Chapter Four

Dynamics of Commodities and Advertising

Advertising is founded upon the great, fundamental truth that he who desires to sell the most must have the widest acquaintance and be the best known. When society is aggregated in a Robinson Crusoe or in the cabin of the Mayflower it is practicable for any man to know everybody, but when civilization advances into complexity it can no longer be done. In our own country this is especially true. There is no common centre.

The dominant message found in all the corporate ads is BUY, BUY, and BUY. The collective impact of this message has had its effect over the past fifty years, of intimately linking our most basic needs to consumer items and channeling all our energies into the marketplace.

Consumption linked with desires vis-à-vis its functional utility is consumerism. Had we been in primitive societies and governed by its laws (mechanical solidarity, collective ownership etc), then no agency (advertisement) was needed to facilitate our subsistence. In this order, the capacity to generate new needs of goods and services along with that of the necessary one’s is advertisements. Advertisement has penetrated deep into our society and culture shaping the symbolic and interaction system as a whole. However, less attention has focused on the way in which academic studies (most often in sociology or cultural studies) strategically deploy limited understandings of advertisement and advertising research as analytic devices. For the purpose of this study, the deployment of advertising as a hermeneutic device in understanding consumerism in contemporary lives has been made. The following section offers not only a fully substantiated argument, but also a speculative account which may help to understand meanings generated by consumption. An interdisciplinary study of advertisement and its interaction with the goods shows concern of general life affected by advertisement.

3 There have been few studies on advertisements in sociology but not plenty to suffice the mind. Quite a few Davidson, 1992; Lury and Warde, 1997; Corrigan 1987 etc.
4.1. The Sociology of Advertisements:

The central thrust is to contextualise and historicise the symbolic dimensions of advertisement. The study analyses how advertising, when used as a social apparatus influences the consumption of day to day lives. What would have happened had there been no advertisements? Then, in this case, would people buy fewer goods for their consumption or would it have been optimum? Would there be lesser swanky cars on the roads; fewer high line of luxurious clothing inside glass panes or would that have contributed to equitable distribution of resources leading to equality amongst the people or consumers? People loose their distinctive power by continuously creating their identities in a new direction. In the light of above, it is imperative to analyse certain objectives in order to capture the reality of advertising and its effectiveness:

- The existing interrelationship between advertisement and commodities.
- The notion of 'social' involved in the self through these commodities.
- The idea of social solidarity irrespective of the class, caste, ethnicity and gender is also framed.

Hence, rather than, condemning commodification and their visual metaphors this chapter argues for a better understanding of the complex subject. The power of 'market' as well as the 'persuasion of advertising' captures the complex relationship with commodities. There exists a wide range of meanings and wisdom to unravel the world of commodities; however advertising is only one part of this circulation of claims and counter-claims. The following analysis centres on the understanding of advertising and advertising research, acting as currencies in the exchange of various forms of power and knowledge. Precisely, though, this will be the focus of our study as it carries considerable significance relatively, which has been somewhat neglected in the academic literature. The purpose is to look at how advertisements are massed and gendered by the influence of consumers. Therefore, it is vital to begin with a clear picture of how people respond to advertisement. The graph 4.1 below
represents the kinds of responses made available in the survey vis-à-vis the active audience polls on advertisement.

Graph 4.1. Response rate of Watching Advertisements

Findings of the field work of 150 respondents showed that 65 of those interviewed view advertisement on television, 25 was not that keen on observing advertisement analytically and 60 of them relied on all the other sources of advertisement (Newspapers, Magazines, Hoardings, Billboards, Radio’s etc.). Hence, advertisements present a positive correlation with their purchase decisions. On similar lines, the degree to which the consumers get inclined is at parity with what the companies spend on their product. This is all related with the image of the object; as to how a product is displayed and visualised by audiences-potential consumers. The whole idea is the adequate representation of the object. Most of the times, this overpowers the object itself with the motive of appealing it to the masses for selling them. Thus, the above exercise was to analyse the degree of consumer culture in these urban areas. Baudrillard takes up this issues rather briefly in his book 'The Consumer
The consumers volunteers to get connected with the projected image for its cultural associations as well. Advertisements are as popular as celebrities, some of them have been analysed in the later sections of this chapter. These were the one’s chosen after a focussed discussions with the respondents during the interviews. They are like the solution to all our problems. For instance, Lux-is the secret of energy; Tide is the ultra whitening detergent for our clothes; the application of Ponds cream makes you beautiful in just seven days; Tata Tea is the ultimate drink for raising nationalistic loyalties so on and so forth.

Graph 4.2. GDP spend on Advertisement in the world (2004)

![Graph 4.2. GDP spend on Advertisement in the world (2004)](image)

Source: Bose 2006:158

Therefore, there is huge amounts of investments involved in the striking the right chord of consumer’s mind. The graphical representation above is a true illustration of the amount of GDP spent on advertisement during 2004. The graph 4.2 indicates that India stood at 0.5 per cent per annum of the GDP as against 1.0 percent in Australia, 1.3 per cent in the U.S. and 2.1 per cent in Hong Kong and for China it was 0.6 percent (Bose 2006:158).

In most industrialised economies expenditure hover around for advertisements, however, the fact is that India has not yet attained the potentials. Given the increasing number of media channels that consumers are being exposed to, brands necessarily advertise frequently and across more channels to generate brand recall. The biggest beneficiary of this activity is most likely to be television. However, with the
inversing population and increasing income the cost of living is high. The study initiates the conceptualisation of advertisement within the subjective constraints of sociology.

4.2. Socio-Historical Evolution of Advertisement:

The nascent consumerism inspired explanations early in this century for the meaningful role of goods that persist today. The last decade of the nineteenth century, and certainly the early years of eighteenth century was difficult for the American Culture. Consumer culture emerged in the late 19th century as business leaders concerned with overproduction developed methods to stimulate consumer demands. It is stated, above that the main aim of advertising is the creation of consumers and selling of dreams in the form of commodities. Most commonly, advertising is understood as a ‘commodity-sign industry’ (Goldman & Papson 1996:7). However, this industry produces more than advertisements or commodity signs: its practices generate a wide range of discourses that circulate in complex ways between multiple participants. In fact, the way in which these signs are transformed and translated into other signs is the reality that they don’t conceal. They have been cast as important ‘captains of consciousness’ (Ewen & Ewen 1992:45) and relatively little attention has been directed at their everyday work practices, commercial imperatives or application of expertise. Within these few studies of advertising practices, very little analysis has focused on the role of sociological research4. Typically, an account of market forces stresses its role in governing consumers often claiming that they ‘form a powerful site of consumer surveillance’. By segmenting and ‘delivering’ groups of potential consumers, media are scrutinised, described and formalised into predictable viewing demographical form. Often, psychological understandings of individuals’ motivations have been cast as a form of governance of consumers.

Having socialised the masses into a labour force the industrial system had to go further to socialise the masses (that is to control them) into a force of consumption (Op.cit. Baudrillard 1988:50). The key elements in this whole affair are the capitalist system during

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4. Sociological or cultural studies’ accounts often centre on the management of consumers through marketing research and audience segmentation (according to social and psychological classifications, and media placement).
World Wars and the collapse of communism. The century began with widespread doubts about the ability of capitalism to manufacture or distribute goods in the advent of mass production era. The growing American cooperation appeared to be slow criteria of personnel success. The Fordist mass consumption generated both work and expansion of the materialistic security in the wake of the war. Hence, the transformation as a consumer and the dual responsibility of the worker got accelerated. Without doubt, the industrial redistribution renewed social solidarity with the limitless economic expansion of goods-shaping the idea of freedom and dignity. This culture was the culmination of historic choices made within, as well as, outside the ‘market’ in the complexities of intellectual, political and social life.

The discussion above throws light on the culture of work and spending whereby the time was transformed into money on and off the job. Especially to draw an analogy of scarcity (time) amongst plenty (money) in relation to the consumer culture (Cross 1993). Henry Ford, was able to maintain a commanding lead over his competitors by simply offering his customers the fundamental assurance that his cars would lead them to their destination and back. In 1927, when General Motors introduced the LaSalla, the first “styled” car, Ford lost his number-one position. Henry eager to get the position back came out with his restyled Model ‘A’ (Audi), and the rest we all know, is history. As corporate development mushroomed, the consumer increasingly became a passive observer of the technological process but at the same time he also became more of a challenge for the producers’ selling imagination.

On the other side, of the continent, Indian advertising begin with the hawkers calling out their wares right from the days when cities and markets first began. Shop front sign ages-from street side sellers to door to door selling to press ads. Especially during the eighteenth century the classified advertising begins. It was essentially the concrete advertising. Ads appear for the first time in print in Hickey’s Bengal Gazette-India’s first newspaper.

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5 The well known Ford Cars-bought a revolution in the consumer industry by initiating mass goods and employment on a large scale. There are evidence that Ford cars was a foundation slab of the developing American Economy in late eighteenth century. After this there have been loads of literature as well in the consumption studies.
Studios mark the beginning of advertising created in India (as opposed to imported from England). Studios set up for bold type, ornate fonts, more fancy, large advertisements. There are therefore the multiple effects of advertisement to be analysed.

4.3. The Role of Advertisement:

The studies on advertisements sometimes offer a map or precise textual transcription of contemporary capitalism. The above discussed printed texts and images are extremely important in socialising people to be consumers even before the goods are widely available. They colonise the imagination with "visions of lifestyle", creating "a theater of familiarity in which readers may envisage themselves at home". For instance, content analysis of ads for new housing in Shanghai shows how marketers target a broad public across most income levels while conveying the sense of a stratified housing market in which each income level finds its own "oasis" (Fraser 2000:32-33).

From this starting point, begins the examination of the social role of commodities, particularly when it acts as a primary mediator in our lives. Therefore, the consumer attitude is seen as a social activity rather than an individualised economic one. This is first of its kind to qualify advertising effectiveness across multiple media, including television, magazine, radio and online. The aim is to demonstrate as to how advertising does have an important role in consumption patterns apart from its persuasive and informative role. A responsive consumer market, which was once looked for reliable goods, now is looked by manufacturers to fabricate not only goods but also the people to purchase them. Advertisements aimed at the efficient creation of consumers accomplished by continually subjecting to the harsh social scrutiny of the surrounding world. This is often conceived as a predicate to the expansion of consumer demand. Capitalism's ideological thrall allows advertising to occupies a central place in the analyses of contemporary society (Ewen and Ewen 1992:32,97). As part of the process, branding became a kind of symbolic exchange, a re-enchantment of the world, a mechanism for channelling consumption into new forms. The social mechanism act as a flow between consumer desire and advertisement.

