MARKET SEGMENTATION AND MAGAZINE ADVERTISING:
A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

by

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B.A., Queen's University, 1980

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Market Segmentation and Magazine Advertising:

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ABSTRACT

A marketing trend has emerged in the last 25 years which has introduced a new strategy for the construction of meaning given to goods in advertisements. The strategy of market segmentation differs from conventional mass market appeals in that the ad messages it generates play on the sociocultural predispositions of select market audiences instead of presenting 'product-centered' associations alone. Segmentation ads are consumer group-specific, both in the selection of media vehicles for product communication and target markets. In contrast, mass ads address one large homogeneous market of consumers who can vary in sociocultural backgrounds. This thesis develops an analytical framework which focuses on the differences between presentational forms of ad messages communicated to mass markets and those audience-specific segmentation ads.

Two basic theories inform the analysis in this thesis: communicational semiotics and sociology of consumer society. Communicational semiotics explains the processes of how meaning is made from signifying elements in a structured message. While semiotics focuses attention on the ad message form itself, the sociology of consumer society looks at the way goods relate to social membership and satisfaction in contemporary society.

Present semiotic analyses of ads suggest that there is one established set of rules for the selection and combination of cultural contents in the ad message. This study reveals that there are in fact context-specific rules of interpretation for
ad messages based on audience sociocultural predispositions. The actual presentational forms of ads directed at market segments are noticeably different in their degree of social group cultural reference than those communicated to undifferentiated readers (mass market). The methodology is suited to the identification of those advertising messages that are group specific and employ cultural references seldom seen in mass advertising.

The suggested methodology is refined and applied to a sample of magazine advertisements for Budweiser brand beer in American publications from 1981-1982. Marketing information acquired from the advertising agency that generates these ads identifies both a subsample of mass and a subsample of segmentation ads in the all-inclusive print sample for that period.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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This study of advertising messages, their structured design by advertisers and marketing strategists, and their interpretation by media audiences is intended to establish a basis, in part, for a new semiotic communicational approach to cultural reference in the symbolization of commodities through advertising. A review of the literature offered in the fields of socio-economic theory, sociology and anthropology of consumer society, and content and semiotic analyses of advertising, reveals that very little effort has been made to explain how advertisers and marketers conceptualize, select and direct cultural meaning to often specific audiences of advertisements. At best, discussion of the symbolic values in advertisement messages and the "effects" on consumer behaviour tend to prefer a "mass communication" and "mass manipulated audience" model in the explication of how goods are made meaningful and regarded as desirable by various groups of consumers in industrial societies. Such analyses often neglect the fact that the media and their audiences are situated in complex social structures through which different audience groups respond in different ways to advertising messages. The literature on advertising as social communication has only recently noted the real social and cultural differences among consumers and the tendency and capacity of advertisers to isolate and address different specific audiences representative of a heterogenous marketplace.
The historical and communicational account of trends in ad message form and content by Stephen Kline and William Leiss, the consumer studies analysis of changing marketing and advertising thought by Montrose Sommers, Richard Pollay's historical and social studies on the relationships between American magazines, advertisers, and consumer culture, and Daniel Pope's historical work on advertising and marketing all confirm the growth of market segmentation as a strategy by which advertisers and marketers conceptualize and communicate meaning to consumer audiences. As well, this trend is noted in marketing literature and advertising trade journals. In contrast with the presently dominant mass marketing strategy which differentiates a brand from its competitors for the entire market, the increasing strategy of market segmentation attempts to reach a specific market located within the mass market. This new strategy has developed over the last 25 years. Pope describes its influence on the institution of advertising:

In fact, the advent and ascendancy of market segmentation as a principle of national advertisers may well be the most far reaching development in national advertising in recent decades. In the last generation it has effected the structure and conduct of the advertising agency business, the standards and principles of advertising professionals and the form and content of advertisements themselves.¹

It is this last influence of market segmentation on the form and content of ad messages, and the role of market segmentation in the fragmentation of media audiences and editorial contents into more specialized communication forms, that is of vital concern in developing a new semiotic
communicational approach to advertising production and reception. The new semiotics of advertising should begin by explaining how certain forms and contents selected by advertisers in the appeals to specific audiences/markets are more or less appropriate for selling to these audiences/markets. It is believed that not only certain contents are selected for a specific audience by admen, but also certain forms as well.

Semiotics is valuable in the study of ad messages because it attempts to explain the systematic and social aspects of signifying practice (rules of meaning construction), as well as, the resulting individual signifying practice (construction of meaning in a particular material message) of ad senders and receivers. Semiotics of advertising describes how a message is composed of internally organized into signifying units or signifiers (usually a visual image or written word) that have the potential to be understood as meaningful concepts or signifieds in that these signifiers refer to something the reader knows or can know. There are two fundamental structures through which the meaning of signifiers are contextualized as signifieds - concepts that the signifiers refer to - in the ad message. The first structure is that of the internal organization and arrangement of signifiers in the material ad message. A signifier and signified, whose combination form a sign, take on particular context-specific operations and meanings when presented in relations with other signifier/signified elements of a message. The second structure
is the one responsible for how *signifiers* can mean or refer to something and is tied to the external *organization* of those things referred to 'outside' of the *immediate* ad context in the broader systems of cultural knowledge and social signifying practice understood and provided by the audience.

Leymore, Barthes, Williamson and Goffman have all, in different terms, suggested that the meaning given to goods in material ad messages is a matter of admen presenting these goods (signs) within the same frame (message) that contains other signs with social and cultural significance. The meaning of one sign (a culturally, referring one) is transferred, by its contiguous relation in the ad, to the product sign. The meaning of either a person, a social situation, a referred system of social knowledge, an object, or an emotional feeling is transferred by the reader's involvement with the layout structure or written text of the ad to a product sign (image and concept). This process of meaning-transfer is accomplished through the internal structure suggested by the message taken as a meaningful whole in the mind of the reader.

Those systems of signs, that are external to the message and from which products gain cultural significance in association with other ad signs, Williamson calls "*referent systems.*" These systems have their ordered logic outside of the advertising system and are learned in social communicational practice in other areas of cultural experience. For the audience to correctly understand the ad message (meaning transfers),
advertisers must select contents (things referred to) and forms (ways of referring to things) within defined limits of what the audience knows and is probably familiar with.

In the case of segmentation advertising, the selection of referent systems is directed by the consideration of the market definition of the target audience sought and their repertoire of social and cultural knowledge and interests (especially in lifestyle behaviours). Unfortunately, semioticians of advertising have recognized the use of referent systems only in general, "mass society" terms -- knowledge that all social members supposedly possess. For instance, Leymore includes in her list of referent systems the age-old concerns of peace and war, old and new, life and death, and good and evil. Williamson includes nature, magic and time while hinting, perhaps unintentionally, at the potential specificity of referent systems in her discussion of the more culturally defined referent system of fashion. As well, Barthes' examples of referent systems becomes no more specific than identifying the system of the stereotypical symbols of nations. It is apparent that the semiotics of advertising is presently ill-equipped to discuss how and what ads refer readers to, given that these readers' values, belief systems and cultural predispositions are known through market research and are employed in ad messages.

The contention is put forth that it is possible to better understand the advertisement and audience reading of meaning in ads based on a more rigorous study of referent systems. The
marketing concept of segmentation, the fragmentation and
definition of ad audiences, and what sociologists and
anthropologists identify as the growing differentiations of
lifestyle and cultural interests in consumer culture all suggest
that different audiences will be addressed by references to
different systems of cultural knowledge provided in ads. The
thesis attempts to develop a methodology which explains how and
why advertisers use specific referent systems for audience
segments in advertising content and form unlike that displayed
in mass market communications.

Chapter one reviews the neo-liberal, 'Marxist', and
anthropological and sociological perspectives on the role of
symbolic communication in consumer society. Before embarking on
a study of the systematic and structural differences between ads
directed at mass and segmented markets/audiences, it is first
necessary to discuss current thought on the social and cultural
determinations of advertising as communication. The point is
made in this section that the media and advertising
institutions, which are the immediate vehicle structures of
advertising, are not autonomously determining or separate from
wider material and social processes. As well, the neo-liberal
and radical critiques of advertising, based on the notions that
ads generate unnecessary or "false" human needs, is rejected,
for the most part, in favour of the anthropological theory of
the symbolic nature of goods and communication about goods
stated by Sahlins, and Douglas and Isherwood.
The anthropological perspective claims an essential cultural and symbolic dimension to human needling and claims that products, once invested with cultural meaning (in consumer definitions of the value of goods, perhaps suggested by ads), become "communicators" of the users' cultural preferences and group affiliations in consumer communities. While often criticized for its cultural relativism and untried sociological assertions, this perspective does not fall into the theoretical dogma of "mass manipulation" conceptualizations characteristic of both neo-liberal and 'Marxist' approaches. The semiotics of Barthes and Williamson suffer an association with the radical notion of a manipulated, mass cultural experience in the communication of meaning around goods in advertising. The anthropological approach, while perhaps remaining at the general level of a cultural relativist account, does seem more helpful in developing an overall semiotic framework that allows for the comparison of referent systems as being representative of different real groups of consumers/audiences in consumer society. This theory, based on a fundamental methodology of cultural descriptions and comparisons, provides semiotics with a more orderly framework with which to understand paradigmatic structures in advertising messages (which make use of resources outside the text), rather than strictly syntagmatic structures (based on a purely internal reading of the text). This comparative methodology allows semiotics of advertising to look across to other informing popular culture forms (source of
reference in ads), to look upwards towards the structure that orders products/messages through marketing (intentions behind the symbolism consciously employed in the production of advertising) and downwards to the social organizational structures of audience formations (divisions of semi-autonomous groups of consumers who respond to different message appeals or to the same message appeals in different ways).

Chapter Two redefines the semiotic methodology for the study of advertising and develops an analytic framework for the study of ads. The semiotic concept of the referential function of the ad message is reworked using the notions of encoding and decoding provided by Stuart Hall and Umberto Eco. The vital concept of code is described as the repertoire of experience (general cultural and social, and from habitual media use) to which both the ad encoder (sender, producer) and decoding audience (receiver, consumer) refer in the process of the construction of product meaning. This is consistent with Gillian Dyer's definition of code as, "a set of rules or an interpretive device known to both transmitter and receiver, which assigns a certain meaning or content to a certain sign." The encoding of segmentation ads is influenced by various factors of market research on target groups and media segments, professional ideologies, and current advertising modes of address to select groups. It is a moment in communication distinct from audience decoding, which is then subject to that audience's preferred reading of cultural materials in ads. It is the distinctiveness
of this second moment of audience decoding that makes it necessary for advertisers to accurately select suitable referent systems in cueing audience predispositions.

Advertising audiences are seen here, not only to have predilections in the goods they consume, but also in the social values and cultural associations they define themselves with and that define goods in advertisement messages. Williamson's notion that the ad's internal structure effectively renders readers as "subjects", structurally and psychoanalytically positioned in the message, is rejected in favour of the historical and social subject defined by Dave Morley's audience perspective. Audiences are real social subject that come to the reading of the ad from various social backgrounds. But Morley also suggests that social classifications of audiences, such as that attempted by Parkins and Bernstein, are too reductionistic. Instead, Morley recommends an approach that can define audiences through the cultural discourses that are habitually practiced and commonly understood by certain audiences. This is the audience approach followed throughout the remainder of the thesis. As well, it is believed to parallel the strategy of marketers and advertisers in selecting various referent systems from the lifestyle and media interests of audiences in their general cultural consumption patterns that actively shape preferred reading codes. The marketers' and advertisers' correct placement of the target audience within a repertoire of cultural and media discourses is important, not simply because the audience is
drawn into a "space" of transferring meaning from one unit sign to another (the product sign) in engaging the ad's structure, as Williamson claims, but also because the audience's/reader's cultural predispositions and social identity are this space. By referring to more select cultural referent systems, associated with an audience's repertoire of cultural discourses (e.g., appealing to young college audiences with reference to "new wave" lifestyle interests represented in advertising art and jingles), the advertiser prefers a more restricted or closed code that redefines the ad message as an emblem of a particular way of life, consistent with the manner in which that group socially display group affiliations and values. It is by saying too little or by assuming that the audience can 'fill in' the suggested significance of signs - references to group-specific, 'secretive' or restricted codes - that the ads meta-communicate the sharing of meaning with an audience in segmentation contexts. This type of signification to audiences is what Eco terms "closed textual communication", and what Kline and Leiss call "closed or more restricted codes of interpretation." Such appeals in segmentation advertising require the reader to do "the work" in supplying information, while in mass market ads a more open code and literal supply of all information necessary for making meaning is more readily provided in the material message.

The discussion on developing an analytic framework sees as its major strategy for analysing referent systems a comparison
among audience-connected media. Especially in segmentation appeals, where certain audiences have responded positively to certain other "non-commercial" media message contents and forms, advertisers appropriate these tried and tested formats (used first in the media marketplace) in approaching often newly defined commodity market audiences. In a way somewhat similar to John Berger's media-comparison semiotic analysis of advertising, the study here follows the analytical project of matching ad message forms with other media the isolated audience segment is known to consume. It is believed that advertisers borrow external media forms and attempt to reproduce specific cultural experiences related to the consumption of these other media in the ad.

Chapter Three introduces the sample of ads, the media segments they appear in and the target markets or mass market the advertiser wishes to appeal to. The sample of ads, on which the analytic framework is used, contains two subsamples (defined by the advertising agency that generated the ads) that are qualified by their segmentation and mass market strategies. The product advertised is Budweiser brand beer in American magazines for the sample period of 1981-1982. The two markets desired are the "Heavy Male Beer Drinker, 18-49 years of age," and the "Young Adult Male, 18-24 years of age." The magazines and media audiences of the magazines are demographically sketched and the statement of marketing intentionality for approaching these market audiences is discussed. The history of appealing to the youth market is outlined in detail along with market research on
this target audience.

In Chapter Four the analytical framework is first applied to the mass market advertisements found in *Sports Illustrated* and *Playboy*, then to ads in *Hot Rod* magazine (a special case of special interest media segmentation) and finally to ads in *National Lampoon*, *Amperand* and *Rolling Stone* magazines (a more homogeneous market segment within the mass market). The analysis examines ads for their closedness and specificity of referent systems and their densities of paradigmatic relations based on audience repertoires of referent systems and lifestyle interests outlined in Chapter Three.


3. These market categories are the same as those used in marketing and advertising and have been outlined in communications from D'Arcy MacManus & Masius in St. Louis, the agency handling the Budweiser account in the United States.
I. Advertising As Social Communication

This chapter is a review of socio-economic and cultural theory concerned with the symbolic nature of goods in consumer society. The relationship between the symbolizations of the commodity system and the origination of human needs takes a privileged position in various theoretical discussions of the communication of meanings in consumer culture. In particular, advertising messages, which reflect the producer's intentional organization and supply of meaning for consumer culture, have been analyzed by different methodologies, each subscribing to different models of how a society generates, directs and practices its basic cultural assumptions in the relationship of the symbolization of goods to human needs. While some of these analyses view the symbols and organization of meaning in advertisements as appropriated by producers from the complex of meanings and needs existing essentially in consumer society, other analyses assume a more negative perspective on the role of advertising and suggest that producers orchestrate the creation of needs through the ideological symbolization of the commodity beyond values of the product's simple use. The following sections isolate and analyze the central issues of this debate which are often implicitly and inadequately represented in the actual analysis of ad messages.
This review of the various debates on the nature of the social meaning given to goods through the communication system of advertising does not intend to settle on the more fundamental study of the satisfaction of needs. Rather, this study is primarily concerned with the process of the communication of social meaning through advertising and not its more far reaching causes and effects. The review considers how various theories of consumer society have come to realize that goods are not simply to be thought of as useful and, in related conceptualizations, that advertising is not to be regarded as merely informational. Contemporary approaches tend to realize that both advertising and the production of commodities have a symbolic aspect whose constitution and structured patterns must be accounted for. These theories acknowledge that goods do not merely perform particular 'use' functions for the consumer, but communicate something about the society they are produced in and about the user himself. Advertising gives goods their social symbolic meanings and defines the way people should conceive their relationship with goods and other areas of cultural practice outside of the act of consumption alone (individuals' purchase and experience of the utility performance of goods).

A guiding focus of this review is on the concept of cultural reference in the symbolic associations (shared conventional meaning definitions of objects and ideas) attributed to goods through advertising. Advertisers and marketers do not work autonomously in providing products with
meaning. These professional social agents borrow appropriate forms and contents for their messages from systems of meaning that are, as well, already practiced by consumers they wish to communicate to through product messages. The notion of specificity of cultural reference has been grossly overlooked in the analysis of commodity symbolization in favour of a vague assumption of dominant ideological social process and mass manipulation. This is a dangerous orientation for such critical analyses to take given the growing trend in advertising and marketing communication systems of market segmentation. This marketing concept, developed and employed to increasing extents in the last 25 years, concentrates on trying to reach a specific market within the mass market, as opposed to trying to differentiate a brand from its competitors for the entire market. Market segmentation is the strategy through which producers are able to isolate particular consumer group social product needs and communicate product meaning in terms of that group's own social and cultural predispositions. The market segment, defined through elaborate market research, receives product messages that are user-centered instead of use-centered. This defined group of consumers receive more than messages about products -- they receive messages about themselves. Advertising as a form of social communication is not as "mass manipulating" or mass consumer culture-oriented as many of the theories in this review would argue. Bearing this theoretical oversight in mind, the theories represented in this chapter are assessed for
their consideration of differentiated groups of consumers in the explanation of advertising as a social and cultural activity.

Some studies of advertising focus on what consumers actually receive in the material of the ad message, while others view advertising from a macro socio-economic and/or cultural (anthropological) perspective. Gillian Dyer provides a helpful distinction between these two related levels of analysis of advertising:

What an ad means depends on how it operates, how signs and its ideological effect are organized internally (within the text) and externally (in relation to its production, circulation and consumption and in relation to technological, economic, legal and social relations).²

Dyer suggests here an analytical differentiation between the external consequences of advertising and the internal analysis of the actual message content. The study of the external social consequences of advertising critiques and attempts to explain what advertising does (e.g., creation of demand by the stimulation of false needs, the issue of ideology, legitimation and the political economic controls of cultural production). This macro-social approach examines advertising and its causes and effects in social institutional structural terms with often an historical focus. The significance of advertising is, on the other hand, also studied in a critique of the internal structure and materials of the ad message itself (e.g., closely examining the systemic creation of false or irrational meanings for goods at the level of the message form). It is necessary to discuss fully the theoretical work on the external
organization and consequences of advertising in order to understand the methodological tools for internal analysis of actual messages that have been constructed with various macro-theoretical proofs in mind. In the study of advertising, most theorists have concentrated on one or the other of these two levels of analysis. With the exceptions of the studies by Kline and Leiss, Pollay and McCracken and others, the existing studies of advertising and consumer culture have amounted to a collection of theories without any empirical validations or methods without any formal theoretical base. The study of advertising must incorporate, to some extent, both levels of analysis.

The review of the literature is guided by the search for a culture and communication perspective on advertising in which external and internal level considerations are analyzed as mutually informing -- the ad message structure and contents being determined by processes of the social institutional structures related to ad production and advertising intention (e.g., market segmentation; the message form and the intentional marketing/advertising activity). A simple study of the ad message itself does not necessarily explain in what ways advertising is a social form of communication. The intentions and institutional ideologies of advertiser, marketing and media groups, plus the social predisposition of those receiving the ad message, are both important for the communication of meaning and theories that describe its systemic production structures and
structured reception.

1.1 Socio-economic Theory and Consumer Culture

The first fundamental understanding of the external organization and consequences of advertising occur in the liberal view presented by economic theorists. The nature of the presentation of the commodity in consumer culture has been defended by traditional economics in an account summarized by Stephen Kline:

The liberal view invites us to see the consumer culture as a more developed stage of industrialization; a reflection of the collective will and unending appetites of individual consumers with the industrialized marketplace as the best means of satisfying them. To this perspective, consumption is the natural expression of a human essence.3

From this liberal perspective comes the assumption that the desire to consume is a psychic response naturally expressed by the consumer. Consumer demand controls the market, and production is regarded as meeting the needs of the market. Kenneth Galbraith, in The Affluent Society (1958) and The New Industrial State (1967), describes this view as the "accepted sequence"* in which production is directed towards dealing with human needs and their current levels of satisfaction. Urgency of wants and, therefore demand, do not lessen as more are satisfied.

This liberal approach portrays consumers as private, rational individuals acting in consumptive roles dictated by
their own preferences and judgements -- these preferences originate from the marketplace. Advertising and marketing communicate messages of product attributes and services in consumer information quite format to consumers. The theory claims the purely informational function advertisements display in representing the way ads make clear marketplace choices to satisfy consumer-determined needs. This acceptance of the notion of consumer democratic selection of goods through demand is critiqued by the neo-liberal perspective of Galbraith's "revised sequence," in which the relations of production and marketing, and the consumer motivation to purchase are reformulated in a new account. Galbraith comments:

The even more difficult link between production and wants is provided by the institutions of modern advertising and "salesmanship". These cannot be reconciled with the independantly determined desires - to bring into being wants that previously did not exist.5

Arguing against the theory of consumer sovereignty ("the accepted sequence"), Galbraith develops his "revised sequence" in which production controls demand. The production and distribution of goods generated by "salesmanship" (marketing) and advertising represent a collusion against consumer sovereignty if, as Galbraith contends, "it is the process of satisfying wants that creates wants".6 According to Galbraith, advertising reaches human emotions ("weaker human" emotional needs) and creates wants that have no place in marketplace communications. The economist argues that the more abundant commodities are, and to the extent that they do not serve our
physical and social needs, the more vulnerable we, the consumers, are to appeals that are psychologically grounded. Both the notion that the urgency of wants do not lessen as more are satisfied/addressed (economic theory of marginal utility and the non-diminishing levels consumer needs), and that wants in the marketplace are autonomously arrived at by consumers (consumer sovereignty), go under attack by Galbraith. Advertising does not inform consumers of simply what is available in the marketplace, it persuades them to need the goods producers supply to the public. The social institutional power of advertising resides in its function as "a relentless propaganda on behalf of goods in general". As an institution of production and marketing, advertising messages have become necessary for advanced capitalist production to oversee economic demand and insure industrial growth. Only by controlling consumer demand and consumptive trends in this fashion, have producers been able to secure capital gains and protect investments into new production, thus avoiding the threat of radical, unforeseen shifts in consumer activity.

At the core of Galbraith's critique of advertising is a crucial distinction made between two possible kinds of human desires; those for satisfying "absolute" needs (more physical, social utility that can be satisfied) and "relative" needs (psychic, weaker, hard to satisfy with goods). Galbraith has little problem accepting the notion of consumer gratifications through the realization or satisfaction of absolute needs (e.g.,
food, warmth, and shelter). It is the satisfaction of relative needs conjured up in the product message promises of advertising -- that is, goods promised for their personal and social values based on consumer social comparison and emulation that Galbraith finds problematic.

1.2 The Relativity of Needs: Socio-economic Approaches to Consumption

Economist James Duesenberry has provided Galbraith with the notion that relative needs in consumption are based on the social goal of a higher standard living. This social need is the elemental impetus behind many consumer needs in consumer society. Galbraith has employed this social observation to oppose traditional, liberal economists in their claim of consumer sovereignty. As well, this view introduces the relationship between the motivational drive and the organization of relative needing, and the capabilities of the society's productive forces. He notes:

Because the society sets great store by ability to produce a high living standard, it evaluates people by the products they possess. The urge to consume is fathered by the value system which emphasizes the ability of the society to produce. The more that is produced, the more that must be owned in order to maintain the appropriate prestige. The latter is an important point, for, without going as far as Duesenberry in reducing goods to the role of symbols of prestige in the affluent society, it is plain that his argument fully implies that the production of goods creates the wants that the goods are presumed to satisfy.
Many of Galbraith's ideas, presented above, were addressed first by Veblen in his analysis of the turn of the century conspicuous consumption and social patterns of the upper class of that time. Veblen satirized the relations of emulation (comparisons among a group) and social significance conceptualizing the system of prestigious goods. Similarly, Galbraith critiques broader social patterns of more contemporary affluent societies. In Galbraith's analysis, the rise of consumer society in the form described above is caused by capitalist societies necessity to control economic demand for growth. This requires not only orchestration of the habits and patterns of consumption, but, more importantly a redefinition of the organization of social consumer needs themselves.

Advertising, through its presentation of social and personal meaning around goods, becomes a vital concern in understanding processes of economic and social influence -- the redefinition of the consuming individual's aspirations and wants to assure demand growth (industrial and capital expansions). Thus, Galbraith suggests a connection between producer interests and the nature of needing in consumer society. Values of prestige and a higher standard of living are motivated indirectly by a value system of consumers' rights to goods -- a result of capitalist production of a wide variety of goods enabling consumer choices. Advertising and marketing perform the central function of creating needs and complete the conceptual triangle in which consumer values of emulation (what is available on the
market and what others possess) and the marketing motives to produce more and more are joined.

Producers create the wants they seek to satisfy through advertising and this suggests to Galbraith that emulative behaviours of consumers and their hunger for a better standard of living are not enough to encourage consumption for producers. He argues further that advertising would not be required if consumers determined their own desires. They would purchase only what they truly need. Therefore, advertising is a component of the relations of production that, as an institution, creates messages that determine attitudes and social behaviours around consumption. Galbraith maintains this critique of 'advertising as manipulation' without any analysis of goods and "the role of symbols of prestige". His reluctance to deal with the symbolic and, therefore, cultural material of advertising curtails any further discussion on how relative needs and emulative values are communicated to consumers.

Michael Schudson provides an alternate view of the role of advertising with a very different understanding of Duesenberry's work on presentation and organization of needs in consumer society. He suggests that Duesenberry's point is "not that consumers are manipulated by advertising; instead he emphasizes that consumer tastes are relative to the tastes of other consumers, and that all tastes are formed by the character of a particular culture". This cultural perspective identifies the function of advertising to be primarily informational. Symbols
and references to social life found in advertisements (e.g., values of emulation, prestige) reproduce significant meanings and associations practiced in the broader realms of cultural activity. The value system in which "symbols of prestige" gain their significance has been in place well before the coming of modern advertising. While advertising might sustain emulative social categories, it has not created the system in which they function as meanings.

For Schudson, Galbraith's Keynesian distinction between "absolute" and "relative" needs, and the idea that relative needs are insatiable, is replaced by the notion that "needs are always relative, but relative needs are not necessarily insatiable". An anthropological view states that goods have a symbolic and material constitution realized through cultural activity. Uses, values and tastes imparted to goods by advertising must be consonant with cultural experience. Products presented with the promise of membership to a particular group upon possession may not be the immediate solution to this need for membership. This, however, does not suggest that the need for social membership is artificially conjured by advertisers nor that this need may not be satisfied. This cultural approach will be discussed in depth shortly.

William Leiss restates the major considerations around the issue of relative needs and need satisfaction based on the socio-economic perspectives of Fred Hirsch and Tibor Scitovsky. These two contemporary economists focus on three
essential processes of consumer culture which shed light on the
system of emulative behaviours common in industrial capitalist
societies:

(1) the importance of interpersonal comparisons or social
ranking; (2) the relations between this emulative
behaviour and goods consumption; (3) the symbolic
determinations of rank and prestige in economic
activity.¹⁴

Leiss in his summative statement observes these three
processes to be prominent in the value systems of consumer
culture. Unlike Galbraith's purely economic theoretical account,
the importance of the symbolic nature of goods and its
undeniable role in economic activity is acknowledged. Leiss'
investigations into the economic anthropological literature has
lead him to state, as well, that "all three features were also
prominent in many (but not all) primitive societies".¹⁵ This
additional contribution from anthropology reflects an empirical
context which puts into question Galbraith's triangular
formulation of the creation of relative needs. In societies
which possess neither capitalist productive capabilities nor
modern advertising it would seem plausible to assume, employing
Galbraith's analysis, that consumption of goods would not
reflect the symbolic determinations of rank and prestige.
Satisfaction of relative needs would not be expressed in
consumptive or economic exchange culture but would be restricted
to other areas of social life. Economic exchange would be based
primarily in the satisfaction of absolute needs. Instead it
appears that the satisfaction of relative needs has a prominent
place in the economic activities of primitive societies. The determination and infusion of relative needing into consuming and trading activities may not rely so heavily upon capitalist production and a "propaganda of goods in general". It may in fact be a product of social organization and man's desire to communicate through the objects his culture has given meaning to. It would be more correct to suggest, as Leiss, Hirsch and Scitovsky do, that relative needing is not separable from absolute needs. The symbolic dimension of goods are part and parcel of the processes of human needing. The symbolic values through which goods take on meaning in consumer society are organized within a system of hierarchical ranks and statuses reflected in broader structures of social organization. In contemporary capitalist societies, each product and service is designated through marketing and product image creation to fit in a certain status level and therefore suit the relative needs of a particular consumer group (consumer subculture) possessing a certain income level, tastes, and social position. The symbols of success which emerge in consumer culture are involved in a constant state of redefinition so that consumers in all social positions are confronted with new means (image concepts and product innovations) by which to better their relative positions.

Sociologist Lee Rainwater makes the point that not all values placed on goods are in the pursuit of social emulative expressions. Dissatisfaction experienced by the consumer and the
answering of positional wants are not an endless process. Consumer expectation is not simply definable along one continuum of increasing expenditures motivated by marketers' and societies' ability to produce a continuing array of products. Rather, by utilizing a stratification model of consumer society, Rainwater believes that social position fixes definitional limits on the need for positional goods. Emulative processes are curved in consumer culture by the more fundamental need for social membership to one's subgroup or peers. The way in which consumers compare each other through what they buy is delivered more precisely in this sociological approach by its description of the heterogeneity of consumer society, and therefore, subgroups of consumers displaying shared values and behaviours in their consumptive habits. Consumers participate more in "validating activities" that are socially confirming rather than socially competitive. Rainwater states that consumers desire "those attributes and resources that go into the construction of a virtual social identity for persons in their society". The important point here is that consumer society is not composed of a homogeneous mass of consumers who vary merely in terms of income, and in terms of a relative knowledge of what those above and below them consume. The "standard package" of consumption for a particular group of consumers, while largely determined by income, is, as well, an outcome of their preferred membership to a particular social group with particular social values. As we will see later on in Chapter Two, this is an assumption.
marketers and advertisers assume from market research in their definitions of market segments within consumer culture -- that of a heterogeneous marketplace with culturally distinct groups of consumers.

This position argues against the notion of the insatiability of relative needs in that it isolates the most basic of human needs, that of social inclusion to a particular group. To say that advertising and the modern social contexts of capitalist production may reveal and be solely responsible for the structuring of needs and expectations for all consumers in the same fashion (Galbraith's modern want creation) is to ignore the history of groups of differentiated consumers (each replying to the need for social group identity) and their different demands in the marketplace based on the group's social, economic and cultural backgrounds. This differentiating aspect of the groupings of relative needs in consumer culture is evident in the symbolic appeals employed by advertisers to present goods with meanings significant for different markets/groups. The idea of a heterogeneous consumer culture, as reflected in advertising symbolizations of commodities, most accurately typify advertising as a communication system and the most recent marketing trend to support increases in production explained later as market segmentation. Its empirical verification can be drawn out in the internal analysis of ad messages and how these messages conceptualize and direct meaning to different groups in the marketplace.
Other lines of critique of the present contexts of capitalist production and the external consequences of advertising come from Marxist social theory. These theories share with the neo-liberal economic account the notion that advertising is necessary in creating demand for unnecessary goods, and that production controls consumption through the mediating institutions of advertising and marketing. Further, the "Marxist" view emphasizes the systematic integration of advertising into the exploitive system of monopoly capitalism. Consumer culture is explained as the reflection of an organization latent in the capitalist system of production. What results from these social relations are the manipulated forms of social alienation and distorted reflections of economic social life. The traditional Marxist critique does not share Galbraith's concern for the sphere of consumption and the resulting problems connected with consumer satisfaction. This "radical" critique of the capitalist system of production and distribution assumes, instead, that human needs are objectively definable. Problems of consumption are subordinate to the primary problems in the system of production. Both neo-liberal and "radical" critiques maintain that advertising must effect false social needs in people in order to monitor and control demand and to secure growth in production.
In less sophisticated Marxist accounts true needs are those of food, clothing, shelter and other objectively defined elements for the maintenance of human life. These do not differ much from Galbraith's concept of absolute needs which may be satisfied. However, the Marxist conceptual distinction of true/false needs produces definitional problems far greater than Galbraith's absolute/relative need distinction. False needs are said to arise out of a manipulation of consciousness, a social process which apparently is more latent and generalized than that of the emulative behaviours of consumers. The manipulation of false needs creates an alienated state realized in, as Gillian Dyer puts it, "mental and physical separation of people from each other and from real involvement with their work and society". These false needs confuse our understanding of how we are socially related to each other and to our livelihood or work. While our own experience in the social world brings this alienation about, mass media, including advertising, is said to cover up and distort these real social and personal inadequacies. These institutions conceal and distort our social experience by providing another, false one. Advertising and the mass media are said to psychically manipulate us into desiring more and more products and therefore create the demand which fuels capitalist production. In the Marxist formulation of Herbert Marcuse, those "need-messages" aimed at psycho-social repression "perpetuate toil, aggressiveness, misery and injustice":

18
Most of the prevailing needs to relax, to have fun, to behave and consume in accordance with the advertisements, to love and hate what others love and hate, belong to this category of false needs.... Such needs have a societal content and function which are determined by external powers over which the individual has no control.... No matter how much such needs may have become the individual's own, reproduced and fortified by the conditions of his existence: no matter how much he identifies himself with them and finds himself in their satisfaction, they continue to be what they were from the beginning - products of a society whose dominant interests demand repression. 21

The "external powers" and "dominant interests" which must be guarded on behalf of these "powers" represent the capitalist relations of production and the maintenance of the interests of producers. Advertising and mass media are institutions that guard in the interests of monopoly capital and its objective of profits in surplus value. How these institutions do this is by providing individuals with false needs that obstruct any recognition of social control. Marcuse argues that consumer culture, through its offerings of a better lifestyle and system of gratifications, promotes social and political apathy. 22 He continues:

Free choice among a wide variety of these goods sustain social controls over a life of toil and fear - that is they sustain alienation. 23

Consumer culture, and the messages which reflect it in advertising, define the terms in which individuals think within one dominant ideological movement. Members of consumer society remain non-autonomous and are denied effective cognitive consideration of their true needs as social being. True needs cannot be distinguished from false needs as long as consumers are "kept incapable of being autonomous, as long as they are
indoctrinated and manipulated". 2

The problem with Marcuse's true/false needs distinction lies in its vague definition and the Marxist theoretical faith in the necessary manipulatory nature of monopoly capitalism and the effects of its related media agencies. Marcuse suggests that our obsession with commodities is a result of the manipulation of consciousness and the resultant false consciousness (including false needs). A clear definition of what constitutes false needs and who delimits false needs cannot be adequately explained. Rather, Marcuse is forced to retreat to one final generalization: in a purely socialist society true needs would be realized and defined by the individuals themselves and until such a freedom and society is available false needs will dominate. The general lack of empirical validation and clear definition of the true/false distinction in the social theoretical formulation of this Marxist approach has forced a questioning of whether consumption is in fact subordinate to production. Is there any proof of this one-way determinism of human needs by the productive base of capitalist society is a question that must gain its answer from a more sophisticated analysis of the mediating institutions of marketing, advertising and the media and an analysis of symbolization found in ad messages (the consumers most direct communication with producers through marketing, besides the act of purchasing itself). Yet, the role of human agency in the internalization of false needs is neglected and oversimplified by the less sophisticated
Marxist position. As Debra Clarke points out:

...there is a good deal more to the process than some simple one-way (and therefore inevitable) domination from above; yet this one-sided and 'one-dimensional' account underlies and pervades the works of both the Frankfurt theorists (notably Adorno and Marcuse) and later U.S. mass society theorists.25

The mass society theorists that Clarke refers to are best represented by C. Wright Mills and their study of monopoly capitalism exhibits a keen interest in political economic structure in the United States. Yet their theory, like that of Marcuse is weak, especially in preferring to focus on the institutions of production and the power elites of these institutions and media producers. Their perspective does not consider a sociology of consumption and the significance of communications between producers and consumers.

1.4 Mass Society Theory and Mass Culture

The notion of human agency is excluded in the one-way determinism formulation in favor of a cultural description of the passive "masses" of a weak civil society (a generalized public outside of the ruling class, their system of values, needs and social relations). C. Wright Mills uses the crude stratification model of one large mass (consumers of goods and mass media) and one small elite or elites (of producers and media professionals).26 Clarke offers a critique of this model when she states:

Mills proceeded to argue that the mass media 'created'
new forms of dependence and made the (classless) masses newly vulnerable to greater control under power wielding elites.\textsuperscript{27}

Mills puts aside the issue of actual audience reception of mass cultural production and carries out his analysis on the assumption that mass audiences (\textit{e.g.}, advertising audiences) are manipulated in similar ways on the basis of the one-way determinism of the interests of the productive forces of society, unchecked and unopposed. Raymond Williams, an exponent of a more sophisticated Marxist approach, singles out two major difficulties with this notion of the culture industry as "mass manipulation":

...the concept of the 'mass' replaces and neutralizes specific class structures; the concept of 'manipulation' (an operative strategy in capitalist advertising and politics) replaces and neutralizes the complex interactions of control, selection, incorporation, and the phases of social consciousness which correspond to real social situations and relations.\textsuperscript{28}

As Williams suggests here, an organized sociology of actual audiences and of the real conditions/contexts of message reception and effect are necessary in the study of mass cultural production (\textit{i.e.}, newspaper, television, politics, and advertising). The component of an active, receptive human agent must be considered in the producer/culture relationship. False needs created by the mass culture industries cannot be capable of fully erasing or overcoming the problem of real differences among social members of advanced capitalist society. Nor can these differences be attributable to false needs and mass cultural production alone. Mass society theories have chosen to neglect the difficulties the culture industries have in
communicating to a plurality of social formations with different social consciousneses defined, for instance, by class divisions. As well, Alan Swingewood, in *The Myth of Mass Culture*, extends this critique of mass society approaches:

Such a view ignores the fact that, with rising educational standards and increasing leisure time and affluence, contemporary industrial society creates conditions of high mass consumption.... Consumer capitalism, rather than creating a vast homogeneous and culturally brutalized mass, generates different levels of taste, different audiences and consumers. Culture is stratified, its consumption differentiated.29

Galbraith's claim of the dependence of consumers on the productive forces of society instilled through the "propoganda of relative needs", and the Marxist statement of the necessary processes of mass manipulation both assume that if advertising did not exist, then consumers would not be indoctrinated with false needs and therefore would not attempt to satisfy them in suggested consumptive behaviours. Both views concern themselves with the overt and intrapsychic significance of advertising in which propoganda and unconscious manipulation are necessary aspects. However, it may be argued that these descriptions of the universal effect of advertising on consumers refer not to the creation of unnecessary, socially-false needs, but to psychologically universal, and cultural needs. As Patricia Springborg has argued in her critique of Marcuse's true/false distinction, advertising manipulates us on the basis of basic needs for emotional security, self-esteem, ego-gratification, creativity, and a sense of power etc. 30 These needs are not a product of advertising and would not disappear if advertising
did. They exist in all individuals and advertising refers to them to gain an effect off consumers' emotional vulnerability. Galbraith even admits that consumer manipulation through advertising is not founded on basic, "absolute" needs, but on referral to consumers' weaker, psychological needs. Similarly, John Berger, in *Ways of Seeing*, acknowledges that advertising plays off of the emotions of envy and pleasure in arousing consumer needs for products. To suggest that advertising creates such needs by stimulating or manipulating through envy and pleasure may reflect the tautological nature of the Marxist psycho-social approach. Mass media and advertising cannot be held completely responsible for what already exists in each individual member of consumer society; a basic psychological set of human needs and the social need of membership through cultural participation in one's specific relations in cultural and social formations. Mass society theories have grossly over-generalized the first set of needs and have avoided completely discussion of the second.

Mass society approaches can never fully explain what it is that is inherently unifying about "mass culture". Their focus on a psychologically grounded manipulation, on the one hand, or dissemination from the power structure explanations of false needs renders them inept in their ability to deal with questions of social formations and cultural patterns in consumer culture. In fact, the argument can be made that culture is not a single unified social form:
...if culture is 'a whole way of life' [Williams cultural approach], then there is clearly no such thing as a singular, all embracing 'culture of capitalism'. There are many cultures, and many cultural forms, some of which are appropriated by class bound groups and some which are not -- however, in the long run, one's 'whole way of life' is, necessarily, heavily conditioned by and ultimately bound up with one's place within capitalist social relations of production; consumption merely symptomizes this fundamental relation.31

Debra Clarke notes here the dangers of choosing a concept of culture as either a "central authority of mass communication systems", or "microsocial forces in a definition of the social world for the individual", without having both present within a theoretical framework that may deal with consumption and fundamental determinations of production. This second, cultural aspect is absent in Marxist mass manipulation theories of advertising.

However, a positive contribution of the work of Marxist scholars such as Ewen can be identified in their shift of emphasis from the realm of production alone, to include the processes of consumption and different consuming groups. Ewen's social and historical focus on the effects of monopoly capitalism prefers to remain within a description of a homogeneous consumer society in an explanation of the ideological function of advertising -- the conversion of the various social classes into a mass consumer society. Ewen identifies the persuasive socializing influence of advertising as the major contributing factor behind the social domination of capitalist production. Answering the problems of overproduction and the necessity for larger markets both in a vertical
direction (to include the labor force) and horizontally (nationally) - advertising became a means for producers to create consumers and control demand. Ewen identifies the beginnings of consumerism in the logic of capitalist growth economies:

Industrialization then was more than a question of producing more goods in a new way. It also entailed a process of socialization which aimed at stabilizing and inculcating fidelity among those whose labor was being conscripted.32

This marks a critical revision of the Marxist deterministic approach from the discussion of social contexts of production to the understanding of the social control function of consumer culture. This theme is summarized in two points by Robert D'Amico around the social mediation of consumption in the power of the productive base:

First power resides more in control over and formation of subjective needs, desires and very identity... than solely over the conditions of labor. Second, specifically in those societies in which the mode of production is highly developed, the stability and legitimacy of society resides not in justifying or concealing the continuing degradation of labor, but in those societies' ability to create and satisfy ever increasing and diverse needs.33

Industrialization has brought about new productive capabilities and a "mass consumer society" eager to better consumers' standards of life through possession of material goods. The socialization of individuals into a consumer society depends on the creation of expectations based on the symbolic properties of goods (these goods are presented as socially and personally significant) and on the ability of goods to produce
feelings of contentment and satisfaction. While the Marxist position on the creation of false needs has been rejected by many contemporary approaches to the effects of advertising in consumer culture, mass-media based advertising can and must be acknowledged as the communication through which market-based expectations are presented. As Kline and Leiss suggest:

...market-based expectations are a function of the symbolic properties of goods, and that these symbolic properties... are more readily observable in media advertising than in other areas. 34

The analytic focus on the external consequences of advertising in advanced capitalist societies should begin first with an empirical data base in the symbolic offerings of products in consumer society, and explain the organization of meaning in advertising messages -- the most direct communication between producers and consumers, other than money on the counter, that is.

