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***THERE ARE NO SHOCKING PICTURES, ONLY SHOCKING REALITY. –  
OLIVIERO TOSCANI***

**The power and role of Benetton's shockvertising.**

**Thesis**

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## ABSTRACT

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"THERE ARE NO SHOCKING PICTURES, ONLY SHOCKING REALITY". – OLIVIERO TOSCANI		
The power and role of Benetton's shockvertising.		
<b>Supervisor</b>		<b>Pages</b>
Principal Lecturer Ossi Päiväläinen		65
<p>The study conducted in order to investigate the traditional advertising methods in marketing and management, in comparison with its revolutionized traditional system by the photographer and a creative director of the Benetton company – Oliviero Toscani. The thesis tries to determine the role of the current advertising which should not aim just at selling the product but ought to also catch receiver's attention and force him to notice the hidden message of displayed photography.</p> <p>The thesis determined the power and importance of the shockvertising in Benetton's campaigns and examined its role, in order to verify the aptness and truth of the Oliviero Toscani's statement -"<i>There are no shocking pictures, only shocking reality</i>".</p>		

### Key words

Advertising, campaign, shock, shockvertising, Benetton, Oliviero Toscani

## **LIST OF CONCEPT DEFINITIONS**

**AIDS** (Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome)

**ASA** (Advertising Standards Authority)

**HIV** (Human immunodeficiency virus)

**UNICEF** (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund)

## **FOREWORD**

I would like to thank professor James S. Gould for his great help and support, which was essential in completing this important work.

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**ABSTRACT**

**LIST OF CONCEPT DEFINITIONS**

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

As a matter of fact advertising aims at informing an unaware consumer about a product which was not known for him before. In case of the aware consumer, it recalls about product's features, quality and advantages which enrich buyers' lives after possessing this certain product, so induces him to own it.

Nowadays advertising is present in peoples' everyday lives. It is noticed continuously and incessantly during the day, it assaults from newspapers, radio, television and billboards. Often it is not even noticed in a rush but it constitutes apprehension towards the world. Numerous companies as well as advertisement specialists contend for customer's attention in order to boost sales of their products or services present in the market, but also to create a connection with the public and to form competition with their competitors.

As the fight for catching sight of the advertisement is more and more difficult, shockvertising is seen as an opportunity to be noticed in a crowded world of advertising and among strong competition in the market.

Shockvertising is most often utilized in so called social marketing and implemented in campaigns against abortion, drinking, animal brutality, meat consumption, racism, climate change and social inequality. Nowadays many other market sectors started to put into their operations shockvertising campaigns as it grabs priceless publicity and customers' attention which often cannot be bought without the shock value.

It is not possible to ponder a shockvertising concept without taking into consideration Benetton campaigns and Oliviero Toscani; their author and the creative director and photographer of the Benetton company. The eighteen years lasting cooperation disseminated a notion of shockvertising in the whole



advertising world and questioned its role through Oliviero Toscani's controversial and shocking campaigns for Benetton and through shocking the audience and exceeding limits of decency and taboos.

The first chapter of the thesis introduces advertising and its role in marketing and management. Its first section familiarizes the reader with its importance in above mentioned fields. Afterwards, the research acquaints him with the importance and management of advertising decisions and the most significant advertising types present in the current market. The following chapter explains the concept of shockvertising and introduces the world of controversial and shocking advertising. Moreover the next section draws a comparison between stereotypical advertising and controversial and shocking advertising in order to investigate effectiveness of the latter one. Finally, the last section of the chapter depicts reasons for offensiveness in shocking campaigns in general. The subsequent parts of the thesis present the Benetton company and its history of cooperation with its creative director Oliviero Toscani and introduces the so called *Benetton phenomenon* and the philosophy of the company. Afterwards the reader becomes acquainted with Benetton advertising campaigns in order to convince him of its power and role. Finally, the discussion and results are presented to elucidate the aim of the author and the topic of the thesis work.

## 2 ADVERTISING IN MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT

An advertisement is not only an announcement. It is information and persuasion which aims at attracting a client into an offer and in a consequence increase sales of this specific product. It is also considered to be an advantageous and propitious presentation of a certain product which is provided through the chosen mass media in order to make society and audience but also customers, consumers and final users realize the existence and importance of a certain brand and its products or services. (Grzegorzcyk 2010, 136-137; KnowThis.com 2012.)

Advertising as a means of mass promotion accompanies and is present in every place of society and buyers' ordinary and daily life. It inundates and attains the whole world and planet. (Grzegorzcyk 2010, 136-137; KnowThis.com 2012.)

### 2.1 Importance of advertising

It is important to emphasize that advertising products does not mean selling them. Advertising is about making general public together with consumers conscious of products, goods and provided services of a definite brand and subsequently supports augmenting its sales. (Grzegorzcyk 2010, 137; KnowThis.com 2012.)

Advertising aims at generating brand awareness in its every receiver, in order to create an influence which will affect customer's purchases and will guarantee that the product will not be forgotten. It also develops brand awareness among general public and causes that the commercial company gains more popularity in the market of prospective customers. (Grzegorzcyk 2010, 137; KnowThis.com 2012.)

Even though many businesses devote huge expenditures on advertising their products or services therefore it may prove as a good stimulant in their revenues.

Moreover, it strives for creating a brand loyalty, which is desired by every manufacturer; a client who is true and loyal to his or her convictions concerning the brand is also resistant to advertising of rivalry. Advertising serves also as an education of the client which introduced a new product to an audience. Besides, it fights with rivalry as well, as every advertisement with its implied meaning is directed against competitors. Furthermore, it builds a market brand image so at the same time it advertises the company. (KnowThis.com 2012.)

## **2.2 Managing advertising decisions**

From the very beginning, creating advertising campaign demands taking many fundamental and significant decisions which lead to effective, profitable and rewarding campaign. Creating a marketing message which will be spread into the market requires different money as well as labor expenditures in relation to the size of the campaign. The small ones do not require making neither mighty exertion nor many creators. It is achieved due to the use of the Internet which facilitates management and administration of campaigns likewise all decision-making processes. (Grzegorzcyk 2010, 136-137, King, Lane & Russell 2007, 159-171; KnowThis.com 2012.)

In a contrary, spacious advertising campaigns involve higher degree of involvement and necessitate extensive number of people engaged in their creation and management. Moreover, more and more frequently part of the advertising tasks and operations depend upon other advertising professionals, mainly from advertising agencies, which assist in introducing the accomplished campaign into the market. (Grzegorzcyk 2010, 136-137, King, Lane & Russell 2007, 159-171; KnowThis.com 2012.)

## **2.3 Advertising types**

From the marketing point of view, a type of advertising has recourse to concentration on the piece of information and message which is delivered through the advertising.

### **2.3.1 Product-oriented advertising**

Majority of advertising spending are generated in order to publicize and promote a definite good or service of the particular brand in the market where it operates. In most cases the target of the campaign is predetermined. Conquering the attention of the reliable audience and gaining prospective customers can be achieved through a restrained approach which supplies the receiver with fundamental facts about the product, what is known as informative advertising. Another method consist in obvious persuading to buy a product, named as persuasive advertising which is also using confrontation of products and offer of brand's market competitors, which is known as comparative advertising. (KnowThis.com 2012.)

From time to time, marketers use advertisement launched mainly on the television which states, for example that "After next week the world will never be the same". The advertisement does not contain the picture of the product and even the company which launches the good. Its receivers are not able to connect the advertising with the product but they are becoming prepared for its appearance in the market. These kinds of operations are made intentionally in order to arouse attention and curiosity among the audience in the market. (KnowThis.com 2012.)

### **2.3.2 Image advertising**

Image advertising fixes receivers attention not on the introduced products but on the organization's significance on the market scene. The advertisement does not necessarily show the product but if it is present, it depicts the organization's actions, not a focus towards benefits which the advertised product is bringing to the consumer. This kind of specific advertising is utilized mainly in order to educate the audience and make it conscious of concrete issues. An example can be the advertisement launched after an unfavorable publicity has been published, for the purpose of introducing itself and the company's actions and rectify its image. (KnowThis.com 2012.)

### **2.3.3 Advocacy advertising**

Some organizations implement advocacy advertising as a tool which tries to affect the audience and which focuses on gaining particular benefits. As an example, the organization can take a position on a particular political case which may have an unfavorable influence on the organization's well being or image, so this kind of advertising helps to introduce its position towards those issues. (KnowThis.com 2012.)

### **2.3.4 Public service advertising**

Public service advertising is also known as socially responsible advertising. Some countries give a possibility to non-profit organizations to publish cost free advertisements, which are known as *pro bono advertising* (in Latin, *pro bono* signifies "for the public good") and placed in certain mass media, mainly on the television, radio or in the back pages of magazines. The role of those advertisements is to educate and sensitize the society to important social issues

and problems, like teen-age smoking, illegal drug use or mental illness. (KnowThis.com 2012; Vanden Bergh & Katz 1998.)

### **2.3.5 Controversial and shock advertising**

The subject of this advertising type instigates controversy mainly by the use of nudity and sex in advertising. There are two separated areas which cause objections in such advertising type: sexual objectification and sexual suggestiveness. People with very resolute moral standards but also believes and religious faith are often offended by the utilization of suggestive, sexual representation to sell products or services. Moreover, sexual suggestiveness is frequently implemented by the use of innuendo. Advertisements which use sexual objectification mostly offend a feminine audience. (Vanden Bergh & Katz 1998, 75-76.)

Controversial and shock advertising may also implement fear appeals. The goal of such advertising is to motivate the audience to a certain action. Frequently the fear appeals can be met in advertisements which present social matters which aspire to alter harmful or unhealthy behavior. (Vanden Bergh & Katz 1998, 75-76.)

The controversial and shock advertising was implemented by Benetton – the Italian clothing company and caused that it is known as one of the world's controversial brands. Although the company possesses inoffensive trademark colourful pullovers, they were promoted in the most controversial and shocking way the whole world had ever seen.

Advertising methods utilized by Benetton disseminated a notion of shockvertising in the whole advertising world and questioned its role through Oliviero Toscani – Benetton's creative director, controversial and shocking advertisement themes.

