

IN ONE EAR AND IN THE OTHER: THE NET EFFECT
OF ADVERTISING FREQUENCY

by

BRENT ANDREW WIETHOFF

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
The University of Texas at Arlington in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

December 2007

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my most sincere gratitude for the direction and suggestions from Dr. Andrew Clark, whose help was instrumental in producing this thesis. Dr. Lara Zwarun and Dr. Thomas Christie gave extremely valuable advice and brought their extensive knowledge of advertising and research to improve the quality of this paper. Additionally, I would like to thank Dr. Michael Stefanone, Dr. Marylou Sheffer, and Dr. Sasha Grant, whose efforts to ignite the sparks of critical thinking guided my inquiry to this point.

Most of all, I must thank my very gracious wife Sally and son Cooper, who made limitless sacrifices on behalf of my education and of this research, with enduring patience and grace.

November 12, 2007

ABSTRACT

IN ONE EAR AND IN THE OTHER: THE NET EFFECT
OF ADVERTISING FREQUENCY

Publication No. _____

Brent Andrew Wiethoff, MA

The University of Texas at Arlington, 2007

Supervising Professor: Dr. Andrew Clark

This research used both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to explore the possible effects and functions that advertising may perform in developing individuals' attitudes. Using the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1984) and Cultivation Theory (Gerbner, 1979), advertising is viewed as a frequently repeated, consistent set of messages that reinforce consumer ideas and values. The net effect of advertising is examined through focus group discussion of high-media/high-materialist individuals. Results of the study show four themes emerging from advertising (advertisements as an entrance to participation in culture, advertisements as

a landscape, advertisements as validation and legitimacy, and advertisements as need-generators). Discussion of these themes is presented, as well as avenues of further research in the net effect.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.....	viii
LIST OF TABLES.....	ix
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 A Frame of Reference.....	1
1.2 Literature Review.....	2
1.2.1 The Players, The Field, and The Object of the Game.....	2
1.2.2 Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion.....	6
1.2.3 Cultivation Theory and Consumer Socialization.....	7
1.2.4 The Net Effect of Advertising Frequency.....	9
1.2.5 Materialism.....	11
1.2.6 Media Consumption and Media Effects Research.....	15
1.2.7 Research Gap.....	16
1.3 Hypothesis and Research Questions.....	18
1.3.1 Hypothesis.....	18
1.3.2 Research Questions.....	19
2. METHODOLOGY.....	20

2.1 Survey Research Method.....	20
2.1.1 Design and Collection.....	20
2.1.1.1 Measures.....	21
2.2 Focus Group Research Method.....	22
2.2.1 Thematic Analysis.....	25
3. DATA ANALYSIS.....	26
3.1 Survey Data and Statistics.....	26
3.2 Focus Group Thematic Analysis.....	31
3.2.1 Advertisements as Entrance to Participation in Culture.....	32
3.2.2 Advertisements as Landscape.....	33
3.2.3 Advertisements as Validation and Legitimacy.....	36
3.2.4 Advertisements as Need-Generators.....	39
3.3 Other Research Questions Answered.....	42
4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION.....	45
4.1 Theoretical Validation.....	45
4.1.1 Elaboration Likelihood Model.....	45
4.1.2 Cultivation and Consumer Socialization.....	47
4.1.3 Third-Person Effect.....	48
4.1.4 Customer-Based Brand Equity.....	48
4.1.5 Unintended Effects.....	50
4.2 Limitations and Future Research.....	51
4.2.1 Sample Limitations.....	51

4.2.2 Data Limitations.....	51
4.2.3 Future Research.....	53
4.3 Summary and Conclusion.....	54
Appendix	
A. SURVEY INSTRUMENT	57
B. FOCUS GROUP AGENDA	64
REFERENCES.....	66
BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION.....	80

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure		Page
3.1	Total Media Consumption Distribution.....	28
3.2	Media Affinity and Materialism Index Distribution.....	31

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
3.1 Survey Data Description.....	29
3.2 Media Consumption Data Description.....	29

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 A Frame of Reference

Out of the myriad of advertisements Americans see and hear in a given day, what, if any, is recalled? What does such consistent exposure to these many messages make consumers think, feel, and do? What kind of effect does this barrage have on individuals, or on society?

Although most individual advertisements seem to go in one ear and out the other, their shared underlying message is subtly reinforced with every pass. The frequency and invariance of these messages seems to come from all directions: as you read a magazine, listen to the radio, or watch a movie. Even more subtle reminders appear in places one might have once considered a peculiar place for a company's logo, but now don't give a second thought—such as the back wall of a baseball field or the bumper of a car—these all serve as “system reinforcement” in the broader consumer culture (Marchand 1985, p. xviii). The more we see it, the less we notice it (Cho, 2007)—and the less we notice, the more its common theme sets in: you can solve your problems through purchase (Kwak et al., 2002; Richins, 1995; Pollay, 1988; Faber et al., 1987).

This research examines how this net effect is manifest in individual perceptions of the world through a screened-participant focus group. The goals of this investigation are to discover themes used to describe this effect by relatively high material individuals, to add to the knowledge about this very important socio-cultural issue, and

to enable research and policy decisions through a deeper understanding of the net effect. The next section reviews the pertinent literature and examines current theories and practices relating to advertising frequency. Relevant theoretical frameworks are presented, such as the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1984) and Cultivation Theory (Gerbner, 1979), which are useful for understanding how these effects are plausible. The hypotheses and questions guiding this study follow the literature review.

1.2 Literature Review

Richins (1995) notes that “striving for more may or may not be inherent in the human character, but modern advertising has been carefully designed to increase consumer desire” (p. 603). Indeed most of the literature on advertising from a practitioner's perspective is designed to maximize the efficiency of their marketing messages (Keller, 1993)—put another way, to influence consumers. The variety of different ways by which this is proposed to occur is both wide and variously-supported by empirical findings.

1.2.1 The Players, The Field, and The Object of The Game

Vakratsas and Ambler (1999) thoroughly examine a wealth of research on advertising models developed in modern literature. Their assessment of the existing models and theories is that advertising should be viewed within the context of cognitive, affective, and experiential effects (i.e., think, feel, and do). Various literature has proposed almost every available combination and sequence of these functions, from simple models of ads as signals of product quality (Tellis & Fornell, 1988) and advertising effects on price consciousness (Kaul & Wittink, 1995; Mitra & Lynch,

1995), to more complicated explorations of advertising-experience interaction (Hoch & Ha, 1986; Marks & Kamins, 1988; Olsen & Dover, 1979; Smith & Swinyard, 1983; Winter, 1973; Wright, 1990) and advertising process interaction (Deighton, 1984; Franzen, 1994; Kupfermann, 1991; Martin, 1991; Rose, 1993; Sutherland, 1993; Vaughn, 1980).

Among these, Lavidge and Steiner's (1961) Hierarchy of Effects Model set the standard for decades of advertising research. This model describes a temporal relationship of the above effects, as in: cognition → affect → experience. Advertising is thus examined from the perspective of guiding consumers along this path, from an awareness of a product, to having certain feelings toward it, to ultimately making a purchase. Vakratsas and Ambler (1999) conclude their discussion with recommendations for a more uniform set of measurements for advertising function based on these three effects, using them interactively and independently to assess how a given marketing campaign works. Although a majority of the models in their review focus on short-term effects, even those which focus on long-term effects limit discussion to future buyer behavior and attitudes, solely from the perspective of the advertiser (e.g., future purchases, etc.).

Perhaps the most relevant practitioner-oriented literature is Keller's (1993) Customer-Based Brand Equity model, which describes brand equity as a function contained within consumers' minds. Keller suggests that brands are more likely to succeed if they hold strong, favorable, unique associations in consumer memory. This model is posited, according to its author, for two reasons: first, to assist in the valuation of a firm or its brands in the event of merger, acquisition, or divestiture; and second, to

help increase effectiveness and efficiency in marketing efforts by understanding how the audience considers the brand in recall and recognition situations.

According to Keller's model (and many of the models discussed above), a key to brand recall is frequency of exposure (Malaviya et al., 1999). Keller (1993) suggests that while the model emphasizes the associations linked to a brand, it does not distinguish the means by which the associations are generated. In other words, the higher the frequency of exposures a consumer has to a specific brand, the better chance of recall, consideration, knowledge, and ultimately, sale. While social scientists and critics have often decried this claim as a bane (Belk & Pollay, 1985b), scholars from the marketing perspective have preached this as gospel. Its use in business schools is very popular, and its theory is simple and practical for those in the field charged with developing and evolving a brand. As a result, marketers are systematically taught to generate as many exposures as possible for a brand, given effectiveness and budget limitations.

The most common theme of advertising is an attempt to persuade (Bendixen, 1993; Stewart, 1989; Meyers-Levy & Malaviya, 1999). And to add to that, the vast majority of advertising (excluding most Public Service Announcements [PSAs] and non-profit organization messages) is a persuasion to buy, to invest, to spend one's time and treasure in return for solutions to whatever problems you may have (Marlowe et al., 1989). Perhaps the persuasion is more focused on getting you to recognize that you have a certain problem; perhaps its target is to show you how little money it will cost; perhaps it is geared to accentuate the significance of the solution. Marchand (1987) suggests this theme is consistent even within advertisements that say nothing of a

specific product, simply presenting an image of a brand or a firm's advocacy of a particular social issue—because the whole purpose of brand-building is ultimately to petition an investment of resources. Research shows that the message to *solve your problems through purchase* is consistent across advertising messages (Marchand 1985; Pollay 1988). The things that change from one advertisement to the next are, in the big picture, simply different actors in the same play.

Pollay (1986) explains that advertising is also a purposeful communication: “it is designed to attract attention, to be easily intelligible, to change attitudes, and to command our behavior” (p. 18). Each advertisement is professionally created, finely tuned through research, and carefully timed to maximize its penetration into the mind of its recipients. Details such as color, odor, verbal cues, celebrity endorsements, and brand name cues have all been shown to affect how an advertisement is processed (Maher & Hu, 2002). As a result, the consumer's reactions to these ads become more and more skeptical and dismissive (Schaefer et al., 2005), believing they themselves are immune to advertising's effects. While a single ad may well fail in its effort to elicit a specific response, the cumulative message impacts the very foundation of individuals' values, in a way they may not readily attribute to advertising: a pursuit of consumption as an end in itself rather than a means to the use of products to improve one's life (Sirgy, 1998).

Advertising content is usually seen within the context of a medium that shows a spread of other ads vying for the same audience's attention. Malaviya (1999) and Poncin et al. (2006) report that advertisements collectively reduce each other's effectiveness (e.g., persuasiveness of its central theme, lower brand recall, and higher

brand confusion) by cluttering media and distracting the consumer. Thus their individual messages are blurred together, reducing them to a common denominator of persuasion to purchase.

1.2.2 Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion

To examine the nature of this distraction, this thesis research applies the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) of persuasion (Petty & Cacioppo, 1984). ELM deals with how analysis of a message is conducted by its recipient, if at all, and how a decision is made based on available inputs within that message. The degree to which critical thinking might be applied to the message—what the model's authors call elaboration likelihood—lies somewhere along a continuum between central processing (for that which is deemed critically important) and peripheral processing (for that which requires very little elaboration).

This theoretical model of communication is crucial to understanding the discrepancy between the message sent by an advertiser and that received by individual consumers. As more and more advertising messages are produced and distributed, the sheer volume of communication is too much to fully consider. In general, “people are less likely to engage in behavior that produces a higher level of mental workload” (Wogalter & Vigilante, 2003, p. 329). Therefore most advertising should cater to a lower need for cognition processing due to its short message length (and according to the ELM should be processed easily). However, Haugtvedt et al. (1992) note that “because of the very high frequency of exposure to advertisements, these messages may represent an exception in that even high need for cognition subjects may not be motivated to think about them unless they are specifically instructed to do so.” (p. 243).

Franzen (1999) and Lewicki (1986) suggest that the initial stage and background material, respectively, in commercial message processing is even conducted unconsciously.

1.2.3 Cultivation Theory and Consumer Socialization

One other theory that adds insight to this thesis is Gerbner's (1979) Cultivation theory. Cultivation contains useful constructs for examining the relationship of advertising in media and individual exposure. According to Gerbner (1998), the term “cultivation” refers to individual effects of a single moment of television exposure, in the context of ongoing and regular television and media consumption by an individual—the messages that come through the TV *cultivate* the viewer's adoption of the mainstream media attitudes on various topics, from politics and religion to stereotypes and aspirations.

While results of Cultivation research often support a correlation between heavy viewing patterns and attitudes that are presented by “the TV world,” Gerbner is careful to explain that the process is not simple: “the influences of a pervasive medium upon the composition and structure of the symbolic environment are subtle, complex, and intermingled with other influences” (p. 180). There is no control group—virtually everyone in the United States has some amount of direct television exposure on a daily basis. Thus, Cultivation studies generally look at differences between viewing levels, measuring a “cultivation differential” which is often found to be only a small margin within a given sample. Those with the relatively heavy viewing behavior in a sample are usually tested against what are found as the “TV-world answers” to socioeconomic and political issues.

