

Branding During Social Disruptions

By

Erika L. Paulson

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of

The requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

(Business)

At the

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

2014

Date of final oral examination: 5/13/2014

The dissertation is approved by the following members of the Final Oral Committee:

Thomas C. O'Guinn, Professor, Marketing

Jan B. Heide, Professor, Marketing

Dhavan V. Shah, Professor, Journalism and Mass Communication

Amber M. Epp, Assistant Professor, Marketing

Robin Tanner, Assistant Professor, Marketing

## Abstract

Several prominent sociologists have called social disruptions and their associated risk as the defining aspect of contemporary society, and marketers have increasingly become interested in this phenomenon. I propose the theory of active erasure to explain a series of robust patterns of change in brand advertising in response to three major social disruptions. This phenomenon is generalizable across disruptions, and consists of two parts: erasing images connected to the event, and actively replacing images with more comforting images of the home. This allows brand managers to anticipate the actions of competitors and choose their strategy accordingly. I situate this phenomenon in an institutional perspective, providing further evidence using depth interviews with brand managers and advertising creatives. Using structuration theory, I identify two external structures and two internal structures that shape the phenomena of active erasure during the advertising creation process and suggest intervention points in advertising strategy. I approach disruptions in a macro social way, and demonstrate that an institutional level of analysis allows new and different findings that are not always available to researchers focused in on smaller units of analysis.

## Contents

Abstract .....	i
INTRODUCTION.....	1
LITERATURE.....	5
Institutional Perspective .....	5
The Idea of Disruption and Related Constructs .....	7
Crisis Management.....	9
Generalized Disruption .....	11
Social Disruptions .....	15
METHOD .....	16
Data Collection.....	19
Coding.....	23
Analysis.....	24
FINDINGS.....	25
Advertising in the Wake of the Exxon Valdez.....	25
Advertising in the Wake of the Persian Gulf War .....	27
Advertising in the Wake of the Great Recession .....	31
Do Top Brands Respond? .....	36
Do Industries Respond? .....	37
LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS .....	39
ESSAY TWO.....	42
LITERATURE.....	42
Structuration .....	42
DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS.....	46
Data Collection.....	46
Analysis.....	48
FINDINGS.....	50
External Structures as Conditions of Action .....	52
Character.....	53
Brand Management.....	55
Internal Structures of Constraint (and opportunity) .....	58
Brand management .....	58
The planning Function.....	61
The Negative Case .....	63
External structure: the character of Brunswick. ....	68
Internal structures: the brand loyalty of Darryl Willis .....	69
Historical and competitive context .....	70
LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS .....	71

DISCUSSION ..... 74  
REFERENCES ..... 82  
APPENDIX A: Coding Sheet ..... 110  
APPENDIX B: Brands that Responded to the Recession..... 113

## INTRODUCTION

Social disruptions and their associated risk have been described as the defining aspect of contemporary society (Beck 1992; Douglas and Wildavsky 1982; Giddens 1991). These disruptions have far reaching effects on collectivities and individuals, companies and consumers. In the case of the former, a recent annual survey of more than a thousand CEOs in 68 countries found social unrest to be the single biggest problem facing their companies. Other disruptive scenarios that worry CEOs include recession, natural disaster, and military tension (Price Waterhouse Coopers 2013, 5). The cover of July 22's (2013) *Advertising Age* asked marketers to "Imagine Your Brand in the Middle of This" [a photo from the Brazilian World Cup street riots] and describes the concerns of global brand management for the likes of Coca-Cola, Anheuser-Busch, and Adidas who are caught in the middle of social disruption. With \$1.6 billion spent on sponsorship fees and more on marketing the World Cup, pulling ads off the air is not an option. Similarly, a recent article in the Wall Street Journal detailed the protest and boycott facing Procter and Gamble for advertising on a Russian television station that aired a political film. The corporate response stated that "we [Procter and Gamble] would like to underline that the company strictly adheres to the principle of doing business outside of politics" (Razumovskaya 2012), a stance that appears increasingly difficult to take.

Despite these concerns, academic marketing literature provides little guidance. Should marketers acknowledge the disruption and underlying tensions, and risk appearing insensitive,

exploitative, or alienating consumer segments? Should marketers ignore the disruption or offer consumers escape instead? And what will competitors do? Marketers are particularly and practically concerned about their brand communication in times of social disruption and yet are without a theory or guiding model to inform their decisions. This dissertation begins to substantially address this need in two essays. The first provides both a detailed analysis of the marketing landscape during and after a disruption and finds the phenomenon of active erasure to be a prevalent response. In the second essay, interviews with advertisers and brand managers examine the processes that lead to specific types of response to disruption. Internal structures such as brand management and external structures such as the character of an advertising agency are considered, alongside contextual factors such as brand history and corporate competition. Both essays are situated in institutional and structuration theory.

Importantly this dissertation engages with the growing body of marketing literature attending to the role of institutional factors in consumer behavior. However, this work pushes for a more macro, sociological perspective of marketing and advertising. Examining branding and marketing at an aggregate, institutional level to understand not only what specific brands or industries do, but also what response is likely from advertising as an institution. We believe that marketers may be unaware of systematic responses, possibly obscured by their subtlety or their wide distribution across many brands. Embedded practice may also become nearly invisible, even to those closest to the practice (Pearson and Clair 1988; Schudson 1984). This institutional level of analysis is important because it goes beyond individual marketer, brand, or industry responses to reveal a different response among all advertisers, a pattern we call “active erasure.”

This response is also generalizable across disruptions across the three disruptions investigated here, each chosen to meet strict definitional criteria while varying in substantive particulars. We chose an environmental disruption with an identifiable corporate culprit: the Exxon Valdez oil spill. This occurred in a remote part of the United States, but received significant media coverage. We also chose the First Persian Gulf War, following the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq. The Gulf War occurred further away than the Exxon Valdez spill, but was extensively covered by American media, carried out by government actors, and tremendously popular with the American public. Finally, we chose a major economic disruption. The Recession of 2008-2009 was felt broadly in the U.S. population, was tied to a housing crisis, and was, like the other two, the subject of extensive media coverage. Identifying a single generalizable response across events is important because it allows marketers to develop a single response strategy to diverse-seeming events. How marketers responded to these three crises in their brand messaging should reveal an institutional response, if one exists. Knowing what the general response also allows brand managers to deliberately choose what strategy to pursue. The differences in circumstance, nature, and proximity of chosen disruptions may also produce meaningful and diagnostic differences between responses that are theoretically or managerially important.

We believe that marketing managers will benefit broadly from knowledge of any revealed response patterns. First, simply knowing that such patterns exist would seem valuable. Marketers might then apply this knowledge to avoid damaging associations to their own brands, or plan actions that run counter to the vast majority of their competitors, thus setting their own

brand apart. Knowing of an institutional-level response is valuable information to any marketer (Kotler and Keller 2012). Institutional level findings also inform individual marketers of the subtle actions of a critical partner in brand communication, advertising agencies. These are, after all, the organizations typically tasked with creating brand communication. Historically, brand managers and other “client-side” managers have expressed unease and even distrust when it comes to precisely how their requested brand communication is ultimately executed by advertising professionals (Fox 1985). It is logical that this might be particularly important when the brand, the category, or society is disrupted and perhaps under greater scrutiny, by an unsettled and anxious public. Ultimately, it is marketers who have final say in the selection of brand communications and bear ultimate responsibility, and would thus benefit from awareness of any previously unknown institutional patterns that may affect their brands.

We use our results to motivate a model that helps marketers understand why and how systematic responses to social disruption occur in brand communications. Perhaps most importantly, our model allows marketers to move past unaware reflexive responses, to understand the predictable and generalizable nature of disruption, and develop long-term brand communication and marketing strategies with social disruption in mind. Theory and our own empirical findings lead us to propose an institutional level response theory, what we call *active erasure*. This response and the accompanying theory are derived specifically to account for the institutional effects of social disruptions on marketers.

We first demonstrate large and very robust patterns of response across nearly 5,000 ads, more than 1,600 brands, and scores of categories. This empirical pattern has never before been



theorized or demonstrated, and certainly not generalized across different events. We then offer several specific managerial implications of this observed pattern, and the underlying explanation. More broadly, we provide additional evidence that attending to institutional phenomena can provide new and important insights into the increasingly important social role of brands and their management. We, like others (Handleman and Arnold 1999; Scaraboto and Fischer 2013), believe there are clear benefits offered by attention to, and explication of, an institutional perspective in brand management. We, like the contemporary CEOs surveyed, also believe that the practical reality of marketing in a risk society demands it. Marketing managers have a practical need to understand branding in disruptive times. They need to understand persistent patterns of institutional response and have some working theory of why these patterns persist in order to reveal branding strategies, socially responsible actions, and competitive opportunities.

## **LITERATURE**

### **Institutional Perspective**

Marketing, and brand advertising in particular, have long been considered institutions (Carey 1960; Sandage 1972, Rotzoll 1976). In accounts of contemporary society, advertising is has become a central institution in consumer society, one that influences our perceptions, thoughts, actions, judgments, and understanding of society and how it works. In the marketing literature, the term is often used to describe the wider social context in which firms operate, including rules, regulations, roles, and prescriptions (Greenwood, Oliver, Sahlin and Suddaby

2008). Thornton and Ocasio (1999) include normative, but also structural and symbolic dimensions when they describe institutional logics as “the socially constructed, historical patterns of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs, and rules by which individuals produce and reproduce their material subsistence, organize time and space, and provide meaning to their social reality” (804). While the term institution can be used in a variety of ways, I use it here consistent with the above definitions as a term that describes the norms, expectations and unwritten rules that guide the practices of the advertising industry.

Scott’s (2005) frequently used definition of institutions reflects this range of influences on thought and behavior: institutions are “comprised of regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life” (Italicized in the original, Scott 2005: 48). The management literature has occasionally engaged both institutional perspectives and disruptions. In proposing the concept of issue fields, Hoffman (1999) is also working in an institutional tradition. From a management, rather than consumer behavior perspective, he describes how the U.S. chemical manufacturing industry and environmentalists have been engaged in an issue field that has experienced four distinct stages. Hoffman also demonstrates that not only do issue fields exist, with an increase in interaction, information, and awareness, but that changes in the issue field can be sparked by disruptive events. The last stage which he identifies in the issue field was spurred by a number of large scale environmental disasters including the Exxon Valdez oil spill. The types of messaging changed as did the interaction among players in the field as the constituents debated, negotiated over the interpretation of the issue.

Consumer Culture Theory research has also embraced Scott's institutional perspective, incorporating it into culturally, socially, and historically situated research. For example, Hunphreys (2010) uses these three elements of institutions to examine discourse surrounding the legalization of casino gambling, identifying different periods and dominant frames. Karababa and Ger (2011) investigate the relatively early appearance of an active consumer in Ottoman coffeehouse culture. While there is attention to institutions such as coffeehouse owner's guilds, the state in the form of decrees from the Sultan, and the Fatwas of religious authorities, the focus remains on the consumer and discourse. The objective here is to turn fully toward the institution as the object of the study, demonstrating the concept's ability to offer unique theoretical insights to the marketing literature in the context of social disruption. As an institution, advertising offers social structures that pattern social activities and relations. These activities create advertisements that reflect, shape, and possibly change the consumer's world view.

### The Idea of Disruption and Related Constructs

Disruptive events have been investigated from a variety of perspectives. Each stream of research has a long history and has constructs that are defined with particular scope and circumstances in mind. Event-focused research in management often examines specific instances of product harm crises and their relationship with marketing effectiveness (Van Heerde, Helsen and Dekimpe 2007), advertising and price adjustments (Cleeren, van Heerde, and Dekimpe 2013) and recall strategy (Chen, Ganesan and Liu 2009). The analysis and findings are

tailored to the firm or industry. Closer to the idea of a social disruption research into how firms manage natural disasters (Quarantelli 1988). The focus tends to be on strategies to avoid, mitigate, or clean up from the disaster. Communication through the news media rather than advertising is emphasized. Less often does this work examine wider social, political, or economic fallout from an event.

The social sciences also offer a wealth of closely related constructs that emphasize media attention and social construction of events as a central issue: hot crises (Ungar 1998; 2008), focusing events (Kingdon and Thurber 1984), and the later discussions of moral panic (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 1994; 2009). However each includes additional aspects: geographic proximity, latent attitude, or us-them dichotomy, respectively, that do not help answer the question of how brands, individually or collectively, respond to social disruptions. Other theories are concerned with the unique character of modernity use constructs such as manufactured risk (Giddens 1991, Beck 1992), wicked problems (Pearson and Clair 1998; Rittel and Webber 1973; Conklin 2006), and cultural contradictions (Bell 1976).

Despite a wealth of constructs, there remains a dearth of research on the relationship between advertising and social disruption, particularly at the institutional level. One significant body of work comes from the crisis management literature, which describes corporate strategies to endure a disruptive event, a product harm scenario, or a disaster. The focus is on firms that are directly involved in the event rather than on the institution of advertising. There is another stream of literature working to understand how brands respond to broad, sweeping cultural changes. Such theories of cultural branding represent the first step in treating disruption as a

generalizable phenomenon that marketers can take advantage of for building brand meaning. Both streams of literature are reviewed for suggestions about how social disruptions may affect branding, and the effects we can expect to see in advertising.

### Crisis Management.

In general the crisis management literature suggests that advertisers avoid imagery and messaging that connotes the crisis or social disruption, unless they are a firm directly involved. The origins of crisis management are in large-scale industrial disasters, Three Mile Island (Dynes and Quarantelli 1975), Challenger (Starbuck and Miliken 1988; Vaughan 1997), Bhopal (Shrivastava 1992), and the Exxon Valdez oil spill (Pauchant and Mitroff 1992; Pearson and Clair 1998). However, recent research has broadened this perspective to include a wider variety of events from natural disasters to acts of terrorism. Pearson and Clair (1998) identify common elements of an organizational crisis as including a highly ambiguous situation with unknown causes and effects, a situation with a low probability of occurring but a high threat to the firm, and a situation in which there is little time to respond. Examples given include an environmental spill, a natural disaster, or a terrorist attack. While the definition is intentionally open, many of the events are similar to those we consider social disruptions, making this literature important to consider.

Often, crisis management focuses on the offending firm or industry, often asking how a firm did, could have, or should have salvage their reputation. For example, the dramatic Exxon

Valdez oil spill of 1989 generated research that examined corporate responses to the crisis, in both public relations and advertising. Communication patterns from Exxon were analyzed and found to be defensive, ultimately damaging corporate credibility. Such patterns antagonized the public and lead to a perception of wider corporate arrogance (Tyler 1992).

Johnson and Selnow (1995) stressed the importance of including deliberative rhetoric. Tierney and Webb (1995) used a dramaturgical analysis to identify salvaging strategies that the firm employed: enhancing their competence, controlling information, personalizing the event, and attempting to redefine the event. However, the authors note that audiences rarely cooperated in these strategies. While the offending firm is encouraged to apologize, and to do so quickly and sincerely, the advertising or public relations of other firms are almost never described. In both these examples the focus is on a single firm's corporate reputation management.

Taking a broader perspective, Lee, Taylor and Chung (2011) examine the advertising strategies of an entire industry during a social disruption, in this case an economic crisis. The authors expect the information to change because the underlying values of consumers change during the recession. The authors find that financial service organizations such as banks, investment firms, and insurance agencies change the messages presented in their advertisements. Financial firms move away from transformational strategies (which are sensory, social, or image based, see Taylor 1999) and instead favor informational strategies (that emphasize rationality, acute need, or routine).

For example, Ho and Hallahan (2003) examine corporate advertising strategies as they appear in two Chinese newspapers following the September 1999 Chin-Chin earthquake in

Taiwan. Firms that advertised were headquartered not only in Taiwan, but Asia and the West as well. The authors found that most corporate advertising included themes of helping to restore society and helping victims, while a large portion expressed sorrow and attempted to soothe or offer optimism. Over half of images used in corporate ads are “abstract,” such as a sunrise and communicate hope or encouragement (p.299-300). Concrete images, including images of products or rescue actions, appear in only a quarter of the ads. The authors describe the strategy behind these images as mixed – building communal relationships, but with enlightened self interest following close behind. For firms that do respond, the ads are abstract, emotional, and soothing.

### Generalized Disruption

Most recently, Spears and Amos (2014) have also examined how ads respond to a turbulent environment, although their focus is not on a single event but the cultural attitude and national mood through the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Their focus is on images of women as relatively traditional, or more in line with emerging feminist ideas. They find that in prosperous and peaceful times, a “culturally emerging advertising strategy” will push the envelope with a new and potentially divisive viewpoint (445) but that an “authentication” strategy which pictures traditional women is preferred during periods of crisis including the Second World War and Vietnam War, the Great Depression and the economic turbulence of the 1970s. Indeed, the

authors describe the motive behind this retrenchment as one of maintaining a sense of stability and the security of consensus (447).

Perhaps the best known work concerned with the idea of a generalized social disruption is the allied handful of theories regarding cultural contradictions, most notably Holt's (2001) concept of "cultural branding." The body of academic work concerned with cultural contradictions, particularly in marketing, can be traced back to Daniel Bell's (1976), *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*. Bell's thesis is that capitalism produces inherent contradictions in terms of material consumer gratification: increased access to consumer goods diminishes motivation to acquire more, thereby eroding the production of capital. Most contemporary invocations of cultural contradiction bear only a vague resemblance to Bell's original assertion that capitalism itself was contradictory in the realm of consumption, describing instead how capitalism leverages rather than strictly produces cultural contradictions in order to sell things.

Holt (2003; 2004) applied this original notion of cultural contradiction much more widely in his cultural branding model. The model suggests that cultural changes cause significant consumer identity questions that the smart marketer can address obliquely using a myth, and set in a populist space. For example, Holt (2003; 2004) describes how the ideology of scientific bureaucracy in the 1950s and 1960s displaced the earlier ideology of rugged individualism. The resulting contradiction between expected obedience to the system, and the older individualism, is felt as anxiety and desire in the (male) population. Mountain dew resolves this contradiction with a Hillbilly myth. The brand and its advertising provide a fictional manhood which restored,



however briefly, aspects of sex, violence, and freedom which had been neutered by scientific bureaucracy.

The cultural contradiction is not necessarily related to discrete events such as an oil spill or a war. Instead, contradictions are either an individual disconnect with national expectations, or rapidly shifting national ideologies such as those advocated by the youth revolution of the late 1960s (p.23). The contradictions present a problem for individual consumers that a brand can help solve through advertising. A focus on cultural contradictions as opportunities for savvy brands has been seen in earlier work, though never so tightly tied to the marketplace as Holt's formulation. Frank (1999) argues that ever since the 1960s, smart advertisers have realized and profited from a central contradiction: youth culture's expressed disdain for materialism and consumer society and their simultaneous love of things and covert materialism. Frank attributes Volkswagen's anti-advertising advertising, and Pepsi's cooptation of the youth revolution via the slogan "*Join the Pepsi Revolution...for those who think young*" as being responsible for the phenomenal success of both brands.

