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## Research study on laddering technique in depth interviews on alcoholic beverage consumption and brand preferences

Mohammed Saleh Aloulaqi

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RESEARCH STUDY ON LADDERING TECHNIQUE IN DEPTH  
INTERVIEWS ON ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONSUMPTION  
AND BRAND PREFERENCES

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A Thesis  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
in  
Interdisciplinary Studies

---

by  
Mohammed Saleh Aloulaqi

June 2003

RESEARCH STUDY ON LADDERING TECHNIQUE IN DEPTH  
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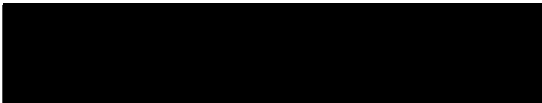
A Thesis  
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by  
Mohammed Saleh Aloulaqi

June 2003

Approved by:

  
Kevin Lamude, Chair, Communication

  
Donna Simmons, Communication

  
Nabil Razzouk, Marketing

*June 2, 2003*  
Date

## ABSTRACT

How do advertisers of the many different brands of alcoholic beverages appeal to consumers, establish a loyal consumer base, and convince these loyal consumers of benefits and positive attributes, consequences, and values of their products?

This research project addresses this issue. First, this research study will conduct a literature review to clarify with facts and evidence that drinking alcoholic beverages is a social problem in American society. Second, this research study will focus on depth interviews using the laddering technique on a small sample of eight respondents (four males, four females) who consume alcoholic beverages on a regular basis to determine linkages between the attributes (A), consequences (C), and values (V) in regards to the specific preferred product brand that each consumes.

Third, the print advertisements in magazines of these various product brands used by these respondents will be located and studied through comparative analysis using consumer behavior constructs to distinguish the advertisers' strategies to attract and appeal to their target consumer audiences. The comparative analysis of these product brand ads will examine these advertising

campaigns in regards to consumer behavior constructs, including learning, perceptions, attitudes, personality, motivation and lifestyle, and problem recognition.

Conclusions will complete this research project to demonstrate whether the depth interviews using the laddering technique exposed consumer responses about product brand choices and the reasons behind these choices match up with the advertising strategies used in the product brand print ads.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Despite many kinds of studies on the negative effects and consequences of consumption of alcoholic beverages, a lot of Americans, especially men, young and old, continue to drink. Sociology research demonstrates that the consumption of alcoholic beverages is a cultural lifestyle and way of life for many Americans. Drinking alcoholic beverages, in other words, is socially acceptable and expected at special American cultural events, like weddings, professional sports games, Christmas parties, summer parties, and any other type of informal social gathering where people are "getting loose" and "letting it all hang out."

Advertisers for alcoholic beverages obviously frame their advertising strategies, designs, graphics, and copy to appeal to Americans' positive social attitudes, perceptions, and values towards alcoholic beverages and overcome the negative barriers and obstacles. Although American law requires a disclaimer to be inserted in the advertisement that warns pregnant women about the dangers of alcohol consumption, warns all drinkers about driving under the influence of alcohol, and notes that such



beverages may cause health problems, these potential negatives are completely ignored and undermined by the advertisers' strategy and approach to the alcohol-consuming target consumers. This disclaimer is overshadowed by the colorful, attention-getting graphics, or the bold headlines, as well as the enticing copy, appealing to a consumer's cultural lifestyle or values, in relation to the consumption of alcoholic beverages. The advertisers for alcoholic beverages are therefore aiming to sell their potentially harmful, dangerous products to the mass public through an appeal to positive sociocultural tradition of drinking such products in the United States.

One question that can be raised is: How do these advertisers of the many different brands of alcoholic beverages appeal to consumers, establish a loyal consumer base, and convince these loyal consumers of benefits and positive attributes, consequences, and values of their products?

The purpose of this research study is threefold. First, this research study will conduct a literature review to clarify with facts and evidence that drinking alcoholic beverages is a social problem in American society. Second, this research study will focus on depth

interviews using the laddering technique on a small sample of eight respondents (four males, four females) who consume alcoholic beverages on a regular basis to determine linkages between the attributes (A), consequences (C), and values (V) in regards to the specific preferred product brand that each consumes. Third, the print advertisements in magazines of these various product brands used by these respondents will be located and studied through comparative analysis using consumer behavior constructs to distinguish the advertisers' strategies to attract and appeal to their target consumer audiences. The comparative analysis of these product brand ads will examine these advertising campaigns in regards to consumer behavior constructs, including learning, perceptions, attitudes, personality, motivation and lifestyle, and problem recognition. Conclusions will complete this research project to demonstrate whether the depth interviews using the laddering technique exposed consumer responses about product brand choices and the reasons behind these choices match up with the advertising strategies used in the product brand print ads.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Alcoholism as a Social Problem in the United States

Prior to examining the respondents' results from the depth interviews using the laddering technique, and the comparative analysis of the advertisers' strategies, it is critically important to frame the background information that consumption of alcoholic beverages is a social problem in this society and culture. This background information will serve to frame the respondents' attitudes, values, and perceptions of alcoholic beverage consumption, as well as the advertisers' strategies and objectives in the print advertisements, as based on sociocultural constructs and traditional assumptions and beliefs that alcoholic beverage consumption is normal and socially acceptable. This section of the research study simply provides the facts and evidence that alcoholism is a real, social problem despite the findings in regards to the attitudes and values of the respondents in this study as well as the strategy-making objectives of the advertisers of these product brands of alcoholic beverages.

Alcoholism is a social problem with consequences for both individual alcoholics and society as a whole. In the United States, drinking alcoholic beverages is a socially acceptable custom and tradition among both men and women. Young Americans learn from their parents and other adults, as well as socialization agents, like the mass media, that drinking alcoholic beverages is socially acceptable. For example, college spring breaks are now promoted as "binge drinking" opportunities and "50 hours of free drinking." (Leinwand A1). In the United States, young and old people drink for various reasons and motives. Some people drink to satisfy personal needs. Some people may enjoy the relaxation and pleasant high that accompany moderate intake. Alcohol may also help us deal with stress. Others may feel that alcohol increases awareness of themselves and their surroundings. Others drink to reduce this awareness. Many people drink to satisfy acceptance needs. For example, most Americans use alcohol to celebrate holidays and special occasions, to observe certain traditions and ceremonies, and to facilitate group interaction. Drinking is known to lower the inhibitions and anxieties of group members and therefore promotes social interaction and group solidarity. Because drinking is both a personal and shared value, drinking by some

members of the group allows the others to feel more comfortable with their own decision to drink. When examining the facts and evidence, alcoholism in the United States is a social problem.

Psychologically, drinking behaviors are also partially caused by the influence of society. Americans are exposed to alcohol use in a subtle, constant, pervasive, and enduring manner. Advertisers spend a million dollars a day to maintain some of this exposure. The remainder comes from the fact that alcohol is part of the American lifestyle and its simply everywhere a person goes. When a typical American boy or girl is growing, it was pictured on billboards, in magazines, and in the background of television shows. It was at parties, baseball games, picnics, and restaurants. Kids observe it at the supermarket, at the neighborhood food store, in the liquor store, and on planes, and trains. It can be said that advertising treats alcohol not as a drink but as a way to be younger, sexier, happier, and more sophisticated (Reed-Flora and Lang 327). As a consequence, younger Americans engage in such behaviors as "binge drinking." For instance, the total number of cinge drinking episodes among adults went from about 1.2 billion in 1993 to 1.5

billion in 2001. Bing drinking episodes per person per year increased 35% between 1995 and 2001. (Stein F7).

Attitudes, customs, beliefs, and sanctions held by society can influence drinking behaviors. When evaluating the evidence from the studies done on alcohol use in a variety of cultures and societies, it was found that alcohol is seldom abused in societies where: (1) Children are exposed to alcohol early in life in a close family setting; (2) Parents are moderate drinkers; (3) It is associated with food and is taken with meals; (4) Wine and beer are drunk more often than distilled spirits.; (5) Drinking is considered neither a virtue nor a sin; (6) Drinking is not viewed as proof of maturity or virility; (7) Abstinence is socially acceptable, and it is not considered rude to decline a drink; (8) Excessive drinking and drunkenness are not condoned or accepted as comical or stylish; and, (9) Drinking is not by itself a major activity (Filstead et al 34).

When the people of a society engage in these practices, problem drinking and alcoholism are rare. When a society such as America's or England's demands interaction that is fast-paced and interdependent, stress and frustration usually result. American society also expects people to control the expression of stress and

frustration. If we deny these emotions, hostility or psychosomatic illnesses occur. People often turn to alcohol to cope with alienation, apathy, or hostility. Also, alcohol can become an anesthetic for the pain of disappointment, a tranquilizer for tension, and a promise for brighter days (Filstead et al 141-142).

