Prescription drug advertisements as fantasies: A cultural critique using a visualization model

Julie Dianne Fisher
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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PRESCRIPTION DRUG ADVERTISEMENTS AS FANTASIES:
A CULTURAL CRITIQUE USING A
VISUALIZATION MODEL

by

Julie Dianne Fisher

Bachelor of Arts
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
1999

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

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Hank Greenspun Department of Communication
Greenspun College of Urban Affairs

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Julie Dianne Fisher

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Master of Arts

Examination Committee Chair

Examination Committee Member

Examination Committee Member

Graduate College Faculty Representative
ABSTRACT

Prescription Drug Advertisements as Fantasies:
A Cultural Critique Using A Visualization Model

by

Julie Dianne Fisher

Dr. Lawrence Mullen, Examination Committee Chair
Professor of Communication
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Foss’ (1994) rhetorical schema for the evaluation of visual images in conjunction with elements of Bormann’s (1982) theories on fantasy theme analysis provides a framework for the creation of the included Visualization model which enables the examination of prevalent advertising images. The transformation of the dissemination of information from a verbal to a visual focus necessitates studies that explore the social messages invading the collective unconscious. The implicit messages and related fantasy themes in the visual dimension influence perceptions and individual visions of what is real. Imagery tells us much of what we know about the world. Consequently, the profusion of images creates various versions of reality and fantasy. This study seeks to explore current world-visions and fantasy themes communicated in the visual domain. The underlying premise is that the lines separating reality and fantasy fade in the intersection of image interpretation, individual standpoints and various lived experiences.
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CHAPTER 1

THE CROSS SECTIONS OF REALITY, FANTASY AND IMAGE

Introduction

In 1982 Ernest Bormann posed the following question, “Could skillful communicators design dramatizing messages with an eye to a target audience and deliver those messages in such a way that others were brought into participation in the fantasy? (p. 291). The answer to this question lies within the dimensions of our symbolic universe and in the conception of our realities. The assertion of this paper is that reality is socially constructed (Berger & Luckmann, 1967, p. 1). Socially constructed perceptions of what is real and where fantasy lies is rooted in individual standpoints and organized by the collective unconscious. While it is understood that socialization processes are based on a myriad of elements, the focus of this thesis centers on the socializing effects of both imagery and fantasy. Visual images tell us much of what we know about the world. They filter audiences’ conceptions of what is real, and thus affect social knowledge. Fantasy themes, those subconscious stories and images that influence community consciousness, also contribute to social knowledge while creating various illusions of reality. For example, dedicated viewers of evening news broadcasts often perceive the
world as more dangerous than television viewers who choose comedy shows as their only source of television programming because of the various fantasies created in these television formats (Bormann, 1982). News programs' reliance on sensational stories about death, murder and deceit often create fantasies of the dark, hidden stranger lurking around the nearest corner. Hence, audiences of these fantasies conjure images of reality that differ from the perceived reality of those who do not watch these news programs.

Diversified programming, imagery and rhetorical visions provide very different types of fantasies, and as such create varied perceptions of reality. When seeking to make sense out of the world, the reliance on fantasy themes provides a framework to do so. Another visual media where fantasy themes develop and reality is constructed and interpreted is advertising imagery. The sheer abundance of advertising images, which bombard audiences almost constantly, legitimizes studies on the social construction capabilities of advertising images. Thus, the goal of this thesis is to determine current perceptions of social knowledge as portrayed in advertising images by examining fantasy related themes within prescription-drug advertisements. The purpose of this analysis is to ascertain the most typical or recurring themes within general interest magazines. Coding and exploring these themes proves significant for communication scholars seeking to understand individualized creations of social knowledge and social realities. The key terms in these assertions are 'reality' and 'social knowledge'. For purposes of this thesis, the definition of reality is having a, “quality appertaining to phenomena that we recognize as having a being independent of our own volition” (Berger & Luckmann, 1967, p. 1). Social knowledge is thus defined as, “the certainty that phenomena are real and that they
possess specific characteristics" (Berger & Luckmann, 1967, p. 1). These terms provide a backdrop for the exploration of reality in Western society.

Justification

Previous research contends that visual dimensions create varied versions of reality (Gumpert & Cathcart, 1985; Warlaumont, 1993; Shaw, 1992; Kang, 1997). Studies in the rhetorical domain are also conclusive regarding the socializing aspects of fantasy themes. As separate media, visual messages and rhetorical fantasies require continued exploration due to their inherent influence on social knowledge and reality. Regardless of the fantasy related patterns, the prevalence and interactive primacy of visual images necessitate the study of visual literacy and visual communication. Interaction primacy refers to the phenomenon that visual images manifest an abundant amount of meaning to audiences prior to any rhetorical interpretation or verbal discussion. Messaris (1994) maintains that analysis of visual media, "may be a means of counteracting the influence of visual media on their viewers" (p. 181). More specifically, Messaris (1994) believes that:

an understanding of how visual communication works, how visual conventions are used to create meaning and to elicit responses from viewers, may make a person better able to resist the power of television and other visual media. (p. 181)

Following this rationale, continued work in the area of visual communication is essential for scholars seeking the opportunity to create awareness of the socializing effects in the visual universe. To this end, educators are empowering people in this symbolic world.
The empowerment of society is also contingent upon thorough analysis and explanation of those fantasy themes that permeate the social unconscious. Simply acknowledging the presence of fantasy-related themes within society proves ineffectual in determining their impact and influence. Rather, the investigation and analysis of such themes provides an effective methodology for the exploration of socializing effects.

Specific target audiences are conditioned to view particular themes. Such conditioning and transfer processes facilitate, "explanation of the connection between message content and audience consciousness" (Bormann, 1982, p. 290). Research linking visual communication and fantasy analysis remains significant in understanding the complexities of socialization processes and the methods utilized in the envisioning and determination of reality.

Theoretical Dimensions of the Visual

While analysis of the function of visual images is rooted in the boundaries of the communications discipline, research and study within the realm of visual literacy originated in the aesthetic disciplines. A literature review of the disciplines of aesthetics, art history, architecture, art education, marketing and advertising reveal little about the processes in which visual images come to be viewed as appealing (Foss, 1993, p. 214). Furthermore, these disciplines ignore the role of function and purpose of imagery, instead focusing on style, unity, intention and the interpretation of truth in imagery.

Consequently, aesthetic perspectives on visual images are, "unsatisfactory for application in a rhetorical realm" (Foss, 1994, p. 214). The aim of the aesthetic evaluation, "is to identify artistic merit or aesthetic excellence; they are not concerned...with the influence
of images on audiences and the way images are constructed to affect such influence” (Foss, 1994, p. 214). The communications discipline differs from aesthetic studies due to an emphasis on the determination of function.

Numerous communication scholars have analyzed visual imagery as a response to the augmenting visual nature of our world. As Schrage (1990) explains, “Words are now those things that simply link up the images, they are a complement to communication, not a focus” (p. D1). Schrage (1990) goes on to say that, “we are moving to a time when people will grope for the right image before they grope for the right word” (p. D16). The predominance of the visual dimension is altering the world in that, “we no longer live in a logocracy, a culture based on verbal texts, but in a culture characterized by omnipresent visual images” (Foss & Kanengieter, 1992, p. 312).

Every image plays some ideological role within the culture or social group in which it is produced and circulates (Daniels, 1988). Accordingly, one may assume that patterns of images also play a role in society through the construction of specific ideologies and social realities. According to Gumpert and Cathcart (1985) those, “images used repeatedly in mediated messages contribute to a “world perspective” that often becomes taken for granted and influences our perceptions and values” (Warlaumont, 1993, p. 27). Kang (1997) substantiates the concept of visual socialization when stating:

As a socializing agent, the visual imagery provided by the media can have a powerful impact on our attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors, since it can contribute meanings and associations entirely apart and of much greater significance. (p. 980)
Visual images focused solely on influencing audiences' behaviors are found in advertising fields. Advertisers' ability to impact values and beliefs through imagery is directly correlated with the social construction capacity of the visual dimension. As Kang (1997) asserts, "Advertisements are...tied to the prevailing ideology of the culture" (p. 994). Through the dissemination of visual images advertisers create social realities and reinforce various ideological frameworks. In sum, advertisers promote various images and visual frameworks creating much of what we know about life.

The Institution of Advertising

Prevailing beliefs in the power of mass communication stem from the successes found in advertising (Lazarsfeld & Merton, 1948, p. 574). Advertising is typically, "directed toward the canalizing of preexisting behavior patterns or attitudes" (Lazarsfeld & Merton, 1948, p. 574). Lazarsfeld and Merton (1948) continue to explain that, "advertising pays because it generally deals with a simple psychological situation" (p. 574). However, generating the information to build on these 'simple psychological situations' also costs advertisers. Advertising agencies, in their pursuit to sway audiences’ perceptions, expend a great deal of financial resources on assessing pre-conceived knowledge of what audiences want and value. Current research shows that advertising expenditures are approximately $400.00 a person annually in the United States, compared with an estimated $17.00 per person annually in other industrialized nations such as Canada and Great Britain (Lafky, Duffy, Steinmaus & Berkowitz, 1996, p. 380). These financial resources allow for extensive analyses of target audiences. The information obtained from these studies enables advertisers to construct interpretive
fantasies that will persuade large groups of people (Bormann, 1982, p. 292). According to Bormann's (1982) research, extensive evidence was found connecting persuaders and publicists with the analyses of target audiences' (p. 292). Concurring with Bormann's (1982) findings, Hall states:

Advertisers have to draw their materials from the social knowledge of the audience, then transform this material into messages, developing appropriate formats and shaping the content in order that the process of communication from audience to audience is completed. (as quoted in Kang, 1997, p. 981)

With preconceived knowledge of common values and ideals, advertisers create imagery that plays upon the values, needs and fantasies instilled in the collective unconscious of Western society.

Successful advertisers maintain the ability to create images that will impact society thus reinforcing and re-creating social realities and ideologies. As Kang (1997) asserts, "advertising diffuses its meanings into the belief systems of the society" (p. 980). Warlaumont (1993) further explains advertisers' function in disseminating ideological frameworks to a variety of audiences:

Advertising, as a purveyor of ideology and a popular form of entertainment and information provides an example of how the media can construct messages that produce visual grammars for communicating quickly to a variety of audiences. (p. 26)

These visual grammars or visual scripts maintain the power to communicate with large segments of society because of the resources advertising agencies employ in securing
The connection between advertising image and social reality is discovered when people, "are drawn into these scripts" (Bormann, 1982, p. 135). When this occurs, people begin to share the social reality advertising imagery portrays with its implied values, motives, and explanations (Bormann, 1982, p. 135). These implied values are artistically reinvented into visual images that transcend many demographic differences assuring influence over the mass consumer. In this way, advertisers secure public awareness and approval while simultaneously invading the collective subconscious.

Securing public approval is a theme examined within diffusion of innovation literature. Theories of diffusion maintain that innovations can be marketed in such a way as to ensure the adoption of new products. An assumption in diffusion research is a focus on identification and social systems. Gatignon and Robertson (1985) maintain that diffusion occurs within the boundaries of a social system and as such the identification of the social system is assumed to be known and to remain constant (p. 857). The implication is the existence of themes and scripts in society that the general population can readily identify. This premise coupled with diffusion theory's emphasis on compatibility supports studies on the social construction dimension of advertising imagery.

The significance of similarity or compatibility in theories of diffusion is found in the connection between adoption of an innovation and the assumption of compatibility of characteristics (Meyer, Johnson & Ethington, 1997, p. 116). If audiences assume a product to be compatible with predetermined values and beliefs, the adoption of that product will increase. Conforming to this research, marketing and advertising agencies
create advertising images and visuals that are readily identified with because they are compatible or similar to pre-existing standards and values. Hence, the interdependence of advertiser and audience coupled with the dialectic enjoinment of visual image and audience creates an intersection where social reality is constructed, struggled over, repaired and maintained.

The creation and re-invention of realities also depend on the omnipresence of media images and reoccurring themes. In explaining the pervasiveness of the mass media and visual communication in general, Ruby states, “It has now become apparent that we live and function within the context of a fourth major environment, the symbolic” (as quoted in Worth, 1981, p. 200). This symbolic environment holds interaction primacy with audiences because of the inherent abilities of the visual dimension in captivating audiences and securing awareness. We have become a visually oriented society and as such the volume of information promulgated in Western culture today demands manipulation of imagery to ensure a visualization of stories and universal themes that will secure and captivate audiences. Universal fantasy themes produce explanations of reality because of the profusion of imagery coupled with patterns of reoccurring images. The inundation and exposure to similar themes and images accounts for the creation of particular realities. As Bormann (1982) states, “The fantasy theme drama when shared is a key to the social reality” (p. 304).

The Force of the Fantastic

Creating images that portray universal themes and scripts is actualized through attention to Western philosophies of the fantastic or fantasy themes. As psychoanalysis
tells us, "fantasy is that intangible source of unconscious fears and desires which fuels our dreams, our phobias" and therefore our visual scripts (Armitt, 1996, p. 1). Apart from the visual dimension, the mere existence of fantasy themes accounts for a great deal of our socialization processes. According to Bormann (1982):

> Fantasies are shared in all communication contexts, that there is a connection between rhetorical visions and community consciousness, that sharing fantasies is closely connected with motivation, and is an important means for people to create their social realities. (p. 289)

Bormann's (1982) emphasis is on the creation of visions and fantasies that are generated through discourse. However, Bormann (1982) does recognize that fantasy themes chain out in television broadcasts, radio programs, "and in all the diverse settings for public and intimate communication in a given society" (p. 289). The influence of advertising messages coupled with an emphasis on visual formats substantiates the premise that particular fantasies characterize visual imagery thus creating social realities.

In 1985 Bormann re-labeled the phenomenon of social reality creation and fantasy analysis to symbolic convergence theory (Rybacki & Rybacki, 1991, p. 86). Bormann's (1985) work explains that, "the basic communicative dynamic of the theory is the sharing of group fantasies which brings about symbolic convergence for the participants" (p. 4). The phenomenon of symbolic convergence emerges from grass roots efforts and group visions from proletariat groups. Dedication to particular visions combined with a sense of cohesion among grass roots groups accounts for the perpetuation and expansion of particular fantasies. These fantasies once adopted by a society, ultimately influence and transformation social meanings. The foundation of Bormann's (1982) work rests on the
assumption that social vision and social fantasies originate in small grass roots groups. Ultimately these fantasies are adopted by society, creating new social meanings and augmenting current visions of social reality.

Once these visions are adopted by society the particular fantasy or story:

insinuates into our subconscious the impression that we are experiencing the here-and-now, we are, in fact, presented with a complex, recursive set of images, stories nested within stories, formed, interpreted, artistic, concocted. (Bormann, 1982, p. 135)

These stories within stories, especially within the realm of advertising imagery, offer explanations for the way the world works and operates. The sheer volume of information and imagery requires the interpretive fantasy for successful advertising. People inherently aspire to make sense out of life and the world. If advertising imagery can utilize fantasies to present an organized and interpretive reality, which is easily identifiable, audiences will submit simply out of a need to have the world make sense.