The same basic formula for success has been noted by David Brooks (2001), although he does not explicitly call it a cultural contradiction. He describes the *BoBo* or *Bourgeois Bohemian*, a consumer affecting the style and alienation of a bohemian, but attracted to and able to afford the bourgeois lifestyle. The same idea is found in Malcolm Gladwell's (2000) explanation of the phenomenal success of Dockers: young married career-men, intimidated by fashion, missing their male friends are able to find community, connection, secure masculinity,

and conformity in the form of Dockers. All of these stories attribute a brand's success to its ability to resolve cultural contradictions through marketing.

As a body of work, the discussion concerning cultural contradictions tells a story about how at least some brands are able to succeed by helping to resolve the cultural contradiction felt by the individual. These accounts are intuitive and compelling. They are consistent with theories of myth, loosely drawn from social thought, and are connected to a base of consumer psychology research. Yet, the evidence for these accounts largely rests on its reasonable nature, its intuitive appeal, and a handful of case studies. This is no doubt due to the reality that iconic brands are very rare, and the very nature of the theory does not lend itself to empirical testing. Indeed, it is hard to imagine, given the nature of cultural contradictions and their situated location within a particular historical moment, just exactly how one would bring science to bear on the theory. This dissertation does not attempt to resolve this, but it does draw on basic hypotheses implicit in the research and offers a related construct, one that is more amenable to quantitative study. While social disruptions are conceptually distinct from cultural contradictions, they are similar constructs. Brands and advertising in general may respond similarly.

While Spears and Amos (2014) found advertisers to retrench into standard female imagery during periods of crisis, extending insights from cultural branding Holt (2003; 2004; Holt and Cameron 2012) suggests an alternative course of action - that at least some brands should respond to cultural contradictions.

These conceptions of disruption are interesting initial forays into social disruption and marketing, but the research does not consider disruptions as a generalizable construct, offer a comprehensive institutional analysis. We propose to do both. First, we describe social disruptions as a distinct phenomenon for investigation.

### Social Disruptions

Social disruptions include environmental disasters such as the Exxon Valdez oil spill, international political conflicts and warfare such as the Persian Gulf War, and economic fluctuations including the Great Recession. Social disruptions share four key characteristics. First, disruptions are discrete. That is, there is a clear beginning and end point. In this way they are different than cultural changes which move, at least for a significant period, in a single direction. Disruptions also differ from cultural contradictions in which there is a simultaneous tension. In a social disruption, public interest, media attention, and public opinion change, but not permanently.

In this definition, the social disruption lasts as long as it lives in the public imagination. For example, the end of the Persian Gulf War could be identified as February 1991 when President Bush announced Kuwait liberated, or March 1991 when Iraq accepted the UN's cease fire agreement. The end may equally be when the last troops and equipment return home, or when Operation Provide Comfort concluded (1995 or 1996). Because the focus of this research is on advertising, which is more concerned with consumer attitudes and behavior, measures of

public opinion are used to define the end date of these events. In the case of the Persian Gulf War, we define it as over when the surge of patriotism and support for military spending that accompanied the war ebb. This operationalization of the “end” of an event also incorporates the second key characteristic, which is that a social disruption is not simply an event but its wider fallout: national media coverage, changes in public opinion, and the hypothesized response by firms and marketers.

The next two aspects of disruption are characteristic of the phenomena, but dimensions along which it may be seen to vary. First, social disruptions have a widespread impact. That is, they are national in scope or impact. Such a scope is rarely defined for cultural contradictions but in practice they appear to follow demographics such as gender or social class (Holt 2004). Finally, disruptions have a negative valence. While we can imagine positive events we do not investigate them in this dissertation. These four characteristics distinguish social disruptions from a of closely related constructs and form the foundation of our empirical investigation.

## **METHOD**

Using a content analysis of mass circulation print advertising, I will examine how advertising, at an institutional level, responds to social disruption according to the hypotheses developed above. I will also disaggregate the data to investigate the special role of industry organizations, top brands, and local brands. The analysis that follows will determine whether

there the advertising exhibits a consistent or generalizable pattern across events, and whether this pattern conforms to existing theories or requires new theorizing.

### Selecting Disruptions

To begin, I select three major social disruptions around which to structure my inquiry. After consulting social histories, public opinion archives, and periodical guides, I drew up a list of over twenty such possible social disruptions in the past thirty years including gay rights, religiosity, changes in employment, various international conflicts, technological changes, industrial accidents, and environmental disasters. Each event was judged against the definition of social disruption; events had to be well-defined temporally and result in some change to public opinion or attitude as indicated by the General Social Survey and Roper iPoll. Potential social disruptions also had to be covered prominently in the national media. Prominently covered media stories and reader interest and attention ratings are available through Pew Center research studies. Finally, they had to be national in scope and all had a negative valence. However, future research could examine the difference between negative, neutral, and positive events.

I also must note that the concept of a cultural contradiction in marketing is both a considerable distance from its origin in Bell's (1976) original formulation, somewhat vaguely articulated, and rarely (if ever) treated empirically. However, I want to make clear that the two are not mutually exclusive. A disruption could focus attention on an existing cultural

contradiction, or bring a new one to light. Further, I want to be equally clear that this work is not a test of an alternative to the Holt (2003) brand model. His model may very well correctly explain the rise and persistence of some iconic brands. Here I examine how brands, groups of brands, companies, industries, affiliated organizations, government entities, the trade press, and the like respond individually and collectively to a similar, but not identical construct, a social disruption.

To investigate advertising's response to social disruptions in a systematic manner, I choose three disruptions that were empirically supported: the Exxon Valdez oil spill, the Persian Gulf War, and the Great Recession. For each disruption I selected, three observation points were needed: one prior to the disruption, one during it, and one after. To increase the consistency, the month of each year examined remains the same. In most cases the time period between observations is also the same.

Exxon Valdez spill March 24th, 1989. The final major social disruption to be investigated is the increasing environmentalism that took hold after the Exxon Valdez oil spill. The dates selected are May 1987, May 1989 (2 months after the spill and allowing advertisers time to revise or pull their campaigns), and May 1992. The three year interval was chosen because at the two-year mark public opinion regarding the environment had not returned to pre-disruption levels.

Persian Gulf War – August 2 1990 to February 28 1991. First, a date in the middle of the conflict was selected, November 1990. Dates before and after were then selected: November 1988 and November 1992. The Gulf War was selected because it has a well-defined time frame

and large national polls suggest a widespread shift in public opinion supporting government, military spending, and patriotism.

The Great Recession – December 2007 to June 2009. The Great Recession was selected because the start and end dates are clear, the impact is spread across the country and the world. Additionally, the business cycle has a long lasting and relatively well researched effect on business and advertising. The recession lasted from December 2007 to June 2009, as determined by the National Bureau for Economic Research. The dates chosen for sampling were November 2006, as housing prices began to soften but before the subprime mortgage crisis began in earnest. November 2008 was in the middle of the recession. For the third period I choose November 2010 after the official end of the recession and as public opinion and consumer sentiment began to rebound.

### Data Collection

Advertisings data was then collected from the dates surrounding each event. Such a data collection necessitated many sampling decision. Advertising could be collected in a variety of ways. Advertising could be requested from individual product and brand manufacturers, although the full response of advertisers would not be visible. Advertisers themselves could be interviewed for their responses, although a large sample would be difficult to assemble (although we do gather such interviews to analyze in the second essay). Television ads are rarely archived.

However, magazines are archived, and the ads along with them. These ads provide a snapshot of advertising during a specific period in history and were selected as the source of data.

Examining advertising from magazines with highest circulation provides us with the images that a large proportion of the population is exposed to. This also provides us with as much of the institutional behavior to be viewed as possible. First, I identified magazines that were consistently in the top ten publications by total paid and verified circulation (obtained from the Audit Bureau of Circulations) in 1990, 2000, and 2010, covering the three time periods in question. I find that seven publications remain among the top ten with the highest circulation: *AARP the Magazine* (formerly *Modern Maturity*), *Reader's Digest*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, *National Geographic*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Family Circle* and *Ladies Home Journal*. From among these I eliminated *Good Housekeeping* and *Ladies Home Journal* because the content, ads, and advertisers largely replicate those in the similarly positioned but higher circulation *Better Homes and Gardens*.

I also recognize that many of these magazines privilege a solidly middle class, female, readership. Because I am interested in the range of mass advertising that is produced I chose to include the highest circulation publications targeting men, young adults, the affluent, African Americans, and business or news readers. This resulted in the addition of six magazines to our sample: *Sports Illustrated*, *Seventeen*, *Southern Living*, *Ebony*, *Newsweek* and *Time*. Again, the purpose is to gather the widest possible range of mass circulation advertising.

All the ads from each issue (or the first week of the month for weekly publications) were recorded using digital photographs. These were gathered from five different libraries, in three



cities, over two weeks in October 2010. The ads were gathered from the November 2010 issues as they were released.

Ads that were a full page or larger were analyzed. Limiting the ads selected is a common practice. For example, many researchers only examine ads that contain people (Belkaoui and Belkaoui 1976). Others include only ads that picture the interior or exterior of a home (Belk and Pollay 1985). The size of the ad also plays a role. For example, in their examination of the time orientation of ads Gross and Sheth (1989) limit the ads to those that are 2 inches by one column large or larger. Thomas and Triebar (2000), in their examination of race, class and status limit the sample to full page ads. I have followed the latter criteria and limited the sample to ads which occupy a full page or more. Doing so captures the vast majority of ads, focusing attention on those that the reader is also likely to pay attention to (Rosbergen, Pieters, and Wedel 1997). Much of what is eliminated by attending to full page ads are the smaller “back of book” ads that closely resemble classified ads; they are often small, in black and white, and composed largely of text. The number of ads collected is just under 5,000, and listed by publication and date in

**Table 1.**

Despite the straightforward data collection criteria, questions inevitably arise. Should magazine inserts, special advertising sections, or repeat ads be included? Inserts were excluded for three reasons. First they are often smaller than one page and so do not meet the sampling criteria. Second, they are likely to fall out or be removed from magazines and so including them may introduce uncertainty into the sample. Finally, inserts often supplement a full-page ad in which case the ad is already included in the sample. A number of “special advertising sections” were also present. These sections are clearly marked and contain content and traditional ads that are both funded by advertisers. In such cases only the full-page ads were included while the editorial content was not. Repeat ads were included in order to provide an accurate image of how advertisers respond to massive social disruptions. While this gives more weight to larger, more prolific advertisers doing so provides a sample that captures reality.

Occasionally issues, pages, or parts of pages can be missing. Missing issues were easily identified by a gap in the numbering, verified by an online database search, and found in another collection. Missing pages were also occasionally encountered and easily identified. Often, only half of a 2-page ad was missing, or part of the torn page was still visible. In such cases, the missing page was noted and retrieved from another magazine. There was only one issue with many missing and I feel confident I have retrieved all the ads. Finally, portions of an advertisement could also be missing. Comparing the missing pieces with duplicate ads shows that most often the piece taken was a coupon. For ads with no duplicate in the data set for comparison, and when the missing piece suggested a coupon (torn in the correct shape, from a

specific spot, not corresponding to content on other side of page) it was coded as such. The final sample has no missing issues, and is largely free from missing ads.

## Coding

To analyze the content of the advertisements, a coding scheme was developed (see table 2). The literature was scoured for potential responses to a massive social disruption. For example, Shama (1978) describes the likely increase in price appeals and promotions in response to a recession, Belk and Pollay (1985) describe the increased use of status appeals during the Great Depression, while Holt (2003) describes how iconic advertising retreats into a variety of populist worlds. Other authors note the proportion of brag ads and patriotic themes during WW2 (Stole 2013) and the Persian Gulf War (McAllister 1993). In addition, logical steps to counteract a massive environmental change could include picturing the unspoiled environment (during the Valdez oil spill), patriotism (during the Gulf war) education (during the recession) or family members and friends (a calming response to any of the events). In some cases the ads themselves suggested certain responses to social events that were included in the coding. In particular, the depiction of physical strength was noted during the Persian Gulf War and was included in the coding. A total of 13 items were examined. During coding this list was refined to 9 because some proved difficult to identify consistently. Five are reported in detail in the analysis here and summarized in Table 2 while the others are included at the bottom of the table.

Only five are reported because they are ones which change significantly and in a meaningful pattern.

To establish the reliability of the coding effort a subsample of 314 ads were selected from the sample and coded by a group of three coders – a graduate student and two undergraduate students. The sample of ads included three different publications from three different years. To test the reliability of the content analysis among the three coders, I used Krippendorff's alpha as the test statistic (Krippendorff 2004: 244-250; for a review of other popular measures see Kolbe and Burnett 1991). The values were calculated using syntax provided by Hayes and Krippendorff (2007).

The inter-rater reliability ranged from 0.7128 for safety appeals to 0.9370 for mention or images of family, with an average inter-rater reliability of 0.8416 for the five items reported in the analysis (all the inter-rater reliability coefficients are listed in Table 2). This is above the 0.8000 that Krippendorff recommends. The inter-rater reliability is high because the coding scheme simply identifies the presence or absence of specific aspects of an advertisement. In addition, it provides confidence that the full sample of nearly 5,000 ads can be coded by a single coder. Test-retest reliability for the single coder was also performed to ensure consistency over time and proved satisfactory.

Analysis

Once coded, the proportion of ads displaying each item was calculated for each time period. Proportions are used to account for the different number of ads during each collection period. Using a p-test, this baseline proportion was compared to the proportion of ads depicting patriotism during and after the event to identify significant differences. In addition, closely related industries were examined during each disruption to look for industry-specific responses. We also compare the responses of top brand to all other brands investigate the possibility that top brands respond differently than others.

## **FINDINGS**

In reporting the findings, I discuss each event separately, in the order they occur. I will compare expectations based on the literature to observed results. I then synthesize the findings to suggest how advertising as an institution uses a strategy of active erasure to respond to social disruptions.

### Advertising in the Wake of the Exxon Valdez

Does this attention and change in public opinion result in a change in advertising? How do advertisers respond? The trade press would seem to advocate silence, with crisis management for firms that are closely related or directly involved. What about everyone else? In the sample,

only a handful of ads are from any organization related to the energy industry. No one actually address the spill outright. But there are other options – advertisers could use populist worlds to help consumers cope or escape from the stress. However, I do not find any significant change in the number of ads showing populist worlds.

What I do observe is a significant drop in the number of ads showing landscapes (Figure 1: Advertising Appeals during Three Disruptions). Before the spill, 11.2% of ads employed images of landscapes as a primary visual device. In the months immediately after the event this number drops significantly to 6.9% of ads (as shown in Figure 1). It would appear as if advertising, as an institution, has chosen to help consumers forget the event by actively erasing any image. Excluded are panoramic landscapes, perhaps because they could trigger associations with the spill. To bolster this soothing strategy, I also note that images of the home (the exterior or the interior) increase significantly – from 10.1% of ads showing the home before the spill to 13.9% showing the home during the disruption.

While the focus is on all advertisers, even the same brand, advertised in the same publication, can change the appeal and imagery dramatically. The ad for Sealy Posturpedic that appeared in the May 1987 issue of *Better Homes and Gardens* shows a couple jogging along the beach at sunrise. The serene landscape occupies the entire page. But the advertisement from 1989, in the midst of the spill, with environmentalism at a high, no longer shows a landscape but instead a much different image - a log on a mattress. There is no setting in this studio shot. The feel is very different. The landscape, rather than being leveraged in a social disruption, is erased instead (Figure 2).

The advertising trade press coverage of the Exxon Valdez spill describes ads and public relations maneuvers by Exxon's, the wider oil industry, and the Alaskan tourism industry. Readers are informed of apology ads (Fisher, May 6 1991), and upcoming tourism ads (Suddock October 1989). Considering the Gulf Oil Spill (also known as the Deepwater Horizon oil spill) two decades later, editorials suggest that marketers should avoid mentioning the crisis so that they are not seen as capitalizing on the misfortune (Wheaton 2010), and industry observers express surprise that Shell would launch an ad campaign in the wake of the disaster (Bush 2010). The idea that silence is the expected outcome was confirmed in a conversation with an advertising executive from British Petroleum. He described how shocked and surprised advertisers were when they saw the firm regularly air ads in the wake of the oil spill. To advertise was surprising, and went against the norm. The only beneficiary noted by the trade press was the Dawn brand, whose longstanding animal rescue efforts garnered positive attention for the firm (Neff 2010). In general, the suggestion seems to be for firms directly responsible to apologize, while others in the industry pull their ads but say nothing. This is the erasure part of active erasure. This is an intriguing finding but can it be generalized to other social disruptions?

#### Advertising in the Wake of the Persian Gulf War

The Persian Gulf War was another dramatic, heavily televised social disruption with implications for advertisers. I would expect that at least some advertisers, perhaps only a small portion, would chose to leverage the disruption and highlight their participation in military

production, commitment to military personnel, or general patriotism. Such a strategy is supported by an increase in patriotism during the Persian Gulf War. Surveys from Roper's iPoll database show that fully half of the population reports agreeing with the statement "I am very patriotic" before the war. That amount jumps to 65% during the war, and falling back after about one year.<sup>1</sup>

Surveys show that consumers are also more favorable to products made in the United States during the Persian Gulf War (Serafin and Horton 1991; Loro 1991). The Gulf War prompted increased acceptance of military spending. Commentators report that 78% of the American public doesn't consider ads supporting troops exploitative or inappropriate, and 30% of adults are more likely to purchase from companies who ran ads expressing such support for the troops (58% said it had no impact, Hume 1991). McAllister (1993) reports local advertisers used the Persian Gulf War to their advantage, including in their ad messages patriotism and support for the troops. Clearly the war triggered feelings of patriotism and nationalism that could be leveraged in advertising. If advertisers responded to the war, ads may increase the use of patriotic color schemes, American symbols such as the flag or the bald eagle, or the inclusion of military characters.

From the second panel in Figure 1 it is evident that the number of ads in the data set containing elements of patriotism does not increase. Instead, the number of patriotic ads actually decreases, significantly, from 11.2% before the war began to 6.5% at the midpoint of the war.

---

<sup>1</sup> A slightly different question shows the same pattern, although with a different baseline: during war patriotism jumps to 61.7% (1991) and by 1993 is back near pre-war levels at 41.9% (1993).



Again, I also observe an increase in the images of homes, which jump from 10.3% of ads including a home before the war to 15.6% at the midpoint of the war. The story that is emerging is one of active erasure. Images of patriotism that could associate the brand with the war, however positive, are not only ignored, but are erased. Comforting images of the home emerge instead.

An example of this transition is pictured in Figure 3. Again, this is the same brand in the same publication. Before the Persian Gulf War the ad for American Airlines in *Ebony* presents a Caribbean island landscape. During the war, in November 1990, the imagery has changed. The Now the ad pictures three generations of family gathered on the verandah of a white-columned home. The grandmother and granddaughter are pictured mid-embrace as the rest of the family watches smiling. During the war the proportion of ads that include home imagery, such as this ad for American Airlines, increase significantly.

In contrast to other disasters, the role of advertising during wartime has been examined closely. During World War Two the advertising industry worked to be seen as civic and patriotic, working closely with the Office of War Information (Stole 2013). In addition, firms also found that promoting the war could help promote products. Jensen and Thomas (2009) examine the nature of ads during World War Two, finding more ads focus on the merits of a corporation, product, service, than ads that encourage patriotism or support for the war.