Adolescence and early adulthood are especially critical periods in our lives. The transition to adulthood involves rapid and sometimes difficult adjustments as we question, challenge, reject, or modify our values. We redefine existing relationships and form new and important ones. Drinking, while a part of this self-discovery in American society, can interfere with these changes and make the transition to adulthood more difficult. Drinking behaviors established during this period may become part of a life-style and have far-reaching consequences (Fort 23).

Social drinkers control how much and how often they drink. These individuals account for about 90 percent of all drinkers in American society. They drink only at certain times, places, and occasions, and they usually drink in the company of others. Social drinkers may be light, moderate, or heavy drinkers, but the common factor is that their drinking habits are shared by a group and

they seldom act inappropriate when drinking (Hafen 75) Episodic-excessive drinkers occasionally exceed socially acceptable limits on drinking. They usually drink to intoxication if possible and usually stay intoxicated longer. Although they retain some control over their drinking, their personal, social, and business relationships are often affected in a negative way. These individuals may also have alcohol-related medical problems that are more chronic and serious (Hafen 76).

Chronic alcoholics are physiologically and psychologically dependent on alcohol. They cannot control when, where, or how much they drink. Their drinking almost always adversely affects their relationship and interferes with their responsibilities. Of the approximately 100 million drinkers in the United States, about 10 million are 'problem drinkers.' These are people whose drinking habits create physical, psychological, or social distress for themselves or others. A problem drinker is one who:

- (1) Drinks to cope with his problems;
- (2) Frequently drinks to intoxication;
- (3) Goes to work while intoxicated;
- (4) Drives while intoxicated;
- (5) Injures himself or others while intoxicated;
- (6) Drinks to do things he might otherwise not do; and,
- (7) Comes in



conflict with the law while drinking (Reed-Flora & Lang 127).

Every problem drinker affects four or five other people, most of whom are members in the drinker's family. Problems usually include verbal and physical abuse, financial and legal trouble, an increased dependence on others, desertion, and suicide. The effect on children may be serious. Children become confused if one parent tries to protect them from the reality of the drinking parent. For instance, the basic trust needed in meaningful relationships may never develop or it may be violated so many times that a lasting bitterness results. Parents may expect children to side with one parent against the other, and the older children may find themselves performing the household responsibilities of one or both parents (McKay et al 154-155).

Research on the causes of alcoholism focuses on three areas: the physiological, the psychological, and the social. In the physiological area, scientists have studied the effects of vitamin, hormone, and enzyme deficiencies on the action of alcohol but have not obtained significant results. The same has been true for studies on the central nervous system, metabolism, and allergic reactions to alcohol (Reed-Flora & Lang 333). There are few

psychological correlates of alcoholism. Personality traits vary from alcoholic to alcoholic, and many traits are the same for both alcoholics and the general population. For example, alcoholics tend to experience greater emotional extremes than nonalcoholics. However, many people experience these same extremes without becoming alcoholics. Emotional extremes, therefore, cannot be said to cause alcoholism. The lack of consistent correlations between any personality trait and alcoholism makes any description of an alcoholic personality difficult to achieve.

The social area holds the most clear evidence and correlates. Alcoholism is definitely more prevalent in groups where drinking is accepted, encouraged, or required. It is also more prevalent in groups where levels of alienation and anxiety are relatively high. Evidence also reveals that drinking is more likely in groups where values of drinking are vague and contradictory. Also, it is highly likely to occur in groups where intoxication is accepted as an excuse for asocial or antisocial behavior (Hafen 90). All of this evidence suggests that alcoholism is more likely a social-psychological phenomenon that may be sustained by, but is probably not caused by, physiological and psychological needs.

The National Institute on Alcohol and Alcoholism reported the following from evidence on alcoholism: "The pain the alcoholic person feels is the pain of self-loathing and humiliation....from the loss of respect of his family and friends....from growing isolation and loneliness....from the awareness that he is throwing away much of unique and creative self and gradually destroying his body and soul" (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism 23). Contemporary, present-oriented psychotherapies offer the most hope for most people. The most successful therapists may use several approaches that stress human interaction and communication. Group therapy, family sessions, halfway houses, and outpatient clinics were found to be valuable.

At the interpersonal level, significant others (those people important to drinkers) may greatly influence drinking behaviors. Children and young people view adults as significant others in their lives. Because drinking is adult-centered, the young perceive it as a proof of maturity and virility. The lure of the 'forbidden fruit' for young people is too much for many to resist. On the other hand, there are people who condemn the use of alcoholic beverages not only for themselves but for everyone. Too often they reject both drinking and the

drinker. So, those who have had their drinking condemned may drink, but with feelings of ambivalence and guilt. When a drinker feels guilty about his or her behavior, he or she tends to make excuses for it or to deny that it exists. This is the denial syndrome of alcoholism. On the societal level, conflicting value systems are even more evident. On one hand, Americans not only accept alcohol but encourage its use for pleasure, recreation, and hospitality. On the other, drinkers view drinking as wasteful, as a sign of weak character, and as a cause of social deviance.

Thus, based on this evidence and knowledge from reliable references and sources, alcoholism is a social problem in the United States. What can society do ten to twenty years from now to resolve the problem of alcoholism and its social consequences? One of the best potential solutions would be to initiate a curriculum in elementary schools and high schools to instruct young people on the dangers and social problems associated with alcoholic beverages. Children could learn about the risks and dangers to make their own decisions as adults about drinking.

It is appropriate to now shift attention to the next section of this research study concerning the depth

interviews of eight respondents who drink alcoholic beverages on a regular basis to distinguish through the laddering technique the product brands they prefer to drink and what linkages can be determined in regards to attributes, consequences, and values associated with these preferred product brands.

## CHAPTER THREE

### INTERVIEWS

#### Depth Interviews Using Laddering Technique

An extensive literature review of relevant studies, facts, and statistics clarifies the background information that consumption of alcoholic beverages is indeed a social problem in the United States for both young and older people alike. Yet, many Americans continue to drink the many different product brands of alcoholic beverages. The purpose of this section of the research study focuses on conducting depth interviews using the laddering technique to uncover the motives, perceptions, and reasons why specific consumers who drink alcoholic beverages select a particular brand and remain loyal to this particular brand. Since it already has been clearly and concisely established in the literature review that all alcoholic beverages are potentially harmful to the physical health of a drinker, and that any given drinker can become an alcoholic, the laddering technique in these depth interviews will focus on trying to uncover the personal preferences and personal assumptions of various respondents in regards to their product brand choices.

The use of the laddering technique in a depth interview is based on means end theory. (Gutman, 1982, pp. 61-62). This approach to interviewing involves trying to obtain the hidden sources of feelings through a very loose, unstructured set of questions. The laddering technique probes the interviewee to uncover underlying motivations, prejudices, attitudes toward sensitive issues, and personal values. (Reynolds and Gutman, 1999, p. 16).

When analyzed across a set of respondents, the laddering technique can provide valuable information for advertisers in the development of an advertising strategy by identifying linkages between attributes and consequences on one hand and the values that a person or a target group of consumers wishes to achieve, in using a specific brand. So, within the context of a depth interview, the laddering technique attempts to determine linkages between attributes (A), consequences (C), and values (V) which are directly involved in the advertisers' strategy-making of these print ads for their alcoholic beverage products.

This small sample of respondents (four males, four females) agreed to the depth interviews after this researcher approached them in a Riverside-area bar where

each one was drinking alcoholic beverages. Approximately twenty different people were approached and asked a few questions about possibly participating in an intensive research study on alcohol company advertising in print magazines. Of the four males and four females, two from each gender group were college-age (21-24 years-old), and two from each gender group were non-college age (25-55 years-old). All eight respondents in the sample agreed to meet with this researcher individually for a depth interview.

Each of the eight respondents were contacted by this researcher via phone to arrange a personal interview meeting at a convenient location where the one-on-one format and approach could be most useful and beneficial for this research study. All eight eventually were interviewed individually at different dates and times on campus of the University of California, Riverside library facility where ideal conditions could be established in one of the individual study rooms. This type of research approach using the laddering technique in a depth interview requires this kind of isolated atmosphere.

The individual respondents were assured of total confidentiality in their identity and responses to any of the interview questions. This confidentiality statement



was made at the beginning of each depth interview. The questions structured for these interviews was based on the laddering technique that seeks to expose linkages between attributes, consequences, and values based on the means end theory. The interview questions were carefully structured to provide clarification of the linkages in resulting ladder from the valuable information contained in their responses concerning their alcoholic consumption patterns and rituals and the product brands they usually choose to consume. .

