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MANOLOS - THE NEW OMEGAS?

*A HISTORIOGRAPHICAL GENDER ANALYSIS ON
BRAND PLACEMENTS IN FILM*

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PREFACE

In order to contribute with new information within marketing, we early decided to investigate the subject from a somewhat unusual angle. With a social perspective, focusing on the portrayal of gender ideals and roles, we took on the challenge to examine brand placements in films over a certain time span. With this view, it turned out to be a complex as well as intricate challenge. Nonetheless, with a complete thesis in our hands, contributing with information within a deep and rather unexplored area, we feel that our efforts have been rewarded.

Apart from our closest family and friends who have supported us through this process, we would like to thank our advisor Jon Bertilsson for inspiration and guidance. Last but not least, we would like to thank each other for a pleasant and rewarding cooperation; it has been a memorable journey.

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ABSTRACT

TITLE: “Manolos - the new Omegas? A historiographical gender analysis on brand placements in film.”

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ADVISOR: Jon Bertilsson.

FIVE KEY WORDS: Marketing, gender, gender roles, brand placement, film.

PURPOSE: An examination of the relationship between brand placement and gender roles in films between the 1980s and 2010s, with the main purpose to contribute to the gender and marketing literature on how the portrayal of male and female characters in films has developed, changed and been translated through brand placement within a social context.

METHODOLOGY: The thesis is based on a qualitative multiple case study with an abductive approach.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE: Frameworks used are discourse, gender and narrative theory including semiotics and mythologies.

EMPIRICAL FOUNDATION: The empirical material is collected from six different films produced between the 1980s and 2000s. Various scenes appropriate for the purpose of the thesis have been chosen.

CONCLUSIONS: Through this thesis, we have found a correlation between the use of brand placement and the development of gender roles over time. Certain attributes have been intensified and have sometimes strengthened stereotypes through the display of brand placements.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In this section the reader is given an insight into the subject investigated as well as the background of the topic. This is followed by a problem discussion which leads to the purpose of the study and the specific research questions. The section ends with an explanation of relevant concepts.

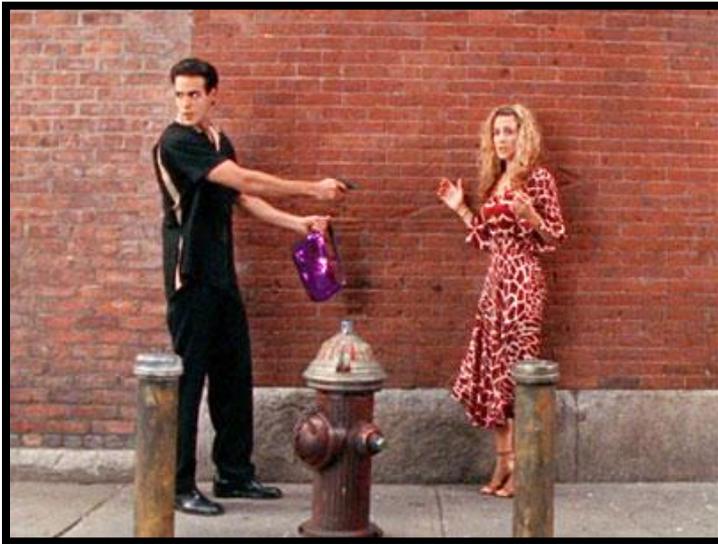


Fig. 1 Scene from "Sex and the City" ¹

The robber points a gun in her face and says; "Give me your bag!" Carrie cannot believe it. "Your bag, now"! She does not argue and gives him the bag along with her watch and ring. "And your Manolo Blabniks!" Carrie is shocked. In a second, the anxiousness turns into rage and despair. She looks at the robber with angry eyes and firmly says; "What? NO!"²

Today brand placement is frequently used in order to reach out to customers and many studies have been made on the subject. Even though discussions concerning gender are a popular topic, there is a lack of studies on brand placement with a gender perspective. Furthermore, it is difficult to find research with a gender perspective which examines a certain time span. Hence, a study which investigates how brand placement has changed over the last three decades in relation to the development of gender roles becomes particularly significant from a social perspective as the phenomena affects both consumers and society as a whole. Accordingly, the study contributes not only to product placement and marketing literature, but to sociology and gender theory as well. Firstly it might be of importance to companies as it enhances the understanding of

¹ TimeInc, 2000, retrieved 2011-04-20 from http://img2.timeinc.net/ew/dynamic/imgs/080521/satc-s03-ep47_1.jpg

² IMDB, 2000, retrieved 2011-04-19 from <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0698699/>

how their advertising may affect the society and its ideals. Secondly, it sheds light on how gender roles might be used by marketers in order to collect bigger profits. Finally, the discovery of patterns might be of use and relevance for companies when selecting marketing tools and when estimating upcoming trends and changes. Hence, the main aim is to improve the awareness of the effect that brand placements in film have on gender roles. How brand placements, on their own as well as coloured by the plot and different characters, are placed and used to produce, reproduce and strengthen occurring gender roles.

A historiographical analysis with an interpretative approach will be made in order to capture and interpret changes, development and parallels between different gender roles and through the use of certain brand placement. As brand placement grew popular in the 1980s, films from this era and forward have been chosen with genres which represent masculine and feminine typicality in order to obtain the gender perspective. Concerning the typicality, we turn to common stereotypes; attributes which traditionally are associated with the different genders.

1.1 BACKGROUND

Companies spend large amounts on marketing in order to create awareness about their brands; an expense which has grown dramatically over the last years. As a consumer you are, according to Henderson et al, constantly targeted by different products and brands through ads or other marketing tools.³ However, most advertisements can be easily avoided, for example by switching the channel on the TV or radio. Thus, it is indeed a real challenge for a company to reach out to the customer. By constantly being productive and creative, coming up with new ideas and marketing ways, a company may manage to overcome this obstacle and get their message through.

”Brand placement is defined as the inclusion of branded products or brand identifiers, through audio and/or visual means, within mass media programming”⁴

A way to overcome the mentioned obstacle is through the use of brand placements, a phenomenon which has increased due to the changes in the marketing climate.⁵ Brand placement

³ Henderson, B., Adams, S., and Miller, A., 1972, "How Many Advertising Exposures per Day?", *Journal of Advertising Research*, December, p. 3-9, retrieved from JAR 2011-02-18

⁴ Karrh, J. A., "Brand placement: A Review". *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, 1998, Vol. 20, Nr. 2, p. 33, retrieved in 2011-03-01 from Mendeley

⁵ Wenner, L.A. "On the Ethics of Product Placement in Media Entertainment" *Journal of Promotion Management*, vol. 10, issue 1-2, 2004, p. 102, retrieved from LibHub 2011-02-01

has been used as a marketing method for a long time; however, it has during the last decade attracted more attention. In 2006, this marketing tool exploded on the global market with a spending of over 7.5 billion dollars and was predicted to reach the double amount in four years.⁶

In today's advertising-propelled media environment we may try to avoid certain advertisement, but as it becomes more embedded into different forms of media this can prove difficult.⁷ Brand placement is one way to discretely promote products and is further very cost-efficient; once placed in a media it is viewed and reviewed. Accordingly, it has during the recent years played an important role in the film world; a role which was introduced as early as 1896 when the Lever Brothers' Sunlight soap was deliberately placed in the background of a film.⁸ From that point on the use of brand placement in film increased, however at a slow pace. The explosion came through the film "ET" where a candy brand named "Reese's Pieces" was successfully placed.⁹

Films can be viewed in many ways such as through internet or in cinemas. Accordingly, film as a channel for brand placement is a strong trend within marketing, thus an interesting media to look into and a reason why we have chosen to delimitate the research to placement in films. Another reason is that we consider film to be media where gender parallels easily can be drawn to reality. Brand placements in films are further appealing objects to study as they can be located in various ways; for example as visible and/or audible as well as translated through characters, plots and roles.¹⁰

Through time, marketing efforts have been directed differently towards genders. Today however, women and men are supposed to be equal, which should be reflected in our marketing channels including the use of brand placement. Previous studies have mainly focused on consumers' attitudes towards brand placement as well as how the marketing tool effects and influences the buyer. As many studies already have been made on these subjects, it would from a social context be of great interest to examine how brand placement in films has influenced gender roles; how men and women have been portrayed differently.

⁶ Graser, M. & Stanley, T., "Study: Placement to Surge 25% in '06", *Advertising Age*, Vol. 77, No. 35, 2006, p.6, retrieved from Goliath 2011-02-04

⁷ Wenner, L.A. p. 103

⁸ Chang, S., Newell, J. & Salmon, C. T., "Product placement in entertainment media", *International Journal of Advertising*, Vol. 28, No. 5, 2009, p. 783-806, retrieved from LibHub 2011-02-04

⁹ McLeod, K, *Freedom of expression: overzealous copyright bozos and other enemies of creativity*, Doubleday, New York, p. 190

¹⁰ Russell, C.A., "Investigating the Effectiveness of Product Placements in Television Shows: The Role of Modality and Plot Connection Congruence on Brand Memory and Attitude". *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 29, 2002, p. 306-318, retrieved from LibHub 2011-02-02

1.2 PROBLEM DISCUSSION

Today we live in a society where it is continuously stressed that all human beings are created equal and therefore should be treated as such. Through time however, differences between men and women have been evident.¹¹ According to Stern et al, this has been shown by distinct roles and places in society with women stationed in the home and men at work.¹²

Apart from being a topic for researchers, the problem of gender inequality has been a consistent concern in our society, where women have struggled to be seen as equal to men in the workforce as well as in other contexts. Even though there has been an increase in women's employment the past years, it has not reached the same level as for men. According to statistics, less than half of the women aged 16 and older were in the labour force in 1975.¹³ In 2005, however, these numbers had increased with over ten per cent which means that nearly 6 out of every 10 women participated in the labour force. Nevertheless, the percentage of women in the labour force in 2005, 59.3 per cent, was of a much smaller number than of men, 73.3 per cent. Likewise, we still live in a society where the majority of women are paid noticeably less than men for the same type of work.¹⁴ In brief, a gap still remains between the sexes. Even so, statistics point to a slow decrease of the gap between men and women in the employment and educational arenas. Accordingly, Women's Bureau estimates that women are to account for 51.2 per cent of the increase in the total labour force growth between 2008 and 2018, perhaps an indication of a new trend where women start to emerge more. Apart from the workplace, gaps between the sexes still occur in numerous grounds such as in the household, the education body and even within marketing.¹⁵

According to Goffman, there were clear differences in how the two sexes were portrayed, demonstrated in a study where over 500 advertisements pictures were collected, displaying women as subordinated to men.¹⁶ A similar test was done by Kang who compared the samples

¹¹ Gali Cinamon, R & Rich, Y "Gender Differences in the Importance of Work and Family Roles: Implications for Work-Family Conflict", *Sex Roles*, Vol. 47, No. 11/12, 2002, p. 532, retrieved from LibHub 2011-02-01

¹² Stern, B.B & Russell, C.A, "Consumer Responses to Product Placement in Television Sitcoms: Genre, Sex, and Consumption", *Markets and Culture* Vol. 7, No. 4, 2004, p. 374, retrieved from LibHub 2011-02-02.

¹³ United States Department of Labour, *Quick Facts Employment Status for Women and Men*, 2005, retrieved from <http://www.dol.gov/wb/factsheets/qf-eswm05.htm> 2011-02-05

¹⁴ Medlingsinstitutet, *Så beräknas löneskillnader*, 2008, retrieved 2011-02-05 from http://www.mi.se/jamstallt/lev3_kvm_lon.html

¹⁵ United States Department of Labor, *Quick Stats on Women Workers*, 2009, retrieved from <http://www.dol.gov/wb/stats/main.htm> 2011-02-05

¹⁶ Goffman, E, *Gender advertisements*. New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1979.

from 1979 with ones from 1991 and achieved comparable results.¹⁷ Other gender analyses have found that women are less likely to appear in media than men, and when they do, it is most likely in a stereotyped role.¹⁸ However, as the new trend arises with women acquiring more influence in the society, advertising companies may see them as a more interesting target audience.¹⁹

Research indicates a strong interest towards gender roles in general, in our society and within the marketing field, but brand placement has been less investigated. As we are slowly moving into a more equal society, a study looking at the gender perspective of brand placement in film is not only relevant, but of great importance. Questions such as if brand placements create ideas and different views on what is considered as masculine versus feminine, and if occurring gender roles is reflected in brand placements, have lacked attention. The revealing of an unbalance could provide companies with information about gaps where brand placement could be better adjusted to suit reality.

Hence, the main question in this study, which will be presented in the following section, will be approached and analysed from a gender perspective. The hope is to present new viewpoints within the discussion on gender and gender roles concerning brand placement in films. We also wish to create a better understanding and to bring a contribution to gender theory concerning equality and marketing literature focusing on product placement theory. This through the enlightenment of consumers as well as of marketers that certain advertising may create pictures of what is considered as right and wrong, generate ideals and gender roles which affect our health, change the perception of ourselves and our way of living.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION

Between the 1980s and the 2000s, how have gender roles been projected differently through the use of brand placement in films? Likewise, how and in what way does brand placement in film produce and reproduce different gender roles? How has the development of gender roles within this time span affected the use of certain brand placement?

¹⁷ Kang, M-E., "The portrayal of Women's Images in Magazine Advertisement: Goffman's Gender Analysis Revisited" *Sex Roles* Vol. 37, 1997, p. 979, retrieved from SpringerLink 2011-02-05

¹⁸ Rudy, R.M, Popova, L & Linz, D.G "The Context of Current Content Analysis of Gender Roles: An Introduction to a Special Issue" *Sex Roles* Vol. 62, 2010, p. 707-708, retrieved from LibHub 2011-02-01

¹⁹ Royo-Vela, M, Aldas-Manzano, J, Küster, I & Vila, N, *Adaptation of Marketing Activities to Cultural and Social Context: Gender Role Portrayals and Sexism in Spanish Commercials*, Springer Science, Business Media, LLC, 2007, p. 381-383

1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.4.1 Product placement

Several authors look at the connection between the entertainment business and product placement. Lehu discusses origins, history, and the term branded integration with his base in branding. He comes to the conclusion that brand placement in media can be an extremely powerful move and that it even can contribute to the entertainment. However, if the brand in any way takes over the entertainment and turns it into an ad, it immediately breaks the link.²⁰ In another book treating the area, Donaton clarifies the term “Madison &Vine”, the convergence between the entertainment and advertising industries. Companies of today need to explore branded entertainment, dare to think out of the box, experiment and welcome change away from old marketing models.²¹ Other authors who discuss the topic are Galician²², who gathers several experts of the area and examines product placements and related media marketing strategies, as well as Young²³, who emphasises the use of the latest media innovations as well as non-traditional methods in order to maximise the brand.

Other studies have been made looking at the effectiveness of the use of product placements. This topic is discussed by, among others, Lehu et al, who have performed a study on DVD viewers where they study brand placement recall. The conclusion was that the placement efficiency rises with the second viewing and they suggest that companies should consider the characteristics of their viewers when placing products in order to better adapt them for the potential customers.²⁴ Yang and Roskos-Ewoldsen examine levels of brand placement, implicit and explicit memory as well as choice behaviour in a three-part study. They found three levels of brand placement; when it is part of the background, when used by a main character, or when it is an integral part of the story. The conclusion is that brand placement level influences the recognition of a brand, but also that simple placement can be enough when just wanting to increase the familiarity.²⁵ Bhatnagar et al investigate product placement efficacy, how it can be enhanced or mitigated as well as

²⁰ Lehu, J, *Branded entertainment: product placement & brand strategy in the entertainment business*, Kogan Page, London, 2007 p. 242-247

²¹ Donaton, S., *Madison & Vine why the entertainment and advertising industries must converge to survive*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 2004

²² Galician, M. (red.), *Handbook of product placement in the mass media: new strategies in marketing theory, practice, trends, and ethics*, Best Business Books, Binghamton, N.Y., 2004, p. 1-10

²³ Young, A., *Brand media strategy: integrated communications planning in the digital era*, 1st ed., Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2010, p. 177-182

²⁴ Lehu, J-M, Bressoud, E. “Effectiveness of brand placement: New insights about viewers”, *Journal of Business Research*, issue 10, 2008, p. 1083-1090, retrieved from LibHub 2011-02-04

²⁵ Yang, M. and Roskos-Ewoldsen, D. R. “The Effectiveness of Brand Placements in the Movies: Levels of Placements, Explicit and Implicit Memory, and Brand-Choice Behavior.” *Journal of Communication*, issue 57, p. 469–489, retrieved from LibHub 2011-02-03

measured, and what implications different placements can have for marketing practitioners.²⁶ Another study by Balasubramanian et al develops an integrative conceptual model that examines audience outcomes generated by product placements. The model developed can be used to plan, predict and evaluate product placement.²⁷

Yet another well-researched area is the one looking into the morality aspect of product placements, within this field there are publications by, among others, Wenner. Analysing product placement, product integration and video insertion, he reaches the conclusion that this can be a complex and extensive ethical issue.²⁸ Newell et al investigates the attitude towards product placement and video news releases and finds the individuals to be cynical about government directives concerning advertising as well as the capability of marketer to self-regulate.²⁹

Some researchers have investigated brand placement in relation to film; Seagrave makes a thorough examination of the product placement in Hollywood films from 1895 to 2002, where he discusses both negative and positive aspects.³⁰ Other studies have looked at possible negative aspects of product placement in films, for example Sargent et al who examines the occurrence of cigarette brands in cinema films and finds that US cigarettes have been marketed globally through films.³¹

1.4.2 The gender perspective

Gender and marketing as a wider subject have been discussed in smaller, niched studies, for example by Koc who on the Turkish travel agency market discusses the impact of gender on the marketing. Essential differences between men and women and how they process marketing information was discovered, but seemed not to be reflected in differentiated marketing

²⁶ Bhatnagar, N., Aksoy, L., & Malkoc, S. *Embedding brands within media content: The impact of Message, Media, and Consumer Characteristics on Placement Efficacy - The psychology of entertainment media: blurring the lines between entertainment and persuasion*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc. Publishers, New Jersey, 2004, p. 99-116

²⁷ Balasubramanian, S., Karrh, J., Patwardhan, H. "Audience response to product placements", *Journal of Advertising*, 2006, vol. 35, issue 3, p. 115-141, retrieved from <http://class.classmatandread.net/pp1/out-2.pdf> 2011-02-03

²⁸ Wenner, L.A. "On the Ethics of Product Placement in Media Entertainment" *Journal of Promotion Management*, 2004, vol. 10, issue 1-2, p. 101-132, retrieved from LibHub 2011-02-01

²⁹ Newell, J, Blevins, J.L and Bugeja, M "Tragedies of the Broadcast Commons: Consumer Perspectives on the Ethics of Product Placement and Video News Releases", *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 2009, vol. 24, issue 4, p. 201-219, retrieved from LibHub 2011-02-03

³⁰ Seagrave, K, *Product placement in Hollywood films: a history*, McFarland, Jefferson, N.C., 2004, p. 209-212

³¹ Sargent, D., Tickled, J., Beach, M., Dalton, M., Ahrens, B., Heatherton, T. "Brand appearances in contemporary cinema films and contribution to global marketing of cigarettes" *The Lancet*, 2001, Vol. 357, Issue 9249, p. 29-32, retrieved from Elsevier 2011-02-03

communication.³² Other authors, such as Banytė et al, investigate perception variables in the context of marketing to women.³³ Feminism in a consumer behaviour context is discussed and analysed by Catterall et al, they believe that feminist perspectives could open up for critique and transformative research within consumer research and marketing.³⁴

By looking at these different sections of product placement research we have identified a gap with few publications covering the subject of brand placement from a gender perspective. Research of this kind has been done in a few cases; Stern and Russell examined consumer response to products placed in a sitcom and analysed the data with textual analysis and feminist theory. Their findings indicated that readings of sitcoms are coloured by patriarchal and feminist perspectives which affects the response to placed products. Based on a sample sitcom, the study was created to act as stimulus, hence did not look at real media, neither the time aspect.³⁵ Interesting views were given but there is a lack of reality, hence a study should be conducted on real media, incorporating a time aspect as well.