The wealth of literature dealing with cultivation provides abundant evidence of this phenomenon. In terms of advertising, materialism, and consumerism, consumption of mass media has been shown to cultivate the perception of a materialistic society (Kwak et al., 2002; Fox and Phylliber, 1978) and to increase the likelihood of personal materialistic attitudes (Harmon, 2001; Greendberg & Brand; 1993).

Hawkins and Pingree (1987) studied the connection between the single moments of watching TV and the eventual cultivation of TV-biased attitudes, arguing the “considerable psychological distance” (p. 555) between the single moments of exposure to television and the formulation of beliefs was elusive at best. Their findings suggest mixed support for direct and even second-order cultivation, prompting them to postulate that cultivation is not a learning process per se, but rather, a long-term reinforcement of values through television as well as the surrounding, inextricable culture.

The study of advertising differs from traditional Cultivation research in at least one very critical way. Compared with TV content programming, advertising is given virtually no attention from the audience. This means that, despite exposure to at least 16-17 minutes of commercials for an hour of prime-time television (Getz, 2006), we pay less attention to the things we see more frequently. Additionally, advertising is not contained by a single medium (as Cultivation traditionally focuses on television), but by almost every medium—even those media on the fringes of society whose content goes against Gerbner's mainstream concept (e.g., gay and lesbian magazines, racial minority publications, and so on).

Cultivation theory's recognition of the complex and intertwined nature of media consumption and attitude development is also useful, as a clear and easy cause-and-

effect relationship won't be found in this research, nor in any Cultivation literature. Advertising, then, is proposed to be a single, if overabundant, influence in the myriad social constructors by which we derive our thoughts, ideas, and beliefs.

Moschis and Churchill (1978) propose a model of this process they call Consumer Socialization, which is closely related to Social Learning Theory (McLeod & O'Keefe, 1972). Social Learning studies the influences of “socialization agents:” any person or system that has direct involvement in one's adaptation to social norms through frequency of contact or authority over an individual (Moschis & Churchill, 1978). Consumer Socialization research focuses primarily on children and adolescents, and examines four main agents: parents, mass media, school, and peers. Each of these agents were found to inter-relate, and scholars have questioned whether the effects of a single agent alone—particularly mass media—has a significant influence (Ward, 1974). This question may be a moot point, as our society exists through the presence of all these agents as well as other, more indirect, influences. More importantly, “repetitions of patterns and lessons have a cumulative effect on an individual that, over time, impart [sic] rules that serve as the basis for beliefs and expectations about the real world” (Marlowe et al., 1989, p. 191).

1.2.4 The Net Effect of Advertising Frequency

ELM suggests that as the volume of advertising increases, the likelihood of elaboration of their messages decreases. If a person receives 5 messages, they are able to give more thought and attention to each than if they were to receive 25, or 500, or 1,000—one estimate of the number of an individual's exposure to advertisements in a given day (Kotler, 1997, as cited in Meyers-Levy & Malaviya, 1999; Mittal [1994]

claims as many as 3,000 per day). Messages that come with such high frequency have little chance of being considered; a large majority are only given fleeting attention before being pushed along by the next message (although this may vary for a few specific messages depending on the consumer's interest, involvement, prior knowledge, and other factors).

ELM explains that peripheral processing is based on “positive or negative cues, which have no intrinsic link to the attitude stimulus” (Petty and Cacioppo, 1984, p. 673), or a simplistic sum of “various cues in the persuasion context” (p. 673) that contextually influence the perception and processing of other items in the message (e.g., the product being advertised) (Maher & Hu, 2004). Instead of critical analysis, it means so many of these messages simply pass, as the saying goes, in one ear and out the other, as attractive people in exotic settings tell the audience all about exciting things they can't wait to have (Allan & Coltrane, 1996; Belk & Pollay, 1985a). This is often suggested in the literature to lead to a decreased satisfaction with one's current standard of living (Richins, 1995; Sirgy, 1998).

O'Guinn and Faber (1987) suggest that “the net effect of this may be the development of a false construction of social reality...which is exceptionally difficult to correct” (p. 475). Waide (1987) explains “even one who sees that a particular ad campaign is aimed at a particular non-market desire may not see how all the ads put together constitute a cultural bombardment with an ideology of acquisitiveness — you are what you own” (p. 76). If this is true, and the net effect happens to everyone in the culture who, from birth, are perpetually surrounded by this reinforcement, then we may feel that we are not individually affected at all.

Literature indicates this *third-person effect* with respect to the effects of advertising on individuals (Cohen & Davis, 1991; Gunther & Mundy, 1993; Duck, Terry, & Hogg, 1995; Borzekowski et al., 1999; Huh et al., 2004). This describes the belief that advertising doesn't have an effect “on me or you, but on them—the third persons” (Davison, 1983, p. 3). However, this seems only to reinforce the subtle nature by which advertising affects us as consumers—we accept it as part of the background, to refuse to consider it carefully and instead to simply believe it to be impotent (Huh et al., 2004). Yet, as Pollay (1986) suggests, belief in our personal immunity to advertising's seduction may have more to do with our self-respect than our comprehension of the subtleties of professional, ubiquitous influence; moreover, these effects are hard to pinpoint and single out, “because, viewing the culture from within, we cannot see the forest for the trees” (p. 21). Weinstein (1989) calls this the “optimistic bias,” which Gunther and Mundy (1993) found to be significant when the perceived influence from a message was negative (such as defaming political campaign ads) rather than positive (such as AIDS awareness).

1.2.5 Materialism

Ward & Wackman (1971) define materialism as an “orientation emphasizing possessions and money for personal happiness and social progress” (p. 426) and has generally been referred to as a value (i.e., a guiding attitude) rather than a trait (i.e., a personal condition) which changes over time (Richins & Dawson, 1990). It is often described in the literature framed by advertising, social comparison, and standards of living. As consumers are exposed to advertisements, they compare their own experience (i.e., physical attractiveness, opportunity, wealth, status, belongings, etc.)

and conclude that their current situation is below the advertised standard of living. Consistent exposure to an idealized expectation level, such as often presented in advertising (Belk & Pollay, 1985a), raises consumers' expectations of what ought to be, and “the process by which this information is assimilated is largely unconscious and generally unsought” (Richins, 1995). This never-ending comparison leads to dissatisfaction (Richins & Dawson, 1991), and to the pursuit of those items shown in ads which are purported to solve problems. According to the Quality of Life theory (Sirgy, 1998), those who place their hope of happiness in getting the thing they desire, which will fulfill their needs, become dissatisfied when the things they buy don't solve whatever problem they're expected to solve (Richins et al., 1992). This leads to purchase of replacement things to make one's self happy, which again fail to meet one's needs, and the spiral continues.

Materialism has been divided into two types by scholars: instrumental, and terminal (Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1978). Instrumental materialism is described as placing value on objects as a means to making life “longer, safer, and more enjoyable” (p. 8). Terminal materialism is the propensity for acquisition of objects for the purpose of attaining the image or status associated with them, consumption as an end in itself. Both modes involve the association of value to the meaning a particular object has for an individual or a culture, and the pursuit and acquisition of these objects in order to gain this value (Richins, 1994). Although content analysis has used these themes in examining advertising (Belk & Pollay, 1985b), Richins (1990) claims that these constructs defy measurement among individuals given methodologies available to social science researchers, and the literature revealed no research dealing with these two

concepts uniquely, although much of the work reported has studied the terminal form of materialism, if implicitly.

Theorist and social critic Erich Fromm (1976) described Western culture by way of the 'marketing character', which is the epitome of a mindless, materialistic citizen who chases a circular goal of satisfaction via consumption. Fromm's 'character' served the machine of the 'marketing society', which sustains itself by teaching its citizens that happiness comes only from things. However, the notion that individuals operate without ever questioning their circumstances is inherently fallible, as Fromm himself explains that our human distinction is that we ask questions such as “why am I here?” Fromm calls this the *human dilemma*, which in addition to materialism is also proposed to lead to anxiety, conformity, and authoritarianism. This concept was later operationalized by Saunders and Munro (2000), and a survey instrument for examination of personal traits was developed (The Saunders Consumer Orientation Instrument, or SCOI), which yielded moderate results on these traits.

Richins (1987b) devised a survey instrument to specifically assess an individual's measure of materialism. Seven questions were originally answered with a Likert scale which asked about both personal attitudes (e.g., “it is important to me to have really nice things.”) and perceived social attitudes (e.g., “people place too much emphasis on material things.”) (p. 354). The results of her research indicated a positive relationship with the perceived realism of advertising and materialistic attitudes. Additionally, this study created the first empirical support of a correlation between advertising exposure and a decreased life satisfaction, mediated by satisfaction with one's standard of living.

Three years later, Richins (1990) carefully reassessed the materialism construct “in terms of the motivations, expectations, and affective states that characterize individuals' values with respect to material objects” (p. 171). The measurement generation process undertaken yielded four main factors of materialistic values: possessions as symbols of success; possessions as a source of pleasure; belief that more possessions lead to more pleasure; and asceticism (the belief that frugality is good). In 2004, Richins generated shorter forms of the material values scale (MVS), ranging from the original 18-question format to only 3 questions, each presenting consistent validity and reliability.

Empirical evidence exists which supports the notion that advertising leads to—or correlates strongly and positively with—materialism (Moschis & Moore, 1982; Pollay, 1986; Liebert, 1986, Wright & Larsen, 1993; Buijzen & Valkenburg, 2003). Greenberg and Brand (1993) found in a study of the Channel One program—commercially-sponsored news programs for public school classrooms that were to create the largest captive teenage advertising audience ever (Wulfemeyer & Mueller, 1992)—that students who watched Channel One exhibited significantly more materialistic attitudes than non-viewers. The researchers described these findings as, among their reported measures of increased news knowledge and agenda setting effects, “perhaps the most surprising...given a bombardment of media advertising throughout students' daily experiences” (p. 150).

Harmon (2001) conducted secondary analyses on national survey results (SMRB/SMM and General Social Survey data) and reported mixed support for commercial media cultivation of materialism. Given that some of the questions

considered as relating to materialism from within the existing surveys measured constructs that might confound each other (e.g., willingness to take another job for higher pay, versus importance of family and community ties), Harmon concluded that the findings “fit nicely into with the scant existing research on the TV viewing and materialism link” (p. 415), suggesting that other variables of consumption and individual characteristics also have a significant bearing. In light of this, Harmon posited that quantitative survey analysis may not be able to really describe materialistic values.

1.2.6 Media Consumption and Media Effects Research

Media consumption has historically been studied as an independent variable in a variety of behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs. Among the more recent research are studies focusing on body image (Miller & Halberstadt, 2005), sexual attitudes among adolescents (Pardun et al., 2005), generational and multinational differences (Dou et al., 2006), violent media and aggressiveness (Kirsh et al., 2006), and cultural/national affinity (Smith & Phillips, 2006). Research is conducted in the form of survey responses, frequently in conjunction with content analysis of some media. Most researchers in this vein of study admit that their findings do not necessarily illustrate causation, but only correlation.

There are several studies dealing with advertising in media effects. Schmoll et al. (2006) studied product placements and reported a generally positive view of product placement in entertainment content by a sample of Baby Boomers. Schaefer et al. (2005) examined teenage skepticism for advertising and found that American teens rated significantly higher than Japanese or Chinese teens, although all three groups

showed higher-than-average skepticism. Gonzales (1996) reported on the Mexican Mayan community's transformation by way of the media they consumed, describing the “sounds of radio and television receivers coming from the wood and thatch-roof dwellings” (p. 141) and explaining the various ways that natives coped with the images and advertising they saw. Among the descriptive findings was a rise in the consumption of processed foods and goods from companies that heavily advertised in the region, such as PepsiCo, Nestle, and General Foods.

1.2.7 Research Gap

A wealth of literature exists from social scientists, to psychologists, to anthropologists, to advertising practitioners, which heralds allegations of unintended consequences of advertising in industrialized cultures such as the United States. Famous authors such as Marshall McLuhan, Neil Postman, John Kenneth Galbraith, and Margaret Mead all make bold statements regarding the trouble with this system. However, to date, literature has shown little evidence of the truth of these claims. Pollay (1988) describes this situation, with regard to one government report on advertising:

Despite the volume of submissions reviewed...submissions pertaining to broader social effects were systematically excluded, even though these effects were held to be “of obvious importance.”

