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Inclusivity or...?: A Multi-Lens Feminist Analysis of H&M’s She’s a Lady Commercial

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Abstract
In September 2016, clothing company H&M released an ad seemingly unparalleled in terms of diversity. With the release of this minute-long commercial, the company projected a message of inclusivity to the public, and the company redefined the word “lady” by including women of different races, body types, and walks of life. However, upon a closer inspection, one can see that key demographics are not represented in this ad – such as women with visible disabilities. Furthermore, H&M is known for labor practices which fail to empower women in the ways which this ad would suggest. This study explores intersectionality within the ad via feminist disability and postcolonial feminist lenses. Analysis of this ad was conducted by repeated viewing of the commercial and its critical scenes, as well as by bringing in work from other scholars to explore H&M’s values and practices. This study aims to critique what is shown as well as what is absent from the ad. By evaluating both positive and negative aspects of H&M’s “She’s a Lady” commercial, I hope to emphasize the importance of viewing media with a critical eye and diving beneath the surface when consuming such content.

Conclusions
The She’s a Lady commercial takes a step toward more diverse advertising by casting women diverse in race, size, gender expression, and age. However, H&M fails to acknowledge women with visible disabilities, which invalidates women with visible disabilities, which invalidates inclusivity based on viewing of this commercial alone.

References
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