1.5 The Symbolic Nature of Goods: a Marxist Interpretation

The cultural perspective of Raymond Williams attempts to verify the Marxist claims of the external consequences of advertising in a historical analysis of its effects and a more internal analysis of how advertisements give goods symbolic values and meanings that are then practiced in real cultural activity. Williams offers a perspective/methodology with which he establishes conceptual definitions of rationality and utilitarian value in advertising messages. He maintains that
goods are presented in consumer society in the forms of irrational symbols. It is possible to set apart this "false symbolism" from the utilitarian values of goods in advertising and in the broader spheres of consumer cultural values in general:

If we were sensibly materialist, in that part of our living in which we use things, we should find most advertising to be of inane irrelevance. Beer would be enough for us, without the additional promise that in drinking it we show ourselves to be manly, young a heart, or neighbourly. A washing machine would be a useful machine to wash clothes, rather than an indication that we are forwardlooking or an object of envy to our neighbours.35

Rather than being communicated to consumers in rational references of product utility characteristics, the messages about goods are organized in "a cultural pattern in which objects are not enough but must be validated, if only in fantasy, by association with social and personal meanings which in a different cultural pattern might be more directly available". 36 Williams moves away from an economic analysis to describe instead a cultural symbolism of "magical inducements and satisfactions" which resemble in function the magical systems of simpler societies. As well, from a different social theoretical perspective, Kline and Leiss have observed that backgrounds, settings and user-presentations used in the symbolization of goods reflect lifestyle behavioural models and values that previously had been shaped by the institutions of religion and kinship relations. Rather than simply provide information of product use, advertising's market-based lifestyle
models have become an important component of the dominant socialization patterns of consumer society. The consumer purchases, in essence, images/values (i.e., social respect, discrimination, health, beauty, success, etc.,) that signify objects in what often seems an ambiguous or arbitrary symbolic association with the products' real uses and satisfactions.

In his later work, *The Sociology of Culture*, Williams corrects the Marxist one-way deterministic account of ideology assumed in the mass society/culture analysis of advertising. In his critique of the sense of ideology employed in perspectives, such as that of Marcuse, Williams states:

General ideologies in their full depth and elaboration have indeed to be seen as among the most remarkable forms of collective cultural production. But then it is precisely because all significant ideologies are indeed this deep and elaborated that the concept cannot be abstracted as some kind of 'informing spirit', at the roots of all cultural production. To say that all cultural practice is 'ideological' need mean no more than that (as in other current uses) all practice is signifying.... But it is very different from describing all cultural production as 'ideology', or as 'directed by ideology', because what is then omitted, as in idealist uses of 'culture', is the set of complex real processes by which a 'culture' or an 'ideology' is itself produced.  

The ideological effect of cultural production, as explained by mass manipulation perspectives, must be reworked in order to empirically investigate the mediation of cultural forms through which this effect is communicated. To simply infer that all cultural production in consumer culture is a mirror image of the systemic logic manufactured by the capitalist system of production and alienation, ignores the actual signifying
processes and forms through which an ideology or ideologies are
effected and realized.

Williams, Stuart Hall, and other members of the Birmingham
School of Cultural Studies Group have concentrated on the
problems ideologies in practice and relations of social and
cultural formations by regarding the level of ideological
practice with more descriptive, somewhat ethnographic,
considerations -- culture is a whole way of life and not simply
a way of "coping with capitalism". The theoretical Marxist model
which this group has adapted for cultural studies of the media,
the "language" of cultures, and urban life, does not suggest
that cultural practice (production and consumption) is merely a
reflection of the capitalist system of production. This group
believes that institutions of cultural production and cultural
practice itself have some degree of effectivity on social
consciousness. With respect to the changing relations of
advertising roles and meanings in consumer culture, social
consciousness has become effected by communication-based
interpretation redefining these relational causes in what Hall
terms the "effectivity of the superstructures". Their approach
suggests the ideas circulated in cultural practice and through
the institutions of cultural producers are capable of having
significances of their own construction in the superstructure.
The fact that that meaning is a product of communication within
a culture tends to deny the Marxist social determination of
consciousness position. For the study of advertising, this
position offers a uniquely communication-based conceptualization of who is sending which messages and how they are made sense of by the receiving audience. This position shall be returned to briefly in the introduction of the Marxist approach to semiotic analysis of advertising.

1.6 The Symbolic Nature of Goods: Anthropological

The anthropological perspective views the symbolic nature of goods to be less a product of the economic system alone, but rather more closely tied to the essence of cultural expression and cultural practice itself. This approach is less critical of the process of commodity symbolization than that of the Marxists and its descriptive nature is best suited toward discussing current consumer trends within a cultural relativist framework. Symbols enter into all areas of social life: economic life which concerns material need or advantage (marketplace social definitions of commodities), as well as, those areas more commonly viewed as purely symbolic such as rituals, emulative social behaviours, and value systems practiced by consumers.

Drawing from the cultural descriptions of primitive and modern societies, economic anthropology indicates that all utilities are symbolic and structured in patterns relevant and functional in social organization. More importantly, anthropology in the study of consumer behaviour can study interpersonal comparisons and non-market sources of satisfaction
in cultures within broad ethnographic and structuralist models of observed cultural behaviours. It is out of such a broad descriptive methodology that the Marxist concept of utility (see section on Williams and false symbolism) or use is cast into a new light. Employing the anthropological concept of culture (a practical system of values and symbols in practice), Marshall Sahlins writes:

From such (cultural) understanding it would follow that all utilities are symbolic. Insofar as "utility" is the concept of "need" appropriate to a certain cultural order, it must include a representation, by way of concrete properties of the object, of the differential relations between persons - as contrasts of color, line or fabric between women's clothes and men's signify the cultural valuation of the sexes. The "system of needs" must always be relative, not accountable as such by physical necessity, hence symbolic by definition.

Sahlins emphasizes the "symbolic constitution of utility" and the necessary signification of the use value of goods within the broader determinations of cultural process and human needing. The "rational" approach of Williams and his view of the "irrationalism" of symbolic values placed on goods is inconsistent with what anthropologists know to be the symbolic process of trading cultures, which as structured systems operate within their own rational logics (both contemporary and primitive).

The cultural sense of "use", from the consumer society analysis of Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood, and Sahlins, is summarized by sociologist Michael Schudson:

For Douglas, goods are meaningful before they are useful. Indeed one may argue that 'use' is simply a culturally-imposed meaning that goods take on in
bourgeois societies. 'Use' itself is a cultural category that holds a prominence in modern industrial societies it has nowhere else (Sahlins: 1976)\textsuperscript{42}

In modern industrial societies different areas of social life are more formally ranked and closed off (i.e.: production/consumption; economic/religious). The functions of goods in consumer societies appear more sharply visible and separated in relation to the negotiation of other social relations. There exists a dual social dimension to consumption and the use of goods which extends beyond the sense of the material use value suggested by the Marxist perspective. This dual sense exists in the cultural and symbolic function and practice of consumption and communicating about goods in society.

The need to differentiate ourselves as members of particular groups in our cultural/leisure/consumptive lives has been explained earlier as falsely answered by the imaginary significations of people's social relationship with their goods in advertising (both the position of Williams and the Marxist analyst of advertising iconography, Judith Williamson). The critique of the symbolization of goods with people, and people with goods, based on the Marxist production society model, selectively isolates and abstracts the economic relations of the real social nature of goods (e.g., relations of production [conscripted labor] and profit motives guiding the marketing and communication of goods to the consumer mass society) from real cultural practices of consuming and conceptualizing of goods in leisure activities. In this way, the Marxist theoretical
approach forces a definition of true relations to be those of the economic base and symbolic relations between the differences of goods in consumer culture and their resulting social values to be false.

In opposition to this limited perspective anthropology claims an essential cultural and symbolic dimension to human needing. Products of the marketplace communicate to others the particular social identity the particular consumer has decided to maintain. Clifford Geertz has made it clear that, "homo sapiens, as a species, was a cultural animal before being physically fully formed". Even though social inclusion is not so much a life and death matter today, it is still a strong human need, perhaps stronger than some absolute needs. The commodity system and consumer behaviours in this system provide a communication framework in which the purchase and display of goods make visible the consumer's social and cultural preferences in belonging to particular consuming communities defined around product images. The commodity system takes on a quasi-autonomous and internally integrated character as a system of meaning. Douglas and Isherwood go as far as to state the primary function of goods as "communicators":

Instead of supposing that goods are primarily needed for subsistence and competitive display, let us assume that they are needed for making visible and stable the categories of culture. It is standard ethnographic practice to assume that all material possessions carry social meaning and to concentrate a main part of cultural analysis upon their use as communicators.*

Goods then, are symbolic in that they display our assumed place
and cultural preferences in society. Consumption entails not only the possession of commodity-objects, but also the possession of meaning and material communicators (totems in effect). Commodities are messages directed at other social members to signify differences or likenesses to these other consumers' displayed commodity/cultural positioning. Through consumption objects are symbolically imprinted with social attributes in whose combination a consistent identity of the consumer may emerge (defined by advertising imagery and mediated by consumer group behaviours in cultural enjoyment of goods).

At a more general level, goods express and confirm the categories of culture in their presentation and exchange by performing a ritual function. Ritual functions in outlining and maintaining through regular experience social meanings. Shared meaning and the memory of experience common to a particular cultural group are celebrated and guarded through consumptive and, therefore, symbolic processes (i.e., a wide variety of clothes reflect well defined association with trend and style). Douglas and Isherwood elaborate:

...rituals serve to contain the drift of meaning.... Goods, in this perspective, are ritual adjuncts: consumption is a ritual process whose primary function is to make sense of the inchoate flux of events. 

The status of goods as symbols within a process of communication and ritual presents a summation of social relations implicit in a given culture. Through goods are negotiated a sharing of cultural values, the establishment of social categories and a set of social relations. The accounts of
Duesenberry and Rainwater, discussed in the earlier section on socio-economic theories, and Douglas and Isherwood here, examine general aspects of cultural practice and social structure as a determining source of the visible manifestations of consumer society. Michael Schudson suggests that:

Since they intelligently discuss consumerism without reference to advertising, they make it unlikely that we can discover in advertising a devil, first cause, or prime mover of the consumer society. *6

These theorists argue, against the neo-liberal and Marxist approaches, that consumer demand and patterns of this demand are generated by the consumer's cultural relativistic and social needs of group inclusion. Schudson admits that advertising makes popular business ideologies and "is part of a 'cultural apparatus', as Ewen says, just like films, books, television talk shows, hotel lobby furnishings, and all the other cultural elements that set standards and create common assumptions about how people live and should live". *7 Schudson's sociological and cultural position on advertising maintains that advertising's aim is not to manipulate but to market to consumers. The symbolic process in ad creation is only one stage in the cultural system of communication of goods. Marketing plays a vital role in the creation of meaning and consumptive practices in the marketplace:

It is also true that marketers view advertising, at least for some categories of goods, as part of the product rather than an announcement for the product. With 'image' products, consumers want not only the physical thing but its 'image', the 'statement' the product makes about the user. Advertising helps construct the product meaning. *8
The marketing concept, then, as a set of institutions, as a business strategy, and as a social ideology deserves the attention of social critics and social scientists.*

Before advertising communicates certain social and personal meanings that consumers come to regard certain products in, marketers decide what products to produce, what consumers will purchase them and what meanings to give these products through advertising. This more expanded explanation of the social role of advertising and marketing shall be returned to in Chapter Two. Within the anthropological and more symbolic level of analysis, anthropologist Grant McCracken and Richard Pollay extend the anthropology of Douglas and Isherwood to include advertising as a critical factor in the creation of meaning in consumer culture:

What is true of goods must also be true of advertising. For if goods have a symbolic aspect it is largely because advertising gives them one.50

From an anthropological point of view, advertising is, among other things, an attempt to invest products with meaning. It seeks to give these products new characteristics. By this process of metamorphosis a bar of soap (originally a mixture of goat tallow and ash, and hardly more exalted in composition today) becomes a communicator. It is made a sign of elegance, mothers' solicitude, or an Irish spring. Advertising makes goods the loci of our ideas, beliefs and values.51

Advertising, it is suggested here, generates symbolic meaning -- it is where goods receive their meaning, for the most part, in consumer society. Goods "do not spring from the factory fully possessed of their ability to communicate",52 but are endowed with meaningful properties through depiction in advertising.
McCracken and Pollay further suggest that "advertising not only informs, it also constitutes". This concept explicitly calls up a determining effect or consequence from the symbolic life of ads and outlines the process which could be an integral part of Sahlin's claim that the symbolic code "works as an open set, responsive to events which it both orchestrates and assimilates to produce expanded versions of itself". Kline and Leiss lend a more technical description which in many ways incorporates the positions of Schudson and McCracken and Pollay in the following passage:

Through careful design, the brand's image could be based upon the analysis of the "decoding" or "interpretive" predilections of the consumer. It is the dimensions of interpretation that are controlled by the advertiser through this process of market research, in which he attempts to refine the symbolic dimensions of his products to suit various segments of the market.

Advertisers are capable of working the symbolic fabric of consumer culture in a 'one size fits all' strategy of realizing the broader system of cultural significance and developing brand images for mass markets. As well, the advertisers and marketers can conceptualize and direct meaning to certain groups of consumers. This directing and constituting tendency of advertising does not necessarily require us to view advertising symbols as false reflections of culture and relations in society. Kline makes clear the difference of this anthropological approach to advertising:

If the organization of consumption has its roots in a cultural unity, then advertising as a second level discourse on consumption expresses and gives form to the social nexus of goods, not merely by reflecting a process
of social domination through persuasion, but rather as a code or discourse through which the commodity system is embedded in the broader system of cultural significance.56

Kline introduces here the concept of advertising from a different perspective of its social role in communication. Rather than look at it as a complex array of social causes and effects, the notion of advertising contents operating through the forms of codes or discourses communicated in consumer culture suggests a discovery of the social significance of advertising by looking from inside the structured workings of ad messages outwards to social values and expression systems (codes) from which they take their meaning. This internal investigation of significance in material ad message forms requires a methodology capable of explicating the rules which govern the connection of "meaningful" elements in ads and the social aspect (sharing of a meaning between members of social group) of how these elements can mean (can refer through cognitive processes to real objects or ideas in the real social world of the group). Semiotics provides such a methodology and is used in collaboration with either the Marxist or anthropological (sometimes both) external analysis of advertising as social communication.
1.7 Semiotic Analyses of the Advertising Discourse

Stuart Hall introduces the analogy of language in an explanation of how things mean for people in culturally constructed/structured contexts of a social sharing of communication conventions:

The production of various kinds of social knowledge takes place through the instrumentality of thinking, conceptualization and symbolization. It operates primarily and principally through language - that set of objective signs and discourses which materially embody the processes of thought and mediate the communication of thought in society. Language is, as Saussure insisted, fundamentally social. The individual can only think and speak by first situating himself within the language system. That system is socially constructed and sustained: it cannot be elaborated from the individual speaker alone.57

Semiotics58 or the science of signs provides a methodology through which cultural symbols may be related back to the socially shared rules and conventions of one "linguistic" and cultural community out of which these symbols are generated. All social life and all aspects of social practice are analyzed by this methodology as a system of signs arranged by codes59 and articulated through various discourses producing objective texts/objects (including non-linguistic semiotic processes: a ritual, a film, a comic strip, a message about a product). Language reflects the nature of social relations in which it operates, the way that the individuals who use it are organized together, and the social and material circumstances in which it is used. From the revolutionary redefinition of cognitive processes operating in the recognition and transmittance of
words and sentences, Saussure suggested that the study of language (systems of signs) should involve an appreciation of the practical and social conventions governing its structure and shared practice. The major unit in the articulation of language is the sign. Signs are composed of the singular material object which signifies something (the signifier), and the significant meaning as a mental concept of the object perceived (the signified). Yet, there is more to the sign than the fact that it is a social phenomenon and that it is a perceived material form. As Hall tells us:

There is no such transparent, one-to-one relationship between sign, the thing to which it refers, and what that thing 'means'. Signs communicate meaning because the way they are internally organized together within a specific language system or set of codes, articulates the way things are related together in the objective social world.\(^6\)

Material objects, events and relations (signifiers) do not have a necessary or natural meaning which simply become transposed, as signs, into a language system or set of codes. Material things are differently ordered to take on meaning within different language and cultural discourses.\(^6\) At the simple analytic level of literal or denotative meaning in the language system of English, the word "snow" may appear as an arbitrary designation in language of a cold white substance. Eskimo society however, have several different terms/signs in contrast to our one term/sign because of the importance and use of this substance in their physical involvement with their environment. The material object snow has a different relative
and cultural importance in Eskimo society. In the signification of complex social relations, such as in the spheres of capitalist productive and consumptive activity, signs perform an ideological function. Language does not naturally 'have a meaning' for such social relations but rather allows these things to 'mean'. It is through the social practice of signification that certain relationships of the 'real world' take on, through this shared signification and resignification by the members of society, cultural and ideological representations. In explaining the ideological 'effect' of language systems in the modern advanced capitalist context of social organization, Hall notes that the use of language will therefore reflect the class structuring of capitalist social relations. It will be dependent on the nature of the social relations in which it is embedded, the manner in which its users are socially organized together, the social and material contexts in which it is employed.62

From this Marxist explanation of language as semiotic, Hall suggests that people realize their social positions through language which signifies and ideologically represents a set of imaginary lived relations as people's real lived relations. In this cultural model for language use, all signs, internally organized by a language system (i.e., English, photography, advertising), are subject to the ideological 'effect' of the dominant interests of the social system which has produced these signs. The 'work' of cultural signification to gain the ideological 'effect' is said to take place in the nature of the sign and the organization of signs in connotation. Connotation
is a level of semiotic processes of signs, and comes about when
the subject refers to his own stored cultural knowledge in
providing conceptual values (social and psychological) for the
sign-objects (things) perceived in message communication.
Connotative codes allow a sign to refer to general areas of
social meaning, or, and as Hall explains, connotative codes
"are the means by which the widely distributed forms of social
knowledge, social practices, the taken-for-granted knowledge
which society's members possess of its institutions, beliefs
ideas and legitimations are 'brought within the horizon' of
language and culture". They are the maps of meaning of a
culture and as Roland Barthes similarly argues:

The signifiers of connotation... are made up of signs
(signifiers and signified united of the denoted
system).... As for the signified of connotation, its
character is at once global and diffuse; it is, if you
like, a fragment of ideology.... These signifieds have a
very close communication with culture, knowledge,
history, and it is through them... that the
environmental world invades the system.

Connotative readings are engaged in by the subject/audience
beyond the level of denotative recognition of the signifier and
are motivated into action by the cultural generation and
recognition of meaning conventions and codes. The subject takes
meaning from this interplay of denotative and connotative levels
by possessing knowledge of the cultural codes without which
connoted signification is impossible. The signifiers of
connotative signs are composed of denotatively signified signs
(signifiers and signifieds to complete the sign). In an example,
a rose signifies denotatively the sign of a kind of flower. Yet
that signified rose (a denotative sign) may become the signifier (vehicle) of the signified love or passion at the level of connotative cultural symbolic codes (sign operates in a system of learned conventionalized object-concept relations within the discourse of signifiers of romance). This appropriation of the signified rose to bring out a second connoted meaning draws on the subject's cultural knowledge. This knowledge is based on the practiced recognition of the cultural code through which passion/love is symbolically represented.

Marxist and semiotic approaches have used this discussion of second level connotational codes to explain the 'ideological effect of advertising' messages in which "we are placed in reconstructed and false relationships to real phenomena". Stephen Kline describes this methodology for the study of advertising:

Here the cultural unity found in the discourse of advertising reflects the fusion of the commodity code with ideological forms of capitalism. Discourse and language processes rather than persuasive manipulation of the individual psyches form the basis of the domination effect. Language fixes the subjects within the conscious and unconscious structure of the discourse, and constrains the possibilities on the creation of meaning within that code.

Roland Barthes and Judith Williamson have both employed the semiotic/semiological methodology in studies suggesting a domination 'effected' by the mythical language processes of advertising messages in the manner Kline outlines above. Both semioticians argue that advertising provides a meta-structure in which the advertisement's component denotative signs 'point to'
connotational signified meaning in referent 'myth' systems, operant as language systems and cultural codes outside of the ad structure. Referent systems represent external 'reality' referred to by the arrangements and contents of signs in advertisements. These mythical or referent systems operate in fundamentally the same ways as language. 67

Barthes develops his denotation/connotation distinction in explaining how the subject/reader uses culturally coded knowledge in bringing together the signifiers and signifieds of meaningful elements in ads. Denotative signification can be iconic (visual image resembles in form a thing in the real world [a dog/a photo of a dog], it is not an arbitrary coded representation apparently) and carries no deep cultural meaning (except in the anthropological sense that all man-made objects are culturally significant). Confined for analysis sake at the level of denotation, signs are not operating in drawing in more subtle cultural meaning through the reader's knowledge for the collective ideological effect of the ad messages collective sign meaning. However, at the level of analysis of connotation, denotative signs operate as second level signifiers (in connotation) called connotators in coded iconic or visual symbolic signification. This second level of the connotation of image signs relies on pre-existing bodies of culturally learned knowledge. The relationship between the signifier and the signified of these second level signs, while using as their signifiers the non-coded iconic signs, is arbitrary. The
signifier (denotative sign; thing and concept) at this connotational level is related to the signified by contract or convention, thus forming a symbolic relationship. The same sign image in an advertisement may appear literally non-coded (by analogy) and denoted, or, at the second level of the symbolic cultural object concept, connoted. It is the inevitable fusion of the two levels by the subject/reader in assuming only that the ad message is communicated on the denotative, or "message without a code" level, that permits the symbolic message to be 'naturalized' into the ad structure of the product sign system. Barthes comments:

... the denoted image naturalizes the symbolic message, it innocents the semantic artifice of connotation, which is extremely dense, especially in advertising. 68

The ad structure is organized in a non-linear syntagmatic relation of denotative signs which function as signifiers of ideological systems existing outside of the ad and renders them as signifiers of the ad structure. In Barthes' example, the denotative sign-images of a Panzani Pasta ad are naturalized by syntagmatic organization in the ad structure. For instance, the vegetables and colors of greens and yellows on a red background seem naturally presented within the photograph. Yet, as signifiers of cultural knowledge the subject/reader brings into the structure, these connotators produce, from their positioning in the ad as a connected chain of sign elements, the signified Italy or "Italianness". The combination of signs which connote Italian nationality operate, as well, outside of the ad
structure itself and is in paradigmatic relation in a set of signs that run through the oppositions of "Frenchness", "Germanness", "Spanishness", and other country-"nesses" whose values are culturally articulated within the stereotyping and emblematic codes of national identities. To start with the connotators in the ad discourse and work back to the externally coded systems out which they acquire their meaning (as signs in a system of differences) would entail a massive semiotic inventory and would suggest to Barthes that:

...the same signified (connotators) are to be found in the written press, the image and actor's gestures (which is why semiology can only be conceived in a so to speak total framework). This common domain of the signified of connotation is that of ideology, which cannot but be single for a given society and history, no matter what signifiers of connotation it may use. 69

This sameness or "common domain" is the essence of what Kline earlier referred to as the "cultural unity found in the discourse of advertising". 70 While the domain of connotative signifieds is ideological, the signifiers on the level of connotation constitute the ad image's rhetoric. 71 Barthes argues that it is within the rhetoric of the whole ad image as a syntagmatic flow of denoted iconic signs of the text that scattered, discontinuous connotators of external ideological systems are reworked in the ad structure. The subject/reader is unconscious of this naturalizing process in which the icons become symbols of ideological systems that signify complete areas of meaning to the product. The myth of advertising images is therefore based on the concept of photographic naturalness.
The iconic nature of the photograph creates the illusion for the subject/reader that 'what is there is all there is' while at the symbolic level of the message the individual is directed into using complete ideological systems, preconceived in the signification and resignification of more general cultural practice.

Judith Williamson, in a later study of the signifying processes in ad messages, utilizes most of Barthes' fundamental assumptions of sign functions and reference, denotation/connotation, language systems and their ideological determinations. As well, She maintains that in advertising systems of meaning pre-existent to the message intersect with and are transferred into the formation of actual signifying elements of the ad structure (taken as a 'meaningful whole'). The term Williamson uses where Barthes employed 'syntagmatic relations and paradigmatic relations of signs' within the advertising text, is 'adwork'. Williamson, in a manner similar to Barthes, argues that ads have their 'ideological effect' in the apparent combination of the product sign (usually a visual representation of the commodity being advertised) with other denotative signs both contained within the borders of the ad as a meaningful whole. However, the denotative signs that lend their meaning to the product sign have a dual life in the sense that they connote deeper cultural meanings and allow the product sign to be related to complete meaning systems external to the discourse of commodity information and the ad message itself (it
is the subject/reader who is the link between these external system meanings and the collective sign meaning of the ads composite sign message). Her structuralist theory of ideology, like Barthes', evolves around the concept of "pre-existing bodies of knowledge [permitting] reference to take the place of description, in ads". Anthropological and structural psycho-analytic perspectives are borrowed to deal with how the subject/reader is appealed to and conceptualized within the limiting structure of the ad text through adwork. It is through this structure that meaning in ads can attach personal and social significance to goods in easily recognized and practiced recognitions. Williamson tells us that:

Advertisements must take into account not only the inherent qualities and attributes of the products they are trying to sell, but also the way in which they can make those properties mean something to us....
Advertisements are selling us something beside consumer goods; in providing us with a structure in which we, and those goods are interchangeable, they are selling us ourselves.

Ads do not simply manipulate the subject/reader through a rhetoric of objects (goods), but rather, provide meaning structures through which statements of the product become statements depicting the social and psychological values and reflections of the consumer as the one who has entered the role of observer/participant of the ad's meaning. In addressing us ads presuppose certain of our social and personal characteristics. We are invited to 'fill in' the connections between qualities and products; between objects and ourselves. Ads create expectations in us of possessing certain positive and
emotional characteristics, which will be ours once the product is purchased. A desirable self-image or social association is signified as the 'exchange value' of the product something (someone or someplace) we value is transferred to the product giving equal value to both (i.e., 'Happiness is a cigar named Hamlet'). Williamson refers to this process of meaning transfer between signs as "currency" - what is being exchanged between people and goods. As well, the ad does not evoke feelings directly, but evokes the idea of a feeling which as a sign 'points to' the product meaning. Product and the emotional referent, through repetition, become interchangeable as signifier/signified (what means and what is meant). A "finished connection" is established in which the referent sign is no longer necessary and the product simply has the signified 'happiness'. The concept of the referent is crucial to Williamson's work throughout and is defined earlier in her analysis of processes of adwork:

Saussure says that with the word H-O-R-S-E where the concept of horse is what is signified, the referent is what kicks you. Thus the referent always means the actual thing in the real world, to which a word or concept points. (However, the external 'reality' referred to by the collection of signs in an advertisement is itself a mythological system, another set of signs. These mythologies I call Referent Systems). 7*

The subject/reader of the ad is drawn in or "appelled" to the linking of the product system and referent system by his own knowledge and recognition of the the referent turned connotator. The referent as sign (denotative, connotative signifier) can only mean if it has someone to 'mean to'. It must have meaning for
the subject and his belief systems. Reciprocally, the referent as sign can only have meaning through repeated use by the subject/reader. Williamson states that:

It is in the dialectic between the 'for' and the 'by' that ideology maintains its momentum. 75

Ideology is inextricably tied to the signification process. It exists on the occasion that we reproduce it, yet depends on the subject/reader's anterior knowledge of it. Williamson defines ideology as existing in the subtle false assumptions which are understood only as 'real' by the subject/reader and 'need not be questioned'.

In the sense of 'speech' and language, ads are produced by someone but need not speak their 'speech'. Ads, in effect, leave a gap where the speaker should be. The subject/reader does not have the opportunity, in most ad texts, to form an opinion or an attitude towards the subject who has constructed the ad message because the subject/reader functions in the ad message as "both listener and speaker, subject and object". 76 This is a vital characteristic of the rhetorical approach of ad message -- in what is described later in Chapter Two as the imperative function of the ad message, the way ads refer to or conceptualize the subject/reader (in example, a generalized 'you' or a confidential 'you' ['this is your conscience speaking']) suggests how meaning will be taken by the addressee. The subject/reader, the target of the persuasive message, must, as well, be able to 'point to' a referent sign in the more manifest forms of the message and come up with the appropriate
cultural significance which is then transferred to the product sign. In a complex relation of how the ad addresses us and what it addresses us with, the subject/reader very seldom feels he is being spoken to by the advertiser as a real social message source and instead the addressee is caught up in the active participation of making meaning from signs that rely on the more subtle cultural significances that 'point away' from the message system of advertising and 'point to' external referent systems.

In Williamson's most extensive articulation of a referent system, in a series of perfume ads for Chanel, Catherine Deneuve's face is represented in an ad to metaphorically signify a significance for a bottle of 'Chanel No.5'. What is signified is glamour and beauty because of the addressee's knowledge of the model's/actress' relation as a sign in the systems of film and fashion magazines. She is a symbol which means within these systems external to the ad structure. It is the repeated sign connection of Deneuve's face with the product sign that assumes for the reader an 'objectiveness' or a 'taken-for-grantedness' in product associations. The subject makes the transfer of meaning, not through any logical association of thing and person, but through an "ideological", irrational "mental leap" from the ad system to the referent as it exists as a sign in the other media referent systems. In a photograph of the product by itself, which is the complete layout of another ad following in the series of Chanel ads, the intermediary referent sign of Deneuve is omitted from the visual elements of that ad.
cultural knowledge and experience in reading the subject has of the other ads and secondarily, of the external referent systems of film and fashion in magazine media link the signified of the missing sign Deneuve with the product. This linking of product and referent - of the meta-structure of the ad calling upon the addressee to fill in a frozen meaning of Deneuve as a symbol of glamour (myth) - implicates in the communication earlier associations of the personality-referent that have given Chanel meaning in the system of advertising. Williamson comments on this process:

...it is individual people, real people, who are the connecting link here: they, we, clearly exist in time and space, in a changing world, but also provide the arena - unconscious - for the ideological structure of ideas. This only exists in so far as it exists inside our heads. It is therefore through us that mythical structures partake of historicity."

All the referent systems available to advertising seem central to Williamson's study of ideology since they all involve relations of transformation - the subject/reader is situated in reconstructed and false relationships to real phenomena. While advertising cannot create or invent systems (other than itself in self-reference), as Williamson demonstrates, they can appropriate meaning (referent signs) from them and reconstruct this meaning in the new context of adwork structures. For Williamson, the reconstitution of meaning out of its real or original context and the creation of false meaning inserted by advertisers ideologically signifies the system of the "natural" in cultural expression (not to be confused with Barthes'
comes to be filled with products that we are urged to buy, and this means that because the product has been made to symbolize nature, we are always trying to buy and attain the natural". Other referent systems of external knowledge, plus those dealt with by Barthes (i.e., of nationalities), operate in relational processes that display some similarity with the form and structure relations of language systems and are appropriated in the speech or individual communications of single ads. Williamson believes that it is only by referring back to the system of differences that the sign can function: it is hollow of meaning in itself, its signified is only a distinction rather than a 'content'. Only the form and structure of the referent system are appropriated by the advertisement system; it is the relationship and distinction between parts themselves, that make an already-structured external system so valuable to advertising. The links made between elements from a referent system and products arise from their inherent qualities.

The external, mythological system of fashion and film is a system of differences among its collection of signs (personalities). Margaux Hemingway and Catherine Deneuve, in Williamson's examples, have values as connoted signifieds in the advertising of the products of 'Babe' and 'Chanel No.5' perfumes, respectively, because they represent concepts, not positively established by factual identification, but negatively arrived at by their sign relations with each other and other terms of the fashion and film systems. There are no natural boundaries between products advertised, but only differences
among and within referent systems. 'Chanel No. 5' and 'Babe' are differentiated by different images created out of the different values Deneuve and Hemingway have in the systems of fashion and films. Deneuve represents French 'chicness' and flawless beauty, while Hemingway has the value of representing novelty, youth and 'tomboy style'. These values are pre-existent to their use as referent signifieds in ad messages. These distinctions of a mythological system have been used to differentiate products in a manner which Williamson believes is the reverse of the structural anthropological concept of "totemism". Instead of a symbol (totem object) differentiating people, it is people (Hemingway and Deneuve) which are being used to differentiate objects (perfume products). However, the product then gives meaning back to us as a new group of consumers of it. Products in advertisements are sometimes made to say something about their buyers (i.e., "Pepsi People", "Marlboro man") in an adjectival sense. As Williamson goes on to suggest:

We are thus created not only as subjects, but as particular kinds of subjects, by products in advertisements.

The product becomes a signifier of difference. 'Chanel' users are suggested by the systemic communication of the advertising discourse to be a different social group than those who use 'Babe'. 'Michelob' drinkers are not likely to be rubbing shoulders with 'Miller' drinkers. These differences first signified in popular referent systems of famous persons or lifestyle stereo-types are used in the ad structure to create
the differences among products which then create the differences among its users both in the ad and in the broader display of consumer cultural practices. Williamson sees a fundamental similarity between the notion that what people buy differentiates them, and Claude Levi-Strauss' notion that different natural objects (i.e., animal species) differentiate different groups of people in primitive societies. Levi-Strauss calls this relationship totemism:

... on the one hand there are animals which differ from each other... and the other hand there are men... who also differ from each other (in that they are distributed among different segments of society, each occupying a particular position in the social structure). The resemblance presupposed by so-called totemic representations is between these two systems of differences.\(^{82}\)

The term totemism covers relations, posed ideologically, between two series, one natural, the other cultural.\(^{83}\)

Levi-Strauss makes clear the processes of a society's ideological structure in that things taken from the natural world become the systematized emblems around which can be created differences in the social system of men. This cultural process is motivated by the need to legitimate divisions in society and provide a common identity to the members of each division based on the unquestionable forms of the system of nature (i.e., system of animals as totemic definition of a group in opposition to other groups). In advertising, the product referent that create these totemic groups are not from the system of nature, yet, the differences of the product/referent systems are presented as oppositions in a 'naturalized' common
use (Barthes sense of naturalization). Thus there exist two
types of false differences: those differentiating products and
those separating and defining people into imaginary social
groups. Williamson states:

We, as people, have thus been made to create the
differences between products, which then differentiate us; but it is also people who have actually made the
products.... Advertisements obscure and avoid the real
issues of society, those relating to work: to jobs, and
wages and who works for whom.... The basic issues in the
present state of society, which do concern money and how
it is earned, are sublimated into 'meanings', 'images',
'lifestyles', to be bought with products, not with
money.

The mythological systems out of which advertising borrows
different meaning to signify products are not based on "real"
social relationships. The images of lifestyle which
differentiate consumers are not based on true economic
differences in the system of social classes. Advertising refers
only to consumption and our identities as possessors of
products. Products have come to speak for us and given us
'imaginary' social positions which totally disregards the 'real'
social relations that have gone into their creation in the first
place (relations of production. In the passage above, Williamson
pays lip service to the Marxist formulation of the external
consequences and self-perpetuating processes of social
capitalist ideology current in the internal and borrowed meaning
forms of adwork. Ads borrow and reconstitute meaning from other
areas of cultural production and activity. However, if these
borrowed systems differ in their cultural contents, these
differences are not based on any truthful reflection of the
class differences among groups of consumers in the marketplace, but rather displays breaks created by the divisions of lifestyle, age, media (referent system preference), and brand allegiance (e.g., 'Marlboro men'). Williamson's discussion of the 'ideological' work that the ad structure invites the subject/reader to participate in is not specific in its declaration of which ideas (referents, referent systems) are permitted passage into the discourse around commodities and which ideas (social reflections, ways of presented goods) are omitted in the capitalist program of social alienation. If alienation is the product of certain cultural forms being practiced in dominance within advertising, saying that ads must always succumb to the unconscious association processes of adwork does little to specifically isolate how what is said in ads causes a certain set of social relations. Williamson does not really explain what is so irrational about the unconscious "leap" the subject/reader supposedly performs in decoding ads. Similarly, Kline attacks this semiotic perspective when he explains that:

... the ideological position locates [the signification of goods] more directly in the discursive specificities of advanced capitalism.... ideological analysis which sees advertising as a crucial difference in the cultural practice of consumer society, has failed to show how the particular current set of social relations and systems of signification result from the commodity form imposed by the advertising discourse; the determinism of ideology remains a matter of theoretical faith in the abstractions of commodity exchange, rather than a result of careful historical analysis of cultural development of the consumer mentality.86
To study the way that products are depicted in advertising does not magically provide evidence of what consumers actually 'get' from this meaning (sometimes based on abstract or unreal associations) and how they behave in their social and even, to some extent, their consumptive behaviours. Marxist, semiotic analyses of advertising do not account for their own claim of the distortion of meaning and how it reflects real social relations.

It must be recalled that "a sign is something which stands to somebody for something else, in some respect or capacity" -- it is fundamental to the way signs work that the signifier refers something to someone in order for meaning to occur. Ads are not carrying unconscious messages nor distorted reflections of one social reality, but instead are specific discourses to specific subject/readers who first recognize and then participate in connotative meaning borrowed from the referent systems used. Janice Winship tells us that as members of society, as differentiated subjects:

We all, so to speak, bring our own social positions with us to the reading of any discourse; and we are automatically "interpellated" as the subject(s) which the discourse constructs.

This analytic assumption is based on real group divisions of consumer society and consequent understanding of different consumer mentalities. Williamson's point about how products operate as totems for people is fundamentally correct at the level of adwork as effecting systemic oppositions through the referential function of total ad meanings. However, she goes on
to assume that all products are differentiated by referent signs and therefore perform parallel oppositions as those the referent performs in its external referent system. Does this mean that there are as many consumer groups/social identities created by these oppositions as there are brands of a product or similar mythological brand imagery referred to in clusterings over different product types (e.g., a lifestyle image taken from the fashion discourse and found in advertisements about cigarettes, beer, charge cards)? She can only maintain that the referred-to differentiated identities that products give to us are arbitrary and socially false:

Because of course, the 'totemic' groups existing around products must inevitably overlap, since we consume so many products; you cannot be a Gitanes man and a Benson and Hedges man, but you can be a Gitanes man and a Guinness man, and an Old Spice man and so on.... One group is differentiated from another only at the price of a sameness within. 89

Williamson and Barthes both refuse to conduct any type of inventory on the referent systems products gain meaning from. There is no attempt made to match referent signs/systems with collective reader/consumer mentalities or preferences, assuming of course that these latter ones vary. Williamson and Barthes limit their analyses by refusing to approach any type of sociological verification of different 'totemic' group behaviours in reading ads and in having some type of orderly predisposition in the knowledge of referent systems upon which ad messages so completely depend for their 'ideological' effects.
Semiotic analysis of advertising messages has not been solely informed by the Marxist critique of its social communicative role in contemporary capitalist society. As we have seen in Williamson's references to the work of Claude Levi-Strauss, a structuralist cultural (anthropological) orientation fits well the task of decoding the internal operations of advertisement presentational forms. The study of advertising from the anthropological perspective tends to examine the similarity between what is "micro-ecologically" signified in ads (how selected cultural scenes reveal indexically and symbolically deep cultural recognitions) and how this condensed display represents actual displays of cultural experience in everyday social life.

Erving Goffman, in *Gender Advertisements*, explains how gender displays in commercial advertising photographs assumes characteristic behavioural recognitions of men and women in the media and in the broader frames of social interaction. The situations photographed in ads are as "readable" as their original counterparts in real expressive exchanges. In the economic expresiveness of advertising symbolizations (every picture says a thousand words), what we are offered are:

idealized characters using ideal facilities to realize ideal ends - while, of course, micro-ecologically arranged to index ideal relationships.⁹⁰

The simplification, exaggeration and stereotyping which Goffman is referring to here in the discussion of advertising, is in fact not that different from the sense of ritualization that
Darwin used in Expression of Emotion in Man and Animals.\textsuperscript{91} From the ethological point of view, as a product of natural selection emotionally determined actions are formalized (into conventions of gesture) for more effective, readily readable expression of an individual social member's situation (rather than act out in full the gesture signals of, for instance, danger, in a condensed form of signal). What is often used for such a signal code is a form of "ritualization" of some portion of the referred-to situation or reaction to it. In a somewhat similar understanding as that established in the earlier semiotic approaches, ritual signs point to whole systems of knowledge (i.e., gender relations in society) from outside the ad frame (ad as a meaningful composition of sign relations) in lived experience. As social relations are infused with ceremonial or ritual displays, advertising presents a further condensation of social activity in a type of "hyper-ritual" process in signification (ritual of a ritual).\textsuperscript{92} In effect, what the individual is presented with by advertising is

an opportunity to face directly a representation, a somewhat iconic expression, a mock-up of what he is supposed to hold dear, a representation of the supposed ordering of his existence.\textsuperscript{93}

In this uncritical perspective Goffman sees advertisements as "hyper-ritualized" expressions of what already exists in cultural practice of men and women. Left untreated is the use of these exacting cultural profiles to project new meaning onto products. No effort is made to understand how this condensed signalling (referent in semiotic terms) operates in an ad's
constitutive processes and the creation of needs. The relationship between general ideological systems (referent systems) and the ad structure is explained without much reference to the system of products in consumer society.

Structural anthropology, which offered the concept of 'totemism' for use in the previous semiotic application by Williamson, provides another concept of "myth" for explaining the essential structural pattern out of which all ads are given meaning and have significance for consumers. Myths are culturally formed discourses in which a society refers to itself, reconstructing and displaying in a practiced (ritualized) form its basic assumptions, solving its root contradictions and celebrating its shared values.94 Advertising, as a reflector and director of the activities of consumer society, can be identified as a mythic system. There exists in this discourse a hidden structuring code from which the symbolized system of goods and cultural categories of consumption can be read.

Using a semiotic method very different from that of Barthes and Williamson, Varda Langholz Leymore suggests that advertising messages, like the myths of primitive societies (usually in ceremony and narrative discourses), provide fundamental anxiety-reducing solutions to the different problems and fears of human social existence in a particular cultural.95 These dilemmas are realized through the structuring capacities of receiving/understanding and sending/expressing, capacities
which are rooted deeply in the human mind's ability to structure signification. From this "Structuralist" perspective advertising is not a matter of borrowing from many culturally ideological systems (ways of expressing contents), but is based on one fundamental system of rules common to all languages (binary couplings in thought). Leymore's analysis reduces advertising, as a "total mythic system", to a series of common denominators (originating structure of six binary oppositions) composing basic thematic oppositions (e.g., 'life v.s. death', 'culture v.s. nature'). She maintains that in the competitive product markets brand advertisements define themselves by their opposition to other ads of the same product type using one of the basic thematic oppositions. In this sense advertising must be taken as a "system in toto" or one language for meaning to occur.

Unfortunately, this cultural reductionism subjugates any handling of the specific consumer contexts of the ad discourse to an all-encompassing, universal human experience in culture. Leymore's study of advertising, which borrows Levi-Strauss' formal methods, and his concept of the 'deep structures of the human mind', posits a notion of the unity of human experience in culture, and thereby, necessarily denies any specific reference to cultural group formations in consumer society or the differentiated cultural references that may be used to talk to them in advertising. This latter shortcoming is something of the kind that has made Levi-Straussian methodologies problematic for
the study of more complex societies. It cannot deal with real cultural differences of social formations nor can it deal with market societies. Pollay and Mc Cracken comment on advertising as "myth":

It must be recalled that the assumptions rehearsed by advertising are not shared by all (Andren et al. 1978:115). Still more obviously advertising does not work to everyone's advantage in the same degree. It must also be noted that there is an ostensive purpose to the advertisement that myth does not share: the successful marketing of goods. In short advertising is purposeful, accountable and revisable in a way that myth is not.

Both semiotic methodologies, Structuralist and Marxist, fail to recognize the way different culturally positioned subjects read advertisement rhetoric (the way the ad "appeals" the subject), thematic oppositions and referent systems. Even Marxist analyses fail to affirm differences of reading by different classes or ad texts structured with only one social group in mind, preferring instead to regard all meaning in advertising as alienating (lies about our real relationship with social reality). This is an unfortunate position for the Marxist internal analyses of ad message meaning to take. When a Miller drinker sees the product signified with blue-collar work-reward scenes and when another consumer sees the product Michelob signified with the setting and activity of a patio picnic on some beachside estate, I believe it is misleading and theoretical dogma to claim a sameness within the decoding subjects and the arbitrariness of product oppositions. True, both ads may distort or omit the more pressing contradictions of social organization, but the advertiser is still somewhat restricted by the fact that two
real different markets/social groups are being spoken to about their own ritual and lifestyle knowledge.