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4.3.1. Advertising as a Social Tool:

The Consumerist mentality has to do with 'use-up' entirely, as has been discussed in chapter three. The whole process is to keep concerns with material goods and its consumption. All goods are disposable offering best of the schemes, prices and discounts to state the most suited reason for possessing a particular object. Thus, advertisement is that one thing which directly keeps us informed about the ever increasing world of novelty. Advertising functions as a mirror, highlighting the major elements of capitalism as a system of production (Jhally 1987:205). This part of advertising which places sole emphasis on its textual end-products (advertisements themselves), or on broad social impacts tends to loose sight of the weak position of consumers developed as a consequence. I have argued that these self-promotional and managing strategies are key to the operation of the advertising industry. In this understanding, advertisements are a privileged analytic site and can be analysed textually in order to 'map the cultural reproduction of commodity hegemony (Goldman 1922:2). Many generalised accounts of advertising obscure these complex knowledge in their rush to set advertising as a sign of an index of social or cultural change. The complexity of economic interests (demand and supply), commercial imperatives and creative inputs reduces advertising to be a mere sign or a symbol. This is a form of governance –of consumers by advertising practitioners (directed by commercial imperatives) and of the social by academics (directed by our own imperatives to research and publish).

In order to function as a index of social change, advertising processes and textual products are discursively reduced to an imagined core which holds an isomorphic relation to change in the social life. Understanding advertisements is like understanding the terrains of the social or the cultural landscape. Therefore, installing a relation of equivalence, in turn functions to reduce the complexity of the social making it more readily available to analysis. In effect, the use of advertising as a trope for a diversity of social phenomena is a way of managing the social and rendering it pliant to social and cultural theory (Lury and Warde 1997:87-102). As discussed in third chapter, consumer needs and demands are constituted and expressed through forms of symbolic communication. In consumer society, our needs are bought into being by commodities; however our desires are shaped in advance. Thus,
advertisements helps to seduce one’s capacity by images dissolves the real and the imaginary. For example, television does not manipulate as much as constitute its audience as a mass. Thus for Baudrillard, ‘mass (age) is the message’ (1983b:44).

4.3.2. Advertisement as a Tool to Social Emulation:

There is little attempt to create a particular sort of consumer, although, certain ideal characteristics cannot be overruled. For instance, there is a hint in this line of an old ad (banned for now), ‘a cigarette in hand makes you feel like a man’. Though, quite unclear why one should start smoking, however provokes a desire to do so to become an ideal man. Here, we find that one of the important element is to make consumers realise of the complexes and then proposes a solution. Our consciousness is largely a reflection of the consciousness which others have of us.

Earlier, advertising in United States was a medium of creating national homogeneity and thereby a tool to overcome the tensions that sprang to mark great heterogeneity in population. Advertising in the US of the 1920’s claimed to provide a universal culture that would overcome social divisions. This was seen as a part of civilising process and advertisements were designed to make people ashamed of their origins and consequently the habits and practices that betrayed them as alien. One could become an American by simply drinking Cocoa Cola and consuming appropriate goods, when, in fact it was something that grew out of a particular stage of capitalism (Corrigan 1997:68). The persistence of consumption is crucial in the analysis of the advanced capitalist society as it tends to downplay social inequalities. It is also based on the fact of social emulation theory, “to find that our possessions often pale in comparison with those of others” (Cross 1993:1). Akin to the idea of myself as rather my idea of an neighbour’s view of me. This can also be contrasted with a more recent advertisement a prominent television commercial for which the famous caption line resonates as ‘Neighbour’s envy, owner’s pride’.7

7 The Onida Commercial on T.V-flashed on channels across India got famous for its advertisement and its caption line.
The above caption line instills the sense of pride by merely owning an *Onida* brand of T.V. Here, we find one of the interesting characteristics of modern advertising. The most integral is to suggest the consumer that they lack something in their relations with others, and proposes the product as the answer. So, it is not that advertising simply creates desires within individuals that begin and ends in an entirely self-contained way, but rather that desires have to do with relations with other people: modern advertising concentrates at these points where the individual and society meet, and claims to have ways of making the individual a more successful social being (Corrigan 1997:66-67). Here, one can find the ways in which diverse aspects of others are cultivated within one's self. This argument can also be supported by taking clue from the Cooley's book of 1902 in which he suggests "I am what you think I think I am". It was totally dependent on how one perceive of oneself and others on the basic ways of seeing.

Advertising plays quite actively on these kind of attitudes especially when everything has a shorter life span. Here, visual and auditory effects comes and is entirely their forte to provide the solution to these issues and confusion if emanating in their solitary minds. This is a comfortable zone in the world of goods for their apparent satisfaction somehow which has no lifetime guarantee and is subject to change. The consumer is like a performer always performing, and is scared of his bad performance. The consumer appears as a fearful actor who can only overcome his/her fears by using products specially designed for this purpose. Advertisements is about the presentation of the object as well as its distinctiveness. The meanings are deciphered in the process of consumption when exchanged for the commodity on display. As it is usually cheaper to buy a new mobile sets or a new laptop rather than to fix the old ones. And, and every couple of months new products display at the shelf.

4.3.3. Advertising as a Tool for Identity Construction:

Consumer goods claim to construct a homogeneous identity. Recent advertising strategies target groups in peculiar ways of building a more mechanical model of solidarity in a more complex way unless it simply fragments and undermine solidarity. "Advertising

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today seems to combine the two, now offering pleasurable dreams, now social nightmares-the contemporary customer is the ever shifting product of this ever-shifting dialectic" (Corrigan 1997:66-67). Therefore, the earlier phase of advertising creating a homogeneous market is followed by the later phase of advertising, which constructed market segments. The later phase is possible because the former has succeeded quite well in making us as consumers, which made a safe ground to divide us up again once our identity as consumers has irreversibly been achieved. Thus, it enables consumers to be homogeneous and at odds both at the same time.

Another aspect of advertising is the creation of "mechanical solidarity" (in Durkhemian sense), irrespective of class, caste, gender and culture. At this point, I recollect my experience while collecting data from the questionnaire. To quote an instance from the field survey (in markets), there were times when I had to survive on McDonald Burger's (The famous fast food chain) for the satisfaction of my intermittent hunger. There I came across a family (German couple with a child), in the restaurant waiting for their meals to arrive. To relieve myself off the stress, I attempted to initiate an interaction with the German child, but in vain. For the reason that the only language the child and his mother knew was German however, to my amazement a little later he (child) began to play with me with the help of the 'monster toy' he received in his McDonald family package. After some time there were giggles, gestures, playful signs and we both started imitating each other without using a single word of linguistics. After this, I wondered for a while and contemplated the whole process as a consequence of my study (consumer culture). Thereafter, I carried my research with conviction.

4.4. Reproduction of Consumer Culture through Advertisement:

We live in a consumer world. Everything one does and perhaps everything one becomes is based on consumption. Do consumers have any desire for a particular object? The homo economics of classical economic theory is somehow endowed with needs that direct
consumers towards objects that give them satisfaction. However, diversifying from the above, the point is that there has been a major shift in the needs and desire. The need is created in the minds of consumers. The question is what really does create a need? They shuffle, change and also transform every time a new commodity comes in the marketplace. Concurrently, who makes them reach to the consumers before they actually buy it? In its practice of advertising, it is a two way process of market responding to the expressed desires of the sovereign needs of the consumers vice versa an attempt to shape consumers’ behaviour through advertising. In its tendencies at least, a total dictatorship of the sector of production is practiced. It undermine the fundamental myth of the classical relations, which assumes that it is the individual who exercises power in the economic system.

On a hindsight, advertising and the consequential high levels of consumption allied to economic expansion, when juxtaposed get coupled with personal dissatisfaction, commodification of culture, decline of public and family life and constant fortification of the destruction of true and meaningful human relationships. The idea is to comprehensively examine the fundamental relationship between people and objects; not only in terms of how people objectify or attribute specific meanings to objects, but also how objects act to objectify and mediate them. This asserts the fact that advertisements leave a long lasting impression on human mind. They reach to the masses in the form of multiple media and influences them in multiple ways:

- Print advertisement activates dual purpose (Auditory and Visual) of sound figures.
- Radio Commercials activates single (Auditory) purpose.
- Television Commercial activates double purpose when the sound figure is both spoken and observed (Auditory and Visual).

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10 Ibid. p-38.
4.5. The Dual Role of Advertisements:

In the quest for wanting more and more (the American society) is visualized as consumerist. There can be multiple reasons for this above stated fact as the other factors like religion and culture were too weak or too superficial to serve as an antidote to consumerism. There was an emergent need to create mass markets for mass production of goods to transform into commodities in a consumer society. "We must keep Americans working, and to keep Americans working we must keep them wanting, wanting more than the bare necessities: wanting the luxuries and the frills that make life so much worthwhile (Cross 1993:264). Despite the ideology of self made man, incentive for hard work aggravated the American rags to riches saga.

In 1900, there wasn't any American magazine with a circulation approaching a million. By 1947, there was at least 48 Reader's digest, with a circulation of over 91/2 million in 1951, along with this, its competitors bombarded readers with incentive to work harder and harder in order to buy more and more goods. In this way, the 'work to-buy' ethic was generously instilled into the American consciousness and later to the world. These theories focused on three sometimes overlapping but generally negative themes:

- the cultural degradation of the experience of mass-production work,
- the market driven manufacture of needs for a vulnerable collective psyche; and
- the dynamics of emulation in mobile urban society.

In spite of these insights, these explanations betrayed the intellectual's efforts to grasp the positive meanings of consumer goods and their linkages to the use of time (Op.cit. Cross 1993:155). Even if we recognise the material and the psychological need for luxury, American class was still seen as a vanguard for mass consumption as compared to their counterparts in European subcontinent. Especially, "a traditional European bias in contradiction to that of the American preference of cultural superiority through consumerism is indeed a la (alike) Americaine" (ibid:156). Economic concentration, rapid transportation,
ostentations and the need for fantasy have always been the triggers of the fast developing consumer society. Money used in the exchange of labour and goods, freed the individual from personnel dependence on others and democratised social distinctions; but it did so at the price of intensifying the pace of life and at the cost of everyone becoming instruments to each other. Ever expanding commercial stimuli forced new stimuli and choices forced newly urbanised people into adopting a 'blase' (carefree) attitude towards a modern world that constantly assaulted the senses' (Simmel 1903:285-354).

In the above quote, one can understand that the average person doesn't understand what he wants in his day to day life. There are only impulses and the exterior of the trendy fashion that make him want something desperately. In this case, a person becomes a passive reactor to the conscious actions of the producers and the sellers. The vacuum often travelled by the advertisers to create the need by inducing the consumers to buy things they did not need before. The 'impulses that force him, in restless fashion, to seek this, that or the other, spring from his unconsciousness' (Op.cit. Cross 1993:285).