This valuable information collected from the transcripts of the depth interviews using the laddering technique was significant in distinguishing the various brands of alcoholic beverages these respondents preferred in their consumption patterns to study advertisers' strategies in relation to matching up the linkages to the attributes, consequences, and values clarified by these consumers in their interviews for choosing these product brands. What became apparent in studying this data derived from the eight respondents' depth interviews using the laddering technique is that the product brand advertisers crafted their advertising strategies and designs based on very similar data from similar targeted consumers that

they probably collected using this same technique or one very close to it.

For example, in the first depth interview using the laddering technique, the respondent was a twenty-two-year-old African-American male who preferred the national beer brand of Miller Genuine Draft. The following portion of the interview demonstrates the laddering technique in the depth interview method while demonstrating the respondent's reasoning and motives for this brand preference. The summary ladder for this particular series of responses will follow the exhibit of this interview portion:

Exhibit 1 Portion of Depth Interview with Respondent #1

African-American Male, 22-years-old

Interviewer: You indicated to me that you prefer Miller Genuine Draft because all your friends, and your girlfriend, also prefer it. Why do you and your peers like it so much?

Respondent #1: I don't know. We just do. I started drinking MGD when I was a teenager with my friends. And my older brothers drank it. I guess it was just the best tasting beer. I've never really tried any other brand besides MGD.

Interviewer: So, what you're saying is that MGD has a higher quality taste than competing beer brands?

Respondent #1: I guess so. I just like it. I think it's smooth. It tastes great. It is a beer that settles easily in my stomach. I've never really preferred any other kind of beer. MGD is it you know.

Interviewer: Okay, so you enjoy the quality taste and smoothness. Does your girlfriend have the same opinion about it as you do?

Respondent #1: Oh yeah. She loves the taste. She has complained about other beer brands when she has tried them. She has told me that MGD is the best-tasting beer in her view. We met by me giving her a MGD at a party.

Interviewer: Oh, so MGD not only tastes great but you met your girlfriend because of her preference for it. Do you think that made a difference in being attracted to her?

Respondent #1: Sure. When she took that MGD and smiled that million dollar smile, I knew it was love at first sight. If she had rejected it, and told me MGD stinks, I would have frowned and walked away from her right on the spot. So, MGD did help bring us together.

The summary ladder from this portion of the interview with Respondent #1 concerning his brand preference of

Miller Genuine Draft (MGD) can assume the following sequence:

Value - Sense of belonging to social group

Value - Met girlfriend and fell in love

Consequence - Socialize when drinking MGD

Consequence - Gets romantic with girlfriend drinking MGD

Attribute - Great tasting

Attribute - Smooth quality

In contrast, the second respondent who also preferred a beer brand when consuming alcoholic beverages was the same age as the first respondent but is a Russian-American who attended a private college, came from a richer family, and preferred a unique brand of beer: Pacifico. Unlike MGD, which is a national brand, Pacifico is a smaller brand name out of Mexico and sold mostly in California and some other southwestern states. Pacifico is distinctive from MGD by the fact that masses of people don't drink it in every bar and at every party. The following portion of the interview with the second respondent demonstrates a distinctive set of linkages between values (V), consequences (C), and attributes (A). His reasons are interesting but different from the first respondent in terms of brand preference. This information can be later

compared with the print advertisements for these two brands and how the advertisers capitalize on this type of information to design ads.

Exhibit 2 Portion of Depth Interview with Respondent #2

Russian-American, 22-years-old

Interviewer: So, I don't see many people in the bar drinking Pacifico. What makes you prefer it over the more famous brands?

Respondent #2: You want to know the truth.

Interviewer: Please.

Respondent #2: Well, first, I enjoy the robust, full taste but, second, I want to be different from the mainstream crowd. I want to be my own man. I want to be seen by the ladies drinking a Pacifico so that they will say, "Hey, now, he is different than the rest of these guys."

Interviewer: Oh, so you drink Pacifico not only because you like its taste but because the girls and anyone else distinguishes you from the crowd based on this unique brand.

Respondent #2: Precisely. My old roommate use to drink Pacifico and I just got hooked on them because they were always in our refrigerator. Yet, once I started

liking the taste, I began ordering them when some bars would carry them and I started getting stares from good-looking girls, even smiles, because I really believe they set me apart because it is a unique, different brand.

Interviewer: Wow, that's interesting. So, what you're saying is that your kind of "cool" or "hip" because you're drinking Pacifico and nobody else is?

Respondent: Yeah, I guess that's a good way to put it.

In contrast to Respondent #1, the summary ladder for Respondent #2 assumes a distinctive series when studying the responses and determining the values, attributes, and consequences. These are as follows:

Value - Sense of Individuality

Value - Uniqueness

Consequence - Girls view him apart from the rest of the guys

Consequence - Girls view him as unique and strong individual

Attribute - Robust taste

The remaining six of the respondents based on the data and transcripts from their depth interviews using the laddering technique preferred hard liquor brands: Cutty Sark, Kahlua, Dewar's, Disarrono's, Jack Daniels, and Jim

Beam. Through the use of the laddering technique in the depth interview, specific reasons, motives, and desires for such product brand choices and preferences could be clarified from each respondent in the same manner as the first two respondents. These product brand choices and preferences are definitely linked with values and attitudes, as well as consequences, which the laddering technique determines as all linked together.

The depth interviews using the laddering technique did expose more detailed motives, perceptions, and reasons that these individual consumers of alcoholic beverages possessed about brand preferences. They responded to almost all my questions in regards to the associations and linkages of their preferences to consumer behavior constructs such as learning, perception, personality, attitudes, motivation and lifestyle, and problem recognition and problem solving. These respondents were eager to provide their feedback on why they each prefer a different brand of alcoholic beverage and why this brand is somehow linked to these consumer behavior constructs in significant ways.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

#### Pacifico And Miller Ads

Two respondents of the sample group preferred beer and each individual had a specific brand of beer usually preferred. As noted in the literature review section, drinking beer is a rite of passage in the United States for young people. In college and high school, young people, male and female, are going to pursue drinking alcoholic beverages because everyone else is too. This is a cultural lifestyle habit that develops in adolescent age groups and develops into a more significant habit throughout young adulthood, especially the binge drinking in college. The drinking of beer has become ingrained in the American cultural images and impressions left on other people who visit this country. We tend to say that Americans love to drink beer and get drunk. This is a fact of American lifestyle on any given weekend at any given bar. Americans are drinking, smoking, and listening to music.

The consumer market for beer is enormous. The national brands, foreign brands, and smaller brands compete for a wide ranging consumer market that cuts



across demographic and gender lines in all markets. A lot of people, male and female, can buy beer and enjoy drinking beer. Advertisers are very aware that when the younger consumers turn age 21 years that they are going to desire experimenting and drinking different brands of beer. This is why the beer companies appeal to these younger consumers because they are more open and flexible about their brand decisions with beer. In two national print ad campaigns for these two distinctive brands preferred by the two respondents in this study, both 22-- years-old, we can apply some of the consumer behavior constructs and assumptions to clarify the advertising designs, themes, and strategies matching up with the values and motives of these respondents' reasons for preferring these brands.

### Learning

In advertising, the strength of learning in the ad is heavily influenced by four factors: importance, reinforcement, repetition, and imagery. Generally learning comes about more rapidly and lasts longer the more important the material to be learned, the more reinforcement received during the process, the greater the number of stimulus repetitions that occurs, and the more imagery contained in the material. Importance refers to

the value that the consumer places on the information to be learned. (O'Guinn at al 172)

Buying beer is a low-involvement decision for adult consumers in most situations. However, young people who are experimenting with different brands of beer are going to be deciding in a different way than older adults. They are going to be more highly involved in weighing the benefits and advantages of the beer brands they try out and decide to stick with in their development of a habit such as beer drinking.

In both these ads, the learning experience can be evaluated in terms of the learning concept of cognitive learning. The first advertisement by Pacifico beer of Mexico features a surfer underneath the curl of a big wave. The use of iconic rote learning is obvious right here in that the advertiser designer wants to relate two or more concepts associated without conditioning. The big wave, the ocean, the beach, and the good experiences of youth are associated with the refreshment relief given by this great Mexican beer. The advertisement is very appealing to the cognitive abilities of consumers in matching up these concepts and making this association. The ad is assuming everyone wants a beer on a hot day

surfing at the ocean. This is why one of the copy statements is: "Now gimme a bottle."

