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C103 The Semiotics of Advertising
Version 2

Midterm Exam
6 March 2019

Part 1. Answer the following 20 multiple choice questions on the supplied computerized answer sheet. This part of the test is worth 60 points. ***Before starting work, please write your name on every page of this exam.***

Part 1. Answer the following 20 multiple choice questions on the supplied computerized answer sheet. This part of the test is worth 60 points.

1. In semiotics, the term “text” can refer to:
 - a. Anything which communicates a message
 - b. An article in a newspaper
 - c. The literal meaning of a metaphor
 - d. All of the above
2. Which of the following is a good example of a privative opposition?
 - a. Male nurse vs. nurse
 - b. Actor vs. actress
 - c. Guys vs. girls
 - d. All of the above
3. “Get your butt over here!” is an example of:
 - a. Metaphor
 - b. Synecdoche
 - c. Simile
 - d. Irony
4. A sign in semiotics is:
 - a. Always arbitrary
 - b. Anything that communicates meaning
 - c. Radically idealist in nature
 - d. None of the above

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5. Which of the following statements is NOT true:
 - a. One use of synecdoche is to substitute a genus for a family
 - b. Metaphor is the substitution for a person or process by one of their attributes.
 - c. Synecdoche may be considered a type of metonymy
 - d. A metaphor may also be ironic
6. Denotation is:
 - a. The “extra” expressive associations and meanings associated with the signifier
 - b. The metaphorical meaning of the signifier
 - c. The literal meaning of the sign
 - d. A and C
7. The rhetorical trope in which the intended meaning is the opposite of the literal meaning is:
 - a. Metonymy
 - b. Synecdoche
 - c. Metaphor
 - d. Irony
8. Which of the following are components of a narrative?
 - a. Complicating Action
 - b. Coda
 - c. Introduction
 - d. A and B
9. A syntagm can be used to describe the:
 - a. Type of shoes a person picked this morning
 - b. The fabric of pants picked by a person
 - c. The color of the hat one wears
 - d. The style defined by the combination of articles of clothing worn together

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10. With regards to an ice cream sundae the most typical kind of paradigm could be:
- Mint chocolate chip
 - Fudge, butterscotch, or caramel
 - The cherry on top
 - B and C
11. A narrative is an example of which type of syntagmatic relation:
- Spatial
 - Sequential
 - Conceptual
 - Orientation
12. Spoken words such as *cuckoo*, *buzz* are examples of what kind of sign?
- Iconic
 - Indexical
 - Symbolic
 - Arbitrary
13. A prototype in semiotics is:
- The first car in the production line
 - The earliest human model of the sign
 - A shared conceptual picture that comes to our mind immediately when we encounter a word.
 - None of the above

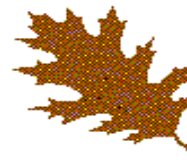
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14. Which of the following is primarily a symbolic sign?



1

A portrait of the Queen



4

Part of a tree, (a leaf, for example)



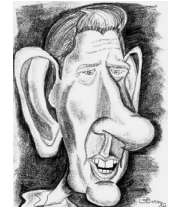
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The Crown



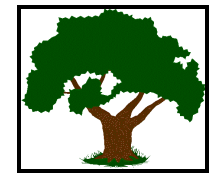
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The word 'TREE'



3

Caricature of Prince Charles



6

A picture of a tree

- 1
 - 5
 - 3 and 4
 - 4 and 6
15. Using “plastic” for “credit card” is best viewed as an example of:
- Metaphor
 - Irony
 - Metonymy
 - All of the above
16. Forrest Gump’s slogan “Life is like a box of chocolates” is an example of:
- Simile
 - Irony
 - Synecdoche
 - All of the above

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17. Which of the following is NOT a type of syntagmatic relations:

- a. Inverse
- b. Spatial
- c. Conceptual
- d. None of the above

18. "Smoke means fire" best exemplifies what kind of sign?

- a. Arbitrary
- b. Symbolic
- c. Iconic
- d. Indexical

19. A signifier is:

- a. The form of the sign
- b. The sign itself
- c. Always natural
- d. All of the above

20. The element of the Peircean model of the sign which corresponds directly to the signifier in the Saussurean model is the:

- a. Interpretant
- b. Referent
- c. Representamen
- d. None of the above

Part 2. There are three questions for a total of 40 points on this section. Question 1 is based on a print ad which is provided to you and is also projected at the front of the room. Questions 2 and 3 are based on video ads given to you on Monday. We will play each of these ads up to 3 times during the middle of the test, beginning at around 1:40. Please write your answers below the questions, and if you need additional space, continue on the back of the sheet.

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1. “Pregnancy Test” (20 points)

The ad at the right can be viewed as a flattened narrative. Analyze it according to the five-part typology of a narrative presented in lecture. Omit *evaluation*.



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2. Nike "Beautiful" (10 points)

What is Nike saying to the viewer in this ad? (Summarize the message in one sentence.) How do paradigmatics and syntagmatics contribute to the message in this ad ? Mention at least four signs in your answer.

3. X-Box 360 (10 points)

Identify the metonymy used in this ad and explain how it is used to contribute to the overall message.