



“Shockvertising” as a Method to Advertise Content in Video on Demand Streaming Services

Shockvertising como un método para promocionar el contenido de los servicios de transmisión de video bajo demanda

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Most thumbnails promoting movies or series in video on demand (VOD) streaming services contain some form of shock advertising. The intention of this type of appeal is to bring immediate attention of viewers. However, little is known if shock advertising persuades consumers to watch series or movies on VOD streaming services such as Netflix or Amazon Prime Video. This study examines more deeply consumer responses to two types of shock advertising appeals: fetishism and sexual, and compares the results to an experimental condition in which there is an absence of shock advertising.

Design / Methodology / Approach: This study empirically tests if shock advertising, in the form of fetishism and sexual appeals, persuades consumers to watch series or movies. In the experimental setting, we manipulated romantic feelings and compared how each shock advertising types of appeals influence consumers when deciding what to watch in VOD streaming services. Analysis of variance was utilized to test the main effect of type of shock advertising appeal (fetishism vs. sexual vs. control condition) and to test the moderating effect of romantic feelings.

Results: Our findings suggest that consumers exposed to fetishism and sexual appeals revealed lower levels of persuasion compared to a control condition. An important finding of the study is the moderating effect of romanticism. When an individual has romantic feelings, conceived as a transitory mood state, the fetishism appeal becomes more persuasive than the sexual or the neutral appeals.

Limitations / Implications: These results are useful for improving the implementation of shock advertising appeals in the form of fetishism or sexual thumbnails for VOD streaming services. The study uses a single experiment to draw conclusions. Future research can test to generalize the results of this study in different settings.

Originality / Contribution: The main contributions derived from this research can be classified into two findings: it improves our understanding of consumer's reactions to shock advertising; and, second advances our knowledge of the influence of positive emotions (romantic feelings) when consumers decide what to watch in video streaming services.

JEL Classification:
M30, M31, M37

Key words:

Fetishism,
romantic feelings,
sexual advertising,
shock advertising,
video on demand
streaming services

RESUMEN

Objetivo: La mayoría de anuncios publicitarios de películas o series en servicios de transmisión de video bajo demanda (VOD) contienen algún tipo de contenido de publicidad de choque. Pero muy poco se conoce sobre este tipo de contenidos publicitarios en las intenciones de la audiencia al elegir una serie o película en los servicios VOD como por ejemplo Netflix o Amazon Prime Video. Este estudio examina las respuestas de los consumidores a dos tipos de publicidad de choque: estímulos fetichistas y sexuales.

Diseño/ Metodología/ Enfoque: Este estudio examina si la publicidad de choque persuade a los consumidores a ver series o películas. En el experimento se manipularon los sentimientos románticos de los participantes y se comparó cómo cada tipo de publicidad de choque (fetichista vs. sexual vs. condición de control) influye en los consumidores a la hora de decidir qué ver en los servicios VOD.

Resultados: Los hallazgos sugieren que los consumidores expuestos a los estímulos de publicidad de choque fetichistas y sexuales, expresan niveles inferiores de persuasión en comparación con la condición de control en la que no se presenta publicidad de choque. Un hallazgo importante es el rol romanticismo. Cuando un individuo experimenta sentimientos románticos, la apelación publicitaria fetichista se vuelve más persuasiva.

Limitaciones/ Implicaciones: Estos resultados son útiles para entender mejor el impacto de la aplicación de estrategias de publicidad de choque en los servicios VOD. El estudio utiliza un experimento para deducir las conclusiones. Futuras investigaciones podrían enfocarse en generalizar los resultados y replicar el estudio incluyendo otras condiciones experimentales.

Originalidad/ Contribución: Las principales contribuciones derivadas de esta investigación son mejorar la comprensión de las reacciones de los consumidores a la publicidad de choque; y, avanzar en nuestro conocimiento de la influencia de las emociones positivas (sentimientos románticos) cuando los consumidores deciden qué ver en los servicios VOD.

