**Module 6 Studying Advertising**

**Objectives:** In studying this module, you should learn to:

- recognize the need to frame advertising analysis within the larger context of understanding advertising within a consumer culture.

- formulate a rationale for helping students learn to critically analyze ads.

- define ways in which ads can function as propaganda or is used in politics.

- analyze uses of advertising on the Web or school contexts.

- create your own ads, including the uses of parody or spoofs of ads.

- develop teaching methods for teaching critical analysis of ads.

###### A Broader Definition of Advertising Instruction

In studying advertising, students are focusing on more than simply studying television or magazine ads. They are also studying all aspects of marketing, merchandizing, promotion, sponsorship, and branding associated with being members of a consumer culture in which all aspects of experience are commoditized. Moreover, they are examining larger issues of consumption associated with environmental impact as well as construction of values and identities in a consumer society—the subject of Sut Jhally’s *Advertising and the End of the World* (for a video clip):

<http://mediaed.org/videos/CommercialismPoliticsAndMedia/Advertising_EndOfWorld>

Jhally argues that we need to understanding the role advertising plays in creating the needs for consumer goods in a capitalistic, consumer culture. The problem with this reliance on consumption is that creating and using consumer goods continues to not only use up the natural resources of oil, water, wood, iron ore, natural gas, coal, minerals, and the land, but to also create pollution through their use. For example, advertising creates the need to own a car to the point that everyone believes that they need to have car. The more cars that are built and sold, the more resources are used to build the cars, and the more cars are crowding highways and polluting the air, particularly those which are not energy-efficient. Given the growing number of countries who are becoming more consumption economies, and as the population of the countries grows, natural resources will be depleted or will become more scarce, as well as enhancing global warming and ecological devastation.

Media Awareness Network: Wasting Away: Natural Resources and the Environment

<http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/handouts/ethics/wasting_away.cfm>

Media Awareness Network: The Resource Racket:  A Global Perspective on Resources and Consumption

<http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/lessons/secondary/ethics/resource_racket.cfm>

*Advertising in a consumer culture*. Understanding advertising therefore requires an understanding of the larger consumer culture. In that culture, consumption is more than simply a matter of purchasing goods. In the past, the economy was built on simply exchange of goods in which the focus was on production and distribution of goods between individuals based on basic needs for food, housing, and health. Advertising during the 19th and early 20th century focused primary on providing information as to how a product served these basic needs.

An ad for Arm & Hammer Baking SodaTM simply described the functional uses for baking soda. After World War II, with the rise of a consumer economy, in which products or goods are consumed for more than just meeting basic needs, the focus shifted to consumption as active work involved in defining one’s identity and social relationships, consumption that influences global economies and markets (Miller, 1997). Thus, during the past century, advertising moved from simply providing information about a product to associating uses of that product with social status and identity, as well as the promotion of brand images.

Stuart Ewen (1999; 2001) argues that contemporary consumer culture emphasizes the importance of one’s social image—how one appears to others—as related to a perceived lifestyle. Advertisers market these images through associating the use of certain products with establishing a certain image—as hip, cool, sophisticated, or classy. These images of coolness are associated with models’ impersonal, withdrawn “look” of not being emotionally expressive. Wearing the “right” kind of clothes or owning certain “in” products serves to mark oneself as having allegiances to certain social status groups.

Consider the work you do in presenting yourself through the objects you include in your home for display to others, your clothes, media choices, car(s), or hobbies, as well as ways of differentiating your own choices from those of others in the home (Miller, 1997). To guide and socialize you in making these choices, businesses now spend billions of dollars to equate certain lifestyles or identities with certain brand images or signs—of, for example, being upper-middle-class with owning a CadillacTM or wearing Christian DiorTM clothes. The meaning of being a certain kind of person is therefore equated with a meaning system of signs and images constructed by the advertising industry.

Given this early socialization into consumerism, it is important that students learn to not only criticize the messages being conveyed by ads, but also understand the larger marketing agendas behind advertising in the culture. As Jhally points out in *Advertising and the End of the World*, it is only when people recognize the larger problem of living in a world dependent on consumption that they will begin to change their attitudes towards the negative impact of consumption on the environment, which, he argues, will reach a crisis point in 2070 when raw materials and water have been depleted and climate change will render much of the planet unlivable. While it may be considered as “too late” to change adolescents’ perceptions of ads, it is during adolescents that they begin to acquire the capacity for critical thinking and analysis of larger institutional forces. It is therefore important to foster a critical stance during that time period, particularly one that examines advertising in the context of larger cultural values.

History of advertising links:

Harper’s Weekly: 19th Century Advertising

<http://advertising.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?site=http%3A%2F%2Fadvertising.harpweek.com%2F>

The Ad\*Access Project: 7,000 advertisements printed in U.S. and Canadian newspapers and magazines between 1911 and 1955

<http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/adaccess/>

National Museum of American History: advertising archives

<http://www.americanhistory.si.edu/archives/d-7.htm>

Archives: top 100 ad campaigns

<http://www.emediaplan.com/admunch/Archives/Archives1.asp>

For examples of early ads:

<http://www.mediahistory.umn.edu>

Advertising is therefore endemic to our consumer culture. It is:

*- Ubiquitous*: it is now found in not only media texts, but also in all contexts of life: in sports arenas, bowl games, web sites, schools, restaurant bathrooms, clothing, highways, etc. Consumption of goods has now become a global activity, influencing cultures around the world, even in poor countries. Adolescents throughout the world have become increasingly conscious of brand names and consumer pastimes.

## *- Anonymous*: in contrast to books or songs, you never know who created the ad or wrote the jingles, so there’s no sense of accountability to what someone it promoting, or no way to challenge the producer of ads.

## *- Symbiotic:* in that its meanings are symbolic of or tied to larger agendas, social organizations, or campaigns. For example, Ronald Reagan political campaign ads employed the Bruce Springsteen song, “Born in the USA,” while Ford ads employed “Born to be Wild.”

## *- Intertextual*: in that ads are continually making references to other texts in the consumer/media world or in the culture. For example, the Coke SuperBowl 2002 ad with Britney Spears made references to previous Coke images from the soda fountain era of 1950s.

*- Repetitive:* ads repeat their messages endlessly; the same ads may also appear many times during an ad campaign often in the same genre form, for example, the Energizer Bunny ads employ the same parody/spoof genre form.

##### Advertising Drives Content

Another important aspect of advertising is that is drives the content of commercial television, radio, and magazines. The content itself is simply filler designed to sell the ads, which, in commercial media texts, are simply made to make money. The programming content is often designed simply to attract certain types of viewers who will also be exposed to ads geared for a certain demographic. Much of the content of prime time television is geared for the 18 – 49 year old market, who presumably are engaged in purchasing of the products advertised.

However, Gloria Goodale and M.S. Mason, in their articles in *The Christian Science Monitor,* “Youth powers TV, but is that smart business?”

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2002/0913/p18s01-altv.html>

challenge this orientation of marketing for the 18-49 year old market:

A growing number of experts are suggesting that the "get 'em while they're young" premise is an outdated assumption about both the young and the old.

First, women, not men, control 85 percent of all personal and household spending, according to recent research. And the over-49 crowd in general has more disposable income than younger people.

"Really, older people look around for things to spend it on," says Susan Easton, an Indiana University professor who has written extensively in the field of demographics.

Next, "brand loyalty" is not something that lasts a lifetime.

Indeed, women ages 40 to 50 are more likely to abandon a favorite brand than are younger women, according to a 1996 study by Information Resources. In 1997, baby boomers, then moving into their 50s, tried just as many brands of soda, beer, and candy bars as did 18- to 34-year-olds, discovered A.C. Nielsen, which tracks TV viewers' purchases just as its Nielsen cousin tracks viewing habits.

Ms. Easton goes so far as to characterize the whole rationale for catering to young adults as a "myth." "It's an idea inside the heads of advertisers," she says.

Much of this points to the fact that advertisers and content producers create demographic

categories that are largely fictional (Ang, 2000). The 18-34-year-old male is a fictional creation, yet that concept shapes much of not only advertising (for beer, cars, sports promotion, computer games, etc.), but also the content that will attract these advertisers: sports, wrestling, MTV, etc.

And, the style of advertising itself shapes the style of content Critics such as Mark Miller (1990) argue that Hollywood films have actually become more like commercials in their use of high-speed editing and flashy shots, given the assumption that audiences will not pay attention to slow-moving, traditional cinematography. And, magazine and newspaper contain more short, “catchy” articles that are often difficult to distinguish from the ads.

##### Why Study Ads?

One primary goal of having students critically examine ads to counteract years of socialization of themselves as consumers, a process that begins at a very young age. In an article distributed by Reuters, Maureen Bavdek, “Marketing to Children Causes Great Divide,”

notes that the following:

- “Critics of advertising aimed at children say that Madison Avenue should stop exploiting youngsters by turning them into little insatiable consumers. But marketing executives in the $500 billion-a-year industry who dream up the campaigns and slogans meant to capture the attention of children argue that they are simply informing the consumer, and follow all the rules in doing so.”

- “Experts say the average U.S. child is bombarded with some 40,000 commercials a year on television alone. Corporations are now using more sophisticated marketing techniques to grab a child's attention and hold it, often for years.”

In an article on the impact of advertising on children, Miriam H. Zoll or American News Service notes that children, regardless of their background, share a strong desire for material goods:

"In my practice I see kids becoming incredibly consumerist," said Kanner, who is based at the Wright Institute, a graduate psychology school in Berkeley, Calif. "The most stark example is when I ask them what they want to do when they grow up. They all say they want to make money. When they talk about their friends, they talk about the clothes they wear, the designer labels they wear, not the person's human qualities.

"I see parents in this context, too," Kanner continued. "They come to me and say their kids are depressed and ask for violent video games or the food they see on TV. Parents say they feel in conflict. They want to say no, but they don't want to have their child be upset with them."

It's not just the pervasiveness of marketing campaigns aimed at children, Kanner said. Nowadays advertisers are making their pitches to younger and younger audiences, many of them not yet out of diapers.

Do ads directed at toddlers work? According to Kanner, they do. "Recent studies have also shown that by the time they are 36 months old, American children recognize an average of 100 brand logos," he said.

More stringent measures have been taken in other parts of the world. The governments of Sweden and Norway prohibit television advertising directly targeting children under the age of 12. Greece bans TV stations from advertising toys to children between the hours of 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. Quebec restricts all television advertising directed at children under the age of 13.

Many of children’s television shows contain numerous ads pitching fast food, toys, dolls, and sports items. Based on research that indicated that children under age eight are not capable of critically responding to advertising and therefore tend to accept their messages, the American Psychological Association recommended that restrictions be placed on advertising geared for children, particularly in terms of fast-food marketing.

<http://www.apa.org/topics/kids-media/food.aspx>

The London Telegraph reported that British children view 20, 000 commercials a year. There are 1,150 junk-food television commercials each day. While it is difficult to prove a cause and effect relationship between advertising and obesity, the obesity rate in children has increased by 25 per cent from 1995 to 2003 and affects one in 10 six-year-olds.

Leonard, T. (2004, 01/05).

Given the assumption that advertising may be harmful to their health, the Australian government does not allow advertising in preschool program, limits advertising to five minutes for every thirty minutes of children’s television, and places restrictions on the content of that advertising.

Media Awareness Network guides: Advertising and consumption

<http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/special_initiatives/girl_guides/guides/advertising/guides_advertising.cfm>

Advertising and consumption <http://www.glbtq.com/arts/ad_consume.html>

Children and advertising <http://www.mediafamily.org/facts/facts_childadv.shtml>

For further reading on children and advertising:

Fox, R. R. (2000). *Harvesting minds: How TV commercials control kids.* New York: Praeger.

Macklin, M., & Carlson, L. (Eds.) (1996). *Advertising to children: Concepts and controversies.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Unnikrishnan, N., & Bajpai, S. (1996). *The impact of television advertising on children.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

For a textbook/workbook with seven units and 45 activities for grades 6-12:

Paxson, P. (2002). *Media literacy: Thinking critically about advertising.* Lincoln, NE:

Center for Media Literacy.

**Application of Semiotic Analysis to Ads**

Contemporary advertising depends primarily on assumed meanings of images and signs. Semiotic analysis focuses on the meaning of these images or signs in advertising based on a code system of consumption. Robert Goldman (1992) notes that:

Modern advertising thus teaches us to consume, not the product, but its sign. What the

product stands for is more important than what it is. A commodity-sign is complete when

we take the sign for what it signifies. For example, “diamonds may be marketed by

likening of them to eternal love, creating a symbolism where the mineral means something not in its own terms, as a rock, but in human terms, as a sign” (Williamson, 1978, 12). The diamond is no longer a means of securing eternal love, it has become eternal love. Conversely, eternal love assumes diamond-like qualities. (p. 19).

Advertising therefore constructs the meaning of sign values associating with constructing identities. Goldman cites the example of perfumes:

Purchasing the right perfume means that a woman will not only acquire a particular odor at a particular price but “a gorgeous, sexy, young, fragrance.” A customer will, in consuming the product, acquire the qualities of being gorgeous, sexy, and young? No, she acquires a sign of being gorgeous, sexy, young. It is the look we have come to desire; and the *look* we desire is the *object of desire*. People thus become a kind of *tabula rasa*, a slate filled with desired attributes by the objects they consumer; the object becomes an active agent capable of going all the things that a gorgeous, sexy and young person can do. (p. 24).

For a semiotic analysis of magazine ads for men’s fragrances by Alexander Clare:

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Students/awc9401.html>

PBS: Food Advertising Tricks <http://pbskids.org/dontbuyit/advertisingtricks/foodadtricks.html>

This suggests the need to analyze how brands acquire certain meanings, how Cadillac or Christian Dior acquire meanings associated with those brands through advertising and marketing. Describe the meanings you associate with the following popular brand names and how you’re acquired these meanings:

- Haagen-Dazs

- Coke

- Apple Computer

- McDonald’s

- Saturn

- Rolex

- Johnny Walker

- FedEx

- Campbell’s

Greg Myers (1999) identifies four systems or “p’s” of marketing that serve to constitute the meanings associated with these brands: product, placement, promotion, and price.

*Product.* The nature of the product, as well as the packaging and presentation of the product—for example, ads may describe the unique ways in which a beer is brewed.

*Placement*. How products are placed and displayed in a store in order to make certain brand names prominent in a store.

