

Chapter 4: Visual Persuasion in Advertising (outline for note-taking)

Deuteronomy: Thou shalt make no graven image.

John 1: In the beginning was logos, and the logos was with God and the logos was God. A word. The word. Not an image.

Why does the Bible say these things? Why does God forbid ideas of Him to be trafficked in images? Why was it a Word in the beginning, a creative Word?

The freight they carry. The freight they don't carry.

Smoke signals. Church bells. Television. Books. A tweet. The medium is an intrinsic part of the message. The medium determines the way the message can and cannot persuade.

Aristotleian Model, p. 77-79 in your books:

Three components to persuasion.

- Ethos: the credibility of a source
- Logos: the logical arguments used to persuade (logos: word, logic)
- Pathos: Emotional appeals used to persuade

How does advertising persuade? How do you argue with this? Critically engage with pathos, an experience, a feeling, an emotion?

Watch car advertising. What did you learn about that very expensive automobile? About long-term financial planning? About Progressive's insurance benefits versus Geico?

The medium of television ("Now!," images washing over you) PLUS the intentional pathos of the advertisers = most TV advertising. The rhetoric is one almost completely of emotion, typically either aspiration or fear.

Where does the ethos come from? The brand, right? And that it's on TV (a circular logic).

Why was Joe Camel banned? p. 84. Because children are most vulnerable to pathos-based appeals. They do not yet have logos-based thinking skills.

Who is most susceptible or vulnerable to pitches based on aspiration? The poor. Televangelists know this. Mega Millions knows this. They are selling hope, an instant fix.

Page 82, **product placement**. Lots of ways to do it:

- Products used by cast members.
- Integrated into the plot.
- Product associated with character.
- As the basis for the show: Rothman Greene & Mohr, a real advertising firm, is THE ad firm that is the basis for TNT's "Trust Me," which is about a Chicago ad agency that handles, among other accounts, Dove hair care products made by Unilver. Rothman Greene actually does have these accounts, the ads in the show are fictional and yet real.

Branded entertainment and the inversion of culture?

From your book: "Critics argue that the public eventually won't be able to tell the difference between advertising, news and entertainment. Because advertising largely supports the media, traditional media outlets offer little criticism of this trend."

With all of this increasing, does culture, art, risk folding in on itself, or being completely hollowed out by commercial interests.

Your response? As distinctions between advertising and news blur, what does that say about our culture? About us? What should we do about it? How does it hurt us or dull us, when we can't or won't distinguish between art (or culture) and a sales pitch?

What do you think the ethics of product placement should be? Do's and Don't's? When should it be verboten, realizing this would be a form of censorship? What kinds of disclosure should be required? What of products on a news show? Journalists in films that have journalists, playing themselves? American Idol results presented as news on Fox News?