

One audience member identified herself as a high school teacher who had come to the session hoping to gain some direction for how her culturally diverse students can break gender barriers and be full human beings. She was seeking illumination, but after this presentation "I'm still just as much in a quandary."

"It's a paradox... in order to end oppression of women, we write about it and therefore celebrate it," another person in the audience said. But Kristin Congdon disagreed. In viewing feminism as a pluralistic approach, the first step is to acknowledge oppression, and then to value women's ways of problem-solving and creating within their limitations.

One self-described "action-oriented" listener thought the NAEA planners needed to be convinced that the imbalance of male and female conference presenters should change. But Marantz said he felt like an oppressed minority when encountering the "old-girls' club" that has existed within the NAEA in the past.

An audience member said the panel should have considered class issues, not just gender, which is only one aspect of a total problem of oppression. But another individual challenged her, saying that oppression of women occurs worldwide in all classes.

Audience members were all given questionnaires which asked for responses and suggestions to current feminist issues within the field of Art Education.

## EXAMINING ENVIRONMENTAL ADVERTISING IMAGERY THROUGH ART EDUCATION

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This is an examination of advertising imagery in the United States, with particular emphasis on outdoor advertising, and a proposal for an art curriculum focused on advertising awareness. The method is socially-oriented art criticism funded by some history of advertising and the psychology and philosophy of persuasive, manipulative, and pecuniary symbolism. The intent is first to "decode the aesthetic environment" (Barbosa, 1988) and then present a structure that helps art students to do the same. The examination begins with the object and returns to the object for validation (Ecker and Kaelin, 1970), but "ends with an understanding of personal experience, values, and social attitudes" (Nadaner, 1985, p. 12). It is what Jagodzinski (1983) calls making the unconscious conscious.

A goal of art education is to foster general adult life competence (Broudy, 1987). This is partially accomplished through image literacy (Rush, 1987), not just of the so-called "high" or "fine" arts, but of all forms of human-made objects. In light of this goal, examination of the omnipresent commercial image is an appropriate task. Most people, including most art professionals, live most of their lives in the common realm of everyday life outside their specialized areas. It is this in-common everyday life which is most widely experienced and shared (Maquet, 1986). As an aspect of this shared experience, commercial images may, in fact, be more important to attend to than the traditional arts normally examined in the art curriculum. This view encompasses what Eisner (1985) would call the "social adaptation and reconstruction" view of curriculum development. The point is that through critical attention to what exists, students are empowered to act upon the world in an intelligent fashion, rather than being pawns, acted upon by the forces of their times (Freire, 1973).

### Advertising and the Built Environment

The question to ask, from an aesthetic perspective, is why the built environment looks as it does. If the aesthetic is a significant factor in urban design why is Wilshire Boulevard (Tennessee Street, Biscayne Boulevard,) filled with such a jostling, crashing, brash, competing jumble of signs that have no integrative aspects or subtlety? Obviously something other than a traditional aesthetic sensibility is at work, or some other philosophical underpinning is dominating the aesthetic. Possibly it is both of the above.

The signs, like other forms of human communication, must be seen as having some specific and understandable end-goal. That end-goal, obviously, is the selling of goods and services. The centers of our towns and cities, and the "strips" with their neon façades are a testament to the capitalist system and the pecuniary philosophy underlying it. Whether one sees the neon jungle as an aesthetic wasteland or an aesthetic feast depends on the underlying philosophy to which s/he ascribes. Commercial images are instrumental in purpose. Whether they are beautiful, repelling, abrasive or innocuous is only vehicular to their primary purpose of selling goods and services. The only point of a sign is to sell something. Form falls in line behind that function.

### Symbolic Communication and Pecuniary Philosophy

Symbols are arbitrary marks or forms which are agreed upon as representing some meaning beyond themselves. They are concrete manifestations of the all-at-once human capacity to function emotively, intellectually and intuitively in the manner we call metaphor. In giving form to metaphor, and in being agreed upon, symbols are intrinsically cultural in their genesis, use and understanding. As goal oriented communication, symbols represent the values which underly them (Gordon, 1971). This is what makes a dollar worth more than its ink and paper. The power of symbols, then, lies in their metaphoric ability to stand for an intrinsically unrelated phenomenon through transmission of a culturally agreed upon emotional substratum on which they feed. That is why a swastika means one thing to a Polish Jew and another to an Indonesian Hindu.