Thus, the thesis tries to determine the role of the current advertising and the power and importance of shockvertising in Benetton's advertising methods and campaigns and examines its role, in order to verify the aptness and truth of the Oliviero Toscani's statement -"*There are no shocking pictures, only shocking reality*".

### 3 SHOCKVERTISING

Shockvertising (a portmanteau of two words shock and advertising), which is also known as shocking advertising, is a type of advertising which uses motives generally accounted to be venturesome for being shown and which could arouse different kind of emotions depending on each receiver. (Konieczna 2010, 6.)

It deliberately, rather than inadvertently, startles and offends its audience by violating norms for social values and personal ideals (Dahl, Frankenberger & Manchanda 2003, 268).

Shockvertising aims at capturing attention of customers to a particular product and usually supports a sales strategy in a short run, but also helps to bring awareness to specific social issues. It utilizes topics connected with sex, pornography, surprise, disgust, fear as well as violence. (Konieczna 2010, 6.)

Shockvertising campaigns rely on negative emotions which cause fear and force their receivers to rethink the problem and his or her behavior. They trigger discussion and indignation and that is the reason why many people talk about and notice them. Finally, those advertisements are noticed and effective, and what is more they combat against induration, indifference and commonness. (Konieczna 2010, 6.)

Olivia Paul and Richard Vezina made an attempt to define a provocation and shock in advertising. They describe them as:

A purposeful appeal enclosed in the advertising announcement, which is aimed at shocking at least part of the audience, both because of disturbing or also relating to values, standards and taboo, which customarily are not touching upon by advertising, but also due to its distinction and ambiguity. (Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 49.)



Following the above definition it is possible to distinguish three main elements of the provocation: distinctiveness, ambiguity and crossing social norms and taboos. (Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 49.)

Distinctiveness is seen as a foundation of every provocation and scandal. Each advertisement similar to the previous one already known in the market is naturally losing its scandalous value. (Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 49.)

Each advertisement should be ambiguous and allow each receiver to freely interpret its message in case of a content or intention of a creator. There is an apprehension that the unequivocal message might be immediately rejected by shocked receivers and as a result it would not be processed. (Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 49-50.)

The advertisement which aims to be known as a provocative one has to touch the area which is considered as a taboo by most of its receivers. (Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 50.)

### **3.1 The world of controversial and shocking advertising**

An aim of a scandalous advertising undoubtedly is focused on higher sales and becoming renowned, which obviously makes the sales higher. The renown is reached by arousing strong emotions in advertisement's receivers. Oliviero Toscani broke the advertising law which stated that the advertising message should be pleasant and make a positive impression. Nowadays advertisement creators and sponsors also would like to arouse negative impressions and emotions like outrage, shame, indignation. Many years ago it was enough to place a delicate erotic motive to make a scandalous advertisement, which would appear as a talk of the world. Nowadays it is not enough and creators use stronger and meaningful stimulus. (Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 53-54.)

### 3.2 Stereotypical advertising versus controversial and shocking advertising

Research conducted by Olson and Mital prove that it is possible to anticipate the receiver's attitude towards the brand through the attitude towards the advertising of the product, provided by the company together with the representation of the provided good. (Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 56.)

The mechanism described by Olson and Mital states that the emotions, positive or negative ones, triggered through the advertisement, are immediately processed to the consumers' attitude towards the brand. (Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 56.)

Advertising is viewed by consumers and its receivers as a product attribute. That is the reason why advertising is building a brand reflection formulating at the same time the attitude towards the brand. (Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 56.)

Finally, the attitude towards the advertising performs a substitute function towards the reflection concerning the brand. (Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 56.)

Most of advertisements which consumers meet everyday relate to stereotypes, which are schematic, simplified and partial human opinion which concerns some good. It causes that the simplified reality vision, schematic phenomenon and simple, straight opinion, shape receiver's behavior habits together with his permanent, invariable attitude. It allows the consumer to feel safely, because he can identify himself with opinions and information which advertising is delivering, but what is more, it also captivates him. All of the advertisements which refer to stereotypes are successful in meaning of being safe for the receiver. They show the world which is well known, accustomed, and secure. This also determines that the acceptance for the advertised world is straightly connected to the brand. (Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 56-57.)

But nowadays the old, safe and accustomed advertising is simply considered by receivers to be a boring one. Researchers conducted on the public opinion have

showed a negative attitude towards advertising since many years. They indicated that since 60's advertisements broadcasted on the television have been considered as a topic for conversations merely just for 10% of population. It gives the tenth place on the list of the thirteen important topics for conversations and the fourth one on the list of most rare topics for dialogue. This is the reason why many companies try to implement shocking advertising in order to wake up the consumer, to raise his interest towards advertising and also to allow him to distinguish this specific brand from others in the market. The Italian journalist thought:

In order to exert impression and convince, a slogan has to be very expressive. And the power of expression must be monstrous, because slogan's effectiveness weakens as the years went by. (Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 57.)

Everyday life with advertisements on the background caused that receivers are resistant to their messages. They are simply ignored. All of the advertising models, like for example AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) state that the success and advertising efficiency are conditioned though capturing the attention of a receiver. It is nowadays extraordinarily difficult, assuming that a man in the street of a big city, is within reach of 80 thousand of different broadcasting. What is important to remark, he is able to remember barely 80 of them, that is one thousandth, so catching his attention is extremely complicated. The fight between all the brands present in the competitive market is very stiff, so it is obvious that the higher possibility to win this game has the shocking advertising, than the traditional, polite one. (Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 57-58.)

Shock, tension, dissimilarity and atypicality attract receiver's attention, encourage and intrigue him. Benetton's motto is: *"Everything what is ordinary, is not interesting for us"*. (Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 58.) Scandalous advertisers understand that customers and advertisement receivers are searching for sensation and

untypical, strong feelings and emotions and implement them in their messages and pictures. It has an impact on the human being and his or her emotions through exhibiting nudity, erotic, ugliness, suffering, religious or moral beliefs and all contrast which take place between them. It causes interest, curiosity, amusement or in the opposite, disgust, fear. Always it appears as delightful or else causes protests, but what is the most important it is imprinted in the memory. Negative emotions entail that people start to talk and share their own opinions and want to discuss about feelings which given advertisement prompts. That is the reason why advertisement creators use shock in their works. They display scandalous pictures which break the generally profess taboos, show intimate and embarrassing areas of life or place common and ordinary situations in a way which might have a double meaning and cause scandal and depravation or outrage against morals. (Colyer 2002; Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 58-59.)

It is important to pay attention to the way in which the advertising is exhibited. Shocking advertising uses external advertisement which is widely accessible and its displaying and accessibility cannot be restricted. In case of shocking advertising broadcasted on the television, its emission might be restricted to particular timing, mainly in night hours or it can be published in a particular segment of a newspaper. Billboards have a strong advantage which allow them to be noticed by children, the elderly or religious people. (Colyer 2002; Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 58-59.) Moreover the hardly ever utilized medium had little cost compared to television advertisement. (De Rosa, Deaux & Philogéne 2001, 49.)

### **3.3 Effectiveness of shocking advertising**

The typical mechanism of success works as the shocking advertising catches receiver's attention and it is a first condition which has to be present in order to determine a success and effectiveness of the advertisement. Press and media

which report with interest the scandal at the same time raise the brand awareness. (Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 62.)

In 1994 there were conducted international opinion polls concerning popularity of brand trademarks, which plainly stated that Benetton is one of five the most world famous trademarks and brands and is more often recognized than Chanel. In the space of few years it became much more known than any other ready-made clothes company. The New York based journalist and writer, Contardo Calligaris, published in Sao Paulo, Brazil his opinion:

An advertising strategy of Toscani is based on the assumption that it's possible to widely disseminate general humanistic study in connection with the recognition and exploitation of the market power. It's a reflection that it is not reduced to stereotypical images of artificial happiness, filling out - as we know- advertising media. It is not his goal to destroy advertising, this nowadays important a cultural tool. He just wants to change it. Toscani has decided to associate trademarks with new scales of value through inducing these brands to the popularization of the new messages. According to this, the communicative power of trademarks will be determined through their value. Products will gain the power of attraction, drawing not only from the promises which are taken from the mirror of the Snow White ("*I am the most beautiful in the world*"), but from many of the humanistic, political and even intellectual and artistic components of the message, distributed by the creator. As a result, products will be also changed [...].

Do you buy jeans because they remind you of trashy Colorado view or a sexy girl's bottom, or because they direct thoughts of what is happening in the world, for example, in Sarajevo? The answer is not obvious [...]. However, it's not about that the choice between consumption and consciousness stereotypes. An important fact is that someone is trying to prove that advertising – the most important means of expressing our culture – can spread more than just trashy comedy about happiness. (Toscani 1997, 173-174; Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 49.)

Afterwards, the only thing which needs to be done is convincing the public opinion that the scandal is not aimed to undermine, deny or negate the old values and beliefs, but only defend them in a distinct and unconventional way, which is at the same time very effective. (Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 62-63.)

### **3.4 Reasons for offensiveness in shockvertising campaigns**

Calder, Phillips and Tybout conducted a research among university students in a large urban university, which aimed at measuring an attitude towards controversial products' advertising and reasons for offensiveness. The usage of cross-cultural sample, gave the advantage which separates any cultural differences, if such exist. (Waller 2010, 4.)

A sample contained a number of 150 students, where 73 were male and 77 female ones. The age range among the samples was from 18 to 40 years old, and the average age of the total sample was 21.87 years old (21.68 male and 22.05 female). All of the students were grouped into two groups according to their age: 21 or less and 22+, in order to facilitate the analysis. (Waller 2010, 4.)

In the section which examined reasons for offensiveness, respondents were asked to state the level of offence, which every reason causes for their personality, by marking a point from a five point scale, where 1 means "Not At All" offensive and 5 means "Extremely" offensive. The list of reasons included 11 items to be examined: Anti-social behavior, Concern for children, Hard sell, Health & safety issues, Indecent language, Nudity, Racist image, Sexist image, Stereotyping of people, Subject too personal, and Violence as they are shown in TABLE 1. (Waller 2010, 4.)

TABLE 1. Reasons for offensiveness (adapted from Waller 2010, 5.)

