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The Advertising Division of the proceedings contains the following 20 papers: "Stereotyping the 'Model Minority': A Longitudinal Analysis of U.S. Primetime Network Commercials, Comparing Asian Female and Male Characters to Themselves and Others" (Dennis J. Ganahl, Liang Ge and Kwangok Kim); "Cultivation Effects of Television Viewing: A Study of Relationships Among Viewing, Materialism and Attitudes Toward Commercials" (Dennis J. Ganahl, Hongwei Yang, and Jie Liu); "Academic Institutional Television Commercials: A Comparison of Universities" (Brian Parker and Gail Baker); "Attitudes Toward Grades Among Advertising Students: Creative Orientation, GPA, Gender and Other Factors" (Don Umphrey and Jami A. Fullerton); "A Content Analysis of Print Advertising Appeals in Times of Crisis" (Alexander Muk); "Advertising Theory Beyond the Context of Advertising: Taylor's Six-Segment Message Strategy Wheel Offers an Integrated Model of Political Behavior" (Anne Cunningham and Eric Jenner); "Understanding Celebrity Endorsers in Cross-Cultural Contexts: An Exploratory Analysis of South Korean and U.S. Print Advertising" (Hye-Jin Paek); "College Students' Perceptions of 'Creative Circumvention' Beer Commercials" (Lara G. Zwarun); "Is It Segmentation or Segregation?: Exploring the Unintended Social Consequence of Targeting Minority Audiences with Advertising Placements Outside of Mainstream Media" (Karie L. Hollerbach); "Latino Consumer Behavior and Acculturation: A Communication Model" (Olaf Werder and Frank G. Perez); "The Test of the Effectiveness of Product Placements in Video Games: Comparing Explicit and Implicit Memory for Brand Names" (Moonhee Yang, Lucian Dinu, and David R. Roskos-Ewoldsen); "Proactive and Retroactive Position Effects and a System for Evaluating Pod Positions (SEPP)" (Koanghyub Kim, W. Joann Wong, and Xinshu Zhao); "From Information Retrieval to Actual Purchase: A Path Analysis of the Online Purchase Decision Making Process Among U.S. and Indian Consumers" (Padmini Patwardhan and Jyotika Ramaprasad); "Strategies for the Super Bowl of Advertising: An Analysis of Message and Creative Strategies for Commercials and Related Web Sites" (Juran Kim, Jang-Sun Hwang, and Sally J. McMillan); "Public Attitudes toward Advertising: Trends and Predictors" (Tien-Tsung Lee and Martin I. Horn); "Hard-Sell Killers and Soft-

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- Latino Consumer Behavior and Acculturation: A Communication Model...Olaf Werder, Frank G. Perez
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Stereotyping the "Model Minority":

A Longitudinal Analysis of U.S. Primetime Network Commercials,
Comparing Asian Female and Male Characters to Themselves and Others

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The authors would like to thank Dr. Dennis T. Lowry, Hyo Seoung Lee, Hongwei Yang and Anthony Huang for their help with this research.

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Abstract

Their population growth rate and purchasing power have made Asians a strong consumer market in the U.S. This longitudinal content analysis of primetime network commercials examined how Asians were portrayed in U.S. television commercials. Comparison analyses of all Asians to all characters, Asian females to all females, Asian males to all males, and Asian females to Asian males were made for numerical representation, acting roles, products and age. Asians were underrepresented in commercials and Asian females were more underrepresented than Asian males. When compared to all characters, Asians were more likely to be presented in younger, secondary roles. They were more likely to be in commercials for food than automobiles. Traditional gender bias-trends were apparent, when comparing Asian females to Asian males.

Stereotyping the “Model Minority”:

A Longitudinal Analysis of Primetime Network Commercials,

Comparing Asian Female and Male Characters to Themselves and Others

Has the growth and success of the Asian- American population led to greater inclusion in primetime network commercials, which is the ultimate test of cultural acceptance and mainstreaming? How is this “model minority” portrayed in primetime major network television commercials?

The United States of America has a reputation as a “melting pot” of cultures, races and ethnicities. Its diversity and its reputation for personal opportunity inevitably leads to an increasing number of immigrants, yet television commercials are not always as diverse.

Among American immigrants, Asians are one of the fastest growing group of minorities (Yoshihashi, 1989). The group of Asian minorities includes “a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam” (“The Asian”, 2002). The population of Asians (Asian alone and Asian in combination with other ethnic groups) in the U.S. reached 11.9 million (“The Asian”, 2002). Asians have only been recognized as a “model minority” in the U.S. since the 1960s (Taylor & Stern, 1997). They were negatively portrayed for more than a century prior to this time (Chen & Yorgason, 1997; Cohen, 1992; Delener & Neelankavil, 1990). Fifty one percent of the Asian population lives in California, New York, and Hawaii (“Asian Pacific”, 2002). In addition, they cluster in

metropolitan areas and earn higher incomes and education and occupational status than average Americans (American Management Association, 1987).

Given their population growth and above average purchasing power in the U.S, Asians should be an attractive consumer market. However, advertising which targets Asians doesn't appear to be very effective due to the advertisers' lack of knowledge about the Asian audience (Cuneo, 1999). Therefore, the portrayals of Asians in television commercials are important.

Stereotypes and Portrayals of Asians in U.S. Television Commercials

Many of the early Asian portrayal studies involved the print media (Bowen & Schmid, 1997; Cohen, 1992; Taylor & Lee, 1994). However, television is the most popular advertising medium (Coltrane & Messineo, 2000), and “television advertising affects and reflects public perceptions more profoundly than print does” (Taylor & Stern, 1997, p. 48). In the U.S, an average person watches television over 30 hours every week; over 98% of the households have at least one television set; about 20% of every broadcast hour has commercials; and one and one-half years of the life of an average adult is spent watching television commercials (Bretl & Cantor, 1988; Kilbourne, 1989; Kellner, 1990; Signorielli, 1991).

According to cultivation theory, television mainstreams views on subjects through repetitive images (Gerbner & Gross, 1976). Not surprisingly, television has reinforced unrealistic stereotypes (McArthur & Resko, 1975) and negative stereotypes (Meredith, 2002), especially when it comes to the portrayal of minority groups (Gandy, 1996; Wilson & Gutierrez, 1995).

As noted by Lippmann (1922), “the subtlest and most pervasive of all influences are those which create and maintain the repertory of stereotypes” (p. 59).

Branthwaite and Pierce (1990) argued, “A social stereotype is a prevailing and frequently used image of one group as uniform (rather than as individually differentiated) used to categorize all members of the group on a limited number of dimensions” (as cited in Taylor, Lee, & Stern, 1996, p. 138). It is a partial way to view the world (Lippmann, 1922).

“Stereotypes must be employed in advertising because it is a shorthand, which helps to convey ideas and images quickly and clearly” (Courtney & Whipple, 1983, p. 205). Positive stereotypes can be detrimental in that they remove the individualistic traits and employ a group mentality (Taylor & Stern, 1997). Asians are often depicted positively as being technically competent, well assimilated, hardworking, family oriented, brand-loyal and cost-conscious (Cohen, 1992; Delener & Neelankavil, 1990; Natividad & Gall, 1996; Yim, 1989).

Negative stereotypes can be detrimental to groups with less power and lower social status (Fiske, 1993). They can affect others’ views of ethnic groups as well as impair the ethnic-group members’ performance (Begley, 2000). For instance, racial and cultural stereotypes can reinforce racist legacies (Berry, 1982).

The purpose of this study is to establish a large sample of primetime network commercials in a longitudinal format so that definitive comparisons between Asian Females and Asian Males and between All Asians and All Characters. This research used a range of variables to establish a context for the characters’ in the commercials including

representation, gender, acting roles, product categories, and age. The following research questions and hypotheses were used.

Hypotheses

(H1) Asians are over represented in television commercials in terms of their representational percentage of the current U.S. population. According to proportionality criterion, the representation of a minority should approximately equal their actual proportion in the U.S. population (Faber, O’Guinn, & Meyer, 1987). Taylor and Stern (1997) found that Asians were over represented in television commercials. Their representative proportion was more than double their actual proportion of the population. Earlier, Taylor and Lee (1994) studied magazine advertisements and similarly found Asians were slightly over represented (4.0% of the sample vs. 3.3% of the population).

(H2) Asian Females are underrepresented, when compared to Asian Males during the television commercials under study. Researchers have argued that television programs and commercials reinforce conventional gender stereotypes (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1994; Gerbner & Gross, 1976). In their study on gender portrayals and stereotyping, Signorielli, McLeod and Healy (1991) found that female characters appeared less frequently than their male counterparts in MTV commercials. Taylor and Stern (1997) found that when gender was considered, Asian women were treated similarly to all other women, by having fewer central roles and more minor roles. In their study on television advertising in 1992, 1993 and 1994, Coltrane and Messineo (2000) found Asian females were slightly over represented, when compared to Asian males (over 50% of Asian characters are women).

Research Questions

(RQ1) How are Asians portrayed in television commercials in terms of primary and secondary acting roles, when comparing All Asians to All Characters, Asian Females to All Females and Asian Males to All Males? Taylor and Stern (1997) found that when compared to Blacks and Hispanics, Asians were the most likely to be portrayed in background roles in television advertising. Coltrane and Messineo (2000) found that 67% of Whites, 63% of Blacks, 55% of Latinos and 50% of Asians were main characters in commercials.

(RQ2) In which product categories are Asians portrayed during television commercials, when comparing All Asians to All Characters, Asian Females to All Females and Asian Males to All Males? Implementing the same proportionality criterion from the first hypothesis, it seems that Asians should be proportionally represented across all product categories. Taylor and Lee (1994) found that Asians received good representation in magazine advertisements for technical product categories such as automobiles and electronics, and poor representation in non-technical categories such as food and beverages, furniture, and clothing. In their study on television commercials’ portrayals of Asians, Taylor and Stern (1997) found that Asian representation was more related to items associated with affluence and work-life and less associated with non-technical items relating to home or social life.

(RQ3) How are Asians portrayed in television commercials, when considering characters’ ages and when comparing All Asians to All Characters, Asian Females to All Females and Asian Males to All Males? No previous research was found in this area but it is generally accepted that age is well respected in the Asian communities.

Method

The researchers videotaped 21-hour constructed week primetime samples (Sunday through Saturday) for each network from 7:00 -10:00 p.m. CDT in 1998, 1999, and 2000. The 1998 sample included ABC, CBS and NBC; the 1999 sample was ABC and FOX; and in 2000, it was ABC, NBC, CBS and FOX. A total of 189 hours of television programming was collected during the February “sweeps” rating period each year. If a commercial was shown more than once, each showing was included separately because that method best exemplified Gerbner and Gross’ (1976) concept of cultural cultivation via repetitive images.

Research Protocol

Coder training was individually conducted for each of the graduate students who coded¹ and the same senior researcher directly supervised coders for all three years of the study. A simple random sample of 10 % of each coder’s commercials was randomly selected and recoded by the senior researcher to assess coder reliability.

Variables and Measures of Reliability

There were a total of 13,497 primary or secondary characters identified and coded within the 7,686 commercials over the three years of the study. The gender variable was coded as a choice between male and female. There was never less than 98% agreement between coders on this variable.

The age variable for all characters was developed to correlate with the U.S. Census data bank and syndicated proprietary information services: infants and young children (5 years and younger); “tweens” and teens (6-20 years); younger adults, (21-50 years); and aging adults (51 years and older). There was never less than 87% agreement between coders on this variable.

Determining a character’s role as primary or secondary never achieved less than 88% agreement between coders. Primary characters were visually substantiated throughout most of the commercial as they directly interacted with the product or service. Primary characters usually had speaking parts. Secondary characters were visually substantiated background characters for at least several seconds and rarely had speaking parts.

Determining a character’s ethnicity never achieved less than 86% agreement between coders. The categories included African, Asian, Caucasian, Hispanic and Others.

Products and services were properly categorized in at least 98% of the commercials between the coders. Product categories were similar to those used in previous studies (Bretl & Cantor, 1988; McArthur & Resko, 1975). Later categories were collapsed into more general categories to insure each cell had a sufficient sample for statistical tests.

Findings

Hypothesis 1 predicted that Asians would be over represented in commercials compared to their proportion of the U.S. population. This hypothesis was not supported. The findings revealed that Asians were under represented in 1998, 1999, and 2000. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the Asian population (Asian alone and Asian in combination) reached 11.9 million persons, accounting for 4.2% of the U.S. population (“The Asian”, 2002). The average representation percentage for Asians in 1998, 1999, and 2000 was 2.1%. This means Asians were proportionately under represented by 47.6% of their actual U.S. population. There were 286 Asian characters identified among the 13,497 characters.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that Asian Females would be underrepresented, when compared to Asian Males. This hypothesis was not supported. Combined data for 1998, 1999 and 2000 reported that Asian Females overwhelmingly outnumbered Asian Males (63% to 37%). This total broke out so that in 1998 and 2000, Asian Females appeared more frequently than Asian Males (1998: 76% to 24%; 2000: 56% to 44%). In 1999, Asian Females appeared slightly less frequent than Asian Males (49% vs. 51%).

Research Question 1 compared the primary and secondary acting roles of All Asians to All Characters, Asian Females to All Females and Asian Males to All Males. In 1998, 1999, and 2000, All Asians differed significantly from All Characters with regard to acting roles $X^2(1, N=13,497)=29.0, p<.001$. All Asians were more likely to be portrayed as secondary characters (84% to 69%) and half as likely to be primary characters (16% to 31%).

Significant differences were also found when gender and character roles were evaluated. Asian Females were half as likely to be primary characters than All Females (14% to 29%) and more likely to be portrayed as secondary roles (86% to 71%) $X^2(1, N=6,380)=20.8, p<.001$. Asian Males were less likely than All Males to be portrayed as primary characters (21% to 33%) and more likely to be secondary characters (79% to 67%) $X^2(1, N=7,117)=7.6, p<.001$.

Research Question 2 asked which commercials featured Asian characters, when comparing All Asians to All Characters, Asian Females to All Females and Asian Males to All Males. Combined data for the three years showed that Asians were given roles in commercials for significantly different products categories than all of the Characters identified $X^2(5, N=13,497)=21.7, p<.001$. (See Table 1). Compared to All Characters, All

Asians were less likely to appear in food and automobile commercials and were more likely to appear in commercials for personal care and lifestyle products.

No significant difference was found between the number of acting roles for Asian Females and All Females in terms of product categories $X^2(5, N=6,380)=9.1, p=.106$. (See Table 2). These findings demonstrate the fact that Asian women were treated similarly to other women in terms of the product categories, where they are featured. However Asian Females did appear far less frequently in automobile commercials (1.8% vs. 5.1%) than All Females.

Asian Males differed significantly from All Males with regard to their representation in certain product category commercials $X^2(5, N=7,117)=30.8, p<.001$. (See Table 3). Compared to All Males, Asian Males were much more likely to appear in commercials for Personal Care products (24.5% vs. 13.0%) and Lifestyle products (37.8% vs. 22.9%), and were half as likely to appear in automobile (4.1% vs. 10.1%), Food and Household commercials.

The automobile category clearly demonstrates significant gender imbalance and that the feminists’ male-dominated gender bias model crosses ethnic/cultural lines in American television commercials. All Females (5.1%) were seen half as often as All Males (10.1%) in automobile commercials $X^2(5, N=13,497)=484.4, p<.001$. Accordingly, Asian Females (1.8%) were half as likely as Asian Males (4.1%) to appear in automobile commercials $X^2(5, N=286)=16.9, p<.005$.

Research Question 3 considered how Asians were portrayed, when considering characters’ ages, when comparing All Asians to All Characters, Asian Females to All Females and Asian Males to All Males. Combined data for the three years revealed that

All Asians and All Characters differed significantly with regard to characters’ ages $X^2(3,N=13,497)= 53.0, p< .001$. All Asians were heavily portrayed as being younger (6 to 20 years old) rather than mature characters older than 21 years of age. Asians were half as likely to be represented as someone older than 51 years of age, when compared to All Characters (5.6% to 10.8%).

Asian Females differed significantly from All Females, when considering the characters’ ages $X^2(3,N=6,380)= 46.1, p<.001$. Asian Females were more likely than All Females to be portrayed from 6 to 20 years old (39.7% vs. 19.7%) rather than mature characters over 21 years of age. Asian Females were half as likely to be represented as someone older than 51 years of age, when compared to All Females (3.7% to 7.3%).

No significant difference was found between Asian Males and All Males in terms of age $X^2(3,N=7,117)= 6.2, p=.103$. However, the percentages suggested similar trends to the findings for All Asians and Asian Females. There was an over representation of younger Asian Males and an under representation of men over 51 years of age. Following the mature male cycle there was equal representation among all men between the ages of 21 to 50 years.

Discussion

Reaching Asian Consumers in the U.S.

Using more Asian women and men as characters in commercials may be an effective way to target Asian consumers in the U.S., and it is reasonable and justifiable for to the following reasons.

Group membership: in-group and out-group.

People tend to favor in-group members instead of out-group members, when evaluating others (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Minority group members usually think advertising spokespersons and characters from their own group are more credible and trustworthy than persons from other ethnic groups (Desphande & Stayman, 1994).

Similarity.

The term for the perceived similarity between two persons is homophily and it is defined as “...the degree to which pairs of individuals who interact are similar with respect to attributes, such as beliefs, values, education, social status, etc” (Roger & Bhowmik, 1970, p. 526).

People prefer models with perceived similarities to themselves (Basow & Howe, 1980). These perceived similarities between characters in commercials and viewers affect the viewers’ responses to the commercials (Aaker, Brumbaugh, & Grier, 2000). Using models of the same race as viewers can generate such perceived similarity (Simpson, Snuggs, Christiansen, & Simples, 2000).

Distinctive Theory.

Distinctive theory states that comparisons to the more prevalent traits of other people make a person’s distinctive traits more salient to her or him (McGuire, 1984; McGuire, W. J., McGuire, C. V., Child, & Fujioka, 1978). This is particularly true for racial or ethnic minority groups.

For instance, Desphande and Stayman (1994) studied the responses that Hispanic-Americans had toward a Hispanic spokesperson. Hispanic-Americans in San Antonio (where they are ethnic majority) and in Austin (where they are ethnic minority) were chosen. The findings suggested that those in San Antonio had less trust toward the

spokesperson than those in Austin. Aaker et al. (2000) found that Black respondents (a minority group) responded more favorably to an ad using Black characters than the White’s (a majority group) response toward an ad using White characters.

Automobile Commercials Using Asian Characters Limited in Number

Their income, purchasing power, and rapid growth rate have made Asians in the U.S. society a great market for the automobile industry. They are more likely to select cars from the \$30,000 family sedan category or from the \$ 40,000 luxury range and are more likely to buy more than one car than other ethnic groups (Cuneo & Halliday, 1999). For instance, among Chinese-Americans living in the Los Angeles area, Toyota ownership increased 15% from 1989 to 1993 (Freeman & Serafin, 1995).

Some automakers have realized the potential of the Asian market and have taken action. In 1995, Volkswagen of America named Loimichay Inc., New York and San Francisco as its first Asian-American agency of record; Ford Motor Co.’s Ford Division launched its first Asian-language advertisement in California, marking the first specific creative for Asians among automakers in 1999; Honda Motor Co. launched a multimillion –dollar plan to reach Asian car buyers in 2001 (Cuneo & Halliday, 1999; Fattah, 2002; Freeman & Serafin, 1995).

Despite some progress, automobile ads targeting Asians living in the U.S. are still limited. It may well be in the carmakers’ best interests to use more Asian characters in their commercials to target the Asians communities.

Asians taken as a minority group are treated differently than All Other Characters; in fact they are treated similarly to females, when studying gender-bias models because they are underrepresented and given lesser roles for products that are less expensive and

less technical. Simultaneously, the male dominated gender-bias model, which is representative of the Asian cultures, is replicated in American commercials except for overall representation where a strong female population softens the Asian image. The highly desirable younger age-bias model, which is prevalent in American commercials including those that feature Asian characters, hasn't been historically accurate or desirable in Asian cultures. These findings indicate fertile areas for future research on culture mainstreaming via television programs or commercials.

Limitations

There were a different number of networks recorded and coded each year. The number of graduate student coders that were available determined the number of networks and variables that could be recorded and coded. Selected variables insured trend analyses and comparisons from earlier studies.

This study didn't examine subculture groups among Asians. “Asian” may not be an appropriate reflection of the heterogeneity among Asians in the U.S. society due to the cultural and consumption diversity among them (Burr & Mutchler, 1993). Tse, Wong, and Tan (1988) found that consumers from five Asian regions (Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan) had different patterns of consumption.

Other limitations come from the nature of content analysis. For instance, it is based on the coder's judgment, which may compromise the validity of the study; it is often limited to specific elements in communications by overlooking theoretical perspectives (Kolbe & Burnett, 1991).

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Footnotes

¹ Coding materials are available from the senior author.

Table 1

Comparisons between Asians and All Characters in terms of product category

Product Category	Asians %	All Characters %
Food	23.0	28.9
Household	15.2	15.9
Personal care	23.0	19.5
Lifestyle	26.8	20.5
Transportation	2.6	7.7
Miscellaneous	9.3	7.5
Total	100 (N=286)	100 (N=13,497)

Note. $X^2(5, N=13,497) = 21.7, p < .001$

Table 2

Comparisons between Asian Females and All Females in terms of product category

Product Category	Asian Females %	All Females %
Food	25.4	25.2
Household	20.1	18.3
Personal care	21.3	26.2
Lifestyle	20.7	18.3
Transportation	1.8	5.1
Miscellaneous	10.7	7.0
Total	100 (N=179)	100 (N=6,380)

Note. $X^2(5, N=6,380) = 9.1, p = .106$

Table 3

Comparisons between Asian Males and All Males in terms of product category

Product Category	Asian Males %	All Males %
Food	19.4	32.8
Household	7.1	13.9
Personal care	24.5	13.0
Lifestyle	37.8	22.9
Transportation	4.1	10.1
Miscellaneous	7.1	7.4
Total	100 (N=107)	100 (N=7,117)

Note. $X^2(5, N=7,117) = 30.8, p < .001$

Adw

Running head: CULTIVATION EFFECTS OF TELEVISION VIEWING

Cultivation Effects of Television Viewing: A Study of Relationships
Among Viewing, Materialism and Attitudes Toward Commercials

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Abstract

A survey of 358 U.S. college students examined the relationships among television viewing, materialism and the respondents' attitudes toward television commercials. Television viewing was significantly correlated with materialism. This finding suggests that television viewing continues to cultivate college students' materialistic values after they become independent. Viewing was also positively correlated with positive attitudes about commercials such as the identification with similar values as those represented in television commercials, the believability of television commercials and the identification of television commercials as a primary source for product information. Generally, college students' materialistic values were a significant predictor of positive attitudes toward television commercials. Materialistic students evidently use television commercials to gather information and support their decisions on product adoption and brand reinforcement.

Cultivation Effects of Television Viewing: A Study of Relationships

Among Viewing, Materialism and Attitudes Toward Commercials

Television has become an indispensable part of American family life and a very important socializing agent for children. Today, 98% of American households have at least one television set and in the typical home it is on seven hours a day. The average American spends nearly four hours per day watching TV – almost 50 days per year. By the age of 65, a person will have spent nine years watching TV (Nielsen Media Research, 1998). Television is the number one after-school activity for American children aged two to 18 who spend almost 20 hours per week watching (Kaiser Family Foundation, 1999). Children see at least an hour of commercials for every five hours of programs they watch on commercial TV, and so the average child sees more than 20,000 commercials each year (Center for Media Education, 1997). It is understandable that people are concerned about the impact of television commercials.

As a change agent, advertising persuades people to buy new brands and accept new lifestyles, but it has incurred many criticisms about its social impact. Arnold Toynbee said that he “cannot think of any circumstances in which advertising would not be an evil” (Kirkpatrick, 1986, p. 42). Galbraith (1976) accused advertising of creating desires that otherwise would not exist and cajoling consumers into purchasing unnecessary new brands of breakfast cereal and laundry detergent. Kirkpatrick (1986) said, “Advertising has been accused of everything from media rape to the cheapening of newspapers and television.” (p. 42)

Fisher and Manoff (1968) held that the most serious charge against advertising is its erosion of society’s moral standards and the substitution of a new set of standards based on the fast buck, bubbling success and material possessions. In other words, advertising fosters materialistic values.

This means that a heavy exposure to advertising could create materialists out of ordinary people. Hence, heavy TV viewers are most vulnerable to the “evil” influence of television

commercials. Cultivation theory maintains that heavy TV viewers internalize the central messages and the perspective of reality on television (Signorielli & Morgan, 1996). Harmon (2001) suggested that “the most consistent and significant message of commercial television is commercialism and one of the pervasive cultivation effects would be materialism among heavy viewers.” (p. 406)

Twitchell (1999) observed:

The impact of television on materialism is not via specific commercials. Along with commercial speech comes commercial context. We see on television how things fit together. Television illustrates a thousand times each hour how branded objects are dovetailed together to form a coherent pattern of selfhood, a lifestyle. If you are successful and happy you drive a new car, you wear designer clothes, you have a house full of branded appliances, you have an entertainment center, you travel a lot, you have a cell phone or whatever new gadget is making the rounds. We see... what a coherent pattern of consumable objects does in creating the stereotype of success and happiness. (p. 105)

Richins and Dawson (1990) pointed out that, “materialism has a status component, which reflects the intended and actual use of material objects as a means of social recognition and to symbolize one’s personal success” while “the expectation or aspirational component of materialism concerns the extent to which an individual believes that acquisition of material objects will lead to personal happiness and enjoyment of life.” (p. 170)

Their definition was inspired by Belk’s (1984) classical comments on materialism: “Materialism reflects the importance a consumer attaches to worldly possessions. At the highest levels of materialism, such possessions assume a central place in a person’s life and are believed to provide the greatest sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction.” (p. 291)

These researchers seem to think that commercial television systematically delivers materialistic values embedded in both commercial and noncommercial messages. The question is to what extent these repetitive materialistic messages affect the values of TV viewers, young and old and whether education plays a mediating role in such a cultivation effect.

This study examines the relationship between television viewing and college students' sense of materialism. By relating TV viewing, materialism and a student's attitude toward advertising, it intends to find out whether heavy TV viewing and high materialism scores can predict a positive attitude toward TV advertising and its usefulness.

Literature Review

Numerous cultivation studies by Gerbner's Cultural Indicator Project found an effect of television on heavy TV viewers' opinions about TV violence, race, gender roles, age-role stereotypes, health, work, science, the family, educational achievement and aspirations and politics (e.g. Gerbner & Gross, 1976a, 1976b; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1980a, 1981a, 1981b, 1982a, 1986, 1994; Gerbner, Gross, Signorielli, & Morgan, 1980b; Gerbner, Gross, Signorielli, Morgan, & Jackson-Beeck, 1979; Gerbner, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1982b). Follow-up cultivation studies continued these lines of study but only a few studied materialistic values from the cultivation perspective. In their values survey, Reimer and Rosengren (1990) confirmed the relationship between media use and values: materialism was related to entertainment and other light media content while postmaterialism was related to high culture media content and news. Potter (1990) conducted research on TV program themes and adolescent values and found some cultivation effect on TV themes like good wins over evil, truth always wins out, honesty is the best policy, and hard work yields rewards. Brand and Greenberg (1994) compared Channel One viewers and nonviewers among middle and high school adolescents. More Channel One viewers reported that they usually wanted what was shown in TV commercials and that designer clothing labels were important to them. Their second follow-up study of Channel One schools

and control schools found a statistically significant increase in materialistic values among the Channel One viewers (Greenberg & Brand, 1993).

It seems that heavy TV viewing children are more vulnerable to televised materialistic values. In the mid 1980's, most surveyed media scholars believed that television promoted excessive materialism in children (Bybee, Robinson, & Turow, 1985). Empirical mass communications studies over the past three decades supported this argument. Goldberg and Gorn's (1978) preschooler study suggested that TV advertising directed at children may lead the child to choose material objects over socially-oriented alternatives. Churchill and Moschis (1979) assessed the interrelationships among TV viewing, sex, age, birth order, family, and peer communication about consumption, materialism, and social and economic motives for consumption. Based on the data collected from 806 adolescents, they found that the amount of TV viewing was positively correlated with materialistic values. In a longitudinal study of television advertising effects on 683 6th-12th graders, Moschis and Moore (1982) found that increased advertising exposure contributed to the development of materialistic values among those who had not yet developed such predispositions. Past research strongly suggests that children under the age of 18 are susceptible to the materialistic influences of television advertising.

Compared to teenagers, college students should be more mature, better educated and experienced enough to resist the negative influences of television and commercials. Easterlin and Crimmins's (1991) secondary analysis of two major data sets, the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) and the Monitoring the Future project did not find a strong TV viewing and materialism link among college freshmen and high school seniors. At the same time, they identified a "substantial increase in private materialism as a life goal, a modest turning away from the public interest, and a sharp decline in emphasis on personal self-fulfillment." (p. 529)

Recently in a cross-cultural study of the United States, Canada, Australia, Turkey, and China, Sirgy, Lee, Kosenko, Meadow, Rahtz, & Cicic (1998) hypothesized that television viewership influenced materialism and dissatisfaction with standard of living, which in turn contributed to feelings of dissatisfaction with life. The pooled result supported the hypothesis that materialism was positively influenced by TV viewership. However, this positive relationship was only supported by the data from the Chinese, Australian, and U.S. panel samples. The Turkish and Canadian panel samples as well as the U.S. undergraduate college student sample did not yield a significant regression estimate.

Research Hypotheses

Past research findings are mixed. For example, Harmon (2001) conducted two recent secondary analyses to determine whether a correlation existed between heavy TV viewing and materialistic values. After analyzing the data from Simmons Market Research Bureau 1996 and the General Social Survey 1972-1996, he didn't find any noteworthy correlation with the Simmons data but he noticed that three questions in the GSS data showed strong correlations between TV viewing and materialism. TV viewing did contribute to materialism in young children and teenagers (Churchill & Moschis, 1979; Goldberg & Gorn, 1978; Greenberg & Brand, 1993; Moschis & Moore, 1982) but young adults (high school seniors and college students) and adult consumers seemed comparatively immune to the influence of the TV materialism (Easterlin & Crimmins, 1991; Flouri, 1999; Harmon, 2001; Sirgy et al., 1998). This cultivation theory study focused on the links between TV viewing, materialism and a person's attitude towards and uses of advertising.

(H1) The more time college students watch television the more materialistic they will be.

A consumer's general attitude toward advertising influences her/his attitude toward an ad, and is a significant predictor of brand attitudes (e.g., Mackenzie & Belch, 1986; Mackenzie & Lutz, 1989; Muehling, 1987; Shimp, 1981).

Studies have been conducted to explore the general attitude toward advertising's economic and social functions (e.g. Bush, Smith, & Martin, 1999; Kwak, Zinkhan, & DeLorme, 2002; Ramaprasad, 2001; Rodgers & Chen, 2002; Mehta, 2000). However, only a few studies have related materialism to attitudes toward advertising. Generally, they identified a positive correlation between materialism and the attitude toward advertising especially among college students. Surlin and Squire (1987) showed that students with materialistic values had a more positive perception of advertising and a stronger desire for the lifestyle depicted in advertising. Yoon (1995) found a positive and significant relationship between materialism and general attitudes toward advertising.

These findings are consistent with the principle of attitudinal homophily, which is the extent to which a receiver perceives the source's viewpoints, positions or attitudes as similar to their own. As attitudinal homophily increases, so does the source's ability to get the receiver to listen, learn and be persuaded (McCroskey, Richmond, & Daly, 1975). Accordingly, materialistic TV viewers identify with the central messages of television commercials. It is consistent that materialists will put more trust into television commercials and believe their product information. Based on the limited literature and the homophily theory, the following hypotheses are proposed:

(H2a) College students' materialistic values are positively correlated to the likeability of television commercials.

(H2b) When college students like commercials, they are less likely to zap stations or adjust the volume during them.

(H2c) College students with strong materialistic values will positively identify with the values represented in television commercials.

(H2d) College students with strong materialistic values will believe commercials.

(H2e) College students with strong materialistic values will use television commercials as

their primary source of product information.

(H2f) College students with strong materialistic values will feel positive about television commercials overall.

(H3) College students with strong materialistic values will watch television commercials.

Method

Sampling

This research attempted to find out whether age and education diminished the effects of television cultivation. A convenience sample of college students was used. Student convenience samples are widely used in the social and behavioral sciences including marketing and advertising research. There are critics of using college students as respondents but Brown and Brown (1993), Sheth (1970) and Shuptrine (1975) argued that the differences between undergraduate students and adult consumers were negligible. College students are educated, young adults transitioning from adolescence to adulthood. College students at a large Midwestern university were offered extra class credit for their participation. The survey took about 15 minutes to complete. There were 358 completed questionnaires. Men were 40.2% and women were 51.7% of the survey respondents. Forty-eight percent of the respondents were under the age of 21, 48.1% were 21-30 years old and only 3.9% were above 30 years of age. The sample was proportional to the ethnic makeup reported by the U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000). Asians and others were 5%, Blacks were 13.1%, Hispanics were 10.3%, and Whites were 64.8% of the respondent pool.

Scale Development

TV viewing scales.

Television viewing of college students was measured by asking two questions, "How much time do you spend watching TV in an average day?" and, "How many hours do you watch TV during a typical weekend, including Saturday and Sunday?" It was thought that college

students would watch more TV during the weekend, when they did not have classes.

Materialism scales.

This study used Belk's scale (1984) and Richins and Dawson's scale (1992) to measure materialism because they have been influential and tested cross-culturally. Belk (1984, 1985) approached materialism by measuring three traits associated with it – envy, nongenerosity, and possessiveness. Nine items measured possessiveness, which was defined as “the inclination and tendency to retain control or ownership of one's possessions” (Belk, 1983). Seven items measured nongenerosity, which was regarded as “an unwillingness to give possessions to or share possessions with others” (Belk, 1984). There were eight items to measure envy, which was defined as “displeasure and ill will at the superiority of another person in happiness, success, reputation, or the possession of any thing desirable” (Schoeck, 1966). In 1990, Ger and Belk revised Belk's old scale by deleting a few items and adding a new subscale of tangibilization. The final version of his scale measured four traits: possessiveness (seven items), nongenerosity (six items), envy (five items) and tangibilization (five items). Such scholars as Evrard and Boff (1998), O'Guinn and Faber (1989), Wallendorf and Arnould (1988) and Wong (1997) have used Belk's scale. Moreover, Belk's scale was tested in the United States, Turkey and France (Ger & Belk, 1990), Denmark and Romania (Ger & Belk, 1999) and other countries or cultures such as Brazil (Evrard & Boff, 1998).

Richins and Dawson (1990) found four consistent factors that emerged from their three data sets: possessions as symbols of success, possessions as a source of pleasure, belief that more possessions lead to more happiness, and asceticism. In 1992, Richins and Dawson came up with a five-point Likert scale to measure materialism in terms of material possessions as a symbol of success (six items), the centrality of objects in one's life (seven items), and belief that material possessions are a great source of pleasure or happiness (five items). Burroughs and Rindfleisch (2002), Evrard and Boff (1998), Mick (1997) and Wong (1997) have used Richins and Dawson's

scale and it has been applied and tested in different countries including Mexico and China (Eastman, Fredenberger, Campbell, & Calvert, 1997); Brazil (Evard & Boff, 1998); Turkey, Canada and Australia (Sirgy et al., 1998); Thailand (Webster & Beatty, 1997) and New Zealand (Watson, 1998).

Advertising Attitudinal scales.

The likeability of television advertising was measured by a one-item scale, "What is your feeling about TV commercials?" with the choices including (A) Love them (B) Like them (C) No strong feeling (D) Dislike them (E) Hate them (F) Mixed feelings. An interval scale measured the frequency of the zapping behavior, "During advertising, how often do you use the TV remote to switch channels or turn the volume down?" There were five options (A) All the time (B) A good deal of time (C) Hardly ever (D) Never (E) No opinion. The five-point scale has been used to measure the zapping activity by such media scholars as Heeter and Greenberg (1985) and Stafford and Stafford (1996) and

A one-item scale measured identification with television advertising values, "TV commercials generally reflect my personal values and beliefs." A one-item Likert scale measured the perceived believability of television advertising, "TV commercials for products that I do not use are generally believable." A one-item Likert scale measured the identification of television advertising as a primary source of product information, "TV commercials are my primary source of product information."

General attitudes toward television advertising were measured by an aggregated ten-item scale including the the likeability subscale, the believability subscale, the subscale of identifying TV commercials as a primary source of information and the subscale for identifying with television advertising values. It also contained four items measuring the negative attitudes toward TV advertising: "There are too many commercials on TV; Most TV commercials are misleading; TV commercials are materialistic; and Most TV commercials insult my intelligence."

Their reliability is acceptable (Cronbach's alpha = .64). The other two items include: "TV commercials are helpful" and "Products that I use usually live up to the promises of quality and performance made in their TV commercials." All statements except the likeability subscale were developed for this study with reference to the relevant literature. The survey's content validity was established by asking for comments from mass communications professors and graduate students following pre-tests.

Statistical Analyses

The Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) was used for all statistical analyses, including correlation analysis, multiple regression, Chi Square, ANOVA, reliability analysis, and factor analysis.

Belk's 23-item materialism scale yielded a moderate reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .55), while Richins and Dawson's 18-item materialism scale yielded higher reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .70). Therefore only scores from Richins and Dawson's scale were subjected to further statistical analyses (the mean = 37, the median = 37, and the standard deviation = 7.91). The mean and median were just slightly higher than the neutral score 36. The distribution was very symmetric: almost half of the respondents had no materialistic tendency while the other half had some materialistic values. The principle component analysis with varimax rotation was used to explore the underlying factors of materialism. Five factors with an eigen value greater than one emerged from the data set. Since Kaiser's rule of an eigen value greater than one is very liberal, the scree test and parallel analysis were applied and it was decided to keep four factors. Any item that had cross loadings was grouped to the factor on which it had the highest loading. The first factor included ten items. Five out of six success items clustered together but they also went with three centrality items and two happiness items. The second factor included three happiness items. The third factor included three centrality items. The last factor included one success item and one centrality item. This finding did not support Richins and Dawson's dimensionality of

materialism, but one important dimension was connected, which was the tendency to regard material possessions as a symbol of success and the guarantee of happiness in life. The four factors accounted for nearly 49% of the variance in materialism.

Table 1 about here

Results

The first hypothesis was supported; both daily and weekend television viewing were correlated with college students' materialism. Daily TV viewing of college students was significantly correlated with their materialism ($r = .13, p < .05$) but there was an even stronger correlation between weekend TV viewing and materialism ($r = .18, p < .01$). In addition, daily TV viewing predicted weekend TV viewing ($R^2 = .25, F_{(1, 355)} = 115.74, p < .01$). The multiple regression of materialism on the daily TV viewing and the weekend TV viewing showed that only 3.4% of the variance in their materialism was accounted for by their TV viewing ($R^2 = .03, F_{(2, 342)} = 5.93, p < .01$). Daily TV viewing can't predict materialism ($\beta = .05, t = .77, p > .05$) but weekend TV viewing was a significant predictor of materialism ($\beta = .25, t = 2.43, p < .05$). Most of the variance (3.2%) in materialism could be accounted for by their weekend TV viewing ($R^2 = .03, F_{(1, 343)} = 11.28, p < .01$) and only 1.6% of the materialism variance could be attributed to their daily TV viewing ($R^2 = .02, F_{(1, 344)} = 5.72, p < .05$).

Table 2 about here

Hypothesis 2a was supported; as it predicted that college students' materialism would be positively correlated with the likeability of television commercials ($r = .11, p < .05$).

Hypothesis 2b was supported; as it predicted that college students with materialistic values and positive feelings about television commercials would zap and adjust the volume less frequently during commercials ($r = .31, p < .01$).

Hypothesis 2c was supported; college students with materialistic values identified with the values in television commercials ($r = .15, p < .01$). There were also strong correlations

between the daily ($r = .11, p < .05$) and weekend TV viewing ($r = .17, p < .01$) of college students and their belief that commercials reflected their personal values.

Table 3 about here

Hypothesis 2d was supported; materialistic college students believed commercials ($r = .21, p < .01$). The more college students like TV commercials and identify with TV commercials, the more they believe television commercials.

Hypothesis 2e was supported; materialistic college students were more likely to identify television commercials as their primary source of product information ($r = .13, p < .05$).

Hypothesis 2f was supported; materialistic college students feel positive about television commercials overall. The general attitudes toward television commercials from the aggregated 10-item Likert scale were positively correlated with students' materialism ($r = .14, p < .05$).

Hypothesis 3 was supported; materialistic college students will watch television commercials. It was supported by a significant correlation of materialism and advertising exposure ($r = .17, p < .01$). In addition, it was found that both materialism and attitudes toward TV commercials predict college students' exposure to television commercials. About 12.2% of the variance in advertising exposure can be accounted for by materialism ($\beta = .12, t = 2.38, p < .05$) and the attitudes ($\beta = .31, t = 6.06, p < .00$) toward TV commercials ($R^2 = .12, F_{(2, 339)} = 23.63, p < .00$).

Discussion and Conclusion

The overall findings about college students were consistent with some of the research literature; TV viewing and materialism were significantly correlated. In addition, this study examined and discovered a string of relationships that were found to be significant.

There is a relationship between materialism and the likeability of television commercials; between the likeability of commercials and the lack of zapping; between materialism and the identification with the values portrayed in television commercials; between materialism and the

believability of television commercials; between materialism and the use of television commercials as a primary source of product information; and between materialism and the watching of television commercials. In other words, this research found that if college students like material things, they use television commercials to help them gather information and presumably make decisions about their consumption. There isn't an antithetical relationship between materialistic college students and television commercials.

It would be simplistic to think only television and commercials promote and foster materialism. Television viewing only accounted for 3.4% of the variance in college students' materialism. In this sense, this study serves as an empirical defense of television commercials. It is not tenable to accuse television and commercials of creating materialistic values. Stronger social and psychological materialism predictors have been previously identified such as social structural constraints, peer group, family environment, role models, self-completion and possessiveness (e.g. Belk, 1984); Braun & Wicklund, 1989; Churchill & Moschis, 1979; Clark, Martin, & Bush, 2000; Kasser, Ryan, Zax, & Sameroff, 1995; and Moore-Shay & Berchmans, 1996;

This research examined the relationship between TV viewing, materialism and the attitudes toward and uses of TV commercials among college students from the cultivation perspective. A significant correlation between TV viewing and materialism was identified. It suggests that television has a cultivation effect on college students' materialistic values but the directionality and causality was not established.

Limitations

This study used a convenience sample instead of a large random sample of college students. In addition, the study did not relate racial or socio-economic factors and family backgrounds. Experimental or longitudinal studies could determine directionality or causality.

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Table 1

The Three-Factor Structure of Materialism (Unrotated Solution)

Materialism Items	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Success Items				
I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes	0.556	—	—	—
Some of the most important achievements in life include acquiring material possessions	0.503	—	—	—
I don't place much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success.	0.480	—	—	—
The things I own say a lot about how well I'm doing in life	0.407	—	—	—
I like to own things that impress people	0.680	—	—	—
I don't pay much attention to the material objects other people own	—	—	—	0.417
Centrality Items				
I usually buy only the things I need	—	—	0.371	—
I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned	0.419	—	—	—
The things I own aren't all that important to me	—	—	0.303	—
I enjoy spending money on things that aren't practical	—	—	0.550	—

Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure	0.581	—	—	—
I like a lot of luxury in my life	0.584	—	—	—
I put less emphasis on material things than most people I know	—	—	—	0.550

Happiness Items

I have all the things I really need to enjoy life	—	-0.867	—	—
My life would be better if I owned certain things I don't have	0.575	—	—	—
I would be any happier if I owned nicer things	—	0.867	—	—
I'd be happier if I could afford to buy more things	0.540	—	—	—
It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I can't afford to buy all the things I'd like	—	0.357	—	—

Note. Only absolute values of factor loadings greater than .30 are shown here. N = 358. From "Measuring Material Values: A Preliminary Report of Scale Development" by M. L. Richins & S. Dawson, 1990, *Advances in Consumer Research*, 17, 169-175.

Table 2

The Correlations between TV viewing, Materialism, Attitudes and Ad Exposure

	Daily TV Viewing	Weekend TV Viewing
Weekend TV Viewing	0.246**	—
Materialism	0.128*	0.178**
Attitudes	0.126*	0.152**
Identification with TV Values	0.11*	0.17**
Advertising Exposure	0.122*	0.17**
TV Ad Believability	—	0.165**
TV commercials as primary source of product information	0.194**	0.217**

Note. N= 358. * P < .05. ** P < .01

Table 3

The Correlations of Materialism, the Attitudes, Zapping and Advertising Exposure

	Materialism	Attitudes	Likeability	Ad Exposure
Attitudes toward TV commercials	0.138*	—	—	—
TV Ad Likeability	0.108*	0.578**	—	—
Identification with Television Values	0.145**	0.555**	0.199**	0.238**
Believability of TV commercials	0.206**	0.447**	0.22**	0.265**
TV commercials as primary source of product information	0.131*	0.452**	0.138**	0.184**
Zapping infrequency	—	0.204**	0.306**	0.190**
Advertising Exposure	0.168**	0.343**	0.280**	—

Note. N= 358. * P < .05. ** P < .01

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Academic Institutional Television Commercials: A Comparison of Universities

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INTRODUCTION

Today, many large universities are striving to achieve 'major research university' status and position their institutions as prestigious academic leaders. Similar to any corporate brand image, a university's reputation is established over the long-term and maintained by multiple means (e.g., quality of education, professors, students, athletics, and tradition). As well, such things as research awards, continuing news stories, and community/ alumni relations all contribute to the maintenance of a university's image. Institutional advertisements, like corporate and consumer advertisements, are regularly employed to develop a university brand (i.e., build the image and clearly articulate a reputation) and to communicate important institutional information.

Academic institutions regularly advertise on regional and national television, typically during major sporting events, with the intention of reaching large audiences with a controlled, unified message. Recently, universities have become more sophisticated in the application of advertising, mimicking the cleverness of large corporate campaigns, even contracting promotional agencies to develop professionally targeted and created campaigns.

In contrast to consumer and corporate advertisements which have been put through decades of rigorous analysis, little, if any research has explored academic institutional commercials. The primary objective of the present study was (1) to conduct an investigation of the structure of recent academic television advertisements by cataloging common executional elements and (2) to examine the differences between classified major research universities and non-research institutional advertising. Results

should increase the understanding of academic advertising style and its application, providing groundwork for further research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of Academic Institutional Advertising

Definitions of institutional advertisements emphasize their primary function, which is to communicate a firm's image and are typically used by large corporations to "sell themselves" (Schumann, 1991, P.36). The term institutional advertising is used interchangeably with the terms 'image advertising' and 'corporate image advertising' (Hartgan & Finch, 1981). Such advertisements are normally intended to enhance a company's reputation and interest, to provide a source of corporate information, and to act as a catalyst for public communication (Schumann, 1991). In order to achieve such objectives, institutional/corporate advertising must impart a variety of different messages to multiple audiences [e.g., consumers, shareholders, special interest, and government groups].

Likewise, the function of academic advertising appears to be similar to institutional/corporate advertising, serving to promote a university's image while appealing to a large variety of audiences (e.g., students, professors, athletes, alumni, public and private constituencies) with multiple messages (e.g., academic offerings, performance of university, activities, and history).

The Association of American Universities

In order to establish categories useful for data collection, classifying universities as either a major research university or a non-research university provides

parsimonious grouping for comparative analyses. One of the most frequently used indicators of the status of U.S. universities is membership in The Association of American Universities (AAU). AAU, founded in 1900, is an organization of sixty-three leading research universities in the United States (www.aau.edu, 2003). Membership in the AAU indicates that a university is considered a 'major research university' this means that (1) an institution competes for federal research funds and spends a minimum of \$20 million of that money and (2) an institution is accredited regionally and awards accredited academic degrees (Lombardi, Craig, Diane, Capaldi, Gater, & Mendonca, 2001).

Research universities conduct about half of the country's 'basic research' and maintain a strong partnership with the federal government in order to keep the nation at the cutting edge of technological and economic development. Research universities stress the importance of broad research programs in multiple academic and professional realms and, "serve as primary institutions for advancing knowledge in virtually all fields of knowledge" (Lombardi, et. al., 2001 P. 5) More specifically, a 'prototypical' research university is defined as an institution with two primary structures: an 'academic core' and an 'administrative shell' (Lombardi, et. al., 2001).

Media Analysis

Content analysis provides a systematic and objective method for categorizing media content (e.g., advertisements) and answering research questions. An overview of studies published in *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* between 1971 and 1995 showed that a quarter of all studies utilized content analysis (Riffe & Fretag, 1996). A descriptive content analysis is similar to detective work and serves as a "reality

check”, allowing the examination of media content after the fact of production (Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 1998, P.10). Advertising content analyses are typically employed to catalog such variables as message type, themes, benefits, selling techniques, informational appeals, and spokesperson characteristics (Larson, 2001; Finn & Strickland 1982; Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 1998).

Television Commercial Content Categories

Stewart and Furse (1989) provided a large variety of television commercial content categories derived from an analysis of the executional elements used in 1000 TV commercials. The resulting database was extensive and the authors reduced the data to a comprehensive grouping of content categories and operational definitions (e.g., brand/product identification, promises/appeals, commercial tone, commercial format, information content, and commercial characters). Moreover, the cataloged commercial executional variables were thoroughly examined on measures of recall, persuasion, and comprehension: key elements of effective communications. Content items strongly related to these measures provide evidence to which categories may be relevant in other research applications, such as the current study.

Promotional Communication Strategies

Taylor’s (1999) six-segment message strategy model offers a parsimonious scheme for cataloging promotional communication strategies. According to this model, mass communication and advertising operate primarily in two different ways. One, ‘transmission communications’, serve to impart and deliver intelligent information to others, messages are transmitted for the control of ‘distance and people’. Two, ‘ritual

communications' are used to construct and maintain a meaningful cultural world that serves as a 'control for human actions.' The distinction between transmission and ritual communications has also been termed 'claim vs. image' or 'rational vs. emotional' approaches to communication.

Each of these two primary types of communication are divided into three distinct segments that suggest appropriate commercial appeals and the strategic role that advertising and other promotional tools (i.e., publicity) should play to meet communication objectives. Transmission communications are divided into three segments based on the level of need for information; ranging from low need (i.e., routine segment) to moderate need (i.e., acute segment), and to a high need (i.e., ration segment). For example, in the ration segment, audiences of promotional messages are "rational, conscious, calculating, deliberative individuals", that desire information. Appropriate advertising strategy would be a USP (i.e., unique selling proposition) or positioning, where the role of the message is to "inform and persuade" (Taylor, 1999).

Ritual communications on the other hand are intended to deliver messages that meet high to low levels of emotional needs [i.e., low need (sensory), moderate need (social), and high need (ego)]. For example, a product that is highly emotionally important to a consumer, needs are fulfilled by products that are 'ego' related and corresponds to the highest need for emotional stimulus and communications. In accordance with the strategy model, advertising executions should be image based with little to no consumable information.

Purpose and Research Questions

The present study represents an exploratory analysis of the application of academic television commercials. The primary objective was to systematically categorize a sample of university television commercials in order to empirically document their application, identify the most frequently used executional elements (e.g., communicated benefits, commercial tone, and commercial format), and to determine if leading research universities (i.e., AAU institutions) use such commercials differently than other large universities (i.e., non-AAU institutions).

Cataloging institutional television commercials will increase the understanding of how major universities use such spots to brand themselves (i.e., distinguish themselves in the market place), determine if there are noticeable differences or similarities in the sampled commercials, and serve as a springboard to future investigations. Because the present study represents a first attempt to develop and utilize a unique coding scheme for the measurement of university television commercials, research questions rather than specific hypothesis were formulated.

RQ1: What are the most frequently used executional elements in a sample of academic institutional television commercials?

RQ2: Are academic institutional advertisements primarily informational/claim based or image based?

RQ3: How are people (i.e., spokespersons, principal characters, women, and racial/ethnic minorities) portrayed in academic institutional advertisements?

RQ4: Are there any variations in the application of academic institutional advertisements between AAU research universities and non-AAU institutions in terms of frequency of cataloged items?

METHODOLOGY

Sample of Academic Institutional Advertisements

The present study applied a descriptive content analysis to a sample of academic institutional television commercials. The coding protocol was applied to a purposive sample of sixteen institutional advertisements acquired from nine AAU and seven Non-AAU universities. The most recent spot was voluntarily submitted by participating universities public relations departments upon the request of the researchers. Advertisements representing major research universities and non-research universities were selected for this study.

Coding Protocol

In a content analysis, reliability begins with the proper operationalization of the categories and subcategories (Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 1998). Definitions in the codebook indicate how the concepts of interest were identified in the present content analyzed. For analysis and organization, the coding protocol was divided into four sections; each including content categories intended to address the stated research questions. The coding guide contained 23 categories comprised of 153 items. All sampled spots were coded on each of the 153 items.

Section One: Commercial Structure

Section one, commercial structure, was comprised of seven executional categories. Category one, primary selling benefit, cataloged the main benefit (i.e., academics, historical/traditional, athletics, diversity of offerings, or technological) communicated in each commercial. Category two cataloged secondary selling benefits, promises, and appeals, and included such items as functional attributes, enjoyment appeals, and social approval appeals. Category three analyzed the type of information in each commercial message, such as a superiority claim or references to the quality of the institution. Category four categorized each commercial's tone or atmosphere, such as 'modern/contemporary' or 'technological/futuristic'. Category five included ten different commercial formats that ranged from vignettes and continuity of action to animation and/or photographic stills. Last, categories six and seven cataloged the visual and audio devices used in the sampled spots.

Section Two: Strategy Analysis

Section two consisted of three categories intended to catalog the type of promotional communications used as either claim based or emotionally image based, as depicted in the strategy model described earlier. The first category cataloged the primary strategy as either transmission communications (i.e., the commercial imparts intelligent information to others) or ritual communications (i.e., the commercial attempts to appeal to emotion and establish a meaningful culture). The second and third categories either cataloged types of transmission or ritual communications, depending on each commercial's placement in the first category of this section.

Section Three: Commercial Characters and Spokesperson

The purpose of this section was to categorize the nature of the principal characters, how women and racial/ethnic minorities are shown, and if and how a presenter/spokesperson was utilized. The first category, principal character(s), cataloged the type of people that were the primary focus in each commercial (e.g., students, ordinary people, race and gender). The next five categories analyzed if and how women and racial/ethnic minorities (i.e., African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians) were shown in each commercial (e.g., visually, verbally, central role). The use of a presenter/spokesperson was cataloged coding for who presented the message (i.e., student, professor, president), how the message was presented (e.g., voice-over only or on camera), and race of the presenter.

Section Four: Additional Executional Elements

The final section of the coding protocol cataloged the use of the university name, symbol, and tagline. University name was cataloged for placement in each commercial and visual/audio presentation. Separate categories determined if and how a university symbol and tagline were used. The last category in the protocol documented basic timing and counting of key executional variables (e.g., commercial length, elapsed time university name was identified, and the number times name was identified).

Coding Procedure

In content analysis, reliability is defined as agreement between coders. In order to increase cataloging consistency, graduate advertising students served as coders. Four independent coders evaluated each institutional spot on all the items in the

protocol. Two training sessions were conducted to eliminate any ambiguity concerning the operational definitions of the categories and subcategories. Coders practiced using the protocol on non-sampled spots and adjustments were made until coders agreed on each operational definition. Coders required approximately 6-8 hours to catalog the spots, which usually involved viewing each commercial several times. Furthermore, in order to assess reliability and conduct comparison across ads, test were applied to pairs of coders and then averaged across all categories to obtain aggregate averages for calculations.

RESULTS

Categories were analyzed for frequencies of coded items, interrater reliability, and association between cataloged items and university type (i.e., AAU vs. non-AAU). Given that the present variables are categorical, where applicable, chi-square test of differences between AAU and non-AAU universities were conducted for each category analyzed.

Reliability in content analysis is concerned with the quality of the conceptualizations and operationalization in the coding protocol, the expertise and training of coders and mathematical assessment of how well the coding scheme and coders achieved consistency (Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 1998). The first two steps were accomplished in the present study by having explicitly defined and accepted concepts via coder training procedures and using graduate advertising students as coders.

Interrater reliabilities were computed for each category utilizing Scott's Pi (i.e., Pi) formula, one of the most commonly used tests in content analyses. The Pi reliability test, based in basic probability theory, identifies category values and corrects for chance

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Interrater reliabilities were computed for each category utilizing Scott's Pi (i.e., P_i) formula, one of the most commonly used tests in content analyses. The Pi reliability test, based in basic probability theory, identifies category values and corrects for chance

agreement by applying observed agreement (OA) and expected agreement (EA) in the following formula: $[P_i = (\%OA - \%EA) / (1 - \%EA)]$ (Hughes & Garrett, 1990; Riffe, 1998). Reliability coefficients for each analyzed category are provided below.

Commercial Structure

Primary Selling Benefit

'Academics' were communicated as the primary selling benefit in more than half the sampled commercials (60%). Even though the brand/product (i.e., universities) is academic in nature, few spots are differentiated by the primary sell message communicated. Though, 'historical/traditional' (16%), 'diversity of offerings' (13%), 'technological' (6%), and 'athletics' (6%) are benefits that represent unique messages communicated in a number of sampled spots, particularly AAU research institutions. Table 1 displays the raw frequencies of each benefit coded and total sample proportion that used each benefit.

Table 1: Primary Selling Benefit

Benefit	AAU	Non AAU	Total	Percent of Total Sample
Academics	7	12	19	60%
Historical/traditional	5	0	5	16%
Diversity of offerings	4	0	4	13%
Technological	0	2	2	06%
Athletics	2	0	2	06%
Total	18	14	32	

Interrater reliability ($P_i = .87$) was strong for this category, indicating consistency between coders for items in Table 1. Chi-square analysis comparison between AAU and non-AAU universities ($X^2 = 14.03$, $df = 4$, $p < .01$), illustrates statistically significant differences in this distribution. Non-AAU institutions typically communicated 'academics'

as the primary sell message, whereas AAU research institutions were cataloged as communicating a greater variety of the primary benefits (e.g., diversity of offerings, athletics, and historical/traditional).

Secondary Selling Benefit

Table 2 displays both raw frequency counts for benefit coded as being used by different university types and the total sample percentage. In general, four secondary benefits were commonly executed: 'psychological or subjective benefits of attendance at institution' (66%) [i.e., a major focus of the commercial is to communicate hidden or non-provable benefits of attending or graduating from the university], attributes of university (63%) [i.e., a major focus of the commercial was to communicate something functional about the university], university performance or benefits (60%) [i.e., a major focus of the commercial is to communicate what the university does or the result of attending], and achievement (53%) [i.e., the main focus of the commercial is on obtaining superiority over others, getting ahead, and winning]. Markedly, many spots simultaneously used a combination the benefits displayed in Table 2.

Table 2: Secondary Selling Benefits

Benefit	AAU	Non AAU	Total	Percent of Total Sample
Psychological	11	10	21	66%
Attributes	12	8	20	63%
Performance	10	9	19	60%
Achievement	9	8	17	53%
Self-Esteem	3	2	5	16%
Enjoyment	2	2	4	13%
Excitement	2	1	3	09%
Social	1	1	2	06%
Total	50	41	91	

Interrater reliability ($P_i = .87$) illustrates coder consistency on items in this category. Chi-square analysis comparison between AAU and Non-AAU universities ($\chi^2 = .608$, $df = 7$, $p > .05$), illustrates the distribution was not significant. AAU and non-AAU institutions were not different in the use of secondary selling benefits. Institutional spots do not differentiate the sampled universities. To the contrary, universities in the present sample are positioned similarly via secondary selling benefits.

Information Content

The institution's image (85%) [i.e., information about the image or reputation of the institution] and quality (69%) [i.e., information that refers to how good the institution is] were most often communicated in the sampled spots. Though not as large of a portion, leadership claim (28%) [i.e., any information claiming the university is a leader in areas of academia or research] and superiority claim (22%) [i.e., any information that claims the advertised institution is better than competitive institutions] were communicated in a mentionable number of spots. A substantial number of spots simultaneously communicated 'institute image' and 'quality', indicating that the image portrayed in these spots is mainly academic supported by the secondary benefits seen in the above section.

Table 3: Information Content

	AAU	Non AAU	Total	Percent of Total Sample
Institution Image	16	11	27	85%
Quality	11	11	22	69%
Leadership claim	5	4	9	28%
Superiority claim	3	4	7	22%
User satisfaction	4	1	5	16%
Other	0	3	3	9%
Total	39	34	73	

Interrater reliability ($P_i = .70$) is sufficiently strong, illustrating coder agreement for the items in Table 3. There were not major differences between AAU and non-AAU use of information content ($X^2 = 5.66$, $df = 5$, $p > 1$).

Commercial Tone/Atmosphere

Overall, the tone/atmosphere of the sampled spots was either ‘modern/contemporary’ (50%) and/or ‘relaxed/comfortable’ (31%). Also, ‘somber/serious’ (18%) and ‘humorous’ (16%) approaches were executed in a mentionable portion of the spots. Unlike previous categories, the sampled spots are slightly more dispersed amongst this category’s sub dimensions, suggesting that a small portion of spots are differentiated by the tone communicated in the commercial.

Table 4: Tone/Atmosphere

	AAU	Non AAU	Total	Percent of Total Sample
Modern/contemporary	13	3	16	50%
Relaxed/comfortable	10	4	14	31%
Somber/serious	1	5	6	18%
Humorous	2	3	5	16%
Technological/futuristic	1	3	4	13%
Conservative/traditional	2	2	4	13%
Old fashioned/nostalgic	2	0	2	06%
Total	31	20	51	

Chi-square analysis indicates a statistically significant association between university type and the tone/atmosphere communicated in the commercial ($X^2 = 12.91$, $df = 6$, $p < .05$). AAU institutional spots, for the most part, were cataloged as either ‘modern/contemporary’ ($n = 13$) or ‘relaxed/comfortable’ ($n = 10$). In comparison, non-AAU institutional spots were cataloged as communicating a variety of different tones,

ranging from modern to old fashioned. Additionally, interrater reliability ($P_i = .71$) demonstrates moderately strong coder consistency for this category.

Commercial Format

Different commercial formats indicate attempts at promotional differentiation. There were a variety of commercial format combinations cataloged in the sampled commercials, displayed in table 5. A number of these formats were regularly used simultaneously, particularly 'demonstration of use' (72%) [e.g., a student or professor in classroom, sporting event, social event, etc.], 'vignettes' (56%) [i.e., a series of two or more stories that could stand alone; no continuity of action], and 'slice of life' (41%) [i.e., interplay between two or more people that portray a conceivable real-life situation]. A notable proportion of universities employed demonstration of results (28%), testimonials by students (19%), and endorsements by a celebrity or authority (19%) as the executional commercial format.

Table 5: Commercial Format

	AAU	Non AAU	Total	% of Total Sample
Demonstration of use	12	11	23	72%
Vignettes	8	10	18	56%
Slice of life	7	6	13	41%
Demonstration of results	6	3	9	28%
Testimonial by student	3	3	6	19%
Endorsement	2	4	6	19%
Continuity of action	3	2	5	16%
Comedy or satire	2	2	4	13%
Animation/cartoon	4	0	4	13%
Photographic stills	1	0	1	3%
Total	48	41	89	

Interrater reliability ($P_i = .54$) was not sufficiently strong for this category, indicating inconsistent agreement between coders regarding the commercial format.

This distribution was not significant ($X^2 = 6.70$, $df = 9$, $p < 1$), illustrating that university type is not differentiated by commercial format.

Visual Devices

Almost all spots (i.e., 97%) employed a brand sign-off (i.e., the university name, or other identifier of the institution at the end of the commercial). The use of visual taglines (72%), scenic beauty (53%) and substantive supers (50%) [i.e., words on the screen] are also common elements in the sampled spots. Table 6 displays the visual devices coded in the present sample, illustrating raw frequencies for each university type and the total percentage of spots coded as using each device.

Table 6: Visual Devices

	AAU	Non AAU	Total	Percent of Total Sample
Visual brand sign-off	17	14	31	97%
Visual tagline	13	10	23	72%
Scenic beauty	10	7	17	53%
Substantive supers	11	5	16	50%
Surrealistic visuals	5	3	8	25%
Memory device	1	2	3	09%
Total	57	41	98	

Interrater reliability ($P_i = .88$) illustrates strong consistency between coders for this category. There was not a statistical association between university type and use of visual devices ($X^2 = 1.73$, $df = 5$, $p < 1$).

Auditory Devices

Unlike visual devices, less than half of the sample employed an auditory brand sign-off (21%) or a spoken tag line (21%). All spots utilized music in one form or another and usually music was used to establish a mood, rather than as a major element of the

execution. Additionally, chi-square analysis ($X^2 = 2.42$, $df = 6$, $p < 1$), indicates that there is not a statistically significant difference in how university types utilized auditory devices in commercial executions. Interrater reliability was sufficiently strong ($P = .71$) for the cataloged auditory devices displayed in Table 7.

Table 7: Auditory Devices

	AAU	Non AAU	Total	% of Total Sample
Music	18	14	32	100%
Music creates mood	12	10	22	69%
Spoken tagline	6	7	13	21%
Audio brand sign-off	8	5	13	21%
Music as major element	3	2	5	16%
Unusual sound effects	2	1	3	09%
Memorable rhymes or slogans	2	0	2	06%
Total	51	39	90	

Promotional Strategy Analysis

Primary Strategy

A larger proportion of sampled spots were categorized as transmission (60%) type communications than ritual (40%) based communications, illustrating that this sample of university commercials are neither mainly information based nor mainly image based. Further, chi-square analysis ($X^2 = 0.249$, $df = 1$, $p < 1$) demonstrates that this distribution is not significant at the .05 level when comparing AAU and non-AAU universities. Note, reliability ($P_i = .61$) was moderately low for this category and slightly more agreement between coders was desirable.

Secondary Strategy

Commercials cataloged as transmission (i.e., claim based) communications were further cataloged according to their placement on high vs. low information content (i.e.,

routine, acute, ration). For the most part, the sampled commercials cataloged as transmission communications fall into the 'ration' segment (i.e., high amount of information), and the remainder were coded as a 'routine' (i.e., low information) transmission communications. No sampled spots were coded as using a moderate (i.e., acute) level of information.

Interrater reliability ($P_i = .87$) showed strong consistency amongst coders for this category. Chi-square analysis ($X^2 = 0.95$, $df = 1$) resulting in a p that is less than or equal to 1 is not significant at the .05 level, indicating no association between university type and transmission promotional strategy. In fact, the exact same proportion (28%) of total sampled AAU institutions and non-AAU institutions employed a ration type communication.

Commercials cataloged as primarily ritual/image based communications were also subdivided according to their use of high vs. low emotional content (i.e., ego, social, or sensory). Interrater reliability ($P_i = .81$) showed sufficient consistency between coders for this category.

The most frequently employed ritual based communications were cataloged in the 'ego' segment (i.e., a high emotional need fulfilled by products/services that allow the consumer to make a statement to him/herself about who he/she is). The second largest proportion of ritual spots fall into the social segment (i.e., a moderate emotional appeal used to communication how one can make a statement to others in a social situation).

Moreover, chi-square analysis demonstrated a statistically significant association between university type and ritual communication executed ($X^2 = 10.89$, $df = 2$, $p <$

0.01). Only AAU research institutions employed ritual/ego based commercials, while social communications were only executed in non-AAU institutional spots. This indicates that AAU institutions that appeal to the audiences emotions and are doing so with highly charged messages that communicate how the university can help one make a personal statement. In comparison, non-AAU institutional spots used a more moderate emotional appeal, communicating what the university can do for the individual socially.

Commercial Characters and Spokespersons

Principal Character(s)

Overall, gender of the principal character(s) in the sampled spots was more often male (56%) than female (41%). A student of the institution was used in nearly half of the sample (44%) and an ethnic/racial minority was the principal character in 16 percent of the sample. Additionally, there was not a principal character in about a fifth (22%) of the spots. Notably, interrater reliability ($P_i = .40$) was low for this category, suggesting that coder agreement was not better than chance alone for identifying the type of character portrayed.

For significance at the .05 level, chi-square should be greater then or equal to 12.59, this distribution is not significant ($X^2 = 3.76$, $df = 6$, $p < 1$), indicating no differences between AAU and non-AAU institutions on the employment of a principal character.

Women and Racial Minorities

Women were shown visually in most spots (85%) and verbally in less than half (41%) of the sample. Women have the central role in nearly a quarter of the sample

(22%) and a minor role in a slightly larger proportion (28%). Notably, women are not shown at all in 16 percent of the sampled spots. Interrater reliability ($P_i = .67$) was low for this category, suggesting inconsistent agreement between coders on the role of women in the sampled spots. Also, chi-square should be greater than or equal to 9.49 for significance at the .05 level, this distribution was not significant ($X^2 = 4.07$, $df = 4$, $p < 1$), indicating that women are shown similarly in AAU and non-AAU commercials.

Racial/ethnic minorities are shown visually in a large proportion of spots (81%), though only have a central role in a small proportion (16%). This is less than the proportion of not being shown at all (19%). Proportions of African-Americans in the sample are similar to those seen for racial minorities in general [shown visually (73%), central role (16%), not shown (25%), minor role (34%)]. This illustrates, that when racial minorities were present in a commercial, the person's race was typically African-American. Additionally, interrater reliability was sufficient for both the racial minorities ($P = .74$) and African-American ($P_i = .77$) categories. Chi-square analysis indicated no association between university type and the items these two categories.

Hispanics are not shown in most spots sampled (91%) and only visually in two spots. Likewise, Asians were also not shown in a large proportion of the sampled spots (70%). When Asians were shown in a spot, the appearance was typically visual only (28%). Expected frequencies were too small to conduct chi-square analysis comparing AAU vs. Non-AAU universities for either of these two categories. Further, interrater reliability for this category was strong ($P_i = .73$).

Presenter/spokesperson

When there was a spokesperson (i.e., a person that delivers the message) present, that person's gender was male in more than half the sampled spots (53%). Students (16%) and presidents (12%) were occasionally employed as a spokesperson. A small proportion of spots (10%) did not use a spokesperson at all. Furthermore, when a spokesperson was employed, the person's race was usually Caucasian (72%) and African-American (9%) in only a small portion of spots. There were not Hispanic or Asian spokespersons in any of the sampled spots.

Interrater reliability ($P_i = .91$) showed good consistency between coders for this category. Chi-square analysis ($X^2 = 9.38$, $df = 5$, $p < 0.10$) illustrates that there is a significant association between university type and the utilization of a spokesperson in the sampled commercials. Specifically, only non-AAU institutional spots used the President of the university as the spokesperson. Also, non-AAU institutional spots had a spokesperson present in each spot analyzed; this was not the case for AAU spots.

Additional Executional Elements

University Name

Chi-square analysis ($X^2 = 4.92$, $df = 5$, $p < 1$) for this category illustrates that there was not an association between AAU institutions and non-AAU institutions in the presentation of the brand (i.e., university name). Interrater reliability ($P_i = .91$) showed good consistency between coders in this category.

Nearly all sampled spots (91%) had the university name at the end of the commercial. Half (51%) of the sample utilized the name at the beginning of the spot.

The name was shown 'visually only' in a large proportion of spots (81%) and 'audio only' in over half the sample (61%). Only about a quarter of the sample (23%) showed the name simultaneously visually and audibly. It is important to note that most individual spots used a combination of visual only and audio only mention of the brand name. In other words, at times the name was visual only and vice-versa.

The average elapsed time until the university name is identified was nine seconds, indicating the brand name is generally mentioned early in the spot. Most spots (52%) mentioned the university name only once in the entire 30 second commercial. The average number of times the university name was mentioned was two and is not identified more than three times in any of the sampled spots. Adding the logo to this count, the average time a name/logo was shown is 2.6. Finally, the total time the university name or logo is on the screen averaged eleven seconds.

University Symbol and Tagline

More than half (60%) of the sampled spots utilized a symbol (i.e., any identifier that stands for a university aside from the name) of any sort. When a symbol was present in a commercial, it was large and at the end of the commercial. This pattern (i.e., end of commercial and large) was consistent throughout the sample except for one spot that had the university symbol at the beginning and end.

Nearly all spots (95%) included a tagline at the end of the commercial. When a tagline was present, it was visual only (42%) more often than audible (29%). A moderate proportion of sample spots (26%) utilized a tagline that was simultaneously visual and audible. Interrater reliability ($P_i = .91$) illustrates strong consistency between coders for this category. The use of these two executional elements was fairly

consistent in the entire sample. Chi-square ($X^2 = 4.92$, $df = 5$, $p < 1$) analysis between university types showed no association to the use of a symbol or tagline.

DISCUSSION

This study cataloged the application of academic institutional television commercials and provided empirical documentation of this genre of advertising. A content analysis of commercials from AAU leading research universities and other large non-AAU universities provided a rich database of fundamental executional elements of university advertisements. Simple frequency counts and comparisons between AAU and non-AAU institutional spots were sufficient to answer the proposed exploratory research questions.

In regards to the first research question, content results illustrate the most frequently applied executional elements in the present sample. The main benefits communicated were primarily academic, supported with both psychological and performance benefits of attendance. Also commonly communicated were functional benefits (i.e., attributes, something the university has), and achievement benefits, communicating how the university will help one get ahead of others and win in life. These benefits are good descriptors of the present sample of advertisements and would provide useful categories for future research on a similar sample. For example, cataloging actual psychological benefits, performance benefits, and functional attributes would enhance the present description.

The information presented in these ads, for the most part, was used to tell the audience about the reputation and quality of the institution. Informational claims about the university being a leader in academia or research and claims that the university is

better than competitive institutions were also used, though not as often as reputation and quality claims. Overall, commercial tone varied from projecting either a modern, relaxed, humorous or technological atmosphere; at times a combination of these tones was used. The executional element format was coded with low interrater reliability indicating problems with the present coding scheme for this category. Nonetheless, a variety of formats were executed in the sampled spots such as animation, comedy, and testimonials. In particular, a majority of the commercials were designed to demonstrate the use of the university by showing people in common university settings (i.e., classroom, sporting event).

The use of visual and audio devices was executed the same way in most of the sample spots. Visual devices, particularly a brand sign-off and tagline were used often. These same devices were presented visually more often than with audio. This is noteworthy, since these spots are shown on television when a large percentage of the audience may not be highly involved watching the spot and an opportunity is missed to connect the promotional message to the brand name (i.e., the university) via the peripheral route. Aside from the university name, only half of the sampled commercials used a university symbol as an identifier of the institution. Notably, a symbol is an important communication tool for creating associations to the university and integrating these associations into other promotional efforts such as publicity pieces and print ads.

The second research question was intended to determine if this type of advertising is primarily informational or image oriented. Neither claim nor image advertising approaches dominated the present sampled commercials. In fact, there was a 3 to 2 ratio of informational to image ads. This indicates that university commercials

are not restricted to one realm of communication, appealing to and operating in both the cognitive and affective realms. This is interesting, given that institutional/corporate advertising is defined as being primarily image based, usually intended to establish a reputation. Results suggest that academic institutional ads are not restricted to this definition. Instead, academic institutional advertisements in the present sample are a hybrid that combines a general message about the university reputation while promoting the product/service offered by the institution to prospective consumers.

Comparison between AAU and non-AAU institutions revealed that there were significant variations in the application of such advertisements in four of the categories analyzed. First, the core message of most non-AAU institutions emphasized academics, whereas AAU research institutional ads emphasized a variety of primary messages. AAU research universities are branded as excellent academic institutions by association and appear to use these ads instead to differentiate (i.e., brand) themselves with other qualities such as diversity of academic offerings, long standing history or tradition, and excellent athletics as well as academics. In comparison, non-AAU research institutions use television commercials to brand themselves as strong performers and academic leaders, communicating no other points of differentiation.

Second, there were differences in the tone/atmosphere between AAU and non-AAU institutional commercials. AAU institutional spots were consistently either modern or relaxed, whereas non-AAU ads ranged through the entire category of possible tones, such as old fashioned, technological, humorous, and serious. Third, although there was not a difference between university types on the use of claim vs. image ads, there was a difference between university types that were cataloged as implementing image (i.e.,

ritual) based communications. AAU commercials that were emotional/image based, appealed to the audience's ego, while non-AAU ads classified as emotional/image based appealed more to social needs. This represents a major point of strategic differentiation, indicating that research institutions communicate how the university can benefit an individual personally and non-AAU institutions appeal in more to social benefits of the university.

Last, university types differed in the utilization of a message presenter/spokesperson. Specifically, non-AAU institutional ads always employed a spokesperson and at times the university president was used. In comparison, AAU spots occasionally used a spokesperson and never had the university president deliver the message. In marketing terms, using the CEO or president tends to add credibility to the message, which may be more important for universities competing for a share of academia leadership, at least in the consumer's mind.

This study also had several limitations. First, the sample size was small. A larger, more representative sample would increase the rigor and generalizability of the results. Second, lack of research on academic advertising limited the analysis to categories used in previous consumer and corporate communication research, which may not have tapped into all the dynamics of this genre of advertising. Third, the nature of content analysis tends to lose the essence of a television commercial; such methods as theme interpretation and benefit documentation would keep this from happening, adding insight into the final analyses. In subsequent studies, it would be valuable to triangulate research methods and study promotional effects such as brand recall and message comprehension in conjunction with advertisement content. It would also be informative

to compare other academic promotions such as print ads and university publicity in order to gain insight into the nature or lack of strategic integration of university communications.

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**Attitudes Toward Grades Among Advertising Students:
Creative Orientation, GPA, Gender and Other Factors**

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ABSTRACT**Attitudes Toward Grades Among Advertising Students:
Creative Orientation, GPA, Gender and Other Factors**

Attitudes toward grades were measured among advertising majors at two universities. More favorable attitudes toward grades were found among underclass students, while more advanced students were more jaundiced in their attitudes. Findings indicated that female students were more favorably disposed toward grades, but perhaps this was a reflection of their higher GPAs. Those interested in the creative aspects of advertising demonstrated ambivalence. Attitudes toward professors were not necessarily tied to attitudes toward grades.

Attitudes Toward Grades Among Advertising Students: Creative Orientation, GPA, Gender and Other Factors

When it comes to grading, teachers are often uncomfortable (Barnes, 1985). And perhaps with good reason, because the stakes are high.

In assigning a grade, teachers know that they are relying on a grading system that they, themselves, have established. They wish to be accurate, fair and unbiased. They also have in mind such issues as grade inflation.

Professors also know that students have a lot riding on their grades. Will the student be able to continue studying at the university? Be accepted into a major? Be able to pledge a sorority or be accepted into an honorary society? Be accepted into graduate school? Get the best possible job? Be praised or chastised by parents?

Grades, therefore, also put pressure on students. But often, when a grade equates to bad news for a student, pressure is then exerted back on the professor from the student, parents or even from academic supervisors. After the professor turns in final semester grades, rarely does he or she receive angry calls from "A" students, but . . .

There is scant research relating particularly to advertising education that would benefit educators when it comes to the issues surrounding grading. The purpose of this paper is to provide

information on this subject for those who teach advertising, focusing particularly on student attitudes toward grades.

Review Of Literature

Defining grades is not a clear-cut proposition. Pollio, Humphreys and Milton (1989) conceptualized a college grade as “a unidimensional symbol having multidimensional meanings (p. 90).” The authors identified four major meaning components of grades: 1) procedural; 2) personal; 3) social purposes (providing information about the student, orienting students to future life, identifying academic and teaching standards, and pleasing parents); 4) trait description (inter-personal skills/adjustment, gauging ability to perform in a system, and intelligence).

Different Perceptions

Two studies have shown that interpretation of grade meaning depends on the perceiver. Pilcher (1994) interviewed a small sample of high school students to conclude that students who put a high value on grades could be controlled by parents and teachers, but students who did not value grades were motivated by other factors that they valued. In a larger sample of college students, Pollio and Beck (2000) divided students into two groups, grades-oriented and learning-oriented, which they found to be nearly mutually exclusive. Those with the grade orientations had poor study habits, higher test anxiety, lower SAT scores, and lower GPAs.

“Grades rather than learning become the primary objective of many students; the appearance of achievement becomes more important than the achievement itself,” according to Pollio and Beck (2000, p. 84). Related to this, Lane, Schaupp and Parsons (1988)

found in a sample of business students a majority who reported setting aside personal values to achieve higher grades and many who perceived grades as a primary objective of their course work.

Variables Affecting Grades

Several studies have addressed factors affecting grades.

Time usage was measured in two studies. According to Britton and Tesser (1991), time management factors were even stronger predictors of GPA than SAT scores; short-range planning and time attitude factors, such as being able to say "no" to people, were both significant predictors of higher GPAs. However, the same researchers found that long-range planning measures, such as goal-setting for an entire academic term and regularly reviewing class notes, did not produce a significant relationship with GPA. According to Bahn et al. (1995) there were significant differences in attitudes towards grades between those who said they had trouble managing their time and those who didn't.

Schuman et al. (1985) discovered that class attendance impacted college grades and amount of time spent studying did not, while Michaels and Miethe (1989) found that both of those variables had a positive influence on GPA. The foregoing studies were in agreement that the variables under scrutiny accounted for a relatively small percentage of the variance. Rau and Durand (2000) found higher GPAs associated with increased study hours and lighter (as opposed to heavier) levels of alcohol consumption.

Among a series of study habits that were intuitively linked to higher grades (Michaels and Miethe, 1989), only studying with no noise produced a significant correlation. The non-significant

variables included rewriting notes, not cramming, library work, and having a study routine.

Attitudes

As would be predicted by cognitive consistency theory (Heider, 1946, 1958), students with more favorable attitudes toward grades were those who studied more hours, had higher GPAs, reported feeling satisfied with their grades, were more positive about the grading process, and favored regular letter grades in comparison to pass/fail grading (Bahn, et al. 1995).

Bahn, et al. (1995) also found significant differences in attitudes toward grades with the following factors: dropping a class because it appeared the student would not get a good grade; leaving questions blank on a test when not knowing the answer; and feeling prepared for class via reviewing notes and reading assignments.

Professors

The literature also has addressed student attitudes toward professors relating to grading. Students in the Pollio and Beck (2000) study believed that typical professors were much more grade-oriented than their ideal professor; at the same time professors interviewed for the study wished their students were less grade oriented. According to Bahn et al. (1995), a factor producing significant differences in attitudes toward grades was whether students would be apt to ask questions of an instructor about grades or grading.

There was no difference in attitudes toward grades when students were asked whether they ranked themselves above average, average or below average as students (Bahn, 1995).

In what way do grades correlate with earnings after one graduates? There was a significant and positive correlation between GPA and subsequent earnings in a Jones and Jackson (1990) study of the graduates of one academic program at a large state university. Students whose motivation for attending college was making money had more negative attitudes toward grades than those who wanted to obtain a better job in the future (Bahn, et al, 1995).

Gender

Several research efforts have used gender as a variable in addressing issues surrounding grades.

In the previously cited Jones and Jackson (1990) study, both men and women produced positive correlations between GPA and later earnings.

Michaels and Miethe (1989) found that women have different study habits than men but not significantly higher GPAs. This later finding is not substantiated by other studies. Women did have higher GPAs than men in two other samples (Loury, 1997; Umphrey & Fullerton, 2001). In yet another study (Mau, 2001), women had higher GPAs but lower scores on the SAT and ACT tests (Mau, 2001).

Even when controlling for factors such as some classes being easier than others, women still had significantly higher GPAs than men (Stricker, Rock & Burton, 1993). This was despite the fact that women in the sample had lower SAT scores.

Stricker, Rock and Burton (1993) found that women had lower confidence levels than men when approaching some subject areas

but speculated that women may work harder to compensate. These researchers also found note-taking differences by gender.

Despite all of the above differences, gender did not account for significantly different attitudes towards grades (Bahn et al., 1995).

Only one study of this type has focused on advertising majors: While there were significant differences in GPA by gender in the graduating class of a university, such a difference did not manifest itself in a separate analysis between men and women advertising majors who were in that class (Umphrey & Fullerton, 2001).

Other Factors

Michaels and Miethe (1989) looked at groupings of majors; when compared with natural science, business, and engineering, only social science majors yielded significant relationships when GPA was correlated with either study time or class attendance.

Two studies utilized year in school as a variable. There were no differences between undergraduate and graduate students in their attitudes toward grades (Bahn et al., 1995), while the Lane, Schaupp and Parsons (1988) study found no differences between students at various undergraduate levels nor between undergraduates and graduates in reporting that they had set aside personal values to achieve grades.

Research Questions

Among advertising majors, how will attitudes toward grades vary:

- 1) According to GPA, year in school and age?
- 2) According to intentions to work in advertising after graduation?

3) According to reasons for selecting the major, including a creative orientation, a business orientation, to gain skills for employment, the professors, and because it is an easy major.

4) By gender.

Methodology

Sample

Data were gathered via questionnaires distributed in advertising classes at two universities during the week of Feb. 5-9, 2001. One of the universities was a medium-sized, private, liberal arts institution and the other a large, state university. Both schools are located in the southwest U.S. and offer bachelor's degrees in advertising. The private university houses its advertising department in a college of fine arts, while the public university's advertising program is part of a journalism school in a college of arts and sciences.

Questionnaires were completed only by advertising majors, and students were instructed not to fill in a questionnaire if they had done so previously.

Instrument

Used to assess attitudes toward grades (ATG) were 15 items developed by Bahn et al. (1995). A complete listing of these with the exact wording of each item may be found in Table 2.

Also included were items relating to advertising education generated from informal discussions and focus groups with students at both universities. They were subsequently pre-tested, as described below. The following items were included:

*When I graduate from college, I expect to work in an advertising-related job.

*I majored in advertising because of the creative aspects.

*I majored in advertising because of the business aspects.

*I majored in advertising because it combines both creative and business aspects.

*I majored in advertising because it would give me skills that would lead to a job when I graduate.

*I majored in advertising because of a professor or professors who teach it.

*Advertising courses are easier compared to your "average" course on campus.

*Advertising attracts students because it is an easy major.

To the foregoing statements and the ATG items, students were asked to respond on a five-point scale ranging from strongly agree (coded as 5) to strongly disagree (coded as 1).

The questionnaire also included age, gender, grade point average, and year in school. A pre-test preliminary questionnaire was given to a sample of 30 advertising majors at each university. Based on these responses, a final five-page questionnaire was created and used in this study. (The questionnaire also included items not included in this study.)

Students completed the questionnaire in an average of six minutes and twenty-eight seconds with a range between four minutes and twenty seconds and nine minutes and ten seconds. Completed questionnaires were coded into an Excel spreadsheet and analyzed using SPSS Version 10 for Macintosh. Statistical tools include mean scores, t-tests and Pearson correlations.

Results

The response rates included 179 advertising majors out of a possible 227 at the private university, accounting for 78.9% of the advertising majors and 96 out of 131 majors at the public university, a 73.2% response rate. The total sample size equals 275, a combined response rate of 76.8%.

Overall, the sample was predominantly female (65% female and 35% male). Students participating in the study were of traditional college age (96% between 18 and 23) and most were upperclassmen (77% juniors or seniors). The vast majority of the students were white (85%).

Consistent with Bahn, et al. (1995) conclusions about high internal validity, a matrix of Pearson correlations (Tables 1-a and 1-b.) indicate significant relationships between virtually all of the items. In each case negatively worded items produced negative correlations with positively worded items, and these negatively worded items yielded positive correlations when correlated with other negatively worded items.

Analyses of mean scores (Table 2.) indicate mixed attitudes towards grades among the sample. For example, findings leaned toward "agree" on item #2, "Grades have a positive influence on how students study." At the same time there was a tendency toward agreement to item #12, "Grades do not reflect knowledge." The relatively high standard deviations indicate a lack of unanimity in responses which may be explored with other statistical tools.

Providing the most revealing findings were the correlations between the ATG and the items dealing with demographics and advertising. (See Table 3.)

In the analysis by GPA, each of the 15 ATG items were significant and in expected directions (Table 3, column a). Thus, individuals with higher GPAs reported positively on such items as grades being beneficial to learning and personally important and negatively to items such as grades not being meaningful and that grades are a waste of time. Students with lower GPAs were likely to have indicated just the opposite.

Among the GPA correlations the weakest relationship was with "Grades don't reflect effort;" while those with higher GPAs were more apt to disagree, there was some recognition here among those with the highest GPAs that no matter how one tries, these efforts do not necessarily result in good grades.

When the variable of age was correlated with year in school (coded as a 4 for senior and a 1 for first-year), the result was $r = .596$, $p < .0001$. It is a high correlation but also indicates that the two variables do not always go hand-in-hand. This undoubtedly reflects non-traditional students and those taking longer than four years to complete their degrees. Therefore, the findings with these two variables with the items dealing with grades were not always the same but they did reflect similar sentiments. (Table 3, columns b and c.) Namely, there is an indication that younger students and those less advanced in their studies were more apt to express positive attitudes toward the grading system. Both analyses resulted in negative correlations between the older, more advanced students

and items such as grades being important for learning and grades being worth the effort. When both age and year in school did not yield significant findings on a particular item, the finding still pointed in the direction of the older, more advanced students being more jaundiced in their attitudes toward grades.

There were no significant correlations between the ATG items and intentions to work in the advertising industry.

There was only one significant correlation when "I majored in advertising because of the creative aspects." was analyzed with the ATG items. "Grade point averages are not meaningful." produced $r = -.139$, $p < .021$.

However, a business orientation (Table 3, column d), majoring in advertising for both creative and business reasons (Table 3, column e), and majoring in advertising for job skills (Table 3, column f) all produced similar, although not identical, negative attitudes toward grades.