Recently, the advertising trade press suggests more caution during wartime. *Advertising Age* notes that the immediate response to the unfolding “Iraq Crisis” (“Marketers on Alert” Aug 20, 1990) and ensuing Persian Gulf War is to cut advertising, particularly during news coverage of

the war (Winters 1991; Donaton and Walley 1991; Hill et al. 1991), protecting the brand from negative feelings engendered by the negative news content. As the war draws out advertising tactics evolve, and a variety of opinions are ultimately expressed about best practices. There are reports of advertisers acting cautiously, and changing the timing of their ads rather than the content. Commentators suggest that the military and airlines pull their ads so they aren't seen as profiteering, and encourage others make sure their existing ads are in good taste (Lafayette and Levin 1991). These are the same suggestions that appear during others wars (McAllister 1993; Tansey, Hyman and Brown 1992; Young 2005), and terrorist attacks (Liodice 2003; Sanders and Atkinson 2003).

For example, Advertising commentator Jerry DeLaFemina described advertising's early struggles with Japanese brands, so close after WWII. In early marketing for Sony, Toshiba, and Toyota, Japan was not mentioned. The same avoidance is apparent the Persian Gulf War. Advertising Age reports that a planned print campaign for Macintosh computers was scrapped because "it was to feature a soldier in Soviet Garb", which Apple Chairman-CEO John Sculley thought questionable when 'everybody in America's putting their uniforms on.' The agency responsible for the ads is considering different images for the October ads." Similarly, a print campaign for Chips Ahoy! planned to appear in women's magazines with the headline "Richer than an OPEC nation." was also pulled (1990 "Saddam"). Overall, the motives can be characterized as cautious, protecting the brand from negative associations. These motivations appear more clearly in the interviews in the second essay.

However, such advice is not universal. A 1991 editorial in *Advertising Age* notes that corporations with military roles may find tasteful ads can garner positive attention, and that advertising provides entertainment and humor that can help consumers cope, and that provides distraction and escape from negative war news (also Elkin 2001; Cardona 2003; Hatfield 2003). Other brands, especially local brands (McAllister 1993) take a more active role, promoting patriotism (Serafin and Horton 1991; McAllister 1993) and visibly supporting troops (Dagnoli 1991) which consumers reportedly find neither exploitative nor inappropriate (Hume 1991).

In examining local advertising surrounding the Persian Gulf War, a small black and white newspaper advertisement for Lehman's Bakery includes the image of a flag next to a pastry, offers shipment to Saudi Arabia for the same local shipment price, and the inclusion of a personal message. This example, combined with the trade press recommendations, suggests a few boundary conditions on active erasure. Small, local firms may be more likely to address a social disruption – either because their small nature removes the formal structures of advertising and allows the owner's own sensibilities to prevail, because the tone is one of assisting the troops rather than supporting the war or profiting because of it, or because the newspaper medium provides a more appropriate platform for ads with a political message.

### Advertising in the Wake of the Great Recession

In contrast to war and economic disruption, advertisers are encouraged to continue advertising during a recession, although many are unable to do so. Advertisers may attempt to

empathize with consumers. The style may become loud with large text, headlines, and competitive copy (Marchand 1986). It also seems reasonable to expect price appeals and promotions increase (Marchand 1986; Belk and Pollay 1985; Shama 1978). Changes can be expected in advertising because recessions and depressions affect consumer beliefs, attitudes, and behavior. For example, Shama (1981) describes a segment of consumers that are unable to maintain their current lifestyle during times of stagflation and rather than working harder choose instead to become “voluntary simplifiers.”

Surprisingly, the results show that advertising does not dramatically increase the number of “deal” appeals. During the Great Recession the proportion of ads using deals remains at 11.2% - a not significant change (see figure 1 panel C). Only after the recession is officially over do such appeals increase significantly to be used in 17.8% of ads. This is an interesting finding and one which supports Marchand’s (1986) observation that advertisers do not respond to a depression (or in this case a recession) immediately.

A significant change I do observe is the drop in images of homes. Before the Great Recession 18.8% of ads include images of the home. This number drops significantly to 13.4% at the midpoint of the recession (see Figure 1, panel 3). This is surprising as Belk and Pollay (1985) note that images of family rooms increase during the great depression as a way of soothing consumers and comforting them. We have also observed that they increase during the two previous social disruptions. However, the nature of the Great Recession, and especially the *housing crisis* that precipitated it, makes this a sensible finding. In this case images of the home,

which formerly offered comfort to the consumer, become associated with the crisis and are no longer available to use as a reassuring image.

Considering an economic recession, empirical research shows that many firms cut spending (Picard 2001). Doing so runs counter to recommended marketing strategy. During a recession, advertising is widely recognized as an important strategy in both the management and academic literature (Diener et al. 1975; Kamber 2002; Tellis and Tellis 2009). The advertising industry has promoted this advice for almost a century now (2008 “Ten things;” Johnson 2008; Marchand 1986). However, these discussions are more about the quantity of advertising and rarely about the specific content.

One of the few discussions of content during the Great Depression is presented by advertising historian Roland Marchand (1986). He describes how advertising all but ignored the economic fallout of the Great Depression in its early years: “Even in 1933, most national advertisements offered no direct reflection of the existence of the depression” (288). When firms eventually responded the content was oblique. Some reinterpreted the success ethic and chose to show “compensatory satisfactions” to help reassure consumers (Marchand 1986). As the great depression of the 1930s continued, the style became bold and unrestrained – large text, loud headlines, competitive copy, “broken art” style, and bleed (using no margins) pages. Advertisers were encouraged to use “every paying inch” of the page, cramming them with copy and multiple images. Utilitarian appeals became more popular than luxury appeals, although the latter allowed for escapist fantasy (Belk and Pollay 1985). There was an increase in coupons, price discounts,

premiums, contests, sex appeals and appeals to economize (Marchand 1986). Shama (1978) also hypothesizes price offers, discounts, and sales to be a major advertising strategy in a recession.

The Great Recession was heavily covered by the advertising trade press. Advertising Age had more than 250 articles mentioning recession. Firms were unanimously encouraged to maintain or even increase ad spending. However, advice about what to communicate in those ads is mixed. Firms more directly involved, in this case financial firms, were encouraged to implicitly recognize the problem (much as Exxon was encouraged to apologize after the oil spill), while others were told to offer consumers distractions such as humor, escapism, affordable indulgences, and even to take pot shots at authority (Zmuda 2008). However, much more common recommendations are to emphasize value rather than price, provide emotional support, and convey a reassuring or optimistic message (Bennett and Austin 2010; Halliday, Zmuda, and Bush 2008; Quelch and Jocz 2009).

Nineteen of those articles discussed a total of 70 specific advertising campaigns (see Appendix B). For each article the date and publication information was recorded, along with the brand and a brief description of the. There were six campaigns that were mentioned more than once. The most widely noted advertising campaign dealing with the recession was Hyundai's Assurance program, which was written up in five separate trade press articles, to unanimous approval, and which was subsequently copied by auto manufacturing competitors GM and Ford. Commentators described the advertisement, and the program it promoted, as reassuring consumers by taking risk (Bulik 4/6/2009) and fear (Zmuda 4/6/2009) out of purchasing a new vehicle. The second most commented on strategy, very different from Hyundai, was JetBlue's

“The CEO’s Guide to Jetting.” In this set of humorous ads, CEO’s no longer able to bear the PR scrutiny of flying in private jets, were introduced to commercial flying, while reminding the real consumers of cheap tickets with plenty of perks. The snarky tone was applauded as “So mean. So funny. So zeitgeist. So smart.” (Garfield 2009). What the trade press expressed disapproval for were ads focused solely on price promotions (rather than value), depressing ads, and anything that appeared to insult the consumer.

This suggests that there may be more than one way to approach a recession. We found in essay one that active erasure was used at the institutional level, shifting images away from homes. A few brands were also able to leverage it in their advertising notably Hyundai and Jet Blue. What seems to set these two apart is the inherent fit with the recession. Both are traditionally value brands, their offers are consistent with the brand image (reassurance for Hyundai, humor for JetBlue), they use one of the recession strategies mentioned earlier (empathy and escape, respectively), and both back their ad with product offerings. This suggests that some brands may be particularly well suited to address economic crises and even accrue accolades for doing so. It seems that brand that are value oriented, have a brand image consistent with an empathetic or humorous strategy, and that have a solid product to back up their advertising, stand the best chance of success when choosing to respond.

Theory of Active Erasure

The pattern that emerges is not consistent with either the theory of cultural branding, which actively leverages social disruptions, or the crisis management literature which advocates caution. The emerging theory has two parts. First, fewer ads use potentially distressing imagery (landscapes, patriotism, homes) – this is erasure. Second, images of the home increase (with the exception of the housing crisis precipitated recession) – this is an active response. I call this two part response active erasure. I suggest that advertising, at the institutional level, creates a world in which the disruption doesn't exist, helping to calm or soothe consumers and offer an escape, however temporary. This theory suggests that brands serve a social function, above merely informing or misinforming, entertaining or infuriating the consumer. Brands may serve as an antidote to social disruptions.

### Do Top Brands Respond?

Perhaps the cultural branding story still fits if only the top brands are examined, only those most attuned to social movements and cultural currents. I use multiple measures of “top” brands, those ranked by Interbrand and brandZ for 2006, 2008, and 2010.<sup>2</sup> Presumably these are the brands that have been and continue to be culturally and socially savvy. While the number of ads for brands included in the brandZ rankings did not show significant changes during or

---

<sup>2</sup> I calculate difference based on brands that appeared on either list, in any year, as well as brands that appeared only in the top 75, brands that appeared on both lists, and brands that appeared on either list.



after the Great recession in their proportion of advertising, the number of ads included by Interbrand ranked brands did differ significantly. However, the proportion of top Interbrand brands in the sample does not increase, but rather decreases, from November of 2006 to November of 2008. By 2010 the numbers have largely recovered to pre-recession levels with no statistical difference. There is no support for the idea that top brands respond significantly differently from other brands, although the sample size makes this a tentative finding.

### Do Industries Respond?

While the institution of advertising as a whole actively erases any reference to a social disruption, industries or top brands may respond differently. The crisis management literature suggests that firms and industries that are directly involved should manage the crisis by creating frames that are appropriate and advertising appeals that are in good taste. Other companies may wish to capitalize on a competitor's weakness, and various industry organizations may run campaigns promoting a specific category of product.

The industries I investigated included the energy and the travel industries during the Exxon Valdez spill, all branches of the US Armed Forces during the Persian Gulf War, and financial services during the Great Recession. In general, I did not find the number of ads run by an industry to increase or decrease significantly during or after an event (Table 5), although the sample size is small for any given industry. Neither did a closely related industry address the issue in their ads, although industry organizations often did.

Consider the energy industry. Both Amoco and Phillips Petroleum Company advertised in May of 1987 and May of 1992 (and November 1990 and 1992), but did not speak overtly about the spill or environmentalism. Amoco continued promoting their “Ultimate” fuel using a power and performance appeal. Phillips Petroleum Company also continued spotlighting corporate philanthropic efforts (sponsoring the U.S. Dive Team, combating drunk driving). Neither changed their brand strategy in light of the disruptive events of either the Exxon Valdez oil spill or the Persian Gulf War. No Exxon ads appeared among the nearly 5,000 ads in the sample.

While individual firms do not overtly address the disruption, an industry organization will often speak out. For example, the U.S. Council for Energy Awareness (a nuclear energy lobbying group) was a prominent advertiser – in the full data set this organization has 11 ads, 5 unique ads, that range from 1989 to 1992, appear across events, and are placed in publications as diverse as *Sports Illustrated*, *National Geographic*, *Reader’s Digest*, and *Ebony* (Figure 4). This industry organization advertised during and after the Exxon Valdez oil spill, while People’s Gas (promoting natural gas) advertised after the event. Both used similar artwork and appeals. Table 6 provides a summary of the industry ads that appeared during the spill.

With a larger number of advertisers in the financial services sector, it is possible to decipher some more subtle patterns in financial services advertising in the midst of, and after, the great recession. Before the recession, a variety of appeals are used, from anxiety to customer service to saving money. During the recession the focus narrows to money, especially smart investing, with headlines promising “affordable rates” and “peace of mind.” Being prepared,

knowing your limits, good decision making, hidden value, and making your spending count are all highlighted. While the recession is never directly mentioned, there is a palpable sense of empathy for the customer. A 2008 ad for UBS that appeared in *Time* magazine pictures a man in a subtly pinstriped suit and burgundy tie presumably explaining investments, his gray hair and lined face suggest age and experience. The text reads “Markets are volatile, financial outlooks change,” and concludes, “You & Us. The world changes. Our commitment doesn’t.”

Through these three disruptions, we have investigated a phenomena we call active erasure – eliminating images related to a social disruption and replacing them with more comforting images, in this empirical study the comforting images are images of the home. Importantly, this is a generalizable phenomenon, with a similar reaction across a very diverse set of social disruptions. Knowledge of active erasure allows advertisers to anticipate how the entire marketing landscape will change after a social disruption, and allow any given firm to develop a plan for any given disruption. The institutional perspective also reveals a phenomena that is not visible when studying smaller units of analysis.

## **LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

Some limitations of this research stem from the institutional level of analysis, the content analytic method, and the focus on a generalizable response rather than the contingencies of each specific disruption. The focus on national brand advertising in print magazines may privilege certain types of mass-market communication, under-representing targeted corporate efforts such

as philanthropy that may be more likely to address disruption. Local or newspaper ads may suggest that different types of firms (small with limited market budget, geographically close to the disruption) may respond in a systematically different way than the institution as a whole (for example, see McAllister 2003 for a discussion of newspaper advertising during the Persian Gulf War). Emphasizing largely negative events may also lead us to privilege erasure, rather than a more engaged brand and institutional response to positive events. During positive disruptions such as the Olympic Games, I would expect firms to be more willing to engage. All these limitations represent an opportunity for further investigation. Additional analysis of this phenomenon could look at different forms of media such as online or local, different types of advertisers such as small or particularly socially active advertisers, or positive events. Other methods may also make up for the inherent limitations of a generalizable, macro approach.

The second essay will use interviews to investigate the process of active erasure and hints at some of the complexity of each situation. Doing so allows a deeper understanding of how this effect arises, how individuals follow, or choose not to follow, make sense of, and implement actions that lead to active erasure. Other methods such as observation of the advertising practice itself or a deeper analysis of the trade press may reveal more facets to active erasure. Future work could also engage with theories of individual consumer behavior. Elaboration Likelihood Models from a reader response perspective may explain why an institutional “rule” exists based on its success among the population. Avoiding troubling imagery prevents it from becoming associated with the brand in memory. Investigating consumer attributions of blame, fault, or general strength of association with a social disruption may change perceptions of

advertisements with different strategies. Investigation of the “success” of an active erasure strategy in both the long and short term would be desirable as well. Further research could also elaborate on how erasing disruption affects consumer’s perception of the world.

Perhaps a larger limitation of this work is that while it has described the macro-social, generalizable phenomenon of active erasure, it has not been able to tell brands whether active erasure in the wake of social disruption is a good strategy. It would seem that for brands that have a closely related product, or a philanthropic cause that sensibly connects to the brand and the disruption, addressing disruptions may be a strong way to be socially engaged and build brand meaning. The pervasiveness of erasure also raises the question of what effect this has on consumer perceptions of reality. Does it act as an antidote to the disruption-saturated news media, or offer an escape? Is either desired by consumers? What are the drawbacks – not only for brands that chose not to address disruptions but for the relevance of advertising in a disrupted society? What obligation do brands have to address disruption?

## **ESSAY TWO**

Essay one discussed one interesting, and unexpected, institutional response to social disruption: active erasure, and suggested that such a response arose at the institutional level. A major question that essay one was unable to answer was how active erasure arises. The goal of essay two is to pull back the curtain and examine the internal workings of the advertising process to answer this question. To address questions of how erasure arises, I conduct nineteen semi-structured interviews with people involved in national brand advertising. I ask, what are the practical conventions, expectations, and unwritten rules that guide advertisers as they construct ads? Who constitutes the cast of players producing each ad and how much agency does any given player have? Who suggests ideas and who makes the decisions? What structures exist that constrain advertisers and brand managers abilities to work within, for, and against the institutional pattern of erasure? And what historical or contextual conditions shape this response?

## **LITERATURE**

Structuration

To answer these questions, we approach advertising as an institution and active erasure as an institutional phenomena (as in essay one). Advertising as an institution is a social structure that patterns activities (and advertisements). We build on this foundation by investigating active erasure through the lens of structuration (Giddens 1979; 1991; 1984). In its original formulation, structuration was an attempt to reconcile over-deterministic theories of structure, institutions, and power with individualistic interest of phenomenology, symbolic interactionism, and hermeneutics. At the heart of this theory is what Giddens calls the duality of structure, and what McLennan (1984: 126) calls the duality of structure and agency.

In this construct, individual actions are the moment when structures are instantiated and either reproduced or altered. It is this very type of action that is of interest in this second essay. Structuration focuses attention on how decisions are made, the normative expectations of the actor, the interpretive schemes employed, and the power actors have. This allows for actors not only to follow the rules of an institution, but to alter them, making room for creativity, improvisation, innovation, and rebellion. While social structure may constrain an actor in certain ways, or enable them in certain ways, this idea crucially acknowledges actors ability to reproduce structures or ‘to do otherwise.’

Perhaps the most persistent criticism of Giddens’ project of structuration has been that the theory remains abstract and generalized. Recently, Stones (2005) has collected together the various critiques and proposed a theory of strong structuration with the goal of grounding Giddens ideas in empirically informed, substantive details. The result of this is the reformulation is Stones’ quadripartite model, which divides the nature of structuration into external structures,

internal structures, active agency, and outcomes (84-86). I will evaluate the interview data and examine it for evidence of each part of structuration. Again, the moment of structuration comes when an individual actor draws on their internal structures to take an action, whether of reproduction or change, the same moment of interest to understanding the mechanism of active erasure. The advantage of this approach is that it goes beyond the image, even a depth reading of the image, to understand the interplay of people and structures involved in its creation, the range of action available to each, and reveals the range of ads that “might have been.”

It must be noted that theories of structuration, by focusing on the individual agent in the moment of production and reproduction of action, bear a great deal of resemblance to practice theories. Epp, Price and Schau (2014) outline three tenets of practice theory: attending to practice as the unit of analysis, attending to regular performance as it produces and reproduces structure, and the trajectories that practices follow. Their investigation of long-distance family consumption practices contributes to understanding change in practices by identifying five fundamental trajectories when families are separated, for example the trajectory of easy translation and the trajectory of failed trial. Theories of practice and theories of structuration are largely compatible, differing largely in their origins and their relative emphasis on social structures.

Other theoretical and analytical orientations have also been used in the literature to understand advertising in its larger context. For example, Phillips and Brown (1993) use a critical hermeneutic approach to examine organizational communication advertising produced by Syncrude Canada. The authors use this case to demonstrate that critical hermeneutics is a



structured method to explore symbolic phenomena in organizations. The analysis is based on Ricoeur's dialectical process, first examining the socio-historical aspects of a text (intentions, referents, and context), next attending to the formal aspects of a text (conventions, relationship of elements), and finally interpreting-reinterpreting the text. The authors cogently argue for the usefulness of critical hermeneutics. While it elaborates on the larger social and historical context, it pays relatively less attention to the individual actors involved in the advertising and branding process. Because my focus is on how individual brand managers and advertising creatives play a role in creating, maintaining, and changing the institutional practice of active erasure, I have chosen to use a structuration perspective.