An account of emergence of money culture (Simmel 1978) also explored the extended status of the lower classes. Fashion combined the attraction of differentiation and change with that of similarity and conformity. Social distinction and identity were merged. Every fashion is essentially a fashion of a social class; that always indicates a social stratum which uses similarity of appearances to assert both its own inner unity and its outward differentiation (Op.cit. Simmel 1978:448). The dynamics of social emulation in a society extended the fashion game, where the lower classes imitated the rich. This in turn, forced elites to distance themselves from the crowd. In this way fashion confirmed and intensified in the democratic dynamics of consumption. Social change had produced frustration to which consumption was a form of adjustment. This certainly had a historical specificity embarking upon the impact of socio-structural change with the emergence of the false creation of the needs. The three observations to be made as follows:

➢ The new structural-psychological order overshadowed the existent social order,
Both the mass markets as well as the social conflict of distinction and emulation occurred which shaped the status; and

Furthermore, it leads to the evolution of the *nouveau riche* in the similar fashion.

4.6. The Culturally Constituted World of Goods:

The most important theme is the communication carried by advertisements of these goods to strengthen social relationships. As goods exchange hands as fast as changing one’s preference over designer shoes. There are two possible ways of indicating one’s pecuniary standing according to Veblen: conspicuous leisure and conspicuous consumption. The latter holds an advantage over the former in situations such as that of the big city and indeed anywhere where the cozy *gemeinshaft* (*community*), has been replaced by *gesellschaft* (*association*) in the whirl of ever-circulating strangers.

4.6.1. Goods Convey Messages:

Conspicuous consumption is to display to people who judge from what they see. Baudrillard and Bourdieu gave a similar idea of goods which are constantly in communication with each other and are not tied to a particular consumer alone. Even Bourdieu’s different classes use goods to elaborate their status in the social structure. Classes are in competition and goods are the weapons of competition, so there is a permanent tension between ‘distinguished’ goods and the popularisation which threatens their ‘distinguished’ status. Goods, then, are involved in endless definitions and definitions of social status (Op.cit. Corrigon 1997:17).

4.6.2. Goods Act as a Cultural Carriers:

Consumer goods have a significance that goes beyond their utilitarian character and commercial value (how the exchange value takes over the use-value). The significance rests largely in their ability to carry and communicate cultural meanings. Goods are an opportunity to make culture material and mobile especially when more and more time is mediated by the
purchase of commodities. It also hides the need to differentiate between consumer durables (goods we use in maintenance activities and leisure e.g. refrigerators, cars, hi-fi's, cameras) and consumer non-durables (food, drink, clothing, body-care products) and the shift of time in proportion of income spent in each sector (Featherstone 1991:16). The meaning rests largely on subjective parameters and flows in the social world aided by commercials, markets, and consumers themselves. In relation to the trajectory drawn between consumer goods and the instruments of mobility-they highlight the triple aspects of consumer goods such as: (Also depicted in the graph 4.3 below)

- Firstly, it focuses on the structural and dynamic properties of consumption via consumer goods consumed by all irrespective of age, gender and sex.
- Secondly, advertising, media and fashion acts as mediums in conveying the already constituted meanings to the collective social worlds of individuals.
- Thirdly, and most importantly the operation of such measures takes place in a localized coherent spaces (markets-also frames the basis of next chapter).

Graph 4.3 Goods Act as a Cultural Carrier

Source: Field Survey 2007-08
The evolution of the mobile culture is made up of goods carrying values (including the value of human life) and all social relations which readily serve as convertible currencies for the marketplace. The process becomes extremely difficult at times to catch sight of, let alone critique, the relations of production which underlie such processes of symbolic exchange. They determine how this world will be segmented into discrete, intelligible parcels and how these parcels will be organized into a larger coherent system. Henceforth, commodities are cultural carriers and are capable of building social relationship on their own. Though, cultural categories have no substantial presence or space in the world they organize. The members of the community are constantly acting in conformity with the blueprint of culture subject to heterogeneous categories in the world. Individuals continually play out categorical distinctions, so that the world they create is made consistent with the world they imagine. In a sense, the members of a cultural group are constantly engaged in the construction of the world they live in (Mckraken 1986:77-84).

4.6.3. Goods Constitute Cultural World:

Hitherto, we have not talked about the cultural meanings contributed by these consumer goods in our day to day lives. Though cultural meaning has organized the world and demonstrated the same through these goods. In the usual trajectory, cultural meaning moves first from the culturally constituted world to consumer goods and then from these goods to the individual consumers. The meaning that ultimately resides in consumer goods is the culturally constituted world. It shapes and specify categories of human community-the distinction of class, status, gender, age and occupation (ibid:71). Goods like any other material category allow individual to discriminate visually through a set of material set of distinction. For example, different products and services are diverse and any activity related to them is divergent as well. But what is the connection between a label and age and similarly with that of the gender and occupation? The young boys and girls adorning the vibrant, modern and sporty look is pushed by Reebok, Adidas and Nike-as the prototype of cool generations who is ever ready to face challenges. This can be studied in the table projected below 4.4.
Table 4.4 The Caption lines of Shoe Brands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shoes Brands</th>
<th>Caption lines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adidas</td>
<td><em>All day I dream about Sports</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reebok</td>
<td><em>I am what I am</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nike</td>
<td><em>Just Do it</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey 2007-08

Another example can be cited of adolescent preferences because they are not cost-effective and budget minded as compared to those of the adults. The younger generation is more consumed by the idea of consuming styles and flaunting designer brands when following the trends. They convey a message of being easygoing and carefree by wearing designer clothing; adopting certain kind of lifestyles (pub culture and night life); and abiding certain ideology as their way of life a la (alike) consumerism. Hence, cultural categories and material culture are mutually dependent as they are incapable of signifying one without signifying the other. On similar lines, is the clothing pattern that determines the gender and the class parameter of a particular individual. They are the most visible sign to communicate the ‘fragility of women’ to that of the ‘masculinity of a man’. Just as *Victoria Secret* lingerie is for females; *Jockey* depicts the inner wear for men. Thus, goods carry these encoded meanings either imbibed from the cultural categories or vice versa—will be the index of study.

4.6.4. Goods Act as Signifiers:

At times, how do they act as signifiers is also a crucial study dealt in detail. For example, to know a woman is at the top or holds a powerful position these indicators help to attain the idea of being pretty or masculine as inculcated in an individual. The distinction of Ms (miss) and cosmopolitan woman can be best utilised here as an exemplar of the modern woman and also an apparatus to clearly manifest how objects become the criteria to claim credentials. The *Ms woman* has ‘a passport; Tic-tac breath mints; a child’s drawing; calculator; keys; American Express Card [a sure sign of belonging to the consumer society];
perfume atomizer; gold charm bracelet; a crumpled $100 bill; Anacin; and a business card. ...' the cosmopolitan woman has a set of objects which partly overlaps the Ms woman but they are more obvious consumer objects as 'American express gold card[obviously a very serious consumer]; make-up brushes; pan American World air travel card; Hertz Rent-a-car card; compact disc(Mozart); portable Sharp calculator; motorcycle helmet; scuba diving mask'(Op.cit. Goldman 1992:137-140).

In this way, the above studies depicts that how this world is furnished with material objects that reflects and contribute to its cultural constitution. Though the categories are classical times and bear western imagery the message of cultural construction is very clear. This asserts the fact that everyone is different in terms of building one's own respective world. Simultaneously, thinking differently of oneself has their own reference groups ranging from peer groups to that of ideology. Sometimes, not consuming also becomes their slogan of style in proving their exclusivity hence, superiority. Consuming and using of products becomes an important tool in building one's own identity. Lifestyles are framed along consumption patterns of identity shopper, and one become what one consume. Which is why, this is so important in decidedly different ways. They make things visible that have been rendered so obscure under the promotional activities of consumer culture. The consumer freedom delivers manipulation in the hands of consumers to permit themselves the cultural categories they want to occupy.

Amidst all the above contradiction whether we should aim towards breeding good citizens or good consumers? Because the society is changing rapidly and the criteria for being an effective citizen is in sync with the global responsibility for sustainable development intimidating one to consume more in order to raise the national economy. In this case, we will be spending more to benefit our national economy? In this situation we can cite how the US president George W. Bush encouraged people after September the 11th to start consuming again.

12 Because there are plenty of opportunities for this kind of self-expression, contemporary consumers can also be considered to be 'identity -shoppers' who constantly renew and create their identity by shopping and buying
13 There is media reports and television coverage of the above stated fact.
Thus, the complexity amidst the sensitive situations is being rekindled through the instant gratification of purchases made in order to raise the economy as a whole. This business of concealing the relations of social power through the revelations of symbolic mediation transforms the purview of commodity fetishism as well. Though, this is not in the preview of this study, however, discussed in relation with the social medium of culture and its institutions.

4.7. Advertisements as Visual and Auditory Producers of Artistic Consumer Culture:

Interestingly, the Russian poet (and advertising copywriter), Vladimir Mayakovskuy (1926) was one of the first to express the idea that "great ad lines were poems". Since then, advertising and poetry have been viewed as allied arts with advertising considered as "the poetry of a consumer culture" (Schultze 1987:2-4). The alliance is historical as well as strategic with advertising supporting the poetry to persuade the audience. Thus, in this way, many value-added objects transformed into commodity-sign. These objects worked alongside the brands, logos to reconstitute capitalism with vigour.

4.7.1. As Cultural Economy of Signs:

The purpose here, is to divulge advertising as a reconfigured goal of persuading consumers to remember brand names, slogans, tag-lines and benefits. Imaginative copy sustains advertising's role as a "kind of dictionary constantly making new consumer signified and signifiers (Wallendrof & Anderson 1987:121-122). Advertising sound relies heavily upon sounds and figures to introduce a new culture to the consumers. The popularity and durability of such slogans suggest the influential role that advertising plays in shaping consumer culture. Many studies focus on advertisement's textual artifacts to analyse the sophistry they thought to deploy as a weapon of persuasion. In this approach, advertising is seen as a 'cultural economy of signs' (Goldman & Papson 1988:1) which creates 'structures of meaning' (Williamson 2000:12). The logic of capital (Bourdieu 1984) and structures of meanings of (Baudrillard 1987) rationalises the commodity logic manifest in the sphere of consumption.

14 This is what philosopher Jean Baudrillard called the branded commodity when provided a status to its use-value.
The perceived conservative nature of consumers when faced by a new style of advertisement clearly causes tensions between the creative impulse and consumer demand. Thus, to take into account the implicit negotiation within their cultural standards of their society is a prerequisite to appeal to consumers. The values and belief systems filters through everyday life of culture industry and dominates the logic of production of consumption. Traditional forms of enjoyment and leisure transforms its meaning into a new form of ‘wanting and recurrently wanting’ needs created by advertising\(^\text{15}\). Accumulation of goods has resulted in the triumph of exchange-value, keeping all aspects of quality life along with its flavor of novelty transformed into visual artifacts. This is to believe that being a part of popular culture, it deconstructs everything into material standards as the culture of the consumer society. Thus, relying heavily upon the Frankfurt school of how a commodity is autonomous to take up the secondary or ersatz use-value of goods. Advertising in particular is able to exploit this and attach images of romance, exotica, desire and so on and so forth.