The final item on Table 3 (column g) is "I majored in advertising because of a professor or professors who teach it." More than half of the correlations were significant, each reflecting negative attitudes toward grades.

There were no significant relationships when the ATG items were correlated with either of the two statements relating to advertising being an easy major.

In the analyses by gender, women reported higher GPAs. The overall mean score of self-reported GPAs was 3.08 on a 4.00 scale with a female-student mean of 3.16 and a male-student mean of 2.92 ($t = -4.659$, $p < .0001$). Women scored significantly higher on

four of the ATG items (Table 4.), including personal importance and importance to learning, grades having a positive influence on studying, and good grades being worth the effort.

Discussion

This study shows that when it comes to the meaning of grades, creative students are “marching to the sound of a different drummer” than their more business-oriented counterparts. Findings here indicate near ambivalence about grades among the creatives and would lead toward a conclusion that creatives are not motivated by grades.

In fact, when it comes to grades serving as a motivating factor, the effect would be greatest on younger, less experienced students. The negative attitudes toward grades among older and more experienced students may be because these students notice less of a relationship between the time they spend studying and resultant grades. Such speculation is substantiated by Michaels and Miethe (1989) findings that increased study time significantly improves grades for freshman and sophomores but has no significant effect for more advanced students. These researchers concluded, “Students who have survived various stages of sorting and selecting in the educational process may develop more efficient study skills or learn short-cuts to obtain the same level of academic reward (p. 319).”

It was expected that students with higher GPAs would have more favorable attitudes toward grades. Counter-intuitive, though were the lack of significant results on the items dealing with advertising being an easy major and advertising courses being easier. If these

sentiments about the advertising major and advertising courses reflect self-concept, the findings would parallel a Bahn (1995) finding. In that study there was no difference in attitudes according to students ranking themselves as above average, average, or below average as students.

Also in the Bahn (1995) study, students whose motivation for attending college was making money had more negative attitudes toward grades. The money orientation may have been reflected in this study when it came to the negative attitudes toward grades among the business-oriented, those citing both business and creative, and those seeking the major to give them skills that would lead to a job. Note that while there were numerous negative associations with those three variables, there were no significant findings in the analyses of intentions to work in an advertising job; this could have resulted from the creatives serving as a neutralizing factor. The business-oriented students may be looking beyond their academic careers to rewards--financial and otherwise--that come from the professional world.

The findings in relationship to advertising professors is something which may serve as encouragement to educators in the field. There were numerous negative associations between the professor statement and the ATG items. This would indicate that contrary to what sometimes may seem apparent to professors, students really do have the capacity to separate their attitudes about grades from their attitudes toward their professors, at least to a certain extent.

Pollio and Beck (2000) used attribution theory (Jones & Harris, 1967) to explain the finding that professors wished students were more learning-oriented while students wished professors were less grade-oriented. The frequency of these types of misunderstandings might be lessened when professors have clear grading standards that are clearly communicated.

Another variable relating to professors in the literature review producing different attitudes toward grades was whether students would be apt to ask questions about grades or grading (Bahn et al., 1995). If professors give students the idea that they gladly receive such inquiries, it will also decrease the distance between themselves and their students.

The Bahn, et al., (1995) finding of no difference in attitudes toward grades in analyses by gender was not replicated here. Women students in this sample scored significantly different than men on four of the items, but the differences are also revealed by non-significant relationships. For example, the women scored significantly higher on "Grades are important for learning." but not on "Grades have a positive influence on what students learn." The women also scored significantly higher on two of the items dealing with personal effort: "Grades have a positive influence on how students study" and "Good grades are worth the effort." Yet at the same time there was not a significant difference with the item, "Grades have a positive influence on what students learn." nor on the items dealing with grades as a reflection of achievement and knowledge.

The greatest differences by gender, again with women scoring higher, was on “Grades are personally important to me.” This is consistent with findings indicating that those with higher GPAs have more favorable attitudes toward grades.

The above differences show a dichotomy of attitudes about grades held by women but not by men. The findings show some indication of women having more of a grades orientation than men but not have a less of a learning orientation. If this is true, the Pollio and Beck (2000) conclusion that such orientations are nearly mutually exclusive did not hold up here.

The differences by gender may reflect the Stricker, Rock and Burton (1993) findings that women work harder to compensate for lower confidence levels.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

With no previous research available on this topic pertaining to advertising students, this study provides baseline data regarding attitudes toward grades.

A shortcoming of the research is that it was conducted among students at two universities in the southwest U.S. Thus, results are not necessarily generalizable.

By distributing questionnaires to advertising majors who were currently enrolled in advertising courses, majors not enrolled in an advertising course could not participate. This methodology also excluded students who were absent during the week the questionnaires were administered.

The ATG scale provided limitations as to the type of information that could be extracted. Most puzzling were results in the gender

analysis. Quite clearly, further research is needed to explore the dichotomous findings among women. Most helpful in this area would be differences by gender in areas such as study habits, self-perception, and motivations as it pertains to college classes--and all of these things related to such variables as GPA and attitudes toward grades, professors, and specific course offerings in advertising and other fields.

Valuable information about advertising students could come from usage of the Pollio and Beck (2000) scale on grade versus learning orientations. It would be helpful to explore this by gender and by whether students are creatives or management-oriented.

In fact, the differences manifested by these two orientations suggests that further information would be helpful. For example, the findings suggest that the creative students have one set of attitudes that are different not only from the business-oriented but also from those who sought the major for both business and creative reasons.

No study on grades has compared attitudes and study habits between the various majors on campus. Would there be a difference between advertising and cinema students? Between advertising and biology, history, statistics, engineering?

Another unexplored area is the meanings of grades from the standpoint of the advertising educator. Replicating the Pollio and Beck (2000) work of measuring professor perceptions of students attitudes and vice-versa could produce results that would be helpful to educators in overcoming misunderstandings about assigned grades.

Though it may produce anxiety for both students and professors, our grading system is not likely to change in the near future. The more information that is available about grading, the better equipped advertising educators will be in meeting the needs of their students.

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Table 1-a
Pearson Correlation Matrix--Attitude-Toward-Grades Items

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Important for learning.								
2. Positive on studying.	.530							
3. Positive on learning.	.579	.512						
4. Are good.	.670	.544	.674					
5. Are bad.	-.462	-.407	-.400	-.635				
6. Important to me.	.448	.444	.322	.429	-.402			
7. Reflect what I learn.	.532	.436	.628	.577	-.366	.441		
8. Don't reflect effort.	-.345	-.269	-.292	-.320	.313	-.273	-.359	
9. GPAs not meaningful.	-.484	-.335	-.350	-.466	.383	-.426	-.509	.451
10. Good grds worth effort.	.500	.470	.363	.465	-.431	.591	.404	-.302
11. Reflect achievement.	.505	.421	.433	.527	-.387	.386	.592	-.437
12. Don't reflect knowledge.	-.405	-.264	-.410	-.456	.313	-.277	-.529	.414
13. I don't like to be graded.	-.377	-.301	-.350	-.507	.446	-.306	-.337	.305
14. Learn when not graded.	.408	.396	.496	.493	-.357	.335	.478	-.247
15. Waste of time.	-.457	-.443	-.364	-.561	.544	-.421	-.381	.296

All correlations are significant at $p < .0001$.

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Table 1-b
Pearson Correlation Matrix (con't)

	9	10	11	12	13	14
9. GPAs not meaningful						
10. Good grds worth effort.	.404					
11. Reflect achievement.	.592	.516				
12. Don't reflect knowledge.	-.529	-.345	-.457			
13. I don't like to be graded.	-.337	-.306	-.288	.378		
14. Learn when not graded.	.478	.372	-.356	.493	-.394	
15. Waste of time.	-.381	-.452	.358	-.561	.494	-.465

All correlations are significant at $p < .0001$.

Table 2
Mean Scores and Standard Deviations for Attitude-Toward-Grades Items

	N	Mean	S.D.
1. Grades are important for learning.	272	3.56	1.06
2. Grades have a positive influence on how students study.	273	3.81	.95
3. Grades have a positive influence on what students learn.	272	3.14	1.08
4. Grades are good.	274	3.51	.91
5. Grades are bad.	274	2.62	.86
6. Grades are important to me.	272	4.10	.84
7. Grades accurately reflect what I learn.	273	2.62	1.07
8. Grades don't reflect effort.	273	2.84	1.17
9. Grade-point averages are not meaningful.	274	2.66	.95
10. Good grades are worth the effort.	274	3.95	.88
11. Grades reflect student achievement.	273	3.41	1.03
12. Grades do not reflect knowledge.	274	3.43	1.09
13. I don't like to be graded.	273	3.07	.96
14. I learn more when I am not graded.	274	3.03	1.05
15. Grades are a waste of time.	273	2.38	.76

5=Strongly Agree; 1=Strongly Disagree

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Table 3
Pearson Correlation Matrix--Attitude Toward Grades and Selected Variables

	a	b	c	d	e	f	g
1. Important for learning.	.230***	-.132*	-.121*	-.192**	-.235***	-.196***	-.160**
2. Positive on studying.	.221***	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	-.131*	n.s.	-.155**
3. Positive on learning.	.147*	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	-.121*	-.167**	-.219***
4. Are good.	.253***	-.123*	n.s.	-.134*	-.165**	-.139*	-.126*
5. Are bad.	-.264***	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	.124*	n.s.
6. Important to me.	.420***	-.171**	n.s.	-.133*	-.157**	n.s.	n.s.
7. Reflect what I learn.	.280***	n.s.	-.138*	n.s.	-.146*	-.216***	-.123*
8. Don't reflect effort.	-.152*	n.s.	n.s.	.127*	.152*	n.s.	n.s.
9. GPAs not meaningful.	-.331***	n.s.	n.s.	.208***	.203***	.125*	n.s.
10. Good grds worth effort.	.371***	-.201**	-.159**	n.s.	-.137*	n.s.	n.s.
11. Reflect achievement.	.236***	n.s.	-.172**	n.s.	-.152*	-.130*	n.s.
12. Don't reflect knowledge.	-.208***	n.s.	.132*	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	.135*
13. I don't like to be graded.	-.240***	n.s.	-.138	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	.118*
14. Learn when not graded.	.236***	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	-.161**	-.126*
15. Waste of time.	-.179***	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	.157**	n.s.

a. GPA

b. age

c. Year in school. (4 = senior; 1 = first year)

d. I majored in advertising because of the business aspects. (5 = strongly agree; 1 = strongly disagree)

e. I majored in advertising because it combines both creative and business aspects.

f. I majored in advertising because it would give me skills that would lead to a job.

g. I majored in advertising because of a professor or professors who teach it.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

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Table 4
T-tests by Gender on Attitude-Toward-Grades Items

	Male Mean	Female Mean	t	p <
1. Grades are important for learning.	3.32	3.70	-2.87	.004
2. Grades have a positive influence on how students study.	3.60	3.91	-2.58	.01
3. Grades have a positive influence on what students learn.	3.03	3.20		n.s.
4. Grades are good.	3.41	3.56		n.s.
5. Grades are bad.	2.67	2.58		n.s.
6. Grades are important to me.	3.83	4.24	-3.92	.0001
7. Grades accurately reflect what I learn.	2.53	2.65		n.s.
8. Grades don't reflect effort.	2.79	2.89		n.s.
9. Grade-point averages are not meaningful.	2.65	2.66		n.s.
10. Good grades are worth the effort.	3.69	4.09	-3.71	.0001
11. Grades reflect student achievement.	3.29	3.46		n.s.
12. Grades do not reflect knowledge.	3.48	3.40		n.s.
13. I don't like to be graded.	3.07	3.08		n.s.
14. I learn more when I am not graded.	2.92	3.10		n.s.
15. Grades are a waste of time.	2.51	2.31		n.s,

5=Strongly Agree; 1=Strongly Disagree

Adv

**A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF PRINT ADVERTISING APPEALS IN
TIMES OF CRISIS**

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A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF PRINT ADVERTISING APPEALS IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Introduction

On September 11, 2001, at 8:45 a.m., a hijacked American Airlines Boeing 767 crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center. Eighteen minutes later, a second hijacked Boeing 767 belonging to United Airlines slammed into the South Tower of the world Trade Center. While people around the world were watching the horrific images on television, a hijacked American Airlines Boeing 757 crashed into the Pentagon half an hour after the attacks on the World Trade Center. Later that morning another hijacked United Airlines jet crashed near Pittsburgh (Isikoff et al, 2001).

Before September 11, America was decompressing from its longest economic boom and was gradually entering into a recession (Samuelson, 2001). The threat of September 11 was the erosion of consumer confidence that would reduce demand for consumer products and services (Samuelson, 2001). In a weak economy, companies may cut back one of their biggest discretionary expenses: advertising (O'Connell, Rose, and Vranica, 2001). After September 11, travel industry, tobacco, technology, financial services and retail companies all reduced their advertising spending (O'Connell et al, 2001). The reduction in ad spending had affected various media companies especially magazine publishers that relied heavily on travel ads for profits. Comparing with magazine ad spending in October 2000, overall ad pages dropped 16 percent in October 2001 (O'Connell et al, 2001).

After September 11, many companies in the United States were unsure how to react. Some advertisers immediately suspended ad campaigns while others ran ads addressing the aftermath with sympathetic messages (Day, 2003). Jennifer Coleman, head of planning at the

New York office of a d agency Wieden and Kennedy, pointed out that many advertisers were confused after September 11 because of the uncertainty of consumers' responses to advertising (Day, 2003). Jennifer Coleman stressed further that the worst thing a brand could do was second-guess what the public mood might be (Day, 2003).

How to Respond?

Quoting historical facts, DiMassimo (2001) suggested that advertising had to be distinctive and noticeable during wartime. Regarding the strategy of advertising, practitioners suggested using emotional and credible ads (DiMassimo, 2001; Novick, 2001). Employing emotional advertising appeals would make consumers feel good and connected to the brand. The functional or attribute-driven advertising would not create differentiation or an emotional link (Novick, 2001). In times of crisis, people need to be inspired and advertising can play a therapeutic role. Advertisers should consider using saving grace of humor in their ads to appeal the audiences (DiMassimo, 2001). On the other hand, Hatfield (2001) argued that humorous ads were out because advertisers were anxious not to offend the American public in such sensitive time. Fredric Kropp, professor of marketing at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, contended that after the September 11 tragedy, American consumers wanted stability, security, and a feeling of congruence (Seipel, 2001).

American advertisers were at a loss in finding a suitable advertising strategy for pitching their products and services after September 11. Helping its members cope with the difficult circumstances, the Association of National Advertisers came up with some advertising guidelines (Sarsen Jr., 2001). The association advised its members to adopt a more sensitive advertising approach regarding the message, tone, imagery and placement of advertising. It also

suggested that the use of irreverent, edgy, maudlin, and comical materials in advertising were inappropriate for the situation (Sarsen Jr., 2001). Novick (2001) also argued that leveraging sentiment and patriotism would be transparently self-serving and flag-waving would damage the brand. The risk of using patriotic message in ads could be interpreted as opportunistic and exploitative (Sanders, 2001).

An online poll of 2000 consumers conducted by Leo Burnett ad agency after September 11 showed that consumers disliked patriotic appeals in advertising. Fifty-one percent of the respondents believed that companies used patriotism for their own profits, while 50% of the respondents strongly agreed that it was unethical for companies to use patriotism to increase sales (Vranica, 2003). However, in the days after September 11, New York media were fraught with ads with patriotism (Hatfield, 2001; Vranica, 2003). Advertisers hastily adopted patriotic themes in their ads by adding images of soaring eagles or the Stars and Stripes (Vranica, 2003).

One of the major trends in U.S. marketing has been the rapid growth of services. In America, the service sector of the economy includes a broad range of industries and among the 500 American largest companies; one out of three is a service-oriented company (Freiden and Goldsmith 1989). According to Kotler (1988, p.467) "A service is any act or performance that one party can offer to another that is essentially intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything. Its production may or may not be tied to a physical product."

According to Advertising Age's National Advertisers ad spending report, the annual advertising dollars spent on services advertising in the year 2000 were amounted to billions of dollars. The importance of service businesses to America's economy is undeniable. The impact of September 11 on America's economy indicates the need for a better understanding of effective advertising strategies in a national crisis. In 1991, the Persian Gulf War and the recession were

the main reasons for the sudden drop in advertising expenditures (Horst, 1992). During the Gulf War, many advertisers canceled their advertising because they feared the audience would reject advertising during wars reports (Horst, 1992). However, surveys by the major TV networks found that a majority of respondents did not feel advertising during war reports was inappropriate (Horst, 1992). After September 11, a similar audience survey conducted by the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) showed the same results (Mermigas, 2001).

In the past, research on advertising during wartime and crisis focused mainly on the effects of inappropriate reductions in advertising (Horst, 1992; Elliot, 2001; Mermigas, 2001) and little advertising research attempted to examine the characteristics of advertising. Although many advertising practitioners intuitively suggested how a brand should respond to the September 11 tragedy, none of them had conducted any research on supporting their postulations (DiMassimo, 2001; Novick, 2001; Sarsen Jr., 2001).

Studying services advertising may provide insight into the advertising strategies that advertisers use during wartime and crisis. This paper attempts to examine the impact of war on print advertising through a content analysis procedure. By identifying the types of advertising appeals embedded in the visual and verbal components of services ads, this study may provide a better understanding of advertising strategies used by advertisers in response to a national crisis. More specifically, this paper is to empirically examine: 1) Whether services advertising spending in magazines decreased in response to the September 11 attacks. 2) In times of national crisis, what kinds of advertising appeals were utilized in print advertising? A review of advertising appeals literature is presented following by research propositions, method, data collection and discussions of research results. Finally, conclusion, limitations of this study and directions for future research are suggested.

Advertising Appeals

In times of uncertainty, the strength of a brand is derived from an enduring set of stable values that it has built on over time (Day, 2003). Values are important elements in advertising. People develop positive or negative attitudes by assessing persons, objects and situations based on the dimensions they consider to be important (Franzen, 1999). The attitudes formed as to what is personally or socially desirable are called values. A value is described as a preferred way of being and can be classified into two types: functional and expressive (Franzen, 1999; Johar and Sirgy, 1991).

Advertising displays certain kind of values that are readily linked to the available products (Pollay and Gallagher, 1990). When consumers see the ads, they would respond to these displayed values that are being dramatized in the ads. To consumers, advertising is a selective reinforcement of their behaviors and values. Value-expressive (symbolic) advertising appeals work at basic pre-conscious levels as reminders and associated imagery. Functional (utilitarian) advertising appeals provide cognitive arguments to rationalize product or brand preference (Johar and Sirgy, 1991).

Persuasion in advertising relies on the psychological appeal to the consumer (Wells, Burnett, and Moriarty, 1998). An advertising appeal is something that makes a good or service particularly attractive or interesting to the consumer. Appeals are embedded in ads designed to represent the supposed values of the desired target consumer and are chosen to represent values thought to be held by the target consumer (Franzen, 1999). By associating the desirable aspects to the product, advertising appeals are used as an active part in positioning the product in the marketplace.

Rational and Emotional Appeals

One of the basic elements associated with an advertising strategy is the choice of advertising appeals. Turley and Kelley (1997) categorize advertising appeals into two broad types: rational and emotional. Rational advertising appeals typically refer to the quality, value or performance of the product and seek to elicit cognitive responses from consumers. Rational advertising appeals originate from the traditional information processing model of persuasion (Albers-Miller and Stafford, 1999). Persuasive (informational) advertising takes the form of reasoned argument by communicating the product attribute (Franzen, 1999; Rossiter and Percy, 1987). This attribute must represent a value or benefit for the message receivers and be credible enough to change the message receivers' beliefs about the advertised brand. The persuasion model is based on step-by-step rational influencing and traditional learning processes where consumers are believed to make logical and rational purchase decision (Albers-Miller and Stafford, 1999; Franzen, 1999).

Pickett, Grove and Laband (2001) claim that informational advertising containing verifiable and factual information is relevant and important to the potential consumer. Information cues in informational ads include the name of the product, the locations where it can be purchased, its price and other relevant information. In essence, informational advertising helps consumers form evaluative criteria for assessing the risk of purchasing the advertised product (Pickett, Grove and Laband, 2001).

In contrast, emotional (transformational) advertising appeals attempt to elicit negative or positive emotions from consumers (Huang, 1997; Rossiter and Percy, 1987). They are based on the emotional and experiential side of consumption. As Holbrook and Westwood (1989) suggest, during the consumption of the product consumers may experience any combination of love, hate,

fear, anger, joy, sadness, pleasure, disgust, interest and surprise. These feelings represent the “experience values.”(Franzen, 1999) Constructing these affective elements in advertising, advertisers are able to tie their products or services to some relevant aspect of the consumer’s emotional life and appeal their interest. Moreover, emotional (transformational) advertising aims to elicit consumers’ good feelings about the brand and rely on such feelings for effectiveness (Rossiter and Percy, 1987; Albers-Miller and Stafford, 1999). The emotions model is to arouse the defined brand feelings from consumers while processing the ad message. The associated feelings developed between the consumer and the brand follow the process of classical conditioning (images and sounds are used in ads to generate the intended unambiguously emotions in message receivers) and are present latently in every message receiver (Franzen, 1999). Rossiter and Percy (1987) suggest that no ad is purely informational or purely emotional, it depends on the emphasis of the advertising message.

Research by Pickett, Grove and Laband (2001) indicated that service ads contained more of specific information cues than ads for physical goods. Pickett et al argue that the intangibility of services prompts services advertisers using more factual information in their ads to make their services appear more tangible. On the contrary, Cutler and Javalgi (1993) contend that services advertising uses emotional appeals more often than goods advertising. Theoretically speaking, services advertisers tend to use more emotional advertising to overcome the intangible aspect of their services (Ha, 1998). By projecting the experience of using the brand in emotional terms help enhance consumers’ understanding of the concreteness and vividness of the service (Ha, 1998). Based on the foregoing discussion a theoretical background for understanding the effects of rational and emotional appeals in advertising is essential to this study.

Establishing recognition or recall of an ad is a matter of noting whether consumers have registered the words, images and sounds used (Franzen, 1999). Advertising stimuli can be in the forms of either visual or verbal or the combination of both. There are two types of advertising stimuli: instrumental and symbolic (Franzen, 1999). Instrumental stimuli are information applying to the concrete characteristics, effect and effectiveness of the product or service and its application. Symbolic stimuli associate the use of the product or service with certain social situations or circumstances. These include displayed emotions, sounds or images in ads that can evoke consumers' feelings.

Imagery

MacInnis and Price (1987) point out that advertising stimuli such as pictures are more memorable than words. Alesandrini (1982) also found that pictures highlight the message topic and its main points to the viewers, and can draw viewers' attention. The objective of using visuals in advertising is to create impact and stimulate interest. Ha (1998) suggests that many association attributes and values in services ads are identified from the visuals not the copy. Visual elements facilitate consumers processing the advertising message. Moriarty (1987) identifies two categories of processing visual appeals in advertising: rational/ informational process and emotional/ symbolic process

According to Moriarty (1987), American ads use a number of different visual processes for communicating the ad message. They are description, association, metaphor and storytelling. Rational visual appeals use literal imagery to communicate factual information. Their role is to identify, describe and report details of the advertised product or service. Rational visual appeals

are a product of direct experience. Description of product features and attributes is one aspect of advertising appeals.

Another aspect of advertising appeals is to create emotional associations. Emotional visual appeals are designed to link the product with a lifestyle, with a certain type of person who uses the product or with a situation where the product is used (Moriarty, 1987). Metaphorical or symbolic ads use simple form as a substitute such as narrative to dramatize the benefit of the product. The aesthetic patterns in a print ad are specifically designed for their visual impact to arouse readers' attention. In general, American print ads use more product description and emotional association appeals. Metaphorical approach and aesthetic patterns are less commonly used in print advertising (Moriarty, 1987).

Headlines

Turley and Kelly (1997) point out that headlines in print ads are closely connected to the advertising message appeal. Headlines are important to the effectiveness of an ad because a headline may strongly influence the reading of an ad by consumers (Hitchon, 1991). Headlines are a type of word appeal that advertisers use to convey a creative emphasis (Wells, Burnett, and Moriarty, 1998). According to Beltrammi and Blasko (1986), the very essence of creativity has always been described by two words: relevant combination. The use of familiar sayings in advertising headlines establishes relevance in the mind of the consumer; in addition the unusual twist of the saying contributes an extra increment of interest. Print ads using familiar saying types of headlines may elicit emotional responses from readers.

However, not all advertising headlines utilize the relevant combination style of wording. The news and information types of headlines convey more informative and straightforward

messages such as communicating something truly new offered by the products or services. Print ad headlines offering readers the direct benefit of the product or service seek to elicit cognitive responses. Rational headlines are usually employed in new product launch. To distinguish different types of advertising appeals in headlines is also important to this study because pictures and headlines are important advertising cues in print advertising.

Research Questions

All the research questions are formulated based on the preceding discussion and the climate in society after the September 11 tragedy. Based on the discussion above, the first research question is:

R1: Did service companies reduce their magazine advertising expenditures in response to the September 11 tragedy?

Sarsen Jr. (2001) pointed out that consumers' emotions were likely to change constantly in the following months after the September 11 tragedy. Advertising that sought to create an emotional link to a brand might seem to be inappropriate. An experimental research by Stafford and Day (1995) showed that rational appeals were more effective than emotional appeals in creating favorable levels of attitude toward services ads. It is posited that using rational appeals are more suitable for communicating credible advertising promises to consumers. Based on this postulation, the second and third research questions are:

R2: Did service companies use more rational visual appeals than emotional visual appeals in their print ads in times of crisis?

R3: Did service companies use more rational headlines than emotional headlines in their print ads after the impact of September 11?

In New York media, some services advertisers hastily adopted patriotic themes in their ads, while others immediately canceled their ads in response to the September 11 tragedy (Hatfield, 2001; Vranica, 2003). The fourth and the fifth research questions are formulated to address the impact of September 11 on national magazines.

R4: Did service companies use more patriotic appeals in their print ads after the impact of September 11?

R5: Did the travel industry reduce magazine advertising pages more than other service companies after September 11?

Method

Research Design

This study investigated magazine advertising using content analysis procedure. Content analysis is a research technique for making valid inferences from data to their context (Neuendorf, 2002). Content analysis allows researchers to identify advertising appeals most commonly used by advertisers (Turley and Kelley, 1997). Since the research purpose was to measure the impact of September 11 on services advertising in magazines, a time-series research design was implemented. According to Neuendorf (2002), the statistical test of time-series analysis allows the messages and receiver characteristics to be summarized and then linked by a time period. This research was conducted in three phases because a cross-sectional relationship between the time before and after the September 11 tragedy was important. Phase one set to examine magazine advertising before September 11. Phase two investigated the immediate impact on magazine advertising after September 11. The third phase was to study any long-term

effects imposed on magazine advertising in the post September 11 period. Analysis was based on comparison of the findings from the three phases.

Sample

The total sample analyzed consisted of 72 magazine issues. Twenty-four magazine issues were selected respectively for each phase of the study. To ensure consistency of the time-series analysis, all magazine issues were selected from two weekly magazine titles, namely Newsweek and Time.

Selection of magazine types was based on Cutler and Javalgi's (1993) categorization of magazines. Basically there are three types of magazines: women's, business and general interest. Women's category was not included in this study on account of its fashion-oriented nature. Similarly, business category was not selected due to its business-to-business nature. National magazines such as Newsweek and Time fell under the general interest type of magazine. Both magazine titles were selected based on their popularity, high-circulation and representation of their category. According to Advertising Age's semi-annual rankings of magazines in the last six months of 2001, Newsweek and Time had a circulation of over 3 million copies per week.

Since this was a time-series study, weekly publications provided a broader base than monthly magazines in data collection. The first phase covered 24 issues of magazine from October 9, 2000 to December 25, 2000, approximately 13 months before the September 11 attacks. The second phase covered from October 8, 2001 to December 24, 2001, which was 4 weeks after the September 11 tragedy took place. Phase three covered from October 7, 2002 to December 23, 2002, approximately 13 months after September 11.

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The lapsed time between September 11, 2001 and the starting date of second phase was to ensure all collected data truly reflecting the situation that was being analyzed. As a standard practice of magazine production, publications usually impose a deadline on accepting advertising materials, which is approximately one month in advance before the date of publication. Right after the September 11 attacks, advertisers might not be able to pull their ads because of the restriction imposed. By following the industry standard, a 4 weeks gap might avoid collecting inaccurate data for this study.

Unit of analysis was based on the size of the ad. In this study, all full-page and double-page spread ads in each magazine issue were selected for analysis and when duplicate ads were identified the second ad was not counted (an identical ad might appear in September and October). Ad sizes smaller than a full-page were excluded from this analysis.

Content Classification (Coding Scheme)

The content of services ads were classified according to 4 variables. They were service categories, types of visual appeals, types of headline appeals, and patriotic appeals. See appendix A for coding procedures.

Classification of Services

Service categories were categorized by the approach described by Culter and Javalgi (1993) and were revised to accommodate more categories. In this study only service categories and other category were created. The service categories were represented by products like car-rental, cable TV, bank including credit card services, airlines, hotel, insurance, investments, online services (e-commerce and Internet service providers), travel agencies, and mobile phone

services. The other category included consumer durable products, consumer non-durable products, pharmaceutical products, advocacy advertisements, public service advertisements, furniture, and home-repair items. The other category was excluded from this analysis.

Visual Appeals

Emotional visual appeals were categorized by using Holbrook and Westwood's (1989) identification of types of emotional appeals and Aaker, Stayman and Vezina's (1988) typology of positive feeling and negative feeling response. Ads were classified as using positive emotional appeals if the theme of the ad emphasized happiness, cheerfulness, humor, acceptance, and romance. Negative emotional appeals were ads that connoted feelings of annoyance, irritation, depression, fear and anger. Visual elements for both positive and negative emotional appeals were symbolic (Moriarty, 1989). These elements included associations with lifestyles and situations in metaphorical or narrative presentations.

The rational visual appeals were categorized by the approach described by Culter and Javalgi (1993). Ads were classified as rational if the theme of the ad emphasized convenience, ease of use, economy, quality, reliability, safety, timesaving and variety of choices. Based on Moriarty's (1989) visual process typology, rational visual appeals were literal identification of a brand, product description, product demonstration, and product comparison between competitors.

Patriotic Appeals

Patriotic appeals were classified according to Chen and Schweitzer's (1996) values approach. In this case, ads showing the love and loyalty to one's own nation inherent in the

nature or in the use of a product were suggested. Patriotic ads might contain images of soaring eagles or the Stars and Stripes (Vranica, 2003).

Types of Headlines

Headlines were classified according to the typology described by Beltramini and Blasko (1986) as either emotional or rational types. Emotional types of headlines included two categories: familiar saying and curiosity. Familiar saying types of headlines suggested new twist on a familiar phrase, a play-on-words, an unusual use of common expression, and a frequently recognized sequence of words (Beltramini and Blasko, 1986). Curiosity headlines included how to, you should know, wait until you see this, here's how, and an offer made to arouse the reader's interest (Beltramini and Blasko, 1986).

Rational types of headlines also consisted of two categories: news/information and benefit. News/information category included declarative statements announcing or claiming direct benefits of the product or service and benefit type of headlines indicated how the product or its use would benefit the buyer.

A pretest of 36 randomly selected services ads, 18 ads from each magazine title, was not included in the sample. Disagreement in pretest coding helped revise the coding scheme until a consensus was reached. Two graduate students majoring in advertising coded the content individually. Using Hosti's (1969) intercoder agreement method, the intercoder agreement achieved: .94 for service categories, .93 for types of visual appeals, .82 for patriotic appeals and .87 for types of headlines. The results were considered high according to Neuendorf's (2002) standards of reliability for content analysis. In this study, simple frequency count and Chi-square goodness-of-fit test were used for the measures.

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Findings

In phase one, 171 services ads or 30% were identified from 572 print ads. Phase two identified 137 services ads or 24.8% from a total of 551 magazine ads. Phase three identified 191 services ads or 30% from a total of 635 ads. Apparently, the proportion of services ads in phase one and phase three was the same. To test if there was a significant difference between the ad pages of the three phases, Chi-square goodness-of-fit test was employed. The results showed a significant difference between the number of ad pages appeared, $X^2 (2, n=499) = 8.8, p<.05$. Examination of the data relating to the first research question, which asked did service companies reduce their magazine advertising expenditures in response to the September 11 tragedy was supported.

Regarding the use of emotional visual appeals, phase one found that 120 ads or 70% used emotional appeals. In phase two, 78 ads or 56.9 % used emotional appeals and 117 ads or 61.2% were identified in phase three using emotional appeals. A Chi-square analysis of emotional visual appeals showed a significant result, $X^2 (2, n=486) = 10.41, p<.01$.

In examining the use of rational visual appeals, phase one discovered that 41 ads or 23% used rational visual appeals. Phase two found that 59 ads or 43% had rational visuals and 72 ads or 37% in phase three also used rational visual appeals. There was a significant difference between services ads using rational visual appeals in the three phases, $X^2 (2, n=172) = 8.2, p<.05$.

The significant results supported the second research question. Services advertisers used more rational visual appeals than emotional visual appeals in their ads after the September 11 tragedy.

Addressing research question 3, the results found that rational headlines were more likely to be used than emotional headlines in service ads after the September 11 tragedy. Phase one identified 119 ads or 69.5% using emotional headlines, phase two found that 70 ads or 51% used emotional headlines and phase 3 discovered 107 ads or 56% had emotional headlines. There was a significant difference in using emotional headlines between the three phases, $X^2(2, n=296) = 12.1, p < .01$.

In examining the use of rational headlines, phase one found that 41 ads or 24% used rational headlines. Phase two and phase three findings were 57 ads or 41% and 80 ads or 41% respectively. Chi-square test showed a significant result, $X^2(2, n=178) = 12.8, p < .01$.

The fourth research question asked did services ads use more patriotic appeals in response to the September 11 tragedy. The research findings in the 3 phases showed a very small proportion of patriotic appeals, less than 3% in each phase, and were not significant to support research question 4.

The research findings partially supported research question 5. Only airlines showed a significant result in reducing ad pages in magazines. The results also showed that no travel agencies and car rental companies ran any ads after September 11. However, the results showed significant differences in ad page change for insurance and mobile phone services. Table 1 compares the relative frequencies of ad pages between the 3 phases of individual service categories.

Table 1

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Significance Level
Cable TV	7.6%	5.8%	9.4% n=39	NS
Airlines	17.5%	5.8%	12.7% n=62	$X^2=12.56, p<.01$
Insurance	11%	24.1%	18.8% n=88	$X^2=7.9, p<.05$
Investments	29.8%	28.5%	26.7% n=141	NS
Bank Services	13.5%	10.9%	12.6% n=62	NS
Hotel	7%	5.8%	3.1% n=26	NS
Online Services	8.1%	6.6%	2.6% n=28	NS
Mobile Phone	3.5%	12.4%	9.9% n=42	$X^2=6.9, p<.05$
Travel Agencies	0.6%	0%	2.6%	Small cell
Car rental	1.4%	0%	1.6%	Small cell

Discussion And Implications

The findings of this study simply show that the nature and content of services ads in general-interest periodicals changed after September 11. Services advertisers did reduce placing ads in national magazines after the tragedy. By comparing phase one and phase two findings, services ads dropped from 30% to 24.8%. However, the findings in phase three showed that service ads recovered to 30% a year after the September 11 attacks took place.

In terms of travel ads, airlines were the most affected service category. Significant reduction in air travel advertising was found in this study. Before September 11, airlines ad pages constituted 17.5% of the total services ad pages and decreased to only 5.8% after the tragedy happened. Airlines ad pages did not fully recover even during peak travel season. Phase

three findings showed that airlines ad pages bounced back to 12.7% in the last quarter of 2002. As O'Connell, Rose and Vrancica (2001) point out, any disaster involving airlines jet will definitely affect the whole air travel industry because airlines will immediately pull their ads from media outlets. Although car rental, hotel and travel agencies ad proportions were not significant to make any inference, the impact on airlines might create a chain reaction that would affect other travel businesses as well. Hotel ads dropped slightly from 7% to 5.8% in the last quarter of 2001 and dwindled further to 3% in the following year. Travel agencies and car rental companies did not place any ad in magazines after September 11. This is consistent with Hatfield's (2001) assumption that after the September 11 tragedy, travel advertisers were extremely cautious of advertising because their creative strategy usually associated fun with their products.

However, the findings also revealed that instead of reducing advertising spending in magazines some services advertisers increased placing more ads to promote their products and services. The proportion of ads for mobile phone advertisers increased from 3.5% before September 11 to 12.4% after September 11. Insurance advertising also grew from 11% to 24%. Checking if there was any seasonality effect on mobile phone services, phase three research findings indicated that mobile phone ad pages decreased to 9.9%. The growth of mobile phone ad pages implies that in chaotic situations, such as the September 11 attacks, having a mobile phone becomes indispensable because it help people communicate with each other. Similarly, insurance companies advertise their products and services as a long-term security plan for the unknown future lying ahead. By appealing consumers to the functional attributes of their products and services, mobile phone and insurance advertisers could capitalize on people's sense of insecurity without being exploitative after September 11. The overall findings in this study do

not suggest that all services advertisers would reduce their advertising spending in times of crisis.

Research examining services advertising strategy has often resulted in conflicting findings. The results from this study indicate that services ads are more likely to use emotional visual appeals and emotional headlines. However, after September 11, services advertisers used more rational appeals in their ads. This implies that after September 11, services advertisers were cautious about the adverse effects of emotional advertising on the fragility of consumers' feelings. To keep the ads simple and credible, using rational advertising appeals are considered more appropriate in a national crisis. In terms of emotional visual appeals, ads containing emotional visuals decreased from 70% to 56% after September 11. The use of rational visuals grew from 23% to 41%. A year after September 11, when the prevailing mood in society had become more positive, services advertisers reverted back to use more emotional visual appeals. Phase three showed that the proportion of using emotional visuals was 24% higher than rational visuals. Rational visuals appeals decreased from 41% in phase two to 37% in phase three. The findings are consistent with Cutler and Javalgi's (1993) argument that under normal circumstances, services ads use more emotional visual appeals. However, if difficult situations arise services advertisers may run informative tactical ads to avoid any incongruity with the consumers' feelings.

Regarding the use of types of headlines, the findings from this study revealed that the use of rational headlines in services ads had increased from 24% before September 11 to 41% after September 11. This implies that service advertisers would use information cues such as headlines in their ads to build up their products or services credibility during crisis. The findings are also consistent with DiMassimo's (2001) assumption that advertising claims in wartime have

to be believable. Although the results suggest that the use of rational visual and verbal appeals increased in services print ads during crisis, under normal circumstances emotional visual and verbal appeals are still commonly used in a larger proportion.

The research findings did show a very small proportion of patriotic appeals, less than 3%, in services advertising after September 11. These results might be applicable only in a national media context. After September 11, New York media were fraught with patriotic ads (Hatfield, 2001; Vranica, 2003) that later were deemed as an inappropriate advertising strategy by many ad executives (Vranica, 2003). The differences between local and national advertising adopting patriotic themes imply that local advertising is a short-term communication effort addressing local situations (Kotler, 1997) while national advertising focuses mainly on long-term brand building (Wells, Burnett and Moriarty, 1998). However, the findings of this study are not significant to support the assumption of leveraging patriotism as advertising appeals in wartime. This supports DiMassimo's (2001) claim that patriotism is not a suitable creative strategy in advertising especially during crisis such as in the aftermath of September.

Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations were inherent in this study. Firstly, this study was conducted in a limited time period due to the constraint of resources. To code a large amount of data within a short period might create coder fatigue effects (Neuendorf, 2002). Therefore, future researchers should allow themselves ample of time to carry out a similar kind of study.

Secondly, this research project only sampled two weekly magazine titles, which is considered not broad enough to provide an overall view of the September 11 impact on advertising as a whole. In future, it is better for researchers to include different types of print

media such as lifestyle magazines, special interest magazines and newspapers as well to broaden the range of data collection. If time and budget allow, future research into the impact of September 11 on advertising should also include electronic media, e.g. television and radio. This may provide a better understanding of how advertisers use different advertising strategies to position their products and services in a national crisis.

Thirdly, selection of types of advertisers in this study also restricts drawing a more accurate inference. Since this study selectively used services advertisements as research data, the findings might not truly reflect the overall response of advertisers to the September 11 tragedy. Future research should also include consumer products advertising because both services and products advertising would constitute a good representation of advertisers.

Finally, the descriptive nature of content analysis does not allow this study to detect any advertising effects on consumers. Future research should be conducted to investigate which type of advertising appeals is more effective in eliciting positive responses from the consumers and is more congruent with their feelings during a crisis.

The impact of September 11 has protracted effects on society; there are still numerous gaps in the literature about its impact on the advertising industry that need to be addressed by additional advertising research. Although the findings of this particular study are not generalizable to other forms of advertising, the results still provide a basis for understanding the use of different types of advertising strategies in a national crisis.

Conclusion

This research has provided a basic insight into the impact of September 11 on the advertising industry. One can conclude from this study that September 11 did affect the service

industries as most services advertisers had reduced their advertising spending in magazines. The travel industry suffered the most especially airlines when airplanes were involved in the disasters.

In addition to the September 11 tragedy, an American Airlines' jet crashed into a residential neighborhood in New York Queens eliminating more ad pages in magazines. According to the standard policy of the air travel industry, airlines will pull all their advertising for a minimum of 48 hours following any disaster especially if there is a loss of life (O'Connell, Rose and Vrancica, 2001). This could be one of the reasons that airlines ad pages dropped drastically.

Airlines' mishap may create a chain reaction that can affect other travel industries such as travel agencies and hotels. After September 11, only foreign airlines placed ads in magazines. This suggests that both the September 11 attacks and the accident of American Airlines jet did hit the domestic airlines industry hard and American air carriers were more cautious about the prevailing mood in American society during this particular period of time. This is equally true for hotel advertisers because hotel ads appeared in magazines were mainly promotions for foreign resorts. Some of the practitioners' postulations are supported by the findings of this study. As indicated by the results, during a national crisis some services advertisers are sensible enough to use informative tactical ads to enhance the image and credibility of their brands. Lessening the use of emotional advertising appeals can avoid any unintended advertising effects on damaging the brand. After all Patriotism is not a creative advertising strategy that can be leveraged in a national crisis.

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Advertising Theory Beyond the Context of Advertising: Taylor's Six-Segment Message Strategy Wheel Offers an Integrated Model of Political Behavior

**Paper presented to the
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Abstract

In an effort to integrate several decades of research on voter behavior this paper turns to four decades of consumer behavior research, culminating in two advertising planning models: FCB Grid and Six-Segment Message Strategy Wheel. After outlining the debate over the rationality of voting behavior and political involvement, we suggest that much of the political science research can be integrated if examined through Taylor's Strategy Wheel. In seeking to integrate current findings in advertising and political science, this paper offers a contribution to both fields of inquiry.

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Introduction

It is no longer original to observe that we sell political candidates in much the same manner that we sell soap. And, even though this statement is specifically inaccurate (candidates are advertised more often like Nike shoes than soap), scholars and consumers alike broadly accept it as truth. Implicit within the notion of the similarity of soap and candidates is the understanding that the decisions made by consumers and voters are themselves similar. We may make decisions about a product (shoes) in much the same way and for many of the same reasons that we decide to vote for or back a candidate or political issue. Nevertheless, the research paths of consumer and political behavior rarely intersect. This is unfortunate. Each has much to offer the other.

Independently, both literatures address related concerns of how decisions are made. Interestingly, they have lit upon similar questions. Principal among these are the degree to which people elaborate on the decision – high versus low involvement – and the extent to which a decision is rational or affective. Still their conceptual treatments are notably different. We argue that scholars interested in how voters make political decisions could benefit greatly from taking a step back from the long-standing debate on whether people are rational or not and examine the integrative advertising strategy models. In much the same way that these models have synthesized decades of advertising research, Vaughn's FCB grid (1980, 1986) and Taylor's Six-Segment Message Strategy Wheel (1999) can provide a framework through which to understand many seemingly contradictory findings in political decision making.

This paper first outlines key theories in political science's debate over the rationality of voting behavior and political involvement. We then trace the development of two advertising planning models: Vaughn's FCB Grid and Taylor's Six-Segment Message Strategy Wheel. We

will demonstrate how much of the political behavior research can be integrated within Taylor's Strategy Wheel. Finally, we propose a new conceptualization of buyer/voter behavior based on Taylor's model but adjusted in light of political behavior literature. Rather than conceiving of buying/political behavior as either rational or irrational, researchers should view certain aspects of such decision-making as based on information seeking and processing. Other aspects are more ritual/affective in nature. Furthermore, these are not discrete or contradictory processes: rather we as consumers of products and political issues constantly process, employ and integrate transmission and ritual communication.¹

Political Behavior: The Reason-Affect Debate

Advertising scholars have long conceived of reason-affect as one dimension along which consumers make product choices. Depending on the person, the situation, the type of product or the nature of the audience, advertisers should expect people's responses to exist somewhere between affective and rational, sometimes exhibiting a combination of both. Scholars of political behavior, on the other hand, have tended to address rationality as being categorically present or absent. Conceived of this way, rationality is a basis of behavior not a quality of decision. Research either defends or refutes it. Instead of modeling reason or affect like involvement – largely a question of degree – rationality and affect are seen as contradictions. This is more a question of conceptualization than anything else.

In fact, the rift has more to do with normative questions that span multiple disciplines than it does with empirical questions within political science. Abelson and Levi (1985) contend

¹ It should be noted that much of the research discussed in this paper owes a debt to the early work of mass communication pioneers such as Lasswell, Lippmann, Lazarsfeld and Hovland. One will undoubtedly note similarities between many of the political behavior findings and theories such as agenda setting, and source and receiver factors in the persuasion process. However, because it is our goal to examine current thinking found in the political behavior literature and its historical development, we will not address, in detail, the development of mass communication theory. It is precisely the lack of dialogue between mass communication and political science that

that notions of rationality and irrationality should be too diffuse to interest most social psychologists, but that economics and philosophy pressure scientists “to argue a general position.”

Issues of rationality and irrationality excite a great deal of debate... and often considerable heat is generated in value-laden debates about these views. Data do not seem to resolve differences between protagonists but only to sharpen the cleverness of the defense of the original positions.
p. 233-234

Philosophical and economic arguments for rationality are well represented in the empirical examination of political decisions as they are in research on consumer behavior. Still, whereas advertising scholars are content to accept the argument that consumer behavior can be both rational and affective, political scientists have been less amenable to that union.

While political behavior theory has tended to argue one position of the other, shadings of both lines of thinking can be found in the very structure of our democratic process. Madison (Altschull, 1990), for one, is well known for voicing his apprehension about the passions of the mass public. The Electoral College is an obvious artifact of this widespread concern. On the other hand, rationality is the normative basis of democratic theory. Modern democracy is a product of the enlightenment; Locke’s notion of the social contract is anchored on the basic premise of the rational citizen. It is difficult to extract the expectation of rationality from the idea of citizenship or in the defense of democratic principles.

The Rational Voter: The Basis of Democracy?

Classic democratic theory holds that citizens are interested, knowledgeable and engaged in rational deliberation of issues in public affairs. Early empirical findings, however, cast a shadow of doubt across the very basis of that theory (Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes,

we hope to underscore by focusing on the political science literature to the exclusion of mass communication theories.

1960; Converse, 1964). One of the first national surveys of voter behavior found that a citizen's vote was not fundamentally based on an evaluation of the issues – a rational decision – but instead was rooted in one's identification with a party. In short, voting behavior was more influenced by socialization than rational deliberation of the issues (Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes, 1960). Converse (1964) argues that most citizens are so politically unsophisticated that they remain incapable of comprehending political deliberation. The vast majority of Americans do not understand the abstract concepts of politics. Further, their opinions, if they can be called that, on policy issues were so inconsistent across time and issues that they were rendered meaningless.

Nie, Verba, Petrocik (1979) argue that voters became much more concerned with issues in the 1960s than they were in the relatively 'issueless' 1950s. In other words, the voters' ability to behave rationally is more dependent on the tenor of the times than an innate disposition. While there was little consistency in the average voters' policy preferences in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the 1964 election changed everything. Nie, Verba and Petrocik argue that the turbulent political times resulted in increased consistency across a broad array of issues – evidence, presumably, of rational political behavior. Likewise, Pomper (1972) contends that the “events and campaigns of the 1960s. . . made politics more relevant and more dramatic to the mass electorate,” and as a result voters' policy positions became more coherent. In a similar vein, Key (1966) argues that the voter can behave rationally, but the candidates must give them the option. Brody and Page (1972) find that Nixon and Humphrey who intentionally made ambiguous their policy position on Vietnam – an apparently important issue to the electorate – diminished policy voting in the 1968 election.

Downs (1957) articulated the most resonant defense of rationality in voters when he made the ingenious argument that a low-information, disengaged voter was in fact behaving in a rational way. It is irrational for the voter to behave as classical democratic theory demands, Downs argues, because there is so little to gain personally. To be disengaged and poorly informed is, in fact, to be rational. Why would a citizen take the time to inform herself on policy issues when the expected payback for the effort is next to nil?

Empirical research in the rational choice tradition has made much with this Downsian argument. Fiorina (1981), for instance, argues that voters' decisions are based on a running tally of evaluative responses to recent performance on domestic and foreign issues. Instead of being bogged down by the complexity of current issues and campaign promises, Fiorina argues that it is more rational to base a decision on retrospective assessments of a party.

Similarly, a broad array of political scientists has adopted the argument that people may not be omniscient calculators, but they are able to maximize utility with so-called heuristics (Popkin, 1991; Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock, 1991; Ferejohn and Kuklinski, 1990). Heuristics are information shortcuts people use to form opinions, evaluate information on political issues, events, candidates and parties. In most cases, rational choice scholars believe that people act as cognitive economizers when it comes to political information gathering. They expend cognitive effort only in situations where they expect to gain future satisfaction. As a result, voters often rely on other sources whom they trust to provide them with their views and opinions. Perhaps Popkin puts it most clearly when he describes people acting more like firefighters than police patrols; it saves them from constantly searching for important facts; heuristics are like cognitive fire alarms that direct their attention to important political facts (Popkin, p.49).

The ascendance of the cognitive approach in political behavior has been far from a validation of the rational choice paradigm. Although the heuristics school has borrowed heavily from the study of political cognition, there is a half-empty, half-full division between the two. While political scientists who use economic models tend to see the political calculation as utility maximization, psychological models emphasize effort minimization. Schema theory is one of these models (Conover and Feldman, 1984). Broadly speaking, schemas are memory structures that organize, encode and fill-in information. Unlike the expectations inherent in rational choice theories, however, the decisions people make are not motivated by utility maximization (Lau, Smith and Fiske, 1991). This should not be entirely surprising. Even the Millsean Classical Liberal conception of the democratic process takes into account that, while voters want to maximize their personal benefit, they do so with the least amount of effort (Rotzoll, Haefner and Sandage, 1990, p.17). Moreover, the models are far from being mutually exclusive. After all, utility maximization and effort minimization are just different ways of framing individual motivation. Still, as Iyengar and McGuire (1995) argue, proponents of each side do not have a lot to say to each other.

Here we see that much of the debate surrounding the rationality of voters centers on questions of what it means to be rational. Is rationality best demonstrated by efforts to gather, process and integrate the vast wealth of public policy information available? Or is it more rational to find cognitive shortcuts? Furthermore, researchers increasingly view the neglect of affect in the study of schema as a liability of the cognitive approach.

Zajonc (1968, 1980, 1998), and Damasio (1994, 1999) make strong and diverse arguments for the primacy of affect. Zajonc (1980) hypothesizes that the first response following sensory input could likely be affective. Further, his research on mere exposure provides strong

evidence that cognition and affect are independent and that an affective reaction precedes a cognitive response. Damasio, a neurologist and neuroscientist more concerned with the biology of emotion finds that emotional systems form the foundation upon which the structure of reason operates. Damasio finds that people who sustained damage to neurological structures and thereby lost the capacity for certain classes of emotions also lost the ability to make rational decisions (1999, p.41). According to Zajonc (1998) hedonic discrimination motivates reasoning; cognitive and cultural categorization exist because it is valuable for us to create these categories. In other words, “categories do not exist because differences exist among objects and events. There are no categories for different contents of used Kleenex. Categories exist because some objects and some events matter and others not”(p.591).

Reason and Affect: The Wall Crumbles

In the last twenty years, rational choice has become the dominant theoretical counterweight to the social-psychological model of voting (Neimi and Weisberg, 1992). Because this paradigm's core idea is the rationality of the individual, it is unlikely that those who subscribe to the rational choice theory will accept a model that allows a permeable divide between reason and affect. After all, the conflict between the two models has been the focus of a lot of influential research. Even so, the rift has never been so empirically transparent. Some (Sears et al., 1978; Sears, 1980; Sears in Iyengar and McGuire, 1995; Edelman 1960, 1971) contend that political choices are not the result of highly rational processes, but instead depend more on symbolic exchange amongst the polity. Taking as his premise the apparent ambivalent, unstable and excitable public opinion that had been empirically observed in the 1960s, Edelman (1971) argues that the arousal and quiescence of public opinion is not the result of a rational and deliberative population, but the ebb and flow of widely shared symbolic cues and response – specifically

relating to anticipated threats. Government and citizens are engaged in a systemic symbolic process involving: the collective perception and misperception of threats; the coalescence of diverse interests; and symbol and personality formation that underlie collective threat and interest aggregation. Political perceptions are distinctive because they “develop and are mutually reinforced in large collectivities of people, evoking intense hopes and fears, threats and assurances”(p.2). Edelman contends that cultural symbol formation and members’ beliefs and perceptions are the same thing. In short, expectations based on one’s symbolic status (race, caste, gender, nationality, etc.) are fundamentally affected by elite cues. These cues are nothing more than basic signals of peril or safety: fueled by expectations of any particular group’s purported adversaries. For instance, news that illegal immigration is on the rise in southern California would be a symbolic cue to lower class residents who may have vague conceptions of encroaching immigration as an economic threat.

Integral to Edelman’s thesis are the ideas of meaning and information, concepts that are strikingly similar, if not identical, to Carey’s (1975) notions of ritual and transmission communication. Information can be thought of as empirical observations or non-redundant facts that are communicated to a receiver (transmission communication). Meaning, on the other hand, is “associated with order – with a patterned cognitive structure that permits anticipation of future developments”(p.31). The two concepts are incompatible, but exist together within all communication in much the same way that we perceive a figure/background relationship visually. Information, like Carey’s transmission, is denotative communication to imparting some specific message: it is instrumental. Meaning, on the other hand, is shared conceptual notions of order: signals and configurations that “emerge through the exchange and mutual creation of symbols that amount to abstractions from a background of other possible meanings”(p.33). And

it is meaning, according to Edelman, that forms the basis of peoples' beliefs, perceptions and expectations. Most people, he argues, do not rely on observation or empirical evidence, but on shared implications and cues from others that imbue current situations and anticipated events. Sears empirically examines some of the hypotheses offered by Edelman and finds, consistent with his argument that socialized values or abstract political symbols offer a stronger explanation of policy attitudes and voting behavior than does self-interest – presumably the basis of rational behavior (Sears, 1980; Lau, Brown and Sears, 1978).

Recent findings further erode the division between rational and affective or symbolic behavior (Lodge and Taber, 2000; Rahn, 2000; Turner, 2000; Marcus, Neuman and Mackuen, 2000). Consistent with the figure/background metaphor of political communication offered by Edelman and the neurological research of Damasio (1999), Marcus et al. (2000) argue that to dichotomize affect and ration is to misapprehend biology: “our research has led us to conceptualize affect and reason not as oppositional but as complimentary, as two functional mental faculties in a delicate, interactive, highly functional dynamic balance. To idealize rational choice and to vilify the affective domain is to misunderstand how the brain works” (p.2).

Marcus et al.(2000), drawing on recant research in neuroscience and social psychology, make the argument that political judgment is largely a repertoire of habits, punctuated in the rare instance by emotive signals to break from the routine. Their contention is that conscious deliberation is the tip of the neurological iceberg. Analyzing survey and experimental research, they find that two separate systems, disposition and surveillance, govern our responses to political experience. These two affective systems manage our attention to and interaction with the outside world and by extension, political issues and events. The disposition system monitors habituated experience with everyday events. Like we learn to drive or walk, Marcus et al. argue

that people learn to monitor political experience with “subconscious scripts” (p.127). When political concerns are routine, this affective system manages the daily demands without taxing our limited capacity for conscious deliberation. In their words, “people carry these useful cognitive-emotional mechanisms over to the political world – relying on learned routines to manage the buzzing and blooming reality of political choice and judgment”(p. 127).

When the routine is broken by exceptional circumstances, however, Marcus et al. argue that the surveillance system signals the need to break from routine and focus conscious attention on the external world. When we are confronted with something that doesn't fit with our routines, we experience an emotional reaction – a warning. In politics, Marcus et al. observe, the emotions that drive these dynamics are associated with anxiety. When a group of people or an electorate is anxious, they become increasingly engaged, interested, and keener to gather political information. People alter their conscious investment, based on the character of political events. When the political environment is “relatively benign, emotional calm permits the reliance on voters' effective habits, their standing decisions guided by enthusiasm,” but when events inspire anxiousness, the emotional reaction stimulates people to be more highly elaborative of their political views.

The emotional and reasoning capacities of people are not oppositional, let alone mutually exclusive. Rather, they work in concert in an efficient response to patterns and breaks in those patterns. Marcus et al. outline a theory of emotional systems and broad political conditions under which an individual will maximize utility and the other circumstances when he will minimize effort. The emotional system, in other words, inspires or quashes a heightened rational response to political routine or novelty.

In a similar vein, Turner (2000) argues that much of what we call reason and choice occurs outside of conscious experience in “backstage cognition.” Backstage cognition is interpretation and inference that occurs without our recognition. Turner, in concert with the ideas of Marcus et al., writes, “just as we do not notice how we compute color constancy in the visual field, so we do not notice the backstage cognition of reason and choice” (p.265). Using an advertisement to illustrate his argument that we unconsciously process much of what we perceive in everyday political reasoning and choice, Turner describes how a British Airways advertisement backfired when its creators mistakenly evoked unanticipated and unwanted associations in their blending of concepts. The advertisements, presented in magazines and newspapers, each had a large photograph and a small inset photograph, accompanied by a phrase to help integrate the two pictures. The advertisement in question had for the large photograph, a sepia-toned image of an attractive mother holding a baby in her arms. In the place of the baby’s head, an inset photograph, set off in higher-contrast, depicts the head of a businessman reclining comfortably in an airline seat. The creators of the advertisement had intended the audience to create an association of comfort and peace through a pair of juxtaposed images. Instead, British Airways received angry complaints that the ad was Freudian and demeaning to flight attendants.

In a nutshell, Turner argues that most of our political reasoning – therefore persuasion – occurs in non-conscious associations that immediately, but creatively appeal to the receiver. Conceptual meaning is created through a seemingly instantaneous set of associations, but the perceiver will not think of this as created. He will consider the meaning “natural and inevitable.” This created meaning then leads the recipient to a political choice. This response, conceptual blending as Turner calls it, is similar to what schematic theorists might argue is a shift in schematic associations, and it allows the receiver to actively create the meaning himself, though

in a way far removed from argumentation. And similar to schematic theory, the meanings that come to mind are dependant largely on what has come before; “highly charged conceptual structures have a lower threshold for activation” (p.270).

Turner’s ideas on the role of interpretation in persuasion and Marcus et al.’s concept of affective intelligence sound strikingly consistent with the idea of priming – especially as envisioned by Jacobs and Shapiro (2000) and Zaller (1992). Because people cannot consider all they know when they are forced to make a political decision or evaluation, they consider what comes to mind. What comes to mind is usually what has most recently been presented to the individual. Zaller argues that people will present their “predispositions” as they occur to them “off the top of the head.” Most people are so uninvolved with politics that their predispositions tend to be endogenous with the media’s coverage of elite opinion. Further, for those people who remain uninvolved, it is recency more than anything that creates salience. What these people recall, in other words, is the most recent opinion that they’ve accepted.

Likewise, Jacobs and Shapiro (2000) argue that politicians rely on priming in order to “persuade” the public. Rather than making an argument for their policy proposal, politicians instead choose to highlight certain standards or perspectives. By staying on message politicians hope to guide the public in their evaluation of them. Politicians use repetition of their message with the expectation that this will become the most salient position to the voter not given to much elaboration.

The evolution of political behavior research can at times appear cacophonous with its many perspectives and theoretical divisions, but if we take a step back and look at the last forty years of development, we may begin to appreciate the rough outlines of a dialogue. From the early contradictions between normative expectations and findings of a poorly informed and

engaged voter, to our present rich, albeit fractious, notions of inconsistency, shortcuts, schema, symbolic representation, and affect-driven cognition, the swing of the theoretical pendulum carves a much narrower arc. The theoretical explanations as expressed by Turner (2000) and Marcus et al. (2000) are not that far apart at all. What begins to emerge is a different concept of what it is to be rational.

Advertising Strategy Models: Integration Not Contradiction

Like political behavior research, advertising scholarship long has borrowed from socio- and psychological literature to better understand consumer-buying behavior. Political behavior scholars and rational choice theorists, however, have persisted in debating rationality rather than being able to integrate many seemingly contradictory findings. Vaughn and Taylor illustrate the power of integration to provide a multi-faceted and more complete understanding of consumer (and we will argue voter) behavior.

Vaughn's FCB Grid, one of best-known models, drew upon the earlier work of Kotler to offer a framework for planning advertising creative strategies. Kotler (1965) proposed four models of individual buying behavior, three of which Vaughn later incorporated into his advertising planning model. The Marshallian Economic Model suggests that consumers engage in rational cost-benefit analyses in order to make deliberative product choices. The Pavlovian Learning Model applies to more habitual purchases such as soap and toilet tissue. According to this model, advertising acts as cues that stimulate drives for products. The Freudian Psychoanalytic Model stresses the emotional aspects of buying behavior. Here Kotler argues that effective advertising can play upon our emotions such as fear, longing and hope, rather than our cognitive processes, in order to persuade. According to the Veblenian Social Psychological

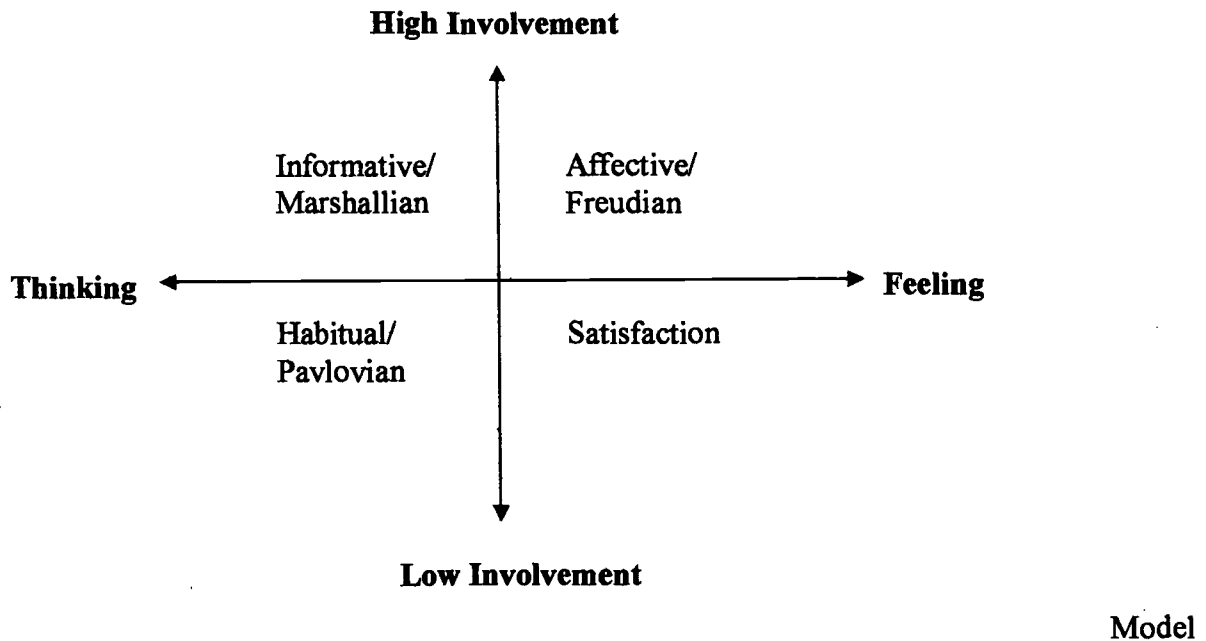


Figure 1: FCB Grid (Vaughn, 1980)

many purchases are made in the pursuit of status. This model emphasizes the social influences on consumption.

Expanding on Kotler’s work, Vaughn argues that consumers engage in different types of decision-making for different product categories. His FCB Grid (named for advertising agency Foote, Cone and Belding) identified four advertising planning strategies by locating consumer decision-making along two continua: high-low involvement, defined as perceived importance or risk of making a poor decision, and left-right brain activity, defined as thinking versus feeling decisions. He was able to place three of Kotler’s models within the quadrants of the grid. The Informative (Marshallian) quadrant deals with highly involving, cognitive product choices such as houses, insurance, computers. Affective (Freudian) decisions, such as perfume and jewelry, are also high involvement but relate more to ego-gratification and self-esteem. Habitual

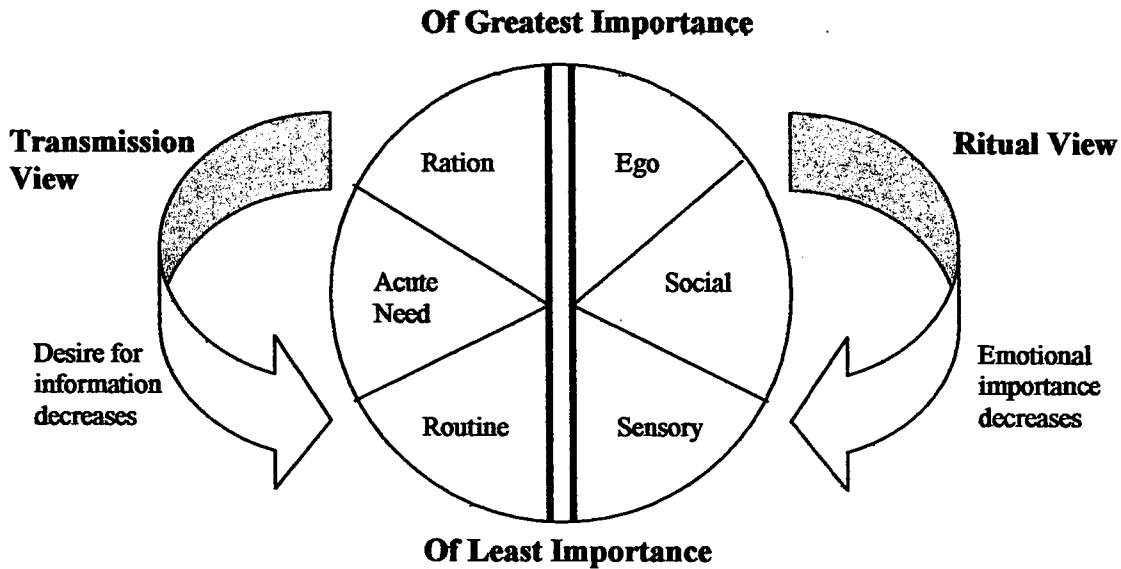


Figure 2: Six-Segment Message Strategy Wheel (Taylor, 1999)

(Pavlovian) product purchases are low-involvement, routinized decisions based often on product trial. Vaughn's fourth quadrant, Satisfaction, does not correspond as directly with Kotler's models. This quadrant relates to low-involvement, emotional products, the treats we give ourselves.

Critics (Ratchford, 1987; Rossiter, Percy & Donovan, 1991; Taylor, 1999) have noted the FCB Grid's failure to account for the social (Veblenian) aspect of consumer behavior and the confluence of Vaughn's high involvement and thinking decisions. In an effort to address this deficiency, Taylor returned to Kotler in developing an expanded Six-Segment Message Strategy Wheel. Rather than Vaughn's division between rational and emotional decision-making, Taylor begins by dividing his wheel based on two models of the communication process. The

Transmission model, similar to Edelman's conception of information, views communication as the transfer of information from a sender to a receiver via a coded message delivered by a medium. This view most closely corresponds to Vaughn's thinking side of the FCB Grid.

The Ritual view of communication, proposed by Carey (1975) and previously identified as similar to Edelman's conception of meaning, contends that communication is a process by which cultural understanding is created, repaired and maintained. As Taylor writes, "Under the transmission view, news is information; under a ritual view, news is drama that portrays an arena of dramatic forces and action" (p. 8). Schudson (1980) offers the same ritual conceptualization of advertising. "Advertising, whether or not it sells cars or chocolate, surrounds us and enters into us, so that when we speak we may speak in or with reference to the language of advertising and when we see we may see through schemata that advertising has made for us" (p. 210).

Moving from the top of the wheel from the most involving, or as Taylor frames them important, decisions to the bottom, least important decisions, Taylor offers six different message strategies: Ego, Social, and Sensory (all on the Ritual side), Ration, Acute Need, and Routine (on the Transmission side). Ego decisions correspond with Vaughn's Affective quadrant. These Freudian decisions allow a consumer to define himself for himself. The Social segment is characterized by the Veblenian Social-Psychological Model not addressed in the FCB Grid. Products purchased in this segment fill the consumer's emotional need to make statements about himself to others and to express affiliation. Taylor roots the Sensory segment in the Cyrenaics philosophy. These product decisions are motivated by sensory pleasure: taste, touch, sight, smell and sound. On the Transmission side, Ration decisions correspond with the Informative/Marshallian quadrant of the FCB Grid. The Acute Need segment accounts for decisions that otherwise would be Rational but, because of limited time, must occur without elaborate

deliberation. Finally, the Routine segment corresponds to Habitual/Pavlovian consumer behavior.

Taylor offers a comprehensive model that synthesizes over three decades of advertising research. His expanded Strategy Wheel not only incorporates Kotler and Vaughn's modeling of consumer behavior but also captures and can be used to further understand Petty and Cacioppo's Elaboration Likelihood Model (1983). The ELM suggests that people engage in two forms of processing en route to attitude change: central and peripheral. The central route to persuasion involves deliberate processing of an argument's merits. Along the peripheral route, people's attitudes are shaped by positive or negative cues associated with the argument or issue under consideration. The degree to which a person is likely to engage in elaboration of the issue or message determines which route is likely to be most effective in generating attitude change. When elaboration likelihood is high, the central route generally works, but the peripheral route may be most effective in situations of low elaboration. Taylor writes:

At first glance it appears that the left-hand, transmission side of the [Six-Segment Message Strategy] model would be "central route" and the right-hand side would be "peripheral route." However, further consideration suggests that ELM deals with two levels of informational cues. Therefore, Segment 6 [Ration] corresponds to the traditional "merits of the arguments" approach of the central route. Segments 4 [Routine] and 5 [Acute Need] are informational-based but made up primarily of what Petty and Cacioppa label "peripheral cues" – celebrity spokespersons, hyperbole, emphasis on brand names. Therefore, it is arguable that ELM is easily subsumed under the transmission side of the strategy wheel. (pp. 13-14)

As Taylor explains, understanding how people are likely to make decisions, advertising planners can develop creative/message strategies appropriate to a given situation. His model helps us do that. It can also be used, when changing message strategies, to identify competitors' strategies and fill gaps. Finally, while the FCB grid originally posited that certain strategies

worked for certain product categories based on how consumers make decisions within that category, Taylor suggests there is much more room for creativity. His research has found clustering of products within certain segments, yet he suggests “a workable communications strategy often comes from playful integration and combining of categories” (p. 16). He offers examples of “single-segment” strategies and “combined” strategies within the pizza category:

Routine: Every Friday night: X Pizza.

Social: X Pizza pleases family and friends

Social/Routine: Please your family every Friday night with X Pizza.

Acute Need/Social: X Pizza – for when friends drop by unexpectedly (p.16)

Taylor, thereby, suggests that our processing and motivations are often complex and multi-dimensional. His six segments need not be distinct; advertisers can and often do appeal to us on many levels, in many ways.

As this review demonstrates, scholars have drawn from a breadth of academic traditions in developing models to better understand and influence consumer behavior. Taylor offers the most comprehensive model for understanding the great diversity within consumer behavior and the varying ways in which advertising is created to appeal to consumers’ many motivations. As such it is an excellent starting point for political scientists to begin integrating their own understanding of voting behavior.

The Six-Segment Strategy Wheel and Political Behavior

Reviewing both consumer and political behavior research suggests a number of areas of overlap. This paper is meant to be more exploratory than decisive – an attempt to inspire dialogue. Therefore, the best course of action may be to provoke rather than conclude. As we move through the six-segment model, segment by segment, we will propose possibilities of synthesis. We will also offer examples of strategies often used in political campaigning, which suggest that candidates and their political consultants may have an intuitive, if not theoretical,

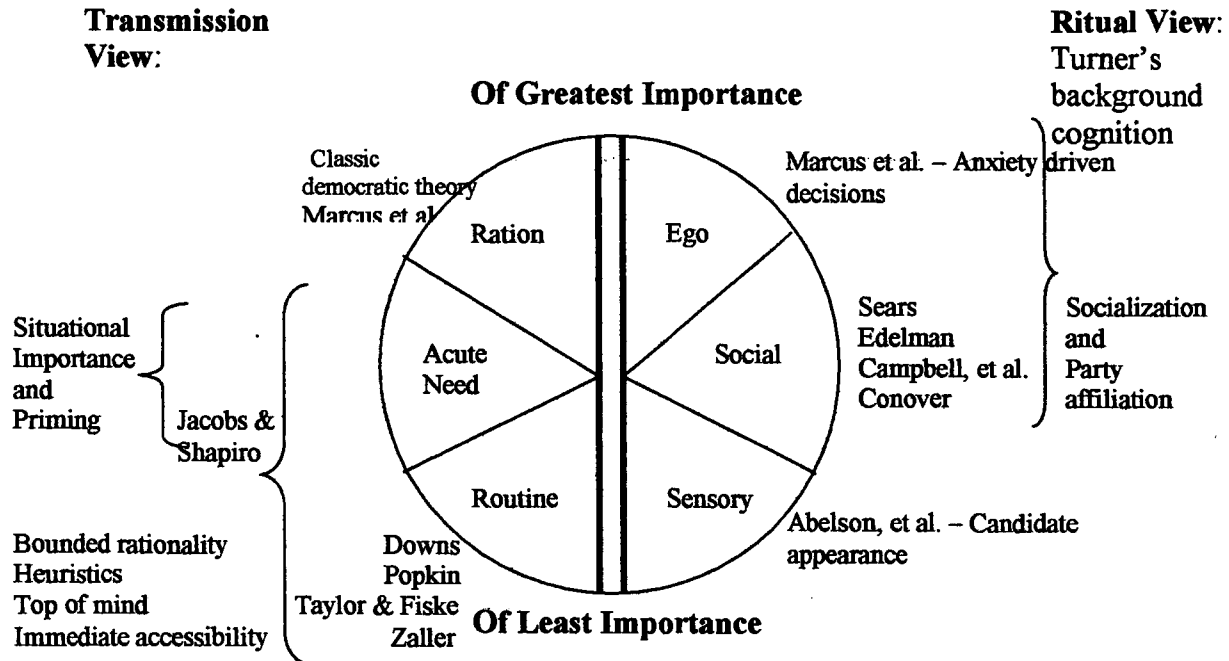


Figure 3: Six-Segment Message Strategy Wheel and Political Behavior Research

understanding of the diversity of political behavior.

Taylor began his development of the Strategy Wheel by reconceptualizing Vaughn's thinking-feeling axis into two views of communication: transmission and ritual. Marcus, Neuman and Mackuen's affective systems argument seems to both support and contradict Taylor's model. First, Taylor's move away from the reason-affect dichotomy to a model divided by perspectives of communication is much more consistent with the theory of complementary affective and rational systems. Still, Taylor's model divides the two. Notwithstanding Carey's notion that the two perspectives form part of a whole, Taylor models ritual and transmission (and by extension reason and affect) as if each can function exclusive of the other. The systemic arguments proposed by contemporary political behavior contests this. Marcus, Neuman and

Mackuen, for instance, make the argument that high rational involvement in political deliberation is a function of one's emotional response to the political context – namely anxiety.

With this in mind, let us now examine how Taylor's communication model-based approach can integrate some of the contentious findings in political behavior. If nothing else, the model unifies the expectations of the most devout rational choice theorist with the findings of the social-psychological school and ties the later bounded rationalist findings with the latest findings on affective reason. The rational segment of Taylor's model corresponds nicely with the classic ideas of an active, engaged and deliberative electorate. In this view, voters seek and receive information on which they then form issue stances. Likewise, Turner's (2000) ideas of background cognition or Edelman's (1960, 1971) views on arousal and quiescence are consistent with Carey's (1975) ritual communication. Turner's conceptual blending occurs beneath our conscious experience, so it is not transmissive. Turner argues that we reason and make choices based on communication like the British Airways advertisement: it is communicative in the sense that it signifies ways in which we can creatively interpret the world around us. Just as Schudson writes, this sort of communication "surrounds us and enters us... we may see through schemata that advertising has made for us" (p.210). This is both surprising and a testament of the narrowing division of affect and reason in political science, because Turner's paper appears within a book devoted to bounded rationality.

Political communication that is designed for the Ego segment suggests a connection within the viewer that is emotionally charged but not elaborated upon. This is the realm of the attack advertisement. These communications do not require the recipient to then rationally deliberate; rather they play on powerful personal feelings of fear and, as Marcus et al. stress, anxiety. This resonates well with Edelman's views of symbolic action. People are moved to

violence and destructive arousal when they perceive a threat. But these threats do not present themselves directly. They are more often than not unobservable. These perceived threats exist as imperiled expectations and are incited by symbolic cues: from ambiguous situations come constructed perspectives on what is fact and what is to come. The power of the symbol is its grasp on ambiguity. A symbolic threat is perceived and believed threatening by a collective, not merely individuals and it is irrefutable by fact alone. Much like the British Airways advertisement analyzed by Turner, the cues and symbols are not explicit: they suggest with visual or aural cues. The recipients process the messages in what Turner calls “backstage cognition.”

One of the best examples of political communication that targets this sort of decision is the “revolving door” advertisement produced for George Bush, Sr.’s campaign in 1988. The well-known Bush ad presented blurry images of vaguely black individuals passing through a turnstile, accompanied by threatening music, while a disembodied voice attacked Dukakis’s record on crime. Hardly an explicit policy advertisement, but the meaning is unmistakable and for some much more resonant. For a certain demographic, the spot suggests a connection between their fear of crime (largely associated with blacks) and Dukakis’s apparently soft treatment of dangerous criminals. If this advertisement was successful, and many believe that it was, it succeeded because it was able to affectively connect Dukakis with an already created and highly associational fear of crime. Because these affective responses already dependably exist within the individual, the advertisement resonated because it just associates something new with feelings, evaluations and anxieties that she already had. Marcus et al. argue that high anxiety causes the surveillance system to kick in, thereby initiating rational deliberation of the situation; an ego decision, however, by Taylor’s definition is an affective response to a ritualistic cue.

Marcus et al. seems to suggest that all rational decisions are triggered by ego; only after one's surveillance system has been activated, does the voter/consumer cross into the transmission mode.

Taylor's model indicates that social appeals are slightly less involving than ego appeals. The political behavior research that best fits into the social segment, however qualifies this division somewhat. Sears' (1993, 1980) theory of symbolic politics and Edelman's (1971) conception of symbolic arousal both acknowledge that decisions are made as a result of social forces. Sears' principal contention is that people acquire stable but affective responses to symbols through conditioning and socialization (Sears, 1993). While attitudes towards objects are motivated by self-interest, they often are more a conditioned response to these symbolic predispositions. As Sears writes, virtually every war has been fought around rallying symbols. Intense emotions surround situations that often have few personal ramifications. But to what extent are these socially driven decisions truly separate from the ego decisions discussed above? Regardless of how symbolic sensitivities are acquired, they are clearly an expression of and mediator for wants and needs of the individual – that is, the ego. Edelman's concept of status, loosely defined as the individual's perception of himself in the social mix, illustrates how inextricable Taylor's two segments really are.

In any case, the Veblenian Social-Psychological segment is most consistent with partisan-based group identification. People make social statements when they post campaign yard signs, bumper stickers or wear buttons or t-shirts. These are examples of pronouncements of group identification and they have a social effect. The idea of group identification is central to Campbell et al.'s (1960) concept of party identification. Conover (1984) argues that group identification shapes how people will perceive political issues and defines how they will evaluate

them. Recent research by Jenner and Kenny (2003) suggests that people tend to consider more knowledgeable and in fact will tend to change their vote towards political discussants that are perceived to be “on their side” rather than those who are just considered proximate.

The third and least involving segment on the emotional side of the wheel, Sensory, has received little scholarly attention in political science literature but considerable attention in persuasion research. Anecdotes suggest that an aesthetically appealing candidate has an advantage over a less appealing one. The Kennedy-Nixon debates are infamous for this. Those who saw the debates on television, tended to believe that Kennedy won. For those who listened to the debates on the radio, the perception was otherwise. The explanation put forward for this discrepancy is that Kennedy, relaxed and tanned, looked better than the translucent-skinned and sweating Nixon. Research findings in this area have been mixed but several studies indicate that the more attractive persuader tends to enjoy greater success. Several reasons are posited for this result. For example, attractiveness may increase the liking one feels for the persuader (O’Keefe, 1990, p. 152). Although most research tends to find that the central traits for the evaluation of candidates are competence and integrity, there is some indication that emotional response to a candidate can have a strong and independent effect on the evaluation of that candidate (Abelson, Kinder, Peters and Fiske, 1982; Page, 1978). This is also consistent with Marcus, et al.’s dispositional system. Since it is of such low involvement, people are not usually conscious of their dispositions but they do flavor how someone perceives an object.

Within the transmission side of the model, Taylor envisions routine and acute need as discrete segments. Political behavior research, however, again blurs the distinction between the two. Both the routine and acute need segments correspond with research showing that most citizens do not spend much time elaborating on political issues. Both Campbell et al.(1960) and

Downs' (1957) conceptions of the disengaged, uninformed voter fall into one of these two segments, as do the political heuristics research (eg. Popkin, 1991). So do cognitive findings that people make decisions off the "top of their head" (Taylor and Fiske, 1978). Categorization depends on the level of elaboration and how aware the voter is of the heuristics being used. For instance, faced with a decision the following day, a citizen falls into the acute need segment when she votes for candidate 'A' as a result of reading a piece of direct mail in which the Sierra Club endorses the candidate. Likewise, another individual would engage in a so-called routine decision if she voted for the Republican candidate because she always votes Republican.

Acute Need suggests that with limited time to make decisions, voters will rely on heuristics and other short cuts. Campaigners can take advantage of this by using tactics such as "push cards" and other platform summaries that will quickly provide information on a candidate just prior to voting. As Jacobs and Shapiro (2000) argue, rather than relying on well-formulated arguments to persuade, politicians can simply prime voters by using repetitive messages to make some issues more salient than others. In part, the Routine segment helps articulate some of the problems of consistency and constraint in public opinion and the strength of elite discourse in directing mass opinion. Zaller's (1992) idea of immediately accessible considerations reflects routinized decisions. Just as consumers will select many products based on immediacy and recall of simple brand name, without too much deliberation, voters or survey respondents often will support whatever happens to come to mind. Most people pay notoriously limited attention to politics. Zaller argues that these low involvement individuals will fill their mind with partially consistent arguments, ideas and considerations. When these people are asked a survey question, they are being asked to respond to a question that they have not deliberated over and they are being asked to respond in great haste. They will, Zaller argues, typically make use of whatever is

immediately accessible in memory, including image advertising and recent media coverage, to make a choice among the options offered. Therefore, he writes, “survey responses are a function of immediately accessible ‘considerations’ where the flow of information in elite discourse determines which considerations are salient” (p. 36). But just how different is this from the concept of “backstage cognition” that we categorized within the ritual half of the model? This highlights a discrepancy between Taylor’s categorization and some recent political behavior research. Unlike Taylor and some Rational Choice scholars, Marcus et al. (2000) envision the routinized decision as a product of the affective subsystems, not conscious and rational involvement. This is not to say there is agreement on this issue – far from it. For instance the “on-line processing” hypothesis (Anderson and Hubert, 1963) and the “hot cognition” hypothesis (Abelson, 1963) both envision reasoned cognition as the basis for these routinized tasks.²

Finally, the Ration segment of the wheel is both the region of the highly elaborative decision envisioned by classical rational choice theory and the anxiety-spurred rationality of Marcus et al. (2000). As they see it, “the activation of the surveillance system goes a long way toward enabling people to choose rationally. Not only does it stimulate people to acquire more, and more accurate, information, but it also motivates them to use that information more decisively” (p.113). It is within this segment that the most politically active voters exist. These people actively seek information and formulate their decisions based on rational judgments. Still, Marcus et al. offer a major contribution to Taylor’s Six-Segment Strategy Wheel by suggesting that the most important/involving decisions are a combination of Ego, therefore affect, and Ration. The affective subsystems drive the Rational.

² Lodge and Taber describe “on-line” processing as the mechanism where evaluative tags for concepts in our memory are continually updated as we process new information. The “hot cognition” hypothesis, a response to early cognitive models that eschewed emotion, argues that in addition to memorial content, all social information and concepts are affectively charged.

Re-envisioning the Model

In Carey's seminal paper on the on the ritualistic and transmission aspects of communication, he uses an example of reading a newspaper to illustrate how both perspectives are part of all communication. The informative quality of the paper is transmission of new information; the ritualistic element is the dramatic exchange of a particular view – a cultural perspective – of the world around us. Vaughn's FCB grid presents affect and reason unambiguously as opposite ends of a single dimension. Likewise, Taylor's strategy wheel, using the ritual and transmission views of communication as correlative to reason and affect, represents the views in his model as discrete. If one thing is obvious from an examination of the political behavior literature in the context of Taylor's model, it is that the segments are much more permeable than is suggested by Taylor and that the dimensional opposition of reason and affect is misleading. The most recent research in political behavior (Marcus et al., 2000), neuropsychology (Damasio, 1999) and social psychology (Zajonc, 1980, 1988) offers weight to this assertion.

The reason/affect dualism set up in the model is, according to these scholars, just part of the deeply imbedded and widely accepted idea that emotion and reason are separate. Marcus et al. on the other hand, conceptualize reason and affect not as oppositional, but as complementary and interactive: "Affective systems manage both our response to novelty or threat and our reliance on established habits. More importantly, our work suggests that in addition to managing our emotional reactions to things that are novel, threatening, and familiar, affect also influences when and how we *think* about such things"(p.9). Likewise, Damasio hypothesizes a homeostatic dynamic system where high reason and even the most basic dynamic patterns of basic life

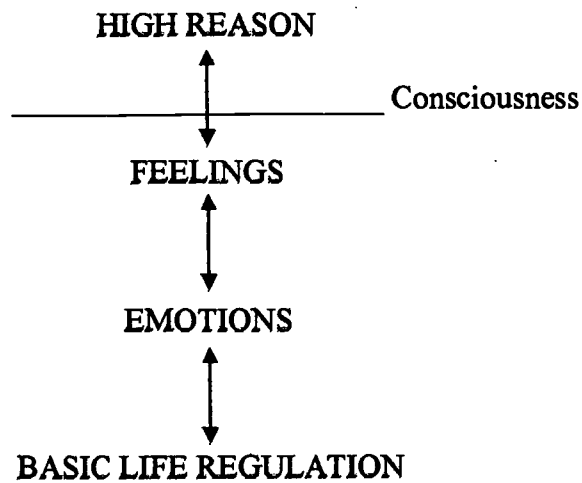


Figure 4: Damasio's (1999) Homeostatic Dynamic System of Life Regulation

regulation are all integrated. This vision of human response posits that reason is just the most sophisticated response system that has evolved from previous and less complex systems including feelings and emotions. Figure 4 outlines the basics of his ideas.

Marcus et al.'s affective subsystems would fall somewhere in between feelings and emotions. As they envision it, consistent with Damasio's ideas, higher levels of anxiety and enthusiasm would, acting like feedback, drive cognitive processing to higher levels of complexity – that is expending more energy to evaluate a possible threat. If someone is anxious enough, she will consciously process the message in a manner consistent with high reason. While Taylor's model does not explicitly contradict the interaction of emotion and reason, it does suggest greater separation between and independent functioning of the two.

Damasio's model also helps to elucidate the interconnectivity of the segments within the ritual view of communication. Taylor's model represents discrete segments for social, ego and sensory decisions; however, as we've already pointed out the divisions are certainly not as clear

when we consider expectations of political behavior. Broadly speaking, and as Taylor suggests, ritual communication can speak to all or any combination at once. Damasio's levels of life regulation show that each of these segments can be seen as inter-connected systems in which we exist and must maintain a state of homeostatic balance. Just as we routinely moderate basic life functions unconsciously – routine balancing of metabolism and body temperature to maintain living conditions – we also systemically respond to infringements on our psychological status (Ego). When these transgressions are minor, we may experience a vague response in the realm of emotions or feelings that don't manifest themselves consciously. The contravention, however, may be significant enough – say a policy change to Medicare benefits – to make us consciously aware of the perceived threat to our self (ego) and perhaps even our autonomic response to the slight.

We simultaneously exist in all three of these segments and are constantly working to achieve balance in each of them at once. The senses are connected to the Ego, which is connected to the Social. As Edelman (1971) states explicitly, the self is as much a social creation as it is an individual within society. The concept of status is essentially the Ego in society. According to Damasio's hypothesis, the concept of self (Ego) is a more complex sensory system through which the individual human survives in a potentially hostile environment. In short, any model that attempts to account for human response to communication should model these as interrelated.

