

### **Reflection**

When I began to brainstorm ideas for this research project I was unsure of what advertisement I could use that could evoke a humorous response from an audience. My first thought was to find a product that had deceived its consumer with false advertising. Initially I wanted to critique General Electric's advertising campaign that beautified windmill farms across the country. There were a few contradictions within this topic that made it difficult for me to write about. Windmills are actually massively helpful forms of renewable energy, so almost any argument made against them is worthless. Secondly, I struggled to find any supporting arguments or evidence that would back my claims against the company. In an effort to problem solve I searched for a new misleading advertisement that could be backed by sufficient evidence. At this point I came across the Volkswagen ad campaign of 2015.

I myself am a 2016 Volkswagen Jetta owner and lover, so my interest was immediately sparked by this idea. I knew little about the scandal regarding Volkswagen and the falsified emission data, so I researched the topic for a clearer understanding. Once I delved into a few sources, I found that this advertisement fit perfectly into the claim I wanted to make. I wanted to exemplify the way companies exploit their customers through the idealization of their products. My ad was one of many in Volkswagen's campaign to promote environmental awareness. I found a massive amount of irony in the way the ad told consumers that Volkswagen cars are "really clean

diesel”, when in reality they had secretly allowed millions of cars to produce extremely high emissions. This obvious ironic situation made it slightly easier for to make light of an actually serious topic. Through exaggeration and incongruity, I joked and compared this controversy to current events that have had similar impacts on society.

Volkswagens former reputation of being a trustworthy and environmentally safe car brand made joking about this scandal that much more funny.