The criterion of importance, however, gave way to the criteria of manageability and measurability, a reflection of the prevailing scientific bias. But clearly it is not acceptable for our entire discipline to avoid addressing questions merely because certain

constructs are difficult to measure. Many of the most important aspects of life elude simple measurement. Indeed, measurability may be highly correlated with triviality. (p. 307)

It is to this end that this thesis attempts to help bridge the gap of knowledge and understanding, to shed light at the individual consumer level on what perceptions, behaviors, and attitudes are attributable to, and exist toward, advertising. This will build off surveys which have polled responses on various basic attitudes toward advertising, exploring causation rather than simply correlation. The landmark study for public attitudes conducted by Bauer and Greyser in 1968 was followed through the years by variations and additions to the two-dimensional measurement of advertising's qualities—namely, advertising's social impact and economic impact. Since then, scholars and professionals have conducted surveys and meta-analyses of similar public opinion data (Zanot, 1981); content analysis of advertising (Belk & Pollay, 1985a and 1985b); interviews with parents and children about materialism and parent-child conflict as a result of advertising (Buijzen & Valkenburg, 2003); and examination of the Direct-To-Consumer prescription drug advertising boom (Kaphingst et al., 2004).

From a practical standpoint, it is critical to point out that this applies to the advertising system as a whole, but not necessarily to any individual advertisement (Pollay 1986). There is absolutely nothing wrong with a company spreading the word about their latest promotions and specials. A firm has every right to advertise its wares, using Plato's classical appeals of logic, emotion, and credibility. Additionally, TV networks, magazines, and websites are within their rights to allow advertising in their medium to offset production costs and realize a profit. And for a company to donate

money to a baseball stadium, having their logo printed up for the back fence isn't unreasonable. So long as a commercial communication is conducted in a straightforward manner, advertising creates no moral or ethical dilemma within a capitalist society.

The problem, then, is not simple. Advertising is okay; and yet, if this argument is true, the advertising system's net effect is the societal adoption of an ideology that scholars and critics have long opposed (Kasser, 2002; Sirgy 1998; Wright & Larsen, 1993; Waide, 1987).

Additionally, Bendixen (1993) points out that empirical evidence does not support the logical notion that advertising across different media has different effects, in terms of traditional marketing objectives. Therefore, though much research on advertising has focused specifically on television advertising (Greenberg & Brand, 1993; Kwak et al., 2002; Pingree et al., 2001), this thesis examines the entirety of the advertising messages across all media that come into consumers' minds. It attempts to determine the verisimilitude and the nature of one's acceptance of advertising, and how it changes individual people's attitudes, beliefs, and behavior.

1.3 Hypothesis and Research Questions

Based on the literature review, this research specifically addresses the following hypothesis and research questions:

1.3.1 Hypothesis

HYP1: Reported levels of media consumption behavior will be related to reported levels of materialistic attitudes

1.3.2 Research Questions

RQ1: What themes emerge from discussion about advertising among students at a large university with materialistic attitudes?

RQ2: How do students at a large university with materialistic attitudes describe their perception of advertising?

RQ3: To what degree do students at a large university with materialistic attitudes believe that advertising has had an effect on their development of such attitudes?

RQ4: Do students at a large university with materialistic attitudes believe themselves to be less susceptible or immune to advertising effects compared to others?

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

In an experimental study on advertising effects, Richins and Dawson (1991) suggest a marriage of Cultivation methodology (i.e., survey) with other research methods to “provide some basis for assessing cumulative effects of exposure to...advertising images” (p. 82). The present study follows this advice by combining a multi-purpose survey and screener and an exploratory focus group discussion to get both general responses and more explicated, thoughtful answers from individuals.

2.1 Survey Research Method

This research methodology consists of two segments of data collection. Initially, a sample of university students from various departments at a large public university in north Texas (n=233) were given a survey. The survey used a 5-point Likert scale which collected attitudes toward statements about consumer behaviors, media consumption, and value assignment to objects versus people. The survey also asked about the individual's media consumption behaviors (i.e., how many hours per week each media was consumed), as well as basic demographic information such as age, gender, nationality, education, and work status. This instrument provided a simple relative positioning of individual beliefs about the media in relation to their personal values as a consumer.

2.1.1 Design and Collection

Data on media consumption behaviors were collected using previous studies (Faber & O'Guinn, 1992) as guidelines. Information was collected in three basic

groups: consumption and materialism attitudes, media consumption behaviors, and demographics.

2.1.1.1 Measures

Materialism measures were designed to assess various dimensions of the respondent's materialistic tendency, based in part on Faber and O'Guinn's (1992) Compulsive Consumption Screener instrument (although the more generic construct of material wants is different from that of purchasing as ritual). Dimensions were measured on a 5-point Likert scale as statements of opinion with responses ranging from 1 = *Strongly Agree* to 5 = *Strongly Disagree*. These included the statements, "if I go to the grocery store with a list, I stick to it," "I like to pass time shopping," "I hang on to flyers, circulars, and newspaper inserts that advertise special promotions," "I am good at recognizing things by their brand names (e.g., a *Craftsman* tool; an *Old Navy* shirt)," "I buy things that are on sale just because they're on sale," "Generic brands are usually just as good as name brands," "I tend to buy name brands more frequently than generic brands," "I notice when friends and coworkers have new clothes," "I like to go shopping even when I don't need anything," "TV news is more useful to me than radio or newspaper news," "The things I buy (clothing, transportation, etc.) help reinforce my image," "The first thing I notice about someone is some part of their clothing," "I like to browse in stores even if I'm not going to buy anything," "I am comfortable carrying a balance on my credit card," "The TV makes good background noise," "I like to go to sleep with the TV on," "I like to have the TV on when I read or work," "I know most of the new movies coming out at a given time," "Celebrity gossip is interesting," "The press makes up great names for celebrity couples," "When describing someone to a

mutual acquaintance, I refer to their possessions,” and “I tend to buy generic brands more frequently than name brands.”

Next, respondents were asked the number of hours in an average week they consumed a variety of media: television, Internet, radio (both AM/FM and satellite, measured separately), magazines, and newspapers. Movies were counted by individual film viewings per month rather than hours per week, and were separated by theater, cable movie channel, and TV-with-commercial formats. Additionally, the respondents were asked whether they use a DVR (digital recording device, such as TiVO) to fast-forward through commercials. Additional channels of advertising exposure (such as driving by billboards and bus wraps; shopping in malls, supermarkets, or other public places; attending sports events, and so on) were not included in the research for two reasons. First, as a matter of consistency with prior research, and second, the level of accurate recall for respondents for some measures was deemed to render the data to be collected invalid. Movies per month were totaled, and multiplied by 2.5 (the length of an average movie) and divided by 4 (weeks in a month), and a total sum of media consumption was also calculated.

Finally, demographic measures included age, gender, English as a first language, nationality, highest education level completed, major, and work status (student, part-time, full-time, or none).

For the full survey instrument, see Appendix A.

2.2 Focus Group Research Method

From students who completed this survey, a subsample of students (n=5) were selected to participate in a focus group. Participants were selected from those who

exhibited the highest relative materialistic attitudes and affinity for media, in keeping with Cultivation research methodology (Gerbner, 1998). Specifically, candidates for focus group participation were based on an index comprised of a mean of responses to the 22 scaled survey prompts. Responses to the prompts “If I go to the grocery store with a list, I stick to it,” “Generic brands are usually just as good as name brands,” and “I tend to buy generic brands more frequently than name brands” were reverse-coded so that a higher response on the scale would indicate higher materialism and media affinity. The resulting index mean was 3.05, SD=0.54, and individual index scores ranged from 1.36 (least materialistic) to 4.32 (most materialistic). A reliability analysis that was conducted on the resulting data for this measure (Chronbach's $\alpha=0.80$, 22 items) determined this index was an adequate gauge for identifying focus group candidates whose emotional, cognitive, and temporal buy-in to mass media was relatively high, given that the most commonly referenced effect in the literature was materialism (Richins, 1995; Belk & Pollay, 1985b). The top 30% of the respondents on this scale were contacted to participate in a focus group. From this subgroup, 9 respondents agreed to participate in the focus group. Only 5 attended the actual group meeting and were all female, of modern American descent (4 caucasian, 1 African American), ages 19-21 years.

Morgan (1997) suggests that focus groups of homogeneous relevant characteristics may provide more rich data by feeling able to talk comfortably with one another (as opposed to individual interviews), and are often advantageous “for topics that are either habit-ridden or not thought out in detail” (p. 11). Based on the subconscious nature of advertising's effects (Franzen, 1999; Lewicki, 1986), the author

selected a focus group as a useful methodology to explore attitudes that may not have been put into words before by the participants.

The researcher determined survey data, in this context, to be ineffective in extracting a meaningful description of how individuals think and feel about (or don't think and are numb to) the effects of advertising. Genuine ideas regarding complex topics won't be captured by even the best survey; but with a live discussion, the opportunity improves to analyze one's thought process through body language, utterances, and facial expressions. Individuals are given a moment to express their mind beyond a Likert scale response or even an open-ended short-answer question. Therefore, by triangulating the study, the results will produce rich data and an increased depth of understanding.

The agenda of the focus group was to discuss behavioral and attitudinal perspectives of individuals in relation to what they define as “advertising,” what its function in society is, what it is participants believe to be the driving message of advertising, and how they believe the participants (and others) are impacted by it.

The 80-minute session was videotaped in a conference room on campus at the university, transcribed, and explicated to examine differences and similarities of responses and recurring themes. The research author moderated the group discussion. Self-selected aliases were used to identify the participants as colors: Turquoise, Red, Green, Teal, and Blue. Participation was explained as entirely voluntary and consent forms and all identifiable information were destroyed under IRB compliance following the study.

For the full focus group agenda, see Appendix B.

2.2.1 Thematic Analysis

Lindlof and Taylor (2002) note that the goal of thematic analysis of focus group data is conceptual development. The literature reveals that the primary effect attributed to advertising is materialism, but this thesis research explored other possible themes to describe advertising's net effect. Comments and discussion segments were grouped together into clusters of ideas that represented similar attitudes and ideas with respect to advertising. Every effort was made to keep statements within their context, so as not to produce statements that were untrue to the speaker's meaning. Facial and physical expressions were recorded when they were deemed important by the author to a participant's comments, whether as emphasis or as an insight into the emotions behind their words.

The analysis focused on group members' expressions of attitude, preference, belief, and cognition about either specific advertisements or campaigns, or about advertising in general. Through an examination of the texts that were recorded during the focus group, both in direct response to agenda items and from the diversions of the conversation, four main themes regarding the role of advertising emerged. Those themes are as follows: advertisements as entrance to participation in culture, advertisements as landscape, advertisements as validation and legitimacy, and advertisements as need-generators. Each of these is described in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

DATA ANALYSIS

The results of this thesis research describe two sets of information: a collection of quantitative survey responses and a thematic analysis of qualitative focus group discussion.

3.1 Survey Data and Statistics

The sample (n=233) was comprised of 131 (56%) females, mean age 22.6 years (ranging from 18 to 53; 78% were between 18 and 23). Respondents who spoke English as a first language accounted for 88% of the total, and 179 (76.8%) called themselves American, African American, or Hispanic—the remainder reported other nationalities, including 1 Cambodian, 3 Chinese, 1 Colombian, 1 Cuban, 2 Filipino, 3 Indian, 1 Italian, 2 Japanese, 1 Kenyan, 2 Korean, 1 Lebanese, 1 Malaysian, 4 Mexican, 1 Nigerian, 1 Pakistani, 1 Polish, 2 Taiwanese, 1 Turkish, 2 Venezuelan, and 1 Vietnamese students. Sixty-four (27.5%) respondents indicated no employment, 121 (51.9%) indicated part-time employment, and 45 (19.3%) indicated full-time employment.

The media consumption of the survey sample was considerably lower on average (6.47 hours per day) than a recent national survey by OMD, which found that Americans consume media 9 hours per day on average (McClellan, 2006). Television and Internet together comprised over half (58.5%; 26.0% and 32.9% respectively) of all the media consumed by the sample. Individual media consumption ranged in hours per

week from 0 on all media to 20 (magazines), 25 (satellite radio), 31 (newspapers), 65 (Internet), 84 (television), and 120 (AM/FM radio). Movies per month were reported ranging from 0 in each subgroup to 15 (in-theater) and 30 (on cable and commercial channels). Total media consumption ranged from 8 hours per week to 215 (over 30 hours per day, which indicates multiple media being consumed at once). See Table 2 for a full list of media consumption by medium from the survey data.

Among these survey respondents, use of digital recording devices (DVR) such as TiVO was limited to 90 or 38.6%, which much greater than the 15% national usage (McClellan, 2006). Total media usage did not differ significantly, $\alpha=.05$, between those who used a DVR device (mean 45.0 hours/week, SD=31.8) and those who didn't (46.0 hours/week, SD=30.9), nor did it differ across American (mean 44.9 hours/week, SD=33.3) and non-American (mean 46.1 hours/week, SD=27.4), or native English speakers (45.5 hours/week, SD=31.9) versus non-native English speakers (41.9 hours/week, SD=24.9).