To that end, let us propose a new model that attempts to integrate the various inconsistencies that exist between political behavior research (and the research upon which it is based) and Taylor's ideas of message strategies. Much of the recent political behavior research, particularly Edelman and Marcus, et al. suggests erasing the division between transmission and

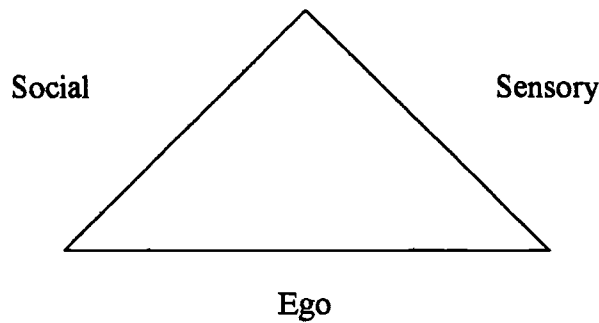


Figure 5: Model Base: Integrated Ritual Aspects of Communication

ritual communication. Rather it seems that transmission must be based on and happen within the context of ritual communication. Thus, the elements of Taylor's ritual view of communication act as the foundation of our modified model. Further Damasio's evidence that the three elements – ego, social and sensory – work in concert suggests that they form a triad, the base of a pyramid. The symbolic world in which we live, and the meaning which we make of it, provide the foundation upon which all of our decisions are made. The motivations for our decisions are a tight integration of our desires to define ourselves both for ourselves and to others and the sensory input that we process. As Taylor's model demonstrates, persuasive messages may stress one particular aspect of this triad. Nike advertising, for example, encouraging consumers to "Just Do It." appeals to the desire for self-actualization, an ego need, while an ad for toothpaste that ensures fresh breath appeals to our social desire to be accepted. The best way to represent this in our pyramid model would be to rotate the pyramid such that the central need played upon in the advertising is in the foreground while the others would reside in the background.

Increased Elaboration

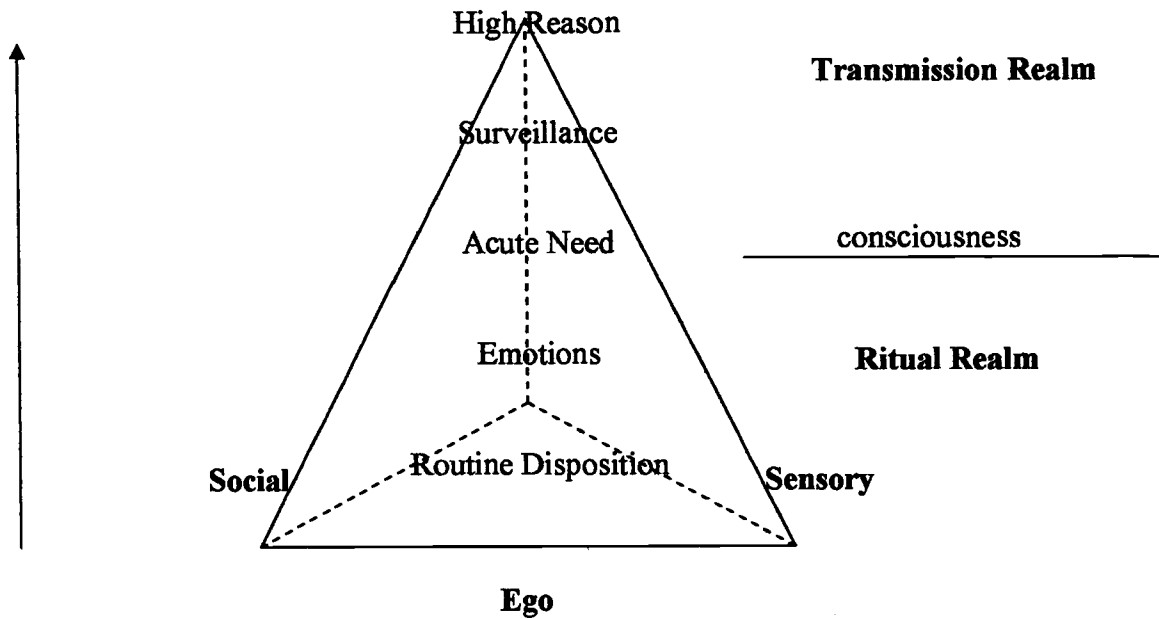


Figure 6: Integrated Model of Political/Consumer Behavior

Levels of elaboration then progress from the base of this pyramid where one's consumer and voting behavior is based on routine disposition to the peak where one engages in high reasoning. In between, one may experience some disruption to her routine, either because there is a change in the political frontier that causes her anxiety or simply because she is asked to quickly offer a political opinion on a topic to which she has given little thought. The degree of disruptions, of course, will vary as will the response. Often the disruptions are minor and the voter/consumer can rely on existing schema or heuristics to resolve the anxiety. When the disruption warrants, she will actively seek additional information and engage in conscious cognitive deliberation.

This model, in seeking to integrate current findings in advertising and political science, offers a contribution to both fields of inquiry. For both we hopefully have provided a way to

understand the variety of complementary, rather than contradictory, findings over the last several decades. This model underscores the numerous ways that people may approach consumer as well as voting/political decisions. For some people, these decisions are quite important and therefore they will take time to rationally seek out and evaluate information. For others, politics is of low importance and their decisions are driven more by low-involvement information processing. That is, they will rely on the most recent and least time consuming information or they will turn to more symbolic cues such as a candidate's appearance to formulate opinions. At times of extreme distress – either when one is pressured to quickly express an opinion or when the cultural climate raises one's evaluation of the importance of politics – people will look for additional information but may have only limited time. At these times, it appears that voters will begin to synthesize their opinions into more consistent ideologies. Consumers will turn to friends, opinion leaders or informational advertising to gather information. Our model also takes into account the importance of socialization, party affiliation and one's personal feelings in formulating political opinions as well as consumer choices.

Taylor has suggested that advertisers can combine segments of the Strategy Wheel to create complex messages that appeal to multiple consumer motivations. Similarly, the Integrated Model of Political Behavior offered here suggests that political behavior often spans several of the Wheel's segments and changes with various situations. Further research might examine, as Nie, et al. and Pomper have, what segments are employed in various political or cultural climates. For example, do voters make more rational decisions during presidential elections while they rely on more Ritual decisions, perhaps party affiliation or simply the appearance of the candidate, for local elections? Content analyses might examine how political candidates and

consultants employ appeals across the various segments of the Wheel. It would be interesting to see if certain appeals are used at specific stages in a campaign or in various types of elections.

This paper also offers an important contribution to Taylor's model. Marcus, et al. contend that Rational decisions are merely a function of the Ego. It is only through self-interest that we are motivated to seek out information. Their argument initially may appear to contradict Taylor's segmenting of the Ration and Ego on opposite sides of the Wheel; however, we believe Marcus et al. merely underscore Taylor's move away from conceptualizing decision making as either thinking or feeling. Rather than the thinking-feeling conceptualization originally offered by Vaughn, Taylor's process-based model sees some decisions as based on the transfer of information. At the low end of the Wheel that information may be quite limited and/or fragmented. While at the upper end, voters/consumers seek more elaborated and complete information. On the Ritual side, decisions and the cues used to formulate them are much more symbolic. Highly involving Ego decisions may be based on strong fear appeals or other Ego-oriented motivations. Sometimes, as may have been the case for some voters seeing the "revolving door" ad, they react to the stimulus without being motivated to seek additional information. At other times, Ego-based appeals may encourage people to move over to the Transmission side of the Wheel and begin actively seeking confirmation or refutation of the argument.

Finally, this paper demonstrates the value of inter-disciplinary investigation. Much of what we seek to know already may have been answered elsewhere. Just as Vaughn and Taylor drew from psychology and sociology to better understand advertising strategies, political scientist and advertisers have much to learn from each other. This paper offers a starting point

for a more integrated view of voting behavior and the approaches campaigners can or might use to influence it.

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Understanding Celebrity Endorsers in Cross-Cultural Contexts
An Exploratory Analysis of South Korean and US Advertising

by

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An Exploratory Analysis of South Korean and US Advertising

Abstract

This study links McCracken's "cultural meaning transfer" model (1989) with Hofstede's cultural typology, in order to understand the cultural meanings of celebrity endorsers in cross-cultural advertising. The content analysis of South Korean and US newspaper ads finds that ads in a high uncertainty avoidance and power distance culture employ a greater number of celebrity endorsers and that there is some possibility for international advertisers to use standardized celebrity endorser strategy. Implications and directions for future studies are discussed.

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INTRODUCTION

Using celebrity endorsers is one of the most popular strategies of advertising in the US (Agrawal & Kamakura, 1995). According to industry sources, approximately a quarter of all television commercials feature a celebrity person (Erdogan, Baker & Tagg, 2001). US companies paid more than \$1 billion to nearly 2,000 athletes for endorsement deals and licensing rights in 1996 (Belch & Belch, 1998). Basketball icon Michael Jordan, one of the most successful advertising endorsers, makes an estimated \$40 million a year in endorsement fees from companies such as *McDonald's*, *Nike*, *General Mills*, *Hanes*, *Quaker Oats* (makers of Gatorade), and *MCI COLLECT CALL* (Horovitz, 1999). Ten out of the top 20 most effective and remembered TV commercials in the US, as reported by *Advertising Age* (2002), were celebrity-endorsed ads, including *Pepsi Cola* (Britney Spears), *KFC* (Jason Alexander), and *Hanes* (Michael Jordan). Recently, a rising TV idol "Joe Millionaire" (Evan Marriott) joined existing pitchman Jason Alexander in two upcoming TV commercials plugging *KFC* Boneless Wings.

However, the cost is not always worth it. For instance, the #1 rental car company, *Hertz*, used O. J. Simpson as its spokesperson for 20 years. The company lost all of that equity when Simpson was accused of murdering his ex-wife (Belch & Belch, 1998). The global brand *Pepsi Cola* hurt their name value seriously when the tarnished personal lives of their three celebrity endorsers -- Mike Tyson, Madonna, and Michael Jackson -- became public (Till & Shimp, 1998).

A plethora of studies have examined celebrity endorser effectiveness and consumer responses (e.g., Bower, 2001; Bower & Landreth, 2001; Frieden, 1984; Goldsmith, Lafferty, & Newell, 2000; Kahle & Homer, 1985; Kamins, 1989, 1990; Kamins, Brand, Hoeke, & Moe,

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1989; Stafford, Stafford, & Day, 2002). However, little is known about the impact of cultural contexts on roles of celebrity endorsers in ads (see McCracken, 1989, for exception).

McCracken (1989) explains that the success of celebrity-endorsed ads depends on whether the celebrity endorser is meaningful to consumer values and norms within a culture. Interpreting celebrity endorsers as cultural value representatives, this study attempts to go further: In this complex global market situation, how can celebrity endorsers work across cultures?

Companies continue to expand their markets beyond national borders and have an increasing interest in global marketing strategy, but international marketers, advertising agencies and academicians have been debating the applicability of globalized or localized international advertising for almost four decades (see Agrawal, 1995; Onkvisit & Shaw, 1999, for detailed review). These debates involve disagreement over whether consumer needs become homogeneous (e.g., Levitt, 1983; Kanso, 1992), or whether consumer reaction differs across cultures, reflecting their indigenous cultural norms and values (e.g., Lin, 2001; Mueller, 1987, 1992; Zandpour, Campos, Catalano, & Chang, 1994). Although international advertising researchers have stressed the importance of cultural factors in making strategic decisions about globalization or localization and have assessed the values reflected in the ads (Lin, 1993, 2001; Mueller, 1987, 1992, 1996), practitioners lean toward globalization because of greater cost effectiveness, simplified strategic planning, and consistent brand image (see Agrawal, 1995). In relation to this globalization, international advertisers and brand managers increasingly consider the potential global popularity of their celebrity endorsers (Howard, 2003). For instance, Yao Ming, an NBA player, is contracted to endorse the sports drink *Gatorade*, which the advertiser attempts to push globally. Given that celebrity endorsement of certain global brands assists in building a consistent brand image worldwide, it is

worthwhile to understand what kind of cultural meanings celebrity endorsers generate across cultures. In so doing, this study is a small step in exploring how celebrity endorsers in advertising are presented and interpreted in relation to cultural meanings and values.

This study compares US and South Korean newspaper ads. South Korea (hereafter, Korea) was selected because of its economic importance, as the US' ninth largest import and export market in 1998 (Moon & Franke, 2000), and as the world's tenth largest advertising market in 1999 (*Ad Age International*, 1999). According to a recent Advertising Age report (2003), a Korean advertising agency, Cheil Communications, is ranked 19th among the world's top 50 advertising organizations (ranked by advertising revenue in 2002)

Because of its close ties between the two countries and importance of Korea as a global market, a number of cross-cultural studies between the US and Korea have been conducted, including examinations of cultural values reflected in ads (Cho, Kwon, Gentry, Jun, & Kropp, 1999; Han & Shavitt, 1994; Tak, Kaid, & Lee, 1997), advertising execution styles and appeals (Miracle, Chang, & Taylor, 1992), consumer attitudes (Yoon, Muehling, & Cho, 1996), and work ethics (Moon & Franke, 2000). This study adds to the knowledge of advertising and values for these two national cultures by examining celebrity endorsers in ad contents, based on the Hofstede's (1991) cultural framework (uncertainty avoidance, power distance) linked with McCracken's (1989) "cultural meaning transfer" model. As such, this study will give some insights of a particular type of global marketing strategy to practitioners.

Celebrity Endorsers in US and Korean Ads

A celebrity is "known for being well-known" (Boorstin, 1961, p.57) and is defined as an individual (actor, sports figure, entertainer, politician, etc.) who is known to the public for his or her achievements (Blackwell, Miniard, & Engel, 2001). These achievements are often

in areas unrelated to the product class being promoted (e.g., Britney Spears for *Pepsi Cola*, Tiger Woods for *Buick* cars, Kobe Bryant for *McDonald's*). Frieden (1984) defines celebrities as well-known individuals who are directly or indirectly associated with their endorsing product category (e.g., Michael Jordan for *Nike* athletic shoes, Kobe Bryant for *Adidas* basketball shoes, Tiger Woods for *Nike* golf equipment). In their endorsed advertising, celebrities have played a variety of promotional roles: giving a testimonial citing, recommending the products' benefits, lending their names to a product (e.g., *Jordan* cologne, *Nike Air Jordan*), playing as an actor in the advertisement, and representing a brand or company as a spokesperson while the contract is valid.

Although US advertisers vigorously embrace using celebrity endorsers in their ads, Korean advertisers rely even more heavily on celebrity endorsements. Of the TV commercials screened, about 32% of the ads included celebrity endorsers, and 59% of prime time TV commercials used celebrities as their endorsers (Son, 2001). The popularity of endorsers depends on the advertising belief that a celebrity endorser is the only way to differentiate their advertised products from those of their competitors.

Ever since the Korean advertising market opened for foreign countries in 1988 and the use of Western endorsers has been deregulated, it is also an increasing trend to use Western celebrities. For instance, Brooke Shields pushed *Aloe* drinks, and Kenny G represented *Inkel* audio. Shannon Doherty, from the popular TV show *Beverly Hills 90210*, appeared on *LG* cosmetics, while Kim Basinger pitched *Vitamin Shampoo*. Cindy Crawford played a role as an endorser in *LG* fashion; sexy star Sharon Stone of the sex thriller movie *Basic Instinct* made the *Hanhwa* energy ad hot; Claudia Schiffer endorsed *GV* jeans; Naomi Campbell pushed *Mercoledi* fashion clothing. Not only have these movie stars played role models in

Korean advertising, but so have Western scholars, politicians, and news reporters. One of the most successful uses of Western celebrities was the *Daewoo* car advertising campaign using Karl Bernstein, who won the Pulitzer Prize for his coverage of Watergate and Nixon.

Likewise, the futurist Alvin Tofler endorsed *Hyundai*, and British ex-prime minister Margaret Thatcher appeared on *Samsung* corporate image advertising (Lee, 2001).

The use of various Western celebrities has not always been successful. It is noteworthy that many campaigns in which Western celebrities use their sexuality and physical attractiveness have had disappointing results, while ads using credible and powerful Western celebrities were successful (Lee, 2001). One exceptional example of a global brand using Western celebrities is *Vidal Sassoon Shampoo* (Kim, 2001). Kim (2001) explains that the *Vidal Sassoon Shampoo* campaign became successful by adopting a 'globalization' (or standardization) strategy using Vidal Sassoon himself as an endorser. This standardization strategy followed *Vidal Sassoon's* 'localization' strategy, which used Korean celebrity endorsers showing off their glamorous hair but was not effective. Ever since, more global product advertisers have adopted a standardization strategy (Kim, 2001). Nonetheless, Lee (2001) has cautioned that global brand managers and advertisers should be careful of using Western celebrities, and that differing cultural tastes, norms, and values must be taken into account.

Given that, how can such various results of using Western celebrity endorsers in global/domestic products advertising be explained in cultural context? What makes celebrity endorsers appeal to consumers across cultures?

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Cultural differences between the US and Korea

Culture is defined as “the interactive aggregate of common characteristics that influence a human group’s response to its environment” (Hofstede, 1980, p.19) and as the behavioral norms, attitudinal tendencies, and beliefs shared among people from the same group (Gundykunst, 1995). Thus, working as a “lens,” culture determines how the world is seen (McCracken, 1986, p.72).

Understanding cultural differences is often considered a prerequisite for successful international advertising (de Mooij, 1998). Consumers grow up in a particular culture and become accustomed to that culture's value systems, beliefs, and perception processes. Consequently, they respond to advertising messages that are congruent with their culture, rewarding advertisers who understand that culture and tailor ads to reflect its values (Zhang & Gelb, 1996).

In a cultural context, the celebrity endorser is a cultural hero (Hofstede, 1991). Cultural heroes are “persons, alive or dead, real or imaginary, who possess characteristics that are highly prized in a society, and thus serve as role models for behavior” (de Mooij, 1998, p.45). McCracken (1989), in a similar context, argues that celebrities are those who “draw these powerful meanings from the roles they assume in their television, movie, military, athletic, and other careers and each new dramatic role brings the celebrity into contact with a range of objects, persons, and contexts” (p. 315). In his “cultural meaning transfer” model, celebrity endorsers should possess shared cultural meanings, imbue cultural meanings into products, and deliver such meanings to the consumers throughout the subsequent processes. Britney Spears, for instance, transferred her distinctive cultural images based on her records, live performances, and video appearances into the Pepsi Cola ads, which successfully

promoted its product concept of a “new generation” to its young target audiences (Peter & Olson, 1993).

Consistent with this concept of meaning transfer, Cohen (1992) found that advertisements with Asian spokespersons produce more favorable attitudes toward high technology engineering products than do ads with white spokespersons, while the reverse is observed for products associated with status. Gwinner and Eaton (1999) have adopted the ‘cultural meaning transfer’ model to hypothesize that a sporting event's image is transferred to a brand through event sponsorship activity. Hirshman and Thompson (1997) agree that the relative success of a celebrity-endorsed ad depends on how well its images of cultural icons fit to its promotional purposes and consumer tastes.

Taken together, “cultural meaning transfer” has some important implications for companies using celebrity endorsers. Marketers should first decide on the image or symbolic meaning important to their target audience for this particular product, service, or company, and then determine which celebrity best represents the meaning or image to be projected.

Given that celebrities who have been typecast are more likely to have shared cultural meanings that can be associated with a product, how would the celebrity endorsers be different in other global markets? In applying McCracken’s model -- that celebrity endorsers should have shared cultural meanings--, this study also adopts Hofstede’s typology of culture (1980, 1983, 1991) as a framework for testing cross-cultural differences in order to understand the cultural meanings of celebrity endorsers. Hofstede’s cultural typology consists of four dimensions on which societies differ, representing the cultural value system of the majority of the middle class in the workplace. These dimensions are: individualism/collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and

masculinity/femininity. This study adopts the two cultural dimensions of power distance and uncertainty avoidance in particular, in that these are distinctly different cultural dimensions between the US and Korea and fit well into discussing the different cultural meanings of celebrity endorsers.

Uncertainty avoidance

The uncertainty avoidance dimension involves "the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations" (Hofstede 1991, p. 113). Individuals in low uncertainty avoidance cultures, such as the US, are relatively comfortable with ambiguity and are tolerant of others' behaviors and opinions. Where uncertainty avoidance is high, such as Japan and Korea, consumers rely more on formal rules (Gudykunst et al., 1996), absolute truth (Hofstede, 1983), and the advice of those whom they consider to be experts (Hofstede, 1980). This dimension has been adopted in cross-cultural advertising studies that investigate the ethical perception of advertising practitioners between the US and Korea (Moon & Franke, 2000), the recall of and attitude toward comparative advertising (Donthu, 1998), and the difference of the form and content of political advertising messages between the US and Korea (Tak, Kaid, & Lee, 1997). For instance, Donthu (1998) hypothesized that low uncertainty avoidance cultures may be very receptive to comparative advertising, whereas high uncertainty avoidance cultures may not be comfortable with such advertising. This discomfort results from the fact that comparative advertising is an unfamiliar approach to advertising that is therefore considered ambiguous and risky. Further, he found that consumer attitudes toward comparative ads were not very positive in a high uncertainty avoidance culture. Likewise, Zandpour et al. (1994) analyzed the content of TV commercials collected from different cultures (the US, Mexico, the UK, France, Germany,

Spain, Taiwan, and Korea) and found that cultures with high uncertainty avoidance relied more frequently on a trustworthy source to provide them with logical reasoning and visual information. Thus, the implication for celebrity endorsement advertising is that uncertainty reduction requires credible, trustworthy, and knowledgeable endorsers in high uncertainty avoidance cultures. Especially for a high involvement product that is newly introduced and very expensive (and thus a risk-taking purchase), people in a high uncertainty avoidance culture may rely more on experts or credible celebrities than people in a low uncertainty avoidance culture.

Power distance

Power distance in Hofstede's typology involves the extent to which people accept the unequal distribution of power in society and organizations (Hofstede, 1980, 1991), or the extent to which people see authority as a basic facet of the society (Gudykunst et al., 1996). Hofstede (1980) claims that the cultural dimension of power distance explains how different societies have addressed basic human inequalities in view of social status, prestige, wealth, and power. High power distance countries, such as Korea, are more tolerant of hierarchies and autocratic leadership and more likely to expect clear directions. In contrast, low power distance countries, such as the US, are more likely to seek factual evidence and reasoning in relation to a particular course of action (Hofstede, 1991). People in a high power distance culture, therefore, tend to obey the recommendations of public and authority figures such as celebrities and high-status figures, in comparison with low power distance cultures (Zandupor et al., 1994). Thus, in a high power distance culture, people with power are considered to be right, and function as referent groups (Albers-Miller & Gelb, 1996).

To apply this to celebrity endorsement ads, celebrity endorsers -- who wield their salience and fame as a power to guide consumers -- might be more prevalent in a high power distance culture than for those in a low power distance culture, which has little tolerance for authority, and focuses more on self-interest, autonomy, and independence (Hofstede, 1980). Celebrities in a high power distance culture transfer their publicly salient and powerful image to consumers, and deliver these images via product ads. Therefore, the following hypotheses can be proposed:

H1: Ads in a high power distance and high uncertainty avoidance culture (Korea) will have a greater number of celebrity endorsers than those in a low power distance and low uncertainty avoidance culture (the US).

H2: Ads in a high power distance and high uncertainty avoidance culture (Korea) will have a greater number of expert (product-relevant) celebrity endorsers than those in a low power distance and low uncertainty avoidance culture (the US).

Product involvement interacting with cultural characteristics

Product involvement has been one of the most important and widely employed concepts in the advertising research domain, particularly when a psychological process of advertising is examined (e.g., Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983; Petty & Priester, 1994). Here, product involvement, according to Bowen and Chaffee (1974), is a relation between consumer and product that theoretically operates as a contingency or necessary condition, governing the relevance of an ad's appeal to the consumer. In this content-analytic study, the degree of product involvement is determined by factors including how expensive a product is, how frequently the product is purchased, how long it lasts, and what the consequences are of a product choice.

How will this product involvement variable interact with cultural values of uncertainty avoidance and power distance to explain presence and meaning of celebrity endorsers? Following cultural characteristics, high involvement product ads in a high uncertainty avoidance culture should employ celebrity endorsers (and especially the endorsers' expertise). This is because high involvement product ads can be considered highly risky, and ads in a high uncertainty culture should meet consumers' expectations, since those consumers want to avoid high risk and uncertainty. However, such reasoning contradicts dual-processing persuasion literature (e.g., the Elaboration Likelihood Model and the Heuristic Systematic Model), which posits that product endorsers (i.e., experts or celebrities) exert greater impact under low involvement conditions (Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983). However, in their experiment to investigate the interactive role of source expertise, time of source identification, and involvement, Homer and Kahle (1990) found that source expertise can serve as the central persuasion cue under the proper conditions, implying advertisers should not assume that all source information is peripherally processed. Given this inconsistent and contradictory account of the role of celebrity endorsers in advertising, it is interesting to see the role of product involvement in celebrity-endorsed ads across cultures. Therefore, the following research question is addressed:

RQ1: With low and high product involvement considered, how differently are celebrity endorsers presented in ads across the two cultures?

International products and celebrity endorsers in Korean ads

As discussed earlier, international marketers and advertisers increasingly execute their product ads in Korean media, but little is known about their celebrity endorser strategy. The

terms and definitions of domestic and international products have been various; Samli (1995) defined the former as products developed to satisfy very local and specific needs, and the latter as products designed to satisfy common needs around the world among different nations. For instance, in the same computer product category, such a brand as *Hyunju* (a Korean brand) is a domestic product, whereas *IBM* and *Macintosh* would be international/global products. Based on McCracken's "cultural meaning transfer" model (1989), either domestic or foreign celebrities, whichever are the most culturally acceptable and meaningful for the endorsed ads, and eventually for consumers, are likely to be shown. In addition, considering some contingent conditions such as standardization vs. specialization strategy and complex Korean media environments importing MTV and Hollywood movies, how many international product ads are executed in Korean newspaper? How many global brand advertisers adopt standardized or localized celebrity endorser strategies? Taking these considerations together, then, the following research question is addressed:

RQ3: Among international product ads in Korea, how frequently are domestic and foreign celebrity endorsers presented?

METHOD

Content analysis was used to examine celebrity endorsers shown in US and Korean newspaper advertising. Newspaper advertisements were chosen because they are the most comparable and generalizable for all target segments¹, but are relatively neglected in cross-cultural advertising studies.

¹ For instance, the magazine medium in Korea is not well developed due to the small market size and the low readership; TV commercials may not be comparable, either, because Korea has only 15-second TV commercials and no ads inserted during programming.

Sampling. Advertisements in *Chosun-ilbo* (Korea) and the *New York Times* (U.S) were selected randomly. These newspapers are relatively well matched (Tak et al., 1997) in that each is arguably the most salient and influential newspaper in each country and has nationwide readership. Based on constructed week sampling, newspapers throughout the year 2000 were collected. Sunday-issued newspapers, duplicate ads, local ads, classifieds, and movie ads were excluded to avoid sampling bias and lack of matching. The unit of analysis is a considerable-size ad², which totals 1318 (694 for *Chosun-ilbo*; 624 for *The New York Times*) ads.

Coding Procedure. Two bilingual graduate students coded the ads. Taking into account the potential for gender differences and cultural biases (Miracle, 2001), one female bilingual Korean American who has lived in the US for more than 15 years coded the entire data set. The other coder was a Korean male who had just arrived in the US. He coded 170 randomly selected sample ads -- more than ten percent (Wimmer & Dominick, 1994) -- to calculate intercoder reliability. The coders worked independently and were blind to the hypotheses. Before coding, six training sessions were conducted, in which the coders practiced coding and contributed to the coding manuals.

The coders were instructed to enter a simple “yes” or “no” to indicate the presence or absence of human models, and then celebrities, for each ad. Human models should show more than the upper torso, so that it can be told whether they are Eastern or Western, male or female, and celebrities or non-celebrities. Celebrity endorsers are operationalized as “publicly well-known individuals such as TV stars, movie actors/actresses, sports figures,

² The measurement of Korean newspaper ads is called *TAN*. The size of Korean ads adopted in this study is 7 1/2 *TAN* (About A4 size, 36.5 cm diagonally). Because the US newspaper is narrower in width than the Korean newspaper (59cm: 62cm diagonally), the size of the US sample advertisements was calculated as 59: x = 62: 36.5.

musicians, scholars, politicians, etc (Blackwell, Miniard, & Engel, 2001). Out of these celebrity endorsers, expert celebrities are operationalized as “product relevant celebrities,” such as sports players endorsing sports products (e.g., Tiger Woods in golf equipment ads, Kobe Bryant endorsing basketball shoes). Non-expert celebrities indicate “product-not-relevant celebrities” (e.g., Jamie Lee Curtis endorsing *Sprint* PCS, Jason Alexander endorsing *KFC*). These different types of celebrities are again categorized and coded as three different age groups; 0 to 25 years old, 26 to 50 years old, 51-and higher years old.

For intercoder reliability, this study adopted Krippendorff’s alpha, which takes chance agreements into account (Krippendorff, 1980). All intercoder reliability values of the variables were at or above the conventionally accepted value of .75 (Wimmer & Dominick, 1994), ranging from .87 to .99 (see APPENDIX A).

Measure. The product involvement scale was constructed with four item variables: product price [PRICE], period of use of product [DURAB], frequency of product purchase [FREQ], and consequences of a product choice [CONSEQ] (see APPENDIX A for more detailed operationalization). The four items were summed to construct the product involvement scale, and the value of the scale, from 0 to 7, is dichotomized into low and high product involvement. Cronbach’s alpha reliability of the scale was .91, which indicates very high internal reliability. Exploratory factor analysis using Principle Component Analysis (PCA) also showed that the scale forms one factor with eigenvalue, 3.12 and 78.02 % of the total variance being explained. The communalities of each item are as follows: PRICE= .77, DURAB= .75, FREQ= .82, CONSEQ= .78.

RESULTS

For the comparison of frequency of celebrity endorsers between Korean and US ads, a series of Chi-square statistics were performed.

Out of the total ads, ads endorsed by human models were 326 for *Chosun-ilbo* and 199 for *The New York Times*. Korean ads contained a significantly greater number of human models (47% out of the total ads) than US ads (31.9%, χ^2 (df=1) = 31.19, $p < .001$).

The first hypothesis, positing that ads in a high power distance and high uncertainty avoidance culture (Korea) would have a greater number of celebrity endorsers than those in a low power distance and low uncertainty avoidance culture (the US), was supported. As shown in table 1, Korean ads had a greater number of celebrities (24.1%, $n = 167$) – whether the celebrities are product-related or not – than the US ads (9.9%, $n = 62$, χ^2 (df=1) = 45.68, $p < .001$). However, the second hypothesis, predicting that Korean ads would have a greater number of expert (product-relevant) celebrity endorsers than the US ads, was not supported. Rather, the result was in the opposite direction, in that the US ads employed a greater number of product-relevant celebrity endorsers (77.4%, $n = 48$) than Korean ads (38.3%, $n = 64$, χ^2 (df=1) = 27.66, $p < .001$).

The first research question relates celebrity endorsers in different cultural contexts with product involvement. Ads for high involvement products in the Korean newspaper accounted for 69.8% of the total ads ($n=395$), while 67% of total ads in the US newspaper were for high involvement products. The difference of the frequency between the two country ads was not statistically significant (χ^2 (df=1) = .92, $p = ns$).

The first research question asked how product involvement works with different cultural characteristics to explain presence of celebrity endorsers in ads in each culture. First

of all, among high involvement products, Korean ads carried significantly more celebrity endorsers (21.5%, n=85) than their US counterparts (9.1%, n=29, χ^2 (df=1) = 20.32, $p < .001$). However, in terms of different types of celebrities (i.e., product-relevant or product-not-relevant), the US ads employed significantly more product-relevant celebrity endorsers than the Korean ads. Specifically, 55.2 percent of the celebrity-endorsed, high involvement product ads in the US newspaper (n = 16) employed product-relevant celebrities, while their Korean counterparts employed only 29.4 percent (n = 25, χ^2 (df=1) = 6.23, $p < .05$). This relatively high proportion of product-relevant celebrities in the US ads is seen among low involvement product ads as well. Among low involvement products, Korean ads had a significantly greater number of celebrity endorsers than the US ads, but within celebrity-endorsed ads, the US ads carried product-relevant celebrity spokespersons more than the Korean ads. 96.1 percent of the total celebrity endorsers presented in the low involvement product ads in the US newspaper were product-relevant celebrities, while about half of the Korean low involvement product ads employed product-relevant celebrities (see table 1).

TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

The second research question asked about the relationship between international product ads and the nationality of celebrity endorsers within Korean ads. Out of a total of 694 ads, only 8.1 % were international product ads (n = 56).

Of 56 international product ads in the Korean newspaper, as shown in table 2 below, only four ads had celebrity endorsers (7.1%), while 163 domestic product ads had celebrity endorsers (25.5%, χ^2 (df=1) = 9.54, $p < .01$). Foreign celebrity endorsers were present in

three out of the four international product ads, while domestic endorsers were present in only one international product ad. It is noteworthy that 12 foreign celebrities (7.7%) endorsed domestic product ads within Korean newspaper.

TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

DISCUSSION

This is the first attempt to explore cultural meanings of celebrity endorsers in advertising across cultures. While numerous studies have focused on effectiveness and psychological processing of celebrity endorsers, the cultural meaning of celebrity endorsers has been relatively neglected. Expanding the scope of McCracken's "cultural meaning transfer" model (1989), this study investigates how celebrity endorsers are interpreted in a cross-cultural context and what kind of cultural meanings they could transfer across borders.

The results show that Hofstede's cultural value framework was helpful in searching for cultural meanings of celebrity endorsers. Ads in the high uncertainty avoidance and high power distance culture of Korea employed more celebrity endorsers than ads in the low uncertainty avoidance and low power distance culture of the US. Such results may imply that celebrity endorsers can play a more significant role in guiding consumers, in less risky and uncertain ways, in Korean society than in the US. This also implies that advertising within a culture should use and portray celebrities congruently with ways that consumers can accept cultural meanings of the famous spokespersons.

One caution concerns specific types of celebrity endorsers. Expert celebrities, operationalized as "product-relevant" celebrities in this study, were hypothesized to be more

prevalent in Korea than in the US, because such source expertise (or product relevancy) may contribute to reducing the risk of unknown product attributes. However, the hypothesis was not supported; rather, the result was in the opposite direction. Although different operationalization and measure may have different results, perhaps cultural characteristics that Korean consumers hold may offer unique insights. Korean consumers are high trend pursuers. Once trends arrive, Korean consumers seek after such trends unanimously; otherwise, they will be regarded as “fashion-laggards” (*Cheil Communication Monthly*, 2000). However, such trends change at lightning speeds. Yesterday’s fashion, therefore, will become history tomorrow. Also, such trends mostly come from TV stars and famous singers who are currently the most salient. Clothes that a pop star wore in last night’s TV show come out in downtown stores in a few days, and form a fashion trend among Korean consumers. The pop star is likely endorsing several products in a couple of ads or more, and will probably become a cultural hero sooner or later. Such a short-breath circle of cultural trends is not uncommon in Korean society. In this unique cultural context, expertise in the product may not matter. What does matter is which celebrities catch the biggest popularity, and which advertisers preempt the most recent and hottest cultural idols.

Taken together, the degree of salience of celebrity endorsers may be overwhelming source experts, such that the celebrities are performing well enough (or at least perceived to be doing so) to relieve consumers’ uneasiness about the product attributes. To transfer their cultural meaning to Korean consumers via product ads, in other words, celebrity endorsers may not require specific knowledge pertinent to the endorsed product brands, but rather simply being the most salient cultural icon and symbol possible.

Just as Hofstede's cultural framework of uncertainty avoidance and power distance gives only a partial explanation of celebrity endorsers, so does product involvement. According to dual-processing persuasion model, the literature predicts that low involvement product ads would be likely to employ more celebrity endorsers, specifically experts, to give consumers peripheral cues to recall and buy the products (e.g., Petty et al., 1983), this paper shows somewhat mixed results. The US ads followed the persuasion model prediction, in that, among low involvement and celebrity endorsed product ads, the proportion of product-relevant celebrities overwhelmed product-not-relevant celebrities (96.1% vs. 3.9%); however, the Korean ads did not follow this direction with same proportion between product-relevant and product-not-relevant celebrity endorsers. Among high involvement product ads, likewise, the results were complex: the US ads had a slightly more than half product-relevant celebrities, while less than 30 percent out of the total celebrity endorsers in the Korean ads were product-relevant celebrities.

On the other hand, high involvement product ads were more prevalent in both countries' newspaper ads. One possible explanation concerns the unique characteristics of the newspaper medium, which has no limit about time and space to advertise, and consumers are more actively involved in looking each ad; accordingly, advertisers may want to advertise high involvement products that are expensive and are not frequently purchased (Rothschild, 1987).

Finally, in terms of global advertising strategy, the results show that only four international product ads employed celebrity endorsers, but three out of four ads had foreign celebrity endorsers. Interestingly, all these three cases were international female fashion magazine ads. By showing their cover models -- Cameron Diaz in *Cosmopolitan*, Cindy

Crawford in *Elle*, and Elizabeth Hurley in *Marie Claire* – these magazines promoted their endorsed products. With the rising tide of globalization, thin Western models with a blonde hair, blue eyes and long legs have become a standard of beauty. Along with the visibility of such global magazine brands, well-known Western fashion models and celebrities become salient by acquiring a cultural meaning of “global beauty standard.” It is likely that other beauty related product ads covering cosmetics, clothes, and fashion accessories have the possibility of adopting a global celebrity endorser strategy. Such an argument is supported by de Mooij (1998), who claims that standardization advertising strategy can be more likely applied to such product ads as cosmetics, toiletries, clothing, and footwear.

In addition, it should be noted that some domestic product ads employed foreign celebrities as well. One salient example is computer software emperor (as he is called in Korea) Bill Gates, who endorsed the *Sambo Dream* notebook computer. Interestingly, he was not shown in person, but on the cover picture of his book, “Speed of Thought.” It seems that the book publisher and the computer company did co-opt marketing, so as to promote both products to evoke a synergy effect. The fact that intelligent and knowledgeable celebrities may be effective can be explained by unique cultural norms prevalent in Korean society (see Paek, Nelson & McLeod, 2002, for detailed discussion). Paek, Nelson and McLeod (2002) argue that, although Korea is known as a collectivistic culture, Korean society demonstrates vertical and individualistic characteristics such as ‘competition’ and ‘achievement.’ It is already well known that aspiration for higher education is widespread and deeply ingrained in Korean society. Such education-oriented cultural values and norms can be detected in Korean ads, in that about 17% of total ads in Korean newspaper in 2000 were for education-related product ads, mostly textbooks enhancing English or other foreign language skills (e.g.,

TOEFL, TOEIC, TESOL) and self-study guidebooks for college entrance exams. It is not surprising to see Bill Gates in Korean ads, because his image of intelligence may meet Korean consumers' norms and expectations in a Korean cultural context. Furthermore, several Korean celebrities who have a similar image to that of Bill Gates endorse Korean brands as well. For instance, Cheol Soo Ahn, who invented an anti-virus computer software program, is a famous cultural icon for his intelligence and brilliance. He has been endorsing several products pertinent to computers, computer program software, and education.

Overall, although it is rarely generalizable, this study implies that it is possible to adopt a consistent and homogeneous celebrity endorser strategy, if the celebrity endorsers are well known and culturally acceptable. As discussed earlier, the success of such foreign celebrity endorsers as Karl Bernstein, Alvin Tofler, and Margaret Thatcher may be a few salient precursors predicting that powerful, credible and intelligent celebrities may work if well coordinated with a certain type of product.

Need celebrity endorsers be culturally meaningful to perform their tasks successfully in the endorsed ads? This study seems to answer that, yes; celebrity endorsers are cultural symbols that represent contemporary cultural trends and can converse with consumers, but only when the celebrities are culturally meaningful. And in the cross-cultural setting, this study suggests that celebrity endorsers should be cautiously selected to transfer the meaning of the advertised products to consumers, by understanding the very cultures where international advertisers want to penetrate.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE STUDY

This study should be evaluated more as a theoretical exploration than an empirical achievement, because many curious questions remain unanswered with answers open to future studies.

Firstly, the sampling of newspaper ads might be a considerable limitation. Much literature is devoted to how influential and prevalent celebrity endorsers are in TV commercials; however, few studies paid attention to role of celebrity endorsers in print ads carried via newspaper and magazine. In analyzing Korean and US newspaper ads, this study might add some insights to a dearth of celebrity advertising endorser literature in print media; at the same time, though, this study lacks an analysis of the mainstream role of celebrity endorsers that can be found in TV commercials.

Secondly, this content analytic study examined presence and frequency of celebrity endorsers in advertising for different types of products. It will be interesting to see how consumers respond to different roles and types of celebrity endorsers in different conditions. Consumer surveys will suffice for such consumer response- relevant research questions. In addition, different operationalization and different measures of content analysis of advertising may be able to explain roles of celebrity endorsers in ads in more detailed and different ways.

Finally, this study opens the possibility of linking other contingent theories and concepts in order to study celebrity endorsers and consumer responses in cross-cultural advertising domains. In so doing, this paper requests to see advertising in a bigger picture of the whole society and culture in more integrated and synthetic ways.

Table 1. Chi-square test of celebrity endorsers in Korean and US ads

Variables	Frequencies % (n)		Chi-sq	P-value
	Korea	US		
Endorsers	47.0 (326)	31.9 (199)	31.19	.000
Celebrity endorsers	24.1 (167)	9.9 (62)	45.68	.000
Product-relevant celebrities	38.3 (64)	77.4 (48)	27.66	.000
<i>Among high involvement product ads</i>				
Celebrity endorsers	21.5 (85)	9.1 (29)	20.32	.000
Product-relevant celebrities	29.4 (25)	55.2 (16)	6.23	.013
<i>Among low involvement product ads</i>				
Celebrity endorsers	32.7 (56)	15.9 (25)	12.46	.000
Product-relevant celebrities	50.0 (28)	96.1 (24)	15.91	.000

Note: Degrees of freedom =1

Table 2. Relationship between product nationality and celebrity endorsers within Korean ads

Variables	Frequencies % (n)		Chi-sq	P-value
	Domestic	International		
Endorsers	47.6 (304)	39.3 (22)	1.45	ns
Celebrity endorsers	25.5 (163)	7.1 (4)	9.54	.002
<i>Among celebrity endorsers</i>				
Domestic endorsers	92.3 (56)	25.0 (1)	20.65	.000
Foreign endorsers	7.7 (12)	75.0 (3)		

Note: Degrees of freedom =1

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APPENDIX A. Operationalization of the Variables

Expert celebrity endorsers:

1. Product-relevant celebrity endorser with age 0 to 25 (.97)
2. Product-relevant celebrity endorser with age 26 to 50 (.98)
3. Product-relevant celebrity endorser with age 51 + (.99)

Non-expert celebrity endorsers:

1. Product-not-relevant celebrity endorser with age 0 to 25 (.95)
2. Product-not-relevant celebrity endorser with age 26 to 50 (.92)
3. Product-not-relevant celebrity endorser with age 51 + (.92)

Non-celebrity endorsers:

4. With age 0 to 25 (.92)
5. With age 26 to 50 (.89)
6. With age 51 + (.93)

Involvement Scale: (.91)*

1. Price of product: low, medium, high (.98)
 - Low: less than \$20
e.g.) Stationeries, foods, hair care, battery, OTC medicine, toothbrush/paste,
 - Medium: About \$21- \$200.
e.g.) fashion apparel, watches, airline ticket, hotels, camera, telephone/cellular service
 - High: more than \$200
e.g.) car, jewelry, computer, electronics, business products such as real estates, insurance, consulting and finance, company networking/hosting service
 2. Durability, period of use of product: short, medium, long (.98)
 - Short: one-time use or used in a few times
e.g.) Foods, hair care, battery, airline ticket, hotels, home/office goods
 - Medium: used about in a year
e.g.) Vitamins, diet pills, clothes/shoes,
 - Long: durable for a long time, or never worn out
e.g.) car, jewelry, computer, electronics, telecommunication service, business products, home/office furniture, publication
 3. Frequency of product purchase: frequent, medium, less frequent (.91)
 - Frequent: more than one time per month
e.g.) Foods, hair care, battery, OTC medicine, home/office goods
 - Medium: a couple of times per year
e.g.) fashion apparel, watches, airline ticket, hotels, publication
 - Less frequent: only one or a few times for lifetime
e.g.) car, jewelry, computer, electronics, diet pills, business products, home/office furniture
 4. Consequences of bad decisions of product purchase: low, high (.97)
-

Low: Less effective. Not much damage. Okay just for trial
 e.g.) Foods, hair care, battery, airline ticket, hotels, home/office goods
 High: Very much effective. Financial and mental damage. When not satisfied with these
 products, you might want to tell your friends or families not to buy those products.
 e.g.) car, computer, electronics, business products, home/office furniture

Product nationality (.96)

Domestic product: essentially made for the purpose of serving domestic customers. Made, sold,
 and advertised domestically. Including joint companies, with foreign companies,
 M&A, or just export products

International (global/transnational/multinational) product: well-known, worldwide brands.
 Made, sold, and advertised globally. Made for and used by customers worldwide.

Eastern model (.99): Mostly easily picked as pacific islanders. Koreans, Japanese,
 Chinese, South Asians, and Mongolians

Western model (.87): White Americans, Hispanics, Blacks, Europeans.
 Basically all races excluding Asians

Note

* indicates Cronbach's alpha reliability; otherwise, intercoder reliability

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Running Head: Beer Commercials

College Students' Perceptions of "Creative Circumvention" Beer Commercials

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College Students' Perceptions of "Creative Circumvention" Beer Commercials
Abstract

College students were shown beer commercials that "creatively circumvent" a self-regulatory advertising guideline, and asked what they believed they saw in the ads. Results indicate that some beer ads imply that dangerous activities are being combined with drinking, although the extent to which subjects perceive this varies by ad. Characteristics of beer ads that might contribute to these perceptions are considered; these findings could be used by beer advertisers to create more responsible ads.

Beer is a somewhat unique product in America: it is legal for some people (age 21 or older), but illegal for others (Eigen & Noble, 1996); it is popular (Eigen & Noble, 1998), but also associated with some very serious social problems, such as underage drinking, binge drinking, alcohol addiction, drunk driving, and an increased propensity for violence and unsafe sex (Office for Substance Abuse Prevention, 1991; Wilford & Morgan, 1992).

Recognizing the sensitive nature of their product, and aware of the potential threat of governmental regulation (FTC, 1999), the beer industry maintains a voluntary self-regulatory code for advertising and marketing (Beer Institute, 1997). Ostensibly, the overall purpose of the code is to ensure that beer is marketed to appropriately aged consumers in a manner that encourages responsible use of the product. For example, there are guidelines discouraging depictions of drunk driving and beer being combined irresponsibly with any potentially dangerous activity (Beer Institute, 1997). Additionally, beer advertisements are not supposed to show the actual act of drinking (Beer Institute, 1997).

Despite the existence of the self-regulatory guidelines, content analyses indicate that many beer commercials contain images of both drinking and risky activities such as motorcycling, boating, water-skiing, snow skiing, snowboarding, and roping steer (Author, 2000a; Madden & Grube, 1994). These ads technically adhere to the guidelines, but use various techniques to imply the very things they are supposed to avoid (e.g., people drinking, or mixing alcohol and risky activities).

Given the influence that advertising messages can have on people over time (Atkin, Hocking, & Block, 1984; Comstock & Paik, 1991; Gerbner, 1995), the effects of

this “creative circumvention” of advertising self-regulation must be examined. It is not uncommon for viewers to make inferences about information that is not explicitly contained in advertisements (Kardes, 1988; Phillips, 1997), and so it is therefore possible that a viewer who sees beer commercials with drinking and risky activities in close proximity will associate the alcohol consumption and the risky behavior. This could be a dangerous association if it results in viewers believing it is safe, acceptable, or even ‘cool’ to combine these two things.

Therefore, this study investigates whether viewers who watch “creative circumvention” commercials, in which beer consumption and risky behaviors are juxtaposed, believe that they have seen characters engaging in risky activities while under the influence of alcohol. To answer this question, college students viewed a videotape of a television program and commercials, including three beer ads that contained drinking as well as risky activities. After viewing the tape, a questionnaire was administered to assess viewers’ beliefs about what they thought they had seen in the beer ads.

The data obtained from this study have implications for legislators and policy-makers, by demonstrating the role advertising might play in exacerbating problems associated with alcohol use. They could also be of great use to advertisers as they design their advertisements, both by informing them of what sorts of persuasion effects their messages are likely to have, and by providing them with specific knowledge about how to advertise responsibly. Although the government has recently expressed disappointment with some of the tactics used by alcohol advertisers (FTC, 1999), it has also made clear that the desired solution is improvement in self-regulation. Results from

this study could help improve the existing guidelines as alcohol manufacturers seek to avoid government regulation.

Literature Review

Compliance with Self-Regulation

One of the self-regulatory advertising guidelines governing the beer industry states that there should be no “portrayals of beer drinking before or during activities which require a high degree of alertness or coordination” (Beer Institute, 1997, pp.1-3). Presumably, what this guideline is designed to prevent are scenarios where a person who is drinking or under the influence of alcohol is seen engaging in some activity that should not be undertaken in this condition. Examples of such activities are water or motor sports, yet previous content analyses have revealed that many alcohol ads—as many as 33% in one study (Madden & Grube, 1994)—contain driving or water-related images (Finn & Strickland, 1982; Grube, 1993; Madden & Grube, 1991).

While the above studies noted the presence of such potentially risky activities, they did not specifically compare this content to the wording of the guidelines. However, a more recent content analysis of beer commercials did assess industry compliance with several of the guidelines, including the one described in the paragraph above, as well as the one mentioned earlier prohibiting depictions of actual drinking (Author, 2000). The overall finding of this study is that if you interpret the guidelines entirely literally, the beer industry does a perfect job of complying with them (Author, 2000). For example, virtually no ads showed the act of holding a beer to one’s lips and swallowing; this indicates perfect compliance with the guideline prohibiting depictions of drinking. However, drinking was implied in 60.3% of the commercials in this study, meaning they

showed people pouring a beer, holding a beer, lifting a beer, ordering a beer, sitting with a half-full glass of beer in front of them at a bar, and so on (Author, 2000). Thus, if the spirit of the guideline is to prevent people from thinking that people drink beer, then this spirit was violated, even if literally the guideline has been obeyed.

Of course, most people know that beer is a beverage, so it is not clear what that guideline is intended to accomplish. However, the guideline about risky activities has a more obvious intention: to prevent a dangerous message from being sent to viewers that it is okay to mix drinking with activities requiring alertness. Once again, the study found perfect compliance with this guideline—if you consider it literally (Author, 2000). However, 19%, or nearly one in five, beer ads in the sample combined images of alcohol with scenes that depict water, motor, or extreme sports (Author, 2000). While the guideline emphasizes the sequential order of the action in an ad (what is discouraged is showing drinking before or during risky activities), in these ads, the order of the events, or even if they are being undertaken by the same person, is not clear. Through a lack of a linear story line, rapidly juxtaposed images of drinking and risky activities, and other visual devices, these ads visually associate drinking and potentially dangerous activities, thereby creatively circumventing the guideline discouraging such depictions.

Potential Effects of Creative Circumvention Beer Commercials

Given the existence of creative circumvention of self-regulatory guidelines in beer commercials, it is important to examine what effect such portrayals might have on viewers of these ads. In general, it is thought that alcohol advertising can be influential on people's beliefs about drinking (e.g., Aitken, Eadie, Leather, McNeill, & Scott, 1988; Martin, 1995; Smith & Goldman, 1995). According to alcohol expectancy theory

(Goldman, Brown, & Christiansen, 1987), an extension of social cognitive theory (Abrams & Niaura, 1987; Bandura, 1977), modeled portrayals in alcohol advertising result in the formation of beliefs and attitudes about drinking that predict intentions to drink and drinking behavior (Austin & Meili, 1994). If people see creative circumvention beer ads and think they are seeing a positive example of someone mixing drinking with risky activities, over time this may cultivate a belief that this behavior is appropriate, common, or safe (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, Signorielli, & Shanahan, 2002). This reasoning illustrates why media portrayals of drinking have been identified as risk factors for alcohol-related problems among teenagers (Robinson, Chen & Killen, 1998; Smith & Goldman, 1995).

Because television advertising for beer models behaviors and scenarios to viewers, there is a question of how viewers interpret what they see in beer commercials (Johar, 1995; Martin, 1995). Atkin, Neuendorf, & McDermott (1983) examined the effect of exposure to alcohol ads that feature hazardous drinking situations by showing subjects examples of such ads, and then asking a series of questions about them in personal interviews. Specifically, the subjects were asked if the character in the ad doing the risky activity had been drinking; whether the sponsor of the ad was condoning drinking while engaging in the risky activity; and whether the subject felt it was safe to drink during the risky activity.

The results of this study indicate that subjects do perceive a connection between risky activities and drinking when both are shown in the same ad, although the extent to which this was so varied by ad. In one case, 24 percent of the subjects believed the

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person performing the risky activity was also drinking; in the case of another ad, 85 percent of subjects thought so; and in the case of a third ad, 57 percent did.

Additionally, many subjects felt that the sponsoring company was condoning the mixing of drinking and risky activities. Although results again varied, no fewer than 46 percent and as many as 80 percent of subjects reported thinking the company was endorsing the combination of drinking and risky activities.

Interestingly, the subjects did not report that they themselves thought that the activities portrayed in the ads were safe to do under the influence of alcohol. As few as 4 percent and no more than 24 percent of subjects thought the activities and drinking were safe to mix, and in the case of the 24 percent, the activity was rowboating (Atkin et al., 1983), a relatively safe water sport compared to many others.

Thus, this experiment indicates that viewers can and do make linkages between activities that they see occur in the same commercial, but that the extent to which they do so varies by ad. It also illustrates that just because people see (or think they see) something in an ad, does not mean they are going to model it. However, it is unlikely that any researcher would get many people admitting that they drink and drive or that they think doing so is safe, simply due to the social stigma attached to such beliefs and behaviors. Nonetheless, the high incidence of alcohol-related accidents and deaths in this country indicates that some people hold these beliefs, even if they don't admit it in a research study.

It has been demonstrated that consumers make inferences about ads by elaborating on and abstracting from their content (Kardes, 1988). This may occur when information is missing, but it can also occur when the relationship between two pieces of

information is ambiguous (Phillips, 1997). This finding is particularly relevant to the creative circumvention beer ads, where narrative ambiguity may make viewers want to make sense of the juxtaposed activities. What's more, as a study on perceptions of news stories shows, people are not only *capable* of making inferences, they are also *motivated* to fill in missing information and reach a conclusion when one is not supplied. They do so by using information they already possess to extrapolate beyond the information that is before them (Metzger, 2000).

Phillips (1997) demonstrated subjects' inference-making abilities by showing them magazine ads that contained images other than the advertised product, such as an ad for a toothpaste that featured a string of pearls. In this experiment, subjects were able to interpret the ad as a visual metaphor, with 92% understanding the ad's meaning as "This toothpaste can make your teeth as white and shiny as the string of pearls" (p.81). It may therefore be that subjects who encounter the creative circumvention beer ads will infer that the drinking and the risky activity are actions that go together, which is exactly what the Beer Code guideline discourages.

Gardial, Schumann, Petkus, & Smith (1993) point out that in advertising, inferences are also made about the lifestyle associated with a product. These inferences are made "about the consumption situation in which the product will be used, either about the type of person who would be best suited for a particular product...or about the type of situation in which the product would be most appropriately used" (p.26). In the case of creative circumvention beer ads, this might mean viewers infer that engaging in risky activities is an appropriate consumption situation for beer, even though this is not explicitly stated in the commercial. The danger of such an inference is, of course, that

combining drinking with activities that require coordination is dangerous. If people think they have seen this risk taken in ads on television, they may choose to take this risk themselves.

To establish whether young viewers make this type of dangerous inference from creative circumvention beer ads, subjects in this study were asked whether they had seen people drinking while engaging in a risky activity. While many studies are criticized for using college students as samples, in this instance they were an ideal subject pool, since they are the population in question where so many alcohol-related problems are concerned (Clapp & McDonnell, 2000). The following hypothesis was tested:

H1: When watching creative circumvention beer commercials that visually juxtapose beer and risky behaviors, viewers infer that characters in beer commercials are engaging in risky activities while under the influence of alcohol.

Methods

The effects of television beer ads that creatively circumvent one of the self-regulatory guidelines were explored in a television-viewing experiment. Subjects were individual television viewers who were shown a brief video of a television program with advertising, then asked to complete a questionnaire. The goal was to use the results of this questionnaire to see if viewers would mistakenly believe they saw instances of dangerous drinking.

Participants

Participants in this study were undergraduate students at a large west coast state university who were enrolled in an Introduction to Communication class. Students received extra credit for their participation; 108 chose to participate. Of the 108, 22 were

males and 86 were females. This 20.4% male and 79.6% female split reflects the overall gender distribution of the Communication major at this university. The subjects were fairly evenly divided among freshmen, sophomores, and juniors (34.8%, 33.1%, and 31.5%, respectively), with only one senior.

Stimulus

Each subject watched a video tape in a private room. The video tape is approximately 20 minutes in length, and contains segments of the MTV reality show, "The Real World," interspersed at three regular intervals by pods of commercials. The commercials are for various products, such as snack food, online services, and automobiles, as well as three for beer, one in each pod of advertising. Due to budget and time restrictions, the order of the beer commercials was not rotated in this experiment.

Alcohol Commercials

The beer ads in this study are those identified in an earlier content analysis designed to assess industry compliance with the restriction on showing drinking before or during activities that require a high degree of alertness or coordination (Author, 2000). The content analysis examined all alcohol commercials that appeared during a random sample of broadcast network prime-time and sports programming during the 1995-1996, 1996-1997, and 1997-1998 television seasons. Of the more than 200 alcohol commercials in this sample, nearly one in five (19%) creatively circumvented the spirit of the guideline by featuring both drinking and activities that would be dangerous if performed under the influence of alcohol. The commercials each accomplish the creative circumvention of the guideline with a different technique.

The commercial in the first pod is for Bud Light. This ad shows various scenes of young people at the beach, swimming, jet-skiing, surfing, and boating. There are also scenes of people on the beach reaching into a cooler to grab a beer, and holding open beers in their hands while seated on a beach towel. This ad is set to music, and the commercial cuts from one image to the next quickly. When the people are shown reaching into the cooler, only their arms are visible, so it is not possible to tell if they are the same people on the boats, surfboards, or jet-skis. Moreover, the time line is ambiguous: even if it is the same people drinking beer as engaging in the water sports, it is difficult to tell what order these events are occurring in or how close in time to each other they are. Thus, this ad does not expressly violate the guideline, since it does not plainly show drinking before or during the water sports, but it does closely associate the two activities through the montage of scenes.

The beer ad in the second pod is for Miller, and shows several men engaging in “extreme” motorcycling. The men use pulleys to hoist their motorcycles to the top of a steep dirt hill, then ride them down. They are then shown, dusty and still wearing the same clothes, entering a bar and drinking beer. There is a split-second shot of the exterior of the bar at nighttime, and then the men are shown motorcycling again. Throughout the commercial, beer suds border the footage described above. That is to say, the action sequences do not fill up the entire television screen, but rather, are played against a backdrop of images of beer suds.

These suds serve to associate the motorcycling and beer without violating the guideline. In addition, there is another technique at play here. Unlike in the Bud Light ad, where there is no clear timeline or cast of characters, this ad does tell a story

chronologically. However, the cue needed to know that the second round of motorcycling occurs the day after the beer drinking, the shot of the exterior of the bar at nighttime, is only on screen for a fraction of a second. If a viewer were to look away or not pay close attention, this shot could be missed. In that case, what remains are images of men motorcycling, both before and after drinking beer in a bar (plus the perpetual beer suds framing the action).

The beer ad in the final pod is a Molson Ice commercial that shows two young guys being taken by helicopter to the top of a huge mountain, then jumping out and snowboarding down. As a voice-over describes how the beer is as cold as the mountains, computer graphics are used to show the entire scene, including the mountain, being sucked into a gigantic beer bottle in the foreground. Next, the bottle cap pops off, and the two young snowboarders hoist themselves out of the beer and onto the mouth of the bottle, where the helicopter picks them up to take them to the top of another mountain.

In this ad, the creative circumvention is not due to ambiguity about time and people, or a split-second cue that could easily be missed. Rather, this ad uses computer technology to create images that could not actually occur in real life. The snowboarders do not drink, so the guideline prohibiting depictions of drinking is not violated. However, the snowboarders are entirely submerged in beer. Thus, while the exposure to alcohol does occur immediately before an implied instance of a risky activity, the fact that the snowboarders are swimming in beer, not actually drinking it, means that the ad is compliant with the self-regulatory guideline on a literal level.

Finally, while snowboarding is shown in the ad, it is shown before the drinking. It is only implied after the exposure to alcohol, by virtue of the fact that the helicopter, that

has already been seen dropping the snowboarders off at the top of a mountain, is picking them up again.

Procedure

Subjects in the experiment signed up for a time to come to a laboratory on campus. There, they were given a consent form to sign out, and told they would be watching a short video and then completing a questionnaire about it. The experiment was explained to be about “how people watch TV.” When subjects were done with the questionnaire, they were thanked and asked not to discuss the experiment with anyone.

The questionnaire contained a number of items about the program and the non-beer commercials. Additionally, it contained items designed to determine whether subjects perceived that they had seen drinking done before or at the same time as a risky activity in the beer ads. To ascertain if people realized they had seen beer commercials, the questionnaire contained a list of products (including the three brands of beer), and subjects were instructed to check those products for which they saw commercials.

The questionnaire also contained a list of descriptions of various scenes. Subjects were instructed to check those phrases that described something they had seen in the commercials. For example, the phrase “a man going to a doctor” was included, and referred to something that actually occurred in one of the commercials, while the phrase “a chihuahua eating Mexican food” was also included, although this did not occur in any of the ads on the tape.

There were six phrases that referenced the beer commercials: “Drinking beer as a way to have fun at the beach,” “People drinking beers and surfing,” “Some guys going to a bar, then going motorcycling,” “Rugged motorcyclists who hang out at a bar,” “People

snowboarding off the top of a giant beer bottle,” and “Beer being compared to the coldness of snow.” Subjects’ responses to whether they believed that had seen each item were used to assess how the creative circumvention beer commercials are perceived.

Results

For each of the three beer ads, it was determined how many subjects reported that they remembered having seen the ad. The results varied widely across the three different commercials. In the case of the Bud Light commercial, which aired in the first pod on the video, 97.2% of the subjects reported seeing the ad. The Miller ad, which ran in the middle pod in the video, was recalled by 48.1% of the subjects. The Molson Ice ad, which ran in the last pod, was recalled by 61.1% of the subjects. These varied recall rates may be due to the ads’ locations in the video, but there is no measure in this study to establish whether this is actually the case.

Similarly, there was variance in how many of the viewers who recalled seeing the particular beer ads could identify certain scenes or elements from the ads. Of the viewers who reported seeing the Bud Light commercial, 83.8% agreed they had seen drinking beer as a way to have fun at the beach. Of the viewers who reported seeing the Miller ad, 21.2% knew that they had seen rugged motorcyclists who hang out at a bar. Of the viewers who remembered seeing the Molson ad, 84.8% reported seeing beer being compared to the coldness of snow. Thus, not only did subjects notice the ads at different rates, they recalled scenes from the ads at different rates as well. Of the three ads, the Bud Light ad was remembered by the most people, and most of those correctly identified a scene from the ad. The Miller ad was noticed by the fewest people, and not many of

those remembered seeing a scenario from the ad. Molson had a recall rate well below Bud Light's, but a higher percentage of people who recognized one of the ad's scenes.

After establishing how many people remembered the ads by the product and by scenes within them, the hypothesis about subjects making inferences from the ads was tested. Because the hypothesis in this study did not specify how many subjects would make these inferences (since there was no theoretical reason to expect any certain amount), the appropriate analysis to use was a binomial test, enabling comparison to how much inference making would occur due to chance. Looking only at those subjects who remembered seeing the Bud Light ad, a frequency was run on how many subjects reported seeing "People drinking beer and surfing." Of the subjects who remembered seeing the Bud Light ad, 90.5% reported that they had seen people drinking beer and surfing. A binomial test comparing the mean of this measure (.905) to a chance distribution (.50) was conducted, and was found to be significant ($p < .001$). It can therefore be concluded that there is a tendency to infer that characters in the Bud Light ad were both drinking beer and surfing.

A frequency was run on the subjects who reported seeing the Miller ad to see how many reported seeing "Some guys going to a bar, then motorcycling." In this case, only 3.8% of the subjects who reported seeing the ad believed they had seen this. A binomial test comparing the mean of this measure (.0385) to a chance distribution (.50) was conducted, and was also found to be significant ($p < .001$), however in the opposite direction. For the Miller ad, most subjects did not infer that they had seen people drink, then ride motorcycles.

Out of those subjects who reported seeing the Molson Ice ad, 68.2% reported seeing "People snowboarding off the top of a giant beer bottle." Again, the proportion of people who reported seeing this measure (.6818) was compared to a chance distribution (.50) in a binomial test, and was found to be significantly different ($p=.005$). These results indicate that the number of people who reported seeing characters who had been submerged in alcohol going snowboarding was significantly greater than would have occurred by chance.

The data therefore indicate mixed support for this hypothesis. In the case of the Bud Light and the Molson Ice commercials, a significant number of viewers believed they had seen drinking before or during surfing or snowboarding. However, in the Miller ad, a significantly large proportion clearly did not believe they had seen drinking before motorcycling. The results in this study therefore indicate that subjects' inferences about what they see in ads differ for each the ad. Moreover, the number of people who remember seeing the ad is not directly related to how many of those people formed an inference from it. However, it is fair to conclude that most subjects inferred that they had seen risky drinking in at least one of the cases of creative circumvention (see Table 1).

Discussion

The finding that, in some cases, exposure to creative circumvention beer ads results in subjects mistakenly believing they saw drinking combined with participation in risky activities, is relevant not only to these types of commercials, but to all ads that juxtapose or otherwise associate diverse images. These results, as well as the study's inevitable limitations, provide several substantive suggestions for future research.

This experiment sought to clarify just what it is that subjects thought they were seeing in creative circumvention beer ads. As advertisers know, awareness of an ad is the first step towards that ad having any effect on people's learning, beliefs, or attitudes (Lavidge & Steiner, 1961; Olshavsky & Kumar, 1997, p. 286). Therefore, how many people were in a position to make an inference is a function of how many actually recalled seeing the ad, and this varied. Nearly all viewers recalled seeing the Bud Light ad, very few people recalled seeing the Miller ad, and slightly more than half of the viewers recalled the Molson Ice ad.

It must be noted that the sample used in this study was not distributed equally across gender; rather, it was heavily female. This limitation was a function of the population from which the sample was drawn. It is possible that gender played a role in inference making; although this did not appear to be the case in this study, these results were not reported due to the small number of males (22). Future research should be conducted with a more equal number of males and females, and with more males overall; this would enable these sorts of comparisons.

It is also possible that the different recall levels have to do with each ad's location within the program, which would be consistent with other research (Jeffres, 1997; Thorson & Zhao, 1997). Unfortunately, this study cannot assert this since the order of the ads was not rotated. However, it appears that both a primacy and a recency effect (Belch & Belch, 2001, Krugman, 1962) may have been demonstrated, with the ad at the beginning of the tape the one that was remembered most often, the ad at the end of the tape remembered next most often, and the ad in the middle of the tape remembered less than half the time. Future experiments should use location of the ad within the program

as an independent variable to best understand how it might moderate attention.

Nonetheless, this study considered how many people out of those who recalled the beer ad made the inference from it, making recall less of an issue.

This study shows that the number of people making the inference varies for each of the beer ads, just as it did in a previous experiment (Atkin et al., 1983). One explanation for the varied results could be the characteristics of the beer ads themselves. Stylistically, the Bud Light ad featured rapidly alternating scenes of a large group of people engaging in a variety of activities, including surfing and drinking beer. The rapid juxtaposition of the scenes, without any story line for clarification, may have been the reason that a majority of viewers made an inference from this ad. This finding seems to echo those in other experiments, where people show an ability and a propensity to create and understand a relationship between two seemingly unrelated objects.

The Miller ad had a temporal clue that the Bud Light ad did not: a split-second shot of the exterior of the bar where the men were drinking. Because the subsequent motorcycling scene took place in daylight, this cue may have been all subjects needed to clarify that they did not see motorcycling under the influence. This could explain why the Miller ad had the lowest inference-making rate of the three ads. Subjects appear to have been media literate enough to figure out the time line, despite the brief period for which the cue was visible. Perhaps this is not surprising, as today's television viewers are often called the "MTV generation," and accused of having short attention spans.

The Molson Ice ad is different than either the Bud Light or the Miller ad. There is a clear temporal sequence, and the ad clearly features the same characters throughout. But while what is occurring is literally very clear, it is also entirely fantastical. As a result

of computer graphics, an entire screen full of scenery is shown getting sucked into a beer bottle. This ad not only juxtaposes drinking beer and snowboarding, it comes closest of the three beer ads to showing an activity performed while under the influence, since its characters are presumed to snowboard after having been submerged in a bottle of beer big enough to hold 50 humans. Making an inference from this ad has less to do with being unclear about what you saw in a literal sense and more to do with being unclear in a figurative sense, since this is an event that would never occur in real life. Perhaps this is why this ad had a higher inference making rate than the Miller ad, but a lower one than Budweiser.

To summarize, while all three beer ads in this experiment associate drinking with risky activities by visual proximity, the manner in which they do so is different. The Bud Light ad makes it unclear if it is the same people drinking as surfing. In the Miller ad, you can tell it is the same characters drinking and motorcycling, but the temporal sequence of the two activities is somewhat ambiguous. The Molson Ice ad juxtaposes drinking and snowboarding through a fantasy sequence. These three very different types of juxtaposition resulted in three different levels of inference making. This suggests a very rich avenue for future research. Subjects in future studies could be asked more specifically and extensively what they saw in the ad, and more ads could be used to assess the effect of different narrative styles. At the same time, the order of the ads could be rotated to allow for any effect that location in the program might have. Results from this type of study would have implications not only for alcohol advertising, but for all advertising, and in fact, for any media presentation with juxtaposed images.

Unfortunately, the method of measurement used in this study to assess what viewers saw in the beer ads needs improvement. To keep subjects from knowing what the study was about, and to keep the survey instrument a reasonable length, subjects were only asked in two short phrases what they saw in each ad. Not only did this result in data that are not as rich as they could have been, there was also a significant flaw in the wording of these items when it came to the beer ad inferences.

It was intended when it was written that the item “People drinking beers and surfing” would refer to the same people concurrently drinking beers and surfing, or in other words, people surfing under the influence of alcohol. However, that is not necessarily how the subjects interpreted it. It is possible that to some subjects, the phrase “people drinking beers and surfing” refers to some people drinking beers and other people surfing, or people drinking beers, and on some other day, surfing. If this were a subject’s interpretation of the phrase, then checking that they saw “people drinking beers and surfing” does not necessarily mean they made the inference of risky drinking due to the juxtaposition of the images. Rather, they may have checked this box because they did see people drinking beers, and they did see people surfing.

Similarly, the item “people drinking, then motorcycling” was intended to mean people drinking, then *immediately* going motorcycling—in other words, people motorcycling under the influence. Again, subjects who agreed that they saw this may have realized that the motorcycling occurred the following day, meaning they did not make an inference resulting from the juxtaposition of images. Interestingly, while not many people reported making this inference, not many people reported seeing “rugged motorcyclists hanging out at a bar,” either, even though that is a fair and literal

description of the ad. It therefore may be that the Miller ad, for whatever reason, just did not involve viewers, such that they didn't notice much of it, let alone make an inference from it.

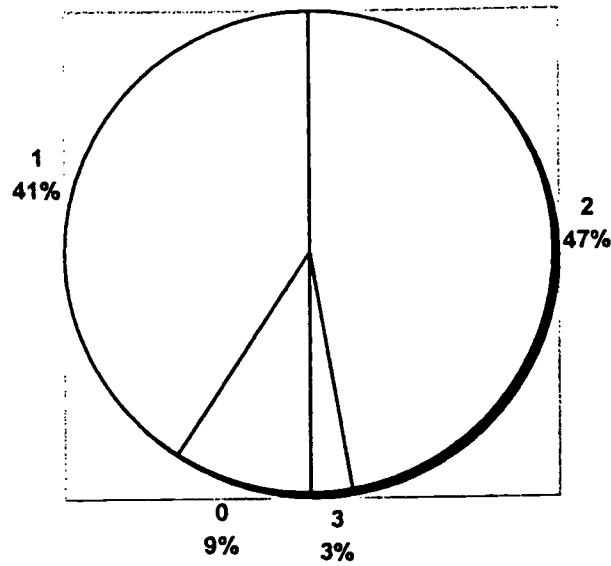
Additionally, there was a problem with the item about "people snowboarding off the top of a giant beer bottle." Although the ad was fantastical in nature, this is literally what was shown in the ad: people snowboarding off a beer bottle. Therefore, this item as it was worded is not truly a measure of inference making. A better measure would have assessed whether subjects thought the snowboarders were under the influence of alcohol as they were snowboarding. It would be of great interest to see how more carefully-worded items might change the results obtained. Thus, in addition to examining more extensively subjects' perceptions of the ads, as described earlier, another suggestion is to repeat this same experiment with better measures.

Despite these shortcomings, this study provides a good first step in assessing the effect of viewing creative circumvention beer commercials. It uses actual ads from recent years, shown to an audience that is at a crucial age with respect to drinking. Although its findings that ads that combine images of drinking with risky activities can send a misleading message to viewers about what they are seeing done on television are not entirely robust due to the shortcomings listed above, they are significant enough to illustrate the need for future research in this vein.

If they are serious about combating problems with drinking, alcohol advertisers should be careful not to imply that drinking can be safely mixed with activities that should never be done while under the influence. Not only is this an implication that can have disastrous results, it is something that the self-regulatory guidelines discourage.

Thus, one final conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that beer industry's guidelines might not be effective at promoting responsible drinking. As long as beer companies can violate the spirit of these guidelines without running afoul of them literally, they cannot be viewed as an effective regulatory mechanism

Table 1
Number of Creative Circumvention Beer Commercials^a in which Subjects Reported Seeing a Risky Activity Performed While Drinking



^an = 3 commercials

Note. Results based on 108 subjects.

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Is It Segmentation or Segregation?

**Exploring the Unintended Social Consequence of Targeting Minority
Audiences with Advertising Placements Outside of Mainstream Media**

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Abstract

An emphasis on segmenting audiences as a function of targeted marketing could lead to possible audience separation or even isolation for some audience members. This study examines the numerical representation and presence of African Americans relative to Caucasians in advertisements placed in primetime television programs found in the Nielsen African American Audience Index and the Nielsen General Audience Index. A content analysis of 813 advertisements appearing in the same four-week time period indicated that African Americans do appear more frequently and speak more in advertisements placed in programs found in the African American Index versus the General Audience Index. However, when African Americans' and Caucasians' speaking and non-speaking time are compared, Caucasians speak more and are on screen more than African Americans in advertisements from both program indexes.

Introduction

There is no easy escape from advertising in today's society. It is found literally everywhere from the pages of the newspaper and the flickering of the television screen to the placards on the city bus and the framed boards in the restroom. Advertisers leave no stone unturned, no space uncovered.

Advertising, for most of the 20th century, was a product of an economic system that focused on the mass production of mass goods marketed to the masses through mass advertising and communication (Schultz, 1999). Companies, through their advertising agencies, spoke to everyone at the same time and in the same way. A changing economy, technological innovations, and audience fragmentation brought changes to the advertising industry. Advertisers had to reconsider not only who they wanted to reach with their message, but also how, where, when, and why they wanted to reach them. Targeted advertising assumed its place as the more efficient method of reaching consumers. The ultimate advertising goal became the ability to reach different groups of consumers with specific messages about how certain products would tie into their lifestyles (Turow, 1997).

While 20th century advertising claimed to be content with the delivery of "everyone" who was available, the term really only applied to the available white majority (O'Barr, 1994). Racial and ethnic minority population members were not included in advertising's realm of consideration. In 1953, African Americans could be seen in just .05% of mainstream magazine advertising (Shuey, 1953). Nearly 40 years later, African American presence in mainstream magazine advertising had risen to just 10.6% (Bowen and Schmid, 1997). Minorities, as advertising audience members, only entered the picture after their economic viability as a target market was established (O'Barr, 1994). However, Sivulka (1998) pointed out that "the emergence of the ethnic market did not mean that more minority images were used in general market advertising. Instead, ethnic minorities were used in separate ad campaigns" (p. 401).

Constructing one set of advertisements featuring the white majority for placement in mainstream media and another set of advertisements featuring African Americans for placement in African American targeted media has been identified as a segmentational marketing and advertising strategy. This paper explores the possibility that segmentational advertising efforts have, in effect, become a form of advertising segregation for African American advertising depictions in terms of message placement.

Economic and Marketing Forces Give Rise to Segmentation

Cortese (1999) identifies advertising as “a powerful social force that commands the public’s attention to, and faith in, a particular style of consciousness and consumption” (p. 3). Advertisements entice, encourage, and even insist that we buy and consume goods and services. Consumption patterns and preferences differ among societal groups, and these distinctions have become an important part of today’s social order (O’Barr, 1994). At a micro level, one measure of audience differentiation is the classification of product users as light, medium, or heavy in terms of their consumption patterns. At a macro level, one measure of social differentiation is that of the economically-based class system that is replacing the American myth of the great middle class (O’Barr, 1994). It is no longer fashionable to be middle class “like everyone else.” Now a consumer can continually seek the next consumption-driven class level by “trading up” in cars, clothes, furniture, houses, entertainment and luxury items, and even in media. Minimizing consumption would challenge the fundamental nature of our social order, for today, “we are what we consume” (O’Barr, 1994, p. 94).

By encouraging all manners and levels of consumption, advertising provides a basic structural support for an economy based on mass production (O’Barr, 1994). Throughout the early part of the 20th century, mass production was thought to equate with mass consumption. This relationship could be characterized by the statement “If we make it, they will buy it.” The economic drive for most companies was the availability of raw materials and inputs, with little

consideration given to the availability of markets and demand for specific types of products (Keith, 1960). By mid-century, an expanded focus on salesmanship saw the development of market research and the beginning of a keen interest in the consumer. The first 50 years of marketing thought had been somewhat generalized (Bartels, 1988). The reconceptualization and redefinition of marketing in the 1950s and 1960s focused on the need for specialization (Bartels, 1988), influenced by a variety of economic factors: intensified product competition jostling for the consumer's dollar, advanced technology that made production – mass and specialized – cheaper and faster, and increased discretionary consumer buying power (Smith, 1956).

Differentiation became the watchword for marketing in the 1960s and beyond. It manifested itself in two primary areas: product differentiation and market segmentation. Product differentiation, from a strategy viewpoint, attempts to secure a measure of control over product demand by advertising differences between the company's product and its competitors' products (Smith, 1956). Market segmentation attempts to respond to divergent demand within a heterogeneous market by subdividing it into smaller, more homogenous markets that can then reflect a more precise satisfaction of consumer desires (Smith, 1956). Like product differentiation, market segmentation relies heavily on advertising and promotion to inform the segmented markets "of the availability of goods or services produced for or presented as meeting their needs with precision" (Smith, 1956, p. 398). The consumer, not the company, thus became the center of the business universe (Keith, 1960).

To address differing consumption patterns and product preferences, marketers further developed and refined the art of market segmentation (Stevens, Loudon, & Warren, 1991). Segmentation efforts are typically used to increase product sales by aligning a product or brand with an identifiable customer group (Jain, 1993). A product-market is divided into smaller composite parts or segments, based on the idea that the needs of consumers in segment A are different than the needs of consumers in segment B. Marketers concluded that it was both effective and economically efficient to use different marketing strategies to reach different

customer segments. Hence, market segmentation's phenomenal growth throughout the last three decades of the 20th century.

The division of a product-market is accomplished by the identification and implementation of segmentation variables (Cravens, 1994). The first variable, known as the basis, is used to determine the initial division of the product-market into segments. The second variable, known as the descriptor, is used to describe or profile the segments. Four variable categories are used for market segmentation and the subsequent establishment of target markets: characteristics of buyers, use-situation, buyers' needs and preferences, and purchase behavior (Cravens, 1994). The characteristics of buyers are more useful in describing consumer segments than in providing an initial identification. Thus, buyers' use-situations, needs and preferences, and purchase behaviors work as the basis variables in providing for the primary division of the segments. Buyer characteristics, such as age, gender, income, lifestyle, and race, usually work primarily as the descriptors, although not exclusively. The other three variable categories can also function as descriptors.

Segmentation, as an initial strategic marketing technique, sets off a chain reaction within the advertising and promotion framework for a product. Segmentation is a foundational element of a product's overall positioning strategy (Cravens, 1994). This strategy determines how to combine product distribution, product pricing, and product promotion into a coordinated set of actions that will favorably position the product with the buyers found in the identified segment. Jain (1993) noted that variables used to divide and describe the product-market should seek to create a segment that is accessible through promotion. Advertising comprises a subset of actions found in the promotion category with the placement of advertising messages one of the important dimensions.

Segmentation Separates Society

Advertising placement has become closely tied to the descriptor variable of buyer characteristics. One of the major commodities currently being bought and sold is the advertising audience, neatly classified along the lines of gender, ethnicity, class, age, (Cortese, 1999) and consumption. Target marketing's rising star has made it increasingly worthwhile, from an economic standpoint, for even the largest media companies to separate audiences into different worlds. This separation is based on distinctions that the advertising industry feels will make the "audiences secure and comfortable" (Turow, 1997, p. 2).

Presumably, these distinctions fall along the lines previously mentioned. Even though the United States population already sees itself marked by huge economic and cultural tensions, advertisers and the media do not seem to think that their further segmentation of the population could contribute to existing social problems. Market segmentation may be a logical output of the target marketing process, but it does raise ethical questions regarding which consumers are included and how they are targeted in comparison to which consumers are excluded and the benefits they are denied (Arens, 2002). Marketing and advertising professionals need to consider when segmenting a market maligns those it tries to serve (Sims, 1997; Smith and Cooper, 1997).

Advancements in message construction and placement will lead to an even greater number of advertisements being tailored to particular audience segments. It is now possible, due to more sophisticated marketing research, to personalize advertising messages. It is now possible, due to more sophisticated technological delivery, to send different televised commercial messages into different households (O'Barr, 1994). This kind of customization takes lifestyle segmentation even further (Turow, 1997).

Advertising media segmentation, developed to support market segmentation, allows and encourages audience members to live in their own personally constructed worlds. They can separate themselves from issues and people that they do not care about or do not want to interact with. Advertising media segmentation could also encourage the concentration of specific societal

groups' images into designated message placement areas. The Dictionary of the Social Sciences (1977) defines the voluntary or involuntary concentration of particular population groups into particular areas as a form of segregation.

Turow (1997) stated that the media that encourage small slices of American society to talk only to themselves are segment-making media. Media that have the potential to get all of the segments to talk with one another are society-making media. In an ideal world, segment-making media strengthen the identity of special interest groups while society-making media make it possible for these same groups to interact with each other through discussion, debate, and entertainment (Turow, 1997).

Yet, even in an ideal world, there are problems associated with each kind of media. Segment-making media have, at times, painted a narrow, prejudiced view of other social segments while society-making media have perpetuated stereotypes of some groups and "have generally presented a portrayal of the world that is more the ideal vision of the corporate establishment sponsoring them than a reflection of competing visions of various publics" (Turow, 1997, p. 4). However, the existence of both media signals the potential for establishing a balance between healthy social segments and a healthy social collective. This potential is diminishing rapidly due to the intense movement by advertisers away from society-making media toward segment-making media in order to search out and exploit consumer differences in the name of economic profit (Turow, 1997).

Media organizations have developed the skills necessary to attract audience segments to specialized formats, but some have decided that attraction alone is not enough. The ability to repel those audience members who do not fit the desired lifestyle profile is the latest effort being undertaken to make the primary media community "pure and thereby more efficient for advertisers" (Turow, 1997, p. 5). With new zipcode-based computer models and consumer databases ready and waiting, both advertisers and media will soon be able to simply exclude the

unwanted audience members from the outset so that the segment-making media audience remains intact.

By turning the audience into an abundance of marketing labels, advertisers and the media are making it virtually impossible for an audience member to find himself or herself in more than just a few segments (Turow, 1997). How will audience members who identify with only certain social categories ever learn about other members and other categories? If an audience member is constantly reminded that other members are not a part of the world, the audience member will be less likely to ever desire to interact with those other members (Turow, 1997). Thus, “market segmentation and targeting may accelerate an erosion of the tolerance and mutual dependence between diverse groups that enable a society to work” (Turow, 1997, p. 7).

Advertising’s Role in Establishing Societal Divisions

Advertising, as a powerful social force, wraps up our emotions and then sells them back to us (Cortese, 1999). Advertising practitioners use research to discover and uncover our attitudes, moral judgments, and our interactions with others. Images of these attitudes, moral judgments, and social interactions are then used in advertising to sell us a good or service (Cortese, 1999). The industry, with its billion dollar budgets, outpaces both the church and the school in its ability to promote our place in society (Turow, 1997). Advertising does not formulate social values and attitudes all on its own, though (Cortese, 1999). Advertising draws upon and then redirects issues that the audience members already share. Thus, it “reflects, not affects, the beliefs, values, and ideologies or cultural beliefs that serve to justify social stratification” (Cortese, 1999, p. 12).

The media are ideal agents for depicting the life of society to society. Advertising, as a part of the media, tells stories that direct attention toward certain issues and away from others (Turow, 1997). These stories tell audience members “what civilization out there is like, how they fit in, what others think of people like them, and what people like themselves think of others”

(Turow, 1997, p. 9). This communication in advertising reflects the social practices and cultural values that presently exist (O'Barr, 1994). Yet it is also true that advertising recreates and reinforces these same practices and values in the process of depicting them. Thus, it becomes difficult to say which element leads and which element follows. Does culture come first or does the ad? (O'Barr, 1994).

Societal construction through advertising is possible through the unique combination of message creation and message placement. Advertising practitioners develop a story that demonstrates the product's usefulness to audience members. To do this effectively, the practitioners must place the product into a social and environmental context that reflects the audience and its values (Turow, 1997). Typically the advertisement depicts the audience members' world, an issue to be dealt with in that world, and the applicability of the product in the resolution of that issue in that world. Another group of advertising practitioners then determines in what media communities the advertisement's intended audience resides and places the advertisement in only those media. Turow (1997) stated that "just as creatives must construct a version of society when they make commercial messages, so planners must work with an idea of the proposed audience's social world when buying time and space" (p. 15).

As audience members consume advertising-sponsored media, they are entering into a world constructed through close cooperation between the advertiser and the media organization (Turow, 1997). Certain social values, priorities, and ideas about the intended audience are built into the targeted formats created by media organizations. These media formats are then offered for sale to advertisers as a method of delivery for the targeted advertiser messages. These messages were also built on the values, priorities, and ideas advertisers had about the intended audience. Thus, both the advertisements and the media formats "signal to people whether and how they fit into the proceedings. They also signal what people might buy or do to keep fitting in" (Turow, 1997, p. 16).

Advertising has its own ideology and discourse that work together to further define the social order of its intended audience and, thus, provide the means of societal construction. The creation of advertising relies on ideas that support and reinforce the social order of our consumption-driven society (O'Barr, 1994). To understand advertising ideology, one must ask, in reference to actual advertisements: Who is in control? Who is subordinate? Who is powerful? Who is weak? The discourse is found in two areas: in the messages that the advertising conveys such as this detergent gets clothes cleaner and this cereal tastes better and in the context of use such as who does the laundry with the detergent and who pours the cereal into the breakfast bowls. Social relationships, depicted through advertising ideology and discourse, are seldom about equality. Most messages are about dominance and subordination (O'Barr, 1994).

What emerges from the consumption of advertising is an understanding of what are considered to be appropriate relations for those audience members in the constructed segment or category. Thus, advertising first defines the audience segment, but then quickly moves to place the segment into a social context that demonstrates issues related to power and control (O'Barr, 1994). Media images confirm one's own worldview, promote the acceptance of current social standings, and reassure audience members that things really are the way they ought to be (Coltrane & Messineo, 2000).

Advertising executives, when questioned about the ideology perpetuated through the discourse of advertising, claim to represent people and society as they are and that it is society that is sexist or racist (O'Barr, 1994). The executives also are resistant to the charge that the advertising industry is somewhat responsible for the maintenance of these ideas in society through their repetition of such depictions. The executives stand behind the claim that advertising does have the power to encourage people to try a product or to switch product brands, while they deny the accusation that advertising has the power to preserve stereotypes and power inequities within society (O'Barr, 1994).

Individual advertising practitioners also express disbelief regarding any personal influence that they could have over advertising's construction of society. O'Barr (1994) stated that "individuals who practice the craft of advertising enter the discourse, contribute to it, but often disclaim any real responsibility for what it said before or may be said after they were involved in its production" (p. 206). It is easier for individuals to act without a sense of personal responsibility about their actions when everyone in their industry maintains that ethical and societal matters are someone else's concern (O'Barr, 1994). Without these effective personal controls in place, the advertising industry will continue to produce advertising that it feels will sell the most products to the most members of the target audience. Any themes or societal depictions, even if they are sexist or racist, will continue to be repeated. Audience members will ultimately become desensitized to these themes as they are repeated over and over (O'Barr, 1994).