Structuration has found a foothold in both strategy oriented and consumer oriented market research. For example, Vallaster and de Chernatony (2006) examine brand building within a corporation through the lens of structuration. Using depth interviews and brand building documents, the authors describe the important role of successful leaders in integrating elements of corporate identity and acting as mediators between corporate brand structures and individual employees. While a structuration approach is increasingly evident in the strategy literature, this inclusion is piecemeal and often combined with other theories (Pozzebon 2004; Whittington 1992), despite the opportunity for significant theoretical purchase by incorporating structuration theory with institutional theories (Barley and Tolbert 1997).

The purpose of this second essay is to realize the latent potential in a structuration perspective. This theory was developed explicitly for understanding a phenomena within its social context - incorporating both structural constraints (and opportunities) and individual

agency. Using a structuration perspective I will demonstrate the process behind active erasure, and explain how and why it arises.

## **DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS**

To examine active erasure, I collect interview data from professionals who work in advertising and brand management and interpret it with an eye towards structuration theory. However, structuration theory explicitly eschews any particular methodology, and so I employed a grounded theory method (Glaser and Strauss 1967) to rigorously guide the collection, analysis, and interpretation of this qualitative data (Spiggle 1994; Goulding 2005; Fischer and Otnes 2008). This grounded theory orientation guides the constant comparison method of analysis, and axial coding of the concepts uncovered (Spiggle 1994), and a second phase of theoretical sampling (Glaser and Strauss 1967). This approach is selected in favor of other analytic and interpretive techniques because it allows greater room for structures in comparison to a hermeneutic or phenomenological approach (Thompson 1997; Goulding 2005). One of the unique benefits of interviews with advertising professionals is also the ability for such individuals to speak as a proxy voice for the organization, perhaps the only way to understand the organizational perspective (Cottle and Kistruck 2008).

### Data Collection

To investigate why active erasure occurs, nineteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with key individuals in the advertising process (McCracken 1988; Cottle and Kistruck 2008). The interviews ranged in length from 31 minutes (0:30:46) to over two and a half hours (2:35:37), and averaged just over one hour (1:01:20). All but one interview were conducted in person, one was conducted with two respondents at the same time, and one was conducted with two interviewers present. The interviews were gathered in two waves. The first data collection was conducted in the spring of 2013 and included a large number of respondents who had long careers in brand management. The goal of the second round of interviews, carried out in the spring of 2014, was to search for maximum variation in the respondents and perspectives (Huberman and Miles 1994; Goulding 2006). This second round included respondents with shorter careers and represented a larger range of roles on the advertising side. After reviewing the second round of interviews it became clear that there were no new themes emerging and that we had reached a point of theoretical saturation (Glaser and Strauss 1967).

The respondents overwhelmingly represented large CPG brands or the advertising accounts associated with them, that is, the same brands that made up the bulk of our data set. The respondents are responsible for shaping some of the Best Global Brands (Interbrand 2013), Billion Dollar Brands (P&G n.d., Nielsen), and their professional titles ranged from copywriter to account planner to brand manager. Ten were senior participants in the branding process and had spent their entire careers in brand management or advertising, while 9 were more junior and had spent less than a decade in the industry. Consistent with the advertising industry as a whole,

more of our respondents were men (13) than women (6), although both were well represented. (see Table 6 for a summary of the interviews) Each was assigned a pseudonym for use in analysis and discussion. All audio-recorded interviews were transcribed for analysis, along with notes taken during and immediately after the interview.

The interview data was also complemented with informal conversations, correspondence with individuals involved in advertising, internal brand strategy and campaign documents from the Hartman Center, as well as articles from the advertising trade press. All three disruptions were covered in the industry's largest trade journal, *Advertising Age*, and articles from this publication are used in the interpretation to further flesh out ideas and relationships first found in the analysis.

## Analysis

In analyzing the interview data, I use techniques drawn from the grounded theory method and concepts from structuration theory to understand why active erasure occurs. First, the interview transcripts were read and coded with provisional themes that emerged from each story told by an informant (rather than line-by-line). Particular attention was paid to the actors involved in each story, individual understandings of agency, internal and external structures, the decision making process, rewards and sanctions, and ultimate outcomes. The constant comparison method was used to compare these brand stories across the course of an interview, and also between respondents, and elicit concepts. Axial coding was used to specify

relationships between different concepts and is revealed in the use of internal and external structures, two core components of structuration (Spiggle 1994).

Two additional strategies recommended by Corbin and Strauss (2008) were carried out in the interviews and the analysis. The first was to look for a negative case, which we found at least partial evidence for. An oil company executive described deliberately choosing to advertise after an oil spill, despite the surprise from others in the industry and the advertising agency. In the empirical data set an oil spill is again the setting for a nuclear industry organization to aggressively advertise. The trade press helps to evaluate the context of these events, and points to the importance of firm character and experience, the unique competitive landscape, and the intricacies of brand history that suggest when a disruption is likely to be addressed. Finding these negative cases is an important part of the analysis helping to highlight context, boundary conditions, and competitive forces in the creation of active erasure.

Some, but not all, respondents described experiences with their brand during a social disruption as it arose naturally during the interview. However, disruption is considered an atypical experience and not all brand managers spontaneously mentioned it. In these cases, the interviewer specifically asked about “social disruptions, such as a war, environmental disaster, or an economic recession.” If the brand had not been involved in such an incident, the interviewer used the second analytic technique, asking respondents “what if” questions, to consider a brand they work on experiencing a hypothetical disruption. I found respondents willing and able to consider hypothetical scenarios, and many interpreted this brief description in line with our empirical disruptions using examples such as natural disasters (such as Hurricane Katrina) or

political conflict (World War II). However, respondents also offered up examples of product harm crises, celebrity endorsement disasters, the death of prominent personas (JFK Jr.) and charitable or philanthropic programs (such as hiring veterans, which was related to war). While not all of these examples fit the strict definition of social disruption from the empirical portion of this dissertation, relaxing the concept allows us a better understanding of the phenomenon of active erasure given the interview data that is available at this time. However, in the discussion I will consider what relaxing the definition means for the construct and the findings.

## **FINDINGS**

While disruption is ever-present, it doesn't always directly affect all brands. However, in the course of our interviews it was clear that at least some respondents did have firsthand experience with social disruptions affecting their brands. In 2 interviews, experience dealing with disruption was elicited without prompting. In four more, respondents were able to give examples from their own work that they felt met the criteria of disruption, while many others suggested responses to disruption that were in the scope of marketing (product lineup, promotion, supply) but not necessarily advertising. Overall, the interview data supports the idea of active erasure.

### **Evidence of Active Erasure**

In the course of interviewing brand managers and advertising creatives, the phenomenon of active erasure gains support. In an interview with a career creative presently on the brand side, the interviewee described the fate of another ad that touched on a social disruption. This example is particularly illustrative as it occurred in a conversation about the general process of advertising and ads that don't air, that is it occurred without prompting about social disruption. A television ad had been developed and produced that featured a brand devotee stockpiling the packaged food product in his basement. The ad had incorporated consumer input, and had been cast, shot, and paid for. It was by all accounts well produced and the team expected good results. But then in August of 2005 hurricane Katrina hit the gulf coast and caused immense damage. According to the respondent, the ad was immediately dropped and never went to air. The connection between enthusiasm for a brand shown by stockpiling that brand in a basement and the hurricane was so clear to the brand team that the ad was scrapped, without discussion or debate. Even after repeated follow up questions, the respondent was clear that everyone simply understood that such an ad was no longer acceptable to air because it was too reminiscent of the hurricane and airing it would be in poor taste.

In this example, the brand team chooses not to air ads that use imagery that is related to the social disruption, even when the connection appears tangential at best. In a hypothetical example given by a career advertising creative, we find the client side again implicated:

Kevin: “Imagine a brand, remember we are making this up. An ad for coffee in which people were hit by lightning and then had energy to do everything. Superneergetic, right? And this ad was meant to be funny. But then in Texas there is a lightning strike that kills 6 people. Clients rethink. Pull that work. What was funny is now tragic.”

This example is similar to the one described above for the hurricane and the bunker, but here the process is fleshed out. The client, the brand managers, are the ones to rethink the ad and the attendant imagery, and come to the conclusion that such an ad would be in poor taste in the midst of the lightning strike. These two examples provide an important confirmation of the idea of active erasure. They also hint at aspects of structuration that we will investigate below.

Recently, Stones (2005) has collected together the various critiques and proposed a theory of strong structuration with the goal of grounding Giddens ideas in empirically informed, substantive details. The result of this is the reformulation is Stones’ quadripartite model, which divides the nature of structuration into external structures, internal structures, active agency, and outcomes (84-86). Using this model I will discuss how internal and external structures appear in the interview data as they relate to the primary outcome of active erasure (Figure ). Throughout, instances of agency will be interpreted. This is because agency, as the moment of structuration, “is a moment that can never float free or be uprooted from the other parts of the structuration cycle” (Stones 2005: 86).

#### External Structures as Conditions of Action



In Stones (2005) quadripartite framework, external structures “have an existence that is autonomous from the agent-in-focus, and which within structuration are conceived in terms of the structural context of action faced by that agent-in-focus at time 1” (84). These are, in short, the “conditions of action” that particularly advertisers are subject to. In the interview data two primary sources of external structure were evident: the character of firms, and brand management.

Character. One primary constraint, in effect even before the creative process begins, is the character or personality of both the advertising agency and the brand client. Both the agency and the client can have a reputation as conservative, or as taking more risks as “Allen” describes:

“So if everything gets filtered through the philosophy of the client, and we're adjustable to the philosophy of the client, which can range from hostile to the creative process, to very warm orientation. And part of an agency's personality is how they react to that. Because an agency that defines itself by creative is going to kind of attract the self-fulfilling prophecy, people who are going to be deferential to their philosophy.”

But there are also more conservative advertising agencies, what the respondent calls “process agencies”:

“We had big, heavy, wealthy clients who wanted to do the full research process by and large, wanted creative sort of leashed. And the work was conservative, but since they were a very successful brand, they bought attention to the media anyway. [...] So the process agencies, while they don't produce the glitterati kind of creative, you've got stats, you've got back-up, you've got proof. And they hit a lot of singles.”

The respondent was clear that when it comes to advertising content, there are two types of advertising agencies, and similarly two types of companies: what I summarize as “creative” agencies, associated with riskier and edgier advertising. There are also firms that are more willing to accept this type of advertising (although the firm is almost always more reluctant). There are set in contrast to “conservative” advertising agencies, what the respondent calls process agencies, who have a reputation for conducting extensive background research, audience testing with ad content, and are considered less creative, less artistic, less edgy. These agencies are also portrayed as larger.

It is the creative advertising agencies that attract clients who want riskier, edgier, more creative advertising content. In contrast, conservative process advertising agencies attract more conservative brand clients looking for such work. There is a sorting process at work here where all players know the character of the other players. This sense of corporate personality represents a clear external constraint that shapes the expectations and actions of both the advertisers and brand managers, and in doing so shapes the final advertising. Brands choose an agency based on their desired content, in a process I call sorting. In general, conservative brands seek out conservative agencies; the advertising will tend to be conservative, and will reproduce the existing structure. If a conservative firm goes to a more creative agency, the firm signals their willingness to adopt a riskier strategy, thus potentially challenging rather than reproducing the existing order. But even so they retain their “conservative” firm status that the advertiser works within. Again, these are preconditions of action, known by both the advertising agency

and the firm, before the ad process begins. Agency character is an external constraint that shapes the final advertisement.

Brand Management. Additionally, brand managers represent an external constraint for the advertising creatives. In the preceding three cases, it is the client (that is, the brand team) who makes the decision to drop the advertisement. In the artillery example, it was a decision made by a regional brand team and communicated to corporate headquarters. In the stockpiling example it was a creative working for the brand that described the incident – his coworkers would have been the brand team and the unanimous decision theirs. In the hypothetical lightning example a creative director describes the action by the client. Indeed, both brand and agency employees see the client as the more conservative, risk-averse partner. Here, an account planner describes what makes for risqué advertising in general, and the danger it poses to for the brand team:

Larry: “Yeah, so I don't think a client always says no to it [risqué advertising]. I think that risqué type of advertising can come when there's something that can be easily misunderstood. So a lot of good advertising plays on this edge of there's some sort of cultural tension, and the brand kind of can resolve it in some way, shape, or form.

“And if that cultural tension is one that, for certain people, is easy to tread the wrong way on, and if there's basically a risk of alienating any of your target or segments, people you're segmented in targeting, if there's any risk of that at all, then usually, it might be really creative and risqué and, you know, get you on, get you some earned media on *Entertainment Tonight*, but at the same time that earned media now is out of your control. So there's a risk to generating buzz, especially if that buzz is not directly where you want it to be, right?”

Not only are we able to see confirmation of the phenomena of active erasure, these interviews also provides glimpses into the motivations and thought processes of those behind the advertisements. The interviews reveal that *both* advertisers and brand managers understand that anything that might be considered to be “in poor taste” or that may elicit negative emotions in viewers will be kept out of ads and far away from the brand. Indeed, this is the overwhelming motivation that was cited. Advertisers attributed it to the client, and the clients attribute it to their own interests to protect the brand. However, it is felt as an external and constraining force by advertisers, and one that they expect from all brands in advance.

This brand conservatism is widely recognized throughout the advertising industry (see for example Grabner 2002). In discussing the entire creative process with agency creatives and account managers and planners, it was clear that while they would occasionally propose a more risky and risqué ad concept or execution, they were well aware that it would not be selected by the brand team. Allen clearly describes how this conservatism on the part of the brand team led the creatives to carefully select which ad concepts to present to the clients:

[brainstorming concepts for an advertisement] “I'm going to show you where we make fun of the target in a funny way, our target audience in a cool way, because everybody can laugh at themselves.[...]I'm going to do another campaign where I make anybody who doesn't use our phone look like an idiot. And I'm going to risk insulting those people. Do you want to do that? Why not? I'm going to do another one that's pretty straightforward, but it's got a funny punch line at the end. So we're not going to really risk offending anybody. We're just going to make them laugh. I'm going to do another one that is a jingle. And I'm going to play you the jingle right now. And it's just happy music, and everything is good in the world. Now, here's the danger. If I really think the

edgier one is cool, I'm going to be very careful giving you conservative ones, because you want everything to be predictable, quantifiable, and not offensive.”

“Right.”

“Even though you're trying to tell me, oh, be creative and be wild and do all this stuff. But you, so, I understand, strategically, that if I put a real nice conservative one out there, I'm probably killing my radical one. So it becomes a real question...”

This widely recognized conservatism is an external structure of constraint from the point of view of the advertising creative. When considering how a brand may respond to a social disruption, the same conservatism applies. As in the opening examples of Hurricane Katrina and a lightning strike, following a social disruption certain images become not only risky but too risky for brand managers and are pulled from advertising, resulting in the institutional phenomenon of active erasure.

Throughout the interviews it was evident that those on the advertising side felt that the brand team hampered creative, artistic, edgier, cooler, more provocative ads in favor of safer, more mundane, less offensive communications. However, the creative also exhibits that other aspect of structuration, agency, when he chooses which ad lineup to present to the brand team. This is the moment of structuration. If the creative presents at least one of the conservative ideas, the structure is reproduced. If he eliminates it, he is modifying, however subtly, the structure of advertising.

## Internal Structures of Constraint and Opportunity

In contrast to external structures as the conditions of action, Stones (2005) describes internal structures as “within the agent” and further subdivides them into ideas of the conjecturally-specific and the general-dispositional. Both are closely related to a number of other theoretical developments, but Stones returns to Giddens’ concepts of an individual’s knowledge of the interpretive schemes, power capacities, and normative expectations of the other actors within the context to describe the conjecturally-specific structures (91). It is these norms and power capacities that we focus on to understand active erasure. The brand management role has norms that heavily favor active erasure, while the planning function is rewarded (experiences a type of power) for just the opposite.

**Brand Management.** From the brand’s perspective, “conservatism” is not an external constraint but a desired outcome. The motivation is to keep brand images and associations positive and upbeat. For example, while describing a brand’s philanthropic work, the brand manager Eric clearly discusses the imagery that they do and do not want to appear next to their brand:

“...we made a very choiceful decision that we were not going to show pain and suffering. It wasn’t going to be like a Sally Struthers ad, and feed the children, or St. Jude, right. Those are incredibly emotional. We didn’t want to take it there. What, so we took it to, you know, a [the need for this product category] is pervasive, and it’s happening everywhere even if you don’t see it, right. It’s not just the poorest of the poor.”

Instead, when asked why Eric and his brand team chose not to do an emotional appeal, he described their choice of a “fashion industry script,” that was “a little bit more of that Hollywood sort of runway kind of a style, which, again, when you think about a target audience, moms love Hollywood, celebrities, *People Magazine*, *US Magazine*, all that stuff.” The respondents knew that there were a range of options available to depict a philanthropic cause, and chose one without distressing imagery. Here the interviews allow us to see the Sally-Struthers-style ad that “might have been” in addition to the campaign that was chosen in its stead. The brand team was excited about their fashion approach. They felt it would communicate effectively to their audience. Rather than feeling forced into this choice, certain branding objectives are internalized and pursued through brand managers choice of advertising. Positive, fashionable, likeable images are readily selected.

Another manager on the client side working with print ad selection described a similar attention to their advertising of philanthropic activities. In helping clean up after a natural disaster, Dean describes the photography used as “more real, live, like showing the good that we were doing, you know, and showing how we were helping the community. And so that's a pretty common thing that we do. It's not so much to take advantage of it, but it's often more so to like, you know, to tell our local communities that we're there for them.” This example gets closer to being a response to disruption, mentioning the cleanup from a natural disaster, but the brand manager continued “You know, we weren't going on national syndicated television and bragging about the work we're doing in [the state]. It was more local.” The brand manager Dean is clear that the advertising is kept to a local level rather than nationally aired. Despite talking about the

disruption, the imagery is also kept positive showing community solidarity rather than the destruction caused by the disaster. In both these examples the brand managers seem happy to play in the bounds of what is considered acceptable so they aren't seen as "tak[ing] advantage" or "bragging." Instead adhering to the positive imagery ensures that the philanthropy is seen "from a helping hand perspective."

This positive perspective on imagery also builds confidence in the idea of active erasure, in which social disruptions are replaced by more benign and comforting images of the home. It is also the same conservatism that advertisers noted, but it is felt very differently. Brand managers describe their role as one of protecting their brand. They feel the constraint to a much lesser degree. While it still shapes the actions of brand managers, it is a normative expectation and one that seems largely internalized. They feel able to make "a very choiceful decision" not to show suffering rather than having to sneak their preferred execution into the consideration set as the creative described.

Here we have riskier ads canned, cannons deleted, natural disaster cleaned up, and pervasive poverty replaced by a runway fashion show. This happens through the actions of both advertising creatives and brand managers as they work together to create an advertisement. In generating ideas for advertisements, creatives are acutely aware that clients are opposed to riskier ads, particularly any social issues the target market may find divisive. As one creative noted, the client will pick the happy jingle every time. As a result, creatives carefully consider which ads to present. Creatives feel this conservatism as an external constraint. In contrast, brand



managers consider the very same expectations and actions to be an integral part of their job – to protect the brand, keep associations positive, and keep consumers pleased.