The point is to analyze how does the advertisements shapes and reshape human minds? What sort of new social order does advertising brings to this world? Historically speaking, advertisement entered the field of artistic production as early as the arrival of commodities.

**4.7.2. As Product of Colonization Process:**

Consumer products were the result of industrialisation, which resulted from and was financed by colonisation. Colonies from around the world provided raw materials (cotton), work (slave labour), markets and an imaginary to exploit in early advertisement and PR(public relations) strategies, (on logos up to these days) as well as in art making and can be termed as an early form of “globalization.

Our day-to-day life became a constant struggle for brands, products and services. Individuals have become conscious of the products they use and utilize in their daily routine. They are identified and classified with the material goods, if not completely but partially.

\(^{15}\)Content analysis of the popular culture whereby the culture shrinks to the propagated commercials inspired by their very own traditional needs and wants. They are best described as the reflections of the society in a stipulated time slot in between the programmes.
Advertisement and the spirit of commodities entered the artistic domain in multiple ways. These artists worked hard from its inception to completion in the field of advertisement and visually enhanced the process of commodification. They did this in the form of crafts, when they weren’t yet called graphic designers. They did this also as photographers and as writers, today referred to as copywriters. Some people used their proper names, others already preferred fake names as it might prove better to work with pseudonyms. There were those who romantically chose to run away from this process of industrialisation, commodification and the arrival of mass products with its visual brand name logic. Dialectically speaking, even a movement like arts and crafts in England had the resistance to commercialism, industrial work. The product alienation underscored the logic of commodification by creating a refined taste that made class issues “class-ic”, i.e. something which from that end needed to be purchased for a high price. ‘Commodification’ refers literally, that were not previously commodified. Such a process was particularly characteristics of Britain in the second half of the nineteenth century. the commodity became and has since remained ‘the one subject of mass culture, the centrepiece of everyday life, the focal point of representation, the dead center of everyday life’ (Jackson:95-108). Hence, provided a boost to actively create consumers in shaping the meaning of goods they consume in various settings.

Graph 4.5. The Discount Styles

Source: Field Survey 2007-08

16 Used as a anthropocentric metaphor, similar to those of the Marx’s terms of ‘commodity fetish’ in the ‘Capital’.
As is presented above, the entire field redefined high cultural production as a subtext of new form of inexplicit culture that didn't need to work with company and product names. In contrast, by the end of the 19th century, not just newly arrived industrial products needed names, recognition, styles, changing prices, changing demands and competition but entire life styles were "up for sale".

This was inherently linked to the commodification process taking place at the advent of industrialization. It is the industrialization of imagery production. Imaging and reproduction technologies developed with the inflow of more investments in advertising department. The responsibilities increased for better quality in the wake of competition. All these works – whether shown on bill boards, on TV, on large scale public displays (e.g. Time Square) or in museums and galleries - have in common visual, textual and conceptual strategies that are informed by the tactics of advertisement and commodity displays. In return, advertisement as usual was more and more incorporating visual modes of operation as a significant medium to assert consumerism. In addition, this informal mode of understanding resides in agencies of knowledge, as folklore or cultural knowledge' to understand the modes of advertising’s effects. These forms of knowledge do not reside in any specific locale to be deployed by one set of codes but as part of advertising ‘cultural folklore’ has the capacity to circulate between heterogeneous groups and has mass appeal.

4.8. Advertisements and its Significance in Sociology:

Modern consumer culture cannot be misinterpreted as merely the ‘enemy’ that murdered ‘time’ by creating ‘false’ needs through modern manipulative technique such as ‘advertising’. Indeed, the origins of consumer society have been found in different periods from the Dutch embarrassment of riches in the seventeenth century to the American ‘gospel of abundance’ in the twentieth century....they correct the still common belief that consumer culture is merely the product of twentieth-century merchandisers (Cross 1993:4). This has also been discovered as an outcome of the colonization period as has been discussed earlier. To put it in a different light, the point is to discuss that the need for a particular object is created by creating a need to need, desire to desire and something more general that can be associated with the possession of any object. This can be explained from the advertisement of
an *American Tourister bags*, which acts as a signifier to take oneself around the world as the advertised line goes *go see the world* along with its utility or use value. The fact that they connect the individual to the object is completely produced; however, it is portrayed to be completely natural. There is semiotic approach amongst these objects in the world goods of consumerism. Henceforth, to analyse commodities in the advertising world, certain case studies are discussed later in this chapter.

4.9. The Socio-psychological Correlation of Needs and Wants:

Having said that, advertising brought values such as the value of the commodity to the consumer culture, one can now ask the question as to *where does this need for commodity comes from?* Does advertising affects us psychologically as well as economically? In the light of arguments one understand how advertising trains us to be preoccupied with our gender (being a *woman*, being a *man*). Each of us become, as it were, our own advertising agents. We become men and women who try to sell ourselves to each other, much in the same way as media tries to sell its products; and also as objects trying to appeal to the consumer's critical eye. Some studies (*Packard in the Hidden Persuaders & Key in Subliminal Seduction*) show us how our unconscious mind is manipulated by advertisers. Advertisements prepare a person to ‘want’ before he or she plans to buy. It can be illustrated as something like *Buy me (product) and you will overcome the anxieties I (product) have just reminded you about.* The result is that we become consumers, with fabricated needs. The advertised object may have little utility but they sustain themselves as tools of capitalism.

4.9.1. Needs are the Product of System of Objects:

Firstly, the truth is not that needs are the fruits of production, but that the system of needs is the product of the system of production. By a system of needs we mean to imply that needs are not produced at a time, in relation to their respective objects. Needs are produced as a force of consumption, and as a general potential reserve within the larger framework of productive forces (*Baudrillard 1988:42*). Campbell considers consumption a social event and not a mere economical process. These thoughts suggest that consumer culture’s needs for
commodity come from the society itself and its progression rather than from projects issued from economists brains. In other words, to assert that consumer culture is reconstructing itself by copying and reproducing what already exists somewhere else. Now, we move on to the conjectures drawn between needs and desires.

4.9.2. Differentiates Needs From Desires:

In today’s times, people place more emphasis on novelty analogous to the antiques of the ‘Victorian era’. For an instance, an *Armani jacket* will be as precious as the unique *Kashmere coat* one inherits from grandparents. The assumption that, these need neither came from an economical prospective nor from the media or advertising, it seems fair to try to answer the above question. To a certain extent, advertising influences choice but it also facilitates information regarding the various facets of a particular purchase to the consumer. At this point, Campbell is helpful by differentiating needs and desires. The needs can be satisfied as long as the consumer carries the money. On the other hand, the desires, defined as source of possible pleasure can not be satisfied. It can be understood with reference to Western Europe where you need status and money to get the products. As for example, in United Kingdom, the ‘Renaissance’ period (mid-16th century) made people more aware of the rhetoric of power: the great city of London was seen as the centre of fashion where most looks and mannerisms (both male and female) stemmed from the court. Straight from the way to behave elegantly to its way of wearing clothes, people were shown that ‘upper class’ flaunts in a specific way. In this sense, consumer culture represents here the notion that belonging to the upper class group definitely meant wearing silk or more generally endorsing luxurious desires.

This can well be taken as a yardstick for an upward mobility, wherein an individual coming from a Nobel family (16th century) can also achieve a Nobel self (appearance), demonstrated here by the middle class. They can also acquire ascriptive status to achieved status as has been demonstrated here. For obvious reasons, Campbell argues that advertising increases our desires but does not influence our needs. Thus, it necessarily facilitates the
audience of the availability of the product. Moreover, these desires relate not to what the object is, but to what it can be taken to be.

4.9.3. The Difference between Needs and Desire is Created:

Thirdly, to say that it is the feeling and the inner symbol of the need which holds significance. Just as is the case with the Protestantism is choice. The believer is put in a position in which he or she is able to choose whether or not he or she wants to pay to church, work, or prove to the church of deeds in order to enter heaven. Hence, the struggle between needs and wants is created and is not the consequence of the consumer culture. Truthfully, the only thing which can be bought from the commodity is its watching activity not the above ambiguous potential between needs and wants. The emphasis upon the material determinants extends its argument to come back to the specific character of contemporary commodity status. The exchange-value thoroughly exhausts the social powers of use-value (meaning), and blends meanings of both exchange-value as well as its use-value. It is not only advertisements or goods but all forms of mediated culture that provides the commodity status. They are captured and communicated within an economic circuit of exchange in which meaning are drained of its specificity or locality, only to be filled up again and recirculated as a spectacular and satisfying commodity-form. The analysis of these is indispensable for the assessment of the meaning consumers provide to the product. The guiding assumption is not that the consumers are manipulated by advertisement and seductive product and packaging design but these offer the consumer a range of possible interpretation (Nava 1997).

4.10. Advertisements and Semiotics:

Despite such diversity, the overarching concern here is the mutual entanglement of promotional signs in one domain with those in another, as a pervasive feature of our whole produced symbolic world. Importantly, it maps out this movement of exchange and entanglement not only in its semiotic capacities but in its economic dimensions as well. At the same time, media forms and generates the currency of symbolic exchange.
The merit lies in the way it importantly situates the affectivities of promotional culture within specific and shifting historical relations of politics, economics, and social identities. In some respects, it attempts a similar historical enterprise but with somewhat different results. Indeed, it is the work of advertisements to make things come alive; to ascribe meaning to otherwise inanimate objects and thus to transform commodity goods into social communicators. However, this ability is not solely the purview of advertising but is in fact the necessary requisite of human culture.

Out here in all objects even the most mundane must be mediated within a symbolic field in order to have any utility at all. Working through such separate collections; the specific brand collections of the Coca-Cola, Thumbs up and Pepsi campaigns; undertakes the ambitious project of examining the changing historical and spatial conditions of the production, distribution, and cultural significance of television ads. As such, the analysis offers a wealth of material which has never been compiled previously nor subjected to critical analysis. And yet distinction set forth a structure which not only contains the subject, but also its mode of analysis in the changing context by studying slogans. Thus, the table 4.5 below represents the culturally changed nature of the slogans adapting to the cultural elements of the nation. They reflect the connotations perfectly for their brand in a developing country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cocoa Cola</th>
<th>Thums up</th>
<th>Pepsi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yeh Hai</td>
<td>Taste the thunder</td>
<td>Yeh Dil Maange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youngistan meri</td>
<td></td>
<td>More (in Hindi, an Indian language) - My heart is asking for more!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jann</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanda matlab Cocoa Cola</td>
<td>Yehi Hai right choice Baby</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If its a cool drink, Its a Coca Cola</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey 2007-08
Thus, while raising such important questions as globalisation, the consumption practices of audiences, or the preferred meanings of advertisements, the analysis tends to falter while addressing the relations of power active within commodity culture. For instance, examining the ideology of affluence at work within television ads in the 1950s, and the reappearance of a cult of domesticity with their strictly delineated gender roles in 1980’s, excludes the specific historical context of those ideological forces outside of the content of the advertisement. Such oversight applies particularly to the spatial distinctions (private/public; leisure/work; consumption/production) which, in conjunction with commercial interests, allowed the organization not just the content of television ads, nor television programs, but the very scheduling of television itself. Perhaps a more apparent demonstration of the limits (or bias) is a propensity to raise received criticisms of advertising and commodity culture only then to dismiss them as ‘highbrow assaults upon mass culture’.