Advertising's Representation of Societal Differences

Advertising, as a social force, "articulates, develops, transforms, and elaborates ideas of ethnicity, gender, and social class" (Cortese, 1999, p. 13). Neither advertising nor the mass media in general presents a uniform conception of these complex issues. Advertising also does not consciously or deliberately seek to plot against specific societal group members, such as those in protected classes (Cortese, 1999). Yet, advertising has been accused of encouraging racism's presence in our culture (Fuller, 2001).

Racism in advertising today is really more inferential than blatant. Typically it takes the form of media representation or a lack thereof. The depiction of unique societal groups indicates that they have a power base, a secure place in society, and a noted identity (Cortese, 1999). Just as a social group's importance is conveyed through its appearance and performance in the media, the social group's lack of importance can also be transmitted through the media through little or no representation. A lack of media representation suggests that a group does not possess

significant material or political power bases (Cortese, 1999). Groups placed at the bottom of the social stratification are kept there in part through their conspicuous absence in the media. A group's devaluation is also conveyed through symbolic racism in the media that includes ethnic stereotyping, trivialization of minority empowerment or racial equality, or the absence of ethnic images (Cortese, 1999).

Mass media are among the strongest bonds holding together the diverse groups that compose our heterogeneous society (Cortese, 1999). Media are both a barometer of race relations and a potential accelerator for either racial cohesion or cultural separation (Entman & Rojecki, 2000). As a diagnostic measure, media content offers a revealing indication of any new forms of racial segmentation. Advertising specifically demonstrates the extent that ethnic minorities have penetrated social institutions historically dominated by white males (Cortese, 1999). As a causal agent, media help mold and reflect culture (Entman & Rojecki, 2000). Advertising can intentionally select the ethnic images to be presented to society that, in turn, help shape attitudes about race and ethnicity (Cortese, 1999).

Ethnic stereotypes were the primary portrayal of minorities in the advertising industry during the first half of the 20th century (Sivulka, 1998). African Americans were depicted typically in subservient roles such as Aunt Jemima, Uncle Ben, or the helpful porter on the Union Pacific Railroad (O'Barr, 1994). Other minority groups rarely even appeared in advertising (Sivulka, 1998). Minority audience members, as consumers, were virtually ignored (Cortese, 1999). The expression of the 20th century's consumption-driven culture, even in its early stages, affirmed the racial inferiority of s through exclusion or demeaning stereotypes (Entman & Rojecki, 2000).

Practitioners in the developing field of marketing research fixated on trying to tap into the "average American." Minority populations were not labeled as a part of the mainstream culture in America (Cortese, 1999). Advertisers continued to dream about a mythical middle America guided by traditional values and populated by white people (Sivulka, 1998). The cultural

homogeneity sought by advertisers in the mid-20th century did not really exist then and, some 50 years later, it certainly does not exist now.

Social change, in the form of the civil rights movement in the 1960s, spurred the use of cultural diversity throughout the advertising industry (Sivulka, 1998; Cortese, 1999; O'Barr 1994). African Americans were the primary minority group to see any effect on advertising representation and, even then, the pace was slow (Sivulka, 1999). African Americans had been defined as "outside of the intended audience for most advertisements" (O'Barr, 1994, p. 107) during a large part of the 20th century. Their images had been used without concern for what they might think of such depictions.

Following the civil rights movement, advertisers were quick to realize the potential of this newly-emerging market and moved to redefine advertising's intended audience to include African Americans (O'Barr, 1994). This inclusion took the form of specialized advertisements promoting goods and services to African American audience members through media, such as magazines and billboards, developed specifically for them. A lack of African American representation continued in the mainstream media with researchers suggesting that it might be reflective of some advertisers' concerns about how a white audience would respond to black images in advertising (see Barban, 1964; Bush, Gwinner, & Soloman, 1974; Cagley & Cardozo, 1970). Entman & Rojecki (2000) reported that television advertising casting decisions are still rooted in the assumption that white audience members would react negatively to commercials with too many African American characters. However, an exploratory study at the University of Missouri-Columbia found that neither ethnic nor Caucasian images in print advertisements affected a person's purchase intentions (Frisby, 1999).

Zinkhan, Qualls, and Biswas (1990) determined that African American media representation in advertising had increased over time, with greater representation present in television than in print advertising. Yet Wilkes and Valencia (1989) found that African Americans were featured in only 17% of the 904 television commercials that they analyzed, with

African Americans appearing in a major role in only 31% of the ads that included any kind of representation. Entman and Rojecki (2000) found that an African American person appears in about a third of all primetime television commercials.

A New York City Department of Consumer Affairs research study titled *Invisible People* concluded that only 3% of the characters represented in general interest magazine advertising were African American (Green, 1991). The report stated that racial stereotyping, under representation, and segregation were all found in the media examined, and the report's authors asked the publishing companies to establish benchmarks for improved multi-ethnic representation in their advertising. A follow-up study, titled *Still Invisible People*, reported that African American representation had increased to 5% in 1992 (Green, 1992).

Research indicates that, when African Americans do appear in advertising, they tend to be associated with marketing pitches for beer or malt liquor, cigarettes, automobiles, electronic products, and hair care products (Cortese, 1999). Most television advertisements featuring an all African American cast are used to promote necessity goods, such as groceries, household items, and drugs (Entman & Rojecki, 2000). Current depictions of African Americans typically take the form of athletes, entertainers, or laborers with portrayals of children also at a significant level (Sivulka, 1998). As sports figures, African Americans are shown with basketballs instead of tennis rackets (O'Barr, 1994). As entertainers, they are shown as musicians playing jazz instead of classical music. Could these depictions be called an adequate reflection of today's society or are they just a sign of new racial stereotypes?

Entman and Rojecki (2000) found that overt conventional stereotyping of African Americans in television commercials had diminished, while less apparent forms of differentiation based on race have appeared. Their content analysis of over 1,600 primetime advertisements suggested that television advertising does convey images of racial separation and hierarchy in certain dimensions. Within a television commercial with an integrated cast, there should be no real difference in the frequency of African American and Caucasian actors receiving close-up

camera angles. Yet, Caucasian actors were twice as likely to be featured in this way than their African American counterparts (Entman & Rojecki, 2000).

Marketing and advertising endeavors with the minority audience in mind will become even more critical as minority buying power increases due to population growth (Sivulka, 1998). African Americans now number approximately 35 million (Census 2000 Brief, 2001) with their buying power at \$540.5 billion in 2000, an increase of 86% during the period 1990-2000 (Business Week, 2001).

Has Segmentation Given Way to Segregation?

The idea of advertising delivery taking on segregational overtones has appeared in a few of the research studies conducted on African American representations in advertising. However, most of the previous research has focused on the apparent lack of African American advertising depictions and on the presentation of stereotypes (Entman & Rojecki, 2000). Any references to a concerted attempt to put only advertisements with African American characters into media known to be targeted to the African American audience have been reported as secondary findings.

In the *Invisible People* report, Green (1991) noted “the emergence of the ethnic market has not meant that many more minorities are used in general advertising. Instead, ethnic minorities are used in separate ad campaigns targeted outside the general market, in black and Latino-oriented media” (p. 42). Green (1991) added that the data from the New York City Department of Commerce’s report indicated strongly that the magazine industry was engaged in segregational advertising practices. The report also referred to the rise of “white media” and “black media” during the 1960s as an unspoken, separate-but-equal policy. By the 1970s, only white models were used in “white media” and only black models were used in “black media.” Green (1991) reported that, with few exceptions, this trend continued into the 1990s.

Frisby (1999) stated that minority models and actors, in general, receive less exposure in mainstream media advertising than members of the white majority group do. Bowen and Schmid

(1997) reported that there were few advertisements in mainstream media where minorities appeared alone or were not outnumbered by members of the white majority. Zinkhan, Qualls, and Bisaws (1990) may have found an increasing number of African American advertising portrayals, but Frisby (1999) attributed this increase to the placements of African American images in targeted media vehicles such as *Jet*, *Essence*, and *Living Single*. Entman and Rojecki (2000) also identified this trend, stating that there were slight differences in the advertising on programs featuring African American actors, such as *Martin*, a situation comedy airing on Fox that starred comedian Martin Lawrence. The program featured two all African American advertisements and three all-Caucasian advertisements, out of nine total. The other two Fox programs used in the sample, *The Simpsons* and *Married With Children*, had no all African American advertisements. Five all-Caucasian advertisements, out of ten total, were shown during *The Simpsons* and seven all-Caucasian advertisements, out of twelve total, were shown during *Married With Children*.

Mainstream media do attract a minority audience, according to market research that indicates that minority groups are regular consumers of several “cross cultural” media such as soap operas, news programs, and primetime serials (Frisby, 1999). In fact, African Americans watch more television from 7:30 p.m. to 2 a.m. than any other audience group (Frisby, 1999). African American television usage peaks during the primetime viewing hours of 8pm to 11pm (Horizon Media, 2001). Nielsen Media Research (2002) identifies African American television households as the largest minority segment of the United States’ television household population, comprising approximately 12%. Yankelovich and Associates (2001) found in their consumer research on African Americans that including them in advertising efforts makes a difference to them when it comes time to make a purchase decision. So why do we not see more African American presence during primetime television advertising?

Pollay and Lee (1992) briefly acknowledged that a fully segmented marketing strategy could also be a segregational marketing strategy. There is also some cursory evidence pointing to

the fact that African American audience members are very aware of the flood of dedicated targeted messages directed toward them. Al Styles, vice president and director of research for Burrell Advertising, the largest minority advertising agency in the United States, stated that African Americans are reporting with increasing frequency in qualitative consumer field research studies that they do not want to be singled out with advertisements that only appear on syndicated African American-oriented television programs or in targeted African American print media (2001). African Americans do not feel that their advertising media treatment is consistent and equitable with the society at large. They are asking, “Why do I see the same television commercials with African American depictions again and again on only certain programs? Why aren’t these commercials aired on shared audience programs and sporting events? What’s wrong with the product or me, as a consumer, for such a singled-out approach to be taken with the advertising?” (Styles, 2001).

Purpose of Study

Further empirical research is needed to identify the levels of African American presence in advertising presented simultaneously in general audience media and African American media. Would who you see in the advertising differ, depending on the program context in which you watched the advertising? In the context of popular primetime television programs, would there be significant differences in African American presence in advertising?

H₁: Advertisements with ad cast types containing African Americans will be found more frequently placed within programs listed in the Nielsen African American Audience Index than in programs listed in the Nielsen General Audience Index.

H₂: Advertisements with greater numbers of African American characters will be found more frequently placed within programs listed in the Nielsen African American Audience Index than in programs listed in the Nielsen General Audience Index.

RQ₃: Will the mean amount of speaking time for African Americans in an advertisement be significantly greater in the advertisements placed within the Nielsen African American Audience Index programs or the Nielsen General Audience Index programs?

RQ₄: Will the mean amount of speaking time for African Americans be greater than that of Caucasians in advertisements placed within programs found in the Nielsen African American Audience Index?

RQ₅: Will the mean amount of speaking time for African Americans be greater than that of Caucasians in advertisements placed within programs found in the Nielsen General Audience Index?

RQ₆: Will the mean amount of non-speaking time for African Americans in an advertisement be significantly greater in the advertisements placed within the Nielsen African American Audience Index programs or the Nielsen General Audience Index programs?

RQ₇: Will the mean amount of non-speaking time for African Americans be greater than that of Caucasians in advertisements placed within programs found in the Nielsen African American Audience Index?

RQ₈: Will the mean amount of non-speaking time for African Americans be greater than that of Caucasians in advertisements placed within programs found in the Nielsen General Audience Index?

Method

Because previous research in this area has been either qualitative in nature or simply secondary findings from a quantitative study conducted on a related minorities-in-advertising topic, the quantitative method of content analysis was used to collect and analyze the data. A purposive sample of primetime television programs was selected from the programs listed in the Nielsen General Audience Index and the Nielsen African American Audience Index (Table 1). The twelve most popular programs were selected from each index. Three programs were found

on both indexes and eliminated from the final analysis. Program episodes were videotaped in a Midwest media market from January 31, 2002 through March 1, 2002. This four-week period also coincided with the first Nielsen rating period of 2002. The number of episodes recorded and their program length can also be seen in Table 1. Some programs on NBC were not broadcast weekly due to the television coverage of the 2002 Winter Olympic games. However, total program time for each index as a whole was not adversely affected by the individual program broadcast interruptions on NBC.

Spot and network advertisements for national advertisers that aired during the sampled programs were included in the analysis. Advertisements for local advertisers, for other television programs, for the television station affiliate itself, for the media products of movies and videos, and for public service announcements were not included in the analysis. Advertisements without human cast members were also eliminated. Following the removal of the previously mentioned advertisements, the remaining advertising sample subject to analysis consisted of 813 advertisement appearances. This is not to be interpreted as 813 unique television advertisements.

Since the focus of this study is the presence of African Americans in advertising, duplicate advertisements were included in the sample. Thus, if the same advertisement appeared five times during the sampling period, it was coded once and entered into the dataset five times. Each dataset entry for an advertisement appearance was made within the appropriate contextual programming unit. Entman and Rojecki (2000) state that including duplicate advertisements in the dataset is logical when researcher interest is grounded in the concept of "ad appearance" (p. 164).

The advertisement sample was analyzed through the use of a 16-item coding sheet (Appendix 1). The pilot version was pre-tested on a sample of 30 advertisements that were not included in the sample. The categories used to capture information regarding cast members' race, speaking presence, and non-speaking presence were revised after the pre-test.

The researcher and a second coder, working independently, coded the sample. The programs were divided between the researcher and the second coder so that each person viewed advertisements from programs found in each program index (Table 2). Both the researcher and the second coder utilized a detailed coding rules sheet (Appendix 2). The second coder was extensively trained on how to use the coding sheet and the coding rules sheet in the analysis of the advertisements. Training was done with advertisements not included in the sample. Both the researcher and the coder had their own VCR and remote control so that advertisements could be paused and replayed as desired. Intercoder reliability using Holsti was 100% for program index, 100% for program cast type, 92.7% for ad cast type, 95.9% for cast member race, 87.7% for cast member screen time (non-speaking), and 86.9% for cast member speaking time. Intracoder reliability using Holsti for the researcher was 100% for program index, 100% for program cast type, 100% for ad cast type, 95% for cast member race, 90% for cast member screen time, and 92% for cast member speaking time. Intracoder reliability using Holsti for the second coder was 100% for program index, 100% for program cast type, 100% for ad cast type, 96% for cast member race, 93% for cast member screen time, and 94% for cast member speaking time.

Results

Hypothesis 1: In the African American Index programs, 54.7% of the advertisements utilized an ad cast type that incorporated African Americans (Table 3). Within the General Audience Index programs, 45.2% of the advertisements utilized an ad cast type that incorporated African Americans. Hypothesis 1 is supported.

Hypothesis 2: In the African American Index programs, 50.7% of the advertisements had one to six African American characters (Table 4). Within the General Audience Index programs, 40.7% of the advertisements had one to six African American characters. Hypothesis 2 is supported.

Research Question 3: The mean amount of speaking time for African Americans in an advertisement is significantly greater in the advertisements placed within the African American Index programs versus the General Audience Index programs (Table 5). There is no significant difference between the amount of Caucasian speaking time in an advertisement between the two program indexes.

Research Question 4: The mean amount of speaking time for African Americans was not greater than that of Caucasians in advertisements placed within programs found in the African American Audience Index (Table 6). Caucasian mean speaking time was significantly greater.

Research Question 5: The mean amount of speaking time for African Americans was not greater than that of Caucasians in advertisements placed within programs found in the General Audience Index (Table 7). Caucasian mean speaking time was significantly greater.

Research Question 6: The mean amount of non-speaking time for African Americans in an advertisement is significantly greater in the advertisements placed within the African American Index programs versus the General Audience Index programs (Table 8). The mean amount of non-speaking time for Caucasians in an advertisement is significantly less in the advertisements placed within the African American Index programs versus the General Audience Index programs (Table 8).

Research Question 7: The mean amount of non-speaking time for African Americans was not greater than that of Caucasians in advertisements placed within programs found in the African American Audience Index (Table 9). Caucasian mean non-speaking time was significantly greater.

Research Question 8: The mean amount of non-speaking time for African Americans was not greater than that of Caucasians in advertisements placed within programs found in the General Audience Index (Table 10). Caucasian mean non-speaking time was significantly greater.

Discussion

The first area of interest this paper explores is the question of: Would who you see in an advertisement differ depending on the program context in which you were watching the advertising? Tables 3 and 4 show that, while one would see a greater number of African Americans in advertisements placed within programs found in the African American Index, one would also see a large number of Caucasians in those same advertisements. In Table 3, 45.2% of the advertisements in the African American Index programs had white only casts. In the General Audience Index programs, 54.7% of the advertisements had white only casts. Thus, nearly half of the advertisements from programs in both indexes utilized only white cast members. In Table 4, this trend is shown through actual number of characters in the advertisement. Once again, nearly half of the advertisements from programs in both indexes utilized no African American characters.

The next area of interest this paper explores is the question of: Would there be significant differences in African American presence in advertising found within programs from each index? Presence was operationalized as speaking time and non-speaking time (or screen time) of African Americans and Caucasians per advertisement. When assessing African American presence in advertisements between the program indexes, there is a greater amount of African American speaking time (Table 5) and non-speaking time (Table 8) in advertisements placed within programs from the African American Index. These figures lend support to the idea that African Americans are showing up more often in targeted advertising than in mainstream advertising.

However, a closer analysis reveals that African Americans are not the stars of the targeted advertising appearing in the African American Index programs. From a speaking standpoint, they are outshouted by Caucasians who speak significantly more (Table 6). From a background standpoint, they are overshadowed by Caucasians who have significantly more non-

speaking screen time (Table 9). These same trends for speaking (Table 7) and non-speaking (Table 10) time are found in the advertisements from the General Audience Index also.

Thus, while consumers may report seeing more African Americans in television advertising placed within African American targeted programming, these consumers are probably not realizing that Caucasians are still the stars of these advertisements. African Americans have not achieved numerical parity even in their “own advertising.”

From a qualitative perspective, both the researcher and the second coder noted specific advertisements that were frequently seen in the African American programs that never appeared in the general audience programs. For example, State Farm Insurance ran a three advertisement series in African American index programs featuring all African American casts in the first two and an African American/White/Hispanic cast in the third. State Farm advertisements airing in the general audience programs featured predominantly white people.

Chevrolet had two different advertisements in the sampled programs for a truck. The advertisement that aired repeatedly in the general audience programs featured a wealthy white rancher promising to give his son his sizeable spread one day, but joking that the son would have to fight his sister, shown sitting on the sweeping front porch of their estate, for the Chevy Silverado truck. The advertisement that aired repeatedly in some of the African American audience programs featured a toiling African American farmer shown wiping the sweat from his brow while he fixed his broken tractor and worked his small farm. His son, just in from the city, shows up to help his father and reaches the remote farm via his Chevy truck. While this example also says something about advertising depictions, the placement of those depictions just reinforces the message about which groups belong in which places.

Limitations and Conclusion

An important methodological limitation regarding this analysis is the fact that the advertisements were not collected from a top 20 designated marketing area (DMA). Eight of the

ten largest television DMAs are also the ones with the largest concentration of African American television households (Horizon Media, 2001). The number of African American households in a market often determines if that market is included in a spot advertising buy directed toward African Americans. Sampling advertisements from a larger metropolitan market could possibly yield different results than those presented here.

More qualitative analysis of the advertisements appearing within the different program indexes and cast contexts would benefit the next stage of this research by providing richer detail about the characteristics of the African American presence in the advertising. Such qualitative research would allow for the deeper exploration of the social construction ideas presented in the literature review. It would also assist in establishing the parity of role representation for African Americans relative to Caucasians. This is an important dimension in light of this paper's finding regarding the lack of numerical parity.

Developing knowledge of advertising's unintended social consequences is challenging (Pollay, 1986). Identifying the "by products" of the economically driven manipulation to get us to "buy products" is not a popular undertaking. But, it is a necessary undertaking if the scholarly disciplines of marketing and advertising are to move beyond practicality-driven research into areas that may be more challenging methodologically, yet more meaningful to the larger community of scholars and citizens (Pollay, 1986).

As agents depicting the life of society to society, mass media and advertising must assume some responsibility for their storytelling actions. Segmentation may be a strategic marketing technique, but when it becomes more than just the division of an audience, it leads to a much larger social problem. When segmentation's effect becomes one of isolation and concentration for specific societal groups, one must question the motives of the messenger, be it the media or the advertiser.

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Table 1
Program Sample Used to Collect Television Advertisements

African American Program Index

<u>Program Name</u>	<u>Netwk</u>	<u>Episodes</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Total Time</u>
1. The Parkers	UPN	4	30 min	2 hours
2. The Hughleys	UPN	4	30 min	2 hours
3. Girlfriends	UPN	4	30 min	2 hours
4. Steve Harvey Show	WB	3	30 min	1.5 hrs
5. For Your Love	WB	4	30 min	2 hours
6. My Wife and Kids	ABC	4	30 min	2 hours
7. The Practice	ABC	4	60 min	4 hours
8. Bernie Mac Show	FOX	4	30 min	2 hours
9. Touched by Angel	CBS	4	60 min	4 hours
				21.5 hours

General Audience Index

1. Friends	CBS	3	30 min	1.5 hrs
2. Raymond	CBS	4	30 min	2 hours
3. West Wing	NBC	2	60 min	2 hours
4. Becker	CBS	4	30 min	2 hours
5. Will and Grace	NBC	3	30 min	1.5 hrs
6. Law and Order: SVU	NBC	2	60 min	2 hours
7. Jag	CBS	4	60 min	4 hours
8. 60 Minutes	CBS	4	60 min	4 hours
9. Judging Amy	CBS	4	60 min	4 hours
				23 hours

Shared Audience Index

1. ER	NBC	3	60 min	3 hours
2. CSI	CBS	4	60 min	4 hours
3. Law and Order	NBC	2	60 min	2 hours
				9 hours

Table 2
Assignment of Sampled Programs By Coder

African American Program Index

<u>Program Name</u>	<u>Coder</u>
1. The Parkers	2
2. The Hughleys	2
3. Girlfriends	2
4. Steve Harvey Show	1
5. For Your Love	1
6. My Wife and Kids	1
7. The Practice	2
8. Bernie Mac Show	1
9. Touched by Angel	2

General Audience Index

1. Friends	1
2. Raymond	2
3. West Wing	1
4. Becker	2
5. Will and Grace	1
6. Law and Order: SVU	1
7. Jag	2
8. 60 Minutes	1
9. Judging Amy	2

Shared Audience Index

1. ER	1
2. CSI	2
3. Law and Order	1

Coder 1: 5 programs from general audience index
2 programs from shared audience index
4 programs from African American index

Coder 2: 4 programs from general audience index
1 program from shared audience index
5 programs from African American index

Table 3
Distribution of Advertisements by
Ad Cast Type and Program Index

(Program Index)

<i>(Ad Cast Type)</i>	African American Index		General Audience Index	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Black Only	45	11.6	12	2.8
White Only	176	45.2	232	54.7
Black/White	99	25.4	98	23.1
Mixed Race	69	17.7	82	19.3
Column Totals	389	100	424	100

Chi square = 26.548, df=3, p=.001
 N=813

Table Note: mixed race is comprised of the following ad cast combinations: black/white/Asian, black/white/Hispanic, black/white/Asian/Hispanic.

Table 4
Distribution of Advertisements by
Number of African American Characters and Program Index

(Program Index)

	African American Index		General Audience Index	
	N	%	N	%
<i>(No. of African American Characters)</i>				
Zero Characters	192	49.4	251	59.3
One Character	92	23.7	104	24.6
Two Characters	48	12.3	52	12.3
Three Characters	29	7.5	11	2.6
Four - Six Characters	28	7.2	5	1.2
Column Totals	389	100	423	100

Chi square = 31.514, df=4, p=.001
 N=813

Table 5
Mean Speaking Time In Advertisements of African Americans and
Caucasians Between Program Indexes

(Program Index)

	African American Index		General Audience Index		Totals	
	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean
African American Speaking Time t=3.85, p=.00	387	2.26	422	.83	809	1.55
Caucasian Speaking Time	389	4.71	424	5.45	813	5.08

Table 6
Mean Speaking Time In Advertisements of African Americans and Caucasians Within the African American Program Index

	African American Index	
	N	Mean
African American Speaking Time	387	2.26
Caucasian Speaking Time	387	4.73

$t = -4.829, p = .00$

Table 7
Mean Speaking Time In Advertisements of African Americans and Caucasians Within the General Audience Program Index

	General Audience Index	
	N	Mean
African American Speaking Time	422	.83
Caucasian Speaking Time	422	5.42

$t = -11.192, p = .00$

Table 8
Mean Non-Speaking Time In Advertisements of African Americans and
Caucasians Between Program Indexes

(Program Index)

	African American Index		General Audience Index		Totals	
	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean
African American Non-Speaking Time t=4.84, p=.00	387	5.13	422	2.27	809	3.70
Caucasian Non-Speaking Time t=-3.37, p=.00	389	9.82	424	12.64	813	11.23

Table 9
Mean Non-Speaking Time In Advertisements of
African Americans and Caucasians Within the
African American Program Index

	African American Index	
	N	Mean
African American Non-Speaking Time	387	5.13
Caucasian Non-Speaking Time	387	9.78

$t = -5.877, p = .00$

Table 10
Mean Non-Speaking Time In Advertisements of
African Americans and Caucasians Within the
General Audience Program Index

	General Audience Index	
	N	Mean
African American Non-Speaking Time	422	2.27
Caucasian Non-Speaking Time	422	12.61

$t = -13.855, p = .00$

P R O G R A M I N F O R M A T I O N

Commercial Number _____ Index AA¹ Gen² Shared³ Date _____

Program Name _____ Length 30 min 60 min

Network ABC¹ CBS² Fox³ NBC⁴ UPN⁵ WB⁶

Program Category News¹ Comedy² Drama³

Program Cast Type

Mixed Race BW¹ BWA² BWH³ BWAH⁴

Segregated Black Only⁵ White Only⁶ OTHER⁷ _____

A D V E R T I S I N G I N F O R M A T I O N

Ad Name _____

Length :15 :30 :60 OTHER _____

Ad Cast Type

Mixed Race BW¹ BWA² BWH³ BWAH⁴

Segregated Black Only⁵ White Only⁶ OTHER⁷ _____

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

M1R	M1A	M1Scr	M1Spk	M2G	M2R	M2A	M2Scr	M2Spk	M3G	M3R	M3A	M3Scr	M3Spk
1	1	---	---	1	1	1	---	---	1	1	1	---	---
2	2	---	---	2	2	2	---	---	2	2	2	---	---
3	3	---	---		3	3	---	---		3	3	---	---
4					4					4			
5					5					5			

M4G	M4R	M4A	M4Scr	M4Spk	M5G	M5R	M5A	M5Scr	M5Spk	M6G	M6R	M6A	M6Scr	M6Spk
1	1	1	---	---	1	1	1	---	---	1	1	1	---	---
2	2	2	---	---	2	2	2	---	---	2	2	2	---	---
	3	3	---	---		3	3	---	---		3	3	---	---
	4					4					4			
	5					5					5			

Coding Rules Sheet

1. Commercial Number is defined as the case number assigned to each commercial viewed (i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4, . . .)
2. Index is defined as the Nielsen Index from which the primetime program was selected.
3. Date is defined as the date the program aired as recorded on the sampling log.
4. Program Name is defined as the title given to the program by the network as a means of program identification.
5. Program Length is defined as the number of minutes the program aired.
6. Network is defined as the broadcast network on which the program aired.
7. Program Category is defined as the primary content type used in the program to advance the plot action of the program.
8. Program Cast Type is defined as the racial makeup of the primary cast members of a program. Primary cast members are defined as those appearing in the opening credits of a program. If no cast members are shown during the opening credits, primary cast members will be determined by watching the first 10 minutes of a half-hour program or the first 20 minutes of an hour program. The presence of at least one primary cast member of a particular race constitutes representation of that race in the program cast type.
9. Ad Name is defined as the name of the primary product/service featured in the advertisement.
10. Ad Length is defined as the number of seconds an ad aired.
11. Ad Cast Type is defined as the racial makeup of the primary cast members who advance the plot action of an advertisement. Primary cast members can appear in a speaking or nonspeaking role. Cast members' facial features must be distinguishable on the screen during the advertisement in order to be considered primary cast members. The presence of at least one primary cast member of a particular race constitutes representation of that race in the program cast type.
12. M1G is defined as the cast member's gender
13. M1R is defined as the cast member's race.
14. M1A is defined as the cast member's age. C= child under 13; T= teenager 13-19; A=adult 20+
15. M1Scr is defined as the cast member's nonspeaking screen presence (in seconds).
16. M1Spk is defined as the cast member's speaking presence (in seconds).

LATINO CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AND ACCULTURATION:
A COMMUNICATION MODEL

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ABSTRACT

The fastest growing and largest consumer segment in the U.S. is the Latino market with a combined buying power of \$630 billion. Given that several variables affect the consumer behavior of individuals and that Latino consumers are in a state of cultural flux, a variety of misperceptions exist that prevent successful advertising communication to U.S. Latino audiences. The goal of this study is to introduce a decision making model as it relates to Latino consumer behavior.

The model combines knowledge from situation-driven ethnicity (labeled “situational Latinismo”) with sociological, personal, and acculturation influences (labeled “enduring Latinismo”) to explore Latino consumer behavior. The introduction of personal choice, a spontaneous self-concept, labeled “felt Latinismo”, is suggested to be of particular importance for marketers to assess whether, why and when ethnicity is important in consumption situations. It is hoped that the present article raises a new agenda for borderland advertising and marketing studies.

LATINO CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AND ACCULTURATION: A COMMUNICATION MODEL

After the 1980s, research into the Hispanic¹ consumer market became a central component of the advertising industry. It lent Hispanic advertising agencies the credibility of numbers, and made Latinos a coveted target population for prospective clients. Now available demographic and lifestyle data, describing the Hispanic market's size, growth and significance, were meant to underscore the market's increasing reputation. To this day, agencies and Hispanic-oriented media alike typically start off their sales pitches with the following arguments:

The current Latino population of 40 million has increased by 58 percent in the last 10 years. 61 percent are native born (U.S. Census, 2001). Due to immigration patterns and higher birth rates, Latinas' current share of 13 percent of the total population is expected to double in the next 20 years (U.S. Census on Hispanics, 2001). Being described as a younger than general market consumer, their combined buying power of \$630 billion is expected to increase at a rate of 118% ("Missed Opportunities", 2002). 75 percent is concentrated in the top five Hispanic markets of California, Texas, New York, Florida, and Illinois, making Latinos a geographically concentrated and thus easily targeted population (Yankelovich, Skelly & White, 1984).

Alongside providing these commonplace demographic data, research also reinforces clichés about Latinas that existed in the advertising industry before the data. Compared to the general market, Latinos were found to have strong traditional family values, with religion underpinning those values. The Hispanic world view is ultimately shaped by three determining cultural characteristics: prevalent use of the Spanish language, close family ties, and strong adherence to Roman Catholicism (Davila, 2001; Guernica, 1982).

For instance, statistics supporting the language ties reveal that about 78% of Latinos speak Spanish at home (U.S. Census, 2001). And a vast majority prefers to communicate in Spanish (U.S. Census Report, 1993). Commitment to the Spanish language as the keystone for maintaining ethnic identity is reflected in the widespread use of Spanish-language media, particularly television (Yankelovich et al, 1984). In other words, advertising campaigns toward the Latino market would benefit from a separate campaign, because Latina consumers will respond to messages from their own cultural perspective and in their own language more readily.

This marketing concept – backed by research data – has complicated more simplistic views about the Hispanic consumer and is at odds with academic research on Latino culture and communication. For instance, contrary to the long-held myth of the traditional family, growing numbers of Latina households are headed by working women (Davila, 2001). Contrary to the marketing view of separate values, many academic models of acculturation (Berry, 1980; Faber, O'Guinn, & McCarty, 1987) have stated that in the process of integration changes of Latino values can be expected. Many of the more recent U.S. Latino consumer segmentation studies (Bromley, 1992; de la Garza, Newcomb, & Myers, 1995; Valdes, 2002) ascribe bilingualism and biculturalism to many of the younger consumer segments and assert that they have more in common with American teens while navigating both cultures. In other words, reaching a younger Latino market does not require a separate campaign or separate media choices, but rather integrative steps to combine a merging Anglo-Latin culture.

The current dilemma seems to stem from two different beliefs about the Latino market. On the one hand, the Hispanic market is projected as one that is profitable and

has purchasing power. However, "affluence" is more representative of the U.S.-born Hispanic than it is of the foreign-born and also varies greatly along the lines of nationality or according to the contexts of in which particular nationalities migrated (Davila, 2001). The more affluent groups are also primarily English-speaking and U.S.-educated Latinos. The problem is that these are the very Latinos who are at odds with dominant generalizations about the market: Spanish-speaking, traditional, and foreign-born. The foreign-born are considered the most authentic Hispanics, upholding the traditional values that are supposedly shared by all Hispanics (Davila, 2001). However, those groups are generally poorer. Projecting the idea of an affluent but culture-bound Hispanic to sell the market creates a conundrum, as there are almost no people left to fit the profile of a high-income but authentic Latino consumer.

There is a need to create a more consistent model in marketing research on Hispanics that avoids the pitfalls of lack of attention to issues of class and reduction of so-called Hispanic traits to culture-bound generalizations. This analysis intends (a) to explore the misperceptions associated with advertising directed to U.S. Latino publics leading to barriers for effective marketing and (b) to introduce a decision making model as it relates to U.S. Latino consumer behavior in a cross-cultural context.

BACKGROUND

In delivering a marketable image of the Latino consumer to mostly Anglo clients, the advertising industry has resorted to projecting a more traditional definition of the "typical Hispanic" to preserve the idea of a unique U.S. Hispanic market. The protection of the "unique market" and its need for special advertising is in and of itself becoming increasingly difficult in a growing global context, in which U.S. Hispanic and Latin

American media operations are forging combined networks and exchange of programs and ideas. More critical though for advertisers is the question whether Latino consumers still identify with and feel engaged by current campaigns, when in fact they appear to have little in common with the images that are supposed to represent them. This section will discuss barriers to successful communication to U.S. Latino audiences. They can be divided into four groups: (1) assumptions of panethnicity, (2) acculturation and assimilation variables, (3) Spanish language dominance, and (4) emphasis of traditional Latin values.

Misperceptions in current advertising efforts toward Latinos

1. Assumptions of panethnicity

A consistent problem in marketing research on Latinos is a lack of attention to class-related issues and the homogenization of Latinos as one culture-bound undifferentiated population. "U.S. Latino panethnicity holds that all U.S. Latinos, Latin American immigrants and their descendants are one unitary group, regardless of differences of national origin, race, class, or U.S. immigration history. U.S. Latino panethnicity, and its hemispheric complement, panamericanism, construct the "Hispanic market", and are the symbolic glue that holds together the audiences for Hispanic media" (Rodríguez, 1996).

The notion that the U.S. Hispanic market is one segment has been firmly implanted in contemporary advertising strategy following the findings of leading research reports, such as Seoane (1995) and Valdes (2002). This notion is also advanced by major media outlets, such as Univision, which are both product and producer of U.S. Latino panethnicity. Spanish language marketers, particularly those based in Latin America, benefit from this notion because U.S. Latinos, particularly Mexican Americans in the South-

west, speak Spanish and are relatively wealthy in comparison to those in Latin America (Rodríguez, 1997). The key idea of the panethnic construct is that culture is always triumphant over class among Latinos, while Anglo-Americans are identified by class (e.g., the middle-class, the wealthy) as a primary basis for target definition. Consequently, the relationship of Latina traits, values and behaviors to class are never explored. It is likely though to assume that a lower-class Latino has more in common with a lower-class White- or African-American than an upscale Latino². However, these issues are rarely addressed in Hispanic marketing research.

Conversely, studies of U.S. Latino ethnic identity show clearly that national origin identification as well as class differences and differences in immigration patterns, override the unifying power of culture and language in Hispanic self-identification (Lopez and Espiritu, 1990; de la Garza, 1992). Latinos reflect a bicultural or hybrid culture, one that is composed of both U.S. and Latin national culture (e.g., Mexican, Puerto Rican, Dominican) (García Canclini, 1995; Hall, 1993, cited in Rodríguez, 1997; Vila, 2000). During a recent symposium on the relations among the U.S., Spain and Latin America at the University of New Mexico (2003), invited speaker, Mexican consul Juan Manuel Solana, identified four diverse factions of Latino influence in the U.S.: (1) the educated and influential Cuban population in Miami, (2) the Puerto Rican and other Central American populations of the New York/ New England area, (3) the post-World War II Mexican immigrant population in Chicago, and (4) the 20-million strong Mexican-origin population of the Southwest borderlands (Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California). In particular, the final group is in the process of slowly creating a “new country”, speaking a

merged language (Spanglish), having dual nationality, and integrating in their own way (Martínez, 1994; Solana, 2003, Vila, 2000).

There are emerging examples to show that rendering differences among Latinos irrelevant and immaterial is counter-productive to market success. An article on grocery stores servicing the growing Hispanic groups (Halkias, 2003) quoted supermarket operators who mentioned that they are stumped catering to the various Hispanic cultures that exist. Stephen Butt, vice president of H.E. Butt Grocery Co. in Texas, added that “the chain has learned over the years that what customers want varies by generation. Immigrants have different tastes than generations who have been here and their tastes have Americanized some” (Halkias, 2003).

Another danger of the culturalist explanation of attitude and behavior is that it is no explanation at all and actually applies to all consumers. The supposed Latina preference for buying things, loving her family, and wanting to see herself portrayed in a positive light in advertising would be appropriate for most U.S. consumers (Davila, 2001).

2. Acculturation and assimilation

Several models of changing ethnicity have been discussed in the literature on American ethnic groups, including assimilation and acculturation. Both models have been used to explain the process of adaptation by Latinas, particularly those of Mexican descent, to life in the United States (O’Keefe & Padilla, 1987). Acculturation and assimilation are generally discussed together because acculturation is assumed to be a prerequisite for assimilation (Kim, 2001; Teske & Nelson, 1974).

Acculturation is essentially a social learning process. It describes the mutual learning of the cultural patterns of two cultures which have come into first-hand contact.

In practice, however, it usually implies the learning of the values of the dominant (host) culture (Kim, 2001; Marin et al, 1986). It is, in short, “the ways in which ethnic minorities accept or reject the host culture” (Burton, 2000, p. 858). If goals and directions of the two cultures are in agreement, the new behavior can be learned with little difficulty. The problem lies in finding areas of compatibility in cultures.

Assimilation, on the other hand, describes a process in which an ethnic minority relinquishes its own culture to be entirely integrated socially, politically, and economically into mainstream society (Kim, 2001). However, studies of ethnic minorities (Grebler, Moore, & Guzman, 1970; Alvarez, 1971) found only limited assimilation, even for those groups who have been in the U.S. for several generations. Dolinsky and Feinberg (1986) noted that among ethnic groups in the U.S., Latinos are the fastest growing but least assimilated minority population within general society.

On the other hand, the lucrative Latino youth segment seems to transcend pride in heritage by asserting its role onto the American cultural landscape. Valdes (2002) describes the Latino youth’s unique culture as “the next wave to infiltrate the general market culture” (p. 25). The dynamics of cultural changes in this generation create a unique cultural milieu within which marketing has to occur. Michelle Del Toro, research manager at the Food Marketing Institute in Washington D.C., predicted that “in the future, maybe there won’t be Hispanic aisles in grocery stores (...) all these products will just be integrated completely. Look at tortillas and salsa, they’re mainstream” (Halkias, 2003).

It is ironic that the emphasis of language and cultural uniqueness in Latino-targeted advertising actually calls into question the identity of most second- and third-generation Latinas. These generations are basically bypassed by marketers. In a time in

which Latino culture continues to shape mainstream America, advertisers still seem to find it difficult to sell these more complex bilingual, bicultural, perhaps “polluted” Hispanics to corporate America (Davila, 2001). Perhaps it is necessary to revisit research on acculturation and ethnic marketing and analyze it in relation to contemporary Latino cultural politics.

3. Spanish language dominance

Latinos are not monolingual, asserted Marin and Marin (1991). They contend that typical monolithic depictions of Latinas as Spanish-only are degrading and demeaning. However, the dominant view in the Hispanic marketing industry is that Latinos speak Spanish and thus respond, understand, and connect more efficiently to messages that are transmitted in “their language” (Davila, 2001). The origin of this viewpoint seems to come from research studies, such as Guernica’s (1982) report or the U.S. Hispanic Market Study (1998), which successfully argued that language is the primary unifying variable for U.S. Latinos. This view is backed by the Spanish television networks, and it is guided foremost by marketing efforts to reach a maximum number of consumers. As a result, for the majority of Latinos it appears as if language is used as the primary indicator of Latina identity. The identification of language as a unifying, classifying trait³ is so intense that there is a conflation of the terms referring to the language and to the people (Astroff, 1988).

Faced with the pressures that corporations will limit their marketing efforts to Spanish-speaking consumers, if convinced that English-dominant and bilingual consumers can be reached through mainstream media, Spanish advertising and media presentations habitually include a statement that Spanish is the preferred language for all Latinas.

Even if they don't speak it, Latinos are symbolically moved by Spanish (Santiago-Irizarry, 1996), as it speaks to them emotionally. As simply put by Lionel Sosa, founder of Bromley Aguilar Advertising, in his bestselling book, *The Americano Dream*, "what we're dealing with here is the logic of the heart, not the logic of the reason (...) we [Hispanics] communicate through a touch, a gesture, an embrace (...)" (Sosa, 1998: 112). Segal and Sosa (1983) added that virtually all Latinos consider their language the most important part of their tradition to preserve. This would also explain the universal commitment to the Spanish language, found in the Census data examined by Yankelovich and colleagues (1984).

However, the assumption of Spanish-only approaches in media and advertising has not gone unchallenged. The annual study of the New York-based national advertising agency BBDO about Hispanic's viewing of English-language network television has found that Latinos watch effectively as much – if not more – English-language television (Burgi, 1994). New media challenge as well the Spanish-language dominance in media consumption, asserting that younger Hispanic segments, who have grown up in the U.S., prefer American sitcoms over Spanish novellas (Ang, 1996; Sinclair, 1990; Wilkinson, 1995). In addition, a variety of Latina-oriented magazine titles have been launched in the last few years, targeting more acculturated markets with bilingual formats (Nuiry, 1996). In doing so, they are creating different "knowledges" of the identity, needs, and desires of the Latino consumer (Davila, 2001).

Other studies (James & Ha, 1996; Rose & de la Maza, 1997) also found mixed support for the idea that Latina audiences are unacculturated and need or prefer Spanish-language media and messages. Given these discrepancies, it should not surprise why lan-

guage ability and preference has been ultimately labeled a less reliable indicator of acculturation and consumer behavior (Sorucco, 1996). Perhaps this is why López-Negrete (1992) advocated using both languages. He went on to state that “these statistics indicate that both English and Spanish print and broadcast media must be used to reach the entire Hispanic market” (p. 9).

One important aspect to the linguistic barrier certainly is that outside of class Latinos prefer Spanish, even those who are fluent in English. A Univisión marketing video, *The New America*, uses Sociologist David Bautista to make the point: “When marketing we have to understand where Latinos feel, and most Latinos feel most comfortable in Spanish” (Rodríguez, 1996). This linguistic barrier presents a marketing challenge because of its contradictory nature, Latinos prefer Spanish but higher SES Latinos prefer English. A suggested approach to best manage this paradox in advertising was that Hispanic marketers present Latinos as “special” middle class Americans who speak Spanish (Rodríguez, 1997).

Rodríguez (1997) also reports that one solution has been to advertise products on an “as needed” basis. For example, media outlets popular with lower class Latinos are ideal for long distance phone service and electronic money transfer services. Media outlets that cater to the “elite” English speaking and higher SES Latinos advertise middle class items. One caveat applies to this last point, Latino income continues to trail that of Blacks and Whites, as illustrated in luxury carmaker BMW’s tendency to promote “Certified Pre-Owned” vehicles in magazines like *Hispanic Business*.

In the end, it appears that the growing interest in Latinos as consumers has led to recasting them into a sellable, homogenous abstraction that helps to define and cluster, but is distant from the real heterogeneity of the "average" Latino consumer.

4. Emphasis of traditional Latin values

The cultural differences between traditional U.S.-American values and Latina orientation have been discovered in several comparative advertising studies (Tansey, Hyman, & Zinkman, 1990; McCarty & Hattwick, 1992). Ad themes from American advertisements on the one side and Brazilian and Mexican advertisements on the other showed deeply-ingrained cultural differences.

It was concluded that Latino values must be the foundation of commercial campaigns directed at Latinos. Valencia (1989), for instance, found that Latinas had higher than White American average value scores on values such as imaginative, comfortable life, pleasure, cheerful, polite responsible, and self-controlled [values were taken from the original Rokeach (1979) scale of values]. These values can be hypothetically related to product planning, promotional strategy, patronage behavior, and shopping orientation. López-Negrete (1992) concurs, stating that even English-only Latinos react more favorably, retain better and longer those creative messages that have or reflect Latino values, culture, and influence. In general, it seems that a larger concentration on values might be fruitful.

While we do not deny the existence and impact of generalized Hispanic values, the description of cultural generalizations incurs the danger of homogenizing Latinos as one undifferentiated population. In many of these descriptions of Hispanic values, typical Hispanics see themselves as part of a group, relying mostly on family, friends, and com-

munity, respecting their elders, having obedient and dependent children, upholding defined and hierarchical roles, and are characterized by male dominance. In contrast, “Anglos” supposedly see themselves as individuals, relying on themselves and institutions rather than on family, and stressing symmetry and democracy in interpersonal and cross-gender relationships (Davila, 2001).

In many instances, a result from that dichotomy is the depiction of Latinas as extremely brand-loyal. Interestingly enough, this loyalty was regularly referred to conservatism and traditionalism – a straight conclusion from the set of ascribed Hispanic values. Other possible variables, such as lack of choice, price, or availability were never considered (Halter, 2000; Lury & Warde, 1997). The consequence of the construction of Latinas as brand-loyal renders them ultimately as uncritical, compulsive shoppers and hence citizens, i.e. disengaged from political discourse (Austin, 1994; Khermouch, 1996).

While we do understand this bias as an outcome of marketers’ objectives to deal with this market as a manageable construct, one must ask if second- and third-generation, “acculturated” Latinas subscribe to these images. And given the aforementioned tendencies among Latino youth cultures and borderland populations, assertions that these groups will simply be picked-up by English-language media and mainstream advertising are insufficient. Hispanic agencies have so far skirted this issue by questioning how far one can fragment the market before it loses its value. This is indeed a valuable question, but one that seems to be answered for strategies aimed at the so-called general-market consumer. There is no reason to assume that Latinos’ values and lifestyles cannot be analyzed similarly.

A COMMUNICATION MODEL FOR LATINO CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Introduction

The construction of a Hispanic market has long been based on the notion of Hispanics as a nation within a nation (Davila, 2001). As we have seen, this construct presents several dilemmas to advertisers, especially to their quest to homogenize this heterogeneous market.

Given that acculturation is a dynamic process, inquiries that simply probe a person's "Anglo-Americanization" are becoming inadequate (Negy & Woods, 1992), as Latinos have exerted already a powerful influence on modern American culture. At the same time, different Latino generations define and redefine their own culture and identification (J-Lo generation, born-again Latinos, urban youth cultures, etc.). Since culture affects the consumer behavior of individuals (Wallendorf & Reilly, 1983) and since Latina consumers appear to be in a state of cultural flux, an important moderator of Latino consumer behavior would be their level of "felt involvement" in their Latino ethnicity (Valencia, 1985).

However, while ethnicity is a group membership characteristic, it seems insufficient to view it simply as a nominally codable demographic classification. This practice would exacerbate acceptable explanations not only of the acculturation process itself, but of the bi- and multicultural person (Garza & Gallegos, 1995). Padilla (1980) noted that cultural awareness and ethnic loyalty involve aspects of preference. Citing case studies of individuals who refused to conform to a particular culture, Padilla identifies "the personal factor in acculturation" (p. 73).

Another factor is the multidimensionality of acculturation. Simplistic, unidimensional models assume a simultaneous change in all aspects of life, leading to a complete replacement of cultural traits. This development contradicts the impact of freewill. Multidimensional models recognize that acceptance of new traits varies between individual traits. Individuals may rapidly adopt certain traits from the new culture, while simultaneously maintaining other native traits (Kim, 2001). The advantage of this model is not only the inclusion of choice (i.e., selective acculturation), but a representation of newly developed cultural and social patterns, created in a new society (Keefe & Padilla, 1987).

The acknowledgement of ethnicity as an act of choice (how one feels in and about a situation) has an effect on how marketers communicate with a person of a particular ethnicity. There seems to be a noticeable difference between thinking of ethnicity and related behaviors as a stable sociological trait that is manifested in the same way at all times, and thinking of it as a transitory psychological state manifested in different ways in different situations (Stayman & Deshpande, 1989).

By borrowing from earlier work by Stayman and Deshpande (1989) on situational ethnicity and extending it to a marketing-communication model toward U.S. Latino consumers, this paper explores the construct of “felt Latinismo” and its building blocks, “enduring Latinismo” and “situational Latinismo”. In so doing it incorporates the aforementioned variables that have led to misperceptions in advertising efforts to the Latino market. The resulting path model combines knowledge from situation-driven ethnicity with variables of acculturation behavior to explain the attitude toward message and brand of a typical Latino consumer. The objective is to introduce a Latino decision making model that addresses the following topics:

1. Explanation of the attitude toward message and brand of a typical Latino consumer.
2. Exploration of the existence of a spontaneous self-concept (personal choice), which takes on importance for both whether and why ethnicity may be important in consumption situations.
3. Advancement of a new agenda for "borderland" advertising.

The Proposed Model

Consumer research (Kakkar & Lutz, 1981) has shown that next to inter- and intrapersonal characteristics, the environmental and identity concerns influence the motivation to buy and actual purchase behavior. Belk (1975) identified five objective dimensions of a situation, which in turn he defined as something outside the characteristics of the individual and stimulus object. Those five dimensions are: (a) physical surroundings/geographic locale, (b) social surroundings/presence or absence of others, (c) temporal perspective/time of day, (d) task definition/information search, and (e) antecedent states/mood preceding the decision.

There has not been agreement about whether it is more valid to define a situation in primarily objective terms, such as those used by Belk, or in primarily subjective terms, such as consumers' internal perceptions and beliefs (Kakkar & Lutz, 1981). It seems reasonable to assume that both terms play a role in consumer attitude formation and behavior. Throughout the history of social psychology, the relationships among values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors played a major role in explaining human action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Petty & Cacioppo, 1981). Research described above has demonstrated

that this applies as well in describing ethnic consumption behavior. At the same time, other antecedent states (e.g., socioeconomic situation, language skills) play a role as well on how Latina/o a consumer feels prior to evaluating a message or product.

Furthermore, it is predicted that social surroundings will have a moderating effect on attitude and behavior. Some have proposed that the salience of how ethnic someone feels is likely to depend on the extent of how similar or dissimilar others' ethnicity is in a given situation (e.g., McGuire, McGuire, Child, & Fujiota, 1978). In intercultural situations such as those found in Latino marketing, one group borrows cultural symbols from another to increase perceived similarity (Holland & Gentry, 1997, 1999). In addition, certain product categories are more affected by ethnic differences than others (e.g., food and clothing vs. cars), as they might play a role in rituals, socio-economic status or behavior patterns. This in turn suggests an influence of the relationship between "felt ethnic involvement" and attitude by the product type. Temporal-spatial issues also influence how ethnic one feels (e.g., geographic locale, racial attitudes of both minorities and White Americans) (Jeffers, Hoggett, & Harrison, 1996; Vila, 2000). Combining all these elements, we obtain the following path model:

[Figure 1 about here]

Enduring Latinismo

The "enduring Latinismo" variables are comprised of socioecological, intrapersonal, and multicultural influences. Following Garza and Gallegos (1995), socioecological influences incorporate socioeconomic and other noncultural environmental factors that directly affect the individual. Those include SES, age, gender, education, parentage (i.e., parents' education and occupation), family size, urbanicity, and citizenship status.

While those factors are sometimes considered “proxy” measures, socioecological measures often account for differential attitudes irrespective of ethnicity (Goode, 1963).

Intrapersonal influences include personality traits and other emotional and cognitive components that stimulate motivation for behavioral response. Personal values form the most important component of this dimension. Closely related components comprise measures of *respeto* (i.e., respect for and courtesy toward elders) (Ramírez, 1969), feminism (Hurtado, Hayes-Bautista, Valdez, & Hernández, 1989), and locus of control (Rotter, 1966) or perceived self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1995). Up to this point, only a few value surveys of Latinos, such as the project by Yankelovich and colleagues (1984) exist.

Finally, multicultural influences encompass language and ethnic awareness factors. This dimension is described in greater detail by Keefe and Padilla (1987), who described two superfactors, labeled “cultural awareness” and “ethnic loyalty.” The former contains measures of cultural heritage (e.g., significance of lifecycle rituals), language preference, and cultural identification (e.g., media usage patterns). The latter factor is composed of measures of perceived discrimination/ethnic sensitivity and ethnic pride (perception of U.S. Latino culture, perception of specific country-of-origin culture, and preferences for relationships).

Situational Latinismo

Product type can affect the relationship between ethnicity and attitude or behavior, as different social situations have different norms of ethnic behavior, such as the type of food used at a wedding (McGuire et al., 1978). It is believed that certain product categories (e.g., food, clothing) are more ethnically cued than others (e.g., cars, office sup-

plies) (Burton, 2000). As a result, “felt Latinismo” (i.e., the degree to which a Latino feels part of a distinct Latino cultural community) will only lead to a manifest Latino consumer behavior, if the product type is distinguished along ethnic criteria. For products that are regarded equally between ethnicities, no differences in behavior should be expected despite the existence of potentially strong enduring Latino identification.

Similar to product type, the social environment influences attitudes and behavior by means of the degree of salience of ethnicity in a given situation. The extent to which consumer behavior is the result of “enduring Latinismo” criteria increases or decreases with the extent to which others in the situation share the Latino origin with the decision maker. Those others can be family, friends (Latino or other), colleagues/classmates (Latino or other), or nobody (person is alone). For this model, it is assumed that no other distinguishable differences exist between decision maker and cohort(s) besides ethnicity. Following Stayman and Deshpande (1989), it is predicted that the relationship between “enduring Latinismo” and “felt Latinismo” is influence by the social environment. In other words, Latino consumer choice is affected by the characteristics of the cohort(s) within the situation.

Felt Latinismo

Although investigators recognized the multidimensional character of acculturation, many of these measures developed to assess this construct reflect a unidimensional conceptualization. With the emergence of more complex models of cultural change, new descriptors were necessary. This model uses the descriptor “felt Latinismo” to describe Latino identity as a multinational conceptualization. It recognizes Latino self-concept as a

process that occurs as part of personality formation as well as differences between groups (de la Garza et al., 1995). Thus, “felt Latinismo” accounts for the strength of ethnic self-identification influence on predisposition toward a brand or message. It is a composite measure that determines directly the behavior in the marketplace.

Since Keefe and Padilla (1987) in a study of Mexican Americans in the Southwest, found no clear empirical basis to distinguish between attitudes and behavior, it is hence assumed that once attitude formation, toward either a message or brand, has taken place, the accepted communication process models (e.g., Wright, 1973; Mackenzie, Lutz, & Belch, 1986; Petty & Cacioppo, 1983) will apply. Consumer behavior measures consist of category usage, perception of product differences, perceived value/loyalty, and perception of the organization’s cultural identity with the group.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper introduced a communication response model of Latino consumers, and as such suggested a new approach toward cross-cultural advertising and marketing research. A narrow delineation of the model components was purposely avoided to allow for maximal utility and flexibility for future research involving Latina consumers. While future research may use only portions of the model at a time, an assessment of the interaction between the components and their multidimensional quality should be kept in mind.

A more in-depth look at Latino consumers is not only important for the described practical reasons, but for a variety of reasons at a theoretical level. Traditionally, the majority of research specified only a limited number of constructs—language use, cultural

values—that seem fit to explain and predict Latino consumer reaction in the marketplace. As mentioned earlier, there are an extensive number of variables potentially correlated with accumulation levels and consumption situations. The fact that individuals with similar backgrounds acculturate at different speeds suggests the involvement of personal choice (Kim, 2001; Negy & Woods, 1992). Moreover, self-confidence and related personality variables may interact with acculturation as well as consumption motivation and ability. For, a high degree of self-confidence indicates, for instance, a willingness to take risks, which may include stepping outside familiar ethnic groups. The opposite may also be true. A large degree of self-confidence may lead one to reinforce one's Latino identity after contact with another culture. It takes a certain amount of self-confidence to openly embrace or promote one's culture when it is not part of the mainstream. Current market trends seem to underscore this latter assumption.

This brief scenario intimates that Latino identity may have other cognitive, emotional, and behavioral consequences. For marketers, it would be of particular importance to assess not only whether, but why and when ethnicity is important in consumption situations. The notion of a “spontaneous self-concept” (McGuire et al., 1978: 516) takes a step toward advancing our knowledge about the level and effect of Latino ethnic awareness and identification by removing it from the culture-bound group identification.

In addition, researchers often suggest that more theory-driven, rather than descriptive, research is needed in the study of cross-cultural mass communication and marketing (e.g., White, 2000; Jones, 2000; Tharp, 2001). One way to accomplish this goal is by looking toward psychological, health, and sociological disciplines, whose model-building approaches were used and extended in this paper. More research is needed to test this

theoretical framework, but also to build upon it by expanding into areas outside the confines of this study and developing other explanatory factors (e.g., message elements).

These activities would render the model more stable and ultimately more comprehensive.

In addressing the profound influences of cultural environment on the person, Adler (1974) referred to “a new kind of person,” (p. 31) who is both socially and psychologically a product of interwoven cultures. While retaining the central sense of self reflected in personal choices, this person is fluid in his/her conceptualizations and free to react in whatever manner is deemed most productive in a particular situation (Garza & Gallegos, 1995). By taking such an outlook for media response and consumption situations, we can begin to develop strategies to adequately reach a growing number of multicultural Latinos in the United States.

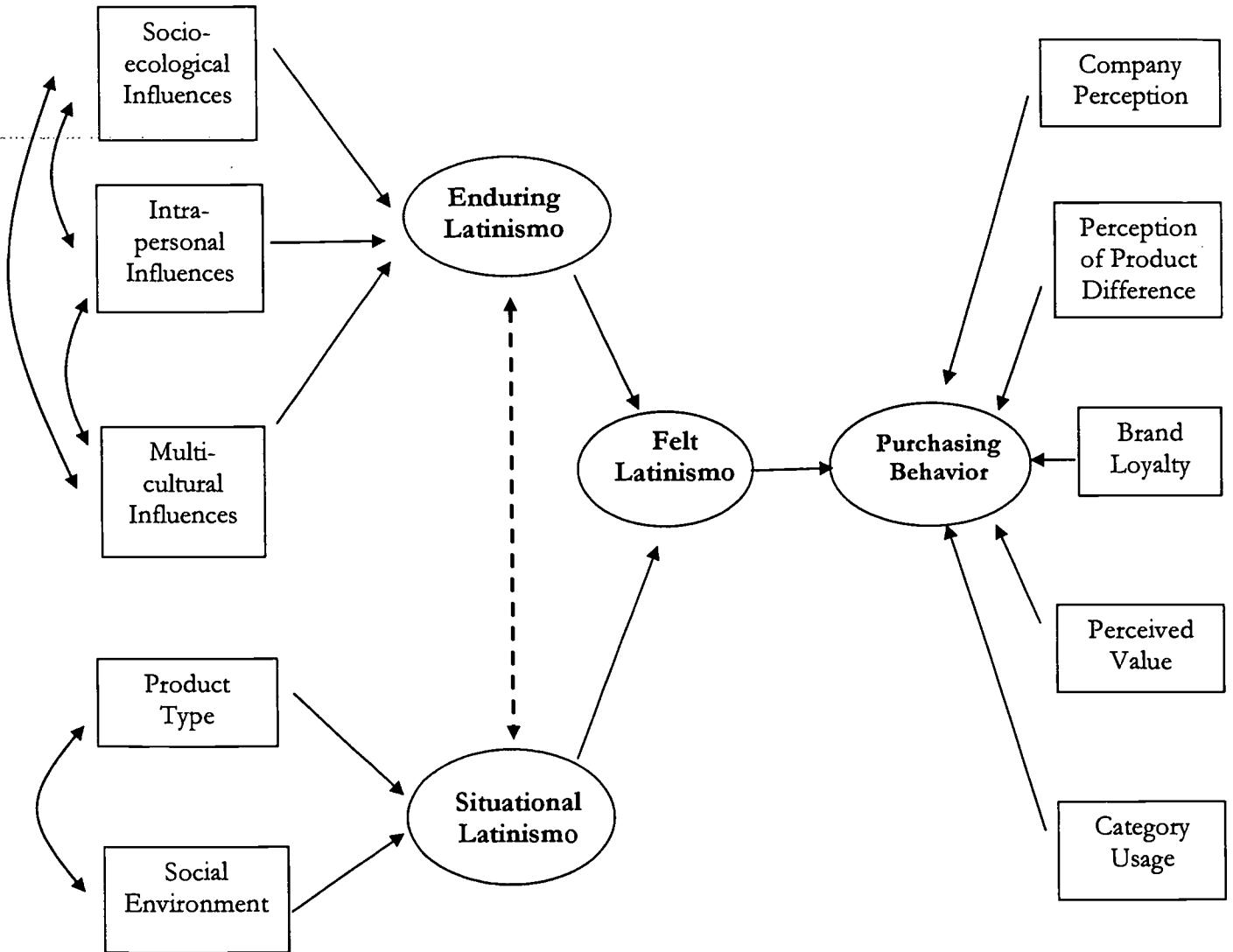
Several caveats associated with this paper should be mentioned. First, the universe from which the sample will be drawn will influence results. While the focus of the study—the exploration of Latina consumer behavior can be maintained, it is always advisable to aspire for the largest, most heterogeneous sample possible. Second, the assessment of consumption behavior based on self-reports might pose problems of accuracy. The impracticality of direct observation should overrule concerns, but the potential danger must be noted. Furthermore, the numbers of items per scale can attenuate the correlation between measures and negatively impact scale reliability.

Above all, this study will concentrate on specific consumption activities or brand names. Marketers cannot readily assume that findings on influences on one product category or activity are replicable for other brands or activities. Similar arguments can be made for a change in demographics of the research population. Therefore, care should be

exercised when developing different, targeted messages, e.g., in the case where ads aimed at Mexican Americans are modified to reach Puerto Rican Americans (Rodríguez, 1996).

Nevertheless, a better understanding of what influences Latino consumer segments to engage in certain purchase behaviors will lead to the creation of more effective marketing communication. It is hoped that the present article has highlighted some issues and expounded a theoretical framework deserving of attention within this research area.

FIGURE 1. Proposed path model of Latino consumer behavior



NOTES

1. Most people in the advertising industry use the terms Hispanic and Latino interchangeably, despite the fact that the industry is most commonly known as “Hispanic marketing.” Whereas the U.S. government coined the official designation of “Hispanic” or “Hispano” to designate anyone of Spanish background in the United States, the term is viewed by some as less inclusive, focusing on the culture of people from the Iberian Peninsula and being Eurocentric. The term “Latina/o”, on the other hand, can be potentially applied to any person of Latin American origin, being more inclusive of people from Central and South America. More importantly, “Hispanic” also suggests a large degree of acculturation and is far less common among the younger generations. For this reason, Latina/o may be the best compromise. Having said this, we will use the term “Hispanic” occasionally, depending on the context (e.g. citations). To avoid the cumbersome “Latina/o” or “Latinas/os,” we will alternately use the terms as gender-neutral, unless otherwise specified.
2. Rodríguez (1997) reports that Latinos of lower socioeconomic status often use Spanish at higher rates than middle-class, college-educated Latinos whose higher assimilation levels are often displayed through their comfort with the English language.
3. Spanish is a unifier among Latino populations, but at the same nationality is a divisive element. Mexican- and Puerto Rican-Americans do not see each other as equals. They do, however, acknowledge each other as Lati-

nos with a common cultural and lingual heritage and can be united along those lines in some circumstances.

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The Test of the Effectiveness of Product Placements in Video Games:
Comparing Explicit and Implicit memory for Brand Names

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The Test of the Effectiveness of Product Placements in Video Games:
Comparing Explicit and Implicit memory for Brand Names

Abstract

Given the increasing practice of brand and product placements in video games, this study examined the effects of placed brands on the game players' memory. Both implicit and explicit memory for brands placed in two sports games were tested using a word fragment test, and a recognition task, respectively. The results indicated that although the players did not perform well on explicit memory (recognition test), they showed implicit memory (word-fragment test) for the brand names placed in video games.

Introduction

In recent years, computer and video games have become a major outlet for entertainment. In fact, by the end of the last century, the computer and video-game business was expected to outgrow the more seasoned Hollywood box-office by about \$2 billion (Dorman, 1997) and according to the Interactive Digital Software Association (IDSA, www.idsa.com) computer and video game sales grew to \$6.9 billion in 2002. In the United States, more than 30 million PCs and video game consoles attached to about 40% of the nation's TV sets formed a huge market for the game producers. Sixty percent of Americans (145 million people) play video games, according to the Interactive Digital Software Association (www.idsa.com). To scores of advertisers, the attraction of video games caused by the sheer number of outlets was recently enhanced by phenomenal improvements in the gaming experience, especially realism (Frasca, 2001). Numerous names of brands, products, and services found their way into video games, especially sports games, where often advertisements were found to contribute to the perceived realism of the game (Nelson, 2002).

The increasing use of product placement in video games has been reported in many newspapers or business magazines, however, little research has been done regarding the effects of product placements in video games. To be sure, product placement in television shows and movies has also received little attention compared to other areas of advertising research. For example, the debate still continues whether product placement is an effective strategy in terms of memory for the brands on TV, as well as in movies (Karrh, 1998). According to one researcher, players' awareness of the brand name is one of the important goals of product and brand placements in video

games (Nelson, 2002). This study explored the virtually unresearched area of product placement in video games and asked whether product placements in video games influence the players' memory for the embedded brands. Following the practice established in TV and movie research, this study employed measures of both implicit memory (unconscious memory) – a word fragment test, and explicit memory (conscious memory) – a recognition test, for ads placed in two popular sports games. The test of two different memory measures in product placement effectiveness is expected to benefit both scholars and practitioners of product placements and we will discuss it later further in detail.

Literature review

Product placement: practice and research

The use of brand placement in a movie or television program has been employed by advertisers for over 50 years as a preferable and effective way of communicating to an audience (Babin & Carder, 1996; Sargent, Tickle, Beach, Dalton, Ahrens & Heatherton, 2001). A recent content analysis of 112 hours of prime-time television in the spring of 1997 found that, on average, there were close to 30 brand appearances per hour of prime time programming (Avery & Ferraro, 2000; Ferraro & Avery, 2000). On the other hand, a plethora of brands and products have been placed in numerous computer and video games. Nelson (2002) listed over 25 examples of massive placements of a wide variety of brands in games produced in just few years. While many of her examples came from diverse games such as action, role-playing, and simulation, the top of the list has been held by the sports genre. For instance, one of the games used in this study, *Formula 1*

2001 contains between 13-15 brand names per racing circuit, and there are 16 different racing circuits.

There are several reasons why brand placements are so popular on TV, and in movies and video games. First, brand placement might overcome the problem of zapping (Avery & Ferraro 2000; d'Astous & Chartier, 2000). Second, brand placements in movies were often associated with well-known actors or actresses, and therefore worked as celebrity endorsements (Avery & Ferraro, 2000). DeLorme and Reid (1999) found that audiences who were young and admired a movie actor or actress were more likely to associate the brand with the actor or actress and more willing to buy the product used by actor or actress in the movie. In video games, brand placements aided consumer identification with famous sports figures such as Tiger Woods, in *Cyber Tiger*, and Michelle Kwan in *Michelle Kwan Figure Skating* (Nelson, 2002). In fact, 17.9% of regular video game players consider the celebrities involved in games as the main reason for playing (ISDA, www.idsa.com). Third, advertisers found brand placement to allow for an accurate targeting of specific audiences. For some time, Hollywood has understood the demographics of who attends what kind of movies (Nebenzal, & Secunda, 1993). The situation seems similar for video games in this respect (Turcotte, 1995). A 2002 consumer survey by the Interactive Digital Software Association (IDSA, www.idsa.com) revealed that game makers have a clear understanding of who plays what kinds of games. Fourth, a brand placed in a movie or TV program has a longer lifetime than a typical advertisement (Brennan, Dubas, & Babin, 1999; d'Astous & Chartier, 2000), especially thanks to television re-run of movies, to videotapes, and DVDs. The life of brands placed in video games might also be considerable (Nelson, 2002), especially in

the case of heavy gamers. Fans of numerous games form online communities and confront each other in virtual tournaments. IDSA recently reported that one third of the people on the internet play games on line regularly (www.idsa.com). Fifth, research found that audiences seem to have more positive attitudes toward brand placements than toward advertisements (Nebenzahl & Secunda, 1993). Some studies reported that audiences indicated brand placements enhance the viewing experience because they make the movie more realistic (Avery & Ferraro, 2000). Nelson (2002) found similar results about brands placed in videogames. The realism of sports games in particular seems to benefit from brand placements (Nelson, 2002).

Finally, research suggested that audiences probably have less critical responses to brand placements than they do to standard commercials (Babin & Carder, 1996). Because people are watching a show when the brand placement occurs, they are probably not going to perceive the placement as a persuasive effort and hence are less likely to respond critically to the brand placement (Babin & Carder, 1996). Nelson (2002) found that overall players don't have a critical attitude about product placements in video games. In fact, she reported that game players show a positive attitude toward the product placements because they are perceived as adding realism to the game.

The similarities that brand placement in video games and movies share offer this and future research in brand placement in video games a solid starting point. One difference, however, between movies and television, on one hand, and video games, on the other hand, lies in the interactive nature of video games (Vorderer, 2000). Interactivity could influence the effect of product placements on memory in video games, and make it different than the effect observed in television and movies. Unlike its passive

audience of the television or movies, audiences of video games are more active and assumed to pay more attention to the screen. However, it is not so apparent that how this interactivity might influence the effect of product placement on memory. Therefore, we expect that this research will contribute to understanding the effect of product placement on memory in interactive media.

Product placements' effect on memory in TV, movies, and video games

One goal of brand placement is to increase the audience's familiarity with the brand so that consumers are more likely to remember the brand (d'Astous & Chartier, 2000). Consequently, much of the empirical research on brand placement has focused on viewers' memory for the brands placed within a movie or television show. Typically, it was argued that overall, brands placed within a television show or a movie have consistent but mild effect on the audience's memory (Karrh, 1998). The research on the effect of brand placement on brand memory yielded rather mixed results (Ong & Meri, 1994; Babin & Carder, 1996). Ong and Meri (1994) found little improvement in memory for some brand placements and remarkably large improvements in memory for other brands. For example, 77% of viewers recalled viewing *Coke* while watching the movie *Falling Down*, but only 18% recalled seeing *Hamm's Beer* in the movie (Ong & Meri, 1994). Similarly, Babin and Carder (1996) examined the recognition of 36 brands placed in two movies and found that some brands were recognized by over 30% of the participants, while others were recognized by less than 30% of the participants.

Academic research regarding the effect of product placement in video games is rare. Using a single game, Nelson (2002) found that game players recalled 25 to 30 % of brands immediately after playing the game and 10 to 15 % of brands after a five month

delay. She found that whether a brand is local or not, new, atypical for the object of the game, may influence the recall rate.

Overall, studies which measured recall or recognition as the effect of product placements in television shows, movies, as well as in video games suffered from two major limitations. First, most studies do not assess whether recognition and recall of brands occurred because the participants specifically remembered seeing them in a game, or just by chance, perhaps because some brands are more popular than others. To remedy this situation, it would be necessary for a study to evaluate the sensitivity of answers by using signal detection measures. Signal detection measures such as A' allow researchers to measure how well research participants can differentiate brands that were present versus brands that were not present in the video game. If the data analysis only considers the number of items correctly recognized, the results can be biased because participants may be guessing. Second, although most studies used a small number of brands, and some of the brands were recalled or recognized at higher rates, than others, most studies show low (below 30%) rates of recall or recognition. Does it mean that product placement is not effective in terms of memory? Advertisers' experience seems to indicate otherwise. Finally, this study argues that traditional recall or recognition tests could not properly assess the extent of brand placement's influence on memory because a different type of memory – implicit memory (Graf & Schachter, 1985, 1987) is used more in such cases.

Product placement: Implicit vs. Explicit memory

Explicit memory occurs when people intentionally and consciously try to recollect a specific previous event. In contrast, implicit memory involves memory effects that

occur without intentional or conscious recollection of such an event (Graf, & Schacter, 1985, 1987). The essence of implicit memory is the suggestion that a specific event can influence the perception and interpretation of subsequent events without recall and recognition of the prior event (Jacoby & Kelley, 1987). Therefore, implicit memory is revealed by the change of task performance such as word completion task or a preference over the given stimuli (Schacter, 1987). The research on implicit memory suggests that in earlier brand placement studies, even though the audience could not directly recall or recognize brand names to which they had been exposed, the brand names may still have influenced familiarity with and preference for the brands. Some scholars referred to explicit and implicit memory as direct and indirect memory, respectively (Richardson-Klavehn & Bjork, 1988). Recall or recognition have traditionally been used to measure explicit or direct memory, whereas preference for the product or the word fragment test have been used to measure implicit or indirect memory. The disassociation between implicit and explicit memory has been suggested by many scholars (Graf, & Schacter, 1985, 1987; Jacoby, 1991; Jacoby, & Dallas, 1981; Richardson-Klavehn, & Bjork, 1988; Roediger, 1990a, 1990b; Schacter, 1987; Tulving, Schacter, & Stark, 1982). For example, implicit memory differs from explicit memory in terms of how long the memory effect lasts and the level of processing of the original stimuli that is necessary to show a memory effect (Sanyal, 1992). Psychologists found that implicit memory survives longer than explicit memory (Tulving, et. al., 1982) and is not influenced by the level or type of processing that occurs (Jacoby & Dallas, 1981), unlike explicit memory which is driven by semantic processing.

Many scholars proposed implicit memory as an important concept in advertising research (Duke, & Carlson, 1993, 1994; Krishnan & Chakravarti, 1999; Schmitt, 1994). The limitations of explicit memory measures – recall and recognition – in evaluating advertising effects led researchers to consider implicit memory as a supplementary way of measuring advertising effect (Shapiro, & Krishnan, 2001). Specifically, explicit memory measures can only reveal advertising effects accessible to conscious retrieval (Krishnan & Chakravarti, 1999). Therefore, using a single measure of memory is problematic, since advertising effects might occur through conscious as well as nonconscious memory processes (Krishnan & Chakravarti, 1999). Sanyal (1990) suggested that restricting measures of consumers' memory to recall and recognition causes important aspects of consumer evaluation and decision making to be overlooked. In addition, some researchers considered implicit or nonconscious memory caused by advertising exposure to be a reliable influence on behavioral predisposition toward a brand (Krishnan & Chakravarti, 1993). In particular, Duke and Carson (1993) suggested that consumers' purchase decisions might be influenced not only by conscious processes but also by unconscious processes, especially at the time of purchase.

Moreover, research has revealed that implicit memory is not influenced by level of processing, or whether processing is semantic or not whereas recall and recognition perform better in semantic processing (Sanyal, 1990). Consequently, implicit memory can detect advertising effects that are related to non-semantic processes and involved with incidental or unattended advertising exposure. Thus, implicit memory may reveal a relatively important effect of the brand placement even though the details of the original exposure were not remembered (Sanyal, 1990).

Still, only a small number of advertising studies examined implicit memory in advertising (Duke & Carlson, 1994; Duke, 1995; Krishnan & Chakravarti, 1993; Krishnan, & Shapiro, 1996; Shapiro & Krishnan, 2001). While few, these studies supported the idea that implicit memory could reveal advertising exposure effects that are not detectable with an explicit memory measure. Word stem completion tasks (Krishnan & Chakravarti, 1993), word fragment completion tasks (Duke & Carlson, 1994; Duke, 1995), preference judgments (Krishnan, & Shapiro, 1996) and purchase choice (Krishnan, & Shapiro, 1996; Shapiro & Krishnan, 2001) have been used to measure implicit memory.

Duke and Carlson (1994) and Duke (1995) presented participants with advertisements and had them either evaluate the product information (brand processing) or focus on the surface features of the advertisement (nonbrand processing, see Gardner, Mitchell & Russo, 1985). As expected, participants who evaluated the product information showed better explicit memory for the advertisement. However, the manipulation of processing had no influence on participants' implicit memory for the brands advertised. Likewise, Shapiro and Krishnan (2001) demonstrated that explicit memory, but not implicit memory, decreased across time.

Implicit memory in product placements

Krishnan and Trappey (1999) suggested that nonconscious processes, which have been used in studies of advertising effects, could also be useful for understanding the effects of product placements in different media, because brief exposure to the product is the norm. Following this suggestion, Law and Braun (2000) used implicit memory measures in measuring effectiveness of brand placement on TV. They found that brand

placement not only influenced explicit measures of memory such as recognition and recall tasks, but that brand placement also influenced implicit measures of memory. In their study, Law and Braun (2000) had participants imagine that they were helping a friend purchase items for the friend's new apartment. They found that participants were more likely to choose items for the friend's new apartment that had appeared in an episode of *Seinfeld* they had just watched than the control items which did not appear in the specific episode they watched. It seems that Law and Braun's findings suggest placement may have primed the brands which influenced later judgments (see Roskos-Ewoldsen, Klinger & Roskos-Ewoldsen, in press, or Roskos-Ewoldsen, Roskos-Ewoldsen, & Carpentier, 2002, for a discussion of media priming). In fact, Law and Braun (2000) tested product placement's implicit memory effect on preferences through a choice behavior task instead of using word fragment test. The current study uses a different measure of implicit memory – a word fragment test. Thus, it directly examines whether brand placements in a video game influence implicit memory for the brand.

Research hypotheses

This study was undertaken with the purpose of investigating memory for brands placed in sports video games. One of the key questions resulting from previous research was whether exposure to the brands placed in video games has an effect on implicit memory. The interactive video games require player's visual attention and motor actions (Grodal, 2000) and therefore, the player might pay less attention to the brand names which placed just as background features which have nothing to do with game performance in both the soccer and racing game. If this is the case, the effect of product

placement in video games will be detected in implicit memory measures which are not influenced by level of processing.

In this study, participants played either a soccer video game, a racing video game or played no game (the control condition). After watching the game, the participants completed a measure of implicit memory (a word fragment completion task) and a measure of explicit memory (a recognition task). In this research, besides the primary control group who did not play any games, two game conditions will serve as a secondary control group for each others. More specifically, the performance of implicit memory test of the brands appeared in soccer game from the players who played the soccer game will be compared with two groups; first, control group who did not play any game at all, and second, racing game group who were only exposed to the brand appeared in racing game. In a same way, the performance of implicit memory regarding the brand names appeared in racing game from racing game group will be compared with those of both no-game group and soccer game group. The reviewed literature suggested that players of the video games would show better implicit memory for brands placed in the game they played than for brands placed in the game they didn't play or brands that did not appear in either game (foils). That is, for the product placement of brand names in video games to be effective in implicit memory, the group exposed with those brand names should show better performance in implicit memory task than two groups, control and the other game, which are not exposed with those brand names.

Specifically,

H1. Players in the racing game condition will have better fragment completion rates for the brand names in this game than the subjects in both the soccer game and the control condition.

H2. Players in the soccer game condition will have better fragment completion rates for the brand names in this game than the subjects in both the racing game and the control condition.

Previous studies of product placements in television shows and movies suggest overall mild effect on brand memory (e.g., recall and recognition). In case of video games, the recall or recognition rates of brand names might lower than those of television or movies, because players might less attentive to the brands placed as a background. As previously mentioned, video game players recalled average 25-30 percents of brand names in short term delay (Nelson, 2002). This recall rated are lower than those from both movie and television overall. Considering the fact that recognition rates are generally higher than recall rates, it is expected that the recognition rate of brand names in this study will be higher than 30 percents overall.

H3a. Recognition rates of brand names seen in both games will be higher than 30 percent overall.

However, it is possible that the participants might respond that they recognize brand names by chance level. Therefore, signal detection analysis will be applied besides the more tradition yes/no recognition measures to detect this problem. Again, it is

expected that the recognition rates of brand names appeared in video games are just the chance level. Namely:

H3. Recognition rates of brand names seen in both games will not be greater than the chance.

Video game playing is a complex activity. Research suggested that other variables may influence memory for brands placed in video games. This study investigated how factors such as arousal caused by playing video games, attitudes toward the game, and involvement with the game interact with both explicit and implicit memory measures. While intuitively it is reasonable to believe that each of these variables may influence memory performance of the players, the literature is vague in this respect and does not allow for the formulation of directional hypotheses. Instead, the following research questions were asked:

RQ1. Does post game arousal influence the players' performance on explicit and implicit memory tasks?

RQ2. Do the players' attitudes toward the played game influence their performance of explicit and implicit memory tasks?

RQ3. Does the players' involvement with the played game influence their performance of explicit and implicit memory tasks?

Method

Design and participants

A 2 (game condition: a racing game vs. a soccer game) × 2 (memory: implicit vs. explicit) mixed between-within subjects experimental design plus control group (no game) for explicit memory was used in this study. Game condition was the between-subject factor, and memory measure was the within-subjects factor. The control group completed the word fragment test (for implicit memory) but not the recognition task (for explicit memory). A total of eighty-nine students from a large southern university participated in the study.

Twenty six played a racing game, 30 played a soccer game, and 33 were assigned to the control group. Participants were assigned to one of the conditions on a random basis. The average age of participant of this study was 20 years old. Usually the use of college students sample might be considered to be problematic in terms of generalizability of the result of study. However, considering the fact that the college students groups are one of the major video game player groups, the use of college students as participant seems to be quite adequate in this study.

Stimuli

Two sports video games were selected for this research; EA's *Formula 1 2001*, a racing game, and also EA's *FIFA 2002*, a soccer game. Both games were selected for several reasons. First, as mentioned in the literature review, placement of brands in sports games tends to be accepted by players as natural and as a factor that enhances the gaming experience. Second, each game contained large, fairly equal numbers of placed brands: 13 in the racing game, and 11 in the soccer game. Third, the placed brands were names of

real brands. Of the many circuits available in the racing game, one was chosen that showed only brands available to the American public. In the soccer game, two American teams of equal strengths confronted each other on a field decorated with brands again available in the US. Finally, both games have relatively simple controls. The driving game uses the four arrows on the computer keyboard, while the soccer games uses the four arrows plus three other keys. Anecdotal evidence indicates that most people require a few minutes of training before mastering the controls of each game at a beginner's level.

Measurements

Implicit memory test: Implicit memory was measured using a *word fragment test*. From both video games, 24 brand names were identified as product placements (see Appendix for detail). *EA Sports* – the game producer, apparent in both games, was not considered as a target. Therefore, 13 brand names from the racing game and 10 brand names from a soccer game were used in word fragment test. Seven brand names not present in either game were included as foils. Thus, a total of 30 brand names were used for the word fragment test. Participants from both treatment conditions and control condition were asked to blanks in 30 words (e.g., Y_ H_ O for *Yahoo*). For each game condition, the brand names from the other game worked as foil. The data from the control group provided a baseline measure of how easy the word fragments were to correctly complete.

Explicit memory test: Explicit memory was measured using a recognition task. Same 24 brand names used in implicit memory test were applied in recognition task. Unlike implicit memory task, participant from two game conditions were only given the

list of brand appeared in each games and some foils for recognition task. As a result, participants who played the racing game were presented 25 brand names—13 targets and 12 foils—and were asked to indicate whether they could recognize the brand names or not. Participants who played the soccer game were presented 21 brand names—10 targets and 11 foils—and were asked to indicate whether they could recognize the brand names or not. For each game condition, different brand name foils were used. Moreover, the control group recognition task was not tested.

Arousal, attitude toward the games, and involvement were measured for participants in the two game conditions. Mehrabian and Russel's (1974) questionnaire was used to assess arousal after the game. It consisted of six attribution sets (Stimulated/Relaxed, Excited/Calm, Frenzied/Sluggish, Jittery/Dull, Wide awake/Sleepy, Aroused/Un-aroused) measured on 7-point Likert-type scales. Attitude toward the game was measured using Phelps and Hoy's (1996) questionnaire (I like it/I hate it, It is stupid/It is clever, It is dull/It is fun, on 7-points Likert-type scales). Finally, involvement with the game was measured using Zaichowsky's (1994) Revised Involvement Inventory (7-points scales) on 10 sets of attributes.

Procedure

In both game conditions, participants were asked to fill out pre-treatment questionnaires regarding their previous video game experiences. They were then asked to read a page of instructions of how to play the video game they were assigned. About 10 minutes of practice time were given for them to learn how to play the games. After the practice, subjects were asked to play the games for 20 minutes. Right after the game, they were asked to answer a questionnaire which measured their arousal, attitude toward and

involvement with the game they had played. Then, a 10-minute distraction task was given before the word fragment completion test. In the word fragment completion task, the subjects were instructed that this was a word game and no mention about the previous video game experience was given. After the word fragment completion task, the subjects were given the list of brand names and asked to indicate whether they had seen each brand in the previous game they played. Lastly, demographic information and whether they had played the game before experiments were asked.

Analysis and Results

Video game experience: None of the participants had experience with the two games used in the study. As far as general experience with video games, most participants were regular computer or video game players to some degree. A slight majority ($n=56$, 62.9%) had played computer or video games for 2 years or more, while 12.4% ($n=11$) had played for less than 2 years. A fairly large proportion ($n=22$, 24.7%) had never played computer or video games before. These numbers are concurrent with survey data from IDSA (www.idsa.com), which suggests that participants in this study were typical in terms of game playing.

Implicit memory test-word fragment test: To examine the implicit memory performance on brand names from the racing game, percentages of correct word fragment completion rates were obtained from the 13 target brand names. Then the percent of correct word fragment completion rates were compared across the three groups. The results of this comparison are presented in Figure 1. As expected, the proportion of correct word fragment completion of brand names from the racing game is higher for the players of the racing game ($M = .38$, $SD = .26$, $F(2, 86) = 7.07$, $P < .01$) than the proportion

resulting from both the soccer game players ($\underline{M} = .24$, $\underline{SD} = .13$) and the control condition ($\underline{M} = .21$, $\underline{SD} = .12$). The performance of players from both soccer game and control condition were not significantly different ($\underline{P} = ns.$). Therefore, H1 was supported.

Figure 1 about here

Similarly, for the implicit memory performance of brand names from the soccer game, the percent of correct word fragment completion rates were obtained from 11 target brand names. Then the percent of correct word fragment completion rates were compared across the three groups. The results of comparison of three groups' performance on brand names from soccer game are presented in Figure 2. The results show the same pattern from Figure 1. As expected, the proportion of correct word fragment task rate of brand names from the soccer game is higher for the subjects from the soccer game ($\underline{M} = .54$, $\underline{SD} = .19$, $\underline{F}(2, 86) = 11.48$, $\underline{P} < .001$) than those of subjects from both driving game ($\underline{M} = .42$, $\underline{SD} = .16$) and control condition ($\underline{M} = .33$, $\underline{SD} = .16$). The performance of subjects from both racing game and control condition were not significantly different ($\underline{P} = ns.$). Therefore, H2 was supported.

Figure 2 about here

Recognition of brand names For the analysis of recognition rates, the proportion of correct recognition of brand names appeared in each of the each games were calculated as hit response rate. For example, if the subjects said 'yes' for a brand name (Bridgestone) that actually appeared in a driving game, this response were considered as correct

response. False alarm was calculated if the subjects indicated that they saw the brand names which are not actually appeared in the target game. For example, if the subject in a driving game condition said they saw the brand name 'Aquafina' which was a filler brand name, this response was used to calculate false alarm. The results of hit and false alarm rates from both game conditions were presented in Table 1.

 Table1 about here

Overall, the correct response rates for the brand actually appeared in both driving game and soccer game around 50% in average. This percentage is higher than the percentage of recall of brand names from a previous study (Nelson, 2002). Therefore, H3a was supported. (See Appendix B. Figure1. and Figure 2 for detail of recognition rates of individual brand names from both games) To confirm the recognition test results were above the chance level, first A' was calculated for each game conditions. An A' score of .50 is equal to chance performance. The A' scores were tested through the one-sample t-test where the group score was compared to .50 to determine if recognition was above chance levels. The result of t-test of brand name A' of driving game is statistically significant ($t=22.636$, $P<.001$) which means that the recognition of brand names in driving game above chance levels of recognition. Similar results were found for the brand names from soccer game condition ($t=12.557$, $P<.001$), meaning that H3b was also supported.

