Commentary on "Crest’s 'Pro' Strategy to Return to the Top"

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Commentary by Matthew Miller

In Bethany Klett's essay, we see a deft handling of many of the difficulties first year writers face. Most significantly, we see a clear statement of purpose and direction for her essay; she tells the reader what she is analyzing, the important components of the advertisement, and the position she's taking within the first paragraph. Throughout the piece, she supports her thesis with close "readings" of the ad's textual and visual elements, and consistently writes strong paragraphs—that is, she has focused paragraphs that return to their initial subject and have a small conclusion that builds upon the essay's larger thematic goals. Lastly, Bethany avoids a tendency among writers new to the collegiate form (and I know this applied to me in my freshman year) to list characteristics or evidence for a piece without making any statement about this evidence. Instead, Bethany makes arguments that are based on the evidence she outlines, showing a good marrying of textual evidence and secondary support throughout her essay.

From Geek to Chic in Hewlett Packard’s Advertising

by Gary Fleisner

For many years through the 1980s and 90s, television and movies have displayed geeks and nerds as people who spent all their time concerned with their work and technology. These undesirables, who were predominantly men, would spend their days doing calculations and researching on their computers. This gave the computer and one’s interest in technology a negative connotation of being geeky and only useful for fields like mathematics, engineering, and science. However, in a few short years, technological understanding and usage have greatly increased. Now, almost everyone has a Blackberry, iPod, and/or cell phone within reach at all times. Gadgets have become the new accessories in our everyday lives and fashion designers are trying to accommodate this growing trend and develop clothes that appeal to the tech savvy consumer. Companies like Nike, Columbia, and Levi Strauss have all created clothing that hides the wires yet makes the controllers for the gadget easily accessible. Columbia has released an iPod-friendly jacket and Levi launched iPod jeans, complete with a joystick in the watch pocket (Geller). Hewlett-Packard is following suit by designing and advertising new laptops/notebooks to reach a broader market. Hewlett-Packard’s advertisement for the Envy 13 promotes its new technology as chic and stylish in order to appeal to the modern woman.

The ad for the Hewlett-Packard Envy 13 notebook shows how women can be fashionable even while using technology. In the ad, the notebook itself is lying on its side, opened towards the reader with the key board on the left and the screen on the right. Surrounding the laptop is an array of metallic accessories: a high heel shoe sitting on top of the Envy 13, a necklace hanging on the corner of the screen, a silver clutch, and a crystal ring, all created by high end fashion designers. The slogan for the ad is: “Tech