While myth is engaged in legitimizing the institutional and ritual structures of one society, advertising has an additional function of creating and adapting to the market differences of differentiated readers/consumers (lifestyle and "hyper-ritual" specific cultural referents in ad messages). Structuralist semiotic theory (Leymore) and the semiotics of visual communication and social anthropology (Goffman) look at the ritual elements in ad texts for evidence of common structuring patterns of the symbolizing human mind. The Marxist-oriented semiotics (Barthes and Williamson), on the other hand, study the ideological alignment of the ad discourse to discover the distortion in reflections of material social life. Both views summarize the signifying structures of advertisements in 'mass culture' terms. Socially differentiated groups are subsumed under the 'dominated masses' or 'dominant' paradigms of conceptualizing the advertising subject/audience. Even though it is known that admen target their messages for different social groups with different expectations of needing and reading (preference in particular referent systems used), semiotic analyses have not discussed social determinations of signification in ads beyond the "one unifying cultural experience of the code".  

The semiotic methods must realize their own limitations in conceptualizing the mysterious "black box", "irrational mental
leap" or cultural reductionism that accounts for what structures the taking of meaning in real contexts of advertising as social communication for differentiated subjects/readers. Perhaps the most limiting aspect of these approaches to the internal analysis of ad messages is their obsession with an inward-lookingness that confines the object of study to the ad message structure itself, thus ignoring the dynamic interactions this structure has with other social structures of the advertising communication system. G. R. Kress, in "Structuralism and Popular Culture" comments:

Because they focus on closed-off entities, structuralist analyses cannot answer this question [how any reader extracts significance]; and the view one adapts amounts to a simple affirmation of faith (though never simply affirmed). A solution is possible only if one looks at systems of structures (i.e., a new structure); then it will become apparent that networks of relations exist between the structures of certain entities, and not between others. Or at least that the density of relations is greater between certain structures than between others.98

Kress takes exception with the structuralist tendency to isolate and analyze the structure of the text without a social-theoretically guided comparative framework (examining how external structures [i.e., marketing] interact with the message structure). Kress' analytical strategy can focus on the ad structure for its systematic linking to the structure of other forms of popular culture and institutions. An advertisement, like any other text, has significance for readers through the nature and arrangement into referent systems and presentational codes. The extent to which advertising's referent systems originate in
or are drawn into other discourses (i.e., film, ritual behaviours, history, etc.) indicates the commonness or uncommonness of reading predispositions between discourses experiences by either the same or different subjects/readers. The density of relations between the discourse of a rock concert and an advertisement for a stereo-cassette tape could display many shared reference structures. The density of relations between that same rock concert discourse and an ad for 'Geritol' would be few. This sharing of reference structures depends on consumer/reader mentality, reading practices (what and how things are read), and common knowledge. In the methodology suggested by Kress, a discussion of the origination or location of meaning in a wider survey of the relations among different textual structures and other structures influencing the communication context, helps to verify the semiotic problem of what the decoder actually 'gets out of texts' from his particular reading position fixed in social practices and experience. Kress, not that unlike the position of Williams in *The Sociology of Culture*, calls for both an inward and outward focus of textual analysts to the complex structures of cultural production and cultural consumption by real differentiated groups of readers. Meaning does not simple reside in the textual structure as a frozen, lifeless form, but in the actual practice of its meaning both in the construction and the deconstruction/interpretation by real readers with real social experiences and preferences. Semiotic analysis of advertisements
must not only look across to other informing popular culture forms (source of references in ads), but also upwards towards the structure of ordering products/messages through marketing and downwards to the social organizational structures of audience formations (groups of readers/consumers of a lifestyle).
1. What is meant by 'use' here is the material utility value of the product and not its form (as social and personal meanings expressed in ads and circulated in the way people think about their goods in consumer society).


4. This straightforward statement of the functions of marketing best typifies the moral and ideological beliefs that contemporary marketers and advertising professionals commonly explain the social effectivity of their trade with.


6. Ibid., p. 140.


9. Ibid., p. 141.

10. Ibid., pp. 140 - 141.


12. Ibid., p. 9.


15. Ibid., p. 29.

16. Leiss follows the lead of Sahlin's 'Marxist' anthropology with the notion that the network of exchanges among persons is a function of more general cultural determinants and "the material flow underwrites or initiates social relations". See Marshall Sahlin, "On the sociology of Primitive Exchange," *Stone Age Economics*, (Chicago: Aldine, 1972).


18. Modern industrial marketing obscures the choice between 'man as consumer' and 'man as user'. The 'Marxist' approach claims that the material object being sold is never enough. Ads stress the symbolic value of goods at the expense of the actual use of goods or at the expense of acknowledging how goods are produced.


23. Ibid., p. 23.

24. Ibid., p. 20.


27. Clarke, "The State of Cultural Theory", p. 120.


36. Ibid., p. 185.
40. Most economic anthropologists maintain that there is a common factor underlying both primitive and modern societies -- culture's function in mediating the material exchanges between humans and nature (physical environment). Symbolic structures predominating in a society's cultural formations work on the definition of material utility and what natural materials are chosen and changed into desirable objects for exchange.
42. Schudson, "Criticizing the Critics of Advertising," p. 10.
45. Ibid., p. 65.
47. Ibid., p. 11.
48. Ibid., pp. 5-6.

51. Ibid., p. 4.

52. Ibid., p. 2.

53. Ibid., p. 2.


58. This discipline has been referred to as the 'science which studies the life of signs in society' (Ferdinand de Saussure, linguistics), or a general theory of signs (Charles Sanders Peirce, philosophy and a forerunner of information theory). The first description emphasized the social function of the sign while the second looked at the logical function of signs. Today Saussure's "semiologie" and Peirce's semiotics refer to the same academic endeavor and because semiotics is now the official international designation for the science, it will be referred to as semiotics throughout the thesis.

59. The term code comes out of information theory and refers to an inventory of arbitrarily chosen symbols ordered by a group of rules for composition (i.e., words coded in English language). Signs, those units of expression and meanings in communication, require a code or 'means' for the transmission of their meaning from source to receiver (understood at both ends of the communication event). A code, in a sense usually less formalized and complex than language, refers to the users knowledge of the objects and ideas that the code expresses and relies on conventions of how different bits (sign vehicles) of information can be strung together in into a sign string expression or message form which orders internally the way these information bits signify together as a meaningful whole (similar to grammar in language).

60. Hall, "Culture, the Media and the 'Ideological Effect'," p.
61. One can talk about, for instance, the ad text (one ad taken as a meaningful and structured whole) in the way it belongs to the larger systems of advertising as a practiced discourse; the system composed of different ad texts each one talking about certain objects, in similar conceptualizations and codes structured in similar ways into orderly messages. The terms discourse and text have also been used to designate certain non-linguistic semiotic processes (i.e., a ritual, a film, art). A discourse is the linking of texts by the commonness of their presentation in form and communication contexts of sending/receiving.

62. Hall, "Culture, the Media and the 'Ideological Effect'," p. 329.

63. Ibid., p. 330.


67. Signifying practices of advertising (a structured system of ad presentational forms) consist of rules and conventions which, in a way similar to language, are autonomous of any one occasion of their use in one ad. A single ad, as an occasion of 'speech', relies on the rules of advertising as language and is the expression of selected, combined and articulated elements within preconceived formats.


69. Ibid., p. 49.


71. Rhetoric means techniques (visual or verbal) that aim at persuading or impressing the subject/reader. It also suggests the use of puffery or non-informational sales appeals (personal and social meanings) which may entertain or engage the reader but says little about product utility. Barthes' semiotic account of advertising includes the rhetoric of the image or classification of the connotative signifieds of the image. Rhetorical figures in imagery, for instance gross exaggeration or omissions, provide a set of persuasive forms that, through their practiced repetitions in the advertising discourse, 'naturalize' what in the real
world would be impossible illusion or false representations of people objects and ideas.

73. Ibid., P. 100.
74. Ibid., p. 20.
75. Ibid., p. 40.
76. Ibid., p 14.
77. Ibid., p. 102.
78. Ibid., p. 137.

80. Levi Strauss' use of Saussure's theory of linguistics enables him to suggest a theory of how cultural meaning is ordered. Totemism may be understood as the use of a set of differences found in nature for the organization of a set of differences established in culture. This theory of cultural meaning has gained wide acceptance in anthropology.

81. Williamson, Decoding Advertisements, p. 45.
83. Ibid., p. 84.

84. For Marshall Sahlins in Culture and Practical Reason, modern society has substituted manufactured objects for species, with exchange and consumption acting as the means of communication of the totemic order.

85. Williamson, Decoding Advertisements, p. 47.
87. Williamson, Decoding Advertisements, p.20.
89. Williamson, Decoding Advertisements, p. 48.

92. Goffman discusses the relation in advertising between the fashion image and so-called natural behaviour; the way in which advertisements express (in a model photograph) artificial poses based on or resignifying another set of artificial poses (body language of a culture).


94. McCracken and Pollay, "Anthropology and the Study of Advertising".


97. Kline, "Images of Well-being".

II. A Semiotic Framework For Segmentation Ads

Advertising can be understood as a means by which goods acquire symbolic value in society. This observation is found in the numerous and varied arguments of the neo-liberal, Marxist, and anthropological literature on communication in consumer society. This chapter focuses on the actual meaning systems conveyed by ad messages and on the relationship of these signifying systems to consumer audiences.

The interpretive framework for the analysis is derived from a perspective on the relationship between advertisement producers and existing popular culture forms and expression consumed by various audiences. In particular, this analysis subscribes to the notion that groups of consumers purchase the meanings that goods represent in forms reflecting trends, styles, social values and tastes, as well as the goods themselves. Advertisers produce such meaning by referring audiences to, and associating the product with, cultural meaning from discourses in other areas of social activity. This complex communication between producers and consumers of goods and the associated social and personal meanings that these goods assume in advertisements, involves a 'double symbolic process'. Kline and Leiss, guided by the insights of Sahlins, describe this process:
One facet of it is the symbolism consciously employed in the manufacture and sale of the product, including the imagery employed in the advertising designs. The second facet is the symbolic associations selectively employed by consumers in "constructing" lifestyle models; the whole marketplace is divided into semiautonomous sectors which respond to different cues in different ways.¹

The semiotic methodologies of Barthes, Williamson and Goffman all study the sign processes and symbolic relationships of this first facet of communication by confining their analysis to the ad text. These semiotic studies interpret how ads borrow, from outside their immediate discourse (marketing of goods), a massive lexicon of cultural forms and references, which Kline and Leiss identify as "of a mythological, historical, characterological, social, psychological and environmental nature, as well as scenes and situations from contemporary life".² The semiotic approach discusses how these originally external meaning systems are structured into advertising messages and how their symbolic association with the product sign, through adwork, gives the product new meaning.

The second facet of the dual symbolic process assumes that there exist differentiated cultural formations within one society and that these divisions are reflected in consumer behaviours and predispositions. Groups of consumers construct various and distinctive lifestyles through the purchase and consumption of goods. People have a cultural predisposition in their social interactions, their recreation and leisure activities, their consumption patterns in relation to popular cultural productions, and their more inherent social and
political beliefs. Advertisers attempt to define markets and talk to consumers through messages mirroring the cultural predispositions of consumers.

As we shall see in the section on market segmentation later on in this chapter, producers and advertisers acknowledge this cultural view of consumer society. They are keenly aware of the fact that audience groups tend to coalesce along lines of lifestyle patterns and consumption. Of any marketing strategy to date, market segmentation attempts to cue and sell to specific groups of consumers goods in terms of these consumers' cultural predispositions.

Present semiotic analyses of advertising do not deal with the growing propensity of admen to borrow culturally specific contents and particular discourses that would be meaningful and favourably read by only certain specific audiences. Barthes and Williamson, for example, address neither the specification of audience nor the ways in which specification might be reflected in the contents of the meaning systems in ads. As Barthes argues:

We make it considerably easier for ourselves from the beginning if we study only the advertising message. Why? Because in advertising, the signification of the image is certainly intentional: there are certain attributes of the product which make up a priori the signifieds of the advertising message, and these signifieds have to be transmitted as clearly as possible.¹

Barthes seems to believe that advertisements are simply product-centered and therefore, he overlooks the forms of user-centered ads (segmentation ads). He does not take into
account that of any message depends on the sender having a particular image of the receiver if the intended meaning is to avoid unintended significations at the reception end of the communication. Similarly, Williamson does not consider a differentiated audience perspective. Instead she posits the existence of an abstract subject/text relationship in which the text rigidly positions the reader through the mechanisms of adwork and its effects at deeper levels of the human psyche.

The structuralist-semiotic approach attempts to secure an immanent perspective that must assume a generalized or universal audience/subject. In doing so, it restricts symbolic analysis to 'what can be seen in the ad', and abstracts the message and the reader out of the larger communications system through which messages are transmitted. In this way, definitional problems pertain to these semiotic conceptualizations of audience reading, and it is on this point that Barthes's claim of "the method can make the theory" is arguable. In contrast with this non-audience assumption in decoding advertisements, Kline and Leiss have demonstrated that ads directed at different audiences have been constructed in ways reflecting differentiated audience predispositions in 'mode of address'. Further, Pope argues convincingly that the communication context of ads distributed to target audiences indicate forms and contents different from more mass market or less specific audience appeals. These audience related influences on the text and its differentiated readings cannot be culturally nor structurally deconstructed by
the immanent analysis of the ad text.

This chapter on methodology critiques and adapts those more workable contributions of the semiotic perspective that deal with audience oriented specificity in ad text references and 'modes of address'. In developing a new methodology, structures will be considered beyond those of syntactic-semantic relations visible in ad grammar (adwork). Operations at the level of ad grammar refer to rules of selecting and combining semantic elements (content units) in the composition of ad imagery and written texts. The study of the relationships among signs themselves (syntactics) and the study of how signs are related to what they stand for, represent, and refer to (semantics), must be incorporated into a communication perspective that addresses the relationships between signs and their human users (pragmatics). The consideration of what signs refer to or represent culturally for certain real subjects in empirical contexts of communication is a vital concern in understanding how audiences 'use' these signs in decoding.

Stuart Hall, Umberto Eco and others argue that the sender and receiver sides of the ad message process can be understood to represent two separate but related contexts of meaning. The patterns of specific cultural reference should be examined from a theoretical point of view that accounts for those who send and receive ad messages. As Eliseo Veron suggests:

...the description of the formal rules of a language system, plus the study of the rules of correspondence between signs and things, give us a complete picture of the process of meaning; the remaining area, that of the
'use' of the system, involves empirical problems that are 'external' to the basic syntactic-semantic model... from the point of view of human communication theory, meaning is a social process. Syntactics and semantics, as they have been classically defined, state some of the general conditions to which this process is subject. Pragmatics is not the study of how signs (and therefore meanings) are 'used'; it describes how meaning comes into being as an empirical fact of social communication.

The methodology developed here attempts to consider the empirical fact of advertising as a social communication system and to include analysis of other exogenous factors (systems affecting the encoding and decoding structures) which connect the advertising discourse with other discourses and other areas of structures in the social formation.

2.1 'The Unifying Cultural Experience of the Code' and Reference

Semiotics explains through a theory of codes the expression and reception of messages. Codes represent a set of rules or conventions commonly understood by those who transmit and receive messages, and these codes imbue with meaning the various sign elements of the message. At the level of connotation, as explained previously in chapter one, coding conventions exist because of the 'user's' knowledge of the paradigmatic relations of signs in more general relations of cultural significance. These same signs operate in the syntagmatic relations that regulate their combination on the occasion of their use in particular messages. While signs connect inwardly in a message and are combined through syntagmatic rules, signs connect
outwardly as well to more general frameworks of what they refer to or represent. This paradigmatic relation in the 'language' practices of advertising has been described as operating through cultural reference codes based in the 'user's patrimony of knowledge; that is, his knowledge of popular cultural productions and ritual symbols of his society, his tastes and evaluations of people, his ideological perspectives, and other basic recognitions of all ideas and objects that his culture has given meaning to.

Barthes and Williamson argue that connotative codes are controlled and redefined by the 'meta-system' of ideological adwork. Ads reproduce images, notions, concepts, myths, etc. that are signifieds of ideological systems and thought available in society's general cultural discourses, and renders them as signifiers in the ad structure. This connotation process relies upon our knowledge of these already 'worked on' (ideological) systems in order to create the final sign in the 'ideological effect' of the ad at the syntagmatic level of adwork. Thus the signification of signs at the denotative level of the ad is the dominant ideological sign process in advertising: the denotative level grammatically connects or combines signifying elements that possess another connoted meaning which the message appropriates and reworks. Williamson states:

...there is a circular process involved because having introduced the referent system by means of connotation, it is then made to denote the product - 'place' it in a system of meaning. This process is basically the process described in [adwork].

83
As well, Barthes tells us that signifying elements from referent systems outside of the ad are iconically coded in the text as typical signifiers of connotation that produce 'signifieds in common':

...the signifieds are to be found in the written press, the image or the actor's gesture (which is why semiology can only be conceived in a so to speak total framework). This domain of the signified of connotation is that of ideology, which cannot but be single for a given society and history no matter what signifiers of connotation it may use.6

Both Williamson's emphasis of the 'circular process' of adwork and Barthes' claim of the 'singular domain of ideology' focus on the syntagmatic aspect of the ad structure as the essential level of ideological operations in signification. In this semiotic account, the signifieds of connotation operate through a dominant ideological coding because the referent systems they are extracted from have an already practiced and predetermined social and cultural meaning. This common coding links signs in the syntagmatic arrangement of the message with the suggested semantic universe of prevailing social ideology. Connotative signifiers (denotative signs) 'point to' referent systems merely as forms of knowledge or whole areas of ideas, but not as single specific ideas. Williamson goes so far as to say that connotative signifieds offer their meaning only as distinguishable elements or paradigmatic distinctions in the referent systems out of which they come, rather than as contents. In this sense these signified are 'hollow of meaning' by themselves. As Williamson states:
Only the form and structure of the referent system are appropriated by the advertisement system; it is the relationship and distinction between parts, rather than the parts themselves, that make an already structured external system so valuable to advertising. The links made between elements from a referent system and products arise from the place these have in the whole system rather than from their inherent qualities.7

The codes that adwork calls upon us to refer to in creating the meaning around the product sign of the ad are familiar, conventionalized and typical of mass cultural productions/significations that we have experienced in other discourses. Operating in signification processes similar to Saussure's 'language', these connotative codes are socially derived and do not originate in the thought of individual speakers. They are socially shared and constituted. They exist in our thought but are not abstractions because as Saussure maintains, 'associations which bear the stamp of collective approval are realities that have their seat in brain.'8 For Williamson, language conditions and is conditioned by 'speech'(the signifying practices of 'subjects') and is composed of a diverse set of social constraints. Advertisements are the 'speech'-syntactic combination of signs into messages- and language is the means (codes) through which messages function (references and adwork techniques employed by advertisers and effective in reading for 'subjects'). In this speech the 'subject' enters into a 'space' between the connotative signifier (denotative sign syntagmatically structured by adwork in the message) and the connotative signified. Williamson explains the 'space' of the 'subject' within this signification process:
... the ideology of the 'Referent System' is always being regenerated in our relationship to the ad. Things 'mean' to us and we give this meaning to the product on the basis of a irrational mental leap invited by the form of the ad.... ideas values, meaning, exist in practice, the process of making the ad mean, i.e. making the required leap from the referent object to the product: it is not only meaning that emerges in the space covered by this leap - but also, ourselves.9

Williamson's conceptualization of 'the space of the subject covered by an irrational mental leap', obscures the whole question of the subject and ultimately leaves it as an empty space.10 Williamson takes Saussure's theory of language explained by practices wholly exclusive of the 'subject' and reconceptualizes language as explicable exclusively at the level of the 'subject'. Williamson discusses the position of the 'subject' in the message (the role of appellation) and the constitution of the subject by referring to a perspective of 'subjects-in-general' found in psycho-analytic approaches. She borrows her concept of adwork from Freud's psycho-analytic concept of 'dreamwork' to suggest how the 'subject' is locked into a particular signifying relation between a structured or coded message and the apparatuses of the mind. The unconscious process that creates the 'subject' is the same one that positions the 'subject' in language. As well, she maintains that this process 'creates the subject for ideology'.

Barthes and Williamson give adwork and textual structures a central place in their analyses. The ad text cannot convey the meaning of referent systems or 'reflected reality': its produced meaning is based on the adwork's ability to situate/recreate the addressee in a reading position of unproblematic
identification/knowledge. Similarly this process constitutes the process of formation of the 'subject'. Williamson writes:

This space is that of the individual as subject: he or she is not a simple receiver but a creator of meaning.... As an ad speaks to us, we simultaneously create that speech (it means to us), and are created by it as its creators.11

The signification operations of language, the practices of representation, and the process of ideology all seem to collapse into one another in this psycho-analytical perspective of the generalized 'subject'/text relationship. By definition the 'subject' is always 'already' operating within the dominant ideological position adwork has constituted in its necessary message-forms. The subject is secured in place by adwork in one message after another. This critical perspective, which assumes the universal structuring effect of the dominant ideology, suffers the same shortcomings as non-linguistic domination theories in its mass-culture simplifications of empirical communication systems and their contexts of use. Barthes suggests that the cultural references employed in ads are so generalized and knowledge of the meaning of these references so readily accessible by all sectors of cultural readers, that it is possible to consider advertising references as a 'common domain of connotative signifieds'. The only possible realization of these connoted signifieds becomes their realization by the 'subject'(constituted by 'language') positioned in the text and explained by the functioning of a single, universal set of psycho-linguistic structures (i.e., the language of the self).
The psycho-analytic orientation of Barthes and Williamson attempts to explain the textual manipulation of the subject at the abstracted level of the unconscious. The constitution of the 'mirror-self', which ads supposedly appeal us into, is an operation determined more by our psychological structures for communication and self-evaluation rather than our knowledge of references to different discourses of varied semantic values in our social experiences.

These semiotic theories of codes and language suggest that the referential function of signs in a message have a self-identity; that is, they are distinct and recognizable as paradigmatic and syntagmatic elements. The recontextualization of specific references is achieved by the syntagmatic relations of signs in a message while the substantial meanings of signs comes from their ideal opposition to other terms in paradigmatic systems. Barthes and Williamson are solely concerned with the universal, intentional, semantic relation between a sign and its representations for all users of a language system (code or metastructure [advertising]). Traditionally the intentional or universalist linguistic approach to representational processes of signs have relied upon Saussure's signifier/signified relation in which the signified remains imprecise, halfway between psychology and the Platonic theory of ideas. The tension between an intentional semantics (semiotic claim of immanence) and an extentional semantics (referents are real things in the real world) is threatening to Saussurean modelled semiotics.¹²
The empirical conceptualization of linguistic elements (i.e. words) suggests that general terms like "dog" gain identity by the symbol referring repeatedly to the real object. Terms enter into the conventional currency of language use by the symbol having a conceptual and learned reference to the real object. However, on this point, semiotics defends its intentional semantic perspective by explaining, for example, the use of sign-vehicles that refer to non-existent entities such as 'unicorn' or 'mermaid'. The function of referring to fictive entities is essentially not unlike the function of representing actual entities. Umberto Eco defends semiotic or intentional semantic perspectives on the basis of culturally-ordered codes mediating how a society thinks and speaks about itself:

Within the framework of a theory of codes it is unnecessary to resort to the notion of extension, nor to that of possible worlds; the codes insofar as they are accepted by a society, set up a 'cultural' world which is neither actual nor possible in the ontological sense; its existence is linked to a cultural order, which is the way a society thinks, speaks and, while speaking explains the 'purport' of its thought though other thoughts. Since it is through thinking and speaking that a society develops, expands or collapses, even when dealing with 'impossible' worlds (i.e. aesthetic texts, ideological statements) a theory of codes is very much concerned with the format of such 'cultural' worlds, and faces the basic problem of how to touch contents. 13

For Eco, it appears unnecessary to explain contents within a text by an analysis of their referents. Yet, Eco falls into neither the empiricist nor psycho-analytic conceptualizations of textual contents and how they refer outwardly from the text. There is a perspective based on other empirical considerations, although it is not strictly linguistic, which defines the determination of
language elements, not in terms of the fixed position of the subject in the text and the obvious self-identity of signs, but in terms of relations of what is communicated and who it is communicated to. The assumption of the self-identity of ideal contents and the psycho-analytic notion that all "subjects" in all societies at all times are unconsciously constituted are both predicated on a transcendental/universal form. Stuart Hall argues that this view of the 'subject'/text encounter does not explain "how historically specific subjects, already 'positioned' in language in general, function in relation to particular discourses and historically specific formations". Rather than view ideology as dominant or singular for society by virtue of its determined place in language processes for all subjects, ideology must be understood, as Hall and Eco contend, as the 'universe of knowledge of the receiver and the group to which he belongs'. This understanding does away with the idealist notion of language and correctly reformulates ideology in a way that is more or less coterminous with culture in the anthropological sense. Further, it places correct emphasis upon the knowledge (ideologies) subjects/addressees bring to the encounter with various texts. The anthropological regard for different subject positioning in culture and meaning systems (Sahlin's second facet of the double symbolic process) is not shared in the notion of ideology found in the semiotics of Barthes and Williamson.
Barthes and Williamson have focused on the ideological 'contents' of sign elements within the syntagmatic dimension of the message thereby examining the internal relations of the sign. The paradigmatic dimension which links the internal structure outwards and is one indicator of meaning considers the ideological 'contents' of connoted signifieds simply within a generalized subjects-for-language model. This structuralist perspective cannot adequately deal with the 'functional meaning' of the ad structure, for instance, operating in a larger structure of communication; i.e., other structures of differentiated subject/audience contexts in which message reception occurs. As a proponent of the cultural approach to sign reception, Kress identifies the problem with purely immanent analysis of signs as

...a major shortcoming of structuralist analysis: in order to be able to enumerate items, state relations between them, establish their syntagmatic and paradigmatic values, in short, to display the structure, one has to proceed as though the object contracted no external external relations. This gives to many structuralist analyses their peculiarly formal and sterile feel: it is difficult to link statements about a structure outwards. Saussure's dictum against the study of context has remained willy-nilly with structuralist analysis: 'language must, to put it correctly, be studied in itself'.

Similarly Kline and Leiss attack semiotic analyses that have claimed the 'unifying cultural experience of the code' (i.e., 'common domain of connoted signifieds'). On the basis of the anthropological theories and observations of Sahlins, and Douglas and Isherwood, Kline and Leiss believe that advertising cannot be understood from the subjects-in-general
semiotic approach -- one set of cultural values and social
categorization for all consumers/subjects. Immanent analyses
cannot take account of the advertising message system and its
relationship to structured assimilation by socially
differentiated groups. It abstracts advertisements out of the
larger communications system through which they are transmitted.
Semiotic analysis essentially restricts its study to the
communicated text with little if no consideration of context (a
communication perspective which studies senders and receivers of
messages).

Umberto Eco suggests that a semiotic approach is possible
in the study of communication if an attempt is made to deal with
'what in fact the audience gets' from the transmission of signs.
An analysis which interprets the forms and contents of the
message should, according to Eco, single out:

(1) the intentions of the sender; (2) the objective
structure of the message; (3) the reactions of the
addressee to items (1) and (2). 17

Barthes' and Williamson's semiotic inquiries single out
only the second item. However, in this second item of the
'objective' content relations and forms of the ad text lie the
intentions of the emitter (i.e., marketers, advertisers, and
creative personnel). The emitter, as cultural producer,
intentionally selects meaningful references and adwork
combinations for a particular circumstance of communication. He
determines why, for whom, and how chains of signs should be
arranged. The selection of a framework of cultural references
can be analysed by semiotics as a system of communication
congenities relating to particular systems of knowledge (a
shared emitter/receiver code) once it takes the 'objective' form
of a system of signs.

Barthes and Williamson have attempted only to deal with the
reactions of the addressee to Eco's first and second items from
the unfortunate perspective of the 'self'/'subject' created by
adwork. From the point of view of anthropologists and
communication theorists the 'subjects-in-general' definition of
message reception and cultural activity amounts to nothing more
than a nebulous assumption of mass-culture/mass-audience. A more
faithful description would be that of the audience as a
personality type of one global 'subject'. It is the
psychological mechanisms of the 'subject', and not a careful
analysis of empirical contexts of advertising mass reception,
that typify the model of message reception of Barthes and
Williamson. Nor is there any mention of the other discursive
formations that are brought into play through the subject's
placement in other practices - cultural, educational,
institutional. If we are to assume that the addressee reacts -
utilizes reading codes (cultural reference systems) called up in
the objective materials and forms of the message - to the
intentions of the emitter, then Barthes and Williamson
conceptualize these intentions as those of a manipulating
dominant ideology produced in the language practices of a
one-dimensional and univocal society. Advertisers intend and
effect more than simply a false re-creation of ourselves through an imaginary world of commodities and their social values. Kline and Leiss provide us with an alternative, more empirical explication of the intentions of the emitters of ads based on presuppositions of culturally differentiated reading audiences. Speaking in terms of the communication context of the contemporary marketplace, instead of the general context of dominant definitions of social reality, Kline and Leiss suggest that the emitter understands advertising/market consumers

... not as a personality type, but as a demographic substratum organized around particular measurable behaviour practices (lifestyle, consumption styles, media use, brand purchase) (Sommers, 1983.).... This premise is based on notions which assume there is no mass but only segmented audiences which must be targeted by research and delivered the goods in terms of their 'predispositions'. 18

Kline and Leiss study the changing structure of the message system in ads and this description they offer above characterizes the contemporary phase in the presentation of advertising forms and contents called 'lifestyle'. It is advertising mode of presentation that started about 1965 and is now in the last few years being more fully realized by especially magazine advertisers. The message/audience relationship suggested by the psycho-analytic semiotic analyses typify the the earlier phase of appeals to consumers called 'personification' (1945-1965). Here a description of the approach of marketers to consumers, at the more universal level of reflecting a generalized 'self', seems more applicable and empirically correct. In describing this phase, Kline writes
The model appears to reflect back the mirror image of the self defined and transformed in fantasy by the product. In the mirror ad, the product's power is not turned against someone else, or used in a social relation, but rather against the ego of the consumer.  

This is not to suggest that there is no reference to specified cultural values in these 'self' centered ads, but rather consumer/cultural group identity is replaced as the essential positive product association by general consumer ideal 'self' images.

Today the intentions of advertisers and the reaction of audiences to these intended messages is best characterized as the result of market segmentation and the identification within consumer groups. Differentiated audience 'predispositions' are a growing factor in the development of structured codes of cultural reference in advertising.

2.2 The Referential Function of the Message and Communication Theory

In the communication of culturally produced messages the emitter engages in two distinct semiotic operations. He selects particular contents and codes (for the representation of these contents) from a pool of cultural materials. As well, he combines and arranges these selections into a particular text, that shares with other similarly combined and selected elements of other texts, an intentional recognition (for emitter and
receiver) that is common of a particular discourse. These operations of selection and combination result from the decisions and assumptions exercised by the sender/producer in cultural production practices. The decision-making activity deserves attention if there exist multiple possibilities for the denotative arrangement (i.e., adwork) of selected or referred-to contents. The seemingly ordinary or natural recognition of denotative signs/signifiers in communicated messages can have varied significance at the level of connotation by simple variations in the combining process. For an example from advertising, a woman and a car may both appear in a television commercial for that car. Whether she is simply placed beside the car or is actively examining the many new features of the vehicle and driving it, connotes two very different meanings: 'this car is sexy and as sophisticated as this model' or 'this vehicle is suited to the tastes of the woman consumer'. Even though the visual signifiers of the woman and the car are denotatively co-present, the denotative communication of these elements connote different meanings in each commercial; that is, they metacommunicate something beyond the obvious recognitions of the communication. Veron distinguishes between these two levels as those of communication and metacommunication. The second level, that of connoted meaning, requires the emitter to have understood the context of communication (medium and audience) and to have performed particular selective and combinatory decisions. For Veron, the transmission of
information should not simply be analyzed at the level of contents (denotative message units) communicated, but should be analyzed bearing in mind the selection and combinatory operations intentionally made by the sender.

Meaning is not an intrinsic property of the message alone, but entails what senders and receivers 'intend' to do with a particular communicated message as well. Metacommunication is a pragmatic notion that regards the context of the empirical communication system out of which particular messages are generated and circulated. Even though messages convey something in their contents, they also orient the the receiver toward an understanding of how the sender interprets their relationship in the communication. The understanding that senders have of how audiences interpret messages facilitate, for instance, what Williamson identifies as an unproblematic 'irrational mental leap' in the mind of the ad 'subject'. The advertiser presupposes in his operations of selection and combination certain audience decoding predilections.

Yet, audiences have social positions which they take to the reading of an ad and therefore provide the emitter with a context of metacommunication to be considered as he selects and combines coded cultural materials in ad messages. Janice Winship, in an example from advertising, illustrates this consideration by describing the case of a publicity poster for a car that effected an inappropriate mass-marketed metacommunication. The ad read, 'If it were a lady it would get
its bottom pinched' and was defaced by the rejoinder: 'If this lady were a car she'd run you down'. The ad managed to offend the female segment of the mass audience and ultimately produced an unexpected negative metacommunication response. The error in product presentation can be identified in the selection of a predominantly chauvinist cultural reference combined into a mass-audience message. In deciding on how the product will be connoted the sender must take account of who the audience of the message will be and how that audience is likely to favourably or disfavourably regard the intentions of the emitter.

Through specific cultural references (select lexicons of a mythical, historical, social and ethnographic nature) and in the more subtle styles of layout, the receiving audience is cued, at the level of metacommunicaton as to the predisposition of the sender/cultural producer. At the connotative levels of the coded message, the audience may match their 'predisposition' with that assumed by the advertiser/producer, thus defining into existence the sharing or non-sharing of cultural perspective.Advertisers rely upon creating a favourable metamessage in transferring something (someone, someplace) we recognize and value onto the product. They must associate the product within codes of imagistic presentation and cultural presentation. It is in this sense that we may begin to talk about ideological communication. Veron explains that:

At the societal level, connotation is the communication dimension through which ideological metamessages are transmitted embodied in messages having a manifest referential function. Just as in interpersonal
relationships communicators transmit through metacommunication the 'image' they have with regard to the ongoing relationship and its norms, so the social mass-messages always metacommunicate a certain 'image' of society, a certain conception of social reality, the way of organizing it and the way of understanding its different aspects. As this image and these possible ways of conceiving and understanding social reality are not the only possible ones, and as they are transmitted through metacommunication, i.e., at the implicit level of meaning, the term Ideological Communication seems fairly adequate.²¹

Advertising is ideological communication in the sense that it operates within a set of semantic rules, i.e., rules of how signs are related to what they refer to, and this set is not the only way of representing social reality. In describing the selection and combination practices evident in ads, Richard Pollay observes that, "advertising selectively reinforces certain behaviours and certain values and neglects others".²² Decisions about selection and combination of semantic elements are limited in the production of the message. Yet, advertising in its diversity and innovative creations makes evident that the set of messages that can be generated by the 'rules of selection and combination' are infinite. It is not enough to describe these rules simply as the way advertising positions us in the semantic-syntactic constructs of its messages and therefore in the positive normative sectors of social life. This level of analysis alone cannot explain the different modes of address employed in ads for different product types (markets) and different audience predispositions. Kline tells us that in advertisements "the use of products is integrated with the pool of cultural imagery, but not as a cultural unity, but more
specifically as valued emblems of particular products and social
groups". Kline expresses here a more pragmatic concern with
how meaning comes into being as an empirical fact of social
communication. This involves a concern with the larger
structured context of intentional production of the message and
reception by differentiated audiences - where the addressor and
addressee are not empty domains but are competent subjects.

2.3 Encoding and Decoding

Stuart Hall employs the fundamental information theory
concepts of senders and receivers for the study of communication
relationships between the institutions of mass-media production
and its intentional messages (encoding structures), and the
reception of media messages by audiences (decoding structures).
The sender/message/receiver model of media communication
examines meaning as a complex process determined by two distinct
stages of encoding and decoding. This model helps explain,

... a process in terms of a structure produced and
sustained through the articulation of linked but
distinctive moments - production, circulation,
distribution/consumption, reproduction. This would be to
think of the process as a 'complex structure in
dominance', sustained through the articulation of
connected practices, each of which, however, retains its
distinctiveness and has its own specific modality, its
own forms and conditions of existence. 24

Hall's semiotic methodology refutes the static concept of
privileged position of the text -- the isolated text as the only
determinant of meaning. Unlike the semiotics of Barthes and
Williamson, Hall provides an analytic framework that attempts to identify the empirical differences between the intentional semantic 'use' producers and audiences make of an objective text from their different social positions in the communication system. The producer operates on professional assumptions of what constitutes a 'good' action shot in a detective movie or what is newsworthy for network television newscasts for instance, while the audience uses interpretive codes of taste in films or scepticism towards American news selection of international affairs. While audiences will seldom not recognize the semantic contents of media messages, there is no guarantee that they will unproblematically arrive at the same metacommunicated or connoted meaning as intended by the sender.

At the moment of production/circulation a message is structured as meaningful discourse via a series decisions made within apparatuses, relations and practices of the encoding institutions. Hall notes that this encoding structure encompasses media production's "material instruments - its 'means' - as well as its own sets of social (production) relations - the organizations and combination of practices within media apparatuses". In its discursive form the message is distributed to media audiences who deconstruct it and return the communicated materials of the text to the form of cultural practice -- they participate in reading its meaning by decoding it with implied, textual and subject-centered, predispositional reading codes. Hall adds an important "use" qualification of
this decoding process:

If no 'meaning' is taken, there can be no 'consumption'. If the meaning is not articulated in practice, it has no effect. 

While Hall does not deny that the message has a 'privileged' position in communication at the point of circulation as a media product, the moments of encoding and decoding are determinate moments in the creation/production and recreation/consumption of meaning. Effective communication depends on a continuity in the transposition into and out of the mode of symbolic exchange (the code). In the production of media messages selective and combinatory decisions effect the mode of symbolic exchange and include "knowledge-in-use concerning the routines of production, historically defined technical skills, professional ideologies, institutional knowledge ... and assumptions about the audience". The production structure should not be conceived of in isolation, but rather as actively selected treatments, events, images of the audience, definitions of situation from other areas of social practice and other discursive formations contained within the wider socio-cultural practices of a society. Hall suggests that media producers, in encoding their messages for particular contexts of message use (i.e., national news, entertainment) view the audience as both the 'source' and the 'receiver', the beginning and end of the communication. The encoder realizes both the expectations of the audience and the expectations that his professional practice in the institutional media discourse requires.
The message in its discursive form between 'source' and 'receiver' cannot assume an immediate identity based on its objective material form -- it must enter into a particular context of communication where senders and receivers are real human agents. If the codes actively employed in encoding and decoding are not the same, and are therefore assymetrical, then a misunderstanding of the intended message at the point of reception is inevitable, if in fact any meaning is taken. In this case assymmetry or non-equivalence occurs between the code identified by the encoder/producer and this same code not identified by the decoder/receiver. A non-sharing of the code between the moments of the message production and the message reading by an audience results in a distortion of the transmitted message. Effective transmission of meaning, on the other hand, is possible in a communication exchange if the codes are understood and used in similar ways by both message producers and consumers. This notion of symmetry allows Hall to argue that both sides of the communication process are 'relatively autonomous' and have their own determinations in cultural and social practice. Unlike media perspectives espoused by domination theory and mass-culture theorists, Hall's cultural studies approach is more specific in its description of the institutional structures and professional ideologies of the institutional structures and relations of media production (i.e., professional codes), and in its anthropological and sociological analysis of particular decoding audiences (i.e.,
based on audience group social and media use experience).

Hall introduces the notion of audience in his semiotic methodology and adds the task of identifying audience decoding habits to the structural analysis of meaning in particular codes of a message. In this respect codes are not related to one unifying cultural experience of 'subjects-in-general' nor are they neatly ordered into a plurality of audience-related categories, each equal in production value to the next. The sign, and that area of social experience it refers to through a code, has for Hall new value in that the semiotic language model is applied in terms of empirical communication contexts as 'codes-in-use' at the moments of encoding and decoding. Hall explains that:

Certain codes may, of course, be so widely distributed in a specific language community or culture, and be learned at so early an age, that they appear not to be constructed - the effect of an articulation between sign and referent - but to be naturally given.... The operation of naturalized codes reveal not the transparency and 'naturalness' of language but the depth, the habituation, and the near universality of codes in use.... Actually what naturalized codes demonstrate is the degree of habituation produced when there is a fundamental alignment and reciprocity - an achieved equivalence - between encoding and decoding sides of an exchange of meaning.28

As a product of repeated discursive practice codes produce 'natural' recognitions of meaning beyond the mere denotation of the sign. The recalled cultural reference drawn from a sign is contracted by the conventions established in habitual practices of signification and therefore the intervention of established signifieds in habitual signification (codes). At the level of
connotation the sign operates within the immediate discourse (message context) and as well, within external discursive fields of meaning defined by practiced symbolic condensations of their meaning into codes. If symmetry exists in the code of a message it is because the message is based on habitual reading codes of the culturally defined audience.

Hall goes on to suggest that the same sign in a message may operate in more than one connotative code. The sign may have polysemic meaning for a decoding audience or metacommunicate in a way unforeseen by the encoder. Habitual reading codes of an audience may run contrary to those dominating a message or an entire discourse for that matter. Within the possible range of different habitual reading codes belonging to a society may be different preferences in the practice or non-practice of these codes by different social groups. Hall explains that:

*Polysemy must not, however, be confused with pluralism. Connotative codes are not equal among themselves. Any society/culture tends, with varying degrees of closure, to impose its classifications of the social and cultural and political world. These constitute a dominant cultural order, though it is neither univocal nor uncontested. The question of the 'structure of the discourses in dominance' is a crucial point.*

In all societies/cultures different techniques are developed to restrict connoted signifieds in such a way as to eliminate the problem of uncertain signs; the linguistic message is such a technique. The concept of polysemy first gained prominence in the study of ritual symbols communicated in primitive societies. Polysemy or multi-vocality are originally anthropological concepts used to explain how a single symbol may
stand for many meanings or referents. For Hall, connotative terms have polysemic potential by virtue of the communication context of their use by socially differentiated and culturally distinct groups of decoders. Mass media decoding is differentiated by polysemous frames of cultural knowledge, reference and code use. The sign's meaning taken out of these lexical frames do not operate in one single or univocal meaning system but may be decodable by the use of a variety of interpretive codes belonging to meaning systems (audience habitual reading preferences) that can be scaled from dominant to subordinate when compared with the preferred producer's encoding. Connotative meanings in media products are in dominance by the fact that they seem to re-occur in a type of production/audience recognition circuit. But these dominant codes and their meanings are not determined their forceful positioning in the message alone, nor by the audience being fixed in a particular social position enabling only certain types of readings. In discussing dominant code structures in the media, Hall argues that they

... are 'structured in dominance' but not closed, the communication process consists not in the unproblematic assignment of every visual item to its given position within a set of prearranged codes, but of performance rules of competence and use, of logics-in-use - which seek actively to enforce or prefer one semantic domain over another and rule items into and out of their appropriate meaning-sets. Formal semiology has too often neglected this practice of interpretive work, though this constitutes in fact, the real relations of broadcast practices in television.
Media producers are worried that the audience has not taken the intended message. Nowhere is this more true than in the advertising discourse in which the producers intentions are not simply those of attracting and engaging audiences, but are directed towards efficiently persuading audiences toward a behaviour. When viewers do not decode in the 'dominant' or 'preferred' code, producers face the possibility of 'systematically distorted communication'. This is the case of an asymmetry between encoding and decoding sides of code. This is the consequence of an asymmetry between encoding and decoding sides of the message use.