This function of explication is achieved through the visualization of fantasy. As Bormann (1982) affirms, "Fantasies always provide an organized artistic explanation of happenings and thus create a social reality which makes sense out of the blooming buzzing confusion of the experience" (p. 134). Hence, the construction of meaning and the creation of individual and group realities are actualized within the union of image and fantasy. That the creators of advertising images are conscious of societal attitudes, beliefs and values implies the co-construction of reality attainment and the interdependence of image and audience.
Elements of Gender and Imagery

A brief discussion of gender differences as related to the organization and interpretation of imagery proves useful because of the diverging gendered lenses influencing individual perceptions. Audiences are diversified by a myriad of demographic differences and unique perceptual lenses. Current research regarding the interpretation of imagery as related to gender is offered by Lafky (1996) et al. when stating, “these gender lenses also help to shape images used in advertising as well as the ways that individuals cognitively process these images” (Lafky et al., 1996, p. 380). This reasoning is similar to those explanations of standpoint theory in the following section. The experiences of women and men in our hierarchical social system are often diverse and always unique. These disparate life experiences are compounded because of mediated images that are created and targeted for specific gendered formats.

From a visual literacy perspective, when women continually perceive gender-specific visual schemas while men are procuring visual schemas which may counter or even contradict those images presented in women's formatted mediated channels diversified socializing effects evolve. As Lafky et al. (1996) assert:

This socialization not only shapes how individuals cognitively assess and create social reality, but also superimposes male-female differences on virtually every aspect of human experience, from modes of dress and social roles to ways of expressing emotion and sexual desire. (p. 380)

The bombardment of imagery targeting both women and men creates varied interpretations of social reality. What is real and authentic for women, as communicated by imagery and fantasies particular to women, produces understandings of social
knowledge. Likewise, images and fantasy-related themes that target male audiences produce gender-specific cognitions of reality and a male-specific understanding of social knowledge. That inconsistencies may exist within these two perspectives advances the premise that the recognition of reality is at the very least transient and on some levels remains an illusion.

Illusions of Reality

Despite the ideological framework offered by Bormann’s vision of fantasy theme analysis and theories associated with visual analyses, the actual evaluation of imagery falls upon the rhetorical critic to assess. As Foss (1996) states, “the appropriateness of or value assigned to the purpose [of an image] is subject to examination by the rhetorical critic” (parenthesis included, p. 12). Kang (1997) corroborates this assumption when stating, “Since things in themselves rarely have any single and fixed meaning, they need to be given meanings by participants of the culture” (p. 980). Contributing to assumptions of multi-leveled meanings is the premise that visual and rhetorical critics each possess their own unique experiences and perceptions of reality. “Like words, visual images also function as symbols that create multi-leveled meanings that have to be decoded to be understood” (Kang, 1997, p. 980). Hence, the implication of meaning attainment as subjective and perceptions of reality as illusionary remains cogent. In response to this and as a means of legitimizing studies based upon unique standpoints and perceptions, Bormann (1982) claims, “I am not personally convinced that in the process of developing grounded theory all investigations need be tied so closely to theoretical issues” (p. 302). Consequently, studies utilizing both theoretical reasoning combined
with creativity and varied standpoints remain both valid and essential in contributing to the grounded theories of our socialization processes.

Hall (1986) discusses the complexity of socialization processes in his articulation model. His research views the role of the receiver as only one factor determining meaning (Moffit, 1993, p. 29). Adhering to Hall's (1986) work, Moffitt's (1993) study on leisure fiction and meaning maintains that:

meaning is flexible, changeable, and determined through the precise intersection of social, textual, and personal factors given to a receiver at any historical moment. (p. 28)

Theories placing meaning within the receiver in the juxtaposition of lived experiences and cultural-historical factors provides a more complete understanding of meaning and the elusiveness of reality determination. Woods' (1997) research on standpoint theory provides an explanation for multi-leveled perceptions of reality.

Standpoint theory addresses the influences of specific hierarchical differences and various lived experiences in creating various meanings around similar events and images. According to Woods (1997), standpoint theory:

focuses on how gender, race, and class influence the circumstances of individuals' lives, especially their positions in society and the kinds of experiences those positions foster. (p. 64)

Application of this philosophy within the visual dimension differentiates standpoint theory from other methods of meaning attainment by emphasizing the socializing function of visual images in conjunction with the reality of various social positions and hierarchies. Rationale advocating standpoint theory assumes that in any society where
power relationships exist, “there can be no single perspective, no ‘correct’ understanding of social life” (Woods, 1997, p. 65). In regards to the analysis of specifically romantic images, Bachen and Illouz (1996) support Woods’ (1997) findings:

We are not suggesting a single view of romance. While certain symbols may dominate, previous research has shown that individuals belonging to different social categories like life cycle stage, gender, social class, or race tend to approach media texts differently because they have different cultural traditions, different relations to the dominant ideology. (p. 287)

The perspectives and realities associated with various visual stimuli are dependent upon specific social experiences, viewpoints and biases. Hence, the premise of every perspective as limited remains valid.

Another limiting condition within visual analysis and cognitive assertions of what is real are the emphases of logic and linear thinking within Western culture. Western science, which focuses solely on qualities of rationality, linear thought, deductive reasoning and technology, dominates Western culture. (Chin, 1992, p. 20) The result of this emphasis on logic has resulted in, “the tendency to overanalyze ourselves to the point of irrational behavior” (Chin, 1992, p. 20). Advocates of Eastern and holistic philosophies maintain that people should procure meaning from the utilization of both right-brain and left-brain capabilities. According to Bormann (1982) the mind is a powerful tool when utilizing both modes, “one of which is discursive logic, the other creative imagination” (p. 289). Developing right-brain processes associated with intuition and creativity gives Western critics another dimension for assessing meaning in images.
Other theories related to socialization and meaning attainment within the visual arena include culture-as-mold and culture-as-resource philosophies. These philosophies are identified in Schudson’s (1989) work on people’s subjective perceptions (Bachen & Illouz, 1996, p. 281). Culture-as-mold refers to individuals who construct meaning based solely on what is provided to them by the culture. The view opposing culture-as-mold refers to culture as a resource. An explanation of culture-as-resource centers on individual cognizance of the variety of media images. According to this model, “individuals select the meanings they need and appropriate them for their own purposes from the array of cultural ideas and symbols available” (Bachen & Illouz, 1996, 281). This theory advocates the critical and evaluative capabilities of the general public as audiences of visual information, while the former theory of culture-as-mold condemns audiences as passive recipients of visual stimuli. I believe the reality between receiver and image rests between these two philosophies in the intersection of various standpoints, and varied lived experiences. Accordingly, the interpretation of imagery in prescription drug advertisements, while grounded in theory and ideology, includes those unique standpoints and perceptions of the critic.

Methodology

This thesis calls for a thematic examination of prescription drug advertising images. The study population will be drawn from Time and People magazine from January 1996 to September 1998. A random sample of images in Time and People provides the parameters for this study because of the general interest level of these two magazines. Examining current images, within the last two years, also offers insight into
present-day depictions of reality and social knowledge. Furthermore, focusing exclusively on prescription drug advertisements limits the scope of the study while providing a vehicle for characterizing current health decisions and trends within the medical industry. According to Leppard, Ogletree and Wallen (1993) several studies support, “a link between drug advertising and physicians’ prescribing medication” (p. 830). This link is referred to as consumer generated prescriptions.

Consumer generated prescriptions refers to the transactional communicative process which occurs between patients, advertising images and ultimately doctors. A common caption in prescription drug advertisements tells audiences to ask their doctor about the medication being advertised. The consumer-generated prescription is a direct result of patients asking their doctor for prescriptions they saw in an advertisement. Waters, a nutrition specialist focusing her work on patients with diabetes, states, “It is common for patients to see drug advertisements and ask their doctor for a prescription even if they don’t need the medication” (personal communication, October 23, 1998). This trend explicates the interactive model of communication.

Initially visual images are manufactured to encode various messages. In response, audiences decode the visual image, offering feedback in the form of inquiries about the medication that was advertised. Other phenomenon linking visual images and medical prescriptions center on the decoding of prescription drug images by the doctor. Many doctors gain information about medication based on their personal decoding of advertising imagery. A study by Linn and Davis (1972) found that, “almost three-fourths of the physicians indicated that medical advertisements were an important source of information for them” (Leppard et al, 1993, p. 830). Therefore, examining advertising
images in *Time* and *People* magazine provides a method for determining those themes that prove most influential to both doctors and patients.

According to a sales representative, *People* magazine has a rate base of three million readers (personal communication, September 30, 1998). Demographic information illustrates that thirty-four percent of readers are male and sixty-six percent of readers are female. The median age of those who subscribe to *People* is thirty-nine and the average household income is $48,000 annually. Moira Havlin, an associate in the public relations department for *Time* magazine, claims that *Time* has a rate base of twenty-four million readers with fairly comparable numbers of female and male subscribers (personal communication, September 30, 1998). Current information shows that approximately eleven million readers of *Time* magazine are female while thirteen million subscribers are male. The median age of *Time* magazine subscribers is forty-three and the average household income is $55,000 annually.

Ascertaining typical themes in prescription drug advertisements proves beneficial because they provide the widest possible interest level for the general public and as such alter the perceptions and realities of millions of people. The proclivity for female readers to subscribe to *People* magazine allows for a comparison of gender-related fantasy themes. Comparing fantasy-related themes within each of these magazines contributes to the wealth of information on gendered socialization, conceptions of reality and meaning attainment. Research linking gender studies and advertisements have found that studies on, “media effects suggests a relationship between exposure to advertising messages and reinforcement of attitudes and gender roles” (Lafky et al., 1996, p. 379). As such, an analysis of prescription drug advertisements will enable the evaluation of fantasy-related
themes, which recur in specific general interest magazines. Assessing social reality construction within these journals provides insight into the socializing effects of these images while assessing any influence these images have within the realm of health related decisions and gender role socialization.

Fosses' (1994) rhetorical schema for evaluating visual images in alliance with elements of Bormann's (1982) work on fantasy theme analysis provides a framework for the conception of the Visualization model (see Appendix II, figure 1). Through implementing this model, the intent of this study is to analyze, according to function, the advertising images for the prescription drugs Zyrtec, Flonase and Pravachol. A frequency count in People and Time magazine from 1996 to 1998 found these prescription drug advertisements to be the most prevalent in that these images reappear more frequently than any other prescription drug advertisements (see Appendix A). The keystone for Fosses' (1994) schema rests on the foundation of "function". Foss (1994) clarifies her assertion of function as key in providing judgments of image quality by differentiating the role of function from that of purpose. Accordingly, Foss (1994) states:

I have chosen the term function, rather than purpose, because purpose involves an effect that is intended or desired and I do not wish to suggest that the criterion for the judgement of an image is the intention of the image's creator. (p. 216)

This schema stands in opposition to the intentionalist model of communication focusing instead on the decoding processes of the receiver. Foss (1994) staunchly advocates the role of the receiver and critic as critical in determining the function and meaning of images. Function, then refers not to the function intended by an advertisement's creator,
but rather encompasses the, "action the image communicates as named by the critic" (Foss, 1994, p. 216). To this end, images do not determine their own interpretation.

The interpretation of imagery, instead, falls upon the receiver. This emphasis on the interpretations of the receiver or audience encourages the exploration of these individualized interpretations. Analyzing the unmitigated aggregate of individual perceptions extends social knowledge and augments cultural understanding. Shapiro (1974) readily explains that images interpreted by the receiver, "will have more meanings for its collective audience than it does for its producer" (p. 39). Admittedly, a receiver-oriented visual communication model proves subjective because there are no single, overriding and correct interpretations of an image's function. As with any act of criticism, "the function the critic names is but one possible function, it is by no means the correct one" (Foss, 1994, p. 216). Foss (1994) continues by explaining, "the critic's responsibility is to support the function proposed by showing the steps taken from the physical data to the claim concerning the function" (p. 216). These steps provide a format for the Visualization model, while simultaneously constituting the methodology for assessing the function and quality of an image.

Visual images elicit claims or assertions from receivers. Those steps, which outline the function of an image, also play a role in the formulation of meanings for those images. The following three-step procedure will be utilized in the identification of function and in the explanation of fantasy themes specifically: identification of presented elements, processing of the elements and formulation of message. Identification of presented elements involves, "the naming and sorting of the basic physical features of the visual image" (Foss, 1992, p. 315). This step calls for the identification and naming of
the physical data comprising the above mentioned prescription-drug advertisements.

Physical data includes elements including line, texture, rhythm, color, camera angle, and lighting, architectural embellishments, interior furnishings and accompanying verbal text (Foss & Kanengieter, 1992, p. 315). Identification of presented elements is a descriptive act in that discussion may assess the relationships between these basic variables and the interaction of presenting elements and individual perception.

The second step in determining the function and message of an image involves the processing of the presented elements. This step builds upon a critic’s identification of presented elements to a state of cognitive processing and message formulation. As Foss and Kanengieter (1992) explain, “The processing of the presented elements is the means through which the viewer moves from the presented elements of the image to the formulation of its message” (p. 315). This involves two phases. Initially, identification of the suggested elements involves formulation of the concepts, ideas, themes, and allusions suggested by the presented elements (Foss & Kanengieter, 1992, p. 315). For example, butterfly imagery may denote or suggest themes of change and metamorphism because of cultural perceptions surrounding the butterfly.

The second phase of step two involves the organization of the suggested elements. During this phase a viewer or critic looks for, “interactions among the various suggested elements – how they relate to each other, how they can be grouped, and the tensions among them (Foss, 1992, p. 315). Applying Bormann’s (1991) theory on fantasy theme analysis or symbolic convergence, at this stage of the analysis, provides a framework for organizing these suggested elements. Although Bormann’s (1991) work emphasizes bottom-up, grass roots efforts, shared visions do exist and are created regardless of
organizational structure. A top-down organization, such as the advertising industry, unequivocally influences and alters prevailing assumptions of reality and social knowledge. While Bormann's (1982) work focuses exclusively on grass-roots efforts, using portions of his theory in alliance with Fosses (1996) schema proves both legitimate and effective. As Foss (1996) asserts, "Fantasy-theme analysis...easily could be applied to the means of presentation of an image, with setting, action, and character themes manifest in the suggested elements of the image but rooted in particular choices made in its presented elements" (p. 22). In sum, the union of these two schemas provides a vehicle for the exploration of social knowledge and universal consciousness.

The final step in assessing the function of an image involves a thesis statement based on the preceding organizational schema. Foss and Kanengieter (1992) explain, "In the third step, the viewer devises an assertion, message, or thesis for the image based on the categories or organizational schema developed for the suggested elements in the previous step" (p. 316). Once this thesis statement or assertion is declared, the function of the image is produced. Identification of function is then followed by an assessment of how well that function is communicated (Foss, 1994, p. 216). Foss (1994) continues that, "this process involves exploration of the connections made between the identified function and the means available in the image to support it" (p. 216). An image composed of presenting elements, which clearly communicate the determined function of that image, is labeled as being rhetorically or visually sound and of high quality.