Arousal, attitudes toward the game and involvement with game Overall, for the subjects from both game condition, arousal after the game ($M=4.28$, $SD=1.26$, 7-points scale) indicated that playing game cause some arousal from the subjects. The average score of

arousal from driving game subjects (\underline{M} =4.01, \underline{SD} =1.12) is lower than the average scores from soccer game subjects (\underline{M} =4.51, \underline{SD} =1.35), however, this difference is not statistically significant. Overall, subjects showed positive attitudes toward the game they played (\underline{M} =4.51, \underline{SD} =1.73, 7-points scale). The two game conditions shows similar score levels of attitude toward the games (driving game: \underline{M} =4.44, \underline{SD} =1.48, soccer game; \underline{M} =4.57, \underline{SD} =1.94). Involvement with game played was moderate (\underline{M} =3.51, \underline{SD} =1.40, 7-points scale) and is the same across the two game conditions (driving game: \underline{M} =3.41, \underline{SD} =1.11, soccer game; \underline{M} =3.60, \underline{SD} =1.63).

As for the research questions, arousal, attitude toward the game, and involvement with the game were analyzed using correlation and regression analysis to determine if any of them influenced the subject's performance of either explicit (recognition) or implicit (word fragment test) memory, or both of them. However, none of the three factors influenced any of the memory measure in this study. Had the participants played the games for a longer time or had they been more involved with the game they played, then arousal after the game, attitude toward the game, and involvement with the game might have influenced either one or both memory measures.

Discussion

Product placement within movies and TV programs has a long history. Academic research on the influence of product placement on memory for the product is mixed (Karhh, 1998). In part, the failure to find clear effects of product placement on memory may result from the reliance on explicit measures of memory. Perhaps the most important finding of this study is that measures of implicit memory may provide a more

sensitive test of product placement than measures of explicit memory. This finding confirms earlier studies' suggestions concerning product placements' influence on brand memory. Measures of implicit memory clearly showed the effects of exposure to the brand while playing a video game. However, consistent with earlier research, the explicit measure of memory showed only a minimal effect on participants' explicit memory for the brands.

This study departs from previous research by using a relatively new and less investigated medium – video games. Video games are an interactive medium and are a more vivid and active media. Consequently, brand placement might not work on video games because playing the game would distract people from noticing the brand placements. Therefore, this study sought to provide a test of whether people's memory for a brand is influenced by brand placements in a video game they are playing. The results of the study clearly demonstrate that participants' implicit memory for a brand is influenced by product placement within a video game. Furthermore, the results indicate a modest effect of brand placement on explicit memory for the brand. This study suggests that product placements in video games may show some promise for advertisers. Game players may not explicitly remember the brands they see in video games, but nevertheless these brands are likely to linger in their mind and maybe influence their later decisions.

However, more research is needed to confirm and expand this study's findings. Therefore, future studies should consider several factors related to product placement in video games. First, the heavy players of video games should be examined. In this study the play time was around 30 minutes including 10 minutes practice. Further, none of the participants had previously played either of the video games they were assigned to play.

Therefore, their overall level of involvement was moderate. Had they played a game of their choice, the involvement levels might have been higher. Future research might consider finding what specific games participants like most and conducting studies on those games.

Heavy players should show higher levels of involvement with the video game and that high involvement may influence the memory of brand placed in the video games. Second, it is necessary to compare the long term effect of product placements in video games. An earlier study found that recall of brand names placed in a driving game diminished with greater delays in the memory test (Nelson, 2002). Explicit tests of memory such as recall and recognition are influenced by time, while implicit memory survives longer after the initial exposure to the stimuli. Therefore, it is necessary to examine whether the implicit memory effect found in this study will expanded to long term effect. Third, it is necessary to examine the effect of product placements in various genres of video games. In this study, we tested two sports related games. However, product placements in video games have been applied in diverse genres of video games, such as simulation. Lastly, in this study we used word fragment test to examine implicit memory effect of product placements in video games. Besides word fragment test, it is recommended to use other implicit memory tests such as preference or choice behavior. As previously mentioned, the purpose of product placements in video games is not limited to brand awareness or familiarity. Preference or purchase intention, which can be measured by implicit memory, also is the possibly important purpose of product placements in video games.

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Figure 1. The Comparison of Word Fragment Test of Brand Names from Driving Game

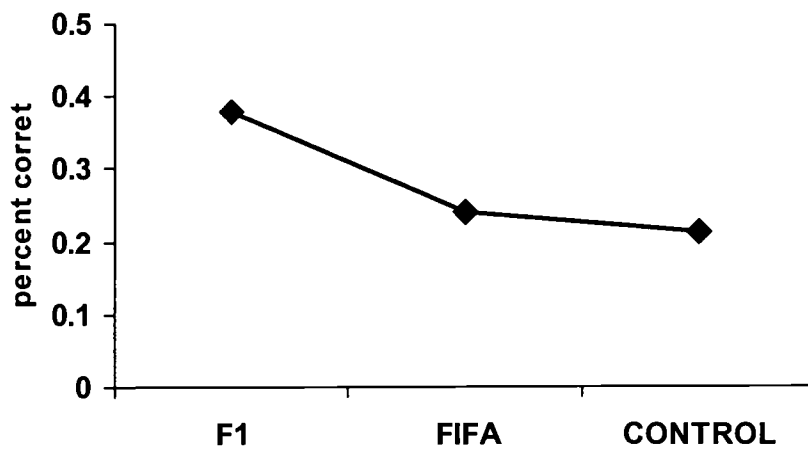


Figure 2. The Comparison of Word Fragment Test of Brand Names from Soccer Game

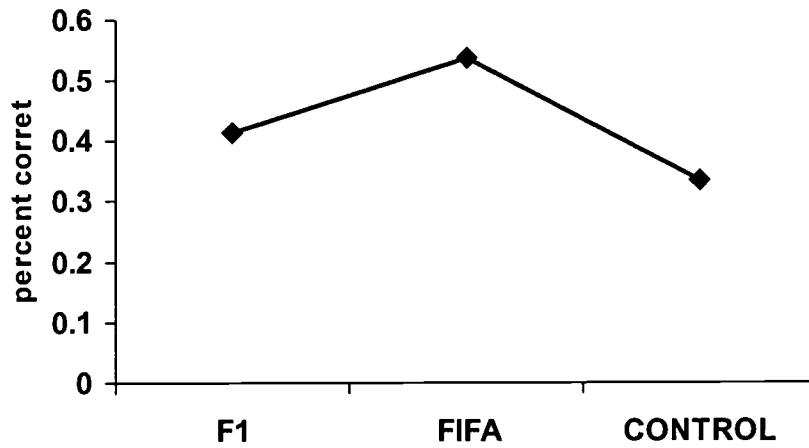


Table 1 Comparison of Recognition for Brand Names from Two Different Games

	Hit	False Alarm	A'*
Formula1	.5385	.2596	.6447
FIFA	.5133	.3212	.6816

*A' = $\frac{1}{2} + \frac{\{(y-x)(1+y-x)\}}{4y(1-x)}$, where x is proportion of false alarm and y is proportion of hit (Grier, 1971)

<Appendix A.>

The list of the brand names placed in video games

Formula 1 2001:

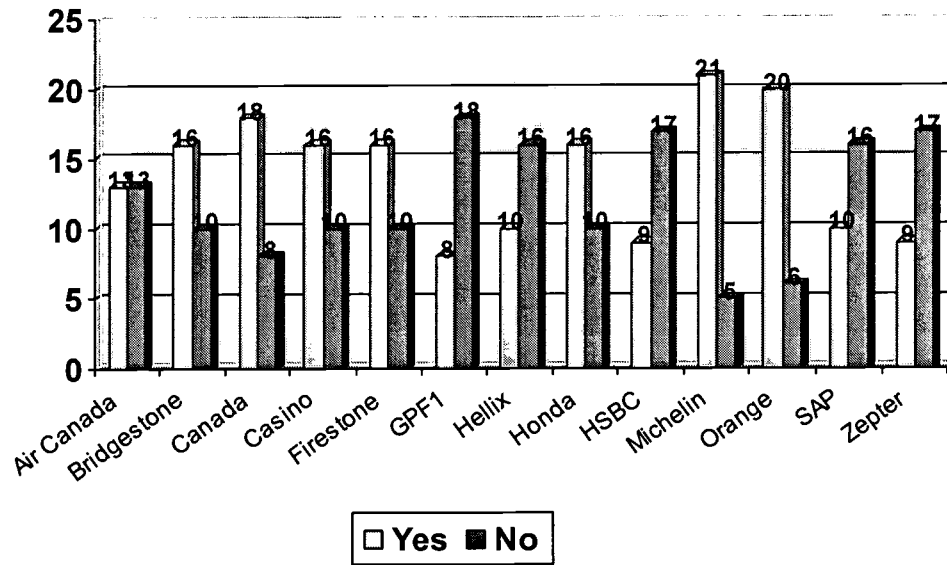
1. *Air Canada*
2. *Michelin*
3. *Hellix (Shell)*
4. *GPF1*
5. *HSBC*
6. *Canada*
7. *Zepter*
8. *Orange*
9. *Honda*
10. *SAP*
11. *Casino (of Canada)*
12. *Firestone*
13. *Bridgestone*

Fifa 2002:

1. *Soccer United Relief Fund*
2. *MLSnet.com*
3. *US Soccer*
4. *ESPN Sports Center*
5. *Valvoline*
6. *Budweiser*
7. *Lego*
8. *Yahoo*
9. *Got Milk?*
10. *Aquafina*

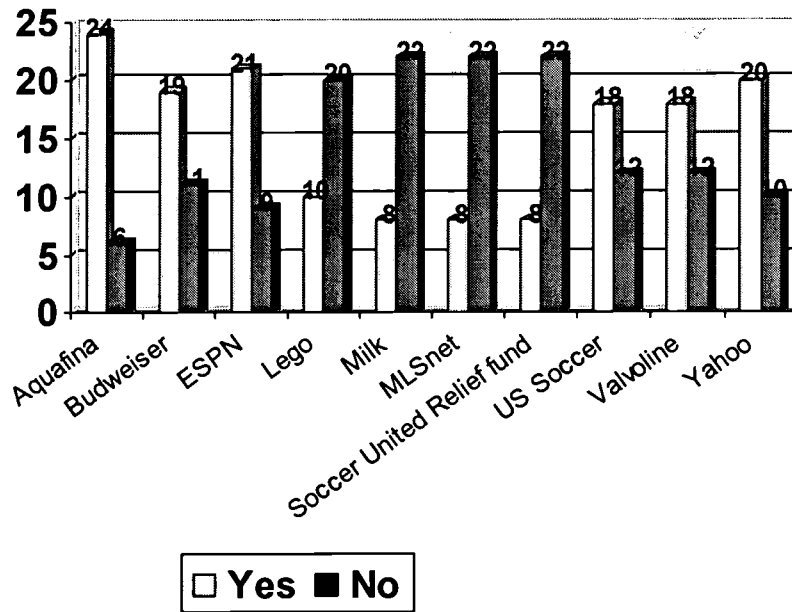
<Appendix B>

Figure 1. Recognition of brand names in Formula1 video game



N=26

Figure 2. Recognition of brand names in Fifa 2002 video games



N=30

Proactive and Retroactive Position Effects
And a System for Evaluating Pod Positions (SEPP)

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Proactive and Retroactive Position Effects And a System for Evaluating Pod Positions (SEPP)

Advertising professionals and researchers have often asked two questions regarding a TV advertisement's position in a "pod," that is, a commercial break. First, does pod CLUTTER matter – would an advertisement fare better in a pod of fewer ads? Second, does SERIAL position matter – are some positions in a pod better than others?

Some advertisers suspect the answer is yes. "The days are waning when an agency media buyer could be content simply to put a spot on a given television show" (Brown, 1988, p. bt38). Nevertheless, television networks and local stations say no, by not allowing advertisers to choose positions, and by regularly charging the same price for all positions within a program (John Hunt of Ogilvy & Mather, quoted by Brown, 1988). Some textbook writers (Rossiter and Percy, 1987, p. 618) agreed: "contrary to popular opinion, this (position) does not make a substantial difference ... Position in general is not worth adjusting for." In the meantime, advertising practitioners who suspect a position effect don't know which positions are more desirable (Brown, 1988, p. bt38). "It's hard to find simple relationships," according to Roger Baron of Foote, Cone & Belding. Therefore, some advertisers, like Bob Warrens who was then with J. Walter Thompson, tried to "get a good rotation among all the pods ..., as well as rotation within pods."

One researcher (Zhao, 1997), however, questions the questions. It would be more precise and more productive, he argues, if we ask two different questions. First, how does the PROACTION from the preceding ads affect an advertisement? Second, how does RETROACTION from the succeeding ads affect the advertisement? Implicit in this re-conceptualization is the assumption that the proactive effects differ from the retroactive effects, while the traditional concept of clutter equates the two. The traditional conceptualization of serial position emphasizes the physical location, while the new conceptualization emphasizes the surrounding ads that define the position.

To apply his re-conceptualization and to test the proactive and retroactive effects, Zhao designed a naturalistic quasi-experiment based on audience reactions to three years (1992-1994) of Super Bowl broadcasting. The dependent variables, memory and attitude, were measured in after-game telephone interviews of randomly selected adults, while the independent variables, pod positions, were measured by analyzing the content taped during the games.

The results suggest that both preceding ads and succeeding ads had strong and negative effects on brand memory. The negative effect of the preceding ads, however, was twice as strong as that of the succeeding ads.

The traditionally defined clutter effect, Zhao reasons, is in fact a combination of proaction and retroaction. Both effects being negative implies that their sum, the clutter effect, is also negative. This traditional way of thinking, however, overlooks the fact that the two component effects are significantly different in magnitudes.

The traditionally defined serial position effect, Zhao points out, is in fact an exchange between proaction and retroaction – e.g., moving an advertisement ahead by one position in a series means one less preceding ad in exchange for one more succeeding ad. The two effects being different implies

that serial position does matter – the earlier positions produce higher memories than the later ones. This traditional way of thinking, however, ignores the fact that it is not the physical location per se that affects viewers' reaction to an advertisement, but the surrounding ads that define the position.

In the 1992-1994 data, the preceding ads were also found to have a negative effect on advertisement liking, while the succeeding ads' negative effect on liking was weaker and statistically non-significant.

All of the above, Zhao argues, was predicted by what he calls a "holistic theory of pod position effect." The preceding ads affect three cognitive processes – they reduce viewers' physical exposure to an advertisement, reduce their attention during the advertisement, and reduce their attention after the advertisement. The succeeding ads, by contrast, affect only the last process – they only reduce viewers' attention after the advertisement. That's why both *should* have negative effects; that's why the proactive effects *should* be stronger.

Zhao's findings regarding clutter effects might have been corroborated by Pieters & Bijmolt (1997), who used a similarly naturalistic design based on audience reactions to 2,677 commercials advertised in television news between 1975 and 1992 in Netherlands. Published in the same year as Zhao's study, Pieters and Bijmolt used the traditional conceptualizations of clutter and serial position, therefore did not specifically investigate the effects of proaction or retroaction.

Zhao's test, however, was based on a relatively small sample of 170 brands advertised in three Super Bowl games. Also, Zhao's data were from nearly a decade ago, although Pieters & Bijmolt's data were even more dated.

While scholars have noticed Pieter & Bijmolt's and Zhao's studies (e.g. Coulter, 1998; Ganesh, Arnold, and Reynolds, 2000; Manning and Larsen, 1999; Ritson and Elliott, 2000; Youn et al., 2001), neither has had a widely visible impact on TV networks' or stations' pricing policies, nor on the advertisers' purchasing strategies. This was, perhaps, partly due to the relatively limited scales of the studies, and partly due to a gap between the empirical finding and prescriptive reasoning – researchers have not taken the step to figure out and spell out exactly how the policies and practices should change in accordance to the evidences discovered so far.

This paper, therefore, has two objectives. First, we will report another test of the proactive and retroactive effects, which is based on a data set from 7 years of Super Bowl surveys and content analyses, the most recent of which are from 2003. Second, we will introduce a System for Evaluating Pod Positions (SEPP) that places different monetary values on different positions, a system that networks and stations can use to guide their pricing, or advertisers can use to guide their purchasing, or both can use to guide their negotiation. The specific figures we will suggest as an example are based on the seven years of Super Bowl data analyzed in this study. But the SEPP system, that is, the logics and procedures that produces the figures, can easily accommodate findings of other studies to generate other figures that may be more appropriate for different times, locales, advertising contexts, or viewing environments.

For this article, we will assign different functions to three often-used terms -- "advertisement" for an entry by a given advertiser; "ad" for an entry by any other advertiser advertising in the same pod or the same TV program; and "commercials" for general reference to both kinds of entries.

The Concepts of Proaction and Retroaction

Some researchers (Webb and Ray, 1979; Thorson, Zhao, and Friestad, 1988; Grimes and Meadowcroft, 1994; Thorson, 1994) and advertising practitioners (cf., Brown, 1988) defined an advertisement's position in terms of its serial order — the first, second, ... or the last position in a pod of TV commercials. Others (Wheatley, 1968; Webb, 1979; Webb and Ray, 1979; Pillai, 1990; Brown and Rothschild, 1993) used the word "position" to describe "clutter," defined as the number of ads, including all kinds of non-program contents, surrounding a given advertisement.

According to Brown and Rothschild (1993, p. 138), "clutter has been addressed sparingly in advertising research," (also see Kent, 1993). Two early experiments (Webb, 1979; Webb and Ray, 1979) found a correlation between higher clutter and a decrease in brand recall. But Brown and Rothschild (1993) hypothesized *no* clutter effects on memory, and reported supporting evidence from their experiments.

While there is "sparing research" (Brown and Rothschild, 1993, p. 138) on clutter, there are even fewer studies on serial order of television commercials. Research literature, starting from Steiner (1966), typically touches upon the matter as a side issue. In two unpublished reports focused on clutter, Ray and Webb (1976, 1978, cited in Webb and Ray, 1979) mentioned that the first position produced the highest attention and recall, the middle positions yielded the lowest, and the last position showed a slight increase. In their chapters focused on measurement of attention, Grimes and Meadowcroft (1994) and Thorson (1994) cited an unpublished study (Zhao, 1989) that reported a one-minute-cycle effect: attention and memory decline at the beginning of a pod, turn to climb about thirty seconds later, and reach a peak another thirty seconds or so later. Then the second cycle begins, attention and memory decline again; and the cycle continues. Much of the design and analysis details were not available in the published sources. More systematic research may be warranted.

In psychology literature, there has been a long tradition of studying serial order effects on recall (Ebbinghaus, 1902; cf., Lachman, Lachman, and Butterfield, 1979). Some of the early studies (McKinney, 1935; Blankenship and Whitely, 1941) used print commercials as stimuli. Based on those experiments, cognitive psychologists (e.g., Glanzer and Cunitz, 1966; Glanzer, 1972) established the famous tilted "U" curve and the theories of short-term versus long-term memory. But here the "short term" is really short -- less than half a minute between exposure and recall tests. And no distracting mental activities are allowed in between. For most marketing purposes, however, hours, days, or even weeks elapse between advertising exposure and purchase decisions, and many mental activities inevitably occur in between. Also, the psychological theories assume no competing messages from before or after the series; and the stimulus series did stand alone in the experiments. In contrast, "real-world" commercial pods face competing messages because they are embedded in programming. More naturalistic tests are needed.

Zhao (1997) argues that the traditional concepts of positions are deficient, as they equate *proaction*, i.e., the effect of preceding ads, with *retroaction*, i.e., the effect of succeeding ads. Psychologists studying serial order have explicitly hypothesized and have empirically demonstrated that the proaction was distinctively different from retroaction (Glanzer, 1972). Advertising practitioners also intuitively differentiate the two. They have often speculated that larger numbers of preceding ads lead to a drop in the number of viewers and their attention levels (Brown, 1988). In contrast, there has been no reported speculation about the same effect from succeeding ads.

The serial order effect may also be redefined. The traditional definition focuses on order location. In contrast, cognitive theories and common sense suggest that it is not the physical location per se that affects viewers' reaction to a given advertisement, but the surrounding ads that define the advertisement's position.

Advertising researchers studying clutter and cognitive psychologists studying serial order rarely cite each other, in part because the traditional definitions of clutter and serial order fail to recognize the conceptual overlap between the two. An advertisement can be at the Nth position only if there are N or more commercials in a pod; an advertisement in a pod of 3, on the other hand, has no chance of being in the 4th or 5th position, a chance that an advertisement in a pod of 5 would have.

The psychologists treat clutter effect as a potential confounding factor, so they typically fix the length of the series in their experiments. For advertising research, this creates an unnatural context for the advertisements, because the lengths of advertising pods vary significantly in the real world. The clutter researchers treat serial order as a potential confounding factor, so they often rotate the serial positions of the commercials. Nevertheless, longer pods inevitably contain more later positions, a confound that can not be completely eliminated by rotation. Consequently, any effects, or lack thereof, may not be exclusively attributed to either clutter or serial order under the current definitions of the two.

We propose to explicitly recognize the conceptual (and mathematical) linkage between clutter and serial order as they are currently defined. Consider the two traditional ways of defining the *serial (order) position* of an advertisement:

- 1a. *Ascending order*, that is, counting the number of commercials from the beginning of a pod until reaching the given advertisement.
- 1b. *Descending order*, that is, counting the number of commercials from the end of the pod until reaching the given advertisement.

The two may be revised as the following without changing their meanings:

- 2a. *Ascending order*, that is, the number of other ads before the given advertisement (plus one).
- 2b. *Descending order*, that is, the number of other ads after the given advertisement (also plus one).

The two combined define, precisely,

3a. *Pod clutter*, that is, the total number of ads in a pod other than the given advertisement itself.

The "plus one" clauses in definitions 2a and 2b reflect a constant difference of 1 between two ways of defining position -- "order location" or "number of other ads." As a constant, this difference of 1 does not affect theorizing, data analysis, or interpretation, and therefore can be disregarded in most situations.

To explicitly differentiate proaction from retroaction, the general concept of *pod clutter effect* may be divided into two distinctive parts:

3b. *Proactive clutter effect*, defined as a result of a change (increase or decrease) in the number of preceding ads without a change in the number of succeeding ads.

3c. *Retroactive clutter effect*, defined as a result of a change (increase or decrease) in the number of succeeding ads without a change in the number of preceding ads.

The no-change clauses in Definitions 3b and 3c prevent possible confusion with serial order under our new conceptualization. For example, an increase in preceding ads *and* a decrease in succeeding ads do not necessarily indicate a change in clutter but possibly a backward move of position by the given advertisement, therefore a change in serial order, as is defined below.

4a. *Serial order effect*, defined as a result of moving an advertisement (forward or backward) within a pod without changing the number of ads in the pod.

Here, the no-change clause prevents possible confusion with clutter effect under our new definitions. It is also consistent with serial order researchers' practice of holding the length of a series constant while examining position effect (e.g., McKinney, 1935; Blankenship and Whitely, 1941),

When there is no change in the total number of ads in a pod, a change in serial position requires a change in the number of preceding ads and a change in the number of succeeding ads by the same number in the opposite direction. That is, a *forward move* in serial position may be defined as:

4b. A decrease in the number of preceding ads and an increase, by *equal number*, in the number of succeeding ads.

Similarly, a *backward move* in serial position may be defined as:

4c. An increase in the number of preceding ads and a decrease, by *equal number*, in the number of succeeding ads.

These definitions explicitly recognize the defining impact of preceding/succeeding ads on the concept of serial order, encouraging serial order researchers to focus their theorizing more on the surrounding ads, rather than location per se.

Together, the above re-definitions of clutter and serial order effects underline an often-overlooked common characteristic shared by the two concepts. That is, each of the two is a special

case of the interaction between preceding and succeeding ads. Clutter effect occurs when only one of the series changes its length, or both increase their lengths, or both decrease their lengths. Serial order effect occurs when the length of one series increases while the other decreases by an equal number. A combination of clutter and serial order effects occur when one increases while the other decreases by an *unequal* number.

More meaningfully defined concepts allow more meaningful operationalizations of key measurements. An immediate beneficiary is the measurement of serial order when a brand is advertised more than once in a program. Airing multiple advertisements within a single program is a common practice. During a football game, for example, 30-40% of the advertised brands place more than one advertisement (Zhao, Bleske, and Bennett, 1993). When serial order was defined in terms of its physical location (i.e., 1st, 2nd, etc.) it did not make immediate sense to add, average, or perform any other mathematical operations with those location IDs across pods. As researchers did not know how to code the position of multiple advertisements, prior studies on serial order (and studies on clutter) all use one advertisement per brand in their stimulus.

Now that serial order has been defined in terms of number of preceding / succeeding ads, it makes good sense to add the total number of preceding/succeeding ads across pods. When a brand places an additional advertisement, the advertisement is typically accompanied by additional competition from before and after. Adding preceding / succeeding ads across pods simply recognizes this fact. When the total number of other ads in the pods are held constant, a change in total number of preceding ads means an opposite change by the same number in the succeeding ads, therefore a move in serial position by at least one of the advertisements a brand airs.

To understand how preceding ads alone can indicate serial position when the total number other ads in the pods are held constant, let's consider a relatively simple example of one brand airing 2 advertisements (designated by symbol "A") and other advertisers airing 4 other ads (designated by symbol "O") in two pods of 3 commercials each.

When there is 0 preceding ad, the two pods should look like --

Scenario 0: AOO, AOO.

When there is 1 preceding ad, the two pods should look like --

Scenario 1a: AOO, OAO; or

Scenario 1b: OAO, AOO.

Comparing any of the two scenarios (1a or 1b) with Scenario 0, we may see that the only difference is in serial position – a difference by one position.

When there are 2 preceding ads, the two pods should look like --

Scenario 2a: OAO, OAO; or

Scenario 2b: AOO, OOA; or

Scenario 2c: OOA, AOO.

Once again, serial position is the only difference between any of the above three scenarios (2a, 2b, or 2c) and either of the one-preceding-ad scenarios (1a or 1b) – a difference by one position. Among the comparisons, the comparison between Scenarios 1b and 2b might be the most interesting: the advertisement in the first pod moves forward by one position, while the advertisement in the second pod moves backward by two positions. The net result of the movements is a change of one position toward the back of the pods.

When each of the 2-preceding-ad scenarios (2a, 2b, or 2c) is compared with Scenario 0, we can see that this time there is a difference of two positions, and serial position is still the only difference.

Similar, albeit more elaborate, illustrations can be made when there are more preceding ads, or more advertisements per brand, or the number of ads in each pod are allowed to vary (but the total number of ads in all pods combined are held constant).

All those comparisons have been, as they should be, made within the same level of frequency (number of advertisements per brand). That is, 1-advertisement brands should be compared to other 1-advertisement brands, and 2-advertisement brands should be compared to other 2-advertisement brands. Therefore, to assess serial position effect, a researcher needs to control both clutter (total number of other ads in all pods) and frequency (total number of advertisements each brand airs). When both are controlled, the preceding ads become an indicator of serial position.

In case there are still doubts about the technique of "adding across pods" for multiple-advertisements-per-brand situation, it may be helpful to compare serial order effects on one-advertisement brands with the effects on brands of multiple advertisements. If the observed effects are about the same for two groups of brands, it implies that the new concepts and the corresponding measurements perform consistently in two situations, therefore an empirical verification for the operationalization proposed above. The details are left to data analysis section.

A Holistic Theory of Position Effects on Memory and Liking

Advertising practitioners (Brown, 1988) often talked about position effects in terms of viewers physically not *exposed* to commercials. Once a commercial pod begins, some viewers start to go to the bathrooms, kitchens, or zap and surf channels. As the number of "deserters" accumulate over time, the later pod positions tend to have fewer viewers.

Advertising researchers studying clutter (Webb and Ray, 1979; Brown and Rothschild, 1993) wrote about competition for *attention* during exposure. Even when viewers stay physically in front of a TV during an advertisement, their attention is not always totally on the messages currently on the screen. The competition may come from other concurrent activities and messages, such as magazine reading and conversation between viewers; or it may come from messages that were previously on the screen and are still on the minds of the viewers. More distractions lead to less attention to the advertisement currently on the screen.

The cognitive psychologists studying serial order theorized about competition even *after* a given message has been presented (cf. Lachman et al., 1979). It has been shown that incoming

information goes initially into sensory and short term memory stores. During a short period immediately after the initial exposure, the information may be transferred from the short term storage to the long term storage, provided that a sufficient amount of mental energy is used to process the information. If, during that period of a few seconds or half a minute, the attention is diverted totally to other activities or messages, the information may never get stored in the long term memory and consequently become unavailable for later retrieval.

All three processes — *physical exposure, attention during exposure, and attention after exposure* — are probably at work (Figure 1). Physical exposure and attention during the exposure should be negatively affected by the preceding ads; more preceding ads should be associated with less exposure and less attention, therefore less memory. Almost by definition, neither exposure nor the concurrent attention should be affected by succeeding ads: by the time the first succeeding ad appears, both processes have been completed for the advertisement in question. Nevertheless, the third process, post-exposure attention, takes place after the given advertisement has ended. Therefore, both preceding and succeeding ads are expected to have negative effects. Higher competition from preceding or succeeding ads should lead to less cognitive capacity for the storing of the information regarding a given brand, therefore less long-term memory for the brand.

 Figure 1 about here

Because proaction involves a combination of the three processes and the retroaction consists of just one of those processes, the preceding ads are predicted to have a larger impact on memory than succeeding ads. Because both proactive and retroactive effects are negative, the general clutter effect is also predicted to be negative.

Prior clutter/serial order studies have used memory indicators, such as recognition and recall, as the only dependent variables. This study introduces advertisement liking as another dependent variable. The attitude toward an advertisement, a broader concept that comprises advertisement liking, has been shown to be an important mediator between input and outcome variables, and has been used in many studies as an indicator of advertising effects (Mitchell and Olson, 1981; Shimp, 1981; MacKenzie, Lutz and Belch, 1986).

It is often assumed that most viewers, even when they stay in front of a television, would prefer that the programming resumes immediately. As the number of preceding ads increase, the viewers grow impatient and increasingly dislike the advertisements that appear on screens. Hence a negative impact of preceding ads on advertisement liking is predicted. There is, however, no apparent reason to predict a retroactive effect, negative or positive, on liking.

A change in serial position is, by our definition, a one-for-one exchange between preceding and succeeding ads. Because the proactive competition is expectedly stronger than the retroactive competition, a forward move of position means a decrease in the total competition, therefore better memory and liking scores. Hence the earlier positions should fare better in both regards.

Methodology

While most of advertising studies use controlled experiments or conventional surveys, this study follows Pieters and Bijmolt (1997), Zhao (1997), and Youn et al. (2001) to use a naturalistic quasi-experiment (Cook and Campbell, 1979). The data were from seven years of Super Bowl broadcasts in 1992 through 1996, 2002, and 2003. Data from some of those years have been reported in a series of articles addressing various topics (Zhao et al., 1993, 1995; Zhao, 1997; Jin & Zhao, 1999; Chung & Zhao, 2001; Youn et al., 2001). This paper, however, represents the first time the 1995 and 1996 data were used to test pod position effects, and the first time the 2002 or 2003 data were used for any topic.

As the most highly priced and probably the most visible advertising event of the year, the Super Bowl broadcast has attracted much attention from applied researchers (e.g., Gallup and Robinson, 1991, cited in Mandese, 1992; *USA Today*, 1991-1993, 1994b, 1995). Academic researchers also have used the event to test general theories or measurement instruments (Pavelchak, Antil, and Munch, 1988; Pokrywczynski, 1994; Anderson, 1996), or as a symbol that may help us to "better understand the society we inhabit" (Schwartz, 1993, p. 33).

The implication of such studies may go beyond the games. Some national advertisers use the games to release new commercials, while others re-run their favorites. These national commercials are sometimes considered the best of a year, while the local advertisers air commercials of lower quality (Elliott, 1994). The game is more than a sporting event. With nearly half of the Americans watching, the live broadcast represents the biggest TV event of any given year, a festival that many non-sports fans also attend (Schwartz, 1993; Martzke, 1994; *USA Today*, 1994a). Higher ratings also mean less time and expenses wasted on interviewing people who did not watch the game.

Because the respondents knew nothing about the study until at least twenty-four hours after the game, their viewing (or non-viewing) behavior may be assumed to be perfectly natural. Such behavior may include a reduced exposure and attention to television during a commercial break, as a result of zapping, room-leaving, socializing, and participation in other non-TV focused activities (cf. Greene, 1988). This factor carries particular importance in clutter or serial order studies. A basic assumption of those studies is that some positions attract more attention from the typically uninvolved viewers (Krugman, 1965; Webb and Ray, 1979; Thorson et al., 1988; Brown and Rothschild, 1993; Thorson, 1994). If the baseline attention/involvement is artificially intensified, as it might in a laboratory setting, the true position effects could be distorted. This possibility is supported by Webb's (1979) finding that clutter has an effect *only* under low involvement, and could explain Brown and Rothschild's (1993) findings of no clutter effects in a laboratory setting.

Hence, in comparison with most of the forced viewing experiments, this study appears naturalistic in several important aspects, including naturally varying length of commercial pods, broader range of commercial qualities, more representative sample of viewers, home viewing environment, and longer time between exposure and memory test. Generalizability, however, is only relative. In comparison with a hypothetical "dream study," this study's generalizability may be limited in a number of regards. The quality of the Super Bowl advertisements, especially the network advertisements, may be higher than the quality of average advertisements. The annual media hoopla surrounding the two "super championships" -- the football championship in stadiums and the

advertising championship on the air -- may have also contributed to an unusually high exposure or attention to both the broadcast and the advertisements. Nevertheless, advertisers and commentators suspect that the uniqueness of the Super Bowl as an advertising event has been overstated, and they cite the lower than expected recall scores of Super Bowl advertisements to support their suspicion (Deveny, 1993; Moore, 1993; Goldman, 1994).

A trade-off for a higher generalizability is a lower degree of internal control. Like most field studies gauging "effects," this study is correlational. Although various measures were taken to guard against some of the methodological threats, causal inference should be made with caution. The design in itself is no more valid than the more often used controlled experiments. It is strong where the controlled experiments are often weak, and it is weak where the others are typically strong. This difference, however, may be one of this study's main contributions. By comparing field results with laboratory findings, a comparison that is done extensively in such disciplines as public health, our collective understanding of position effects may become more valid externally *and* internally.

The unit of analysis in this study is each brand advertised during the games. The dependent variables were measured through telephone interviews and then aggregated across respondents. The independent variables were measured by analyzing the content of the television commercials taped during the games.

Telephone Interviews: Measuring Memory and Attitude. A telephone survey was conducted from Monday evening through Thursday evening following each of the three Super Bowl games played from 1992 through 1996, and in 2002 and 2003. Graduate and undergraduate students enrolled in research classes at a major university used random digit dialing to reach the local residents of Orange County of North Carolina, which includes the cities of Carrboro, Chapel Hill, Hillsborough, Mebane, Pittsboro, and the vicinity in between. Guided by a computerized questionnaire, the interviewers asked for the person who had the next birthday. If a call yielded a machine-recorded answer or no answer, that number was re-dialed at least three times before being discarded. A total of 1,134 interviews were completed, with an average response rate of nearly 63%. Each year, more than two thirds of the respondents reported having watched the game. The high ratings support some writers' (e.g., Martzke, 1994) observation that non-sports fans also watch Super Bowl games.

Dependent Variable 1: Unaided Brand Recall. The interviewers asked each respondent whether he or she had watched the Super Bowl game, and which part. Those who watched any part were then asked to list all advertisements they remembered seeing *during the game*. Two coders coded separately the responses, which had been recorded verbatim during the interviews. The two sets of results were in agreement in all but one case (more than ninety nine percent). The recall rates were then calculated according to:

$$\text{Recall Rate} = \frac{R_b}{W_s} * 100$$

where R_b is the number of respondents who recalled the brand, and W_s is the number of respondents who watched the segment(s) in which the brand was advertised.

To see if any of the recalls may have been a false alarm — a respondent could mistakenly recall a brand he or she had seen elsewhere but not during the Super Bowl advertising — we searched the responses for brands that were not advertised during the game segments that a given respondent reportedly watched. No such false alarms were found.

Dependent Variable 2: Brand Recognition. After the unaided recall measure, each respondent was given a list of brand names. Students, teaching assistants, and the instructor had compiled the list by observing the advertisements aired during the game. The observations were cross-verified via video tapes. Respondents were asked if they remembered seeing an advertisement for that brand during the game. The recognition rates were calculated according to:

$$\text{Recognition Rate} = \frac{G_b}{W_s} * 100$$

where G_b is the number of respondents who recognized the brand.

The threat of false alarms is typically larger for recognition measures than for unaided recall. To address this concern, interviewers emphasized to respondents that the brands listed may or may not have been advertised during the game.

Further, various false-alarm tests were conducted for each of the seven years. For example, the 1994 questionnaire included seven brands that had not been advertised during the game but were major competitors of the advertised brands. The false-alarm rate for 1994 was 8.1% according to the seven tests. The average false alarm rate across the seven years is a relatively low 8.42%.

The recognition rate and liking score were then recalculated after being *weighted by each respondent's correction rate in the false-alarm tests*. The correlation between the weighted and unweighted scores is .91 for the recognition measure and .99 for the liking measure. Those results suggest that false alarms, while a low frequency phenomenon, also occurred rather randomly and distributed quite evenly among brands. Therefore, false alarm should not significantly affect correlation between variables, which is the basis of our analysis.

We use the weighted scores as the major basis of analysis and reporting. A parallel analysis based on the unweighted scores gave essentially the same results.

Dependent Variable 3: Advertisement Liking. Advertisement liking was measured by asking those respondents who remembered seeing an advertisement how good or poor they thought the advertisement was. Likert scales (1-9 for 1993, 1-7 for the other six years) were used. To facilitate interpretation, all liking scores were linearly transformed to a 0-100 scale (100: the best; 0: the poorest):

$$\text{(for 1993)} \quad \text{Liking} = \frac{OL - 1}{8} * 100$$

and (for the other years)

$$\text{Liking} = \frac{\text{OL} - 1}{6} * 100$$

where OL is the original liking score. Those scores were then averaged across respondents for each brand of each year.

Content Analysis: Measuring Position. Each independent variable involved at least two coders who did independent coding using video tapes recorded during the games. Coders initially agreed in all but one case. Consensus on the case was reached quickly after re-examining the tape.

To gauge advertisement position in a pod of commercials with varying lengths, researchers may choose between two measurement units: *clock time*, or *number of ads*. That is, an advertisement's position may be measured in terms of its distance in minutes/seconds from the two ends of the pod, or in terms of the number of ads before and/or after the advertisement. A preliminary analysis (Zhao et al., 1995) was conducted to test and compare the two units. They yielded similar results in testing the position effects on brand memory and advertisement liking; and in most situations *number of ads* appeared to be a better predictor than *clock time*. Accordingly, *number of ads* was chosen as the measurement unit for this study.

When a brand had just one advertisement in the Super Bowl broadcasting, the general concept of clutter (Definition 3a) was measured by the *number of other ads in the pod*, that is, the total number of commercials in the pod minus one. When a brand was advertised twice or more, the number of other ads in all pods in which the brand was advertised were summed to measure the total amount of clutter competing with the advertisements of the given brand.

To separate and compare the proactive and retroactive effects, two more variables were measured: the *number of preceding ads* (Definition 2a), and the *number of succeeding ads* (Definition 2b). When a brand was advertised more than once, the numbers were added across relevant pods, in the same way that the clutter was measured when there were multiple advertisements for a brand.

While those three served as the major independent measures, none of them alone could cleanly gauge the *serial order effect* (Definitions 4a-c), the *proactive clutter effect* (Definition 3b), or the *retroactive clutter effect* (Definition 3c). Because each of the effects has been defined in terms of interaction between *number of other ads*, *number of preceding ads*, and *number of succeeding ads*, a proper combination of those measures has to be used to gauge each effect. The details are reported in data analysis section.

Identifying and Measuring Control Variables. An obvious confounding factor is *frequency*, defined as the number of advertisements promoting the same brand during a given game. Higher frequency may be associated with better memory. Our independent variables, clutter and order, are also associated with frequency; a brand airing three advertisements tends to have more preceding and succeeding ads than a brand advertised only once. Prior studies address this problem by restricting frequency to one advertisement per brand. To test position effects under multiple-advertisement situation, this study controlled frequency statistically, rather than physically. Conceptually, it is

equivalent to examining the effects within each level of frequency, and then averaging the magnitude of the effects across frequency levels.

Another possible source of contamination was the *year* variable. Each year meant a different game, a different list of advertisements, a different class of student interviewers, and a different sample of viewers. As mentioned above, there also were some small differences in the measurement scales of liking. When the data were pooled together, there was a chance that differences between the years could confound position effects. Six dummy variables, one for each year starting 1993, were created. The brands from 1992 served as a comparison group (cf. Pedhazur, 1982; Cohen and Cohen, 1983).

Product categories posed yet another problem requiring statistical control. Brands in certain product categories might be more easily remembered than others, and some of those brands might happen to be in certain positions. Therefore, seven dummy variables were created to represent seven product categories. An eighth category, entertainment advertisements, served as a comparison group.

Our re-conceptualization of serial position requires that the length of the pods be held constant while the impact of preceding/succeeding ads is examined. Faced with the methodological threat, experimental psychologists physically fix or restrict the length of the series. To preserve the natural variation in the length of the pods, this study statistically, rather than physically, controlled the variable *number of other ads*. Other two variables, *number of preceding ads* and the *number of succeeding ads*, were also measured, so each of them can be statistically controlled when retroactive effect or proactive effect is respectively examined.

Data Analysis and Results

The results supported virtually all of the major predictions: preceding ads and succeeding ads both have negative impacts on brand memory; preceding ads also have a negative impact on advertisement liking; the negative impact of preceding ads is larger than that of the succeeding ads. In other words, an advertisement fares better when it is placed in a less crowded pod, or when it is placed in an earlier position in the pod.

Position effects were found to be as important as frequency effects -- placing an advertisement in an advantageous position within a program could be as beneficial as running an additional advertisement. In another analysis, some position variables were also square with advertisement length or advertisement quality in terms of their effects on brand memory or advertisement liking.

Background Findings from Univariate Analysis. Between 55 and 65 brands were advertised in each game, totaling 428 for analysis. Those brands were from eight product categories (Table 1). The most successful brands had recall and recognition rates of more than 80%, as is shown in Table 2. The least successful brands recorded no recall or recognition at all. The average across brands is nearly 3% for recall and 28% for recognition. Those who recognized the brands also tended to like the advertisements moderately, giving an average score of nearly 60 on a scale of 0-100. The number of ads in each pod ranged from one to seven. The positions of the advertisements ranged from the first to the last. A little less than two thirds of the brands advertised only once during the game, while each of the other brands placed two to seven advertisements.

 Tables 1 and 2 about here

Two of our dependent variables, recognition and liking, had reasonably bell-shaped distributions. Deviation from normality is nevertheless inevitable for unaided recall. By nature a difficult test, recall distribution tends to have a high hump skewed toward the lower end. Because of the robustness of regression, however, such deviation is deemed within the tolerable range. The other variables we used are independent or control variables, therefore their normal distribution is not required.

While advertising researchers often use ANOVA to analyze experimental data, this study chose multiple regression, a technique most often used in field studies for its power and flexibility (Pedhazur, 1982; Cohen and Cohen, 1983).

The analysis procedure was the same for each dependent variable. *Year, product, and frequency* were entered first (ten entries because of dummy coding. See Section 1 of Table 3). On top of those controls, three blocks of the independent variables were entered *alternately*; each block was removed before the next was entered. Each block consisted of one or two of the three clutter/order variables. The results of the analysis is summarized in Table 3.

 Table 3 about here

Effects of Control Variables. Average brand memory and advertisement liking did not change significantly from one year to another. They varied significantly, however, among product categories. Another important factor was the number of advertisements that each brand aired during each game – an additional advertisement tends to increase recall by more than three percentage points and increase recognition by over six percentage points. But frequency did not appear to have affected advertisement liking.

In Table 3, the regression coefficients for the 6 "year" variables indicate the differences between those years and 1992. The average recall rate of 1993 advertisements, for example, is lower than that of 1992 ads by 2.84 percentage points. Most between-year differences are quite small.

The effects of product category appears larger. Advertisements for shoes and clothes, for example, have a higher liking score than entertainment advertisements by over 8 points on a scale of 0-100.

Those controls explain over 36% of the variances in recall, 46% in recognition and nearly 29% in liking (Section 5). They appear to be reasonable models that have accounted for a good amount of variances due to outside factors.

General Pod Clutter Effects. Advertisements placed in longer pods tended to generate lower brand memory for the advertised brand -- each additional "other" ad in the pod may be associated with a decrease in recall by one percentage point and a decrease in recognition by two and half percentage points.

When an advertiser runs an additional advertisement, he should expect it to bring additional memory for his brand – each additional advertisement may bring in over 5 percentage points of additional recall and close to 12 percentage points of additional recognition (see Table 4). But the advertiser has to pay a high "income tax." Over 17% of the additional recall and 40% of the additional recognition may be taken away by the additional clutter surrounding the additional advertisement(s). Consequently, the "take-home income" brought by each additional advertisement is lower.

In data analysis, the variable *number of other ads* (Section 2 of Table 3, representing Definition 3a) was entered on top of the control variables (Section 1 of Table 3). The results show general clutter effects on memory. An additional ad in clutter is associated with a decrease in recall by one half (0.44) of a point and a decrease in recognition by one and a half (1.7) point ($p < .001$ in both cases). With average recall (2.6 percent) and recognition (27.7 percent) as the baselines, those figures represent decreases by nearly 17% and 6%. An additional ad in clutter is also associated with a lower liking score, by one third of a point. But it barely failed the conventional .05 probability test.

The approach demonstrated in Section 2 of Table 3 is analogous to prior studies that implicitly equate proaction with retroaction. In the following section the two were explicitly separated and compared.

Proactive vs. Retroactive Clutter Effects. The audience is more likely to remember a brand and may like its advertisement(s) more if there are fewer other ads *before* the advertisement(s). The other ads *after* the advertisements may have a similarly negative, albeit smaller, effect on the recall of the advertised brand. On *each* of the three major dependent variables, succeeding ads' negative effect, if any, appears smaller in magnitude than its counterpart effect of preceding ads.

In data analysis, the variable *number of other ads* (Section 2 of Table 3) was removed. Entered in its place were two other independent variables, *number of preceding ads* and *number of succeeding ads* (Section 3 of Table 3). The simultaneous entry holds one variable constant while examining the effects of the other. So the two lines in Section 3 represent, respectively, proactive and retroactive clutter effects (representing Definitions 3b and 3c), but not serial order effect.

Proactive clutter effects are strong. An additional ad before is associated with a decrease in memory by nearly one to more than two percentage points, and a decrease in liking score by seven-tenth of a percentage point. They represent decreases by about 33%, 9%, and more than 1%, respectively, with average recall, recognition, or liking as the baselines.

Retroactive clutter effects, while also negative, are smaller — less than one half of the size of the counterpart proactive effects. Further, only one of the retroactive effects, that on recognition, is statistically significant. In that case, adding an ad behind is associated with a decrease in brand recognition by nearly one percentage point.

Serial Order Effects. The observed differences between proactive and retroactive effects suggest that our predictions about serial order effects might be supported. Sure enough, the next step of analysis indicates that a brand may indeed be remembered by more viewers when its advertisement is placed earlier, rather than later, in a pod.

As a more formal test, the *proactive/retroactive clutter block* was removed from each equation (Section 3 of Table 3), and entered in its place a *serial order block* (Section 4). This is to hold constant the clutter level, represented by *number of other ads*, while examining the effects of preceding ads (representing Definitions 4a-c). The effect, if any, can only come from serial order (i.e., moving an advertisement forward or backward) but not from proactive clutter (i.e., adding or dropping preceding ads).

As expected, the coefficients for preceding ads are all negative. An additional ad in the front, representing one position move toward the end of a pod (Definition 4c), is associated with a decrease in brand memory or liking by one percentage point plus or minus half of a point.

Comparing Position Effects with Effects of Frequency and Other Variables. TV networks and local stations are often unwilling to let an advertiser to choose positions; and they typically charge the same price for all positions within a same program. On the other hand, the number of advertisements to be aired is decided by the advertiser; and there is almost always a cost for any additional advertisement. While the position and frequency are treated quite differently in practice, our data suggest that the two may compensate each other; and effects of position may be as strong as the effects of frequency. Advertisement length and advertisement quality are two other important factors, and an advertiser has to pay to increase the length or to improve the quality. A separate analysis of our data suggests that position may be as important as length or quality in affecting TV viewers' memory and/or liking.

By comparing the appropriate regression coefficients (in Sections 1 & 3 of Table 3) we can see that getting rid of two or three preceding ads of other advertisers may have about the same effects on brand memory as running one additional advertisement. If the objective is an improved liking, kicking out one preceding ad of another advertiser might match the effect of running two more advertisements!

The beta coefficients are often used for comparing the effects of different independent variables (Zhao, 1997). The beta coefficients in Table 3 show that clutter/order variables are among the best predictors, competing with frequency in predicting memory, and competing with a couple of product dummies in predicting liking.

In a previously published analysis focused on single-frequency brands, we found that position variables can be as important as other established factors, such as advertisement length or advertisement quality, in predicting brand memory and/or advertisement liking (see Zhao et al., 1995, for details).

Predictive Power of Position Variables. The within-program position of an advertisement is a good predictor of the brand memory. That is, if an advertisement is moved to a better position, we should not only predict that the advertised brand may be remembered by more people, but we should also be fairly confident that our prediction may be quite close to the actual effects.

Our confidence comes from the (incremental) R squared statistics. On top of the more than 35%-45% variance in memory already explained by the control variables, the block of order/clutter variables can add another 4%-8% (Sections 5 & 7 of Table 3) . Both results represent substantial predictive powers of the position variables, and they are both statistically significant.

The position variables can also predict advertisement liking, but somewhat less accurately.

Of the three independent variables — preceding ads, succeeding ads, and all other ads in the pod — each is a mathematical function of the other two. Therefore, entering all three simultaneously into regression is mathematically forbidden. The relationship also implies that *any* two of the three produce the same predictive power, representing a combination of clutter and order effects.

Interaction Effects. We found that position effects are about the same across different levels of advertising frequencies, and serial order effects are about the same across different levels of clutter. The first finding suggests that our reconceptualization and the corresponding measurements may indeed be extended to situations when a brand advertises twice or more in a TV program. For advertising practitioners, it suggests that the position effects reported above can be applied at various frequency levels. For example, if an additional ad is placed before one of your advertisements, the addition should decrease the recognition rate of your brand by nearly three percentage points, *regardless of how many advertisements you air during the same program.*

Those findings are the results of a dozen interaction tests, which all yielded statistically non-significant probability scores (statistics not shown in tables).

Non-Linear Effects. No evidence was found in support of any kind of non-linear effects. That is, the longest pods and the latest positions in those pods were found to generate the lowest brand memory and least positive advertisement liking scores for the advertisements in those positions. No leveling-off, nor concave-up of the effects were found.

Those null findings are the results of half a dozen polynomial equations with square and cubic terms, which were all statistically non-significant (statistics not shown in tables). This means that no pattern of curvilinear effects of position variables on memory or liking was detected. Those results contradict the U-curves such as those cited by Webb and Ray (1979) and reported by cognitive psychologists (McKinney, 1935; Blankenship and Whitely, 1941; Glanzer, 1972). But they are consistent with the findings of those psychologists (Glanzer and Cunitz, 1966; Craik, 1970) who reported monotonously declining recalls when recall tests were delayed and distracting tasks were inserted between message exposure and the tests.

A System for Evaluating Pod Positions (SEPP)

Most advertising efforts aim at changing audience's memory, attitude or behavior. Memory, however, indicates more than memory. It also measures the audience's exposure and attention to an advertisement (Stewart et al., 1985; Pieters and Bijmolt, 1997, p. 370). Without exposure and at least some attention, even the best advertisement would have no chance to influence the audience. We

might think of exposure and attention, measured in memory, as “the right to the floor”, that is, the right to speak to the audience. Whether the speech is persuasive, that right, in itself, has a value. If some pod positions give advertisements more exposure, more attention and consequently more memory, these positions should have higher price tags, even if the positions, in themselves, do not increase the advertisement’s ability to change attitudes and behavior. It’s like an attorney having a higher than average success rate in getting the courts to hear her cases. It is only fair for her to charge higher than average fees, even if, during the hearings, she has only an average success rate in persuading the courts to rule for her clients.

In our case, the attorney appears to be more effective than usual in both procedures – the better pod positions lead to both better memories and better likings. The higher effectiveness, however, shows up more in the first procedure than in the second; that is, the pod position has a stronger impact on memory, particularly recognition, than on liking. Block 3 of Table 3 indicates, for example, the effect of a preceding ad has three times of the effect on recognition (-2.42) as it has on liking (-0.72).

Of the two memory indicators, recognition is probably more applicable than recall for a large majority of the purchasing situations. For such products as cloths, food, soft drinks, fast food restaurants, etc., most of the consumers don’t choose a brand without seeing the choices, which would have required un-aided recall. Instead, most of the consumers pick up a brand when they see it among the competing brands in stores or on the street, which requires recognition.

Therefore, we propose to use recognition rate as the main criterion when building our System for Evaluating Pod Positions (SEPP).

We begin by estimating the Average recognition Rate generated by Each Advertisement (AREA). From Table 2, we can see that the mean recognition rate over the seven years is 27.71%. But this figure needs to be adjusted for possible false alarm, and the fact that some brand advertised multiple times. So we have the following (Equation 1):

$$\text{AREA} = (\text{Mean Recg} - \text{False Alarm Recg.}) / \text{Mean Freq.}$$

Within our data, the average false alarm rate over the 7 years is 8.42%, and the average advertising frequency is 1.57 (See Table 2). Fill those into Equation 1, we have:

$$\text{AREA} = (27.72\% - 8.42\%) / 1.57 = 12.29\%$$

This means that, on average, each advertisement in a Super Bowl game is estimated to generate a baseline recognition rate of 12.29%.

According to our seven years of data and that of Pieters and Bijmolt (1997), the actual recognition that an advertisement might enjoy may deviate from this baseline average depending on the pod position it is in. Block 3 of Table 3 indicates that an additional preceding ad decreases the recognition rate by an average of 2.42 percentage points, which constitutes 19.69% of the 12.29 baseline rate. We will call this Proactive Rate (Pr = 19.69%). An additional succeeding ad, according to the same block, decreases the recognition rate by an average of 0.94 percentage points, which is 7.65% of the 12.29 baseline rate. We will call this Retroactive Rate (Rr = 7.65%).

Having estimated the ProRate (Pr) and RetroRate (Rr), we now need to find an average position in an average pod. According to Table 1, each advertisement on average has 1.45 preceding ads and 2.07 succeeding ads. We need to round those numbers to identify our average position. In doing so, we also need to keep an equal number of preceding ads and succeeding ads so that average price of all positions combined does not change.

Therefore, we decided that our average position should have 2 preceding ads and 2 succeeding ads, in the middle of an average pod of 5 commercials. This position is shown as the 3rd column of the 5th row in Table 4.

 Table 4 about here

The average position in an average pod should have the average price. So it is given an average rate of 1. As a forward move of one position in the same pod means one less preceding ad and one more succeeding ad, such a move should be charged an additional ProRate minus the RetroRate, as is shown in Table 4.

For easier calculation and understanding, Table 4 rounded the ProRate to 20% and RetroRate to 8%.

In comparison with 3rd position in a pod of 5, the 3rd position in a pod of 4 has the advantage of one less succeeding ad, therefore should be charged an additional RetroRate (Rr). Therefore, the price rate for that position is increased to 1.08

 Table 5 about here

Table 5 indicates, when the average price is set at \$2 millions for a 30 second commercial, as was the actual price for a 2003 Super Bowl broadcast, how the price schedule should look like.

Discussion

There appears to be a negative correlation between clutter and recall, a finding consistent with prior studies (Webb and Ray, 1979; Pillai, 1990; Pieters and Bijmolt, 1997 and Zhao's, 1997). In fact, the magnitude of some position effects appeared comparable to that of other more established variables such as advertisement quality, advertisement length, or advertising frequency. Questioning the implicit assumption that proaction and retroaction are equal, this study offers evidence that proactive effects may be stronger than the retroactive effects on memory. Further, the proactive clutter effect may go beyond memory and extend to advertisement liking, while the retroactive clutter effect on liking was not predicted, and was not found.

Serial order may also be important. Earlier positions appear to be more effective in generating higher brand memory. The results contradict some experimental researchers' (McKinney, 1935; Blankenship and Whitely, 1941) conclusion that memory is the highest for the last few stimuli.

Pending verification by other researchers using different methods, our findings may have a number of practical implications. It might be sufficient and efficient to think about position in terms of the preceding and succeeding ads (rather than the traditionally defined clutter or serial order). Assuming equal price, an advertiser may want to have fewer preceding ads *and* fewer succeeding ads, because both tend to have a negative impact. When the total number of ads in a pod(s) are given, the advertiser may want to move his/her advertisement(s) toward the beginning of the pod(s), because the negative impact of preceding ads tends to be larger than that of the succeeding ads. The magnitudes of the position effects that we have estimated may be useful to the TV networks/stations and advertisers who wish to negotiate a reasonable premium for the desirable positions or a discount for the less effective ones. The comparative effects of position vs. frequency, length, and quality may provide a guideline for media planners in their daily decision makings.

The System for Evaluating Pod Positions (SEPP) described in this system shows such an example. As it is developed on the basis of seven years of Super Bowl data, it should be a fairly reasonable reference system for pricing and purchasing in the negotiations regarding Super Bowl advertising in the future. Outside of Super Bowl, the specific figures we show in this paper should be used with great caution, if they should be used at all. The SEPP logic and the procedure, however, should be applicable to advertising in any television program in any event. The broadcasters and the advertising industry should join hands to fund additional naturalistic studies to estimate the pod position effects in a variety of TV programs and environments, so that the figures in our SEPP system can be revised to reliably accommodate different events and programs.

Figure 1: A Holistic Theory of Position Effects
 on Brand Memory and Advertisement Liking

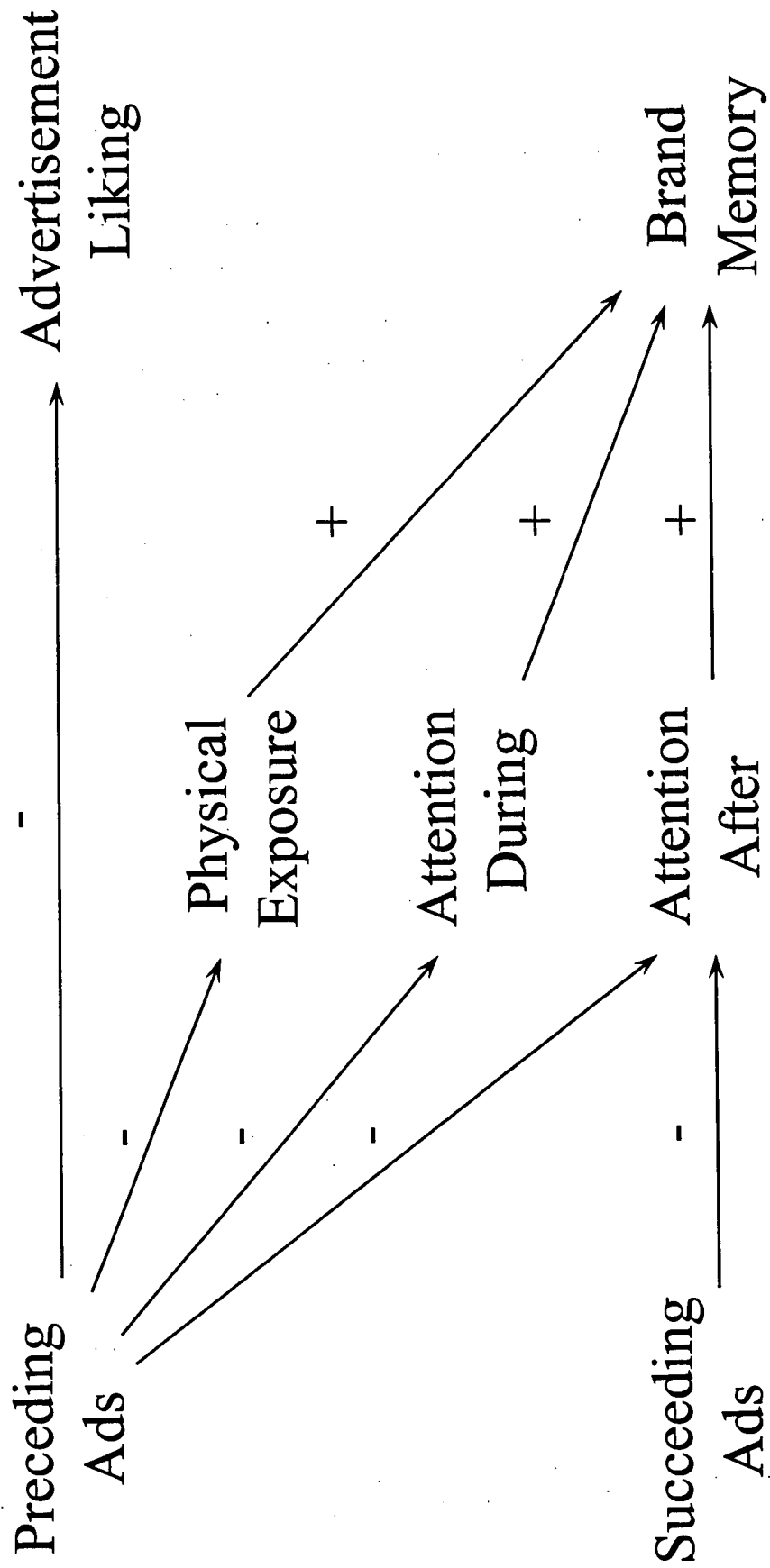


TABLE 1

NUMBER OF BRANDS ADVERTISED BY YEAR AND PRODUCT CATEGORIES

Across: Year Down: Product Categories	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	2002*	2003	Total
Services	12	14	13	7	23	17	14	100
Auto Related Products	8	14	10	16	15	13	11	87
Shoes & Clothes	3	4	4	5	1	4	3	24
Health & Beauty	12	7	3	7	4	4	3	40
Household Products	3	4	4	3	0	3	4	21
Food & Beverages	11	12	16	14	12	16	15	96
Public Announcements	4	2	2	2	3	4	3	20
Entertainment	2	4	4	2	2	14	12	40
Total:	55	61	56	56	60	75*	65	428

* In all years except one, the survey questionnaire included only the brands that were advertised after the Super Bowl Broadcast formally started at 6pm Eastern Standard time, or in the commercial break immediately before it. In 2002, we experimented with adding some brands advertised in the three pods in the Pre-Game show immediately before 6pm, which lead to a higher number of brands for that year in our analysis.

TABLE 2

UNIVARIATE STATISTICS OF MAJOR VARIABLES

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.	Skewness	Kurtosis	N
Brand Recall (%)	0.00	85.38	2.61	0.00	9.32	5.76	38.14	435
Brand Recognition (%)	0.00	85.38	27.71	22.76	16.44	1.12	0.83	426
Advertisement Liking (0-100)	21.88	91.58	59.03	58.33	8.71	0.06	1.51	426
Total Number of Other Ads <per pod>*	0 <0>	39 <6>	5.54 <3.20>	4 <3>	4.23	2.97	14.52	435
Total Number of Preceding Ads <per pod>*	0 <0>	21 <5>	2.28 <1.45>	2 <1>	2.39	3.61	23.08	435
Total Number of Succeeding Ads <per pod>*	0 <0>	27 <6>	3.26 <2.07>	2 <2>	3.25	2.74	11.77	435
Advertising Frequency	1	7	1.57	1	1.11	2.77	8.57	435

*: When there were two or more advertisements per brand, the clutter and serial order variables were summed across relevant pods. This operationalization is the basis of our subsequent regression analysis (see text for the underlying rationales). To aid understanding of this rather complex data, we added in < > additional information on a "per-pod" basis. The "Maximum" column, for example, indicates that the maximum number of "other ads" (in all relevant pods combined) for a brand are 39. The number <6> in the same cell indicates that the longest pod in our data has 7 commercials, including the advertisement in question.

TABLE 3
POSITION EFFECTS ON BRAND MEMORY AND ADVERTISEMENT LIKING

Dependent Variables:	Brand Recall (%)	Brand Recog. (%)	Advertisement Liking (0-100)
1. Control Block ^a			
Constant	- 4.90***	23.34***	56.99***
Year 1993	- 2.84 (-.11)*	1.59 (.03)	0.21 (.01)
Year 1994	- 3.15 (-.11)*	- 3.00 (-.06)	- 1.40 (-.05)
Year 1995	- 0.53 (-.02)	- 5.00 (-.10)*	1.79 (.07)
Year 1996	- 0.56 (-.02)	- 1.07 (-.02)	2.62 (.10)
Year 2002	2.83 (.12)*	5.61 (.13)**	2.67 (.12)*
Year 2003	1.45 (.06)	4.08 (.10)	- 2.05 (-.08)
Services	0.81 (.04)	- 8.97 (-.23)***	- 2.91 (-.14)*
Auto Related Products	-0.76 (-.03)	-13.98 (-.34)***	- 2.95 (-.14)*
Shoe & Clothes	2.06 (.05)	4.95 (.07)	8.21 (.22)***
Health & Beauty	0.27 (.01)	-13.13 (-.23)***	- 8.49 (-.28)***
Household Products	1.19 (.03)	- 7.44 (-.10)*	2.44 (.06)
Food & Beverages	3.61 (.16)*	1.16 (.03)	2.13 (.10)
Public Serv. Anmnts	0.05 (.00)	- 0.95 (-.01)	2.39 (.06)
Advertising Frequency	4.30 (.51)***	6.74 (.46)***	1.48 (.19)***
2. Gen. Clutter Block: ^b			
# of Other Ads	- 0.44 (-.20)**	- 1.70 (-.44)***	- 0.32 (-.15)
3. Pro/Retr Clutter Blk: ^b			
# of Preceding Ads	- 0.88 (-.23)***	- 2.42 (-.36)***	- 0.72 (-.20)***
# of Succeeding Ads	0.01 (.00)	- 0.94 (-.19)***	- 0.11 (-.04)
4. Serial Order Block: ^b			
# of Other Ads	0.01 (.01)	- 0.96 (-.25)***	0.01 (.01)
# of Preceding Ads	- 0.90 (-.23)***	- 1.47 (-.22)***	- 0.82 (-.23)***
5. Total R² of Control Block (Section 1) (%)			
	36.9***	46.3***	28.6***
6. Incremental R² due to # of Other Ads (Section 2) (%)			
	1.1**	5.3***	0.6
7. Incremental R² due to block of any 2 clutter/order vars (Section 3 or 4) (%): ^c			
	3.9***	7.8***	3.4***

TABLE 3
POSITION EFFECTS ON
BRAND MEMORY AND ADVERTISEMENT LIKING
(Continued)

Cell entries in Sections 1-4 are regression coefficients and standardized beta coefficients (the latter are in parentheses).

- a: The brands from 1992 serve as a baseline for comparison with the brands from the other two years. Entertainment serves as a baseline for comparison with the other seven product categories.
 - b: Number of Other Ads (General Clutter Block, Section 2) was entered on top of the control variables listed in Section 1. This variable was then replaced with the Proactive/Retroactive Clutter Block (Section 3), which was then replaced with the Serial Order Block (Section 4). Because of the mathematical link among the three clutter/order variables, it is mathematically forbidden to enter all three variables simultaneously.
 - c: Because of the mathematical link among the three clutter/order variables, any two-variable combination produces the same R^2 statistics.
- *: $p < .05$
- ** : $p < .01$
- ***: $p < .001$

Table 4: Price Rates in a System for Evaluating Pod Positions (SEPP)

# of ads in a pod	Pod Positions						
	1st	2nd	3rd	4 th	5th	6th	7th
1	$1+2(Pr+Rr)$ = 1.56						
2	$1+2Pr+Rr$ = 1.48	$1+2Rr+Pr$ = 1.36					
3	$1+2Pr$ = 1.40	$1+Rr+Pr$ = 1.28	$1+2Rr$ = 1.16				
4	$1+2Pr-Rr$ = 1.32	$1+Pr$ = 1.20	$1+Rr$ = 1.08	$1-Pr+2Rr$ = .96			
5	$1+2(Pr-Rr)$ = 1.24	$1+(Pr-Rr)$ = 1.12	Average Rate For Average Position = 1	$1-(Pr-Rr)$ = .88	$1-2(Pr-Rr)$ = .76		
6	$1+2Pr-3Rr$ 1.16	$1+Pr-2Rr$ 1.04	$1-Rr$ = .92	$1-Pr$ = .80	$1-2Pr+Rr$ = .68	$1-3Pr+2Rr$ = .56	
7	$1+2Pr-4Rr$ 1.08	$1+Pr-3Rr$ 0.96	$1-2Rr$ = .84	$1-Pr-Rr$ = .72	$1-2Pr$ = .60	$1-3Pr+Rr$ = .48	$1-4Pr+2Rr$ = .36

Average Rate = 1; Pr=ProRate=0.20; Rr=RetroRate=0.08

Table 5: An Example SEPP Schedule (Prices in millions. Average price = \$2M)

# of ads in a pod	Pod Positions						
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th
1	3.12						
2	2.96	2.72					
3	2.80	2.56	2.32				
4	2.64	2.40	2.16	1.92			
5	2.48	2.24	Average Price=\$2	1.76	1.56		
6	2.32	2.08	1.84	1.60	1.36	1.12	
7	2.16	1.92	1.68	1.44	1.20	0.96	0.72

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From Information Retrieval to Actual Purchase: A Path Analysis of the Online Purchase Decision Making Process Among U.S. and Indian Consumers

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From Information Retrieval to Actual Purchase: A Path Analysis of the Online Purchase Decision Making Process Among U.S. and Indian Consumers

Abstract

Drawing from theories of consumer decision making that posit hierarchies and exploiting their match with the components of online purchasing, this study first proposes a path model of online purchase decision making and then empirically examines it for U.S. and Indian consumers. The model integrates two stages--knowledge and behavior--of the rational consumer behavior hierarchy with a two-stage beliefs-action hierarchy. Thus respondent beliefs about the Internet's potential for information retrieval lead to respondent beliefs about the Internet's potential for purchase, which in turn lead to actual information retrieval and finally to actual purchase online. The rational hierarchy is used as the model because online purchasing most lends itself to rational consumer behavior.

The study uses an innovative sampling technique and creates scales to measure the four variables in the path model. Each scale possesses high reliability, and the two behavior scales also demonstrate unidimensionality. With one exception, all direct paths were significant and indirect effects were present for all paths for both U.S. and Indian consumers. The respondent means on the four key variables, the statistical significance of direct paths, the presence of indirect paths, and the total effect sizes, all indicate support for the proposed online purchase behavior model. The results indicate that the theoretical underpinnings and methodological innovations may be used cross-culturally.

From Information Retrieval to Actual Purchase: A Path Analysis of the Online Purchase Decision Making Process Among U.S. and Indian Consumers

Introduction

Online shopping is a growing global phenomenon. Over 15 % of global Internet users shop online today, 18% intend to do so in the next six months, and another 15% have bought goods or services offline as a direct result of information found online (TNS Interactive-Global eCommerce Report 2002). As both consumers and marketers tap the potential of the Internet in diverse purchasing contexts, the importance of the new 'marketspace,' and with it the need to understand and respond to the challenges of virtual shopping, is increasing.

This need is driving much of today's research on online purchasing. Many different aspects of this complex, multifaceted Internet-based phenomenon are currently under investigation. From a consumer perspective, several recent studies have examined consumer motivations (Lynch, Kent & Srinivasan 2001, Limayem & Khalifa 2000, Korgaonkar & Wolin 1999, Li, Kuo & Russell 1999, Donthu & Garcia 1999, Bellman, Lohse & Johnson 1999) and concerns (Miyazaki & Fernandez 2001, Sheehan & Hoy 1999a, Ghose & Dou 1998) in online shopping. Still others have explored various factors influencing the consumer decision making process in the Internet environment (Haubl & Trifts 2000, Koufaris, Kambil, & La Barbera 2001/2002).

This study focuses on the decision making process itself, as consumers utilize Internet resources at various stages in making online purchase decisions. Rather than examining motivations, concerns, and individual or Internet related factors affecting online decision making, the primary objective of this paper is to propose, and then empirically test, relationships in a theoretically derived path model of online purchase decision making. Based on traditional theories in consumer behavior about beliefs preceding intent to act and information search preceding purchase, the model integrates these to posit a path sequence among them. The empirical test is conducted through a survey of online consumers in the U.S. and India, where e-commerce is at different stages of development. For example, only about four percent of the Indian Internet population was reported to have shopped online in 2002 as compared to over 32% of the American Internet population (TNS Interactive-Global eCommerce Report 2002). In

terms of retail figures, the Department of Commerce reported online retail transactions by American consumers in 2001 at \$33.7 billion (Pastore, 2002). The total volume of e-commerce transactions in India was about U.S. \$100 million (Rs. 450 crores) in 1999-2000. Of this, retail and business-to-consumer transactions constituted only about U.S. \$11 million (Rs. 50 crores) (Times of India 2000, November 30). Despite the differences in Internet use and experience due to different stages of Internet adoption in the two countries, the study posits the same theoretical model for U.S. and Indian consumers on an assumption of an underlying universality in models of consumer behavior.

Components of Online Purchase Decision Making

As commercial activity on the Internet continues to grow, more and more consumers are expected to turn to its convenience to make online purchases, or conduct other purchase-related activities. While some researchers consider only the final act of buying a product as defining the transactional nature of online purchasing, others include the entire range of activities from conduct of purchase-related information searches, use of price and brand comparison tools, use of online coupons and discounts, interaction with marketing personnel via web sites, to actual purchase and post-purchase use of the Internet. Such a view conforms with Howard and Sheth's (1969) conceptualization of buying behavior as a series of mental and motor steps, with actual choice only its terminal act (p. 261). This expansive definition of online purchase activities can be broken down into three basic staged components--information search, actual use/purchase, and post-purchase interaction.

Information search is a crucial component in all decision making models (Pereira 1999). In online buying situations, such information search is even more critical given that consumers make purchases without talking face-to-face with a sales agent or having the benefit of actually experiencing (seeing, touching, etc.) the product. The Internet, as a vast repository of information, which is relatively easily accessed, is ideally suited for information search activity. Online information resources allow a consumer to customize product attributes, get a better sense of price, and also feel more comfortable about post-sales technical support and customer service. An overwhelming number of people already search the Internet for information with an intent to purchase (GVU Survey 1998), and use of the Internet can significantly reduce pre-purchase anxiety among consumers (Ghose & Dou 1998). Pre-purchase sales information, therefore, appears to be a major part of a web site's value (Bruner 1997).

While 'shopping' online for product information, and using Internet price and brand comparison tools may be more prolific among consumers, actual purchasing is likely to be a less frequent activity. This is because buying products online may be constrained by, among other things, security concerns and transaction anxiety (Korgaonkar & Wolin 1999). The Gvu Survey Report (1998), which surveyed consumers in several countries including the U.S. found, however, that contrary to popular beliefs about the importance of security to consumers using the Internet for shopping, it was quality information that was more important to respondents. Other factors consumers considered important were ease of ordering and reliability. Market surveys in recent months have also indicated that security concerns continue to diminish as consumers grow in online shopping experience and confidence (Miyazaki & Fernandez 2001). For India, other reported barriers to e-shopping included the social activity aspect of in-store shopping in India, and the lack of face-to-face contact in e-shopping (Times of India 2000, November 30).

In addition to its information search and online purchase potential, the Internet also provides a venue for several post-purchase activities. Consumers can interact with sales support staff, participate in online product communities, or receive product updates via related web sites and company email services. Dell Computer Corporation, for example, has an online "Ask Dudley" service on its web site that fields more than 150,000 customer questions a week and a "Dell Talk" feature that allows Dell customers to post messages to each other (Sheridan 2000).

While the research on Internet use in e-commerce is largely based on U.S. consumers, the anticipation is that the three components of online purchase activities are universal even though their adoption levels may differ in various countries. This suggestion of universality is based on the fact that these components closely correspond to salient stages in consumer decision making. This study of U.S. and Indian consumers limits itself to two of the three components of online purchasing activity--information search and purchase--which correspond with two salient stages in the consumer decision making process, knowledge and behavior. The last component, post-purchase interaction, paralleled most closely by the feedback stage in traditional decision making models, was not included because of uncertainty about its availability to, and sufficient participation by, Indian consumers.

Theoretical Framework

The specific path model developed for this study combines two compatible theoretical frameworks: the rational hierarchy of consumer behavior where consumers move linearly from knowledge to attitude to action (Lavidge & Steiner 1961), and the beliefs-attitude-action hierarchy (Lutz 1985, MacKenzie & Lutz 1989).¹ While models using the rational hierarchy may differ slightly in the number of steps² and the nomenclature used for the steps, they maintain the knowledge-attitude-behavior sequence. Such an approach assumes a rational, goal-oriented approach to decision making, as the consumer moves from awareness and knowledge (cognitive stage) to liking and preference (affective stage) to conviction and purchase (conative stage) (Aaker & Myers 1982).

Theory development coming from a criticism of the rational hierarchy of effects model and the elaboration of this model has resulted in an understanding that the product, the consumer, the buying situation, and other factors can not only reverse or change (in any possible combination) the hierarchy but also result in abbreviated and expanded hierarchies (see for example, Crozier & McLean 1997, Sheth 1974). In addition, all sequences of the three major stages in the hierarchy are possible in consumer decision making.

Still, while the rational hierarchy is admittedly only one of several models for consumer decision making, it is logical in concept and widely used by researchers and practitioners. It lends itself particularly well to online decision making contexts, where consumers' need for information is large because of lack of real experience with the product, because such information is easily available on the Internet, and because the Internet also allows direct purchase. Also, consumer use of the Internet is generally assumed to be more purposive and goal-directed, and therefore more "rational." The two selected stages – cognition and behavior— not only parallel the two components of the online purchase process of interest to this study—information search and purchase, but also fit its specific focus on action-oriented purchase decision making.

Each of the two selected stages is also conceptualized in two ordered stages, beliefs and actual use. That is, each stage, cognition and behavior, is represented by two variables, beliefs about the potential of the Internet, and its actual use, within the context of online purchasing.

¹MacKenzie and Lutz (1989) use a beliefs-attitude-intent to act hierarchy.

Thus the variables used in this study include (1) beliefs about the Internet's potential for information retrieval and actual information retrieval as the cognition stage variables and (2) beliefs about the Internet's potential for purchase and actual purchase as the behavior stage variables. Conceptual definitions of these variables are provided in Table 1.

Since beliefs are theoretically considered to precede use, beliefs about the Internet's potential for both information retrieval and purchase are posited to precede actual information retrieval and purchase. These four variables are then modeled into a path diagram to represent an online purchase decision making sequence.

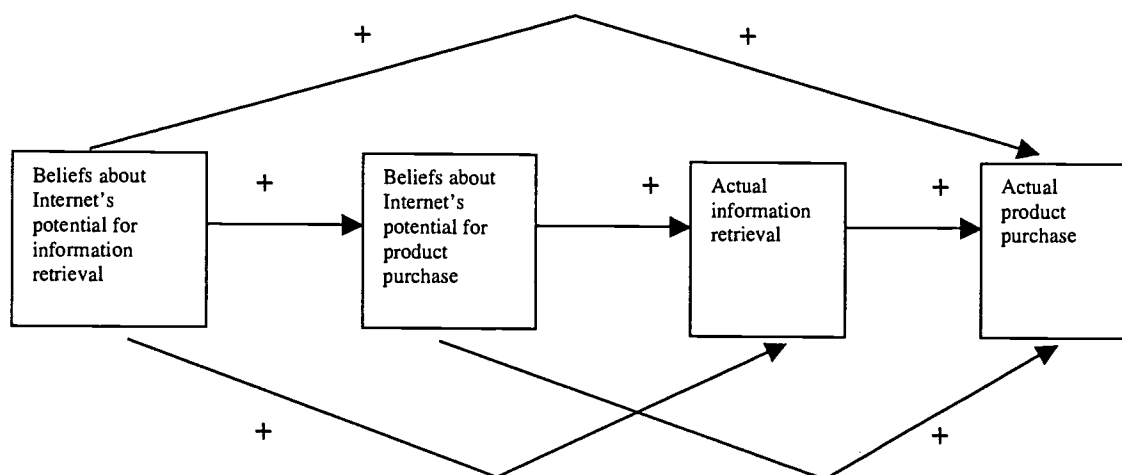
Path Analysis

Any sequential theoretical model, such as the one posited above, is well represented by a path diagram and tested by path analysis. Path analysis begins with a visual mapping, in a path diagram, of the sequence of and relationships (i.e., expected paths) among variables formulated on the basis of theory. Together the sequence and the paths capture the order of the successive direct or indirect influence(s) of variables on other variables (Pedhazur 1982, Alwin & Hauser 1975).

Once the path diagram is complete, a path analysis is conducted to quantitatively assess direct and indirect impacts of independent variables on dependent variables; while sometimes referred to as causal modeling, the analysis only assesses relationships not causes. The *direct effect* is that part of the total effect that is not transmitted through intervening variables (Alwin & Hauser 1975). The *indirect effect* is that part of the total effect that is transmitted by mediating variables. Apart from forcing researchers to clearly explicate theory with regard to the sequence of relationship(s) among variables rather than simply test a linear relationship, what distinguishes path analysis from a multiple regression analysis is this ability to represent and calculate indirect effects (Alwin & Hauser 1975), thus ensuring that the influence of a causal variable is not underestimated. In addition, through an exercise called theory trimming, where non-significant paths are removed, path analysis allows for a parsimonious theoretical conclusion. Figure I provides a path diagram representing the paper's theoretical model and depicting both direct and indirect influences of variables.

² For example, Haubl and Trifts (2000) posit a two-stage process in the information search step: screening to identify a subset of promising alternatives and then evaluating in-depth this subset to make a purchase decision.

Figure I
Conceptual Path Model of the Online Purchase Decision Making Process



Hypotheses and Research Questions

Parallel to the paths outlined in the diagram, several hypotheses were proposed to examine direct effects at different stages of online purchasing. These were tested through a series of standard regression analyses, following Pedhazur (1982), and Alwin and Hauser (1975). To examine indirect effects, research questions rather than hypotheses were proposed. In the tradition of studies using path analysis, these indirect effects were examined descriptively rather than statistically (Goldsmith, Lafferty, & Newell 2000) because of the lack of a statistical test of significance for indirect effects.

For direct effects, the following hypotheses were posited with regard to both U.S. and Indian consumers:

- H1 Beliefs about the Internet's potential for information retrieval positively and directly influence:
 - H1a Beliefs about the Internet's potential for purchase.
 - H1b Actual information retrieval from the Internet.
 - H1c Actual purchase from the Internet.

- H2 Beliefs about the Internet's potential for purchase directly and positively influence:
 - H2a Actual information retrieval from the Internet.
 - H2b Actual purchase from the Internet.
- H3 Actual information retrieval from the Internet directly and positively influences actual purchase from the Internet.

For indirect effects, the following research questions were posited with regard to both U.S. and Indian consumers:

- RQ1 Do beliefs about the Internet's potential for information retrieval indirectly and positively influence:
 - RQ1a Actual information retrieval from the Internet through its effect on beliefs about the Internet's potential for purchase?
 - RQ1b Actual product purchase through its effect on beliefs about the Internet's potential for purchase as well as its effect on actual information retrieval from the Internet?
- RQ2 Do beliefs about the Internet's potential for purchase indirectly and positively influence actual purchase from the Internet through its effect on actual information retrieval from the Internet?

Method

The method used for this study was a cross-sectional survey. Following the recent approach of using web and email to conduct surveys, the data collection instrument was an online questionnaire administered in July 2000 through a web site to a sample of U.S. and Indian consumers.

Population and Sample: Because the focus of the study was online consumer purchase behavior, the survey population was U.S. and Indian consumers with email/Internet access. Hence consumers without Internet access were consciously excluded.³

Following Sheehan and Hoy (1999b), with some departures, this study deployed a geographic parameter based on stratification of the country to obtain a sample of consumers with

³Previous researchers surveying the online population have made use of both convenience and purposive samples. While thousands of user databases are commercially available from online and offline sources on payment, no comprehensive national lists of online consumers are freely available, one of the major problems in generating a probability sample of Web users.

Internet access.⁴ To insure randomness, all U.S. states were first assigned to different geographic zones based on their general location: North, South, East, West, and Central. Two states were randomly picked from each zone, providing a set of 10 states. Names of the states were then entered, one at a time, into the Yahoo People Search engine. Each state-wise search generated 75 email addresses.⁵ These were then manually entered into an email directory created by the researcher, providing a list of 750 email addresses. Five more U.S. states (one from each zone) were subsequently sampled due to low response to generate an additional 350 email addresses. A similar procedure was followed for India, though only one state from each of five geographic regions (India has half the number of states as compared to the U.S.) was randomly selected to generate an India sample of 375.⁶ Actual data was collected using a Web survey.⁷

Questionnaire Design: Questionnaire design went through several qualitative iterations and one quantitative iteration based on the results of a pilot. Apart from questions on demographics (age, gender, education, income) and Internet use (years of Internet use, daily hours online), the questionnaire measured the four key variables depicted in the path diagram through four different scales (See Appendix).

The use of an interval level measure (a Likert scale ranging from “very frequently” to “never”) to assess actual use rather than a ratio level measure, such as number of times/amount of time information searched and number of products bought/number of times actually shopped online in the last ‘n’ months, is a limitation. This decision rested on 1) the fact that for the parallel variables measuring potential, it was determined that a Likert scale was the appropriate measuring tool, and 2) differences in actual retrieval/purchase due to differing levels of adoption

⁴Sheehan and Hoy (1999b) used a domain search parameter to generate a list of domain (Internet Service Providers) names from an online directory. They selected 30 ISPs from the list of ISPS, but provided no explanation for how this selection was made. Subsequently, they entered each ISP name in the advanced search field of the Yahoo People Finder (www.yahoo.com) which allows email searches of its Four11 Directory based on a variety of optional fields.

⁴ Yahoo returned a random sample of up to 75 names of people for each ISP.

⁵Today, Yahoo returns up to 200 names with each search.

⁶ While geographic stratification and random selection of states from the strata were used, it is unknown whether the 75 email addresses were generated randomly for each state. Further, the population from which these names were generated is also unknown. Admittedly, this is a limitation.

⁷ The advantage of a Web survey is that it facilitates downloading of responses as values into a database, thus skipping the intermediary and tedious stage of data entry and subsequent data proofing. A solicitation email was sent out to the sample of potential respondents. The mail contained relevant information about the survey’s purpose and provided a link to the survey web site. Respondents were offered an opportunity to opt out at this stage itself. The web site opened with an introduction to the survey, once again repeating required information for participants and providing the respondents with an opportunity to opt out.

of both the Internet and e-commerce in the two countries necessitated an interval level scale to capture comparable levels. This decision was supported by the reliability and factor analytic results for these two variables; the results respectively demonstrated very high pre- and post-test reliabilities as well as unidimensionality.⁸

Cronbach's alpha for the four variables, in order of their use in the path diagram, in a pilot test (with a convenience sample of Internet users from a university population that included both American and Indian students) was .85, .90, .93 and .91 respectively, and all scale items were retained for the final questionnaire. Reliabilities for these variables in the final study were as follows, presented by country: .85 (U.S.) and .84 (India), .90 (U.S.) and .91 (India), .77 (U.S.) and .86 (India), and .91 (U.S.), and .92 (India). The pilot test of the draft questionnaire (using a web survey with opt out opportunity) was also useful in successfully testing actual online survey administration.

Findings

Altogether, 1,500 email messages were sent out to the U.S. (750 first mailing, 375 second mailing) and Indian (375) sample. A total of 509 email messages were returned as undeliverable (422 for the U.S. sample, 97 for the India sample), and five respondents sent email messages declining participation, reducing sample size to 986. A total of 291 respondents took the survey (186 for the U.S., 105 for India) on the web site, for a response rate of 19% for the U.S. and 28% for India.⁹

Description of Sample: Indian Internet users in the survey were somewhat older than their U.S. counterparts. While the average age of Indian respondents was 39 years, that of U.S. respondents was 37 years. Exactly half (50%) of U.S. respondents, and a little over half (56.4%) of Indian respondents, were in the 25-40 age group. Interestingly, those below 25 years constituted the smallest segment of Internet users among U.S. respondents (14.4%), while the above 40 age group (10%) was the smallest segment among Indian respondents (Table 2).

⁸Factor analysis with varimax rotation was conducted on all scales. For both behavior variables (AIR and AP), single factor solutions with eigenvalues above one emerged, supporting construct unidimensionality.

⁹ However, because the survey site was subsequently listed on a listserv by an interested respondent, and access to the web site was not controlled, the response rate must be interpreted with caution because it is difficult to predict what percentage of the response was from the original sample and what percent came from the subsequent unsolicited listing.

While better balance among male (55.4%) and female (41.9%) users was observed in the U.S. sample, male Internet users (66.7%) outnumbered female users (29.5%) in the Indian sample. In terms of education, more than half (51.1%) of the U.S. respondents were college graduates, 25% were in college, and another 18% had completed high school. Among Indian respondents, about half (51.4%) were college graduates, 34% were in college, and another four percent had completed high school.

In terms of Internet experience and use, on average, U.S. respondents had used the Internet for about five to six years ($m = 5.63$), while Indian users had used it for about four years ($m = 3.86$) (Table 1). Interestingly, in terms of average daily Internet use (in hours), Indian users were online longer ($m = 3.44$) than U.S. respondents ($m = 2.91$).