Clasificación JEL:
M30, M31, M37

Palabras clave:

Apelación fetichista,
publicidad de
choque,
publicidad sexual,
romanticismo,
servicios de
transmisión de vídeo
bajo demanda

1. Introduction

Over the years there has been an increase in the use of shock advertising appeals not only in the advertising of consumer goods, but also within new contexts (e.g., video streaming services) that involve different consumer decision-making processes (Reichert & Lambiase, 2006, p. 14). Consumers have been bombarded by different forms of messages with the purpose of attracting their attention to specific content in video streaming services. We find that in popular video streaming services, shock advertising is a common form of marketing communication. In this context, the use of sexual appeals has become increasingly explicit and a widely used marketing technique (Ruberg, 2020). A quick analysis made by the authors reveals that 20 percent of thumbnails in Netflix or Amazon Prime Video use some form of shock advertising appeals. In particular, sexual appeals are predominant. Since the goal of shock advertising is to draw viewer's immediate attention, the use of this type of advertising appeal seems like a suitable strategy to promote entertainment content. However, there is little evidence in previous marketing communication literature on how shock advertising persuades more (vs less) viewers.

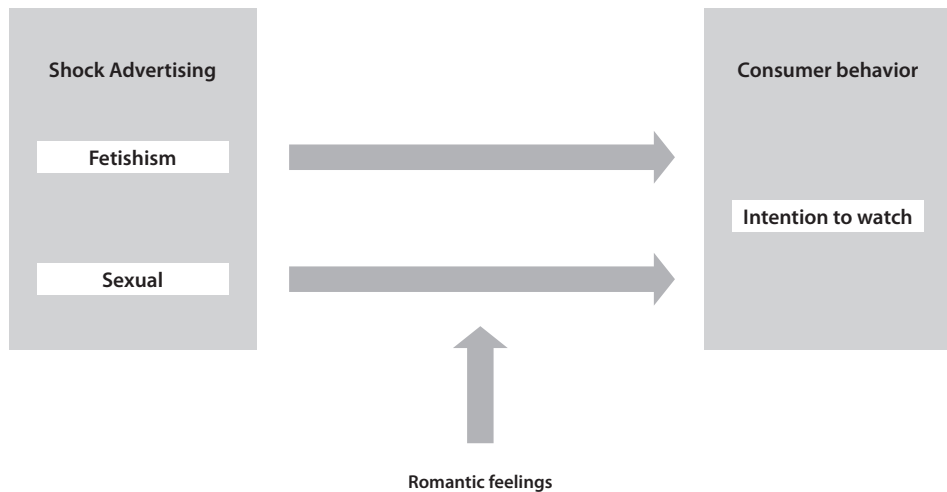
It has long been established that shock advertising, in the form of sexual appeals, is expected to achieve better rates in recognition, recall, and purchase decisions (Alexander & Judd, 1978, p. 47; Álvarez Domínguez, 2020, p. 25). Complementing these effects, we found that many of the current forms of communication use shock advertising, especially when promoting entertainment products. For example, 59 percent of music videos use sexual appeals (Zhang, Dixon, & Conrad, 2010, p. 787), 43 percent of women dress very provocative in magazine ads (Carpenter & Reichert, 2004, p. 825), 41 percent

of women on television wear revealing clothing (Downs & Smith, 2010, p. 729), 23.5 percent of magazine thumbnails in social networks have some level of nudity and 39.5 percent suggest eroticism (Brito-Rhor, 2019, p. 128), 18 percent of the clothing or behavior of prime time actors in television commercials is provocative (Lin, 1998, p. 463), and sexual advertising appeal in Spanish-language television network ads is usually higher than in other languages (Fullerton & Kendrick, 2001, p. 53). These statistics suggest the belief that "sex sells" is not just a cliché, but that it certainly remains as a valid marketing communication format for various entertainment products. This could be explained by how shock advertising (i.e., sexual appeals) is capable to attract viewers' attention, evoke pleasure, and stimulate purchase intentions (Reichert & Lambiase, 2006, p. 42).

Although the widespread use of sexual appeals in different media and around the world is evident, there are not enough studies on different forms of sexual appeals. The purpose of this study is to objectively evaluate the response of consumers to shock advertising of both fetishism and sexual nature. Responses from subjects toward the sexual stimulus will be evaluated in function of their intentions to watch TV series. The experimental design is intended to measure and compare consumers' reactions to three different shock advertising appeals (fetishism, sexual and a control condition). Furthermore, this effect will be contrasted with romantic feelings induced by an experimental manipulation. This study aims to contribute, to both theory and practice, on the effects of shock advertising appeals. Figure 1 present our conceptual framework.

