Second Writing Assignment
AMH 2042: Modern American Civilization
Prof. Bennett

Your second writing assignment requires you to examine advertisements that appeared in the New York Times in the 1950s. You will:

1. Examine one week’s worth advertisements from the Times;
2. Select two or three advertisements that reflect some theme about the postwar United States discussed in Elaine Tyler May’s Homeward Bound;
3. Write an essay (1200-1400 words) that not only describes the advertisements you selected, but analyzes how they are illustrative of the world of postwar America.

All essays are due in class on Thursday, March 13 (Sections 20 & 21) or Friday, March 14 (Sections 13 & 14).

Instructions for accessing advertisements in the New York Times
1. Go to http://library.fiu.edu
2. Click on “Find Articles & Do Research”
3. On the right, click on “A-Z Databases” (second box down)
4. Go down the page and click on “New York Times (Historical File)”
5. Click on “More Search Options” on bottom tab
6. In the “Date Range” section, enter a beginning date and ending date that will allow you to view a week’s worth of issues (for example: 01/07/1954-01/14/1954)
7. In the “More Search Options” section select “Display Ad” in the “Document Type” box
8. Click the “Search” button
9. Click on the first document listed in the search results
10. Resize document as necessary to view
11. To view the next advertisement, click “Next” at the top of the page
12. Choose your ads; if you do not like any that you find, go back to step 5 and choose a different range of dates

Important: You must print off a copy of each ad you use in the essay and staple them to your essay when you submit it.

Some Suggestions for Choosing Advertisements
1. Make sure you have read May before beginning the assignment. Take some notes about the issues she raises.
2. Do not give up if you don’t find ads you like immediately. Give some time to your searching.
3. Any type of ad can be used, but those with appealing visuals are often the richest for analysis.
4. That being said, don’t forget to analyze the text of the advertisements; you will find many textual ads are gold mines of material.
5. Some ads will be interesting, but may not say much about the times. Choose instead those ads that say something about the themes you’ve studied (e.g. marriage; domestic life; nuclear war; etc.)
6. As you choose your ads, think about the analytical thread that will hold them together as you write your paper. It will be very difficult to write a paper about three ads that have little in common except that they came from the same newspaper.

Some Suggestions for Writing Your Essay
1. Remember that you are to analyze the ads, not just describe them. The best way to keep to this task is to write a strong thesis statement that sets forth your analysis/argument in clear terms.
2. Outline your paper in a way that sets up each paragraph to propel your argument forward. You can organize these either by theme or by advertisement. The latter way will probably be clearer.
3. Choose active, simple past tense verbs to keep your sentences clear.
4. Write a conclusion that pulls the argument together in a logical way.

All essays must include the following
1. A title that clearly defines the essay’s purpose and theme.
2. A clear introduction.
4. Orderly paragraphs with smooth transitions.
5. Correct spelling and punctuation.
6. Footnotes for each citation of outside works. References for the advertisements should only be made on the first mention; subsequent citations are unnecessary for our purposes.
7. A clear conclusion.