A discussion contemplating the legitimacy of the image completes the rhetorical analysis. An important distinction must be addressed. Regardless of the ethical implications promoted in the image under scrutiny, a rhetorical schema suggests that:
Only if all images in a category fail to support the communication of their functions and those functions are argued to be illegitimate can categorically negative judgments be made about them. (Foss, 1994, p. 221)

Discussion of the images in the following prescription-drug advertisements will be approached initially by assessing the function of the image. Once the function of the advertisement is determined and an appropriate thesis statement is reached, a discussion of how well the elements in the image communicated that function will follow. If it is determined that the presented elements both advocate and unequivocally illustrate the stated function, the image will be construed as being high in quality.

Ethical considerations and discussion will examine the visual content and social messages disseminating from the prescription-drug advertisements. While Fosses’ (1994) rhetorical schema for evaluating visual images constitutes much of this thesis, the goal of this study is the determination and discovery of social knowledge and influence today. As such, prevailing social messages within these advertisements will be explored, thus providing a window for excavating those influential messages and perceptions defining social knowledge.

Concluding Thoughts

Numerous communication scholars have analyzed visual images as a response to the augmenting visual nature of our world. Words have become peripheral in the exchange of information. Rather than being a focus in communication, words now often function as mere facilitators in the market place of ideas. Producing the most effective
image through the visual manipulation of life experiences and fantasy conceptions illustrates current modes of exchange. The omnipresence of visual stimuli signifies American life and culture. This transformation from a verbal to a visual focus has altered world visions. On that account, continued application of functional-based visual theories facilitates cultural understanding while enhancing the procurement knowledge. The following three chapters will explore those implied social messages in Zyrtec, Flonase and Pravachol advertising images respectively.
CHAPTER 2

ENVIRONMENTAL STANDPOINTS: BALANCING PERCEPTIONS
OF THE EGALITARIAN, THE DOMINATOR
AND THE SELF-ACTUALIZED

Visualizing Perceptions of the Egalitarian

"Feel like yourself again", "Relief bigger than your allergies" are the two primary slogans for Zyrtec. On December 12, 1995 Zyrtec gained marketing clearance from the Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of allergies. Since its' advent, Zyrtec advertisers have targeted general interest magazines for promoting the allergy relief this drug promises. The prevalence of these images and their widely disseminated messages call for exploration that will uncover those suggested meanings and fantasy themes infiltrating the collective unconscious. For organizational purposes, the first image of analysis is the advertisement advocating the personal recovery capabilities of Zyrtec. This is followed by analysis of the proportion-focused, male-oriented image. A brief discussion outlining the images within these advertisements begins the analysis. Reviewing the suggested elements, manifested according to main character, setting and plot will follow. Finally, a discussion of the function of these images and the inherent implications on social reality today concludes this chapter.
The dominant presenting image in the first advertisement, centered at the top half of the page, is a woman with light-green eyes and long, auburn hair. She is smiling with her head tilted slightly to the right. Surrounding her are bright yellow, wild flowers. The juxtapositioning of this woman and the flowers constitutes the focal point of the presenting images in this advertisement. Other presenting images include a light-blue background and a subtle diffusion of light radiating behind the model's hair. She is wearing a black dress decorated with small, multi-colored flowers. The flowers on her dress are intermingled with the flowers encompassing her. Across the top left corner of the advertisement is a darker, blue colored banner with white text reading, 'New. For Allergies'.

The bottom half of this advertisement is white with black text reading, 'Feel like yourself again. Ask your doctor about new Zyrtec'. Down the left margin of the bottom half of the image in an aqua-blue hue is listed the main selling points for this drug. These selling points include 'Easy'; 'Proven'; 'Ask your doctor about a trial of new Zyrtec'; and 'Well accepted'. Adjacent to each of these phrases is discourse advocating the claims. Lastly, Zyrtec's logo is positioned at the bottom, right side of the advertisement. This logo is composed of three different colored and slightly slanted lines. A thin, aqua stripe sits just above a yellow strip of color. The yellow strip extends slightly farther than the aqua strip while sitting above a red strip. Adjacent to this is the word 'Zyrtec' in an aqua shade. The dark blue, oval logo for Pfizer, the company producing Zyrtec, is positioned below the Zyrtec logo in the lower right corner.

As previously indicated, suggested elements of an image can be manifested through the use of Bormann's (1982) criteria found in theories associated with symbolic
convergence and fantasy theme analysis. The main character in this image is a woman who is smiling. The setting of a light blue background and surrounding yellow, wild flowers portray this woman to be sitting outside, possibly in a field of flowers. Juxtaposing this woman with a picture of a clear blue sky and wild flowers creates a new meaning for these presenting images. As Messaris (1994) explains, "it has been assumed that attitudes towards a product can be shaped by juxtaposing its picture with other images" (p. 184). Explanation of the co-constructive meaning processes when juxtaposing various images is beyond the scope of this study. It can be noted, however that research in the field of behavioral psychology extends current visual literacy theories. As Craig (1992) explains, "The use of visual imagery in commercial advertising has traditionally been guided by assumptions borrowed from behaviorist psychology" (p. 166). This includes, but is not limited to, those processes of meaning creation, which occur with the juxtapositioning of diverse images. Regardless of origin, cognizance of the transfer of meaning through association has been embraced openly in advertising literature and imagery (see Stout, 1984).

Juxtapositioning this woman within an environmental and natural setting of a clear, blue sky and yellow flowers creates a new reality and meaning suggested in the qualities of main character and setting. The relationship between these elements communicates a type of solidarity and union between women and nature. This union finds a foundation in the maternal archetype of Mother Nature. Stearney (1994) explains:

Archetypes are multidimensional constructs that exert persuasive power through their ability to construct and assert interrelationships among diverse phenomena. (p. 145)
Osborn (1967) continues, "Archetypal metaphors function as preferred patterns of imagery which are related to cultural evolution" [(p. 115), see also Bertelsen (1992)]. The influence of Native American cultures on Western society today perpetuates conceptions of Mother Nature. Native American's are exemplary in illustrating cultural constructs that interweave qualities of femininity and nature. This culture demonstrates their respect and acknowledgement of an earth and female affiliation within the confines of their rhetoric, by referring to the earth as, Great Mother (Orenstein & Zemp, 1994, p. 1094).

As such, the Mother Nature archetype arises due to cultural predispositions and biases that continually associate and affiliate women with nature. The premise supporting this affiliation is based upon an assumption of similarity between the inherent characteristics of women and nature. Employing feminized and maternal earth and nature images takes advantage of stereotypical beliefs regarding the connection between those functions of traditional motherhood and idealized conceptions of the interdependence between nature and nurturing qualities.

This similarity-based assumption accounts for the persuasive and powerful effect the mother archetype holds within diverse cultural frameworks. Accordingly, Stearney (1994) states, "The strength of the mother archetype is that it is a universal and powerful image which communicates clearly the need for an unconditional commitment to protect and sustain the environment" (p. 151). Assumptions of the inherent nurturing abilities within both women and nature cross cultural boundaries. As such, image processing of this Zyrtec advertisement generates a universal presumption of Mother Nature. The principles of main character and setting unite in their universal portrayal of women and nature as constructs that together signify the Mother Nature archetype.
Assuming an alliance between women and nature and their continued pursuit to protect the environment lends credence to the Mother Nature archetype while providing a foundation for the study of Eco-feminism. According to Stearney (1994), “Eco-feminism draws an analogy between women’s role in biological production and Earth Mother as a warrant that privileges women’s relationship to nature” (p. 152). A predominant theme in Eco-feminist theories is the analogy of the Earth as Goddess. As Orenstein and Zemp (1994) assert, “The Goddess only enters into Eco-feminism because ancient goddess cultures were spiritually and religiously Earth-based” (p. 1094). Starhawk, a priestess of the goddess religion, maintains that the earth is alive, part of the living cosmos and that the spirit, called Goddess, is not outside of the Earth (see Starhawk, 1982). As such, the suggested elements of Mother Nature and the environment may also be interpreted as a cohesive whole, symbolizing life. Orenstein and Zemp (1994) affirm Starhawk’s claims through their assertions that, “Earth is alive with the Goddess, it is not outside of the Earth, it is the Earth” (p. 4). Hence, the interplay of a natural-looking main character with green eyes, symbolic of the earth, surrounded in a natural setting of sky and flowers constructs a new interpretation. This co-constitution, manifested through plot, is that of an egalitarian-based relationship between life, energy, and nature.

The light from behind the woman’s hair combined with the antithesis of light, a black-colored dress contributes to the following discussion of plot. The contrasting elements of light and darkness are cultural constructs often symbolizing dichotomy’s of life and death, night and day, and good and evil. Both historically and cross-culturally illumination often symbolizes birth, while death is frequently portrayed through images of darkness. Hence, advertising institutions understand the broad social concepts that
play upon this symbolism. Consequently, such advertising images create and perpetuate generalized philosophies relative to the nature of light. Arnheim (1974) asserts that, "in perception darkness does not appear as the mere absence of light, but as an active counterprinciple" (p. 324). The significance of the yin-yang symbol illustrates this counterprinciple by emphasizing the interdependence of light and dark imagery in the formulation of visual plots.

Yin-Yang Philosophies

The yin-yang symbol emerges from ancient Chinese cosmology. The original meaning is representative of the dark and bright side of the mountains. Issues of gender also present itself within yin-yang imagery. Yin, for example, symbolizes the female and qualities of passivity. Yin's other qualities include the earth, moon and shading. Yang, in contrast, represents the male, light, sun and activity. Within these contexts the dark and light halves of the yin-yang symbol signify harmony, balance, creation and interrelatedness. Arnheim (1974) offers the following explanation of the unity illustrated with contrasting light and dark imagery:

The ancient interplay of the powers of light and darkness is made to seize the single object, in which the conflict between oneness and duality creates a high level of dramatic tension, the clash of two opposites in an unconsummated union. (p. 328)

These two opposite forces of light and darkness are integrated in both objective and consequence. This interdependence creates a tranquil flow of energy translating into the light and darkness of day and night, both creating and perpetuating life. To this end,

Assimilating the constructs of main character, setting and plot allow for a dualistic interpretation of the function of this Zyrtec advertisement. Initially, the Mother Nature archetype emerges, with supporting evidence manifest in the juxtapositioning of a dominant female character and images of nature or natural elements. However, the contributing schema of plot allows for another interpretation, while similar to the Mother Nature hypothesis, this premise distinguishes itself because of its holistic focus on energy, life and interconnectedness. Within this interpretation, the main character and setting join as symbolic images denoting the mother earth as both goddess and as synonymous of life itself. Within this framework, life is personified as an interconnected web of flowing energy. Orenstein and Zemp (1994) further explain, “The earth-embodied spirit is alive, and that means that everything on earth is interconnected” (p. 4). This interconnection is consummated because of the constant flow of energy throughout all of life, humanity, nature and on a macroscopic level, the universe.

The preceding interpretations of this Zyrtec advertisement are rooted in the multicultural subconscious of our existence. Their persuasive power “resides in their ability to evoke strong responses by tapping into our common human experiences” (Stearney, 1994, p. 151). Regardless of the persuasive capabilities of this image, a discussion of visual quality is dependent upon the competence of the suggested elements in illustrating these interpretations. The primary presenting images of a woman with light-green eyes, and natural wavy, auburn hair, surrounded by flowers set against a blue sky present an
effectively cohesive whole, with each element effectively contributing to the proposed function of generating an interpretation of Mother Nature. The non-verbal elements demonstrated by this female model of a tilted-head posture and smiling expression also enhance the functional aspect of this image.

Initially, smiling behavior and head tilting postures, especially with women, are connotative of powerlessness. Studies by Burgoon, Buller and Woodall (1996) demonstrate that women often tilt their heads to the side more often than men (p. 236). In contrast, a front, direct head orientation, as opposed to the head tilting posture, proves more potent, dominant and less affiliative (see Mehrabian, 1981). Smiling behaviors in women are also often culturally construed as less dominant and less powerful than expressions devoid of smiling behaviors. Other theories associated with smiling behaviors advocate the interactional aspect of a woman’s smile (Burgoon et al., 1996, p. 236). Consistent with this speculation is the general finding that, “women smile more than men, regardless of the emotion they feel at the moment” (Burgoon et al., 1996, p. 236). Hence, the egalitarian premise communicated in this Zyrtec advertisement is enhanced by the main characters non-verbal displays. Tilting head behaviors and smiling behaviors facilitate greater interdependence between humanity and nature. Such non-verbal displays de-emphasize social hierarchy’s while accentuating the interconnective and approachable nature of both women and the natural habitat. These non-verbal behaviors both represent and illustrate the egalitarian nature of the Mother Earth archetype. Non-verbal cues that communicate humanitarian and nurturing qualities function as a re-affirmation of the interconnection between humanity and nature. To this end, these non-verbal displays both identify and enhance the quality of this image.
Furthermore, the camera angle, which is looking up at the female character, contributes to the quality of this image. If a critic chooses an interpretation relative to the reaffirmation of our connectedness with everything that is alive, implications of empowerment and high-image quality ensue. According to Messaris (1994), “low angles of view, which create the effect of looking up at someone, enhance the image’s implications of power” (p. 182). Therefore, an image interpretation rooted in yin-yang principles proves both functional and of high visual quality because of the emphasis on empowerment granted by the low camera angle. This type of shot empowers the earth goddess or Mother Nature, granting all that she symbolizes, life, energy and nature, as powerful entities in the cosmos of our universe. This camera angle also plays upon cultural biases by altering stereotypical portrayals of the powerless woman and replacing such imaging with a more empowering visual construct. This emphasis on woman as empowered or woman as earth goddess illustrates those intuitive links between the universe and women. The duplicity in the main character’s non-verbal expressions combined with camera angles characteristic of impressions of empowerment both contributes to the two previously considered interpretations of the Zyrtec image. As such, the interdependence of main character and plot enhance this image’s quality through a coherence of contextual images, which both promote and advocate functions of egalitarianism and harmonious energy connecting humanity and nature.

Labeling this image as rhetorically effective, in that it communicates those functions, which are persuasive to large groups of women, in particular, proves valuable from a visual literacy perspective. However, discussions of the implications for social knowledge and reality construction remain critical in assessing those nexuses of social
influence today. Assessment of our current environmental discourse legitimizes the claim that environmental issues have reached the forefront of political debates.

According to Schultz & Stone (1994), over the last twenty years, “there has been a movement to protect the environment and a growing consciousness that humans are an integral part of nature” (p. 25). This consciousness has been called the new environmental paradigm (Schultz & Stone, 1994, p. 25). Communication disciplines in particular are answering this call for new environmental discourse by offering additional courses and requirements within the field of environmental communication. While most liberal and moderate environmentalists, “call simply for an intellectual, aesthetic, or spiritual reconnection with nature” (Lewis, 1993, p. 798) the need to reconnect humanity and nature holds greater implications than liberal environmentalists may conceive. As Lewis (1993) advocates, “Human beings become psychologically, if not spiritually, impaired when they are removed from direct, intimate, daily contact with the world of nature” (p. 797). Images emphasizing and illustrating this reconnection enhance social awareness regarding environmental issues while providing a visual medium of understanding.

