodas. Although it is not brand advertising, it is some all brands-encompassing advertising for soda consumption, and one can find SEXEs painted at the bottom of the can. On picture 3, one SEX has been delineated, forming a straight line; an alternative SEX is on picture 4, with same S and E but X taken from above so the three letters form a triangle. Other S, E and X, even bigger than these ones, can be picked up.



2-1



2-2



2-3

Case 3

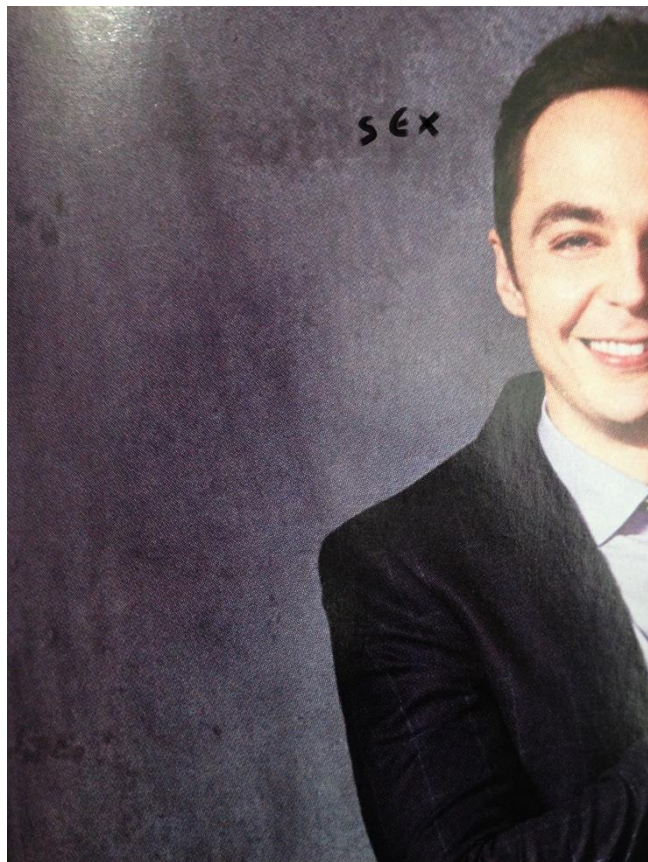
From *Time Magazine*, March 30, 2015, p. 46, the following picture of three actors from a movie presented on p. 45. People in the media call it film criticism, some other people call it advertising. Whether subliminal techniques are required for film criticism, I don't know, but I can see SEXes in the picture, in the background on the left, where some shady area is apparent, inside of which *clouds of embedded letters* can be perceived. Several overlapping SEXes pop up, of which I have delineated one.



3-1



3-2



3-3

Case 4

Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group (*The Economist*, March 27, 2015)

It's only a lady (she may be famous, but I don't know her) looking at us or someone from inside a car. All is trim and neat in the picture, except for a little chrome bar on the right side below the window, where some small graffiti are visible. When you look closer, you can see three letters, X, S, E, which makes a SEX puzzle (for your reptilian brain to play with).



4-1



4-2



4-3



You don't watch ads, do you? The money-grubbers don't care: your reptilian brain watches the ads for you!

The five cases here presented are taken from the March 20-26, 2015, issue of the French weekly *Marianne*. Each case presents the advertising page, then a second picture zooming on the relevant spot, finally a third picture with the sub or subs previously outlined on my computer so you can compare with picture 2. Case 9 shows five pictures because I have found subs in two distinct and rather distant spots on the ad.

March 2015

*

Case 5

An ad for the automaker Audi. SEX subs are lying under the German slogan of the brand.

Less and the city...

Less and the city.

Audi
Vorsprung durch Technik

ouvelle Audi A1. L'effet A1.
le système Start and Stop et des émissions de CO₂
ir de seulement 89 g/km, son efficacité va vous surprendre.
l'essayer chez votre partenaire Audi, ou découvrez-la sur Audi.fr/A1

en Group France S.A. - RC Sorssons 8 602 025 538. Audi recommande **Castrol EDGE Professional**.
s durch Technik - L'avance par la technologie. Less and the city - Émettre moins en ville.

ouvelle Audi A1 : consommation en cycle mixte (l/100km) : 3,4 - 3,3.

5-1



5-2



5-3

Case 6

An ad for the automaker Toyota. SEX subs are embedded in the left headlamp (right side in the picture).

SORTEZ-VOUS DE TOUTES
LES SITUATIONS
DÉLICATES



TOYOTA

TOUJOURS
MIEUX
TOUJOURS
PLUS LOIN



TOYOTA RAV4 DIESEL SURÉQUIPÉ

299 €/MOIS⁽¹⁾

ENTRETIEN INCLUS⁽²⁾

SANS CONDITION DE REPRISE

LOA* 37 MOIS. 1^{ER} LOYER DE 3 500 €, SUIVI DE

COFFRE À OUVERTURE & FERMETURE ÉLECTRIQUES

CAMÉRA DE REcul

ACCÈS ET DÉMARRAGE SANS CLÉ

CLIMATISATION AUTOMATIQUE

SYSTÈME MULTIMÉDIA TOYOTA TOUCH 2

6-1



6-2



6-3

Case 7

This one is a kind of “advertorial,” an article on the French ham and butter sandwich, with at the end a few addresses in Paris where to buy that kind of chow. The baguette sandwich in the picture contains a SEX sub, probably more. (Also note the bottle of wine, in a context where alcohol advertising is strongly regulated due to public concern.)



ROI DES SANDWICHS

LE JAMBON-BEURRE FAIT DE LA RÉSISTANCE

On se souvient de Darry Cowl hélant Pierre Tornade derrière son comptoir pour lui demander « *Un Paris-beurre sans beurre !* ». Emblème du casse-croûte populaire, joyau du troquet parisien, l'illustre sandwich reste l'aliment préféré des Français. En effet, selon le cabinet d'étude Gira, 1,2 milliard d'unités ont été vendues en 2014 plaçant ainsi le « JB » (JBC quand il est garni de cornichons) en tête des produits écoulés en restauration rapide. Attention à bien garder la corde...

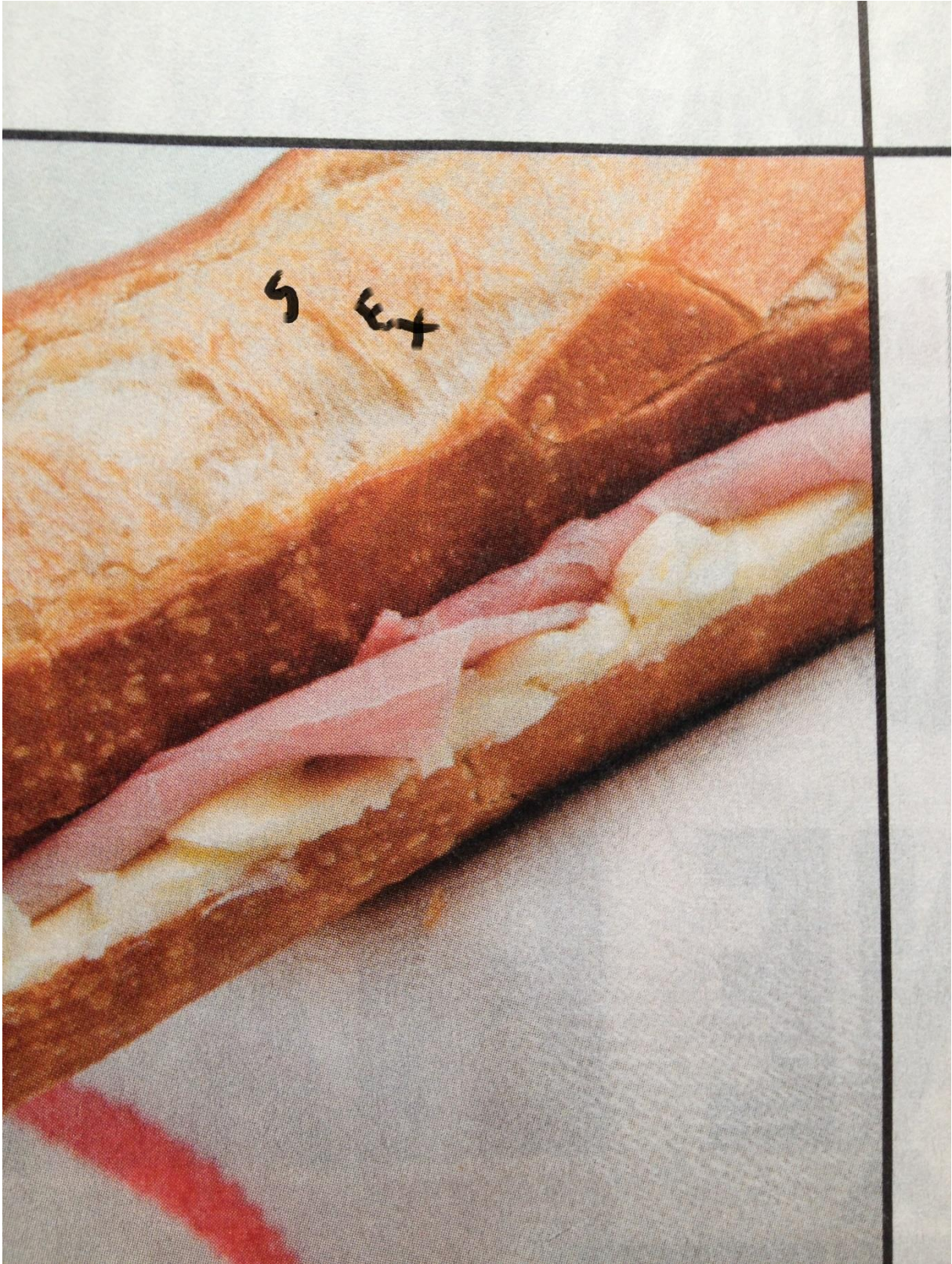
Etonnante statistique à une époque où l'on pourrait croire que ce classique pas vraiment à la pointe des modes alimentaires perd de son prestige. Que

une bonne baguette croustillante garnie d'une belle couche de beurre frais avec de vraies tranches de jambon blanc à l'os ou au torchon. On trouve aujourd'hui de délicieux JB préparés par des professionnels appliqués dans des sandwicheries sérieuses. Certains chefs le mettent même à l'honneur à leur carte, car un grand jambon-beurre relève du plat gastronomique. Dieu sait si la concurrence est rude avec le burger (1,07 milliard d'unités) et la pizza (809 millions), mais dans un sursaut patriotique les Français restent fidèles à la tradition. Souhaitons à nos





7-2



7-3

Case 8

In this one, the newspaper is inviting readers to subscribe. It displays three covers from former issues. The issue on the middle depicts a rather ominous American eagle, which is, however, sexed up by a few subs in her plumage. The catch phrase reads: “How the Americans will chow us down.” Hardly more than a joke, as these people truly promote the agenda they claim to attack: they make you think the words “unless we do something about it and this is long overdue” are implicit here, but there is no such implicit thought in their thinking.

Abonnez-vous à

Marianne

à partir de
45€
 seulement
 au lieu de
 (26 num)

Quand l'actualité
 s'écrit avec révélation

Immobilier Comment
 éviter les conseils fallacieux

François Bayrou: Le
 retour programme

LE NOUVEAU
Marianne
 N° 2018 du 19 au 27 août 2018
 www.marianne.net

L'AFFAIRE PROGLIO
 MISE EN SAISON FROISSURE

ACCUSÉ ZEMOUR
 (LEZ-ROUS)

Marianne
 Crise, police, justice, légalité,
 subversion, actualité...
 Et tout en première ligne

**VIVE LA
 RÉPUBLIQUE
 ET CEUX QUI
 LA DÉFENDENT
 VRAIMENT**

TRAITÉ TRANSATLANTIQUE - LA NOUVELLE ANNÉE EUROPÉENNE QUI SE PRÉPARE

**COMMENT LES
 AMÉRICAINS VONT
 NOUS BOUFFER**

Marianne
 N° 2018 du 19 au 27 août 2018

CONTINUO
 LE COMBA

Inclus : la version digitale multiplateforme offerte avec votre abonnement

Près de **42% de réduction**, soit **1,73€ le num**

8-1



8-2



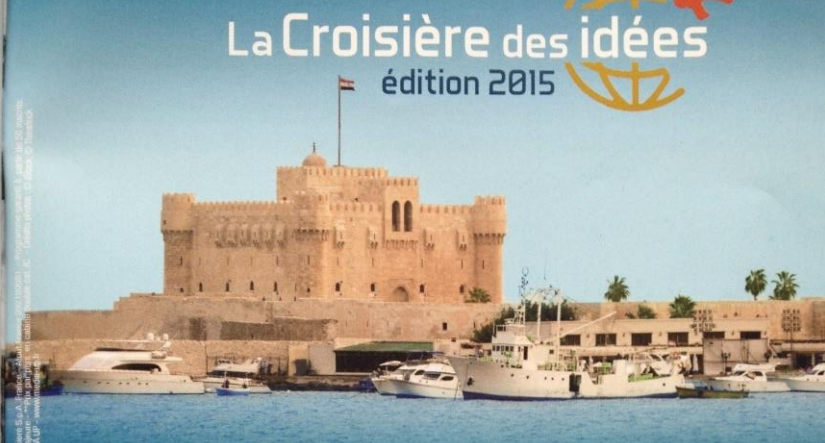
8-3


Case 9

Finally, the newspaper organizes, with Costa, a cruise tour named La Croisière des idées (The Ideas Cruise), where a handful of notorious eggheads will be holding the mike, and then customers can dance. Two pictures have been sexed up by multiple subs.

La Croisière des idées

édition 2015









Jean-François Kahn
Fondateur de Marianne

Embarquez pour la **nouvelle Croisière des idées du 1^{er} au 12 novembre 2015**, un parcours unique qui vous permettra de croiser et de découvrir tous les grands lieux de la civilisation : **Rome, Athènes, Crète, Égypte, Jérusalem**. À cette occasion, nous avons demandé à des penseurs, chercheurs, historiens, spécialistes, écrivains, journalistes de toutes sensibilités d'accepter de nous rejoindre pour participer à nos échanges et débats* :

- Natacha Polony, éditorialiste
- Michel Aglietta, économiste
- Maurice Sartre, historien
- Jean-François Colosimo, expert
- Régis Debray, écrivain
- René Frydman, professeur obstétricien
- Axel Kahn, médecin généticien
- Périco Légasse, critique gastronomique
- Michel Onfray, philosophe
- ...et peut-être d'autres surprises

" Plus qu'une croisière, un moment rare de réflexion collective "

ROME | OLYMPIE | CRÈTE | JÉRUSALEM | LE CAIRE | ALEXANDRIE

Du 1^{er} au 12 novembre 2015, à bord du Costa Pacifica

A partir de 1 290 € TTC/pers. SEULEMENT
en cabine intérieure - Au départ de Nice
(Billets/Visas (collectifs) à valoir pendant les repas
Taxes & frais de séjour inclus, confédération)

Renseignements et réservations :
en appelant au **0 811 020 033**

Complétez, découpez et envoyez ce coupon à :
CGV services - « Croisière des Idées 2015 » - 53 rue du Théâtre - 75015 Paris

Mme M. Nom : Prénom :

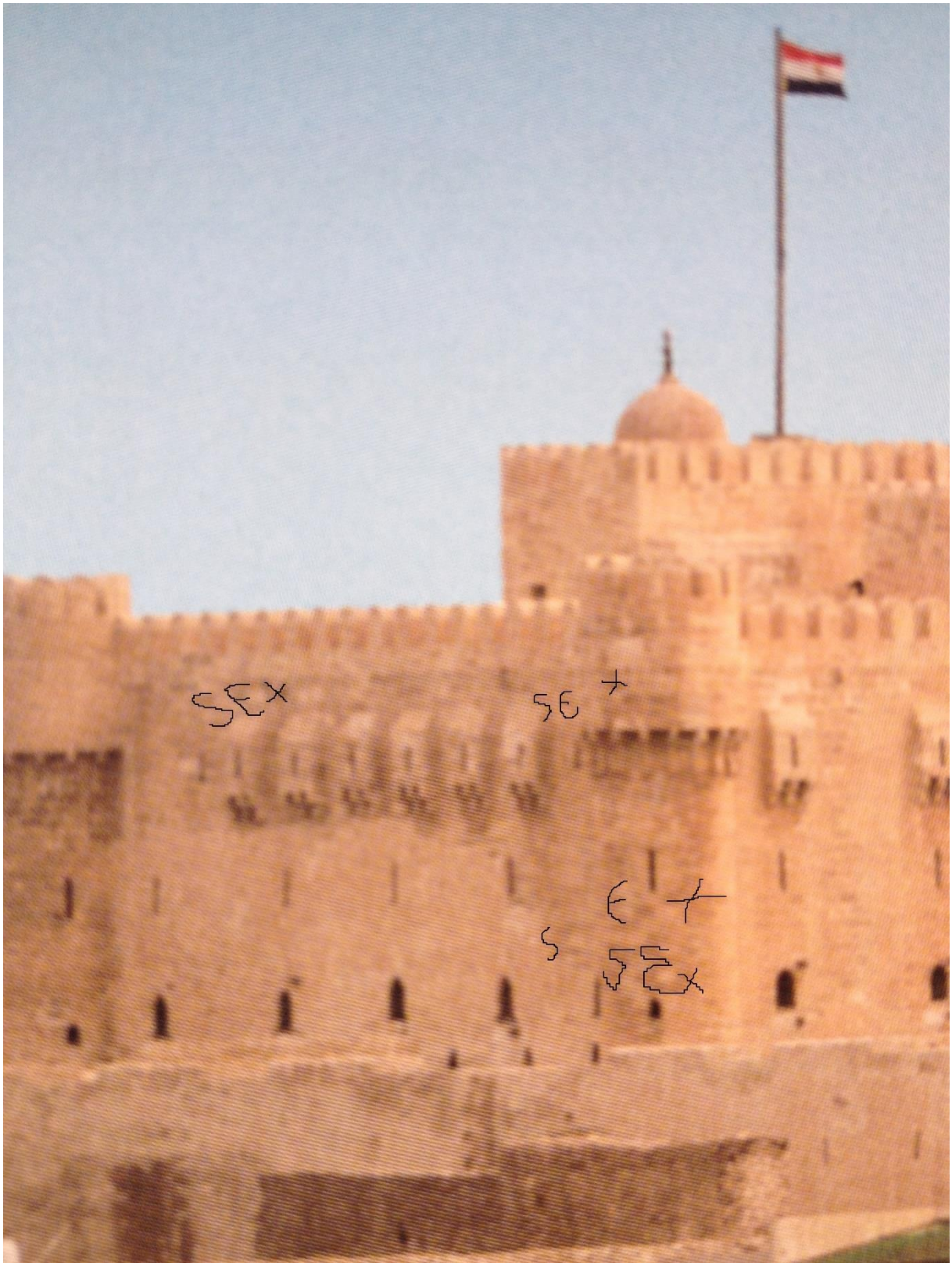
Adresse :

Code postal : Ville :

Date de naissance : Tél. :



9-2



9-3

M | LE CAIRE | ALEXAND



Rome

ez ce coupon à :

Idées 2015 » - 53 rue du Théâtre - 75015

9-4

III Night and Day Pollution

Cases 10 to 15 are taken from a single issue of the French news weekly *L'Express*, dated March 18-24, 2015, Cases 16 to 23 from a single issue of the French women's weekly magazine *Elle*, dated March 20, 2015.

Although taken from French journals, many of these ads are promoting multinationals' brands and were designed by advertising agencies with international marketing in view (I am quite confident they can be found in other countries too).

Case 15 has only two pictures since a picture 2 wasn't needed. Case 16 has five pics, because I focus on two different spots.

March 2015

*

Case 10 The No Sex Fear

On this ad for the fashion brand Hogan sex embeds are located on the dancing man on the right. I have outlined two embeds on his right arm and forehead, but there are several more tiny ones on his shoes and one more on his arm tattoo as well. Interestingly, most conspicuous from his tattoo is the word NO. With the outlined sex embeds the message, actually, reads NO SEX.

One way to analyze this subliminal message would be that it is a vicious injunction meant to subliminally hinder sex life, because sexually deprived people would be more receptive to advertising and consume more. I believe this would be a line of argument favored by W. B. Key.

I can see at least two other reasons for a No Sex subliminal message. It would be reassuring to young women. The party displayed in the ad only suggests fun, mind you. In other words, it is not showing the last decent moments (very relatively decent, in fact) before a sex orgy. It happens sometimes that girls who only want to have fun end up having sex without caring for it. Doesn't it?

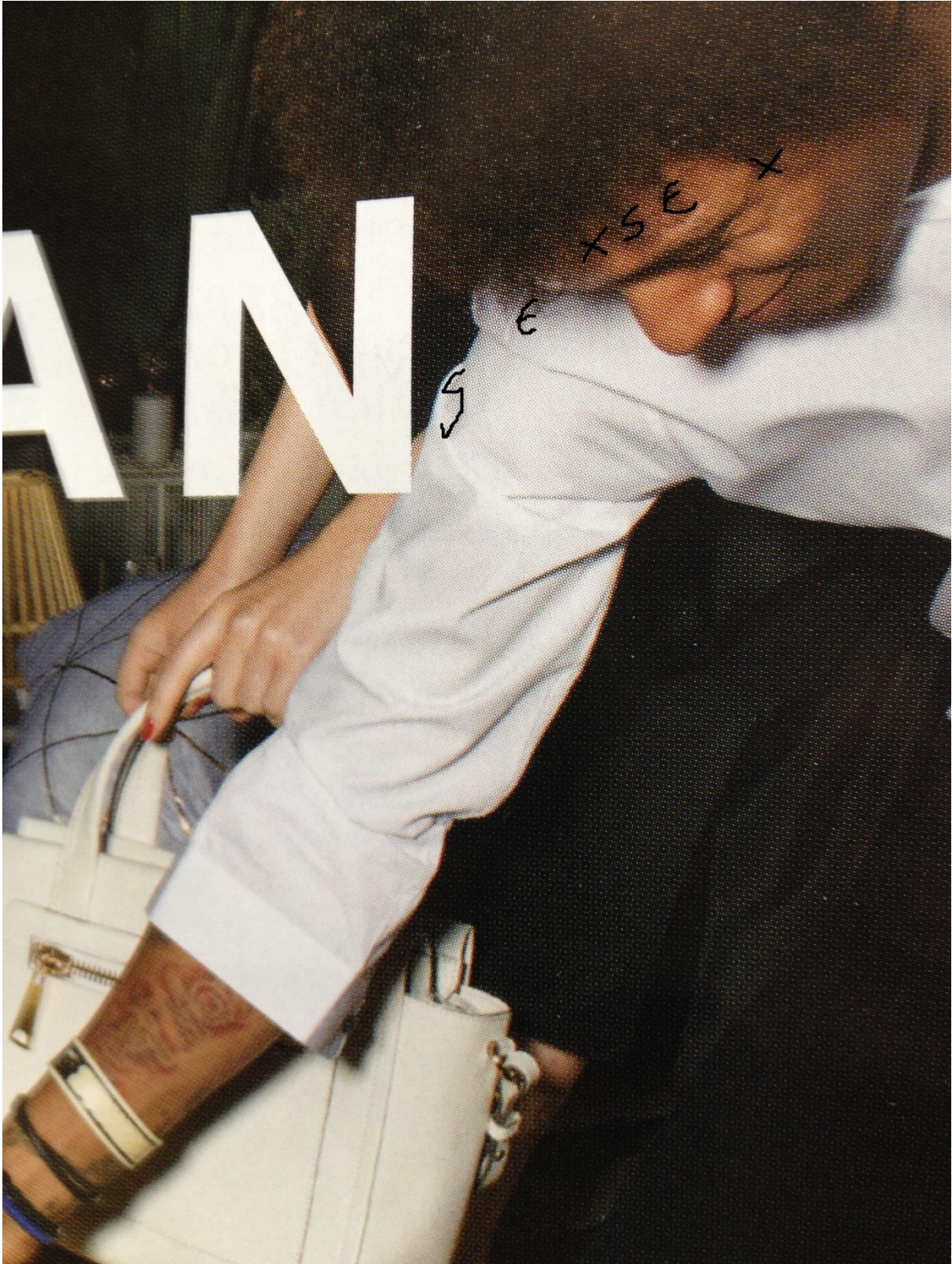
On the other hand, the No Sex message could also be a reminder: We remind you that you have no sex in your life. As the main targets of this brand are young people, a good deal of them never had sex. Given that sex is a passage from child to adult, the fear that one might never experience sex and become an adult is a real factor in adolescent psychology. This is the no sex fear, which the ad intends to exploit subliminally.



10-1



10-2



10-3

Case 11

On this ad for the Italian-based fashion brand Geox, the pattern of the displayed shoes offers an easy opportunity for embeds. In the shadow of the white shoe's lace, the graphist has painted an E. The S and X are provided by the pattern itself, slightly darkened in the case of the X.



11-1



11-2



11-3

Case 12

This brand of coffee advertises a partnership with Nespresso. At first sight, given the dull aspect of the ad, full of boring text that no one would ever care to read, I told myself there must be something bold to look for. I wasn't disappointed. See the shadows on the jersey.

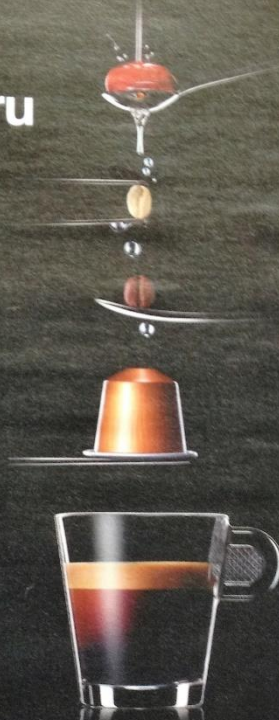
Osez un Grand Cru décaféiné !

Ils sont bluffants ! Les trois nouveaux Grands Crus décaféinés ressemblent comme deux gouttes d'eau à leurs emblématiques alter ego.

L'image du café est associée au coup de fouet matinal procuré par une tasse de cet indépassable « torrifiant intérieur », comme l'appelait Balzac, lequel en buvait des litres, afin de pouvoir écrire jusqu'au bout de la nuit sans éprouver la moindre fatigue. Balzac avait cependant des impératifs créatifs et un appétit d'écriture qui l'obligeait à empiéter sur son temps de sommeil.

L'amateur de café en a d'autres : il aime le café pour sa force, sa complexité, sa palette aromatique, et il pense peut-être encore que seul le « vrai » café possède ses atouts, tandis que le café décaféiné, réputé moins fort, serait aussi moins goûteux, donc moins plaisant.

Ces vieux clichés volent aujourd'hui en éclats avec la nouvelle gamme de Grands Crus décaféinés de Nespresso. Grâce à des techniques de décaféination pointues, la marque a réussi à recréer le profil aromatique de ses trois Grands Crus emblématiques — Arpeggio, Volluto et Vivalto Lungo —, dans leur déclinaison en Grands Crus décaféinés. La palette de ces deux gammes est donc confondante, à une nuance près. Vous pouvez boire d'excellents Grands Crus décaféinés, selon vos envies.



la définit. Chaque Grand Cru possédant un profil de torréfaction qui lui est propre, c'est au cours de ce processus décisif que se développent les arômes — et donc le degré d'intensité du café.

Enfin, une autre idée reçue a la vie dure, selon laquelle un café décaféiné serait moins pourvu de saveurs. Cela est battu en brèche par Nespresso, grâce à l'utilisation de grains de café identiques pour composer aussi ses Grands Crus décaféinés. Ceux-ci répondent aux exigences de la marque pour l'élaboration de tous ses cafés, sans exception. Seuls 1 à 2 % de la production mondiale de grains de café répondent à ses critères de qualité.

C'est pourquoi chacun des trois nouveaux Grands Crus décaféinés : Arpeggio Decaffeinato, Volluto Decaffeinato et Vivalto Lungo Decaffeinato, est aujourd'hui dégusté soit pour sa force, son équilibre, ou bien pour sa douceur. Ce bouleversement heureux dans notre façon d'envisager le café est considérable. Nous pouvons désormais oser un Grand Cru décaféiné afin de découvrir sa savoureuse intensité.

Pour en savoir plus : www.nespresso.com/deca

L'intensité d'un Grand Cru décaféiné

D'aucuns reprochent par ailleurs au café décaféiné de manquer singulièrement d'intensité. Notons que celle-ci est totalement indépendante du pourcentage de caféine contenue dans le café, car c'est en partie le processus de torréfaction qui



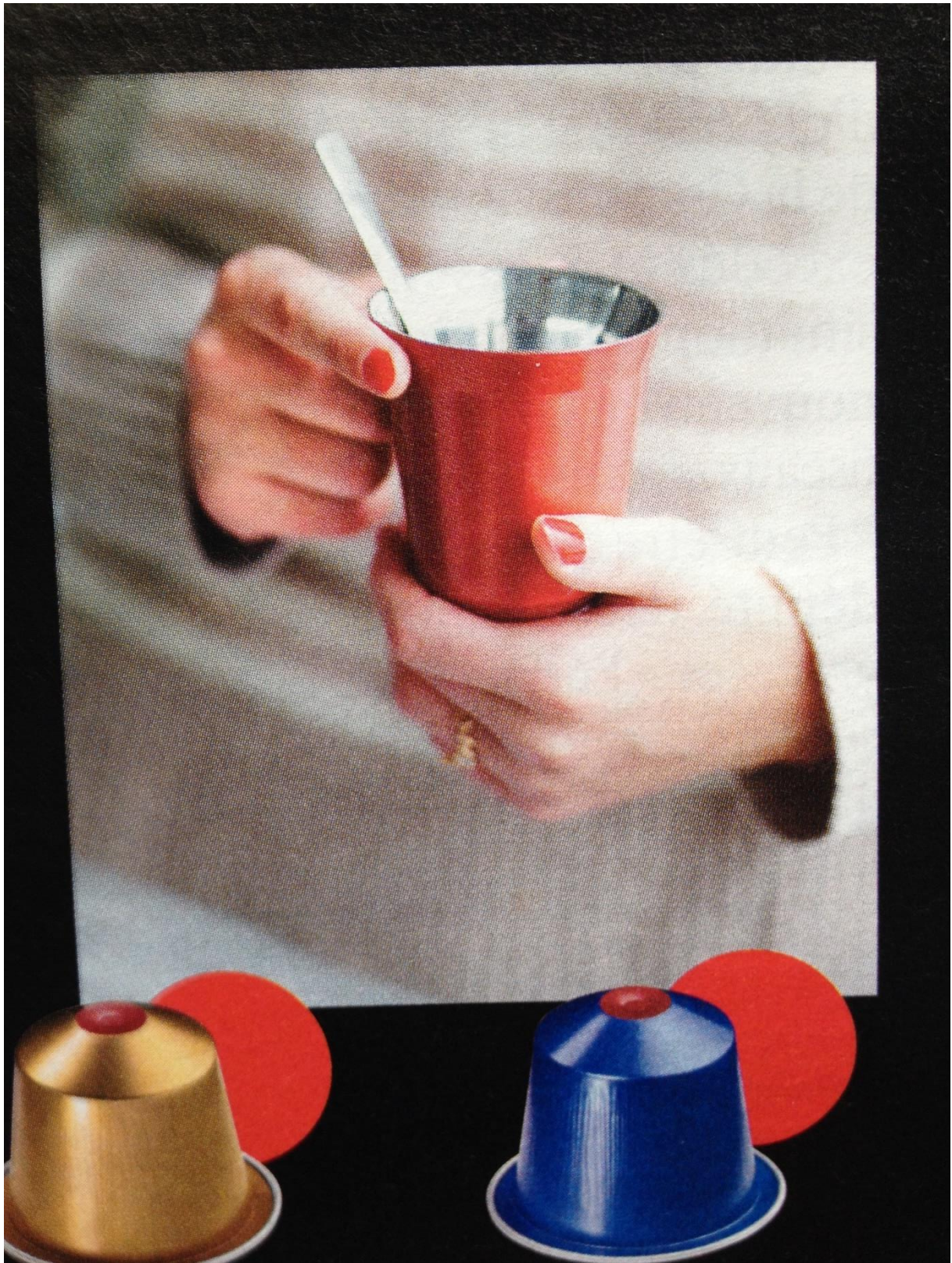
ARPEGGIO DECAFFEINATO
Notes cacao, intensément grillées.
Intensité 9 — Intense



VOLLUTO DECAFFEINATO
Notes fruitées et équilibrées.
Intensité 4 — Equilibre



VIVALTO LUNGO DECAFFEINATO
Notes florales et fruitées.
Intensité 4 — Lungo



12-2



12-3

Case 13

This one for the state-owned French bank La Banque Postale.

**J'AI CHOISI
LA BANQUE QUI
A FAIT DE MOI
UN PROPRIÉTAIRE.**

**PREMIER ACHAT
IMMOBILIER™**

- PLUS DE 700 EXPERTS EN CRÉDIT IMMOBILIER POUR VOUS GUIDER
- UNE GAMME DE PRÊTS FAVORISANT L'ACCESSION À LA PROPRIÉTÉ™
- DES TAUX PARMIS LES PLUS BAS DU MARCHÉ

**LA BANQUE
POSTALE**

BANQUE ET CITOYENNE

BUREAUX DE POSTE • 36 39™ • LABANQUEPOSTALE.FR™

13-1



13-2



13-3

Case 14

This one promotes the DVDs of the American TV series *Boardwalk Empire*. The blood on the face delineates, rather conspicuously, the letters S and X. The letter E is there, of course, but not so apparent.

le bédé, moi qui en suis fan, a été médaillé des Arts et des Lettres. » même a publié plusieurs livres brefs son nom, Dominique Ané.

ne le sait pas

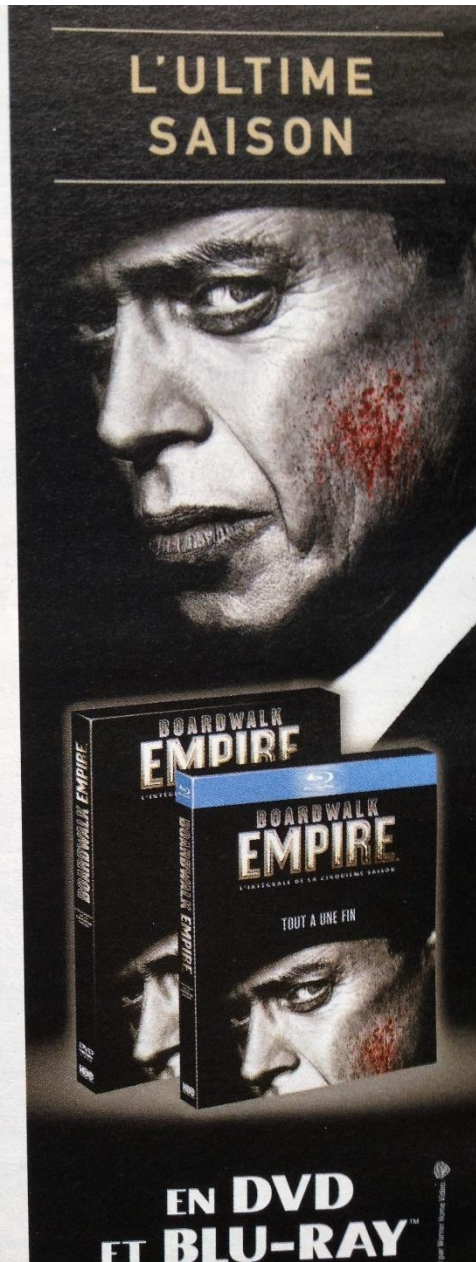
punk sommeille en lui

onné comme révélation masculine Victoires de la musique, en 1995, transforme les paroles de son minitube *Twenty-Two Bar*, pour tacler l'assistance direct : « A la télévision française, chantais, et devant moi, les gens maient. » « Je ne voulais pas être un phénomène, insiste-t-il, je ne le suis ailleurs pas devenu. » Katerine raconte de Dominique A et lui se sont aspergés de vodka après un concert, avant de se lécher mutuellement. « Il a un peu exagéré », minimise A en riant. En revanche, c'est avéré, Dominique a été censuré dans une chapelle près de Rennes, en 1999, lors d'une performance théâtrale. « J'étais alors dans une période de radicalité, avec la volonté de faire exploser tous les cadres. »

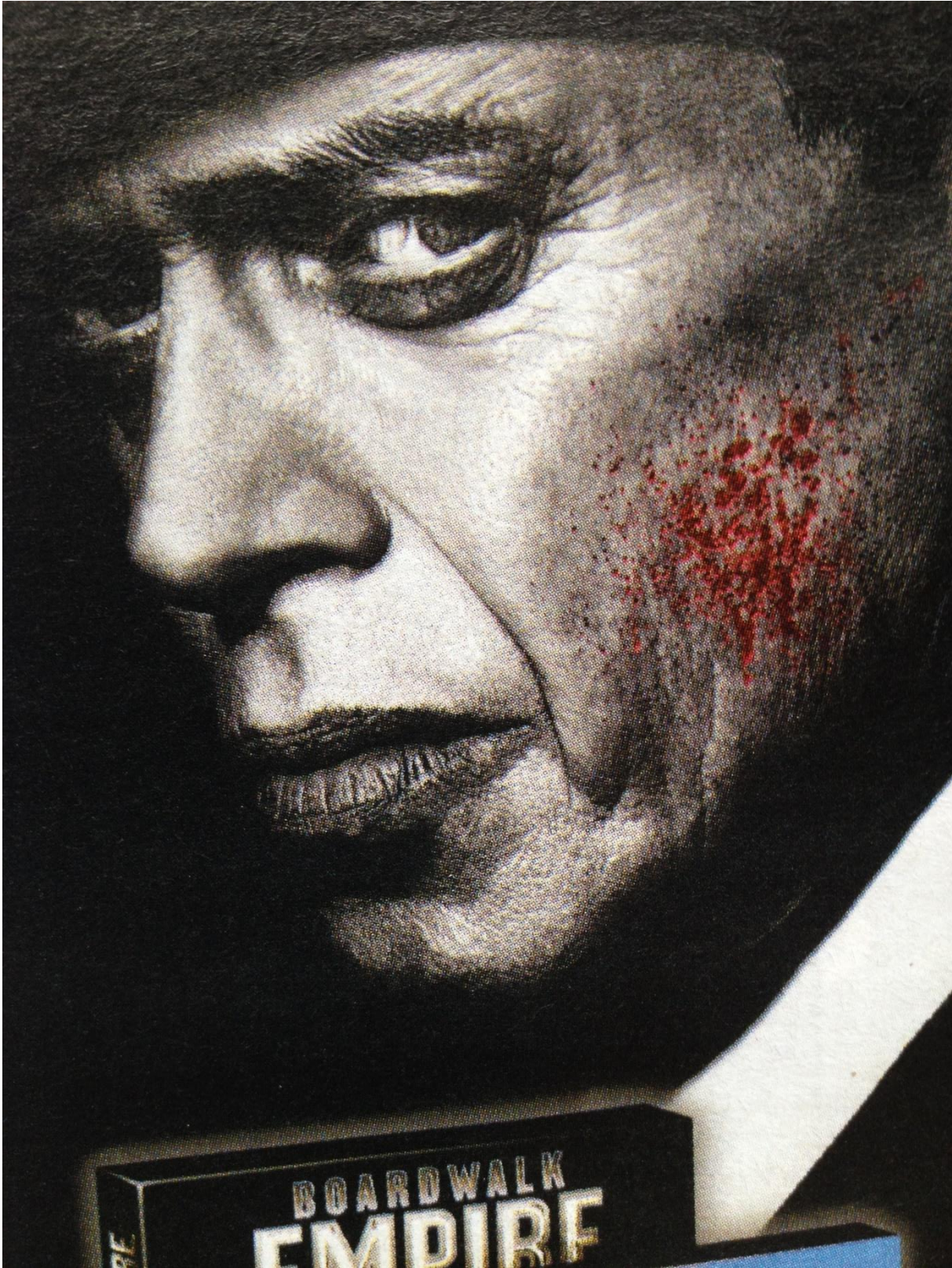
on le sait

est un parolier recherché

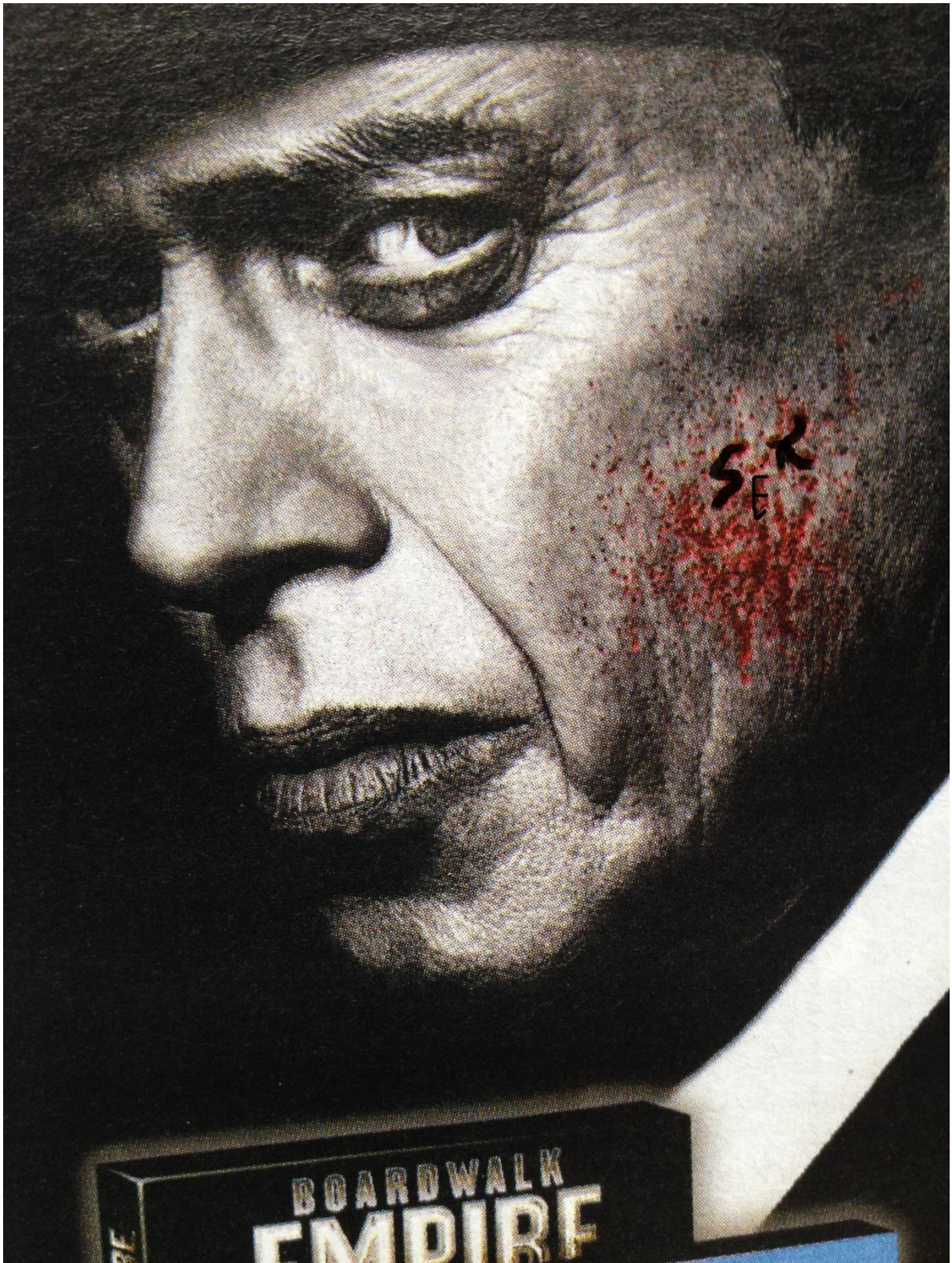
es textes ont été chantés par Jane Birkin, Joseph D'Anvers, Jean Guidoni, Stéphanie Daho. Et, plus étonnant, Valogero s'est imposé comme l'un de ces interprètes privilégiés, inscrivant du coup Dominique A dans la variété populaire. « Ecrire pour lui était l'occasion d'échapper à mon jansénisme musical. Une façon, aussi, d'être jugé sur mon travail et non sur ce que je parais être. » Maître Bashung avait sollicité A pour son ultime disque, *Bleu pétrole*, et enregistré *Immortels*, un morceau signé de lui, en plusieurs versions. Il n'en a finalement gardé aucune. « Je n'ai jamais eu d'explication, regrette



14-1



14-2



14-3

Case 15 Emporio Armani

With this case begins the series from the women's magazine *Elle*. The sex embeds have been painted as reflections on the girl's glasses.



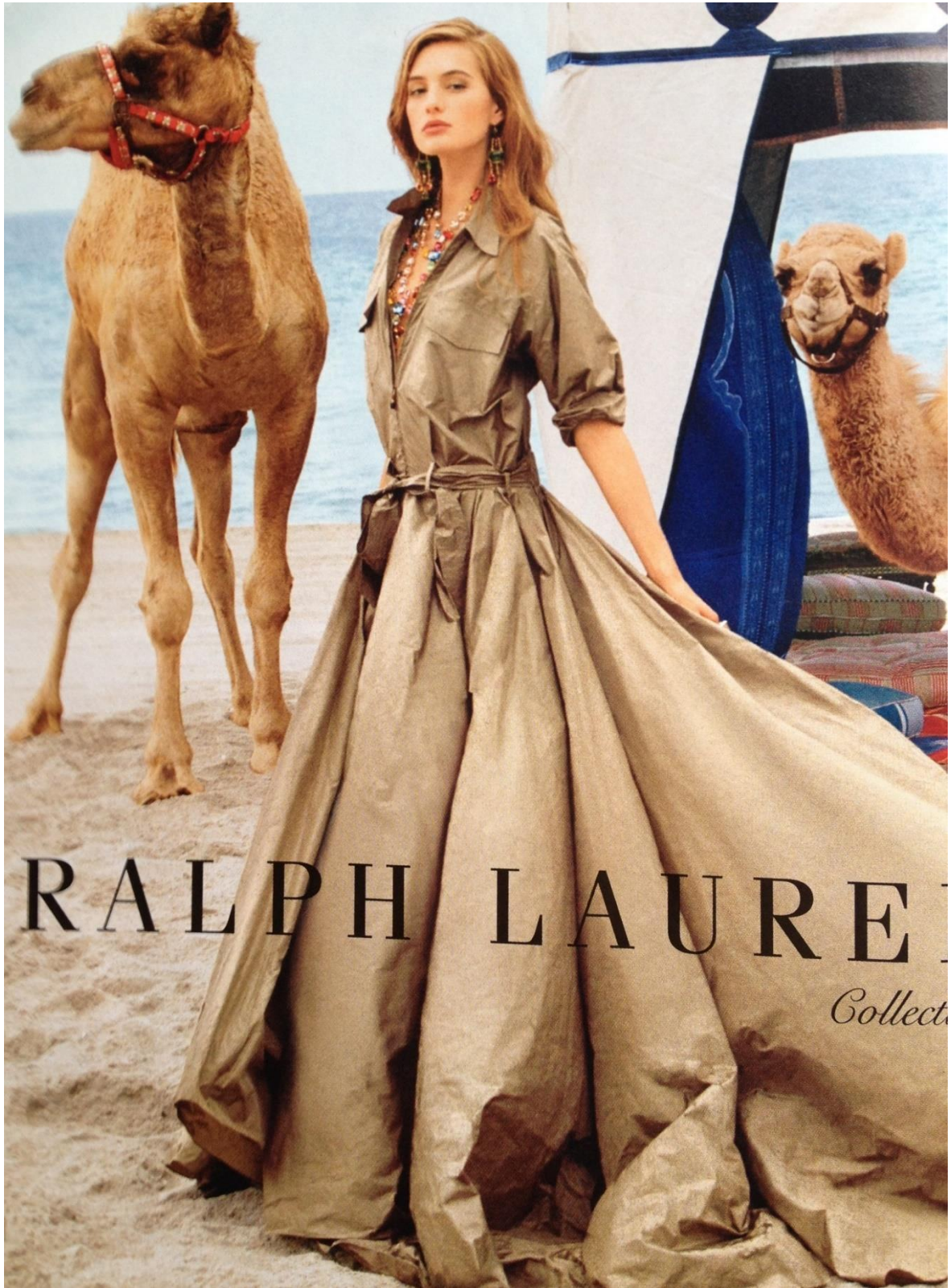
15-1



15-2

Case 16 Ralph Lauren

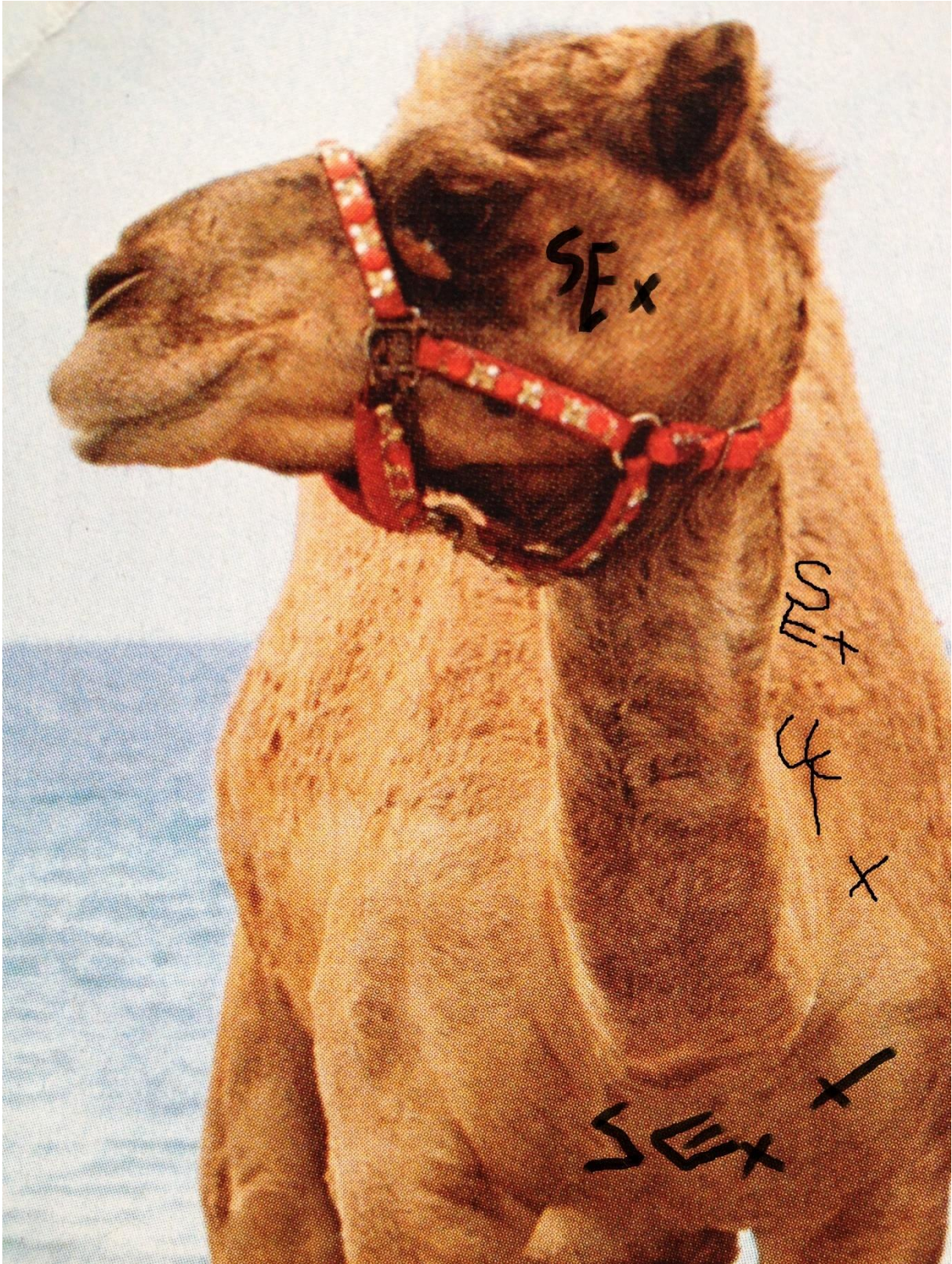
The main camel in the background is covered with embeds. I have outlined the three most conspicuous. The gown of the lady exhibits at least one sex embed too, at the bottom, painted as folds and shades.



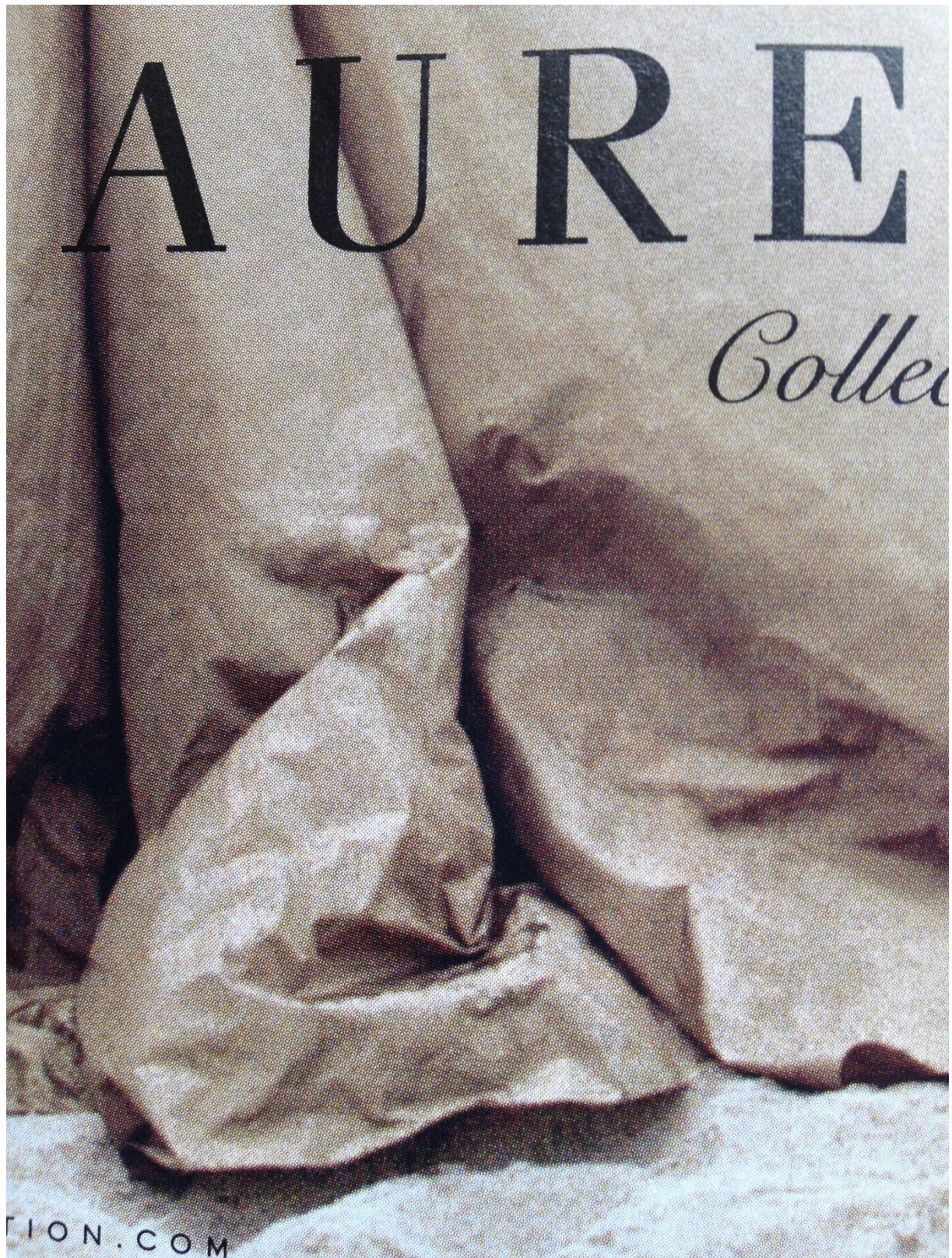
16-1



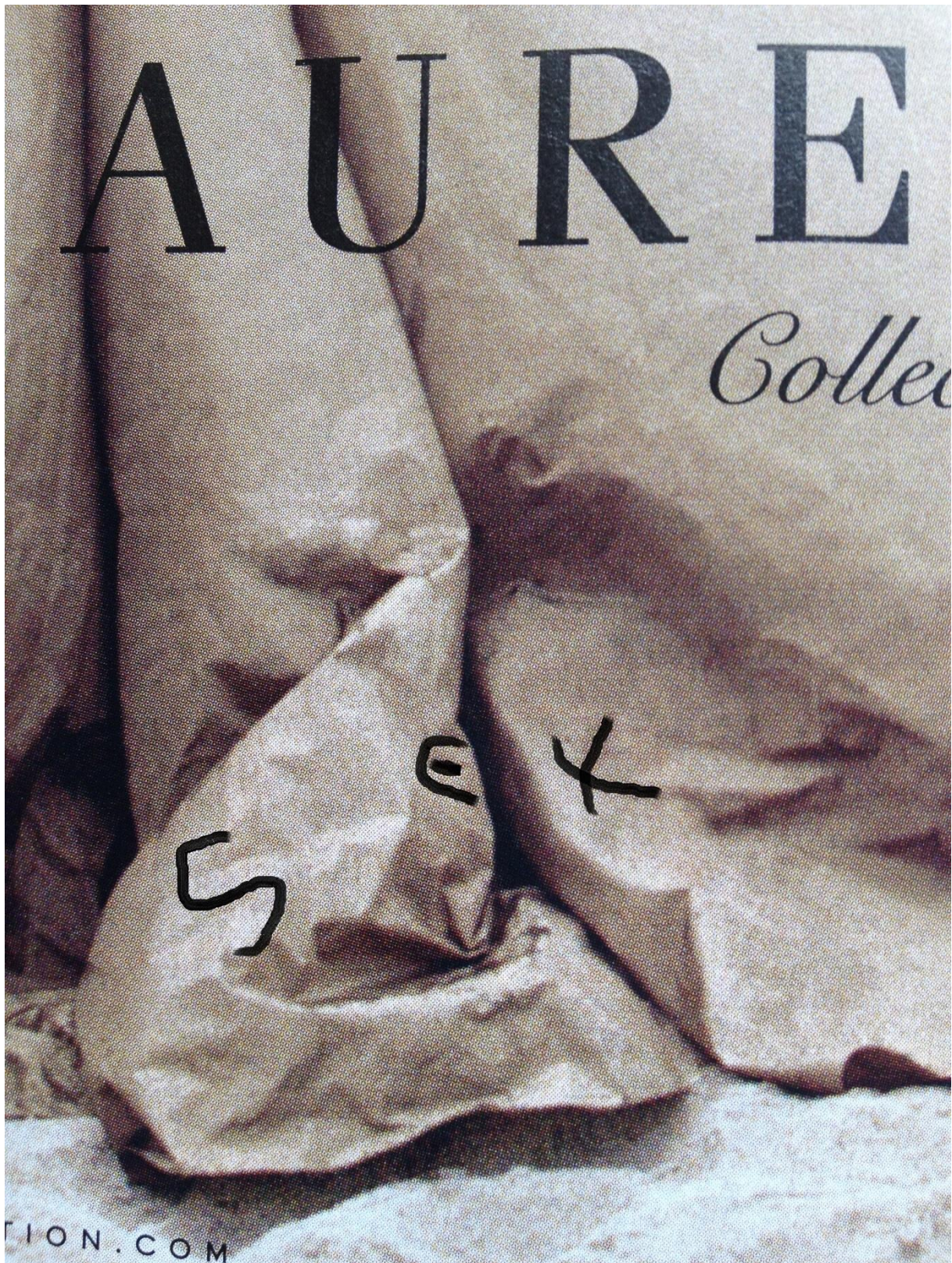
16-2



16-3



16-4



16-5

Case 17 Burberry

These are models Naomi Campbell and Jourdan Dunn. Naomi Campbell's lips have been adorned with a SEX, embedded amidst the natural furrows of these fleshy parts.



17-1



17-2



17-3

*

Case 18 Salvatore Ferragamo



ENTE SUR FERRAGAMO.COM

Salvatore Ferragamo

18-1



18-2



18-3

*

Case 19 Kenzo



19-1



19-2



19-3

*

Case 20 ba&sh



20-1



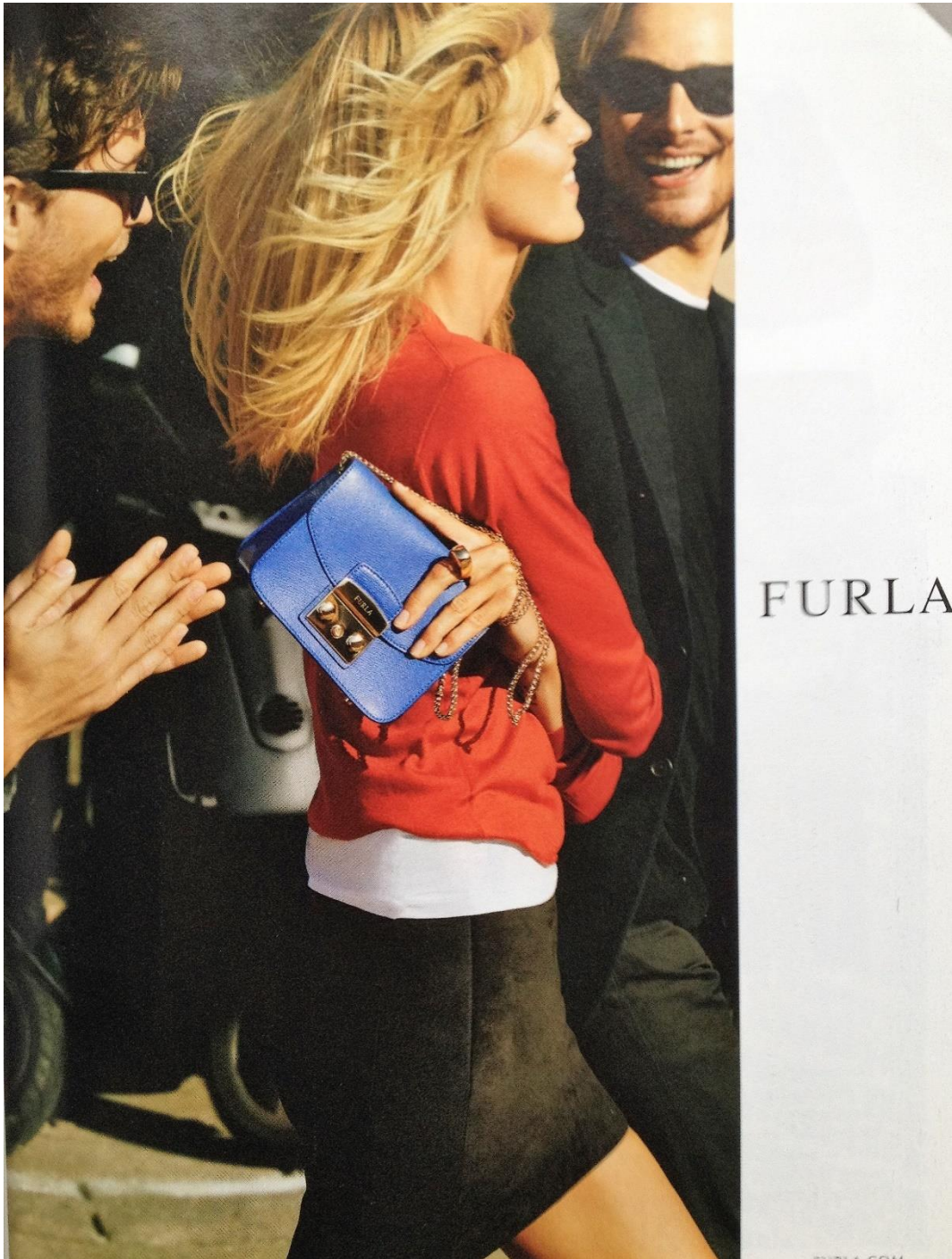
20-1



20-2

Case 21 Furla

The sex embed lies on the lady's dress. The S has been painted as a fold, the E is a lighter red than the background, and the X is made via the seam.



21-1



21-2



21-3

*

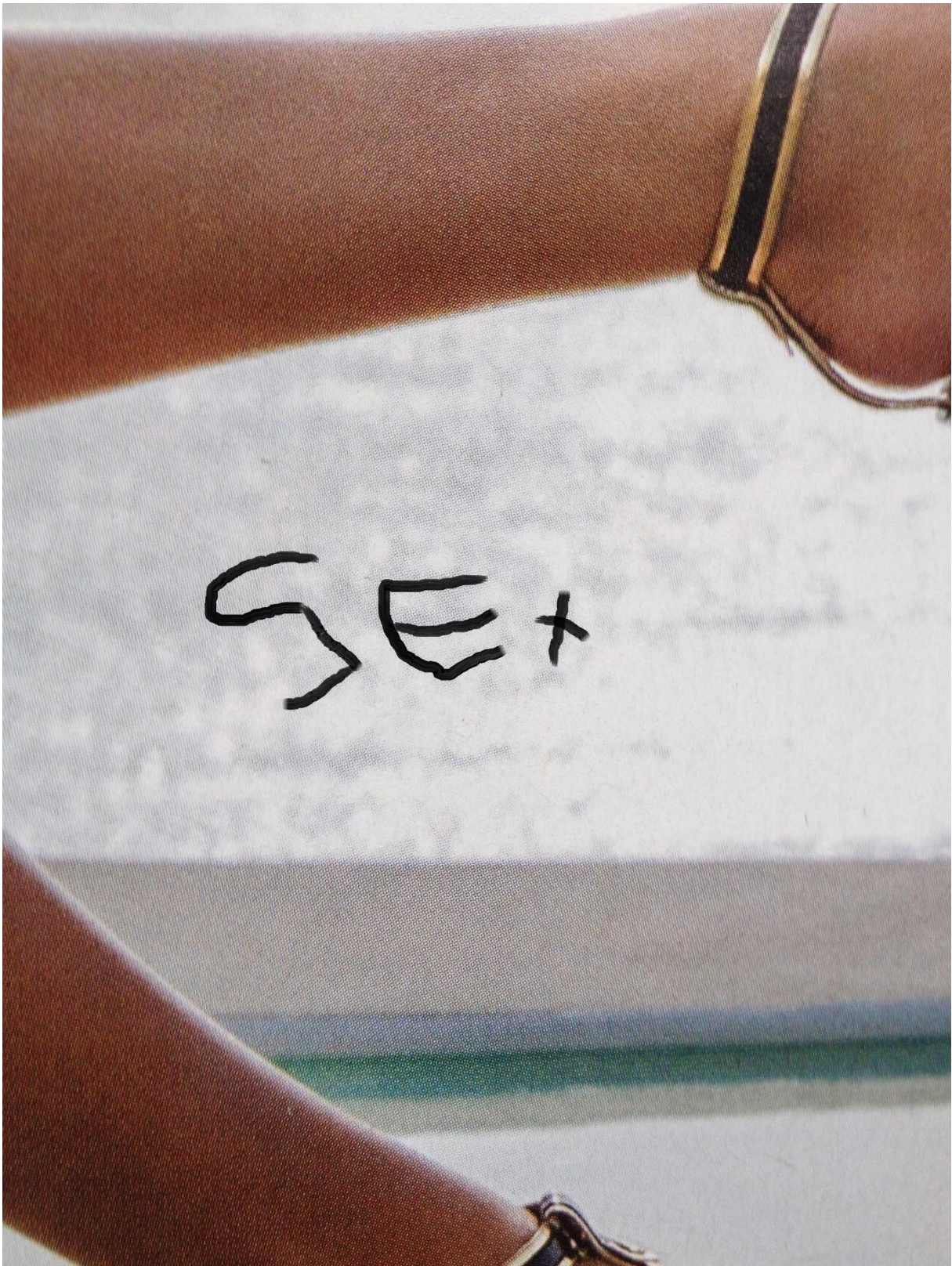
Case 22 What For Shoes



22-1



22-2



22-3

Case 23 La Redoute

Last but not least, a sex embed on a preadolescent girl, for the French distance selling company La Redoute.

appuyez rapidement à tous vos articles.