Miller Genuine Draft is a national brand that has a much larger consumer base than Pacifico. This nationally-known and globally-known beer is appealing to the younger consumer crowd in this advertisement. The content promotion is appealing to the younger consumers' desire to play in such a contest and try to win the MGD Blind Date contest featuring the Stone Temple Pilots and Tenacious D at the House of Blues in Las Vegas. The headline reads: "Experience a Music Revelation." This cognitive learning experience concerns the person's association of rock and roll with beer drinking. The Blind Date contest involves getting to know these bands on tour and receiving free traveling expenses. The beer brand is featuring an advertisement that places the potential consumer in a cognitive situation.

### Perception

Both Miller Genuine Draft and Pacifico advertisers are trying to communicate something about their products through the concept of perception. Perception can be considered the critical activity that links the individual consumer to group, situation, and marketer influences. The nature of perception, exposure, attention, and

interpretation are evident in both of these advertisements when closely distinguishing and evaluating their presence. Exposure occurs when a stimulus comes within a range of a person's sensory receptor nerves. Attention occurs when the receptor nerves pass the sensations to the brain for processing. Interpretation occurs when the person assigns meanings to the receive sensations. Memory is when the person allows the meaning of the message to be retained for later consideration or use. (O'Guinn et al 142-144).

Both the Miller and Pacifico ads are attention-grabbers with the color and appealing pictures that jump out from the pages. Both full-page ads are very colorful which stimulates our perception. The Miller ad has a beautiful blue background with a woman superimposed on the blue colored in red wearing a big, black hat. The two bands are pictured below her. The copy is scattered between the pictures. The copy is different letter styles and different sizes. The hipness of the ad is experienced by the senses. The woman is sexually appealing. She has lipstick. We can't see her eyes which makes her intriguing and mysterious in a sexual attractive way. The logo of the firm is given on a bottle cap in the left hand corner of the ad. The product is pictured in the bottom right hand corner. The perceptions of this ad are influenced by the

bands and the beautiful woman as well as the appealing colors.

The Pacifico ad features less bright, more gentle shades of colors around the surfer riding the tunnel. The beer is pictured in the right hand corner. The copy is done in a creative way. The perception created in this ad is distinct from the one created by Miller. This ad can be considered in regards to its compressed message. It doesn't have line after line of information that the Miller ad features to explain the rules of the contest. Instead, the Pacifico ad uses a compressed message which is suppose to increase audience attention. This message is contained above and below the surfer in this tunnel: "From a Dark Tunnel I emerge. Alas, I am born. Now gimme a bottle." This is poetic and to the point. The message is delivered in a more effective, meaningful way for interpretation in this shorter form compared to the Miller overload of information.

The Pacifico ad contrasts with the consumer's expectations and perceptions of most beer brands and their ads of sexy women and hard-drinking party boys. Instead, a certain elegant element is perceived in this ad by the consumer. The beautiful sight of the surfer having the greatest ride of his life, and the original copy style

supplements it, and the whole mood is enjoyable and subtle compared to most beer ads. The Pacifico ad is gentle on our perceptions. We are stimulated in a different, distinctive way compared to the Miller ad which goes after the younger crowd who is loyal to their brand and reflects the rowdy, college-age situation that Miller is aiming to reflect in this ad's colors and content. The perceptions intended by the advertiser relate to the fun, party-like lifestyle of the younger crowd and how drinking Miller beer is involved with these activities.

### Personality

Based on the literature review about alcoholic consumption and alcoholism as a social problem, brand personality becomes very important for beer companies. The target consumers have to derive some kind of attachment or association with the brand personality of the beer to be motivated to prefer it. Also, brand personality is very important because of the diverse, and wide-ranging demographics, of the potential consumers. The brand personality is defined and redefined by all the beers in this country's advertisement competitions. The Pacifico brand personality in this advertisement appeals to the young surfer crowd. They are hip, distinct, and unique people. The Pacifico brand may appear to fit their image

and lifestyle. In contrast, the Miller brand image is associated with the Stone Temple Pilots and Tenacious D. The Miller brand personality is giving the experience for the consumer that its personality is related to the characteristics of rock and roll musicians and rock and roll audiences. This advertisement is designed for a rock and roll magazine. So, the targeted consumers are being defined and a brand personality for the beer is being shaped to cater to their wants, needs, and expectations. The Miller brand can be 'cool' and 'hip' to drink for these younger consumers because of its Blind Date contest and its association with rock and roll stars.

#### Motivation and Lifestyle

These concepts are very important in viewing and studying the meanings and messages contained in these two advertisements. Pacifico and Miller are aiming to customers with certain motives and lifestyles. The surfer crowd is increasing on all the major beaches in Southern California and other beach cities in the United States. Surfing has become very popular. The surfer crowd is different, unique, and hip compared to the young people in their age group. Their peers are also different and unique in their lifestyle patterns. They all love the beach. Pacifico can become a brand that reflects their type of

lifestyle and motivation. This beer is attaching its brand image to the surfer image to reflect this association of lifestyle to the potential consumers from this target audience.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs can be considered. The Pacifico and Miller beers are appealing to basic motives in young consumers. All humans, according to Maslow, acquire certain motives through social interaction and genetics. Some motives are more basic or critical than others. At this age, these individuals from the surfer crowd consider beer drinking a very important social activity. (O'Guinn et al 101-102). Pacifico understands this theme for this target audience. Miller is aiming for the youngsters who love rock and roll music. They are assuming these youngsters need to drink beer when they are listening to their favorite music. The two go together is the motivation in this ad for Miller beer. The basic motives are being satisfied by these beers. These beverages are consumed out of social habit and social interaction with peer groups. The needs being satisfied are our physiological and belonging needs. The social groups in this age group are very important for self-esteem and self-concept. The Miller brand and Pacifico brand are



appealing to these needs of this specific younger age group of consumers.

### Attitudes

Both beer advertisements are aiming to change a person's attitude about their selection of beer brands in their next store visit. The ads are aiming at the affective component in both situations towards their younger, more emotional consumers in their targeted audience. These youngsters are going to be emotionally affected by the combination of great design and appealing messages in both these ads. Pacifico is aiming for the desire in most young people to be participants in the surfer lifestyle in Southern California. These surfers are the 'in thing' for many young adults who may select Pacifico to reflect these types of attitudes of the California surfer dudes. The Miller ad is appealing to the rock and roll attitude. This attitude involves being rowdy, hard-drinking, and having a great time in life. These bands are two of the most popular rock bands today. Stone Temple Pilots is a rock and roll band that has been at the top of the charts in the past five years. Young people desire to be part of this contest so they can win a 'blind date' with the band and have all expenses paid. This contest is sponsored by Miller beer to attract more

consumers to understand its 'attitude' toward the rockers is great and appealing.

#### Problem Recognition and Problem Solving

Problem recognition involves the existence of a discrepancy between the consumer's desired state and the actual state. Both the desired state and actual state are influenced by the consumer's lifestyle and current situation. Problem solving is something that a consumer can consider when viewing these advertisements in distinctive ways. For the surfer culture, and individual surfers, the problem of thirst can be addressed with Pacifico beer after a hard day hitting the waves. For the Miller ad, the rock and roll music fan can solve his or her problem about seeing these great bands in concert by winning the Blind Date contest. These rock and rollers can also meet their favorite musicians and talk to them about their music. In both ads, the advertisers are addressing the consumer's tendency to enter a problem solving mode when activating them to recognize a problem existing. These ads are demonstrating how to target a segment of consumers, in each case, a younger crowd, who read this rock and roll magazine. These ads are also appealing to some of the consumers who may be not living life in a positive, full way. People who work long hours and do not

have fun can see these ads as helping resolve their current problem of being stuck in a rut.

#### More Effective Ad Strategy

The compressed message in the Pacifico ad, along with the amazing picture of this surfer riding the tunnel, and the artistic design of the entire ad, gives it greater impact than the Miller ad. The two ads are both appealing and effective in capturing the attention to their targeted consumers who are reading this particular magazine. Spin is a magazine featuring rock and roll music bands and other music styles for young people. The advertisers of these two beer brands are competing to attract the attention of these young beer-drinking consumers. The surfer theme of the Pacifico ad appeals to these young people. The Miller ad is appealing to the same people but by offering a contest that gives the opportunity to win a blind date with Stone Temple Pilots and Tenacious D. This type of contest is appealing because young people would love to become friends with the members of these bands and get to be backstage at a concert with them.

The problem is that the Miller ad is overloaded with information because of the need to spell out the contest rules for the contestants in the reading audience. This information overload turns the reader off in some ways

which makes the ad less effective than the artistic, compressed message of the Pacifico ad. These consumer behavior constructs make us see the bigger picture of how to attract, appeal, and interest a potential consumer who may be loyal or who may be a new customer.