*Promotion*. How brands are promoted through various advertising techniques.

*Price*. How brands are promoted in terms of being a “good value,” or, in terms of customers willingness to pay a premium price.

Myers also describes four more “p’s” associated with the promotion of brands: past, position, practices, and paradigms.

*Past.* Brand names are associated with a certain tradition or “heritage” in terms of meanings based on how advertisers create a record over time.

*Position*. Advertisements attempt to place brands in competitive relationships with other brands to mark those brands as superior or unique—the fact that Hertz is #1 or Avis “tries harder” (in the number two spot).

*Practices*. Customers’ actual uses of products, practices associated with the meaning of brands—the fact that Starbucks coffee is associated with a yuppie practice of consuming coffee and/or meeting with others at a coffee shop. As Myers notes, practices may change—for example, how Levi’s jeans shifted from being work clothes to more fashionable social markers.

*Paradigms.* Larger cultural frameworks or discourses shaping the meanings of brands, for example, how the meaning of smoking in the 1950s compares with contemporary meanings given shifts in larger paradigms related to perceptions of smoking.

Go back and review the meanings associated with the brand names listed above in terms of Myers’s eight “p’s.” What advertising images do you associate with your meanings of the different brands? What intertextual experiences or code systems are you applying to construct the meanings of these brands?

The meanings of these brand names are constituted by larger public relations campaigns involved in creating positive images for products, companies, industries, or organizations. This includes creating logos that are readily identifiable and that evoke a positive image. If a logo is perceived to evoke an outdated, out-of-touch image, that logo will then be revised.

For examples of logos see:

<http://www.mckarney.com/pages/Logos_jpg.htm>

Which of these logos is effective and which are not.

Have students create their own logos, using the following features:

- Simplicity

- Appealing colors

- Legibility

- A relevant graphic

The big question is, how does one judge whether these attributes are present since each is very subjective? If you have an opportunity, “test” your logo by allowing customers or potential customers to see it. But the truth is, in the final analysis the logo must please you.

Look at the National Honey Board’s logo for an example



Take a look at the National Honey Board’s logo. Judge it according to the attributes mentioned above:

*The logo is simple*

It has the word “Honey” and a bear eating from a honey jar.

*The logo is legible*

Even though “Honey” is in a script style, one can easily read it.

*The colors are appealing*

Though it’s not visible here, the logo is often shown in black and white with a striking gold highlight.

*The logo features a relevant graphic*

The illustration of a bear eating honey implies the wide appeal of honey, the product’s old-fashioned innocence, and its natural purity.

However, in some cases, there are problems with the argument that brand names carry a lot of power. Wolfgang Grassl argues that this concept of “brand idealism”

<http://ontology.buffalo.edu//brands.html>

fails to consider the differences between brands and products, when they are often quite different. For example, consumers of products such as bread or milk may not consider brand names in making such choices. Or, in some cases, imitation products without the same brand name, for example Rolex watches without the Rolex name, may retain their same value. And, certain products cannot always be successfully sold through marketing their brand name.

## In her book on branding, No Logo, Naomi Klein (2000), argues that branding is part of a larger multi-international corporate attempt to assume power and control within the context of economic globalization. She is critical of the emphasis on public relations campaigns designed to sell positive images for companies who are either selling undesirable products or who are violating worker rights or anti-pollution laws.

# <http://nologo.org/index.pl?section=classroom>

Education Media Foundation video with Naomi Klein: *No Logo:* *Brands, Globalization & Resistance*

<http://www.mediaed.org/videos/CommercialismPoliticsAndMedia/NoLogo>

# Part of this branding process, marketing people attempt to determine how adolescents construct their identities through wearing or using products based on these products’ “coolness” or brand names. Both the PBS Frontline documentary, *Merchants of Cool* (entire documentary online):

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/cool/etc/synopsis.html>

and Alissa Quart (2003) document the ways in which marketers hire consulting firms and trend-spotters to acquire information about adolescents’ perceptions of what particular brands, fashions, music, and other products are perceived of as trendy or “cool” (See also Module 8 on media ethnography). They also encourage adolescents to engage in word-of-mouth promotions of certain products with their peers.

<http://www.workopolis.com/servlet/Content/fasttrack/20030503/FCNERD?section=Marketing>

For further reading on the semiotics of advertising:

Forceville, C. (1998). *Pictorial metaphor in advertising.*New York: Routledge.

Williamson, J. (1994). *Decoding advertisements: Ideology and meaning in advertising.* London: Marion Boyars.

###### Rhetorical/Audience Analysis of Ads

Traditional rhetoric focused on strategies for persuading an audience to do or believe something. Traditional rhetoric can be applied to an analysis of direct, hard-sell ads in which a speaker is expounding reasons to use and buy a certain product, ads that were typical of early advertising even up to the 1940s and 1950s. Such analysis would focus on the use of evidence supporting the product, the believability and status of the speaker, the validity of reasons provided, and various techniques employed—citing “scientific evidence” or use of celebrity endorsements. Early ads therefore focused on the product itself—often with an image of the product in the ad, along with reasons for use of these products.

If you trace the evolution of ads in the following “Timeline” of ads from the 1700s to the 1980s from the American Advertising Museum,

<http://www.admuseum.org/museum/timeline/timeline.htm>

note the shift in the focus of the primary topic of the ads from the product itself with a lot of information about the product to an increasing use of images and audience use of the product.

Advertising has always played a role in American commerce and industrial growth. As early as 1704, The Boston News Letter carried such paid announcements as one seeking a buyer for an Oyster bay, Long Island estate.



Advertising writers of the mid-1800s developed an excessive, flamboyant style characterized by the showmanship of PT Barnum's circus promotions.



Coca-Cola was first registered as a trademark by Atlanta pharmacist Asa Briggs Chandler in 1893. The distinctive script name was advertised on souvenir fans, serving trays, calendars and countless other specialty items, eventually becoming the most recognized trademark in the world.



To support recruiting efforts and promote sales of war bonds and stamps during World War 1, thousands of advertisers featured war themes in their campaigns while media contributed space. By 1919, the contributions totaled $2.5 billion.



Celebrity endorsements were a popular tool used by cigarette advertisers to add glamor to their brand during the Golden Age of Hollywood.



Even advertising couldn't sell a car the public didn't want. When Ford promoted the Edsel with photo-lengthened pictures to make it look more glamorous. In reality, it looked simply ordinary and became the butt of many jokes.



George petty styled his curvaceous Petty Girl after the red-suited Jantzen Diving Girl, one of the world's best-known trademarks since its beginnings in the 1920s. His rendition became one of the most popular pin-ups of World War II.



Volvo automobile advertising put a humorous spin on America's growing obsession with dieting in this ad produced in 1979



In 1982, Apple began one of the decade's most aggressive advertising campaigns. Its objective was to take some of the mystery out of personal computers.



Nike pictured sports figures wearing its shoes in giant size during the 1984 Los Angeles Summer Olympics - a fitting symbol of America's growing presence in the international market.



Focus on audience identification with groups or causes. As you may note in the above evolution of ads, there is an increasing emphasis on uses of the product by the audience itself—the Volvo owner, the Apple user, and the Nike sports star. More recently, ads have shifted away from

direct, hard-sell appeals to focus on gaining audience identification with a social group or cause. In this more indirect, soft-sell approach, by gaining identification with a certain group or cause, the ad producer can then link or equate involvement with this group or cause with use of the product.

For example, in the following series of magazine ads for an Accura SUV, the primary focus is on the images of the SUV associated with uses of the SUV for surfing on the beach.



This ad creates an appeal to a certain audience group involved in outdoor activities, for example, surfing, hunting, fishing, etc. The image of the surfer is equated with owning an SUV—the product is then assumed to be a necessary part of the surfing, hunting, or fishing process.

Similarly, the “Joy of Pepsi” ad campaigns

<http://www.pepsi.com/current/joy_of_pepsi/tv_spots/index.cfm>

portrays the “Pepsi Generation” in an idealized manner as a group who is equated with celebrities Britney Spears, Jeff Gordan, Shakira, Ken Griffrey, Jr., and Sammy Sosa, images of status or fame that are they equated with being a member of the “Pepsi Generation,” which, in turn, is equated with drinking Pepsi.

Again, understanding the meaning of these intertextual equations requires an understanding of the larger discourses and cultural models operating in a consumer culture in which these celebrities assume star status. The producers of the Pepsi ads assume that their audiences are familiar with these celebrities and that they will equate positive associations between these celebrities, group membership, and the product. All of this requires the ability to conduct analyses of the various discourses constituting the meaning of the audience/text relationships.

Underlying these audience appeal are certain values assumptions. For example, the reasoning behind the SUV ad is that if you have an SUV, you are going to be able to better access sites for surfing. Students could identify certain value assumptions lurking behind ads, and then interrogate those assumptions by asking such questions as, couldn’t one get to the beach on foot or by another type of transportation.

All of this suggests the need to examine these questions:

## - Who’s the intended or target audience

## - What signs, markers, images, language, social practices imply that audience

## - How is the audience linked to use of the product?

## - What are the underlying value assumptions: (Having white teeth enhances your popularity; casino gambling is enjoyable).

*Dream-like fantasy world*. Another basic element of advertising is the way in which it creates a dream-like fantasy world that appeals primarily to audiences’ emotional desires for popularity, status, power, or sex appeal. Audiences identify with idealized people who have attained popularity, status, power, or sex appeal through their use of certain products. These products are also associated with an instant, magical transformation of the self. By using a certain shampoo, one becomes beautiful. By taking certain pills, one’s headache is cured immediately. By going on a certain diet, one loses weight in days. By owning a certain car, one immediately becomes the center of attention. These magic transformations reflect the dream-like fantasy world that waxes over the complexities of life.

The element of magic is also evident in the uses of mythic heroes or savior such as the “Man From Glad” or the “White Knight” who instantly transforms a dirty kitchen into a clean one. Mythic references are also evident in references to Atlas tires, Hermes FTD flowers, or the Ajax white knight

In his classic study of portrayals of women in advertising, Irving Goffman (1988) described the way in which ads portrayed women as child-like, dependent on males, often positioned in unnatural pose, and mindless, images associated with what he described as “the ritualization of subordination” (p. 45). He cites the example of female models who frequently adopt a dazed look with seemingly little on their mind, as in the following pantyhose ad:



Ads also position audience to adopt gazes that define females or males as the objects of desire—as things to be desired:

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/gaze/gaze.html>

<http://www.uvm.edu/~tstreete/powerpose/>

Given these highly emotional appeals, it is important for students to define how ads employ various emotional appeals and images to construct a dream-like fantasy world. While much of the appeal may be working on a subconscious level, students could consciously employ a image-sound skim method to list the images and sounds in the ad and then the emotions the associate with those images and sounds.

###### Critical Discourse Analysis of Ads

From the perspective of critical discourse analysis, Guy Cook (2001) argues that advertising is a discourse itself constituting the meaning of both the text (the ad itself) and the context in which people are responding to the ad. He argues that is important to examine the meanings of ads based on how audiences construct these meanings based on their semiotic knowledge of images/signs, genre knowledge, needs, desires, and discourses applied to the ad. He describes the following components of context (p. 4):

*Substance:* the physical material which carriers or relays text

*Music and pictures:* designed to entertain and capture people’s attention

*Paralanguage:* meaningful behavior accompanying language, such as voice quality, gestures, facial expressions and touch (in speech), and choice of typeface and letter sizes (in writing).

*Situation:* the properties and relations of objects and people in the vicinity of the texts, as perceived by the participants.

*Co-text:* text which precedes or follows that under analysis, and which participants judge to belong to the same discourse.

*Intertext:* texts which the participants perceive as belonging to other discourse, but which they associated with the text under construction, and which affects their interpretation.

*Participants:* their intentions and interpretations, knowledge and beliefs, attitudes, affiliations and feelings. Each participant is simultaneously a part of the context and an observer of it.

Participants are usually described as senders and receivers (The sender of a message is not always the same as the addressers, however, the person who relays it. In a television ad, for example, the addresser may be an actor, though the sender is an advertising agency. Neither is the receiver always the addressee, the person for which it is intended. The addresses may be a specific target group, but the receiver is anyone who sees the ad.)

*Function:* what the text is intended to do by the senders and addressers, or perceived to do by the receivers and addresses.

Let’s apply these different components to the Sprite “Lowrider” ad



*Substance, music, pictures.* In this 30-second ad, a group of Hispanic adolescents are riding down the street on their “lowrider” bikes. Some younger kids stare at them as the words, “Some people don’t get it” are heard in the background. At the end, one of the riders is shown drinking a bottle of Sprite with the words, “Obey your thirst” in the background. The images of this ad are designed to imply hipness or coolness, an equation of the “lowrider” bike image with the product image. The music and images in this ad are geared for an adolescent audience, who are not yet driving—so they are still limited to their bikes, although the appeal may also be to the larger adolescent audience. A critical discourse analysis goes beyond simply these images to suggest that the discourses of masculinity and subcultural resistance constituting the “lowrider” biking practice are then transferred to the practice of drinking Sprite.

For a discussion of Latino students’ studying the “lowrider culture” in Mexican-American culture, see:

Cowan, P. (2004). Devils or angels: Literacy and discourse in lowerider culture. In J. Mahiri (Ed.), *Literacy in the lives of urban youth* (pp. 47-74). New York: Peter Lang.

An analysis of Sprite’s campaign to improve their market share in the late 1990s in the documentary, *Merchants of Cool*

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/cool/etc/synopsis.html>

indicated that Sprite launched a major campaign using sports celebrities parodying celebrity endorsement ads in an attempt to equate being ironic, hip, or cool with the product. As a result, Sprite sales jumped among the adolescent group. Sprite also increased its advertising on MTV; the program shows a hip-hop concert event sponsored by Sprite, again, designed to link certain cultural images, in this case, hip-hop with the product.

*Paralanguage.* The voice, speech, and words that appear on the screen are all consistent with an appeal to a young, male, adolescent audience. The words, “some people don’t get it,” and “obey your thirst” are spoken in a defiant manner associated with the image of assertiveness.

## These paralanguage uses serve as markers for certain identities associated with gender

### class, or race. For example, audiences bring certain assumptions about the relationships between dialects, register, pitch, topic elaboration, intonation, hedging, asides, types of speech acts performed and social class as a set of cultural, social practices. In this ad, audiences may assume that the people are more working to middle-class given their language use and social practices.