Advertising's use of symbolism is based in what Henry (1963) calls pecuniary philosophy. Every philosophical system has foundational truths and a logically integrative self supporting conceptual structure. The foundational truth in pecuniary philosophy is money. Statements and symbols which contribute to making money, then, are true pecuniarily, whether or not they are true according to traditional standards. An example of pecuniary pseudo truth is examined in the second critique later in this article. In order to validate the truth of pecuniary statements and symbols, pecuniary philosophy must develop its own integrated universe which is consistent within the cultural framework of pecuniary goal directedness. Thus pecuniary symbol use fulfills all the requirements of symbolic communication in general. It is goal oriented communication transmitting the substratum of emotion, the meaning of which is agreed upon by a given cultural group.

The problem is, that the pecuniary symbol is a form of propaganda. That is, it has a concealed purpose which is predetermined and manipulative (Jowett and O'Donnell, 1986). It is not transactional for the purpose of mutual communication. The ends are always predetermined to serve the advertiser's best interests, and these ends are obscured or concealed toward the goal of manipulation of behavior.

This does not imply quite as much freedom as it may seem at first for the advertisers to say whatever they want in the pursuit of sales. Although the economic institutions are dominant, they are not all-powerful. Other powerful social institutions, such as formal education, continue to exert the influence of more traditional values. If pecuniary philosophy gets too obviously out of line with the value systems espoused by the rest of the culture's institutions, it will of course create conflict in the potential consumer. This conflict would result in loss of institutional trust and probably a loss of sales. In effect, by blatantly going too far, advertising would negate its *raison d'être*. Methods of circumventing traditional values and standards have to be invented. The next section will look at the development of some of these methods.

### Historical Perspective

It is claimed that the first bona fide use of outdoor advertising goes back to an Egyptian ruler who put up a poster for the return of a runaway slave (Gowans, 1974). In Babylonia, merchants put up signs outside their shops to draw attention to their goods and services. However, it was the Romans who were to make the first widespread use of outdoor ads. The Romans are also credited with being the first to develop logos, or standardized, non-word symbols, used for the purpose of commercial identification. A good example of this form which is still used today is the pawnbroker's three-balls sign. The reason for the development of logos was, of course, that very few people could read.

There was little real change in format or usage of outdoor signs until the nineteenth century. Then, in the 1870's machines were introduced that could crank out standardized ads by the thousands. With this change came the repetitive symbol. This standardized symbol is more specialized than the pawnbroker's balls in that it represents only one brand of pawnbroker. Examples of the standardized symbol of this sort in use today include the chevron used by a gasoline company or the Rock of Gibraltar used by an insurance company.

Along with all these standardized ads came the need for their display. Enter the advertising agency. Advertising agencies were formed in the 1870's for the prime purpose of constructing billing platforms, or billboards, which they then rented as a service to those companies who wanted to advertise. Thus the modern system was born.

P.T. Barnum is credited as being the first major user of modern advertising in North America (Gowans, 1971). He utilized the standardized symbol and the repetitive technique, in conjunction with the compulsive format. Barnum's obvious success with these techniques demonstrated such a system worked. By the 1890's the use of the repetitive, standardized symbol in a billboard format reached a point of excess. One could not go anywhere without seeing a billboard for Pear's Soap, including the deserts of Nevada and the Sudan. At this point, citizens' groups formed in protest and a great number of billboards came down.



This was not a great setback for the billboard industry. They had already recognized that the repetitive symbol on billboards was becoming less and less effective. There were two reasons for this lessened effectiveness: (1) the increasing sophistication of the consuming public, and (2) the fact that everyone in the mercantile trade was using the technique. Thus the individual symbols were simply getting lost in all the clash and clamor. Because of the advertising industry's awareness of these factors, work had begun on new techniques even before the billboard slowdown.