Next, we present our literature review, then discuss the methodology, followed by the results, and conclusions of the study.

Figure 1. Conceptual framework



2. Literature Review

Shock Advertising

Shock advertising is described as offensive content, that violates norms, values, moral or social codes (Dahl, Frankenberger, & Manchanda, 2003, p. 268; Srivastava & Dorsch, 2020, p. 2). This type of advertising is intended to surprise the audience breaking through normal ads, catching consumers' attention and resulting in an intention on the audience to act in a particular way (Lee, Septianto, Frethey-Bentham, & Gao, 2020 p. 2; Urwin & Venter, 2014, p. 204). Norm violation refers to a violation of expectations created during the social development learning process (Dahl, Frankenberger, & Manchanda, 2003, p. 269 - 270). The different types of shock appeals are: disgusting images, sexual references, profanity/obscenity, vulgarity, impropriety, moral offensiveness and religious taboos. Advertising as any other social object, is judged with the rules that people have learned to be acceptable, when the content is offensive it

commonly breaks norms of decency, good taste, aesthetic propriety and moral standards (Dahl, Frankenberger, & Manchanda, 2003, p. 269-270). Shock advertising has been found to be easier to comprehend and to retain in consumers' minds. Also, there is evidence that the shocking effect is greater for the themes shown rather than for the products or ideas advertised (Parry, Jones, Stern, & Robinson, 2013, p. 112). Also, studies have shown that this communication form can be effective when promoting new products and brands (Skorupa, 2014, p. 69). Other studies implied that the effects of shock advertising are greater when looking for more immediate actions rather than for long-term effects (Parry, Jones, Stern, & Robinson, 2013, p. 113). This last evidence suggests that it could be an appropriate strategy for viewers of streaming video services, since they decide what to watch in a matter of seconds.

There are some factors that influence the effects and perception of shock advertising. These

elements can be defined as ethics, culture, language, history and religion (Engelbart, Jackson, & Smith, 2017, p. 46; Urwin & Venter, 2014, p. 204; Yan & Chapa, 2020 p. 11). Above all, religion and social factors are believed to have a stronger relationship with the perception of individuals because of the influence on daily life, concern of moral standards and the presence of more conservative attitudes (Parry, Jones, Stern, & Robinson, 2013, p. 114). For instance, the higher the level of nudity used in an advertisement, the more negative the ethical attitude towards it is (Brito-Rhor, Rodríguez-Herráez, & Chachalo-Carvajal, 2019, p. 45). Even though the perception differences between genders have not been fully described, there is some evidence of mixed results if women feel more offended when the advertising includes sexual images.

Sexual and Fetishism Appeals in Advertising

The word sex has different meanings depending on the area of research in which it is used. Sex researchers, social psychologists, and marketers define sexual information as a sexual stimulus to which sexual meaning is attributed (Reichert & Lambiase, 2012, p. 27). Sex in advertising has been defined as media messages containing sexual information for the persuasive purpose of selling branded goods and/or services (Reichert, Heckler, & Jackson, 2001, p. 15). Courtney and Whipple (1983) defined sex in advertising as sexuality in the forms of: nudity, sexual images, innuendo, and double meaning (p. 15). Furthermore, advertising itself is an applied form of persuasion that attempts to: inform, position, convince, reinforce and differentiate; to achieve various objectives such as selling products and/or services, improving the image of the brand, educating the public, among others (O'Guinn, Allen, & Semenik, 2012, p. 87;

Reichert & Lambiase, 2012, p. 19). In accordance with the definition of sex and advertising, sexual appeals are persuasive resources containing sexual information that is integrated with the overall message (Reichert, Heckler, & Jackson, 2001, p. 14). Sexual content in advertising is diverse; however, it could be defined as those stimuli within the ad that people interpret as sexual (Reichert & Ramirez, 2000). Commonly the objective of using the sexual appeal in advertising is to achieve the affective connection or association with the consumer (O'Guinn, Allen, & Semenik, 2012, p. 61, 208-209).