To summarise our findings, there has been many articles and books produced on the topic brand placement. Common to these writings is a lack of gender perspective in combination with a historiographical examination. The gap which has been discovered is of interest to investigate further as it can contribute with much interesting information.

1.5 PURPOSE

This interpretative historiographical analysis will examine the relationship between brand placement and gender roles in films between the 1980s and 2010s, with the main purpose to contribute to gender and marketing literature on how the portrayal of male and female characters in films has developed, changed and been translated through brand placement within a social context.

³² Koc, E., "The impact of gender in marketing communications: the role of cognitive and affective cues". *Journal of Marketing Communications [serial online]*. 2002, vol. 8, issue: 4, p. 257, retrieved from Business Source Complete 2011-02-03

³³ Banytė, J, Paunksnienė, Z, Rūtelionė, A. "Peculiarities of Consumer Perception in the Aspect of Marketing to Women" *Engineering economics*. 2007, issue 1, p. 50-58, retrieved from LibHub 2011-02-03

³⁴ Catterall, M., Maclaran, P., & Stevens, L. "The transformative potential of feminist critique in consumer research". *Advances in Consumer Research*, 2006, issue: 33, p. 222-226, retrieved from Scopus 2011-02-10

³⁵ Stern, B.B., Russell, C.A. p. 371-394

1.6 DELIMITATIONS

In order to clarify the study we have made certain delimitations. The media observed consists of long Hollywood films produced between the 1980s and the 2010s. We have decided to focus on films as they have gained popularity as media channel for brand placement. In order to capture the gender aspect we examine films from various genres where elements typically associated as masculine or feminine are displayed. The reason for the chosen time span is that the era has seen much change in gender roles in conjunction with an increasing use of brand placement.

1.7 INITIAL DEFINITIONS

1.7.1 Product placement

The most popular definition of product placement is a brand that deliberately is placed within a type of media as either visible, audible or as a combination.³⁶ These different types of placements are additionally discussed by Russell and Lehu. The dimensions presented by Russell are the visual; being exposed to the eye, the verbal; mentioned in the film, and the plot; blended into the storyline as a prop.³⁷ Lehu further demonstrates extended sorts of visual brand placements. Firstly, the classic placement presented as a glimpse or an important prop in the film, secondly the corporate placement displayed as signs and logotypes connected with the brand, and lastly the evocative placement represented as indirect objects associated with certain characteristics connected with the brand.³⁸ Throughout the thesis, the term “brand placement” will in some contexts be replaced by “product placement”. Even so, the two concepts will represent the same meaning.

1.7.2 Stereotypes

The issue of stereotyping has been important in studies of social and cross-cultural nature. A stereotype is a standardised belief about a specific group or individuals based on prior assumptions, various qualities related to race, nationality, sexual orientation and other factors.³⁹ Likewise, Schutz claims that stereotypes are opinions and impressions about others with the aim to help individuals typify each other and structure their everyday life.⁴⁰ Stereotypes are frequently being changed, modified or entirely discarded as new information comes along which will be seen throughout this thesis.

³⁶ MMI Product Placement Inc., *Benefits of Product Placement*, retrieved from <http://www.mmiproductplacement.com> 2011-01-29.

³⁷ Russell, C. A., p. 306-318

³⁸ Lehu, J, p. 4-15

³⁹ Lee, Y, Albright, L & Malloy, T, “Social Perception and Stereotyping: An Interpersonal and Intercultural Approach”, *International Journal of Group Tensions*, Vol. 30, No 2, 2001 p. 183, retrieved from LibHub 2011-02-04

⁴⁰ Schutz, A, *The phenomenology of the social world*, Northwestern University Press, 1932, p. 139-144

1.7.3 Gender roles

Gender roles are, according to Anselmi and Law, beliefs about the behaviour of men and women coloured by culture and society.⁴¹ There are countless theories concerning gender and gender role development, such as evolutionary theory, object-relations theory, gender schema theory and social role theory.⁴² In this thesis, the view on different gender roles is mostly derived from the gender schema and social role theory. With a process focus, the gender schema theory, introduced by Bem, helps clarify how gender stereotypes become psychologically embedded in the society. The roles of men and women are learned as stimuli from cultures and societies, filtered through individual experiences referred to as schemas.⁴³ Somewhat similar, the social role theory argues that gender roles are generated by societal expectations based on various stereotypes, women and men behaving differently due to expectations put upon them by society.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Anselmi, D.L. & Law, A.L., *Questions of gender, perspectives and paradoxes*, USA, Editorial McGraw-Hill, 1998, p. 195

⁴² Chodorow, N., *Feminism and psychoanalytic theory*, Yale University Press, New Haven/London, 1989

⁴³ Bem, S.L., "Gender schema theory: A cognitive account of sex typing." *Psychological Review*, Vol. 88, 1981, p. 354-364, Retrieved from <http://www.psych.cornell.edu/sec/pubPeople/slb6/Gender%20Schema%20Theory.pdf> 2011-02-04

⁴⁴ Eckes, T & Trautner, H., *The developmental social psychology of gender*, Lawrence Erlbaum associate, Inc, 2000, p. 125-126

2. FRAME OF REFERENCE

In the following chapter the frame of reference, divided into two main categories, will be presented. The theories will serve as foundation for the coming analysis. The section starts with an explanation of the choice of theories followed by a presentation of the categories.

2.1 CHOICE OF THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The main categories chosen for our study are discourse and gender theory as well as narrative theory. Since discourse captures the construction of subjects displayed through text and signs, the theory is important to comprehend in order to understand the subject of gender and gender roles. As the thesis concentrates on gender roles manifested in films, the choice of discourse theory became obvious. With a gender focus, another important section to cover is gender theory and its role in advertising.

Our second category is narrative theory which is used to analyse the scenes and assists in the explanation and the interpretation of the texts. It helps us understand how brands within films construct different characters and gender roles. A part of narrative theory is mythologies which are of great importance to our thesis since they often are connected to films as well as brands. Further, myths encompass signs which can be examined through semiotic theory. This theory is important since brands essentially are signs which become related to the film characters and their gender roles.

2.2 DISCOURSE AND GENDER THEORY

2.2.1 Discourse theory

Discourse analysis is a method for studying processes of social reality and has recently gained ground in disciplines such as psychology and gender studies.⁴⁵ Discourse is the way we use language to enact perspectives and identities, while discourse analysis is the study of the language embedded in different types of text such as symbols and pictures. In broader terms, discourse can be described as “text in context”, where text is simply a physical object.⁴⁶ It does not possess meaning but is shared and created from social interactions and structures. Thus, without

⁴⁵ Phillips, Nelson & Hardy, Cynthia, *Discourse analysis: investigating processes of social construction*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2002 p.13:39

⁴⁶ Litosseliti, L & Sunderland, J, *Gender Identity and Discourse Analysis*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, John Benjamin Publishing Company, 2002, p. 12

surrounding interactions the discourse is individually meaningless.⁴⁷ As Foucault suggests; discourses are “practices that systematically form the object of which they speak”.⁴⁸

Philips and Hardy have presented a framework that serves as a tool for understanding the diversity of different styles and approaches used in discourse analysis. The first dimension is to what degree the focus lies on individual text or the broader context, while the other concerns whether the research emphasises on power and ideology or processes of social construction. Interpretive structuralism, which focuses on social contexts, and critical discourse, which discusses the nature of power, are of relevance for our study as we, with a focus on content rather than on individual texts, investigate unequal power relations between the genders in the chosen film scenes in a broader context.⁴⁹

2.2.2 Gender theory

Gender is the modern expression of the distinction between women and men, describing what is considered as masculine versus feminine.⁵⁰ With a dynamic nature and contradictory meanings, gender is often referred to as a problematic subject. One way to theorise the construction of gender is to use the presented discourse analysis. As mentioned, this approach turns people into subjects through the use of language; learning to think and feel with linguistics that is socially available. Hence, different combinations in discourses set limits on how we experience different things, such as gender and gender roles. As differences between women and men; masculine versus feminine attributes, are already labelled in society we come to see ourselves in these terms and roles.⁵¹ With a discourse perspective, gender is presented as a “set of overlapping and often contradictory cultural descriptions and prescriptions referring to sexual difference which arises from and regulates particular economic, social, political, technological and other non-discursive contexts”.⁵² Hence, gender should not be considered as a set of different fixed characteristics, but be conceived as a dynamic process. However, gender is according to van Zoonen a fundamental part of culture which makes it into an ongoing discursive struggle and hard to change as the disciplinary power of discourse can be very resistant. By definition, certain stereotype roles may be hard to completely overcome.⁵³

⁴⁷ Litosseliti, L & Sunderland, J, p. 15

⁴⁸ Litosseliti, L & Sunderland, J, p. 13

⁴⁹ Phillips, N. & Hardy, C., p. 19-29

⁵⁰ Hofstede, G. *Masculinity and femininity: the taboo dimension of national cultures*, Sage publication Inc, 1995, p. 78

⁵¹ van Zoonen, L. *Feminist Media Studies*, London, Sage Publication inc, 1994, p. 30-33

⁵² van Zoonen, L. p. 33

⁵³ van Zoonen, L. p.34

The portrayal of women and men in media has always been discussed, particularly with regards to television.⁵⁴ When studying gender roles in media, it is important and relevant to investigate how gender discourse is encoded in media texts.⁵⁵ According to van Zoonen, "media reflects society's dominant social values" and translates what is considered as masculine and feminine through stereotypical roles. She further suggests that media symbolically degenerates women by not showing them at all or by subordinating them to men. By presenting a majority of men on TV, van Zoonen means that society is given a picture where women are not as important.⁵⁶ By this mean, literature on gender usually takes interest in the missing woman, to some extent neglecting the man. As the sociologist Silvia Gherardi argues, by ignoring the social construction of masculinity half of the history on gender goes missing.⁵⁷ Hence, it is important to cover both halves as well as the link between them.

An increase of the representation of women in advertising began in the 1970s and since the concept of stereotypes has been much discussed.⁵⁸ Previous studies conducted by researchers such as Royo-Vela et al⁵⁹ also indicate a pattern where men and women are portrayed differently in media. This is agreed upon by Ford et al⁶⁰. The dependent women are often seen in domestic settings as housewives radiating less authority than men. In real life however, it is argued that women work much more than what is suggested through media. Furthermore, many studies with feminist approaches point out images and aspects of women's life in media which are projected in a less realistic way; misrepresenting women's real position in our society. As the demography is changing, the advertising industry is accused of not keeping up with the transformation. Thus attitudes, beliefs and opinion on gender roles, women in particular, are not in pace with the reality.⁶¹

2.2.3 Gender in advertising

A textual study looking at the variances in display of Clinique products discovered many differences between the approach and coding of marketing campaigns. Firstly, there were clear variations between the colours used on the packaging; the male products were grey or sometimes

⁵⁴ van Zoonen, L. p.11

⁵⁵ van Zoonen, L. p. 43

⁵⁶ van Zoonen, L. p.16-17

⁵⁷ Gherardi, S. *Gender, symbolism and organizational cultures*, Sage Publication Inc p. 187

⁵⁸ Royo-Vela, M. Aldas-Manzano, J., Küster, I., Vila, N. "Adaptation of Marketing Activities to Cultural and Social Context: Gender Role Portrayals and Sexism in Spanish Commercials" *Sex Roles*, 2008, Vol 58, Issue 5, p. 381.

Retrieved from LibHub 2011-03-07

⁵⁹ Royo-Vela et al, 2008, p. 379-390

⁶⁰ Ford, J., Kramer, P., Honeycutt Jr, E., & Casey, S."Gender role portrayals in Japanese advertising: A magazine content analysis", *Journal of Advertising*, 1998, p. 113-125. Retrieved from All Business 2011-03-07

⁶¹ van Zoonen, L. p. 30

blue, while the female products were of pastel and soft colours. According to the authors, this enforces gender stereotypes. Secondly, the ads displaying the products for men were mostly in black and white, conveying a more objective and rational impression. The ads for the female products on the other hand were pastel and signalled sensibility and softness. The conclusion is that these ads not only make a great difference between female and male products, but also try to masculinise “feminine” products.⁶²

Another researcher has studied the connection between advertising and the construction of violent white masculinity where several interesting themes were discovered. One theme is the antiauthority rebel, a white working class male who resents middle-class manners and social conventions. A great example of the angry white male is the rapper Eminem who possesses a grim, violent and rebellious image. Yet another common theme is the existence of violence in male behaviour as a consequence of genetics, used in many ads. Products such as condoms, computers, and even cruise trips have been advertised with the help of this theme. Additionally, sports and the military are popular themes when creating marketing campaigns. Ads for the military itself link masculinity and power with each other, selling masculinity as violent and adventurous. Lastly, the author speaks about the connection between heroic and violent masculinity often displayed by Hollywood films. The violence in the films is often perpetrated by males and turned into some sort of exiting violent masculinity. Furthermore, the display of the violent heroes of the film continues on billboards, in ads and in trailers.⁶³

Women in advertising have been investigated as well, looking at how they are affected by ads. Often, perfume, clothing and beauty are being prominent in ads, portrayed as areas of great importance for young women. The ads indicate that being thin and beautiful is always possible, even though it requires some self-sacrifice and effort. Women often lean towards self-objectification and look at their bodies from the outside, a phenomenon less found among men. There is a great pressure on women to be thin, cutting down to size, while they at the same time are expected to succeed in every area of life. An existing theory is that the fear of powerful women have created the goal of being thin, and indeed the history seems to indicate that increased pressure for thinness and greater freedom for women have been following each other through time. Another finding is that girls and women often are encouraged to act beautiful and silent in ads. There are countless examples of ads displaying this message, visually as well as

⁶² Dines, G. & Humez, J.M. (red.), *Gender, race, and class in media: a text-reader*, 2. ed., Sage, Thousand Oaks, 2003, p. 268-273

⁶³ Dines, G. & Humez, J.M. (red.), p. 349-357

verbally. Moreover, ads often depict women as passive, insecure and weak while the men are active, secure and powerful.⁶⁴

2.3 NARRATIVE THEORY

Narratives of all kinds are everywhere in our life as language, gestures, images and a mix of them all. They can be found in, among others, conversations, cinemas, ads and commercials.⁶⁵ Fictitious narratives are important since they help develop narrative competence, our ways of understanding and allow us to enter unknown situations so we can broaden our senses.⁶⁶ Narrative analysis focuses on the story itself and why it is told in a certain way, it is about interpretation, where subjectivity is an important part. The analysis takes surrounding culture and personal experiences into the account as well.⁶⁷ The definition of a narrative is broad and includes many variations, but it should be a unit with a clear beginning and end, separable from the surroundings.⁶⁸ When dealing with narratives, the forms of telling are important; they way something is said and how it is understood which also is crucial for the interpretation.⁶⁹

One can read a text with the use of Hernadi's triad, an instrument that point out the possibility to read a narrative in several ways simultaneously. There are three steps; explication, the rendering of the text; what it says, the explanation of the text; why it says it, and lastly, exploration, what the reader thinks of the text. Explication is often mentioned as the summary of a text, something which might be hard to accomplish correctly in own words. The story should be reconstructed by the reader and prepared for the steps that follow. By trying to explain the text and examine the purpose of the author, the reader gains a greater understanding for the narrative. There are three modes of explanation; subjectivist, objectivist and constructivist, two of relevance. The subjectivist approach looks at the intentions of the author and is suitable when examining, among others, advertisements. The objectivist approach which relates to external structures such as power relationships and gender is further useful in this study. It views text as a product of the time in question with the author depicting her or his reality. The last phase is exploration where the reader stands in for the author, constructing the text again. Depending on the text and the reader's standpoint, not all the phases are used in every analysis.⁷⁰

⁶⁴ Dines, G. & Humez, J.M. (red.), p. 258-265

⁶⁵ Barthes, R., *Image, music, text*, Fontana, London, 1977, p. 79

⁶⁶ Corvellec, H, 2006. "Elements of Narrative Analysis," GRI-rapport 2006:6, Göteborg University, Gothenburg Research Institute GRI.