Interpretations of diversity offer another valuable theme in this image. The multi-colored flowers on the women’s dress mingled with the various wild flowers contribute to references of diversity and variance. Images portraying the value of diversity enhance the ethical merit of this image. Diversity also provides an additional foundation for Eco-feminist discourse. As Orenstein & Zemp (1994) assert, “A healthy, balanced ecosystem maintains diversity”, and therefore, “eco-feminism celebrates diversity among women, in all the species of nature and in the world in general” (p. 1093). Images that communicate
a valuing for diversity and a respect for environmental concerns and egalitarian
connectedness between humanity and nature offer positive implications for social reality
constructs today.

Holistic interpretations of visual imagery are dependent upon the interdependence
of the visual critic, their particular standpoints and the actual image of analysis.
Accordingly, image interpretations rooted in feminist and sociological studies differ in
their explanations of the maternal archetypes of Mother Nature. The Mother Nature
archetype linked with the discourse surrounding this image proves to be either
problematic or reaffirming depending upon various standpoints and cultural perceptions.
Differentiating between cultural constructs and reality warrants discussion. One principle
within Eco-feminist rhetoric is that women are inherently connected with nature.
However, upon closer examination it is cultural constructs, which classify women and
nature as solidarity. As Orenstein & Zemp (1994) affirm, “women are culturally
constructed to be identified with nature” (p. 3). From this cultural construct emerges the
archetype of Mother Nature, however this archetype stands as a symbolic state, not as a

The archetype of the mother casts this condition as a symbolic state,
characterizing women’s supposed instinct for care taking and nurturance
as essentially a natural phenomenon, and encompassing the female
psychological aptitude for limitless love and self-sacrifice. (p. 147)
Both biological and social factors combined are responsible for the, “supposed instinct
for care taking and nurturance” linked with the stereotypical female construct. The
portrayal of a woman immersed in nature, symbolically standing for the Mother Nature

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archetype both limits and defines women's position in relation to the world. As with all archetypes, "the image of motherhood while familiar and powerful, is both simplified and idealized when compared with the actual experience of producing and raising children" (Stearney, 1994, p. 147). Paralleling this is the simplification and idealization of the Mother Nature archetype, which romanticizes the image of women and nature while simultaneously omitting men from their environmental responsibilities.

Determination of the Self

While the previous section focuses on fantasies rooted in egalitarianism and harmony between humanity and nature, the following analysis is grounded in fantasies associated with strength, self-actualization and personal fulfillment or fantasies of dominance and male-centered supremacy, depending upon personal insights and perceptions. As previously mentioned, particular functions of images are dependent upon the standpoints and insights of the visual critic. As such, the presenting images in the following advertisement hold varied meanings dependent upon those cognitive perceptions of the visual audience. The presenting images in this advertisement include an enlarged picture of half a sunflower. The sunflower is aligned along the lower left side of the page, covering approximately a third of the total image. It is shaded with warm, golden toned petals and a large orange and red shaded center.

Suspended by a rope hangs a man, proportionately the size of one of the yellow petals. He is wearing mountain climbing shoes, a dark suite with a white, dress shirt and a bold red tie. His left hand is holding a small cellular telephone, giving the impression that he is talking on the phone while his right arm is in his coat pocket. The background
is a dark, rust-colored hue with large, white bolded text, running across the top of the page that reads, "Big allergies. Big relief." Adjacent to the rope, running down the center of the advertisement, is text promising the "big" relief gained by taking Zyrtec. This excerpt is written in small, approximately twelve point, black font, except for the words "big" and "bigger". These words are larger, almost double the size of the surrounding text. The words "big" and "bigger" is also distinguished from the other written text because of the bolded, white print contrasting against the black text. The word "big" appears six times running down the center of the advertisement.

The sunflower is the main character for this image. The surreal interpretation of a man climbing over the petals of an enlarged sunflower, against a darker hued, orange sky provides the dominant elements of setting. The orange-colored background symbolizing a sky at either sunset or sunrise. According to Berger (1998), "what we see is based...on inferences the mind makes about the world, which are based on mental input and on perceptual rules" (p. 67). Accordingly, interpreting an orange and rust colored page as signifying a sky at either daybreak or sunset is rooted in the collective unconscious. This unconscious perceptual framework assigns meanings according to predetermined inferences the mind has about the world and the relationships within that world.

Following this assumption, interpretations of plot vary depending on which cognitive and perceptual lenses the critic utilizes. The first perceptual cognition is founded in theories and perceptions relating to self-actualization. Within this framework, the first visual plot focusing on the relationship between the sunflower and the man emerges. A sunflower-growing contest in September 1918 produced a sunflower measuring fifty-two and a half inches in circumference. (Lovejoy, 1991, p. 63). While

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nature lovers may appreciate the ability to grow a flower this large, those suffering from allergies could interpret this flower-growth ability as an obstacle in achieving premium respiratory relief. Accordingly, cognitive interpretations of the relationship between an excessively large sunflower and a proportionately much smaller man transfers from an allergy-centered construction to a visual representation of overcoming obstacles.

The sunflower initially represents an obstacle in achieving maximum breathing ability while the man represents the underdog, fighting to overcome his obstacles. Such meaning transfer processes again are rooted in the collective unconscious and in the form of the presenting images of the sunflower and the man. According to Arnheim (1974):

...form always goes beyond the practical function of things by finding in their shape the visual qualities of roundness or sharpness, strength or frailty, harmony or discord. It thereby reads them symbolically as images of the human condition. In fact, purely visual qualities of appearance are the most powerful of all. It is they that reach us most directly and deeply. (p. 97)

As such, the divergent forms of strength and frailty manifested in the presentation of the sunflower and the man transfers to the visual critic, thus connecting distinct differences in form with impressions of power hierarchies. Initially, a viewer may perceive the sunflower as the locus for power and influence simply because of the size difference between the flower and its opponent. However, upon closer examination, both the presenting images relative to the man in the image and those suggested elements manifested according to setting present a new interpretation. This interpretation of plot places the man, although much smaller proportionately than the flower, in a position of
power and strength with the tools and form needed to overcome his conflicts and obstacles.

The artifactual elements of a repelling rope, mountain climbing shoes and a cellular phone communicate both power in overcoming conflicts and positions of status. According to Burgoon et al. (1996), “people in power reveal their influence through possession or access to valued resources” (p. 311). Burgoon et al. (1996) continue by outlining the key factors, which distinguish artifacts as denoting power and status, “they must have scarce availability, entail exclusivity, or are associated with some special accomplishment or position of prestige” (p. 312). The interdependence and juxtapositioning of a formal, business suit, mountain climbing shoes and a cellular phone denotes this man’s exclusivity and position of prestige. Unlike most business people and mountain climbers, this man maintains the exclusive ability to climb over a floral mountain while continuing his daily work routine.

Power and status are also communicated through the non-verbal displays in this image. For example, the man’s non-verbal cues of a relaxed position combined with a front, forward head orientation enhances inferences of power and dominance. An interpretation of relaxation stem from the non-verbal cue of placing one hand in a pocket while the man’s other hand is holding a cellular phone. This visual combination gives a viewer an impression of relaxation. The man appears self-assured and in control while climbing the walls of a sunflower-mountain. Theories associating relaxation with principles of status and power have been found by numerous communication researchers including Goffman, 1961; Henley, 1977; Mach, 1972 and Mehrabian, 1969. While this man is displaying a relaxed position on some levels, he is also maintaining a straight,
non-tilted head orientation. This head position also communicates positions of power. Burgoon et al. (1996) maintain that a particularly symbolic position is the head tilt, “which is reminiscent of the ultimate show of submission in the animal kingdom, exposing the jugular vein to the victor” (p. 315).

The interdependence between the suggested elements of setting and the subconscious elements of individual perception and cognition of particular world views creates a visual interpretation of personal accomplishment and individual empowerment for this image. Visual images, to a significant extent, are creative forces determining their own, “categories of representation, and in so doing, gives form to its own reality” (Messaris, 1994, p. 118). The reality created in this image involves a visual plot of a man utilizing various tools in order to face personal obstacles, ultimately achieving personal fulfillment and achievement. According to Adler, Rosenfeld, Towne and Proctor (1998) a self-actualized individual displays the desire to develop full potential, “to become the best person we can be” (p. 9). As such, the reality of self-actualization and self-determination defines this image with the visual critics’ perceptions influencing the cognitive processes that decode imagery and create visual comprehension.

Dominance and Environmental Alienation

Another interpretation of visual plot for this advertisement is based on the environmental paradigm and on the prominence of current environmental concerns. A theme found in Eco-feminist rhetoric focuses on the growing separation of humans from nature. Lewis (1993) admonishes:

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Regardless of which historical period is emphasized, the broad consensus holds that human separation from nature is growing more pronounced year by year, leading inexorably to intensified ecological trauma for the planet and psychological degeneration for humanity. (p. 798)

From this perspective a new visual reality emerges for this advertisement focusing on human dominance and environmental devaluation. Katz (1995) sustains that a devaluing of nature is merely a consequence of employing human interests and that this devaluation of nature for human progress is the dominating force in all life cycles. Katz (1995) maintains, "humanity has attempted to modify and to mold natural processes for the satisfaction of human interests, to create an artificial or artifactual world that produces the most benefit for human beings" (p. 277). While overcoming problematic natural processes for overall human good initially appears admirable, closer examination uncovers the fallacies of such logic.

The following interpretation is grounded in both an environmentally conscious perspective and in the relationship between the suggested elements of setting. This relationship reveals a new interpretation of plot, thus creating a new visual fantasy. A visual interpretation from an environmentalist standpoint is based upon frameworks of oppression. According to Kaufman (1994) an oppressive conceptual framework is one that, "explains, justifies and maintains relationships of domination and subordination" (p. 333). From this position, the Zyrtec advertisement plays upon philosophies of oppression by visually displaying cultural institutions of hierarchy, dualism, and domination. In this framework, the main character, the sunflower, is victimized by humanity. This environmental victimization is visually communicated by the relationship between the
sunflower and the man. The suggested elements of formal business attire, a cellular telephone and mountain climbing gear contributes to interpretations rooted in victimization and domination because such artifacts characterize Western civilization and technological growth. As stated by Katz (1995):

The primary goal of Western civilization, especially Western science and technology, has been the control and domination of nature for the promotion of human benefit. Humanity conquers...the natural world with the moral justification that human good is the only determination. (p. 277)

As such, elements of setting contribute to the visual story, or plot, of a man's ability to dominate nature through utilization of Western technology. Themes of domination and power are also communicated visually by an emphasis on the color red and rust-colored hues.

Visual connotations of dominance stem from the red-colored tie and rust-colored overtones characterizing this image. Metallinos (1996) asserts the, "entire process of perception...is at work when we look at colors" (p. 249). This perception process starts with the retina that receives the primary color schemes, codifies the colors and then transmits the information to be decodified and interpreted (Metallinos, 1996, p. 249). When colors are properly manipulated they can symbolically function as aesthetic agents able to produce a myriad of feelings and emotions. For example, the color red can be interpreted as exciting because it reminds us of, "fire, blood and revolution" (Arnheim, 1974, p. 368). Burgoon et al. (1996) also advocates the mood eliciting abilities of colors and their symbolic interpretation (p. 115). Accordingly, Burgoon et al. (1996) found the color red to be affiliated with moods of affection, anger, defiance, hostility, vitality, love
and excitement. Following this codification, symbolism surrounding the color red is rooted in states of happiness, lust, intimacy, restlessness, agitation, royalty, rage, sin and blood (p. 115). The presenting elements and suggested elements of setting do not allow our subconscious to associate meanings of love or romance to this image. As such, the collective unconscious draws upon those other moods and emotions culturally imposed on the color red. These remaining emotional charges include anger, defiance and hostility. Consequently, the color scheme in this image and the emphasis on red associated with the main character symbolizes defiance and hostility toward nature. Together, the suggested elements of setting produce a plot for this image based on theories of domination and environmental disconnection from humanity.

Regardless of environmental stance, Foss (1994) maintains that an image is of high visual quality if all of the components of that image communicate the stated function (p. 218). The primary function or theme in the first Zyrtec advertisement rests within the boundaries of Eco-feminist research and egalitarian perspectives. This first advertisement clearly communicates and emphasizes the inherent interdependence of humanity and nature. As life experiences confirm nature and the environment are not single regions, but rather, “conditions of being of the natural world” (Robinson, 1998, p. 61). The function of the second Zyrtec advertisement is dualistic depending upon personal perceptions and world-views. The major themes and concepts in the first analysis of the second male-centered, Zyrtec advertisement include themes of self-determination and self-actualization. The second analysis of the same image is built upon perceptions of dualistic systems between humanity and nature. The dominating themes in this analysis focus on divergence, placing existence into rigid oppositional categories.
and granting humanity greater value than the environment. From a social knowledge perspective, this type of polarity from nature reveals a deeply embedded estrangement from the actual experience of being alive. However, from a functional stance these various themes and concepts are clearly communicated through manipulation of the presenting and suggested visual elements in the advertisements.

The duality found when interpreting the second Zyrtec advertisement also confirms Fosses' (1996) claims that the function of an image will vary depending upon the visual critic and the perceptive processes at work. As such, the interplay between the suggested elements of an image and the varied standpoints or perceptions within our social, collective unconscious creates an intersection where the lines between reality, understanding and visual interpretation are continually changing. It is this continuous recreation and reconstruction of meaning that erases the boundaries between reality and fantasy.
CHAPTER 3

PERSUASION, PROPAGANDA AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE SELF-ACTUALIZED

Holism and Reductionism

Manipulating images in order to represent universally accepted themes and social constructs often generates effective advertising messages. This chapter focuses on visual representations of effective propaganda techniques and implications of self-actualizing behaviors. Visually creating messages that denote the central themes of propaganda and self-actualization provides the function for the following two Flonase advertisements. The first advertisement focuses predominately on an artistic, animated interpretation of a nose, which is centered, on the front page of a fictitious newspaper named The Daily Bugle. The second Flonase advertisement is a photographic representation of a woman riding a bicycle. The obvious differences between these two advertisements are manifested in the means of expression. The first image portrays a comical and exaggerated artistic interpretation of a nose exclaiming the healing properties of Flonase. The second image expresses Flonase’s healing properties through a realistic photographic illustration of the profile of a woman riding a bicycle. Despite these differences,
accentuation of the human nose and the profile-orientation of these images provide a basis of similarity for the advertisements. Profile imagery, according to Pinto and Bombi (1996), “makes it possible to show salient details of the body such as the nose...hence its wide diffusion in our visual culture, from coins, to portraits, to road signs” (Pinto & Bombi, 1996, p. 304).