Over the years it has become obvious that the use of eroticism in advertising has increased in tone and explicitness (Maison & Pawłowska, 2017, p. 310). As a mechanism to attract the attention of consumers, it is very common to see in the mainstream media, the use of sexual appeals in advertising (Hyllegard, Yan, Ogle, & Attmann, 2010). Several investigations have pointed to an increase in the use of sexual appeals with women (American Psychological Association, 2007), and there is evidence of the use of more female models who appear with an intense degree of nudity and couples in positions that suggest sexual relations (Zimmerman & Dahlberg, 2008, p. 76).

Over time, the sexual appeal in advertising seems to have evolved into a new form of sexual appeal: fetishism. Although most advertisements contain forms of fetishism, little is known about this type of appeal that evokes a sense of power and erotica in the individual (Holm, 2016, p. 128). This is how fetishism emerges in advertising as an important marketing tool that creates objects of desire through visual techniques and symbols. The fetish object, typically associated with sexuality, symbolizes contrasting concepts such as liberation and control, power and powerlessness, sexuality and childishness. The fetish object discloses a

flexible mixture of "three underlying features of categorization and representation characteristic of all thought. These are concretization, animation or anthropomorphization, conflation of signifier with signified, and an ambiguous relationship of control between person and object" (Ellen, 1988, p. 1). Fetishism from a clinical perspective is a dysfunctional response to sexuality since fetish objects eventually substitute human contact for sexual arousal and satisfaction. Sexual needs are projected onto erotic objects. From a psychological perspective, fetishism replaces human relations with relations with objects and, in general, revolves around certain garments. The three qualities of fetish clothing are (1) liminality: a gap that falls between nature and culture (leather, rubber, shoes, boots, corsets, stockings, zones of passion, danger, creativity, uncertainty), (2) color: Black skin or bright red, and (3) de-contextualization and isolation. For example, the shoe that by itself excites, high heels, high leather, handcuffs.

The Moderating Role of Romantic Feelings

The term self-schema refers to the beliefs or ideas that a person has about oneself (Mueller et al., 2016). In general terms, the schemas vary depending on some factors such as culture (Brito-Rhor, Rodríguez-Herráez & Trueba, 2020, p. 89) or other elements of the environment (Leite & Kuiper, 2010). From the studies of Andersen and Cyranowski (1994, p. 1085; 1999, p. 657) four categories of sexual self-schema were defined based on the combination of two independent dimensions for women and one for men. One dimension is related to emotions of romanticism and the other to the negative aspect of shame or conservatism. The sexual self-schema is formed by four factors (1) Eroticism; the sensual component of sexuality. This element is related to the congruent cognitions of the capacity to

experiment and provoke sexual desire and pleasure in the other being, (2) Romanticism; the affective-emotional component of sexuality. Cognitions concerning romanticism reflect affection and sensitivity, (3) Sexual openness, the behavioral component of sexuality. In a person's behavior, cognitions are linked to security, openness, assertiveness, and confidence in sexual competence, and (4) Negative affectivity; the affective-emotional and behavioral negative component of sexuality. In this element, congruent cognitions are related to feelings of tension, anxiety and guilt stimulated by sexual aspects that could cause sexual containment behaviors (Brito-Rhor et al., 2020, p.88).

Comparatively, both men and women believe that a sexual human being is one who is sexual by evidencing romantic and loving qualities (Andersen et al, 1999, p. 661). People with higher sexual self-schemas possess characteristics such as romanticism, as well as a more liberal sexual attitude, and increased interest in sexual issues (Cheung et al, 2013, p. 381). A romantic sexual self-schema is a cognitive generalization about romantic aspects of oneself from a sexual perspective.

It has already been mentioned that several studies have confirmed that the use of sexual attractiveness in advertising is increasing. However, very little is known about the influence of different personality sexual traits, such as romanticism, on responses to sexual information. Nevertheless, it is possible to affirm that romantic feelings are evidently an individual level factor that influences attitudes and reactions to a stimulus with sexual content (Hatfield & Rapson, 1993, p. 90). These elements became central in this study to examine the moderating effects of romantic feelings and preferences for shock advertising appeals.