⁶⁷ Riessman, C.K., *Narrative analysis*, Sage, Newbury Park, 1993, p. 1-5

⁶⁸ Riessman, C.K., p. 17-18

⁶⁹ Riessman, C.K., p. 19-21

⁷⁰ Czarniawska, B., *Narratives in social science research*, SAGE, London, 2004, p. 60-74

2.3.1 Semiotics and mythologies

The narrative analysis is further connected with two related theories which serve as complements when investigating the scenes; semiotics and mythologies. While narrative theory makes sense of the world by creating the way objects, such as brands, are represented and used in language, signs serve as building blocks from where these meanings arise. Semiotics is a discipline developed to study the systems of signs within society and is a useful tool when examining texts and symbols.⁷¹ These signs, which convey meanings to people, are building blocks in the formation of myths seen in stories, film, and brands. Viewing brands as signs symbolising certain characteristics, the approach serves as a useful tool.

“The entire universe is perfused with signs, if it is not composed exclusively of signs”⁷²

With this in mind, brands can undeniably be regarded as signs. Apart from the sign itself, other areas must be studied; for example the codes into which signs are organised and its culture. Likewise, there are three elements which must be involved in studies of signs; the sign itself, the object it refers to, and the user or interpreter of the sign.⁷³ Together, these elements represent the triadic model of the sign.⁷⁴ When looking at semiotics and signs, there are further three categories to investigate. Firstly, there is the icon category, which means that the sign resembles the object. Examples of this would be a map, a portrait or some sort of prohibition sign. Secondly, there is the index category, where there is a direct link between the sign and its object. Examples of this would be smoke as an index of fire or dark clouds as an index of rain. The last category is the one of the symbol, where there is neither connection nor resemblance between the sign and the object.⁷⁵

2.3.2 The signifier and the signified

In order to utilize the instrument of semiotics properly, one should be familiar with the expressions signifier and signified. The sign consists of two entities which together make it complete. The visualisation or the sound of a word is known as the signifier, while the mental picture or concept that arises when encountering the word represents the signified. Even though

⁷¹ Nöth, W. *Handbook of Semiotics*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990, p. 3

⁷² Nöth, W, p. 41

⁷³ Fiske, J., *Introduction to communication studies*, 2. ed., Routledge, London, 1990, p. 40-42

⁷⁴ Nöth, W, p.44

⁷⁵ Fiske, J., p. 46-48

the two units may seem separable, they must be synchronised in order to create a complete sign.⁷⁶ The relationship between the signifier and the signified can be compared to a piece of paper; even though the front and back are separable, they cannot be split in two.⁷⁷

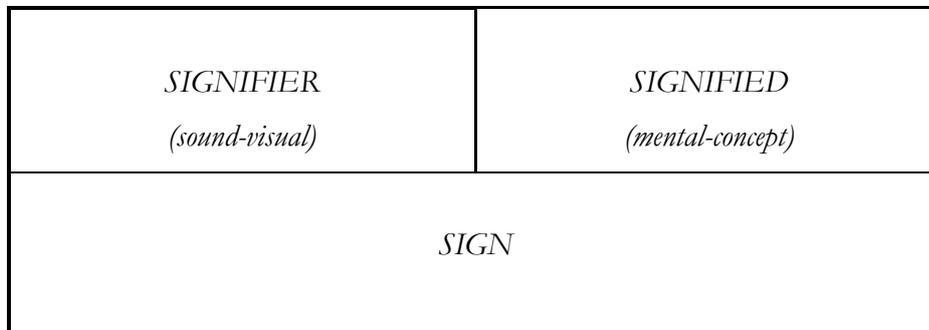


Fig. 2 Barthes' model of signification.⁷⁸

According to Barthes, the sign is further organised into two orders where the first represents the language and the second belongs to mythology.⁷⁹

2.3.3 The second semiotic system

Ever since the structural analysis of myths was introduced, the concept has held an important position within semiotics.⁸⁰ They are constructed by different signs, which encompass knowledge concerning the perception of the world including gender roles. In "Mythologies", Barthes discusses different types of myths as utterances created by history. They serve as an explanation of reality and can concern many things such as good, evil, death, life and modern concepts such as family, gender, success and science. Neither as object nor concept, but as a way to provide meaning, myths are communication systems presenting statements or messages.⁸¹ As there is no stability in the mythical statements or concepts, they can easily be created, reformed, transformed, partly dissolved or fully vanished. Human history turns reality into myths and history itself can easily abolish them by creating new ones. By this mean, the mythology must have a historical background from which it was created.⁸² The message within the myth can be translated and delivered through different channels, such as the spoken language, in written

⁷⁶ Barthes, R., *Mythologies*, Arkiv Förlag, Halmstad, 2007, p.203-205

⁷⁷ Nöth, W, p.59

⁷⁸ Barthes, R, p.207

⁷⁹ Barthes, R, p.205

⁸⁰ Nöth, W p. 374

⁸¹ Barthes, R, p. 201

⁸² Barthes, R, p. 212

words, by the uses of photographs or as in this study through films.⁸³ In accordance with Holt, different myths can also be held and translated through brands of different kinds.⁸⁴

Similar to semiotics, myths are constructed in a three-dimensional way. In line with Saussure, Barthes argues that the myth is an exceptional scheme as its formation springs from the chain of an already existing semiotic system, hence named the second semiotic system. The sign in the first system serves as signifier in the next. Despite of its meaning in the first system, the sign becomes exposed and turned into a new pure signifier as soon as it becomes part of the myth. Accordingly, when discussing the myth, the sign of the first system and the signifier of the second system are ambiguously referred to as both the meaning and the form. The constant struggle between the two is what decides and creates the myth. Furthermore, the signified of the myth is simply called the concept which gives it an expression. Consequently the myth is not a sign in itself, thus what was earlier named the sign is here more appropriately referred to as the signification.⁸⁵

<i>1. SIGNIFIER</i>	<i>2. SIGNIFIED</i>
<i>3. SIGN</i> <i>I. SIGNIFIER (Meaning)</i>	<i>II. SIGNIFIED (Form)</i>
<i>III. SIGN (Signification)</i>	

Fig. 3 Barthes' model of the second semiotic system⁸⁶

A greater understanding of myths facilitates and creates a wider possibility to interpret certain associations in society. The most relevant myths with regards to this thesis are the ones concerning gender, masculinity and femininity. The roles of men and women in society are constantly changing and so are the myths. Therefore media must find new ways to create history

⁸³ Barthes, R, p. 202

⁸⁴ Holt, D.B., *How brands become icons: the principles of cultural branding*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, MA, 2004, p. 3-11

⁸⁵ Barthes, R p. 206-209, 211,214

⁸⁶ Barthes, R, p. 207

and trigger these continuously evolving myths, something made through the use of brand placements.⁸⁷

2.3.4 Brands as myths and icons

As mentioned above, myths exist in films and stories, but also in connection to brands which have their own myths and therefore are part of the semiotic system. Certain brands develop over time to become iconic brands; symbolising values, ideals and expressions of the consumers. These brands are based on certain characteristics and principles. Often, an iconic brand addresses a great desire in a market; it identifies an intense need for something and helps fill up the void. This phenomenon can be connected with the performance of myths, which address said desires as well as concerns. Identity myths are performed by iconic brands as simple fictions; they address problems from made-up worlds and express imaginative aspirations. Commonly, the myths are set in populist worlds where the inhabitants have an intrinsic motivation for their actions; they do what they do because they want to and not because they get paid or seek power. Examples of populist worlds are Marlboro's Westerns frontier, Corona's Mexican beach and Nike's African American ghetto, providing the myth with authenticity. After some time, the brand becomes the myth and while using the product the consumers experience the myth and lessen their personal burdens. This kind of usage creates incredibly strong emotional bonds between consumer and brand. Another indication of the strength of iconic brands is their ability to make people reconsider ideas about themselves where the most powerful brands lead cultural change. Important to note is that a successful iconic brand often is the result of a few great performances which last a long time, in contrast to consistent communication. Lastly, a powerful myth can create a halo effect on the other aspects of the brand and helps enhance the quality reputation and status value.⁸⁸

In order to create an iconic brand, the usual characteristics of a strong brand needs to be there; it has favourable associations, it creates buzz and has strong emotional bonds. The foundation of these characteristics is the myth itself which helps consumers associate said benefits with the brand. In order to build an iconic brand, managers need to use certain strategies and tactics, using cultural branding.⁸⁹ It is crucial to target the contradictions of society and thereafter resolve them with myths. This creates so called myth markets, where the brand and its myths share the arena with film, music, television and literature. These markets easily change as they are influenced by

⁸⁷ Fiske, J, p.87-91

⁸⁸ Holt, D.B., p. 3-11

⁸⁹ Holt, D.B., p. 35

cultural fluctuations which force the brands to change as well.⁹⁰ After successful creation of the myth, it needs to be sustained in order to uphold its iconic status.

2.3.5 Structural analysis

Another building block to use when analysing text and plots with a narrative perspective is the structural analysis created by Propp. It can be used when analysing narratives and is a scheme closely related to semiotics. Propp examined different tales which were classified in forms according to the acknowledged components and the relationship between them.⁹¹ He discovered that some actions could have the same or different meanings and be performed by one or many characters. On this basis, Propp further divided the most vital components into different functions, individually representing an act of a character.⁹² Examples of these are absentation; a family character absent from the home, lack; one family member lacks or desires something, and departure; the hero leaves home.⁹³

As an important element of a tale, Propp further presented functions joined together between the characters as different spheres of actions.⁹⁴

1. *The sphere of action of the villain.* It can include villainy, struggle with the hero and/or pursuit.
2. *The sphere of action of the donor.* It can include provision of a magical agent.
3. *The sphere of action of the helper.* It can include transfer of the hero, dissolution of misfortune, rescue from pursuit, solution of tasks and/or transformation of the hero.
4. *The sphere of action of the princess (a coveted person) and her father.* It can include the assignment of difficult tasks, such as branding, exposure, recognition, punishment of another villain and/or marriage.
5. *The sphere of action of the dispatcher.* It can include some sort of dispatch.
6. *The sphere of action of the hero.* It can include departure on a search, reaction to the demands of the donor and/or wedding.
7. *The sphere of action of the false hero.* It can include departure on a search and/or reaction to the demands of the donor.

⁹⁰ Holt, D.B., p. 39

⁹¹ Propp, V., *Morphology of the folktale*, 2. ed., Univ. of Texas Press, Austin, Tex., 1968, p.19

⁹² Propp, V., p.21

⁹³ Propp, V., p.25-65

⁹⁴ Czarniawska, B., p.78

There are three possible distributions of these spheres among the characters. One possibility is that the sphere exactly corresponds to a character; they have one role as for example a helper or a donor. Another option is that one character fits into more than one sphere and has multiple roles at different times in the story. The last possibility is where several characters fit into one sphere.⁹⁵

The analysis of Propp has been widely used as it is easily applicable on a variety of theories. However, applicability does not necessarily mean that it reveals and contributes with useful information. For the same reason, many who have used structural analysis have instead applied the Actant model.⁹⁶ It introduces the concept of a narrative program which represents a change of state produced by any subject equivalent to a minimal plot. Different narrative programs are then chained together in a so called narrative trajectory. A canonical narrative schema represents an encircling of three trajectories; firstly the object which reveals itself, followed by means of which it acts and finally the sanction which turns the action into meaning and the object into a character.⁹⁷ The subject can be a person but likewise an animal, an object or a concept, thus is referred to as “it”. Similarly, the object undergoing the act, which was referred to as a character by Propp, has been replaced by an actant.⁹⁸

2.4 THEORETICAL OUTLINE

To conclude our theory chapter, we will provide a short summary of our theories and their intended usage. Firstly, our intention was to provide a section about discourse analysis which describes how one should interpret different concepts and structures in the world, including the construction of gender and gender roles. This type of approach helps us understand the broader picture and backgrounds of the films examined. It is useful when looking at the structures, roles and happenings in the reality where the films were produced, creating a canvas for the other types of analyses. It serves as the base when examining the theme of the thesis; gender, which represent the part presented next. Gender theories assist in the analysis of the society and the prevailing climate. The theory described in broader terms, is followed by gender in advertising, another relevant area for our thesis. When narrowing down our scope, looking closer at the films and the specific scenes there are other, more suitable methods. The main analysis tool for the scenes is the narrative analysis; chosen because of its diversity and multifaceted use. This type of analysis also encompasses several others; such as semiotics, mythologies and structural analysis. Said

⁹⁵ Propp, V., p. 79-83

⁹⁶ Czarniawska, B., p.79

⁹⁷ Greimas, A. & Courtés, J., *Semiotics and Language. An Analytical Dictionary*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press 1982, p.204

⁹⁸ Greimas, A, p.5

methods assists in the breaking down of the scenes; what they symbolise and how gender roles are affected by myths, narrative structures and different types of signs. The aim with the structure of this chapter is to show how our analysis looks; it forms a contracting funnel, starting wide and narrowing down, looking at smaller fractions and penetrating more deeply along the way.

3. METHOD

This section will describe and present the methodological approach of the study. The different approaches; the way to collect, process, summarise and analyse information, has been carefully chosen in order to present the result in best way possible.

3.1 RESEARCH PURPOSE

3.1.1 Exploratory and descriptive

Since few previous studies on brand placement have investigated the gender aspect, this study is mainly exploratory where new information is searched for in order to provide a better understanding of how specific placements affects our view on gender roles. Furthermore, a study with this purpose starts off as generally wide and is narrowed down along the way; a structure which mainly is followed.⁹⁹ In addition, the research is partly descriptive as many factors within the study are broken down into components in order to get a greater understanding of the phenomena as a whole.¹⁰⁰

3.2 RESEARCH STRATEGY

3.2.1 Abductive approach

Within social science there are two main ways of apprehending the relationship between theory and practice; deductive and inductive research approaches.¹⁰¹ The abductive approach is a combination between the inductive and the deductive approaches and is chosen for this study as it goes well with the purpose.¹⁰² Deductive theory is when already collected empirical data is used to test hypotheses and theories. This approach is only partly appropriate for the study as we use existing theories, but do not test hypotheses. The other approach draws generalizable conclusions based on the observations made. In this case, the observations and results create theory as we investigate a less explored area which makes the study partly inductive. Important to note is that the use of the word 'theory' is questionable in the inductive strategy, since the result often can consist of no more than empirical generalisations.¹⁰³ As both theory and empirics are necessary

⁹⁹ Saunders, M, Lewis, P & Thornhill, A., *Research Methods for Business Students*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2000, p. 106-128

¹⁰⁰ Saunders et al, p.106-128

¹⁰¹ Bryman, A. & Bell, E., *Företagsekonomiska forskningsmetoder*, 1. uppl., Liber ekonomi, Malmö, 2005 p. 23-26

¹⁰² Alvesson, M. & Skoldberg, K., *Tolkning och reflektion: Vetenskapsfilosofi och kvalitativ metod*. Studentlitteratur, Lund, 1994, p. 42

¹⁰³ Bryman, A. & Bell, E., p. 23-26

and equally important elements in our research, an abductive approach is the most appropriate choice.

3.2.2 Qualitative method

Since the main purpose of this study is to provide a better understanding of how, over time, our view on certain gender roles has been affected by brand placement, it is considered as qualitative. In an attempt to facilitate this process; to study, describe and provide an understanding about the subject, the qualitative approach gives us the ability to analyse and interpret documents and other findings rather than counting them. The quantitative method is not aligned with the purpose of our study as we perform an in-depth study which in comparison to larger samples only focuses on small amounts of objects, thus is not chosen.¹⁰⁴

The qualitative theory method is based on the hermeneutical approach, which stands for the science of creating an understanding of a particular phenomenon and to interpret the behaviours and actions of individuals. The qualitative theory philosophy is mainly dominated by the inductive approach and has the focus of theory generation. The ontological standpoint of qualitative theory is constructionism, which claims that social phenomena are created through social interplay and are in a state of constant change. It also includes the notion that the researchers' accounts of the social reality are constructions; the versions presented are never final.¹⁰⁵ The ontological standpoint suits the thesis well as different social interplays are observed.

3.3 RESEARCH CRITERIA

When performing quantitative research, the most important criteria are reliability, replication and validity. However, since we perform a qualitative study, not all of these are applicable. There have been two approaches used by researchers, one can either adapt the criteria of quantitative research into qualitative meanings or use new concepts as criteria. Quantitative criteria that can be used are external and internal reliability and validity. Alternative criteria that have been developed are credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.¹⁰⁶ For this study we have chosen to work primarily with the alternative criteria.

Firstly the grade of transferability should be considered throughout the work process. This is achieved by keeping the descriptions of culture elements detailed and thick, which provides other

¹⁰⁴ Bryman, A. & Bell, E., *Business research methods*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2003, p. 39-41

¹⁰⁵ Bryman, A. & Bell, E. p. 39-41

¹⁰⁶ Bryman, A. & Bell, E., p. 48-52

people with a sort of database where the transferability to another environment can be estimated. Secondly, another dimension that is used when assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic consumer research is conformability, which represents the possibility to verify and corroborate. This means that we try to act in good faith at all times and do not let personal values or other hindrances affect us.¹⁰⁷ According to Wallendorf and Belk, it is important to collect individual accounts of the empirical data in order to avoid groupthink. With this in mind, we watch the films individually and then summarise our findings together.¹⁰⁸ An additional criterion which we find important is relevancy, which decides how important a theme is within its area and what contributions it can leave.¹⁰⁹ When addressing credibility, we have used debriefing with peers since we attended a seminar halfway through the process and received feedback. In order to increase credibility, we also attempt to understand the context both theoretically and empirically.¹¹⁰

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

After studying various types of design, we came to the conclusion that the comparative design is best suited for our study. This design entails the investigation of two or more cases by the means of more or less identical methods. It can also help researchers gain a better understanding for certain social phenomena by comparing disparate cases in films, something which is ideal in this study. When using a comparative design with a qualitative approach it is called a multiple case study. The foundation of this design is the ability to create theoretical reflections from differentiated cases as well as the facilitation of theory generation.¹¹¹

3.5 RESEARCH METHOD

Films are used as our main source of data and we believe that an analysis of these is the most reliable research method due to our objectives. The chosen films are systematically and thoroughly watched and examined. There are a total of six films where every decade is represented by two films; one which is produced for a female audience and one for a male audience. A number of scenes from every film are selected and analysed. Secondary data is essential in this study as it, in a way, becomes our primary data; new information collected for a special purpose.¹¹² The secondary data used is based on literature in the marketing field; mostly

¹⁰⁷ Bryman, A. & Bell, E., p. 304-311

¹⁰⁸ Wallendorf, M. & Belk, R., "Assessing Trustworthiness in Naturalistic Consumer Research", *Interpretive Consumer Research*, 1989, p.69-84

¹⁰⁹ Bryman, A. & Bell, E., p. 304-311

¹¹⁰ Wallendorf, M. & Belk, R. p.69-84

¹¹¹ Bryman, A. & Bell, E., (English version) p. 47-78

¹¹² Saunders, M., p. 256

focusing on brand placement and gender differences in marketing. We also make use of research articles in order to establish the gender status of the era in question.