For brands that want to pursue campaigns that do engage social disruptions, these structures must be recognized and called out. Creatives can be encouraged to develop ads that engage with disruption, but without support from brand managers it will be difficult to get such ads approved. Instead, the opportunity for addressing disruption lies heavily on the brand side. Real intervention would be better spent on brand managers, who may have to be encouraged or rewarded to accept a riskier and possibly more relevant advertisement for brands that want to address disruption. The planning function represents another opportune place to intervene.

The Planning Function. While the majority of respondents described their aversion to advertising with imagery related to a social disruption, there were functions within the advertising agency that perceived potential social disruption as good for the brand. Melissa, a media planner for an ad agency, describes the launch of a new campaign in 1999 in the midst of what she perceived as a disruption:

“And like the week we were launching we had ads in a lot of like broad-reach magazines like *People* and *Time*. And *Life* magazine was still around then. And then JFK, Jr., died, and the *People* mag, it was like this celebration, because our ad was going to be seen by like twice as many people. So this was supposed to be just a regular issue of *People*, but it was the JFK, Jr., commemorative issue.

“So the sales rep came to us and said, we're going to have very little advertising in this. We have to try to be somewhat tasteful, and we'd like you to be one of the only ones in here. And we were like, yeah, we were supposed to be in here anyway this week. And it's like, you're still going to pay

the same price that you were going to pay, but now like the readership is going to be like triple, because like everybody is going to buy this, and they're going to keep it like at the . . . and it was the same thing in *Time* and the same thing in *Life*.

“And there was this like everybody was so excited, like what a great opportunity it was. And yet you were always thinking like this is awful, like people died. This man died, and like we're excited, because we're going to sell more [product] because of it, you know. So that was one event that like in terms of ethics I felt really uncomfortable talking about. Like this is so great, and there was so much of that ‘this is so great’ conversation happening. So it was uncomfortable then.

“But I remember us thinking like, God, we really have gotten lucky in that. Like we really shouldn't be on this many news channels, but it's kind of worked out where there is probably a broader audience watching those news channels those weeks. Like our target might actually be watching it more, because like everybody wanted to like, I think Columbine would have been right around then. It might have been like a Columbine or something like that that where everybody is watching the news, and so our ad campaign ends up being seen by a lot of people. And it's like, all right. I guess maybe this was a good idea.

“And there wasn't any concern about it being sort of negative?”

“I do not remember that at all at [the brand]. It was all about like more people are watching. And I don't. And it wasn't a concern here either, because this is, you know, this ad, this is so positive. It's not like pictures of a smashed plane. If it were that, I think they would want to avoid it.”

As a media planner, the excitement surrounding this social disruption for Melissa and her department makes sense. The success of this department is measured by the number of impressions they are able to make. They are rewarded on this metric. This reward is an expression of power capacity, a part of the internal structure that Stones and Giddens describe. More exposure, even because of a prominent death, is still more exposure.

This excitement over an apparent disruption initially seems like a negative case of active erasure. However, at the end Melissa makes it clear that despite the high number of views the

ads will get, other departments in the advertising agency would clearly want to stay away from images associated with the disruptive event itself – the smashed plane. However, the imagery is of almost trivial concern to the media planners, for whom disruption presents an opportunity for increased impressions and awareness of the brand. To the planning department, a disruption helps the brand do better. The media planning department's understanding can be understood as an internal structure based on the power of reward.

In terms of structure and the phenomena of active erasure, it seems that media planning may be among the first sub-specialty within an advertising agency to embrace disruption. While in the case above it occurs by chance because of placement in news publications, the desire for impressions may be the first and most likely step toward addressing disruption. Creatives may be next in line, addressing disruption as a way of making a riskier, more creative, and perhaps more compelling advertisement. If a brand wants to pursue a strategy of active erasure, the experience of media planners also suggests a possible method of encouragement. Compensation for brand managers may have to be altered to encourage addressing disruption rather than more conservative work. For example, brand managers could be rewarded for earned media (free publicity) or increased engagement rather than simply awareness or sales.

### The Negative Case

One important analytic technique from Corbin and Strauss (2008) was to search for negative cases. Such cases are an important test of the analysis and can suggest additional

strategies or themes, boundary conditions, instances of agency, and historical or contextual factors that may otherwise go unobserved. In the data collected, it was two instances of oil spills that provided the strongest evidence of a negative case in our examination of active erasure. I will first describe the evidence from the content analysis and the Exxon Valdez oil spill, and then the evidence from the interviews concerning the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in April of 2010. Throughout, complementary data from the trade press will be incorporated to better understand the situation. After each event is discussed, it will then be compared to the aspects of structuration that have been identified: external structures of firm character and internal structures of brand management. Two additional contextual factors become important considerations - of history and competition will be introduced.

While it is the nature of active erasure that individual brands or firms do not overtly address the disruption, the content analysis demonstrated industry organizations do address disruption. The U.S. Council for Energy Awareness (a nuclear energy group) was a prominent advertiser – in the content analysis data set this organization has 11 ads, 5 unique ads, that range from 1989 to 1992, appear across events, and are placed in publications as diverse as *Sports Illustrated*, *National Geographic*, *Reader's Digest*, and *Ebony*. This industry organization advertised during and after the Exxon Valdez oil spill, while People's Gas (promoting natural gas) advertised after the event. Both used similar artwork and appeals. Table 5 provides a summary of the industry ads that appeared during the spill.

The ads are also extraordinarily direct, discussing the disruption in a way that is nearly unimaginable for a brand to do. The U.S. Council's first campaign in the data set appears in National Geographic, Sports Illustrated, and Reader's Digest in the midst of the Exxon oil spill (Figure 4). The ads picture an oil barrel as a syringe, sketched in pen, labeled "Foreign Oil," accompanied by the headline "Just Say No," a play on the "war on drugs." The copy describes an America "hooked on foreign oil," the need to "kick the foreign oil habit," with nuclear power providing "energy independence." The same political cartoon illustration style is used in the next image that appears in the November 1990 issue of Ebony and Reader's Digest. This time the oil barrels labeled "Foreign Oil" make up a snake with fangs bared, hissing at the reader, with the headline "Dangerously Unpredictable." Copy describes how "unrest in the Middle East" endangers the American economy. This ad may be spurred by not only the Exxon Valdez oil spill, but also unrest in the Persian Gulf.

At the same time in National Geographic the U.S. Council for Energy Awareness ran an ad with six angry woodland creatures (bear, deer, raccoon, rabbit, gopher, bird) carrying protest signs and looking straight at the reader. The headline reads "Citizens for nuclear energy" and the signs decry pollution. The copy calls nuclear energy clean, abundant, and a solution to global warming. Adding to the original theme of energy independence, the copy concludes that nuclear energy is necessary for "energy independence and a cleaner earth." The 1992 ad (which appeared in the May issue of *Newsweek*, and *Reader's Digest*, and the November issue of *Time*) has a different visual, a view from the trunk of a tree up to the canopy and blue sky beyond, in bright color, with the text "Our Need For More Nuclear Energy Is Up In The Air" and describe

how nuclear energy reduces greenhouse gas and contributes to cleaner air. The November 1992 ad (Reader's Digest) shows a tiny turtle, with the headline "Some Arguments for Nuclear Energy are Smaller than others."

While brands usually take a silent, or at least subdued, response in their ads, there is room for industry organizations to speak more freely. In this case, the Exxon Valdez oil spill, perhaps combined with the weight of the Persian Gulf War, led to strident advertising by a competitive industry organization for nuclear energy. Exxon's apology ads were considered late, and insufficient. However, two decades later British Petroleum managed the gulf coast oil spill very differently, advertising throughout the crisis and continuing well after the spill. In the author's informal conversation with a brand manager at British Petroleum, he described a very contentious choice to advertise. He was aware of Exxon's PR history with the spill, and said they had decided to take a very vocal strategy. Others in the industry reportedly were surprised at this move, keeping a low profile and not discussing a disruption is indeed the expected response. While this proactive advertising went against industry expectations, advertising commentators also believe it has helped British Petroleum to avoid some negative publicity (see for example Wheaton 2010).

Interestingly, the Deepwater Horizon also brought out competitive advertising, similar to the Exxon Valdez oil spill two decades earlier. The standard response is noted by advertising commentators: Wheaton (2010) writes "Perhaps the most interesting response has come from BP's competitors. With the exception of Shell Oil, they've remained mostly silent. Marketers

don't want to be seen as capitalizing on a crisis-especially amid public outrage” (14). Bush (2010c) describes the same phenomena:

“Eric Dezenhall, CEO and co-founder of Dezenhall Resources, said the best approach for an oil company in good times and bad is to draw as little attention to themselves as possible. ‘Nobody likes oil companies, and nobody ever will,’ he said via e-mail. He added that pushing the green message is all fine and good, but Shell should be careful not to cross that line that can turn consumers off. ‘It's fine to raise the issue of alternative energy, but too much posing for green pictures has been known to tick people off,’ he said.”

Bush (2010c) again reports that “nearly every other oil company has gone silent” except for Shell, launching “An aggressive new ad campaign, which includes print, TV, online, outdoor executions and two websites, [energygalaxy.com](http://energygalaxy.com) and [shell.us/letsgo](http://shell.us/letsgo)” that touts their alternative energy credentials. The expectation is for those in the industry under scrutiny to remain silent. However, it is seen as an opportunity: “Still, in the marketplace, the reward goes to those willing to take a risk. And that is what Shell is doing.” (Wheaton 2010).

However, there is also room for certain unrelated brands with clear positioning to make use of the disruption. During the Exxon Valdez oil spill, Dawn donated cleaning products that were used to help clean up animals, helping the brand gain a reputation for philanthropy that was successfully leveraged before but also during the Gulf Coast oil spill nearly two decades later. With a clear brand connection, and continued commitment to a specific cause, allowed Dawn to capitalize on the oil spill and reinforce their brand’s meaning, relevance, and product attributes (Neff 2010).

In these examples, we have seen firms choose to go against industry expectations of silence and active erasure and instead choose to discuss the disruption in their advertising. By examining aspects of structuration previously identified we identify scenarios in which brands may chose ‘to do otherwise,’ that is, choose to go against the general pattern of active erasure.

External structure: the character of Brunswick. Previously, we have described how firm character for both the advertising agency and the brand client can affect the ads produced. In the case of British Petroleum, their PR agency is Brunswick and the potential involvement of the political advertising firm Purple Strategies, which has “industry insiders wonder whether Brunswick-known largely for financial PR and not considered the go-to shop for a catastrophe of this magnitude-is the right firm for the job. Or, frankly, if anyone can do it.” (Bush 2010b). The agency’s ability to deal with this disruption is clearly questioned:

“U.S. All of the industry executives and competitors of Brunswick that Ad Age spoke to, who all asked not to be identified, praised the shop for its work in the mergers-and-acquisitions, financial-communications, litigation, CEO-positioning and corporate-communications sectors. But a number of them questioned the decision to have the agency's Washington office lead the crisis based on its size.”

While the distinction here is less about conservatism vs. creativity in firm character, it suggests that the advertising agency used during a disruption may dramatically affect the type of ads produced. In this case, Brunswick’s lack of experience in product-harm crises of this magnitude may result in ads that go against expectations and directly address the disruption, and continue to do so even years after the disruption.



Internal Structures: The Brand Loyalty of Darryl Willis. The internal structure of brand management that leads to conservative, positive imagery for most brands during a disruption is also evident in one of British Petroleum's advertisements starring VP-resources Darryl Willis. He introduces himself in the ads: "I'm Darryl Willis. I oversee BP's claims process on the Gulf Coast. BP has got to make things right, and that's why we're here." In an interview with *Advertising Age*, Darryl describes the difficulties faced by cleanup crews and British Petroleum's sincere commitment to the affected communities. Responding to criticism, Willis replied, "I would say that I'm doing this because I love my job and the community I grew up in. I've spent lots of time across the Gulf Coast. I care about how people are treated through this process. I'm not doing it to be part of any PR stunt." (Lee 2010).

Just as advertisers feel, as an internal structure, that it is their responsibility to be stewards of their brands, here Willis is a New Orleans native and a British Petroleum employee, with loyalties to both the firm and the affected region. He states that it is his objective to make sure the brand does the right thing for those affected. Clearly the choice to use him as a spokesman is a strategic one, but it would seem, at least on record, that he feels it is protecting both the brand and the community that he grew up in, and feels that he can do both at the same time. His sense of protecting the brand is very much consistent with the internal structures that we have seen in the usual cases of active erasure. However, in this case it is part of a different result, continuing to advertise.

Historical and competitive context. So how then to account for the dramatic choice to advertise, despite expectations and warnings that doing so might not be a good idea? After the Exxon Valdez oil spill we saw Exxon launch defensive apology ads late, and the U.S. Council for Energy Awareness pursue an aggressive campaign touting nuclear energy. In the aftermath of the Deepwater Horizon spill British Petroleum came out with apology ads immediately and have continued to use advertising that references the spill for years afterwards. In casual conversation, BP's media presence was attributed to lessons learned from the Exxon spill. The advertising has been described as everything from "disastrous" (Bush 2010b: 2), to as "restrained and as adequate as such things can be" (Wheaton 2010: 14). BP is certainly aware of the critical response to Exxon and is attempting not to make all the same mistakes. In this case, the particular history of oil spills and corporate reactions comes into play to shape any given advertising response.

The competitive landscape is another consideration that may differ among disruptions. In the case of both oil spills there is a clear offender tied to a specific industry. The U.S. Council for Energy Awareness saw the Exxon Spill (possibly in addition to the tensions in the Middle East) as an opportune moment to differentiate their brand and get their message across. The industry organization, rather than any particular firm or brand, was deemed the best messenger. In the Deepwater Horizon spill, Shell chose to break with the industry silence and launch a campaign that touted the firm's alternative energy credentials (figure 6). Industry commentators felt the goal was to separate the firm from other oil companies, although the success of such a

campaign was debated (Bush 2010c, 10). In both cases, the goals of individual companies and industry organizations affect the decision to engage with a disruption rather than keep silent. The only acknowledged beneficiary in the advertising aftermath of the oil spill was Dawn, a dish soap brand. During the Exxon Valdez oil spill they donated product to the cleanup efforts. The brand has continued this philosophy apace and incorporated it into their marketing efforts, making their advertising during the Deepwater Horizon oil spill well timed. Two items seem particularly important in explaining Dawn's success with advertising during a disruption. The first is their longstanding animal rescue efforts. Even today one of the five primary images on their website promotes wildlife rescue using an image of a clean duckling on the water (see Figure 7, <http://www.dawn-dish.com/us/dawn/>). The second is the clear link between their product and its attributes, a dish soap that is gentle on the hands, and an aspect of oil spill cleanup, namely removing oil from wildlife. Both of these attributes together make Dawn positioned to benefit from advertising during an oil spill.

## **LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

The primary contribution of this essay has been to go beyond a textual analysis and investigate how the institution of advertising creates, propagates, and perpetuates the phenomena of active erasure. While we were not able to sit in on brand or advertising agency meetings while the ads were being planned and executed, the interviews do provide a glimpse into this phenomenon of active erasure. We find that it isn't organized in the sense that a few people in

powerful positions decide to erase unpleasant images. Instead, it arises through the external character of advertising agencies and firms as they interact with the internal norms and expectations of brand management. The negative case demonstrates that although brands may generally stay silent and replace disruptive images with more comforting ones, industry organizations and competitive firms especially are not bound by the same norms. Instead, a disruption may present an opportunity for their brand. In addition, each disruption is bound by a historical context in which previous advertisements in the wake of similar disasters are interpreted and used as benchmarks in developing brand and advertising strategies.

For management, this work suggests several important intervention points for evaluating their advertising as it relates to a social disruption. If a firm chooses to address a disruption, they may consider a creative, as opposed to a process advertising agency. They may better align rewards for brand managers with addressing the disruption. The danger of competitive advertising must be considered, along with the specific history of similar incidents, as these can point to successful or unsuccessful messages. For brand managers with specific products and philanthropic efforts, the example of Dawn demonstrates that disruptions may also be opportunities to highlight positive brand activities.

This second essay has also illuminated the process that results in the phenomenon of active erasure. Not only is the process important, but I have described it in terms of a truly social perspective, that of structuration. While marketing has been increasingly interested in social, and sociological, perspectives, the field has not widely adopted a macro perspective or theories like structuration that are used to explain social structures and institutions. As we have demonstrated

with the phenomena of active erasure, using this macro social perspective allows us to identify and understand previously unknown phenomena – active erasure – that is not visible at a smaller unit of analysis.

The ability to see this institutional pattern is important in recognizing how brand-level behavior affects the larger landscape of advertising. And yet it is important to consider how this etic approach differs from the insider perspective described by individual respondents. Throughout the course of the interviews, advertisers and brand managers had a consistently broader notion of a social disruption than that investigated in the first essay. Disruptions could include not only natural disasters and wars, but also instances of product harm, celebrity antics, and ongoing social causes that the brand was affiliated with. Some of these were offered up in recognition that the brand had not directly experienced disruption as similar examples. Others were considered disruptive events in their own right. A number of explanations can be proposed for this difference.

The first explanation is the basic distinction between an individual, insider, emic understanding and a generalizable, outsider, etic perspective that has long been a topic of concern in the social sciences. Rather than privileging one or the other, the difference between the two interpretations is the important part. Examining the difference, it can be seen that individuals are much more tightly focused on a single brand (“their” brand), rather than the entire landscape. Any event with an effect on that brand is considered a disruption. Another explanation for different definitions may be that the construct of social disruption is not as clear cut as presented in essay one but exists on a continuum from small to large disruptions that occur

at various distances from the brand in focus. And yet doing so runs into the larger and longer-standing cultural contradictions that bound one side of the construct of social disruptions, and product harm crises at the other. If disruptions are more plentiful, then advertising should be nothing but images of the home. And yet we know it is not. Similarly, brand responses may be more subtle and varied than the tightly controlled first essay investigated. Interviewees reported changes not only in advertising images, but also in promotions, product line, and packaging. Visuals are also undoubtedly more varying than the four images investigated. Finally, the actions taken in response to disruption may be unconscious practices, difficult for even the most introspective respondents to describe. This doesn't mean the results don't exist, simply that interviews are not a good way to investigate active erasure. Again, the importance of an institutional, macro approach becomes important. This overarching question about the boundaries of social disruptions and their difference from a host of other similar concepts can only be answered with additional research.

## **DISCUSSION**

These two essays present an important, but rarely studied aspect of marketing and consumer behavior: institutional response in the context of social disruptions. I test two prominent theories against empirical data from three different disruptions. Finding no support for existing theories and observed patterns, I propose a theory of active erasure. This

institutional response is predictable – an attempt by advertisers and brand managers to erase visual or textual cues that would lead consumers to place their brands within the disruptive scenario or conjure negative emotions that would then be transferred to the brand. Images of the home appear instead. This two part institutional practice removes references to a social disruption and offers comfort to consumers in its stead. This finding is consistent with the broader sociological idea that institutions, including advertising, are inherently ideological in nature and self-defending in practice. Erasing disruptions in the marketplace is consonant with sociological notions of marketing and advertising, and capitalism more generally (Schudson 1984; Ewen 2001).