Romanticism has its roots in attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969; Holmes, 2014). Attachment motivations, reflecting individual characteristics, have implications in individuals' social behaviors toward others (Simpson & Rholes, 2012, p. 286). Attachment theory further describes these motivations as having two central dimensions: anxiety and avoidance. According to Simpson et al., (2012), both dimensions play a significant role in how individuals obtain social power in a relationship, as individuals become more (versus less) susceptible to each person's preferences. Thus, depending on how the level of romanticism produces high (versus low) levels of anxiety or avoidance type of orientations, the level of social power and control in the relationship switch. This argument can explain how romanticism can lead to a person, having more social power over his/her partner, employ a greater influence in decisions and preferences toward sexuality. Using this as a basis, we expect a positive link between romanticism and preference for fetishism sexual appeals.

To sustain our hypothesis that romantic feelings increase the preference toward fetishism appeals we found evidence in literature about variety-seeking behaviors. Huang and Dong (2018) suggest that even short episodes of romanticism, romantic crushes, lead to variety-seeking type of behaviors (p. 232). As the authors further describe, a romantic schema is likely to lower people's sense of control and increase a desire for sensory stimulation. In addition to this finding, experiments that induced a romantic feeling in male participants show they feel greater attraction to dissimilar female partners that evoke a sense of limerence and obsession for fantasies (Gold et al., 1984). Advertising literature has similarly studied romantic schemas. Huang (2014) found that ads showing romantic appeals induce greater attitudes

toward the ads; this effect is strengthened by higher levels of arousal and pleasure (p. 69). Since fetishism delivers both types of outcomes, we expect that romantic feelings increase the persuasion from fetishism types of appeal in advertising.

3. Method

Pre-Test

A pre-test was necessary to confirm if certain types of advertising cues (e.g., a whip, handcuffs, red panties, red brassiere, a pole, and so forth) when embedded in an ad generate perceptions of either a fetishism appeal or a sexual appeal. Sixty-four participants (43.2 % female; Mage = 36.08, SD = 12.64) from a consumer panel accepted the invitation to participate in an advertisement evaluation task. Participants were instructed to associate different types of objects that are representative of either fetishism or sexual advertising appeals. Table 1 shows a list of eight objects presented to participants and their corresponding responses when associating each cue to a type of shock advertising appeal.

Main Study

Purpose. The objective of this study is to find evidence of the level of persuasion that different types of shock advertising appeals produce inside the mind of consumers. In this study we manipulated romantic feelings and compare how each shock advertising appeals (sexual versus fetishism) influence more (vs. less) consumers when deciding what to watch in paid video streaming services. A control condition was included to compare the effects that these shock advertising appeals provoke.

Design and shock advertisement manipulations. A two factor 3 (shock advertising sexual appeals: fetishism, sexy, and a control condition) x 2 (state

Table 1. Objects associated with a fetishism or a sexual appeal

Objects	Fetishism appeal %	Sexual Appeal %	Z-value
Whip	83	17	14.11***
Leather underwear	76	24	11.12***
Handcuffs	81	18	13.30***
Venetian mask	70	30	8.55***
Red brassiere	24	76	-11.11***
Red panties	25	75	-10.698.55
High heel shoes	42	58	-3.42**
Pole	54	46	1.71 ^{ns}

Note: *** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.5; ns not statistically significant difference.

of mind: positive romantic affect vs. neutral condition) between-subjects experimental design was utilized to investigate how consumers react to video streaming programming that is advertised with shock advertising appeals.

First, participants were randomly instructed to either write a few lines describing one of the most romantic episodes of their lives or write a description of what is their daily routine. This first step was intended to rise feelings of positive romantic affect. These romantic feelings manipulation was adopted from Donato et al. (2018) study (p. 220-229). Second, we manipulated shock advertising appeals promoting a new TV series available in a video stream service. Three versions of the ad were created to exhibit each shock advertising appeal. The fetishism appeal was manipulated by embedding imagery artifacts related to the practice of fetishism in the TV series ad. Following the results of the pre-test, we utilized a black leather pair of handcuffs to be displayed in the ad. The sexual appeal utilized imagery artifacts, such as women's red panties and

brassiere. Last, the control advertisement did not include any artificial that can be related to shock advertising appeal. A fictitious name of the TV series (Pearls), a short description of the story, customer ratings, and a young lady laying on the floor served as stimuli included in each of the three versions of the ad. All advertisements were designed by a professional graphic designer who used the same look and feel that a popular paid video stream service uses to promote their programming. Appendix 1 illustrates the three thumbnails related to the experimental conditions of this study.