3.6 SELECTION

Since brand placement started to properly develop during the 1980s, we have chosen films from this decade and onwards which provides us with a rich material to examine. We also want an even distribution over the decades in order to get a more nuanced picture. In order to capture differences in a clear way, we have chosen films that we believe are aimed at different target audiences, men and women. Important to note is that we realise that the chosen films can attract people of both sexes, but we still feel that they are mainly produced for one gender. The chosen film scenes also contain and present brand placements, as well as typical gender roles.

	Feminine	Masculine
2000	“Sex & the City”	“Casino Royale”
1990	“Clueless”	“Fight Club”
1980	“Dirty Dancing”	“Top Gun”

3.7 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

The films used in the study are acquired through renting. We observe the films chronologically, starting with the ones from the 80s. In order to increase reliability, they are watched at least three times each by both of us. The examination is systematically performed, divided into three main phases. Firstly, the films are watched in order to capture the general spirit of the story and the characters, as well as the discourses of the time. Secondly, we focus on the selection of scenes, encompassing brand placement and gender roles. These are further connected with narrative theory, including mythologies and semiotics. Lastly, the scenes are reviewed in detail, involving all mentioned theories. Additionally, the scenes are transcribed followed by a selection of the most important elements.

3.8 ANALYSIS

Discourse analysis in combination with narrative analysis is used to read the scenes. Semiotic theory is used as well since it implies that the symbolic order of a culture is formed and interpreted through signs. This analysis method looks at how messages are communicated as systems of meaning, which has a connection to other used theories; mythologies and structural

analysis.¹¹³ The analyses are adequate tools to use when examining film and different types of discourse, since there is a possibility to look at the entire context. In order to provide structure, the scene analyses are conducted with the use of Hernadi's triad, a tool for reading narratives, hence encompassing the other theories as well.

The data in the summary analysis is examined with the use of critical hermeneutic approach, which is based on the notion that the analyst of any material must bring attention to the social and historical context where the material originated. Since we look at the development and connection between product placement and gender over time, the above mentioned context is very important. The approach is divided into three parts, beginning with the social-historical moment where the producer and recipient of the text, the referent in the world and the context are examined. The second phase is called the formal moment and contains a formal analysis of the text with the use of discourse analysis and semiotics. The last phase is the interpretation-reinterpretation moment where the results from the two former stages are interpreted.¹¹⁴

3.9 CRITICAL ASPECTS

3.9.1 Research design

With regards to the chosen research design, one risk is that focus could be transferred onto the cases instead of the particular context. This might cause a need to create a pronounced focus from the beginning, instead of having an open approach.¹¹⁵ Our response to this issue is to be careful when structuring and performing the study, in order to avoid incorrect focus.

3.9.2 Research method

Readers of qualitative studies often have problems to understand why a certain study area has been chosen. Lack of generalisation is another issue often brought up in connection with qualitative research. A study of this kind should be generalised into theories and is not representative for a people or a society. The last main point of critique is the lack of transparency, which might concern the difficulty to understand why certain research subjects have been chosen for the study or the impaired ability to properly follow the analysis.¹¹⁶

With regards to understanding the reasons behind the study, we try to motivate and explain our choices throughout the thesis. We believe that the knowledge about the generalisation issue is

¹¹³ Bryman, A. & Bell, E., (English version) p. 418-421

¹¹⁴ Bryman, A. & Bell, E., (English version) p. 421-422

¹¹⁵ Bryman, A. & Bell, E., p. 74-78

¹¹⁶ Bryman, A. & Bell, E., p. 318-321

enough to lessen the severity of the critique and realise that the focus should lie on the theoretical reasoning. The argument concerning lack of transparency is met by, again, motivating our choices and documenting our thoughts during the entire process.

3.9.3 Selection

When the choice of films has been made, there is a risk for inadequacy concerning the featured brand placements and gender role display. This issue is solved through the provision of backup films, one for each decade and category.

Another potential critique concerns the chosen films and their credibility since we have chosen films which belong to the extremes of the gender scale. Naturally, stereotypes are easier to discover. However, our choice is made in order to acquire a distinct result in a rather unexplored area. Additionally, after having analysed the films, a similar pattern was discovered in all of them. This implies indifference between feminine and masculine films; irrespective of the category of the film, the same kind of stereotypes was displayed.

3.9.4 Data collection method

By observing films the risk of change in behaviour is eliminated since the content remains the same and one is able to pause and replay as many times as needed, which strengthens the reliability. The observation is also free from coloured opinions which can occur in for example interviews.

Relevancy is another important issue when collecting data. As discourse theory is a complex qualitative research method, a problem concerning relevancy might arise. Apart from the need to have access to relevant texts of various types one must select the right source of text, thus the challenge is not the search of data but the selection.¹¹⁷ We aim to collect data relevant to our purpose throughout the study with the support from our constructed framework.

3.9.5 Analysis

All types of analysis involve different risks which should be considered. Discourse analysis can be difficult to perform in a structured and systematic way since the aim is to identify multiple meanings of texts. Another issue is to decide on the analysis of data as there are a great number

¹¹⁷ Phillips, N. & Hardy, C., p. 70-71

of analysis methods which makes the selection difficult.¹¹⁸ Our answer to the first potential issue is to apply as much structure as possible without undermining the analysis, which is important in order to facilitate the reading and the understanding of the thesis. Secondly, our chosen analysis methods are selected due to their ability to process and refine the used data. Thus, they are grounded in our particular study and reflect our research questions.

The narrative parts risk to be read only for content or only to confirm a prior theory in the analysis. Various power issues also exist, such as the belonging of the voice finally represented, the possibility of other readings and our own situation in the narratives.¹¹⁹ Furthermore, the issue of validation within narrative analysis is widely discussed and can be difficult to deal with.¹²⁰ When reading the narrative we begin with the structure and systematically move from the inside and out in order to form a complete picture. With regards to the power issues, the most important thing is to be aware of them and make the reader understand the interpretative problems.¹²¹ When validating our text, we look at a number of things, for example the persuasiveness, correspondence, coherence and the pragmatic use.¹²²

The semiotic part of the analysis is often criticised for being unstructured and only giving individual accounts of the story. Commonly mentioned is the problem to acquire the whole picture, not only pieces, which makes a complete analysis almost impossible.¹²³ Through the use of Barthes well-established models, we try to bring as much structure as possible into the analysis. It is multifaceted since we have a continuous exchange of thoughts and opinions which provides a platform for discussion. We are aware of the impossibility to perform a complete semiotic study given our timeframe as well as the nature of the analysis method. Our aim is to provide the best picture possible given said restrictions.

¹¹⁸ Phillips, N. & Hardy, C., p. 74-79

¹¹⁹ Riessman, C.K., p. 61

¹²⁰ Riessman, C.K., p. 64

¹²¹ Riessman, C.K., p. 61

¹²² Riessman, C.K., p. 65-68

¹²³ Chandler, D. *Semiotics for Beginners*, 1994-2011, retrieved in 2011-03-03 from <http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/S4B/>.

4. EMPIRICAL DATA & ANALYSIS

In this section the reader will, in chronological order, be presented with the different films chosen for this study. In order to facilitate the reading, the film scenes will be directly followed by shorter analyses based on the narrative analysis method. Firstly a short plot summary will be given, followed by a description of the chosen film scenes. Thereafter, our thoughts and opinions linking the theory of narrative, including morphology, mythologies and semiotics, will be discussed. This leads up to the analysis chapter where we will try to answer our main questions.

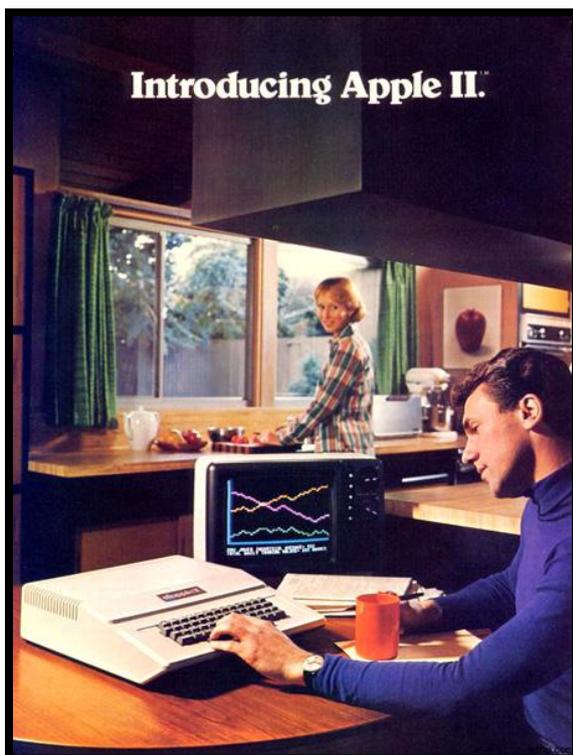


Fig. 4 Apple advertisement as an example of gender roles in the 80s. ¹²⁴

4.1 GENDER AND DIFFERENCES IN THE 80s

The development of the sex roles in the US during the 80s continued an ongoing trend towards equality. From the 60s and onwards there had been a rise in egalitarian decision-making and less segregation between gender specific roles. By the middle of the 80s, there was an egalitarian attitude towards sex roles among a majority of the Americans.¹²⁵ When examining marriage during the 80s, most Americans claimed that marriage and family life was of great importance to

¹²⁴ Creative Pro, 2008, retrieved 2011-04-18 from http://www.creativepro.com/files/story_images/20080313_SAWG_fg06.jpg

¹²⁵ Thornton, A. and Young-DeMarco, L., "Four Decades of Trends in Attitudes Toward Family Issues in the United States: The 1960s Through the 1990s." *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 2001, 63, p. 1014

them.¹²⁶ The timing of marriage in life was changing, most young people wanted to marry at a later age than earlier on.¹²⁷

Gender differentials in domestic and paid work time were during the time substantial. Women were mostly seen in the home doing household work such as cooking and taking care of the children, while men were at work. Nonetheless, research covering industrialised countries on the allocation of work time between married men and women, showed that the differential had been reduced by the mid-1980s. This was a positive trend for gender equality which was explained with more women entering the workplace, with less time for household chores. Accordingly, this led to an increase in domestic work for men.¹²⁸ Even so, a study made on married women in the UK in 1987 showed that they, in comparison to their husbands, spent three times more time at home.¹²⁹

After two decades of achievement for the feminist movement with legalised abortion and equal pay as important issues, the 80s resulted in a general slowdown. The times were more conservative and many believed that feminism was unnecessary since women had already gained equal rights. This period was also known as post-feminism.¹³⁰ Interesting to note is that, since the 70s, men and their relationship to women had become more acknowledged in the equality debate.¹³¹

The political and economic situation in the US in the beginning of the 80s was turbulent, with a deep recession and high unemployment numbers. President Reagan started a campaign intended to bring the country back on its feet. Keywords were can-do spirits and men-of-action, inspiring working class men across the country to revitalise the domestic industry.¹³² The urge to revive the glory days brought back conservative values and traditional roles, which can be seen in the films from this era. "Top Gun" is an obvious example of US propaganda, with the focus on strong men portrayed as heroes. Likewise, the film "Dirty Dancing" aims to evoke the same feelings through the 60s setting, when the country was successful. A further indication of the spirit of the time is the depiction of the traditional working class hero, possessing one of the lead roles.

¹²⁶ Thornton, A. and Young-DeMarco, L., p. 1011

¹²⁷ Thornton, A. and Young-DeMarco, L., p. 1018-1019

¹²⁸ Ramos, X., "Domestic work time and gender differentials in Great Britain 1992-1998", *International Journal of Manpower*, Vol. 26 No. 3, 2005, p. 266

¹²⁹ Ramos, X., p. 273

¹³⁰ Osborne, S., *Feminism*. Harpenden, 2001, p. 25-32

¹³¹ Mattsson, T., *Intersektionalitet i socialt arbete: teori, reflektion och praxis*, 1. uppl., Gleerup, Malmö, 2010, p. 54

¹³² Holt, D.B, p. 97-106

4.2 TOP GUN

This American action film from 1986 takes us to the Navy where Tom Cruise is playing a reckless and macho pilot called Maverick. When encountering a pair of MIGs over the Persian Gulf, Maverick's wingman has problems handling the pressure. With almost no fuel left, Maverick manages to assist him down to the carrier where the wingman later turns his wings in. In spite of Maverick's recklessness, this heroic incident takes him to the best US flying school. Apart from struggling with his past and aiming to be the greatest pilot among the other students, Maverick fights to get the attention of his female instructor to whom he feels a strong attraction.

Throughout the film we come across different brand placements, mainly of visual character.¹³³ Some of them stand out by reoccurring frequently and others by building and strengthening the storyline as well as the front figures. These are Budweiser and the United States Navy; the Fighter weapons school also called Top Gun.¹³⁴

4.2.1 Budweiser



Fig. 5 Scene from "Top Gun".¹³⁵

¹³³ Russell, C. A, p. 306-318

¹³⁴ "Top Gun" (1986) Paramount Pictures

¹³⁵ The RPF, 2010, retrieved 2010-04-17 from <http://www.therpf.com/attachments/f9/top-gun-captain-suit-where-get-badge-maverick-goose-bar-scene-large.jpg-34600d1285249208>

As mentioned, Budweiser is a brand which is shown numerous times during the film. The scenes containing the placement mostly take place in the local bar where the pilots, dressed in uniforms, can relax, brag about their battles and surround themselves with beautiful women. Thus, the beer immediately becomes associated with these certain characteristics; confidence, coolness and fearlessness. One scene in particular shows the placement in a way which represents the other scenes by capturing the most important aspects associated with the beer.

*Maverick and his radar man are standing at the bar after a long day in the air when their toughest competitors approach. The smoky bar is filled with pilots dressed in white uniforms and women in short tight dresses. You can hear music and laughter in the background. Ice Man, known as the best pilot, approaches Maverick and says: "You need any help?" Maverick gives him a cold look, takes a sip from his Budweiser and responds by asking "With what?" Ice Man smirks while chewing on his gum; "You haven't figured it out yet? Who the best pilot is?" Maverick smirks back and responds arrogantly; "No I think I can figure that out on my own". Next Maverick turns to his radar man, raises his bottle of Budweiser and says "We're going to have a good time". They empty their Budweiser bottles and screen the place for approachable ladies. They turn to the bar which is filled with Budweiser bottles and the radar man challenges Maverick with a bet; "to have carnal knowledge of a lady on the premises". Next, Maverick has spotted a beautiful and lonely woman sitting at the bar. In an attempt to win the bet, Maverick, backed up by Goose, makes a move by singing "She's lost that loving feeling". Embarrassed but at the same time flattered, the beautiful woman giggles and asks Maverick to sit down.*¹³⁶

4.2.1.1 Scene analysis

According to Hernadi's triad, the first step of the analysis is the explication where the scene is described.¹³⁷ Opening the scene is a discussion between Maverick and Ice Man where they argue about the spot as the best fighter pilot of Top Gun. They are self-confident, arrogant and collected. After the harsh dialogue, the attention is directed to a woman sitting at the bar, the fight is replaced with a chase. Maverick is challenged by his radar man to acquire a random woman in the bar, a task he gladly commences. While Maverick is showing off, the woman is sitting passively watching him. As she in the end invites him to sit down, it becomes a typical "the boy gets the girl" scene.

Throughout the film, Budweiser is consumed mainly by men. In this particular scene the product is, according to Lehu, an example of a classic placement, clearly presented through the screen.¹³⁸ Budweiser is as an iconic brand associated with certain attributes such as manliness, confidence

¹³⁶ "Top Gun" (1986) Paramount Pictures

¹³⁷ Czarniawska, B., p. 60-74

¹³⁸ Lehu, J., p. 4-15

and poise which all become reinforced in the film. The growing independence of women in combination with the economical state of the US at the time made Budweiser the perfect regainer of masculinity for some men.

Apart from a generally displayed alpha male behaviour in connection with attributes such as manliness, self-confidence and boldness, Budweiser is further associated with flirtatiousness and success with women, enhancing gender roles. Thus, in accordance with the theories of Barthes, the beer itself acts as a signifier for the mentioned characteristics¹³⁹. On the subject of semiotics, the hero role possessed by Maverick is enhanced by his uniform, which is spotlessly white and perfectly fitting; a symbol for his status. It serves as a signifier for certain characteristics such as above mentioned status as well as control, masculinity and power. These are the signified features, which together with the signifier creates the sign. The uniform forms a distinct difference between the men and the women, giving the men higher authority. This is further aligned with the myth held by the brand placement; projecting men as powerful and masculine.

The passage above aligns well with the theories of Propp, as we can interpret Maverick as the good guy and hero of the story.¹⁴⁰ According to Greimas and the theories concerning narrative programs, Maverick as an object firstly encounters the bad guy and then courts the woman¹⁴¹. This act supports Maverick's transformation into a hero where he is turned into a subject. He is assisted by his radar man, who acts as the helper and stands by him during the argument with the villain, Ice Man. Another helper in the scene is Budweiser which enhances his character as masculine. The woman at the bar possesses the role of the princess, as she is being courted by the men standing around her. She also symbolises some kind of prey, hunted by the men.

