

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the two birthday cards using semiotics, I come to the conclusion that a ordinary thing can become extraordinary if we see it deeper. A birthday card is an ordinary thing for people to deliver to a person who is celebrating her or his birthday. Many kinds of birthday cards can be found in the stores. This ordinary thing can turn into something extraordinary once it is in the hands of the recipient. That is why people have to be wise in choosing the perfect birthday card.

A fashionable or popular birthday card does not mean a perfect birthday card to deliver. I come to this opinion after analyzing two kinds of birthday cards which I chose among thousands of other birthday cards. The first birthday card is a perfect card for an intimate or special relationship, while the second birthday card is a perfect card for a friend. Normally, the card designers will put many things such as words and pictures or drawings in the card which will support the concept they want to offer. In terms of semiotics, the words, pictures and drawings are symbols and icons.

From my point of view, the symbol found on the cover of a card has a big influence in presenting the concept of the card. A typical romantic symbol is normally put in a birthday card with an intimate or personal concept rather than a

joyful birthday card concept. The specific shape of symbol also influences the readers in grasping the concept or the message of the card. Besides the symbol found on the cover, the symbol inside the card normally supports those in the cover. The symbol inside the card which normally has longer sentences compared to that on the cover, gives emphasize to the message of the card as it explains the cover. The cover looks more lively because of the explanation in the inside.

Drawings give freedom to the card maker to explore the concept of the card. In drawing pictures, the maker can draw the icon based on his or her style. This also gives the readers more room to interpret the pictures and the message of the card. To build a birthday atmosphere, the card designer uses birthday ornaments as icons. However, not all birthday ornaments can be used in a birthday card.

As we know, there are many concepts of birthday cards. Balloons are common birthday ornament, but balloons cannot be used in a personal birthday card which offers an intimate atmosphere since the shape of a balloon builds a merry atmosphere. Sometimes, uncommon birthday ornaments such as cups of tea are put in the birthday card cover to create a particular atmosphere as the concept of the card. It is not intended to create a birthday atmosphere.

In the birthday cards I have analyzed, I find there are also some ornaments which are put in the card only to support the concept of the card but do not build a birthday atmosphere, such as a cup of tea. What is more, normally, a birthday means a party or some happy event. There are some ornaments that can be classified more as party ornaments than just birthday ornaments. Since a birthday is related to a party, the use of party ornaments is, by all means, appropriate. Nevertheless, using many of

those ornaments without putting typical birthday ornaments such as a birthday cake can create different interpretation, such as in the second card. In this card, since there is no birthday cake or any other typical birthday things in the cover, there is a possibility that the readers will misinterpret the concept, as the card looks more like an invitation card than a birthday card.

The cover of the birthday card is the first impression the readers get. After analyzing the two cards, I find that nowadays, many card designers do not use the word birthday straightly in the birthday card cover. Even though the card designers do not put the word birthday as the symbol in the covers, it does not mean the readers will misunderstand the interpretation of the birthday card. This also applies to the recipient. A birthday atmosphere can be created by the combination between each symbol and icon in the card. The use of ordinary birthday ornaments helps the readers get the birthday atmosphere. But, there is still a possibility that the readers will have the wrong interpretation if the combination between a symbol and an icon is too general.

Colour is something ordinary to be used in birthday cards. Good colours give another positive point to the meaning of the birthday card and they will be one of the things that attract the sender to buy the card. What is more, it is not only for positive promotion, I find that almost every colour in birthday card support the concept of the card. Furthermore, the ideal colour in an icon can help the readers to arrive at the interpretation the card makers want them. From my finding, I find that light colours usually build a personal and formal atmosphere. Meanwhile, bright colours usually build a joyful and informal atmosphere. The other fact is that not all colours support

the concept of the card. Some colours are put just to help the readers focus on the sign of the birthday card. For this reason, the card designer usually puts natural colours such as blue or white.

In analyzing birthday cards using semiotics, I find many aspects which involve semiotics. Since it deals with symbol and icon which are something we can see, this analysis does not only focus in language but also about every detail in the birthday card. Art and psychology are some of the other areas which can help to do the analysis deeper. During the writing the analysis, I get a lot of new information regarding those other areas.

For some reasons, there is a possibility that many readers may not catch the deeper meaning of the birthday card because of their lack of background knowledge. A birthday card is a simple thing with a lot of details. For some icons, the readers must have specific information or references before hand to understand the right meaning.

A semiotics analysis may seem simple, but once you start, there are many aspects you have to look at and consider. In my point of view, this happens because of the broadness of semiotics subject. In semiotics, every detail can be analyzed as deeply as the researcher wishes to.

For future researchers, it will be wise to prepare the references sooner and to explore the other areas based on the data you intend to analyze. Thinking outside the box is another major mind-set in making a great analysis.

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