One of the techniques that evolved has become known as idea association. The most effective form of idea association in an advertising context was quickly found to be irrational association; the basic method was to show a picture or create a word picture which arouses emotions in the viewer, and then to transfer those emotions to the mercantile's product or service via a direct reference to the product. The purpose, of course, was to sell it.

A recent major development in the history of the advertising industry has been the advent of what is known as the psychological hard-sell. According to Gowans (1971) this is advertising based on shame and envy. It appeals to:

ruling interests and motives—the desire to be healthy, to hoard, to possess, to wear smart clothes, to get something for nothing, to be more like the privileged and successful classes. It is not suggesting how good a product can make your life, but how miserable your life will be without it (p. 45).

Pelfrey and Hall-Pelfrey (1985) suggest that this psychological hard-sell technique plays not only upon shame and envy, but upon every human emotion that can be exploited: love, hate, pride, sex drive, death anxiety, family, religious and other loyalties, and so on, ad infinitum.

The advent of the psychological hard-sell is probably a prime factor in the new-found power of the mercantiles to create *needs* through advertising. They have developed the ability to manipulate consumer tastes to make the consumer feel that s/he *needs* certain products: s/he *needs* a new car, s/he *needs* an underarm deodorant, and so on (Nicosia, 1983; Olsen and Reynolds, 1983; Stokrocki, 1988). By suggesting that the elite do not do without a certain product, the advertiser implies that only a common person, a basically unsuccessful individual who cannot afford the product, does without it. The consumer's (substitute "person's") motivation to buy, then, is not primarily economic, but social. People are not buying Fords, fedoras and football tickets, but social security.

The technology responsible for the proliferation of outdoor advertising, and for the advances in advertising technique, now manifests itself in more powerful advertising media such as television, radio, magazines, and newspapers. This technology also allows advertisers to employ sophisticated marketing which focuses on so-called target groups of consumers (Meyers, 1984). Advertisements are directed toward a particular group who will be watching a given television program, or reading a certain magazine, or even a certain section of the newspaper. Advertisements are

carefully crafted in style and content to appeal to white females aged fifteen to twenty-one, yuppy moms, or black middle class males who make over \$30,000 a year. While these more efficient ad media have not eliminated outdoor ads, they have relegated billboards and on-premise, point of purchase displays to supporting roles.

Billboards particularly, play a secondary role now. Whereas they once served as the primary ad medium, their present role is one mostly of memory jogging and keeping the pressure on, of keeping Coca-Cola or Marlboros fresh in the consumer's purchasing consciousness. Since the main message has been delivered via television or some other medium, and since the message is universally standardized, all it usually takes is a little billboard jog, a short phrase maybe, no more, to keep the current ad theme in the viewer's mind.

## The Psychological Setting

Psychologically, contemporary advertising presents a manipulative view of humankind. People are seen not as self-directed or as having needs other than the material. Rather they are viewed as "brain boxes" to be filled with "memories of cereals and beer and razor blades" (Leavitt, 1960; Meyers, 1984). The primary agenda in advertising is attaining a state of need arousal in the potential consumer (Alwit, L.R. and Mitchell, A.A., 1985; Olson, J.C. and Reynolds, T.J., 1983). Supporting concerns are convincing the consumer of the availability of the goal object ("Now! You can afford a Cadillac!"), its value relative to its difficulty in being attained, and all those values of rightness and wrongness perceived by the consumer in the ownership of the object (Meyers, 1984).

A national advertisement incorporates as many of the above motivations as possible using a variety of sophisticated techniques. One technique, embedding, uses emotion-laden words or symbols embedded in the ad so that the perceiver will be consciously unaware of them (Weinstein, S., Drozdenko, R., and Weinstein, C., 1986; Key, 1972). According to Freudian and Jungian psychology, about 90% of sensory input comes in at the subconscious level (Key, 1972; Jung, 1974; Packard, 1957). This cognitive unexamined sensory input then has the potential to effect later decision making without the individual's being aware of the reasons for the choices made. Clinical testing has proven the effectiveness of subliminal cues in promoting buying behavior (Weinstein, Drozdenko, and Weinstein, 1986). Thus, in advertising, the object is to arouse emotions subliminally, avoiding the conscious decision-making process. This embedding technique allows this emotional arousal to attach itself to the product in question when it comes time to buy. According to Wilson Bryan Key (1972), sex is the most frequently embedded word in the American advertising industry. Multi-dimensional printing techniques permit advertising artists to plant taboo emotional words dozens of times in a single layout (p.109).