19€⁹⁹
LE GILET

La Redoute

une raison d'aimer La Redoute

La Redoute.fr

23-1



23-2



23-3

IV

The 9 following cases are taken from a single issue of the magazine *Vanity Fair*, dated April 2015. Not that I only found 9 cases in the whole issue, but I had to make a selection, because almost all ads show the same technique of embedding the word SEX in pictures. (Almost as far as I can observe, so there may be sex embeds in all advertisements, with some having escaped my attention.)

Such advertisements are not only found in magazines and newspapers, but also on billboards.

April 2015

*

Case 24 Ralph Lauren

The April 2015 *Vanity Fair* “Special Issue” opens on this double-page advertisement. The model is sitting near a bear-like animal or jumbo-sized teddy bear. The fur of this strange pet is covered with sex embeds, of which I have only outlined a couple.



24-1



24-2



24-3

Case 25 Tiffany & Co

What makes this embed inconspicuous at first sight is that one will not pay attention to the natural bone and tendon lines of the body. But here the lines are not natural in the least, they have been painted to both look like natural bone and tendon lines and draw the word sex. Furthermore, the S is grey, the E white, the X black, so your inattentive neocortex will not connect them.

Also note how low the “neckline” is. To the best of my understanding, her breast is uncovered by the shirt and covered only by the jacket. To be sure, she is a giantess, compared to the man, but still...



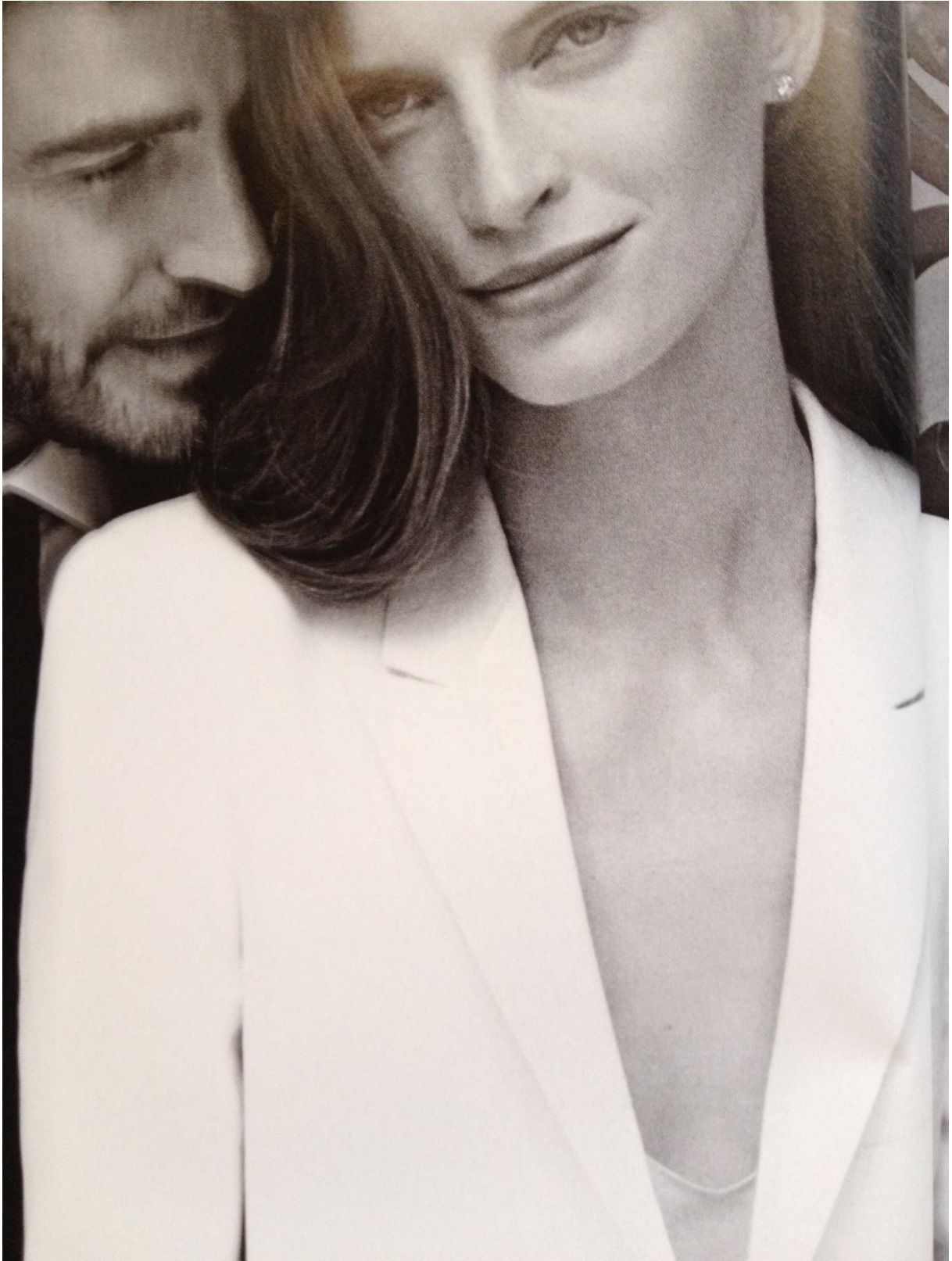
© 2011 TIFFANY & CO. TIFFANY.COM

WILL YOU KNOW THAT AS PERFECT AS THIS RING IS,
IT WON'T BE TRULY BEAUTIFUL UNTIL
IT'S SPARKLING ON YOUR HAND AS YOU SIP YOUR TEA
AND HUG OUR KIDS AND OPEN THE DOOR TO
A WORLD THAT GETS MORE INCREDIBLE ALL THE TIME,
JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE IN IT?

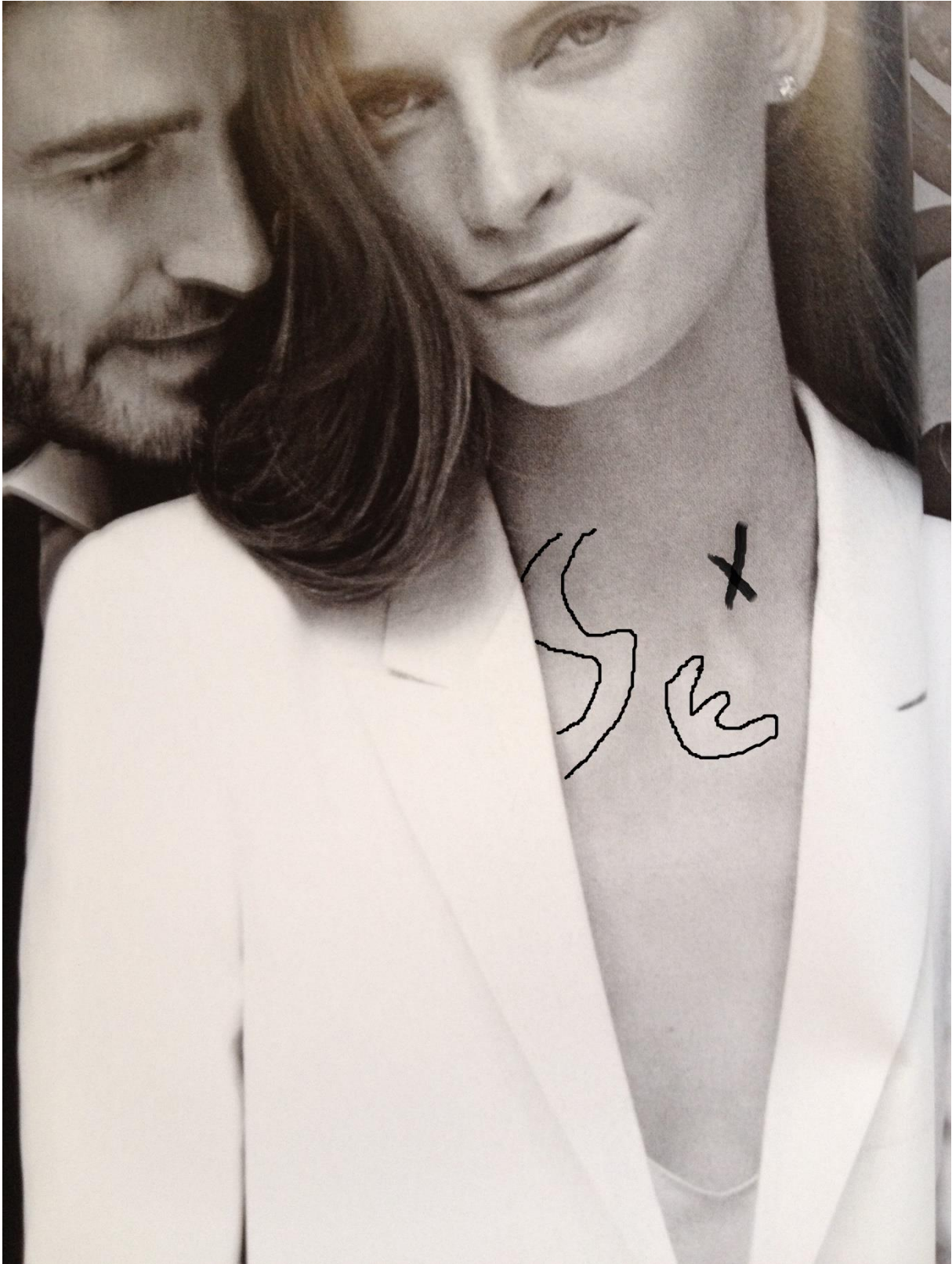
WILL YOU?



25-1



25-2



25-3

Case 26 Burberry

This is another advertisement from one series made for Burberry. The models, Campbell and Dunn, are the same as in Case 17 from the French magazine *Elle*. Here you have evidence that this advertising campaign has a global reach, since the different photographs from the same campaign can be found in French as well as American magazines (and billboards, as I could ascertain in the streets of Paris this month).



26-1



26-2



26-3

Case 27 Miu Miu

This young lady is sitting on a wood bench degraded by knife cuttings. There is a prominent E near her handbag, but it stands alone. However, the word SEX can be found on other parts of the poor bench, not too far.



27-1



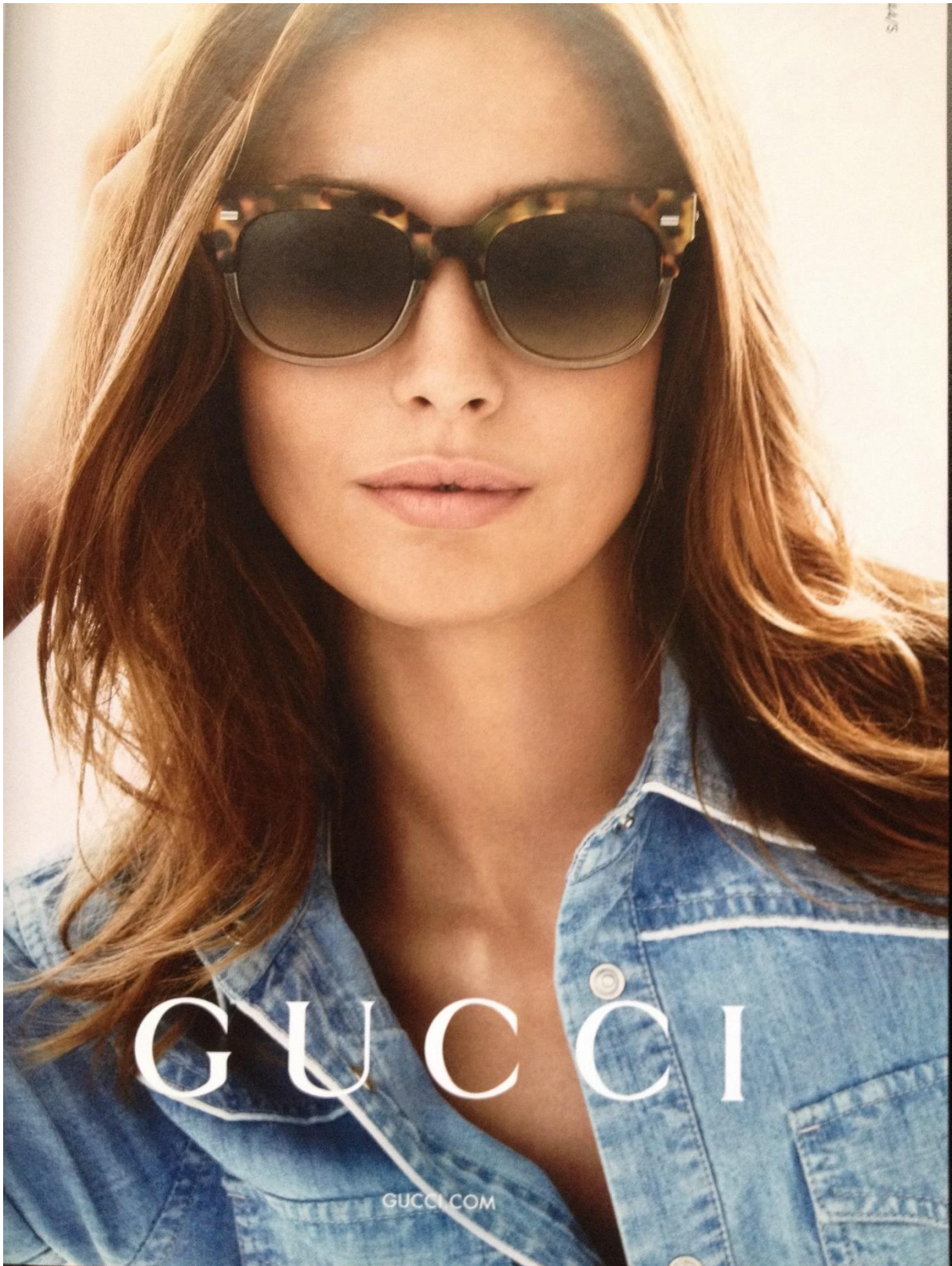
27-2



27-3

Case 28 Gucci

The sex embed is on the denim shirt. As far as I can see, there are a couple more Xs around that could provide the third letter. If you observe the cases well, you will find it is not unusual that some parts of the photographs are covered with graffiti, clouds of letters.



28-1



28-2



28-3

Case 29 Patek Philippe

Motherly love and... SEX.

We'll say more about this ad in Case 76.



PATEK PHILIPPE
GENEVE

Begin your own tradition.

175
1785-2015

You never actually own
a Patek Philippe.
You merely look after it for
the next generation.



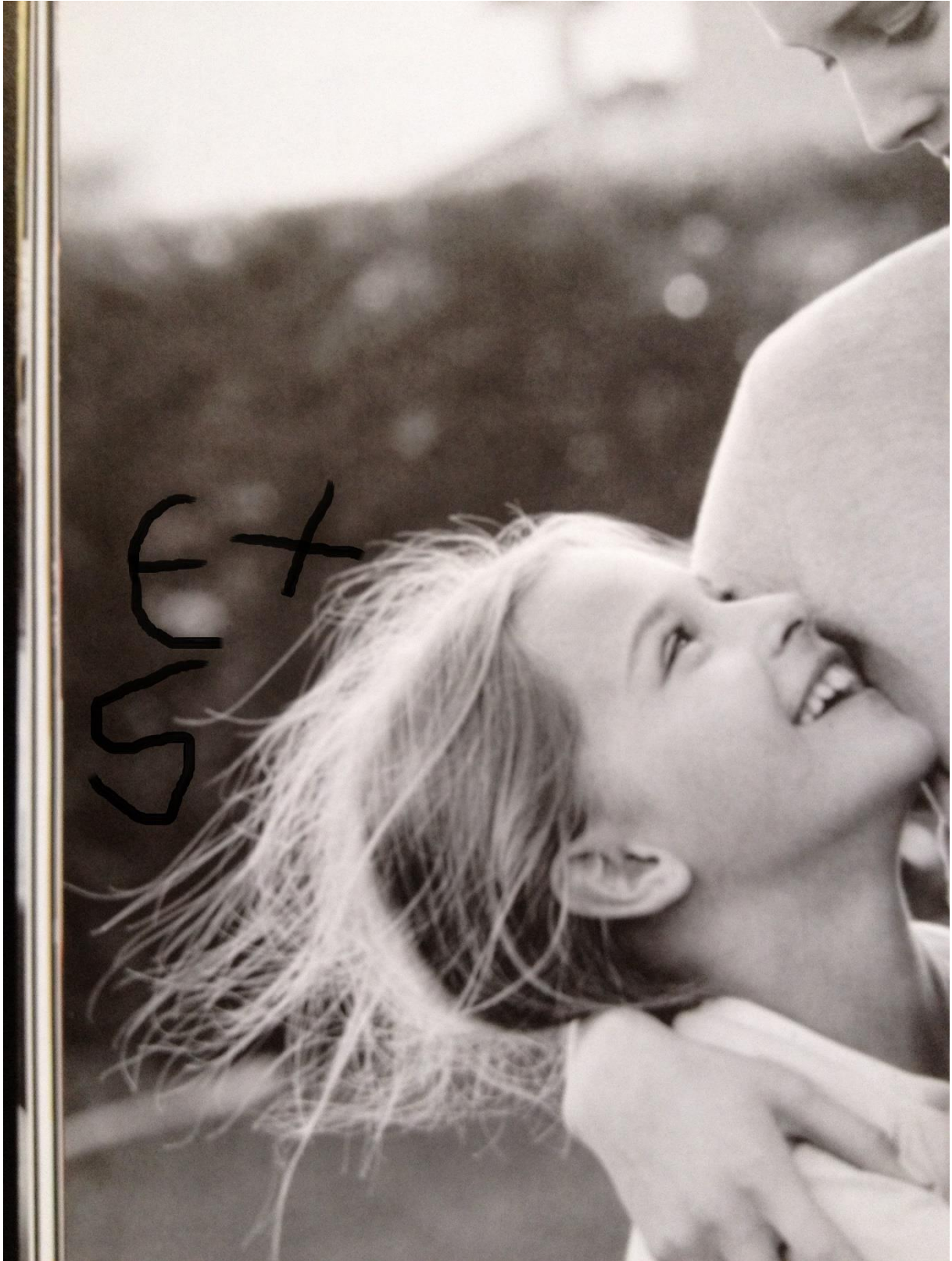
Twenty 4® Ref. 4910/10A
Tel. +44 (0) 1753 891348

Patek Philippe Grand Exhibition 2015, Saatchi Gallery, London
27 May - 7 June 2015 - Open to the public - Free admission
www.patek.com/London2015

29-1



29-2



29-3

Case 30 Elie Saab

An embed in the hair.

We'll say more about this ad in Case 77.



30-1



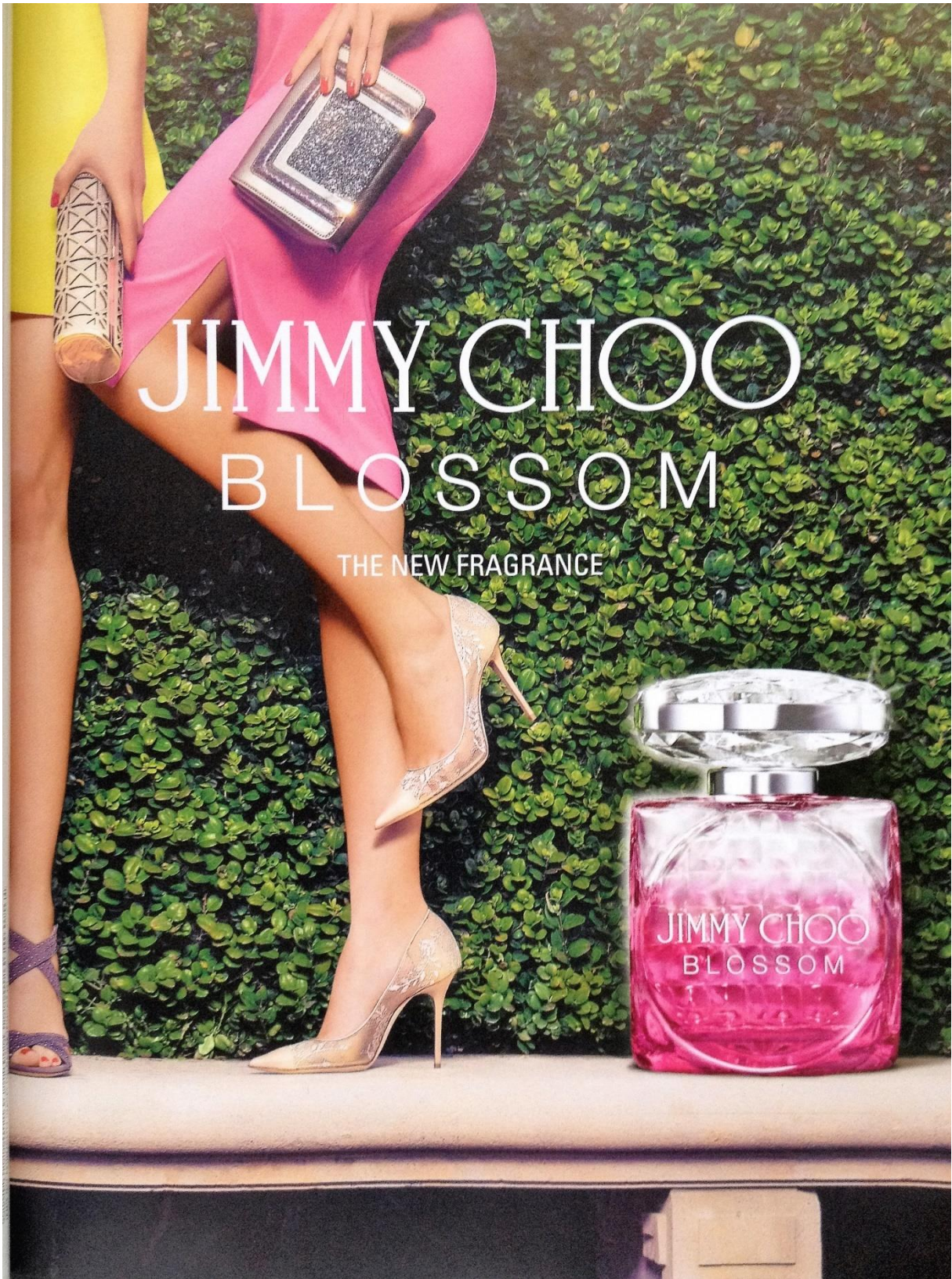
30-2



30-3

Case 31 Jimmy Choo Blossom

Isn't it crystal clear?



31-1



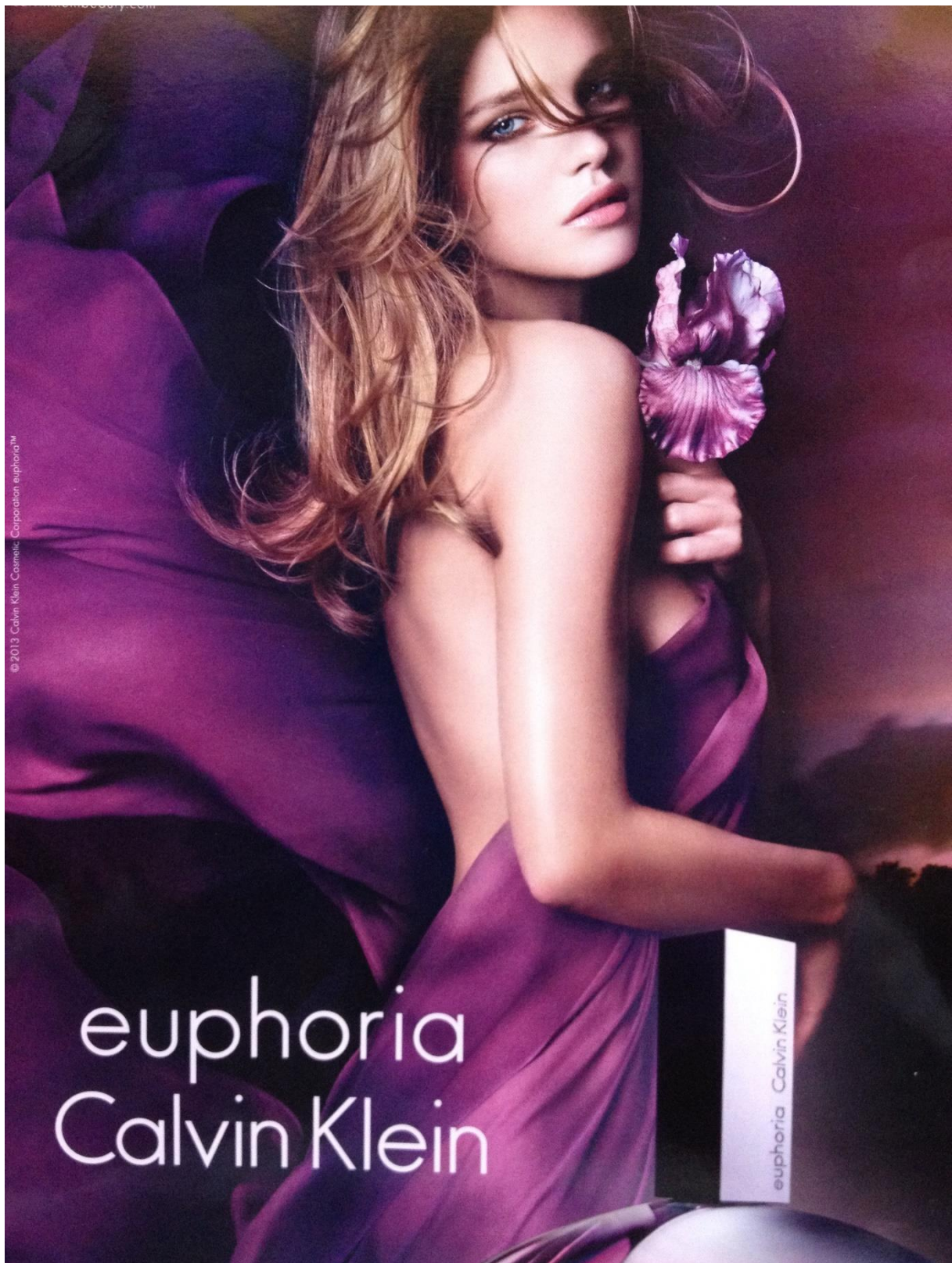
31-2



31-3

*

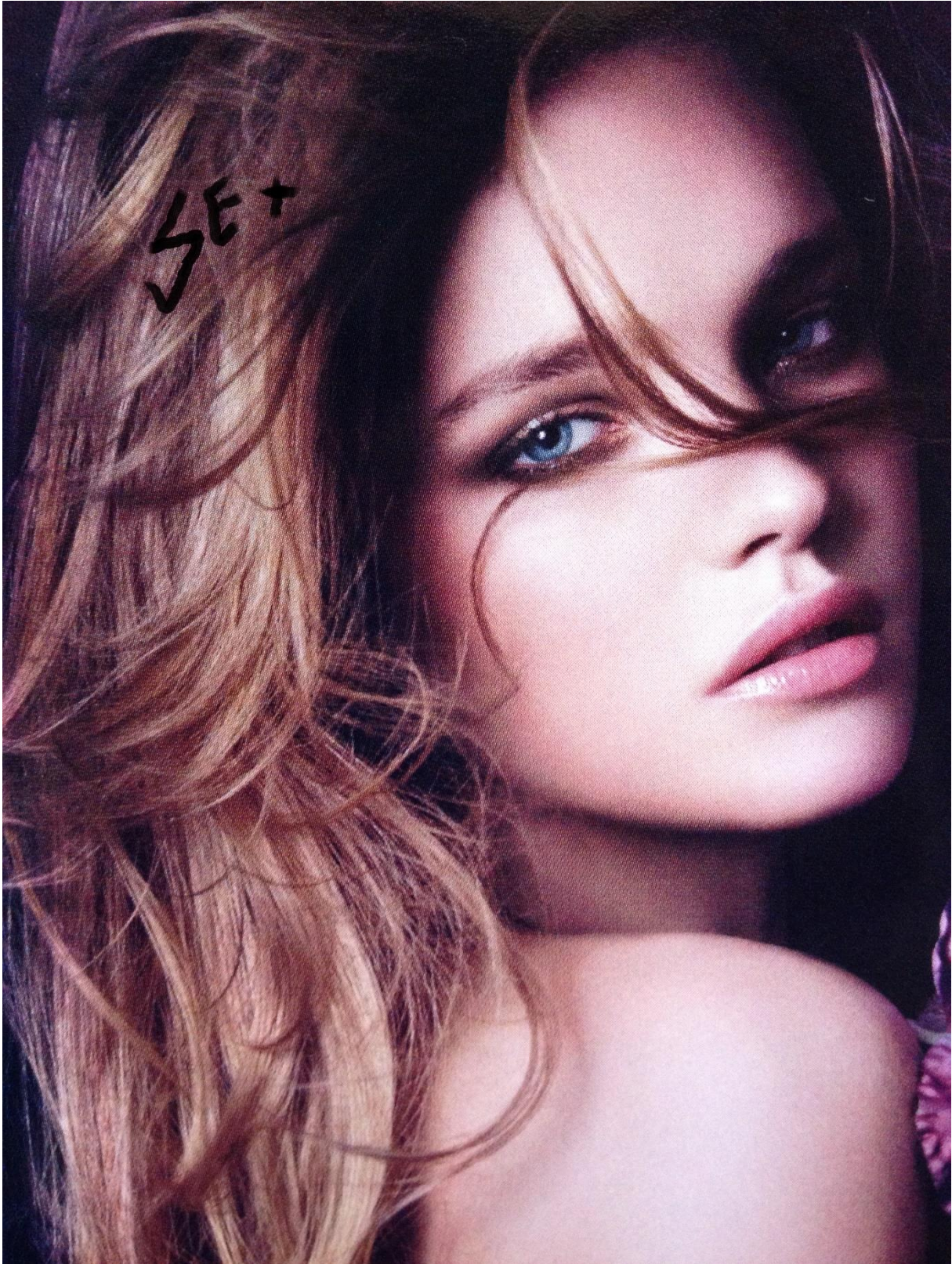
Case 32 Calvin Klein Euphoria



32-1



32-2



32-3

V
Vanity Fair (without Thackeray)

After the April issue of *Vanity Fair*, I thought the May issue would be interesting too, as regards sex embeds. Several ads from the April issue are also found on the May issue, like Case 24, Case 25, and a few others that I didn't bother to bring forward, so the subscribers who receive the magazine each month, or the regular buyers, are sure to get their share of repeated exposure which is the main principle of advertising as a conditioning process.

By the way, counting pages on both issues, I find 60 pages of commercial advertising on an overall 172 pages in the April "special" issue, and 46 pages on an overall 148 in the May issue, which makes 34.9% and 31.1% respectively (the special, bigger issue has a greater proportion of advertisements), and this does not even include the back cover ads, infomercials, advertorials, "Fanfairs," "Hot Tracks," "My Stuff," "Portraits" of commercial artists selling their last outputs, and so on and so forth.

All this research on sex embeds doesn't imply I am convinced they have potent effects or even have effects at all. However, even if the effect is unsure, as the technique costs little – or rather nothing since the graphic designer's working time is compensated anyway and it makes no difference whether he or she's adding shades or sparks or droplets or sex embeds – it seems that advertisers believe they ought to use the technique, and they do use it.

One final thought before the case studies. If advertising, as its advocates claim, is so important for our economy, then what a vibrant homage it is to artists, those (in the view of a few people who look at themselves as practical minds) "losers"! People working on ads have artistic training. At a time when middle management, even top management, is being increasingly performed by computers, and experts are being increasingly replaced by expert systems –i.e., computers– human artists are still needed to perform that part of the economy whose global revenues in 2010 amounted to 503 billion dollars worldwide (Shaver & An, Ed., *The Global Advertising Regulation Handbook*, 2014). Parents who discourage their kids' artistic inclinations seem very injudicious, even according to their own materialistic standards, because kids may end up earning much more working for advertising agencies than as accountants. In any case, what the advocates of advertisement's claim amounts to is that our economy needs the artist more than the organization man, whose function is being automatized and computerized.

Avril 2015

*

Case 33 Louis Vuitton SEX

The lady is waiting on a pier with an extravagant profusion of luggage. The sex embed is on her boots. The signal on the tip of the pier reads “Privé Private Please.” “Privé” is the French for “private.” Zooming on the board (33-2), you realize these words are not the first of a phrase, like “private pier”; they stand alone on a meaningless board. A private pier, however, conveys the idea of VIP-ness, and the advertisement as a whole the idea that very important people consume very much.



33-1



33-2



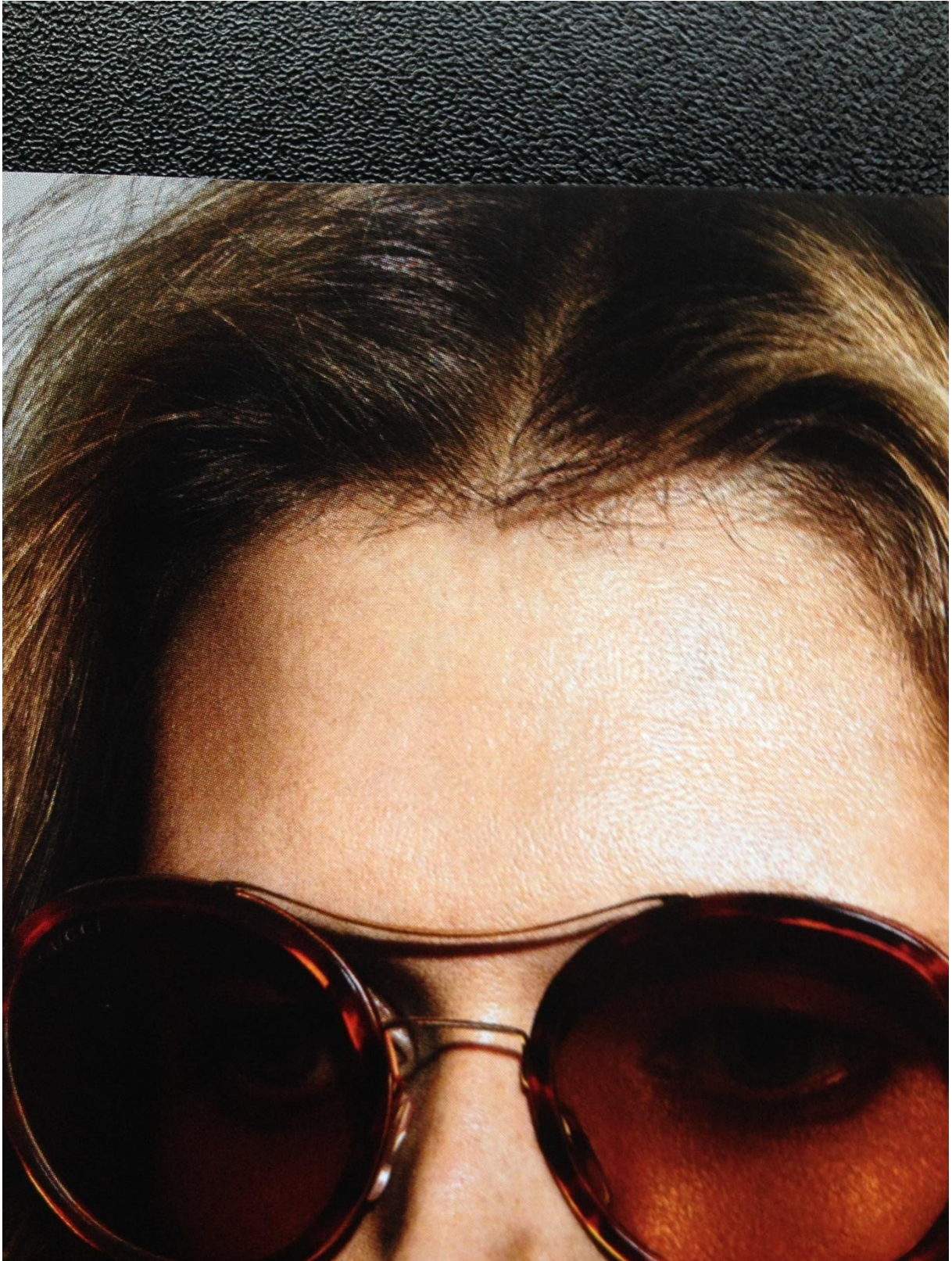
33-3

Case 34 Gucci SEX

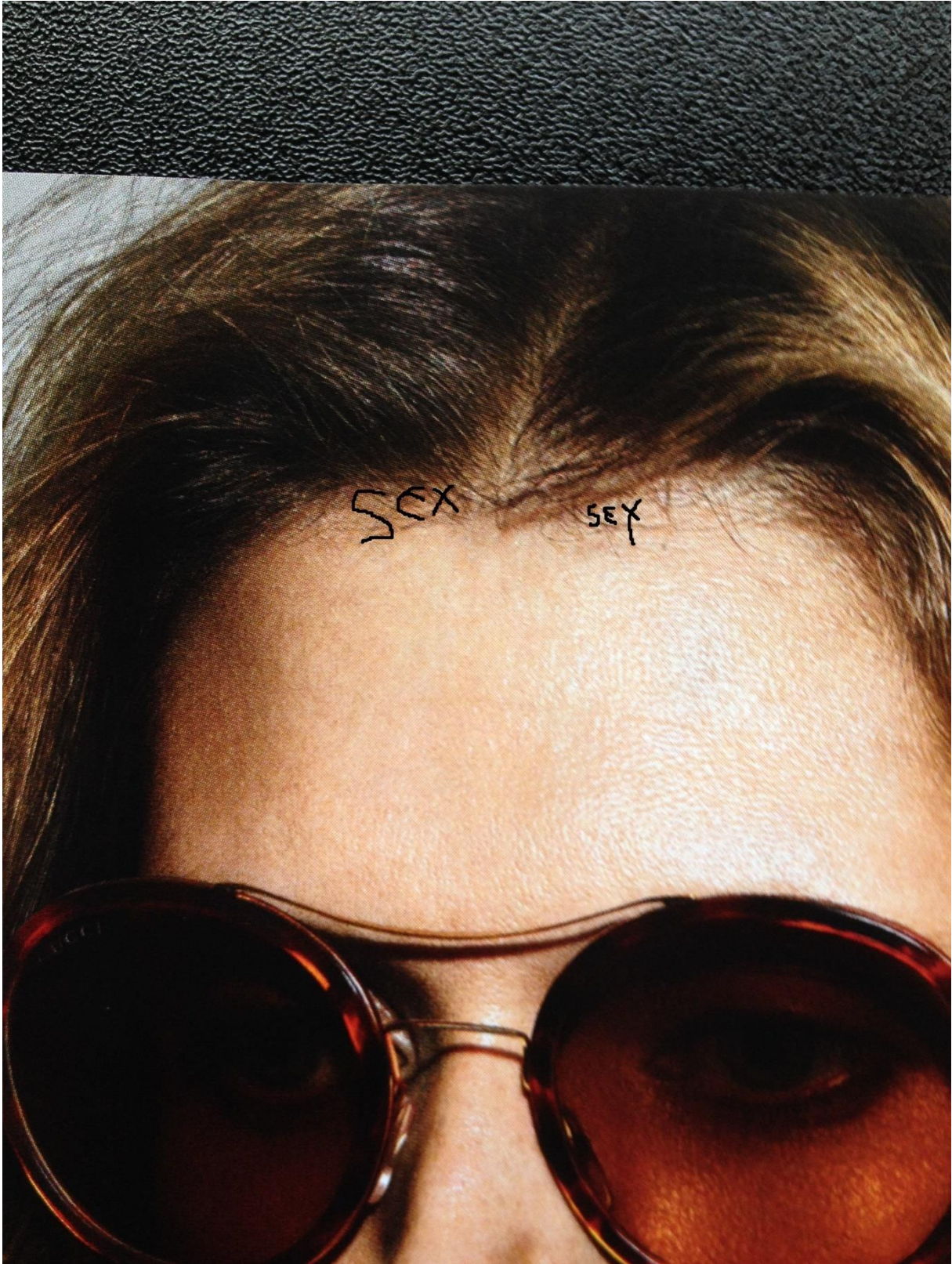
The borderline between hair and forehead, with all its underbrush, is a convenient place to embed SEXes à gogo. We have a real sex jungle here.



34-1



34-2



34-3

Case 35 Olay SEX

Another case of hairline sex embedding.

©2015 P&G

“I’LL ONLY USE SKINCARE I KNOW I CAN TRUST.”

Katie Holmes

Be your best beautiful with the world’s No. 1 female facial skincare brand.*

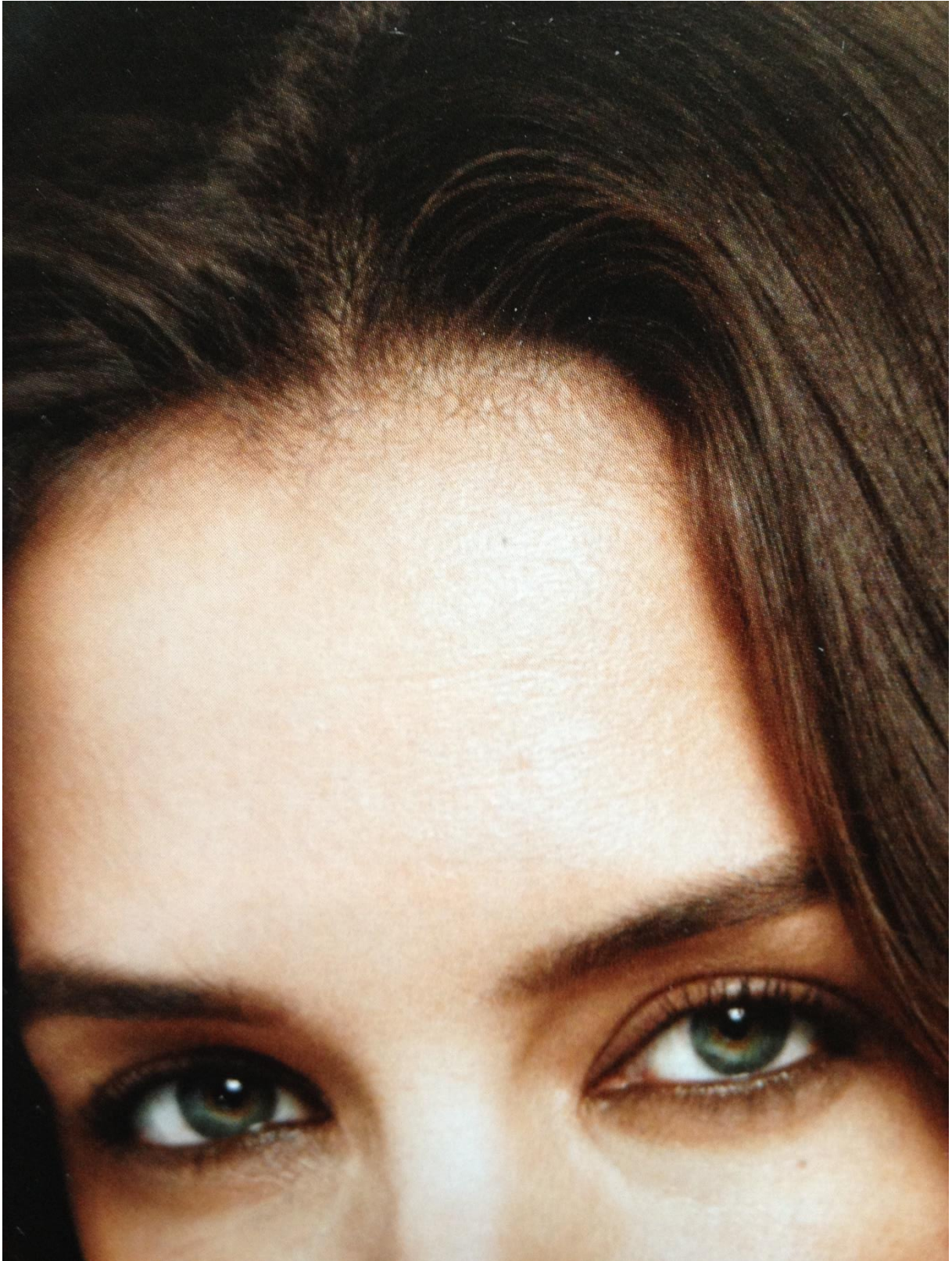
As the world’s No. 1 female facial skincare brand* we are devoted to creating the most advanced products designed to **beautifully transform your skin’s appearance whatever your age.**

WORLD’S No. 1
FEMALE FACIAL SKINCARE BRAND*

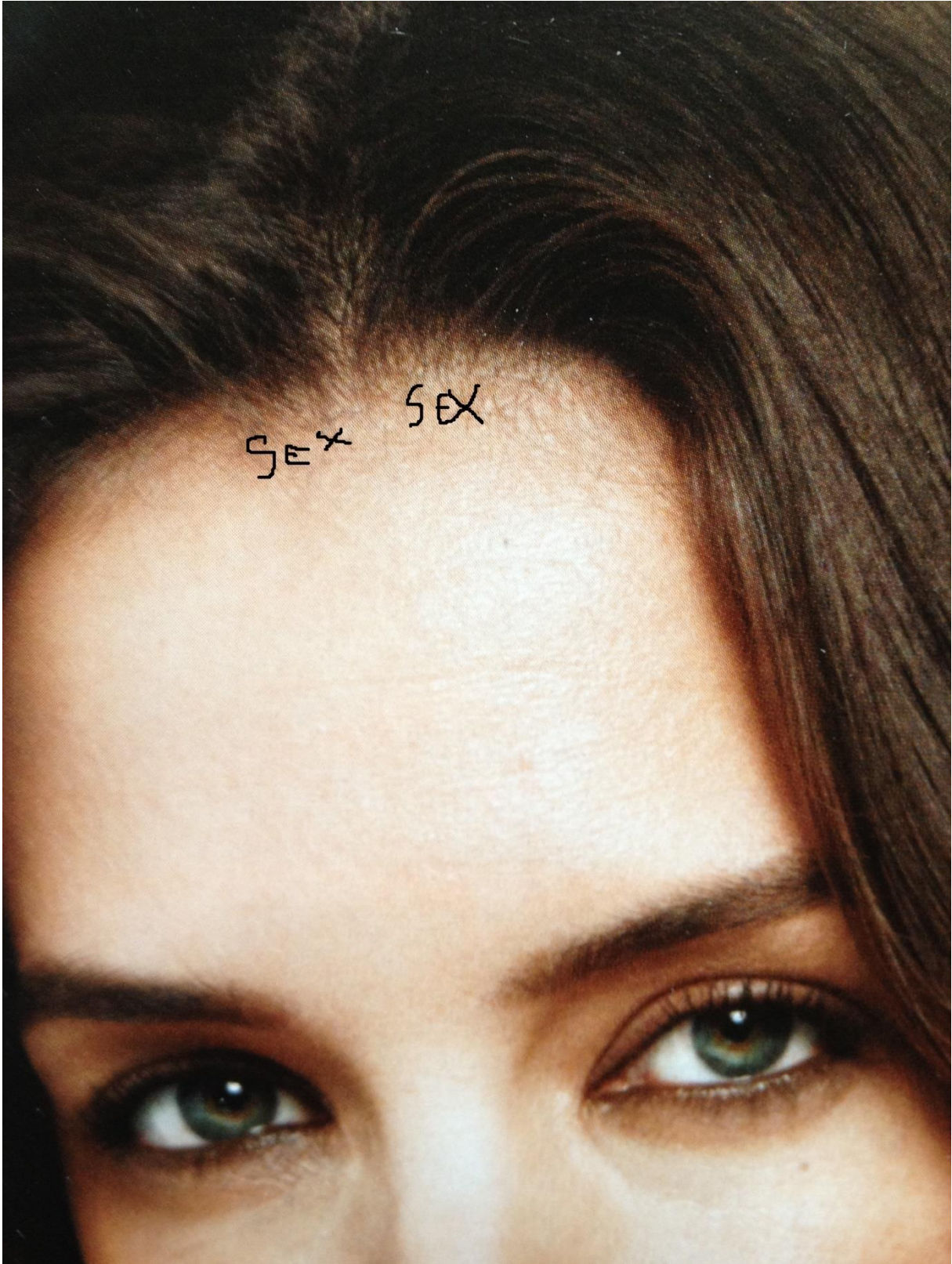
Your best beautiful begins at Olay.co.uk
*Based on mass market facial moisturiser and cleanser value sales for past 12 months ending June 2014.

Olay
YOUR BEST BEAUTIFUL™

34-1



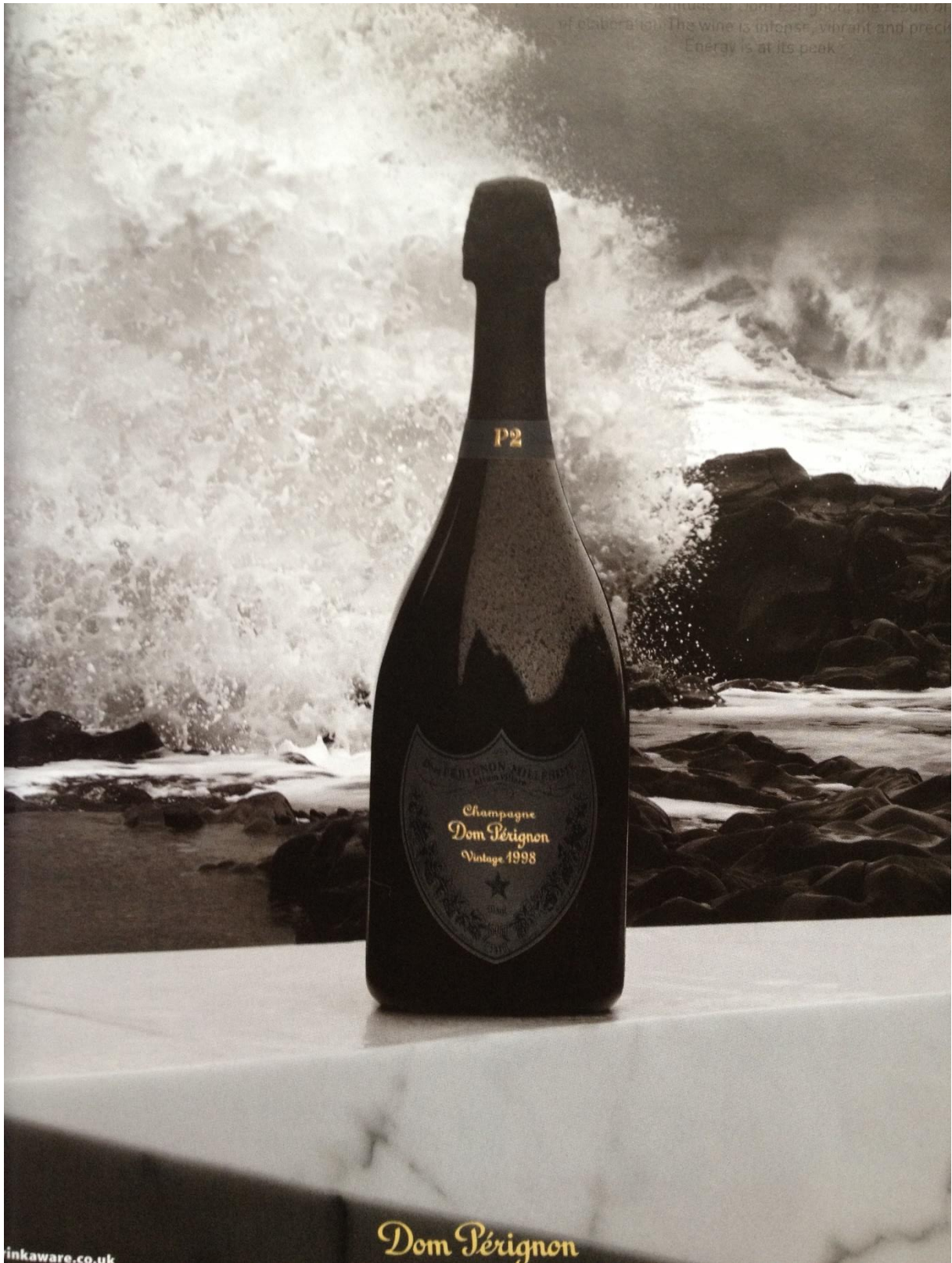
34-2



34-3

Case 36 Dom Perignon SEX

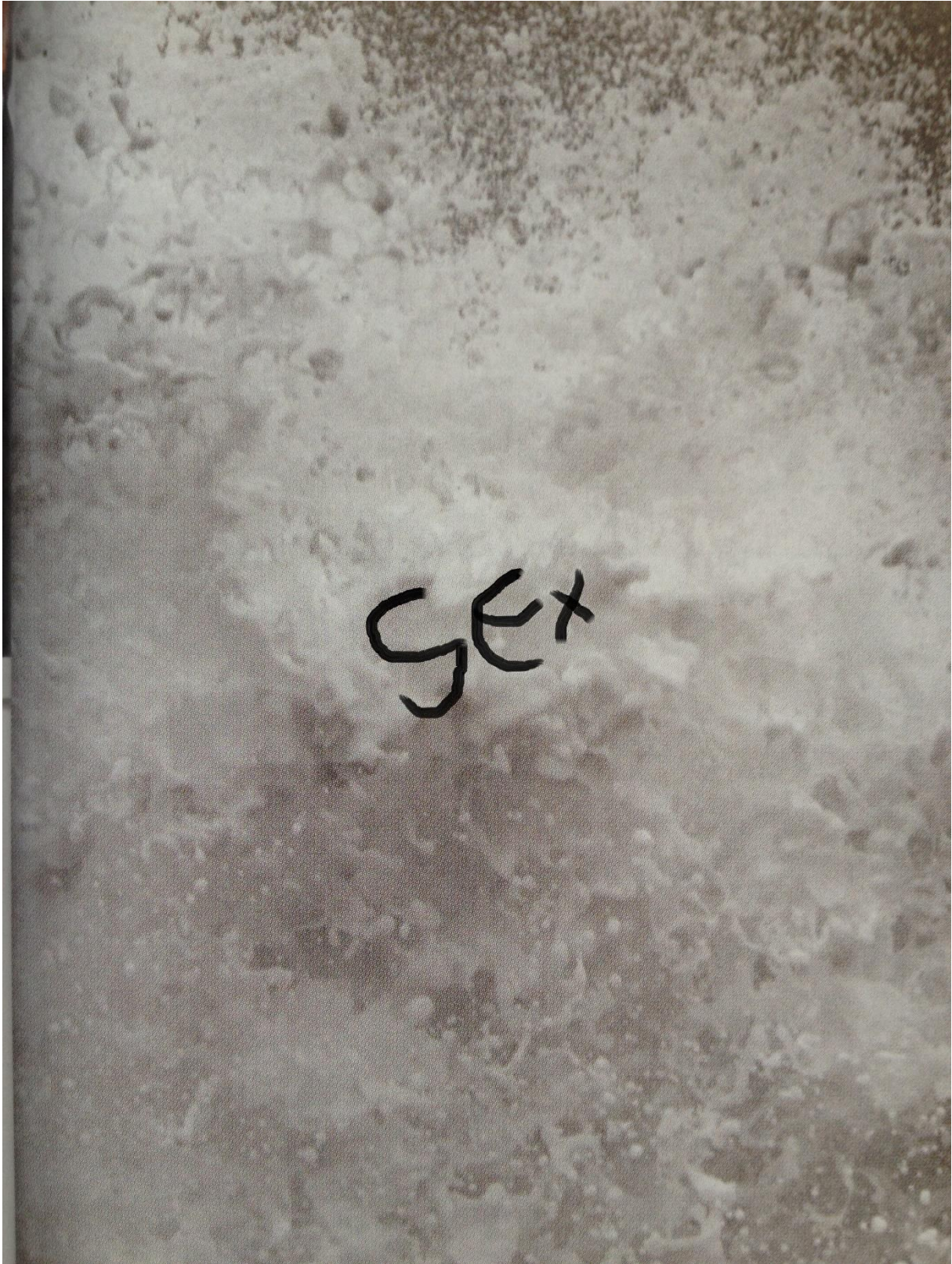
The expensive champagne brand Dom Perignon uses no color on this one, expect golden letters for the brand name. The word sex is embedded on the stylized sea spray. The X is frankly neat and obvious as a white relief on this piece of commercial relieve.



36-1



36-2



36-3

Case 37 Clarins SEX

As in Case 15, the word sex is embedded as a reflection on the sunglasses. Such reflections are typical background elements to which no attention is paid, even if geometrically speaking they are not in the background at all (since they are even closer to the viewer than the face itself, the glasses protruding from the forehead).

Youthful looking eyes are in sight.

NEW

*Super Restorative
Total Eye Concentrate*

A powerful, youth-activating cream to target the complete eye contour area from temple to temple. An innovative combination of organic harungana extract and cassie flower wax replumps and enhances by visibly reducing fine lines and wrinkles. Upper lids are instantly lifted while dark circles and puffiness are improved. Youthful, brighter eyes, day after day.

94% of women were pleased with the results after just one week*.

*Satisfaction tests, 200 women, in the UK, overall product satisfaction response.



Discover the full range in store and online: www.clarins.com



CLARINS

37-1



37-2



37-3

Case 38 Michael Kors SEX

Another case of sunglass reflections sex embedding. The difference with Case 35, however, is that the reflections on the latter are saturated: many objects, some sort of posh villa with greenwood trees, can be seen as reflections, among which the word sex has been embedded, whereas in the present case the apparent reflection is only that of a flat surface like the sea or a beach or a sand desert, and the sky. The word sex is embedded on this emptiness. I have outlined two different, partially overlapping embeds (37-3 and 37-4).

s a relatively
You read a
ews four or
diminishing
to boost your
er disaster
r for on-air
Washington
ith whoever
ou make in
s make in a
n Williams
of the jour-
xecutioners
-own media
hrash," says
ompete with

apart from
thority and
es. To those
nd talented
sense of hu-
ice of NBC
at many of
enormous
me in jour-
or him and

Chocolate is
Village. On
sses, Tea &
locks from
ybacks that
rade in the
Hobnobs.
plates. The
in the US
ll, however,
ago bought
ban the im-
petition as it

& Sympa-
less villains
uce Handy
f Hershey's
Cadbury, if
American
nd just like
en the US
chocolates

MICHAELKORS.COM **MICHAEL KORS**

38-1



38-2



38-3



38-4

*

Case 39 Etihad SEX

This one is my favorite from the lot and I will take a few minutes to explain why. First of all, it uses *celebrity endorsement*, the woman there being the famous actress Nicole Kidman. Celebrity endorsement is described by D. Lakhani as subliminal advertising (according to *Subliminal Advertising and External Stimuli: A Theoretical Framework*, 2014, by Shakeel Ahmad Sofi, an Indian scholar who has studied the effects of these kinds of ads on a sample population of Kashmiri students), because one is induced to purchase a product upon motivations that have nothing to do with the product's characteristics. This is stretching the meaning of "subliminal" very much, for, although people like to say they buy products due to the latter's intrinsic qualities, marketers know consumers should not be taken seriously in that respect. Marketers also know celebrity endorsement sells well.

For women, the endorsement here triggers identification, I suppose. For men, it triggers plain sexual arousal in an extravagantly gross fashion. Shoes off, on her couch or bed inside the aircraft cabin, wearing a somewhat creased evening dress (it's really bedtime), Nicole Kidman is looking at you in the eyes. Furthermore there is the name Etihad in Arabic, no doubt a "marker"; in the same way as Audi's international slogan *Vorsprung durch Technik* relies on the psychological "marker" (be the fact true or not) of uncompromisingly reliable German technology (the idea of keeping the German language was the British agency BBH's by the way), Arabic calligraphy evokes (be the facts true or not) Gulf oil wells and luxury and harem mysteries, so the male viewer is transported in a fantasy where he is a desert sheikh and the Hollywood star a sex slave from his harem, and the grossness of the sexual overtone (hardly an innuendo) becomes irresistible.

In such a context I was expecting the embeds to be rather shy, for two reasons. First, with due respect to the endorsing celebrity. Second, because the clients (Etihad) being desert sheikhs and outdoor Puritans[†], they could miss the humor and jocularly of sex-embedding, as, for instance, capital punishment is still, in a spectacular fashion, in vigor among them (through fire squads, which is not as picturesque, however, as in neighboring Saudi Arabia, where beheading fairs are performed). These two factors would dampen, I conjectured, the artist's embedding mania.

The embeds are shy indeed; they almost seem to apologize for being there. But they are there anyway. One of them lies on a white pillow, as an arabesque of slight shades and folds. Others are on the couch, whose cover's velvety fabric provides the milieu for the embed culture. I have outlined only a few of these.

Post Scriptum. As I find the same ad in German *Der Spiegel* of the same month, it's likely it appears in most magazines of significance throughout the world. The price of such a global campaign (including NK's compensation, and payment for advertising space on dozens of the most expensive media) must be enormous. Needless to say, it is paid by the consumer: marketing costs are included in the final price.

[†]When I use the phrase "outdoor Puritans," I do not mean these people are hypocrites. What occurs behind doors is no great secret among them, I should think. However, many Westerners will call these mores hypocritical, as repressed monogamists and "zerogamists" carpet-bombed with mass media sexual fantasies are expected to do.



39-1



39-2



39-3



39-4



39-5

VI Cosmopolitan Spiegel

The advertising community is not particularly interested in confessing to the use of subliminal messages, and there appears to be no good source to document their prevalence. Back in the 1980s, I asked an advertising executive at Wyse Advertising if he had any insights into the use of subliminal messages in advertising. ... He estimated that about 10% of all ads use some form of subliminal technique.

Glenn G. Sparks, *Media Effects Research. A Basic Overview*, Fifth Edition 2015, p. 216

This quote is from a course manual for undergraduate students in the communications field authored by a professor at Purdue University. The fact that the manual has gone through five editions so far is testimony to its success and perhaps to its quality as teaching material. Such a quote should be proof enough that the subject of subliminal advertising is not, as some believe, an “urban legend” or a hoax for self-proclaimed “hoax busters,” who shoot anything that moves, to bust. The advertising executive’s confession is gold, although the correct figure, as far as current printed advertising is concerned (newspapers, magazines, billboards), is closer to 100% than to 10% at this juncture.

When advertisers themselves confess to the practice, the denying attitude of some scholars (among them a few self-proclaimed hoax busters) strikes one as very odd. When I read, for instance, the following (quoted by Sparks, p. 217): “Perhaps now is the time to lay the myth of subliminal sorcery to rest and direct our attention to other, more scientifically documented ways of understanding the causes of human behavior and improving our condition. (Pratkanis, *The cargo-cult science [sic] of subliminal persuasion*, 1992)” I have only this to say: Go tell the advertisers.

As Sparks explains, Pratkanis has found out that products such as tapes and videos based on alleged subliminal techniques and marketed to increase self-esteem or improve one’s moods (a \$50 million business in 1990, according to Charles R. Acland, *Swift Viewing: The Popular Life of Subliminal Influence*, 2011) are placebos. This is certainly worth knowing but does not allow one to talk about a “myth of subliminal sorcery.” Wilson Bryan Key contends subliminal persuasion in media advertising relies on the priming offered by media content – in newspapers the bad news (content) primes for the good news (ads), on McLuhanian lines, and in magazines it is the lifestyle-oriented content that primes for the ads. As the priming effect is missing in the material tested by Pratkanis, his experiments have nothing to say on such a persuasion system.

But, I repeat, if subliminal advertising has no effect according to laboratory experiments, this information should be forwarded primarily to the advertisers themselves, who, as I am documenting with the present series, are using subliminal techniques extensively, at least in their sex-embedding version, on which I am concentrating. Otherwise, I don’t know if it’s the same for you, but I really feel that disparaging terms such as “cargo-cult science,” “myth,” “sorcery” sound like a design to defuse the potential consequences of consumers’ concern on vested interests. This feeling, I know, is not rational, for what is rational is to maintain that scholars are independent from vested interests; the bombast in these disparagements is only the camouflage of the naive. For naive it is, indeed, to presume advertising agencies don’t know their job, considering their own research gets financing which an (independent) academic

scholar would never dream of. An advertiser is likely to know his job, despite his claims to the contrary.

In this context, the confession of the advertising executive quoted above is, once again, striking, since the proprietary knowledge of advertising agencies is guaranteed by law from public scrutiny.

The following advertisements are taken from the German weekly *Der Spiegel* dated April 11, 2015 (Cases 40-44), and the magazine *Cosmopolitan* (UK Edition) dated May 2015 (Cases 45-47).

May 2015

Case 40 Freistaat Thüringen SEX

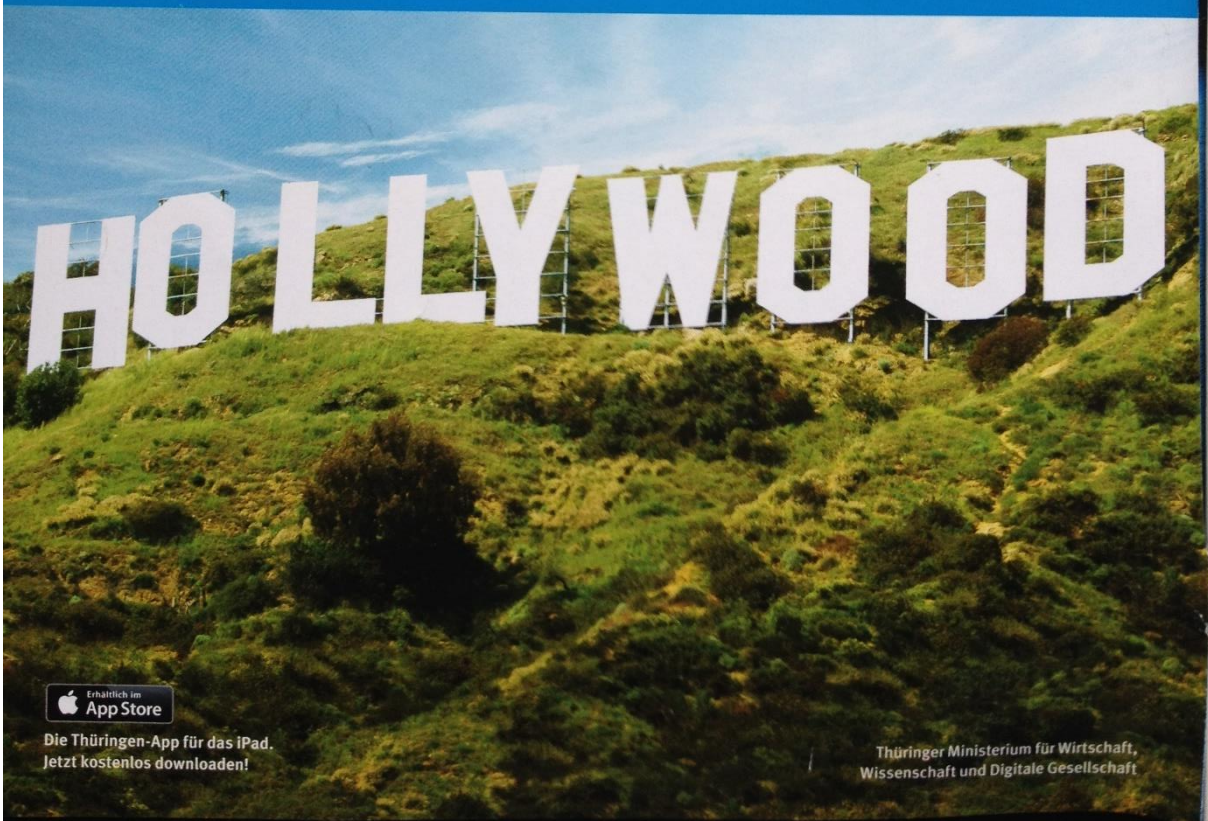
When the Free State of Thuringia, one of Germany's *Länder*, or any other public collectivity advertises, with the taxpayer's money, its existence on the market, in order to allure tourists or investors, or for whatever reason, it contracts with an expensive advertising agency. The presence of sex embeds comes as no surprise.