An evaluation of the animated depiction of a nose on the front page of a newspaper provides the first image of analysis. The presenting images in this advertisement include a surreal interpretation of a newspaper covering the top half of the page. In a large, dark bolded font running across the top portion of this newspaper is the name of the paper reading, “Daily Bugle”. Underneath this heading in a larger font, approximately double the size of the title of the newspaper reads the phrase, “Nose Cleared”. A light blue background covered by an enlarged cartoon picture of the profile of a nose covers the bottom two-thirds of this fictional newspaper. The nose is colored with a neutral peachy shade that darkens toward the tip, giving it a rosy hue. Extending from the nostril is a white bubble reading, “What a relief”. The bottom third of this advertisement is rhetoric exclaiming the healing attributes of Flonase, which when taken regularly can, “unstuff your nose”. Flonase is allergy relief, “right under your nose”. The word Flonase is printed twice in this advertisement in a forest green color with the ‘o’ in Flonase depicted in a navy blue color with small red blocks running clockwise inside the ‘o’, possibly depicting a clock. The remaining text is printed in a smaller black font against a white background.

Only by thoroughly extracting and separating the presenting images found in advertisements can critics and audiences understand those larger social messages that
ultimately invade our collective unconscious, creating social knowledge. Accordingly, "focusing on the procedural modalities involved in the translation of conceptual knowledge into graphic representation" provides a constructive and cognitive dimension for the exploration of social knowledge and the collective unconscious (Pinto & Bombi, 1996, p. 303). As Perry (1993) asserts, "simpler phenomena are derivatives of a higher dimensional reality" (p. 227). Following this rationale, and as a restatement of purpose, processing the above mentioned presenting elements into the categories of main character, plot and setting will not only provide an overriding conception for this advertisement, but also serves as a vehicle for the discernment of Westernized perceptions of reality. As previously determined the separation and identification of main character, plot and setting illuminates those suggested elements essential for interpreting image function. In the analysis of this image, a brief discussion relative to the effectiveness of each suggested element will follow codification of the stated suggested element. Concluding this section is an explanation of the advertising image's function and overriding theme.

As already stated, the dominant image in this advertisement is a close-up, profile depiction of a human nose. The nose, as the main character in this advertisement, advances Westernized conceptions of health or well-being through a partial, visually limiting, profile-oriented representation of the nose. Understanding particular worldviews facilitates discussion of the promotion of Western philosophies relative to overall health and well-being. As Sardar (1996) explains, "We live by worldviews. How we enjoy life, what we think of our bodies and how we treat them...all this is governed by worldviews" (p. 39). Accordingly, those themes and visual representations prevalent
in Western advertisements are also influenced and created within the boundaries of a worldview valuing rationality, deductive reasoning and linear thinking.

As related to medical practice, Schulte (1996) explains, "In the West, we usually think in terms of organ systems and focus on eliminating the physiologic cause of a disease or relieving its symptoms" (p. 55). In effect, Western medicine often deduces problems to their smallest parts, focusing medical attention to individualized and distinct body parts. As such, a visual image of a disconnected nose exclaiming allergy relief appears rational, effective and ultimately influential to Western audiences. This advertisement visually represents a cultural ideology of deductive logic, by reducing the symptoms of allergies specifically to the nose. This ability to disconnect and deduce problems to their smallest components characterizes Western society while influencing Western perceptions of reality.

The ability to separate parts of a whole prove necessary under particular conditions, however singular participation in this worldview proves myopic without complementary consideration of holistic life patterns. Embracing holistic standpoints and practices characterizes Eastern worldviews. According to Rod Chin, Eastern philosophies are identified by a common premise that there is an intrinsic link connecting the mind, body and spirit. Furthermore, failure to acknowledge this link leads to incomplete medical approaches, which may ultimately harm patients (personal communication, March 23, 1999). A holistic medical standpoint does not, "view the body as a mechanical assemblage of parts" but instead views people as, "a functionally integrated system and sees disease as a condition that affects all aspects of the person, including the physical, mental and spiritual" (Schulte, 1996, p. 55). Eastern practitioners
do not make rigid distinctions between the body, mind and spirit, nor do they disjoin various body parts in alleviating health problems. As a result, an incomplete, fragmented picture of a nose, separated from an actual representation of a person may prove ineffective in persuading Eastern-minded audiences.

In regards to audience adoption, there are other persuasive factors which may attribute to the effectiveness of this image with Eastern audiences. The overwhelming dissemination of American media images and advertisements coupled with inter-cultural beliefs valuing the adoption of Western ideals may account for varying degrees of higher effectiveness ratings with some Eastern audiences. Despite the wide diffusion of Western ideals, however, the overwhelming majority of Eastern audiences will reject this image as persuasive in that it contradicts intrinsic and innate subconscious biases imposed by specific cultural conditions. As such, while Western audiences may easily conceptualize an image of a fragmented nose as symbolizing the attainment of well-being, the fantasy of a nose exclaiming renewed health may prove visually problematic for advocates of Eastern philosophies.

Visual Ploys and Propaganda

While visual interpretations of the main character are culture specific on certain levels, codification of the setting in this advertisement transcends most cultural differences. The manipulation of presenting images communicates a visual story reminiscent of a front-page, breaking news story. The elimination of additional discourse and supplementary information found in traditional newspapers is indicative of a tabloid paper illustration. According to Morrow (1998), "The first tabloid papers, the London
Daily Mirror in 1904 and the New York Daily News in 1919, established the idea of devoting the whole front page to a single theme” (p. 86). The singular strategy of covering only one story on the front page of a paper is not overwhelmingly persuasive in and of itself. Attention to page layout also aids in securing audience motivation. According to Schaffer (1995) tabloid papers gain audience’s attention “with provocative photos and large, vari-colored, eye-catching headlines, often in block capitals reminiscent of comic-book captions” (Schaffer, 1995, p. 27). Correspondingly, this Flonase advertisement adheres to research findings on effective persuasive strategies by devoting the front page of a fictitious newspaper to a singular story while utilizing a large ‘comic-book’ style font.

Another persuasive strategy proven effective in securing tabloid journalism sales is the use of the pseudo-quote. This Flonase advertisement applies the use of the pseudo-quote by placing a bubble directly below the nostril reading, “what a relief”. The personification of the nose as possessing human capabilities of expression and feeling generates an impression of interdependence between audience and image. As Schaffer (1995) explains, “The use of these pseudo-quotes thus gives readers a feeling of involvement or intimacy with the article subjects, plus a spurious sense that the information is authentic” (p. 30). Corresponding with these trends, the configuration of presented elements creates a visual setting punctuated with persuasive tactics proven effective in generating audience attention while communicating an impression of legitimacy.

Utilization of the pseudo-quote and the above mentioned attention-gaining strategies proves significant in creating effective persuasive advertising messages and in
generating tabloid sales because neither medium can rely on, “the hard-news value” of their messages (Schaffer, 1995, p. 27). From this point of view, both advertisements and tabloid papers parallel each other in the pursuit of attracting the attention of the masses. Each medium must visually appeal to audiences, thus securing attention for relatively insignificant matters when considering the universes of experience housing these institutions. The positioning of the presented elements, with respect to setting, proves effective in that these elements simulate a tabloid paper while simultaneously complying with predetermined research on successful attention-gaining devices for tabloid papers.

Cooper and Nothstine’s (1992) explanation of the principles of propaganda offers an interpretation for visual plot. The following principles clarify the intentions and basic functions of propaganda. According to Cooper and Nothstine (1992), “Propaganda is explicit, institutionally sponsored persuasion by ‘the system’ aimed at a mass audience” (p. 253). Another definitive characteristic, “of propaganda is its fundamental concern with effects” (Cooper and Nothstine, 1992, p. 376). Cognizance of these definitions warrants discussion on the interrelationship between advertising messages, propaganda and the role of the medical industry.

First, advertising images are intentionally created forms of communication with the mass media providing the channel of information dissemination. Second, advertising agencies and the Western medical model are two institutions greatly concerned with effects. The advertising agency is primarily concerned with creating a visual representation that will persuade audiences while simultaneously meeting the goals of the medical company soliciting their services. The medical company, in this case GlaxoWellcome, is concerned with the singular effect of producing greater sales. Hence,
both GlaxoWellcome and the advertising agency employed by them are united in the purpose of effecting and influencing the mass audience. Utilizing the image of a tabloid paper creates a setting suggesting sensationalism and the mass dissemination of propaganda. Perceptions of propaganda signify image plot for this advertisement because the primary messages denote indoctrination and strategies of persuasion.

The function of this advertisement is based on utilizing familiar tabloid journalistic strategies of attraction while manipulating the basic principles of persuasion and propaganda. According to Fosses’ (1996) theory, if all the elements in an image communicate the function, as stated by the critic, the image is said to be of high visual quality. This image communicates a function based on the perpetuation of propaganda-type persuasive principles due to the effective juxtapositioning and manipulation of the presenting and suggested elements. As discussed in chapter one, Lazarsfeld and Merton (1948) contend, “Advertising pays because it generally deals with a simple psychological situation” (p. 574). Accordingly, this Flonase advertisement ‘pays’ in that it plays on those strategies of propaganda by displaying the singular theme of allergy relief on the front of a fictitious publication reminiscent of a tabloid journal.

The Ethics of Persuasion

The lines separating issues of image effectiveness and ethical considerations loom large. Consequently, a brief discussion examining these distinct areas follows. Image effectiveness largely depends upon the individual visual critic. First, various standpoints and predetermined subconscious biases clearly hold primacy in the determination of image effectiveness, as illustrated in the preceding discussion comparing Eastern and
Western ideological perceptions. Regarding ethical considerations, the following comparison indicates a negative and counter-productive relationship between the media and ethics. As stated by Lazarsfeld and Merton (1948), "Economic power seems to have reduced direct exploitation and turned to a subtler type of psychological exploitation, achieved largely by disseminating propaganda through the mass media of communication" (p. 556). This 'psychological exploitation' stems from propaganda's, "disregard for the judgement of the individual and a preoccupation with effectiveness" (Cooper & Nothstine, 1992, p. 391).

Under these terms, Lazarsfeld and Merton's (1948) suggestion that the, "continuing assault of these media may lead to the unconditional surrender of critical faculties and an unthinking conformism" appears feasible (p. 556). However, the opposing premise that not all propaganda is characterized as unethical remains cogent and the extinction of all intellectual and introspective individuals seems overstated. From an ideological standpoint, it is the expansion and continuation of the free marketplace of ideas, which remains essential in furthering social knowledge and developing new realities.

Representations of the Self-Actualized

The second advertisement under scrutiny presents another interpretation of the effects of Flonase. While the preceding image is rooted in fantastic and exaggerated portrayals of the effects of Flonase, realistic interpretations of human experience forms the foundation for this image. The bulk of the presenting images relative to this advertisement are located in the top half of the page. The profile of a woman smiling
while wearing a biking helmet covers approximately two-thirds of the top portion of the advertisement. This picture captures the woman from the neck to the top of her head, cutting off the top of her helmet. The woman’s posture gives the impression that she is currently riding a bike. This message solidifies when the visual critic views the inclusion of a full-body portrayal of the woman riding a bike in the far-right portion of the advertisement. The juxtapositioning of these presenting elements gives a dualistic representation of a close-up and elongated shot of the same woman in one frame. The background environment is comprised of green grass and trees.

Running across the top, left side of the image, covering the top portion of the woman’s helmet is the phrase, “Flonase: Nasal Allergy Checklist”. Underneath this line, in a vertical column are the terms, “stuffy”, “sneezy”, “itchy” and “runny”. These words are written in large, white text with a white box positioned in front of the individual terms. Inside these boxes are large green check marks. This Flonase checklist is running down the left side of the image, covering a portion of the close-up shot of the woman’s head. The bottom half of the advertisement is white with black text promising relief with continued Flonase use. Adjacent to the Flonase label is a boxed picture of an animated nose. This nose is drawn with a profile orientation replicating the nose analyzed in the first section of this chapter. The emphasis on the nose and the profile-orientation of these images proves significant for assessing image meaning and codifying the suggested elements of main character, setting and plot.

The main character in this image is the female bicyclist. Research related to picture structure provides a vehicle for meaning construction relative to the photographic representation of the main character. Hartford (1984) pointed out that few people realize
the influence photographs have in conveying certain feelings. The manipulation of camera angle and shot distance enhances these emotional responses. Extensive research on the psychological effects of camera angles illustrate that communication researchers consider this a crucial aspect of visual communication (Baggaley & Duck, 1974, 1975, 1976; Baggaley et al., 1980; McCain et al., 1977; Tiemens, 1970). According to Tuchman (1978) the “head on” or eye level shot, as viewed in this image, produces impressions of facticity, due to the premise that all other angles present a distorted view (p. 113). Hence, utilization of direct, eye level camera angles generates visual interpretations of authenticity and actuality. Other camera angles promoting image effectiveness include the low angle shot which makes a subject appear taller and more psychologically powerful (Mullen, 1992, p. 44). The juxtapositioning of these two representations of the main character, the eye level, close-up shot and the low, full-body shot, creates a dualistic interpretation for this image based on perceptions of empowerment and authenticity.

Perceptions of empowerment and credibility are achieved through the utilization of a low camera angle and the additional juxtapositioning of a profile shot. According to Mullen (1992):

If you combine a low angle with a profile angle the combined effects of these two angles may give...more perceived credibility, strength, authority, potency or generally perceived power than either angle by itself. So, the combination of a profile plus a low angle may be termed a ‘power angle’. (p. 48)
On that account, juxtaposing a low, full-body camera angle showing the profile of a
cyclist behind a profile-oriented headshot generates perceptions of credibility and
empowerment. In addition to the 'power angle', profile shots singularly denote higher
credibility ratings than direct face shots. Baggaley and Duck (1975) explain the
correlation between high credibility ratings and profile shots:

...a full-face shot suggests less expertise than a profile shot, since in
popular broadcasting those who address the camera directly are typically
the reporters and link-men, the readers and retailers of information, those
who transmit the new rather than initiate it. The expert on the other hand
is more often seen either in interview or in discussion, and thus in profile.
(p. 184).

Attention to picture structure, specifically camera angles, in this advertisement are
deliberately shot to elicit emotional responses of credibility and empowerment. In sum,
the camera angles organizing the presenting images in this advertisement are effective in
that they visually construct imagery which audiences subconsciously process as
indicating power and believability.

Framing offers an additional strategy in developing perceptions of credibility and
sincerity. As stated by Mullen (1992), “Framing refers to the perceived distance the
subject is from the camera” (p. 46). Hall (1966) specifies four categories of social
distances including intimate, personal, social and public. Tuchman (1978) translates
these distances into specific framing terms, namely close personal, far personal, close
social and far social (p. 112). Accordingly, “close-up (shots) allow the audience to feel
intimate with the person pictured, making his or her weaknesses and vulnerabilities more
visible" (Mullen, 1992, p. 42). Interpreting close shots as portraying intimacy equates with Hall’s (1966) findings that suggest a correlation between different social distances and the social meanings that physical distance can express (Mullen, 1992, p. 47). The visualization of weaknesses and vulnerabilities renders close-up shots ineffectual in portraying political figures. However, from an advertising standpoint, utilizing a close-up shot proves effective in communicating allergy relief in that audiences clearly observe the main character’s non-verbal smiling cues, a manifestation of being free from the ailments imposed by allergies. Furthermore, producing a visual image that conveys a sense of intimacy between audience and main character proves influential in convincing audiences of image sincerity and truth.