Both U.S. ($m = 2.3$) and Indian ($m = 2.2$) Internet users had fairly positive and strong beliefs about the Internet's potential for product information retrieval (lower value = more positive belief on a scale of 1 to 5) (Table 1). However, their beliefs about its potential for product purchase were more or less neutral: U.S. users ($m = 3.0$), Indian users ($m = 3.1$). Both U.S. ($m = 2.8$) and Indian ($m = 2.9$) users reported slightly greater than average use of the Internet for product information searches. However, when it came to actual online purchase, U.S. users reported buying online "sometimes" ($m = 3.1$), while Indian users seldom shopped online ($m = 3.6$).

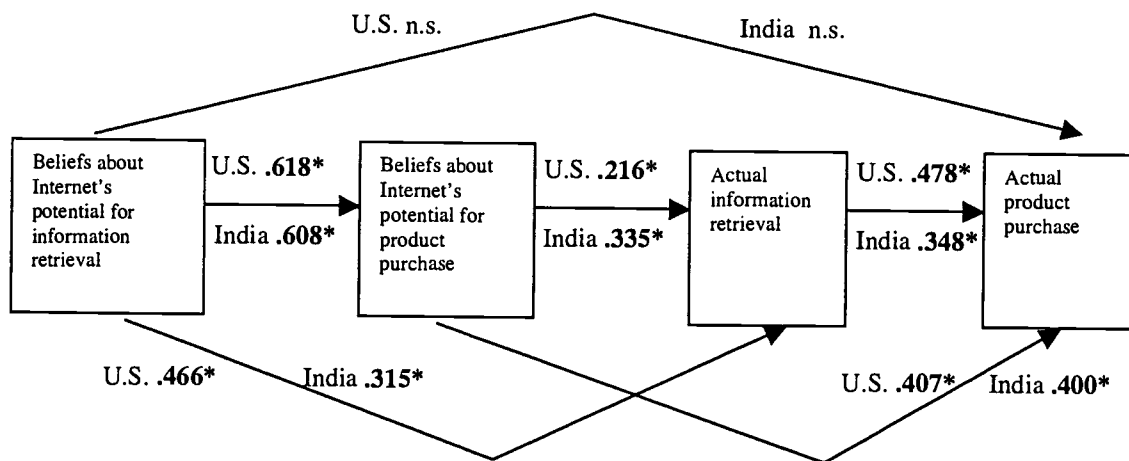
Results of Path Analysis : For Hypothesis 1a, for U.S. consumers, the strength of the path from beliefs about the potential for retrieval to beliefs about the potential for purchase ($\beta = .618$, $p = .00$) suggested that the former had a direct and significant influence on the latter (Figure II). Such a direct effect ($\beta = .608$, $p = .00$) was observed for Indian consumers as well (Figure II). Hypothesis 1a was, therefore, supported. The regression analysis also showed that the former significantly predicted 38% of the variance in the latter ($F = 113.8$, $p = .00$) for U.S. consumers and 37% ($F = 60.45$, $p = .00$) for Indian consumers.

For Hypotheses 1b, the path from beliefs about the potential for information retrieval to actual retrieval was significant for both countries' consumers (U.S.: $\beta = .466$, $p = .00$; India: $\beta = .315$, $p = .00$). That is, beliefs about the Internet's potential for information retrieval positively predicted actual retrieval of information from the Internet among both groups of consumers. Hypothesis 1b was, therefore, supported.

For Hypothesis 1c, for both U.S. and Indian consumers, the effect of beliefs about the potential for information retrieval on actual purchase was not significant. This suggests that, for both groups, beliefs about the Internet's potential for information retrieval did not significantly predict their online purchasing.

For Hypotheses 2a and 2b, the paths from beliefs about the potential for purchase respectively to actual information retrieval and actual purchase were significant for both countries' consumers (U.S.: beta = .216, p = .00; beta = .407, p = .00; India: beta = .335, p = .00; beta = .400, p = .00). That is, beliefs about the Internet's potential for purchase positively predicted actual retrieval of information and actual purchase from the Internet among both groups of consumers. Hypotheses 2a and 2b were, therefore, supported.

Figure II
Path Model of the Online Purchase Decision Making Process



* Significant paths at .05 alpha

For Hypothesis 3, a direct, positive path was also found from actual information retrieval to actual purchase for both U.S. (beta = .478, p = .00) and Indian (beta = .348, p = .00) consumers. This suggests that, for both groups, beliefs about the Internet's potential for actual information retrieval did have a direct, positive impact on online purchasing.

Research question 1a examined and found an indirect path from beliefs about potential for information retrieval to actual information retrieval through its effect on beliefs about the

Internet's potential for purchase for both U.S. (.135) and Indian (.204) consumers (Tables 3 & 4). However, in both groups, the direct effect was stronger than the indirect effect.

Research question 1b examined and found an indirect path from beliefs about the potential for information retrieval to actual purchase for both U.S. and Indian consumers: through its effect on beliefs about the potential for purchase (U.S.: .252; India: .243), actual information retrieval (U.S.: .223; India: .110) and the two combined (U.S.: .064; India: .071) (Tables 2 and 3). For both groups, beliefs about the potential for information retrieval exerted an indirect effect on actual purchase. Therefore, while beliefs about the Internet's potential for information retrieval did not directly predict actual online purchase for both groups as noted earlier, they did exert an indirect influence through their effect on mediating variables in the path model.

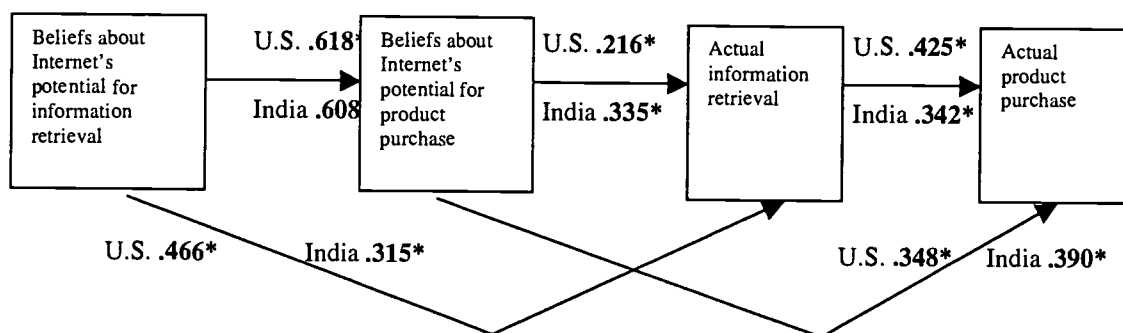
Research question 2 examined the indirect path from beliefs about the potential for purchase to actual purchase, and found that the former indirectly influenced the latter through its effect on actual information retrieval for both U.S. (.103) and Indian (.117) consumers (Tables 3 & 4). Therefore, in addition to directly predicting actual purchase, beliefs about the Internet's potential for information retrieval also had an indirect influence on actual purchase through its effect on actual information retrieval. However, in both groups, the direct effect was greater than the indirect effect.

Results of Revised Path Model: Because one of the paths—beliefs about the potential for information retrieval to actual purchase--was not significant for both U.S. and Indian respondents, it was dropped for the theory trimming exercise.¹⁰

Because only the last stage of the model (the regression of actual purchase on beliefs about potential for purchase and actual information retrieval) was affected by the non-significant path, only the last stage of the path analysis was rerun excluding potential for information retrieval as a direct predictor of actual purchase. The revised path diagram and the results of the path analysis using this diagram are presented in Figure III. All remaining paths continued to be significant though beta weights went down slightly.

¹⁰A judgmental criterion of meaningfulness (example, regression coefficient < .05) is used by researchers to delete paths even if coefficients are significant, particularly when it is suspected that with a large sample size substantively meaningless regression coefficients may be found to be significant (Pedhazur 1982). In this study, only the non-significant path was eliminated for theory trimming because the significant coefficients appeared to be relatively healthy.

Figure III
Revised Path Model of the Online Purchase Decision Making Process



* Significant paths at .05 alpha

Summary

For both countries, with one exception, all direct paths, i.e., effects, in the sequential, rational consumer decision making model were statistically significant. The exception was for the direct path between beliefs about potential for information retrieval and actual purchase. For both countries, this time without exception, all indirect paths, i.e., effects, were present. Hence while the direct path from beliefs about potential for information retrieval to actual purchase was not significant, the indirect path was.

In sum, each stage of the online purchase decision making process as conceptualized in this study's path model was significantly impacted by the stages preceding it, either directly or indirectly, for both the U.S. and Indian respondents. In terms of direct effects, an antecedent Internet belief variable (potential for information retrieval) impacted a consequent belief variable (potential for purchase), and an antecedent action variable (actual information retrieval) impacted a consequent action variable (actual purchase). Further, the consequent belief variable (potential for purchase) impacted the immediately following antecedent action variable (actual information retrieval). This was true in both countries. In terms of indirect effects, all antecedent variables impacted the consequent variables at each stage of the model.

Specifically, for direct effects, beliefs about the Internet's potential for information retrieval lead to beliefs about its potential for purchase; in turn, the latter beliefs lead to actual information retrieval which finally leads to actual purchase for both U.S. and Indian consumers.

In addition, beliefs about the Internet's potential for information retrieval lead to actual information retrieval and beliefs about the Internet's potential for purchase lead to actual purchase for both U.S. and Indian consumers. Only beliefs about the Internet's information potential did not directly lead to actual purchase. This was true for both the U.S. and India.

Specifically, for indirect effects, beliefs about the Internet's potential for information retrieval lead to actual purchase through beliefs about the medium's potential for purchase and actual information retrieval. Also, beliefs about the Internet's potential for purchase lead to actual purchase through actual information retrieval. Finally, beliefs about the Internet's potential for information retrieval lead to actual information retrieval through beliefs about the medium's potential for purchase. This was true for both the U.S. and India.

Conclusion and Discussion

Three major conclusions can be drawn. First, the theoretical model of rational consumer decision making for Internet related consumer behavior is supported. Second, the theoretical model that posits beliefs as antecedents of intent to purchase/purchase is also supported in the context of online purchase decision making. Third, within the context of online purchase decision making, these two models have some cross-cultural validity.

Specifically, while the rational and beliefs-action consumer decision making model proposed in this study may be only one of several possible ways in which consumers sequence and make online purchase decisions, it is one that is well supported by the data in this study. It was argued that the rational model might be particularly well-suited to Internet based consumer purchases because of the consumer need for information in an online buying situation where the product is not physically available for inspection, and because of the tremendous potential of the Internet for information in terms of amount of availability of information and ease of retrieval of this information. Respondents confirmed the latter by rating the medium quite high on potential for information retrieval and around midpoint for actual information retrieval. (Such a drop at each stage of decision making models is typically expected. Also, access related constraints could be responsible for the lower rating for actual retrieval as compared with potential for retrieval).

It was also argued that the rational model might be well-suited to Internet based consumer purchases because of the Internet's potential for direct purchases by consumers. In fact, it may be argued that the Internet more than any other direct marketing medium has the

greatest potential for actual purchase because of ease and ability to create a virtual shopping experience. The Internet's graphics capabilities enable it to virtually recreate the product, in three dimensions, to closely simulate the actual product consumers experience in a store. Its customer service capabilities afford an opportunity to the consumer to interact with salespeople. The social interaction experience of shopping is better approximated on the Internet than any other medium. Respondents' rating of the potential of the Internet for actual purchase around midpoint indicates their confidence in this potential.

In the rational model, information search is followed by purchase. The Internet collapses in one medium the search for information and the act of purchasing, making it a perfect site for the operation of the study's two-stage rational model. U.S. respondents reported that they purchased on the Internet 'sometimes,' the midpoint on a scale running from 'very frequently' to 'never', while Indian respondents reported that they purchased products on the Internet 'seldom' (3.6 on a 5-point scale). Actual purchase on the Internet has been thwarted for social interaction reasons, as well as for security fears. The latter are however receding, and it may be posited that convenience in an era of diminishing leisure and time may override the social interaction needs if the virtual environment does not.

These Internet characteristics (supported by respondent ratings of these characteristics with the exception of actual purchase for Indian consumers) are however only reasons for expecting the rational model to be present in this shopping environment but not evidence of the presence of this model. It is the significant direct paths and the presence of indirect paths that lend support to this model as well as to the beliefs-action model.

A comparison of effect sizes is also instructive because of their support of both models. In both countries, for total (direct and indirect) effects, beliefs about the Internet's potential for information retrieval had the largest effect on beliefs about its potential for purchase, the second largest effect on actual information retrieval, and the lowest on actual purchase. With regard to beliefs about the Internet's potential for purchase, the findings suggested that they had the larger total effect on actual purchase than on actual information retrieval for both countries. At first, the differing pattern of effects for both belief variables may appear as lack of support for the two models (rational and beliefs-action). A closer examination however shows otherwise, and two interesting (though not inconsistent) conclusions can be drawn. First, an antecedent belief

predicted a consequent belief better than it predicted a consequent action. Second, each antecedent belief better predicted the action most closely related to itself.

Based on the sequential predictive relationships empirically observed through this study, it may be concluded that the mental and motor steps (Sheth, 1969) of online purchase decision making may be explained through using hierarchic models. The fact that the findings were identical across two rather different cultures at different stages of adoption of the Internet provides further reinforcement to the conclusions. The lack of one direct path does not change the models' basic hierarchies, and the rerun of the model without the non significant path did not change results much, further confirming the conclusions. Theoretical confirmation apart, the findings have practical implications for Internet based advertisers and companies.

Practical Implications

In order to successfully exploit the potential of the Internet as a shopping venue, Internet-based advertisers and companies may find it useful to view the online shopping experience as a process of decision making stages, each preceding stage influencing the one following it. The findings of this study suggest that the successful integration of information search and purchase stages in an Internet environment physically (by companies) and mentally (by consumers) is key to moving consumers toward actual online purchasing.

Companies need to make each stage (and the transition between stages) as smooth and consumer-friendly as possible. For example, in the information stage, companies could benefit from harnessing the Internet's unique information potential by improving web site information resources and facilitating the retrieval process through easy-to-use search tools and decision aids. Similarly, at the purchase stage, making purchase action as user-friendly and secure as possible would greatly enhance chances of completing online transactions.

Limitations

As is the case in most online surveys, the response rate for the study was small.¹¹ Based on the fact that studies with these response rates are the norm for online surveys, this study's response rate may be deemed acceptable. Comparison of respondent characteristics with Internet population demographics for both the U.S. (GVU Survey 1998) and India (NASSCOM 2000) suggested that the samples were fairly representative, with the single exception of age for Indian

respondents. Indian respondents in the sample were somewhat older than the general Internet user population in India. Still, since a true random sample could not be used (a practical impossibility when surveying general Internet populations), the results must be interpreted with caution.

Actual purchase was measured as an interval, not ratio, level measure for a specific reason. In future studies, despite differences in accessibility, adoption, and e-commerce availability levels with regard to the Internet by country, it might be useful to use a ratio level measure. For the belief variables, factor analysis revealed two underlying factors with eigenvalues of more than one. Thus despite high scale reliabilities for both belief constructs, future scale refinement could be beneficial.

The path model used in this study is a simple two-stage, linear model. While quite strongly supported by theories of consumer decision making processes and by the theoretical basis of decision support systems research (Haubl & Trifts 2000, Pereira 1999), future research could introduce complexities into the model to more adequately represent the process, particularly the inclusion of an attitudinal measure between the knowledge and behavior steps.

As already pointed out, the sequence adopted by consumers is not necessarily always rational; that is, information retrieval may not always precede purchase and beliefs may not always precede action. This study maintained that particularly in the Internet environment the cognitive/behavior and beliefs/action model is likely to operate.

Further, the theoretical underpinning of this study--the rational hierarchy--is generally applied to a specific purchase (find out about a product, develop an attitude and then make a purchase); this study does not do that. By not referencing a specific purchase, questions about the link between the stages may arise. For example, it may be argued that consumers may make use of several information channels that may or may not include the Internet (for example, call up a 1-800 number or talk to a dealer) even if their purchase is made online; or consumers may collect information from the Internet even if their purchase is made offline. This study's specific focus was on the Internet as a factor (in terms of beliefs and actions) in online purchase decision making.

¹¹Widely variable response rates ranging from over 70% to less than 10% have been reported for Web surveys (Sills & Song 2002, Crawford, Couper, & Lamias 2001). In general, it is believed that response rates for online surveys are much lower as compared with those conducted via mail or telephone.

The interplay of influences between online and offline factors was, therefore, not part of the current investigation, and may be included in future research.

Contribution

First, this paper's contribution lies in its empirical validation of hierarchical theoretical models through the use of an analytic technique, path analysis, that is particularly suited to the validation of such models. This lends particular significance to the results of this study supporting the theoretical model.

Second, by also calculating and presenting indirect effects, this paper exploits one of the major advantages of path analysis over multiple regression, the ability to separate out the relative direct and indirect contribution of each independent variable in explaining the respective dependent variable, and thereby also assessing total effect. Specifically, the contribution of beliefs about the potential for information retrieval to explaining actual purchase indirectly would have remained undiscovered if only the direct paths had been examined, and the analysis of effect sizes would have been misleading if total effects had not been gauged.

Third, the new scales created to measure the four constructs used in the study demonstrated fairly high reliability, and may be employed in future research.

Fourth, the study uses an innovative sampling and data collection technique that can be of value to other researchers who are looking for ways to move from paper and pencil to web-based surveys or looking for ways to sample from the Internet.

Fifth, the study focuses on consumer decision making allowing for the theoretically grounded results to be used for practical applications in industry. Sixth, the study focuses on the Internet environment, where research is still insufficient and therefore very useful. These two contributions combine to provide insights into the relatively new purchasing environment of the Internet to which the theoretical models might be particularly well-suited.

Finally, the study is cross-cultural providing such validity to both the method and the findings.

Table 1
Conceptual Definitions of Variables

Variables	Conceptual Definitions
Beliefs about Internet potential for information search (PIR)	Beliefs (based on fact or opinion) about the potential that the Internet holds for gathering reliable and comprehensive product and purchase related information with ease and speed
Actual information retrieval (AIR)	Actual use of the Internet for retrieving product, price, service and other purchase related information
Beliefs about Internet potential for purchase (PP)	Beliefs (based on fact or opinion) about the potential that the Internet holds for product purchase with security, convenience, ease, and enjoyment. This definition excludes information retrieval
Actual Purchase (AP)	Actual use of the Internet for making product purchases and related actions such as using discounts

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Table 2
Respondent Profile And Mean Scores* for PIR, PP, AIR, AP by Country

	<u>U.S.</u> (N = 186)	<u>India</u> (N = 105)
Gender		
Male	55.4%	66.7%
Female	41.9%	29.5%
Education		
Post graduate	1.1%	1.9%
Graduate	51.1%	51.4%
In college	24.7%	34.3%
Completed high school	17.7%	3.8%
Some high school	1.1%	2.9%
Vocational/Technical	0.5%	1.9%
Mean Age (in years)	36.96	39.40
Years Internet use	5.63	3.86
Hours online daily	2.91	3.44
Potential for Information Retrieval	2.23	2.28
Potential for Purchase	2.97	3.09
Actual Information Retrieval	2.82	2.90
Actual Purchase	3.08	3.59

*(Lower value indicates stronger response on scale of 1-5)

Table 3
Interpretation of Significant Effects in Online Purchase Decision Making Process
(U.S. Consumers)

Predictor Variable	Dependent Variable	Total Effect	Indirect Effects via			Direct Effect
			PP	AIR	PP/AIR	
Potential for Information Retrieval	Potential for Purchase	.618				.618 (100%)
	Actual Information Retrieval	.601	.135 (22.5%)			.466 (77.5%)
	Actual Purchase	.539	.252 (46.7%)	.223 (41%)	.064 (11.9%)	n.s.
Potential for Purchase	Actual Information Retrieval	.216				.216 (100%)
	Actual Purchase	.510		.103 (20.2%)		.407 (79.8%)
Actual Information Retrieval	Actual Purchase	.478				.478 (100%)

Table 4
Interpretation of Significant Effects in Online Purchase Decision Making Process
(Indian Consumers)

Predictor Variable	Dependent Variable	Total Effect	Indirect Effects via			Direct Effect
			PP	AIR	PP/AIR	
Potential for Information Retrieval	Potential for Purchase	.608				.608 (100%)
	Actual Information Retrieval	.519	.204 (39.3%)			.315 (60.7%)
	Actual Purchase	.424	.243 (57.3%)	.110 (25.9%)	.071 (16.7%)	n.s.
Potential for Purchase	Actual Information Retrieval	.335				.335 (100%)
	Actual Purchase	.517		.117 (22.6%)		.400 (77.4%)
Actual Information Retrieval	Actual Purchase	.348				.348 (100%)

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Appendix: Scales

Beliefs About Internet Potential for Information Retrieval (PIR)

(Five point scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree)

The Internet is a valuable source of product information
Internet-based information helps in making wise purchase decisions
The Internet helps people become better consumers
The Internet provides quick and easy access to product information
Searching for information online is an inexpensive way to learn about products
The Internet is a useful tool to make brand comparisons
Web-based information about products is unreliable
Searching for purchase related information online is a waste of time
Web advertising is a valuable source of product information
Web sites provide all the information consumers need to buy a product

Beliefs About Internet Potential for Purchase (PP)

(Five point scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree)

Placing an order on the Web is too complicated
Buying on the Web is more impersonal than shopping in a store
Buying on the Internet takes all the trouble out of shopping
The Internet is a one-stop shop for everything
It's difficult to judge product quality while shopping online
Transaction security is a major concern in online shopping
Buying on the Web gives consumers more flexibility to shop when they want, where they want
The Internet is not the best place to buy all products
Buying on the Web is faster than going to a store
Shopping on the Internet is a convenient way to buy products
Shopping on the Web is an enjoyable experience
Consumers should be cautious about buying products on the Internet
It's cheaper to buy products on the Web

Actual Information Retrieval (AIR)

(Five point scale from Very Frequently to Never)

I visit Web sites to check out the best deals
I search for detailed information about the brand or product category
I compare several brands online before making a decision
I check out relevant Web ads to get more information about a product
I check out Web sites for sales and service information
I look for product information that is specific to my requirements
I check out company information online for products I would like to buy
I look for online discounts and bargains

Actual Purchase (AP)

(Five point scale from Very Frequently to Never)

I shop on the Internet
I buy many different products on the Internet
I make use of online discounts on goods and services
I follow up on good deals on the Internet
I buy a product online even if other buying options are available

Strategies for the Super Bowl of Advertising: An Analysis of Message and Creative Strategies for Commercials and Related Web Sites

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Strategies for the Super Bowl of Advertising: An Analysis of Message and Creative Strategies for Commercials and Related Web Sites

ABSTRACT

Super Bowl advertising provides an ideal venue for exploring message and creative strategies in commercials and related Web sites. This study found television commercials more often use transformational strategies while Web sites are more informational. Message strategies were generally more consistent across media than were creative strategies. Some unexpected relationships were found between message and creative strategies, but these and other findings point to the importance of tailoring messages to meet technological capabilities of media.

Introduction

The Super Bowl is a showcase. Two football teams field highly paid players in an attempt to win the most important game of the season. Multiple advertisers broadcast expensive commercials in an attempt to win in the game of business. Consumers tune in to see both games. A poll conducted by Eisner Communications prior to the 2003 Super Bowl found that 14% of those viewing the Super Bowl tune in primarily to see the advertisements (Horovitz, 2003).

With the price of commercial space during the 2003 Super Bowl at \$2.2 million per 30-second spot, advertising is a high-stakes game. As one observer wrote: “It’s all about eyeballs. The Super Bowl advertiser who attracts, keeps, and delights the most viewers stands to win a lot more than a football game. It can be worth tens of millions of dollars in free publicity, bring in potentially millions of new customers and leave a fat chunk of the 88 million, or so, Super Bowl viewers feeling very good about the brand” (Horovitz, 2003: B2).

With so much riding on their advertisements, advertisers agonize over the best way to communicate. Development of an underlying message strategy is central to advertising. Message strategy goes deeper than deciding what pet tricks to incorporate into the advertisement. Taylor (1999: 7) defined message strategy as “a guiding approach to a company’s or institution’s promotional communication efforts.” Advertisers use the message strategy to define “what to say” and then develop a creative strategy that focuses on “how to say it” (Taylor, 1999).

In recent years, both message and creative strategies of Super Bowl advertising are often extended beyond game day through the World Wide Web. For example, in 2003 Levi Strauss ran a month-long Web campaign that culminated with a Super Bowl spot. The Reebok Super Bowl spot featuring “Terry Tate the Office Linebacker” reportedly drove more than 140,000 people to the company’s Web site within 24 hours after the advertisement ran (Forster, 2003).

Earlier studies found that Internet-based companies often lacked strategic thinking in advertisements they placed on the Super Bowl (Morrison and White, 2000). But there is also evidence that companies spending big money for advertising and Web site development have begun to think strategically about how to integrate online and offline strategies (Forster, 2003).

Super Bowl advertising is more than just a game. It's an investment. As the Web becomes central to integrated marketing communications, advertisers must think strategically not only about the Super Bowl message but also about how that message translates into the online environment. This study profiles both message strategy (what to say) and creative strategy (how to say it) of national advertisements in the 2003 Super Bowl and Web sites for those brands. Understanding strategic directions taken in the Super Bowl of advertising may provide insight into appropriate ways to address large and relatively diverse audiences. The study also offers the opportunity for testing a relatively new message strategy typology in a cross-media environment.

Literature

Super Bowl Advertising: Overview and Application

The Super Bowl is one of the most-watched television programs with ratings typically at or above 40%. In the past 10 years, more than 80 million people have watched the game each year (AdAge 2003). According to the *Wall Street Journal*, Super Bowl audiences tune in to the television commercials. Of those respondents who recalled seeing a Super Bowl advertisement, 61% said they pay more attention to advertisements that run during the annual game than to other television advertisements (Quick 2001). Overall, Super Bowl advertising seems to be valuable to study because many people see, and pay attention to, the advertisements.

Some researchers have found that the programming context for advertising influence consumers' response to that advertising. For example, Gardner (1985) found that program-

induced emotional reactions influenced recall for embedded advertisements. Pavelchak, Antil and Munch (1988) examined emotional effects specific to Super Bowl advertising. They studied the effect Super Bowl XX had on the emotions of viewers in three cities and explored how these emotional reactions influenced recall for advertisements broadcast during the game. That study helps to increase our understanding of how the Super Bowl influences viewer emotions and how program-induced emotions influence advertisement recall. It also highlighted the feasibility and value of research regarding influential programs like the Super Bowl.

Morrison and White (2000) studied message strategy used by “dot.com” companies in Super Bowl XXXIV. Their study not only provided a description of how these new businesses rushed to Super Bowl advertising in 2000, but also directly examined the strategies underlying the messages in those advertisements. A key finding of that study was that many dot.com companies seemed to be advertising during the Super Bowl as a way to lend an air of credibility to their companies. Consumers might have more faith in the long-term viability of a dot.com company, if that company can afford to advertise on the Super Bowl (Morrison and White 2000).

Overview of Message and Creative Strategy

Many studies use the terms message strategy and creative strategy interchangeably. However, some researchers (Frazer 1983; Lasky et al. 1989; Taylor 1999) have distinguished the two terms suggesting that the concept of “what to say” refers to message strategy while creative strategy is about the method of presentation or “how to say it.” Several scholars have suggested that both message strategy and creative strategy can be dichotomized into two basic approaches depending on whether the appeal focuses on product attributes and benefits or on the creation of a brand image.

Aaker and Norris (1982) labeled the two basic advertisement types as “informational/rational/cognitive” and “image/emotional/feeling.” Puto and Wells (1984) dichotomized advertising as “informational” and “transformational.” Puto and Wells (1984, p. 638) suggested that informational advertising: “. . . provides consumers with factual (i.e., presumably verifiable), relevant brand data in a clear and logical manner such that they have greater confidence in their ability to assess the merits of buying the brand after having seen the advertisement.” Transformational advertising: “. . . associates the experience of using (consuming) the advertised brand with a unique set of psychological characteristics which would not typically be associated with the brand experience to the same degree without exposure to the [advertising].” They suggested that informational and transformational categories are exhaustive, but not mutually exclusive, categories of advertisements.

Vaughn (1980) proposed a two-by-two matrix in which one axis represents thinking versus feeling message types, and the other axis represents high- versus low-involvement products. Vaughn’s matrix became the core of the well-known FCB grid that has been presented in textbooks for decades as a tool for developing message and/or creative strategies (see for example Batra, Myers, and Aaker 1995).

Recent studies that applied this dichotomy to both television (Lee, Nam, and Hwang 2001; Morrison and White 2000) and the Web (Hwang, McMillan, and Lee 2002) found that informational strategies were generally used more often than transformational ones in American advertising and corporate Web sites. However, the Web sites for high-revenue companies (such as those that can afford to advertise on the Super Bowl) were more likely to use transformational strategies than were those of low-revenue companies (Hwang, McMillan, and Lee 2002). The literature and philosophy of integrated marketing communication (see for example Duncan 2001) suggests that companies

should use a similar underlying strategy for all of their marketing communication materials – including both television advertising and the Web.

H1: Overall strategies (informational and transformational) will be similar for commercials aired during the Super Bowl and Web sites for the advertised brands.

In addition to the simple informational/transformational dichotomy, several researchers have suggested that multi-category message typologies can be employed. In general, these multi-category typologies attempt to provide more specificity within each of the two general message strategies. For example, Simon (1971) proposed ten categories of messages: Information, Argument, Motivation with Psychological Appeals, Repeated Assertion, Command, Brand Familiarization, Symbolic Association, Imitation, Obligation, and Habit Starting. In the next two sections, two kinds of multi-category typologies are explored. First is Taylor's (1999) typology that focuses primarily on message strategy (what to say). Second is a summary of key research on multi-category typologies that focus more on creative strategy (how to say it).

A Framework of Advertising Message Strategy: What to Say

Taylor's (1999) Six-Segment Message Strategy Wheel was developed by carefully reviewing communication theories of James Carey and John Dewey. Social science literature was also reviewed with an emphasis on economic models of buying behavior. Additionally, Taylor reviewed significant literature on creative strategies such as Vaughn's FCB Grid. Taylor's model begins by dividing message strategies into the dichotomy suggested by Carey (1975): transmission and ritual views of communication. This dichotomy is similar to those reviewed in the previous section. But the literature reviewed by Taylor as well as his qualitative research suggested that each of those primary views could be sub-divided into three sub-segments for a total of six strategic approaches.

Taylor's model is valuable for two reasons. First, the model considers message strategy from the perspective of how people make buying decisions and how advertising works. Because this model is based on consumers' motivational behaviors, its application is not limited to message strategies in traditional media such as television and newspapers and has been successfully applied to the Web (Hwang, McMillan and Lee 2002). Second, the model offers sophisticated reasoning for identification of sub-segments and Taylor's model gives the same attention to transformational advertisements as to informational advertisements.

Within the transmission view Taylor identified three segments: Ration, Acute Need, and Routine. In the Ration segment, the role of advertising is to inform and persuade. When consumers make purchase decisions, it is important to seek as much information as they can get. In the Acute Need segment, the role of advertising is to build brand familiarity and recognition. Consumers need information to make purchase decisions but time limits the amount of information they can process. In the Routine segment, the role of advertising is serving as a cue or a reminder. In this segment, advertising appeals to convenience and trivial interests, ease of use, and product efficacy. Consumers make purchase decisions on the basis of rational buying motives, but consumers buy according to habit without large amounts of deliberation time.

Within the ritual view Taylor also identified three segments: Ego, Social, and Sensory. In the Ego segment, purchase decisions are emotionally and personally important to consumers and "allow the consumer to make a statement to him/herself about who he/she is" (Taylor 1999, p.13). In the Social segment, products are "used to make a statement to others"(p.13). The advertising appeals are related to gaining social approval and to recalling and reliving social experiences through product consumption. In the Sensory segment, products provide consumers with "a moment of pleasure" based on any of the five senses.

The second hypothesis builds upon the first by exploring similarities in television and Web-based message strategies. If companies are integrating their communication, not only should the informational/transformational strategy be similar in both media, but similarities should also be found in terms of use of the six message strategy segments identified by Taylor.

H2: Message strategies (as defined by Taylor's six segments) will be similar for commercials aired during the Super Bowl and Web sites for the advertised brands.

A Framework of Advertising Creative Strategy: How to Say It

One of the frequently cited multi-category typologies of creative strategy is Frazer's (1983) study that identified the following seven strategies: Generic, Preemptive, Unique Selling Proposition, Brand Image, Positioning, Resonance, and Affective. Frazer's typology appears to be exhaustive and to provide a reasonable number of categories. Frazer's typology is also appealing because of the familiarity of the terminology. However, Laskey et al. (1989) found low agreement among coders when using the typology – especially when coding television commercials. The greatest confusion occurred in attempts to distinguish between the Unique Selling Proposition and Preemptive categories, and between Brand Image and Resonance categories, resulting in low agreement among coders. Laskey et al. (1989) developed a revised multi-category typology designed for television commercials. The typology begins by dividing creative strategies into informational and transformational approaches.

Within the informational strategies, Laskey and his colleagues identified five segments: Comparative, Unique Selling Proposition, Preemptive, Hyperbole, and Generic Information. In the Comparative strategy, advertised brands are compared to others by showing or explicitly mentioning competing brands. In the USP strategy, uniqueness involving a product attribute or benefit-in-use is presented. In the Preemptive strategy, the objectively demonstrable attribute or benefit-in-use is presented. In the Hyperbole strategy, exaggerated claims and assertions are

presented. Generic Information provides information about the product class in general without focusing on a particular brand.

Within the transformational strategies, Laskey and his colleagues identified four segments: User Image, Brand Image, Use Occasion, and Generic Transformation. User Image focuses primarily on the users of a brand and their lifestyles, not the brand itself. Brand Image focuses primarily on the brand (image) itself, not the users. Usually, Brand Image conveys a brand personality. Use Occasion focuses primarily on the experience of using the brands or on the situations for which use of the brand is appropriate. Use Occasion usually creates an association between experiences of use and the brand as well as an association between situations of use and the brand. Generic Transformation appeals to emotions related to the product class in general without focusing on a particular brand.

The third hypothesis builds upon the first two by exploring similarities and differences in television and Web-based creative strategies. The first two hypotheses predicted that both the overall strategy (transformational/informational) and message strategy (as defined by Taylor's Six Segment Strategy Wheel) should be similar for television commercials and Web sites for those advertised brands. If the creative strategies flow out of message strategies, then logically they should also be consistent across media.

H3: Creative strategies (as defined by the Laskey et al. typology) will be similar for commercials aired during the Super Bowl and Web sites for the advertised brands.

Bringing Together Message and Creative Strategies

As noted earlier, research (Frazer 1983; Lasky et al. 1989; Taylor 1999) suggests that there should be a relationship between message strategy and creative strategy. While the message strategy provides a broad umbrella under which many creative strategies can be

executed, it would seem reasonable that informational message strategies should lead to informational-oriented creative strategies and vice versa for transformational strategies.

H4a: The three informational message strategies identified by Taylor will be associated with the five informational creative strategies identified by Laskey et al.

H4b: The three transformational message strategies identified by Taylor will be associated with the four transformational creative strategies identified by Laskey et al.

The hypotheses outlined above address the data in aggregate to identify ways that message strategy and creative strategy are implemented in Super Bowl commercials and Web sites for those advertised brands. The literature also suggests a key question that is not addressed by these hypotheses but that is very worthy of exploration:

RQ1: Are message strategies (as defined by Taylor's six segments) more consistent than creative strategies (as defined by the Laskey et al. typology) in the commercials aired during the Super Bowl and Web sites for the advertised brands?

Method

To test the hypotheses and explore the research question detailed in the previous section, television commercials aired during the Super Bowl and Web sites for the advertised brands were collected. Super Bowl XXXVII was videotaped in its entirety in January of 2003. All national commercials, a total of 55 from 40 advertisers, that appeared during this time period were analyzed. Regional or local advertisements, promotions for upcoming ABC shows, or spots promoting the commercially sponsored half-time and post-game shows were not analyzed. A few advertisers (e.g., Budweiser) aired two or more different commercials and each of those advertisements was individually analyzed.

Two researchers conducted a thematic analysis to identify the creative and message strategy for each commercial and Web site (see Appendix I copy of coding form). Specific descriptions of the message strategy model (Taylor, 1999) and the creative strategy typology (Laskey et al., 1989) were used for coding guides (see Appendix II). Coders used the same

coding sheet to record the company/brand name, overall strategy (Transformational/ Informational), message strategy, and creative strategy for each commercial and each Web site. Because commercials and Web sites often use multiple strategies, the coding sheet allowed the researchers to record all creative/message strategies that applied.

Each television commercial was reviewed several times. Because there are several categories in both creative and message strategy, the strategy was not always clear during the initial viewing. The opening pages of Web sites were also analyzed and they were relatively less demanding to code, because Web sites' main visual and text components usually looked like magazine advertisements, which are one-shot executions. However, application of content analysis to the Web is challenging and somewhat different from analysis of content in traditional media. As McMillan noted (2002), there are some potential problems in conducting content analysis on Web sites including problems of sampling (e.g., frequently changing content), unit of analysis (e.g., the number of pages is limitless and varies by domains), and so forth. The current study addressed these problems as described below.

All Web sites were visited shortly after the Super Bowl and their front pages (opening screens) were captured with screen-capture software (*camtasia*). Where possible, sites specific to the advertised brand (rather than an overall company site) were examined. These "captured" pages showed the appearance of those Web sites at about the same time as the Super Bowl commercials aired and were used for analysis. Only message strategies found on these front pages were analyzed. This helped to reduce bias based on the overall size of the Web site and also focused on the core message consumers would see when they first go to the site. Major visual and textual components were examined in evaluation of creative/message strategy. After

initial training, researchers were able to easily reach agreements on these units of analysis. Intercoder reliability was 91.8% overall.

Disagreements were resolved in a two-step procedure. First, the two researchers who were primary coders discussed specific items about which they disagreed. Some disagreements were easily resolved in this stage because they involved simple misunderstandings. Second, the third researcher who is also familiar with both the message strategy model and the typology of creative strategy used in the study, reviewed items that remained unresolved and helped the primary coders come to agreement. Familiarity with the coding scheme was essential for all three researchers. In particular, coding for message strategy required not only a knowledge of the Six Segment Strategy Wheel, but also an understanding of its theoretical underpinnings that require consideration of the consumer's motivation when considering the advertising message.

Findings

The current study aimed to examine the message and creative strategies in both television commercials and Web sites. This section presents the findings related to each hypothesis as well as the research question. Care must be taken in interpreting statistics reported in this section for two reasons. First, the commercials and Web sites examined in this study represent a census of all Super Bowl advertisers in one year. These commercials and Web sites may not be generalizable to other advertisers. Second, because of the relatively small number of commercials and Web sites examined, a small N is reported in some of the data tables. In some cases, this small N may have resulted in reporting of no statistical significance even when real differences were found. In other cases (e.g. when using chi square) the small N may not be sufficient for valid statistical analysis. In general, the results reported here provide a descriptive analysis of how advertising "big spenders" utilize message and creative strategies in both

television and Web-based messages. The statistical data is presented as a way of helping to summarize that description.

Informational – Transformational Strategies across the Media

Hypothesis 1 predicted overall strategy (informational and transformational) should be similar across television and the Web because these advertising “big spenders” should be concerned about integrating their marketing communication messages. The informational/transformational strategies of both commercials and Web sites were coded on a scale from one to five using the following sequential categories: entirely transformational, relatively transformational, both transformational and informational, relatively informational, and entirely informational. A higher score on this scale indicates a more informational strategy.

As illustrated in Table 1 significant differences were found in overall strategy across media. Television commercials scored lower on this scale than did Web sites, indicating that television commercials are more transformational. Hypothesis 1 was not supported.

Table 1. Differences between Media of Transformational-Informational Strategy

	Mean	S.D	Df	t	Sig.
Television (n=55)	2.709	1.286	93	-3.882	.000
Web (n=40)	3.750	1.296			

Given inherent characteristics of each medium, this finding should not be surprising. Television is generally seen as an entertainment medium while the Web is used more for information-search behaviors. Thus, it would seem that advertisers are more concerned with tailoring messages to inherent characteristics of the medium than with integrating the transformational/informational strategy across their marketing communication messages.

Message and Creative Strategies in Each Medium

Hypotheses 2 and 3 were developed to further examine the extent of message and creative strategy integration across media. Hypothesis 2 predicted that message strategies would be similar across media while hypothesis 3 predicted that creative strategies would be similar across media. As illustrated in Table 2, partial support was found for each of these hypotheses.

Table 2. Creative/Message Strategies across Media Types

		Media		Chi-Square
		Television	Web	
Message Strategy	Ration	21 38.2%	20 50%	1.318
	Acute Need	7 12.7%	10 25.0%	2.374
	Routine	37 67.3%	27 67.5%	0.001
	Ego	31 56.4%	18 45.0%	1.197
	Social	7 12.7%	2 5.0%	1.612
	Sensory	11 20.0%	2 5.0%	4.411*
	Creative Strategy	Comparative	0 0%	0 0%
USP		1 1.8%	0 0.0%	.735
Preemptive		12 21.8%	33 82.5%	34.204***
Hyperbole		24 43.6%	0 0%	23.355***
Generic Informational		8 14.5%	2 5.0%	2.240
User Image		29 52.7%	13 32.5%	3.841
Brand Image		22 40.0%	20 50.0%	0.939
Use Occasion		8 14.5%	1 2.5%	3.918*
Generic Transformational		0 0%	0 0%	

Note) Percentages reflect the column (within each media type)

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

Most message strategies were consistent across media, but the Sensory strategy was used more often in television than on the Web. Television apparently has more capacity to appeal to the senses than does the Web at this stage of development of the two media.

In analysis of creative strategies, it is interesting to note that three of the nine strategies were virtually unused: Comparative, USP, and Generic Transformational. Of the remaining six strategies, three were consistent across media (Generic Informational, User Image, and Brand Image) and three were not consistent (Preemptive, Hyperbole, and Use Occasion).

The Preemptive strategy was used more frequently on the Web while Hyperbole and Use Occasion were used more frequently on television. The heavier use of the Preemptive strategy on the Web is reasonable because by definition the Preemptive strategy should objectively demonstrate product attributes. The virtually limitless time and space benefits of the Web enable companies to provide enough information to support Preemptive claims.

The popularity of Hyperbole in television commercials may also be explained by comparative media characteristics. Current television commercials are characterized by limited time and high executional capability. Specifically, television commercials must attract consumers' attentions in a short period of time; therefore, they are more likely to exaggerate how their products are beneficial. The well-developed techniques for creating television commercials help make this possible. In the future, as bandwidth increases and technology improves, the Web might also be able to present messages with high production values that use the Hyperbole strategy. Although it is used less often than Hyperbole, the popularity of Use Occasion in television commercials may also be related to capabilities of the medium.

Relationships between Message Strategies and Creative Strategies

Hypotheses 4a and 4b predicted that informational message strategies would be associated with informational creative strategies while transformational message strategies would be associated with transformational creative strategies. Thus, when the three non-used creative strategies identified in Table 2 are removed one would expect Preemptive, Hyperbole, and Generic Information creative strategies to be used with Ration, Acute Need, and Routine message strategies. Similarly, one would expect User Image, Brand Image, and Use Occasion creative strategies to be used with Ego, Social, and Sensory creative strategies.

Table 3. Relationships between Message and Creative Strategies

Informational Creative Strategies

	Informational Message Strategies			Transformational Message Strategies		
	Ration	Acute Need	Routine	Ego	Social	Sensory
Preemptive	28*** 62.2%	10 22.2%	26 57.8%	16** 35.6%	2 4.4%	4 8.9%
Hyperbole	8 33.3%	1* 4.2%	20 83.3%	13 54.2%	3 12.5%	10*** 41.7%
Generic Informational	9** 90%	0 0%	6 60.0%	1** 10.0%	3* 30.0%	0 0%

Transformational Creative Strategies

	Informational Message Strategies			Transformational Message Strategies		
	Ration	Acute Need	Routine	Ego	Social	Sensory
User Image	15 35.7%	2** 4.8%	30 71.4%	25 59.5%	6 14.3%	8 19.0%
Brand Image	10** 23.8%	10 23.8%	33* 78.6%	32*** 76.2%	3 7.1%	2* 4.8%
Use Occasion	5 55.6%	0 0%	5 55.6%	3 33.3%	1 11.1%	1 11.1%

Note) Percentages reflect the row (within each Creative Strategy)

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

As illustrated in Table 3, hypotheses 4a and 4b were partially supported. In support of hypothesis 4a, both the Preemptive and Generic Information creative strategies were associated with the Ration message strategy. In support of hypothesis 4b, the Brand Image creative strategy was associated with the Ego message strategy. However, as Table 3 also illustrates, unexpected relationships were found between message and creative strategies. Most of the informational creative strategies showed a relationship with at least one of the transformational message strategies (e.g. Preemptive and Ego). Relationships were also found between transformational creative strategies and informational message strategies (e.g. Brand Image and Ration).

Consistency of Message and Creative Strategies across the Media

Research question 1 asked whether message strategies are more consistent than creative strategies in television commercials and Web sites. As illustrated in Table 2, message strategy does seem to be generally more consistent than creative strategy. In both media, Ego, Routine, and Ration were the most popular message strategies. Table 2 also shows less overall consistency in creative strategy. For example, while Preemptive was the most popular Web creative strategy (used by 82.5% of Web sites) less than 22% of television commercials used a Preemptive creative strategy.

However, statistics in Table 2 report data in the aggregate. To get an in-depth understanding of strategies used by specific companies, it is more useful to examine message and creative strategies used in both commercials and Web sites for each brand. Table 4 provides a detailed picture of relationships between message and creative strategies. If a single brand aired more than one advertisement on the Super Bowl but had a single Web site, the Web site is coded only once.

Table 4. Message Strategy and Creative Strategy by Advertiser across Media

Advertiser	Television			Web		
	Overall	Message Strategy	Creative Strategy	Overall	Message Strategy	Creative Strategy
AOL	Entirely Informational	Routine Acute Need Ration	Preemptive Hyperbole	Entirely Informational	Social Acute Need Ration	Preemptive
AT&T Wireless	Relatively Informational	Routine Ration	Generic Informational Hyperbole Use Occasion	Entirely Informational	Routine Ration	Preemptive
	Relatively Informational	Routine	Generic Informational Hyperbole			
Bud Light	Relatively Transformational	Ego Sensory Routine	Hyperbole User Image	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine	User Image
Budweiser	Entirely Transformational	Ego Social Routine	User Image Brand Image	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine	User Image
Cadillac	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine	User Image Brand Image	Relatively Informational	Ego Routine	Preemptive Brand Image
Chrysler	Relatively Transformational	Ego	User image Brand image	Relatively Informational	Ration Ego	Preemptive User Image Brand Image
Columbia Pictures - Anger Management	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine Acute Need	Brand Image	Relatively Transformational	Ego Acute Need	Preemptive Brand Image
Dodge	Relatively Informational	Ego Routine Ration	Preemptive Hyperbole User Image Brand Image	Entirely Informational	Ration	Preemptive Brand Image
	Entirely Informational	Ration	Preemptive			
Drug control	Relatively Transformational	Social Ration	Generic Informational Hyperbole	Entirely Informational	Ration	Generic Informational
	Relatively Transformational	Social Ration	Generic Informational User Image			
FedEx	Relatively Informational	Ration	Hyperbole Brand Image	Entirely Informational	Ration	Preemptive
Fox-Dare Devil	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine	Brand Image	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine	Preemptive Brand Image
Gatorade	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine	User Image Brand Image Use Occasion	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine	Preemptive
George Foreman Grill	Relatively Transformational	Social Routine	Hyperbole User Image	Entirely Informational	Routine Ration	Preemptive Brand Image
Hanes	Entirely Informational	Routine Ration	Preemptive Hyperbole User Image	Entirely Informational	Ration	Preemptive User Image Brand Image
H&R Block	Relatively Informational	Ration	Preemptive Use Occasion	Entirely Informational	Ration Acute Need	Preemptive
Lamisil	Entirely Informational	Ration	USP	Entirely Informational	Ration	Preemptive User Image Use Occasion
Levi Strauss	Entirely Transformational	Ego Routine	User Image Brand Image	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine	Preemptive User Image Brand Image
Master Card	Entirely Informational	Ration	Generic Informational Use Occasion	Entirely Informational	Routine Acute Need Ration	Preemptive User Image
Michelob	Relatively Informational	Ration	Preemptive User Image	Relatively Transformational	Ego Social Routine	Preemptive User Image Brand Image

Table 4. Continued

Advertiser	Television			Web		
	Overall	Message Strategy	Creative Strategy	Overall	Message Strategy	Creative Strategy
Monster.com	Relatively Informational	Routine	Preemptive Hyperbole User Image	Relatively Informational	Ego Routine Ration	Preemptive User Image
Myfisco.com	Entirely Informational	Ration	Preemptive User Image	Entirely Informational	Ration Acute Need	Preemptive User Image
Nissan Frontier	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine	Hyperbole Brand Image	Relatively Informational	Ego Routine Ration	Preemptive Brand Image
Pepsi twist	Relatively Informational	Routine	Hyperbole User Image Brand Image	Relatively Informational	Routine	Preemptive User Image
Pepsi diet	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine	User Image Brand Image	Entirely Informational	Routine Acute Need	Preemptive
Philip Morris	Relatively Transformational	Social Routine Ration	Generic Informational User Image	Relatively Informational	Ego Routine Ration	Generic Informational
Quiznos' sub	Relatively Informational	Sensory Ration	Preemptive Hyperbole	Relatively Informational	Sensory Routine Acute Need	Preemptive Brand Image
Reebok	Relatively Transformational	Ego Social Ration	Hyperbole Brand Image	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine	Brand Image
Sierra Mist	Relatively Transformational	Sensory Routine	Hyperbole Brand Image	Relatively Informational	Routine	Preemptive
Sony Pictures Bad Boys II	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine Acute Need	Brand Image	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine	Preemptive Brand Image
Sony Pictures Charlie's Angel	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine Acute Need	Brand Image	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine	Preemptive Brand Image
Sony Electronics	Entirely Transformational	Ego Social	User Image Use Occasion	Entirely Informational	Ration	Preemptive User Image Brand Image
Subway	Relatively Informational	Sensory Ration	Preemptive	Relatively Informational	Sensory Ration	Preemptive
Touchstone	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine Acute Need	Brand Image	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine Acute Need	Preemptive Brand Image
Trident	Entirely Informational	Ration	Preemptive	Entirely Informational	Ration	Preemptive
Universal Pictures Hulk	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine Acute Need	Brand Image	Relatively Informational	Routine	Brand Image
Universal Pictures Bruce Almighty	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine	Brand Image	Relatively Informational	Routine Acute Need	Brand Image
Visa	Relatively Informational	Routine Ration	Generic Informational User Image Use Occasion	Entirely Informational	Routine Ration	Preemptive
WB Matrix	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine Acute Need	Brand Image	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine	Preemptive Brand Image
WB Terminator 3	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine	Brand Image	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine	Preemptive Brand Image
Yahoo Hot jobs	Relatively Transformational	Ego Routine	Preemptive Hyperbole User Image	Entirely Informational	Routine Ration Acute Need	Preemptive

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A detailed review of Table 4 shows that for most brands message strategies are more consistent across media than are creative strategies. There were many cases in which the message strategy was identical for both media while different creative strategies were used for the television commercials and Web sites. However, the opposite never occurred; there were no instances of a unified creative strategy with different message strategies.

For example, in the case of *Cadillac*, television and the Web site both used Ego and Routine message strategies. For television, User Image and Brand Image strategies were used. The Brand Image creative strategy was also used on the Web, but the User Image creative strategy used in television was replaced by a Preemptive creative strategy on the Web. In the case of *FedEx*, both television and the Web site used a Ration message strategy but the television commercial used Hyperbole and Brand Image creative strategies while the Web had a Preemptive creative strategy.

Three additional cases illustrate the fact that message strategy tended to be more enduring than creative strategy. *Gatorade* used Ego and Routine message strategies for both the television commercial and Web site. The creative strategy for the commercial was User Image, Brand Image, and Use Occasion, but the Web site used a Preemptive creative strategy. In the case of *Lamisil*, both the television commercial and Web site used a Ration message strategy. The television commercial used a USP creative strategy, but the Web site used Preemptive, User Image, and Use Occasion creative strategies. Finally, in the case of *Visa*, both the television commercial and the Web site used Routine and Ration message strategies. But the creative strategies were quite different using Generic Informational, User Image, and Use Occasion for television and Preemptive for the Web.

In addition, in most cases of movie advertisements (e.g. *Anger Management*, *Daredevil*, *Matrix* and *Bruce Almighty*), television commercials and Web sites showed consistent uses of message strategies while employing somewhat different creative strategies. In most cases, these

advertisements promoting future movies used Ego and Routine message strategies. Many used Brand Image creative strategies in both their television commercials and Web sites; many also added a Preemptive creative strategy to their Web sites.

Discussion

Companies that advertise on the Super Bowl are powerhouses. They spend big money on television commercials and, as of 2003, they also all have Web sites. Yet despite their willingness to spend big money, they are not consistently integrating their creative strategies across media. Instead, they seem to be recognizing the differential capabilities of television and the Web and attempting to strategically maximize their messages for the medium.

In general, television commercials are more likely to take transformational approaches while Web sites are more informational. Advertisers seem to be viewing television as a way to appeal to the emotions and the Web as a way to address consumers' intellectual curiosity. For now, television seems to provide better production values that lead to stronger emotional appeals – particularly when the message strategy is based in the senses. The Internet is a stronger tool for information-oriented creative strategies – particularly those that use the depth and breadth of the Web to help build Preemptive arguments. But there is evidence that the fundamental message strategy (what to say) is more likely to remain stable across media than is the creative strategy (how to say it). The Web site may be designed to endure with a relatively stable message strategy while multiple television advertising campaigns may be executed that embrace differing creative strategies.

One of the more perplexing findings of the study is the relatively high number of unexpected relationships between message strategy and creative strategy. Some of the strongest correlations were for expected relationships (e.g. Ration and Preemptive; Ration and Generic

Informational; Ego and Brand Image) and these relationships are fairly easy to understand. But relatively strong correlations were also found for unexpected relationships. For example, Preemptive (an informational creative strategy) correlated fairly strongly with Ego (a transformational message strategy). This may be because Preemptive was so dominant in Web site creative strategies (used in 82.5% of all Web sites). Some companies might be adding a Preemptive creative strategy to their Web sites to supplement a message strategy that is primarily transformational. They may be doing this to take better advantages of the relatively unlimited time and space available on the Web (see for example *Gatorade*, *Levi Strauss*, and *Michelob* as well as many of the advertisements for upcoming movies).

Other examples of relatively strong unexpected relationships between message and creative strategies include the use of Hyperbole (an informational creative strategy) with Sensory (a transformational message strategy) and the use of Brand Image (a transformational creative strategy) with Ration (an informational message strategy). The first of these examples might also be explained by advertisers' apparent focus on maximizing media characteristics. As shown in Table 2, both the Sensory message strategy and the Hyperbole creative strategy are strongly associated with television. Advertisers seem to believe that television offers a better environment both for Sensory appeals and for generating the kind of humor-based argument often associated with Hyperbole.

The correlation between Ration and Brand Image may be best explained by one product category in which it frequently occurs – automobiles (e.g. *Chrysler*, *Dodge*, and *Nissan*). These high-involvement products assume customer will seek information before purchasing a car. But, despite these high information needs, brand image may also weigh heavily in consumers' purchase decisions. Actual features of automobiles might vary only slightly between brands (e.g.

the Chrysler Sebring and the Dodge Intrepid) but strongly different images may be created for each brand.

Some other unexpected relationships between message and creative strategy must be viewed with care because of the relatively small number of instances of advertisements and/or Web sites in a category (e.g. Ego and Generic Information). This relatively small sample is one of the most important limitations of the study. Future studies should compare message and creative strategies across media using a larger number of advertisers drawn at random from a specified universe. Such a future study could make broader generalizations for the sample to advertising as a whole. But for the current study, which focuses more on describing similarities and differences, the small sample of high-profile advertisers was appropriate.

Future studies might also expand to other media (e.g. magazines, radio). For example, it would be interesting to know whether creative strategies are more consistent across traditional media with the Web being an outlier because of its virtually unlimited time and space. Another alternative for future studies is to review strategies of fewer advertisers but examine them in more depth. For example, is there consistency in executional elements (e.g. color, graphics, etc.) across media that help to provide a kind of thematic unity even when underlying strategies vary?

This study has clear potential applications to advertisers. Most importantly it illustrates the reality the big spenders in the advertising game are putting their money into matching the message with the medium rather than on trying to achieve slavish consistency of creative strategy. Nevertheless, they are, for the most part remaining true to a fundamental message strategy across television and Web messages. Other advertisers who want to compete in the “big game” might do well to follow their lead.

The study has implications for researchers as well. It illustrates the strength of Taylor's (1999) Six Segment Strategy Wheel as a tool for identifying message strategies. Not only can this tool be applied across media, this study also shows that message strategy is a potentially enduring construct across media types and can be flexible enough to encompass multiple creative strategies. Message strategy seems to be a better measure than creative strategy for understanding how advertisers might integrate their marketing communication.

Advertising educators often use Super Bowl advertising in the class room to illustrate the kinds of messages that are broadcast to large diverse audiences as well as to illustrate key media principles such as cost per thousand. This study provides educators with an additional opportunity for the ritual showing of the Super Bowl advertisements – a discussion of how both message strategy and creative strategy are implemented in these high-profile commercials.

The Super Bowl is a showcase for advertising. Campaigns launched via Super Bowl commercials often run long after the game is over and are expanded into other media. Understanding how message and creative strategies play out in this game is an important step in understanding both the media and the messages.

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Appendix I – Coding Form

ID Number _____
 Product Category _____
 Company Name _____
 URL http:// _____
 Date _____
 Media TV _____ Web _____

1. Creative Strategy

Specific Creative Strategy (Check All That Apply – At Least One)

Comparative _____	User Image _____
USP _____	Brand Image _____
Preemptive _____	Use Occasion _____
Generic-Informational _____	Generic-Transformational _____
Hyperbole _____	_____

2. Message Strategy

Specific Message Strategy (Check All That Apply – At Least One)

Ration _____	Ego _____
Acute Needs _____	Social _____
Routine _____	Sensory _____

3. Overall Creative and Message Strategy (Check One)

Entirely Transformational	_____
Relatively Transformational	_____
Both Transformational and Informational	_____
Relatively Informational	_____
Entirely Informational	_____

4. Web Features

5. Notes

Appendix II – Coder Guide

1. *Informational/ Transformational Strategy*

General direction: This five-point scale needs to get somewhat qualitative sense. The decision needs to be made strongly based on the result of specific message strategy (1-a). For example, if no transformational strategy (e.g., Ego, Social, sensory) is found in the precedent step of 1-a, the decision on this item should be either “Relatively informational” or “Entirely informational.” If the coder evaluate that both transformational-side strategy and informational-side strategy are almost equally employed, “Both transformational and informational” should be coded. Both “entirely informational” and “entirely transformational” can be coded when all specific strategies coded in 1-(a) are one-side (either transformational or informational) strategies. (Basic assumption: Six message strategies can cover all message strategies.)

Transformational

- Associates the experience of using a brand with a set of psychological characteristic.
- Focuses on the users of a brand and their life style, focuses on developing a brand image

Informational

- Provides with factual product information about a brand or a company
 - Provides with relevant brand data in a clear and logical manner.
 - Show competing brands, focuses on claims of uniqueness, and provides nature of brands.
-

2. *Creative Strategy*

General direction: To get consistence, code the specific strategy (a) first followed by overall strategy (b). For the websites, mainly examine the main visual and texts but links including buttons.

Specific Creative Strategy

Comparative

- Showing or explicitly mentioning competing brands
- Comparing with other brand name clearly
- Not implicitly referring to competing brands
- Example: “None of these cereals gives you more fiber than (Brand Name)”

Unique Selling Proposition

- Claims or assertions of uniqueness
 - Uniqueness involving a product attribute or benefit-in-use
 - Objectively verifiable
 - No comparison to other brand
 - Example: "Introducing the only compact disc player that can play six discs at one time"
-

Preemptive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contain the objectively demonstrable attribute or benefit-in-use - No claim of uniqueness - No mention of competing brands - Example: "(Brand Name) contains pure vitamin E and aloe to keep your skin looking good"
Generic-Informational
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on the product class in general - Not focus on a particular brand - Informational - Example: "It does the body good" ad for milk.
Hyperbole
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exaggerated claims and assertions - Not objectively verifiable. - Not refer to a measurable attribute - Example: "Best darn hamburger in the whole wide world"
User Image
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus primarily on the users of a brand and lifestyles (i.e. User's activities, interests, jobs, or lifestyles) - Focus on persons who use the brand, not the brand itself - Convey the notion that a certain type of person always chooses a particular brand - Example: Beer and wine company ads which define people types (party animals, warm romantic males, sporting females)
Brand Image
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus primarily on the brand (image) itself, not user - Convey a brand "personality." (i.e. quality, status, prestige) - Example: luxury personalities of automobiles
Use Occasion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus primarily on the experience of using the brands - Focus primarily on the situations where use of the brand is appropriate - Create an association between experiences of use and the brand - Create an association between situations of use and the brand - Example: an association of the brand of beer and the night
Generic-Transformational
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on the product class in general - Not focus on a particular brand - Transformational - Example: The "Don't forget the cheese", "reach out and touch someone"

3. *Message Strategy*

General direction: Mainly examine the main visual and texts but links including buttons. To get consistence, code the specific strategy (a) first followed by overall strategy (b).

Specific Message Strategy

Ego

- Appeal to vanity, self-actualization (Not corporate image but consumer image)
 - Emotional needs relating to self are fulfilled
 - Image based executions (visual dominance) with little or no factual information
 - Unstructured and ambiguous enough so each person can fit him/herself into the ad
 - Usual Strategy*: User image, brand image
 - Example**: For the computer mania
-

Social

- Valuing on others' (thoughts, opinions, evaluations, etc.)
 - Stating to others, not to self
 - Showing social situation motivating consumers (Group identification)
 - Showing target market member as socially important to others
 - Usual Strategy: User image (in a social situation), Use occasion
 - Example: Share it with a friend / Sept. 11 Tragedy, our hearts and minds are burdened
-

Sensory

- Five senses emphasized
 - Sensory gratification
 - Pleasurable moments
 - Usual Strategy: Moment of pleasure
 - Example: Yum! / Feel the speed
-

Routine

- Habitual purchase / Don't need deliberation
 - Serving a cue or a reminder (brand name and package emphasized)
 - Appeal to convenience and trivial interests
 - Usual Strategy: Hyperbole, Preemptive, Brand Familiarity
 - Example: Future of memory / Welcome to Mesa Electronics
-

Acute need

- Limited time to make decision (timely decision)
 - Serving a cue or a reminder in an urgent situation
 - Requiring immediate action
 - Strategy: Brand familiarity
 - Example: Fall/2001 fashion / Call now to process the claim
-

Ration

- Rational consumers assumed
 - Needs a large amount of deliberation (lots of corporate information)
 - Problem solving offered
 - Emphasizing the differences or competitive advantages
 - Usual Strategy: Comparative, USP, Generic
 - Example: Get the wider picture / Faster Pentium 4 with 256MB memory under \$1,500
-

* Usual strategies in each message strategy are not strictly fixed, since the Taylor's message strategy emphasizes the consumer motivation. These "usual strategies" are traditionally common in each cell.

** Examples here are text-based messages only, but coders should consider the visual as well as texts.

Public Attitudes toward Advertising: Trends and Predictors

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Public Attitudes toward Advertising: Trends and Predictors

Abstract

Using a series of surveys conducted annually between 1975 and 2002, changes of public attitudes toward advertising were analyzed. Contrary to the findings of recent studies, the present research shows that American consumers hold increasingly positive attitudes toward advertising over the past few decades. In addition, predictors of such attitudes were identified using a 2001 survey. Respondents tend to hold a positive view toward advertising if they are younger, enjoy reading fashion magazines and watching TV, like to spend money and try new products, prefer brand names over generic products, are more religious and conservative, and feel a strong need to get the news every day.

Public Attitudes toward Advertising: Trends and Predictors

There is no doubt that advertising plays an essential role in both society and mass media. Consequently, much research exists on this subject, including attitudes toward advertising. There are two major schools in the study of such attitudes. One concerns how consumers' attitudes toward individual ads affect the effectiveness of those advertisements. The other gauges the public's attitudes toward advertising in general. Some scholars call the former *Aad* or *AAd* and the latter *Ag* (Brown and Stayman 1992; Muehling 1987; O'Donohoe 1995, 2001).

The present study belongs to the latter category, but took a different approach. Most research of this nature is a one-time survey of consumers' attitudes toward advertising. Only a few existing studies focus on *Ag* trends, which have thoroughly summarized and analyzed findings from various academic studies or public opinion polls in order to trace changes in consumer attitudes toward advertising. Building upon their helpful approaches and insights, the present research extends existing studies by using a series of annual national surveys between 1975 and 2002.

Survey data in the present study were provided by a leading advertising agency, DDB Worldwide, which for decades has been conducting an annual survey of consumers entitled *Life Style*. Various statistical procedures were employed to identify the trends and determinants of attitudes toward advertising among American consumers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Attitude and Belief

Attitude is defined as a general and enduring feeling about an object (item, person, issue, etc.) (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975). This feeling can be either positive or

negative, or like versus dislike. A belief associates an object with certain attributes, and normally beliefs determine attitudes (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975; Schiffman and Kanuk 2000). An example of belief is “advertising is deceptive,” and such a belief likely leads to a negative attitude. Attitude can be toward a particular advertisement (*Aad*) or toward advertising in general (*Ag*). As for the latter, according to Lutz (1985), attitude toward advertising (*Ag*) is an overall liking or disliking of advertising in general.

There may be some link between these two types of attitudes. For example, Mehta (2000) found that the performance of individual ads (in terms of recall and buying interest) is influenced by consumers’ attitudes toward advertising in general. O’Donohoe (1995), and Shavitt, Lowrey, and Haefner (1998) reported a similar justification in previous studies (e.g., Alwitt and Prabhaker 1992; Bauer and Greyser 1968; Lutz 1985) and argued that this is why *Aad* researchers should be interested in *Ag* as well. Another reason that researchers and practitioners are concerned about *Ag* is that the public’s opinion about advertising may have implications in terms of public policies and regulations (Calfee and Ringold, 1994; Zhou, Zhang, and Vertinsky 2002).

Research in Attitudes toward Advertising

As pointed out by Brown and Stayman (1992), a popular stream in consumer research investigates attitudes toward an ad (*Aad*). They identified a few pioneering studies in the 1970s and 1980s (e.g., Holbrook 1978; Mitchell and Olson 1981; Shimp 1981), although this tradition may be traced back to a study by Wells (1964).

Basically, this school of research measures the relationship between consumers’ feelings towards a specific ad and their feelings toward the advertised brand (e.g., Brown and Stayman 1992; Burke and Edell 1989; Kilbourne 1986; Lutz, MacKenzie, and Belch

1983). Why is it important to study attitudes toward specific ads? Wells (1964) put it in a straightforward way: while ad recognition and recall are important, to predict subsequent sales, “just ask people to rate the ad.” Since Wells’ original discovery, researchers keep confirming the same connection and even have applied it to the effectiveness of websites (Brown and Stayman 1992; Chen and Wells 1999; Haley and Baldinger 1991; MacKenzie, Lutz, and Belch 1986).

Another tradition of ad attitudes research concerns general beliefs about advertising (Ag). The topic of Ag has attracted the attention of a number of academic researchers (e.g., Bauer and Greyser 1968; Larkin 1971; Muehling 1987; O’Donohoe 1995, 2001; Polly and Mittal 1993; Shavitt, Lowrey, and Haefner, 1998; Yap 1996; Yoon 1995a, 1995b). They are interested in consumers’ beliefs about advertising in general, which would determine attitudes (Ag). Some of the charges against advertising as an institution include: advertising misleads and deceives, perpetuates stereotypes, creates needs, promotes materialism, and encourages unnecessary consumption that wastes resources (O’Guinn, Allen, and Semenik 2000; Pollay and Mittal 1993). Conceptually advertising beliefs and attitudes are different, but because of their direct and close connections, practically they have been treated interchangeably in previous research. In other words, attitudes toward advertising are operationalized and measured by positive or negative beliefs about advertising.

Measures of Ag Beliefs

A ground-breaking study by Bauer and Greyser (1968) included seven measures of attitudes toward advertising in general (Ag): 1) “advertising is essential”; 2) “most advertising insults the intelligence of the average consumer”; 3) “in general, advertising

results in lower prices”; 4) “advertising often persuades people to buy things they shouldn’t buy”; 5) “in general, advertising presents a true picture of the product advertised”; 6) “advertising helps raise our standard of living”; and 7) “advertising results in better products for the public.” The above measures of Ag beliefs can be divided into two dimensions: social and economic effects of advertising.

According to Yap (1996), three additional measures were added later to this line of research (Durand and Lambert 1985; Muehling 1987): “a legal limit should be placed on the amount of money a company can spend on advertising”; “advertising leads to a waste of natural resources by creating desires for unnecessary goods”; and “today’s standards of advertising are higher compared with ten years ago.” However, Yap (1996) argued that much Ag research until early 1990 still focused on basically the same two dimensions (economic and social).

Pollay and Mittal (1993) divided Ag into two broad categories (personal uses vs. societal effects) and identified seven dimensions. They developed 28 items to measure consumers’ attitude toward advertising. A study by Shavitt, Lowrey and Haefner (1998) incorporated 17 attitudinal questions covering five dimensions: general attitude, enjoyment and indignity, trustworthiness, effects on product prices/values, and regulation. Following suggestions by Reid and Soley (1982), this group of researchers chose a “personalized” approach, meaning they tailored their questions to “tap attitudes that are based on respondents’ own experiences and personally relevant outcomes” (Shavitt, Lowrey, and Haefner 1998, p. 9).

O’Donohoe (1995) provided an excellent summary of various studies and offered an extensive list of Ag dimensions based on her review, which included institution vs.

instrument, personalized vs. generalized, beliefs vs. functions, practices, industry, users, irritation, manipulation, informational, behavioral, intentional, materialistic, and hedonic.

A more recent study (Mehta, 2000) employed the following six statements as its measures: 1) “advertising helps me keep up-to-date about products and services that I need or would like to have”; 2) “too many products do not perform as well as the ads claim”; 3) “advertising is more manipulative than it is informative”; 4) “much of advertising is way too annoying”; 5) “I like to look at advertising”; and 6) “on average, brands that are advertised are better in quality than brands that are not advertised.”

Determinants or predictors of ad attitudes (Ag) found in previous studies include: age, generation, race, ethnicity, income, nationality, gender, socialization, level of materialism, political views, and media consumption (Andrews 1989; Bush, Smith, and Martin 1999; Durand and Lambert 1985; Mittal 1994; Muehling 1987; Shavitt, Lowrey, and Haefner 1998; Yap 1996; Yoon 1995a, 1995b; Zanot 1984). In general, these studies reported that consumers who are younger (e.g., under 35), non-white, male, less educated, have a lower income, or are more materialistic and hedonic tend to hold a more favorable attitude toward advertising.

The survey data used in the present study contain representative dimensions and important measures of Ag including: 1) whether advertising insults respondents’ intelligence; 2) whether respondents find advertising helpful in making buying decisions; and 3) respondents’ views of moral and ethical issues such as sex in advertising and advertising targeting children. The Life Style data also include a rich list of potential predictors of Ag, which is explained in the method section.

Popular opinion polls and academic surveys on the public's attitudes toward advertising have been conducted every so often for decades (Bauser and Greyser, 1968). Scholars such as O'Donohoe (1995) and Shavitt, Lowrey, and Haefner (1998) have provided excellent reviews of previous research in their own studies. A few others (e.g., Greyser and Bauer 1966; Zanot 1984; Calfee and Ringold 1994), on the other hand, have focused their attention on summarizing existing research in order to report historical trends.

Shavitt, Lowrey, and Haefner (1998) summarized earlier studies and reported that public attitudes toward advertising in the 1960s were generally mixed, and by the 1970s such attitudes had become more negative. The same negativity continued into the 1990s. This view is echoed in O'Donohoe's review of previous research (1995, 2001).

Among the few studies that systematically and directly analyzed survey data over time, Greyser and Bauer (1964) examined various opinion polls on Americans' attitudes toward advertising from 1934 to 1964. They concluded that public attitudes were generally stable and favorable although some people criticized individual aspects of advertising. Zanot (1984) analyzed 38 public opinion surveys from the 1930s to 1970s and concluded that Ag among the U.S. public had become increasingly negative. Calfee and Ringold (1994) used data between 1930s and 1980s and concluded that the majority of consumers (70%) had enduringly negative attitudes toward advertising, especially in the 70s and 80s. Some of the same authors conducted related studies and came to similar conclusions (Bauer and Greyser 1968; Greyser 1972; Calfee and Ford 1988).

Other studies in 1980s also indicated a negative Ag among consumers (Andrews 1989; Muehling 1987). Later Alwitt and Prabhaker (1992) and Mittal (1994) found that over half of their respondents felt that advertising insulted the intelligence of the average

consumer. At the same time, however, they reported that many of their respondents found advertising enjoyable and entertaining. Nevertheless, these authors concluded that overall public attitudes toward advertising were negative. By contrast, a survey by Shavitt and her colleagues (1998) revealed a rather favorable view. Although consumers did not generally trust advertising, they felt that advertising was often informative and useful for guiding their decision making.

The studies reviewed above generally reported a negative trend of Ag into the 1990s. A contribution of the present study is to provide updated information. Also, the approach of combining data from various sources, as pointed out by Calfee and Ringold (1994), has its limitation because of different wordings in survey instruments. The present authors believe that combining findings from various opinion polls and academic surveys is a valid – and sometimes the only – approach. Valuable information has been produced by such studies. Nevertheless, it is naturally to wonder whether a different conclusion would be made if alternative data were available. In the present study, Ag trends were analyzed by using same question wordings over time with a nationally representative sample. The latter approach is another contributions the present study seeks to make.

In addition to reporting Ag trends, an important research question is why such changes took place. Zano (1984) speculated and contributed increasing negativity to the rise in: 1) the amount of advertising; 2) the use of television as an advertising medium; 3) advertising clutter; and 4) consumerism. His approach is similar to an influential study by Putnam. In a book entitled *Bowling Alone*, Putnam (2000) identified a few “prime suspects” behind the decrease in social capital (civic participation) to such trends as pressures in time and money, mobility and sprawl, technology and mass media, and

generational differences. It is difficult to statistically measure causal relationships between factors, although his speculations sound logical. The present authors made similar attempts to explain possible reasons behind Ag changes.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present study has two objectives: to systematically review trends of public opinions toward advertising (Ag) and to analyze predictors of such attitudes. Therefore, three research questions were generated as follows:

RQ1: Have public attitudes toward advertising become more negative or positive over the past three decades?

RQ2: What are some possible reasons behind shifts over time in attitudes toward advertising?

RQ3: What are the best predictors of attitudes toward advertising in general (Ag)?

METHOD

The Life Style survey data used in the present study were provided by a leading advertising agency, DDB Worldwide. This annual survey of a panel of U.S. adult consumers, conducted since 1975, employs a stratified sample, and has an N between 2,700 to 3,800 each year. The response rate has been consistently 50% or higher. In recent years (1995 to 2002) the average N is 3,416.

This annual survey consists of hundreds of variables including demographics, social and political views, opinions on personal issues and feelings, consumption of products and services, social and leisure activities, and media usage. Most opinion and activity items are measured on a 1-6-point Likert-type scale from definitely disagree (1) to definitely agree (6).

Life Style variables concerning attitudes toward advertising include: 1) “Advertising insults my intelligence” (adinsult); 2) “Information from advertising helps me make better buying decisions” (adsbuy); 3) “I refuse to buy a brand whose ad I dislike” (adrefuse); 4) “TV commercials place too much emphasis on sex” (adsex); 5) “Advertising directed to children should be taken off television” (adkids); 6) “I avoid buying products advertised on shows with too much sexual content” (sexcont); 7) “I avoid buying products advertised on violent TV programs” (violnttv). Among the eight variables above, however, only the first two are directly about Ag.

Study One

The agency provided historical trends data (1975 to 2002) of all the above attitude items (N = 98,145). Question wordings were the same across years; however, some questions were not asked in every year. Also, the samples between 1975 and 1984 included only married individuals. To be consistent, only married people’s opinions from 1985 to 2002 would have been reported. Nevertheless, because this study’s focus is general public opinions rather than the opinions of married individuals, the present authors chose to report the means of all respondents from 1985 to 2002 in addition to available information from 1975 to 1984.

Each Ag variable was regressed on years with a simple regression procedure. This approach tests whether there is a relationship between attitudes and time, which essentially measures attitude changes over time. The slope (b-coefficient) also reveals whether there is an upward or downward trend. A curve estimation procedure was performed between years and each Ag variable. A comparison of models suggested that

all regression lines were linear rather than quadratic or cubic. In other words, cubic and quadratic models did not significantly improve R-squares.

Study Two

To answer the second research question, the second part of the study is to identify possible reasons behind Ag changes over time. A more comprehensive set of longitudinal Life Style data was obtained from the website associated with *Bowling Alone* (Putnam, 2000): <http://www.bowlingalone.com>. This data set, also provided by DDB, contains information from 1975 to 1998, but does not include advertising-related variables. However, a few items from this data set are useful for the investigation of reasons behind Ag changes over time, such as television usage, social life and other forms of civic participation, income and financial outlook, consumption habits, stands of political and social issues, and religiosity. These variables correspond with some of the reasons behind the changes of Ag as suggested by Zano (1984), as well as general social trends observed by Putnam (2000).

An aggregated data set was generated using the means of Ag variables from the Ag trends data mentioned earlier, as well as the means of relevant variables from the *Bowling Alone* data. The purpose of combining both data sets was to detect possible relationships between Ag variables and others in a historical (over time) sense. Attempts to run multiple regression and discriminant analysis failed, probably because of a small N. Most variables have only 24 rows (1975 to 1998). Pearson correlations between variables were performed to identify “prime suspects” behind Ag changes. Further investigations were conducted using benchmarks similar to Putnam’s (2000).

First, the correlations between these variables and Ag measures have to be statistically significant. Second, these variables have to show an upward or downward trend over time. In other words, the b-coefficient of a variable (regressed on years) has to have a $p < .05$. Third, these “prime suspect” variables have to have a conceptual link with Ag changes. Because of the unique nature of this type of analysis, the selection and identification of reasons behind Ag changes is rather qualitative and arbitrary.

Study Three

DDB Worldwide also provided a complete set of its 2001 Life Style data for further analyses of Ag predictors, which is the third part of the present study and corresponds with the third research question. The 2001 data ($N = 3,056$) include the following 5 attitude variables: *adinsult*, *adsex*, *adsbuy*, *adkids*, and *sexcont*. A factor analysis (with Varimax rotation and suppressed loadings $< .45$) revealed that *adinsult* (.74) and *adsbuy* (-.77) loaded on the same factor, while *adsex* (.73), *sexcont* (.75), and *adkids* (.49) loaded on another factor. Such distinctions suggest two dimensions of attitudes toward advertising: attitude in general versus the ethical/moral aspect of advertising. A reliability test further confirmed that the five variables should not be combined into the same scale ($\alpha = .41$). The correlation between *adinsult* and *adsbuy* was rather low ($r = -.23$, $p < .01$; Cronbach’s $\alpha = .37$). Therefore, these two items were not combined into a single scale. On the other hand, the remaining three variables were combined into a measure of “advertising ethics/morality” ($\alpha = .54$).

Stepwise multiple regressions were performed on the 2001 data, with “*adinsult*-reversed,” “*adsbuy*” and “advertising ethics/morality” as dependent variables. Following previous studies’ approach, independent variables included demographics (age, sex, race,

income, education), religiosity, political (liberal-conservative) ideology, media consumption and dependency, social activeness, appearance/fashion, financial outlook, spending habits, and innovativeness (i.e. trying new products). Some of these variables were constructed scales and others were single measures. Many of these items were not included, or examined at the same time, in previous research. Being able to simultaneously test a thorough list of independent variables is another significant contribution the present authors believe we have made.

A few constructs above were not widely employed in previous research but the present authors added them for the following reasons. First, besides one's income, how a person feels about his or her finances in the future could directly affect consumption and indirectly influence attitudes toward advertising. Second, both "appearance/fashion" and "spending habits" resemble materialism and hedonic pleasure in previous studies. Third, how socially active and innovative individuals are may affect their sense of fashion and style, and their desire to be perceived as being "cutting edge." Consequently, they may be more interested in receiving relevant information in advertising. In addition, religiosity may affect one's view on advertising toward children as well as sexual content in ads. Furthermore, ideology (liberal-conservative) affects how a person thinks the world should function in general (Hinich and Munger 1994), which could include the role of advertising. Therefore, along with SES these variables above were included in all multiple regression models. VIF statistics were reviewed to detect collinearity problems.

Specifically, our independent variables include: age (agexact), sex (dummy variable of male), race (dummy variable of white), income (income), education (edres), political ideology (liberal), reliance on television for entertainment (tventer), desire to get

the news -- including sports -- everyday (news), enjoyment of reading a fashion magazine (fashmags), and a few constructed scales.

The first scale is religiosity (Cronbach's alpha = .81; religion, belvgod, spiritual), which measures how religious one is. The second scale is social activeness (alpha = .61; home-reversed, homebody, visfrd, anyfun), which measures how active a social life one has. The third scale is financial outlook (alpha = .83; desire-reversed, famdebt, ahead, creditcd, savemon, and savelux). This scale concerns one's savings, debts, and future earnings. The fourth scale is spending/buying (alpha = .58; today, buyaford, impulse, paymore, highserve, ckprice-reversed; shoplive, shopspre). It basically illustrates whether one is a big and carefree spender.

The fifth scale is innovativeness (alpha = .66; buynew, newprod), which measures one's desire to try new brands and products. The sixth scale is appearance/fashion (alpha = .81; youthful, clothesl, lookdiff, dressup, dress, stylish, latestyle, bettaste, buybest, goodlook, pamper). This scale explains how much one cares about appearance and fashion. The seventh scale is brand attitudes (alpha = .62; brandsme, buybrand, brandname, presdrug, designer). It measures how much one prefers to buy name brands over generic products. Finally, except for statistics concerning the second research question, because of the large N of the Life Style data, the cut off point for statistical significance was raised from the usual .05 to .001 to make the tests more rigorous.

RESULTS

RQ1: Have public attitudes toward advertising become more negative or positive over the past three decades?

As shown in Table 1 and Figures 1-7, attitudes toward advertising (Ag) have been rather consistent and favorable over the past three decades, which answers RQ1.

The midpoint of a scale from 1 (I definitely disagree) to 6 (I definitely agree) is 3.5. For a measure of attitudes toward advertising in general: “adinsult” (Advertising insults my intelligence), the mean has decreased from 3.83 (s.d. = 1.63) in 1975 to 3.20 (s.d. = 1.49) in 2002, a -16.44% change. Figure 1 shows a downward trend that has gone below the midpoint of 3.5. A mean below 3.5 suggests a positive attitude for this particular variable. Treating years as the independent variable and “adinsult” as the dependent variable in a simple regression model, the slope (non-standardized beta) is -.0239 ($p < .001$). This finding suggests a decrease in the belief that advertising insults consumers’ intelligence. Also, public attitudes in this aspect of Ag have become rather positive since 1998.

Another Ag measure is “adsbuy” (“Information from advertising helps me make better buying decisions.”) The mean has decreased from 3.94 (s.d. = 1.39) in 1975 to 3.67 (s.d. = 1.27) in 2002, which translates into a -6.85% change. Figure 2 shows that the means over the years all fell between 4.0 and 3.5, and have never been lower than 3.5. The slope is -.0085 ($p < .001$). This suggests a slight decrease in consumers’ belief that advertising is helpful for making better buying decisions. However, because the means stayed above the midpoint, general opinions in this particular aspect of Ag are still favorable.

Between 1975 and 2002, there is little change in public opinion on whether television commercials place too much emphasis on sex. The percentage change between 1975 and 2002 in terms of “adsex” is .68 (from 4.41 in 1975 to 4.44 in 2002). The regression slope is -.0001 and not statistically significant ($p > .05$). Overall the means stay above 3.5. Therefore, a consensus exists among consumers that television commercials contain too much sex, but there is no change of this opinion over time. (See

Figure 3.) By contrast, the opinion that advertising directed to children should be taken off television has been receiving less support over time (slope = $-.0013$, $p < .001$). The means drop from 4.01 in 1975 to 3.62 in 2002, a -9.7% change. However, the means still have not gone below the midpoint of 3.5, which suggests that in general the public does not like the practice of advertising directing to children, although there is a slight decrease of this opinion over time. (Figure 4.)

The means of “I avoid buying products advertised on shows with too much sex content” are consistently below 3.5 between 1996 and 2002. There has been no attitude change between years either (slope = $.009$, $p > .05$). This finding means that consumers do not boycott products advertised in such shows, and there has been little over time shift in this opinion. (See Figure 5.) Do consumers boycott products advertised on violent television programs? Figure 6 shows that the means between 1996 and 2000 are between 3.04 and 3.12, therefore the answer is no. There is little shift in opinion over time either (slope = $.0139$, $p > .05$). Finally, do consumers refuse to buy a brand whose advertising they dislike? Generally yes as illustrated in Figure 7. The means between 1995 and 2000 are all above 3.5. There is no change over time (slope = $-.0189$, $p > .01$).

<<PLACE TABLE 1 and FIGURES 1-7 ABOUT HERE>>

RQ2: *What are some possible reasons behind shifts over time in attitudes toward advertising?*

As discussed earlier, reasons behind over time shifts in opinions are difficult to measure. Nevertheless, attempts to answer RQ2 were made based on correlations.

Pearson correlations were run between three Ag indicators (adinsult, adsbuy, adkids) and other variables in the aggregated data. The variable “adsex” was not tested

because its slope has a p -value that is smaller than .05, which indicates no change over time. Other Ag variables were not examined in this procedure because they were measured in only a few years in the Life Style surveys. The trends of each identified “prime suspect” variables were further investigated by running a simple regression against years to ensure that an upward or downward trend did exist.

The decrease in the belief that advertising insults consumers’ intelligence can be explained by the following two trends. The first is an increase in using television as the primary form of entertainment (slope = .01, $p < .05$; the r between “adinsult” and “tventer” = $-.67$, $p < .01$). The second trend is an increase in the preference for staying home (slope = .01, $p < .01$; the r between “adinsult” and “home” = $-.73$, $p < .01$). The variable “tventer” means watching television is respondents’ primary form of entertainment. The variable “home” means respondents would rather spend a quiet evening at home than go out to a party. A connection between the above two factors has been discussed by Putnam (2000). He argued that staying home means more time for watching television. It is reasonable to suspect that watching more television, and therefore advertising, could make viewers less critical of advertising (Bush, Smith, and Martin 1999). Logically one can argue that greater TV viewership might actually make people more discerning in their tastes and therefore could lead to an increase in the percentage of people who think advertising insults their intelligence. Nevertheless, our data suggest a non-critical effect of TV viewing on attitudes toward advertising.

As for the slight decrease in the attitude that advertising helps make better buying decisions, it may be related to an increase in cynicism (the slope of “honmen” = .01, $p < .01$; the r between “honmen” and “adsbuy” = $-.44$, $p < .05$). The variable “honmen”

means “an honest man cannot be elected to high office.” Cynicism basically means distrust. Distrust in politicians could be related to distrust in advertising.

The Ag variable of “adkids” has a slight downward trend (slope = $-.0013$, $< .01$), which means the support for taking advertising directed to children off television has been decreasing. It can be explained by the increase in television viewing (the r between “adkids” and “tventer” is $-.68$, $p < .01$), the increase of preference for staying home (the r between “adkids” and “home” is $-.74$, $p < .01$), and a trend of a more political liberal attitude as reflected by views on women’s equal status in society. A conservative attitude is often related to a protectionist desire to shield children from certain information, such as birth control (*Boston Globe* 1992; *USA Today* 2003). By contrast, a liberal attitude may lead to a mentality of less restriction (Lee 2003). The correlations between “adkids” versus “womenlib” and “womplace” are $-.74$ and $-.70$, respectively. Both have a p value of smaller than $.01$. The slopes of “womenlib” and “womplace” are $.03$ and $-.05$, respectively. The p values are again less than $.01$. The variable “womenlib” means women’s liberation is a good thing, and “womplace” means womens’ place is in the home.

Other social changes that may be related to a slightly but increasingly positive attitude of Ag include: a decline in religiosity (slope of “church” = $-.03$, $p < .01$; slope of “religion” = $-.02$, $p < .01$); a decrease in distrust of big companies (slope of “bigcomp” = $-.01$, $p < .01$); an increase in general financial optimism (slope of “savelux” = $-.03$, $p < .05$; slope of “morenon” = $.01$, $p < .01$); and a more positive attitude toward shopping (slope of “shopfun” = $-.02$, $p < .01$).

RQ3: *What are the best predictors of attitudes toward advertising in general (Ag)?*

After describing “what” (consumers attitudes toward advertising in eight aspects) and speculating possible explanations behind Ag trends, the 2001 data set was used to further investigate “why” -- predictors of Ag attitudes, which answered RQ3.

For ease of understanding, the variable “adinsult” was reversed. Therefore, a larger value means a more positive attitude. This direction would be consistent with the other two dependent variables: adsbuy (advertising helps make better buying decisions) and advertising ethics/morality (imposing a higher moral standard by being less tolerant of certain questionable practices). Predictors of “adinsult-reversed” include: age, fashmags, education, and race (white) (see Table 2). Respondents are less likely to find that advertising insults their intelligence if they are younger, enjoy reading fashion magazines, are less educated, and non-white. These echo the findings of some previous studies mentioned earlier (e.g., Bush, Smith, and Martin 1999; Yoon 1995a, 1995b).