Aberrant decoding - that unforeseen by encoders - is not a result of idiosyncratic reading preferences. Audience selection of codes is not random nor privatized, but exhibits across individual variants significant clustering. Encoding can 'prefer' but not guarantee the codes through which an audience reads a message. Without such limitations of reference in encoding the audience would be free to assume whatever it wished from the message. The positioning or significant clustering which characterize audience formations is the object of study of multi-million dollar research engaged in by advertisers and media research institutions. This is the major component of encoding structures for developing an image or certain treatment of certain audiences. It is this factor which guides the selection and combination codes and materials in messages encoded to different audiences.

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4 The Encoding Practices of Advertising

Armed with knowledge from market research and with assumptions of a more technical production-oriented nature, admen conceptualize and direct meaning to audiences. Michael Schudson comments on the type of research one is likely to find advertisers conducting:

...depth psychology has been long abandoned. Sex still sells products,... but Freud is now rarely the inspiration for market research. Sociology, not psychology, directs the gathering of hard data in market research.32

Market research is guided more by sociological interests in the market/audience's predisposition than with discovering more universal psychological traps operative at the unconscious levels beneath the 'subject's' awareness. This implies that the mode of address is an ideological process insofar as admen discover a priori the particular set of codes and range of social and cultural references the audience will recognize and gain meaning from within in particular contexts of communication.

Ex-adman Tony Schwartz describes the advertising profession's perspective on mode of address and the referential function of the message. Once the advertising target audience is identified and the selection of basic product images and themes complete, commercials must rely on what Schwartz terms "resonance". He suggests that ads operate as a "package of

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stimuli" and draw upon a certain recognition and conceptual mechanisms of an audience. Schwartz believes that advertisers construct or should construct an ad which

...resonates with information already within the listener and available for recall.... Information for recall includes everything we have experienced, whether we consciously remember it or not.... Those of us who create ads are in the business of structuring recall. When audience recall is effectively structured, the audience becomes an active part of the communication process. When the audience is viewed as a work force in the communication process, the experiences and attitudes people bring to the viewing or listening situation become active elements in our advertising effort.33

Schwartz defines information available for recall to include social experience whether it is remembered consciously or at deeper levels. This information is 'stored' in the audience and frames each new ad message experience. Schwartz's concept of "resonance" is a professional articulation of what Williamson explains as the semiotic connection of an 'objective correlative' located in the processes of adwork. In attaching meaningful associations to the product sign (the final message) advertisers are attempting to induce evoked recall -- create a stimulus triggered by the product. 'Objective correlative' is borrowed from T.S. Eliot's concept of the linking of internal thoughts and feeling with something external and objective. Eliot describes 'objective correlative' as the linking aspect of art:

The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an "objective correlative" : in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events, which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is
Williamson suggests that in advertising a product sign may be encoded as if it represents an abstract feeling: 'Happiness is a cigar named Hamlet'. Through adwork the product sign may go from representing the feeling to being that feeling. The product becomes the referent of 'happiness'. For Schwartz, the ad message has significance for the audience and the product is patterned into the message to produce a stimulus. Particular experiences of the addressee are associated with the product and become a product/stimulus. On seeing the product on display in the store, this stimulus should be recalled if the appropriate associations have been struck in the original ad message. The key factor for marketing strategists is in finding the appropriate association for the product in the ad and structuring the message in a recallable form.

Schwartz makes clear that those factors that make a message recallable are not merely a matter of what the advertising audience can remember. Rather, an ad will be recalled if it makes a strong enough impact on the individual receiver at the time of viewing, in ways that are meaningful for that person. Schwartz suggests that messages require the receiver to be the 'work force' in gaining information at different levels of message functions. It becomes necessary for a communicational semiotic approach to describe the relationship between the "work" the receiver must undergo in the interpretation of the message and the actual direction of such "work" effected by the way the message functions in communication acts. The semiotic

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and communicational models of structural-linguist Roman Jakobson has done much to help formalize the different functions of the message, each having a slightly different level of transmission of significance for the receiver. These functions are summarized in the following six definitions by Eco:

1. Referential Function: The message 'points to' something. It occurs in all normal processes of denotation and connotation, even if the intended reference tends to restrict to the minimum the semantic field which exists around a sign and to focus the receiver's attention on one single referent.

2. Emotive Function: The message tends to stimulate emotions (associations, projections, identifications).

3. Imperative or Conative Function: The message aims to command something, to persuade to an action.

4. Phatic or Contact Function: The message aims at establishing a psychological contact with the receiver (the most common form is the expression of a greeting).

5. Metalinguistic Function: The message speaks about another message or about itself.

6. Aesthetic Function: The message, even if it performs other functions, aims primarily to be considered as such, as a system harmonious at all levels and for all functions.35

The performance of these functions in the ad message suggests that different levels of meaning are being stressed. No matter how complex or variable the selection and combination of materials for advertising may be, it is important to remember that the functions of the message are the product of the emitter pursuing various formats and approaches in order to strike the 'responsive chord' of certain audiences. The work of Schwartz and Williamson comes close to representing what Jakobson identified as the emotive function of messages. As well, the two critics of advertising discuss how ads refer to things outside of the message form itself (Schwartz' 'resonance' and
Williamson's 'referent'). While it is true that advertisers communicate ideas concerning the nature of the referent (referential function), ads also express an attitude towards the referent object (product, thing signifying product): good or bad, desirable or hateful, beautiful or ugly. While Schwartz explains the emotive function in terms of affectivity for the audience, Williamson prefers the Pavlovian dog analogy in explaining, for instance, the "objective correlative."

Schwartz does, however, recognize the value of the referential function in his central concept of resonance. Market researchers, according to the ex-adman, should be able to establish the 'experiences and attitudes' people are likely to respond to, thus reducing the chances of the audience interpreting the ad incorrectly or not at all. Schwartz recommends that,

An advertiser's research should deeply explore the actual experiences people have with products in real-life situations, and structure stimuli in the commercials in such a way that the real-life experience will be evoked by the product....

Marketing research 'should' and does in fact instruct ad production in his strategy of representing 'actual experiences people have with products' would function for lifestyle advertising of such products as alcohol and cigarettes. Cancer, brown teeth, and drunk driving are more closely associated with those products than what is presently viewed in lifestyle ads. This is perhaps where a better understanding of the metalinguistic function (i.e., omit any references to the health
hazard) and the aesthetic function (i.e., do not surprise the audience with disharmonic ad forms and contents usually not associated with the discourse).

Kline and Leiss suggest that the marketplace is differentiated by different market audiences that 'respond to different cues or the same cues in different ways'. They agree with Schwartz's claim that advertisers attempt to combine and the "package of stimuli so that it resonates with information already stored within an individual, and thereby induces the desired learning or behavioural effects." Kline and Leiss emphasize the role of consumer market research as it establishes, for admen like Schwartz, the frames of references and for either general or specific audiences:

Through careful design, the brand's image could be based upon the analysis of the "decoding" or "interpretive" predilections of the consumer. It is the dimensions of interpretation that are controlled by the advertiser through this process of market research, in which he attempts to refine the symbolic dimensions of his products to suit various segments of the market. Here then is the origin of the dual symbolic process. Depending upon the marketing strategies, the brand's image can be developed either for mass markets by use of open codes of interpretation, or for specific markets by the use of more restricted codes.

Schwartz's articulation of the professional practices of advertising is solely fixed in mass audience terms; what above is called 'open codes' of audience interpretation. Kline and Leiss are sensitive to the 'restrictive codes' advertisers encode into ad messages. Hall's notion of codes 'structured in dominance' or 'preferred' must not be confused with the notion of 'restricted' or more closed codes, expressed by Kline and
Leiss. The first sense of preferred codes deals with how encoders attempt to restrict audience decoding through code selection. Encoders attempt to effect dominant cultural readings in messages that prefer one semantic domain over another. This relationship could occur as well when the same encoder directs 'target' messages to specific audiences with specific competencies (for examples, advertising audiences for children's or soap-opera programming on television). The second sense of codes provided by Kline and Leiss deal with the open or restricted nature of codes as viewed in the image that marketers and advertisers develop of audiences as mass-market or more specialized markets. Kline suggests therefore that:

Advertising as an industry mediates between commodity production and cultural production, as a message form it adopts, renders and shapes other cultural message systems, and most importantly, through research it appropriates the social structure of the market and the audience for media, and recycles them as a strategy that is targeted towards a segment of the population. 39

Market and consumer research investigates, as Schwartz states it should, what people think products do and what products actually mean for people in everyday life. This information is integrated into encoding strategies and recycled back to advertising audiences in terms of cultural settings and scenes which cue the audience.

Kline and Leiss argue that advertisers develop meaningful ad designs to suit both product type and market/audience predisposition. On the basis of their historical study of changing modes of representation and address in magazine
advertisements, they claim that advertising in the last two decades is moving away from perceiving the marketplace as a 'personality type'. This psychological approach, of cueing one common mass market on the basis of what they have in common - the structures of the reflective psyche - has been replaced by an advertising encoding trend based on the "growing specificity of advertising modes of address for particular product types and market segments".

To suggest that marketers and advertisers are informed by existing, observable consumer behaviours and attitudes or, conversely, consumer behaviours and attitudes are cued by the intentional marketing cues of ads, should not suggest an either/or proposition. Instead the two symbolic processes must be considered as a singular circuit or chain of determining moments within the advertising communication system. Market segmentation represents a new formation within the communication system which is reflected in the encoded phatic and and referential functions of contemporary ad messages. In particular, audience predispositions are being cued by selection of a wider variety of more specific codes of cultural reference combined in more dense clusterings of semantic elements in ads. The notion of advertisers talking to consumers 'through a relentless propaganda on behalf of goods in general' is inadequate given the growing fragmentation of markets and consumer cultural ideologies. Lifestyle ad messages do not attempt to persuade or command to an action (propaganda,
conative function dominating) in their mode of address as much as they once did. Today a growing trend exhibits the dominance of the level of meaning of messages manifestly centered in referential functions (those oriented towards the communication context, what is referred-to) and phatic functions (enlist the participation of the reader in the sharing of values, expression forms and of a communication relationship with the sender).

2.5 Market Segmentation

This section defines the marketing strategies and commercial message encoding intentions operating in the communication to specific groups of consumers. The advertising encoding structure does not view receivers in this communication system as primarily culturally distinct groups; rather the receiver is conceptualized first and foremost as part of an approachable market segment with certain consumer behaviours commonly held by this group. In the encoding stage of media segmentation - selecting a media audience in order to communicate to the desired market segment - the encoder must consider the preferred cultural reading codes and predispositions of the consumer group marketed to. Market segmentation does not entail the making of products for consumer groups, but entails the making of messages for consumer groups through which the meaning of products is communicated. This discussion of market segmentation identifies the motivations behind advertising messages cueing consumers in closed codes of
interpretation and in terms of the consumer's own predispositions.

In the modern context of intensive competition marketing, the roles of marketing and advertising have grown enormously to what is now characterized by Kline and Leiss as "life-style" advertising. Today producers must know not only what needs to serve, but also whose needs. As productive capacity and competition for markets grows, the choices of brands and product types in the consumer marketplace grows exponentially. Producers in the last few decades especially have reacted with a growing tendency of establishing different markets for production and distribution of goods and have consequently stimulated heterogeneous demand trends in consumer society. In a seminal statement, economists Ben Enis and Keith Cox sum up this major trend in terms of marketing strategies:

The theory of perfect competition assumes homogeneity among the components of both demand and supply sides of the market. But diversity or heterogeneity had come to be the rule rather than the exception. 

Growing prosperity has not meant a homogeneous consumption context of loyal purchasers of a small number of heavily-advertised brands. Rather, this prosperity has marked the movement away from a homogeneous mass of consumers. Pope explains that within the contemporary context of complex capitalist society, consumption patterns

...mirror the demographic and social fissures in American life. Leading brands do not conquer entire national markets; they share the market with other brands that appeal to different target groups.
Smith and Pope have used the term "market segmentation" in their discussion of marketer's reaction to demand diversity. Marketers use the strategy of segmentation to interpret a heterogeneous market (divergent demand) in which a number of smaller homogeneous markets, each with differing product preferences and social needs, are discernable as market segments. Rather than make different products for everyone, market research has indicated that it is "better therefore, to divide up the broader market and design a campaign that could attract a specific target audience with distinctive needs and desires." Market segmentation is the process of identifying groups of consumers with different consumptive needs. Philip Kotler, in one of the most widely used marketing textbooks in business schools across North America, states:

"Market segmentation, the most recent idea for guiding marketing strategy, starts not with distinguishing product possibilities, but rather with distinguishing customer groups. Market segmentation is the subdividing of a market into distinct subsets of consumers, where any subset may conceivably be selected as a market target to be reached with a distinct marketing mix. The power of this concept is that in an age of intense competition for the mass market, individual sellers may prosper through advertising brands for specific market segments whose needs are imperfectly satisfied by mass-market offerings."

Kotler acknowledges the importance of reaching a market segment through a distinct marketing mix -- through the communication of cultural producers to audiences whose consumer preferences are translated from preferences in media consumption (social constitution of readership). In the last 25 years, market segmentation has had tremendous impact on national
advertising campaigns. It has been responsible for complicating the institutional relations and practices of advertising agencies and marketing firms in their attempts at profiling and reaching the market through a patchwork of media/audience purchase selections. Specialization and differentiation of audience segments and media require diversity in the design of advertising programs (ad presentational forms and contents) and, more particularly, in the cultural forms and contents of ad messages themselves.

Segmentation campaigns are user-centered and focus on the desirability of the product user entering into a consumption community. Explicit product attributes are subordinated in this type of advertisement to carefully profiled images of lifestyle common to a recognizable consumption community. Once market research establishes the characteristics of basic demographic segmentation, i.e., age, sex, family life cycle and size, income, occupation, education, religion, nationality, and social class, intended markets are cued by a resultant lifestyle image in the ad. It should be added here, that media selection possibilities will have a great influence on the various lifestyle images chosen for the advertising appeal and this will be returned to later. In discussing the marketing approach to the concept of lifestyle, Kotler tells us that:

Lifestyle refers to the distinctive mode of orientation an individual or group has towards consumption, work and play. Such terms as hippies, swingers, straights, and jet-setters are all descriptive of different lifestyles. Marketers are increasingly being drawn to lifestyle segmentation. They are targeting versions of their
products to lifestyle groups and studying new product opportunities arising out of lifestyle analysis.

This notion of lifestyle guides the professional assumptions of advertisers and marketers in their attempts to define the market that is to be communicated through advertisements. Lifestyle is by no means the only type of information market researchers seek. For instance, psychographic segmentation research investigates consumer buying motives, product knowledge and product use. Lifestyle information is most significant for the selection by ad encoders of cultural references in ads and determining which media vehicles are best suited to advertising management and goals in segmentation strategies. Montrose Sommers has observed that in sophisticated ad encoding structures, the creative function and the media selection function are highly defined and specific in response to increasing segmentation of markets and increasing specialization of media. Lifestyle definitions of the marketplace are becoming more complex and essential for reaching the market.

The encoding process does not begin and end simply in the creation of an ad. Specific lifestyle and social psychological advertising appeals are derived from consumer behaviour analyses in a strategy of audience targeting through select media. Media audience demographics are defined by media segmentation analysis. Broadcast and publishing media have grown in the sophistication with which they market their space or time—their lifeblood and product of demographically defined audiences
to media buyers. Magazine advertising space is more suitable for lifestyle, user-centered campaigns because magazine audiences tend to be more selectively defined than in any other media. Magazines depend upon their editorial content securing a particular readership that is significantly large and affluent to make their advertising space marketable and profitable. Richard Pollay cites a description of this magazine marketing strategy as explicated by the marketing department of "Better Homes and Gardens":

Magazines are surely the most effective focusing instruments in the whole world of communications. They select definite areas of concern and interest. Therefore, they select audiences.... Magazines reach particular levels of education, lifestyle and responsiveness.*

The market segment can only be communicated to through the audience segment and no one knows this better than media buyers and magazine sales departments. What the advertising industry refers to as "lifestyle magazines" attract particular audiences with tightly identified leisure and consumption habits (i.e., skiing, micro computers, cars, exclusive fashion). As well, lifestyle ads in such publications include typical product categories of booze and cigarettes.* The nature of the product dictates in various degrees the level at which the representation of products will resonate or evoke meaning for the reader. Some products such as women's personal care items will appear in a women's fashion magazine in direct messages of assumed confidentiality and information, while cigarette ads appearing in the same publication may offer women the
opportunity to join the "liberated" or "professional" lifestyle of the "new woman" set. In this second type of product presentation where the product associations are less 'product-use' or information-related and are more accepting of lifestyle imagery and social display associations, advertisers seize upon the opportunity of having a culturally and socially defined audience. Advertisers have traded the advantage of speaking to massive non-descript audiences with the advantage of speaking to smaller well-defined audiences with certain tastes, beliefs, and knowledge. The latter media segmentation strategy necessitates ad contents and modes of address that will have definite meaning for the specified audience and that will respond to particular social needs, dreams and aspirations of the audience -- these contents and modes of address centered around the possession and consumption of products. In this respect, Leiss is correct in asserting that, unlike national mass-market appeals, segmentation advertising "makes generalizations risky." However, for national lifestyle ads, targeted towards specific audience segments, the product resonates with culturally specific reference systems that are not risky because they are based on audience/media segmentation data.

In the context of national television, in which audience segments are tightly defined at certain times of the day, Pope explains how the segmentation strategy influences the forms and contents of advertising messages:
Marketing strategists also effect the information content of advertisements. Focus strategies with their emphasis on user-centered appeals, may be most likely to subordinate product claims to "resonance". It is suggestive that, among the television commercials evaluated, ads appearing on weekday afternoons and on weekend mornings were the least informational. In these time periods, the audiences are likely to be narrowly defined (children and non-working women), and segmentation campaigns are the most suitable.***

In segmentation advertising of this type, resonance (a concept shared by both Pope and Schwartz) is confined to the determinations of audience predisposition rather than product information. Focus strategies rely on the implicit transmission of appropriate values in ad presentation. The media/audience relationship fixes the means (codes) that the encoder selects in the attempt to gain a preferred reading -- favorable product message. Anthropologist and marketing executive Walter J. Dickie explains that:

...choosing to buy or not to buy is a part of the system of symbols and meanings that Americans use to define themselves, and that purchase behavior can be understood as one of the structures of social interaction. People who choose "Miller Time" over "putting a little weekend into their week" with Michelob are choosing one symbol of themselves (tough, macho, hardworking, enjoying the comradery of one's buddies) over another (dress for success outfits, briefcases, semiprivate reveries of a more prosperous future with a few close friends). The advertising for these brands has invested them with symbolic values, enabling buyers to appropriate the brands as symbols expressing their social identities.50

Miller is marketed to the general mass market whereas Michelob is a more expensive superpremium marketed to the white-collar market. Two different markets are chosen for the two brands as are two different media usually chosen. The same company that produces Michelob has a brand that competes with
Miller. This brand is called Budweiser and the lifestyle imagery that is employed to sell this brand is similar to that described for Miller. The symbolic values for Budweiser and Miller are often those of the blue-collar working man's world when the mass beer-drinking market is addressed.

What this discussion of market segmentation should make evident is that the analysis of advertising messages cannot universalize or generalize the processes of conceptualizing and directing meaning and the manner in which resonance is achieved (particular referent systems chosen). In semiotic analysis, the differentiation of cultural reference systems, which is the primary objective of focus or segmentation strategies, is completely overlooked. In light of the growing specificity of media and lifestyle definitions of products for advertising, the semiotic methodology, which assumes the unifying cultural experience of the code, cannot adequately claim one decoding predisposition from which all meanings are taken. As Kline points out:

...such analyses fail to appreciate the relationship between a message system and its structured assimilation by audiences. The significance of advertising is therefore posed in terms of cultural values and social categories for the culture as a whole, rather than for individuals or socially differentiated groups. Such views have therefore tended to deny or overlook the process of market segmentation (Schudson 1981), differentiated meanings amongst subgroups and audiences.... 51

The semiotics of Barthes, Williamson, and Leymore do not mention the real decoding and consumer divisions evident in advertising as a symbolic system. Nor is there any attempt to
inform their analysis with the real intentions of marketers and advertisement encoders -- a segmentation strategy altering the way meaning is made in ads.

2.6 Commodity Totemism

Before turning to the primary methodological focus of developing an audience perspective in the analysis of meaning in advertising, it is worthwhile to attempt to more fully understand how goods become emblematic of different groups of consumers in the marketplace.

In segmentation advertising utilizing the lifestyle format of presentation, products and settings in their signifying relations come together in the text as a "situation emblematic of a particular way of life". On the basis of the implicit communication perspective of a double symbolic process, drawn out in the anthropology of Sahlins, Kline arrives at a summative description of three ways in which product images and consumptive lifestyle practices are signified totemically for market segments:

1. the totem object (object cluster) becomes the basis of symbolic relation upon which all other social relations are defined through membership.
2. membership in a totemic group entails proscriptions over social behaviour and social relations both within groups and between groups (food, clothing, rituals etc.).
3. the totemic structure of society provides the basic system of social classification pertaining to interpersonal interaction and judgement.

Kline's description of how goods give people social identities is phrased in terminology not uncommon to the
descriptive side of structural anthropology. For Kline the organization of social meaning that goods take on in ads and in our real social lives is not determined by the reflections of the linguistically based manipulations in dominant ideology, but is the product of real describable cultural relations and social meaning systems. The symbolic organization of the Michelob and Miller ads, described earlier, fit the theoretical suggestions of social relations defined through membership and their classification pertaining to interpersonal interaction.

Unlike Williamson's immanent approach to messages, Kline and Leiss prefer to frame their analysis on existing patterns of social and cultural behaviours identifiable in the visible product-person relationships of communicated ads. While lifestyle and group related consumption is not yet a fully realized dominant consumer form, Kline is convinced of its growing status in marketplace appeals. He cites ideal-typical examples from the significant ritual modes of object relations found in the consumption of clothes (jeans, punk, disco) and foods (health foods, junk foods). Group identities organized around consumption are indicated by these examples as well as coherently integrated lifestyle.

Advertising converts demographic lifestyle research data into specific modes of address, but do so by equating lifestyle within product market boundaries. Because, as Kline points out, "lifestyle is a little understood social category which seems to lie somewhere across the usual breakdowns of groups into roles.
and classes," advertisers must encode conservatively; that is, within the parameters of cultural reference codes common to the market segment's previous consumptive behaviours, its media consumption practices and its experience in the communication of similarly targeted ad messages using particular modes of address.

Advertisers, agencies, and consultant/suppliers operate in a competitive and comparison-oriented environment. The industry supplements product quality, lifestyle, basic market, psychographic, and media segmentation information in the encoding practices of advertising with information about the communication system's messages as a self-referential index -- what ads a particular market has received in the past and which ones appear to be most successful are the questions asked in gaining this last type of information. This information, as a source for encoding decision-making, can help explain the degree of autonomy the encoding structure enjoys (the first aspect of Sahlin's double symbolic process) and the fad and fashions in coding messages to particular market segments, at particular times and for certain products. 

Advertiser's and marketer's conception of how the audience reads advertisements is thus tempered by the consideration of what audiences have come to expect from the communication system and how the competition have encoded their messages to similar audiences.

In segmentation advertising the primary intent is not simply to present the product image in opposition to other
images of like products, as Williamson would have us understand it. Rather, advertisers seek to secure particular markets by emphasizing the phatic function in ad messages -- a shared, closed set of codes for interpretation by select audiences. By selecting appropriate "in references" for particular audience segments, the 'hey you' appellation or phatic function of the message is heightened on the basis of the predisposed desire of the addressee to be part of the social group connoted by these references. While it is not clear what the boundaries of these totemic group divisions are in society, segmentation campaigns of different brands for a similar market display curiously consistent images of the group they speak to evident in the totem group symbols used to define the social values of the products. Whether this is a product of media segmentation and audience information in the encoding practice, the autonomy of the industry in creating and directing newly discovered markets in fad and fashion-oriented ad presentations, or researching the totemic group differences in the marketplace and designing ads to suit these groups preferred reading codes, it is clear that consistently different cultural references are used to reach different market segments.
2.7 The Role of the Decoding Audience

It was earlier noted that marketing strategies can effectively generate brand images for either mass markets (open codes of interpretation) or specific markets (restricted or closed codes of interpretation). This is a correct assumption to make when talking about how marketers view their communication relationship with the two types of markets. It does not, however, tell us much about what actually goes on between the objective message and the audience nor does it tell us about how an audience makes meaning from an ad that perhaps another audience would not.

Schwartz argues that when the audience is conceptualized as actively participating or "working" in the taking of meaning, "the experiences and attitudes people bring to a viewing or listening situation become active elements in our advertising effort." This concept of participation in decoding finds expression in the semiotics of Pierre Guiraud. Guiraud explains that various messages require various degrees of participation and attention of the reader. Messages have more attention value if the object of the message (the referent) holds the receiver's interest. Guiraud suggests that this type of interest "is of an intellectual kind and it stems from the pleasure obtained in reconstructing and interpreting [the referent]." A message that offers many referents and that is not overcoded is going to more fully involve the receiver's participation, if in fact the
receiver can competently decode the references made. From the same point of view, a message that is too highly programmed is uninteresting and demands less participation from a certain type of receiver. Guiraud suggests that this "is true of any art in which stereotyped rhetoric makes interpretation too easy, and of any overcoded message in which redundancy causes the receiver's attention and interest to flag." These two types of messages (more or less programmed) suggest two different roles in reading.

Umberto Eco, in The Role Of The Reader, provides a sophisticated semiotic methodology for examining the reading process in the communication of popular cultural narratives. Based in a theoretical account similar to that of Hall's dominant and restricted reading codes, Eco's perspective seems to reject a purely immanent analysis and the implications of such analyses that all mass cultural production operate through open codes of interpretation. In explaining his concepts of open and closed texts Eco tells us that:

What I call open texts are reducing indeterminacy, whereas closed texts, even though aiming at eliciting a sort of 'obedient' cooperation, are in the last analysis randomly open to every pragmatic accident.... The author has thus to foresee a model of a possible reader (hereafter Model Reader) supposedly able to deal interpretively with the expressions in the same way as the author deals generatively with them.... Those texts that obsessively aim at arousing a precise response on the part of more or less precise empirical readers (be they children, soap-opera addicts, doctors, law-abiding citizens, swingers, Presbyterians, farmers, middle-class women, scuba divers, effete snobs, or any other imaginable socio-psychological category) are in fact open to any possible 'abberant' decoding. A text so immoderately 'open' to every possible interpretation
Eco draws the notion of particular audience participation into a discussion of the functions of the text. In the ideal-typical open text the readings by receivers, regardless of socio-psychological backgrounds, will be decoded commonly. In closed texts the encoder does not take into account that his produced text may be interpreted in meaning codes different from those he intended; the encoders of such texts have in mind a target addressee in a given social communication context. For Eco, the open text can sustain multiple thematic or symbolic interpretation while the closed text cannot achieve its desired meaning through such variant decodings.

If we turn for the moment to the communication context of segmentation advertising directed at more or less precise empirical readers, 'aberrant' decoding is a communicational mishap avoided by the encoding structure in their ability to specify, through control in distribution, the receiving context of market audiences. Both the text and context of the communicated message effectively presuppose the type of reader interpreting the ad and through media segmentation analysis, the reader is fixed within a guiding socio-psychological category. This inscription of the socio-psychologically identified reader predisposition is encoded into the message at the level of effectivity which Eco terms an "extratextual competence":

Thus it seems that a well-organized text on the one hand presupposes a model competence coming, so to speak, from outside the text, but on the other hand works to build up, by merely textual means, such a competence...
Eco's cultural and semiotic perspective of the text implies the study of shared codes of meaning. Borrowing Ricouer's notion of text, culture can be conceptualized as an "assemblage of texts": culture is governed by a repertoire of texts imposing models of behaviour and codes in use. The reader never interprets a text independently from his knowledge of other texts based on common codes. Eco explains that in learning language a "child is trained through exposure to a continuous textual performance of pre-fabricated strings of that language, and he is expected to absorb his competence even though not completely conscious of the underlying rules." Eco argues that there are entire discourses that we do not have to interpret and decode because they have been already experienced in analogous circumstances or contexts. The reader can often fill in the omissions of elements of a text because the reader already knows, through competence in the particular code or discourse, what the sender is going to say or means. Competence in reading always operates on the basis of codes that may not be manifestly present in a particular text. These types of coding range from "socially defined procedures (such as the hero's obligatory death in a classical tragedy) to a sort of discursive competence whereby anyone can guess that a phrase in a spoken context of a conversation implies such and such a presupposition." This establishes an important conceptual difference between what is "conventionally" implicated and what is implicated 'conversationally' (i.e., depending on the individual memory, on
an imprecise and non-explicit rule, on a weakly contracted agreement).

The sense of competence that is most useful in the semiotic analysis of texts is that of cultural knowledge and group dialectics (i.e., a cultural perspective) rather than that of the cognitive ideolecets of individuals. The notion of culture conceived as a system of used competence is, as Roger Kessing argues,

... not all of what an individual knows and thinks and feels about his world. It is his theory of what his fellows know, believe, and mean, his theory of the code being followed, the game being played, in the society into which he is born.6*

From this formulation of competence we can identify through analysis of groupings of texts that the intended readers, for whom these texts are encoded, do not necessarily share the same "theory" of the cultural code. Not all social members know all the various systems of meaning in different social formations. Kessing suggests this conceptual framework can help plot the distribution of variant versions of competence among subgroups and make possible the study of the processes of change in conceptual codes as well as in patterns of social behaviour. It is this sense in which the concept must be pursued in our analysis of advertising as social communication -- observable in differentiated textual forms and contents.

With regard to textual analysis, Eco explains that extratextual competence is a matter of the codes the addressee has access to through intertextual frames and common frames. His
The concept of intertextual frames relates to the performance of particular texts to the addressee's competent knowledge of, and previous experiences in other texts available in his culture. This relational process assumes that readers have previously decoded various texts, and that this decoding is stored in the readers' memories to be called upon as a textual competence. Competence in texts can be understood here as a series of generic recognitions of culturally articulated forms and contents in any new ad reader/text encounter. Eco uses the term intertextual instead of simply textual frames because of the fact that these frames are constructed out of the readers' experiences in decoding texts linked by certain topical and structural elements that define a discourse. For example, "westerns" are linked by a common topical discourse of story-telling of the adventures of the early American west centered on the lives of cowboys and gunslingers. In the discourse of "western" films, one learns to expect certain coding conventions of the narrative structure such as: the cowboy dressed in black will inevitably be the villain.

Competence in certain discourses reduces ambiguity in the reception of new texts/messages of that discourse and each occasion of receiving a new message has the potential of fortifying or altering the readers' competencies.

As well, Eco points out that various readers possess common frames which originate from the "storage of encyclopedic knowledge and are mainly rules for practical life." These
frames depend on the social positioning of the reader and reflect the historical and patrimonial dimension of decoding. Eco understands this type of frame in a conceptualization of cultural "theories" of readers earlier found in Keissing's theory of the cultural code. Different experiences in different cultural formations renders different reading capabilities and preferences. It is possible to identify major differences in common frames based on readers' social histories of experience from particular cultural points of view. In a review of Eco's idea of common frames, William Hendricks notes:

While people's daily experiences in a given culture may have more intersubjectivity than their reading habits, there still remains the potential for major differences (subculture); a person brought up in New York City has daily experiences quite different from those of someone raised on a farm in Iowa.66

The communication approach of encoding and decoding can put into practice this apparently abstract notion of different competencies (based on psychosocial categories) only if the objective material of texts are analyzed. The text does not only effect recognitions, in the readers' decodings, of forms structures and themes from other texts. The text may cue recognitions from readers' codes of daily practical knowledge and practice and require these codes in the taking of meaning in messages. The more esoteric textual codes tend to have been encoded into the message with a particular focus in mind -- these codes within the message are all chosen from a consistent frame of what the "Model Reader" can recognize and use. Codes based on the frameworks of cultural knowledge of the person
brought up in New York City (i.e., time passing signified by being caught in downtown rush hour traffic) will be alien and ineffective in a message, such as a tractor ad, for the reader brought up in Iowa who is being told that planting season will soon be here (i.e., time passing signified by the sun being up during the time for a particular recognized morning chore).

In Eco's notions of intertextual and common frames is observed the idea of symmetry or alignment between the moments of encoding and decoding. Eco appropriately takes advertising as an ideal example of risked alignments in codes chanced by encoding ad messages in closed textual forms for select "Model Readers". These forms risk 'aberrant' decoding; that is, unforeseen by the encoder. Eco states that closed texts...

... seem to be structured according to an inflexible project. Unfortunately, the only one not to have been 'inflexibly' planned is the reader.... Better, they presuppose an average reader resulting from a merely intuitively sociological speculation - in the same way in which an advertisement chooses its possible audience. It is enough for these texts to be interpreted by readers referring to other conventions or oriented by other presuppositions, and the result is incredibly disappointing.67

Clearly, Eco is not fully aware of the precise audience research and media segmentation analysis information advertisers have at their disposal for identifying and cueing the "Model Reader". This information is the key for advertisers avoiding 'incredibly disappointing results' of asymmetry of codes used in the communication of ad messages. Yet, Eco is correct in his identification of the fundamental problematic to be overcome by the advertising encoding structure -- admen in selecting their
image of the audience (Model Reader) must try to encode their messages for the highest possible yield in planned, effected meaning (ultimately a positive product association resulting in purchase behaviour). Eco's semiotic framework of open and closed texts brings the problematic of certain encoder-decoder contexts of communication to the level of textual analysis of forms and contents of ad messages themselves. His approach suggests the comparison of a certain text under study with other texts and discourses the identified readers may have experience or competence in. As well, it suggests the comparison of message structures and culturally mediated reference codes with the social and cultural predispositions of audiences for whom messages are intended.

2.8 The Empirical Nature of the Decoding Subject

Eco provides not only a theoretical framework for the "Model Reader", but also the conceptualization of decoding contexts of empirical readers (those actually reading the text rather than those the text is simply encoded for). However, Eco's discussion of open and closed texts and the extratextual frames they suggest does not formally integrate the empirical addressee into his analyses of narrative text structures' effect on decoding. Eco prefers to remain in the tautological methodology of defining the reader as the one the text prefers, without fully developing the true sociological or cultural
predispositions of empirical readers in common frames and intertextual habits/ experience.

Attempts have been made to situate empirical reading audiences based on a static sociological model of class and language. In such conceptualizations of audience reading Basil Bernstein and Frank Parkin develop two sociological approaches positing a one-to-one correspondence of social structure positioning of readers and discourses: language is dealt with ascribed by and inscribed in class position. The meaning of messages is analyzable, not simply by the overdeterminations of the text, but by the overdeterminations of the social position the decoding subject.

Bernstein, in *Class, Codes, and Control*, suggests that "employment category" is useful for situating the political and ideological predispositions of language users at the decoding end of communication. Dave Morley points to the obvious shortcomings of this audience perspective in semiotic studies:

This position cannot be defended or sustained. It is based on a too simplistic notion of how classes are constituted, and on the ascription of fixed ideologies to whole classes. There is no concept of signifying practices, their relative autonomy and specific effects.... There is no simple alignment between the economic, the ideological in the constitution of classes. Classes do not have fixed, ascribed or unitary world views. 68

Bernstein's analysis suggests boundaries for the operation of codes fixed in a crude stratification model of decoding and language use. It is difficult to incorporate his a priori claims of audience predisposition into a methodology which is concerned
primarily with signifying practices and the relations between audiences and the message's meaning.

Parkin's "dominant", "negotiated" and "oppositional" descriptions of audience decoding has been used by Hall in formulating a hypothetical set of different positions from which messages are decoded by differentiated readers. Parkin suggests that audiences share (dominantly decode), partly share (reading is negotiated between dominant and reader's own different codes of interpretation), or do not share (decode using very different oppositional codes) those codes that the message and "dominant definitions of social reality" prefer. Again, these decoding positions are related through a sociological, a priori definition of class position. Similarly, this audience perspective can be faulted on "the simple ascription of these positions to to classes as such or, alternatively, the deduction of them from socio-economic positions in some prior manner."69

However, Parkin makes a valuable contribution in his work on negotiated codes and the possibility of the reader imposing his own preferred codes of interpretation and extratextual frames. Parkin brings our attention to the question of where meaning systems originate and out of which discourses they are drawn by encoders and decoders, whose selection of reading codes may differ. In a example of Parkin's 'negotiation of codes,' Hall explains how a television news message about an Industrial Relations Bill can be encoded within one "situated logic" preferred by the message, and decoded from the different
reading codes that empirical readers choose:

At the level of the 'national interest' economic debate the decoder may adopt the hegemonic definition agreeing that 'we must all pay ourselves less in order to combat inflation'. This, however, may have little or no relation to his/her willingness to go on strike for better pay and conditions or oppose the Industrial Relations Bill at the level of the shop-floor or union organization.\textsuperscript{70}

The television message is encoded within the dominant ideological discourse of the television news media which selects codes that contextualize the event as 'a story of national significance'. Readers of the story come to its viewing as a mass audience competent in the fundamental codes necessary for an understanding of the national news discourse (i.e.: television, magazine, newspaper, and radio news). However, if the reader is a machinist for whom the message will have definite significance at the reading levels of his common frames and institutional worker relations discourse (the shop floor), other non-media reading codes may be operating in decoding. If the viewer is a white-collar, corporate executive, for instance, there would be expected no such problematic of the dominant meanings (codes) going against the grain of the decoders common frames and institutional and social position. Parkin refers to this type of contradictory decoding (the machinist as news decoder) as a product of 'split levels of consciousness' and implies, as domination theorists would, that one of these levels is a product of 'false consciousness' while the other level is more articulated by a more real awareness of one's position in the work-a-day world. Parkin's explanation of the constitution
of the subject is inflexibly set in the predeterminations of social class and cannot, therefore, consider other extratextual determinations of the subject/text encounter; that is, the subject's competence in several discourses (media or practical social discourses) which may result in a non-homologous reading. Consequently, Parkin's indication of 'split levels of consciousness' is, in fact, an indication of the reader realizing, through his competence in two discourses (national news media and shop floor negotiation and politics), two different meanings -- one more determined by the message structure and the other more self-centered, arising from the effectivity of common frames on reading.

Morley employs the concepts of interdiscourse and interpellation to modify the sociological perspective of audience used by Parkin. For Morley, audiences and their characteristic competencies in reading can be defined by studying the interrelations of discourses and by tracing the codes used in particular media messages back to their original contexts where they are learned by audiences (which may be media decoding activity itself). Morley's concept of the subject offers a sociological sophistication to Williamson's notion of the message appelling the addressee into a ready-made 'subject space'. Morley suggests that each appellation is not an independent construction of a 'subject space' whose processes are confined to one discourse (i.e., adwork/advertising), but rather, appellations are interconnected by the fact that some
audiences will experience them and others will not. The 'subject space' is more a result of particular audience reading habits and experience (what empirical readers bring to the reading of a text and how encoders conceive of this in terms of a particular image of the model reader) than it is a result of a particular message structure, or rules of a discourse, for that matter. Morley emphasizes the difference between the 'subject space' a particular text prefers in its discursive operations and the process in which empirical readers, previously interpellated as 'subjects' throughout their histories for a multiplicity of discourses, are interpellated by particular texts. Readers do not simply become subjects constituted by a single textual appellation. It is the patterns of discourse use - what discourses are consumed by various individuals and what 'subject spaces' these audience-linked discourses construct around habitual reading preferences - that mark out what Morley calls an interdiscourse or discursive formation. Morley explains that at the moment of decoding,

other discourses are always in play besides those of the particular text in focus -- discourses which depend on other discursive formations, brought into play through the 'subjects' placing in other practices - cultural, educational, institutional.\(^7\)

In many respects Morley's conceptualization of the reading of texts resembles Eco's earlier formulation of extratextual competence. Both suggest the necessary interrelations between a text, its discursive formation and the discourses an audience will be competent in and refer to in reading. Both suggest that
audiences are defined by cultural producers who construct messages for them and both discuss communication from the perspective of an intentional semantics and a pragmatic concern with contexts of encoding and decoding. Using Parkin's example of decoding in a negotiated code, Morley argues that the same 'worker' is a contradictory subject, traversed by different discursive practices (i.e., national news subject and class/sectional/subject). This subject is conceived as already competently constituted in other discursive practices and social relations which do not relate to class alone. Morley and other Marxist analysts of the cultural production and reception of messages have come to realize that the matching of audiences and their reading codes and encoder concepts of these matchings do not fall into lines of social class divisions and the definitions of model readers along these divisions.

Morley is concerned with the match of extratextual competencies required in decodings by audiences and discursive formations linked by common codes in cultural references and mode of address. The meanings of a text depends on the discursive competencies brought to the encounter with the text by particular audiences. The delimiting factor for the semiotic analysis of reading is the "repertoire of discourses" at the disposal of different audiences. Morley takes up Willemen's suggestion that, individuals do have different relations to sets of discourses, in that their position in the social formation, their positioning in the real, will determine which sets of discourses a given subject is likely to
encounter and in what ways it will do so. 72 Although it is true that audiences are situated economically, politically, and ideologically by virtue of the shared experiences within social and of cultural formations, this does not completely restrict nor accurately reflect, for the purpose of audience reading analysis, what texts/discourses audiences will read and how they will read them. For these answers we must look at actual texts and the discourses known to be decoded by one common audience. Textual analysis of media messages in any communication context will simply verify that meaning systems are not perfectly contained within the hypothetical boundaries of class readings, but are more accurately defined as originating out of a multiplicity of discourses from various subject positions traversing these boundaries. Subject position is no longer that position created by the text/individual psyche encounter, but a more stable position established by different media and non-media discourses converging on a type of reader defined as a model audience/media market by encoders and the cultural practitioners of a select repertoire of discourses. Discursive formations mediate between various cultural locations of subject space and the actual decoding practices of audiences. By knowing what discourses and common frames a group of readers actively participate in it is possible to make cultural assumptions about what meaning this group is likely to take from a particular message and also where encoders of the message have borrowed outside of their own discourse for the construction of meaning.
Morley is compelled to identify 'key sites' for the learning of discourse preferences and competencies. For Morley, these 'key sites' are those identified as performing the fundamental processes of socialization in society. Morley borrows Bernstein's idea that two such sites are the institutional sites of the family and the school. As well, gender and immediate social context or cultural milieu influence which specific discourses enter into the formation of discursive repertoires - a discursive space - and establish a discursive range. Most important for the study of media production and consumption is how the patterned distribution of the discourses of the media and other forms of mass cultural production create culturally different discursive competencies between audiences.

The research practices of advertising use information about the social structure of the market and about audience relationships to media (i.e., lifestyles, consumption styles, segmentation analysis of media use by cultural groups), and it is these practices which are responsible, as well, for the cohesion of particular discursive sets through segmentation media marketing and production. These practices establish and define the forms of the text/reader relation at the level of mode of address. The magazine audience is rendered addressable and the audience's competencies in a discursive cultural position is defined for audiences through media and market segmentation analysis. This research activity enables advertisers to isolate not only consumer preferences but also a
range of discourses which can be selected from and employed referentially in ad forms and contents to cue particular audiences. While the market segment may be initially identified by social relations of product use by brand and type, it must be communicated to through the audience segment (defined by media use and most contributing discourses for the definition of discursive space). The growing sophistication in segmentation marketing and audience/totem group address in ads is largely a function of the specification of media contents in specific contexts of encoding and decoding made possible by the media industries and appropriated by advertising for similar heterogeneous markets.