The typeface of the words that appear on the screen are large bold, comic-book-like script, also associated with “coolness.” Myers notes that ads use typeface and word graphics frequently to convey certain meanings. He cites the example of a perfume ad for Passion (p. 85):

be touched

by the fragrance

that touches

the woman

in which the shape of the words, with the second line protruding to the left matches the shape of the perfume bottle, a link between the words themselves and the product.

Myers also notes the importance of the connotations of words in ads used as brand names, for example, Poison for a perfume, a word that connotes death or killing, words associated with femme fatale. Or, while the denotation of Opium is that of a narcotic, its connotation is that of Romantic poets, the Orient, dreams, or bohemian practices (pp. 107-108).

And, Myers argues for the need to analyze the uses of figurative language in ads. For example, similes such as “Miller: The Champagne of Bottle Beers,” or “breakfast without orange juice is like a day without sunshine.” Or, the use of metaphors such as “Sherwin-Williams covers the earth.”

# Language is also employed in creating slogans, as in the use of catchy sounds in alliteration: “Before it can become a Heinz bean, every raw bean is tested by a light beam,” or intonation, as in “I exercise, AND I eat the right sort of breakfast,” and a mixture of different languages: “You can fudgi it or you can Fuji it”

# Myers also identifies how pronouns are used in ads to attempt to build personal relationships between the ad and the audience, particularly with the use of “you” that assumes a relationship with the audience, as in “Don’t let coughs keep you off duty.” Similarly, the use of “we” personalizes the impersonal, as in “At McDonald’s, we do it all for you,” or, in the Avis ad “We try harder.” (Avis). And, the use of “he”/”she” implies a certain shared knowledge between ad and audience as in the Clairol ad: “Does she of doesn’t she? Only her hairdresser knows for sure.”

Myers also examines the use of everyday conversation in ads as in the two following Nescafe coffee ads that use dialogue to create a mini drama associated with drinking coffee:

### Doorbell rings

### Woman: Hi

### Man: Laura

### Woman: You always did stay up late.

### Man: How long have you been back?

### Woman: About a day and a half. I was just passing by.

### Man: At this time of night?

### Woman: Are you along?

### Man: Yes, er, no. Look, I’m expecting someone

### Woman: It’s a neighbor

### Man: Well, do we have time for a coffee?

## Announcer: GOLDEN ROASTED RICHER SMOOTHER NESCAFE GOLD BLEND

## Doorbell rings

## 2nd woman: Hope I didn’t get you out of bed.

## 1st woman: This coffee tastes good

## Man: sighs

## 2nd woman: gaze towards camera/1st woman

*Situation*/*co-text*. It is difficult to know how the Sprite ad is perceived or on what programs is occurs, but one could guess that it would appear on programs associated with a male adolescent audience: MTV programs, sports shows, etc.

*Intertext*. There is a strong intertextual link in the Sprite ad to the phenomenon of lowrider bikes

<http://www.lowriderbike.com/>

something that would appeal to a young adolescent market, particularly in parts of the country in which lowrider cars/bikes are popular. This reflects a larger association with an Easy-Rider adolescent rebellion against the usual, status-quo car/bike in the form of creating one’s own versions of bikes. This rebellion against the “some people [who] don’t get it”—the status quo, is then linked with the act of drinking Sprite.

*Participants*. The clothes, sun glasses, and terrain evokes an adolescent world in which adolescents dominant the neighborhood streets in which younger kids “don’t get it” because they have not yet achieved adolescents. The potential audience of participants are assumed to be attracted to this portrayal of hipness, although some my not identify with the idea of a younger adolescent group who is still riding bikes.

*Function*. This ad functions within the larger Sprite campaign of equating images of coolness with the product. It is also part of an even larger marketing effort to promote soft drinks given recent criticisms of the soft drink industry by health experts and educators who are alarmed with increasing obesity and lack of nutrition in adolescents’ diets.

###### Advertising as Propaganda: Public Relations Ads

Another perspective for analyzing advertising is to consider it as propaganda for developing positive attitudes towards consumerism. Ads can then be perceived as more than just promoting products; they are also promoting attitudes, values, and ideologies. From this perspective, advertising itself functions to indoctrinate audiences to believe in consumer products as providing them happiness, status, and success. For example, Exxon Oil may have an ad that portrays the value of education or even the environment. These ads are not designed to directly sell oil. Rather, they are selling the larger image of Exxon as a corporation that “cares” about education or the environment—despite the fact that oil is the leading cause of air pollution and global warming. These public relations ads qualify as propaganda in that they distort facts in order to promote their own ideological perspectives and agendas, in the case of Exxon Oil—often to resist efforts to curtail oil exploration or production. However, as in any critical analysis of propaganda, students could ask, who does advertising really benefit—leading them to recognize that it is the producers, not the audiences, who are benefiting.

webquest: What is the Truth: propaganda analysis

<http://valhalla.guhsd.net/library/webquest_somewhereinmid.html>

To create your own ad analysis, ask students to go to the following sites for ads

<http://www.adflip.com/>

<http://www.ads.com/ads/index.jsp?us=574629&pt=0>

and analyze the different components listed above. For examples of ad analysis see the following sites:

Dan Chandler ad analysis

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Modules/MC30820/analad.html>

ad analyses

<http://www.lclark.edu/~soan370/advertising.html>

<http://projects.edtech.sandi.net/brooklyn/advertising/>

## <http://website.education.wisc.edu/rla/ADSITE/index.htm>

##### Advertising and Idealized Gender Images

Advertisers also portray various images of gender roles in order to promote certain products associated with achieving those roles. For example, the multi-billion dollar beauty industry employs ads to promote images of ideal femininity (and now masculinity) to equate the use of their products to achieving these ideal gender images. By projecting images of the ideal, ad function to create a sense of inadequacy—that one is imperfect without a certain product. And, these ads also establish a sense of membership in imaginary communities of consumption with others, a “synthetic personalization” with a mass audience treated as an individual “you” to create a “synthetic sisterhood.”

This suggests the need to have students examine the disparities between the ideal image and the reality of their own complex, realistic identity. For example, most female’s body shape do not match the thin body shape of models employed in ads. Adolescents need to recognize that it is impossible to change one’s body shape and therefore to achieve the appearance of models in ads. And, males who believe that they can achieve a muscular, body-builder image through excessive training or even steroid use need to realize the limitations of doing so. Moreover, they need to recognize the health risks of eating disorders, or, for males, steroid use.

The video, *What a Girl Wants,* (video clip):

<http://mediaed.org/videos/MediaGenderAndDiversity/WhatAGirlWants/studyguide/html>

documents the ways in which advertising using celebrity females such as Britney Spears, Christina Aguilera, Mandy Moore and Jessica Simpson to promote these idealized images of femininity for females to emulate.

Jean Kilbourne, a leading critic of these ads, in her *Killing Us Softly3* video (video clip):

<http://mediaed.org/videos/MediaGenderAndDiversity/KillingUsSoftly3/studyguide/html>

and the video, Slim Hopes (video clip):

<http://mediaed.org/videos/MediaGenderAndDiversity/SlimHopes>

makes the following points in the teacher’s guide accompanying the *Killing Us Softly3* video:

- As girls reach adolescence, they get the message that they should not be too powerful,

should not take up too much space. They are told constantly that they should be less than

what they are.

* At least 1 in 5 young women in America today has an eating disorder.
* One recent study of fourth grade girls found that 80% of them were on diets.
* Twenty years ago, the average model weighed 8% less than the average woman. Today,

the average model weighs 23% less than the average woman.

- Only 5% of women have the body type (tall, genetically thin, broad-shouldered, narrow-

hipped, long-legged and usually small-breasted) seen in almost all advertising. (When the

models have large breasts, they’ve almost always had breast implants.)

* The obsession with thinness is used to sell cigarettes.
* 4 out of 5 women are dissatisfied with their appearance.
* Almost half of American women are on a diet on any given day.
* 5-10 million women are struggling with serious eating disorders.
* The American food industry spends $36 billion on advertising each year.
* Women’s magazines are full of ads for rich foods and recipes.
* Eating has become a moral issue. Words such as "guilt" and "sin" are often used to sell

food.

- Americans spend more than $36 billion dollars on dieting and diet-related products each

year.

* 95% of all dieters regain the weight they lost, and more, within five years.

- Articles about the dangers of diet products are often contradicted by advertisements for

diet products within the same magazine.

- Sex is frequently used to sell food. Many ads eroticize food and normalize bingeing. These

ideas support dangerous eating-disordered behaviors.

- There are many images in advertising that silence women – images that show women with

their hands over their mouths and other visuals, as well as copy, that strip women of their

voices.

- The body language of young women and girls in advertising is usually passive and

vulnerable. Conversely, the body language of men and boys is usually powerful, active and aggressive.

- When girls are shown with power in advertising, it is almost always a very masculine

definition of power.

* Often the power that women are offered in advertising is silly and trivial.

- Women are often infantilized in advertisements, producing and reinforcing the sense that

they should not grow up, resist becoming a mature sexual being, and remain little girls.

- Advertisements rarely feature women over the age of 35, and there are many

advertisements for beauty products that claim to help women continue to look young, even when they no longer are.

Given her critiques of the construction of femininity by the beauty industry, students could examine ads for cosmetics, clothes, diet products, etc., and have them define the discourses constituting the meaning of these ads. In our own research on high school students’ perceptions of stereotyped portrayals of females in magazine ads (Beach & Freedman, 1992), we found that students demonstrated little critical analysis of these ads. Moreover, when asked to create narratives associated with the people in the ads, for example, a female dressed in a Zum-Zum prom gown dancing with a sailor, students created highly idealized narratives, for example, that the couple will fall in love and get married. Students could examine how these ads influences their own gender perceptions as to what it means to be “female” or “male.”

Submissive females in advertising <http://gladstone.uoregon.edu/~pingle1/submissivefemale.html>

Webquest: Images of Girls and Women

as Portrayed in the Media <http://schools.sbe.saskatoon.sk.ca/evanh/webquest/>

Webquest: Carol Boehm: Images and Influences

<http://eprentice.sdsu.edu/J03OW/boehm/INDEX/Images_Influence.htm>

Webquest: Dying to be Thin

<http://www.lkdsb.net/TEAS/Webquests/Disorders/disorders.htm>

Advertising geared for males focuses more on selling products—beer, cars, video games, clothes, sports, sports equipment, etc.—associated with male-peer bonding and markers of masculinity. For example, given the relatively high percentage of males playing video games, the video game industry is now placing more ads in the games. A study conducted by the industry itself (Activision and Nielsen Entertainment, 2004, “Video Game Habits: A Comprehensive Examination of Gamer Demographics and Behavior in U.S. Television Households,” and therefore possibly suspect in terms of bias toward promoting the idea of video game advertising) found that over one quarter of the gamers recalled ads from the last game they played, had positive perceptions of the ads, and one third indicated that the ads help them make purchase decisions.

<http://www.videogame.net/vgn/newsstory.cfm?newsid=667&system=Multi>

One central theme of male-oriented ads is the appeal to the archetype of the muscular, tough, even violent male hero who takes on the world or the male sports star. These idealized images of masculinity engaged in “male” cultural practices are often associated with beer, car, or video game ads.

A Media Awareness Network instructional unit on male violence in advertising examines five basic themes evident in these ads:

1. Attitude is Everything

2. The Cave Man Mentality

3. The New Warriors

4. Muscles and the "Ideal Man"

5. Heroic Masculinity

Media Education Foundation video: Advertising and Male Violence

<http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/lessons/secondary/gender_portrayal/advertising_male_violence.cfm>

Media Education Foundation video: *Tough Guise Violence, Media & the Crisis in Masculinity*

Featuring Jackson Katz

Part One: Understanding Violent Masculinity Introduction / Degendering Violence / Upping the Ante / Backlash / The Tough Guise

Part Two: Violent Masculinity in Action The School Shootings / Constructing Violent Masculinity / Violent Sexuality / Invulnerability / Vulnerability / Better Men

<http://www.mediaed.org/videos/MediaGenderAndDiversity/ToughGuise#vidinfo>

Study Guide:

<http://www.mediaed.org/videos/MediaGenderAndDiversity/ToughGuise/studyguide/html>

Media Awareness Network: Advertising and Male Violence

<http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/lessons/secondary/gender_portrayal/advertising_male_violence.cfm>

Media Awareness Network: Sports Personalities in Ads

<http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/lessons/secondary/advertising_marketing/sports_ads.cfm>

Males in Ads (lots of useful examples)

<http://www.ltcconline.net/lukas/gender/maleads/males.htm>

Males as Objects (lots of useful examples of objectification of males)

<http://www.ltcconline.net/lukas/gender/objectify/males/maleobjects.htm>

Webquest: Ann Jones: Advertising and Image

<http://www.web-and-flow.com/members/ajones1/advertising/webquest.htm>

Webquest: Jeff Bailey: Exploring Gender Stereotypes through Shakespeare

<http://valnet.mtvalleyhs.sad43.k12.me.us/MVHS/Bailey/genderwebqstudent.htm>

Webquest: How Do I Look?

<http://www.mtsd.org/jswilson/main/library/WebQuestkvp.html>

For further reading: males and advertising

Boyreau, J. (2004). *The Male Mystique: Men's Magazine Ads of the 1960s and '70s.* New York: Chronicle.

Advertising and Alcohol/Tobacco

Advertisers also promote alcohol and tobacco (in magazines/billboards) in ways that appeal to adolescents. A study of alcohol advertising in magazines and adolescent readership published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (Garfield, Chung, & Rathouz, 2003) found that from 1997-2001 in 35 of 48 major US magazines there were 9148 advertisements; 13% were for beer, 5% for wine, and 82% for liquor. Analysis of those magazines more like to have an adolescent audience found that beer and liquor ads were most likely to be read by adolescents. For every 1 million underage readers ages 12-19 of a magazine, there were 1.6 times more beer advertisements and 1.3 times more liquor advertisements.

The National Institute on Media and the Family noted that:

- Television advertising changes attitudes about drinking. Young people report more positive feelings about drinking and their own likelihood to drink after viewing alcohol ads (Austin, 1994; Grube, 1994).

- Fifty-six percent of students in grades 5 through 12 say that alcohol advertising encourages them to drink (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2001).