Freedom in Leisure Participation

While perceptions of empowerment, credibility and intimacy characterize the portrayal of the main character; cognizance of leisure activities characterizes the setting for this image. Milgram (1977) affirms the cognitive abilities of audiences in constructing visual stories from photographic representations. He asserts that, “a photograph not only records events. It creates them” (Milgram, 1977, p. 245). The creation of events and image setting centers on fantasy’s of leisure activities, recreation and freedom. These, “fantasy environments typically evoke playful activities and attitudes and create a climate of escape, pleasure and relaxation. While similarly arousing playfulness and escapism” (Belk and Costa, 1998, p. 221). Portraying a single bicyclist riding in the park evokes impressions of pleasure and escapism that audiences can easily conceptualize.
According to Roper (1998), "Three-fourths of adults say they often or occasionally spend leisure time by themselves" (p. 34). Leisure time often elicits feelings of inner peace and psychological freedom. It is a time to reflect and contemplate and as such opens up dimensions, which may lead to internal awareness. Opening the doors to this inner psychological domain is, "produced by seriously engaging in leisure activities...or feeling overwhelmed by the beauty of nature" (Lu and Shih, 1997, p. 182). The main character's enjoyment in her surroundings is manifest by her non-verbal displays of happiness. Lu and Shih (1997) explain, "the most general description of happiness would be an internal experience of a positive state of mind" (p. 182). Displaying a positive state of mind is accomplished through the smiling behaviors of the main character in conjunction with her engagement in the leisure activity of cycling. Scott and Willis (1998) explain the importance of leisure activities, affirming that "continuity in leisure participation can come linked with the individual's self-concept and contribute to a sense of competency and positive self-esteem" (p. 331). In sum, "participation in leisure activities...can contribute to life satisfaction and well-being" (Scott & Willis, 1998, p. 331). The pursuit of life-satisfaction, emancipation and continued well-being extends into a discussion of image plot.

The inclusion of a running checklist covering the left side of the main character's face and helmet initiates discussion of internal awareness and life satisfaction. Successful living requires proficiency in relaxation techniques, which encourage introspection. The multitude of demands on people today necessitates the creation of lists, daily planners and pocket-calendars. Juxtaposing a list with checkmarks, indicating the fulfillment of implied goals, with images of a single woman riding a bicycle communicates impressions
of both emancipation and self-actualization. The implication is that the main character is emancipated because, in regards to her health, she has become self-actualized. As Jenkins (1996) affirms:

The bicycle was the genesis of American mobility and freedom, from long-distance travel to paved highways, aircraft tubing to the women's movement. It was 1896 when Susan B. Anthony said the bicycle had done more to emancipate women than anything else in the world. (p. 58)

The term emancipation is often associated with discussions related to self-actualization because an individual achieves an inner freedom by pursuing self-actualizing behaviors.

Focusing on the cultural icon of a bicycle proves effective in communicating psychological emancipation because audiences readily conceptualize the bicycle as a symbol of freedom. A professor at George Washington University law school maintains that the bicyclist's, "mantra is non-conformity. Simply opting for the bicycle as the preferred means of transport qualifies a person, without more, as willing to live on the edge, as distancing oneself from the pack, in short, as chancing a joyous moment of non-conformity" (McCarthy, 1997, p. 33). Drake (1996) maintains that bicycling, "is about as close to a Zen experience as I can ever hope to achieve. When the day is clear, and the conditions are right, it is as close as any of us will come to a sort of peace" (p. 13). The bicycle represents a vehicle for the realization of peace, inner awareness and emancipation. Collectively, these elements generate self-esteem and self-actualizing perceptions and behaviors.

The function of this image is the communication of self-actualizing behaviors. The combination of presenting images clearly communicates the self-actualizing
potential of Flonase customers, as related to health standards. A precursor to self-actualizing abilities is the realization of one's self-esteem. Self-esteem "comes naturally and easily out of one's own true inner nature, one's constitution, one's biological fate or destiny, out of one's real self rather than out of the idealized pseudo self" (Maslow, 1987, p. 22). Self-actualizing behaviors and mindsets, however, do not easily or naturally transpire. Rather, models of self-actualization stem from humanist psychology whose extensive research sought to account for the growth-seeking behavior of human beings. According to these frameworks, "The individual is perceived as a creative, self-actualizing, and self-determining organism capable of making responsible choices and growing progressively toward an ideal state" (Perry, 1993, p. 214). According to Maslow (1968), "self-actualization is an ongoing process of realizing one's full human potential" (p. 23). Maslow (1968) emphasizes trust in the experiencing of life.

Trusting oneself to fully experience life develops open-minded perceptions and cognitive frameworks. Such standpoints may initially generate the materialization of setbacks and difficulties. For the pursuant of self-actualization, however, experiencing imperfection holds profound possibilities. Defeat or personal failure may characterize the consequences of experiencing life difficulties for some. For those on the road to personal actualization, experiencing life in its entirety develops enhanced wisdom, understanding and discernment. Open-minded, progressive individuals passionately interact with the world around them not oblivious to the imperfections presented by environmental conditions. Rather, with complete cognition that, "consciousness is not limited to what occurs within the individual; it is outside as well, a reciprocal presence which is immanent in the circular relations between the individual and his or her environment"
(Perry, 1993, p. 233). We not only create ourselves, but also are continually participating in the creation of our environment and universal consciousness' with which we are inseparably bound. As Perry (1993) states, “Universal consciousness...resides at the deepest core of the human psyche as well as in every situation the individual may encounter” (p. 236). In sum, life interaction and boundless world-discovery facilitates the development of self-actualizing behaviors.

The visualization of a woman riding a bicycle remains functionally and ethically effective in conveying perceptions of self-actualization as the following poem illustrates.

**Bicycle Rider**

Teeth bare to the wind  
Knuckle-white grip on the handlebars  
You push the pedals of no return,  
Let loose new motion and speed.  
The earth turns with the multiplied  
Force of your wheels.  
Do not look back.  
Feet light on the brake  
Ride the bicycle of your will  
Down the spine of the world,  
Ahead of your time, into life  
I will not say Go Slow.  
Eugene McCarthy

McCarthy poetically describes the perceived union between bicycle imagery and subconscious perceptions of self-actualization. Quests for self-actualization demand an internal locus of force and personal empowerment. Visually illustrating such themes in connection with health issues remains ethically sound. Furthermore, communicating current social predisposition’s associated with finding oneself characterizes dominate social messages and fantasy themes today. In finding the self, one has found those roads to achieve self-mastery. In that pursuit, no one should say, ‘Go Slow’.
CHAPTER 4

VISUALIZING FAMILIES
AND PLAYING
ON FEARS

Pictures play a major role in formulating and processing persuasive messages. As already stated throughout this thesis, reliance on pictures makes sense in developing effective advertising formats given that we have become a visually oriented society. Images elicit emotional responses and act prove as catalysts in examining individual levels of consciousness. Mitchell (1986) reports that positive and negative affect-laden pictures can alter audiences’ attitudes without affecting product beliefs. Findings opposing this view suggest that pictures and images generating emotional affects, “involves a direct transfer of affect from the picture to the product, as suggested by classical conditioning principles” (Miniard, Bhatla, Lord, Dickson and Unnava, 1991, p. 92). This line of reasoning suggests a decline in persuasiveness ratings in relation to negative-affect images.

The following analysis of this Pravachol advertisement examines the transfer of affect to product using the dominant theme of dependence and the emotional appeal of fear. Interpretations of images that portray dependence vary depending on the various standpoints of the visual critic and the cognitive, conscious processes at play. This theme
is also generated partially by the nature of the physical condition Pravachol users tend to exhibit. This chapter begins with a discussion explaining the presenting elements in the Pravachol advertisement. The processing of these presented elements in the codes of main character, setting and plot follows. The final section in this chapter examines the theme and function of dependence. Creating image functions are accomplished through a myriad of visual and persuasive strategies, one being the utilization of fear tactics. Accordingly, examining the ethics of fear appeals, as illustrated in this advertisement, concludes this chapter. Conclusions indicate an interdependence between various standpoints, individual consciousness and the ethical judgements which follow.

The preceding chapters offer visual interpretations of two different images for each prescription drug. The advertisements for Zyrtec and Flonase were evenly disseminated and characterized by both of the included images in each chapter and their subsequent analyses. Consequently, analyses of both images for Zyrtec and Flonase are essential in examining the social messages infiltrating the social unconscious. The advertising images for Pravachol, in contrast, almost exclusively followed the same format with the exception of two different images. The frequency count showed ten images over a two-year period advertising Pravachol. Eight of these ten images are similar, the analysis of the stated image following. However, two images differed in that these two images each pictured an elderly woman. In the first advertisement a woman is smiling while playing tennis. The second advertisement depicts an older woman smiling into the camera while standing in a large swimming pool. The assessment of these images led to central themes denoting self-actualization and self-determination in relation to personal well-being and personal health. In that this theme has been analyzed in the
previous chapters, a thorough analysis of these images is redundant. Furthermore, as a conduit for the dissemination of social messages, the following image proves more influential in effecting audiences because of its prevalence.

The presenting images in this advertisement are located at the bottom half of the page. These elements include three birthday cards sitting on top of a mahogany table. At the far right of the table, behind the cards is a green vase holding seven, tall peach-colored roses. The card standing in front of the vase and slightly to the right has three balloons above a caption reading, ‘Dad, Happy Birthday’. Adjacent to this card is another birthday card reading, ‘happy birthday, I love you!’. This card appears to be from a young child because of the brightly colored rainbow that is embellished with sunrays and flowers. The print on this card is also cheerfully decorated with primary colors and a large clumsy print, reminiscent of a child’s handwriting. Behind this card and slightly to the right is another birthday card reading, ‘You’re Everything to Me, Happy Birthday’. This card differs from the previous two cards because of its emphasis on subtle tones and a refined navy-colored type. In the center of this card is a picture of two sunshine-yellow flowers. A muted olive and chestnut patterned wallpaper adds a comfortable touch, enhanced by a clock sitting just behind the last mentioned card.

Above this image in large white text reads the phrase, You’d give your life for them, but that’s not what they want. They just want you to stay healthy’. The spatial distance between text and image are proportionately balanced, with the above mentioned phrase covering the same amount of space as the picture portion of the advertisement. The entire page is enclosed with a dark, copper-colored background, forming a border around the perimeter of the picture. This same copper background also provides an
effective color-contrast emphasizing the stated caption. Securing audience attention is also accomplished by particular image layout. Placing the text above the pictures lends the verbal message interaction primacy. Viewers initially process the verbal phrase and then naturally follow the eye to the presenting images below. This focus on the rhetorical portion of the advertisement develops the main character for the Pravachol advertisement.

While the preceding chapters and analyses visually provided a main character manifested in the presenting elements of the images, the main character in this image is implied in the text. The verbal emphasis in the top caption of this advertisement and the corresponding card references indicate that a man is the main character for this image. These messages further denote that this implied main character holds the dual roles of father and husband. The setting for this image, possibly a hall table or home office desk furthers implications about the main character. The visual critic can not see this man but must make inferences about him based on the contextual cues provided by the interior setting of a seeming beautifully decorated and clean home.

The verbal portion of this advertisement indicates interpersonal relationships based on the traditional family archetype. The inclusion of flowers communicates attention to home decorating and beautification while the reflection of the cards on the glossy table signifies an affinity for the home. This visual arrangement denotes a setting found in the interior of a traditional American home. While the suggested element of setting remains clear, visualization of the main character remains ambiguous. Cognition of male roles and the inherent, “variations that exist among men in relation to class, race and sexuality” facilitates analysis of the main character (Kimmel & Messner, 1995, p. xi).
Defining Men

In describing predetermined biases regarding male-standards of being, sociologist Erving Goffman (1963) stated:

In an important sense there is only one complete unblushing male in America: a young, married, white, urban, northern, heterosexual Protestant father of college education, fully employed, of good complexion, weight, and height...Every American male tends to look out upon the world from this perspective...Any male who fails to qualify in any one of these ways is likely to view himself...as unworthy. (p. 128)

In viewing this image, it is impossible to determine if the main character fits the description of a, “complete unblushing male” as Goffman (1963) describes (p. 128).

Moreover, perspectives of men and male roles have transformed significantly since the time Stigma was published. In stands to be mentioned, however that while his definition of a ‘worthy’ man seem distorted by today’s standards, such cultural prejudices continue to plague America. Profiles and theories regarding the roles of fathers and husbands remain diverse depending upon the socio-cultural constructs and predetermined standpoints of the visual critic.

The peripheral textual cues making references to love in the child’s card and the insinuation of completion, as represented in the phrase, You’re Everything to Me’ in the wife’s card are visual implications of a functional, traditional family structure. Models of effective, functional families often adhere to theories and behaviors found under the umbrella of an androgynous scheme. Androgynous families are characterized by an overriding goal to sustain equality in familial tasks and decision-making responsibilities.
For example, men in androgynous family schemes help with child rearing tasks that were traditionally left solely to women. Accordingly, Rotundo (1985) states:

A good father is an active participant in the details of day to day childcare. He involves himself in a more expressive and intimate way with his children, and he plays a larger part in the socialization process that his male forebears had long since abandoned to their wives. (p. 17)

Writing on the history of fatherhood in the United States, Joseph Pleck (1987) contends that there have been three distinct phases through which modern fatherhood has passed. From the early nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries the father was characterized as the distant breadwinner. Between 1940 and 1965 there was the father as sex role model. Since 1965 Pleck (1987) contends that there has emerged a new father, differing from previous fathers because of a renewed interest in nurturing roles. As LaRossa (1988) claims however, this nurturing father, “is more imagined than real” (p. 449). Concurring with this, Pleck (1987) concedes that his historical analysis is based on the history of the, “dominant images of fatherhood” (p. 84). The effectiveness of this image in influencing consumer decisions is subject to predetermined constructs of traditional families. If a positive-affect is generated from viewing an image denoting a traditional family setting, the transfer of that affect from image to product may increase persuasiveness ratings. In contrast, visual critics in processing such images may experience a negative-affect in relation to image. Under this circumstance, image effectiveness will decline.
Traditional Family Archetypes: Fantasy or Reality?

As Ivy and Yaktus (1996) claim, “Perceptions of individual family members appear to be influenced by the interactional context from which they are generated” (p. 101). In that family interactions have adhered to androgynous models, images promoting family cohesion will remain persuasive and positive affect will be transferred to the product, Pravachol. However, if unequal divisions of power characterize family interactions, images promoting the traditional family will remain futile. This image may prove persuasive for viewers that prescribe to androgynous fathering and partnering roles, or for participants in functional traditional family constructs. The arrangement of presenting images does not visually create a message that people outside traditional family constructs can relate to.