Archetypal forms (Jung, 1964) as well as words are embedded. Common symbolic archetypes found in national ads are the apple, the dog, the snake, the sun, the moon, and all sorts of phallic and vaginal forms.

Symbols are poor specific communicators but very effective in communicating the substratum of emotion. For the advertiser's purposes this is an advantage, not a drawback. The idea is only to arouse emotions, not to deliver the message in this mode. Often the more unspecified the arousal in the consumer, the better, it is easier for the advertiser to give direction to that emotion on the conscious level.

In short, the advertising industry long ago realized that at the conscious level we have the power to decipher, weigh, and possibly reject. At the unconscious level, the brain apparently resists little, if anything brought in by the preceptors. Thus it is logical that most marketing appeals are directed toward the unconscious. Advertisers want to develop a predisposition toward their product and for it to stay in the subconscious until it comes time to buy.

The question which arises at this point is, how do they get away with it? Why does the public put up with embedding and other subliminal techniques? The question has been partially answered. The ad industry is sneaky, it manipulates its way through the world of traditional values trying to legitimate its own view with all of its considerable resources. The other reason advertisers get away with what they do is that, as in any functional society, Americans have been enculturated to trust their institutions. This trust is precisely what the ad industry plays on. In the words of Key (1972):

Merchandise's illusions depend upon consumers who cannot be certain whether the SEXES are their own creation or that of the merchandiser...As long as the consumers are uncertain should they detect subliminal stimuli they will logically assume they are imagining things and pass off the notion without a second conscious thought.

## Critiques

A good example of the technique of irrational association is represented in Figure 1 (p.149). If one looks for a moment at the picture, s/he will see a very attractive woman of maybe 20, with the desired 1980's body type. Also pictured is a young man in his prime, also very attractive. That they are in a private pool is implied by the diving board and the fact that she is lying on it (one does not lie on the board of a public pool). The two of them seem to be in a world all by themselves, and obviously they are enjoying each other very much. In fact, there seems to be strong sexual attraction indicated by the girl's teasing actions, her curled toes, and his obvious delight. Also they both have scrumptious looking concoctions to help them enjoy their pleasurable situation. But nowhere in the picture does one see anything that is clearly milk. The only place one is directly informed that this advertisement for milk is in the caption: "Cool It...With Beautiful Milk."



This particular ad is very good in that it follows the rules of irrational association: (1) It uses a strong picture to captivate and pull one into the ad (just imagine yourself in such a situation!). (2) It does not even try to rationalize a tie between the caption and the picture. For the association of unrelated, irrational ideas to work effectively in selling a product there must never be anything which ties the two elements concretely. The trick is to persuade by insinuation alone. In effectively using this technique, the advertiser relies on the audience to transfer ideas and emotions from one part of the total image to another. The audience does this (subconsciously) because both images, though unrelated, are in the same physical context; our biological/cultural adaptation has taught us to regard parts of one thing as unified purposefully (Arnheim, 1986). According to Gowans (1971), "the more irrational an association of ideas the more effective it is likely to be" (p. 392). He adds that the idea is to "discourage logical thought altogether. The successful advertisement is one that makes an irrational association instantaneously, before customers have any time to reflect."

Looking at the milk ad again, one can also see the psychological hard-sell in the private swimming pool, seemingly endless leisure time, idealized youth and beauty many of us do not have. These are the kind of people who drink milk. Obviously, one of the ways we can be like them (while we save our money for the pool) is to drink it too.

A good example of pecuniary pseudo-truth is shown in Figure 2. (p. 150). In the traditional sense, it would be absurd to say that "Winston is taste." Winston is a cigarette brand, not taste. In terms of the appeal to ruling interests (status, class identification), as found in the psychological hard-sell, however, the words "Winston is Taste" take on a new meaning—actually several new meanings. The advertiser hopes to make Winston cigarettes synonymous with taste (as in taste buds) and with taste (as in Ming Dynasty vases on one's mantle piece). In this particular ad, the designer has been quite successful in achieving this goal. It sells Winstons, and, thus, in pecuniary terms, it is quite true to say that "Winston is Taste."