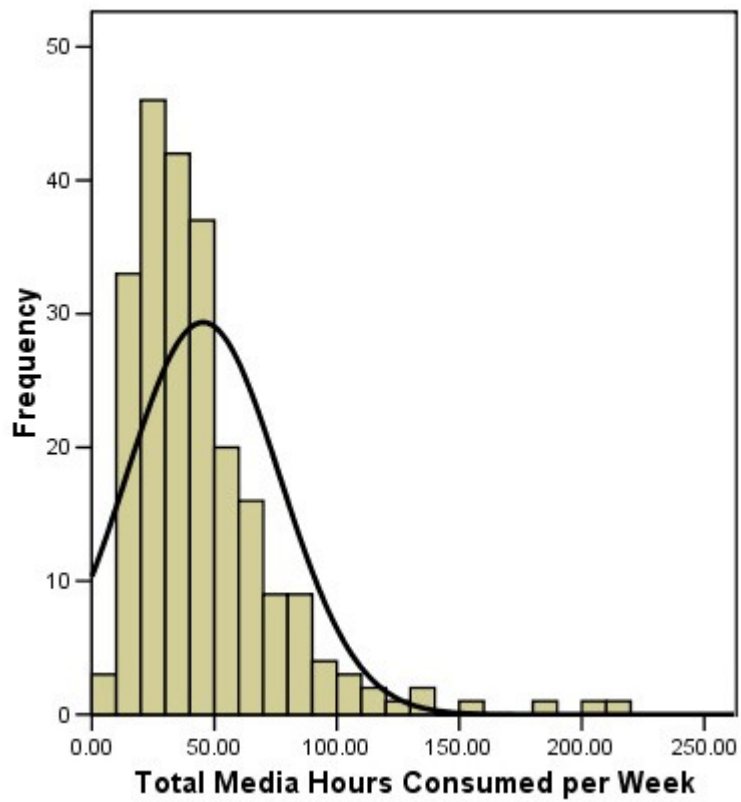


Figure 3.1, Total Media Consumption Distribution

Table 1, Survey Data Description

Survey Prompt	Mean	Std. Deviation
If I go to the grocery store with a list, I stick to it.	2.53	1.154
I like to pass time shopping.	2.87	1.400
I hang on to flyers, circulars, and newspaper inserts that advertise special promotions.	3.32	1.326
I am good at recognizing things by their brand names (e.g., a <i>Craftsman</i> tool; an <i>Old Navy</i> shirt).	1.84	.931
I buy things that are on sale just because they're on sale.	2.85	1.173
Generic brands are usually just as good as name brands.	2.51	1.089
I tend to buy name brands more frequently than generic brands.	2.36	1.102
I notice when friends and coworkers have new clothes.	2.56	1.265
I like to go shopping even when I don't need anything.	2.85	1.515
TV news is more useful to me than radio or newspaper news.	2.76	1.204
The things I buy (clothing, transportation, etc.) help reinforce my image.	2.46	1.123
The first thing I notice about someone is some part of their clothing.	2.76	1.177
I like to browse in stores even if I'm not going to buy anything.	2.43	1.277
I am comfortable carrying a balance on my credit card.	3.19	1.349
The TV makes good background noise.	2.86	1.364
I like to go to sleep with the TV on.	3.59	1.562
I like to have the TV on when I read or work.	3.50	1.401
I know most of the new movies coming out at a given time.	2.87	1.216
Celebrity gossip is interesting.	3.06	1.351
The press makes up great names for celebrity couples.	3.43	1.190
When describing someone to a mutual acquaintance, I refer to their possessions.	3.67	1.045
I tend to buy generic brands more frequently than name brands.	3.30	1.158
Materialism and Media Affinity Index	3.05	0.501

Table 2, Media Consumption Data Description

Medium	Mean	Std. Deviation
Hours of TV watching per week	12.35	12.518
Hours of magazine reading per week	1.89	2.329
Hours of newspaper reading per week	2.34	2.948
Hours of AM/FM radio listening per week	8.63	13.319
Hours of satellite radio listening per week	0.68	2.729
Hours of Internet surfing per week	14.47	11.750
Movies seen in a theater per month	1.84	1.692
Movies seen in on a cable channel per month	3.47	5.513
Movies seen on regular (commercial) TV channel per month	3.18	4.269
Total Media Consumption	45.34	31.372
The things I buy (clothing, transportation, etc.) help reinforce my image.	2.46	1.123

Hypothesis 1 proposed that current media consumption behavior will coincide with an increased report of materialistic attitudes. The generated materialism and media affinity index was compared with the total hours of media consumption, using a bivariate correlation, and found to have a significant ($p=.049$) Pearson Correlation of .130, which showed support for Hypothesis 1 in this sample. While the correlation is significant, the currently reported media usage measurement may differ from media consumption history for individuals, particularly within a sample of college students. Therefore, current media usage is likely to show only a small piece of the picture of an individual's cumulative interactions with media (and in particular, advertising).

Through independent samples T-tests, the index was also found to be significantly different across gender ($t=-5.126$, $p=.000$). The mean score for the materialism index among males was 2.8 versus 3.2 among females, suggesting that a female focus group would be appropriate to further explore the issues raised in this study. No correlations were found between the media affinity and materialism index and any other demographic variable in the survey such as age, education, or nationality, or English as a first language.

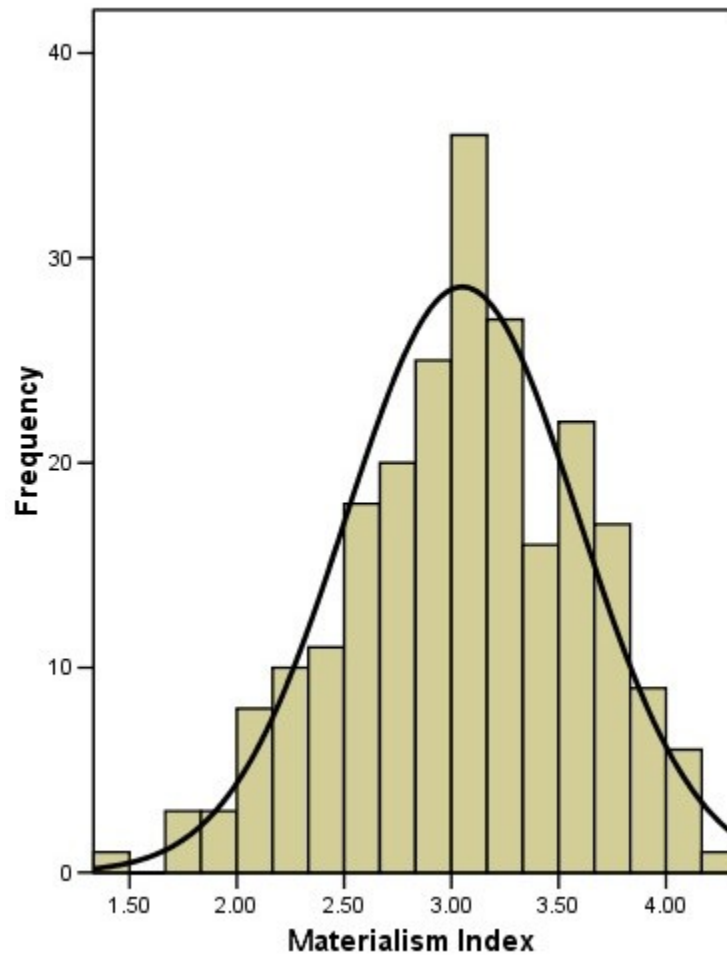


Figure 3.2, Media Affinity and Materialism Index Distribution

3.2 Focus Group Thematic Analysis

Due to the exploratory nature of this research, much of the findings are presented in a descriptive, and therefore non-generalizable, format. This, however, by no means indicates that the data are not useful; rather, they present a rich illustration of current attitudes and a number of relevant issues.

The first research question sought to extrapolate themes of discourse a conversation about advertising would take among students at a large university with

materialistic attitudes. The following themes were observed to consistently come into speech and thought patterns from the focus group members.

3.2.1 Advertisements as Entrance to Participation in Culture

During the focus group, participant's background became a salient topic, as three of the five members' expressions toward the advertisements they saw became noticeably different from the other two. These three members, Turquoise, Green, and Teal, were from rural towns with less than 2,500 population. Their attitudes toward advertising differ from the members who grew up in large urban environments, signifying that they had been “missing out” on something very exciting.

Turquoise gave the most emphatic example of this idea. “I didn't know what Coach was, I didn't know what Jimmy Choo was, you know, other than the movies, so now it's just like—I have to have that; I've been missing out, and I want that.” The small town members felt as if they had been held back from all of the possibilities that advertising and the consumer culture had to offer, given the greater relative abundance of advertising in an urban environment.

The moderator asked how participants felt like they reacted personally toward advertising as persuasion. Turquoise explained, “I think we appreciate it more, because we didn't have it. And so now, I feel like the small town people notice it more; we're a better market, because we pay more attention to it, because we didn't have it before, so our focus is right on that.” Teal matter-of-factly added, “I think you're like a clean slate, so they have more opportunities to grab you, and make you their loyal customer.” These sentiments illustrate that, to those who are relatively new to the lifestyle of being

exposed to lots of advertising (Turquoise, 3 years; Teal, 2 years; Green, 2 months), it was all still new and very exciting.

3.2.2 *Advertisements as Landscape*

Theodore Levitt (1970), famed economist and scholar, exclaims that “without distortion, embellishment, and elaboration, life would be drab, dull, anguished, and at its existential worst” (Quoted in Barry, 1979, p. 256). Much to the surprise of the author, this concept was echoed in the sentiments from multiple participants in the focus group.

The moderator prompted members to describe whether they thought that, in general, advertising had an effect. Teal looked quickly around and responded first:

Even take for example in this room—to me, it would be so boring, if we didn't even have the Dr. Pepper box, or the Papa John's boxes. If you took all the advertisements out of the United States for a day, it would be *so incredibly boring*, I think. You're so used to having all these things catch your attention, catch your eye. Once they were all gone, you would be like, “what is going on?”

The room was, indeed, rather devoid of décor of any kind. The walls were wood paneled, and the large conference table and chairs were simple and nondescript. A chalkboard was the only thing on any walls, and it had no markings on it. The items Teal referred to were packaging items from the lunch provided as compensation for participation in the discussion.

Green followed, with much enthusiasm of an apparent shared emotion. “—exactly, I mean, how would you know how to function? They're on everything—there are advertisements on *everything*. It's daily.”

Red joined in. “Definitely. Just think, when you're on a road trip, out in the middle of nowhere. They don't have billboards; there aren't fast food choices on every corner—”. At this, Green added emphatically, sitting up very straight, with a two-handed gesture indicating flatness, “—it's just *land*.” Red continued, “so it *is* boring, you know. Time goes by so much slower.” As Red made this last statement, Green appeared to have second-guessed her response, or heard her own words aloud, adding quietly “...which isn't always a bad thing.”

Teal described a recent road trip from her home town in Texas to Las Vegas. “...And then—” clapping her hands once, loudly, “—all of a sudden you get there, and it's like,” here, she held her hands in front of her, fingers making a flashing signal, like bright lights, “everywhere you can look—cluster—it's everywhere.” Reverting back to the road trip itself, she offered, “it really *is* boring, and it makes the time go by so much slower when you have *nothing* to look at. And even though you're still in the middle of the desert...there are those ads, every few feet, and it just...” At this, she shrugged, a kind of warm fuzzy expression, and a smile of familiarity, “just gives you something to look at.”

Almost any route from near Houston to Las Vegas (1,400 miles) includes a substantial amount of flat, uninhabited terrain. While it may be entirely true that, after hours in the car with nothing but the natural landscape to see, one may become *so incredibly bored*, it is interesting to note that this was the image selected as the opposite of an environment with advertising. In the Southwestern desert, there is little visible life from the highway except some small plants, cactus, and an occasional bird. However, Teal did not describe her own home town, which she described as “near the

[Gulf of Mexico] beach,” with lots of native vegetation, trees, and wildlife, as a visual representation of life without advertising, even though she said it lacked any real advertising—instead, she chose a place that she perhaps considered barren.

As one alternative explanation to this connection, she may have recalled this experience based on the discussion of being bored, as perhaps the most boring moment she could recall. In this case, advertising may have had an auxiliary role in keeping her occupied, as people generally come up with all manner activities on road trips. She may have made this connection between advertising and boredom within the context of the focus group; this is unknown.

Those respondents who came from a small town (Turquoise, Green, and Teal) were asked by the moderator whether they had advertising in their small home towns. All three respondents shook their heads; Green said rather indignantly, “not unless people put up signs for their garage sale.” This prompted the moderator to ask whether they had grown so accustomed to advertising in their current environment that they would miss it. All responded in the affirmative. Teal explained that in a small town, you see the same things every day, and you notice when someone puts up a new fence; but in a big city, you notice when billboards change. This explanation appeared to be given with the implication that fences were entirely uninteresting, while billboards were very exciting. She then explained that, in a small town, you sit outside and watch the sunset because there's nothing else to do; “that's just what you do.” She closed her explanation with an affirmation that, in her opinion, advertising was a pleasant backdrop.

The two members from big cities (Red and Blue) were then asked if they'd ever watched the sunset. Red responded, “when you go off somewhere, and *there's nothing else to do*...watch the sunset, and it's exciting.” Blue thought for a moment and said, “I think I have, maybe sat out and watched it, maybe once.”