It is now appropriate to use this same set of consumer behavior constructs to evaluate and examine the product brand preferences of the other six respondents. By comparing and contrasting the print advertisements as done with these two beer brand preferences, distinctions can be made between the advertisers' success or failure in promoting the right messages and themes to grab target consumers' attention, motivate them to buy the product, and become brand loyal to the products. Each of the remaining six product brands will be paired off and evaluated through the use of comparative analysis using the same constructs.

#### Kahlua and Cutty Sark

Two of the eight respondents made product brand preferences for Kahlua and Cutty Sark. A person anywhere in the United States can go to a nearby liquor store or supermarket and find these product brands. The advertisers are dealing with millions and millions of Americans who

may purchase these products for their parties, special events, and holiday events. The product brands are similar in appealing to a segment of the consumer audience that desires speciality in their choice of alcoholic beverages. Both of these product brands are speciality products because of their distinctions as individualistic types of beverages.

The promotion and ad campaigns of these two product brands are going to appeal to consumers, like these two respondents, who are looking for a party time and a good time during leisure periods in the typical American's lifestyle. These product brands are offering some special appeal to certain consumers that may consider purchasing it next time they visit the store or buy any kind of alcoholic beverage. By studying their advertising themes, by using the sample ads from a magazine, we can gain an understanding of the terms of the psychological, cultural, and sociological impact that the ads have on the consumers as framed in the depth interviews from using the laddering technique.

Again, as in the beer advertisements, the specific behavioral and social science concepts are going to be cited which means evaluating the ads in terms of these consumer behavior constructs:

- \* Learning
- \* Perception
- \* Personality
- \* Attitudes
- \* Motivation & Lifestyle
- \* Problem Recognition & Problem Solving

Kahlua and Cutty Sark are ads that display the diverse needs and diverse wants of the alcoholic beverage consumers in the U.S. domestic markets. These product brands are appealing to a potential consumer's lifestyle needs and possibilities. Yet, each ad campaign is aiming for different motives and different needs because of the diverse range of potential consumers of either product. By evaluating with detail the different consumer behavior constructs, a clear perspective of what the advertisers were doing when creating, designing, and finishing this ad campaign design for each product brand and how they relate to the respondents' feedback in relation to attributes, values, and consequences clarified in their depth interviews using the laddering technique.

### Learning

Both ad campaigns are using the cognitive learning approach. The advertisers are viewing their potential consumers as independent, creative, and insightful people.

These individuals can understand the intended, implied themes and messages because they are assumed to be intelligent and educated. The ads are featuring pictures that have nothing to do with the product's use. The message in the imagery is associated with the use of the alcoholic beverage. However, the direct appeal for a certain behavior is not undertaken as would be the case if using operant learning or classical conditioning approaches. The advertisers are using the cognitive learning approach to appeal to targeted consumers who would most likely use their product brands.

The advertisers want us to link sex and their alcoholic beverage in both ads. The incredible sexual energy and appeal of the Cutty Sark ad displayed in the prominent picture of the brunette beauty in a skimpy bathing suit. This ad implies that drinking this alcoholic beverage is going to bring about the type of situation you are seeing in this picture in the ad. A beautiful, brown-haired woman is showing us her body in a sexual way.

In contrast, the Kahlua ad is more light-hearted but still sexual in content. A Marilyn Monroe-Look-Alike is used as the central figure with her large breasts exposed through her shirt and her legs spread as she is dressed in a costume with white fur lining. Like Cutty Sark's female

model, sexiness is emphasized. The company is trying to capture the attention of a targeted male segment. They want the targeted consumers to think sex as connected with their liquor product. Her lip stick is very red to match the red parachute behind her and attached to her. The copy reads: "Anything Goes." The recipe for a Kahlua White Russian is provided near the woman. The low-involvement learning situation in each ad is purposeful because of the need for each brand advertiser to simply get the attention for potential consumers to consider their brand when partying or getting together with a date. This sexy woman is something that makes the viewer connect the image with the brand in this learning situation.

### Perception

Both ads have stimulus factors in catching our attention to consider what is going on in the picture and copy. The Kahlua ad concentrates on distinctive, appealing colors such as red and white. The product itself is placed below the copy on the lower left hand side of the full-page ad. The stimulating factors are the woman's red lips, the woman's nearly-naked breasts, and the red parachute behind her. The 'party' time spirit is associated with these stimulating factors on our senses. The perception is that 'anything goes' with this woman if



we are drinking Kahlua together. The theme of the ad is that we are getting our spirit and mind ready for some big party event or special occasion with this beautiful woman, which brings us to considering different alcoholic beverages, and therefore when we see this ad and the party mood created and sustained by its action and colors, we may choose this product brand for the party.

The Cutty Sark ad simply brings us pure, natural female beauty in this woman who is presented sitting on the floor of a ship. The logo and image of this brand is the old-style wooden ship. This woman has a bright, red-white polka dot bathing suit to draw a male viewer's attention right away. Her natural beauty is incredible. Her face, lips, eyes, nose, and hair are very, very attractive to any male viewer of this ad. She is a picture of female perfection. Her breasts can be seen peeking through the bathing suit top. Her legs are very long and she brings them up closer to her body so we can almost see her butt cheeks. She is definitely in a sexy pose that captures any male viewer's attention. As far as the interpretation phase, a male viewer is caught up in studying this female beauty while the only copy for the ad is: Cutty Sark. Scots Whisky.

## Personality

The black-hair beauty in the Cutty Sark ad is a dominant graphic image that captures the target consumer to pay attention for those few seconds. The pure and natural beauty of this woman is suppose to be associated with this brand. The wooden ship deck she is sitting is attaching her to the brand's personality. She is on the ship that is seen on the label of the product. This beautiful woman sticks out in our minds as someone that we would love to meet. The image of her beauty and class gives us indication that this brand has class and beautiful taste. We are feeling that the brand personality of Cutty Sark is related to this image and impression given by this beautiful female.

Kahlua is pitching a group of targeted consumers who are looking to have good, rowdy party time with their alcoholic beverage. The sexy woman with the bright, red parachut are symbolic of a free-for-all, rowdy atmosphere. We can associate this woman's smile and her attitude as reflecting what Kahlua's personality must be. Kahlua's brand personality in this ad is ``Anything Goes.' If we are getting ready to have a good time with a good-looking woman, then we should be mixing a drink with Kahlua and getting together with her.

## Motivation

The appeals are different for these product brands. The Kahlua brand is going to be appealing to those people who have wet bars, liquor cabinets, and hold big parties. The rowdy, party-time mood is being created and sustained by the image and message in this humorous ad and good-feeling ad. This woman is a party animal who has the attitude that 'anything goes' in life. She is someone who represents the lifestyle of party animals out in the consumer audience. She is someone that many men would desire to be with and party with in real life. Kahlua is saying that the men who are ready to party with such women should buy and mix the white Russian drink to get them ready for some sex and fun in the sack. This is the implied message in the ad about motivation and lifestyle. Free, loose, and fun are all associated with this woman and her outfit, as well as her red parachute, as if she is rowdy and ready for a fun-loving man in her life.

In comparison, the Cutty Sark woman is different and distinctive in personality than the Kahlua party girl. This woman is more of a beautiful, virgin-like girl who has class and beauty. The Cutty Sark lifestyle involves a beautiful woman who seems pure and beautiful for the sake of class and beauty. She is no party girl. She is a

beautiful woman that needs a classy man with expensive tastes. Cutty Sark is trying to aim at the upper-class consumer more than the party-time consumer that the Kahlua ad is aiming to target. Both are after males by the fact that these women are set up in the ads to convey sexual imagery and sexual attitudes.

May it be at a party or a date, the consumption of alcoholic beverages is promoted in both ad campaigns. People can drink and have a good time is the message in Kahlua's ad, while in the Cutty Sark ad, the main message and theme is that a man can find the perfect, beautiful woman when drinking Cutty Sark. This ad implies that a person can set the mood and atmosphere for love with a real, classy woman compared to the Kahlua party girl.

#### Attitudes

The ads for both Kahlua and Cutty Sark are emphasizing the cognitive component but also mix and blend in the affective and behavioral components. The cognitive component in each ad is the most important for the potential consumer to be challenged with considering in each ad spread. The Kahlua ad is implying a good time with a woman when drinking this beverage. We almost feel like laughing with the woman in this ad. Laughter brings out the affective component in that we have emotional ties

with the ad display. We are laughing because we think she is appealing yet entertaining. This humor emotion may help us remember buying Kahlua when we are preparing for our next party. The cognitive component makes us laugh and get emotional over this ad for those few seconds which may influence our behavior later when we are buying liquor supplies. Her sexiness is conveyed through the way she is holding her lips open, her exposed breasts, and her legs are spread open. Her sexual energies are coming from a rowdy, party spirit that we received from her overall appearance in this ad. The humor is that we are likely not to find this rowdy of a party girl in the real world but that we can motivate a woman to get in this spirit with Kahlua White Russians.