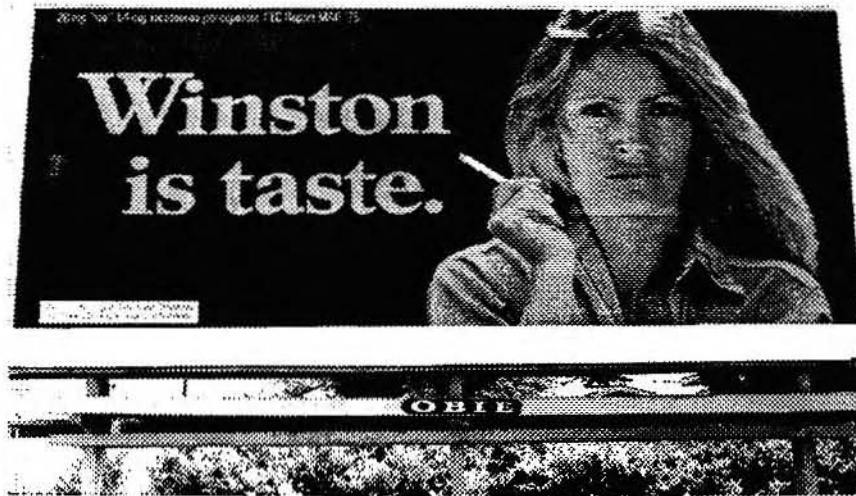


Figure 3 (p. 151) offers an example of pecuniary logic in the form of implication through association. The caption "Let in the sunny side of living" is combined with the picture showing Coca-Cola as an integral part of having a good time, having friends, and playing softball on a team. How can drinking Coke do this? In short, because it "Let in the sunny side of living," and because obviously, it's the real thing. First of all, one may ask, it's the real what? The real cola? From whose point of view? Surely not Pepsi's. The real Coca-Cola then? That is evident. One could go on, but the point has been made. Pecuniary logic is logical only in commercial terms. Usually, it is intentionally fuzzy and unobtrusive so as to avoid close examination, and completely illogical in the traditional sense of the word. As in the irrational association technique, pecuniary logic seems to be its most effective when it is carried to the extreme, that is, when it is most illogical. In this form, because it sells, it is logical (pecuniarily, of course).

So, in advertising, we have a philosophical system with the elemental truths being rooted in the economic, using traditional value systems to attempt to manipulate the consumer towards these same economic ends. Having created goods with a psychological load, and having subtly educated us that these goods are the answer not only to our material, but also, to our social and even spiritual well-being, the mercantiles let us know where, how, when, and why we can / should get specific goods and services. We are conditioned to want things, to formlessly desire the material as a cure-all for whatever ails us. Then, when the merchandisers bring out something new (synonymous with better in ad terms), or something bigger (substitute again, better) we salivate automatically like Pavlov's dogs, anticipating the purchase of the new, bigger, better product or service. The discussion is thus brought back around to the aesthetics.



### The Aesthetics of Outdoor Advertising

Any element in an ad which does not contribute to the goal of selling goods and services is dysfunctional. The first job of an ad is to attract the perceiver's attention. Entire volumes are devoted to understanding the means of getting the consumer's attention and understanding his/her processing strategies (In Alwitt's (1985) advertising terms, any element of the ad not contributing to this goal is unaesthetic. Secondly, the visual elements must communicate something specific to the potential consumer. To eliminate the dysfunctional in this context means to dispense with whatever does not contribute to the specific message the advertiser is trying to communicate. This naturally excludes all decoration for its own sake in advertising art. Decoration communicates nothing specific, thus in pecuniary terms, it is a useless art form because it does not pay its way.