<http://www.mediafamily.org/facts/facts_alcohol.shtml>

A study conducted by The Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth (click on Marketing Gallery for examples of TV alcohol ads) *Youth Exposure to Alcohol Ads on Television, 2002,*

<http://camy.org/> found that there was an increase of 39% in TV alcohol advertising from 2001 to 2002. Adolescents viewed two beer and liquor ads for every three seen by adults. All 15 most popular shows for adolescents had alcohol ads.

<http://camy.org/factsheets/index.php?FactsheetID=22>

A study by The Alcohol and Public Health Research Unit of New Zealand found that many adolescents view alcohol television ads. The more positive their reaction to these ads, they more likely they were to consume alcohol and to have higher annual alcohol consumption.

<http://www.aphru.ac.nz/projects/Alcohol/advertising.htm#content>

Education Media Foundation video: *Deadly Persuasion: The Advertising of Alcohol & Tobacco*

<http://www.mediaed.org/videos/MediaAndHealth/DeadlyPersuasion>

Jean Kilbourne, “Targets of Alcohol Advertising”

<http://www.health20-20.org/targets_of_alcohol_advertising.htm>

Education Media Foundation video: *Spin the Bottle: Sex, Lies & Alcohol*

<http://www.mediaed.org/videos/MediaAndHealth/SpinTheBottle>

Media Education Foundation: (click on: Deconstructing an Alcohol Ad).

<http://www.mediaed.org/>

The alcohol industry claims that it has launched ads designed to discourage underage drinking. However, a study by The Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth indicated that, in 2001, adolescents were 93 times more likely to see an ad promoting alcohol than an industry ad discouraging underage drinking. (Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth, 2003, “Drops in the Bucket, Alcohol Industry “Responsibility” Advertising on Television in 2001,” Washington, DC: Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth).

Institute of Medicine, (2004), *Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility* (online book) <http://www.nap.edu/books/0309089352/html/>

*Tobacco ads*. While television tobacco ads have been banned, they are still prevalent in magazines, billboards, and at sports events. And, tobacco companies pay movie producers to include smoking in films. A study conducted by the Center for Tobacco Control Research and Education, University of California, San Francisco, found that of the 776 movies released between 1999 and 2003, almost 80 percent of PG-13 rated films, and almost half of PG and G-rated films included smoking. And, the total number of films for young people with smoking actually increased from 1999 to 2003.

<http://repositories.cdlib.org/ctcre/tcpmus/Movies2004/>

Given the prevalence of smoking in films, often in ways that glamorize smoking, The American Legacy Foundation has proposed steps to eliminate smoking in films:

- Give new movies with smoking an R rating, with the exception of when tobacco use and its dangers and consequences are accurately portrayed, or when it is necessary to portray a real historical figure.

- Certify no pay-offs by posting a certificate in movie credits declaring that no talent or members of the production team received anything in exchange for using or displaying tobacco.

- Require strong anti-smoking ads to run before any film with any tobacco presence, regardless of its rating.

- Stop identifying tobacco brands in any movie scene.

The Foundation notes that its national American Smoking and Health Survey (ASHES) survey

results indicated strong popular support for adopting restrictions on smoking in films:

- 74 percent of people support showing brief public service announcements in theaters to counteract the influence of smoking in movies.

- 84 percent of people said that movie producers and actors should not be allowed to accept money or other items of value in exchange for including smoking in movies.

- 76 percent of people said that cigarette brands (names and logos) should not be allowed to appear in movies.

Why People Smoke (product placements in films)

<http://www.quit.org.au/quit/display.cfm?ArticleID=532&table=Tobacco&category=Why%20People%20Smoke>

In 2000, The American Legacy Foundation also launched a series of hard-hitting, documentary style anti-smoking ads, described as the “Infect truth®” campaign. These ads focus on the deceptions employ ed in the tobacco industry’s marketing strategies; it also focuses on challenging the influence of peer pressure to smoke as a social status symbol. And, the ads employ clever techniques to draw viewers attention. For example, one ad shows adolescents putting up mannequins on a street as ''replacement smokers'' who will replace smokers who have died; the ads closes with a young girl talking about her father who died from smoking and that no one can replace him.

The “Infect truth®” site <http://www.thetruth.com/index.cfm?connect=truth>

The American Legacy Foundation <http://www.americanlegacy.org/>

Despite an increased use of anti-smoking ads, a relatively high percentage of adolescents continue to smoke. A study conducted by the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and Georgetown University found that impulsive or risk-orientated adolescents, characterized as "novelty-seeking," were more receptive to tobacco advertising and were more likely to start smoking than adolescents who were less oriented to “novelty-seeking” practices.

<http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2003-10/uopm-ntm100803.php>

Another study (Straub, Hills, Thompson, & Moscicki, 2003) found that the variables most likely to predict 9th graders’ intention to smoke were recognition of brand of favorite advertisement, willingness to use or wear tobacco-branded products, stress, and having friends who smoke, while 9th graders who agreed with anti-tobacco advertising were less inclined to smoke.

<http://www.accelerated-learning-online.com/research/effects-pro-anti-tobacco-advertising-nonsmoking-adolescents.asp>

Education Media Foundation video*: Pack of Lies: The Advertising of Tobacco*

<http://www.mediaed.org/videos/MediaAndHealth/PackofLies>

Webquest: Dangers of Tobacco Use

<http://infusion.allconet.org/webquest/Persuading_Kids_Not_to_Smoke.html>

Webquest: Will You be a Smoker?

<http://www.sad22.us/rb/MATTHE~2.HTM>

Webquest: The Truth about Tobacco

<http://www.smith.edu/educ/student%20work/tobacco/>

For a whole unit on smoking ads, along with some examples of anti-smoking ads:

<http://www.med.sc.edu:1081/smoking.htm>

**Advertising and the Pharmaceutical Industry**

Another major advertiser is the pharmaceutical industry which advertises the use of ads for treating a range of problems, particularly given the fact that Congress, spurred on by industry lobbying, forced the Food and Drug Administration to loosen controls on drug advertising. While ads do have to mention negative side effects, they often do not have to go into detail about those side effects. Much of the cost of this advertising has resulted in the industry refusing to lower the costs of drugs in the United States, which, unlike other countries such as Canada, does not bargain directly with the industry to set drug prices. These ads are effective in that various studies find that people are increasingly more likely to ask doctors about these drugs.

PBS Now program with Bill Moyers: A Brief History of Drug Advertising

<http://www.pbs.org/now/science/drugads.html>

One doctor, Michael Wilkes, of the University of California, Davis, Medical School, noted that these “direct-to-consumer” ads attempt to work around the doctor by fostering a belief that patients have certain health problems that need to be treated:

In both cases, the goal is to get patients to seek attention for conditions that they previously considered benign or natural. The ads also seek to make their product sound remark able compared to other existing treatments. The goal is to get patients using one drug to switch to another…

Patients ask about ads that encourage them to focus on trivial somatic complaints or cosmetic anomalies, leading to unhealthy bodily preoccupation and inappropriate use of health services. The ads often lead to physician-patient conflict as a result of the doctor’s unwillingness to prescribe an unnecessary or costly drug. The patient leaves the office dissatisfied and disrespected.

<http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/ucdavismedicine/features/wilkes.html>

Belkin, L. (2001). Prime Time Pushers. Mother Jones Magazine

<http://www.motherjones.com/news/feature/2001/03/drug.html>

## **Advertising on the Web**

Another important aspect of advertising is the ability to attract one’s attention in the midst of a highly cluttered consumer market in which people are saturated with images and sounds (Gitlin, 2001). Given thousands of competing messages or bits of information geared for the same audience, how does a marketer or advertiser convey their message in a manner that attracts that audience’s attention?

This has led to a new industry of consultants who assist marketers and advertisers who are able to promote attention itself as a valuable commodity (Lankshear & Knobel, 2002). Colin Lankshear & Michelle Knobel (2002) argue that being a member of the “attention economy” requires the ability to know “how to pay and receive attention” (p. 22), something discussed in Module 2 in terms of the media literacy of “attention transacting.” As fans or consumers, people may recognize the difference between an illusory, false attention afforded them by “stars”—celebrities or politicians, and authentic attention. This requires new forms of literacy associated with “attention transacting,” which requires:

Knowing how to elicit information from others, encouraging them to provide it (with appropriate assurances), and knowing how to work with that information so that it becomes an instrument for meeting what the other party believes to be their needs or interests… [through the] the use of new information technologies to obtain, interpret, share, and act on information of a private nature, knowing how to build and honor trust in online settings, knowing how to divulge and interpret information obtained electronically in appropriate ways, and so on. (p. 35).

Another form of literacy is that of “contact displaying” in which people employ “public

media” to “create an *opportunity* to gain attention” in ways that achieve “‘immediate effects’ (rhetorical, quirky, stunning)” (pp. 32-33).

A central tool in this “attention economy” is the use of technologies designed to attract others’ attention—particularly advertising on the Internet. This ranges from more direct forms of “spam” or “push” messages or uses of animation or flashing signals, to more indirect means of creating “’ad bots’ that inhabit chat rooms and similar spaces on the Net. These respond to trigger words and can engage potential customers in private conversation that has commercial relevance” (p. 27).

While some of the promises of high levels of revenue from advertising on the Web have not materialized, the Web remains a major new site for marketing and advertising. Marketers can target certain audiences with “spam” e-mail advertising. Advertisers can promote specific products within the contexts of specific sites associated with specific audiences who use those sites.

One of the major issues associated with Web advertising involves marketing to children.

In a report on online marketing and privacy issues

<http://www.media-awareness.ca/eng/webaware/parents/kids/pkids.htm>

the Media Awareness group noted that the Web can often jeopardize children’s privacy. The report contrasts television with online advertising by noting the while there are standards for television advertising, there are none for Web advertising. It also notes that Web-based ads can engage children through interactivity not present in television ads. While television ads have obvious start and stop times, Web-based ads are more subtle and interwoven into the content.

Media Awareness Network: Teacher guide: Online Marketing Strategies geared for children

<http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/special_initiatives/wa_resources/wa_teachers/tipsheets/online_marketing_strategies.cfm>

Webquest: cyberganda: advertising on the Web

<http://www.community.k12.mo.us/webquest/bertels/quest.htm#intro>

Webquest: create an ad for the Web

<http://www.lfelem.lfc.edu/tech/DuBose/webquest/whittier/advertise.html>

Webquest: Cycertise Webquest

<http://cte.jhu.edu/techacademy/fellows/Harris/cyvertise/>

##### Marketing in Schools

Another recent phenomenon has been the increase in marketing and advertising in schools.

Cynthia Peters, in an article, "Teacher, there's a brand name in my math problem!!"

<http://www.zmag.org/zsustainers/zdaily/1999%2D08/23peters.htm>

documents some of these marketing campaigns:

According to the "Education and Consumerism" issue of Radical Teacher, a major battle has heated up in the last year between Coke and Pepsi, and it's taking place in U.S. public schools. These multi-million dollar soda companies want to pay schools to exclusively market their product. For the soda marketers, it's a good use of advertising dollars: pay the school to make their brand name central to kids' lives all day everyday. For the school, it's an easy source of much needed funds.

Advertising is becoming ubiquitous in schools. In Colorado Springs, the side of a big yellow school bus becomes a bill board for just $2500. A six-foot commercial banner hung inside the school for one calendar year costs only $700. In Toronto, schools are using screen savers on their computers that mix motivational messages with sales pitches from fast food and soft drink companies. The Pepsi-sponsored screen saver advises kids to "develop a thirst for knowledge." In Braintree, Massachusetts, a company called Cover Concepts has made a multi-million dollar business out of giving away free book covers that are decorated with corporate advertising.

In his book, *Educating the Consumer-Citizen: A History of the Marriage*

*of Schools, Advertising, and Media* (2003, Erlbaum), Joel Spring documents the many ways in which advertising and commercialism has pervaded the schools. Advertisers and corporations provide schools with products or funding in return to being able to place ads on textbook covers or in schools or to sell certain fast-food/beverage products in the school. Because school funding has been cut, schools often need additional funds simply to meet basic needs. For example, Primedia’s, Channel One, provides morning in-school “news,” now in some 40% of all secondary schools, by providing schools with free video equipment. 42% of the 12 minute “news” broadcasts consists of ads, self-promotions, and filler, thereby using what is assumed to be a pedagogical tool to insert advertising into the curriculum.

Some states, including New York, and local school districts have not allowed Channel One to be broadcast in their schools.

Channel One

<http://www.channelone.com/>

Critical analyses/reports on Channel One

<http://www.commercialalert.org/index.php?category_id=2&subcategory_id=32&article_id=120>

<http://www.fair.org/media-outlets/channel-one.html>

<http://www.fair.org/extra/9705/ch1-miller.html>

<http://www.aap.org/advocacy/reid1100.htm>

Commercialism in Education Research Unit, Arizona State University: <http://www.asu.edu/educ/epsl/ceru.htm>

Citizens Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools

<http://www.scn.org/cccs/>

Webquest: Kimberly Colley, School Funding and Commercial Advertising in Schools

<http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/go/edis771/spring99webquests/prof/pkimcolley/home.htm>

##### Political Advertising

Another important topic related to advertising is political advertising. Political campaigns often revolve around the number and effectiveness of their television ads. These ads may provide some information about candidates, but they often stress slogans, sound bites, and deceptive images. In many cases, candidates turn to negative advertising focused on attacking their opponent’s record. Moreover, these ads are often highly expensive, resulting in the fact that only well-financed or wealthy candidates can run for office. Much of this is due to the relatively high costs of advertising charged by television stations. Although a campaign finance law passed in 2002, it did not include a mandated reduction in the costs of television ads sought by proponents of campaign reform, who argue that these cost price many candidates out of the market.

For more on this topic, see the PBS program, *30 Second Candidate*:

<http://www.pbs.org/30secondcandidate/>

The American Museum of the Moving Image: The Living Room Candidate (online exhibit of candidates from 1952-2000)

<http://www.ammi.org/livingroomcandidate/>

Media and American Democracy: Analyzing a political ad

<http://www.med.sc.edu:1081/tvspots.htm>

Alliance for Better Campaigns (improving political advertising)

<http://www.bettercampaigns.org/>

FactCheck: deceptions in political ads

<http://www.factcheck.org/>

C-Span: campaign ads for the 2004 Presidential election

<http://www.c-span.org/vote2004/campads.asp>

Common CauseThe Critical Role of Television in Political Campaigns

<http://www.commoncause.org/publications/040297_rpt6.htm>

PBS: Dissect an Ad

<http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov1996/takingonthekennedys/dissect.html>

"Do the Media Affect the Democratic Process?"