Further, I find that a particular sort of branding, cultural branding is rarely used to deal with social disruptions. This, of course, does not mean that cultural branding is ill-advised. In does, however, suggest that such a response is indeed very rare. The brands noted in the cultural branding literature may succeed because they do just the opposite of what the vast majority of brands do. It could also be the type of cultural contradictions on which cultural branding is premised are indeed different than social disruptions. This means that they should be treated differently in further research and by the literature more generally.

The research suggests how advertisers in general, industry organizations, implicated firms, and top brands are likely to respond. This response is similar across three different events, pointing to a generalizable response. This represents another important step forward in theorizing branding. Previously, these events have most often been considered vastly different with unique responses required of each. Certainly any event is has unique characteristics that

require sensitivity, as discussed in the second essay, but this research suggests that the broad similarity in response across disruptions and advertisers has been largely ignored.

However, this work doesn't just investigate the broad appearance of advertising. The second essay asks art directors and advertising creatives, brand managers and directors, about the process underlying active erasure. Through these interviews, we discover how and why active erasure occurs. Firm characteristics on both the brand and advertiser side play a role. Individuals also have a powerful influence. Brand managers are seen as constraining art directors, but see their own role as one of protecting the brand from negative associations and consumers from negative brand connections. Tension between the creatives and the brand manager have long been noted, and are present in the data here, but I also uncover tension between the planning function and other roles within the advertising agency. Careful attention to the negative case demonstrates some of these same findings, but also highlights the importance of competitive forces within an industry, and specific brand histories that may make response to disruption a desirable choice. This begins to answer the question of what brands should do during a disruption.

Theoretically, this work is important because the institutional response of active erasure is nearly invisible at different levels of analysis, such as a single advertising campaign, or the advertising for a single brand. This finding demonstrates the importance of approaching advertising and marketing from truly macro-level perspective. The use of structuration also suggests that active erasure is less a conscious plan set in motion by omniscient advertisers than



the result of the multiple decision makers, each with their own motivations, mindset, and end goals. These are invisible unless the process of active erasure is investigated.

This work also introduces marketing to the strong structuration proposed by Stones (2005). Structuration theory can illuminate the processes at work in advertising, but it can also provide a powerful theoretic device for any research investigating the way individuals and social structures work together. In marketing, understanding the connections between the consumer and larger market, marketer, and advertiser domains remains underdeveloped but full of promise. The application of this theory in the field of marketing may also yield valuable contributions to structuration theory as it sociology, suggesting new dimensions, boundary conditions, or unexpected outcomes.

This work also contributes to the current theoretical discussions of cultural branding. Finding brands that chose to respond to a disruption is indeed rare. This is in line with the mere handful of iconic brands that Holt (2001) described as leveraging a cultural branding strategy. While disruptions and contradictions are not the same construct, they make interesting conceptual neighbors. However, while Holt attends to a few brands, I examine the entire brand landscape and find the opposite effect – not of leveraging but of silencing brands. While Holt attends to the imagined consumer response, I examine the institutional players, practices, and processes that affect the choice of this strategy. I look at the response of brands that are directly implicated in the disruption, the industry that comes under scrutiny, and the work of industry organizations as well. Attending to these multiple forces contributes to understanding active erasure, but points out extensions to other theories of cultural branding. The same is true of the

McCracken's (1986) meaning transfer model. In this model, meaning moves from the culturally constituted world through the advertising/fashion system to consumer goods. Investigating exactly how these advertisements are produced, the conflicts and tensions that arise within this single aspect of the model, and the more institutional facets of advertising, extends the model in significant directions.

At a practical marketing strategy level, this research tells us what a firm can reliably expect all advertisers to do in the wake of a social disruption, when they will do it, and how. A brand manager can expect the majority of other advertisers to pursue a campaign that is cleansed of any reference to the disruption. This knowledge allows a brand manager the flexibility of choosing the institutionally expected path of active erasure, or may present an opportunity to act in a different way and perhaps gain attention and brand meaning. Indeed, some brands are well known for intentionally pursuing

The examination of how this process works allows brand managers, marketers, and advertisers an opportunity to critically examine their strategy and intentionally choose to a different strategy. Awareness of this phenomenon alone may be enough for brand managers to change tack. For brands that do want to respond, this work has also revealed important intervention points during the process of advertising creation. At these points managers may choose to stop and consider their strategy. The brand side may listen more closely to advertising creatives when the riskier ideas are proposed. Brand managers must also be encouraged to discuss disruptions, and in turn must be offered incentives that are in line with a more responsive

strategy. While the tension between advertising creatives and brand managers is well known, adopting a riskier strategy may also improve the working relationship.

One important question this work has not been able to address directly is what should brands do? Should they choose to address disruptions, or should they continue to erase them as most brands currently do? Which is a better strategy to pursue to enhance brand meaning, encourage brand differentiation, and ultimately increase sales or revenue? The findings from interviews with brand managers and advertisers suggest that many factors must be considered – current brand meanings that fit with the disruption, products that match these meanings and can ameliorate the effects of the disruption, and a brand's own past actions and advertisements. In the case of the oil spill, British Petroleum's preexisting "green" campaign made the spill seem worse. Dawn's preexisting philanthropy with oil spills, their own preexisting wildlife advertising campaign, and more than two decades of supporting a related charitable cause through products and donations all suggest the Dawn brand is positioned to benefit from addressing an oil spill. However, such suitability changes if another disruption is considered. We have also seen competitors (Shell Oil) use a disruption as an opportunity to differentiate their own brand at the expense of another, and industry organizations (The U.S. Council for Energy Awareness, promoting nuclear energy) use the Exxon Valdez disruption to promote their own cause. Clearly this investigation is only a starting point in examining these relationships.

We can also ask what brands should do from a social or ethical perspective. Do brands have an obligation to address pressing social concerns? Should they be activists for

environmental concerns? Do they have an obligation to promote patriotism along with their brand during periods of political upheaval and war? Would doing so protect the American public, national security, or the brand's own bottom line? The media has long been considered able to set the national agenda. What is the advertising contribution to this? Is it consistent with Schudson's (1984) capitalist realism, and what agenda does it set for consumers? Or perhaps it is the role of the marketer to offer up what they presently do, a comforting space which is free from conflict, trouble or disruption. It is also important to consider brands in the larger media context. Print ads are seen side by side content, and other advertisements. Broadcast ads come between various kinds of programming, entertainment, and news. How does programming that addresses disruption affect perceptions of ads that use erasure compared to those that address the disruption to varying degrees? How do ads with an erasure or a response strategy affect the consumption of the related news media, and the unrelated entertainment content?

The very idea of frequent disruption is antithetical to core aspects of society: reproduction of society and stability through laws, norms, customs and systems or rewards and punishment. However, this work addresses social disruptions not as rare and unforeseeable events, but as regularly recurring phenomena that marketers must prepare for and that marketing theorists must attend to. As brands are increasingly being called to be socially responsible, philanthropic, charitable, socially conscious, and good corporate citizens - they will increasingly be faced with the decision whether to engage with a social disruption. This work helps brands understand disruption and how to respond. Even more importantly, this research points the need

to view brands as fully social constructs, amenable to institutional, structuration, and other macro social theories. This work pushes existing theory toward a fully social theory of brands.

## REFERENCES

- (1990), “Marketers on Alert: Iraq Crisis Rattles U.S. Consumers’ Confidence” *Advertising Age*, August 20: 1, 62.
- (1990), “Saddam scrooges Retailers’ Plans,” *Advertising Age*, August 27: 38.
- (2008), “Ten Things You Can Learn From ‘70s Recession” *Advertising Age*, October 13, 79 (38): 1, 55.
- (2010) “Biggest Stories of the Year,” *Advertising Age*, December 13, 81 (44): 3.
- (2013), Cover of *Advertising Age*, July 22, 84 (27): 0.
- Beck, Ulrich (1992), *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, 1st ed. Sage.
- Belk, Russell W. and Richard W. Pollay, (1985), “Images of Ourselves: The Good Life in Twentieth Century Advertising,” *Journal of Consumer Research*, 11 (4): 887–97.
- Belkaoui, Ahmed and Janice M. Belkaoui (1976), “A Comparative Analysis of the Roles Portrayed by Women in Print Advertisements: 1958, 1970, 1972,” *Journal of Marketing Research*, 13 (2): 168–72.
- Bell, Daniel (1976), *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*, Basic Books.
- Bennett, Graceann, and Manila Austin (2010), “Recession Might Not be Over, But Consumers are Tired of Hearing About It.” *Advertising Age*, 81 (12): 14.
- Birkland, Thomas A. and Regina G. Lawrence (2002), “The Social and Political Meaning of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill,” *Spill Science & Technology Bulletin*, 7 (1-2): 17–22.
- Brooks, David (2001), *Bobos In Paradise: The New Upper Class and How They Got There*, New York: Simon & Schuster.

- Bulik, Beth Snyder (2009). "How Your Value Message Can be Heard Above the Din," *Advertising Age*, April 6, 80(12):1,26.
- Bush, Michael (2010a), "BP Print Ads Promise to 'Make This Right'," *Advertising Age*, June 2. <http://adage.com/article/news/bp-print-ads-promise-make/144196/>
- (2010b), "Brunswick Put to Ultimate Test as BP Grows Increasingly Toxic," *Advertising Age*, June 7, 81 (23): 2, 37.
- (2010c), "Shell Breaks Industry Silence with Aggressive Campaign," *Advertising Age*, June 28, 81(26): 8.
- Cardona, Mercedes M. (2003), "Consumers to TV Networks: Keep Ads, Regular Programs," *Advertising Age*, 74 (13): 3.
- Carey, James W. (1960), "Advertising: An Institutional Approach," in *The Role of Advertising: A Book of Readings*, ed. Charles Harold Sandage and Vernon Fryburger, Homewood, IL, Richard D. Irwin: 3-17.
- Chen, Yubo, Shankar Ganesan, Yong Liu (2009), "Does a Firm's Product-Recall Strategy Affect Its Financial Value? An Examination of Strategic Alternatives During Product-Harm Crises," *Journal Of Marketing*, 73 (November): 214-26.
- Cleeren, Kathleen, Harald J. van Heerde, Marnik G. Dekimpe (2013), "Rising from the Ashes: How Brands and Categories Can Overcome Product-Harm Crises," *Journal of Marketing*, 77 (March): 58-77.
- Conklin, Jeffrey (2006), *Dialogue Mapping: Building Shared Understanding of Wicked Problems*, Chichester, England: Wiley Publishing.

- Corbin and Strauss (2008), "Strategies for Qualitative Data Analysis" in *Basics of Qualitative Research*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Los Angeles: Sage: Los Angeles, 67- 86.
- Cottle, June and Geoffrey Kistruck (2008), "Discerning Marketers' Meanings: Depth Interviews with Sales Executives," in *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods in Marketing*, ed. Russell W. Belk, Edward Elgar Publishing, 465-75.
- Dagnoli, Judann (1991), "Nabisco Brands is Touched by War," *Advertising Age*, 62 (4): 42.
- Diener, Betty J., Edward L. Perkins, Robert A. Lynn, William F. Christopher, Rudolph Dallmeyer, Irving D. Canton, Jack W. Cundiff, and Lee Adler, (1975), "Marketing in a Recession: Comments from Our Readers," *Journal of Marketing*, 39 (July): 78-9.
- Donaton, S. and Walley W. (1991), "War Bleeds Nets of Millions a Day," *Advertising Age*, 62 (3): 1-2.
- Douglas, Mary and Aaron Wildavsky, (1982), *Risk and Culture: An Essay on the Selection of Technological and Environmental Dangers*, Berkley: University of California Press.
- Dynes, Russell R., and E. L. Quarantelli (1975), "Organizational Responses to Major Community Crises," Disaster Research Center, The Ohio State University, at <http://udspace.udel.edu/handle/19716/1137>.
- Elkin, Tobi (2001), "In a Time of War, Play," *Advertising Age*, 72 (46): 4-54.
- Epp, Amber M., Schau, Hope Jensen, Linda L. Price (forthcoming) "The Role of Brands and Mediating Technologies in Assembling Long-Distance Family Practices," *Journal of Marketing*.



- Ewen, Stuart (2001), *Captains Of Consciousness: Advertising and The Social Roots of the Consumer Culture*, 25th Anniversary ed., New York: Basic Books.
- Fischer, Eileen, and Cele C. Otnes (2008), "Breaking New Ground: Developing Grounded Theories in Marketing and Consumer Behavior," in *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods in Marketing*, ed. Russell W. Belk, Elgar Publishing, 19–30.
- Fisher, Christy (1991), "Exxon Ad Stars Mayor," *Advertising Age*, May 6: 50.
- Fox, Stephen (1985), *The Mirror Makers: A History of American Advertising and Its Creators*. New York: Vintage.
- Frank, Thomas (1999), *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture and the Rise of Hip Consumerism*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 168-83.
- Garfield, Bob (2009) "A Little Clever Schadenfreude May Fill Up Some Airline Seats," *Advertising Age*, February 23, 80 (7): 22.
- Giddens, Anthony (1979), *Central problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure, and Contradiction in Social Analysis*, Vol. 241, Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.
- (1984), *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*, Berkley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.
- (1991), *The Consequences of Modernity*, 1st ed., Stanford University Press.
- Glaser, Barry G. and Anselm L. Strauss (1967), *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*, Chicago: Aldine.

- Goode, Erich, and Nachman Ben-Yehuda (2009), *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance*, 2nd ed., Wiley-Blackwell.
- Goulding, Christina (2005), "Grounded Theory, Ethnography and Phenomenology: A Comparative Analysis of Three Qualitative Strategies for Marketing Research," *European Journal of Marketing*, 39 (3/4): 294–308.
- Greenwood, Royston, Christine Oliver, Roy Suddaby, and Kerstin Sahlin-Andersson, ed, (2008). *The SAGE Handbook of Organizational Institutionalism*, Los Angeles: Sage.
- Gross, Barbara L., and Jagdish N. Sheth (1989), "Time-Oriented Advertising: A Content Analysis of United States Magazine Advertising, 1890-1988," *The Journal of Marketing* 53 (4): 76–83.
- Halliday, Jean, Natalie Zmuda, and Michael Bush (2008), "Recession Got You Down? Marketers Want to Help," *Advertising Age*, 79 (19): 4, 58.
- Handelman, Jay M., and Stephen J. Arnold (1999), "The Role of Marketing Actions with a Social Dimension: Appeals to the Institutional Environment," *Journal of Marketing*, 63 (July): 33-48.
- Hatfield, Stefano (2003), "Advertising and Entertaining are Necessary in Tough Times," *Advertising Age*, 74 (13): 14.
- Hayes, Andrew F., and Klaus Krippendorff (2007), "Answering the Call for a Standard Reliability Measure for Coding Data," *Communication Methods and Measures* 1 (1): 77–89.

Hill, Julie Skur, Nancy Giges, James McCarthy, David Kilburn, and Geoffrey Lee Martin

(1991), "Foreign Travel Units Pull Back Ad Efforts," *Advertising Age*, 62 (7): 41.

Ho, Fei-Wen, and Kirk Hallahan (2004), "Post-earthquake Crisis Communications in Taiwan:

An Examination of Corporate Advertising and Strategy Motives," *Journal of*

*Communication Management*, 8 (3): 291–306.

Hoffman, Andrew J. (1999), "Institutional Evolution and Change: Environmentalism and the

U.S. Chemical Industry," *The Academy of Management Journal*, 42 (4): 351–71.

Holt, Douglas B. (2003), "What Becomes an Icon Most?" *Harvard Business Review*, (March):

43-9.

----- (2004), "Branding as Cultural Activism," in *How Brands Become Icons*, Cambridge, MA;

Harvard Business School Press, 209-22.

Holt, Douglas, and Douglas Cameron (2012), *Cultural Strategy: Using Innovative Ideologies to*

*Build Breakthrough Brands*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Huberman, A. Michael, and Matthew B. Miles (1994), "Data Management and Analysis

Methods" in *Handbook of Qualitative research*, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S.

Lincoln, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 428-44.

Hume, Scott (1991), "Poll: Troop Ads Win Support," *Advertising Age*, 62 (13): 6.

Humphreys, Ashlee (2010), "Semiotic Structure and the Legitimation of Consumption Practices:

The Case of Casino Gambling," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 37 (3): 490–510.

Jensen, Ric, and Christopher Thomas (2009), "To What Extent Did American Corporations

Publish 'Brag Ads' During World War II?" *Advertising & Society Review*, 10 (2).

- Johnson, Bradley (2008), "Five Tips to Cope-Or Even Thrive-Through Downturn" *Advertising Age*, December 8, 79 (45): 3, 22.
- Johnson, Darrin, and Timothy Sellnow (1995), "Deliberative Rhetoric as a Step in Organizational Crisis Management: Exxon as a Case Study," *Communication Reports*, 8 (1): 54–60.
- Kamber, T. (2002), "The Brand Manager's Dilemma: Understanding How Advertising Expenditures Affect Sales Growth During a Recession," *The Journal of Brand Management*, 10 (2): 106–20.
- Karababa, Emİnegül, and Gülİz Ger (2011), "Early Modern Ottoman Coffeehouse Culture and the Formation of the Consumer Subject," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 37 (5): 737–60.
- Kingdon, John W., and James A. Thurber (1984), *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, Vol. 45, Boston: Little, Brown.
- Kolbe, Richard H., and Melissa S. Burnett (1991), "Content-Analysis Research: An Examination of Applications with Directives for Improving Research Reliability and Objectivity," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 18 (2): 243–50.
- Kotler, Philip, and Kevin Lane Keller (2012), *Principles of Marketing*, 14<sup>th</sup> ed., Boston, MA: Prentice Hall.
- Krippendorff, Klaus H. (2004), *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Lafayette, Jon, and Gary Levin (1991), "Agencies Revise Tactics as War Unfolds," *Advertising Age*, 62 (3): 53.

- Lee, Edmund (2010), "BP's 'Everyman' Spokesman Sheds Some Light on Handling of Crisis," *Advertising Age*, June 28, 81 (26): 10.
- Lee, Taejun, Ronald E. Taylor, and Wonjun Chung (2011), "Changes in Advertising Strategies During an Economic Crisis: An Application of Taylor's Six-Segment Message Strategy Wheel," *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 39 (1): 75–91.
- Liodice, Robert (2003), "New Blueprint for Wartime Ads," *Advertising Age*, 74 (13): 16.
- Loro, L. (1991), "U.S. Products Win Consumer Allegiance: Poll," *Advertising Age*, 62 (16): 17.
- Marchand, Roland (1986), *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- McAllister, Matthew P. (1993), "'What Did You Advertise with the War, Daddy?': Using the Persian Gulf War as a Referent System in Advertising," in *The Media and the Persian Gulf War, Praeger Series in Political Communication*, ed. Robert E. Denton, Jr., Westport, CT: Praeger, 213–33.
- McCracken, Grant (1986), "Culture and Consumption: A Theoretical Account of the Structure and Movement of the Cultural Meaning of Consumer Goods," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 13 (June): 71-84.
- McCracken, Grant (1988), *The Long Interview*, Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- McLennan, Gregor (1984), "Critical or Positive Theory? A Comment on the Status of Anthony Giddens' Social Theory," *Theory, Culture and Society*, 2 (2): 123-9.
- Neff, Jack, (2010), "Dawn's Rescue Efforts Shine in Gulf Oil Spill," *Advertising Age*, 81 (19): 8.