PRODUCT	TOTAL	Males	Females	21 or less	22+
<b>Racist image</b>	4.32 (2.59)	4.51 (3.52)	4.14 (1.16)	4.37 (3.28)	4.24 (.94)
<b>Sexist image</b>	3.60 (1.28)	3.16 (1.36)	4.01 (1.04)	3.64 (1.35)	3.53 (1.20)
<b>Violence</b>	3.55 (1.33)	3.16 (1.37)	3.91 ** (1.19)	3.28 (1.37)	3.97 ** (1.18)
<b>Stereotyping people</b>	3.38 (1.12)	3.14 (1.18)	3.60 ** (1.03)	3.34 (1.14)	3.42 (1.13)
<b>Hard sell</b>	3.24 (1.21)	3.37 (1.26)	3.11 (1.14)	2.99 (1.20)	3.59 ** (1.12)
<b>Concern for children</b>	3.21 (1.41)	3.10 (1.42)	3.32 (1.40)	2.97 (1.42)	3.50 ** (1.35)
<b>Subject too personal</b>	3.13 (1.21)	2.84 (1.20)	3.42 ** (1.15)	3.09 (1.15)	3.19 (1.32)
<b>Indecent language</b>	3.11 (1.23)	2.77 (1.24)	3.43 ** (1.14)	2.96 (1.28)	3.28 (1.14)
<b>Nudity</b>	3.06 (1.31)	2.64 (1.38)	3.45 ** (1.12)	3.00 (1.29)	3.10 (1.36)
<b>Health &amp; safety issues</b>	3.02 (1.35)	2.85 (1.34)	3.19 (1.34)	2.97 (1.32)	3.11 (1.40)
<b>Anti-social behaviour</b>	2.94 (1.27)	2.92 (1.22)	2.96 (1.32)	2.71 (1.29)	3.30 ** (1.19)

\*p &lt;.020

Waller utilized a midpoint of 3 on the Likert scale and found out that all of the respondents state offence to all of the presented reasons, the only one exception is Anti-social behavior. Some of the reasons were considered to be not offensive by a young age group and males, but as they were close under the midpoint, they more stand for indifference.

Moreover, the age of the respondents influenced the study in a significant way. It is possible to notice that the older group was much more offended by all kinds of advertisements which used Violence, Hard sell, Concern for children, and Anti-social behavior than the younger one. The reason can lie in conservative outlook on life and child well-being as well as anti-violence matters.

While taking into consideration gender, it is possible to indicate that females are offended more for Sexist image, Violence, Stereotyping of people, Subject too personal, Indecent language and Nudity than the group of males. Waller found the reason in common perceiving women as objects of the sexism, stereotyping and nudity. (Waller 2010, 6.)

The research conducted by Waller convinces that not particular products which have been advertised are offensive for advertisements' receivers but there are just some reasons why receivers find some of advertisements offensive. It is also possible to notice that a gender is a stronger determinant of offensiveness in comparison to age of respondents. That allows claiming that women more often feel offended by controversial advertising than men.

The conclusion which comes from the research is clear and concerns all authors of controversial campaigns who should be cautious for the possibility to offend an audience. Even some advertisements are meant to be controversial it is important to keep in mind that they cannot be racist, sexist or should not contain violent pictures, especially if the campaign is addressed to the female market segment. Offending the audience can finally result in dropped sales or even boycotting of



the products introduced to the market and bring a bad brand reputation. Advertisers should keep in mind the importance of advertising message and its receivers and pledge the responsibility for the message which is spread over, as any of advertisers would want to cause a negative response in the market they operate in. All companies which provide contentious products into the market should take into their consideration all reasons that cause that their customers may feel resentful and make an attempt to refrain from overtly appearing offensive. Manufacturers of condoms, feminine hygiene products or underwear can be taken as an example of producers who should implement such advertisements, which ought to avoid using nudity, obscene and improper language, sexist images as well as talking about the advertised product too personally.

#### **4 BENETTON GROUP S.p.A.**

##### **UNITED COLORS OF BENETTON.**

The Benetton Group was established in 1965 in Ponzano Veneto in Italy as a family business, under the Italian name *Maglieria di Ponzano Veneto dei Fratelli Benetton* by four brothers and the sister: Carlo, Gilberto, Giuliana and Luciano Benetton. (Grzegorzcyk 2011, 181; De Rosa, Deaux & Philogéne 2001, 48.)

The first store was opened in 1968 in Italian Belluno. The Benetton Group was quickly transferred into an international company with a network of over 6500 stores spread over 120 countries all over the world. Moreover its profits have been rising in the last years. (Grzegorzcyk 2011, 181-182; Benetton 2012.)

The group which core business is clothing works in the fashion business with five different brands: *United Colors of Benetton* (for casuals), *Under Colours of Benetton* (for under garments), *Sisley* (fashion wear), *Playlife* (leisure wear) and *Killer Loop* (for street wear). The company is available to young and old people in combined colours and stylish fashion.

*United Colors of Benetton* is one of the five biggest world brands, working not only in the clothes industry. It is also specialized and known with many kinds of merchandising, from accessories, luggage and perfumes to home products.

The first logo which signed all of the Benetton clothes, was the one designed by one of Giuliana's workers – Franco Giacometti, who draw a simplified ball of wool, placed with a Benetton name on the green background. A green colour was the favourite one of Giuliana. (Bojańczyk 2002, 11.)



GRAPH 1. The first Benetton logo (adapted from tuniPAGES.com)

*"All the colors of the world"* it was the first slogan which appeared on Benetton advertisements to be repeated in succeeding years and which fluctuated later on to *"United Colors of Benetton"*. (Benetton 2012.) It was very meaningful and stands for united races and united world. Moreover, it is compatible with the Benetton philosophy, which is genuinely global and makes a bulk of profits as well as revenues outside Italy. (Stobart 1994, 181-182.)

The idea of united colors introduced by the company was such a strong one that the company made a decision to accept the slogan as its logo. It was the first example in the history of commercial trademarks, where the United Colors of Benetton slogan came to be a trademark. (Benetton 2012.) A change in a logo reflects the progressive change from a family business to a national and global company.



GRAPH 2. The current Benetton trademark (adapted from Toscani, 1997, photograph appendix)

A collaboration between Luciano Benetton - a company owner and Oliviero Toscani - a photographer and creative director started in early 1980's throughout 1990s and introduced so called "*the Benetton phenomenon*". From a small, family owned business, the company was transferred into a national and global one, following also changes in the logo from Benetton to United Colors of Benetton. (Deaux & Philogéne 2001, 49.)

Luciano Benetton described the beginning of the cooperation with Oliviero Toscani in his autobiography:

The collaboration with Oliviero Toscani began in a barn at a winter night in 1983. I called late, just before the midnight. Oliviero stayed with animals. One of his mares, Appaloosa, has just been foaling and he assisted. They connected me. He picked up the handset in a stable. – Ciao, Oliviero – I said. – Listen. I think you're right; actually we need a new image. A few minutes later, the colt came into the world, and a night hour full of good announcements became the beginning of our unusual cooperation.

This conversation lasted no longer than five minutes. Of course, at this time I (Oliviero Toscani) had no idea that I met with such an open and bold individuality. Always and unconditionally Luciano provided me a support. I am proud that with his company's money – a small budget compared with the budgets of big companies – I could try to create a new type of social communication. (Toscani 1997, 117-118.)

At this time Oliviero Toscani was already a well-known photographer and a producer of successful advertising campaigns, even though he was not working in any advertising agency.

I hate agencies. My idea was to work in spite of their rules, a marketing dissimilarity. For example the rule, that advertising campaign has to be based on the television - I proved that it is not true. When everybody says that it is necessary to use the television-resign it! Luciano Benetton bought it. (Bojańczyk 2002, 6.)

The owner of the Benetton company trusted in Toscani from the beginning. He has never censored his works. He knew and understood that the photographer is adding a new value to company's pullovers. Thanks to his work company became richer than at the beginning of the collaboration and grew twenty times. (Toscani 1997, 139-140.)

Oliviero Toscani had a free hand while inventing new campaigns and the strategy for the company. The photographer himself remembers the conversation with Luciano Benetton after one of arguments with one of managers of the company. (Toscani 1997, 139.)

Oliviero, don't allow that sales managers will fool you. At work trust just in your instinct and your creative idea. If you listen them, even tomorrow marketing managers will tell you where you should place your camera, and that the black men are too black, and the white too white. You should do, what you think should be done, you rather don't have to listen to me too. (Toscani 1997, 139.)

## 5 OBJECTIONS TOWARDS TRADITIONAL ADVERTISING

Oliviero Toscani consistently separates himself from rigid advertising views and norms which rule over the whole world of advertising. All of all misdemeanor and crimes it commits caused that he is ready to bring action against whole advertising, even a similar one to the historical Nuremberg Trials. (Toscani 1997, 15.)

### 5.1 Dissipation of unbelievable amount of money

Advertising is wasting a huge amount of money. Every year all international companies transfer billions for advertisements to all kinds of media: press, radio and the television. Advertising which is donated with such huge amounts of money is present everywhere: in every bus stop, metro, airport, train station, pharmacy and park. Even in every small gadgets which accompany people in everyday life like cigarette lighters or mobile phone cards. Every movie or television program is interrupted because of the advertising occurrence. It fills radios, newspapers, beaches, clothes but also soles. (Toscani 1997, 16.)

It is flooding the whole world, the whole planet! You won't turn on the television, you won't unfold a newspaper, in other words – you won't make a step, to not come across a kind-hearted, old advertisement. It is present everywhere. (Toscani 1997, 16.)

Oliviero Toscani accuses that the huge posters, pages in newspapers, hours of the television and radio advertisement show only heavenly pictures which are deceptive, stupid and far away from the reality. This social communication is not focused on the society and moreover the society cannot benefit from it. It does not have any sense, any message; everything is just beautiful and colorful.

Moreover Toscani wants to convince everybody that each consumer who is buying any kind of products introduced to the global market, finance all the advertising campaigns, as all the huge expenditures influence the final price of the product. (Toscani 1997, 18.)

## **5.2 Social uselessness**

Toscani reproach the advertising that it is socially useless. Many of the advertisement specialists forgot about their mission which is social communication. They are not brave and responsible. They spend hundred thousands without thinking about the social and educational role which advertising should have. They are just afraid of losing clients that is the reason why they do not honestly inform people. (Toscani 1997, 19.)

