

ROGUE – A DEEPER MEANING: ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION AND THE NONVERBAL SIGNIFIERS IN LABELS

GEORGE SAUL



Linfield

The Power of a Small College

ABSTRACT

Within the beer and wine industry, labels provide an ever-prevalent marketing ploy to reel in customers. A semiotic analysis of ROGUE Breweries' main beer labels provided a glimpse into the company's communication strategies. Focusing on both verbal and nonverbal messages, the study illuminated several themes occurring within this marketing tool and identified concrete messages conveyed by the labels.

WHAT IS ROGUE BREWING?

- **Where did it start?**
 - Ashland, Oregon
 - Founded in October 1989
- **ROGUE Brewing's most productive hop farm is located in Independence, Oregon.**
- **All Rogue Ales are brewed in Oregon and then distributed all around the world.**



ROGUE. Advertisement.
ROGUE Ales & Spirits.

ROGUE

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ROGUE Ales & Spirits.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- **Do the labels of ROGUE beer include recognizable signifiers that have been used throughout history?**
- **Do the labels contain a narrative that is accessible to the consumer?**
- **Are there any connections between the use of color in the labels as a marketing tool and appeals to the emotions of the consumer?**

ARTIFACTS



ROGUE. Advertisement.
ROGUE Ales & Spirits.



ROGUE. Advertisement.
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ROGUE. Advertisement.
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METHOD

- **Semiotic analysis**
 - Ferdinand de Saussure
 - Sign, signifier, signified
 - Arthur Asa Berger
 - Intrigued by language and the metaphors that we make to form language
 - “To say something is one thing is to also infer what it *is not*.”



Exit Sign from:
Microsoft PowerPoint Clipart.

BERGER'S METHOD

- **Isolate and analyze important signs**
- **Identify the central structure, theme, or model of the text**
- **Identify the narrative structure of the text**
- **Determine whether the medium being used affects the text and how**

ANALYSIS: 7 HOP IPA

- **Nonverbal Signifiers**
 - Power fist with **left hand** clenching hops and vines
- **Verbal Signifiers**
 - Face of bottle
 - “GROW THE REVOLUTION”
 - “DARE RISK DREAM”
 - Reverse side of bottle
 - “Dedicated to Farmers & Fermenters”
 - Lid
 - “Dedicated to the ROGUE in each of us.”



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ANALYSIS: BRUTAL IPA

- **Nonverbal Signifiers**

- Clenched power fist with the **right hand**
 - Unity, defiance, solidarity, & revolution
- Gears
 - Catering to the workforce and the middle class audience
- Stars
 - Honor, achievement, and guidance

- **Verbal Signifiers**

- Face of bottle
 - “JOIN US” ~ in Red
 - “DARE RISK DREAM”
- Reverse side of bottle
 - Rogues take risks.
 - Rogues work hard.
 - Rogues ignore patterns.
 - Rogues are honest.
- Lid
 - “Dedicated to the ROGUE in each of us.”



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ANALYSIS: AMERICAN AMBER ALE

- **Nonverbal Signifiers**
 - Power fist with **left hand**
 - **Right hand** clenching frothy beer
 - Color usage
 - Red, white, & blue = patriotism
- **Verbal Signifiers**
 - Face of bottle
 - “Made in the USA”
 - “DARE RISK DREAM”
 - Reverse side of bottle
 - “Dedicated to **our** armed forces”
 - Lid
 - “Dedicated to the **ROGUE** in each of us.”



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CONCLUSIONS

- **Accessible narratives are created by ROGUE through repetition.**
 - Throughout ROGUE's marketing scheme, the vocalization of a consistent and repetitive message is key to the impact the label has on the audience/ consumer.
 - “Dare Risk Dream”
 - On neck of **ALL** ROGUE bottles *except specialty editions*
 - “Dedicated”
 - This promotes in the consumer a subconscious personal connection to the product.
- **Nonverbal Signifiers are essential and communicate historical cultural messages.**
 - Clenched fist
 - Unity, defiance, solidarity, & revolution
 - Deeply rooted in U.S. history
- **Color choices invoke emotional responses in the audience/ consumer.**
 - Red, White, & Blue = patriotism

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