

Loving “Mapple Store” but Hating “Sprawl-Mart”: A Case Study of Brand Parodies in *The Simpsons*

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Abstract: A content analysis of a total of 96 brands and 405 tweets reveal that 1) feature imitation is more frequently employed than theme imitation in brands with parodies in *The Simpsons*; 2) brands with parodies contain significantly more negative connotations than positive connotations; and 3) audiences have significantly more positive attitudes than negative attitudes toward both fictional brands and defictionalized brands. The findings are mainly consistent with 1) information processing and persuasive theory in communication and 2) brand defictionalization phenomenon in marketing, providing practical suggestions for both television and marketing practitioners. More theoretical and practical implications were further discussed.

Keywords: brand parodies, brand imitation, brand attitude, defictionalized brands, popular media