

**“The Epidemic of Spiking your Best Friend's Eggnog”: Rhetorical Analysis on  
Bloomingdales Advertisement**

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In society, men and women are looked at in two different lights, oftentimes men are perceived as strong, masculine, and dangerous while women are seen as fragile, weak, and innocent. Men often can and do take advantage of women in numerous scenarios as it has been proven that women are more prone to sex trafficking and kidnapping. These cases may not all be performed by men, however, men are the leading cause. Another form of taking advantage is drink spiking. There have been numerous scenarios where men and women have slipped a drug into another person's drink while they were unaware for personal benefit: that being for sexual pleasure, robbery, kidnapping etc. Bloomingdales released an ad in 2015 with a man and a woman saying, "Spike your best friend's eggnog when they're not looking". This sparked quite a bit of attention and controversy as this ad was encouraging date rape. When viewing the image that bloomingdales used, there are countless rhetorical analyses seen from how the people are carrying themselves to the words written on the ad. Common rhetorical appeals: ethos and pathos are also used.

Starting from the breakdown of what is seen, it is apparent that the woman is dressed in white clothing which is often correlated with innocence while the man is wearing a black suit and tie, as black symbolizes guilt. The man also has a serious face looking towards the woman as she is looking in a different direction and what seems to be laughing, completely unaware of her "friend". From the structure of the image it can be concluded that the target audience was men. The man is the one committing the act towards the women as she is blissfully unaware. Her unawareness can be drawn from the fact that she is with her best friend, a person of comfort and vulnerability. With the usage of "best friend" the creator of this ad targeted the audience through pathos. Humanity's nature is to come together and form relationships, therefore, many people

have a personal connection with another person whether that be a good friend, family member, or best friend. Best friends aren't just any friend, but a person that is held higher than every other friend, they are trusted and looked to for help, confidence and a good time well spent. The audience can relate to this, grabbing the attention of the viewers and growing the attention towards the advertisement. It is also important to point out that "best friend" is in bold compared to the rest of the words, thus bringing all of the attention to the word and emphasizing the importance. Another form of pathos would be the usage of "your" in the sentence stated. The word "your" plays into creating a direct connection between the individual and the message being conveyed. The reader should feel as if they are the only person being spoken to. Pathos partakes a large role in the advertisement, however, ethos also plays into the advertisement.

Bloomingdales is a large corporation that has been successful with plenty of stores across the United States. There are loyal customers to Bloomingdales and just as any other business, has control over what they advertise for a higher influx, therefore, this advertisement has a large amount of credibility. A large company like Bloomingdales having the ability to release an advertisement that is supporting date rape can give some people the allusion that such actions are acceptable. If an average person were to advise "spiking your best friends eggnog" many would immediately retaliate and tell this person they are wrong, however, a corporation followed by hundreds and a CEO of businessmen and women advises the same statement, there may be hesitation to refute. Pathos and ethos being used in this advertisement strengthens the creators intentions on connecting with the audience and because there are no signs of not agreeing with the statement the creator was in full support of this advertisement. There was no question of whether or not spiking your best friend's eggnog was appropriate as it was a clear statement intent on sharing an opinion as if it is a fact.

Bloomingdales' advertisement had many layers to break down as the image itself symbolized a deeper meaning and the words playing along. Ethos and Pathos had a larger incorporation within the rhetorical analysis than logos as personal connections were used to connect with the audience and emphasize the message being conveyed. Ethos gave the advertisement credibility further boosting the attention of the advertisement and convincing people into supporting the statement. Rhetorical analysis allows for the reader to understand beneath the surface level and sheds light on what's hidden within the lines.