Their responsibility is really huge. They could cause that a certain trademark would be associated with something more than just with a simple marketing. They should promote a convincing advertising system, which till now has been rotating and persuades to buy more and more. (Toscani 1997, 19-20.)

## **5.3 A lie crime**

Another objection which the photographer introduced is so called a lie crime. He argues that advertising does not sell ideas and products but the false, unreal and hypnotizing happiness. It introduces an idealized form of a rich, happy life. It convinces all consumers that the prestige requires to frequently change clothes, furniture, cars, toys, in other words all the articles of daily use, even when it is not required and necessary yet. (Toscani 1997, 21.)

What is more, he lays to blame that advertising advices that consumers choices have the influence on their youthfulness, health, femininity as well as masculinity.

This advertising world suggests in a deceitful way what to buy in order to achieve all those goals. (Toscani 1997, 22.)

In the reality adulterant advertising world, there also exist death, pain and war, but they are hidden under the heap of the customer goods and image of beautiful women. Don't we feel the smell of death in those campaigns with lipsticks' laboratories for the deceased, with soldificarsed mannequin, those unreal, lacquered, silent, mock, hunged with trinkets, expressionless women with a false smile and forced step – that's a real zombie... (Toscani 1997, 86.)

#### **5.4 A crime against intelligence**

Toscani accuses advertising also of a crime against intelligence. It presents also enthusiastic pictures which get on observers nerves, especially nowadays where moral and economical crisis are present everywhere, where people worry about the next day of existence. Many advertisements want to show and convince that they sell the happiness. But the question which Oliviero Toscani asks is whether it is for sale. (Toscani 1997, 23.)

#### **5.5 A crime of a suspicious persuasion**

A crime of a suspicious persuasion is a next type of crimes Oliviero Toscani indicts advertising. Advertising arouses buyers' desires and invents their needs. It is using tested techniques which are developing their hopes and expectations. Many bosses of advertising agencies convince that:

Advertising task is to bring a consumer to his hidden expectations. Exposing them, it awakes a desire, this true activity engine of our lacking self-control consumption society. (Toscani 1997, 24.)



Toscani judges that consumers are not able to control their consumption. He finds the reason in advertising, which lies to customers far too much. People are deceived about the true value of the product they are convinced to buy, and more over the advertisement plays with their feeling in a way which forces them to purchase the product in spite of the too high price. It lies too. Toscani notices that sooner or later advertising will have to explain, why at present time of economical crisis, all consumers are induced to purchase more and more, even if it is not required to change articles of daily use and many other items frequently. In contrary buyers ask for high quality reliable, strong and durable goods, as they comprehended that consumption at any price is senseless and worthless. (Toscani 1997, 24-25.)

Toscani advises that advertising and all specialists should rethink its role, its art of persuasion and morality, otherwise it will be destroyed by its lie and falsity. (Toscani 1997, 25.)

## **5.6 A crime of isolation and racism**

Toscani reproaches advertising also another, more serious crime, a crime of isolation and racism. His accusations concern showing selected and racist pictures but also the utopia world which is far away from the reality. (Toscani 1997, 26.)

So let's look in a current advertising world for poor people, displaced people, victims of accidents, insurgents, rebels, short people, frightened people, the obese, grouchy, sceptical, unemployed, spotty ones, a drug addiction or traffic-jams victims, sick people, let's search for the Third World, madmen, haunted artists, carousers, shouters, suffering from lichen, provocateurs, let's look for huge social problems, crisis, ecological disasters, youth riots and lonely old people. It's no go ! (Toscani 1997, 27.)

### **5.7 A crime against equanimity**

The next following crime noticed by the photographer is described as the crime against equanimity. As each advertising is not able to sell the happiness as most of them try to persuade each consumer, at the end it results in bringing out depressions, fears, fury and eventually frustration. It causes that the wishes and expectations arouse, which in fact are not fulfilled. Each customer is bombarded everyday by every kind of advertisement but at the same time tries to make ends meet with often insufficient, minimum wage. The result is that the exerted pressure makes them feel that they are insular from the society and cause inconvenient feelings. Toscani draws attention that it is generally believed, especially among young people that the items, prominent in advertisements, situate and evidence about the social position and a place in a social hierarchy. According to the *Le Point* and *La bibliothèque des émeutes*, the French weekly news magazines, in year 1994 in France, Spain and Italy, each week there were present street riots which aimed at destroying and demolishing shop windows as well as symbols of riches. (Toscani 1997, 28-29.)

### **5.8 A crime against the language**

The next crime, which Oliviero Toscani accuses to advertising is a crime against the language. The advertisement slogans, according to the photographer, are primitive, meagre, repeated again and again so they seem to have been the same since long time period, as well as stupefying. (Toscani 1997, 30.)

### **5.9 A crime of pillage**

And the final crime noticed by Toscani is the crime of pillage. He accused that the advertisement specialists use and copy immediately each happening, mental

current, artist or a movie scene is a potential material for a picture or an advertisement. Toscani spots also that the specialists from the line of business like photographers and directors like Richard Avedon, Jean Paul Goude, Ridley Scott and others and also their ideas, scenes and pictures are copied and used in many different advertisements. As a result many advertising campaigns look similar to each other and nothing new is created. What is more he also argues that even all the products started to look similarly to each other. He calls today's world as a "*me too product*", where all goods copy each other and where their quality is the same. He blames all goods creators who analyse tastes of consumers and market research, resulting in same advertising campaigns. But the power of each company and its advertising is to be distinguished among other ones in the market. Companies should vary in the way they present the product and invent the inimitable advertisement, they ought to differ in its philosophy as well as imagination and creativity. (Toscani 1997, 33-35.)

As a conclusion he explains the title of his book "*Advertising is a smiling carrion*". He calls advertising a perfumed carrion.

They say about the recent dead body that he looks very well, almost as if he smiles to us. The same relates to advertising. It died but has been still smiling. (Toscani 1997, 36.)

## 6 BENETTON PHILOSOPHY

Since the first Benetton advertisements entered the market, it was not possible to pass by indifferently without noticing them. On each of them obligatorily the trademark - green rectangle with a white inscription *United Colors of Benetton*.

As Oliviero Toscani is considered as a photographer who performs shocking advertising, however in his works it is possible to notice that his ambitions are significantly higher. That is exactly the thing which distinguishes him among other representatives of this kind of advertising. Toscani reprimand artificiality, lack of honesty, kitsch and exaggeration which can be met in the current advertising.

In my advertisements I was aspiring to a dialogue with a public opinion about the power of prejudices and stereotypes (because advertising is full of them). About submission and mind freedom. About tolerance. Why majority persists to its first reaction, to its racist or antiracist taboo? Why advertising like an art or media, cannot be an area for playing for philosophy, an emotion catalyst, a dispute and polemic area? Without any doubts I was the one who was the most shocked because of reaction fierceness and a power of racial prejudice. Later on I understood that playing with stereotypes generates a huge possibility for eliminating acquired or inherited beliefs. (Toscani 1997, 46.)

The photographer introduced his way of understanding and encouraged but also proposed to find advertising as a source of art and a carrier of philosophical transfer. From the beginning Oliviero Toscani made Luciano Benetton conscious about his idea for Benetton advertising. He said: "*A sweater has two sleeves and wool is wool*". (Bończyk 2002, 11).

He was aware that new campaigns have to be intelligent in order to create a value added for the product. The product is constantly same just the message is different and varies.

The company decided not to focus on advertising their products and appeal directly to the market, but to pay its attention to social issues present in the marketplace. Benetton aimed at convincing its buyers that they are in the main point of the company interest and that products they wear are of the secondary importance. They addressed their products to people regardless of the skin colours, sex, class, religion, social background or sexual preference. (Androiadis, Baciu, Iancu, Pilsu 2004, 33.)

Benetton believes that it is important for companies to take a stance in the real world instead of using their advertising budget to perpetuate the myth that they can make a consumers happy through the mere purchase of their product. (Haig 2006, 250.)

Luciano Benetton achieved so big success and transformation of company through centralized planning, good marketing tools, product management and distribution system. The repositioning of the company's brand image was achieved through advertising proposed by one of the most controversial creative directors in the world – Oliviero Toscani. (De Rosa, Deaux & Philogéne 2001, 49.)

While looking at Benetton campaigns everybody would agree with two discrete aspects. The first one between company's products, which are manufactured to dress its customers, being advertised by billboards and posters, where the product is absent. (De Rosa, Deaux & Philogéne 2001, 49.) Furthermore, the logo United Colors of Benetton is the only text present on the billboards in most of advertisements. Besides, most of them, although not all, contain just a plain white background behind the image. (Grzegorzcyk 2011, 181-182.)

Moreover, most of people know and recognize the company not because of the clothes or other products it sells, but because of the pictures which accompany numerous campaigns. (Toscani 1997, 86.)

When people ask me what connects the war in former Yugoslavia, AIDS and current events in the world with pullovers, I answer that nothing. There is nothing in common. Because I do not do advertising. I do not sell the goods. I do not try to persuade anyone to make purchases by means of trivial tricks. I will not praise highly patterns and colors of Benetton pullovers, because I'm like everyone else convinced of their quality. I am not cynical, I am looking for new means of expression. I discuss with the audience, like other artists do. I do not speculate on the suffering of the world, to draw attention to Benetton, but I nibble a conformity presumption. I use opportunities of advertising – scorned and non-exploited art, its power of influence and the presentation ability. I scratch the public opinion there, where it itches. I participate in public debate, as a writer does, as a pamphleteer, as a journalist. The tragic image of a young Bosnian soldier is in my eyes more important than all the slanders about advertising, more important than a small green Benetton rectangle. The picture speaks for itself. Why would it be unacceptable and difficult to bear just on the advertising area signed by Benetton? Are newspapers, like other media, without their own logo or title? In addition, they are sold for money. And they contain advertising. As well as photographs of poverty of the world. Do they speculate on it too? (Toscani 1997, 86-87.)

On the other side, the common advertisement is problem free, stereotypical and traditional, whereas the photos proposed by the Benetton company sensitize to solidarity, commitment and involvement in contradistinction to buyers needs of feeling young, popular and beautiful. (Andersson, Hedelin, Nilsson & Welandar, 2004.)