In its structure, advertising design deals with the same elements and principles as other art forms: line, shape, form, color, texture, movement (implied and actual), rhythm, balance, proportion, unity, and variety. Proportion of the advertising image in relation to the other environmental factors is also a primary concern. Obviously, the larger the object, the more of one's field of vision it will include, and the more likely it is to be seen.

Since clarity of communication (of intentionally fuzzy concepts) is of central importance, ad design naturally takes simplicity as another of its essential structural parts. A good ad is direct, with a minimum of clutter and confusion. In billboard advertising, for example, it is generally accepted that large, minimal shapes are the ideal, and that more than seven words are too many. The reason is that the advertiser wants the consumer to "read" the board in six seconds or less (which is the time they have estimated, from their research, it takes for a motorist to get from where s/he first sees the board to where s/he goes past it).

Another intrinsic factor in advertising aesthetics is movement. Movement attracts more attention than static forms. When it is not possible to include movement in a sign, the suggestion of movement is an effective substitute, many advertisers will stop a person (or some other entity) in motion.

It cannot be stressed enough that in all these processes the advertiser does not want the viewer to critically step back for an objective look. A billboard is not trying to bring the consumer to any kind of heightened awareness. Rather, it is attempting just the opposite. It is playing on the emotional/intuitive self to try to make the perceiver one with the collective image of the culture as formulated by the ad medium! The advertising aesthetic is not personal or idiosyncratic as a medium. Rather, it is the same sort of collective or tribal image Edmund Carpenter (1974) depicts in pre-literate societies. Advertising might be said to be the cave painting or the "graven images" of modern society. In any case, we are dealing again with a less than fully conscious interchange on the part of the perceiver. The advertising industry, is the shaman who creates magic the public is not supposed to understand and likes it that way.

Toward this end, in the design of most ads, there is the striving for what could best be described as an all-at-onceness. That is, the advertiser is interested in unity which strikes the observer with an immediate impression. None of the elements can be entities in and of themselves, and so detract from the all-at-onceness. Details are designed not to be consciously picked up by the consumer but to contribute to the global impression which is the ad's overall goal.

Other aspects of the advertising aesthetic are appropriate for discussion here. For example, the industry contends that shape has sexual identity and connotations. Round shapes and almond shapes are feminine, while angular and squarish shapes are masculine. Through the use of either masculine or feminine shapes exclusively, advertisers try to promote each product as either masculine or feminine. Every nationally advertised product is of a definite gender in terms of its advertising. In standardizing the image of a product, the lettering also plays an important role. Obviously, the strong square letters used in a Michelin tire ad would be out of place in an ad for Chanel #5.

However, the aesthetic elements also contribute to the ideational vagueness of an ad. The picture should not be too well-defined ideationally. This allows the greatest possible number of people to project themselves into the situation in that picture, and thus, of course, to be empathetic to the product which that picture is trying to sell. Ittleson, Pronshansky, Rivlin, and Winkel (1974) state that "the greater the ambiguity or lack of structure or clarity of the object, place or event to be observed, the greater the influence of inner or behavioral determinants on the precepts that emerge" (p. 86). The element of ambiguity is particularly important in outdoor advertising in that, unlike other advertising forms, it does not direct itself to a specific audience. Advertisers know that an ad in *Woman's Day* will be read by a different type of reader than one in *Playboy*, and they direct their efforts accordingly. However, the whole of the heterogeneous population circulates around billboards.

Color in advertising is also used primarily for its psychological, manipulative value. According to Steven Baker (1961) "...each color has values in and of itself." Blue is a cold color, red is hot. Blue is calm, slow, relaxing, while red is stimulating and time-shortening, and yellow is ambiguously energetic. In addition, color is often used to appeal to people on the basis of their sex, or of their age group. For example, advertisers have

determined that children tend to prefer yellow, while older than middle-aged people almost always prefer blue. Violet tends to be a very non-commercial color as opposed to the primary colors which are very commercial. The simple "colors" sell.