The moderator asked whether participants agreed with advertising being referred to as 'clutter.' Red thoughtfully said, “I don't necessarily feel like it's clutter, just because there's a lot out there. ...I don't always recognize things as an advertisement even though, you know, that's what it is.” She later added, “It's not really noticeable; to me, it's not like an advertisement because it's always been there. So, I may not be influenced by an ad, unless there's something really appealing about it, I'm going to brush it off like it's anything else...I can filter out things, because I've seen it all. Other people too, being numb to certain advertisements and things like that.” Blue held a similar attitude: “a lot of times, I don't think of it as an advertisement. I see it and I like it or don't like it, or I don't pay attention to it.”

Green continued Red's thought: “—because you get used to it, because you see it all the time. I mean, could you imagine *without* all those ads? If you drove down the highway and *didn't* see all those billboards?” She then explained what she believed was a simple fact of life, as if the question of whether or not it might be clutter were irrelevant: “it's going to be there either way—people have to get their message across, they have to get their product out there if they're going to make money.”

3.2.3 Advertisements as Validation and Legitimacy

Focus group participants often spoke of nationally advertised brand names such as Macy's, Target, and Colgate with a distinct purpose of establishing a connection with

other group members. Additionally, participants described multiple social situations in which an individual's alignment with a given brand was perceived to affect their personal relationships, as well as their willingness to try something new.

Turquoise described a situation in which she and a friend were planning to go out for a meal, and the two had a debate about going to Taco Bell versus Taco Bueno. Each thought the other was “crazy.” Teal had a similar experience with Taco Bueno, having never had it in her area growing up. Blue explained that she was unwilling to try Taco Bueno because she'd never heard of it when she was younger, despite having seen multiple ads and receiving multiple invitations from friends. She just didn't want to, because she “didn't know about it.”

Throughout the discussion, every member mentioned some connection between exposure to advertising and recall. Several equated this exposure with familiarity, even if imaginary. Teal explained how she saw this connection: “seeing the ads also makes you more comfortable with it, it tricks you into thinking 'oh, okay, that's fine.' I'm familiar with it because I see the ads all the time; I know all about it.” Red and Blue both suggested variations on “it's all about what you remember” and “it's all about what you're comfortable with.”

Turquoise offered her reasoning behind visiting Taco Bueno over a local restaurant—“because you know about it, and it's not sketchy. You know, if it's a franchise, they have to be doing something right; it has to be good, or else they wouldn't be in business.” She then described one such relationship. “It's kind of a higher price tier. ...you wouldn't want to be seen, like—for me, Burger Box—*ugh*. I would never go there. Chick-Fil-A has a better—it's seen as more of a reputable place, like maybe it's

easier to go there than some hole in the wall...It's more legit” Red echoed this idea, saying “I think, you know, McDonald's are everywhere. Chick-Fil-A is more rare, and the people there are fast.”

Red expressed a similar idea. “I'm sure [the effect] is huge. Because when you see something, it's more familiar, and like we said about fast food—stepping out of your comfort zone—you don't do it, because it's always there. It's like a constant reminder.” To this point, the moderator asked those small town members if they went to local *hole-in-the-wall* restaurants in their home towns. All agreed enthusiastically; Green stated that “their food is like, ten times better than any other place you can go to. The people, too.” However, since they had come to the urban environment, these all stated rather simply that they hadn't been to any local places in proximity to the university.

This aspect of the discussion brings up the first of two critical points regarding advertising as validation and legitimacy: ads may be seen to establish a brand's credibility in the marketplace and to disseminate certain ideas and values, such as status, quality, service, etc. This idea is supported by the literature (Tellis & Fornell, 1988). Within the examples from the present discussion, ads appear to work in conjunction with first- and second-hand experience with given brands.

The second aspect of validation is significantly more subtle. It is the behavioral, social affirmation and connection that individuals make by orienting themselves in relation to certain brands. In a subsequent discussion about Chick-Fil-A advertising, Green explained that she believed chicken to be healthier than some alternatives. She explained, “it's better than a cheeseburger—I mean, don't get me wrong, everyone loves a cheeseburger—I had one last night.” At this admission, several group members

chuckled. Her hand still in the air, as if in mid-thought, Green's next word, after a moment's pause and among the snickers from the room, was “—Whataburger.” With this, she made a kind of *as if it wasn't obvious* gesture with her hand, smiling proudly. The way this was expressed, it appeared later to the author that the purpose of stating where the cheeseburger came from was for the benefit of establishing some common understanding among the others in the room. Her statement would clearly have served its purpose of illustrating her conflicting behavior and statement without the last word—but she appeared to need to explain the origin anyway.

Turquoise explained of advertising, “it's part of your lifestyle now. My friends and I, we'll have conversations about ads we saw...it's a conversation starter, just brings up another topic, it's just another part of your life.”

3.2.4 Advertisements as Need-Generators

Every participant expressed some kind of personal, direct effect from advertising, although the large majority of ads they saw were reported to not matter to them. One particularly interesting response from Blue indicated she believed advertising was good because it “leads us”—which is to say, they act as a sort of social beacon for members in a culture to know where to go. Blue's full statement follows:

I kind of like advertisements. I think they kind of lead us. Even if we don't want them to lead us, I think they kind of lead us in certain directions. I hear Coke and Sprite spend millions and billions of dollars on advertising every year, and if they didn't, everything would go down because they lead us, they keep us, you know, chasing after Coke and Sprite and all that.

This statement reflects an unexpected deviation from the norm that suggests people generally believe they are autonomous (Waide, 1987). However, it appears that all of the participants were aware of the notion of chasing after something. Blue continued, stating later in the discussion that “I think it's a good effect; it kind of broadens people's horizons, they find out about lots of things they wouldn't find out about if it weren't for lots of advertising.” Within the context of her comment, the word “things” seemed clearly to represent products for sale (as opposed to historical facts, or current events, for example). She later mentioned she believed ads help develop fads and trends.

The moderator asked whether they believed that advertising created problems in order to sell solutions. After a moment of thought, Green mentioned “the whole restless leg syndrome thing. I heard that wasn't really real, but then, when you see those commercials, you lay down and you think, 'my legs *do* kind of hurt.' And I mean, there's a lot of things like that—you *never thought about before*, and then you see it over and over and over, and then you think, 'well, you know, maybe—*yeah*.' and then it, like, instills in your mind, and then you're wanting to get that, to solve that.” Teal said, with what appeared to be an enthusiastic mixture of pride and embarrassment, “I *always* have *something* I want.” Green admitted, “I can't tell you how many things I have in my apartment that I don't *need*, but I *wanted* it, because it appealed to me.”

Turquoise had a very interesting, distinct phrasing of this concept.

I don't think it causes problems; I think it just gives people a sense of needing things they don't really need. It doesn't necessarily generate a problem, *per se*, but I feel like it tricks consumers into thinking they need

that. They don't actually have a physical problem, but, it kind of just gives them something else to want, to desire.

Several other members nodded in agreement at this statement. She continued with a personal example. “Like Febreze. I do my laundry, and fabric softener, but Febreze, it gives you that...you know, I don't *need* it, but I *love* it.” Green interjected, with a real sense of understanding, “exactly!” Turquoise explained that she and her roommate used the stuff habitually, spraying everything from carpets to clean clothes. “I don't need it...but I need it *now*, because I've become dependent on my Febreze.”

The moderator then queried whether the group members felt personally affected in this way. Turquoise was the first to respond:

That happens to a lot of people. You don't need a *Coach*; but everybody wants one—it's just telling you that it has some kind of status, and you want that, and although you don't need it, you've convinced yourself that you have to have it.

She described a friend of hers who used a portion of her student loan money to buy a Coach purse. “She sees it all the time, and it has this exclusivity to it, and she's like, 'I *have* to have that.'” Teal followed, “it's hard to have your mind changed, after they've persuaded you to think one way.”

Red offered her thoughts, stating “I think our society now is driven by material things—you want the *coolest* car, you want the *latest, coolest* phone, you want the thing that gives you a status, puts you above others—*successful*, you know.” Teal explained, “some people, it makes you feel *more whole*, to have, just that last piece.” Everyone in

the group expressed similar beliefs, that you “always want more”, and are “never satisfied.”

3.3 Other Research Questions Answered

The second research question examined how students at a large university with materialistic attitudes describe their perception of advertising. Focus group data suggest that they believe advertising is a benefit, rather than a problem, for society. Blue expressed appreciation for advertising that “leads us” and keeps “chasing” after things, suggesting that the alternative would be that “it would all go down,” as in, at the very least, the economy. Participants were troubled with how materialistic society had become, but didn't seem to blame advertising, even if they did verbalize that advertising creates materialistic desires.

Focus group data also suggested they believed themselves to personally benefit from advertising as well. Responses ranged from appreciation for exposure to previously unknown and exciting consumer goods, dissemination of trends, and confirmation of legitimate businesses. Turquoise's explanation of her discovery of unknown brand names upon coming into the urban environment is clearly expressed as a positive personal effect.

The focus group data reveals conflicting evidence for RQ3, examining the degree to which students at a large university with materialistic attitudes believe that advertising has had an effect on their development of such attitudes. In general, most group members stated variations of “it doesn't have that big of an effect on me.” However, one group member said, “I'm sure [the effect] is huge...” and all members

agreed that it did, in general terms, have some effect. In fact, the same group member expressed both of these things verbatim.

Focus group findings indicate that, although the responses seemed impromptu, as opposed to preconceived, their response to RQ4 is affirmative: these students do believe themselves to be less susceptible to advertising effects compared to others. Group members did not freely describe themselves as less susceptible than others, until asked explicitly by the moderator. When prompted, most participants clearly agreed they were, for a variety of reasons including desensitization and an above-average understanding of the premise of advertising. Two group participants suggested that non-communication majors would be less aware of advertising's attempt to persuade, and so would be more likely affected. It should be noted that these responses appeared to be given without ever having given the question consideration.

Although the focus group data are by no means generalizable to larger populations, it appears from only this group that a very important factor in exploring the net effect of advertising has to do with previous experience and personal backgrounds. As Potter (1990) suggests, the degree and valence of media affect is determined by individuals. Therefore, it is critical to consider each member of any sample not as statistical values but as a collection of unique experiences.

In particular, this research highlights at least one critical mediating factor for the net effect for this sample. The environment in which individuals grow up may be a significant factor in how they perceive the world as adults. Focus group respondents from small towns each expressed fascination and interest with the advertising they encountered in the urban environment where their university was situated. The notion

of “I’ve been missing out” seemed to play a significant role in their conscious consumption of advertising and urban culture in general. The idea is analogous with previous literature (Greenberg & Brand, 1993) that focuses on media effects in children, but tends to emphasize the importance of the local social and economic setting.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The goal in this thesis research was to help develop an understanding of how the frequency of exposure to advertising affects individual beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. The following discussion relates the themes and results found in the previous chapter to relevant theories from the literature review.

4.1 Theoretical Validation

These data provide insight and raise interesting questions from various theoretical perspectives. Following the literature, each major contributing theory is examined in closer detail.

4.1.1 Elaboration Likelihood Model

The focus group discussion clearly indicated issues of frequency effect attitude, attention, and awareness (Haugtvedt et al., 1992). Red explained her thoughts on the frequency of advertising thusly: “It's not really noticeable; to me, it's not like an advertisement because it's always been there. So, I may not be influenced by an ad, unless there's something really appealing about it, I'm going to brush it off like it's anything else.” This may raise questions like, *what other kinds of things do you brush off?*, and, *why do you feel that you have to brush off 'anything else'?*, whose answers in turn may lead to further understanding about advertising's net effect. Blue's attitude was similar: “a lot of times, I don't think of it as an advertisement. I see it and I like it or don't like it, or I don't pay attention to it.” Red later said simply that “I can filter out

things, because I've seen it all.” This is congruent with Schaefer et al. (2005) regarding skepticism and advertising.

Additionally, as Petty and Cacioppo (1986) explain, involvement is critical to message elaboration; this idea was generally noted in the focus group discussion in terms of *appeal*. Four out of the five group members described their responses to certain ads that didn't appeal to them, echoing Red's statement that “if it's not really good, an ad is not going to do anything for me.” Green discussed her disinterest in commercials during daytime television that advertised mortgage refinancing, insurance, and other products and services that “stay-at-home moms would be interested in” (being a single college girl, she had no use for these things).

Blue said that if she saw 1,000 ads in a day, she might pay attention to “maybe a handful.” Turquoise agreed: “10% if that, because there's just so much...to me it's hard to remember, because I see so much.” Teal explained that “I'm more analytical about things—I analyze *everything*,” but failed to elaborate on this statement before the topic moved on. Green also argued that she believed she paid more attention than others to advertisements, although she did not explain why, or how many in relation to other figures that were being discussed. These two group members had been in an urban environment for the least amount of time; whether this played a role in their response is unclear, but the question may be important.

When asked about the rest of the advertising—that to which attention wasn't given—Turquoise said simply, “I don't feel like it's wasted; it's just not meant for me.” Red's response to this question offered support to literature from Franzen (1999) and

Lewicki (1986): “I think it's unconscious—you know, you see it, and you're reminded of it, but because it's always there, it helps recognizing stuff—but I don't think about it.”