The company decided to implement universal and socially oriented themes as the advertising messages spread to every country all over the world.

Benetton campaigns are dedicated and draw people's attention to the western society problems like racism, race relations, equality, pollution, Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), a death penalty, deprived children, authorities, over-population, religion and its sensibilities but also views and opinions concerning life and death. (De Rosa, Deaux & Philogéne 2001, 49; Stobart 1994, 162-163; Pomieciński 2005, 29.) The billboards visualized that boundaries, barriers and limits concerning races, nations, between sick and healthy people, the condemned and free ones, are present all over the world and what is more they determine people's lives.

Oliviero Toscani persuades that photography is seen as the most current expression of art as the situation of the present world is introduced in the pictures. Even more than 90 percent of our knowledge is gained through images which we can see.

People see through somebody else eyes today, so there is a big responsibility - an image can be stronger than an army. We see children throwing stones against tanks and everyone thinks it's a shocking picture; there isn't such a thing as a shocking picture, there is shocking reality that is being reproduced through photography to the people who aren't there. (Tomkins 2010.)

All of the pictures which the photographer introduced to the world, place the human being in front of an event and reality, which most times do not want to be noticed and known. But even people try not to perceive them; they are still present somewhere in the other corner of the world.

Toscani asserts that his activity has not been done for shocking. He did not use shock as a tool. He links the receivers' reactions with being civilized. Lack of this essential feature causes that people are shocked by those pictures.

That's the point, people get shocked because they aren't really civilized yet, because they don't want to belong or face the problem of civilization. Maybe it's the duty of the photographer to shock them, bringing in front of them something that they probably don't want to look at. I want to photograph what exists and we don't want to look at- that intrigues me a lot. And there are people who, when they look at a picture, they get angry at it. But they should get angry at themselves for not having the courage to look into the problem. (Tomkins 2010.)

And finally the photographer reached his aim. People got to know and started to understand that advertising is not made to introduce and push products and their consumption. Its role and communication is much more important.

The first ones who accepted the photographer's argument were specialists from his line of business or interests. They agreed with the importance of problems he tried to visualize and make evident, and reinforced his exertions. Joachim Pissaro, the chief curator of the Kimbell Art Museum from Fort Worth, Texas clearly stated:

Benetton warns us through Toscani to not act as if beyond the successful completing our everyday small tasks were not true other people's tragedies. Toscani is not subtle, but the reality to which he refers is not subtle too. (Toscani 1997, 92.)

Also Anna Greiser, a curator of the cabinet of medals from Lausanne in Switzerland, agreed with the idea of advertising and published her statement:

The purpose of advertising is to sell the product, so making a capital. Theoretically, earnings growth should be proportional to the popularity of advertising campaign. Meanwhile, Toscani's reportage



about a hard reality generally does not stand out a Benetton product in the foreground. The product is represented only in the collective symbolic representations, which wake up in us. Without any doubt we are witnesses of establishing new forms of social communication in which the advertised product may disappear or can just be marked. (Toscani 1995, 168.)

Furthermore, the New York-based journalist, Furio Colombo, agreed with the Benetton creative director but also looked ahead into the advertising problem and its presentation, and criticized as well as reprimanded it in the *Aperture* and *Espresso* magazines in a very straightforward and bold way:

Look at the great fashion studios, such as Calvin Klein, Ralph Lauren and others; their advertisements present the young creatures, exposing above all their own bodies and very scantily clothed - a T-shirt, jeans. But beware, [...] those pictures are often alluded (indirect, subliminal) to rape and enslavement of woman - child or otherwise any other provocation, which a model macho cannot simply resist.

It is amazing that currently in the youth fashion advertising, erotic dreams and fantasies about rape have never become the subject of even the smallest complaint. Nudity in the unleavened style of the early Nazi years also didn't cause a scandal. Apparently there is obligatory such a rule: as long as everything relates to the potential of imagination, then an alarm is not needed. Benetton chose the other assumption. Its advertising step by step - with a multitude of colors, suggestions and games, with several interwoven dissonances - brings closer to the reality, to melt with it at the end. (Toscani 1997, 120.)

Many of the European newspapers and magazines started to publish photographs taken by Oliviero Toscani as photoreports. (Toscani 1997, 40.)

Why a fashion catalogue might not be a testimony of hope and a defiance of some nation? Advertising is an offer directed to the public. It should become a street art, decor and decoration of our cities. It could also be a unrestrained, spouting with an invention but even a provocation, a press creation. It might compose a test of all types of

invention and creativity, documentation and reportage, irony and provocation. It could inform about various matters, to serve a humanistic purpose, present artists, popularize huge discoveries, educate an audience, become useful and avant-garde. In the meantime- what a wastefulness! (Toscani 1997, 40-41.)

Who determined that advertising doesn't have the right to use powerful photographs? What an art director established once and for all, the rules for advertising, who decides, what it is allowed to do, and what it is not. Together with my campaign, for the first time and firmly, the life realities entered the air-conditioned advertising cosmos. For the first time advertising exploited few square meters of its giant area to exhibit the actual reality in its extreme manifestation to the people, with the hit force thousand times exceeded an influence of all informative magazines taken all together. It was able to speak on the street. To the whole world. (Toscani 1997, 53.)

A press photographer Patrick Robert who was the author of two photos which were placed in posters, argued with critics those who were against Benetton campaigns. (Toscani 1997, 54.)

Benetton entered into the new advertising dimension, left showing products, in order to focus on selling the philosophy of its own company [...]. We don't inspect classic advertising campaigns concerning dreams, illusion; there is not unreality and superficiality. Toscani speaks about the world of today. Stands to reason, immediately he was suspected wrongly about aggression... We, reporters, current events photographers, are reproached because of extreme poverty and violence in the world, almost as we were responsible for them. Our aim is to fight with indifference [...]. I don't feel a need of placing inscriptions under my photos, because they say everything by themselves... When a passer-by notices on the street a photography of the human being with a thighbone [...], immediately he gets the power of the violence contained in the picture, he will notice a lack of respect to the human life. The message is obvious: do not forget that nowadays, somewhere in the world, these things are happening. (Toscani 1997, 54.)

## 7 BENETTON ADVERTISING

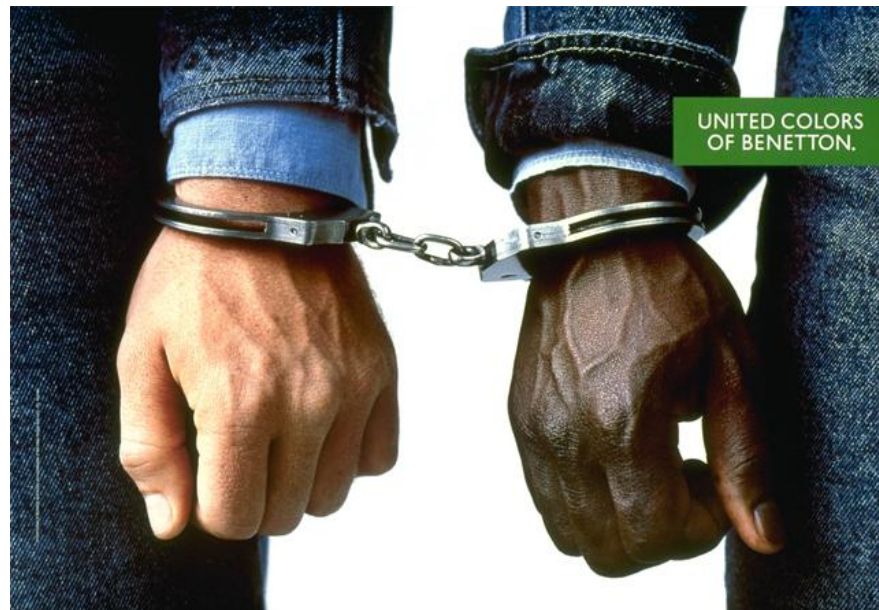
From the beginning in Benetton campaigns, their creator Oliviero Toscani was mixing and combining different themes and genres, like for example current reportage photographs, antiracist pictures and those ones which abolish stereotypes. (Toscani 1997, 41.)

They provoke political and moral reactions of the audience. They act as a huge street newspaper; the newspaper of huge hieroglyphs, which calls into question our taboos as well as fears and brings out spontaneous discussions – pure and simple through a confrontation with a picture. This advertisement doesn't look like any other and surely that is why many experience it as a scandalous. Because it violates our habits. Because it questions a whole previous advertising. (Toscani 1997, 41.)

Toscani decided to portray pictures, which nobody so far dared to publish in the media. All photos functioned as a huge, street newspaper, which began a battle with fear, taboo topics and evoked spontaneous discussions, merely through confrontation with a picture. Benetton advertisements are unique in its kind; do not resemble any other campaign, so that is why it was experienced as scandalous, because the advertising was called into question so far.

A colorful paper, just right to decorate a pedestrian zone. It seems to be that advertisement with enlarged, reporter photos, people perceived for the first time just for the advertisement itself, discovered it anew, noticed how it is ubiquitous and at the same time invisible. Advertisement induces immediately to think. Passivity becomes broken. The reporter photography discloses its whole emotional potential. Published in an information magazine among hundreds of photos, loses its explosive power. But enlarged into a wall format on a bus stop, lonely and got away from its ordinary surroundings, wins back its power. (Toscani 1997, 54-55.)

As a response to the problems of the present-day world, Oliviero Toscani published new series of photographs which were related to the matter of skin colours. The first poster: a close-up to a white and black wrists, braced with handcuffs. Both men had the same jackets; the only exception was that one of the black man, which was cuffed at the wrist. (Toscani 1997, 46.)



GRAPH 3. Handcuffed wrists Autumn/winter 1989/1990 (adapted from Toscani, 1997, photograph appendix)

The next advertisement was a group of Pinocchio puppets made of bright and dark wood.



GRAPH 4. Pinocchio puppets Spring/summer 1991 (adapted from Toscani, 1997, photograph appendix)

All of the photos are touching the problem of prejudice but on the other hand try to combat with it. They abolish a racist ideology and beliefs by visualizing and emphasizing the racial and color alternatives which can be found among one and same nation. They illustrate a mixed and miscellaneous love and are not scared to situate naked bodies close to each other, without paying any attention to the skin colours. (Toscani 1997, 47.) Moreover, all of the photos which show different races persuade advertisement receivers to the ideas of tolerance, respect for diversity among them and propagate peace among all nations. (Benetton 2012.)