Discursive space, as an analytic concept, is useful in the pragmatic study of how meaning is constructed in advertising — as an empirical fact of social communication. Discourses and texts referred to in the advertising discourse have a material, definable existence as media and other forms of cultural production; that is, they are intentional cultural artifacts. An ad for beer targeted towards a market segment of 30 to 55 year old men refers the addressee to famous sports celebrities of yesterday, famous comedians and humor styles, the ethnographic context of an executive board-room, and a celebrity "roast" type presentation of characters. For the ad to be decoded effectively and meaningfully it requires the audience to be competent with these select discourses. The semiotic method can examine these discourses in a comparative analytic framework, that not only
reveals how the product gains meaning from the various levels of signification, but also what makes the referred-to discourses in the ad suitable and common as a reference set for communication to the 30 to 55 year old, male, white-collar audiences. In this example all the referential discourses exhibit densities of relations of common modes of address and composite reliance on a consistent pattern of habitual media consumption. Without detailed sociological and pragmatic investigations into the nature of the relationship of the 30 to 55 year old, male audience to all these referential discourses, one is able to suggest the type of viewer and his socio-cultural predispositions (i.e., media habits) from the objective material of the ad message. The performance of the audience in viewing the ad is the performance of this interdiscourse. In what could be defined in the metacommunicational function of segmentation ads, an understanding of the discursive space of the targeted audience takes the forms of both a logic of cultures and the expression of lifestyle emblems of the audience. The range and repertoire of discourses this audience is competent in, likewise, precludes a favourable or accurate reading of the discourses of new wave poster art, ethnographic displays of punk culture, or the type of cynical "Saturday Night Live" humor referred to in youth market beer ads.

The understanding of densities of relations in a collection of referred-to discourses of the ad presupposes that the various cultural forms are motivated by contextual demands of
their use by differentiated audiences. It is the competencies of particular audiences possessing different discursive repertoires and locked into ideological constructs (ideology in the anthropological sense) resulting from their use of particular discourses that sets the terms of contextual demands. Structural analyses which incorporate this methodological consideration of systems of structures or interdiscourse can expect to find common links between various separate discourses and meaning systems. By comparing the discursive references of a text with the the original context of communication of that discourse (i.e., historical, sender/receiver relationship, social and cultural contents of the discourse, media used), it is possible for semiotic analysis to explain referent systems, not merely as "emptied" or as "ideological myth" assumed by an audience at the level of the structured text, but as systems of expression used by particular encoders/decoders. These systems are ideological in the sense that they belong to specific cultural contexts of their use by certain groups in society and are culturally produced with these groups in mind (including specific marketing motives and strategies structured into these messages). As Kress correctly tells us, such a multilevel analysis provides no answer to the ideological definition of popular culture; it does provide a working methodology. Structural analysis would have to incorporate this methodology: not to confine itself to the analysis of discrete entities, but to take as its proper object of attention systems of structures (which is in fact the practice of anthropologists).
This structuralist approach encourages a more extensive and sophisticated cultural study of how systems of structures or separate discourses are connected outside of the discrete text which refers to and therefore uses them. For the ad message encoded with a model reader in mind, social and cultural meaning is transferred from mentioned discourses to the product. These discourses are not chosen arbitrarily but on the basis that they are linked into a system of structures (discursive forms) that are appropriate for the model reader because they are used by him. The reader identifies himself with the meaning of these discourses and in various degrees interprets the world through these discourses. Revealing the patterns of discursive repertoires of groups in society is not intended to provide an exhaustive encyclopedia of a group's sociocultural lexicon. It does provide a way of limiting the possible ways in which a group reads a reference by defining the original semantic spectrum and pragmatic circumstances in which the group reads. In the case of advertising, which as a discourse talks to totemic/audience groups in terms of their own predisposed discourses, a study of the systems of structures in ad communication contexts should reveal selection of referential discourses from a predetermined discursive repertoire belonging to what advertisers believe to be audience/market targets.
2.9 Borrowed Discourses And A Comparative Method

This section explains why it is significant for the study of meaning in advertisements to understand patterns of selectivity in ad references that have originally had meaning for particular cultural groups in other contexts of communication. The recontextualization of these discourses as semantic reference in ads is not a process of emptying original meaning, but of recasting it. Often these references in ads are condensed signals of meaningful discourses the empirical reader recognizes with ease due to his competence in the expanded and elaborate use of the discourse. For instance, the discourse of fashion will be more apparent in its codes, rhetoric (overcoding), and more subtle cultural nuances as practiced in the reading of volumes of fashion magazines, discussion with other fashion enthusiasts, and the attending of fashion shows, than in a brief reference to fashion in an advertisement for a perfume. It is very likely that the perfume ad audience will also be competent in the fashion discourse, but it is only by comparing the ad discourse with the fashion discourse that the semiotician may tease out the full significance of the reference and how exactly it gives meaning to the product.

The methodology of comparing systems of meaning and studying their relations to the advertising discourse has been loosely applied in John Berger's immanent analysis in *Ways of Seeing*. Berger specifically looks at how the discourse of oil
painting is borrowed or "quoted by", and aesthetically and functionally similar to advertising layout presentation. He compares the presentational genre of oil painting, along with its social value connotations, imagery, and pragmatic contexts of its use as a medium, with ad messages, some of which borrow from the oil painting discourse. In his statement of comparing the two media, Berger argues that:

The continuity, however, between oil painting and publicity goes far deeper than the 'quoting' of specific paintings. Publicity relies to a very large extent on the language of oil painting. It speaks in the same voice about the same things. Sometimes the visual correspondences are so close that it is possible to play a game of 'Snap' - putting almost identical images or details side by side. It is not, however, just at the level of exact pictorial correspondence that the continuity is important: it is at the level of sets of signs used.75

The product sign enters into a contiguous relation with the visual layout of the ad: the product image is superimposed over or positioned in the layout. The layout of the ad operates in a continuous or analogic semiotic relation by resembling a known piece of art or genre. Berger's paradigmatic consideration of art reference in the ad and the discourse of oil painting in more formal semiotic terms identifies signification processes of metonymy (the layout is part of the genre, stylistic rules connect) and metaphor (the layout is like a particular painting). The discourses of advertising and oil painting assume a commonness in mode of address -- they speak to the "spectator-owner" (of a piece of art) and the same addressee as "spectator-buyer" (of the product) "in the same voice about the
The importance of the correspondence between these two media is, for Berger, at the "level of the sets of signs used". Berger argues that the art discourse as a media has been "learned" in different social institutional and cultural contexts within a system of structures familiar to cultivated audiences. Unfortunately, he does not explain on what basis the art discourse is part of a contemporary discursive repertoire of any particular audience. Berger only concludes that advertising's selection of imagery "forces the majority to define their own interests as narrowly as possible" without explaining on what cultural reading predispositions this definition takes place.

There is another way of explaining the continuous representation of one discourse through semiotic analogy in another (i.e., advertising). The movement of meaning structures from discourses outside of advertising to references within the structure of the ad message can be explained with the help of Levi Strauss's concept of "bricolage". Williamson uses bricolage in her discussion of how ads borrow "odds and ends" from external meaning systems in which these signs have original significance. The notion of the transfer of meaning from other discourses into the ad system, can be thought of, from Williamson's perspective, in the same way as Levi-Strauss explains here that rites and myths "take to pieces and reconstruct sets of events (on a physical, socio-historical or
technical plane) and use them as so many indestructible pieces for structural patterns in which serve alternatively as ends and means."?7 Williamson tells us that these "indestructible pieces" exist unconsciously "in our heads" and it is through us that these structural patterns "partake of historicity". It must be argued, however, that the effectivity of this process of transference should not be left to the psychologistic and mass culture definitions of sign use that plague Williamson's study. Culturally indescript subjects-in-general do not borrow meaning from one discourse for another, rather bricolage requires that the borrowed object be used in different and new cultural context other than the one it originates from. Bricolage is an anthropological concept designed to explain the movement of structured meanings from one discursive context to another in a society. The concept has proven to be extremely useful in explaining the evolution of lifestyles of subcultural formations very much involved in what Kline earlier explains as totemic group meaning systems. Cultural anthropologist and sociologist John Clarke explains the structured improvisations of bricolage in a theory of communication between different cultural sectors (subcultures):

Together, object and meaning constitute a sign, and, within any one culture, such signs are assembled, repeated, into characteristic forms of discourse. However, when the bricoleur re-locates the significant object in a different position within that discourse, using the same overall repertoire of signs, or when that object is placed within a different total ensemble, a new discourse is constituted, a different message conveyed.?
The use of this concept in explaining how sign systems take on new meaning when relocated in a new discourse or ensemble may be used to explain the exchange of meaning between subcultures defined by their lifestyle interests, conspicuous consumption behaviours and ritual displays. To use bricolage to explain the process of advertising creating new cultural discourses for particular totemic groups in the selection of meaning in targeted ads assumes an incorrect usage of the concept. If these target ads are to be successfully decoded by an audience, then there can be little recontextualization of the borrowed signs which the audience already use to define themselves within a coherently integrated lifestyle set. An ad targeted to youth, white-collar executives, or blue-collar sports fanatics is not going to experiment with cultural signs and references from other distinct lifestyle groups - other discourses that are not already familiar - unless, of course, the intent of the message is humorous disorientation. Bricolage does not occur at the sign level of encoded and decoded messages meanings of signifiers from what they are in advertising. Advertisers do not wish to change the cultural signs from their significance in original discourses to a reworked meaning they bear in the signification of goods. It is the goods that change meaning in a flexible way, not the referent signifiers.

What Williamson and others have mistaken for bricolage in advertising is in fact the process where encoders select cultural references to signify a product. This constitutes an
appropriation but does not necessarily change the essential meaning of these cultural signs. If, for instance, a reference is made to the revolutionary values of the Woodstock generation in the selling of a home computer, the actual recontextualization of the referred-to meanings will have already taken place in the co-optation and commercialization effected in other cultural arenas (i.e., the music industry, mass media) before advertisers will use it. By drawing an external discourse into the advertising discourse, the advertiser is borrowing already worked-upon meanings. This may work to help maintain an act of bricolage effected originally elsewhere, but this does not constitute an act of bricolage.

Williamson correctly explains that advertising uses "its own form as a referent system; and it relies on our recognizing that form".79 The fad and fashion trends of competitive marketing set definitions for such presentational formats as "lifestyle" ads in the technical, artistic and rhetorical codes employed. Encoders assume that the advertising discourse is a recognizable system with certain structures deemed more appropriate than others in particular circumstances of communication to audiences. The encoder borrows presentational styles of other ad texts and sometimes whole semantic and syntactic structures are referred to. A soap ad format may be utilized (for humorous affects) to sell television sets in a type of advertising self-parody. Pepsi ads mirror Coke ads and vice versa. Ads in magazines will be condensations of their more
elaborate television counterparts. Ads within a particular product campaign can develop along a structured theme of associations with increasing omissions of material that has been seen in its previous ads ("Chanel" ads finally omit Deneuve's face leaving only the bottle). These self-contained omissions and borrowing of materials are all based on the assumption of the audience's habitual media habits.

Similarly, marketers analyze the successes and failures of the presentation and reception of concepts and imagery in other areas of mass cultural production and access their value for favourable product association. Star Wars imagery and themes are selected for ads selling razors, television sets, and cars. What Kline and Leiss describe as the "fluidity" of product associations is, in especially segmentation contexts of communication, guided by encoder evaluations of audience habitual media use.

Segmentation lifestyle advertisement encoding borrows less from pre-existing marketing strategies of the ad discourse and more from the media imagery found in cultural productions peculiar to the targeted audience's habitual reading experience. Perhaps this may be due to the relatively short history and limited volume of appeals to particular market segments. In other words, within the advertising discourse itself there may not be many ads that have interpelled the particular desired group, thus creating a precedent for cueing them in terms of their own predispositions. It is with this notion in mind that
it seems credible to posit that encoders borrow imagistic styles, references, and modes of address from other media production discourses that have been consumed for a longer period and with proven interest (market success) by specific audience/market segments. In an example from the analysis of beer advertisements which follows, ads targeted to youth market audiences borrow the presentational styles, references, and marketing strategies evidenced in the discourses of the record album cover and poster art for the same basic market.

In the chapters which follow this methodological discussion, the notions of open and closed texts and the sociological structuralist concept of interdiscourse and discursive repertoires shall be applied to the communication processes evidenced in advertisement presentational forms directed to mass and segmented audiences/markets. Many of the semiotic concepts provided in Barthes' and Williamson's analysis of the syntagmatic structure of the ad will be retained within a more pragmatic perspective of encoder intentionality in sign selection and selection of discursive references.


5. Williamson, Decoding Advertisements, p. 100.


7. Williamson, Decoding Advertisements, p. 28.


9. Williamson, Decoding Advertisements, pp. 43-44.


12. Peirce from the semiotic point of view in logistics believed that 'a sign' is anything which determines something else - to refer to an object to which itself refers (its object) - in the same way the interpretant (signified in Saussurean terms) becomes in turn a sign and so on ad infinitum. The difference between these two concepts of objects and resultant concepts is in Saussure's reliance on psychological processes of the human receiver.


15. This approach is contrary to Hall's perspective of
'historical materialism' which requires the examination of differences among 'real' subjects in different social formations -- different forms of subjectivity in different societies at different points in time. In many ways Hall's perspective is similar to that of Ewen's, save for Ewen's claim of 'Mass Culture'.

19. Ibid., p. 29.
25. Ibid., p. 128.
26. Ibid., p. 128.
27. Ibid., p. 129.
28. Ibid., p. 132.
29. Ibid., p. 134.


38. Ibid., p. 18.


40. Ibid., p. 1.


43. Ibid., p. 258.


45. Ibid., p. 147.


52. Ibid., p 20.

53. Ibid., p. 35.
54. Ibid., p. 35.


56. Schwartz, The Responsive Chord, p. 73.


59. With regard to Schwartz's notion of stimulating appropriate emotional resonance in product messages as an important guarantee of audience participation, Guiraud explains that messages can produce a purely affective interest for the receiver because they imply the receiver is in a communication relationship with a significant sender. Here the intellectual/cognitive aspect of interest is minimal and depends upon a codification and socialization of the message at the expense of its information content. Eco's following theory prefers the cognitive/referential aspect of reader participation, but leaves the door open for a consideration of the more affective aspect in his notion of extratextual knowledge.


61. Ibid., p. 8.


63. Ibid., p. 137.


69. Ibid., p. 172.


76. Ibid., p. 135.


III. A Sample Defined: Media and Product Market Contexts of Communication

The semiotic methodology for the study of reference in segmentation advertisement texts requires elaboration in a selected sample. The general assumption of the connection and specificity of referent signifiers in ads targeted to particular audiences/markets needs verification of a more empirical nature based in actual analysis of material texts in real contexts of advertising encoding and decoding relations. This chapter introduces the sample and the pragmatic circumstances of its communication (the sender and receiver relations of encoding and decoding) as first steps in such verification.

The importance of establishing the audience/market context in the study of advertisements directed to particular groups of consumers is a vital consideration for the sampling procedure. Semiotic analyses of advertising tend to omit such considerations on the grounds that all ads are believed to share common rules, syntactic combination and semantic selection. In contrast to such assumptions of uncontrolled sampling, this analysis depends to a large extent on the detailed explication of who sends the message (which product, marketing strategy, media used) and who receives the message (media-market preferences, preferred reading and cultural codes of interpretation). If advances are to be made towards a more
pragmatic, cultural semiotics of advertising, such audience marketing and audience definitions in sampling procedure are invaluable for a better understanding of how cultural meanings come to be used in ads.

In the search for a sample which exemplifies a suitably extreme case of segmentation marketing strategy, and in order to observe how this strategy has affected ad presentational forms, I have found it necessary to refer to magazine advertisements in the United States. Advertisement encoders in this country have considerably larger budgets than in other English speaking countries and as a result have more sophisticated research methods and institutions at their disposal. Ad agencies in the United States have a great variety and definition in the editorial contents from which they may choose a publication as a media vehicle -- more and varied ways of reaching specific markets. As I have mentioned earlier, magazines are more suitable for segmentation advertising because they tend to attract audiences with specific interests in common and therefore provide advertisers with more defined "reach" data than is possible for either television or radio media.

The primary methodological consideration in choosing to focus on the print medium is based on what is involved in the analysis of each ad for a sample of any considerable size. Leymore in her discussion of static (print) and dynamic (television and radio) ad messages suggests that the study of dynamic advertising is a far more complex and exhaustive
procedure for the analyst because "of the greater complexity of
dynamic advertisements and the larger amount of information they
convey, as well as the more complicated and elaborated ways in
which the different parts interact with each other, the
deciphering process is more involved." In addition to the
difficulty of analysis, the semiotic treatments of dynamic
media, especially in the area of advertising, are still
struggling with the perplexing conceptualizations of time and
space (i.e., movement, changing signs, memory of what was seen
in the last shot, etc.). For these reasons dynamic advertising
forms will not be studied.

Yet a bias in the sample selection of static advertising
needs to be mentioned. Differences in media suggests that there
will be differences in the expression in ads. Leymore argues
that,

The medium exercises a determining control over the
utilization of codes, the form the image takes and the
means through which it is transmitted. It does not,
however, control the message itself, which is accidental
to the form, the pertinent aspect of the medium. Thus,
while the medium determines the form and while the
substance is, as it were, external to it, the final
message is determined by the interaction between the
medium, the content and the recipient. 2

For those ads which are more informative and straight
content-oriented (that is, ads in which a substantial spoken
text accompanies a "simple" photograph or series of use related
shots of a product with minimal connotative coding), the final
message to the audience should be the same for either print or
television media. Many advertisers in fact use the same sign
elements (visual and linguistic) in two different media for the same intended final message. However, for those messages that play more on form—ads which have spoken or written text, the visual images are ambiguous or refer the recipient to codes instead of structured contents, and the photographic technical codes are used in a very connotative way—codes may be used differently to effect different messages. This is extremely pertinent to the study of cultural references and discourses used in advertising to get a message across to an audience.

In form-oriented magazine ads for the youth market, for example, album cover layout conventions are more suitable for ad encoders in cueing particular entertainment, lifestyle associations with a product. Album covers are a static medium and are likely to be better recognized in print than on television. Conversely, movies are a dynamic medium and are more useful for cueing young audiences' habitual reading codes in television advertising. Some of the more subtle stylistic and technical determinations of visual presentation do not translate well to static media, if the original mode of transmission is dynamic, and vice versa. Both movies and LP covers are part of the young audience's repertoire of media discourses, but each is more likely to be used in different media, cueing specific cultural references. Even though this bias is real, it does not change the value of the print sample in uncovering the specificity of cultural references taken from the discursive repertoire of the particular market audience segment.
The sampling procedure used in this study is motivated by Kline's and Leiss' analysis of the increasing specificity in advertising modes of address for particular product types and market segments. Their sample is historical and is designed for the analysis of changing relationships between people and products from 1900 to 1980 in Canadian magazine advertising. They sample a total of 1300 advertisements from Maclean's and Chatelaine magazines thus providing both a reliable and valid sample volume for their cross-referential content analysis. These publications represent two distinct market/audience segments - Maclean's readership is 70% male and Chatelaine has a female readership of 80% - which makes verifiable the deduction that differences between the publications' ads in mode of address are due in large part to differences in advertisers cueing male or female interpretive predispositions. Kline explains further that

...because the audience for that magazine defines the market segment that is addressable by advertisers, different product types are advertised in different magazines and possibly with different form and content. We wished to control for these factors as we tracked broader historical changes. It is only in this way that we could distinguish between changes in the magazine market, and the use of magazines as vehicles by specific product type advertisers, and changes in the actual presentation itself.3

While their primary sampling objectives are with the broader historical changes in ad presentation, Kline and Leiss identify the importance of market/audience determinations of the forms and contents of ads, especially in the last historical phase of lifestyle advertising. Any sampling procedure for the
analysis of ads should recognize that the market segment, characterized by particular consumer behaviours (product brand and type preferences), can only be reached through the audience segment (social and cultural composition of readership). Kline and Leiss sample ads in a limited set of product types that are advertised in the two magazines. This assures that changes in ad presentation are not significantly influenced by changes in product types entering into the two markets over their histories. Because different product types resonate on different relational registers (some by the nature of their 'use' characteristics are best associated with social emulation values while others are more suitably advertised for their performance qualities), sample restrictions on product type assures that an influx of liquor ads, for instance, will not skew the sample's reproduction of social comparison and group-identified values in ad presentation.

The sampling requirements I select resemble some of those used by Kline and Leiss and are, as well, a result of some of the findings of their study. In contrast to their historical sample, the sample developed here is synchronic in its focus on the last phase of lifestyle advertising. Lifestyle ads are the most typical for market segmentation strategies; that is, this ad type tends to be user-centered and locates the addressee in the nexus of particular group relations. Because lifestyle ads are most notable in alcohol and cigarette advertising, and because different product categories do resonate on different
relational registers, I will restrict the product type to beer, which seems to use perhaps the most detailed descriptions of particular group values and social membership in product associations.

Due to the synchronic and small sample focus of the study (approximately 20 advertisements spanning two years), and due to the primary concern of comparing mass marketing with segmentation strategies, I include a sampling control which Kline and Leiss do not include in their study. The selection of the advertising agency and brand for the sample will be singular.

Agencies use defensive strategies of differentiation in the creation of oppositions between images of brands in a competitive product set. As well, the idiosyncrasies of the relationship between an advertiser client and an agency's marketing and creative structures in encoding may prefer certain presentational ad forms typical of more or less segmentation. These idiosyncrasies seem more amplified since there may not be many competitors in smaller segmented markets and since segmentation strategies are still relatively new and not fully proven to some advertisers and/or agencies.

Those less conservative marketers, such as the Miller Brewing Company, have been using segmentation since 1972, while the more conservative brewing giant, Anheuser-Busch, has more fully entered into this strategy in the last five years. As Sommers points out, "the changes in marketing thinking effect
advertising most readily when there are sophisticated 'actors' involved. Those agencies and advertisers which are less sophisticated in marketing research and creative capabilities tend more towards a fad and fashion, follow-the-leader orientation. More sophisticated encoding institutional networks with better market research apparatuses and large budgets that permit coverage of both mass and select market segments, are today those most fully evolved into segmentation advertising for beer. The relatively new advent of segmentation media and market segmentation strategies has meant that less information is known about particular audiences and how to reach them in comparison with long standing mass advertising strategies. Only the few sophisticated beer marketers can afford to advertise to well-defined national market segments. This means that comparisons between brands may be far and few between and will reflect a greater degree of original creative strategy in ad presentation to national markets. Bearing these factors in mind, the most sophisticated and most productive beer advertiser is selected for the sample. It is believed that such an encoder engages in the most extensive market research and therefore the most effective cueing of the desired market segment.

Finally, the last sampling criterion, and the most important, is that which provides a comparative dimension for studying the different forms and contents of ads presented to two different market audiences. The total sample consists of two subsamples of ads, each distributed to definable media audiences.
through lifestyle magazines -- one of the subsamples reaching a mass market/audience and the other reaching a market/audience segment. This permits the comparison of the two subsamples for open and more restricted reading codes and the comparison of connected connoted cultural reference systems and discourses in ads directed at each market. Segmented ad presentations should employ observably select connotational materials closed within one audience interdiscursive set, while mass ads should be more openly coded. This comparative sampling framework facilitates the examination of different encodings of messages directed at either specific audiences or more general ones. It also permits the examination of discursive repertoires by publication and the identification of audience habitual media involvements within structured media segment definitions. This last aspect is believed to be key for the way advertisers approach a particular audience with cultural references and for explaining in analysis of ads the origins of referred-to cultural discourses. Thus the sample will be further identified and distinguished by publication.

3.1 The Sample

Beer advertisements fit the lifestyle ad format by identifying the product user in a social and cultural context of group relations and activities. According to Consumer Report magazine, this format in beer advertising appeared when in 1970
Philip Morris, the cigarette maker (another lifestyle format related product), purchased the Miller Brewing company:

Before Philip Morris entered the brewing business, most beer advertising traded on humor and stressed how good the beer tasted. Philip Morris' advertising for Miller tagged on an additional message: that beer was the appropriate reward for a hard day's work.5

Kline's and Leiss' historical phases of ad presentation demonstrate that beer advertising in the 1970's comes out of the dark ages of advertising (product quality associations) to the most recent phase of lifestyle advertising (user-centered, group leisure activity associations). In the mid 1970's lifestyle and consumer behaviour research indicates that beer drinking is associated with men finishing work and going to a tavern. Miller ads show groups of blue-collar workers in real-life bar scenes rewarding themselves for a hard day's work. "If you've got the time, we've got the beer" is the slogan which connects the products with these scenes. Consumer Report states that this new ad format "marked the first time that beer drinkers, rather than beer itself, became the subject of an ad campaign."6

Anheuser-Busch leads breweries in the United States in sales and their Budweiser brand is the most consumed. Before the mid 1970's Budweiser was promoted by the product emblem of the Clydesdale horses and the claim "we know of no brand produced by any other brewery which costs so much to to brew and age." In the 1970's the company moved from the promotion theme of good beer to introduce a Miller type commercial of "This Bud's for You; for all you do, the king of beers is coming through", as
well, stressing the work-reward theme.

Based on the sampling criterion of advertising sophistication and expenditure on advertising, the sample for this study is drawn from Budweiser brand beer advertisements found in American magazines. A review of the tremendous variety of beer advertising presentations in high circulation national publications reveals that Anheuser-Busch has surpassed Miller in the sophistication of its segmentation strategies. This sophistication is based in the Anheuser-Busch product segmentation and development of different brands for different lifestyle consumer groups. The superpremium Michelob is targeted to upwardly mobile lifestyle groups, Budweiser light is aimed at the middle-aged and female drinker, and Michelob Light is aimed at a cross-section of these two markets. Most importantly, Budweiser brand, the largest seller, is sold to the mass market and to smaller market segments with greater differences in presentational forms and contents than is evidenced in Miller's main product segmentation ads. Budweiser brand beer ads are therefore more suitable for comparing mass market ad forms and the selection of their referent systems to segmentation ad forms and the selection of more specific referent systems defined by the market/audience segment.

In order to concentrate on the full impact of the growing specificity of the Budweiser advertising mode of address and cultural reference set for identifiable market segments, the sample of ads is restricted to the period 1981 - 1982. This
restriction also permits for an all-inclusive sample of Budweiser print ads in large circulation national publications for that period. A series of correspondences with D'Arcy - Mac Manus and Masius Ltd., the agency handling the Budweiser account for U.S. national advertising, has provided the study with the publication lists and basic strategies of their 1981 - 1982 print advertising. This assures the all-inclusiveness of the sample and a general statement of encoding intentionality. A complete list of publications used for the two target markets of "Young Adult Male 18 - 24" (taken as the market segment in this study) and "Heavy Male Beer Drinker 18 - 49" (taken as the mass market) is supplied by D'Arcy MacManus and Masius Ltd. (the ad agency involved). By maintaining a definition of the sample by publication, it is possible to use media segmentation information and audience characteristics by publication to further examine the encoder's matching of desired market segments with audience segments (media discourses). Fred Wolter of D'Arcy - Mac Manus and Masius Ltd. comments on these strategies:

As the lists and accompanying rationale statement suggests, age group delivery is the primary criteria that determines the market segment classification of a given publication. Further, these publications are the most efficient, in terms of standard media planning criteria, among all publications in reaching their respective target audiences.

In addition to objective, or quantitative analysis, the publications reflect a subjective judgement as well. The subjective evaluation includes, among other things, a consideration of the relevance of the publication's editorial stance as it relates to the brand's overall marketing objectives, and the appropriateness of the publication as a forum for Anheuser-Busch Inc.
It appears that age group delivery is the essential criterion for filling the market requirements of address to the two markets (Y.A.M. 18-24, and H.M.B.D. 18-49). The two markets are male and one is specifically defined and a subgroup within the other mass market. Further, Wolter points out that apart from objective analysis of the media, subjective evaluations conducted by the agency and client influence the selection of publications. Editorial stances (editorial content interests of the magazine) are matched with overall marketing strategies and the "appropriateness" of particular magazines is deduced in consideration of the brand's established image and present communication relationships with various audiences (metacommunication of social and marketing ideologies).

In a fundamental way the lifestyle interests and images of the selected publications' editorial material must be consistent with consumer behaviours and interests of the desired beer markets -- there must be an overlap in the cultural and consuming habits of the desired market and the media audience of considered publications. Beer, in the way it is enjoyed in leisure time activity and in the way it is promoted by marketers, is associated with spectator sports, music-related events, and men's lifestyle and entertainment. Print media selection of such publications as *Sports Illustrated*, *Rolling Stone* and *Playboy* magazines clearly satisfy this elementary criterion of audience based on lifestyle. What is less apparent and of great concern for the analysis of meaning in ads, is the
extent to which the subject matters of selected publications influence the presentational materials of the Budweiser ads. On the one hand, as Leiss points out, generalizations made in ad presentations (broad references open to any interpretive suppositions) communicated to media segments "may be risky" given that they do not metacommunicate any closed, shared relationship in the cueing of audience interests. On the other hand, encoders must be careful not to undo or contradict product messages established in their wider market appeals which the audience segment may be familiar with as well. Subjective evaluations, that Wolter mentions above, weigh the advantages of specific market access with the potentially perilous product associations of, for instance: sports and alcoholism; rock concerts, countercultural involvements and the deviant use of booze and drugs; and beer and the sexist male reference system of girlie magazines and pornography. These metacommunications that the general public might pick up on provide a complex problematic that exerts restrictions on the advertisement presentational practices. The creative personnel, in their selection of ad contents and modes of address, are caught between this tension of cueing readerships in terms of those readerships' predispositions and of maintaining a favorable product/company image for the general public. Because of this important relation between dominant and subdominant reading/cultural preferences (between the general public and select audiences), it is further necessary to enable the sample to be
differentiated by publications in which Budweiser ads appear. Some publications allow for a different ordering of preference and specificity in polysemic repertoires of reading codes (i.e., youth market publications) than more mass market publications that prefer a polysemic ordering in dominant, normative definitions of social experience. These tendencies toward certain code orderings orient both editorial and advertisement production and presentation.

3.2 The Market Segments and Media Segmentation

D'Arcy - MacManus and Masius Ltd.'s strategy of media selection for the larger, mass market of the "Heavy Male Beer Drinker 18-49" is rather simple. Based on the criteria of product association with sports and men's lifestyle and entertainment, the agency selects the highest circulation publications in these lifestyle interest areas (i.e., Sports Illustrated, Playboy). Simply put, their objective here is to reach as many members of the "Heavy Male Beer Drinker" market as is possible per published ad, while also displaying an association with those publications which lead the fields of men's entertainment and sports journalism. For this market print advertising operates as a secondary support medium for Budweiser's central advertising thrust into network television sports programming. The thematic relations and similarities between the sports television advertising and the ads which
appear in print in Playboy and Sports Illustrated magazines are dense. Budweiser advertising to the "Young Adult Male 18-24" depends, however, to a far lesser extent on television and more on print as an effective reach medium.

Beer producers are extremely interested in the youth market due to the fact that 64% of all domestic beer is consumed by 18-34-year-olds. The major consumers in this statistical group are 18 to 24. The most attractive part of the youth market for effective media access is the college segment. According to Advertising Age, the college segment is estimated at 12 million students with an average disposable income each of $2,200 a year, is relatively "recession proof (based on parental support), and heavily consumes hi-fi equipment, certain media and entertainment, airline tickets, and beer. Breweries and producers of these other goods and services for the college market realize the importance of establishing brand loyalties in the college years (18-24) and, as the director of national advertising for a string of college publications states:

They are buying products, establishing brand preferences, and in many cases are establishing buying habits that will last for a long time. There are many people today who buy products because of peer pressure they had in college.

As well, those 18-24 young adults who are not in college number about 21.3 million people and have an estimated $92 billion in discretionary income ($4,300 each annually). Media buyers and marketers seek strategies for advertising to the college and non-college sectors of the youth market and as a
spokesman for D'Arcy-Mac Manus and Masius Ltd. explains, it is "very easy to turn off the people we're trying to reach, who range in age from 17 to 24 and could be anything from high school graduates not in college to medical students." Mediamark Research Inc., specialists in researching the youth market, have observed various points along which collegiate and non-collegiate youth sectors display similar consumer behaviours: "Beer and fast food consumption habits of college students were similar [to the non-college group], as were statistics showing automobile ownership, participation in photography, going to movies, and reading books and magazines." The sectors of the youth market overlap in certain habits in the consumption of goods and media. Marketers use similar advertising vehicles in order to reach the two groups which could be best summarized as based in associations with a young person's lifestyle. Both Anheuser-Busch and Miller beer producers have used athletic events, movies and music-related events as promotional vehicles. Reaching youth through the conventional use of mass media proves more problematic than for reaching beer mass markets. Jay Coleman, a leader in youth marketing in the United States, explains why:

There's no doubt that the media habits of that audience are different. They watch the least TV because they are the most active. They do listen to radio, but that's not enough for most advertisers. For particular products, they have to look at promotional programs that can be integrated into various aspects of their lifestyle.

Youth market media habits create many problems for media buyers. Several market research investigations reveal that
college students watch about a third of the television that the
general public watches which puts them in the lowest quintile of
television viewing audiences. Marketers expect this unfavourable
pattern in media habits to worsen in light of the youth market's
growing interest in such alternative media as pay television's
M.T.V., video rock and take-home movies, and video games. As
well, the youth market as a whole displays erratic media
consumption patterns in the news magazines, newspapers, and
consumer publications they read. These media characteristics of
youth leave media buyers with little room for error in selecting
specific media for their advertising messages. As an example,
American International Pictures have advertised to the 16-24
year old market with television ads surrounding "Saturday Night
Live", the midnight rock shows, "Mash", "Mork and Mindy", "The
Rockford Files", re-runs of "Maverick" and "Star Trek" and a few
others. A spokesman for American International Pictures
comments that:

If you don't cluster around those shows, you can miss
your audience by a mile. That's like throwing money to
the winds. You have to be careful.

Similarly, D'Arcy-MacManus and Masius Ltd. have placed
advertisements for their large Air Force and Budweiser youth
market accounts in "Saturday Night Live" and the midnight rock
show time slots. This type of selectivity in media purchase is
even more extreme in the print media which, as I have mentioned,
is better suited toward audience/market segmentation. Because of
the more definable and distinguishable editorial contents of
publications, and because publications are less "gatekept" (subject to broader commercial interests of national advertiser interests in the mass market: dominant definitions of appropriate media contents), a close look at the editorial contents of Budweiser's print media use for youth marketing is warranted.

3.3 Budweiser's Print Advertising and Media Audience Characteristics

Playboy and Sports Illustrated have broad demographically constituted audiences which are predominantly male and cover a wide range of age and social groups. These publications are widely read by college students, the off-campus youth, and businessmen alike. For all intents and purposes of the advertising encoding structure these publications compositely reach the 'mass' market for Budweiser.

D'Arcy-MacManus and Masius Ltd. in 1981-1982 advertises Budweiser in Rolling Stone, National Lampoon, Ampersand, and Hot Rod magazines as youth market segmentation medias. Each of these publications have different editorial contents, layout formats, and demographic characteristics of reach within the youth market. These differences are significant for the understanding of how editorial content and audience influence the selection and combination of layout designs and cultural contents of Budweiser ads in each publication.
a) Ampersand

The largest of the youth publications used for Budweiser is Ampersand ("The Music, Art and Entertainment Magazine for College Newspapers") which has a circulation of close to a million each month. Alan Weston Publishing have published the magazine since 1977 and have determined their readership to be 64% male and 35% female, college students, and 18-26 years old. A total of 74 colleges and universities have the publication added to the campus newspaper each month. According to the publishers, "Ampersand is the only monthly college magazine geared to the college student's entertainment and cultural interests." The entertainment material of Ampersand contains current entertainment news and gossip, features and personality interviews, record, music, film and book reviews, and hi-fi equipment reviews. Major advertisers include the product categories of hi-fi, movies, records, tapes, magazines, personal care, books, musical instruments and beer. Advertising volume is estimated at over $1,500,000 a year for the 1981-1982 period.

The editorial presentational format resembles that found in Rolling Stone magazine. Unlike Rolling Stone, a rock'n'roll review publication, Ampersand concentrates more on lifestyle-oriented features, motion pictures, and annual special sections on travel, sound system innovation, and photography. It appears that the editorial focus of the publication covers only some areas of lifestyle which are believed to be of greatest collective interest to the college audience. Yet these lifestyle
interests are varied and as the magazine's marketing department comments:

The mass college audience is much more diverse than it once was - they're older and their purpose for being in college is to be better prepared for life. There is a strong emphasis on being an individual. Music is still very much a part of their lifestyle, but it's not as important as it once was. For Ampersand, a cover with a major music artist is not going to get picked up as fast as a cover with a major comedian or a major film star on it.17

Out of the four youth publications which Budweiser ads are extracted from, Ampersand is the most committed to the participation in the discourses of collegiate leisure activities. College life is understood by advertisers as one submarket/culture within the youth market. Publishers of Ampersand claim to advertisers that they, like no other publication, reach the "areas of dominant influence in the country" 18; that is, they are targeting toward the more educated (those bettered positioned for jobs) and potentially more affluent sector of the youth market. Ampersand's entry into the youth media market takes place after the era of radical student unrest on campus. In ways different from National Lampoon and Rolling Stone magazines, its editorial stance is free of the traditional, though fading, associations that National Lampoon and Rolling Stone magazines have had to maintain with counter-cultural and critical perspectives on dominant American lifestyle.

b) Rolling Stone
Rolling Stone, established in 1967, publishes twice a month with a readership similar in size (per addition) to that of Ampersand for the 1981-1982 period. Its readership is 66% male and 34% female with an average age of 23.9 years old. Its editorial contents include coverage of music, movie and audio news in addition to feature stories from all areas of contemporary culture. Advertising categories consist of audio/tape, records, liquor, cigarettes, musical instruments, automotive, movies and corporate. Its established advertising volume is over $10,000,000 a year for 1981-1982. As one representative for the publication explains, Rolling Stone is "read by the largest concentration of both 18 to 24 and 18 to 34-year-olds of any publication measured by any syndicated research." This statistic reflects to some extent the phenomenon of media consumption loyalties of the Rolling Stone audience. It suggests that 34-year-old readers of the publication may have consumed the publication since 1967 when these readers would have fallen into the 20-21 year old demographic core of the general youth market audience. The publication has changed with new definitions of youth lifestyle and with the changing lifestyle interests of its now more affluent 18-34 year old audience, some of whom have considerably more buying power than the 18-24 year old youth market. These changes are evidenced in the evolution of Rolling Stone's editorial focus and as sociologist Simon Frith notes:

Rolling Stone developed from a magazine in which the leisure values of rock'n'roll were the source of a
critical commentary on the organization of politics and production into a magazine in which music is understood only as an enjoyable form of consumption. *Rolling Stone*, like the rest of the music press, is now a consumer guide, an example of the way in which commercial entrepreneurs work to make leisure and pleasure orderly.

Similarly, Frank Kofsky, writer for *Jazz and Pop* charges that, "*Rolling Stone* is the ideal vehicle for corporate-liberal ideology... because it is striving manfully to reduce the revolution in youth consciousness to nothing more than a handful of novel consumer tastes." While sociologists and social critics view this process of change as co-optation, repression, and commercialization of youth culture occurring in the seventies, marketers to the youth audience see this process as the realization of a new market and the development of a new rapport that allows youth to more fully indulge in its lifestyle interests (i.e., music). One youth marketing specialist comments:

Music is the most integral part of a young adults lifestyle today.... Rock music and music popular with young people is no longer counterculture like it was in the 1960's. Advertisers were afraid of being associated with rock music, but they're coming to realize it is an established part of the culture. It's too important to ignore.

Music-related marketing, such as *Rolling Stone*, is believed to be the most effective way of reaching the non-college group because music provides, what marketers call, a "central tie-in activity". The strategic association of products with music is today utilized not only for music-related products such as records, hi-fi equipment, musical instruments and tapes, but also for cigarettes, beer, and other non-music-related
commodities. The strategy works at two encoding levels; music press selection in media buying and product association with music as a lifestyle interest in ad presentations. This second encoding consideration shall be returned to in the actual analysis which follows in chapter four. The selection of the music press for advertising communication opens up the range of products that may be targeted to the previously unreceptive and problematic reading preferences of the youth audience. As Doug Bernstein, a member of Rolling Stone's publishing department and former advertising director for National Lampoon, states: "who ever thought back in the 60's that Rolling Stone would be carrying ads for something like Sasson jeans." 23 Music marketing and media provide ready-made lifestyle associations and marketing communication avenues for those marketers seeking to conceptualize and direct meaning for the youth audience. Music marketing is an established communication system that through the years has forged its way to a status of acceptance within the cultural formations of youth. It has set precedents for the fad and fashion-oriented advertising industry both at the decision levels of which publications to choose and, most importantly, which references and modes of address to use in ad presentations to youth.

c) National Lampoon

Budweiser advertisements appear in National Lampoon magazine which has been in publication since 1970 and has 80% male readership, aged 18 to 34 years old. Total circulation
numbers over 700,000 for this monthly publication. The editorial format is based on parody and black humour, each month focusing on a particular issue of interest for youth audiences (i.e., "Back To college", "Summer Sex", "The Movie Industry"). Products advertised include hi-fi equipment, liquor, cigarettes, cameras, records, tapes, and movies. Advertising volume is close to three million dollars a year for the 1981-1982 period. The publication is an off-shoot of the collegiate publication *Harvard Lampoon*, and many of *National Lampoon*'s editorial staff have overlapped with the writers and actors of "Saturday Night Live", a standard television media buy for youth marketing.

Barbara Sabatino, office manager for *National Lampoon*, describes its readers as being in the middle to upper middle income bracket, an average of 24 years old, and predominantly students. The underground press and comics of the middle class youth culture in the 60's has provided *National Lampoon* with an editorial tone and a number of visual layout conventions familiar with the countercultural media audience (i.e., readers of *Harold Head, Mr. Natural*).

As is the case with *Rolling Stone*, *National Lampoon*'s critical commentary on American lifestyle, values and politics has lost its countercultural focus so today the publishers make the claim that "the magazine plays no favoites" in its somewhat nihilist critique of America.

d) *Hot Rod*
D'Arcy-MacManus and Masius Ltd. use Hot Rod magazine to target Budweiser ads at that part of the youth market which is the most difficult to reach, the non-collegiate. Hot Rod, established in 1948, has a defined readership of 18 to 34 years old and predominantly male. It is written for men with an interest in automotive machinery and its prime editorial focus is on car modifications to improve performance and the appearance of vehicles. Its circulation and ad volume surpasses that of Rolling Stone.

While many of the ads in Hot Rod use the standard youth themes associated with music as a part of a young adult's lifestyle, the editorial format of a car owner's consumer guide seems to exert more influence on advertising modes of address. Budweiser ads attempt to reach young adult males through this media segment audience who perhaps cannot be reached through the youth culture entertainment and music publications. This particular strategy of segmentation to youth results in ad presentational forms that radically differ from those found in National Lampoon, Ampersand and Rolling Stone. Hot Rod's editorial materials refer to no other youth lifestyle discourse than an interest in cars. The three other publications, from their representations of the discourses that define a young person's lifestyle, make few if any direct references to the discourse of cars. It is interesting to note that Budweiser ads in Hot Rod use references to the discourse of high performance racing with no reference to more common youth discourses, while
other advertisers in the publication make the more standard youth lifestyle references (i.e., music). This is due mostly to Budweiser's commitment in sponsorship of boat and car racing as event-oriented "tie-in" promotions of the brand. As well, because of the older demographic makeup of Hot Rod's audience, and that audience's lifestyle involvements with discourses not restricted to youth entertainment and media consumption, Anheuser-Busch may be attempting to achieve a redundancy effect or resonance with its other advertising programs in Sports Illustrated and its extensive television advertising during sports coverage.