4.1.2 Cultivation and Consumer Socialization

Gerbner (1998) hypothesized that the content on television, as a dominant social disseminator of culture, would affect the attitudes and beliefs of those who watch it. Similarly, it would seem that the same can be said of advertising. Turquoise's expression that “it's part of your lifestyle now” lends a very real sense to the transformation she may have undergone in moving into an urban environment from a small town. Additionally, Red and Turquoise both used the exact same description of advertising frequency as a “constant reminder” (close to fifteen minutes apart in the discussion), which suggests that they are aware that advertising messages are attempting to change them in some way.

Although the focus group data are not generalizable, it may well be that consumers also begin to count on advertising for more than simply information about products; but also as a form of economic legitimacy (e.g., Turquoise's statement that “it has to be good, or else they wouldn't be in business.”) and interpersonal legitimacy (e.g., Green's inclusion of the Whataburger brand name in her comments about cheeseburgers). Advertisements may begin to be the preferred surroundings, as opposed to natural environment. It would appear that, from a Cultivation perspective, these individuals may have learned to give the “Advertising World” answers to questions.

4.1.3 Third-Person Effect

Through the course of the focus group discussion, the moderator asked whether participants believed that they were less susceptible to the persuasions of advertising.

Turquoise thoughtfully offered,

non-communication majors—the average Joe Schmoe doesn't realize it's advertising, and so they think that they're doing it on their own; it kind of instills preferences on them in a way; it's kind of like the back of mind thing, it's always in their mind but they don't realize it because they don't think “that's advertising, and I'm remembering it.” They don't process it like that. I think it just builds their preferences, like for later on; but I don't think they realize it effects them.

Red and Teal enthusiastically nodded their agreement.

The author noted that most of the speech patterns of participants produced examples in the second-person, such as “...because you know about it...” and “...seeing the ads makes you more comfortable with it...” Due to its consistent and unilateral use, this artifact may have more to do with the natural speaking of the participants than to a significant window into how they believe these effects come about.

4.1.4 Customer-Based Brand Equity

From the discussion, it became clear that the panel members held the same orientation toward brand names as Keller's (1993) model of brand equity. Turquoise explained that she believed advertising's function was to persuade, or at least to make consumers aware of a brand:

I can kind of recall some of the messages, but I don't really know what the product is, because there's so much, and I feel like it's hard for certain products, like Mr. Pibb—it would be hard to get across to the consumer with Dr. Pepper and Coke in its face. It's hard for me to notice the littler brands when I see the big ones so much.

Green echoed this idea, saying that “you see more stuff associated with Dr. Pepper than you do with Mr. Pibb, even though they're supposed to be equivalent. So, it's really about the frequency.” In a subsequent discussion about advertising effects for a national restaurant chain, Green posited that “you might think of Chick-Fil-A before you think of other places, because of the ads. People that run ads more frequently...if you see it more frequently, you're going to think of it before you think of something else.” Red described her take on this process: “I don't necessarily think about the eating cow or eating chicken. When you see the cow, you automatically think Chick-Fil-A,” snapping her fingers, emphasizing the speed of thought, “because that's what it's advertising.” These seem to be pages taken from Keller's impetus for making the case of a high number of advertising impressions: with frequency comes front-of-mind real estate.

Teal offered that if she could buy any car, it would be a “Lexus hybrid SUV.” contending that, “I think they're pretty.” After a pause, and some smiles from other group members, she appeared to need to add more. “And, I think we're sort of shifting towards a hybrid revolution. It's made by Toyota; it's a good car, good gas mileage, reliable.” This further exhibition of reasoning is clearly an example of Keller's (1993) associative memory links about a brand. Teal had a number of ideas about the Lexus

automobile, connecting social trends, personal feelings, advice from her parents, and perhaps bits directly from advertisements as well.

In a discussion about Chick-Fil-A restaurants, Blue contended that “I think Chick-Fil-A tries to take a healthier approach, like, trying to make you feel better about eating fast food by eating at Chick-Fil-A.” This appeared to be purely a perceptive association, perhaps in part from the advertisements, which she and other group members described as “clean” and “basic.” However, she didn't know any items on the Chick-Fil-A menu that were more healthy than something from a competitor like McDonald's or Burger King. In this example, she later expressed that she felt that way primarily because of the image they present through their marketing messages. Whether or not the claim was true, if a goal of their advertising campaign had been to make the association, it was clearly successful for this individual.

4.1.5 Unintended Effects

In an analysis of unintended effects of health campaigns, Cho and Salmon (2007) describe eleven categories of (primary, but not exclusive) effects from the literature. Though their research is aimed at describing a campaign, rather than the system in which that campaign appears, two categories are relevant to the present research—namely, *social norming* (analogous to Cultivation) and *desensitization*.

Both of these constructs were observed in the focus group discussion. Members who had come from a large urban city growing up described themselves as “numb” or “unaffected” by advertising; whereas those from small towns were “a clean slate” and even “a better market” that is untapped and prime for selling. Additionally, everyone

expressed a propensity for wanting material goods, and most explained that advertising played some role in it.

4.2 Limitations and Future Research

4.2.1 Sampling Limitations

The convenience-based sampling of college students has sparked significant debate within communication research studies (Courtright, 1996; Pingree et al., 2001). Critics argue that student populations tend to be largely homogeneous in demographic terms and that student life varies significantly from the general population. For this research, however, student responses meet a critical factor that justifies their use: the phenomena under study is believed by scholars to be similar for all people (Pingree et al., 2001).

4.2.2 Data Limitations

Although the nature of this thesis research was primarily qualitative in nature, the survey instrument used to screen participants in the focus group could have been more carefully crafted so as to allow additional statistical analysis. The constructs for materialism were also generated without the help of Richins' (1987b) seven-point measure of materialism, which was discovered in the literature after the survey had been conducted. Use of this instrument would have increased the value of this research in terms of quantitative analysis of materialism, even if literature showed consistent results that did not support cultivation of materialism in American culture among heavy as opposed to light media users (Harmon, 2001; Kwak, 2002). As a screener, however, responses recorded from all five focus group participants indicates their selection to have been well-calculated.

The index used in the focus group selection placed female respondents significantly more frequently to fit the top 30% of materialistic attitudes. Since the sample size was 56% female, the significantly unequal distribution may be due to any number of internal or external factors. This finding corresponds with compulsive consumption literature that finds more women than men have a tendency to compulsively spend (Faber et al., 1987)—an argument many scholars believe derives in part from the greater advertising spend toward female markets.

The data collected for media consumption in the survey instrument represents a current level of usage for the respondents only, and reveals nothing about their previous history and habits with regard to media consumption (Pingree et al., 2001), which Consumer Socialization scholars consider critical (Churchill & Moschis, 1979; Moschis & Churchill, 1978). Thus, the long-term effect under examination may have relatively little to do with an individual's present consumption levels, and therefore current consumption may not be extremely valid.

Morgan (1997) suggests that focus group methodology is subject to influence from the moderator and/or the researcher's participation, due to the direct and conversational nature of typical research design. However, he continues to explain that researcher influence is argued among all but the most unobtrusive methods, and that no empirical evidence exists to support that focus group research influence is any greater than personal interviews or participant observation. Further, discussion groups raise questions of conformity and polarization—participants who say what they think they're expected to say, or in order to fit in, or withhold or change what might be their normal

response to avoid conflict. This is a real possibility for any focus group design, and perhaps the price of gathering data via interaction between individuals.

4.2.3 Future Research

A substantial portion of this research was an attempt to create a method of understanding the effect which Pollay (1988) claimed eluded simple measurement; to turn the ethereal and abstract concept into something that could be formulated, described, and studied. As a part of this study, the review of literature covered a wide variety of related disciplines in an effort to broaden our approach—still, large gaps remain in the literature review and in creating a more cohesive analysis of the phenomenon. For example, relevant research from the fields of behavioral psychology, policy development, philosophy, and interpersonal communication may also have a bearing on the present discussion. Scholars must approach this topic from as many different angles as possible in order to more fully and objectively grasp the effect.

More research should be conducted to examine these themes, discover additional themes, and use them within research methods to gain understanding of this net effect. The present thesis presented findings from only one focus group, which consisted of a highly homogeneous group of college-age students. Other themes are likely to arise from discussions with other age groups, with men versus women, with different income levels, and other demographic variations.

Other methods may include a longitudinal study with periodic discussion sessions about this net effect, along with journaling and advertising consumption logging. Alternatively, a program might be developed as an informal education system, that forms awareness groups and helps spread the idea to family and friends. Research

on historical contexts, policy decisions, or possible enforcement of protection against such a net effect might also be useful.

McCombs and Shaw's (1972) Agenda Setting theory that the media tell us what to think about, and how to think about it, could be applied to advertising, where what to think about might be goods, services, or status; and how to think about it might be simply "I want *that*." This would be a particularly useful paradigm for examining the *advertising as landscape* concept presented here. Future research might take this approach to examine whether advertising diverts consumers from other things and keeps them focused on consuming.

Further inquiry should also focus on developing a method to succinctly measure a person's previous media consumption behaviors. The overall lower-than-average media usage among this sample accompanied with the same array of materialistic tendencies indicates that current media usage may have little to do with a person's current attitudes. This, in turn, lends further weight to the assertion that the net effect occurs over the long term, and has a greater set of influences than simply traditional media exposure.

Much more research must be conducted to enable researchers and policy makers to make wise decisions regarding society's future.

4.3 Summary and Conclusion

This research examined how the net effect of advertising manifests in individual perceptions of the world through a screened-participant focus group. The goals of this investigation were to discover themes used to describe this effect by relatively high material individuals, to add to the knowledge about this socio-cultural issue, and to

enable research and policy decisions through a deeper understanding of the net effect. These findings indicate that advertising may be seen from a variety of occasionally conflicting perspectives by individuals with high materialist and high media buy-in measures. The four themes observed from discussion (advertising as entrance to participation in culture; advertising as landscape; advertising as validation and legitimacy; and advertisements as need-generators) provide new paradigms for examining advertising's role in our culture.

Advertising is not simply a mouthpiece for those attempting to sell goods and services; it “is also a social and cultural phenomenon that is unique to specific types of societies” (Stewart, 1989, p. 595). Postman (1985) describes television commercials as modern-day parables, with highly emotional, visually stimulating mnemonics which have little to do with the products they attempt to sell, and more to do with how we ought to live our lives. From this perspective, advertising might be seen as a ubiquitous bulletin of rules we should follow. Postman continues:

A person who has seen one million television commercials might well believe that all political problems have fast solutions through simple measures—or ought to. Or that complex language is not to be trusted, and that all problems lend themselves to theatrical expression. Or that argument is in bad taste, and leads only to an intolerable uncertainty.
(p. 131)

If there is a net effect, what can we as a culture, or as individuals, do to counteract it? As many suggest, education is paramount (Postman, 1985; Buijzen & Valkenburg, 2003; Richins, 1995). Chances are, the greater awareness you have of the

process, the more resistant you can become to the net effect. While some research suggests that advertising professionals, such as copywriters and art directors, responded much differently to a set of commercials from a group of consumers (Young, 2000), other recent findings (Livingstone and Helsler, 2006) establish that while media literacy increases with age, advertising which targets a specific age group is designed to meet their level of understanding. For adults, those who are cognizant of the system have the ability to be more savvy with its messages—not immune, but perhaps less susceptible.

Marsha Richins (1995) offers another suggestion. Advertising's answer to the question of how to satisfy one's self is “more stuff” (p. 604). While this answer is not likely to disappear, we ought to generate a “greater variety of answers about what brings happiness” (p. 604). The dissemination of these alternatives (e.g., family and interpersonal relationships) might be most effective through the use of television, using reasonably average, identifiable characters and presenting in the context of regular programming, and other formats that (unlike advertising) have the time to tell a story.

We must honestly assess, both as individuals and as a society, what we are doing in our lives. As Dewey (1930) explains, “the thing actually at stake in any serious deliberation is not a difference of quantity (as utilitarianism would have us believe), but what kind of person one is to become, what sort of self is in the making, what kind of a world is making” (p. 202).

APPENDIX A

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

INFORMED CONSENT

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Brent Wiethoff

TITLE OF PROJECT: Net Effect of Advertising Frequency

INTRODUCTION: You are being asked to participate in a research study. Your participation is voluntary. Please ask questions if there is anything you do not understand.

PURPOSE: Study in media usage behaviors and attitudes.

DURATION: 20 minutes to complete this survey, optional 1-hour focus group meeting from a few selected respondents (at a later date).

PROCEDURES: This research requires only that respondents fill out a survey. From the results of the survey, a total of approximately 8 individuals will be asked to participate in a focus group discussing the issue of media usage at a later date. The focus group will be video taped for transcription purposes. All identifiable data will only be used to contact individuals about the focus group, and will subsequently be destroyed.