2000-2001

<http://www.primett.org/medialiteracy/guide.htm>

Effectiveness of Negative Political Advertising

<http://www.scripps.ohiou.edu/wjmcr/vol02/2-1a.HTM>

Webquest: political advertising

<http://socialstudies.com/c/@yfFDZYUmilj1c/Pages/PolAdv.html>

For further reading on political ads:

Jamieson, K. (1996). *Packaging the Presidency: A History and Criticism of Presidential Campaign Advertising.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Another important form of political advertising are issue ads designed to shape public opinion and policy. These issue ads on topics such as health care, drug benefits, education, etc., are used by advocacy groups to promote their particular agenda. Many of these issue ads are produced and promoted by think tanks which conduct “research” that is then used in these ads. For example, the Heritage Foundation had a major influence on producing ads on behalf of the insurance industry that challenged the Clinton health-care proposals in 1993.

For a study of how issue advertising influence Congress in 2001/2002, see a study by the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania.

<http://www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org/ISSUEADS/index.htm>

##### Product Placements

One of the major challenges to traditional forms of advertising are new technologies such as TIVO digital recorders that record television programs which audiences then watch and fastforward the ads. This means that advertisers are looking for new, more indirect ways to promote products within the content itself. One of these strategies involves shorter ads that are more difficult to skip, as well as product placements in films or television programs in which people or characters are consuming these products. The constant display of products in films serves to further promote the representation of society as a consumer culture.

An analysis of Mighty Ducks 2 made in 1994 found that it not only included promotions of hockey brand name equipment (“Easton gloves, shoulder pads, and sticks; CCM helmets, skates, and shirts; Koho sticks; Jofa helmets; Champion clothing; Cooper pucks; Itech masks; Takla parnts, Christian sticks; Bauer skates; Vaughn goalie pads; and Hendricks hockey apparel,” but also “Bubblicious gum, Zubas, Dove, Greyhound, Gatorade, General Cinema, Diet Coke, Little Caesar’s pizza, Delta, and even Duck Head clothing. The zenith, however, making the cover of the Wheaties box!” (Fuller, 1997).

This also includes promotion of media texts themselves. Given the increased media conglomeration, products created by a company owned by the company producing the media text will often cross-promote their own product. A network television news broadcast or talk show will include promotions for films or TV programs owned by that network. And, products themselves may contain references to media texts as when McDonald’s uses images from popular movies or television shows.

One study conducted by Mediaedge found that about half of audiences notice brands associated with product placements.

The study finds that 60 percent of those consumers are willing to try the brands advertised, with the percentages a little higher for TV than movies…Product placement can't hold a candle to traditional television advertising, which the Mediaedge:cia study said was still the most effective form of advertising. TV advertising bested product placement when measuring consumers' recall of brands and willingness to try products. Joe Abruzzo, director of the MediaLab/Ohal, said Tuesday afternoon that product placements are really a brand exposure, not a well-constructed message that would come through in traditional advertising…Forty percent of consumers ages 15-34 don't want to see brands in films, compared to 59 percent of adults over 55….The study found that product placement boosted brand recognition by 40 percent to 100 percent.

Gough, P. (2004, April 22). Consumers Respond Favorably To Product Placement Of Brands In TV, Movies. *Media Daily.*

<http://www.mediapost.com/dtls_dsp_news.cfm?newsID=247859>

Feature This: a product placement business:

methods of doing product placements in Hollywood films

<http://www.featurethis.com/placement.html>

The Blob Factor: Ubiquity in Product Placement

<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~UG03/hamlin/ppcross.html>

Product placement in computer games

<http://www.usatoday.com/tech/techreviews/games/2002/1/30/spotlight.htm>

Webquest: Subliminal Persuasion Assignment

<http://www.concentric.net/~Creyn266/COMM335/SublimWQassignment.htm>

For further reading:

Segrave, K. (2004). *Product Placement in Hollywood Films: A History.* New York: MacFarland.

##### Creating or Parodying Ads

One of the most effective ways to study ads is to have students produce their own ads or create parodies of ads, something that you will actually be doing at the end of this module for use in modeling this process for your students. By having to consider techniques and strategies for selling a product, students are having to think about the techniques and strategies they are critiquing in ads. Students could create a new product or consider using existing products and then create magazine, video, or Web-based ads. They could then share their ads with peers and garner feedback as to the effectiveness of their ads.

Or, based on parodies/spoofs of ads in *Adbusters Magazine*

<http://www.adbusters.org/home/> students could select examples of deceptive ads and construct their own parodies or spoofs of ads.

False Advertising: A Gallery of Parody

<http://parody.organique.com/>

Zapavision: Parodies of ads and movie trailers

<http://www.trailervision.com/zapavision/>

Unofficial Calvin Klein Ads Archive

<http://pobox.upenn.edu/~davidtoc/calvin.html>

Why Milk—parodies of the Got Milk ads

<http://www.whymilk.com/>

Lampoonery: ad parodies

<http://lampoonery.com/ads.htm>

Teenz247: parodies of smoking ads

<http://www.teenz247.com/sa_parody.cfm>

Nicknamers: parodies of branding

<http://www.members.cox.net/nicknamers/nn.html>

Funny Adverts: Spoof Ads

<http://www.funny-adverts.com/spoof-ads/index.php>

Webquest: creating ads:

<http://www.lfelem.lfc.edu/tech/DuBose/webquest/whittier/advertise.html>

Webquest: Create an anti-pollution ad

<http://spidey.sfusd.edu/schwww/sch529/webquests/alex/riverquest.html>

Webquests: create anti-smoking ads

<http://www.berksiu.k12.pa.us/webquest/Musket/index.htm>

<http://www.longview.k12.wa.us/ralong/lib/smokhp/text/Smkindex.html>

##### Teaching Activity: Parodying Ads

Students can create their own parody of an ad for a fictitious or actual product; you could also create a parody or spoof on an ads such as those found in Adbusters.

1. Go to the Adbusters site on how to create your own ad: <http://adbusters.org/spoofads/printad/>

Follow the instructions on this site that involve the following steps:

1. Decide on your communication objective

2. Decide on your target audience

3. Decide on your format

4. Develop your concept

5. The visual (you may want to select on-line images from art-clip files or from on-line images to insert into a Word or PowerPoint document).

6. The headline

7. The copy

Subheads

The signature

8. Some mistakes to avoid

You may also want to create a parody or spoof of an ads; for examples go to the Adbusters site <http://adbusters.org>

You can also find examples of anti-smoking ads on the following site:

<http://www.med.sc.edu:1081/smoking.htm>

such as the following spoof on the Malboro ads



- Write out a description of your intended message, audience, and concept, along with a rough description of the ad itself.

- Create the ad as a Word or PowerPoint file using clip art/Web-images.

- Then, post your ads on the nicenet.org documents site, along with your description of your intended message, audience, and concept

- Share your ad on the tappedin.org with some peers, who should describe their perceptions of your intended message, the audience appeals employed, and their evaluation of its overall effectiveness.

- Compare their perceptions of the ad with your intended message, audience, and concept, noting reasons for similarities and differences.

Your ad and discussion of the ad will be evaluated in terms of your ability to:

- clearly define your intended message, audience, and concept.

- employ images, language, intertextual references, and layout in a manner that conveys your intended message and concept, and gain audience identification.

- assess reasons for disparities between intended meanings and audience responses.

Webquests: Advertising:

<http://www.geocities.com/horton_quests/>

<http://spidey.sfusd.edu/schwww/sch529/webquests/alex/riverquest.html>

<http://www.cedu.niu.edu/~robinson/vislit/webquest2.htm>

<http://wneo.org/WebQuests/TeacherWebQuests/advertising/advertising.htm>

<http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/DE/webquests/mediaprop/index.html>

<http://website.education.wisc.edu/rla/ADSITE/index.htm>

<http://et.sdsu.edu/APaxton-smith/eslwebquest/index.htm>

<http://www.community.k12.mo.us/webquest/bertels/quest.htm>

<http://www.fullwood.tv/zip/wq.html>

<http://technoteacher.com/webquests/nutrition/advertising.html>

<http://42explore.com/advertis.htm>

We close this module with an example of an advertising unit created by Heather Johnson in CI5472, Spring, 2002, that incorporates much of the material covered in this module:

AN ADVERTISING UNIT

I used spoof ads and regular ads from adflip.com and adbusters.com

I Transferred them onto transparencies and used them for the unit. Go to

<<http://www210.pair.com/udticg/lessonplans/consumerism>> for worksheets that accompany this lesson.

Teens in Culture:

Do advertisements influence or

reflect teenage culture?

INTRODUCTION:

The objective of this unit is to make teens aware of the way in which they are marketed by advertisers. Teens see approximately 24 hours of television a week compared to the 30 hours they are in the classroom; discussing implications and deconstructing the media is a key element to their processing of the ads.

\*There are dozens of activities and ideas listed here that are aimed at helping students focus in on the way in which the media manipulates their attention and buying habits.

\*Accompanying the unit will be several articles from the magazine “Adbusters” which offers students the chance to look at ads in a different light.

\*Looking at “spoof” ads assists the students in looking at advertising in a different light. Students will be asked to create their own advertising pitch in the end, and they are encouraged to use a “spoof” ad as their marketing pitch.

\*The video “Merchants of Cool” and the “Best Commercials of All Time” will be used in this unit to accompany the material.

To start off the unit, the students partake in the prompt below; students and teacher then discuss commercials on a basic level of entertainment. Conversation as such can easily develop, especially when it concerns commercials, for there is a quality of the commercial that makes it memorable and fun to discuss. (Take the hype of the Superbowl commercials/or the Oscar commercials).

Ads have become a social connection among peers and coworkers, as common phrases such as “whasssup?” enter the classroom and other environments. Recognizing the influence of such a medium is crucial to establish right away with students.

Next we delve into the ads themselves, articles about ads, spoof ads, videos, reflection on ways in which we live in an ad-based world, and in-class discussions. The unit and activities are enough for at least three weeks.

Part ONE:

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| I. WHAT DO TEENAGERS WANT? Before we examine ads, students will first reflect upon what they want, as teenagers. By examining our desires, we may know our values. We will do some self-reflection, gather some information and compare this data to advertising analysis that we will do later in the unit. |

FOCUS QUESTION: What do you suppose is a utopian solution? Think about the term and research it if you don’t know what the word “utopian” means.

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| Activity: Values Inventory *(30 minutes)* <javascript:;>*Quickwrite #1*: *What do you want most in life? Make a list of things, as well as ideas and experiences.* Teacher records volunteered student answers on overhead/board. Students choose the top 5 things on their list generated by *Quickwrite #1* and record them in the first column of WORKSHEET 1 <worksheet1.htm> Teacher discusses the second column and reviews example. Students complete. |

PART TWO:

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT: Ad Inventory

1. Using WORKSHEET 2, students will identify the ads they see from school to home that day. They may include ads they see at school. They will identify the place the ad is found (bus stop bench, fast food sign, etc.) and what the ad is for WORKSHEET 2 <worksheet2.htm>.

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| Activity: Assignment Review *(20 minutes)* *Quickwrite #4: Reports say that teenagers see an average of 3,000 ads a day. Do you think this is true? Explain and give evidence to support your answer.* Discuss answers, which will naturally lead to a review of last night"s assignment: Teacher creates a composite chart of items found for last night"s assignment and students copy. *Discuss: How many of you use or would like to use the products, services or ideas that you saw advertised?* Answers will vary. *Quickwrite #3*. Discuss the last activity"s quickwrite. Answers will vary, but urge students to consider our previous topic of discussion (*Do they use the products they saw advertised*) when answering. *Some of you said that advertising does not influence you and many of you said you are only partially influenced by advertising. Let"s take a little quiz to see how much you may be affected by "Branding"* add to vocabulary list <vocabulary.html> |

Another Activity for the classroom:

Have students pair up in two’s and chose a market they wish to explore - teenage girls, teenage boys, young children, mothers, fathers, grandparents, etc. Together they gather ads from this “genre” and find patterns, flaws, deceptive things that exist within the ads. Does it represent the audience that it is trying to sell it’s product to? Or does the advertiser make it appear as if the audience “Needs/Wants” things that are not necessary? Were there any positive, well-represented portrayals of the audience in the ads that you found? Project results and individual write up with reaction to the assignment/project will be due. The students will present their findings to the class in two minute presentation. Here are some questions to be asked while analyzing a magazine:

Title:

-what is the title/who does it speak to?

-what connotations are there from such a title?

-what audience is the magazine trying to capture?

\*what clues do you have that indicate that this is the target market?

-what kinds of body language is expressed in the magazine?

-how do the different magazines of the same genre compare?

-what products are being advertised?

-how are men and women represented in the magazine?