- Pauchant, Thierry C., and Roseline Douville (1993), "Recent Research in Crisis Management: A Study of 24 Authors' Publications from 1986 to 1991," *Organization & Environment*, 7 (1): 43–66.
- Pearson, Christine M., and Judith A. Clair (1998), "Reframing Crisis Management," *The Academy of Management Review*, 23 (1): 59–76.
- Phillips, Nelson, and John L. Brown (1993), "Analyzing Communication In and Around Organizations: A Critical Hermeneutic Approach," *Academy of Management Journal*, 36 (December): 1547-76.
- Picard, Robert G. (2001), "Effects of Recessions on Advertising Expenditures: An Exploratory Study of Economic Downturns in Nine Developed Nations," *The Journal of Media Economics*, 14 (1): 1–14.
- Pozzebon Marlei (2004), "The Influence of a Structurationist View on Strategic Management Research," *Journal of Management Studies*, 41 (2): 247-72.
- Price Waterhouse Coopers (2013). "Dealing with Disruption: Adapting to Survive and Thrive." PwC 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Global CEO Survey: 1-32, [www.pwc.com/ceosurvey](http://www.pwc.com/ceosurvey).
- Proctor and Gamble (n.d.), "P&G's Billion Dollar Brands: Trusted, Valued, Recognized," [http://www.pg.com/en\\_US/downloads/media/Fact\\_Sheets\\_BDB.pdf](http://www.pg.com/en_US/downloads/media/Fact_Sheets_BDB.pdf).
- P&G (2013), Dawn Website, Accessed 4/30/2014, <http://www.dawn-dish.com/us/dawn/>.
- Quarantelli, E. L. (1988), "Disaster Crisis Management: A Summary of Research Findings," *Journal of Management Studies*, 25 (4): 373–85.

- Quelch, John A., and Katherine E. Jocz (2009), "How to Market in a Downturn," *Harvard Business Review*, April.
- Razumovskaya, Olga (2012) "Proctor & Gamble Feels Political Heat in Russia," *The Wall Street Journal*, Emerging Europe section, posted 3/20/2012, <http://blogs.wsj.com/emergingeuropa/2012/03/20/procter-gamble-feels-political-heat-in-russia/>.
- Rittle, Horst, and Melvin M. Webber (1973), "Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning," *Policy Sciences*, 4: 155–69.
- Rosbergen, Edward, Rik Pieters, and Michel Wedel (1997), "Visual Attention to Advertising: A Segment-Level Analysis," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 24 (3): 305–14.
- Rotzoll, Kim B. (1976), "Advertising in the Large-Four Institutional Views," *Journal of Advertising*, 5 (3): 9–15.
- Sandage, Charles H. (1972), "Some Institutional Aspects of Advertising," *Journal of Advertising* 1 (January): 6–9.
- Sanders, Lisa, and Claire Atkinson (2003), "Creative Conflict: Ad Messages Re-evaluated," *Advertising Age*, 74 (12): 3–54.
- Scaraboto Daiane, and Eileen Fischer (2013), "Frustrated Fatshionistas: An Institutional Theory Perspective on Consumer Quests for Greater Choice in Mainstream Markets," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 39 (April): 1234-57.
- Schudson, Michael (1984), "Advertising as Capitalist Realism," in *Advertising, The Uneasy Persuasion: It's Dubious Impact on American Society*, New York: Basic Books, 209–33.

- Scott, William Richard (2008), *Institutions and Organizations: Ideas and Interests*, 3rd ed., Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Serafin, Raymond, and Cleveland Horton (1991), "Getting Mileage from Patriotism," *Advertising Age*, 62 (7): 3–45.
- Shama, Avraham (1978), "Management & Consumers in an Era of Stagflation," *The Journal of Marketing*, 42 (3): 43–52.
- (1981), "Coping with Stagflation: Voluntary Simplicity," *The Journal of Marketing*, 45 (3): 120–134.
- Shrivastava, Paul (1992), *Bhopal: Anatomy of a Crisis*, Cambridge, MA: Ballinger Publishing.
- Spears, Nancy, and Clinton Amos (2014), "Twentieth Century Female Ad Images: Cultural Interconnections, Social Learning, and the Dialectical Logic of Advertising," *Journal of Business Research*, 67 (4): 441–48.
- Spiggle, Susan (1994), "Analysis and Interpretation of Qualitative Data in Consumer Research," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 21 (3): 491–503.
- Starbuck, William H., and Frances J. Milliken (1988), "Challenger: Fine-Tuning the Odds Until Something Breaks," *Journal of Management Studies*, 25 (4): 319–40.
- Stole, Inger L. (2013), "Persuasion, Patriotism and PR: US Advertising in the Second World War," *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing*, 5 (1): 27–46.
- Stones, Rob (2005), *Structuration Theory*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Suddock, Sally (1989), "Alaska Sets Budget, Dusts Off 1984 Ads," *Advertising Age*, 60: 86.



- Tansey, Richard, Michael R. Hyman, and Gene Brown (1992), "Ethical Judgments About Wartime Ads Depicting Combat," *Journal of Advertising*, 21 (3): 57–74.
- Taylor, Ronald E. (1999), "A Six-Segment Message Strategy Wheel," *Journal of Advertising Research*, 39 (6): 7-17.
- Tellis, Gerard J., and Doyle L. Weiss (1995), "Does TV Advertising Really Affect Sales? The Role of Measures, Models, and Data Aggregation," *Journal of Advertising*, 24 (3): 1–12.
- Thomas, Melvin E., and Linda A. Treiber (2000), "Race, Gender, and Status: A Content Analysis of Print Advertisements in Four Popular Magazines," *Sociological Spectrum*, 20 (3), 357–71.
- Thompson, Craig J. (1997), "Interpreting Consumers: A Hermeneutical Framework for Deriving Marketing Insights from the Texts of Consumers' Consumption Stories," *Journal of Marketing Research*, 34 (4): 438–55.
- Thornton, Patricia H., and William Ocasio (1999), "Institutional Logics and the Historical Contingency of Power in Organizations: Executive Succession in the Higher Education Publishing Industry, 1958-1990," *American Journal of Sociology*, 105 (3): 801–43.
- Tierney, Kathleen J, and Gary R Webb (1995), "Managing Organizational Impressions in Crisis Situations: Exxon Corporation and The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill,"  
<http://dspace.udel.edu:8080/dspace/handle/19716/643>.
- Tyler, Lisa (1992), "Ecological Disaster and Rhetorical Response," *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 6 (2): 149 –71.

- Ungar, Sheldon (1998), "Hot Crises and Media Reassurance: A Comparison of Emerging Diseases and Ebola Zaire," *The British Journal of Sociology*, 49 (1): 36–56.
- (2008), "Global Bird Flu Communication," *Science Communication*, 29 (4): 472–497.
- Vallaster, Christine, and Leslie de Chernatony (2006) "Internal Brand Building and Structuration: the Role of Leadership," *European Journal of Marketing*, 40 (7/8): 761-84.
- Harald Van Heerde, Kristiaan Helsen, and Marnik G. Dekimpe (2007), "The Impact of a Product-Harm Crisis on Marketing Effectiveness," *Marketing Science*, 26 (March /April): 230-45.
- Vaughan, Diane (1997), *The Challenger Launch Decision: Risky Technology, Culture, and Deviance at NASA*, Chicago: University Of Chicago Press.
- Wheaton, Ken (2010), "Marketers May Want To Steer Clear Of Oil-Spill Crisis," *Advertising Age*, June 28, 81(26): 14.
- Whittington, Richard (1992), "Putting Giddens into Action: Social Systems and Managerial Agency," *Journal of Management Studies*, 29 (November): 693-712.
- Winters, Patricia (1991), "Marketers Slash Ads as War Erupts (cover story)," *Advertising Age*, 62 (3): 1, 54.
- Young, Dannagal Goldthwaite (2005), "Sacrifice, Consumption, and the American Way of Life: Advertising and Domestic Propaganda during World War II," *Communication Review*, 8 (1): 27–52.
- Zmuda, Natalie (2008), "How to Market Through Recession Jitters," *Advertising Age*, 79 (12): 27.

-----, 2009. "Sears Seeks Right Tone for the Times without the Deep Discounting," *Advertising Age*, April 6, 80 (12): 3-26.

Table 1: Magazine and Advertising Sample

Publication	May 1987	May 1989	May 1992	Nov 1988	Nov 1990	Nov 1992	Nov 2006	Nov 2008	Nov 2010
Seventeen	63	73	47	45	47	60	38	34	36
AARP	24	23	21	23	24	21	28	39	19
BHG	56	115	85	93	77	91	138	71	113
Ebony	78	65	62	60	103	116	75	67	31
Family Cir.	72	85	70	66	74	58	84	89	97
Nat Geo	16	12	23	14	16	20	33	25	27
Newsweek	38	29	30	51	31	11	20	23	10
Readers D.	82	57	50	60	50	69	37	52	38
Southern Living	50	49	65	69	70	86	72	67	57
Sports Illust.	34	40	24	49	45	32	19	28	15
Time	34	29	31	52	33	26	31	48	29
Column total	547	577	508	582	570	590	575	543	472
Grand total									4964

Table 2: Abbreviated Coding Scheme and Reliability Measures

Category	Rationale	Included	Excluded	Krippendorff's Alpha IRR
Deal	Recession (Shama 1978)	Coupon, sale, price cut, discount, rebate, tax credit, free gift, contests	Good value for the money, warranty, guarantee, free information	0.8864
Patriotism	Tansey, Hyman and Brown (1992), McAllister (1993)	American flag, bald eagle, RWB color scheme, topline text citing "America"	References to other countries, specific regions within the US, "national"	0.8558
Landscape	Birkland and Lawrence (2002)	Landscape pictured incl. lakes, mountains, desert, fields. Stylized landscapes (painted or illustrated).	Blurred or obscured vista. Close-up of natural elements (sand, water). Cityscapes, lawn, gardens.	0.8767
Home	Belk and Polay (1985)	Interior or exterior of home including yard, patio, and garden. References to home including "homemade."	Home appears in the distant background, is significantly cropped or blurred. Only farmland.	0.8600
Other World	Holt (2002)	Other cultures, subcultures, exotic locales, historic American cultures incl. cowboys, hippies.	Other countries that share a modern culture with the united states (i.e. Urban China).	0.8745
<p>N=316 for IRR</p> <p>Also coded for the presence or absence of coupons (0.8864), luxury (0.8509), strength (0.8402), safety (0.7128), family (0.9370), and new (0.7403).</p> <p>Additional items were discarded during the coding process when it became evident there was significant confusion (natural, education, memory)</p>				

Table 3: Differences in Imagery Before, During and After a Disruption

All Brands		EXXON VALDEZ May 1987, 1989, 1992				GULF WAR Nov 1989, 199, 1992				GREAT RECESSION Nov 2006, 2008, 2010						
		Baseline	ΔDuring	ΔAfter		Baseline	ΔDuring	ΔAfter		Baseline	ΔDuring	ΔAfter				
Deal	.8864	0.11	0.01		0.02		0.09	0.04	**	0.01		0.12	-0.01		0.05	**
Luxury	.8509	0.09	-0.02		0.00		0.10	0.01		0.01		0.07	-0.02		-0.03	*
Patriotism	.8558	0.10	0.01		-0.02		0.11	-0.05	**	-0.07	**	0.03	0.02	*	0.00	
Strength	.8402	0.07	-0.01		-0.03	**	0.05	-0.01		0.01		0.09	0.00		-0.01	
NaturalTxt		0.06	-0.02		-0.01		0.03	0.02		0.05		0.05	0.05	**	0.03	**
Landscape	.8767	0.11	-0.04	**	-0.03		0.08	-0.03	**	-0.01		0.07	0.00		-0.01	
Safety		0.22	0.04		-0.01		0.17	0.01		-0.02		0.21	-0.02		0.04	*
Education	.7128	0.08	0.00		0.01		0.09	-0.03	**	-0.03	**	0.09	-0.02		-0.01	
Home	.8600	0.10	0.04	**	0.03		0.10	0.05	**	0.01	**	0.19	-0.05	**	-0.01	
FriendFam	.9370	0.17	0.02		0.02		0.17	0.01		0.01		0.18	-0.02		0.01	
Populist	.8745	0.07	0.00		0.00		0.09	-0.03	*	-0.05	**	0.05	-0.01		0.00	
Memory		0.03	0.00		0.00		0.02	0.02	**	0.03	**	0.04	-0.01		0.00	
New	.7403	0.14	0.00		0.00		0.11	0.01		0.01		0.15	-0.03		-0.01	
n	316	547	577		508		582	570		590		575	543		472	

\* indicates significant difference between baseline at the 90% level

\*\* indicates significant difference between the baseline at the 95% level using the p-test

Table 4: Number of Advertisements for Specific Industries during a Related Disruption

EXXON VALDEZ		Energy Ind. Others total			Prop.	z- score	Sig.
May	1987	2	545	547	0.0037		
May	1989	3	574	577	0.0052	-0.389	
May	1992	5	503	508	0.0098	1.3574	

PERSIAN GULF WAR		Military Ind. others total			Prop.	z- score	Sig.
Nov	1988	5	577	582	0.009		
Nov	1990	9	561	570	0.016	-1.110	
Nov	1992	7	583	590	0.012	-0.561	

GREAT RECESSION		Finance Ind. other total			Prop.	z- score	Sig.
Nov	2006	24	551	575	0.958		
Nov	2008	29	514	543	0.947	-0.918	
Nov	2010	23	449	472	0.951	-0.543	

\* indicates significant difference from the first period at the 90% level

\*\* indicates significant difference from the first period at the 95% level using the p-test

Table 5: Energy Industry Ads Before, During and After the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill

Mag	Date	Advertiser	Headline
EB	May-87	Amoco ultimate lead-free premium gasoline	Take your driving to the ultimate
NG	May-87	Phillips 66, Phillips Petroleum	The eagle has landed.
SP	May-89	U.S. Council for Energy Awareness	Foreign oil / Just say no. Nuclear energy means more energy independence.
NG	May-89	U.S. Council for Energy Awareness	Foreign Oil / Just say no.
RD	May-89	U.S. Council for Energy Awareness	Foreign Oil / Just say no.
NW	May-92	Amoco	The point where many of today's cars run out of gas.
EB	May-92	Peoples Gas	Natural gas: the environmental protection energy.
RD	May-92	U.S. Council for Energy Awareness	Our need for more nuclear energy is up in the air.
NW	May-92	U.S. Council for Energy Awareness	Our need for more nuclear energy is up in the air.
TM	May-92	U.S. Council for Energy Awareness	Our need for more nuclear energy is up in the air.



Table 6: Summary of Interview Data

	Date	Duration		Role	Location	Gender	Tenure
Allen	3/14/2013	1:09:26	Agency	Educ, Art Director	NC	male	long
Brandon	3/18/2013	1:03:07	Agency	Educ, Art Director	IL	male	long
Carolyn	4/5/2013	0:43:33	Brand	Global Business Dir	WI	female	long
Dean	4/5/2013	0:41:67	Brand	Print Ad Selection	WI	male	long
Eric	4/26/2013	1:01:09	Brand	Brand Manager	WI	male	long
Frank	4/26/2013	1:01:09	Brand	Commercial Program Manager	WI	male	long
George	6/12/2013	1:09:00*	Both	Multiple roles	MN	male	long
Henry	6/14/2013	1:08:00*	Brand	Brand Manager	IL	male	long
Irene	6/14/2013	1:58:00*	Brand	Brand Manager	IL	female	long
Jessica	1/27/2014	0:34:16	Agency	Brand Imagery Cor	WI	female	short
Kevin	1/28/2014	1:06:36**	Agency	Creative director	WI/NJ	male	short
Larry	1/30/2014	0:52:28	Agency	Account planner	WI	male	short
Melissa	1/30/2014	0:35:15	Agency	Media planner	WI	female	short
Nicolas	1/31/2014	0:30:46	Agency	Senior Assets Mgr	WI	male	short
Olivia	2/2/2014	0:36:56	Brand	Brand manager	WI	female	mid
Paul	2/8/2014	2:35:37	Agency	Art Director	IL	male	long
Quincy	2/17/2014	0:49:48	Brand	Brand Manager	WI	male	short
Rose	2/21/2014	0:55:16	Brand	Brand manager	WI	female	short
Steven	2/21/2014	0:33:32	Agency	Copywriter	WI	male	short

\* indicates an interview that was not audio recorded

\*\* indicates an interview that was conducted via telephone

Table 7: Trade Press Articles Regarding the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill

Title	Date	Title	Summary
Neff, Jack	5/10/2010 v.18 n.19	Dawn's Rescue Efforts Shine In Gulf Oil Spill.	Dawn's PSA
Crain, Rance	5/10/2010 v.18 n.19	BP's 'Beyond Petroleum' Positioning Becomes Toxic In Wake Of Gulf Oil Spill.	BP's messaging
Bush, Michael	5/17/2010 v.18 n.20	Gulf Coast's \$20B Tourism Biz Asks BP To Foot Advertising Bill.	Requests for BP to fund tourism advertising made by many gulf states and communities
Bush, Michael	6/7/2010 v.81 n.23	Brunswick Put To Ultimate Test As BP Grows Increasingly Toxic.	BPs use of Brunswick as PR agency is discussed
[na]	6/14/2010 Supplement	Can Bp Do Anything To Salvage Its Brand At This Point?	Public opinion polling (half said yes, with time and effort)
Garfield, Bob	6/21/2010 v.81 n.25	From Greenwashing To Godwashing, BP And Obama Fail At Image Control.	Editorial describing BPs campaign
Wheaton, Ken	6/28/2010 v.81 n.26	Marketers May Want To Steer Clear Of Oil-Spill Crisis.	It is rarely wise to mention the event in advertising. Discusses brands that have chosen to do so.
Lee, Edmund	6/28/2010 v.81 n.26	Bp's 'Everyman' Spokesman Sheds Some Light On Handling Of Crisis.	Interview with Darryl Willis, Cleanup and compensation campaign
Bush, Michael	6/28/2010 v.81 n.26	Shell Breaks Industry Silence With Aggressive Campaign.	Shell launches an ad campaign discussing alternative energy, breaking from the industry norm
[na]	7/12/2010 v.81 n.27	Should Bp's Competitors In The Oil Industry Take Advantage Of Its Current Crisis By Advertising?	Public opinion polling
Wheaton, Ken	8/9/2010 v.81 n.29	Bp Walks Fine Line In Attempts To Restore Its Brand.	Pros and cons of advertising after a crisis
[na]	12/13/2010 v.81 n.44	Biggest Stories of the Year.	BP is one of the biggest stories of the year of importance to advertising, marketing, mass media
Rooney, Jennifer	1/3/2011	How Florida Bounced Back From The Oil Spill.	"Visit Florida" campaign