POSSIBLE BENEFITS: This study is aimed at examining individual responses to messages in media, and increasing awareness of effects these messages may have.

COMPENSATION: Survey respondents will not receive compensation for completing the survey. Focus group participants will receive a free meal (i.e., pizza and soft drinks) as compensation for their time and effort.

POSSIBLE RISKS/DISCOMFORTS: It is possible that focus group participants may become uncomfortable as a result of the sharing of different views about media usage attitudes with others.

ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES/TREATMENTS: This survey and focus group research has no alternative procedures.

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE STUDY: You may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits, to which you are otherwise entitled.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: We expect 500 participants to enroll in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Every effort will be made to protect any personally identifiable information collected during this research, and such information will only be used for the express purpose of

contacting survey respondents to follow-up in a focus group participation. Following the focus group, all personal information will be destroyed.

If in the unlikely event it becomes necessary for the Institutional Review Board to review your research records, then The University of Texas at Arlington will protect the confidentiality of those records to the extent permitted by law. Your research records will not be released without your consent unless required by law or a court order. The data resulting from your participation may be made available to other researchers in the future for research purposes not detailed within this consent form. In these cases, the data will contain no identifying information that could associate you with it, or with your participation in any study.

The focus group session will be videotaped. Cassettes will be coded so that no personally identifying information is visible on them, and will be kept in a secure place (e.g., a locked file cabinet in the investigator's home). Cassettes will be viewed only for research purposes by the investigator and his or her associates, and will be erased following transcription and coding.

CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS:

Questions about this research or your rights as a research subject may be directed to Brent Wiethoff at (940) 228-4622. You may contact Brent Wiethoff at (940) 228-4622 in the event of a research-related injury to the subject.

CONSENT:

Signatures:

As a representative of this study, I have explained the purpose, the procedures, the benefits, and the risks that are involved in this research study:

Signature and printed name of principal investigator or person obtaining consent Date

By signing below, you confirm that you have read or had this document read to you. You have been informed about this study's purpose, procedures, possible benefits and risks, and you have received a copy of this form. You have been given the opportunity to ask questions before you sign, and you have been told that you can ask other questions at any time.

You voluntarily agree to participate in this study. By signing this form, you are not waiving any of your legal rights. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled, and the you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits, to which you are otherwise entitled.

Signature: _____ Date: _____
Printed Name: _____ [] I **do not wish** to be contacted for participation in
Phone: _____ a focus group.
Email: _____

Your name and contact information will only be used to contact you to participate in a focus group.

Please answer the following questions by circling the answer that best describes how you *agree or disagree* with each statement.

Question	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. If I go to the grocery store with a list, I stick to it.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I like to pass time shopping.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I hang on to flyers, circulars, and newspaper inserts that advertise special promotions.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am good at recognizing things by their brand names (e.g., a <i>Craftsman</i> tool; an <i>Old Navy</i> shirt).	1	2	3	4	5
5. I buy things that are on sale just because they're on sale.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Generic brands are usually just as good as name brands.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I tend to buy name brands more frequently than generic brands.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I notice when friends and coworkers have new clothes.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I like to go shopping even when I don't need anything.	1	2	3	4	5
10. TV news is more useful to me than radio or newspaper news.	1	2	3	4	5
11. The things I buy (clothing, transportation, etc.) help reinforce my image.	1	2	3	4	5
12. The first thing I notice about someone is some part of their clothing.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I like to browse in stores even if I'm not going to buy anything.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I am comfortable carrying a balance on my credit card.	1	2	3	4	5
15. The TV makes good background noise.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I like to go to sleep with the TV on.	1	2	3	4	5

17. I like to have the TV on when I read or work.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I know most of the new movies coming out at a given time.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Celebrity gossip is interesting.	1	2	3	4	5
20. The press makes up great names for celebrity couples.	1	2	3	4	5
21. When describing someone to a mutual acquaintance, I refer to their possessions.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I tend to buy generic brands more frequently than name brands.	1	2	3	4	5

For the following questions, please fill in or mark the response that most closely describes your *media usage behavior*.

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| 23. Number of hours in an average week I watch TV : | |
| 24. Number of hours in an average week I read magazines : | |
| 25. Number of hours in an average week I read the newspaper : | |
| 26. Number of hours in an average week I listen to the AM/FM radio : | |
| 27. Number of hours in an average week I listen to the satellite radio : | |
| 28. Number of hours in an average week I surf the Internet : | |
| 29. Number of movies I watch in a theater in an average month: | |
| 30. Number of movies I watch on a cable movie channel (e.g., HBO) in an average month: | |
| 31. Number of movies I watch on TV (with commercials) in an average month: | |
| 32. I have a DVR (TiVo or similar) and fast-forward through commercials. | [] YES [] NO |

Please fill in the following *information about yourself*. All answers are kept confidential and will not be used to identify individuals.

33. Age: *please fill in*

34. Gender: Male Female

35. English is your first language: Yes No

36. Nationality: *please fill in*

37. Highest education achieved:

- Some high school
- High school diploma or equivalent
- Some undergraduate work
- Bachelor's degree
- Some graduate work
- Master's degree
- Some post-graduate work
- Doctorate degree

38. Major (if applicable): *please fill in*

39. Work status:

- Student
- Part-time employment
- Full-time employment
- No occupation

Thank you for taking the time to help with this research project. Please return your survey to the research team.

APPENDIX B

FOCUS GROUP AGENDA

Agenda: Focus Group

Goal- to examine the reasoning behind the reported behavior of those who exhibit heavy consumerist attitudes, and to drive at some critical analysis of the industry and the messages it produces, and how these may encourage consumerism.

What do you shop for? Why do you want those things? Where do you find out about those things?

How much information do you feel like you receive from media about the things you buy? What kind of information?

What do you think about the advertisements for the products you buy? How effective do you think they are? Why?

How effective do you think advertising is, in general? In what ways is it effective? Does it make people buy? Does it *make* them do anything? What does it do?

Do you feel that some advertising should be censored (e.g., some advertising for kids; cigarettes, beer, prescription drugs)? Why?

Do you think some groups (e.g., children, elderly, etc.) are more vulnerable to advertising than you are? Why?

In general, do you feel that others are more susceptible to the ploys of advertising than you are? Why?

Do you try to shield yourself from advertising? Do you ignore it?

What kind of message does advertising, in general, send? Is this message effective? Why?

REFERENCES

Abbarno, G. J. M. (2001). Huckstering in the Classroom: Limits to Corporate Social Responsibility. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 32, p. 179-189.

Allan, K., and Coltrane, S. (1996). Gender Displaying TV Commercials. *Sex Roles*, 35, p. 185-203.

Balasubramanian, Siva K. (1994). Beyond Advertising and Publicity: Hybrid Messages and Public Policy Issues. *Journal of Advertising*, 23(4), p. 29-46.

Belk, Russell W. and Pollay, Richard W. (1985a). Materialism and Magazine Advertising During the Twentieth Century. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 12(1), p. 394-8.

Belk, Russel W. and Pollay, Richard W. (1985b). Materialism and Status Appeals in Japanese and US Print Advertising. *International Marketing Review*, 2(4), p. 38-47.

Bendixen, Mike T. (1993). Advertising Effects and Effectiveness. *European Journal of Marketing*, 27(10), p. 19-32.

Borzekowski, Dina L. G., Flora, June A., Feighery, Ellen, and Schooler, Caroline (1999). The Perceived Influence of Cigarette Advertisements and Smoking Susceptibility Among Seventh Graders. *Journal of Health Communication*, 4(2), p. 105-118.

Buijzen, Moniek, and Valkenburg, Patti M. (2003). The Unintended Effects of Television Advertising: A Parent-Child Survey. *Communication Research*, 30(5), p. 483-503.

Cacioppo, John T. and Petty, Richard E. (1980). Persuasiveness of Communications Is Affected by Exposure Frequency and Message Quality: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis of Persisting Attitude Change. *Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, 3(1), p. 97-122.

Cacioppo, John T., and Petty, Richard E. (1984). The Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 11(1), p. 673-675.

Cacioppo, John T., and Petty, Richard E. (1989). Effects of message Repetition on Argument Processing, Recall, and Persuasion. *Basic & Applied Social Psychology*, 10(1), p3-12.

Cialdini, Robert B., Petty, Richard E., and Cacioppo, John T. (1982). Attitude and Attitude Change. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 32, p. 357-404.

Chang, Chingching (2002). Self-Congruency as a Cue in Different Advertising-Processing Contexts. *Communication Research*, 29(5), p. 503-537.

Cho, Hyunyi, and Salmon, Charles T. (2007). Unintended Effects of Health Communication Campaigns. *Journal of Communication*, 57(2), p. 293-317.

Churchill, Gilbert A. Jr., and Moschis, George P. (1979). Television and Interpersonal Influences on Adolescent Consumer Learning. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 6(1), p.23-34.

Cohen, Jeremy and Davis, Robert G. (1991). Third-Person Effects and the Differential Impact in Negative Political Advertising. *Journalism Quarterly*, 68(4), p. 680-688.

Courtright, J. A. (1996). Rationally Thinking About Nonprobability. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 40(3), p. 414-421.

Davison, W. P. (1983). The Third-Person Effect in Communication. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 47, 1-15.

Deighton, John (1984). The Interaction of Advertising and Evidence. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 11(3), p. 763-70.

Dewey, John (1930). *Human Nature and Conduct*. Random House, New York.

Dijkstra, Jaap J. (1999). User Agreement With Incorrect Expert System Advice. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 18(6), p. 399-411.

Dou, Wenyu, Wang, Guangping, and Zhou, Nan (2006). Generational Differences in Media Consumption Patterns of Chinese Generation X Consumers. *Journal of Advertising*, 35(2), p. 101-110.

Duck, Julie M., Terry, Deborah J., and Hogg, Michael A. (1995). The Perceived Influence of AIDS Advertising: Third-Person Effects in the Context of Positive Media Content. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 17(3), p. 305-325.

Faber, Ronald J. and O'Guinn, Thomas C. (1992). A Clinical Screener for Compulsive Buying. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 19(3), p.459-469.

Faber, Ronald J., O'Guinn, Thomas C., and Krych, Raymond (1987). Compulsive Consumption. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 14(1), p.132-5.

Fox, S., and Phyllis, W. (1978). Television Viewing and the Perception of Affluence. *Sociology Quarterly*, 19(1), 103-112.

Franzen, Giep (1994), *Advertising Effectiveness*. NTC, London.

Franzen, Giep (1999). *Brands and Advertising*. Admap Publications, Oxfordshire.

Fromm, Erich (1976). *To Have or to Be?* Harper and Row, New York.

Fuqua, Joy V. (2002). 'Ask Your Doctor About ...': Direct-To-Consumer Prescription Drug Advertising and the HIV/AIDS Medical Marketplace. *Cultural Studies*, 16(5), p. 650-673.

Gerbner, George (1998). Cultivation Analysis: An Overview. *Mass Communication & Society*, 1(3/4), p. 175-194.

Gerbner, George, Gross, L., Signorielli, N., Morgan, M., and Jackson-Beeck, M. (1979). The Demonstration of Power: Violence Profile No. 10. *Journal of Communication*, 30(1), p. 37-47.

Getz, Matt (2006). Drowned in Advertising Clutter: The Case for Regulation Ad Time on Television. *Georgetown Law Journal*, 94(4), p. 1229-?.

Gonzales, Henry Geddes (1996). Mass Media and Cultural Identity Among the Yucatec Maya: the Constitution of Global, National, and Local Subjects. *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*, 15, p. 131-153.

Gunther, A. C., and Mundy, P. (1993). Biased Optimism and the Third-Person Effect. *Journalism Quarterly*, 70(1), p. 58-67.

Harmon, Mark D. (2001). Affluenza: Television Use and Cultivation of Materialism. *Mass Communication & Society*, 4(4), p.405-418.

Haugtvedt, Curtis P., Petty, Richard E., and Cacioppo, John T. (1992). Need for Cognition and Advertising: Understanding the Role of Personality Variables in Consumer Behavior. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 7(3), p. 239-260.

Haugtvedt, Curt, Petty, Richard E., Cacioppo, John T., and Steidley, Theresa (1988). Personality and Ad Effectiveness: Exploring the Utility of Need for Cognition. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 15(1), p. 209-212.

Hawkins, Robert P., Pingree, Suzanne, and Adler, Ilya (1987). Searching for Cognitive Processes in the Cultivation Effect: Adult and Adolescent Samples in the United States and Australia. *Human Communication Research*, 13(4), p. 553-577.

Hoch, Stephen J. and Ha, Young-Won (1986). Consumer Learning: Advertising and the Ambiguity of Product Experience. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 13(2), p. 221-233.

Huh, Jisu, Delorme, Denise E. and Reid, Leonard N. (2004). The Case of Direct-to-Consumer Prescription Drug Advertising: The Third-Person Effect and its Influence on Behavioral Outcomes in a Product Advertising Context. *Communication Research* 31(5), p. 568-599.