Thüringen ist ein ausgezeichnete Wirtschaftsstandort und ein attraktiver Platz zum Leben und Arbeiten. Unternehmer profitieren von einer hochmodernen Infrastruktur, der zentralen Lage in Deutschland und motivierten Fachkräften. Für Mitarbeiter verbinden sich gute Perspektiven im Job, die beste Kinderbetreuung für die Kleinen und schöne Ausflugsmöglichkeiten ins Grüne mit einer hohen Lebensqualität. Wann wollen Sie unser Land entdecken? Mehr erfahren: im Internet www.das-ist-thueringen.de oder persönlich: +49 (0) 361 5603450.

Freistaat
Thüringen
Hier hat Zukunft Tradition.

Das ist Thüringen.

Viele erfolgreiche Hollywood-Filme wurden mit
High-End-Objektivlinsen von Zeiss aus Jena gedreht.



Erhältlich im
App Store

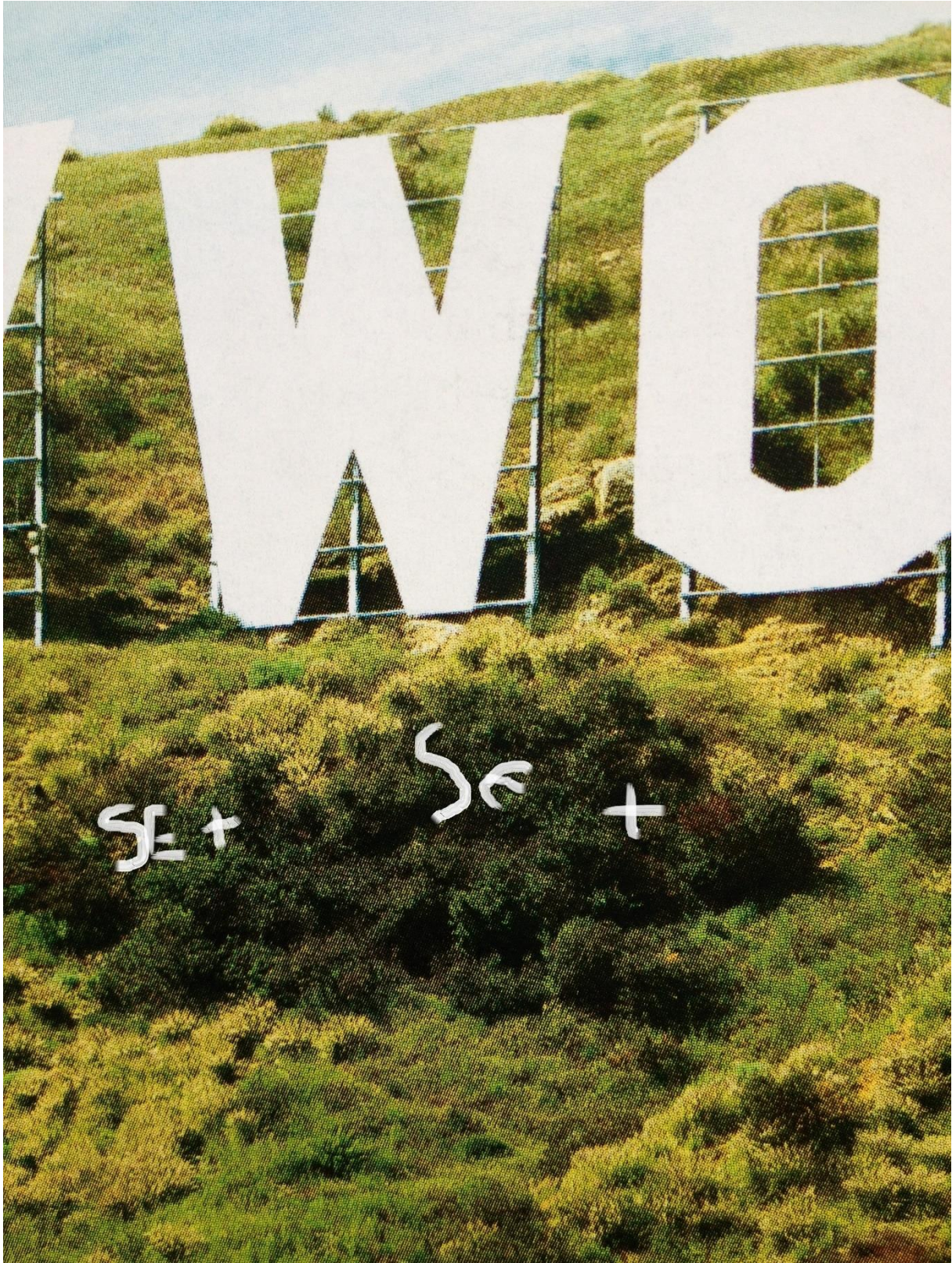
Die Thüringen-App für das iPad.
Jetzt kostenlos downloaden!

Thüringer Ministerium für Wirtschaft,
Wissenschaft und Digitale Gesellschaft

40-1



40-2



40-3

Case 41 Deutsche Bahn SEX

This one is for the German railways company. In the world of advertisement, men have not learned to comb their hair nor to shave their beards, because uncombed hair and incipient beard are convenient settings where to embed SEXes. As a result of men's so often seeing uncombed hair and incipient beards on advertisements, the scruffy looks have become trendy in the real world.

There could be another reason for incipient beards being fashionable. The world of advertisements is a world of total freedom and enjoyment of one's time and pleasure, without restraint; in that world there is simply no place for the organization man, with his suit and tie and long working weeks and subservience to the organization's goals. The numerous organization men from the real world are torn between their real-life condition and the social desirability of appearing fashionable in accordance with advertisement's canons. Incipient beard is the answer. Sporting an incipient beard, the suit-and-tie organization man is telling the world: "See? I have not shaved this morning, I do what I want, I am no relic from the oppressive past," and that makes him socially acceptable, given that social acceptability is mostly based on appearance (fashion) and determined by advertisement conditioning. Ironically, the grooming of an incipient beard is much ado; you must shave or trim it regularly lest it become an unfashionable full beard.

As to the Deutsche Bahn advertisement, please observe how the embed is exposed in the light rather than camouflaged by the darker areas of the background.



endlich Zeit,
Mails zu checken statt
kehrsmeldungen.

Diese Zeit gehört Dir.

Fahren Sie doch mal wieder Bahn. Wo sonst können Sie unterwegs lesen, schlafen, spielen, arbeiten und tun und lassen, was Sie wollen? Steigen Sie ein. Es ist schließlich Ihre Zeit. bahn.de/deinezeit

41-1

DB **BAHN**



41-2

DB **BAHN**



41-3

*

Case 42 BASF SEX

Was können wir tun, damit Menschen den Berufsverkehr lieben?

Bis 2050 werden mehr als 70 % der Weltbevölkerung in Städten leben. Deshalb feiern wir unser 150-jähriges Jubiläum, indem wir gemeinsam nach Lösungen suchen, um die Lebensqualität in den Städten zu steigern. Zum Beispiel mit öffentlichen Verkehrsmitteln, die einem modernen Lebensstil angepasst sind.

Diskutieren Sie mit: creator-space.basf.com

150 Jahre

BASF
We create chemistry

The advertisement features a woman in a dark blazer looking at her smartphone, standing next to a futuristic, sleek train. The background shows a city skyline at night. A large green heart is superimposed over the scene, symbolizing the connection between technology, urban living, and the company's anniversary.

42-1



42-2



42-3

Case 43 Book Cover SEX

I can't say for sure whether the embed lies on the book cover or on the advertisement alone, because I haven't had the book in my hands. I wouldn't be surprised in the least if the embeds lied on the real cover. The book is supposed to be a serious one; this is why, certainly, it needs a bit of subliminal up-sexing.

trag des SPIEGEL wöchentlich ermittelt vom Fachmagazin „buchreport“;
tionen und Auswahlkriterien finden Sie online unter: www.spiegel.de/bestseller

Olsen	dtv; 19,90 Euro
er	Diogenes; 23,90 Euro
ey	Goldmann; 19,99 Euro
Schwestern	
ellebecq	DuMont Buch; 22,99 Euro
ng	
en	Knaus; 19,99 Euro
envariationen	Hanser Berlin; 15,90 Euro
	Suhrkamp; 22,95 Euro
tun	
Euro	
mi und	
inen Nazi, der	
weise zum	
ämpfer verklärt	
Clare	
enly Fire – Chroniken	Arena; 24,99 Euro
elt	
ck	
ie Dichter	Kiepenheuer & Witsch; 17,99 Euro
Der Erwählte	Fischer Sauerländer; 16,99 Euro
m	Heyne; 22,99 Euro
nke	
Das goldene Garn	Dressler; 19,99 Euro
rt	
frieden	Knaur; 24,99 Euro
ng	Heyne; 22,99 Euro
itzek	
3	Droemer; 19,99 Euro
lera	
er Bedeutungslosigkeit	Hanser; 16,90 Euro
der Lippe	
en singe ich Balladen	Knaus; 14,99 Euro
rt	Hanser; 22,90 Euro

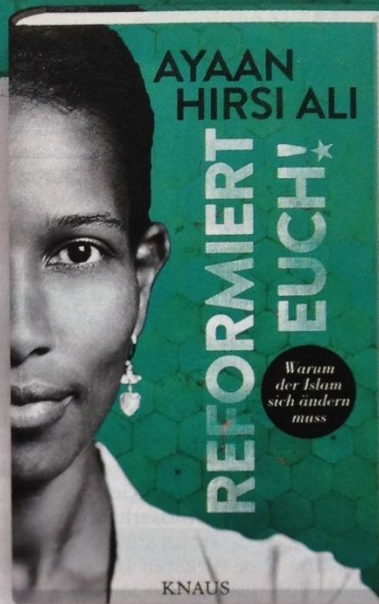
Sachbuch

- 1 (1) **Helmut Schmidt**
Was ich noch sagen wollte
C. H. Beck; 18,95 Euro
- 2 (3) **Hape Kerkeling**
Der Junge muss an die frische Luft
Piper; 19,99 Euro
- 3 (2) **Wilhelm Schmid**
Gelassenheit – Was wir gewinnen,
wenn wir älter werden
Insel; 8 Euro
- 4 (4) **Thilo Bode**
Die Freihandelslüge
DVA; 14,99 Euro
- 5 (5) **Mahtob Mahmoody**
Endlich frei
Bastei Lübbe; 19,99 Euro
- 6 (6) **Udo Ulfkotte**
Gekaufte Journalisten
Kopp; 22,95 Euro
- 7 (7) **Guido Maria Kretschmer**
Eine Bluse macht noch keinen Sommer
Edel Books; 17,95 Euro
- 8 (8) **The Bodleian Library (Hg.)**
Leitfaden für britische Soldaten
in Deutschland 1944
Kiepenheuer & Witsch; 8 Euro
- 9 (9) **Jean Ziegler**
Ändere die Welt
C. Bertelsmann; 19,99 Euro
- 10 (11) **Peter Scholl-Latour**
Der Fluch der bösen Tat
Propyläen; 24,99 Euro
- 11 (12) **Naomi Klein**
Die Entscheidung
S. Fischer; 26,99 Euro
- 12 (14) **Alexander von Schönburg**
Smalltalk
Rowohlt Berlin; 16 Euro
- 13 (-) **Paul Sahner**
Merci, Udo!
Herder; 16,99 Euro
- 14 (-) **Miriam Gebhardt**
Als die Soldaten kamen
DVA; 21,99 Euro
- 15 (20) **Ferdinand von Schirach**
Die Würde ist antastbar
Piper; 16,99 Euro
- 16 (17) **Thomas Piketty**
Das Kapital im 21. Jahrhundert
C. H. Beck; 29,95 Euro
- 17 (-) **John Cleese**
Wo war ich
noch mal?
Blessing; 22,99 Euro

Der englische Komiker blickt
zurück auf ein Leben
im Dienste des Irrsinns
- 18 (15) **Lars Mytting**
Der Mann und das Holz
Insel; 18 Euro
- 19 (-) **Lea Linster / Kerstin Holzer**
Mein Weg zu den Sternen
Kiepenheuer & Witsch; 18,99 Euro
- 20 (10) **Flake**
Der Tastenficker

»DER ISLAM MUSS SICH REFORMIEREN.«

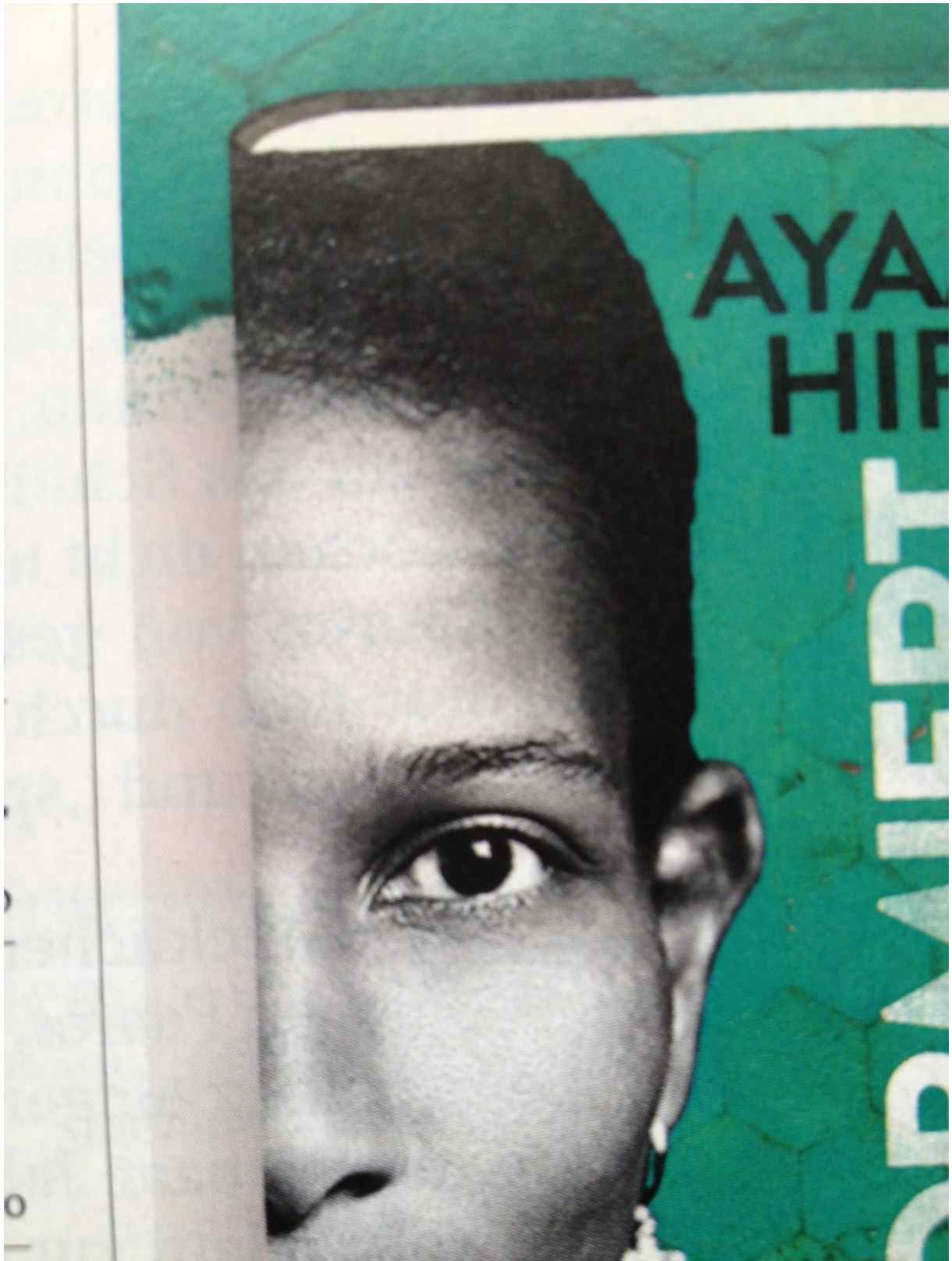
Ayaan Hirsi Ali



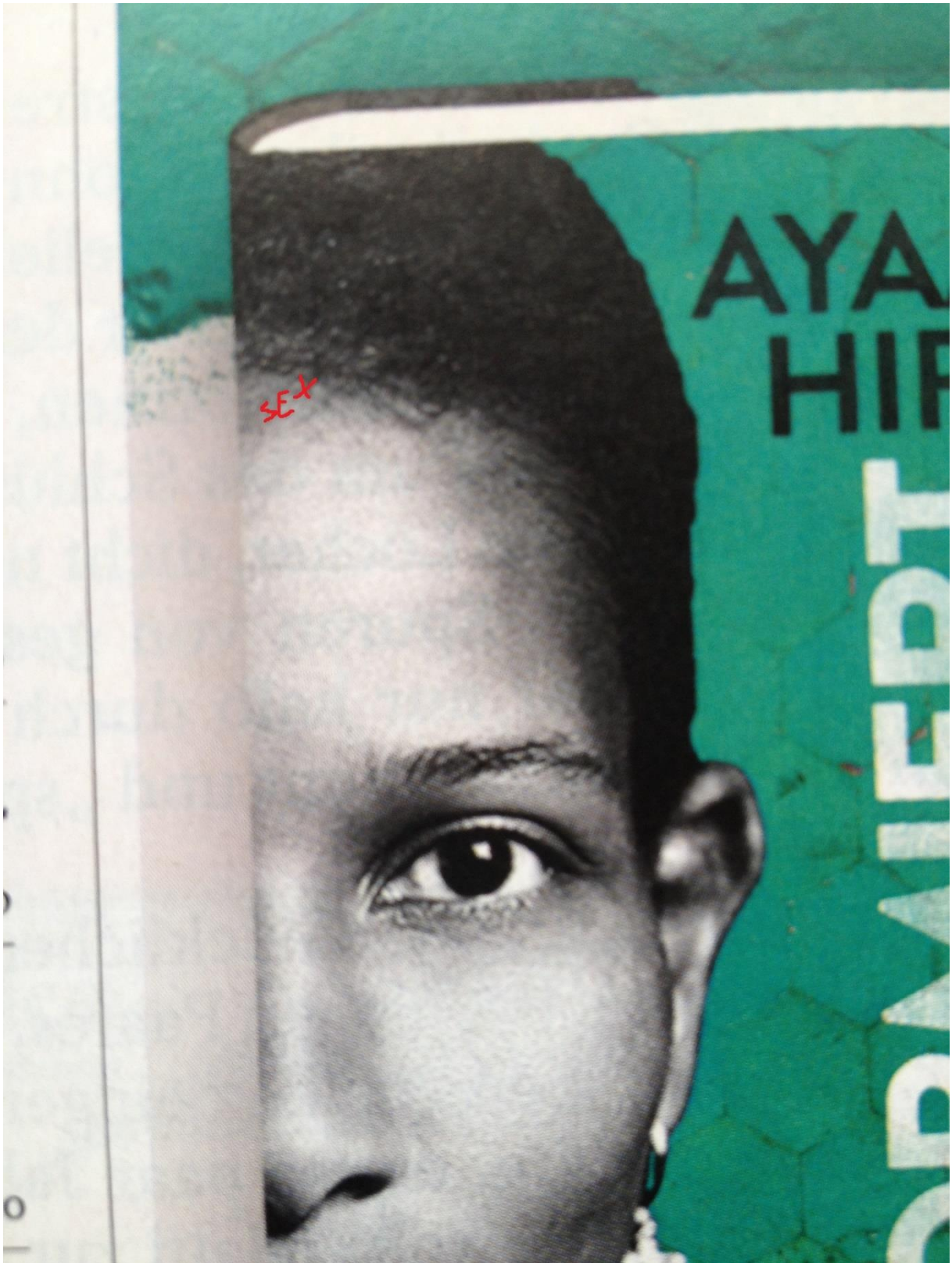
304 Seiten, gebunden, € 19,99 [D] · Auch als E-Book erhältlich

Ihre eigene Biographie und intime Kenntnis der islamischen Gesellschaften und Kultur sowie ihre Forschungen machen Ayaan Hirsi Ali zu einer der wichtigsten Stimmen in der Debatte über den Islam. Ihr neues, von **Optimismus getragenes** Buch, an dem sie seit Jahren arbeitet, kommt im richtigen Moment: Es nimmt die Terroranschläge in Paris zum Ausgangspunkt, bietet fundierte Einordnung und Hintergründe, vor allem aber bezieht Hirsi Ali klar Stellung: gegen einen erstarrten Islam und dessen Tolerierung durch den Westen. Und für **eine Reformation** ihrer Religion durch die Muslime, die sie bereits auf dem Weg sieht.

 Besuchen Sie den Knaus Verlag auf Facebook



43-2



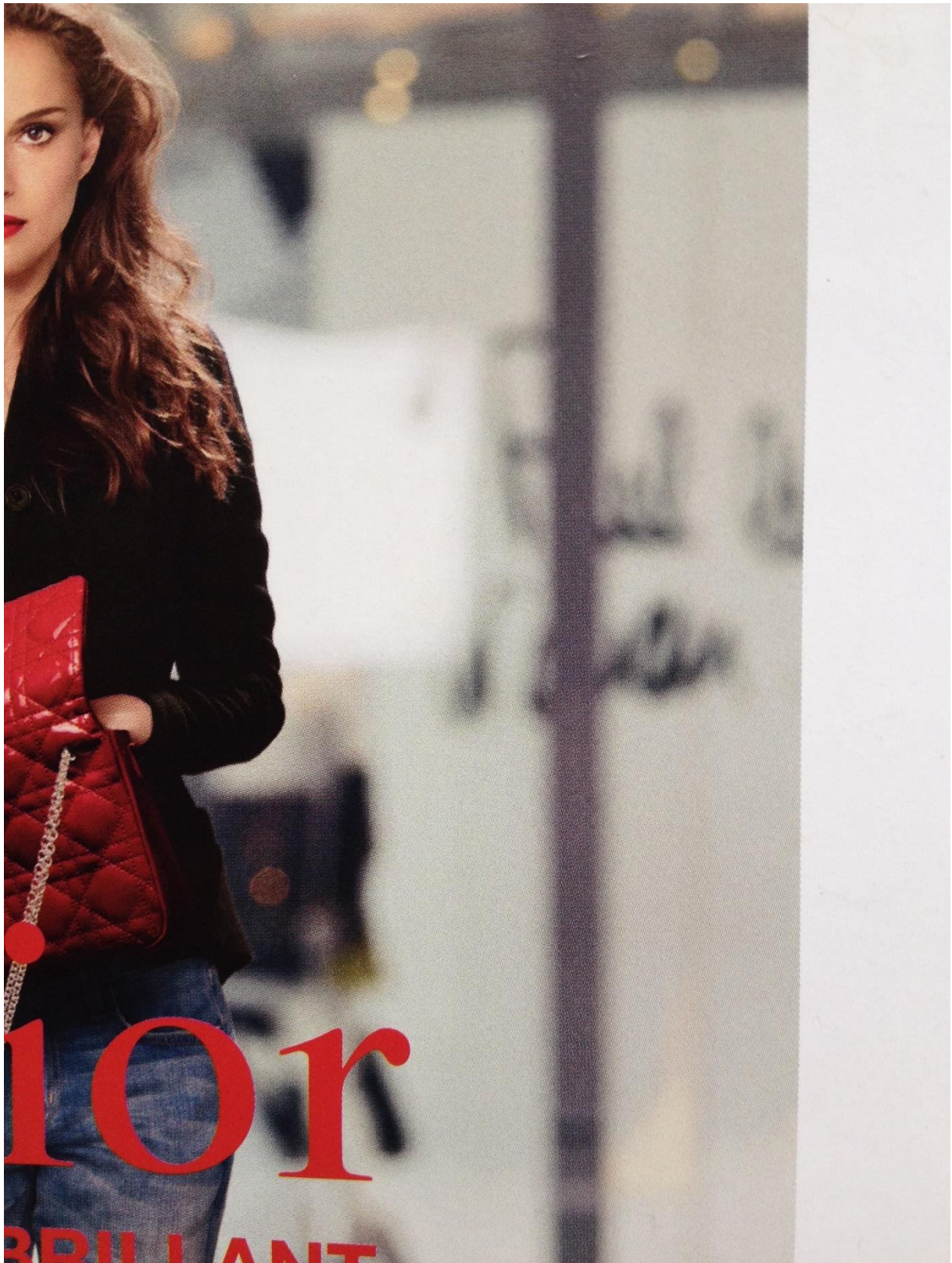
43-3

*

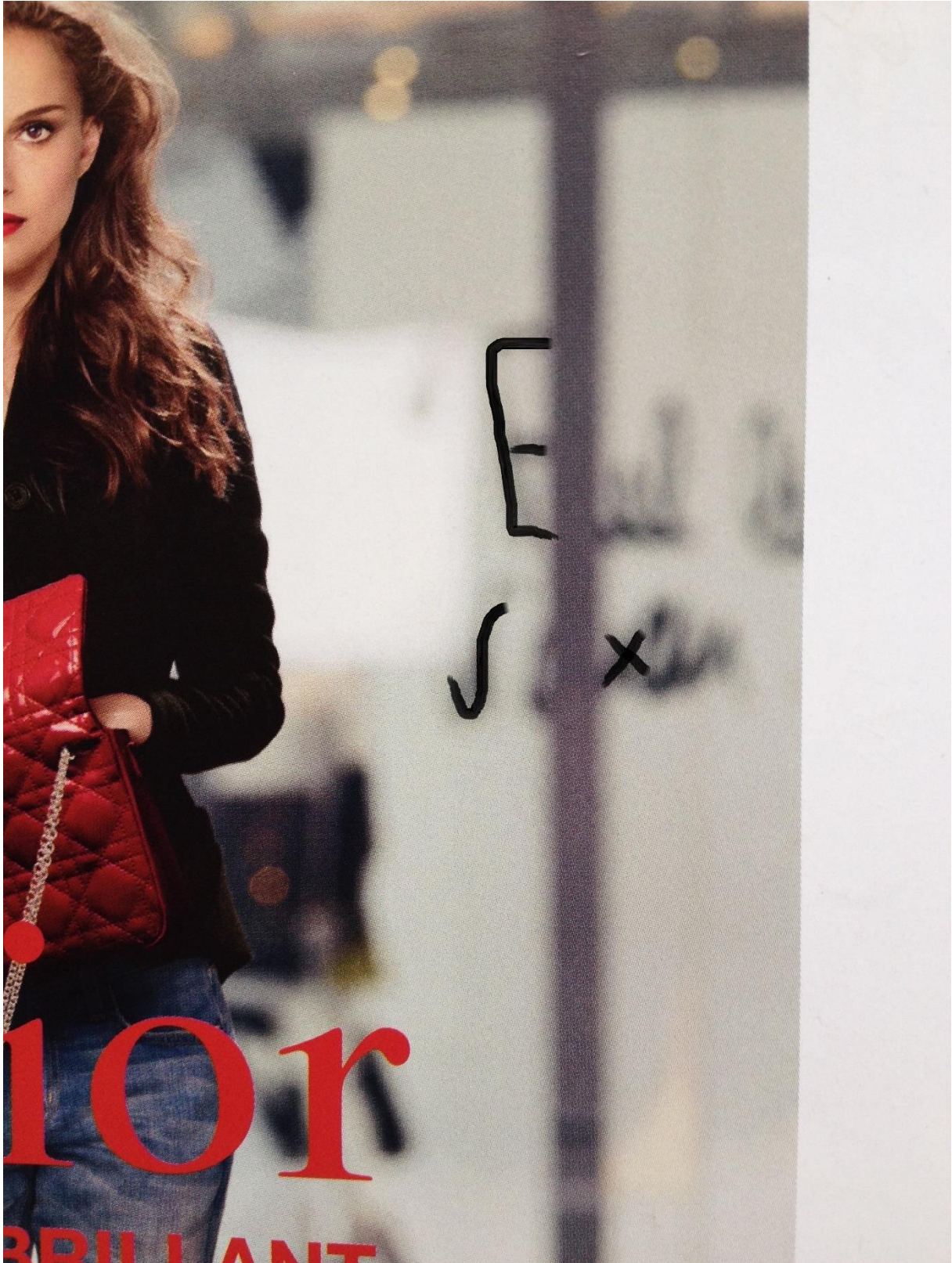
Case 44 Dior SEX



44-1



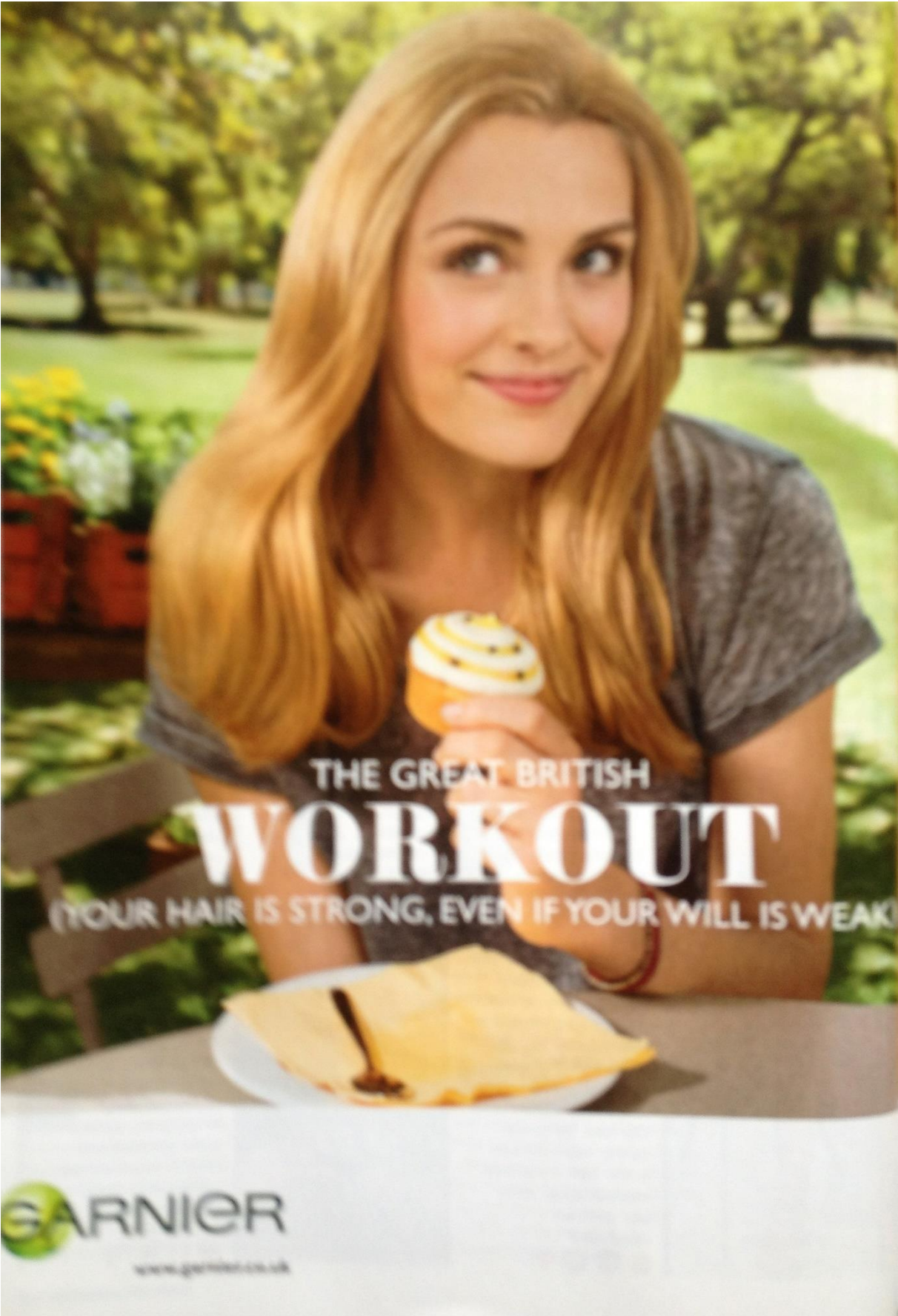
44-2



44-3

Case 45 Garnier SEX

To find the sex embeds, follow the direction of her look.



45-1



45-2



45-3

Case 46 Hyundai SEX

To create the sensation of speed, the graphic designer has fuzzed parts of the picture, a banal technique whose advantage is to make embedding very convenient. I have outlined one sex embed. Use your own skills and try to find the others. Enjoy.



46-1



46-2



46-3

VII Ghosts from Épinal

At my grandparents' house, hanging on the wall of the lavatory were a couple of Épinal printings, old images that peddlers used to sell as entertainment, as one would have some pleasant time looking for the hidden objects in them. These printings were quite popular, and some really tricky as riddles, even though the caption or legend told viewers in florid style what object to look for. Thus, relatives and guests at my grandparents' house could enjoy the riddles while in the lavatory.

This may account for my not being very much surprised, years later, as I read Wilson B. Key's books on subliminal advertising, because the techniques he described reminded me that, in former times, artists from the small French town of Épinal, in the province of Lorraine, did just the same. Only their goals were different. An innocent game then, it is now utilized to penetrate consumers' psyches in order to manipulate their purchasing behavior.

In the following case studies, 47 to 52, from the April 2015 issue of the magazine *Vogue* (American edition), besides a few new cases of sex embeds, I presently extend the scope of the series by providing examples of hidden objects Épinal-wise (Cases 51 and 52).

Before, as you may have heard or read about Wilson Bryan Key in dismissing and disparaging terms, if you have ever read or heard of him at all, it will be useful to quote some respected scholars who acknowledge his contribution. The following lines are taken from the book *Sex in Advertising*, 2003, ed. Tom Reichert and Jacqueline Lambiase. W. B. Key authored a chapter in this book, which is certainly one of his last written contributions (he died in 2008). Interestingly, in the section "About the Contributors", the editors have this to say about him: "He is currently CEO of Mediaprobe Inc., an international consulting and educational firm, and is writing a new book on media analysis." To my knowledge, the book alluded to has never been published; it would be great if the manuscript, even if unfinished, could someday find its way to a publisher.

Quotes:

This book also includes original work by Wilson Key, one of the most prolific (and widely read) writers on the issue of sexual embeds in advertising and media [and, in fact, the one author who discovered and exposed the practice. FB]. Key's writings ... have sold millions and influenced not only a generation, but sparked considerable controversy as well. (p. x)

Possible proof of his influence is brought forth by several surveys. One, cited in Jack Haberstroh's *Ice Cube Sex: The Truth About Subliminal Advertising*, 1994, a book aimed at discrediting Key's findings, shows that 62 percent of Americans agree with the statement that advertisers utilize subliminal techniques – and the more educated one is, the likelier he is to agree. According to another survey, cited in Acland, 2011 (Acland has read Haberstroh and, like Haberstroh, he finds Key's ideas "kooky"), the figure reaches 81 percent, among which 44 percent believe it has some effect on purchasing behavior. All in all, however widespread Key's influence might have been, academic and other research and writing on the matter remains strikingly shy, if not nonexistent if one looks for books that support the idea and carry on with the work on that direction.

Although sex in advertising is a controversial topic in and of itself, nothing in this area raises more debate than the supposed use of sexual embeds. Often referred to as subliminal advertising, sexual embeds are defined as referents or forms of sexual representation designed to be perceived subconsciously. Common types of embeds include: the word sex; objects that are shaped or positioned like genitalia and sexual acts; and small, hidden images of naked people, body parts, and genitalia. Sexual embeds are integrated into images by ad creators and are intended to go undetected by those viewing the ad. ... Controversy pertains to the existence and supposed effects of sexual embeds. (p. 25)

Have you heard of the controversy? If yes, was it recently? Do you think the issue is being duly debated in the public sphere? Do you know of public personalities expressing themselves on the issue?

As embeds trigger unconscious recognition, they stimulate sexual arousal and motivation. Ultimately, observers are motivated toward goal-directed behavior (e.g. movement toward the stimulus). When embeds are consciously detected their power diminishes because viewers' defense mechanisms are stimulated. (p. 27)

Many researchers and advertising professionals consider embeds to be a hoax because controlled research has not substantiated their effects, and they doubt that media professionals intentionally use embeds. ... At this point, interested readers are encouraged to review work in sexual embed research to reach their own conclusions. (p. 27)

May the present series contribute to interested readers' reaching their own conclusions, knowing extra-lab research on sexual embedding in actual media advertisements is scarce.

May 2015

Case 47 Ralph Lauren SEX

The word sex has been embedded on the crocodile skin-looking material of the lady's sandal. The color patterns of said material are frankly irregular, hinting at real animal skin. The S and E show up as black marks, whereas the X appears in a white rhombus next to E. The rhombus is made of four of the units that seem to constitute the hide's scaly texture: these four units' intersection in the white rhombus makes an X. If you're not satisfied with this X, maybe you will agree, then, that the next white stain on the right, a bigger one, shows an X-like shape.

As I said that this time, I would look for more than mere word embeds, I would like to call your attention to the lady's left hand. The middle and third fingers are touching a button from the trousers or shirt (it's not very clear), a button that seems to be the only one of its kind in this particular place. When one remembers that the word "button," in English as well as other European languages such as French (*bouton*), can designate the clitoris, one is led to infer that the image is meant to be subconsciously perceived, and *felt*, as a scene of masturbation.

Alluring women via female onanism makes perfect sense in a context where, according to the *Hite Report on Female Sexuality*, 70 percent of women will never experience orgasm if not by means of masturbation. Of course, the relevant question here is not so much whether said report gives an accurate picture of the reality as whether advertisers tend to opine it does.



47-1



47-2



47-3

Case 48 Gucci SEX

Another sex embed on sandals. The sandals' reptile skin material, by the way, color and all, is the same as in Case 47. It seems that Gucci (Kering group) and Ralph Lauren have the same sorts of ideas about shoes at the same time.



48-1



48-2



48-3

Case 49 Estée Lauder SEX

On this one, I have outlined a banal hairline sex embed on the blonde lady's head. More can be found on both ladies.

This advertisement, however, triggered my interest for another reason. You can't see the blonde lady's hand, so you won't easily admit she's grasping the brunette's buttocks. In fact, her hands may lie slightly below the buttocks, but very close to them, just far enough to defuse any eagerness at indignation. The idea remains the same: between these two women goes some special intimacy that includes erotic body contact. Unless, of course, the brunette is standing between parallel bars or is a legless cripple who has been carried up on an armchair, on which arms the blonde's hands are resting, but I think we can safely discard such interpretations although we'd rather advertisers didn't tap our sex drives with so much compulsion.

© 2011 Estée Lauder Inc.

TRUST YOUR INTUITION

Revitalizing Supreme
The first creme with IntuiGen Technology™

Your intuition. It's always right. Just like this breakthrough multi-action creme that knows precisely what your skin needs. Helps trigger multiple anti-aging effects. Instantly, skin feels smoother, looks clearer, more radiant—revitalized. In just 4 weeks, 92% of women showed significantly firmer skin. Whatever your age, we think you'll love it.

NEW MASK

ESTÉE LAUDER
Revitalizing Supreme
Daily Anti-Aging Cream
with IntuiGen Technology™
and Caviar Complex

ESTÉE LAUDER
Revitalizing Supreme
Daily Anti-Aging Cream
with IntuiGen Technology™
and Caviar Complex

ESTÉE LAUDER

49-1



49-2



49-3

Case 50 Burberry SEX

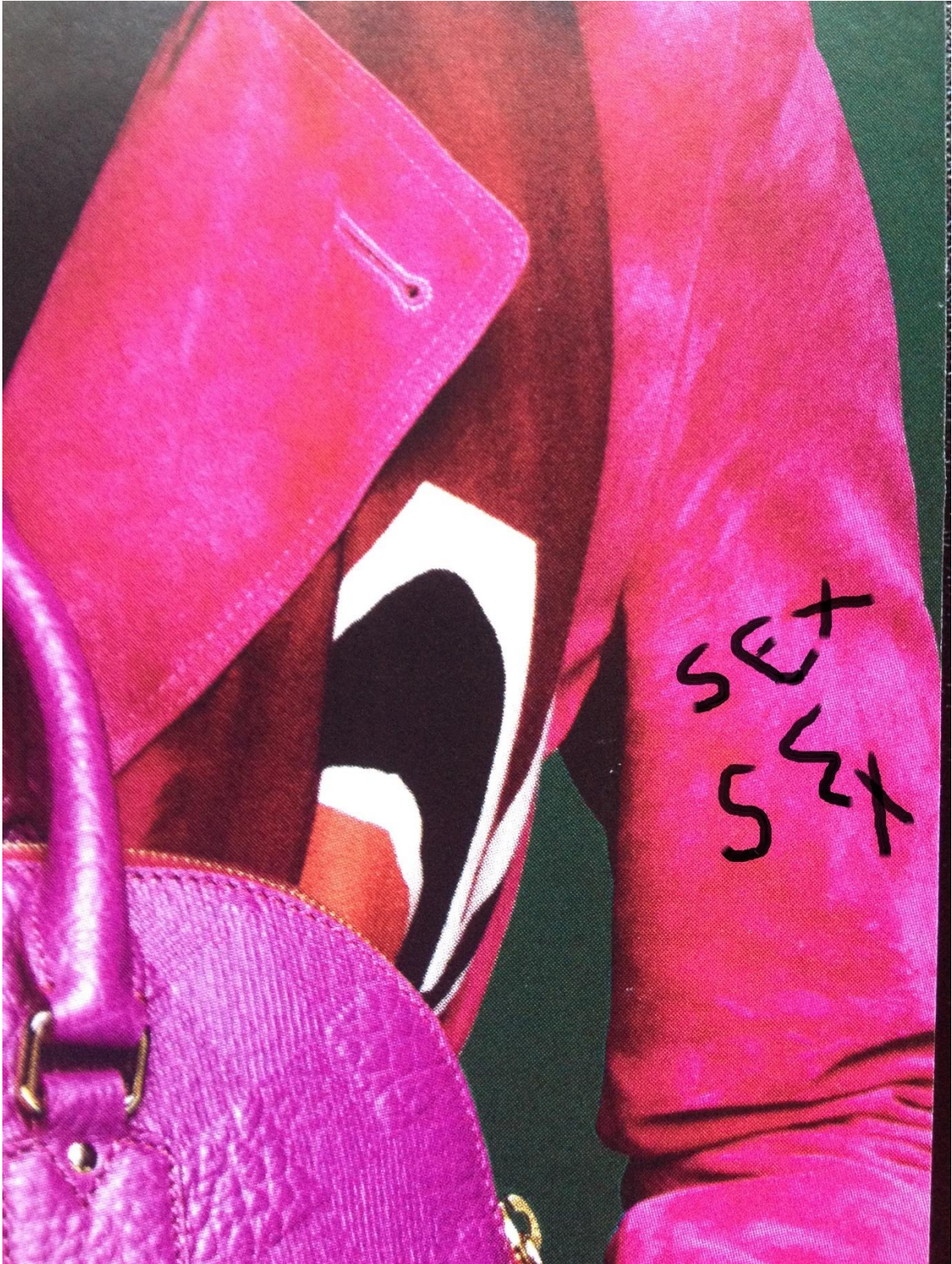
We have already seen in this series two ads from the same Burberry campaign, involving models Naomi Campbell and Jourdan Dunn (Cases 17 and 26). However, contrary to both previous ones, on this ad we can see their uncovered legs. What will we see next? This campaign is a million-dollar striptease. (The advertisers responsible for this campaign might expostulate that they have not launched the different ads in such striptease arrangement, but all more or less together. If this is true, it still allows that a consequent number of people will be exposed to the campaign in the same sequence as has been the case for me.)



50-1



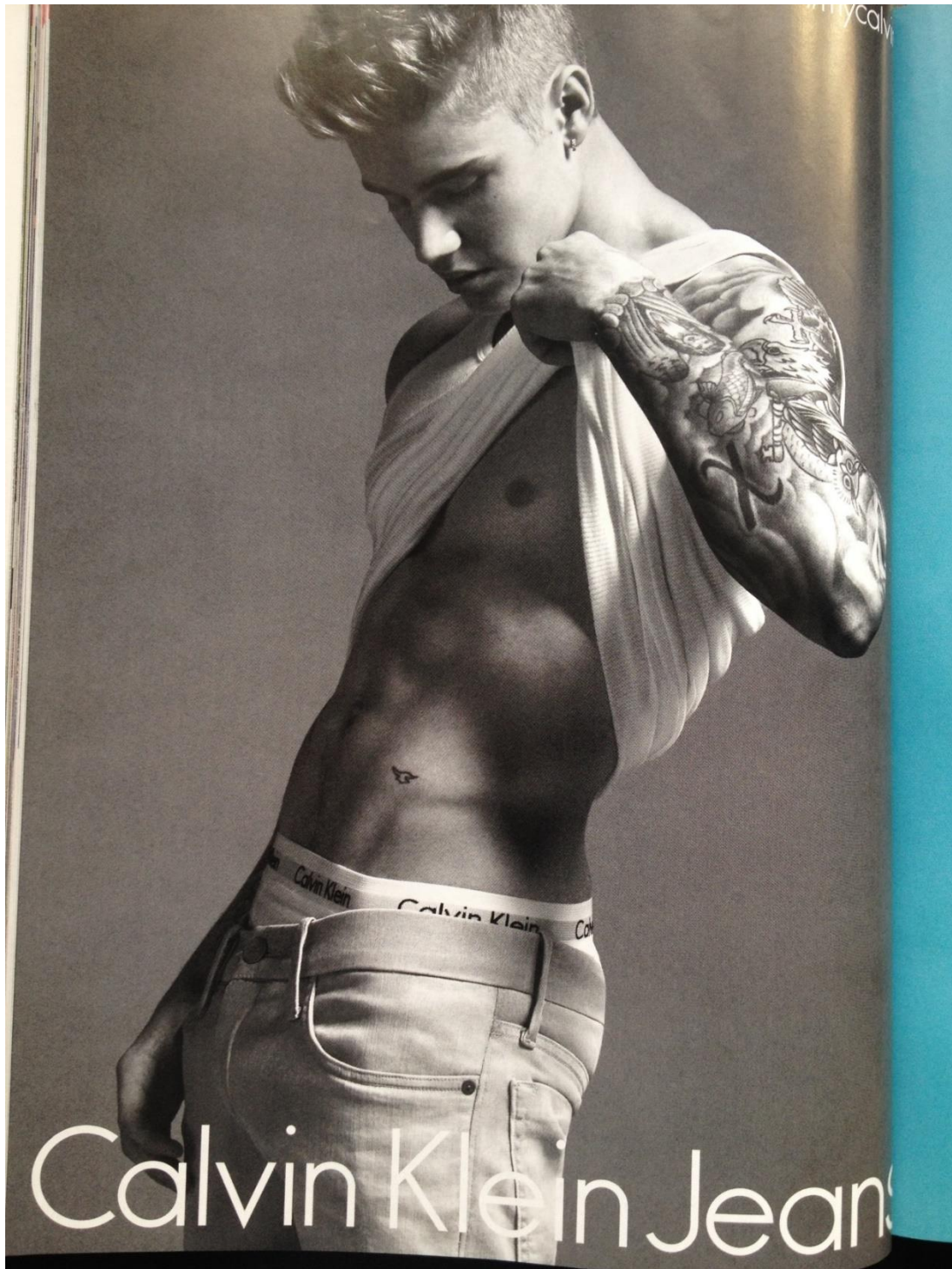
50-2

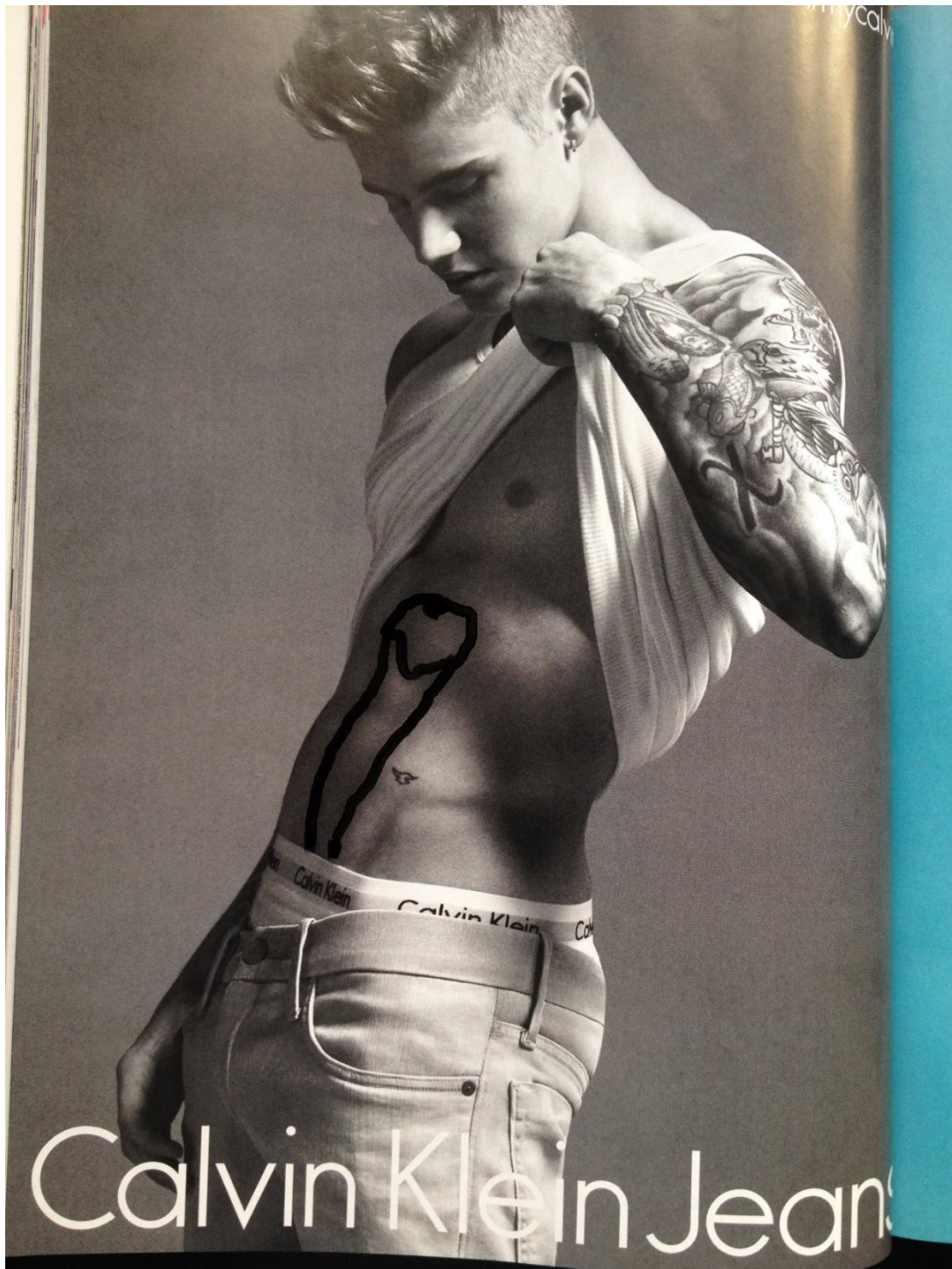


50-3

Case 51 Calvin Klein SEX

We arrive at Épinal, Lorraine. For Calvin Klein Jeans, the pop singer Justin Bieber is exhibiting his abdominal muscles. In the business jargon we call that a *beefcake* image: an athletic, scantily clad man. He seems to be admiring his abdominals. Is he? Are you? I guess the huge penis embedded on his abdomen will not leave you indifferent either; you might even dream about it afterwards (Poetzl effect), unless, maybe, I show it to you. (The exact same kind of embed is described in Wilson Key's book *The Age of Manipulation*.)





Case 52 Cadillac CHILD PORN

Now we go where Épinal artists of old would never have dreamt of. In that New Épinal, there is no limit to the wildest fantasies.

This is an advertisement for Cadillac, a General Motors marque. It extends on six pages, three times two, of which I bring forth nb 1 & 2 (picture with legend Case 52) and 5 & 6 (picture with legend 52-4). (Pages 3 & 4 are just blah blah that no one reads: it isn't even technical information, but pseudo-philosophy in aphorisms: "It is not the critic who counts etc." This sentence, the first one in the blah blah, intended at most to be read cursorily, perceived but not processed, could actually be construed to effect a subliminal injunction to relinquish critical thinking).

The two pictures distinguish themselves from all other ads on this *Vogue* issue by their realistic depiction of our urban world and life. Instead of garish, gay dresses, people wear dark, dull clothes, their faces are worn and concerned. It should serve as a reminder, by the way: Why do you buy bright dresses when you know you cannot put them on because you would be regarded like an alien from Mars, would make yourself too conspicuous and thus the target of comments? Anyway, *this* is the real word, from which Cadillac owners withdraw.

To make it more nightmarish, the graphic designer has embedded hidden objects in the pictures. Remember, most people take pains to avoid looking at advertisements, so advertisers must find a way to attract people's attention in spite of their reluctance and avoidance. One way to do it is to wave hello to the reptilian brain (limbic system), that part of the brain that is permanently scanning its environment, having done the same ever since it has been the survival tool of an ancient primate lurking in primeval wilderness in quest for food and fear of deadly attacks. The reptilian brain will perceive the embeds without your knowing it. Once perceived by the limbic system and thus stored inside the *implicit memory* system, hidden embeds can tell their little stories undisturbed to our drives and motivations. Expectations with respect to ads, as vapid and insignificant material, in a word as *noise*, will contribute to prevent perceptions of embeds from accessing consciousness. So you won't see the ghoulish faces and zoomorphic demons embedded by mercenary artists in the thousands of commercial messages to which you are exposed on a daily basis.

On picture 52-3, I have outlined a few SEXEs, but also an eerie face staring at you from a waft of fog, and an awe-inspiring cow-like, bosomy goddess blowing smoke from her nostrils. My outlining is not adequately conveying the actual eeriness of the former face and stare, I find, but my artistic drawing skills haven't been much exercised as of late.

With respect to picture 52-6, I must ask you to be prepared to anything. The sex embed on the greyish air is nothing. On the left-hand side, between the two realistic-looking, middle-class, dark-clad wretches on foot, one sees a pole, maybe a streetlamp. It is given a prominent position in the picture. Not only that, but it also displays a large number of confused black and white forms. These are the forms to which I would like to draw your attention, because it is there the graphic designer has embedded a variety of meaningful images.

At the bottom, two faces are smooching, a man on the left, a woman on the right. The woman has long hair. The man is middle-aged at least, given the baldness on the top of his head.

From the bottom go directly to the top. There I have outlined two ghostly faces. The face on the left is a skull. That on its right is some demon-like fiend.

Below these haunting faces, something very nasty is going on. A young girl is forced to perform a fellatio. The physiognomy of the face, as well as its dimension compared to the penis, indicate a child, unmistakably. This is subliminal child pornography!

Should be enough for the present. Some of you will react like: “You want to make us see what you yourself are projecting on the picture, but I won’t.” To those I would like to remind Épinal printings. You won’t see the hidden object in the printing unless you look for it. But it is there. Someone has put it there, not my or your imagination. The trick has been known for a long time.



52-1



52-2



52-3

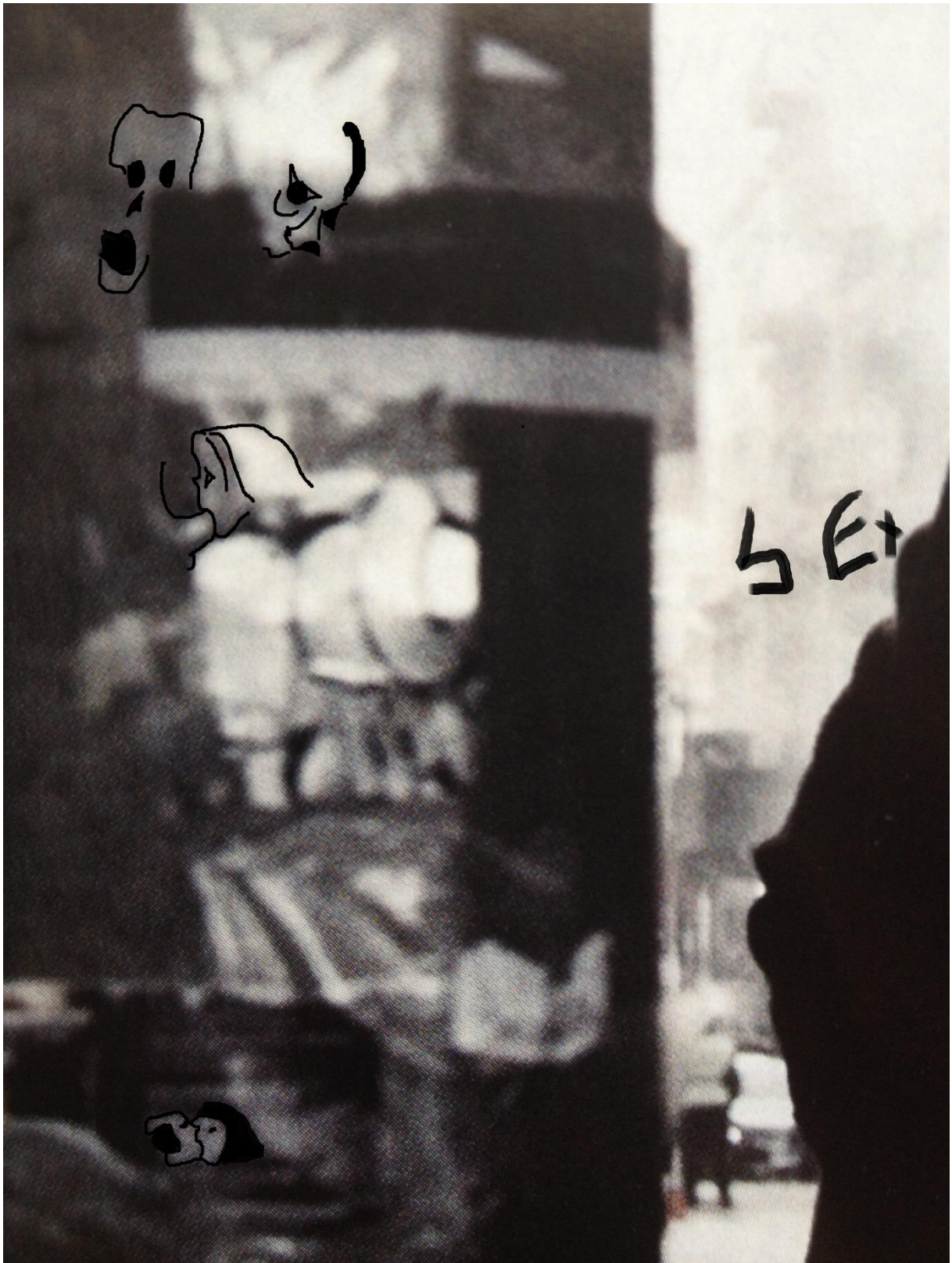
*



52-4



52-4



52-5

VIII

Figaro Without Beaumarchais

Cases 53-65 are taken from the French *Le Figaro Magazine* dated May 22-23, 2015, (Cases 53-58) and *Le Figaro Madame* that goes with it (59-64). The last one (Case 65) appeared in *Vogue*, Italian edition, May 2015.

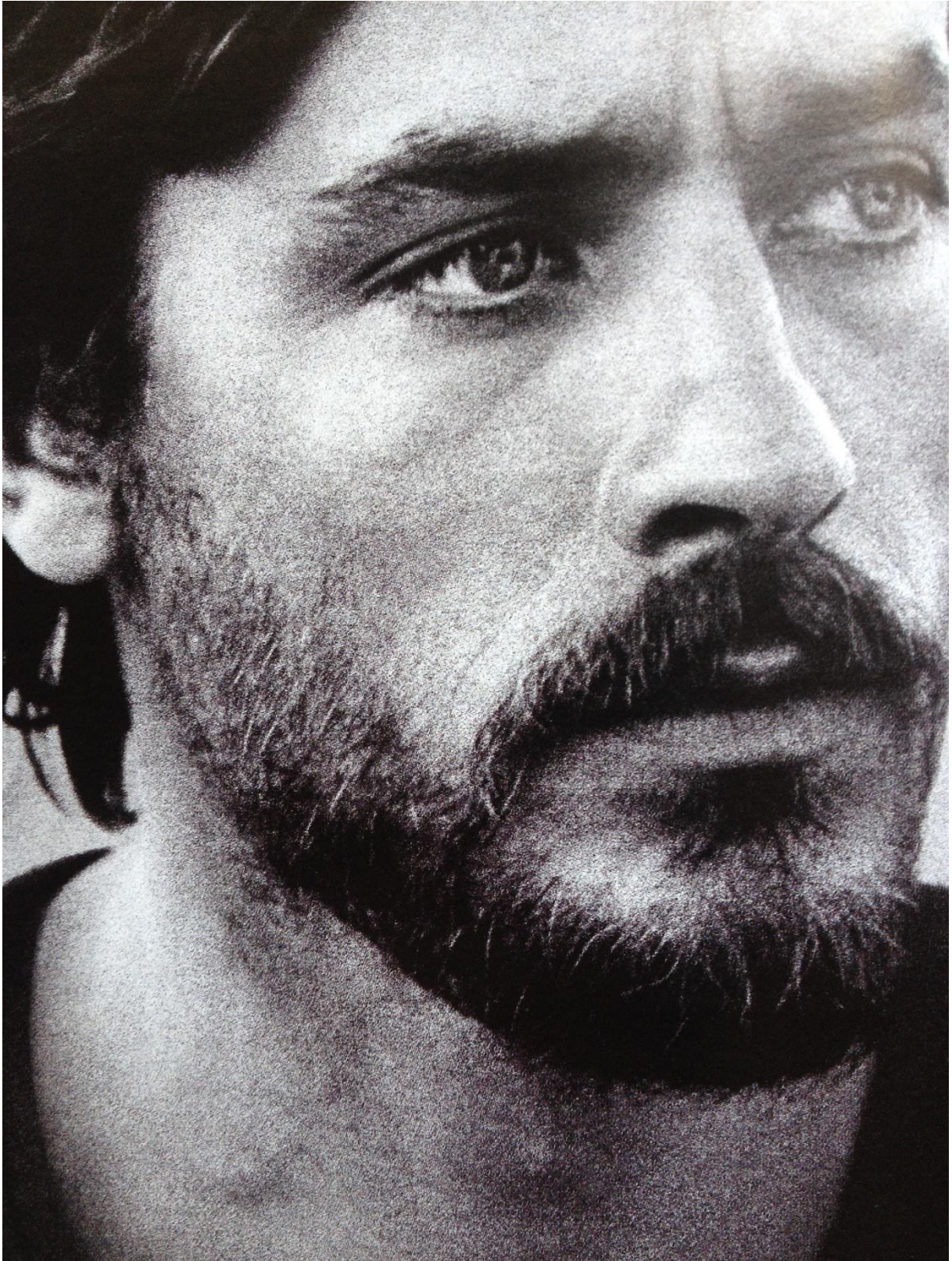
June 2015

Case 53 Dior SEX

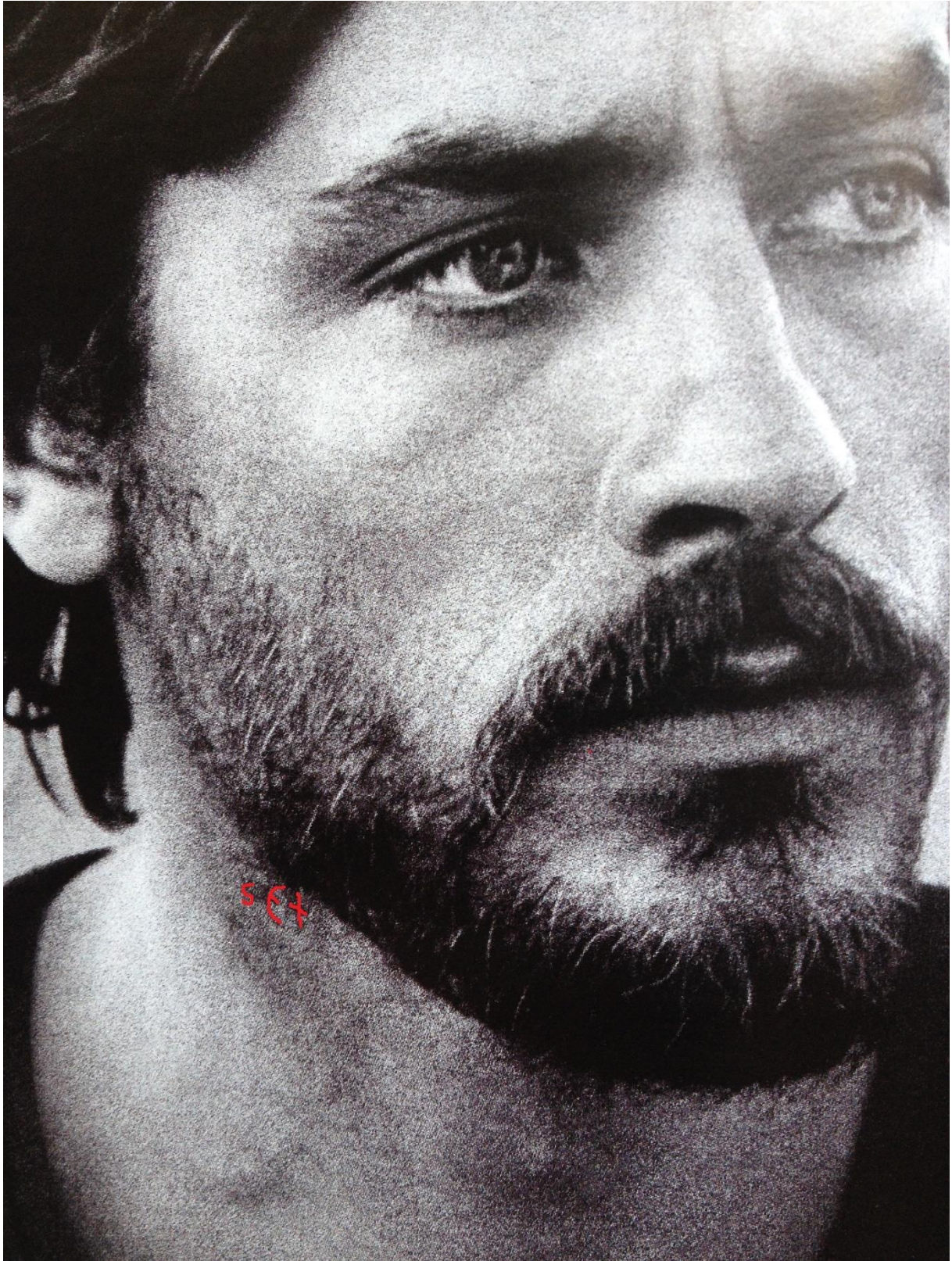
A sex embed on French actor Alain Delon when young.