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| Activity: Corporate Alphabet *(15 minutes)* Teacher places *Corporate Alphabet*, Adbusters No.32, Oct/Nov 2000, on overhead and asks students to silently identify the brand names they recognize. *Discuss*: Brands that appeared in the corporate alphabet. Compare: Ask students to raise their hands if they could identify at least 10 of these brands. Now ask them to identify something that is considered "academically" important: i.e. *Who was the fourth president of the United States? What is the oldest and largest species of tree?* Or, ask them to identify a picture of a famous person in history like Frederick Douglass or Sitting Bull. They can draw their own conclusions! *Discuss*: *Revisit Quickwrite #3*. Ask students if any of them changed their minds or want to learn more. . . *It is estimated that the average teenager watches 24-28 hours of television a week. Compare that to the 30 hours of classroom time. In 1996, the American Medical Association stated, "Young people spend twice as much time with media than they do with their parents and teachers combined."* Add media to vocabulary list <vocabulary.html>. *As we saw in the last activity, the ads we see* do *affect us, even if they are just taking up "mindspace." In this next activity, we will take a closer look at television advertisements.* |

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| Activity: TV Inventory(*50 minutes)* Teacher will have pre-recorded a half hour segment of prime time TV targeted to a teen audience. Suggested programs: sit-coms, The Simpsons, BET, MTV, etc. Student groups use WORKSHEET 3 <worksheet3.htm> to track the commercials and complete the worksheet. Groups report findings to the class WORKSHEET 4 <worksheet4.htm> : Rate Sheet. Class examines the rates of different TV stations *As you can see, advertising pays for the "free" programming that you watch. These companies pay a lot of money to make sure that you get their message.*  *Their message is, of course, to get you to buy a product, service or idea. They are driven to produce an ad that effectively hooks you in the least amount of time. So, let"s take a closer look at the ads and how they work.* |

PART THREE:

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| III. ANALYZING ADVERTISING : WHAT ARE ADS REALLY SELLING? In the following lessons, students will learn about the persuasive techniques used by advertisements. They will identify these techniques in print and TV ads and then analyze the messages of the ads. |

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| Activity: Persuasive Techniques *(50 minutes)* *Quickwrite* #5: *Think of a time when you wanted to convince your parent to let you do something. What did you do to* persuade *him or her?*  Discuss answers as teacher lists the techniques on the overhead projector. Students will generate a good list of techniques such as logic, threats, facts, appeal to emotions: guilt, affection, etc. Definition: *persuasion*, add to vocabulary list <vocabulary.html> Distribute and review WORKSHEET 5 <Worksheet5.htm>Argumentation and Persuasion. Ask the students to write a paragraph in which they use each of these techniques to convince a reader that they should buy a certain brand name product, i.e. a pair of Nike shoes or a that they should use the Google search engine or eat at McDonald’s, etc. (They should *not* identify which technique is being used.) Students exchange paragraphs with one of their group’s members and identify techniques generated in the previous exercise as ethos, pathos, or logos. At the bottom of their partner’s paper, students will write a paragraph in which they explain which technique was most effective in their opinion. *Optional*: Volunteers share paragraphs. *Discuss*: *How many people though logos was the most effective? Pathos? Ethos? Explain.* |

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| Activity: TV Ad Analysis *(30 minutes)* Teacher has pre-recorded 5 primetime commercials. Student groups use WORKSHEET6 <worksheet6.htm> to analyze the commercials Discuss |

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| HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT: <javascript:;>Find two "effective" print (magazine, newspaper, internet hard copy) ads to bring to class tomorrow. If students ask what defines an "effective" ad, tell them that they are to decide and we will discuss this tomorrow. |

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| Activity: Print Ad Analysis *(30 minutes)*  Modeling: Teacher shares an ad and discusses what she likes about it and what is effective for her personally, using terminology from persuasion unit. She records this on the chart in WORKSHEET 7 <worksheet7.htm> WORKSHEET 8 <worksheet8.htm>: Persuasive words used in advertising. Study this sheet and use it to analyze their ads. Student groups share and analyze their ads. Their task is to identify what is appealing about the ad (colors, celebrity endorsement, humor, information, etc) and what persuasive techniques and words are primarily used. Students report back to the class; depending on time, groups may offer 2 or more things on their list. |

Freewrite Activity:

What do you think is the meaning of moral panic? How does this relate to the

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| Activity: Ads Sell Image *(50 minutes)*  <javascript:;>*Quickwrite#6*: *Analyze this statement: Ads sell ideas, not products.* Discuss quickwrite. Examine an ad and discuss: *What do you notice first? What info is given about the product? What is shown as important in the image? What is the lifestyle or fantasy being promoted? What is the message of the ad?* Note: Try to get the students to notice that very little info about the product is actually offered; instead, an image or fantasy is created. Thus, the consumer is led to believe that the product is the key to the lifestyle or fantasy. Examine another ad, identifying the lifestyle being advertised. Also ask: *Who is the intended audience for this ad?* Groups analyze their ads, discussing the things or ideas that are promoted in the ad. Groups share while teacher records the major elements of the lifestyles that are promoted in these ads, i.e.: youth, sex, fun, money, exercise, joy, love. . . This list, made on either butcher paper or an overhead projector transparency sheet will be saved to post or show later. Students revisit WORKSHEET 1 <worksheet1.htm>. They can now complete the third column using the ads that have already been shown on TV or print ads brought in. If they do not find ads to correspond to their desires, they must do so as homework. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT: Find ads that correspond to your desires on your desire chart, worksheet #1. |

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| Activity: Cigarette Ads *(20 minutes)*  <javascript:;>Examine a cigarette ad, identifying the fantasy that is advertised. Examine anti-smoking ads that are "adbusters." |

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| Activity: Adbusting: *(50 minutes)* Add parody to vocab list WORKSHEET 9 <worksheet9.htm> : Follow directions and have fun! Share and display ads… |

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| IV. THE TEENABE DEMOGRAPHIC Cool Hunting: Teens as Targets In this section, students will explore the ways in which companies directly target them. It will be the final piece in answering the question: Does advertising influence or reflect teen culture? *Quickwrite:* *Were you able to find ads that correspond to your desires?* *Discuss* *Advertisers hope they can appeal to your desires because they are spending great amounts of resources to reach you, the teenage demographic*. Add demographic to vocabulary list <vocabulary.html>. |

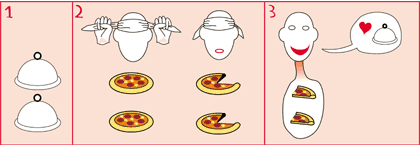
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| Activity: What do Teens Value? "Focus Groups" *(40 minutes)* *Discuss*: *Do you think many of your peers will share your desires? How about your values? Why?* In their groups, students compare their lists in columns one and two. In their groups, students develop a thesis statement based on this question: *What do teenagers value most?* Groups share thesis statements they may write them on tag board and post them around the room. *If I were interested in designing an ad targeting for your demographic, I would have paid a lot of money to have listened in on your previous discussion. I may have even paid you to meet with me in a "focus group." Has anyone ever participated in a focus group? These are groups of everyday teens like yourself who give information about your likes and dislikes so that I may design ads that best appeal to your sensibilities.*  Read: "Sweet 16," Adbusters, June/July 2000 Discuss: Is anyone in this room *not* wearing a visible brand? Why is it important to us to identify ourselves with brand names? Inevitably, the students will say that these companies or products are "cool." This will segue into a discussion of "cool." *Optional*: Why did your group name itself after the brand name you choose? What makes it cool? |

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| Activity*: Cool Is. . .(30 minutes)* *Quickwrite #8:What is cool? List things and ideas that are cool.* Groups discuss answers and make a list of their top coolest things. These will be posted and all students will circulate the room, viewing the lists and trying to develop a thesis statement. Thesis Statement: Cool, as defined by a St. Paul teenager is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *Cool is a value, one that is extremely hard to even identify, let alone define. Still, companies realize that they must be cool to be consumed by teenagers. Here are some of the ways in which companies have become successful by becoming cool.* Read: Article 11 Quickwrite #9:*Given your understanding of these articles we just read, do you think these companies are reflecting or influencing teenagers?* *Discuss* |

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| Activity: Video Viewing: *Merchants of Cool (50 minutes)* View video (and discuss key points as you go) Freewrite brainstorm for final essay: Does advertising influence or reflect teen culture? |

Article 11

Slice of ’za proves brand loyalty is totally stupid!



Is the slavish brand loyalty of your peers getting you down? Are your high school’s corridors awash in swooshes and Tommy colors? Is every lunch hour a pilgrimage to Taco Bell or Pizza Hut? It’s the same old story - in the struggle for personal identity, it’s easier to buy a pre-packaged model than to create your own.

But it’s also easy to expose brand-name conformity with a simple experiment. 1 Pick a brand that your peers pledge allegiance to. For example, Pizza Hut. Corral some students in a room and order in a pizza. 2 Blindfold your test subjects. Feed each blindfolded person one slice of pizza, telling them it’s fresh from the Hut. Next, feed them a second, identical slice, and tell them it’s anything else - Uncle Albert’s Down Home Pizza, for example. 3 Ask them which slice tasted better.

Ninth graders Marcelo Choi and Sean Merat tried this procedure in their science project, "Do Commercials Work?" at Burnaby South Secondary School, in Vancouver. In their experiment, all 16 test subjects said the Pizza Hut slice tasted better than the other slice.

"How can this be?" asks Merat, indignantly. "It’s the same pizza, from the same box."

Variations on the test are endless. Choi and Merat also buttonholed loyal Nike-wearing students. While they tried on both Reebok and Nike shoes, the blindfolded students were told they were trying on the opposite brand. All eight test subjects said the Nike shoes were more comfortable - then had their blindfolds removed to discover they were wearing Reeboks.

That’s the moment of truth jammers live for. "Some said Nike was still cooler," Merat says. But a few admitted it was time to start looking beyond the brand.

*- Eliza Strickland*

CRITICAL CONSUMERISM  
VOCABULARY

1. Advertisement: something that is trying to influence a person to "buy" (or adopt) a product, service or idea.

2 Branding: The advertising of products in such a way that consumers have instant, positive, brand-name recognition and association with a particular company.

3. Media: a material or technical means of expression

4. Persuasion: the act of moving by argument to a belief, opinion or course of action.

5. Parody: a literary or musical work in which the style of an author or work is closely imitated for the purpose of comedy or ridicule.

6. Demographic: relating to the statistical study of human populations, especially with reference to size, age, race, religion, social class and geographic locale.

Reflection activity:

It seems that we have hit the ceiling cap in this digital age: what do you think is left to invent? Where do we go from here? Do we recycle old ideas and make them modern?

DEFINITIONS OF PROPAGANDA TECHNIQUES



#1: Bandwagon

This technique tries to persuade everyone to join in and do the same thing.

#2: Testimonial

An important person or famous figure endorses a product.

#3: Transfer

Good feelings, looks, or ideas transferred to the person for whom the product is intended.

#4: Repetition

The product name or keyword or phrase is repeated several times.

#5: Emotional Words

Words such as luxury, beautiful, paradise, and economical are used to evoke positive feelings in the viewer.

#6: Name-calling

Negative words are used to create an unfavorable opinion of the competition in the viewer's mind.

#7: Faulty Cause and Effect

Use of a product is credited for creating a positive result.

#8: Compare and Contrast

The viewer is led to believe one product is better than another, although no real proof is offered.

#9: Ethos

The character, sentiment, or disposition of a community or people, considered as a natural contribution; the spirit which motivates manners and customs. Opposite of pathos.

#10: Pathos

Emotions - That quality or property of anything which touches the feelings or excites emotions and passions, esp., that which awakens tender emotions. Opposite of ethos.

#11: Logos

The quality of anything that involves the use of logic and reason.

Propaganda

Many of the characteristic features of advertising and propaganda are similar. As consumers we are both cynical and paranoid when it comes to advertising. Although the average American is most likely not making comparisons between advertising and propaganda, everyone knows advertising is designed to sell more product. Advertising is propaganda whose purpose is to develop allegiance to a product or corporation instead of a government.

As Professor Widdig <http://web.mit.edu/fll/www/people/BerndWiddig.html> notes, propaganda is content-independent. He made short list of defining characteristics of propaganda. It is systematic manipulation. It is geared to a mass audience. It has high emotional density. It uses ideas that are already present, and themes that are common to a community. It creates an "us vs. them" mentality. It never refers to unresolved issues and is not humorous. It uses history as raw material which it reshapes to present its ideology as the logical outcome of history.

All advertising is propaganda in the broadest sense of the word, but in its own subclass we tend to distinguish it from other propaganda. This is merely semantics, as the major impact of the word propaganda is not its literal meaning but its rhetorical power and connotations. Manipulation to buy a product or manipulation by a government to support it tend to use the same methods.

Advertising is definitely designed for a mass audience such as television viewers or magazine readers. Content with high emotional density is only one method advertising uses. In some ways, advertising is more sophisticated than what we think of as traditional examples of propaganda. It appeals to preexisting ideas in consumer culture. We already buy lots of products. We like being competed for by companies and products. In theory, this competition results in better products. In practice it makes us feel valuable. The creation of an "us vs. them" mentality is again only one of the methods advertising uses. Other approaches emphasize the political values of a company, use celebrity figures, or use sex appeal.

Advertising differs, however, from propaganda in its use of humor. Many advertisements incorporate an element of humor. In this sense, perhaps advertising is the most advanced form of propaganda. It is certainly the most practiced. It makes sense that it should be the best evolved and adapted. There are also certain ethical differences between advertising a product and convincing a nation that your dictatorship is what they truly desire, although they are subtle.

The web has added a new aspect to manipulation and propaganda. Because of the nature of the web, users expect to access information that they are choosing to access. Search engines make this possible to a large extent. But when a search engine begins tailoring its responses and advertising based on the subject a user is searching on, a more subtle manipulation than ever takes place. Advertising actually modifies itself in real time and becomes specific to each user.

Web sites can now give cookies, and use them to track how a user moves through them and how often they visit and what they look for. These sites can then present a customized form of advertising based on this information or even send email to a user. Propaganda just got personal. The web is just another medium and, as Widdig states, propaganda can take place in any and all medium. Advertising is not bad, and neither is propaganda, as long as we are aware of it and how it attempts to manipulate us.

Propaganda   
Types of Propaganda

BANDWAGON: The basic idea behind the bandwagon approach is just that, "getting on the bandwagon." The propagandist puts forth the idea that everyone is doing this, or everyone supports this person/cause, so should you. The bandwagon approach appeals to the conformist in all of us: No one wants to be left out of what is perceived to be a popular trend.

EXAMPLE: Everyone in Lemmingtown is behind Jim Duffie for Mayor. Shouldn't you be part of this winning team?

TESTIMONIAL: This is the celebrity endorsement of a philosophy, movement or candidate. In advertising, for example, athletes are often paid millions of dollars to promote sports shoes, equipment and fast food. In political circles, movie stars, television stars, rock stars and athletes lend a great deal of credibility and power to a political cause or candidate. Just a photograph of a movie star at political rally can generate more interest in that issue/candidate or cause thousands, sometimes millions, of people to become supporters.

EXAMPLE: "Sam Slugger", a baseball Hall of Famer who led the pros in hitting for years, appears in a television ad supporting Mike Politico for U.S. Senate. Since Sam is well known and respected in his home state and nationally, he will likely gain Mr. Politico many votes just by his appearance with the candidate.

PLAIN FOLKS: Here the candidate or cause is identified with common people from everyday walks of life. The idea is to make the candidate/cause come off as grassroots and all-American.

EXAMPLE: After a morning speech to wealthy Democratic donors, Bill Clinton stops by McDonald's for a burger, fries, and photo-op.

TRANSFER: Transfer employs the use of symbols, quotes or the images of famous people to convey a message not necessarily associated with them. In the use of transfer, the candidate/speaker attempts to persuade us through the indirect use of something we respect, such as a patriotic or religious image, to promote his/her ideas. Religious and patriotic images may be the most commonly used in this propaganda technique but they are not alone. Sometimes even science becomes the means to transfer the message.