Sample and Procedure. Consumers from a research panel were invited to participate in a task evaluating advertisements for a consumer good. A sample of 203 adults participated in the study (46.3 % female; Mage = 24.25, SD = 6.31). At the beginning of the study, participants were randomly assigned to our experimental conditions. Then, participants provided answers to a questionnaire that included our main dependent intention variable to watch the TV series. Intentions to

watch the TV series included two items: (1) “How likely is it that you would watch this TV series? 1 Very unlikely – 7 Very likely; (2) “How interested are you in watching this TV series? 1 Not interested at all – 7 Very interested ($r = 0.87$). Then, participants answered the manipulation check questions, a current mood questionnaire, and shared their demographic information.

4. Results

Manipulation check. To check for the effectiveness of the romantic feelings manipulation we conducted an ANOVA using as dependent variable the score of a seven-point scale question that asked participants their current feelings (7=romantic; 1=unromantic). As expected, participants in the romantic feelings condition ($M = 4.56$, $SD = 1.50$) felt more romantic than those in the control condition ($M = 4.07$, $SD = 1.82$; $F(1, 202) = 4.37$, $p < .05$). The result suggests our manipulation on the romantic feelings operated as intended.

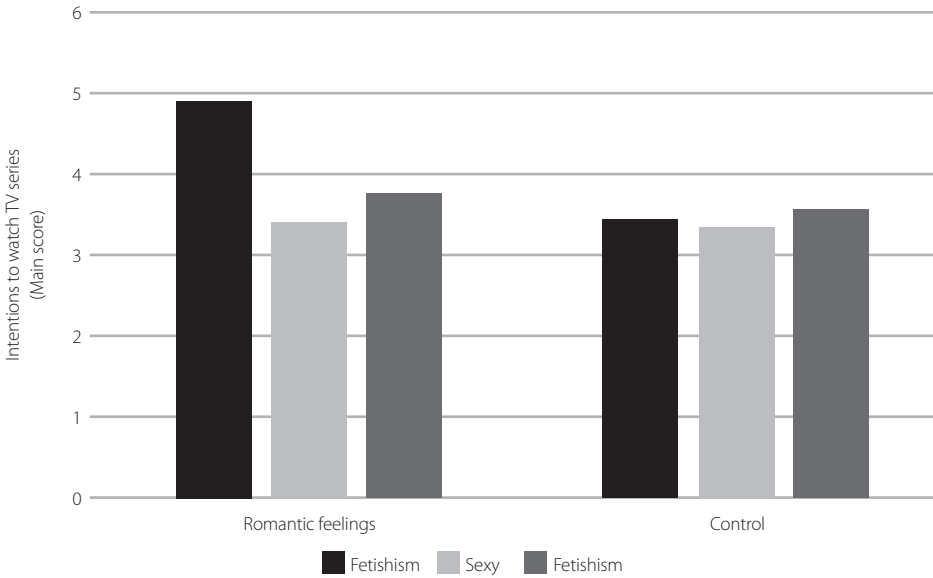
Hypotheses testing. To test the hypotheses a 2 (romantic feelings) \times 3 (shock advertising appeals) ANCOVA, with intentions to watch the TV series as the dependent variable was conducted and mood as a covariate. Participants in the romantic feelings condition showed higher intentions to watch the TV series ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 1.53$) than participants in the neutral mental state ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 1.37$); thus, the main effect of romantic

feelings reached statistical significance ($F(1, 195) = 7.26$, $p < .001$). We also found a main effect for shock advertising appeals ($F(2, 195) = 4.73$, $p < .01$) that participants in the fetishism appeal condition ($M = 4.33$, $SD = 1.48$) showed higher intentions to watch the TV series than those in the control condition ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 1.38$), and than those in the sexual appeal condition ($M = 3.39$, $SD = 1.47$). Most importantly, the analyses revealed a significant romantic feeling \times shock advertising 2-way interaction ($F(2, 195) = 4.34$, $p < .01$). For participants induced with romanticism, there is a significance difference in intentions to watch the TV series across the fetishism appeal ($M = 4.93$, $SD = 1.38$) compared to the sexual appeal ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 1.33$) and control conditions ($M = 3.75$, $SD = 1.46$). However, for participants in the non-romantic feelings condition, intentions to watch the TV series were almost the same for all three shock advertising conditions: fetishism appeal ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 1.17$), sexual appeal ($M = 3.38$, $SD = 1.57$), and control condition ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 1.30$). Post-hoc tests for mean differences, Tuckey HSD, confirmed that there was a significant difference between the fetishism appeal mean and the other conditions. Table 2 presents the mean scores for each condition. Figure 1 shows the interaction effect of romantic feelings and shock advertising.