After those photos the public opinion was waiting for the next, new Benetton campaign. The walls of the buildings evolved to the real media.

## 7.1 An equality campaign

### 7.1.1 A white infant nursed by a black woman

The year 1989 was the year where Benetton launched the campaign for equality. The first poster made by Oliviero Toscani, which initiated a polemic all over the world, presented a white infant nursed by a black woman. A very subtle photography. The author during the work on the advertisement did not think about it in a classical meaning, therefore we will not find here any connection between a motive and a product – clothing of the Benetton brand. The clothes the woman was wearing had only a symbolic value. According to the photographer, he does not sell sweaters, which say everything by themselves, does not even convince people of buying them. Toscani tried to enter into a dialogue in a problem of races mixing idea. The campaign was based on a watchword United Colors, which soon became a part of a new Benetton name. (Toscani 1997, 41-42.)



GRAPH 5. A white infant nursed by a black woman Autumn/winter 1989/1990 (adapted from Toscani, 1997, photograph appendix)

It makes up a kind of a time machine which carries antiracist, cosmopolitan and free from stereotypes spiritual attitude to the furthest nooks of these countries, where racism is manifested especially clearly as in Republic of the South Africa or the United States of America. (Toscani 1997, 42.)

The campaign was viewed well all over the world and as a proof it received numerous awards mainly in Austria, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Italy and also the world Grand Prix award in the best advertisement picture category. It was acknowledged as a symbol of brotherhood and an aim of agreement in spite of any kind of differences between nations. (Toscani 1997, 42.)

The United States of America turned out as an exception, where it was found as racist one by black minority movements. They affirmed that:

The poster will enliven an old colonial stereotype of a white baby in black nanny arms. Still it is astonishing that so political minds were not capable of leaving outside confines of old thinking habits, practicing racism under reversed signs. (Toscani 1997, 42-43.)

Some weeks later, after publishing the advertisement in the *Rolling Stone* magazine, Spike Lee – the director of *Malcolm X*, expressed his opinion:

Working places, drugs, crimes, AIDS, a war, racism, good breeding, homelessness, environmental pollution – these are huge problems of our today's world, which are waiting for an initiative. [...] In this respect, the Benetton management outruns others in a long way. Of course I don't have any delusions about its motives of behavior. Benetton wants to earn a packet, like every other company. In the end all of us aim at earnings, however the difference appear in choosing the way to the aim. Everybody knows that the sex is the quickest way to make the money with the help of the cinema, music or advertisement. And mostly this, the easiest way is chosen. If you want to sell a compact disc album or a movie, make an effort to find a pretty girl with beautiful tits and a shapely bottom. That's enough, even it is a way as crowded as the Franklin-Delano-Roosevelt-Avenue during rush hours. A wandering far from the crowded high ways is

much more risky. Why? Because it forces us to think. People will stop and discuss about the message only at the time, when it is enough strong and provoking. (Toscani 1997, 43.)

In the second side of the world, in the racist Republic of the South Africa, the media boycotted the advertisement. Was it too much antiracist? (Toscani 1995, 44.)

### **7.1.2 An angel and a devil**

In the fall of 1991, Benetton introduced a new photography, making up a part of the Equality campaign. The advertisement depicted a stereotype of good and evil and a moral conflict featuring an angelic white girl with curly hair and blue eyes, who is hugging an Afro American girl, whose hair are twisted into devil's horns. Moreover, the angel has a so called *dents du bonheur* - *a lucky teeth*; a gap between two teeth, which is considered as a sign of happiness, beauty and wisdom in some cultures. The photographer used this feature in order to emphasize the innocent and angelic look of her. (Limpinnian 2004; Turner 2010; Toptenz.net - life, on a short list 2012.)





GRAPH 6. An angel and a devil Autumn 1991 (adapted from Toscani, 1997, photograph appendix)

At first sight the photography seems to be shocking and brings a racist association for many receivers, but this picture exposes people's deeply rooted racial prejudices and tries to challenge them. Benetton is touching again the problem of equality, racism and racial prejudices and this caused that the company is a mighty brand of ethnicity. (Limpinnian 2004; Turner 2010; Toptenz.net - life, on a short list 2012.)

By introducing "*The angel and the devil*" photography into the audience the company aimed at:

featuring images from the real world which have some social and universal relevance, in order to break through the barrier of indifference which often surrounds these issues. (Turner 2010.)

But again the campaign was received in the opposite, unintentional manner. It created unparalleled insult and controversy. The reason for that was successively found in society believes and stereotypes concerning Afro-American people. Benetton stated:

All of these conflicts were based on a difference that separates rather than unites. By acknowledging these differences and prohibitions, the brand (...) made a commitment to foster the cohabitation of opposites, to break down barriers and ensure dialogue. Benetton had a plan to integrate opposites, to unite differences under a single flag, the flag of its own logo. (Toptenz.net - life, on a short list 2012.)

## **7.2 The world panics and a new-born Giusy**

At the beginning of 1991, Benetton launched its new campaign. Very often Oliviero Toscani was accused of excessive war and death exposure, just to sell sweaters. That was the reason why this time he chose totally diverse motive. Toscani introduced Giusy – naked, newborn baby girl, covered with blood and still attached to the umbilical cord. At the same time the war in the Persian Gulf was going on. Photographer's intention was to show photos as an anthem to life, a symbol of hope. (Toscani 1997, 50.)

Our intent in this instance was to pay homage to life – we hoped that the baby would remind us that we all begin the same way and that differences are installed only after birth. (Toscani 1997, 50.)



GRAPH 7. A newborn Autumn/winter 1991/1992 (adapted from Toscani, 1997, photograph appendix)

He hoped that it would be the first time when he could reach his intended aim; he introduced the picture which would not be censored. But this time it was even worse. The campaign with the newborn baby was commented on by media all over the world. A whole situation was acclaimed as a new Toscani's provocation and condemned by many people. Most of the European press attacked Toscani and the photo could not be published in Italy, Great Britain, France and many newspapers which consider themselves as avant-garde. (Toscani 1997, 50.)

Moreover, Benetton spent a lot of money and effort to examine indifference for advertising in many countries, all over the world, before it launched this campaign in Great Britain. In July 1991, the company asked Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) for assenting to publishing the newborn campaign. ASA characterized the advertisement as probably rousing disgust, what was understood as an obvious objection for its publication. In most cases companies decide to resign from making public the campaign but Benetton ignored ASA's opinion. The poster

which was placed in British cities frustrated the public opinion. British authorities received 800 complaints from people and organizations. The most agitated were mothers because of the influence upon their kids. The most satisfied from the situation and scandal was the company owner, Luciano Benetton. (Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 51.)

It is better if we are criticized then if nobody notices us. All magazines and daily newspapers published the controversial photo. We had a better advertisement than if we have put dozens of advertisement in a paper. (Paluchowski & Zadłużna 2004, 51.)

In Palermo, in Sicily posters were damaged from a mayor's of the town order. In the place, where the mafia kills people, newborn baby seemed to be a provocation. (Toscani 1997, 50.)

### **7.3 David Kirby's death-throes**

The most expressive and moving poster that was shocking the most, turned out to be a photo taken by Therese Frare and implemented in Benetton advertising. A picture taken on the shape like the true contemporary Vatican Pieta of Michael Angel, presented dying David Kirby, 32 years old, AIDS activist, lying in the State Hospital in Ohio in his father's arms, in a family surroundings, with the sister and niece at his bedside. Toscani put up posters all over the world to fight and cease an isolation of the suffering from AIDS. The picture was published without any additional signatures, comments or titles. He desired a picture to speak for itself, to not weaken nor sooth its message. He wanted to show that the sick do not need to die alone, but among family, in their arms, surrounded with love and what is the most important without infecting them. (Toscani 1997, 54-55; Macleod 2007.)



GRAPH 8. Pieta in AIDS campaign Spring/summer 1992 (adapted from Toscani, 1997, photograph appendix)

After the campaign publication, immediately a surge of indignation, controversy and also fascination was spilled. People screamed:

Toscani speculates on illness, suffering, endless misfortune, to sell pullovers. No, I was fighting. It was time, when in awarding campaigns on AIDS topics they did not want to show sick people. Experts were turning gray, looking for appropriate arguments to convince public opinion to condoms. And they held against me that I wanted to show a plain truth, in addition in love surrounding. With help from one of the most moving picture of this decade. (Toscani 1997, 56.)

In February 1992, before campaigns based on reporter pictures moved public opinion, Toscani together with Benetton took part in many press conferences, organized in many world metropolitans. They wanted a confrontation with an audience and journalists critique, to introduce their true rules and defend own attitude to advertisement, but also to prove that they are not guided by cynicism. During all press conferences, controversy and discussions about anti-AIDS

spreading campaign necessity, where openly will be shown the infected, but also sexual practices, were breaking out. (Toscani 1997, 59; Pomieciński 2005, 30.)

On 13<sup>th</sup> February took place the first press conference in New York, where were present also David's parents – Kay and Bill. During it, journalists started to ask them about the campaign. (Toscani 1997, 59.)

Why did you give your assent to publish the picture of your son?  
When you see it, hanged on a street, don't you suffer from pain?  
(Toscani 1997, 60.)

With these questions they wished to make Kirby's family blood boil, to stigmatize Benetton for deriving profits from misfortune and suffering. David's father with a huge dignity and without hatred answered:

During life my son was fighting for making the whole world aware of AIDS and preventive possibilities. Thanks to this terrifying and international poster campaign, he can speak now with his voice. We used influential friends and Benetton's popularity in order to force the public opinion of all countries to take at last note of this horrible disease that nobody wants looking into eyes and to finally start to talk about it. (Toscani 1997, 60-61.)

His formal words were rumbling in audience that unanimously fell silent. And it was not possible to hear anything, just static flashes, directed to turned away face of mother and father's tears. Some journalists truly do not know how to behave (Toscani 1997, 19; Pomieciński 2005, 30).