EXAMPLE: The environmentalist group PEOPLE PROMOTING PLANTS, in its attempt to prevent a highway from destroying the natural habitat of thousands of plant species, produces a television ad with a "scientist" in a white lab coat explaining the dramatic consequences of altering the food chain by destroying this habitat.

FEAR: This technique is very popular among political parties and PACs (Political Action Committees) in the U.S. The idea is to present a dreaded circumstance and usually follow it up with the kind of behavior needed to avoid that horrible event.

EXAMPLE: The Citizens for Retired Rights present a magazine ad showing an elderly couple living in poverty because their social security benefits have been drastically cut by the Republicans in Congress. The solution? The CRR urges you to vote for Democrats.

LOGICAL FALLACIES: Applying logic, one can usually draw a conclusion from one or more established premises. In the type of propaganda known as the logical fallacy, however, the premises may be accurate but the conclusion is not.

EXAMPLE:

1. Premise 1: Bill Clinton supports gun control.
2. Premise 2: Communist regimes have always supported gun control.
3. Conclusion: Bill Clinton is a communist.

We can see in this example that the Conclusion is created by a twisting of logic, and is therefore a fallacy.

GLITTERING GENERALITIES: This approach is closely related to what is happening in TRANSFER (see above). Here, a generally accepted virtue is usually employed to stir up favorable emotions. The problem is that these words mean different things to different people and are often manipulated for the propagandists' use. The important thing to remember is that in this technique the propagandist uses these words in a positive sense. They often include words like: democracy, family values (when used positively), rights, civilization, even the word "American."

EXAMPLE: An ad by a cigarette manufacturer proclaims to smokers: Don't let them take your rights away! ("Rights" is a powerful word, something that stirs the emotions of many, but few on either side would agree on exactly what the 'rights' of smokers are.)   
  
NAME-CALLING: This is the opposite of the GLITTERING GENERALITIES approach. Name-calling ties a person or cause to a largely perceived negative image.   
EXAMPLE: In a campaign speech to a logging company, the Congressman referred to his environmentally conscious opponent as a "tree hugger."

Ad Attack! Analysis Chart

1. Describe the product or service presented in this ad.
2. Describe the young people portrayed in the ad: What are they doing? What are they wearing? Where do they live? What seems to be important to them?
3. Compare your life to theirs? How does this comparison make you feel?
4. Would you like to be like these young people? Why or why not?
5. Circle a phrase below to rate this ad on how accurately it portrays teens.
6. Got it right!
7. Pretty good
8. Needs a rewrite
9. Who ARE those kids?!

Attachment #2 Media Awareness Test (slogan game)

Ex.

The breakfast of champions \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The copper-topped battery \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The nighttime, sniffing, sneezing, coughing, aching, stuffy head, fever, so you can rest medicine \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

It just keeps going, and going, and going \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The softer side of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The best part of waking up is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in your cup.

Good to the last drop \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

In the valley of the jolly (ho-ho-ho-) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Melts in your mouth, not in your hands \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \

Best for you and all your 2000 parts \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Just Do It \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Kid tested, Mother approved \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Must see TV \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Always low prices, always \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Nothing runs like a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, John \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Be all that you can be, in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Yo Quiero? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Did somebody say? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

It’s got to be the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

It’s the cheesiest \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

You look so natural, no one can tell \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The fastest way to send money \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

They care enough to send the very best \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5 cents a day, every day \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

mmm mmm good \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

bargains by the bagful \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Answer Key to media awareness test (slogan game)

Ex. Wheaties

Duracell

Nyquil

Energizer

Sears

Folgers

Maxwell House Coffee

Green Giant

M & M’s

Lever 2000

Nike

Kix

NBC

Walmart

Deere, John Deere

Week One: Advertising Unit

Day one: (50 minutes)

Statistic on overhead: Teens see approximately 3000 of these a day.

-Have students guess what this statistic could be in reference to

-After guessing, and coming up with the answer, ask students if they think this is possible.

-Where could 3000 ads be seen per day?

-Have students look around the room and count the amount of ads they see; highest count gets prize.

Coke VS. Pepsi

-Familiar topic to all; when you think of Coke, what do you think?  
 -When you think of Pepsi, what do you think?

-What is your preference of drink?/Why?

-Do you think that the advertisements have an effect on you?

-If they don’t have an effect on the population, then why are they spending millions of dollars on these advertisements?

-Look at comparison of bottles. What are the differences? Why?

-Look at comparison of images being sold by each product. What audience is each targeting? Website transparency used and commercial transparency.

Day two: (30 minutes)

Start with slogan guessing game. Have students guess the slogan. The preface: students stated yesterday that advertising does not effect them, yet they are able to identify over 20 slogans in less than a second.

(10 minutes)

Discuss different types of propaganda techniques.

(10 minutes)

Show short video that uses persuasive technique and have students identify several techniques used in video (pitch for stadium in St. Paul).

(10 minutes)

Day three: (50 minutes)

Students read the first two viewpoints of article and discuss as a group what was covered in the article. (not extremely successful. Need shorter article).

(10 minutes)

Summarize what was covered yesterday; propaganda techniques in video, etc.

Place propaganda techniques back on board and look at specific ads, discussing different types of techniques used.

(20 minutes)

Have students look through magazines in search of ads that sell an image more than the product. Share with class as they go.

(20 minutes)

Day four:

Show the “Best Commercials of All Time” to students and have them identify at least three propaganda techniques used in the commercials. Short response paragraph also to follow the identified propaganda techniques.

(50 minutes)

Week Two: Advertising Unit

Day one: (50 minutes) ADS SELL IMAGE

-Place Corporate Alphabet on the overhead. How many do you recognize?

-How many of you still think that we are not affected by advertising?

-Discuss this statement: Ads sell ideas, not products.

-We look at more ads on the overhead, and students study/respond to what the ad is saying. What techniques are being used?

Questions to be answered when examining an ad:  
 ~What do you notice first?

~What information is given about the product?

~What is shown as important to the image?

~What is the lifestyle or fantasy being promoted?

~What is the message of the ad?

Hand out worksheet one and have students fill in the first two rows.

Do you think that many of your peers share the same desires?

Students get in groups of four and create a thesis statement for their group: What, as a group do you value most? Find ads that correspond with such desires. Volunteers share with the group what ads they found that correspond with their desires.

Hand out worksheet two for the homework of the evening, due tomorrow.

Day two: (50 minutes) PERSUASION

-Pose this question to students at the beginning of class and write down responses on an overhead/or chalkboard:   
  
 -Think of a time when you wanted to convince your parent to let you do something. What did you do to persuade him or her?

-Discuss how propaganda surrounds our life in many ways, from the advertising pitches that we are bombarded by, to the way in which we try to pitch our own beliefs and expressions.

-Hand out Worksheet Five and read through with the students. Ask if they have questions about the handout. Give an example of the three types of persuasion/argumentation on the overhead. Discuss.

-Have students provide a short pitch for different products using the three basic concepts. Partners share with the other the three pitches and the other partner has to guess which technique was used. Both partners share “pitches.”

-Volunteers for the class share their pitches with the class.

-Hand out persuasive word sheet used for ads.

Day three: (50 minutes) AD BUSTING:

QUOTATION: Thaw with his gentle persuasion is more powerful than Thor with his hammer. The one melts, the other but breaks in pieces. ATTRIBUTION: Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862), U.S. philosopher, author, naturalist.

QUOTATION: The object of oratory (speaking) alone is not truth, but persuasion. ATTRIBUTION: Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-1859),

Cialdini found that successful counter ads involve the use of effective counter-arguments that call into question the opponent's facts and trustworthiness. Memory links to the opponent's ads, a sponging device which essentially infects the opponent's message by linking its memory and impact to the counter ad. Ridicule is used to satirize the opponent's ads.

An example of a successful ad campaign that involved all of these elements was the anti-smoking campaign some years ago that featured mock "Marlboro Man" commercials. Those commercials initially looked like tobacco ads, with the same rugged outdoor settings and same macho cowboy characters. But the counter ads then transformed into attacks on tobacco, depicting the cowboys coughing and displaying other health symptoms that result from smoking. This undermined the original ads, as Cialdini said, the satirical ads made laughable the notion that smoking was linked to images of male strength and potency.

What is the meaning of the word satire? One way to combat persuasion is through the use of satire.

SATIRE: A satire, either in speaking or in writing, holds prevailing vices or foolishness up to ridicule: it employs humor and wit to criticize human institutions or humanity itself, in order that they may be remodeled or removed.

Here is one example of satire...there are thousands of examples online. (Check out The Onion, or even the Minnesota Daily archives on-line)...



Show spoof ads; begin discussing with students the ads they will be pitching after spring break. What is the purpose of a spoof ad?

We read the article “Sweet 16” from the AdBusters magazine.

What do you think of this article?

\*\*\*To illustrate other “persuasion” examples, and just for fun (the kids really enjoy these!!):

(With hands on shoulders) Oh, those are shoulder blades, I thought they were wings.

If I could be anything I'd be a tear: Born in your eye, live on your cheek, and die at your lips.

"Would you happen to have a band-aid, because I skinned my knee when I fell for you."

Day four: Present the assignment for spring break: The CONTEST!!!

We look at more bad ads. Show the Chevy ad again.

There is a distinction between commercials, which are broadcast on television, radio, and other electronic media, and advertisements, which are found in various print media, such as magazines, newspapers, billboards and posters. (On the Internet, the many static advertisements are, I would suggest, best seen as electronically disseminated print advertisements.) The following checklist focuses on print advertisements; Chapter 6 provides a checklist for analyzing television commercials.

The Mood

What is the general audience of the advertisement-the mood that is created, the feelings it stimulates?

The Design

What is the basic design of the advertisement? Does it use axial balance, or are the fundamental units arranged in an asymmetrical manner?

What relationship exists between the pictorial aspects of the advertisement and the copy, or written material?

How is spatiality used in the advertisement? Is there lots of white (blank) space, or is the advertisement crowded-full of written and graphic material?

Is there a photograph used in the advertisement? If so, what kind of shot is it? What angle is it taken from? What is the lighting like? How is color used?

The Context and Content  
6. If there are figures in the advertisement (people, animals), what are they like? Consider factors (to the extent that you can) such as facial expressions, hairstyles and hair color, body shape and body language, clothes, age, sex, race, ethnicity, education, occupation, relationships, and so on.

What does the background of the figures suggest? Where is the action taking place, and how does the background relate to this action?

What is going on in the advertisement, and what significance does this action have? Assuming that the advertisement represents part of a narrative, what can we conclude about what has led to this particular moment in time? That is, what is the plot?

Signs and Symbols  
9. What symbols and signs appear in the advertisement? What role do they play in stimulating positive feelings about or desire for the product or service being advertised?

Language and Typefaces

How is language used in the

advertisement? What linguistic devices provide information or generate some hoped for emotional response? Does the advertisement used metaphor? Metonomy? Repetition? Alliteration? Comparison and contrast? Sexual innuendo? Definitions?

What typefaces are used, and what messages do these typefaces convey?

Themes  
12. What are the basic themes in the advertisement? What is the advertisement about? (for example, the plot may involve a man and a woman drinking, and the theme may be jealousy)

What product or service is being

advertised? What role does it play in American society and culture?

What political, economic, social, and

cultural attitudes are reflected in the advertisement-such as alienation, sexism, conformity, anxiety, stereotyped thinking, generational conflict, obsession, elitism, loneliness, and so on?

What information do you need to

make sense of the advertisement? Does it allude to certain beliefs? Is it a reflection of a certain lifestyle? Does it assume information and knowledge on the part of a person looking at the advertisement?

Hand out worksheet 7 and worksheet 8 to help them recognize “techniques”.

More examples of persuasion that gets the kids to think outside of the advertising “box” and they really get a kick out of them!!

1. Hey baby, are you a parking ticket? 'Cause you got "fine" written all over you!
2. Can I borrow your library card? I wanna check you out!
3. Are you from Tennessee? 'Cause Ten is all I See!
4. Are your feet tired? 'Cause you've been running through my mind all day.
5. Are you Jamaican? 'Cause you're Jamaican me crazy!
6. Do you have a map? Because I'm totally lost in your eyes.
7. Well, here I am. What were your other two wishes?
8. I bet you 20 bucks you're gonna turn me down
9. What is the point of persuasion?
10. What makes someone a good persuader? A poor persuader?
11. What types of persuasion work best on you? Examples: humor, honesty, argument, etc.
12. Why might it be difficult to turn down someone who's trying to persuade you to do something?

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Teaching Activities (developed by students in CI5472, Spring, 2004):

Jeffrey Wendelberger and Scott Devens

Our idea for teaching critical analysis of advertising goes like this:

We would first show students examples of advertisements from various media and help students deconstruct what the advertisements were doing to add value to a product that is not necessarily intrinsic to the product itself. We would then have students from groups. The groups would choose a product to work with. The kinds of products chosen would be up to individual teachers, but one idea would be to have groups choose from very mundane ordinary items that are in the everyday lives of students. Examples of this type of thing would include: pencils, pens, notebooks, or other items that are generally mundane and would engender little reason for students to feel any sense of inherent brand loyalty or value beyond the objects utilitarian use. Another idea for a set of products to choose from would be generic, common food or beverages from the school cafeteria--something the kids are very familiar with.

After students have chosen a product their teams would begin an advertising campaign around that product. In order to measure the impact of advertising, the groups would first design a market research survey for their product. The survey would measure such things as awareness of the product, appeal of the product, loyalty to the product, comparisons with other brands of the product, and price one would be willing to pay for the product. Students would then survey peers in the school to determine a profile of the product before the advertising.

Once the survey is complete, students would begin their advertising campaign. They would first brainstorm marketing ideas to make their product more appealing or associate it with positive outcomes. Groups would then begin their advertising campaign. They could choose any type of media to begin to raise the profile of their product. They might for example make a video or Imovie of their product showing it being used by popular kids in the school or make posters, etc. The possibilities would be open to anything they could imagine.

After a suitable length of time the groups would then administer their survey again and analyze the results. Students could then discuss their results and through the projects and discussions raise their awareness of how advertising create demand and feelings for products that is not necessarily intrinsic to the product. Students could then begin to analyze products and advertising in their own lives--things like shoes, clothes, watches, pop, etc.