Table 3 shows that respondents are more likely to find advertising helpful for making buying decisions if they: like to try new products, prefer brand names, are more religious, use TV as their primary form of entertainment, enjoy reading fashion magazines, are more conservative politically, and have a stronger need to get the news (including sports) everyday. Frequent usage of mass media may lead to a more receptive attitude toward advertising as discussed earlier (e.g., Bush, Smith, and Martin 1999). Also, information about new products and brand names is readily available in advertising.

Table 4 reveals that respondents would hold a more strict moral/ethical expectation of advertising if they: are more religious, are older, have a less active social life, are female, are more conservative politically, are not big spenders, do not feel they are doing well financially, and do not enjoy reading fashion magazines. More religious and conservative people naturally tend to oppose sex in advertising. These people tend to

be older and have a less active social life. Women, especially mothers, may be more sensitive to advertising directed toward children or commercials emphasizing sex (Cosmas and Yannopoulos 1981; Laczniak, Muehling, and Carlson 1995; LaTour and Henthorne 1993). People who do not feel they have a lot of money are less likely to be big spenders. Naturally they tend to have a lower reliance on shopping information -- advertising. Consequently they would harbor a more negative attitude toward advertising, especially when they think of sexual content or advertisements directed toward children.

<<PLACE TABLES 2-4 ABOUT HERE>>

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Overall our data indicated that negativity in some aspects of public attitudes toward advertising has decreased over time or remained constant. Therefore, it is fair to conclude that consumers' attitudes toward advertising have become slightly more positive over time. The increase in media usage since 1975, especially television viewing, is likely a major reason. Other potential contributing factors include a decline in social capital, which could lead to more media use, and an increasingly more liberal view in general among consumers. These findings echo scholars' observations that consumers have been using mass media, including television, more often, which may lead to a more neutral or positive attitudes toward advertising (Bush, Smith, and Martin 1999; Putnam 2000). Also, the American society has become more liberal, especially on social issues (Mitchell 1998; Smith 1990).

Considering the amount of advertisements in media content, it makes sense that more media usage could help form a positive attitude toward advertising. As Bush and

colleagues (1999) have suggested, the audience is socialized to be more receptive of mass media and the advertising in them. Also, those who desire information about new products and the latest fashion, as well as those who like to spend money, appreciate advertising. As for over time shifts in attitudes, in line with the socialization argument above, consumers watching a lot of television and thus advertising while growing up naturally become be less critical of advertising. The present authors predict that consumers' attitudes toward advertising will continue to improve.

Religious and conservative consumers find advertising helpful for making buying decisions, but are more sensitive to such issues as sex and messages directed toward children. If advertisers want to appeal to this group of people who already like advertising and want information about new products, certain advertising tactics such as nudity need to be avoided.

A potential problem with trend analyses is that even the same question wordings may have different meanings over time (Calfee and Ringold 1994; Entman and Rojecki 2001). This problem is faced by all studies using either same or different surveys across years. The second limitation of the present study is that the explanations of Ag trends, which are related to the second research question, are speculations based on correlations between variables. No causal relationships could be established. Another limitation is that only a few dimensions of Ag were examined, which is a common shortcoming in studies using secondary data. Fortunately, key dimensions were represented, including whether advertising helps make better buying decisions, whether advertising insults consumers' intelligence, and moral/ethical concerns. Future researchers are encouraged to collect primary data that include more measures, as Shavitt and her colleagues have done (1998), and to conduct national surveys periodically in order to generate information on Ag

trends. Another approach worth taking is to further investigate the relationship between the liberal-conservative political ideology, religiosity, and attitudes toward advertising. Consumers with strong political opinions are more likely to influence government regulations on advertising.

In conclusion, we believe the present study has made meaningful contributions to Ag research in the following areas. The present study is one of the few, and likely the first since Calfee and Ringold (1994), to document changes in public opinion on advertising by directly analyzing secondary data. Ours is also likely the first that has utilized surveys with same question wordings across decades. The fact that our findings differ from others – we reported that Ag trends have become more positive since 1970s – demonstrates that conclusions could vary when alternative methods and data are chosen. In addition, the impacts of political ideology and religiosity on Ag are new discoveries, which could have some important implications for advertisers. Furthermore, the present research confirms the attitude predictors identified in previous studies with smaller samples.

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Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations of Attitude Measures

Year		Adinsult	Adsbuy	Adsex	Adkids	Sexcont	Violnttv	Adrefuse
1975	mean	3.83	3.94	4.41	4.01			
	s.d.	(1.63)	(1.39)	(1.54)	(1.52)			
1976		3.88	3.91	4.46	3.91			
		(1.58)	(1.34)	(1.45)	(1.34)			
1977		3.89	3.81	4.42	3.86			
		(1.57)	(1.33)	(1.48)	(1.52)			
1978		3.89	3.83	4.42	4.01			
		(1.61)	(1.39)	(1.51)	(1.54)			
1979		4.09	3.82	4.48	4.08			
		(1.62)	(1.44)	(1.49)	(1.55)			
1980		4.07	3.85	4.56	3.98			
		(1.62)	(1.38)	(1.46)	(1.57)			
1981		3.92	3.86	4.62	4.09			
		(1.61)	(1.32)	(1.45)	(1.50)			
1982		3.90	3.83	4.58	3.90			
		(1.59)	(1.33)	(1.44)	(1.56)			
1983		3.76	3.91	4.57	3.84			
		(1.59)	(1.29)	(1.46)	(1.52)			
1984		3.76	3.93	4.61	3.81			
		(1.62)	(1.34)	(1.42)	(1.54)			
1985		3.68	4.03	4.69	3.72			
		(1.57)	(1.26)	(1.39)	(1.55)			
1986		3.66	3.98	4.67	3.76			
		(1.59)	(1.31)	(1.41)	(1.56)			
1987		3.53	3.92	4.57	3.71			
		(1.58)	(1.31)	(1.44)	(1.51)			
1988		3.61	3.90	4.57	3.73			
		(1.58)	(1.30)	(1.44)	(1.54)			
1989		3.54	3.91	4.58	3.83			
		(1.59)	(1.31)	(1.47)	(1.54)			
1990		3.66	3.82	4.65	3.88			
		(1.57)	(1.31)	(1.43)	(1.50)			
1991		3.69	3.83	4.59	3.84			
		(1.55)	(1.27)	(1.43)	(1.50)			
1992		3.69	3.80	4.73	3.88			
		(1.55)	(1.29)	(1.42)	(1.48)			
1993		3.65	3.88	4.83	3.86			
		(1.55)	(1.29)	(1.36)	(1.50)			
1994		3.58	3.79	4.62	3.76			
		(1.50)	(1.26)	(1.39)	(1.49)			
1995		3.52	3.80	4.56	3.78			
		(1.53)	(1.30)	(1.42)	(1.50)			
1996		3.40	3.75	4.52	3.71	3.19	3.12	3.60
		(1.48)	(1.26)	(1.44)	(1.49)	(1.69)	(1.62)	(1.52)
1997		3.54	3.71	4.46	3.70	3.28	3.09	3.61
		(1.51)	(1.26)	(1.44)	(1.45)	(1.69)	(1.64)	(1.51)
1998		3.45	3.72	4.39	3.64	3.16	3.04	3.61
		(1.50)	(1.31)	(1.47)	(1.45)	(1.71)	(1.63)	(1.56)
1999		3.48	3.66	4.38	3.63	3.26	3.08	3.57
		(1.48)	(1.27)	(1.45)	(1.43)	(1.68)	(1.61)	(1.57)
2000		3.40	3.73	4.47	3.68	3.32	3.08	3.57
		(1.51)	(1.24)	(1.44)	(1.45)	(1.68)	(1.61)	(1.57)
2001		3.27	3.64	4.53	3.68	3.31		
		(1.46)	(1.24)	(1.45)	(1.48)	(1.70)		
2002		3.20	3.67	4.44	3.62	3.21		
		(1.49)	(1.27)	(1.47)	(1.44)	(1.69)		
Total		3.65	3.83	4.56	3.81	3.24	3.11	3.56
		(1.57)	(1.31)	(1.45)	(1.51)	(1.69)	(1.62)	(1.54)

Note: Only married individuals were surveyed 1975-1984.

Table 2
Predictors of “Adinsult” Reversed (N = 2,740)

Independent Variables	B	S.E.	Beta	p.
Age	-.01	.00	-.15	***
Enjoy fashion magazines	.11	.02	.12	***
Education	-.08	.02	-.09	***
Race (white)	-.27	.07	-.08	***
Innovative (new products)	-.09	.03	-.07	**
Appearance/fashion	-.09	.04	-.05	*
Liberal	-.06	.03	-.04	*

R-square = .07

Notes: *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

Table 3
Predictors of “Adsbuy” (N = 2,760)

Independent Variables	B	S.E.	Beta	p.
Innovative (new products)	.30	.02	.27	***
Brand name	.19	.03	.14	***
Religiosity	.08	.02	.09	***
TV primary entertain.	.08	.01	.11	***
Big spender	-.10	.03	-.06	**
Enjoy fashion magazines	.06	.01	.09	***
Liberal	-.08	.02	-.07	***
News dependency	.05	.01	.07	***
Active social life	-.07	.02	-.05	**
Income	-.03	.01	-.05	**

R-square = .18

Notes: *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$

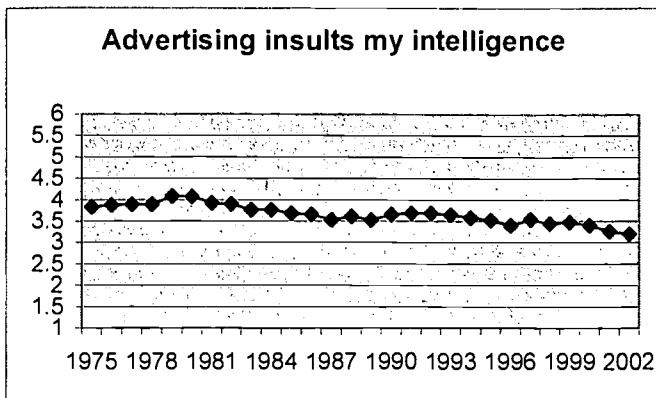
Table 4
Predictors of Advertising Morality/Ethics (N = 2,768)

Independent Variables	B	S.E.	Beta	p.
Religiosity	.20	.02	.23	***
Age	.02	.00	.26	***
Active social life	-.10	.02	-.08	***
Male	-.29	.04	-.13	***
Liberal	-.10	.20	-.09	***
Big spender	-.11	.03	-.08	***
Bad Financial	.06	.02	.07	***
Enjoy fashion magazines	-.04	.01	-.06	**

R-square = .21

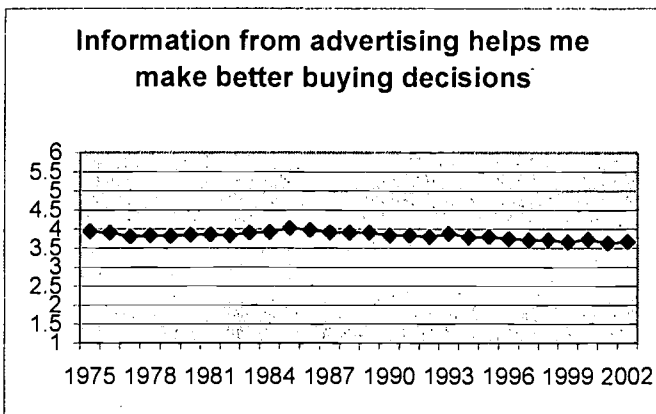
Notes: *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

Figure 1



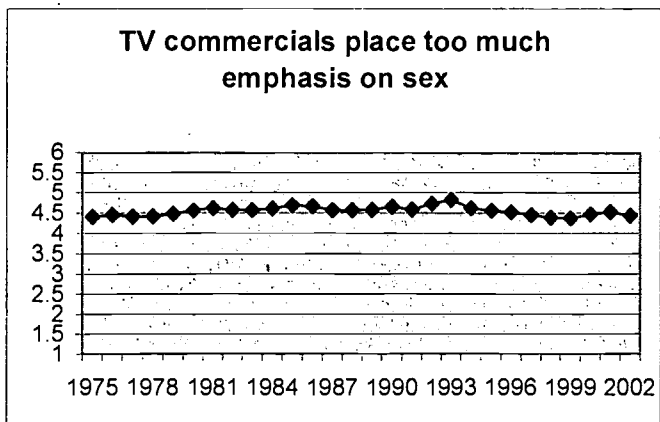
Slope = $-.0239$; $p < .001$

Figure 2



Slope = $-.0085$; $p < .001$

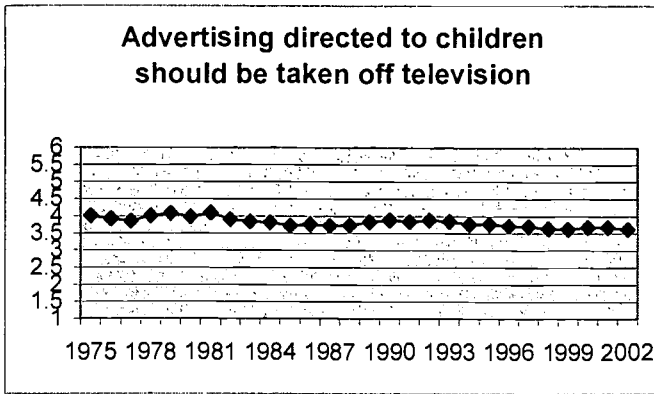
Figure 3



Slope = $-.0001$; $p > .05$

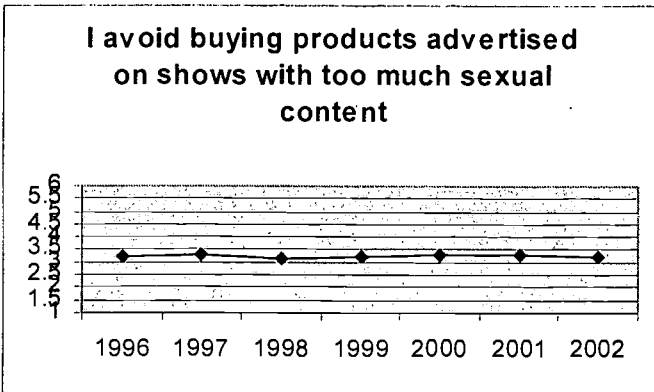
BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Figure 4



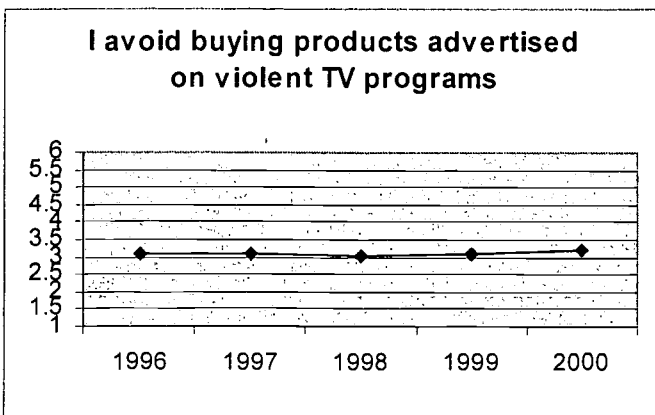
Slope = -.0013; $p < .001$

Figure 5



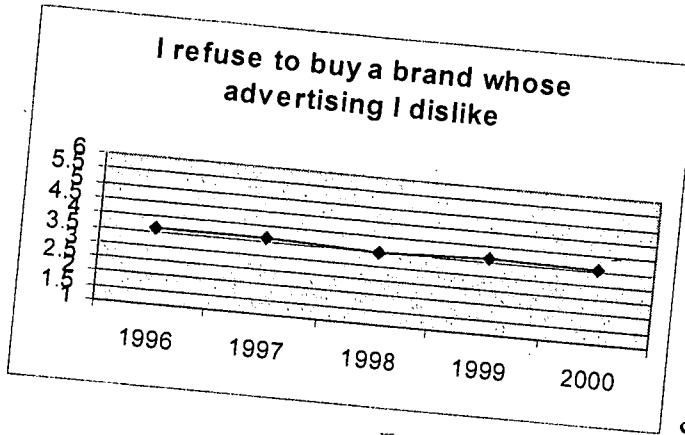
Slope = .0090; $p > .05$

Figure 6



Slope = .0139; $p > .05$

Figure 7



Slope = $-.0189$; $p > .01$

Adw

Hard-Sell Killers and Soft-Sell Poets: Modern Advertising's
Enduring Message Strategy Debate

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Hard-Sell Killers and Soft-Sell Poets: Modern Advertising's

Enduring Message Strategy Debate

Abstract

The historical study of the advertising trade literature reported in this paper sought to describe and explain continuity and change in the enduring debate between advocates of hard- and soft-sell advertising. Data consisted of works published primarily in *Printers' Ink*, supplemented with contemporary professional thought identified in advertising and marketing trade journals. The findings of the study are consistent, overall, with what many might consider to be the "received view" of modern advertising. Whereas the analysis examines major influences and criticisms, it also provides a more fine-grained interpretation of a professional dispute that has divided advertisers for almost a century.

Hard-Sell Killers and Soft-Sell Poets: Modern Advertising's

Enduring Message Strategy Debate

Some 90 years ago, leading U.S. automotive advertisers met head on in the industry's foremost trade journal, *Printers' Ink*, to debate the merits of "reason-why" versus "atmospheric" or "impressionistic" advertising ("Does 'Atmosphere' ... Make Good?" 1911). Contemporary advertisers, dubbed "hard-sell killers" and "soft-sell poets" (Crain 1997, Vagnoni 1997), debated roughly the same topic in a recent issue of *Advertising Age*. The 1990s version pitted advocates of rational-oriented "advertising that sells" against those favoring emotional-oriented advertising that entertains and creates bonds with consumers.

Academic researchers have developed and applied many theories and constructs in their study of modern advertising. Recent studies confirm the seminal status of research on the various hierarchical models of effects, information content, involvement, cognitive processing, affective cues and responses, and attitude toward the ad (Beard 2003; Pasadeos, Phelps, and Kim 1998). These efforts to match the characteristics of effective advertising with various situational factors, however, have had little impact on the message strategy debate or advertising practice (Beard 2002). Then again, there is little evidence that industry research has had much influence either. A search of the trade literature published between 1970 and 2002 revealed only six instances of industry research linked to discussions of message strategy (Adland 1994; "Ad Recall" 1971; Hume 1992; McMahan 1976; "Mood, Image" 1986; Rockwood 1996).

Instead, as Fox suggested, hard- and soft-sell advertising seemed to cycle back-and-forth throughout the 20th century "according to the industry's own rhythms, ... its perception of the public's boredom level," and "in apparent independence of the external historical context" (1984,

p. 64). Despite the significance and longevity of the professional dispute, little scholarship exists describing the nature of the debate or explaining the discipline's apparent inability to resolve it.

The study of the advertising trade literature presented here uses the method of historical analysis (Smith and Lux 1993) to address this gap, exploring several influences on the hard- and soft-sell debate. One is the extent to which advertisers' definitions remained consistent. Present-day textbooks suggest the hard sell and its informational product orientation consists of logical appeals, an emphasis on tangible product features, and advertising that encourages a direct response (Bové and Arens 1992; Dunn, Barban, Krugman, and Reid 1990; O'Guinn, Allen, and Semenik 1998). The soft sell and its transformational consumer orientation is typically associated with emotional appeals, an emphasis on psychological benefits, and advertising that causes sales indirectly via entertainment, brand image, or brand liking.

Another potentially important influence relates to changing professional perspectives regarding the role and characteristics of effective advertising. Pollay (1985), who identified phases of hard sell and soft sell in magazine advertising between 1900 and 1980, noted the possibility that "many of the apparent differences between the advertisements of various eras are simply different means of trying to accomplish the same ends" (p. 24).

The analysis also examines the criticisms and arguments advertisers have used to attack their opponents and defend their own positions. Among the most important themes emphasized in this analysis are the supposed strengths and weaknesses of hard- versus soft-sell advertising, the role of research and strategy in the development of advertising messages, and the core dispute over advertising as art versus science and commerce.

The purpose of this study, therefore, was to identify, explain, and interpret change through time in the professional debate over one of modern advertising's principal strategic foundations.

The findings are organized in three sections, corresponding to the three hypothetical influences associated with the hard-sell versus soft-sell debate described earlier. The presentation and analysis of major themes and supporting evidence are organized chronologically within each section in order to emphasize continuity and change in professional thought.

Data Collection

Data consisted of works published primarily in *Printers' Ink* (a.k.a. the *Little Schoolmaster* among its devoted readers). Many articles were originally gathered as part of another study of advertising humor. *Printers' Ink* was published continuously from 1888 to 1972, although from 1967 to 1972 it was titled *Marketing Communications*. It was intended "for the use, information and entertainment of publishers, printers and general advertisers" ("Announcement" 1888, p. 16). Prominent newspapermen, sales executives, and advertisers wrote most articles, although the staff, including founder George Rowell, also wrote editorials and commentary.

Beginning this history at the turn of the last century is fitting for at least two reasons: (1) the period captures the birth and maturation of modern advertising; and (2) thought regarding message strategy had coalesced by 1900 among the foremost members of the professional community, with copy preparation a standard agency service and major agencies (such as Lord & Thomas and J. Walter Thompson) systematically training copywriters (Schudson 1984).

The author and three assistants searched one randomly selected issue from each of the 268 volumes published between 1900 and 1972 for articles about message strategy. Forty issues were re-scanned as a check on subjective judgment. Professional thought for the remainder of the century was sought using a literature search, restricted to trade journals, with the goal of producing data as equivalent as possible to that in *Printers' Ink*. The standard histories were used as secondary sources (Fox 1984, Presbrey 1929, Rowsome 1970, Schudson 1984).

Defining Two Schools of Thought

Historians generally agree that the prevalence of announcement and hard-sell reason-why advertising 100 years ago was partly due to print media publishers' rules and printing technology limitations (Fox 1984, Presbrey 1929, Rowsome 1970). Other scholars and some historical evidence suggest many advertisers favored verbally descriptive, emphatically rational, and scrupulously truthful advertising due to embarrassment over the blatantly dishonest advertising of the 1800s (Grosbeck 1931, Pollay 1985, Rowsome 1970, Russell 1919). One writer of a historical piece noted that announcement advertising actually contained no sell at all. "Rejecting with honorable disdain the thought of saying things about their wares that were not true, some large manufacturers hit upon a brilliant idea. They would announce their goods. But they would say nothing about them at all, or as little as might be" (Russell 1919, p. 83).

The soft-sell school of the early 1900s is mainly represented by the influential atmospheric style of Theodore F. MacManus and the image-based approach of Ernest E. Calkins. Art was a critical element of both, with atmospheric layouts "striving for an impression of effortless high quality and class" (Fox 1984, p. 70). As one writer described it, great effort was "lavished upon illustration and setting that fairly breathes of quality and tone. The effort, of course, is to impress the reader with the feeling that if a house represents itself by advertising of this kind, then the product advertised must partake of the same high qualities" ("Does 'Atmosphere' ... Make Good?" 1911, p. 48). Thus, a more artistic soft sell was well established by the early 1900s, following advertiser acceptance of "scientific advertising" (Pollay 1985) and the necessity "for appealing to the emotions in certain fields of publicity" (Editorial 1903, p. 34).

During this period, hard-sell advocates consistently argued in favor of logical appeals to a rational consumer's self-interest. One writer spoke for the majority, noting: "More attractive than

fine pictures, more potent than fine language, are the Why and Wherefore of the goods—the Reasons” (“Reasons” 1902, p. 30). Another described the reason-why advocates’ insistence “that the argument of the advertisement—the evidence, the word logic—is all that is worth considering” (Hall 1912, p. 59). Conversely, advocates of the period’s more artistic soft sell argued that advertising could work indirectly by creating impressions. Their position was described as follows: “Illustration, border, type, white-space treatment and style of language all have to do with atmosphere. Naturally, when all are harmonious and appropriately selected, the advertisement throws out the ideal general impression” (Hall 1912, p. 60).

Some writers in *Printers’ Ink* implied that atmosphere was, in fact, nothing new but merely a variation of the older announcement, or “simply-display” (Russell 1919) advertising, albeit more visual and artistic. The lack of hard sell in atmosphere advertising led one advertiser to refer to it as “general publicity of the purest brand” (“Does ‘Atmosphere’ ... Make Good?” 1911, p. 48). Another writer distinguished between two types of advertising:

the one that tries to circumvent the reasoning processes and make you jump at a conclusion through mere impression—and the other that tries to lay before you the facts and offer an interpretation of them and get you to decide the matter by calm deliberation are the outgrowth of two different types of thought. One must perforce be called the old way, and the other the new way (Warren 1912, p. 17).

The author of an article from 1921 offered a definition of reason-why consistent with that of 20 years earlier: “It simply tells the informative news about a product, and gives those facts that are necessary to make its purpose, use and operation clear. It does not excite the reader or create sensations. But for the long pull it has its place and value” (“‘Reason Why’ Comes Back,” p. 18).

One of the most influential message strategists of the second half of the 20th century, Leo Burnett, identified two schools of strategic thought in a *Printers' Ink* article:

1—Poster-style advertising which depends on its simplicity and its manner plus a cogent selling thought expressed with a rigid economy of words. 2—Reason-why advertising which takes the reader by the hand, emotionalizes the results of the product, and rationalizes it with pertinent information and persuasive argument (1962, p. 36).

Burnett's "Inherent Drama" philosophy suggests he favored combining both hard and soft sell: "Often the concept is a pretty straight news story. Sometimes the appeal is an approach that in some way arouses the emotions of the reader, then quickly gives a reason why" (Burnett, p. 36).

Another prominent copywriter, John Caples, also described two types of advertising: "Reason-why copy attempts to focus on functional aspects in presenting arguments for buying a product or service. Short copy goes deep into the reader's subconscious and stirs him to action" (1973, p. 60). Like Burnett, Caples seemed to favor combining hard and soft sell: "Reason-why copy is a necessary ingredient in every good advertisement. But a good story lights a fire in the reader's subconscious mind. ... If you can skillfully combine reason-why copy with story copy, you can produce an irresistible advertisement" (Caples 1973, p. 67).

Conversely, Rosser Reeves, in the late 1950s and 1960s, "championed the hard sell" ("Ad Pioneer Reeves, 72, Dies" 1973, p. 4). As described in his *Advertising Age* obituary, "Mr. Reeves maintained that ad strategy must spring from a creative sales base. His foes wanted advertising to charm, amuse and entertain along with the sales pitch. And there the argument raged" (p. 4).

By the 1980s, the majority of contributors on the topic were describing soft-sell advertising as mood or image advertising, but its characteristics remained principally the same.

While the traditional “hard sell” needs no subterfuge to praise demonstrable product features or benefits, mood/image advertising sneaks in the back door to entertain, make the consumer feel good, and to sell the product through good vibrations. Mood/image/emotional appeal advertising makes no direct product pitch. It’s characterized by memorable visuals, “feeling,” surrealistic effects, little copy, and, quite frequently, dramatic music with catchy lyrics (“Mood, Image” 1986, p. 36).

Many writers in the 1980s also began to associate the reason-why with direct-response advertising. As one writer noted, “For, when you come right down to it, writing ‘reason why’ copy has been at the heart of what I’ve been doing for a number of years. And, ‘reason why’ copy is what separates me from those who write billboards, TV and radio, most print and other impression advertising” (Turley 1985, p. 34). During this period, some advertisers even hoped “to eliminate the hard sell from the direct marketing vocabulary. This new breed believes that the time has come to inject direct marketing copy with the flair and sophistication associated with traditional ad copy and to do away with the ‘Pow! Zing!’ come-ons” (Gilbert 1984, p. 29).

Definitions in the 1990s remained consistent with those from earlier periods, but also revealed that the soft sell had become firmly established as more “creative.” As one writer observed, “One school believes that a straightforward advertising campaign will succeed if it can present a persuasive and credible argument in favor of the product. The other school of thought contends that creative, emotionally-based campaigns are more successful because they attract more attention and can establish a bond between the marketer and the public” (Rockwood, 1996, p. 4). As another noted, advertisers remain divided “between advertising that engages consumers in an entertaining way and creates an emotional bond and advertising that offers up boilerplate fact-fueled messages, USP promises and product shots” (O’Leary 2000, p. 30).

The Role and Characteristics of Effective Advertising

Writers in *Printers' Ink* during the early 1900s often affirmed that advertising's role was to sell products directly. One prominent copywriter (Trueman 1901, p. 3) observed: "There is one main impulse which should influence you in the way you prepare advertising—to make it sell goods, to make it sell more goods than some other similar or identical article of equal or superior merit that somebody else sells." Another writer, criticizing the use of "crudity" and "flippant slang," lamented: "It is a significant fact that these kinds of copy—though they may make the unskillful laugh—cannot but make the judicious grieve, and they seldom are effective in the main purpose of advertising—selling goods" (Grey 1908, p. 35). The few who addressed advertising's role in message terms defined it as information. As one noted, "The effectiveness of an advertisement increases in the ratio that it conveys definite information and interprets that information in terms of the consumers' interest" (Warren 1912, p. 18).

Although advertising's role was often referred to as selling in the 1920s, a subtle shift in beliefs was also present. The belief that advertising should entertain found expression for the first time during this period: "It is often possible to accomplish more in creating good-will for a product by entertaining the public in print than by constantly advancing selling arguments" ("Advertising Coffee" 1928, p. 103). Entertainment was often linked to competition for attention.

Writers during the 1930s and 1940s offered more sophisticated views of an intermediate role for advertising. As one noted, "Advertising, according to one school of thought, is a form of selling. Another looks upon it as a *creator of salability* [italics added]" (Erbes 1931, p. 10). The president of N.W. Ayer & Son argued against defining advertising as mere selling. "No, advertising has one specific thing to do; and that is to inform, and often—but not necessarily always—to persuade" (Batten 1941, p. 61). In the 1950s, a slim majority continued to argue that

advertising's role was to sell products directly, with remarks similar to those of hard-sell advocates from 40 years earlier. "Meaningless words, pretty pictures, attempts to sell the public valueless thinking—all these are corrosive to the young mind growing up without the necessary discipline provided by the question, *Does this copy sell?*" (Day 1952, p. 31). In the 1980s, one writer directly linked the use of the soft sell to advertising objectives other than sales:

"...important goals of many mood campaigns are to generate high awareness, build goodwill, create an atmosphere, and invite participation in a lifestyle associated with a product" ("Mood, Image" 1986, p. 37).

Writings in the 1990s were roughly split between those who viewed the role of advertising as selling or persuading and those in favor of entertainment and brand liking as intermediate goals. As one writer put it, "people will soon be making more buying decisions right in their own homes. More than ever, the advertising we create and approve will have to help with those decisions, by providing more information—more compelling reasons to buy our brands" (Perry 1994, p. 32). Conversely, a soft-sell advocate succinctly summarized the opposing view: "Before you can be believed, you have to be liked" (Kuperman, cited in Vagnoni 1997, p. 20).

Effective advertising. Advocates of both schools around the turn of the last century frequently mentioned that effective advertising must first attract attention. What distinguishes the two sides, however, are beliefs regarding how this should be done—a key distinction that persists to present day. One group proposed that originality and novelty should be used to attract attention. A copywriter writing on the topic of jingles noted: "Whether they sold goods or not I cannot tell. But they surely performed the first function of the advertisement as we understand it—that of attracting attention" (Schwartz, 1901, p. 16). Another similarly observed: "The modern 'copy man' has to say things in a way that they have not been said before—because that

is the only kind of talk that will nowadays attract attention” (Grey 1908, p. 35). One advertiser praised cartoons for this purpose: “Unquestionably, the cartoon has a place in advertising. It brightens the soggy mass of reason-why and show-you-how” (Larned 1919, p. 65).

Moreover, many of the same writers emphasized that advertising has “personality” and should appeal to “human-interest” by being lighter in tone and by expressing human qualities. “Can anyone doubt, when he thinks the matter seriously over, that these pen-performances are thoroughly imbued with personality?” (Benton 1906, p. 70). Another wrote that “less intensely practical and more intimate, personal, colloquial copy would appeal more forcefully in many instances than strictly reason-why copy” (Williams 1917, p. 46). The president of N.W. Ayer & Son suggested “that any business which deals with human beings can afford to be human in its approach without the loss of dignity” (Fry 1935, p. 71). An art director in the 1950s linked personality directly to artistic design: “In the consumer’s mind, the product will take on a certain personality. The artist can provide the product with a character” (Baker 1952, p. 104).

It was not always possible to classify writers as hard- or soft-sell advocates based only on a single article. Some who linked advertising effectiveness with personality or humanity in the latter half of the 20th century appeared to be dual-theorists. For example, the president of Leo Burnett described how the agency was carrying on the founder’s tradition of creating “advertising so interrupting, so daring, so fresh, so engaging, so human, so believable, and so well-focused as to themes and ideas that, at one and the same time, it builds a quality reputation for the long haul as it produces sales for the immediate present” (Fizdale 1995, p. LB1).

That advertising should be more personal, novel, human, and artistic, however, were not the only beliefs to find expression. Prior to the 1930s, the more easily identifiable killers clearly rejected these tactics and argued the superiority of logical appeals. As one noted, “The adwriter

who sits down to give the plain Reasons about any article in a store will come as near to writing a forceful ad as it is possible for him to come. Let him stick to Reasons and he will need to worry very little about attractiveness” (“Reasons” 1902, p. 30). Similarly, “Irrelevant designs, selected more for novelty than for reason, are contrary to sound doctrine” (Larned 1919, p. 64).

One writer’s observations explicitly revealed for the first time the core dispute between advertising as art versus science and commerce: “Another advertiser, anxious to be original overlooks the fact that advertising is neither art nor literature, but salesmanship in print” (“Fads” 1917, p. 83). As another hard-sell advocate (Hathaway 1923, p. 84) colorfully stated:

If the writer of advertising hears one of his efforts classified as “clever,” or hears someone say “that’s a snappy ad,” then he has the proper hint—if he is a *real* advertising man—to dig in and find out, if possible, in just what way his copy has fallen down.

Writers throughout the rest of the century expressed similar beliefs, but they also appeared less frequently. A vice-president of the McCann-Erickson agency complained that client and copywriter often “turn out something witty, something that sparkles, often something so almighty attractive that the consumer reads it, enjoys it keenly and gets from it no jot or little of impression regarding the article to be sold” (Groesbeck 1931, p. 4). Rosser Reeves—“the dean of the Gastro-Intestinal School of Advertising” (Freberg, cited in “Ad Pioneer Reeves, 72, Dies” 1973, p. 4)—similarly rejected novelty: “At all costs, admen should avoid the most dangerous word of all in advertising—originality” (cited in Fox 1984, p. 193).

In the 1990s, some advertisers continued to argue that excessive creativity and entertainment are ineffective. One of modern advertising’s most successful humorists, Stan Freberg, noted: “The client is not interested in how funny you can be, in how entertaining you can be. What he really wants to do is sell his product” (cited in Garfield 1992, p. 62). As another

hard-sell advocate pointed out, “maybe a tactical alternative like the infomercial hasn’t become the passing fad many of us hoped because consumers really do want ads and commercials to tell them something meaningful, not merely entertain them” (Perry 1994, p. 32).

Criticisms and Arguments

The early hard-sell advocates’ belief in the superiority of rational appeals led to frequent criticism of the soft sell’s generality and intangibility. Such criticisms continued in nearly every decade and remained consistent in content and tone. As one writer observed, some advertisers “speak of the advantages of shopping in their establishments in such general terms that there don’t appear to be any advantages, or if there are, that they themselves do not take much stock in them. Their logic is weak, and won’t bear investigation” (“The Third Dimension” 1906, p. 19). Another in the 1930s noted: “Advertising has been defined as news. The trouble with most of it is, it isn’t. It can be, should be. Ballyhoo is the wolf in the bosom of advertising” (Giles 1936, p. 37). A hard-sell advocate in 1971 observed: “I think the evidence is quite clear. Many of the cute, witty, or tricky slogans do not work well in the real world. Theoretically, they are great. In actuality, the majority of them just don’t make it” (Schwartz 1971, p. 25). Two related themes, however, are associated with the superiority of the hard sell in this respect.

First, many writers argued that advertising could not sell a product unless it had a tangible feature of superiority. As one early writer noted, “The article that has no good Reason for being sold is not a good article to advertise, or to have in stock” (“Reasons” 1902, p. 30). Another noted 20 years later, if a product could only be sold “by masquerading the advertising under a camouflage of irrelevant art, romantic story, or sacrifice of product name, surely something is lacking in the product” (Geisinger 1928, p. 12). The president of N.W. Ayer and Son similarly observed that advertising “cannot create a single point of superiority in a product or add a single

virtue to its manufacturer. What advertising can do is to speed up the process of getting a good product well and favorably known” (Batten 1941, p. 61). This argument was also strongly implied in the early 1990s with one of the few references to industry-based research. “We’re validating empirically what David Ogilvy has been saying for years: If you don’t have anything to say, smoke and mirrors won’t help” (cited in Hume 1992, p. 20).

Conversely, in the 1950s a small minority proposed that soft-sell advertising could create a point of difference. In the following quotation, the modern-day problem of what to say about a parity product was revealed for the first time: “Advertisers are getting weary of blatant copy, big type for what are really small claims and competitive copy. They are going in for the ad with emotional appeal” (Keline 1956, p. 29). Hal Riney, a creative director of the BBDO agency during advertising’s celebrated creative revolution, stated this point very clearly: “‘Most of the time,’ he says, ‘the facts haven’t done me a lot of good. It seems there’s someone already using the same ones’” (cited in Winksi 1982, p. M2). Another contemporary soft-sell guru, Lee Clow, similarly questioned: “Why isn’t the persona of the brand considered a real difference? Is it because it’s too esoteric?” (cited in Vagnoni 1997, p. 30).

A second theme related to the perceived superiority of the hard sell was the overwhelming agreement that a weak economy and stiff competition require it. One early advocate of reason-why versus atmosphere pointed out: “you will observe that the old way is giving way to the new under the pressure of competition because the new way sells more goods” (Warren 1912, p. 17). As another observed, “Our adoption of reason-why copy is simply a recognition of not only the conditions of the public’s purse, but the public’s state of mind. The public no longer responds to the mere offer of goods, however meritorious; it must be *sold* to them” (“‘Reason Why’ Comes Back” 1921 p. 17). During the Great Depression, a hard-sell advocate questioned:

Why is there not more of this good advertising? Because a great many of us are still hoping for another boom period in which other economic forces may be called upon to do advertising's lowly, heavy chore of influencing broadly and quickly the low-grade mass mind. If such a boom comes we will happily revert to the pompous, impotent calendar-picture illustration and the string-of-pearls adjective copy (Day 1936, p. 17).

Interestingly, this writer linked his criticism of atmosphere to the art versus commerce debate, referring to the period of 1914 to 1928 as a period of "advertising decadence": "The period of decadence begins when the basically strong and simple impulse of an artistic school is debauched by the efforts of second-rate men to embellish it" (Day 1936, p. 17).

Motivation researcher Ernest Dichter linked soft-sell "tongue-in-cheek" advertising to a positive economy. "He says it's indicative of the psycho-economic attitude of the entire country. The trend toward the light and humorous touch in so much of today's advertising ... reflects the increasing security of consumers and advertisers" (cited in Keline 1956, p. 29). Similarly, the death of advertising's creative revolution has been attributed to recession in the 1970s (e.g., Della Femina 1971). As a writer observed in 1971: "the so-called 'in' advertising with its cute asides and boutiquey appeals is moving against the tide of simplicity and straightforwardness. ... Advertising must get back to elemental truths about a product" (Angelus, p. 52).

But there were also examples that contradicted the "hard times equals hard sell" philosophy. Advertising's Golden Age of the Limerick Contest occurred during the Great Depression (Erbes 1938). In the 1990s, one soft-sell tactic, humor, and brand liking were viewed as superior approaches for hard times. This belief was explained in the following way: "tough times make for tough, calloused mind-sets. ... Package goods and durable goods manufacturers must woo

the customer over to liking their product, given their reluctance to purchase. We have to find a way to put a grin on people's faces or they'll simply do without" (Fried 1991, p. 26).

The ad and the ego. Hard-sell advocates frequently criticized poets for desiring personal recognition for their creativity. One early advertiser observed that the copywriter's desire "to inject himself as a personality into his productions is merely a case of falling prey to crass ego and creating a diversion which no advertising copy can endure" (Hathaway 1923, p. 84). Another questioned: "Is this tendency to be 'different' really prompted by a changing public, or is it born of the desire to demonstrate our own personality and originality without regard to the interest of Mr. Average Man or Mrs. Average Woman...?" (Geisinger 1928, p. 11). This criticism was often linked to the belief that soft-sell advertising is often noticed and remembered, but at the expense of the advertiser. "Advertising should be engineered to make people want the product—not admire the ad" (Schofield, cited in Margolis and Silverstein 1956, p. 82). In the 1980s and 1990s, the criticism of ego and creative indulgence was often associated with the proliferation of awards competitions. For example:

Somewhere between Bill Bernbach and the Saatchis, the advertising business jumped the track. ... We began measuring the worthiness of our ads and commercials by how much applause they earned from consumers, the media and our peers. ... Our role as creators of advertising isn't getting people to remember our ads and commercials, it's getting them to remember what our ads and commercials say about our clients' brands (Perry 1994, p. 32).

Conversely, soft-sell advocates often criticized killers for their lack of creativity. A WWII veteran made the point clearly: "Now the war is over, and they're flicking the dust off their rule books and preparing to turn out the same old stodgy stuff—the 'real selling copy,' as they like to call it—the stuff without a fresh idea in a carload" (Nicholson 1945, p. 21).

The role of strategy and research. Dating from the turn of the last century, historical events and evidence strongly suggest that hard-sell advocates favored rational message strategies that could be validated with research, whereas the poets rejected strategy and research and viewed advertising as art rather than science and commerce. This theme prevailed throughout the century, helps explain the distinction between “killers” and “poets,” and ultimately came to represent not only the debate between them, but a power struggle between client and copywriter.

One of the most successful advocates of reason-why advertising, Claude Hopkins, preached the importance of research and testing in his influential book, “Scientific Advertising” (1923), which David Ogilvy (1985) claimed every practitioner should read at least seven times. A vice-president of McCann Erickson, highly critical of “advertising so clever that the product got no notice” (Grosbeck, 1931, p. 4), observed that the problem occurred “before the days of authentic testing of copy appeals. The relative ineffectiveness of too much ‘cleverness-seasoning’ as compared with just enough to make the dish palatable has been proved in many a copy test” (p. 6). As another successful copywriter observed (Schofield, cited in Margolis and Silverstein 1956, p. 82):

I believe you will find that in more and more agencies, non-creative executives have taken over the functions of a creative director—selecting campaigns on the basis of professional appearance, often without regard for factual strategy or the proved basics of mass action. Yet you will find these same agencies often advising their clients to wait 13 weeks, 26 weeks or even longer before expecting traceable results—when every successful department store in the country measures its advertising by same-day sales.

The roles of strategy and research increasingly discriminated between the two schools following the collapse of the creative revolution, and writers often noted that clients favored both

as a means for holding agencies accountable. As one wrote, “Research not only takes some of the mystique out of agency creative departments, it also gives the client more direct control over creative people” (“Ad Recall?” 1971, p. 24). A General Foods executive noted: “To provide a commonly understandable framework, it was agreed that the process of creating advertising could and should be schematically broken down into steps or blocks of activity” (Grant, cited in “Ad Recall” 1971). But soft-sell advocates, especially in the 1980s and 1990s, rejected the belief that advertising should be developed in a strategically rationale way. This belief was expressed clearly in the words of a prominent soft-sell agency principal:

The fashion in advertising is to use the Harvard M.B.A. approach as modified by P&G. ... Strategies are determined with “no thought on how it might be executed and having nothing to do with the real world.” ... Berlin believes superior ads are created “in a necessarily unscientific way, but in all instances treat people with humanity, courtesy and caring and let them have a little fun” (Berlin, cited in Cuneo 1986, p. 5).

In the final decade of the last century, soft-sell advocates offered writings and comments that consistently echoed three related themes: the influence of Bill Bernbach, advertising as art versus science, and a consequential inability to predict the potential effectiveness of an advertising message or strategy. As summarized by one obvious poet: “The art part of this, the part that deals with human nature, and what works and what doesn’t—and that no creative person could explain—is what all the controversy is about...” (Kuperman, cited in Vagnoni 1997, p. 30). Another observed that the future “belongs to the communication artists, to people who know how to make things stand out on the screen or the page and who know how to manage the confluence of media that’s happening now” (Clow, cited in Vagnoni 1997, p. 28).

Yet contemporary killers and the dual-theorists in the literature also paid homage to Bernbach. As one writer noted:

Years ago, when he exhorted our entire industry to reach for higher and higher levels of creativity, he never intended for us to lose sight of what advertising was all about. In his own words, “Our job is to sell our clients’ merchandise ... not ourselves. Our job is to kill the cleverness that makes us shine instead of the product. Our job is to pluck out the weeds that are smothering the product message” (Perry 1994, p. 32).

An *Advertising Age* editor similarly noted: “Unfortunately for the advertising business, today’s practitioners don’t seem to acknowledge the need for both schools to interact in a seamless way to make a strong and compelling sales point. What better example can there ever be than Bill Bernbach’s great ad, ‘Have you ever wondered how the driver of a snowplow gets to the snowplow?’” (Crain 1997, p. 26).

Finally, an interesting theme that emerged from the data consisted of opposing views regarding the evaluation or prediction of advertising effectiveness. One contemporary poet, for instance, observed that the advertising message is “where the magic happens in advertising, and you can never predict that. It’s dangerous to be suspicious of that” (Goodby, cited in Vagnoni 1997, p. 30). A writer in 1912 offered the killers’ perspective: “Pretty pictures, association of ideas, unconscious impression, decorative treatment, etc., they declare is just a delusion that high-collared gentlemen work off on innocent advertisers” (Hall, p. 59). A killer from 1917, however, offered the most colorful contradiction: “When anybody tries to give the impression that advertising is a mysterious, un-understandable thing, he is either an ignoramous or a plain fakir” (“Fads,” p. 83).

Discussion and Conclusions

This study's findings confirm what, for many, is likely the "received view" of modern advertising. In most respects, both killers and poets held firm to their original conceptions and definitions of the informational hard sell and impressionistic soft sell. The role of advertising evolved from selling mostly retail products directly using predominantly print media to achieving intermediate goals, such as brand identity and image, to, eventually, brand liking. Criticisms, too, are consistent with current professional thought. The modern killers' concerns about irrelevant creativity and entertainment overshadowing the sales message, or advertising driven more by ego than strategy, were among the first criticisms of MacManus' atmosphere. The findings, however, reveal a more fine-grained interpretation of how the debate evolved to inform present-day advertising.

First, although hard- and soft-sell definitions remained mainly the same, the findings suggest that dispute over the use of emotional appeals became less influential over time. The findings also suggest that advertiser acceptance of the need to attract attention and imbue advertising and brands with personality brought the two schools closer together as well. Indeed, the overzealous arguments in favor of logical appeals mostly disappeared by the middle of the last century, as did the extreme criticisms of efforts to attract attention. Other evidence suggests the use of emotional appeals is not inconsistent with the contemporary hard sell. Advertising historians report that during the Depression advertisers relied on both hard-sell advertising and emotional appeals. Rowsome notes specifically that advertisers often used slice-of-life stories that "tapped emotions such as guilt, fear, shame, and blame to reinforce advertising appeals" (1970, p. 173).

The finding that some of the most influential strategists and copywriters appeared to favor combining hard and soft sell also supports the compatibility of emotional appeals with the hard

sell. The writings of Burnett and Caples suggest they were dual-theorists. Similarly, whereas Ogilvy, who wrote two of advertising's most influential books (Beard 2003), is often associated with the soft-sell brand image school, he was clearly influenced by Claude Hopkins, one of the earliest and most successful killers (Fox 1984, Maxwell 1999).

Therefore, the major distinction between the two schools, in terms of the role of advertising, came to be its effectiveness in achieving a direct, immediate, and measurable response.

Criticisms of two early approaches, announcement and atmosphere advertising, were based on their delivery of impressions but no sales message. As one atmosphere critic pointed out: "It is the slowest working thing in the world next to New Orleans molasses at the North Pole" ("Does 'Atmosphere' ... Make Good?" 1911, p. 56). The contemporary association of the hard sell with direct-response advertising also supports such a conclusion.

Whereas the role of research represented a foundation for the early hard sell, advertising assessment and strategy development came to represent a principal difference between killers and poets by the end of the last century. Early advertisers, such as Claude Hopkins, routinely assessed advertising effectiveness in the form of sales. As assessment of direct sales effects became more difficult, and advertising message objectives more common, advertisers, and especially agency clients, increasingly favored the use of copy testing procedures (Pollay 1985). Thus, it is clear why the verifiable effects of hard-sell advertising in the form of sales, or a response as close to that as possible, came to distinguish killers from poets.

Finally, as Pollay has noted, the practice of advertising should "show stages of experimentation and innovation, and other stages of contraction and consolidation. ... The consolidation occurs as these various experiments prove successful or not and as the profession increasingly employs only the successful tactics in appropriate circumstances" (1985, p. 25).

Thus, the most likely explanation for the enduring debate is that individual advertisers have experienced success with the hard sell, the soft sell, and combinations of both. One of the earliest writers on the topic noted: “The ‘reason-why’ advocates put forward stout arguments against ‘atmosphere’ copy and, moreover, point to convincing results of the educational variety. But so can the advocates of atmosphere or impressionistic copy” (“Does ‘Atmosphere’ ... Make Good?” 1911, p. 48). Indeed, decades of scientific research conducted by both industry researchers and academicians confirm the situational effectiveness of advertising containing hard sell (e.g., information content, cognitive processing) and soft sell (e.g., affective cues, warmth, humor) characteristics. Unfortunately, as the results of this study also indicate, the published debate between hard-sell killers and soft-sell poets was rarely informed by the cumulative results of scientifically conducted research.

Future historical research on the hard-sell versus soft-sell debate could, first, attempt to confirm the findings using other primary sources, such as biographies and autobiographies of advertising practitioners and early and contemporary textbooks. Second, because the debate has been primarily disseminated in the pages of advertising’s trade publications, scholarly research among advertising practitioners designed to assess the extent to which they fall into hard-sell, soft-sell, and dual-theorist schools of thought would be both practically useful and theoretically interesting.

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**A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF PRINT ADVERTISING APPEALS IN
TIMES OF CRISIS**

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A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF PRINT ADVERTISING APPEALS IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Introduction

On September 11, 2001, at 8:45 a.m., a hijacked American Airlines Boeing 767 crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center. Eighteen minutes later, a second hijacked Boeing 767 belonging to United Airlines slammed into the South Tower of the world Trade Center. While people around the world were watching the horrific images on television, a hijacked American Airlines Boeing 757 crashed into the Pentagon half an hour after the attacks on the World Trade Center. Later that morning another hijacked United Airlines jet crashed near Pittsburgh (Isikoff et al, 2001).

Before September 11, America was decompressing from its longest economic boom and was gradually entering into a recession (Samuelson, 2001). The threat of September 11 was the erosion of consumer confidence that would reduce demand for consumer products and services (Samuelson, 2001). In a weak economy, companies may cut back one of their biggest discretionary expenses: advertising (O'Connell, Rose, and Vranica, 2001). After September 11, travel industry, tobacco, technology, financial services and retail companies all reduced their advertising spending (O'Connell et al, 2001). The reduction in ad spending had affected various media companies especially magazine publishers that relied heavily on travel ads for profits. Comparing with magazine ad spending in October 2000, overall ad pages dropped 16 percent in October 2001 (O'Connell et al, 2001).

After September 11, many companies in the United States were unsure how to react. Some advertisers immediately suspended ad campaigns while others ran ads addressing the aftermath with sympathetic messages (Day, 2003). Jennifer Coleman, head of planning at the

New York office of ad agency Wieden and Kennedy, pointed out that many advertisers were confused after September 11 because of the uncertainty of consumers' responses to advertising (Day, 2003). Jennifer Coleman stressed further that the worst thing a brand could do was second-guess what the public mood might be (Day, 2003).

How to Respond?

Quoting historical facts, DiMassimo (2001) suggested that advertising had to be distinctive and noticeable during wartime. Regarding the strategy of advertising, practitioners suggested using emotional and credible ads (DeMassimo, 2001; Novick, 2001). Employing emotional advertising appeals would make consumers feel good and connected to the brand. The functional or attribute-driven advertising would not create differentiation or an emotional link (Novick, 2001). In times of crisis, people need to be inspired and advertising can play a therapeutic role. Advertisers should consider using saving grace of humor in their ads to appeal the audiences (DeMassimo, 2001). On the other hand, Hatfield (2001) argued that humorous ads were out because advertisers were anxious not to offend the American public in such sensitive time. Fredric Kropp, professor of marketing at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, contended that after the September 11 tragedy, American consumers wanted stability, security, and a feeling of congruence (Seipel, 2001).

American advertisers were at a loss in finding a suitable advertising strategy for pitching their products and services after September 11. Helping its members cope with the difficult circumstances, the Association of National Advertisers came up with some advertising guidelines (Sarsen, 2001). The association advised its members to adopt a more sensitive advertising approach regarding the message, tone, imagery and placement of advertising. It also

suggested that the use of irreverent, edgy, maudlin, and comical materials in advertising were inappropriate for the situation (Sarsen Jr., 2001). Novick (2001) also argued that leveraging sentiment and patriotism would be transparently self-serving and flag-waving would damage the brand. The risk of using patriotic message in ads could be interpreted as opportunistic and exploitative (Sanders, 2001).

An online poll of 2000 consumers conducted by Leo Burnett ad agency after September 11 showed that consumers disliked patriotic appeals in advertising. Fifty-one percent of the respondents believed that companies used patriotism for their own profits, while 50% of the respondents strongly agreed that it was unethical for companies to use patriotism to increase sales (Vranica, 2003). However, in the days after September 11, New York media were fraught with ads with patriotism (Hatfield, 2001; Vranica, 2003). Advertisers hastily adopted patriotic themes in their ads by adding images of soaring eagles or the Stars and Stripes (Vranica, 2003).

One of the major trends in U.S. marketing has been the rapid growth of services. In America, the service sector of the economy includes a broad range of industries and among the 500 American largest companies; one out of three is a service-oriented company (Freiden and Goldsmith 1989). According to Kotler (1988, p.467) "A service is any act or performance that one party can offer to another that is essentially intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything. Its production may or may not be tied to a physical product."

According to Advertising Age's National Advertisers ad spending report, the annual advertising dollars spent on services advertising in the year 2000 were amounted to billions of dollars. The importance of service businesses to America's economy is undeniable. The impact of September 11 on America's economy indicates the need for a better understanding of effective advertising strategies in a national crisis. In 1991, the Persian Gulf War and the recession were

the main reasons for the sudden drop in advertising expenditures (Horst, 1992). During the Gulf War, many advertisers canceled their advertising because they feared the audience would reject advertising during wars reports (Horst, 1992). However, surveys by the major TV networks found that a majority of respondents did not feel advertising during war reports was inappropriate (Horst, 1992). After September 11, a similar audience survey conducted by the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) showed the same results (Mermigas, 2001).

In the past, research on advertising during wartime and crisis focused mainly on the effects of inappropriate reductions in advertising (Horst, 1992; Elliot, 2001; Mermigas, 2001) and little advertising research attempted to examine the characteristics of advertising. Although many advertising practitioners intuitively suggested how a brand should respond to the September 11 tragedy, none of them had conducted any research on supporting their postulations (DiMassimo, 2001; Novick, 2001; Sarsen Jr., 2001).

Studying services advertising may provide insight into the advertising strategies that advertisers use during wartime and crisis. This paper attempts to examine the impact of war on print advertising through a content analysis procedure. By identifying the types of advertising appeal embedded in the visual and verbal components of services ads, this study may provide a better understanding of advertising strategies used by advertisers in response to a national crisis. More specifically, this paper is to empirically examine: 1) Whether services advertising spending in magazines decreased in response to the September 11 attacks. 2) In times of national crisis, what kinds of advertising appeal were utilized in print advertising? A review of advertising appeals literature is presented following by research propositions, method, data collection and discussions of research results. Finally, conclusion, limitations of this study and directions for future research are suggested.

Advertising Appeals

In times of uncertainty, the strength of a brand is derived from an enduring set of stable values that it has built on over time (Day, 2003). Values are important elements in advertising. People develop positive or negative attitudes by assessing persons, objects and situations based on the dimensions they consider to be important (Franzen, 1999). The attitudes formed as to what is personally or socially desirable are called values. A value is described as a preferred way of being and can be classified into two types: functional and expressive (Franzen, 1999; Johar and Sirgy, 1991).

Advertising displays certain kind of values that are readily linked to the available products (Pollay and Gallagher, 1990). When consumers see the ads, they would respond to these displayed values that are being dramatized in the ads. To consumers, advertising is a selective reinforcement of their behaviors and values. Value-expressive (symbolic) advertising appeals work at basic pre-conscious levels as reminders and associated imagery. Functional (utilitarian) advertising appeals provide cognitive arguments to rationalize product or brand preference (Johar and Sirgy, 1991).

Persuasion in advertising relies on the psychological appeal to the consumer (Wells, Burnett, and Moriarty, 1998). An advertising appeal is something that makes a good or service particularly attractive or interesting to the consumer. Appeals are embedded in ads designing to represent the supposed values of the desired target consumer and are chosen to represent values thought to be held by the target consumer (Franzen, 1999). By associating the desirable aspects to the product, advertising appeals are used as an active part in positioning the product in the marketplace.

Rational and Emotional Appeals

One of the basic elements associated with an advertising strategy is the choice of advertising appeals. Turley and Kelley (1997) categorize advertising appeals into two broad types: rational and emotional. Rational advertising appeals typically refer to the quality, value or performance of the product and seek to elicit cognitive responses from consumers. Rational advertising appeals originate from the traditional information processing model of persuasion (Albers-Miller and Stafford, 1999). Persuasive (informational) advertising takes the form of reasoned argument by communicating the product attribute (Franzen, 1999; Rossiter and Percy, 1987). This attribute must represent a value or benefit for the message receivers and be credible enough to change the message receivers' beliefs about the advertised brand. The persuasion model is based on step-by-step rational influencing and traditional learning processes where consumers are believed to make logical and rational purchase decision (Albers-Miller and Stafford, 1999; Franzen, 1999).

Pickett, Grove and Laband (2001) claim that informational advertising containing verifiable and factual information is relevant and important to the potential consumer. Information cues in informational ads include the name of the product, the locations where it can be purchased, its price and other relevant information. In essence, informational advertising helps consumers form evaluative criteria for assessing the risk of purchasing the advertised product (Pickett, Grove and Laband, 2001).

In contrast, emotional (transformational) advertising appeals attempt to elicit negative or positive emotions from consumers (Huang, 1997; Rossiter and Percy, 1987). They are based on the emotional and experiential side of consumption. As Holbrook and Westwood (1989) suggest, during the consumption of the product consumers may experience any combination of love, hate,

fear, anger, joy, sadness, pleasure, disgust, interest and surprise. These feelings represent the “experience values.”(Franzen, 1999) Constructing these affective elements in advertising, advertisers are able to tie their products or services to some relevant aspect of the consumer’s emotional life and appeal their interest. Moreover, emotional (transformational) advertising aims to elicit consumers’ good feelings about the brand and rely on such feelings for effectiveness (Rossiter and Percy, 1987; Albers-Miller and Stafford, 1999). The emotions model is to arouse the defined brand feelings from consumers while processing the ad message. The associated feelings developed between the consumer and the brand follow the process of classical conditioning (images and sounds are used in ads to generate the intended unambiguously emotions in message receivers) and are present latently in every message receiver (Franzen, 1999). Rossiter and Percy (1987) suggest that no ad is purely informational or purely emotional, it depends on the emphasis of the advertising message.

Research by Pickett, Grove and Laband (2001) indicated that service ads contained more of specific information cues than ads for physical goods. Pickett et al argue that the intangibility of services prompts services advertisers using more factual information in their ads to make their services appear more tangible. On the contrary, Cutler and Javalgi (1993) contend that services advertising uses emotional appeals more often than goods advertising. Theoretically speaking, services advertisers tend to use more emotional advertising to overcome the intangible aspect of their services (Ha, 1998). By projecting the experience of using the brand in emotional terms help enhance consumers’ understanding of the concreteness and vividness of the service (Ha, 1998). Based on the foregoing discussion a theoretical background for understanding the effects of rational and emotional appeal in advertising is essential to this study.

Establishing recognition or recall of an ad is a matter of noting whether consumers have registered the words, images and sounds used (Franzen, 1999). Advertising stimuli can be in the forms of either visual or verbal or the combination of both. There are two types of advertising stimulus: instrumental and symbolic (Franzen, 1999). Instrumental stimuli are information applying to the concrete characteristics, effect and effectiveness of the product or service and its application. Symbolic stimuli associate the use of the product or service with certain social situations or circumstances. These include displayed emotions, sounds or images in ads that can evoke consumers' feelings.

Imagery

MacInnis and Price (1987) point out that advertising stimuli such as pictures are more memorable than words. Alesandrini (1982) also found that pictures highlight the message topic and its main points to the viewers, and can draw viewers' attention. The objective of using visuals in advertising is to create impact and stimulate interest. Ha (1998) suggests that many association attributes and values in services ads are identified from the visuals not in the copy. Visual elements facilitate consumers processing the advertising message. Moriarty (1987) identifies two categories of processing visual appeals in advertising: rational/ informational process and emotional/ symbolic process

According to Moriarty (1987), American ads use a number of different visual processes for communicating the ad message. They are description, association, metaphor and storytelling. Rational visual appeals use literal imagery to communicate factual information. Their role is to identify, describe and report details of the advertised product or service. Rational visual appeals

are a product of direct experience. Description of product features and attributes is one aspect of advertising appeals.

Another aspect of advertising appeals is to create emotional associations. Emotional visual appeals are designed to link the product with a lifestyle, with a certain type of person who uses the product or with a situation where the product is used (Moriarty, 1987). Metaphorical or symbolic ads use simple form as a substitute such as narrative to dramatize the benefit of the product. The aesthetic patterns in a print ad are specifically designed for their visual impact to arouse readers' attention. In general, American print ads use more product description and emotional association appeals. Metaphorical approach and aesthetic patterns are less commonly used in print advertising (Moriarty, 1987).

Headlines

Turley and Kelly (1997) point out that headlines in print ads are closely connected to the advertising message appeal. Headlines are important to the effectiveness of an ad because a headline may strongly influence the reading of an ad by consumers (Hitchon, 1991). Headlines are a type of word appeal that advertisers use to convey a creative emphasis (Wells, Burnett, and Moriarty, 1998). According to Beltrammi and Blasko (1986), the very essence of creativity has always been described by two words: relevant combination. The use of familiar sayings in advertising headlines establishes relevance in the mind of the consumer; in addition the unusual twist of the saying contributes an extra increment of interest. Print ads using familiar saying types of headline may elicit emotional responses from readers.

However, not all advertising headlines utilize the relevant combination style of wording. The news and information types of headline convey more informative and straightforward

messages such as communicating something truly new offered by the products or services. Print ad headlines offering readers the direct benefit of the product or service seek to elicit cognitive responses. Rational headlines are usually employed in new product launch. To distinguish different types of advertising appeal in headlines is also important to this study because pictures and headlines are important advertising cues in print advertising.

Research Questions

All the research questions are formulated based on the preceding discussion and the climate in society after the September 11 tragedy. Based on the discussion above, the first research question is:

R1: Did service companies reduce their magazine advertising expenditures in response to the September 11 tragedy?

Sarsen Jr. (2001) pointed out that consumers' emotions were likely to change constantly in the following months after the September 11 tragedy. Advertising that sought to create an emotional link to a brand might seem to be inappropriate. An experimental research by Stafford and Day (1995) showed that rational appeals were more effective than emotional appeals in creating favorable levels of attitude toward services ads. It is posited that using rational appeals are more suitable for communicating credible advertising promises to consumers. Based on this postulation, the second and third research questions are:

R2: Did service companies use more rational visual appeals than emotional visual appeals in their print ads in times of crisis?

R3: Did service companies use more rational headlines than emotional headlines in their print ads after the impact of September 11?

In New York media, some services advertisers hastily adopted patriotic themes in their ads, while others immediately canceled their ads in response to the September 11 tragedy (Hatfield, 2001; Vranica, 2003). The fourth and the fifth research questions are formulated to address the impact of September 11 on national magazines.

R4: Did service companies use more patriotic appeals in their print ads after the impact of September 11?

R5: Did the travel industry reduce magazine advertising pages more than other service companies after September 11?

Method

Research Design

This study investigated magazine advertising using content analysis procedure. Content analysis is a research technique for making valid inferences from data to their context (Neuendorf, 2002). Content analysis allows researchers to identify advertising appeals most commonly used by advertisers (Turley and Kelley, 1997). Since the research purpose was to measure the impact of September 11 on services advertising in magazines, a time-series research design was implemented. According to Neuendorf (2002), the statistical test of time-series analysis allows the messages and receiver characteristics to be summarized and then linked by a time period. This research was conducted in three phases because a cross-sectional relationship between the time before and after the September 11 tragedy was important. Phase one set to examine magazine advertising before September 11. Phase two investigated the immediate impact on magazine advertising after September 11. The third phase was to study any long-term

effects imposed on magazine advertising in the post September 11 period. Analysis was based on comparison of the findings from the three phases.

Sample

The total sample analyzed consisted of 72 magazine issues. Twenty-four magazine issues were selected respectively for each phase of the study. To ensure consistency of the time-series analysis, all magazine issues were selected from two weekly magazine titles, namely Newsweek and Time.

Selection of magazine types was based on Cutler and Javalgi's (1993) categorization of magazines. Basically there are three types of magazines: women's, business and general interest. Women's category was not included in this study on account of its fashion-oriented nature. Similarly, business category was not selected due to its business-to-business nature. National magazines such as Newsweek and Time fell under the general interest type of magazine. Both magazine titles were selected based on its popularity, high-circulation and representation of its category. According to Advertising Age's semi-annual rankings of magazines in the last six months of 2001, Newsweek and Time had a circulation of over 3 million copies per week.

Since this was a time-series study, weekly publications provided a broader base than monthly magazines in data collection. The first phase covered 24 issues of magazine from October 9, 2000 to December 25, 2000, approximately 13 months before the September 11 attacks. The second phase covered from October 8, 2001 to December 24, 2001, which was 4 weeks after the September 11 tragedy took place. Phase three covered from October 7, 2002 to December 23, 2002, approximately 13 months after September 11.

The lapsed time between September 11, 2001 and the starting date of second phase was to ensure all collected data truly reflecting the situation that was being analyzed. As a standard practice of magazine production, publications usually impose a deadline on accepting advertising materials, which is approximately one month in advance before the date of publication. Right after the September 11 attacks, advertisers might not be able to pull their ads because of the restriction imposed. By following the industry standard, a 4 weeks gap might avoid collecting inaccurate data for this study.

Unit of analysis was based on the size of the ad. In this study, all full-page and double-page spread ads in each magazine issue were selected for analysis and when duplicate ads were identified the second ad was not counted (an identical ad might appear in September and October). Ad sizes smaller than a full-page were excluded from this analysis.

Content Classification (Coding Scheme)

The content of services ads were classified according to 4 variables. They were service categories, types of visual appeal, types of headline appeal, and patriotic appeals. See appendix A for coding procedures.

Classification of Services

Service categories were categorized by the approach described by Culter and Javalgi (1993) and were revised to accommodate more categories. In this study only service categories and other category were created. The service categories were represented by products like car-rental, cable TV, bank including credit card services, airlines, hotel, insurance, investments, online services (e-commerce and Internet service providers), travel agencies, and mobile phone

services. The other category included consumer durable products, consumer non-durable products, pharmaceutical products, advocacy advertisements, public service advertisements, furniture, and home-repair items. The other category was excluded from this analysis.

Visual Appeals

Emotional visual appeals were categorized by using Holbrook and Westwood's (1989) identification of types of emotional appeal and Aaker, Stayman and Vezina's (1988) typology of positive feeling and negative feeling response. Ads were classified as using positive emotional appeals if the theme of the ad emphasized happiness, cheerfulness, humor, acceptance, and romance. Negative emotional appeals were ads that connoted feelings of annoyance, irritation, depression, fear and anger. Visual elements for both positive and negative emotional appeals were symbolic (Moriarty, 1989). These elements included associations with lifestyles and situations in metaphorical or narrative presentations.

The rational visual appeals were categorized by the approach described by Culter and Javalgi (1993). Ads were classified as rational if the theme of the ad emphasized convenience, ease of use, economy, quality, reliability, safety, timesaving and variety of choices. Based on Moriarty's (1989) visual process typology, rational visual appeals were literal identification of a brand, product description, product demonstration, and product comparison between competitors.

Patriotic Appeals

Patriotic appeals were classified according to Chen and Schweitzer's (1996) values approach. In this case, ads showing the love and loyalty to one's own nation inherent in the

nature or in the use of a product were suggested. Patriotic ads might contain images of soaring eagles or the Stars and Stripes (Vranica, 2003).

Types of Headline

Headlines were classified according to the typology described by Beltramini and Blasko (1986) as either emotional or rational types. Emotional types of headline included two categories: familiar saying and curiosity. Familiar saying types of headline suggested new twist on a familiar phrase, a play-on-words, an unusual use of common expression, and a frequently recognized sequence of words (Beltramini and Blasko, 1986). Curiosity headlines included how to, you should know, wait until you see this, here's how, and an offer made to arouse the reader's interest (Beltramini and Blasko, 1986).

Rational types of headline also consisted of two categories: news/information and benefit. News/information category included declarative statements announcing or claiming direct benefits of the product or service and benefit types of headline indicated how the product or its use would benefit the buyer.

A pretest of 36 randomly selected services ads, 18 ads from each magazine title, was not included in the sample. Disagreement in pretest coding helped revise the coding scheme until a consensus was reached. Two graduate students majoring in advertising coded the content individually. Using Hosti's (1969) intercoder agreement method, the intercoder agreement achieved: .94 for service categories, .93 for types of visual appeal, .82 for patriotic appeals and .87 for types of headline. The results were considered high according to Neuendorf's (2002) standards of reliability for content analysis. In this study, simple frequency count and Chi-square goodness-of-fit test were used for the measures.

Findings

In phase one, 171 services ads or 30% were identified from 572 print ads. Phase two identified 137 services ads or 24.8% from a total of 551 magazine ads. Phase three identified 191 services ads or 30% from a total of 635 ads. Apparently, the proportion of services ads in phase one and phase three was the same. To test if there was a significant difference between the ad pages of the three phases, Chi-square goodness-of-fit test was employed. The results showed a significant difference between the number of ad pages appeared, $X^2 (2, n=499) = 8.8, p<.05$. Examination of the data relating to the first research question, which asked did service companies reduce their magazine advertising expenditures in response to the September 11 tragedy was supported.

Regarding the use of emotional visual appeals, phase one found that 120 ads or 70% used emotional appeals. In phase two, 78 ads or 56.9 % used emotional appeals and 117 ads or 61.2% were identified in phase three using emotional appeals. A Chi-square analysis of emotional visual appeals showed a significant result, $X^2 (2, n=486) = 10.41, p<.01$.

In examining the use of rational visual appeals, phase one discovered that 41 ads or 23% used rational visual appeals. Phase two found that 59 ads or 43% had rational visuals and 72 ads or 37% in phase three also used rational visual appeals. There was a significant difference between services ads using rational visual appeals in the three phases, $X^2 (2, n=172) = 8.2, p<.05$.

The significant results supported the second research question. Services advertisers used more rational visual appeals than emotional visual appeals in their ads after the September 11 tragedy.

Addressing research question 3, the results found that rational headlines were more likely to be used than emotional headlines in service ads after the September 11 tragedy. Phase one identified 119 ads or 69.5% using emotional headlines, phase two found that 70 ads or 51% used emotional headlines and phase 3 discovered 107 ads or 56% had emotional headlines. There was a significant difference in using emotional headlines between the three phases, $X^2(2, n=296) = 12.1, p < .01$.

In examining the use of rational headlines, phase one found that 41 ads or 24% used rational headlines. Phase two and phase three findings were 57 ads or 41% and 80 ads or 41% respectively. Chi-square test showed a significant result, $X^2(2, n=178) = 12.8, p < .01$.

The fourth research question asked did services ads use more patriotic appeals in response to the September 11 tragedy. The research findings in the 3 phases showed a very small proportion of patriotic appeals, less than 3% in each phase, and were not significant to support research question 4.

The research findings partially supported research question 5. Only airlines showed a significant result in reducing ad pages in magazines. The results also showed that no travel agencies and car rental companies ran any ads after September 11. However, the results showed significant differences in ad page change for insurance and mobile phone services. Table 1 compares the relative frequencies of ad pages between the 3 phases of individual service category.

Table 1

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Significance Level
Cable TV	7.6%	5.8%	9.4% n=39	NS
Airlines	17.5%	5.8%	12.7% n=62	$X^2=12.56, p<.01$
Insurance	11%	24.1%	18.8% n=88	$X^2=7.9, p<.05$
Investments	29.8%	28.5%	26.7% n=141	NS
Bank Services	13.5%	10.9%	12.6% n=62	NS
Hotel	7%	5.8%	3.1% n=26	NS
Online Services	8.1%	6.6%	2.6% n=28	NS
Mobile Phone	3.5%	12.4%	9.9% n=42	$X^2=6.9, p<.05$
Travel Agencies	0.6%	0%	2.6%	Small cell
Car rental	1.4%	0%	1.6%	Small cell

Discussion And Implications

The findings of this study simply show that the nature and content of services ads in general-interest periodicals changed after September 11. Services advertisers did reduce placing ads in national magazines after the tragedy. By comparing phase one and phase two findings, services ads dropped from 30% to 24.8%. However, the findings in phase three showed that service ads recovered to 30% a year after the September 11 attacks took place.

In terms of travel ads, airlines were the most affected service category. Significant reduction in air travel advertising was found in this study. Before September 11, airlines ad pages constituted 17.5% of the total services ad pages and decreased to only 5.8% after the tragedy happened. Airlines ad pages did not fully recover even during peak travel season.

Phase three findings showed that airlines ad pages bounced back to 12.7% in the last quarter of 2002. As O'Connell, Rose and Vrancica (2001) point out, any disaster involving airlines jet will definitely affect the whole air travel industry because airlines will immediately pull their ads from media outlets. Although car rental, hotel and travel agencies ad proportions were not significant to make any inference, the impact on airlines might create a chain reaction that would affect other travel businesses as well. Hotel ads dropped slightly from 7% to 5.8% in the last quarter of 2001 and dwindled further to 3% in the following year. Travel agencies and car rental companies did not place any ad in magazines after September 11. This is consistent with Hatfield's (2001) assumptions that after the September 11 tragedy, travel advertisers were extremely cautious of advertising because their creative strategy usually associated fun with their products.

However, the findings also revealed that instead of reducing advertising spending in magazines some services advertisers increased placing more ads to promote their products and services. The proportion of ads for mobile phone advertisers increased from 3.5% before September 11 to 12.4% after September 11. Insurance advertising also grew from 11% to 24%. Checking if there was any seasonality effect on mobile phone services, phase three research findings indicated that mobile phone ad pages decreased to 9.9%. The growth of mobile phone ad pages implies that in chaotic situations, such as the September 11 attacks, having a mobile phone becomes indispensable because it help people communicate with each other. Similarly, insurance companies advertise their products and services as a long-term security plan for the unknown future lying ahead. By appealing consumers to the functional attributes of their products and services, mobile phone and insurance advertisers could capitalize on people's sense of insecurity without being exploitative after September 11. The overall findings in this study do

not suggest that all services advertisers would reduce their advertising spending in times of crisis.

Research examining services advertising strategy has often resulted in conflicting findings. The results from this study indicate that services ads were more likely to use emotional visual appeals and emotional headlines. However, after September 11, services advertisers used more rational appeals in their ads. This implies that after September 11, services advertisers were cautious about the adverse effects of emotional advertising on the fragility of consumers' feelings. To keep the ads simple and credible, using rational advertising appeals are considered more appropriate in a national crisis. In terms of emotional visual appeals, ads containing emotional visuals decreased from 70% to 56% after September 11. The use of rational visuals grew from 23% to 41%. A year after September 11, when the prevailing mood in society had become more positive, services advertisers reverted back to use more emotional visual appeals. Phase three showed that the proportion of using emotional visuals was 24% higher than rational visuals. Rational visuals appeals decreased from 41% in phase two to 37% in phase three. The findings are consistent with Cutler and Javalgi's (1993) argument that under normal circumstances, services ads use more emotional visual appeals. However, if difficult situations arise services advertisers may run informative tactical ads to avoid any incongruity with the consumers' feelings.

Regarding the use of types of headline, the findings from this study revealed that the use of rational headlines in services ads had increased from 24% before September 11 to 41% after September 11. This implies that service advertisers would use information cues such as headlines in their ads to build up their products or services credibility during crisis. The findings are also consistent with DiMassimo's (2001) assumption that advertising claims in wartime have

to be believable. Although the results suggest that the use of rational visual and verbal appeals increased in services print ads during crisis, under normal circumstances emotional visual and verbal appeals are still commonly used in a larger proportion.

The research findings did show a very small proportion of patriotic appeals, less than 3%, in services advertising after September 11. These results might be applicable only in a national media context. After September 11, New York media were fraught with patriotic ads (Hatfield, 2001; Vranica, 2003) that later were deemed as an inappropriate advertising strategy by many ad executives (Vranica, 2003). The differences between local and national advertising adopting patriotic themes imply that local advertising is a short-term communication effort addressing local situations (Kotler, 1997) while national advertising focuses mainly on long-term brand building (Wells, Burnett and Moriarty, 1998). However, the findings of this study are not significant to support the assumption of leveraging patriotism as advertising appeals in wartime. This supports DiMassimo's (2001) claim that patriotism is not a suitable creative strategy in advertising especially during crisis such as in the aftermath of September.

Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations were inherent in this study. Firstly, this study was conducted in a limited time period due to the constraint of resources. To code a large amount of data within a short period might create coder fatigue effects (Neuendorf, 2002). Therefore, future researchers should allow themselves ample of time to carry out a similar kind of study.

Secondly, this research project only sampled two weekly magazine titles, which is considered not broad enough to provide an overall view of the September 11 impact on advertising as a whole. In future, it is better for researchers to include different types of print

media such as lifestyle magazines, special interest magazines and newspapers as well to broaden the range of data collection. If time and budget allow, future research into the impact of September 11 on advertising should also include electronic media, e.g. television and radio. This may provide a better understanding of how advertisers use different advertising strategies to position their products and services in a national crisis.

Thirdly, selection of types of advertiser in this study also restricts drawing a more accurate inference. Since this study selectively used services advertisements as research data, the findings might not truly reflect the overall response of advertisers to the September 11 tragedy. Future research should also include consumer products advertising because both services and products advertising would constitute a good representation of advertisers.

Finally, the descriptive nature of content analysis does not allow this study to detect any advertising effects on consumers. Future research should be conducted to investigate which type of advertising appeals is more effective in eliciting positive responses from the consumers and is more congruent with their feelings during a crisis.

The impact of September 11 has protracted effects on society; there are still numerous gaps in the literature about its impact on the advertising industry that need to be addressed by additional advertising research. Although the findings of this particular study are not generalizable to other forms of advertising, the results still provide a basis for understanding the use of different types of advertising strategy in a national crisis.

Conclusion

This research has provided a basic insight into the impact of September 11 on the advertising industry. One can conclude from this study that September 11 did affect the service

industries as most services advertisers had reduced their advertising spending in magazines. The travel industry suffered the most especially airlines when airplanes were involved in the disasters.

In addition to the September 11 tragedy, an American Airlines' jet crashed into a residential neighborhood in New York Queens eliminating more ad pages in magazines. According to the standard policy of the air travel industry, airlines will pull all their advertising for a minimum of 48 hours following any disaster especially if there is loss of life (O'Connell, Rose and Vrancica, 2001). This could be one of the reasons that airlines ad pages dropped drastically.

Airlines mishap may create a chain reaction that can affect other travel industries such as travel agencies and hotels. After September 11, only foreign airlines placed ads in magazines. This suggests that both the September 11 attacks and the accident of American Airlines jet did hit the domestic airlines industry hard and American air carriers were more cautious about the prevailing mood in American society during this particular period of time. This is equally true for hotel advertisers because hotel ads appeared in magazines were mainly promotions for foreign resorts. Some of the practitioners' postulations are supported by the findings of this study. As indicated by the results, during a national crisis some services advertisers are sensible enough to use informative tactical ads to enhance the credibility of their brands. Lessening the use of emotional advertising appeals can avoid any unintended advertising effects on damaging the brand. After all Patriotism is not a creative advertising strategy that can be leveraged in a national crisis.

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Warning Signals, Wind Speeds and What Next: A Pilot Project for Disaster Preparedness Among Residents of Central Vietnam's Lagoons

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Warning Signals, Wind Speeds and What Next: A Pilot Project for Disaster Preparedness Among Residents of Central Vietnam's Lagoons

Abstract

This paper describes a pilot disaster risk communication campaign for Central Vietnam. Central Vietnam is highly prone to water related disasters, which cause enormous loss of lives and livelihood and make sustainable development almost impossible. Residents in the lagoons of Central Vietnam, who are particularly vulnerable because of their proximity to water, were the target audience for this project. The project built social marketing capacity among Vietnamese government officials and the target communities as well as worked to prepare the target public for storms and floods through the use of a creative and media campaign based on secondary and primary research.

The significance of the project lies in the fact that this may be one of the first projects in Vietnam to systematically plan a campaign based on sound social marketing principles. These principles are new in Vietnam, a communist country that has only recently introduced doi moi or economic reform. The project is part of a paradigm shift that is taking place in disaster mitigation where disaster relief, the mainstay to date, is now coupled with disaster preparedness. The project also signals the greater acceptance of non-structural and particularly communication approaches to disaster preparedness, where in the past the emphasis has been on structural solutions such as building dykes and dams.

Warning Signals, Wind Speeds and What Next: A Pilot Project for Disaster Preparedness Among Residents of Central Vietnam's Lagoons

Purpose and Significance

This paper describes a social marketing campaign for flood and storm preparedness among residents of the lagoons of Central Vietnam. The focus of this paper is on 1) the research conducted to plan the campaign and 2) the campaign itself i) as planned and ii) as it was implemented.¹ A brief overview of a long-term plan is also provided. The paper also provides a brief background on disaster mitigation as well as on Vietnam.

The significance of reporting this project lies first in the paradigm shift that is currently taking place in disaster mitigation, wherein pre-disaster preparedness is receiving attention as a critical component of and complementary to post-disaster relief in the roster of mitigation strategies. Additional significance derives from the focus on Vietnam, a country that faces critical water related disasters that result in severe loss of life, livelihood, homes, and infrastructure, and has had little exposure to marketing principles because of its only recent (1986) introduction of economic reform into its socialist economic system. Finally, the significance of a project of this nature in garnering national support for and acceptance of such solutions (Alternatives and Development Workshop, 2002) in a country where in the past equipment rather than skills were valued in disaster mitigation (Suthirak & Weersinghe, 2002) must be noted.

Vietnam and its Center

Vietnam is a socialist republic with a population of 75 million. Colonized by France, Vietnam received its independence in 1945 after World War II, but French rule continued until 1954 when they were defeated by Ho Chi Minh's communist forces that took control of the north. The south received U.S. economic and military aid through the 1960s to bolster the government, but U.S. military involvement came to a stop after a cease-fire agreement in 1973. By 1975, the entire country was under communist control. Only recently have Communist Party leaders initiated doi moi (meaning change and newness) or economic reform. Partly as a result of

¹ The official campaign was completed by April end so this paper now reports a completed project rather than a project in progress (as was the case at time of submission of the paper) and includes results of the qualitative evaluation.

prior economic policies, the country is among the poorest in the world. Central Vietnam is in turn the poorest region in Vietnam, with 10.6% of its eight million people living in poverty and many of the remaining living just above poverty level (Vietnam Development Report, 2000 as cited in Partnership to Mitigate Natural Disasters in Central Vietnam, 2000).

Delayed economic reform apart, recurring water related disasters of considerable magnitude that make the sustenance of development impossible, have contributed to this condition. A long and narrow S-shaped country, mostly mountainous and hilly, but also made up of a very long coastline and two major river deltas which are its main cultivated areas, Vietnam is subject to severe weather and very high rainfall. About 4,200 square miles of the country is under water bodies such as lagoons (Suthirak & Weersinghe, 2002). The season for typhoons and tropical depressions is May/June to November/December and for heavy rains is September to December (Partnership to Mitigate Natural Disasters in Central Vietnam, 2000; Center for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters [CRED], 1997). An average of six typhoons strike the country every year; 1964 witnessed 18 (CRED, 1997). According to the International Hydrologic Technology Transfer Center (n.d.), flooding from these vagaries of nature is the most destructive force in Vietnam, resulting in considerable loss of lives and livelihood. The number of victims from typhoons and floods ranges between 100 and 1,000 per year (CRED, 1997), and the loss to livelihood and infrastructure has been enormous particularly in the last half of the decade of the 90s (Asian Disaster Preparedness Center [ADPC], 2002).

Central Vietnam, composed of the North Central Coast, South Central Coast, and the Central Highlands, these in turn divided into 16 provinces, and holding 26% of the country's population, is particularly subject to hostile weather because of its location (along the coast of the East Sea) and topography (CRED, 1997). All three regions of Central Vietnam suffer from floods, flashfloods and storms of the highest severity. Topographically, Central Vietnam consists of mountains to the west, narrow low-lying plains to their east, which are broken by river systems, and finally the coastline. The mountains serve as catchment for the rivers that in turn discharge excess waters as floods into the narrow plains. Apart from receiving floods, the coastal areas also experience typhoons and storms.

At the same time, these very factors, flooding from the rivers and the large coastal areas, largely define the occupations of the population that lives in these areas. The floods from the rivers deposit rich soil in the lowlands making these areas fertile and therefore some of the more

densely populated ones in Central Vietnam. Agriculture (largely, rice farming) is one of the mainstays of Central Vietnam. In coastal areas, on the other hand, fishing is one of the major occupations. Both these occupations, farming and fishing, are however very vulnerable to water related disasters. Therefore, water related disasters reap costs in terms of land, livestock, livelihood and infrastructure. For example, the severe floods of 1999 washed away agricultural land and destroyed crops, food, seeds, fertilizer, etc., apart from the damage they did on infrastructure.

These disasters also cost lives. Of the floods that have occurred recently, the November 1999 flood is considered by many to be the severest to hit Central Vietnam (US Agency for International Development, 1999). During the first two weeks of November 1999, six provinces in central Vietnam experienced the heaviest rainfall and flooding to hit the region in 40 years. To make matters worse and leaving little time for recovery, a second flood occurred in December. The provinces that were hardest hit in November were Quang Binh, Quang Tri, Thua Thien-Hue, Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, and Binh Dinh, as well as the city of DaNang (NDM-Partnership, 2000). Thua Thien-Hue, Da Nang, Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, and Binh Dinh were affected again in December. In the Central Provinces, the 1999 floods resulted in the loss of over 700 lives and damage worth US\$340 million. Another storm that appears to live in the people's memory because of its considerable impact had occurred earlier in 1985.

These conditions are bad enough, but worse still is the fact that the vulnerability of the Central Vietnamese people to water related disasters is increasing because of population pressures, increasing economic investment in these areas (Alternatives and Development Workshop, 2002), and breakdown of traditional preparedness and response mechanisms (NDM-Partnership, 2000).

Disaster Mitigation: Disaster Relief versus Disaster Preparedness

Disasters, manmade and natural, occur in all parts of the world, and inflict considerable damage to property and pain to people. Governments, volunteer groups, non-government agencies, and several other sectors of society play a role in mitigating disasters. Historically, particularly in parts of Asia and certainly in Vietnam, however, this mitigation effort has focused on disaster relief, i.e., dealing with cleaning up, providing aid and assistance to victims of disasters, and such, essentially a crisis response (CRED, 1997; NDM-Partnership, 2000, p. 21). Soon, the particular disaster is forgotten and attention shifts rapidly to the next one. The need for

a more comprehensive approach to dealing with disasters, to include disaster preparedness, has been underscored in many reports, fact-finding and project-based, governmental and non-governmental, on disaster mitigation, resulting in greater acceptance of this approach in parts of Asia (CRED, 1997).

Disaster Preparedness: Structural versus Non-Structural Solutions

Apart from recognition of the need to move from relief assistance alone to preparedness and relief assistance both, there is another change taking place. In the past, where attention has been paid to disaster preparedness, the focus has been on structural solutions: construct earthquake resistant homes and schools, build reservoirs, implement a dyke system, and so on depending on the type of disaster. These are certainly worthwhile initiatives, but disaster preparedness has another face: that of the people who are potential victims. These people need to be educated about risks and solutions, about how to prepare and what to do when a disaster strikes, and to feel empowered at an individual level for coping with disasters. That is, grassroots level disaster preparedness training and planning is needed. Experience now indicates that, for a more holistic approach, non-structural solutions such as education, public awareness and risk communication are important supplementary and complementary activities in the roster of disaster preparedness programs. As their worth is being understood, non-structural solutions are gaining footing and being recognized as having critical utility in fighting natural disasters. Capacity building in them is increasing. It must be noted however that non-structural solutions are not limited to communication campaigns but also entail disaster area mapping and zoning, implementing disaster warning systems, and so forth (NDM-Partnership, 2000).