The second, and our last, step of the triad is explanation, where we go beneath the surface of the scene. Looking from an objectivist perspective, the 80s was an era of stagnation for equality. Even though there had been much progress for women, a slowdown had taken place where the women still possessed traditional roles and were very much bound to marriage. The scene clearly displays gender differences through several channels such as the atmosphere, the characters and the course of events. The focus of the scene lies on the men who are portrayed as quite primitive with basic needs. Meanwhile, the women are present in the background, giggling and being "silly". This intensifies the current image of men and women. Viewing the scene with a

¹³⁹ Barthes, R., p. 203-205

¹⁴⁰ Propp, V., p. 25-65

¹⁴¹ Greimas, A. & Courtés, J., p. 204

subjectivist perspective it is clear that the director of “Top Gun” and the brand manager for Budweiser had the same goal; to intensify the main characters and the plot along with a strengthening of the brand. The intention seems to be to construct an ideal image of masculinity; thus creating a win-win situation for both parties. Simultaneously, the woman has a passive role; quiet and beautiful, something which is a common theme in advertising.

4.2.2 US Navy: Top Gun



Fig. 6 Scene from “Top Gun”.¹⁴²

The producers of “Top Gun” strived for and succeeded to get the assistance of the US Navy when producing the film; however, only on the request that they were to be projected in a heroic fashion. “Top Gun” became a typical American patriot film but it differed from the others by having another aim. According to the producer, the film also had the intent to boost the Air Force and Navy recruitment which apparently became very successful. By having recruitment booths in the theatres, the number of men applying for the American Navy rose dramatically.¹⁴³

Two fighter planes are sent up into combat. Maverick and his radar man have a hostile MIG on their tail. The situation is not looking good. Pearls of sweat are running down their faces while missiles dash through the air. The safest choice would be to get out of there but Maverick refuses; “I am not leaving my wingman” At the aircraft carrier, the crew is nervously listening to the fighters while the captain is smoking a cigar. The tension is high. Gunshots are heard and alarms set off. Maverick’s wingman Ice Man has been shot. With lives at stake,

¹⁴² Mama Pop, 2010, retrieved 2011-04-16 from <http://www.mamapop.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/tom-cruise-top-gun.jpg>

¹⁴³ Campbell, D, *Top Gun versus Sergeant Bilko? No contest says the Pentagon*, The Guardian, 2001, retrieved in 2011-03-15 from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2001/aug/29/media.filmnews> Top Gun versus Sergeant Bilko? No contest, says the Pentagon.

*Maverick boldly lures the MIG closer, gets behind him, and locks fire. A great explosion takes place and the Top Gun anthem starts to play. Victory! They alert the aircraft carrier which bursts out into cheers and applauds...*¹⁴⁴

4.2.2.1 Scene analysis

Starting with the first step of Hernadi's triad, the scene in question captures a battle in the air.¹⁴⁵ The tension is high and the atmosphere is filled with exhilaration. Among the men, one can feel an eagerness and impatience to defeat and destroy. The scene once again excludes females, the roles of the pilots and the crew at the carrier are restrictively assigned to men. With a lot of action, the scene ends in victory.

Distinctly aimed towards men, the Navy brand is in the scene placed in several ways. According to Russell, a placement can either be visual, verbal or a part of the storyline as a plot placement¹⁴⁶. Concerning the scene and the brand in question, all three types are applicable. Firstly, as the film partly was made to increase the Navy recruitment, the brand itself played a vital role as a plot placement. Secondly, the brand can also be described as a verbal placement as it is much talked about among the men. Finally, with logos and other signs connected to the brand itself and shown frequently on the planes and the men's uniforms, it can according to Lehu be referred to as a visual corporate placement. The last mentioned placement strengthens the brand as a whole, rather than the product itself.

The brand is further placed so it compels to those who desire to be associated with attributes already related to the Navy; typical for an iconic brand. The male characters in the scene all possess attributes such as braveness, boldness, solidarity and independence; characteristics which fit with the brand displayed. Along these lines, the Navy as an iconic brand strengthens the heroic scene just as the thrilling plot and the brave characters in turn intensifies the Navy as a brand for young men to identify themselves with.

With this in mind, the Navy is with a semiotic perspective a symbol for heroism. This hypothesis supported by the theories of Fiske, describes the hero as a function¹⁴⁷. In a heroic style, the fighter pilots battle to demolish the enemy which can be interpreted as the villain. Again the old myth about the good versus the evil can be applied as the fighters are conquering "the bad and

¹⁴⁴ "Top Gun" (1986) Paramount Pictures

¹⁴⁵ Czarniawska, B., p. 60-74

¹⁴⁶ Russell, C. A., p. 306-318

¹⁴⁷ Fiske, J., p. 46-48

the evil”. Seen as a narrative program, Maverick is introduced as the actant who is the main focus in the act. By defeating the enemies, the earlier object is turned into a hero.

The scene further displays various signs through the text. At the carrier, a man with a resolute and composed approach is arrogantly smoking a cigar. He wears a proper, green uniform which stands out from the others, indicating a higher rank. Apart from the uniform, which according to Barthes represents the signifier of the sign serving as a symbol for authority, the cigar intensifies the man as powerful and masculine¹⁴⁸. Likewise, the cigar as a semiotic sign further strengthens the mentioned features of the character, symbolising authority and masculinity.

The explanation of the scene is quite obvious. Viewed with a subjectivist perspective, the intention of the author and the US Navy is to strengthen the Navy as a heroic brand. This is accomplished by displaying the male pilots as brave, bold and fearless; attributes traditionally viewed as masculine. The men at the carrier, even though slightly anxious and worried, are further displayed as collected, calm and self-confident. The second intension, viewed with an objectivist approach, is to portray the male characters as the possessors of certain masculine characteristics typical for the time. As mentioned earlier, the 80s was still dealing with traditional stereotyping where women were viewed as passive individuals while the men were the ones in charge; having the authority as the protectors of the family. Thus, the traditional view on masculinity is translated through the features held by the men in the scene, expressing a clear and distinct opinion on gender roles. When creating advertising campaigns to sell masculinity as violent and adventurous, military is a popular theme.

4.3 DIRTY DANCING

The film from 1987 features Jennifer Grey and Patrick Swayze in a love story during a summer vacation. “Baby”, a teenage girl who is on holiday with her wealthy family, falls in love with Johnny; the macho dance instructor who works at the camp and the relationships starts to bloom. Baby who has a privileged life is expected by her family to attend college and marry a doctor. However, during the summer these expectations fade as Baby becomes more and more involved with Johnny, a boy with a vastly different background.

Even though the film is from the same period as “Top Gun”, there is a huge difference in the amount of product placement. We actually only discovered one brand, Chevrolet. Nonetheless,

¹⁴⁸ Barthes, R, p.205

the film plays a lot with femininity and masculinity, which is clearly shown in the display of the product. With this in mind, despite the low amount of brand placement, we still consider the film to be appropriate.¹⁴⁹

4.3.1 Chevrolet



Fig. 7 Scene from "Dirty Dancing".¹⁵⁰

This is, as mentioned above, the only visible brand in the film. The cars in general are only driven by men and are experienced as "for men only". A common theme in the scenes pictures the man as active while the woman is passive. Due to the lack of brands in the film and the expressive scenes involving the Chevrolet, we have chosen to analyse two scenes which features the brand instead of one.

Baby and Johnny are rehearsing inside. It is not going very well and they are screaming at each other. Baby is wearing a long, pink skirt, a white sleeveless top which reveals her stomach and high, silver heels. Johnny is wearing black jeans and a black sleeveless top. They are both sweaty. Johnny suggest that they should go somewhere else, so they head outside where it is raining heavily. They run out to Johnny's car, a Chevrolet only to find it locked. Johnny looks inside the car, curses and tells Baby that he locked the keys inside. They are standing in the pouring rain, agitated. Baby looks urging at Johnny, he thinks for a few seconds and then turns around. He finds a fence pole in the ground, which he kicks, pulls out of the ground and then smashes the car window with. Baby looks surprised and slightly questioning. Johnny then holds up the door for Baby and she gets in. They drive off, Baby laughs and says "you're wild" to him.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ "Dirty Dancing" (1987) Great American Films Limited Partnership,

¹⁵⁰ IMCDB, 2004, retrieved 2011-04-18 from <http://www.imcdb.org/i006964.jpg>

¹⁵¹ "Dirty Dancing" (1987) Great American Films Limited Partnership,

4.3.1.1 Scene analysis

The scene opens with an unsuccessful dance move, followed by some frustration from both characters. After a short argument, Johnny tells Baby to come with him and she follows him obediently outside to his car. When it is clear that the keys of the car are inside, Johnny quickly makes the decision to smash the window of the Chevrolet, being very determined and authoritative. Baby is passive and admiring.

The placement in this film, Chevrolet, is of a classic, visual character according to Lehu.¹⁵² The car is shown in important, strong scenes and is a symbol for lawlessness and freedom, anything is possible. Chevrolet is also known as an iconic brand, at least at that point in time, providing the Americans with a free spirit and an important cultural symbol. During the film scenes, the brand and thus the characteristics associated with it, is shown in clear connection with men. The women do not drive or handle the car, hence do not possess the same features as the men do; authority, dominance and fearlessness.

Looking at the semiotics of the scene, there are a few indicators to be found. The clothes Baby and Johnny are wearing symbolise youth, carelessness and sex. The tight, revealing clothes are signifiers for a special kind of lifestyle; creating a sign together with the certain characteristics mentioned above. Johnny's carelessness is an index for a rebelliousness and indifference for the normal conventions of society.

When connecting the scene with the theories of Propp, again, the male lead takes the role of the hero in the story, trying to win the princess, Baby.¹⁵³ She is helpless and in need of assistance, only able to admire the male and not to have her own say. It is Johnny who drives the Chevrolet, again showing authority and dominance. The theories of Greimas points at the transformation of Johnny into the hero, something which takes place the instant he smashes the window; saving them from the heavy rain as well as their bad training session.¹⁵⁴

Viewing the scene from the objectivist perspective, once more, it is clear that there were still great equality differences between men and women during this century. Through the plot as well as through the characters, we can undeniably discern differences concerning gender and gender roles in the scene. While Johnny is portrayed as the strong, wild and powerful front figure, Baby

¹⁵² Lehu, J., p. 4-15

¹⁵³ Propp, V., p. 25-65

¹⁵⁴ Greimas, A. & Courtes, J., p. 204

demonstrates a more passive, prudent and virtuous approach. Throughout the scene, Johnny takes command and initiates their actions, something which is common for men in advertising. His behaviour can be connected with heroic violence, his raw masculinity is glorified when he breaks the social conventions and smashes his own car window. He becomes the typical white working class hero, in revolt against the middle-class and any authority. From the subjectivist perspective, it seems to have been the goal of the director to connect a certain kind of masculinity to Chevrolet, perhaps projecting glorified images of violence in a manner not originally intended.

Johnny is standing by his Chevrolet, he has been fired and is leaving. He takes his leather jacket and closes the boot. He is wearing black jeans and a black t-shirt. He throws his things into the car, looking sad but determined. Baby stands leaning against the car, her arms crossed, looking uncomfortable. She is wearing a white sleeveless top and skirt with a flower print. After talking for a while, Baby leans over to hug him. He pats her arms, looks at her and kisses her. He then lets her go, walks around the car, gets in and drives away. He skids the car off in a cloud of dust, while Baby looks longingly after him.¹⁵⁵

4.3.1.2 Scene analysis

Starting with a reconstruction of the scene, it shows the end of the short romance; Johnny has been fired and has to leave immediately. Their farewell is short and quite restrained, not many emotions are displayed, even though the difference between male and female behaviour is clear through their reactions. Nothing can be done about the decision and Johnny leaves Baby in his Chevrolet.

Again the brand of Chevrolet stands for freedom, a possibility to go anywhere. The scene would have lost much impact, if Johnny for example would have been driven to the bus station by Baby. Much of the power of the scene lies within the energeticness and determination of Johnny, his departure from their love story.

This scene also uses the symbolic language of clothing in a clear way, with Johnny in his black jeans, a t-shirt and a leather jacket, all symbols for masculinity at the time. Baby's innocent top and skirt in bright colours stands in contrast to his outfit. Their clothes are symbols of their different worlds; Johnny's working class background and Baby's middle-class belonging.

¹⁵⁵ "Dirty Dancing" (1987) Great American Films Limited Partnership,

Johnny is the hero of the film and Baby the sought-after princess according to Propp's theories.¹⁵⁶ The hero is here forced to leave by the princess's father, who tries to protect his daughter and suspects Johnny for deeds he has not done.

Explaining the scene with the help of Hernadi's triad, the objectivist approach reviews it the same way as the earlier scene; the inequalities of the 80s are clearly visible.¹⁵⁷ The scene is a great example of the differences in the portrayal of the genders; Johnny is being active while Baby is passive. He takes his Chevrolet and leaves her, not displaying much emotion. It is Baby who approaches him for a last hug, but Johnny who lets her go first. When he drives away, she stands there unable to move for some time. These are very basic roles, where the male is dominant and does not seem to be very emotional while the female, on the other hand, is weak and sensitive. The passivity of the female versus the activity of the male is displayed in a traditional way, in the same style as in the first scene. Above mentioned traits can be seen when subjectively viewing the scene as well. The relationship between Chevrolet and Johnny is mutually beneficial; masculinity is depicted in a certain way and strongly associated with the car. It is clear that the woman is not meant to have a connection with the brand, their respective values clash in an obvious way and they have nothing in common.

4.4 GENDER AND DIFFERENCES IN THE 90s

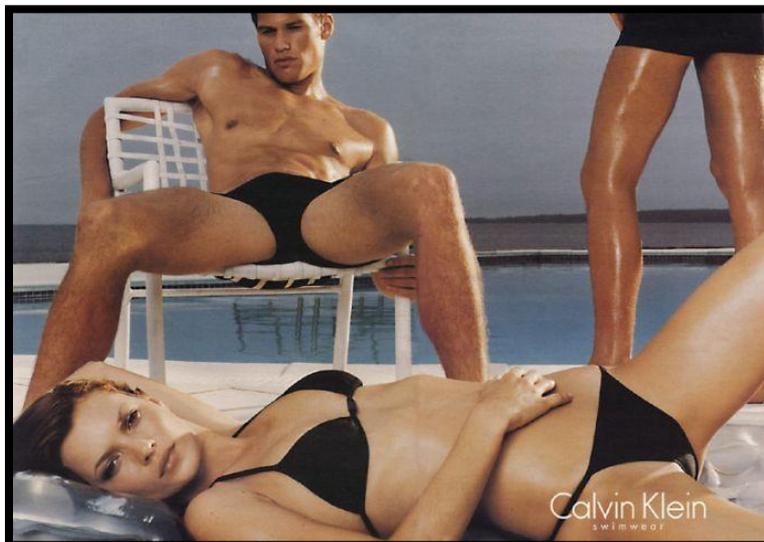


Fig. 8 Calvin Klein advertisement as an example of gender roles in the 90s.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ Propp, V., p. 25-65

¹⁵⁷ Czarniawska, B., p. 60-74

¹⁵⁸ The Grand Narrative, 2010, retrieved 2011-04-29 from <http://thegrandnarrative.files.wordpress.com/2010/04/goffman-gender-advertisements-ritualization-of-subordination-kate-moss-chris-kremer.jpg?w=680&h=480>

The trend going towards a more egalitarian attitude towards women continued to strengthen in the first half but then seemed to level off and, in some areas such as men achieve/women home, actually go in the opposite direction.¹⁵⁹ Concerning marriage, there was no evident trend during the 90s, apart from the increasing numbers of young people postponing marriage.¹⁶⁰ There was actually some evidence of a stronger commitment to family and marriage during this decade than before the 80s.¹⁶¹

A study performed in the UK on gender equality showed decreasing differentials on the working load between the genders. The distribution of domestic and paid work time became more balanced between women and men during the 90s. Women gained more space and authority in the business market with less responsibility at home. Even so, by the end of the decade, there was still a gap. The trend towards equally paid work continued, however, concerning domestic work the progress was less successful as men, in comparison to women, demonstrated a reluctant behaviour towards household chores.¹⁶²

After being somewhat out of focus, a new kind of feminism emerged, called third wave feminism. These women did not believe that the struggle was over, as there were yet problems to overcome. They claimed that there had been a backlash after the second wave feminist movement and that the women of the time had forgotten about the remaining issues.¹⁶³ The rising understanding for the complexity of gender made the researchers consider men and masculinity as much more important than earlier on.¹⁶⁴

The decade following Reagan's years presented the nation with new challenges; wages were low and job security virtually non-existent. This was mainly affecting young people who withdrew from the education and work scene as a direct effect of the state of the economy. A new group of these Peter Pan-like individuals emerged, named slackers.¹⁶⁵ This so called slacker myth can be clearly identified in "Fight Club", where the characters exist outside the frames of society.

¹⁵⁹ Thornton, A. and Young-DeMarco, L., p. 1014

¹⁶⁰ Thornton, A. and Young-DeMarco, L., p. 1017-1019

¹⁶¹ Thornton, A. and Young-DeMarco, L., p. 1030

¹⁶² Ramos, X., p. 266

¹⁶³ Osborne, S., *Feminism*. Harpenden, 2001, p. 32-34

¹⁶⁴ Mattsson, Tina, *Intersektionalitet i socialt arbete: teori, reflektion och praxis*, 1. uppl., Gleerup, Malmö, 2010, p. 54

¹⁶⁵ Holt, D.B., p. 50-52

4.5 FIGHT CLUB

Together with the reckless Tyler, a fight club is formed by the unnamed character to escape his monotonous life and to cure his insomnia. The club disconnects him from his “normal” life and his white-collar job as he gets more involved in a deep and very special relationship with both Tyler and a depraved woman. The film involves much violence which is intended to serve as a metaphor for the battle between the younger generation and the structured society controlled by the system of advertising.