Image plot rests on the foundation of the traditional family. Dichotomizing perceptions regarding interpretations of the traditional family warrant discussion in interpreting this plot. Through the lenses of feminist discourse, the idea of the traditional family conjures images of unequal power distributions that often lead to various levels of psychological, physical and emotional abuse. As stated by Woods (1997), “One of the most important institutions shaping cultural consciousness, including perspectives on violence, is the family” (p. 331). Gender consciousness, the recognition of stereotyped self-concepts, influences family interactions. Recognizing the socialization processes and institutional constructs that confine people into rigid gendered roles will, “lay bare the socio-cultural and psychic roots of gender inequality” (Sanchez and Thomson, 1997, p. 750), while encouraging a more androgynous family dynamic.
Other lines of research maintain that the idea of the traditional family is a fantasy. According to Bruce (1995) the idea that the family:

Is a stable and cohesive unit in which father serves as economic provider and mother serves as emotional caregiver is a myth. The reality is that trends like unwed motherhood, rising divorce rates, smaller households and the feminization of poverty are not unique to America, but are occurring worldwide. (p. 3)

Ivey and Yaktus (1996) concur with this when comparing the expectations of traditional family expectations versus the reality of lived, family experiences:

The profound discrepancies that exist between traditional androcentric expectations and the real-life demands found in contemporary families is a source of significant individual and relationship difficulty. (p. 97)

They go on to explain that the majority of contemporary families, “appear abnormal or dysfunctional when perceived through the prevailing andocentric epistemology” (Ivey & Yaktus, 1996, p. 97) of the traditional family archetype. Groups appearing ‘abnormal’ or ‘dysfunctional’ based on this dominating epistemology include, “most immigrants, Mexican Americans, African Americans, rural families, the urban poor” and homosexual partners because there are significant, “contradictions between image and reality in the middle-class family ideal” (Coontz, 1996, p. 47).

While perceptions of the traditional family archetypes prove problematic and even fantasy-related for many, other groups tenaciously assert the value of the traditional family, basing much of their arguments on scientific findings and biological truths. In 1978 Mary Leakey discovered the first human footprints, approximately 3.6 million years
old. These footprints, found in a fossil lava bed indicate, "two creatures walking upright, between four and five feet tall, one larger than the other, apparently a male and a female" (Zinsmeister, 1997, p. 28). Author William Tucker summarizes these findings, as stated by Zinsmeister (1997):

The nuclear family was not invented in Europe in the eighteenth century nor in Europe of the eighth century, nor even Ancient Egypt of the eighteen century BC. When the first diminutive human-like creatures walked on the planet three and a half million years ago, they had already formed the nuclear family. (p. 28)

Other rationalizations for the perpetuation and preservation of the nuclear family include discussions comparing humans and mammals. A case in point, monkey infants can navigate independently and newborn horses can run away from danger just a few hours after birth while other animals can, "hunt, dig, swim or fly within days of their arrival into the world" (Zinsmeister, 1997, p. 29). Human young, in contrast, "remain utterly helpless for an extended period, unable to control their own temperature, see clearly, grasp, or roll over" (Zinsmeister, 1997, p. 29). This level of helplessness and dependence is augmented by human complexity. The creation of a competent person demands years of intensive acculturation coupled with a commitment to personal development. As Zinsmeister (1997) claims, "the traditional family provides a way of capturing the energy of the male parent as well as the female, and channeling it into the rearing of the dependent young (p. 31). Similar arguments defending the nuclear family advocate it as a natural, biological necessity.
Deliberations on Dependence

In sum, visual critics basing their visions of family reality on such standpoints or those who have experienced positive family interactions will experience positive affect when viewing the Pravachol image. Conversely, those who regard the traditional family as a mythical and institutionally created construct may, depending upon their particular standpoints and past lived realities, experience a negative affect related to image interpretation. Under this premise, interpreting visual compositions that communicate the function of dependence will vary on past family dynamics and perceptions of family reality. Visual lenses perceiving an intrinsic value in traditional family structures may be influenced by themes of family dependence, while those regarding the traditional family reality as problematic will disregard appeals of family dependence. As stated by Cherry and Matsumura (1998), “Family is at the heart of human life” (p. 25). Our family experiences shape our lives, enabling us to give meaning to life and to the visual dimensions of our realities. As such, ethical judgements of visual messages denoting the central theme of dependence is subject to the various standpoints, lived experiences and individual perceptions of family reality.

Profits in Fear Induction: The Ethical Implications

In explaining the Aristotelian approach to persuasion, Ryan (1992) states, “Emotional appeals are potent persuaders for both good and evil ends” (p.15). Such a statement warrants discussion on the ethical implications of denoting family dependence through utilization of fear as an emotional ploy. The implied fear in the Pravachol image,
being the death of the main character and the ensuing implications for the mourning dependents. Findings from Terwillinger (1962) suggest:

> The more strongly fear is aroused by a warning communication, the more strongly motivated the person will become to avoid symbolic responses and thought sequences which lead him to recall or to focus his attention on the essential content of the arguments and conclusions. (p. 409)

Other research concurring with Terwillinger’s (1962) findings found that utilizing fear strategies induces various levels of fear arousal. These varied levels of fear arousal generate various effectiveness ratings relative to influencing audiences. Accordingly, Keller and Block (1996) found that low-fear appeals produce a significant gain in conformity while medium appeals generated a marginally significant increase in product conformity” (Keller & Block, 1996, p. 450). Specifically, high-fear appeals are characterized by personalized language, such as ‘this can happen to you’ (Keller & Block, 1996, p. 450).

Coinciding with these findings, the Pravachol image visually produces a high-fear appeal by emphasizing the term ‘you’. Verbally alluding to the implied main character, a father and husband, losing his life while juxtaposing imagery denoting the celebration of life elicits a high-fear response. When utilizing high-fear appeals, findings indicate that, "increasing the level of problem elaboration increases the extent to which the recipient will engage in defensive tendencies such as message avoidance” (Keller & Block, 1996, p. 456). In that high-fear appeals have been found to be ineffective in persuading audiences, using such format in promoting life-saving medication remains questionable at best. Promoting treatments that may strengthen and empower people physically remains
futile if the persuasive strategy used creates defensive cognitive processes of message avoidance. As such, ethical judgements of subconsciously inducing high levels of fear in at-risk heart patients remains clearly unprincipled and ultimately immoral.

Considering Family Reality and Imagery

Image interpretation and ethical judgements of message appropriateness depend on the emotional affect elicited in the Pravachol advertisement. As Miniard et al. (1991) claim, “picture-based persuasion should become less potent as involvement increases” (p. 93). The level of involvement between audience and image depends on the myriad factors encompassed in the various standpoints, lived experiences and individualized perceptions of reality, which characterize current diversified audiences, and the particular image under scrutiny. Visual messages communicating themes of dependence and traditional family values to audiences with heart-risk conditions through utilization of hear appeals remain highly problematic. These emotional appeals not only elicit negative-affect towards image but to product as well. The natural, subconscious tendency to minimize fears by discounting the particular condition or discrediting available treatments de-legitimizes use of visual high-fear appeals in connection with health related products.

Images that communicate, “family commitment as not merely biological”, but instead as a construct resting on the complex foundations of affinity, trust and emotional commitment grants visual audiences a less deterministic and rigid system to fit into (Matsumura, 1998, p. 25). Within this visual construct audiences are afforded more options in findings themselves. With increased opportunity comes increased freedom and
in this freedom, fears are alleviated and the visual critic becomes more easily persuaded. 

Impressions of the traditional family archetype are imprinted in the fabric of Western 
Consciousness. The numerous experiences that co-create specific family dynamics and 
the extent to which family life determines individual consciousness mystify 
interpretations and effectiveness ratings of family-life imagery. Implementing the 
Visualization model illustrates the fantasy of a single, universal reality as related to 
family experiences and the subsequent varied perceptions and interpretations of visual 
messages under the domain of the traditional family archetype.
CHAPTER 5

CONSIDERING VISUAL INTERPRETATIONS OF
SOCIAL KNOWLEDGE: PERCEPTIONS OF
THE COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS

In 1970 Foucalt claimed that a discursive formation is the code of a culture. This
discursive formation governs “its language, its schemas of perception, its exchanges, its
techniques, its values, the hierarchy of its practices” (Foucalt, 1970, p.xx). Discursive or
rhetorical information is both verbal and visual. A key premise of this study is that the
visual dimension simultaneously mirrors and augments social knowledge by opening
windows to the collective unconscious. Within this collective unconscious, realities and
fantasies are created and actualized. As Foss (1996) asserts the visual domain is the,
“characteristic system and structure of networks that define the conditions for the
possibility of knowledge or for the worldview of an age” (p.204). Visual images
communicate the perceptions of social realities and social fantasies associated with
particular worldviews.

Visual images have both meaning and purpose. They are meaningful in that, “as
derivatives of consciousness, they symbolize habitual states of mind, and they are
purposive in that they frequently provide the stimulus for growth to higher and more
complex states of awareness” (Perry, 1993, p. 225). Research unlocking doors to higher
states of awareness through exploration of the collective unconscious expands society's knowledge bases. A society's stock of knowledge, "including its fundamental world view or image of itself and others, is selectively constructed by a functional system of relevant or familiar practices and is mass produced in its social transcript" (Vhang, Wang & Chen, 1998, p. 278). The social transcript scrutinized in this study is the visual domain, namely, the most prevalent advertising images found in the previously described study sample.

Advertising imagery is characterized by attention to arrangement of, "colors, forms, images, textures and other elements in a manner that affects or evokes a response" (Foss, 1996, p. 204). Deliberate attempts to evoke emotional or intellectual responses hold the primary goal of influencing others'. Ethninger (1972) maintains, "I see visual images as forms of rhetoric that attempt, as does discursive rhetoric, to influence others' thinking and behavior through the strategic use of symbols" (p. 3). As previously stated, examining visual messages influencing the collective unconscious and shaping worldviews remains critical for communication scholars. Cohen (1994) affirms, "Communication scholars have emphasized that audiences may gain social power by resisting, opposing, or critically engaging with mass mediated messages" (p. 99). Social empowerment is the ability and power to consciously create and choose among the different possibilities of knowledge, meaning, identities, and behaviors (Cohen, 1994, p. 104). The primary goal of this study was the critical engagement of the visual critic with prevalent visual messages disseminated in wide, public interest magazines. Critical engagement with these influential images promotes social empowerment by offering a new method for discerning the social constructive capabilities of audiences. In sum,
examining visual images and the correlating relationship of these images with the collective unconscious increases social knowledge. To this end, fantasy themes actualize and reality construction becomes more easily manageable.

Explanations of the Visualization Model

The Visualization model, a compilation of Fosses’ (1994) schema for the evaluation of visual images and elements of Bormann’s (1982) fantasy theme analysis, provided the method for the critical examination of visual images. This model also served as a tool in analyzing the advertisements for Zyrtec, Flonase and Pravachol while illustrating the inherent interdependence of visual images, social knowledge and individual interpretations. As Vhang, Wang and Chen (1998) contend, “The content and validity of social knowledge are ultimately tied to the general interests and common experiences in society” (p. 278). Accordingly, using the Visualization model as a framework for examining common visual experiences in general interest magazines opens previously closed doors of social understanding.

The implementation of this model allowed for personal interpretation, which contributes to and augments current cognition’s of social reality. Considering the exponential growth in knowledge today, both the physical and social sciences are increasingly re-examining the philosophies of knowledge development and research practices. According to Smith (1995), “More and more, accepted knowledge bases, establishing perspectives on truth, and traditionally held belief systems are being called into question and re-evaluated in light of dramatic new understandings of the universe” (p. 402). Consequently, systematic visual models aimed at understanding the universe
appear to be useful to the critic who further pursues this visual method of evaluating current social realities and fantasies. Ultimately, generating new visual theories expands current knowledge bases, even when such theories are based upon individual interpretation. Smith (1995) affirms, “An individual’s own personal theology, spirituality, or conscious awareness serves as a theory base” (p. 410). Information in the field of psychology confirms the need to explore non-traditional methods for accumulating information.

Developing Knowledge

Another way to conceptualize this study is in terms of psi phenomenon which illustrate the limitations in current scientific research methods of information development. According to Perry (1993), “Psi phenomena can be defined as organism-environment interactions in which it appears that information or influence has occurred that cannot be explained through science’s understanding of sensory-motor channels” (p. 203). Explanation of the obstacles hindering information development is found in simple awareness of the structure and function of societies and cultures. Organizational culture is simultaneously subjective and objective. In other words, “there is no organizational event that can be isolated and analyzed in terms other than the interpretations that the subjects involved assign to it” (Strati, 1998, p. 1384). As such, interpretations offered by the individual perceptions of the visual critic, while not rooted in quantifiable theories, expands social knowledge by opening windows to the collective unconscious. In seeking to discern world experiences visual communication scholars augment current knowledge bases by connecting visual images to social consciousness. In this way, the Visualization
model encourages the exploration of the unconscious which ultimately determines perceptions of reality and fantasy.

Every individual interpretation, however, does not facilitate the expansion of academic knowledge. Accordingly, knowledge expansion is contingent on the visual critic adhering to organizational schemas that promote intellectual exploration. The Visualization model provides such a schema. Furthermore, following the guidelines set by this model bridle streams of consciousness, which may be interesting, yet insufficient in furthering valid knowledge bases. Preservation of genuine academic exploration is also achieved in the examination of visual imagery by the object or image under scrutiny. As Foss (1996) asserts, “A viewer’s interpretation is limited by the actual object itself” (p. 206). Consequently, the following conclusions and predominate themes found when analyzing the prescription drug advertisements for Zyrtec, Flonase and Pravachol are based on individual perceptions, yet framed by adherence to the Visualization model.

Prevalent Fantasies and Collective Realities

The following central themes were found when evaluating the advertisements for Zyrtec, Flonase and Pravachol. The Zyrtec advertisements focused primarily on environmental issues or self-determination themes, contingent upon the perceptual lenses and individual standpoints of the visual critic. The first Flonase advertisement, analyzed in chapter three, communicated themes relating to issues of propaganda and persuasion. The second Flonase advertisement generated themes focusing on self-actualization and freedom through leisure activities. The final analysis, examining the Pravachol advertisement, produced themes relative to men’s roles, family life and issues of
dependence. The prevalence of visual messages denoting themes of self-actualization establishes this central theme as a key finding in this study. Self-determination and the ability to achieve a sense of mental freedom through participation in leisure activities are essential ingredients in the pursuit of self-actualization.

Visual critics generate meaning from images in using the perceptive processes produced from individualized interpretations and specific standpoints. These standpoints aid in forming broad philosophical meanings from various visual images. The composite of all the major themes found in the stated advertising images generate meanings that stem from past lived experiences. Furthermore, advertising images simultaneously reflect and expand on current worldviews. At the brink of the new millennium, nostalgia and introspection characterize many of the thought processes and subsequent interpretations of today's audiences. The 1980s is a decade marked by fierce competition for scarce resources. The baby-boom generation, in their fight to attain those scarce resources constituting the American dream, left many uncertainties and ideological dilemmas in their path. The near extinction of many necessary environmental resources, the demise of the American family coupled with a growing awareness of media tactics illustrates those ideological predicaments perplexing current generations, or generation x. As such, imagery denoting and expanding on these issues affects visual audiences, thus ensuring image effectiveness.