This section on the publications employed by the advertisers of Budweiser, like the section on market segmentation in chapter two, is an attempt to outline the ad message encoder's intensions and predispositions toward the decoding audiences/markets. It is believed that these institutional marketing and media practices of selecting forums of communication (magazines) and audiences require also suitable modes of address in ad presentation. In 1973 a marketing analyst observed that marketers to youth hold

...an understanding that is neither true nor does it represent the tradition of the world of the audience,...too often there's little integration of the truth of the reality of the audience....

Today advertisement encoders are aware that the youth market "does not respond in a highly positive fashion to traditional ad messages in traditional media." Advertisers respond to this problem by metacommunicating to youth audiences that their
values are truly understood which may include the value of cynicism or suspicion of advertising itself. By advertising to youth in the publications it reads and in a mode of address which is part of the way youth communicates - through the discourses of music, film, entertainment and cultural symbols of it lifestyle preferences - encoders select meanings for their products that in the mass market might prove ineffective. The analysis which follows employs definitions of the sample by publication to allow for the comparison of how the advertisers of Budweiser conceptualize and direct meaning to the youth audience segment as opposed to the mass audience (18-49 year-old men).
2. Ibid., p. 60.
4. Find
6. Ibid., p. 348.
12. Ibid., p. m-19.


IV. The Semiotic Analysis

In this chapter actual advertisements will be semiotically deconstructed, each in terms of their internal relations of adwork. In particular, the analysis studies the structural process of meaning transfer from referent signifiers in the ad to the product -sign Budweiser brand beer. The explanation of this process centers on the syntagmatic arrangement of the ad text in which the product sign is structured into a contiguous presentation with referent signifiers enclosed in the message as a meaningful whole. At this level the ad message operates on the basis of combinatory signifying conventions which constitutes it as a recognizable cultural system – as a discourse of ready-made, rhetorical devices and modes of address for the presentation of product meaning. The sample is analyzed at this level with a special interest in adwork encoding of what Eco terms either open or closed texts.

Open texts actively involve the reader in their reproduction: the reader does not use the ad structures as he wants (the reader cannot use his own preferred association of referent signifiers to the product sign), but only in the singular set of associations the ad structures permit. In such ad texts, the combination of more subtle semantic contents with the product sign employs adwork structures self-referentially common in the discourse of mass marketing advertising -- they
connect meaningful elements in a manner most audiences have encountered in previous decodings of ads presented in other mass media. These ads leave very little to the reader's extratextual predispositions in the reconstruction of their meaning. Closed ad texts, on the other hand, intend to evoke a limited and predetermined response for defined, more or less precise empirical readers. These closed ad texts are immoderately "open" to various different interpretations because their rigid internal plan (signifier's interrelations with each other) and their limited textual semantic use of intentional signs (signifiers whose meaning is ordered in cultural systems outside of adwork) require of the reader an experiential competence in particular media and ritual activities. ¹ Closed texts are characterized by a configuration of structural elements and fixed semantic meanings to these elements that are not clearly or fully communicated by the ad. Closed ad texts depend on specific preferences and textual reading literacies that cue empirical readers' common and intertextual frames. These texts are encoded with a precise definition of the empirical readers in mind and are less open to whatever ad reader on the basis of that reader's general cultural knowledge and familiarity with mass marketing modes of address alone. These closed ad texts should be most evident in that portion of the sample identified in Chapter Three as the segmented youth ads presented in Hot Rod, National Lampoon, Ampersand, and Rolling Stone magazines. From the perspective of a pragmatic semiotic analysis of the
text, which assumes the extratextual decoding position of the model reader the text is encoded for, it may appear that even the segmentation ads are openly structured. The point that must be recalled throughout the reading of the analysis is, however, that these texts are not open to "subjects-in-general" or the mass audience, as Williamson claims all ads are (psychologistic language model for explaining advertising mode of address). An empirical reader for whom the ad text is not intentionally encoded for in its conceptualization and the direction of meaning (mode of address for a market segment based in encoding operations of selection and combination), may not take the correct meaning or any meaning, for that matter, from the ad. On the other hand, an empirical reader with a particular extratextual predisposition in common frames and intertextual competencies is able to take the more open mass market ad presentation meaning even if this reader is not the model reader.

The analysis of the sample concerns itself with another interest in the cultural and totemic associations of referent systems paradigmatically linked to the ad, and the densities of relations between referent systems used in one ad. The analysis identifies the referent signifiers within each ad text, traces the origin of these symbols or ideas back to external discourses, and explains why and how these discourses are meaningful for readers identified by a market/audience segment. The objective of this exercise is not to develop a complete
inventory of cultural references or referred-to discourses that advertisers can choose from in cueing particular markets/audiences. Rather, the objective here is to observe whether the referent systems coalesce along lines of interest of (1) the particular publication as a media segment (referential codes connected to editorial contents and mode of address of the publication alone), (2) advertising as a mass communication discourse (particular applications of ad form and content usually refer the reader to a structured understanding of the advertising system), or (3) a consistent set or repertoire of discourses (discursive space) unified in their association to a cultural formation outside of advertising and the editorial focus of the publication.

This part of the analysis attempts to accomplish two things. First, by moving from what is actually in the ad message to a terminal point in external discursive significance, ads, grouped by target market (Heavy Male Beer Drinker or Young Adult Male), are examined for their reference to similar discourses or discourses connected within a repertoire of cultural group behaviours (especially media consumption). Secondly, clusterings of referred-to discourses are compared by publications that carry the ads. All the advertisements appearing in *Ampersand*, *National Lampoon*, and *Rolling Stone* use the same layout on a rotation basis and therefore the same discourse sets. All the ads that appear in *Playboy* (a total of 3) appear in *Sports Illustrated* as well, while the latter publication has many more
Budweiser ads for the sample period (a total of 10). This is due to Anheuser Busch's strategy of advertising its more expensive, superpremium Michelob brand in Playboy, considered a magazine reaching the more affluent male drinker. Hot Rod contains completely different ad copy (3 ads in all). The ad presentational forms of the latter three publications are more similar and refer to common conventions of ad work found in mass market magazine advertising.

The semiotic analysis is not designed to represent all advertising formats in a detailed explication of the exhaustive rules of ad grammar and possible realms of textual semantics in advertising. It is merely illustrative of some of the theoretical models of encoding and decoding communication relations that have been elaborated in the pragmatic project of defining ad significance for identified empirical audiences (model readers). The application of the method to the sample should be thought of as the testing of a new semiotic audience perspective for the analysis of encoding selection and combination of reference in advertising.

4.1 Mass Market Advertising for the Heavy Male Beer Drinker
4.1.1 Sports Illustrated

Eight different ads for Budweiser brand beer appear in Sports Illustrated in the sample period of 1981-1982. This analysis begins with a series of five ads which typify, in comparison with the rest of the sample, what Kline and Leiss call "lifestyle advertising modes of presentation". In these ads the relationship between persons, products and settings signify situations that are for the audience supposedly 'emblematic of a particular way of life. Only one of these ads will be deconstructed in detail since all five possess similar layout and written textual presentational structures. While the syntagmatic processes of adwork may be the same for all five, the ads' paradigmatic connections to external referent systems demands independent explanation with regard to the knowledge the audience must 'fill in' for the preferred decoding.

The following ad analyses are ordered in groups defined by their similarity in modes of address. The naming of the ads is done quite arbitrarily and is intended to facilitate cross-reference in semiotic comparisons. Apart from the grouping by publication audiences, there is no purposeful chronology. As well, all the sample's ads and comparison illustrations are identified numerically (i.e., figure 1., figure 2., etc.).
The five ads to be considered here are 'boxing', 'farming', 'logging', 'ranching' and 'steelworkers'. The syntagmatic deconstruction of 'boxing' should suffice in representing the similar adwork structures of all five. Throughout the entire analysis each ad will be deconstructed in the preliminary separation of denotative signs by functional divisions of the photographic image, the written text, and the layout design. This is not to suggest any ordering of what occurs first or last to the reader, but does analytically facilitate a reconstruction of the different levels of meaning (constituted by different signifiers) in the reader's movement to the final message of the ad. At the level of denotative signs (connotative signifiers) different meanings are so contained by their material differences in appearance or apparent function only to be reunited at the level of connotation in signification - open to one unmistakeable final meaning - around the product image.

At the level of denotation in the photograph of 'boxing' the reader is provided with several non-coded or literal iconic signs. The center of the photograph is taken up by a person who is a boxer. On each side of him stand his trainers/managers. In the background is another boxer who undoubtedly is the sparring partner. These people compose, what anyone familiar with boxing recognizes as, a complete boxer training team. The people and gym setting, as signifiers, require limited preliminary cultural
FOR EVERYONE WHO'S GOT THE HEART AND COURAGE TO GO THE DISTANCE...

THIS BUD'S FOR YOU.

Figure 1: 'boxing'
knowledge of the sport of boxing before one can competently grasp meaning at the level of connotation. The product associations that are derived at the levels of connotation do not even require of the reader that he has closely studied the in-depth articles that occur in *Sports Illustrated* itself, thus calling up some intertextual references based on the boxing sports discourse.

Most signifiers in the syntagmatic arrangement of the photograph are the symbolic and indexical. The towel around the boxer's neck, the stop watch positioned for us to see and the postures and gestures of all the people in the ad operate as indexical referent signifiers of the boxing activity. All these denotative signs operate as a condensation of the activity which has preceeded. The upraised arm of the boxer, the jubilant smiles of the boxer and trainers, and the exhibited stop-watch also signify the event which is yet to come - the victorious knockout in record time. These signifiers do not so much cue the reader's intertextual frame knowledge of the beauty and art of boxing, but rather provide all the necessary direction for the cueing of a more literal message of work reward. All these denotative signs connotatively signify a fundamental message of 'hard work and the promised rewards of working hard'. The boxer is not anyone recognizable from the sports scene, but is apparently an up and coming fighter who, as the setting and people suggest, works out to achieve a reward.
The product image, the final point to which all connotative meaning in the ad is directed, is represented by the upheld Budweiser cup and its frothing contents, the word "Bud" in the written text and the Olympic emblem in the lower left hand corner of the layout. The product label on the cup is easily recognized and appears in most of Budweiser's print advertising. The upheld cup seems to come into the picture frame from outside in the posture of a salute or an offering gesture. The double suggestion of both a salute and an offering both indicate a mode of address similar to a shared praise or the acknowledgement of an accomplishment. This is reaffirmed by the text, as we shall see shortly.

The cup is the pivotal sign around which a colour technique connects the ad. The colour technique is used to syntagmatically connect the red, white and blue uniform of the boxer and ring with the label colours of the superimposed cup. Beyond standing for the national colours of the United States, the colours connect the product with the scene that connotes work-reward.

The written text of this ad performs a syntagmatic linking of the product sign and the contents of the photograph. The written text positions the reader in a communication context of the message's openness and overrides the reference to the sports discourse of boxing -- knowledge assumed by the 'subject'. The wording of the caption, "For Everyone Who's Got The Heart And Courage To Go The Distance...", operationalizes a conative function in which the generalized "Everyone", as the object of
the phrase, directs attention not just to the boxer, but to all people that have such "Heart and Courage". This caption refers to the boxer, but also remains open to any other examples of "heart and courage" the reader might associate with (e.g., the reader is invited to refer to his own work-a-day world experiences, be he an executive, dock worker, or mailman). However, the satisfaction from good work/workout connotation of the photograph and caption can, as well, invite the reader to insert associations to his own reference to experience in the leisure activity of recreational sports (e.g., training and consequent victories of the weekend tennis hero or company soft-ball player which typifies the common frame experience of many of Sports Illustrated's readers). This caption signifies and contextualizes the meaning the reader is to gain from the photograph. This meaning is that the boxer has what it takes to "Go The Distance", which, translated from sports commentary jargon, means to finish the fight (the work). The upheld cup enters into the meaning of the written text as the reader moves on to the second half of the caption to interpret the "You" in "This Bud's For You". A dual meaning is constructed in which the cup is being offered, signified by the gesture of handing it, to the boxer or the reader. While the cup appears to be superimposed in the foreground of the spatial layout - as coming out of the ad towards the reader - it is presented upwards towards the boxer. However, the final signified of the product sign (the cup) is completed by the generalized "you" of the
caption and by the phatic function performed by the eye contact of the people in the photograph looking out of the ad to the reader (this establishes a contact between the characters in the ad and the reader). The reward of hard work, signified by the handed cup, is offered to the general reader.

A third contextualization of the product sign meaning is identifiable in the actual product image sign selected, the sports journalism code of the photograph and the sports jargon employed in the first half of the caption. The cup selected for representation of the product is of the type in which beer is issued at live sporting events. The beer company sponsoring the event and supplying draught beer at the event will sometimes have the product label appearing on the dispensatory cups. This cues the readers' experience of live sports spectating. The photograph of the posed training session of the boxer is not unlike those appearing in the editorial pages of Sports Illustrated and again places the reader in a referent system of sports spectatorship or coverage. The phrases "Heart And Courage" and "Go The Distance" are sports commentary cliches which assume for the reader a communication context of sports media coverage experienced in radio and television decoding. These signifiers all associate the product with the common lifestyle interest in sports coverage or news which is what draws the readership of Sports Illustrated to the publication as a definable audience. Thus, on the one hand, Budweiser is the beer that active champions drink and the reader positively
regards such select representatives of the product. On the other hand, those who enjoy the spectacle of boxing and spectator sports in general are themselves addressed by the ad as a totemic lifestyle group whose consumer behaviours include beer drinking and the reading of *Sports Illustrated* (based on market definitions of "Heavy Male Beer Drinker" lifestyle interests and media segmentation analysis). This referent system of sports spectating safely remains within a format of openness, given the national mass audience interest in sports in the United States.

Taken as a particular presentational format within the system of magazine advertising layout designs, this ad is one of a series of five ads with similar syntagmatic relations of adwork presented for the product Budweiser beer in the sample period. The only signifiers that change throughout this series are those in the photograph and the first halves of the written texts. In 'farming' the reader is provided with the photograph of two grain farmers who have finished work on the fields, and the caption reads, "For Everyone Who Brings In The Harvest...". The ad text 'logging' contains a photograph of four loggers with all their equipment taking a break from work and reads, "For Everyone Who Cuts The Big Jobs Down To Size...". 'Ranching' begins with the phrase "For Everyone Who Stands His Ground From Sunup To Sundown..." and is accompanied by a photograph of two cowboys and a horse at the end of a day's work. 'Steelworkers' presents a photograph of two steelworkers standing beside a loaded crane hook on a highrise being built and the written text

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runs, "For Everyone Who's Moving Us Up In The World...". In each of these ads it is doubtful that the generalized reader would have any difficulty in identifying these work scenes. Similarly, the captions direct an unproblematic, general contextualization of these "random" snapshots of the American industrial heartland and its workers as unsung heroes. On the basis of a reading competence built upon intertextual reference to all five ads in the series, the sports referent system of 'boxing' may very well have been replaced by that of a fireman's work (a reference made in a Miller beer television commercial based on similar, 'real-life' depictions of the American work-reward theme). The collective and final message of the ad photographs is that of a generalized tribute to the blue-collar worker. In each case, the photograph is linked to the product by the final "This Bud's For You" caption and the handed or toasting bottle or cup superimposed over the photograph, which centers the connotated signifieds (referent signifieds) onto the product. In all the ads of this series the colour technique is employed in the matching of the brown bottle or coloured label with the colour tones of the photographic signifiers (usually the people).

At the level of paradigmatic relations to media systems outside of the advertising discourse, these ads commonly refer, through a photographic code, to a form of journalistic photography that is more ethnographic in nature than sensational in its documentation of American life. This 'matter-of-fact' or 'real-life' photographic discourse can be found in such
Figure 2: 'farming'
Figure 3: 'logging'
Figure 4: 'ranching'
FOR EVERYONE WHO'S MOVING US UP IN THE WORLD...

THIS BUD'S FOR YOU.

Figure 5: 'steelworkers'
publications as *Newsweek* or *Life*. The discourse/referent system of American life review journalism, as opposed to standard advertising photographs involving models, sets, and the usual fantastic situations, connotes both authoritative commentary and authentic social contexts depicted. The settings are actual work environments and the people involved are, in fact, boxers, ranchers, farmers, loggers and steelworkers who, for one reason or another, deserve our attention for their role in society. These professionals do not display the product, but rather are in the process of just finishing work. The photograph does not offer the scenes of what is involved in the work. The visual representation of the activity depicted suggests merely that these are certain types of workers who are in work environments. These people, as the objects of the photographs, are to be taken as symbols of work itself, in perhaps its most exhausting forms. Thus this photo-journalistic code operationalizes the mode of address of the message in which the signifying photograph deserves attention or respect by the reader, based on intertextual reference to other news media codes, but does not refer to any specific contents that report or tell a story about real social events.

The structural openness of these ad texts for the generalized reader is founded, as well, by intertextual reference to other advertising texts with similar work-reward themes (almost all being used in the selling of beer). In magazine, radio and television advertising messages, both
Anheuser-Busch and Miller have presented their standard beer products (Miller and Budweiser) in almost identical adwork structures with paradigmatic references to every imaginable scene of American work life (from factory workers, to ski patrolmen, to the musicians producing the advertising jingles). As well, the media vehicles carrying this type of ad have ranged from 'Monday Night Football', to F.M. radio programming, to *Ebony* magazine. In many cases, the references to work situations in these ads are not based on audience interests defined through media segmentation analysis (which could be said of 'boxing'), but rely upon the general theme of work in its recognizable and various examples. The redundancy of this particular textual structure and its usual referent systems, communicated to the mass market through different audience segments and media, has in almost eight years, assured an open, unproblematic reading of its meaning. Most readers will have already experienced this adwork structure before having decoded it in *Sports Illustrated* during the sample period.

The comparison of the content and form of ads in this series with ads for superpremium beers (Michelob and Lowenbrau) do suggest a difference in lifestyle references connected with the targeting to more or less affluent groups in the "Heavy Male Beer Drinker" market. It can be argued that Budweiser ads employ blue-collar oriented work-reward references while Michelob ads use more specific lifestyle references in cueing the middle to upper income groups. The point is, however, that within the
encoder's definition of the massive lower to middle income beer market, the ads used deny any substantial specificity in the way the advertiser conceptualizes and directs meaning to this market through the different audience segments. The images of hard-working American people can be appreciated by the blue-collar and white-collar readers alike. As well, Sports Illustrated, as a media segment, has never been thought of as a blue-collar publication.

b) 'Newman racing'

The adwork structure of this advertisement is more syntagmatically complex in its associations to the product Budweiser than what the reader encounters in the previous Sports Illustrated ads. Yet, its semantic values remain at the level of surface generalities. The denotative signs of actor/racing car driver Paul Newman, racers Bobby and Al Unser, and the three photographs of the racing cars operate as connotative signifiers. The product image (the terminal point of the final connotative meaning of the message) appears on these denotative signifiers instead of being graphically separated. The reader does not see the actual product but only the crested label on the racers' jackets and the name on the cars. The fine lettered written text provides a literal description of the "Newman Can-Am Team's" winning record for 1981 and operates with the racers and cars as connotative signifiers.
Figure 6: 'Newman racing'
The connotative signifiers of the racers, the cars and their track statistics are signified by the text, "Here's To The Newman Can-Am Team". The colloquial phrase "here's to" is understood in the English language to be the beginning of a toast or message of praise to someone or something. In the context of this adwork the reader is directed to share in the praise or toast of the cars, drivers and winning record of the Can-Am Team. "Here's to" states an accomplishment that is rendered easily recognizable for the readers of Sports Illustrated who may not know anything about car racing specifically. The written text literally informs the reader of the sports news meaning of the connoted signifiers.

To the sports reader, the Budweiser name on the jackets of the drivers and the cars, and the list of the team's participation in four races are indexical signifiers of the sign 'money spent by Budweiser in the sport of car racing'. The selection of Newman, Al and Bobby Unser further signify the notion that Budweiser have enlisted the sport's most glamorous and famous celebrity racers for its cars. The second half of the phrase - "this buds' for you"- signifies that both the cars, the drivers and their stated participation, and the product Budweiser are for the readers'/spectators' consumption. All the component parts of the team (drivers and cars) are labelled with the brand name, thereby suggesting an analogic or continuous transfer of the meaning of the team to the meaning of the brand.
The ad layout produces a collage, presentational effect in which the fragmented connotative signifiers are syntagmatically connected by the overall colour coding of the message. The blue horizon and ground contain within the space between them the red and white clad drivers, the white written text, and the red and white racing cars. Red, white and blue are the Budweiser product label colours and these objects, so coloured in the layout, collectively transfer their significance to the product emblems. As well, the colour technique sets the connotative signifier of Newman apart from the other drivers in the suggestion of some type of opposition. For the general reader, Newman is perhaps the most easily identified personality among the three drivers and has the significance of Hollywood glamour that the other two drivers do not convey. The written text refers to the Budweiser racing team as the "Newman Can-Am Team". The readers drawn to *Sports Illustrated* are generalized sports enthusiasts who, as a collective audience, are perhaps not as knowledgeable in the discourse of car racing as the readers of, for instance, *Hot Rod* or *Car and Driver* are. The prestige image of Newman as a referent signifier allows for a more open and unmistakable connotation of the final product sign. His contribution to the actual successes of the racing team are probably nowhere as great as those of Bobby and Al Unser, but, as a symbol that has value in the interdiscourse between sports and popular media, he provides an easily interpreted and recalled association for the product sign. In this way, the advertisement encoder plans for
maximum identification of its representative celebrities, not just in the system of car racing, but in the discourse of national personalities such as those depicted in People magazine. The specificity of the racing discourse gives way to the more open coding of the discourses of famous people and products.

In the analysis of the ad in terms of its intertextual reference to the system of product promotions, it is worth noting that brand sponsorship of sporting events is continually growing. The sports spectator encounters product promotions not simply in commercial interruptions of programming or in award presentations, but on the clothes athletes wear and on the vehicles they drive. The type of product association structures previously discussed are commonplace in the editorial materials of sports coverage to the extent that publications such as Sports Illustrated and Sport magazines have discussed sport from the perspective of sponsorship by brand promotion. In this way, the mass sports audience is becoming familiar with a new interdiscursive formation based on products and sports competitors.

c) "Bud's athletes"

"Bud's athletes" is a literal statement of the product's association with the discourse of sports programming and sports media audience segments. In this message the reader is informed
of the brand's sponsorship of the U.S. Olympic Team, the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games and coverage of the International Amateur Athletic Federation's World Cup Championships on the Entertainment and Sports Programming Network cable television channels in the United States. All these facts are contained within the written text in straightforward English and, as denotative signs, signify the product image of the Budweiser bottle and accompanying slogan "This Bud's For You". Not only is the product signified, but the activity of sponsorship itself. This message is what advertisers refer to as "pre-promotion" -- advertising a media coverage or live event during which the main thrust of product promotion takes place. Such ads not only inform the audience of these coming events, but also prepare the audience for the advertising and sponsorship messages that they will receive in viewing these events.

The written text performs a conative function of a direct imperative -- "watch" the athletes compete and "be sure to tune to ESPN". The referential functions of these denotative signs leave little room for suggestion or for the reader to fill in meaning. The reader is even told where and when the sports events take place by the passage, "Televised Live From Rome, Italy September 4, 5 and 6 on ESPN (Check your local listings for times)". These signs recontextualize the manner in which "Budweiser salutes the world's greatest athletes". The gesture of a salute or tribute is displayed by the hand holding the product sign of the bottle. Yet, through the written text the
Budweiser Salutes
The World's Greatest Athletes.

Watch them compete in...
the IAAF World Cup
of track and field

Televised Live from Rome, Italy
September 4, 5 and 6
on ESPN

Check your local listings for times.

Budweiser, an official sponsor of the U.S. Olympic Team and the 2004 Los Angeles Olympic Games, proudly presents the International Amateur Athletic Federation's World Cup Championships.

Be sure to tune in to ESPN and watch athletes from around the world begin their quest for Olympic gold in 1984.

THIS BUD'S FOR YOU.

Figure 7: 'Bud's Athletes'
"Salute" becomes not a gesture of a person holding a drink, but a gesture of commercial sponsorship by a company defined for the reader as the means through which these events and the country's participation in them, and their coverage by the media are made possible. The written text suggests an interdiscourse of actual sporting events, media coverage of these events (system of sports media products) and the sponsorship involvements of companies that support the previous two. In an open written textual format, 'bud's atheletes' is conceptualized within sports media market definitions of the audience -- much the same definition of the audience on which Sports Illustrated sells itself to advertisers. From this specificity of selected referent systems identified, it appears that this ad, more so than any other in the Sports Illustrated portion of the sample, is encoded by the marketing and advertising structure with a strong media segmentation approach (definition of sports audience) in communicating to the "Heavy Male Beer Drinker" market.

The easily recognized slogan, "This Bud's For You", does not refer simply to the bottle as if it is for anyone. Through the written text, and previous paradigmatic and literal references, "Bud" means sponsorship of sports media and events. This is what is "for" the reader, who is most definitely a sports fan. As well, the slogan performs the function of recalling previous commercial communications and associations made in other Budweiser ads of a less specific reference. Thus
the slogan brings 'bud's athletes' in line with the brand's overall advertising efforts to the "Heavy Male Beer Drinker" market.

d) 'the pitcher'

This ad represents a typical adwork structure employed in the advertising messages for beer in mass marketing contexts. The syntagmatic relations of the ad are few. The denotative signs of the ad include the caption "this buds' for you", the product emblem on the pitcher, the pitcher of beer, and the bar setting (especially the beer tap). The product sign of the pitcher of beer labelled "Budweiser" is signified by the caption which addresses the reader, once again, as a generalized "you". This caption is signified in opposition to the rest of the ad - it is set apart syntagmatically as a distinct signifying element - by the contrast of its bright white lettering from the soft, dominating, brownish hue of the remaining photograph. The caption is intended to resonate for the reader with previously encountered contexts of slogan operations of meaning transfer and address specifications of defining the "you" the beer is "for". In this ad there is no dual signification of the "you" representing, for instance, either a steelworker or the generalized reader. 'The pitcher' is ambiguous in its significance and makes no specific references to knowledge the audience must supply in decoding.
Figure 8: 'the pitcher'
This openness is supported by the presentation of the barroom scene as a connotative signifier, that is out of photographic/visual focus. This lack of definition of the scene permits the reader to insert whatever bar setting and people he prefers for background lifestyle contents of the ad. It is the flowing beer tap, as the only part of the bar that is clearly in focus, that literally and symbolically link the bar setting with the beer. The stream of beer from the tap to the "Budweiser" pitcher physically connect the tap, as part of the bar, with the product sign. The colour coding technique associates the red handle of the tap, with the product emblem on the pitcher. Brown and golden colour hues make the connection between the contents of the pitcher and the tap and the rest of the background bar. This technique-based visual code establishes a unity or harmony among the elements of the photograph through an aesthetic function. Taken as a meaningful whole, the photograph is pleasing to the eye and not conducive to elemental or component decoding by the reader. Thus, the meaning of the ad is less referential than it is affective. Whether the photograph with its blurred background is intended to suggest a dream-like frame into which the reader can 'fill in' the appropriate bar-room friends and setting, or whether the photograph is simply to be taken as a pleasing accompaniment to the familiar slogan that resonates with already learned product associations, this visual signification in the ad is referentially non-specific and performs most of product associations in syntagmatic adwork.
transfers provided by the text (i.e., colour technique).

4.1.2 Playboy

All three of the advertisements that appear in Playboy for the sample period 1981-1982 appear as well in Sports Illustrated. They are analyzed separately from the other "Heavy Male Beer Drinker" market ads in order to determine if media segment definition of the publication has guided the selection of appropriate content and form of the ads -- why these and not other ads appearing in Sports Illustrated have been chosen to appear in Playboy. The first two ads analyzed fall into the advertising category of general image advertising. The third ad analysed performs a seasonal, traditional greeting communication. Its presentation is, however, more tied to a direct brand promotion message than is evidenced in the previous two ads.

The marketing relationship between Anheuser-Busch and Playboy, defined as a media segment, must be considered as the encoding process of matching various brand markets with the publication's reading audience. Anheuser-Busch's Michelob and Michelob Light brands are particularly prevalent in the advertising pages of Playboy in each edition for the 1981-1982 period, while only a total of five Budweiser brand inserts can be located. Anheuser-Busch's reluctance to advertise their Budweiser brand in Playboy suggests that they do not believe the
publication reaches the core demographic targets of Budweiser's market (those less affluent lower-middle to middle income groups of 18-49 year old males). It is noteworthy that Anheuser-Busch relies heavily on lifestyle format advertising in cueing audiences for the Michelob and Michelob Light brands. The Budweiser Olympic sponsorship advertisements that appear in Playboy are primarily placed in the publication in order to address and elicit funds from the more affluent white-collar, audience while not conflicting with the successful lifestyle advertising campaign of Michelob. The company does not wish to confuse this well-defined and suitable market for Michelob by introducing another brand to them that would inevitably compete against Michelob. Similarly, the Christmas greeting advertisement employs the Clydesdale horses in a non-lifestyle format that symbolizes more the Anheuser-Busch tradition than actually signifying anything about the Budweiser brand or its drinkers. In contrast with these Playboy Budweiser ads, the Michelob ads do focus on more specific lifestyle, user-centered images representative of the middle to upper income groups (see figure 9, 'the riders').

a) 'hockey art' and 'basketball art'

'Hockey art' is one of a series of brand sponsorship messages conceptualized in an indirect promotion of the Budweiser product image. Most of the syntagmatic elements of the
A ride becomes a race when it's Michelob Light for the winner.

Figure 9: 'the riders'
written text internally refer to the denotative sign-phrase, 'send your contributions to support our U.S. Olympic athletes'. The body of the written text on the left hand side of the layout dominates the ad and directs the meaning of the visual photographic sign on the right side of the layout. The denotative signs/connotative signifiers of the ad include the photograph of the painting and hockey player Eruzione, the statement of his accomplishment, the Budweiser Olympic emblem and the statement of the sponsorship proposition. These denotative signs are paradigmatically connected to referent systems external to the internal ad structure. The terminal point of these signs' connotative meaning is in the ad sign of the Budweiser Olympic emblem and the U. S. Olympic Committee emblem, whose contiguous visual presentation (one situated beside the other with "Budweiser" beside Eruzione and his art product) are to be taken as one.

The connotational signifieds which structure this final meaning include Eruzione's facial expression and posture, his paint covered stick and skates, and the concepts of "artistry" and 'victory over the Russians', and Eruzione's words quoted in the written text.

Eruzione's stance in front of the painting refers the reader to the discourse of contemporary art and artistic intention and is indexical of the work the artist has undergone in the skillful plan of the painting. The painting itself represents an example of abstract expressionism, in opposition
These paintings, generally executed on a large canvas laid out on the floor, are works most popularly associated with the gesture, action painting. It is never the intention of the critic Harold Rosenberg, in selecting the phrase, to imply that action painting is a kind of atheistical artifice. Nor is it true that the "action" art is a kind of intuitive art. These innovations of Pollock and his followers, the abstract expressionists, are a large and complicated art movement which does not directly provide an answer to the question: What is "action art"? In the context of the present argument, the point is that these paintings are not "action art" but "composition" art. As a result, the question of how our athletes can train for the gold in '84 can be addressed. The advertisement suggests that the "action" in art is not just a surface action but one of accomplishment. The phrase "hockey art" implies that the art is not just a surface action but one of accomplishment. The ad shows the

Figure 10: 'hockey art'
to other artistic styles, which equips the creator with a peculiar type of artistic license that leads to its distinctive form. H. H. Arnason, an art historian, provides us with a convenient definition of this technique:

These paintings, generally executed on a large canvas laid out on the floor, are the works most popularly associated with the phrase, action painting. It was never the intention of the critic Harold Rosenberg, in coining the phrase, to imply that action painting was a kind of athletic exercise. Nor is it true that the furious and seemingly haphazard scattering of paint involved a completely uncontrolled, intuitive act. There is no question that, in the paintings of Pollock and many of the other abstract expressionists, the element of intuition or the accidental plays a large and deliberate part; this is one of the principle contributions of abstract expressionism. However, nothing that an experienced and accomplished artist does can be completely accidental.²

The following ad 'basketball art' actually provides photographs of the production of a painting which adheres to the action painting technique (see figure 11, 'action art'). In 'hockey art' this is signified by the paint on the stick and skates and by the written affirmation of Eruzione as artist. To the general reader, this painting may be thought of as the haphazard scattering of paint in an 'anything goes' art style. Such an unsophisticated (in terms of art appraisal) decoding of the art process is suggested by Eruzione's smirking expression and bizarre selection of artistic tools (i.e., skates and stick). As well, Eruzione's heavy-handed statement of artistic accomplishment, "Picasso made many paintings, but there's only one Eruzione", suggests that the ad is not of course, addressing the audience as serious art enthusiasts. The ad signifies the
painting and its creation in a grossly popularized version of what Arnason has described, but the concept of the painting as a legitimate, 'valuable' symbolic object is retained by the metaphorical parallelism the ad produces of 'hockey artistry/painting artistry'.

The social value of the painting and its production is taken out of the discourse of art and is resignified, through adwork, within the discourses of sport and national identity in competition. The reader is impelled to purchase the painting by the ad's reference to the discourse of national identity in sports. The U.S. gold medal in hockey is described by its victory over the Russians, the U.S.'s most formidable political and sports opponents in international competition. Reference to these discourses further re-contextualizes the significance of the photograph and painter, and accomplishes the final meanings of Budweiser's commitment to Olympic sponsorship. The lithographs or posters become emblematic of Budweiser's entertaining approach to the brand's/consumer's support of American Olympic athletes.

The 'basketball art' ad operates through almost identical syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations. One difference concerns the discourse of past Olympic victories which identifies Bill Russell as a referent symbol. Here, the ad encoder has chosen a reference within the discourse of sports events that dates back to the Olympics of 1956. Yet, as in the 'hockey art' ad, the reader does not have to do the 'work' of supplying knowledge.
Figure 11: 'action art'
BILL RUSSELL PUTS ONE UP FOR OUR OLYMPIC TEAM. AGAIN.

Own the Budweiser 1984 Olympic Games Art Collection.

Budweiser commissioned Bill Russell to create a masterpiece—using only paper, paints, a lot of paint, and the colors of the Olympic Games—outside of a painting studio. This was the final product, the painting was completed in 1984, the U.S. Olympic Committee chose to hang the painting in Los Angeles.

In the same year, the Olympic Games mascot cover was released, the painted cover was given to all athletes as a symbol of support for the U.S. Olympic team. Budweiser commissioned several paintings from Olympic artists and athletes, one of which was a portrait of basketball player Bill Russell.

The Budweiser 1984 Olympic Games Art Collection

The official Olympic Games mascot was an all-black bear named Hope. Hope represented the colors of the Olympic Games and was designed to symbolize the spirit of the Olympic movement.

Figure 12: 'basketball art'
about what actually took place -- the written text quite literally reproduces most of the facts and the sports drama it refers the reader to in brand/sponsorship product associations.

At the level of syntagmatic connections, the three photographs of Bill Russell engaged in "action painting" further facilitate the transfer of meaning between the painting and Russell's production of it (between the photograph at the bottom and the text). These photographs further add to the authentic value of the painting and the humourous incidence of its production (Russell is covered in paint and appears to have trouble dribbling the ball on paint). In the second of the diagonally descending photographs the product label appears in back of Russell. This signifies that Russell has been commissioned by "Budweiser" and links the 'before and after' sequence photographs of the product sign (the painting/ brand name). In this ad the Budweiser label, and the Budweiser Olympic emblems operate as the product signs at the level of denotation. They are the most readily available terminal points for the investment of meaning at the level of connotation generated by the written text. The ad layouts of 'basketball art' and 'hockey art' rely heavily on printed text and use literal statements of historical context to connote the painting, its production and the message of sponsorship -- the ad reproduces its own referent systems. The selected sports celebrity referent signifiers of Russell and Eruzione in this message do not, as well, require decoding knowledge of the specific historical or technical
aspects of the sports discourse. The significance of these athletes and their paintings are open to all readers for the final sign association of Budweiser and its positive contribution to American sports.

Because these ads appear in both *Sports Illustrated* and *Playboy*, and because they select a sports history and sponsorship referent system (sports is perhaps the safest common denominator for cueing the "Heavy Male Beer Drinker" market), the media segmentation influence of the ads matching the specific editorial content and form of *Playboy* seem less important. The concept of Olympic sports sponsorship in 'hockey art' and 'basketball art' is part of an overall marketing campaign that comes to full fruition in the the hundreds of hours of Olympic sports television coverage advertising in 1984. Approximately half of all Anheuser-Busch's print advertising for Budweiser, Michelob, and Michelob Light bear the brands' Olympic sponsorship emblem and the statement, "proud sponsor of the 1984 Olympic Team" (see again Figures 1-5, 9). 'Hockey art' and 'basketball art' construct a meaning system or predisposed intertextual competence for the male mass audience which, based upon the open codes and references to the sports discourse most often found in beer advertising, produces the effect of resonance when visually communicating the emblem in other non-sports oriented lifestyle ads. Such generalized sponsorship image connotations are not attempted in the market segment ads of this sample as we shall see shortly.
b) 'season's greetings'

In the last five years this ad has appeared with slight presentational variations in Playboy, Sports Illustrated and, before the sample period, in Rolling Stone magazines. The fundamental referent system of all these Budweiser ads is that of expressing the rituals that surround the celebration of Christmas. The connotations drawn from this referent system are ritually and symbolically significant for all audiences -- the reference to Christmas seems to cut across and come into use in all cultural group and consumer community formations of predominantly Christian societies. In this sense it comes into seasonal use in ad messages with few media segment or market based variations of its tradition-oriented themes.

In 'season's greeting', the photograph denotes an old Budweiser beer wagon transporting the beer and a Christmas tree. Within the intertextual frame of the reader's experience with beer advertising, the Clydesdale horses and red Budweiser wagon connotatively signify the traditional emblem of Anheuser-Busch. The image has been used for the Budweiser brand (the brewery's longest selling brand) for decades and its presence in this ad signifies old-time tradition, both in advertising and in the way beer used to be transported. The Christmas tree on top of the wagon further signifies this reference to old-time tradition by suggesting that people used to take home trees for the same
ritual purpose they do today -- the practice of the shared meanings of a society and its belief systems. The phatic function this broad contextualization of the message renders -- a unity of all people who acknowledge the holiday as a special time -- does not implicate the reader by membership of any specific social group. The printed caption echoes this connotated signified, further providing for the ad's open coding, with the words, "Take Home A Holiday Tradition". The significance of the tree, as a symbol of the holiday, is being "taken home" along with an ample supply of beer refreshments. The contiguous containment of the signifiers beer and tree on the wagon directs the reader to see an essential similarity between the tree as a referent signified (tradition of Christmas) and the product signified Budweiser beer in a metaphoric transformation of the product's meaning in the final sign of the ad. This transformation of meaning is facilitated by the colour technique in that the caption in red matches the red Budweiser wagon (the product signifier).

It is clear that the advertising encoder intends this message as an emotional stimulus instead of attempting to communicate to the market/audience segment through particular, predisposed, lifestyle/habitual media use references. In fine print at the top of the ad the marketers for Budweiser offer the photograph alone as a purchaseable 17 x 40" colour poster. By doing so, they are assuming that, to the readers of *Sports Illustrated* and *Playboy*, the visual presentation of 'season's
greetings' is pleasing to the eye, or, in fact, constitutes art. It is unlikely that ownership of this poster or the art pieces in 'hockey art' and 'basketball art' signify any particular set of cultural values or specific lifestyle preferences. The posters do signify totemic group preferences of beer brand in their new household context of message communication. As cultural artefacts associated with Budweiser's modes of address to these media segments, these pieces' artistic styles (Christmas card art and abstract expressionism) represent dominant cultural tastes of the mass media market. Instead, these posters are to be taken as totemic objects signifying product affiliations and participation in the sponsorship of sport in nationalist terms. They are indicative of a growing marketing trend to fill the world of the mass consumer's collection of everyday goods and objects with things bearing the Budweiser label. Most lifestyle advertising brands (cigarettes and beer in particular) offer products such as clothing, sports equipment and "art collections" in which the consumer can identify to others his choice of lifestyle/brand associations. These Budweiser things resonate with the mass cultural definitions of what 'Budweiser brings to you' (see figure 14, 'Bud products').
Figure 13: 'season's greetings'
Figure 14: 'Bud's products'
4.2 Market Segmentation Advertisements for the "Young Adult Male"

4.2.1 Hot Rod

This portion of the sample exhibits what I believe to be the determining influence on advertising form and content of the editorial form and content of the carrying publication. Hot Rod is the most typical of what the advertising industry calls "lifestyle magazines" in this study's sample selection from different publications. More than any other youth market publication in the sample, Hot Rod's editorial content is consciously directed to the readers' common interest in high performance vehicles and their racing competitiveness, maintenance, and design. Seldom do other advertisers refer this reading audience to standard youth market ad presentations and associations of youth entertainment "tie-ins" in signifying their products. Most of the ads in the publication pertain to the interest in automotive parts and more "rational-information" and "product quality" associations in chosen imagery (see figure 15, 'automotive appeal'). A "co-op" ad jointly promoting Budweiser beer and Quaker State motor oil exhibits the marriage of Budweiser's overall general image mode of address with the "product quality" type of appeal common in Quaker State ads (see figure 15, 'Quaker State and Bud'). Budweiser advertisement
Figure 15: 'automotive appeal'
This Bud's for you and Quaker State

Stayin' on the road with Quaker State.
presentations have focused upon the publication's primary audience segment reading interest -- high performance vehicles. This is the case for all but one of the ads analyzed here. The outstanding ad, as we shall see, is presented in a very ambiguous referential conceptualization much the same as 'the pitcher'. Overall, Budweiser takes a sophisticated segmentation approach in developing the brand's image, not only for the audience segment of Hot Rod, but for the whole market of high performance racing enthusiasts/spectators in marketing and advertising "tie-in" promotions related to the sponsorship of events and competitors (see figure 17, 'editorial pages'). In comparison with the previous mass marketing approaches and the other advertising presentations to the youth market which follow those of Hot Rod in the analysis, the overall Budweiser Brand image is conceptualized by the ads as emblems of the racing community (readers/ spectators). Budweiser brand beer becomes, what Kline defines as a "totem object" which forms the "basis of symbolic relation upon which all other social relations are defined through membership." In the 'Budweiser King' ad that follows and in the Budweiser King 't-shirt' ad, the marketing encoder attempts to define the terms of membership in a totem group by the use of restrictive codes of social behaviour and social relations within the group and in opposition to other lifestyle totem groups (i.e., defined by beer brand, clothing, macho values of the "Budweiser King Racing Team" member).
The systematic structuring of "Budweiser King" revolves around a similar marketing concept as is presented in "Hockey art" and "Basketball art", that varies in the sense of address to a more well defined audience. The paradigmatic selection of connotative significance in "Budweiser King" to external reference system are specific within the "social modern" extraradical interest and competence in the lifestyle discourse that surrounds the high performance racing spectacle. The photogaphs of the car and people below denote, for the reader of Bud and the "funny car" class vehicle leaving the starting line, the sponsorship of the car by the beer brand "Budweiser" on the car, as well as support with the "funny car" class vehicle by the beer brand "Budweiser".