In “Fight Club” one encounters endless of brand placement as the power of advertising is a main topic of the film. As a result, many brands are displayed as well as talked about throughout the story. Some of them are Good Year, Mac, BMW, IKEA, Starbucks, Calvin Klein, Pepsi, Budweiser, DKNY and numerous of airlines. We have chosen to focus on Budweiser and Gucci and Calvin Klein since they capture certain attributes useful for this gender study.¹⁶⁶

4.5.1 Budweiser



Fig. 9 Scene from “Fight Club”.¹⁶⁷

Whenever a fight takes place you can spot a Budweiser bottle nearby. It is either placed in the background or in the hands of a man. It is strongly associated with independency and fearlessness; attributes related to masculinity.

¹⁶⁶ “Fight Club” (1999) Fox 2000 Pictures, Regency Enterprises, Linson Films

¹⁶⁷ Prince Pari, 2010, retrieved 2011-04-20 from http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_4SOTweau6gA/TQieE1k8m1I/AAAAAAAAACh0/Hvxvo7ejFhU/s1600/fight-club.jpg

*After some drinks and a deep conversation about how “people only are by-products of a lifestyle obsession”, Tyler and the head character leave the bar. Tyler puts his Budweiser on the phone booth and turns to the other guy who wears a suit with a tie. They are standing in the backyard of the bar, it is pitch dark, only some dim neon signs light up the scene. Tyler says; “I want you to do me a favour. I want you to hit me as hard as you can.” The other guy cannot believe what he is hearing and asks why. “I don’t know, never been to a fight. Have you? You cannot know yourself if you haven’t.” He then puts down another pair of Budweiser bottles and says; “Come on. Hit me, before I lose my nerve.” After some arguing back and forth the guy hits him in the face. He quickly apologises. Tyler however, tells him that it was perfect and responds with a hard punch in the stomach, whereby he begs for more. Smoke and dust fill the sky. Next they are sitting on the pavement all battered up with torn shirts and black eyes. The other guy takes a sip from the Budweiser bottle, gives it to Tyler and says; “We should do this again sometime”.*¹⁶⁸

4.5.1.1 Scene analysis

Beginning with the description of the scene, violence plays an important role. Even though the film may seem odd to use in a gender investigation as it displays few female character, it has an interesting approach to the concept of masculinity. Male emotions and expressions of aggression are channelled through fights, which are clearly displayed in this chosen scene. It challenges the assumption that men are required to put on a manly and strong face, not allowed to express feelings. This is one of the subjects discussed between the two guys during the beginning of the scene. The one who initiates the fight wears a colourful and untucked shirt with a red leather jacket, portraying a rough, boyish and playful “I don’t care” attitude. In contrast, the other man is dressed in a smart, neat manner, signalling a more grown up approach. This is, however, changed in the end, where the two men are sitting on the side of the road with torn clothes, equal to each other.

Throughout the scene, Budweiser is shown either clearly visible in the hands of a man or hidden in the background as a classic placement according to Lehu¹⁶⁹. As mentioned earlier, Budweiser is an iconic brand which possesses certain attributes, clearly displayed in the scene. These characteristics, related to Budweiser, are further reinforced and associated with the characters; behaving manly and recklessly in the scene. With this in mind, the brand is typically aimed towards men as it enhances the masculinity of the consumer.

¹⁶⁸ “Fight Club” (1999) Fox 2000 Pictures, Regency Enterprises, Linson Films

¹⁶⁹ Lehu, J., p. 4-15

Since Budweiser is being heavily consumed in the scene, it can be interpreted as a sign according to Barthes.¹⁷⁰ The actual beer as the signifier and the related qualities; negligence, roughness and recklessness, held by the two characters as the signified features, together symbolise manliness. The two characters are further dressed in opposite ways; neat versus rough, where parallels can be drawn to the myth concerning the struggle of good and evil.

Viewing the scene with an objectivist approach, a struggle still exists concerning the balance of equality. This is clearly shown through the male characters that are given certain stereotyped attributes seen as typically masculine. Men were supposed to put a manly face on, not showing any feelings. In this particular scene however, the fight enables them to channel their otherwise concealed feelings. This behaviour can further be connected to the construction of violent white masculinity and advertising. The raw violence in the scene is rebellious and anti-authoritarian, transforming the two characters into white working class heroes. With black eyes and torn clothes, they enhance their masculinity by breaking social conventions and resenting middle-class manner. From a subjectivist view, the intention of the author seems to be to associate the male characters with certain attributes seen as masculine; recklessness and toughness. The brand placement, Budweiser, further intensifies this.

4.5.2 Gucci and Calvin Klein

Two other placements in the film are Gucci and Calvin Klein. They are at all times placed as real ads in the movie and are restrictively directed towards men; displaying fit and vigorous males in their underwear.

It is evening. The traffic is heavy and the two characters are walking along the sidewalk. They are smoking and talking about the fights. The other guy blows out some smoke and asks Tyler; "If you could fight any celebrity, who would you fight?" While walking, they pass a bus station with an ad; a handsome man with great muscles wearing Gucci underwear. They step up onto a bus. They find themselves looking at a similar Calvin Klein ad. They grin and ask each other; "Is that what a man looks like?"¹⁷¹

4.5.2.1 Scene analysis

The explication of the scene reveals two contradictory views on what is considered as manly. The scene opens with a discussion between the men concerning who they would like to fight. With torn clothes, smashed faces and black eyes the characters later find themselves looking at an ad of a muscular and half naked model. They are harshly judging the man as being nothing than a

¹⁷⁰ Barthes, R., p. 205

¹⁷¹ "Fight Club" (1999) Fox 2000 Pictures, Regency Enterprises, Linson Films

“trained monkey”; “Is that what a man looks like?” Their grinning faces reveal contempt and disapproval. In their eyes, the ad displays a person who lacks authority and dignity; the opposite to manliness.

In this scene, the brand placements Gucci and Calvin Klein clearly differ from the rest. Instead of being consumed or used as a prop, the placements are translated as real ads in the film, selling male underwear. Clearly visualised, the brands are, according to Lehu, referred to as classic placements¹⁷². Through these pictures, attractive half naked men are displayed, associating masculinity with attributes such as handsomeness, vigour and flawlessness.

The characters, however, consider that the brands channel an almost perverse view on masculinity. Accordingly, the ads symbolise the twisted view on gender and gender roles held by society. Similarly yet entirely opposite, the black eyes and torn clothes of the characters serve as signifiers which together together with the signified characteristics held by the men, recklessness, independence and roughness, symbolise an opposite picture of masculinity. By rejecting the norm imposed by the ads, the characters intensify their tough image as independent masculine men.

Just as the earlier scene, one can draw similar parallels between the male gender portrayed in the scene and the occurring power relationships and gender status of the time. According to research made in the UK, men in the 90s demonstrated a reluctant behaviour towards certain roles and responsibilities.¹⁷³ This is further illustrated by the tough, masculine and rebellious characters in the scene. With contempt and disapproval of the gender ideals portrayed by society, they act independently of the system. Once again, one can refer to the typical white working class hero. With their own ideal of men as independent and self-reliant, they revolt against norms and authority. A subjectivist examination of the used placements points at an attempt to display masculinity and the characters as rough and reckless. By showing brands with contrasting characteristics this further intensifies the intended portrayal of the men.

4.6 CLUELESS

This teen lifestyle parody from 1995 takes place in Beverly Hills, starring the spoiled 16-year-old Cher. She lives with her father, a lawyer, in a huge house and spends her days shopping with her friend Dionne, arguing for better grades and giving fashion advice. Her biggest problem in life is how to get a driver’s license, and possibly what to wear for the day. A transfer student, Tai,

¹⁷² Lehu, J, p. 4-15

¹⁷³ Ramos, X., p. 266

arrives to their school and Cher decides to get her a makeover and a boyfriend. During her struggle with helping the new girl discover true love, Cher herself finds her life to be empty. She realises who she really loves and gives herself a spiritual makeover in order to capture his interest.

There are several placements in this film, some of them more obvious than others. Most of the products are food and drinks where light products are being consumed by the young, slim girls and not by the men. When looking at drinks, the most prominent is Diet Coke. Generally the girls wear tight revealing clothes, while the guys wear baggy street wear. Some designers are mentioned and Adidas is featured several times.¹⁷⁴

4.6.1 Diet Coke



Fig. 10 Scene from “Clueless”.¹⁷⁵

One of the brands that appear most times in “Clueless” is Diet Coke or Coca-Cola light, as it is called in some markets. Throughout the film, Diet Coke is the drink of women, not men. It is mostly seen in connection with young, thin girls and cans are even being used as hair curlers in one scene. Generally, the women tend to consume light products and, as stated earlier, not the men. One scene which is typical for the film features Diet Coke.

Cher and Dionne are sitting at school having lunch together. They are both looking immaculate and are wearing fashionable outfits. Cher is eating her lunch while Dionne is polishing her nails. They are discussing if the food is fat free and how to lose weight. Tai comes over with her lunch and Diet Coke for everyone. She immediately starts

¹⁷⁴ “Clueless” (1995) Paramount Pictures

¹⁷⁵ Julie’s juice, 2009, retrieved 2011-04-21 from http://juliesjuice.files.wordpress.com/2009/12/clueless_284.jpg

*telling them about a boy she just met. Apart from the Diet Coke cans which they have on the table, there are other light products as well.*¹⁷⁶

4.6.1.1 Scene analysis

Beginning with the explication of the scene, it is typical for the film that the girls discuss something “important” with great enthusiasm, portrayed as rather stupid. The topic of this particular conversation is fat free food and one of the girls is not even eating though it is lunch time. Instead she is polishing her nails. With that picture fresh in mind, Diet Coke enters the scene on another girl’s tray. They all have a can and start to talk about a boy.

According to the theories of Lehu, the placement is of a classic, visual character, also working as a prop.¹⁷⁷ The message sent by the brand is clear; thin, successful girls drink Diet Coke. It strengthens the images of the characters by being seen only in connection with these girls. Coke has been one of the most iconic brands through time, something which affects the impact of the placement, making it more believable for the viewers. While Coke have been directed towards both sexes, Diet Coke is produced and marketed for women only.

Barthes theories concerning semiotics can be used when looking at their clothes as symbols for success; they are expensive and very fashionable.¹⁷⁸ The viewers also know from earlier on that the girls are very popular at the school. To further enhance the message, the table is full of other light products; indexes of dieting and thinness. Diet Coke symbols success, fitness, beauty and popularity in this scene. Extreme vanity is signified through the girl who polishes her nails instead of eating. It is important to note that the brand is being used by beautiful people, no “ugly” or “failed” people are using it.

With the theories of Propp in mind, it is possible to draw parallels to the old stories about heroes and princesses.¹⁷⁹ The women’s highest goal seems to be meeting the dream man, the hero of their life. In order to accomplish the dream, they need to be perfect in all possible ways which includes dieting and keeping a flawless physique. Their constant talk and obsession about different men further enhances this fact; their world revolves around males.

¹⁷⁶ “Clueless” (1995) Paramount Pictures

¹⁷⁷ Lehu, J., p. 4-15

¹⁷⁸ Barthes, R., p.205

¹⁷⁹ Propp, V., p. 25-65

The objectivist approach link the depiction of the sexes to the current state of the gender equality balance. Differences still existed and, interestingly enough, there was a stronger commitment to marriage than during the 80s. From this perspective, the film depicts a much exaggerated picture of society and its values at the time. When using the subjectivist approach it is clear that there are certain characteristics and values that are central in the film; thinness, popularity, beauty and so on. Diet Coke has certainly helped strengthen these attributes, thus strengthening its own brand at the same time. Unfortunately, this is not without serious stereotyping and odd classification of female versus male. As mentioned before, advertising has a strong habit of stereotyping women and men into certain roles; women are taught that beauty is always an option, even though it might require sacrifice.

4.6.2 Adidas

This sportswear brand is only seen on men in the film. The wearers often try to project a tough and hard image, “street cool”. An illustrating scene shows an example of this.

Dionne, her boyfriend Murray and Cher are in a car. Murray is wearing his everyday “uniform”, Adidas clothes. He is helping Dionne learn how to drive; meantime, Cher is talking about a disastrous date. Dionne is not driving very well, she does the wrong things and does not listen to Murray’s advice. The girls are talking about boys and not focusing at all. Eventually, they end up on the freeway, Dionne panicking at the wheel. Murray tries to calm her down and gets them off the road, safe and sound, although Dionne is crying and hyperventilating. The scene ends with him comforting her.¹⁸⁰

4.6.2.1 Scene analysis

The scene shows the women chatting away about dates and boys while driving. Murray is there to help Dionne learn to drive, a quite manly phenomenon. Unsurprisingly, the driving does not go well, with the girls focus on everything but the car, and Dionne becomes hysterical while Murray takes control over the situation. He is strong, protective and solves the problem, while she freaks out and becomes frantic.

Adidas is throughout the film a visual, classic placement and seen only on men. The brand symbolises masculinity and street smarts, the man wearing the clothes knows how to handle situations like this. This is the strongest and most prominent sign in the scene. Although a famous brand, Adidas is not known as an iconic brand and does not have the same impact as

¹⁸⁰ “Clueless” (1995) Paramount Pictures

many other brands in this study. Nowadays it is associated with men as well as women, but is in this film only seen on men.

According to Propp and his theories, Murray clearly plays the role of the hero in the scene, rescuing his princess, the damsel in distress.¹⁸¹ The hero is on a quest; to teach his princess to drive, something which spirals out of control since she proves to be useless at driving. Even though a small crisis arises, the hero quickly manages to save the situation. The incident further strengthens his role and status towards the women.

The last part of the scene analysis examines two perspectives, starting with the objectivist view. Again, it is clear that there might be some grounding of the story in the society of the 90s, where equality was not top priority and gender issues were set aside. This scene shows men and women as very different in a stereotypical way, the man is calm and extremely collected while the women are hysterical and not able to make the correct decisions. Once again, traditional roles within advertising are shown; men are strong while women are weak. By the use of the subjectivist approach, this can be connected to the directors wish, he or she seems to have wanted to enhance the stereotyped gender roles and Adidas matched the picture of the kind of masculinity wanted.

4.7 GENDER AND DIFFERENCES IN THE 00s



Fig. 11 Volkswagen advertisement as an example of gender roles in the 00s.¹⁸²

¹⁸¹ Propp, V. p. 25-65

¹⁸² Persoenlich, 2006, retrieved 2011-05-02 from <http://www.persoenlich.com/img/news/content/img193382.jpg>

America after year 2000 displayed a great emphasis on marriage and family life, with little evidence of an erosion of these values during the last decades, rather the opposite.¹⁸³ Even though marriage continued to be important, it was still less central than it had been. This, in combination with increased equality, acceptance and ability to choose different lifestyles triggered a conservative movement which valued old-fashioned traditions and customs.¹⁸⁴

As mentioned, during this decade many women have experienced growing equality within different areas such as education, work, in family, and in public life. Nonetheless, the gap is not entirely closed. The traditional roles of women, however, with head responsibility for children and elderly while men were working, are in our modernised society almost demolished. Nonetheless, we still face clear differences in, for example, wages between the two genders. The differentials between the sexes furthermore vary depending on cultural attitudes and religion.¹⁸⁵

The feminist struggle continued and still looked at matters such as political representation, sexual harassment and body issues. It was important to remember that there were many areas that needed a more equal balance, for example there was a lack of females in the political arena as well as on the executive positions in companies, this despite great results accomplished by young women in the academic world.¹⁸⁶ Gender research of the 00s encompassed both female and male perspectives. A difficulty when studying masculinity was that it had been the norm in comparison to femininity, women had been made into a gender since they had been deviating from said norm. Men, on the other hand, had been the standard, thus neutral and invisible.¹⁸⁷

The economy of the US during the 00s put focus on knowledge products and highly skilled professionals which triggered a combination of hard work and bohemia. The new type of people was called Bobos and valued self-actualisation, creativeness and experiences¹⁸⁸. An example of these characters can be seen in “Sex and the City”, career woman who value individual expression and leisure.

¹⁸³ Thornton, A. and Young-DeMarco, L., p. 1030

¹⁸⁴ Thornton, A. and Young-DeMarco, L., p. 1011

¹⁸⁵ Inglehart, R. & Norris, P., *Rising Tide*, Cambridge University Press, 2003, p 10-14

¹⁸⁶ Osborne, S. p. 33-36

¹⁸⁷ Mattsson, T., p. 54-55

¹⁸⁸ Holt, D.B., p 75-78

4.8 CASINO ROYALE

The 21st Bond film takes place at the beginning of 007s career and he is about to achieve 00 status. He chases after a villain named Le Chiffre, the banker of the world's terrorists, throughout the entire film. As usual, Bond drives his boss M mad and does whatever he feels like without listening to anyone. There are a few beautiful women surrounding Bond in the film, but not as many as normally. The early Bond has a softer side, quite different from the films taking place later on in his career.

To no surprise there are quite a few product placements in the film, some discrete and some very blatant. Bond himself is as always wearing his Omega and using Sony products. Most cars in the film, driven both by the good and the bad guys, are manufactured by Ford.¹⁸⁹

4.8.1 Omega



Fig. 12 Scene from "Casino Royale".¹⁹⁰

The most famous brand featured in the Bond film is the watch Omega. Interesting to notice is that even though Bond wears it at all times, the watch is rarely shown in detail. One would probably not recognise it as an Omega if it was not a known fact. It is placed on Bonds wrist on every occasion; when he is making love to women, fighting, playing poker or just having a drink. The most prominent scene with the watch does nothing to be subtle though.