53-1



53-2



53-3

Case 54 Google SEX

Google ordered an advertising campaign explaining that the company supports non-profit organizations. The present ad deals with a French organization whose purpose, as one reads, is to “teach the young good reflexes on the Web,” whatever that means. We are shown a picture where the responsible of that organization, “Thomas” (or rather a model), meets some kids in a classroom.

The kids’ attention seems to focus on one of them outside the photograph, and another kid of whom the viewer only sees the back and who wears a salmon-colored jersey is pointing at the former. I can’t say for sure whether the latter is a boy or a girl; neither the hairdo nor the clothing allows us to draw a four-square conclusion. The other kids look either at him/her, or at what or whom he/she is pointing to.

Thomas, on the other hand, the responsible of the Google-sponsored organization, looks at no particular place on the picture. He might be staring at some spot beyond the depicted scene, but he rather looks like someone who is watching nothing in particular. His smile is ecstatic; he just seems to be enjoying what’s going on and enjoying it intensely.

Now, you may not have noticed it but the head of the boy/girl with the salmon jersey is between Thomas’s legs, at pelvis level. At this stage, ask yourself a question: Is this by accident? Some of you, perhaps most of you would not have noticed this incongruous, even improper perspective had I not pointed to it (in the same way that it took me some time to see it, even though I was searching for tricks from the start). The conscious brain, automatically adjusting the overall picture according to perspective laws, overlooks the incongruity. However, on the subconscious level, the superimposition of the child’s head on the man’s genitals will have been recorded. The professional photographer, the art director of the advertising agency responsible for the ad, any person involved and having expertise in graphic techniques should have noticed that the perspective is not right, in fact they could not fail to notice it, and they would have modified it were their intention not to have it that way, but in fact they wanted your lizard brain to record a fellatio between a child and an adult, and they engineered the ad to that end.

“Nous avons appris à 4,5 millions de jeunes à surfer responsable.”
Thomas, Calysto

← HE LIKES IT

Calysto, association pour l'éducation digitale en France.
Thomas a créé son association pour enseigner aux jeunes les bons réflexes sur Internet. Depuis 10 ans, grâce au soutien de Google, son équipe rencontre chaque année les élèves de plus de 2 000 établissements scolaires.

Google aide les associations françaises. Pour promouvoir leurs projets, Google leur a offert plus de 35 millions d'euros de publicité en ligne.
Vous aussi, témoignez et devenez l'un des visages de la campagne #moteurdereussites*

Google

Moteur de Réussites Françaises

GOOGLE FRANCE SARL, 8 rue de Londres, 75203 Paris, RCS Paris 483 061 841, Capital 7 500€ © Google Inc. 2012. Tous droits réservés.

*Conditions de participation et informations complémentaires disponibles sur www.moteurdereussites.fr

Case 55 Stihl SEX

As in Case 54, an ecstatic man again. The copy reads “Do not let nature overshadow you.” It advertises garden machinery and equipment such as hedge trimmers. The picture shows a shadowy garden (where Stihl equipment has not been used) and a man having the intention to make a barbecue. He has placed the grill on the one spot where daylight is available and is intensely enjoying the rare particles of sunlight falling in his garden, as it seems. Why he should be delighted at all is an enigma, since the copy’s message is that the barbecue is doomed for failure as no one can enjoy an outdoor dinner in such gloom. However, no matter the logic, showing an ecstatic man tends to make the *mirror cells* in your brain partake in the same feeling. And if you look inside the grill carefully you will find that the man is enjoying more than just rays of light. The ad has been designed to make your subconscious brain record a fellatio.



Ne laissez pas la nature vous faire de l'ombre.

Le soleil revient, et avec lui le soleil. À vous les soirées
été, les barbecues entre amis et les loisirs en plein air.
Ici, la nature elle aussi a profité du soleil et a décidé
de faire de l'ombre. Réagissez avec la gamme Stihl.
FS, débroussailluses, souffleurs et tronçonneuses
sont à faire toute la lumière sur votre jardin.
Et des conseils pour votre jardin sur l'application **Stihl+**



www.stihl.fr

Application **Stihl+**
Disponible sur Google Play

La performance est notre exigence **STIHL**

55-1



55-2



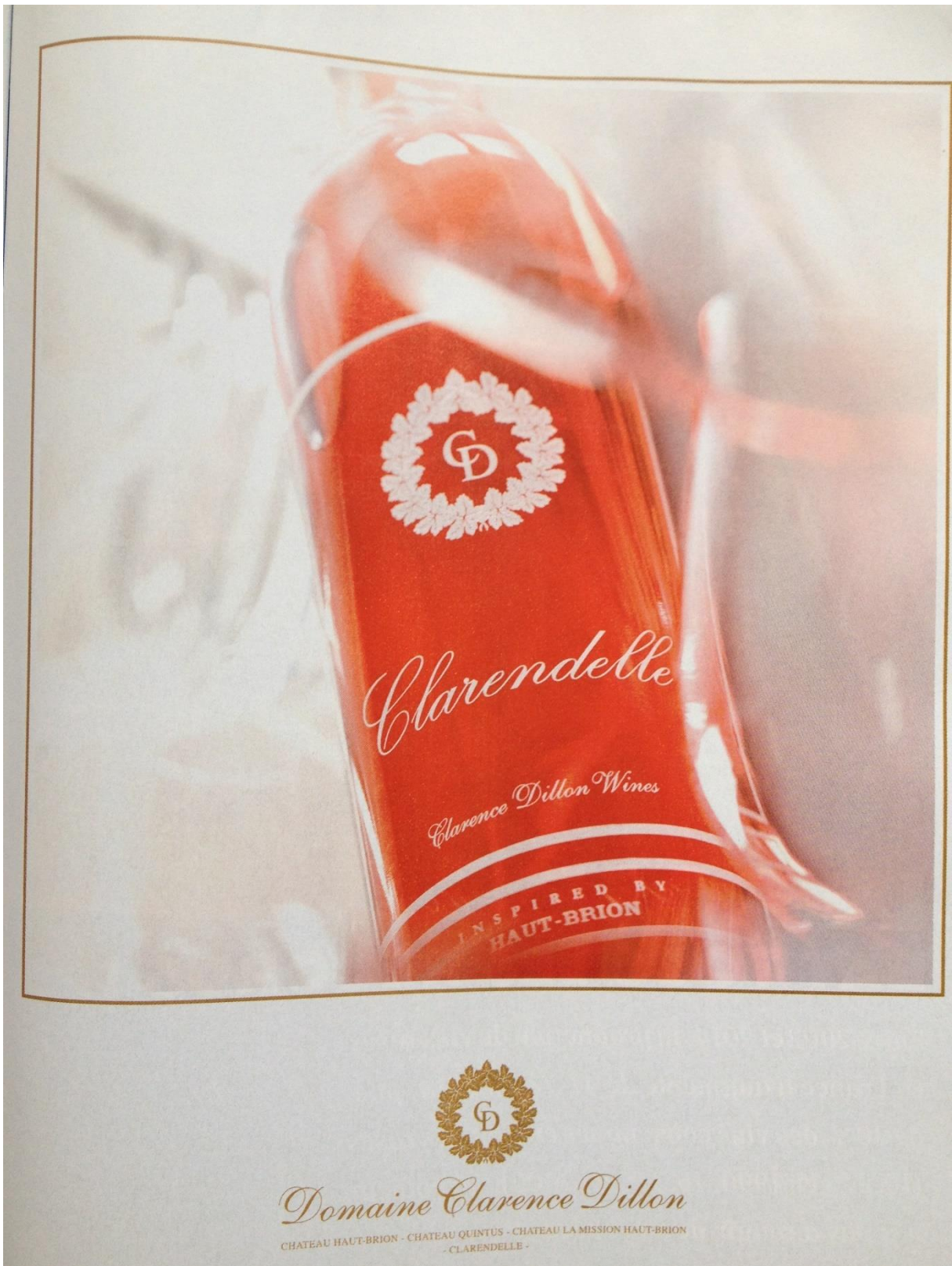
55-3

*

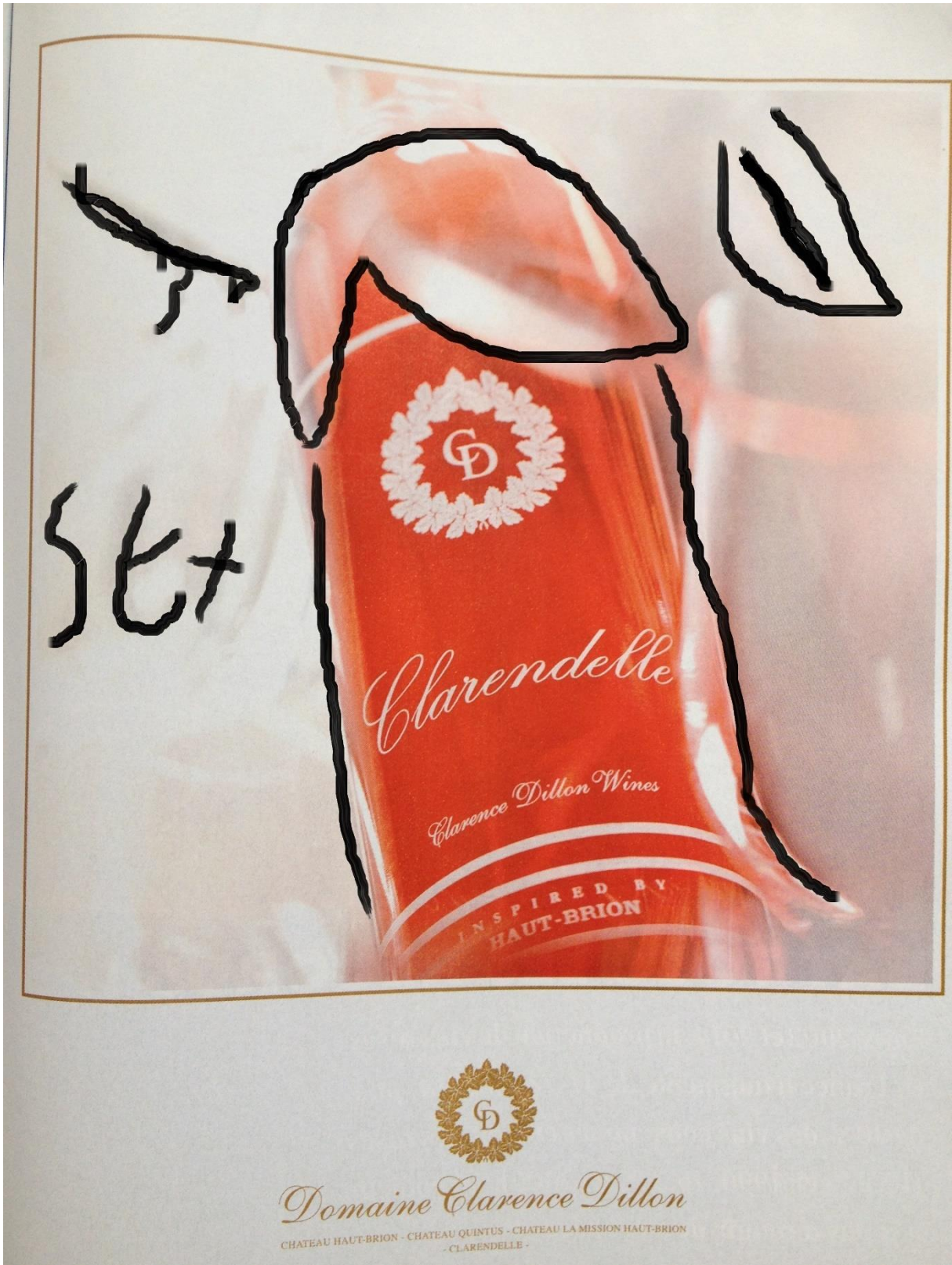
Case 56 Domaine Clarence Dillon SEX

In this issue of *Le Figaro Magazine* there follow a few ads for wines, among several pages of articles (so-called informative content) on the wine business. Let's begin with this masterpiece (tongue in cheek). The bottle of rosé is an unmistakable penis. The glans is clearly outlined and, true to anatomy, it is particularly sheeny: light reflections of the bottle glass are more numerous and glaring on this part. Furthermore, the graphic designer has succeeded in giving the straight bottle a somewhat curvy shape reminiscent of the penis's curvature.

A scissors-like image gliding above the penis evokes castration fear. On the left side of the penis, at the glans's level, is a dripping slit. This can either be a wound inflicted by the scissors, alluding to castration having been carried out, or a female vulva. On the right side is another slit, surrounded by swollen labia. I also outlined a sex embed.



56-1



56-2

Case 57 Le Clos Peyrassol SEX

Another wine advertisement. Among the bowl's reflections, I outlined a sex embed, a vagina slit that is at the same time a penis thanks to two ice cubes providing the testes, and, on the right-hand side of the bowl, a fellatio being performed. The fingers of the fellatio performer (looking toward the right) are apparent, she (he?) has her hand clenched on something that she's bringing to her mouth.

LE CLOS
PEYRASSOL

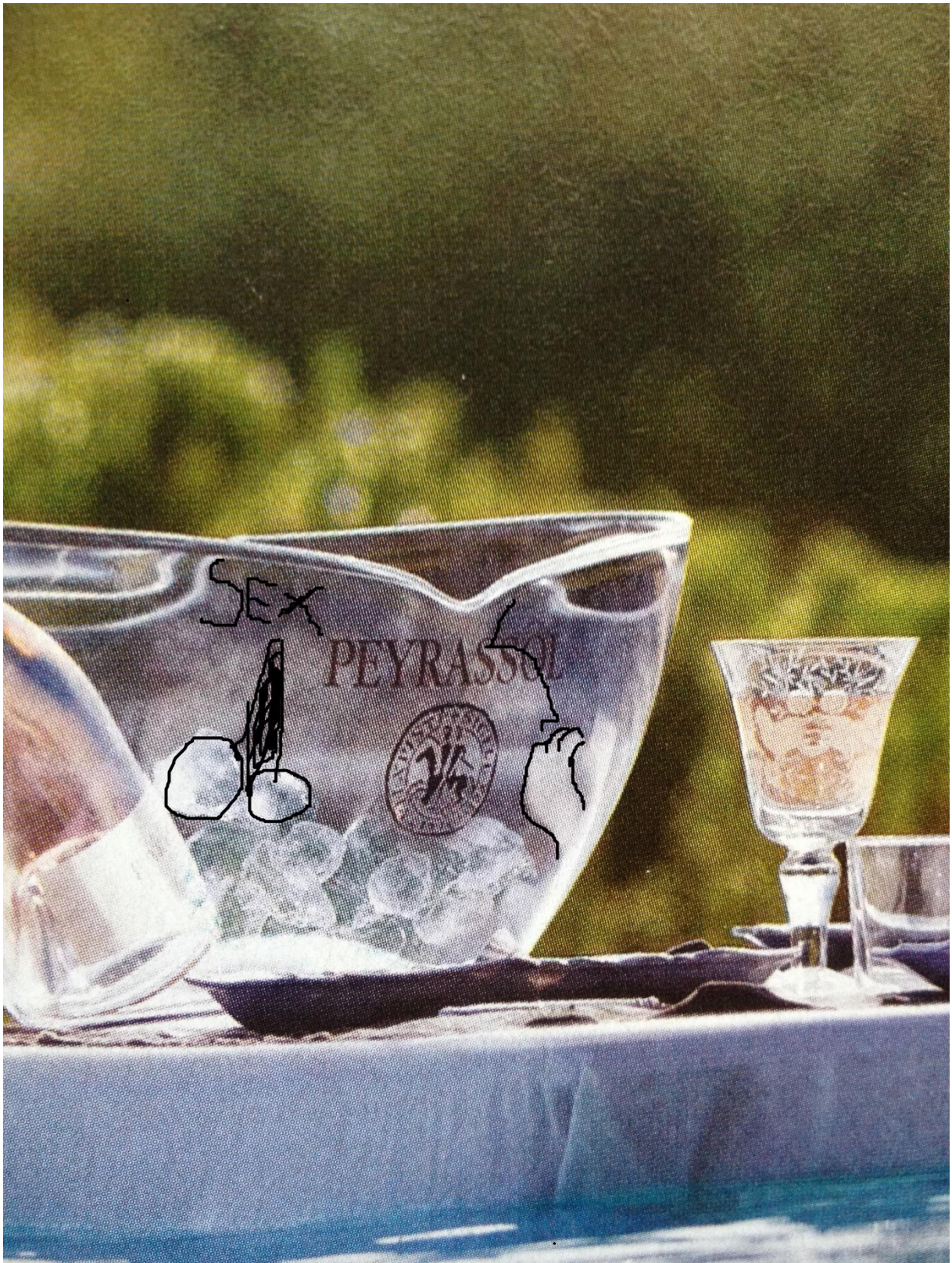
CUVÉE D'EXCEPTION



57-1



57-2



57-3

*

Case 58 Duval Leroy SEX

This advertisement can be found in both *Le Figaro Magazine* and *Le Figaro Madame*. The bottle of champagne wine is surrounded by whitish flower petals. Faces have been drawn among the petals, kissing and licking the penis-like bottle. On the lower side, the grotesque face expresses wonder.

LEROY

FINESSE  ABSOLUE

Fleur de Champagne
BRUT 1^{ER} CRU

Un grand Champagne aérien, ses fameux chardonnays apportent fraîcheur et minéralité, ses savoureux pinots noirs offrent générosité et rondeur.

Idéal à l'apéritif, il sera l'accord parfait de tout un repas.

THE WORLD OF FINE WINE
 18/20

FINESSE  ABSOLUE

CHAMPAGNE
 DEPUIS 1859
DUVAL-LEROY
Fleur de Champagne
PREMIER CRU
 PRODUIT DE FRANCE
BRANDY PAR DUVAL-LEROY BRUT VERVEUR FRANCE

MAISON FAMILIALE ET INDÉPENDANTE

CHAMPAGNE  **DUVAL-LEROY**
 DEPUIS 1859

BOISSON AÉRIÉE À CONSOMMER AVEC MODÉRATION

58-1

DUVAL-LEROY

FINESSE  ABSOLUE

Fleur de Champagne

BRUT 1^{ER} CRU

Un grand Champagne aérien, ses fameux chardonnays apportent fraîcheur et minéralité, ses savoureux pinots noirs offrent générosité et rondeur.

Idéal à l'apéritif, il sera l'accord parfait de tout un repas.

THE WORLD OF FINE WINE
18/20

FINESSE  ABSOLUE

CHAMPAGNE
DEPUIS 1859
DUVAL-LEROY
Fleur de Champagne
PREMIER CRU
PRODUIT DE FRANCE
MAISON FAMILIALE ET INDÉPENDANTE

MAISON FAMILIALE ET INDÉPENDANTE

CHAMPAGNE

DEPUIS 1859

DUVAL-LEROY

CONSUMER AVEC MODERATION

58-2

Case 59 Dior Joaillerie SEX

When you open this issue of *Le Figaro Madame*, you find the present two-page advertisement for jewelry. The advertised jewels represent amethyst and pink quartz roses with gold and diamond bees. But there is more. First, I don't know which gender is the target here, man or woman; probably both are intended, women who buy jewels for themselves and men who buy jewels as gifts. I tend to opine, however, that men make gifts according to their partner's preferences, and so would buy a Dior jewel if the lady expressed some appreciation of the brand after being exposed to such ads.

The zoomed-on jewel of the left page has been embedded with weird figures and shapes as light reflections. On the lower side (pictures 59-2 and 59-3) a grotesque man's face has been drawn with the tongue out and erect. The man is licking what looks like a bum. This could be a depiction of metaphoric bum licking or a sexual act.

On the upper side (pictures 59-4 and 59-5) something awful is going on. I can see a woman's face, crimson-colored (in contrast to the amethyst-colored surrounding), in profile, oriented upwards. One eye, as well as nose and mouth are visible and distinct, however anamorphic the image. I have outlined the contour only, more like a circle around the face, because I couldn't convey with the help of a computer mouse the expression of this anamorphized visage. It is suffering and it could be pleasure as well, the sort of pleasure which perverts look for, as encapsulated in the words "it hurts so good." And I figure the agent of this unbearable pleasure would be the dog-like beast whose eerie face stands just behind the woman's face, and which features I have been able to outline (although in a comic-like fashion). The woman is being mounted by a big dog! Awful, but consistent with W. B. Key's findings in the seventies and eighties. Nothing has changed, only the amount of exposure to advertising has increased 900-fold.



59-1



59-2



59-3



59-4



59-5

Case 60 Céline SEX

Another sex embed for good measure.



60-1



60-2

Case 61 Chopard SEX

The lady is supposedly performing some sort of dance. What dance? The position of her hands reminds one of oriental dances (Siamese, Balinese) where hands' gestures are codified and have symbolic meanings. These oriental dances originated in sacred dances, especially ancient Hindu dances, performed by sacred prostitutes such as devadasi (slave girls of the gods).

Look carefully at the left hand. The index and middle fingers are disposed in the characteristic way a woman spreads her genital labia, and the hand itself is more or less at genitals' level. The ad hints, not very subtly, at female exhibitionism and masturbation. As I explained on Case 47, this makes perfect sense, given the figures in Hite Report: 70 percent of women won't experience orgasm if not by ways of masturbation. More conservative figures still make for one third of women in that situation. It is obvious that advertisers will be intent on trying to associate the products they advertise with sexual climax and thus to evoke the feelings felt during masturbation.

The woman on this ad is sternly dressed, rather like a man, so the creature here dancing is a hermaphrodite, which, again, speaks deeply to the onanistic woman's psyche, because the hermaphrodite is complete per se, whereas gendered beings in order to achieve completeness must look for their other halves, according to the Platonic myth propounded in the *Symposium*.

A woman with voluminous, windswept blonde hair is captured mid-air, wearing a dark navy blue suit. She is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. Her hands are clasped in front of her, and she is wearing a Chopard watch on her left wrist. To her right, a large, detailed image of a Chopard Happy Sport watch is shown. The watch has a silver-tone metal link bracelet, a white dial with Roman numerals, and a date window at the 6 o'clock position. The Chopard logo is visible on the dial.

HAPPY SPORT

Chopard

BOUTIQUES CHOPARD:
PARIS 1 Place Vendôme - Printemps Carrousel du Louvre
Printemps du Luxe - Galeries Lafayette - 72 Faubourg Saint Honoré
CANNES - LYON - MONTE CARLO

Case 62 Dinh Van SEX

The bracelet, attaching both wrists, makes manacles: bondage. Moreover, the woman is performing a fellatio on a huge, flaccid penis, like that of a horse. The left hand holds the glans, the right hand caresses the testes. All this is subliminal pornography. I haven't drawn the penis because it would allow pornographers to strike my blog down claiming this is pornography... However, I think I made the point clear.

Also, please note that all such ads having not a single word of copy are said to be (including by the United States Supreme Court) commercial *information*. This is the way large companies *inform* us.



Case 63 Lierac SEX

The red splash of lipstick behind the stick evokes female genitals. The lady is looking upward, smiling, presumably to a lover. We can see her left shoulder, but we do not see the arm, so the arm must be tied to her back. She is bound.

Tapping into deviant practices makes perfect sense, again, due to the figures given on Case 61. Women who don't experience climax in their sexual life are bound to fantasizing a lot more than men and are likely to be asking themselves if such or such practice would not bring about the fulfillment they long for.

RIDES - FERMETÉ - ÉCLAT
**MAGNIFICENCE
CRÈME ROUGE**
ANTI-ÂGE EMBELLISSEUR RETEXTURISANT

HYBRIDATION
SYNÈRGE
DU MEILLEUR
DES SCIENCES
ET DE LA NATURE



INNOVATION. Enrichie en pigments minéraux, la texture inédite de la Crème Rouge lisse instantanément la peau et rehausse visiblement le teint. Le complexe D-Glyox - brevet déposé - lutte contre la glycoxydation, une altération des protéines fondamentales qui accélère le vieillissement cutané. Jour après jour, les rides sont réduites et la texture de peau est corrigée dans toutes ses dimensions : grain de peau lissé, peau éclatante, peau plus ferme.

Irrésistible. En un clin d'oeil
et pour longtemps

NOUVEAU



LA BEAUTÉ N'A PAS D'ÂGE
LIERAC
PARIS

Case 64

From one of the numerous fashion pages that are a staple of ladies' magazines, on this depiction, again, of female masturbation, the right hand's middle finger is conspicuous and points toward the vagina. If you don't see that it is masturbation, there's nothing I can say.



*

Case 65 Valentino Garavani SEX

Tapping into weird fantasies, masochism, and fear of aggression, this ad depicts a woman's body lying on the ground. The man has taken her handbag: it must be hers because it matches her boots. So, if I understand well, the man has beaten the girl down while snatching her handbag and she's now lying on the pavement. The man's tattoo somehow reinforces this interpretation. Just below the benevolent lion's head, we can see a woman, on the left, behind which, a bit blurred, are drawn two hoodies with evil stares and angry faces, one clenching his fist.

If the ad is not telling an aggression story, please explain what is going on. Feel free to correct me and bring the right interpretation of this piece of *commercial information*, which does not have a single word of copy besides the name of the brand and the name of the product.



65-1



65-2

Subliminal Junk IX

In order to present a few more cases of subliminal techniques used besides the pervasive sex embeds, in print advertising, I have selected other adverts from the same couple of magazines I have already been using so far, that is from the months of March, April, and May 2015. The following titles, all women's magazines, will provide the new cases: namely, the French magazine *Elle* from March 20 (Cases 66-7); *Cosmopolitan* UK Edition from May (68-9); *Vogue* from April (70-1); and the French magazine *Le Figaro Madame* from May 22 (Case 72).

Altogether, from no more than a dozen issues of various magazines and weekly newspapers on a three-month period, I have extracted over 70 ads to present my case on contemporary subliminal techniques, and the number would have been much greater had I only have more time and patience at my disposal. Because subliminals are everywhere. How could it be otherwise? Our social environment has become so saturated with advertising that no attention whatsoever is paid any longer to the huge majority of advertisements, and as a result advertisers must by necessity rely, to achieve any foreseeable impact, on mechanisms aimed at impressing so-called *peripheral attention*, i.e., subconscious mind processes, that is to say to rely on subliminal techniques.

In the subliminal world of the human mind, survival and sexual instincts reign supreme. There are no – how do you call it again? – checks and balances in this realm. Marketers and advertisers know it, and they manipulate these drives in order to channel them into specific consuming behaviors. We live in a society that has accumulated mountains of data from a hundred years of *scientific management and scientific marketing*, i.e., the experimental method applied to human behavior on the workplace and the marketplace. Scientific management has put an end to anticapitalistic, revolutionary movements; scientific marketing has been able to automatize, so to speak, consumption. It's Kenneth Galbraith's "inverted sequence" running at full speed. This accumulated knowledge remains in large part proprietary, belonging to the corporations that have financed the research from which they now derive huge benefits. With time, some of the results trickle down in the public domain, largely, however, via specialized books from insiders, at a pace dictated by the proprietors themselves. Employees from marketing departments as well as advertising agencies are contractually committed not to disclose the content of their activities. However, it is not even likely that much concern would be stirred among the public, were unrestricted access to these proprietary data provided all of a sudden. As a matter of fact, the existence of alpha waves, for instance, is well known, as is the fact that they are induced in the brain by watching television, along with a hypnoid state, and increased suggestibility as a consequence; what concern does it raise? People, it seems, fail to understand what this implies.

September 2015

Case 66 Armani SEX

This advert is the same as in Case 15. It's a two-page ad, one page being presented on Case 15 (a sex embed among the reflections of the sunglasses), the other, here, showing what seems to be the same woman, body complete down to the knees (as opposed to the head only being pictured on the opposite page), without sunglasses, on a blue sky, blue sea background. In Case 15, the model has her shoulders covered; here, the model's shoulders are uncovered. Are there two different persons, and are our brains invited to imagine some story taking place before our eyes, speculating, unbeknownst to our consciousness, on such slight, even hard-to-notice discrepancies?

On the page here shown, the model is wearing some blue, satined sackcloth of a sort. There is something odd with her left arm; the shape made by her hand in the pocket looks awkward. Consider it for a moment. The shape looks awkward because it is, in fact, that of a penis. The bulging pocket provides the glans, the arm – her hand being entirely concealed – gives the shaft. Furthermore, the dress folds on the left-hand of the bulging pocket are vaginal folds, the darkened area outline a vaginal slit, so the subliminal penis points to a subliminal vagina. There is, however, a discrepancy between the size of the penis and that of the vagina; the former is too small to be considered a suitable object. This picture is likely to provoke among its viewers, both male and female, unconscious feelings of sexual inadequacy, thus adding to current levels of anxiety and/or frustration. Anxiety is a primary trigger of compulsive buying, and it often seems, when anything goes wrong, that something must be wrong with our sexual life. There is an endless supply of uncertainty in the domain of sex, and with uncertainty goes anxiety.



66-1



66-2

Case 67 Stella McCartney SEX

It's about a nice little shining handbag. So sheeny is the texture of the bag, so starlike its silvery surface, that it works like a mirror, reflecting the world in a myriad of dazzling little beams of opalescent light. So let's take a closer look at these reflections. I have outlined on Picture 67-3 below some interesting drawings. Towards the left, a reclining man's head can be seen. The man is looking with apparent satisfaction at the pair of amazingly nice breasts a woman is proffering him; in all likelihood, she will soon cover his face with them. On the right, another man's face, strangely grinning, as if mesmerized by awe, appears behind a woman's back. As a dark triangle her pubic hair is apparent, as well as the legs and belly.



67-3



67-2



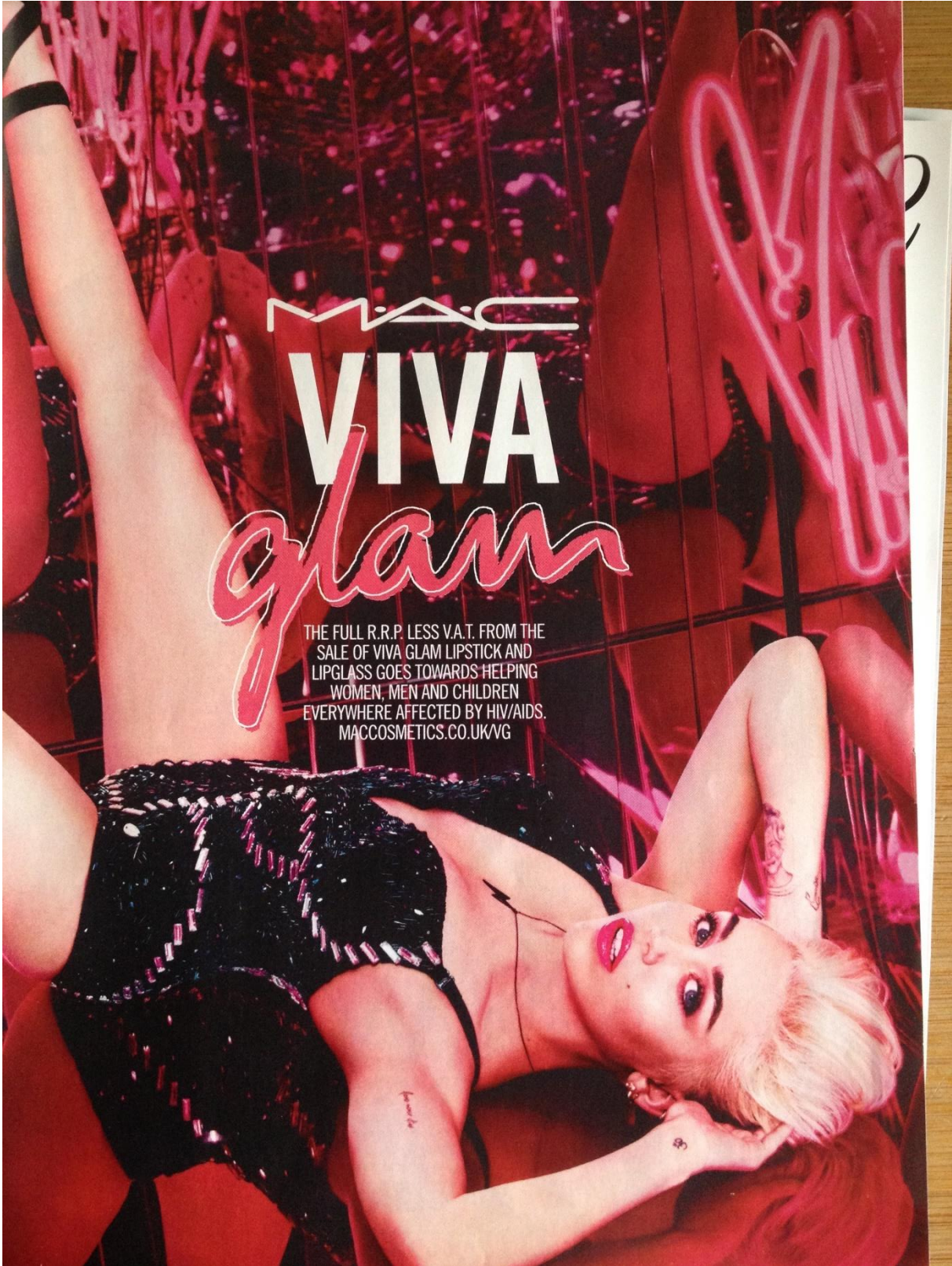
67-3

Case 68 Viva Glam SEX

Viva Glam does not only sell lipstick and other cosmetics, it also makes donations to provide care for people affected by HIV/AIDS. The model represents a strip dancer, maybe a prostitute, in a typical venue for this profession, with mirrors at all angles, crude red lights, assorted with weird-shaped, pink neon tubes, and a glimmering confusion on the dazzling background. It's about sex and death and beauty and money. Look at the right-hand side, among the copse-like neon-tube structure. One can see a penis glans, with deep purple hue and light reflections on its turgescient tissue. The glow of light has been cleverly located to cut a drawn line and thus isolate what is none other than the penis meatus. Furthermore, the neon tubes partially covering the glans, on its left side, represent a pair of scissors. I let you decide what one's subconscious might be feeling after unattended exposure to such subliminal junk.

My first thought was that if a prostitute is represented (it can hardly be denied that the model is intended to represent a prostitute because, as the rumor goes, strip dancers or cabaret dancers – and she is such a dancer, obviously – make extra money from customers by having sex with them), then it must be exciting to (a number of) women to imagine themselves as prostitutes. The subliminal penis and scissors would remain out of this, something besides, for a different kind of women, or at least a distinct trait of character, that of castrating women, which per se does not seem to have a necessary relation to the fantasy of being a prostitute. However, since I published the case, another scenario came to my mind, more coherent, as I will now explain.

The model is represented as a prostitute and intended to be recognized as such by the female reader, not necessarily at conscious level. For many a female reader, now, the prostitute is, subconsciously at least, the enemy, and their reflex will be to bare their claws and show their teeth, most especially as their mind is invited to dwell on HIV/AIDS (remember that is the argument of the ad's copy: Viva Glam funds organizations that take care of people affected by HIV/AIDS). The prostitute is the woman that would bring HIV/AIDS to the female reader's bedroom via her husband. This is the main argument subliminally. If you, female reader, do not take care to keep on appealing sexually to your husband or partner, he will resort to sex workers, and that may result in his and then your contracting a sexually transmitted disease. And if you dare not carry out castration (the subliminal scissors) to protect your health, or even save your life, how do you keep appealing sexually to him? By using Mac Viva Glam lipstick, no doubt.



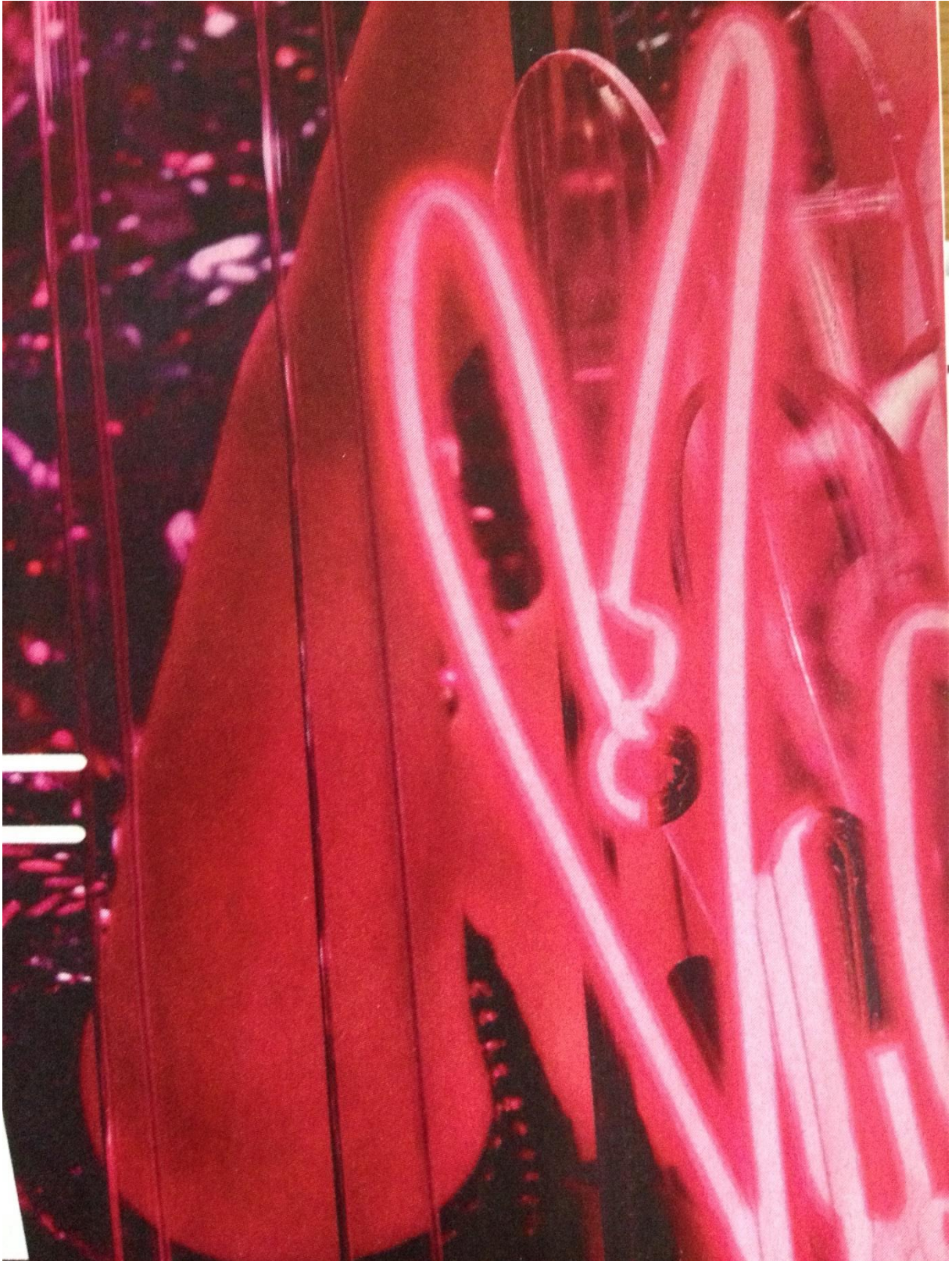
MAC

VIVA

glam

THE FULL R.R.P. LESS V.A.T. FROM THE
SALE OF VIVA GLAM LIPSTICK AND
LIPGLASS GOES TOWARDS HELPING
WOMEN, MEN AND CHILDREN
EVERYWHERE AFFECTED BY HIV/AIDS.
MACCOSMETICS.CO.UK/VG

68-1



68-2



68-3

Case 69 Simply Be... SEX

It says 'Simply Be... You,' so let's take a look at what You is. It strikes one at first glance that You is different from the ladies one usually sees in the pictures of a magazine like *Cosmopolitan*. You, indeed, is overweight. Chubby. You wears blue jeans, which, however widespread in real-life streets and meadows, is frankly unusual on the pages of women's magazines. You has a cheap neo-hippie look about her, hinting at a wish to experience the same sexual liberty as the hippies of old. You sits carelessly and slovenly, like a slattern, wears cheap inconspicuous bracelets (all plastic, I would swear), and her facial features are kind of ordinary and unattractive. What else can I say if not that You, although she looks like you in her ways, is just the kind of person you don't care to be? – Slighted by an ad?

10%
OFF

YOUR FIRST
ORDER PLUS
FREE
DELIVERY*



SimplyBe
...YOU

Find your fashion story at simplybe.co.uk | 0871 984 5835 | shop in-store

#SimplyBe

ORDER UP TO 8PM FOR NEXT DAY DELIVERY!

Case 70 Bottega Veneta SEX

A two-page ad. The right page shows a scantily clad woman and the left one a room of some sort (and what the hell of a room is that? you might ask). The scanty clothing, as well as the woman's attitude, eroticizes the advertisement, so the viewer is invited to look at the room with erotic thoughts (remember the right-hand page is the first to be seen when one is turning pages, and adverts are strategically placed according to that fact). What sort of a room is this, then? A very odd and strange one, indeed. The bedstead is a plain metallic structure, the bed linen is minimal and unadorned, with a blanket that looks unpleasantly coarse. The walls are plain and dark. One could almost feel them oozing with humidity. The wooden door looks ominous. The flower drawn on the cushion is the only element that would inspire some feeling other than utter gloom and dejection, but its presence is a cynical trick, because it cannot counterbalance the global effect of the room (it can only divert your brain from analyzing the picture as it is truly intended). Where are we? It's a dungeon cell where the Inquisition keeps its victims, innocent women alleged to be witches, between interrogations in the torture chamber, or it is a cellar fit out by a sexual predator who abducts his victims and locks them in this place to rape them at his will. Victims are attractive women like the one we see on the opposite page. Sometimes advertising taps on weird, weird fantasies...



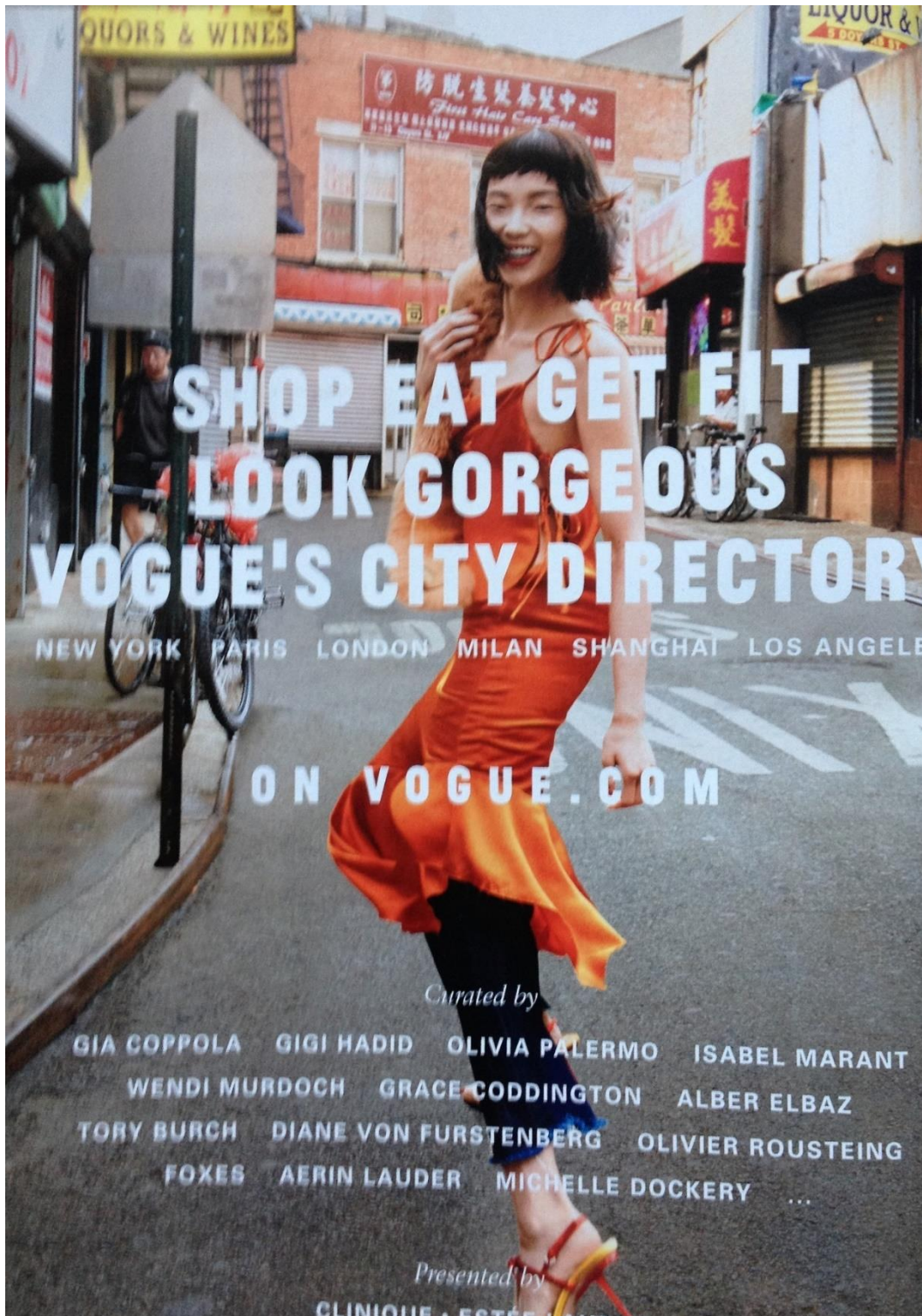
70

Case 71 Vogue SEX

The young Chinese-looking model is depicted looking merrily at you and me, frolicking in a street of some Chinatown, the Chinatown of a city in an English-speaking country because the shop signboards are written both in Chinese and English. Just above the woman's left shoulder, even sticking to it, appears the word "parlor" (not "parlour," so we might as well be in NYC), from a signboard further behind her. We all know the double meaning of the word "parlor," and the woman could be a prostitute from this house. Touching her hair are the words "hair care," but this, certainly, is a mere coincidence. Other signboards, on both sides of her, advertise liquors and wines, a staple good for successful socialites and losers just the same. My attention was drawn on the road writings. These writings, partially concealed from our eyes by the woman's shape, make two lines, and the end letter of each line is S and X respectively (S lying above X). SX is a code name for SEX. It's been a long time since I last went to NYC, and I wasn't really interested in reading the road writings either, but I guess the present writings must be special because, from whatever way you read the line with the X-ending (and the picture leaves one at a loss when trying to figure whether the lines must be read from the viewer's standpoint or from the other side, since the decipherable S, X, I, N are symmetrical), I just can't see what word relevant to street signing the letters NIX, if at the end, or XIN, if at the beginning, can be part of. This is the question I ask to more knowledgeable people. Is it Cantonese in Latin transcript? In case it means nothing and such a word does not exist, the artist has taken very bold a step to confront our lizard brains with an SX compound.

(ii)

In a private correspondence, the researcher in subliminal deception Nathan B. has answered my question about the road signing. The writing says "school xing," although the words, here, are inverted and it reads "xing school" (as "xing" is above "school"). I had never met the word "xing," which means "crossing." I am grateful to Nathan for providing this information.



Case 72 L'Oréal SEX

One acquaintance to whom I showed my research on subliminal advertising discarded it first-hand telling me, as an account for his intention not to pay attention to it, that advertising today was pornographic at the conscious level, so there was no need to look after subconscious tricks since pornography could be made use of openly by advertisers. Of course, he's right to say some ads are openly sexual in content, but his inference is nevertheless incorrect. As I said above, subliminals are aimed at peripheral attention (at the brain of people who won't take a look at the ad – the brain registering it anyway if the ad, no matter how quickly, entered the field of sight) and as such are not treated by the brain in the same way as objects entering conscious attention. Even an openly pornographic advert may be bolstered by subliminal sex embeds. Furthermore, advertisers know they can't play the sex card aboveboard all the time, because it can have adverse effects occasionally, whereas there is no adverse reaction to subliminal sex. Never, as long as it remains subliminal.

Double entendre with words is routine advertising, as even advertisers will admit. If a word has, not as a principal meaning but among its other few, a sexual meaning, you can be sure it has become a catchword. This might be called a subliminal technique, although the double entendre is often recognized by the public, and the idea is therefore to make it look like tongue in cheek – when it would more properly be labeled “in your face.” (It's precisely because of possible adverse reactions to the in-your-face effect that aboveboard obscenity is not more frequent in advertising, all in all; subliminal junk is much safer.)

Let's take this advertisement for L'Oréal as an example. Saving time is in the mind of many consumers, and time-saving devices much sought after. So how do you advertise timesaving? Here the advertisers ask the question “How quick are you?” Need I comment? How quick are you? refers, tongue in cheek or in-your-face-wise, as you choose to call it, to female orgasm. How quick do you orgasm? is the question, and, if you take the time to analyze it, it means, given the well-known and established time discrepancy between male and female orgasms generally speaking: *How likely* are you to orgasm? Of course, the discrepancy can be overcome by special techniques and preliminaries, but the seemingly mild, humorous joke is not innocuous at all, inasmuch as it is likely to raise the level of anxiety present in many a viewer, male and female, for the male the anxiety that he is too quick to be a good mate, for the female the anxiety that she won't find the good mate to gratify her if she's too slow. The fear, and possibility, of sexual inadequacy makes the advert a grim jest. One response to raised anxiety is compulsive buying. Truly, in the social phenomenon of advertising, people kiss the hand that beats them, like a dog licking his hard-hearted master's hand.

Having said this, I don't even feel the need to extend on “Blow Dry.” You know what it means to blow, sexually, and you've also heard of “dry sex,” i.e., sex with clothes on, rubbing one's body against each other's. It's called dry because, if fluid discharge occurs, it remains unnoticed by the mate. The seminal fluid provides the wetness, in the idea, and its absence the dryness. “Blow dry,” thus, means to perform a fellatio until the semen has been discharged and the genitals are, as one would say, emptied of the fluid, and thus temporarily dry. In your face – but those who don't notice will buy.

**BLOW DRY
PERFECTION
UP TO TWICE
AS FAST**

BLOW DRY IT

QUICK DRY PRIMER
*Professional grade formula for quick
wash-blowout perfection at home.*

NEW

**L'ORÉAL
PARIS**
**NEW
BLOW DRY IT
QUICK DRY
PRIMER
SPRAY**

*Cuts Dry Time
Heat Protection*

HAIR THERAPY **PROTECT & PLEAS**
For 88 hours

Because you're worth it.

**L'ORÉAL
PARIS**
ADVANCED HAIRSTYLE

**HOW QUICK
ARE YOU?**

BE YOUR OWN STYLEMAKER.
GO TO HAIRLOREAL.COM

Case 73 Guerlain SEX

Dear Madam, have you ever dreamt of being kept in a harem? Of course not. Tell me, then, what is the assumption behind the present ad? The product's name is Shalimar, from the famous Shalimar Gardens in Lahore, Pakistan, a place associated with the former Moghul rulers of the Indian peninsula, whose Muslim kings, princes, and highnesses were masters of immense harems, filled in large part with the wives and daughters of subdued Hindus. The blonde woman in the picture is sitting naked in a room whose light is provided by the sun through mashrabiya-patterned panels reminiscent of zenanas' windows. She is, therefore, in the women's apartments of some Oriental palace, behind the purdah, that is, in a harem. The fantasy of being one of many, one among many lovers or sexual things at the power of a dominant man, is something real. It dates to the days of the primitive horde when our simian ancestors were organized around a dominant male. As some researchers put it (evolutionary psychologists Vladas Griskevicius and Douglas Kenrick, *The Rational Animal*, 2013), in those days, as among the primates which still have such social organization, the females would line up and wait for their turn to be inseminated by the alpha male. (The other males only have the right to copulate with infertile females.) I suggest that the fact of female orgasm being scattered among the population (I have found so many different figures, from 30% to 50% to 70% [Hite report] for women never experiencing orgasm during intercourse, that trying any guess seems pointless) may have something to do with this heritage of ours. Many women just won't have it to the full with none but the silverback gorilla, I mean the dominant male. It's only a conjecture, of course. We know, besides, that women are more promiscuous than gorilla females; the data all point to greater *sperm competition* among humans, and chimpanzees (of which the dwarf variety is known as the bonobo), than among gorillas. Still, researchers also state that women's EPC (extra-pair copulations), the scientific name for horns-putting, occurs much more frequently with some types, or rather a certain type – singular – of male.

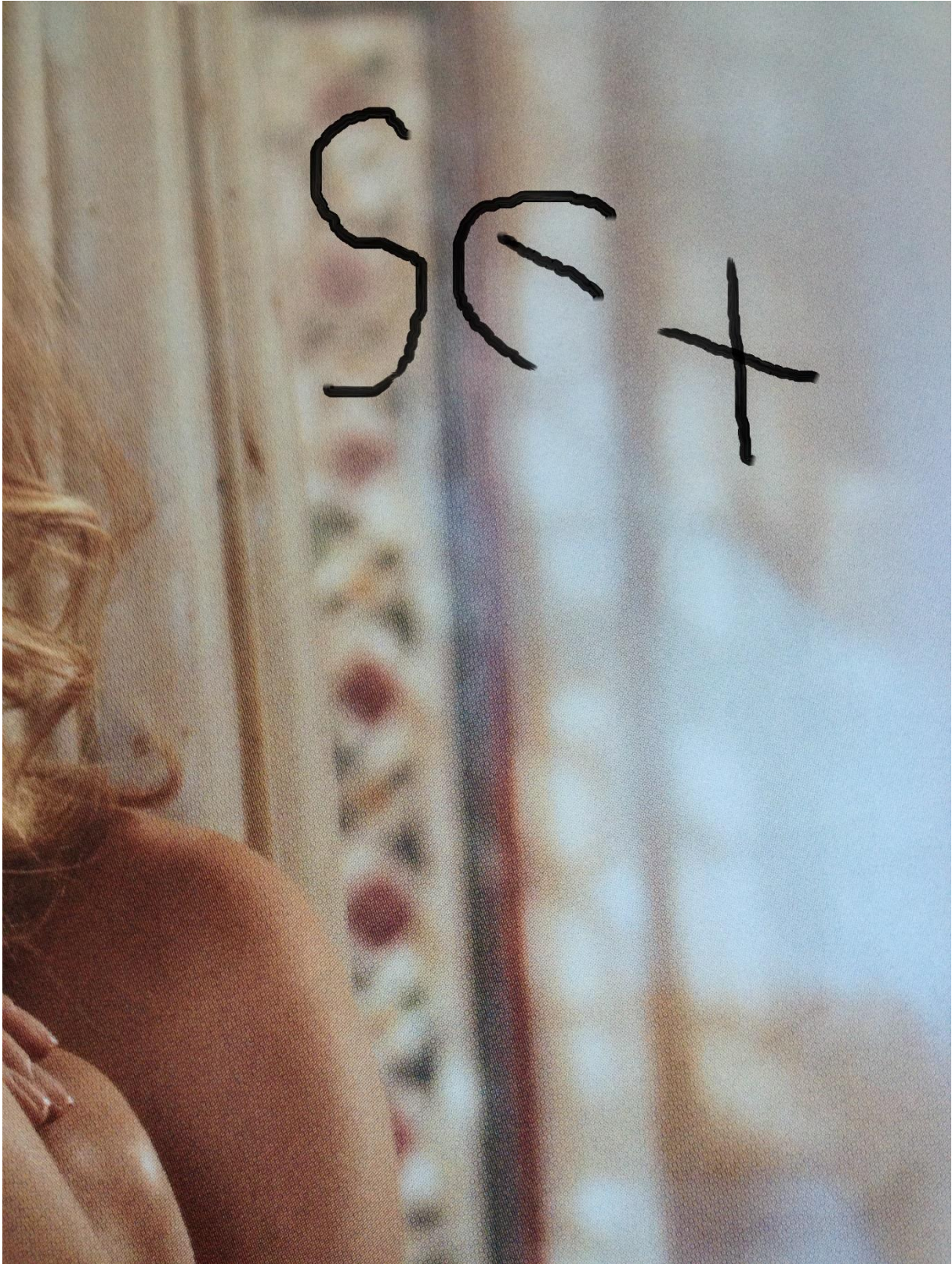
I have also outlined one sex embed, for good measure. It was easy for the graphic designer to embed the word sex among the filigreed shades of the wall panels.



73-1



73-2



73-3

Subliminal Junk X

In his four books, written from 1973 to 1989, Wilson Bryan Key has discussed perhaps between 100 and 200 cases of subliminal advertising, for a research period extending over 20-25 years. The other material he collected has not been published. What I am intending to demonstrate is that you can easily extract 100 cases from press publications over a three-months period.

For the present issue, I keep extracting advertisements from the same magazines and newspapers I have been using for issues I-IX, namely fifteen issues of various papers altogether, dated March, April, and May 2015. In *Subliminal Junk IX*, I wrote that lack of time and patience prevented me from presenting more cases from the same papers. This is not good advertising of myself – if I have no time and patience to do something well enough, then I really should consider leaving it alone – and, besides, I have more patience than the average guy, so that is not a good excuse either. In fact, what keeps me from showing all the subliminals I find is the redundancy and repetition in the technique; in many cases, adding examples would only be boring to the reader. In a way, I am doing honor to the advertisements I select. Many are discarded in the process, not on the ground, though, that they are devoid of subliminal junk, but because I do not find their junk exciting enough.

At the end of this post, the number of cases will be 79 – or 80 if you include the introductory case study on Microsoft. The seven following cases are taken from: *Vanity Fair* from May 2015 (Case 74), *Vanity Fair* from April 2015 (75-7), and *Vogue* Italian Edition from May 2015 (78-9).

September 2015

Case 74 Dom Perignon SEX

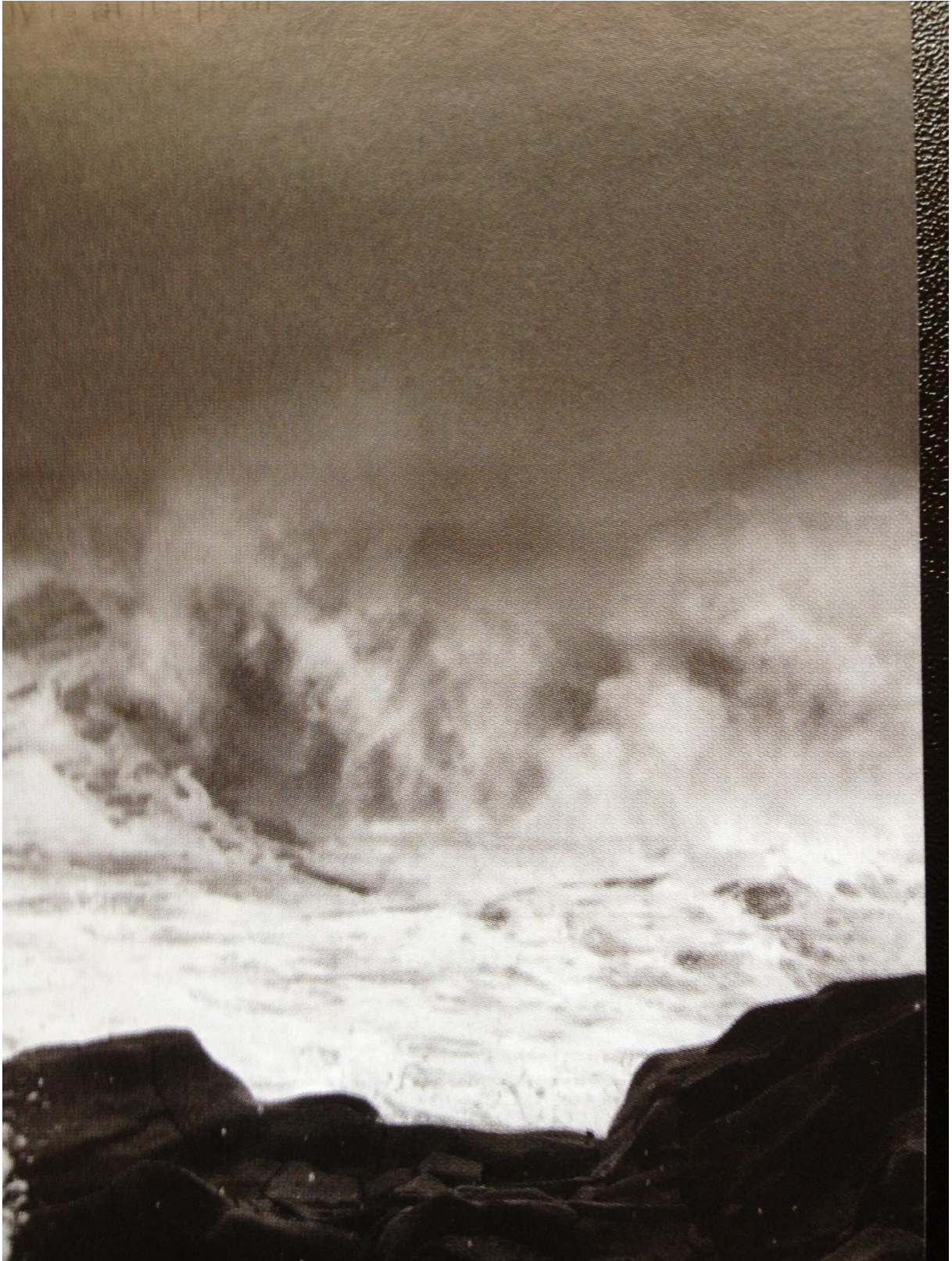
This one is from the same as Case 35, to which I refer you for the whole picture and the word SEX embedded among the sea spray. The whole picture, by the way, is topical: a phallic object (champagne bottle) and explosive sea spray. On the backward, towards the right, I have outlined a couple of interesting drawings that have been added to bolster the ad's impact in a subliminal way. Pictures 74-2 and 74-3 show the same part of the advert twice because the artist used a technique known by those who are acquainted with Salvador Dali's painting *Slave Market With the Disappearing Bust of Voltaire*. The technique consists in setting two different reality objects as one pictorial object; in Dali's painting, a few body shapes are Voltaire's face at the same time.

On Picture 74-2, I show three faces. The face on the left is that of a half-conscious woman, sick because of alcohol consumption. I did the best I could in the outlining but I strongly advise you to look at the Picture 74, the bare one, to get a more appropriate idea of the artist's rendition of a drunken woman falling out of consciousness or miserable with feelings of faintness. The second face, toward the right, is that of another woman. That one is in distress too, her black eyes wide open while she vomits. Close against her on the right is a man's face, smiling, not disgusted at all by what is happening. He probably knows he will achieve his goal now, with this or both women. I can see a wig on his head, which makes him a fine eighteenth-century *roué*, very much in line, I guess, with what a Dom Perignon connoisseur is likely to admire.

On Picture 74-3, we come back to the first woman's face, but this time it shows something different, albeit the idea is not so different. It shows a woman bent forward, hair falling and almost touching the ground, hands pressed against the knees. She too is in a dejected state due to excessive drinking. While she copes with her present misery, a smiling bear-like creature is gently grabbing at her. His face is against her buttocks, his paw clasping her thigh. The bear, although not altogether deprived of seeming benevolence, looks as if he were intent on taking advantage of the situation.

This is the message subliminally addressed to viewers: Intoxicate your preys with Dom Perignon and –*voilà!* – it's done.

This would be the male reader's viewpoint. For the female reader, however, such an interpretation would make the advert repulsive, so there must be other possible interpretations available to her, or to both sexes for that matter. Woman number one, then, instead of fainting from intoxication, would be gently falling in a post-copulatory swoon, having just climaxed. As to woman number two, something would be forced into her mouth, namely a penis, and she would look distressed due to her fear that it may choke her, or because she is already choking, to the great amusement of the *roué* looking at this rough scene of oral sex. Finally, the woman in Picture 74-3 would not be on the verge of vomiting, but simply waiting for the bear to mount her. Such scenes are probably repulsive to most men and women, and to many a Dom Perignon patron too, at conscious level – but on a subliminal plane it seems to be another story.



74-1 (35-4)



74-2 (35-5)



74-3 (35-6)

Case 75 Louis Vuitton SEX

This advertisement for Louis Vuitton is of the same series designed for the manufacturer as Case 33. First, I would like to call your attention on the way the model is wearing her bag. Although we have the typical background of bright sky and blue sea so appealing to dejected employees, the woman is fearing something is going to happen to her. She is holding the bag against her chest, looking at a distance, as if she had been suddenly aware of a desperado's presence. The scene, in fact, is mildly nerve-racking. It's only because you do not expect such tone in a tropical, and topical, advert for a handbag that you did not perceive it at first. Well, you did not perceive it, maybe, but your lizard brain has registered the model's disquiet nevertheless – because it has no social expectations like yourself, I mean your conscious self, which is easily tricked by advertisers because of the preconceived notions we are all using as shortcuts to deal with the requirements of everyday life.

That lizard brain of yours also registered something else. On the turquoise waves a drawing has been embedded. It represents two kids and a man, all naked. One kid is leaning against the other's shoulder. Maybe he's tired, maybe he's ashamed, maybe he's crying. The other kid is masturbating the man's penis. The man is lying on the back, both hands under his head. He's enjoying. This is subliminal pedophilia, something we have already come across (Case 52). As a first guess, I'd say it will (discarding any sexual stimulation effect) contribute to heighten in the female viewer the anxiety produced by perceiving, unconsciously most of the time, the model's apprehensiveness. Mirror cells in the brain tend to reproduce as yours the emotions you perceive on others; that is their function, and I suggest they will reproduce emotions even when you fail to interpret these emotions correctly at conscious level. Choosing a handbag is in itself an anxious experience – all choices imply some degree of anxiety – and here it is connected with status anxiety, like all fashion. Anxiety advertising is aimed at producing the right crisis in the mind.

Uninformed readers may object that mirror cells cannot be induced to react in the present case, as people know it is only an advertisement and the model is acting. In reality, our mirror cells function as usual even when we know that the person we look at is simulating emotions. Without such a functioning in the face of all our knowledge, movie theaters would remain empty. It is because people let themselves be moved by acting that they enjoy cinema, and they can do that because even their knowledge of the whole stuff's being acting and simulation does not prevent their mirror cells to induce in them the emotional states they perceive. The difference between a good actor and a bad one is that the former is capable of mimicking emotions most perfectly, whereas the latter lets perceive a discrepancy between his behavior or attitude and the emotion he is supposed to be acting. Bad actors betray that their inner state is alien to their role, and such discrepancy makes them, and the whole scene, ridiculous; despite our willingness, our mirror cells cannot be fooled by bad actors, and we resent them for the poor performance.