In comparison, the beautiful, black-hair model in her red-white polka dot bathing suit is purposely positioned as the central image in this ad to relate her virgin-like appearance and classy appearance to Cutty Sark brand. We picture her lifestyle as a real beauty with purity and virginity. Her pure beauty is reflected in her facial qualities. She appears so innocent and untouched in the way she gives that smile. Her legs, her breasts, and her hair are extremely attractive to any male viewer in the reading audience. The male stops to admire her pure, fresh

beauty and the Cutty Sark advertisers hope these male viewers remind themselves of this classy, virgin beauty when they are purchasing liquor the next time.

### Problem Recognition and Problem Solving

The ads are targeting male viewers of this magazine. They are drawing these male viewers into the ad themes and nature of the message through the use of sex. Both women are very sexy. The male reader is going to stop and consider the beautiful bodies and faces of these women. The problem with any single male in modern life is finding a woman to share time and fun with. These ads are giving men incentive to find women to party with and fall in love with. The alcoholic beverages are being portrayed as part of this search for a woman and part of the way a man can get a woman. These two beautiful female models are pitching these products as if they want a man who consumes these products. The Kahlua party girl is attractive and sexy for the male readers who like these kinds of women. They are ready to have a good time and give a man sex at the end of the night. In contrast, Cutty Sark is showing that its drink is for the upper-class, classy, intelligent, more sophisticated male who wants to fall in love with only the classiest, most beautiful women like this model pictured in the graphic. The lifestyle and

motivationn is completely different when drinking Cutty Sark in terms of going after a classy, virgin-like woman rather than a party girl.

### Most Effective Advertising Campaign

Kahlua's ad is appealing and interesting to most readers, due to the woman's beauty and her nearly-exposed breasts, the message doesn't persuade me to purchase this beverage to be in love with a party woman and share love with a party woman. Instead, this beautiful woman in the Kahlua ad appears to be someone else's woman and just seems to be some Hollywood spokesperson for the 'good time' we can have drinking this beverage. She is definitely sexy. But, my idea of a perfect woman is more in line with the Cutty Sark model. Now, she is a beauty of the maximum degree. Her body and face are perfect. She is simply every male's dream girl because of her virgin look. For me, the most effective ad campaign is the Cutty Sark ad because of its portrait of a woman that I consider beautiful and classy compared to the party girl of the Kahlua ad.

The obvious impact of these ads on me, a male reader, is similar to other males in the reading audience. The brand personality, attitude, and other elements of the advertisement are aimed towards the male reader who loves

women. The presence of these beautiful women capture our attention because of their physical beauty. We have to stop and pause to consider their distinctive beautiful body parts. Both ads emphasize some exposure of their breasts. This is one of the prominent female sexual parts that all males enjoy gazing upon and studying in terms of its attractiveness in a sexual way. Exposed breasts are complemented by the beautiful faces of these women. When a woman has both a beautiful face and a pair of beautiful breasts, then the average male is stopping to look at her. This is what the advertiser desires so the brand is considered too.

As recognized in the U.S. advertising industry, sex sells product brands. Some of the loyal consumers, as well as new consumers, for these liquor product brands are attracted to purchasing these products because of their associations with sex and a good time. The sexual connotations from the graphics in these advertisements are evident by the beautiful models utilized by the advertisers. The brand personalities of both Kahlua and Cutty Sark are associated with these sexual-related themes because of the evidence that advertisers are recognizing that people drink alcoholic beverages to set up sexual situations for themselves. Also, these advertisements are



aiming to "turn on" some of the male consumers with the female models so that they can remember these product brands associated with these sexually-attractive females.

#### Disaronno and Dewar's

Two of the respondents in the depth interviews using the laddering technique preferred Disaronno and Dewar's as their product brands when drinking alcoholic beverages. As already noted, the liquor industry is highly competitive and densely packed with companies who try to capture the consumers who are purchasing these products for a variety of events, special occasions, and holiday seasons. The liquor manufacturers are understanding that the people who drink spirits are distinctive from the beer and wine drinkers. These consumers have very refined tastes about their spirits in most situations. The readers of the national magazines are the targeted consumers for these two ads used in this project. The probably target consumers are adult men and women who are enjoy this product category of alcoholic beverages.

These products can be found in any supermarket, liquor store, and some convenience stores. The companies offering these products have reputations in the national markets. Disaronno and Dewar's are brands that most

drinkers of spirits recognize from their past experience and the word-of-mouth advertising and communication about high-quality brands. These brands are competing for the consumers who desire to entertain their guests with a classy, elegant kind of drink rather than a glass of beer or wine. The class element in both ads can be observed in the images and impressions.

The distribution of these products to all the national markets means the advertiser is putting together an ad campaign that appeals and attracts the mass consumer. These products can be found on most shelves in most stores. The consumer is going to be patronizing the liquor section to find some spirits for the holidays or a special event. The advertiser is trying to appeal to consumers that when they are in a certain buying mode for these products to consider their product as a great choice

#### Learning

Dewar's ad features a couple of successful 'doers' in American society that the company profiles in their advertisements in the most recent ad campaign. This is a unique concept because of the word play on the scotch whisky's brand name - Dewars. The actual picture is very interesting and kind of bizarre because of a brain sitting in a jar between these two guys on the arms of a chair

smiling. The first line: "They're out of their minds."  
This concept is excellent for the ad presentation being even more effective because this is what the perception of the ad first is. The other statement near the picture of the product is: "They're Dewars." This is a cognitive learning experience for the reading audience. The word play is clever and appealing to our mental facilities. We are also interested in this human story. The ad is designed to make us learn about some no-name Americans in a scotch whisky advertisement in a national magazine.

In contrast to the Dewar's ad, the incredible sexual energy and appeal of the Disaronno ad implies that drinking this alcoholic beverage is going to bring about the type of situation you are seeing in this picture in the ad. A beautiful, blonde-haired woman is sitting on her man's lap with one of her shoulder straps already down her arm. The guy has his eyes closed as if caught up in sexual passion for this woman. She is holding a drink in her hand as if this moment of passion and sex is associated with drinking Disaronno. The advertisers are obviously addressing the sex associations with this product brand and how people drink it as a prelude to sexual activities and romantic activities.

## Perception

In terms of perception, the Disaronno ad is creating sexual energies and passion in the observer. We can obviously see that this is a sexual-oriented ad to play off a person's sexual mood and energies towards a partner or new girlfriend or boyfriend. The Disaronno message is clear sex and this alcoholic beverage go perfect together. The entire ad is based on a picture in the center with a very beautiful woman on the lap of a partially-hidden man. This woman dominated the picture and ad. She is wearing a lace top with ruffled shoulder straps which appeal to any male's senses. Also, the fact that the strap is off her shoulder makes a male reader sense a sexual attraction to her. She is irresistible in this first glance to any red-blooded man. This is what the advertiser wants the reader to have when perceiving this ad's picture. The next step is hopefully the potential consumer will associate this image with the product brand. The burning match symbolizes the 'sexual heat' that these lovers are experiencing in the picture.

In contrast, the perception created by the Dewar's ad is that this scotch brand whiskey is perfect for when entrepreneurs like these guys in the ad, as well as business executives and business associates get together

to have a drink and make big decisions. These smart guys are being used to promote the whisky as a 'thinking man's' drink. Brains and Dewar's are connected in this ad and the ad make us recognize this clear and direct association. People do not drink wine when discussing big issues and big solutions. Instead, Dewar's fits the event because real men and real leaders drink this fine quality type of drink. These two entrepreneurs were able to make a new product and still find time to enjoy a glass of Dewar's.

#### Personality

The brand personality for the Dewar's whiskey is obvious. The thinking man drinks Dewar's. The inventor drinks Dewar's. The genius drinks Dewar's. The business executive drinks Dewar's. The strong, heroic, and masculine leaders of this world drink Dewar's. This brand personality is typified in the copy and picture in this ad campaign. The business people who read this magazine are going to recognize that this brand personality fits their type of desirable personality. These leaders are smart, courageous, and risk-happy. They are smart and clever.

Sexy is the brand personality of Disaronno. In contrast to Dewar's image and impression, the couples who are romantically involved and have fallen in love are targeted in the Disaronno ad. The person who desires to

fall in love is also a targeted consumer. Some male consumers may accept the message that by having Disaronno around the house that a woman may enjoy a drink and decide to be like this woman in the picture. The sexual energy and passion that the advertiser is associating with this alcoholic beverage is intended to be imprinted in the potential consumer's mind and memory.