Bond and Vesper have just met and are sitting on a train taking them to their mission, the atmosphere is tense. Bond is looking immaculate in a dark suit and tie, while Vesper is wearing a dark trouser suit, her hair pulled

¹⁸⁹ "Casino Royale" (2006) Columbia Pictures, Eon Productions, Casino Royale Productions

¹⁹⁰ 007 museum, 2007, retrieved 2011-04-21 from http://www.007museum.com/Omega_Casino%20Royale.htm

back, looking beautiful. They are discussing each other, Bond has just finished his monologue about Vesper, talking about what kind of person she is and trying to get her off guard. Now Vesper is doing the same thing back, doing a better job than Bond. The tone is sharp and disdainful; Bond is amused, careful not to lose his slight smile. After some well-placed sentences Vesper starts talking about men as Bond as “former SAS-types with easy smiles and expensive watches”. She then moves on to glance at his watch and asks if it is a Rolex, after which Bond answers that it is an Omega. “Beautiful” Vesper responds.¹⁹¹

4.8.1.1 Scene analysis

Beginning with an explication of the scene, the initial discussion between Vesper and Bond show them as equals in the art of arguing, they are sharp and quick-witted. Even though he is in a serious conversation with Vesper, he maintains his composure and smile. This shows his self-control and class. She moves on to a harsh insult on him, before complimenting on his watch. The fact that she is not wearing a dress further points to the wish for them to look more equal. After an argument without a clear winner, Vesper gracefully withdraws from the scene.

The Omega plays an important role in the film as a sign of exclusivity and great taste, worn by Bond. The placement is of visual, classic character in every scene, except this one where it becomes verbal. Even in the scene where the two sexes are fairly equal, the watch is being admired by Vesper, thus enhancing Bonds masculinity and strengthening his status towards her. Omega is an iconic watch brand, worn by many celebrities and carrying a hefty price tag. This is well-known by most viewers of the film and gives Bonds character another push in the right direction.

Barthes theories of semiotics are useful in this scene.¹⁹² The masculinity of Bond is less visible than in most other films, but his character is still well-groomed, wearing a suit and, of course, the Omega. His clothes and appearance symbolise class and a certain social rank. The expensive Omega is an index of wealth. Vesper’s clothes, on the other hand, symbolise professionalism and capability, not drawing on her looks in an obvious way.

The theories of Propp is not as easily applied on this scene as the earlier ones, the roles are not as clear cut.¹⁹³ One can almost say that there is a hero but no princess; Vesper is not a weak woman in search of a man, she is strong and independent. Bond on the other hand displays the

¹⁹¹ “Casino Royale” (2006) Columbia Pictures, Eon Productions, Casino Royale Productions

¹⁹² Barthes, R., p. 205

¹⁹³ Propp, V., p. 25-65

masculine characteristics traditionally associated with the hero in old stories, managing to seduce women at all times. This is a rather unusual situation compared to the other scenes.

Using Hernadi's triad and the objectivist perspective one can hope that the film is depicting reality in a more true way than the earlier Bond films, which are well-known for their odd portrayal of women as well as men.¹⁹⁴ This film shows women and men more equal than ever before in this setting, Vesper is portrayed as intelligent and has a role in the film not only because of her beauty. She even manages to keep up with Bond in a discussion where they, for a moment, are absolutely equal. The subjectivist perspective shows how the brand Omega and Bond are in a synergy, helping each other reach great status. The watch is commonly seen in Bond films, thus representing quite stereotypical values. Even though Bond and Vesper are more equal in this scene, she still admires his Omega, although in a spiteful way.

4.8.2 Ford



Fig. 13 Scene from "Casino Royale".¹⁹⁵

At the time this film was produced, Ford still owned many brands that now have been sold, among others Land Rover and Aston Martin, the classic Bond car. The characters in "Casino Royale" use these cars, as well as other Ford models, frequently throughout the film. Also noticeable is that Bond or other men are behind the wheel, not women.

Bond and Vesper have just finished dinner after his win in the poker game when she leaves to check on Mathis. Vesper is wearing a beautiful evening dress while Bond, as always, is wearing a dark suit and tie. He gets

¹⁹⁴ Czarniawska, B., p. 60-74

¹⁹⁵ Reviewnuts, 2009, retrieved 2011-04-21 from <http://reviewnuts.com/pic/bd/o/s-casinoroyale09.jpg>

suspicious just after she leaves and runs after her, just to see her getting dragged into a car. Bond runs to his specially equipped Aston Martin and quickly speeds after them, with his tires shrieking. The chase takes them out into the countryside on long curvy stretches of road. Bond is driving fast but securely, looking very focused and calm. He speeds over a rise in the ground, the car lifting slightly, only to notice Vesper right ahead. She is lying in the middle of the road with her hands tied behind her back, unable to move. Bond quickly manoeuvres the car out of the way, while she crouches in order to avoid getting hit. The car rotates several times, finely ending up on the grass about ten metres from the road, wrecked.¹⁹⁶

4.8.2.1 Scene analysis

Describing the scene, one can distinguish more traditional roles between men and women. When Vesper is kidnapped, Bond immediately rushes after in order to save her. She is the helpless female, in need of help from the strong and powerful male. Bond is portrayed as very calm and focused even in this very stressful scene. He is able to make quick decisions, saving Vesper from being crushed by his car, even though it means crashing the car and severely injuring himself.

The Aston Martin has a big part in this scene, it is fast, elegant and secure on every inch of the road. According to the theories of Lehu, it is a classic visual placement¹⁹⁷. The brand has an iconic status, noticeably supported by the appearance in the Bond films. Its appeal lies within its exclusivity and the luxury it is to own a sports car of this calibre. Bond's characteristics are reflected in the car and vice versa; they complement each other perfectly. One could not imagine a car more suitable for the agent.

There are various signs to interpret when looking at the scene from a semiotic perspective, the Aston Martin symbolises absolute control, grace and manages to convey both function and form to the viewer. Much alike the Omega, the expensive car is an index of wealth. Without it, Bond would not be the same and much of his masculinity would probably be reduced. As always, Bond is immaculately dressed in what seems to be expensive clothes which further strengthen his imagined lifestyle.

Again parallels can be drawn to Propp's theories; Vesper is the princess of the story, attractive and sought-after.¹⁹⁸ She has been taken away by the villains, Le Chiffre and his men. Bond fits perfectly into the role of the hero, bravely trying to save Vesper no matter the consequences. He

¹⁹⁶ "Casino Royale" (2006) Columbia Pictures, Eon Productions, Casino Royale Productions

¹⁹⁷ Lehu, J., p. 4-15

¹⁹⁸ Propp, V., p. 25-65

manages to save her but sacrifices himself. The traditional roles seen in many old stories are prominent, more similar to the previous Bond films than in the earlier scene.

With the help of Hernadi and the objectivist perspective, this scene is somewhat different from the above analysed one.¹⁹⁹ Since this depicts a reality where women are weak and men take care of everything of importance, it appears to belong to an earlier decade. It depicts the relationship between man and woman in a way that is more like the other Bond films, the roles are clearly divided. Vesper is in a dress, looking very feminine and beautiful, while Bond radiates masculinity through his elegant outfit. The gender roles seem to be dated many years back in time. One can perhaps better understand the choices made when looking from the subjectivist perspective, trying to place the Aston Martin in the scene. The course of events suits the brand and its image perfectly, the same fact applies to Bond, both he and the car requires a strong scene to be highlighted in. As with many other brands and characters, they help each other achieve a certain image and adherent characteristics. Apparently, Aston Martin is a brand for men, which is displayed in many ways; it is driven by Bond, who is extremely masculine and the only woman in the scene is taken away, helpless and left on the road as nothing more as bait for the man. Once more, the woman has a passive role and is being depicted as weak and dependent on men.

4.9 SEX AND THE CITY

The film is about four beautiful independent women and their friendship, sex lives, and experiences as single women in NY. Carrie Bradshaw, the charming columnist who writes about love and sex, is finally getting married to Mr. Big who always have been her great love. Carrie's girlfriends Samantha; the unstoppable man-eater and PR agent, Charlotte; the dreamer with old-fashioned standards, and Miranda; the career woman, could not be happier. However, the happiness is soon turned in to tears as Mr. Big gets cold feet and takes off on their wedding day.

The film is almost positioned as a long commercial being filled with different product placements. With brands such as Manolo Blahnik, Jimmy Choo, Swarovski, Gucci, Dior, Louis Vuitton and Prada, the film can be seen as women's equivalent to Super Bowl. Despite the number of placements, we find that some brands have specific symbiotic relationships with the film and the characters and will therefore be further investigated.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁹ Czarniawska, B., p. 60-74

²⁰⁰ "Sex and the City" (2008) New Line Cinema, Home Box Office (HBO), Darren Star Productions

4.9.1 Apple



Fig. 14 Scene from “Sex and the City”.²⁰¹

One of Carrie’s most loyal partners is her Mac laptop; another brand placement frequently seen in the film. The immediately identifiable Apple logo is shown at the beginning and end of many scenes. It is practically a character of its own and represents Carrie as an independent writer. Likewise, the successful PR agent Samantha is handling her business with her smooth and stylish iPhone.

The scene takes place on a pool deck with the ocean as background. Carrie, who is without a home after the break up with Mr. Big, is relaxing in the shade with her two friends. Miranda is typing on her computer while Samantha operates her iPhone. “Good news!” Miranda says. She has just received an email from the buyers’ attorney, saying that they are willing to sell Carrie’s old apartment back for the escalated price. Samantha holds up her iPhone and ads; “Now, let us work on getting your things there.” Carrie looks at her two friends with admiration. “Wow, you two could rule the world.”²⁰²

4.9.1.1 Scene analysis

In comparison to earlier presented scenes, the explication of this particular scene and the whole film reveals a firm and solitary focus on the female gender, portrayed as independent and strong; characteristics earlier associated with men. The gorgeous and femininely dressed friends are sunbathing on the deck while operating their gadgets. They are in a rational, impressive and professional way solving a problem. The scene represents power and independence and implies that women could rule the world.

²⁰¹ Cult of Mac, 2008, retrieved 2011-04 -26 from <http://www.cultofmac.com/iproduct-placement-sex-the-city-iphone-throwback/6102>

²⁰² “Sex and the City” (2008) New Line Cinema, Home Box Office (HBO), Darren Star Productions

This implication of power is further channelled through the use of their gadgets. The brand placement in focus is the iPhone used by Samantha which, according to Russell, is a visual placement²⁰³. It has an important role in the film and can in accordance to Lehu further be referred to as a classic plot placement²⁰⁴. As an iconic brand, Apple through the iPhone helps to project and associate the females as independent; empowering their authority. Similarly, the brand becomes associated with the attributes held by the characters.

With this in mind, one can apply the theories of Barthes.²⁰⁵ The brand in the scene functions as a sign for authority and independence. The phone as the signifier and the mentioned attributes as signified features, they together symbolise a new era where women are projected as strong individuals, equal to men. This is further aligned with the clothes worn by the women; expensive, smart and professional, which can be seen as a symbol for success and power.

Concerning Propp's theories, the role of the hero which usually belongs to the man, is in this case possessed by two women.²⁰⁶ This is implied by Carrie who says "you two could rule the world" and just as a hero, the females are projected as powerful and autonomous individuals. Looking at the traditional myth of the strong and powerful prince taking care of his fragile princess, the scene is telling a different story. The princess does not depend on her prince anymore. Since she stands individually, the myth is rewritten; the two fairy-tale figures receive equal roles.

With an objectivist perspective, the decreasing equality differences between men and women during the decade are clearly displayed through the scene. The old portrayal of the woman as passive and dependent is challenged since the female gender is displayed as a front figure in a non-traditional manner. Characteristics typically associated with men such as authority, power and independence are applied on the female characters. The intention of the author seems to be to project a different view of the female gender as more powerful, capable and independent, equal to the man. This is further intensified by having the women operating an iconic brand already associated with the mentioned attributes.

²⁰³ Russell, C. A., p. 306-318

²⁰⁴ Lehu, J., p. 4-15

²⁰⁵ Barthes, R., p.205

²⁰⁶ Propp, V., p. 25-65

4.9.2 Starbucks



Fig. 15 Scene from “Sex and the City”.²⁰⁷

Apart from being a location, almost every second scene involves a Starbucks product. It can easily be spotted in one of the characters’ hands as they run off to some urgent business meeting. One scene in particular, featuring a Starbucks product, captures the woman as a potent career figure.

Samantha Jones, the confident PR agent, is coming up the stairs as her phone rings. A striking sign is shown on the white wall behind her saying: Samantha Jones Management. She is dressed in a smart white dress with a silver brand bag hanging on her right arm. She answers and begins talking to Carrie. While covering topics like Botox and marriage, Samantha enters her office where she is greeted by her male assistant. Without having to ask, he hands her a take away coffee from Starbucks²⁰⁸.

4.9.2.1 Scene analysis

Starting with the first step of Hernadi’s triad, once again the narrative focuses entirely on the female gender.²⁰⁹ However, this with the exception of one male character who, as Samantha’s assistant, quickly makes an appearance in the background. With the woman as front figure and the man as a passive participant, the scene plays with the traditional stereotype roles. Dressed professionally but yet classy and feminine, Samantha portrays authority and power with a feminine touch. In the scene, the women are simultaneously discussing Botox and business which stresses that being independent does not mean that you are less of a woman.

²⁰⁷ Shameless Placement, 2011, retrieved 2011-04-26 from <http://shamelessplacement.com/page/5>

²⁰⁸ “Sex and the City” (2008) New Line Cinema, Home Box Office (HBO), Darren Star Productions

²⁰⁹ Czarniawska, B., p. 60-74

Throughout the scene, the Starbucks brand is a classic placement, clearly visualised through the screen. As the products are consumed restrictively by women, the brand becomes associated with the attributes held by the female characters. These are attributes such as strength, power and success. Even though it is a famous and familiar brand; which symbolises a specific lifestyle, Starbucks is not yet known as an iconic brand. In the scene however, the sexless brand is strongly connected with the female gender.

Starbucks in accordance with Barthes model can be seen as a sign for the independence of woman with the brand as the signifier and the covered attributes held by Samantha as the signified features.²¹⁰ The male assistant, who attends Samantha with her daily coffee, further strengthens women as a gender of authority and independence.

Concerning the theories of Propp and the old myths, the princess in distress is once again turned into an independent queen who can take care of herself. Thus the position traditionally held by the prince has been replaced. The passive man placed in the background may serve as a representation of the traditional princess. According to Greimas, Samantha serves as the actant who through the scene becomes the subject of power and authority.

During the time, traditional gender roles were changing. The modernised society holding increased equality, acceptance and ability to choose different lifestyles is clearly displayed through the scene. With an objectivist approach, the nature of the scene presents a new era and provides a less traditional and stereotyped portrayal of women as capable and much potent career figures. Equal to men, Samantha is displayed as intelligent and in control. Instead of a passive and barely noticeable role, Samantha plays a successful front figure. The subjectivist perspective shows how the Starbucks brand and Samantha, in synchronisation, intensifies each other's associated attributes, together reaching a higher status.

²¹⁰ Barthes, R., p. 205

5. SUMMARY ANALYSIS

From the previous chapter, certain findings will be selected, displayed and further examined. This will be structured and accomplished with the use of the critical hermeneutic approach, bringing the social and historical context from where the material is originated to attention. Firstly, the focus lies on social-history with the emphasis on the referent and the context. Secondly, a formal analysis will be made with the use of discourse analysis. Finally, the result from the two earlier stages will be interpreted.

5.1 THE SOCIAL-HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Looking at the development and connection between brand placement and gender roles over time, context is a vital part and thus becomes the first stage to investigate. Naturally, there has been a transformation in society concerning gender over the 30 years covered by our thesis. The 80s were signified by a general slowdown after a period of progress for the equality movement, women were still mainly stationed in the home while men were working. The following decade displayed a decline in the egalitarian attitude but also a development of so called third wave feminism. Women were of the opinion that there were still issues to solve in order to achieve a more equal society. The struggle continued into the 00s with improvements within, among others, education, work and public life. Many traditional roles seen in the 80s had become outdated. During these decades the sexes have managed to approach each other in many areas and have further diminished the gap between them.

5.2 THE FORMAL ANALYSIS

The equality development in the society can be seen through the way advertisement has been used. With this in mind, a further examination of the formal structure is carried out with the help of discourse analysis. The investigated films and the enclosed brand placements all show distinct indications of the social climate.

5.2.1 The 80s

Looking at the roles displayed by the characters in “Dirty Dancing” and “Top Gun”, we can discover consistent trends concerning gender portrayal. The men in the films are of the same nature, demonstrating traditional masculine attributes such as confidence, fearlessness, independence and power. Another similarity between the films is that the males drive the narrative forward, being the active force. This can be seen in the scene where Johnny firmly takes the initiative to smash the window, controlling the action. Simultaneously, Baby stands in the

background, passively observing the course of events. This display of behaviour is frequently seen in the films with characteristics such as passiveness, virtuousness, prudence and quietness related to the female gender. Above mentioned features are further enhanced by the different brand placements in the films. The most prominent placements, for example Budweiser and Chevrolet, are seen in connection with men, all associated with typically masculine traits. The myths which already belong to the brands, presenting the men as working class heroes, become linked together with the myths projected by the films. In this case the reflections of the separate myths correlate perfectly, thus creating a stronger united myth. Apart from a solid connection with brands and their attributes, this myth represents the decade and the time-typical values belonging to it. One can further discern two separate myths, one for the woman and one for the man. The female myth portrays the woman as passive and subordinated to men, while the male myth portrays men as active and powerful. These myths align with the old fairy-tale structures, with the roles of the princess and the prince clearly displayed. This implies traditional values and an unbalance between the genders.

5.2.2 The 90s

Moving on to the 90s, we can still distinguish stereotypical gender roles in the films. Once again, the male characters show features such as crudity, collectedness, nonchalance, protectiveness and sauciness which strengthens their masculinity. An example of a scene where the man is displayed in a certain light is in “Clueless” when Murray is helping Dionne to drive. While the woman loses control and gets hysterical, the man calmly regains the control and saves the situation. This example portrays women in a way which radiates helplessness, weakness, and dependency of the male, something which is common in the scenes. The brand placements in the films, for example Budweiser and Adidas, are mainly directed towards men, with one exception. The Diet Coke placement is strongly aimed towards women who display traditional female attributes, mentioned above. Once again the placements and the image depicted by the films cooperate in the strengthening of a mutual myth. “Clueless” nurtures the myth about beauty and thinness which claims that beautiful people are more successful. Throughout the film this is further enhanced by the display of Diet Coke, solely in connection with women. The use of certain brands assists in the construction of the myths, including gender related myths. Concerning women in the films during the 90s, the myth is similar to the one belonging to the earlier decade, which presents them as subordinated to men. Likewise, the male myth of this era has not evolved, still representing authority and control. Again, the myths support the old fairy tale structures through the use of traditional princess and prince roles.