Another theme found in the analysis portion of this thesis focuses on holistic worldviews and Eastern philosophies. The fundamental principles found in holistic models provides another avenue for introspection and world understanding. Environmental exigencies are on the rise. Defining the family and resolving ideological
dilemmas in family role responsibilities have taken a precedent in cultural understanding. Furthermore, the growing technologically-based information society coupled with the omnipresence of media input calls attention to issues of trust and ethical modes of persuasion. In synthesizing these themes and examining the effects of current cultural trends, collective audiences need to become more self-actualized. In this attempt at self-actualization, people often look at other worldviews in search of understanding as seen in the discussions related to holistic models. In sum, the principal theme of self-actualization emerged from the actual advertising images under scrutiny, and from the affiliation of the remaining themes previously mentioned. These findings call attention to the message formulating abilities of both the individual visual critic and the collective unconscious of mass media audiences. As such, in an attempt to further social understanding of prevalent visual messages, the following sections will examine patterns of self-actualization and the corresponding influence of the collective unconscious.

Patterns of the Self-Actualized

As previously mentioned, images denoting the theme of self-determination or self-actualization surfaced during this study. Advertising formats rely on formulating images that reach and influence the collective unconscious. Accordingly, reliance on images denoting themes of self-actualization prove effective because, “intrinsic motivation and self-determination are basic to the human condition” (Perry, 1993, p. 215). Self-actualization proves fundamental to human development. Visual schemas communicating these themes remain influential because they elicit a response from the collective conscious of human experience.
The transpersonal position offers another method for conceptualizing issues of self-actualization. This hypothesis assumes that everyone has impulses toward an ultimate state and that these impulses are continuous whether or not an individual is aware of them at any given time (Smith, 1995, p. 402). Reed (1987) describes these impulses as "a human propensity toward transcendence" (p. 335). Transcending to an ultimate state, described by Maslow (1968) as self-actualization, is an infinite process of realizing and expanding upon one's full human potential. The extraction of this theme from the study population of visual images expands current bases of social knowledge while explaining current social realities. Advertising industries, studying the effects of effective image formats, manipulate images denoting self-actualization because it speaks to large groups of people on a level of consciousness that may initially seem obscure. Thus, awareness of these visual formats, their function and subsequent influential ability empowers audiences.

Promoting and manipulating visual imagery denoting self-actualization themes remains ethical, because in pursuing this state of consciousness or self-enlightenment, "people experience themselves in the utmost depths of their psyche" (Walsh & Vaughan, 1982, p. 52). Experiencing psychological discernment awakens the visual critic or audience from any single reality, thus recognizing the relativity and broader social meaning of the visual image under investigation (Smith, 1995, p. 408). Perception, in other words, is not the grasping of an external, objective reality, but the creation of one (Perry, 1993, p. 219). The perceptions of visual critic, during this study, created a theoretical reality or fantasy theme from the stated advertising images based on issues of self-actualization. Cognizance of the predominance of this theme in influencing
audiences empowers people, granting insight into current visual depictions of social constructs.

Reflecting on the Collective Unconscious

The Visualization model can also be applied to research investigating the connection between images and the collective unconscious. Forming broad philosophical interpretations from advertising images stem from the recognition and subsequent processing of meanings housed in the collective subconscious. According to Walsh and Vaughan (1982), consciousness is viewed as being:

considerably greater, and potentially available at any time, should the defensive contraction be relaxed. The fundamental perspective on growth is therefore one of letting go of this defensive contraction and removing obstacles to the recognition of the expanded, ever-present potential through quieting the mind and reducing perceptual distortion. (p. 48)

Implementation of the Visualization model aids in removing perceptual distortion by relaxing and focusing the mind. Actual interface with the elements of the image is accomplished by separating the presenting elements and processing the suggested elements. Following these guidelines provides a methodology that focuses the visual critic’s attention to the singular task of evaluating the actual images, thus allowing insights from the collective unconscious to surface.

The subjectivity of the visual dimension encourages individualized perceptive interpretations of what is real and where meaning lies. However, these individual perceptions prove more consistent than one would initially assume. As Strati (1998)
contends, "Conscious perception is an act of recognition; it is a coupling of an object with a background constituted by the appropriate symbol" (p. 1380). The background from which an object is interpreted is the unconscious mind at work. The organization of the collective unconscious and its relationship with perceptive processes is rooted in theories on transpersonal psychology.

Carl Gustav Jung, a pioneer in transpersonal psychology, saw the unconscious as a creative intelligent principle. Accordingly, Jung (1960), "recognized that in the individuation process humans can transcend the narrow boundaries of the ego and the personal conscious and connect with the Self and the cosmos" (p. 188). Such theories call attention to the organizational abilities of the collective unconscious. Universal interpretations from audiences of seemingly subjective visual scripts provides evidence of a connection between individual visual critics unconscious perceptions. Future research, implementing the Visualization model would illustrate the union between cognitive image processing and the collective unconscious. While individual lived experiences and various standpoints, unequivocally influence visual interpretations, there is also confirmation of the unconscious mind breaking through ego boundaries, allowing for generalizable and universal cognitions' of visual images. As Perry (1993) affirms, "In emerging cognitive models there is ever increasing support for the unconscious mind as a complex information processing system which sorts data, makes decisions, and influences behavior in a highly intelligent and purposeful way" (p. 215). Using the Visualization model in conjunction with these research findings proves instrumental to advertiser's in their pursuit to create universally influential messages and images.
Defining Reality and Fantasy

As previously stated, the collective unconscious formulates meanings and processes visual messages and images similarly on certain levels. However, the assumption is that the experiences of those within this collective unconscious have been similarly based. There are values, themes and meanings that transcend cultural boundaries because they appeal to larger issues of humanity. However, as this study hopes to portray, individual life experiences dictate those perceptions housed in the collective unconscious. Accordingly, one person’s reality may be another person’s fantasy, depending upon individual standpoints and various lived experiences. Findings in the analysis section of the Zyrtec advertisement illustrate this fact. Depending upon the perceptual lenses and varied standpoints of the visual critic, themes denoting environmental domination or self-actualization emerge from the same visual advertisement. While issues of reality and fantasy may not denote actuality, the visual domain provides a place where realities and fantasies can be expressed, understood and investigated.

The concept of the construction of organizational reality through the negotiation of symbolic universes questions, “notions of mythical thought which evades the truth/false dilemma” (Strati, 1998, p. 1380). Organizational culture illustrates the inherent contradiction in dichotomizing issues of truth and falsehood or reality and fantasy because such realities are expressed through the negotiation of subjective symbols. The interpretation of those symbols is often misunderstood, misrepresented and overwhelmingly uniquely perceived. Therefore, the concepts of reality and fantasy are principle conceptual tools used in gaining understanding of life. As Strati (1998) claims,
"They provide subtle, deep insights into eventual changes and illustrations of everyday organizational life" (p. 1379). However, fantasy and reality are not separate or distinct elements. Rather, fantasy and reality are illusions of actuality, simultaneously imaginary and real, depending on the perceptive lenses of the visual critic. According to Abravanel (1983):

Fantasies are double systems, providing glimpses of what is actual and what is feigned. In this ubiquity, its point of departure is constituted the arrival of a meaning. To keep a spatial metaphor...the signification of the fantasy is constituted at once as an intellective signifier and simultaneously imagery, arbitrary and all the while, natural. (p. 209)

The reality, fantasy dichotomy renders all the contradictions and inconsistencies of organizational ideologies manageable while providing an explanation and methodology for examining the visual dimension. Ultimately, the terms fantasy and reality prove valuable in understanding cultural processes. Furthermore, depending upon the visual critic's particular standpoints these terms prove inherently interchangable.

Final Considerations

No writer can control interpretations of his or her work (Lewis, 1993, p. 781). Therefore, replication, as a normal test of validity for experimentally derived knowledge seems appropriate. As Babbie (1986) mentions, repeating academic studies helps avoid overgeneralization. The present study confirms the role and interdependence of image, visual critic and collective unconscious in determining and expanding knowledge bases through reconciliation of what is real and where fantasy lies. However, replication with a
larger number of visual images from various, widely disseminated media sources will augment social knowledge while granting relevance to this study. This study dealt strictly with the images published in the pages of two major American published magazines. Future research replicating this study and expanding on the Visualization model may assess social messages and the construction of social reality in medium's other than advertising imagery. Also, the major presenting images manifested in each advertisement determined the criteria for evaluation. Future research may be more specific in analyzing specific variables, such as the manipulation of color schemes or camera angles. Relying too heavily on specific codes and variables limits social inquiry, however. Strict rationality holds dangerously deceptive qualities. It must be adjusted with far less tangible things like eager open-mindedness, sensitivity, insight, and rigorous skepticism. We must always be exploring and discovering that which lies beyond the rational, inside and outside ourselves (Wipond, 1998, p. 10).

As stated by Cassirier (1963), “Knowledge is mediated by the universe of symbols, and cultures are constituted by symbolic textures” (p. 29). Visual interpretation requires an understanding of the relationship between culture and symbolic processes. Cognizance of this relationship allows the visual critic to assign broader philosophical meanings to common visual representations and images. Images show the evolution of the human psyche into high levels of awareness. Their omnipresence attests that they have become the focus around which knowledge circles. The circle widens, consciousness expands and freedom increases as the evolving complexity of the psyche reflects and deliberates on the visual imagery defining our culture (Perry, 1993, p. 241). In sum, the discernment of civilizations is achieved in exploring arts, words and images.
APPENDIX I

VISUALIZATION MODEL
VISUALIZATION MODEL

Identification of Presenting Images

Cognitive Processing of Presenting Elements

Main Character Setting

Plot

Suggested Elements

Conception of Image

FUNCTION
Major concept, themes and perceptions as named by the visual critic
APPENDIX II

ADVERTISING IMAGES
Feel like yourself again.
Ask your doctor about new Zyrtec.

No other prescription medicine proven effective for both seasonal and year-round allergies plus chronic itching and hives.
BIG ALLERGIES.
BIG RELIEF.

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BIGGER
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Nasal allergy sufferers:

**FLONASE** unstuffs your nose.

Daily Bugle

NOSE CLEARED!

WHAT A RELIEF!
FLONASE: Nasal Allergy Checklist

- STUFFY
- SNEEZY
- ITCHY
- RUNNY

Now check out FLONASE.

Ask your doctor about the nasal spray that relieves all of your allergy symptoms — all day and all night.
YOU'D GIVE YOUR LIFE FOR THEM.
BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT THEY WANT.
APPENDIX III

MAGAZINE DATA
## PRESCRIPTION DRUG ADVERTISEMENTS

### PEOPLE MAGAZINE

1996 – 1998

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None

September 7, 1998
None

June 15, 1998
[Cartoon] Prilosec (heartburn)
PRESCRIPTION DRUG ADVERTISEMENTS

TIME MAGAZINE

1996 - 1998

January 8, 1996
[B] Cardizem (high blood pressure)
[B] Dovonex (psoriasis)
[F] Zantac (heartburn)
[F] Sporanox (toe nails)

February 19, 1996
[F] Claritin (allergies)
[F] Imitrex (migraine)
[M] Zantac (heartburn)

March 25, 1996
[F] Seldane (allergies)

April 1, 1996
[F] Effexor (depression)
[None] Zyrtec (allergies)

May 6, 1996
[None] Zantac (heartburn)

June 24, 1996
[B] Eulexin (prostate cancer)
[F] Renova (emollient cream)

July 15, 1996
[B] Havrix (hepatitis)
[F] Renova (emollient cream)
[F] Diflucan (yeast infection)

August 5, 1996
[F] Zyrtec (allergies)

September 9, 1996
[B] Havrix (hepatitis)
[None] Zantac (heartburn)

Fall Special Issue, 1996
[F] Imitrex (migraine)
[F] Serevant (allergies)
[None] Flonase (allergies)
[F] Valtrex (herpes)
[None] Zantac (heartburn)

October 14, 1996
[F] Naprelan (arthritis)
[F] Serevent (asthma)

November 25, 1996
[F] Zocor (high cholesterol)
[F] Imitrex (migraine)

December 16, 1996
[None] Hytrin (prostate cancer)

January 6, 1997
[F] Lodine (allergies)
[Baby] Cardura (prostate cancer)
[M] Zocor (cholesterol)
[F] Imitrex (migraine)
February 17, 1997
[None] Pravachol (cholesterol)
[F] Flonase (allergies)
[F] Serevent (asthma)
[None] Allegra (allergies)

April 21, 1997
[Cartoon] Prilosec (heartburn)
[F] Claritin (allergies)
[None] Atrovent (nasal spray)

June 9, 1997
[F] Allegra (allergies)

August 4, 1997
[None] Valtrex (herpes)
[Cartoon] Prozac (depression)

October 13, 1997
[Cartoon] Prilosec (heartburn)
[Cartoon] Prozac (depression)

December 15, 1997
None

February 2, 1998
[F] Claritin (allergies)

April 27, 1998
[F] Flonase (allergies)
[M] Propecia (hair loss)

June 15, 1998
[F] Glaxowell (herpes)

August 17, 1998
[B] Viagra (erectile dysfunction)

March 3, 1997
[Baby] Cardura (prostate cancer)
[None] Allegra (allergies)

May 5, 1997
[F] Serevent (asthma)
[B] H Pylori (ulcers)
[Cartoon] Prilosec (heartburn)

July 28, 1997
[B] Allegra (allergies)
[None] Pravachol (cholesterol)

September 29, 1997
[None] Valtrex (herpes)
[F] Flonase (allergies)

Fall Special Issue, 1997
[F] Imitrex (migraine)
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[F] Serevent (asthma)
[F] Zofran (chemotherapy)
[F] Valtrex (herpes)
[F] Flonase (allergies)
[None] Zyban (smoking)

January 19, 1998
None

March 16, 1998
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May 11, 1998
[M] Propecia (hair loss)
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July 13, 1998
[M] Zyrtec (allergies)
[B] Rexulin (diabetes)

September 28, 1998
[F] Pravachol (cholesterol)
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PEOPLE MAGAZINE

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REFERENCES


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VITA

Graduate College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Julie Dianne Fisher

Local Address:
5070 River Glen Drive
Las Vegas, Nevada 89103

Home Address:
5527 Via Conejo NE
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87111

Degrees:
Bachelor of Arts, Communications, 1997
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Special Honors and Awards:
Lambda Pi Eta Communication Honor Society

Thesis Title: Prescription Drug Advertisements as Fantasies: A Cultural Critique Using A Visualization Model

Thesis Examination Committee:
Chairperson, Dr. Lawrence Mullen, Ph.D.
Committee Member, Dr. Tony Ferri, Ph.D.
Committee Member, Dr. Leesa Dillman, Ph.D.
Graduate Faculty Representative, Dr. Barbara Brents, Ph.D.