Selling knowledge: A sociological analysis of attorney advertisement in Las Vegas

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Abstract
I analyze how Las Vegas attorneys represent themselves, their associates and clients in televised law firm commercials. I use attorney commercials as a case to explore cultural beliefs in media representations. Using an inductive method, I analyze the textual, visual, and aural symbols that appear most frequently in television commercials to interpret how law firm advertisements convey themes of attorney expertise, knowledge, ethnic and gender stereotyping. I introduce this study with a historical evaluation of the rise of advertisement in the United States. I continue discussing how the media is an important realm of discourse that affects people's identity. Using examples of attorney advertisements, I explain gender and ethnic representations, how attorneys construct their image, and the use of dramatic presentations. In the methods section, I explain the two approaches I used: First, a quantitative evaluation of 504 hours of television programming from January 11 to February 18, 2006, distinguishing the number of attorney commercials vs. other products and services; second, a qualitative evaluation identifying common themes in attorney commercials relating those to broader sociological theories. I conclude my evaluation suggesting the use of alternative media to inform the public of their legal rights, and suggest that statistical data on law firm performance and consumer satisfaction need to be available in public records.

Keywords
Advertising; Attorney; Content analysis; Knowledge; Law and society; Law firms – Marketing; Lawyers – Marketing; Mass media; Nevada – Las Vegas

Disciplines
Broadcast and Video Studies | Legal Profession Commons | Marketing Commons | Mass Communication Commons | Public Relations and Advertising Commons | Sociology Commons

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English

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Knowledge is essential for evidence-based policy, and we must fill the information gap.6 The Annenberg Center on Communication Leadership & Policy (CCLP) at the University of Southern California launched an anti-trafficking initiative in response to a similar call for increased knowledge. In 2006, the FBI arrested Marcus Sewell in Las Vegas for sex trafficking. According to the indictment, Sewell advertised two underage girls as escorts on Craigslist.47 In another case, two Chicago women were arrested and charged for selling girls as young as 14 on Craigslist. The women allegedly forced the girls to have sex with 10 to 12 men daily.48 More recently, Randal G. Jennings was convicted of forcing five underage girls into prostitution. A Las Vegas personal injury attorney stands ready, willing and able to help accident injury victims in their time of need. No matter how independent and strong a person may be before an accident, hiring an experienced professional, only makes sense. The help from a lawyer will simplify the legal issues and develop a plan to protect an accident victim’s rights based on knowledge, understanding, and experience. A personal injury lawyer with our firm is ready and willing to explore the facts underlying your case, assess fault, get evidence and construct the strongest possible arguments on your behalf. Personal Injury Attorneys in Las Vegas. No matter where you live, our legal team can help you today.