5.2.3 The 00s

The films of the 00s step somewhat away from the earlier observed stereotypical gender roles and the sexes are portrayed as more equal with women stronger than before. Even so, the traditional view of male and female still exists although less prominent. Bond still possesses the classic characteristics belonging to his character although slightly moderated. The woman is associated with capability, intelligence and independence, able to match Bond as an equal, something which is seen in the dialogue taking place between them. Nonetheless, with the car chase scene in mind, it is clear that the old Bond with the typical, basic masculine attributes still exists. Similarly, the woman in the scene possesses a traditional, subordinated and helpless role, bringing us back in time. The placements are directed restrictively towards men and help intensify Bonds masculinity in various ways. Examples of these are the frequently seen Omega and Aston Martin driven by Bond. Holding the myth of power and success, the brands goes well with the myth encompassing Bond and his desirable masculine characteristics. Even though the story of the film projects a slightly more modernised gender view, one can still discern a connection to the fairy tale structures with Bond as the brave and heroic prince. Thus the male myth, strengthened by the masculine brand placements, still encompasses power and authority.

With a stronger focus on women, “Sex and the City” displays a similar pattern. It advertises itself as a “feministic” film, where the women are strong and independent, able to lead successful lives without the support of men. In contrast to the other films, the placements are mainly aimed at women, even products usually placed towards men, such as technical products as Apple, Dell and Blackberry. The use of these placements in connection with women goes against the myth of women as unable to handle and be interested in technology. Instead the myth becomes deconstructed and rebuilt in a new way, providing the women with traditional male characteristics associated with the brands. Another example which depicts women as strong is the Starbucks scene, where Samantha is portrayed as a sharp, competent career woman, even provided with a male assistant serving her coffee. This is one of many examples of the status held by women in the film. However, appearances are deceptive and traditional gender roles shine through. The film revolves around a wedding and the man abandoning the woman, thus once again depicting the man as active and the woman as passive. This further aligns with the old fairy tale structures where the princess longs for her prince.

5.3 INTERPRETATION-REINTERPRETATION

Parallels can be drawn between the society of the time and the depicted gender roles in the films. The spirit of the 80s is reflected in the films through the gender roles displayed by the characters, further strengthened through the brand placements. Firstly, the placements are almost entirely directed towards and used by men, something which affects and enhances the already existing gender roles. By neglecting or subordinating women certain signals are sent out, producing and enhancing the values of the time, even making women seem less important than men. Women were not seen as the decision makers of the family and not capable of making purchases, hence not a desirable target for the advertisers.

Entering the 90s, the media was still mainly directed towards men, associating them with brand placements enhancing their masculinity. Women have more prominent roles than during the earlier decade, nevertheless not associated with positive features. While men still are displayed as independent and in control, there is a tendency to portray women as less intelligent, superficial, weak and hysterical. The typical feminine traits are enhanced by the Diet Coke placement, which encourages women to strive for perfection. This further affects the ideals of society, how women should look in order to be accepted and able to catch a man.

The films from the 00s contain more placements than the earlier decades, which in “Sex and the City”, also are more evenly distributed towards men and women. The placements connect the women with traits earlier only held by men, such as intelligence, power, independence and success. The more equal society is reflected in the use of brand placements as well as in the story line. However, even though women have gained ground concerning equality, traditional gender order still prevails. Women have been provided with more masculine characteristic, but the traditional values of women live on. Even though the woman in “Casino Royale” has a more prominent role, there is still a lack of placements directed towards women in the film. Almost all placements in the film are targeted towards men, thus strengthening masculine features.

To summarise, one of our most prominent findings have been the existence of different types of myths, involved in a complex symbiosis. Firstly, brands contain myths addressing desires of the market, conveyed through the consumers. Secondly, films often display myths intertwined with the storyline, either deliberately or not. Lastly, society encompasses gender myths, which present gender roles in certain ways. When observing the films, the above mentioned myths could be discerned in combination with each other. The discovered pattern shows that the myths often are

synchronised; the film myth displaying a certain gender myth which is strengthened by the brand myth. This correlation, creating a united myth can be seen in our model.

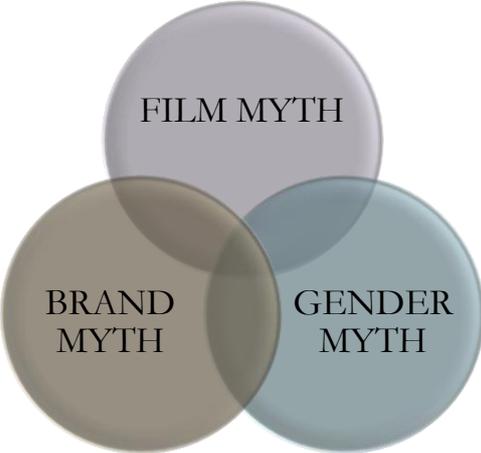


Fig. 16 *The united myth model*.²¹¹

²¹¹ Arildsson, S. and Fahlur, S., *The united myth model*, 2011

6. CONCLUSION

In this final chapter we will, with the use of our findings, try to answer our research questions, present our theoretical contributions and lead a short discussion concerning the results. Lastly, we will point out some future research suggestions which have arisen during the process.

6.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Aware of it or not, media has great power to affect the society and gender roles. Through the investigation and analysis of six films and their most prominent brand placements we have been able to discern certain patterns concerning gender.

Our first and second questions considering how gender roles have been projected and produced through brand placement between the 80s and the 00s was answered in an early phase. Through time, there has been an obvious development concerning gender roles, which has been projected through the placements. From being targeted towards men only, the placements have been directed increasingly towards women as a result of the changing social environment. Before the rise of placement directed towards women, the woman and her role were still indirectly affected by the products handled by and aimed towards men, since the absence of the brand indicates the woman's lack of the desired capabilities. The masculine attributes, projected through the brand placements, have remained fairly alike with a noticeable increase in the number of placements. The women, on the other hand, have been portrayed in various ways over the years. From being excluded from the target audience, then portrayed in negative ways and finally being acknowledged as almost equal to men, the gender roles of women have been visible through the use of brand placement in the films.

The above stated has an evident connection with our last question since it deals with how the development of different gender roles has affected the use of certain brand placements. Apart from the increasing amount of placements, the development of gender roles has changed the way products are placed. During the 80s, brand placements aimed at women were virtually non-existent. The following decade, however, presented an increase where women were related with brands symbolising typical characteristics of the time. The most prominent development took place during the 00s, displaying great differences compared to the earlier decades. For example, it was unthinkable for women to be connected with technical products in the 80s, but in the 00s we can see the strong and independent women in "Sex and the City" handling their Apple and

Blackberry products. As the male gender roles have been relatively well-preserved, brand placements directed towards men have displayed similar characteristics during the decades, although with a noticeable increase in the amount.

6.2 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Our contribution differs from earlier studies within the subject, as they mainly have focused on the consumers from different perspectives. For example, Lehu et al²¹² have investigated the effectiveness of product placement while Wenner²¹³ have examined the morality aspect. There have been studies made on brand placement in relation to films, for example by Seagrave, however few have used the gender perspective²¹⁴. One exception is the study performed by Stern and Russell, which looked at consumers response to products placed in a sitcom analysed with feminist theory²¹⁵. Since the sample sitcom was created to act as stimulus, it did not capture real media, nor the time aspect. The discovered gap is somewhat lessened by our study, which provides an insight in real media with a historiographical view. Our study has contributed to brand placement literature by adding a gender perspective which has shown an interesting pattern. This pattern implies that the use of brand placement encourages the construction of certain gender roles in society. This is further pointed out by our united myth model, which displays three connected myths; gender, film and brand, together forming a stronger united myth. As our thesis is applicable not only on brand placement but on advertisements in general, it can be of importance for marketers as well as public policy makers in order to understand its impact on gender roles. It might further be of relevance for customers, who need to be aware of this social phenomenon as it affects our society and the equality between genders.

6.3 DISCUSSION

Firstly, there seems to be an evident connection between gender roles and the use of brand placement, a mutual relationship which has evolved through time. Through our observations it stands clear that gender roles often have been strengthened and encouraged by the use of brand placement which glorifies certain stereotypical characteristics. Also of interest is the existence of old tale structures in many films, an indication of a less modernised view where traditional, stereotyped roles are encouraged. The impact on the viewer becomes stronger as the status of the brand increases, something which is clearly displayed through iconic brands. These brands

²¹² Lehu, J., p. 242-247

²¹³ Wenner, L.A., p. 101-132

²¹⁴ Seagrave, K., p. 209-212

²¹⁵ Stern, B.B., Russell, C.A., p. 371-394

symbolise certain values and ideals which are transferred into society through individual consumers, thus giving them great influence concerning gender roles.

With this in mind, one might wonder if marketers are aware of the consequences brand placement might cause. One explanation can be that they are aware of the gender roles which they help produce and continue to reproduce in order to capitalise on them. On the other hand, this circumstance might be undiscovered as many brand placements still are used in slightly old-fashioned surroundings, not up to date with the values of our modernised society. An interesting example is the Bond film, where typical masculine traits are supported by the vast array of brand placements. Even though the woman in the film has a prominent role, she is not seen in connection with any brands. One might believe that her character would be as surrounded by brands as her male counterpart, but the possible advertisement space is left blank, thus ignoring a possibly profitable target group.

Irrespectively of the awareness among marketers, brand placement and the way it is used affects the consumers and society as a whole. This effect can generate good as well as bad ideals, either weaken or strengthen stereotypes. We believe that it is of uttermost importance that both consumers and advertisers are aware of this, since an ability to stay objective and critical in the current media climate is vital. With our current social progress where women and men are becoming more equal, we hope to see the same development within advertising and the use of brand placement, something which has been indicated in the films from the 00s. It might be too early to name Manolos the new Omegas, nevertheless they are starting to reach the same level, steadily reducing the inequalities of today.

6.4 FUTURE RESEARCH SUGGESTIONS

Regarding future research within this area, there are several possible investigations to be made. One suggestion is to look at more gender neutral films in order to achieve a more genuine and less distorted picture of society and gender roles. To further increase credibility, a larger study can be performed, containing more samples. Yet another interesting take on the subject would be to examine certain brands and their placements over time in order to monitor their development. Instead of focusing on films, there is a possibility to look at TV-series where the change in the use of placements in connection with can be identified.

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7.4 FIGURES

Fig. 1 *Scene from "Sex and the City"*, TimeInc, 2000, retrieved 2011-04-20 from http://img2.timeinc.net/ew/dynamic/imgs/080521/satc-s03-ep47_1.jpg

Fig. 2 *Barthes' model of signification*, Barthes, Roland, *Mytologier*, Arkiv förlag, Lund, 2007

Fig. 3 *Barthes' model of the second semiotic system*, Barthes, Roland, *Mytologier*, Arkiv förlag, Lund, 2007

Fig. 4 *Apple advertisement as an example of gender roles in the 80s*, Creative Pro, 2008, retrieved 2011-04-18 from http://www.creativepro.com/files/story_images/20080313_SAWG_fg06.jpg

Fig. 5 *Scene from "Top Gun"*, The RPF, 2010, retrieved 2010-04-17 from <http://www.therpf.com/attachments/f9/top-gun-captain-suit-where-get-badge-maverick-goose-bar-scene-large.jpg-34600d1285249208>

Fig. 6 *Scene from "Top Gun"*, Mama Pop, 2010, retrieved 2011-04-16 from <http://www.mamapop.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/tom-cruise-top-gun.jpg>

Fig. 7 *Scene from "Dirty Dancing"*, IMCDB, 2004, retrieved 2011-04-18 from <http://www.imcdb.org/i006964.jpg>

Fig. 8 *Calvin Klein advertisement as an example of gender roles in the 90s*, The Grand Narrative, 2010, retrieved 2011-04-29 from <http://thegrandnarrative.files.wordpress.com/2010/04/goffman-gender-advertisements-rituatlization-of-subordination-kate-moss-chris-kremer.jpg?w=680&h=480>

Fig. 9 *Scene from "Fight Club"*, Prince Pari, 2010, retrieved 2011-04-20 from http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_4SOTweau6gA/TQieE1k8m1I/AAAAAAAAACh0/Hvxvo7ejFhU/s1600/fight-club.jpg

Fig. 10 *Scene from "Clueless"*, julie´s juice, 2009, retrieved 2011-04-21 from http://juliesjuice.files.wordpress.com/2009/12/clueless_284.jpg

Fig. 11 *Volkswagen advertisement as an example of gender roles in the 00s*, Persoenlich, 2006, retrieved 2011-05-02 from <http://www.persoenlich.com/img/news/content/img193382.jpg>

Fig. 12 *Scene from "Casino Royale"*, 007museum, 2007, retrieved 2011-04-21 from http://www.007museum.com/Omega_Casino%20_Royale.htm

Fig. 13 *Scene from "Casino Royale"*, Reviewnuts, 2009, retrieved 2011-04-21 from <http://reviewnuts.com/pic/bd/o/s-casinoroyale09.jpg>

Fig. 14 *Scene from "Sex and the City"*, Cult of Mac, 2008, retrieved 2011-04 -26 from <http://www.cultofmac.com/iproduct-placement-sex-the-city-iphone-throwback/6102>

Fig. 15 *Scene from "Sex and the City"*, Shameless Placement, 2011, retrieved 2011-04-26 from <http://shamelessplacement.com/page/5>

Fig. 16 *The united myth model*, Arildsson, S. and Fahlur, S., 2011

7.5 FILMS

“Top Gun” (1986) Paramount Pictures

“Dirty Dancing” (1987) Great American Films Limited Partnership, Vestron Pictures

“Fight Club” (1999) Fox 2000 Pictures, Regency Enterprises, Linson Films

“Clueless” (1995) Paramount Pictures

“Casino Royale” (2006) Columbia Pictures, Eon Productions, Casino Royale Productions

“Sex and the City” (2008) New Line Cinema, Home Box Office (HBO), Darren Star Productions

8. APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1: SCENES

Budweiser

0:18:26

0:19:00

0:19:32

0:59:00

1:17:34

1:38:31

Us Navy: Top Gun

0:00:40

0:12:46

0:14: 20

0:16:11

0:26:10

0:31:46

0:33:07

0:33:48

0:47:16

0:48:18

0:57:30

1:01:35

1:19:13

1:21:55

1:23:40

1:32:31

1:38:30

DIRTY DANCING

Chevrolet

0.40.15

0.49.36

1.23.17

FIGHT CLUB

Budweiser

0:30:06

0:32:58

0:37:53

0:39:00

0:40:18

0:44:07

1:16:10

1:44:15

Gucci and Calvin Klein

0:42:51

0:43:16

1:17:21

CLUELESS

Diet Coke

0.11.36

0.17.12

0.25.02

0.26.34

Adidas

0.30.43

1.05.25

1.22.01

CASINO ROYALE

Omega

Since Bond is wearing his Omega at all times during the film, we have chosen not to list all the scenes including it since it would mean listing the greater part of the film.

0.15.06

Ford

0.07.23

0.08.36

0.09.01

0.24.57

0.25.50

0.27.48

0.28.34

0.33.52

0.38.22

1.02.12

1.31.29

1.41.57

2.13.22

SEX AND THE CITY

Apple

0:01:59

0:03:18

0:12:59

0:18:28

0:35:05

0:52:05

0:58:52

1:08:40

1:18:43

1:19:20

1:25:42

1:33:10

1:34:42

1:37:30

1:58:23

2:12:54

Starbucks

0:13:17

0:14:49

1:12:22

1:24:52

1:27:35

1:58:29



Characters, as well as plots in films, are often strengthened through the use of brand placement. These possess certain attributes which contribute to the construction of traditional and stereotyped gender roles.

Brand placements – good or bad in the strive towards equality?

Aware of it or not, media has great power to affect society and gender roles. Through an investigation of six films and their most prominent brand placements a pattern concerning gender has been discerned.

Over the last three decades, brand placement in film has attracted much attention. As this efficient marketing tool is used in scenes with characters portraying different gender roles, a correlation between the use of brand placement and the development of gender roles can often be found. This is demonstrated in the films analysed, where certain scenes displaying distinct gender roles in relation to placed brands have been examined.

An example of this is the film “Fight Club” where Budweiser is a prominent placement. The men in the film demonstrate traditional masculine characteristics such as confidence, fearlessness, independence and power. These attributes held by the men are further strengthened through the Budweiser placement which emanates the same characteristics. In contrast to the male projection, women are often portrayed as passive, less intelligent, weak and dependent. One of the brands that appear most times in the film “Clueless” is Diet Coke. The beverage is the drink of women, mostly seen in connection with young thin girls, not men. The stereotyped feminine traits are

enhanced through the placement, which encourages women to strive for perfection through thinness.

The pattern with stereotyped gender roles continues into the 00s even though society has become more equal in many areas. The films from this decade step somewhat away from the traditional roles as the sexes are portrayed as more equal with women stronger than before. Although less prominent, the traditional view of male and female still exists, a pattern which can be seen in “Sex and the City”. With a strong focus on women, the film advertises itself as “feministic” where the women are strong and independent. In contrast to the other examined films, the placements are mainly aimed at women, including products usually placed towards men, such as technical products as Apple and Dell. However, appearances are deceptive and traditional gender roles shine through. The film revolves around a wedding and the man abandoning the woman which relates to the old fairy tale structure where the princess longs for her prince, thus once again depicting the man as active and the woman as passive. This indicates that this advertisement method has not developed in accordance with society and its values.

Since brand placement and the way it is used affects society as a whole, the effect can generate good as well as bad ideals, either weaken or strengthen stereotypes. The revealed unbalance affects both consumers, who are exposed to the placements, and advertisers, who are partly responsible for the development within the area. Nonetheless there seems to be an indication of increasing equality within brand placement, reflecting the current social progress where women and men are becoming more equal.