Despite these limitations, it is valuable in its breadth of historical subject matter. Moreover, this comprises a thorough and comprehensive corpus of published works on advertising, popular culture, consumer society, television, and audiences. What is advertising? Why does it exist? What purpose or function does it serve in the society we live in? Advertisement transgressed its boundaries to come into existence of the limits of society. Then how do we recognise something as a piece of advertising? How is advertising related to our society? How is it embedded in our economy? Thus, to invite one dialogically for the capitalism – advertisement acts as a tool to spread consumerism. Also to the extent that if it gets banned tomorrow our economy would suffer or perhaps collapse. Then, does advertising reflect and mirror social life or does it perhaps guide and control social life? Does advertising work? Or, perhaps we should better ask, how does advertising work? There are three important correlations discussed further to elaborate the thematic concerns of socio-psychological impacts of advertising.

4.11. The Socio-Cultural Interrelationships of Advertisement:

Advertising and consumer culture does not involve at least to some degree, lies and propaganda all the time. Indeed consumer culture, which relates to material culture can effectively take a physical aspect. There is a need to investigate the history of advertising, its
origin, evolution and world wide dissemination. "Although much of what advertising does is considered ignorable, the role of advertising in our society is so broad and its history so rich and so inextricably linked to our economic system and culture that an institutional approach to its study is absolutely necessary"17. Thus, the study aims to look at the social mechanisms and the values of our society that allowed advertising to continue to develop and to legitimise its existence.

Thereby, to throw light on the above objective, it is relevant to refer as to what happened during the 1970's, when punks wondered if the fashions and ideas coming from the "re-made culture" of post 1960's were really theirs. Their tough reaction (destruction without any purpose), their rebellion and anarchist claims were related to the urban problems of modernity where the punk population did not want to fit in18. Finally, one could also say that advertising and consumer culture neither manipulate (or brainwash) nor influence audiences. The reason for this argument is that, in a sense choice is given and consequently one considers that only the vulnerable are at risk. We may wish to celebrate advertising; we may condemn advertising; but we all try to be different at some point of time. To gauge upon the fact that advertising is a socio-cultural tool and not any other marketing guide, the study through its case studies analyses its three interrelationship as discussed below.

17 There is a n academic concern which makes it prerequisite to understand Advertising as a social tool and not like any other marketing tool to understand the consumers.
18 Borgatta Encyclopedia of Sociology. The explanation is in relation to the history of advertising of America.
4.11.1. Interrelationship between Advertisements and Culture:

Advertising is a cultural process, not a medium in its own right, although it uses different media forms to communicate. Advertising, in its simplest form, is the way in which the vendor or manufacturer of a product communicates with consumers via a medium or many different media. It can be as simple as a “For Sale” card placed on a supermarket notice board or a different agents of media.

Graph 4.7. The Signboard during Sale Season’s

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FOR SALE:
Desk
$100
Phone: 9876 5432
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Source: Field Work 2007-08

Advertisements are deeply embedded in our everyday lives yet we are rarely concerned about the messages and information we learn from this exposure. Advertisements confront us everywhere in our increasingly urban lives, from sidewalks to rooftops, radio to television & cinema halls so on and so forth. The social role of advertising in physical and virtual spaces throughout contemporary society is inevitable. Special emphasis is given to the historical rise of advertisements, the ideological content, the economic forces, the mechanisms of persuasion, and current social controversies over advertising effects on human behaviour and socialization. The basic tenet of the study is the way advertisers vis-a-vis consumers’ preferences subject to the influences of media. This has been depicted in graphical representation in 4.8 below:
The above analyses the foundations of the social institution, the cultural practice, and the economic force of advertising. Advertising as a social system is treated both as a process and cultural capital in itself. It studies how the institution functions, socially and economically and how it interrelates with the social system as a whole. Advertising has been celebrated by its advocates as the institution of abundance. This can also be seen as an 'awareness institution' after promoting unawareness for a while, on a critical note. Conversely on a defending note, one might say that much criticism of advertising is really misdirected criticism of capitalism.

Thus, the social psychology of advertising impinges on our social roles, aspirations and identities to become an active agency of our socialization as well. In this way, the entire process educates us in reference to gender, age, race and social class and so on. Individuals restructure their social self subject to the changes taking place in their environment with the help from and through the advertisement. People usually don't really identify with the 'other' outside the realm of this habitus, rather with the people who are the paid actors of these advertisements. This provides the foundation for modern advertising, especially, our concerns with owning and possessing private material goods. This entails both social
glamour and envy relating to the appearance and sexual desirability of being objects to someone else desire or desiring above all to be desired.

While analysing the models of the philosophy of advertising one comes across several questions such as: What type of epistemology is assumed and used in imagining advertisement? In reality, consumers with ideal imagination are able to conceive of commodity in such a way that it becomes an object of emotion to them. The central change appears to the shift from seeking pleasure in sensation to seeking pleasure in emotion—the advantage here is in the capacity of emotion to provide prolonged stimulation that can be coupled with a significant degree of autonomous control (Campbell 1987:69). We tend to see emotions taking control of us, rather than ourselves taking control of emotions. Hence, creates a desire of the 'other' than a mere feeling of the conception of the 'self'.

Therefore, the relationship between advertising, culture and commodity is apparently sufficient for the purpose of this study. Commodity is precisely an unaware object propagated by an 'alien' other than itself. Outside the structure of advertisements also, it is one's fundamental right to justify that it is in the realm of our freedom to choose between the products. Finally, we look at the politics and ethics of advertising as well. Thus, much of our established, socially constructed experience of reality is shaped, moulded and tailored by this institution. But, does these contemplations make advertising fantasy a surrogate for all our life experiences? We become what they intend to make of us and don't trouble ourselves beyond this psychology. Further, the study will examine the nature of and the controversy about subliminal advertising. Advertising re-assert all-permeating frame of reference for our very experience of reality. It deciphers the reality of our self, others and the reality of the very universe we live in. Nonetheless, underlying the fact that we have become consumer before everything else is in existence.

It is asserted that consumer culture in general and advertising specifically involves at least to some degree, lies and propaganda. Asserting the fact, it can be argued that advertisement influence audiences to some degree, for of course if this was not the case the media industry would not be viable. Nevertheless, to deconstruct the levels of advertisements related to brainwashing and propaganda pops a question: does advertising maneuver or
persuades? However, the answer lies not just with explicating the role which advertising plays in subsuming the use-value of objects (and people) with exchange value, but more importantly sign-value locating this relationship within the political economy of the commercial media (specifically television).

In this study, the idea is to shift to the ideological analyses which begin with the premise of socially created meanings than to be concentrated upon the specific economic logic of the commercial media. The key here, is the concept of selling audience time, which of course is the lifeblood of commercial television. Advertising is usually seen as a manipulating agency as a result of which people feel brainwashed and act as if they were forced. They behave in a certain way and have no reason behind it. In order to consider the wider issues of manipulating the mass population, one can refer to religious aspects. As a matter of fact, one who reflects on him or herself is capable to influence anybody as far as the potential target is reachable. Indeed, this example tends to prove that the aim of advertising does not only lie in the sale of products but about the consumer culture as well. However, a misinterpretation of what the screen conveys can easily lead to cynicism. For instance, if one need money to obtain specifically nice things that do not even exist in his or her country, then he or she is might act aggressively to possess it. This is central to an increasing emphasis in business practice of manipulating desire as against satisfying already existing needs. As the advertisements of Bmw's; Audi and other super luxury cars are still beyond the reach of Indians in spite of their developed economic situations. This can explain the troubles encountered by the restless consumers. Thereby, it is possible to shift from this assumption, and say that the commercial image reaches out to sell more than a service or product; rather it sells a way of thought process as well (consumer culture).

4.11.2 Interrelationship between Advertising and Consumption:

To deepen our understanding of why people consume in a way as they do. In traditional society, there were limited numbers of things to do as well as to consume. So the actual modes of consumption entered the consumer consciousness relatively faster. But in modern societies a general orientation to consuming comes naturally. Also, because what is
consumed is not fixed in quantity rather it changes rapidly. The crucial feature of the role of the modern consumer is the primary obligation to want to want under all circumstances and at all times irrespective of what goods and services are actually acquired or consumed (Campbell 1987:282).

Therefore, to assume that the above findings has nothing to do with the innate nature of an individual rather is a byproduct of the system of objects (Baudrillard 1988[1970]). This is to explain that needs of an individual is directly associated with that of consumption of objects. Henry Ford, who introduced the model T in 1909, probably would have died of a stroke if he had looked into a crystal ball seen in the May, 1973 issue of playboy, which featured a pictorial on sex and the automobile. In the photo-spread, one sees a woman apparently in ecstasy stroking a steering wheel. The editors of Playboy seem to think that the automobile was primarily invented to get sex off the porch swing and on to wheels (Op.cit. Altshuler & Regush).

Using primary research technique to study the subconscious mind it was evident that advertising would mass-produce customers just as the corporations mass-produced products. For that matter, Veblen in his critique of *nouvea riche* points out the mass circulation of newspapers, films, radio, rise of mass political parties and the special interest of the advertisers all anaesthetised the masses with what he called 'laughing gas'. This provides us with the question: is television used as a response to the consumer culture?

This works as a potential method for transferring meaning by bringing the consumer good and culturally constituted world together in one set of cultural frame of an advertisement. The creative director of an advertising agency seeks to conjoin these two elements in such a way that the viewer or reader glimpses an essential similarity between them. When this symbolic equivalence is successfully established, the viewer or reader attributes to the consumer good certain properties he or she knows exists in the culturally constituted world. The known properties of the culturally constituted world thus came to residue in the unknown properties of the consumer good and the transfer of meaning from world to goods is accomplished (McKracken 1990:74).
This aspect is commonly argued that contemporary culture signifies media culture. In such culture, meaning can no longer be understood in terms of a relationship between audiovisual signs (sounds and images) and the real world although the emergence of TV brought the real world right in front of the audience. The interaction that existed between advertising and audience had the effect of creating a profound change vis-à-vis the audiovisual landscape. By telecasting programs to people with disposable incomes (commercial breaks in between) one gets intrigued by the question: is TV bringing the real world to viewers? A program engineered to reach the widest range of TV viewers maximum the purchase of what common people use to experience in their life. This hyper real idea of an everyday life is a byproduct of the United States which provides the fact that meanings are therefore easily ascribed from the TV screen. In addition, knowing that one hour of TV gives more images than someone living next door would see in their entire life.