Table 2. Main Study – mean scores and standard deviations

Shock advertising condition	Romantic feelings		Control	
	Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev
Fetishism	4.93	1.38	3.44	1.17
Sexy	3.40	1.33	3.38	1.57
Control	3.75	1.46	3.55	1.30

Figure 2. Interaction effect of romantic feelings and shock advertising



5. Discussion and Conclusions

Advertising is a basic element of marketing and as such, it is important to understand how shock advertising influences viewers' decision-making processes and choices. Our experimental study reveals that consumers are more persuaded by fetishism when romantic feelings are activated. Results indicate that consumers show higher intentions to watch video streaming content when shock advertising, in the form of fetishism appeals, are used in the movie thumbnail. Findings also suggest that the level of romanticism, operationalized as a transitory romantic feeling, changes the perceptions toward fetishism appeals. The more romantic a viewer feels, the stronger the level of persuasion expelled by fetishism appeals is.

The main contributions derived from this research can be classified into two areas: improving

the understanding of consumer's reactions to shock advertising; and, advancing our knowledge of the influence of a romantic mood on new forms of advertising in a video streaming context.

Individual personality traits are important variables that influence sex-related attitudes and reactions to sexual information. The findings suggest that understanding people's predispositions and tendencies to approach/avoid sexual information is important for understanding how those tendencies influence responses to advertising messages. Our results support Huang's (2014) research that evidenced that ads displaying romantic appeals induce better attitudes toward the ads; this effect is reinforced by higher levels of arousal and pleasure (p. 69). Given that fetishism offers both types of outcomes, romantic feelings increased the persuasiveness of fetishism appeals in ads. Likewise, Reichert and Lambiasi (2006),

evidenced that shock advertising, whether in the form of fetishistic or sexual appeals, is able to attract viewers' attention, evoke pleasure, and stimulate purchase intentions (p. 42). Therefore, the use of fetishism appeals could be an appropriate strategy for viewers of streaming video services, who choose what to watch based on the artwork. According to research by Parry, Jones, Stern, and Robinson (2013), it was established that the effects of shock advertising are greater when more immediate actions are sought than long-term effects, such as choosing to watch a movie on streaming services (p. 113).

Given that customers receive an excessive amount of commercial stimuli, it is paramount to keep looking for new ways to achieve strategic differentiation and fulfill the first basic step of advertising, which is to attract the public's attention. Precisely, emotional ads that appeal to shock not only seek to break with conventional norms, but also aim to make a concrete call to action in micro-moments. In the case of streaming services, the call to action is to get people to click on the thumbnail of the movie they are most interested in watching. In conclusion, If a movie

thumbnail combines a fetishism type of appeal and uses elements to activate romanticism, the film being advertised will receive favorable consumer responses.

6. Limitations

This research is not without limitations. To support generalizability, more studies should be carried out to test the relationship concerning shock advertising, romantic sexual self-schema, and behavioral intentions for different product categories, market segments, and sexual content in advertisements. For example, future research might examine the role of culture and how it facilitates romantic feelings and influences perceptions toward sexual content in advertisements. Another research question for future studies to address is how other forms of shock advertising, especially threat and drama, influences consumer choices in video streaming services. Last, we suggest that future studies focus on the romantic sexual schema conceptualized as a more stable personality trait. Furthermore, replication research is suggested which leads to the advancement of science.

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Appendix 1 Experimental Conditions

Movie Thumbnail

Title: Pearls/Rating: 4.5 stars/2018

Description: College graduate Pearl Courtney begins a relationship with John McClane.

Appeals: Fetishism, sexual, control

Sexual appeal



Fetishism appeal



Control condition