Anne Holmgren and Dixie Boschee

Our idea was for a culminating activity in a unit about critical analysis of advertising. It would be a simulation of working at an ad firm. The kids would be put into partners and they would either be assigned a product, or they would choose from a list of products. They would get a certain amount of time to create a print advertising campaign based on the techniques and psychology they'd learned during the unit. After a few days of working on these ads, each pair would get a chance to "pitch" their ad to the rest of the class. On the final day of the unit, some sort of "sale" would be set up where the kids are all given an amount of (fake) money and get to "buy" products, based on the campaigns they've seen. It would all be a simulation, but the idea would be that the kids get to get into the heads of advertisers and try to figure out how to appeal to the largest audience possible.

Jennifer Larson

I’d like to set my students up with international pen pals through epals.com. Each student would receive a pen pal to converse with at least monthly; one monthly topic of discussion will be assigned by me. They will also be assigned a small group to discuss their findings in (this is a failsafe in case someone has a non-communicative e-pal). Two topics to discuss are the following: What TV shows and movies do you enjoy and what kind of picture do you get of the culture that they’re from? And what do you notice about advertising and the way products are marketed in your country? How do people regard advertising in your country? (I have a theory that in America we view advertising almost as a form of entertainment. I wonder if the same is true in other countries.). I’d like my students to consider their own and other cultures through international eyes.

One warning about e-pals: it doesn’t work well with near deadlines. Give plenty of time to complete.

Adrien Everest and Jamie Pehl

We would have our students pick two television commercials that they found convincing and/or intriguing and compare/contrast their advertising elements. The students would receive a list of advertising vocabulary much like the film terms so that they can accurately express their thoughts about the commercials. Then, after picking their 2 commercials, they would define different aspects of advertising in the commercials: pitches to different age groups, classes, or races. After describing each individual ad, they would compare the two and see what they liked about each one, if the interesting aspects were the same or not.

For example, if you look at the Dr. Pepper vs. Coca Cola ads, there is a focus on age, music, and setting. Dr. Pepper is often shown with country singers in a car or porch drinking pop as an everyday thing. Coke is shown with young people having a great time at a park and drinking coke while enjoying life. Using these basic elements, one could look at the advertising elements in commercials that affect us every day.

Kevin Lally

As far as advertising is concerned, today is as big as it gets. More TV ad campaigns are revealed today than any other day of the year. Whichever network has forked the colossal sum to purchase broadcasting rights, CBS this year, will see more ad revenue than during any other TV event. The Superbowl generates more advertising revenue than the Macy's day parade, more than Dick Clark's New Year's Eve, more than the State of the Union address. Aside from beer, chips and Ad controversies (moveon.org), Today is a prime day to consider the impact of advertising in our lives, and who is responsible for that impact.

The debate began in class the other day; does advertising promote culture or the other way around? Advertising does mirror our culture. It shows us both who we are and who everyone else is. We see a commercial for a new video game and we understand why they used the music, colors, and setting they did. Ad companies have our population down pat and they know that youthful people like America's ghetto culture and thus target that population with those tools. Ad companies understand that young wealthy couples like luxury sedans, and thus target young professionals as potential Lexus buyers rather than older empty nesters. Obviously then, young people enjoy a Lexus more than older people. Obviously then, men like beer more than women. Obviously then, ad companies play us off of our stereotypes.

In the Oedipal story, Oedipus's parents were told by the blind prophet, Tyreseus, that their son would kill his father and marry his mother. To prevent this horrible fate, they sent Oedipus to be killed on a mountaintop. He was saved by a shepherd and lived to see the ruinous demise of his family, just as the blind prophet foretold. This story has many applications. In one plain sense, a blind man told a family something that created a self-fulfilling prophesy.

This tragedy could have been prevented in two ways; the blind man could have withheld his prophecy or the family could have ignored it. As we are unable to shut our eyes to the world at large, especially one so hungry for our attention as ours, let us consider what may have happened should Mr. and Mrs. Oedipus have ignored the blind old man. Oedipus would have lived and known his parents, loved them, argued with them, and worked alongside them. In those circumstances, he would never have committed patricide and incest, leaving Freud to his own pathologies.

Advertising is a blind mirror, but a noisy one. It cannot predict the future, but it can create such a powerful world which, however false, will capture our imagination and rule our actions and lifestyle choices. It is patently irresponsible to claim that advertising has any power over us. Keep litigation and advertising on the opposite sides on the street and maintain people's responsibility for their behavior.

Katrina Thomson and Jennie Viland

We would have students videotape their favorite TV show and then have them analyze some/all of the ads broadcast during that show. Students would look at the assumptions, discourses and techniques used to position viewers to buy the products advertised and discuss the intended audience based on the kind of show chosen and the likely demographics. We would try to focus students' attention on identifying not only what is IN the ads, but what is missing: i.e. what editing techniques have been used to persuade the viewer. This could be an individual or small group project and students would share their findings with the class. Students could connect this advertising in TV to similar techniques in other media: magazines, newspapers, malls, movies, billboards etc.

Kathryn Connors and Amy Gustafson

Amy and I would do an activity in which we would look at ads in two different mediums--magazines and TV. To begin, with magazines, we would have them consider whether or not a particular ad could be placed in a different magazine. They would have to consider the intended audience of the magazines and see if the ad fits within another magazine audience. For example, would an add from "Rolling Stone" magazine fit into a "Scientific American?"

For TV ads, students could access ads online from the Superbowl and other ads that have been prolific in advertising to see what makes ads effective. Depending on how long we had for the activity, after studying the ads, students could make an ad of their own.

Daniel Gough and Adam Banse

We would have students pay particular attention to gender roles within advertising. Students would be assigned a TV viewing assignment where they try to count how many adverts are geared towards females versus males. The activities can then be broadened to all aspects of advertisng and students would pay attention to which adverts are directed toward which gender and how each sex is portrayed within advertisements. What we want students to get at is how advertising constructs notions of femininity and masculinity. A culminating project could be to have students conceive their own advertisements that parody or subvert traditional gender roles as they perceive them.

Tamela McCartney and Kimberly Sy

We would have the students look at two different ads for the same product, but in different media (television and magazine, television and the web, magazine and web, etc.). First the students will need to determine the target audience for each ad by looking at discourses, images, and the category of media in which it fits (teen magazine, prime-time sitcom, etc). Then, in partners, the students will determine why each of the companies putting out the ads might have chosen that certain media. Who did they assume to influence? What about the ad made it effective/ineffective in the place it was given? Would another form of media been more effective? Why?

Hopefully, this will help students look critically at how and why ads are placed amongst their favorite shows. Also, it will help them understand the underlying motives of the advertisers.

Meghan Scott and Megan Dwyer-Gaffey

We would ask students to bring in copies of their favorite magazines and then we would break into small groups and ask the students to look at a few ads and discuss (then later present to the whole class) who the audience is, what they're selling, what assumptions are being made, and whether or not it is effective.

Then, keeping that in mind, we will ask students to break into small groups again and imagine a product they want to sell. After they decide on the product, they will create an advert for it (print or multimedia) keeping in mind the elements they discussed about the ads in the magazines.

The goal is for them to "get inside" the mind of advertising creators to see what motives and methods are present and constructing our reality and our consumerism.

Kari Gladen and Katie Schultz

We planned a lesson around the critical analysis of different advertising mediums such as movies, TV, magazines, billboards, and radio. We would divide the class into groups of 3-5 students asking that each group select a medium and do a critical analysis of it by answering the following questions: 1. What type of audience is it attempting to persuade? 2. Is it perpetuating any stereotypes about femininity, masculinity, class, race, etc.? 3. What techniques does it use that are explicit and/or implicit? 4. Do you think it is effective?/Would you buy the product? Why or why not?

After the initial activity, we would ask that students design their own advertisements focusing on a particular audience. (if possible, we would have students design ads in the form of the media they studied) The class as a whole would then critique their peers? ads and identify the techniques they employed in order to sell their product/idea.

Erin Warren and Erin Grahmann

This lesson will take place over a course of five to ten 50-minute class periods.

Overview: Students will apply and identify aspects of a critical lens to an ad, discover the biases hidden in the ad, and then reconstruct a new version of that ad that eliminates bias.

The class will be divided into groups of between 3 to 5 students. They will be challenged to apply a critical lens of their choice (or the teacher can specify a specific lens) to a television advertisement of their choice. After studying that ad, the group will need to turn in a report of what they discovered about that ad when applying their lens, how these discoveries reveal bias, and what steps they will take in re-filming this ad in order to eliminate said bias(es). After this report has been reviewed and accepted by the teacher, the students’ next step will be to write a script for their ad and map out storyboards. Once this process has been fully revised, the groups will work on filming, editing, and presenting their ads to the class, alongside the original. Students will have to give reasonings for changes in script, camera angles, actor representations, etc.

Anne Holmgren and Dixie Boschee

Our idea was for a culminating activity in a unit about critical analysis of advertising. It would be a simulation of working at an ad firm. The kids would be put into partners or groups of three and they would either be assigned a product, or they would choose from a list of products. They would get a certain amount of time to create a print advertising campaign based on the techniques and psychology they'd learned during the unit. After a few days of working on these ads, each pair would get a chance to "pitch" their ad to the rest of the class. On the final day of the unit, some sort of "sale" would be set up where the kids are all given an amount of (fake) money and get to "buy" products, based on the campaigns they've seen. It would all be a simulation, but the idea would be that the kids get to get into the heads of advertisers and try to figure out how to appeal to the largest audience possible.

Rachel Godlewski and Jessie Dockter

This activity is designed to have students think critically about themselves as consumers and to analyze the advertisement campaigns used by the companies that produce their favorite products. Students should choose one or two of their products (their favorite name brand clothing, shoes, soda, candy, or types of technology they use most such as Ipods, or game boys etc.) They should first describe the words that come to mind when they think of these products. Then describe why they use the product and how it affects their lives.

Then, as a form of research, students should search for various examples of advertisements used by the companies producing those products. They could investigate where ads for their favorite products appear and the frequency of the ads. Students may find examples in magazines, newspapers, on billboards, and as television commercials. Students could then determine what advertising techniques are being used for that product and draw conclusions about what image the company is trying to create for the product. Students could determine if they themselves are part of the intended audiences of those ads. Once students share their findings, the class may discover similar techniques that are being used for reaching kids their age. They could also practice identifying the various forms of advertising techniques: bandwagon, testimonials, etc. They could discuss the appeal of the logos used by their favorite companies.

After researching and discussing, students could recreate ads for those products for other audiences. For example, what might an ad for McDonalds look like in a magazine or during a show for teenagers compared with a magazine or show for adults -- or the same product geared toward male vs. female audiences. A movie like *Lord of the Rings*, for example, has different trailers for different audiences (changing the focus from the romance to the action, etc.)

Katrina Thomson and Jennie Viland

In this election year, political campaign ads are particularly relevant as topics of discussion in the classroom. Political ads are a powerful influence over a fundamental American right (the right to vote). Various analysis activities could be used in the classroom for students to analyze the language used and rhetorical devices and strategies of political advertising. Many comparisons could be drawn between the current political contests as well as drawing on previous election campaigns. For example, the rise of negative advertising in the 2000 presidential campaign unleashed a public backlash against such ads, which has influenced subsequent campaign advertising language use and rhetorical strategies. Students could be assigned to track a certain political party or candidate and analyze the language and image use and then compare/contrast this candidate to his/her opponent. Students would have a wide range of choice since this could be either at the local, state or national level. This activity could go hand in hand with a unit on persuasive writing in speeches. As a final activity, students could design their own ad campaigns using these persuasive and rhetorical techniques, which would demonstrate their understanding and application of these techniques and strategies.

Louise Covert and Becca Robertson

We are following through and building on our last activity with students examining the film, *Romeo and Juliet*.

We would have students watch the film and look for advertisements throughout the film For example, a Mercedes Benz vehicle (the symbol) or a Nike symbol on a t-shirt, for instance. We could encourage the students to look for different products that they know or recognize. We would ask them to write down as many as they are able to identify in the film.

After viewing a segment of the film, students talk about what they've recognized. We invite them to think and talk about what the symbols or signs mean using a semiotic analysis to these ads - guiding the students in considering what meaning is attached to these symbols and associated products.

We would also talk about the intertextual connections between the product and the film and how the product is being represented in the film (associated with what character type(s), etc.).

We would provide guiding questions for discussion and to create scaffolds for student conversation.

Amanda Furth

Students could find three examples of a specific advertising technique from magazines and then answer the questions 1) what advertising technique is being used & how do you know? 2) what message is being delivered by the advertisement & how do you know? 3) is the advertisement effective, why / why not?

Lindsay Kroog and Jodi Laframboise

Our teaching idea comes from a book called, *Critical Encounters In High School English*. It is by Deborah Appleman who has some great ideas (I heard her speak when I was an undergrad) about teaching literary theory to students. Her idea is to teach this kind of critical analysis by telling students to look through the world with different colored lenses. She has them put on colored sunglasses as an opening activity and describing how they see the world differently. She then goes on to explain the different lenses with which we can view literature. For instance, one activity she has students looking through the rose-colored glasses: the feminist lens. We like the idea of using the colored lenses to help explain and introduce what the students will be doing when they are looking at literature in different ways.

Reid Westrem and Brock Dubbels

With so many excellent ideas for analyzing and critiquing ads, the countercultural thing might be to look for something good in advertising. Granted, it might take some effort, but it seems that there are at least two things that could be said.

First, there is such a thing as a positive ad. Second, there are many things we in education can learn from advertisers. After all, we want to have students learn and remember things -- and advertisers have developed sophisticated techniques for making people do just that. It would be interesting to read a book or attend a seminar to learn how to apply those black-magic tricks to learning something worthwhile in the classroom.

After studying ads, students could be asked to create a positive ad. This is called a public service announcement, or PSA. The main source of PSAs in America is the Ad Council, and on their website <http://www.adcouncil.org>

students can find tips for how to make a good PSA. They can combine these tips with those on the Adbusters website ("How to Create Your Own Print Ad"), which is also discussed on our course website at the end of Module 6. The Adbusters information (choosing an objective, audience, format, concept, visuals and copy) applies easily to a TV ad as well. A list of topics could be given, or students could choose their own. In either case, encourage them to tailor their message to a specific local audience using specific local information. If equipment is available, they could film their PSAs and show them to the class. If there's no equipment, they can make PSA storyboards and present them to the class.

This could be tied in with aspects of teaching writing, such as understanding purpose and audience and clarifying a focused message.