The findings of the study reveals that most meanings come from the media, especially from the TV. Here, advertising comes as a rescue. However, it is asserted that TV is responsible for bringing commercials which aims to entice the consumers to capture a certain kind of an image and have more choices at their disposal. Not to defy, that other agencies to be taken into consideration as well. Thus, despite the explosion of poster and billboard advertising especially in the 1890’s, the periodical remained the crucial site on which advertising developed its new discourse. The discourse was inevitably centered upon the way objects transformed itself into commodities with use-value as well. This value was not intrinsically related to the function of the product but was a measure of its cultural and symbolic worth. Hence advertising not only represented but produced the value of the commodity by increasing its consumption.

The fact that, it was through advertising that this eroticism of the commodity was displayed. Historically by mid-1880’s, the discourse of visibility and desire dominated the representations of the commodity on posters, billboards and the advertising pages of the

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19 Baudrillard Jean 1988Hyper reality. The shift from the real to the hyperreal occurs when representation gives way to simulation.
women's magazines as asserted (Beetham 1996:8), and advertising developed its new
discourse. In Indian firms this led to clashes between the older generation and the new about
the place and scope of advertising. As was stated before, advertisements played a major role
in shaping one's individuality as well as gendered identity. The gender gap has narrowed
down apparently and so the question of advertisement playing a key role in making one feel
masculine (powerful) and the other feminine (petite and soft). The study focuses on this key
concern as an area of further investigation.

4.11.3 Interrelationship between Advertisements and Gender:

There have been rounds of discussion in academia relating to commodifying gender
and the usage of bodies as a tool to accelerate sales in advertisements. Generally for its
negative reasons for feminisation of commodities. Though, recent studies have also raised the
issue of masculinity as controversial. The April 1906 issue of *Outing Magazine* featured
more than twenty-seven ads (advertisements) which were obviously intended for men such as
racing tires, tobacco, beer, camping, fishing, hunting supplies, and most of the ads were
explicitly targeted to men. For example, one “Postum Coffee” ad featured a man hanging
from a coffee cup and recommended itself to “those who appreciate strength and health”,
while a “Gillette Razor Blade” ad described itself as made of a “steel of neolithic hardness”.
Another ad praised “President Suspenders” for allowing men the freedom to move about
without worrying about losing their pants, and ad for “Deviled Ham” described itself as ideal
“for the hungry (male) camper and fisherman”. Numerous ads for underwear, men's hosiery,
and coat shirts showed happy men wearing their products, while tire ads often showed
excited men “racing” down a hill in a sports car (Swiencicki 1998). In Indian context, the
advertisement that reminds of similar fate is that of the *Beer* – where men enters the bar and
hit the target on the wall and asks for the advertised beer. The backdrop features close up of a
huge and muscular man showing strong biceps symbolising that only this beer could have
made him strong masculine. The study demands a detailed analysis been made during the
compilation of this thesis. For a better understanding, the subject is further sub divided to
study ‘masculinity’ and ‘feminity’ in advertising.
4.11.3.1 Advertisement and ‘Masculinity’:

The study of advertising is not extensive enough to allow for sweeping generalisations regarding the degree to which each sex (male and female) is targeted by advertisers. Though, it does uncover enough evidence to suggest that early twentieth-century advertisers were not addressing a primarily female audience. Thus, an important question becomes why have so many scholars missed such data and gone on to describe the advertising (and consuming) audience as “feminine”? Have these advertisements contributed to feminism or was a blow for feminism? Masculinity though, is less traveled path regarding the studies on consumer culture and more specifically its medium (advertising)? The question which is relevant here is that when and how the position of men transformed from performers to consumers? After all mountain of evidence in the form of early twentieth-century marketing journals, magazine articles, and recent women’s history collectively testified the fact that women were society’s main consumers until some point in the mid-twentieth century. Consequently, the remaining problem is to trace the process whereby, women were ideologically society’s prime consumers. This establishes the fact that man is always the producer and woman as consumers. Because so much of the 1920s and early 1930s advertising space in marketing journals were paid by women’s magazines, that advertisers and marketers were constantly reminded of the enormity and importance of the female consumer.

Masculinity pertains to societies in which social roles are clearly distinct i.e. men are supposed to be assertive, strong and focused on material success whereas women are supposed to modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life. During the late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century women had been exhorted to “Go out and Buy’ in the United States” in Britain and in Germany a little later. This period was a prelude to the two world wars of the twentieth century. During this women mothered children in the home and went shopping as men went to paid work outside the home, and then went to war to kill and be killed. The modern period was marked by this gender divison between mothering and consumption on the on hand, and, production and making war on the other. The post-modern has been by comparison a period of peace in western Europe, North America and Japan -this
has allowed a change and even men became consumers (Bocock 1993:96). By the last decades of the nineteenth century shopping in large department stores had become an important activity outside the household for middle class women.

In twentieth century, on the other side, discourses on heterosexual masculinity lost its significance and restricted the use of men’s cosmetics under numerous grooming products called as toiletries rather than, cosmetics or beauty products. This debunked the meaning in itself and infused a cultural standard that real men do not use cosmetics. Moreover, such an idea is ubiquitous in American popular culture and women’s history-men were not major consumers since most buying and shopping were done by women. However, most of the consumption and consumerism has been shielded since the terms “consumer” and “consumer goods” have been constructed in such a profoundly gendered fashion. Between 1900’s, and 1970’s more men in the twentieth century began to live alone, leaving wives and children, sometimes to live with other women...consumption hence became essential to many men’s need of who they are (ibid:97).

The study aims to examine how and why such information has been overlooked by most scholars of gendered consumption and advertising. Consumption has entered into the unconscious sense of identity of men and women in form of capitalism. Conceptions of masculinity in the second half of the twentieth century almost completely changed subject to new patterns of consumption. There are certain assumptions to be drawn for the above study as follows:

- Initially, women were the “primary” consumers (i.e., purchasers);
- Most consumption (i.e., utilizing goods) occurred within; or on behalf of the home and family; and sustained a passive receptor of power as consumers.
- Male consumption was a marginal activity at best as producers but later developed equality at par as consumers.
- Masculinity vis-à-vis Feminism.
4.11.3.2. Commodity Feminism in Advertising:

According to the accepted wisdom on gender and advertising, the target of advertisers in the early twentieth century was almost always female. Marchand's study of American advertising between 1920 and 1940 suggests that "the overwhelmingly male advertising elite [perceived] was engaged primarily in communicating to masses of women" and describes early advertising as a "seduction of women by men, in which women would be addressed as yielding objects to the powerful male subject forming . . . their desires" (Bowlby 1987:114).

The traditional concern of feminists with the inclusion of women in the public sphere is expressed in sociology as a major critical attack, who have taken 'female', and especially 'female body' as the model for the whole range of products to be advertised. Although gender role portrayals in advertising have been extensively studied in Western and other Asian countries, very few such analyses have been done in India. There is an excellent collection of no fewer than 508 advertising images of the 1970's in Goffman's book on Gender Advertisements. The study does a systematic analysis of the role portrayal of men and women in Indian television advertising. Of which, 128 male role portrayals and 196 female role portrayals are analyzed (content analysis) for the years 1996, 1999 and 2002 and showed that Indian advertising depicts men and women in traditionally assigned roles of the culture. In several respects role portrayals in Indian advertising are different from the West but similar to other Asian countries. The fact arises from the assumption about the nature of biological differences between the bodies of men and women and their influence on their active roles they play in their respective society. At the heart of this issue is the recurring question of biology and society: to what extent are the differences between male and female bodies biologically determined, or socially and culturally constructed? With the apparent exception of a few unusual cases, this process of biological change is unknown to men. Much is generally agreed but as feminist scholars argue the fact of this bodily change is no justification for the elaborate construction of personal and social distinctions between men and women which characterize stereotypes. Whilst biological differences in the reproductive functions of men and women are clearly evident, the question still reminds of social

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interpretations placed upon this difference. Thus, in which way the perceptions and inferences draw differences from the varied social discrimination portrayed between genders?

Referring to the Indian context as well there are various advertisements depicting women as the sole maker of household chores and husband as the head of the family. For instance, in the advertisement of a room fragrance-women is pictured as the octopus with the animated happy human (female) face managing multiple jobs with the help of its multiple extensions of octopus like handling the baby in the cradle, reading a book, cooking in the kitchen, wiping the floor so on and so forth. Thus, it is quite interesting to understand the depiction of modern woman as a super woman who's a perfectionist. Otherwise, they do maintain a dignified silence when used as model for commodifying products and endorsing them. There has been a relative study by Goldman which acts as a reminder that commodity relations turn the relations of acting subjects into the relations between objects. The process of turning feminism into sign values fetishizes feminism into an iconography of things. ‘When advertisers appropriate feminism, they cook it to distill out a residue-an object: a look, a style. Women’s discourses are thus relocated by named objects like Hanes hose, Nike shoes, Espirit jeans. Sign-objects are thus made to stand for, made equivalent to feminist goals of independence and professional success. Personality can be represented, relationships achieved and resources are acquired through personnel consumer choices’ (Goldman 1992:131). On the other hand, some readers may remember the launch of Revlon in 1973 of Charlie perfume, which depicted a young woman who did not needed a man to give her a meaningful existence (ibid:134-135). Thus, this and many more can be taken as a significant illustration to depict the rise of feminism studies in which an ideal state can be attained by consuming the right thing. As described above, in Indian context there is a modern woman who plays multiple roles and so is constructed visually in a striking manner in the advertisements. They wear nice dresses and endorse products that increases the sales. One such advertisement, is that of Nima Rose Soap, wherein pretty ladies come and the background music echoes. There was this X perfume also, where everytime they showed the erotic females running after the boy because of the deodorant. Thus, this and many more are exemplified on the small as well as the big screen for popularising the product.
4.11.3.3. 'Masculinity' Versus 'Feminity':

This section of this study revolves around feminism vis-à-vis masculinity as it is important not to conceptualise either man or woman as passive target consumers. From the 1970s feminist scholarship has played an important role for bringing the concept of 'body' back into sociology. Putting it differently from the point of view of advertisers, feminism is something that is not so much a social movement with particular politics and ideology and a desire to change the world, but a state that can be attained by consuming specific goods. Feminist, for them is just another consumer category and abiding certain objects signifying 'feminist lifestyles' and that are required. In this period of modern capitalism the binary relation of production and consumption was quite strongly gendered; production for man and consumption for women (ibid:95). The above connotation is true to assert the autonomy of women in the era of consumerism.