The next time that potential consumer is buying supplies for the bar or liquor cabinet, Disaronno's ad imagery comes to mind because of the emotional associations we all make with the sex themes and messages. Disaronno's brand personality is sexual-related in many ways. This is a drink for lovers. This brand personality is for romantic people who are enjoying each other's company. The Disaronno brand personality is important for young couples who are romantically involved.

#### Motivation and Lifestyle

The Disaronno ad is directly appealing to lovers and romantic couples. The Disaronno brand personality in this ad is purely sexual in content and implication by the picture, the lit match, and the copy. This alcoholic beverage is intimately tied in with romance in every aspect. This means that people dating someone very special, and desiring to create a romantic atmosphere like

the couple in the ad, then they should consider Disaronno brand for the occasion. The Disaronno ad is targeting the sophisticated, romantic-minded consumers. These targeted consumers are motivated to set the mood and atmosphere to make love with their romantic partner. Disaronno is tied into this sexual-oriented scenario in this ad so the consumer can remember it when buying a special drink for a special person. The lifestyles promoted in both ads are consumption of alcoholic beverages during leisure time. May it be at a party or a date, the consumption of alcoholic beverages is promoted in both ad campaigns.

The Dewar's ad is targeting the 'thinking man' who is inventing and running a successful business. The Dewar's ads are always trying to emphasize that a genius drinks this kind of spirit. Dewar's advertisers are saying that they are the drink of choice in this situation. The lifestyle and motivation behind this ad campaign is targeted for business decision-makers. The magazine is oriented to draw business people to read it. The whole campaign is aligned with the target consumer audience of this particular magazine. This is a motivation and lifestyle that we can clearly contrast with the one advocated in the Disaronno ad. This difference is

attributed to the different kinds of men that these ads are targeting to make them motivated to buy their product.

### Attitudes

The Disaronno ad is aimed at making us think about drinking this brand when getting romantic with our lovers. We are suppose to associate a romantic situation and sex with drinking this product brand. The entire ad spread is designed to make us 'feel' passion in this picture and situation. The woman's exposed shoulder with the lace top and silk dress makes the male reader stop and notice her right away. The passion implied in this situation makes a male 'feel' something attractive about this woman and her beautiful body and face. This emotion is representative of the affective component of this ad. We males are drawn to this beautiful female in the center. The lighted match reinforces this imagery of passion and sex so our memory can be impressed with this brand, Disaronno, when we are thinking about buying something very special for a romantic time.

In contrast, Dewar's ad is displaying a thinking man's attitude. The cognitive component is emphasized. The affective component is ignored. This ad wants to appeal to people who are making decisions. These two guys, Whit and Richard, are profiled to reflect this association and



allow these two individual geniuses to be represented as 'doers' in this advertisement campaign of profiling such successful entrepreneurs. They are pictured with a brain in a jar between them. The attitude is that people who can think, who are smart, and who are geniuses drink Dewar's. This is an advertising strategy that is oriented toward the target consumer audience of intellectual-types who are very refined in their tastes in all lifestyle areas.

#### Problem Recognition and Information Search

Both ads appeal to these consumer behavior constructs that we all possess inside us. We all can recognize problems and then conduct an information search to find a solution. In the Dewar's ad, the objective is to appeal to the inventors, entrepreneurs, and business leaders who make decisions and need a drink to relax and make decisions. Dewar's is the whiskey they should be using to make these decisions and inventing great things. In the Disaronno's ad, the problem recognition is obviously for those people who are desiring to create and sustain a romantic setting like the couple featured in the ad. This ad resolves the problem of what type of drink should be used to get a woman or a man into a sexual situation like this couple.

Some of the problems solved by the Disaronno ad is answering such questions: What is the drink of choice to get a woman romantically ready? What is the drink of choice to create a sexual energetic situation with a woman? The ad is designed to attract and appeal to men to buy this type of beverage for their next date and hope that he can enjoy what this man is about to enjoy portrayed in the picture.

The problem recognition in each of these ads is that people get into situations where they are going to drink alcoholic beverages. We all go out on dates with members of the opposite sex and many people make business decisions at meetings that have alcoholic beverages. So, the decision is what beverage should be selected. The Dewar's ad appeals to inventors and genius decision-makers to choose their beverage, while the Disaronno ad appeals to those people who are looking and searching for the perfect romance and need an excellent drink that gets people in a sexual mood. The Disaronno ad is saying that this type of amaretto is perfect for a setting with a woman and where romance is in the air. This type of drink is going to create a warm, sensual situation with a lover which is the solution that every man is looking to use in a romantic situation.

## Most Effective Advertisement Campaign

The Disaronno ad campaign is more effective in several areas compared to the Dewar's ad. The Disaronno ad simply sparks and crackles with sexual energy with the graphic picture of these two lovers in a very intimate pose. Her breasts are exposed enough to draw our attention to them in the central position of the ad page. The strap of her lace top is down off her shoulder. The sexual enticement strategy is effective here for the consumer to stop and admire this situation between this beautiful woman and man. The man's face is buried in the woman's neck as his eyes are closed. The image and impression of sexual energy is obvious. Every red-blooded man would want to be in this guy's place in that specific moment in time. The Dewar's ad just gives us a profile of two entrepreneurs sitting on a chair with a brain in a jar. Although this clever, funny picture draws our attention, this profile of these two men is not near as powerful as the Disaronno ad in getting its major message and theme across. In fact, the Disaronno ad makes most men associated this spirit immediately with beautiful women and sex. This is precisely what the advertisers desire to elicit from each man reading it. Thus, as evident in these particular ads for these product brands, advertising is an

art as much as a science. It is now appropriate to draw some conclusions concerning the findings from these comparative analysis of the product brands of the respondents and their depth interview responses.

#### Jack Daniels and Jim Beam

Two of the male respondents had brand preferences for Jack Daniels and Jim Beam respectively. These male respondents reflect some of the distinctive consumers in the whisky market. The market for whiskey in the United States is significant because of the number of people who consume alcoholic beverages. Millions of Americans are drinking different types of alcoholic beverages including whiskey products such as Jack Daniels and Jim Beam. These two brands are two of the most popular whiskey brands in the United States. They are types of whiskey are usually consumed by males. The attributes, consequences, and values associated with these brands are oriented around the theme of masculinity and machoism.

Jack Daniels and Jim Beam are two products that consumers are using as a tradition among mostly male drinkers. These whiskey products are 'masculine' in character and brand personality from a long tradition. The whiskey brands of Jim Beam and Jack Daniels must compete

with many other whiskey brands on the supermarket shelves and in liquor store shelves. However, these national brands are very impressionable on male whiskey drinkers because of the reputation and long-standing tradition of American men proving their masculinity by using these specific types of whiskey from the Deep South.

The average price of a fifth of whiskey for Jack Daniels or Jim Beam ranges from \$10.00-\$15.00 per bottle. This is a low-involvement consumer decision. The buyer is going to choose a certain liquor to drink for a party, a date, or a special event with special people. The choice of the whiskey may be brought about by a variety of factors that influence the purchase decision. But, in the ultimate decision to purchase either a Jim Beam or a Jack Daniels bottle, the most likely influence will be brand loyalty from the past. In both instances, the target consumer audience is males. When men do male things together, they can frequently drink a 'masculine' whiskey like these brands.

Based on the respondents' in the depth interviews using the laddering technique, in comparing the advertisements of Jim Beam and Jack Daniels, the reasons why consumers buy these products can be clarified. The concepts to be used to compare the two ad campaigns

include learning, attitude, personality, motivation and lifestyle, perception, problem recognition and information search are exposed by the respondents' depth interviews using the leading technique.. These concepts can be collectively used to decide which of the two ad campaigns is more effective and why it is based on what the consumers see, feel, and believe about their content and graphics..

### Learning

The cognitive learning theory is applicable in both ad campaigns for the target audience of male consumers. The cognitive learning theory involves the consumer using thinking processes that associate ideas, meanings, and interpretations about the product brand. Unlike classical conditioning and operant conditioning, the cognitive learning theory is focused on the intellectual capabilities of the consumer reading the advertisement. In the situation with the Jack Daniels ad, the message is made clear: "How Men Bonded - Back Before They Knew They Were Supposed To." This message is being sent to the male consumers who are trying to tap into their masculinity on a weekend or a special event in getting together with the guys. This type of ad is focused on motivating the male consumer to consider the heritage, legacy, and tradition

of this Tennessee Whiskey. The implication is that men in the old days were drinking this whiskey because they were very masculine and very tough guys. They were bonding before they knew there was such a concept as male bonding. In other words, these guys were tough, whiskey-drinking individuals who were not concerned with male bonding principles. They were more concerned with their masculinity in other areas, probably, like in the areas of toughness and getting the good-looking lady.