## Advertising and the Environment

Two types of signing are on-premise and off-premise. On premise refers to shop signs, distributor signs, and product or service origin signs. Off-premise consists of space rented by a mercantiler to promote a product or service (See Figure 4, below). Other common forms are transit advertising and point of purchase displays. Billboards are far and away the dominant environmental advertising medium. The common billboard size is twelve feet high by twenty-five feet wide. Since the point of advertising is to get attention and communicate a message, every ad is in competition with every other ad and with stop lights, street signs, buildings, and so on. The dominant aesthetic mode, then, is one of big, bright, simple forms placed in a position of relative environmental dominance. This aesthetic sets the stage for the environmental clash and clamor we all know.



If "symbol clusters reflect and reveal a civilization's philosophy" (Gordon, 1971), and the built environment has a symbolic meaning as a whole, then, a materialistic ethos as represented by commercial signs is the dominant value represented on American streets. The nature of billboards as a standard medium also says the United States is a society on wheels. In addition, competition is personified through the advertising on our streets. Where pecuniary dominance is absolute dominance, a bigger sign and better location are indicative of a more successful company. Furthermore, commercial images exist as symbolic of Americans' willingness to take much of what they buy and how they live at a superficial level. Commercial images refer the perceiver to jingles and contrived circumstances that have little to do with traditional notions of real content, truth, value, or substance. Finally, in the face of the plethora of outdoor advertising, one may ask the



question, what is the most desirable use of the public's space? Who has the rights to public space and the power to influence its appearance? Maybe, as Edward Hall (1969) would have it, due to heightened schedule needs, Americans do not have clearly defined space needs. Private property is almost sacrosanct in our culture. Do the economic institutions take advantage of this unfairly?

All of these are questions which cannot be answered here, but which could serve as a nexus for the development of a curriculum examining advertising images not only as formal constructions, but as carriers of societal mores, values, and assumptions. The crucial point to remember is that in commercial images one is dealing with economic, not aesthetic issues. Aesthetic factors either support a pecuniary agenda or they are eliminated.

### Questions and Issues for Curriculum Planning

Questions to be discussed in relation to critiques of advertising imagery might be structured around 1) the nature of one's response to that imagery; 2) a descriptive analysis of what qualities in the image conditioned that response, including description of forms, thematic content, and formal relationships, 3) interpretation of images and 4) evaluation using formal and societal criteria. Issues would rise out of critiques and discussions such as an examination of cultural and economic presuppositions embedded in advertising and the history of advertising, its philosophy, psychology, and ethics including techniques for making a sale. The aesthetics of advertising in an environmental context could be examined in relation to symbol making (its nature and forms), advertising's repetitive symbols, standardization, technology, idea association and emotional arousal through formal qualities, compositional features and style, embedding, and the meaning advertising has to individuals and to society. Examination might also include outdoor advertising's effects on the environment, and the nature of that built environment as a reflection of held values, mores, and beliefs. The heart of such examinations could be a critical method (Anderson, 1988) which consciously incorporates contextual funding into the critical process. Studio activities might include redesigning the "strip" to reflect a non-pecuniary philosophy or at least an honest, mercantile sensibility, or redesigning an advertisement to reflect honest claims, forms and values. Once students understand the "sleuthing" nature of this unit, student-generated activities can be developed.

### Conclusions

Paolo Freire (1973) says, "Perhaps the greatest tragedy of modern man is his domination by the force of...myths and manipulations by modern advertising, ideological or otherwise" (p. 6). Furthermore, if these manipulations are successful they will result in the loosening of the associational structure of society in the face of symbols (Gordon, 1971). Civilization is a cultural manifestation of making and acting upon symbols. Symbols' dis-

association from shared traditional meanings would be cultural schizophrenia. If the role of art education is to take part in the broad education of students to help them develop the critical ability to go beyond accepting the prescriptions and recipes of established institutional powers, then content and methods in art education must be flexible enough to go beyond the safely defined and conventional forms. This ability for critically engaging the major themes of the times can be crucial not only for students as individuals, but for the society as a whole. Witness, for example, Sontag's (1980) critical analysis of fascist art as having a predisposition to control a populace through emotionally manipulative means and through a self-conscious repudiation of the intellect with the end goal of affecting behavior. This sounds alarmingly like the major characteristics of advertising art. In this context, it is vital that students are given tools and the depth of sensibility to make informed decisions about their choices in life and their choices in society.

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