The consumption of commodities was considered to be more powerful situation vis-à-vis the passive activity to produce consume-and was no less an apparatus to get involved in the process of emancipation of domesticity. Subsequently, women discovered a whole new range of meaning merely by possessing certain objects of desire inheriting the symbolic significance along with the use-value. As Williamson describes, the conscious chosen meaning in most people's lives comes much more from what they consume than what they produce' (Williamson 1986:230).

Generally, men in advertising are made to appear taller than women and this can be best seen when the reverse is true: in Goffman's illustrations the men seem almost not only subordinated in social class status but also thoroughly costumed as craft-bound servitors who-it might appear-can be safely treated totally in the circumscribed terms of their modest trade (Goffman 1979:28). Exemplified more in detail in Bowlby's comment as follows, "That this should have been practically available to the bourgeoisie lady who marks a significant break with the past: department stores were in fact the first public places-other
than churches or cathedrals—which were considered respectable for her to visit without a male companion. But this also signalled at another level as stepping out from domestic bounds.  

Thus advertisers have handled the challenge in a dual manner in which at one side men are subordinated and woman are constructed as independent and in control but to more serious concerns also labeling women as segregate by elaborating in their roles. Men have become as much a part of modern consumerism as women. Their construction of a sense, who they are is accomplished as much through style, clothing, body image and the right look as is women. This type of consumption is not so much as a trivial real life but means of establishing an identity. Although, “consumption built around the human body- its attractiveness to the self as much as to others: its sexual and erotic appeal: its use as a means of expressing a sense of identity-has become a process in which desire is embedded, in which major meanings are located” (Lash and Freidman 1992:56).

In reference to Indian Society there have been quite remarkable ads over the period of time as well. Emami Fairness Cream have made a positioning triumphant which won it Rs.50 crores worth of sales, a territory which was not earlier traveled had made its mark in the market. The advertisement portrays—the celebrity (Sharukh Khan endorsing the product) presenting a darker skinned boy a fairness cream for impressing ladies who have earlier rejecting him. Now with the help of the fairness complexion, he gains confidence as a result of the cream and finally wins his ladies heart. On similar lines, Lux—the super cool beauty soap advertisement very recently depicted a male celebrity bathing in a bath tub filled with water mixed with rose petals (a launch of its new soap, targeting for both male and female) and all the girls, (the former ambassadors of Lux) surrounding the tub beautifully, leaves no scope to motivate the prospective consumer to get beautiful merely by buying the soap. As a consequence, this breaks away the image and the barricade of only women using it to enhance their sexuality and beauty but the erotic depiction of a male bathing acts a signifier to aggravate its sales to both the sexes. The launching line of Lux in 1929—“Filmy Sitaron ka saundrarya sabun”(the shop of film stars) continues till 1980’s, and all this while the brand

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struck the celebrity endorsement. Finally, also deconstructed the myth and helped in the
construction of the iconic image of gender equality as well. The major contribution is how
the meanings given to the body are socially constructed by those who are in a position to
create ideas about the body and put them into practice. In this area many sociologists have
been influenced by the work of Michel Foucault, who treats the body as the subject of power
and discipline, especially the power and disciplined knowledge of the experts in this context.
Although the studies do marshal up considerable evidence to support the arguments, all are
methodologically flawed in that nearly all the ads cited are taken from either T.V. or
respondents perceptions of advertisements in this study.

4.12. Deconstructing Advertisement Deciphering Reasons to Buy:

When we look around, we will find our world filled with advertising on huge
billboards in the streets, on the pages of magazines, between the tracks played on the radio,
on the walls of the subway, on the pages of internet sites, at the bottom of emails, on the
backs of cinema tickets, on the shirts of football players so on and so forth. It seems that any
surface that will hold long enough to be read is considered a potential advertising medium.
The fact that there is so much advertising everywhere-it is part of our daily cultural
experience and becomes almost impossible to avoid it. Therefore, the study of advertising is
not just about what manufacturers say to consumers, but it about how it is said. Advertisements can have an influence far beyond a simple message about a product. Advertisements can introduce characters to the public imagination, make icons out of actors, have everyone repeating a catchphrase- coffee or toffee(ad for coffee toffee), Pappu to pass ho gaya (Dairy Milk chocolate) and so on and so forth- get audiences arguing over plot points or waiting for the next instalment, and generate news stories.

Advertisements often play on cultural standards on their own and occupy space in the
minds of the consumers. This, of course, is an advantage for the advertisers. The Adidas ad,
featuring David Beckham, made headlines as the largest ever piece of outdoor advertising in
the UK, possibly the world, in May 2002. Fort Dunlop is a Birmingham landmark, and can
be seen from the M6 (which is often completely jammed with traffic) although it was
claimed that the ad could be seen from up to a mile away on a clear day. The ad itself was
larger than a football pitch, with the image of Beckham's face measuring 20m x 20m (cue lots of Football Bighead headlines from the UK tabloids). In addition, there was a huge (sorry...) impact on the local environment, the ad generated press coverage around the world on account of its size. The effects of advertising promises to fulfil the crises in the consumer's life which is created artificially. This in turn transforms the individual into a social self. This notion of the individual as the object of continual and harsh social scrutiny underscored the argument (Ewen & Ewen 1976[1920]:34).

One is always being observed into the ways others look at us. Thus, one can see how the discussion is beneficial for the advertisers subject to the established notion of the theory of social world as stated above. The fear always surrounds us at every moment and in every way the world scrutinizes us. This provides social movements displaying appropriate commodities by promoting products that provides visible evidence that one is living the 'feminist' or 'green' lifestyle'(Corrigon 1997:74). Most advertising today is about communicating the complex range of messages about a product known as branding. A brand is a product or range of products that has a set of values associated with it that are easily recognized by the consumer. A brand is distinguished immediately by its name or a symbol (e.g. the Nike swoosh, the adidas three stripes). As consumers, we tend to be more familiar with the whole brand, as opposed to individual products. The process of advertising allows us to associate values with products that may not have a real connection to them. For instance: Nike has always selected rebellious athletes to promote its shoes, the 'bad boys' of basketball, tennis & football, and therefore the Nike brand has connotations of rebelliousness, of doing whatever it takes to win.

The intent of advertising is to associate 'self' with 'commodity self' and to cement feelings of positive affect to brands. These texts are recognizable to viewers as ads however, they produce texts that are sufficiently compelling to viewers who are motivated to decipher them. Still, the ads cannot mean anything on their own. Ads require viewers to complete their meaning no matter how much they strive to make the decoding process an identical but advertisers can never achieve an absolute equivalence between the encoding and the decoding processes.
Both advertisers and the consumers apply a social grammar -- a shared set of propositions about how commercials are structured and how the narrative of a commercial will unfold. If we are all consumers of the same products, then we are all same culturally, no matter where we originate from. Since most Americans have been watching commercials since they were two years old, recognizing and making sense of ad messages usually takes place at a non-reflexive level. The grammar of the ad remains unspoken though not necessarily out of mind, it is out of sight. Referent systems designate widely shared systems of knowledge and clusters of meaning. For the ad to work the consumer must validate the sign attaching a signified to the signifier. Supported by narration, music, the relationship of each image to others in the commercial, and the consumer's own knowledge of the referent system from which the signifier is drawn, the consumer is guided through this validation process\(^\text{23}\). In this context, advertising attempt to manage understandings and its effects through self-promotional rhetoric about their creative skills and commercial competencies. In this way, 'the extremely weak base of advertising from a material point of view, creates a context which must be carefully managed by means of linguistic and other symbolic means' (Alvesson 1994:535–63). Thus there are various illustration and case studies for the mentioned relationship between consumption and advertising.

4.13. Structuring Consumption through Advertisement: Case Studies:

An effective advertisement, being processed stirs the prospective buyer's emotions and enlightens him or her about the brand. Emotional elements are the surface means used in advertisements to energise (stimulate) the decision makers purchase motivation (Rossiter and Percy 1987:208-09). This is an effective method of public relation and communication for several reasons. Emotional and cognitive responses have been found to increase positive attitude to advertisement. It is economical making it possible to establish public relation message to a large number of readers at a relatively low cost per reader. It can be highly selective and concentrated on a particular segment of the public such as stockholders, suppliers, or opinion leaders. Intensive community coverage may be secured through the use of local newspapers, radio, or television advertising. The advertiser can control the timing

\(^{23}\) http://it.stlawu.edu/~global/pagessemiotics/menuframesem.html 15 Jan 2009 1430hrs
and space given for a public relations message by buying a certain amount of time on the air, or space in a specific article or paper for instance vaccination, and in several public welfare.

In this way advertising is an accurate mirror for society and convenient means of tracking social structure or patterns of identity. Conversely, advertising is seen as a key driver of social change in capitalist societies, actively refiguring consumption patterns. In this framework, the analysis of advertising is thought to unveil the logics of capitalist expansion and the power of capitalist ideologies. In both cases, advertising is used as a hermeneutic device to abstract and simplifies certain commercial and discursive practices. During our fieldwork of unstructured interview sessions, the study finds out the most popular advertisement and its reasons. The entire exercise was to analyse the multiple loyalties of a prospective consumers towards the product they buy. The reasons such as an advertisement is observed because of the commodity it endorses or they get to know about the commodity due to its advertisement. In the process, few advertisements discussed with the respondents were chosen, popular for whatever reasons such as its script, rhyming, cause it presents so on and so forth. Few of them have found relevance in this study as follows:

4.13.1. Case Study I: Advertisement of Tata Tea:

There is this Indian advertisement of Tata Tea: which is very remarkable in the sense of acting as a signifier in a broad sense. This claims to awaken mass consciousness through the sip of a tea. The advertisement revolves around door to door election campaigning of contestants. The contesting candidate along with his delegates comes across a young man to ask for the vote for the legislative seat, he is contesting for and is trapped answering questions of a young educated voter sipping tea (who happens to get enlightened by sipping Tata tea). The picture is a town area in the background with the contestant joining hands to everybody comes across the voter. story is narrated below:

Candidate: Please Vote...for me!
Young man: What is your experience?
Candidate (Humorously): For what?
Young man: What is your experience as in building dams, bridges, schools etc.
Candidate (sarcastically): Are you trying to take my interview?
Young man: Yes you have applied for the job!
Candidate's assistant (shocked): Job?
Candidate: What job and (takes the tea offered by the young man)?
Young man (boldly): desh ko chalane ka job sir? (The job to run the nation sir?)
Candidate coughs.....feels nervous staring each other.

Thus, the content analysis of this particular ad was very interesting as it offers an academic insight. This has also made it popular. Firstly, it depicts how the confidence is instilled along with the wisdom and patriotism for the nation. The scene also depicts the campaigning of the local administrative candidate who's almost stumped by the questions of a young voter. Apparently the entire advertisement depicts the awakening consciousness of mass by merely consuming Tata tea. Hence, the tea act as a signifier to all those unawakened voters of the nation. And as a metaphor to revive consciousness and wake up and vote for the nation. Behind all this-lies the ultimate truth to promote Tata Tea bringing in light all the nationalistic loyalties and along with it the responsibility. This year, this advertisement also became popular for its mass appeal for the 2009 elections and the media reports states that it has even succeeded by drawing maximum young voters.