To optimize disaster mitigation then, a focus on disaster preparedness with a mix of structural and structural strategies including risk communication must be considered (CRED, 1997; NDM Partnership, 2001a). This approach is particularly needed in Vietnam where while non-structural solutions appear to be gaining ground (Standing Office of the Central Committee for Flood and Storm Control, Disaster Management in Viet Nam, n.d.), the focus on structural solutions appears to have been dominant (CRED, 1997).

Non-Structural Solutions: Disaster Risk Communication

Disaster risk communication or social marketing as it is called in its generic form (i.e., the application of marketing principles to social causes), while not the only non-structural solution, is a critical one. People need to know that they are at risk and be able to recognize its imminence

or onset. They need to know how to prepare for and respond to the risk if it occurs. They need to know of the solutions in place to assist them, and of what actions they need to take to benefit from these solutions. They also need to know what they can do independent of these solutions. In the context of water-related disasters, several non-governmental organizations have suggested similarly that attention be paid to public awareness programs including television and radio campaigns (NDM-Partnership, 2000, p. 7) that focus on creating awareness about storm ratings and corresponding dangers, what to do in the case storms/floods of varying strengths, and where to get additional information on preparedness activities.

Specific micro-level data are available that support this move in Vietnam. For example, data from the 1999 floods in Vietnam indicate that people were unaware of the dangers of flooding. People became trapped in their attics, which are generally considered safe places by them for storage of paddy, etc. (NDM-Partnership, 2000, p. 19). Several lost their lives in attempting to save property or rescue others. People had little awareness of water safety and proper rescue behavior, and swimming skills were rudimentary. In general, warning messages do not provide clear guidance and villagers do not know how to interpret information that is provided to them. In fact, there is a need for improved awareness of the threat from disasters related to water (and we might add, of solutions) at all levels (NDM-Partnership, 2001b): government officials, volunteer groups, and other agencies. These groups are all appropriate and necessary target audiences of social marketing campaigns even though the public remains key.

Two issues however need to be kept in mind in conceiving, designing and implementing risk communication projects. First, it needs to be recognized that for risk communication campaigns to work effectively, corresponding solutions must be in place. For example, if the public is taught to recognize storm warning levels, then the warning system needs to be in place and timely in issuing warnings. Some indications are that warning systems are not always reliable in Vietnam (International Hydrologic Technology Transfer Center, n.d.). Second, it is critical that, where and when appropriate, campaigns are planned and implemented with input from and involvement of local people, namely the target audience and local implementers, to create a sense of ownership of and investment in the solution. The target groups must feel that they are part of the solution, its creation and its implementation and therefore also its maintenance post-project completion. Such an approach enables individuals and communities to meet institutions and systems half-way instead of being in a dependency relationship with them.

According to the National Disaster Mitigation Partnership, a 2001 coalition of the Vietnamese government, the Dutch government, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and other international donors, working on the problem in Vietnam, “By soliciting the participation of the people most directly affected by natural disasters through a *grassroots participatory approach*, the afflicted communities will become *empowered* and share a sense of *ownership* of the projects they have developed. This *empowerment* and *self-determination* are the foundations of sound and sustainable socio-economic development” (NDM-Partnership, 2000, p. 4).

Of critical importance is the empowerment of local implementers too by returning at least partial decision making to them. This is necessary for project success but also, particularly in a decentralizing economy such as Vietnam’s, develops confidence and ability among local leaders to tackle the next project themselves, to conceive it and design it, and thus encourages their faith in localized problem solving and decision making. The project described herein falls squarely within this framework.

Disaster Risk Communication in the Lagoons of Central Vietnam

While other projects have been conducted on disaster preparedness in many parts of the world including Vietnam, such as the 1997 DIPECHO Program for Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Preparedness (CRED, 1997), the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), a non-governmental organization headquartered in Bangkok, Thailand, has made preparedness its mantra and is now adopting non-structural solutions, particularly risk communication, as part of its mix of solutions having recognized their impact (ADPC, 2002). While several ADPC projects have used public awareness as part of project implementation, the project in the lagoons of Central Vietnam is the first (and only among three in a group, see below) in which a disaster risk communication plan has been systematically researched, conceived, and planned.

The Central Vietnam project is part of the Disaster Reduction Program--Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam (DRP-CLV) project funded by DANIDA for administration/implementation by ADPC. DANIDA is an NGO that reflects Danish development assistance priorities for developing countries in areas such as women’s participation in development, the environment, promotion of democracy and observation of human rights (DANIDA, n.d.). On-site assistance to the project was provided by the Vietnamese government, in particular officials and staff of the Disaster

Management Center, under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), as well as by ADPC staff.

Objectives of the DRP--CLV for Vietnam

The program's general goal was to develop both individual (public) and institutional (officials, agencies, volunteers, etc.) capacity in disaster mitigation and thus create a culture of safety (ADPC, 2002). The mandate from DANIDA outlined two requirements. One, to create and implement a short-term, pilot, community disaster management awareness program for flood prone areas in Central Vietnam with specific focus on basic information about floods and storms and effective measures for preparedness to be communicated to villages, families and individuals (ADPC, 2002). Two, to develop a three to five year strategy for water related disaster preparedness for Central Vietnam based on the experience of the short-term pilot. The disaster risk communication approach indicated in the DANIDA mandate is critical in and of itself but is also supported by Vietnamese government priorities (Government of Vietnam as cited in ADPC, 2002).

Short-Term Pilot Project

Project Planning

Project planning went through several phases. An outline is presented below, with details provided in individual sections.

- First, an ADPC team visited Central Vietnam to collect secondary data. Based on this data, the team decided that residents of Central Vietnam's lagoons, including those who lived on land and others who lived on boats (the boat people), would be the target audience for the disaster risk communication project.
- Second, using a questionnaire, ADPC collected primary data to obtain a profile of the target audience. This honed the definition of the target audience in terms of some key characteristics useful for the development of the pilot campaign.
- Third, the author conducted a three-day workshop through interpretation, in Hue city in Central Vietnam, for a group of Vietnamese government officials and local non-governmental organization staff members to provide social marketing training and simultaneously receive input for the pilot project. The materials from this workshop have been translated for distribution to build capacity in disaster risk communication. The input received was formalized by the author into a disaster risk communication campaign plan for production and implementation

Step One: Secondary Research, Target Audience Selection

An ADPC team visited Central Vietnam for secondary research and collected information on disasters and their effect, public awareness campaigns conducted to date by various agencies,

and government agencies involved in disaster management. They documented the losses due to water related disasters particularly noting the effect on residents of lagoons, outlined the government structure in place to deal with these disasters, and found that while some NGOs had done good work in public awareness, on the whole, little attention had been paid to non-structural, risk communication projects for water related disasters.

Several NGOs work in disaster preparedness and mitigation in Vietnam, in structural and non-structural areas, each with a different target audience (policy makers, school children, and such) and different goals (safer housing, microfinancing, etc.). Public awareness is incorporated in their work to a different degree in each case. The evaluation of these projects, if at all conducted, is however largely qualitative and descriptive (Suthirak & Weersinghe, 2002). Still, some of the campaign materials are well targeted, well designed, with clear messages and use of good communication principles.

Equipped with this secondary information, the ADPC team made a site visit to a commune in a lagoon. This visit confirmed the group's extreme vulnerability to floods and resulted in the team's selection of lagoon residents as the target for the project. While all lagoon residents are vulnerable, the boat people (not related to Vietnamese refugees who left Vietnam in boats), named for the fact that they live and work (fish) in boats, were the most vulnerable because they lacked access to disaster warnings in time to seek shelter on land. According to an ADPC February 2003 mission report during project implementation, families living in boats are called *chi* in Vietnamese. These people indicate that their ancestors were all boat people. Children of these *chi* families live mostly with their grandparents who have built houses on land. Today, for most boat people, the lack of access to land and lack of money to buy housing materials are serious barriers to their ability to resettle on land. The government too has very limited funds to resettle the boat people. As Brazier (1991) narrates of flood victims in Vietnam, "I ask why they don't move to somewhere a bit less vulnerable to such disasters. Not surprisingly, he looks at me like I am stupid. 'Of course we only wish we could - but you live where you can afford to live and we are poor.' ... The poor have no choice about where they live and find themselves inevitably in the marginal, dangerous positions that no-one else wants."

The selection of lagoon residents as the target was also influenced by the fact that children in the lagoons receive schooling for only about one hundred days in the typhoon period, that too only if they are close to a school while in shelters (Suthirak & Weersinghe, 2002), making them

a very appropriate target for future school education projects that could be proposed as part of the three to five year strategic plan for DANIDA. It appears that educational opportunity, which provides future generations an out from the cycle of low education, low opportunity, low mobility out of lagoons and fishing, and consequent poverty and therefore continued vulnerability to water related disasters, must become part of any long term strategic plan.

This initial selection of lagoon residents as the target was deemed appropriate as more information was gathered:

- First, by all accounts, the lagoons appear to house the poorest of the poor, the most vulnerable, the place where many lives can be saved with appropriate intervention. In the opening speech made by a government official for the Hue workshop, the following information was provided (via translation): The lagoons comprise 60 kilometers of land, are inhabited by 300,000 people, are very sensitive and vulnerable to floods, are poor, and do not have two-storied, stable houses.

In addition, the primary research confirmed the low income and the high people density per boat or home in the lagoons. This primary research as well as other secondary research confirmed that fishing was the main occupation, an occupation particularly subject to calamity from floods.

- Second, the selected lagoons are in the Thua Thien-Hue province, twice hit during the severe 1999 floods.
- Third, a visit in concert with the Hue workshop to one of the lagoons revealed that most children stop going to school after the sixth grade because parents cannot afford the required nominal fee. These children begin to help their fathers with fishing only when they turn 15 years of age, leaving several fallow years between termination of school attendance and the start of work, years which can be usefully deployed in a long-term project to provide school education. National statistics show that the group, 10-19 years, is one of the largest among several age groups (Suthirak & Weersinghe, 2002).
- Fourth, participants (14 government officials and two NGO staff members) in the Hue workshop also confirmed (after working on a target audience ranking exercise) that the lagoons were the appropriate target for the three to five year project. As compared with locations outside the lagoons, the lagoons were rated as having suffered and most likely to suffer loss of life and livelihood and post-disaster illnesses.
- Fifth and finally, the lagoons had never been specifically targeted for a disaster risk communication project.

Based on other secondary information, gender and age determinations were also made to further define the target audience. National statistics indicate an equal percentage of males and females in the population of Vietnam. In Vietnam, women have not traditionally been authority figures, but given their role as primary caretakers of the family, they are possibly largely responsible for shaping their children's attitudes and behaviors. In addition, homes are

sometimes owned by females (Alternatives and Development Workshop, 2002). Both males and females, adult and child, were therefore important to this campaign. Adult males were likely responsible for decision-making, particularly in crisis situations, and adult females for socializing their children in disaster preparedness, while children would present an early opportunity in their life cycle to shape knowledge, attitudes and behaviors. While each of these family members was important for different reasons, given the high family (and community) connectedness in Vietnam, families (and communities) as units were a focus (Crawford, 1966).

Step Two: Primary Research, Target Audience Definition

Primary research was conducted to collect demographic, attitudinal and behavioral data. A draft questionnaire was developed, subjected to local scrutiny, and simultaneously translated and back translated with local assistance to establish conceptual and functional equivalence. Specifically, three translators in Vietnam fine tuned the translation, followed in Bangkok by further refinement by a Vietnamese student of engineering, followed in turn by final adjustments on site to get as close to the exact meaning as possible. A Vietnamese teacher provided critical assistance in this process. Government permission was requested (per regulations) and received to conduct the research. Also, staff members of Vietnam's Department of Dyke Management and Flood Control (DDMFC)/Disaster Management Center (DMC), also partners in the implementation of this project, and the local Red Cross assisted in several aspects of this research.

Data was collected in two communes, Loc Dien and Quang Phuoc, situated in lagoons in the Thua Thien-Hue province of Central Vietnam. The selection of these communes was made by ADPC with the intention of implementing the project in hamlets within these communes so the representativeness of these communes was not an issue. The probabilistic sampling method (systematic sampling) that had been planned to obtain a representative sample of commune residents however could not be used because the working hours of the fisher folk did not allow it. Instead, the commune chief had asked residents to be present on certain evenings for data collection and data were collected from these families. Upon the suggestion of the Hue chapter of the Red Cross, which has engaged in disaster related projects, a small compensation was given to participants. Red Cross volunteers did the field interviews (20 each) after receiving some basic training in administration of the questionnaire. The interviews lasted from 25 to 45 minutes each

and were conducted between 11 a.m. and 3 a.m. over two days (the late hours because of the work hours of fisher folk).

Families rather than individuals were interviewed; given the collectivistic nature of the society, this was difficult to avoid. Still, the adult male made most of the responses. Input from children was not very high because some of them were asleep after having worked from 5 p.m. to late hours to help their fathers in fishing (Suthirak & Weersinghe, 2002). Questions that attempted to get at motivations (asked “Why”) and a few other recall questions (for e.g., year of birth) were difficult for the sample to answer. Final sample size was 400, after discarding 12 questionnaires because they were incomplete.

Demographic Profile: The sample was characterized by very low income, density of six persons on average per boat/home, very low education (about 59% had attended school, but only 1% has attended Grade 12; none had attended college), and low literacy (41% could not read and 29% could read with difficulty; this compares poorly with the national statistic of 94% literacy) (United Nations Development Programme, 2003). In the sample, 93% were married, and 99% were ethnic Vietnamese. The main occupation was fishing (86%), some owned a grocery shop (7%) and a few farmed (2%).

Attitudinal/Values Profile: The sample had high flood risk perception but only a moderate feeling of control over life and the future as well as over what they can do with regard to floods. Secondary research had indicated that Vietnamese society exhibits a strong community orientation and a hierarchical structure with a place for each person within the family, the community and the society (Crawford, 1966). Vietnamese society also has considerable fondness for song, poetry, and story telling in the form of myths and legends as well as in drawings (Jamieson, 1993).

Geographic Profile: Hamlets in the Loc Dien and Quang Phuoc communes, situated in lagoons in the Thua Thien-Hue province of Central Vietnam.

Media Use Profile: The sample had 23% ownership of radio, 12% ownership of television, and almost no newspaper and magazine subscription. It had 42% radio listenership, 27% television viewing, and almost no newspaper and magazine readership. The sample listened to radio in the morning (19%) and evening (13%). Radio was also the medium liked most (54%) and relied on (45%) and trusted (50%) most for information, followed by television. The sample had high reliance on and trust of community leader(s) for information as compared with others in

the community (family, friends). The sample members also indicated a greater reliance on local government authorities than national authorities for information. Seventy-six percent trusted media more than general interpersonal contacts for information. It was also noted later in the ADPC February mission report that the boat people often had relatives come out to the shore to warn them of impending storms (the boat people would then park their boats and find shelter with relatives).

Knowledge Profile: Primary research in the communes supplemented by secondary research indicated the following:

- Knowledge of the flood season and of signs of floods (rains, storms) was high (but only as measured by one question) and indicated by children in the Loc Dien commune during the workshop visit. The children said they knew a storm was imminent when they saw storm clouds over the ocean. However, this knowledge did not appear to be complete and systematic. As noted earlier, risk perception was high in the lagoons.
- Knowledge of what to do in preparation for a flood appeared to be high too: should have an escape plan, discuss it with family, learn how to swim and how to rescue others, practice the escape plan, store safely valuable documents and seeds and paddy. The ADPC secondary research team reported that people living in flood prone areas in Vietnam in general were “apparently” aware of what to do but tended to “avoid taking precautions thinking that the event will not touch their lives” (Suthirak & Weersinghe, 2002). Still other secondary research has shown that this knowledge is not always sophisticated enough to stand in good stead when a water related disaster occurs (NDM-Partnership, 2000).
- Similarly large percentages agreed that during a flood they should follow a predetermined plan of action, listen to and follow government instruction, and evacuate immediately. A large percent also felt they should try to rescue others and save property.
- Again similarly large percentages agreed that after a flood they should listen to instructions from government authorities, follow a predetermined plan of action, and practice safe drinking water and eating habits.

Behavior Profile: Primary research in the communes indicated:

- A considerably large percentage reported that during the most recent floods they had listened to, understood and followed (particularly) local government instruction, and that they had escaped to a safe place.
- A large percentage also reported that they had tried to rescue others and save property including documents, and had secured their boats. Two-thirds reported that they had also taken with them valuable items including food, and half reported taking water. Only 68% evacuated immediately however. It seemed that the residents did not always act swiftly and in their best interest at the moment of crisis.
- Also, 65% said they had followed a predetermined plan of action. However, the ADPC staff member in charge of the survey came away with the impression that residents did not have specific response plans in mind corresponding to the intensity of the threat.

- Most said that they evacuated with their family and 70% said they evacuated when their neighbors did.

Past Exposure to Disaster Related Messages: Primary research indicated that (please note that while an attempt was made to distinguish between flood warning messages when a flood is imminent and flood risk communication campaign messages, i.e., public awareness messages, this distinction may not always have been present in the mind of the respondents):

- In the most recent floods, warnings were received from radio by 33%, from loud speakers by 10%, from television by 12%, from community leaders by 60%, and from neighbors by 22%. The workshop visit to the Loc Dien commune confirmed that radio was a major source of information that a flood was imminent. Secondary research indicated that loudspeakers seem to be a common channel for issuing warnings.
- Past exposure to media messages about floods was very low, except for exposure to radio messages.
- Past exposure to messages about floods and what to do in case of floods was very high for messages from community leader(s) and local authorities but not for messages from media.
- Respondents reported that previous flood-related messages were not very easy to understand, did not represent the group very well, and were only reasonably informative and effective. They did rate these messages as easy to remember, believable and likable.

Step Three: Workshop in Hue City and Campaign Plan

While the primary and secondary research findings of steps one and two assisted considerably in the selection and definition of the target audience and in providing guiding parameters within which the pilot campaign would be developed, at the stage of actual campaign development, these were supplemented by input from 14 government and 2 non-government Vietnamese participants in a three-day workshop held in Hue from September 30 to October 2, 2002.

On the eve of the workshop, upon arrival in Hue, ADPC and Vietnamese government representatives, some of the whom would attend the workshop as facilitators or trainees and later also become part of the campaign implementing team, visited the Loc Dien commune to get an on-site introduction to the target audience and their geographic surroundings.

The workshop itself first provided participants (14 government officials and two NGO staff members) with the overall objectives of the workshop: 1) to provide training in disaster risk communication campaign planning so as to build local capacity and 2) to develop a short-term, pilot, disaster risk communication campaign for selected lagoon communes in Central Vietnam.

It then provided participants with background on the project in terms of project objectives, funding source, etc.

Next, participants received an introduction to social marketing (use of marketing principles for a social cause, in this case disaster risk communication) and to integrated marketing communication (the coordinated use of all means of communication to send a unified and strategically planned campaign message). Armed with this knowledge, participants were ready to be introduced to the social marketing steps that had already been executed to date: secondary and primary research, the results of this research, and a description of the target audience. Subsequent lessons and corresponding practical exercises focused on developing communication/practice objectives, a creative strategy and tactics, a media strategy and tactics, and a monitoring and evaluation plan for the pilot project.

Communication/Practice Objectives

The first exercise in step three was to decide what the foci of the communication objectives would be. Based on their knowledge of awareness levels in the target group and guided by what research had indicated, participants decided, via a ranking exercise, that warning signals and response plans were appropriate foci. Following a lesson on the hierarchy of effects, objectives were formulated such that they would create an almost “conditioned” response among the target audience because Hue workshop participants suggested that disaster preparedness should become a habit. Because no baseline data is available on awareness, etc., of warning signals and response plans, the objectives did not quantify expected increases.

Communication Objectives for Warning Signals

To create knowledge:

1. To create awareness of warning signals among the target audience in three months.
2. To create understanding of the different intensities of the warning signals among the target audience in three months.
3. To create recall of the different intensities of the warning signals among the target audience in three months.

To create an intent to act:

4. To create an intention to act in accordance with the warning signal among the target audience in three months.

Communication Objectives for Response Plans

To create knowledge:

1. To create awareness of a response plan among the target audience in three months.

2. To create understanding of the different steps of the response plan among the target audience in three months.
3. To create recall of the different steps of the response plan among the target audience in three months.

To create an intent to act:

4. To create an intention to act in accordance with the response plan among the target audience in three months.

Practice Objectives for Warning Signals/Response Plans

To create practice:

5. To make the target audience practice the response plan in consort with the warning signal.

Media Plan

Media Strategy: The media strategy was to achieve reach, frequency, and continuity through meaningful media; i.e. to expose as many of the residents as possible as often as possible continuously through appropriate and accessible media including interpersonal contact. The media would also be synergistic.

Media Tactics: Each of the communication objectives automatically suggested several appropriate media. Final selection from among these was based on media availability, accessibility, trust, and reliance as well as on suggestions by workshop participants in exercises they did after media planning concepts and lessons were presented to them.

For creating awareness, posters were selected for these reasons: 1) creating awareness needs a quick presentation of facts and a poster allows this, 2) a poster enables the presentation of levels in sequence on one sheet of paper, 3) response plans and certain warning signals are best presented visually (may be reinforced verbally) and a poster lends itself easily to such presentation and representation, and 4) a poster can be hung up as a constant reminder.

For creating understanding, interpersonal contact, particularly with a trusted source, was selected because it allows questions and clarifications, and results in greater acceptance. In this case the trusted source was the commune leader, selected because of the reported high trust as information source, the reported (in a ranking exercise) frequency of contact, and this official's representation of authority, important in a society that is vertically/hierarchically organized.

For creating recall, jingles (songs) were selected because songs have rhymes and rhythms which make them easy to remember, song, music and poetry are valued by the Vietnamese who have a long-standing tradition in this cultural form of expression, and songs lend themselves to be played on the two media most available to the boat people, radio and loudspeakers.

For creating intention to behave, interpersonal contact via the commune leader as well as messages in posters/songs that use an “urge to action” were selected. A slogan embedding action and a logo representing the action in a stylized drawing could be used, but local input would be necessary to make sure that it reflected societal values and was not too direct and parsimonious for effective communication in Vietnam. Collectivism as a societal value was apparent in the use of words such as “Everybody” participate, or “Together” do this, in the slogan writing exercise done during the lesson on creative strategy.

For practice, live demonstration (if budget allowed) of response plans in consort with the warning signals was recommended as a communication medium. Demonstrations would assist with all other objectives of the campaign as well.

Media Schedule: While not ideal because these months fall towards the end of and after the season of heavy rainfall, the project timeline necessitated the pilot campaign to start either in December or January, and continue until the DANIDA deadline of April. Specifics included the distribution of posters early in the campaign to every family in the target communes with interpersonal contact by commune leaders to explain them, continuing commune leader contact if necessary to explain the poster, playing of the jingles in the morning and evenings (as well as other appropriate times) over the loudspeaker in the lagoons and on Hue Radio, if they would agree, and doing the demonstrations on kick-off day and periodically in each lagoon.

Creative Plan

Creative Strategy: In view of the alarming loss of life from water related disasters in recent years, and based on agreement among participants, the creative strategy comprised the individual and societal level cognitive and motivational skills needed to save lives. The campaign was therefore named “Life Saver.”

Creative Tactics: To identify creative tactics, workshop lessons were provided at each step followed by exercises in which participants presented their ideas. Final recommendations were based on considerable honing of these ideas.

Two posters would be created, one depicting signal intensities and their meaning and the other depicting response plans. The posters would be of the same size (a size that fits well in a boat or small home) and have textual and visual similarity. Keeping in mind the low literacy level, the posters would be largely visual using locally appealing styles (example, detail drawing or story telling) that became evident in a poster creation exercise; this would lead to the right

positive associations in terms of learning and liking. If budget allowed, giant hoarding-sized copies of the posters would be on display on kick off day with people positioned to explain them.

The commune leader would be trained in the warning signal intensities, their meanings, and the response plans as depicted in the posters so that he could in turn explain these to the target.

Two jingles would be created to parallel the posters, and could trace the warning signal intensities and their meaning as well as the response plan steps through a story. If possible, lagoon talent would be used in the creation of these jingles and both adult and youth voices would be used.

The live demonstration of response plans in consort with warnings would be done by local residents, after they receive training. If budget allowed, t-shirts with the poster slogan/text would be distributed to these trainers—an incentive for them to train and volunteer—and would be worn by them during the demonstrations.

Other Strategies and Tactics

A critical task was to ensure participation in the project by the target group. Workshop participants emphasized the importance of providing some tangible benefit to encourage participation on campaign kick-off and closing days. Pencils, school bags, toy boats for children, and raincoats for adults, all with the campaign message on them were recommended giveaways. While the giveaways selected for adults were based in their utility value in water-related situations, those for children were selected because of 1) the importance of education as a means of providing long term solutions to the problem, 2) the importance of reaching children early in their lives with these messages, and 3) to bring some fun into the lives of the children and create positive associations for them with the messages.

If demonstrations were adopted in the campaign and periodically conducted, the volunteers were to also train interested residents. To create interested residents (and ultimately to equip residents with the skill), a closing day contest was recommended for these demonstrations (in turn this would ensure attendance at closing day). Because of strong family connectedness in the society, families would form teams. This will also be realistic because, in the case of a disaster, it is families that would leap into action to respond to warning signals by following a response plan. Because of the critical role of radio in disseminating information to the target, and the scarcity of radios in the group (the primary research sample indicated that they would like to get radio sets), radio sets could be used as prizes. Additional contests such as singing the jingle and

designing a new poster could also be used as an incentive for the people to learn the jingle, the response plans, etc. Finally, it was recommended that to stress the importance of survival swimming skills for children, swimming classes through the campaign followed by a competition on closing day could be held, budget permitting. Competitions and contests create involvement, trial and excitement, all conducive to campaign success.

Also important was the training of the commune leader in campaign objectives, strategies and tactics, not only to ensure effective communication on his part but also to get his involvement and commitment so that he plays the role of motivator, cheer leader, and force behind the campaign. Simultaneously, this would fulfill the capacity building goal.

Campaign Production and Implementation

The production of campaign materials would bring content and communication experts together and would include government and other officials. The material itself would be pretested qualitatively. As production was taking place, the implementing staff would receive training in the objectives, messages, time line, and implementation routines.

The campaign would be kicked off by a major event in each lagoon on a suitable date. The objective of this kick off day would be to introduce the information materials (posters, jingles, demonstrations, contests, etc.) and explain them, and to give the boat people an opportunity to play and practice. The campaign would end with a closing event, which would include the contest(s), prizes, and play. The press would be invited to these events and be encouraged to provide continuing coverage of the campaign.

Campaign Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring would be conducted regularly to make sure the campaign is progressing as planned and to take corrective action if necessary. A proof of performance videotape of the campaign could also be produced.

For measuring the communication and practice effects among lagoon residents as well as capacity building among government officials, concurrent and post project evaluation, using qualitative (observation: field notes, personal interviews) and quantitative methods (questionnaire), could be conducted. Some evidence of capacity building among Hue workshop participants is already available in the daily evaluations of the workshop but quantitative as well as qualitative (interviews, observation) evaluation would be conducted to assess capacity building for the entire project staff. If communication between neighboring hamlets takes place,

it might be interesting to measure indirect exposure and possible effects of the messages in them.

Project Implementation

Project implementation, in terms of such things as materials produced, timing of events, and evaluation, deviated somewhat from the campaign plan for various reasons including logistics.²

Campaign Production

Production of campaign materials was done locally in Vietnam using local talent, implementation was done by Vietnam government officials from the Disaster Management Center in Hanoi and by local officials and volunteers, and administration of the project was conducted by ADPC.

Campaign Implementation

Location: The project was implemented in two hamlets of the Loc Dien commune, Trung Chanh and Luong Qui Phu, located 30 miles from Hue. Trung Chanh had 334 households of which 301 were occupied with fishing and 32 with farming including shrimp farming. Thirty of the families lived on boats (i.e., were boat people). The total population of this hamlet was 2,012. Luong Qui Phu had 315 households of which 101 were occupied with fishing and 214 with farming. Twenty of the families lived on boats. The total population of this hamlet was 1,750. The second commune, Quang Phuoc and its particular hamlet in which primary data had been collected (Phuoc Lap), was not a project site because it was located in a direction opposite to Loc Dien and the Vietnamese government official in charge (from the Ministry of Construction) was not in a position to manage both projects. Also, the Vietnam Red Cross, which may have been able to assist, had no presence in Phuoc Lap, and Phuoc Lap had no connection with the public address system in the commune. Additionally, cost was a factor. ADPC decided to target this commune during a possible future three to five year plan.

Personnel and Training: A DMC official who had assisted with the logistics of the Hue workshop as well as provided some interpretation during the workshop became the liaison officer for the project. She made an outline of the implementation plan and explained it in detail to community educators who would implement the project. She also visited the hamlets frequently to supervise these community educators, to mediate, and to facilitate. She reported however that local nuances of the Vietnamese language took, at times, some additional

² Details about project implementation, monitoring and evaluation are based on reports by Abarquez (2003) and Dam & Dang (2003)

Vietnamese-to-Vietnamese translation for her understanding. While this official had attended the social marketing workshop in Hue in the capacity mentioned above, she had little previous training in social marketing in general (this is generally true in the country). During project implementation, ADPC provided her with training materials to read and also provided her with training in monitoring. It appeared that she was able to handle project implementation. An ADPC representative also worked the field to implement the project and assisted with the monitoring after receiving monitoring training together with the liaison officer.

At the local level, four community educators two each from two hamlets in the Loc Dien commune, selected by their commune leader, were on the front line of project implementation. In Trung Chanh, one was an information officer of the commune and one a leader of the hamlet. In Luong Qui Phu, one was chief of the hamlet. The use of local educators was critical not only because it would create ownership and elicit involvement, but also because their familiarity with the hamlets and its residents would (and did) make project implementation easier. These educators received (from DMC staff) a one-day training session on warning signals and content of the two posters that were being finalized at the time. Their assessment of the training was that it was adequate and useful in implementing the project and that they understood the posters; in fact, the warning signals table and posters were of considerable assistance to the would be educators in enhancing their own understanding. One of the two educators, the hamlet leader in Trung Chanh, revealed that he had no prior knowledge of this subject matter. Both educators from Luong Qui Phu had received no previous training on disaster management. Later, the educators expressed a keen interest in learning more about how to conceive, plan and execute such social marketing projects. A MARD official suggested during the final evaluation phase that selection of community educators be stringently done to get the best, signaling the importance of this selection.

Kick-off Day: The project started with kick off day on January 5, 2003. The community educator who was the hamlet chief in Luong Qui Phu had gone from house to house to invite the village dwellers to the kick off day. The day was attended by ADPC staff, Vietnam partners and the target residents, and was a day of fun, games and prizes at the same time as project goals were being implemented and additional events tailored to meet these goals were being initiated. On this day, the jingle writing competition for the adults and children, scheduled for later in January, was also announced.

A song, written and recorded by a professional, was played on kick off day to create a festive atmosphere and attract residents to attend. According to the DMC liaison officer, the song was quite popular; the villagers liked it and so did the Deputy Director of Agriculture and Rural Development, who asked for a copy. The song described what effect a storm could have on a lagoon comparing possibly separated children during the storms to “a chick that has strayed from its mother.” The song then mentioned what should be done to save lives and how the community needed to unite to face the storm for the happiness of each family.

Also at this event, poster drafts (in the form of drawings) were displayed for attendees to write comments on and win prizes such as raincoats. Two posters were used and received considerable input not only at opening day but later also from hamlet residents, ADPC staff, and others, before they were finalized. The warning signals table was kept separate from the posters as a third printed giveaway because combining the signals with action to be taken might have been too difficult for the target audience to understand.

In their final form after all feedback had been considered, each poster had six pictures, laid out in two columns, with three pictures in each column, and each was 40 cm. by 60 cm. in size so that the text was big enough to be read easily. The design was symmetrical with a headline and subhead, subheads for each picture, and common information at the bottom in smaller type indicating where additional information could be sought for preparedness. The headline on both said “For Safety of Communities that Face Natural Calamities.” In the first poster, column one had three pictures of damage (to lives, property, and infrastructure respectively) caused by storms and column two had parallel pictures of damage caused by floods. Storms and floods are the two main natural disasters in the region and the idea was to bring home the possible threats these posed to the target audience and raise awareness of these threats. In the second poster, directed more towards preparedness and prevention and particular response plans, the subhead said “Ways to Diminish Natural Calamity.” The pictures told residents what to do when the wind speed was 1-5 (educate community about possible calamities and ways to diminish them), 4-7 (protect your house, ground your boat, move to a safe place), 8-9 (keep the boat near the shore), 10 (call for help, be ready to salvage), 11 (help residents to evacuate), and 12-17 (carry out relief support to help save).

Actual Campaign: While variations might exist in the timing of events in the two different hamlets, there was considerable similarity in implementation. After kickoff on January 5, 2003,

the community educators and the DMC liaison officer went house to house between 11.30 a.m. and 1.30 p.m. (possibly one of the best times to find residents) and distributed photocopies of a table of warning signals in the form of a leaflet and explained the meaning of the warning levels. Community educators' names were on the back of this leaflet. Simultaneously, during this visit, the educators/DMC officer encouraged families to participate in the forthcoming jingle writing contest and provided them with paper for the competition. Where literacy was a problem, residents were encouraged to get their children's help in writing down the words. Residents expressed preference for a professional recording of the song rather than using local talent.

Also during these visits, the educators/DMC officer solicited and received additional comments on the poster drawings. Comments included ease of understanding particularly because they were visual, successful communication of the message (what to do to protect their life and property when natural disasters occur), dire need for such information materials given that these communities had not been the target of any such information campaign in the past, and eagerness to receive the material.

In February, these educators (sometimes as a team, sometimes individually) made home-to-home visits (unless the houses were so closely clustered that they could meet the families as a group) and distributed, in fact in some cases hung up on walls of target homes and boats, the two finished posters. The number of families they reached per day depended on the physical closeness of the homes. In Luong Qui Phu hamlet, the houses were located further apart and therefore more difficult to reach. The long working hours of the target residents in the shrimp farms during the day and at fishing after dinner made it difficult to reach all families at once; repeat visits were necessary particularly to reach parents who were out at work. The home-to-home visits were considered by residents a major strength of the campaign.

Altogether, 301 families were reached in the Trung Chanh hamlet with the warning signal table leaflet and the two posters. Creating awareness through this distribution was not the sole goal of the visits however; the objective was to create understanding too. As a result, the posters were explained in detail, questions were elicited and answered, and government agencies that assist in mitigation of water related disasters were introduced to the target groups. From this interaction, it became apparent that the residents had the most difficulty with understanding wind speeds. In some cases, particularly in Luong Qui Phu and particularly with older residents, the messages had to be explained repeatedly.

Reactions to the posters included comment about their beauty and their realism, but more important, about their usefulness in teaching residents about disaster preparedness. The feedback from Luong Qui Phu included a comment about one picture that depicted government and community response to a typhoon but showed people outside a building during this typhoon. A MARD official and others commented that local knowledge should be integrated in the posters, and the MARD official suggested that still simpler language needed to be used in the warning table which could also be recorded in video for repeated play.

Educators received 100 entries from Trung Chanh (where a vigorous campaign of encouragement was undertaken) and 37 entries from Luong Qui Phu in the jingle writing contest. Educators selected one winner for a song targeted at the adults (from the Trung Chanh hamlet) and one for the song for children, who received some assistance from their families (from the Luong Qui Phu hamlet). The key criterion for selection of winners was that the lyrics represent the message of the campaign; in Trung Chanh, the criterion message was typhoon and flood warning signals. A singer from Hue was selected to record the song written for the adults and the melody was made to match that of a traditional Vietnamese song. The children's song was recorded in Hanoi by a professional singer and used a pop music approach.

By January 21, these two songs as well as the kick off day opening song were being played regularly in the hamlets in the early morning hours from 5.30 a.m. to 6 a.m. and in the late afternoon, early evening hours of 5.30 p.m. to 6 p.m. These are the hours when broadcasts are made to the hamlets regularly and include news and information. In Trung Chanh, one more loudspeaker would have helped to cover the entire hamlet. In Luong Qui Phu, 31 families did not have access to the broadcast of the commune because the commune had only one loudspeaker.

The importance of swimming skills among children was the main message in the children's song. It repeated the phrase "learn to swim" for various reasons including in preparation for natural disasters and for rescue of self and of others, and ultimately for keeping the village happy. The collective nature of the society was again apparent in the words of this song. The song for adults adopted some story telling: it asked people to be quiet and listen as the singer told the story of the 1985 and 1999 storms. Then it mentioned different wind speeds, one at a time, and respective appropriate responses.

Campaign Monitoring

Towards the end of February, monitoring (specifically, a qualitative concurrent evaluation) was done with the target audience by interviewing two families in each hamlet. One couple in Trung Chanh had received the warning signals table and the two posters as well as received explanations of these materials. This family found the entire project very useful, particularly the explanation of the warning signals that they felt had been a source of confusion earlier, and according to them had resulted in loss of life. They themselves had almost died in previous storms. The family members were able to correctly identify what the signals meant in terms of what action to take or not take. They found the two posters realistic, simple and therefore easy to understand, and relevant given their fishing occupation. This family in fact hung up their posters on the porch of their house so that others could read and learn from them. The male adult in this family had attended kick off day and was the winner of the competition for the song for adults and was to receive a television set for use by the commune as a prize on closing day. He had received assistance from his brother in writing the song and together they had spent five days and nights writing it. He was happy that he had this ability.

The second couple interviewed in this hamlet had received the two posters, which were hanging on the wall in their home. They had also received the leaflet which had been put away safely in a box and did not appear to have received much use, given its very good condition. The wife (who had received the materials) had forgotten to inform her family about the messages on the leaflet and posters because she was very busy with shrimp farming. She also could not remember what the messages were. The couple however expressed a liking for the posters because of their color and liveliness and because the pictures informed them about preparedness measures.

One family interviewed in the second hamlet, Luong Qui Phu, was made up of a father who lived on land and his married daughter and her husband who were boat people. The father said he had received both the warning signals table and the two posters. He reported understanding the warning signals table easily because he was literate, and reported that when the community educator had asked for participation in the song writing competition, his son had joined. He had attended kick off day but because of a disability could not participate in the contest that required residents to write comments on the two poster drafts. Still, he had not realized that there was to be a project in his hamlet. He explained the poster accurately in terms of what people must do in

the case of different wind speeds. He was also quick (the evening he received them) to explain the posters to his daughter and her husband but they could remember only a little of what was in the posters. They had hung the posters up in their boat and also indicated that they had never received information of this kind any time before. They did express a liking for the poster because it taught them preparedness measures and they also reported that the fact that the posters were there to be seen was a useful constant reminder. They further noted the timeliness of the posters given the impending monsoon season and reported they would know what to do when the monsoon strikes.

The second family interviewed in Luong Qui Phu was actually composed of four couples, the head and his wife plus three of his children and their families who lived on boats. The head of the family participated in kick off day and even won a raincoat for writing comments on the two draft posters. He had received the warning signal table and an explanation of it from the community educators and had in turn explained it to his children and asked them to hang it up on the wall. Each of the four families had also received the two posters. The family head's son could explain the warning signal table and what protective action to take in response to the different warnings, but his recollection of the windspeed messages was not complete. The families considered both posters important. The posters, they reported, served as good reminders to stay prepared, and altogether, the items distributed were good reference material and relevant to their lives. They also noted the timeliness of the project, but said the sooner they were informed about matters of this kind, the better it was.

On the whole it appeared that, midway into the campaign, residents of the target lagoon communes who lived in houses were reached in large numbers but those who lived in boats were not. According to ADPC, this needed to be done in the time remaining for campaign implementation. Other upcoming activity in the project included putting up posters in the building of the people's committee, health center, and all the cafés where people gather for their social activities. It also included closing day activities,² which would include a singing contest for children and adults, with shirts and raincoats as prizes. The two winners from the two hamlets for the song writing contest would be given their prize, television sets, as well as plaques. Knowledge tests based on the messages would also be administered for both children and adults.

Campaign Evaluation

A post-campaign evaluation done in mid-April showed similar results to those received in the February-end monitoring (or concurrent evaluation). Apart from resident villagers (80 in each hamlet), officials were also interviewed for this evaluation. The latter included the Deputy Director of DDMFSC, local educators who implemented the project as well as other officials (the People's Committee in Trung Chanh and the provincial officer in Luong Qui Phu).

Evaluation by officials: The Deputy Director of DDMFSC reiterated the critical role played by the local educators in campaign implementation and noted that for this work to continue, these educators should be provided more training. His overall assessment was that while not all of the target audience benefited, the project was successful. He pointed to the particular success of the song writing competition and the kick off day.

An official of the Trung Chanh hamlet made several critical assessments: the project was propagated in other forums including farmers, women, and youth meetings; behavior was already falling in line with the suggested action as evident in the community's safe behavior (strengthening the house and not going to sea) when a forecast of high wind speed was announced by radio in the recent past; the officials were willing to combine this project with other cultural/informational programming in the commune; and because of the different forums in which this project would be discussed campaign related information would disseminate beyond the project hamlets. Two points made by this official were also made by almost all the other respondents in this post-campaign evaluation: the success of the songs and the usefulness of the practical information provided by the warning table and the posters. No report is available on the comments of the provincial officer in Luong Qui Phu hamlet.

The local educators in Trung Chanh hamlet reiterated the assessment they had made during the February monitoring visit: the house-to-house effort they had made and the difficulty posed by illiteracy among some members of the audience in understanding the materials. Very encouraging were the initiatives they had already taken in asking the school teacher to incorporate disaster preparedness material in the curriculum for fifth graders and the volunteerism they exhibited in their willingness to continue working on the project without remuneration. Local educators in the Luong Qui Phu hamlet also reported a house-to-house effort, the practical nature of the information, the deep understanding of the importance of

² Details about closing day activities as they actually occurred are not available.

preparedness among people and their willingness to strengthen their homes during off-disaster periods. These educators however also pointed to the difficulty in understanding of the message on part of some. They reported that about 90% of the people in the hamlet benefited from the campaign, and indicated widespread (across age groups) interest in the project and eagerness to attend meetings related to this project. They believed that the project goals had been met. An affirmation of the success of the project was their interest in expanding it to other hamlets through meetings with farmers and within the commune.

Evaluation by villagers: Male villagers in Trung Chanh hamlet reported knowledge of windspeeds and participation in kick off day and the song writing competition. They reported that the songs were well liked by the villagers, the posters useful in creating awareness, and that those who were too busy with fishing during the campaign would benefit when disasters came because they would pay attention to the messages then. Female villagers were more specific in their responses in terms of the purpose of the project and the messages it provided. They indicated an understanding of the messages and what action to take and liked the materials (they gave the example of an older woman who could sing the song though she is illiterate). Critical however was their interest in discussing the messages with neighbors to prepare for disasters and their expressed intent to behave (for example, one woman said she would buy a radio and take it to sea because she is now aware of the dangers and others said they would act in accordance with the alarm). The women indicated that their interest in disaster preparedness was greater than that of men because they wanted to protect their children and property and because when a disaster struck their workload in terms of preparing water and food to take and helping their husbands with heavy work was very large. An eight-year old child who was interviewed could sing the children's song very well and said that so could all her classmates because the song is interesting and easy to learn. These children could also reportedly sing the adult song.

Males in Luong Qui Phu hamlet reported attendance at kick off day and participation in the song writing competition. Two septuagenarians as well as two children sang the song during the evaluation, with the children indicating that all their schoolmates could sing both the children's and adult song. One of the adults indicated that while he was busy with shrimp farming, his children's involvement with the project and the knowledge they have gained will be useful because they will tell him what to do in case of a high windspeed. Critical was these villagers expression of an intent to behave in accordance with the alarm and to strengthen their houses

even when there was no storm so as to be prepared. This group too mentioned the practical nature of the printed materials and their usefulness and the fact that the song would encourage children to learn how to swim. The group reported they would share their knowledge with others even if the local educator were not present because of the knowledge transfer that had taken place, and indicated that they had in fact already held conversations and discussion about disaster preparedness since the onset of the project.

Females interviewed in Luong Qui Phu hamlet reported knowledge of the project and its messages. They indicated they had helped their husband in writing the songs for the competition but they did not remember the whole song though they did know that it was broadcast on the commune radio system everyday. A 55 year-old woman could sing the song. Critical in these villagers' report was 1) their mention of a synergistic effect between the song and the posters (the song helped them to remember the messages in the posters), 2) their expression of an intent to behave in accordance with the messages, and 3) their report of a multiplier effect because those who received the materials would share and disseminate the information to those who did not. While most of the women were illiterate, those who reported literacy described the poster messages. The topic of disaster preparedness was also discussed in the village's monthly meeting, they reported. Children could sing the song and reported that despite their tender years they would help their parents when a disaster strikes. They also found the song's message very useful and practical.

Conclusion: While quantitative evaluation based on a pre-campaign baseline survey was not done, qualitative evaluation was used and provided feedback on the merits of the campaign. In sum, it may be concluded from this qualitative assessment that the campaign was successful in meeting its objectives. The two major information tools, the posters and the songs, supplemented by interpersonal communication on part of the local educators, met the objectives of the project with regard to the warning signs and corresponding response plans, resulting in knowledge, understanding and considerable recall of songs. Recall of print messages as well as an intent to act was evident. Even modest action on part of some residents when they were alerted to a possible high windspeed during campaign implementation was present.

But more than the campaign objectives were met. Officials and villagers expressed their intent to sustain the project on their own and to extend the project to other hamlets in their communes. Officials had shown initiative by bringing discussion of disaster preparedness into

their commune meetings with farmers, women, and youth and by asking the local school to incorporate this agenda in their teaching. Villagers wanted to multiply the effects by passing the information on and sharing materials.

As far as campaign materials were concerned, the validity of the selection of posters and songs and the quality of the presentation in both vehicles was confirmed. The selection of the key message themes was also affirmed. The tie-in between the poster and the song created the synergy expected. What also became clear was that the interpersonal effort of the local educators played a key role; they took ownership of the project.

Where obstacles were noted, they centered on the difficulty of the material for those who are illiterate and the time constraints on those who were busy with fishing and farming. In projects in the immediate future, the first difficulty may be dealt with by increasing the number of educators and thus the time that may be given to each family as well as by using a step ladder approach of introducing the simplest message first, confirming understanding, returning with the next message and so on. This would require a longer campaign period. The second difficulty could be addressed by picking a fallow time when adult males are somewhat less busy.

While the campaign was not implemented in both lagoons in which data was collected, its implementation in Loc Dien may be deemed a success. In particular, the lyrics of the songs and the songs connection to the community (written by members) were highlights. The posters were also useful and practical as was the warning signals table. Messages communicated through both of these (the printed and audio material) were recalled by the hamlet residents. These media and messages along with the other activities have created an active interest among residents and implementing officials in continuing and expanding the project because they have an understanding of the benefits that accrue to them.

Capacity building among the people and institutions, reaching a group that has received little attention, and the experience of the pilot that can be fruitfully employed in the three to five year project as well as in other situations are important contributions. Similarly important is the confidence the project may have created locally in the ability to implement and possibly even design such projects given the elicitation and use of local input from all levels and at all stages. Finally, the mobility that the campaign may provide to other initiatives of this nature that in the past might have been met with skepticism must be noted.

Three to Five Year Campaign

A three to five year disaster risk communication campaign strategy was formulated for Central Vietnam based on the experience of the pilot, secondary research, and other information. Given the length of the long terms DRC campaign, what is reported here is only a summary of the project.

Because of the expanded time period and geographical focus, the plan encompasses two major target audiences: the public who suffers the effects of floods and storms and complementary audiences—schools/school children and youth and adult groups—as well as potential project implementers. For the same reasons, the plan proposes inclusion of several (not one) knowledge, attitude, practice (KAP) foci starting with basics such as dangers of flooding and warning signals/response plans to building safe houses.

The first target audience is composed of farmers and fisherfolk who may live in Central Vietnam's lowlands and lagoons and along its coastline. The main objectives of the campaign for this group are to increase knowledge (awareness and recall) and understanding and create an intent to act, practice, and action in relation to the various KAP foci. The major creative strategy suggested for this target audience is an enter-educate approach, which embeds educational messages related to social development and issues in creative video programs. Community viewing is recommended to spread the benefit to those without television sets. Supplemental strategies include the creation of posters, booklets for children, one-pager information sheets for discussion groups, demonstrations of action foci such as safe storage of valuable materials, and contests with relevant prizes. A timeline that both intensifies the campaign within selected communities as well as expands it to other communities is outlined. A campaign calendar is recommended as a means of reminder to the public to enhance participation in scheduled activities, but also to force advance planning and maintenance of the schedule by implementers. Also as part of this campaign, it is recommended that school teachers receive content training in disaster related topics and develop (with help, if necessary) a disaster related curriculum for schools. This should be supplemented by extracurricular activities for school children. The idea is to create an integrated campaign in terms of creative, media, timeline, and audience selection strategies.

The second target audience (implementers) is composed of government officials at various levels as well as volunteers. The major suggested strategy is to provide training to this group in

disaster risk communication campaign planning, implementation and evaluation as well as in content (disaster related) knowledge. This training should be experiential and if possible use the three to five year campaign as the prime exercise.

The media would be an important partner in these efforts. They are message multipliers and also serve to keep the people and leadership of a country informed. This in turn may influence public policy in a direction important for disaster preparedness. The Vietnamese government already considers disaster mitigation an important priority, but the focus on disaster preparedness to complement disaster relief, and within disaster preparedness on non-structural measures such as disaster risk communication could be reinforced by such attention.

Conclusion

Short-term campaign: It appears that the pilot project has achieved a measure of success. Capacity building among the people and institutions, reaching a group that has received little attention, and the experience of the pilot that can be fruitfully employed in the three to five year project as well as in other situations are important contributions. Similarly important is the confidence the project may have created locally in the ability to implement and possibly even design such projects given the elicitation and use of local input from all levels and at all stages. Finally, the mobility that the campaign may provide to other initiatives of this nature that in the past might have been met with skepticism must be noted. Lack of quantitative evaluation based on a pre-campaign baseline survey is one of its failures. Still some qualitative evaluation was used.

Long-term campaign: The conditions in Vietnam, and particularly in Central Vietnam's lagoons, are such that any long-term campaign can really make a difference. While it is true that cognitive, affective, and behavioral change through communication (among any of the stakeholders) takes time and requires several non-communication elements (for example, television sets or accurate forecasting) to be in place, progress can be made in Central Vietnam. This judgement is based on the learning and involvement that seems to have taken place among the target public and officials during the pilot project, the low baseline to begin with in terms of information providing considerable room for growth, and the large losses suffered providing potential to save more lives. There is also evidence of the Hawthorne effect, an effect that social science researchers found in which factory workers increased productivity when their lighting was improved as part of an experiment, but did not decrease their productivity when lighting was

decreased, simply because of the attention they were receiving. The enthusiastic reaction to receiving attention in the pilot is evidence of this. There is considerable room to make an impact, a large impact in the communities of Central Vietnam so that the children will “not be lonely like a chick straying from its mother, and the old woman” will not be “lonely too before the stormy sea” (From the song played on kick off day).

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Who are the “Others”? Third-person effects of idealized body image in magazine advertisements

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Running head: *Effects of ideal body image*

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Who are the “Others”? Third-person effects of idealized body image in magazine advertisements

Abstract

By proposing the importance of gender-based “others” (male vs. female), the current study examined the third-person effects of idealized body image in magazine advertisements. Based on literature from third-person effects and ideal body image, we first hypothesized that exposure to ideal body images would create larger third-person perceptions when the “others” were defined as males. From reflected appraisals theory, we also hypothesized that when others were males, the greater the third person gaps, the more negative evaluation females would make of their body area satisfaction. Findings confirmed the importance of gender-based others, such that female participants estimated that close male friends would be more influenced by idealized body image ads than their close female friends. Another key finding is that females made more positive evaluations of their body areas as the third person gaps increased, which conflicts with reflected appraisals theory. The finding is discussed in the context of self-esteem.

Who are the “Others”? Third-person effects of idealized body image in magazine advertisements

Researchers have long argued that idealized female body images portrayed in advertising have a direct or/ and indirect negative impact on females’ body image satisfaction, self-concept, and in extreme cases, eating behavior. Previous research examined the direct effects of ideal body images on females by employing social comparison theory (Law & Labre, 2002; Martin & Kennedy, 1993; Richins, 1991). Some studies have employed sociocultural factors as intervening variables and found direct relationships between media exposure and eating disorders (Stice, Schupak-Neuberg, Shaw, & Stein, 1994). Those studies, however, have not fully explored the possibility that the perceived media effects on others may influence effects on self. As Milkie (1999) reported, female adolescents are negatively affected by ideal body image (effects on self) not because they believe those images are real but because they believe that others, in particular, males, will evaluate them according to the idealized images (perceived effects on others). The study shows that perceived media effects on others deserve further attention in explaining the effects of ideal body image on females.

The third-person effect framework suggests that perceived effects of ideal body image on others relative to oneself may impact on attitudinal and behavioral consequences such as extreme diet and eating disorders. Under the framework, the question of who the “others” are becomes critical because the “others” may elucidate why third-person perceptions occur and why the perceptions in turn lead to negative outcomes from body image advertising.

The purpose of this study is twofold: First, the current study attempts to examine the impact of ideal body image on females by employing the third-person effect framework. More specifically, this study will explore how third-person effects may vary depending on the *gender-based others* (male vs. female). Second, by employing reflected appraisals theory, we explore how the size of the third-person gaps may

influence body area satisfaction, which may lead to negative self-concept and low self-esteem. We accomplished this by conducting an experiment with females at a large Midwest university.

Numerous studies have reported that female participants believed that other people would be more influenced by ideal body image advertising than themselves. Yet critical questions haven't been fully explored: who are the "others"? and what impact may occur based on differently defined "others"? By proposing the importance of gender-based others, we attempted to answer these questions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ideal Body Image in Magazine Advertisements

"I think they want to be like those models... because they think if they're like that they're gonna get lots of guys and stuff." (Rural white girl, Milkie, 1999, p.200).

Body image is a multidimensional construct, and it is often defined as a mental construction of oneself (Markus, 1977, Markus & Sentis, 1982) or as the degree of satisfaction with one's current physical self (Cash & Deagle, 1997).

Females' self-concept and self-esteem are known to be strongly related to their attitudes about their bodies' physical attractiveness (Lerner, Karabenick, & Stuart, 1973; Sondhaus, Kurtz, & Strube, 2001). Idealized body image in advertising, thus, has long been criticized for its negative influence on females' self-concept, which may ultimately lead to body image dissatisfaction, low self-esteem, and drive for extreme thinness (Irving, 1990; Myers & Biocca, 1992).

Magazine advertisements, in particular, have been frequently criticized for magazines' unique context in which advertisements are placed. By employing rhetorical analysis, Duffy and Gotcher (1996) claimed that teens and women's magazines are places where young women must try to discern the minds and desires of young males in order to attract them. Such editorial titles as "How can I get guys to notice me? How to approach guys?" (p.36-37) well demonstrate some of the magazine ads' contexts that can affect the interpretation of information in the ads (Yi, 1990). Articles and magazine advertisements mutually

reinforced an underlying value, that is, the key to success and happiness is attracting males by way of physical beautification (Frazer, 1987). These studies imply that female readers interpret the idealized body image in magazine ads under the ubiquitous gaze of the opposite sex. This indicates the importance of gendered others when examining the effects of ideal body image ads because the gendered others may play a pivotal role to link the third-person perceptions to negative outcomes.

Goodman (2002), Milkie (1999), and Nichter (2000) also reported that even though females were well aware that the body images shown in the ads were illusionary, they were still negatively affected by ideal body images. Milkie (1999) explained that individuals exercise significant influence in interpreting and selecting media images and content. The “interpreted” messages by individuals, however, still have a negative impact on females’ self-concept because of females’ perceived media impact on others, particularly males. This study hints that female adolescents are negatively affected by ideal body images, not because they believe those images are real, but because they believe that males, whom they believe are greatly influenced by media, will evaluate their body according to the idealized images. Goodman (2002) also found that females believe that media help males to find female thinness attractive.

The previous body image research then suggests that the effects of ideal body image on negative outcomes may not be due to the direct impacts of the ideal body images themselves. Therefore, we will examine the impact of ideal body image on females in third-person effects framework.

Third-Person Effect

The third-person effect, which implies the difference between media effects on self and others, refers to two propositions: First, people tend to believe that mass communication has a greater impact on others than on themselves (third-person perception). Second, this perception may lead to behavioral consequences (Davison, 1983).

Various psychological theories have been introduced to explain underlying cognitive mechanisms in the third-person perception, such as ego involvement (e.g., Perloff, 1989), the elaboration likelihood

model (e.g., White, 1997), attribution theory (e.g., Gunther, 1991; Rucinski & Salmon, 1990), social comparison theory (e.g., Atwood, 1994), and biased optimism (e.g., Brosius & Engel, 1996; Chapin, 2000; Gunther, 1995; Gunther & Mundy, 1993).

Recent research suggests that the third-person perception occurs because people use different perceptual processes for self and other evaluation (McLeod, Detenber & Eveland, 2001). According to the study, people use a relatively naïve schema for media effects on others, whereas they use a more complicated conditional effects model to evaluate media effects on self. An interesting finding from this study is that the amount of perceived exposure others have to potentially harmful media messages are strongly related to the perceived media effects on others. Brosius and Engel (1996) also proposed that the third-person effect might occur based on the perceived media use of others. They wrote “people imply that others use the media more than they do, or that they use other media than oneself, guided e.g. by their tastes for the vulgar” (p. 159).

Thus, in ideal body image advertising, females’ perception that others are more likely to use media, and that they are more exposed to the idealized female body images may generate the third-person perceptions. Therefore, the following primary hypothesis is proposed.

H1: Perceived effects of ideal body image on others will be greater than on self.

Others Defined in Third-Person Perceptions

In the third-person effect research, *others* have been conceptualized in various ways. Most researchers defined others using the social distance corollary (Cohen, Mutz, Price, & Gunther, 1988; Cohen & Davis, 1991; Eveland, Natanson, Detenber, & McLeod, 1999; Gunther, 1991; McLeod, Eveland, & Nathanson, 1997). Social distance corollary predicts that as the social distance between the self and others increases, the third-person perceptions will also increase. Social distance refers to the difference between the self and comparison groups. For example, female classmates, females in a university, and females in the U.S. are one example describing the social distance.

While Eveland et al. (1999) attempted to define others by age and education differences, other

scholars explained social distance either in terms of psychological distance (Brosius & Engel, 1996; Perloff, 1993) or in terms of out-group bias or group membership (Cohen & Davis, 1991; Duck, Hogg, & Terry, 1995). Some researchers conceptualized others using “vagueness” and “closeness” (Duck & Mullin, 1995), whereas recent studies suggest that others should be defined based on social/demographic groups (Scharrer, 2002) or based on the comparison group size (Tewksbury, 2002). Lo and Wei (2002), in particular, emphasized the role of gender in the third-person effect in the context of Internet pornography.

Support for the social distance effect, however, has been mixed. In some studies (Brosius & Engel, 1996; Cohen et al., 1988; Gunther, 1991), media effects on college students themselves are reported to be less than other residents in the region, whereas less support was found for the social distance effect in other studies (Cohen & Davis, 1991; McLeod et al., 1997). Cohen and Davis (1991), for example, found limited support for the social distance effect. Their respondents, estimating the effects of negative political advertising, did not demonstrate larger third-person effects as the comparison group moved from people in their home state to general people in the U.S.

McLeod et al. (1997) reported that youths from New York and Los Angeles were perceived to be more influenced by violent and misogynic rap lyrics than average people whom researchers expected to be most socially distant. The finding was supported in two other studies (Eveland et. al, 1999). From these contradictory findings, McLeod and his colleagues proposed the “target corollary” instead of the social distance corollary. Target corollary is defined as the perceived likelihood of exposure to the media content and predicts that those considered as likely targets of a communication will generate larger third-person perceptions than will generalized others.

McLeod et al. (2001) argued that such research findings cast doubt on explanations of “social distance” findings of previous third-person perception studies (p.680). Scharrer (2002) also pointed out that definition of the “others” in third-person effect research “settles for a somewhat nebulous definition of the ‘others’” (p.682). McLeod et al. (2001) and Scharrer (2002)’s claims shed a light on the importance of issue-

specifically defined others in third-person effect research. In case of the rap music, perceived likelihood of exposure to the content (target corollary) provides a more powerful explanation than the social distance corollary. Since there is a certain group of people who are more likely to listen to rap music, generalized others may not explain any meaningful third-person effect.

Lo and Wei (2002)'s study confirmed the importance of issue-specifically defined others. They examined the role of gender in the third-person effect in the context of Internet pornography. Their findings indicate that female respondents tend to perceive greater negative effects of Internet pornography on other males than on other females. The same logic can be applied to the body image advertising domain. In issue-specific fields such as body image advertising, defining others based on the generalized social distance corollary (e.g., female classmates, female students in a university, females in the U.S.) may not explain why third-person perceptions occur, and why the perceptions may have negative impacts on females. The point to be taken here is not that the target corollary is germane to our study, but rather that influential others can be conceptualized in ways (e.g., issue-or topic-specific) other than those suggested by the social distance corollary.

Previous ideal body image studies indicate the importance of *gendered* others (as opposed to *exposed* others) in third-person effects of idealized body image advertisements. Thus we suggest that others should be defined based on gender in idealized body image advertisements, and propose the following hypotheses:

H2: Perceived effects of ideal body images on *males* will be greater than perceived effects of ideal body images on self.

H3: Perceived effects of ideal body images on *females* will be greater than perceived effects of ideal body images on self.

Previous studies also showed that females believed that others perceived the idealized body image as a beauty norm, and that others would evaluate females based on the idealized body image in the ads rather

than by a neutral body image (Goodman, 2002; Milkie, 1999). Thus, we propose that those who are exposed to ideal body image ads will demonstrate greater third-person perceptions than those who are exposed to neutral body image ads and product ads.

H4: Perceived effects on *males* will be greater when participants are exposed to ideal body image ads than those who are exposed to neutral body image ads and product ads.

H5: Perceived effects on *females* will be greater when participants are exposed to ideal body image ads than those who are exposed to neutral body image ads and product ads.

We also postulate that third person gaps (perceived effects on others minus on self) will be greater when others are defined as males than when others are defined as females (Duffy & Gotcher, 1996; Frazer, 1987; Goodman, 2002; Milkie, 1999; Nichter, 2000).

H6: Third person gap will be greater when others are defined as *males* than defined as *females* for each level of equal social distance (e.g., close friends, students at their university, students in the U.S.).

One research question is posited to examine the effect of the generalized social distance corollary within gender-based others.

RQ1: What may be the effect of generalized social distance within gender based others?

In other words, will perceived effects of ideal body image on both males and females be greater as generalized social distance increases from close friends to students in the U.S.?

Brosius and Engel (1996) pointed out that research normally treats third-person effects merely as dependent variables, but argued to consider the effect as “an independent or intervening variable” (p.160). The current study investigates how the size of the third-person gaps may impact females’ self-appraisal of body area satisfaction by employing reflected-appraisals theory from symbolic communication.

Reflected Appraisals

Reflected appraisal theory was drawn from symbolic interactionism. The fundamental proposition of

symbolic interactionism is that the individual and society are inseparable and interdependent units. Thus the self, as both an internal cognitive representation and as a public characteristic, is presumed to be constructed through social interaction. Social psychologists in symbolic interactionism have assumed that one's self-appraisal is determined to a great extent by the perceived appraisals one receives from significant others who have important meaning in certain aspects of the self. The influence of reflected appraisals on self-appraisals, however, does not occur to every aspect of the self-concept. It depends on which self-concept component is under consideration, and it occurs when our self-concept is influenced only by significant others whom we believe are important to us. Teachers, for example, may be highly influential in judging our academic skills. However, they are less influential in determining our physical attractiveness.

Felson (1985) found that reflected appraisals affect those self-attributes that are defined in terms of others (e.g., physical attractiveness and body image). Felson tested the effect of reflected appraisals of peers on self-appraisals of physical attractiveness, and found that perceived peer appraisals have substantial impact on self-appraisals for both boys and girls. Since body image and physical attractiveness are largely defined in terms of others, females' perceived reflected appraisals (i.e., males' evaluations based on ideal body images in advertising) will impact negative self-appraisals of their body areas. Thus following hypothesis is proposed:

H7: When others are defined as males, the greater the third person gaps, the more negative evaluation females will make of their body area satisfaction.

METHOD

Design and Independent Variable

This study employed a one-way between-subjects experiment. The independent variable was type of advertisement and had three levels: product ad; normal body type ad; ideal body type ad. Each participant saw three ads, each of which represented one level of the independent variable. The products advertised were ordinary, non-gender specific products, not normally associated with physical appearance (watch, chewing

gum, soup).

In the product ad condition, only a picture of the product and its brand name were contained in the ad, and served as a control group. These ads were void of people and descriptive text (i.e., the only text was the brand name). The normal body type ads contained a female in the center of the ad with the accompanying product. They were similar to the product ads in that they contained no descriptive text. The ideal body type ads were identical to the normal body type ads except that the female in the ad possessed an ideal body type.

Normal body type and ideal body type were selected from a pretest by a separate group of 20 undergraduate and graduate female students of various majors. Each person rated 25 pre-selected models on five items: sexiness, slimness, attractiveness, ordinary-looking, average body size, defined on the questionnaire as size 10—14, (Anderson, 1989; Lennon, Lillethum, & Buckland, 1999). Each item was rated on 7-point Likert type scales anchored 1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree. Three ideal body types were selected that scored highest on sexiness, slimness, and attractiveness, and lowest on ordinary looking and average body size. Three normal body types were selected that scored lowest on sexiness, slimness, and attractiveness, and highest on ordinary looking and average body size.

Participants

Eighty-six undergraduate and graduate females majoring in journalism and mass communication voluntarily participated in this study. Caucasian (83.7%), African-American (4.7%), others (5.8%), Asian (3.5%), Hispanic (1.2%), and Asian American (1.2%) made up the sample in this study. Their ages ranged from 19 to 30, and the mean age was 21. Each participant was randomly assigned to one of three levels of advertisement: ideal body image ads (N = 32), neutral body image ads (N = 28), and product ads (N = 26).

Measured Variables

Third-person perception. Third-person perceptions were the primary set of measured variables. For each ad type, participants rated how much they thought ____ would be influenced by these ads in perceiving and evaluating women's body images? The seven targets were: 1) self, 2) close female friends, 3) other

female students at this university, 4) other female students in the US, 5) close male friends, 6) other male students at this university, and 7) other male students in the US. Each target was rated on a 7-point Likert type scale anchored by 1=not at all influenced and 7=highly influenced. Since both age and education may impact on third-person perceptions (Eveland et al., 1999), we purposely used the word, “students” (e.g., male students, female students) so that we could measure the role of gender by controlling for the influence of age and education differences. We did not counterbalance question order because previous studies (Perloff, 1996; Price & Tewksbury, 1994) reported that there was no difference between counterbalanced question ordering and constant question ordering in third-person perceptions.

Several third-person scores were computed for each participant. Comparisons were made between the three female “others” and self by subtracting the rating score on self from the rating score on the female others. Comparisons were also made between the three male “others” and self by subtracting the ratings score on self from the rating score on the male others. This yielded six other-self comparisons: close female friends, female students at the university, female students in the U.S., close male friends, male students at the university, and male students in the U.S.

Body area satisfaction. Body Area Satisfaction Scale (BASS, Brown, Cash, & Mikulka, 1990) was used to measure body area satisfaction after participants were exposed to each ad type. The 9-item BASS is one of the sub-scales of the Multi-Dimensional Body Self Relations Questionnaire (MBSRQ). MBSRQ is a self-report inventory for the evaluation of self-attitudinal aspects of the body-image construct. This measurement is known to have adequate psychometric properties (Thompson, 1996; Thompson, Penner, & Altabe, 1990). Thompson et al. (1990), for example, reported internal consistencies ranging from .75 to .91 and test-retest reliabilities from .78 to .94. BASS assesses satisfaction with one’s body areas such as face (facial features, complexion), hair (color, thickness, texture), lower torso (buttocks, hips, thighs, legs), mid torso (waist, stomach), upper torso (chest or breasts, shoulders, arms), weight, muscle tone, height, and overall appearance. Reliability of the nine items was .65. After dropping height and upper torso, reliability

of the seven items was increased to .70. Each item was rated on a 7-point Likert type scale anchored by 1=very dissatisfied and 7=very satisfied.

Attitude toward the ads. The measures of attitudes toward the advertising were 7-point scales anchored by descriptive terms: unattractive/attractive, unrealistic/realistic, unconvincing/convincing, negative/positive, dislike/like, uninformative/informative, and unpleasant/pleasant. After seeing each ad, participants reported their attitudes toward the ad. Reliability of the seven items was .86.

Model's Attractiveness The measures of models' attractiveness were 7-point scales anchored by 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree. Models in each ad were rated on three items: Model's sexiness, slimness, and attractiveness. Reliability of three items was .93.

Procedures

Each participant was given a packet that contained three ads (either product, normal body, or ideal body) and a pencil and paper questionnaire. Participants were instructed to answer the questionnaire requesting such information as their media use, perceived media use of others (e.g., "on average, how many hours do you think fe/male college students watch TV per day?"), and demographics after seeing all three ads. Participants were told to take as much time as they needed to complete the questionnaire. They were permitted to complete the questionnaires either in class or on their own time and were instructed to return them to a central location within the same day. Participants were told that the study involved consumers' responses toward advertising images and messages. An informed consent form was obtained for each participant.

RESULTS

Hypothesis 1 predicted that the perceived effect of ideal body image on others would be greater than perceived effect on self. Based on the proposed gender-based others, two more specified hypotheses were generated from H1 and apply to the ideal body image group. H2, H3 stated that the perceived effect of the ads on *males and on females respectively* would be greater than the perceived effect of the ads on self.

Table 1 presents the results of paired *t*-tests that demonstrate strong support for H1 and H2, and partial support for H3. Overall, the third-person perception differentials were significant for comparisons of self to close male friends (mean difference = 0.78, $t(31)=2.52$, $p = .017$, $d= .51$), self to male students at their university (mean difference = 1.09, $t(31)=3.50$, $p = .001$, $d= .72$), and self to male students in the U.S (mean difference = 1.00, $t(31) = 3.22$, $p = .003$, $d= .66$). The third-person perception differentials were also significant for comparisons of self to female students at their university (mean difference = 0.94, $t(31)=3.53$, $p = .001$, $d= .62$), self to female students in the U.S. (mean difference = 0.88, $t(31)=3.26$, $p = .003$, $d= .58$) but no statistical significance was found for a comparison of self to close female friends (mean difference = 0.28, $t(31) = 1.30$, $p = n.s.$).

 Insert Table 1 about here

Hypothesis 4 stated that the perceived effect on *males* would be greater when participants were exposed to ideal body image ads than those who were exposed to non-ideal body image ads. As Table 2 shows, moving from product ads, neutral body image ads to ideal body image ads, there were significant increases in perceived effect of the ads on close male friends ($F(2,83) = 19.62$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = 0.32$), male students at their university ($F(2,83) = 24.10$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = 0.37$), and male students in the U.S. ($F(2,83) = 25.00$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = 0.38$). Hypothesis 5 predicted that perceived effect on *females* would be greater when participants were exposed to ideal body image ads than those who were exposed to non-ideal body image ads. The result showed support for hypothesis 5. There were significant increases in perceived effect of the ads on close female friends ($F(2,83) = 12.10$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = 0.23$), female students at their university ($F(2,83) = 16.52$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = 0.29$), and female students in the U.S. ($F(2,83) = 18.64$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = 0.31$). Participants who were exposed to ideal body image ads reported greater effects on all others than those who were exposed to neutral body image ads or product ads. It should be noted, however, that participants showed that they were also more affected when they were

exposed to ideal body image ads than were exposed to non-ideal body image ads ($F(2,83) = 12.17, p < .001$, $\eta^2 = 0.23$).

 Insert Table 2 about here

Hypothesis 6 postulated that third-person perception differentials would be greater for comparison of self to *males* than self to *females* for each level of equal social distance. H6 was partially supported. Third person gap was larger when others were *close male friends* than when others were *close female friends* (mean difference = 0.50, $t(31) = 2.55, p = .008, d = 0.29$). There were, however, no significant differences in third-person perception differentials between comparison of self to male students and self to female students at their university, and between comparison of self to male students and self to female students in the U.S. However, the means were in the predicted direction in the ideal body image ad group, such that third-person perception differentials were larger for the comparison of self to *males* than they were for self to *females* (see Table 3).

 Insert Table 3 about here

 Insert Figure 1 about here

We conducted several additional analyses to further explore some interesting patterns that emerged. For example, Table 3 shows that for product ads and neutral body image ads, third person gaps between females and self were continuously greater than third person gaps between males and self. In other words, our female participants believed that other females would be more influenced by the neutral body image ads and the product ads than males. However, third-person perception differentials were reversed in ideal body image ad condition. Participants believed that *males* would be more influenced by ideal body image ads than females. As Table 3 shows, there were gradual increases in third person gaps between males and self, moving from the product ads, neutral body image ads to ideal body image ads.

Research question 1 is concerned with the effect of the generalized social distance corollary within the gender-based others. To test RQ1, a repeated measures analysis was conducted. First, the generalized

social distance effect within males was tested with three third person gaps as the within-subject factor (gaps between self and perceived effect on close male friends/male students at their university/male students in the U.S., respectively). Then the generalized social distance effect within females was tested in a same manner (gaps between self and perceived effect on close female friends/female students at their university/female students in the U.S., respectively). The analysis showed that there was no significant generalized social distance effect within male others ($F(2,62) = 1.84, p = \text{n.s.}$). However, the analysis indicated that there was a generalized social distance effect within female others ($F(2,62) = 10.44, p < .001, \eta^2 = 0.25$).

Hypothesis 7 proposed that when others were defined as males, the greater the third person gap, the more negative evaluation females would make of their body area satisfaction. Before testing this hypothesis, we first tested whether perceived effect of the ads on self, and perceived effect of the ads on others alone (females and males respectively) influenced participants' body area satisfaction score. In this way, we were able to get a direct effect of third person gap on participants' body area satisfaction score. For the test, third-person perception variables for males and for females were created by separately calculating means of the perceived effect on each gender. For example, the male third-person perception variable was created by calculating the mean of the perceived effect on close male friends, perceived effect on male students at their university, and perceived effect on male students in the U.S. A total of three regressions were computed (perceived effect on self, other males, and other females, on body area satisfaction). None of the beta weights were significant. Therefore, perceived effect on self and perceived effect on others alone did not affect participants' body area satisfaction.

To test hypothesis 7, the third person gap variable for males was created by calculating the mean of each third person gap (perceived effect on close male friends / male students at their university/male students in the U.S. minus on self, respectively). Then regression analysis was conducted. When others were defined as males, the third person gap significantly affected females' body area satisfaction ($\beta = 0.48, R\text{-square} = 0.23, p = .007$) not negatively but *positively* (see Table 4 for details). It is important to note that when others

were defined as females, however, the third person gap between females and self did not significantly influence females' body area satisfaction ($\beta=0.02$, R-square = 0.00, $p = n.s.$).

 Insert Table 4 about here

DISCUSSION

By employing the third-person effect framework, the present study attempted to examine how gender-based "others" (male vs. female) would differentially interact with self, and based on reflected appraisals theory, how the self-other comparisons, in turn, affected females' body area satisfaction when participants were exposed to ideal body image advertising. Gender based "others" in ideal body image advertising is critical in that body image or physical attractiveness is a self-attribute that is largely defined in terms of the others, in most cases, by the opposite sex, and physical attractiveness is regarded important in heterosexual exchanges (Mathes & Kahn, 1975).

Previous studies had defined "others" in the third-person effect of idealized body image advertising based on the generalized social distance corollary such as female classmates, females on campus, and American women (David & Johnson, 1998), or based on race as a social distance marker (David, Morrison, Johnson, & Ross, 2002). The current study, however, proposed the importance of gender-based others in ideal body image advertising, and tested the assumption by running an experiment.

Our results suggest that significant third-person perceptions occurred when others were defined based on gender. As noted in the literature review section, third-person perceptions seem to occur from the perceived media use of others. When asked, "on average how many hours do you think fe/male college students watch TV per day?" there were significant differences ($F(1,31) = 44.40, p < .001, \eta^2 = 0.60$) among self ($M = 3.13, SD = 1.10$), female college students ($M = 4.09, SD = 0.86$) and male college students ($M = 4.91, SD = 1.17$). Even though the current study did not use TV ads, considering the prevalent ideal body images shown on TV, female participants might think that male and female college students were more

exposed to the idealized body images than themselves, thus being more influenced by the ads.

Participants who were exposed to ideal body image ads reported greater effects on all others than those who were exposed to neutral body ads and product ads. These findings are consistent with previous research that found that females believe other people will accept the ideal body as a beauty norm, and that others will evaluate and judge them by an ideal body image (Goodman, 2002; Milkie, 1999) rather than by a neutral body image.

Participants, however, did not strongly differentiate perceived effects of the ads on close female friends from the perceived effects on self. This likely occurred because of the gender in-group and out-group bias based on social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981). Gender in-group bias is exemplified by favorable evaluations of, and attitudes toward, the in-group, whereas gender out-group bias is shown as unfavorable appraisals of the out-group (Deaux, 1996). Our participants likely perceived close female friends as in-group members who have the same social identity, thus distinguishing close female friends from self less, whereas they differentiated close male friends from self as a gender out-group which were more likely to be influenced by, and more likely to favor, the idealized female body image. These findings shed light on the importance of gendered others in third-person effects of ideal body image advertising.

From the generalized social distance corollary, the closeness of both close female and close male friends is presumed to be equal. However, our data showed that within the generalized closeness (e.g., close friends), gender played a significant role. As the generalized social distance increased from close friends to distant others, however, the third person gaps were not significantly different when others were defined as males or as females. Even though the third person gap differences were not significant, the means were in the predicted direction. Third-person perception differentials were greater for comparison of self to *males* than of self to *females*. There were also gradual increases in third person gaps between males and self, moving from the product ads, to the neutral body image ads, to the ideal body image ads. These results imply that there may be increases in third person gaps between males and self when participants were exposed to ideal body image ads.

It would be valuable for future studies to test the third person gap differences based on gender beyond the close friends' category.

The gender out-group bias was also present when we tested the effect of generalized social distance corollary within the gender-based others. We found that there was no significant effect of generalized social distance within males, but there was within females. This finding illustrates that gender plays a social identity role here, thus generating gender-out group bias. Females seemed to perceive males not as individuals but as a homogeneous out-group member. And, under an inter-group comparison situation (i.e., gendered third-person question used in this study), females stereotyped others more as an out-group (Oakes, Haslam, & Turner 1994).

In testing hypothesis 7, we proposed that when others were defined as males, the greater the third person gap the more negative females would rate their body area satisfaction. This result was reversed such that the greater the third person gap the more *positive* evaluation females made of their body area satisfaction when others were defined as males.

This finding can be explained in two ways. First, Myers and Biocca (1992) reported that body image advertising made the young women feel thinner. They wrote that "advertising's presentation of the ideal body image led to a light euphoria, a lessening of depression levels" (p. 127). They concluded that commercials invited young women to fantasize themselves in their future ideal body, adding that their participants felt better about themselves right after they were exposed to the ideal body ads. From their explanation, our participants likely fantasized about their bodies even more than they normally would because they were encouraged to imagine the males' gaze (i.e., third person question). This might lead them to evaluate their body more satisfactorily. It is important to note that when others were defined as females, third-person gaps between female others and self did not significantly influence the body area satisfaction. This result clearly demonstrates the nature of the body image, which is largely determined by the opposite sex, and the importance of gender-based others in understanding third-person effects of idealized body image advertisements.

The alternative explanation was detected from a correlation analysis between third person gap (perceived effects on males minus self) and attitude toward the ads. From the analysis, we observed that when others were defined as males, there was no significant correlation between third person gaps and attitude toward the ads, whereas when others were defined as females, there was a significant correlation between third person gap and the ads' realism ($r = .44, p = .011$) and the ads' persuasiveness ($r = .38, p = .035$). On one hand, this finding made perfect sense in relation to the gender in-group bias. As previous studies show (Goodman, 2002; Milkie, 1999), females are well aware that the body image shown in the ads are not real. Therefore, they likely believed that as the realism of the ads decreased, other females who were relatively well aware of the illusionary ideal body image would be less influenced by the ads.

On the other hand, this result raises a critical question. Third-person perceptions, by definition, are closely related to media exposure. However, our data show that our participants who demonstrated that perceived effects of the ads on *males* would be greater than on self did not seem to "interact" with advertising because there was no significant correlation for third person gaps between males and self and the ads they saw. For comparison purposes, we conducted a correlation analysis for those who were exposed to neutral body image ads. We found significant correlations between the third person gap (between males and self) and the ads' attractiveness ($r = .40, p = .034$), pleasantness ($r = .48, p = .009$), model's attractiveness ($r = .43, p = .023$), model's sexiness ($r = .40, p = .036$), and model's slimness ($r = .51, p = .006$).

These contrasting results between ideal body image and neutral body image groups suggest an interesting possibility. There likely were some psychological mechanisms preventing those who were exposed to ideal body image ads from comparing their perceived bodies to other males' perceived evaluation of their bodies. As our data show, female participants reported that they themselves were more affected when they were exposed to ideal body image ads than those who were exposed to non-ideal body image ads. Female participants also believed that males would be more influenced by idealized body image and that males would evaluate females' body image based on the idealized models shown in the ads. Our participants

likely knew what would be the result. To avoid “feeling bad” about the result and to protect their self-esteem, they seemed to consciously evaluate their body more satisfactorily than they otherwise would.

Leary and Baumeister (2000) proposed the sociometer theory of self-esteem. According to the theory, self-esteem is “an internal, psychological monitor of something that is very important to people—namely social belongingness” (p.1-2). This view of self-esteem is closely related to women’s self-esteem in that relationships with other people, especially valued and important others, are crucial elements in women’s self-esteem (Josephs, Markus, & Tafari, 1992). This theory states that when possible threats to self-esteem are experienced, the sociometer motivates behaviors to gain, maintain, and restore relational appreciation, in other words, self-esteem. Considering that physical attractiveness is one of the determinants of self-esteem, especially for women, females who were exposed to ideal body image ads likely experienced threats to their self-esteem. In order to maintain, restore, and enhance their self-esteem, they seemed to evaluate their body areas satisfactorily.

There have been contradictory findings about whether ideal body image advertising has a direct impact on females’ self-concept, self-esteem, depression, and anxiety (Cash, Cash, & Butters, 1983; Richins, 1991; Stice, Schupak-Neuberg, Shaw, & Stein, 1994). Our data show that the negative impact may not be direct, and it needs careful interpretation because participants’ self-esteem likely plays “a self-defense role.”

This study has several implications for ideal body image research. As the third-person effect framework suggested, if the effects of ideal body image on attitudinal and behavioral outcomes are not due to the direct impacts of the ideal body images themselves, it is encouraging to let female participants be exposed to what males *really* think about the idealized female bodies. Studies show that females have a misperception toward the males’ notion of attractive female bodies. Fallon and Rozin (1985), for example, found that the female figure that female participants rated as most attractive to men was significantly *thinner* than the figure preferred by males. Demarest and Allen (2000) also reported that women believed that men preferred shapes thinner than those that men actually reported. Thus, it may be valuable to test whether those

who are exposed to a magazine article that reports males' views of attractive female body will show lower third-person perceptions to the adjacent magazine ads portraying ideal female body image, which, in turn, may reduce the occurrence of the negative outcomes.

There are some limitations in the current study. Our sample was heavily skewed to Caucasians, and self-concept likely varies across race and cultures (Watkins & Gerong, 1997). Future research may explore how third-person perceptions vary as functions of ethnic differences. Also, the analyses undertaken to explain the result of hypothesis 7 (the greater the third person gaps, the more negative evaluation females would make of their body area satisfaction) are correlational in nature. Thus, causation cannot be determined.

Numerous female participants voiced that they believed that other people would be more influenced by ideal body image advertising. Yet critical questions haven't been fully explored: who are the "others"? and what impact may occur based on differently defined "others"? We proposed and tested the importance of gender based others in ideal body image advertising with a hope to better connect the third-person perceptions to undesirable outcomes frequently debated in the ideal body image domain. If the nature of the body image depends on the eyes of the beholder, future research should explore males' third-person perceptions when they are exposed to females' ideal body image ads. Further, it would be valuable to examine how males' third-person perceptions may influence their female friends and family members (e.g., sisters). By the same token, how females view males' idealized body image will also provide a richer picture to better understand the role of gendered others in the ideal body image domain.

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Table 1. Paired *t*-test results showing third person gaps for ideal body image group (N=32)

Third person gaps (others minus self)	
Male others	
Close male friends	0.78* (1.80)
Male students at their university	1.09** (1.77)
Male students in the U.S.	1.00** (1.76)
Female others	
Close female friends	0.28 (1.22)
Female students at their university	0.94** (1.50)
Female students in the U.S.	0.88** (1.52)

Note: Cell entries are means; standard deviations in parentheses. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Table 2. Perceived effect on self and others by each ad type

Perceived effect on...	Experimental Group		
	Product Ads (N=26)	Neutral Body Ads (N=28)	Ideal Body Ads (N=32)
Self***	2.62 (1.68)	3.21 (1.64)	4.63 (1.52)
Close male friends***	2.54 (1.84)	4.14 (1.96)	5.41 (1.41)
Male students at their university***	2.58 (1.86)	4.25 (1.86)	5.72 (1.44)
Male students in the U.S.***	2.62 (1.86)	4.21 (1.73)	5.63 (1.26)
Close female friends***	2.85 (1.89)	4.21 (1.62)	4.91 (1.30)
Female students at their university***	3.00 (2.14)	4.68 (1.68)	5.56 (1.27)
Female students in the U.S. ***	3.00 (1.98)	4.21 (1.62)	5.50 (1.02)

Note: Cell entries are means; standard deviations in parentheses. *** $p < .001$.

Table 3. Third person gap comparisons based on gendered others by each ad type

	Others		Difference
	Close males	Close females	
Product Ads (N=26)	-0.077	0.23	-0.31*
Neutral Body Ads (N=28)	0.93	1.00	-0.07
Ideal Body Ads (N=32)	0.78	0.28	0.50*
	University males	University females	
Product Ads	-0.04	0.38	-0.42*
Neutral Body Ads	1.04	1.46	-0.42*
Ideal Body Ads	1.09	0.94	0.15
	US males	US females	
Product Ads	0.00	0.38	-0.38
Neutral Body Ads	1.00	1.00	0.00
Ideal Body Ads	1.00	0.88	0.12

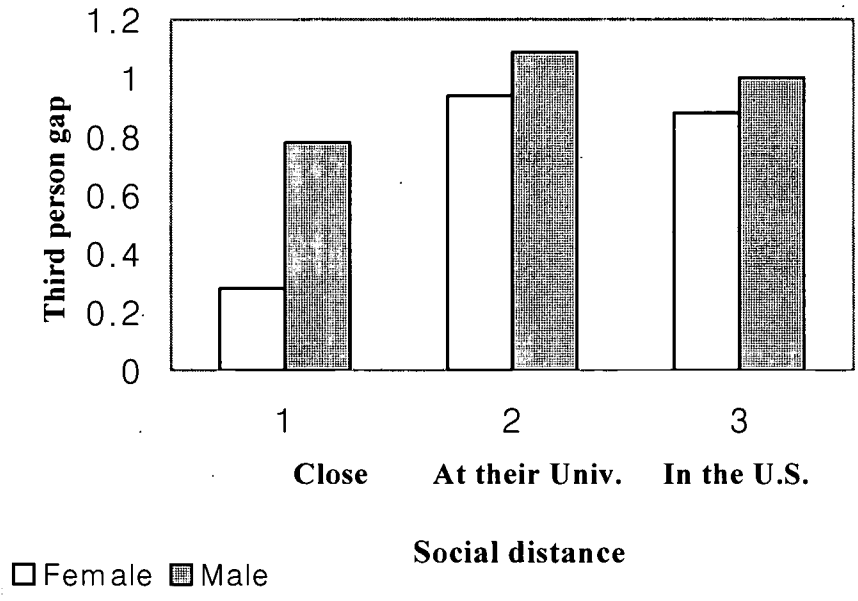
Note: * $p < .05$.

Table 4. Regression analysis results showing body area satisfaction and third person gap for ideal body image group

Body Area Satisfaction	Third person gap between males and self	Third person gap between females and self
Face	$\beta = 0.17$ $R^2 = 0.03$	$\beta = 0.29$ $R^2 = 0.09$
Lower torso	$\beta = 0.40^*$ $R^2 = 0.16$	$\beta = 0.13$ $R^2 = 0.02$
Mid torso	$\beta = 0.37^*$ $R^2 = 0.13$	$\beta = -0.11$ $R^2 = 0.01$
Hair	$\beta = 0.02$ $R^2 = 0.00$	$\beta = 0.02$ $R^2 = 0.00$
Muscle tone	$\beta = 0.23$ $R^2 = 0.06$	$\beta = -0.29$ $R^2 = 0.08$
Weight	$\beta = 0.32^*$ $R^2 = 0.10$	$\beta = 0.05$ $R^2 = 0.00$
Overall appearance	$\beta = 0.40^*$ $R^2 = 0.16$	$\beta = 0.01$ $R^2 = 0.00$

Note: * $p < .05$.

Figure 1. Third person gap by gender and social distance for ideal body image group





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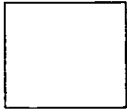


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