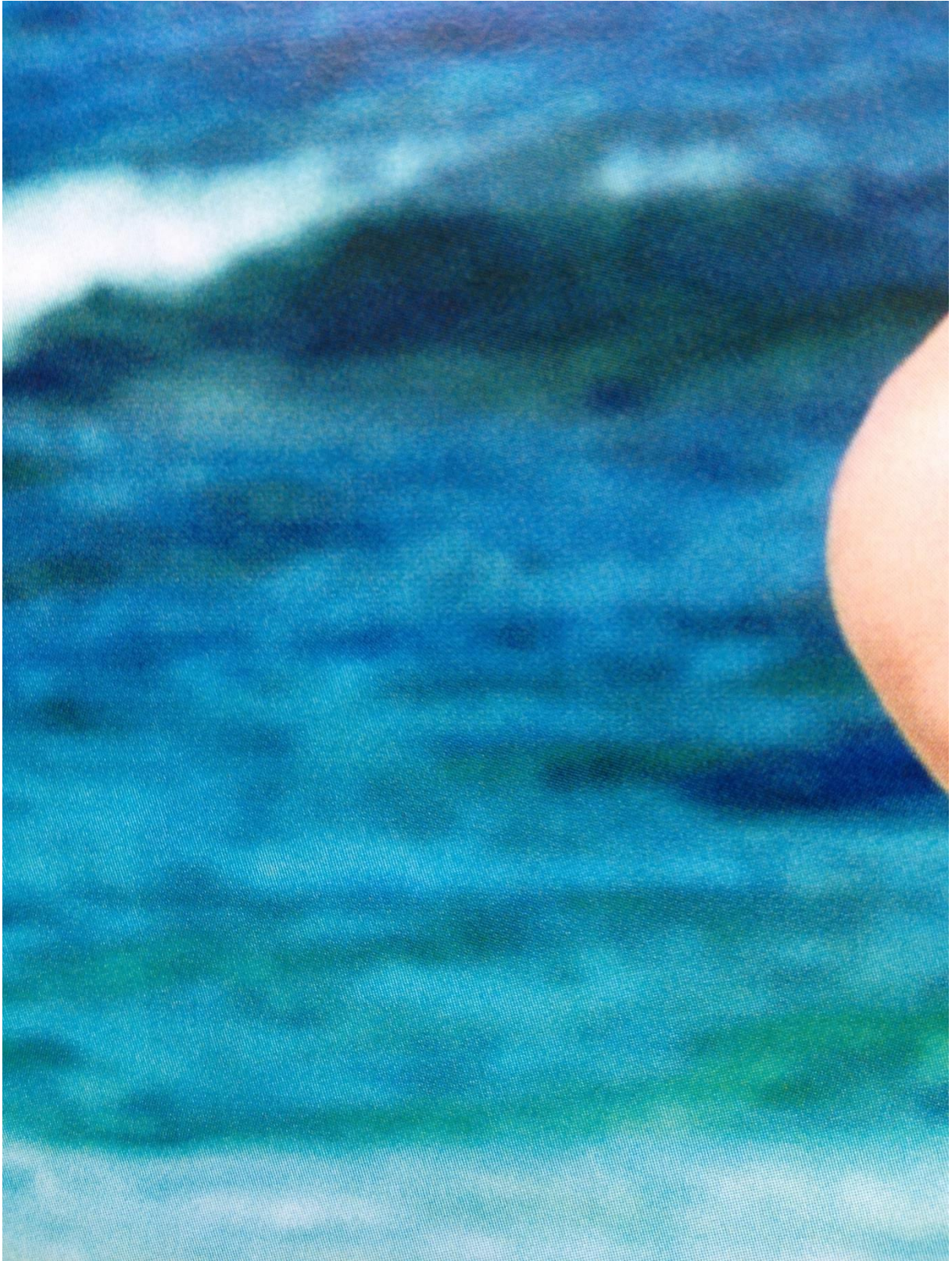
These remarks allow one to describe the impact of advertising, even printed advertising, in terms of mirror cells. Advertising models are asked to express emotions, which the photographer will try to capture on the picture. In Case 75, I suggested that the model is expressing some feeling of anguish that would remain unperceived at conscious level inasmuch as it makes no sense at all for the uninformed consumer that fear should be made use of in that

kind of advertising, especially with a cliché bright sky, blue sea background. As it makes no sense, the stimuli that would allow the correct interpretation remain unattended.

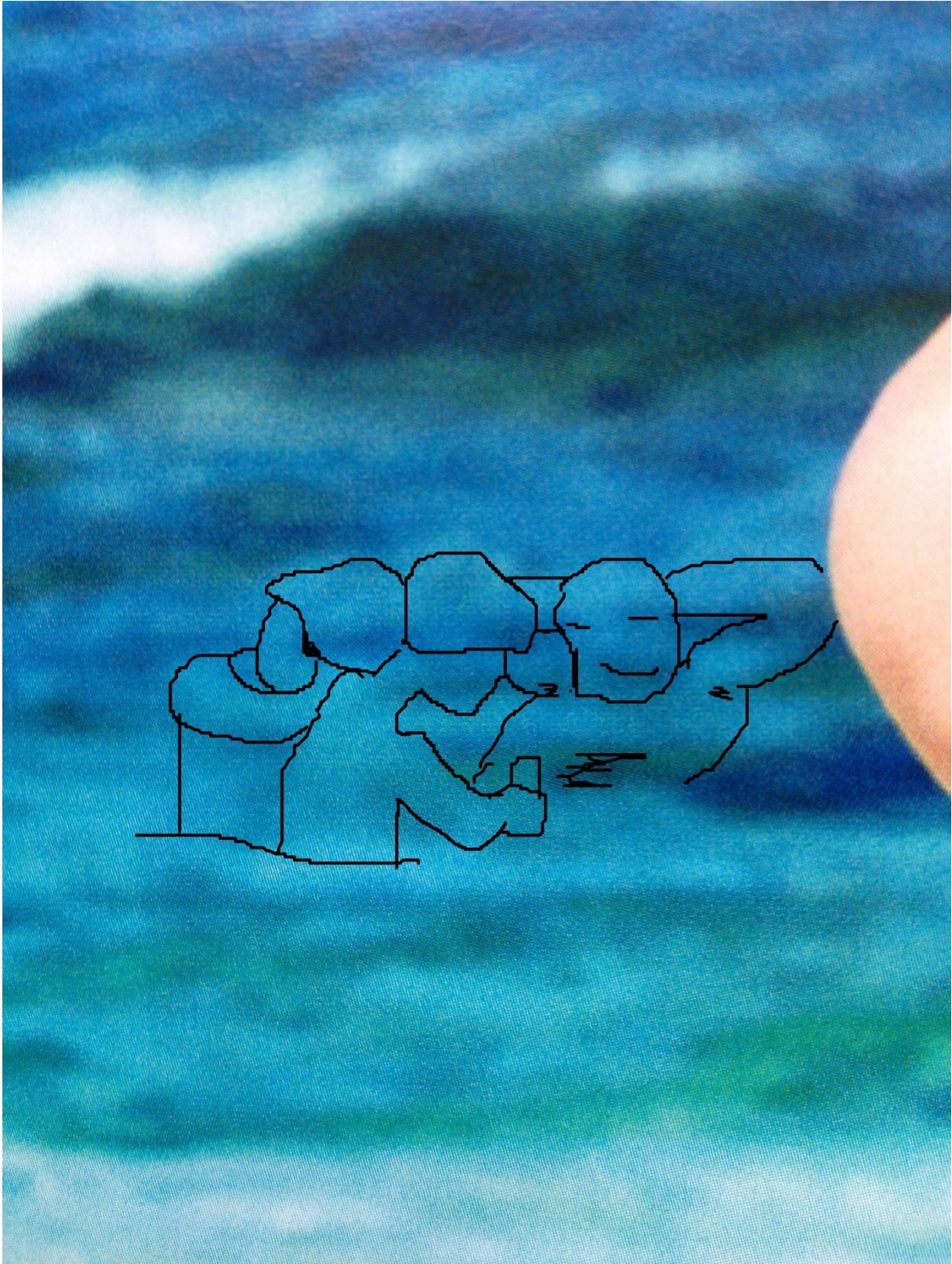
One thing, however, must be added. The model here has not been asked to play genuine anguish. In fact, she was asked to look disquieted, with her gaze and her holding the bag against her chest, but not entirely so, in order to confuse the brain and prevent any possibility that the right interpretation be brought to consciousness. The way she is holding the bag against her chest is ambiguous, the gesture is soft, there is no muscular tension, no crispation as would be expected from true disquiet. So, in a way this is a case of bad acting, some stimuli indicating one emotional state and some other stimuli from the same source indicating another emotional state. Except that the discrepancy here has been designed intentionally, so that the viewer will more easily discard the stimuli that make no sense, i.e. anguish or, more mildly, disquiet, since are also present the stimuli that make perfect sense to the conscious mind – a young woman strolling on a beach or a riviera by a fine summer day with her handbag, which she carries most gently, and why not against her chest, if she likes? Her looks seem a bit odd, for sure... but, wait, she's so young and at that age one is easily troubled. So far so good. If the character is troubled, then there is something troubling about the advertisement. I just wanted to be sure you noticed. Finally, the discrepancy may serve the purpose of disquieting the unattending brain and thus remaining engraved inside as a puzzle, something unexplained and thus potentially threatening (despite the conscious interpretation of the ad as being innocuous, trite stuff). And then there is the subliminal drawing of pedophilic erotica.



75-1



75-2



75-3

*

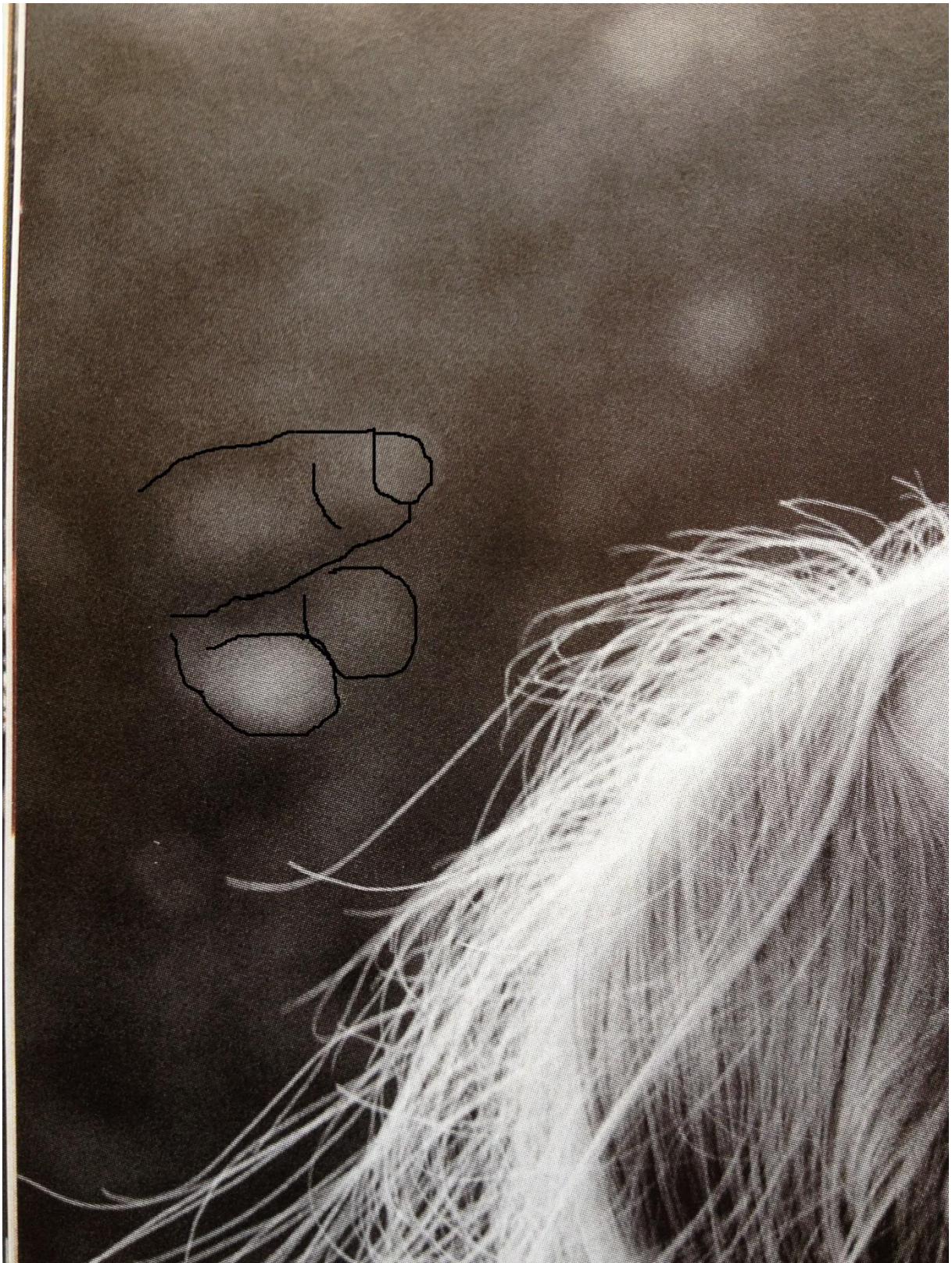
Case 76 Patek Philippe SEX

We have already seen this advert, Case 29, where I show a sex embed. As with Case 74, the sex embed is not only a sex embed, no more than it is solely, it goes without saying, the shades of a coppice in the background. There is also present a semi-erect penis. The testes have been painted prominent. It's not so much about the penis, this time, as about the reproductive stamina.

If you're interested, you can find another sex embed stuck to the woman's left shoulder. Above this embed are two faces, which I do not care to outline, but that you may find too. It's the woman's parents, the father on the left, with large whiskers, a Colonel Goodchild of sorts, the mother on the right, fateful and zombie-looking, with a face larger than her man's.



76-1 (29-4)



76-2 (29-5)



Case 77 Elie Saab SEX

From the same ad as Case 30. Besides the sex embed in the model's hair, the folds of her dress, nicely swollen by the wind, delineate a copulation. We see two bottoms and two backs. The woman's pubis is concealed by the top of the perfume bottle but I have indicated the navel (though I'm not inventing it: it's there) so you can orient yourselves in these folds. The woman is on her knees, the man on her, they're making it *more ferarum*, which is the Latin for doggy-style, if you care to know. The man, though, is not well oriented on her mate's back, he is bending toward the left, probably toward another mate, which he is kissing or on whom he is performing a cunnilingus.

Also, looking back at the ad p. 121, you'll see the model's body is slightly tilted, whereas the writings below are quite horizontal, that is, when the writings of the page are horizontal the body is tilting toward the right. The model is therefore leaning against something, and as she can't be leaning against her veils flaunting in the wind, she is leaning against a man's body.



77-1 (30-4)



77-2 (30-5)

Case 78 Louis Vuitton SEX

From the same series as Cases 33 and 75. I have nothing to say about the picture itself. Please proceed directly to Pictures 78-2 and 78-3, and into the turquoise waters where strange Tritons and Nereids are having a subliminal orgy. On the left side, a woman is licking the testes of a semi-erect penis bending toward the left. No doubt the penis will be full hard soon. Close against the woman on her right, we can see the back and buttocks of another woman, sat on a penis. A third woman, further on the right and a little below, is also impaled on a penis, and smiles at you. (The smiling head could be that of a fourth woman, though, as it is separated from the bottom with the penis inside it, a bottom which can be completed instead by a female back and a black-haired head contiguous to it on the right side.) From this group further to the right and below, a woman is taken *more ferarum* by a crocodile or a doglike creature (Goofy?) on her back. Her visage expresses intense contentment. (We have already come across subliminal bestiality, in Case 59.) In the space between these two lovers, another face is staring at you; it is a smiling death's head, or just another Mister Grin.

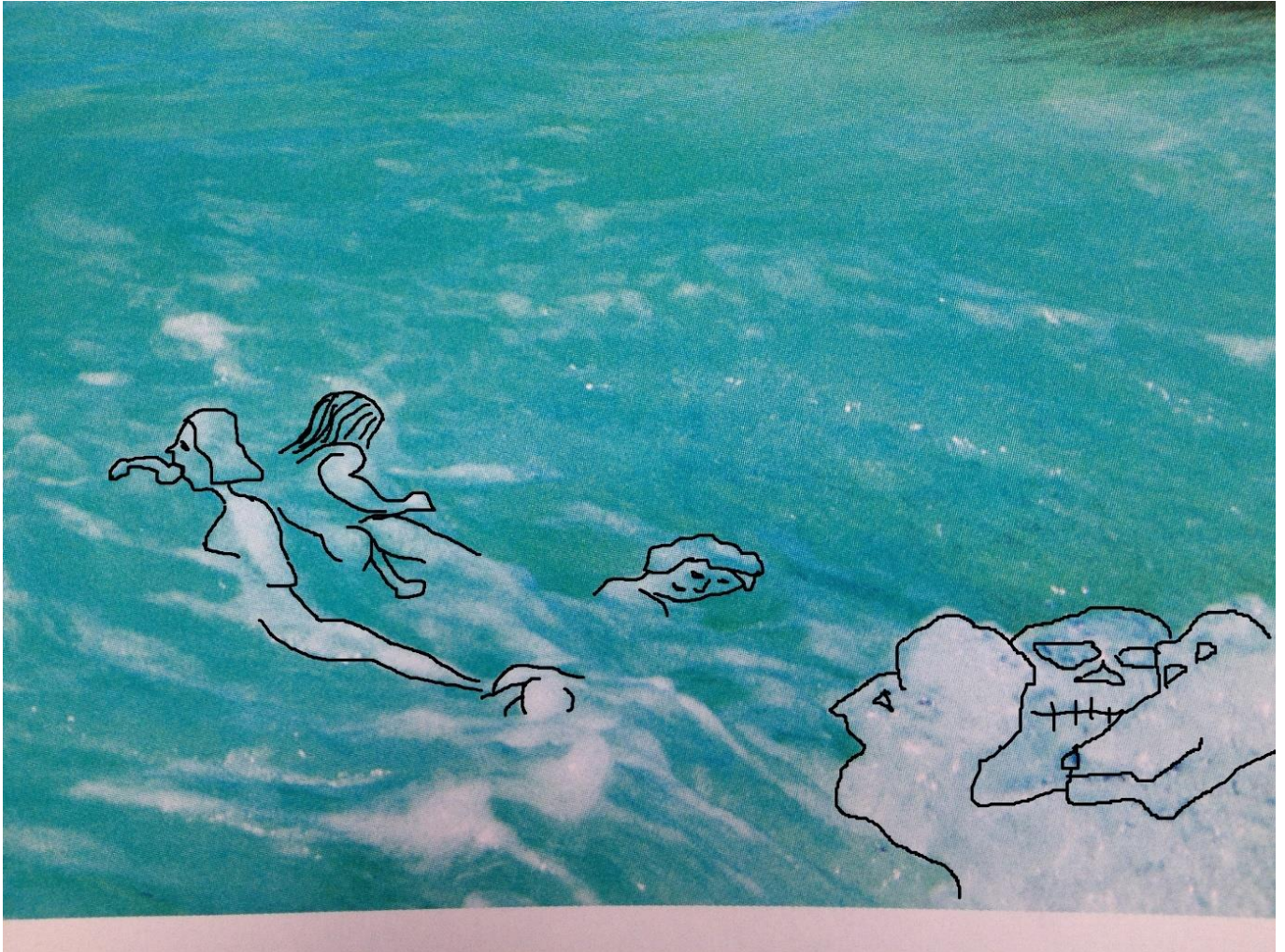
From this case I conclude that women too like pornography, providing it be subliminal.



78-1



78-2



78-3

Case 79 QC Terme spas and resorts SEX

The model's expression is well-being. On Picture 79-2, she is embraced by a subliminal man (à la Modigliani, not my favorite embeds: I prefer more realistic objects, more difficult to object to by opponents), and besides a little Death figure, very realistically drawn with skeleton and the customary cloak and hood, is staring at her with its typical grin. Please take a closer look at Picture 79-1 to appreciate the fine rendition of the skull. Health concerns are involved, as you have understood.

Pictures 79-3 and 79-4 display a fellatio (rather ethereal, admittedly, but it's there nonetheless). EPC (extra-pair copulation) prospects are material for advertisers.



Bagni di sole e di benessere.

QC TERME
spas and resorts

leading spas and wellness resorts

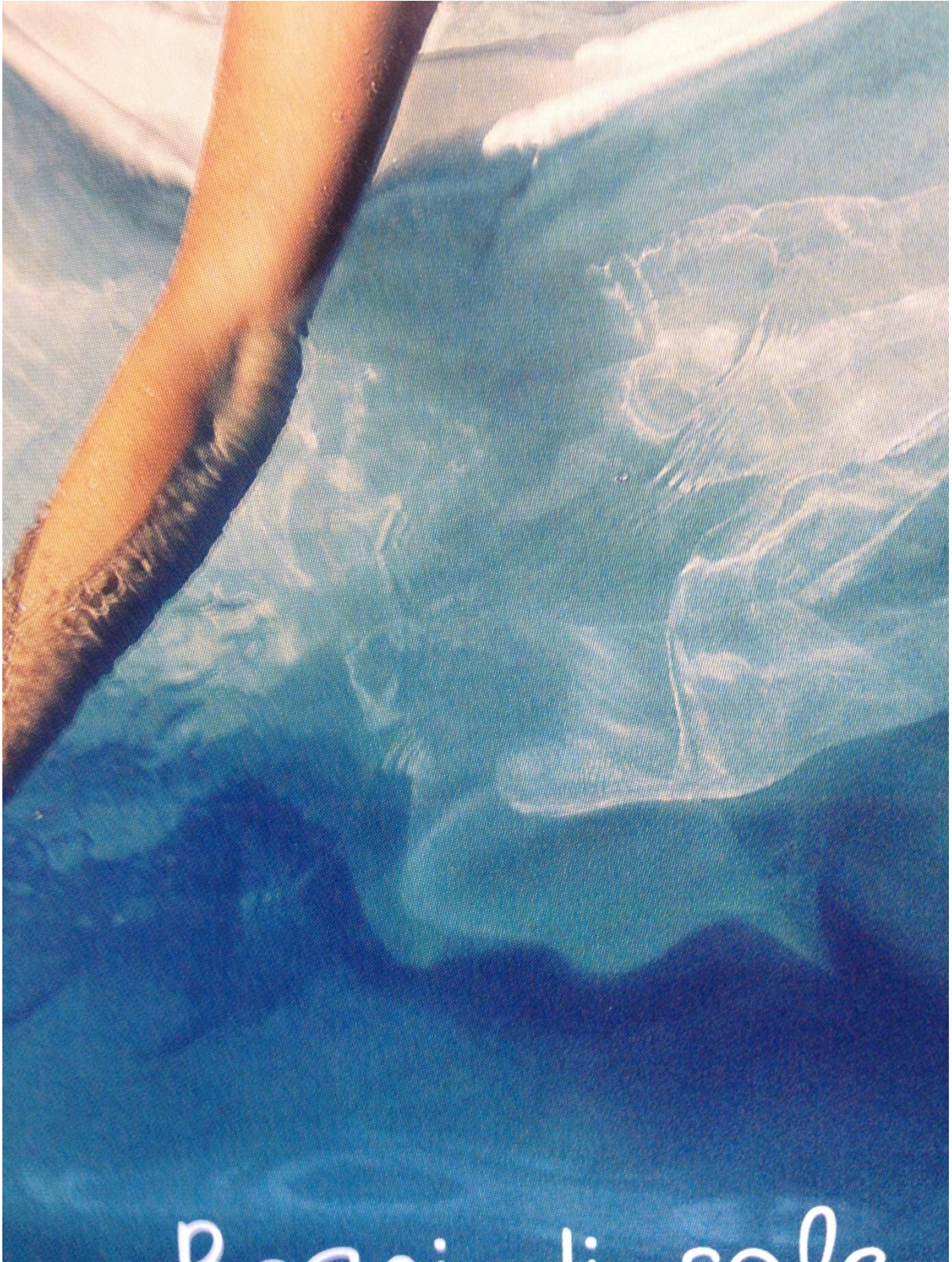
79-1



79-2



79-3



79-4



79-5

XI

This will be the last post I make on subliminal adverts taken from no more than fifteen papers and magazines dated March, April, and May 2015, fifteen items that will have provided the material for chapters I-XI. The number of cases will amount to 87. Although a few cases are taken from the same advert (one or several sex embeds shown first, then some embedded subliminal drawings in a second time), this will give you an idea of how generalized the subliminal phenomenon is in print advertising. To be sure, 87 cases from 15 issues makes more than 5 cases of subliminal advertising per issue, and as I have already said I could easily take more cases from these issues if I decided to present indiscriminately all the subliminals I found, which I did not want to do, in order not to overload my blog.

From now on, I will extract material from other magazines' issues, in search of the most exciting stuff.

The following cases 80-7 are taken from: German weekly *Der Spiegel* dated April 11 (Cases 80-2), *Time* magazine dated March 30 (Case 83), French weekly *Le Point* dated March 12 (Case 84), French weekly *Marianne* dated March 20 (Cases 85-6), and finally *Le Point* again dated March 19 (Case 87).

September 2015

Case 80 Union Investment EXTRA-PAIR SEX

The copy, in German, says “Why are socks always disappearing from the washing machine?” and we see a father and his son wondering at their finding only one sock from a pair among the washing. The copy further says that, although we cannot explain everything, at least having one’s savings at Union Investment (the investment branch of Deutsche Zentral-Genossenschaftsbank) is a safe and transparent option, liable to no unpleasant surprise. I leave it to you whether this is a fine, clever advertisement so far as the preceding is concerned.

What I am interested in is the subliminal gorilla sitting in the background behind the kid. He smiles at a woman reclining with her head on its bulging stomach. Both the gorilla and the woman seem to like each other very much. In fact, they just had sex. The woman is naked, the white skin of her shoulder or breast being apparent. Of course, she is the man’s wife, and the kid is her son. The man has a distinct moronic look about him, smiling as do morons; one would expect to see slobber drooling from the commissure of his lips. As to the son, I’m afraid his ears extend a bit far from the skull, like pinheads’ ears (although he is no pinhead). Quite striking, when one pays attention, is the size of his left forearm. As you can see, his left hand is leaning on the top of the washing machine, but there is something wrong with the perspective: it is hardly believable that this is his hand, because it means the forearm is unusually long. Now please recall that gorillas have very long forearms. This feature of the kid’s arm hints at the gorilla’s being the biological father...

This is a most elaborate way of playing on the all-pervasive *paternity uncertainty*, a source of many ailments in our civilization, from pathological jealousy to domestic violence to refusal to commitment and single mothers (whose kids, it has been found, are more likely to become delinquents†). And it is no figment of the masculine imagination either, since child support agencies, which administer paternity tests on a daily basis, report a non-paternity rate (that is the number of children not sired by the men who believe to be the fathers) of 15 per cent (Robin Baker, *Sperm Wars: The Science of Sex*, 1996). The advert subliminally plays on that. It says: Don’t be a moron like the guy here, with the sock in his hands, and contract with Union Investment, or DZ Bank, or else your wife will know how to cuckold you. In other words, cuckolds do not rely on Union Investment for the management of their savings.

Besides, it is likely that a cuckold will not care very much to save money for his kids if these are not really his, and a man who entertains such doubts will hesitate to save money for he knows not whose kids. So much so that one who does not save money for one’s kids may well be suspected of being a cuckold and of knowing it or surmising it. So the advert also asks: Are you a cuckold, or what?

Finally, gorillas are animals where male dominance is particularly salient (see my remarks on Case 73). The advert implies, subliminally, that one will be cuckolded by a more dominant male, and that having one’s savings to Union Investment will prevent that by showing off one’s dominance, unlike the moron with the single sock in his hands. In other words, Union Investment is the dominants’ bank.

As a postface, this dialogue from a famous play. “Hjalmar: *I want to know if... your child has a right to live under my roof. Is Hedwig mine... or... Well?* Gina: *I don’t know.*” (Ibsen, *The Wild Duck*)

†The correlation I mention between single mothers and delinquent offspring is no statement on causality. The correlation may be due to most single mothers' being poor, and the primary cause monetary deprivation. I mention the correlation as a way to justify my speaking of "ailment" although many a single mother might object to the label, especially among women separated from wealthy businessmen and earning comfortable alimonies.



Genossenschaftliche FinanzGruppe
Volksbanken Raiffeisenbanken

Warum verschwinden die Socken in der Waschmaschine?

Wir können nicht alles erklären, aber wie Investmentfonds mehr aus Ihrem Geld machen können, schon



- Egal, ob Sie anlegen, ansparen oder für die Zukunft vorsorgen möchten, wir haben eine passende Lösung für Sie
- Auch mit kleinen Beträgen: Schon ab 50,- Euro monatlich sind Sie dabei
- Ihr Geld wird in einer Vielzahl unterschiedlicher Wertpapiere oder Immobilien angelegt
- Sie bleiben flexibel, denn Ihr Geld ist grundsätzlich bewertungstäglich verfügbar



Geld anlegen klargemacht

Wenn Sie mehr wissen möchten, fragen Sie Ihren Bankberater.
Oder besuchen Sie uns auf www.geld-anlegen-klargemacht.de

Weitere Informationen, die Verkaufsprospekte und die wesentlichen Anlegerinformationen erhalten Sie kostenlos in deutscher Sprache bei allen Volks- und Raiffeisenbanken oder direkt bei Union Investment Service Bank AG, Weißfrauenstraße 7, 60311 Frankfurt am Main, unter www.union-investment.de oder telefonisch unter 069 58998-6060. Stand: 16. Februar 2015.

Einfach QR-Code scannen und auf unsere Internetseite informieren.




80-1



windeln die Socken maschine?

en, aber wie Investment-
nachen können, schon

 **Union
Investment**


er für die Zukunft vorsorgen möchten,
in Sie

80-2



windigen die Socken
maschine?

en, aber wie Investment-
machen können, schon

 **Union
Investment**

er für die Zukunft vorsorgen möchten,
Sie

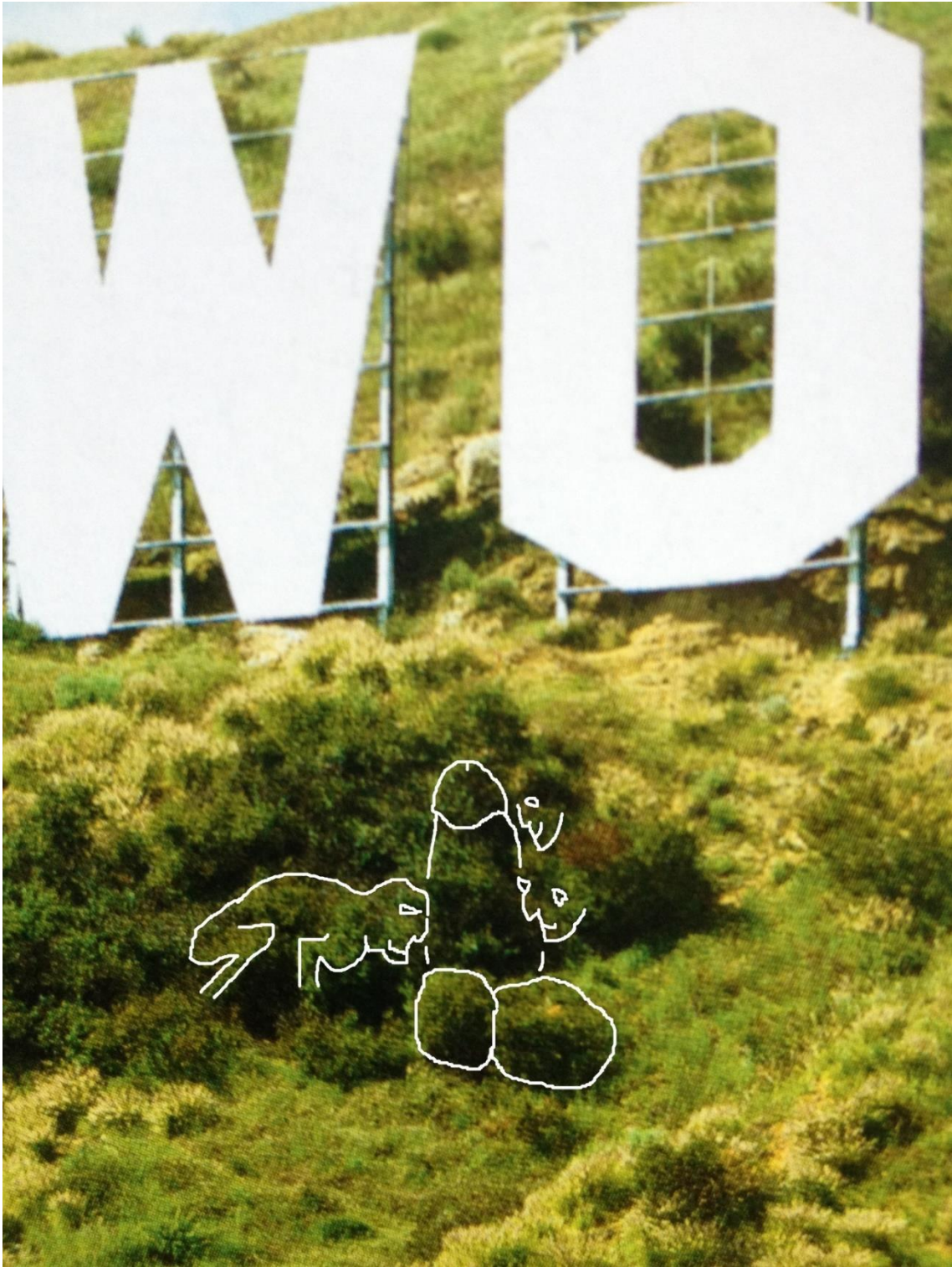
80-3

Case 81 Freistaat Thüringen SEX Again

From the same advert as Case 40. In the same coppice where I outlined sex embeds, I presently delineate the interesting drawing of an erect penis attended by three... nymphs, represented as two faces on the right and an animal on the left. True to human anatomy, the testes are asymmetric.



81-1 (40-4)



81-2 (40-5)

*

Case 82 Peugeot SEX

An advert for the French car manufacturer Peugeot. The copy is strictly insignificant although I doubt not some public relation men from the advertising milieu would easily extol its merits to a credulous public. What I want you to see is the penis ejaculating on the model's face. The penis, namely the glans with a well-delineated coronal ridge, as well as the upper part of the shaft, are visible in the guise of sun beams. Part of the glans is covered by a brighter spark, which could represent semen flowing on the glans due to the peculiar position or movement of the penis during an earlier spurt. At the present moment, a fraction of second after that earlier spurt, another spurt is projected from the meatus toward the model's cheek, or hair, on the left. The copy is now more meaningful. "Impress Yourself" by submitting young and beautiful girls to your sexual fantasies thanks to being the owner of a Peugeot car. Facial ejaculation is indicative of female subjection (cf. Hans J. Eysenck).



**GRANDIOSEN SONNENAUFGANG ERLEBT.
KEIN FOTO GEMACHT.
NICHTS GEPOSTET.**

IMPRESS YOURSELF. DER NEUE PEUGEOT 308 SW GT –
MIT 5 JAHREN QUALITÄTSPLUS.*

PEUGEOT

308 GT

- 151 kW/205 PS nur 5,81 l/100 km
- Sportfahrwerk mit 18-Zoll Felgen
- Alcantara-Sitze mit roten Ziernähten
- und viel Platz für eine eigene

82-1



**GRANDIOSEN SONNENAUFGANG ERLEBT.
KEIN FOTO GEMACHT.
NICHTS GEPOSTET.**

IMPRESS YOURSELF. DER NEUE PEUGEOT 308 SW GT –
MIT 5 JAHREN QUALITÄTSPLUS.*



PEUGEOT



151 kW/205 PS nur 5,81 l/100km
Sportfahrwerk mit 18-Zoll Felgen
Alcantara-Sitze mit roten Ziernähten
und viel Platz für eine eigene

82-2

*

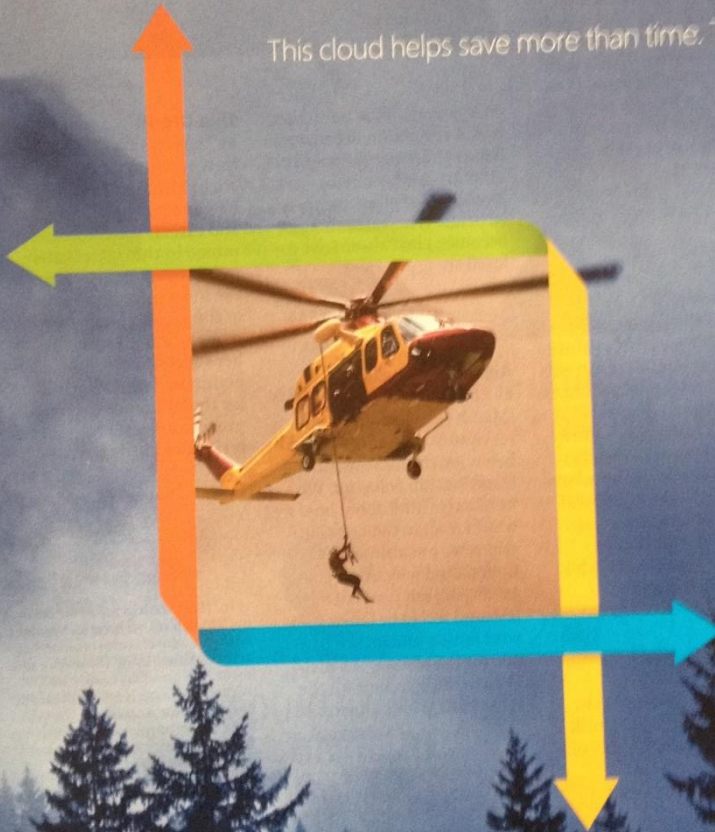
Case 83 Microsoft SEX

An advert for Microsoft Cloud from the same campaign as “First Try, First Find” (pp. 2-3). The green arrow ends in a cloud. The cloud shows a woman’s face. She has the arrow in her mouth and seems to enjoy it. If you think I am seeing imaginary things in clouds, please let me remind you that the cloud here is not a cloud in the sky but a cloud in an ad, and that’s a big difference. I can admit there is no God or gods sending intricate signals to us humans through clouds’ shapes, but the graphic designer of this ad is a human being like you and me – with that difference that he or she probably earns a lot more money, because the ad having being published in major papers and magazines around the world the campaign must have been immensely expensive, and the advertiser remunerated in consequence.

The cloud that responds first.

Mother Nature can be a tough customer. That's why emergency responders around the world need to be agile and coordinated when disaster strikes. Powered by Lync and Office 365, teams from multiple organisations can collaborate and coordinate in real time to outmanoeuvre emergencies - no matter what device they are on.

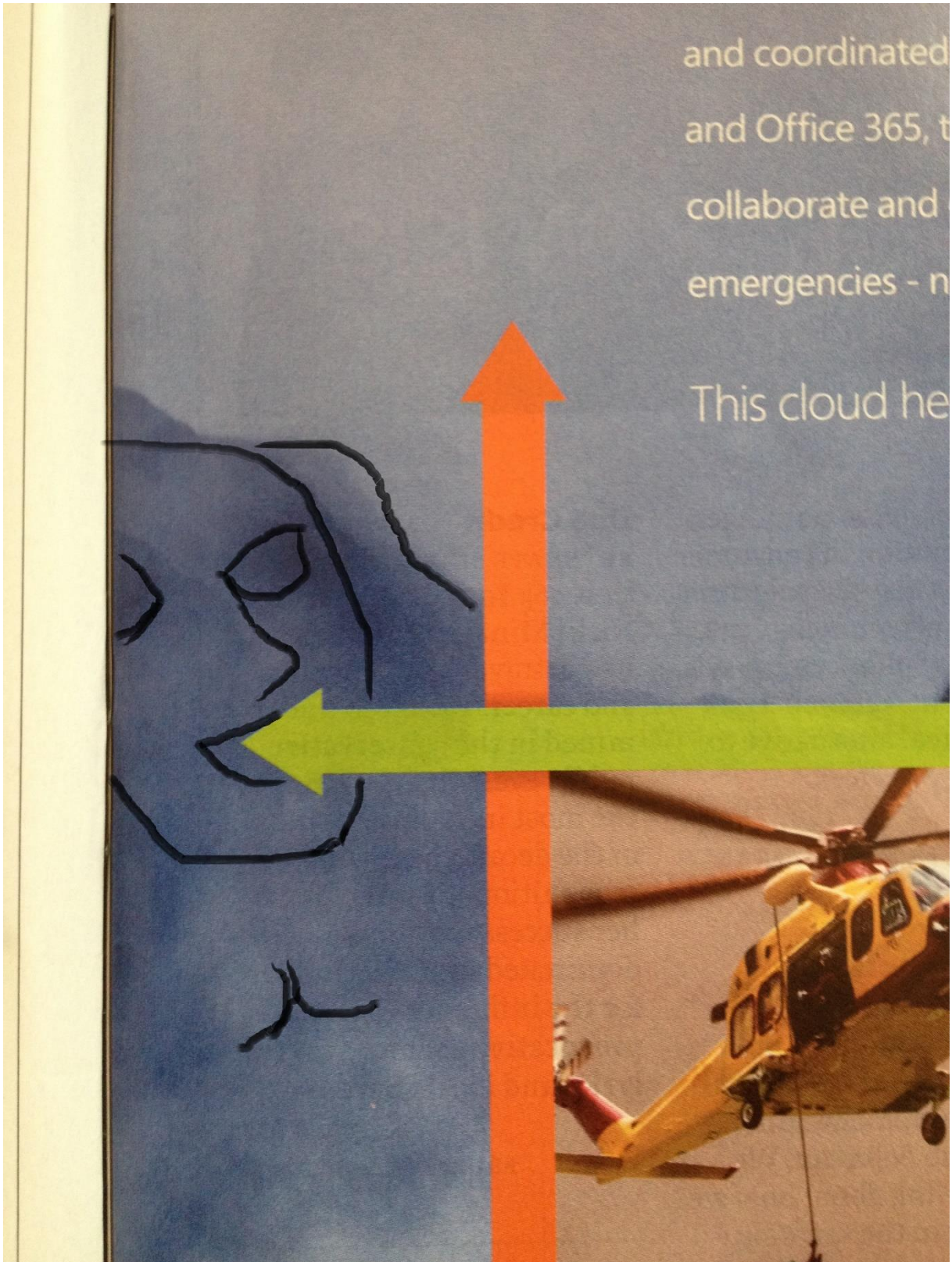
This cloud helps save more than time. This is the Microsoft Cloud.



learn more at microsoftcloud.com

 Microsoft Cloud

83-1



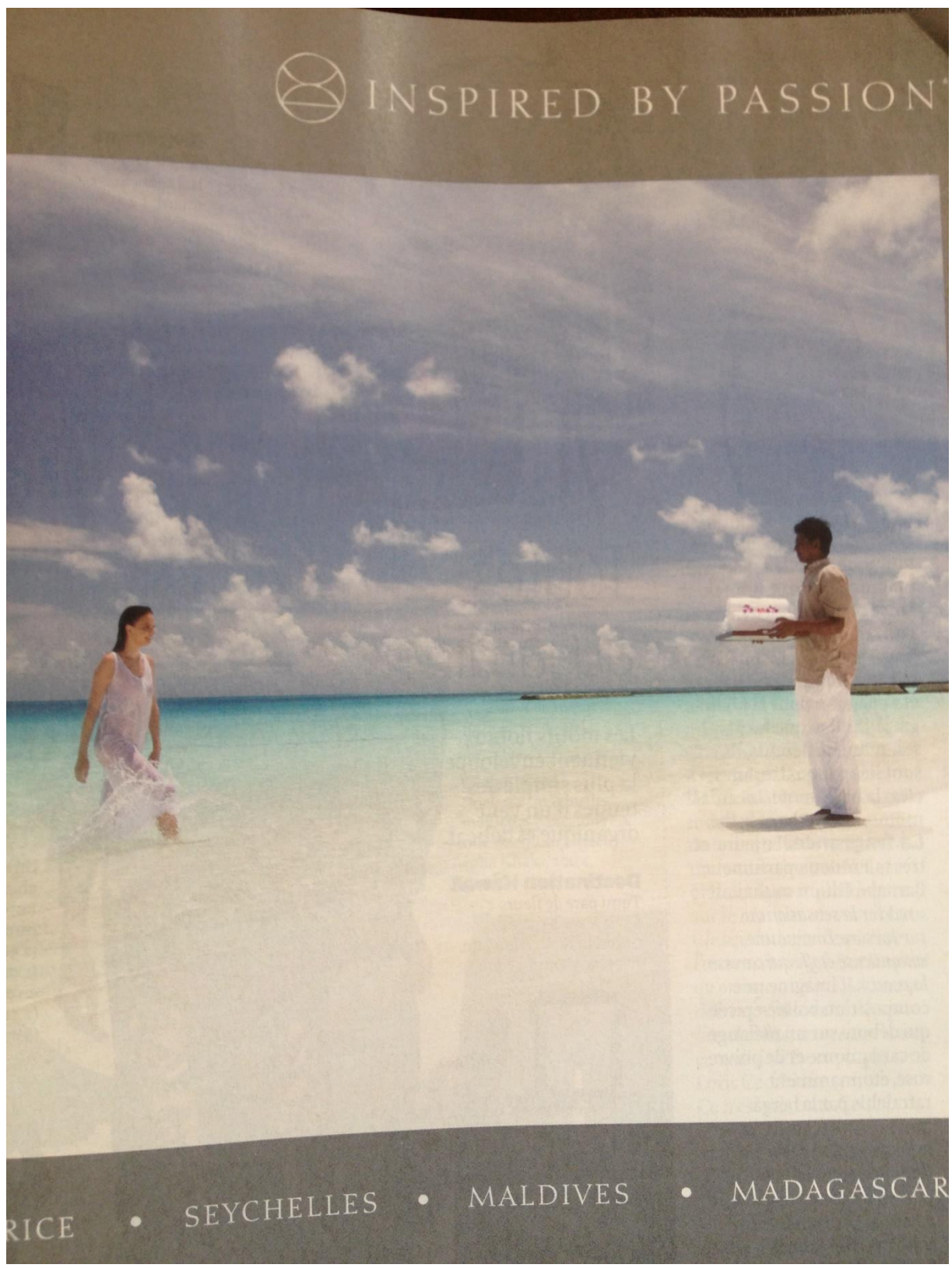
83-2

Case 84 Constance Hotels and Resorts SEX

I don't know if this one should be called subliminal at all, but I want to be sure you understand what is going on, because it comes from a respected newspaper and I know quite a few people who would blush to acknowledge their being exposed to that sort of junk.

As to subliminals, maybe the cloud above the woman is a bit phallic, being erected contrary to the other clouds. And there's an old man's face grinning in the upper right corner, showing sarcastic approval and enjoyment.

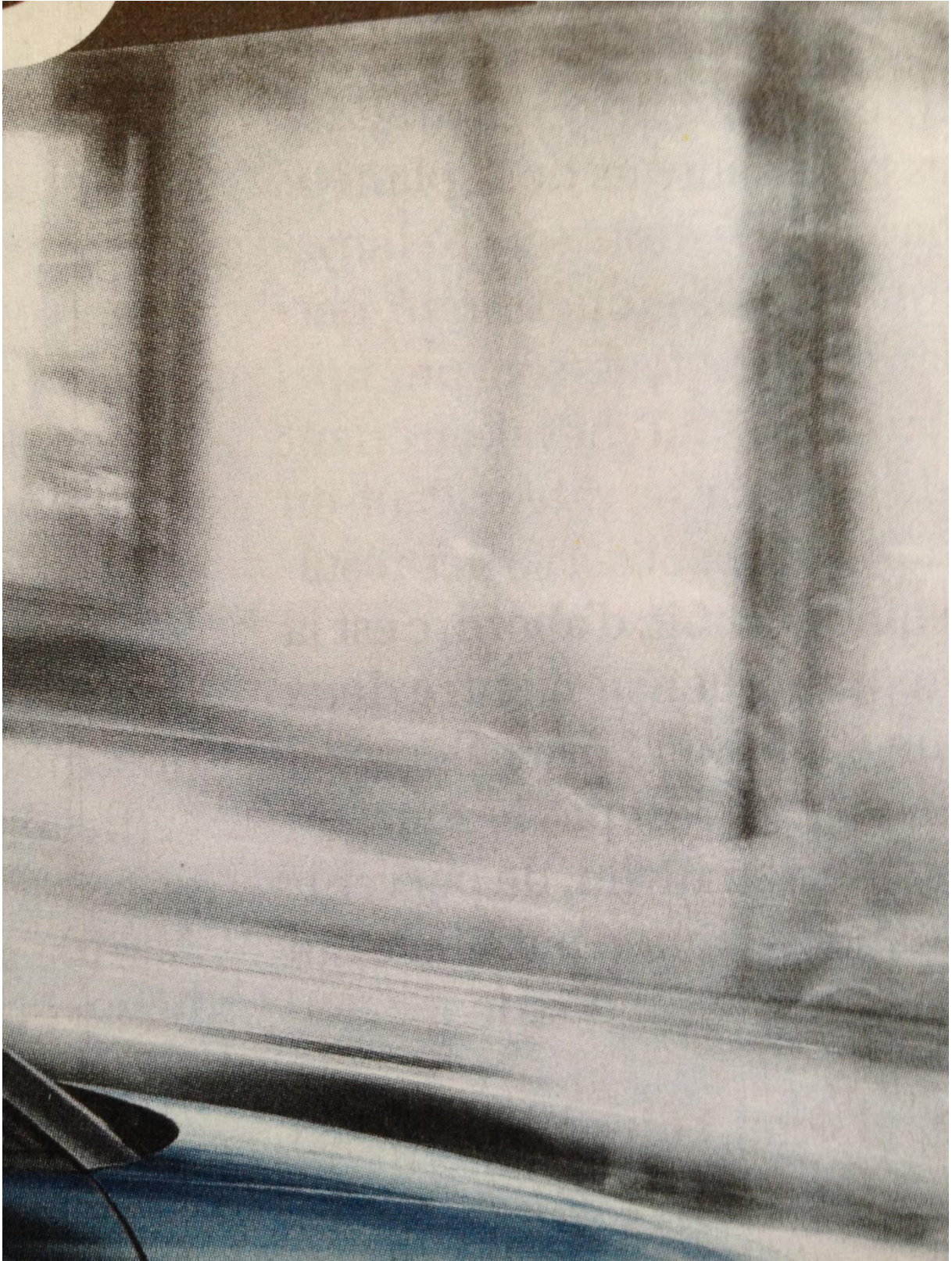
The lady is coming back from her bath in the sea toward the beach, where an attendant from the hotel is waiting with towels. How long has he been waiting? Is this really how employees attend to customers in Constance hotels and resorts? Is the customer offered a return to the old days of footmanship, when lackeys were at their master's disposal night and day? Be that as it may, there is more to find in Constance hotels and resorts. The lady looks determinedly and eagerly at the local employee's face. She wears a sort of nightdress, and that seems rather strange for sea bathing. As I can see no nuance in colors indicative of a bathing suit under that dress, and as the dress being white it has by necessity become transparent due to immersion in water, the lady is actually exhibiting herself to the employee facing her. In particular, her pubic hair must be conspicuous. Furthermore, if she is intent on using the towels, that will prove a futile exercise unless she removes the wet gown, that is, unless she undresses in front of the man. That the advert is coarse eroticism is not to deny. Why should it be called subliminal at all? It's coarse, it's vulgar, it's in your face (not tongue in cheek), and it occurs while you may be under the fancy that you do your duty as a respectable member of the society by keeping informed of the news.



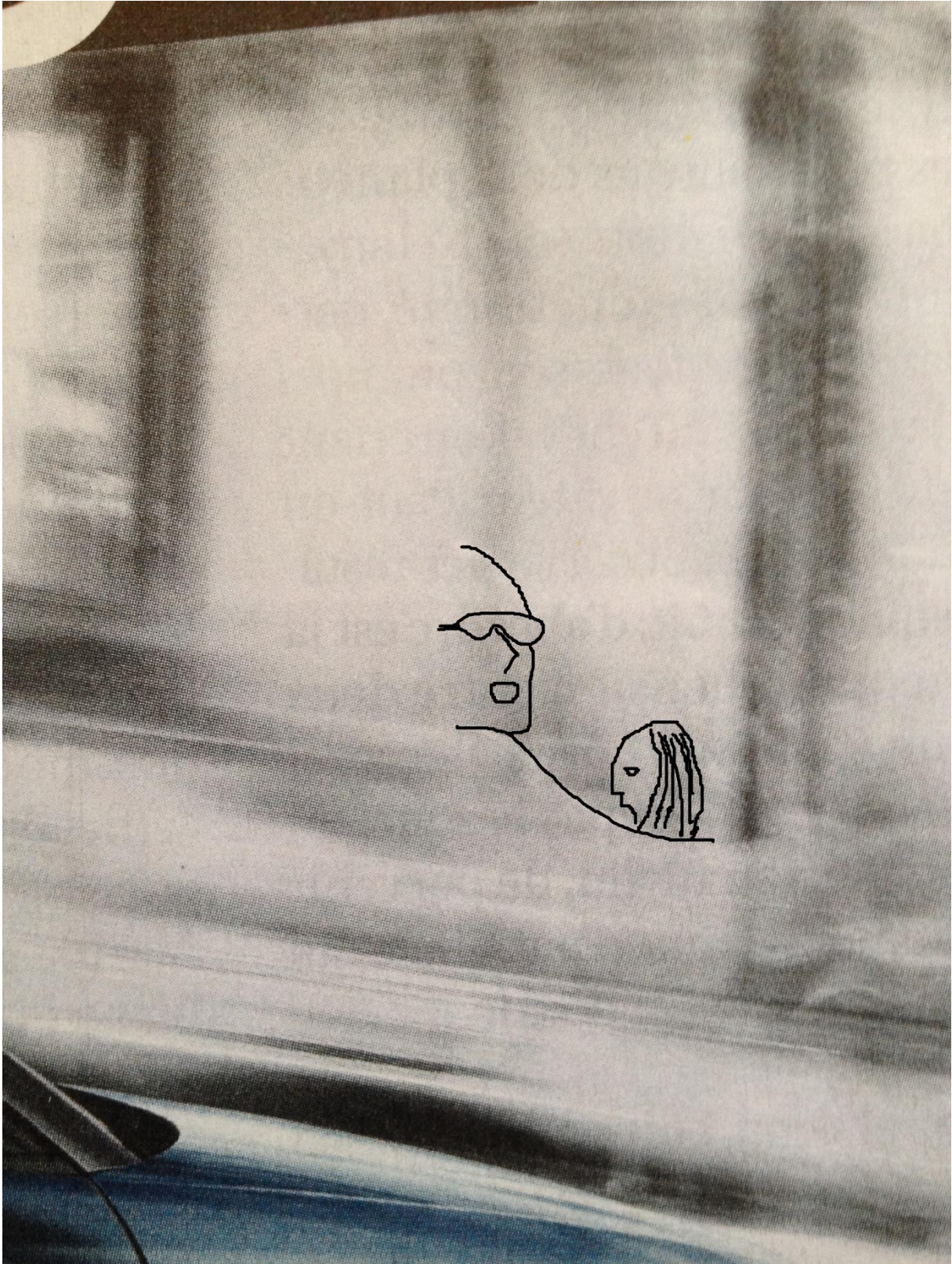
*

Case 85 Audi SEX

Same ad as Case 5. I did not expatiate then on the copy “Less and the City,” which refers – tongue in cheek, as always – to the successful TV series “Sex and the City,” and I won’t here either. You already know that when I report copy as “tongue in cheek,” it means that it’s deadly serious. No, what I call your attention to presently is the fellatio performed to a spectacled man looking in your direction. It may be a portrait of the former president of Volkswagen’s directory, who resigned on September 23 (taking with him a golden parachute of 28 million euros) following the disclosure of a huge fraud involving 11 million cars of several marques of the group, including Audi, souped up with anti-antipollution test software (I’ve just seen his picture in the papers and I think our man here looks like him.) If Volkswagen’s lawyers now have the judicial proceedings go their own way, we will learn the top brass were utterly ignorant of what was happening, so that the fraud can only be the mischief of some crazed engineer, a minor one at that. And if, on the other hand, they do not have it their way, the economic consequences will be tremendous not only for the first car manufacturer in the world (providing their daily bread to 600,000 people) but for the world itself.



85-1 (5-4)



85-2 (5-5)

Case 86 Mgen SEX

The model on the ad is a skier, a champion, people like him. Sport is so important because it boosts your testosterone. When your favorite player or team wins, you get a testosterone boost (Gad Saad, *The Consuming Instinct*, 2011). When it loses, you've really got to watch another match, or another sport, where another of your favorites can win again. It keeps you high. And it makes you buy. A little subliminal can do no harm either; that's why the graphic designer embedded in the background a smiling woman's face presented with a penis.

mgen*

ENGAGEMENT
PERFORMANCE
SOLIDARITÉ
J'AI CHOISI
MGEN

MARTIN
FOURCADE
CHAMPION DU MONDE DE BIATHLON

MGEN : la solidarité qui profite à tous, et d'abord à vous
Maladie, hospitalisation, optique, dentaire, arrêt de travail, invalidité
votre vie et vos besoins peuvent évoluer. Pourquoi, dès lors, votre
protection santé et prévoyance n'évoluerait-elle pas en fonction de
votre préférence ? Pour accompagner chaque moment de votre vie
MGEN propose des offres adaptées qui couvrent efficacement vos
frais de santé et de prévoyance en même temps. Vous aussi, comme
plus de 3 millions de personnes, faites de la référence solidarité
MGEN votre préférence.

mgen.fr
MUTUELLE
SANTÉ
PRÉVOYANCE

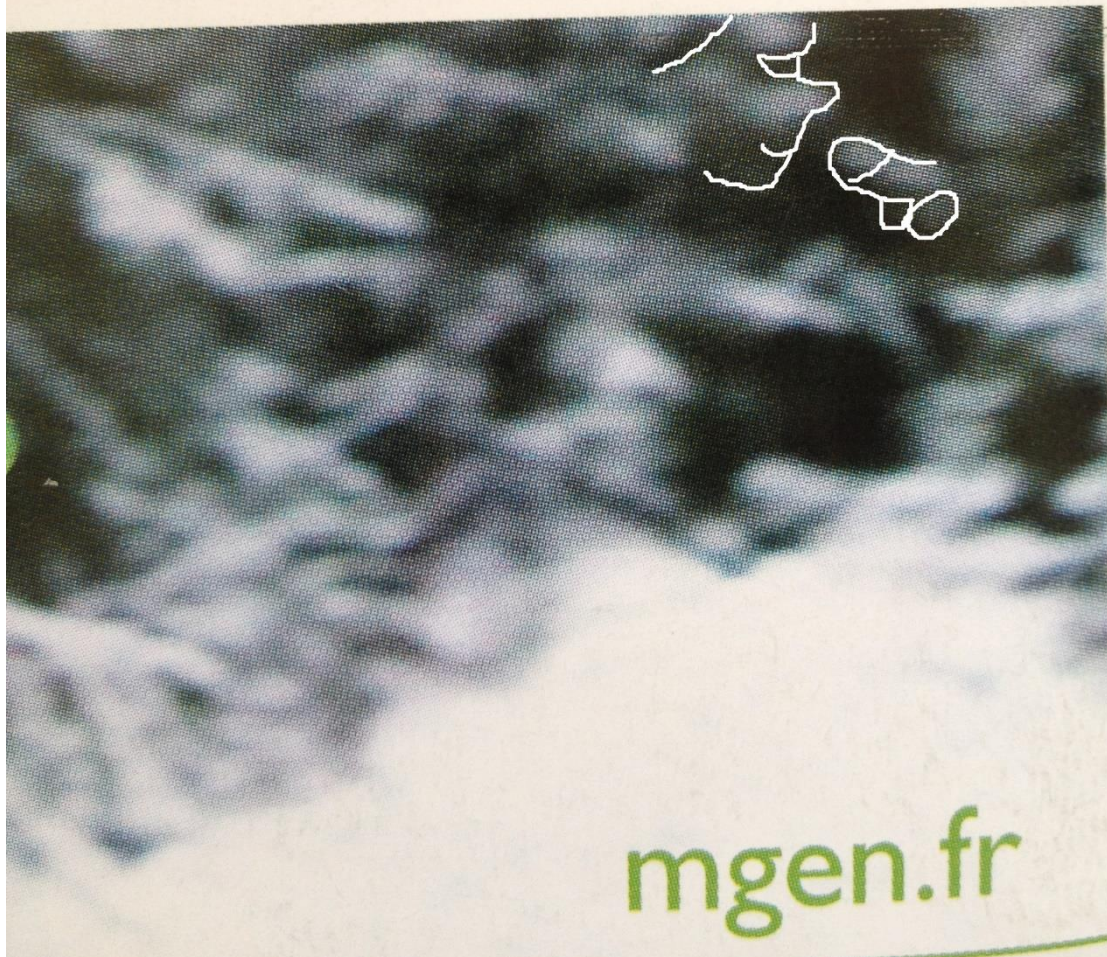
86-1

que, certains, peuvent évoluer. Pourquoi, dès lors, votre assurance n'évoluerait-elle pas en fonction de votre situation pour accompagner chaque moment de votre vie, avec des solutions adaptées qui couvrent efficacement vos besoins à tout moment de votre vie. Vous aussi, comme toutes les autres personnes, faites de la référence solidaire.



86-2

que, certains, peuvent évoluer. Pourquoi, dès lors, votre assurance n'évoluerait-elle pas en fonction de votre situation pour accompagner chaque moment de votre vie, avec des solutions adaptées qui couvrent efficacement vos besoins à tout moment de votre vie. Vous aussi, comme toutes les autres personnes, faites de la référence solidaire.



86-3

Case 87 Mettez Paris SEX

Hunters, it is well known, are Nature's best friends. The present ad, however, tells another story. It is a cheap ad for a dress business located in Paris. The business sells hunting attire. The picture shows a painting of the naive genre representing a hunter and a reindeer before a tree adorned with wild fowl, bird, and squirrel. The reindeer's eye is wicked. The hunter's left hand holds a branch of the tree; the part he is holding is quite dark, but further on the right the branch is silvery gray like steel, as if the hunter were not holding a branch but instead were brandishing a knife. And, astonishingly, the whole painting is smeared with a reddish-brown substance like dried blood. The ad, obviously, intends to appeal to bloodthirsty, brutish minds, violent people eager to indulge in butchering live bodies – the friends of Nature we were talking about.

mettez 
Paris

“Le Meilleur de l’Autriche”

Nouvelle collection Printemps 2015



Chasse, Styles anglais & autrichien

12, Boulevard MALESHERBES 75008 PARIS

www.mettez.com Info@mettez.com

Tél. : 01 42 65 33 76

XII

Transmarginal Advertising

For an explanation of the title “Transmarginal Advertising,” go to Complements, after Cases 88-95 below.

July 2016

Case 88 Tyrannosaurus Toyota

An advert from the Italian weekly *L'Espresso* (October 1st, 2015).

Is it possible to miss the ferocious look of the car, with its headlights designed as brutish eyes and the bumper as the mouth of a furious animal ready to attack? It seems possible, yes, because who would admit, even to themselves, that they buy a car that looks frightful – a car that takes one back to some fantasy prehistoric times when cavemen rode dinosaurs to raid on their enemies and exterminate them to the last man?

Here you get an illustration to some scholarly conclusions I find thus expressed:

It is well-known that staring eyes can elicit fear in humans and other nonhuman species (Eibl-Eibesfeldt 1989; Aiken 1998) because such patterns are associated with ambushing predators and aggressive conspecifics (Coss 2003). Eyespots are exploited by certain organisms to ward off potential predators and sometimes they are even present in art, architecture, and design (Joye 2007). For example, some car brands seem to tap into these arousing effects by designing vehicles whose headlights are similar to frowning and threatening ‘eyes’, which can give them a conspicuously aggressive look (Coss 2003; Joye 2007). Recent research by Aggarwal and McGill (2007) indeed confirms that car fronts are perceived as face-like and can express different types of emotions.”

“Evolutionary Store Atmospherics” – Designing with Evolution in Mind, Yannick Joye, Karolien Poels, and Kim Willems, in *Evolutionary Psychology in the Business Sciences*, G. Saad ed., 2011

The “seem” in the next to last sentence (“some car brands seem to tap”) is superfluous: they do tap into these effects.

In the last sentence the authors cite some research that tends to show people are conscious of their perception of car fronts as being face-like. No doubt you can, in a psychology lab, draw the attention of people on the fact, but I suggest the perception is not conscious during purchase decision, for a man who would acknowledge he is buying a car because of its threatening and aggressive look would by the same token admit to himself either that he needs to compensate for some deficiencies in his life or that he is a public danger. Besides, if the same man is conscious of the ferocious look of his car, then certainly he can reflect that others will be conscious of it too and that they may make inferences from his choice of such a car to the kind of man he is, namely a man in need of compensation for deficiencies or an outright antisocial person, or both. Therefore, I think the ferocious aspect of the car as pictured in the advert remains largely subliminal. If perceived at conscious level, it will be explained away as unintentional, when in reality it is his sick mind manufacturers and advertisers are tapping.

NUOVA AURIS HYBRID. GUIDARE PER CREDERE.



**TUA A 200 € AL MESE
CON 4 ANNI DI MANUTENZIONE E GARANZIA.
E LA RESTITUISCI QUANDO VUOI. TAEG 6,03%.**



**TOYOTA
HYBRID**

**Vieni a fare il Test Drive della Verità.
Scopri di più su toyota.it**



88-1

NUOVA AURIS HYBRID. GUIDARE PER CREDERE.

TOYOTA

ALWAYS
BETTER



TUA A 200 € AL MESE
CON 4 ANNI DI MANUTENZIONE E GARANZIA.
E LA RESTITUISCI QUANDO VUOI. TAEG 6,03%.



TOYOTA
HYBRID

Vieni a fare il Test Drive della Verità.
Scopri di più su toyota.it



88-2

Case 89 El Corte Inglés SEX

Cases 89 to 92 are taken from the Spanish magazine *¡Hola!* (September 30, 2015).

El Corte Inglés is a local store chain. On this ad you only see a model leaning against the frame of what seems to be a huge mirror. Or maybe it's just an empty frame because no reflection is to be seen; instead, it's the same whitish, empty wall inside and outside the frame. And the model is leaning against it. The copy, in Spanish, says "*Inspiras otoño*," "inspire autumn." The local store chain advertises its autumn fashion collection.

