

Final Project Analysis: University of Oregon Greek Life Action Figures

For the subject of my final project satirical piece I decided to focus on fraternities and sororities here at the University of Oregon. There are over 30 different fraternities and sororities at UO, but despite the many differences between them a stereotypical “frat bro” and “sorority sister” image prevails. I wanted to use this stereotype in my final project to highlight and exaggerate the commonalities and foibles that members of Greek-Letter organizations display. The public reaction to these stereotypical members of Greek life is usually negative, so I thought it would be funny to create action figures that espouse these often negative-received traits. There are many characteristics associated with fraternity members that I chose to focus on with my satire, including binge-drinking, hazing, smoking and vaping, the use (or misuse) of parental funds, toxic masculinity - and on a more serious note - racism, misogyny, and sexual aggressiveness. There are also many characteristics associated with sorority members that I chose to focus on with my satire, including the lack of diversity in sororities, low self-esteem, the consumption of “girly drinks”, sexual promiscuity, drug use, eating disorders, bullying, as well as a general inability to hold alcohol. The overarching purpose of my satirical piece was to poke fun at the behaviors of these groups and also to expose many of the problems that are harbored by the prevailing attitudes and milieu of the Greek life system.

I would place my satire in the genre of parody advertisements. There are many prevalent examples of parody advertisements in media, with the most prominent being Saturday Night Live’s commercial parodies that run every episode. Common features of this genre include exaggeration and farce; the absurdity of the advertisement is where the humor is derived from, for example SNL’s classic “Dr. Porkenheimer’s Boner Juice” commercial,

promoting a 24-hour erection, or Key and Peele's "Ancestry Website" commercial, linking many black American's genealogical roots to Thomas Jefferson. Another characteristic of parody advertisements is that they are instantly recognizable as parodying a specific, existing thing in society. "Dr. Porkenheimer" is an obvious parody of Viagra and other erectile-dysfunction medicine, while "Ancestry Website" is an obvious parody of Ancestry.com and other genealogy websites. I thought that doing a parody advertisement for an action figure was a great choice for satirizing my subject because action figure ads directly highlight all of the accessories and characteristics of the doll. I've attached below a real advertisement for the "Bionic Woman" action figure, to showcase what a real advertisement for an action figure, with highlighted styles and accessories, looks likeⁱ. I figured what better way to highlight the exaggerated characteristics of members of Greek life at the University of Oregon than in a way that explicitly defines them in a comedic manner? I also believe that the mere thought of children purchasing action figures that highlight these horrific traits in sorority and fraternity members was hysterical, so for that reason I thought that the satire would be extremely funny as well as topical.

I think I did very well in creating a funny and contemporary satirical piece that is extremely close to home for me and many of my fellow students at the University of Oregon. I thought that the subject matter and genre worked very well together to blatantly highlight issues with Greek life here at UO, as well as portray those issues in a comedic manner. I have since showed the pieces to a few of my friends in Greek life, both in fraternities and sororities, and while they were a bit distressed at some of the more callous remarks, they were able to see the humor in it and found the pieces extremely funny. I didn't have many problems in creating

the pieces, but all that I did encounter involved the “Sorority Stacey” doll. While I did want to highlight issues and characteristics associated with sorority members I did not want to shame behaviors like eating disorders and sexual promiscuity, but simply show that they existed. I can see how the advertisement could come off as misogynistic, but I felt that I attacked the toxic masculinity of fraternity members, so I had to create an equal playing field for my satire. If there is one thing I have learned from this class it is that nothing is off-limits in comedy, and I hope that my satire was accomplished without being tasteless.

JOIN JAIME SOMMERS IN HER BIONIC ADVENTURES.

Dressed in her blue suit and red shoes, your own 12" attraction figure of Jaime Sommers really is bionic.

Turn her head from side to side and you will hear her bionic ear "ping." Roll up the skin on her arm, or raise flaps on her thighs, to reveal removable bionic modules.

And when she's out on her assignments, Jaime always carries her Mission Pouch containing everything she's likely to need, so we've given your Jaime one too, with a wallet and money, credit cards, map case and map, a cosmetic case complete with a decoding chart and an O.S.I. Mission Assignment.

You'll find Jaime, and all the fantastic games and accessories shown below, at your toy shop now.

Like all beautiful girls, Jaime loves to dress in gorgeous outfits, so we've given her a glittering wardrobe for you to collect.

Everything from flirty feminine dresses for sophisticated dates and parties, to stylish outfits for casual everyday wear.

Every one a favorite with Jaime (and Steve).

THE BIONIC WOMAN
BY DENNIS FISHER

Bionic Board Games
The Six Million Dollar Man, Bionic Woman, and Bionic Crisis, three fantastic games for all the family to play.

SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN **BIONIC WOMAN** **BIONIC CRISIS**