Kaphingst, Kimberly A., DeJong, William, Rudd, Rima E., and Daltroy, Lawren H. (2004). A Content Analysis of Direct-to-Consumer Television Prescription Drug Advertisements. *Journal of Health Communication*, 9, p. 515–528.

Kasser, Tim (2002). *The High Price of Materialism*. MIT Press, Cambridge.

Kaul, Anil and Wittink, Dick R. (1995). Empirical Generalizations About the Impact of Advertising on Price Sensitivity and Price. *Marketing Science*, 14(3), p. 151-160.

Keller, Kevin Lane (1993). Conceptualizing, Measuring, and Managing Customer-Based Brand Equity. *Journal of Marketing*, 57(1), p. 1-22.

Kirsh, Steven J., Mounts, Jeffrey R. W., and Olczak, Paul V. (2006). Violent Media Consumption and the Recognition of Dynamic Facial Expressions. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 21(5), p. 571-584.

Kupfermann, Irving (1991). Hypothalamus and Limbic System: Peptidergic Neurons, Homeostasis, and Emotional Behavior," in *Principles of Neural Science*, 3rd ed., Eric R. Kandel, James H. Schwartz, and Thomas M. Jessel, eds., Appleton and Lange, Norwalk. p. 735-49.

Kwak, Hyokjin, Zinkhan, George M., and DeLorme, Denise (2002). Effects of Compulsive Buying Tendencies on Attitudes Toward Advertising: The Moderating Role of Exposure to TV Commercials and TV Shows. *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, 24(2), p. 17-32.

Lavidge, R. G., and Steiner, G. A. (1961). A Model for Predictive Measurement of Advertising Effectiveness. *Journal of Marketing*, 25(6), p. 59-62.

Lears, Jackson (1986). Truth, Power, Consequences. *Nation*, 9/13/1986, 243(7), p. 220-224.

Lewicki, P. (1986). *Nonconscious Social Information Processing*. Academic Press, New York.

Liebert, Robert M. (1986). Effects of Television on Children and Adolescents. *Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics*, 7(1), p. 43-8.

Lindlof, Thomas R., and Taylor, Bryan C. (2002). *Qualitative Communication Research Methods, Second Edition*. Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks.

Livingstone, Sonia, and Helsper, Ellen J. (2006). Does Advertising Literacy Mediate the Effects of Advertising on Children? A Critical Examination of Two Linked Research Literatures in Relation to Obesity and Food Choice. *Journal of Communication*, 56(3), p. 560-584.

Maher, Jill K., and Hu, Michael (2002). Materialistic Cue Effects in Print Advertising. *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, 24(1), p. 62-70.

Malaviya, Prashant, Meyers-Levy, Joan, and Sternthal, Brian (1999). Ad Repetition in a Cluttered Environment: The Influence of Type of Processing. *Psychology & Marketing*, 16(2), p. 99-118.

Marchand, Roland (1985). *Advertising the American Dream: 1920 – 1940*. University of California Press, Berkeley.

Marchand, Roland (1987). The Fitful Career of Advocacy Advertising: Political Protection, Client Cultivation, and Corporate Morale. *California Management Review*, 29(2), p. 128-156.

Marlowe, Julia, Senlow, Gary, and Blesser, Lois (1989). A Content Analysis of Problem-Resolution Appeals in Television Commercials. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 23(1), p. 176-195.

Marks, Lawrence J. and Kamins, Michael A. (1988). The Use of Product Sampling and Advertising: Effects of Sequence of Exposure and Degree of Advertising Claim Exaggeration on Consumers' Belief Strength, Belief Confidence and Attitudes. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 25(3), p. 266-282.

Martin, John H. (1991). Coding and Processing of Sensory Information. in *Principles of Neural Science*. 3rd ed., Eric R. Kandel, James H. Schwartz, and Thomas M. Jessel, eds. Appleton and Lange, Norwalk, p. 329-340.

McClelland, Steve (2006). More Time With Media Means Less Patience for Ads. *Adweek*, 47(12), p. 10.

McCombs, Max, and Shaw, Donald (1972). The Agenda-Setting Function of the Mass Media. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36(2), p. 176-187.

McCoy, Katherine (2000). Information and Persuasion: Rivals or Partners? *Design Issues*, 16(3), p. 80-83.

McLeod, Jack M., and O'Keefe, Garret J., Jr. (1972). The Socialization Perspective and Communication Behavior. *Current Perspectives in Mass Communication Research*, eds. G. Kline and P. Tichenor. Sage, Beverly Hills.

Meyers-Levy, Joan and Malaviya, Prashant (1999). Consumers' Processing of Persuasive Advertisements: An Integrative Framework of Persuasion Theories. *Journal of Marketing*, 63(4), p. 45-60.

Miller, Evonne, and Halberstadt, Jamin (2005). Media Consumption, Body Image, and Thin Ideals in New Zealand Men and Women. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology*, 34(3), p. 189-195.

Mittal, Banwari (1994). Public Assessment of TV Advertising: Faint and Harsh Criticism. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 34(1), p. 35-53.

Moschis, George P., and Moore, R. L. (1982). A Longitudinal Study of Television Advertising Effects. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9(3), p. 279-286.

Morgan, David L. (1997). *Focus Groups as Qualitative Research*. Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks.

Mosler, Hans-Joachim, Schwarz, Karsten, Ammann, Florin, and Gutscher, Heinz (2001). Computer Simulation as a Method of Further Developing a Theory: Simulating the Elaboration Likelihood Model. *Personality & Social Psychology Review*, 5(3), p. 201-215.

O'Guinn, Thomas C., and Faber, Ronald J. (1987). Mass Mediated Consumer Socialization: Non-Utilitarian and Dysfunctional Outcomes. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 14(1), p. 473-7.

Olson, Jerry C. and Dover, Philip A. (1979). Disconfirmation of Consumer Expectations Through Product Trial. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 64(2), p. 179-189.

Pardun, Carol J., L'Engle, Kelly Ladin, and Brown, Jane D. (2005). Linking Exposures to Outcomes: Early Adolescents' Consumption of Sexual Content in Six Media. *Mass Communication & Society*, 8(2), p. 75-91.

Petty, Richard E., and Cacioppo, John T. (1981). Issue Involvement as a Moderator of the Effects on Attitude of Advertising Content and Context. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 8(1), p. 20-24.

Petty, Richard E.; Cacioppo, John T. (1984). Source Factors and the Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 11(1), p. 668-672.

Petty, Richard E., Cacioppo, John T., and Schumann, David (1983). Central and Peripheral Routes to Advertising Effectiveness: The Moderating Role of Involvement. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 10(2), p. 135-46.

Pingree, Suzanne, Hawkins, Robert P., Bush Hitchon, Jacqueline C., Gilligan, Eileen, Radler, Barry, Kahlor, LeeAnn, Gorham, Bradley, Kolbeins, Gudbjorg Hildur, Schmidt, Toni, and Kannaovakun, Prathana (2001). If College Students are Appointment Television Viewers..., *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 45(3), p. 446-463.

Pollay, Richard W. (1986). The Distorted Mirror: Reflections on the Unintended Consequences of Advertising, *Journal of Marketing*, 50(2), p. 18-36.

Pollay, Richard W. and Mittal, Banwari (1993). Here's the Beef: Factors, Determinants and Segments in Consumer Criticism of Advertising. *Journal of Marketing*, 57(3), p. 99-114.

Pollay, Richard W. (1988). Keeping Advertising from Going Down in History—Unfairly. *European Journal of Marketing*, 22(8), p. 7-16.

Pollay, Richard W. (1983). Measuring the Cultural Values Manifest in Advertising, *Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, p. 71-92.

Poncin, Ingrid, Pieters, Rik, and Ambaye, Michele (2006). Cross-Advertisement Affectivity: The Influence of Similarity Between Commercials and Processing Modes of Consumers on Advertising Processing. *Journal of Business Research*, 59(6), p. 745-754.

Postman, Niel (1985). *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*. Penguin Books, New York.

Potter, W. James (1990). Adolescents' Perceptions of the Primary Values of Television Programming. *Journalism Quarterly*, 67(4), p. 843-851.

Richins, Marsha L., McKeage, Kim K. R., and Najjar, Debbie (1992). An Exploration of Materialism and Consumption-Related Affect. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 19, p. 229-236.

Richins, Marsha L. (2004). The Material Values Scale: Measurement Properties and Development of a Short Form. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31, p. 209-219.

Richins, Marsha L. (1990). Measuring Material Values: A Preliminary Report of Scale Development. *Advances in consumer Research*, 17(1), p. 169-175.

Richins, Marsha L. (1987b). Media, Materialism, and Human Happiness. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 14(1), p. 352-6.

Richins, Marsha L. (1987a). A Multivariate Analysis of Responses to Dissatisfaction. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 15(3), p. 24-31.

Richins, Marsha L. (1995). Social Comparison, Advertising, and Consumer Discontent. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 38(4), p. 593-607.

Richins, Marsha L. and Dawson, Scott (1991). Social Comparison and the Idealized Images of Advertising. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 18, p. 71-83.

Richins, Marsha L. (1994). Valuing Things: the Public and Private Meanings of Possessions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 21(3), p. 504-521.

Rose, Steven P. R. (1993). *The Making of Memory*. Bantam Books, London.

Saunders, Shaun, and Munro, Don (2000). The Construction and Validation of a Consumer Orientation Questionnaire (SCOI) Designed to Measure Fromm's (1955) 'Marketing Character' in Australia. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 28(3), p. 219-240.

Schaefer, Allen D., Hermans, Charles M., and Parker, R. Stephen (2005). A Cross-Cultural Exploration of Advertising Skepticism and Media Effects in Teenagers. *Marketing Management Journal*, 15(2), p. 29-42.

Schmoll, Nicole M., Hafer, John, Hilt, Michael, and Reilly, Hugh (2006). Baby Boomers' Attitudes Toward Product Placements. *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, 28(2), p. 33-53.

Sirgy, Joseph M. (1998). Materialism and Quality of Life. *Social Indicators Research*, 43, p. 227-260.

Smith, Scott M., and William R. Swinyard (1978). Involvement and the Hierarchy of Effects: An Integrated Framework. in *A Look Back, A Look Ahead*, G. Hafer, ed. American Marketing Association, Chicago, p. 86-98.

Smith, Philip, and Phillips, Tim (2006). Collective belonging and mass media consumption: unraveling how technological medium and cultural genre shape the national imaginings of Australians. *The Sociological Review*, 54(4), p. 818-846.

Stewart, David W. (1989). Maintaining the Delicate Balance: Industry and Academic Approaches to Advertising Research. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 16(1), p. 595-7.

Sutherland, Max (1993). *Advertising and the Mind of the Consumer*. Allen and Unwin, St. Leonards, Australia.

Tan, Alexis S. (1979) TV Beauty Ads and Role Expectations of Adolescent Female Viewers. *Journalism Quarterly*, 56, p. 283-8.

Twitchell, J. B. (1999). *Lead Us Into Temptation: The Triumph of American Materialism*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Vakratsas, Demetrios, and Ambler, Tim (1999). How Advertising Works: What Do We Really Know? *Journal of Marketing*, 63(1), p. 26-43.

Vaughn, Richard (1980). How Advertising Works: A Planning Model. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 20(5), p. 27-33.

Waide, John (1987). The Making of Self and World in Advertising. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 6(2), p. 73-9.

Ward, Scott (1974). Consumer Socialization. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 1(1), p. 1-14.

Ward, Scott, and Wackman, Daniel (1971). Family and Media Influences on Adolescent Consumer Learning. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 14(3), p.415-427.

Weinstein, Neil D. (1989) Optimistic Biases About Personal Risks. *Science*, p. 1232-3.

Winter, Frederick W. (1973). A Laboratory Experiment of Individual Attitude Response to Advertising Exposure, *Journal of Marketing Research*, 10(2), p. 130-140.

Wogalter, Michael, and Vigilante, Jr, William (2003). Effects of Label Format on Knowledge Acquisition and Perceived Readability by Younger and Older Adults. *Ergonomics*, 46(4), p. 327-339.

Wright, Allice Ann (1990). Advertising vs. Direct Experience as Modes of Communicating Information About Products. doctoral dissertation. College of Business Administration, University of Florida.

Wright, Newell, and Larsen, Val (1993). Materialism and Life Satisfaction: A Metaanalysis. *Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction, and Complaining Behavior*, 6, p. 158–165.

Wulfemeyer, Tim, and Mueller, Barbara (1992). Channel One and Commercials in Classrooms: Advertising Content Aimed at Students. *Journalism Quarterly*, 69(3), p. 724-742.

Young, Charles E. (2000). Creative Differences between Copywriters and Art Directors. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 40(3), p. 19-26.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Brent Wiethoff received his undergraduate degree of Bachelor of Fine Arts in Communication Design at the University of North Texas in Denton, and has been a student, a teacher, and a producer of communication [graphic] design and advertising. The completion of this Thesis marks his completion of a Master of Arts degree in Communication from the University of Texas at Arlington. Future plans include the generation and cultivation of an awareness program dedicating to helping consumers, and pursuit of protective consumer public policy.