The Jim Beam advertisement is aiming for this same target audience of male consumers who like to get together with other guys and drink whiskey together. The headlines, the pictures, and the main slogans are all connected to this whiskey brand representing the main drink to be shared by the men on the guy's night out together. This Jim Beam product is portrayed in the bottom right corner of each page of the three page ad spread. The guys in the pictures are drinking Jim Beam whiskey and having a good time together. The cognitive learning theory is applicable because Jim Beam is indirectly connecting the good times and party times with this whiskey with a masculine character.

"Real Friends. Real Bourbon." This is the slogan of the ad campaign. the pictures of the guys show that they

are real friends. The first picture has a bunch of friends playing pool and drinking Jim Beam whiskey. The second page has a picture of some friends laughing and drinking Jim Beam whiskey. The third page has an ad photo of the whiskey bottle and its label to give the brand recognition to the consumer in the reading audience. The emotions and feelings associated with real friendships are supposed to be associated with the Jim Beam product brand. The advertisers are deliberately attaching the macho and masculine characteristics to the product brand.

#### Perception

The perception is important because of the fact that consumers' senses can be stimulated to attract them and capture their attention enough to allow interpretation of the ad's meanings and messages to take place. Any advertisement is aiming to capture the attention of the targeted consumers. For these whiskey ads, the targeted consumer is the young to middle-aged male who gets together with other males to drink whiskey on a guy's night out or some other gathering where guys get together and party. The perception is important in both these ads in trying to stimulate many different things in the targeted male consumer.



The Jim Beam ad is a three-page spread that captures the reader's attention through a red background to offset the black-and-white photos of friends. The stimulating factor in capturing the attention of the reader is also the big, black bold headlines. The male reader may read these words before looking at the picture. Either situation, the advertiser is trying to stimulate some sentiment in the male consumer about his good times in the past drinking Jim Beam with his best friends and his real friends. The consumer is suppose to be affected by these pictures as reminders of his own experiences. In comparison, the Jack Daniels ad is aimed at the same target male audience with a slightly different slant on the same message. The emphasis is more on the heritage and reputation of Jack Daniels whiskey which is prominently featured in the ad with the slogan that men bond while drinking this whiskey before they knew it and nowadays when they know they are bonding. The male bonding theme is purposely being addressed by the advertisers because of their emphasis on the masculine and macho qualities of this product brand.

### Attitudes

This concept features three components: the cognitive component, the behavioral component, and the affective

component. All three components are very important in considering what a consumer will think about an ad's content and messages. What kind of attitude does this ad create for the targeted male consumer?

The affective component is evident more in the Jim Beam ad campaign with the copy associating the great times with real friends and the drinking of this product brand. The Jack Daniels ad campaign is more focused on the cognitive component. The Jack Daniels ad is making the male consumer think about men in the old days when they were drinking whiskey because they were tough men who loved it. The inferences in this ad are made about historical times in the Deep South that a person would need to think about and associate ideas and memories with the time period and the men back then. This is the way that the advertiser is trying to create the theme of an American tradition.

The Jim Beam ad campaign is aiming more for the affective component to get the emotional sentiment going among the male viewers in the reading audience. The black and white photos of real friends give us the chance to think about our real friends in our present or past. The Jim Beam brand is associated with an attitude of sentimental memories of our great, real friends. At the

same time, the brand is offering the opportunity for the male viewer to use the cognitive component to associate the two things together: sentimental emotions of real friends and Jim Beam whiskey. The attitude is strong in this ad. The consumer who is being targeted is assumed to have this kind of macho, masculine attitude towards drinking.

### Motivation and Lifestyle

The concept of motivation and lifestyle are also found in both the ads featuring Jim Beam whiskey and Jack Daniels whiskey. The motivation and lifestyle concept is clearly found in the Jim Beam whiskey ad featuring the good friends playing pool and laughing together while they are drinking this brand of whiskey. The lifestyle emphasized is real friendship. Jim Beam whiskey and real friends are two things that are always together in American society. This is the message sent to the consumers in the reading audience of this magazine. The motivation and lifestyle is also centered on guys only. This whiskey is related to masculine behavior and the masculine lifestyle of men. This ad does not aim to attract female consumers.

In comparison, tradition, heritage, and historical reputation are the message implied in the Jack Daniels ad.

Like the Jim Beam ad, the implied message is masculinity is tied together with this brand. The motivation and lifestyle of the tough, macho male is implied in the ad. The real men of the past in the Deep South were sharing this whiskey as part of their male bonding ritual before it even was recognized as a ritual. These men from the past did it because they were loving it and doing it for the sake of bonding with friends and neighbors.

### Personality

The ads reflect the brand personalities of each whiskey. The Jim Beam ad reflects a brand personality that associates itself with real friendships and men getting together and having a great time. The copy, the photographs, and the slogans are all tied together to make the big message apparent to the target audience of male consumers. Jim Beam brand is a great drink to have with real friends that are special to you. This whiskey is a masculine ritual that all men share because of its reputation as an All-American male bonding drink. The reputation of Jim Beam as being used by young men across the United States is reflected in the content of this advertisement. The ritual of passing from boyhood to adulthood would not be the same without the whiskey of Jim Beam brand.

The brand personality reflects in the Jack Daniels brand is obvious in the implications in the slogan and copy. The heritage and history of Jack Daniels is implied clearly as the most important element of the ad. The brand personality is masculine in every aspect. The copy is referring to this long heritage of being the whiskey of real, tough males in the past and in the present. In comparison to Jim Beam brand, the brand personality is similar in terms of appealing to macho-oriented males who enjoy drinking a hard liquor when doing male bonding activities, like a boy's night out, and other such events.

Both brand personalities are masculine. The characteristics and attributes are appealing to men. The whiskey flavor is very bitter and hard to swallow with a comfortable expression on the face. In my own experiences, whiskey is a tough drink in any form. The toughness and masculinity of whiskey brands like Jim Beam and Jack Daniels is what holds their appeal and attraction to a target consumer audience of males. These individual males believe that they prove their masculinity and manhood by drinking either of these whiskey brands with other men and male friends in their party times together. The advertising strategy is to appeal to the masculine qualities and macho attitudes of these potential target

consumers. They are out to prove their manhood everytime they drink.

### Problem Recognition and Problem Solving

The problem recognition and information search concept can also be considered in comparing these two ad campaigns. The problem recognition element can be found in the Jim Beam advertisement in terms of getting together with real friends and drinking real whiskey. The implied message in this ad is that friends can solve their distances between one another by getting a bottle of Jim Beam and getting together to drink and have some fun and laughter again.

The Jack Daniels ad refers to the problem of choosing a reliable brand of whiskey in the liquor store or supermarket. This problem is solved because Jack Daniels is a long-term dependable brand of whiskey for all American men to share and enjoy. Both whiskey brands are masculine and the male in the viewing audience can prove his manhood and reaffirm his masculinity by purchasing this whiskey and representing the same kind of toughness and manliness. The consumer can solve his problem of not being masculine enough by drinking Jack Daniels.

### Most Effective Campaign

The most effective ad campaign is the Jim Beam three-page spread in this magazine for young male audiences. The Jim Beam ad is very effective. The message is very strong and personal. The affective component of attitude is very strong. The young guys partying and smiling are appealing to the young male audience. These guys are having a great time and they are real friends.. In contrast, the Jack Daniels ad is appealing to loyal, a;e consumers to the brand name. The young male viewer can understand that the whiskey is appealing to a masculine trait in all its target consumers.

### Conclusions

By conducting depth interviews using the laddering technique with a sample of eight respondents (four males, four females, various ages), valuable information was derived from them about their brand preferences when consuming alcoholic beverages. This information established clear linkages among their values (V), consequences (C), and attributes (A) that they associated with their brand preferences. The eight respondents were isolated in a quiet study room in the library facility of University of California, Riverside for their depth

interviews. Strict confidentiality of their names and identities was pledged by this researcher at the beginning of each interview session. The portions of the interview transcripts from Respondent #1 and Respondent #2 were presented in the second section of this research study to demonstrate the use of the laddering technique and how summary ladders were constructed for each respondent.

The valuable information derived from the laddering technique in these depth interviews was precisely linked to the consumer behavior constructs framed in the comparative analysis of the eight different preferred brands of the eight respondents. Advertisers are obviously using these depth interviews with the laddering technique to understand and study their target, loyal consumers. By employing the laddering technique in the depth interviews, the attributes, values, and consequences could easily be exposed in the comparative analysis of the print advertisements of each of the product brands. Some of the print advertisements were obviously more effective than others in appealing and framing these attributes, values, and consequences of the target consumers for their brand products.



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