#### **7.4 H.I.V. POSITIVE**

In Europe, in autumn 1993 a poster bringing forward a fragment of a naked skin with tattooed inscription *H.I.V. POSITIVE* caused the most intense, the most

interesting and highly political reactions among wide public, but also intensity of envy and loathing. (Toscani 1997, 71.)

An idea for the poster for a new Benetton campaign was born in the United States of America, when Oliviero Toscani stayed at a Californian motel in a way to Los Angeles. (Toscani 1997, 71.)

When I turned on the tv, there just had been broadcasting an actual reportage based upon a background of a local incident at school. A student agitated with a fact that nothing is done for fighting against AIDS, tattooed on his arm an inscription *HIV positive* and went to school totally naked. He was stopped immediately and puritan Americans discovered much more quickly not his nudity but a tattoo. (Toscani 1997, 71.)

Oliviero Toscani was shattered. At that time, an idea for a new photography was born, when he realized that a brave boy had organized that action to denounce people's blindness, mentality and panic fear of an illness. A reaction of Luciano Benetton turned out to be extraordinarily positive. (Toscani 1997, 71.)

At this time the audience would understand that we are saying the truth. It would be an essence of all our campaigns. (Toscani 1997, 71.)

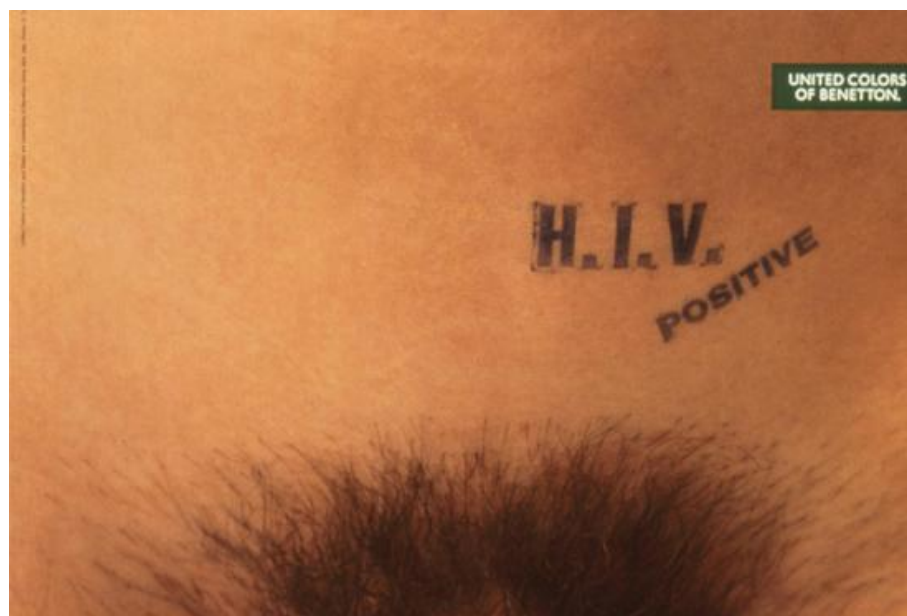
Oliviero Toscani wanted to assure that Benetton still wishes for intervene in many different spheres of life that will undertake the battle against social insulation of people suffering from AIDS, equally forcefully as against racism. The campaign achieved its aim. In whole Europe newspapers, suffering from AIDS organizations, politicians and television stations spoke up, argued, defended or slung mud on Toscani. Never before any other advertisement have caused such emotions and discussion. All discussions, opposed opinions, approval and rebuked articles concerned stamping or social insulation of people infected with the virus, and focused around the problem of agitating role of advertisement. The

campaign forced also social communication experts to think, who had ever caused such intense discussion about sex and AIDS. They were forced to think whether to be a realist, who shocks by showing sex, pleasure and sick people, or whether to do on the contrary. And any other AIDS campaign has never triggered such emotions. The truth is that nobody decided to show stamping directly on the skin of the infected person. (Toscani 1997, 72-74.)

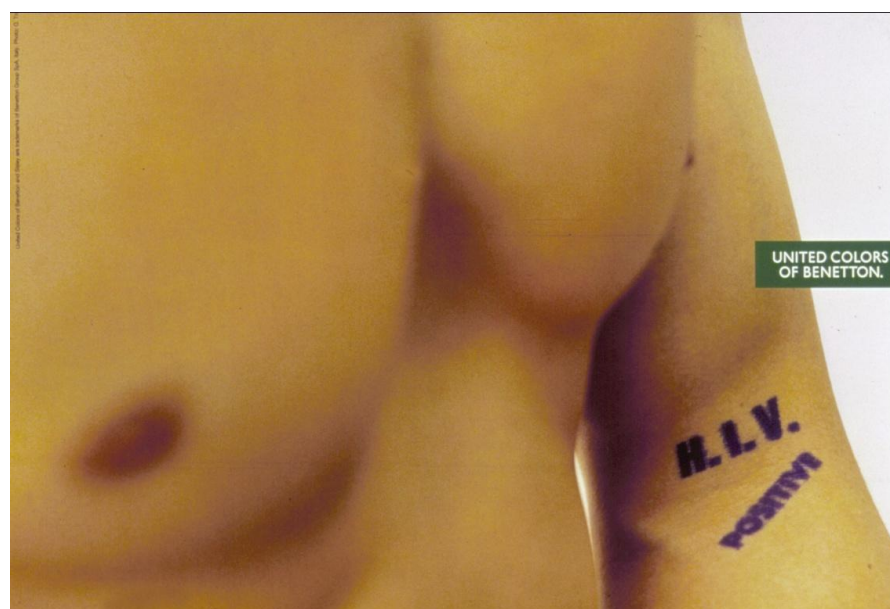


GRAPH 9. H.I.V. POSITIVE Autumn/winter 1993-1994 (adapted from Toscani, 1997, photograph appendix)





GRAPH 10. H.I.V. POSITIVE Autumn/winter 1993-1994 (adapted from Toscani, 1997, photograph appendix)



GRAPH 11. H.I.V. POSITIVE Autumn/winter 1993-1994 (adapted from Toscani, 1997, photograph appendix)

Benetton found itself offending the audience by the *H.I.V. POSITIVE* campaign. In 1995, some of German clothing stores which carried the Benetton clothing line organized a protest against company's message. The tattoo *H.I.V. POSITIVE* was found to be too resembled to the forced tattoos placed on Jews and Nazi concentration camps during the World War II. The protest led to the court case, which was won by Benetton in March 1996. (Vanden Bergh & Katz 1998, 77-78.)

In France three HIV- positive people who were offended by the photography, took a legal action into a court. The court ordered Luciano Benetton and his company to pay damages, as the company was a provocative exploitation of suffering (Vanden Bergh & Katz 1999, 77).

The ad brings forward the way that many people are unfairly labeled or stereotyped. (Vanden Bergh & Katz 1998, 77.)

Responses for the *H.I.V. POSITIVE* poster differed depending on a country. In the Netherlands and Japan the poster was utilized by organizations taking up help for people suffering from AIDS, during helping and making people aware of AIDS topic actions. They did not care that the picture is the advertising. The photo was deprived of advertising function and bought out and moreover, introduced to official institutions, so they could derive an example. Whereas in London, the Act Up organization, which was helping people suffering from AIDS, placed its telephone number on all *H.I.V. POSITIVE* posters. Mass, indignant English newspapers responded in one and the same way, like during all Benetton campaigns and Benetton advertisements – appealed to Benetton boycott, understanding company's aim just as a pullover's campaign. In Paris, the Act Up organization, already famous from its previous radical side, expressed its indignation because of an unfavorable and inimical AFLS attitude (a state agency making people aware of AIDS topic). (Toscani 1997, 74-75.) Thus, Act Up issued a press statement:

AFLS should rather prove much more courage and political boldness in own campaigns. (Toscani 1997, 75.)

Couple weeks later, on the World AIDS Day, on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 1993, Benetton together with the Parisian group Act Up – a liberal militant group, decided to unit together their forces and installed a giant, pink condom on the obelisk in the Place de la Concorde in central Paris. The aim of the happening was to force a society to understand the problem and reality of AIDS disease. This symbolic monument of prevention from AIDS infection appeared soon on the covers of all newspapers worldwide. (Toscani 1997, 75.)



GRAPH 12. The World AIDS Day (adapted from Toscani, 1997, photograph appendix)

The Genevan ASS – a Swiss organization helping people suffering from AIDS – expressed its opinion in a very favorably disposed manner towards Benetton. In the introduced announcement they issued:

ASS thinks that those posters are a fervent, unconventional attempt towards shaping a public awareness. Since in contrary to another companies which solely make efforts to promote their products, Benetton gives up a simulating proclamation. Benetton intention is to summon receivers, to think over the AIDS issues and establish its own opinion. (Toscani 1997, 75.)

In Italy, Monsignore Giuseppe Pasini, the Catholic Church spokesman, accuses Luciano Benetton of manipulating public opinion, utilizing tears, melodramatism and tragic pictures to reach the aim. In a short time *Osservatore Romano* – the Vatican daily newspaper, accused the company of terrorism, by means of photography. In separated by opinions France, Benetton was attacked from every side. The Human Rights Minister demanded destroying *H.I.V. POSITIVE* posters. Young designers called to boycott Benetton shops. However the *Libération* daily newspaper editor-in-chief wrote:

Benetton with its scandalous photos acts like cops and shavelings that continuously boast extravagantly of better knowing than others, what is good for people. (Toscani 1997, 76.)

Additionally, Jacques Séguél – a French advertising expert, gave out his critical opinion being shocked of posters. (Toscani 1997, 77.)

Toscani is the beiggest "eruption" of monstrosity in the world. Provocation substitutes step by step the art, the place of cheerful mixing up of races and colours from first Benetton campaigns, was taken up by our planet tragedies. After three years antiracism sank in anticonformity. [...] (Toscani 1997, 77.)

In his opinion all persons who do not want to copy others who have their own opinion about these issues, are sinking in nonconformity and provocation does not belong to creative advertising methods. Toscani found out those words as disturbing in a mouth of social and public communication whizz.

The essayist Michel Dante, the editor-in-chief of the *Construire* magazine emphasized in a positive way significance of the *H.I.V. POSITIVE* campaign. (Toscani 1997, 78.)