**Figure 17: 'editorial pages'**
The syntagmatic structuring of 'Budweiser King' evolves around a similar marketing concept as is presented in 'hockey art' and 'basketball art'. What varies is the mode of address to a more well defined audience. The paradigmatic relations of connotative signifiers in 'Budweiser King' to external referent systems are specific within the model readers' extratextual interest and competence in the lifestyle discourse that surrounds the high performance racing spectacle. The photographs of the car and person below denote, for the reader of Hot Rod, a "funny car" class vehicle leaving the starting line, the sponsorship of the car by the brand name "Budweiser" on the car, and the driver of the car signified by the held helmet with the name "Budweiser King" on it. These denotative signs operate as referent signifiers of the discursive system of high performance vehicle racing based in the particular extratextual competencies of the model reader (i.e., common frames of having talked about and experienced such races and intertextual frames built up in the reading of Hot Rod, Road and Track and television sports media coverage). The "funny car" start, within the referent system of racing cars, connotes the quintessential moment of the most powerful car in racing's test of performance. Races are won or lost at the start in this racing class. The "funny car" is the emblem in America of the hot rod community. The emblem of Budweiser on the hood of the car suggests both the notions of
Figure 18: 'Budweiser King'
sponsorship and the transference of the car's meaning to the product sign. The words "Budweiser King" (the name of the car) and "This Bud's For You" on the rear "spoiler" of the car are paradigmatically linked to the product's long standing slogan in ad messages. This encourages a resonance of previous ad meanings. The posture and facial expression of the driver connote to the Hot Rod reader that he is posing, perhaps after the race displayed above. The t-shirt he wears is the same offered in "team membership" and the helmet he carries connotes part of the racing equipment whose significance is transferred to the sign of the t-shirt in a contiguous relationship of the smaller photograph. The connotational sign of being a member of the team (by owning/wearing the t-shirt) transfers its meaning to the action photograph of the car through the statements of the written text. The larger car photograph encloses the smaller photograph of the driver. The larger visual depiction of activity literally frames or includes the driver and, of course, the t-shirt worn. In this literal framing of the t-shirt by the action shot and the fact that the driver is wearing it, the t-shirt becomes part of the activity of drag-racing. The "Budweiser King" print on the t-shirt refers the reader to the "Budweiser King" print on the car in an operation of literal similarity -- the car and t-shirt are two objects with the same significance.

The "Budweiser King" caption at the head of the page denotes the car in the passage that accompanies the photograph
and connotes the marketing slogan, "Budweiser, the king of beers". The red and white of the caption is connected through the colour technique to the car as a symbol of the racing community. The finer print denotatively signifies what is entailed in and what one receives from membership in the "Budweiser King Mercury LN7 Motocraft Racing Team". The opening phrase, "Now you can join..." connotes a time reference of 'before you were unable' to be a member of the activity signified by the photographs, but now Budweiser has allowed for your entry into this lifestyle group activity (of racing). By purchasing the t-shirt, official sponsor decals, team button, newsletter, action poster and car photo - all included with membership - the reader is promised an identity within the racing lifestyle group. These purchaseable items are for display and suggest a further specification of group membership around the totemic sign of the Budweiser brand name. This racing paraphernalia becomes a cultural statement of the individual's lifestyle commitment to the community of car enthusiasts and the product image of Budweiser whose marketers compete against other breweries and product name racing sponsors. As well, the ad's written text explains that members and non-members may enter in a contest that includes two prizes of all-expense paid trips to major drag-races where the contestant works as a part of the pit crew. This further signifies the encoder's conceptualization of the model reader as one who wishes to be part of the activity signified by the action photograph of the car. It is, of course,
unlikely that the ad standards for Budweiser would permit such
an offer in Martin or Rolling Stone magazine advertisements.

There are referent signifiers in this advertisement other
than just those belonging to this discussion of high performance
racing and Budweiser's overall promotions (other are, racing as
a "tie-in" activity). The term "Beefy-T" that describes the
T-shirt colloquially expresses the notion of "sacred" deport
associated with the sport of drag-racing. In the manner of, "T-shirt", a posing, nude (see the T-shirt here, models the
"Beefy-T" (see Figure 19, 'Beefy-T')). Our gesture is similar to
those of models in "nipple" magazines. This female pictorial
discourse is certainly favored by marketers to advertise

Figure 19: 'Beefy-T'
unlikely that the ad encoders for Budweiser would present such an offer in Playboy or Rolling Stone magazine advertisements.

There are referent signifiers in this advertisement other than just those belonging to this discourse of high performance racing and Budweiser's overall promotions (other ads, racing as a "tie-in" activity). The term "Beefy-T" that describes the t-shirt colloquially expresses the notion of "macho" power associated with the sport of drag-racing. In the separate ad, 't-shirt', a woman, nude from the t-shirt down, models the "Beefy-T" (see figure 19, 'Beefy-T'). Her gesture is similar to those of models in "girlie" magazines. This female pictorial discourse is commonly borrowed by encoders to advertise specialty car parts in magazines such as Hot Rod and is, as well, a common image on automotive company calendars (see figure 20, 'sexy parts'). The image of the woman connotes an intertextual reading competence of the model reader's habitual media use of these publications and cues a common frame predisposition in social values (i.e., macho male) pertaining to interpersonal interaction and judgement. These sexist social values are connoted in the attempt to cue the specific audience segment of Hot Rod and are common, through intertextual reference to other ads in the publication, but are not exhibited in other paradigmatic relations of other Budweiser ads in other publications.
Figure 20: 'sexy parts'
b) 'Miss Bud'

The denotative signs of this ad consist of the background photograph of the hydroplane boat, the photograph of the crew working on the boat, the product image of the Budweiser can and the mug, and the fine print caption at the bottom of the page. The connotative significance of the action photograph of the hydroplane performs a similar referential function as did the action photograph in 'Budweiser King'. The speeding hydroplane cues, as a symbolic referent, the reader's interest in high performance racing within the referent system of boat types. The photograph of the crew servicing the boat connotes indexically the mechanical work and expertise that is required in making the hydroplane performance competitive. The image connotes a documentary, action sports coverage form in its photographic coding that invites, through the shot angle and close-up perspective, the reader to almost join with the crew in surveying the engine in search of a possible mechanical failure. Again, the crew are all wearing Budweiser brand emblems that identify them as members of a team. The photograph of the product is positioned right next to the photograph of the crew. These two photographs are both in sharp focus and are connected by this similarity in visual representation, while the speeding hydroplane photograph is more grainy, thus suggesting a secondary association of perhaps a time lapse (future moment) or dreamlike image (the envisioned moment of the testing of all the
Figure 21: 'Miss Bud'
mechanical work that is going on). The two smaller photographs are syntagmatically structured in close spatial proximity and connote the signified 'this poured beer is for those who have worked hard to make the hydroplane perform'. The colour technique further strengthens the bond of the two smaller photographs through resemblance of the boat's colour and white uniforms to the brand label colours. The people in the white uniforms present the referent sign of mechanical expertise in the system of high performance racing and the fact that they are all concerned with and assembled around the engine connotes a notion of community interest (in mechanics) which is, as well, transferred to the product-sign. This object of the photograph is selected with the Hot Rod reader in mind and would be of far lesser interest to the general reader who may only enjoy the action element in the racing spectacle.

The printed text "Miss Bud's for you" operates in signifying a dual connotative meaning. The phrase refers the reader to the photograph of the boat and the crew working on the boat, and signifies Budweiser's sponsorship of the 1980 national champion hydroplane and its excellent record. The positioning of the caption beside the product sign photograph and the photograph of the maintenance crew provides for an ambiguous relation between these elements based on the linguistic pun in "Miss Bud's for you". The phrase "this Bud's for you" is the brand's slogan and, is what resonates, through similarity, in the reader's mind when encountering the "Miss" in this ad's
slogan. The dual meaning created by this play on words or grammatical tampering, syntagmatically associates the product image and the notion of sponsorship of the hydroplane spectacle for "you", the reader. As well, it refers the reader to the system of Budweiser promotional slogans. It naturalizes the well-known slogan by allowing the reader to pick up on the obvious spelling mistake of "Miss" instead of 'this'.

The caption "Miss Bud's for you" contextualizes both the phatic and referential contact function with the reader. This phrase assumes a mode of address that the male reader, in referring to his common frame experience, is supposed to identify as one man talking to another friend about a woman. The ad employs a colloquial expression based upon a referred male tendency to personify machinery and especially vehicles in the female gender. In this sense the slogan performs a structured cross-reference of the discourse of high performance vehicles and the sexist male social values and the informal interaction among males.

It can be argued that the references to the discourse of performance vehicle mechanics and racing (the editorial focus of Hot Rod) are less specific than the way in which the referred discourse is utilized in 'Budweiser King'. The reader does not have to know much about the sport of hydroplane racing or mechanics to grasp the significance of the ad. The reference to the definitely male tendency to refer to things as women, as well, will probably gain unproblematic decoding by the reader.
who most likely is a male. Despite this realization of the open textual form of this ad, there is an aspect of the group-related (totemic community of hot rodders) specificity of the referent systems of the ad that need consideration -- how many generalized readers (mass media market) would favourable decode or prefer the interdiscourse of the racing spectacle, mechanics, and referring to machinery in the female gender? I believe that the densities of relations between these three referent systems are few for the average member of the "Heavy Male Beer Drinker" market and are even fewer for members of the "Young Adult Male" market (e.g., college students) when cultural predispositions are cued. Yet, for the readers of Hot Rod, who automatically prefer the overlapping significance of the paradigmatic systems of racing and mechanics, an intertextual frame is built up from reading other ads in Hot Rod which includes, as well, the sexist discourse. It is also believed, that practiced conceptualizations of these densities of referential relations can be found in the common frame experience of the America community of hot rodders and their social values in communication, be they part of the 18-24 or 18-49 demographic groups.

c) 'this is Bud'

The 'this is Bud' is designed to perform the operation of resonance. The product sign is signified in this ad by the
photograph of the hand reaching into the iced beer and the slogan, "this Bud's for you". In comparison with all the advertisements that have been studied thus far, the 'this is Bud' adwork has fewer contributing connotative signifiers and fewer separate relations between elements in its structure. As well, the printed text, which usually connects several connotative signifiers to the signified product, is reduced to the elementary brand slogan and the beer label. This ad text, even though it is one of a series of messages that have helped shape the communication relationship of marketing encoders and decoding markets/audiences for the brand's meaning, aims to be considered as a complete message, as a system harmonious at all levels and for all functions. In this way the ad performs an aesthetic function in communication of its meaning to the reader.

In 'this is Bud', the printed slogan "This Bud's For You" is a connotative signifier taken from the referent system of signifieds that this slogan has produced in other Budweiser ads. For the reader this slogan resonates with stored meaning from having viewed it in other contexts of adwork and paradigmatic relations. The amalgam of these different meanings of the slogan are frozen or naturalized into one, whose significance is transferred to the simple photographic elements through a complete metaphor of one system (slogan meaning) being similar to another (the photograph as an aesthetically complete assemblage of elements). The denotative sign elements of the
photograph are the hand and several cans of beer, floating on ice. These elements appear not to refer to any social discourse or cultural interaction other than the product form and label. The slogan relates to the photograph as if to suggest, literally, that this can of beer is being pulled from the ice for the reader. The slogan will only resonate with someone the reader has experienced from previous ad decoding. The slogans and readings are usually juxtaposed associations with the product image, which is used to the reader in an attempt to interpret the meaning of whatever product the reader wishes to select.

Figure 22: 'this is Bud'
photograph are the hand and several cans of Budweiser floating on ice. These elements appear not to refer to any social discourses or cultural information other than the product form and label. The slogan refers to the photograph as if to suggest, literally, that this can of beer is being pulled from the ice for the reader. The slogan will only resonate with meaning the reader has experienced from previous ad decipherings. The slogan meanings are usually in structured associations with the product image (usually a bottle or can label). Just as the reader is invited to perform a structured recall of whatever product meaning by the slogan as the connotative signifier, so the hand chooses whatever can in the ice which is the product sign in the message. Both the ambiguity of the slogan (any one recalled signified of previous Budweiser slogan positions in adwork) and the multiple product images in the photograph open this text to whichever preferred reading the decoder wishes to select.

The selection the reader participates in is restricted to the referent system of Budweiser messages the 'this is Bud' ad is paradigmatically a part of. This ad, presented in a context of media segmentation, is remarkably open and non-specific in its referential functions. Yet, cultural reference is not the objective of this ad. This type of general resonance around the product sign operates as a most effective appeal to this specific audience, who will have seen Budweiser ads, but whose cultural predispositions may be hard to define, as a group, and represent in ads. This ad operates in ways similar to the
'Chanel' ad in which Deneuve's face is omitted and only the perfume bottle is left to resonate with associations learned by the reader in previous specific reading contexts ('Chanel' ads in fashion magazines).

4.2.2 National Lampoon, Rolling Stone and Ampersand

Ampersand

These last seven ads of the sample have all been presented in National Lampoon, Rolling Stone and Ampersand magazines on a rotation basis for the sample period of 1981-1982. Because of this rotation media distribution strategy effected by the advertiser, this youth market subsample need not be differentiated by the media vehicles carrying it. From the perspective of a pragmatic semiotics that attempts to look at the message as well as the communication contexts of sending and receiving, it is understood that the advertisers of Budweiser conceptualize the readerships of these three publications as all belonging to similar cultural and social backgrounds (and one market definition). This assumption - based on the fact that the ads do not change in appearance from one magazine to the next - is of central importance, given the closedness of their textual form which I shall describe shortly.

The ads in this section of the "Young Adult Male" subsample share a commonness in form-oriented adwork formats and in selection of interrelated paradigmatic systems brought into adwork through the referential function of these messages. As
well, these ads do not encode any printed slogans which demand
the attention of the reader as significantly separate from the
photographic or collage signs taken as complete sign forms.
Unlike the rest of the Budweiser brand advertisements, the
syntagmatic relations of these seven ads invite the reader to
enter into "hermeneutic" interpretations while the paradigmatic,
referential functions of these messages rely heavily on their
aesthetic functions (the whole ad structure taken as a unified,
harmonious referent). Williamson provides a valuable definition
of hermeneutics in her own specific semiotic usage:

By this I simply mean interpreting, but interpreting in
the sense of deciphering a code, or translating from one
language to another: it is an interpretation along given
channels, which lead away from the interpreted object,
to a 'meaning' behind or beyond it - or even 'inside'
it. 5

This encoding of a strict path of structural relations the
decoding reader must undergo in arriving at a 'meaning beyond',
'behind' or 'inside' the ad message usually takes the form of a
puzzle or joking relation in which the reader must stop and work
out a 'solution'. The exclusion of products, and the conative,
persuading rhetoric of the advertising language code, in
opposition to their usual abundance in ad messages, provides the
reader with the impression that he is discovering a hidden
meaning that is already there, in the message. The ad's
structural form reminds the reader that a puzzle has only one
solution or missing piece and that a joke has only one strict
logic which must be followed in order to "get it". While puzzles
imply that something should be there or 'meant', jokes often
omit a connection between two frames of meaning or signs which, when discovered, reveal an unlikely or impossible meaning behind its condensed surface meaning. There is a meta-communication in communicated jokes and puzzles that the referent solution (completed puzzle or seeing the impossibility yet the intersection of two joking planes of meaning) is decipherable from and obtainable in the message. Such ad messages, employing syntagmatic joking or puzzle relationships, require 'conscious' work from the reader within the parameters of the textual processes -- they appear to not rely as much on connoted extratextual knowledge in their surface operations of adwork. The signifiers of the puzzle and joke appear to come fully equipped with their own signifieds and the illusion that the ad's sign system leads directly to a 'meaningful' reality is created. Williamson states that in deciphering such ads,

we are constituted as the discoverers of meaning, and are involved in a 'conscious' activity which keeps us looking through a certain opacity in the signifying process, to a message beyond; thus although involved in a hermeneutic and limited 'deciphering', we overlook the signification process itself.7

In terms of Eco's theory of open and closed texts, Williamson is suggesting that the hermeneutic adwork provides an illusion of closedness which diverts the readers' attention away from the ad's significance. Yet, she does not adequately explain this final significance as an 'ideological' paradigmatic relation in signifying the product. She merely asserts that the reader has participated in a 'false reality' which is imparted to the product. It could be said that the puzzle or joke enables.
the reader to participate in a pleasurable discovery (emotions of humour and accomplishment in the decipherment) thus making the product resonate with the emotion produced. The audience's reaction to the referent sign (the final solution of the joke or puzzle) is the result of having participated in a personal realization -- an emotive function. If this is true, there is another level upon which ad texts can understood as be more open or closed and, as well, ideological (in the anthropological sense of the term).

Pun and joke structures, for instance, are not funny for everyone but depend on a sharing of extratextual knowledge between the encoder and decoder for the final meaning of the joke to be correctly interpreted. If the condensed signifiers of the joke and their signified meanings (taken as a whole) do not coincide with the cultural predispositions of the audience, then the desired effect is not achieved. Hermeneutic processes of the ad thus perform a referential function (cognitive association of signs of the ad with external objects, cultural meaning) and an emotive function (express an attitude towards the joking relation as a sign, affective in causing an expression of emotion). If the referential function within the hermeneutic structure does not properly cue the audience, the emotive function is likely to provide an unforeseen resonance or no remembered stimuli in product association.

The youth subsample is form-oriented in another sense that is closely related to the hermeneutic structure and emotive and
referential functions of the ad. An aesthetic function dominates the communication of these ad messages. The referent is the ad message's "artistic" layout design (refers the reader to an artistic style, thus rendering it an object of this style system). It is no longer the instrument of communication of some reality beyond itself, but becomes its own referent. As message-objects/art-objects, whose photographic or collage sign elements are harmoniously united, these ads bear their own meaning and belong to a referred semiotics of stylization. The ad's aesthetic character depends on its ambiguity and, as Eco puts it, on the fact that it is "self-focusing". The ad message functions as a meaningful whole.

Semiotics has used the three domains of syntactics, semantics and pragmatics in the analysis of art-objects. Syntactics investigates the problems of rules which govern the art-object as a text. These syntactical relationships can be strictly determined (e.g., in the time of Classicism) or less restricting (e.g., abstract expressionism). The meaning of the art-object or its semantic operations can be taken as its immanent sense, usually identified with its value, or as the necessary condition of its reference to something else. The analysis of the ad subsample assumes that the design of the art-object becomes a sign within a particular artistic style or discourse of objects and the portrayal of these discourses demand of the viewer an appraisal of value (culturally based in audience predisposition). The semiotics of aesthetic messages,
from the pragmatic point of view, has usually tended to examine
the work of art as the expression of the artist's inner life and
perspective. This is not the pragmatic approach taken in the
analysis of the "artistic" design of ad messages in this
analysis. Instead, the art-object/layout design is seen as an
intentional expression of the ad encoding structure and its
appropriation of artistic style supplies the means (codes) for
cueing particular types of consumers.

A critical operation of sign processes arises out of the
dominating presence of the aesthetic function of these ads. Even
though these "artistic" messages display several functions at
the same time, the dominating aesthetic function — in opposition
to other message functions — seems not aimed at the fulfillment
of any practical task of communicating content (e.g., product
information). The "artistic" presentations of these ads, in
effect, disarm the reader in, what Pollay describes as, a
process that "relies on simple association, where a mood,
feeling, or affect communicated by the art surrounds the
product, like so much sugar coating on a bitter pill."¹⁰ This
use of art in product presentations is a very apt encoding
strategy of selection and combination for the youth audience
that "does not respond in a highly positive fashion to
traditional ad messages." Even so, the ad encoder cannot select
just any aesthetic value (semantically significant art style)
for cueing the youth audience because in a society the aesthetic
value is variable and it is conditioned socially (it is learned
and shared within groups). In the example of the communication of aesthetic texts (where this function dominates the message) in youth cultural production in the media, an album cover, for instance, will have its signifying elements arranged in an artistic layout design characteristic of a particular visual genre whose syntactic rules of combination have been employed in countless other albums for the same model consumer/viewer (situated in a specific musical taste and therefore associated visual taste market). Coming from a semiotic and aesthetic evaluation theory that does not consider the commercial production aspect of the text (in the sense developed here), Jan Mukarovsky explains:

Not only the variability of the aesthetic evaluation, but also the stability of the objective aesthetic value must be derived from the relation between arts and society.¹¹

The aesthetic evaluations of art designs vary depending on which cultural group receives them. The audience's predispositions towards "artistic" messages is based on what, through experience in decoding, they have come to define with positive value. From the discussion in Chapter Three, music has been identified as the most positively valued cultural production media consumed by youth. The aesthetic evaluation of this media has not been restricted merely to sound images received in the consumption of record albums, but also has included, especially since the sixties, evaluations of the imagery of posters and record covers that perform congruent aesthetic functions. Dominy Hamilton, an analyst of the
iconography of album cover art, explains that:

the psychedelic poster and record sleeve were, literally, objects of contemplation. Listening to records was in the late '60s a manner of 'getting into it', you put the record on the turntable, you got high, and probably looked at the record cover while listening. The complex and ambiguous images were food for fantasies.  

The point here is that the album cover, which not only identified the record, but also was consumed simultaneously with the musical contents, was used as an aesthetic text and still is today. While the consumer would perhaps be somewhat lost as to the social and cultural significance of the "complex and ambiguous" imagery of the cover designs, the lyrical contents of the accompanying music provides, through contiguous presence in the decoding experience, social and cultural value to the cover image as the visual product/group/music sign. And it is important to note that the syntagmatic rules of album cover design, like the establishment of a particular musical genre or "sound", become established and easily recognized by patronizing audiences.

The artistic designs of the seven ads that follow in the analysis resemble the aesthetic values and norms of syntactical message structure presentation characteristic of album cover designs. The form-oriented presentation of these ads translate into a "media approach" borrowed from the promotion of youth albums and, on the basis of the youth interdiscourse, it is believed that these ad layouts perform a similar aesthetic and marketing function in youth market advertising. This is not to
say that album cover type adwork and referential structures are
the only way to approach the "Young Adult Male" market, a market
with preferred social and cultural codes of product meanings.
Yet contemporary advertisers realize that it is the music
industry that has not only had the greatest success with the
youth market, but also has also had a big hand in actually
shaping the lifestyle preferences, attitudes and cultural
predispositions of the contemporary youth consumer.

Hamilton's study of record album covers identifies a fairly
common aesthetic value which she refers to as the
"fantasy/reality confrontation". The confrontation, which is
manifested in many album cover designs and usually communicated
through distorted representations of objects and unusual layout
patterns and colours, suggests a conscious testing of the more
dominant/traditional media standards and cultural tastes.
Hamilton suggests that this aesthetic form/value concerns an
opposition between the conceptual terms and consumptive
practices of traditional society and the consumptive practices
of the youth audience, who constant play with the acceptable
boundaries of the "straight" media reality. Hamilton notes the
obvious expression of this "fantasy/reality confrontation" on
album covers since the mid '60s and suggests that this
aesthetic/social value in youth culture has been working itself
out since. Hamilton also notes the interdiscursive contributions
of other media during this period in shaping the album cover
medium, apart from music itself:
The visual influences that contributed to the importance of sleeve design from about 1963 onwards were few but cover a wide spectrum of contemporary culture. Movies, fashion photography, modern art (especially Surrealism and collage) and fantasy and sci-fi illustration appear in unexpected combinations. The attitude of tongue-in-cheek sophistication that made this possible was largely fostered by art directors, who set high standards of professionalism. All this has given rise to the emergence of the album as an important design medium (some say art-form) in its own right.13

Other media have contributed to the formation of aesthetic and social values of album cover presentations in much the same way that the medium of album cover design has been appropriated by the artistic layout designers of these seven Budweiser ads. The crucial factor in this trans-media exchange is that an artistic form will survive in the media production industry as long as it has market value in positively cueing certain audiences. A case in point stemming from a Budweiser ad appearing on both television and in magazines can be traced back to other media of origination of its form. In the Budweiser ad 'the tastebuds', presented in National Lampoon and in a television ad version shown during "Saturday Night Live" in 1979, a distinctive comic book aesthetic and social value is communicated by its form conceptualization and the historic value of such conceptualization. The juxtaposition of the codes of simple and 'make-believe' forms and characters - something that would appeal to and appears more appropriate for a child - with a dialogue and characters that are adult and often perverse and grotesque, typifies a cartoon form, originated by R. Crumb and Clay Wilson, in the late '60s and early '70s as underground "comix". This form gained popularity among youth audiences.
Figure 23: 'Cheap Thrills'
because of its almost political defacement of a medium that represented the parent culture's conservative approach to fantasy and entertainment - in no way was the real social world to intrude into aesthetic and more literal codes of cartoons. The form is used in the design of the "Cheap Thrills" album cover and in fact the artist is R. Crumb himself (see figure 23). Here semiotics can identify similarities in the message forms presented in underground "comix", album cover designs and magazine ads, and can note the omissions or reworking of certain referential treatments of these message forms as they are appropriated from one medium to another. This comparison-oriented analysis of the changing communication of the message form suggests the search for the presentational function or value common in these social media forms that marketers/encoders find suitable in cueing the readers of the youth audience formation. These forms evidently have particular media marketability based in their referential, phatic and conative functions. This factor is the audience predisposition to that message-form and it is this factor which has lead the encoders of 'the tastebuds' to confidently enter into the youth media segment (for the first time in 1979) with an alternative to their conventional ad content and form. The similarity in aesthetic function of the Crumb "comix" and album cover, and the Budweiser layout are signified by the bulbous and erotic presentation of the characters (i.e., the faces emerging from the tongue, the woman's breast on the album cover and its sexual
connotation similar to what is seen in "underground comix") and by the juxtaposition of cartoon characters with adult, vulgar dialogue of these characters for humourous effect. 'The tastebuds', and as can be seen in the forthcoming sample, the Budweiser youth advertisements, have kept pace with the album cover medium and have borrowed the unconventional styles produced by youth album cover designers. Hamilton describes these:

The unexpected juxtapositions and distortions of scale derived from Surrealism continue to appear both in photographic collage and in illustration and have become almost as predictable a formula as the stylized portraits of the 1950's.¹

Such evidence of juxtapositions and distortions of scale can be seen in the example illustrations of 'album distortions' (see figure 25). The remaining analysis here suggests that Budweiser ad layouts borrow the referent album cover design form as, in Mukarovsky's terms, "the stability of the objective aesthetic value" historically appropriate for evaluation by youth audiences. This is not to contend that the album cover is the sole source of the origination of form and content of the ads which follow. Rather, I wish to use the comparative semiotic framework to suggest that the album cover design has been the most popular visual medium to youth and has been appropriated because of its social function in the young persons media and cultural experience of youth in relation to the communications about goods.

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'music dances' at the level of pragmatic relations. It operates in a process of hermeneutic attack, as it locates its position of significance by the context of the setting (walls, doorways and sky). The significance of the setting, the cat, and the head holding the product are connected by virtue of their containment within the layout as a meaningful whole. The counter-signature function does not direct the reader, but rather, the counter-signature is part of the layer of images after the poster background. The division of the poster into squares, as Apparate suggests, is the solution to the problem of a closed reading-experience. The only element in the obvious product of the ad, the significant sign of 'album distortions'. Figure 25: 'album distortions'
a) 'women dancers'

'Women dancers' at the level of syntagmatic relations operates in a process of hermeneutic adwork, as Williamson conceives of it. The denotative signifiers of the setting (walls, doorways and sky), the elderly women dancing, the statue, the cat, and hand holding the product image are connected by virtue of their containment within the layout as a meaningful whole. There is no explicit conative function operative here; that is, the advertiser does not direct the reader's attention through printed captions, but rather, the denotative signs appear juxtaposed on one layer of images after another ending with the product sign in the center background. The denotative signs are presented in collage form, as disparate unit elements, whose connectedness is offered as the solution to this puzzling structure that the reader must figure out. The reader is presented with the illusionary problematic of a closed text whose signifying elements need careful consideration before moving on to a next layer of meaning. The setting of the ad literally appears as a dream-like maze. The only element in the puzzle that makes sense to the reader is the obvious product image, which on the basis of previous advertisement reading experience, the reader knows to be one of the significant signs of product message meaning. The product image is usually the sign signified by other socially or personally significant referent signifiers. The statue, poised in a position of looking
Figure 26: 'women dancers'
at the bottle of Budweiser and the common signified of the hand presenting the bottle of Budweiser (image common in other Budweiser ads) re-affirm the probable role in signification the product image must play.

Upon closer investigation of the denotative elements of the ad, the reader is finally rewarded with a discovery. In the patterns of the wallpaper on the background wall are the printed words, "This Bud's For You". The signifying slogan is hardly noticeable because of its patterned repetition on the wall and because of its presentation in fine, low colour contrast print. The reader has been led down a closed path of impossible product associations while the Budweiser brand signified, "this buds' for you", is displayed over approximately half of the layout's entire space. The decoy connotative signifiers of the women dancing and the Surrealist images of the distorted size of the hand and bottle (here signified as actually part of the scene), the classical statue and arching doorway, and the substitution of a sky image where the floor should be, all operate as diverting noise in the communication of the mundane message signified "this Bud's for you".

On the one hand, the juxtaposition of the women dancing with other distorted or out of place imagery connotes the readers' involvements with deep symbolic meanings and complex illusionism. On the other hand, the message is definitely a Budweiser advertisement. In this sense the whole ad operates as a referent that intertextually refers to the usual system of
adwork conventions (these ads make established paradigmatic connections with particular sets of referent systems). The puzzling co-presence of these two frames of references in one message is contextualized or made sense of by the hidden signified "This Bud's For You." The phrase meta-communicates to the reader that there is no deeper/other final meaning. The punchline of the joking relation in 'women dancers' or the point where the reader realizes that his careful consideration of the layout has been in vain, occurs when the reader notices the hermeneutic slogan on the wall. The reader becomes the object of the joke and his oversight the joke's referent. At this moment of discovery the emotive function of the message (positive, humorous reaction) resonates with the common slogan signified of Budweiser as both the subject/communicator of the joke (and the pleasure it gives) and the product signified of the adwork. This resonance at first glance might be thought of as being a product of an open text; that is, all information supplied by the ad would suggest a humorous product meaning to occur to the reader. But this is not the case.

The emotive function depends largely upon the referential function of the ad. The Surrealist frame of reference must be significant in some way in order for the audience to participate in the joking relationship. If the audience does not actively participate in the ad system frame (recognize how ads usually arrange people, places and things around the product sign), then the "punchline" or surprise element of the ad will not be
affective for the reader and no resonance will occur.

The art style employed in 'women dancers' clearly draws from the Surrealist artist genre/tradition. The 18-24-year-old Budweiser ad market/audience may not be competent in the closed intertextual system of art history. However, they are competent readers of album cover art which is very much a part of their lifestyle interests. Hamilton explains the use of styles such as those of the Surrealist painter Magritte in album cover design:

Borrowing from the surrealism of Magritte, Ernst and Dali provided another line of development. A generation that was committed to undermining accepted notions of reality rejoiced in disturbing contradictions embodied in a highly illusionistic style. 15

The works of Rene Magritte provide an appropriate frame of comparison for the of this ad style sample.

The aesthetic values (semantic) and norms (pragmatic, social aspect of the relationship between audiences and producers) of the layout style of 'women dancers' can be taken as a referent sign presented in three different media (Surrealist art, album cover art and youth market advertising). It is possible to acknowledge the use of this illusionary style in three different contexts of encoder intentionality and cultural signification the style produces for the audience (compare the styles used in figures 25, 26 and 27).

The selection and combinations of images and structure from an original medium to another, appropriating medium with a completely different intention aesthetic to commercial intention in this case - results necessarily in a modification of
Figure 27: 'Magritte'
Figure 28: 'album cover Magritte'
presentational and cultural values of the form in messages. Advertising and marketing encoders of album cover art were caught between the counter-cultural audience predispositions of cultural interests based in radicalism and esotericism, and the need to reduce this audience's decoding preferences to a more manageable handful of consumer tastes. The record industry had to mold its market/audience experiences. One way of doing this was, in fact, to turn the audience's social relationship with music into a relationship with leisure commodities defined by taste differences. The commercialization and mass distribution of album art, as a part of the record commodity-object form, can be understood as part of a larger appropriation process which Frith suggests is the control of "cultural practice":

The record industry must always try to mold its market (this is the reality of rock-as-commodity), but this must always involve a struggle (this is the reality of rock-as-a-leisure-commodity). The rock audience has its own ideas and experiences of what music is for - this is what gives the best rock performers their artistic edge. Mass culture works by draining these ideas and experiences of their edge in the very act of responding to and expressing them. What is crucial here is the capitalist control not of ideas but of cultural practice.16

The formation and structuring of rock music and its accompanying visual expression in album cover art, through cultural production and distribution to youth, directed these media to the discourse of youth entertainment and leisure-time activity. As noted in Chapter Three, Rolling Stone magazine played a major role in this directing of music as a leisure-related object for consumption. The rock audience was
categorized into a series of market tastes. Music, along with its visual artistic expression, became a solution to these audiences' particular leisure problems.

Surrealist art styles today carry this value of leisure-commoditization in their cueing of an already constituted discursive space for the readers of *Ampersand*, *National Lampoon*, and *Rolling Stone*. From the youth audience's previous experience with the album cover designs in the consumption of leisure-commodities (perhaps the most central and important for youth), youth market advertisers, such as the encoders of 'women dancers', are able to design images of their brand which resonate with positive aesthetic value. The product image (slogan and bottle) is not encoded in the message to simply signify the value of the ambiguous Surrealist and collage layout form by some implied transfer of meaning. Rather, 'women dancers' is to be taken as a leisure-commodity-object, as a meaningful whole, much the same way that artistic album covers and records are both part of the aesthetic function of the record as a medium. The leisure-commodity-object contextualization of the ad's meaning cannot be denied since the ads are sold by the advertiser as large posters. The product Budweiser beer is not promised to perform any social or personal service or pleasure upon possession. The complete ad as a referent sign of the system of record covers does not promise anything. Yet, the ad creates an expectation of the fulfillment of a lifestyle need by employing the positively received album
In a final sense, the hermeneutic structure of the joke in 'women dancers' performs, through the product presentation frame of reference, a self-reference to the system of Budweiser advertisements in a tongue-in-cheek parody. At the level of the hermeneutic solution of the ad's meaning, the Surrealism and women dancing are not truly intended to signify the product. The layout parodies more serious uses of Surrealist symbols in other more traditional mass market ads. The fine printed slogan, "This Bud's For You", parodies advertising's crude and manipulatory efforts at "unconscious" persuasion. The "unconscious" appeals have been popularly understood as subliminal messages relayed to ad audience at levels of awareness below conscious interpretation. Obviously the presentation of the slogan does not truly fall into the category of subliminal seductions because it is so apparent. These self-critical references, as a mild undermining of adwork itself, reveal 'women dancers' as a closed text in terms of the mode of address which implicates the more critical youth audience's predisposition by satirizing a dominant cultural media message. The appearance of the ad is part of a more widely used satirization of mass media discourse common in youth cultural productions (see figures 29 and 30).

b) 'raining Bud'
Figure 29: 'National Lampoon'
The syntagmatic relations in the ad text, 'rolling bud', operate, as well, in an "open" hermeneutic reading structure in which the reader is invited to actively decode some deeper meaning. The denotative signs which signify the entities, persons and activity in the photograph are indicative of youth lifestyle interests. The surfer, and man and woman taking shelter under the bridge, are the reader's persona from of experiences of the beach/atmosphere, which are condensed into the white）、are symbolic of things young and vibrant (which is how the surfer, signify as reflected in youth's lifestyle interests). The young man carrying the guitar could be interpreted as a rock idol, the young couple is engaged in an intimate, romantic embrace, the young woman is lying on the beach facing the camera, and the young man is standing behind her. The surfer, likely diverted to what is happening in the background, the photograph's hermeneutic structure is suggested by the hermeneutic cutlines and the falling stars, the sky and falling stars, the surfboard and the surfer, the reflection in the water, the young woman's gaze directed towards the camera, and the young man's contemplative expression.

Figure 30: 'Rolling Stone'
The syntagmatic relations in the ad text, 'raining Bud', operate, as well, in an "open" hermeneutic reading structure in which the reader is invited to actively decode some deeper meaning. The denotative signs which signify the setting, persons and activity in the photograph are indicative of youth lifestyle interests. The surfer, and man and woman taking shelter under the bridge cue the readers' common frame of experiences of the beach. The 'real-life' referent signs, which are condensed indicators of a larger cultural activity, are symbolic of things youth like to do in the summer.

A colour and photographic, air-brush technique contributes to the aesthetic identity of this represented scene. The photograph has been 'touched up' in order to amplify the purple of the surfboard and the woman's tank-top shirt. The surfboard (which literally reflects the image of the young man carrying it) and the woman (displayed in suggestive posture and revealing clothing), who has drawn the attention of the surfer, signify as referent signifiers of the young adult male's lifestyle interests.

Yet, the readers' attention is most likely diverted to what is 'wrong' in As well, the direction the surfer looks could be towards the hermeneutic clue of the cartoonish billboard in the remote background, the photograph. A hermeneutic structure is suggested by the Budweiser bottles and can falling from the sky and forming puddles that reflect the product's label in them. All the sign elements of the ad are implicated in the
hilarious. The result is realistic, yet the product sign replaces the rain which is indexically signified by the people taking shelter under the surfboard, umbrellas and bridge. The replacement of the raindrops by cans and bottle caps employs another convention of Surrealism (see Magritte's "Voile de Verre"). Surrealism ordains objects that have been appropriated from their 'normal', 'natural' environment in a dream-like association. The ad juxtaposes the product with the natural situation of a rainfall, an integral aspect of the layout. This is the basis of the surrealistic structure of the system of natural and social forces. The fact that the Californian youth who are a large portion of American youth in the 1980's (see Figure 33) are generally found to look to music and photography with extreme interest and are not so much in favour of the comic strip and the leisurely business of the cartoon and comic strip allows us to understand that which helps, as well, to signify an aesthetic ...
hermeneutic puzzle. The scene is realistic, yet the product sign replaces the rain which is indexically signified by the people taking shelter under the surfboard, umbrella and bridge. The replacement of the rain drops by cans and bottles employs another convention of Surrealism (see Magritte's "Golconde"). Surrealism orders objects that have been appropriated from their 'normal', 'natural' environment in a dream-like association. The ad juxtaposes the product with the natural situation of a rain storm in the dream-like aesthetic function of the layout.

Because the surfer assumes the spacial proximity of the foreground of the photograph, the reader is drawn into and perhaps shares the surfer's perspective. This is the basis of the phatic function of the adwork.

This perspective is not restricted to what content is contextualized within the ad. And in analyzing the paradigmatic relations of the text to referent systems, it would be insufficient to merely claim that the hermeneutic structure of the ad refers to an 'irrational' leap from the system of nature to the system of goods as 'naturalized' into the scene. The fact that the beach scene is emblematic of the Californian youth lifestyle - a myth used to sell to a large portion of American youth in the record industry since the 1950's (see figure 33, 'beach covers') - makes the ad significant for the youth audience. It is the technical marriage of photography with cartoon and colour distortion in the ad which helps, as well, to resignify the surreal imagery. The dream-like sequence suggested
Figure 32: 'Golconde'
Figure 33: 'beach covers'
by the raining cans and bottles is resignified by the colour distortion. It connotes the fantasy/reality confrontation which is then transferred to the product sign of the raining bottles and cans and to the standard Budweiser slogan, "This Bud's For You". This slogan represents the product signified that appears on a large billboard in the background. This coincidental billboard sign is one of two "hidden" hermeneutic clues to the final meaning of the ad. The men on the bridge operate in the ad as two referent signs and attract the reader's interest by the contrast of their conservative clothing (i.e., black suits and umbrella) with the casual clothing and context of the beach scene. The fact that one of the men is taking a photograph whose object could either be the surfer or the reader himself, furthers the notion of shared perspective.

The only element which breaks the aesthetic visual presentation form of the ad is the cartoonish billboard sign. It is less sophisticated and, therefore, less tied to the photographic scene presentation. Yet, through similarity in the ad's colour code, the billboard sign (an ad) is linked with the product sign images. The simplicity of the billboard's presentational form operates in a referential function of self-parody. This mild self-critique prefers the youth audience's aversion to traditional advertising. The fact that the billboard has been replaced by perhaps an imagined sign, as well, suggests that the primary referent system of the ad may be surreal replacement itself. Williamson explains the intentions
behind such paradigmatic suggestion:

The use of surrealism itself as a referent system helps advertising to protect these properties [adwork transfers of meaning] from exposure, by appearing to expose them itself.¹⁹

The major paradigmatic relation of 'raining Bud' operates at the level of the aesthetic ad text as referent. The form-oriented layout refers not so much to a single meaning of the product as a leisure commodity, but refers to the youth practice of leisure consumption itself. The youth values of the self-reflective fantasy/reality confrontation present in 'raining Bud' uses similar aesthetic means (codes) for the interpretation of the image as is necessary for rock album covers and pop art since the mid 60's. The colour code of highlighting and distorting colour balances, which is evident in the representation of the scene in 'raining Bud', can be seen in countless album cover designs which Hamilton attributes to infrared photography and other unusual photographic techniques.

The collision of 'real-life iconography with some kind of distortion of the laws of nature by the presence of the product sign (i.e., the cans and bottles raining from the sky and dissolving into puddles) does require, as Williamson points out, a distortion of the reader's understanding of the real places real things take in the real world. The intrusion of the surreal product sign into otherwise normal lifestyle situations does, from practiced decoding, assume an 'order' and 'rightness'. For youth audiences of the three publications that carry 'raining Bud', this 'normal' unreality would be learned in the discourses.
of album cover designs and pop poster art. These media display distortion through the colour technique - a carry-over from the psychedelic period of these evolved media - whereas surreal painting proper and the many mass market ads that use the art form do not use colour distortion in this way.

c) '3-d Bud'

At the syntagmatic level of hermeneutic adwork, the product sign is signified by a Budweiser can ripping through the page of the layout at the top. It has a surreal presence in the ad by virtue of the expression of its three-dimensionality -- it breaks through the two-dimensional sign medium of visual representation of persons, setting and activity below. The photograph below contains the denotative signs of a small-town, main street and its evening activity. The hermeneutic puzzle structure is connoted by the juxtaposition of this normal, undistorted description of the street activity with the over-scaled can piercing the photograph above. The product sign represents a distortion not only because of its unrealistic size and placement relative to the size scale of the realistic scene below, but, most significantly, because of its breaking of the code of photographic representation itself (iconic, analogic technical code of representing three dimensional objects in one flattened, two dimensional plane of the photograph).
The product sign of the can piercing the page introduces two visual traces which set up an oscillation between the 'real' plane of representation and the surreal representation. On the one hand, the product sign, within the system of real objects in the material world, is more real because it is a three-dimensional object that can rip a page. On the other hand, the scene below is true to the system of literal, iconographic resemplance, but it breaks the illusion of the audience and returns to cultural and technical codes.

The audience has learned to read these elements as the headlines of the street corner, and the page ending at the clock sign. These elements are an intrusion into the page, seeming at the same time that notices the can in a reference object (which signs point to)

This can be looked back from a prominent inconspicuous position at something closer within the spatial background of the scene. Unlike the street, he sees what the reader

*Figure 34: '3-d Bud'*
The product sign of the can piercing the page introduces two value frames which set up an oscillation between the 'real' plane of representation and the surreal representation. On the one hand, the product sign, within the system of real objects in the material world, is more real because it is a solid three-dimensional object that can rip a page. On the other hand, the scene below is true to the system of literal photographic representation which does not include the technical effects of three-dimensional representation -- the audience has learned to see reality reproduced in two dimensions. An opposition is structured in the ad text in which the can is a referent -object (it is the real thing in the real world which signs point to) and the photograph is a product of cultural and technical codes of representing the real world.

The man staring up at the can, the headlines of the newspaper being read by the man on the street corner, and the page rip that goes all the way down the page ending at the clock connect the photograph with the product sign. These elements are connotative signifieds of the product's intrusion into the photograph. The young man, who is walking with his girlfriend/wife appears to be the only one that notices the can which signifies that this may be his fantasy (similar adwork, internal-referential and phatic device as in 'raining Bud'). This man looks back from a prominent foreground position at something deeper within the spacial background of the scene. Unlike the other people on the street, he sees what the reader
sees. From the craning of his neck, he may be turning to see the clock or the headlines of the newspaper that is printed in bold letters just feet away. The man's direction of attention, as an indicator of where the readers' attention should be directed, may, as well, be towards the 'surreal' or real (from the audience perspective) presence of the looming can above. The hermeneutic structure revolves around the can.