Figure 1: Advertising Appeals during Three Disruptions

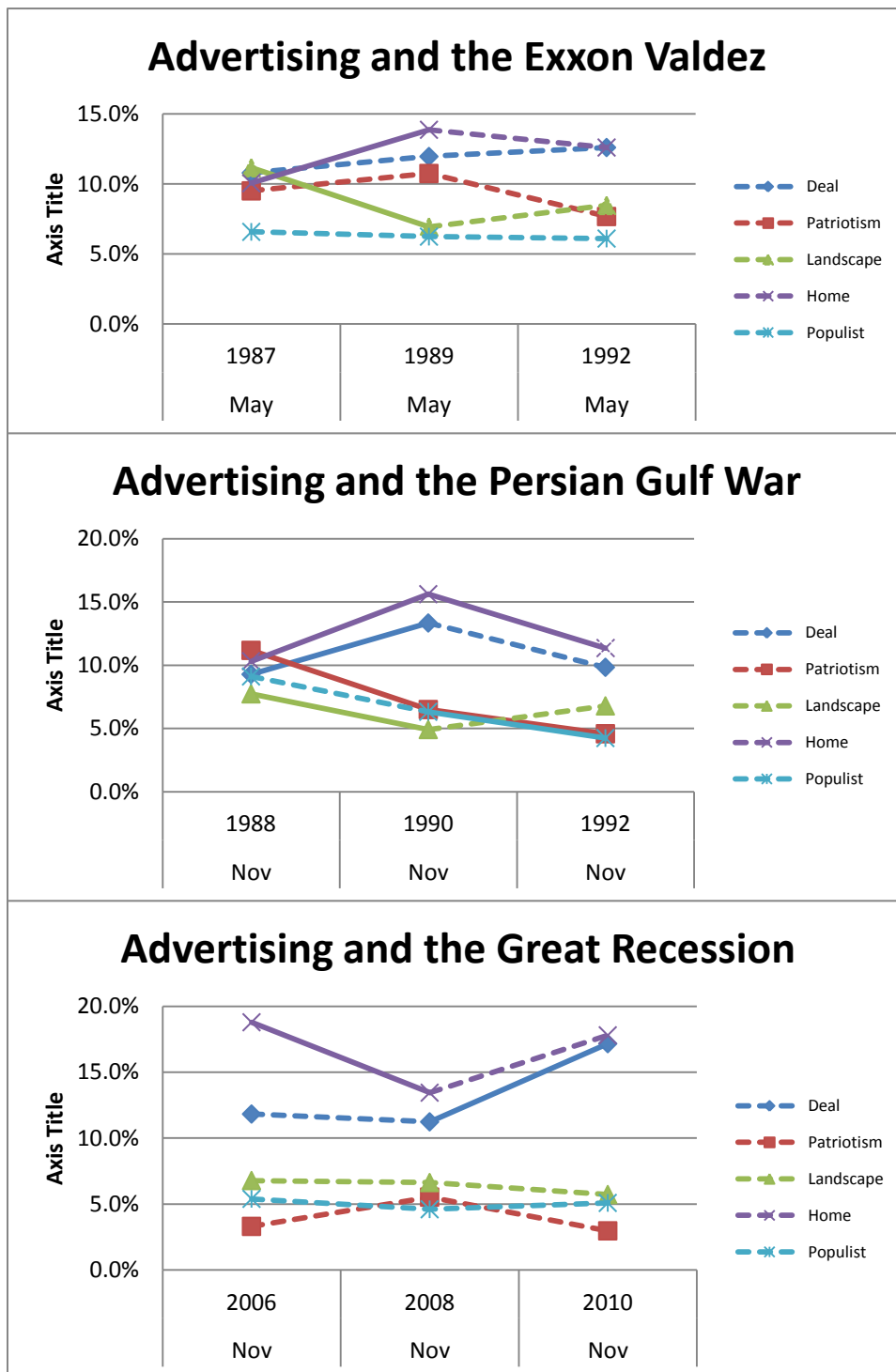


Figure 2: Two Advertisements Depicting Erasure of Landscapes

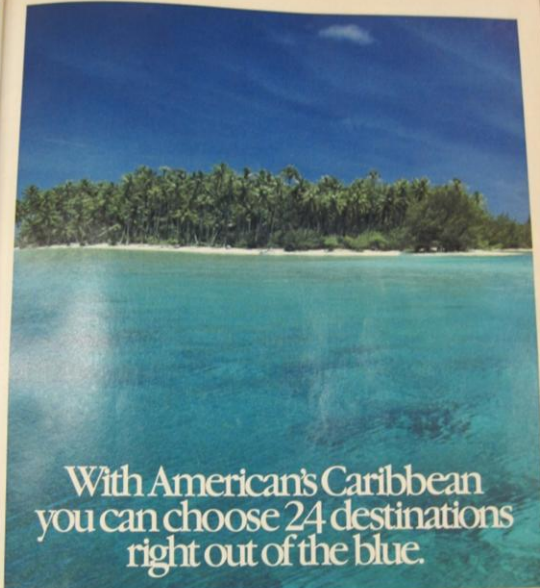
Two advertisements for Sealy Posturepedic, both appearing in Better Homes and Gardens. On the left two joggers on a sunrise run, appearing in the May 1987 issue. On the right, a log placed atop a mattress, appearing in the May 1989 issue, during the height of the Exxon Valdez oil spill.



Sealy Posturpedic – Better Homes and Gardens

Figure 3: Advertisements picturing the Insertion of the Home

These two advertisements, both for American Airlines, appear in the November issues of Ebony magazine. The Caribbean landscape image appears in the 1988 issue, before the Persian Gulf War, while the family reunion image on the right appears in the November 1990 issue, illustrating the increase in images of the home.



**With American's Caribbean  
you can choose 24 destinations  
right out of the blue.**

American Airlines can take you to some of the most beautiful island destinations in the world — 24 of which rest serenely in the azure waters of the Caribbean Sea. Places like Aruba, Jamaica, Martinique, Virgin Gorda, St. Maarten, St. Croix, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Trinidad & Tobago and many more balmy isles in the sun. What's more, American serves the Caribbean from 12 gateways throughout the U.S. And with one of American's Fly Away Vacations<sup>SM</sup> packages, you can be basking on a sun-drenched beach for less than you might think. So if you're ready to pick a paradise right out of the blue, call American Airlines or your Travel Agent. Then get carried away to the sparkling islands of American's Caribbean.

**American Airlines**  
*Something special in the Caribbean.*



**American has low fares  
to the friendliest places on earth.**

American Airlines and American Eagle<sup>®</sup> can take you to some of the friendliest places and people around. With low SuperSaver fares. Just plan in advance and let American's affordable fares take you to more than 250 destinations in the U.S. and throughout the world. Places you can't afford to miss.


So call American or your Travel Agent today. And get some of the friendliest fares to some of the friendliest places on earth. American Eagle<sup>®</sup> is a registered service mark of American Airlines, Inc., and is American's regional airline associate.

**American Airlines**  
*Something special in the air.<sup>®</sup>*

American Airlines, Ebony 1988, 1990

Figure 4: Advertisements from the U.S. Council for Energy Awareness

Advertisements for the U.S. Council for Energy Awareness appear in multiple publications in 1988 and 1990.



**DANGEROUSLY UNPREDICTABLE.**

We now import 50% of all the oil we use. And with the unrest in the Middle East, this dependence has put America's economy in danger.

But the more we use nuclear energy, instead of imported oil, to generate our electricity, the less we have to depend on uncertain foreign oil supplies. America's 112 nuclear electric plants already have cut foreign oil dependence by 4.3 billion barrels since the oil embargo of 1973, saving us \$125 billion in foreign oil payments. But 112 nuclear plants will not be

enough to meet the electrical demands of a growing population and economy. More plants are needed.


Importing so much oil is a danger America must avoid. We need to rely more on energy sources we can count on, like nuclear energy.

For free booklets on nuclear energy and energy independence, write to the U.S. Council for Energy Awareness, P.O. Box 66080, Dept. RS07, Washington, D.C. 20035.

**U.S. COUNCIL FOR ENERGY AWARENESS**

**Nuclear energy means more energy independence.**

©1990 USCEA



**OUR NEED FOR MORE NUCLEAR ENERGY IS UP IN THE AIR.**

Because nuclear plants don't burn anything to make electricity, nuclear plants don't pollute the air.

In fact, America's 110 operating nuclear electric plants displace other power sources and so reduce certain

airborne pollutants in the U.S. by more than 19,000 tons every day. Just as important, nuclear plants produce no greenhouse gases.

To help our economy grow, this country needs a secure, growing supply

of electricity. More nuclear plants will give us just that—without sacrificing the quality of our environment. For a free booklet on nuclear energy, write to the U.S. Council for Energy Awareness, P.O. Box 66080, Dept. AI01, Washington, D.C. 20035.

**NUCLEAR ENERGY MEANS CLEANER AIR.**

© 1990 USCEA

Figure 5: Model of Active Erasure



Figure 6: Shell Advertisement

Advertisement for Shell, one of British Petroleum's competitors, appeared in the November 2010 issue of National Geographic magazine.





Figure 7: Dawn's Current Homepage

Website snapshot of Dawn's home page, by Proctor and Gamble (2013). Image taken April 30, 2014.

Go Ahead and Make Your Family's Favorite Meals. Dawn is Here to Clean Up.

PRODUCTS BUY DAWN SAVING WILDLIFE **DAWN** COUPONS & OFFERS LIFE WITH DAWN SOLUTIONS & TIPS

CHOOSE COUNTRY/LANGUAGE: US ENGLISH submit search

# Dawn saves wildlife

Together, Dawn and our partners are committed to wildlife rescue efforts. Learn about our new documentary series, The Big Picture, and what you can do to help make a difference.

Go There Now

We're donating a million dollars to wildlife rescue efforts

LEARN MORE ▶

Need a Hand With Dish Duty?

"LIKE" US TO GET TIPS ▶

Cleans 2X More Greasy Dishes While Suds Last

LEARN MORE ▶

#DAWNDISH

Dawn @DawnDish "Hopple" found himself up the creek without a paddle. Check out how @TMMC helped this sea lion pup find his way home <http://t.co/GohdBS2gWv>

Dawn @DawnDish @mynameisnotmike Grab some of our Platinum to help make up the time :) Overnight soak in just 3 minutes!

About Dawn | Where to Buy Dawn | Partners | FAQ's | Consumer Reviews | Commercials | Demo Videos | Customer Support | Terms and Conditions | Site Map | Privacy | Ad Choices | Money Back Guarantee

©2013 Procter & Gamble. All Rights Reserved.

WATCH DAWN VIDEOS ON YOUTUBE FOLLOW DAWN ON TWITTER "LIKE" US ON FACEBOOK BBB

## APPENDIX A: Coding Sheet

Magazine title

Issue month-year code

Brand name – include all product names (Campbell’s AND chicken soup). If there is more than one brand, include both separated by a comma.

Headline – largest text on the page.

Slogan/tagline – short phrase usually located at the right hand corner of the page, near the brand logo. Used by the brand for a relatively long period of time (vs. the headline which varies by ad).

Category:

Auto – includes automobiles, car rental, car parts,

Travel – includes airlines, cruises, travel destinations

Clothing – including footwear, outdoor gear, and accessories such as jewelry and watches.

Collectibles – collector plates, Christmas ornaments, coins.

Education – schools, certificate programs, educational products school supplies, etc. Excludes books (entertainment).

Electronics and appliances – includes large (fridge) and small appliances (stand mixer) and consumer electronics (cell phones, computers or typewriters).

Entertainment – television programs or channels, musicals, book clubs, children’s toys.

Financial products and services – includes banks, credit cards, insurance,

Food and Beverage – includes ingredients, prepared food, fast food, restaurants, pet food, sweeteners, and commodity organizations (California milk, avocado growers association).

Grooming and hygiene – includes makeup, beauty products, skin care, shampoos, personal and feminine hygiene, pregnancy tests,

Home improvement and decorating – siding, flooring, interior design, and construction items.

Household supplies – consumables used in the home such as laundry detergent or paper towels.

Medicine and health care – includes prescription and over-the-counter medicines, herbal remedies, products with a primarily medical purpose (orthopedic shoes),

Misc. – organization membership

Philanthropy - charitable organizations such as the Salvation Army and corporate giving.

When coding, remember that the product is less important than the appeal.

Examine only the image and headline. Smaller text that supports a point can be included as notes in the last column. [highlighted in the original coding sheet]

**Engagement:** does this ad directly or indirectly (“changing times”) address the gulf war, the Exxon Valdez oil spill, or the recession anywhere in the text? Code it as direct or indirect with a dash and include the phrase.

**Patriotism** – text that mentions “America” or “Americans,” images of the American flag, a conspicuous red, white, and blue or stars and stripes theme (other than regularly used in logo such as AARP), and national landmarks when they have patriotic significance (examples include the liberty bell or Mt. Rushmore).

**Strength** - Particular physical, mental, or emotional strength is pictured or reference. Products that promise to kill, destroy, conquer, or use other strong language.

**Landscape** - the scenery is one of natural beauty or the sublime. Includes mountains, rivers, lakes, farms, desert, coastline, and specific locales such as the grand canyon or Yellowstone geysers. Can include text mentions of a specific spot known for its natural beauty. Excludes cityscapes, gardens (cultivated beauty), and animals

**Natural** – the product (rather than the setting) is made of natural ingredients as described in the text or evident in the images. References to the elements, animals, vegetables, minerals, farming, unadulterated, purity (of product), organic (Pollay 1983).

**Luxury appeal** (things) – “Explicitly mentions luxury (or related terms such as leisure, pleasure, regal, or pampered or else depicts such pleasures visually (depictions should be judged to be clearly more comfortable, lavish, or opulent than most middle class homes of the same period)” (Belk and Pollay 1985). Associations with Wealth, affluence, elitism, taste, elegance, and affluent lifestyle or executive status are included as luxury appeals (*affluence* is described by Thomas and Treibar 2000). Keywords may include expensive, rich, valuable, highly regarded, costly, extravagant, exorbitant, luxurious, priceless (Pollay 1983). Excludes “affordable luxury” items that more specifically emphasize price

**Education appeal** – the product may be an education course or product described as improving educational success (breakfast foods, Crayola markers, children’s learning software such as Leapfrog). May also include an educational institution as part of the background, as well as text describing learning how to make, judge, evaluate, or appreciate products. Includes connoisseurship. An example is learning to cook Chinese food. This includes Pollay’s (1983) wisdom appeal which includes keywords such as knowledge, education, awareness, intelligence, curiosity, comprehension, expertise, judgment.

**Populist world/heritage** – includes southern rednecks, Appalachian hillbillies, Coastal fishermen, Colonial settlers, Native Americans in traditional garb, Western Frontiersmen, ranchers, or images of indigenous peoples/tribes or the more distant past (ex. Ancient Egyptians or Romans). This theme Includes nostalgic themes, personal memories (often in sepia toned

photos). This often includes traditional appeals that use language such as classic, historical, antique, legendary, time-honored, long-standing, venerable, nostalgic (Pollay 1983)

**Family and Friends** – when a group of people are present or referenced in the text. Describe the relationship, for example couple, siblings, mother and daughter, extended family, childhood friends. Excludes groups of people at work or at daycare, classmates, teammates, or band-mates

## APPENDIX B: Brands that Responded to the Recession

Author and Date	Attitude	Brand	Campaign (emotion)
Weiss 4/21/2008	Approve	Cadillac	Sensible extravagance
	Approve	WalMart	Save money. Live better.
Halliday et al. 5/12/2008	Approve	Harley Davidson	Screw it. Let's ride.
	Approve	Chevrolet	Tell me something good
	Approve	Best Buy	Better summer
	Approve	Jet Blue	Happy jetting
NA 10/27/2008	Approve	Citi	The citi never sleeps
Bryson 10/10/2008	Approve	Wachovia	Strength of institution. (New products)
	Approve	Kraft Kool Aid	1/3 the price of soda
	Approve	Kraft singles	Pocket change
	Approve	DiGorno	Not delivery
Neff 11/17/2008	Approve	Bounty	What you can do with 1 sheet
Zmuda 4/6/2009	Approve	Hyundai	Assurance program
	Approve	Miller High Life	Truck driver rails against price
	Approve	JetBlue	Happy jetting, CEO's guide
	Approve	Xbox	Big fun, bigger value
Bush 12/15/2008	Disapprove	Workplace Media	Target employees
	Disapprove	Speedpro imaging	Leverage 401k
	Disapprove	Thorlos	'Whimsical' campaign
	Disapprove	DS Simmons	Financial crisis insurance
	Disapprove	Media Pitchers	
	Disapprove	Comfirm Bio Service	
NA 1/12/2009	Approve	Pepsi	(Optimism)
	Approve	Dunkin donuts	(Optimism)
Zmuda 1/19/2009	Approve	Pepsi	Smiling logo. Refresh
	Approve	Coca-cola	Open happiness
	Approve	Calvin Klein CK one	We are one
	Approve	Dunkin Donuts	You kin do it
	Approve	Ikea	Embrace change
	Approve	Macy's	Believe
	Approve	Officemax	Life is beautiful. Work can be too.
Bloom 2/2/2009	Approve	Hyundai	Assurance program (3 spots)
Garfield	Approve	JetBlue	CEO's guide to jetting0

Author and Date	Attitude	Brand	Campaign (emotion)
2/23/2009			
Crain 3/9/2009	Approve	Cessna	Timidity didn't get you this far
	Approve	Hawker Beechcraft	Dear Starbucks, you still need to fly
Rooney 3/9/2009	Approve	Goldwell bankers	Founders, 103 year legacy
	Approve	Geocp	Subtle change in proof points
York 3/23/2009	Approve	Denny's	Free meal promotion
Bulik 4/6/2009	Disapprove (price cuts)	Walmart	Save money, live better
	Disapprove	Microsoft	PC's are cheaper
	Disapprove	JC Penney	Style, quality, price
	Disapprove	Kia Motors	Price
	Disapprove	Pillsbury Grands	25 cents per serving
	Disapprove	Subway	Price promo
	Disapprove	Quiznos	Price promotion
	Approve (value)	Hyundai	Assurance program
	Approve	Target	A new day. A new way to save. (simpler times)
Neff 4/6/2009	Approve	Tide	Timm Gunn, total care
	Approve	TGI Fridays	Entrees at \$9.99
	Approve	Hyundai	Assurance program (GM and Ford roll out similar programs)
	Approve	Kraft, Campbell	\$1 for soup and sandwich
Zmuda 4/6/2009	Approve	Sears	Kidvantage program
	Approve	Miller high life	
	Disapprove	Gatorade	2 Kevin Garnetts
	Approve	Xbox (Netflix)	Demonstrated value
	Disapprove	SteinMart	Talks value, doesn't show it
	Approve	Jetblue	CEO's guide to jetting
	Approve	Boost Mobile	Unwronged campaign
	Disapprove	Cici's	Penny picker uppers (groveling)
	Disapprove	Gatorage G2	Everyday athlete
	Disapprove	Sears	Win a makeover (depressing)
Bryson 4/13/2009	Approve	Nationwide	Comforting "Nationwide is on your side"
	Approve	Home Depot	More saving. More doing.

Author and Date	Attitude	Brand	Campaign (emotion)
	Approve	Visa	More people go with Visa.
	Approve	Hyundai, Ford, GM	Assurance program
	Approve	Allstate	Mention company was founded during a recession
	Approve	Charles Schwab	Less cash, more questions (empathy)
	Approve	General Mills	Retro cereal boxes
Neff 5/4/2009	Approve	Burpee (seeds)	\$10 money garden package