Yet this is not all. The back of the model's left hand is in contact with some gilded pattern of the frame. This adornment is an erect penis, of which I have outlined the testes, the shaft, and the glans (picture 89-3). What would make you overlook that it is an erect penis is not only the downward direction of the penis but also the somewhat warped proportions of the shaft and glans. No matter how realistic the curvature of the shaft, it tapers at the junction with the glans, which makes the latter look extremely big. The model is caressing it with the back of her hand. Moreover, the index finger is pointing to the model's mouth, which may be telling you she is intent on putting the penis in her mouth.



89-1



89-2



89-3

Case 90 Jo Malone (London) SEX

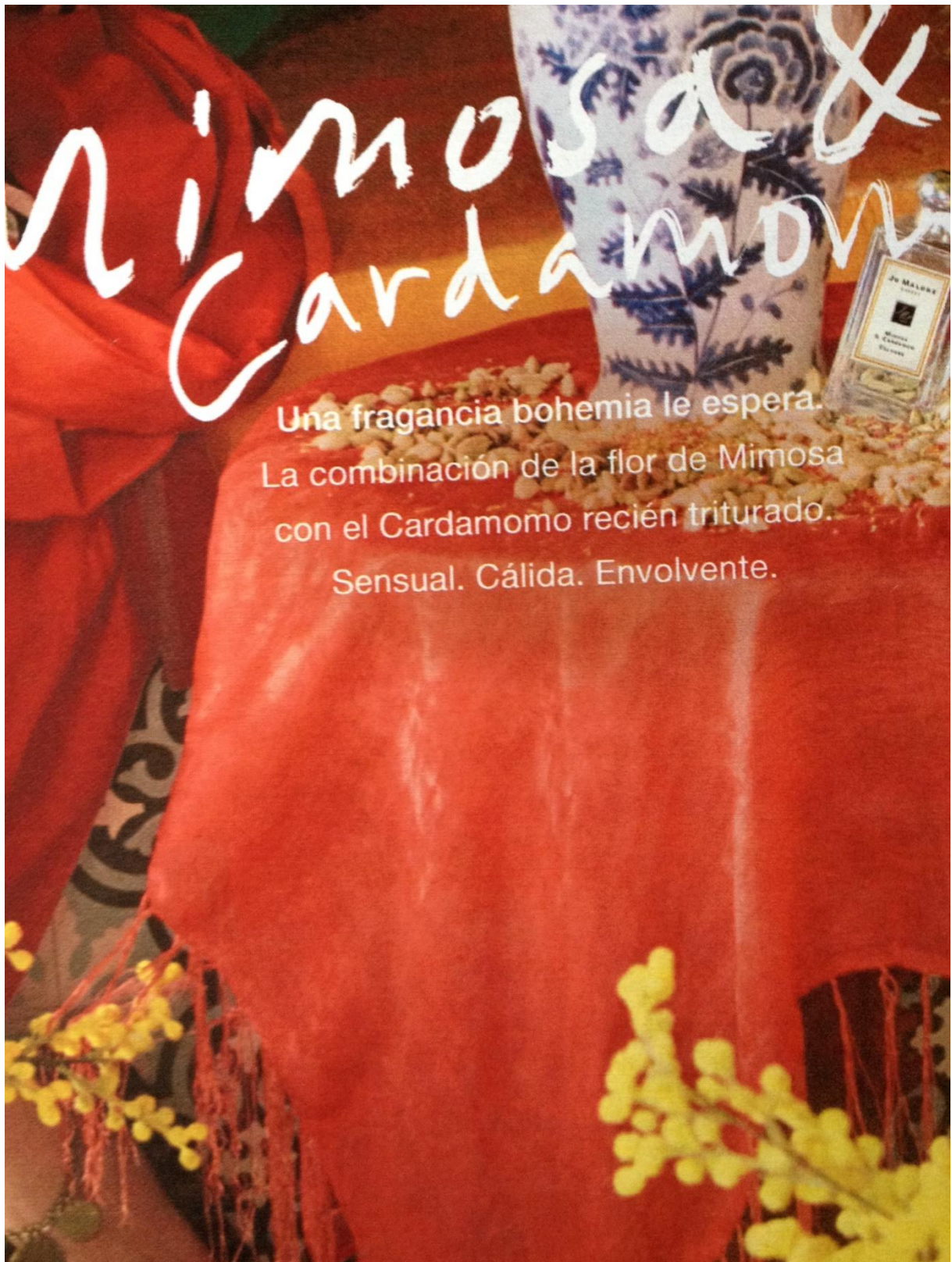
The copy says that the combination of mimosa and cardamom is “sensual, warm and enveloping.” Fine. Now, strangely, part of the tablecloth is hooked to, I don’t know for sure, either a branch of mimosa or the model’s ankle just behind it (more likely the branch, however). This, in my opinion, is completely crazy. How could the advertisers overlook such a blunder? Couldn’t they just disentangle the tablecloth from the plant or the model’s ankle bracelet before taking the picture? How much were these incompetent fools paid for the shot?

Yet, when you look more carefully at the tablecloth, you see that the fold it is making due to its entanglement with the mimosa looks like an erect penis. It’s not that they needed the hooking to make the fold, because most of the picture seems to have been airbrushed and they could have airbrushed any type of fold they wanted, but they needed a dissonant element to draw your subconscious attention to the subliminal sexual depiction. From the tip of the penis, sperm, drawn as white irregular blots, is spurting (sluggishly). This ejaculation happens on the same spot where the copy’s word “sensual” is written.

Further on the right of the penis, you can see a spectral face on the cloth. The model herself has something eerie about her. She may be described, except for the closed mouth, as been completely thoughtless and emotionless, as if zombified.



90-1



90-2



90-3

Case 91 Travelkids SEX

Travelkids organizes travels and sojourns “for the family.” Yet, in case you would find it a bit trite, they suggest you may find more excitement than just that. I am not talking about the meeting with Santa Claus, which is the copy line, but of the subliminal embed in the background. A woman is laid with two men. One man is lying beneath her; you can see his face, looking at you, between her right thigh and her right breast. The other man’s face is against her face. I have also outlined what seem to be a stretched arm and a hand resting on the woman’s head, hinting at the possible presence of a third man. The man beneath the woman is penetrating her in the anus (picture 91-3). The vaginal slit may be stuffed with a penis too, if you look carefully, but I have not outlined this because I’m not so sure there.



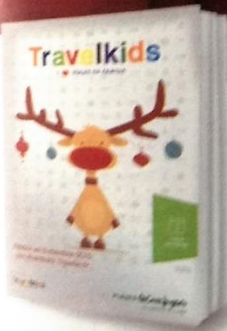
Encuentro con Papá Noel, un momento inolvidable

5%

5% de descuento

3

3 meses sin intereses



¡Conoce también a los Reyes Magos!
Consulta otros destinos en nuestro folleto Travelkids Viajes en Familia



Vuelos incluidos
desde Madrid o Barcelona

Actividades para toda la familia

Safari en trineo tirado por Huskies, paseo en trineo tirado por renos, mini motos de nieve para los mas pequeños, ceremonia Sami, cena especial de despedida y encuentro con Papá Noel.

Ylläs | Lapland Hotel Saaga **** Sup.

Saariselkä | Hotel Gielas **** Sup.

Puente de Diciembre

5 días | 4 noches

Salida 4 de diciembre desde Madrid o Barcelona.

Adulto
2.287€
Niño
1.895€

Puente de Diciembre

5 días | 4 noches Salida 4 de diciembre desde Madrid o Barcelona.

Adulto
2.439€

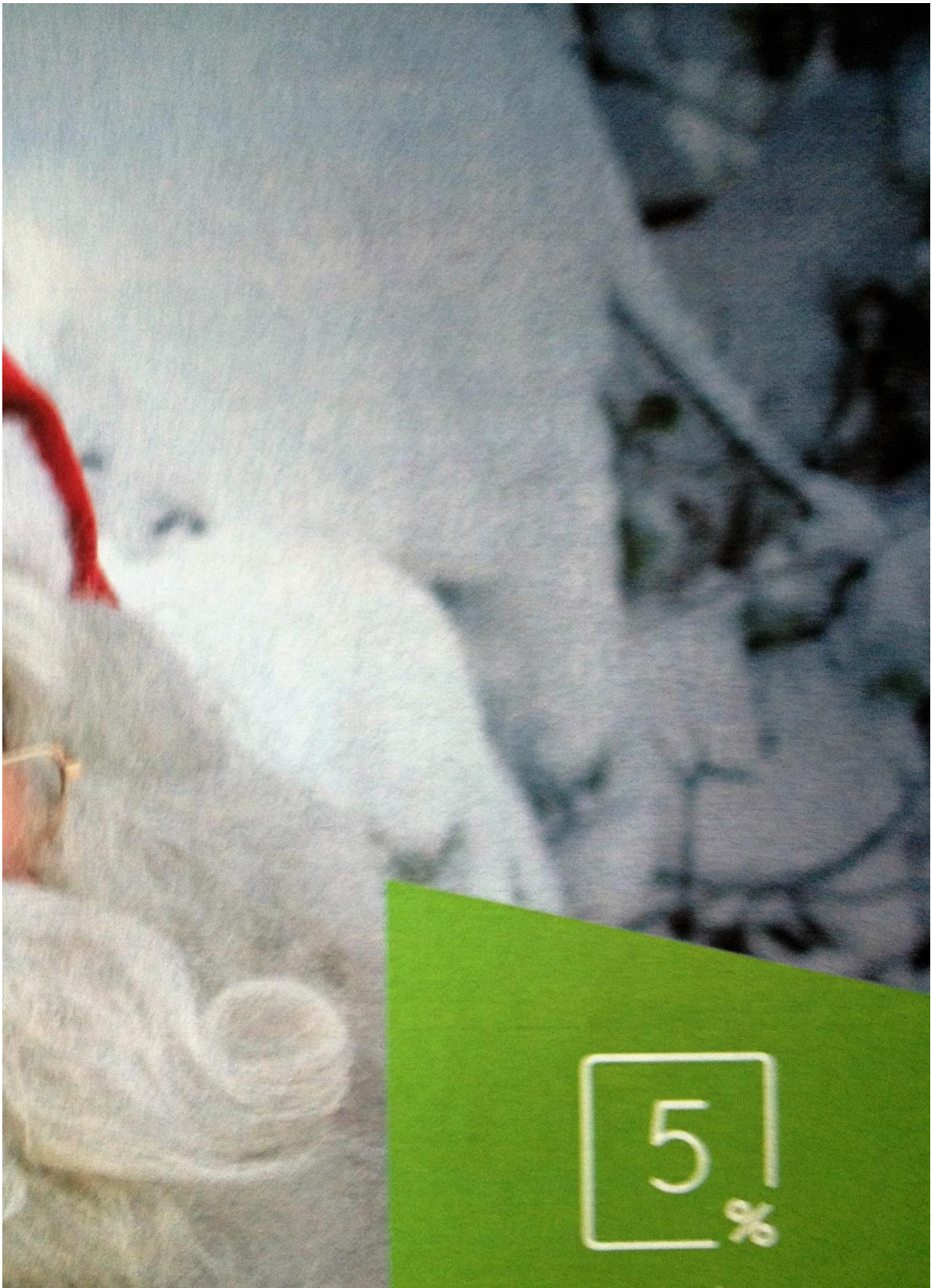
Navidad y Fin de Año

5 días | 4 noches Salida 29 de diciembre desde Madrid.

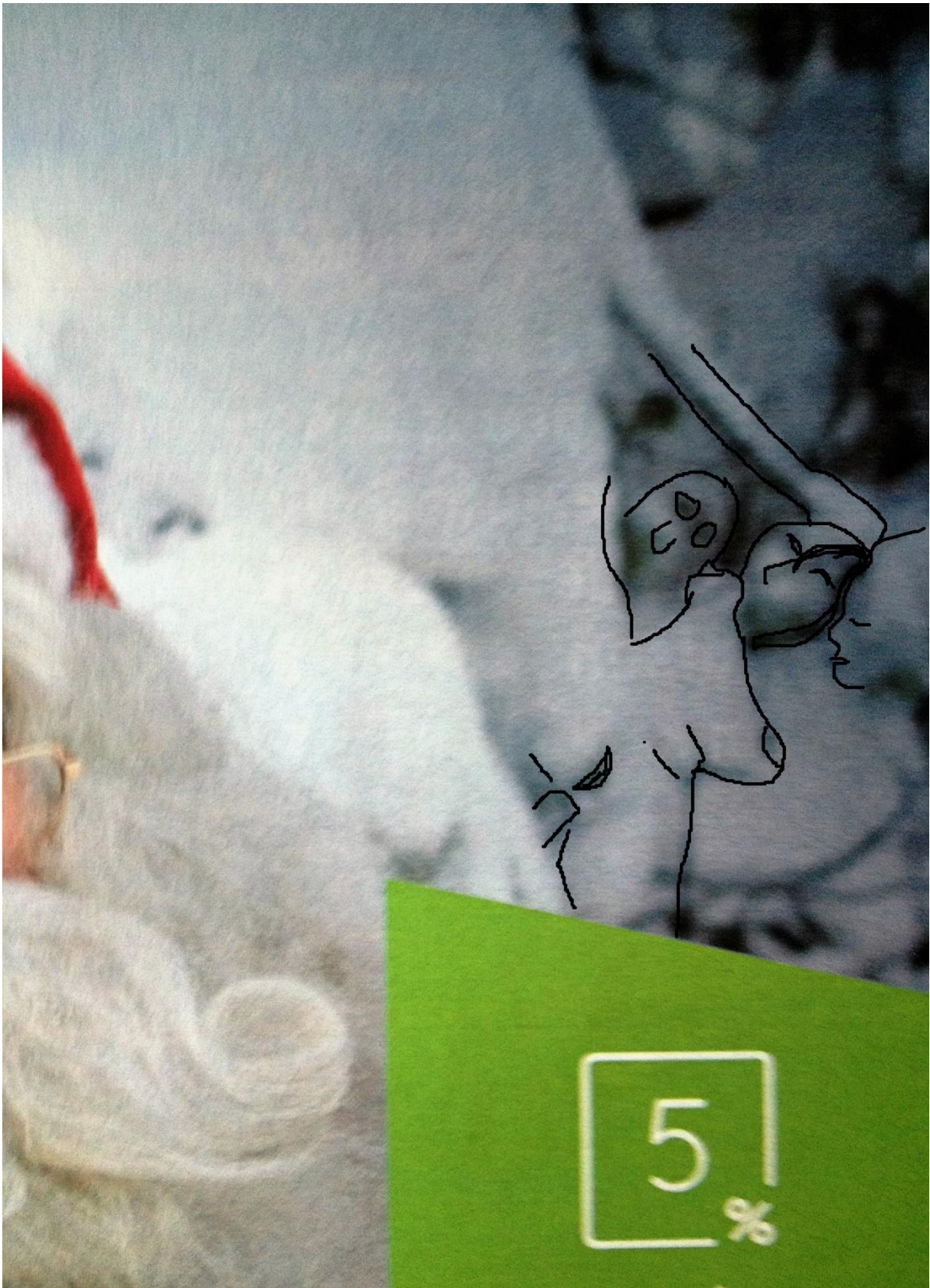
6 días | 5 noches Salidas 21 y 27 de diciembre desde Madrid o Barcelona y 29 de diciembre desde Barcelona.

Niño
1.624€

VIAJES **El Corte Inglés**



91-2



91-3

Case 92 Rabat (Barcelona Madrid Valencia) SEX

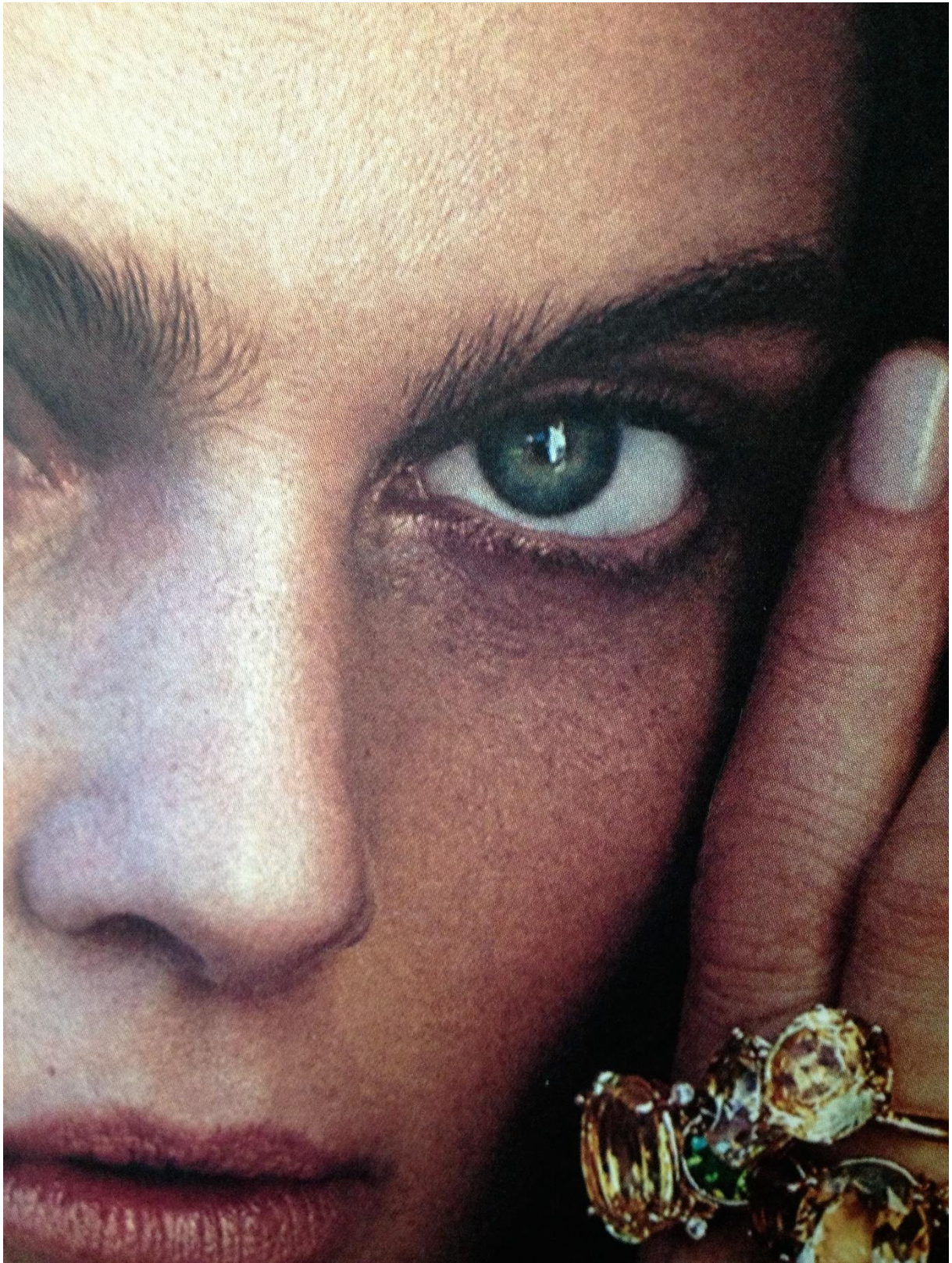
The bust shows almost only naked parts, uncovered skin. The pattern of the few centimeters of dress that you can see looks like spermatozoa.

Under the model's eyes, in the shady area, have been embedded a couple of SEXes which I leave to you to spot.

What I have concentrated on is the subliminal presence, in the background, of a woman wearing only a dark shirt or blouse wide open on her naked breast. The blouse has fallen down her shoulders, slightly, so the shoulders too are largely uncovered. Her left hand is on her vagina. The inclination of the head hints at a moment of abandon. That subliminal woman is masturbating.



92-1



92-2



92-3



92-4

Case 93 Gucci SEX

Cases 93 to 95 are from *Cosmopolitan* UK Edition, October 2015.

On the left page of this two-page advert for perfume, you can see, beside the name of the brand and the copy (“Underneath it all she wears Gucci Bamboo” – this by itself is eroticism, isn’t it?), a Japanese-like ink print, complete with birds in bamboo trees and grass by a river. The river stream and grass stand for a moist, oozing vaginal slit with pubic hair.

The model on the right page, wearing a risqué evening dress, is looking at you intensely. You too are on the picture, mind you, because albeit you may think the shadow on the wall is hers, whose shadow is it that is *on her*? There is only one shadow and that’s the shadow of a man with erect penis (outlined on picture 93-2). This is whom the woman is looking at.



93-1



93-2

Case 94 Pantene SEX

Are words necessary? I don't know how to tell you, but there's not even a façade of propriety in your world. You talk like a person of worth and dignity, and yet that's the kind of stuff your guests will find in your living room, on the sofa or under the coffee table – depictions of fellatio.

Please take a look back at what I wrote on Case 72, where I already discussed the “blow dry” copy. The present advert confirms that I am right. For, yes, it's a fellatio that you're seeing just now. And it's a fellatio that was intended, with that hairdryer and that wide-open mouth. Had it not been intended, there would have been some guy in the staff telling the others: “Shouldn't we do something to make the picture look less like a fellatio?” And someone would have replied: “Oh yes, it's true some people will think of a fellatio! Let's do something about it.” No, they wanted it that way.

PANTENE

VISIBLY ERASE THE DAMAGE OF 100 BLOW DRIES

OUR MOST ADVANCED FORMULA YET.
VISIBLY ERASES DAMAGE FROM THE FIRST USE.
YOU'LL BE BLOWN AWAY.

PANTENE PRO-V
CONDITIONER
REPAIR & PROTECT

PANTENE PRO-V
SHAMPOO
REPAIR & PROTECT

PRO-V

FIND OUT MORE ON PANTENE.COM

Case 95 Fiat SEX

A female hand is about to apply lipstick to a car rear light. Because, as the copy goes, the rear light is as glossy as lipstick. On the other hand, the stick is about to penetrate the dark space between the red glossy “lining” of the rear light. Another sexual representation.

Why do women put on lipstick in the first place? According to evolutionary psychologists, it’s a way to simulate sexual arousal, since her lips tend to redden and shine when a woman is aroused; such a state of arousal being in its turn sexually arousing for men, lipstick makes women more attractive. It’s like swollen genitals during estrus among certain primate species. Among species with visible estrus, a female can take no rest at these periods because all males want to copulate with her, and even if she’s monopolized by one dominant male he won’t stop copulating with her, in case she would be inseminated by another male despite his vigilance (and he wants to counter the other male’s semen with his own: this is called sperm competition, see my *Science of Sex*).

In echo with Case 88 (Tyrannosaurus Toyota), even though the ad is obviously aimed at women, its copy intends to be alluring to aggressiveness: “The Icon Reloaded. Change the Fiat 500? That’s crazy talk. So we set out to subtly style-up the little beauty. Take a look at the red hot halo-style rear lights with body coloured inserts. Just one of many ferociously fashionable (author’s emphasis) touches that make the new Fiat 500 even glossier. Shine baby, shine.” Being fashionable is not enough, one must be “ferociously” fashionable. Many a psychologist (even among evolutionary psychologists) will tell you women are not aggressive... They don’t live in the same world as us, seemingly. Women are aggressive and when they mean business they know how to use men as weapons.

“Icon” can apply both to the car and the customer, that is, the female ad viewer. If the latter needs “reloading,” and that can mean something very organic such as vagina-loading (this is consistent with the whole seduction line of the ad), she may reach out for the car.

NEW
500

THE ICON
RELOADED

Change the Fiat 500? That's crazy talk. So we set out to subtly style-up the little beauty. Take a look at the red hot halo-style rear lights with body coloured inserts. Just one of many ferociously fashionable touches that make the new Fiat 500 even glossier. Shine baby, shine.

GLOSS
TECHNOLOGY



Complements

Have I the right to make use of all these adverts without asking permission? I have read several scholarly books dealing (more or less competently) with advertising, and they all thank the companies for their kind permission to let them use their material.

On one occasion, when Kentucky Fried Chicken faced a viral campaign on the Web because of a racist ad, first they hinted ominously at unpermitted use of their advert by the people who launched the campaign. Then they pulled the ad like good boys.

Still, I find it would be strange that the companies that otherwise pay for an advertisement to be made for one of their products and also pay for that advert to appear in various media, object to another medium showing the same material without asking money for it. To be sure, I take the liberty of making comments on that material, which the other media never do (they take the money and shut up – that’s what they call informing the public). This is why I add here the following excerpt from Eric McLuhan’s introduction to the 2014 edition of Marshall McLuhan’s book *Culture Is Our Business* (1970):

Many have wondered at the lack of acknowledged permissions for using the ads in both books [*The Mechanical Bride* and *Culture Is Our Business*]. The reason is that permissions were unnecessary: the ads were available for free. Editors at Vanguard had found a curious legal fiction. Advertisers were being given huge tax breaks on the grounds that they were engaged in a sort of educational enterprise, “educating the public” about products so that it might better make informed choices. The upshot is that anyone can make use of the (government-supported) ads for free providing they were not being used as ads, but as educational materials, for educative purposes. Needless to say, the agencies were reluctant to let these matters become known to the public.

And, on behalf of advertisers, thank you for the tax breaks.

Whether this legal provision applies to my case or not, I haven’t the slightest clue (under which jurisdiction lies this blog is unknown to me), but I guess that if multinationals want to crush me or anyone, they have the means. But I, on my side, have nothing to lose. (They perhaps have the means to buy me, as an alternative, who knows?)

I’ve got nothing to lose and besides I’m not alone; there is at least one living dead with me, namely Aldous Huxley, whose *Brave New World Revisited* (1958), written some 25 years after *Brave New World*, I urge you to read, especially, regarding the present topic, its chapter IX “Subconscious Persuasion,” which I quote:

Poetzl was one of the portents which, when writing *Brave New World*, I somehow overlooked. There is no reference in my fable to subliminal projection. It is a mistake of omission which, if I were to rewrite the book today, I should most certainly correct.

Last but not least, a quote from William James on his views about the “transmarginal field of consciousness,” in *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902):

Such rapid abolition of ancient impulses and propensities [by religious conversion] reminds us so strongly of what has been observed as the result of hypnotic suggestion that it is difficult not to believe that subliminal influences play the decisive part in these abrupt changes of heart, just as they do in hypnotism. Suggestive therapeutics abound in records of cure, after a few sittings, of inveterate bad habits with which the patient, left to ordinary moral and physical influences, had struggled in vain. Both drunkenness and sexual vice have been cured in this way, action

through the subliminal seeming thus in many individuals to have the prerogative of inducing relatively stable change (author's emphasis). If the grace of God miraculously operates, it probably operates through the subliminal door, then.

and

Incursions from beyond the transmarginal region have a peculiar power to increase conviction.”

And the money-grubbers would deem it below their dignity to make use of such a powerful tool at their disposal?

XIII

The Merguez Undergloss (I Can't Stand It)

In chapter XII, I pictured myself as a man engaged in a lonely struggle attempting to expose subliminal practices in advertising. The truth is that it is far from being the case, as a brief search on YouTube can convince anyone that the topic is very hot. Scores of videos, viewed by hundreds of thousands, even millions of people, just do the same as I do. Yet the advertising industry and media carry on their business unconcerned.

To be sure, many of these videos seem to circulate chiefly in certain networks preoccupied with the power of an agency they call the Illuminati. I understand that these Illuminati would be some organization inside the freemasonry, the top managers of the whole business, so to speak, apparently having (according to some) direct communication with Satan, which plans they intend to fulfill on this earth. Subliminal techniques, in this peculiar view, would serve Illuminati's goal of world domination.

That some die-hard Christians, faced with the secularization of our societies and cultures (perhaps a sham, this secularization, in fact), are apt to explain things in terms of spiteful, inimical agencies – and the Devil himself – is hardly a surprise. That they are, on the other hand, if not the only ones, at least the most active and successful (counting the number of viewers of their videos) in exposing subliminal techniques, and thus in contributing to the knowing of our times, in short that they proved to be the spearhead of the movement toward the truth, even if it be only in that field, must be a little shocking for die-hard secularists.

Advertisers are like conjurers. If you knew the conjurer's tricks, you wouldn't go to his show. Likewise, if you knew how advertising worked, advertising would fail to achieve its goal, which is to influence behavior. That such is its goal is somewhat concealed by our society, its laws and law courts' calling it "commercial information" notwithstanding the fact that such "information" is always aiming at the consumer's purchase in the economic interest of the "informant." Given this goal – suggestion –, advertising must remain undiscussed and unexamined if it ought to be efficient. Democracy has proved often enough over time that it can accommodate to complete lack of transparency in numerous matters; yet, on the plane of principles, both concepts – democracy and opacity – undermine each other, so how one reconciles the status of advertising with our national constitutions is a problem that so far has remained unresolved.

August 2016

*

Case 96 Boodles SEX

Cases 96 & 97 are taken from *Vanity Fair* n° 672, August 2016 (English edition: “Vanity Fair is published by the Condé Nast Publications Ltd., Vogue House, Hanover Square, London,” p. 26).

The picture shows a woman’s face looking at the viewer. Albeit the model’s chin seems to rest on her left hand, not a single flesh fold one would expect from the pressure of the palm on the fatty parts of the chin can be seen. Evidently, the picture is a montage. Perhaps the hand doesn’t even to the same model.

Now, if you take a closer look at the area where the hand is supposed to be in contact with the chin, the feeling arising is actually that of distance rather than contact. It seems that the graphic designer made no effort to create an illusion of contact, and that he wanted to tell us a quite different story than that of a chin resting on a hand, which a quick glance at the advert first suggests Gestalt-wise.

The model wears a cream-colored jersey. The fabric’s fold on the shoulder is extremely peculiar; I can’t figure out how the jersey could become so folded, unless it has been very poorly cut... or the fold designed to that effect for the ad. So let’s take a closer look at this fold. I have outlined nothing in the picture because I think the effect is obvious. The hand, seemingly used to support the model’s chin, is in fact clenching an object that protrudes from it, on its right, and is suggested by a double fabric fold. This object is no other than a penis. It is a still flaccid or half flaccid penis curving downward, and the hand masturbates it, making it bob to and fro because of its not being quite stiff yet.

Furthermore, the two folds delineating the penis can be connected to a third one further on the left, the resulting compound making a stylized vulva.



Case 97 Creed SEX

Picture 97-1 is taken from a two-page ad for the new Creed woman perfume Aventus For Her, of which it is the first page, showing only the “classic” Aventus perfume for men. We see the perfume bottle salient on a marble-like whitish background and some greenery probably representing the fragrances involved and which I identify as blackcurrants, mint, and licorice. The licorice stick is leaning against the bottle top. Its tip is reminiscent of a penis, which I have outlined in red.

The curvature is suggestive and, although the stalk somewhat tapers toward the tip, the glans neatly partitions from the shaft thanks to a visible ridge. The texture of the stick provides veins on the shaft (I outlined one) as well as finer creases around the frenulum (a few being outlined).

I suggest this penis-like object is in fact a clitoris. Just above the point where the meatus would be, lies a dark area given to construe as the shadow of one of the mint leaves. The whole display of shadows looks messy and not quite according to the laws of optics. This particular shadow delineates a pool, that is, an ejaculate pool. Its smoky aspect could also represent some sprayed substance, a cloud of fine moisture particles emanated from the clitoris due to arousal. In short, the arrangement suggests to you the effect that Aventus perfume will have on women: it will arouse them and make them wet and receptive and consenting to any sexual proposition.

ONE TRUE CREED
Creed's ravishing new fragrance is a feminine take on a captivating men's classic

Authentic, family-owned and steeped in history, Creed is a breath of fresh air in today's maelstrom of commercial fragrances. Since its founding in 1794, the house has amassed a venerable archive of over 200 perfumes, and today continues to perfect its signature infusion technique. Its Aventus, an acknowledged men's classic, is a testament to the brand's commitment to quality and craftsmanship.

97-1



97-2



97-3

Case 98 L'Oréal SEX

Cases 98-102 are taken from the American magazine *Glamour*, August 2016.

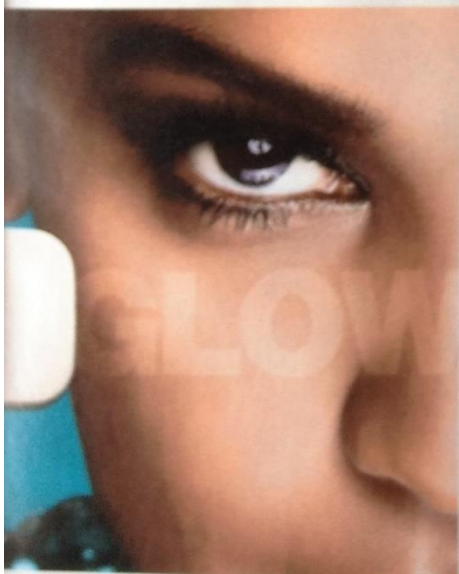
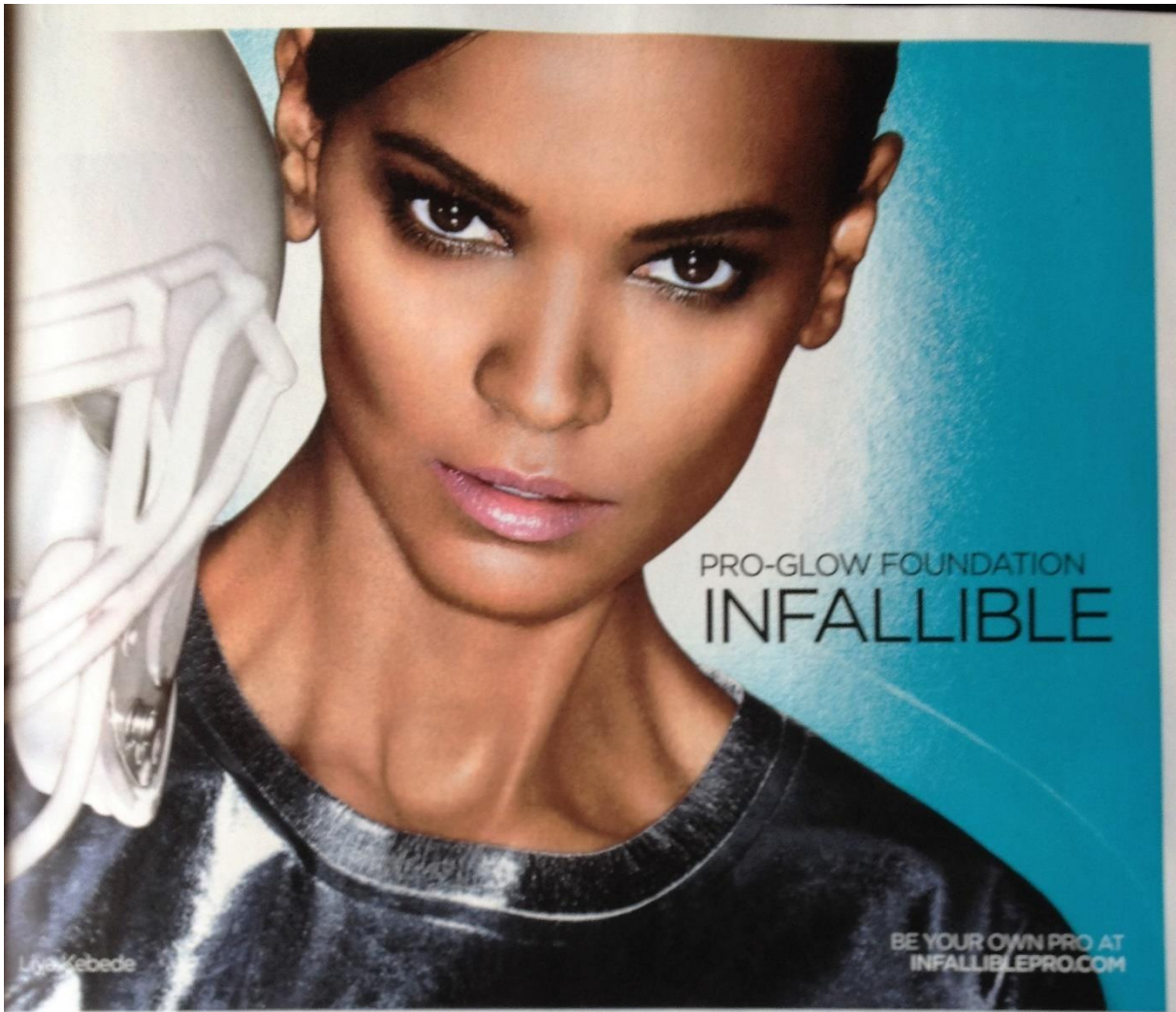
The present ad for L'Oréal "Infallible Pro-Glow" is endorsed by Ethiopian model and actress Liya Kebede, whose name appears on the bottom left of the upper picture, for those, like me, who did not know the model. Not that the name was known to me either, but I was made aware in that way that she was a celebrity. Mentioning the name might betray that the celebrity in question is not so famous, after all – or does it mean that it was thought she would be impossible to recognize in the ad due to massive airbrushing of the picture?

I don't know what the apparatus on the left of the upper picture is; it looks like some hairdresser's or gymnastics equipment. On another plane, it looks like a human skull looking at the model, with the chrome parts drawing the jaws and mouth.

The model is looking at the viewer. Among the intricate patterns of the left ear (the model's right ear) a fellatio has been embedded, which I have outlined in white. Next to the model's temple appears a penis – shaft, glans, and meatus visible. Its impressive size can be measured by comparing it with the human face drawn beside it, the mouth of which being entirely concealed by the glans. The performer of the fellatio must be currently licking the shaft.

(ii)

Nathan (see p. 271) emailed me: "I think the model in the L'Oreal ad is holding an American football helmet." I thank him for that; as a man raised and living in Europe, an American football helmet is not something that would come to my mind. Yet I am sure in real life a snow-white football helmet is an oddity, so the advertisers may well have meant to carry the idea of a skull.



NOW PRO WITH AN ALL-DAY GLOW:
24HR FOUNDATION
THE NEW PRO-LOOK OF LONGWEAR
BECAUSE YOU'RE WORTH IT.™

NEW RICH HYDRATING
EMOLLIENTS

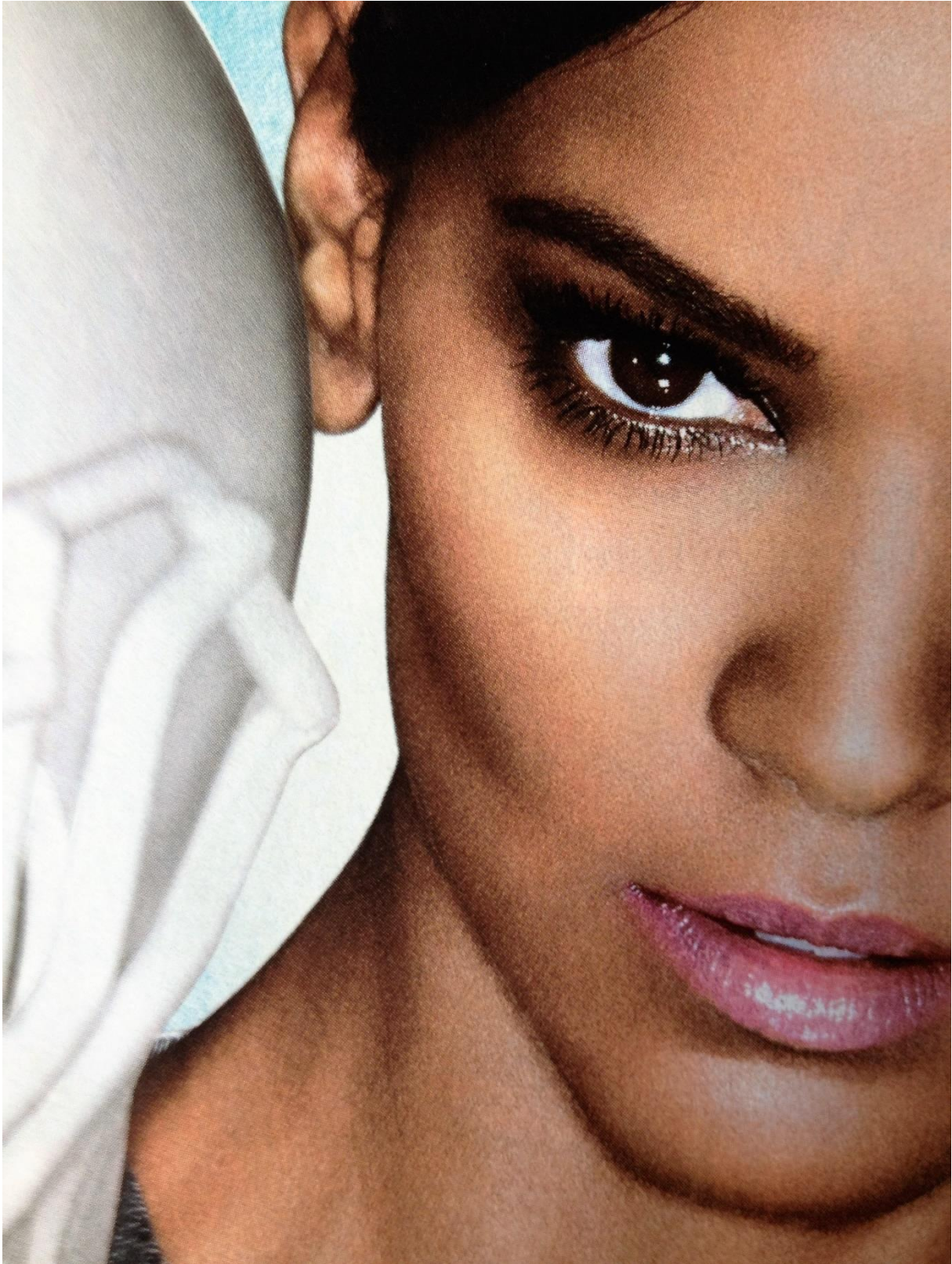


L'ORÉAL
MAKEUP DESIGNER/PARIS

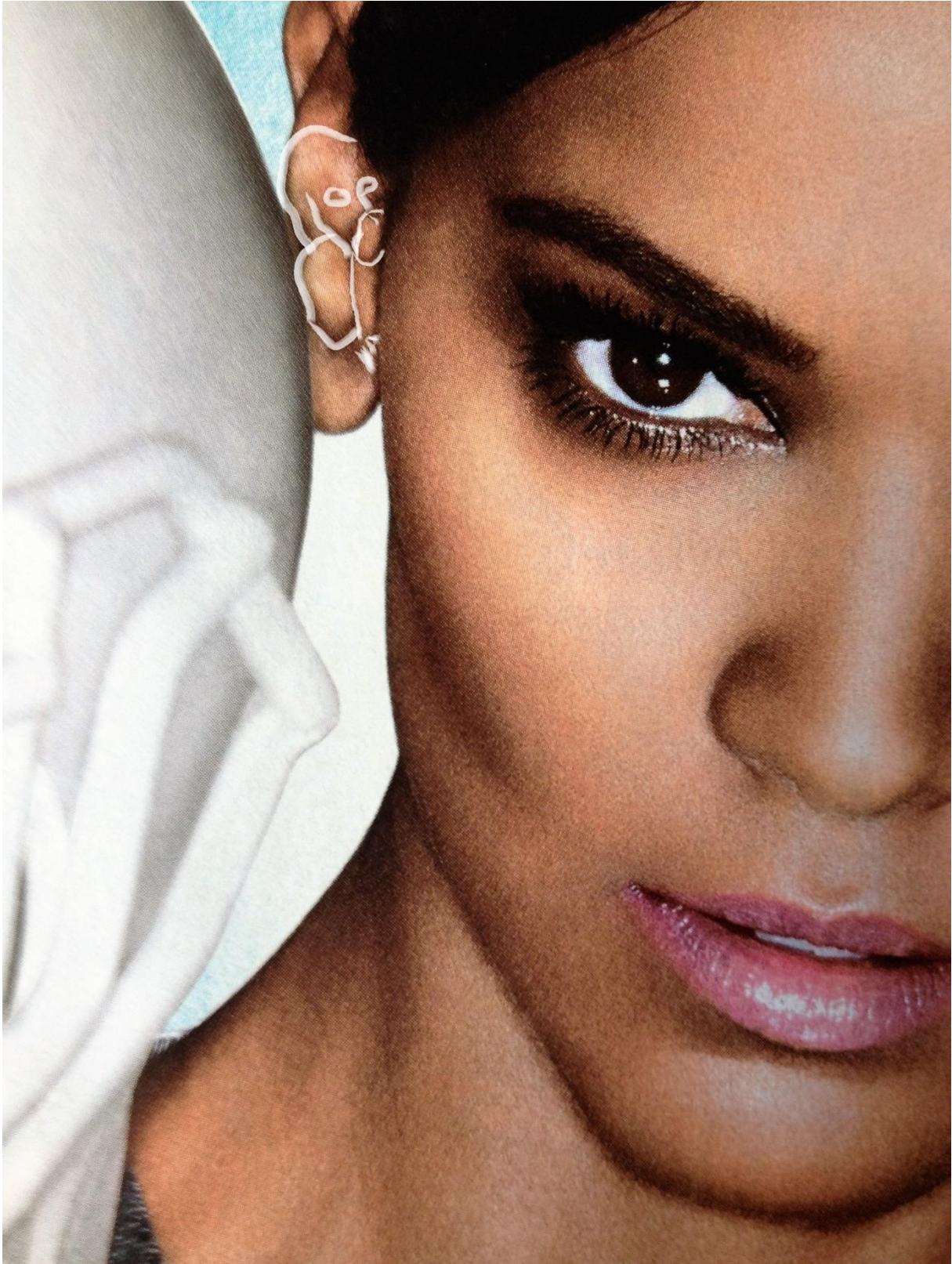


@LOREALMAKEUP
©2016 L'ORÉAL USA, INC.

98-1



98-2



98-3

Case 99 Johnson & Johnson's Aveeno SEX

Another case of celebrity endorsement, this time for Johnson & Johnson's Aveeno daily scrub and daily moisturizer (to be used together). (For theoretical considerations on celebrity endorsement, see Case 39.)

Contrary to Case 98 with actress Liya Kebede, the celebrity here is not named. She's the American actress Jennifer Aniston. I guess she's more expensive a model than her colleague Liya, whose name must appear on the ads.

At the bottom right of the ad, a string bean (French bean) is leaning against the moisturizer bottle. Two beans are out of their pod. The whole thing is a naïve (I mean the pictorial genre) representation of an erect penis. I don't need to outline anything; it's as plain as the nose on your face. The pointed tip may hint, if you like, at a condom.



99-1



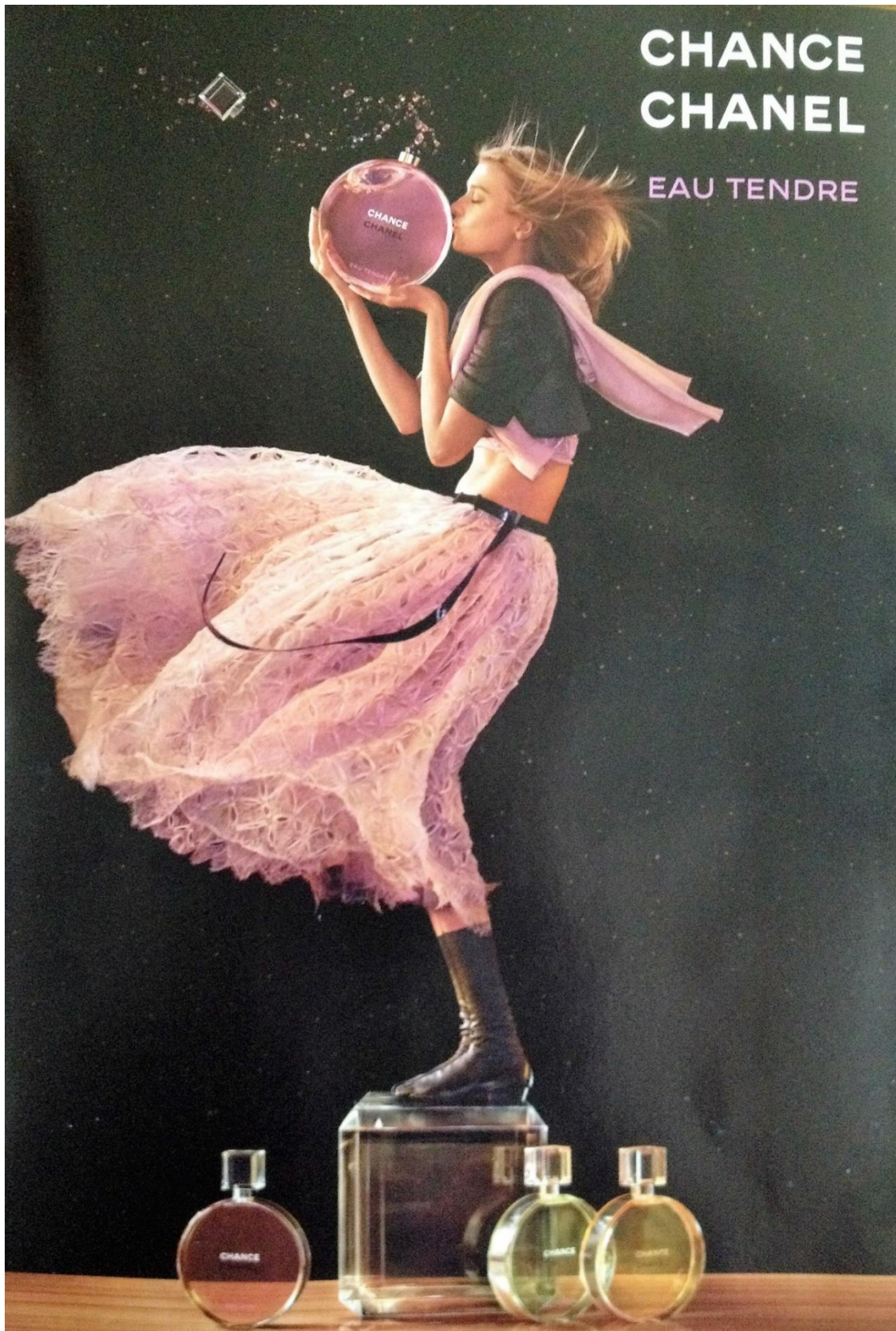
99-2

Case 100 Chanel Eau Tendre SEX

In this picture there is wind, but looking carefully you will find that it is impossible to tell from which direction the wind blows. If you look at the cap of the perfume bottle, blown away from it, and at the model's dress, the wind blows from behind her back. If, on the other hand, you look at the model's hair and shawl, the wind blows from left to right. The apparent inconsistency, likely to be missed on conscious level by many viewers, suggests a maelstrom of sensations; surely this is something of the sort the creators will tell you if you ask them what they mean with such multidirectional winds.

Yet there is something else than just that. Salvador Dali has devoted a whole book, *The Tragic Myth of Millet's Angelus* (in the original French *Le Mythe tragique de l'Angélus de Millet*), 1963, to Jean-François Millet's painting *L'Angélus*, in which he explains among other things that the man's hat is concealing an erection. Dali shows a cartoon in which a naked character can be seen in the same position as the man in the painting, holding a hat at the level of his genitals; when the character takes his hands off the hat because he needs them at once for another use, the hat does not fall and instead stays in the same position, so the viewer understands the hat is maintained by the character's erect penis. Dali tells us that this subliminal erection (I don't remember if he uses the word "subliminal"), together with the woman's attitude, which he describes as mantis-like, was what spooked him as a child after he first saw this painting.

In the advert here, the same technique may have been used (intentionally here, whether Millet's effect was intentional or not). The dress would look as if it were blown forward by a powerful wind but, as the shawl and hair a few centimeters higher are blown in the opposite direction, it would not be wind but instead a powerful erection that elevates the dress in such a manner. The ad would thus appeal to women's penis envy (Freud) by subliminally depicting a woman with a huge penis capable of mighty erections.



100

Case 101 Unilever's Dove SEX

Another case of celebrity endorsement. The personality endorsing the product is, I suppose, the woman seen in the ad and her name the one given under the quoted words, namely, Simona Di Dio. I searched for this name on the Web and found that no single Simona Di Dio can be deemed a celebrity but a few of them, if any, because I found one dancer (a belly dancer, actually), one poetess, one lawyer... As the ads talks of perspiration, I suppose our Simona here is the dancer. So much for celebrity endorsement.

They were right anyway not to use a better-known personality for their ad, because they intended to have her tell a lie. The quote reads: "I didn't know an antiperspirant could make my underarms softer and smoother." Let's ponder for a moment over how things happened. Did Simona, one day, buy Dove Advanced Care and became aware after using it that her underarms had become softer and smoother so she wanted to advertise the fact to the whole world and reached out to Unilever to that effect, or was Simona (if she exists at all) called by the advertising agency to appear in an ad under words alleged to be hers for cash payment? Well?

In a way, the process is the same with all celebrity endorsements. The glitterati do not care a dime about the product they advertise (as long as it does not damage their image), they only care about the money they get from being associated with it. In most cases, however, it's not so direct; if it's an actor, for instance, who's paid, he will play a little sketch in a TV spot or pose for a picture. Here, it is the celebrity's own words that are supposedly quoted, and the name has the same function as a signature.

Moreover, the copy reads as follows: "Dove Advanced Care goes way beyond protection. 9 out of 10 women agreed that it made their underarms soft and smooth." Can Unilever prove it? Can they show the questionnaire, the answers given to it, the research protocols? Can they explain how the survey was carried out? Perhaps they can – why not? – but the material is their propriety and they won't disclose it. Only courts of law could compel them to disclose their proprietary material, but on what ground? *Figures without sources*, it's what advertising is all about.

The advertisement features a woman with curly hair, smiling and touching her hair. The background is a light, textured surface. In the top right corner, the Unilever logo is visible. The main text is a quote from Simona Di Dio. In the bottom right, there is a can of Dove Advanced Care antiperspirant and a testimonial.

Unilever

“I didn't know an antiperspirant could make my underarms softer and smoother.”
Simona Di Dio

Dove
advanced care

Dove Advanced Care goes way beyond protection. 9 out of 10 women agreed that it made their underarms soft and smooth.

Case 102 Chevrolet Malibu Suicide

Where does “a complete 180 on the ordinary” (copy) drive you? According to this ad, it may well lead you to the brink of an abyss.

Albeit “Drive Safely” is written on the license plate (in red letters), the Chevrolet Malibu stands on some perilous edge. If you look at the visible front wheel, you see a diagonal line running behind it in a slightly upward straight direction. Even though the white wall on the right of the car continues further toward the front, this line, beyond which nothing is to be seen (below the wheel and car) but a black space, a different space from that on which the car is now standing, indicates the end of the parking lot, or whatever that place is. The parking lot opens on a mountain scenery under bright sky. The feeling conveyed is that of height, the parking lot looks as if it were accessed through an opening in a mountain slope, and the line the car is about to cross if it advances just a little farther is the edge of a chasm. By escaping the ordinary, the advertisers thus seem to mean indulging one’s suicidal tendencies.

That advertising would appeal to some Thanatos urges (death wish) in man comes as no surprise. That a car is a fitting object to make appeals of this kind goes without saying, given the death toll our societies are paying to their road networks. – Appealing to (and exacerbating) aggressiveness when selling cars, as the ad in Case 88 does, may be regarded as criminal, by the way, bearing this death toll in mind, because those who use their cars and see driving as an outlet to their aggressiveness are likely to provoke more accidents. If research proves this intuitive view wrong, and the counterintuitive view that these people have less accidents right, then I would be glad to be informed of it.

A COMPLETE 180
ON THE ORDINARY.




Breaking the mold has never looked so beautiful. The all-new 2016 Chevrolet Malibu features expressive styling that is sure to take you by surprise. Premium lines and a precisely sculpted exterior designed for exceptional aerodynamics unveil a presence that's truly unexpected.

STARTING AT \$22,500* AS SHOWN \$36,550*

THE ALL-NEW 2016
CHEVROLET MALIBU

FIND NEW ROADS

CHEVROLET 

Complements

Several ads in *Glamour* magazine are copyrighted (you can see the copyright symbol on Case 99's picture, for instance). This is something I have found frequently in magazines' American editions but much more infrequently, or even not at all, in other countries' editions at my disposal. For instance, I do not find a single copyrighted ad in the *Vanity Fair* August issue, *English edition*, from which Cases 96 and 97 are taken.

Does it betray a pettifogging spirit in American business law? Be that as it may, it looks like I'm infringing on legal rights by using copyrighted material (as in Case 99). All I can say for my defense is the nonlucrative, educational nature of my endeavor, and please go back to ch. XII: Complements, and to Eric McLuhan's quote. It explains why, when writing *The Mechanical Bride* and *Culture Is Our Business*, Marshall McLuhan did not ask for permission before using several advertisements in these books, because his publisher found it was not necessary. If it was unnecessary in Canada only, or whatever the publisher's country was (Marshall McLuhan being a Canadian, I assume his publisher was in Canada, but whatever the country is, it is only one country in any case), then the books still would have had to require permissions for sales outside that country, in other legal contexts, that is – a point on which Eric McLuhan does not say a word, which in turn leads me to assume, provisionally, that permission is unnecessary worldwide, no matter how strange that sounds (but remember we're dealing with multinational companies on the one hand, internet on the other hand, and that nation states look a little irrelevant in this context).

Yet it is astonishing that, in one and the same issue, some ads are copyrighted and others are not. Some companies copyright their ads and some don't. I have no idea what is to be inferred from the practice, or its absence, but, still, here are the companies that copyright their ads and those that don't in the *Glamour* issue for August 2016:

Copyright: Maybelline LLC (4 ads), Levi Strauss & Co., Estée Lauder Inc. (2 ads), CliniqueLaboratoires LLC, L'Oréal USA Inc. (10 ads), Garnier LLC (7 ads), Johnson & Johnson Consumer Inc. (3 ads), Allergan (2 ads), Jockey International Inc., Unilever (2 ads), Kao USA Inc., Procter & Gamble (4 ads), Mondelez International Group, Simple (2 ads), Merck Sharp & Dohme B.V., Del Monte Foods Inc., GEICO, Otsuka America Pharmaceutical Inc., Kraft (2 ads, p. 121, p. 133), Bayer, Condé Nast (p. 135).

No Copyright: Nordstrom, Condé Nast (pp. 6-7), Essie, Unilever (3 ads), Sunglass Hut, Buffalo David Bitton, AG Jeans, Chanel, Current/Elliot, Forever21, Paula's Choice, Covergirl BeautyU, Arm & Hammer, Ogxbeauty, Kraft (p. 115), It's A Ten Haircare, Chevrolet, Epicurious, Wet Brush, Hair Recipes.

Though the un-copyrighted ads tend to be for minor brands, this is not always the case (Chanel, Chevrolet). Some companies or groups even have some of their ads copyrighted and others not, in the same issue (Condé Nast, Unilever, Kraft).

August 2016

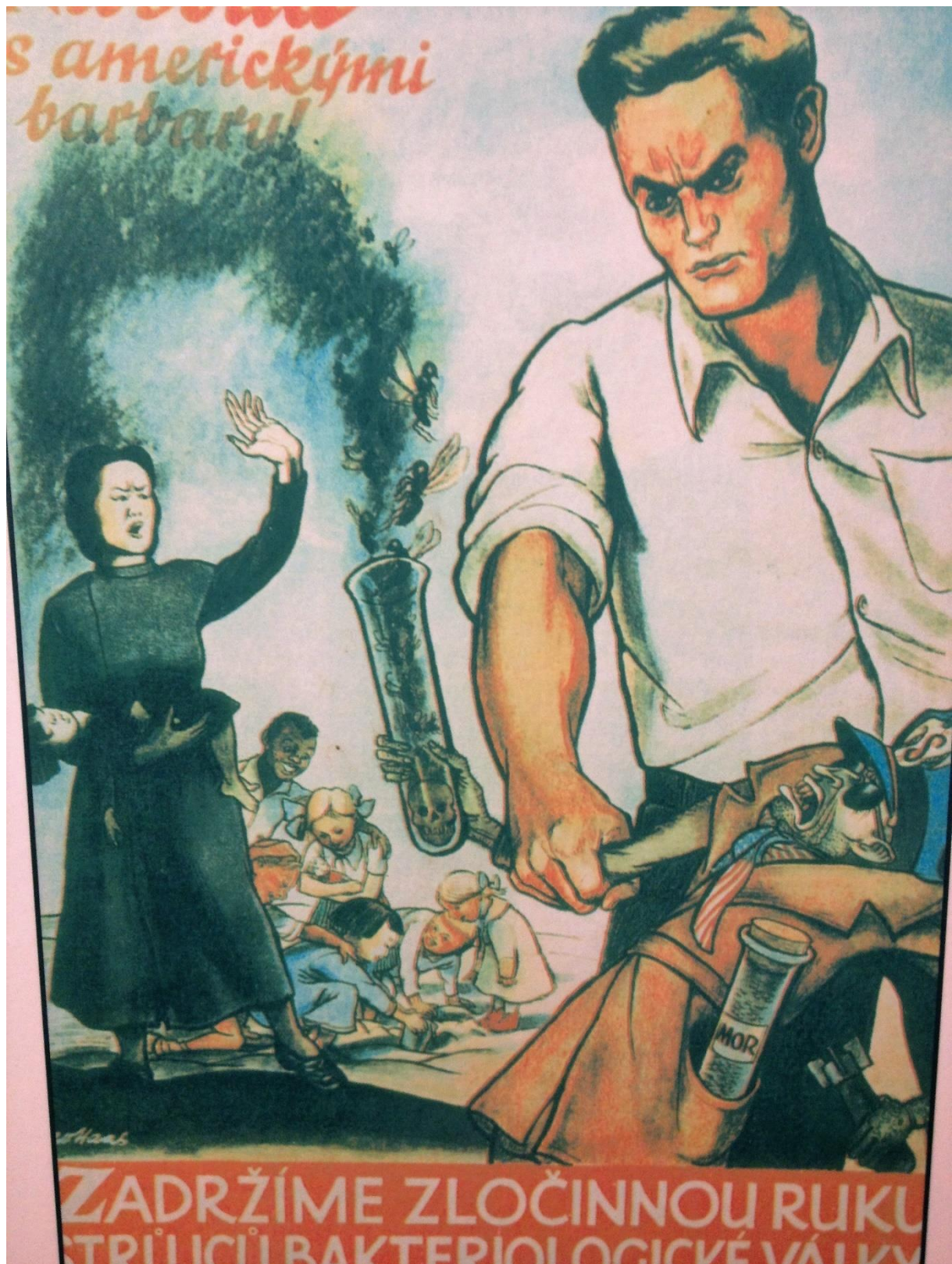
XIV
From the Czech Republic with Junk

Travel diaries from Aug. 24 to Aug. 28, 2016, Prague, Czech Republic.

Socialist Child-Sex Propaganda

This poster I photographed at the Museum of Communism. I think the artist had a lot of fun, but apparently no one noticed. This is a piece of propaganda (or information, let me know) from Socialist Czechoslovakia, during the war of Korea, accusing the US of using bacteriological weapons.

The group of children in the background drew my attention. The Negro boy, whose hand rests on the little blonde girl's shoulder, is looking at her with a lecherous gaze. The Chinese girl plays at making sandcastles with a pail, while the blond boy kneeling behind her is holding her, arm stretched, by the shoulder, his face flushed and grinning. Looks like doggy-style sex! The penetration is concealed from the viewer by the dress of the grieved and indignant Korean woman. The third boy is looking at his comrade's doing (not at the sandcastles game, mind) with evident enjoyment.

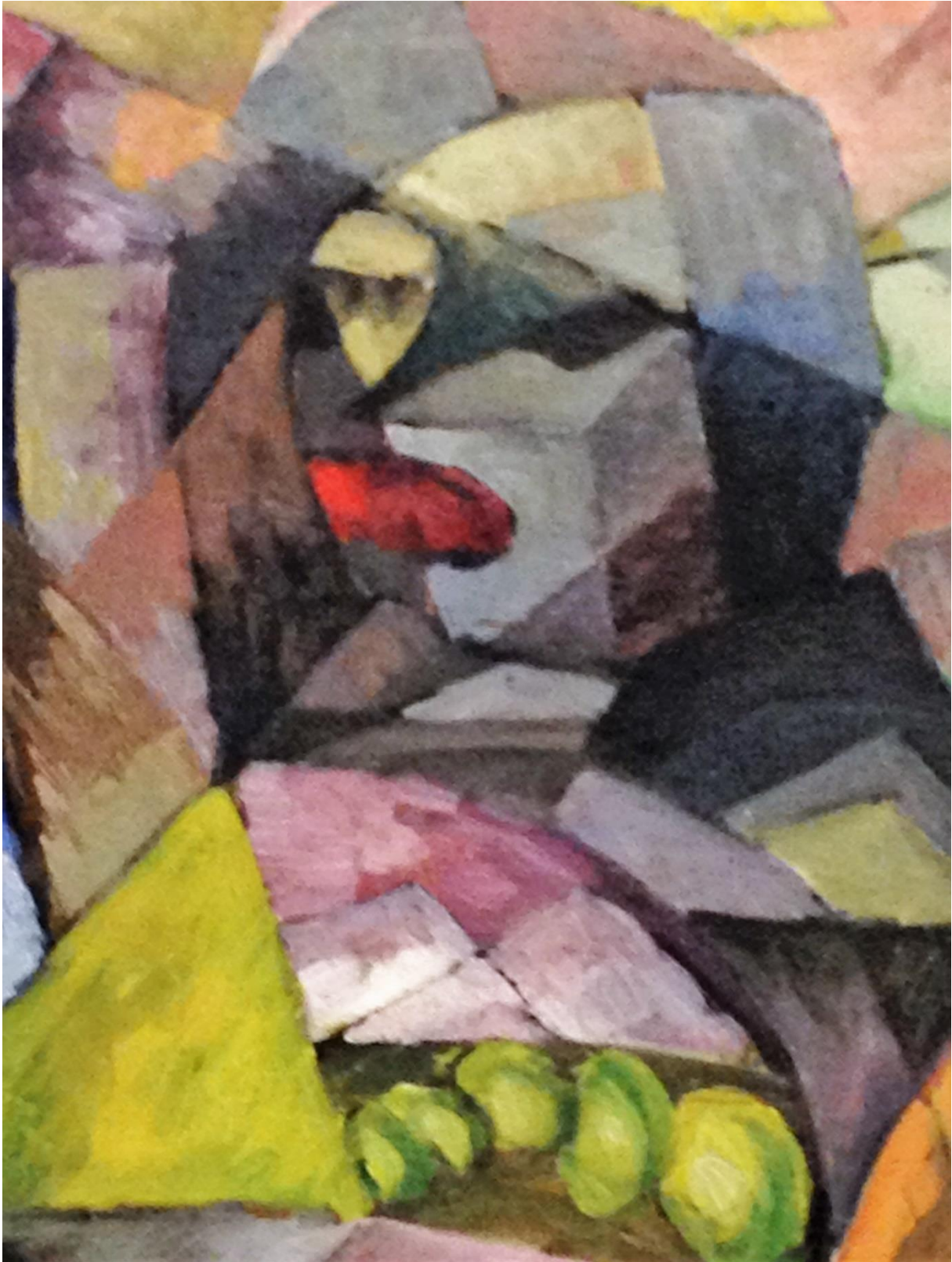


Pretend You Saw Nothing

This Cubist fellatio can be admired at the National Gallery – Veletrzní Palác. The artist is Russian painter Aristarkh Lentulov (who in Soviet times became chairman of the Society of Moscow Artists), and this work from 1912 is called *A Ballet Theme*.