As an element in the hermeneutic structure, the clock indicates the time, a quarter to eight (in the evening one would expect), and is a signified of an appropriate time for thinking/dreaming about going out for a drink (of Budweiser). If his/the readers' eyes follow down from the clock to the front page of the newspaper below, the reader is able to discover the hidden piece of the puzzle in the headlines, "This Bud's For You". This connotative signifier of the newspaper slogan operates as a referent sign of the system of Budweiser product presentations in advertising. The fact that this slogan appears as a headline and not as an advertising page message suggests that the young man's/readers' perception of the product, as a real and unusual occurrence of 'fantastic' proportions is justified -- it made the news. Budweiser, as both a physical object and as an object of editorial news coverage value, deserves the readers' attention outside the usual 'flat' representation it is allowed in advertising messages printed on pages just like the one the can rips. In this way the hermeneutic structure attracts the attention of the audience and
meta-communicates about the 'flat' discourse of advertising itself. While the hermeneutic structure is openly provided by the syntagmatically contextualized signifying elements of '3-d Bud', this meta-communication about the system of advertising itself relies upon the audience's critical predisposition towards ad messages and their mundane, traditional structuring of the associations made between people, places and things. Here this traditional lifestyle coding is commented upon in a sophisticated semiotic statement of the medium itself.

The technical code of photographic 3-d media has a history of aesthetic functions in the cultural production of magazines, youth market films, pop art posters and album cover design. While even earlier the American mass media audience in the 1950's actively consumed '3-d' films, the cultural form drifted quickly out of favour due, in large part, to technical inadequacies. The youth market/audiences of the seventies and eighties have responded positively to the '3-d' form for its fantasy/distortion value of adding a new dimension to standard media forms and for nostalgia aesthetic values. For examples, Andy Warhol's Frankenstein and certain album cover designs (see figure 35) employ this aesthetic form in a fantasy/reality dialectic based on its connotation of the youth value of subverting traditional visual codes established in the mass media. As well, National Lampoon have run several editorial pieces making fun of the 3-d form of visual presentation in parodies of the medium based on its failure in third rate films.
Figure 35: '3-d albums'
(see figure 34). Here, the attempted contrast of the incredible
with the mundane collapses into the final realization of the
media's mundane technical inadequacies — the reader of
National Lampoon, after viewing the 3-D glasses and squinting
his way through several picture frames of a film-like frame
sequence realizes that, not only does the medium not work, but
the work he has put into reading has been in vain; the story
itself in intentionally boring and mundane. In the tradition of
this publication's cynical approach to traditional media, the
reader notes the essential uselessness of the frame (similar approach
takes the form of the famous 'dancers').

I know they can't
act.
The ad interpolates the consumer response to the commercial
standardized cultural
production of youth audiences (especially the three
teens) into their decision making (the lifestyle
investments of the three
adolescents) as a
form of parody (the
'3-D parody') as a
solution to the situation it may be. The final
result is another ad in a closed
project of criticizing the medium of advertising messages

Figure 36: '3-D parody'
(see figure 36). Here, the attempted contrast of the incredible with the mundane collapses into the final realization of the medium's mundane technical inadequacies -- the reader of National Lampoon, after donning the 3-d glasses and squinting his way through several picture frames of a film-like frame sequence realizes that, not only does the medium not work, but the work he has put into reading has been in vain: the story itself is intentionally boring and mundane. In the tradition of this publication's cynical approach to traditional media, the reader is made the object of the joking frame (similar approach to the joking structure presented in 'women dancers').

Similarly, the encoders of '3-d Bud' know they cannot actually produce the real '3-d' effect. The ad interpellates the audience as those who are critical of standardized cultural productions. This critical predisposition of youth readerships (especially the college media market) guides their decoding of the popular arts, contemporary music and satire (the lifestyle interests reflected in the editorial contents of the three publications that carry '3-d Bud'). The 3-d can, as a product sign, produces a circular denial of its own form by disrupting the advertising page with the 3-d can and then provides the hermeneutic product signified ("This Bud's For You") as a solution, not matter how mundane a solution it may be. The final meaning of the '3-d' can in the open hermeneutic structure is resignified as two-dimensional or 'just another ad' in a closed project of criticizing the medium of advertising messages.
positive humour resonance. This specific reference to the critique of traditional media intertextually points the reader to the humour discourse found in National Lampoon especially, and meta-communicates to the youth audience that their cultural values have been represented by the advertisers of Budweiser.

d) 'the campers'

'The campers' signifies through a more obvious hermeneutic structure than the previous ad texts. The photograph denotes a natural setting with two young outdoorsmen camping by a waterfall and stream. The setting, campers and activity connote 'getting away from civilization' and an encounter with nature (lifestyle interests around camping). The product sign of the Budweiser can is surrealisticaly presented in place of perhaps a high rock formation above the waterfall. The product sign is connoted, through replacement, as a natural formation because of its irregular angle and because there is a coyote howling at its 'peak'. The can's size in relation to the physical terrain implies a surreal presence, as well, through exaggeration. The product sign is connotatively signified by its apparent place in nature, by one of the camper's admiring survey of it (head posture as a signifier) and by the calligraphic presentation of the slogan in lettering produced by the clouds. The slogan, like the product sign itself, is presented as an element of nature.
and reads, "this just's for you."

The "you" the slogan refers to is, once again, the camper in the scene and the audience. Yet the structuring of the text, which makes clear this conative function of the slogan, is far more simplistic and requires fewer stages of decoding than what has been described in the last previous ad in this section of the analysis. Commentators to this ad all seem to be more open to general references which the ad itself produces. For instance, the interpretation by the text, the product image and the relationships of natural life. As well, the bubbling sound of the waterfall means to satisfying that relationship in which the part of nature may be understood to exist. The form-oriented ad text, aged, able, outdoor activities, and so on in each market advertising forest. The aesthetic value of these types of media portray their potential. The aesthetic aspect is beautiful, rugged wilderness scenes. The slogans and use of the product image follow standard adcock.

Figure 37: 'the campers'
and reads, "this Bud's for you".

The "you" the slogan refers to is, once again, the camper in the scene and the audience. Yet the structuring of the text, which makes clear this conative function of the slogan, is far more simplistic and requires fewer stages of decoding than what has been described in the few previous ads in this section of the analysis. Connotators in this ad all seem to be more open to general references which the ad itself produces. For instance, the nature/culture opposition is open for interpretation by information supplied in the message (i.e., the product image and signified as slogan taking the form relationships of natural things set out from the natural setting). As well, the bubbling water and waterfalls signify the natural means to satisfying thirst, which develops a structural relationship in which the beer as part of nature and the water as part of nature may, through an operation of replacement, both be understood to satisfy thirst.

The paradigmatic relations of this form-oriented ad text connect with the referent systems of rugged, male, outdoor lifestyle ads and more ambiguous surreal ads in mass market advertising, thus producing a hybrid advertising format. The first male lifestyle ad reference is best located in cigarette advertising's competitive 'Camel' and 'Malboro' ads. The aesthetic value of these types of layout portray their two emblematic heroes in beatiful, rugged wilderness scenes. The slogans and use of the product sign follow standard adwork
structures common in most lifestyle advertising. The values of rugged independence and natural beauty of the landscape connote these products. In 'the campers', the characters are a little less rugged and independent by virtue of the fact that they are leisurely camping with a partner and are not hanging off a cliff nor chasing down cows. Unlike the 'Marlboro man' or 'Camel man' who simply enjoy their cigarettes, the character the reader is to associate with in 'the campers' is perceiving the Budweiser can.

The distorted relationship between the product sign and nature is structured into the ad text by the camper's own illusion and lifestyle wants expressed through fantasy. The calligraphic slogan is derived from a contextual use found in rock album art (see figure 38). In a similar layout structure as is found on many album covers, the name of the product (album or beer) blends into the depicted scene as a natural object in that scene. It is the overall structuring of the surreal product signified by the 'naturalized' phrasing, "This Bud's For You", the reduction of the surreal aesthetic to the lifestyle character's fantasy, and the distortion of the natural beauty element of the lifestyle scene with commodity signs that suggest an unlikely combination of aesthetic images/forms. This potential lifestyle and natural aesthetic scene depicted in the ad is intruded upon by an excessive use of surreal imagery.

This ad not only supplies the reader with all the information needed for decoding in an open textual format, but
it refers to lifestyle discourses that most of the "Heavy Male Beer Drinker" market/susa audience would have little problem understanding. An extratextual competence in reading ads and camping as a lifestyle interest is enough to convey the ad’s open reading. The encoders of ads for Sudwerk Brand beer are probably aware of the more wide appeal of this particular ad and consequently have ran it in Flasher in 1983.

a) 'Sud lust'

In the ad text, 'Sud lust' a product-person exchange is

articulated through the affective function of the

Trenkamp's 'social

The

Figure 38: 'album calligraphy'
it refers to lifestyle discourses that most of the "Heavy Male Beer Drinker" market/mass audience would have little problem understanding. An extratextual competence in reading ads and camping as a lifestyle interest is enough to permit the ad's open reading. The encoders of ads for Budweiser brand beer are probably aware of the more wide appeal of this particular ad and consequently have run it in Playboy in 1983.

e) 'Bud lust'

In the ad text 'Bud lust' a product-person exchange is communicated through the affective function of the surrealist/fantasy aesthetic code and is socially articulated through a referential function of signifiers of 'hyper-ritualized, social display of a particular group's social scene and behaviours. This ad uses adwork and content arrangements characteristic of what Kline and Leiss call "lifestyle" format, but with a significant difference located in the technical and social nature of the aesthetic function of the message as a meaningful whole.

The hermeneutic structure of this ad operates within the denotative setting -- people and activity signifiers of a common totemic community of the collegiate youth crowd. For the youth audiences the setting is denotatively signified as a local, casual bar where a certain type of young people (most likely college students) congregate for leisure enjoyment. The dress of
the young people in the bar is the most accurate indicator of their social and cultural backgrounds and has in some general cultural discourses been called "preppie" — counting different prep school students and their manner and dress.

Several denotative signs are systematically linked to the hermeneutic puzzle of the ad. The puzzle frame is suggested to the decoder by the product alignment of the surreal and surrealistic bottle-cap which is slightly visible in the forefront of the ad. This bar scene carry the visual of social and common natures brought together around the bar. Figure 39: 'Bud Lust'
the young people in the bar is the most accurate indicator of their social and cultural backgrounds and has in more general cultural discourse been called "preppie" -- connoting affluent prep school students and their manner and dress.

Several denotative signs are syntagmatically linked in the hermeneutic puzzle of the ad. The puzzle frame is suggested to the decoder by the product signifier of the surreal Budweiser bottle cap which is plainly visible in the forefront of the depicted scene (the cap takes on surreal value because of its mammoth proportions). The foregrounded individual's astonished expression on viewing the cap, as well, helps lead the reader to this first stop in the hermeneutic set up of the ad.

All the bottles and glasses in this bar scene carry the product signifier of the Budweiser label or emblem and connote this scene as a totemic community brought together around the product Budweiser. Even one of the customers at the bar is wearing a t-shirt with the slogan, "This Bud's For You", printed on it. In the center of the photograph is a young couple facing each other while talking. The close proximity of their smiling faces and the posture of the woman's left hand and legs (practically enclosing the young man) connotatively signify in a hyper-ritualized expression a social relationship of intimacy and courtship. The facial expression and posture of the young man (his right hand clenching the barstool) signify excitement and sexual desire within the context of the interpersonal nonverbal signals. Yet, even within this interpersonal context,
the woman still clasps on to her glass of Budweiser beer which seems significant to her, as well, even with all the 'excitement' going on.

The reflected images of the mirror contain the structured solution to the hermeneutic puzzle suggested by the presence of the massive Budweiser cap at the bottom of the layout. In the bar mirror reflection of the scene a single surreal distortion is communicated by the literal replacement of the passion-filled young man with a massive Budweiser bottle that fits the proportions of the cap on the 'real' floor. In the mirror reflection the significance of the complete switch between stereotyped character (a dashing, young male collegiate) and commodity sign is signified by the group scene apparent only in the mirror reflection of people talking. The reflected mirror image - where the young man is a bottle and people can be seen talking - operates as a referent of the totemic community around Budweiser. In this image the people and their social identities is assumed by the product since the young man is like those in the background of mirror. The product sign as totem object becomes, in Kline's words, "the basis of symbolic relation upon which all other social relations are defined through membership."21 The product signifiers of the Budweiser bottles and glasses held by virtually everyone in the bar scene resonates with the signified of their totemic membership to the Budweiser lifestyle community. This system of social classification even pertains to the interpersonal relationship
of the couple sitting at the bar. The young man is so much a part of this community identity around the product as emblem, that he has become the product emblem or totemic object of the Budweiser bottle itself. In analogic reference to his identity as the totemic object, he has opened his cap ('flipped his cap'; suggestion through the literal representation of a figure of speech that signifies 'to become excited'). In this way the ad's hermeneutic solution links Budweiser with the young male's lifestyle interest in socializing with the opposite sex. Participation in this activity and the presence of the bottle as an emblem suggests a lifestyle similarity in the two signifieds not only in the ad, but in the wider discourse of youth's lifestyle interest of going to bars to drink and to meet members of the opposite sex.

This hermeneutic structure constructs a closed text in that the young male's preferred reading, based on common frame knowledge of collegiate life and the youth courtship ritual, is referred to by the referent signifiers of the people and cultural activity in the layout. Both the aesthetic semantic value of erotic symbolism (i.e., the man being replaced by the phallic beer bottle) and the surreal distortion of reflected images as components of the message as a collective and harmonious string of signs, is a style common in youth culture album cover art. The surreal aesthetic norm of distortion in reflection of images is a very common visual form on rock album covers. Designers have played with this form in especially the
changes of similar scenes depicted on the front and back of album covers (see figure 40). This type of distortion through symmetry has become familiar to the youth record consumer, and, like the decoding demanded by the aesthetic function of 'Bud lust', the elements added or omitted usually signify to the consumer a change effected by the value of the product itself.

Contrary to Williamson's theory of the mirror function in mass market adwork, the "gap" between the readers and the "ideal other" in the ad (i.e., the man turned Budweiser bottle) does not simply operate as a "space" that is unproblematically closed by the surreal, "irrational" connection of the adwork. Instead, the "space" is that of the discursive space constituted by practiced intertextual and common frame associations shared by the totemic community and referred to by the aesthetic form of the ad as referent signifier. In this sense the reference is specific to the audience's preferred reading frames, product presentations.

f) 'jock Bud'

The ad text 'jock Bud' falls into the lifestyle format. The lifestyle setting, persons and activity denote a lockerroom where young male athletes are dressing in preparation for sports or undressing and showering after play. Based on the collegiate audience's common frame experience, the setting connotes an old university athletic facility change room. The
Figure 40: 'reflection'
Figure 41: 'jock Bud'
athletes are in their twenties and racquet enthusiasts which further signifies collegiate sports community membership. The laughing facial expressions of the athletes in the foreground signify comradery and lockerroom talk as a predominantly male discourse of shared stories and attitudes. The laughter also signifies that a joking relationship is being or has been presented. The reader, by referring to the product sign of the Budweiser bottle pouring into the mug, is invited, as well, to share in a joking relationship provided by the surreal manner in which the beer is poured.

The product sign of the beer pouring into the glass is noticed by the two athletes who have just showered and have supposedly finished their sports. The product-sign represents a surreal intrusion into the commonplace order of the people and objects of the lockerroom (similar surreal distortions are again present in album cover layout, see figure 42). It is being poured by hands coming out of the jersey which is hung on the locker door, but this inanimate jersey is not being worn by anyone -- there is nobody in it. The jersey is visually personified. The fact that the jersey is unsoiled and hung up right next to the man with the towel around his waist signifies that this is his jersey which shall be worn shortly. The hermeneutic puzzle of who is pouring the beer is answered by the expression of the owner of the jersey who notices the surreal presence of the pouring Budweiser. It signifies a future activity of what the owner of the shirt will in fact be doing
once having dressed and gone to the local bar or hood. The pouring hands are and will be those of the athlete, but the fact that the athlete in the background seems to see this aberration too signifies a sharing of perspectives. This connotes the collective concept that athletes share after a hard workout -- 'they all need a Budweiser'.

The product sign of the pouring Budweiser bottle is further signified in connotations of those belonging of the athletes which collectively form the shape of a human body that might fill the frame. The football or one of the locker where the student's racquet bag hangs often away from a quantitative to lifestyle selects and years such as number of years spent in the area. Graffiti on the street could resemble part of this scene. This and 'for you'. The student's position, here in this in the reader's reference to 45, are just as a written cable of the product sign (signifies not skillfully having for the athlete who have had a new contract), but an enunciation in the pure

Figure 42: 'the hand'
once having dressed and gone to the local bar or home. The pouring hands are and will be those of the athlete, but the fact that the athlete in the background seems to see this aberration too signifies a sharing of perspective. This connotes the collective concept that athletes share after a hard workout -- 'they all need a Budweiser'.

The product sign of the pouring Budweiser bottle is further signified in connotations of those belongings of the athlete's which collectively form the shape of a human body that might fill the jersey. The football on top of the locker where the jersey is hung, the cut out face of the woman and the sports magazine photographs on the locker door, and the tennis racquet leaning against the locker door all resemble the vague form of a body. These objects also connotatively signify the constitutive elements of lifestyle which metonymically compose a body of interests. This collage of things signifies the nexus of interests that are important in a young adult male's lifestyle and are simultaneously taken as the form which selects and pours Budweiser.

Two other product connotators cue the reader's intertextual knowledge of the system of Budweiser advertisements. The graffiti on the green pillar behind the athlete reads "This Bud's For You". The slogan presented here operates in the reader's reference to it, not just as a written emblem of the product sign (signifies this illusionary beer for the athletes who have had a good workout), but as an expression in the more
closed, esoteric discourse of atheists and their values. In a more generalized reference to graffiti as a youth cultural discourse, it is not just mischievous defacement, but a medium for the expression of usually group-centered social commentary and alternative views. In a more popularized format within youth cultural expression, graffiti has been used on countless album covers (especially for punk artists) to identify the product/band (see figure 43). The Budweiser slogan, so stylized in the aesthetic and social referential form of the ad, merely borrows the form and not the content of this youth medium.

In the change kit of the athlete in 'jock Bud' a magazine back cover sticks out, underlined by a mysterious light blue line that draws attention to it. The cover contains the layout of 'the campers' and displays the surreal Budweiser can which resonates with the illusionary significance of the product sign established in the encoded aesthetic function of these several ads. Because 'the campers' occurs in *Amersand, National Lampoon* and *Rolling Stone*, it operates as a referent of the readers' advertising intertextual knowledge based upon specific media use habits and lifestyle entertainment interests (media segmentation). The intertextual reference (linking this apparent sports ad with Budweiser's specific youth market/audience ad texts) and the intrusion of the lifestyle ad representation with a surreal aesthetic value require a more closed textual reading of 'jock Bud' by the youth audience. The distortion of the commonplace, hyper-ritualized lockerroom scene by the surreal
presentation of the product signifier falls into the familiar mode of synecdoche - youth in nontypical advertising layouts and design. This distortion again appears based on the coding of the fantasy/curiosity confrontation specified in other areas of youth culture rather than advertising in general.

Figure 43: 'album graffitti'
presentation of the product signifier falls into the familiar mode of address to youth in nontraditional advertising layout design. This distortion again appears based on the cueing of the fantasy/reality confrontation specified in other areas of youth culture rather than advertising in general.

g) 'sidecar Bud'

The semiotic analysis ends with the ad text 'sidecar Bud'. The syntagmatic arrangement of the sign elements in this ad qualify it as a lifestyle format and the ad also operates as a paradigmatic connector of the system of ad layouts in Hot Rod, National Lampoon, Ampersand and Rolling Stone magazines. Within 'sidecar Bud' are literal reproductions of 'this is Bud' and '3-d Bud'. This suggests the encoders attempt to cue specific intertextual knowledge of the readers' having decoding these ads previously.

The connotations of a particular lifestyle set through persons, setting and activity share a common signified with the work-reward theme ads running in Sports Illustrated -- they are related to a definition of lifestyle contextualized by work-related signifieds of persons and settings. The photograph in 'sidecar Bud' denotes a bus, motorcycle and sidecar, and other cars confined within rush-hour traffic in a downtown district. The yellowish colouring of the bus and building and the long shadows cast by the sunlight index the situation --
Figure 44: 'sidecar Bud'
late afternoon rushhour. The fact that the bus is packed and the traffic is not moving further signifies the scene as such. The man in the sidecar is holding a magazine in a typical commuter posture. As the center of the photograph his image demands the readers' attention. As well, in explicit contradiction to standard lifestyle ad depiction of particular types of consumer community representatives (stereotypical people), this commuter and his young female driver warrant the attention of the reader because they are distinctive to the point that they defy classification. Questions of who they are, why are they driving in a sidecar and what do they mean to the reader is left to the reader's imagination. While the sidecar and its occupants seem to be socially ambiguous, it is important to realize their opposition, as a sign, with other commuters in the ad scene. While they are independent and defy categorization, the people on the bus, some of whom peer out, are the exact opposite. The yellow hue of the bus and the building in the background link the two signs and connote a uniform mass identity which is faceless. It could be said that the unusual presence of the sidecar commuters sets up a comparative framework for the testing of conventional social definitions of lifestyle values. The ad denies the reader of any comfortable answers in saying who the character is to represent and how the reader is to associate with him.

The product signifier of 'sidecar Bud' is the "this Bud's for you" slogan on the side of the bus. A hermeneutic operation
is structured into the reading of 'sidecar Bud' by the surreal, 3-d aesthetic distortion in the presentation of the product signifier. The product signifier of the 'this is Bud' ad, originally encoded in an open youth audience ad is distorted by the actual Budweiser cans and ice spilling out of the bus ad layout onto the road. In this surreal extension of the cans from the realm of two dimensions to the realm of three dimensions, the cans shrink to normal size. This connotes their new entry into the world of material object forms. In this distortion of size and dimension comes the signified that the beer cans in 'this is Bud' are confined to the orderly or normal system of mass advertising vehicle while the falling cans and ice cannot be contained and are more significant because of their difference in form.

These uncontainable cans are for the man in the sidecar and this is signified by the fact that he is the only one who notices them coming out of the bus. As well, the slogan appearing right above the man's head refers the readers attention to the man -- "This Bud" is for the man. The fantasy/surreal image of the beer coming out of the bus for the man is syntagmatically linked to the overall scene of people returning home from work on a hot summer's day and quite possibly heading straight for a beer. Further, through a structured colour technique, the man, driver and side car provide the red, white and blue colours of the Budweiser label which is clearly visible in the two and three dimensional
signifiers. This man is what the cans embody, an uncommon experience or a way of breaking the rules: breaking the rules of standard social identification, breaking the rules of media dimensionality.

The final product connotator is the back cover of the magazine the man is holding. Through an intertextual performance code based on the specific previous reading experience of the youth audience, the reader identifies the ad '3-d Bud'. It is a referent signifier of the preferred media of the audience and the media tastes of the man in the sidecar. The '3-d Bud' layout contained within the message 'sidecar Bud' resonates with the product sign (the Budweiser can) and, more significantly, with the sophisticated, 3-d fantasy/reality value in the aesthetic of Budweiser's conceptualization and direction of meaning to the youth market/audience. The way of conceptualizing reality in the Rolling Stone editorial pages the sidecar man reads, is consistent with the way his perception of the 'this is Bud' ad prefers to see the cans in a more real or sophisticated three-dimensional aesthetic (his way of looking at the world as a model reader). His distortion of the 'this is Bud' ad in fantasy suggests that the original mode of address of this ad has no straight meaning for him. The reader, taking the perspective of the sidecar man, is positioned in the ad structure to share in the definition of the 'this is Bud' ad as commonplace and to share a preference for the aesthetic semantic of '3-d Bud'. The ad text 'sidecar Bud' meta-communicates a
choice between two aesthetic ad forms, one of which is open to interpretation by all readers, and one in which the audience is asked to share a particular, larger, cultural predisposition to decoding in general. Such a suggested decoding predisposition is built up for instance in the reading of publications such as *Rolling Stone* and in other areas of the youth culture's media consumption patterns.

The aesthetic significance of the ad as a meaningful whole, the lifestyle significance of the sidecar man, and the advertising significances of the opposition between 'this is Bud' and '3-d Bud' layouts are, through the referential functions of this ad message, meaningful for the young adult male because they are based on predispositions developed in the youth media market place.
1. As Hendricks points out earlier in chapter two, an Iowa farmer may not be familiar with the cultural scenes, rythmes, and rituals of an urban environment. Likewise, a young reader of of 21 years old may have a very different common frame competency than a middle aged businessman (one reader typifying the readership of Rolling Stone while the other may be the reader of Playboy).


3. This ad has been omitted in the primary sample analysis because the mode of address is influenced by the co-representation of the automotive product type.


6. From a semiotic point of view, the object of the joke is contained within the joking frame either directly or indirectly by invoked reference. The joke is articulated so that the audience will perceive the two parallel and inconsistent frames of reference made that internally connect in the joke object. Thus it is based on a shared knowledge/social understanding of things - language e., conceptual categories, roles, mutual awareness of situation - and this understanding is required for the perception of the joke itself. It is the process by which the joke is constructed around its object by the joker in a given social context. Mary Douglas defines the joke as any play on form, any deviation from the norm which is socially acceptable. see Mary Douglas, "The Social Control of Cognition: Some Factors in Joke Perception," Man, III, 361-376.

7. Williamson, Decoding Advertisements, p. 73.


9. Different art forms are more or less restricted within a format of syntactic rules of combination of elements. While Classicism is highly regulated by the values of simplicity, realistic representations and objects (i.e., "landscape"), and conformity to proportion, Abstract Expressionism is more free-form, depicting a representation of reality through internalization of the artist's feelings/expression.


17. National Lampoon provides in its editorial pages a cynical parody of traditional popular media production such as newspaper and current affairs magazine stories. The magazine plays no favorites in the selection of topics for parody and satire, and, consequently, select object for ridicule from every corner of mass media cultural production with representational accuracy and shocking juxtapositions.

18. It is interesting to note that a dream-like aesthetic is set up in a similar layout produced in a sketch by Magritte (see figure 32, 'Golconde')


20. The nostalgia value of referring to past media and past styles in cultural artefacts composes an interdiscourse centered largely around the revival of musical genres (e.g., Rock'a'Billy) and aesthetically distinct forms (e.g., Art Deco, Kitsch). Much of this interdiscourse is constituted by the cultural processes of "bricolage" (see Chapter Two).

V. Conclusion

This study has demonstrated the need for analysts of advertising to acknowledge the influence of market segmentation on the design of meaningful product messages. The segmentation strategy directs the efforts of advertisers in their appeals to particular audiences. Market segmentation is a growing consideration in the way advertisers design their product messages for communication to differentiated consumer audiences.

The semiotic communicational analysis applied to both segmentation and mass market Budweiser brand beer advertisements has provided substantial indication of the different ways advertisements address audiences in these two contexts of marketplace communication. The strategies employed by advertisers in the structured process of selecting and combining message forms and contents have been analyzed using the market-context subsamples of ads directed to the "Heavy Male Beer Drinker" and the "Young Adult Male" in American magazines. The deconstruction of the twenty-one ads and the research on the media segment audiences that receive these ads has suggested that in market segmentation contexts advertisers intentionally send messages that require the reader to refer from the material ad message to predispositional systems of cultural and media knowledge. The reader must be thought of in segmentation contexts as part of a definable audience formation drawn to the
particular media vehicle carrying the ad. In the context of the mass media carrying mass market ads, the advertiser knows less about the cultural and media preferences of the average reader and consequently must use more universally understood cultural referent systems and general forms of address.

The semiotic analysis of the two subsamples of ads has been guided by theoretical models of the structural relations and processes that explain the role of advertising from an anthropological/communication perspective. This perspective offers a view that is somewhat contrary to the notion of a manipulated consumer society dominated by production. As well, the perspective pursued in this study rejects the "mass culture" approach to the production and reception of ad messages. The sociological, cultural and communication theories of Schudson, Sahlins, and Kline and Leiss, in particular, recommend a more sophisticated account of how goods take on symbolic values in consumer society. These theories suggest that the symbolism attached to goods in marketing and the symbolic associations selectively used by consumers for defining themselves socially and culturally into semi-autonomous sectors, are two distinct but related aspects of the ways goods acquire meaning in contemporary industrial societies. In this way, the role of advertising, as a communication system, can be understood as situated between the determining influences of two systems of structures. On the one hand, the sphere of production can be viewed in large part as a reaction to the demands of the
heterogeneous marketplace where consumer demand is clustered into various wants. This does not, of course, rule out the role of marketers in stimulating these wants. As well, through media segmentation analysis the various consumer markets can be identified as addressable media audiences for messages about goods in advertising. This capacity of marketers to culturally locate the market through the media leads to the strategy of user-centered or market segmentation advertising. On the other hand, the consumer society in consuming a seemingly endless variety of product types and brands has developed into increasingly differentiated consumer markets or commodity communities.

The media marketplace continues to fracture into media segments constituted by specialized programming and content themes that attract a certain type of media consumer. The growing specificity and distinctions of media segments has meant to advertisers the differentiation of communication channels that reach denser representations of desired product markets in the defined audiences. This definition of market-as-audience has lead the study to the conclusion that marketers and advertisers take advantage of these media segment communication vehicles for advertising by encoding cultural signs into ads in a way that prefers the cultural predispositions of the demographically defined audiences.

Within this fundamental description of the role of advertising in marketplace communication, this study has
emphasized the determining structures of the semi-autonomous media marketplace at both the production and consumption sides of message communication. This approach has proven to be the most comprehensive in the explanation of the differences of the cultural signs and design formats between mass market and market segment ad contexts. These differences have not been located merely at the level of adwork design structures of the message and in explications of how the ad reproduces "subjects-in-general." Rather, these differences have occurred most apparently in paradigmatic relations of cultural signs referring the reader to particular systems of knowledge constituted 'outside' the material ad message.

The understanding of the reader's intertextual and common frame experience provided by the placement of the reader in definable market segments has allowed for a more exacting interpretation of the referent systems or codes the reader prefers in decoding. Audience composition is an indicator of who advertisers must make products meaningful for. The habitual media practices and general cultural predispositions of the audience (developed from media segmentation analysis of audiences by magazine) has offered the analysis some substantial clues for explaining how advertisers select ad forms and contents and how the audience interprets these in decoding. Accordingly, it has been possible to abstract from the ad message what store of experience the reader is most likely to refer to in consuming cultural signs used. The reader then, must
be thought of as an interpellated subject, within an audience formation, whose knowledge or preferred referent systems are clustered in an interdiscursive repertoire.

By employing the notion of the reader as situated within an audience, the semiotic framework has rendered a clearer account of how advertisers conceptualize and direct meaning in the selection and combination of cultural referent signs. In a semiotic approach to the combination of cultural signs syntagmatically linked in ad designs, Eco's theory, which develops the idea of open and closed texts to explain reader participation in decoding culturally produced messages, has proven useful in explaining degrees of reader participation in structured ads. Closed texts require more work from the reader because they presuppose that the reader possesses specific competencies in media and cultural experience. These closed texts are "open to pragmatic accident" -- if a reader unforeseen by the encoder interprets such a text, there is a good chance that no meaning or an unforeseen meaning will be communicated. These are the type of texts characteristic of segmentation advertising, where advertisers, through market and media research, have presented the product in symbolic dimensions using more restrictive codes (modes of address and specific references common to a reading group).

In contrast, open texts reduce indeterminancy because of their more literal presentation of contents that require much less specific intertextual and common frame competence in the
codes/knowledge the reader must supply in decoding. In mass market advertising contexts, the encoder identifies a market consumer and generalized reader who is competent in less specific extratextual codes/knowledge. Thus, for mass market ads, different readers with different extratextual competencies, or readers who come from different discursive formations, will still understand the message.

It has been suggested that in mass market contexts advertisers build up the general reader's intertextual competence in reading ad messages by repeating the same adwork structures (syntagmatic relations) and by referring to a common pool of product images or referent systems. This has been the position taken by the semiotics of Barthes and Williamson. However, this study has provided an analysis which suggests that in segmentation or closed textual situations, advertisers seek to appropriate and refer to other media-based and cultural referent systems by employing the mode of address and the more subtle codes of these referent systems. In such advertising contexts, the phatic, emotive, conative, aesthetic and metalinguistic functions of the ad message are competently used by the audience because of their capacity as predisposed cultural signs in other media systems. Again, it is market and media segmentation analysis which informs advertisers of which discourse/referent systems the audience habitually uses, and those that may be used in ads to cue preferred reading codes and, therefore, positive product association. It is this
methodological refinement of a semiotics of advertising which has led to a fundamental comparison-oriented framework of the analysis. By looking across from the context of the advertising message form to other message forms in other cultural production, the analysis has sought to find out if advertisers select cultural references from the set of media messages known to be habitually consumed by targeted audiences.

Through the means available in advertising, consumer and marketing trade journals, the analysis has described the market segment of "Young Adult Males, 18-24" as a demographically identifiable commodity and media market. The most notable aspects of this description are the youth market's lifestyle and media consumption interests around music (particularly "rock'n'roll"), the split of the youth market into "on-campus" and "off-campus" groups, and the marketers realization that the youth market has not reacted in a very positive way to traditional ad messages in traditional media. As well, the publications carrying the market segmentation subsample have been described by editorial material and audience demographics. The important discovery in this survey is the difference between the audiences consuming National Lampoon, Ampersand and Rolling Stone, and the audience consuming Hot Rod. National Lampoon, Ampersand and Rolling Stone share a current affairs, youth lifestyle and popular youth media review format in common (emphasizing the themes of humour, collegiate life and music news respectively). These three publications take a
sophisticated and somewhat critical approach in social commentary and communicate to a homogeneous media market defined within youth as a media segment. The same Budweiser ads appear in all three publications thus reaffirming the advertiser's common conceptualizations of these media segments. Hot Rod, however, is a more specific lifestyle publication where the center of the editorial content is consciously directed at maintenance and innovations in high performance vehicles and the readers' interest relates to the presentation of automotive products in a consumer guide-type format. Two of the three Budweiser ads running in this publication are related to this interest in high performance vehicles and racing, while the third is culturally ambiguous. Overall, most of the ads in this publication employ traditional adwork formats and usually present automotive products. Seldom are youth lifestyle interests referred to by the editorial or ad contents of this magazine. From these observations, the sample analysis has qualified the ads appearing in Hot Rod to be activity-centered rather than user-centered in its appeals to the youth market. Thus, Hot Rod has assumed the market value of a special case of media segmentation that better represents the American community of hot rod enthusiasts than the interdiscursive predispositions of youth audiences.

All the ads in the Budweiser sample have conceptualized and directed meaning, and have selected referent systems for a predominantly male readership. As well, these ad texts, with the
exception of the three appearing in *Playboy*, have all referred the reader to the overall system of Budweiser advertising through the referent signified "This Buds' For You." However, the analysis has located within these similarities of appeal different design strategies of structured syntagmatic and paradigmatic ad message processes between the "Heavy Male Beer Drinker" and "Young Adult Male" subsamples.

The "Heavy Male Beer Drinker" ads have tended toward directing symbolic value onto the product in open textual formats. These texts require less extratextual participation of the reader by supplying cultural referent signs that have been universalized or often practiced in media lexicons of very large, undifferentiated male audiences. These ads make more literal use of the general referent systems of the work-reward theme, popular sports, and national tradition. Such systems and their paradigmatic relations to the ad are what Barthes and Williamson had in mind for their use of the concept "mythical systems." Particular context-specific cultural and historical activities are referred to through and directed by conventionalized, superficial codes of representation or literal, written statements of what took place or what is going to take place. For examples, the work-reward theme ads in *Sports Illustrated* refer to specific work scenes. The ads contextualize these scenes as referent signifieds through a superficial treatment in photo-journalistic coding of the American workplace. The photographs of boxers, ranchers, farmers, loggers
and steelworkers identify who the people and work scenes in the ads are, as is done in national news review journalism. However, the ads do not refer to the photograph with specific social consideration of their "story" or newsworthiness. This superficial reference is intertextually fortified by the "snapshot"-type treatments these people and scenes assume in the five ad series as a non-descriptive tribute to the blue-collar work world. The referential function of these ads requires the readers' competent knowledge in previous Budweiser ads and in the photo-journalism code used widely in other mass media (it appears often in beer and cigarette ads). 'Newman racing', 'basketball art' and 'hockey art' all supply the reader with literal, openly coded statements of the referent system the depicted celebrities and sports activities refer to. Similarly, 'Buds' athletes' relies for its meaning on literal statements of sporting events, the brand's sponsorship of these events, and media coverage. It is important to note that whenever the potential for "aberrant decoding" arises in the presentation of more esoteric referent signs/referent systems (e.g., reference to fine art and reference to the financial structures of the production of professional sport), the syntagmatic relations of adwork always contextualize or overcode such reference with the literal statement of the brand's contribution to the leisure activity of mass consumption of entertainment (i.e., viewing sport).
The analysis of the ad subsample directed toward the "Young Adult Male" market has revealed the presentation of more closed textual designs. The only exceptions to this trend are found in *Hot Rod* magazine ads. In 'Budweiser King' the ad encoder has in mind a model reader. This reader is defined by his association with the American hot rod community. The cueing of the reader by the references and the mode of address employed in the ad does not suggest any one cultural predisposition, but rather imitates the mode of address and references established in the editorial contents and in other automotive product ads which attract the less culturally and socially homogeneous audience to the publication. I can only assume that D'Arcy MacManus & Masius Ltd. has classified the *Hot Rod* audience under the "Young Adult Male" market category for want of a better market definition.

In the intentional functions and audience participation in the ad text, 'Budweiser King', the phatic function of the Budweiser team driver as he communicates to the reader (someone that respects this voice of authority), is subsumed, as a referent sign, by the referential function of the Budweiser product message. This is a closed textual ad design format analyzable by the work the reader must do in supplying extratextual knowledge. The message gains its meaning for the reader by that reader's pre-established interest in the activity the "Budweiser King Team" representative speaks about and interest the reader has in being part of this community which the message offers, as well. This phatic function of the ad or
its suggestion of communal interest becomes a referent of the racing discourse and a specific cultural sign positively signifying the product. The ad text is closed because of this specific cueing in mode of address.

In comparison or intertextual reference to the mass advertising discourse commonly found in mass market media, these ads in *Hot Rod* use conventional syntagmatic adwork structures. In fact, this is true not only of all the Budweiser ads in *Hot Rod*, but also characterizes almost all the advertising that appears in the publication. The reason for this type of syntagmatic structure (to some extent open) is because of the varied cultural predispositions of the media segment's readership. These predispositions, particularly in habitual media use (e.g., everything from car magazines, to sports broadcast, to "girly" magazines), do not prefer any one repertoire of discourses that culturally define an audience formation. The ad encoder must employ media references and advertising modes of address that will be unproblematically decoded by the lowest common denominator of the varied *Hot Rod* readership.

Those ads that have appeared in *National Lampoon*, *Ampersand* and *Rolling Stone* have represented in the analysis the best examples of the closed textual ad design format. At the analytical level of syntagmatic connections, the cultural signs communicated in these ads operate together in form-oriented presentations that structure into prominence, the aesthetic
function of the ad. In this instance, the message is interpreted as one harmonious or whole sign connected by the cultural significance of its form as referent. Through visual photographic and colour distortion techniques, Surrealist aesthetic codes of distortions in object scale and object replacements, and hermeneutic structures, the final product-signs of the ad become unified referents of external discourses consumed in the youth media marketplace. The aesthetic functions of the visual coding of these ads refer the youth audience to album cover and pop art poster design consumed since the sixties by youth consumers. On this basis, the phatic function of these ads appropriate the communication relationship between the cultural producers of visual entertainment and music-related commodities (especially visual album cover art), the social value of the "fantasy/reality" confrontation connoted in these messages, and the audiences' positive reaction to the messages. The question of the youth audiences' extratextual competence in these referred media offers little doubt, given the ad encoders' knowledge, of the extreme success of music commodities in the youth marketplace.

The emotive function of these youth ads are based in the hermeneutic function of the ads. Depictions of people, objects and settings invite the reader to participate in a puzzle or discovery in the surface "closed" structure. The intention and arrangement of these puzzling structures avoid "aberrant decoding" once the solution is found and the intended
realization is achieved (usually humourous emotional resonance). Again, this hermeneutic structure in the ad depends for its positive reaction by the reader on extratextual knowledge of its practiced codes in youth humour media (e.g., National Lampoon and 'Saturday Night Live') and in 'tongue-in-cheek' album cover imagery. In this youth humour media discourse a commentary through playful distortions of traditional cultural and media forms typify the expression of social values and perspectives of youth. In a similar fashion of playfully distorting reality, these ads attempt to recall an experience for the reader -- that of consuming the meaningful media messages in cultural consumption practices external to the advertising system. This intentional encoding strategy is made clear in these ads by the fact that these ad layouts are offered by the marketers of Budweiser as purchasable commodities (posters). As well, these ads generally cue the youth audience's cultural preference for novelty by contrasting with traditional ad messages communicated in traditional media.

The audience predisposition for something different and alternative exhibits another structuring strategy of closedness effected by the encoder of these Budweiser ads. This strategy has been identified in the conscious design of the conative function of these ads. The ad does not address the reader and direct his attention through literal statements of the written text or through adwork comparisons of the product and other cultural signs set apart in the ad. Instead, these ads make the
reader choose an appropriate point of entry into their complex hermeneutic structures. As stated in the analysis, this entry into the ads' suggested perspective is usually connoted by a character(s) who, through his point of view in the scene, directs the readers' attention to particular hermeneutic clues. By suggesting that the reader survey things in the ad as the character(s) does, the encoder connotes a similarity between the identity of the character(s) and reader. In 'raining Bud', 'sidecar Bud', 'jock Bud', 'camping', 'Bud lust' and '3-d Bud' the directing characters are all young men evidently involved in lifestyle activities the reader may prefer. In this sense, they represent the readers' lifestyle community interests and suggest a model reader with particular extratextual cultural preferences. The fact that these characters are usually the only ones who perceive the Surrealist scene connotes, as well, a sharing of the alternative way of perceiving reality between these culturally indexical characters and the youth reader. This conative function of the ads contrasts with traditional adwork appeals by the absence of the usual persuasive rhetoric of conventional ad texts (these ads usually direct the readers' attention continually back to the product and stress the product qualities or 'obvious value'), and by the impression of interpretive freedom rendered by these youth market addresses.

This study has shown how market strategy and media production structures influence designs and cultural signs applied by encoders in advertisements. In comparing market
segmentation and mass market context advertisements the study has found that segmentation ads refer the reader from cultural signs in the ad to specific referent systems, while mass market ads connote more general referent systems in product signification. As well, the segmentation ads displayed cultural sign arrangements that meant a greater degree of involvement by a particular type of reader for the intended or proper significance to be taken from the message. These findings recommend a reconsideration of the vital role of marketing and especially, marketers' understanding and use of the media marketplace in the strategies of designing advertisements. For those advertising audiences that are culturally predisposed to particular lifestyle and media consumption interests, advertisers use cultural forms in their messages that are positively consumed by and significant for these particular audience formations.

It is suggested that as the influence of market, and, therefore, media segmentation grows, we are likely to witness the growing specificity of referent systems and closed textual forms in ads. Along with this tendency of ad specificity in address, it is expected that admen will be even more reliant on the appropriation of media forms and cultural interests that the media commodity itself signifies to patronizing readers situated in known audience formations. This is why the semiotics of advertising must attempt to incorporate an understanding of both the true encoding structures influenced by marketing strategies
and the real constitution of the reader into media audience formations. This study has made the first steps in this new direction.


"Creative Research research must get together to reach youth," Advertising Age, (April 9, 1973), 63.

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