4.13.2. Case Study II: Soft Drinks and Mobile Network:

Man has always been taken with the pattern through which the things of this world move.....pattern is not a poet's invention, language moves though with anyone who says, "willy-nilly", or 'see ya later , alligator," or who joins in any football yell.... Or who repeats any of a number of good political slogans (Firat and Venkatesh:283-376). The idea dates back to Aristotle, who pointed out that humans instinctively enjoy harmony, rhythm and meter. Advertisers grab your attention with funny, or serious, statements and pictures. The slogans are aimed at being catchy so that you will remember them, and keep repeating, so you can remember to buy it. They aim at getting you to at least look at their article to see a picture or name of the product they are trying to get you to purchase. Sometimes advertisers
use just the product itself trying to get you to notice it, and maybe if you see it in the store you will know what it is. So word of mouth was a reliable source, as well as the newspapers, radio, and television. Vocal advertisement came first; visuals the second as in some of the soft drinks advertisements of Thumps up; Cocoa Cola and Pepsi, with their particular slogans they have been able to capture your attention along with their celebrity involvement as depicted in graph 4.9.

Graph 4.9. Soft Drinks and Mobile Network

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Softdrinks brands</th>
<th>Great ad lines</th>
<th>Celebrity endorsing it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thumsup</td>
<td>Taste the thunder</td>
<td>Akshay Kumar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocoa cola</td>
<td>Thanda matlab Cocoa Cola</td>
<td>Aamir Khan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepsi</td>
<td>Yeh hai right choice baby-youngistan meri jaan</td>
<td>Shahrukh Khan, Deepika Padukone, Ranbir Kapoor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Mobile Network commercials:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hutch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airtel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The commercial key lines not only evokes hilarity on the part of agency creativity, the peers and the clients but influences majority by influencing their purchase decisions. Keeping in mind the sensitivities of the global standards the Airtel advertisements have been made.

Illustration: In this Airtel advertisement—there have been different shades from a scene where kids are playing across the border lines when their balls cross the borders. Soon the
child at one side of the fence, helps the other child to cross the border and play together playing from either side of the bordering fence for a while. Then the other ad is related to a NRI (Non Resident Indian) grandson, who expels courage to make their parents and grandparents talk on phone after years of the no communication gap between them. Later, he gets friendly with their grandparents, (shown to the audience) depicted as the grandson is playing chess on phone while leaving his native place in the train. In the other example, a contractor-engineer father, who is shown as busy and is on duty (offsite at the construction site). His daughter picks up the phone at her home and call up her dad on his Airtel cellphone. She was obviously getting bored so she asks her dad to play with her for which her dad readily agrees (gesture symbolising the traits of a good father). He, squeezes little time out of his construction site, comes at one side and watching the sky instructs her on phone to draw a dolphin on the sky by locating the stars in a dolphin shape-this all is also shown to the audience. And, here the viewers see the digital lines connected on the sky drawing a fish thus, entails a quality family life by buying a Airtel connection with the punch line that blinks on TV screens-stay connected(in times of crises as well). Therefore, the entire sentimental drama was to instil the idea and create the need to talk and problems will fly away to far off lands. So stay connected as you just need to speak out.

Illustration II: In Hutch-Vodafone, the concept of a puppy (a metaphor for network)—who follows you everywhere you go in different directions. The Idea brand is another company who provides certain great ideas in critical times of confusion. Their brand ambassador Abhishek Bachaan (a Bollywood Star) sometimes becomes a guide and communicates via mobiles messaging and clears all doubts. At other times, he is the Mukhia (leader) of a village and settles the caste disputes by denouncing everyone’s names and substituting their identity of caste association to numbers. Hence, he introduces their phone numbers as their identity. Oh what an idea Sirjee—comes the punch line of the ad. In later scene, every one then put up the plate of numbers instead of names and erodes the differences of identity that exist with their names and solves the problems. Thus, with the peculiar tunes of their own they get successful in occupying their mental space in the market.
4.13.3. Case Study III: Nescafe a Coffee Drink:

Nescafe, is one ad which also mingles tradition and modernity in a father-son duo, the son is a Radio jockey-returns home in midnight which is quite unconventional for his father. After all this, the son who was earlier being scolded and was deconstructed to a nocturnal owl for his not so well understood profession suddenly gets appreciation for his commendable working late in the night and responding to the phone calls of late sleepers- merely after sipping a Nescafe coffee (which the son prepared for his father). Again the jingle-Nescafe- signifying the end of generation gap and even getting appreciation for his commendable job of helping people in the night. This all begins merely by sipping together.

4.13.4. Case Study IV: Advertisements of Banks:

Then there are categories of advertisement which target families for their holiday destination. Especially after a large chunk of Indian getting heavy paychecks, the problem arises with them to invest it. At such a scenario, the pool of private banks comes to ones rescue. The three most interesting advertisements are of HSBC; Max New York Life Insurance and CANARA bank.

Illustration: Max New York Life Insurance

First scene, there is couple and their infant kid by the river or pool side and the infant intends to jump however, his father instructs him not to do it and he stops. Later, he grows up, marries and becomes a husband working in the corporate sector. There his Boss banters at him for some reason (mute in the scene) and he is thinking to kick off the job but suddenly meanwhile the scene makes him imagine his pregnant wife- and he stops and listens quietly and starts working again. The third scene, shows him as a middle aged man entering in a Mercedes showroom, almost settling to buy one, but during the trial he again imagines the responsibilities of his school kids- and there he stops again and comes back home. Fourth scene, shows him as an old man driving a small car going back home with his wife after leaving his grown up children at airport. He comes across the same riverside-stops the car
and take a dive in the water. Nevertheless, the caption pops of investing in *Max New York Life Insurance* which liberates you from all these sacrifices and yet delivering all your responsibilities. Thus, the entire documentary was playing on to the compromising trap of a human being and how advertisement like *Max New York Life Insurance* is the way to make you feel happy along with your responsibilities fulfilled.

**Illustration: ICICI Bank**

Similar is the advertisement of *ICICI BANK*, where again in different version a family of three—mother daughter and father are shown in first scene planning for their future. But for some reasons the intellectual wife laughingly makes his husband understand the hardships of life (all scenes are in gestures), so that he doesn’t dream high for his family. The dream of their daughter becoming a doctor, her dreams of going for a world tour etc. And, dramatically the discourse creates magic and the wife in the next scene is gifted with a *ICICI* policy by her husband for their future benefits. The caption follows the scene wherein, wife blesses husband *Jeete raho* (Long live as the message conveyed to the investors that ICICI would guarantee the life). Thus, in the end, they all get back to work, acting wisely for the benefit of their families.

**Illustration: Canara Bank**

The third is about a young woman asking the rules of cricket match—asks her colleague the difference between a *googly* and a *doosra*. The scene shown as she takes her passion of cricket home, setting the field on her dining table with tomatoes, potatoes and other vegetables substituting for players. She also reads newspapers to learn more about the game. After the theory, follows the practice. Now the young woman is acting as a umpire in the neighborhood cricket match with kid on the field. As an intern she follows but raises both the hands signalling it as sixer rather than one for declaring the batsman out. Not learnt properly yet, she decides to follow magazines and listen to the crowd outside a shop where they exult after a wicket falls. Then she plans to get dressed up asking a mute storekeeper for a pink jersey for girls instead of the blue jersey of Indian team. Finally she makes a casual
remark while her husband is engrossed in watching the match "should have played a square
cut". Her husband curiously shocked enough to know when she started following what he
loves. She replies "Just recently". Then they both break into smiles, when he corrects her
"it's a square cut and not slice". The next visual shows an old Canara bank signboard being
replaced by the new, radically different one. The voiceover adds "We all change for our
loved ones".

The entire exercise is to study advertisement in relation to the consumer culture of
contemporary times. In today's times everything is consumable from brands to cinema to
culture, however in different perspectives. This leads to the question: what do advertisers
answer as a response to the culture and the use of TV? In such a culture, meaning can no
longer be understood in terms of relationship between imagined and the real world. Thus, if
the above practically is the definition of the consumption according to the assumption made
earlier, the act of consumption, which seems necessary is not an act of manipulation, signs or
anything else. If the answer is yes, with regards to Baudrillard's, then, by consuming, we
merely follow the system of objects. Advertising does not merely produce discursive
currencies for the articulation of individual or collective identities. Neither should advertising
be seen as a super-efficient capitalist machine as its practices are more contingent, hesitant
and reactive than commonly supposed.

Summing Up:

Within the academic literature on consumption a countertrend has emerged which
focuses on a variety of positive aspects. Much work on consumption has been criticized for
its relentless negativity, the tendency of its authors to adopt a God-like position that only
they truly understand what they are observing, and a propensity to take an elitist view toward
consumers who continue to consume and enjoy these products as well as adopting a positive,
even reverential, view of the corporations which produce them. Academics are taking note of
these criticisms and offering more balanced perspectives on consumption-related issues.
Modernity has a long history, but amongst the most significant social processes identified
with rapid socio-economic and technical change. Since the nineteenth century the emergence
of markets works as an epitome of consumer culture. The marketing and consumption of mass-produced consumer goods involves an unprecedented exploitation of visual images of the body, ranging from photography and the cinema to computer-mediated forms of communication.

To conclude, consumption is a social relationship that is a dominant relationship in our society. At a time when for many of us the meaningful change seems to elude our grasp, the question of consumption has immense social and political implications. To establish popular initiative, consumerism must be transcended which is difficult but central task facing all people who still seek a better way of life. Thus, answering the question yes or no, advertising and consumer culture are responsible for the creation of false needs is the same as answering the question yes or no to whether the consumption is viewed as being necessary or not. According to Jean Baudrillard (1996:200), consumption is not a material practice nor is it a phenomenology of 'affluence', but is defined by the organisation of different things (nourishment clothes, car, oral) and virtual totality of all objects and messages readily constituted as a more or less coherent discourse. If it has any meanings at all, consumption means an activity consisting of the systematic manipulation of signs.

As Raymond Williams has argued, this is 'the language of frustration rather than power' (Williams 1980:90). In an attempt to open up some of these questions, I have argued that understandings of advertising and research data circulate as commercial currencies. As forms of power they constitute the field of commercial promotion and the field of academic analysis. In order to fully apprehend advertising's commercial and discursive impact on the social realm, studies must take account of markets as social unit to advance the consumerism debate. The markets, as radical practice produce more reflexive analyses of academic understandings of the commercial realm. With this positive attitude and progressive understanding of the study so far, the study further analyses markets (a socio-cultural unit) in the next chapter.

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24. The phenomenology is the branch of philosophy that concentrates on what is perceived by the senses in contrast to what is independently real or true about the world.