If I be not the first to have noticed that peculiar detail in Lentulov's masterpiece, yet nothing in the material environment of the gallery drew my attention to the explicit material I would encounter while looking at the painting (no mention like "this painting contains sexually oriented material that may be offensive to some people and not suitable for persons under the age of eighteen").






Orgasm Guaranteed

From your regular Czech women's magazine (lifestyle, cooking, children...), this sex toy ad. ORGASMUS guaranteed. The future belongs to machines.



Rychlejší,
intenzivnější
a mnohonásobný
ORGASMUS!

Satisfyer
PRO 2

-  bezdotyková stimulace klitorisu
-  stimulace pomocí tlakových vln
-  zdravotně nezávadný silikon
-  magnetický USB nabíjecí kabel součástí balení
-  lithium-iontová baterie
-  snadné čištění
-  11 stimulačních programů
-  vodotěsný, pro ještě více zábavy ve vodě



Vodotěsný, pro
vaše dokonalé
potěšení ve vaně.

Nový Satisfyer Pro 2 vám díky své vodotěsnosti nabízí ještě více zábavy také ve vodě. To musíte zažít: stimulace tlakovými vlnami se pod vodou ještě mnohonásobně zintenzivní!

K dostání
v **butiku intimacy**,
Benediktská 8,
Praha 1 nebo
objednávejte na
www.intimicity.cz



SLEVA 20%
Sleva 20% uplatníte při objednávání na www.intimicity.cz nebo při návštěvě prodejny v Praze 1, Benediktská 8. Sleva platí do 31.12.2016 a vztahuje se na všechny výrobky.

Complements

“All our dishes are served with a beer,” according to the placard at the entrance. But in the end the beer is charged. Seeing the bill, you say to yourself: “What’s the use complaining? I should have made the point clear with the waiter from the start.” However, it’s not even sure, not even likely that you would have paid the expected CZK270 for the ordered schnitzel; there must have been a trick even there, the placard probably contained a heap of qualifications in tiny fonts at the bottom, and so, after being made aware of these by the waiter, you would have had to raise from your chair and leave the place to find another one, no doubt with the same placard...

McDonald’s vs the Pettifoggers

It’s just the same where I live. Most cafés and restaurants in Paris touristic arrondissements are managed by people who want to make the most of your pockets at the fastest rate: poor quality of the food, poor service, not enough space, insane prices... Many play music loud so you will feel like leaving as soon as you sit down. French cafés and restaurants see tourists as pigeons. Once I saw the following at a café near the Pantheon (allegedly a prestigious, safe place). Some Japanese tourists ordered food, the waiter asked them what they wanted to drink, they said tap water (for free) and they insisted to make him understand. He pretended not to understand and brought a water bottle that he had just opened. They had to pay for it. He even cursed them in French, to himself, but of course they understood that they were insulted and had to swallow their pride.

Years ago, they said fast foods would never set foot in the country of gastronomy, i.e., France. More recently, they said Starbucks would never set foot in the country of cafés. Even more recently, I told my friends: “I’ve designed an advertising campaign for Pret A Manger – it says Pret A Manger: Soon in France,” and here they are, in the country of the baguette. The reason? People don’t care to go to nasty places where mean pettifoggers will treat them like dirt. When you come to Paris, let me recommend you three places where to eat and have a drink: McDonald’s, Starbucks, and Pret A Manger.

We all know tourism has generated those shoddy service industries that cater to the “ideal” customer, the tourist, one who will never come back, one, thus, who will never complain, returning to their countries the next day, replaced by a new wave. French cafés and restaurants don’t care what you, tourists, think of their food or of the service, they don’t even give a dime for what you think of la France: they take your money and what you get for it you’d rather pay for not having it. And don’t ask for tap water, because although it is free on the paper of which laws are made, it will cost you the humiliation of your life.

You may say guidebooks are here to help prevent such bad experiences. In theory, yes, but the addresses they will give you, if they’re good restaurants, then the chances are they will be full of people from all the offices around, in their workaday formal dress, whereas you will be dressed in tourist’s attire – casually – and you will soon feel that you look like morons.

(ii)

Nathan (the same as pp. 271 and 371) e-mailed me this: “I’m glad I live in a place with ‘Southern Hospitality.’ I’ve been to about half the states, and there is a genuine kindness at the restaurants here in West Virginia. The only chance of bad service is at a fast-food place, but I

don't eat at those anyway, and it seems very rare." Which incited me to develop the subject a little.

As far as I can remember, my experience with sales service in general in US is quite different from that in Europe: I have nothing to complain about in US. So it reminds me that, before I went to live in US (Boston, MA) for a year, an American girl on tour in England, Ann, told me, when I asked her if she had considered spending a couple of days in France, that she'd been told the French are "mean." It made me smile at the time, but after my stay in US, with the very noticeable difference in service I had found, I wrote to her and told her she was right, the French are mean!

This being said, the advantage of a fast-food restaurant is that you order your meal, it is put on a tray for you, and then you're free as a bird. Whereas in a regular restaurant you depend on the waiter's good will and/or skills all through the meal. If he forgets you (or pretends to forget you because he's too busy with other customers), then you'll have to make him notice you, and so on and so forth. So even better than fast-food restaurants in this respect are self-service restaurants.

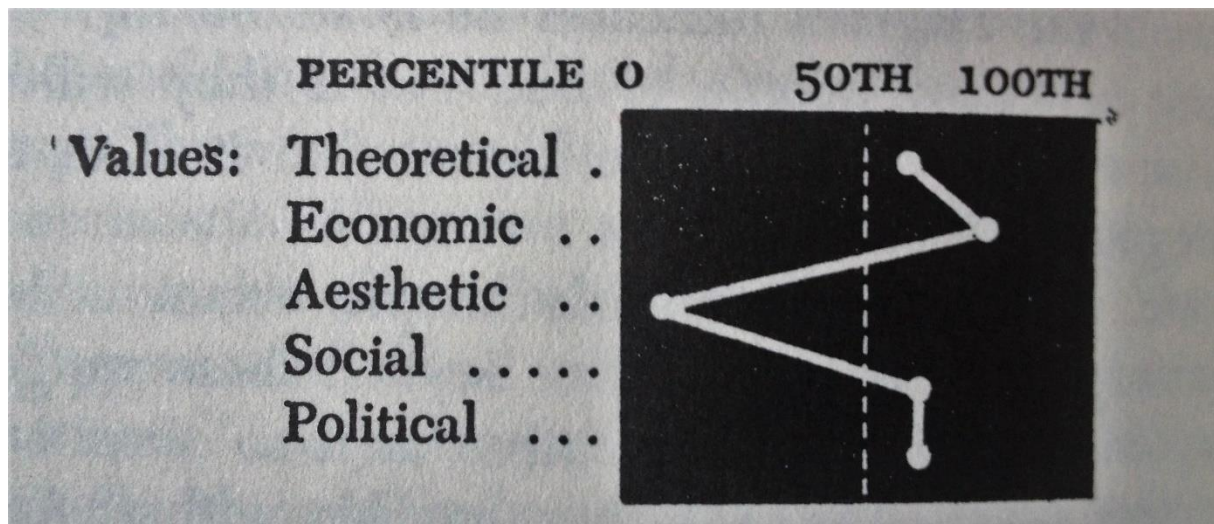
There are many food courts in Boston. You'll be surprised to know there is only one in the whole of Paris (two if we include the airport). As to the largest French cafeteria brand, named Flunch, they too only have one restaurant in Paris. This is ridiculous. Some are lobbying hard to save those darn cafés I was talking about, which I call pettifoggers, or hucksters, or just plain thieves. Service from people who talk back to you or scowl upon you or embarrass you in any way must clear the way to machines. And they will.

By the way, I will see if I can find multinationals' job figures by country. Then we'll know which countries would be most impacted by automation. We may call Nike an American company, but I believe they employ more Chinese than Americans. If this is true, they may contribute a higher share to Chinese economic growth than to American growth and, on the other hand, the automation of Nike factories would impact Chinese work more than American work. (In the meantime, I have been looking for Nike job figures by country and did not find them. Hard task, it seems. Probably with some reason...)

Art & the Organization Man

From *The Organization Man* (1956) by William H. Foote:

Profiles are also worked up for work in individual companies. At Sears, Roebuck there are charts that diagram the optimum balance of qualities required. Here is the one an executive values:



A man does not have to match this profile exactly, but it won't help him at all if his line zigs where the chart zags. Take a man who scores considerably higher than the 10th percentile on aesthetic values, for example; such people, Sears notes, "accept artistic beauty and taste as a fundamental standard of life. This is *not* a factor which makes for executive success. ... Generally, cultural considerations are not important to Sears executives, and there is evidence that such interests are detrimental to success."

There is much good sense in that view expressed by Sears because, as the best definition ever for culture, concise and elegant, goes, "culture is the learning of the leisure class" (economist Tibor Scitovsky), which means that the organization man is an overworked windbag.

Interestingly, Whyte was already writing in the 1950s about those corporations that claimed they were willing to recruit people with literary (cultural) profile and training, yet never recruited them. I have heard this claim from today's corporations repeated time and again – so nothing has changed and I guess the above diagram, with aesthetic taste seen as quite irrelevant, still holds for today's organization man.

And yet, "Wu cites a 1990 study that claimed that in the US about 20 to 30 per cent of the market in New York was due to corporate collecting, and outside the city about half." (Julian Stallabrass, *Art Incorporated*, 2004) Contemporary art is a reminder – the reminder that people that work are poor devils. Half the market for contemporary art is made of corporate collecting: top executives adorning their offices with the excremental fantasies of slackers! Ask the connoisseur how much corporations pay artists for splashed mud and monochromes (remember, the organization men's aesthetic acumen – his taste – approximates zero: see diagram) and compare with your own earnings!

Possible consequences: "Recently, in the Netherlands, a middle-sized bank, i.e. the DSB Bank, came into serious financial trouble for this exact same reason. Only a couple of months before, the bank had bought art for tens of millions of euros, and received a loan from another bank in order to build a museum that was to be named after the DSB bank's CEO. These prestigious undertakings were one of the reasons that the bank had no financial reserves left when business slowed down due to the financial crisis. As a result, in September 2009 the DSB Bank was declared bankrupt." (A.P. Buunk et al., 2011) Bankrupted because of dabbling in art.

And then there is the advertising industry, packed with artists (renegades?) and so vital to the organization man's economic interests...

XV
From Dubai to the Planet Mars

Travel diaries from 29 Aug to 2 Sep 2016, Dubai & Sharjah, United Arab Emirates.



View from the Burj Khalifa (555m) (By the author)

Vulgar Pillow Talk at the Radisson

In my room at the Radisson Blu Hotel, this qibla sticker on a bedside table (pictures below). Part of the sticker's rim was torn away, as if someone had attempted to remove the sticker from the table with his or her nails.

On the same table a placard invites customers to specify their needs as to their pillows. A most gracious attention. But then it comes under the head "Pillow Talk," a vulgar, tasteless double entendre. I say tasteless because on school playgrounds, when a pun is so self-speaking and flat, to make it is considered shamefully humorless. Taste is knowing not to make ludicrous double entendres, and that is what marketing people are badly lacking. A world in which marketing has become ubiquitous would be a suffocating quagmire of bad taste.

As appears in the second picture, the qibla points toward "Pillow Talk." Subliminal blasphemy! Again, in religious and sacred matters, taste implies not to utter (in any fashion) double entendres, associating sacredness with profanity. Carelessness is not congruent with taste nor with faith, and it should be sanctioned, for otherwise every wicked individual could cover and excuse his wickedness by carelessness.

My friend X is wont to say, "A ban on bad taste is long overdue. By which I also mean banning the US from the world." Truly, when one sees Emirati citizens, dressed in their dignified traditional dishdashas (males) and abayas (females), beside American tourists in tee-shirts and shorts and thongs and herds, one's taste is so shocked by the contrast that one is moved to call the American tourist an aesthetic pollution.

A last word on my hotel room. Hotel Information said: "A copy of the Holy Quran is placed in all rooms." I searched for my copy but could not find it (room 312). Perhaps the same person that tried to scratch the qibla sticker took the Quran away?



(I blackened the upper right part of the picture to conceal a reflection of light on the wood table. The sticker's rim as it was can be seen on the next picture.)



Inside World's Largest Mall

The picture below is taken from the Dubai Mall Guide, which I picked up in the mall (it was not handed to me), and presents the Mall's "courtesy policy." The first sign asks customers to "wear respectful clothing," and especially that "shoulders and knees should be covered." The second sign shows a man and a woman holding hands, and the comment reads: "No kissing or overt display of affection in the mall."

It is only after leaving the mall, leafing through the guide afterward, that I was made aware of this courtesy policy, so I guess most tourists do not know these regulations more than I did when I first strolled through the mall. I came back the next day (to see the dancing fountains show) and tried to see whether these rules were followed. I did not carefully look at the clothes, in fact – but I am certain that most tourists wore shorts –, concentrating on couples' behavior. I saw a couple (tourists or resident foreigners) holding hands, without being disturbed, and even another one (tourists or resident foreigners) holding each other by the waist, without being disturbed either. After that, I stopped focusing my attention on that point because I thought that was enough evidence that the courtesy rules were not applied. Yet I must say that I had expected to see more couples holding hands and that it took a little time to spot these two pairs, despite the large crowds. Moreover, the pair holding each other by the waist were walking at an unusually fast pace, as if these people were fearing some reaction; it may have been some kind of provocation on their part.

Be that as it may, the text under the sign does not say that it is forbidden to hold hands, but that it is forbidden to "kiss" and "overtly display one's affection," whatever the latter might mean. The sign with the pair holding hands may be merely a kind of graphic euphemism, a mild way to represent what is not allowed, but the gesture thus represented may be per se not prohibited. This interpretation may sound farfetched, yet if one bans pornography one will not publish this policy by showing hardcore sex in a TV screen, even crossed by a red line, will they?



(Part of the picture is blackened to conceal a reflection of light.)

*

From the Dubai Mall Guide, on page “Fashion – Children,” I found these boutiques, among others: Armani Junior, Burberry Children, Cacharel–Kidspac, Dolce & Gabbana Kids, Gucci Kids, Monsoon Kids, Ralph Lauren Kids, River Island Kids, Roberto Cavalli Junior, Tommy Hilfiger Kids... Ah, you thought you could make do with dressing your children with Petit Bateau, but it’s over! (Anyway, for the Petit Bateau boutique, it’s 2d floor, F6.)

*

On page “Fashion – Arabic,” these boutiques with good old Arab names: Bon Chic, L’Amour, Les Foulards, Monte Bianco...

*

First floor, K6, “multi-brand fashion and lifestyle stores based in Dubai,” the brand S*UCE (tel quel!) – a name that French tourists are not likely to forget.

Subject Chewing Gum

In Dubai I realized chewing gum is a nonsubject for Western media and politics. This little sign from Dubai metro can teach us a lot about the meanders of international trade. For I made an internet search and found that such a policy was first adopted in Singapore in order to prevent the defacements and damages committed by gum-chewers sticking their gummy refuse anywhere they find convenient. To that effect, Singapore even prohibited gum import. But that was overlooking the US's stand on the matter, for which chewing gum remains as vital an export good as it is strategic. Under their pressure Singapore had to accept a compromise, according to which the country accepts to import... therapeutic chewing gum. And so it is that now Singapore physicians are entitled to prescribe chewing gum to their patients.

What Singapore got in exchange, I do not know, but I am in favor of banning chewing gum, which makes extremely costly waste, in France too, if only to compel the US to negotiate on a sounder basis with us.



Emirates Mars Mission

Excerpts from *Mission to Mars: The Emirates Mars Mission and Mars Hope* (2015), copyright by The Executive Office of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum.

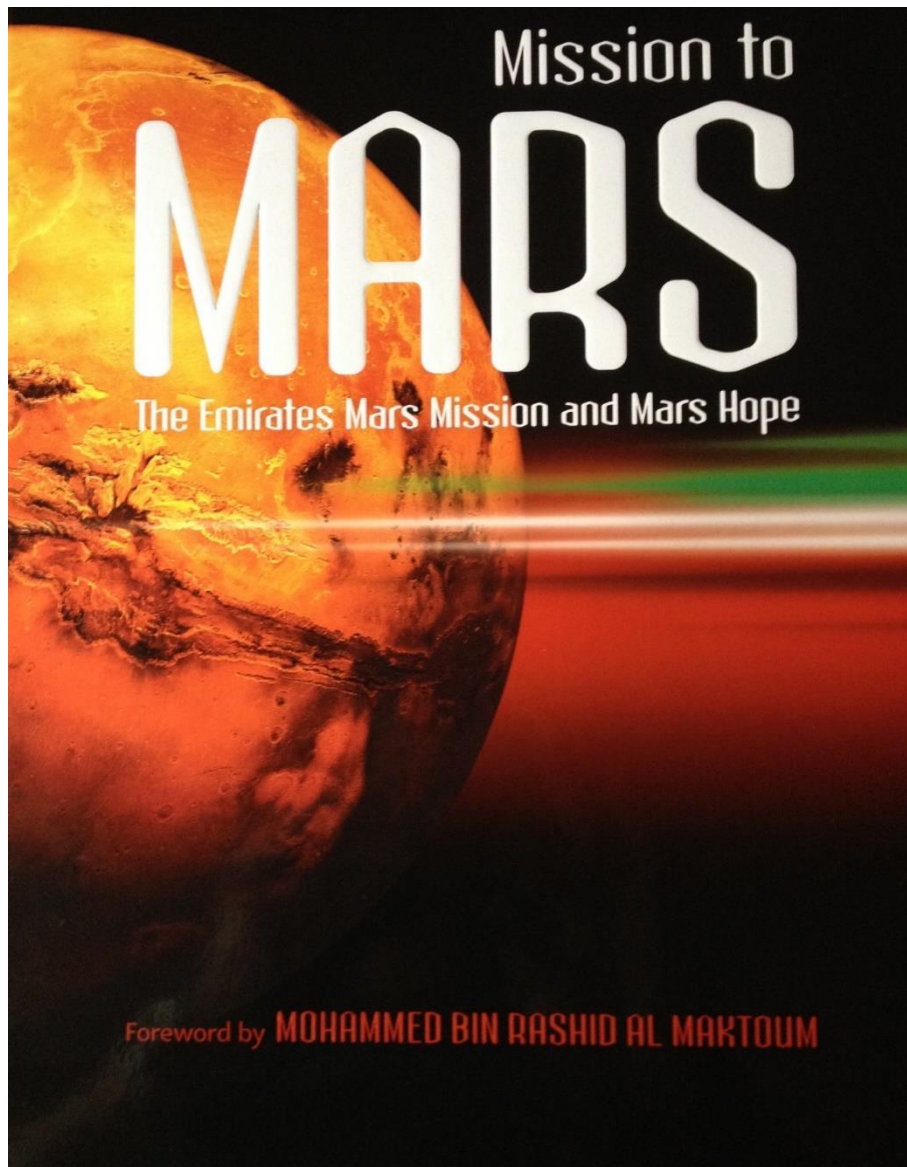
“The behaviour of water in Mars’ highly volatile desert environment is of particular interest to the UAE as a desert nation.”

“Today, almost all of our understanding of climate comes from scientific studies of the atmosphere here on Earth. Mars is a valuable laboratory for atmosphere science because conditions there are very different. The insights and data we gain from understanding the Martian climate will add new dimensions to human knowledge about how atmospheres work.”

“Recent research has found evidence of human habitation as long as 125,000 years ago [in the peninsula] and it is now believed that modern humans moved out of Africa to the rest of the world through Arabia. ... These early humans would likely have inhabited – and travelled through – an Arabian peninsula that was cooler and wetter than it is now, with a land bridge linking Arabia and Africa through modern-day Yemen.”

“An enormous amount of work is taking place to coordinate and foster cooperation between the world’s leading space capable nations, and the UAE’s membership of the International Space Exploration Coordination Group (ISECG) is part of that work.” (p. 65) Yet on the ISECG’s website the membership list (as of 2016: 14 space agencies) does not include the UAE. UAE’s agency must have associate member status or something like that.

And, from a poem by Sheikh Al Maktoum, this elegant testimony of the Sheikh’s social Darwinism: “This ever-spinning universe cannot stand still / or look back at those slipping behind. / It has always been so impelled, / positive energy being the source of its life.” (There exists a collection of Sheikh Al Maktoum’s poetry translated into English, which preface is by Paulo Coelho. When I bought *Mission to Mars* at Kinokuniya bookshop, Dubai Mall, one of Coelho’s books was on display by the cashier’s desk.)



XVI

My Life in Subliminals

When one comes to the ultra-modern profession of advertising, responded Schliemann, – the science of persuading people to buy what they do not want, – he is in the very center of the ghastly charnel-house of capitalist destructiveness, and he scarcely knows which of a dozen horrors to point out first.

Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle*, 1906

Today's superstars [superstar companies] are using modern science to push advertising into areas that have not been tried before, raising difficult ethical questions about what "free choice" means in a capitalist economy.

The Economist, September 17th-23rd 2016

What these "areas that have not been tried before" are, is not to be gathered, however, from that issue of *The Economist*. They seem to discover advertising only today, more than a hundred years after Upton Sinclair talked of it as "the very center of the ghastly charnel-house of capitalist destructiveness." Still, it is with this admission – by a fierce mouthpiece of capitalism – of the reality of some strange "science" at the service of advertising, "raising difficult ethical questions...in a capitalist economy," that we are proud to introduce our new cases of subliminal junk.

Cases 103-108 are taken from *Harvard Business Review*, September 2016.

October 2016

*

Case 103 BASF Bestiality

The model, a swarthy, scruffy, unshaven man seems to come out of a film on the Mexican Revolution. After having conquered *tierra y libertad*, he now enjoys the fruits of his labor on a land of his own, gazing with touching emotion at gorgeous, sweet peppers he holds in his hands – his own peppers.

A table is set on the left side of the advert, with a salad bowl and a glass of what looks more like grenadine syrup than wine. After seeing this ad, for one thing BASF poisons will be associated in your mind with luxurious green goods, and poor but dignified campesinos.

Then there is a subliminal embed in the glass of grenadine, which I have outlined. A naked woman is sitting on her knees. Her head is tilting back as a big dog sniffs her pussy; she expects him to lick her genitals. As the dog wears a necklace, it is probably her own pet dog, which she acquired to satisfy her lust in this way. This is bestiality.

We create
chemistry
that helps
shrinking
farmland
love growing
appetites.

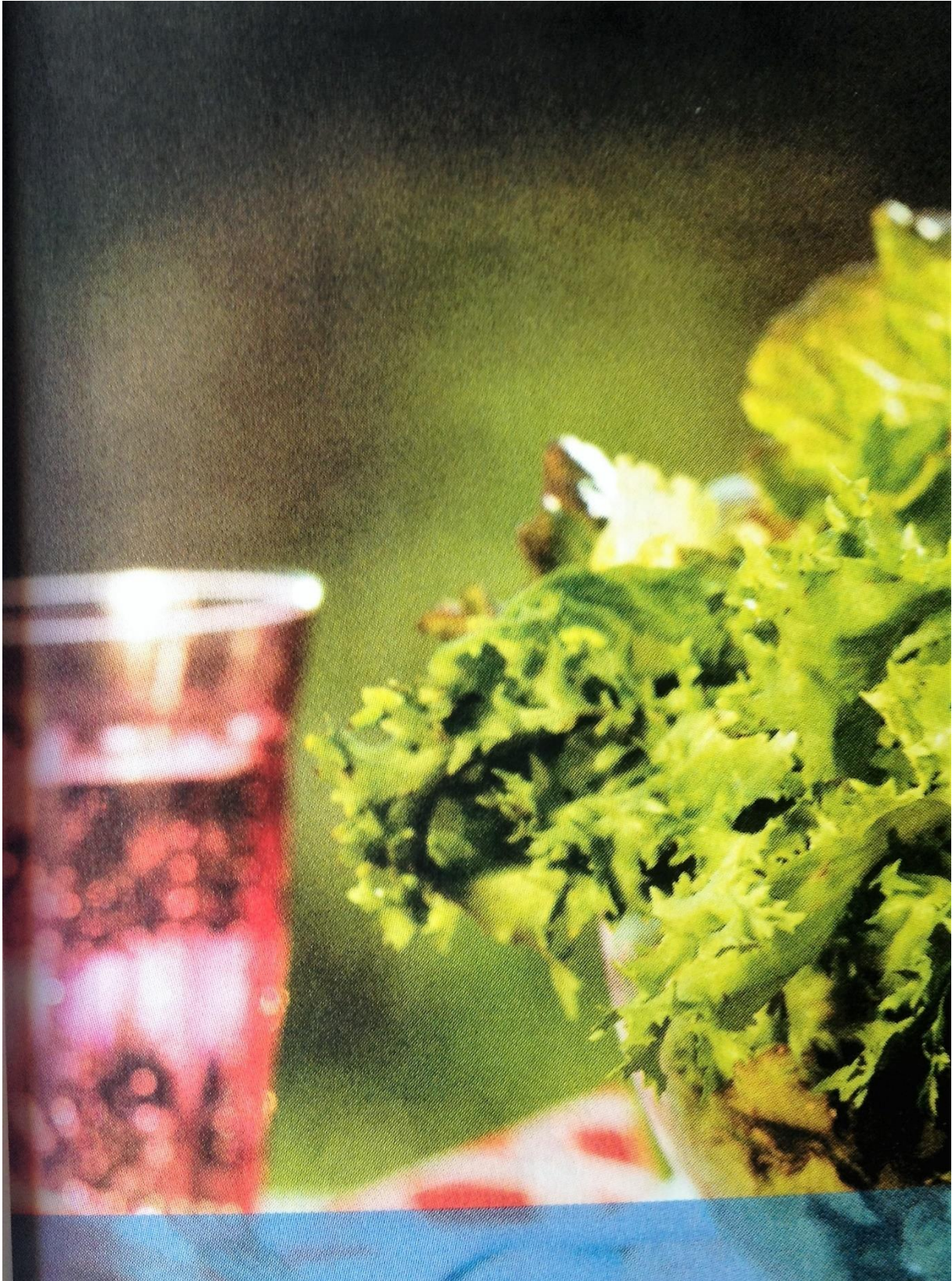


With a growing population comes the need for more food. To ensure that everyone can enjoy a balanced diet, we are co-creating solutions to a number of different challenges across the food production and supply chain. When more food gets to where it is needed, it's because at BASF, we create chemistry.

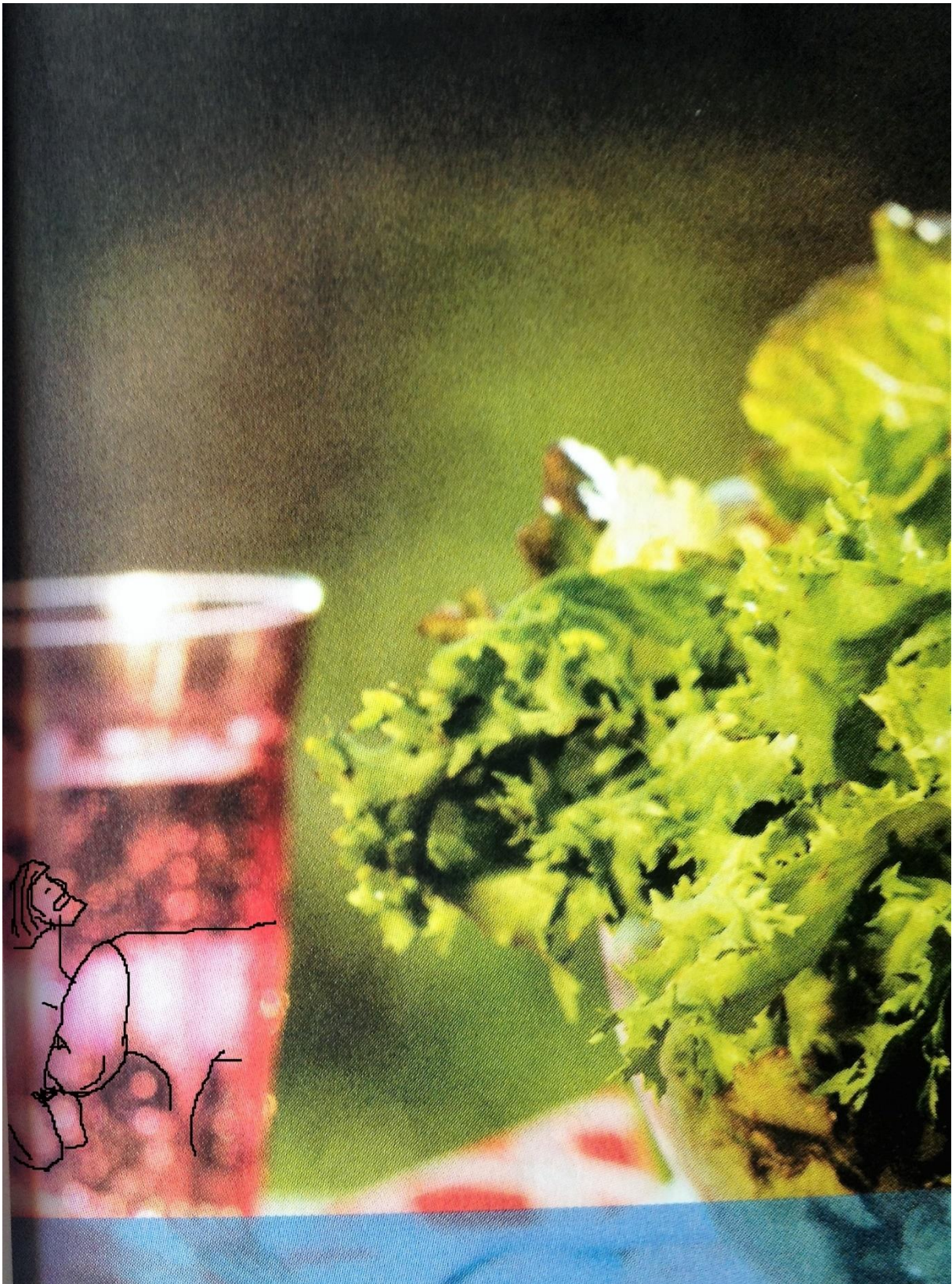
Share our vision at wecreatechemistry.com

BASF
We create chemistry

103-1



103-2



103-3

*

Case 104 Stanford Business School of SEX

This one for a top Ivy League university, and more specifically for its executive education department. The main character in the show, the man on the right, has a somewhat disheveled and thoroughly scruffy look about him – the very look that is abhorrent to all corporate organizations throughout the world. This, however, is good selling pitch, meaning: Take a break from the horrendous monotonousness of your dreary corporate life by enrolling to our program and be for a couple of days, or weeks, the bum you dream to be.

But the ad promises more than that. On picture 104-2 I have drawn a straight line to show what the man is looking at, namely the woman's breast. Looking at her breast and grasping invisible objects in the air... First watch, then touch; he already has his hands in position, all it takes now is a 90-degree turn.

The woman is smiling at him, encouragingly. Besides, she could not escape his grasping if she wanted, because she is manacled. Her hands are tied together exactly like manacled hands, and her watch wrist provides the clear suggestion of manacles.

The man is thinking so hard about sexual acts with the woman that he is projecting laser penises from his brain (picture 104-2). One is just leaving his skull. A second one, very bright, is bolting toward her face. Below that one, a third penis, very fat, is about to reach her on the nose, where she will have to handle it to her mouth, I guess.

The third character is the loser you do not want to be. If you look carefully, he seems quite depressed. At first glance, you may think he is looking at and listening to the other guy, but in fact he just stares into space, brewing over the failure of his life. To the very hardcore sex action that is going to take place he will remain spectator merely; he is so much of a loser that he cannot even have enough spite to be willing to prevent it. As he sits quite close to the woman, she may be his girlfriend; but his luck with her is over. You can't be a loser and keep your sweetheart when the Stanford boy comes in.



STANFORD
BUSINESS

GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF

Executive Education



Practice what we teach: Innovation.

Innovation isn't a stripe on a chromosome. It can be taught. So can building a corporate culture of innovation. And for thousands of senior global business leaders, Stanford Executive Education has shown the way. By tapping the innovation engines that power Silicon Valley. By providing open access to the minds that have educated generations of the world's most successful innovators. Come to the source. There's only one: Stanford.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Influence and Negotiation Strategies Program

October 9 – 14, 2016

Finance and Accounting for the Nonfinancial Executive

November 13 – 18, 2016

104-1

STANFORD
BUSINESS

GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF

Executive Education



Practice what we teach: Innovation.

Innovation isn't a stripe on a chromosome. It can be taught. So can building a corporate culture of innovation. And for thousands of senior global business leaders, Stanford Executive Education has shown the way. By tapping the innovation engines that power Silicon Valley. By providing open access to the minds that have educated generations of the world's most successful innovators. Come to the source. There's only one: Stanford.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Influence and Negotiation Strategies Program

October 9 – 14, 2016

Finance and Accounting for the Nonfinancial Executive

November 13 – 18, 2016

104-2

Case 105 Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science of SEX

The copy reads: “What did one doctor discover during the Ebola crisis? Herself.” And she is looking fondly at one of the above men’s bum. You see her looking at the top of the world, at the stars, you say she is a mature woman with dreams (read greedy ambition) determined to fulfill them and become one of the worthies of this world. Which amounts – follow the straight line I draw – to finding a man with nicely-shaped buttocks. She looks at the only one whose presence is primarily marked by his conspicuous buttocks. And if you enroll at Rosalind, this is precisely what you will find at last. They promise. If you are already married, then you will find the man with whom to cuckold your husband at last. Promised.



WHAT DID ONE DOCTOR DISCOVER DURING THE EBOLA CRISIS?

HERSELF.



When Dr. Kwan Kew Lai (MD '79) left to treat patients during an outbreak of the deadly Ebola virus, she wasn't sure what she would find.

She found pain, loneliness, fear and death, but she also discovered a new inner strength. Her training as an infectious disease expert paired with veteran experience in international aid, meant she could make a difference.

Like Dr. Lai, Rosalind Franklin didn't know what she would find when she captured "Photo 51." Yet that image led to the single most important advance of modern biology — the discovery of the structure of DNA. At her namesake university, we pioneered the model of interprofessional healthcare education, and today we are at the forefront of the study of population health management.

We proudly embrace the spirit of discovery by taking those first steps on paths unknown.

LIFE *in* DISCOVERY



ROSA LIND FRANKLIN
UNIVERSITY
of MEDICINE AND SCIENCE

DISCOVER THE FUTURE OF HEALTHCARE EDUCATION AT ROSALINDFRANKLIN.EDU

Case 106 Harvard Business School of Hot SEX

“Great leaders never stop evolving.” I would never have imagined that great leaders look like that. The man on the left is just ridiculous, with half-cooked Chinese noodles dangling from his hand. The man in the middle is a juggler: there is a small cake in equilibrium on top of his coffee cup. Jugglery is the specialty of circus clowns and was formerly that of court jesters and buffoons. The lady is actually running: only the tip of her right foot touches the ground, perhaps it does not even touch it – a movement she could not make if she were walking (the other foot has been cropped out of the picture so you can imagine it does not touch the ground either). Her overcoat almost seems to have fallen from her right shoulder (you need to look at it with attention to find out that both her shoulders are still covered), it does not cover the right side of her chest, and anyway she looks quite unkempt. Her right hand lies on a jacket button, which she may be opening, in the process of taking off the jacket. Her eyes are closed and she smiles, her face turned in the men’s direction. She is in a state of sexual arousal or even in an act of solitary sex. Expecting more (in her never-ending evolving), she is running in her haste to reach the place of the three’s sexual rendezvous, and such is her lustful haste that she is undressing while running. Harvard Business School: last chance of hot sex for desperate cases.

GREAT LEADERS NEVER STOP EVOLVING



TRANSFORM YOUR CAREER, YOUR COMPANY, AND YOURSELF.

At Harvard Business School Executive Education, individuals at every level gain the skills and knowledge they need to contribute to their organizations at a higher level. With four different programs focusing on leading research and innovative problem-solving frameworks, senior executives and up-and-coming leaders alike return to their organizations transformed.

**Owner/President
Management**

BEGINS 14 MAY 2017

**Advanced Management
Program**

BEGINS 02 APR 2017

**General Management
Program**

BEGINS 01 FEB 2017

**Program for Leader
Development**

BEGINS 05 DEC 2017



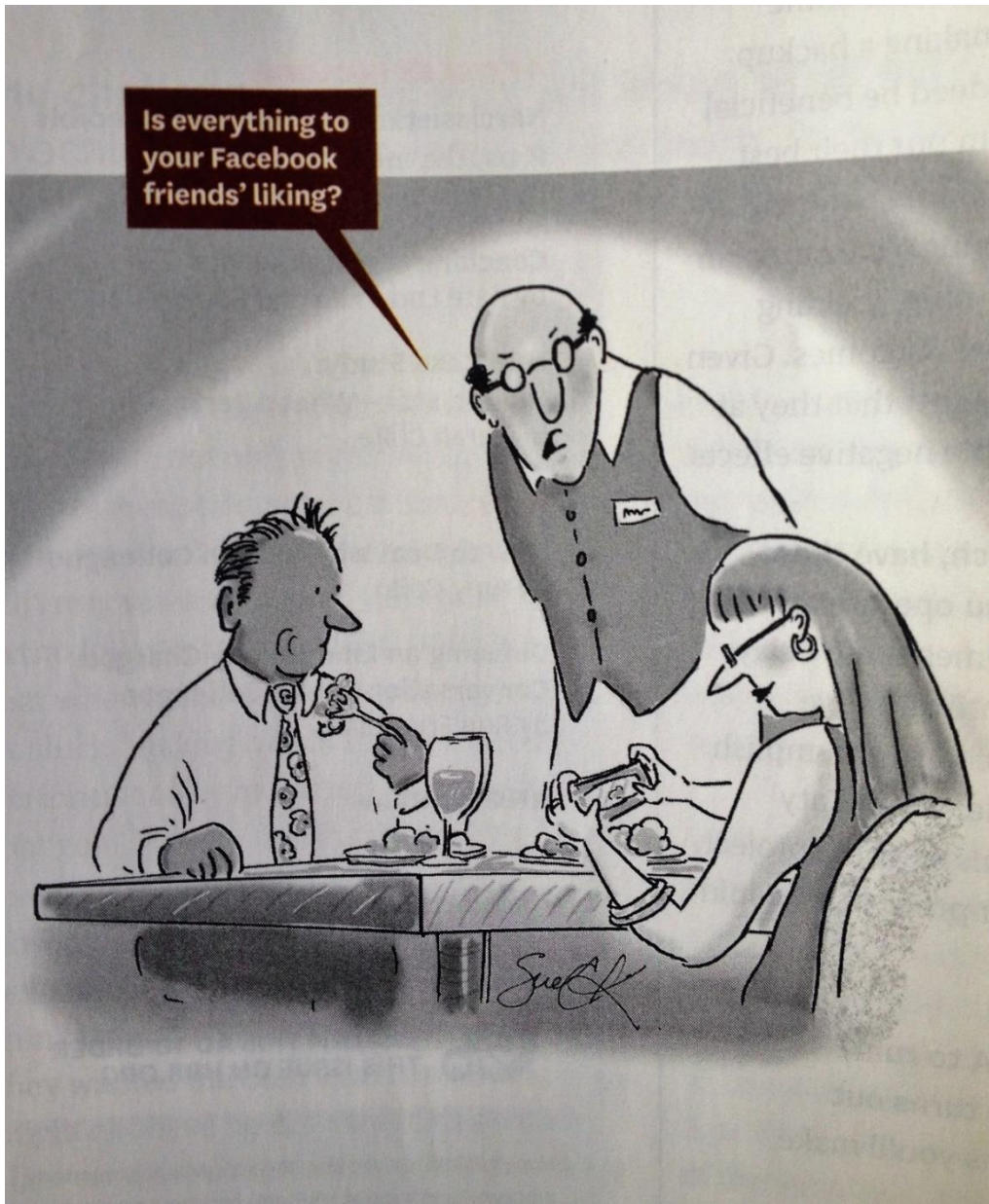
**HARVARD
BUSINESS SCHOOL**

Executive Education

Learn more www.exed.hbs.edu/clp-h

Case 107 Laugh & Suck

A funny cartoon, and it is signed SUCK.



107

Case 108 Bottega Veneta SEX

And a nice SEX embedding for good measure. I show you the spot in 108-2 but I find the embeds even more apparent when the picture is looked at as a whole; that is, once you know the embedding spot from 108-2, you'll see the embed in 108-1 all right.



108-1



108-2

Complements: My Life in Subliminals

Subliminals have been a major influence on my musical tastes. The first cassette tape I bought in my life was an album by band INXS, after seeing their clip *Need You Tonight* (1987) a couple of times on TV. Then, the first laser disc I bought was an album by band Simply Red, after seeing a couple of times on TV their clip *Something Got Me Started* (1991). Both were successful bands in my teens. Retrieving their clips on YouTube recently, I found the following.

Need You Tonight

The singer's leather jacket, near the zipper, on the chest, sports the letters SEX, in chrome or something like that, vertically. The “embed” is not particularly hard to detect, and if I remember well I had detected it before buying the album. Even though, among the various subliminal techniques used in the film *The Exorcist* (1973), exposed by Wilson Bryan Key in *Media Sexploitation* (1976), there are flash images of a ghastly face; as the filmmakers themselves explained, some people see these images consciously, others do not (in this way they intended to dismiss the idea that the technique is subliminal). It could be the same with the SEX here. If you're not really watching the clip but rather listening to it while doing something else (as occurs with TV viewing, which is often done together with another activity), the letters on the jacket may escape your conscious attention. Be that as it may, let's say the SEX on the jacket is not subliminal at all but obvious. This is still a case of using the written word as a way to “sex up” the show. As it seems, it is hot to sport the word SEX on one's jacket. Or is it cool, rather?

To see if that would elicit reaction, I dropped a comment on YouTube in the form of a question: “Is it the word SEX I read on his jacket?” No reaction so far. I hope I haven't spoiled the fans' pleasure with an indiscreet remark.

Something Got Me Started

From 2:20 to 2:34 (instrumental part) one hears a faint female voice speaking in the background. However, what that voice says is not to be got at all. Here is the best example I have found so far of a subliminal technique in music/on TV: the voice can be heard, by attentive listeners, but the words never. And I bought the disc. The sequence occurs after a female voice has whispered “I really love you,” to which the singer reacts with an “Ooooh” of arousal. Both songs, by the way, make supraliminal use of whispers (“Come over here” at the beginning of *Need You Tonight*) – already the conscious content is highly eroticized in both cases.

Here as well I left a comment on YouTube: “From 2:20 to 2:34 one hears a faint female voice speaking, if you listen carefully. Can someone tell me what she says?” No answer so far. If you're a sound engineer and intrigued by this too, please contact me because I am ready to pay for having these occult words deciphered.

XVII Harvard Business Redux

“Tell the men of the East to look out for the men of the West. The irrepressible Yank is knocking at the doors of their temples and he will want to sell ‘em carpet-sweepers for their harems and electric light plants for their temple shrines.”

Frank Norris, *The Octopus*

After you read this new essay on subliminal advertising, I am confident you will be aware that the connection between the above quote and the essay is at best flimsy. In this the quote does no differ in the least from the usage in the publishing market, where publishing houses remunerate editing staff specialized in irrelevant and shallow quotations – the shallower the better. But the above quote also differs from the usual practice inasmuch as it is largely irrelevant but not at all shallow.

That quotation business reminds me of some author’s 6-page (!) “Acknowledgments” at the end of his book. He does not acknowledge his editors’ quotation job (there are no chapter-heading quotations in that one) but he is so frank and scrupulous in his thank-yous to his “ghostwriter,” “editor,” “senior editor,” “researchers,” to Mr so-and-so for the title of the book, and for such and such idea in the book, and for the very idea of the book, and so on and so forth, that one realizes after perusing this that the author’s contribution is at most that single acknowledgments section, and his name on the cover.

Yet I have got another quote for you, which will reverberate with the former one over these intercalary considerations of mine.

James Joyce’s book [*Finnegans Wake*] is about the electrical retribalization of the West and the West’s effect on the East: The West shall shake the East awake. ...while ye have the night for morn ... Joyce’s title refers directly to the Orientalization of the West by electric technology and to the meeting of East and West.

Marshall McLuhan, *War and Peace in the Global Village*)

Harem or, more precisely, Purdah. A man who wants to see the world with his own eyes needs baggage consignment.

Cases 109 to 113 are taken once again from *Harvard Business Review* (for previous HBR cases see here). The issue is October 2016. It is extremely important to deal with cerebral material because, as you know, zombies must be shot in the head. (“Cerebral” refers to “Harvard,” of course, not to “Business.”)

October 2016

Case 109 Eva Air SEX

Eva Air is a Taiwanese airline company. The hostess has just served the passenger his meal and invites him to enjoy it by a gesture of the hand. Her other hand is concealed by copy; given how that other hand is positioned, one may think she holds something in it, for otherwise the hand would not be, as it is, somewhat lifted in the air but rather down along her body, but as she probably needed both her hands to carry the tray, and besides one sees no object whatever, coffee pot or anything like that, some parts of which would be sticking out of the concealing copy insert, in fact both hands are empty. Consequently, the concealed hand is making the same gesture as the visible hand, and what the hostess is inviting the customer to enjoy is not his meal but herself: she opens her arms to him and his embrace. This is a first subliminal effect.

Then there is a subliminal effect with the visible hand too. As you can see, a glass of wine placed between the hand and the photograph (and viewer) creates by refraction an optical illusion on the hostess' visible hand. Through the glass, part of her forefinger is seen bigger as it is. Your brain, by experience, normally corrects such illusions and in fact, looking quickly at the picture you will not even notice (in the sense of paying attention to) the altered proportions. I beg you pay attention to these and carefully consider the object you now see. I have outlined the subliminal embed (picture 109-3) but did a poor job with the computer mouse and am convinced you can see the penis better on the "blank" picture (109-2). The glass swells the finger's phalange into the shape of a penis glans, to which the other phalanges provide the shaft. The knuckle bone at the finger's root looks like a testicle.



109-1



109-2



109-3

Case 110 Harvard Business Review's Online Exclusive SEX

This is an ad for HBR's online newsletter, dubbed "insider newsletter." The logo above the copy shows a stylized torso with what seems to be a magic wand – represented as a stick radiating several, multidirectional beams. The object mixes magic and technology, since in the context of modern communication it could be seen as an electric antenna, and the beams as electric or radio waves.

It mixes more than just that. The stick is held in the middle of the torso, not at its margin. If you extend it in imagination, it reaches the groin. The stick is actually a huge erect penis, and it is giving off a massive ejaculate, in several spurts. The spurts are multidirectional because of a vigorous handshake applied to the penis.

Harvard
Business
Review
Online
Exclusives



Learn It

With The Insider Newsletter

Sign up for **The Insider**, a weekly, subscriber-only newsletter curated by editors to help you keep tabs on the content that matters most to you.

hbr.org/email-newsletters



Management
Tip of the Day



Weekly
Hotlist



The Daily
Alert



Business
Bookshelf



Leadership



Best of
the Issue



Technology
& Innovation



Strategy
& Execution



Finance
& Economy

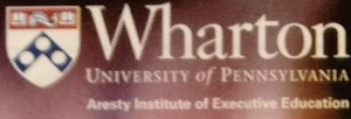
SUBSCRIBE TO ONE OR ALL OF OUR OTHER GREAT ENEWSLETTERS

Case 111 Wharton University of Pennsylvania's Executive SEX Education

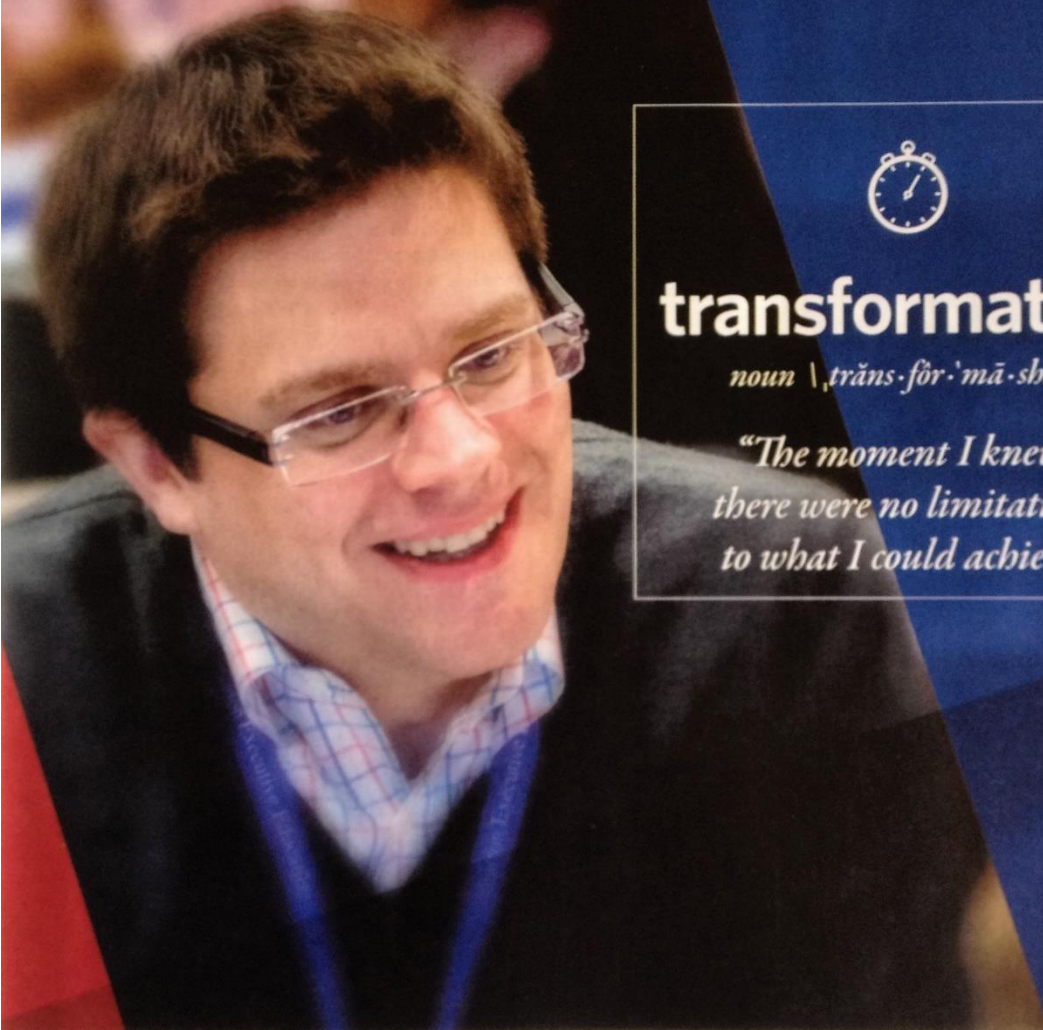
Copy: "Transformation. 'The moment I knew there were no limitations to what I could achieve'." In quotation marks, so we know the utterer of these memorable words is the model. The guy's transformation is rendered by graphic means by the somewhat fuzzy contours of several of his parts, such as his hair and shirt; the fuzziness does not result from my hand trembling while taking the picture, it is in the original. The guy is transforming before our very eyes, and the background, above his head, is no background at all but a thermic, misty halo emanating from his body as a result of energetic processes at the heart of his transformation.

If we believe the copy, this uncanny mutation will enable the lad to overcome all limitations. Now what, according to you, are the obvious limitations of this guy? He doesn't seem to lack either intelligence or the qualities inherent to a friendly person. On the other hand, he clearly is a geek. Try to imagine a better representation of a hopeless geek... You cannot. The limitations of our buddy here are sexual.

Executive education is often aimed at people with scientific and engineering training who want to make more money and achieve higher status in the organization world to which they are bound, by opening executive positions to them. As trainees in science and engineering, they demonstrated intelligence and a capacity for long studies and hard work. Now it is time to make men of spineless clowns, and this is what executive education is for. As a consequence, the present ad is a mere copycat of Jerry Lewis's film *The Nutty Professor* (1963), whose French title, *Docteur Jerry et Mister Love*, makes obvious the parodic reference of the film to Stevenson's famous story about a man's transforming personality – in the original it is the transformation of a respectable notable into a perverse brute, and in the parody the transformation of a geek into a ladykiller. Higher status is the main tool for overcoming males' sexual limitations, and key to higher status is, they claim, executive education.



EXECUTIVE EDUCATION



transformation

noun \,trāns·fōr·mā·shən\

“The moment I knew there were no limitations to what I could achieve.”

Define your Wharton moment.

Wharton Executive Education will transform you. Our world-renowned faculty will broaden your perspective on the global business landscape. Our real-world scenarios will strengthen your approach to any challenge. And our rigorous Leadership and Business Acumen Programs will give you knowledge you can use for immediate impact. It's time to go beyond the boundaries.

EXCED.WHARTON.UPENN.EDU/define

UPCOMING PROGRAMS:

Executive Development Program
NOV. 6-18, 2016 • MAR. 19-31, 2017

Advanced Management Program
MAY 28-JUN. 30, 2017

General Management Program
A FLEXIBLE SIX-PROGRAM LEARNING JOURNEY

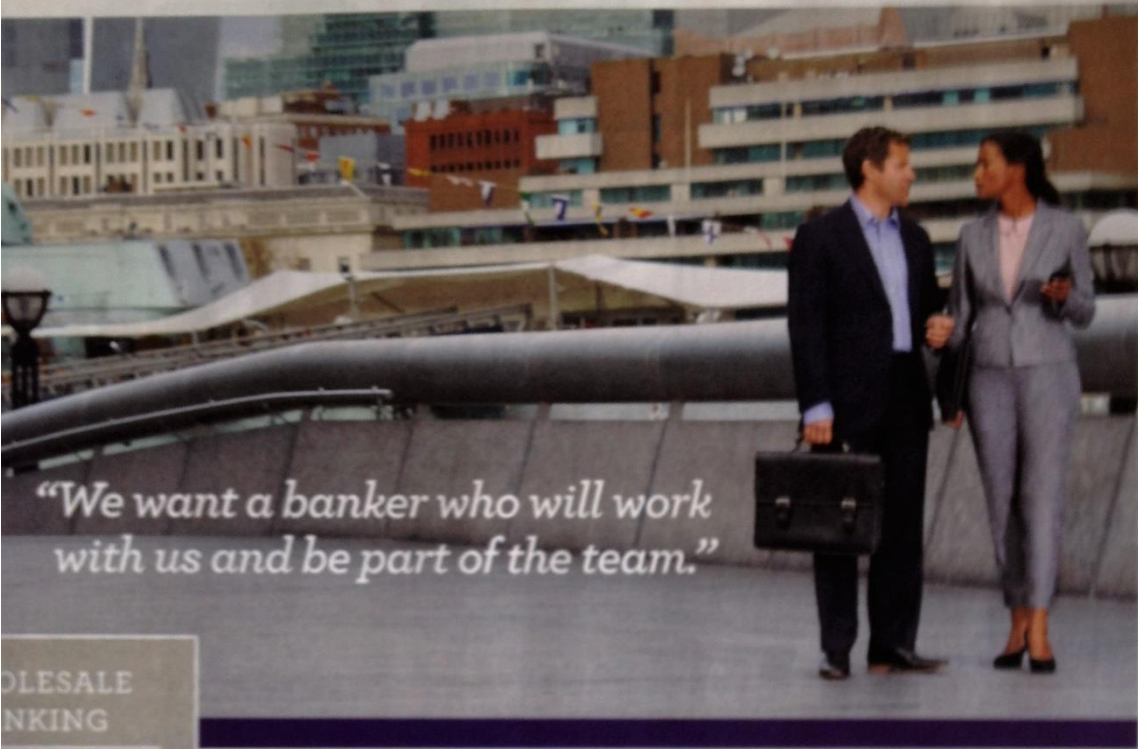
*

Case 112 Wells Fargo SEX

The erotic content of the ad is hardly mistakable. The woman is sexually aroused. I have drawn two straight lines (picture 106-2) to show the tilting of her head. She is about to kiss the man or is inviting him by her attitude to kiss her. Her eyes are half-closed, these are “bedroom eyes” (seductive eyes). Her lips are puckered up. We see a perfectly triangular, dark area on her trousers at the level of genitals as if the fabric were wet with moisture of arousal. The man seems rather indifferent, which means this has happened to him so many times, at every business trip, the lucky guy.

Complement. Among the many preposterous distortions of reality in films of mass consumption, the female character taking sexual initiative is one of the best jokes – even better than female warriors, another recent staple of these products which is such bad taste and so much absurdity, knowing that a man’s slap sends a woman flying meters away (I don’t know this from experience, but I don’t need experience to know that it is so). We owe the ubiquitous initiative-taking woman of the movies to the following consideration. The hero being the man, he must be rewarded – with sex (if he is not rewarded with sex, he is a failure, not a hero). But as a hero, his behavior ought not to evidence the vulgar commonalities of his sex, that is, urgent interest in sexual acts, lechery, womanizing, and prostitutes-seeking. The only way for the film maker to solve the dilemma is to introduce on a systematic basis *an initiative-taking female character* who rewards the hero with her love and body, toward the middle of the film, while he is fully absorbed in his mission and quest.

FARGO



"We want a banker who will work with us and be part of the team."

WHOLESALE BANKING

- Management
- Capital Finance
- Commercial & Corporate
- Commercial Real Estate
- Government & Institutional
- Insurance
- International
- Investment Banking & Capital Markets
- Asset Management

When you need someone to strategize with, we'll be ready to talk. Our relationship managers take the time to learn your business and gain a deeper understanding of your expansion goals. We've successfully partnered with mid-sized to large corporations to help them meet their global business needs. With our full suite of products backed by our time-tested strength and stability, we've never been more ready to support your business today and for years to come. To learn more about how our capabilities can work for you, visit national.wellsfargobank.com/HBR19.

Together we'll go far



Investment products: NOT FDIC-insured - NO Bank Guarantee - MAY Lose Value

Asset Management is a trade name used by the asset management businesses of Wells Fargo & Company. Certain investments are distributed by Wells Fargo Funds and are not FDIC-insured. Wells Fargo & Company is a member of the FDIC. Wells Fargo Insurance is a subsidiary of Wells Fargo & Company. Some services are offered through non-bank affiliates of Wells Fargo & Company including Wells Fargo Insurance Co. and Wells Fargo Insurance Services Co.



with, we'll be ready to talk. ○

112-2

*

Case 113 Harvard Business School of SEX and Drugs

Copy: "Where experienced executives become exceptional leaders." Ex-perienced, ex-ecutives, ex-ceptional: sex, sex, sex.

The black man on the right has a penis embedded on his shirt (picture 113-2).

With his bony finger he points toward the penis of the other black man, showing it to the white guy on the left: "You see that penis?" The penis must be erect, as the guy looks to the girl and gestures toward her as if to grab her. With her left arm, the girl is giving hint of a defensive move, as if to avoid the latter's assault; this is just a reflex, she perhaps is a little scared by the dimensions of his penis but fundamentally she thinks it is okay to be inseminated by him. (Curiously, the skin color of each of her arms is not the same, the left one being tanned –or hairy!–, the right one being not, as if the former arm were another person's intending to grab her wrist from under the table. Possibly she is going to be gang raped.)

There is a fifth person on the left, another guy, of whom we only see the hands and shirtsleeves. He holds his pen as a junkie holds a syringe for a shot, with his thumb on top of the piston.

The ad, thus, is about what is needed to make of experienced executives tolerable members of the society.



WHERE EXPERIENCED EXECUTIVES BECOME EXCEPTIONAL LEADERS

Today's global economy demands leaders with a holistic view of business. The General Management Program at HBS Executive Education combines on-campus sessions with off-campus opportunities to apply what you've learned at your organization. Gain comprehensive perspective and accelerate your transition from accomplished functional specialist into outstanding business leader.



**HARVARD
BUSINESS SCHOOL**
Executive Education

General Management Program

UPCOMING SESSIONS: FEBRUARY–MAY 2017
AUGUST–NOVEMBER 2017

Learn more www.exed.hbs.edu/gmp-hbr →

113-1



WHERE EXPERIENCED EXECUTIVES BECOME EXCEPTIONAL LEADERS

Today's global economy demands leaders with a holistic view of business. The General Management Program at HBS Executive Education combines on-campus sessions with off-campus opportunities to apply what you've learned at your organization. Gain comprehensive perspective and accelerate your transition from accomplished functional specialist into outstanding business leader.



**HARVARD
BUSINESS SCHOOL**
Executive Education

General Management Program

UPCOMING SESSIONS: FEBRUARY–MAY 2017
AUGUST–NOVEMBER 2017

Learn more www.exed.hbs.edu/gmp-hbr →

Complements

Job outsourcing by multinationals: Everybody knows... but nobody knows who

In XIV, I wrote:

I will see if I can find multinationals' job figures by country. Then we will know which countries would be most impacted by automation. We may call Nike an American company but I believe they employ more Chinese than Americans. If this is true, they may contribute a higher share to Chinese economic growth than to American growth and, on the other hand, the automation of Nike factories would impact Chinese work more than American work. (In the meantime I have been looking for Nike job figures by country and did not find them. Hard task, it seems. Probably with some reason...

The reason is, I now know, that companies are not compelled to divulge their job figures country by country. That, again, probably with some reason. "U.S. Rep. Gary Peters (D-MI) introduced a bill that would require publicly-traded corporations to disclose the number of employees they have in the United States and overseas. Under current law, companies must disclose their total number of employees in annual Securities and Exchange Commission filings. Peters' bill, titled the Outsourcing Accountability Act, wouldn't create a new regulation, but rather change the existing rule so companies would have to break down their employment figures by nation and state." (2012) The bill was voted down.

"Data from the U.S. Department of Commerce showed that 'U.S. multinational corporations, the big brand-name companies that employ a fifth of all American workers... cut their work forces in the U.S. by 2.9 million during the 2000s while increasing employment overseas by 2.4 million'." You bet companies don't want to break down their job figures! That bill is key. When the American people realize (with figures) that their favorite brands employ 100 or 1.000 or 10.000 times more Chinese than Americans, they will start questioning their approach to consumption, I believe.

Add fiscal outsourcing, which is done by most big companies, as admitted by *The Economist*, and what I said about American multinationals contributing more to foreign growth than to American growth is wholly warranted: "The volume of money moving through such havens [i.e. "the most tax- and regulation-efficient jurisdictions"] on the way to their final destination has risen sharply since 2000 and currently makes up about 30% of all FDI [foreign direct investment]." (TE, Sep 17th-23rd 2016)

When I say "nobody knows who (does)," whereas all multinationals do, this simply means that people ought to get the figures presented to them in tables ranking the companies from highest to lowest outsourcing figures. Support the Outsourcing Accountability Act.

The Winner Takes All

Wikileaks reveals: "Qatar giving Bill Clinton \$1m for 5-minute meeting." That is some \$3.333 per second of presence. At this rate, Bill Clinton earns the same as 2,361,480 average Americans (Mean personal income \$44,510, US Census Bureau).

If you take median income (\$30,240), he earns as much as 3,475,842 or about 3.5 million average Americans.

Full-time minimum wage in US is \$15,080. Bill Clinton earns the same as 6,970,125 or about 7 million American workers at the minimum wage.

The poverty line in US is \$11,770. At his Qatari rates, Bill Clinton earns as much as 8,930,287 or about 9 million Americans at the poverty line.

If you know the mean/median income of the 46.7 million Americans below the poverty line (Census Bureau figures for 2014), then you can find how many millions of American paupers Bill Clinton is worth.

ANNEXES

World Premiere Eric McLuhan says his say about subliminal messages

Many have wondered at the lack of acknowledged permissions for using the ads in both books [*The Mechanical Bride* and *Culture Is Our Business*]. The reason is that permissions were unnecessary: the ads were available for free. Editors at Vanguard had found a curious legal fiction. Advertisers were being given huge tax breaks on the grounds that they were engaged in a sort of educational enterprise, “educating the public” about products so that it might better make informed choices. The upshot is that anyone can make use of the (government-supported) ads for free providing they were not being used as ads, but as educational materials, for educative purposes. Needless to say, the agencies were reluctant to let these matters become known to the public.

This is the excerpt from Dr Eric McLuhan’s introduction to the 2014 edition of *Culture Is Our Business* by Marshall McLuhan (quoted in ch. XII) concerning which I reached out to Eric McLuhan. This move initiated an exchange of emails between Eric and me. I present the first of these emails, due to their importance for the topic of subliminals.

*

August 15, 2016

Dear Florent Boucharel,

Thank you for your intriguing letter. I was unable to access either of the links that you included, but never mind. It would have been interesting to see the sources you cite. The notion of “subliminal junk” rings a lot of bells here: I spent years investigating things subliminal and am something of an expert re the matter. However...

Let me say right off that I have no personal legal or legalistic expertise in the matter of copyright of ads. The publishers (Vanguard for *Mechanical Bride*, and McGraw-Hill for *Culture Is Our Business*) gave my father freedom to use any ads he wished, and he did so, never once asking permission. Vanguard set the stage by doing the initial research—I assume it was done by their legal department. McGraw-Hill evidently took their word for it. We never heard of a single objection from any of the owners of any of the ads used in either book. Both publishers, by the way, are located in New York. The *Bride* never went on sale, but *Culture Is Our Business* did, and copies were sold outside the US, though I have no idea how many.

Lots of teachers use ads in their courses and I have no knowledge of any of them ever seeking permission to discuss an ad used in a class or classroom. Of course, there is a multitude of textbooks for teachers to use and hundreds of ads in them, but frankly I have never checked to see if permission was asked or given. I seem to recall that these books routinely *list the sources* of ads in their “Acknowledgements” section, as do art textbooks for the images that they use. But all of them are *academic* textbooks.

I am quite certain that it is safe to *study* ads in the classroom without permission; I assume, from past and present experience, that it is safe to provide students with copies of ads

that are being studied in a classroom setting for academic purposes. The sole proviso would be that the ads are being used as specimens for academic scrutiny and not AS ads.

Regards,
Eric

*

August 16, 2016

Dear Florent,

Well! You are a devotee of Bill Key's! I too was a fan of his when he put out the first three books, starting with *Subliminal Seduction*, and subsequently.

As I mentioned, I taught embedding techniques until recently—I retired a couple of years ago. Let me suggest a couple of things. One thing that damaged Key's credibility was that he quickly became very sophisticated in his ability to detect subliminals; as it were, he was working at a post-doc level while his readers were still at the undergraduate level. I found the same problem: I could see things clearly that were still opaque to my students. So I had to tone it down, restrict my exhibits to the simplest and most obvious ones or I would lose them.

I'd suggest that you try something similar. In each of your reports, have several sections. Make the first a group of simple and easy examples, obvious things; the second, a little more subtle; and the third, the not-so-obvious group. And put headings on the groups.

Eventually, I began my class on subliminals (I used a carousel tray of 80 slides) with covers of *Playboy* magazines. Very effective: slightly naughty and caught everybody's attention. Here's the secret: since the first issue, *Playboy* has embedded their signature icon, the rabbit, somewhere in every single cover. They still do it. The homework assignment for that class was to visit a newsstand and examine the cover of the current issue and "find the rabbit." *Playboy* covers are not only entertaining, but VERY useful as a training device.

