

Introduction:

A recent trend in corporate marketing is to attract consumers through social responsibility. This strategy typically involves demonstrating how the company makes a difference in the community or raising awareness of a social justice issue related to the product or service that the company sells. This activity focuses on commercials created by two different companies—Gillette and Egard—and how those commercials use social responsibility to promote cultural values and beliefs surrounding masculinity.

Objectives:

As a result of this activity, participants will be able to:

1. Discuss how commercials use social responsibility to promote cultural values and beliefs surrounding masculinity.
2. Reflect on how masculinity is perceived and performed in their own cultures.

Time:

45 minutes.

Group Size:

Entire Group.

Materials:

Access to the internet to watch and display [Gillette](#) and [Egard](#) commercials; Selling Masculinity PowerPoint (in [Downloads](#)).

Intercultural Development Continuum Stages:

- Minimization
- Acceptance

AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Goals:**Cultural Self-Awareness**

- To articulate insights into own cultural rules and biases (e.g., seeking complexity; aware of how their experiences have shaped these rules, and how to recognize and respond to cultural biases, resulting in a shift in self-description).

Knowledge of Cultural Worldview Frameworks

- To demonstrate sophisticated understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs & practices.

Other Skills:

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion.

Activity Instructions:



1. Begin by asking participants to answer the following question: How would you define masculinity? The facilitator may choose to allow participants to first free write and then offer their answers.
2. Play the Gillette commercial for participants and then discuss the following questions:
 - What was your emotional response to this ad? What other emotional responses have you heard about or could you imagine?
 - What underlying cultural values and beliefs do you see in play in this ad?
 - Which co-cultural groups or social identities do you think are the intended audiences?
 - How do you see power and privilege critiqued in this ad?
 - How effective do you think the message was?
3. Next, play the Egard commercial for participants and discuss the following questions:
 - What was your emotional response to this ad? What other emotional responses have you heard about or could you imagine?
 - What underlying cultural values and beliefs do you see in play in this ad?
 - Which co-cultural groups or social identities do you think are the intended audiences?
 - Think about this ad in relation to the first one. How are they similar and different? Which do you think is more effective?
 - Do you have any critiques to offer about the rhetoric used?
4. Do a final debrief with the following questions:
 - What are considered masculine traits in your culture? How are they similar or different to what is depicted in these two commercials?
 - How strictly is masculinity enforced in your culture? That is, how acceptable is it in your culture for individuals to behave outside of gender norms?
 - What do each of these commercials imply or say about masculinity?
 - Are you convinced by either of these commercials' versions of masculinity? Why or why not?
 - What do you think about companies who brand based on social responsibility?