There exist a circle of countries and instances, which under this one or another pretext stigmatize the people who live with the virus. There are regulations which facilitate deportation of these people, refusal in getting visa and insurance benefits and even an access to certain schools. The tattoo on three posters from the *H.I.V. POSITIVE* series is a metaphorical picture of this status quo. This is a fearfully concrete metaphor, fearfully vivid meaningful, synthetic. [...] (Toscani 1997, 78.)

### **7.5 A monument of a known soldier – Marinko Gagro**

At the end of 1993 in the former Yugoslavia the war was still going on – the first European war since 50 years. All over again, old national and religion hatreds returned. In the East and West existed war danger, where racism was already feeded. (Toscani 1997, 80.)

Oliviero Toscani wished to connect a new Benetton campaign with the war, to bring public opinion's attention. During the one morning in January 1993 the photographer received a letter from Maria Pejic, 22 year- old inhabitant of bombed Sarajevo. The girl wrote:

I noticed that everytime you organize your campaigns, the topic does not matter, the whole world talks about them. Why won't you make a poster which will stigmatize this war? (Toscani 1997, 80.)

Toscani's aim was not to shock at this time; his aim was to touch and move people's consciences. He did not set out to show an anonymous, killed individual, impersonal corpse. He wanted to show:

A monument of a known soldier; an effigy of a young killed man, whose name, but also parents are known. Maybe even his uniform. His idea was introduced in the Red Cross. (Toscani 1997, 81.)

In February 1994 Oliviero Toscani received a parcel by post. Its content was: a battle dress trousers and an undershirt – a part of a uniform of the young, recently killed soldier. Additionally a cutted belt dried up blood, a bullet inleted slot ... And a note in Croatian language, written on a typewriter:

The sent trousers seemed to be a symbol of a war, which we did not want to know anything about. And these sentences were like lines in the book, which we have never wanted to open. (Toscani 1997, 81.)

The uniform belonged to Marinko Gagro. The parcel and the letter were set by a father, who did not want that his son's death was vain. His son wanted to graduate, marry, that is why the father asked to use a surname and legacy of the killed by Serbians, for the peace concern and against the war. (Toscani 1997, 81-82.)

A poster presented a blooded uniform was shown in 110 countries. On the right hand side of the poster there was located a blooded undershirt, on the left hand side a denim trousers, everything on the white background, in a way which shown a figure of a lied man. There was also visible a slot after a bullet, through which he lost his life. And above a fragment of the father's letter:

Me, Gajko Gagro, the father of Marinko Gagro, who was born in 1963 in Blatnica, Citluk community, wish to employ the name of my dead son Marinko and everything what was left after him, for the peace concern and against the war. (Toscani 1997, 82.)



GRAPH 13. The soldier's uniform Spring/summer 1994 (adapted from Toscani, 1997, photograph appendix)

Toscani wrote also to the *Oslobadenje* newspaper's editorial office in Sarajevo, where he introduced the idea:

United Colors of Benetton taking the advantage of advertising power directs this message to the world. United Colors of Benetton doesn't intend to give answers, however wants to ask about civilians, about children and soldiers, who gave their lives in Sarajevo. Behind every soldier there is always hidden a human being with its private life and destiny, with people who he loves. And behind every aborted life there is hidden world's responsibility, which chose a role of an observer. [...] The photography chosen by United Colors of Benetton to the extensive dissemination, aims at increasing doubts, with which the world should refer to institutionalized violence and death. (Toscani 1997, 82.)

After a while Oliviero Toscani heard of journalists' activities, opposing Benetton campaign. They reached to Gojko Gagro and informed him that Benetton grows rich through a martyrdom of fallen son. The father himself, who sent to Toscani the battle dress and asked for a death celebration, named him as a "jackal". At least

in this way, Jacques Séguél described this situation. However the question which must be asked is whether Gajko realized that the photography of his dead son is presented in the world? That reminds to people the stigma of this war and its horror, which threatens remaining European countries, maybe even the world? What journalists conveyed to the father and whether explained him the aim and sense of the advertisement? (Toscani 1997, 83.)

Once again the campaign triggered controversy all over the world. In the United States of America *Los Angeles Times* public relations officer denied to publish the photo because of contained "violence" inside it. In Geneva, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) accused Toscani of the world peril instrumentalisation. (Toscani 1997, 83.)

In Germany two human right protection organization carried out an investigation to check whether the international law was not violated by: exploitation for profits (by Benetton) the war in Bosnia (Toscani 1997, 83).

The French *La Monde* and *La Figaro* did not take part in the campaign. In France numerous newspapers congratulated an idea and were publishing pictures, in spite the fact that the country was often applicable aggressively to Toscani's ideas. In Japan, where advertisement also concentrated on symbolic and artistic message shaping, the poster was honored with the best art director award. Even young graphics from TRIO agency from Sarajevo sent words of solidarity. They appreciated Toscani's campaign realization that is an attempt at mobilizing international public opinion against the war in Yugoslavia. They thanked also for an attempt at developing art of advertisement. (Toscani 1997, 84.)

We will never get to know whether the poster, devoted to a conflict in our region belongs to the most shameless and cynical responses for a war or otherwise is one of exceptionally successful warning against modern civilization crimes, which seems to set more and more store by marketing and social communication. Because Toscani obeys stick to the marketing regulations, which he respects and at the same time



laughs at them, spreading his manifesto... even I don't know how brutal. Certainly we know that through this poster Toscani conferred a new impulse to a debate about reasons and aims of the war in Bosnia [...] Toscani imports to his pictures the word's danger, ensures immortality to shocking truth and sends us his comment. (Toscani 1997, 85-86.)

## 8 RESULTS

The most important aim of every advertisement is to grab receiver's attention. A message which is sent through the advertisement has to bring to effect. It contends for people's eyes as well as ears, a piece of time, focus and morsel of attention. Undoubtedly Benetton's campaigns are those ones which people remember and satisfy above-mentioned requirements.

Moreover, nowadays many advertising specialists claim that shocking advertising is the most effective and powerful method of selling any kind of necessities. But the Benetton company assumed a different role for its advertising. The company owner and creative director opposed against traditional role of advertising but what is more advertising itself. They believed that it is significant for every company to take a stance in the real world and tried to convince others that customers should be considered as the main point of the company interest. Moreover, the skin colours, sex, class, religion, social background or sexual preferences are not important as all people are equal regardless of those differences between them.

The company was also not afraid to propagate that their products are not made in order to make each customer happy through their possession and blamed those who persuaded about feeling young, popular and beautiful through purchase of commodities. Instead of it, Benetton aimed at paying attention to social issues present in the market the company operates in.

The creative director of the company proposed and implemented a revolutionized advertising which have set against the traditional, stereotypical and problem free advertising.

Benetton's controversial campaigns were destined for discussion concerning global issues. Even the company owner; Luciano Benetton emphasized that his

advertisements were not focused on selling company's products but afterwards they generated considerable sales and profit. The company achieved its goal which was making people interested in the products they provide into the market, but what is more, consumers started to pay huge attention to Benetton's image too.

The billboards which appeared on the streets all over the world presented universal and socially oriented subjects and made evident that in every country where they were hanged, some barriers, boundaries and limits are present and what is more, they determine lives of those ones who are settled there. Oliviero Toscani did not pull wool over people's eyes but took off blinders from their eyes and situated human beings in front of reality, many times cruel reality, which often is unseen and imperceptible, without wishing to be known or even noticed by many passers-by. But even if it is invisible, it is still present somewhere; in the different corner of the world or next to everybody's life. Thanks to publishing these kind of shocking pictures the so called conspiracy of silence was interrupted and many problems which were previously covered up finally started to see the light of day.

Vizualization of common problems the world copes with, caused that many people set against the photographer and also Benetton. Opponents accused them mainly of excessive exposure of death, violence, war or shock but also mentioned a negative influence upon their kids. But the most astonishing fact is that consumers allow experiencing violence, sadistic scenes and cruelty in television, often consciously and voluntarily choosing these kinds of thriller movies but at the same time they are disgust, indignant and opposed exposing violence, shock and other moving motives in advertising.

## 9 CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

Benetton authentic and strong pictures finally started to affect people and convinced at least part of the audience that the company aims at commitment, involvement and solidarity instead of convincing its consumers to follow the trend of being beautiful and young. Toscani continuously have induced that he did not aim at shocking. Moreover, he did not make use of shock as a tool. He connected all of negative reactions towards Benetton advertising simply with being civilized, as its deficiency brings about this kind of reactions. He constantly stressed that *"There are no shocking pictures, only shocking reality"* and it is very difficult not to agree with this statement. Many experts assert that advertising tries to sell dreams. And this statement is full of truth, as it introduces colourful, imagined pictures to consumers who are forced to live in gray, cruel reality. Furthermore, each mediocre consumer has already got accustomed to idealized pictures created by the mass media and this unbroken world is perceived as a true reality. But this vain and void reality does not let in people who are far from being perfect, the obese, the sick, old or disabled ones. It never even crosses his or her mind that there could exist a different world from that one created by the mass media. That is the reason why each attempt aiming at showing the world full of disgusting or shocking pictures ends up with a big scandal and indignation caused by the public opinion. The public opinion wants normality, the normality where all of above-mentioned people do not live and where everybody is happy, beautiful and eternally young.

At the end the photographer finally reached his aim and induced the audience to the company message. People started to understand that Benetton advertising is not made just to introduce its products and push customers towards their consumption but its role is much more significant and important. He shows the significance of the certain problem and forces the audience to be aware and notice

this sick person and that real war. His way of publication is obviously authentic, shocking and painful. But the photographer also touches peoples' hearts and minds. It is true that the way of expression is controversial and frustrating but it seems that nowadays only those shock methods are effective and do not allow the person to pass close indifferently.

Oliviero Toscani together with the Benetton company was not afraid to bring to life and publish photos which started to combat with apathy and indifference in every corner of the world and decisively they succeeded in doing it. The barriers of indifference were significantly infringed or even broken in incalculable countries and cultures and people were provoked to rethink the message sent through them. Even if Benetton numerous campaigns brought also opponents to the company, its products or advertising, it was definitely worth to utilize shock which educated and took note of problems which harass the world but which did not want to be noticed by many people before.

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