You see, the *Playboy* artists use every single embedding technique several times over the course of a year or two of covers, with a lot of them repeated because after all there are not that many techniques—it's a matter of theme and variation. But after scrutinizing 20-25 covers, the audience becomes quite expert in spotting the rabbit—and some of the covers are really clever embeds! THEN I hit them with a few ads, and they are often ahead of me. Seldom do I need to explain what is going on: the audience does it for me.

Even so, I begin with a few obvious ads, and then get progressively more subtle.

*

August 17, 2016

I have never written up the way that I taught subliminals using *Playboy* covers. I just did it, each year for a dozen or more. Actually, I think that my letter to you is the first time I have written anything about it. It was—and is—a very powerful means of teaching the subject. I'd suggest that you find somewhere a cache of covers, from the first issues to the present, and made a file of them. (When you do, I'd appreciate a copy!) They fall into a small number of groups if sorted by techniques, and exhibit a wide range of sophistication from simple to

complex in each group. Actually, now that you mention it, it might be fun to put together a small book on the subject as an approach to ads and kindred items.

Playboy is a useful tool because their usage is all *in the spirit of play* and has no moral judgments attached or implied. Nearly everyone who writes on the topic, and I include Bill Key here, along with his detractors—nearly everyone feels compelled to work up moral indignation to a fever pitch. All of that is actually irrelevant. Try this: take any criticism text on subliminals and remove from it every vestige of moralism, and see what is left. It is quite the same with how people approach criticism of media. You are required to express a moral position. If you don't, the assumption is that you approve of it. So in self-defence you must state whether you approve or disapprove. People want to know, right off, "is it a good thing or a bad thing?" The moment you tell them, they are relieved of the responsibility of examining the thing any further: they know now what and how to think. My father made a point of never giving his moral opinion of the things he examined, so was widely accused of being an advocate. Except once. His first book on ads, *The Mechanical Bride*, included a lot of moral outlook. He learned from that experience and you will be hard pressed to find thereafter any similarly moralistic tone in his subsequent writings or his lectures. The second book on ads, *Culture is Our Business*, is entirely free of moralism. Along the same line, you might like to have a look at Wyndham Lewis's essay, "The Greatest Satire is Non-Moral." The non-moral approach pulls the teeth of the opposition.

My class on subliminals was part of a larger discussion of artistic techniques and ways of managing the attention and, just as importantly, crafting the inattention of the beholder. Consequently I never experienced opposition from faculty, though occasionally a student would object, either on moral grounds, or because he or she simply couldn't see the things I was exhibiting. Every serious artist, whether poet or painter or sculptor, etc., spends at least as much time on the elements of inattention as on those things the beholder is to attend to. The language of *figure* and *ground*, which we use often in *Laws of Media: The New Science*, is well suited to these discussions. *Ground* is the area of inattention, the 95% area of any experience. Another word for it is "medium." It provides the way of *seeing* whatever is *figure*. *Ground* is the mode of perception. Another word for the *ground* area is "style." *Ground* is by definition the part that people are trained or induced to ignore, and they have great resistance to any incursions into their areas of ignorance. People will defend to the death their right to preserve their ignorance!

*

August 18, 2016

Here's an idea of what I meant by a cache of covers:

<http://www.playboy.com/articles/playboy-covers-guide>

It does not include ALL of the covers for individual years, but gives quite enough to work with. Quite a number of sites will supply examples.

Of course, if you can find a box-full of actual mags, so much the better. But perhaps you know someone who can make digital copies of these for use as a display. (If you do, please send me a copy!)

If you go to the site above, look especially at the following (play "find the rabbit"):

1960 March, November
1961 March, April, July
1962 Feb., March, April, June, Aug., Dec.
1963 March, Aug.
1964 March, May, Dec.
1965 March, June, Oct., Nov., Dec.
1966 June, July, Nov., Dec.
1967 Feb., March, Nov.
1968 December

1970 May, July, Nov.
1971 April, Aug.
1972 March, April, June
1973 Feb., June, Aug., Oct.
1974 June, Nov.
1976 May, June, July, Aug.
1977 May, Nov....

But you get the idea. Look through the rest.

Occasionally, you'll see white (rabbit-shaped) paper cutouts obscuring parts of anatomies—for the obvious reasons. Too titillating. Ignore the cutouts: they are not the embedded rabbits.

I have underlined several dates, above: these are particularly fine and challenging examples (1973, 1974, 1976). If they stump you, ask me.

Present company excepted, moral indignation generally takes the place of understanding. Try editing out the moralism from one of your own earlier fine posts and see what is left. I imagine it will be just fine, and harder-hitting. (The moralism component is one of the things that got Bill Key fired.)

Wyndham Lewis pointed out that if you criticize someone for being immoral, he and she can sort of snigger and joke that yes, they WERE being naughty, wink wink nudge nudge ha ha—that is, they can turn the criticism to account. Being banned-in-Boston does have a certain PR value. But if you satirize them/show them up instead as being stupid or ignorant or insensitive, why, there's no PR value in that. You got 'em. All they can do is get angry, and that works against them.

The moral approach encourages somnambulism in your readers. I'm not sure that that is the response you wish to promote.

*

August 19, 2016

(...) Anyhow, you see why using a parade of *Playboy* covers makes a useful way to warm up an audience to presenting and examining some more sophisticated embedding in ads. The big difference between the covers and the ads, is that you are supposed to scrutinize the covers and to ignore the ads. And of course the covers are not intended to have an effect beyond that of enticing the beholder to buy the mag.

Incidentally, “ground” is a useful way to refer to embedding areas because the key to ground is that it is always configurational. In any situation there is the figure (the object of attention) or the procession of figures one at a time, and the con-figures, that is, all of the other potential figures assembled at once which is ground. In other words, the figure is by definition an artifact of the beholder’s attention. The figure area is sequential; the ground area, simultaneous.

*

August 20, 2016

My course was on perception, taught at a school for musicians and professional recording students. I devoted one or two classes to the topics we have been discussing. In that slide tray there were about 30 covers and the rest, about 50, had to do with ads.

World Premiere 2

Material from Eric McLuhan's Class on Subliminals

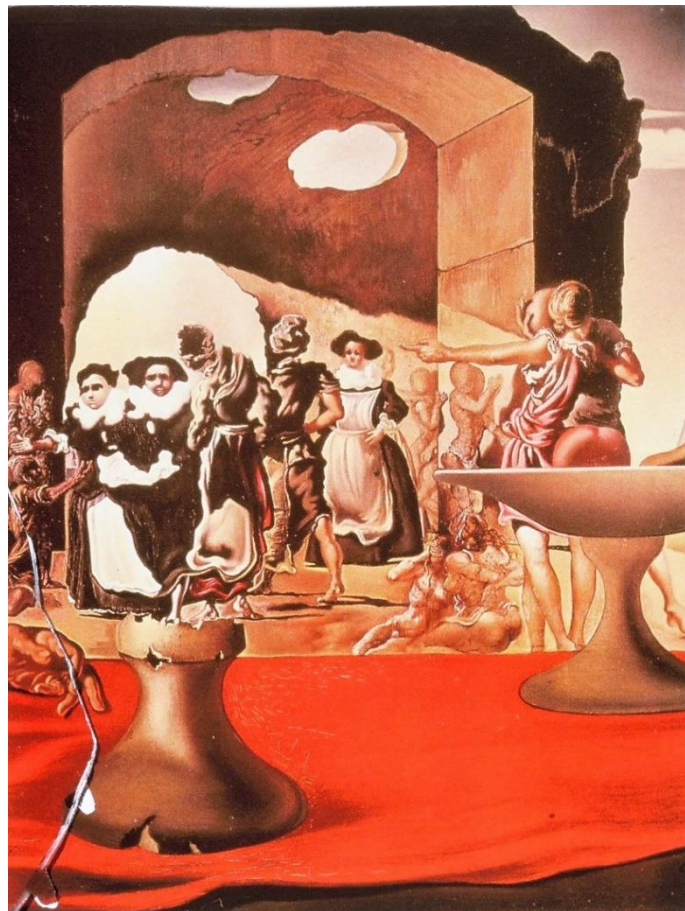
In the first annex, Professor Eric McLuhan talked about his class on perception and subliminals at Ontario College of Art (OCA) in the seventies. In this correspondence he says he was using a carousel tray of 80 slides to familiarize his students with the subject. In the meantime, he digitized this material and has been kind enough to email me some of the slides, allowing me to publish them on this blog as another world premiere.

In these slides readers interested in the topic of subliminal messages as used in our mass culture will find not only fine examples of subs' occurrence in advertising but also a method for their research.

Prof. Eric McLuhan's comments on his material will appear in roman type, while my occasional remarks are in italics.

*

From his carousel he sent me this painting from Salvador Dali, Slave Market with the Disappearing Bust of Voltaire (1940), which, incidentally, I had already mentioned in my own work (Case 74 from Sep 2015).



I can name at least two more Dali's paintings in the same vein: 1/ Metamorphosis of Narcissus; and 2/ Swans Reflecting Elephants. You can google them. Also, at the small Dali Museum in Montmartre (Paris), there is an anamorphosis: A butterfly is painted which reflection on a vertical metal tube transforms into a grinning Harlequin's face.

Then Eric McLuhan sent me the following.

I generally approach the matter of embedding from the angle of visual puns. Doing so allows the discussion to proceed minus the annoyance of moral indignation.



Can you still get prime quality for \$1.26 a pound?

A pound of Volkswagen isn't cheap compared to other cars. But what you pay for is the quality. Prime quality.


Just look at what you get for your money:

- 13 pounds of paint, some of it in places you can't even see. (So you can leave a Volkswagen out overnight and it won't spoil.)
- A watertight, airtight, sealed steel bottom that protects against rocks, rain, rust and rot.
- Over 1,000 inspections per one Beetle.
- 1,014 inspectors who are so finicky that they reject parts you could easily ride around with and not even detect there was anything wrong.
- Electronic Diagnosis that tells you what's right and wrong with important parts of your car.
- A 1600 cc aluminum-magnesium engine that gets 25* miles to a gallon of regular gasoline.

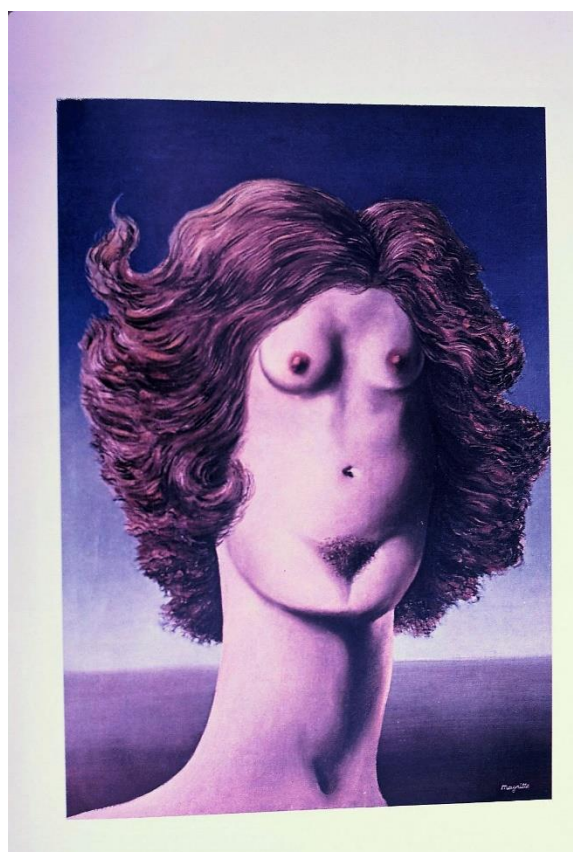
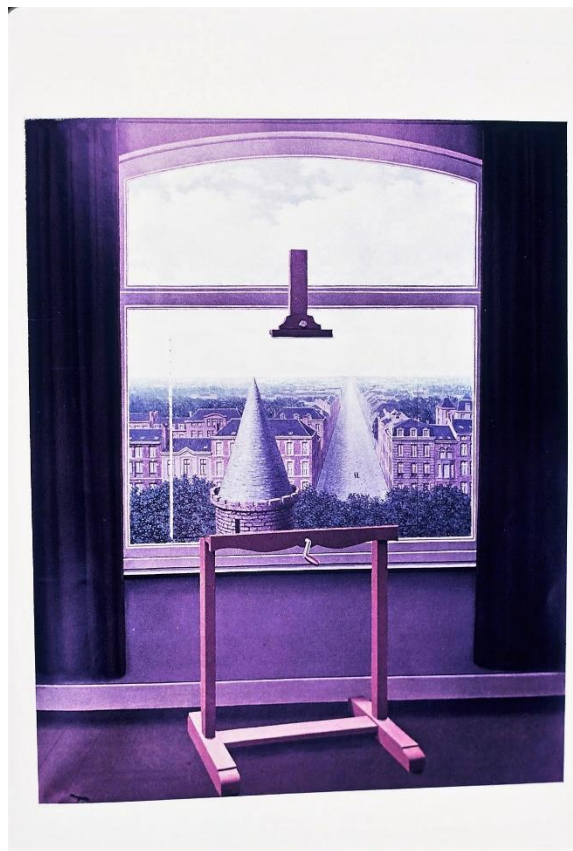
Volkswagen's traditionally high resale value.

Over 22,000 changes and improvements on a car that was well built to begin with.

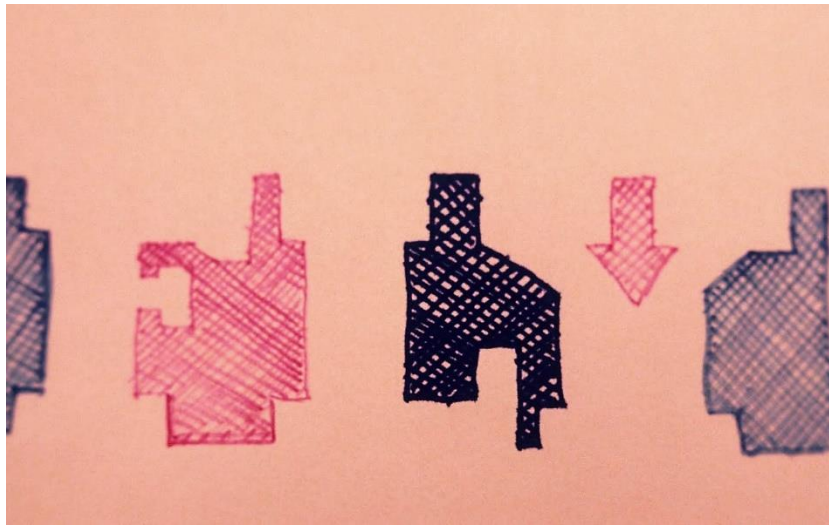
What with all the care we take in building every single Volkswagen, we'd like to call it a filet mignon of a car. Only one problem. It's too tough.

 Few things in life work as well as a Volkswagen.

Magritte



Then, the word FLY embedded in the intervals between the figures...



I find it really useful as a demo of embedding technique because the object is not presented as a figure but as a pure product of use of interval (ground) and con-figuration.

*

Here's another example of embedding that uses con-figuration—that is, ground. The only elements that are to be taken literally appear in the centre strip. From a Ben Casey cartoon. The Ben Casey exemplifies how an assemblage of disparate elements can be used to compose an image not implicit in any one of them—exactly how subliminals are constructed when a gearshift lever or a baguette serves as a penis, etc...



The mouth and nose of the four-square face is provided by a lamp in the bottom-right square. The bottom-left square, it's other (rather undefined) deco elements and at the same time the chin.

*

I use this one, the Family Circus cartoon, to introduce the notion of the “beholder’s share” in completing the image, whether done consciously, as here, or unconsciously, as in the usual round of subliminals in ads.



*

Let me close with a dandy, one of the most subtle subliminal ads ever made. For Beefeater gin.

The Beefeater ad is an excellent example of an ad designed to be ignored. As such, it does its work while the beholder is occupied elsewhere, in this case, with reading the column of print on the left. The ad itself can be grasped in a second or two at most: there is nothing there, just a few fragments of a situation. The bottle cap, the martini glass and olive and its reflection, the single word. The beholder fills in the rest and thereafter relegates the entire to the area of inattention so the ad continues to work for the next minute or two or three as he reads the print. The entire ad is subliminal.



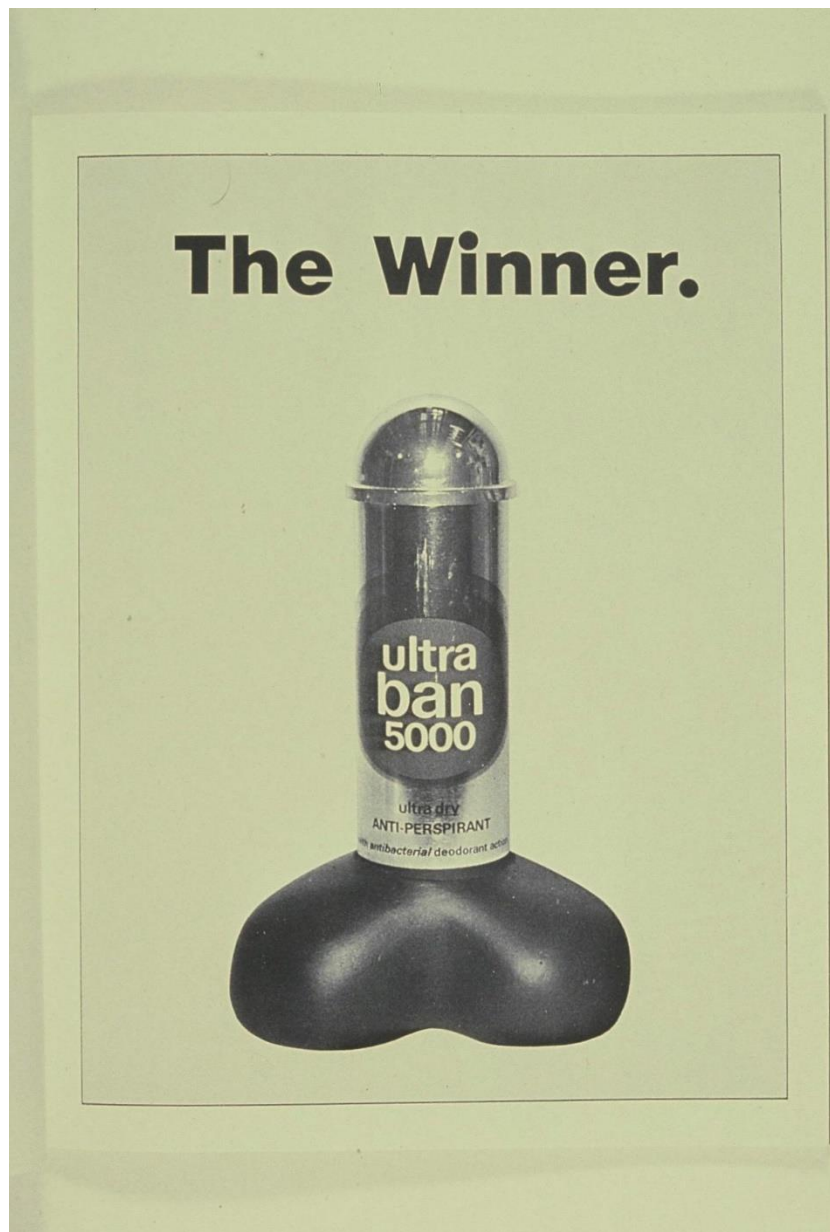
I get Eric's point all right, yet my feeling, as I was searching for a subliminal embed, was, perhaps based on a misconstruction of the word "dandy" he used, that the picture was very appealing. I fancy some people may like to linger gazing at it. It magnifies the glass of gin

as pure light on a background of unmitigated darkness. The reflections have been airbrushed to produce a vertiginous effect of infinite light-beam plays. It's a diamond. A diamond for cheap. Real art, I would say. Abstract art. Clean, uncluttered style. It takes a lot of work to streamline an object like this, even if on paper only.

*

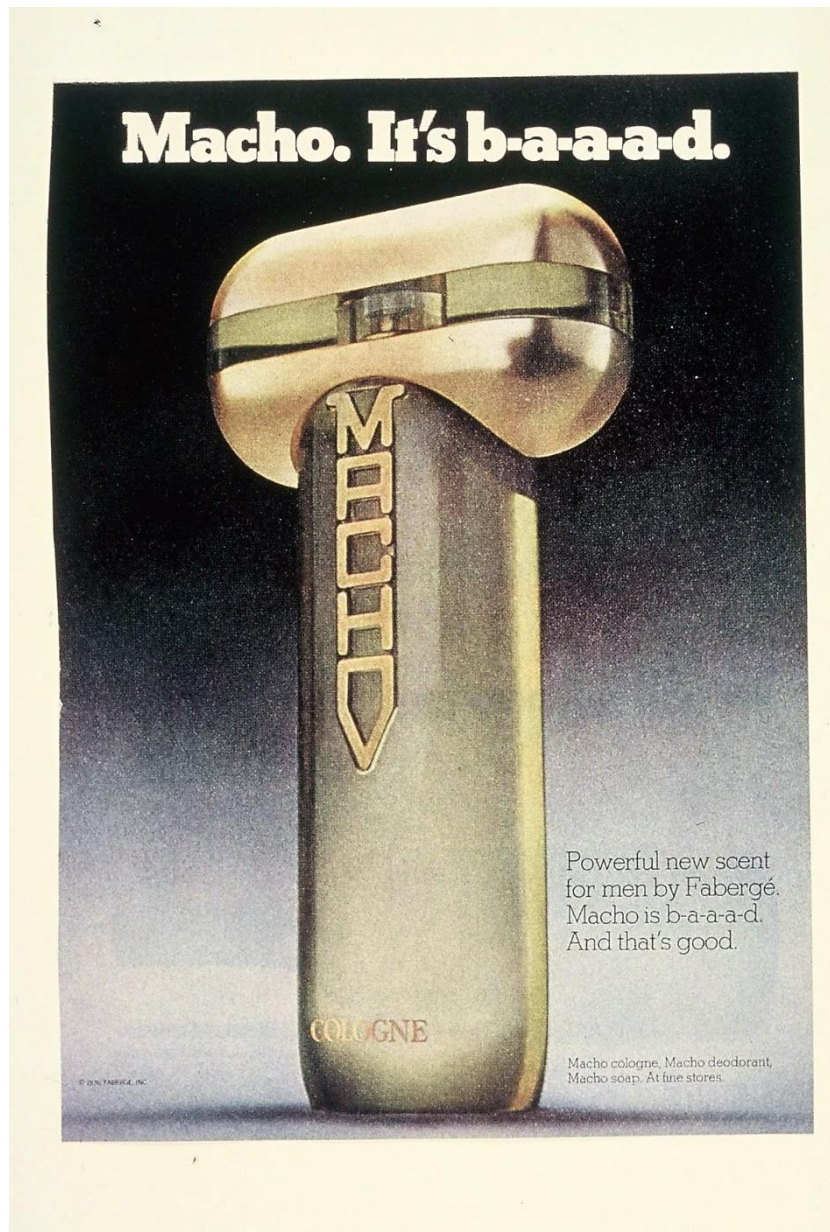
Here are a couple more from the slide tray. I think you'll enjoy them.

The first is a fake, a send-up: I use it to set up the next two...



After the laughter has died down, comes this one...

From erect to flaccid.



And then this one... (From Good Housekeeping, I think.)

Twinkle did several with the same theme.

**Proud of your copper?
Keep it shining
with Twinkle!**



Twinkle copper cleaner gives you a shine and brightness that lasts a long time. There is a reason. Twinkle is the only copper cleaner containing chronite. It's an ingredient that holds back retarnishing. So if you want your copper to keep its shine, get Twinkle.



©Copyright 1973 The Drackett Products Co.



Letters

TEXAS HOTLINE

Many young runaways of America are already beginning to call Operation Peace of Mind in Houston in direct response to your article appearing in the September issue ("Please . . . Ask My Mother If I Can Come Home"). I know that you, like us, must be very pleased at performing a much needed service for these troubled young people and their anxious parents.

DOLPH BRISCOE
GOVERNOR OF TEXAS
AUSTIN, TEXAS

The toll-free number for Operation Peace of Mind's nationwide hotline is 1-800-231-6946—Ed.

RECOVERED ALCOHOLICS

I read with great interest and with tears in my eyes, the article by Don Newcombe (*I Was an Alcoholic*, October). My mother was, or more correctly, is, an alcoholic. It was only when I told her that she could not see me and my children again if she did not stop drinking that she faced, as Mr. Newcombe did, "the shock of an ultimate loss." She responded by pouring the last of her "supply" down the kitchen sink. God bless her, that was almost seven years ago!

NANCY H. BURY
PLAINWELL, MICHIGAN

MEDICAL TESTS

The American Society for Medical Technology is the largest national, professional organization of clinical laboratory practitioners. Our society strongly agrees with the premise of GH's September article *The Shocking Facts About Medical Tests* that there is a critical need for strengthened regulation of clinical labora-

tories, and we strongly endorse the Clinical Laboratories Improvement Act of 1975 proposed by Senators Jacob K. Javits and Edward M. Kennedy.

NANCY PREUSS, PRESIDENT
AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR MEDICAL
TECHNOLOGY
WASHINGTON, D.C.

C-R GROUPS

Since I am currently involved in a consciousness-raising group, I was glad to see the question on C-R groups in the September issue (*Dr. Joyce Brothers Answers Your Questions*). But I was shocked to read "Single, married, in love or out of love, you can be helped by these sessions to relate better to the man in your life. If there isn't a man in your life, C-R might provide a clue as to why." The entire purpose of these groups is to help women see themselves as whole, independent persons—not as satellites around men!

MS. LINDA M. BRINKERHOFF
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

The focus of my answer was on women's feelings about themselves and each other. But C-R groups can and should explore all relationships including those between men and women. And if all the people in a woman's life are of one sex only there is something wrong—Dr. Joyce Brothers.

BREAST RECONSTRUCTION

The Operation Women Never Dreamed Would Be Possible (September) was excellent! It is time more women were made aware of this alternative following mastectomy. It certainly can give a new lease on life.

continued on page 1

*

January 1976 Vol. 182, No. 1
 Good Housekeeping is published monthly in national and regional editions by The Hearst Corporation, 300
 Eighth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10019. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional
 mailing offices. Subscription Price: U.S.A. and possessions, \$7.00 for one year; Canada, \$10.00 for one year.

The academic reaction to my lectures on subliminals were generally, er, disappointing. Or downright dismissive, to put it mildly. Not serious scholarship. Mind you, I avoided the moral approach entirely and pursued the practise in terms of art technique and visual ambiguity. But the literati, it must be noted, have a profound distaste for puns, visual or otherwise.

Speaking of which...



Chatelaine's exclusive
TOTE BAG

Our carryall bag is perfect for your busy life. It's functional, durable, yet fashionable. Made of strong 12-oz. canvas, the bag is reinforced through the handles and bottom, and is completely washable, once you remove the board. The unique Lily of the Valley and Sweet Pea design adds a splash of color. Great for carrying parcels or your crafts projects, the bag measures 38 cm x 14 cm and is 28 cm in depth (15 in.x5½ in.x11 in.). Only a limited number of bags are available so order today.

Molly Copus Christie, Crafts Editor

CHATELAINE'S EXCLUSIVE TOTE BAG

80267203 Chatelaine's exclusive tote bag: \$12.95.
Ontario residents (includes 7% sales tax): \$13.86.
Includes postage.

Allow two to three weeks delivery after receipt of order.

Please send me _____ tote bags. Enclosed is my cheque/money order for \$ _____.

(PLEASE PRINT)
NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
APT. _____ CITY _____
PROV. _____ POSTAL CODE _____

Mail this coupon with your cheque or money order (no cash) to:
Chatelaine Crafts, 481 University Ave., Toronto
M5W 1A7

And in Chatelaine, of all places! Tsk, tsk!

The jock strap as Tote Bag—or is it vice-versa?

*

Variations on a theme...

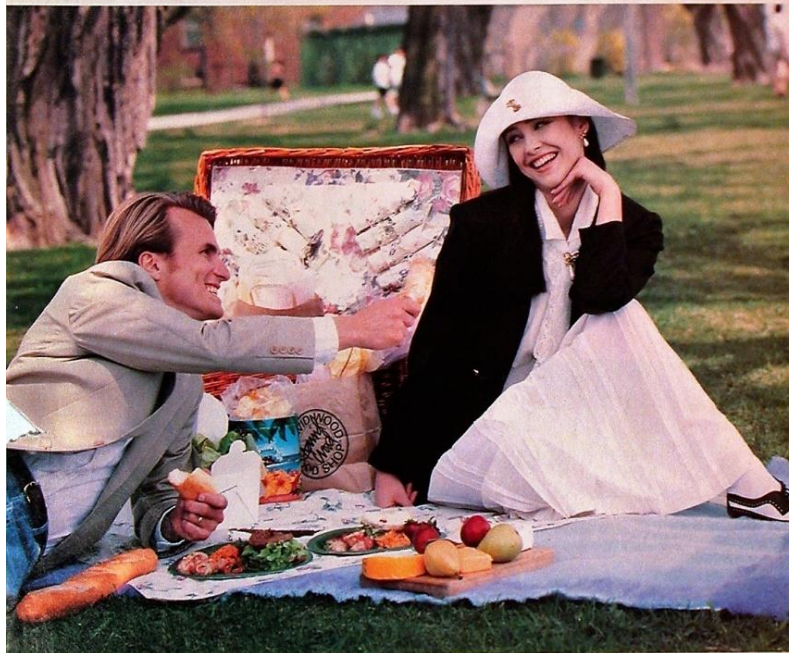
100

JACKET JACKPOT

Raise your fashion ante with this one great item

For years, tailored jackets have been the backbone of men's wardrobes. Now, with a flare all their own, women's fashions are following suit. The perfect finishing touch for a variety of good looks, a jacket will be one of your smartest fashion purchases this fall. Or, if you already have a classic jacket or blazer hanging in your closet—navy, black, olive and brown are high-visibility colors this fall—now's the time to put it to work. Here's how to wear it five different days in five different ways, each with the look and feel of a brand-new outfit. All it takes is imagination and a good eye for mix and match. For shopping information, see page 105.

This page: A romantic picnic for two is an ideal chance to team up the traditional tailoring of a navy wool sateen blazer, \$270, with a softly feminine ankle-length cream wool sateen pleated skirt, \$155, both by Carriere, and linen blouse, \$89, by Club Monaco. Opposite: Your weekday blazer relaxes on the weekend with the help of a comfortable pair of jeans, \$45, and bright white T-shirt, \$12, both by The Gap.



by Karen Labelle

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MATTHEW WILEY Hair and makeup: Jamie Hanson



The essay to be written (or spoken) on this one is easy, and obvious...

No wedding rings

They've been to a party / ball

They're going to her place

He's focused outwardly; she, inwardly...

"How do you know they're going to her place, I asked. The groceries she's holding?"

Yes, it is the fact that she is carrying the groceries, cradling the genitalia, clutching the milk to her breast, that tells the story. Normally, the gentleman would carry the bags.

*

Here's one for today...
No comment needed.



The Bols Snowball.

It melts the heat.

When heat hits, hit back with a Bols Snowball. Pour two ounces of Bols Advocaat over ice in a tall glass. Add four ounces of bitter lemon or lemon lime. Sip slowly, thinking cool thoughts. Feel the heat melt away.

BOLS ADVOCKAAT
The Dutch Masterpiece.

It seems even more outrageous that advertisers talk of “dirty minds,” about the very few people who voice their suspicions, given such transparent items...

Hard to believe, isn't it? The best way to hide something is to put it in plain sight. Of course they say you have a dirty mind. What else can they say—unless they admit to being naughty?

Tsk, tsk!

Wink wink nudge nudge.

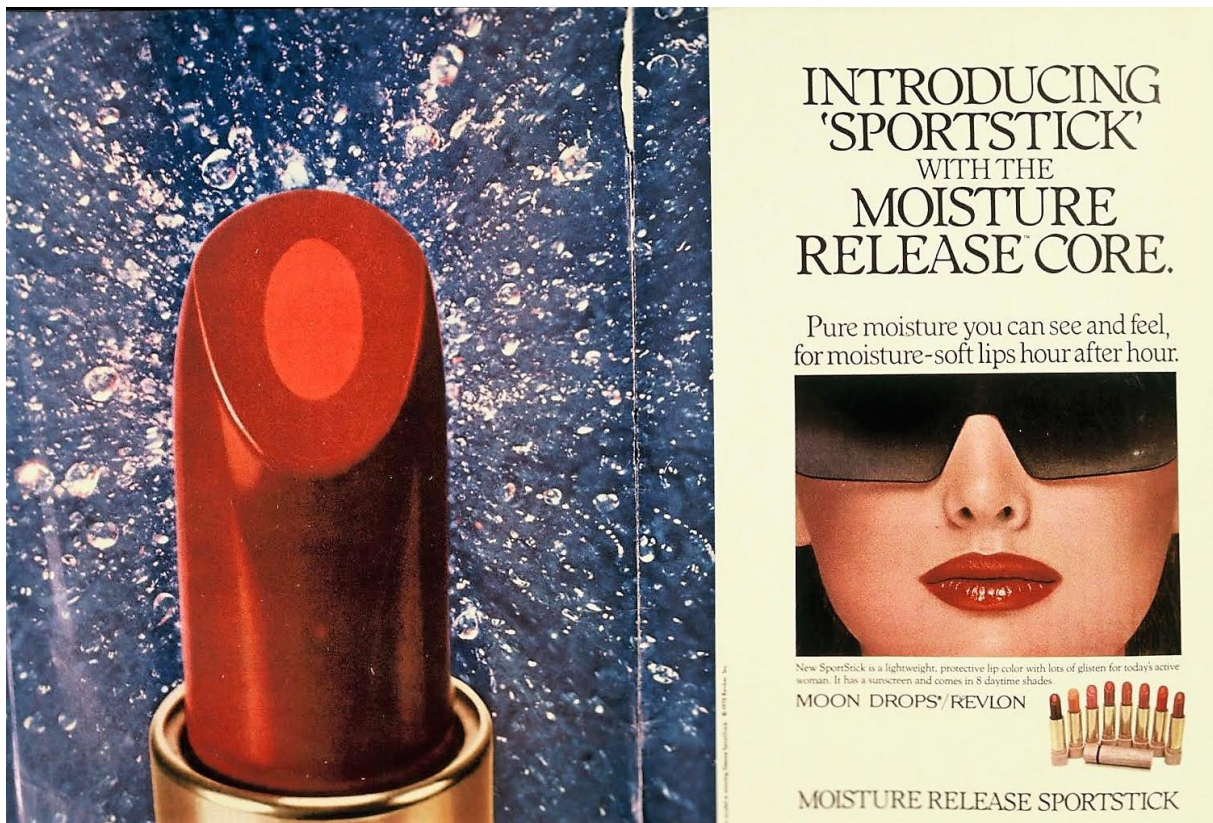
*

Lipstick ads can usually be counted on to provide a sandbox for the embedders to play in. Here's a rather exuberant example...

Hey, sport, how's the old stick?

Moisture-soft lips? Come ON...

Hour after hour? And this was before Viagra and its companions.



The background here again is important. Whereas on the After Six and Bols ads the figures (objects: groceries, baguette, bottle and tennis balls...) tell the story, here the lipstick is, to be sure, a phallic shape, yet somewhat remotely so. It needs the “moisture” Eric is talking about to specify the effect, and it is provided by the white, marble-like veins of the background wall and their “spurt effect.”

*

Love's new Big Shine Colorgloss

big
shine
big
shades
in



one quick Love stick.

Gloss up your lips, not your fingertips!
You apply Colorgloss like a lipstick, but
you get glossy, transparent colour—like
nothing we've ever had in a stick before.
Gentle, earthy shades. Big big shine.
And it's a sunscreen, too!
Try on the clean quick stick.



Here is the copy to consider. Meaning subliminal oral sex in the lipstick pointing toward the model's mouth is not per se sufficient, methodologically speaking, because in any case it is the vocation of lipstick to be applied to the lips, which would make all lipstick ads subliminal. (It would be like saying everything is sexual, as Freudians do: eating is a sexual pleasure [orality], etc.)

The copy is about a "big love stick." Double entendre. The advertiser, however (an imaginary advertiser who would go beyond the "dirty mind" stance), might reply that there is a dissonance in that construction, because of "quick": doing it quick is not a favorable attribute for a "love stick"... But perhaps it is meant that the stick is quick to get hard, hence that it is a healthy stick and that once it is hard it will not be soft again before a long time. The stick is quick to be a love stick.

Bear in mind that almost every reference to lips in these contexts is also a double entendre: facial lips and genital lips. As, for example, in the Sportstick ad, or in this one (inviting cunnilingus). See also the next few...



The field is rich.

*

**Plunge
into
the Wet Wet World
of
Lip Quencher**
by Chap Stick

Come and enjoy moist lips. Once you enter our wet wet moist lips world, you'll never use any other lipstick again. Lip Quencher moisturizing lipstick by Chap Stick is drenched with protective emollients, overflowing with creaminess, to soften your lips and keep them lusciously moist. In mouth-watering creams, transparents and shimmering frosteds. Choose from 24 beautiful shades. Why wear just any lipstick when you can wear Lip Quencher by Chap Stick. Splash one on.

A new kind of lipstick by Chap Stick.

Lip Quencher
by Chap Stick

Chap Stick and Lip Quencher are registered trademarks of A. H. Roberts Company. Copyright 1976.

This one deserves prolonged meditation: it is loaded.

First, note the manufacturer is Chap Stick.

Here we go again: same ballpark as SportStick.... Same tune, different key.

Composition: standard eye-leading: eye is led from top left to bottom right. Plunge — Wet Wet — Quencher, Chap Stick—and so down.

The model strides over a gap in the pavement: legs apart. Through that gap/between her legs there gushes a waterfall, a torrent of foamy liquid.

She is airborne (ecstatic?): only the very tip of one toe touches the ground.

The headline tells the reader to take a plunge. Figuratively of course as the depth of this water is an inch or less. But “take the plunge...”

So Chap Stick / Lip Quencher provides the wet wet world—and there they go with lips again. Really subtle!

Now turn to the copy for the second course.

Headline: Come and enjoy MOIST LIPS. Only it has to be read aloud in a suitably excited voice: **COME!** and **enjoy MOIST LIPS.**

(Remember the waterfall...)

(Pause for emphasis)

(there’s those lips again).

Then: Once you enter our wet wet moist lips world, ...

It continues,

Chap Stick is

drenched with protective emollients,

overflowing with creaminess,

to soften your lips and keep them lusciously moist.

In mouth-watering creams...

Enough said.

Hilarious!

*

Here are two cliches from the lipstick ads. Lipsticks not only have a very useful name (lips + stick) and set of suggestive (symbolic) phallic associations, their very ubiquity and familiarity blocks the readers' imaginations from seeing them as anything else.

First, circumcised:



Second, uncircumcised:

Flame-Glo says:
Put your lips in our hands
with Flame-Glo's Lush Lips.

Now! Roll-on
the supershiny-est
color your
lips have ever seen!

Never has a liquid lip gloss been wetter, shinier and come in such fresh, long-lasting colors. With rich moisturizers that guard against dryness and chapping.
Flame-Glo's Lush Lips. The more you roll, the more you shine!

Get our free newsletter "How Lips Can Lead A More Exciting Life" Write to: Flame-Glo, Dept. G, P.O. Box 2548, Grand Central Station, N.Y., N.Y. 10017.

Deep, rich colors like wine, mocha, cocoa, pink, peach, red and natural.

...in the inset on the right side.

Also, there is the usual double-entendre about lips, and so on.

Check the main headline: Put your lips in our hands...

*

Is that a thumb?

THERE'S MORE TO BEING RICH THAN MEETS THE EYE.



At Redken, beautiful promises are based in scientific fact. So when we say our new colors for lips and nails are rich, we mean rich.

pH Plus[™] Conditioning Lipstick gives you more than a pretty mouth. Loaded with hard-working emollients, protein and vitamins, it pampers and protects your lips. Its long-lasting color glides on as effortlessly as sheer chiffon. Without caking. Without drying out.

pH Plus Conditioning Nail Colour leaves more than a jewel-bright finish. It's packed with polymers that act like another, stronger nail layer to help your nails resist breaking and softening in water. pH Plus Nail Colour is quick-drying, too.

We even put thought into the bottle. The application is pre-measured. The bottle is spill-proof.

And our six new colors are elegant. For lips: Privileged Beige, Million \$ Mauve, Foxy Beige, Red Sable, Iced Champagne and Caviar Brown. With six new Nail Colours that coordinate beautifully.

We feel that scientific products like ours can best be recommended by a licensed cosmetologist. You'll find pH Plus Lipstick and Nail Colour in the hands of professionals. Look for it in select beauty salons that use and sell Redken products. If you don't already know such a salon, check your Yellow Pages Telephone Directory. Then, go after Redken's new Richer-Than-Rich Colors. You'll be that much richer for it!



pH PLUS
RICHER-THAN-RICH
COLORS

REDKEN AT KNOWLEDGEABLE HAIRSTYLING SALONS

*

It's amazing, the variety of contexts in which male genitalia can be used!

It's a visual pun. Puns are the essence of our subject.

...the occasion for which you serve the food. (The occasion doesn't have to be a party or other special event.)

* Tell us where you got the recipe or recipes. If adapted from a book or other publi-

* Send your entry to *Woman's Day*, Silver Spoon Award, 1515 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10036. We will award the winning cook a handsome Tiffany sterling-silver serving spoon.

Holiday Lobster Spread

2 envelopes Knox® Unflavored Gelatine
¼ cup water
2 Tbsp. lemon juice
1 pint (16 oz.) sour cream
1 bottle (12 oz.) chili sauce
2 Tbsp. horseradish
1½ cups finely chopped cooked lobster or shrimp (about 8 oz.)
Assorted crackers or party-size bread

In medium saucepan, sprinkle unflavored gelatine over water and lemon juice. Let stand 1 minute. Stir over low heat until gelatine is completely dissolved, about 5 minutes. With wire whip or rotary beater, blend in sour cream, chili sauce and horseradish; fold in lobster. Turn into Mirro® Copper-tone® 3½-cup Lobster Mold; chill until firm. Serve with crackers. Makes about 3½ cups spread.

Save—Mirro Lobster Mold Offer

Mail to:
MIRRO MOLD OFFER—Dept. G
P.O. Box 500
Manitowoc, WI 54220

Please send me _____ Mirro® Copper-tone® 3½-cup capacity Lobster Mold(s). For each one I have enclosed \$3.99 in check or money order payable to the Mirro Corporation (no stamps or cash, please).

Name _____
(Please Print)

Address _____ Apt. _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

*Must be included to guarantee delivery Offer void without this certificate.
Offer good only in U.S.A., its territories and Puerto Rico. Void where reproduced, prohibited, taxed or restricted. U.S. Military Overseas, please include APO number. Add sales tax in CA, IL, NY and WI. Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery. Offer expires June 30, 1984.
An offer of Mirro Corporation, 1512 Washington Street, Manitowoc, WI 54220

This shape can be related to the “super deformed” genre from some Japanese mangas and video games, a type of normed caricature. It’s fine “super deformed” genitalia. I suggest using this grid when looking for subliminals.

*

There's a nice (and innocent, for once) subliminal embed in the top left corner, behind and just below the word, "tu"—a man's face.



The advertisement features a large, close-up portrait of a woman with voluminous, dark, curly hair, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. She is wearing bright red lipstick and dark eye makeup. In the top left corner, there is a white outline of a keyhole with the letters "tu" inside. To the right of this logo, the text "The most exciting thing you can wear." is written in a white, sans-serif font. In the bottom left corner, there is a small inset image showing a collection of Woolworth cosmetics, including a red lipstick tube, a compact powder, and a jar of cream. In the bottom right corner, there is a block of text describing the product range, followed by the Woolworth logo in blue and red.

tu The most exciting thing you can wear.

It's the very special, totally feminine cosmetic range. A warm romantic creation. Mascaras, lipsticks, nail colours, blushers, eyeshadows, skin care creams and lotions... It's all you really need to wear. Whatever else you don't wear, for beauty — always wear tu.

CREATED EXCLUSIVELY FOR F. W. WOOLWORTH CO. LIMITED.

Woolworth **Woolco**

The point is, you examine the model's expressions and demeanour, and ask, what is on her mind, what is she grooming for? The answer is there, connected to "tu"—second person (male in this case) and very singular. Her dream companion.

There is nothing naughty about this ad or the use of the subliminal (or nearly subliminal) image since readers can easily discern the ghostly boyfriend if they pay attention. It is just a nicely-orchestrated composition.

I have my own interpretation on this one. The "dream companion" is in the gloom. As I guess people will tend to look at the model, they won't notice the face in the background. When they see it, for those who will see it, it must be startling, like a spook coming out of the dark... He looks befuddled, as if not well awoken from his eternal sleep. Or sad and melancholy: The man is a suicide. Men will die for this woman. She's a witch. "Tu" is the informal/intimate you, but also the masterly, the superior you. The advertiser intended to convey a sense of power, magic power, and power over males. That the man stands in the dark could also mean the woman will be the one who shines in that pair.

*

Then there is this.

Just remembered—the very first issue of OUI mag, in 1972, featured a brazen subliminal that might interest you, inasmuch as there was little or no recognition of it—the embed, that is. OUI was published by *Playboy*.

It is a simple subliminal: open the centerfold and hold it up to the light. One side is a reclining nude. The other has a drawing of Marlon Brando in a rather odd pose. With the light shining through, you see Mr Brando performing cunnilingus on the model.

You might like to add this one to your collection.

I ordered the copy and saw the embed all right. I was to take a picture of it when Prof. McLuhan sent me the picture he himself had taken and just retrieved.



January 2017

Material from Eric McLuhan's Class on Subliminals 2

With Prof Eric McLuhan's permission we continue disclosing the material related to subliminal advertising that he discussed in his class.

Same as before, my own remarks are in italics.

Without further ado, the floor is his!

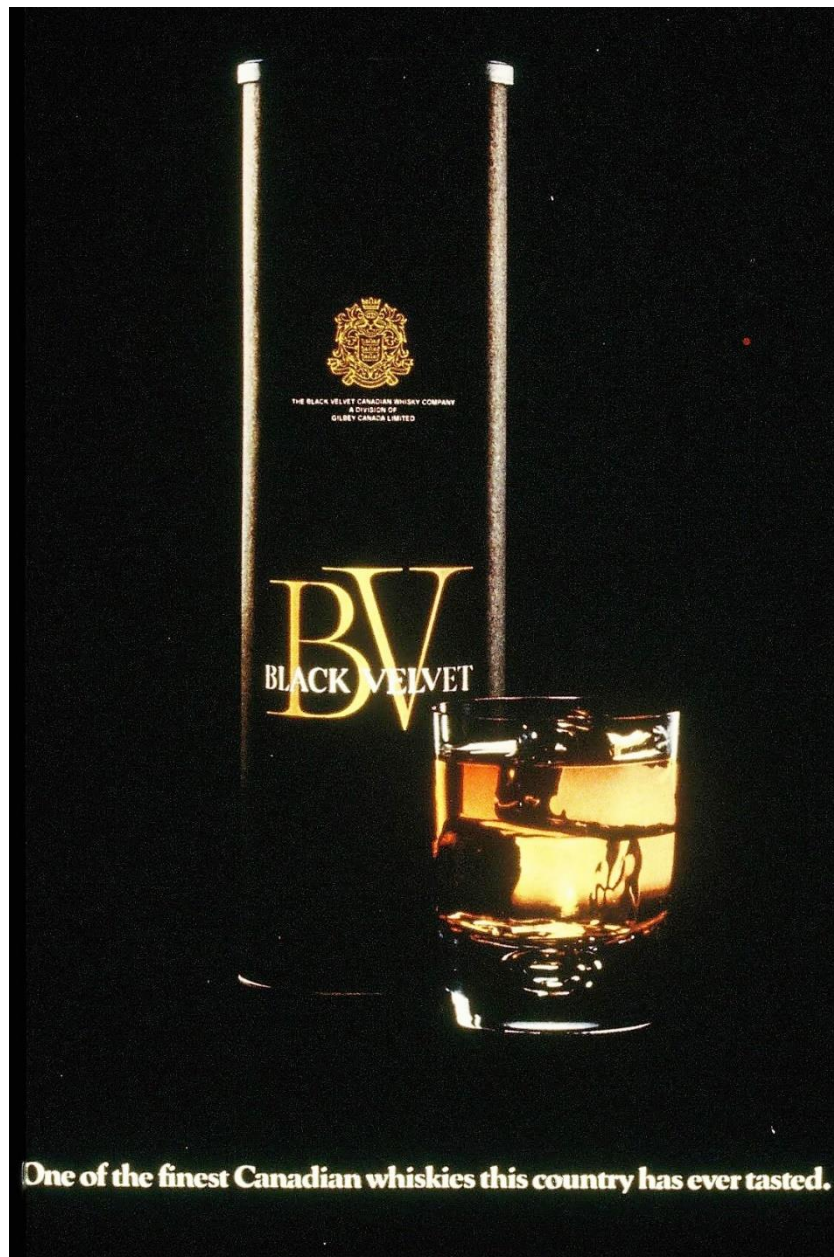
*

Another nice, innocent one.

All the action is, of course, in the glass, in the center two bands.

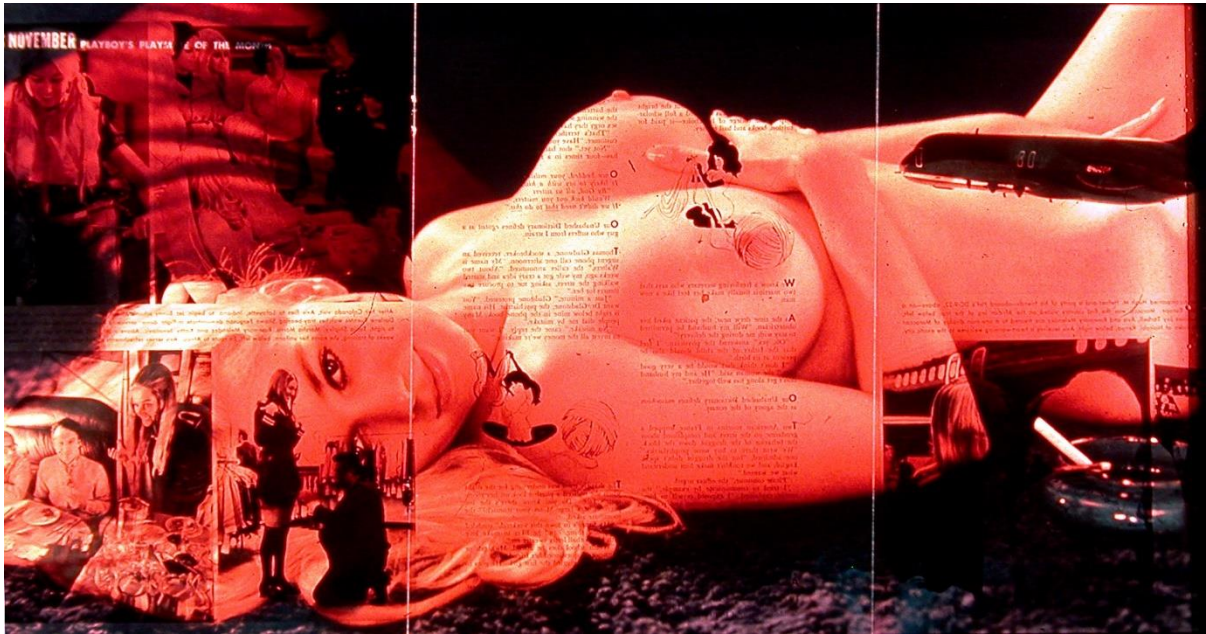
The scene is romantic: a couple stands on the beach, holding hands and observing a sunset. They are Giacometti-like stick figures, not fully depicted characters. In the distance, in the band above them, they see a square-rigged sailing ship silhouetted under full sail. Romance, nostalgia—nicely executed.

Interesting ambiguity in the copy line, don't you think? "This country" could be anywhere the ad appears.



*

Playboy didn't confine its naughtiness to *Oui* magazine: they dabbled a bit in their signature mag.



It's the same technique as the last case from the previous annex, with one side, the centerfold, being the nude model and the other side "completing" the centerfold subliminally. Here the centerfold is completed by a rather impressive penis penetrating the model in the guise of an airplane. The plane's tail even provides an optical curvature.

*

Not all of the subliminals concern sex. Some, a much smaller number of course, work the other end of the life spectrum: death.

This Crown Royal ad ran for the longest time. It was everywhere, for over a year. Ad agencies have big budgets, but they are not known for throwing good money after bad, so it must have shown enduring results.

Possibly one reason is that it hands the beholder a subliminal double-whammy of symbols.



Sex and death in the same ad is a rarity: they usually occur in isolation. All the action is in the bottom half of the page.

Sex is invoked in dozens of ways in ads; death, uses a smaller vocabulary of symbols. One of the main ones is “the hidden enemy”—silent, stealthy underwater creatures such as sharks. Coupled with the threat from the animal is the threat of drowning.

In the bottom left corner, above and left of the word “Have”: a large aquatic predator emerges from the sea (of spilled booze), jaws agape. Big enough to swallow the companion figure on the right. All we see is the head, but that is enough to prod our imaginations to fill in the rest.

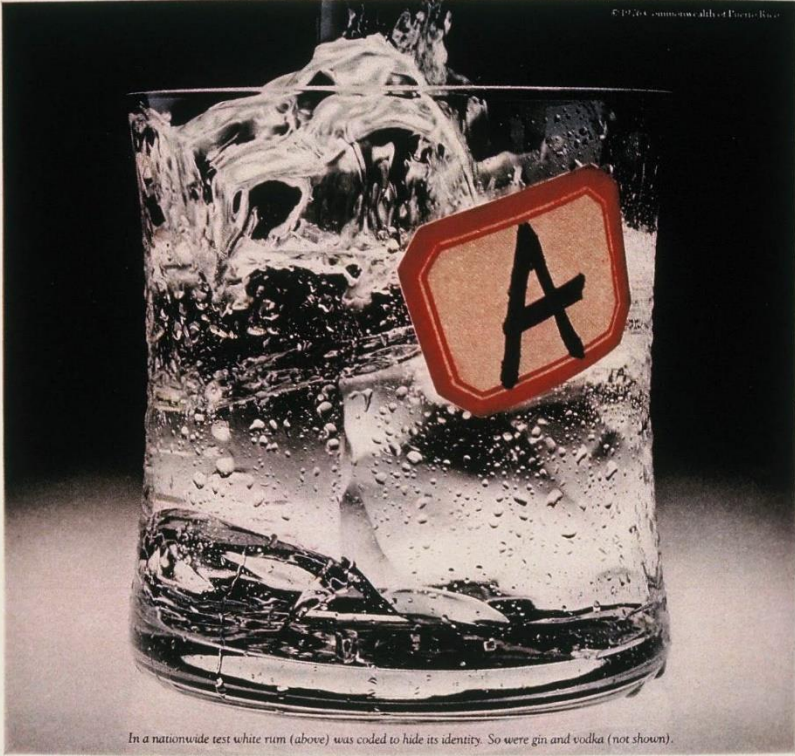
To the right, a nude female beckons. Above the words “man cry?” is her torso; from waist to shoulders is clear enough. The right breast is silhouetted, and the left shoulder and arm. The head is obscured but there are vague hints of one in the place where a head ought to be found. Below the torso the legs are evident, and open. The right leg extends from tip of toe, above “Have,” to crotch, above “man.” There, we can see the beginning of the left leg, and imagine the rest.

I think the copy offers a rather strong instance of flimsiness and mere pretext, for the deeper, subliminal content offered by the broken glass and spilled liquid as a good milieu for embeds.

*

Along similar lines is this one, which you might call The Specimen.

We spent thousands finding out what we already knew. White rum is smoother than gin or vodka.



© 1968, Imported and Bottled by Puerto Rican Rums

In a nationwide test white rum (above) was coded to hide its identity. So were gin and vodka (not shown).

We could have told you white rum was smoother before we spent a mint on a nationwide taste test. But we couldn't advertise it. Government regulations protect you from idle claims by requiring quantitative substantiation. That's as it should be. So we went to 21 major cities and asked 550 drinkers to compare white rum with the leading brands of gin and vodka. 24.2% preferred gin. 34.4% preferred vodka. And 41.4% preferred white rum.

It should be noted that the white rum came from Puerto Rico — the only place where the law requires that rum be aged. And since smoothness is a direct result of aging, it's not surprising that more people liked the taste of white rum than gin or vodka.

Enjoy white rum in your next drink calling for gin or vodka. Before long you'll be telling your friends. Fortunately, government regulations don't prohibit you from doing that.

PUERTO RICAN RUMS

For free "White Rum Classics" recipes, write: Puerto Rican Rums, Dept. T-16, 1290 Avenue of the Americas, N.Y., N.Y. 10019

A glass of Puerto Rican Rum splashed over some ice cubes.

The colours are at the cold end of the spectrum—purple, sliver, black: nothing warm or cozy or inviting here.

The exception is dramatic, the red and beige label with the letter A on the side of the glass, which immediately suggests a laboratory instead of bar. The copy at the bottom boasts that the advertisers performed a properly “scientific” quantitative experiment concerning the rum, hence the symbolic labelled glass. The professional emotion inside a lab is supposed (by the layman) to be comparatively cold, distant, objective.

The death end of the spectrum.

Closer inspection of the glass discloses that the liquid teems with action: it is a virtual aquarium, beginning with the whale (by the tail fins) at the very bottom. In all, altogether about a half dozen fish of various sizes.

*

A roll(ed cigarette) in the hayloft

Do you remember EVE cigarettes? For a brief time, tobacco manufacturers tried marketing fags designed for fems. Another (slightly earlier) brand was Virginia Slims. Men did not, as a rule, buy or use these brands, though there was only slight difference between these and other cigarettes, other than size. Pricing was competitive with regular cigs. EVEs were introduced in the early '70s.

This ad is rather rich in symbolism and subliminal suggestion... Let's take a walk through it. It is nicely crafted, and not overly subtle.



Right off, we have a woman lounging in/beside a stable—traditionally a male preserve. Leather pants—more often menswear than womenswear. (A hint of transvestism.) The hank of rope suggests a bridle—for tethering or leading a large animal. This ad is aimed specifically at

women. No men here. The model is looking straight at the female reader—a direct, inviting gaze, nothing demure or hesitant about it, as if to say, “come on; try it!”

Eve—the original Eve—was daring, and a temptress. Never mind that it got her into trouble. She dared—to do forbidden things, to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. This contemporary Eve is standing, leaning against a post with one leg cocked, i.e., legs somewhat apart. Self-assured, relaxed, in charge.

The headline announces that “There’s a little Eve in every woman”—a little of the daring, the feminine curiosity, the temptress, the unconventional (unconventionality was a selling point at the time).

OK so far.

“Eve” is spelled two ways. As EVE, it refers to the product; as Eve it refers to the woman in the Biblical Garden. The designers are careful to observe this distinction.

Two packs of cigarettes are shown, edge to edge, simulating a book lying open. The text there consists of a garden with Eve prominently displayed. The book, symbolically, naturally, is the Bible and it is open to Genesis and the tale of Eve in the Garden of Eden. No Adam in sight. But there are two Eves, one on the left page and one on the right, side by side in a bed of flowers... The cigarettes displayed also bear the word EVE and the signature band of flowers. The Eve posing here holds one which she has been smoking.

Note that she too is decked in flowers: her jacket mimics the pattern on the package. She and the two EVEs (and the tobacco) are simply rolling in flowers. and the copy line, an injunction, suggests another kind of roll in the hay. Be daring, unconventional... “Try today’s Eve [the woman, by the spelling]. Flowers on the outside. Flavor on the inside.”

Enough said?

*

Ads play endlessly (pun intended) with the bookends of the life spectrum in their hijinx with subliminals and symbols. To wit, death, and sex. Picking up the Garden of Eden theme and (lesbian) sex theme in the EVE ad, here's one from the other end.

The model, made up to simulate a death mask, holds a symbolic apple in her hand (the bottle is apple-shaped). Or rather on her hand.

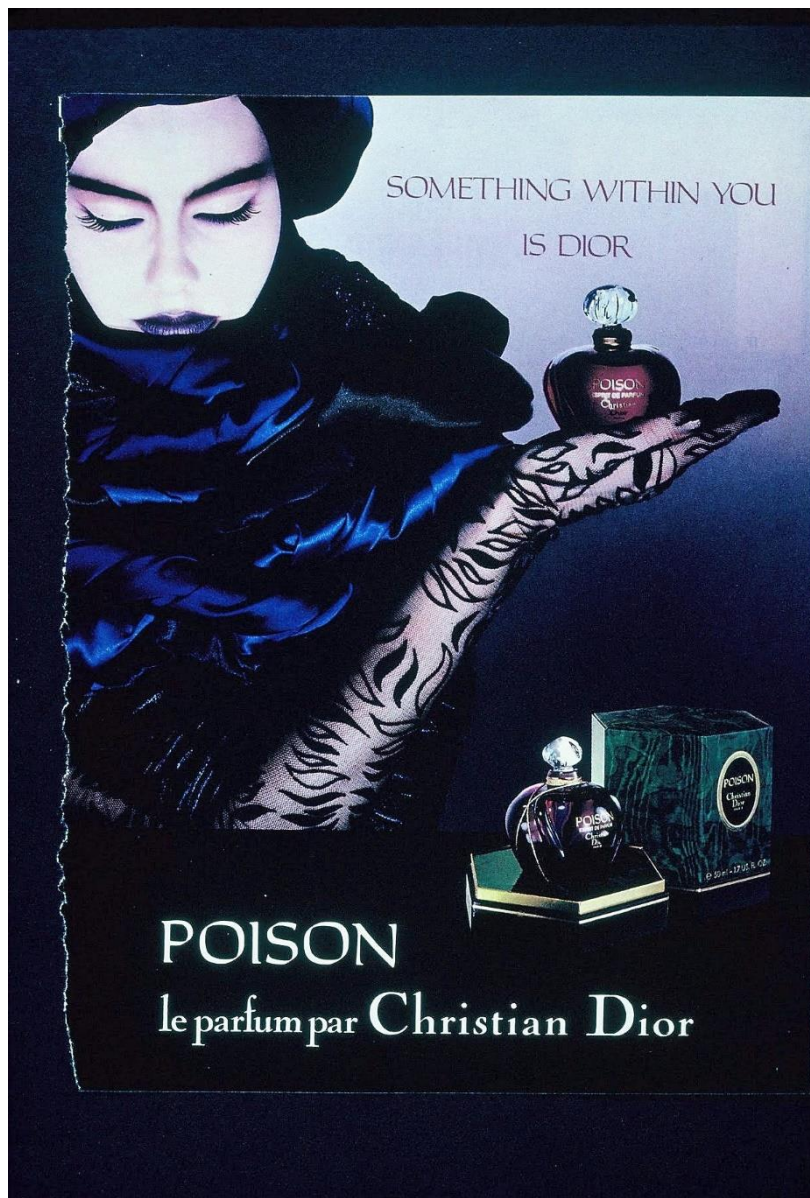
Hand and forearm clearly imitate a serpent.

Serpent + apple are pretty overt echo of the illicit antics in the Garden. Floral pattern on the arm suggests (Edenic) foliage.

And—death motif—the product is named Poison.

The message: take Poison—make it that special “something within you.”

There's more, but that's the essence.



Could there be an appeal to the murderer within the woman as well? Poison has always been the “weapon” of the frail sex. Many examples in French and Italian cultures (Naples widows &c).

Another association of ideas from this funerary scene is that of Egyptian tombs, sarcophagi, and mummies, hence of embalming and countering the effects of time, i.e., of aging. Being frozen in eternal beauty.

*

Another flower from the Garden

Here's another bit of Garden material. In the 60s and 70s, there was a lot of concern about health and exercise, and the tobacco companies were having a rough time of it. So they all began to emphasize health in every imaginable way in their advertising. It was the dawn of the Green Era.

This ad is for Craven M cigarettes. (M for Menthol—very cool!)



The setting is Edenic, a “natural” setting with all the knobs and whistles: green foliage, flowers, a waterfall (not too large). It fairly screams HEALTHY! Clean air, cool and humid, as the copy emphasizes.

coolest...

cleanest...

most refreshing!

Even the package sports the colours white and green.

Overall impression: healthy, natural, clean.

And they boast that the cigarettes have “Just a single drop of menthol.” What could be better?

Everyone knows that cigarettes are bad for the health of the smoker. Reports of people dying from lung disease are too numerous to be ignored. Warnings were appearing on the packages.

The sinister element in the ad, the bit that connects it to death, is on the cigarette itself. Notice the print just below the filter. There is the crown logo followed by the name of the product, Craven M.

The two cigarettes have been rotated ever-so-slightly and the package tilted so that you can read only the end of the name: you see VEN.M on each of the cigarettes displayed. Venom—as in snake venom. It is pure, alright: pure poison.

And the snake is an age-old fixture of The Garden. In this case, lurking in the shadows, off-stage. And the “single drop” is displayed too...

Menthols make 32% of the market (2011), a big share, and women are 1.6 times more likely than men to smoke menthols.

Another study shows that women more than men smoke for the non-nicotine effects of tobacco such as the taste of smoke: “Compared to men, women may smoke less for nicotine and more for the non-nicotine effects of smoking like seeing and smelling tobacco or social pleasures involved in smoking rituals.” (Dr Firuza Parikh, quoted in The Times of India, July 13, 2011)

Advertisers probably deal with the product accordingly. I'd like, then, to spin a little further my yarn about poisoner women (it complements Eric's analysis and does not negate it in the least). Venom for sale appeals to beings who undergo constant venom depletion within their bodies and need constant replenishment. The message is: Refill your venom glands with Craven M, madame.

It's like the previous ad: “Something within you is Dior” – when the Dior product in question is named Poison. “Something within you is poison,” and it's mighty precious to you!

In French (Dior's country), “une poison” (feminine use, while in its common usage the word is masculine) is a mean woman. In that usage it is a little antiquated, so it won't ring a bell to the average French shopper (one has to be a little bookish), and the appeal to the meanness of one's truest self—“Be yourself, la Poison!”—is not overly obvious either.

*

Another corpse

Ok, then. Here's another corpse to consider.

This is an ad for... Opium.



Plain and simple.

For a while, they played with the idea of the inner trip (as here, the Opium user) as a form of death.

The body is frankly corpse-like (I'll tell you why), yet the name "Opium" is somewhat misleading because it associates with catatonic inner trip rather than with, first thing, death.

The name "Opium" invites you to construe the scene as depicting a woman high on a trip—in ecstasy. Yet, at the same time, your brain will not fail to register the absence of all paraphernalia associated with opium-smoking or any other intoxicating indulgence. There's not even a pillow. It's just a (pale) woman lying flat on her back (not crouching), and for all we know she may be lying on the naked ground. Just like a corpse after sudden, unexpected death.

And I'm sure you can poison someone with opium! Like, say, a rival: the corpse in the picture...

(ii)

As this ad is dated 1988, I asked Eric if I understood well when he told me he taught his class in the 70s. Here is his reply.

There are two events. One was the OCA class in early 70s. The other was the carousel I assembled to teach a class on ambiguity and subliminals at the Harris Institute, from the 90s to about 2012 or -14. Most of what I've been sending along is from that slide show—and I'm not done with it yet.

February 2017